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STEPHEN CRANE, *The Red Badge of Courage: A Facsimile Edition of the Manuscript*, ed. Fredson Bowers. A Brucoli Clark Book. Washington, D.C.: NCR/Microcard Editions, 1972 and 1973; \$60.00.

STEPHEN CRANE, *The Red Badge of Courage: An Episode of the American Civil War*, ed. Fredson Bowers, introd. J. C. Levenson. Vol. II of the University of Virginia Edition of *The Works of Stephen Crane*. Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1975; \$17.50.

In these two editions Fredson Bowers offers the Crane scholar riches running wild. First the riches, then the running wild. Both editions present themselves impressively with the CEAA seal, although only the volume in the *Works* was funded by the federal government through NEH. The *Facsimile* consists of a boxed set, Volume I the "Introduction and Apparatus" and Volume II the photographic reproductions. The introduction traces the composition and early history of *Red Badge*, describes the final manuscript and extant parts of the draft manuscript, discusses the revision of the final manuscript and its publication, and explains the apparatus, which consists mainly of lists of alterations in the final manuscript (divided according to the stages at which the editor thinks they were made) and alterations in the draft. The volume labeled "Facsimile" contains (in slightly reduced but sharply legible photographic reproductions) the final manuscript, together with the surviving pages of a discarded chapter, false starts, certain computations by Crane, and the preserved pages from the draft manuscript, as well as a single-page related fragment called here "Gustave and Marie." The second *Red Badge*, the stout one-volume Virginia edition, runs to 516 pages. Somewhere inside are 133 pages taken up by Crane's little book, as heavily emended by Bowers. A printed rendering of the surviving draft manuscript takes up 36 pages and the discarded chapter takes up 4, while 75 pages are devoted to lists of alterations in the draft and the final manuscript.

Attempts were made to keep the NCR and Virginia enterprises distinct and complementary, even though Bowers edited both, but dubious judgment decreed that the edition sponsored by the government be dependent on the commercial boxed set. In the Virginia edition Bowers says that his "present account" is condensed from his "more extended survey of the physical evidence of the draft and final manuscripts" in the NCR edition, and several times the reader is referred to the *Facsimile* introduction for data which belongs in the NEH edition. One trusts that NEH money did not go in measurable quantities into the preparation of the *Facsimile* (though in the natural course of things whatever had been learned for the long-planned Virginia volume would have been available for the *Facsimile*), but one also fervently wishes that the fuller story had been told in the cheaper government-funded

edition. Nagging questions—both pragmatic and ethical—are raised. By contrast, the large amount of duplication (especially in the introductory essays but also in the lists of alterations in the manuscript) raises mainly pragmatic questions. Still, the waste is disturbing in view of the fact that certain necessary items are *not* provided, most conspicuously a chart in the NCR edition keying manuscript pages to Virginia pages and a comparable key in the Virginia edition showing from what parts of the manuscript its own pages derive. Such waste and such omissions are lamentable enough, but where the Virginia *Red Badge* runs wild (aside from many of the editorial emendations found in the text of the novel) is in J. C. Levenson's eighty-page introduction, in Bowers's seventy-page history and analysis of the text, and in some of Bowers's textual notes.

Editorial intrusiveness in the Virginia Crane is nothing new. It led wags to speak of Volume I as "The Bowersy Tales" and convinced me that my own copy, cased upside down and backwards, resulted from an uncontrollable outbreak of symbolic bookbinding at Kingsport Press. (For several thousand words on this controversial piece of editing, see Hershel Parker and Brian Higgins, "The Virginia Edition of Stephen Crane's *Maggie*: A Mirror for Textual Scholars," *Proof*, Vol. 5, 1976.) After examining several volumes in which Bowers and Levenson seem slow to scrutinize each other's manuscripts with genuine rigor but quick to pay each other compliments in print, the reader of the Crane *Works* senses a pervasive and ultimately debilitating self-indulgence. Neither Levenson nor Bowers tells a straightforward story about how Crane wrote and published his masterpiece; indeed, one oddity is that their versions of what happened do not always precisely coincide. For a good account one still goes first to William L. Howarth's "*The Red Badge of Courage* Manuscript: New Evidence for a Critical Edition," *Studies in Bibliography*, 18 (1965), 229–47, which in 19 packed pages lays out the history better than the Virginia team in 150. Howarth must now be corrected on several basic points by Bowers's discoveries, but he can still help readers gird up for the gauntlet of the Virginia introductions.

