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*being a collection of essays and  
occasional pieces on the Midwest,  
its writers, its writing, and its  
people, past and present,  
by members of*

The Society for the Study of  
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*edited by*  
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In honor of  
Phillip A. Greasley



## PREFACE

*Midwestern Miscellany XXVIII* is truly that in this spring issue of the last year of the twentieth century and the second millennium. Its contents range from the blood-soaked landscape of eighteenth century Ohio to the Midwest in modern film musicals, from the record of a young man's journey across America to that of a not-so-young woman's nautical adventures, and it includes, too, a memoir inspired by an earlier memoir.

Particularly appropriate is the inclusion of one of the last works by the late Edward Recchia, friend and colleague for many years, who will be remembered.

This issue is dedicated to Philip Greasley, recipient of the MidAmerica Award for 1999. It is at once recognition and celebration as the *Dictionary of Midwestern Literature* under his general editorship nears publication.

November 2000

DAVID D. ANDERSON



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## THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME: THE MIDWEST IN AMERICAN FILM MUSICALS

EDWARD RECCHIA

The heartland. The Midwest has been called that for reasons ranging from its geographical location to the fact that it produces the grain for the kind of cereal that's supposed to lower our cholesterol. It's a place where things grow. Compared to its more glamorous neighbors on both coasts, it might seem pretty humdrum, with its relatively flat terrain, its wheat fields stretching seamlessly towards the horizon. Yet, in our popular mythology, it is precisely the *lack* of excitement and sophistication that has become a virtue itself for the Midwest: Midwestern dullness has represented for the nation a kind of reassuring steadiness of human virtue and human values: those wheat fields have transformed themselves into symbols not only of a nation's material abundance but of the human capacity to nourish—to make healthy not only body but also mind and spirit.

Mainstream America—particularly since the advent of radio and motion pictures—has embraced the image of the Midwest as a sanctuary for the human spirit. It is an image that has reassured Americans of the moral and social strength not only of this one region of the U.S. but also of the country as a whole. Particularly during the desperate years of the Great Depression and World War Two, as well as during the decades of rebuilding and consolidating American society that followed, the Midwest served as a convenient and appropriate setting for reinforcing the traditional values that many Americans had built their lives on and felt that they had to hold on to for the present and hoped to build on for the future. Andrew Bergman has commented that during that hard time, “sentimental yearnings for a Jeffersonian life on the land became the basis for a potential ‘solution’ to the nation’s illness” (70) and that, as a result,

“Films in implicit or explicit celebration of rural life appeared . . . (71). Within such films, the American home and the American family were to find a particularly warm and comfortable resting place.

Of course, celebrations of the family occurred nightly during the thirties and forties, in almost every American living room, rural or urban, as the family gathered around the radio to listen to *Peppé Young's Family*, or to Fibber McGee and Molly, whose overstuffed closet lurked within their small home at the delightful address of 74 Wistful Vista; the family could laugh at the misadventures of high schooler Henry Aldrich or the dry wisdom of highschool teacher Our Miss Brooks. Since the greatest wisdom would be invested in the symbol of knowledge, the town doctor, the could listen to *Dr. Christian* or *Dr. Kildare* some nights, and still have the *Great Gildersleeve* and *Dagwood* and *Blondie* available for comic relief.

The cinematic versions of these same characters were often available at the neighborhood theater, and all the family members had to do was walk down there on “dish night” and watch a low-budget film based on their favorite radio show. And while they might be provided pure escape from everyday worries in a Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers musical or a Warner Brothers’ “Golddiggers” extravaganza they could receive their greatest morale boost by empathizing with the filmic small-town or farm folk, who evidenced all the virtues they themselves had grown up believing in and who lived a life style they could more easily identify with. So they might watch wise old Judge Hardy dispensing sage advice to his impetuous son, Andy, in the Andy Hardy series of films; they could sympathize with the domestic problems confronting Priscilla and the other Lane sisters in warm family film dramas like *Four Daughters* (1938) or its sequel, *Four Mothers* (1941)—and then bask in the young women’s triumph and successful romances by the film’s end. Or they could marvel at Shirley Temple, Deanna Durbin, and Judy Garland—all everyone’s daughters—singing and acting their way through a whole series of what Rick Altman has appropriately labeled “folk musicals” (272)—often involving plots in which the family home or dad’s business was somehow miraculously saved because a Broadway producer just happened to be sitting in the audience when the kids put on their musical show in the neighborhood barn.

After the war, as Americans determinedly settled down to build the homes and families they had been so afraid of losing earlier, they could always find affirmation of long-held beliefs in films like *Th*

*Farmer's Daughter* and *I Remember Mama*.—And of course, *It's a Wonderful Life*, from the fifties, has become an icon whose significance reaches well beyond the Christmas season.

Whether on radio or the film screen, whether the story was funny or warmly human, the judges always gave sage advice, the physicians demonstrated Solomonic wisdom, and even the comic husbands and uncles always revealed hearts of gold. The home—usually located in some vaguely designated area safely away from both coasts and imbedded securely in the middle of the country—was validated as the source of love, harmony, and stability in the face of some very unstable economic and political conditions.

It was in the film musical that these celebrations of such bedrock values found their most enthusiastic and ritualistic affirmation. The “folk musical,” says Altman, “...neither depends entirely on American history, nor ignores it completely; it takes place within that intermediary space which we designate by such terms as tradition, folklore, and Americana” (273). What Altman describes as the “mythical vision” (272) of the folk musical could, of course, be presented in plain black and white, as in Deanna Durbin’s *One Hundred Men and a Girl* (1937) or the Mickey Rooney-Judy Garland musicals *Babes in Arms* (1939) and *Strike Up the Band* (1940); but it was more obviously the technicolor musicals of the forties that formalized that vision and extended it even into the sixties. And, quite naturally, when they did, many of them tended to set their musical dramas in the location that most naturally suggested all the wholesome qualities the film stories were intended to commemorate—the Midwest.

Not all, of course; but enough to define a significant pattern of affirmation. All of the following films make it a point to set their stories in the Midwest: *The Wizard of Oz* (1939)—Kansas; *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944)—Missouri; *State Fair* (1945)—Iowa; *On Moonlight Bay* (1951) and its sequel, *By the Light of the Silvery Moon* (1953)—Indiana; *The Music Man* (1962)—Iowa; and *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963)—Ohio. Such settings are not merely a matter of convenience; each film utilizes the social connotations of the setting to develop its theme, affirming what today might be negatively viewed as the naivete of the stereotypical Midwesterner to be instead a virtue—a positive foil against the encroaching manipulation, materialism, and amorality of the modern age. This simple goodness, which translates into that much-scorned phrase of the 1990s—“family val-

ues”—is treated as a positive force in these musicals. It not only withstands the incursions of an outside world that seems increasingly less moral and stable (and which is often represented by a character from the East coast) but does so simply because it *is* simple and good. The innocence of the Midwesterner, his or her inability to envision anything *but* good, actually becomes the weapon that blunts any potential evil, simply because it forces others not only to acknowledge it but also to recognize the good that lies dormant within themselves. At least in these films, the meek not only manage to inherit the modest piece of earth to which they aspire but they also frequently convert the non-meek in the process.

