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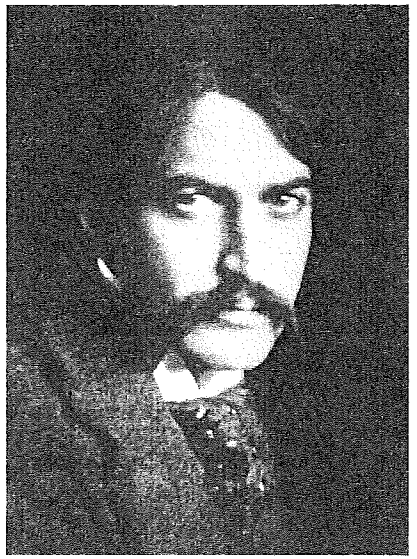

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Contributors' Notes

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Robert M. Dowling is an associate professor of English at Central Connecticut State University. His book *Slumming in New York: From the Waterfront to Mythic Harlem* (Univ. of Illinois, 2007) appeared this past summer. He is currently working on his next book projects, *Critical Companion to Eugene O'Neill: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work* (Facts on File, 2008) and a critical anthology on O'Neill's early bohemian and radical influences.

University of Nebraska five years earlier, Willa Cather quotes John, chapter 13, to characterize the author's providentially urgent ethic of productivity: "That thou doest, do quickly" (qtd. in 84).

We look forward to your own Crane biography, Professor Sorrentino, but please take all the time you need. In the meantime, your *Student Companion* will help open the gates for a new cadre of informed readers.

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Review

What Unit Did Henry Belong to at Chancellorsville, and Does It Matter?

Donald Pizer
Tulane University

Discussions of Crane's use of a specific battle as a source for his account of Henry Fleming's initiation into combat in *The Red Badge of Courage* fall into three phases. Before 1963, it was often briefly acknowledged that Crane relied on the battle of Chancellorsville, which occurred in early spring 1863 in an area of northern Virginia near Fredericksburg known as the Wilderness. Students of Crane's work commonly cited Henry's remark in the story "The Veteran," when Henry is recalling running away during his first battle, that "That was at Chancellorsville." And anyone familiar with Civil War military history could readily identify the general circumstances of the battle in *The Red Badge*—a first campaign of the spring, a river crossing by pontoon bridge to attack the enemy's rear, a reference to the Rappahannock, and a two-day struggle—as applicable only to Chancellorsville.

In 1963 Harold R. Hungerford published in *American Literature* an article which closely compared the historic battle of Chancellorsville and Crane's fictional representation of a battle in *The Red Badge* and conclusively demonstrated what had earlier been a conjecture.[1] Hungerford, however, while definitively nailing down Chancellorsville as Crane's source, also noted that he had found it impossible to identify a historical regiment which closely resembled Henry's fictional 304th New York regiment. "The regimental movements which Crane describes loosely parallel the movements of many regiments at Chancellorsville," Hungerford flatly stated; "they directly parallel the movements of none."[2]

For some thirty years, Hungerford's position occupied the field unchallenged. Since the early 1990s, however, there have been several energetic efforts to solve the riddle of a specific source for Henry's 304th New York—indeed, a sufficient number conducted with sufficient energy to constitute a significant new approach to the novel. These studies seek to persuade us both directly and indirectly by their emphasis on Crane's full and precise use of the actions of a specific actual unit fighting at Chancellorsville that Crane in *The Red Badge* is not only a symbolic naturalist and/or psychological realist but also an historical researcher who is seeking to render with great accuracy an historical event.

Maggie, textual scholarship for *The Red Badge of Courage*, existentialism for "The Open Boat," and New Criticism juxtaposed with biographical criticism for the poems. (Sorrentino's plug for the importance of textual scholarship might lead readers to apprehend his own theoretical predilections [73-76].) The synopses never go on too long, and the critical and historical material is objective and well-balanced.

Sorrentino deftly teases out his subject's use of "subjunctivity," if you'll pardon the expression—Crane's "attempts to record reality [using] slippery words like *seem* or *a kind of* or the subjunctive mood, as in *might have been*" (79). Sorrentino highlights this constant sense of misperception in texts like "The Open Boat" and "The Monster." One of Sorrentino's most compelling passages can be found in his treatment of "War Memories," Crane's sketch on his experience as a war correspondent at Guantánamo Bay and the Battle of San Juan Hill. Sorrentino astutely contrasts this first-hand account, in which Crane expresses the futility of attempting strict mimesis, to Theodore Roosevelt's memoir *The Rough Riders*, "in which the author appeared to have total recall of even the smallest detail." "We can never tell life, one to another," Crane writes in "War Memories," "although sometimes we think we can. . . . you can depend upon it that I have told you nothing at all, nothing at all, nothing at all" (qtd. in 90, 91).

Sorrentino largely incorporates Crane scholarship that has survived the test of time—Berryman, Colvert, Stallman, Nagel, Pizer et al. We're still working our way through the last couple of decades to divide the tenderloin from the chuck in Crane studies, and Sorrentino does provide a bibliography that includes more recent scholarly work. In fact, in his brief discussion of postmodernism, he is remarkably adept at defining jargon in terms even most high school students will easily understand. He neatly sums up the word "totalizing," for example, as the way "a reader of a text constantly wants to make clear sense of it by reducing it to one meaning" (80). (Cleared up for me at long last.) Because Crane's biographical material is so meager, and thus often hotly contested, Sorrentino helpfully parses out the strengths and limitations of our most important Crane biographies.

Student Companion to Stephen Crane succeeds as a concise and forceful introduction to Crane's artistry. As such, it will remind readers of the tragically abrupt end of Crane's career while at the same time allowing us to exalt over the artistic treasures he left behind. "What an unmitigated unredeemed catastrophe!" Henry James wrote Cora Crane after Crane's death in 1900, "I think of him with such a sense of possibilities and powers!" (qtd. in 15). After interviewing Crane at the

***Student Companion to Stephen Crane*. By Paul M. Sorrentino. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 2006. 184 pp. Cloth, $39.95.**

Robert M. Dowling
Central Connecticut State University

Paul Sorrentino is best known for co-editing with Stanley Wertheim *The Crane Log*, an invaluable resource that documents virtually every known scrap of evidence regarding Stephen Crane's all-too-short life and meteoric career. He and Wertheim also headed the team responsible for calling out Thomas Beer, Crane's first chronicler, as more fictionist than biographer. (Who among us doesn't secretly wish that much of Beer's delicious apocrypha had been based on fact?) His latest contribution, *Student Companion to Stephen Crane*, will prove highly accessible to its target audience: high school and college-level learners. Readers of this volume will come to understand why Sorrentino, listed in his author's note as a "recipient of numerous teaching awards," has been equally regarded for teaching and scholarship. Scholars who attended last December's American Literature Association symposium on biography in Puerto Vallarta won't need extra proof of this. To open his discussion, Sorrentino employed a magic rope trick in order to demonstrate that shorter is often better with regard to a biography's size and the average length of Crane's texts (if not his life, 28 years, or his height, 5'7").