What's wrong with Levenson's essay, aside from his failure to tell a good story? Some will disagree with me on principle here, but I think a basic fault is his allowing himself free rein to interpret rather than restricting himself to an earnest attempt to lay out the available evidence about the composition, publication, reception, and later critical history. Much, if not most, of Levenson's literary criticism is of the highly debatable sort that I prefer to see in a critical journal rather than in what purports to be the standard edition. Some of the biographical sections seem too speculative, and the guesswork is not always adequately labeled as such. Much else strikes me as not belonging in a historical introduction—little essays on Hemingway and Tolstoy, semi-

summary of the plot of *Red Badge*, frequent repetitiveness. Then, the introduction is inexplicably truncated before telling what fate awaited the book in the twentieth century: it is as if the last ten pages had been lost. Finally, I am alternately bemused and repelled by the recurrence of this sort of philosophizing: "Tolstoy helped free Crane of the anxiety—literary influence often works thus—of working all alone with new materials and not knowing whether his facts were real."

Whatever one feels about Levenson's essay is of little importance: the Virginia *Red Badge* stands or falls by Bowers's work. Bowers's arguments here are couched in his customary opacity, yet it is not the style which most weakens the textual history, or even the failure to organize material into swift, cogent narrative. The most damaging faults of commission are Bowers's misleading account of Crane's revisions and his related decisions to emend the novel excessively. In a major discovery, Bowers identified Hamlin Garland's as the hand in the manuscript challenging Crane's dialect spellings. (The crucial marginal annotation by Garland, one which contains an undeciphered word, is prominently discussed in both editions; strangely, the *Facsimile* slices it half off, denying the reader the chance to see the word in context and making him dread that *authorial* writing in the margins might frequently have eluded the camera, as seems to have happened at MS pp. 111 and 134.) But Bowers manages to turn his discovery into a liability. Even though Crane's attempts to comply with Garland's criticism were halfhearted, contradictory, and soon abandoned altogether, Bowers interprets them as culminating in a complex "system" which Crane supposedly conceived but did not come close to carrying out: imposing standard English for Henry Fleming but retaining dialect for the other characters. Eager to fulfill what he has decided were the final intentions of his author, Bowers relentlessly emends in order to impose the "system" which he thinks he has discovered. How few or how many consistently interrelated elements make a "system," the reader finally asks, and what proportion of "exceptions" invalidate one? Crane botched up his manuscript a little in response to Garland's criticism, but nothing like the Virginia botching, which creates a ludicrous discrepancy between Henry Fleming's normal speech and the dialect used by other characters (try sampling the Virginia version of the dialogue in the first two chapters). Imposing this "system," in which many words are erratically taken out of dialect and many others put into dialect, requires not only an unconscionable number of new editorial emendations but also frenetic picking and choosing of dialect and nondialect forms from the draft manuscript and various stages of the final manuscript. The result strikes me as one of the most disheartening mishmashes in textual history.

The Virginia textual decisions in general, even aside from the wholesale emending of dialect words and casting of other words into dialect forms, are open to the same objections brought against many textual

decisions in the Bowers Ohio State Hawthorne volumes and the other Crane volumes. Once again Bowers reveals a tendency to shelter himself under outdated McKerrowean dogma where Greg offers sounder policy; indeed, Bowers sometimes shows a curious antipathy toward the very rationale he has proselytized for. Once again some of Bowers's aesthetic arguments in justification of his emendations are woefully unconvincing. Once again he rigorously regularizes accidentals in violation of his claim to print an unmodernized critical text—even to the point of sticking a prissy apostrophe into every “aint” that Crane wrote. The upshot is that the Virginia text, once again, is not one you would want your students to read. More vigorous than anyone else in defending the theoretical utility of eclectic tests, Bowers by his actual example is forcing responsible textual scholars to challenge indiscriminate eclecticism and to consider afresh for every work just what form of the text (and just what kind of apparatus) will best serve scholars, critics, and students. In reaction to Bowers's Hawthorne and Crane texts, a consensus is also emerging that no editor who is driven by an urge to impose regularity upon a text is apt to produce a definitive edition of anything. The Hawthorne and Crane editions are a heavy price to pay for belated wisdom, but their faults seem apt to prove the means by which American scholars will educate themselves, at long last, about textual criticism.