Of course, it is not important whether such victories are possible in real life; what was likely most important to the audience who viewed these films at the time was that the films affirmed the *desire* to believe that they are. It remains for us, in an age seared by the knowledge of Watergate, of the Kennedy and King assassinations—by alleged Kennedy and Clinton *assinations*—by Michael Milkens and by Savings and Loans Scandals, to view such affirmations as mere fantasies. The original audiences of these films were, perhaps, fortunate enough to be able to believe what we cannot.

The idea that “there’s no place like home” is, of course, actually articulated, in *The Wizard of Oz*; but Rick Altman’s classification of that film as a “fairy tale musical” (153, 155) rather than a folk musical is accurate, because Dorothy does undergo most of her adventures in the fantasy land of Oz. Even here, however, before she learns her valuable lessons, she sets the pattern that will be repeated in other musicals whose action more firmly centers on home and home town. In later films, the home town will frequently be invaded by an outside influence that in some way threatens the stability of the family. In Dorothy’s real-life case, that force is closer to home; it’s crabby old Miss Gulch, who has threatened Dorothy’s peaceful home existence by obtaining a court order that would take Dorothy’s little dog, Toto, away from her. In the parallel fantasy world of Oz, it is Miss Gulch’s symbolic representatives, the Wicked Witch of the East and the Wicked Witch of the West, who must be vanquished before Dorothy can return to her home.

It is probably coincidence that Frank Baum’s characters happen in this film version to represent the two more worldly, sophisticated coasts that bracket the Midwest; it is, however, fitting—even if again not intentional meaningful—that the witches are destroyed not

through consciously antagonistic acts by Dorothy but through actions that are innocently—in fact, benevolently—motivated. Dorothy is merely a passenger in the house that falls on the Wicked Witch of the East; but there may be some significance in her having returned there out of love for Auntie Em, whom she believes to be suffering because Dorothy has run away. Her destruction of the Wicked Witch of the West is caused by an even more benevolently intentioned act, as she tries to throw water on the scarecrow, who has been set afire by the Witch, only to see the Witch herself evaporate when she is accidentally splashed by the liquid symbol of purity and life. Even then, though, Dorothy is not “saved,” until she reaches the realization that her home is, indeed, where her heart is, no matter what problems she might have to face due to the Miss Gulches of the world. Then salvation, as the Wizard points out, is as simple as consciously acknowledging what her heart has always told her—that there’s no place like home. A couple clicks of the heels and she’s back, and the value of home and family is affirmed.

What Dorothy does symbolically in this film is to be done in more literal terms in later musicals: she affirms the power of goodness not just to survive but to triumph against what seems the overwhelming advantage that evil seems to have against it. Almost unwittingly, good prevails, not by actively fighting against evil but by positively affirming its own nature as good. There is no attempt at either offense or defense. Good *is*. And in allowing it to prevail simply by being, films like *The Wizard of Oz* reaffirm for their audiences the people’s faith in those values which they had been brought up on and still embrace in the face of real-life hardships. Therefore, in choosing to leave the technicolored land of Oz to return to the pedestrian black-and-white world of Kansas, Dorothy confirms the audience’s belief that the less glamorous values of the Midwest are ultimately the values that count.

Dorothy’s belief that “there’s no place like home” lies at the heart of what Stanley Green indicates to be the inspiration for a series of later musicals which “sought to capture the home-and hearth spirit of the American family” (130). Easily the most open attempt to dramatize that spirit occurs in another Judy Garland film, *Meet Me in St. Louis*. This is a film that was consciously crafted as a tribute to a past that may never have existed in real life—but that has long existed in our minds. Every element in the film is a celebration of wholesome family life: from the family songfests around the piano,

through the romance between Judy Garland's Esther Smith and "the boy next door," to the use of what Green describes as a "sepia-tinted picture-card view of (with appropriate filigree border) the Smith family's American Gothic house at 5135 Kensington Avenue" (130) to introduce each of the film's four seasonal episodes. Those daguerreotype-like stills of the house are part of director Vincente Minelli's calculated effort to evoke a sense of nostalgia. He had decided that "the whole picture should have the look of a Thomas Eakins painting," (quoted in Altman 277); and Rick Altman comments that as a result:

The sets for this film...never aspire to the status of reality, but rather to that of remembered reality. Kensington Avenue is not like the street we grew up on, but like an old engraving of that street, as the film's seasonal vignettes reveal. By borrowing the Eakins style, Minelli assimilates his set not to an actual memory, but to our memory as filtered through the transforming palette of an artist. (277)

All those values and more are tested when Alonzo Smith, the *pater familias* of the Smith family announces that he has been promoted to a position of much greater prestige, power, and wealth by his banking firm—but that the promotion means that the family must leave its cozy Midwestern home and move to New York. He may be bewildered by his wife and daughter's lack of enthusiasm but the audience has no difficulty understanding what kind of disruption he is proposing. Mr. Smith is, after all, a man of the business world, the one who makes the family's living; his values are affected (in the world of this kind of musical, one would say "tainted") by interests that are foreign to this picture-postcard world. As David Bordwell points out, the men in such musicals tend to pose a threat to the unity of the home because they are involved in an outside world whose values are often inimical to the values of family (426). It frequently remains, therefore, for the female figure—the "heart" of home, rather than the nominal male "head"—to preserve what is truly most valuable.

Of course, Mrs. Smith, being a good wife and helpmate, and daughters Esther, Rose, and Tootie (Margaret O'Brien), being properly obedient children, never argue, never complain. But they do silently anguish, and all of the warmth of family and innocent humanity that had suffused throughout that cozy home seems somehow endangered. It is saved, however, through the youngest member of

the Smith family, Tootie, who is not as constrained as her older sisters by social restrictions and can therefore act purely from the heart. After Esther has sung a plaintive version of *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* to a crying Tootie, who does not want to leave her home and neighborhood, Tootie runs out into the yard, barefoot and in her nightgown, and hysterically tries to tear down the snowfather, snowmother, and snowchildren family she has made in the front yard. Her anguish forces Alonzo Smith finally to recognize that the home is far more important than whatever attractions the riches of a job on the east coast can offer his family, and he decides, despite whatever financial loss may be suffered, that he will turn down the the promotion and that the family will stay in St. Louis. The film ends with the family joyously attending the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition as a proper capstone to an affirmation of the same truism that Dorothy uttered at the end of *The Wizard of Oz*. Just as she was willing to forego the attractions of the Emerald City, so Alonzo Smith gives up New York's glitter for the place where the heart is.

Other films are to follow *Meet Me in St. Louis*'s lead. In *State Fair*, for example, the setting is the Iowa State Fair; the double romances are created when brother and sister Margy and Wayne Frake (Jeanne Crain and Dick Haymes), who are accompanying their parents to the fair, fall in love with two Easterners, played by Dana Andrews and Vivian Blaine. Margy's fresh, innocent beauty is eventually to win the heart of the cynical newspaperman Pat Gilbert (Andrews), while Wayne's desire to escape the wholesome environment of this family farm and the love of his sweetheart, Eleanor, to satisfy his infatuation with band singer Emily Edwards is blunted—fittingly, by Emily herself, who recognizes that the peripatetic life of a band singer's mate is not for him. Once again home and nurturing love win out, and once again, it is the woman who recognizes their value.

