11-1-1976

San José Studies, November 1976

San José State University Foundation

a publication of san josé state university volume2 number3 november '76

bicentennial special issue

san josé STUDIES

SAN JOSE STUDIES

Volume II, Number 3

November 1976

SAN JOSE

Volume II, Number 3

ARTICLES

STUDIES

November 1976

POETRY

SPECIAL FEATURES

SAN JOSE STUDIES

Volume II, Number 3 November 1976

SAN JOSE STUDIES is published in February, May, and November by San José State University, San José, California 95192.
MANUSCRIPTS, BOOKS FOR REVIEWING, AND EDITORIAL COMMUNICATIONS should be sent to The Editor, *San José Studies*, San José State University, San José, California 95192.
SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS should be sent to John Sullivan, Business Manager, *San José Studies*, San José State University, San José, California 95192.
SUBSCRIPTIONS: $8.00 per year for individuals ($10.00 for foreign subscriptions). $15.00 per year for institutions. $3.50 for single copies. Patron subscriptions: $50.00 per year. Benefactors: $100.00 per year. Single copies are available at the Spartan Bookstore, San José State University.
SAN JOSE STUDIES publishes articles and literature appealing to the educated public. Critical, creative, and informative writing in the broad areas of the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences will be considered. Please limit contributions to a maximum of 5,000 words and avoid footnotes when possible. All manuscripts must be typewritten and double-spaced on standard 8½ by 11 white bond, and the original and one copy submitted to the Editorial Board. The author's name and address should appear only on the cover sheet of the original. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return of the manuscript.
ONLY PREVIOUSLY UNPUSLISHED WORK will be considered. Authors and reviewers will receive two free copies of the journal in which their contribution appears.
THE BILL CASEY MEMORIAL FUND, established by friends and relatives of the late Bill Casey, will award $100.00 to the author of the best essay, story, or poem appearing in each annual volume of *San José Studies.*

Bicentennial Poetry Celebration

The following essays in this issue of *San José Studies* were lectures in the Bicentennial Celebration of American Poetry sponsored by the city of San José, California and San José State University:

"Poetry, Revolution and the Age of Paine" . . . . . *Roy Harvey Pearce*
"The Ethnic Voice in American Poetry" . . . . . *Arnold Rampersad*
"From Colonial to Revolutionary: The Modern American Woman Poet" . . . . . *Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi*
"The Regional Incentive: Reflections on the Power of Place in Contemporary Literature" . . . . . *William Everson*
Additional essays from this series will appear in future issues of *SJS*.

Selected poems from the national competition for the Bicentennial Poetry Awards will be published in a special issue of *San José Studies*, sponsored by a grant from the City of San José Fine Arts Commission. From the approximately 2,500 entries received, the following poems received awards:

The Holly Drew Geary Cooper Bicentennial Poetry Award ($500)
"Garrison" . . . . . *Tom Wayman*
Windsor, Ontario

The San José Awards
Second Prizes ($100)
"Letter from the Colonies" . . . . . *Dick Allen*
Trumbull, Connecticut
"Pony Prayer Translation from Blind Lazarus to Cristobal at Circle of Enemy/Always/Warrior, 1874-1974; 1976" . . . . . *Bruce Edwards*
Lompoc, California
"The LaCrosse Game" . . . . . *William Joyce*
Norwalk, Connecticut
"Women in Early Plymouth" . . . . . *Lyn Lifshin*
Niskayuna, New York

Third Prizes ($50)
"Finding a Home" . . . . . *Elaine Dallman*
Watsonville, California
"Whale Songs" . . . . . *Clark McCann*
North Hollywood, California
"Massachusetts Fantasy: The Doberman in the Dune Buggy" . . . . . *Terrill Shepard Soules*
South Hadley, Massachusetts
Judges of the contest were Josephine Miles, Kathleen Fraser, and Robert Hass.

ARTICLES

Poetry, Revolution, and the Age of Paine

Roy Harvey Pearce

for Kathryn Preyer

IN his middle age retired to Quincy, at once angry and meditative, John Adams wrote his good friend Benjamin Waterhouse, 29 October 1805, as follows:

> I am willing that you call this the Age of Frivolity as you do: and would not object if you had named it the Age of Folly, Vice, Frenzy, Fury, Brutality, Daemons, Buonaparte, Tom Paine, or the Age of the Burning Brand from the bottomless Pit: or any thing but the Age of Reason. I know not whether any Man in the World has had more influence on its inhabitants or affairs for the last thirty years than Tom Paine. There can be no severer Satyr on the Age. For such a mongrel between Pigg and Puppy, begotten by a wild Boar on a Bitch Wolf, never before in any Age of the World was suffered by the Poltroonery of mankind, to run through such a Career of Mischief. Call it then the Age of Paine.[1]

Adams, we can now say, protests too much. His own view of the causes, occasions, and ends of the Revolution, deriving from his whiggish conservatism, is directly expressive of his high-principled stubborness, self-assurance, and agonizing sense that the Revolution had released forces (among them, Tom Paine) which were virtually beyond controlling. In spite of himself, as it were, he was caught up in the Age of Paine, his own moral and political ideology being just one variant of a larger, more inclusive, more complex, and internally contradictory ideology – that of the Revolution as an overwhelmingly accomplished fact: a fact, to use that terribly complicated enlightened word, of Nature. That larger ideology subsumed its internal contradictions, and also the violence and dissension produced by those contradictions, in the notion that the Revolution itself was nothing if not eminently "reasonable" – the reason being that of Nature and Nature's God, fixed in the very structure of things as Americans sought to design and to

bring about the social, political, and economic arrangements that their sense of themselves in their world "naturally" demanded of them. Thus the thousands of pamphlets they wrote, from whatever "reasonable" perspective, conceived the Revolution as being above all "ideological." So powerful and telling was this "ideological" emphasis that it set the tone and style of interpretations of the Revolution through the end of the nineteenth century and beyond.

The great study of poetry in the American Revolution, Moses Coit Tyler's ***Literary History of the American Revolution*** (1897), is in this sense ideological.

> The same logic that drove the participants to view the Revolution as peculiarly intellectual also compelled Moses Coit Tyler, writing at the end of the nineteenth century, to describe the American Revolution as "preeminently a revolution caused by ideas, and pivoted on ideas." That ideas played a part in all revolutions Tyler readily admitted. But in most revolutions, like that of the French, ideas had been perceived and acted upon only when the social reality had caught up with them, only when the ideas had been given meaning and force by long-experienced "real evils." The American Revolution, said Tyler, had been different; it was directed "not against tyranny inflicted, but only against tyranny anticipated." The American revolted not out of actual suffering but out of reasoned principle. "Hence, more than with most other epochs of revolutionary strife, our epoch of revolutionary strife was a strife of ideas: a long warfare of political logic; a succession of annual campaigns in which the marshalling or arguments not only preceded the marshalling of armies, but often exceeded them in impression upon the final result."

I am quoting here from Gordon Wood's magisterial analysis of interpretations of the American Revolution.[2] He in turn is quoting from Tyler's ***Literary History of the American Revolution***, which, as regards its study of revolutionary pamphleteering, has only relatively recently begun to be superseded and, as regards its analysis of revolutionary poetry, drama, and fiction, has yet to be superseded. (One of my intentions in what follows is to suggest the direction that supersession might well take.) Professor Wood goes on in his analysis to review anti-ideological socio-economic interpretations of the Revolutionary period as they occur in the work of Becker and Beard. But his principal concern is to deal with recent interpretations of the Revolution, his own and that of Perry Miller, Edmund Morgan, Bernard Bailyn, among others. And he concludes that the Revolutionary period was indeed an Age of Paine, with Adams himself, beyond his own understanding implicated in it, in all its painfulness. I quote Professor Wood again:

> When the ideas of the Americans are examined comprehensively, when all of the Whig rhetoric, irrational as well as rational, is taken into

account, one cannot but be struck by the predominant characteristics of fear and frenzy, the exaggerations and the enthusiasm, the general sense of social corruption and disorder out of which would be born a new world of benevolence and harmony where Americans would become the "eminent examples of every divine and social virtue." As Bailyn and the propaganda studies have amply shown, there is simply too much fanatical and millenial thinking even by the best minds that must be explained before we can characterize the Americans' ideas as peculiarly rational and legalistic and thus view the Revolution as merely a conservative defense of constitutional liberties. To isolate refined and nicely-reasoned arguments from the writing of John Adams and Jefferson is not only to disregard the more inflamed expressions of the rest of the Whigs but also to overlook the enthusiastic extravagance – the paranoic obsession with a diabolical Crown conspiracy and the dream of a restored Saxon era – in the thinking of Adams and Jefferson themselves.

The ideas of the American seem, in fact, to form what can only be called a revolutionary syndrome. . . . In the kinds of ideas expressed the American Revolution is remarkably similar to the seventeenth-century Puritan Revolution and to the eighteenth-century French Revolution: the same general disgust with a chaotic and corrupt world, the same anxious and angry bombast, the same excited fears of conspiracies by depraved men, the same utopian hopes for the construction of a new and virtuous order. . . .[3]

With these last phrases Professor Wood might well be describing the poetry of the period – or rather, be describing it in its aspirations. For disgust, anxiety, anger, fear, and hope do in fact constitute the tone of much of the poetry. But they are disgust, anxiety, anger, fear, and hope so compulsively projected outward, as part of the poets' commitment to *persuade* their readers, that they transform it altogether to rhetoric and so do not get absorbed and made constitutive of its integral quality. It is an overdetermined poetry. What we have, I think, is a case of poets, caught up in Revolutionary fervor, become idealogues, and so creating verse which is so much given over to its public function that we have little or no sense of the poet as being – as he must be to be at his best – at once both a private and a public person. It is as though there were no *inside* to the Revolutionary experience, as though the poet himself, and thus his reader, were not somehow changed (for poetry at its best above all *changes* us) by his discovery and setting forth of his disgust, anxiety, fear, and hope. The historian of poetry – for that is what I am – would above all want his poets – for that is what they are – to be aware, in the very marrow of their being, that theirs was an Age of Paine. But, as I read them, they were not.

Surely the *young* Freneau, writing collaboratively with his classmate at Princeton, Hugh Henry Brackenbridge, was not. I quote from the conclusion

to their 1771 academic piece, "The Rising Glory of America":

This is thy praise America thy pow'r
Thou best of climes by science visited
By freedom blest and richly stor'd with all
The luxuries of life. Hail happy land
The seat of empire the abode of kings,
The final stage where time shall introduce
Renowned characters, and glorious works
Of high invention and wond'rous art,
Which not the ravages of time shall waste
Till he himself has run his long career;
Till all those glorious orbs of light on high
The rolling wonders that surround the ball,
Drop from their spheres extinguish'd and consum'd;
When final ruin with her fiery car
Rides o'er creation, and all nature's works
Are lost in chaos and the womb of night.

This is explicitly a public statement, so that we should accept at face value the ponderous blank verse and the simplistically overt diction. At *face* value, since there is little depth here. All is surface. Utopianism is pushed all the way, until there is even a withering away of poetry, or, rather, an advancement of poetry to rhetoric.

At the other extreme, there is the ballad and song-writing of the period. These are the two concluding stanzas of an undated "American Soldier's Hymn":

'T is God that still supports our right,
His just revenge our foes pursues;
'T is He that with resistless might,
Fierce nations to His power subdues.

Our universal safeguard He!
From Whom our lasting honors flow;
He made us great, and set us free
From our remorseless bloody foe.

This is the opening stanza of "General Sullivan's Song," 1777:

Hark, the loud drums, hark, the shrill trumpet-call to arms,
Come, Americans come, prepare for war's alarms,
Whilst in array we stand,
What soldier dare to land,
Sure in the attempt to meet his doom,
A leaden death, or a watery tomb;
We, Americans, so brave, o'er the land or the waves,

All invaders defy, we'll repulse them or die,
We scorn to live as slaves.

And this is the beginning of "The Ballad of Nathan Hale," 1776:

The breezes went steadily through the tall pines,
A-saying "oh! hu-ush!" a-saying "oh! hu-ush!"
As stilly stole by a bold legion of horse,
For Hale in the bush, for Hale in the bush.

"Keep still!" said the thrush as she nestled her young,
In a nest by the road; in a nest by the road.
"For the tyrants are near, and with them appear
What bodes us no good, what bodes us no good."

The brave captain heard it, and thought of his home
In a cot by the brook; in a cot by the brook.
With mother and sister and memories dear,
He so gayly forsook; he so gayly forsook.

Perhaps it is necessary in the nature of songs and ballads to simplify, so to sharpen, the perceptions and understandings of their auditors. Perhaps in the long run it will be decided that indeed its songs and ballads are the most significant, or most typical, modes of verse of the Revolutionary period. My point is, however, that they too are essentially (again perhaps necessarily) rhetorical exercises. The examples of songs and ballads I have given – and there are, believe me, enough like these to make them typical – have this crucial quality in common with the bit from "The Rising Glory of America": that they both derive from and are set in stock techniques and phrases – ranging from "elevated" blank verse and generalized figurative language to hymn- and ballad- style and language – such that, in employing an accepted and assured mode of expression, they may confirm and enforce their auditors' response and understanding. Auditors', really in each case, not readers'. For these, and also the myriad others of their kind, are proclamatory poems, rhetorical verse, reaffirmations of shared, public commitments so clear and self-assured that their implications and entailments need not, cannot, be explored in that depth and subtlety which we know to characterize major poetry. One of the most painful things – to those who witness it *ex post facto* – about an Age of Paine is that for those who lived through it, its painfulness was comprehended and so transcended by its rectitude and its promise. This, I take it, is what issues when, in trying to witness and understand ourselves in our history, we put our rhetoric to the test of a poetry which could have been.

If then "The Rising Glory of America" represents public poetry – that is, poetry so overdetermined that it becomes rhetoric – at its most formal, and if the songs and ballads represent it at its most informal, the satirical verse of

the period brings together the two modes and, in my opinion, is all the more effective for doing so.[4] There is an improvised, hard-hitting, journalistic verve in such satirical verse, both pro- and anti-Revolutionary. Moreover, there is reliance on the technique of such verse in the British tradition, where the elegant and precise neo-classical mode had been transformed into a mode exuberantly inelegant and sweeping instead of precise: the highest sort of journalism, one might say; a broadsword instead of a rapier; rhetoric with a vengeance; sheer invective.

Thus an anonymous Loyalist satire on Tom Paine himself, published in the New York *Gazette,* 11 August 1779:

Hail mighty Thomas! in whose works are seen
a mangled Morris and a distorted Deane;
Whose splendid periods flash for Lee's defense, –
Replete with everything but Common Sense.
You, by whose labors no man e'er was wiser,
You, of invective great monopolizer;
You, who unfeeling as a Jew or Turk,
Attack a Jay, a Paca, and a Burke;
You, who, in fervor of satiric vein,
Maul and abuse the mild and meek Duane,
And eager to traduce the worthiest men, –
Despite the energy of Drayton's pen, –
O say, what name shall dignify the lays
Which now I consecrate to sing thy praise!
In pity tell by what exalted name
Thou would'st be damned to an eternal fame:
Shall Common Sense, or Comus greet thine ear,
A piddling poet, or puffed pamphleteer?

Thus, from the same year, the opening section of Jonathan Odell's Loyalist "The American Times":

When Faction, pois'nous as the scorpion's sting,
Infects the people and insults the King;
When foul Sedition skulks no more conceal'd,
But grasps the sword and rushes to the field;
When Justice, Law, and Truth are in disgrace,
And Treason, Fraud, and Murder fill their place;
Smarting beneath accumulated woes,
Shall we not dare the tyrants to expose?
We will, we must – tho' mighty Laurens frown,
Or Hancock with his rabble hunt us down;
Champions of virtue, we'll alike disdain

The guards of Washington, the lies of Payne;
And greatly bear, without one anxious throb,
The wrath of Congress, or its lords the mob.
Bad are the Times, almost too bad to paint;
The whole head sickens, the whole heart is faint;
The State is rotten, rotten to the core,
'Tis all one bruize, one putrefying sore.
Here Anarchy before the gaping crowd
Proclaims the people's majesty aloud;
There folly runs with eagerness about,
And prompts the cheated populace to shout;
Here paper-dollars meagre Famine holds,
There votes of Congress Tyranny unfolds;
With doctrines strange in matter and in dress,
Here sounds the pulpit, and there groans the press;
Confusion blows her trump – and far and wide
The noise is heard – the plough is thrown aside;
The awl, the needle, and the shuttle drops;
Tools change to swords, and camps succeed to shops;
The doctor's glister-pipe, the lawyer's quill,
Transformed to guns, retain the power to kill;
From garrets, cellars, rushing thro' the street,
The new-born statesmen in committee meet;
Legions of senators infest the land,
And mushroom generals thick as mushrooms stand.

Odell, like the anonymous satirist I quoted before, of course goes on and on. Satire of this order becomes a litany of imprecation, without much structure or inclusive design or argument – no end envisaged because all is beginning. Fully felt, the pain of the Revolutionary situation is responded to and against, not understood. As in most cases of public poetry, who would be newly persuaded by satire such as this? In effect, the satire serves to confirm the opinion of a reader with Loyalist sympathies and so lets him assure himself that he is most surely at one with those with whose opinions he agrees. The satirist goes on and on, because if he talks long enough, he might postpone the inevitable.

So too with satire from the other side. I daresay *our* side. If it seems less assured than Loyalist satire, it is nonetheless as fully felt. ("Conservatives" seem always to have the best in satire.) This, for example, is a passage from Charles Henry Wharton's 1778 "A Poetical Epistle to George Washington, Esquire, Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the United States of America" – the "Whitehead" mentioned in the fifth line being the then British Poet Laureate:

While many a servile Muse her succor lends
To flatter Tyrants, or a Tyrant's friends;
While thousands, slaughtered at Ambition's shrine
Are made a plea to court the tuneful Nine;
Whilst Whitehead lifts his Hero to the skies,
Foretells his conquests twice a year and lies,
Damns half-starved Rebels to eternal shame,
Or paints them trembling at Britannia's name;
Permit an humble bard, great Chief, to raise
One truth-erected trophy to thy praise.
No abject flat'ry shall these numbers seek,
To raise a blush on Virtue's modest cheek;
Rehearse no merit, no illustrious deed,
But Foes must own, & Washington may read.

The pro-Revolutionary satirist also so often seems to go on and on – at even greater length, I must say, than the Loyalist satirist. The best-known (because in its own time so widely publicized) of satires of this order is John Trumbull's ***M'Fingal (1775-1782).*** Written in unintentionally clumsy Hudibrastics, overfull of intentional political, historical, classical, and literary allusions – thus more self-consciously "artful" than other satires of its time, it details the incapacity of its Tory hero to get anything right, even though at the end it envisages the victory of the side its hero opposes. Thus it celebrates inversely. As for satire – at one point a Whig crowd proceeds to tar and feather M'Fingal on a liberty pole:

Forthwith the crowd proceed to deck
With halter'd noose M'Fingal's neck,
While he in peril of his soul
Stood tied half-hanging to the pole;
Then lifting high the ponderous jar,
Pour'd o'er his head the smoaking tar.
With less profusion once was spread
Oil on the Jewish monarch's head,
That down his beard and vestments ran,
And cover'd all his outward man.
As when (so Claudian sings) the Gods
And earth-born Giants fell at odds,
The stout Enceladus in malice
Tore mountains up to throw at Pallas;
And while he held them o'er his head,
The river, from their mountains fed,
Pour'd down his back its copious tide,
And wore its channels in his hide;
So from the high-raised urn the torrents
Spread down his back their various currents. . . .

And so it goes, on and on, its mock-epic similes hunted out to the bitter end, as is M'Fingal himself. In this case, the satirist goes on and on because he would hasten the inevitable.

The problem for the Revolutionary satirist – one which accounts for his combining satire proper with argumentation – derived of course from his need to prove his own political position right while damning that of the opposition, whereas for the loyalist his political position was beyond need of being proved right. The loyalist can damn at will, whereas the Revolutionary must at once damn and argue, so as to celebrate.

The great example here of course is Philip Freneau. My subject as I have interpreted it lets me mention only in passing Freneau's capacity to be what used to be called a "pre-romantic" poet, his sense of a natural world with which he would be at one and his sense of the constitutive power of the poetic fancy. (I think of course of poems like "The Beauties of Santa Cruz," "The Indian Burying Ground," "The Wild Honey Suckle," and "On a Honey Bee" – and, along with them, the poems which constitute their deistic, thus not quite Romantic, rationales, poems like "The Seasons Moralized," "On the Uniformity and Perfection of Nature," and "On the Religion of Nature.") The Freneau with whom I am concerned is he who would be at once satirist and celebrant – the poet who developed out of "The Rising Glory of America," from which I quoted at the outset. There is, for example, "A Political Litany," 1775:

> From a junto that labour with absolute power,
> Whose schemes disappointed have made them look sour,
> From the lords of the council, who fight against freedom,
> Who still follow on where delusion shall lead them.
>
> From the group at St. James's, who slight our petitions,
> And fools that are waiting for further submissions –
> From a nation whose manners are rough and severe,
> From scoundrels and rascals, – do keep us all clear.
>
> . . . .
>
> From the caitiff, lord *North*, who would bind us in chains,
> From a royal king *Log*, with his tooth-full of brains,
> Who dreams, and is certain (when taking a nap)
> He has conquered our lands, as they lay on his map.
>
> From a kingdom that bullies, and hectors, and swears,
> We send up to heaven our wishes and prayers
> That we, disunited, may freemen be still,
> And Britain go on – to be damned if she will.

This is the satirist, one example of him at work.

And this is an example of Freneau as celebrant, from his 1778 "American Independent; and Her Everlasting Deliverance from British Tyranny and

Oppression." The poem begins:

'Tis done! and Britain for her madness sighs –
Take warning, tyrants and henceforth be wise,
If o'er mankind *man* gives you regal sway,
Take not the rights of human kind away.

Freneau goes on at great length to detail and interpret the history of the Revolution itself and his own part in it, and then begins his conclusion thus:

Let Turks and Russians glut their fields with blood,
Again let Britain dye the Atlantic flood,
Let all the east adore the sanguine wreathe
And gain new glories from the trade of death –
America! the works of peace be thine,
Thus shalt thou gain a triumph more divine –
To thee belongs a second golden reign,
Thine is the empire o'er a peaceful main;
Protect the rights of human kind below
Crush the proud tyrant who becomes their foe,
And future times shall own your struggles blest,
And future years enjoy perpetual rest.

In the end, I think, American Revolutionary poetry perforce becomes a poetry of celebration, with the satirical absorbed in and muffled by the celebratory. It is a proclamatory poetry, needfully so assertive that it cannot allow for the very doubts which its writers must surely have worked through to make their proclamations and assertions. Its depth is forced to the surface, in the process of which much – all that we know to have been integrally true of the Age of Paine – is lost. It culminates, once the Revolution is over, in a poem like David Humphrey's "Poem on the Industry of the United States of America," 1783, whose Revolution-empowered intention and aspirations are stated at the beginning:

Genius of Culture! thou, whose chaster taste
Can clothe with beauty ev'n the dreary waste;
Teach me to sing, what bright'ning charms unfold,
The bearded ears, that bend with more than gold;
How empire rises, and how morals spring,
From lowly labour, teach my lips to sing;
Exalt the numbers with thy gifts supreme,
Ennobler of the song, my guide and theme!

Humphreys had been a young man during the Revolution, as had his friend Joel Barlow, who in his epic of America, ***The Columbiad*** (1807) gave Columbus a vision of what was to come after the Revolution. Columbus sees

. . . that other sapient band,
The torch of science flaming in their hand!
Thro nature's range their searching should aspire,
Or wake to life the canvass and the lyre.
Fixt in sublimest thought, behold them rise
World after world unfolding to the eyes,
Lead, light, allure them thro the total plan,
And give new guidance to the paths of man.

2

The great art, then, the great poetry, was yet to come, a product of the Revolution. It would follow that the art, the poetry, of the Revolution itself was only preparatory for something greater. The fact is that the poetry of the Revolution is not by any means major poetry. Freneau knew this, writing in his "To An Author," 1788:

An age employed in edging steel
Can no poetic raptures feel;
No solitude's attracting power,
No leisure of the noon day hour,
No shaded stream, no quiet grove
Can this fantastic century move . . .

John Adams, writing his wife from Paris, some time in 1780, reported on the beauties that he had seen and then commented:

> It is not indeed the fine arts which our country requires; the useful, the mechanic arts are those which we have occasion for in a young country as yet simple and not far advanced in luxury, although perhaps much too far for her age and character. . . . I must study politics and war, that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain.[5]

Tom Paine put it more simply, remarking of himself in *The Age of Reason* (1794), "The natural bent of my mind was to science. I had some turn, and I believe some talent, for poetry; but this I rather repressed than encouraged, as leading too much into the field of imagination."[6]

Thus we should not too much regret, because not to be too much surprised at, the situation of American poetry in its Age of Paine. Further, we should recognize that this would seem to be a regular relationship between poetry and revolution, particularly when – so I have focussed my remarks

here – that poetry is to be *of* revolution. In 1924 Leon Trotsky outlined a possible version of the dialectics of the situation for us in our age:

> Culture feeds on the sap of economics, and a material surplus is necessary, so that culture may grow, develop and become subtle. Our bourgeoisie laid its hand on literature, and did this very quickly at the time when it was growing rich. The proletariat will be able to prepare the formation of a new, that is, a Socialist culture and literature, not by the laboratory method on the basis of our present-day poverty, want and illiteracy, but by large social, economic, and cultural means. Art needs comfort, even abundance. Furnaces have to be hotter, wheels have to move faster, looms have to turn more quickly, schools have to work better.[7]

Friedrich Engels, writing in 1885 to a correspondent who asked his advice about compiling an anthology of revolutionary poetry, was even more directly to the point: "In general, the poetry of past revolutions . . . rarely has a revolutionary effect for later times because it must also reproduce the mass prejudices of the period in order to affect the masses."[8] The point, I trust, can be well taken. If we can appreciate American Revolutionary poetry for what it was – a public poetry, a congeries of rhetorics, an uncritically celebratory poetry –, we can rest satisfied and go on to a necessarily entailed question: What of Poetry, Revolution, and the Age of Paine *after* the fact? What follows, then, is a postcript, albeit a necessary postscript.

3

By the 1820's and 30's, the visions of Freneau and Brackenridge, of Humphreys, and of Barlow seem to have been realized. It has been pointed out more than once that although Rip Van Winkle awakens presumably in the 1790's, having slept through the Revolution, in effect he awakens in 1819, when Irving's story about him was first published. Westward-building empire, urbanization, population growth, industrialization – all that marked American development and prosperity, all that we associate with what was to be the Age of Jackson and beyond, had set in. It is at this point – in retrospect, as it seems, inevitably – that the Revolution itself is taken as an enabling act, making possible a New America and the New Americans. Thus in his Fourth of July Oration in 1830, Edward Everett, speaking at Lowell, Massachusetts, could declare that "a prosperous manufacturing town like Lowell, regarded in itself, and as a specimen of other similar seats of American art and industry, may with propriety be considered as a peculiar triumph of our political independence. They are, if I may so express it, the complement of our political independence." Earlier in his oration, he had declared that "the astonishing growth [of the United States] has evidently not only been

subsequent to the declaration of independence, but consequent upon its establishment, as effect upon cause."[9]

A literary analogue to Everett's (and so many others') statements is this, from the opening editorial pronouncement in the October 1837 ***United States Magazine and Democratic Review.*** Declaring that the "American Revolution was the greatest of experiments" and that the experiment was one of democratizing men, the editorialist went on to say:

> The vital principle of an American national literature must be democracy. Our mind is enslaved to the past and present literature of England. . . . In the spirit of her literature we can never hope to rival England. . . . But we should not follow in her wake; a radiant path invites us forward in another direction. We have a principle, an informing soul, of our own, our democracy. . . .[10]

It was also in 1837 that Emerson delivered "The American Scholar":

> If there is any one period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution; when the old and the new stand side by side and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

By December 1839, he could write in his journal of a poetry fully democratized:

> *Treat Things Poetically.* – Everything should be treated poetically, – law, politics, housekeeping, money. A judge and a banker must drive their craft poetically as well as a dancer or a scribe. . . . If you would write a code or logarithms or a cookbook you cannot spare the poetic impulse.

And by 1844, in "The Poet," he could fully envision his poet revolutionized:

> We have yet had no genius in America, with tyrannous eye, which knew the value of our incomparable materials, and saw, in the barbarism and materialism of the times, another carnival of the same gods whose picture he so much admires in Homer; then in the middle Age; then in Calvinism. . . . Our log-rolling, our stumps and their politics, our fisheries, our Negroes and Indians, our boats and our repudiations, the wrath of rogues and the pusillanimity of honest men, the northern trade, the southern planting, the western clearing, Oregon and Texas, are yet unsung. Yet America is a poem in our eyes; its ample geography dazzles the imagination, and it will not wait long for meters.

Thus the democratic impulse in our literature, deriving from its revolutionary origins – the Revolution and what eventuated being conceived, as our historians have come recently to see it, as an Age of Paine.

Melville, writing to his friend Evert Duyckinck, 3 March 1849, put it most succinctly:

> – I would to God Shakspeare had lived later, & promenaded in Broadway. Not that I might have had the pleasure of leaving my card for him at the Astor, or made merry with him over a bowl of fine Duyckinck punch; but that the muzzle which all men wore on their souls in the Elizabethan day, might not have intercepted Shakspers full articulations. For I hold it a verity that even Shakspeare, was not a frank man to the uttermost. And, indeed, who in this intolerant Universe is, or can be? But the Declaration of Independence makes a difference.[11]

The "difference" – that which would make possible Emerson's "tyrannous eye" – is an enabling factor, I am persuaded a crucial enabling factor – , in American literature from the 1830's onwards. But still, the possibility of the tyrannous eye and frankness notwithstanding, the American Revolution itself has not been much "available" to the American literary imagination for full and open (or open-ended) treatment. I suspect that it is a matter of the unavailability of a sense of the Revolutionary period as an Age of Paine. For surely, what a writer of the highest sensibility needs is a view of a segment of history which absolutely comports with his tyrannous and frank sense of the fullness and depth of human nature working its way, for good and for bad, through its history.

