Volume 18, Number 2 Fall 2007

EMERSON SOCIETY PAPERS

Distinguished Achievement Award Presented to Barbara Packer

Barbara Packer received the Emerson Society's Distinguished Achievement Award at the American Literature Association conference in Boston on 25 May 2007. The award was especially fitting since 2007 marks both the twenty-fifth anniversary of *Emerson's Fall*, her landmark first book, and the reprinting as a single volume of *The Transcendentalists*, originally included in volume two of the *Cambridge History of American Literature* (1995). The University of Georgia Press was displaying this new book at the publishers' exhibit throughout the Boston ALA meeting.

Professor of English at the University of California, Los Angeles, Barbara Packer received her B.A. from Stanford University and M.Phil. and Ph.D. from Yale (1973). Beginning to teach at Yale, she found her major career at UCLA, where she has received numerous awards, including the Luckman Distinguished Teaching Award. She has been a member of the Emerson Society since its founding in 1989. I remember meeting Barbara at our first session in San Diego, where people from opposite sides of the country, previously known to each other only through their publications, could start talking. Such is the value of our society and its bicoastal conviviality. Since then Barbara has served on the society's Advisory Board, presented papers often, and co-chaired the effort to award new scholarly and community projects on Emerson.

Her distinguished career as a scholar of Transcendentalism includes literary criticism, literary history, and contribution to the editing of Emerson's works. In *Emerson's Fall: A New Interpretation of the Essays* (1982) Barbara offered a nuanced critical reading of both Emerson's celebrations of unfallen consciousness and his new "fables" for understanding the world's evil. It won immediate praise and has also stood the test of time, so that Al von Frank, serving on our Distinguished Achievement Award Committee, declares it "still the most important reading of the essays—and the best written." She followed that book with a series of more culturally grounded articles, drawing on fields of knowledge as varied as Romantic landscape, Higher Criticism of the Bible, nineteenth-century friendship, and decline of American religious community. By the nineties she was also composing two different large sections for the prestigious, multi-authored *Cambridge History of American Literature*: not only "The Transcendentalists" for volume two, but also a history of American poetry from Neoclassicism to Transcendentalism for the fourth volume. Soon thereafter she took on writing the Historical Introduction to *The Conduct of Life* in *The Collected Works*; this involved a new immersion in history of the 1850s as well as close cooperation with Textual Editor Douglas Emory Wilson in what she calls the "great sport of Emersonian life," locating parallel passages from journal to lecture to essay.

What unites all this work is a fresh and reflective reading of everything relevant to the subject at hand. Her history of nineteenth-century poetry begins with a series of poets unknown to most of us and, alongside Emerson's best-known texts, newly interprets his Journal verse as well as many poems by others in his circle. Barbara takes delight in the personal and political dramas contained in the Transcendentalists' informal writing, whether such a major text as Emerson's Journal or a neglected one as the correspondence of Margaret Fuller and James Freeman Clarke.

Such immersion in private writing is one of the several ways that Barbara Packer's literary history *The Transcendentalists* reads in 2007 as the consummate

(Continued on page 16)

2007 Emerson Society Patrons

Emerson Society members continue generously to join at various "patron" levels of membership. All donations above the $10 annual regular membership go to support special programs of the Society. Dues categories are Life ($500), Sustaining ($50), Contributing ($25), and Regular ($10). Please send check payable to The Emerson Society (U.S. dollars only) to Robert D. Habich, Secretary/Treasurer, Dept. of English, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306-0460.

Life Members
Barry Andrews
José C. Ballón
Ronald A. Bosco
Paul S. Christensen
Phyllis Cole
Roger L. Cole
Sterling F. Delano
Ellen Emerson
Mary H. Emerson
Richard Lee Francis
Len Gougeon
Robert L. Hamilton
Don Henley
J. Parker Huber
Wesley T. Mott
Joel Myerson
Izumi Ogura
Barbara L. Packer
Wendell F. Refior
Robert D. Richardson, Jr.
Robert Nelson Riddick
Nancy Craig Simmons

Sustaining Members
Margaret Emerson Bancroft
John W. Bergstrom
Martha Coutant
Rev. F. Jay Deacon
Eleanore Dedrick
Ryoichi Fuji
Richard G. Geldard
Robert A. Gross
Richard Grossman
Robert D. Habich
Mark Hicks
David W. Hill
Robert N. Hudspeth
Linck Johnson
T. Paul Kane
Rich Koster
Frank Martucci
Merrill F. McLane
Saundra Morris
Jean McClure Mudge
Samuel K. Parish
David M. Robinson
William A. Simpson
Gayle L. Smith
Joseph Urbas
Sarah Ann Wider
Thomas Wortham

Contributing Members
Elizabeth Addison
Allen Hamilton Bates
Susan Belasco
Lucille Bell
James Bense
Becky Billings
Rita Bledsoe
Kris Boudreau
Clarence Burley
Bonnie Carr O'Neill
Martha Casey
Rev. Duane H. Cox
Meta Cushing
Helen R. Deese
Bonnie Dixon
Robert F. Donahue
Susan Dunston
Leslie E. Eckel
Kenmore H. Emerson
Tim French
Yoshiko Fujita
Shoji Goto
Alan D. Hirsch
Jon D. Inners
Hideo Kawasumi
Martin Kevorkian
Rev. James C. Leach
David Lyttle
Lorna C. Mack
Cathryn McIntyre
Rev. Daniel Medina-Hernández
Sean R. Meehan
Julie Meloni
C. Jack Orr
Ralph H. Orth
Anita Patterson
Sandy Petrulionis
Audrey Raden
Todd Richardson
George R. Rinhart
Susan Roberson
John G. Rudy
Bill R. Scalia
Kenneth J. Schlager
Lydia Serrano-Place
Frank Shuffelton
Michael A. Southwood
Jan Stievermann
Mark Stirling
Yoshio Takanashi
Joe Thomas
George Toutain
William Valentine
A.E.P. (Ed) Wall
Laura Dassow Walls
Ryan Weber
Leslie Wilson
Thomas B. Wilson
Barbara Wojtusik

Additional Gifts/Donations
Anonymous
Margaret E. Bancroft
Ryoichi Fuji

EMERSON SOCIETY PAPERS

The newsletter of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society
Published at Worcester Polytechnic Institute

www.emersonsociety.org

Editor: Wesley T. Mott
Book Review Editor: Jennifer Gurley
Editorial Assistant: Andy Marinelli
Design and Production: Peggy Isaacson

Emerson Society Papers is published twice a year. Subscriptions, which include membership in the Society, are $10 a year (students $5). Send checks for membership (calendar year) and back issues ($5 each) to Robert D. Habich, Department of English, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306-0460.