That same affirmation of the transforming power of Midwestern naivete is reflected even in such relatively formulaic musicals as the 1950s *On Moonlight Bay* (1951) and its sequel, *By the Light of the Silvery Moon* (1953), two Doris Day-Gordon McRae musicals set in Indiana in the nineteen-teens, in which Doris plays Marjorie Winfield, tom-boy turned demure beauty after her first meeting with Indiana University senior William Sherman (Gordon McRae). He has all the stereotyped pretentious idealism of a young college pseudo-radical, but he is soon domesticated by her

down-home charm. Sample dialogue as he sees her home after their first date: He: "What's one life more or less, when all of Europe is bathed in blood?" She: "Would you like a glass of buttermilk?" He: "Sure." He never gets the buttermilk, but they both enjoy their first chaste kiss, and pretentiousness crumbles in the face of such a formidable foe.

Eventually, it will be up to the darker, non-musical dramas of the post-war period to begin dramatizing the underside of Midwestern life. With such films as *Picnic* (1955) and *Some Came Running* (1958), Hollywood was beginning to tap into the sense of dissatisfaction that began during the "silent generation" of the fifties and that would lead to a wide range of films set in different locales but all involving social criticism, such as *Man in a Gray Flannel Suit*, *Gentleman's Agreement*, *The Snake Pit*, and so on. But for the musical, which by its very nature is more optimistic, the idea that human nature is not only innately good, but innately powerful because of that goodness, has a surprisingly long shelf life. It remains for the musical to reinforce, not question, traditional social values; to be optimistic, not critical.

Therefore, even in the 1960s, in *The Music Man*, where traveling sales-and con-man, Professor Harold Hill (Robert Preston), invades the small Iowa town of River City, intending to bilk the townspeople by selling them band instruments and uniforms for their children or the phoney promise of giving the kids musical training, Hill's love for the pure and simple (and, happily, beautiful) Marian, the Librarian (Shirley Jones), transforms him into a real teacher, who inspires the kids to mount a parade in which they actually *do* (or at least *seem* to in the eyes of their adoring parents) march and play marvelously. *The Music Man* is a film that is ultimately a tribute to all those mothers and fathers who attend school concerts and are thrilled at what they perceive to be the beauty of their children's efforts to coax a round tone out of violin or bassoon; and Hill's moral regeneration through his love for Marian is a further tribute to the transforming power of the simple goodness of the Midwestern small town.

It is just a year later—in 1963, the same year when the dreams of Camelot were to end so tragically—that *Bye Bye Birdie* reached the screen. What more appropriate place to celebrate the wholesome-ness of youth and the family that a fictional town called Sweet Apple Ohio? Who better to represent the surging dangers of the new rock 'n-roll era than Conrad Birdy, a rock singer who looks, sways hi

hips, and sneers like Elvis and who is about to be inducted into the army? What better way to show the overwhelming power of the naive goodness of the Midwesterner than to have a group of cynical New Yorkers descent on Sweet Apple to have Conrad plant a good-bye kiss on one of the town's teenagers, Kim McAfee (played by Ann-Margaret), as a symbolic good-bye to all Conrad's fans—and of course, as a way of creating great press for him?

Yet once in the atmosphere of Sweet Apple, the New Yorkers begin to change. The mother-dominated publicist, Albert Peterson, played by Dick Van Dyke, finally gains the courage to tell his mother that he plans to marry his secretary, Rose Grant, played by Janet Leigh. Young Kim's scrawny boyfriend, Leon, played by Bobby Rydell, knocks out Conrad Birdy on national t.v.—on the Ed Sullivan show, yet. Midwest conquers East before a nationwide audience, and at least an Eastern heart, temporarily transported to the Midwest, finds its courage and declares its love. In both cases, the purity of the Midwest wins out.

Yet when Paul Lynde, as the teenage girl's father, sings the comic song, *Kids!* (Kids! What's the matter with kids today?), he may be foretelling much more than the film itself intends. For American society was on the edge of a great social revolution by 1963, and it wouldn't be that long before a lot of other American parents would be echoing Paul Lynde's words. After a series of west-coast pictures like *Beach Blanket Bingo* (1965) and *How to Stuff a Wild Bikini* (1965), the emphasis on "family" films was no longer on dutiful children obeying the wishes of mom and dad for the family's sake but on parents who tried, but couldn't really understand, the importance of their offspring's wish to ride the perfect wave. Often the parents and authority figures, even in these lighthearted beach pictures, became the unintentional heavies, and the teenage moviegoers of course ate the premise up.

It would not be that long a jump, then, to the rock films of the later sixties, in which "family" might not be blood relatives at all but other people of the same age who listened to the same music, held the same philosophy, lived in the same commune, and often indulged in the same drugs. By the beginning of the next decade, the film *Woodstock* (1970), which documented the celebration of sex, drugs, and rock-'n-roll that had occurred on a New York farmland one year earlier, brought to the screen the new, popular music of that era—but most of those songs were a far cry from *Somewhere, Over the*

*Rainbow* or *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*. The Age of Aquarius would have little in common with that earlier age of musically celebrated innocence, and succeeding generations of Americans would discover that finding one's way back home was not done as easily as by clicking one's heels together.

Late Michigan State University

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## BLOOD — AND A NAME — ON THE LAND

DAVID D. ANDERSON

During the Age of Reason of the Eighteenth Century, the age that proclaimed that “all men are created equal,” that each human being is “endowed by his creator with certain inalienable rights,” that among them are the rights to life and liberty, and for the more poetic, the right to pursue happiness, the latter interpreted by the more crass among us then and now as the right to own property, the concept of a State of Ohio was conceived. However, in that Age of Reason, in the years between 1763 and statehood in 1803, Ohio was conceived and born not in rationality but in blood and hatred as two ancient cultures met, clashed, and left as their heritage both blood and names on the land.

As early as 1763, in the Proclamation of that year, the British government sought to impose order and stability on the Ohio country, perhaps recognizing and attempting to avoid the coming conflict between Indians determined to retain their traditional lands and whites, largely English, many of them the Virginians who were to become our forefathers, determined to make the Ohio country their own. By the early 1770s, the Proclamation of 1763 was in shreds as nearly 50,000 whites crossed the Appalachians to seize control of the upper Ohio River Valley. Of them, General Thomas Gage, commander of British forces in North America, who sought unsuccessfully to stem the influx, wrote that they were “the very dregs of the people ... a Sett of People ... near as wild as the country they go in, or the people they deal with, and by far more vicious and wicked.” He later described them as “too Numerous, too Lawless and Licentious ever to be restrained.” A young missionary in the area, David McClure, described the Virginians flooding into the area as “beyond the arm of government and freed from the restraining influence of religion.” They were no more than “white Savages,”

who saw their Indian counterparts as fair game and their land as belonging to those who seize it. George Croghan, Colonial Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, concurred, saying that the whites in the Ohio Valley "thought it a meritorious act to kill Heathens wherever they were found." Sir William Johnson, captor of Montreal in 1760 and later Croghan's superior as Superintendent of Indian Affairs, concurred, saying that such an attitude was "the opinion of all the common people."

In 1768 another attempt by the British government to separate Indians and colonists was equally unsuccessful as Virginia surveyors moved farther west on the south bank of the Ohio, west of the Kanawha, and the Shawnees along the Scioto determined to drive them out of the valley and perhaps beyond the mountains as well. By early 1774 whites in Pittsburgh were convinced that the Shawnees were raiding across the Ohio, and they planned retaliation. The stage was set for perhaps the most dramatic moment, the most eloquent speech, and the most durable myth that grew out of the hatred and violence that marked Ohio's conception.

