THE AMERICAN NOVEL

剑桥美国小说新论·24
（英文影印版）

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The Red Badge of Courage

《红色英勇勋章》新论

Lee Clark Mitchell 编

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导　读

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近年来，美国文学在我国很受欢迎。大专院校英语系纷纷开设美国文学选读和专题课，学生从中学到的大部分内容是美国小说。不仅如此，在本科毕业论文、硕士论文或博士论文方面，学生所选题材也大多为关于某部美国小说或某个美国小说家。然而，我们的学生往往热衷理论而对作品或作家缺乏深入细致的了解和分析。他们往往先大谈理论规则，然后罗列一些例证，不能很好地把理论和文本融会贯通，恰如其分地结合在一起。在这种情况下，我们需要一些好的参考资料来帮助学生更好地认识和理解他们在阅读或研究的作品和作家。《剑桥美国小说新论》正是这样一套优秀的参考书。

这套丛书的负责人是曾经主编过《哥伦比亚美国文学史》的艾默里·埃利奥特教授，并且由英国剑桥大学出版社在上世纪80年代中期开始陆续出书，至今仍在发行并出版新书，目前已有五十多种，不仅出平装本还有精装本。一套书发行二十多年还有生命力，估计还会继续发行，主要因为它确实从学生的需要出发，深受他们和教师的喜爱。

《剑桥美国小说新论》的编排方式比较统一。根据主编制定的原则，每本书针对一部美国文学历史上有名望的大作家的一本经典小说，论述者都是研究这位作家的知名学者。开篇是一位权威专家的论述，主要论及作品的创作过程、出版历史、当年的评价以及小说发表以来不同时期的主要评论和阅读倾向。随后是四到五篇论述，从不同角度用不同的批评方法对作品进行分析和阐

释。这些文章并非信手拈来，而是专门为这套丛书撰写的，运用的理论都比较新，其中不乏颇有新意的真知灼见。书的最后是为学生进一步学习和研究而提供的参考书目。由此可见，编书的学者们为了帮助学生确实煞费苦心，努力做到尽善尽美。

这五十多种书有早期美国文学家库珀的《最后的莫希干人》，也有当代试验小说大师品钦的《拍卖第49号》和厄普代克那曾被《时代》杂志评为1923年以来100部最佳小说之一的《兔子，跑吧！》；有我们比较熟悉的麦尔维尔的《白鲸》，也有我们还不太了解的他的《漂亮水手》；有中国学生很喜欢的海明威的长篇小说《永别了，武器》，令人想不到的是还有一本论述他所有的短篇小说的集子。有些大作家如亨利·詹姆斯、威廉·福克纳等都有两三本作品入选，但它们都分别有专门的集子。丛书当然涉及已有定论的大作家，包括黑人和白人作家（可惜还没有华裔作家的作品），但也包括20世纪70年代妇女运动中发掘出来的如凯特·肖邦的《觉醒》和佐拉·尼尔·赫斯顿的《他们眼望上苍》，甚至还有我国读者很熟悉的斯托夫人的《汤姆叔叔的小屋》。当年这部小说曾经风靡美国，在全世界都有一定的影响，后来被贬为“政治宣传”作品，从此在美国文学史上销声匿迹。70年代后随着要求扩大文学经典中女性和少数族裔作家的呼声日益高涨，人们才开始重新评价这部作品，分析它对日后妇女作家的影响、对黑人形象的塑造，甚至它在美国文学的哥特式传统中的地位等等。

这样的例子还有很多，例如威廉·迪恩·豪威尔斯和他的《赛拉斯·拉帕姆的发迹》。以前人们只肯定他在发展现实主义文学和理论方面的贡献，对他的作品除了《赛拉斯·拉帕姆的发迹》评价都不太高。但在这本新论文集子里编者对已有定论进行挑战，强调豪威尔斯的小说、他的现实主义跟当时的社会经济文化现状有很大的关系。他的小说既有其文学形式，又是一种社会力量。另外一位19世纪新英格兰作家萨拉·奥尼·裘威特过去一向被看成是乡土作家，现在学者们用女性主义观点强调她的《尖枞树之乡》对美国文学的贡献，分析当年的种族、民族主义和文学市场

对她写作的影响。用封底宣传语言来说，这本集子对美国文学研究、女性主义批评理论和美国研究等方面都会引起很大的兴趣。

还有一本书似乎在我们国家很少有人提起过——亨利·罗思的《就说是睡着了》。此书在20世纪30年代曾经风靡一时，此后长期销声匿迹，60年代又再度受到推崇。现在这部小说则是上面提到的《时代》杂志100部优秀小说中的一部，被认为是上个世纪头50年里最为出色的美国犹太小说、最优秀的现代主义小说之一。评论家认为集子里的文章采用心理分析、社会历史主义等批评方法探讨了有关移民、族裔和文化归属等多方面的问题。