ESP welcomes notes and short articles (up to about 8 double-spaced, typed pages) on Emerson-related topics. Manuscripts are blind refereed. On matters of style, consult previous issues. We also solicit information about editions, publications, and research in progress on Emerson and his circle; queries and requests for information in aid of research in these fields; and significant news of Emersonian scholars. Send manuscripts to the editor, Wesley T. Mott, Department of Humanities & Arts, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 100 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609-2280, or email wmott@wpi.edu.

Review copies of books on Emerson should be sent to book review editor Jennifer Gurley, Department of English, Le Moyne College, 1419 Salt Springs Road, Syracuse, NY 13214-1399.

ISSN 1050-4362

PROSPECTS.

Calls for Papers

Program Co-Chair Todd Richardson announces calls for three Emerson Society panels in 2008:

American Literature Association, 22–25 May, San Francisco

Emerson's Representations of Asia, Asia's Representations of Emerson.
Given the recent interest in Emerson and transnational studies, as well as Emerson's well-known interest in Asian culture, the Emerson Society invites paper proposals on all aspects of Emerson and transpacific cultural interchange. Email 300-word abstracts to richardson_t@utpb.edu by 15 December.

Emerson and War
Given our persistently bellicose world, the Emerson Society invites paper proposals on Emerson and war, considered philosophically, historically, or biographically. Possible approaches could, for example, examine the development or disconnect of his thought regarding war or his relation to major conflicts involving the U.S. military or other world powers. Email 300-word abstracts to richardson_t@utpb.edu by 15 December.

Thoreau Society Annual Gathering, 10-13 July, Concord

Emerson and Social Reform
In concert with the Thoreau Gathering's 2008 theme, "The Individual and the State: The Politics of Thoreau in Our Time," for its panel the Emerson Society solicits papers that explore Emerson's engagement with the practical ethics of reform in his life, writings, or influence. Reform movements and political interests that have received relatively little attention are particularly welcome. Email 300-word abstracts to richardson_t@utpb.edu by 15 November.

Card of Thanks

The Emerson Society gratefully acknowledges Dr. John A. Orr, Provost ad interim and Dean of Undergraduate Studies at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Provost Orr has renewed the subvention that supports publication of *Emerson Society Papers* and enables your editor to attend conferences at which the society presents significant programs and conducts its annual business meeting. WPI provosts have provided this crucial financial support to the Emerson Society since its inception in 1989. Thank you, Provost Orr!

Treasures from the RWES Vault

Before the celebrated blue tie-dye Emerson Bicentennial T-shirt dazzled Transcendentalists in 2003, there was the classic "transparent eye-ball" T-shirt. Two of these vintage gems—in uncirculated condition—have just been discovered in the Emerson Society Archives (actually, in the editor's cool, dry storage closet). Both are forest green, XL, and made from Hanes Beefy-T pre-shrunk cotton. These collector's items are offered to members at $8 each—and we'll pay the postage. Because of the extremely limited supply, please email the editor at wmott@wpi.edu to stake your claim.

Emerson Sightings/Citings

In a letter to the editor of the Scranton, Pa., *Times-Tribune* (19 September 2007, p. 10) **Len Gougeon** recalls that Emerson in 1856 was disgusted with President Pierce's "using the rhetoric of democracy and freedom" to defend his proslavery policies. Noble words had become "fine names for an ugly thing," declared Emerson. "They call it otto of rose and lavender,—I call it bilge-water." Gougeon observes that "we are at another such bilge-water moment now in the Bush administration." "For a person who has had an adversarial relationship with the English language for his entire adult life," Gougeon writes, President Bush "has figured out how to say 'Stay the course'[in Iraq] in at least a hundred different ways. . . . We are drowning in bilge-water."

Bob Habich writes that in Robert B. Parker's recent western, *Appaloosa* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2005), the main character is considering how to avenge the death of the former town marshall. He quotes "this man Ralph Emerson," whom his sidekick identifies as "some sort of philosopher": "What I must do concerns me, not what people think" (p. 75). The quote is a close paraphrase of a line from the essay "Self-Reliance" (1841).

Susan Dunston writes: "Emerson's role in Louisa May Alcott's intellectual upbringing and daily neighborhood life, and her adolescent crush on him, emerge in an imagined but historically informed exchange of ideas, experiences, and intimacies between Alcott and Kim Bakke in Bakke's novelistic biomemoir, *Miss Alcott's E-Mail: Yours for Reforms of All Kinds* (Godine, 2006). As a former member of the Weathermen, a radical spinoff of Students for a Democratic Society, and a nurse, Bakke turns to Alcott to explore the questions of political engagement and radical reform."

Sterling "Rick" Delano writes that in the *American Arts Quarterly* (Summer 2007; pp. 29-36), Brian Peterson, in "The Wise Silence of Daniel Garber" (an allusion to Emerson's essay, "The Over-Soul"), suggests that there is a "deeply felt spirituality that permeates" the work of prominent 20th-century American impressionist painter Daniel Garber that is reminiscent of Emerson. "Emerson, like Garber," Peterson says, "felt the presence of the divine in the touch and feel of things." Although Garber was "never known to quote Emerson or Thoreau, … the seamless interweaving of the temporal and the timeless in his work is reminiscent of some of the core ideas

(Continued on page 4)

PROSPECTS (Sightings/Citings)

(Continued from page 3)

of American transcendentalism." Peterson, who is Senior Curator at the James A. Michener Art Museum in Doylestown, Pa., notes several similarities between Emerson and Garber, who was the leader of a group of Bucks County landscape painters known today as the Pennsylvania Impressionists.