At the center of that moment, that eloquence, that myth, stands a mature Indian, a Mingo chief, son of Shikellamy, a Cayuga chief sympathetic both to the white settlers and Christianity. When his son, the Indian destined to personify the coming conflict, was born about 1750, Shikellamy named him Tachnedorus, but he also named him John Logan after his friend James Logan of Pennsylvania, and he may have had him baptized as well. By 1774, some years later, as the conflict threatened about him, Logan, then chief of the Mingoes, son of Shikellamy, friend of settlers, and Indian spokesman, stood firm for peace. But the conflict was about to engulf him. In the Spring of 1774 Logan was living at least part of the time in a Mingo village where Yellow Creek enters the Ohio, south of the site of what is now the city of Steubenville. With him were a number of members of his extended family or clan, all presumably living in peace, a state that Logan, who had refused to participate in the French War, was determined would continue in spite of the growing aggression of the whites, particularly the Virginians.

On May 3, 1774, an incident occurred that, no matter which of the half dozen versions of what happened one accepts, changed Logan's life, his attitude, and the course of Ohio history for all time. As can best be re-constructed from the varied accounts, tensions between whites and Indians increased to the point that one Captain

Michael Cresap organized a company of militia to protect the Virginia surveying teams, stationing at the Zane Settlement at what is now Wheeling. The Shawnees fought both surveyors and militia, the latter moving freely between the Virginia and Ohio banks as guerilla warfare increased. But Logan and his Mingoes, determined to keep the peace, remained aloof.

On that May day, however, the incident occurred that drove him to violence. A group of Virginia surveyors led by a man named Daniel Greathouse camped across the Ohio from the Mingo town at Yellow Creek, where the town of Mingo Junction, one of the many obscure names on the land, now stands. The camp was near the cabin of one Joshua Baker, a notorious individual who sold and traded rum to Indians and settlers alike. The surveyors invited some Mingoes from across the river to join the festivities, and seven came, six men and a woman who brought her infant with her. The Indians were unarmed, according to one account; others say that the whites immediately challenged the Indians to a shooting match and the Indians quickly discharged their weapons. Three Indian men then apparently became drunk; four others, the woman and three men, refused to drink and attempted to leave. The whites thereupon shot down the sober Indian men, tomahawked the drunks, and shot and wounded the woman, who lay dying and pleading for the life of her child, saying that it was kin to them, as it may have been half white. At least three of the Indians — two of the men and the woman — were closely related to Logan, apparently among them his father, his brother, and his sister, according to one account. For Logan it was tantamount to a declaration of war, a challenge he immediately accepted and began to seek vengeance. Later, in July, he sent Cresap a message:

Captain Cresap:

What did you kill my people on Yellow Creek for? The white people killed my kin, at Conestoga, a great while ago; and I thought nothing of that, but you killed my kin again at Yellow Creek and took my cousin prisoner. Then I thought I must kill too; and I have been three times to war since; but the Indians are not angry; only myself.

July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1774

Captain John Logan

There is no evidence that Cresap took part in the massacre, as Logan knew, but it is clear that Logan did hold Cresap responsible for failing to keep the peace; Logan had spent two months prior to the note

to Cresap waging a small-scale war against the Virginians. By July he had taken thirteen white scalps, he had had his revenge, and he was determined once more to live in peace. But his abortive attacks across the Ohio had repercussions that neither he nor his few followers, unable to find support from their relatives, the Shawnees, could anticipate. Logan's raids across the river provided the incentive for the Virginia colonial government to remove permanently what they perceived as hostile threat to settlement in Western Virginia and the Ohio country. Captain John Connolly at Pittsburgh mounted a punitive attack against Logan; Lord Dunmore, colonial governor of Virginia, like most of the colonial leadership a land speculator on the frontier, sent a thousand militia to support Connolly, to build a fort at the mouth of the Kanawha, and to remove the Indian obstacle to profit and settlement. The result, known to history as Lord Dunmore's War, saw the most violent fighting ever in the Ohio Valley; it brought Cornstalk, chief of the Shawnees, to prominence, as it did George Rogers Clark and the two great Simons of the Ohio frontier, Simon Kenton and Simon Girty; and it brought a campaign of blood and destruction to the Mingo and Shawnee villages as far away as the Scioto valley and the Pickaway Plains near present-day Circleville.

On the Scioto Dunmore erected a fort, Camp Charlotte, indicating to Cornstalk and the Shawnees that the Virginians had come to stay, and the fighting intensified, resulting in what some have called the opening battle of the American Revolution and what to Theodore Roosevelt marked out the path of American destiny. In his *The Winning of the West* he wrote, "Had it not been for Lord Dunmore's War it is more than likely that when the colonies achieved their freedom they would have found their western boundary fixed at the Allegheny Mountains."

Whether or not the effects of Lord Dunmore's War were as far-reaching as Roosevelt insists is questionable, but its effects did much to open Southeast Ohio to exploration, exploitation, speculation, and settlement, so much so that to some the war's Battle of Point Pleasant on October 10, 1774, a failed attempt by 1000 Shawnees to cross the river, was the opening battle of the Revolution. In the Fall of 1774 the war ended when the Shawnees under Cornstalk asked for a meeting at Camp Charlotte to make peace.

Whether Logan participated in the war is doubtful, and he refused to participate in making peace as well, remaining aloof in a

nearby village. Lord Dunmore insisted that Logan participate, and he sent a scout, John Gibson, an old friend of Logan's, to persuade him to take part. Logan and his old friend sat down under a huge elm near an old mound. Logan began to cry and then began to speak. Gibson wrote down what he said and delivered it to Lord Dunmore. The tree they sat under became known as the Logan Elm; it is still revered in Ohio folklore even long after it fell to lightning, windstorms, and Dutch Elm disease, but the dramatic moment occurred not under the elm but the next day when Dunmore rose to read Logan's words to the assembled Virginians and Shawnees at Camp Charlotte. He read:

"I appeal to any white man to say if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry and he gave him not meat; if ever he came cold and naked and he clothed him not? During the course of the last long and bloody war, Logan remained idle in his camp, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites that my countrymen pointed as I passed and said, 'Logan is the friend of the white man.' I had even thought to have lived with you, but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it. I have killed many. I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country I rejoice at the beams of peace. But do not harbor a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one."

With the publication of Logan's words in Eastern newspapers in both New York and Williamsburg they enjoyed a brief 18th century celebrity and then they seemed to pass into obscurity, even as did Logan himself as the revolution absorbed the attention of Indians, Virginians, and British alike. Whether Logan participated in the battles of the Revolution in the West is doubtful; apparently he wandered alone from village to village in the Ohio country, and there were rumors that he had taken to drink. But no one knows, and only one person, an old Mingo friend named Good Hunter, could attest to his fate. As reported by Good Hunter to Henry C. Bush of Tiffin, Ohio, and recorded by Henry Howe in 1848, Logan had wandered to Southern Michigan, and some time about 1780 he was murdered near Detroit. According to Good Hunter, he was sitting at his camp fire wrapped in his blanket, his elbows resting on his knees and his head

on his hands. An Indian who perceived some offense came up behind him and buried his axe in Logan's head. "Thus," writes Howe, "perished the immortal Logan, the last of his race."

But his words are with us yet. In 1785, in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Thomas Jefferson published Logan's words and the Logan story as far as he knew it, commented then that Logan, the Mingos, the Shawnees, and all the Ohio Indians were "...noble but doomed savages, tragically slaughtered in wars precipitated by a few murderous frontiersmen and a few vengeful warriors, a surviving remnant yearning to be civilized but fated to lose their land to a deserving white yeomanry." Clearly Jefferson remained to mourn Logan.

