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THE FORGOTTEN REALIST

BY

JOHN GARVEY

A thesis submitted
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree Master of Arts
Major in English
South Dakota State University
1982

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THE FORGOTTEN REALIST

This thesis is approved as a creditable and independent investigation by a candidate for the degree, Master of Arts, and is acceptable for meeting the thesis requirements for this degree. Acceptance of this thesis does not imply that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

Dr. Ruth Ann Alexander Date
Thesis Adviser and
Head of the English Dept.

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Dr. Ruth Ann Alexander first introduced me to the work of Edward Eggleston as a project for her class in the fall of 1980. Her advice since that time has enhanced this larger project in many ways, particularly by sharpening its focus; indeed, she has given focus to a number of of passages which must have seemed to her like snapshots attempting panoramas of 360 degrees. If the pictures of this album are creditable, the photographer gratefully shares credit with the darkroom technician.

My next largest debts are to two libraries. That of Indiana University provided me with obscure reference materials and willingly allowed me allowed me to hold them beyond the time normally granted for inter-library loans. The reference room of SDSU's Hilton Briggs Library made more excuses than I care to admit for my delinquencies to several out-of-town libraries.

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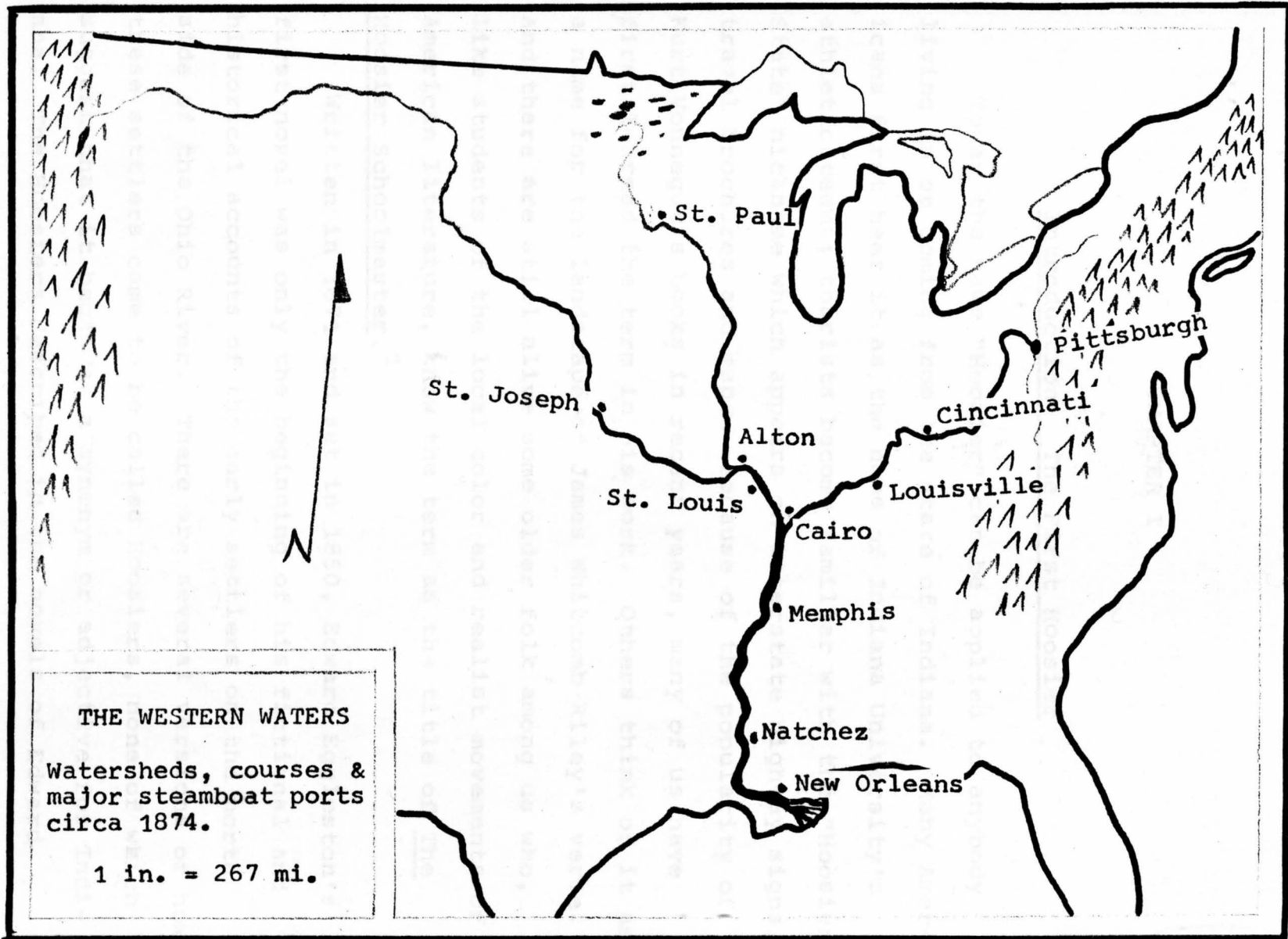
Finally, I must thank Rachel Rain, age four, who typed the letter "r" somewhere in the early thirties of my pages. Her company during the final typing of the manuscript was a most pleasant and moderating influence.

It would be easy to analyze Dr. Eggleston's fictions, and to show in detail their literary excellence, but the task is in his case as superfluous as it might be tedious, for his chief excellence is not literary. He is, to be sure, a conscientious and artistic writer, and in the technicalities of his craft he has nothing to fear from a comparison with others. What is meant in saying that his chief excellence is not literary is, that in him the artist is subordinate to the man.

Henry Vedder, 1894

As much as any other writer, Edward Eggleston was American to his very marrow, a creature of specific American circumstances, a product of the most American regions, and a recorder of American actualities that he lovingly and consciously assembled in fiction and history. He was an individual, too--a particular American, hardly heroic yet a pioneer, serving his countrymen in a variety of ways but not always proud of the country he served. He was often too ill to be amiable; he was given, on occasion, to peculiar notions--some well in advance of the times, some out of fashion; he was driven by the typical compulsion to produce and to succeed, and was never completely satisfied with himself or his achievement. When, and only when, we as a people are fully satisfied with our achievement and are no longer impatient for a better future, may such men as Edward Eggleston become expendable.

William Randel, 1963



THE WESTERN WATERS

Watersheds, courses & major steamboat ports circa 1874.

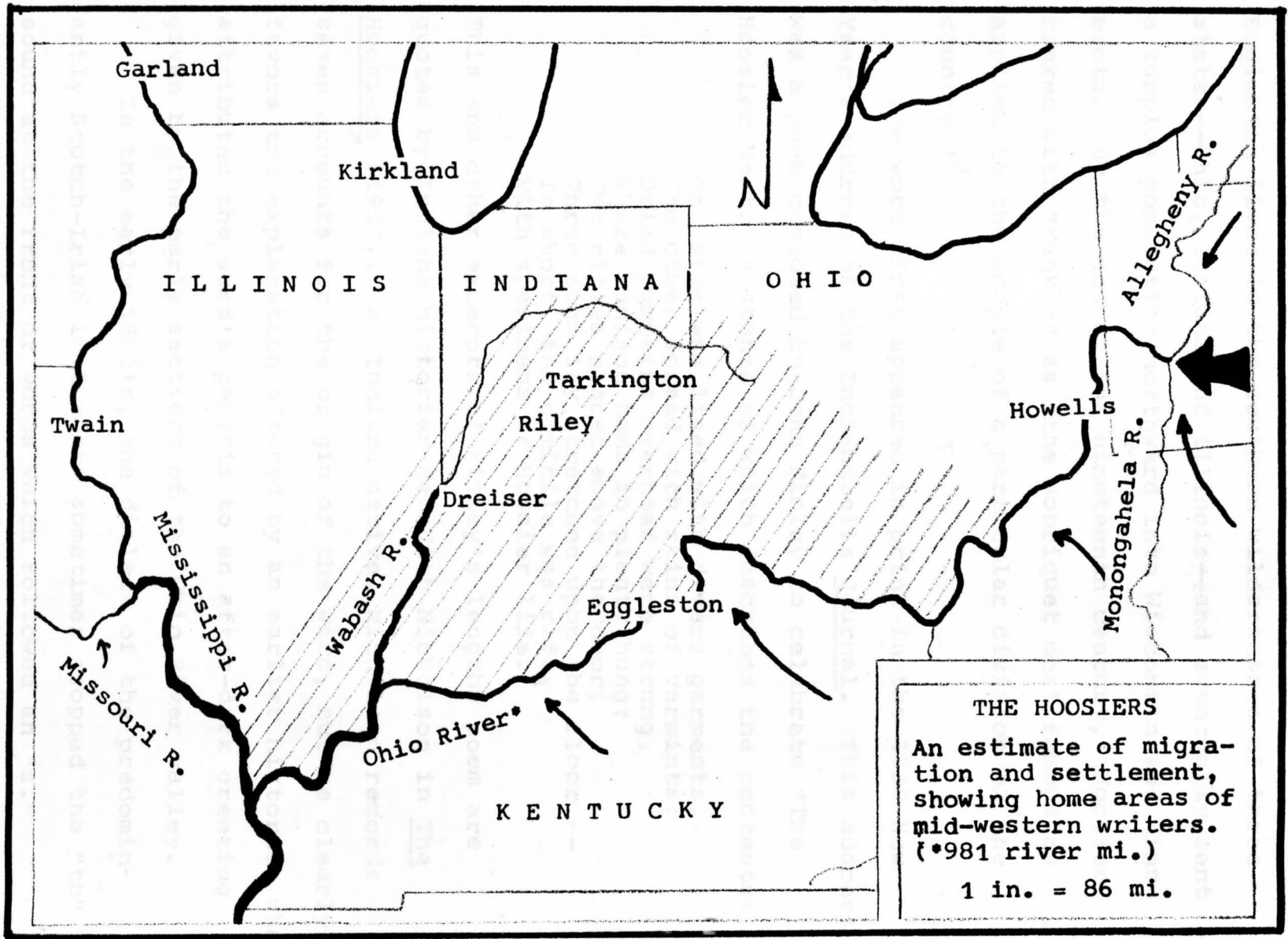
1 in. = 267 mi.

CHAPTER I

Introduction: The First Hoosier

Today the name "Hoosier" can be applied to anybody living in or coming from the state of Indiana. Many Americans first hear it as the name of Indiana University's athletic teams; tourists become familiar with the "Hoosier State" nickname which appears on interstate highway signs, travel brochures and maps. Because of the popularity of Kurt Vonnegut's books in recent years, many of us have first learned the term in his work. Others think of it as a name for the landscape of James Whitcomb Riley's verse. And there are still alive some older folk among us who, like students of the local color and realist movements of American literature, know the term as the title of The Hoosier Schoolmaster.¹

Written in 1871 and set in 1850, Edward Eggleston's first novel was only the beginning of his fictional and historical accounts of the early settlers on the north side of the Ohio River. There are several versions of how these settlers came to be called Hoosiers, none of which suggest that it began as a synonym or adjective for Indiana. The Hoosiers described in the novels of Edward



Eggleston lived in the southern wildernesses of three states--Ohio, Indiana and Illinois--and eventually sent a surplus population northward into Wisconsin and Minnesota. By the end of the nineteenth century, "Hoosier" ranked with "Yankee" as "the sobriquet most famous as applied to the people of a particular division of the country."²

The word first appeared in print in the 1830 New Year's address of the Indianapolis Journal. This address was a poem composed by John Finley to celebrate "The Hoosier Nest," a stanza of which describes the contents:

One side was lined with divers garments,
 The other spread with skins of varmints;
 Dried pumpkins overhead were strung,
 Where venison hams in plenty hung;
 Two rifles placed above the door;
 Three dogs lay stretched upon the floor,--
 In short, the domicile was rife,³
 With specimens of Hoosier life.

This and other excerpts of Finley's lengthy poem are quoted by Indiana historian Meredith Nicholson in The Hoosiers (1900). An Indiana native, Nicholson records seven accounts for the origin of the word, but he clearly favors the explanation offered by an earlier historian who attributed the word's genesis to an after-dark greeting given by the early settlers of the Ohio River valley.

In the early 1800's, the dialect of the predominantly Scotch-Irish immigrants sometimes dropped the "th" sound at the front of words which followed an "s."

Furthermore, there has always been a tendency of midwesterners not to raise the inflection of the voice at the end of a question as people from the eastern and southern states continue to do. Hence, a question to newcomers in the valley sounded as flat declarative statements or, if yelled at a distance, as no-nonsense commands. The custom of visitors was to holler "hello" before they approached the door of a woodland cabin. The occupant's response, rendered in standard English, was "Who's there?" But the visitor heard "Who's hyer!" In time this became so familiar that visitors began calling out "Hoosier" as they arrived at the home of a neighbor or stranger.⁴

Like the term "mark twain" which reassured steamboat pilots of the safe depth of a river's waters, the sound of "Hoosier" reassured the early settlers of the Ohio valley of their visitors good will. Americans today readily recognize "Mark Twain" as the pen name of one of America's most popular authors, and particularly as the chronicler of the Mississippi River. But the name of his contemporary who chronicled the Hoosier life of the Ohio River valley is virtually forgotten.

In his own day Eggleston was among America's most popular writers. He was so popular that a doctoral dissertation on his work describes "a writer who seemed to

specialize in restoring the circulations of nearly defunct magazines."⁵ But his work fell into neglect soon after his death in 1902. In 1913 an advertisement for Grossett and Dunlap's inexpensive reprints of popular fiction listed only his most widely read book, The Hoosier Schoolmaster, among one hundred offerings. Jack London and Zane Grey led that list with approximately twenty titles apiece, and today they retain recognition in various ways: London is read and analyzed; Grey is read and enjoyed. Eggleston, however, is unread and unknown; by 1961 even Schoolmaster was called a "dim memory" among college and university professors of American literature.⁶

The present study reviews Edward Eggleston's life and work in relationship to the turbulent times in which he lived, and of which he wrote as a minister, a journalist, a novelist, and ultimately as an historian. Indeed, it was this very versatility that more than one critic has cited to account for the failure of Eggleston's reputation to survive. But he made an impact in each of his various pursuits. As a minister, his last pastorate was a non-denominational church which was widely acclaimed for its humanitarian, Christian endeavors; as a journalist, he never lacked offers to edit this newspaper or that magazine; as a writer of fiction, his contributions were always sought by the leading periodicals of his time; as an historian his work influenced future writers

of American history and eventually gained for him the presidency of the American Historical Association. These historical facts suggest that Eggleston's work merits an artistic re-evaluation to determine his true place in American letters.

What place can he claim? One scholar has called it "undeniable that his novels are of interest to the student of American literary history... he took a step toward opening a new field of material for the American novel."⁷ The conclusion to the most thorough and rigorous treatment of his novels offers an even larger place: "His best work should be judged as well as his best known, and he should be given credit for having developed to the point where he can claim attention for other than historical reasons."⁸

Literary scholars such as Carl Van Doren and Alexander Cowie have treated him sympathetically in books which trace the development of the American novel. Van Doren, in 1940, wrote that "No novelist, writing within the range of topics Eggleston touched, is more candid, few more believable."⁹ Cowie, in 1949, included Eggleston "among those writers destined to be remembered as one of the hardest pioneers" of frontier and regional fiction.¹⁰

Though Cowie's prophecy is today unrealized, other estimates venture even further to establish the importance of Eggleston's role in the development of American

fiction. Fred Lewis Pattee, writing in 1917, declared that the

... influence of Eggleston's work was enormous. He helped to create a new reading public made up of those who, like himself had had scruples against novel reading. He was an influence in the creating of a new and healthy realism in America... From Harte came the first conception of a new and powerful literature of the West. Eggleston was the directing hand that turned the current of this new literature into the channel of realism. ¹¹

Henry Vedder, writing when Eggleston was still living, took exception to the notion that "an undisciplined product of the Wild West was hardly to be ranked alongside the more cultured writers of the East." Vedder declared it necessary to "revise this provincial judgement and award him his due place among our writers of fiction."¹²

Many of Eggleston's fellow writers would have agreed. Hamlin Garland and Joseph Kirkland, at the outset of their literary careers, agreed that Eggleston's work "was the truest fiction of the mid-West."¹³ When Kirkland, somewhat boisterous upon the publication of Zury (1887), accused Garland of laziness for not yet attempting fiction or dialect, Garland was moved:

This accusation stuck in my mind. It was true. All the way across Iowa I pondered the problem. 'Can I move into the short story field? Can I put the life of Wisconsin and Iowa in fiction as Eggleston has done for Indiana and as Kirkland is doing for Illinois?'¹⁴

The tributes of Garland, Kirkland and others are strong evidence that Eggleston's pictures of midwestern life were regarded as memorable and authentic. Moreover, they demonstrate Eggleston's influence on younger contemporaries. John Flanagan, writing in 1944, mentions these qualities of authenticity and influence to suggest a possibility that deserves the attention of those who teach literature and writing. Carefully noting the "gradual improvement in the plotting and architectonics of his books,"¹⁵ Flanagan offers Eggleston's development as a novelist for a model to those who teach, study and practice the craft of fiction. While the earlier novels are superior for their backwoods authenticity, the later ones are more artistic as they increasingly integrate Eggleston's realism with "polish and point." Says Flanagan:

By the time he finished Roxy he realized that the greatest artist... allows characters to speak for themselves. Young writers can profitably study in Eggleston's novels the gradual attainment of artistic objectivity.¹⁶

With such predecessors as Flanagan, Cowie and the rest, a present day student of Edward Eggleston cannot help but seek answers to the overriding question of why his novels have been neglected in recent times. Certainly there exist weaknesses and limitations in Eggleston's literary work, and these will be duly considered in the following pages. But they hardly offset his offering

of a genuine look at frontier life; his scrupulous record of one of the largest and most important population shifts within the American nation; his detailed studies of major religious sects which determined the early culture and life of that population; his probing psychological accounts in the later novels of characters who are readily recognizable today; and all of this in an eminently readable style.

Edward Eggleston's literary tendencies, including his fluency as a writer, were apparent very early in his life, but he deliberately subordinated them to a devout faith in Methodism which made him believe that his literary pursuit was a worldly, and therefore unworthy, ambition. He read widely, but fiction was hardly known to him due to the aspersion cast upon it by the Methodist church. The only novels he had seen as a boy were didactic tracts teaching temperance and anti-Catholicism. Such formidable and pervasive religious influences caused Eggleston to burn a manuscript by the time he was fifteen and to join the Methodist ministry four years later.