Wendell Refior reports seeing the world premiere of Paul Grellong's bitingly humorous *Radio Free Emerson* at the Gamm Theatre in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Grellong, a writer for the TV series *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*, makes particularly satirical use of Emerson's essay "Self-Reliance." The play has been favorably reviewed in the *Boston Globe*, *Boston Phoenix*, *Online Magazine*, and *Broadway World*.

Your editor has spotted a syndicated column by Garrison Keillor on cheerfulness ("September: Time to lighten up and get a grip," *Cape Cod Times*, 23 September 2007, p. F3) that devotes three paragraphs to Emerson, the "philosopher of cheerful purpose," in contrast to "the puritanical Thoreau, a sorehead and loner."

Several from **Joel Brattin**:

> In an unpublished letter dated "Concord February 8 1850," Henry David Thoreau writes to Mr. C. Northend, of South Danvers Lyceum, mentioning Emerson: "Dear Sir, I am informed by Mr Emerson that you invite me through him to read a lecture on Cape Cod before your Lyceum on Monday the 18th." The letter is reproduced in facsimile in autograph dealer Joseph M. Maddalena's *Profiles in History* autograph catalog #45 (2007), item #111, and is offered for a price of $15,000. The full text of the letter will appear in Robert Hudspeth's forthcoming edition of the Thoreau correspondence.

> In John Updike's short story "My Father's Tears," published in the 27 February 2006 issue of *The New Yorker*, the narrator visits an old farmhouse in Vermont, purchased by his father-in-law, a Unitarian minister. The narrator says that this purchase "had to do, I knew, drawing upon my freshly instilled education, with idealism, with Emerson and Thoreau, with self-reliance and taking *Nature* on *Nature*'s terms."

The narrator looks at a rarely opened set of books called *The Master Works of World Philosophy*, flipping through, by chance, "the volume containing selections from Emerson's essays. 'Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact,' I read, and 'Everything is made of one hidden stuff,' and 'Every hero becomes a bore at last,' and 'We boil at different degrees.'" These four quotations derive from "Language," chapter four of *Nature* (1836); "Compensation," published in *Essays: First Series* (1841); "Uses of Great Men," from *Representative Men* (1850); and "Eloquence," in *Society and Solitude* (1870), respectively.

Late in the story, reflecting on his divorce from the minister's daughter, he muses "Why? It's hard to say. We boil at different degrees, Emerson said, and a woman came along who had my boiling point."

Another sentence in "My Father's Tears" may contain a final, less direct allusion to Emerson: The narrator notes that "The dead are so easy to misquote."

> In his article "Notable Quotables" in the 19 and 26 February 2007 issue of *The New Yorker*, Louis Menand argues that "Quotations are like prostheses. 'As Emerson/Churchill/Donald Trump once observed' borrows another person's brain waves and puts them to your own use." Menand then writes, "(If you fail to credit Emerson et al., it's called plagiarism. But isn't plagiarism just the purest form of quotation?)" (p. 189).

> In the opening paragraph of a profile of Ralph Ellison published in *The New Yorker* (7 May 2007), Hilton Als points out that the novelist had been named for "another New England writer: Ralph Waldo Emerson" (p. 74). At the conclusion of the article, Als argues that if Ellison had been able to conquer his own "caginess and social ambition," he might have succeeded in producing the work for which the world was waiting, and he might have come away with "something of the sense of freedom that his namesake described, in the closing remarks of his 1841 lecture 'Man the Reformer': 'As the farmer casts into the ground the finest ears of his grain, the time will come when we too shall hold nothing back, but shall eagerly convert more than we now possess into means and powers, when we shall be willing to sow the sun and the moon for seeds'" (p. 80).

> In an article in *The New Yorker* about Reagan's diaries, Nicholas Lemann mentions John Patrick Diggins's 2007 book *Ronald Reagan: Fate, Freedom, and the Making of History*, noting that Diggins's Reagan "was shaped by Thomas Paine and Ralph Waldo Emerson, and was comparable in Presidential greatness to Abraham Lincoln" (28 May 2007, p. 75).

> In his review in *The New Yorker* of the Richard Serra retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, Peter Schjeldahl identifies Serra as "our greatest sculptor," and notes that Serra, an English literature major, "cites Emerson and Melville as persistent lodestars" (11 and 18 June 2007, pp. 146-47).

2007 Annual Business Meeting

President Sarah Ann Wider conducted the annual business meeting of the Emerson Society at 12:30 p.m. on 25 May 2007 in the Courier Room of the Westin Copley Place Hotel, Boston. Approximately 35 members were in attendance. While everyone enjoyed coffee and cake to commemorate RWE's 204th birthday, Sarah Wider welcomed three international guests from Japan, Akemi Tanaka, Taeko Kobayashi, and Kazuhito Tsutsumi, and noted the achievements of several other international members: Mamta Anand of India, winner of last year's research award, and Fan Shengyu of China, recipient of an RWEMA fellowship to Harvard.

Bob Habich distributed the minutes from the 2006 business meeting (taken by David Robinson, with the Secretary's thanks), which were accepted with the following emendations: Barbara Packer, not Roger Thompson, would serve on the Awards Committee; and volumes 8, 9, and 10 of Emerson's *Collected Works* will appear in 2009, 2010, and 2011, respectively.

Bob Habich also distributed the May 2007 Secretary/Treasurer's Report. Current assets of the Society total $30,593 (compared to $22,137 last year). Major debits for the past 12 months include awards for Emerson scholarship (4 @ $500), web site updates ($1280); design and layout of *ESP* (2 issues), ad, and brochure ($1500); postage ($247); and printing ($165). Major *credits* for the past 12 months include revenue from the Oxford conference ($8637), membership dues ($4543), appreciation of CDs ($537), and interest on savings account ($38). Moving funds into two high-yield CDs has significantly improved our investment income. The Secretary/Treasurer's report was accepted.

