

Twentieth-Century
Literary Criticism

TCLC 216

Volume 216

Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

**Criticism of the
Works of Novelists, Poets, Playwrights,
Short Story Writers, and Other Creative Writers
Who Lived between 1900 and 1999,
from the First Published Critical
Appraisals to Current Evaluations**



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**Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism, Vol.
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Preface

Since its inception *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (TCLC) has been purchased and used by some 10,000 school, public, and college or university libraries. TCLC has covered more than 1000 authors, representing over 60 nationalities and nearly 50,000 titles. No other reference source has surveyed the critical response to twentieth-century authors and literature as thoroughly as TCLC. In the words of one reviewer, “there is nothing comparable available.” TCLC “is a gold mine of information—dates, pseudonyms, biographical information, and criticism from books and periodicals—which many librarians would have difficulty assembling on their own.”

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TCLC is designed to serve as an introduction to authors who died between 1900 and 1999 and to the most significant interpretations of these author's works. Volumes published from 1978 through 1999 included authors who died between 1900 and 1960. The great poets, novelists, short story writers, playwrights, and philosophers of the period are frequently studied in high school and college literature courses. In organizing and reprinting the vast amount of critical material written on these authors, TCLC helps students develop valuable insight into literary history, promotes a better understanding of the texts, and sparks ideas for papers and assignments. Each entry in TCLC presents a comprehensive survey on an author's career or an individual work of literature and provides the user with a multiplicity of interpretations and assessments. Such variety allows students to pursue their own interests; furthermore, it fosters an awareness that literature is dynamic and responsive to many different opinions.

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TCLC is designed as a companion series to Gale's *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, (CLC) which reprints commentary on authors who died after 1999. Because of the different time periods under consideration, there is no duplication of material between CLC and TCLC.

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- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author, work, or topic that is the subject of the entry.
- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The genre and publication date of each work is given. In the case of foreign authors whose

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- Reprinted **Criticism** is arranged chronologically in each entry to provide a useful perspective on changes in critical evaluation over time. The critic's name and the date of composition or publication of the critical work are given at the beginning of each piece of criticism. Unsigned criticism is preceded by the title of the source in which it originally appeared. All titles by the author featured in the text are printed in boldface type. Footnotes are reprinted at the end of each essay or excerpt. In the case of excerpted criticism, only those footnotes that pertain to the excerpted texts are included. Criticism in topic entries is arranged chronologically under a variety of subheadings to facilitate the study of different aspects of the topic.
- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism. Source citations in the Literary Criticism Series follow University of Chicago Press style, as outlined in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003).
- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** explicating each piece.
- An annotated bibliography of **Further Reading** appears at the end of each entry and suggests resources for additional study. In some cases, significant essays for which the editors could not obtain reprint rights are included here. Boxed material following the further reading list provides references to other biographical and critical sources on the author in series published by Gale.

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An alphabetical **Title Index** accompanies each volume of *TCLC*. Listings of titles by authors covered in the given volume are followed by the author's name and the corresponding page numbers where the titles are discussed. English translations of foreign titles and variations of titles are cross-referenced to the title under which a work was originally published. Titles of novels, dramas, nonfiction books, and poetry, short story, or essay collections are printed in italics, while individual poems, short stories, and essays are printed in roman type within quotation marks.

In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Gale also produces a paperbound edition of the *TCLC* cumulative title index. This annual cumulation, which alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the series, is available to all customers. Additional copies of this index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index; it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is recyclable upon receipt of the next edition.

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Stephen Crane

1871-1900

(Full name Stephen Townley Crane; also wrote under the pseudonym Johnston Smith) American novelist, novella writer, short story writer, poet, journalist, and travel writer.

The following entry provides an overview of Crane's life and works. For additional information on his career, see *TCLC*, Volumes 11, 17, and 32.