Two words which are always used in reference to Eggleston's life are "transits" and "vicissitudes," or what biographer William Randel called the unwillingness or inability of Eggleston to adhere to any single purpose. This is in large part responsible for the failure of his

reputation to survive with those of the workhorses of the realist movement such as William Dean Howells and Mark Twain. As Randel put it, Eggleston "tried for too many prizes and always fell short of winning the highest."¹⁷ Even when he made the decision to leave the ministry for a literary career, he vacillated between children's literature and belles-lettres, and then between fiction and history. When he finally chose history, he was still torn between "social history, which was his ideal, and the popular variety, which filled his pocketbook."¹⁸ A Methodist historian called him a "prodigy of versatility,"¹⁹ and Eggleston alternately boasted and complained of the trait in later years. The boast was that of a man who was able and willing to participate vigorously in the youthful nation's literary, religious, social and educational growth; the complaint was that of a man who foresaw that his work would not be long remembered in any one field.²⁰

Two other reasons are offered for Eggleston's obscurity among American realists. First, he was never able to capture popular imagination with his later and more serious work as he had done with his first novel. The popularity of The Hoosier Schoolmaster, as much a children's story as one for adults, overshadowed any reputation he could have gained for any other book or could have made for himself. This annoyed Eggleston, particularly after

the publication of Roxy, his most carefully written novel. Perhaps the later critics who have excluded him from studies of American literature have read and considered Schoolmaster only to neglect his later work on the assumption that it could not be much different. Historians have sometimes reinforced this tendency by identifying him only as the author of Schoolmaster and a juvenile sequel called The Hoosier Schoolboy.²¹

A second reason was observed and documented by an Indiana University graduate student who found that the memoir published by brother George Cary Eggleston less than a year after Edward's death discouraged scholarly treatment. Scholars who did attempt to study his work seriously gained no cooperation from the Eggleston family who were dismayed by George's book for reasons that are not easily apparent.²² The First of the Hoosiers (1903) is as much autobiography as it is biography, and George's erratic chronology does not help the reader follow, much less understand, the many changes in Edward Eggleston's life. In short, the family felt that George, "nonpareil of brothers" though he was,²³ had marred Edward's reputation.²⁴ If the family disliked the memoir for George's extensive editorializing, they could not deny that Edward asked his brother to write it. They could hardly deny that the commission was offered--and accepted--not only because of the brothers' intimacy, but also for the reason

that George shared Edward's iconoclastic attitudes and most of his opinions. Inevitably, First of the Hoosiers has been a foundation of much of the later day scholarly treatment of Edward Eggleston. Unfortunate it is that the best of the scholarly appreciations, two biographies by William Randel in 1946 and 1963, were not published when Eggleston was still in public favor.

If we consider only these three reasons for his obscurity, we could easily attribute full blame for it to Eggleston himself. He chose, after all, to suppress his writing for religion; he chose to divide the prime of his life between fiction, journalism and preaching; he decided to quit popular fiction for scholarly research. As disturbed as he was by his inability to transcend his reputation as author of The Hoosier Schoolmaster, he reinforced it with The Hoosier Schoolboy twelve years later. And he resisted an urge to write an autobiography, asking his brother to write a memoir instead, well aware that much subjectivity and some sentimentality would be impossible for George to avoid.²⁵

If the above reasons account for his obscurity, they hardly explain it. Howells, Twain and others can claim to have done more with and for fiction, but none of them surpass the range of Eggleston's participation in American life. If students of literature are content to isolate subjects in ways which ignore relationships to the full

body of American studies, then one or two "major authors" are perhaps enough for them to know in American literary realism. But to understand literature in its vital relationships to history, geography and sociology, one will find the work of Edward Eggleston more representative of nineteenth century Americana than that of any other American author.

Eggleston was what Ralph Waldo Emerson would have called a "representative man" of America's late nineteenth century. He embodied the highest ideals of an age abundant with growth and hope; he perceived religion, history and literature in new ways, making new connections between them; he instilled new faith in the potential of purpose and action in those who knew him; and his versatility made him more of a Renaissance man than any other author of the time could claim. Henry Vedder's statement that Eggleston the artist was subordinate to Eggleston the man should be interpreted as no slight to Eggleston's novels; Vedder also comments on the nature of Eggleston's work:

It is the throb of this warm and true heart, with its love for all humankind, its sympathy with human sorrows, its pity for human weakness, its tolerance of human errors, that one feels in Dr. Eggleston's books, and in this his peculiar charm and power must be sought.²⁶

Finally, Edward Eggleston's efforts as a writer of children's stories and school histories never ceased during the time when he might have improved his marks as a

serious writer of fiction or of history. Perhaps his commitment to children and to their education should be considered the first and foremost evidence of his deep commitment to America's future. This commitment made itself apparent early in Eggleston's life which, like his work, celebrates the will to produce and the compulsion to succeed.

² Meredith Nicholson, The Hoosiers (New York: Macmillan, 1900), p. 29.

³ Nicholson, pp. 30-31.

⁴ Nicholson, pp. 31-32.

⁵ Stephen Curtis Paine, A Critical Study of the Novels of Edward Eggleston (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1967), p. 2.

⁶ Paine, p. 3.

⁷ Marian DeBaus Logan, "An Unpublished Journal of Edward Eggleston's with Supplementary Letters" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1932), p. 1.

⁸ Paine, p. 285.

⁹ Carl Van Doren, The American Novel: 1789-1939, 2nd ed. (1921; rpt. New York: Macmillan, 1940), p. 120.

¹⁰ Alexander Cowie, The Rise of the American Novel (New York: American Book Company, 1948), p. 538.

¹¹ Fred Lewis Pattee, A History of American Literature Since 1870 (New York: The Century Co., 1917), p. 98.

¹² Henry C. Vedder, American Writers of To-Day (Boston: Silver, Burdett & Co., 1895), p. 254.

¹³ Hamlin Garland, Roadside Meetings (New York: Macmillan, 1930), p. 113.

¹⁴ Garland, Roadside Meetings, p. 113.

ENDNOTES

¹Originally published as The Hoosier School-Master: A Novel (New York: Orange Judd, 1871), the text cited in this paper is that published by Orange Judd in 1892 with the title altered to read, The Hoosier Schoolmaster: A Story of Backwoods Life in Indiana. Often referred to as the "library edition," the 1892 publication includes an extensive introduction by the author which explains the book's genesis and numerous footnotes to explain Hoosier customs and speech. Hereinafter cited as Schoolmaster.

²Meredith Nicholson, The Hoosiers (New York: Macmillan, 1900), p. 29.

³Nicholson, pp. 30-31.

⁴Nicholson, pp. 31-32.

⁵Stephen Curtiss Paine, A Critical Study of the Novels of Edward Eggleston (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1962), p. 2.

⁶Paine, p. 5.

⁷Harlan DeBaun Logan, "An Unpublished Journal of Edward Eggleston's with Supplementary Letters" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1932), p. i.

⁸Paine, p. 255.

⁹Carl Van Doren, The American Novel: 1789-1939, 2nd ed. (1921; rpt. New York: Macmillan, 1940), p. 120.

¹⁰Alexander Cowie, The Rise of the American Novel (New York: American Book Company, 1948), p. 538.

¹¹Fred Lewis Pattee, A History of American Literature Since 1870 (New York: The Century Co., 1917), p. 98.

¹²Henry C. Vedder, American Writers of To-Day (Boston: Silver, Burdett & Co., 1895), p. 254.

¹³Hamlin Garland, Roadside Meetings (New York: Macmillan, 1930), p. 112.

¹⁴Garland, Roadside Meetings, p. 113.

¹⁵John T. Flanagan, "The Novels of Edward Eggleston," College English, 5 (Feb. 1944), 253.

¹⁶Flanagan, p. 252.

¹⁷William Randel, Edward Eggleston: Author of the Hoosier Schoolmaster (New York: King's Crown Press, 1946), p. x. Randel authored a second biography, Edward Eggleston (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1963), which he described as more critical than the first work. Whereas both books are major sources of the present study, and whereas citation of the titles could cause confusion, the earlier work is hereinafter cited as Randel, 1946; the later work will be cited as Randel, 1963.

¹⁸Randel, 1946, p. x.

¹⁹Chauncey Hobart, History of Methodism in Minnesota (Red Wing MN: Red Wing Printing Co., 1887), p. 193.

²⁰Edward Eggleston, "Formative Influences," The Forum, 10 (Nov. 1890), 284-285.

²¹R. E. Banta, The Ohio (New York: Rinehart, 1949), p. 548.

²²Logan, p. ii.

²³Randel, 1946, p. 237.

²⁴Logan, p. ii.

²⁵George Cary Eggleston, The First of the Hoosiers, Reminiscences of Edward Eggleston... (Philadelphia: Drexel Biddle, 1903), Chapter One, "The Author's Commission." Hereinafter cited as GCE, First.

²⁶Vedder, p. 255-256.

CHAPTER II

A Hoosier Hiatus

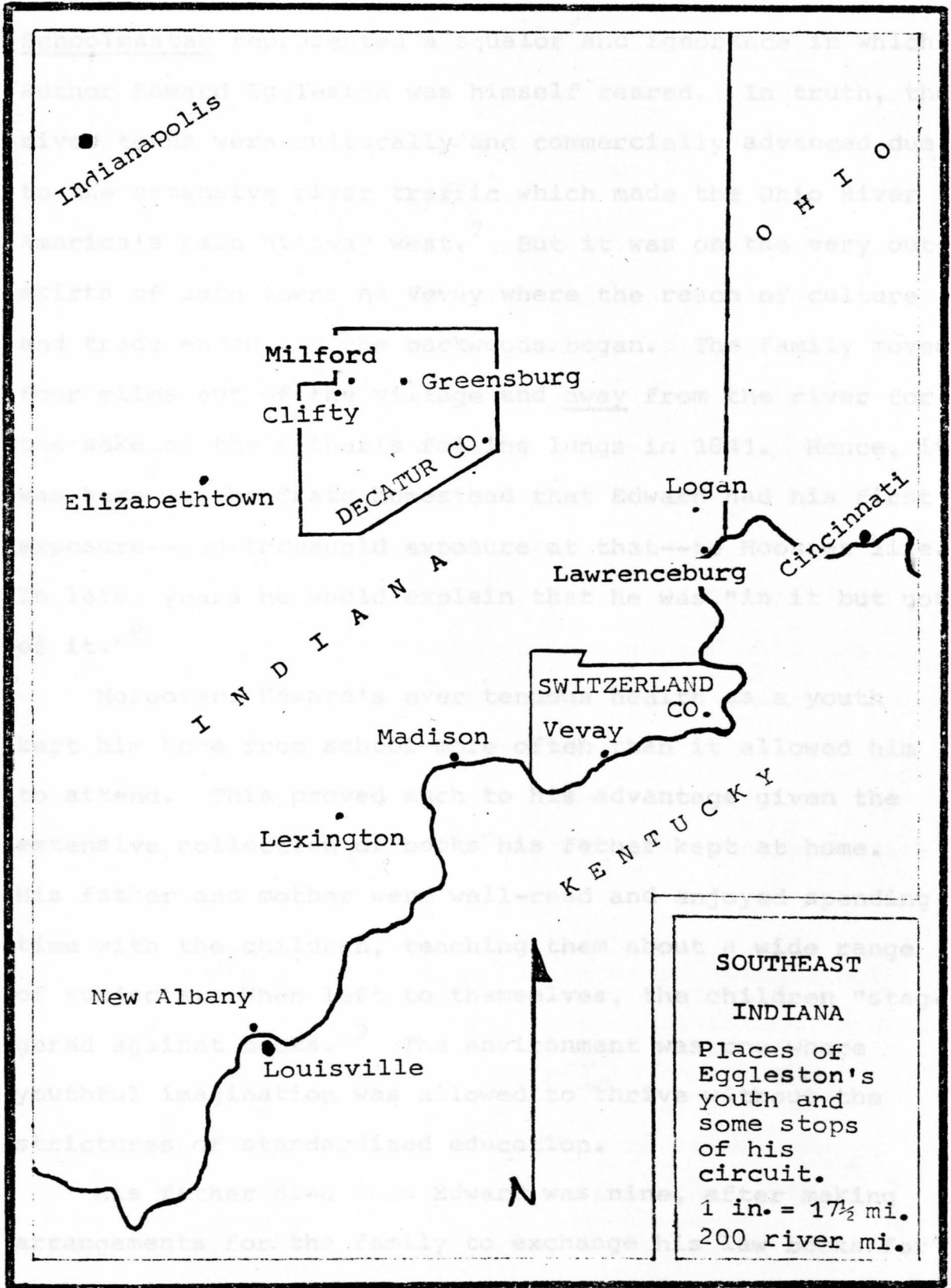
Compulsion to succeed, to produce, and impatience for a better future were causes; great expectations were the propulsions behind those causes. The idea to "Go West" sent waves of immigrants over the Appalachian range and down into the Ohio River valley years before Horace Greeley was born. The newly realized territorial prerogatives of American independence and the explosions of population in the new-born states, particularly Pennsylvania, made the movement unstoppable. The frontier of William Penn's colony had been largely settled by Scotch-Irish when the linen industry in Northern Ireland failed, and by "Pennsylvania Dutch," a catch-all term for Germans, Swiss and Hollanders. Both of these groups were prolific generators of children, and they soon populated the length of the Ohio River to its delta marriage with the Mississippi at a place they called "Little Egypt." These practical and wistful people were the Hoosiers.¹

Among the Hoosiers were French-speaking Swiss who longed to recreate their old-country vineyards which thrived on the banks of the Rhein. Of genial and energetic dispositions which made them enjoy outdoor work,

they settled on the Ohio River bluffs in what is now the southeastern corner of Indiana.² Founded in 1801, the town of Vevay (Veh-vee) is situated about midway between Cincinnati and Louisville; it became the seat of Switzerland County when Indiana was admitted into the union as a free state in 1816.³ Indeed, the settlement of the valley was so fast that when Charles Dickens toured the Ohio in 1842, "he wondered about the toiling, purposeful people building their monuments in that wild country as though they were at the end rather than the beginning of its history."⁴

Ten years prior to Dickens' trip, a Virginia lawyer named Joseph Cary Eggleston, one of numerous new professionals who were beginning to go west into the new settlements, met George Craig of Vevay. Craig, a farmer, an original pioneer of the area, and a highly respected, learned man, naturally fit the role of civic leader. While running errands in the town, he took a liking to the young lawyer's conversation and invited him home where one of his daughters also took a liking to the young man.⁵ Mary Jane Craig and Joseph Eggleston were married in 1836; Edward was their first born on December 10, 1837, and George Cary was next in November of 1839, followed by Jane Lowry in 1842 and Joseph William in 1844.⁶

In 1871 and soon thereafter, readers in America and throughout the world would assume that The Hoosier



Schoolmaster represented a squalor and ignorance in which author Edward Eggleston was himself reared. In truth, the river towns were culturally and commercially advanced due to the extensive river traffic which made the Ohio River America's main highway west.⁷ But it was on the very outskirts of such towns as Vevay where the reach of culture and trade ended and the backwoods began. The family moved four miles out of the village and away from the river for the sake of the father's failing lungs in 1841. Hence, it was here at the Craig homestead that Edward had his first exposure--and threshold exposure at that--to Hoosier life. In later years he would explain that he was "in it but not of it."⁸

Moreover, Edward's ever tenuous health as a youth kept him home from school more often than it allowed him to attend. This proved much to his advantage given the extensive collection of books his father kept at home. His father and mother were well-read and enjoyed spending time with the children, teaching them about a wide range of subjects. When left to themselves, the children "staggered against books."⁹ The environment was one where youthful imagination was allowed to thrive without the strictures of standardized education.

His father died when Edward was nine, after making arrangements for the family to exchange his law books for books suitable for the children. As an alternative to

what George would later call "pedagogical penology," the home library was twice a boon to a self-starter such as Edward. Later in life, a highly acclaimed Dr. Edward Eggleston would astonish critics and public alike with the apparent modesty of a denial that he was a self-educated man. But the statement is better understood as an honest tribute to his home and family, particularly to the foresight of his father.¹⁰

Eggleston Senior had prophesied that his early death would be the consequence of too much study at the expense of outdoor life. He instructed his wife to guard against these habits in the children, particularly in Edward who already showed signs of overstudy and whose frail health was obvious. The warning and subsequent precautions were redundant concerning George, but it was unthinkable to separate the two. Arrangements were therefore made for Edward and George to spend summers in the country working on a farm for board:

So much of compensation he desired us to receive in order that our sense of justice not be offended. But he desired that we should at no time be permitted to receive money wages, lest we acquire in youth that money loving spirit which he feared was to become the bane of our country.¹¹

Although both boys enjoyed the farm life, their assigned tasks and their unassigned adventures, Edward's health did not improve. The dread was of pulmonary consumption, the disease which soon claimed the father.

In 1847, one year after the father's death, the mother moved the family back into Vevay. By that time a new teacher had taken charge of the school, Mrs. Julia L. Dumont, a poet and story writer who had been contributing to the Literary Gazette of Cincinnati as early as 1824. The Gazette's motto, "not to display learning, but to excite a taste for it,"¹² is an apt summary of her philosophy and purpose of teaching. Indiana historians such as Nicholson give her fair and generous attention as a writer and educator; Edward and George both wrote lengthy tributes to her in later years. Said Edward:

Mrs. Dumont was the ideal of a teacher because she succeeded in forming character... She treated no two alike. She was full of all sorts of knack and tact, a person of infinite resource for calling out the human spirit... She was the only teacher I have ever known who understood that school studies were entirely secondary to general reading as a source of culture...¹³

Dumont once kept the ten year old Edward after school to discuss a composition of his which she had rigorously marked. She told him that he was a natural writer who needed to discipline his talent. Because the subject and title of his paper was "The Human Mind," she lent him copies of John Locke's On the Conduct of Human Understanding and other related books. Edward was thrilled by what we today call "directed study," although he was disappointed when he was unable to generate a common interest among his peers.¹⁴ This caused him to spend more and more time

studying--and overstudying.

