

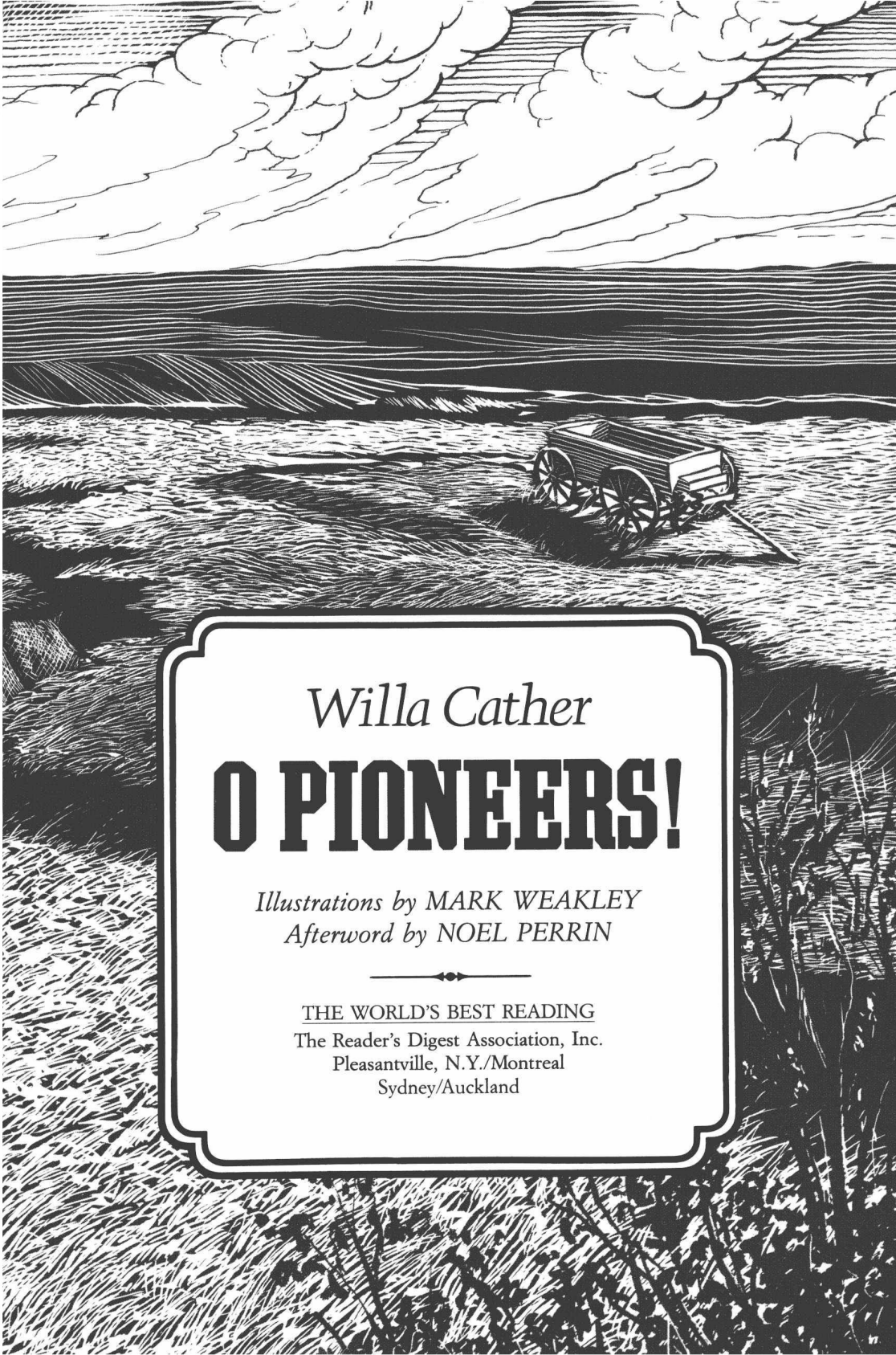
Willa Cather

O PIONEERS!



O PIONEERS!





Willa Cather

O PIONEERS!

Illustrations by MARK WEAKLEY
Afterword by NOEL PERRIN



THE WORLD'S BEST READING
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O Pioneers!

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To the memory of
SARAH ORNE JEWETT
in whose beautiful and delicate work
there is the perfection
that endures

"Those fields, colored by various grain!"

MICKIEWICZ



PRAIRIE SPRING

Evening and the flat land,
Rich and sombre and always silent;
The miles of fresh-plowed soil,
Heavy and black, full of strength and harshness;
The growing wheat, the growing weeds,
The toiling horses, the tired men;
The long empty roads,
Sullen fires of sunset, fading,
The eternal, unresponsive sky.
Against all this, Youth,
Flaming like the wild roses,
Singing like the larks over the plowed fields,
Flashing like a star out of the twilight;
Youth with its insupportable sweetness,
Its fierce necessity,
Its sharp desire,
Singing and singing,
Out of the lips of silence,
Out of the earthy dusk.

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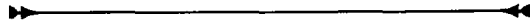
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Her clear, deep blue eyes
were fixed intently on the distance.

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You could have walked over the
roof of Ivar's dwelling without dreaming that
you were near a human habitation.

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Her face was rather like a poppy, round and brown,
with rich color in her cheeks and lips.

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Amédée challenged Emil to a jumping match.

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"Do you think you could tell my fortune?"

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An idea flashed into his mind, and his sense of
injury and outrage grew.

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They paused on the last ridge
of the pasture, overlooking the house
and the windmill.

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O you daughters of the West!
O you young and elder daughters! O you mothers and you wives!
Never must you be divided, in our ranks you move united,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

—*Walt Whitman*

PART ONE

The Wild Land

