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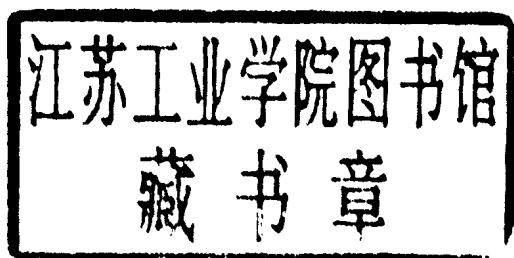
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

*Edited by
Richard H. Millington*



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For our colleague, Gillian Brown

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NOTE ON REFERENCES

Unless stated otherwise, all references to Hawthorne's works relate to *The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Ohio State University Press, 1962–97), and are noted parenthetically in the text by volume and page number.

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CHRONOLOGY OF HAWTHORNE'S LIFE

- 1804 Born Salem, Massachusetts, July 4, second child of Nathaniel Hathorne, a ship's captain, and Elizabeth Manning Hathorne, member of an enterprising Salem family. Descended on father's side from prominent Puritan colonists. Sisters: Elizabeth (1802-83) and Louisa (1808-52). (Hawthorne will add the "w" to the family name in his early twenties; his mother and sisters accept the emendation in 1837, with the publication of *Twice-told Tales*.)
- 1808 Father dies of yellow fever in Surinam (Dutch Guiana); family joins Manning household. Begins schooling.
- 1809 Sophia Amelia Peabody, later Sophia Hawthorne, born September 21 in Salem.
- 1813 Injures his foot playing ball; suffers from lameness for the next fourteen months. Is tutored at home.
- 1818 Moves with his family to Raymond, Maine. Attends school briefly but enjoys considerable freedom, hunting, fishing, reading, and running "quite wild."
- 1819-20 Returns to Salem, living with his Manning relatives while his mother and sisters remain in Raymond. Attends school, then prepares for college under the tutelage of a Salem lawyer.
- 1821-25 Attends Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, where he forms lifelong friendships with Horatio Bridge, Jonathan Cilley, and Franklin Pierce (fourteenth President of the United States) and meets Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who becomes a good friend in later years. An admittedly "idle" student, he is fined for card-playing and begins writing fiction. Graduates eighteenth in a class of thirty-five.
- 1825 Returns to Salem after college graduation. Lives in Salem with his mother and sisters for the next ten years, working to establish himself as a professional writer and traveling to early

tourist destinations in New England and New York; several of these sites find their way into tales and sketches. While some of his best stories are written during this period and his reputation grows, he struggles with the conditions of an immature and unremunerative literary marketplace, abandoning ambitions to publish thematically linked collections of his tales and sketches and burning one such manuscript.

- 1828 Publishes his first novel, *Fanshawe*, anonymously and at his own expense. Later repudiates this book, destroying his own copy and eliminating it from all accounts of his career. (Unsold copies of the novel burn in a Boston bookstore fire in 1831.)
- 1830 Publishes first tale, "The Hollow of the Three Hills," in the *Salem Gazette*.
- 1830-33 Other early publications, all anonymous. The sketch "Sights from a Steeple" appears in *The Token*, an annual gift book, for 1831; the 1832 *Token* includes the extremely popular "The Gentle Boy," "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," and "Roger Malvin's Burial."
- 1834 Proposes a collection of tales and sketches, "The Story Teller," to Samuel Goodrich, who refuses it. The contents of the projected volume will be scattered among various gift books and magazines.
- 1835 Contributes stories and sketches, including "The Minister's Black Veil" and "The May-Pole of Merry Mount," to *The Token* for 1836; "Young Goodman Brown" appears in *New-England Magazine*.
- 1836 Moves to Boston to edit, with the help of his talented sister Elizabeth, the *American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*. Resigns editorship when publisher goes bankrupt, and returns to Salem. With his sister he works on *Peter Parley's Universal History, on the Basis of Geography*, part of a popular series for young readers, which appears the following year.
- 1837 Succeeds in publishing *Twice-told Tales*, a collection of his earlier work, when Horatio Bridge, without his knowledge, agrees to secure the publisher against losses. A favorable review by Longfellow helps establish Hawthorne's reputation as a promising American writer. Meets Sophia Peabody, his future wife, and her sister Elizabeth (a friend of Emerson and a powerful presence in intellectual circles and reform movements), who begins her support of his career.

- 1838 Befriends John L. O'Sullivan, editor of the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* and later promoter of the idea of "manifest destiny." Hawthorne will publish frequently in this notable magazine, associated with the Democratic Party, during the next seven years. College friend Jonathan Cilley killed in a duel with a fellow congressman; Hawthorne writes memorial essay in the *Democratic Review*.
- 1839 Accepts appointment as measurer in the Boston Custom House; becomes engaged to Sophia Peabody, to whom he addresses the first of a remarkable series of love letters.
- 1840 Publishes *Grandfather's Chair*, the first of his books for children.
- 1841 Leaves Boston Custom House. Joins Brook Farm community (the model for the utopian community depicted in *The Blithedale Romance*) in April, becoming a trustee and director of finance. Hoping to establish a home for Sophia, purchases two shares in project, but leaves the community in late October.
- 1842 Publishes second, expanded edition of *Twice-told Tales*. Marries Sophia Peabody, July 9; they settle at the "Old Manse" in Concord.
- 1842-45 The "Old Manse" period. Encounters Transcendentalist circle gathered around Ralph Waldo Emerson; friendships with Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, and Ellery Channing. Writes many tales and sketches, including "The Birth-Mark," "Rappaccini's Daughter," "The Artist of the Beautiful," and "The Celestial Rail-road," later collected in *Mosses from an Old Manse*.
- 1844 Daughter Una (1844-77), named after a heroine of Spenser's *Fairie Queene*, born March 3.
- 1845 Edits Horatio Bridge's *Journal of an African Cruiser*. Cash-strapped, the family returns to Salem, where they move in with his mother and sisters. Seeks political appointment through influential friends, Bridge and Franklin Pierce; nominated for position of custom house surveyor by Salem Democrats.
- 1846 Appointed surveyor in the Salem Custom House; publishes *Mosses from an Old Manse*; son Julian (1846-1939) born, June 22.
- 1849 Removed from surveyorship in June by new Whig administration; considerable public controversy ensues. Mother dies, July 31. By September is "writing immensely" on "The Custom-House" and *The Scarlet Letter*.