At the age of twelve, Edward's health deteriorated to the point where the family thought it necessary to remove him from the damp river climate. Again with George, Edward was then sent to the home of his mother's uncle, Captain William Lowry. Located in Decatur County, about half-way between the river and the new but rapidly growing state capital of Indianapolis, Lowry's vast estate was in the heart of the Hoosier backwoods. Perhaps part of the reason that Eggleston's literary work is neglected in modern times owes to ill-health. At the very time that Mark Twain gained boyhood memories of river life and adventure, Eggleston was removed from river experience.

* * *

That his health put him into the heart of backwoods experience is of undeniable import to the literary work that was yet twenty years ahead of him. As George recorded it, "his recollection of things observed at that time furnished no small part of his materials when... he came to the task of writing The Hoosier Schoolmaster and The End of the World."¹⁵ Although he may have seen some of it as a small child when the family first moved to the outskirts of Vevay, it was at Lowry's where he had his first full experience of musters, revivals, cornshuckings, woodchoppings, quiltings, hoe-downs, log-rollings and spelling matches.¹⁶ Here too did he gain his first knowledge of

itinerant Methodist circuit riders and his lifelong fascination for the Hoosier dialect.

Edward lived at this hospitable, high-spirited and virtually self-sufficient farm for only a brief period. But when he moved, it was to the nearby town of Milford, enabling him to visit often at the farm. This dual existence was typical of a main driving force of Eggleston's life: to learn as much as he could from books and from his surroundings. In Milford he took a job as a store clerk and learned mathematics "under the tuition of a young man who had some educational advantages."¹⁷ Furthermore, Hoosiers were conducting business with him across a counter, impressing him deeply with their mannerisms and speech.¹⁸ During his time in Decatur County Eggleston had

...an enviable conjunction of past and present influences... He stood in vital relations with the heritage of world culture, and he found himself at the same time in the midst of a free, unconventional and virile life of a new community.¹⁹

While life at the Lowry homestead enabled Edward to regain his health, it also brought him closer to Methodism. According to George, "the only educative influence that was brought to bear was that of the preachers, chiefly Methodists."²⁰ While the scholarly impulse inherited from his father vied with the religious influences of Wesley and the Methodists, his mother married a Methodist minister, the Reverend Williamson Terrell. Terrell took

the family to New Albany, about ninety miles downriver from Vevay and directly across from Louisville.

But the religious tendency was still held in check when thirteen year old Edward was entered--with George--into the Collegiate Institute. Here Edward made enough progress in Latin to be reading Caesar but had to quit "after a month or two" due to recurring illness.²¹ For a time George and other boys managed to interest Edward in boyish play. At first he would disdain the odd things that the others would do with mud, but when George suggested that various shapes of it represented bricks, Edward would soon initiate some architectural planning. Before long he would be directing the construction of Greek and Roman temples, and by day's end Edward had been "teaching us something of the achievements of the ancients in art and architecture."²²

Just six months after the move to New Albany, Terrell was reassigned to Madison, within twenty miles of Vevay. The Methodist church not only kept preachers on circuit in rural areas, they also rotated their pastors in the towns to insure "objectivity" toward a congregation.²³ At that time Madison was the most important center of trade and culture in southern Indiana, and it remains today the largest river town between Cincinnati and Louisville.²⁴ Clearly dependent upon the river for its life, its material prosperity was already showing the first signs of

decline due to the advent of the railroad. But for many years afterward, Madison remained busy with steamboats, insuring its vitality as a cultural, if not commercial, center.²⁵ Eggleston was to retain a connection with Madison throughout his life.

Once in Madison, Edward came quickly under the influence of a cousin, Guilford Dudley Eggleston. The man had a deep appreciation for literature and never hesitated to spend time with Edward and George in outdoor pursuits or in discussions of philosophy and history. In later years, Edward reminisced:

I didn't suspect that Guilford was trying to teach me or even to influence me. I never found that out until after I became a man of middle age. At the time I thought he was merely trying, in his genial fashion, to make himself entertaining.²⁶

Guilford's foremost contributions to Edward's intellectual development were his practical suggestions about reading and keeping a commonplace book. While Alexander Pope's Essay on Man was making a strong appeal to "the philosophical side of the boy's meditative nature," Edward entered a contest held by the Madison Courier for the best essay written by anyone sixteen or younger.²⁷ The prize was a volume of William Cullen Bryant's poetry which Edward won by virtue of his essay called "The Beautiful." The essay notes that the Indian word "O-hi-o" was translated precisely by French trappers into their own

language: "La Belle Riviere." So too did young Edward Eggleston translate the word into the American vernacular for the title of his first published work, an essay on America's river to the west.²⁸

Although the fraternal relationship never weakened, a gap between Edward and George began as the influence of Rev. Terrell on Edward increased. As George would later complain, Edward was "a victim of the faith habit, (while) I was beginning to manifest a skeptical, inquiring tendency of mind which distressed those responsible for me."²⁹ There are several passages in Edward's "Unpublished Journal" and in George's memoir which reveal Edward's concern for George's lack of faith and some short-lived hopes to bring him into the Methodist fold. Logan's introduction to the journal states that Edward gained the "urge toward religion" from Terrell.³⁰ However, there is too much evidence--much of it from Logan himself--to the effect that the urge came much sooner, although Logan is no doubt accurate when he states that Terrell's influence "drew Edward into the ministry when he came to realize that his constantly recurring illness would prevent him from obtaining a college education."³¹

While some of Edward's memories of early years were regrettable and others fond, many were of a complex nature reflecting the lifelong struggle between literary

and religious tendencies which wreaked havoc with his conscience and his physical health. He told a Chicago Tribune reporter in 1893 that publication of "The Beautiful" was the "greatest literary success" he had ever attained.³² The impetus it provided in 1853 must have been great because he soon began an extended work on "Materials for American Literature:"

All American writers of the time were using borrowed European imagery, larks and nightingales for their books. I for one believed there is material in our own land for a worthy literature; we do not need the larks and nightingales. I thought when I began this first extended literary work that I had started something worth the while. But before the book was finished I felt a conviction that perhaps its authorship was a worldly ambition; and I burned the manuscript. Shortly thereafter I entered the ministry.³³

But his entry into the ministry was not until 1856, before which the family moved back into their old Vevay house when Terrell went to work for the American Bible Society as a traveling agent. Edward was pleased to be back under the tutelage of Julia Dumont, and he later studied under a Presbyterian minister named Hiram Wason who nurtured his interests in geology and astronomy. He considered college. Eggleston Senior had purchased a scholarship at the Methodist Indiana Asbury Institute-- now known as DePauw University. But Edward did not trust the endurance of his health; at age seventeen he made the decision to forego college and yielded the opportunity to

George. When George protested that deficiencies in Greek and Latin would prevent his admission, Edward planned an intensive course of study for his brother which began before breakfast every day for eight days--and then he put a ban on his brother's study for seven remaining days--before the admission exams. George was easily admitted and soon began tutoring classmates who were weak in Greek and Latin, using Edward's plan of study.³⁴

One enticement to enter Indiana Asbury may have been a letter from a friend who went to the school in 1852 and wrote to Edward about "the advantages of college." If it did not bring him to Asbury, it did motivate him to "get out from under the parental roof."³⁵ When his health failed in the spring of 1854, the family made plans to send him to his father's relatives in Virginia.

The Eggleston family was among the oldest of the Old Dominion's elite. The first American Eggleston emigrated from England in 1635; during the Revolution, Major Joseph Eggleston (1754-1811) was second in command to Light Horse Harry Lee, later serving in the U.S. Congress. Shortly after 1800, the Egglestons intermarried with the Carys, another of Virginia's old and prestigious families; their homes and lands were located in Amelia County, southwest of Richmond.³⁶

On the eve of his departure for Virginia, Edward made his first entry into a journal:

Vevay June 12th 1854

Forming acquaintance

Let me form your acquaintance Mr Journal as we shall be travelling companions through scenes new to us. You will make a very agreeable, tacit friend, to whom I can disclose my ideas with as much voluability as I choose without being interrupted by your replies. I shall be glad to have you with me to gain any information I wish as your memory is more retentive than mine. I wish you therefore to reply to questions and nothing else. I perceive you give a tacit consent to the terms of our friendship. We shall leave to-day therefore prepare you baggage
Sir 37

He had already experienced long separations from the Ohio River; the next thirteen months were to be Edward Eggleston's first prolonged separation from his brother George.

* * *

The opening pages of Eggleston's journal describe a pleasant steamboat passage to Cincinnati followed by "a tedious trip by rail and omnibus" via Pittsburgh and Harrisburg to Virginia.³⁸ He found the Potomac "so broad that it looks stagnant compared with the rapid, deep Ohio." But later he noted in the margin, "an invidious comparison."³⁹ Soon he marked "invidious again" as marginalia to a similar passage: "The hilly country in the neighborhood of Lynchburg reminded me of the Ohio River hills and I welcomed the diminutive beech on account of their relationship to the magnificent forests of the Ohio River Valley."⁴⁰

There was one thrust of political satire which would

in time become a featured edge of his novels: "The passengers all mistook the poorhouse for the state house. If it had been the insane asylum the mistake would have been less."⁴¹ And a brief preview of the angry and straightforward commentary that was also sharpened in his later work:

The shrill whistle of the "iron horse" as it reverberated among these wild scenes seemed to speak of sacrilege. What presumption to place a railroad here, yet the avaricious spirit of the Yankee nation disregards everything but its ultimate object--profit. It seemed that in thus desecrating the sacred retreats of nature, the object was to compare the greatest freak of art with the mightiest works of nature.⁴²

But this is as colorful, concrete, satirical, indignant and certainly as "invidious" as the journal ever gets. The entries soon become shorter and more sporadic; virtually all of them are outpourings of Eggleston's piety: his frustrations at the faithless and desultory ways of his schoolmates; his feelings of unworthiness; his reflections on speeches he made at temperance meetings. He "felt more like a culprit going to execution than a 'speaker of the occasion'" when he gave his maiden speech.⁴³ Upon the exhilarating experience of a mountain summit for the first time in his life, he reflected that

Not the least grand of the sights which I beheld was a thunderstorm in the mountain. When God speaks in tones of thunder, nature with ten thousand tongues replies, but when the still small voice speaks to the heart of the guilty man, he flees like Jonah...⁴⁴

Eggleston entered the Amelia Academy where he believed he was the sole practicing Christian. "I wish I could be more instrumental in the conversion of some of my schoolmates," he wrote.⁴⁵ But he also rebuked himself: "Pride is my great enemy. It is the alloy of every good feeling I have."⁴⁶ Randel's interpretation of Eggleston's dilemma describes a brand of person almost extinct in our own day: "...the chief source of humiliation was his inability to pierce the pleasure-seeking armor of his associates."⁴⁷ When Eggleston was pleased for any reason, God received all credit--often by the name "Providence"--but whenever Eggleston was displeased, he put all blame upon himself.

Eggleston returned to Indiana after too much study again broke his health. The brothers resumed their geological studies, taking daily to the countryside, and Edward's reading became mixed. His readings of theologians Theodore Parker and William Ellery Channing reinforced the influences toward independent thought long nurtured by such people as cousin Guilford, Hiram Wason and Julia Dumont. But the scientific influences of other books such as The Old Red Sandstone, The Testimony of the Rocks, and The Vestiges of Creation challenged even the iconoclastic theology of Parker and Channing.⁴⁸ Edward himself was disturbed by the conflict; the ministers were "sadly

distressed" that the obviously "gifted boy...destined to become a power in the world--perhaps a power dangerous to their dominance" was tending away from orthodoxy.⁴⁹

George's consuming passions at this time were to visit the workshop of a local geologist and to explore a nearby railroad cut with geological hammers--with Edward, always with Edward. While pointing out the irony that the author of The Hoosier Schoolmaster, though usually presumed one by contemporary reviewers and critics, never was a schoolmaster, George declared him "always a teacher and a source of inspiration."⁵⁰ This remark in George's memoir leads to a summation of Edward's belief in saturation and independent study, which in turn opens a twelve page pedagogical treatise consistent with views of education expressed in the work of Edward Eggleston.

Eggleston's view of the prevailing educational practices of the day was negative, but he was in no way hopeless of the potential for change. Though he never conducted a formal class after a brief appointment in Madison (he quit for reasons of health), he was often in charge of Sunday schools throughout the twenty years of his life that spanned places as diverse as frontier Minnesota, suburban Evanston, Illinois, and Brooklyn, New York. The teachers in his novels demonstrate his pedagogical views. Significantly, brother George with similar views was the inspiration and model for the first of these: Ralph

Hartsook, the Hoosier schoolmaster himself, who overthrew the "no lickin', no larnin'" precept of the Ohio valley backwoods by making himself a friend of his students; Brady the Irishman of The Circuit Rider, offering laughter and blarney; the more serious Presbyterian minister who ventures to open a school upon his own initiative, Whittaker of Roxy, who "shook off...all the phraseology of the schools, putting to work only the shrewd mother-wit that he had got from a long line of shrewd and hard working New England ancestors."⁵¹ Moreover, there are various characters throughout Eggleston's novels who demonstrate the benefits of self-education.

* * *

The fall of 1855 restored his health, but the winter which followed was nearly the end of Edward Eggleston. When his lungs began to hemorrhage, the doctors frankly stated that he had little time to live. Desperately his mother thought that another trip might restore him, so she accompanied him to St. Louis. By itself, the trip did nothing, but on the steamboat he met numerous tuberculars en route to a new land of promise. His mother then him with as much money as she could and returned alone to Madison; Edward had very little of it left after he paid his one-way fare to Minnesota.⁵²

The opening chapter of The Mystery of Metropolisville recalls the experience vividly: "It marks an epoch in a

rattlesnake yarns." The one small debt that Edward had incurred during the trip was paid by George "as an expression of joy at having my brother back again as comrade."⁵⁶

But the comradery this time was short-lived. George returned to Asbury, and Edward took the step that was the long-term, practical intent underlying the last-fling impulse of fighting slavery in Kansas: he applied for and quickly gained a license as a Methodist preacher. Following a few local sermons, he was assigned to ride the Lawrenceburg circuit in southeastern Indiana and southwestern Ohio. The next six months brought experiences which served as the basis for The Circuit Rider, his "most intimate and affectionate novel,"⁵⁷ although it is improbable that he was deliberately gathering material for any later literary work. Nevertheless, the experiences of Morton Goodwin and Kike Lumsden were based in large part upon his own; other, older preachers in the book are based upon his colleagues.⁵⁸

Eggleston's circuit in these malarial areas undid all that Minnesota had done for his health, but unlike his character Kike Lumsden, who rode and preached himself to death, Eggleston recalled the breathing promise of Minnesota and the call of Methodist preachers there to join them. His departure was hastily planned and executed in May of 1857.⁵⁹

Edward and George were not to be together again until editorial assignments reunited them in New York in 1870. They remained in close proximity until death claimed Edward in 1902; George survived him by nine years. Both lived in cabins on a shore of Lake George in upstate New York for most of the remainder of their lives, and they were occasionally together at the Authors' Club in New York City. Many of their colleagues and friends speculated on their relationship in those years when Civil War reminiscences were so prominent in the columns of national periodicals and in club-room conversations. While Edward was preaching in Minnesota, George moved to Virginia, fell in love with it, enlisted in the Confederate Army, and eventually served as an officer of some distinction. At one Authors' Club gathering, the English scholar and writer Edmund Gosse faltered in conversation with George when Edward approached them. When Gosse saw the brothers' greetings, he admitted to them that his literary associates in London had warned him that the two did not speak. "It is gratifying," said Gosse, "to find that you are on terms with each other." George was nonplussed, but Edward's reply was quick and characteristic:

On terms? Why Geordie and I have always been twins...born exactly on the line between the North and the South, and one fell over to one side and the other over to the other.⁶⁰

ENDNOTES

- ¹Schoolmaster, pp. 19-20.
- ²Nicholson, p. 134; Randel, 1946, pp. 1-3; GCE, First, pp. 62-63.
- ³Nicholson, p. 5.
- ⁴Walter Havighurst, River to the West: Three Centuries of the Ohio (New York: G. P. Putnam's Son's, 1970), p. 17.
- ⁵Randel, 1946, pp. 4-5; GCE, First, p. 24.
- ⁶Randel, 1963, pp. 17-19.
- ⁷GCE, First, p. 92.
- ⁸Logan, p. vii; GCE, First, p. 14.
- ⁹GCE, First, p. 44.
- ¹⁰"Formative Influences," p. 281.
- ¹¹GCE, First, p. 57.
- ¹²GCE, First, p. 147.
- ¹³"Some Western Schoolmasters," in The Schoolmaster in Literature, ed. Hubert Skinner (New York: American Book Co., 1892), pp. 564-565.
- ¹⁴Randel, 1963, p. 25.
- ¹⁵GCE, First, p. 77.
- ¹⁶Logan, p. vii.
- ¹⁷GCE, First, p. 82.
- ¹⁸Randel, 1963, p. 28.
- ¹⁹"The Author of Roxy," The Book Buyer, 4 (April, 1887), 96-97.
- ²⁰GCE, First, p. 93.

- ²¹GCE, First, p. 108.
- ²²GCE, First, p. 110.
- ²³GCE, First, p. 115.
- ²⁴Nicholson, p. 11; GCE, First, pp. 130-134.
- ²⁵Nicholson, p. 11.
- ²⁶GCE, First, p. 145.
- ²⁷Randel, 1963, p. 29.
- ²⁸GCE, First, pp. 142-143.
- ²⁹George Cary Eggleston, Recollections of a Varied Life (New York: Henry Holt, 1910), p. 22. Hereinafter cited as, GCE, Recollections.
- ³⁰Logan, p. x.
- ³¹Logan, p. vii.
- ³²Earle E. Martin, "In His Hoosier Home," Chicago Tribune, 30 July 1893, p. 20.
- ³³Randel, 1963, p. 161.
- ³⁴GCE, First, p. 243.
- ³⁵Randel, 1963, p. 31.
- ³⁶Randel, 1963, pp. 31-32.
- ³⁷"Journal," p. 6. This refers to the "Unpublished Journal" edited by Logan. The pagination of Logan's introduction is in roman numerals; the arabic numerals begin the text of Eggleston's journal. For clarity I have cited references to the introduction with the name "Logan;" references to the primary source are cited as "Journal." Since it is a journal, I have elected to silently correct mistakes in spelling and punctuation where the original text may distract or confuse the reader. Other errors and omissions I have let stand without the distracting "sic."
- ³⁸Randel, 1963, p. 32.
- ³⁹"Journal," p. 8.