Membership in the Society continues to grow, as indicated by the chart below.

May, each year:	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*
Total membership	188	183	194	210
Life members	25	22	22	22
Sustaining members	17	18	18	25
Contributing members	48	46	51	55
New members	n/a	11	22	40
States represented	35	35	43	43
Non-U.S. countries	5	6	10	10

Our international membership now includes Japan, 7 members; France, 4; Germany, 3; England, 2; Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Poland, and Russia, 1 each. We are saddened to report the deaths of long-time members True Boardman and Joan Goodwin, as well as Joel Porte.

Sarah conducted elections for Society offices:

- Wes Mott was nominated as President-elect for 2008-2009 and elected by acclamation.
- Bob Habich was nominated as Secretary-Treasurer for 2008-2009 and elected by acclamation.
- Peter Balaam and Leslie Eckel were nominated to replace Leslie Wilson and Todd Richardson on the Board for 2008 through 2010. Both were elected by acclamation. Sarah thanked Leslie Wilson and Todd Richardson for their good service.

Sarah has appointed Roger Thompson to join Jennifer Gurley on the Special Projects Committee, replacing Barbara Packer. To Barbara, our thanks for the good work.

Ron Bosco reported on the progress of the edition of Emerson's *Collected Works*. Sarah congratulated Ron and Joel Myerson for keeping the edition on a timely and regular schedule. Richard Geldard announced the availability of a new 53-minute video entitled *Emerson: The Ideal in America*. Suitable for educational use, the video was produced by the Ralph Waldo Emerson Institute and features Society members Robert D. Richardson Jr., Richard G. Geldard, Sarah Wider, and Richard Grossman. It is available for sale at www.rwe.org. The video will be premiered tonight at 5 p.m. in the Founders Room of the Campus Center, UMass-Boston.

Sarah Wider reported on the maintenance and restoration needs of the Emerson House in Concord, as presented by Beatrice Manz at last evening's Board meeting. Discussion followed, with several alternatives raised: (1) advising the family on material and books in the house that should be preserved and/or moved elsewhere, (2) using the models of Orchard House and the Thoreau Birthplace to get some idea of the cost and complexity of renovating a historic building, and (3) appointing a subcommittee to pursue options for working with RWEMA. After much discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Society form a committee to work with the RWEMA in support of the restoration of the Emerson house and the objects in it. Seconded and carried.

Sarah Wider raised the possibility of some sort of electronic discussion list for members of the Society. Todd Richardson will investigate for us.

Sarah Wider reviewed the success of the 2006 Oxford Conference and raised the possibility of a future Emerson conference in Italy. She also reminded the members about the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering in Concord, 12-15 July, which includes an Emerson Society program on Friday evening, 13 July. The Board has agreed to offer the Thoreau Society the customary $250 in support of the AG.

BOB HABICH

Jessie Bray, Phyllis Cole

Phyllis Cole presented awards to two of our members:

- The Graduate Student Paper Award to Jessie Bray of the University of South Carolina, for her ALA presentation entitled "'Not a *pure* Idealist': Edward Emerson, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the Civil War."
- The Distinguished Achievement Award to Barbara L Packer of UCLA.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m. The next business meeting will be held at the 2008 ALA conference, 22-25 May, at the Hyatt Regency in Embarcadero Center, San Francisco. The Secretary/Treasurer's Report for 2007 may be obtained by request from Bob Habich, Department of English, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306 or via e-mail: rhabich@bsu.edu.

—Robert D. Habich

Abstracts of Boston ALA Papers

The following panels were presented by the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society at the eighteenth annual conference of the American Literature Association on 25 May 2007 in Boston, Massachusetts.

SESSION I: New Approaches to Emerson: Exploring the Family Ties

Chair, Phyllis Cole, *Penn State University–Delaware County*

Realizing "the publick spirit of Plato's republic": Mary Moody Emerson, Ambition, and Women's Writing

NOELLE A. BAKER, *Independent Scholar*

As much as Mary Moody Emerson honored her ancestry and delighted in her nephews' intellectual inheritance, she also rejects such ties in her Almanacks—as when, for example, she depicts the brothers as ascendant eagles, thwarting her own intellectual and spiritual ambitions. Such ambitions position Emerson within a wider "pious family" of early American readers and writers. This "pious family" adds a significant angle in which to situate her writings, many of which became important to her descendants. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, Emerson and a coterie of women in eastern Massachusetts created such a family of readers and writers. In their letters and spiritual journals, Emerson and one member of this group, Mary Wilder Van Schalkwyck, derived authority for their writing from the conventions of eighteenth-century evangelical tracts and pious memoirs. Such devotional literature integrated intellect and piety and thus offered models for the ways in which early American bluestockings might exert intellectual ambition and spiritual authority. Philip Doddridge's *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* (1745) provided readers with models of Christian writing; significantly, he urged readers to write spiritual journals, so that their testimony might influence others. Pious memoirs similarly privileged the manuscript letters, commonplace books, and journals of their subjects; they also valorized the woman who integrated piety and intellect. Such "steady seller" devotional literature encouraged a culture of manuscript preservation and circulation as either a precursor to or viable alternative for print publication. The reading and writing practices of the coterie to which Emerson and Van Schalkwyck belonged stimulated just these kinds of activities, including their pseudonymous publication of seven letters between 1804 and 1805 in the *Monthly Anthology*. Like other Americans, each woman thus benefited from the fluid conventions of print publication and manuscript circulation at the turn of the nineteenth century.