In his statement, as astute and perceptive as it was politically correct as the United States began its nationhood, Jefferson fused past, present, and future in his view of the Ohio country as the clash of cultures moved toward an inevitable conclusion. With the successful conclusion of the Revolution, one of the greatest migrations of peoples in human history began almost immediately, to continue for more than a century. In the census of 1800 one-twentieth of the country's white population had already moved across the Appalachians and beyond. By 1820 one-third of the population had moved West; Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois had become states; and the remaining American Indians of the Ohio country, exiles from their own country, had begun their inevitable transformation into myth even as they were removed to the West.

Yet the blood and the names remain on the land, the blood absorbed by a soil that became richer for it, and the array of names—Ohio itself, Chillicothe, Coshocton, Cuyahoga, and a vast array of others now shrouded in the mists of history—mark the violent past in the land. Among them are names that shine with historical splendor: Wayne, Tecumseh, Pontiac, Clark, and hundreds of others that came to prominence and even glory in those years of cultural conflict, of hatred and bloodshed. Among them not the least is that of Logan, whose name remains on the land in the Hockhocking Valley where he once lived in peace. Now it marks a town, the county seat of a county called Hocking by those who carved it arbitrarily out of the spectacular and blood-soaked Ohio landscape.

## HOW I “EARNED MY OARS,” OR, NAUTICAL PASSAGE AT FIFTY

FOR MARY ELLEN CALDWELL

JILL B. GIDMARK

Mary Ellen is my spry 90-years-“young” friend, with whom for over a quarter century I’ve delighted in sharing a love of *literature*—specifically, of Herman Melville—and a love of *water*—particularly a large wooded and many-bayed lake named Winnebagoish in the Chippewa National Forest of northern Minnesota, where she has a small, rustic cabin (stocked with lead crystal wine glasses and other essentials) on a secluded beach known as Cut Foot Sioux. Our adventures span the traditional and academic (she served on the university graduate committee for my Ph.D. dissertation, a study of the nautical vocabulary in Melville’s sea novels) to the wildly—she and I would prefer to say “wisely”—indulgent (we splurged on an adventure to the Galapagos Islands in 1988, tracking Melville’s footsteps, sally crabs, and blue-footed boobies).

For purposes of this story, you have to understand two things: first, that I don’t say “no” to her (nor would she to me, though she’s far more often the one with the good ideas, like the time last September when we were closing the cabin and, rather than throw out the dozen old eggs that we had taken out cleaning the refrigerator, made a nest of them at the edge of the wilderness, giggling as we wondered which grateful wild animal would enjoy the surprising feast). The second thing is that, while we both take some pride in our academic accomplishments, ask me to do anything technical or mechanical and I start to hyperventilate. Such things don’t daunt *Mary Ellen*, I should add, who is both calmer and more resourceful.

Closing the books on my afternoon class at the University one sunny Wednesday last May, I savored the solo drive north through

pinus and aspens to meet Mary Ellen at her cabin; my husband and younger son would join us for the weekend. It was a quiet, amber sunset when I arrived, and we had barely begun sipping our cocktails “to stop traveling,” as we like to say, when she looked at me with the glint in her eye that I know always signals delicious trouble and said, “You’re writing a book about lakes and the sea: you need to drive the boat.” Pretending not to hear this, I finished my cocktail and poured us both another.

The next morning, she handed me the Owner’s Manual to her fishing-boat motor, and I sensed there was no way out. I walked slowly down the long wooded hill to the lake, my fate sealed. Manual splayed open on my knees, I sat backwards in the docked wooden boat, puzzling half-heartedly over an intimidating array of buttons, levers, and mechanisms that I was only dimly beginning to identify on the motor. After an hour, stretching my shoulders, I thought another cup of coffee might be nice, so I ambled back to Mary Ellen in the cabin and said that I really didn’t think I felt like doing this, let’s enjoy the morning sun instead by checking the eagle’s nest or reading in the screen house with our feet propped up. Oh, and by the way, have *you* driven the boat much lately, I dared to challenge, avoiding her eyes. She said she hadn’t driven the last few years, but we really should get out on the lake it was such a fine day, and she was sure that we could manage. Doomed, I said a silent prayer and reasoned that the worst that could happen was for the two of us to reach a watery fate at the bottom of Lake Winnebagoishish, which didn’t seem a half-bad way to go if our time had come.

So we donned our tilley hats. Mine is an old beige canvas sporting my favorite buttons (“Western Minnesota Steam Thresher’s Silver Anniversary Reunion, Rollag,” “Big Bay Point Lighthouse Senior Keeper,” “University of Minnesota—One of the Glories of this State,” “Old Sailors Never Die, they just get a little dinghy”). Hers is a more recent purchase, sailor blue terycloth, comfortable and a bit squarish, which she had dubbed her Monica Lewinski hat months before Monica became such big news. We threw life vests onto the bottom of the boat, sat on our favorite cushions, cast off the ropes, and poled away from the dock. Owner’s manual perched on my knees, I reread the steps once through for luck and sighed audibly. I looked to Mary Ellen for courage or comfort or composure, but her eyes were scanning the bright haze on the other shore. I squeezed the fuel tank bulb, poised my back and knees to lower the

heavy motor, shifted the throttle to NEUTRAL, cranked the gear shift to NEUTRAL, pulled the choke out slowly, located the ON button by conferring with the manual's index, moved the gear lever to FORWARD, jolted the throttle clockwise, and we were off.

Problem was, we were also aimed directly at the reed bed, and I knew neither how to steer nor how to slow down. Puckish Mary Ellen clasped her Lewinski hat to her head with one hand and grabbed the gunnel with the other for all she was worth, closed her eyes, but never once lost her cool. One of my hands pressed the fluttering pages of the manual to my knee, the other jiggled the throttle, and the boat was coughing at erratic speeds, gaining on the reed bed (at least we weren't headed for the newly repaired dock) but going in circles this time because I still hadn't gotten the hang of steering, or forward or reverse or maintaining consistent speeds, things the manuals aren't entirely clear on. I may have screamed, I think more than once. I regretted not having figured out in advance where the STOP button was. Losing what cool I thought I had, I panicked that there was nothing marked STOP on the motor; though the manual showed a nice picture of a button clearly labeled STOP, the manual did not tell me *where it was*. Mary Ellen couldn't remember. The manual fell to my feet as I frantically began pushing buttons everywhere on the motor; at last a red one did the trick. We coasted to a gentle drift an arm's length from the reeds.

Okay. Breathe in, breathe out, my older son reminds me at times like this. What to do. Disappointing Mary Ellen was out of the question. And, really, all things considered, retreating to the dock at this point was beginning to seem less appealing to me than staying right here on the lapping water, maybe even moving farther out along the water, and managing to drive myself and Mary Ellen across its surface, stretching us, reaching us to even vaster expanses of watery deep. I set my jaw, picked up the manual, and reviewed the steps once more.

The words were more like acquaintances now, even friends. Things *worked*: the reverse lever really reversed our direction and got us away from the reeds, I could steer without careening out of control, and I found myself pushing my hand down clockwise on the throttle to speed us up slightly. At fifty years old, for the first time in my life, I was actually driving a boat! Wind pressing our faces, moving through our hair fast and free, was caused by an

action of my doing. The word “exhilarating” had never felt truer or more precise to me.