- 40 "Journal," p. 10.
- 41 "Journal," p. 8.
- 42 "Journal," p. 11.
- 43 "Journal," p. 19.
- 44 "Journal," p. 13.
- 45 "Journal," p. 23.
- 46 "Journal," p. 22.
- 47 Randel, 1963, p. 34.
- 48 Logan, p. xiv.
- 49 GCE, First, p. 235.
- 50 GCE, First, p. 243.
- 51 Roxy (New York: The Century Co., 1888), p. 287.
- 52 Randel, 1946, pp. 31-32.
- 53 The Mystery of Metropolisville (New York: Orange Judd, 1873), pp. 19-20. Hereinafter cited as Metropolisville.
- 54 "Formative Influences," p. 284.
- 55 Randel, 1963, p. 39.
- 56 Randel, 1946, p. 35; GCE, First, p. 268.
- 57 Randel, 1963, p. 42.
- 58 Randel, 1946, p. 141.
- 59 Randel, 1963, p. 36.
- 60 GCE, Recollections, pp. 266-267. George began writing novels shortly after Edward's success with Schoolmaster, all of which are classified as southern romances. His best known work, however, was A Rebel's Recollections which was first serialized in The Atlantic in 1874. Edwin Cady, biographer of William Dean Howells, writes that Howells conceived the work and then solicited it from George, thus opening the "literary citadel" of the North to southern writers. See The Road to Realism, p. 173.

CHAPTER III

A Hoosier Transit

From 1857 to 1871 Eggleston's life was marked by numerous transitions. He left the Methodist ministry in Minnesota for an editorial post with a children's magazine in Chicago in 1866; four years later he took an editorial post with a leading literary periodical in New York; a year after that he took control of and revived a failing magazine and, by accident, became a novel writer in the process. In addition to these major changes were numerous sporadic ventures, many of them in business, which render a full sketch of Eggleston's life most time-consuming and confusing. But even these minor ventures, such as writing advertisements for soap and serving as Minnesota's agent on the federal commission to provide for Civil War victims and their families, testify that Eggleston possessed what T. S. Eliot called "the experiencing nature."¹

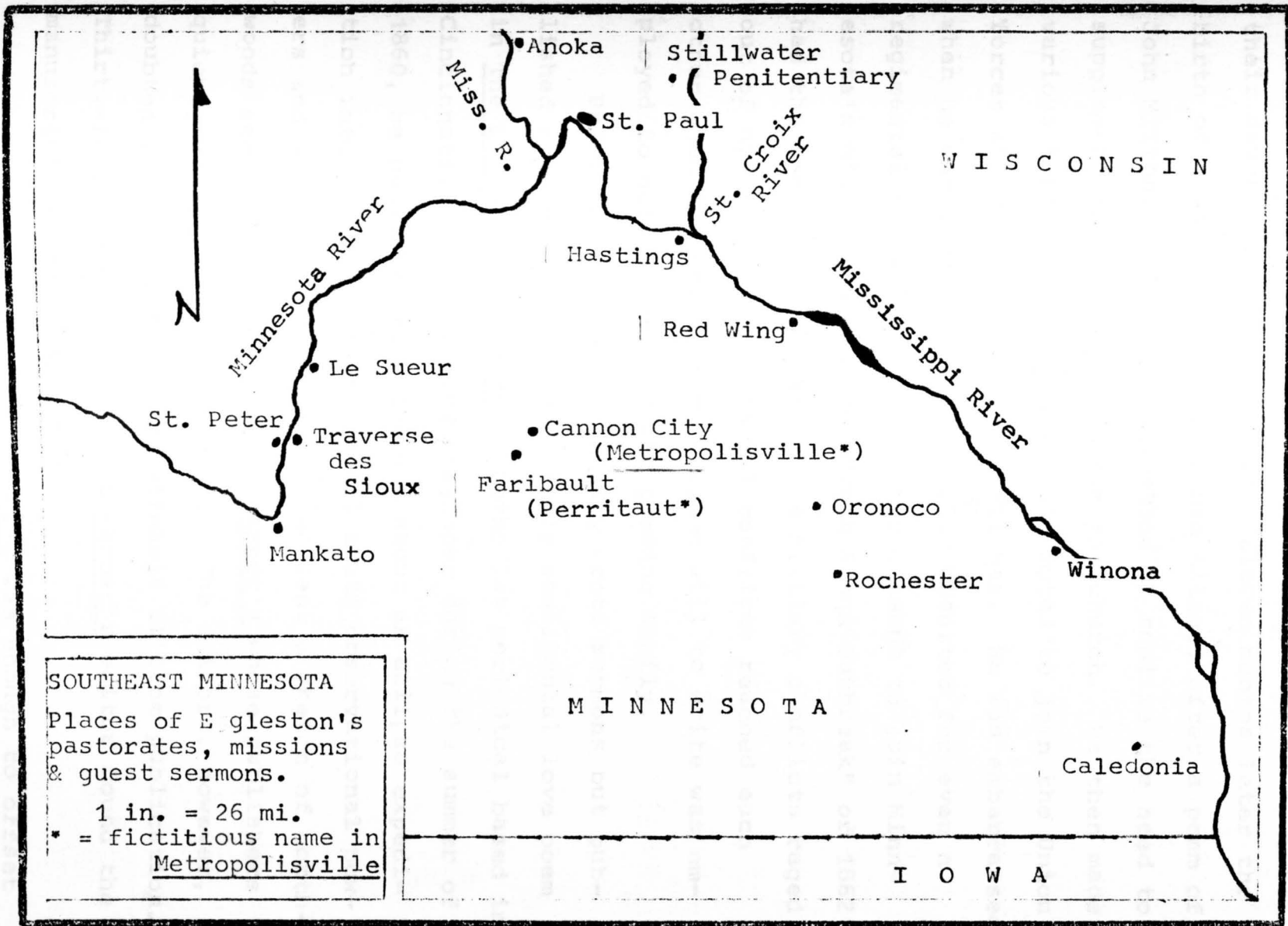
Nevertheless, Eggleston's literary tendencies were inhibited by his religious beliefs as late as 1870 when he reviewed books for The Independent. While he revealed a preference for the new-found realism in American fiction, he disdained, for example, the more mature and frank

realism of France. But the religious restraints were not to last much longer. The move into Chicago's infant and already bustling literary scene marked the most important transit of Eggleston's entire life. Prior to Chicago, religion had been the foremost commitment of his life; from 1866 on, his raison d'etat was writing.²

* * *

Eggleston's new life in Minnesota began in June of 1857 with an enthusiastic welcome from old friends. But the joy was soon jolted by a telegram bearing word of his mother's death following an illness of just thirty hours. In a journal that is otherwise flush with quotations from and allusions to the Bible for wisdom and consolation, the entry which reflects on the loss of his mother contains the only reference to an author who is not associated with religion. He turned to Washington Irving: "Sorrow for the dead is the only grief from which we refused to be divorced."³ His grief was compounded in another two weeks when he had to serve a multiple funeral after a boat capsized on Crystal Lake.⁴

The Methodist church in Minnesota assigned him to Cannon City, Winona, St. Peter, St. Paul and to the penitentiary in Stillwater. At Traverse des Sioux he was a missionary to the Indians. In 1858, as Minnesota was admitted as the thirty-second state, Eggleston married Lizzie Snyder of Baltimore on March 18; on December 15



their daughter Lillie was born. Eleven months later the birth of a second daughter, named Allegra after a poem of John Milton, caused the Egglestons to realize the need to supplement Edward's income from the church. He then made various business ventures and attempted to join the Union forces at the outset of the Civil War. He was embarrassed when he was pronounced "physically unsuited for even a regimental chaplaincy."⁵ A later attempt to join Minnesota's militia during the "Great Sioux Outbreak" of 1862 had the same result.⁶ While the military conflicts raged out of his reach, his personal conflicts reached each other when Eggleston's re-emerging will to write was employed to gain income for the growing family.

Prior to 1860 he continually wrote sermons but published nothing other than a single sentimental love poem in The Ladies' Repository, a Methodist periodical based in Cincinnati. In a St. Paul newspaper during the summer of 1860, he published four letters about an eclipse expedition into Manitoba which "reveal acute observational powers and an ear for dialogue."⁷ He sent a sketch of northwoods scout George Northrup to Harper's whose publishers quickly accepted and paid for it. The editors, however, doubted its authenticity and withheld it from publication. Thirty-four years later another Harper's editor found the manuscript and published it.⁸

The remuneration from Harper's was enough to offset

the frustration of failing to find his sketch in print, at least for awhile, and helped accelerate his "impulse toward the secular life of the intellect." At this time there was a wave of popularity throughout Europe and America for the French poet, Pierre Jean de Beranger, who died in 1857. Early in 1860 Eggleston gave lectures on Beranger's work. Part of his attraction to Beranger may have been that of an aspiring poet to a poet he emulated, but it must have been due in large degree to a belief that the two men shared: that people must act according to conscience.⁹ Eggleston called Beranger the "Robin Hood of French literature" and compared him to Robert Burns for his glorification of the humble life.¹⁰ In December of 1860 The Ladies' Repository published the lecture on Beranger, and Eggleston could finally say that he had published and been paid for a single prose work.

He published little more until the summer of 1865. Real estate deals were providing a fair return, and as an early arrival in a rapidly growing new state, he very likely could and would have become rich in the real estate business.¹¹ But he was indifferent to business, and was spending as much time in his literary pursuits as he was on his pastoral tasks. He continued to read all that he could; Emerson's Representative Men particularly impressed him.¹² But few of his writings found their way into print.

Two pieces that were published in 1864, however, were significant. A "Letter to General Gorman from a Hoosier" to the St. Paul Daily Press signed "Zoroaster Higgins" was Eggleston's first use of Hoosier dialect. The letter opens:

Dere Ole Hoss: Havin cum down from the Big Woods fer to get eggsemted from the draft, I heerd thar waz a thunderin' big meetin' a goin' to be held in Ingersaul's Haul, in favor of McClellan, or as the han' bills fasheshusly remarked, in favor of McClellan and the Union... Little mac is wun uv mi kind of men. Ef he wuz in kommand, i woodent mind the draft, for they woodent be no hard marchin' an' not much fitin'. It wood be as kam as a summer's eve...¹³

The creation of such garrulous and ungrammatical mouth-pieces was already a common device of the Western humorists. For Eggleston it marks the first published sign of the political satire that would be a highlight of his early novels--and which was in large part responsible for many comparisons of Eggleston's work to the work of Charles Dickens, particularly to the social commentary of Oliver Twist following Eggleston's first novel.

The name "Zoroaster Higgins" may indicate yet another first for Eggleston which his reviewers have failed to note. Virtually every biographical and critical sketch of Eggleston calls attention to his "religious transit," or his gradual life-long shift from devout Methodism to non-sectarianism, and eventually to agnosticism. Edward Stone calls this the "puzzling deterioration" of his faith,¹⁴

sketching it with accuracy and insight according to evidence offered in Eggleston's novels. But Stone would have strengthened his case had he started with this early use of the name "Zoroaster" when Eggleston was still very much a Methodist minister. Zoroaster was a prophet who lived six centuries before Christ and who called not for any religious affiliation or creed, but for people's good deeds in a continual war against evil. It is hardly likely that a scholar as widely read as Eggleston could have chosen such a name by whim or by chance. Zoroaster Higgins was a name he used frequently in later years, usually for satire in verse, indicating an enduring faith in good works over a diminishing regard for religious orthodoxy.

The Hoosier dialect had fascinated Eggleston since boyhood, but the idea to use it in print was sparked by his reading of a Yankee dialect in the verse of James Russell Lowell's The Biglow Papers (1848). While preparing the letter for the St. Paul paper, Eggleston composed a comprehensive list of Hoosierisms which he filed for future use.¹⁵

Eggleston's second published piece in 1864 was "An Incident of the Indian Massacres of 1862." This was very likely the first salvaged section of an aborted project to which Eggleston had devoted much time in the previous years: namely, a history of the Sioux Outbreak. He had a favorable letter from a publisher in Hartford who was

interested by Eggleston's description and a sample of the work.¹⁶ But another Methodist minister, a friend of Eggleston's, began soliciting the same information, causing Eggleston to scrap the project.¹⁷

But the Indian project was soon to bear plentiful fruit in the form of stories for a children's magazine called The Little Corporal (later incorporated into the highly acclaimed St. Nicholas). Eggleston published one of these stories each month from August of 1865 to June of 1866. That some of these are either true stories, or stories based very closely upon truth, is evidence of Eggleston's early interests in history, biography and realism. Although he lived among the Sioux as a missionary, he was later deeply affected by the grim tasks of burying at least nineteen white victims of the outbreak. Eggleston "never let his young readers forget that the plains Indians were generally savage and dangerous; he was incapable of subscribing to the notion of the Noble Savage."¹⁸

Eggleston's capacity for children's stories was in large part the result of his home life. His children at this time were of the indefatigable "tell-me-a-story" age, and the openings of his Little Corporal pieces reflect this by presenting the narrator in the company of small girls nicknamed "Fairy," "Sunbeam" and "Chicken Little," the last to represent Blanche who was born in late 1863.

Eggleston read his stories to the girls and any friends who were with them. He noted their reactions to various parts of the stories and, in effect, employed them as his editorial review board while entertaining them with the adventure and wordplay of the stories. One of the visiting boys quickly gained the nickname "Professor of Geography" by reaching for an atlas whenever Eggleston mentioned a new place.¹⁹

Eggleston's increasing interest in The Little Corporal coincided with the reversal of his earlier attitude that religion and literature were antithetical. A strong influence in this change was the editor and publisher of Corporal, Alfred Sewell, who shared Eggleston's capacity for big ideas and projects. Eggleston's Indian stories significantly boosted the neophyte magazine's circulation, but Corporal was a daring business venture that had no capital. The added trump of Eggleston's spontaneous popularity only allowed it to break even.²⁰

Eggleston hedged on a decision to quit the ministry until March of 1866 when Sewell, about to depart for New York on business, jarred him with a typically impulsive request: "if I should be killed on the cars, I want you to adopt my little Corporal, as your own child."²¹ By late April 1866, the governor of Minnesota sent personal regrets that the state was losing Edward Eggleston.²² But the Egglestons were not to leave until June, as they

awaited the birth of their first and only son, Edward William.

* * *

The family arrived in Chicago just as the eleventh and last of the Indian series was published in June. Corporal's next issue carried the first of his "Evenings at the Nest" series, which dealt lightly in science-fiction and the supernatural.²³ When Eggleston realized the financial precariousness of the Corporal's editorial post, he sought and gained additional posts. In November of 1866 he commenced a weekly column in the Chicago Evening Journal called "Our Saturday Feuilleton" for its relaxed and genial treatment of common city topics. Typical of the column which ran for nearly a year is this passage from "Life in the Street Cars:"

We believe in the street cars. Not that this Feuilletonist likes to have his corns trodden on, or likes to hang on a leathern strap half an hour while his arm is jerked from its socket, or likes to have his ribs punched by other people's elbows, or likes to inhale atmosphere at second or third hand. Our corns, our arms, our ribs, our lungs are as sensitive as other folks' to the horrors of a "middle passage" at ten o'clock at night in a "country limits" car. Nevertheless we believe in the street car as an institution. We have a sublime, democratic satisfaction in regarding the street car as a leveler of all human distinctions.²⁴

Many of these columns are reminiscent of Charles Lamb, whom Eggleston emulated, and Mark Twain, whom he ignored.²⁵

As busy as he was as an editor and columnist, his ties to religious work were in no way severed. In January of 1867 Eggleston accepted the editorship of The Sunday School Teacher, a national monthly based in Chicago. He held this position for three full years during which the circulation increased sevenfold.²⁶ Additionally he published Sunday School manuals and tracts which advocated the liberal pedagogy of the famed Swiss educator, Johann Pestalozzi.²⁷ He retained his affiliation with the Methodist church, occasionally substituting for their preachers.²⁸

While the years of sermon writing deeply ingrained his didactic tendencies, the columns helped Eggleston gain a stylistic control over his writings. But the weekly production of a column probably contributed to the "inchoate organization" and tendency to ramble in his early novels.²⁹ Most critics fail to note, however, that it was the weekly format that gave birth to Eggleston's first novel before he even intended it as a novel, or as anything more than a few weeks of entertainment and a record of the Hoosier dialect.

The weekly attention gained by "Our Saturday Feuilletton" so impressed the editors of The Independent that they signed Eggleston in late 1867 to write a bi-weekly feature called "Western Correspondence." Based in New York, The Independent ranked with Harper's, The Atlantic,

The Nation, The Forum and Scribner's (which later became The Century Magazine) as one of the nation's leading periodicals; its reputation increased significantly during these years due to its adamant abolitionist stance prior to the war. In addition to his regular column, The Independent published features by Eggleston on such subjects as the work of the Methodist church in the West, on YMCA's and on Sunday schools. The success of all this work suggested to Eggleston that there was a formidable market in the East for information about the West,³⁰ an idea that was simultaneously occurring to two young men in California named Harte and Clemens.

The name of his column was eventually changed to a more familiar "Our Western Letter," which he continued to sign "Penholder." The diversity of his subjects was consistent with The Independent's avowed catholicity, and the editors welcomed his choice of topics as much as they appreciated his leisurely, lucid style. Randel notes that Eggleston, like others who sought literary careers, "must have felt the attractions of Boston and New York as literary centers."³¹ Eggleston's prolonged success with The Independent suggests that an offer of an editorship from one of the eastern publications was inevitable.

Meanwhile, he retained a connection with the Chicago press by contributing free-lance articles. Some of these demonstrated that he was capable of shedding his leisurely

sauntering style and unleashing scathing exposes. Two of these were published by the Chicago Tribune in 1867, and they reveal the reprehensible administration and conditions of poorhouses, orphanages and prisons near the city. Randel offers these as evidence that Eggleston was one of the forerunners of the muckraking era in American journalism.³² His ties with the Chicago press were cut in the fall of 1869, however, when The Independent offered him the post of literary editor. He immediately accepted.