- 1850 *The Scarlet Letter* published by Ticknor and Fields (the latter a key figure in the promotion of American literature), who remain Hawthorne's publishers for the rest of his career. Having resolved to leave the "abominable" Salem for ever, moves family to Lenox in the Berkshire Mountains of western Massachusetts, an early summer resort. Meets Herman Melville; the two form a profound friendship. Melville publishes "Hawthorne and His Mosses," a manifesto for a distinctive American literature, in *The Literary World*.
- 1851 Publishes *The House of the Seven Gables*, *A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys*, a new edition of *Twice-told Tales*, and *The Snow-Image, and Other Twice-told Tales*, which contains uncollected tales and sketches, including "Ethan Brand," "The Wives of the Dead," and "My Kinsman, Major Molineux." For the first time, earns enough from his writing to support his family. Daughter Rose (1851-1926) born, May 20. Melville dedicates *Moby Dick* to the "Genius" of Nathaniel Hawthorne.
- 1852 Publishes *The Blithedale Romance* and *The Life of Franklin Pierce*, the presidential candidate's campaign biography. Returns to Concord, Massachusetts, purchasing Bronson Alcott's former house (renamed "The Wayside"); sister Louisa dies in a steamboat accident on the Hudson River, July 27.
- 1853 Pierce appoints him American Consul at Liverpool, one of the most lucrative posts in the Consular Service; his fee-based salary will make him a rich man. Publishes *Tanglewood Tales for Girls and Boys*. Family leaves for England in July.
- 1853-57 Lives in England, performing his consular duties conscientiously and traveling in the British Isles; records his impressions of English life in his notebooks. Publishes second, revised edition of *Mosses from an Old Manse* in 1854. Last visits with Melville in the autumn of 1856 and the spring of 1857.
- 1858-59 Hawthornes travel to France and on to Italy, living first in Rome, then in Florence, then again in Rome. Records impressions in notebooks; becomes friendly with members of British and American expatriate artistic community, including Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Harriet Hosmer, Louisa Lander, and William Wetmore Story. Begins writing *The Marble Faun* in July, 1858, finishing rough draft in January 1859. Daughter Una contracts malaria in October, 1858 and becomes gravely ill; near death in April, 1859. Family returns to England in May, where Hawthorne finishes revising *The Marble Faun*.

- 1860 Publishes *The Marble Faun* (released in England under the title of *Transformation*). The Hawthornes sail for America, returning to Concord and The Wayside. In the four years until his death, will begin and abandon three new romances, "The American Claimant," "The Elixir of Life," and "The Dolliver Romance."
- 1862 Visits Horatio Bridge in Washington, D.C.; meets Lincoln. Publishes an essay on the Civil War, "Chiefly About War Matters," in the *Atlantic Monthly*; several pieces on England appear in the same magazine.
- 1863 Publishes *Our Old Home*, based on *Atlantic Monthly* sketches on England; dedication to Franklin Pierce, now seen as Southern sympathizer, is harshly criticized.
- 1864 His health deteriorating, he leaves with Pierce on a carriage tour of northern New England. Dies in his sleep at Plymouth, New Hampshire on May 19. Buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord, Massachusetts; pallbearers include Longfellow, Emerson, Alcott, and Holmes. Pieces of his last work appear in the July *Atlantic Monthly*, under the title "Scenes from 'The Dolliver Romance.'"

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Introduction

Item one. In the “College” episode of the brilliant HBO series *The Sopranos*, mobster Tony Soprano finds himself sitting in a hallway at Bowdoin College, waiting for his daughter Meadow to complete her admissions interview. We have just watched Soprano set aside his role as bourgeois dad while he garrotes a gangster-turned-informer he has discovered in a nearby town. The camera then shows us the inscription chiseled into the wall above his head: “No man can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude without finally getting bewildered as to which may be true.” The author, of course, is identified as Hawthorne, and as the scene ends an undergraduate walks by, informing Tony that “He’s our most famous alumnus.”

Item two. Dr. Leon R. Kass, the head of President George Bush’s Council on Bioethics, assigns the members of the council – a body established to advise the President and the National Institutes of Health on the moral questions raised by controversial research initiatives like cloning – to read Hawthorne’s story “The Birth-Mark,” and opens the council’s first meeting with a discussion of that tale of a scientific enthusiasm gone perversely awry.

Item three. “The Connection,” a call-in program on National Public Radio in the US, devotes a show, featuring a panel of Hawthorne scholars, to a discussion of the 150th anniversary of the publication of *The Scarlet Letter*. They take a call from Carolyn, in Boise, Idaho: “I would just like to say that I identified with the book because I was an adulteress, I was a single mother, and I had to raise my children by myself. I make no excuses for that, but because I not only had the shame but the children, I had to become more able, stronger, better at other things . . . I believe that this is the essence of America: that one can overcome inauspicious beginnings. If you make mistakes you can change, you can overcome. Sometimes people don’t let you forget it – that’s their problem – but I love this book because you can identify with Hester: she made mistakes but she went on.” There is a moment of stunned silence as the assembled scholars take in this unexpected fulfillment