Even in that period of our literature culminating in the American Renaissance, that Revolution-inspired period as Emerson called it, most of the writing which takes an aspect of the Revolution for its subject is celebratory, its subject conceived in terms which define its public, not its private, dimensions. There are Cooper's ***The Spy*** (1821), Simms' ***The Partisan*** (1835) and the five other Revolutionary historical romances which followed it, and Kennedy's ***Horse-Shoe Robinson*** (1835) – to recall the major titles. As for poetry itself, there is Emerson's ennobling but not penetrating "Concord Hymn" (1837), Longfellow's ballad-like "Paul Revere's Ride" (1860), and a series of odes on Revolutionary subjects by Lowell, beginning in 1849 and ending in 1876 and increasing in stiffness and pomposity. The purview of these poems – and there are others, even lesser, like them – suggests the purview of the poetry deriving immediately from the Revolution itself, except of course for the lack of commited satire. Emerson, Longfellow, and Lowell in their poems take upon themselves the responsibility for public, communal celebration. And it is not appropriate in such celebration to go deep. What is called for – and given – is affirmation, yea-saying. Each of

these poets – indeed, each of the romancers I have instanced – was on other occasions, though varyingly and unsurely, capable of going deep, of saying Yes only after he had chanced saying No. But not as regards the American Revolution.

I know of only three instances in the writing of the American Renaissance where the writer is able to cut through received tradition and memory, so to catch a glimpse of the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary period as an Age of Paine. Two of these, since they are fiction (though as romances, they are on the edge of being poetry), I can note only in passing.

There is Hawthorne's great tale, "My Kinsman, Major Molyneux" (1832), in which in immediately pre-Revolutionary times a young man, Robin Molyneux, comes to the city from the country, seeking his kinsman and his fortune. He is a Molyneux, since his sought-for-kinsman is his paternal uncle. After a series of nightmarish encounters, he does find his kinsman, but as the loyalist tarred-and-feathered victim of a revolutionary mob. (Think of Trumbull's *M'Fingal*.) He becomes part of that mob, and so must learn something, in the deepest personal terms, of revolution, political and otherwise. The tormenter and the tormented – thus the rebel and he against whom he rebels – somehow are one. Moreover, in one of Hawthorne's major ironies, the name Robin and his kinsman is given is in the fact that of one of the principal, most violent of revolutionary tormentors and persecutors of loyalists. In the tale, revolution – however proper it ends – is conceived as implicating the self and the other, the rebel and him against whom he rebels, in a process at once destructive and constructive. Its pain is not, cannot, be blinked. Hawthorne intends us to be witnesses of our own beginnings and, in the witnessing, to be willing to acknowledge the price paid for what we have achieved. An Age of Paine indeed.[12]

There is Melville's *Israel Potter* (1855), dedicated "To His Highness, The Bunker Hill Monument," which began its appearance in *Putnam's Monthly Magazine*, July 1854 as "A Fourth of July Story." It is once an heroic and anti-heroic tale. Israel is a wanderer, whose various adventures always conclude with his being down-and-out. Long-gone from his home in Vermont, he fights at Bunker Hill, is captured by the British, taken to England, befriended by rebel agents, becomes a secret courier between England and France, meets Franklin and John Paul Jones, fights alongside Jones, in confusion gets to England again, sees Ethan Allen as captive, settles in disguise in London, lives out his life in poverty until at the end of his "Fifty Years of Exile" he returns to the United States, seeking a pension, which of course is denied – as he, so strong a believer in the Revolutionary cause, is in fact denied his American identity most of his life. The portraits of Franklin, Jones, and Allen are at once hugely comic and gross, as is Israel's life. Warfare is described graphically and unpityingly. The Revolution and its aftermath as regards Israel are interpreted in Melville's conclusion at the end of the sequence of chapters in which he describes the fight between the

Serapis and the *Bon Homme Richard*, in which Israel participated:

> The loss of life in the two ships was about equal: one-half of the total number of those engaged being either killed or wounded.
>
> In view of this battle one may ask – What separates the enlightened man from the savage? Is civilization a thing distinct, or is it an advanced stage of barbarism?

Israel, as the tale moves toward its end, is the anti-hero as scapegoat. "Requiescat in Pace" the last chapter is called. And old Israel, his exile ended, is shown, on the Fourth of July, looking at Bunker Hill:

> Upon those heights, fifty years before, his now feeble hands wielded both ends of the musket. There too he had received that slit upon the chest, which afterwoods, in the affair with the Serapis, being traversed with a cutlass wound, made him now the bescarred bearer of a cross.

Scarred with the cross of the Revolution. Black comedy in the Age of Paine.

The third instance is in verse, what became in its final version the thirty-fifth and the thirty-sixth sections of Whitman's "Song of Myself." The sections are part of the fourth phase of the poem, that in which as I have written,[13] we are to know the poet (as person) fully at home in his newly defined world, fully sure of himself and of what he can declare: "I am an acme of things accomplish'd, and I am encloser of things to be." Sections thirty-five and thirty-six deal with the battle between the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Serapis*, about which Whitman learned from his maternal grandmother, whose father had served under John Paul Jones, and from a recently published account of the battle by Jones himself. I follow here the version of "Song of Myself" given in the 1855 *Leaves of Grass*, which has an involved directness considerably attenuated in later versions.

Following his account of the Battle of the Alamo, which immediately precedes these sections, Whitman begins:

> Did you read in the seabooks of the oldfashioned frigate-fight?
> Did you learn who won by the light of the moon and stars?
>
> Our foe was no skulk in his ship, I tell you,
> His was the English pluck, and there is no tougher or truer,
> and never was, and never will be;
> Along the lowered eve he came, horribly raking us.
>
> We closed with him . . . the yards tangled . . . the cannon touched,
> My captain lashed fast with his own hands.

A bloody description, almost surrealistic, follows. Then:

> Toward twelve at night, there in the beams of the moon they surrendered to us.

Stretched and still lay the midnight,
Two great hulls motionless on the breast of the darkness,
Our vessel riddled and slowly sinking. . . . preparations to
pass to the one we had conquered,
The captain on a quarter deck coldly giving his orders
through a countenance white as sheet,
Near by the corpse of the child that served in the cabin,
The dead face of an old salt with long white hair and carefully
curled whiskers,
The flames spite of all that could be done flickering aloft and
below,
The husky voices of the two or three officers yet fit for
duty,
Formless stacks of bodies and bodies by themselves. . . . dabs
of flesh upon the masts and spars,
The cut or cordage and the dangle of rigging. . . .the slight
shock of the soothe of the waves,
Black and impassive guns, and litter of powder-parcels, and
the strong scent,
Delicate sniff of the seabreeze. . . . smells of sedgy grass
and fields by the shore. . . . death-messages given in
charge to survivors,
The hiss of the surgeon's knife and the gnawing teeth of his
saw,
The wheeze, the cluck, the swash of falling blood. . . . the
short wild scream, the long tapering groan,
These so. . . . these irretrievable.

The details are as hard-hitting and as frank as those in Hawthorne's description of the tarred-and-feathered Major Molyneux and Melville's of the battles in which Israel Potter fought. Whitman's way of comprehending such details, comprehending them in all their painfulness, is consonant with, in this phase of "Song of Myself," his way of comprehending the world he is discovering – as "acme of things accomplish'd," so that, with him, we are to accept our past (as also our present and our future) wholly for what it has been, therefore is. He goes on immediately in the 1855 version after the passage I have quoted:

O Christ; My fit is mastering me!
What the rebel said gaily adjusting his throat to the rope-noose,
What the savage at the stump, his eye-sockets empty, his mouth
spirting shoops and defiance,
What still the traveler come to the vault at Mount Vernon,
What sobers the Brooklyn boy as he looks down the shores of the
Wallabout and remembers the prison ships,

What burnt the guns of the redcoat at Saratoga when he
surrendered his brigades,
These become mine and me very one, and they are but little,

I become as much more as I like.
I become any presence or truth of humanity here,
And see myself in prison shaped like another man,
And feel the dull unintermitted pain.

There follow, as "Song of Myself" works out its special dialectic, accounts of other sorts of pain, and also of other sorts of glory. The poet, would lead us to comprehend, so to live with, so to accept the responsibility which makes for the promise of, ourselves in our history – in this instance, our Age of Paine. Not in dreams, but in our history, so comprehended, begins our responsibilities – and our freedom.

4

I know of no other nineteenth-century poetic text which deals so tellingly with our Revolution as does Whitman's. Indeed, as you will have gathered, I know very few texts – poetic or otherwise – which do so. We can, because we must, accept the quality of poetry produced directly out of the Revolutionary situation for what it was – so involved, so "ideological," so tendentious, so celebratory as to make it consist of so many public pronouncements, self-assured, therefore assuring us. So too with Emerson, Longfellow, and Lowell on Revolutionary themes. And of course what we ask of poetry – and of literature generally – is not that it assure us but that it enlighten us, that it establish a vital tie between our most deeply possible selves and the history of the world in which those selves have been shaped.

For whatever reason, the Revolution as theme, as topos, has not been available to the American literary imagination in a way that would lead to poems and fictions which might enlighten us. There are interesting enough twentieth-century novels on the theme – those by Gore Vidal, Kenneth Roberts, Walter D. Edmunds, Howard Fast, for example. But, for all their sophistication in socio-cultural detail, these novels lack (to use Henry James' phrase about Hawthorne) the "deeper psychology" we must require of major fiction. There are the sections devoted to John Adams in Ezra Pound's *Cantos*. But these are mainly documentary and, as poetry, are sustained – if in fact they are – only by their being embedded in a context so global as to lack the power of historicity. In my reading I have encountered three recent poems on Revolutionary themes – Robert Bly's "Poem Against the British," Frank O'Hara's "On Seeing Larry Rivers' *Washington Crossing the Delaware* at the Museum of Modern Art," and Diane Wakowski's *George Washington Poems* sequence. Each figures a relationship between the poet in our time and Washington as a kind of Revolutionary father figure. In all, however, the Revolution is discovered, or invented, as occasion, not felt cause.

During the period 1775-1825, the Revolution is so much, so directly, the cause of its poetry that, as I have said, the poems produced are, understandably enough, overdetermined, meant so much to move that they do not allow for that meditative tranquillity which is a necessary condition for poetic achievement. We realize now, as I pointed out at the beginning, that the Revolution itself, precisely because it was a revolution, was overdetermined. Meditation and tranquillity are irrelevant. Thus, through the work of our recent historians, our sense of the Age of Paine. But from 1825 or so onwards, that overdetermination came to exist as a memory; and so cause for the most part became occasion, the tone of the occasion being set by recollection and pathos. For the writer of great power, however, for poems and stories of great power, an occasion, even one out of the past, must be felt strongly enough to become a cause, a cause to be meditated in tranquility. This is how the high literary imagination works when it deals with its own history. Thus Hawthorne, Melville, and above all Whitman. Perhaps our historians' new understanding of the American Revolution will become available to the literary imagination, so that occasion can indeed become cause, and our poets, like Whitman, will rise to that special occasion which is and was the Revolution, discover a cause, recollect it in tranquillity, and be able to say:

I become any presence or truth of humanity here. . . .

Notes

[1] W. C. Ford, ed., *Statesman and Friend: Correspondence of John Adams with Benjamin Waterhouse*, 1784-1822 (Boston, 1927), p. 31.

[2] "Rhetoric and Reality in the American Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly*, Ser. 3, XXIII (1966), 3-32. I quote from pp. 6-7.

[3] Pp. 25-26.

[4] In the discussion of satire which follows I am of course principally indebted to the account, with its treasury of citations, given in Tyler's *Literary History of the American Revolution.* I have, however, gone to the original texts.

[5] *Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife Abigail* (New York, 1876), p. 381.

[6] *Complete Writings*, ed. P. Foner (New York, 1945), I, 496.

[7] *Literature and Revolution* [1924] (New York), 1957, pp. 9-11.

[8] *Marx and Engels on Literature and Art*, ed. L. Baxandall and S. Moriski (St. Louis, 1973), p. 128.

[9] The address is anthologized in D. T. Miller, ed., *The Nature of Jacksonian America* (New York, 1972), pp 21-30.

[10] The editorial is anthologized in J. L. Blau, ed., *Social Theories of Jacksonian Democracy* (New York, 1947), pp. 21-37.

[11] *Letters*, ed. M. Davis and W. Gilman (New Haven, 1960), pp. 79-80.

[12] For details, see my "Hawthorne and the Sense of the Past; or, The Immortality of Major Molyneux," *Historicism Once More* (Princeton, 1969), pp. 137-145.

[13] Cf. of my *Continuity of American Poetry* (Princeton, 1961), p. 74.

The Ethnic Voice in American Poetry

Arnold Rampersad

At the most recent meeting of the Modern Language Association in San Francisco last December, a distinguished white academic rose to introduce the Afro-American poet Michael Harper. Harper, he declared, was the best black poet writing in America. There was a slight melodramatic pause, then he continued: "By that I mean, of course, that he is the best poet writing in America." While the substance of the statement, that the best black poet is *ipso facto* the best American poet, is too majestic for me to discuss, the equally noteworthy aspect, for our purpose, is the link asserted between ethnicity and poetic quality, a union seen by the academic as leading inevitably to poetic power of the first order. Of course, the praise for the black poet must be intended as praise for all ethnic poets, or its terms are too deliberately racist for further study. But another, more traditional view of the ethnic poet sees him or her groaning under the burden of song; the Afro-American poet Countee Cullen, facing the inscrutability of God, marvelled "at this curious thing:/ To make a poet black, and bid him sing." The paradox of being black, or Chicano, or Native American, or Asian-American, and being bid to sing has been felt acutely at one time or another by these and other groups who have sunk like stones to the bottom of the American melting pot, unmeltable. But each has eventually felt a resource of power in the confluence between the fact of ethnicity and the urge to sing; poetry has sprung irresistibly out of the American ethnic consciousness and the American ethnic situation.

Ethnicity in this country is once again almost popular. Groups who have progressed beyond the oppression common to immigrant classes are finding again some meaning in the search for ethnic roots, and for the expression of that interest in poetical ways; it is not a nostalgia for the immigrant mystique that moves such groups, but a fresh recognition of the rootlessness of American culture and a desire to reexperience a sense of having belonged and of purpose in being here. Thus we have a journal, ***Italian Americana***, edited

by the late Ernest Falbo, dedicated to Italian-American culture; and *Ararat*, a journal of arts and letters on Armenian culture. On the other hand, at least one group of writers appears to have embraced and then disowned ethnicity; increasingly the Jewish-American writer has repudiated ethnicity in art. The poet Karl Shapiro is a prime example, since he has written so brilliantly on race and literature. The author of *Poems of a Jew*, defiantly named and defiantly published in 1958, writes in 1973 that "I no longer feel Jewish in the literary sense though more Jewish and perhaps fanatically American in the cultural sense. In my mind, I equate Jew and American and do not feel any split about it." Irving Howe, even as his *World Of Our Fathers* began reaping its much deserved success, has denounced "the cheap hokum of ethnic self-indulgence." And as late as a few weeks ago Saul Bellow could flatly declare that he considered himself a writer first, an American second, and a Jew only third. These remarks have the ring of consensus. They speak of a certain security that other ethnic writers declare to be impossible to achieve, and some people are tempted to infer that other groups will declare one day an end to ethnicity and call themselves American.

If that is to be the case, there is little or no indication yet of its coming. What characterizes ethnic poetry in America at the moment is, among other things, a desperate struggle for survival itself. A black woman, the second in two years, has been nominated for the National Book Award in poetry, but few books of poetry are published, and fewer poets live by their verse. The most distinguished black publishing house, Broadside Press, cannot guarantee publication of five books of any kind a year, a number not exceeded by the biggest and wealthiest black publisher, Johnson Publishing Company; meanwhile Harper and Row produces over 1400 a year, and Bantam publishes 250 paperbacks a month. For ethnic groups other than black, the opportunity to publish, the opportunity, in other words, for the voice of the ethnic poet to be heard, is far scarcer. The rich outpouring of contemporary Chicano poetry finds the printed page almost exclusively through the initiative of the artists themselves producing their own works under extremely difficult conditions. The insensitivity of the profit-oriented publisher is legend, and it is clear that non-white publishers are at least as reluctant to put art and the artist above profit. While the black poet Don L. Lee can boast of having sold over a hundred thousand copies of his works without once involving a major publisher, the ethnic poet normally hears a stark silence beyond the immediate reach of his or her own voice.

Though what binds ethnic poets in America together may be greater than their differences, an understanding of their different histories and expectancies is important. Native American and Asian-American poets may not have published more than two dozen books of verse in the history of their association with Anglo culture; until very recently the Chicano poet had not published much more. For perfectly scrutable reasons, such as the language shared with white America, the experience of black Americans has been

different. By 1900 they had already published some ninety volumes or pamphlets of verse; between 1944 and 1971, accordingly to one bibliographer, they published some six hundred titles in poetry. Gwendolyn Brooks has won the Pulitzer prize for poetry (but one might remember the remark that while it proved that a black woman could win the Pulitzer prize, it did not prove that the Pulitzer prize is worth winning). But the far larger quantity of verse published by blacks means only that the problems they face as ethnic poets in common with other American groups are the more dramatically exposed; the greater mass and the longer history aid in the exposure of the phenomenon of ethnopoetics, but they speak of no happier experience or less complex present. Certainly, they promise no more certain resolution to the mysterious future of the American ethnic poet than of any other group caught in the grasp of the cultural imperialism that has characterized the nation's response to the imaginations of minorities within its borders.

For the ethnic poet, language – specifically the English language – is the pressure point where race and art confront each other. Between the ethnic poet and the received language there is a tension that can be as enervating as it is energizing. For some poets, it leads to a retreat – or is it an advance? – into caves of minority expression, famously so in the case of Yiddish writers who, in the midst of the most adventurous and sophisticated cultural group in the nation, hold to their half-acre of cultural exclusiveness in defiance of the tastes or abilities of a larger audience, including the majority of their fellow Jews. The greatest deprivation faced by America's ethnic minorities may well be the starvation of older languages either by official fiat or by social pressures that result in an opportunistic response to American racism – Chicanos, Chinese, and Japanese-Americans trained *not* to speak the language of their parents and grandparents, alienating themselves from the world of their living past. For the Native American, most defiant of American ethnics and stripped of what whites saw as his "barbaric" languages, there is the loss of other forms of communication. As two of their scholars have put it, "The phrasal bursts of sound that approximate whole sentences in English may have sounded like ughs and grunts to the Euro-American ear attuned only to the logical and unsubtle clusterings of the English sentence, but they were, and are, magic islands of thought sent into the sea of air like puffs of smoke released in intermittent bursts to create a sustained communication; the smoke signal is language visible in patterns."

The first stage in the struggle of the poet with the English language and poetic tradition is the skirmish over form. The traditional verse forms of English, and rhyme itself, in some cases, often represent for the ethnic the dead weight against which he or she struggles. The differences between Spanish and English standards of rhyme, the impact of the rollicking anapest metre or the ballad form on a person whose culture has stressed restraint and delicacy, the intimidation by literary expression itself of a people taught to revere oral expression and to appreciate its direct involvement of artist and

audience, such matters act to exacerbate the insecurity of the ethnic poet once he discovers, in the first step toward knowledge, that the laws of English literary expression are not universal but quite local, that he is, in effect, but one ethnic dealing with another when he confronts the white writer, and that only power demands of him accommodation and allows the white writer the luxury of *noblesse oblige.*

What impact do traditional European forms have on the ethnic writer? Was Phillis Wheatley, for example, harmed because she wrote in the heroic couplet of her 18th Century day? What are we to infer from the fact that the most militantly defiant of black poems,Claude McKay's "If We Must Die," as alive in 1919 as when it was quoted at Attica a few years ago, is a sonnet, the form that epitomizes for many the rigidities of the Euro-American tradition? Can the ethnic poet justify learned allusions to the European and white American culture entering his or her art, or the extensive use of, say, ancient Anglo-Saxon literary conventions such as systematic alliteration? Such habits are to be found expressed in the work of the late Melvin Tolson and in the poetry of Gwendolyn Brooks, who are both among the most prolific and successful of black writers. Was Jose Navarro "trapped" in the quatrain, and was Sadakichi Hartman or Jean Toomer a greater poet for having taken more readily to avant garde forms? Ethnicity surely cannot dominate the theme of a poem and then have no impact on its form; form and content must go together, each determining the scope of the other, and the success of the other. We must distinguish, then, not only between degrees of ethnic consciousness, but also between protest poetry written by ethnics, and truly ethnic poetry, which may or may not be protest. The presence of progressive themes in deliberately conservative forms is a contradiction in art. Every poet should be allowed to do whatever he or she likes – *that* is axiomatic – but none should pretend that one can proclaim ethnic difference and beauty without assuming the obligation of rendering that difference and beauty in formal as well as polemical ways. The form of the blues, the form of the *corrido,* these are at one with the intent of their themes, and represent organically the wisdom and integrity of the folk from which they sprang. The educated artist can hardly expect to do less.

In so far as the art of the ethnic poet has political implications, and the fact of ethnicity is intertwined with the knowledge of economic, cultural, and political oppression, the challenge to the poet is clear. However rarified and aloof its blossoms may be, the roots of ethnic poetry must sink deep down into the soil of the folk – the folk in all its variety, from the remembered hills of the rural experience, be it Californian or Carolinean, to the urban ghetto, where the energies of the city drive situations endurable elsewhere to the flashpoint, and where language is continually forged anew to accommodate degrees of psychological intensity unknown to the rural mind. How to domesticate his or her art in this shifting setting, how to reconcile pastoral visions with the language of the street, how to make dialect valuable as

poetry, these are among the special burdens of the ethnic poet, who comes with the most ambitious of intentions, only to discover the ancient truth that art, even for the revolutionary, is long, and life, particularly for the revolutionary, may be short indeed.

Out of 200 years of one group's poetry or a dozen books of another, certain patterns emerge in the response of different ethnic poets to the American scene, responses reflected in art, which I wish to discuss now. They are, it seems to me, five in number: First, there is the illusion of or belief in identification between poet and the national American culture. Second, there is the cult of regionalism, the depiction of the ethnic experience as local color, often through peculiarities of language stressed for their quaintness. Third, there is the perceived drama of double consciousness, the crucial stage in the rising drama of the ethnic experience. Fourth, there is the repudiation of this sense of duality and the glorification of the ethnic self. Fifth – and here I am on most uncertain grounds, for it is not certain that any ethnic group of those we are considering has yet passed beyond that fourth stage and found some acceptable mode of self-justification – there is a reintegration of self to conform not to the necessities of politics, which change in response to the very pressures inherent in a campaign of ethnic glorification, but to the necessities of the poetic life and its supreme task, so replete with political possibility, which is to create – as a major poet of this century put it – the supreme fiction: a portrait of humanity that is both noble and, finally, credible.

These stages must not be seen in a linear or chronological sense, although they have occurred in that way in certain cultures – certainly in black American literature – and though they are certainly meant to be seen dialectically. The patterns may emerge within the life and growth of an individual poet. They are translatable into political attitudes and may exist as aspects of that flux that is cultural consciousness even in a revolutionary or a totalitarian state. The patterns approximate and reflect, too, the differences in temperament that make one person placid and another bellicose when faced with the same situation. Indeed, within the poetry of each ethnic group today these forces of attitude and thought are at work modifying and shaping cultural consciousness, and among no artists more so than the poets.

Let us examine these five stages or forces in the growth of ethnic poetry. Though many people find protest the intolerable part of poetry written by ethnics, and others find protest the *only* tolerable part of poetry, it is important to assert that for the oppressed man or woman any act of poetry, whatever its immediate theme, is an act of protest through an affirmation of dignity; the first poem of the first poet inaugurates an assumption of destiny that begins the long process of the evolution of singer and song. Nevertheless, how is one to evaluate that art which, coming from an ethnic writer, appears to ignore or be quite unconscious of those pressures of reality that are historically and culturally so resonant?

In his essay "The Literature of the Negro in the United States," Richard Wright quotes from Alexander Dumas' *The Count of Monte Christo* and from the writing of the poet Alexander Pushkin to show the possibilities of men and women of color totally integrated within their national cultures, in these cases French and Russian. Wright asks: "Has any American Negro ever written like Dumas and Pushkin? Yes one. Only one. . . . Before the webs of slavery had so tightened as to snare nearly all Negroes in the land, one was freed by accident to give utterance in poetry to what she felt, to give in clear, bell-like, limpid cadences the hope of freedom in the New World." Though one may rightly question Wright's judgment of Phillis Wheatley, the former slave who was the second American woman to publish a volume of verse, many non-white American poets have chosen to ignore overt ethnic expression or political protest in their art, or even to assume by general moral didacticism a responsibility for the instruction of their people. The black Boston anthologist and critic William Stanley Braithwaite endured Ezra Pound's scorn, expressed in a blatantly racist way, but criticized black poets who expressed anger in their verse. His appreciation of the Jamaican-American poet Claude McKay in 1924 illustrates his point of view. Braithwaite discriminated between McKay as pure dreamer in certain of his poems and "the violent and angry propagandist, using his natural poetic gifts to clothe arrogant and defiant thoughts." The art that produced "If We Must Die" must give way to "those magnificent Psalms against which all the assaults of time dissolve, and whose music and whose vision wash clean with the radiance of beauty." What is one to make of the work of the Japanese-American Sadakichi Hartman, or the avant-garde black poet N. H. Pritchard, who expresses himself in multiple rows of repeated typewritten letters of the alphabet on the page? And of the evolution in Michael Harper that leads him to assert that he is "not interested in telling everybody every other line that I'm black . . . I don't crusade"; and that he writes "to a handful of people, and to no one." Or of Diana Chang, or of James Masao Mitsui, whose collection *Journal of the Sun* (1974) is stocked with two or three poems about relocation centers – concentration camps – that only whisper, or is it whimper? – of racist cruelty?

Obviously these poets have little in common except perhaps for one tendency, that they appear to think it their responsibility not to confront but to transcend racism, to claim themselves above the racial fray, rather than its prime victims. There is a tendency to view this attitude as the natural end of the ethnic process in America and the goal of protest itself; perhaps it is, and the process of ethnic poetic history is cyclical, so that Phillis Wheatley and Jim Mitsui are linked in spite of the 200 years that separate them. But one also suspects that what is often involved in this disengagement is little more than extreme self-doubt and a fear of self-investigation that attempts to suppress rather than to assimilate the lessons of history.

The second stage of the ethnopoetic experience I call regionalism, manifest

most certainly in turn-of-the-century Afro-American poetry and in such volumes as Yone Noguchi's ***From the Eastern Shore*** (1905) and Jun Fujita's ***Tanka: Poems in Exile*** (1923). Regionalism is the deliberate structuring of poetic theory and practice to show the exotic nature of a culture, its quaintness. The representation of Native American and Mexican-American culture in this way is almost traditional, though more in film and fiction than in poetry and almost always by white writers. In both Asian-American and Afro-American verse, though, it is strikingly present. If Lawson Inada achieved one poetic coup it was in his destruction of the idea that a Japanese-American poet must write haiku and hokku and tanka in order to represent his culture faithfully; his exposition of the trauma attendant on his cultural experience does not lack poetical or political force because it discards what he sees as the trappings of an oriental culture that was not germane to his own sense of history. The summit of regionalism in black writing was the publication of Paul Laurence Dunbar's ***Lyrics of Lowly Life*** in 1896, with William Dean Howells' endorsement of Dunbar's dialect verse as preserving that "precious difference of temperament between the races which it would be a pity ever to lose." The dialect pieces "described the range between appetite and emotion, with certain lifts far beyond and above it, which is the range of the race." Dunbar showed "a finely ironical perception of the negro's limitations, with a tenderness for them which I think so very rare as to be almost quite new." Comedy, the picture of humorous happy darkies speaking their quaint and colorful speech, was counterbalanced by the other pole of the tradition, pathos, decked out in the same language, that elevated sentimentality as the supreme Negro emotion.

Even in the hey-day of the sixties, of course, many books that purported to be revolutionary in political and cultural perspective were in fact latter day versions of regionalism and dialect verse concocted for a suddenly eager white readership drawn to sensationalism. While some of these books may have been written to exploit the market, regionalism often has a more psychologically complex source. It is no accident that Dunbar wrote during the most oppressive period of black national history, "the Nadir," as one historian has put it. The poles of comedy and pathos marked the general extent of the response to white terror; comedy is perhaps the penultimate response of the intimidated man, the attempt to invoke pity being the last. What has determined such poetry is fear; the terrified ethnic holds up a mask for the approval or amusement or other diversion of whites. In the Asian-American usage of Asian poetic forms against which Lawson Inada revolts, there is something similar though more complicated, a timidity that clings to discretions that are determined for it; the white audience is met on that audience's terms; limits on expression are set to conform to that audience's preconceptions and desires, and the truth of the Asian-American experience is concealed behind the lacquered mask.