INTRODUCTION

Stephen Crane is regarded as one of the most important and influential American writers of the late nineteenth century. His breakthrough work, *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895), is often described as one of the finest stories written on the subject of the American Civil War, as well as a masterpiece of modern literature. In addition to novels and novellas, Crane wrote poems, short stories, and various works of journalism and non-fiction. Critics regard his verse as highly enigmatic and similar in style and technique to the Imagist poetry of the early twentieth century. Of his short fiction, "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," "The Blue Hotel," and "The Open Boat" represent, for many scholars, some of the best and most skillfully crafted examples within the genre. Crane addressed various themes in his writings. In his poems he often questioned the relationship between God and humanity, while in his short and longer fiction he explored the conflict between the individual and the natural world, challenging the romantic idealizations of war and frontier life. Stylistically Crane is considered an innovator, presaging both the realist and naturalist literary movements. Like the modernists that came after, he privileged the psychological development of characters over conventional formal structures of plot and linear time. Although Crane died at a relatively young age, he produced a significant and influential body of work, which heralded the literary trends and thematic concerns of the twentieth century. "[H]is early death," William E. Cain has argued, "was an immense loss for American literature. But his achievement was substantial—and unmistakably original. The controlled tensions of his language crucially influenced Cather and Hemingway, and his daring extravagances of imagery inspired Faulkner and Ellison, among others. Like the longer-lived Mark Twain, Crane matters both for the novels and stories that he wrote and for the literary work that his potent example did much to make possible."

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Crane was born on November 1, 1871, in Newark, New Jersey. His father, Dr. Jonathan Townley Crane, was a member of the clergy and served as the Presiding Elder of Methodist churches in New Jersey, while his mother, Mary Peck Crane, actively spoke in public on religious and reform issues. In 1880 Jonathan Crane died, leaving his family of nine children in strained financial circumstances. After his father's death Crane became increasingly rebellious and experimented with drinking, smoking, and gambling, but he avoided getting into serious trouble in his conservative community. At the age of sixteen he began helping his brother write a newspaper column for the *New York Tribune*. Crane attended preparatory school, as well as Lafayette College and Syracuse University, but failed to graduate with a degree from any institution. In 1891 he left Syracuse and lived a nomadic life in New York City for over two years. He published several newspaper articles and features during this time but failed to establish a professional career in journalism. In 1893 Crane privately published his first novel, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, under the pseudonym Johnston Smith. The following year he published his best-known work, *The Red Badge of Courage*, in serial form, and later, in book form, in 1895. The novella brought Crane both international fame and critical recognition.

During the late 1890s Crane traveled extensively and wrote prolifically, producing novels, short stories, and volumes of poetry. *The Black Riders, and Other Lines* (1895), one of Crane's most significant collections of poetry, was published during this time, as well as another novel set in New York's Bowery district titled *George's Mother* (1896). Crane's travels through the American West and Mexico inspired some of his most important short fiction, including "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky" and "The Blue Hotel," while an ill-fated trip to Cuba aboard the *Commodore*, which culminated in a twenty-seven hour ordeal in a dinghy after the ship sank, gave Crane material for another important work, "The Open Boat," collected in *The Open Boat, and Other Tales of Adventure* (1898). In 1897 Crane settled in England with Cora Taylor, a hotel proprietor from Jacksonville, Florida. Crane and Taylor established a common-law union but were never legally married, and during this time Crane composed most of short fiction, later collected in *The Open Boat and The Monster, and Other Stories* (1899).

After traveling back to the United States to cover the Spanish-American war, Crane returned to England in 1899. The poetry collection *War Is Kind* was published that same year. Despite being diagnosed with malaria and tuberculosis, Crane continued writing, and when he died at the age of twenty-eight, on June 5, 1900, in Germany, he left behind an unfinished novel, *The O'Ruddy*, which was completed by Robert Barr and published in 1903, and two collections of stories, *Wounds in the Rain* (1900) and *Whilomville Stories* (1900). These works, as well as other miscellaneous writings, such as *Great Battles of the World* (1901) and *Last Words* (1902), were collected and published after Crane's death.