Student Companion to Stephen Crane accessibly explains the challenging use of imagery, color, symbol, structure, and philosophy Crane brings to bear in his best work. Sorrentino's introductions provide clear summations of his subject's life, historical context, and the "Realism War" then waging in literary circles. He also helpfully explains the distinctions between Realism and Naturalism that students often find so elusive; after listing their characteristics, he directly applies them to William Dean Howells's *The Rise of Silas Lapham* and Frank Norris's *McTeague*. Crane himself—the "literary chameleon," as Daniel G. Hoffman has called him (qtd. in 26)—defies such generic codification more than any other writer of the period, though Sorrentino appropriately highlights Crane's affiliations with Naturalism and Impressionism.

Chapters are dedicated (in this order) to Crane's earliest work, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, the New York stories, *The Red Badge of Courage*, the war stories, "The Open Boat" (and his experience as a correspondent on the filibustering *Commodore*), poetry, and *Whilomville Stories*. Four of these end with theoretical readings: feminist criticism for

In this essay, I will first review in broad terms the battle of Chancellorsville and then present the various attempts to place Henry in a particular unit during the battle. I will conclude with a brief effort to resolve the issue that these efforts constitute.

Chancellorsville is one of the most commonly studied Civil War battles. Both Civil War historians and military tacticians are fascinated by its mix of high tragedy (the death of Stonewall Jackson), human error (the failures of General Hooker, the Union commander), great bravery (the charge of the Eighth Pennsylvania Cavalry to hold back Jackson's assault on the Eleventh Corps), and the difficulty of interpreting a battle conducted by almost 200,000 men maneuvering for position in the fog, smoke, and general obscurity of a wooded battlefield. No wonder that its principal early historian, John Bigelow, Jr., remarked in 1910 that Chancellorsville "presented a greater variety of military problems and experiences than any other in which an army of the United States had taken part." [3]

Chancellorsville was one of several battles which emerged out of the struggle between the Union Army of the Potomac and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia for control of the strategically important area lying north and south of the Rappahannock River, a broad but relatively shallow river which is about 50 miles north of Richmond and the same distance south of Washington. The most important prize in this struggle was Fredericksburg, which was not only the largest city on the river but also the railhead on the line connecting the Confederate-held portion of northern Virginia and Richmond. In December 1862, just before the onset of winter, General Ambrose Burnside, then commander of the Army of the Potomac, mounted a major frontal assault on the fortified Confederate army at Fredericksburg, one that was beaten back with heavy Union casualties. Lincoln then replaced Burnside with General Joseph Hooker, and both armies went into winter camp to await the spring.

By late April, Hooker, who is usually acknowledged to have been a brilliant tactician but an irresolute leader under pressure, had conceived a huge flanking movement in order to dislodge Lee from his Fredericksburg fortifications and force him to fight in the field, where the far larger Union forces could more readily prevail. (The Army of the Potomac comprised roughly 133,000 men, the Army of Northern Virginia 60,000.) Leaving behind a token force facing Lee at Fredericksburg, he moved the bulk of his Army west along the north side of the Rappahannock, which it crossed (principally at United States Ford, about twelve miles up river from Fredericksburg) and then prepared

to march on Lee's unprotected rear. (Jim Conklin spells out this tactic in the third paragraph of the novel when he tells a group of doubting fellow soldiers, "We're goin' 'way up the river, cut across, an' come around in behint 'em."[4]) This was so massive an action, however, that Lee had the knowledge and time to move a sizeable portion of his army out of Fredericksburg into a position facing the new Union lines to his west. All this occurred over a period of 4 days, from 28 April, when the Union army began its movement west along the river, till the evening of 1 May.

The principal events of the battle occurred on Saturday and Sunday, 2-3 May. Lee and Jackson had themselves concocted a large-scale flanking movement to compensate for the disparity in numbers between the two armies. While portions of the army facing the Union lines would occasionally sally forth, Jackson would move with his augmented corps along the southern flank of the Union army and attack it from the rear. These actions were completed by the late evening of the 2nd and consisted of relatively minor skirmishing and charges-countercharges during the afternoon on the front, and Jackson's maneuver to the south, when toward dusk he attacked the surprised Union Eleventh Corps held in reserve behind Hooker's major force and caused them to flee in the most infamous rout of a sizeable Union force during the entire war.

With Confederate corps now seemingly both to its west and east, the Union army was thrown into confusion the night of the 2nd-3rd, but by dawn of the 3rd had sorted itself out into the basically defensive position of an irregular huge circle (with a panhandle running north to the river) that could defend itself from any direction. Hooker is often blamed with having failed to have won the battle of Chancellorsville because of this defensive maneuver. The Confederate forces were now divided into three unconnected parts—one back at Fredericksburg, the other to the southeast (the Army that Lee had brought out from Fredericksburg, less Jackson's corps), and Jackson's large force facing Hooker to the west. Decisive action by his total army could have wiped out any one of these segments and probably have ended the war. Instead, Hooker stayed where he was until attacked by Jackson's corps (with Jackson seriously wounded, now led by J. E. B. Stuart), and even in this encounter he committed only half his army, in effect equalizing the size of the two forces. The result was an intense and complicated series of battles, lasting most of the morning of the 3rd, all along the center of the confused front separating three of Hooker's corps and Stuart's force—confused because the topography of second

federate Armies of poor Stevie's book" (232). Ford goes on fulsomely to praise Crane's opening that shows dawn coming over the Union Army tents beside the Potomac as "the most vivid scene of anything that I remember in literature."

Equally of interest to scholars attempting to understand the connection between Crane the war novelist and James the non-combatant is Ford's immediate connection to *Maisie*—almost as if it were James's war novel (note the plethora of battle images). As Ford Madox Ford avers, he links *Maisie* to an encounter with a French orphan and an imaginative picture of Kensington Gardens of the novel and to German shelling of the trenches. Maisie Farange and Henry Fleming? Two innocents betrayed by adult egos? Why not? Ford creatively lets his qualified war and literature memories hint of uncertainty: "I wish I could put it more fuzzily than that; more with blurred edges because the memory does not come back very clearly . . ." (234).