For ethnic poets, as for ethnic peoples living in white America, the central

psycho-cultural phenomenon, one with enormous cultural implication, is that of double-consciousness, the sense of oneself as torn between two sets of loyalties and two ways of seeing the world. It was the black scholar W. E. B. Du Bois, himself a poet, who first pronounced on the significance of double-awareness, this "peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity." He spoke of the twoness of the black, but he could have spoken of any non-white ethnic: "two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder." The militant denial of this dualism is an integral part of recent political art, but no one is fooled; double-consciousness remains today as powerful a force as it was when Du Bois described it in 1903. Wing Tek Lum speaks for a multitude of writers caught in the tension between ethnicity and Americaness: "The hyphen is like the tightrope I walk . . . I draw from both cultures, and yet I am part of neither." The Navaho Emerson Blackhorse Mitchell came to two roads in life, "Deciding between two cultures, / I gave a second thought, / Reluctantly I took the new one / The paved rainbow highway." The Caribbean poet Derek Walcott asks: "I who am poisoned with the blood of both, / Where shall I turn, divided to the vein? / . . . how choose / Between this Africa and the English tongue I love? / Betray them both, or give back what they give? / . . . How can I turn from Africa and live?"

For the Chicano poet, the dichotomy between English and Spanish objectifies the dualism in which the ethnic lives; so many of the poets combine in their lines elements of both languages; others make an equally forceful point, I believe, in electing to write in one language or the other. Similarly for the black poet the distinction between street corner language forged by the people and the English that represents the linguistic consensus of Anglo-America acutely represents the division of audience and of inspiration that marks his life and his work. In various ways many still ask the question "What am I?" – which is to the ethnic what Hamlet's "To be or not to be" is to the racially and culturally secure. No amount of assertions of black or brown beauty can still the force of this tension, which – apparently – only removal from the culture can successfully erase. "Blood runs the heart. The *heart* knows what it is," says Native American LaDonna Harris. The problem is, of course, that the heart is notoriously inarticulate; the problem is as acute for those whose ancestors were brought here as slaves or servants as for those for whom this land is ancestral home.

The greatest danger of double consciousness is not apostasy from the ethnic group to the majority, but artistic and psychological immobility. The violent upsurge of cultural nationalism in the last ten or fifteen years among America's ethnic groups – black, Chicano, Asian, Native American – recognizes this fact. It matters little which group has set the pace for others;

all have had smouldering resentments for too long to make such judgments important. Cultural nationalism, the proclamation of separate and at least equal status for individual ethnic groups, has moved almost all such groups, though there are differences among the responses. Native Americans have always held up the integrity and the separateness of their culture; and for Asian-Americans language presents special problems. As the editors of one Asian-American anthology put it, unlike blacks and Chicanos, "only Asian Americans are driven out of their tongues and expected to be at home in a language they never use and a culture they encounter only in books written in English." But they, like blacks and Chicanos, have felt the need to smash through the veil of double consciousness, to write poetry faithful in theme and language to the common experience of their people.

Nothing has led to more confusion and more resentment than recent black, Chicano, and Asian-American poetry; the first two, in particular, have been attacked as incoherent, destructive, obscene, and – of course – unpoetic, its linguistic means and effects seen as disordered and faddish, its intellectualism rudimentary. A white critic writing recently in the *Saturday Review* on the present state of black arts, admitted the growth and complexity of previous black writing; but "tragically, this line of development was seriously retarded by the riots of the sixties," out of which came a black consciousness "carefully equipped with a black literary technique to articulate it correctly. In practice this usually means a free use of obscenities (especially the omnipresent m . . . f . . .), ghetto slang, phonetic spellings, typographical highjinks à la Cummings, a striving after oral effects, and a tone of voice pitched at megaphone level." Even black writers have been critical; Ishmael Reed, the poet and novelist, denounced the "sensationalistic typography" used, he said, "to conceal the rather banal intellectual content" of the verse itself.

While there has obviously been much bad verse written in the course of the last few years by ethnic nationalist poets, one must understand that cultural nationalism is as necessary for the ethnic poet as double consciousness is inevitable. The radical perception of the individual artist and the group may lead to excess from time to time, but it also provides that powerful, fundamental reassessment of the entire field of poetics in the light of the ethnic experience, of which the principal beneficiary is poetry itself. The experience of ethnic groups in a state of cultural nationalism is a microcosm, in any event, of the process of examination and renovation through which white American literature passed on its way from colonial mediocrity to maturity, and *that* process duplicated the experience of the English people in *their* great period of nationalism in the sixteenth century. The craziness that many see in recent ethnic poetry is only the residue of its vigor, and its vigor is its greatest hope – though not its final achievement.

Thematically, the dominant idea has been the beauty and the gift of the folk – a direct assault, then, on the central issue of the ethnic experience and

on the tyranny of those who heat up the melting pot while pretending to be in it. "Stupid America," sings Abelardo Delgado, "hear the chicano / shouting curses on the street / he is a poet / without paper and pencil / and since he cannot write / he will explode." *"We are,"* says Ricardo Sanchez, *"universal man, / a spectral rivulet, / multi-hued and beautiful – / We are La Raza /* the cradle of civilization." Alurista has seen "the bronze child / – his little (round) head, / hair locks of black / cabellos / y su madre / – su madre / su madre guadalupe / con el infante / en sus brazos . . . / ChicaNos / los dos / i've seen the bronze birth / el nacimiento . . . de mi pueblo."

At least equally well known is the powerfully assertive black poetry led by Imamu Baraka and Nikki Giovanni and Haki Madhubuti and Sonia Sanchez. But how far many black and Chicano intellectuals need to go may be judged in the editorial note of a recent anthology of Chicano poetry that told us that one of their contributors "is a young Californian poet who is presently working on a volume of Chicano poetry." Can Pedro be at work on a volume of anything but Chicano poetry? It is to repair this fragmented process of imagination and self-perception that the poets write; they have assumed a prophetic role, the greatest role of the poet. The ethnic nationalist poet seeks to reach the masses of the people; he or she generally denies the necessary privacy of art or the esotericism of language; God speaks to the ethnic poet in the ethnic vernacular; the embattled and estranged speech of the urban masses, the sayings of the rural dwellers, this is the language of poetical truth. The poetry is didactic by design. Yet if the great thrust of the works is to "raise the consciousness" of the people, as the slogan goes, the poetry does not escape being meditative or epic or lyrical or satirical; collectively, and this is the way the poetry should be heard, both within an ethnic group and among all ethnic groups, the ethnic poet speaks with a various voice. The ethnic nationalist poet understands the price of his or her dedication to the masses: the price is ephemerality, and it is consciously paid; the art and fame of the poet are not cherished above the welfare of the people. The ambition for fame is seen consciously as the last infirmity of the white mind, and disdained by the ethnic poet aware of the needs of his people.

In discussing the fifth and final category of those I mentioned near the start, I spoke of an ultimate "reintegration of the self" to conform to the necessities of poetic life and the creation of a supreme fiction, a portrait of mankind both noble and credible. I think it is important to remember that while nationalism may intensify or decline, poetry must continue, and that it behooves the poet to recognize when the historic moment of intense political action may have passed. The responsibility of the poet to conform to his moral intelligence still exists; indeed, it is more important than ever during quiet times. The task of the ethnic poet, then, is to move to a deeper level of involvement with his heritage, to convert its often apparently incoherent history and its continuity of experience into a mythology that will sustain the people in the centuries to come. The task that the ethnic poet faces today is

onerous. And yet there seems to me to be something inevitable about his or her success, and something unquestionable about the foundations of the change that has overtaken America's ethnic minorities through the major poetic movements of blacks, Chicanos, or Jews, or the more episodic but still significant cultural events of the Asian-American and the Native-American poets. In the remaking of the self that has been the goal of political and cultural action and the tendency of history, the final result of greatest importance to the poet is not a greater understanding of society, or racism, of his history, or of himself or herself, although these various advances in knowledge are all closely coherent, but a greater understanding of poetry itself; the ethnic writer has rescued the art of poetry from the ethnocentrism of a majority culture that has no greater title to poetic intelligence than any other culture, and in particular, from the snobbishness and the reactionary apologetics of the universities. This greater knowledge of poetry summarizes and apotheosizes all other kinds of knowledge; culture may be what replaces religion, as one critic has said, but truth stands outside and above both religion and culture, and poetry remains the best language of truth. The ways to wisdom are many and various, but for the ethnic minorities of this nation, oppressed, depressed, repressed, no road has so defined true progress as the way of the writer, and no writing has been more valuable than that of the poet.

From Colonial to Revolutionary: The Modern American Woman Poet

Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi

It happened that just as I began to puzzle over how I was to organize ideas about modern American woman poets into a meaningful half-hour's talk, friends sent me a book by Margaret Atwood called *Survival*. Canadian writers and the Canadian consciousness are its subject, not women writers specifically at all, and so as I read I was surprised to notice that sentence after sentence seemed at least as applicable to women as to Canadians. Then I realized the connection: American women – all women – are, as Canadians are in Atwood's opinion, colonials. Their literature as a result has the themes and attitudes of colonial literature.

Perhaps you find that thought distasteful, but I ask you to reflect for a moment on what makes a colonial. Two factors – both economic. First, colonies provide an industrialized "parent" country with raw material and cheap labor. Analogously, the women of our industrialized nation provide both an underpaid work force and the completely unpaid domestic labor which functions as the system's working base. At the other end of the industrial organization of life, colonies are the consumers of industry's finished products. And again, women function in our society as consumers. More than fifteen years ago, the historian David Potter noted that "The economic revolution, while converting most men from producers to earners, has converted most women from processers to consumers, and the exploitation of the consumer has, again, added a new devaluation to women's role."[1] He made that observation at the end of an essay on "American Women and the American Character" in which he came to a perception now taken for granted but then extraordinarily new and telling – viz. that American women's history and sociology are not the same as American men's. Their frontier experience, for instance, was very different and had not therefore the same psychological effects. Both men and women worked and struggled on the frontier but "the opportunities offered by the West were opportunities for men and not, in any direct sense, opportunities for women."[2]

Potter's insight makes an interesting juxtaposition with the contrast Atwood finds between American and Canadian frontier experience. She notes that in the American myth and fact the west was *won*, conquered by the individual effort of those scouts and settlers who preceded organized "law and order." In Canada, she writes, "they don't have to *really* fight because the Mounties are there, the rules of the game are set up already, the flag is flying. No outlaws or lawless men for Canada; if one appears, the Mounties always get their man."[3] Now men are women's Mounties. They struggled with disorder, established control and held off discordant elements so that women and their attendant family life might survive. Women might suffer from whatever lawlessness existed in the pioneer society, but it was only the exceptional woman who took an active part in establishing or maintaining a rule of law. Just, then, as Canadian settlers were dependent on the Mounties for the very creation of outposts of control and for the continued surveillance of them after settlements were formed nearby, so American women were dependent on men for the establishment and maintenance of rule.

These parallels between the situation of women and that of colonials create parallel consequences. Since women, like colonials, are socially and economically victimized, their consciousness takes on certain victim characteristics. And because the existent order is one that is not created either by the women or the Canadian colonials but that is, so to speak, "given," that order seems impossible to change. Many other psychological factors might be brought in as well to explain women's acceptance of their assigned social role,[4] but certainly women resemble Atwood's Canadians in that they are likely to see their activities not as "the construction of a new world built according to their free fancies" but rather as "the implementation of an order that is 'right'" (p.122). Such a tendency leads one to accept victimization as part of good order, and the circle is complete.

Atwood theorizes that there are four basic victim positions. Since her book is not readily available in this country I shall describe them in detail.

BASIC VICTIM POSITIONS

Position One: To deny the fact that you are a victim.

The person in this position suppresses anger, using – unconsciously, of course – great energy to do so. Energy locks against energy much as it does in isometric exercises. A serious difficulty in this position, one not explicitly mentioned by Atwood in setting up her schema but suggested elsewhere in the book, is that many other emotions and with them many ideas are blocked along with the anger, and the person's entire psychic life is diminished as a result.

People in this position are often those of a victim group whose situation seems slightly better than that of fellow victims and who therefore are afraid to lose their advantages by exploring the nature of this victimization. Instead they tend to identify with the victimizer; through this identification they can

find themselves worthy, and if they feel any anger they are likely to turn it against fellow victims "particularly those who try to talk about their victimization."

Position Two: To acknowledge the fact that you are a victim, but to explain this as an act of Fate, the Will of God, the dictates of biology (in the case of women, for instance), the necessity decreed by History, or Economics, or the Unconscious, or any other large general powerful idea.

Atwood describes several results of the thinking which takes oppression to be the result not of specific human institutions or attitudes historically created and therefore historically changeable but of a force transcending the human and therefore unchangeable. Acknowledgement of their victimization fills those in this position, paradoxically perhaps, with self-hatred and self-scorn as well as with scorn for their fellow-victims. The reason lies in the fact that they have not the unconscious identification with the forces of victimization which comforts those in Position One, but they *have* unconsciously internalized and so share the victimizer's contemptuous attitudes about themselves as victims. Their identity as a result becomes that of victim: they need to be victims. Whether then they are resigned and long-suffering – and the supposed inevitability of their situation makes passive resignation the reasonable response – or whether they momentarily rebel, they accept defeat and think rebellion worthy of punishment.

Position Three: To acknowledge the fact that you are a victim but to refuse to accept the assumption that the role is inevitable.

The anger which in Position One is suppressed and in Position Two is directed back against oneself and one's fellow victims is released in Position Three against a source of oppression seen as specific, objective, and changeable. Because those in this position no longer see themselves as *fated* victims, they do not run the danger of seeking victimization unnecessarily. They are also in a better frame of mind than those in Position Two to distinguish between the genuinely inevitable difficulties of their situation and the remediable ones. Position Three as a result is dynamic, releasing the pent energy of Positions One and Two. "From it," Atwood writes, "you can move on to Position Four, but if you become locked into your anger and fail to change your situation, you might well find yourself back in Position Two."

Position Four: To be a creative non-victim.

Those in Position Four do not identify with the oppressor, as do those in Position One, nor do they, like those in Position Two, find their identity in the role of victim, thereby shaping themselves and their experience according to their oppressor's sense of both. Nor again do they need, like those in Position Three, to expend their energy on repudiation of the victim role, for the role does not tempt them. Their self-acceptance makes them open to their

own experience and their own judgments about its significance in ways not available to the other three positions. As a result, "in Position Four creative activity of all kinds becomes possible."

There is, however, a difficulty: Position Four is one enjoyed either by those who have never been victims at all or by those who moved there as ex-victims from Position Three "because the external and/or internal causes of victimization have been removed," writes Atwood. And she adds: "In an oppressed society, of course, you can't become an ex-victim – insofar as you are connected with your society – until the entire society's position has been changed."

Logically or sociologically you cannot, and yet Emily Dickinson, for example, wrote at times from Position Four. Achievement of that position may partly be the result of social change, but a factor as well, sometimes the crucial factor, is the nature of an individual's self-acceptance.

With these categories as a grid or a hermeneutic, I would like to examine the background and present state of American poetry written by women. As hermeneutic, this system does not provide for literary judgments. A poem with a Position One attitude may be exquisite, a Position Four poem totally inadequate to the idea it attempts to express. So as to obviate any misunderstanding, I have decided to mention only poems I think well written.

But although the categories worked out by Atwood are not useful for analysis of the purely aesthetic value of a work, they do help to define the state of consciousness expressed through a lyric poem. Their function is moral rather than purely literary, for as we analyze the attitudes to be found in a poem we learn constantly about our own attitudes as well. Besides this self-revelatory function, the schema has some historical use: although one may find different categories of poems in the work of any single writer, and although the work of a poet like Emily Dickinson can, as I mentioned, throw out notions of a strict historical progression in women's poetry, there is nonetheless a discernible movement in women's poetry through this century from a predominantly #1 position through #2 to what is now predominantly #3 with breakthroughs into #4. These last come even though women have not fought a Revolution, and the sources of victimization have not disappeared. Yet here again women's situation resembles that of Canada: for them as for the Canadians, revolution by combat is neither practicable nor desirable; they must rather change their condition through the longer and less obviously exciting process of thought and legislation, and the breakthroughs in such a process come gradually.

In describing the problems of Canadian literature E. K. Brown wrote:

> A colony lacks the spiritual energy to rise above routine, and ... it lacks this energy because it does not adequately believe in itself. It applies to what it has standards which are imported, and therefore artificial and distorting. It sets the great good place not in its present, nor in its past nor in its future, but somewhere outside its own borders,

somewhere beyond its own possibilities.[6]

As I hope to show, women's poetry in the past has suffered from the sense that great poems were written "somewhere outside its own borders" – i.e. by men, but now women poets have Adrienne Rich's sense of writing, as she says Emily Dickinson did, on their own premises.[7]

Marianne Moore is a fine example of a poet who writes primarily from the first victim position. But how, one may well ask, am I distinguishing Position One from Position Four? If a poem does not acknowledge victimization, will it not sound the same as a poem which has transcended it? No – because avoiding that acknowledgement means limiting one's subject matter in ways unnecessary and indeed undesirable to a person in Position Four. Moore, for instance, shows her acceptance of limits by the way in which she turns her quick, intelligent gaze outward both to the world of living forms and shapes and to the formal shaping of her verse. Her animal poems are so elegant and rich in vocabulary and technique, so *curious* in both senses of that word that a captive prince might have written them in prison to keep himself sane.

Although her poetry is often at the same time speculative and interior, its ruminations veer away from the area of purely personal emotion. In "The Mind is an Enchanted Thing," for instance, Moore says of mind that

> It tears off the veil, tears
> the temptation, the
> mist the heart wears
> from its eyes, – if the heart
> has a face; it takes apart
> dejection.[8]

The heart exposed by mind is not really exposed at all, it is dismissed with the line "if the heart has a face." Emotion, "the mist the heart wears," tempts one to explore it further by suffering it more and more deeply. Moore prefers to avoid it altogether by dissipating it through mind. In another poem, "New York," she draws back even more emphatically from exploration of interior darkness. She writes of

> the scholastic philosophy of the wilderness
> to combat which one must stand outside and laugh
> since to go in is to be lost (p.60)

Perhaps the best example of this escape through standing outside and laughing is the poem "Silence":

> My father used to say,
> 'Superior people never make long visits,
> have to be shown Longfellow's grave
> or the glass flowers at Harvard.
> Self-reliant like a cat –

that takes its prey to privacy,
the mouse's limp tail hanging like a shoelace
from its mouth –
they sometimes enjoy solitude,
and can be robbed of speech
by speech which has delighted them.
The deepest feeling always shows itself in silence;
not in silence, but restraint.'
Nor was he insincere in saying, 'Make my house your inn.'
Inns are not residences. (pp. 94-95)

As Moore's notes to the poem make clear, this is not autobiography. Much of it is based on a quotation she cites from Amy Homans, and the devastating line, "Make my house your inn" is taken from Sir James Prior's memoir on the life of Burke, where its effect is very different. It is there a genial and open invitation: " 'Throw yourself into a coach,' said he. 'Come down and make my house your inn.' " (p.168)

The poem then is not personal revelation – that is part of its point – but it is a wonderful study of the internalization of values. The speaker recognizes the limitations of her father's point of view and is ironic about them, but her irony involves recognition that she has herself been patterned into a similar mold. So if in one sense father is the cat, she the mouse, and the poem the limp tail which shows that she knows what has been done to her, in another sense she also is the cat and her writing of the poem is the mouse enjoyed in privacy. These ironies bring "Silence" to the verge of Position #2, but they are so understated that they do not move it there.

Adrienne Rich has a nicely succinct paragraph on the history of women poets in America which, while not using Atwood's categories, describes very clearly the Position #1 state of consciousness:

> Vague sorrow, chaste ironic coolness, veiled whatever realities of sexual ambivalence, bitterness, frustration were experienced by such women as Louise Guiney, Sara Teasdale, Elinor Wylie and their lesser-known contemporaries. Edna Millay alone seems a precursor of what was to come, and only at times. Marianne Moore fled into a universe of forms; H. D. (Hilda Doolittle) to the more fertile region of myth.[9]

I would take it from these comments that Rich would consider H.D.'s poetry, like Marianne Moore's, to be expressive of the Position One attitude. Actually through her writing life, H.D. (like Adrienne Rich herself) seems to have moved from Position One through to Position Four. A dream which H.D. relates in her prose memoir ***A Tribute to Freud*** shows that she was perfectly aware of the conflict in her situation as woman and poet in a world imaginatively dominated by man and that she was able to verbalize it. Her late poem ***Helen in Egypt*** studies the conflict between masculine and feminine in order to transcend it. But the dream came earlier and expresses a Position

Two state of consciousness. In it she was going to a dance with a man:

> Now we go out together but I am in evening dress, that is,
> I wear clothes like his. (I had been looking at some new
> pictures of Marlene Dietrich, in one of the café picture-papers.)
> I am not quite comfortable, not quite myself, my trouser-band
> does not fit very well; I realize that I have on, underneath
> the trousers, my ordinary under-clothes, or rather I was wearing
> the long party-slip that apparently belonged to the ball-gown.
> The dream ends on a note of frustration and bewilderment. This
> dream seems to have some associations with Ezra; though he danced
> so badly, I did go to school-girl dances with him.[10]

Frustration and the bewilderment born of the conflict between believing what one is told about one's nature and destiny as a woman and desiring yet resenting the prerogatives assumed by men – these are the Position Two emotions, not usually as amusingly expressed as the witty unconscious managed to do in H.D.'s dream.

As I read through poets' collected works and through anthologies, classifying the poems according to my four categories, the spaces I left for Position Two were always inadequate; titles were crammed in along the edges and ran off the page. The conflict is multiple: to the Position #2 vision of life, men and women are hopelessly at odds, bound into an opposition which is the necessary and inescapable foundation of all social system; at the same time women in that system are all in conflict with because in competition with each other and conflicted within themselves.

Man-hatred, mother-hatred, woman-hatred, body-hatred, self-hatred: this is the wheel of the Position Two consciousness. Among its most powerful and memorable expressions are many of the poems of Sylvia Plath. For although Plath opened to women writers of the last fifteen years many themes and images for works in Position Three, she herself is for the most part bound by guilt into Position Two. "Purdah" from *Winter Trees* is a good example. The title refers to the Hindu custom of keeping women in strict seclusion. Unfortunately the poem is too long and complex for me to quote it in its entirety. Worth noting because this image recurs in other poems is the fact that the woman speaking describes herself as a mirror and her bridegroom as "Lord of the Mirrors." A few lines later she says:

> I am his.
> Even in his
>
> Absence, I
> Revolve in my
> Sheath of impossibles,
>
> Priceless and quiet.

The tension behind that quiet continues to build through the following lines

until there comes this dénouement:

Attendants!

Attendants!
And at his next step
I shall unloose

I shall unloose –
From the small jeweled
Doll he guards like a heart –

The lioness,
The shriek in the bath
The cloak of holes.[11]

Clytemnestra's revenge on Agammenon for the ritual killing of their daughter Iphigenia is the allusion bound into the last lines. Involved here is a woman's vengeance not for a daughter's slaying but for the death of the girl she herself had been. But Clytemnestra's is not, as we remember, a self-fulfilling vengeance. And although another play, ***The Doll's House***, is also in the speaker's mind at the end of the poem, the conclusion stresses Clytemnestra's tragedy not Dora's possibilities.

Plath's imagination is haunted by a sense of inescapable Fates. Her quarrel may be with a man, but her doom is to be woman, her condition and her conditioning both swallowing her up. She is Clytemnestra in the poem I just quoted, but in others she is also a female Orestes pursued by the Furies with no hope of salvation from a beneficent Minerva. These lines from "All the Dead Dears" contain a theme repeated in many different ways in her poetry. The speaker is looking in a mirror whose mercury-backed reflection becomes the god Mercury, the psychopomp who leads her to the underworld:

From the mercury-backed glass
Mother, grandmother, great grandmother
Reach hag hands to haul me in.[12]

There are three of these personal Erinyes, as there are three Fates in "The Disquieting Muses." The mother in the latter poem has strategies to frighten them away, but like the stepmother and the witch in "Hansel and Gretel" she and the Fates are actually in malevolent alliance:

Day now, night now, at head, side, feet,
They stand their vigil in gowns of stone,
Faces blank as the day I was born,
Their shadows long in the setting sun
That never brightens or goes down.
And this is the kingdom you bore me to,
Mother, mother. But no frown of mine

Will betray the company I keep.[13]

In the years since 1962 when *Ariel* was published, the dominant note in women's poetry has changed from the fatalism and irony characteristic to Position Two to the forthright, slashing but at times roughly cheerful anger of Position Three. Consider the difference between Sylvia Plath's mirror in "Purdah" or in "All the Dead Dears" and the mirror of Margaret Atwood's sequence called "Tricks with Mirrors." In this poem a woman speaks to a man, calling herself his mirror. She recognizes that she is only a means by which he may admire the power of his own sexuality, the effectiveness of his own personality. If this were a Position Two poem, this mirror-woman would not be able to move past her bitter and ironic recognitions because she would feel no choice but to reflect passively. Atwood's mirror, however, becomes active. Instead of being merely a means by which a man can view himself, her mirror-woman begins to look back threateningly. Yet finally she makes a plea:

I confess: this is not a mirror,
it is a door

I am trapped behind.
I wanted you to see me here,

say the releasing word, whatever
that may be, open the wall.

Instead you stand in front of me
combing your hair.

At this point the speaker is still in Position Two. In the following and concluding section, however, while the man's attitude has not changed, hers has:

You don't like these metaphors.
All right:

Perhaps I am not a mirror.
Perhaps I am a pool.

Think about pools.[14]

This poem and "Purdah" are very similar in idea; they end also on the same note of menace and with a similar fantasy of revenge. My placing of them in different positions may then be arguable, but it seems to me justified because a pool, after all, has an independent life of its own. The anger of Atwood's poem therefore has not the tragic self-destructiveness of the emotions expressed in Plath's.

The witches and Furies of earlier poems are more likely in the poetry of

the last few years to be co-conspirators and patronesses than avengers. Diane Di Prima's "Prayer to the Mothers" ends:

o rain
poison upon us, acid which eats clean
wake us like children from a nightmare, give the slip
to the devourers whom I cannot name
the metal men who walk
on all our substance, crushing flesh
to swamp.[15]

It is exhilarating to join the Erinyes in their anger, not flee them in guilt; like the flame of pure acetelyne in Rich's "Phenomenology of Anger,"[15] the anger of the Furies can bring a new sense of oneself, a new innocent clarity. Yet, as Atwood suggests, if the anger effects no real change, if the fight therefore comes to seem hopeless, then the fighter, guilt-ridden once more and defeated to boot, may sink back to Position Two, her last state worse than her first.

Within the history of women's poetry in this century, we are at that moment of pause, of crisis virtually, between Positions Three and Four. The reasons for anger have not disappeared, but the poems needed for discovering and describing anger have been written. What now? What, after anger, is our subject? The editor of an anthology of Australian women poets writes:

Whether we like it or not [as subjects] women
are stuck with childbirth, babies, menstruation,
housework, feminine conditioning, and female
perception.[17]

In my opinion, such an acceptance of limitation, like the acceptance of defeat, confines the woman poet to Position Two. How does one move instead to Position Four? What indeed are the qualities of a Position Four poem?

In talking about Canadian novels Atwood comments, "What one misses . . . is joy."[18] The same might in general be said of modern women's poetry. There is irony, sardonic or grim wit, rough humor – but the élan of pure creative joy appears rarely. Though death-oriented it flashes out at the end of Sylvia Plath's "Ariel":

Godiva, I unpeel –
Dead hands, dead stringencies.

and now I
Foam to wheat, a glitter of seas.
The child's cry

Melts in the wall.
And I

Am the arrow,

The dew that flies
Suicidal, at one with the drive
Into the red

Eye, the cauldron of morning.[19]

Another such joyful moment, this one positive and hope-filled, occurs at the end of Rich's "Snapshots of a Daughter in Law" when the speaker has a vision of the new woman whom she hopes is coming into being:

Well,
she's long about her coming, who must be
more merciless to herself than history.
Her mind full to the wind, I see her plunge
breasted and glancing through the currents
. . . .
but her cargo
no promise then:
delivered
palpable
ours.[20]

Atwood's description of Position Four when applied to women's poetry suggests that such poems, such a cargo, will not be palpable and ours until the women in our society no longer suffer victimization. If so, like the aged Simeon and Anna in the Temple we may be in for a long wait. Yet even as we believe in the possibility of women's coming to a full and unvictimized sense of themselves, we are thereby making the possibility actual. True, we cannot think in terms of military revolutions, however enjoyable that fantasy is when we are in Position Three. But there is another sort of revolution, one we are already in the midst of, so far-reaching that its consequences, in the theologian Margaret Farley's words, "are to the moral life of persons what the Copernican revolution was to science or what the shift to the person was to philosophy."[21] What that revolution involves for women is a change in the sense of their personhood which Coleridge's definition of the primary Imagination helps to describe: "a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM."[22] Historically, women as well as men would think of the fulness of human consciousness which Coleridge's phrase describes as more within the reach of a man's potential than it is of a woman's. As women now begin to consider the unfolding of their own consciousness with a seriousness such as Walt Whitman or Ezra Pound, say, had in meditating upon and recording their inner growth as men and as poets, the result will be the creatively joyful works of art characteristic of Position Four.

I mentioned earlier that the span of Adrienne Rich's writing could be matched rather nicely with my schema. Her work encapsulates, as it were, the

historical movement I have described: from Position One in an early poem like "An Unsaid Word;" through Position Two as in "Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law;" to "Phenomenology of Anger," a classic statement of Position Three; with breakthroughs, growing now more sustained and more frequent, to Position Four. The conclusion to "Planetarium" is a good example of the last:

> I am a galactic cloud so deep so involuted that a light wave could take 15
> years to travel through me And has
> taken I am an instrument in the shape
> of a woman trying to translate pulsations
> into images for the relief of the body
> and the reconstruction of the mind.[23]

Rich has recently noted with satisfaction that women's poems are getting longer,[24] a pleasure I share. We do not yet have and we need a *long* poem, an epic on the growth of a woman's consciousness. Such a poem will be written from Position Four; it will also bring others to Position Four. When it appears, we will know that women have made the transition from colonial consciousness to full participation in the immense human experiment.