* * *

In his final months in Chicago, Eggleston began sifting through old manuscripts and clippings to distract himself from the grief of his three-year-old son's death. He found the list of Hoosierisms and on impulse sent it to the creator of Zoroaster Higgin's literary cousin, Hosea Biglow, asking advice. James Russell Lowell's response was prompt, detailed, generous and as much a challenge as an encouragement: "I hope you will persevere & give us a collection. Remember that it will soon be too late. Railways are mixing and the school-master rooting-out..." Eggleston even took Lowell's caution as a challenge: "...you must remember that Mr. Biglow was not writing to illustrate a dialect--but using his lingo as a cudgel."³³ Eggleston joined the literati of New York feeling that he was under an obligation to produce some record of the Hoosier dialect.³⁴

George Cary Eggleston claimed that his brother had long aspired to an editorship of one of the leading periodicals,³⁵ but The Independent's concept of a literary editor was someone to review every new book, thus sacrificing quality for quantity.³⁶ Many of Eggleston's reviews were necessarily perfunctory, and he was hard pressed to keep up. Moreover, he had none of the time he needed to overcome his inexperience with--and a lingering Methodist prejudice against--fiction. Consequently, his reviews of the emerging realism of French authors were moralistic. His best reviews were of books written for children and books on the subject of education.

His diligence and improvement during the first months showed that he could overcome his weaknesses, and he steered clear of The Independent's internal feuds which broke into the magazine's pages in late 1870. The religion editor openly fought with a contributor named William Lloyd Garrison about the activities of various churches. But this was eclipsed by a scandalous dispute between a former editor-in-chief, Henry Ward Beecher, and the present editor-in-chief, Theodore Tilton.³⁷ When Tilton went so far as to editorialize his doubts about the sanctity of marriage and the divinity of Jesus Christ, the publishers forced his resignation.³⁸ Naturally they wanted to replace Tilton with a mild-mannered editor whom they would be able to control. They therefore changed the title of

the post to "Superintending Editor" and offered it to Edward Eggleston.³⁹

Eggleston was as mild-mannered as they could have asked, but he could never bear a professional compromise. He had an appreciably wide liberty to pick topics and express opinions as the voice of The Independent, but the publishers kept control of the sensitive, internal editorial decisions. When Eggleston found himself at odds with a decision which he felt compromised the editorial content of the magazine, he resigned. Thus, in August of 1871, Edward Eggleston left the most influential position he would ever hold, just eight months after he had taken it.⁴⁰

Before Eggleston was even free of The Independent his contributions were sought by other magazines. An editor of Scribner's Monthly, Richard Watson Gilder, stopped by the Independent offices on a Friday to ask Eggleston for a short-story for an adult audience. Eggleston tried to refuse on the grounds that he was not capable of writing adult fiction, but his good friend only reminded him as he left that Scribner's deadline was the coming Monday. Gilder meant it, and Eggleston met it. The result was "Huldah, the Help: A Thanksgiving Love Story," which begins much like the children's stories except that the narrator was an elderly judge speaking to three grown daughters. The girls complain to their father when he finishes:

The story's young lawyer should have married the society girl who "read Emerson" rather than the servant girl whose unaffectedness attracted him. The story ends with the judge's revelation to the girls that the young lawyer was, in real life, himself, and Huldah was their mother.⁴¹ The reception of his first fiction for an adult audience surprised and satisfied Eggleston, particularly a note to him which praised "a very unaffected bit of good work" signed by Atlantic editor William Dean Howells. Gilder responded by demanding more; by the end of 1871 four more short stories by Eggleston were carried in Scribner's.⁴²

At this time a New York-based periodical of rarified interests called Hearth and Home was on the verge of bankruptcy, and its editors looked to Eggleston to save it. His acceptance was contingent upon complete editorial control of the publication, which perhaps explains his decision to join an obscure publication rather than one of the reputable and successful ones, or perhaps it was the sheer challenge of restoring a circulation. The publishers agreed to his terms, although one would persist in nagging him about the "immorality" of fiction. His first move was to hire George as managing editor with the assignment to suffocate certain features of the magazine which Eggleston knew had minimal popular appeal. This edict applied to all but one department of Hearth and Home, and Edward accordingly instructed George to ascertain and meet all of

the needs of Mary Mapes Dodge, the editor of the children's section. In the coming years Hearth and Home was fully the production of the Brothers Eggleston and Mary Mapes Dodge--strongly assisted by a find of Mrs. Dodge named Frank R. Stockton. Together Edward and George made plans for Hearth and Home's new features; the one which did most to resuscitate the periodical was fiction.⁴³

Fiction at this time was an increasingly popular feature of American periodicals, and under the influence of editors such as Eggleston, Gilder and Howells, romance was quickly giving way to realism. For a decade prior to Eggleston's arrival in New York, "realism hung in the air without definitely alighting."⁴⁴ Of the works which Eggleston reviewed, he especially praised Harriet Beecher Stowe's Sam Lawson's Oldtown Fireside Stories and Rebecca Harding Davis' "Life in the Iron Mills." But the book which had the most profound influence on him and which served as the catalyst in the accidental process by which he became a novelist was A Philosophy of Art in the Netherlands by French critic, Hippolyte Taine.⁴⁵ Taine's writings helped steer America's recent and thriving local color movement into what would soon be called realism. Bret Harte and Mark Twain had already gained immense popularity by pioneering local color; but Harte was still writing romance, Twain humor. Even so, by 1870 "the loud laughter of Mark Twain began to clear the scene," and the

audiences of periodicals such as The Atlantic, Harper's and Scribner's began to show a preference for realism.⁴⁶

Like Howells at The Atlantic, Eggleston's editorial sense was determined by what would appeal to readers; editorial decisions were based primarily upon the promise of each feature to attract and keep new readers. Fresh from the success of his initial fiction for adults, and still under the obligation to record the Hoosier dialect in print, Eggleston's choice of complete freedom at Hearth and Home over any restrictions he would have incurred at another periodical had at least two ulterior motives. Hearth and Home and a reading public of young and old throughout North America and Europe were the immediate beneficiaries when those motives combined in Edward Eggleston to produce The Hoosier Schoolmaster in the fall of 1871. But the long-term beneficiary was the infant movement toward realism in the national literature.

ENDNOTES

¹ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. uses T. S. Eliot's definition of the "experiencing nature" in his preface to Robert Kennedy and His Times (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978).

² Randel, 1963, pp. 47-50.

³ "Journal," p. 50.

⁴ Randel, 1946, p. 43.

⁵ Randel, 1963, p. 60.

⁶ Randel, 1946, p. 78.

⁷ Flanagan, p. 250.

⁸ Randel, 1963, p. 70.

⁹ Randel, 1963, p. 57.

¹⁰ Paine, p. 6.

¹¹ Randel, 1963, p. 63.

¹² Randel, 1963, p. 60.

¹³ Cited by Randel, pp. 62-63.

¹⁴ Edward Stone, "Edward Eggleston's Religious Transit," University of Texas Studies in English, No. 3926 (July, 1939), 210. One mistake which Stone does make is to date the publication of Metropolisville in 1871. He then treats it as Eggleston's second rather than third novel.

¹⁵ Paine, p. 7; Randel, 1963, p. 62.

¹⁶ Randel, 1963, p. 64.

¹⁷ Randel, 1946, p. 88.

¹⁸ Randel, 1963, p. 61.

¹⁹ Randel, 1946, p. 96.

- ²⁰Randel, 1963, pp. 66-67.
- ²¹Randel, 1963, pp. 67-68.
- ²²Randel, 1963, p. 68.
- ²³Paine, p. 13.
- ²⁴Cited by Paine, p. 18.
- ²⁵Paine, p. 14.
- ²⁶Randel, 1946, p. 99.
- ²⁷Paine, p. 15.
- ²⁸Randel, 1963, p. 76.
- ²⁹Paine, p. 15.
- ³⁰Paine, p. 17.
- ³¹Randel, 1946, p. 104.
- ³²Randel, 1946, p. 104.
- ³³Cited by Randel, 1946, p. 105.
- ³⁴Cited by Randel, 1963, p. 79.
- ³⁵GCE, First, p. 200.
- ³⁶Randel, 1946, p. 108.
- ³⁷GCE, Recollections, p. 38. George writes that he was a confidant of Tilton and made vain efforts to moderate Tilton's moods.
- ³⁸GCE, Recollections, p. 39.
- ³⁹Randel, 1946, p. 111.
- ⁴⁰Randel, 1946, pp. 111-120.
- ⁴¹Randel, 1963, pp. 84-85.
- ⁴²Randel, 1963, p. 85.
- ⁴³GCE, Recollections, p. 150.
- ⁴⁴Cowie, p. 637.

⁴⁵"Formative Influences," p. 280. Virtually every critical and biographical review of Eggleston makes note of Taine's influence on him.

⁴⁶Cowie, p. 637.

CHAPTER IV

Hoosier Chapters in the Great American Novel

The first issue of Hearth and Home to carry Eggleston's writing included the first installment of a three part story called "Uncle Sim's Boy." The satisfying outcome of the story's love entanglements and the didactic message concerning honesty conveyed a Shakespearean knack to "please the generality of contemporary middle class readers."¹ On all counts it serves as a preview of Eggleston's early novels: strong setting, weak plot, fast pace, eccentric caricatures, sentiment, realism. The story, moreover, fits the trend of Eggleston's development as a writer of fiction; it was his first attempt at a serial, and whether he intended it as such or not, it served as a trial balloon for a serial he would initiate one month later to fulfill the challenge of James Russell Lowell.²

Eggleston's early fiction, however, hardly previews the artistic achievements of his later novels.³ While the settings continued to be vivid and authentic, the characters grew more complex and better motivated; plots became stronger and more plausible. The stylistic and

substantive differences between Eggleston's early and late novels are such that Eggleston more than once suggested that they were authored by different men. Eventually he deferred to the popular preference for the younger Eggleston. His preface to the 1892 library edition of Schoolmaster states that the author "is distinctly not I; I am but his heir and executor; and since he is more popular than I, why should I meddle with his work?"⁴

This he wrote some fifteen years after he began expressing annoyance at the popular preference for his first novel. During that time he wrote but three serious novels: Roxy, The Graysons and The Faith Doctor. Artistically these three are cause for speculation that Eggleston's present obscurity is the result of critical and academic myopia that cannot--or will not--look into the formidable shadow cast by the contemporary popularity of his earliest work.

Put another way: Henry James is not judged according to the merits of Roderick Hudson, nor is William Faulkner denied critical increments beyond his Soldier's Pay. Any protest that "the author of The Hoosier Schoolmaster" was not capable of writing a novel as penetrating as The Portrait of a Lady or Light in August should obligate the person who makes the protest to read at least Roxy. Only then will we have considered and valid assessments of Eggleston's artistry.

SCENES OF EGGLESTON'S
FICTION

Approximate locations
of his novels and the
short stories from the
collection, Duffels.

1 in. = 145 mi.

"The Gunpowder Plot"
Metropolisville

"The Christmas Club"
"Huldah, the Help"
"A Basement Story"
"The New Cashier"
"Periwinkle"
The Faith Doctor
"Sister Tabea"

NYC

H O O S I E R:

Schoolmaster
Schoolboy

Circuit
Rider

Roxy

Graysons

End of the World
"Priscilla"

"The Redemptioner"

"Talking for Life"



* * *

The Hoosier Schoolmaster was originally intended as a three part serial, but the popular success of the first installment caused Eggleston to expand it, writing the chapters week by week for immediate publication.⁵ Hence, a silent and glancing villain with an invisible gang is introduced to commit midnight crimes for which the new schoolmaster, Ralph Hartsook, is framed.⁶ In another installment he falls in love with his hosts' "bound girl,"⁷ a woman not much younger than he and of a sensitive nature. Another episode finds Ralph avoiding his hosts' all-too-available but not-at-all-attractive daughter, thereby alienating his hosts and inviting revenge. And so the episodes proceed, with most of the attention on the physical movements of the characters and relatively little on their motivation. Although structure and plot are sacrificed--insofar as one can sacrifice things which never existed in the first place--the story does reveal Hoosier speech, manners and customs to a reading public immediately fascinated by them and calling for more.⁸ As a retired army officer remarked, Schoolmaster was Eggleston's "cavalry dash into literature."⁹

Perhaps it would be judicious to find that Schoolmaster, in 1892, became a new book, the result of a collaboration between Eggleston at age thirty-four, and Eggleston

at age fifty-five.¹⁰ The library edition contains extensive footnotes to explain Hoosier history and dialect, and the lengthy preface is a creditable document of American realism. But if, in original or born-again form, Schoolmaster failed as art, it succeeded as history, geography, humor and good-will. For each of these reasons, Schoolmaster was an overwhelming success in Europe, including countries where the attraction of the Hoosier dialect was necessarily lost in translation. The Danes were so enthralled by it that one of their critics dubbed Eggleston "America's Charles Dickens."¹¹

Ralph's struggles against forces of ignorance, mischief and malice are themes which make Schoolmaster a keynote address of the American realist movement. Ralph knows that he must meet these retrogressive forces after his first day before the Flat Creek pupils:

...there were symptoms of insubordination through the whole school... He remembered that quiet and annihilating bite which Bull gave (to a racoon). He remembered Bud's certificate, that "Ef Bull takes a holt, heaven and yarth can't make him let go." He thought that what Flat Creek needed was a bulldog, quiet, but invincible.¹²

Ralph's bulldog resolve, a recurring motif throughout the serial, foreshadows Darwin's influence on the American naturalist movement in literature; in order to survive, Ralph had to prove himself fittest. Carl Van Doren suggests a geographic reason for Schoolmaster's primacy:

...some bareness in the life of the Mid-West, lacking both the longer memories of the Atlantic Seaboard and the splendid golden expectations of California, discouraged romance there and encouraged that bent toward naturalism which descends unbroken from Edward Eggleston through E. W. Howe and Hamlin Garland, Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis.¹³

The threat posed by Dr. Small's gang enabled Eggleston to show that the lives of common people could be treated in sympathetically realistic fashion. Small and his conspiracy are always cast in darkness and "sinister shadow." But the counterplans, such as the "Church of the Best Licks," and the "Council of War" to protect the honest, old Captain Pearson, are presented with varying degrees of humor. The young, admiring Bud Means "shocked Ralph's veneration a little" when he answered the schoolmaster's religious appeal: "You mean, then, that I'm to begin now to put in my best licks for Jesus Christ, and that he'll help me?"¹⁴ The lesson, Ralph explains, is that "two people who help one another serve God make a church." The author then admits that this "ecclesiastical theory will not be considered orthodox... But other people before the days of Bud and Ralph have discussed church organization when they should have been doing Christian work."¹⁵

Added to the narrative influence of Dickens was the thematic influence of Hippolyte Taine. While Schoolmaster was in progress, Eggleston told his brother

...that the Dutch painters never produced anything of value in art until they ceased to go to Italy for their subjects and began to paint their own homely Dutch interiors and landscapes and people instead. It was his fixed conviction that whether in the graphic or literary art no man can do his best work unless he chooses for his subject a life which he thoroughly knows.¹⁶

If Schoolmaster observes Taine's principle of using commonplace materials, so too does it meet the challenge set forth by Lowell.¹⁷ The dialect is sustained through the closing chapters of Schoolmaster, including an ironically entitled chapter, "A Charitable Institution." In it Ralph visits an insane asylum in search of the bound girl's unjustly committed mother. A reader might laugh at the patient who calls himself "General Andrew Jackson," but not at the footnote that says:

Between 1867 and 1870, I visited many jails and poor-houses with philanthropic purpose, publishing the results of my examination in some cases in "The Chicago Tribune." Some of the abuses pointed out were reformed, others linger till this day, I believe.¹⁸

Eggleston used the Hoosier dialect "as a cudgel," intending its humor to serve as relief from the social problems which he sought to bring to the attention of what he would eventually come to call "a world-out-of-joint."¹⁹ Perhaps the inexact English translation of a Danish critic put it best: "This is humor laughing to keep from bursting into tears."²⁰

The first installment of The End of the World appeared in April, 1872, or within four months of the last installment of Schoolmaster. As quick as this may seem, End did have the advantage of pre-planning since Eggleston had assigned most of his editorial duties to George by the time Schoolmaster was concluded. After the circulation of Hearth and Home had soared from seven thousand to thirty-five thousand, and while editions of the book were selling out as fast as they reached the market--at up to ten thousand copies per printing--neither George nor the publishers were likely to complain.²¹

To use its full title, The End of the World: A Love Story is set in an Ohio River town called Brayville; whereas Schoolmaster is set entirely in the backwoods, End does offer a few quaint glimpses of town life, such as a meeting of the lovers at the town pump.²² But as was true of Schoolmaster, the focus of attention is the admittedly erratic movement of characters, particularly Julia Anderson and her admiring beau, August Wehle, her father's hired man. But Wehle is German, or a "Dutchman" according to the parlance of the time; upon learning of his interest in her daughter, Mrs. Abigail Anderson causes her perpetually henpecked husband to fire the strong and virtuous laborer. Again like Schoolmaster, the weekly episodes find the lovers falling in and out of each other's reach,

either at the whims or deliberate machinations of other characters.

As discursive as the plot is, and as flat as some of the characters are, End shares at least one redeeming quality with Schoolmaster: it is another chapter of authentic backwoods history. Furthermore, after the "Church of the Best Licks" in Schoolmaster frankly revealed the unorthodox but devout Christianity of the author, End records an important and rather curious chapter of American religious history: the Millerite belief that the world would end on a Biblically determined date in 1843. Moreover, Eggleston's tolerant and conciliatory treatment of the fanatic Millerite preachers, their deluded followers, and the Adventist descendents of the sect is quite different from the treatment they would have received from, say, Mark Twain.²³

The Methodist preachings of his early years were already yielding to his increasingly frequent calls for tolerance among religious denominations. End brings to the surface Eggleston's advocacy of another form of tolerance which he hoped would counter widespread prejudice against German-Americans. When an angry mob wants to tar and feather the protagonist's father, Gottlieb Wehle, the threat is far more convincing than the similar one in Schoolmaster precisely because the nationalistic overtones are frightfully realistic. Eggleston's fiction, then,

moved early into the history of American cultural relations.