这套集子里还出现了令人信服的新论点。很长时间内海明威一直被认为是讨厌女人的大男子主义者。但在关于他的短篇小说的论述里，作者通过分析《在密执安北部》，令人信服地证明海明威其实对妇女充满同情。不仅如此，这一论断还瓦解了海明威在《太阳照样升起》中充分暴露他的厌女症的定论。

然而，作者们并不侈谈理论或玩弄理论名词，所有的论断都是既以一定的理论为基础，又对文本进行深入的分析；既把理论阐述得深入浅出，又把作品分析得丝丝入扣，让人不由得不信服。他们能够做到这一点完全是因为他们了解学生的水平和需要。

我认为《剑桥美国小说新论》是一套很好的参考书。北京大学出版社购买版权，出版这套书是个有益于外国文学研究教学的决定。

Series Editor's Preface

In literary criticism the last twenty-five years have been particularly fruitful. Since the rise of the New Criticism in the 1950s, which focused attention of critics and readers upon the text itself – apart from history, biography, and society – there has emerged a wide variety of critical methods which have brought to literary works a rich diversity of perspectives: social, historical, political, psychological, economic, ideological, and philosophical. While attention to the text itself, as taught by the New Critics, remains at the core of contemporary interpretation, the widely shared assumption that works of art generate many different kinds of interpretation has opened up possibilities for new readings and new meanings.

Before this critical revolution, many American novels had come to be taken for granted by earlier generations of readers as having an established set of recognized interpretations. There was a sense among many students that the canon was established and that the larger thematic and interpretative issues had been decided. The task of the new reader was to examine the ways in which elements such as structure, style, and imagery contributed to each novel's acknowledged purpose. But recent criticism has brought these old assumptions into question and has thereby generated a wide variety of original, and often quite surprising, interpretations of the classics, as well as of rediscovered novels such as Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, which has only recently entered the canon of works that scholars and critics study and that teachers assign their students.

The aim of The American Novel Series is to provide students of American literature and culture with introductory critical guides to

American novels now widely read and studied. Each volume is devoted to a single novel and begins with an introduction by the volume editor, a distinguished authority on the text. The introduction presents details of the novel's composition, publication history, and contemporary reception, as well as a survey of the major critical trends and readings from first publication to the present. This overview is followed by four or five original essays, specifically commissioned from senior scholars of established reputation and from outstanding younger critics. Each essay presents a distinct point of view, and together they constitute a forum of interpretative methods and of the best contemporary ideas on each text.

It is our hope that these volumes will convey the vitality of current critical work in American literature, generate new insights and excitement for students of the American novel, and inspire new respect for and new perspectives upon these major literary texts.

Emory Elliott
Princeton University

Note on the Text

The textual history of *The Red Badge of Courage* is obscure and complicated, and the following simply outlines issues detailed more fully in Hershel Parker's essay. Whether or not Crane started work on the novel in 1892, he had certainly begun writing by March 1893. After completing nearly one-third of a draft, he started over, this time (for lack of paper) writing on the unused sides of his first pages. By December 1893, he seems to have completed a novel of twenty-five chapters and some 55,000 words, and he spent nine months vainly trying to convince publishers to accept it. Finally, he took the manuscript to the Bachellor-Johnson news syndicate, which offered to serialize an abbreviated version of 18,000 words. The novel first appeared in this form in December 1894 in the New York *Press*, the Philadelphia *Press*, and hundreds of other papers throughout the country.

That same month, Crane received an acceptance from D. Appleton and Company, and a version 5,000 words shorter than the original manuscript was published in October 1895. Long since lost have been the typescripts used by both Bachellor and Appleton as fair copy for typesetting. Still extant, however, at the University of Virginia is a bound manuscript of 176 pages that is marked by various hands with emendations and cuts. Five pages from the original have been lost or destroyed, and four of six pages that constituted the original Chapter 12 are preserved in special collections at Harvard, Columbia, and the New York Public Library.

The major and continuing problems with establishing a reliable text begin with the manuscript, particularly since the reasons Crane had for cutting material remain unclear. Alterations sug-

gested by Hamlin Garland, who was among the first to read the manuscript, have recently been called into question. And other changes are even more suspect, since they seem to have been demanded as a condition of publication by an Appleton editor fearful of offending public taste. The major changes in the 1895 publication, apart from a series of verbal revisions, include the dropping altogether of the original Chapter 12, the deletion of endings to Chapters 7, 10, and 15, and the heavy cutting of Chapters 16 and 25.