We cruised into and around McAvity Bay, West Seeley Bay, East Seeley Bay to Eagle’s Nest Lodge, past Battle Point and Sugar Point, as I, with some pride and care, picked our way through lines of anchored or trolling fishing boats and three buoys, vigilantly scanning the surface before us for deadheads, particularly at The Rocks, near where Pigeon River flows in. I was getting used to this way of traveling, deeply ingesting lake air and bright haze, squinting with right palm shading my eyes, loving the speed and glide—in short, savoring all the senses of every minute of our delicious azure morning.

That’s when Mary Ellen, hands still gripping hat and gunnel from her perch in the bow, turned her head back over her shoulder to me, and said conspiratorially, with that glint in her eye that I always know signals delicious trouble, “Let’s tackle the *big* lake.” So light out for vaster, yet more watery territories was what we did. *Seasoned salts* was the right term for us now: she, content and I can’t help but think pleased; me, euphoric and incredulous, carefully and confidently nudging the throttle toward steadily faster speeds. We were off, with a wake behind us: a new Captain and an ever (forever) loyal First Mate.

University of Minnesota

SOME COMMENTS ON WILLIAM THOMAS'S  
"THE FARM, 1912-1940"

THEODORE R. KENNEDY

Mr. William Thomas's farming experiences varied from my own in several respects, most of the variations being situational rather than fundamental. He lived in Ohio, I in Indiana. His father's farms were probably larger—and more prosperous—than my father's 176 acres, though my father also farmed 88 acres of bottomland owned by his parents. Since I was born in 1919 and my family left the farm a decade later, my memories are dimmer than those of Mr. Thomas, though some remain vivid seventy years later. I have consulted my brother, Lloyd W. Kennedy of Yellow Springs, Ohio, five years my senior, on the details of this article.

The greatest omission from the Thomas account is in the lack of reference to livestock: horses, cattle, pigs, sheep, and chickens. These each and all required daily—usually twice daily—care and effort: feeding, watering, milking, "slopping" and egg-gathering. A dairy herd, however small (my father's herd of Milking Shorthorns numbered about a dozen), had to be milked at 12-hour intervals for optimum production. Milking times were usually at 5 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Robert Frost once mentioned that he was the only farmer in Vermont who milked at noon and midnight.) With no milking machine, this was a Sisyphean chore.

After each cow was milked the pail was weighed and a record kept of the particular cow's production. When a kitten was on hand and my brother was doing the milking, the output figures were not accurate. He was expert at sending a stream of milk about three feet into the mouth of a kitten standing on its haunches and lapping at a high rate of speed. If I was not alert, sometimes I got a stream of milk in my face.

The sheep were my favorite animals, perhaps because one year my father brought two new-born lambs into the kitchen. The mother ewe had rejected them, so we bottle-raised them. I love holding the nipples while they drank and especially enjoy the vigorous butts with which they punctuated their meals. After they were fully grown I happened one day to walk out to the pasture where the sheep were grazing, and the two I had helped raise came trotting up to me. I suppose my happy feeling could have been described as “maternal.”

My father told me how one year the ram got loose and joined the ewes much earlier than planned. The result was that the lambs were born at Christmas time instead of near Easter—and in consequence brought top market price. My father said he arranged for that “accident” to happen every year after that. One of my earliest memories is jumping from the haymow down onto a pile of huge sacks of wool.

One virtue of farm life was that a child soon became a valuable helper. My first service was “helping” my mother collect the eggs and in time that became my regular duty. Later, feeding the chickens became an added responsibility. The granary door hung on rusted iron hinges which emitted a loud squeak when the door was opened. When I pulled that door open in the late afternoon, the flock of Rhode Island Reds came running and partly flying to greet me. I have rarely felt so popular since.

Horses still had many uses on a farm in the 1920's, and we still had three or four, though a Fordson tractor was already the main source of energy. I remember my mother hitching a mare to our buggy and our riding to visit a friend a few miles distant. An exceedingly pleasant ride it was. She told me how her father, a minister, would always greet another driver, possibly stopping to chat a few minutes on meeting an acquaintance. I sometimes think of this while hurtling down a highway at 70 miles per hour.

I would add only one or two details to the Thomas account of the cultivation of the fields and harvesting the crops. He did not mention a hay rake, a horse-drawn implement with about twenty curved tines each about four feet in length. The driver, seated on the implement, had a foot lever which raised the tines and released the hay. This allowed the hay to be raked into long rows. If one did not have a hay-loader—and we did not—the hay rake could pull the rows of dried hay into piles ready to be hoisted with a pitchfork up onto

wagon. Stacking the hay on the wagon so a big, high load would not slide off required considerable skill.

Walt Whitman describes, among his other joys, riding on a load of hay. With the disappearance of canal boats, this was absolutely the only completely comfortable ride in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. No matter how much the wagon jolted over rutted lanes, a passenger high up on a hay wagon seemed to float, with an added slight sense of danger.

In some respects a small boy's perceptions may be more acute than an adult's and certainly the early morning arrival of the threshing rig chugging up the lane toward our house had me racing with excitement. The racing was purposeful. I hurried in order to hop aboard the back of the steam-driven threshing engine, because it moved slowly but with a marvelous shimmying motion and a "chug-a-chug-a chug" sound.

Thomas makes only one "grievous" error in his account of a threshing day, possibly because he had the misfortune to live in Ohio rather than Indiana. At noon the threshers would come to the house and wash up in a basin under a maple tree in the back yard. Then they trooped into the dining room and before them lay what an uncle of mine termed "a Hoosier special": a large meat platter rounded over with fried chicken (God's favorite food), mounds of mashed potatoes, gravy, ears of freshly picked sweet corn, green beans, peas, celery stalks, fresh ripe sliced tomatoes, cottage cheese, pickled beets, apple sauce, and other gems I am probably forgetting. Dessert was apple or some other kind of pie, perhaps with the choice of angel food cake. But the centerpiece was that "Hoosier fried chicken." The dressed birds were thoroughly cut up, rolled in seasoned flour, browned in hot lard, probably, then oven fried in a covered iron skillet for about an hour on a big coal stove. During the last third of oven cooking period the lid was removed, turning the pieces a delicious, crisp brown. In Indiana Mr. Thomas's chicken and dumplings would have appeared only in winter time.

Corn on my father's farm was not shocked but was "shucked" by hand. A thirty-inch bank board was added to the left side of a wagon bed so that the ears of corn, when extracted from the husks, could be tossed against the bank board and would fall into the wagon. The farmers used heavy work gloves with a metal piece, called a "shucking peg," across the palm of one hand which had a kind of cutting hook at the bottom end, rather like a beer can opener. An expert

would use the peg to slice open the husk covering the ear and, with the other hand, twist the ear loose and throw it into the wagon in two or three motions. One neighbor's help was especially prized as he had formerly worked in the great Illinois corn fields. When he was husking corn one could hear the ears hitting the bank board at two- or three-second intervals, more than twice the speed of most farmers. Husking corn was cold, hard November work.

The only other farm activity to be mentioned is probably still going on today: gathering hickory nuts, walnuts, and perhaps a few butternuts in late fall. Hickory nutmeats were favorites as they were the mildest but they were also the most challenging to crack and extract pieces in reasonable sizes. Outer walnut hulls contained a dark stain, not readily removable from skin or clothing, so separating nuts from the hulls was done outdoors by rolling them under the feet. Walnuts were very hard to crack. We usually cracked the nuts with a hammer against a round, flat-bottomed inverted sash weight held between the knees. Butternuts deserved their name and were delicious but eating too many would bite the tongue.