Serious as they are, Bowers's editorial sins of commission may be venial compared with the sins of omission, his failures to consider the full range of textual and critical evidence. The textual situation of *Red Badge* which emerges from study of all the evidence now available, including the Charles E. Merrill facsimile of the first edition, especially, as well as Bowers's two new editions, suggests important questions that have not yet been asked, much less answered. First, should Crane's post-Garland dialect tinkering be rejected on the ground that the older man had intimidated him, pushing him into blind alleys of attempted placation? A more significant question is whether or not Crane's hasty large-scale late excisions might have been made under pressure from the publisher. The latest excisions of all (those where the manuscript contains passages, not crossed out, which do not appear in the first edition) drastically alter the meaning of the novel: in the manuscript Crane at the end is ironically and blasphemously mocking Henry Fleming's self-delusions (as in the paraphrasing of such a biblical passage as Matthew 10.29), while in the printed book Henry's opinion of himself seems to have sudden and anomalous support from the author. Was the new upbeat religiosity of the ending designed to appease the Appleton editor, Ripley Hitchcock, who was so soon to wipe the rouge off *Maggie*? Levenson and Bowers refer to other instances in which Crane proved remarkably impressionable to criticism, but they never focus on the degree to which the differences between the final manuscript as first inscribed and the first edition of the book may be due to various outside pressures.

We need to know, for careful scrutiny of the evidence suggests an absolutely paramount theoretical and practical problem. Is it possible that Crane had the fullest sense of his "intentions" for the book very early, perhaps at the time of his first revision of his newly inscribed final manuscript (the rather thoroughgoing weeding out of proper names, where "Fleming" became "the youth," and so on), before he submitted the manuscript to Garland's criticism? After that, did Crane yield halfheartedly first to one advisor then another, gradually losing his sense of the work as an aesthetic unity and relinquishing his practical control of it in order to get it into print, however maimed? If so, we need to acknowledge that no literary critic will ever hold in his hand the "ideal" text Crane had created, for during the post-Garland revisions the original chapter 12 was discarded (and part of it lost, then or later) and other pages were discarded from the ends of certain chapters. One can more or less reconstruct almost all of what stood in the manuscript prior to Garland's reading it: doing so simply requires reinserting the surviving pages of chapter 12, restoring passages in the manuscript which are legible although crossed out, and eking out these restorations with any fortuitously surviving passages from the rough draft (as when p. 86 of the draft contains the original form of part of what must have been on the final p. 100, now missing from the discarded chapter). This rather motley and slightly incomplete reconstruction, I wager, would be the best possible basis for New Critical demonstrations of the unity of the novel—the sort of essays which have been lavished upon mere reprints (or reprints of reprints) of the Appleton text, a text which reached its final form as the result of omissions so hasty and ill-conceived that several passages still depend for their meaning upon passages which were excised. We owe Bowers a debt for putting much documentary evidence before us, however restricted the circulation of the \$60 set will be; but we must also recognize that the elaborate textual arguments in these two editions do not touch on the most significant issue of precisely when Crane's "intentions" were most fully bodied forth. Furthermore, the documentary evidence is far from exhausted. When I outlined the possibility of editorial pressure on Crane, Joseph Katz called my attention to a contemporary Appleton list of corrections, unused by Bowers, which turns out to have complex biographical and textual significance. This list has led to demonstration that the Appleton plates were altered in 1896, with Crane's knowledge, although Bowers asserts that the plates were "invariant during Crane's lifetime." (Bowers apparently failed to make the one indispensable Hinman collation, first printing against last. See Henry Binder, "Alterations in the Appleton Plates of *The Red Badge of Courage*," forthcoming in *Editorial Quarterly*, No. 3.) Saying this sounds strange even to my own ears, but the fact is that conscientious textual and critical study of *The Red Badge of Courage* has hardly begun.

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