Until the past decade, readers have generally relied on the text published by Appleton, and most critics have otherwise accepted it as Crane's "final intention." Yet this review should suggest how serious are the questions that remain about that text, and those wishing to pursue them further should consult the essays by Binder, Bowers, Howarth, Levenson, and Pizer listed in the Selected Bibliography. In 1982, Henry Binder prepared a critical text that, despite the absence of manuscript pages, effectively reconstructed the "novel that Crane wrote." The five authors of the essays collected here have relied on Binder's reconstruction, which includes the original Chapter 12 excised in Appleton's 1895 publication. For ease of reference, and when confusion may arise, chapter citations in this collection will also include a slash reference – first to the Binder text now published by Avon, and then to the Appleton text upon which all other publishers currently rely (e.g., Chap. 16/15).

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Introduction

LEE CLARK MITCHELL

STEPHEN Crane burst into fame with *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) at the age of only twenty-three. Readers on both sides of the Atlantic applauded, marveling that an author too young to have known war had written about it so compellingly. And as if to confirm for himself the authenticity of his novel, Crane rushed off to battle at the first opportunity, arousing public interest in a life that came to seem even more exciting than his fiction. Like other American writers from Poe through Hemingway, he became something of an invented cultural figure – an exotic adventuring in war and in love, plagued periodically by the effects of drugs and of syphilis. Unlike their stories, however, few of his resembled his experience, and what interests us now in Crane is precisely his active fostering of biographical confusion. He seems to have enjoyed contradiction in his life even more fully than in his art, repudiating assorted conventional labels out of an irrepressible impulse toward self-revision. As Ford Madox Ford wryly observed: "I have known him change his apparent personality half a dozen times in the course of an afternoon."[1] Crane still remains elusive, both as biographical figure and as literary artist, and for reasons remarkably similar, requiring similar kinds of caution. The contradictions and repudiations that characterized his behavior, even the abbreviated nature of his career, are qualities repeated in his prose and poetry, with the collective effect of casting dubiety upon nearly all claims about him or his art.

Perhaps the best way to organize uncertainty is by separating problematic issues into three major questions, respectively biographical, historical, and textual: Who was Stephen Crane? Why did *The Red Badge of Courage* win such immediate acclaim? What in

fact *is* the novel? Unusual as these questions appear when directed to a major author, in this case they soon seem curiously apt. To begin with, little about the man stands unchallenged amid his friends' conflicting accounts and his own contradictory poses. And given the intimate connection that Crane himself perceived between the ordering principles of life and of art, we can best start to understand his novel by establishing certain terms about its author. In turn, the novel's extraordinary reception makes it an historical as well as a literary event, prompting a consideration of its status not only as an American classic but as a popular best-seller. How could Crane's contemporaries have reveled in a novel that, from our perspective, so subverts their assumptions?

This paradox may in its own turn result from the problem of identifying a reliable text. After all, two radically different versions of *Red Badge* appeared within a year of each other, neither of which may have been the one that Crane actually intended. With a novel so ambiguous that one is hard put to discern when the narrative voice wavers between pathos and irony, the question of whether the text is reliable assumes far greater importance than it might otherwise. That few until recently have made sure of their text before venturing a spectrum of critical views only seems of a piece with the assorted biographical errors that many have continued to accept. Ironically, Crane's fiction itself repeatedly illustrates the hazards of interpretation, and it is fitting that with no one else so fully does the author's life, his novel's reception, even the novel itself, finally resist evaluation.

1

His biographers should be forgiven their mistakes in the light of Crane's misrepresentations; their frequent addition of a year to his age, for instance, merely repeats his own error on his last birthday. Over and over, those reconstructing his life have been baffled by his contradictory self-descriptions, and too often were lured into making conclusions that were overturned by later evidence or less problematic interpretations. We can nonetheless confidently assert that of all American writers now considered great, Crane was the shortest-lived and produced the smallest body of important work.

Between the printing of *Maggie* in 1893 and his death in 1900 from tuberculosis, he wrote one major novel, a handful of important stories, and two small, though remarkable, books of poetry. The very brevity of a career we think of as major directs our attention to his literary and social context and to the important fact that Crane came of age as Victorian social values were themselves coming under attack. Few were more vigorous than writers in protesting the straitjacket of genteel standards of decorum, and in the 1880s dozens of young authors began to repudiate social taboos and specious verbal usage. One need not agree with H. L. Mencken in dating all modern American literature from Crane to allow that his work does neatly define the twin directions fiction would take because of that rebellion – toward social realism, on the one hand, and symbolic impressionism, on the other.