Notes

[1] David Potter, "American Women and the American Character," *History and American Society: Essays of David M. Potter,* ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 302. This essay was first presented as a lecture at Stetson University in 1959.

[2] Potter, "American Women," p. 282.

[3] Margaret Atwood, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1972), p. 121.

[4] Judith M. Bardwick studies at length the "many reasons ... the American girl rarely achieves an independent sense of self and self-esteem" in *The Psychology of Women* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).

[5] Atwood's description of the four victim positions is to be found in *Survival*, pp. 36-39.

[6] E.K. Brown, "The Problem of a Canadian Literature," *Contents of Canadian Criticism,* ed. Elias Mandel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press). Quoted by Atwood in *Survival*, p. 182.

[7] Adrienne Rich, "I Am in Danger – Sir –," *Poems: Selected and New, 1950-1974* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1975), p. 85.

[8] Marianne Moore, "The Mind is an Enchanted Thing," *Collected Poems* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1951), p. 134. Future references to poems in the edition will be cited in the text.

[9] Quoted in the "Introduction" to *Adrienne Rich's Poetry*, ed. Barbara C. Gelpi and Albert Gelpi (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1975). In a recent interview Rich said, "Millay was important to me in my early years because she was writing about some sort of personal autonomy within the traditional form of the sonnet. Her sonnets are mostly about love, but there is an assertion: I am a person with a will. Not a victim, not a flower, not a shadow of someone else; you have to take me as I am." – "Adrienne Rich and Robin Morgan Talk about Poetry and Women's Culture," *The New Woman's Survival Sourcebook*, ed. Kirsten Grimstad and Susan Rennie (New York, Alfred A. Knoph, 1975), p. 108.

[10] I am indebted to Kenneth Fields' "Introduction" to *Tribute to Freud* where he cites this passage as evidence of the ambiguity women poets of the post First World War generation felt about their role, – H.D., *Tribute to Freud: Writing on the Wall: Advent* (Boston: Davide R. Godine, [c. 1974]), p. xxxvi. The dream is described on pp. 180-181. "Ezra" is Ezra Pound.

[11] Sylvia Plath, "Purdah," *Winter Trees* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 41-42.

[12] Plath, "All the Dead Dears," *The Colossus & Other Poems* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), p. 30.

[13] Plath, "The Disquieting Muses," *Colossus*, p. 60.

[14] Margaret Atwood, "Tricks with Mirrors," *You Are Happy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 27.

[15] Diane Di Prima, "Prayer to the Mothers," anthologized in *Rising Tides: 20th Century American Women Poets*, ed. Laura Chester and Sharon Barba (New York: Washington Square Press, 1973), p. 237.

[16] Rich's lines in "The Phenomenology of Anger" are:

> When I dream of meeting
> the enemy, this is my dream:
>
> white acetylene
> ripples from my body
> effortlessly released
> perfectly trained
> on the true enemy
>
> raking his body down to the thread
> of existence
> burning away his lie
> leaving him in a new
> world; a changed
> man

Poems, p. 200

[17] Kate Jennings, ed. *Mother I'm Rooted* (Outback Press: Victoria, Australia). Quoted in *The New Women's Survival Sourcebook*, p. 125.

[18] Atwood, *Survival*, p. 141.

[19] Plath, "Ariel," *Ariel* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), pp. 36-37.

[20] Rich, "Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law," *Poems*, p. 51.

[21] Margaret Farley, "New Patterns of Relationship," *Theological Studies*, XXXVI (Dec., 1975), 628.

[22] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (London: J. M. Dent, 1906 [Everyman Edition]), p. 159.

[23] Rich, "Planetarium," *Poems*, p. 148.

[24] The short, concentrated lyric, the chiselled, gem-like poem, has been seen as the typical female poem. But as women's lives expand, our poems are getting bigger – it's as if there's a stretching out, a deeper breathing." – "Adrienne Rich and Robin Morgan," *New Women's Survival Sourcebook*, p. 110.

The Regional Incentive:

Reflections on the Power of Place in Contemporary Literature

William Everson

ONE of the deepest needs of the human soul is for centeredness, a focus of coherence and signification which confers meaning on the shapelessness of temporal existence. Of many possibilities perhaps the most basic, after man's awareness of family, is the apprehension of his immediate locale. For the surrounding landscape represents something markedly other – indeed the eternal presence of Otherness – and as such it carries the vibration of divinity. In man's identification with his region he realizes what he is by intuiting everything he is not. Close at hand and yet aloofly apart, it stands as the mandala of his unconscious associations, one of the ineradicable patterns of psychic life. As such, the recourse to landscape in the need for coherence has from time immemorial elevated man to his most profound religious intuitions. Mountains, valleys, rivers, islands. Always he has looked to the configuration of the world about him for the face of God.

This deep fact stands behind the power of regionalism in literature, but the writer's difficulty today in touching that power stems from the lingering negative imputation it has endured under Modernism, the aesthetic hegemony prevailing across the first half of the century. Modernism, as an aesthetic movement, had defined itself over against Romanticism, which celebrated the cult of personality and featured an expansion of consciousness in the evocation of the "sublime," using the more grand aspects of nature to implement this direction. (The Lake Country of Wordsworth and Coleridge comes most readily to mind, but much American writing of the last century invoked it.) Extolling nature and the sublime as concommitants of the exaltation of personality, regionalism became a distinct Romantic adjunct.

There were, however, other factors at work as well. In ***The Dehumanization of Art*** Ortega y Gassett has shown how in displacing Romanticism the Modernist movement adopted a basic seven-point credo that enabled it to concentrate invincibly on its own narrowly defined field. These tenets he listed as follows: (1) to dehumanize art, (2) to avoid living forms, (3) to see to it that the work of art is nothing but a work of art, (4) to consider art as

play and nothing else, (5) to be essentially ironical, (6) to beware of sham and hence to aspire to scrupulous realization, (7) to regard art as a thing of no transcending consequence.[1] These, obviously, are reductive classical criteria. It is apparent that given such a credo no appeal to regionalism could therein find a place. In fact, as an aesthetic component, regionalism must be disparaged.

Modernism, however, was not simply an artistic revolution, an insurrection in the continuum of aesthetic trends, the revolt of the sons against the fathers. More fundamentally it was produced by the triumph of positivistic science, a triumph over religious values initially and then, by the mid-nineteenth century, over basic human ones as well. This acknowledgement of the total triumph of science, a triumph dispelling man's belief in his unique place in the universe, was the source of Modernism's emphasis on dehumanization, and the seat of its authority. It was a culmination extending back several centuries. In ***Science and the Modern World*** Alfred Whitehead contended that beginning with the scientists of the Renaissance, there developed a science of reality which has dominated Western thought to the present century:

> There persists ... throughout the whole period the fixed scientific cosmology which presupposes the ultimate fact of an irreducible brute matter, or material, spread throughout space in a flux of configurations. In itself such a material is senseless, valueless, purposeless. It just does what it does do, following a fixed routine imposed by external relations which do not spring from the nature of its being.[2]

By the mid-nineteenth century this view of reality had established itself as the unchallenged ontology, based on the continuing empirical validation of the Newtonian system. Increasingly man was reduced to his context, and his context was dead.

Yet the history of art following the Renaissance had been for the most part the effort of the artist as humanist to resist and controvert this narrowing scientific focus, with Romanticism on the European continent and Transcendentalism in America constituting the last major resistences. But after Darwin such effects lost force, apparently deprived of credibility in man's loss of his sense of uniqueness, reduced to a biological mutation, an atomic neuter adrift in the materialistic flux. With the death of Romanticism the Victorians, who had nothing else to hope for, took the full brunt of spiritual alienation. Matthew Arnold summed it up:

> Ah, love, let us be true
> To one another! for the world, which seems
> To lie before us like a land of dreams,
> So various, so beautiful, so new
> Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
> Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;

And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.[3]

Over against this Modernism was art's attempt to change the sense of alienation from a liability to an asset. No longer challenge the triumph of science as the Romantics had done, it proclaimed, nor bewail it, as the Victorians had done, but accept it, live with it, acknowledge its implications, and abstract from the scientific purview the aesthetic ingredients which it is art's sovereign power to engage. This capitulation of art to science in order to save its soul proved to be as significant for the twentieth century as Romanticism had been for the nineteenth; in subsuming the underlying ethos of the age it enabled the artist to tap the unconscious values inherent in the dominant scientific culture, and accounts for the spectacular brilliance of Modernism's aesthetic achievement. Clearly, Ortega's seven tenets, so classical in temper, are directly derived from the assurance and objectivity of scientific certitude.

However, just as Modernism early in this century was initiating its great groundswell there appeared a speculative work which would overturn the Newtonian hegemony and thereby cut the underpinnings from beneath the whole Modernist aesthetic. With Einstein, positivism lost the ascendency and relativism swept the field, and with relativism came trooping back all the transcendental intuitions which scientism had repudiated, marking the doom of Modernism in the moment of its apotheosis.

D. H. Lawrence, that antimodernist apostle of the Spirit of Place, saw the implications clearly. Einstein's theory, first published in 1907, was not empirically confirmed until 1919, but it was even then rapidly transforming twentieth century speculative thought. The verification enabled Lawrence to exclaim in 1922, "We are all very pleased with Mr. Einstein for knocking the eternal axis out of the universe. The universe is not a spinning wheel. It is a cloud of bees flying and veering around."[4] The cosmos, once thought to be rational, then meaningless, finally was being proved to be neither. *It is irrational!* And that was the last thing contemporary science wanted to hear.

The implications were, then, revolutionary, eventually ushering in a new Romantic period. Its breakthrough in poetry may be placed with the emergence of Dylan Thomas and the New Apocalypse poets in England before the war, and in America at war's end with the appearance of Kenneth Rexroth and the San Francisco movement prefiguring the Beat Generation. But it was a revolution resisted to the last. In 1948, confronting the new movement almost thirty years after the Einsteinian vindication, Leslie Fiedler could write, confident of the commiseration of his readers:

> The concept of structure has been a handsome and useful fiction, sustaining two, perhaps three generations of poets in the style to which we have become accustomed, but it begins, I think, to assume already a slight air of the old-fashioned; defending it we seem inevitably – a little

truculent. For we submit, now, willing or not, to a revolution in sensibility, called sometimes with moderate accuracy, neo-Romanticism, which involves, in the aspects these poets chiefly illuminate, a restoration to legitimacy of the more dangerous uses of emotion and the consequent difficulty in the discrimination of sentimentality.[5]

And he went on to couple "such English fellow-travellers in emotional excess as Dylan Thomas" with the new American groundswell.

For the death of Modernism has been slow; one might say it malingers unconscionably. Not only has the age remained emphatically scientific in ethos, so that the abstract tenets of Modernism retain a cultural and social relevance, but the great masterworks of the early period, in the brilliance of their execution, fixated aesthetic values. These criteria no longer avail creatively but their prestige is enormous. Einstein might have vindicated the nature worship of Lawrence and Jeffers, but the urbanity of Eliot and Pound and Stevens still dominates the texts. Modernist precisionism, if no longer the practice of poets, is still the touchstone of critics, and from the beginning it never relinquished its grip. Nor is this confined to poetry. In all the arts Dionysian creativity runs rampant but Apollonion perspectives preempt judgment. The conflict between these attitudes is locked at the center of our consciousness, and more than anything else provides the key to the strangely hybrid, painfully contorted character of our art.

So it has been throughout the whole post-Modernist period. Lawrence, as we saw, had laughed with delight, but in *Time and Western Man* (1927) Wyndham Lewis warned that the triumph of the process philosophies stemming from Einstein would threaten the rational underpinnings of Western culture, open the Pandora's box of superstitions against which human reason had struggled so long and so arduously.[6] Anyone viewing the welter of cult and occult phenomena today can only acknowledge the justness of Lewis's apprehensions. Yet it is precisely the proliferation of these heterodox psychic trends that has enabled regionalism to emerge as a centering element against the tendency toward chaos, the belated validation of the intuitional forming the context within which its return must be gauged. Between the chaotic upwelling released from the Pandora's box of the collective unconscious, and the straight-laced strictures of applied science, man seeks a center of coherence and equipoise. Crucified in the alienation of his urbanized hell, revolted by the dehumanization of his art, he cries out for identification and participation. It is in such a crisis of the spirit that the presence of region arises like the pheonix to its ancient office. Until it is accomplished, neither religion nor art can be whole.

II

In the attempt to understand the significance of regionalism, recent writers have tended to divide into two approaches, the phenomenological and the symbolic. Of the former, Paul Shepard, who calls himself a naturalist, in his

book *Man in the Landscape* reasons from territorial and biological responses:

> In man territoriality is an intricate association of tenderness and antipathy, in which both are closely related to the terrain. In him too the territorial instinct varies greatly according to circumstances. It is the household, property in land, the tribal range. Perhaps even the city, state, and nation are meta-territories. The attention which the individual gives to the territory is related to his age and perhaps the season. Alaskan wolves do not seem to recognize territorial bounds or even the context of territorialism, until they reach breeding age, whereupon they mate for life, learn the territorial bounds, and join in to defend it. In some primitive human groups ties between puberty and the right to hunt hint at a similar relation between age and perception of the landscape; indeed, the major role of the territory is perpetuation of a reproductive unit. Territorial establishment and maintenance is closely related to sexuality and to other socializing processes. For love of another is linked to love of place.[7]

Thus the technological age, with its scorn of nature and its dehumanization of art, has produced the highest divorce rate in human history. Because men and women can no longer identify with a place they can scarcely identify with each other.

Of the symbolic approach Mircea Eliade, an historian of religion, addresses himself directly to the break in plane inherent within space itself. "For religious man" he writes at the beginning of *The Sacred and the Profane*, "space is not homogeneous... some parts of space are qualitively different from others." And he goes on:

> It must be said at once that the religious experience of the non-homogeneity of space is a primordial experience, [equivalent] to a founding of the world. It is not a matter of theoretical speculation, but a primary religious experience that precedes all reflection on the world. For it is the break effected in space that allows the world to be constituted, because it reveals the fixed point, the central axis for all future orientation. When the sacred manifests itself in any hierophany, there is not only a break in the homogeneity of space; there is also revelation of an absolute reality, opposed to the nonreality of the vast surrounding expanse, the manifestation of the sacred ontologically founds the world. In the homogeneous and infinite expanse, in which no point of reference is possible and hence no *orientation* can be established, the hierophany reveals an absolute fixed point, a center.[8]

In the light of Shepard's point touching on the biological and Eliade's point touching on the symbolic, it should be apparent that the powerful emotional and intuitional forces inherent in regionalism constitute between them its force in collective and individual motivation. Given these

resources it is no wonder that powerful semi-Modernists like Yeats and Lorca, and stubbornly anti-Modernists ones like Frost and Jeffers, continued all through the height of the Modernist period to draw on regionalism's evocative appeal despite the hostility of the urbanized critics, for the numen inherent in its sovereignty cannot be dispelled by mere theorizing. The same sources await the artist today, even more powerfully, as the clamour of Modernism sinks into the past. It is within the context of regionalism as both a sexual and a sacred phenomenon that its power is manifest.

III

Speaking for myself, the discovery of my poetic vocation, conjoined with an immediacy of identification with my region, came as something almost physical, and the overtones were definitely erotic. Shepard writes:

> This awareness of the territory at mating suggests imprinting, an irreversible learning at a critical period in the individual's life, attaching significant and inherent meaning to an appropriate yet fortuitous object. It is part of the normal development of all young animals, a predisposition at a certain age to learn certain things which cannot thereafter be easily unlearned. It is the ultimate *idee fixe*. Young crows, for example, fixate on their parent crows or whoever is tending them at an age of seventeen days. If they fixate on people instead of crows at that time they become much tamer and more docile. In men such processes probably involved the indelible memories of childhood. There may be types of human imprinting which we do not know to occur amongst other creatures, such as fixation on dream images, on art forms, or on architecture . . .[9]

And, of course, as he had already suggested, on landscape.

Without doubt for me the regional awareness had indeed been one of the indelible memories of childhood; but it became conscious only in my dual awakening, my identity as poet, confirmed in post-adolescence by my encounter with woman. Woman and region fused together in an ineluctable synthesis that constituted what I can only call an entirely new identity, an unprecedented sense of my own self awareness. Not only did I see myself in human terms as the native of the San Joaquin, but in religious terms I saw myself as the predestined voice of that region. These coalesced together in my love of a woman and my love of the land, and with increasing maturity achieved a definite ambience, a distinct sense of equipoise and grace:

FEAST DAY

Peace was the promise: this house in the vineyard,
Under the height of the great tree
Loosing its leaves on the autumn air.
East lie the mountains;

Level and smooth lie the fields of vines.

Now on this day in the slope of the year,
Over the wine and the sheaf of grain,
We shape our hands to the sign, the symbol,
Aware of the room, the sun in the sky,
The earnest immaculate rhythm of our blood,
As two will face in the running light,
Ritual born of the heavy season,
And see suddenly on all sides reality,
Vivid again through the crust of indifference,
Waken under the eye.

East lie the mountains,
Around us the level length of the earth;
And this house in the vines,
Our best year,
Golden grain and golden wine,
In autumn, the good year falling south.[10]

Here the erotic and religious conjoin to complete the regional mandala that is the soul's orientation point in reality.

Undoubtedly this same synthesis obtained in the ordeal of vocation of Robinson Jeffers, the greatest regional poet the West Coast has produced. Although he found both his vocation and his woman before he discovered his region, it was the belated arrival in his life of the latter, the Big Sur coast, which transmuted him into the darkly brooding and transcendent figure that confirmed his unique self-finding. In fact he indicates as much in the foreword to his *Selected Poetry* when he juxtaposed the untamed spirit of his woman and the untamed spirit of his region as the explosive ingredients that lit him to incandescence. After setting forth his artistic credo he goes on the say:

> Here are the principles that conditioned the verse in this book before it was written; but it would not have been written at all except for certain accidents that changed and directed my life. (Some kind of verse I should have written, of course, but not this kind.) The first of these accidents was my meeting with the woman to whom this book is dedicated, and her influence, constant since that time. My nature is cold and undiscriminating; she excited and focused it, gave it eyes and nerves and sympathies. She never saw any of my poems until they were finished and typed, yet by her presence and conversation she has co-authored every one of them. Sometimes I think there must be some value in them, if only for that reason. She is more like a woman in a Scotch ballad, passionate, untamed and rather heroic – or like a falcon – than like any ordinary person.

> A second piece of pure accident brought me to the Monterey coast mountains, where for the first time in my life I could see people living – amid magnificent unspoiled scenery – essentially as they did in the Idyls or the Sagas, or in Homer's Ithica. Here was life purged of its ephemeral accretions. Men were riding after cattle, or plowing the headland, hovered by white sea-gulls, as they have done for thousands of years, and will for thousands of years to come. Here was contemporary life that was also permanent life; and not shut from the modern world but conscious of it and related to it; capable of expressing its spirit, but unencumbered by the mass of poetically irrelevant details and complexities that make a civilization.[11]

Jeffers maintained his identity with the region of his self-finding until the end of his life, as he maintained his identity with his wife Una long after the close of her own. It was the conjunction in his mind of these two images that gave him the continuity of purpose which constitute the essence of his achievement.[12]

For me, however, fate had another pattern to enact, and I will conclude with it here in order to show how much the commingling of these two strains, the sexual and the sacred, are bound together to make up the magic of the regional archetype. The poem "Feast Day," already quoted, was written on Thanksgiving Day of 1939, just after the opening of World War II in Europe. In the poem the sense of erotic identification and regional equipoise is manifest, but within three years that selfsame war had thrown us apart, never to take up life in the Valley again. The dual myth of woman and region was exploded in the appalling crisis of separation, and neither of us ever returned. It was the most devastating thing that ever happened to me, and the depotentiation of the numen invested in the region never survived the going of the girl.

It is true I have remained a regionalist in the broader, Californian sense. Later I identified with the San Francisco Bay Area in the late forties and fifties, and have recently put down roots in Santa Cruz. It is also true that these Californian, San Franciscan, and now Santa Cruzan identities have been maintained and confirmed by the women I have loved, who have given my life its discernable contour. But never again has the "imprint" taken as it did in that first awakening when the eros of woman and region conjoined to make me a lover and a celebrator of life, who stood forth in his sexual identity as well as in his sacred space, and gathering about him the vastness of the world in which he was born, opened his throat and praised his God.

Notes

[1] *The Dehumanization of Art*, New York, 1956, p. 13.

[2] *Science and the Modern World*, New York, 1958, p. 18.

[3] "Dover Beach," *Collected Poems*, New York, 1959, p. 239.

[4] *Fantasia of the Unconscious,* New York, 1960, p. 66.

[5] "Some Uses and Abuses of Feeling," *The Partisan Review*, August, 1948, p. 924. Actually among his set Fiedler was ahead of his time. A decade later Diana Trilling attended the return of Allen Ginsberg to Columbia University. She was moved by the Dionysian atmosphere of the event, so different from the circumspect poetry readings to which she was accustomed. Returning to her apartment where her distinguished husband and professor sat with his intellectual friends aloof from all that, she could not help but communicate her excitement, only to be reproved, "You should be ashamed of yourself!" The reprover was W. H. Auden. (Diana Trilling. "The Other Night at Columbia," *Partisan Review*, Spring, 1959, pp. 214-230.

[6] *Time and Western Man,* New York, 1957.

[7] *Man in the Landscape*, New York, 1967, p. 33.

[8] *The Sacred and the Profane*, New York, 1950, p. 20.

[9] *Op cit*, p. 33.

[10] *The Residual Years*, New York, 1968, p. 43.

[11] *Selected Poetry*, New York, 1938, p. xv.

[12] In this regard it is interesting to speculate on Robert Frost's identification with New England as corresponding to his erotic awakening. Writers have long wondered how he could leave San Francisco as late as the age of twelve and yet leave so little impress of it in his work. Was the spirit of New England imprinted with the finding of his wife?

POETRY

Bill Tecku

BICENTENNIAL BLUES

I am an American
I can not drive nontoke from Madison to Chicago
I have sat in all the waysides from Duluth to St. Louis
Yet, I can not convince myself that you are an American
I think you was made somewheres else
Guess you just didn't pick the right door or something
I am an American
I have not lost radio contact
I have lost faith in the American Public School System
As a whore, along with the U of Wisconsin, VWs(after '67)
And the Warren Report
I am an American
Because I'm downright curious about where all those
20th Century immigration officers stashed the "melting pot"
I think we ought to unstash it
It would probably get us all up again

I am an American and a good sport about it;
At least at home if not abroad
I am a good sport although the only thing Super Sunday
Means to me is ADVERTIZING
I haven't stopped listening to the ballgame and
I know the score: THEY = 1,970 U.S. = 2,360 icbms
And where is the mother who first shouted, "LET'S PLAY BALL!"
I have stopped listening to NBC Special Reports &
To The Council of American Bishops, despite the fact
That each came out with straight faces against war & inflation

I am an American, I picked The American Sportsman Of The Century
And U.P.I. replied, "Who is W.E.B. DuBois?"
I answered that DuBois was a dude who had his rap together
More than Henry ever will; and he was objective enough
To KEEP HIS COOL while all the peaceful, lawabiding folks
Around him were losing theirs and just fucking the eyes
Out of his friends and loved ones
Yes, he wrote over 500 letters to his congressman and the shit
Just got thicker just like after Nixon, and man, if that's not
Being a good sport then you're crazy!!

I am an American who needs no induction
Nor shall receive one
This is not to say I am no longer into America
I'm still into her enough
To turn the other cheek and come in her from behind
You may call it a sneak attack (i.e. subversive)
We're old-fashion, to us it's getting it on!
And while they play the flipside
I go bathe and admire myself

I am an American
I always wash my hands after seeding Lake Superior
With asbestos
I know it don't come easy
Although I've noticed it's no hassle
To get in front of a camera every night and tell the local
Audience what the news IS and what America IS and in general
Just what's what, and what to do in event of a
National Emergency; and just what is a National Emergency?

I am an American
I don't attempt to push a stalled car
While it's in park, or throw a party and call it a
Bicentennial Celebration
That's the sort of shit I leave for the police and politicians
Gives them a good excuse to tell us that they're
Really into something heavy
Well, here comes my bus for Wisconsin
Want'a help me with my bags ?
O.K., you take the redhead, I'll take the blonde !

A. Wilber Stevens

VEGAS: A FEW SCRUPLES

Under scrutiny of hills in the hot sun
A woman crazed has cut her lover
Hacked at his privacies kicked
Glass at him broken glass is the thing
Here where the children at the lower
Elementary levels have one of the best
Systems and more daysleeping parents
Than Monaco it's a tight town
Full of churches rampant cars like
Pimples mapping the alleys behind
The Strip a wonderment of sullen searchers
Planted firmly on the shifty earth looking.

When Brigham sent his band here
He did not foresee what the sun could
Do but burn for the Faith it does burn
Indeed burn right for the Saved of which
There are many species transient and nested
And too there are the lesser breds the manic
The levitated professors who floated
Into this crude escrow like bad seeds vagrant
Talent dumped from the more thoughtful cities
All sorts of burning bushes in dry tide
Now by gardens and pools the natives half watch
The cuffed change girl shuffle to the cool blue car.

Lou Lewandowska

AT THE WRITERS' CONFERENCE

So there we were
bedded and boarded
at Hotel Famous
with seventeen Famous Writers
also bedded
some even bred
already, as some
of us would be
presently.

We had come to Ocean
to breathe in sun
frolick in the surf
deliberately, creatively,
so we could write
realistically
while our Seventeen Best
rested, abed, brilliantly
or scribbled their way
to the Best Seller List
and the leading
Literary
Libraries.

Every night we scribbled too
having three times that day
shared the air
with the darlings
of Doubleday
who, perspiring greatly,
inspired us each
to great feats
of scribbling.

Throughout the week
we met each
of our Fabled Few
learning that
one, sex sells
two, fine books fail
three, publishers are publishing fewer firsts
four, famous writers know famous editors and up they grow
five, to have a friend
        with a press
        is a bless
        ing undisguised.

During the week
we each wrote
three short stories
scathingly brilliant
six sonnets
and four free
ultra free
experimentally free
poems

which, we all know
we will send
to no less than
seventy two markets
to the Big Mags, for money
to the journals, for fame
to the small mags, in hope
and then
to our friend
with the press
who, depress
ingly candid, says
"Make this haiku
and I'll fit you
in, Pal."

Anyway, we paid
to gaze on myths
kiss hems
grovel a bit
and we did
knowing the conference head
once said
allegedly
not surprizingly
that there's
more money
to be made
in writers
than in writing.
Our fawning was fruitful
as that man knows.
He's made us all
so happy.

TO A HURT HUSBAND

Tonight you reach out
And I roll away
Leaving you limp and sighing
The space between us empty
Beneath the warm sheets.

Other nights, finished,
You fall back, smiling
While I, having swelled around you
A slippery creampuff
A wet pillow oozing stuffing
Remain there, spilling
Your sperm on the sheets.

Or rising, I wander the house
Dripping babies, flowing,
Wanting to vomit the day
To feed on the dark
Walk a lonely way.

Today our children chewed my nerves.
Like ghouls rising from our bed
They shrieked along at my side

> Mother, can you lend me
> Mom, do you think this dress
> Mommy my leg hurts, I need
> money, I want lunch, I want
> your touch your life see this blood

And so tonight
Your wanting leaves me weak.
What I need
Is a lean mind
A few sparse words
Our bones, quiet,
Alone.

Nils Peterson

During the collection at the First Lutheran Church,

Miss Megrim, the organist,
fingers long since fallen
beneath the old German minister
goosestepping through the Gospel,
scattered her music,
lost *Love Lifted Me,*
and fell twenty years
into *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring.*
By heavens,
she got it right
both hands together-
feet too.
She who in one fifth of a century
had not hit three right notes in succession without Thanksgiving,
found herself at last played by the music,
used
(her ass firm on the bench
fulcrum and fundamental)
as she had always wanted-
totally.
I say the old church danced,
got up off the ground,
pulled its skirts to its knees,
and gave itself to a stately measure
full of grace
a galliard for the joy of it
but with steps befitting.

Throughout this fantastic,
four men collared into choler

marched down the aisles
implacable as counterpoint
making damn sure
you rendered unto Luther
what was Luther's.
Their feet
(feet with no nonsense in them,
feet for flat earths)
had no ears,
but who could care?

Oh lovely reader who has come this far-
sadness.
It was a short church
and though I saw it try to stretch itself
(though still in dance)
from porch to altar
along the length of its nave,
it was, after all,
only human,
and where it came to an end,
it came to an end.

When the collectors
had collected the collection
and stood
burdens at our back,
the four horsemen of fiscal responsibility,
Miss Megrim was maybe halfway through
flushed with the glory of accuracy
and more
(though God knows that is enough)
about to come at last
to that Promised Land
where resolution seems possible.

The Reverend Max Schnell,
seeing the moneys were gathered,
tugged at his chasuble-
a signal which for twenty years
had sent the mice of her fingers
scurrying for the hole of a C major chord
and the congregation shuffling to its feet-
but, Lord be praised,
nothing happened but the music

Stunned,
he tugged again and coughed,
brought to the brink of listening,
(What?
Ignored?
In his own house?).
The third time,
he matched his tug
with such a cataract of catarrh clearing
that even the pews were taken aback,
and Bach, broken,
fled that place taking the dance with him.
Miss Megrim,
toppled,
slid forward to the edge of the bench,
teetered into a *Do, Mi, So,*
and the collection went altarward
on *How Firm a Foundation.*

ARTICLES

Andrew Putnam Hill in 1890 at the age of 37.