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A Note on the Ford Madox Ford-Stephen Crane Connection

Eric Solomon
San Francisco State University

Both I in *Stephen Crane in England: A Portrait of the Artist* (1964) and Nicholas Delbanco in *Group Portrait* (1982) have pondered over the question of why relatively experimental Edwardian writers such as Henry James, H. G. Wells, Joseph Conrad, and Ford Madox Ford embraced Stephen Crane. We strained to get beyond the geographical—for many months they all lived in Surrey; the personal—the older writers were attracted to Crane's youthful American charm and accomplishment; and the interest in similar themes and styles. In this way, Delbanco and Solomon tried to find a substitute for Crane's lack of statements, in letters or occasional prose, of any theory of fiction. The more established writers responded to Crane's style (Conrad on Impressionism) and major theme (war).

Ford Madox Ford was our crucial source both because he wrote often about Crane in a variety of potted literary histories and rather creative reminiscences, and because Ford argued for the existence of a group. Now, in Max Saunders's *Ford Madox Ford: War Prose* (2004), we find a source I certainly missed. Ford often told the tale of when on his own active service in the World War I battlefields, he was startled one morning by the similarity between his and Crane's war. In Saunders's collection, however, appears the fullest telling of that tale and, more importantly, Ford's yoking of the Surrey novelists as a group of influences while he was in combat. Saunders reprints four pages from Ford's "Literary Causeries: IV: Escape . . ." *Chicago Tribune Sunday Magazine* (Paris) (9 March 1924), pp 3, 11. In addition to fiction by Flaubert, Turgenev, Hudson, France, and Maupassant, Ford in 1916 at the Somme also asked for a lot of Joseph Conrad (*Lord Jim, The Nigger of the "Narcissus," Youth*); Henry James (*What Maisie Knew, The Spoils of Poynton, The Portrait of a Lady*); and two works by Stephen Crane (*The Red Badge of Courage*, "The Open Boat"). Ford also mentions his immediate reading of H. G. Wells's *Mr. Britling Sees It Through* (1916).

Ford Madox Ford here famously—he often used these lines in various memoirs—conflates *The Red Badge* with the Kemmel Hill Battlefield landscape. Coming out of his tent at dawn, viewing the khaki-clad soldiers rising, Ford recalls, "I assert solemnly that I did not believe these men could be in khaki, so convinced had I been that I was amongst men in the blue or gray uniforms of the Federal or Con-

growth woodland, uneven ground, and streams and marshes made the battle more a series of struggles between small units rather than fully marshaled divisions and even brigades. (To clarify the military organizational terminology of the time, the smallest fully operational unit was the regiment, consisting, on average, of about 400 men. Three to six regiments usually constituted a brigade, two to five brigades a division, and three divisions a corps. The Army of the Potomac had seven corps at Chancellorsville.) By late morning of the 3rd, Hooker had enough of this kind of struggle and ordered a full withdrawal back across the Rappahannock.

The two principal efforts to identify Henry's specific unit at Chancellorsville are the book-length studies by Charles J. LaRocca and Perry Lentz. LaRocca believes that Crane modeled the 304th New York on a regiment in General Daniel E. Sickles' Third Corps, the 124th New York State Volunteers. Lentz holds that Crane's model was an unspecified regiment in the Third Division of General Couch's Second Corps.

LaRocca initially discussed his claim that Crane relied wholly on the 124th New York in a brief 1991 *American Heritage* article.[5] He then made this belief an underlying theme in his 1995 edition, *Stephen Crane's Novel of the Civil War:* The Red Badge of Courage*: An Historically Annotated Edition.* LaRocca, it is relevant to note, approaches the historical problem of which unit Henry belonged to with the conviction of an enthusiast. He is a resident of Orange County, where the 124th New York was recruited, and is a participant in reenactments of its Civil War battles.

On the surface, there is much to like in the notion that Crane based the 304th on the 124th, since Crane had been exposed to its history earlier in life and since the broad configuration of the two regiments' experience at Chancellorsville is similar. Both regiments were from upstate New York, had been raised during the summer of 1862 (after Lincoln called for 300,000 fresh volunteers), had trained and wintered at Falmouth across the river from Fredericksburg, and fought their first battle at Chancellorsville. On the personal side, Crane had been partially raised in Port Jervis, in the southeastern corner of Orange County, a town which supplied the 124th with part of a company. It is pleasing to think of him sitting as a boy in the town square on summer afternoons listening to the veterans telling of their experiences and later transmuting their tales into a novel. He also attended a private prep school, Claverack College, an alumnus of which, Charles H. Weygant, was the author of *History of the One Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Regiment,*

N.Y.S.V. (1877).[6] Weygant was the captain of a company when the regiment was formed in 1862 and ended the war as its colonel. Weygant devotes all of Chapter VII to Chancellorsville, but is not much help in charting the regiment's specific movements during the battle, perhaps because as the commander of a company he had little sense of location and action outside of his immediate area. What one does get clearly from him, some twelve years after the close of the war, is regimental hagiography. Here is his account of the regiment fighting off a rebel charge at Chancellorsville:

> The battle was now at its height, and the 124th was in the thickest of the fray, but not a son of Orange county was seen to show the white feather, not a man faltered; deliberately they aimed and rapidly fired; for not one moment did they cease pouring their leaden hail into the enemy's ranks. . . . Backward, forward, down, down, our brave men fell; thinner and yet thinner grew the ranks, but not a foot of ground was yielded.[7]

LaRocca's edition is useful in some of its characteristics. His annotations provide a good deal of detailed information about the Civil War reflected in the novel—information about weaponry, uniforms, accoutrements, and so on. But in the matter of demonstrating conclusively that the actions of the 304th on the 2nd and 3rd of May 1863 are those the 124th New York S.V., he is often either unconvincing or thin. An example of the first is his claim that references in "The Veteran" to a farmer's horse designated as "Sickles' colt" is a clue that Henry was a member of the 124th, which was in General's Sickle's corps.[8] An even more forced reading occurs in his annotation of Henry's fears before his initial combat. Crane wrote, "The shadows of the woods were formidable. He was certain that in this vista there lurked fierce-eyed hosts." Since the small hamlet of Vista was in the battlefield area, LaRocca writes about this passage, "'Vista' was a site on the Chancellorsville battlefield, reference to which corroborates the 124th New York/304th New York connection."[9]

In addition, as both Weygant's account and the report of Colonel Augustus Van Horne Ellis, the commander of the 124th New York, make clear, the 124th saw little concerted action on 2 May, playing almost entirely a reserve role.[10] It saw action aplenty on the morning of the 3rd (the passage from Weygant's history I quote from above deals with the 3rd), but Crane's need for Henry and the 304th to engage in full combat with an attacking enemy on Henry's first day at Chancellorsville would certainly have led him away from the 124th as a model for this stage of

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short, more modern—view of courtship.