Stephen Crane began life on November 1, 1871, as the fourteenth child of devout Newark, New Jersey, Methodists. His father, the Reverend Jonathan Crane, died when Stephen was only eight – a fact that has not prevented some from concluding Crane's rebellious personality resulted from his resistance to paternal constraints. A "preacher's kid," so the story goes, Crane rebelled against religious pieties and middle-class standards by flagrantly taking up smoking and drinking. Yet a different reason for this rebellious image emerges in the excuse he offered for adolescent beer drinking: "How was I going to know what it tasted like less'n I tasted it? How you going to know about things at all less'n you *do* 'em?"[2] Perhaps this taste for experiment suggests why Crane was a notoriously poor student, who in failing semesters at Lafayette College and Syracuse University distinguished himself at poker, billiards, and baseball far more than he did at his studies. And it may also help explain why he pursued an interest begun during his summers as a teen-age reporter for his brother's Asbury Park press bureau. No simple explanation emerges, however, for Crane's decision to break with accepted news style. Throughout his journalistic career, his impressionistic prose invariably sent tremors through the city room, where editors recognized how easily his pieces could scandalize as well as energize their middle-class readers.

The independence of Crane's journalistic style was matched by a

fascination with unusual fictional subjects, leading him as an undergraduate to write about life in New York City's Bowery district. Even in this first draft of *Maggie*, moreover, Crane broke with the usual narrative conventions, later prompting some to observe that he wrote as if the literary tradition from Shakespeare to James simply did not exist. That Tolstoy, Kipling, and Poe, among others, did indeed have an influence upon him hardly alters the accuracy of William Dean Howells's friendly toast to a writer who had "sprung into life fully armed." Nor was Crane averse to reinforcing that impression. Following a characteristic American pattern, he sought to dissociate himself from the apparently ineffectual role of author and intellectual. When asked about Mallarmé, for instance, he allegedly answered, "I don't know much about Irish authors" – a response as arch as it may have been honest. The determination to appear other than self-consciously literary nonetheless flew in the face of Crane's clear devotion to his craft.

Failing to persuade a publisher of its merit, Crane finally printed *Maggie* at his own expense under the pseudonym of Johnston Smith. The publishers had in fact been right in predicting that no notice would be taken of this first work of American naturalism, and its author found that he could hardly give away the novel of a slum girl's fall to prostitution, then suicide. Crane himself now fell into genteel poverty, eased by borrowing, cadging, and free-lance journalism, and he suffered through the economic panic of 1893 with a group of other New York City bohemians. To escape destitution, he conceived the idea of a best-selling war novel, and turned for material to the first-person accounts in *Century Magazine*'s once-popular series on "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War." Yet after reading a while, the lifeless chronicling of facts, numbers, and names surprised him: "I wonder that *some* of these fellows don't tell how they *felt* in those scraps!" he exclaimed. "They spout eternally of what they *did*, but they are as emotionless as rocks!"[3] Perhaps he recalled a military school teacher who had been famous for bringing Civil War battles alive for students. Or he may have been prompted by Zola's supposedly inadequate account of war in *La Débâcle*. But whatever the inspiration – whether poverty, subject matter, literary rivalry, or a combination of causes – he soon discovered that the material resisted a formulaic

treat- ment: "I deliberately started in to do a potboiler, something that would take the boarding-school element – you know the kind. Well, I got interested in the thing in spite of myself, and I couldn't, I couldn't! I *had* to do it my own way."[4] That "way," moreover, involved a radical transition from *Maggie* in the shift from a third-person perspective to the free indirect discourse that reveals impressions all but firsthand. Crane dramatizes "the youth's" experiences directly instead of neutrally describing events, anticipating Ford Madox Ford's dictum to "render, never report."

Crane began writing no later than March 1893, and that summer completed his most sustained effort even as he was scraping by with occasional journalism and composing the remarkable poems that became the *Black Riders* (1895). Rebuffed once again by publishers, he turned this time to the Bacheller-Johnson news syndicate, which accepted the 55,000-word manuscript on the condition that it be severely abridged. In December 1894, a version one-third of the original first appeared in hundreds of newspapers nationwide, and despite Crane's mixed feelings about its radical amputation, the novel created the enthusiastic stir he had been hoping for all along. As well, it had the effect of interesting the publishing house of D. Appleton and Company, which brought out a longer version of the novel the following October.

In both Britain and America, *The Red Badge of Courage* was greeted by what H. G. Wells termed an "orgy of praise." It went through ten editions in its first year alone, through as many more in the next dozen, and was accorded a critical reception unusual for the work of a living writer. Mere days after its publication, an anonymous reviewer struck a note that would be sounded by countless others: "At times the description is so vivid as to be almost suffocating. The reader is right down in the midst of it where patriotism is dissolved into its elements and where only a dozen men can be seen, firing blindly and grotesquely into the smoke. This is war from a new point of view."[5] However uncertain readers may have felt in identifying the narrative causes of such powerful effects, most felt assured in their admiration: "Not the least of Mr. Crane's gifts is that this narrative, with scarce a name to hang upon a single character, and no plot whatsoever, holds one irreversably. There is no possibility of resistance, when once you are in its grip" (93). This reviewer,