MAJOR WORKS

Although Crane's reputation rests primarily on his fiction, his relatively small opus of poetry—a mere 136 poems—has stimulated increasing interest from critics, especially since the publication in 1957 of Daniel G. Hoffman's study, *The Poetry of Stephen Crane*. Crane's first volume of poetry, *The Black Riders, and Other Lines*, consists of sixty-eight short poems, composed in lines of varied length. Although some critics have described the poems as formless, others have argued that they follow patterns of syntax and sentence structure. Religious themes pervade the collection, particularly the relationship between God and humanity. At times the speaker of the poems rages against God, as in "Blustering God." In others, God is described as wrathful or is portrayed as blundering, forgetful, or indifferent. Ultimately, however, Crane depicts an amoral universe in the poems, while highlighting humankind's futile attempts to impose moral order on a chaotic world.

Crane's second volume of poetry, *War Is Kind*, consists of thirty-six poems, many of which question the relationship between humanity and the natural world. In "A man said to the universe," the world responds with indifference to human existence. In other poems, such as "The wayfarer," Crane highlights the individual's preoccupation with self interest and the tendency to privilege comfort and convenience over truth. For many scholars, the title poem, "War Is Kind," which provides an ironic treatment of the glorification and idealization of war, is the most important in the collection.

Even though Crane's poems are not considered representative of his best work, many critics consider them important and unique within the scope and development of American poetry. Bettina L. Knapp has remarked that Crane's two volumes of verse "are distillations of rage and passionate love clothed in tempestuous organic rhythms; each line catches and arrests a fleeting moment. Words recreate sensations of devastation and pain.

Crane had a rare ability to compress time through what might be called *freeze framing*. His images are brilliant and concrete."

Many critics have described Crane as a master of the short story form, citing such tales as "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," "The Blue Hotel," and "The Open Boat" as among his greatest works in the genre. Set in Texas, "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky" employs and ultimately subverts the conventions of the Western formula. The romantic idealization of frontier life is repeatedly questioned throughout the story, which focuses on the ongoing conflict between Scratchy Wilson, an aging desperado, and a lawman named Marshall Jack Potter. At the climax of the story, Potter returns to Yellow Sky and is confronted by Wilson, who is ironically depicted in red-topped boots and a maroon shirt made in New York. The Marshall, with his new bride beside him, admits that he is unarmed and now married. Under these new circumstances, Scratchy is unwilling to proceed with the fight. Throughout the story, the "lawless" and "wild" west is portrayed as inevitable victim to the encroachment of civilization, providing a predominant theme in the work.

Similarly, in Fort Romper, Nebraska, the setting of "The Blue Hotel," frontier life has increasingly eroded in the presence of civilization. A stranger newly arrived in town, referred to as "the Swede," is blind to this fact, however, and harbors preconceptions of a lawless, violent, and hostile region, which he gleaned from reading pulp fiction. He becomes convinced that he will be murdered by desperados who inhabit the same blue hotel where he is a guest. The Swede's paranoia increases as the story progresses, and he behaves more and more erratically. Eventually, after physically challenging a respected gambler in town, the Swede is stabbed to death. In addition to exploring the irony of the self-fulfilling prophecy, Crane also addresses themes related to social responsibility and complicity. Scholars have also noted Crane's use of fire and religious imagery in the story.

Another of Crane's most admired short stories, "The Open Boat," was inspired by the author's own experience of survival after the sinking of the *Commodore*, as he traveled to Cuba. In the story, four men—the cook, the captain, the correspondent, and Billie the oiler—struggle to get to shore after surviving a shipwreck. While one key feature of the story is the camaraderie between the men as they struggle to survive, another important theme is the conflict between humanity and nature. Throughout the story natural elements are described as both beautiful and terrible. The ocean, the seagulls, and even a shark in the distance are portrayed as dangerous but also possessed of an elegance and beauty that suggests their role in a larger design. In addition to the conflict between humanity and the natural world, fate is also an important theme in the story. Billie

the oiler, who is clearly the strongest of the four men, drowns alone in shallow water, before reaching the shore. The weaker men, however, survive by working together.