Thus if *The Third Violet* lacks the mastery of *The Red Badge of Courage*, it nonetheless exposes something of Crane's experimentation with transforming conventional genres, and it is clearly more daring than a traditional vacation romance like "A Victorious Defeat." Amid the stereotypical women in *The Third Violet*—the "old mother," as Hawker's mother is always called, or the hypocritical gossips on the porch—Grace stands out by contrast. Like Leslie, she attracts the hero with her spirited behavior, and she understands the quality of the man hiding behind a physically rough exterior, or, in Crane's retelling, a socially awkward manner. But Crane refuses the conventions of the courtship romance and frustrates the reader at every turn: *The Third Violet* has no heroes sweeping heroines away in their strong arms or rescuing them from danger, nor does it give more than a cursory nod toward physical attraction between the two. Indeed, Hawker's pursuit of Grace is so inept that it is she who must spell out her feelings through the medium, or weapon, of flowers. In short, Crane experiments with conventions in language and character in the courtship novel in ways that are subtly satirical, perhaps too much so for his first audiences; his vacation romance moves beyond the formula that Agnes employs, but at the cost of irritating audiences who failed to see the irony of his approach. *The Third Violet* is, as he wrote to Ripley Hitchcock, simply "a quiet little story and serious work." In short, it is not *The Red Badge* and was not meant to be, but when considered in context *The Third Violet* provides an interesting look at the progress of Crane's artistry and the possible source for one part of its development.

Notes

[1] I would like to thank Kathleen Manwaring and other librarians of the Special Collections Research Center at Syracuse University for their assistance with this article.

[2] For an intriguing suggestion that the character "Grace Fanhall" may have connections to Ernest Hemingway's mother, Grace Hall, see John Clendenning's "Crane and Hemingway: A Possible Biographical Connection" (*Stephen Crane Studies* 5.2 [1996]: 2-6).

[3] In Thomas Bailey Aldrich's popular short story "Marjorie Daw" (1873), Ned Delaney, on vacation in New Hampshire, tries to help his friend John Flemming recover from a broken leg by writing him letters about a beautiful girl, Marjorie Daw. Infatuated with the image of Marjorie swinging in a hammock, Flemming travels to see the girl in person but discovers that Delaney has invented the character to keep him entertained.

the battle. LaRocca does annotate this portion of *The Red Badge*, but the evidence he presents, letters home from soldiers of the 124th, recounts minor skirmishes, not the kind of assault Henry experiences.

Perry Lentz's *Private Fleming at Chancellorsville:* The Red Badge of Courage *and the Civil War* (2006) is one of the most striking and original full-length treatments of Crane to have appeared in many years. Lentz has two interests in his study—to demonstrate that Crane relied largely on a hitherto neglected source for his understanding of Chancellorsville, a source from which he derived a particular unit on which to model his fictional 304th New York; and to argue, often perceptively and eloquently, that Crane's intent in the novel was not to render the theme of maturity gained through combat but rather to portray the permanent inadequacies in Henry's self-conception. These two concerns are, in fact, seldom, if at all, directly connected by Lentz. He never makes clear why it is necessary for Henry to belong to a specific unit for him to be the immature self-aggrandizer who Lentz takes him to be. In effect, Lentz has written two books under a single title—an exercise in historical research in which he attempts to prove that Crane depended heavily on the Third Division of Couch's Second Corps for his portrayal of the actions of the 304th New York, and an exercise in close reading and comparative studies in which he argues that many readers have misread Crane's pervasive ironic rendering of Henry's self-evaluations because of the powerful hold on western thought of the myth of personal growth as a consequence of severe trials.

Lentz posits as Crane's sources for Chancellorsville not the conventional mix of his childhood recollection and his later reading of the Chancellorsville portion of the *Century* serialization of *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* but rather his concerted effort to research fully the documentary history of the battle. Crane thus went first to the fuller account of the battle in the later four-volume book publication of *Battles and Leaders* (1887), where he read an article on the battle—not in the serialized version—by General Darius Couch, commander of the Second Corps. He then studied—presumably at a public library—Volume 25 (Part Two) of the 128-volume collection entitled *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (1889)—a work more commonly known as the *Official Records*. Here on pp. 146-789 he could read the reports by all commanders of Union units at Chancellorsville (Confederate reports were on pp. 789-1056). From his study of these first-hand reports, most written a few days after the battle, Crane, Lentz believes, decided that one specific unit would best suit his purposes—the Third Division, commanded by Major General

William H. French, of Couch's Second Corps.

As with LaRocca's claim, there are some things to like in Lentz's belief that Crane read the Chancellorsville volume of the *Official Records* and arrived at French's Third Division of Couch's Second Corps as a model for the 304th, and a good deal not to like. Much of Crane's best work derives from his personal encounters with distinctive sites—New York's Bowery and the Far West, for example—but lacking that opportunity for Chancellorsville, the *Official Records* could provide him in its participant reports with at least a portion of the sense of authenticity he sought. And there can be little doubt that the experiences of French's Third Division resemble those of the 304th. Couch's corps was at the center of the fighting on both May 2nd and 3rd, and the Third Division, as did the 304th, helped repel various minor Confederate actions on the first day and participated fully in the major battles of the second

Yet, there is much that casts doubt on both the legitimacy and usefulness of Lentz's claim. First, there is the very nature of the *Official Reports*. They are exactly that—flat, factual accounts of the actions of a specific unit. Most are very brief—a page or so—and few contain anything of the flavor of the moment. Also, they are completely unedited, lacking both introductions and notes. They are not arranged around particular phases in the action but in relation to what is called the Order of Battle—a corps commander's report is followed by that of the commander of his first division and then by those of the division's brigade and regimental commanders, and then the cycle is repeated for the next division, and so on. Since it is unlikely that Crane came to the *Reports* with French's division in mind, he would have to have read at least all the reports of all the divisions in Couch's corps—and perhaps all the reports for all the corps if he did not at least start with Couch's corps—in order to select the Third Division from among the others. He would finally have had to translate the various disparate accounts by French himself and his brigade and regimental commanders into a single coherent narrative of the division as a whole. And since each commander tended to write as though his specific unit's story is the only story, this act of synthesis would be an immense task.