"Not a *pure* idealist": Edward Emerson, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the Civil War

JESSIE BRAY, *University of South Carolina*

On 29 October 1863, Colonel E. N. Hallowell, hoping to recruit "the best young men in the land," honored Ralph Waldo Emerson by asking to enlist his son. Long infatuated with soldierly life, Edward Emerson had pleaded with his father to enlist since the war's inception, yet was initially refused until the Union made abolition its primary objective. Edward did eventually enlist in early 1865, but his service was short lived as General Robert E. Lee surrendered that April, and it is unlikely Edward actually saw battle.

It is curious that Emerson waited until 1865 to allow Edward to enlist, especially since Hallowell's letter had arrived more than a year earlier. It is even more inexplicable, given that Hallowell's unit was the 54th Massachusetts Volunteers, the first federally sanctioned, all-black infantry. Emerson himself was socially and financially linked to the unit. On 20 March 1863, he had lectured at the 54th's public recruitment rally at Chickering Hall in Boston; in August, he wrote a poem, "Voluntaries," to commemorate the death of the unit's original colonel, Robert Gould Shaw. Emerson's involvement in antislavery activity created an ideal context in which his son could become an officer in this famous, controversial unit and put abolition at the forefront of the Union effort. Yet, until recently, Emerson's response to Hallowell remained unknown.

On 12 November 1863, Emerson did, in fact, write a response that clarifies and complicates his relationship to the war, his son, and his commitment to abolitionism: He told Hallowell "No." Emerson's refusal evinces a previously undocumented pragmatism in his abolitionist agenda and strong protectionism for his own legacy. The 54th was an untried experiment without assurance of success, and the loss of Edward would be the loss of the Emerson dynasty. Rather than stake his legacy on the success of the 54th (and, therefore, the black race), Emerson refuses to be a "pure idealist" and invests his son in a safer venture.

"Who may in future undertake to write Father's biography?": The Emerson Family and Emerson's Reputation

ROBERT D. HABICH, *Ball State University*

Emerson's early biographical construction, in addition to being culturally determined, can also be attributed to the dynamic commercial relations among publishers, writers, family, and readership that Richard Brodhead has called the "culture of letters." Emerson's wife and children exercised an influential stewardship over the public presentation of his life.

For instance:

• In 1870, Moncure D. Conway and Alexander Ireland wrote "Emerson and His Friends," intended as a biographical introduction to an edition of Emerson's unpublished early writings projected by the London publisher John Camden Hotten. Hotten had a "bad odour in the trade," as Ireland put it, and was widely known as a pornographer. The family mobilized to stop the edition. But in doing so they also blocked Conway's and Ireland's lively, anecdotal biographical introduction. *Had* it appeared in the early 1870s, it would have revealed a personable, socially engaged, reformist thinker, not the aloof "Sage of Concord."

• In 1881 George Willis Cooke, Emerson's first biographer, sent the family a draft of his Emerson biography. Not only did Ellen Emerson fact-check the manuscript scrupulously, she and her parents also discussed the draft, paying careful attention to issues like Emerson's influences and reading. Thus Cooke's was the only biography to have benefited from Waldo Emerson's direct intervention. Thanks to Ellen and the family, many of Cooke's hagiographic inaccuracies had been erased or at least muted.

• Both Ellen and Edith Emerson Forbes conceded that in matters biographical, the authorized biographer James Elliot Cabot was the boss. In 1886, however, when Cabot demanded more material from them, Emerson's daughters seized the opportunity to provide him a wealth of reminiscences for his *Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, once again helping to rescue their father from an iconic whitewash.

These anecdotes point to a larger pattern of influence and stewardship implicating the Emerson family in the construction of Waldo's posthumous reputation. They accommodated the early biographers with generosity and grace, all the while struggling to preserve and record Emerson's fragile humanity in the face of a massive cultural appropriation.

Edward Emerson and the Filial Canon of Emerson's Poetry

JOSEPH M. THOMAS, *Caldwell College*

The canon of Emerson's poetry, both works and texts, was defined for generations of readers by the sibling Riverside and Centenary edition and reprints from them in anthologies, textbooks, and critical discussions. Literary executor James Elliot Cabot has rightfully been given credit for overseeing the Riverside edition as a whole, but documents in the Emerson Family Papers show that Emerson's son Edward in fact supervised the Riverside poetry volume and expanded it in his own Centenary edition. While best known for the 12-volume Centenary edition, 10-volume *Journals*, and biography *Emerson in Concord*, Edward's formative role as editor of the poetry may be where his influence on Emerson's literary canon was most singular.

Because of various personal circumstances, Edward was on the outskirts of the "Emerson factory" that began in the 1870s when Ellen Emerson and James Elliot Cabot became active editors for Emerson's later lectures and essays. But after his father died in 1882, he quit his medical practice and became more central to the editorial work, among other things supervising the poetry volume. His notebook of fair copies of manuscript poetry was the basis for the large appendices of unpublished verse that are key contributions of the Riverside and Centenary editions. The selection, arrangement, and construction of these poems were often editorial. This notebook also evidences the role of other family and advisors in selecting contents from the manuscripts. Other documents show how Edward and Cabot approached the poetry that Emerson had already published himself (and how they approached their own working relationship). In a version of critical editing, Edward compared Emerson's published and unpublished revisions and then altered texts, as needed, with a "better alteration." One stated principle, often ignored, was to give less credence to revisions from Emerson's later years. The Centenary *Poems* expanded work already done for the Riverside—including adding more manuscript verse and banishing the enigmatic "The Sphinx" from the opening spot, where Emerson placed it, and replacing it with "Good-Bye," a poem he had rejected as one of his "juvenilities."

Edward's work on the poetry cost him great effort, perhaps at the expense of his own aspirations. He confided to his sister Edith that he wished "we should be remembered long for good on our *own* account, but surely it will prove to be as Emerson's children." His work on the poetry became the sole arbiter of Emerson's canon for over a century, a remarkable feat well worth being remembered by.