On January 1, 1930 my family moved away from the farm where my brother and I and our father had been born. But that parcel of land, now plowed up by strip mining, still lives—every acre of it—in my memory. It was far from an idyllic life, even for a child, but it did have its moments of enjoyment and occasional drama.

Michigan State University Emeritus

## A CHAPTER OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY: CONCLUSION

WILLIAM THOMAS

vii San Francisco

I determined to go by ship, for I had never been aboard a vessel even so big as a launch. I went on the *Humboldt*, which I was told had been a freighter in the Alaskan trade during the high time of Dawson and the Klondike. We went out of Los Angeles harbor late in the day. It was the first of June

Nearly all the passengers were seasick. Perversely convinced, without basis, of my immunity, I took breakfast and lunch. My sickness was not prolonged, and after they came up I did what I assumed, from reading, every youth does on shipboard: look for a girl. She was on her way to Berkeley. Neither of us wanted dinner, and we sat in chairs on the hurricane deck until it was dark and we were alone, but I was afraid to move to embrace her, afraid even to try to hold her hand. It was cold, and I went and got the blankets out of my berth and moved our chairs close to the stack, where we sat until midnight, I with all the yearning of youth for embracing and kissing her and youth's naivete that deprived me of the daring to try.

That, since I had not Bruce King's assurance, was the reality, though what I wrote of it later is romantic speculation after the manner of Sherwood Anderson. I looked for her next morning but never saw her again.

When I got to my stateroom (which I shared with a man who said he sold furs) my face was stinging, and red as from sunburn. I awoke late, and my seasickness was gone. I heard a steward call "San Francisco in half an hour" and hastened to dress. My face was the tan color of smoke. When I got on deck we were through the Golden

Gate, and I looked the first time at the city of San Francisco against a cold gray sky. Among the coins in my pocket were four pennies, and I tossed them into the bay.

It was a Thursday. The fur salesman, who freely admitted he wished to save money, proposed that we share a room at a cheap hotel. I got a job at once as bus boy in the coffee shop of the Clift. Eight days later I was fired from it, and that afternoon went to a theater, where Jeanne Eagels was playing in "Rain." Even now I can bring before me scenes of that performance and hear the downpour on the stage.

The fur salesman urged me to try helping dispose of his goods. Sceptically, I agreed, and rehearsed my speech: "Madam, I represent an association of Alaskan trappers which is selling furs direct to the public for about half what you would pay at the stores here. Allow me to show you the fine coats we offer." "Then," said he, "you'll show her the catalog and tell her to pick out the style she likes best so I can bring a selection for her to choose from. If she says 'no,' that ends it."

He did not instruct me as to the most likely sort of women to approach, and I went to the most unlikely ones, residents of a good district, who all said "no." He went to San Jose. The next two weeks I searched, first earnestly, then desultorily, for work, eating toast and coffee or wheat cakes twice a day. With a daily expenditure of twenty-five or thirty cents obtaining a little food, I found the sensation of hunger gone after about three days. What remained was a dull discomfort, and, walking the streets of this famed and fabled city, I was, by one distraction or another, enabled at times to forget it. I walked every street of the business district and loitered, as in Salt Lake and Los Angeles, at shop windows. Late in the afternoon I might walk the length of the Embarcadero or climb Telegraph Hill and look down at vessels moored at the edge of the bright bay.

I had been to the newspaper offices without success at getting a reportorial job, to a number of advertising agencies, and to all the hotels and restaurants where employment seemed likely. Employment agencies offered only kinds of work I could not perform. I ceased to look for work, and regularly spent a large part of every day in the reading room of the library. There I wrote as well as read, penciling sheets of a school tablet with what I thought to be original ideas in a gaudy and exotic combinations of words. When I tired of that I would go to a billiard hall on Market Street to sit and

think. I no longer spent money for cigarets, but no longer felt deprivation at lack of them.

I thought of the many mistakes I had made, each successive one seeming to have put me into a worse predicament than that before. I thought of my folly in leaving my parents' house because I could not get along with my father, and for the first time was struck by the possibility that in our prolonged quarrel I might not be wholly right and he not altogether wrong. I thought of that splendid, beautiful, and familiar country, and how much better I liked it than California, and wished I might have found a niche there that would have kept me from succumbing to wanderlust. Though I did not think so far as to acknowledge it, I was homesick.

Even with the minimum of daily expenditure my money was nearly gone, and I owed for my room. I had to bring myself out of lethargy. I set out again to look for a job, and found one, though it was in a restaurant lower in the scale of restaurants than any other I had worked in and more distasteful than any other job I had had. When I told the hotel manager I was to get a check at the end of the week he agreed to let me stay. A couple of days later came a letter with money from my mother, who had deduced my situation and done for me all she could do. That made me feel independent, and I summarily quit the job. I had decided to make my way home, however humble must be my arriving. I would work in Salt Lake until I had enough money to get to Denver, in Denver until I could get to Kansas City. Though my money was not sufficient to take me to Salt Lake, I was determined to go eastward, and eastward was Sacramento.

#### viii Sacramento

This was July, and while San Francisco was comfortably cool Sacramento was hot—a fact I had failed to consider. I went by trolley car on a Sunday afternoon, and found a room, two flights up, at two dollars a week. I had fifteen dollars left, so the next day I went first to the newspaper offices—with the same lack of result I had experienced elsewhere. The day ended with my becoming, yet once more, a bus boy.

At the Sacramento Hotel in summer there were no crowds of diners such as I had become used to, and my tasks were the carrying of table boards and horses from the second floor and chairs from

the basement in preparation for a Rotary, a Kiwanis, a Lions, a 20 30 Club luncheon, or that of the Realty Board, and afterward carrying them back; as well as transferring silver and napery—a proper combination of these being known as a “set-up”—from the Empire Room to the Pompeiiian Room and back again. In the Empire Room was a fireplace of transcendental size and decoration, as resplendent and aseptic as that in George Babbitt’s Athletic Club.

The heat made the days a torture, and the nights were no respite though my third floor room was no hotter than the outdoors. I worked from seven to half-past nine, eleven to two, and four to half-past eight under the direction of a young German who said that four years in the German army had made him crazy—“grazy in the ‘ead.” During my free hours in the afternoon I would go to the Library, and at night walk the streets, coming late to my room where sleep was slow to relieve me because of hives the heat had brought upon me and because of an electric sign which flashed on and off outside my window.

My undoing was a waiter named McKay. If there is a prototype of a Platonic idea, of a waiter, I am sure McKay approximated it. He was a small, wizened, stringy-haired, flat-footed man, servile, obsequious, ingratiating, ever cultivating a discreet familiarity with regular patrons, discussing with them ball games, horse races, and prize fights. I thought him an old fussbudget. He exceeded his privilege I felt, in giving me instructions which, as I had learned my duties, considered unnecessary. We disagreed about who was to place fingerbowls. As I had not known a dining room where this duty devolved upon anyone but the waiter, I insisted it was his obligation:

“If you don’t do what you’re told, you’re goin’ to get fired. The head waiter wanted to fire you last week, and I was the only one he had that wanted to keep you. But if you don’t do what you’re told...?”