The accompanying photographs are from the Andrew P. Hill, Jr. Collection held by the Souisseau Academy of San Jose State University.

Andrew P. Hill and the Big Basin, California's First State Park

Carolyn de Vries

MORE than fifty years have passed since the death in 1922 of Andrew Putnam Hill, a noted California artist, photographer, and conservationist. Today, few people recognize the man's name. And even where tributes to the man do exist – the "Andrew P. Hill High School" in southeast San Jose was dedicated in 1956, for instance – little attention is paid to the man who is memorialized. Yet Andrew Hill is responsible for preserving much of the beauty and natural environment of the mountains which bound the Santa Clara Valley in California. The area known as "Big Basin Redwoods State Park" owes its existence, in fact, to Hill.

That the man responsible for this beauty is frequently ignored may be due, in part, to the American definition of success and individual importance, which emphasizes the acquisition of material goods, the accumulation of wealth, and the achievement of professional or social standing. From these aspects, Hill's life was neither successful nor important. His career was only sporadically prosperous, for example, and at his death in 1922, his estate was valued at less than $900. Neither was he a member of the social elite – either by birth or professional achievement. Further, Hill was a local man, unknown to most people outside northern California. In short, Andrew P. Hill was an outstanding individual only if his achievements for humanity are considered. He saw a need and directed his energies toward a singular goal – that of saving the California coast redwoods for posterity.

Born in 1853 in Porter County, Indiana, Hill traveled to Amador City, California with an uncle at the age of 14. He first lived in Santa Clara County in 1868 and 1869 while attending two years of high school at Santa Clara College. After studying art in San Francisco at the newly established California School of Design, Hill took up residence in San Jose in 1878 as a well-known portrait painter in oils with his partner Louis Lussier, his former instructor at art school. Known throughout California for his artistic talents, Hill was also called upon to paint portraits of three Nevada politicians for the Nevada State Capitol Building. It was at this time also that he painted two of

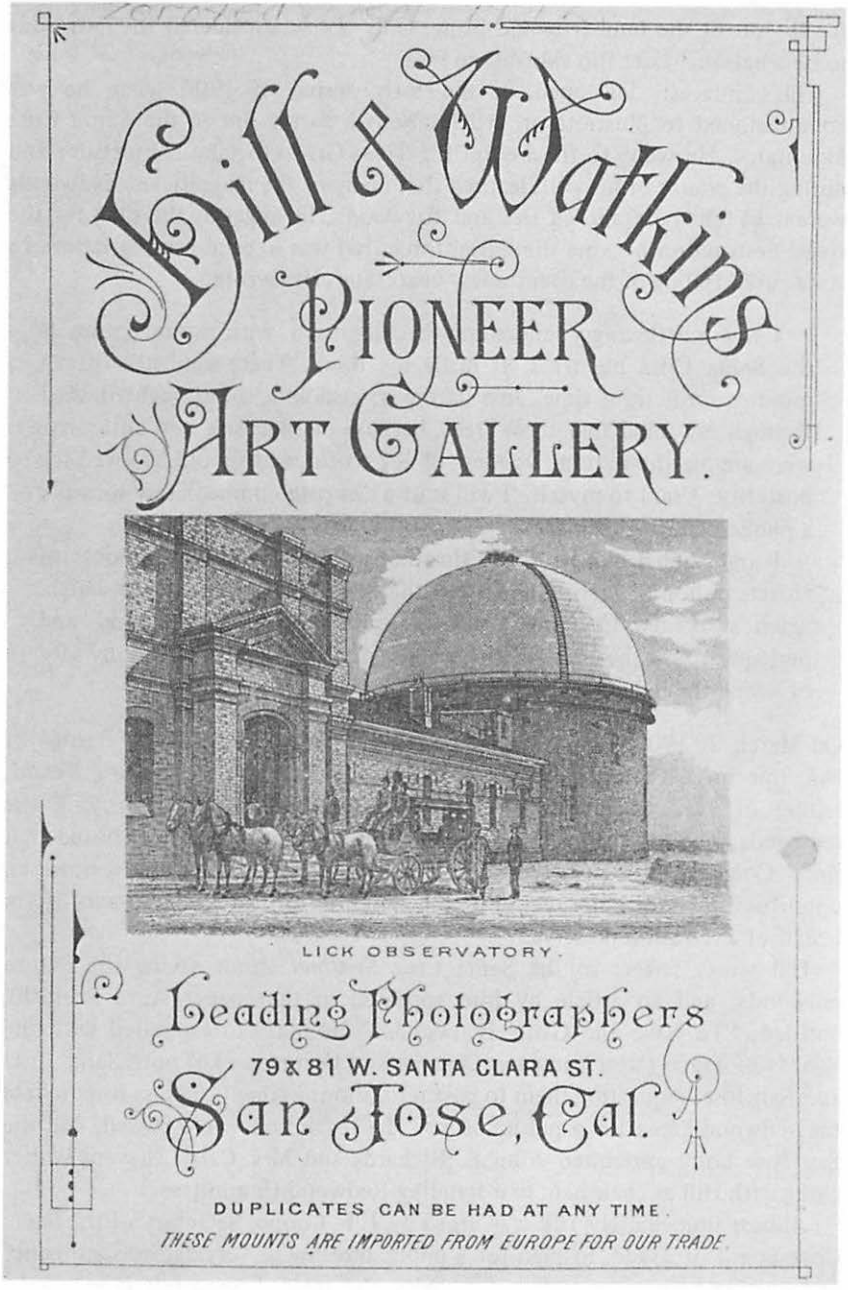
his large works: "The Murphy Party" and "Mission Santa Clara." The former was an historical painting showing the first emigrant party to ascend the Sunset Pass from Donner Lake in 1844. Although later destroyed in the 1906 earthquake, the painting won a gold medal at the California State Fair in 1890 for the best oil painting in landscape and was purchased and placed in the historical room of the California Pioneers' Association of San Francisco.

Eleven years later, Hill added photography to his artistic pursuits. Entering into three different partnerships in as many years, Hill and his third partner Sidney J. Yard photographed many local scenes during their three years together, capturing a bygone era in Santa Clara County. Numbered among their photos were pictures of Mount Hamilton, Stanford University, downtown San Jose and Palo Alto, and the celebrated horses owned by Senator Leland Stanford. Photographs of local scenes by the two men were part of the Santa Clara County display at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.

In the years to follow, however, Hill's business career suffered many hardships. The 1906 earthquake totally destroyed his painting and photography studio located in the Dougherty Building on Second Street, San Jose. A disastrous fire following the earthquake burned all his photographic plates and paintings stored in the studio. This catastrophe had a lasting effect on his business career as he never again maintained a business address separate from his home. Another financial loss occurred when Hill invested money in the Ingomar Consolidated Gold Mining Company in Calaveras County, California. Although iron outcroppings were rich in gold on the surface and had been extensively worked during the gold rush, it soon became apparent that the mine was nearly worked out and its sale would be the only way to salvage the invested money. No buyers could be found, however, and the mine was not sold until several years after Hill's death.

From 1906 to 1922 Hill continued his photography of the natural beauty of California, as well as his painting of western scenes such as "Crossing the Plains in '49" (a canvas now hanging in the State Capitol Building at Sacramento). These pursuits began to take second place, however, to his developing interest in preserving the mountains to the west and south of San Jose. Initially, Hill encouraged people to preserve the coast redwoods through the columns of local newspapers. But he was also a man of deeds and actively worked in the conservation movement. His diligent efforts, in fact, were largely responsible for the campaign to "Save the Redwoods."

The Big Basin redwoods had stood for many centuries, and their magnificent beauty and their majestic grandeur had impressed many a passerby. The area's value, however, was not in its beauty, but in the prize timber yield that it offered. High quality redwood found a market not only in California but other states as well, where it proved to be excellent construction material. Many investors would willingly have sacrificed the redwood's natural beauty



A typical advertisement for 1890 when photography was added to Hill's artistic pursuits.

for the profit the lumber would bring. Only a few considered the redwoods to be a national asset too valuable to lose.

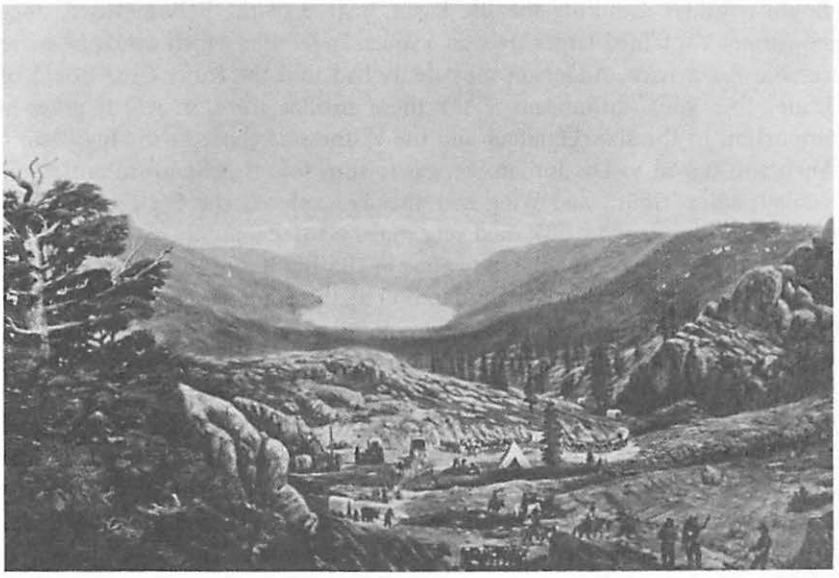
Hill's interest developed in the early spring of 1900 when he was commissioned to illustrate an article about a forest fire in the Santa Cruz Mountains. He went to the Felton Big Trees Grove to take his pictures and during the course of his visit, learned that many of the magnificient redwoods were to be felled for railroad ties and firewood. His anger at the plan for the trees' destruction became the initial force that was to establish Big Basin as a state park. Telling of the event a few years later, Hill wrote:

> I was a little angry, and somewhat disgusted, with my reception at the Santa Cruz big trees. It made me think. There were still fifteen minutes until train time. Just as the gate closed, the thought flashed through my mind that these trees, because of their size and antiquity, were among the natural wonders of the world, and should be saved for posterity. I said to myself, 'I will start a campaign immediately to make a public park of this place.'
>
> I argued that as I had been furnishing illustrations for a number of writers, whom I knew quite well, that here was a latent force which, when awakened to a noble cause, would immediately respond, and perhaps arouse the press of the whole country. Thus was born my idea of saving the redwoods.[1]

On March 7, 1900, two newspaper articles appeared written by friends of Hill, one in the Santa Cruz ***Sentinel*** and the other in the San Jose ***Herald***, telling of Hill's adventure at Felton and the plans for destroying the redwoods. Just ten days later an editorial in the Santa Cruz ***Surf*** noted that since Congress was preserving the Big Trees of Calaveras, it seemed an opportune time "for the revival of the agitation instigated some years ago in behalf of a redwood preserve."

Hill wrote letters to the Santa Cruz ***Sentinel*** about saving the Felton redwoods, and an article by him appeared in that paper April 3, 1900, entitled, "To Save the Giant Redwoods," He also corresponded with the Boards of Trade (later known as Chambers of Commerce) of both Santa Cruz and San Jose, requesting them to pass resolutions asking Congress to purchase the redwood trees for a public park.[2] The resolutions were passed, and the San Jose body appointed John E. Richards and Mrs. Carrie Stevens Walter along with Hill as chairman, to a standing Redwood Committee.[3]

Almost immediately Hill was urged by J. F. Coope, Secretary of the Santa Cruz Board of Trade, to plan for a public meeting to "crystallize sentiment" and encourage positive action for saving the trees. Coope felt it would be preferable to hold such a meeting away from Santa Cruz (presumably since Santa Cruz could have been accused of promoting a redwood park for its own personal benefit instead of for all Californians), and Hill was asked to make the arrangements. "The latter proposed, in order to shut out any possibility



"The Murphy Party," painted by Hill in 1878. This historical painting showed the first emigrant party to ascend the Sunset Pass from Donner Lake in 1844, most of whom settled in the Santa Clara Valley. This painting was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake after being purchased and placed in the historical room of the California Pioneers' Association in San Francisco.

of politics, to seek the co-operation of education institutions,"[4] and with this in mind Hill consulted Dr. David Starr Jordan, President of Stanford University. Jordan agreed with the plans, and word went out that a meeting of people interested in saving the redwoods would be held at the Stanford University Library, May 1, 1900.

Amid considerable publicity,[5] the meeting of May 1 at Stanford was attended by a number of conservation-minded citizens, including Dr. Jordan who presided; Stanford Professors W. W. Dudley (Botany), J. M. Stillman (Chemistry), Charles B. Wing (Civil Engineering), R. L. Green (Mathematics) who also represented the Sierra Club; Professor J. H. Senger of the University of California; Professor James McNaughton, President of San Jose Normal School (now San Jose State University); ex-Governor William T. Jeter; F. W. Billings and J. Q. Packard from the Santa Cruz Board of Trade; John E. Richards, Mrs. Carrie Stevens Walter, and Andrew P. Hill of San Jose.[6]

Just prior to this meeting Hill had received a letter from Coope, Secretary of the Santa Cruz Board of Trade, telling him of a suggestion made by Dr. C. L. Anderson, a botanist living in Santa Cruz, that the people at the meeting

should consider acquiring the Big Basin, instead of the Felton Grove, since the former contained larger trees in a much larger area which would be more suitable for a park. Anderson supposedly had told the Santa Cruz Board of Trade, "As your enthusiasm is for these smaller trees, so will it grow in proportion to the size, grandeur and the vastness of those in the Big Basin.[7] When Hill talked to Dr. Jordan, he was in turn told that Stanford professors Dudley, Marx, Smith and Wing had already explored the Big Basin region, made maps and a survey of it, and very much favored a public park there.[8]

The suggestion to save the redwoods in the Big Basin, instead of those at Felton, became the primary consideration at the Stanford meeting. The next step was the appointment of a survey committee to go into the area and report on the suitability of the Big Basin as a park site.[9] Since only Hill and Mrs. Walter were not "too busy" to serve on the committee, the two were made responsible for selecting others to join them. Hill and Mrs. Walter asked W. W. Richards, R. S. Kooser, and Mrs. Louise C. Jones to join them, and the group started their journey to Big Basin on May 15. The reconnoitering party went by train from San Jose to Boulder Creek and from Boulder Creek by horsedrawn vehicle to the end of the road. They were joined in Boulder Creek by J. F. Coope and J. Q. Packard from Santa Cruz, as well as their guide, Andy Baldwin, and a cook, Thomas Croon. They were later joined by Charles W. Reed of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.[10]

Somehow the committee had been able to interest H. L. Middleton, largest stockholder in the Big Basin Lumber Company, in joining their exploration for a short time. It had been discovered that one of the mills owned by his company had packed machinery on mules over the mountain to the rim of the Big Basin, close to some of the largest trees, and was ready to begin cutting.

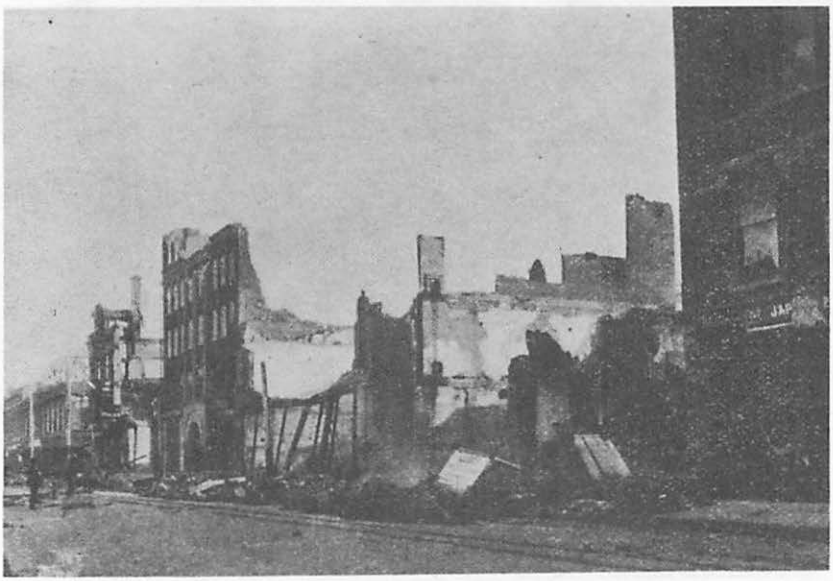
> . . . Mr. Middleton was dragged, willy-nilly, along with the camping party, and held as friendly hostage while his woodchoppers cut trails in any direction that was suggested. For the first time the extent of the Basin was fully realized, and the value of the watercourses, the Waddell, the Gazos, the Pescadero Creek, the Butano, all taking their sources here. Days were spent in exploration; and before the party went back to civilization . . . Mr. Middleton had become inoculated with the spirit of this redwood-saving crowd.[11]

During their exploration of the Big Basin, the committee walked farther and farther into the forest. As they emerged into the opening before a redwood towering over three hundred feet in height, Hill noticed "the members of our party all looking at this giant with open mouths, and suddenly I became aware of being in the same condition!"[12] Their awe increased as they went on their way.

Although Hill was a member of the Basin party and concerned with the preservation of the woods, one of his other functions was to photograph

Florence Watkins Hill, wife of the artist, in Hill's Studio; about 1904 before destruction by the 1906 earthquake.

1906 Earthquake and Fire Damage to Hill's studio in the Dougherty Building, 85 South Second Street, San Jose, California.



much of the scenery that the group encountered. Engrossed in his camera and his subject, Hill became separated from his companions on May 17. Believing the photographer to be completely lost, the group sent out word, and the next day both the Santa Cruz *Sentinel* and the San Jose *Mercury* reported the "mysterious disappearance" of Hill to their readers. Fortunately for Hill, he soon found his way back to the camp, safe but hungry.[13] The editor of the Boulder Creek *Mountain Echo* visited the party at their camp to check on the details of Hill's disappearance.

> When shown Santa Cruz and San Jose papers with the sensational accounts of Mr. Hill's being lost, they laughed long and loud over the ridiculousness of the whole affair. All agreed that it was not every man who was fortunate enough to live to read his own obituary . . . In spite of the veracious and multitudinous newspaper authority at hand, Mr. Hill and his associates insisted he had never been lost at all, but slept comfortably every night at his tent in Camp Sempervirens.[14]

It was around the evening's campfire on May 18, that Hill suggested the formation of a forest club to preserve the Big Basin.[15] J. F. Coope named it "The Sempervirens Club of California." They passed the hat and collected $32 to help in the costs of their campaign.[16] As the club became more firmly established following the Basin's expedition, the members adopted the motto "Save the Redwoods" and listed their objectives as: to save the redwoods for posterity; to save the trees and many species of fauna in the area for scientific study; and to create a park for all people to enjoy.[17] Fifty prominent citizens of California were appointed honorary vice-presidents while the club officers chosen were Charles W. Reed, President; Carrie Stevens Walter, Secretary; J. Q. Packard, Treasurer; W. W. Richards, Sporting Secretary; and Andrew P. Hill, Official Artist.[18]

On May 27, 1900, the San Francisco *Chronicle* printed a long article supporting the purchase of the Big Basin, including photographs by Hill. The Boulder Creek *Mountain Echo* reported on articles in the Stockton *Independent* and the San Jose *Mercury* about the issue which stated that Big Basin should be out of local control and politics and suggested federal control of the park. Support was also forthcoming from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Forestry Association, and the Society for the Promotion of Agriculture.[19]

An important step in the preservation of the Basin was taken when Hill, Dr. Jordan, and Professor Dudley of Stanford met with H. L. Middleton, the lumberman who had visited the Sempervirens in their camp. Middleton proved anxious to save the redwoods by helping the men obtain an option for one year on 14,000 acres in the Big Basin area.[20]

Following the first informal meeting of the Sempervirens Club around the campfire in May, the club met formally at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, July 3, 1900. The members authorized a government agent in the Bureau of

Forestry to represent their interests in Washington, D.C.[21] But on August 25 of that same year, the club met and decided to appeal to the California Legislature, instead of the United States Congress, for a park.[22] This decision was apparently made because the Sempervirens felt an appeal to Congress to purchase the Big Basin might jeopardize the passage of another bill already pending to purchase the Calaveras Big Trees in the Sierras.[23]

The Sempervirens also decided at their August meeting to send representatives to the upcoming political conventions of California with the hope of persuading at least one of the parties to include the purchase of the Big Basin in its platform.[24] These efforts were apparently unsuccessful as the newspapers did not mention anything about the acquisition of Big Basin during their many months of reporting on the political campaigns.

After the elections in November, 1900, the Sempervirens again pushed for the creation of a park at Big Basin. The club met again in San Francisco to plan the campaign for the proposed park. Charles W. Reed, appointed by the club's members, authored the park bill that was presented to the California Legislature for action. Printed in an illustrated folder by the Sempervirens Club, the bill proposed the creation of the "California Redwood Park." Assemblyman George H. Fisk of San Francisco introduced the bill, A B 200, in the Assembly on January 15, 1901. The bill required the creation of a Redwood Park Commission, which included the Governor and four executive appointees, to select

> land in the State of California upon which are growing trees of the species known as 'sequoia sempervirens,' and which, in the judgment of the said Commission, is most suitable for a park whose purpose is to preserve a body of these trees from destruction and maintain them for the honor of California and the benefit of succeeding generations.[25]

After locating the site, the Commission was to purchase it for not more than $500,000 or else obtain the land through condemnation rights. The bill as introduced asked the legislature for $250,000 of the amount needed.[26]

Following the preparatory state printing, the bill passed into the hands of the Committee on Public Lands and Forests.[27] Hearings were held on the bill and several people from Santa Cruz appeared to speak in favor of the purchase of a redwood park.[28] At another meeting of the Committee, speeches favoring the park were heard from Professor William Dudley of Stanford University, Rev. Robert E. Kenna, S.J., President of Santa Clara College, and Charles W. Reed and Mrs. E. O. Smith of San Jose.[29] On January 30, 1901, the Committee voted approval of the bill and sent it back to the Assembly with a "do pass" recommendation. As the bill required expenditure of state funds, it was next sent to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee for review.[30] This committee, perhaps considering the expenditure to be foolish, returned the redwood park bill to the Assembly

Hill at the Ingomar Consolidated Gold Mining Company in Calaveras County, California. The mine proved to be a financial loss for the Hill family.

floor, February 8, 1901, with a "do not pass" recommendation.[31]

The Sempervirens quickly held another meeting in San Francisco. Some members were willing to give up the idea of a park for the Big Basin area. Hard work had not gotten them anywhere, and they could see no prospects for a change in the feelings of the legislators about the project. But Andrew P. Hill refused to give up, believing the bill could still be passed.

> His enthusiasm aroused hope in some, and provoked ironic smiles from others, but to all it seemed fitting that he should take charge of the cause that he refused to believe was lost.[32]

Being unanimously elected as a committee of one, Hill left for Sacramento carrying as many of his photographs of the Big Basin as he could.

Hill first sought the advice of Lieutenant Governor Alden Anderson, a former San Josean, who suggested several changes in the bill that would help it get through the Ways and Means Committee of which he was a member. He also advised Hill to seek help from a well-known politician, Grove L. Johnson, father of Senator Hiram Johnson. Armed with his photographs, Hill went to Johnson and persuaded him to sponsor the bill. Johnson had the bill reported back to the committee, where it was rewritten. The second version of the park bill spread the acquisition of the land over a five year period, specified definite boundaries for the proposed park, and required a title search by the State Attorney General before purchase. Following its return to the Assembly floor, the bill received a favorable recommendation.[33]

But passage of the bill was not yet in sight. Hill learned that a "push" – a group that accepted bribes for favorable votes on certain bills – controlled the California Legislature and that $5,000 was required to arrange for the passage of the redwood park bill. Hill tried to avoid paying the $5,000 bribe. He had already made many friends in the legislature who would vote favorably, but he felt that more votes were needed to ensure passage. He turned to the Catholic members of both the Assembly and Senate who constituted a rather large minority in the legislature and whose voting record indicated that they usually voted together. Hill sought the aid of his good friend, Rev. Robert E. Kenna, S.J., (President of Santa Clara College) in hope that the priest would be able to sway not only the Catholic legislators to the park issue but the Catholic Church congregations in the entire state. Rev. Kenna arranged for Hill to speak at a meeting of the Society of Jesus, where Hill asked for a committee to visit Big Basin before deciding on the merits of the park issue. Appointed by the Society, the committee visited the Big Basin area and returned with enthusiasm to influence other Catholics to support the park bill by mentioning it in sermons and church announcements.[34]

Meanwhile, D. M. Delmas, a San Francisco attorney and noted orator was requested by the Sempervirens Club to visit the proposed park area and then address the California Assembly on February 18, 1901.[35] In his speech Delmas listed two objections to the park purchase: the owners were wealthy

"Crossing the Plains in '49," painted by Hill in 1915. This canvas now hangs in the State Capitol Building, Sacramento.

and should donate the land for a park, and the price was more than the commercial value of the land. His answers to these objections were that the owners were not willing to donate the land and lose the income, and that the state would be buying virgin redwood, not cut timber. He also reminded the legislators that the countries of France and Germany as well as the states of New York and Massachusetts had set aside funds to purchase forest lands and that California should do the same.

> Man's work, if destroyed, man may again replace. God's work God alone can re-create. Accede, then, to the prayers of the people. Save this forest. Save it now. The present generation approves the act; generations yet unborn, in grateful appreciation of your labors, will rise up to consecreate its consummation.[36]

The March 2, 1901 issue of the Boulder Creek *Mountain Echo* reported that Hill was still at work trying to save the redwood park bill that was to be submitted March 3 as A B 873.

Many legislators still did not want to approve the park purchase, however.

They were able to place a new condition on their favorable votes: the Sempervirens Club had to obtain a new option on the Big Basin area to keep the loggers out while the state completed purchase. Hill immediately went to San Francisco and met with H. L. Middleton, the representative of the timber owners who had helped before. The one condition the owners wanted for extending the option on the land was a guarantee of $50,000 to be paid to them in case the state should fail to make the first payment on time. Hill promised to have that guarantee by midnight of the same day. Taking a train south, Hill called that evening on President Jordan of Stanford University, but Jordan was unable to help. Hill then went to Rev. Kenna at Santa Clara College, who was able to obtain the promised guarantee of $50,000 from his nephew, James Phelan, a man generous to many such causes. Hill telephoned Middleton from Santa Clara with the news that the condition of the timber owners could be met.[37]

And yet, Hill was still not able to rest that night. In order to show the legislators some proof that the new option had been secured, Hill decided to seek help from Harry G. Wells, editor of the San Jose *Mercury*. Since the

May 1, 1900 meeting at Stanford University for conservation-minded citizens. Left to right, J. H. Senger, David Starr Jordan, W. R. Dudley, F. W. Billings, James McNaughton, J. Q. Packard, William T. Jeter, John E. Richards, Carrie Stevens Walter, J. M. Stillman, Charles B. Wing, John J. Montgomery, R. L. Green. (Photo by Hill).

Exploration party at Big Basin, May 15-19, 1900. Left to right: Louise C. Jones, Carrie Stevens Walter, J. F. Coope, J. Q. Packard, Andy Baldwin, Charles W. Reed, W. W. Richards and Roley Kooser.

street cars did not run at that time of night, Hill had to walk from Santa Clara to the offices of the *Mercury* in San Jose, a distance of five miles. Arriving about 1:00 A.M., he asked Wells to write an editorial, telling of the accomplishment. As the paper had already gone to press, Hill was able to convince Wells to run off a special edition of one hundred and fifty copies in which Hill, himself, wrote the editorial. Because he needed to have the newspapers on the desk of every legislator for the morning session, Hill caught the 4:30 A.M. milk train to Sacramento.[38]

When the legislators read their newspapers with the front page editorial announcing fulfillment of the conditions set for passage, A B 873 was again called up for reading.[39] After hearing speeches by Assemblyman G. S. Walker of Santa Clara County, George G. Radcliff of Santa Cruz County, and H. W. Brown of San Mateo County, the Assembly passed the California Redwood Park bill with a vote of fifty-five in favor and one against.[40]

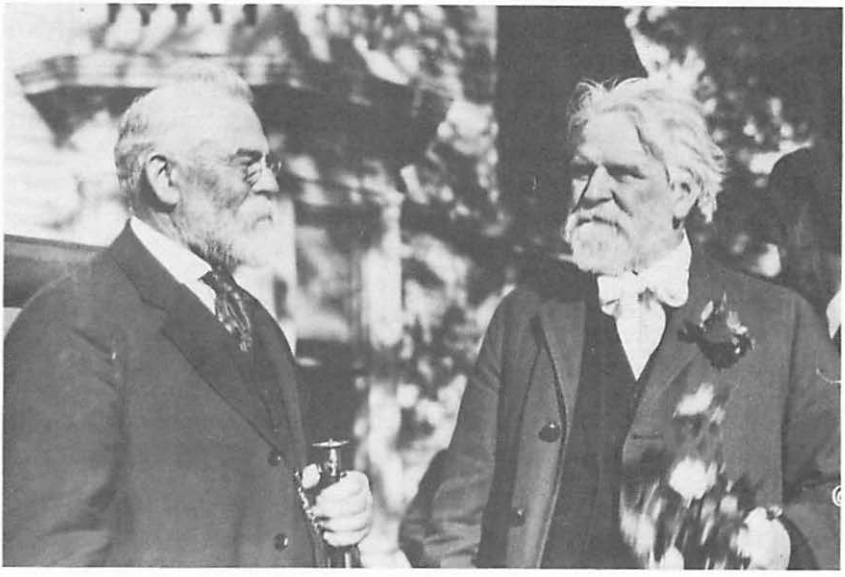
Now the bill was ready for the California State Senate. Rev. Kenna had followed Hill to Sacramento where he spent the day talking to various legislators brought to him by Hill. Even after the Assembly passage of the bill, a poll of Senators showed only seven in favor of the park.[41] Just before the Senate adjourned, Senator Charles M. Shortridge of San Jose, at Hill's request, asked the legislators to stay and listen to Rev. Kenna. Of the occasion, Rev. Kenna later wrote:

My remarks, though very simple, were given with an earnestness that made the Senators accept them as the sentiments of my heart. I said in part: 'Senators, I do not speak to you as a priest, nor as the president of a great college, nor in the language of such, but as a 'forty-niner,' and in the language of one who loves the great land of the West, and her magnificient forests which so often charmed my boyhood days and thrilled my young heart with high and noble aspirations. They spoke to me of Liberty, and they filled the mind with great thoughts and the soul with lofty aspirations. These redwoods are pre-eminently Californian, unique in their species and situation, and as a forty-niner I beg you to stay the hand that would harm those that still remain to recall the glories of those vast virgin forests now no more.'[42]

When the Senate vote was taken, the California Redwood Park bill passed almost unanimously. The lone vote in opposition came from the chairman of the Finance Committee who was in favor of the bill but felt he could not conscientiously vote for such a large expenditure.