SESSION II: Emerson on Other Shores

Chair, Todd Richardson, *University of Texas–Permian Basin*

Emerson's Encounter with European Natural History in "Goethe, or the Writer"

MICHAEL JONIK, *University at Albany, SUNY*

The goal of this essay, at least in part, is to provide a genealogy of Emerson's interaction with European scientific and natural historical thinking, especially with the work of Linnaeus, Buffon, Cuvier, Goethe, Hutton, Playfair, Agassiz, and Darwin. Whereas an understanding of natural history informed by these encounters is written across Emerson's work, my focus is the role of Goethe that Emerson demarcates in his essay from *Representative Men*, "Goethe, or the Writer." Goethe's scientific work, especially his theory of morphological botany, deeply inflected Emerson's thinking, leading him to understand form as fluxion or transition. In "Goethe, or the Writer," Emerson develops a flexible notion of classification: Nature's archive becomes an active repository, "the record is alive." For Emerson, Goethe thus defends life from the rigidity of Linnaean taxonomy by detecting "amid littleness and detail" the "Genius of life, the old cunning Proteus"; and, despite "whatever loss of French tabulation and dissection," because of him "poetry and humanity remain to us." Goethe becomes not only a representative "writer," but an "earth writer" complicit with the earth as it perpetually overwrites—or re-maps—itself. As such, Emerson's "biography" of Goethe provides us with a key landmark in understanding Emerson's interaction with European thought, especially European natural history. "Goethe" similarly marks a turning point in how the idea of nature functioned in Emerson's thought, from his earlier encounter with French botany in the Jardin des Plantes in Paris to the emerging centrality of the concept of nature as a shifting model of mental topology in his later lectures and notebooks.

Emerson's Search for a Teacher: The Jardin des Plantes

RICHARD GELDARD, *Independent Scholar*

[Abstract not available at press time.]

Transcendental Orientalism: Questioning Religious Materiality in Antebellum Encounters with China

TAMARA C. EMERSON, *Wayne State University*

In "Exporting Christian Transcendentalism, Importing Hawaiian Sugar," Rob Wilson argues that "American authors such as Emerson, Twain, Alcott, Hawthorne, Thoreau, London, and

(Abstracts continued on page 8)

Abstracts

(Continued from page 7)

Whitman participated in the circulation of distancing tropes of the Orient and the Pacific as the 'gorgeous East' and thus helped to idealize imperial Western designs" (*AL* 72 [September 2000]: 540). However, when we consider the role religion played in U.S. interactions with the East, we find less evidence that Emerson and Transcendentalism supported an imperialism of the East and more showing how Emerson's ideas worked to intervene in U.S. evangelicalism's nineteenth-century imperialization of China.

Considering Bruno Latour's 1993 anthropological models of relativism, universalism, and symmetry, I argue that evangelicalism followed a particular universalism in which one form of U.S. religion-culture was promoted as superior to any Chinese, attempting to justify, then, evangelicalism's desire for both cultural influence and material gain in China. Emerson's work, in contrast, reveals a position of symmetry. In his essay "Experience," Emerson suggests that religion is an individual experience; thus, while he praises the existence of many religions, he suggests, ultimately, that religious experience cannot even be named, calling it simply an "ineffable cause." Emerson's acceptance of experiential religious difference allows him to focus on the similarities between the East and West rather than merely the differences, as evidenced in his 1860 speech "In Honor of the Chinese Embassy," in which he suggests that Confucius spoke the same principles as Jesus did, only five hundred years earlier.

Nineteenth-century evangelical critiques of Emerson and transcendentalism provide a historical parallel to Wilson's hasty analysis of transcendentalism. In 1848, Samuel Wells Williams, a missionary to China, compared Transcendentalists to Chinese Taoists, depicting both as "destitute of common sense and unproductive of good to their fellow-men." His critique reveals the power that notions of religious difference had in U.S. imperialistic designs for the East, and the socio-economic importance of differentiating Transcendentalism from other nineteenth-century spiritual traditions.

BOB HABICH

Tamara Emerson, Richard Geldard, and Todd Richardson greet their audience.

BOB HABICH

Michael Jonik fields a question from Elizabeth Addison.

BRENDA YATES HABICH

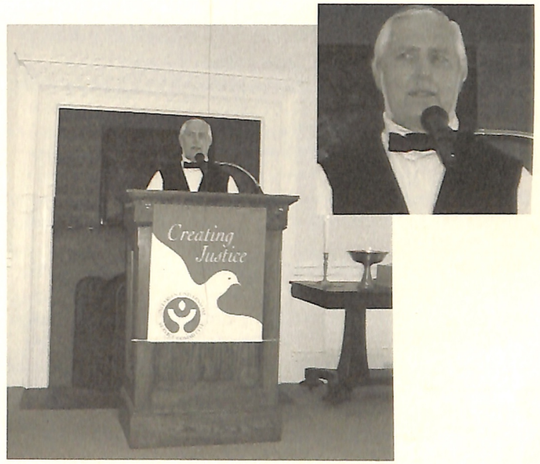
Joe Thomas, Bob Habich, Jessie Bray, Noelle Baker, and Phyllis Cole conclude their panel.

Emerson Speaks

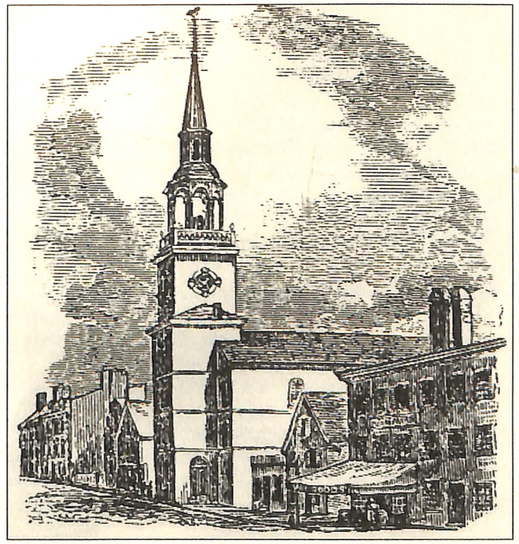
Preaching from pulpits, lecturing on self-reliance, and speaking out against slavery—Waldo Emerson sightings have been reported with increasing frequency across eastern Massachusetts in recent months. Close inspection reveals that it's actually Emerson Society board member Wendell Refior, of Belmont, Mass., who, with mutton-chop sideburns, has been performing as the Concord Sage at a variety of venues since 2003. In May, he recreated Emerson's 1839 lecture "The Protest" at First Parish Church in Concord, Mass., in an NEH-supported program sponsored by Northeastern University: "The American Lyceum and Public Culture: The Oratory of Idealism, Opportunity, and Abolition in the 19th Century."