Like LaRocca, Lentz's favoring of a particular source perhaps has a personal basis. In his case, this derives not from an allegiance to a specific regimental history but to his own experience as a Civil War novelist. In an aside in his study, he notes that he himself, when he set out to write a novel based on the infamous Fort Pillow massacre of 1864, consulted the *Official Records* for information about the incident, and was able to read and digest the account within four or five hours.[11] (His

to that in *The Third Violet*, as are several of the incidents and themes, including an evening boat ride and a more general emphasis on water as an uncontrollable natural force propelling the couple toward romance. Most significant in each work is the crucial ride in a farm wagon that both evokes a crisis of class consciousness and brings the couple together. For example, at the beginning of *The Third Violet* both Hawker and Grace travel on the same stage from the train station, but his plans to remain on her social level and to be taken for just another summer visitor fail when the driver recognizes him as "ol' Jim Hawker's son" (283), a recognition that demotes him in class as John is elevated in class when he is revealed as Metler's son in "A Victorious Defeat." This episode in *The Third Violet* foreshadows the defining episode of the novel, another ride that the two share. While out walking with Grace Fanhall one day, Hawker sees his father driving an ox wagon and, after a moment of hesitation, introduces the two, after which Grace accepts Mr. Hawker's invitation to ride in the ox wagon. A true aristocrat who knows that class is a function of self-perception rather than the judgments of others, she is not bothered by gossip. What she has discovered is what Leslie Gordon has discovered: that a rough exterior may fall away to reveal an educated, artistic man—a prince—suitable for marriage. In Stephen Crane's wry take on the vacation romance and prince-in-disguise idea, however, Hawker persists in his awkwardness and remains partly a frog to the last; instead of bringing a bouquet of violets (the "flower of modesty") to Grace as John does for Leslie, Grace must instead give him, or pelt him with, violets to get the courtship off the ground.

Crane's perspective eliminates some elements of the story and satirizes others; the multiple rescues and the stilted dialogue disappear from his version, but, less effectively, so does the insistent physicality of "A Victorious Defeat." From the start Agnes places her characters in contact with each other, or with water, or more commonly with both. After wiping the perspiration from his brow at the train station during their first meeting, John lifts her into the wagon with "strong and somewhat audacious arms" (198), afterwards catching "the astonished girl in his strong arms" when rescuing her from the snake. He orders her to put her arms around his neck when he draws her out of the water just before the millwheel crushes her. By contrast, Crane's characters Hawker and Grace stand on the brink of the stream but never get wet. They talk instead of act; and they grasp pipes, violets, parasols, and paintbrushes but rarely each other. It is as if Crane avoided the sentimental dampness associated with Agnes's story or stories like hers, substituting instead a more cerebral, dry, inarticulate, and ironic—in

in a dirty farm wagon, alone with the hired man"—but she notices nonetheless that he is "real handsome, only for his clothes" (199). Her class-based expectations are upset when he is revealed to be the son of the house, John Metler, and she watches him closely as she swings back and forth in the hammock in the twilight. Memorably used in Thomas Bailey Aldrich's portrait of the imaginary Marjorie Daw,[4] the hammock figures prominently in several of Agnes's stories and in *The Third Violet* as well, an emblem not only of leisure but of space in which the heroine's natural impulses are less guarded than on the stiff chairs of a hotel veranda. Her encounters with John reveal his true status as an educated man: he quotes Milton to her as they stand in the moonlight and later asks her about Tennyson. But the charms of his literary allusions pale in comparison to the physical attraction that Leslie feels toward him, especially when John's "strong arms" surround her and swing her away from a rattlesnake. After the two take a quiet boat ride at dusk, John picks a bouquet of violets for her –"the flower of modesty," he says. Not content with this offering, as she is not content with the humble status of the mere farmer's son she believes John to be, and feeling "more rebellious than usual" one morning, Leslie steps out on a log to gather some "extremely brilliant wild flowers" (204). She defies John's warning—"What business has he to order me about?" (204)—and plunges into the stream above the mill dam. John jumps in, rescues her from being crushed by a millwheel, and, as he carries her from the stream, "presses his warm kisses upon her face" (205). When she finds out that he is not a simple farmer but the editor of a New York paper, the *Beacon*, she gives herself permission to love him. A hesitating heroine like Grace Fanhall, Leslie cannot resist toying with him the next day before she goes away by naming everything on the farm she will miss—except himself—before making an "unmaidenly avowal" that she will miss him most of all. But then, as she explains, "they belong on the farm and your home is at the *Beacon* office, New York City. . . . You surely never supposed for a moment that I fell in love with a simple farmer, did you, John?" (206). Of course she did; her recasting of this physical attraction as an intellectual one with someone whom she unconsciously recognized as being on her social level reinforces the prince-in-disguise motif necessary to the vacation romance. At the end of the story, however, a "strangely silent" John stares into the distance and seems to contemplate this obvious rewriting of history, but whether to give her the lie or to commend her natural ability to discern class is left ambiguous.

The parallels with Crane's work are striking. The setting is close

novel, *The Falling Hills*, appeared in 1967 and was reprinted in 1994). Crane, he implies, could have done the same in seeking to know more about Chancellorsville. The difficulty in accepting this comparison is that other than the massacre itself (Confederate cavalrymen slaughtered the black soldiers of two Union artillery batteries after they had surrendered), the Fort Pillow combat was an insignificant minor action of little or no tactical interest, and therefore, aside from details involving the massacre itself, occupied little space in the *Official Records*.[12]

Another problem in fully accepting Lentz's premise is his insistence on an exact and precise correspondence between the actions of the 304th and French's Third Division. ("Exact" and "precise" are his terms, which he uses again and again.)[13] Here one has to posit Crane taking elaborate notes on his reading at one of the two public libraries in New York containing the *Official Records* and then consulting these notes as he writes the novel—a manner of composition which seems unlikely for Crane on the face of it and for which, in any case, we have no external evidence.

Finally, and perhaps the most important reason for questioning Lentz's finding, there is the issue—one that Lentz does not deal with—of why Crane would be interested in and then rely on the actions of a division, a large military unit (averaging roughly 5000 troops) with little character. He was engaged by the regiment, not the division, as his basic sphere of action. Divisions contained brigades and regiments from every part of the nation. They were basically battlefield strategic units—generals maneuvered them for control of the field. The regiment was a social and psychological entity; its men and officers all came from the same town or county, and members of the unit lived and fought in close proximity to each other for as long as they served. Henry thinks and feels as a member of the 304th New York regiment, not as a member of an unnamed division. There is thus a disconnect between Lentz's belief that Crane carefully researched the actions of a specific division and Crane's reliance on a regiment as his unit of action in the novel. If Crane wanted to base his novel on a New York regiment at Chancellorsville, one asks, why was it necessary—if he could not find an actual New York regiment to fit his needs—to expand his range of research to the actions of a division? Why could he not have simply made up a regiment—made up in the sense of not using a specific source—and then supply it with a sequence of action both loosely appropriate to the actualities of Chancellorsville and closely expressive of his fictional intent?