I knew his statement to be a deliberate falsehood, and my reply had, as well as audibility, such a rugged directness and simplicity that the patrons turned and looked, other waiters gasped, and the head waiter came running. “You’re fired!” I admitted it and rejoiced in it.

In Sacramento I had worked nearly six weeks, and, with the expense but that of lodging and laundry, had what was to me a considerable sum of money. I made plans, settled the account for my room, spent the rest of the day at the Library, and left on a train for Salt Lake at one o’clock in the morning.

## ix Eastward

Salt Lake was clean and green and beautiful, and my previous sojourn there made it now familiar. The advertising agent for whom I had written the booklet on coffee had not sold it yet but still hoped to sell it. Business was rotten. He was surprised, he said, that I had not made some sort of connection in Los Angeles.

Maybe it was Salt Lake's familiarity that decided me to go on to Denver. I had left my trunk at my former lodging house, and went there and sorted out my clothing, and took out to sell what garments I could readily spare. I sold the lot to the sixth pawnbroker for the price offered me by the first.

On the day coach of the Denver and Rio Grande Western there were many unfilled seats, but a short, heavy man asked for a match, then sat beside me and began to talk. I did not encourage him, for this kind of conversation bored me, then as it does now. But he talked on. He was a Greek, he said, and a railroad section foreman. He asked what work I did; I told him I was a newspaper reporter. He was going to Grand Junction to get a job, and if he got it he would take me on as timekeeper. I wouldn't have to work much, and after things were running smoothly, with the camp commissary and the rake-off on the poker game, we would make a lot of money. As if to answer a question, he continued that he was offering this because he liked me. He put his hand on my knee.

I did not know then his purpose, but did not wish to be liked by a man whom I had no interest in, and got up and went to the toilet. When I came back I sat across the aisle. He continued from the seat that had been mine. Would I consider it? I told him to write to me in Denver, General Delivery, when he got his job. Late in the afternoon we reached Grand Junction, and he got off the train.

In Denver I went to the address where Quist had lived, a brownstone house behind big maple trees, but it had changed ownership, and nobody knew anything about him. However, there was a vacant room, and I engaged it. The next day I made my inevitable visits to the newspaper offices and endured the inevitable rebuffs. The morning after that I walked, slowly and much against my wish, to the district of the big hotels, arriving at the cafe entrance of each in turn. Nowhere could I bring myself to the point of entering and asking for a job. I went to the Library that afternoon and every day and every night thereafter while I stayed in Denver. I made no record of the

books I read there, and cannot recall what they were; I remember sometimes finding myself with a book unfinished at the closing hour, concealing it under my coat, finishing it in my room, and returning the next day.

As in San Francisco and Salt Lake, I could not seriously look for a job. A letter came from the Greek section foreman offering me the post of timekeeper at Green River, Utah, but I did not answer. I wanted more than ever to get home, and was sorry I had stopped in Denver: I might have got a good deal farther on the sum expended for a week's food and lodging. I could still go to Kansas City by bus, cheaply.

Denver to Kansas City was a forty-hour journey over muddy and treacherous roads. We arrived about midnight, and I went to a cheap hotel recommended by a fellow traveler. I had shipped my trunk home collect from Denver, and from here I sent my bag. Eleven o'clock of a sunny August morning saw me, with six dollars in my pocket, walking the Blue River bridge on the Raytown Road, hitchhiking eastward.

## x Hitch-hiker

My first ride was with a traveling salesman and my second with a college student returning to Columbia. Between them I walked what seemed a great distance; it was late at night when we arrived in Columbia, and I was glad to accept my benefactor's offer to put me up at his fraternity house. I slept on the sofa, and the college boy, mildly interested in the phenomenon of a young tramp, gave me good breakfast of ham and eggs.

The next forenoon three rides advanced me thirty miles, and then I was taken in by two men in a Ford roadster. Both had a couple of days' whiskers and worse-for-wear clothes. At noon the driver stopped at a gasoline station and lunchroom. As my big breakfast was yet durable, I decided to skip lunch. "Haven't you any money at all?" asked Khaki-shirt, the driver. "A dollar," I said. "I can stand half a dollar on gas if you're going all the way to St. Louis."

They were going all the way to St. Louis. We got gasoline and oil and went on. It was a fine afternoon and we all felt good, and each knew the others felt good, and we laughed and joked because we had nothing to worry about for several hours. We went through St. Charles, and then Khaki-shirt stopped the car near a bridge over

a creek. This would be a good place to clean up, he said, before going into town. Out of the rear compartment of the car he brought a bucket and a kit of soap, razor, brush, shaving cream, mirror, toothpaste, toothbrush, and towel, and went under the bridge. I washed my face and hands and dried them on my handkerchief. Brown-pants shaved with Khaki-shirt's razor. Khaki-shirt went back to the car, and I asked Brown-pants if they had been together long.

"Naw, I been down in Oklahoma. He picked me up same's he did you. I got some money comin' in St. Louis—that is, it ought to be there—and I'm going to meet my buddy. He's got a dodge, and we're goin' to Chicago. If you want to go to Chi, we'll take you with us. Only don't say nothin' to this bird. He thinks I'm goin' with him down in Illinois." I told him I wanted to stay on the road to Indianapolis and Columbus.

At four o'clock we reached the St. Louis post office. I got out, thanked Khaki-shirt, and said "so long" to both. There were letters for me, addressed successively to Denver, Kansas City, and St. Louis, as I had, with that curious perversity of human nature, left Kansas City with the thought of working in St. Louis, even though I had not worked in Salt Lake, Denver, or Kansas City. But none contained a check or money. I looked for a cheap restaurant.

I boarded a trolley car to East St. Louis, there ascertained the proper direction to follow, and started walking. I had walked no more than half a mile when a Ford roadster caught up to me, and in it was Khaki-shirt, alone. He stopped, I got in, and asked about Brown-pants.

"Aw, he didn't have no money comin'. He just wanted to get to St. Louis."

"How about you? You haven't any, have you?"

"Not a damned nickel. But I'll get along. Hell, I'll steal gas and grub till I hit some big construction job. I'll take you to Cairo if you want to go."

I declined to go to Cairo and left him where the road forked. At a gasoline station I inquired what road to follow to Indianapolis. "Through Collinsville," the attendant said. "You can get an interurban car right there. See, the one that says 'Collinsville only'." "Have you any maps—those the oil companies put out?" "We sell these—thirty-five cents." "No, thanks."

At Collinsville I got a map free and started to walk on Number 11. It was dusk and looked as if it were about to rain. I recounted

my silver money and fingered my three one dollar bills. I walked back. I started out again. I felt myself becoming sick at the stomach. I had suspected that meat was spoiled when I ate it in St. Louis. It came up, and then I felt better, and walked on. Rain began falling. Once more I walked back to Collinsville, found a hotel, and ascertained that I could stay for a dollar.

The next morning I decided to fortify myself with a good breakfast, and spent forty-five cents for it. It was cloudy but not raining, and the day looked propitious. So it proved. Three long rides brought me to Terre Haute early in the afternoon, and another took me twenty miles beyond. Then I walked two miles, and a fat red faced man in a snorting old Hudson stopped and took me in.

“Goin’ to Indianapolis?”

“Columbus,” I said.

“Well, I guess you’ve got a ride. That’s where I’m goin’.”

He smiled at me, and I smiled back. I thanked him, and settled against the cushion to ease the weariness that had suddenly overtaken me. My worries were over. In Columbus, I was as good as home.

Late Ohio State University/Marion