On Sunday, 12 August, he ascended the pulpit of First Parish (Unitarian Universalist) in Watertown, Mass., to deliver Emerson's 1830 sermon XC, urging each member of the congregation to "trust yourself." Six days later, he stood outside the historic Old Manse in Concord—as part of the annual Civil War Soldier Recruitment Rally historical re-enactment—to perform a thirty-minute version of Emerson's 1851 Fugitive Slave Law Address. Wendell asserts that "Emerson's five points of how by 'natural retribution' the Fugitive Law is 'contravened' is the highlight and heart of the speech." Having performed this lecture for three years, Wendell says that "every year someone in the audience comments that it seems so relevant for today and could apply to the Patriot Act or the recent wiretapping legislation."

A statistical analyst for a biotech firm in Cambridge, Wendell Refior has also appeared as Emerson reading poetry and has spoken before middle school, adult education, and senior audiences. He will be preaching more Emerson sermons before Boston-area Unitarian Universalist churches this season and will appear in the 2008 Concord Patriot's Day Parade and annual mid-August reenactment at the Old Manse.



Wendell Refior as RWE, First Parish, Watertown, Mass. (Wendell reports that the photo was taken at an earlier point in the service before he donned his black coattails jacket to deliver the sermon—it was a hot day in August!)



Emerson's Second Church in Boston

An Emerson Bibliography, 2006

DAVID M. ROBINSON
Oregon State University

*New scholarly works on Emerson and Transcendentalism from 2006, including items missed in the 2005 bibliography (*ESP *18, i [2007]:5-6). Readers should also consult the Thoreau bibliographies in the* Thoreau Society Bulletin, *and the chapter "Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller and Transcendentalism" in the annual* American Literary Scholarship *(Duke University Press).*

Allen, Thomas M. "Frank Bidart's Emersonian Redemption." *Raritan* 25:95-114. [Emerson's influence on the poet]

Atchley, J. Heath. "The Death of Emerson: Writing, Loss, and Divine Presence." *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 20:251-65. [Emerson's philosophical response to death]

Augst, Thomas. *The Clerk's Tale: Young Men and Moral Life in Nineteenth-Century America*. Chicago [2003]. [Includes a chapter on Emerson's lectures]

Baker, Anne. *Heartless Immensity: Literature, Culture, and Geography in Antebellum America*. Michigan. [Cultural assumptions of space, boundaries and nationhood]

Barolini, Helen. *Their Other Side: Six American Women and the Lure of Italy*. Fordham. [Fuller in Italy]

Bense, James. "At Odds with 'De-Transcendentalizing Emerson': The Case of William James." *NEQ* 69:355-86. [James and Emerson]

Bosco, Ronald A., and Joel Myerson. *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*. Massachusetts Historical Society, distributed by University of Virginia Press. [Essays from the 2003 Emerson Bicentennial conference at the Massachusetts Historical Society. Individual essays will also be listed here.]

Bosco, Ronald A., and Joel Myerson. *The Emerson Brothers: A Fraternal Biography in Letters*. Oxford. [Emerson and his brothers revealed through their correspondence]

Buell, Lawrence, ed. *The American Transcendentalists: Essential Writings*. Modern Library. [Anthology]

Buell, Lawrence. "Saving Emerson for Posterity." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 33-47. [A call to de-localize critical perspectives on Emerson]

Burkholder, Robert E. "(Re)Visiting 'The Adirondacs': Emerson's Confrontation with Wild Nature." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 247-69. [Reassessment of Emerson's excursion into the Adirondack Mountains]

Chung, Eun-Gwi. "'It Does Not Touch Me': Emersonian Poetics of Mourning in 'Experience.'" *NCLiE* 10:185-204. [The account of grief in "Experience"]

Cole, Phyllis. "Emerson at 200." *RALS* 30:316-30. [Recent Emerson scholarship and needed work on Emerson and women]

Cole, Phyllis. "The New Movement's Tide: Emerson and Women's Rights." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 117-52. [Emerson's view of the women's movement]

Deese, Helen R. *Selected Journals of Caroline Healey Dall. Volume I: 1838-1855*. Massachusetts Historical Society. [Extensive selections from Dall's journals]

Dimock, Wai Chee. "The Planetary Dead: Margaret Fuller, Ancient Egypt, Italian Revolution." *ESQ* 50[2004]:23-57. [Fuller, Italy, and Egypt. See also *Through Other Continents*]

Dimock, Wai Chee. *Through Other Continents: American Literature Across Deep Time*. Princeton. [Global and deep historical reading of Emerson, Thoreau, and Fuller]

Elbert, Monika M., Julie E. Hall, and Katherine Rodier, eds. *Reinventing the Peabody Sisters*. Iowa. [15 new critical and biographical essays]

Epstein, Andrew. *Beautiful Enemies: Friendship and Postwar American Poetry*. Oxford. [Emerson and the New York poets]

Finseth, Ian. "Evolution, Cosmopolitanism, and Emerson's Antislavery Politics." *AL* 77:729-60. [Evolution and antislavery in Emerson's thought]

Fuller, Randall. "Errand into the Wilderness: Perry Miller as American Scholar." *AmLH* 18:102-28. [Miller, Emerson, and the public role of the scholar]

Garvey, T. Gregory. *Creating the Culture of Reform in Antebellum America*. Georgia. [Theology and social reform in the antebellum period]