The realities of poverty, corruption, and moral degradation are the major themes of Crane's first novel, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*. Irony is a prevailing characteristic of the work, particularly with regard to Crane's treatment of the disparity between moral conventions and the reality of slum life. At the center of the novel is Maggie Johnson, a girl who lives in the tenements of New York's Bowery district, whose home life is characterized by cruelty, neglect, and abuse. Both she and her brother, Jimmie, suffer regular beatings from their alcoholic mother, which are interrupted, occasionally, by their father, but only when his sleep is disturbed. At one point in the novel, Maggie is driven by her mother's abuse to the protection of Pete, a bartender who has befriended Jimmie. Pete seduces Maggie once she is in his care, and her outraged family reacts by throwing her out of the tenement. Pete eventually abandons Maggie, and she is forced to work as a prostitute. At the end of the novel Jimmie informs his mother that Maggie's dead body has been found. In response, she promises to forgive her daughter, but it is too late.

While some disagree, many critics have argued that *Maggie* represents the first example of American naturalism, citing the novel's emphasis on environment as a controlling force in the trajectory of Maggie's life. Regardless of the novel's relationship to the tenets of naturalist fiction, scholars have been preoccupied with Crane's portrayal of slum life in New York's Bowery district in the book. Keith Gandal has asserted that "with *Maggie*, Crane sets out to reinvent the slum novel, and he proceeds in a programmatic fashion. The novel is a *tour de force*, a kind of counter-demonstration. He takes a familiar tale, keeps the plot, but redoes the characterizations or the mental action as well as the moral judgment—to get the story right." Gandal concludes that "Crane perceives in the turn-of-the-century slums, not vice, but an alternative reality—and moral inspiration."

Crane's best-known work, *The Red Badge of Courage*, variously labeled a novel or novella, is an episodic tale depicting a young soldier's experience of the Civil War. Fear and courage are the primary thematic focal points of the story, as they are experienced by the nineteen-year-old protagonist, Henry Fleming. When Fleming first enlists, his perception of war is shaped by romantic idealizations. As he witnesses the realities of war, however, his ideals are shattered, and he begins to question how he will react during battle. In an unnamed battle, Fleming succumbs to his fear and flees amid the intense fighting. He is injured, however, when another fleeing soldier delivers a blow to his head with the butt of a gun. When Fleming returns to his camp, the other sol-

diers never suspect that he is a deserter but believe he has been injured in battle. In the final conflict of the book, Fleming finds his courage and is recognized as one of the best fighters among his camp.

While the plot of *The Red Badge of Courage* is relatively simple, the formal and stylistic features of the work are considered complex and groundbreaking. Rather than specifically locating Fleming's experience, using markers of linear time or geography, Crane foregrounds the psychological development of the protagonist by offering an impressionistic portrayal of events. Some scholars have also noted the role of the narrator in the story, arguing that subtle differences between Fleming's perspective and the narrator's more ironic observations create ambiguity and richness of meaning in the text.

The work invites different interpretations with respect to formal categorization as well. While initial reviewers described it as impressionistic, some noted its heavy reliance on symbolism. Other critics have categorized it as a work of realism or, even, naturalism. Despite the differences in opinion over the formal aesthetic employed by Crane in *The Red Badge of Courage*, most scholars agree that Crane's narrative of the American Civil War is original in both style and theme. Indeed, according to A. Robert Lee, theme and form are intricately linked in the story; in Lee's words, "*The Red Badge of Courage* achieves that rare thing, the unmistakable integration of theme—'an episode of the American Civil War' and the war and peace within the human breast—and of story-telling design."

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Crane's literary efforts prior to the publication of *The Red Badge of Courage* were largely ignored by critical and popular audiences. Following that book's appearance in 1895, however, his reputation as an important literary figure was quickly established, in both the United States and abroad. International fame and critical recognition sparked a belated interest in his previously published work, while it motivated Crane to produce some of his most respected short fiction. Yet, despite his early success, many of Crane's writings were not fully understood or appreciated until later in the twentieth century, when they were assessed within the context of current literary trends. While many early reviewers of Crane's work praised the author's fresh themes and inventive style, some of his detractors described his work as "blasphemous," condemning his use of vulgar language and graphic imagery. As the twentieth century progressed, however, scholars increasingly connected Crane's novels, poetry, and short stories with important movements within American literature.