A third significant attempt to identify a specific unit as the

source of the 304th New York is the article by John E. Curran, Jr., "'Nobody seems to know where we go': Uncertainty, History, and Irony in *The Red Badge of Courage*," which appeared in the Fall 1993 issue of *American Literary Realism, 1870-1910*.[14] Accepting the well-established notion that one of Crane's principal themes in the novel is to dramatize the epistemological uncertainty pervading all experience, Curran seeks to discover a symbolic analogue for Henry's personal fog of understanding in the military unit in which he functions. Crane, he argues, selected an unspecified regiment in Sickles' Third Corps to play this role. Sickles was blamed by some Civil War historians for the Union debacle at Chancellorsville, since portions of his corps made contact on the Union's right flank with Jackson's corps but failed to recognize what Jackson was up to. For Curran, the aura of aimlessness, misunderstanding, and plain error surrounding Henry is thus confirmed as a more general human condition by Crane's choice of a historical model for Henry's unit whose befogged activities mirror those of Henry himself.

One problem presented by Curran's idea is that most of what he claims for Sickles' corps can be attributed to almost any Union corps present at Chancellorsville. Once Jackson attacked on the evening of the 2nd, the Union army as a whole was a principle of uncertainty in motion. Units of all sizes were unsure of their orders, of who was on their flanks, and of where the enemy was. No wonder that Hooker decided to pull out. Curran, in short, has no doubt located a functional theme in the novel—Henry's personal ideas and actions are reflected in those of the immediate world he belongs to—but he fails to convince that this theme led Crane to consciously select Sickles' Third Corps as the model of that theme.[15]

The limitations present in all the recent efforts to locate a precise historical source for Crane's fictional 304th New York bring us back to Hungerford's essay of more than forty years ago. Hungerford noted that some of the actions of Henry's regiment on its route from Falmouth to Chancellorsville and on the first day of battle resemble those of Couch's Second Corps, and that the charge of the 304th on the morning of the 3nd resembles that of the 124th New York, which was in Sickles' Third Corps. But he also concluded, it will be recalled, that it was impossible to relate all of the actions involving the 304th to a single Union unit at Chancellorsville.

This is now my own conclusion, as I implied earlier, one buttressed not only by my encounters with the largely unconvincing recent efforts to locate a specific single source for the 304th but also by

in the "Dotty Dimple" and "Little Prudy" series appeared under her pen name, Sophia May. More interesting is the tantalizing possibility that "Samantha," the imaginary friend to whom Agnes wrote in her diary, might owe at least her name to Marietta Holley's wildly popular Samantha Allen or "Josiah Allen's Wife," a humorous character who audaciously spoke her mind about subjects from women's rights and tourism to revivalist preachers and the race question. The first book in the Samantha series, *My Opinions and Betsey Bobbet's*, appeared in 1873, and the book's dialect, often rendered as comic misspellings—"What could I du?" Samantha's friend Betsy Bobbet asks at one point (Holley 11)—recalls Agnes's similar spelling in an entry of June 7: "How du you like Bound Brook by this time?" (121). If Agnes indeed read any of Holley's books, one of their principal themes could not have escaped her: Samantha's consistent deflation of romantic ideas about woman's place, from Josiah's reference to his wife as a "little angel"—"I weigh two hundred and four pounds," she retorts (4)—to the spinster Betsey Bobbet's sentimental view of courtship.

Nor was Agnes's burning passion to write entirely thwarted, for she published three stories during her lifetime. Of her four extant stories—"How it Happened," "A Victorious Defeat," "The Result of an Experiment," and "Laurel Camp"—only "Laurel Camp" and a poem, "Content," appeared posthumously. None shows the genius of her brother Stephen, but all exhibit an understanding of contemporary tastes that explains their appearance in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* and in other popular venues. Significantly, three of the stories feature a romance plot with a spirited, intelligent, but not conventionally attractive heroine, and the stories are set in the spaces of middle-class leisure, a setting they share with *The Third Violet*. "The Result of an Experiment" takes place on and around the veranda of the boarding house at a summer resort; "Laurel Camp," in an idyllic camp in the woods in the same locale; and "A Victorious Defeat," at a farmhouse where the heroine has chosen to vacation. Of the stories published during her lifetime, "A Victorious Defeat" bears the strongest parallels to *The Third Violet*.

"A Victorious Defeat" follows Miss Leslie Gordon, a vacationing girl from the city, as she is left at the railway station and asks a rough-looking but handsome stranger with "a shocking straw hat and . . . a brown, sunburned, manly face" (198) how far it is to Metler Farm. Saying that he is working at the place, he offers her a ride in his wagon, and she agrees. Agnes Crane emphasizes the elements of class in the situation, as Leslie reflects that she, "the latest rage," is "riding

across the stream; Grace even stands at the edge of the cliff and watches a hemlock branch caught and moved by the force of "each swirling mad wave" (298). Clearly emblematic of their emotions, the turbulent force of the water, the red-stained crags, and the impulsively natural Stanley all sharpen the contrast between what Hawker and Grace feel and what they can express, constrained as they are by the artificial language of courtship.

A sense of just how consciously Crane uses these materials can be seen by comparing this first part of *The Third Violet* with "A Victorious Defeat," a story published by his sister Agnes in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* on January 13, 1883. Nearly sixteen years Stephen's senior, Agnes Crane acted as a surrogate mother to Stephen, the youngest of the Reverend Jonathan Townley and Mary Helen Peck Crane's fourteen children. She was by all accounts his favorite sister, and the two were close until her death of meningitis in 1884 at the age of 28 when Stephen was twelve. Trained as a schoolteacher, Agnes, like the rest of her family, had intellectual interests of her own: she had attended Centenary Collegiate Institute, now Centenary College; had won a prize for her excellence in German and "the Coit Prize for the best English essay" (Gullason 181); and had been named class valedictorian. As Thomas Gullason explains, "It was Agnes who directed Stephen's early writing . . . [and] reading" (Gullason 13), and Paul Sorrentino agrees: "A brilliant student who described herself in her diary as having a burning passion 'to write', she introduced Crane to literature and encouraged him to write" ("Newly Discovered Writings" 105). In his essay accompanying the reprinting of Agnes's diary, Sorrentino notes that Agnes enjoyed reading popular and sentimental fiction, such as the popular Hartford writer Julia P. Smith's *Chris and Otho* and *The Widower; also, a True Account of Some Brave Frolics at Cragenfels*. Another reference also suggests Agnes's taste for popular works; a diary entry for Thursday, August 27, 1874 reads as follows:

> Have come to the conclusion that the "Doctor's Daughter" although fascinating is not a good criterion for *me*. Am going to be a "D. D." of another type but just as good if I can't be pretty or preternaturally smart. Sounds audacious, don't it, Samantha? Don't mention it to any one. (Sorrentino "Newly Discovered Writings of Mary Helen Peck Crane and Agnes Elizabeth Crane")

Published in 1873, *The Doctor's Daughter* was the latest in a series of books by Maine author Rebecca Sophia Clarke, whose popular stories

my own reconsideration of what Crane was up to in selecting Chancellorsville as the basis for a Civil War novel. Crane, I believe, was not interested in rendering the battle and its participants in a manner consistent with full historical accuracy. Just as there is no "actual" Fort Romper with a blue hotel somewhere in the West, and just as Crane's Bowery is almost a mythical construct of entirely symbolic characters and events, he wished in his use of a Civil War battle not to render a specific source but a theme. His theme, loosely put of course, was to explore the possible answers to the problem of how men behave under great stress. Or, put another way, are the conventional ideas of "courage" and "cowardice" true? For this theme, he needed a conflict in which an untried soldier is tested, running away on the first trial and behaving well on the second. Crane chose a fictional regiment, not a corps, for the context of his protagonist's actions because he needed the relatively small size of a regiment for the important role of social acceptance and judgment in Henry's beliefs and actions. But he had little regard, I believe, as to whether the actions of Henry's regiment represented those of the 124th New York or any other actual regiment or any specific corps. Rather, from what he knew about the battle from a variety of sources (though probably not the *Official Records*), he shaped a narrative closer to the pattern in his head—the experiences and the state of mind of a "green" soldier in a "green" regiment over a two-day period—than to the specific experiences of any historical unit participating in the battle.

Are the three recent studies I have been examining therefore of little value? No, I think that they serve several useful purposes. They have provided a wealth of important information about the conduct of the Civil War which bears on countless details embedded in the narrative of *The Red Badge*. And they have raised important questions about an area in Crane studies which is still largely terra incognita: how, in fact, did he "work up" the background for his most important writing? (We know far more about this subject for Crane's major contemporaries, Dreiser and Norris, than we do for him.) And the subject has stimulated a writer as engaged and informed as Perry Lentz to write a compelling study of the novel.

1. "'That Was at Chancellorsville': The Factual Framework of *The Red Badge of Courage*." *American Literature* 34 (January 1963): 520-31.
2. Hungerford, p. 524.
3. Bigelow, *The Campaign of Chancellorsville: A Strategic and Tactical Study* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1910), p. x. Of the many recent studies of the battle, I have profited especially from Stephen S. Sears, *Chancellorsville* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991) and (for its excellent maps) Donald E. Sutherland, *Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville: The Mark Dare Campaign* (Lincoln : U of Nebraska P, 1998).
4. Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage*. ed. Donald Pizer (New York: Norton, 1994), p. 3.
5. LaRocca, "Stephen Crane's Inspiration," *American Heritage* 42 (May-June 1991).
6. LaRocca, *Stephen Crane's Novel*, p. xii.
7. Weygant, *History of the One Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Regiment, N.Y.S.V.* (Newburgh, NY: Journal Printing House, 1877), p. 117.
8. LaRocca, *Stephen Crane's Novel*, p. xii.
9. LaRocca, *Stephen Crane's Novel*, p. 46.
10. See Weygant, pp. 107-113, and "Report of Col. A. Van Horne Ellis," *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), Vol. 25, Part 2, pp. 496-97.
11. Lentz, p. 18.
12. *The War of the Rebellion*, Vol. 32, Part 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891), pp. 508-622.
13. For example, see Lentz, pp. 33, 36, 208.
14. Curran, *American Literary Realism, 1870-1910* 26 (Fall 1993): 1-12.
15. Curran, I should note, writing in 1993, does not indicate an awareness of LaRocca's 1991 article claiming that the 124th New York, which was a regiment in Sickle's Third Corps, was the model for Crane's 304th New York, a finding which would support his own position. Even more extraordinary, Lentz, who includes a very extensive bibliography, writing in 2006 seems unaware of Curran's important 1993 article bearing significantly on his argument.

the other men painted" (*The Third Violet* 375), and the "great deal of freedom" that it promises, she coaxes Hawker to tell her his true story. The true story, he tells her, is that living in Bohemia does not signify artistic genius. Haltingly, for it is one of the few times when Hawker truly confronts the social gap between them instead of obnoxiously calling Grace "the heiress," he tells her that when he hears "people talk as if that was the whole life it makes my hair rise, you know" because it is not; he tells her that he really "can paint, you know" (376). His repeated use of "you know," a stylized verbal tic, drops out of his speech as he tells her what he is really ashamed of in his story: "The poverty." In a subtle shift in language, Grace begins to comfort him by adopting his term in a half-serious, half-teasing manner, repeating his "you know" three times in the next exchange as she tells him that she finds his behavior "brave, you know" (376). Grace drops the verbal sparring that has been their standard form of communication and accepts, even transforms, his language, an exchange that foreshadows her proffering of the third violet to him.

In addition to such subtle techniques as these shifts in dialogue, Crane uses other means such as the language of nature and setting to contrast with the misleadingly articulate but artificial courtship conversations of Grace and Hawker. While the two are still in the country, Hawker spins a stylized and conventional tale of an Indian maiden who throws herself from a cliff: "And she was, of course, beloved by a youth from another tribe who was very handsome and stalwart and a mighty hunter, of course" (299). Hawker's repetitions of "of course," which undercut the tale of romance that he tells, annoy Grace, and he falls silent, afterward bewailing that in conversation with her he is "as interesting as an iron dog" (301); as if in a natural reproach to his unnatural speech, the dark pines overhead, "swaying over the narrow road [,] made talk sibilantly to the wind" (301) and "could be heard in their weird monotone as they softly smote branch and branch as if moving in some solemn and sorrowful dance" (304). When Grace and Hawker move back to the city and go their separate ways, Crane again provides an alliterative, natural perspective on their relationship: "When the snow fell upon the clashing life of the city, the exiled stones, beaten by myriad strange feet, were told of the dark silent forests where the flakes swept through the hemlocks and swished softly against the boulders" (383). Crane also uses tropes of the natural world and of movement to signify their relationship and to sharpen the contrast between them. Much of their courtship is spent walking, often with Stanley, and in two key scenes they pause behind a waterfall with red-stained crags