After the passage of A B 873 by both the Assembly and Senate, problems were still encountered. Governor Henry T. Gage, given two forestry measures for signature had to make the decision to sign both, which was highly unlikely, or veto one. One measure was for the creation of a forestry and irrigation commission to plan a comprehensive policy of forest and land protection, while the other was for the creation of the state park in the Big

Hill's photograph of the visit to San Jose by President Theodore Roosevelt, May 1903.



Andrew P. Hill (left) with Edwin Markham, California poet. (Photo by Hill)

Basin. Governor Gage could sign only one of the bills if he were to uphold his party's stand against excessive government spending. The forestry commission bill had wide political backing and many legislators later said they voted for the Big Basin park bill only because they considered it a dead measure.[43]

Hill again went into action. He had long before used up the money given him for expenses by the Sempervirens Club and his own personal funds were negligible. But by moving to a cheaper room and eating at a laborer's lunch counter for fifteen cents a day,[44] he was able to budget enough for one final effort. Sending telegrams all over the state, Hill asked supporters of the California Redwood Park bill to send letters and telegrams to Governor Gage urging his signature on the bill. A public hearing was also set up by Governor Gage and the Sempervirens Club. Advocates for the park attended from all over the state. Speaking for the scholars and scientists were Professors William Dudley of Stanford and J. H. Senger of the University of California. Others speaking in favor of the park included representatives from the Native Sons and Native Daughters, and local Women's Clubs from throughout the state. Their adversaries were strong, but Hill and the park's supporters were unwilling to accept defeat.[45]

Governor Gage was faced with the decision: the public wanted him to sign the redwood park bill while the politicians wanted him to sign the forest and irrigation commission bill. To help make the decision, the Governor asked the advice of Dr. David S. Jordan, President of Stanford University. Dr. Jordan

argued in favor of the Big Basin park bill, pointing out to the Governor that the forestry commission bill could wait, while "any delay in connection with the proposed forest might be fatal."[46]

With overwhelming public support behind him, Governor Gage signed the California Redwood Park bill March 16, 1901, stating, "now poor and rich alike might enjoy the pleasures of these grand groves of nature."[47]

Hill and his associates had succeeded. The park was now a reality. The popularity of the bill's passage was acclaimed by the newspapers of California. A spokesman for the American Forestry Association stated:

> In this act California has not only done a great service to the cause of forest protection in the United States, but has also given her citizens a superb park for the enjoyment of themselves and their posterity.[48]

When President Theodore Roosevelt, himself a great conservationist, visited California in 1903, he said at Stanford University, May 12:

> ... the interest of California in forest protection was shown even more effectively by the purchase of the Big Basin Redwood Park, a superb forest property the possession of which should be a source of just pride to all citizens jealous of California's good name.[49]

Andrew P. Hill was also praised for his dedication to the creation of California's first state park. Perhaps the best tribute to Hill's work and his continuous dedication during the last 22 years of his life was that written in 1915 in a San Jose newspaper:

> Andrew P. Hill is one of the greatest promotion agents in all California ... Hours, days, weeks, months, years of incessant labor, of talking, begging, pleading, persuading followed, and only now, at this late day does Andrew P. Hill see the nearing of the fruition of all his labors and of those who have fought with him.[50]

The man who did so much to help establish the outstanding California State Park system of today was unable in his lifetime to amass any kind of an estate to leave his family. He did leave them a monument, however – Big Basin Redwood State Park – for "in truth it can be said that the Big Basin Park is the elongated shadow of Andrew P. Hill."[51]

Hill painting "The Automobile Tree" at Big Basin, 1914. This photo is typical of Hill's work habits as he always wore a suit and hat in the redwoods.

Hill's studio at Big Basin, finished in May 1918. After Hill's death in 1922, the studio served as park headquarters for many years.

Notes

[1] Frank E. Hill and Florence W. Hill, *The Acquisition of California Redwood Park* (San Jose: Privately Printed, 1927), pp. 10-11.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 14

[3] Andrew P. Hill, "History of the Redwood Park," p. 1 (Sempervirens Club Collection, San Jose Historical Museum).

[4] Hill and Hill, p. 14.

[5] Palo Alto *Times*, San Jose *Herald*, Santa Cruz *Sentinel*, May 1, 1900.

[6] Herbert C. Jones, "History of Acquisition of the Big Basin as a State Park," p. 2 (Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley).

[7] Eugene T. Sawyer, *History of Santa Clara County, California with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with its Growth and Developments from the Early Days to the Present* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1922), p. 207.

[8] Hill and Hill, p. 15.

[9] Hill, p. 2

[10] Hill and Hill, p. 17.

[11] Josephine Clifford McCrackin, "How the Big Basin Redwoods Were Saved," *Out West*, January 1904, p. 41.

[12] Hill and Hill, p. 18.

[13] Santa Cruz *Sentinel*, San Jose *Mercury*, May 19, 1900, pp. 2, 3.

[14] Boulder Creek *Mountain Echo*, May 16, 1900, p. 2. Author's note: Hill must have been lost in the Basin at least long enough for his friends to spread the alarm. All were perhaps embarrassed by the incident and played it down when visited by the editor of the Boulder Creek paper.

[15] Sawyer, p. 207.

[16] Hill, pp. 2-3.

[17] Arthur A. Taylor, *California Redwood Park: An Appreciation* (Sacramento: Superintendent of State Printing, 1912), pp. 36-37.

[18] Bertha Marguerite Rice, *Builders of Our Valley: A City of Small Farms*, Vol. I (San Jose: Privately Printed, 1957), p. 224.

[19] San Francisco *Chronicle*, July 16, 1900, p. 2.

[20] Hill and Hill, p. 20.

[21] Boulder Creek *Mountain Echo*, July 14, 1900, p. 6

[22] San Jose *Herald*, August 11, 1900.

[23] William R. Dudley, ed., "Forestry Notes," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1901, 266.

[24] San Jose *Herald*, August 11, 1900.

[25] Hill and Hill, pp. 20-21.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[27] *Final Calendar of Legislative Business, California Legislature, 1901* (Sacramento: n. p., 1901).

[28] Santa Cruz *Surf*, January 24, 1901, supp. 1.

[29] San Francisco *Bulletin*, January 24, 1901.

[30] George S. Walker, "Big Basin: Former Legislator Tells How the State Acquired its First Park," Santa Cruz *Sentinel*, February 21, 1952, p. 2.

[31] Thomas A. Jacobs, "A History of the Acquisition of the Big Basin as a State Park, 1902" (History 4031 Paper, California State University, Hayward, rev. 1972), pp. 12-13.

[32] Hill and Hill, pp. 20-22.

[33] Harriett Weaver, "He Saved the Redwoods," *Westways*, January 1954, p. 25.

[35] Letter, Herbert C. Jones, Sempervirens Club to Henry C. Jensen, Principal, Andrew P. Hill High School, December 5, 1960 (Library, Andrew P. Hill High School, San Jose).

[34] Hill and Hill, pp. 24-25.

[36] D. M. Delmas, *Speeches and Addresses* (San Francisco: A. M. Robertson, 1901), p. 363.

[37] Hill and Hill, pp. 24-25.

[38] Sawyer, pp. 208-209.

[39] Boulder Creek *Mountain Echo*, March 9, 1901, p. 5.

[40] Santa Cruz *Surf*, March 14, 1901, supp., p. 2.

[41] Sawyer, p. 209.

[42] Taylor, p. 36.

[43] Hill and Hill, p. 25.

[44] Buell D. Anderson, "A California Conservationist," *Sunset Magazine*, July 1914, 120.

[45] Hill and Hill, p. 26.

[46] David Starr Jordan, *The Days of a Man; Being Memories of a Naturalist, Teacher and Minor Prophet of Democracy, Volume I: 1851-1899* (Yonkers, New York: World Book Company, 1922), p. 519.

[47] Raymond C. Clar, *California Government and Forestry From Spanish Days until the Creation of the Department of Natural Resources in 1927* (Sacramento: State of California, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, 1959), p. 181.

[48] William R. Dudley, ed., "Forestry Notes," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, June 1901, p. 337.

[49] Theodore Roosevelt, *California Addresses* (San Francisco: The California Promotion Committee, 1903), p. 70.

[50] Hill and Hill, p. 47.

[51] Rice, p. 227.

A Frontier Agrarian Settlement: San José de Guadelupe, 1777–1850

Daniel J. Garr

ALTHOUGH the founding of well-planned, compact urban settlements was the essential intent of Spanish colonization, other considerations sometimes produced an outcome at variance with the urban centrality favored by the framers of colonial legislation. The failure to nucleate, although stemming from a variety of underlying causes, was mainly the result of both the lax political control characteristic of frontier environments and the agrarian orientation which inevitably superseded urban pretensions. Such was the case with California's first civilian settlement, the pueblo (town) of San José de Guadalupe, now a metropolitan center of more than 500,000 inhabitants located at the southern end of San Francisco Bay.

It was survival rather than strategic or developmental considerations which provided the primary motivation for the founding of pueblos in California. Seaborne shipments of supplies from the Gulf of California port of San Blas were costly, aud the journey around Baja California and up the Pacific Coast was perilous. The Franciscan missionary, Francisco Palou, tells us that the establishment of towns was one of Felipe de Neve's primary objectives upon becoming Governor of the Spanish province of California in 1774:

> From the very moment when Governor Don Felipe [de] Neve entered Monterey he was seized with anxiety as to how to support the inhabitants of the new establishments. He thought in the beginning that by increasing agriculture in the missions.... they could assist the three presidios with the surplus. But, being informed that this could not be done at once, for as the crops increase the consumers also increase, because of the new Christians who are being secured, he agreed to

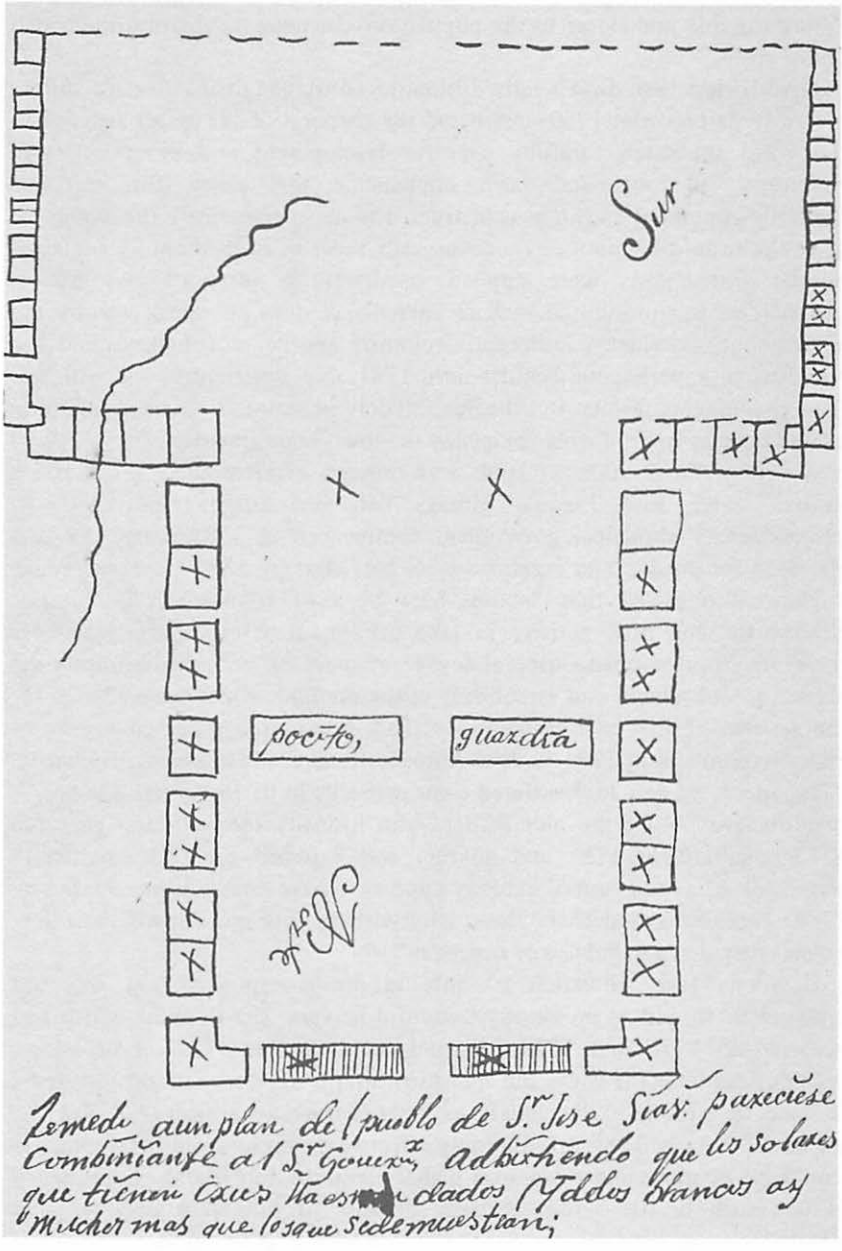
found a pueblo in a good place, made up entirely of Spaniards and castes, to be employed in the raising of every kind of grain and crops, so that all the presidios might be provided from them, especially when barks should not come or if they should suffer some disaster.[1]

In June, 1776, de Neve proposed to Viceroy Antonio Maria de Bucareli that experimental sowings be conducted to check the inevitable food shortages and to provide supplies at low cost.[2] But his intended solution involved plans on a larger scale, and he sought the Viceroy's endorsement for an ambitious and sweeping measure which would insure agricultural self-sufficiency for California. Once this approval was received, it was possible for de Neve to implement his design. During his 1777 provincial tour of inspection, he selected two particularly well-suited river locations where such cultivation could be instituted – one in northern California and the other in the south. Later on in that year, de Neve proceeded to found the northern pueblo of San José de Guadalupe. "The settlers," wrote Palou, "set out from the presidio of San Francisco on the 7th day of November, 1777, accompanied to the site by . . . lieutenant [José Joaquin Moraga]."[3] The friar chronicled the founding as follows:

Arrived there, he [Moraga] gave them possession in the name of his Majesty, marking out for them the plaza for the houses and distributing the houselots among them. He measured off for each one a piece of land for planting a *fanega* of corn, and for beans. They also proceeded to build a dam to take the water from the Guadelupe River, which is the one from which it must be drawn in ditches to irrigate the fields.[4]

In reporting his undertaking to Viceroy Bucareli, de Neve stressed San José's agrarian orientation. He wrote, "Considering the importance of said works . . . I have resolved to transfer nine soldiers, experienced in farming, from the small garrison of this [Monterey] Presidio and that of San Francisco." He related that the colonists numbered fourteen, "who with their families consist of sixty-six souls."[5] Bucareli heartily endorsed de Neve's actions and praised the selection of a "spacious plain which permits the distribution of lands to the present settlers and to new ones who will settle and give to the Town all the extensions filled with groves that are intended as *Ejidos* and *Dehesas*."[6] He also predicted that "within two years . . . there will be sufficient harvests to maintain not only this Presidio [Monterey] but also that of San Francisco which will result in the sufficient saving to the Royal Treasury for the population of these establishments and for the extension of the Catholic Religion to the numerous Gentiles who live in these lands."[7]

Unfortunately, circumstances did not bear out the Viceroy's optimism. The first sowing was almost completely lost in unseasonable flooding which occurred in July, 1778. A year later, inundations left San José submerged under more than three feet of water.[8] De Neve attempted to remedy the



Plan of the Pueblo of San José, probably before 1780. This unsigned, undated plan could be the work of José Joaquin Moraga. Reprinted through the courtesy of Western Title Insurance Company, San José, California.

situation by relocating the town's agricultural lands, removing them to a site "more suitable and closer to the population, changing the distribution which I have made."[9]

Nevertheless, San José's early difficulties continued unabated. An order, probably dating from 1780, instructed the corporal of the escort assigned to the town to watch carefully over its development and progress.[10] An inventory of tools and farm implements was called for and the militarily-appointed *alcalde* was instructed to audit frequently the supply of tools "in order to punish anyone who sells them or ruins them by neglect." Similar instructions were applied to livestock, weapons and horses; card-playing was prohibited.[11] Such surveillance does not speak well for the government's confidence in the early colonists, and Bancroft believes that San José was an experimental venture until 1781, and, apparently, one with less than encouraging results. But the Spanish determination to attain agricultural self-sufficiency in California compelled the town's continuation.

A formal distribution of lands was ordered in December, 1782, and a month later José Joaquin Moraga officially assigned houselots *en propriedad.*[12] Municipal government commenced in 1783 when the first elections for *alcalde* and *regidores* were held. But by 1786 Governor Pedro Fages had observed that "abuses have been experienced in its interior government and little activity in [the fulfillment of] its obligations." He therefore commissioned Corporal José Dominguez to "root out promptly the abuses in said pueblo and establish it in the methods which were advised for the success of the establishment."[13] This situation is reflected in one of Fages' comments in 1791 to José Antonio Romeu, his successor. He wrote, "The pueblo of San José suffered some setbacks in its first years due to . . . maldirection."[14] Of the nine settlers who formally received land grants in 1783, one left in 1785 and another was expelled for bad conduct.[15] Nevertheless, a modicum of industry appears to have finally been achieved by 1786. Fages indicated that "those who wish to sow more lands than they possess may do so in *baldios* or *realengas.*"[16]

However, the cultivation of this vacant government land was not undertaken to add to an already bountiful harvest. The flooding which had occurred in 1778 and 1779 persisted on a number of other occasions, probably because the town and its agricultural lands were still on too low a site and were prone to the climatic excesses of the rainy season.[17] It was first suggested in early 1785 that the only effective means to avoid these disasters would be to move the town to a higher elevation, but Moraga hesitated to initiate such drastic action partially because of boundary disputes that inevitably arose between the Santa Clara Mission and the pueblo, as well as the logistical problem of moving. The sentiment of the settlers, however, was in favor of relocation, and in August Fages wrote to Jacobo Ugarte y Loyola, Commandant General of the *Provincias Internas* requesting permission to move the town to a *lomita poco distente*. The change of site would not have represented a major dislocation for the settlers since at the time their houses

were only palisade structures with earthen roofs.[18] Ugarte approved the idea "as it would be more useful and advantageous," but warned that it must be done "without altering or varying . . . the limits and boundaries of the lands or districts assigned to said Town."

Yet, despite the decade or so of contemplation, the move was not undertaken until 1797. In January of that year, Marcos Chavoya, the *alcalde,* officially requested that the town be transferred, "recognizing the deplorable situation in which the Pueblo has found itself owing to the flooding of the *arroyos* which surround it."[19]

Although agricultural lands had been distributed formally in 1783, by 1794 the pattern of ownership bore no resemblance to its original state. This irregularity was noted by Governor José de Arrillaga in a report to Diego de Borica, his successor:

> In my last visit to the pueblo of San José I was told that the settlers attached to it did not own tillage lands and said lands were loaned by a Commissioner of Realengas; this arrangement impeded their working of those lands *con amor* as each time during the following year he would give those lands to someone else. I advised him that he should distribute four *suertes* to each settler under penalty of fines from the government and that these lands may not be transferred or sold without the consent of the Governor.[20]

But even under such conditions a surplus was achieved in 1796 which permitted the sale of two-hundred *fanegas* of maize to the Carmel Mission and six-hundred to that of San Francisco. An additional eight hundred were exported from the province. In 1790 only fifty-six *fanegas* of maize had been produced, thirty of which were surplus, and twenty-six were allocated to defray the expenses of municipal government.[21] The distribution of property suggested by de Arrillaga was contrary to all legislation and might have been the first in a series of incidents which provoked a stern warning from Mexico in 1805.[22] However, it may also reflect the uncertain conditions which were precipitated by the periodic inundations.

The second formal concession of land at San José took place in June, 1798 on the new town site.[23] Governor Fages noted that "it is proper to carry out the formalities requisite to confer possession of lands to the settlers of the Pueblo of San José de Guadelupe in order that they may live in uniform peace and quiet."[24] In distributing the lands, a space of ten *varas* between houselots was allocated for "the boundary for a division or street."[25] After the *solares* and *suertes* were allocated, the remaining territory was to be divided among *propios* and *realengas*.[26] The absence of *ejidos*, common lands, must have been the product of either confused terminology or of official indifference. The former is not likely since the governor of California was previously known to have possessed a copy of the ***Recopilación.*** Given the isolation and lack of development in California, it would appear plausible

that all the stipulations for municipal land tenure provided in the *Recopilación* were simply not taken seriously.

With respect to population, San José's original complement of nine households in 1777 had grown to eighteen in 1790; the total population was eighty, all of whom were natives of Mexico with the majority coming from Durango and Sonora.[27] By 1800 this number had more than doubled to 165.[28] Bancroft reported that it declined to about 125 in 1810, the reduction attributed to a mustering of troops in 1805-1806, which was dictated by colonial adjustments to the Napoleonic Wars. The presidial forces at Monterey and San Francisco were accordingly bolstered by some sixty men, half of them from San José, a fact substantiated by a report by Governor José de Arrillaga which indicated that there were very few able-bodied colonists remaining at San José.[29] Had such circumstances not intervened, the population of San José would have numbered about 250 in 1810.[30]

The 1820's witnessed a succession of foreign visitors who were more adventurous than those earlier who paid calls only at trade-oriented coastal presidios. Otto von Kotzebue's second visit to California brought him to San José which, in the fall of 1824, he described as a veritable Arcadia:

> This Pueblo lies in a beautiful spot. The houses are pleasant, built of stone, and stand in the midst of orchards, and hedges of vines bearing luxuriant clusters of the richest grapes. The inhabitants came to meet us, and with much courteousness, blended with the ceremonious politeness of the Spaniards, invited us to enter their simple but cleanly dwellings. All their countenances bespoke health and contentment, and they have good cause to rejoice in their lot. Unburthened by taxes of any kind, and in possession of as much land as they choose to cultivate, they live free from care on the rich produce of their fields and herds.[31]

Duhaut-Cilly saw things in a somewhat harsher light in July, 1827. He was impressed with the great fertility of the Santa Clara Valley, but found that "the natural laziness of these creoles . . . has arrested the development and led to the decadence of the establishment."[32] He estimated the population at 800, including about 150 Indian domestics.[33] But these figures seem to be exaggerated in light of his count of only eighty dwellings. A few months earlier, Beechey guessed the population to be about 500. By that time, the well-known tree-shaded *alameda* that led from the Santa Clara Mission to San José was completed; Beechey was the first to mention it and wrote that the town consisted of "mudhouses miserably provided for in every respect."[34] And those who lived in them were wont to "style themselves *Gênte de Razon*, to distinguish them from the Indians, whose intellectual qualities are frequent subjects of animadversion amongst these enlightened communities."[35] An 1828 census revealed all previous guesses to be inflated; the population was 415, rising to 524 three years later.[36] Alfred Robinson, in

the spring of 1829, observed that San José had grown to about 100 houses and possessed the basic complement of public buildings typical of an Hispanic town: a church, a town hall, and jail. Unfortunately, he made no remarks concerning the appearance of the plaza or the plan of the town. His comments with respect to the inhabitants elaborated on those of Duhaut-Cilly:

> The men are generally indolent, and addicted to many vices, caring little for the welfare of their children, who, like themselves, grow up unworthy members of society. Yet, with vices so prevalent amongst the men, the female portion of the community . . . do not seem to have felt its influence, and perhaps there are few places in the world where . . . can be found more chastity, industrious habits and correct deportment than among the women of this place.[37]

By the mid-1830's San José was the largest town in northern California. Faxon Atherton first arrived in May of 1836 and was impressed with the rich and extensively-cultivated lands.[38] He returned the following November and remarked that it was "beautifully situated for a large town," but there his enchantment ended. The people were "a most villainous set of scoundrels, their chief pride being to see who can cheat a foreigner the most."[39] He must have had a series of unfortunate experiences in San José because upon his return in August, 1837, he wrote, "It would in my opinion be dangerous for me to stop (in) this vile place over a week as I am sure I should shoot myself the second. A mere sight of the place give me the blues for a week."[40]

The agrarian character of San José was quite pronounced during this period. Wilkes found it almost deserted when he passed through in 1841.[41] It had developed a prosperous agricultural economy, and Belden wrote that those "who had any wealth, had it in cattle, at their ranches in the vicinity."[42] Contrary to Kotzebue's recollections, he asserted that the town possessed only a few adobe houses; the rest were *pala parada*, consisting of "posts standing upright in the ground, and then filled in with mud, and with a thatch of straw over the roof." Belden offered these further comments on housing:

> The people lived in a primitive rude state. Although they had large houses, they were only partially floored; they usually contained one large room in the middle, for a kind of hall or general room, and at the end a kind of shed for the kitchen and cooking. Except in some of the best families, they did not generally have any table set in their rooms. They would commonly go into the kitchen and have the food taken from the kettles, and passed around in plates.[43]

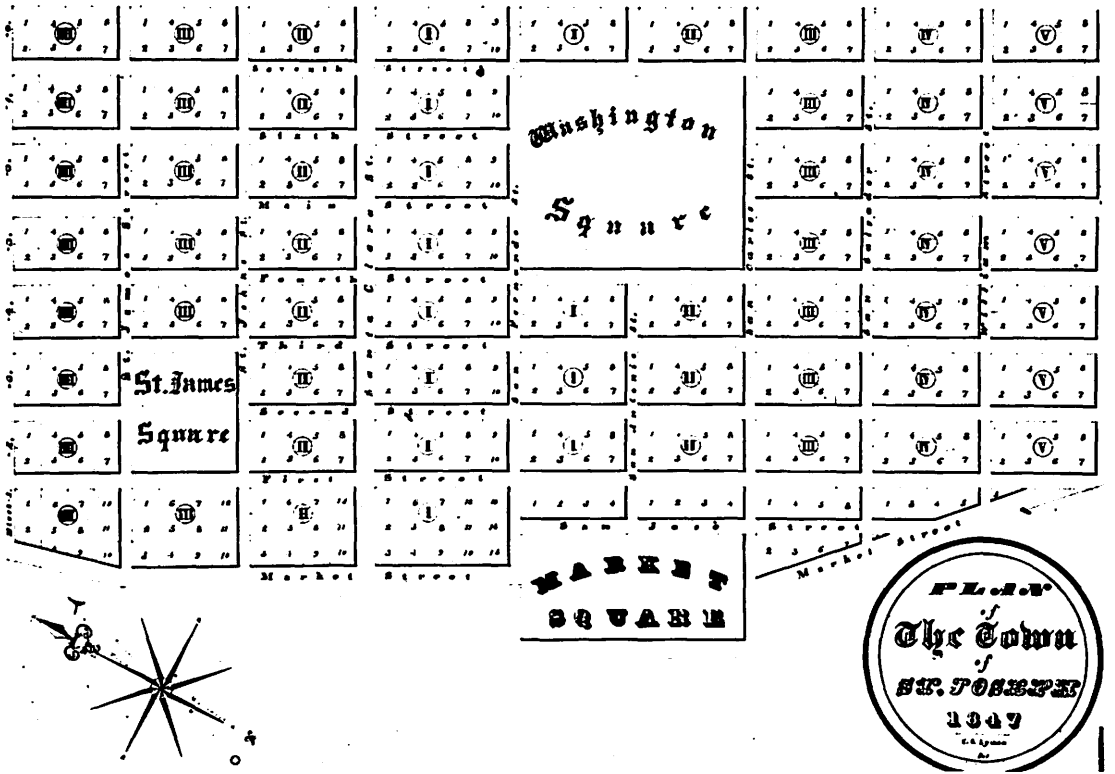
Even by the necessarily limited standards of a native Californian, San José "was in a condition of greater backwardness than those of the other points on the map . . . and still more so in its fiestas and amusements."[44] As late as

1846, it was still a "straggling village . . . hardly worth describing."[45] And in the spring of 1847, General Sherman reported it to be "a string of low adobe houses festooned with red peppers and garlic."[46]

The first real indication of the urban form of San José dates from 1846, and, apparently, it differed little from the laissez-faire arrangement of other California towns. Bryant wrote that "the streets are irregular, every man having erected his house in a position most convenient to him."[47] The plaza was the area for the frolicking of "hundreds, perhaps thousands of squirrels, whose abodes are under ground."[48] It is not known which buildings faced on the plaza; the church was located "near the centre of the town [and] exteriorly resembled a huge Dutch barn." The other buildings, by then mostly adobe, lacked "even the smallest pretensions to architectural taste or beauty."[49]

The first survey of San José was carried out in February, 1847. Prior to that time there was no regular arrangement of streets nor, as elsewhere, did most settlers possess written titles to their land.[50] The *ayuntamiento* directed William Campbell to survey a plot of land measuring one mile square and to divide it into streets and building lots, the latter measuring fifty square *varas*. Upon completion of the survey, those owning land within its limits were instructed to present their claims so that written titles could be registered.[51] Another survey by Campbell and his brother was conducted in May, 1847 from which additional lot grants were made, all of which were sustained in subsequent litigation. The extent to which these surveys differed is not known, and it is doubtful whether they still survive. In July, 1847, J.D. Hutton was commissioned to undertake a survey of outlying lands, dividing them into lots of 500 acres (2,000 square *varas*), a measurement which was intended to correspond to *suertes;* as if to emphasize the validity of the survey, the tracts were to be distributed by lot. However, these subdivisions were later annulled. Since a *suerte* measured 200 square *varas* and, according to prior practice, an individual was normally granted four, it is not surprising that this irregularity caused the survey not to be confirmed. In January, 1848 the *alcalde* complained that Hutton had defrauded the citizens; his 500 acre lots were found to measure from 200 to 300 acres at most.[52] Still another survey was conducted in 1847 by C. S. Lyman, a Yale professor and United States surveyor; this effort served as the basis for the municipal grant to which the town was entitled.[53] In appearance, the Lyman survey bore little resemblance to the original Spanish plan. Only in its directional orientation is there evidence of Hispanic planning. The corners of the plaza are roughly in correspondence to the so-called cardinal points of the compass. Thus, the streets would not be exposed to the winds which the Spanish archaically believed to originate from those four directions.