In recent years Crane's work has continued to draw critical interest. Some scholars have linked the author's writings to modernism and postmodernism. Others have traced Crane's influence on the category of literary non-fiction, or journalism, as well as the war novel genre, particularly with respect to the "war correspondent" personae. Critics have increasingly reviewed Crane's lesser known works, including the novella *The Monster* and the novels *George's Mother* and *The Third Violet* (1897), noting important themes and tendencies in the author's literary development. Recent assessments have also focused on Crane's treatment of universal themes, including the experience of war, moral and social corruption, and religion, as well as the individual's existential struggle to make sense of the external world. Attempts to limit the author's writings to one literary movement or trend have largely failed, which, in the opinion of some scholars, attests to Crane's artistic brilliance and secures his position as an influential figure in the development of American literature. Joseph Petite has observed that Crane "certainly has drawn his share of labels: Naturalist, Impressionist, Symbolist, Existentialist, ironist, parodist. These definitions result not so much from critics trying to explain by categorization but because Crane's densely textured prose, like a gemstone, changes as one changes perspective." Petite concludes that "despite the efforts of a few critics who, like Procrustes, have tried to force Crane's work to fit one bed, of their choosing, the variety in Crane criticism is testimony to the richness of his art."

PRINCIPAL WORKS

- Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* [as Johnston Smith] (novel) 1893; revised edition, 1896
The Black Riders, and Other Lines (poetry) 1895
The Red Badge of Courage: An Episode of the American Civil War (novella) 1895
George's Mother (novel) 1896
The Little Regiment, and Other Episodes of the American Civil War (short stories) 1896; also published as *Pictures of War*, 1898
The Third Violet (novel) 1897
The Open Boat, and Other Tales of Adventure (short stories) 1898
Active Service (novel) 1899
The Monster, and Other Stories (novella and short stories) 1899; enlarged edition, 1901
War Is Kind (poetry) 1899
Whilomville Stories (short stories) 1900
Wounds in the Rain: A Collection of Stories Relating to the Spanish-American War of 1898 (short stories) 1900
Great Battles of the World (nonfiction) 1901

Last Words (short stories) 1902

The O'Ruddy [with Robert Barr] (novel) 1903

The Works of Stephen Crane. 12 vols. [edited by Wilson Follett] (short stories, novels, poetry, and nonfiction) 1925-26

The Collected Poems of Stephen Crane [edited by Follett] (poetry) 1930

**The Sullivan County Sketches of Stephen Crane* [edited by Melvin Schoberlin] (sketches) 1949

Stephen Crane: Letters [edited by R. W. Stallman and Lillian Gilkes] (letters) 1960

The Complete Short Stories and Sketches [edited by Thomas A. Gullason] (short stories and sketches) 1963

The War Dispatches of Stephen Crane [edited by R. W. Stallman and E. R. Hagemann] (journalism) 1966

The Works of Stephen Crane. 10 vols. [edited by Fredson Bowers] (short stories, novels, poetry, sketches, and journalism) 1969-76

*The sketches in this work were originally published in the *New York Tribune* and the *Cosmopolitan* in 1892.

CRITICISM

Amy Kaplan (essay date 1986)

SOURCE: Kaplan, Amy. "The Spectacle of War in Crane's Revision of History." In *New Essays on The Red Badge of Courage*, edited by Lee Clark Mitchell, pp. 77-108. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

[In the following essay, Kaplan argues that in *The Red Badge of Courage* Crane introduced the "war correspondent persona" and redefined the war novel genre, thereby anticipating the "modern spectacle of war" and shaping subsequent representations of war in American literature.]

1

The year that saw the publication of *The Red Badge of Courage* to great acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic was reviewed as a time of "wars and bloodshed" by Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World*. The newspaper's year-end survey of 1895 recalled that "from Japan westward to Jackson's Hole, bloodshed has encircled the globe," and it listed some examples of contemporary wars:

When the year 1895 dawned the Italians were engaged in a bloody war with the Abyssinians; Haiti was overrun by rebels, who had burned the capital, Port-au-Prince, and slaughtered many people; the French were preparing for their disastrous if victorious war in Mada-

gascar; the Dutch were slaughtering the natives of Lombok, one of their dependencies in southeastern Asia; and rebellions were in progress in several of the South American countries.¹