become "a trained bear of the magazines" (294) and delivers lengthy commentary on the frailties of women. As critics have noted, the two characters represent the two sides of Crane, or what he believed that he was and feared that he might become: the poverty-stricken genuine artist, prickly with integrity, and the artist who cynically sells out to become a commercial success. The action of the first half of the story comprises the vacation courtship plot. Hawker falls in love with Grace Fanhall,[3] an heiress staying at the nearby resort hotel. As is customary in the vacation romance, the two become attracted to one another despite their differences in class, with the rural paths and forests surrounding the Hemlock Inn providing the classic green world in which class difference is erased. It is at the resort that Hawker gathers the first two of the violets that give the novel its title: the first he picks up from a tennis court where she has been playing, and the second Grace gives Hawker as she walks away from him on the arm of another suitor, the wealthy Jem Oglethorpe. What should be a green world idyll is spoiled, however, by the contentious and irrelevant conversations of the two; unwilling to let the class difference go, Hawker insistently calls attention to Grace's status as an heiress. In their final conversation at the end of the novel, Hawker tells Grace he is going away, and Grace tosses the third violet at him; after he picks it up, she tells him that she wants him to leave. Instead, he reads the "defiance" in her face with "an explosion of delight and amazement" (287), and instead takes two steps toward her, an ambiguous rather than wholly happy ending. Thus instead of the positive symbolism usually associated with the giving and receiving of flowers, the three violets signify the reverse--missed, dropped, or otherwise failed communication between Grace and Hawker.

Replacing this conventional symbolism of the flowers, however, is Crane's focus on language and space as signifiers. Crane's heavy reliance on "short, terse sentences" (Weatherford 213), which was much remarked on by contemporary reviewers, prunes away, or, to put it another way, wrings dry the excesses of the forms he follows, a strategy that conceptually looks ahead to modernist ideas despite the limitations it imposes on Crane's characterization. When Hawker and Grace return to the city, their spaces and lives diverge as she lives in a house with a "colossal chandelier" (375) and he occupies an artist's studio and eats, when he can afford it, at a cheerfully noisy "Bohemian resort" (370). A few chapters before the end of the novel, Grace begins to break down this spatial and class-based barrier between herself and Hawker by asking about his studio and his world. Fascinated by Bohemian life, with its "charming" studio teas, its artists who "remark how badly all

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More than a Family Resemblance? Agnes Crane's "A Victorious Defeat" and Stephen Crane's *The Third Violet*[1]

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Like his younger contemporary Jack London, who famously claimed to have had "no mentor but myself," Stephen Crane acknowledged few influences on his writing. Established authors such as W. D. Howells and contemporaries such as his friends Hamlin Garland and Harold Frederic read Crane's fiction and encouraged him, but encouragement rather than influence formed the basis for these relationships. That Crane based "The Open Boat" on his survival after the wreck of the *Commodore* off the coast of Florida is well known. But *The Third Violet* has not received the same sort of scrutiny, in part because, as Donald Pizer put it in *Fifteen Modern American Authors before 1900*, "Most Crane critics would not be too much disturbed if *The Third Violet, Active Service*, and *The O'Ruddy* disappeared from the face of the earth, and this sentiment is reflected in the extent of the criticism of the three novels" (178). Not quite a decade later, Patrick Dooley's *Stephen Crane: An Annotated Bibliography of Secondary Scholarship* surveyed the work done on the novel and came to a similar, if less bluntly expressed, conclusion on its critical reception: that aside from its biographical interest it is at best a potboiler and a decidedly unworthy successor to *The Red Badge of Courage* and *Maggie;* and that some of the weakness resides in Crane's inability to portray female characters. Other critics have found strengths in the book: for William Andrews, the novel is Crane's meditation on "the meaning of artistic success and failure in America" (80); and, drawing on the novel's grounding in Howells's critical statements on realism, Paul Sorrentino suggests that Crane's response is more complex than the simple parody of plot elements described by Eric Solomon. For Sorrentino, the systematic use of language and allusion, such as the multiple meanings of words such as "frame" or "true" or the references to Verdi's *La Traviata*, allows Crane to "blur the distinction between fact and fiction" ("Stephen Crane's Struggle with Romance in the *Third Violet*" 283) in ways that call into question the "truth status of art itself" (279).

Crane himself had high hopes for the work at first, telling his editor Ripley Hitchcock during the writing of it that his draft was "working out fine" and that his first seven chapters had given him "the proper enormous interest in the theme" (*Correspondence* 128). But

his judgment of the work that seemed to him "clever sometimes and sometimes . . . nonsensical" (*Correspondence* 140) while he was writing it shifted once the novel was complete. In a December 31, 1895 letter to Curtis Brown, written four days after sending the manuscript to Hitchcock, Crane expressed doubts as to whether Appleton would accept it, for, he said, "it's pretty rotten work. I used myself up in the accursed 'Red Badge'" (*Correspondence* 161). A month later Crane defended the book in a letter to Hitchcock, calling it a "quiet little story [and] serious work" and arguing that "[p]eople may just as well discover now that the high dramatic key of The Red Badge cannot be sustained" (*Correspondence* 191). He added, "I think I will be capable of doing work that will dwarf both books," a comment that Lillian Gilkes suggests is Crane's way of "trying to put the best face on it" (Gilkes 108). Although the British reviews generally praised Crane's experiments in dialogue, only a few American reviewers, such as the one for *Munsey's Magazine*, appreciated them; most derided his use of language and also his characterization with the sole exception of Stanley, the orange and white setter that one reviewer declared was "the only . . . interesting creature in the book" (qtd. in Stallman 134).

But *The Third Violet* is interesting for reasons other than the exuberant Stanley. As Crane himself suggested, it is an experiment in working in another key, and what has received insufficient attention is the extent to which Crane bases this work, with its peculiarly divided settings of the rural vacation resort and a thinly disguised version of the Art Students League, on two kinds of literary models. The first is the Bohemian artists' novel, particularly George du Maurier's *Trilby*, to which the second half of the novel owes an obvious debt; the second, and more surprising, model is what may be termed the "vacation novel" or "vacation story" as popularized by W. D. Howells in *The Coast of Bohemia* and *An Open-Eyed Conspiracy*. In fact, the "vacation story" sections of Crane's novel bear a surprising resemblance to the work of a less-than-famous author: his sister Agnes Crane. Reading Crane's novel in juxtaposition with Agnes's "A Victorious Defeat" illustrates the ways in which he was attempting not only to strike out in a new direction from *The Red Badge of Courage* but also to satirize and improve upon fashionable models of fiction current at the time: those that use the emerging leisure spaces of Bohemia and the resort hotel as sites for cross-class romance.

The Third Violet is the story of William Hawker, a poor but promising artist visiting his parents' farm for the summer. He is accompanied by his cynical friend George Hollanden, a writer who has