At the close of the Mexican era, San José was predominantly a Hispanic-Californian town with a population of about 700.[54] Shortly after, it was selected as the capital of California which "gave to it an impetus, and



Plan of the Town of St. Joseph, 1847. Drawn by C. S. Lyman. Reprinted with the permission of Mrs. Helen Kennedy, Stockton, California.

brought it at once into notice"; but this status was short-lived.[55] When Bayard Taylor passed through in 1849, San José "was mainly a collection of adobe houses, with tents and few clapboard dwellings, of the season's growth, scattered over a square half mile."[56]

It is clear that San José was not a town of much consequence prior to American rule. There were none of the political intrigues which made Los Angeles a hotbed of activity. There was little or no commerce to compete with that of Monterey, the perennial seat of the customs house, or with the fabulous growth experienced at San Francisco. It was a pastoral town, as had been conceived at the outset. Bryant noted that "the population of the place is composed chiefly of native Californian land-proprietors. Their *ranchos* are in the valley, but their residences and gardens are in the town."[57] As was the case with many towns in northern Mexico, San José was delineated by the forces of dispersal. Certainly, there were few, if any, resources concentrated in the development of the town. There was no obligation for *vecinos* (citizens) to maintain a house in town, and only twice in California, both times prior to 1800, did the government attempt to encourage such urban centrality. In 1773, Viceroy Bucareli ordered that those who were granted lands "according to their merit and means of labor" must live "in town and not dispersed."[58] Later, in 1797, Governor Borica sought to compel retired soldiers to settle in towns instead of at their countryside *ranchos*.[59] However, the threat of militia duty which was tendered did not precipitate the desired change. Government control was not sufficient to enforce the whims of the Madrid bureaucracy when these designs lacked practical incentive.

With no political activity and little commerce, San José possessed few magnetic attractions. Its chief asset was the Santa Clara Valley, which, Bryant observed, "if properly cultivated, would alone produce breadstuffs enough to supply millions of population."[60] Duflot de Mofras was indeed uncanny in his prediction of a South Bay metropolis more than a century before it was to flourish: "It is without doubt that ... the population of the Pueblo will grow, and the space which separates it from Santa Clara will be filled with houses, the location being extremely favorable for the establishment of a great city."[61]

The early years of San José illustrate the inherent conflict between its agrarian rationale and its urban heritage, an irreconcilable set of cross-purposes which permitted neither objective to be adequately fulfilled prior to 1800. If it's agricultural pre-eminence had been given proper recognition, perhaps the problem of poor siting could have been avoided. These difficulties symbolize the inability of California's colonial officials to merge the Hispanic urban tradition with the exigencies of topography. By the time an equilibrium could be reached, it was the agrarian and pastoral impulses which prevailed over considerations of urban form and the lesser corollary objectives of economic and social cohesion.

Footnotes

[1] Francisco Palou, *Noticias de la Neuva California*, ed. & trans. Herbert E. Bolton (4 vols; New York: Russell & Russell, 1966), IV, 166.

[2] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California* (7 vols; San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Co., 1884-1890), I, 311.

[3] Palou, IV, 167-168.

[4] Ibid.

[5] De Neve to Bucareli, Monterey, April 15, 1778, California Archives, Bancroft Library (CA), *Provincial Records*, I, 9.

[6] Bucareli to de Neve, Mexico, July 22, 1778, CA, *State Papers. Missions and Colonization*, I, 29-30. Charles III acknowledged and approved the founding on March 6, 1779; it was communicated to de Neve on July 19, 1779 (Teodoro de Croix to de Neve, Nombre de Dios, July 17, 1779, CA, *Provincial State Papers*, I, 334). In addition, much of the detail is re-stated in Bucareli's report to the King (Bucareli to Charles III, Mexico, July 27, 1778, Romulo Velasco Ceballos, ed., *La Administración de D. Frey Antonio Maria de Bucareli y Ursua* [2 vols; Mexico: Publicaciones del Archivo General de la Nación, 1936]), I, 436-437.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Maynard J. Geiger, O.F.M. *The Life and Times of Fray Junípero Serra* (2 vols; Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1959), II, 200.

[9] De Neve to Croix, Monterey, August 11, 1778, CA, *Provincial Records*, I, 92.

[10] Anonymous, n.pl., n.d. [c. 1780], CA, *Provincial Records*, I, 339-341.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Moraga to Governor Pedro Fages, San Francisco, January 4, 1783, CA, *State Papers. Missions*, II, 31-33.

[13] Fages to Teodoro de Croix, Monterey, February 1, 1785, CA, *Provincial Records*, I, 188. Bancroft attributed the difficulties to conflict among the *alcalde* and *regidores*, (I, 478).

[14] Fages to Romeu, "Informes Particulares al Gobr Romeu," Monterey, February 26, 1791, CA, *Provincial State Papers*, VI, 154.

[15] Bancroft, I, 477.

[16] Fages to Ignacio Vallejo, Monterey, November 1. 1785, *Departmental State Papers, San José*, I, 15.

[17] Bancroft, I, 479.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Chavoya to Gov. Diego de Borica, San José, January 10, 1797, CA, *Provincial State Papers*, IX, 25-26.

[20] Arrillaga to Borica, n.pl., n.d., 1794, CA, *Provincial State Papers*, VII, 189.

[21] Santiago Arguello to Fages, San José, December 31, 1790, CA, *Provincial State Papers*, V, 225-226. (Borica to San José *comisionado*, Monterey, November 30, 1796, CA, *Departmental State Papers. San José* I, 73).

[22] Conde del Valle de Orizaba, Mexico, December 20, 1805, CA, *Provincial State Papers*, XII, 15.

[23] Fages, Monterey, June 12, 1798. CA. *State Papers., Missions and Colonization,* I, 241-268.

[24] Ibid., p. 241.

[25] Ibid., p. 249.

[26] Ibid., p. 268.

[27] Census, October 5, 1790, CA, *State Papers. Missions,* I, 61-64.

[28] Census, December 31, 1800, CA, *Provincial State Papers,* XI, 181-183.

[29] Cited in Bancroft, II, 133.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Otto von Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World in the Years 1823-1826* (2 vols; London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), II, 100-101.

[32] Auguste Duhaut-Cilly, *Voyage Autour du Monde* (2 vols; Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1834-35), II, 91.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Frederic W. Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Beering's Strait* (2 vols; London: Henry, Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), II, 47.

[35] Ibid., pp. 47-48.

[36] Census, September 30, 1828, CA, *Departmental State Papers,* I, 249; H. S. Foote, ed. *Pen Pictures from the Garden of the World or Santa Clara County, California* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1888), p. 36.

[37] Alfred Robinson, *Life in California* (Oakland: Biobooks, 1947), p. 47.

[38] Faxon Dean Atherton, *California Diary, 1836-1839,* ed. Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. (San Francisco, & Los Angeles: California Historical Society, 1964), p. 7.

[39] Ibid., p. 36.

[40] Ibid., p. 60.

[41] Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842,* (5 vols; Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1845), V, 208.

[42] Josiah Belden, *Memoir and Early Letters,* ed. Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. (Georgetown, Cal: Talisman Press, 1962), p. 47. The location of Belden's San José dwelling is now marked by a sign on North First Street.

[43] Ibid., pp. 47-48.

[44] José Arnaz, *Recuerdos* (Bancroft Library MS, 1878), p. 48.

[45] Joseph Warren Revere, *A Tour of Duty in California* (New York & Boston: C.S. & J.H. Francis, 1849), p. 54.

[46] William Tecumseh Sherman, *Recollections of California, 1846-1861* (Oakland: Biobooks, 1945), p. 21.

[47] Edwin Bryant, *What I Saw in California . . . in the Years 1846, 1847* (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1967), p. 316.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Of the few land grants made in 1846, only one was subsequently confirmed in the United States courts (Bancroft, V, 664).

[51] Foote, p. 81.

[52] Bancroft, V.665.

[53] Foote, p. 82

[54] Bancroft, VI, 4.

[55] John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua* (2 vols; New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1854), I, 68.

[56] Bayard Taylor, *Eldorado, or Adventures in the Path of Empire* (2 vols;New York: G. Putnam's Sons, 1850), I, 68.

[57] Bryant, p. 316.

[58] Bucareli, "Instruccíon que debe observar el Commandante nombrado para los Establecimientos de San Diego y Monterey," Mexico, August 17, 1773, CA, *State Papers. Missions and Colonization*, I, 324-328.

[59] Borica to Presidio Commandants, Monterey, October 15, 1797, CA, *Provincial Records*, II, 435-436.

[60] Bryant, p. 316.

[61] Eugène Duflot de Mofras, *Exploration du Territoire de l'Orégon, des Californies, et de la Mer Vermeille* (2 vols; Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1844), I, 416.

California State Normal School: The First Years in San Jose

Benjamin F. Gilbert

A century ago in 1876, the students and faculty of San José State University, then known as California State Normal School, and the citizens of San José celebrated the nation's centennial. Throughout the year they reflected upon their progress since 1776. Now, San José State University and the community are celebrating the bicentennial of both the founding of the United States and the founding of San José, California's first pueblo or civic settlement. When the thirteen English colonies on the Atlantic side of the continent declared their independence on July 4, 1776, Juan Bautista de Anza was opening an overland route on the Pacific side from Sonora in northern New Spain to San Francisco. The Anza party camped near Cupertino and crossed the Guadalupe River near Agnew, noting that the upper portion of the Santa Clara Valley, then named Llaño de los Robles (the Plain of the Oaks), would make an excellent location for a settlement. On January 12, 1777, the first site of Mission Santa Clara was found in the fertile lowlands of the Guadalupe River. Later in the year, on November 29th, El Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe was founded on the eastern bank of the river about three miles from Mission Santa Clara. Governor Felipe de Neve recruited nine families from the presidios of San Francisco and Monterey and five families from the Anza party. These *pobladores* totaled sixty-six individuals, who were escorted from San Francisco to San José by Lieutenant José Joaquin Moraga.

In Spanish and Mexican California, little formal education was known. The missions served as training schools in the industrial and agricultural arts. During the Spanish era, other schools were mainly taught by retired soldiers

who could barely read and write. In the Mexican era that followed, Governor José Figueroa improved the schools at Monterey and Los Angeles and started several schools elsewhere. Figueroa also encouraged the opening of *El Seminario de San José* at Monterey in 1834. Its headmaster, William Hartnell, moved the school to his ranch near Salinas, but it only lasted a few years. In 1844, an ecclesiastical seminary was begun at Mission Santa Inés.

After the United States conquered California, the Constitution of 1849 provided for a state university, but the lack of advanced students and inadequate finances delayed the chartering of the University of California for nineteen years. The first Legislature meeting at San José in 1849 and 1850 enacted a measure permitting the incorporation of colleges. The first chartered college established under this law was the California Wesleyan College (later renamed University of the Pacific), founded on July 10, 1851 in San José. Earlier in that same year, a school had been founded at Mission Santa Clara by Father John Nobili with twelve pupils, two secular teachers, and an Indian cook. Known as Santa Clara College, it was empowered to grant degrees in 1855. Meanwhile, in 1853 the Scientific and Classical School at Contra Costa had opened in Oakland as a high school for boys with Henry Durant as principal. It was incorporated as the College of California in 1855 and merged with the University of California in 1868. Private and public elementary schools continued to develop throughout California as did a few private high schools. The first public high school opened in 1856 as part of the Union Grammar School of San Francisco. During these early Gold Rush years, however, school officials were unable to do much about the training of teachers because of the mobility of a mining society, and in 1854 William H. O'Grady, Superintendent of Schools of San Francisco complained about ineffective teaching in his annual report to the Common Council. Shortly afterwards, San Francisco school officials launched a movement to transmit the successful New England concept of teacher training in normal schools to California.

ORIGINS IN SAN FRANCISCO

California's first public-supported institution of higher learning originated in San Francisco in 1857 as Minns' Evening Normal School. The City and County of San Francisco initially founded the school to train its own teachers. Classes were held on Monday evenings for five years until 1862, when the State of California assumed responsibility for the institution during Leland Stanford's tenure as governor. Minns' Evening Normal School then became the California State Normal School, a daytime school designed to prepare teachers for the entire state.

In San Francisco, the Normal School depended upon the local school board for its building and never had a permanent home. Housed in six different locations from 1862 to 1871, its intended goals of teacher preparation and good citizenship appeared impeded. The noisy city traffic

tended to disrupt its educational process, and worst of all, the students were disturbed by what Principal, or President, William Thomas Lucky described as the "temptations" of San Francisco. He thus began a search for a new location that avoided such distractions – a search that ultimately resulted in moving the Normal School to San José.

President Lucky headed the fledging California State Normal School during the crucial era of the last three years in San Francisco and its first two years in San José. A Kentuckian and a graduate from McKendree College in Illinois, Lucky had been appointed President of Howard Female College in Missouri in 1859. But the outbreak of the Civil War temporarily closed that college causing Lucky to lose his job. He then decided to migrate to California to seek new opportunities. In addition to his experience as a college president, Lucky was also a Methodist minister. Upon reaching California, Lucky accepted the presidency of Pacific Methodist College in Vacaville as well as a professorship of moral and intellectual sciences. With a salary of $4,000 per year, Lucky was the highest paid teacher in California; nonetheless, in 1867, he resigned his position to open his own private school in the East Bay called the Alameda Seminary. The new school was not a financial success, and he soon became principal of San Francisco's famed Lincoln Grammar School before a vacancy enabled him to head the California State Normal School.

Lucky's religious background apparently caused him to view San Francisco as a city of sin. He felt that the "Normalites" in his charge, then largely young ladies away from home for the first time, might be tempted by the city's distractive environment. The crowded cosmopolitan and financially-oriented city with its many saloons and high crime rate was simply not the proper place. Lucky often complained that the school needed better student housing, pointing out that the girls were compelled to live with private parties unqualified to assume moral direction.

Dissatisfaction with the San Francisco location mounted. On October 21, 1868, a severe earthquake struck the city, causing minor damage at the School. In exploring alternative locations, the Trustees of the Normal School decided to confer with the Regents of the University of California on the possibility of a merger with that newly-chartered institution, which was preparing to open at its first site in Oakland. At the same time the Trustees appointed a committee to find a better location and to reorganize the institution.

In 1869 the State Board of Education decided to move the school from San Francisco. The final selection of a new site was left to the Legislature, but before the solons could act, keen competition developed among several California communities to win the coveted prize. The San José *Mercury* of June 3, 1869, in an editorial boasted: "San José is the third city of California in point of population and is situated in the heart of the most beautiful valley in the State." The *Mercury* also exclaimed: "The climate is all that can be desired. The place is convenient of access, even in foggy mornings! We

respectfully submit that no other town in the State possesses like advantages for the location of the State Normal School."

At Napa, property-holders offered to tax themselves to gain the Normal School, asserting that their climate was more "salubrious" than San José. Moreover, Napa residents claimed that their mineral springs and natural curiosities would afford the students greater advantages in scientific studies. An Oakland newspaper, the *Transcript*, argued that its city was the recognized educational center of the State and that by locating there, the Normal School students could have access to the University of California library. Other cities made inviting bids and San Francisco sought to retain the institution.

The students themselves, voted to remain in San Francisco, since they regarded the city as a cultural center. However, when the city fathers of San José invited the school to a visit and the San José Railroad Company offered free passes for the trip, the invitation was readily accepted. On December 21, 1869, the 180 students and teachers embarked on the morning train for San José. Upon their arrival some slight confusion occurred, since the reception committee had gathered at the wrong depot. This misunderstanding was soon cleared up, however, and the "Normalites" first inspected the court house, viewing the city from its dome. After touring other San José sites, the group adjourned to the Auzerais House where they were served a lunch. The party then visited Market Plaza, one of the proposed sites for the Normal School, and the adjoining convent gardens. Students and faculty alike were highly impressed by what San José could offer.

The day before the San José excursion, Lucky had submitted a report to Oscar P. Fitzgerald, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, pointing out the disadvantages of the school facilities furnished by San Francisco. He also mentioned that increased enrollment and the urgency for a new building were reasons to move. Although Lucky admitted that some valid arguments existed for staying in San Francisco, he said: "After mature reflection, I am fully convinced that the best interests of the school and of the pupils attending, will be promoted by locating where there is more quiet and fewer temptations."

The Rev. William Lucky again visited San José on February 1, 1870. In the evening he addressed a large audience at Armory Hall, expressing his determination to move his young ladies out of San Francisco. He enumerated the various moral and pecuniary assets that the Normal School could bring to any community and recommended its location in San José to make the city "synonymous with education as Stockton is synonymous with insanity." Lucky was referring to the fact that Stockton had the State Insane Asylum and enjoyed the financial advantages of housing a state institution while San José had no such benefit. Two days after Lucky's Armory Hall speech, the San José *Mercury* assured its readers that: "Unlike a college or State University that attracts many fast and mischievous young men, not a desirable acquisition to any community, the Normal School comprises only the most desirable class of young people."

While the major cities of northern California spiritedly contended to win possession of the School, the people of San José debated the question of the best site within their city. At first San José had offered Market Square as the site, but subsequently it was considered too small in area. The city fathers next proposed Washington Square for the location. The *Mercury* countered with a proposal that the Santa Clara County Agricultural Society should be persuaded to relinquish the fair grounds on the Alameda. The newspaper described the grounds as an excellent tract of eighty acres, asserting that the Normal School would be more valuable than any number of "agricultural horse trots." A fourth site considered by San Joseans was the Sullivan Tract, just east of the Coyote Bridge.

Meanwhile, the Legislature had appointed a joint committee of the Assembly and Senate to determine the new permanent location. The committee visited San Francisco, Stockton, Oakland, San José, Santa Clara, Napa, Martinez, and Petaluma. A majority report favored San José whereas a minority report boosted Martinez. On March 8, 1870, the Assembly and Senate sat in a joint convention and on the fifth ballot decided in favor of San José.

Actually the Legislature's decision had been greatly influenced by Lucky's arguments. Lucky had also persuaded State Superintendent Fitzgerald that San José was the preferred place. Fitzgerald told the legislators that the Normal School could not flourish in a great commercial city such as San Francisco, and he contended that neither Oakland nor Berkeley was the place because the Normal School would be overshadowed by the University of California with its "magnificent endowment and huge proportions." He noted that San José was accessible from all parts of the state and that it had an excellent climate and suitable facilities. Moreover, he said:

> In addition to these intrinsic advantages of San Jose, as the location for the State Normal School, on the principle of an equitable and judicious distribution of State institutions, there is an obvious propriety in locating it there. Sacramento has the State Capital; Stockton has the State Insane Asylum; Oakland has the University and the Deaf, Dumb and Blind Institute; San Francisco has several institutions that receive State aid; San Jose has nothing. At San Jose the Normal School would be an object of local pride and attachment, while, like "a city set on an hill," it would cast its beams of light over the whole State.

After the Legislature had voted for San José, Governor Henry Haight, Superintendent Fitzgerald, and President Lucky visited the city in early April, 1870, to investigate further the best site. At the time of the visit, the *Mercury* reported that Lucky planned a boarding house on the grounds and wanted sufficient land to keep cows and to raise fruits and vegetables. Four months later, the Common Council of the City of San José donated Washington Square to the state for the Normal School. The 27-acre square was then 1,005 by 1,161 feet, extending from San Fernando to San Carlos Street and from Fourth to Seventh Street.

WASHINGTON SQUARE

Washington Square was selected as the campus because it was in the heart of the city and near transportation. It was low and marshy land with adobe soil. The plot was first surveyed in 1848 by Chester S. Lyman, who named it after George Washington. On July 15, 1851, it had been deeded to the City of San José along with other land for the sum of $1,549 by James Frazier Reed, an organizer and survivor of the ill-fated Donner Party of 1846. Later it was reserved as a public park and some minor improvements were made. By 1860 there was a public school, known as the School House of District No. 1, on the southeast corner of the plot. On April 11th of that year, the San José *Telegraph* complained that drovers were illegally pasturing their livestock within the city limits and stated: "Large bodies of cattle and horses are daily driven upon Washington Square and there pastured under the charge of a herdsman." The newspaper considered this intrusion a threat to the school children on Washington Square, protesting: "the lives of these little ones are continually endangered in going to and from school, by wild cattle pasturing near the schoolhouse."

In 1862 a new hazard had polluted the environment of this square when a dog pound called the "Bastile" was erected in its center. The San José *Tribune* of December 20, 1862, in an article entitled "Washington Square," labeled it the "Dismal Swamp" of the town and stated: "You have apparently left the near precincts of the city when you have reached Washington Square." The *Tribune* reporter wrote: "Half a dozen sedate curs were tied round the pen . . ." condemned to imprisonment and the "ax of the executioner." The reporter also described the swampy and alkali ground of the northern side of the square and the rubbish piles on the western side. He then envisaged a future Washington Square with sewers draining off its excess water, ornamental trees protected by a fence, graded walkways, and a statue of George Washington gracing the site where the dog "Bastile" stood.

During the winter of 1864-65, the city had begun erecting a fence around the square. The San José *Mercury* of January 6, 1865, stated: "The labor of fencing in Washington Square is progressing finely. It has been an unsightly goose pasture, and depository of rubbish, about long enough." On February 16th, the *Mercury* reported other improvements stating that a walk was to be constructed around the outside of the square lined with shade trees and that inside the square and adjoining the completed fence, a strip ninety feet wide was to be planted with five rows of trees. Despite these improvements, Washington Square remained a goose pasturage for some time. On November 9th, the *Mercury* reported that two "smart hunters" had been recently seen at an early hour "blazing away at the tame geese on Washington Square, mistaking them for wild fowl of the same species." After realizing their mistake, the two hunters sought the owner of the two geese to pay damages. The *Mercury* concluded: "If they had annihilated the whole flock, they would have been entitled to the thanks of the public." Four months before

the California State Normal School moved to San José, the public school on Washington Square was destroyed by a fire, believed to have been incendiary, on the night of February 12, 1871.

SAN JOSE IN 1870

San José in 1870 was a thriving city with a population of 9,089. During its first ninety-three years it had been a Spanish and Mexican pueblo, a town under United States military government, briefly California's first state capital, and since 1850 an incorporated city. During the next decade, the city's population was to increase 38.3 per cent. As county seat of Santa Clara County, the city was proud of its beautiful court house with its lofty dome. The first San José city directory appeared in 1870, calling the community the "Eden of California" and praising the excellent school system, rich orchards and vineyards, flourishing foundries and flour mills, and new woolen factories. The city had five newspapers, three banks, three benevolent societies, forty-one lawyers, and thirty-two physicians. Two railroads converged at San José, and the Southern Pacific had extended its line to Gilroy the year before. During the strawberry season, a steamer plied between San Francisco and Alviso on a regular schedule carrying freight and passengers bound for San José and Santa Clara. Moreover, H.G. Wade, the Alviso warehouseman, operated the schooner ***Fairfield*** to serve Santa Clara Valley farmers who wanted to ship their produce by water to San Francisco and avoid the "exorbitant" railroad rates. A horse-car line ran between San José and Santa Clara along the Alameda shaded by trees planted by Mission Santa Clara padres and Indians in 1799. The city's streets were described as broad and macadamized. By 1873 the introduction of asphalt sidewalks in the downtown section brought a change that the San José ***Mercury*** called a "truly citified air."

Among other attractions in the proud city were the Convent of Notre Dame, Brohaska's Opera House, Musical Hall, Waldteufel's Book Store, and the beautiful estate and gardens of General Henry Morris Naglee, Civil War hero and prosperous viticulturalist and brandy-manufacturer. On the city's rustic outskirts were two already noteworthy educational institutions, the University of the Pacific and Santa Clara College. Santa Clara County's population of 26,246 was to increase 33.1 per cent during the decade. The county's real and personal property values totaled $39,877,413, according to the 1870 federal census, being exceeded in California only by San Francisco.

THE FIRST YEARS

Ceremonies of laying the cornerstone of the first California State Normal School building took place on October 20, 1870, and were conducted by the grand lodge of Masons of California, assisted by the Howard Chapter of Royal Arch Masons and the San José Encampment No. 35 of the Independent Order

of Odd Fellows. First a grand procession formed in front of the San José City Hall. The group commenced marching, preceded by the Cornet Band. At the Auzerais House they were joined by the students and faculty of the Normal School, who had traveled from San Francisco for the occasion. The parading units proceeded up First Street to San Antonio Street where they turned east, marching forward to Washington Square and the site of the foundations of the structure. A large audience of San José citizens and school children assembled to witness the historic event.

Principal Lucky opened the ceremonies with a prayer, followed by music by the band. Superintendent Fitzgerald then invited the grand lodge to lay the cornerstone. A box containing memorabilia and historical documents was deposited beneath the cornerstone. Among the contents were a copy of the California school laws, a Normal School diploma, contemporary California newspapers, an account written in Spanish of the founding of the first public school in San José on October 26, 1811, and a copy of the San José City Charter. Next, the building's architect, Theodore Lenzen, distributed the working tools among the Masonic officers. The Grand Master, Leonidas Pratt, poured corn, wine, and oil on the cornerstone. After it was laid, he gave a brief speech and then Superintendent Fitzgerald delivered the main address. Fitzgerald stated that the day was symbolic of the transition of California from a preparatory period of society to one with well-established institutions, and he prophesied a future California with a population of two million people.

Meanwhile, the Normal School continued to operate on Market Street in San Francisco, but on February 4, 1871, it was officially notified to vacate its building there at the close of the term in March. Since the building on Washington Square was not ready, the School formally opened in San José, on June 14, 1871, in the Santa Clara Street School. Approximately 150 students, representing fifteen counties, were in attendance. The San José *Mercury* remarked:"They are intelligent and a fine appearing body of young men and women whose faces would be a passport to the best society in any refined community." A large audience assembled for the opening ceremonies. State and local school officials and members of the Common Council of San José occupied the platform. Professor Merzbach played piano selections, the Rev. A. M. Bailey offered prayer, and a quartet sang. Judge Archer gave an address on behalf of the city and Superintendent Fitzgerald responded for the State. City Superintendent W. B. Hardy said a few words for the Board of Education and Dr. Lucky replied. A trio sang "Oh Restless Sea" and the Rev. W.J. Maclay gave a benediction, saying: "Thus the State Normal School enters upon its noble work in the field of its permanent location."

Within a few weeks the institution moved to the Reed Street School. The faculty at this time included Lucky, Vice-Principal Henry P. Carlton, Eliza Houghton, and Dorcas Clark. No training school to give the students an opportunity for practice teaching had been started as yet in San José. Dr. Lucky's plan for a boarding house had not materialized, and students were

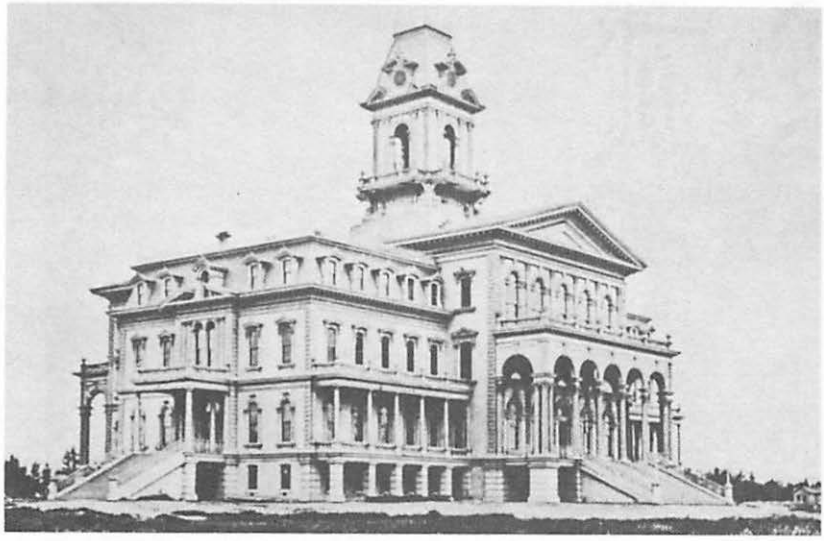
boarded with private families. The school's catalogue for the academic year 1870-71 indicated that the senior class included 16 males and 41 females and the junior class 16 males and 91 females, making a total of 164 pupils.