Realistic details are more prominent in End than in Schoolmaster, but the comic tone and the coincidental action make End more of a Shakespearean spoof than a representative nineteenth century American novel, a fact which none of the criticism, early or late, has mentioned. The subtle word play of the full title is one of numerous allusions to such plays as The Taming of the Shrew, Romeo and Juliet, I Henry IV, The Tempest and A Midsummer Night's Dream; if Eggleston had been blatant, the title of the novel would be "All's Well that Doesn't End at All." In this light, the general consensus that The End of the World is Eggleston's "least interesting novel" is an unwittingly profound recommendation of both form and content of the rest of his novels.²⁴ The form is an entertainingly funny Americanization--or Hoosierization--of Elizabethan drama. The content reveals an important passage of American history in soberingly realistic fashion.

* * *

Eggleston's third novel, The Mystery of Metropolisville, is often faulted for its title, since the ostensible mystery is not introduced until two-thirds of the way into the book. Some reviewers wonder why he did not call it a history instead of a mystery, since it accurately records the rise and fall of a boomtown in Minnesota

territory in the 1850's. Midway through the serial are two chapters which open with asides revealing Eggleston's concern for his reader's view of the delay; these are of "the sort that mar all of his early novels."²⁵ One makes a brief point of his choice of the title: "If this were a History of Metropolisville--but it isn't and that is enough."²⁶ This, however, apparently is not enough, since Eggleston promptly resumes his detailed, documentary treatment of the corruption of boomtown speculation.

The story opens on the stagecoach of Whiskey Jim whose colorful Yankee monologue serves to introduce the protagonist, Albert Charlton, and the reader to the salient facts of Minnesota territory. Charlton is overwhelmed by his first sight of the vast, rolling landscape and won by the driver's willing and earthy commentary. He gushes forth his beliefs: no flesh-eating, no speculating, no flannels, no shaving, no tobacco, whiskey or coffee. But he is quickly rebuffed by Jim: "Tain't no land of ideas. It's the ked'ntry of corner lots. Ideas is in the way--don't pay no interest. Haint had time to build a 'sylum fer people with ideas yet--Better try Bost'n."²⁷

The twenty-one year -old aspiring educator with "great world-reforming thoughts" then takes to the inside of the coach at the first opportunity and spends the remainder of his trip in conversation with a young woman he

finds both physically and intellectually attractive. Helen Minorkey is as cool as Charlton is enthusiastic, "an eminently well educated young lady as education goes,"²⁸ she is neither shy nor obtrusive. Albert begins to court Helen following several chapters which introduce members of his family, newly settled in Metropolisville, and most of the other characters who will figure in the story's action.

Perhaps the most succinct description of the boomtown is offered at the sod tavern, "what seemed to be a heap of earth."²⁹ A map on the wall "had probably been constructed by a poet, for it was quite superior to the limitations of sense and matter-of-fact."³⁰ Intended "chiefly for Eastern circulation," the map showed the "flourishing city of New Cincinnati," not so much a lie as a hopeful attempt to tell the truth ahead of time by indicating elaborate future development surrounding the sod tavern.³¹

Noticeably more of the description in Metropolisville is rendered in dialogue, enough for Cowie to complain of the "endless conversations which mar the proportion of the story."³² But one intriguing sub-thesis that Eggleston suggests is borne out by the dialogue: "A man's pet words are the key to his character."³³ Albert talks of "goals," or "vocation;" his fifteen year-old sister describes everybody as "dear." Katy Charlton welcomes her brother to

the new family home with the news that she is betrothed to a fop whose conversation is speckled with "By George!" and snatches of minstrel songs. Albert soon entreats Isa Marlay, his new step-father's niece, to end his sister's romance with the coxcomb, but she has already

"...tried everything. I have spoken to your mother. I have spoken to Uncle Plausaby. I have begged Katy to listen to me, but Katy would only feel sorry for him if she knew he was bad. She can love, but she can't think, and if she knew him to be the worst man in the territory she would marry him to reform him. I did hope that you would have some influence over her."

"But Katy is such a child. She won't listen if I talk to her. Any opposition would only hurry the matter. I wish it were right to blow out his brains, if he has any, and I suppose he has."

"It is a great deal better, Mr. Charlton, to trust in Providence where we can't do anything without doing wrong."

"Well, Mrs. Marlay, I didn't look for cant from you. I don't believe that God cares. Everything goes by the almanac and natural law. The sun sets when the time comes, no matter who is belated."³⁴

When Albert is jailed late in the novel, Isa's letters will repeat the word "Providence."

Like many other dialogues throughout Eggleston's fiction, this one between Albert and Isa serves a multiple purpose. It typifies the vehement animadversions which gain for Charlton the hostility of the townfolk; it reveals Katy's childish vulnerability; and it displays the good taste and dignified simplicity of Isabel Marlay. Furthermore, it is the beginning of the shift of Albert's

affections from Helen to Isa. Eggleston's extensive preparation for Charlton's eventual match with Isabel marks an artistic achievement that was absent from Schoolmaster and End. Two other events which receive similar preparation are the death of Katy by drowning, which she has always feared, and the discovery that Charlton's mother was pressured by her husband, Squire Plausaby, to steal a land-warrant, framing Albert.³⁵

Metropolisville is longer than Schoolmaster and End because it continues for forty pages after the specific mystery is resolved, which raises the question whether or not Eggleston had another mystery in mind. Even if it fails as the "strong central government" which Cowie thought the novel needed,³⁶ there is another plot which is only resolved in these last pages. Charlton is released from Stillwater Penitentiary through the tireless efforts of Isa and a minister named Lurton who won the inmate's confidence for his calm, thoughtful faith. Charlton is now a humble, softer-spoken man, and he has written in response to Isa's many letters, "I, too, am coming to believe in a Providence."³⁷ Helen, meanwhile, has quit the story, unwilling to have anything to do with an ex-convict, even after he is proven innocent. Predictably, Charlton wants to propose to Isabel, but he feels obligated to spare her any controversy. In the most mature and

realistic love scene to be found in Eggleston's early novels; in a chapter which also serves as a subtle plea for women's rights, the two leave their rooms and begin walking in each other's direction.

They begin with awkward remarks on Charlton's planned departure. Charlton then admits that

"One doesn't like to be the cause of unpleasant remarks about one's best friend."

"But what if your best friend doesn't care a fig for anybody's remarks," said Isabel energetically.³⁸

He stammers some words about disgrace which she answers with stammering impatience. Finally her energy returns: "May I decide what will make me happy? Am I capable of judging?"³⁹

The real mystery of Metropolisville is why Charlton could not recognize Isabel Marlay's superiority to Helen Minorkey from the start. Perhaps he could not see this for the same reason that formal criticism has failed to appreciate the full purpose and substance of the novel: "Idees is in the way--don't pay no interest." But the public paid interest, and in keeping with the sales of the two serials before it, eleven thousand copies of The Mystery of Metropolisville were ordered before it even went to print.⁴⁰

* * *

Eggleston's fourth novel, The Circuit Rider, was the

first one serialized in a periodical other than Hearth and Home. During the composition of Metropolisville, Eggleston had resigned his editorship to devote full time to fiction. But when the harsh reviews appeared upon the completion of his third serial, he was so demoralized that he nearly abandoned the novel in progress.⁴¹ Metropolisville was the first of his novels that Howells did not review; other reviewers repeated the charges of coarseness and discursiveness of plot.⁴² Eggleston was encouraged, however, when English reviews were favorable, and he began examining the other criticisms for constructive advice. He noticed that The Christian Union favored the book but objected to "a fascination for odd characters" who were not related "convincingly to other characters or to the plot."⁴³ Not only did he take the advice; he brought the result to The Christian Union, which printed the first installment of The Circuit Rider in November, 1873.

The improvements in character development and analysis were the foremost reasons for the favorable reviews which prompted Eggleston to remark that he felt "coaxed back into fiction."⁴⁴ Howells pronounced Rider Eggleston's "best to date." In one of his lengthiest reviews he offered especial praise for Kike Lumsden, "the most sublime character in the book...a noble tragedy, finely

set forth."⁴⁵ But Howell's generous praise included a stern warning to Eggleston for the continued use of frequent and lengthy editorial intrusions and discursive essays on many and varied points:

This is bad art, as Mr. Eggleston himself must feel, and he ought not to indulge it. The novelist's business is to paint such facts of character and custom as he finds so strongly that their relative value in his picture will be at once apparent to the reader without a word of comment: otherwise his historical picture falls to the level of the panorama with a showman lecturing upon the striking points and picking them out for observance with a long stick.⁴⁶

The reader's first view of Rider's panorama is a typical picture of Eggleston's fiction: a corn-shucking followed by a Hoosier frolic, an evening's entertainment of dance, refreshment and games. The main characters are introduced during these scenes. The heroine, Patty Lumsden, is of Virginia stock and is described as a snobbish Episcopalian among the irreligious and mischievous young folk, one of whom is the good-humored Morton Goodwin, the story's hero. Patty's father is a rich, land-grabbing politician who, upon the death of his brother, tries to cheat his own nephew.

In return Kike Lumsden is a hot-headed youth ready to kill his uncle. Morton intercedes to prevent this, but in taking Kike's side he gains Captain Lumsden's wrath and ruins his chances with Patty. This is when the Methodist

circuit rider first appears in Hissawachee Bottom. Kike attends the preacher's meeting mostly because his uncle scorns the Methodists, but the exhortation appeals to his fervent nature; his pride is soon transferred to self-sacrifice. While Kike takes to a circuit in the wilderness of western Ohio and a life of austerity that will eventually kill him, Morton takes to drinking, gambling and causing mischief at Methodist meetings. Eggleston deftly probes the psychology of Morton's behavior with intimations that Morton is denying his own growing faith.

Before long Morton loses his money, his gun and his horse to an errant member of an outlaw gang. The outlaw claims to have been a friend of Morton's ever-wayward and long-lost brother, and he returns Morton's gun and horse, keeping deeds of ownership to prevent Morton from gambling with them again. Disgraced, Morton flees further from home and soon rides into a flood--another Eggleston device used in two other novels and in "Priscilla." When Morton seeks shelter he is distrusted, and he hesitates when he is asked if he owns his horse. The next morning he is arrested and about to be hanged for a horse-thief when a travelling Presbyterian minister is attracted to the scene and vouches for him. Determined to reform, Morton then considers the example of Kike and the nobility of the preacher who endured his own mischief. He resolves to

become a Methodist circuit rider. From this point on, Eggleston was able to dramatize the friendship of Morton and Kike and have them comment upon each other's life and work. Hence, Eggleston freed himself to assume an aloof, ironic narrative tone quite different from the overly dogmatic tone of characterization in the early novels.⁴⁷

Patty is ready to forgive Morton for his misbehavior, confident that her love will reform him. The description of her preparation for his return typifies numerous paragraphs throughout Eggleston's fiction and non-fiction which are inescapably reminiscent of Henry David Thoreau in that they set premises for an inductive last sentence:

Patty knew he would come. She went about her work next morning, humming some trifling air, that she might seem nonchalant. But after awhile she happened to think that her humming was an indication of pre-occupation. So she ceased to hum. Then she remembered that people would certainly interpret silence as indicative of meditation; she immediately fell a-talking with might and main, until one of the younger girls asked: "What makes Patty talk so much?" Upon which, Patty ceased to talk and went to work harder than ever; but, being afraid that the eagerness with which she worked would betray her, she tried to work more slowly until that was observed. The very devices by which we seek to hide mental pre-occupation generally reveal it.⁴⁸

Patty's eager anticipation quickly changed to repulsion when she learned that Morton had joined the "dingy" religion.

Eggleston's concerns during composition of the story

were "how to convert the heroine to eventual humiliation and self-sacrifice" and whether to make Patty "rich and full, or timid and delicate."⁴⁹ Following an example recorded in the autobiography of Jacob Young, a circuit rider circa 1800-1810, Patty is converted in the contagion of a Methodist camp meeting; she is then turned out of her home and goes to live with Kike's mother. She soon opens a school, indicating her active, restless intent to contribute to the betterment of Hissawachee Bottom.

Patty and Morton are reconciled, but only after some admittedly tortured resolution of the plot's loose ends. The outlaw who pitied Morton does double-duty as a county sheriff and then triple-duty as Morton's prodigal brother. Moreover, the brother knew the woman who trapped Morton into a virtual promise of marriage during his estrangement from Patty. Discerning Patty's love for Morton, he causes the other woman, Ann Eliza, to drop her claim under threat of exposure of her past in Pittsburgh City. Eggleston may have condemned the penny-dreadfuls of his day, but he shamelessly borrowed their devices for the resolutions of Rider.⁵⁰

But one genuinely Egglestonian device employed for exposition and development of the plot throughout the book is a loquacious Irish schoolmaster named Brady, a "mine of wit, wisdom and good will."⁵¹ This time Eggleston created

an eccentric who acted upon all of the characters, often to reconcile them and always to collect and pass information. Brady's dialect, like those of German Gottlieb Wehle and Vermonter Whiskey Jim, evidences the range and accuracy of Eggleston's ear. Furthermore, it is Brady who presents the thesis of Rider in rich metaphor which is also characteristic of Eggleston's prose:

I'm no Mithodist, Mrs. Lumsden. Me father was a Catholic and me mother a Prisbytarian, and they compromised on me by making me a mimber of the Episcopalian Church and throyin' to edicate me for orders, and intoirely spoiling me for iverything else but a school taycher in these haythen backwoods. But it does same to me that the Mithodists air the only payple that can do any good among such pagans as we air. What would a parson from the old counthry do here? He moight spake as grammathical as Lindley Murray himsilf, and nobody would be the better of it. What good does me own grammathical acquoirements do towards reforming the sittlement? With all me grammar I can't kape me boys from makin' God's name the nominative case before very bad words. Hey, Koike? Now, the Mithodists air a narry sort of payple. But if you want to make a strame strong you hev to make it narry. I've read a good dale of history, and in me own estimation the ould English Puritans and the Mithodists air both torrents, because they're both shet up by narry banks. The Mithodists is ferninst the wearin' of jewelry and dancin' and singin' songs, which is all vairy foolish in me own estimation. But it's kind of nat'ral for the millrace that turns the whale that fades the worruld to git mad at the babblin', oidle brook that wastes its toime among the mossy shtones and grind's nobody's grist. But the brook ain't so bad after all.⁵²

The preface to The Circuit Rider frankly states Eggleston's intent to pay tribute to the itinerant Methodist

preachers of the early 1800's, which suggests that the book would have been a terrible embarrassment had it failed.⁵³ The question which naturally follows Eggleston's tribute was best put by Edward Stone: "Was Eggleston recording publicly his unshaken devotion, or in effect penning a moving obituary of that faith?"⁵⁴

* * *

Although the critical success of 1874 encouraged him, his next novel, Roxy, did not appear until 1878. In the meantime, Eggleston accepted the pastorate of a Congregational church in Brooklyn. The conditions were remarkably analogous to those concerning the terms of his initial employment at Hearth and Home: the church had suffered an alarming decline in membership; the church leaders sought Eggleston for his reputation and his dynamic personality; and the leaders accepted Eggleston's terms that they waive a formal creed and become non-denominational. Eggleston promptly renamed it "The Church of Christian Endeavor," a dignified rendition of Schoolmaster's "Church of the Best Licks," and he started the "Endeavor Club" which met weekly to discuss political and social issues and to organize for work to be done in the immigrant neighborhoods of Brooklyn. He established a library in the church and was soon conducting the largest Sunday-school in Brooklyn.⁵⁵ As these efforts gained wide praise from the local press,

Eggleston went further and initiated an athletic club. Interest and attendance soared.⁵⁶

The Church of Christian Endeavor was not, however, free from attack. One cynic dubbed it "The Church of the Holy Ambiguity." When one clergyman opined from a pulpit that a church should "no more offer amusement than open a grocery store," Eggleston shot back that he would open a grocery store the next day if he thought it would save people from urban vices. Eventually an added attack came from within as some people noticed that Eggleston was less and less concerned with the supernatural. He admitted privately that he had lost faith when he resigned from the church shortly after the publication of Roxy. Protagonist Roxy Adams is a record of his internal conflict; Reverend Whittaker of the external conflict concerning the church. These two characters suggest that if Rider was a "moving obituary" to his former Methodism, Roxy reaffirms his lasting Zoroastrianism.⁵⁷

Roxy was the first of Eggleston's works to be published in book form without a preface. Instead, the title page contains this paragraph:

Enthousiasme, etat momentane, mouvement extra-ordinaire d'espirit, cause presque toujours par une cause exterreure. Exaltation, etat habituel, elevation constant que l'ame doit a ses propres forces, que est dans sa propre nature.⁵⁸

These definitions suggest that the story will explore the

depths of the characters' psychology as expressed in dialogue, emotions and actions. The prefaces of each of the four earlier novels express a common intent to focus on the authenticity of historical background, setting, customs and dialect. While Roxy, set in southern Ohio during the "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too!" campaign of 1840, is equal to the earlier novels for authenticity, it achieves levels of characterization that Eggleston never before attempted.

The opening scene is an election day parade followed by a barbecue in the streets of the Ohio River town of Lucerne. The townspeople are clamoring to see the parade, and Eggleston's opening paragraphs are clearly intended to put the reader among them. Virtually every sentence begins with the pronoun "you," but unlike his prior use of the second person for editorial asides, in Roxy the appeal is to the reader's senses:

But you, had you been of their company, must have halted on the hill to look off eastward where the sun is quivering in the thin yellow-and-white horizon-clouds that hang over green hills. You must have stopped to look at the Lucerne island in its many shades of green, from the dark maple leaf to the lighter cotton-wood and sycamore, the whole fringed by a margin of yet pale water-willows which dip their outermost boughs into the placid water of the broad Ohio, glistening in the early sunlight like the apocalyptic river of life.⁵⁹

Among the crowd is Roxy Adams. Introduced as a

living saint, she occasionally has to scold herself for expecting thanks for her ever-willing attention to neighbors in need and for the daily care of her idiot cousin, young Bobo. Young boys in the crowd torment Bobo who can only respond in echo; the nearby crowd enjoys the cruel sport, and Roxy is helpless to prevent it. To the rescue comes Mark Bonamy, a young politician who momentarily leaves his place in the parade to dispose of the tormentors without so much as having to get off of his horse. Roxy is more than thankful; she is attracted by Mark's strength and good looks. In the next scene she will be further attracted by his articulate and resonant speech, and by his charisma among the townfolk.

Before he moves to the speech, however, Eggleston notes that "the same crowd that had laughed at the ridicule put upon Bobo now cheered Mark for punishing the persecutor."⁶⁰ Therefore, we enter the second scene already cognizant that Eggleston is exploring the psychology of crowds as well as that of individual character.