To newspaper readers in 1895, these outbreaks of international violence may have seemed remote from America's geographical borders and even more distant in time from the historic battlefields of America's last major conflict, the Civil War. Yet as the decade progressed, the United States ventured more boldly into international disputes; after verging on military engagements with Italy, Chile, and Britain in the early 1890's, America fought a war against Spain in Cuba and the Philippines in 1898. Mass-circulation newspapers like the *World*, which had already made exotic battles in European colonies a staple for American consumption, had an enthusiastic audience feasting on the spectacle of the Spanish-American War. One year after covering the Greco-Turkish War, Stephen Crane landed in Cuba with the American marines as a special correspondent for Pulitzer. Dated June 22, 1898, the *World* headline for the first major battle of the Spanish-American War read: "THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE WAS HIS WIG-WAG FLAG."²

What do these international wars have to do with *The Red Badge of Courage*, a novel begun in 1893 about an internecine conflict that took place thirty years earlier? Although Crane himself had not yet seen a battle when he wrote his book, the heightened militarism in America and Europe at the end of the nineteenth century shapes his novel as much as does the historical memory of the Civil War. Crane's novel participates in a widespread cultural movement to reinterpret the war as the birth of a united nation assuming global power and to revalue the legitimacy of military activity in general. The novel looks back at the Civil War to map a new arena into which modern forms of warfare can be imaginatively projected.

This conjunction of past and present may help explain the paradoxical status that *The Red Badge of Courage* has long held as the classic American Civil War novel that says very little about that war. Crane divorces the Civil War from its historical context by conspicuously avoiding the political, military, and geographical coordinates of the 1860s, and he equally divorces the conflict from a traditional literary context by rejecting generic narrative conventions. The novel reduces both history and the historical novel to what its main character thinks of as "crimson blotches on the page of the past." The illegibility of history in Crane's war novel has informed most critical approaches, which either treat it as a statement about war in general, turn war into a metaphor for psychological or metaphysical conflicts, reconstruct the absent historical referents of the Civil War battlefield, or decry the weakness of the his-

torical imagination in American literature. Contrary to these critical assumptions, Crane wrenches the war from its earlier contexts, not to banish history from his "Episode" but to reinterpret the war through the cultural lenses and political concerns of the late nineteenth century.

If, on the battlefield of *The Red Badge of Courage*, Crane does not revisit old territory with a historical imagination, he does explore an unfamiliar social landscape reminiscent of the modern cityscape of his earlier writing and replete with similar social tensions. Like other well-known novels of its time, Crane's is a book about social change, about the transition not only from internecine to international conflict or from preindustrial to mechanized forms of warfare, but also from traditional to modern modes of representation. The novel implicitly contributes to and criticizes the contemporary militarization of American culture by focusing not on politics but on the problem of representing war. Crane transforms the representation of war from a shared experience that can be narrated in written or oral stories into an exotic spectacle that must be viewed by a spectator and conveyed to an audience. This transformation was to provide Crane with a lens for reporting the real wars he observed in Greece and Cuba only two years after writing his Civil War novel.

2

To read *The Red Badge of Courage* historically, it is necessary to understand how Crane's contemporaries were reinterpreting the Civil War, for Crane was not alone in divorcing the conflict from its historical context and formulating a new one. In the outpour of non-fiction and fiction in the 1880s, writers consistently avoided referring to political conflicts over slavery or secession in favor of the theme of national reconciliation.³ In both genteel magazines and dime novels, the "road to reunion" took the form of glorifying the heroism and valor of the soldiers in both armies. Memoirs of the war depicted soldiers on both sides chatting and singing together on guard duty and cheering one another in the midst of battle as they rescued the wounded. Such memories led one author to conclude that "had the work of reconstruction been left to the fighting men of the North and South, much of the bitterness of that period would have been avoided."⁴ The bonds between soldiers in the field were seen to outlast and transcend the political conflicts for which they fought.

Crane's source for *The Red Badge of Courage*, the popular *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, epitomized this trend. To instruct a new generation in the meaning of the war in 1884, the editors of *The Century Magazine* invited veterans from both the Union and Confederate armies to record in detail their memories of major battles with the purpose of facilitating mutual