In the *Fourth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*, dated November 10, 1871, Fitzgerald asserted that the school had successfully passed a crisis inasmuch as there was no decrease in classes or serious disruption of studies since moving to San José. He revealed that the Board of Trustees had to halt construction work when the building fund became exhausted. However, the work was resumed when the superintendent of construction and part of his crew agreed to continue on the assumption that the State would pay them eventually.

Principal Lucky's report for the year ending in March, 1871, and for the period from June to December, 1871, contradicted Fitzgerald's report in one regard. Lucky indicated that the removal to San José had caused a decrease in the size of the senior class because many San Francisco pupils promoted at the close of the last junior year were unable to move to San José. Lucky urged former pupils and "friends of education" to make donations to the library and cabinet, stating: "Let the beautiful rooms in preparation for these departments be filled with offerings that will be evidences of the gratitude of those who have here been trained for their noble profession." The school at times had been criticized on grounds that its graduates did not teach, but Lucky refuted the charges by pointing out that the twenty graduates of 1869 procured good positions within a few months. Of the forty-four graduates of 1870, all but four had started teaching. Lucky further related that about twenty of the 1871 graduates were teaching and that the demand for Normal School graduates was far greater than the supply. He stated that about sixty-five experienced teachers were enrolled in the classes each year and recommended taking measures to encourage teachers in the field to improve their professional abilities as soon as the new building was available. Moreover, Lucky advocated organizing a training school and expressed a desire that the number of male teachers should increase.

A class of seventeen seniors graduated on March 28, 1872. The most noted member of the first class to graduate in San José and one of the most eminent graduates of the institution during its entire history was the poet, Charles Edwin Markham, author of "The Man with the Hoe." At the exercises Markham delivered an oration entitled, "Genius in Ruins."

On July 7, 1872, the Normal School finally moved into rooms in the new building on Washington Square and for the first time ceased to be a "beneficiary" of city boards of education. At first only five rooms on the first floor were occupied, but step by step the various other rooms and floors were utilized. The imposing three-storied wooden building's architectural style was Romanesque with classic details. The main part of the building had a frontage of 68 feet with a depth of 160 feet and was surmounted by a tower 150 feet high. Its portico was supported by ten Corinthian columns and the tower and frieze by Corinthian pilasters. On each side of the central



The first building on Washington Square to house the California State Normal School.

section was a wing with a mansard roof. Each wing had a 52-foot frontage and a 70-foot depth, making a length of 172 feet for the entire building.

The main entrance faced west and was reached by an ornamented flight of steps. Located on the first floor were the office, reception room, five classrooms, and rooms for scientific apparatus and the library. The second floor had three large classrooms, smaller recitation rooms, a music and museum room, and the Normal Hall. The front half of the third floor was devoted to a lecture room; and the rear part contained the galleries of the Normal Hall below. In addition, there was a basement walled in brick on a concrete foundation. It housed the fuel and engine room, recreation rooms, supply rooms, and fireproof vaults. Hare's ***Guide to San Jose,*** appearing in 1872, stated that the building was "spacious enough to accommodate all the pupils of the State for a century to come."

Since 1862 the Normal School had been situated in eight different locations in San Francisco and San José, and now the students and faculty rejoiced in occupying their own building. In November, 1872, a training school was established, and forty pupils from San José public schools were admitted. On March 26, 1873, Lucky was reelected principal, but only on a temporary basis. Charles H. Allen was elected vice-principal, replacing Carlton, while Eliza Houghton and Lucy M. Washburn were appointed assistants. When the election for principal was held on August 5, Allen was chosen to succeed Lucky, the latter receiving only one vote.

First Normal School building in San José as seen from Second and San Antonio Streets.

Five days after Allen's appointment as principal, the San José *Mercury* reported: "We are pleased to state that from present indications our State Normal School is just entering upon an unprecedented season of prosperity. The appointment of Prof. Allen to the principalship meets with very general satisfaction." At this time John H. Braly, a former trustee, became vice-principal and Eliza Houghton was appointed preceptress to supervise and advise the young ladies. In November, 1873, a preparatory department, destined to last fourteen years, was organized and taught by Cornelia Walker. This preparatory program was designed to meet the needs of students unable to pass entrance examinations and in need of a review of elementary subjects prior to admission to the junior class. During the year, the senior class commenced regular practice teaching for the first time since the removal of the school to San José.

The *Catalogue and Circular* for the school year ending March 26, 1874, indicated that the training school would be continued and increased in size and that seniors would have to demonstrate success in teaching ability prior to graduation. During the academic year 1874-75, the school enrollment greatly increased, the peak being approximately 300 with an average of 239 in the normal classes, exclusive of the preparatory department and training school. The first floor of the building was nearing completion and progress was being made in preparing the second floor.

A significant event took place in June, 1875 when a state convention of teachers was held in the Normal School building, resulting in the organization

of the highly significant California Teachers Association. Principal Allen and several Normal School faculty members became leaders in this organization during its formative years.

During the academic year 1875-76, the faculty voted to extend the course from two to three years, but to grant an elementary diploma at the end of the second year. This policy was in accord with the practice of several eastern and mid-western normal schools. Previously, elementary school subjects had been stressed because of the limited background of the students. Under the three-year program, more emphasis could be devoted to practice teaching, and advanced courses could be offered in such subjects as higher algebra and trigonometry. Allen in his report stated: "Teachers will be thus qualified for the great mass of the schools of the State and it is believed many more will, by this arrangement, remain through the course."

THE CENTENNIAL YEAR

In January, 1876, the Normal School opened with an attendance of 350. The San José *Mercury* noted: "There are a larger number of students attending the State Normal School than the State University." The *Mercury* complained that while the Normal School received a legislative appropriation of $17,500, the University of California was given over $120,000.

Both the community and the California State Normal School celebrated the nation's centennial throughout 1876. On the evening of February 4th, Normal Hall was crowded with students, faculty, and denizens of San José, who came to witness the first entertainment of the School's recently organized Work and Win Society, the ladies' literary group. The entertainment began with a chorus led by Professor Z. M. Parvin. Next Lois Peckham presented a select reading entitled, "An Incident at the Fire at Hamburg." Mamie Murray then gave a recitation, "Guilty or Not Guilty, which was followed by another, "Searching for the Slain," presented by Carrie Fairchild. After these recitations were completed, Mary Peckham read the society's first issue of *The Work and Win Gazette.* One of the evening's most enjoyable performances was a rendition of the song, "I'll Follow Thee," by Mollie Barry, who sang with "fine expression." The crowd responded with prolonged applause and then Professor Parvin appeared in a solo. The society's literary exercises then concluded with a drama appropriate to the centennial theme, entitled, "What Are We Coming To, or 1776, 1876 and 1976."

On February 18, 1876, the San José *Patriot* stated that the Normal School had an enrollment of nearly 400 students. In its column, "Jottings," the newspaper remarked: "So broken up are the grounds around the Normal School that it is unsafe for a bird to fly over the pitfalls and sloughs thereabouts." That evening a series of weekly lectures called the "Normal Scientific Course" were started at Normal Hall with Professor Henry B. Norton speaking about "Pictures from the Stone Book." On February 25th,

John Muir, the eminent naturalist and conservationist, lectured on "Mountain Building." The *Patriot* reported: "The lecturer, by numerous diagrams, illustrated the structure and progress of glaciers, especially those which eroded the Yosemite Valley."

In March, 1876, the seventeenth class comprising thirty-eight members graduated. On May 18th, the *Patriot* commented upon the "important improvements" being made in the Normal School building, stating that a staircase had been completed to the top of the tower. The building's third story was nearing completion and its large hall was being furnished with cases for a museum of natural history. Among other new structural features were the outfitting of new scientific laboratories, the completion of a well, and the installation of a calorie engine pump in the basement. Although the *Patriot* approved these building innovations, it decried the fact that there were no provisions made to improve the grounds. The journal remonstrated: "The physical geography of the Great American Desert may be thoroughly illustrated by reference to them. The great square, which ought to be made a garden, is still an alkaline waste, a dumping-ground for miscellaneous offal, not always of the most savory character."

On July 4, 1876, San José observed the one-hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in grand style. The city was ablaze with patriotism. Public buildings, stores, and private residences were decorated with foliage, streamers, and banners bearing spread-eagleist mottoes in red, white, and blue. The celebration began in the morning with a gigantic procession down First Street led by Mayor John D. Murphy and Common Council members riding in carriages. Among the marching units were the Willis Band in handsome uniforms, the Mitchell Guards, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and the Mexican War Veterans. The Native California Pioneers led by Juan Pablo Bernal and Secundino Robles paraded on horseback as did a unit of seventy San José butchers.

The procession ended its march at Brohaska's Opera House on Santa Clara Street where the literary exercises of the day were held. A choir sang the "Star Spangled Banner," Frederic Hall read his sketch on the history of San José, Mrs. Zella R. Cronyn recited her "Centennial Poem," and Principal Charles H. Allen of the California State Normal School delivered the official oration. In the evening a fireworks display was exhibited at Live Oak Park, and the Fourth of July festivities closed with a grand ball at City Hall Market.

By the end of the centennial year, the Normal School building was completed, the Legislature had increased the school's appropriation, and the people of San José were proud to have an established state institution. Despite the economic depression of the 1870's, San José appeared to prosper. The Normal School had expected a drop in enrollment because of the "hard times," but the number of students surprisingly increased. Both the community and the California State Normal School, as they looked forward to the next century and 1976, began efforts to improve the Washington Square campus, but neither envisaged the San José State University of today with its 27,000 students and 1500 faculty members.

The United States Army's First Flirtation with the Bicycle

Ted C. Hinckley

The United States Army, though small, should be kept in the highest state of efficiency, so that in the event of war we shall have a nucleus that will compare, in organization at least, with any power with which we should be likely to come in contact. The balance of power is so nicely adjusted that the chances in the coming conflict will be governed by efficiency in detailed preparation. The bicycle will weigh well in the scale. We are told somewhere that for want of a horseshoe nail a battle was lost. In the next war, for want of a bicycle the independence of a nation may be forfeited.

Harper's Weekly, April 11, 1896.[1]

INDUSTRIAL technology has given us many things – television, dishwashers, and typewriters. It has also given us Hiroshima. Almost every device born of our industrial age for man's comfort and convenience has in one way or another found a military application. One must struggle hard to conjure up any machine more dedicated to free-fun-loving, body-building pleasure than the bicycle. Sadly, the war god has quite an imagination. Mars has adopted even this wonderful toy, as veterans of Vietnam and two world wars can testify. In fact even before our own century had begun, soldiers both in Europe and the United States had been attracted by the military potentialities of the bicycle.

The Italian army seems to have been the first to add the wheeled threat to the horse-cavalry. In 1887 the French army incorporated military cyclists into its ranks. To qualify as a "regimental cyclist," a French recruit had to

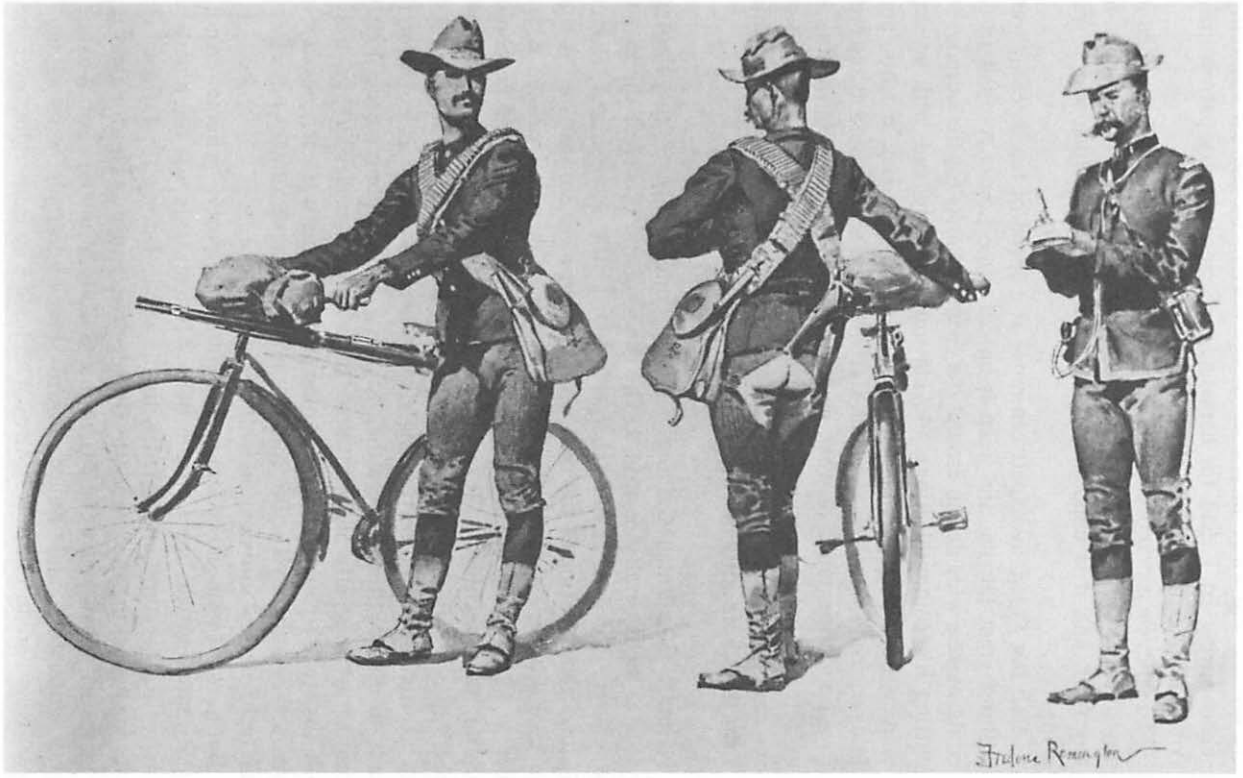
cover a distance of forty-eight kilometres in six hours. The more elite "staff cyclists" were required in the same time period to complete a ninety-mile run. In England – whether it was the salt water in their veins or British traditionalism – for some time only "volunteers" mounted bicycles. Yet, for all the Victorians' love of horses, the ineluctable pressures of mechanization could not long be blocked.[2]

Until the 1870s, Great Britain had been the primary producer of cycles (a century earlier its progenitor had been the velocipede) sold in the United States.In 1877 Boston manufacturer Colonel Albert A. Pope built a factory to turn out rubber-tired, chain-driven, two-wheeled "safety bicycles." Domestic production burgeoned. By 1900, 312 American firms produced in that year alone, according to the transportation historian Oscar O. Winther, 1,113,039 bicycles. "By then there were approximately four million bicycles in use within the United States."[3]

Quite appropriately, the American commonwealth that nurtured Eli Whitney and Samuel Colt introduced Americans to the bicycle as a tool of war. In 1891, some forty men of Connecticut's National Guard wheeled out their mounts and confounded their neighbors. The following year General Nelson A. Miles, of Indian-fighting fame, commenced some experiments with cyclists in the regular army, since he appreciated the necessity of educating cost-conscious citizens. Certainly their tax dollars should not be squandered – wasted upon an untested mechanical gadget. On May 18, 1891, Miles sent a message from his headquarters in Chicago to General Oliver O. Howard in New York City by "relays of cycle-riders" recruited from the League of American Wheelmen.[4] The League's members were not fighting men, and the Wheelmen listed in their ranks a number of prominent Americans. Most important, they were a superlative "Gay Nineties" public relations force, so powerful, in fact, that later historians would credit them a major role in paving the nation's roads.[5]

General Miles' League of American Wheelmen allies peddled 975 miles in four days and thirteen hours. Rain-soaked, wheel-swallowing dirt roads probably explain why some cyclists selected to pump their vehicles over several hundred bumpity miles of Lake Shore Railway track. Two years later, similar relays carried a message from Washington, D.C. to Denver, a distance of 2000 miles. The riders covered the span in six days, twelve hours, and thirty-seven minutes. When Army Lieutenant William Donovan flogged himself to transport himself, a Colt revolver, a Springfield rifle, rations for three days, bedding, and thirty rounds of ammunition over a grueling course of 530 miles in three and a half days, it seemed obvious that the bicycle's military application was not a novel joke.[6]

Where could this most unmartial-appearing contraption find appropriate usage? Among those who extolled its military virtues, Major Howard Alden Giddings of the Connecticut National Guard was among the most eloquent.



Officer and men of the First Cycle Infantry

Although it is believed that the greatest function of the military bicycle is to enable the infantry to have at hand, with slight expense and care, a convenient and swift means of transportation, its use for exploring, reconnoitring [sic], and for harassing and expeditionary patrols must not be underestimated.

The bicycle is practically noiseless, raises little dust, can be hidden in any ditch or cornfield, lifted over any fence, ferried across a stream in any boat, and it is impossible to tell from its track which way it was going.

Men not especially expert can move at a speed of ten miles an hour without great fatigue, and keep it up for some hours. A small force could make a wide detour around the enemy's flanks for the purpose of cutting his communications, moving more quickly and with greater secrecy than cavalry. Important points, such as passes, heights, and bridges, could be seized and held. Cyclists could also be used as reserves to support threatened or weak portions of the line, either in the attack or defence, and in pursuing a retreating army, following on the heels of the cavalry to harass the enemy, and perhaps make him turn at bay and fight the whole army in a disadvantageous position.[7]

National Guardsman Giddings willingly conceded that "the classing of cyclists as 'light cavalry' is absurd. The function and power of the cavalry is the charge. Cyclists cannot charge." Albeit, the exaggerated claims of Giddings reminds one of the next century's airpower enthusiasts: "A soldier can take a bicycle through the woods and over the most broken country, where a horse could not go, at very nearly as rapid a gait as he could go without the machine." "It could be ridden in fields and pastures" – hopefully not very damp or heavily grassed meadows. The wheeled vehicle is "an assistance to soldiers fording rivers where the water is not over their heads, as it helps them to keep their footing." [The quote is correct.] Bicycle manufacturers eagerly demonstrated that "duplex cycles" (large tricycles with two seats) could carry a machine gun, and one was even rigged with a cannon.[8] Fortunately for the country, not a few professional soldiers viewed such technological intoxication with a jaundiced eye.

But bicycles soon showed up on Far West army posts – whether or not the brass wanted to test them in the field. After all, this was the nineties and America had become infatuated with the cycle. During 1894, Signal Corps units located along the lower Rio Grande were issued cycles for field repair assignments. When pesky Indians, or just as likely, drunken cowboys shot out eighty insulators and pulled down some telegraph poles along the Brownsville-Laredo line, it was Army Wheelmen who came riding over the hill to the rescue. The resultant effusive praise of the rubber-shoed cavalry indicates that the officer in charge must have held membership in the League of American Wheelmen. "The bicycle," he reported, "proves the more rapid as well as more economical method of travel. In one case a break on the line

was located 2 miles from the station in twenty minutes, less time than would have been consumed in obtaining a mount."[9]

In his 1895 report to the Secretary of War, General Nelson Miles, itching to explore various wheeled vehicles' military possibilities, blew the bugle for "bicycles and motor wagons."

> As very great progress is being made in European countries in the use of the bicycle and motor wagons, and as both have been found practicable in this country and would certainly be utilized to a great extent in case of war, I recommend that a force equal to one full regiment of twelve companies be equipped with bicycles and motor wagons and their utility thoroughly demonstrated by actual service. . . . The bicycle has been found exceedingly useful in reconnoitering different sections of the country, and it is my purpose to use to some extent troops stationed at different posts to make practice marches and reconnoissances, and thereby obtain a thorough knowledge of their own country, especially the topographical features, condition of roads, sources of supplies and all information of military importance.[10]

"Motor wagons" did indeed have a future, particularly when Englishmen later encased them in steel and equipped them with caterpillar treads and cannon. The bicycle? Within a year it was *hors de combat*. Brigadier General James W. Forsyth summarized the problem after an inspection tour of southwest army posts. At Fort Sam Houston:

> Many expeditions have been made on bicycles belonging to officers and soldiers. The results so far attained are not encouraging for the use of the bicycle as a part of the military equipment in this department. They are very valuable in the vicinity of cities where good roads are found, but the bicycles in use at the different posts in this department are not strong enough to stand the hard usage to which they would be necessarily subjected on the rough country roads that they would be required to travel in service. The natural roads of Texas are perhaps the best in this country, but there are no side paths, and they are at times very muddy and at others extremely dusty, making it almost impossible to travel over them on a wheel; but the worst feature seems to be the thorns that fall in the roads, and which are constantly puncturing the tires.[11]

Was it a case of too many horseshoe nails? Whatever, it was just as well that the Army had not gone over to the pedal cavalry. In two years American soldiers would be fighting and dying in the Spanish-American War. Cuba's hills, humidity, and dense foliage provided an environment in which the humble bicycle could win neither glory nor a battle.

Notes

[1] Major Howard Alden Giddings, "The Bicycle in the Army," *Harper's Weekly*, April 11, 1896, 364.

[2] Ibid. Very useful on the early development of the bicycle is Lyman Hotchkiss Bagg (pseud., Karl Kron), *Ten Thousand Miles on a Bicycle* (New York, 1887). To grasp widespread enthusiasm for the bicycle during the nineties, one need only peek into the periodical literature for that decade. For example, see: S. M. Barton, "The Evolution of the Wheel – Velocipede to Motocycle [sic]," *Sewanee Review* (January, 1897), 48-62; A. L. Benedict, "Dangers and Benefits of the Bicycle," *Century* (July, 1897), 471-473; and Philip G. Hubert, "The Bicycle, the Wheel of To-Day," *Scribner's* (June, 1895), 692-702. A well-written summary of the fad is: Fred C. Kelly, "The Great Bicycle Craze," *American Heritage* (December, 1956), 68-73.

[3] Oscar O. Winther, *The Transportation Frontier: Trans-Mississippi West 1865-1890* (New York, 1964), 150.

[4] Major Howard Alden Giddings, "Cyclist Infantry, the New Branch of the Military Service," *Harper's Weekly* (February 11, 1893), 135. Giddings, "The Bicycle," 364. *The Wheelman*, the League's official publication, remains a mine of information on not only cycling, but the better roads movement and much else pertaining to the age's socio-recreational habits.

[5] As early as 1893, an unsigned contributor to *Harper's Weekly* (May 27), 495, predicted: "It has been stated that a wheelman can do six miles over a good road with as little effort as would be required to walk one mile. If this be true, then with a bicycle almost any man, however hard his work or long his hours, could actually live in the country – that is, he might in the country if there were a good road between his home and his place of business.... if this mileage of good roads is greatly increased in the near future, and we hope and believe it will be, we shall owe a deep debt of gratitude to the bicycle-riders of this country."

[6] Giddings, "The Bicycle," 364.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Giddings, "Cyclist Infantry," 135. For actual photos of these laughable absurdities see: Giddings, "The Bicycle," 364. Surely if the wheelman ever fired the cannon mounted on their over-sized tricycle, they were the weapon's first victims.

[9] Daniel S. Lamont, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1895* (Wash. D.C., 1895), I, 575-576.

[10] Ibid. I, 69.

[11] Daniel S. Lamont, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1896* (Wash. D.C., 1896), I, 169.

Acknowledgements

The publication of *San Jose Studies* is possible only through the support of its benefactor and patron subscribers. The Trustees and Staff of *SJS* would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following supporters.

BENEFACTORS

Alumni Association of San Jose State University
Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Arends
Association of California State College and University Professors, San Jose Chapter
Hobert W. Burns

PATRONS

Stanford H. Atwood, Jr.
Mary O. Bowman
Dr. and Mrs. Henry Bruinsma
California State Employees Association, Chapter 32
Fischer-Jensen, Insurance
John Galm
Walter Donald Head
Wayne E. Krouskup; Haskins and Sells
Porter · Jensen · Hansen · Manzagol, A.I.A.
Dirk J. Wassenaar
Dr. and Mrs. O. C. Williams
Bill Wilson: Wilson's Jewel Bakery, Inc.
Arthur Young and Company

In addition, a number of anonymous donations have been received.

Notes on Contributors

Carolyn de Vries is the Executive Secretary of the Sourisseau Academy for California State and Local History at San José State University. A native of San José and a graduate of San José State University and the University of Santa Clara, she is the descendant of two early day families of the Santa Clara Valley – The Parrish family of Cupertino and Gilroy, and the Robinson family of San Martin, co-founders of the San Martin Winery.

William Everson, Poet in Residence at Kresge College, University of California at Santa Cruz, was known as Brother Antoninus during his eighteen years as a Dominican monk. The author of numerous books of verse, including ***The Residual Years, The Crooked Lines of God, The Hazards of Holiness,*** and ***Man-Fate***, he is also a well-known scholar, critic, and fine arts printer.

Daniel Garr, Assistant Professor of Urban and Regional Planning at San José State University, has published numerous articles on Hispanic California in such journals as ***Western Historical Quarterly, Thymos, The Americas,*** and ***Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians.*** When not engrossed in the frontiers and missions of early California, he broadcasts a classical music program from KUSP-FM, Santa Cruz, known as "Dusty Dan's Diatonic Deliverance."

Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi, a Lecturer in English at Stanford University, has published numerous articles on Jungian theory and Victorian literature. The author of ***Dark Passages: The Decadent Consciousness in Victorian Literature*** and co-editor of ***Adrienne Rich's Poetry***, she is currently working on a book about the connection between androgyny and feminism in nineteenth and twentieth century literature.

Benjamin F. Gilbert is Professor of History at San José State University and historical consultant for the Office of the Attorney General of California. He has been an associate editor of ***Journal of the West*** since 1962 and has authored numerous scholarly articles and books, including ***Alaska History, 1741-1910; Scientific Discoveries and Inventions in the United States, 1600-1913;*** and ***State of California.*** He was honored as an "Outstanding Educator of America" in 1972 and received the Award of Merit from the California Historical Society in 1975.

Ted C. Hinckley, Professor of History at San Jose State University, has authored some forty popular and scholarly articles on U.S. history of the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, as well as a book, ***The Americanization of Alaska, 1867-1897.*** Living in the high hills of the Santa Cruz mountains, he finds the bicycle to be a machine of limited convenience and somewhat dubious efficiency.

Mary Lou Lewandowska teaches English and Comparative Literature at San José State University. Her creative interests have resulted in numerous poems and short stories, as well as seven children. In 1973-74, she received an Innovative Instruction Grant from the Chancellor of the California State Universities and Colleges to develop a personalized system of instruction for English composition. In 1974, she also received a San José State University Summer Session Fellowship for her project "The Analogic Analysis of Literature."

Roy Harvey Pearce is Professor of American Literature at the University of California, San Diego and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has authored ***The Savages of America***, ***The Continuity of American Poetry***, and ***Historicism Once More*** and is currently the general editor of the ***Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne***. A Guggenheim Fellow, 1975-76, he has previously taught at the Ohio State University, Johns Hopkins University, Claremont Graduate School, Salzburg Seminar in American Studies, and the University of Bordeaux.

Nils Peterson is an Associate Professor of English at San Jose State University where he teaches creative writing and Shakespeare and originates unique projects, such as the Bicentennial Poetry Celebration. His stories have appeared in ***Fantasy and Science Fiction*** and his poetry in such journals as ***Beloit Poetry Journal***, ***College English***, and ***Midwest Quarterly***. No Dead Line Press will be publishing a new series of his poems this year.

Arnold Rampersad is Assistant Professor of English and Chairman of the Program in Modern Thought and Literature at Stanford University. His book **The Art and Imagination of W. E. B. Du Bois** will be published by Harvard University Press in October 1976. Beyond those brief biographical facts, he prefers to remain anonymous.

A. Wilbur Stevens is Professor of Humanities at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he teaches in the departments of English, Theatre Arts, and Philosophy. His teaching and administrative career have included appointments at the University of Washington and Idaho State University, as well as Fulbright professorships in Burma, Thailand, and Brazil. He has published poetry and criticism in numerous journals and is editor and publisher of ***Interim***, a literary magazine currently being revived.

Bill Tecku is an independent radio and television producer. He is currently producing "Oral Readings," a weekly half-hour of music, humor, aud poetry with poet Bill "Ole" Olson and John Harris at WDTH-FM in Duluth, Minnesota. A 1976 graduate of the University of Wisconsin, he is looking for a publisher for his first collection of poetry.

Announcements

The Harold C. Crain Award for Playwriting – established recently by the San Jose State University Theatre Arts Department – will open for competition on September 15, 1976. The award to honor Professor Harold Crain, who joined the SJSU Fine Arts division 21 years ago, will offer the winning playwright $500.00, along with a production of the winner's script by the Theatre Arts Department. The deadline for submitting entries is December 31, 1976. The final decision will be announced on March 15, 1977.

During 1976-77, the Campus-Community Poetry Festival, sponsored by the Fine Arts Commission of the City of San Jose and San Jose State University, will include another outstanding series of poetry readings and workshops, University courses incorporating the major readings, and a series of poetry posters in Santa Clara County buses. Events of the Festival are open to all members of the community. For information, contact the SJSU English Department (277-2817) or Extension Services (277-2182).

Articles appearing in *San Jose Studies* are indexed and/or abstracted in the following publications:

Abstracts of Popular Culture
America: History and Life
Biological Abstracts
Historical Abstracts
Indexes of The H. W. Wilson Company
Language and Language Behavior Abstracts
Modern Humanities Research Association: *Annual Bibliography*
MLA International Bibliography
National Index of Literary Periodicals
Sociological Abstracts
Women Studies Abstracts

San José Studies
San José State University
San Jose, California 95192