Bonamy electioneers in company with a seasoned politician named Tom Lathers among a quite different crowd of backwoods folk who have gathered at a country hoe-down several miles away from Lucerne. The rustics of Rocky Fork expect Bonamy to be as slick and obliging as Lathers, but the inexperienced young pol is captivated by a sultry

and dark-complexioned beauty named Nancy Kirtley. By giving her all of his attention, he offends many voters, and two chapters later we learn that it nearly cost him his first election. Lathers had tried to warn him: "Come, old feller, you'll git used up as bad as Julius Caesar did when he went down into Egypt and fell in love with Pharaoh's daughter...and got licked by it."⁶¹ Thus begins a trend of Eggleston's later novels toward understated literary and historical allusions; these replace the insistent editorials and digressions of the earlier novels as vehicles of characterization.

Another literary vehicle which Eggleston employs at some length in Roxy is the imagery of the river. The election, which occasions drunkenness and brawling in Lucerne's streets, is "a hurricane of excitement (to) sweep over still waters."⁶² Bonamy's fluctuations between Roxy and Nancy make of him a "shifting sand-bank that lay open on all sides to the water; every rise and fall or change of direction in the current of influence went over him."⁶³ When Whittaker proposes to Roxy, she feels the "crosscurrents and eddies" of her attractions to him and to Mark.⁶⁴ When Whittaker fails to gain Roxy's hand, his soul is "like the great, wide Ohio...it mirrored in its depths the glory of the sky above."⁶⁵

Whittaker's suit is promoted by Roxy's best friend,

Twonnet Lefaure, an irrepressible prankster, mimic and teaser who may be Eggleston's most original, endearing character. Whittaker is a boarder with the Swiss family Lefaure, described by one critic as "one of the most attractive features of Lucerne."⁶⁶ Whittaker tries to maintain an appropriate Presbyterian dignity, but Twonnet's laughing and sometimes droll replies to his conversation "makes his gravity unsteady."⁶⁷ Her presence enables Whittaker to laugh at himself, developing his character throughout the story, and it is Twonnet's influence that leads him to a more practical exercise of his religious duties. Twonnet's complexity and her value to the story are couched in a fact that the reader can only gradually realize: she loves Whittaker but does not believe that her frivolous nature is worthy of him.

The Lefatures are among many Swiss in Lucerne who lend Roxy a foreign air while reinforcing the novel's indelibly American authenticity. Eggleston's ear for dialect demonstrates further range in the bilingual Lefaure household, and again when Frenchman Pierre Larousse goes to vote:

Sac-r-r-re! Le diable! You dinks I is durn-goat... I see 'nough of damograts... I leef in Paree. Robespierre was a damograt. I hafe to veel of my head avairy morning to see eef it was nod shop off. I no likes your damograts. Doo much plud. I likes my head zave and zound, eh? By gare! Quel sacre imbecile!⁶⁸

The colorful attractions of such townfolk as the Lefatures

and Larousse, furthermore, serve as relief from the sombre portrait of domestic strife as Eggleston draws it.

Bonamy seeks and gains Roxy's hand in marriage when he perceives that his personal triumphs depend upon a renunciation of Nancy Kirtley. The affection of Roxy Adams is cause for faith in himself; love for her draws him to the Methodist religion. He is about to quit politics with the idea that he will serve as a missionary in the wilds of Texas with Roxy. But Bonamy Senior connives to delay them. When they finally prepare to leave in spite of his disfavor, he has a stroke; they stay to care for him. Mark suddenly finds himself in possession of his father's law office and considerable political influence. The sand-bank of Mark's personal interests shifts again.

Roxy's discontent with her new situation makes her proud and snobbish in the eyes of Mark's political allies. Roxy and Mark quarrel; he strays, particularly toward the Rocky Fork district. Hard spring rains cause a flood, forcing Mark to find shelter. Eggleston's scant account of the liason says only that Mark stayed twenty-four hours in the cabin of Nancy Kirtley.

The following months are of uneasy truce between the unaware wife and the distracted husband. Eggleston's narrative shifts to the relationship of Twonnet and Whittaker until a vengeful and somewhat deranged Nancy is heard

making wild threats in town. When the gossip spreads, Eggleston again explores the psychology of a population that thrives equally on the triumphs and tragedies of their neighbors. Whittaker, with the aid of Twonnet, acts to shield Roxy from the most vicious of the news mongers; he then finds Mark in time to prevent a suicide. Roxy's father takes her home; his proud, cantankerous nature is for once softened, and he cannot resist it when Whittaker leads Roxy to an understanding of Mark's suffering. Mr. Adams, a cobbler who masks his generosity with chronic, habitual contention, is yet another vivid and fully realized character in the novel, seen and heard mostly in heated but friendly debate with Whittaker.

Whittaker, much like pastor Eggleston of the Church of Christian Endeavor, then conceives of "salvation by hook or crook." Eggleston's personal conflict becomes clear when he reports how Whittaker loses interest in a sermon that he had been preparing for his next service: "Salvation by Faith Only." He seeks and finds Nancy Kirtley, deliberately violating the wishes of a church elder. Overcoming his natural repulsion for the now dishevelled "animal beauty," Whittaker subdues Nancy's bent for revenge. He then restores her to a family that had cast her out. When he tells Roxy of Nancy's troubles, she resolves to seek Nancy and offer to adopt the unborn child.

Some reviewers complained that this should have ended

the story, but Eggleston's intent was to show a fully realized religious transformation in Roxy. Hence, the physical and emotional strain cause Roxy to collapse, and Mark profusely and penitently attends to her during a week of raging fever. Mark's catharsis is achieved as Roxy verges on death. But Roxy recovers, and for Eggleston's purpose one brief last chapter is necessary: Roxy, alone in church the next Sunday, experiences the "utter joy and peace of genuine religious feeling" for the first time." Eggleston's point is that only by suffering and forgiving, and not by calculated good behavior, can a person achieve this peace.⁶⁹ Roxy has transcended enthousiasme to realize exaltation.

* * *

For the last twenty-three years of his life (1879-1902), Edward Eggleston was primarily an historian, and by the end of 1885 he had already published the first ten numbers of his series on colonial history in The Century. The laborious work of historical research necessitated a vacation which sent him to Europe in 1885. Unable to endure a complete break from literary activity, he recalled a suggestion from the Century editors for a short story based upon a factual incident in which an inexperienced lawyer saves a defendant's life by the use of an almanac to discredit a prosecution witness.⁷⁰

Writing in Italy, Eggleston could not verify the

details of a story set in Illinois some forty years previous, nor did he attempt to verify them when he returned to the states. Instead, as he wrote in his preface, he preferred to record "popular tradition (which) is itself an artist rough-hewing a story to the novelist's hands."⁷¹

The composition must have been as spirited as it was rough-hewed, for it restored his health while growing to the proportions of a novel. Letters home were boastful:

You don't know what an encouragement it is to me to find that I haven't lost the art of telling a story with people in it a good deal solidier than those in The Bostonians for example.⁷²

Though The Century solicited the story and editor Gilder called it the "most absorbing" manuscript he had ever read, Eggleston was exasperated when serial publication was delayed until late 1887, and again when Century neglected to list the book on its 1888 Christmas advertisements.⁷³ Critical reception was accordingly indifferent. The Graysons: A Story of Illinois, therefore, has the dubious distinction of being Edward Eggleston's first commercial failure.

A major reason for its failure was that the story of young Abraham Lincoln's dramatic court victory was well known to the American public, obviating any element of suspense concerning the fate of Tom Grayson. Some of the latter day criticism faults the story for the same reason; one critic adds that once the trial is over "we" do not

care for the rest of the story.⁷⁴ The second prominent reason for failure was that the prolonged denouement does not reconcile Tom to Rachel Albaugh, his lover prior to the troubles which lead to his arrest. For the first time, Eggleston refrained from providing that sentimentally satisfying outcome.

The Graysons is anomalous among Eggleston's novels for a second reason: religion is not treated as a major theme. At the end of the novel, the convicted murderer experiences a "conversion" that is treated at more length and with more sarcasm than Twain's treatment of piety-too-late in Life on the Mississippi. Religious references appear only briefly at the beginning of the novel when the Bible is used as a device for a game.

The use of a rustic entertainment, however, for the novel's exposition was part of the "Eggleston formula,"⁷⁵ and The Graysons, despite its anomalous qualities, is more representative of Eggleston's novels with: an unheroic hero; a retiring heroine; a bound girl; a young child who craves the constant company of a main character; a politician more concerned with votes than with service; a teacher from the East who risks disfavor to serve a cause; an ill-fated card game; a villain who is also a fop with an ambiguous history in sinful steamboat ports such as New Orleans; a boyishly good-natured Sampson; dialects, plural; a mob eager to lynch; and contrasting pair of love

stories.

Rachel is the irresistible beauty to all of the young men of the farming community of Moscow, where the prairie meets the woodlands like a "shoreless sea."⁷⁶ Tom, who is "prized for his cheerful heedlessness,"⁷⁷ is Rachel's favored suitor until the jealous George Lockwood contrives to put Tom in disfavor. When Lockwood urges Tom into a game of cards with Dave Sovine, a wayward son of the town, Tom loses more money than he has. He borrows the balance from Lockwood and is soon forced to leave his uncle's law office and return home in disgrace. When he discovers that Lockwood subsequently sent word of his carelessness into the Albaugh home, Tom returns briefly to the town and voices threats of murder in the presence of several town-folk.

At the farm of his mournful, indulgent mother, the focus of the story shifts to Tom's self-sacrificing sister Barbara. The money to pay off the debt to Lockwood is supplied by Barbara from her meagre savings which she intended for tuition under Hiram Mason, a recently arrived schoolmaster in the district:

It was only during this summer that Barbara had been seized with independent aspirations for herself; and perhaps even these were not without some relation to Tom. If Tom should come to be somebody in the country, she would sit in a reflected light as his sister. It became her, therefore, not to neglect entirely her own education. To go to Moscow to a winter school was out of the question. Every

nerve was strained to extricate the farm from debt and to give a little help, now and then, to Tom. It chanced, however, that a student from an incipient Western college, intent on getting money to pay his winter board bills, had that summer opened a "pay school"...⁷⁸

Barbara and Mason are plain physically; they are attracted to each other for qualities of sincerity and industry. Their ensuing love affair throws that of Tom and Rachel into relief. Whereas Rachel deserts Tom in his time of trouble, Mason seeks Barbara at home when he learns the circumstances of her absence from school. While Rachel and Tom both display pride and high spirits, Barbara feels compelled to refuse Mason's modest suit because she does not believe that her humble background is worthy of him.

The Graysons is the only one of Eggleston's novels in which strict chronological order is abandoned for a few overlapping scenes. The effect of these is to leave some of the action and dialogue ambiguous until a later passage sheds the necessary light. As we observe Barbara and Mason, we do not know that Lockwood is planning to take advantage of a rule of poker which forfeits all stakes of a player caught cheating; he had detected Sovine's technique while Tom was losing. Lockwood finds Sovine at a camp meeting, but our attention is on Tom who, in "penitence and sackcloth to restore the balance of complacency,"⁷⁹ has accompanied his mother and sister to the same meeting.

Hardly interested in the preaching, Tom soon excuses himself to look after the horses; we remain with Barbara and Mrs. Grayson as they watch a frantic man make his way to the preacher's stand. When this man announces that a murder has been committed just outside the campground, everybody rushes to the scene. The Grayson women soon hear the rampant rumor: Tom is accused.

As Tom is placed in prison, a group of men from the poor-white populace of the rocky and barren Broad Run convene, in the words of leader Jake Hogan, to

...look at the case... Tom's uncle 's one uv them ar rich men what always gets the'r own way, somehow ur nuther. That's what we're up fer. Ef we don't settle this yer business by a short cut acrost the woods, they'll be a pack uv lawyers a-provin' that black's white, un that killin' hain't no murder no-ways, un Tom'll git off 'cause he's got kin what kin pay fer the law, un buy up the jury liker'n not. A pore man don' stan' no kind uv a chance in this yer dodrotted country...⁸⁰

The Broad Run gang is foiled three times by the ingenious and daring devices of the Graysons' hired man, Bob McCord. The introduction of this merry, instinctive hunter and fisherman may be the longest paragraph Eggleston ever wrote. Much of the paragraph may be used as evidence that Eggleston's tendency to digress was still lingering in his later novels. But like most of the digressions in The Graysons, and in Roxy and The Faith Doctor, McCord's introduction provides a historical metaphor which casts

him as a timeless and universal figure while describing the eccentricities and force which he brings to bear upon the story. To sample:

...immense muscles were softened in outline by a certain moderate rotundity; his well-distributed adipose was only one of many indications of his extraordinary physical thriftiness... His physical perfections were not limited to mere bull strength: no man had a keener eye or a steadier hand... Had he lived in the days of the Saxon invasion of England, McCord would have stood high on the list of those renowned for exploits of strength and daring, the very darling hero of the minstrel...⁸¹

Lincoln's introduction, half-way into the book, is similarly romanticized. He is "one of those solitary horsemen who gave life to every landscape and mystery to nearly every novel of that generation."⁸² Grayson's mother sends for the young, unknown lawyer, offering the deed to the farm if he can free Tom. But Lincoln refuses the offer and takes the case in return for Mrs. Grayson's "goodness to me when I was a little wretch with my toes sticking out of my ragged shoes."⁸³

If the inclusion of Lincoln has gained critical attack, the casual manner in which he enters and exits the story, "without a hint at his future greatness,"⁸⁴ has gained as much critical acclaim. Latter day assessments may call The Graysons the best or the worst of Eggleston's novels depending on the critic's ability to accept an historical character in fiction. Pattee is among the

favorable critics who point to Lincoln's cross-examination of Sovine as unsurpassed for "vividness and narrative power in any novel of the period."⁸⁵ Eggleston's reputation as a writer with pace must owe to his early novels, but the potential for tension is best realized by the pace of The Graysons' trial scene.

Prior to Sovine's testimony, Lincoln had waived every right to cross-examine other witnesses and offered no objection to court proceedings. But he was not entirely inactive; confident of saving Tom in court, he needed to save him from the lynch mob and to prevent Sovine from skipping town. He does both by acting in consort with McCord, usually by way of messages relayed by Mason. Due to the questionable legality of McCord's actions, Lincoln is kept unaware of specific plans. Even when he asks Mason to tell Tom's whereabouts, Mason can only repeat McCord's words: "He says he's 'playing Abe Lincoln;' and the fewer that know, the better." Lincoln enjoys "merry but restrained laughter" at this, but Mason feels "out of patience" that Lincoln and McCord are gaining so much amusement from Tom's plight.⁸⁶

Upon his release, Tom "wouldn't like to be what (he) used to be,"⁸⁷ so he turns down the offer to rejoin his uncle's law office, and he avoids Rachel when she virtually throws herself at him. Sister Barbara, however, is

able to change her answer to Mason's suit. Janet Grayson, the young cousin who brought food to Tom when he was in jail, shows her preference for life on the farm with Tom over the prim and proper life of her parents' home in the town. The novel, therefore, traces the development and change of more than one character named Grayson.

The final chapters may be uninteresting to those who read the novel as strictly the story of Tom Grayson, or of Abraham Lincoln, but for those who read it as Eggleston titled it, plural, the final chapters provide an artistic finish that is as balanced as it is realistic. The sentimentality that had prevailed in the early novels is, in The Graysons, replaced by a sustained and balanced treatment of a realistic theme that is only realized after the acquittal. The match of Barbara and Mason shows that sacrifice can be the basis of love, while the estrangement of Tom and Rachel shows that pride cannot.

The critical mistake of dismissing the denouement is matched by that of attributing the story's heroism primarily to Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln is the hero in the legal territory of the court, but Bob McCord is the hero in the lawless Broad Run territory of frontier Illinois. McCord's defense of Tom begins long before Lincoln's first waiver of the right to cross-examine. McCord employs double-agents, plants rumors, dons disguises, lies to gain the use of a neighbor's horse and buggy, indulges his

"colossal thirst" and feigns drunkenness, mugs the sheriff, steals tools from a blacksmith's shop, and rips the bars out of the jail window; all of this to achieve the same justice for which Lincoln works with understated propriety. While Lincoln's exit from the story is without ceremony, McCord is last seen tagging to the sheriff in the town streets, relentlessly taunting him with an account of the escape and a prediction of the sheriff's defeat in the next election. To treat Lincoln, Eggleston stated his preference for the role of novelist rather than historian, but to treat McCord, Eggleston combined the elements of fiction and history to assume the role to which he alluded while introducing his daring, darling hero. The Graysons was written by a nineteenth century American minstrel.

* * *

In 1891 Eggleston published his last novel, The Faith Doctor, a sober and sobering satire of Christian Science. The raucous comedy of the early novels and the minstrelry of The Graysons are entirely absent from this novel; occasional ministries of dry wit and colorful description are in. His faithful readers may have wondered if he somehow traded pace for penetration. For style and tone it is Eggleston's best novel; for content his most cerebral; for energy his most subdued. As has been true of The Graysons, critical assessments of The Faith Doctor

have ranged between extremes; unlike Graysons, it was "distinctly the novel of the season when published."⁸⁸

The Faith Doctor is the first Eggleston novel in which Hoosiers are absent, and some reviewers entertain the notion that he wrote it to show that the socialites of New York City could be as deluded by religious ideas as the backwoods folk of the western river valleys. Faith Doctor ventures further than Roxy into a psychological probe of religious fervor; words such as "exaltation," "enthusiasm," "elation" and "exhilaration" appear throughout the book. But if Eggleston made a specific connection between the exhorters of the Ohio valley and the practitioners of Christian Science in the urban East, the connection is only coincidental. Eggleston simply had more to say about the nature of faith; only by relocating his fiction from country to city--and from past to present--could the overall statement of his artistic work be complete.

Faith Doctor is additionally the only Eggleston novel that is set in the time in which it was written. Living in New York City, he would walk while taking breaks from composition to view the very streets, shops, parks and tenements of his story. One of the novel's protagonists takes a walk

...through a cross-street which steadily deteriorated as he journeyed eastward, condescendingly assimilating itself to the

character of each avenue in turn. Beer saloons, cheap grocery stores, carts against the curbstone with their shafts pointing skyward, and troops of children on the sidewalk, marked the increasing poverty and density of the population. Millard wondered at the display of trinkets and confectionary in the shop-windows, not knowing that those whose backs are cheaply clad crave ornaments, and those whose bellies lack bread are ravenous for luxuries.⁸⁹

The focus of attention through the first four chapters is Charlie Millard, a "fastidious" young man who inherits wealth which propels him from a sleepy Hudson River town onto Wall Street. Instinctively he shifts the accent from Mil to lard. Soon he gains the assistant cashier-ship of the Bank of Manhadoes, partly because he owns much of its stock and partly because his letter of application is "composed...with intelligence."⁹⁰ The heirarchy of the bank, however, is composed with dissension, and the twenty year-old Millard finds himself the third man in the office where second man, cashier Farnsworth, habitually plots against President Masters. The chapter titled "The Bank of Manhadoes" is a creditable and complete short story which can be chilling to the modern day reader with any idealistic notions of an American past in which harmony and cooperation governed bureaucratic structures. If Faith Doctor's street scenes foreshadow the work of Stephen Crane and Elmer Rice, the following narration recalls the psychological explorations of Hawthorne and Melville:

A sort of magnanimity was mingled with craft in Masters' constitution, and, besides, he preferred the road that was likely to give him the fewest jolts. The natural tendency of his irritation was to die away. This would have been the result in spite of the spur that Mrs. Masters supplied--applied, rather--if Farnsworth could have been content to let things take their natural course; but he would not abide to let anything go its natural way: he would have attempted a readjustment of the relations between the moon and tides if he had thought himself favorably situated for puttering in such matters.⁹¹

Millard proves himself a conscientious and effective ombudsman and diplomat for Manhadoes. His loyalty to Masters neutralizes Farnsworth's monomania; his assignments are increasingly sensitive; often to the advantage of the bank he "can work a visiting-card in more ways than any other man in New York."⁹² Accordingly his salary rises quickly, and in an off-hand way Millard

...might give something to some mission or other agency, and thus get the disagreeables of benevolence done, as he got his boots blacked, by paying for it. Then he wondered what Miss Callender would think of such a device, and whether in the luminous moral atmosphere which enveloped her it would seem mean to substitute a money service for a personal one...⁹³

Phillida Callender, very much the daughter of a strong-willed missionary to Siam, is the mission worker whom Millard meets through mutual friends. Though she has no taste for high society, she does not fault it. She is, rather, grateful for the philanthropy which provides for the mission cafeteria and reading-room. She learns by

accident that Millard is a benefactor of her work, but this is only a small part of her attraction to him; the larger part is that he is a manifestly well-mannered, good-natured, easy-going, and yet sensitive man. She cannot, however, bring herself to attend the plays and concerts which are dear to him. Even so, they become engaged.

The bank sends Charlie to Europe, and Phillida begins attending the Bible readings of Mrs. Frankland, a social-mover who does not regard gospel references to "worldly possessions" too literally. Mrs. Frankland's favored hostess is Mrs. Van Horne whose

...magnificence was fed by an army: innumerable laborers with spades and shovels, picks and blasting-drills, working in smoke and dripping darkness to bore railway paths through mountain chains; grimy stokers and clear-sighted engineers; brakemen dripping in the chilly rain; switchmen watching out the weary night by dim lanterns of flickering torches; desk-worn clerks and methodical ticket-sellers; civil engineers using brains and long training over their profiles and cross-sectionings; and scores of able "captains of industry," such as superintendents, passenger agents, and traffic managers--all these, and others, by their steady toil kept an unfailing cataract of wealth pouring into the Van Horne coffers.⁹⁴

Mrs. Van Horne is one of the "weary rich" to whom Mrs. Frankland warbles such rhapsodies as, "the sick shall be healed... Rise up, O believing heart, and take the Lord at his word!"⁹⁵ Phillida, neither rich nor weary but

literal and impressionable, takes this to mean that she can cure, by prayer, a bed-ridden woman whom she visits in the tenements. When the sick woman manages to sit up and take a few steps, Phillida gains a reputation as a faith-healer.

Reputation, as always, feeds rumor, and Millard returns to New York to overhear his betrothed discussed in his fashionable club as an imposter and crank who must be raking a splendid income. He brings this to the attention of Phillida who loathes the notoriety as much as he. But she has been counseled by Mrs. Frankland's quotations to surrender all earthly attachments. The engagement is broken, but not until the end of the novel do we realize that the sorrow, combined with a sense of inadequacy due to the contrast between his and Phillida's lives, causes Millard to quit most of his social activity.

Eleanor Arabella Bowyer, a founder of the Christian Science movement, invites herself to the Callender home to recruit Phillida to heal the sick, in Bowyer's words, "by securing interior perception... (and) producing the quiescence of the large brain."⁹⁶ Phillida is thoroughly repelled by the processed jargon of this file-cabinet of a woman, and more so when she hears one of Bowyer's few frank admissions: "My education is all business." Phillida: "I do not believe in your science, and wouldn't for

the world take money from those I've been able to help..."
 Bowyer: "You're pretty high-toned, it seems to me..."⁹⁷

A young child, Millard's cousin, is taken ill, and the parents send for Phillida who sees the symptoms of diphtheria. Millard's uncle, however, is a recent convert to Christian Science who has always distrusted doctors; he insists to his pleading wife that it is only a "case of belief in diphtheria," and he refuses to call for a doctor who can work only "on the mortal plane."⁹⁸ Re-enter Eleanor Arabella Bowyer. Alarmed, Phillida goes to Millard.

While the uncle is at work, Millard tricks Bowyer with the hint of a lucrative case into the tenement hallway; his aunt immediately locks the door. He then threatens Bowyer with a report to the Board of Health for attempting to treat a contagious disease without having a license and without filing a report. As soon as she abdicates, Millard must procure the services of two doctors: one for the nephew, the second for Phillida who has contracted the disease.

Phillida is still too ashamed of her reputation to renew her engagement with Millard. Her cousin Philip resolves this by letting Millard know that Phillida fears that the marriage offer is now motivated by pity. Millard has an easy time solving this problem, and the newlyweds depart for a honeymoon in Europe. Philip, a collector of

rare books, is rewarded with a valuable set of histories that has eluded him for years, sent by Millard from London. The name of this final chapter is "As You Like It."

From the time that Millard first arrives in New York until the time of his estrangement from Phillida, he and Philip are best friends at the club. When Philip attempts to reconcile Millard with Phillida, he has already puzzled over the absence of Millard from the club and from various receptions. When Philip arrives at Millard's hotel room, Eggleston only mentions that he found Millard writing.⁹⁹ At the start of The Faith Doctor, Millard had been described as a man who, "if he had been so lucky as to be disappointed in love at the outset of his career, ...should have come to write real poetry..."¹⁰⁰

These hints about Millard's potential and kinetic energies are admittedly slender and infrequent, but they are subtly suggestive. One of the few critical complaints about Faith Doctor is that the careful attention given Millard, particularly in the early chapters, is disproportionate to the novel, which would, therefore, be more fittingly called "The Rise of Charley Millard."¹⁰¹ The title which Eggleston chose seems to imply that the book's main character is Phillida, but the reader sees and hears much more, throughout the book, through Millard. Moreover, Phillida's practice is brief; Bowyer's practice is shown as much, and her theory is certainly heard more. Even

Mrs. Frankland, whose appearance is sooner and more frequent than Bowyer's, may stake a claim to the title role. Is it possible that Eggleston's hints concerning a second transition in Millard's young life indicate that he is the "faith-doctor"?

If it is true that The Circuit Rider was an obituary to Eggleston's Methodism, then it is probable that he should have penned an announcement of the faith which replaced it. When he left Minnesota, Eggleston's foremost purpose in life shifted from religion to writing; from preaching to audiences awaiting answers, to composing for audiences impatient with questions; from Wesley to Darwin.¹⁰² At the outset of Edward Eggleston's final novel, Millard

treated himself as a work of art...which the beholder must judge only by the charming result, with no knowledge of the foregoing effort, no thought of the periods of ugly incompleteness that have been passed on the way to perfection.¹⁰³

At the conclusion of The Faith Doctor Millard is a practitioner of what Eggleston, as a realist, had come to regard as a higher faith.

ENDNOTES

¹Randel, 1963, p. 88.

²Randel, 1946, pp. 118-120.

³For the purposes of this study I have used the term "early novels" to refer to Schoolmaster, End of the World and Metropolisville. The Circuit Rider, although it appeared in serial form within a year following the publication of Metropolisville, is the first novel which evidences Eggleston's primary concern for the novel form rather than a primary concern for a magazine's weekly circulation. The Circuit Rider may, therefore, be considered a transitional novel in Eggleston's artistic development. The term "later novels" refers to Roxy, The Graysons and The Faith Doctor.

Another novel, The Hoosier Schoolboy (1883), was serialized in St. Nicholas and then published when Eggleston began writing The Graysons. Described by Paine (p. 49) as "a footnote" to Schoolmaster, this is a novel written for children. I have, therefore, followed the lead of most critics by excluding Schoolboy from this study.

⁴Schoolmaster, p. 26.

⁵Schoolmaster, pp. 8-10; GCE, Recollections, pp. 35-36; GCE, First, chapter fifteen. I have cited three accounts since the Eggleston brothers give varying impressions whether the decision to expand Schoolmaster was made before or after the first installment was published. Perhaps the publishers and George, as managing editor, gained Edward's agreement to lengthen the serial somewhat, and then the success of the first installment caused him to lengthen it further. Secondary accounts are: Nicholson, p. 147; Randel, 1946, p. 122.

⁶Schoolmaster, pp. 9-10.

⁷"In those days almost every family in tolerably comfortable circumstances had one 'bound girl' or more... The public authorities usually indentured orphans to serve during their nonage in families able and willing to care for them." GCE, First, p. 31.

⁸"The weakness of structure has been a general complaint, then and ever since, among the critics; the astonishing fact is that, under the circumstances of composition, the book has any structure at all." Randel, 1963, pp. 90-91.

⁹Nicholson, p. 147.

¹⁰Eggleston was more explicit about the disparity of his artistic outlook one year following the remarks in the preface to the library edition (see note four). In the preface to his farewell to fiction, a collection of short stories published in 1893, he wrote:

"Opinions and sentiments are inextricably interwoven with some of these earlier stories that do not seem to be mine today. But a man in his fifties ought to know how to be tolerant of the enthusiasms and beliefs of a younger man. I suspect that the sentiment I find somewhat foreign to me in the season of my cooler pulses, and the situations and motives that seem rather naive now had something to do with the acceptability of the stories." Duffels (New York: D. Appleton, 1893), p. v.

¹¹Schoolmaster, p. 17; Paine, p. 46.

¹²Schoolmaster, p. 49.

¹³Van Doren, p. 118.

¹⁴Schoolmaster, p. 161.

¹⁵Schoolmaster, pp. 161-162.

¹⁶GCE, First, p. 14.

¹⁷The library edition is dedicated, "as a pebble cast upon a cairn," to Lowell "whose cordial encouragement to my early studies of American dialect is gratefully remembered." There is more to the Lowell-Eggleston connection, however, than the use of dialect, or the use of "lingo as a cudgel." In a passage that describes Ralph Hartsook as accurately as it describes Ichabod Crane, Lewis Leary wrote:

"Lowell was perhaps the first to recognize that Irving, as much as Cooper, though with a lighter touch, produced a 'homespun and plebian mythos"--in Fielding's terms a "comic epic"--in which gallant protagonists tested ideals of the Old World against the frontier requirements of the New." Washington Irving (Univ. of Minnesota, 1961), p. 18.

¹⁸Schoolmaster, p. 210.

¹⁹The Faith Doctor (New York: D. Appleton, 1891), p. 100.

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- ²⁰Schoolmaster, p. 17
- ²¹Schoolmaster, pp. 10-11; GCE, First, pp. 145-
- ²²The End of the World (New York: Orange Judd, 1872), p. 65. Hereinafter cited as End.
- ²³Elmer Suderman, "Religion in the American Novel: 1870-1900" (Diss. Univ. of Kansas, 1961) p. 17. In his preface to The Faith Doctor, Eggleston stated a similar intention: "The book was not written to depreciate anybody's valued delusions, but to make a study of human nature under certain modern conditions... There are indeed, souls who are victims of their own generous enthusiasm; and it grieves me that, in treating the subject with fidelity and artistic truthfulness, I must give pain to many of the best..."
- ²⁴Paine, p. 69.
- ²⁵Randel, 1963, p. 100.
- ²⁶Metropolisville, p. 152.
- ²⁷Metropolisville, pp. 20-21.
- ²⁸Metropolisville, p. 26.
- ²⁹Metropolisville, p. 23.
- ³⁰Metropolisville, p. 24.
- ³¹Metropolisville, p. 24.
- ³²Cowie, p. 543.
- ³³Metropolisville, p. 34.
- ³⁴Metropolisville, p. 73.
- ³⁵Paine, p. 81.
- ³⁶Cowie, p. 542.
- ³⁷Metropolisville, pp. 313-314.
- ³⁸Metropolisville, p. 315.
- ³⁹Metropolisville, p. 316.

- ⁴⁰Cowie, p. 543.
- ⁴¹Randel, 1946, p. 142.
- ⁴²Randel, 1963, p. 104.
- ⁴³Randel, 1963, p. 104.
- ⁴⁴Randel, 1946, p. 143.
- ⁴⁵William Dean Howells, The Atlantic Monthly, June 1874, pp. 746-747.
- ⁴⁶Howells, p. 745.
- ⁴⁷Paine, p. 108.
- ⁴⁸The Circuit Rider (New York: J. B. Ford, 1874), pp. 175-176. Hereinafter cited as Rider.
- ⁴⁹Citing a notebook Eggleston used during the composition of Rider, Metropolisville and The Faith Doctor, Randel, 1946, p. 141. Eggleston's portrayal of women is one of several points of comparison which Suderman makes between the works of Eggleston and Hawthorne.
- ⁵⁰Cowie, p. 544.
- ⁵¹Cowie, p. 544.
- ⁵²Rider, pp. 100-101.
- ⁵³Randel, 1963, p. 105.
- ⁵⁴Stone, p. 214.
- ⁵⁵Randel, 1946, p. 148.
- ⁵⁶Randel, 1963, pp. 108-109.
- ⁵⁷GCE, First, pp. 256-257.
- ⁵⁸Roxy, title page.
- ⁵⁹Roxy, pp. 1-2.
- ⁶⁰Roxy, p. 10.
- ⁶¹Roxy, p. 31. Paine draws the analogy to Antony and Cleopatra at more length, pp. 129 and following.

- ⁶² Roxy, p. 66.
- ⁶³ Roxy, pp. 47-48.
- ⁶⁴ Roxy, p. 108.
- ⁶⁵ Roxy, pp. 140-141.
- ⁶⁶ Dorothy Dondore, The Prairie and the Making of Middle America: 4 Centuries of Description (Cedar Rapids IA: The Torch Press, 1926), p. 308.
- ⁶⁷ Roxy, p. 65.
- ⁶⁸ Roxy, pp. 43-44.
- ⁶⁹ Randel, 1963, p. 114.
- ⁷⁰ The Graysons (New York: The Century Co., 1888), preface.
- ⁷¹ Graysons, preface.
- ⁷² Cited by Randel, 1946, p. 176.
- ⁷³ Randel, 1946, pp. 175-176.
- ⁷⁴ Flanagan, p. 253.
- ⁷⁵ Randel, 1946, p. 180.
- ⁷⁶ Graysons, p. 27.
- ⁷⁷ Graysons, p. 10.
- ⁷⁸ Graysons, p. 74.
- ⁷⁹ Graysons, p. 33.
- ⁸⁰ Graysons, pp. 198-199.
- ⁸¹ Graysons, pp. 107-108.
- ⁸² Graysons, p. 173.
- ⁸³ Graysons, p. 176.
- ⁸⁴ Nicholson, p. 152.
- ⁸⁵ Pattee, p. 98.

- ⁸⁶Graysons, p. 282.
- ⁸⁷Graysons, p. 336.
- ⁸⁸Vedder, p. 255.
- ⁸⁹Faith Doctor, p. 110.
- ⁹⁰Faith Doctor, p. 13.
- ⁹¹Faith Doctor, p. 42.
- ⁹²Faith Doctor, p. 380.
- ⁹³Faith Doctor, p. 112.
- ⁹⁴Faith Doctor, p. 172.
- ⁹⁵Faith Doctor, p. 198.
- ⁹⁶Faith Doctor, pp. 287-288.
- ⁹⁷Faith Doctor, pp. 289-291.
- ⁹⁸Faith Doctor, pp. 339-341.
- ⁹⁹Faith Doctor, p. 407.
- ¹⁰⁰Faith Doctor, p. 18.
- ¹⁰¹Paine, p. 195.
- ¹⁰²Faith Doctor, p. 16: "No matter what the subject under consideration, we later nineteenth century people are pretty sure to be brought face to face with the intellect that has dominated our age, modified our modes of thinking, and become the main source of all our metaphysical discomforts. It is this same inevitable Charles Darwin who says that a man may be made more unhappy by committing a breach of etiquette than by falling into sin."
- ¹⁰³Faith Doctor, p. 28.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion: Obscurity and Writers

Virtually all of the latter day reviews of Edward Eggleston's novels conclude that his reinstatement in American literary studies is justifiable for artistic as well as historical reasons. Although many reviewers disparage his early novels, most praise the artistic merits of Roxy and The Faith Doctor and find more merit than fault with The Circuit Rider and The Graysons. Yet there remain the majority of critics and scholars who exclude Eggleston's work from literary considerations. Herein lies the grave fallacy of American literary criticism concerning Edward Eggleston: while other novelists are discussed and judged according to their best work, Eggleston is mentioned and dismissed according to his worst.

At approximately the same time that Eggleston fell from favor in the early twentieth century, the reputation of another formerly popular American novelist arose from some seventy years' obscurity to secure one of the highest places in the national literature. For those who will argue that there can be no point in--or that it is too late for--an "Eggleston revival," the example of

Herman Melville's should serve as a caution. This encumbers no obligation to compare the work of one with the other, but it rather suggests that if a flamboyant, eclectic masterpiece such as Moby Dick can be overlooked for three-quarters of a century, so too can quiet, controlled triumphs of art such as Edward Eggleston's later novels.

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