Garvey, T. Gregory. "Emerson, Garrison, and the Anti-Slavery Society." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 153-82. [Emerson and Garrison as reformers]

Gemme, Paola. *Domesticating Foreign Struggles: The Italian Risorgimento and Antebellum American Identity*. Georgia [2005]. [Fuller, Italy, and America]

Gilmore, Michael T. "A Plot Against America: Free Speech and the American Renaissance." *Raritan* 26:90-113. [Attempted censorship of antislavery texts in the antebellum period]

Golec, Michael J., "*Martha Stewart Living* and the Marketing of Emersonian Perfectionism." *Home Cultures* 3:1-24. [Emerson's theories of the home and modern marketing]

Gougeon, Len. "Emerson, Whitman, and Eros." *WWQR* 23 [2005]:126-46. [Emerson, Whitman, and theories of mind/body unity]

Gougeon, Len. "Emerson and the British: Challenging the Limits of Liberty." *REAL* 22:179-213. [Emerson's conflict with British intellectuals over slavery]

Gougeon, Len. "The Legacy of Reform: Emersonian Idealism, Moorfield Storey, and the Civil Rights Movement." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 183-210. [Storey and Emerson's progressive legacy]

Habich, Robert D. "Holmes, Cabot, and Edward Emerson and the Challenges of Writing Emerson's Biography in the 1880s." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 3-32. [The first biographies of Emerson]

Hudspeth, Robert N. "Later Emerson: 'Intellect' and *The Conduct of Life*." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 405-31. [Emerson's later lectures on the mind]

Johnson, Linck. "Emerson: America's First Public Intellectual?" *MIH* 2 [2005]: 135-51. [Emerson and cultural authority]

Kern, Robert. "Fabricating Ecocentric Discourse in the American Poem (and Elsewhere)." *NLH* 37:425-45. [Emerson, Thoreau and Environmentalism]

Koopman, Colin. "Pragmatism as a Philosophy of Hope: Emerson, James, Dewey, Rorty." *JSpecPhil* 20:106-16. [Politics and pragmatism]

Larson, Kerry. "Illiberal Emerson." *NCP* 33:28-72. [Emerson and classic liberal theory]

Manson, Deborah. "'The Trance of the Ecstatica': Margaret Fuller, Animal Magnetism, and the Transcendent Female Body." *L&M* 25:298-324. [Fuller and Mesmerism]

Meehan, Sean Ross. "Emerson's Photographic Thinking." *ArQ* 62:27-58. [Reflexivity in photography and epistemology]

Meehan, Sean Ross. "Living Learning: Lessons from Emerson's School." *ESP* 17, ii:4-5,15. [Emerson as educator]

Menze, Ernest A. "Herder and American Transcendentalism: Reception and Influence on the Religious Dimension of the Movement." *Herder Jahrbuch* 8:27-41. [Transcendentalism and Herder]

Mills, Bruce. *Poe, Fuller, and the Mesmeric Arts: Transition States in the American Renaissance*. Missouri. [Fuller's use of mesmeric ideas]

Mott, Wesley T. "'The Power of Recurring to the Sublime at Pleasure': Emerson and Feeling." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 367-90. [Emerson and the "moral sublime"]

Myerson, Joel. *A Supplement to Ralph Waldo Emerson: A Descriptive Bibliography*. Oak Knoll and University of Pittsburgh [2005]. [Supplement to Myerson's Emerson *Bibliography*]

Norris, Andrew, ed. *The Claim to Community: Essays on Stanley Cavell and Political Philosophy*. Stanford. [Includes references to Cavell's treatment of Emerson and Thoreau]

Packer, Barbara. "History and Form in Emerson's 'Fate.'" *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 432-52. [Connects "Fate" with Emerson's antislavery thought]

Pary, Marek. "Beyond the Traveler's Testimony: Emerson's *English Traits* and the Construction of Postcolonial Counter-Discourse." *ATQ* 20:565-90. [*English Traits* from a post-colonialist perspective]

Petrulionis, Sandra Harbert. *To Set This World Right: The Antislavery Movement in Thoreau's Concord*. Cornell. [The Concord antislavery movement and its female leadership]

Petrulionis, Sandra Harbert, and Laura Dassow Walls, eds. *More Day to Dawn: Thoreau's Walden for the Twenty-First Century*. Massachusetts. [Republication of the *Walden* sesquicentennial issue of *Nineteenth-Century Prose*]

Ready, Kathryn. "Dissenting Sociability and the Anglo-American Context: The Correspondence of William Ellery Channing and Lucy Aiken." *Symbiosis* 9 [2005]:117-33. [Channing, Aiken, and free speech]

Rhu, Lawrence F. *Stanley Cavell's American Dream: Shakespeare, Philosophy, and Hollywood Movies*. Fordham [Cavell's response to Emerson]

Richardson, Todd H. "Publishing the Cause of Suffrage: The *Woman's Journal*'s Appropriation of Ralph Waldo Emerson." *NEQ* 76:578-608. [The representation of Emerson as a women's rights supporter]

Roberson, Susan L. "Emerson, Columbus, and the Geography of Self-Reliance: The Example of the Sermons." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 273-88. [Emerson's use of Columbus]

Roberts, Timothy M. "Margaret Fuller's Rome and the Problem of Provincial American Democracy." *Patterns of Prejudice* 40:45-60. [Fuller, Italy, and America]

Robinson, David M. "Experience, Instinct, and Emerson's Philosophical Reorientation." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 391-404. ["Experience" and Emerson's London lectures]

Robinson, David M. "'The New Epoch of Belief': The *Radical* and Religious Transformation in Nineteenth-Century New England." *NEQ* 79:557-77. [Key early texts of the Free Religion movement]

Sachs, Aaron. *The Humboldt Current: Nineteenth-Century Exploration and the Roots of American Environmentalism*. Viking. [Humboldt and American environmental thinking]

Sandage, Scott A. *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America*. Harvard [2005]. [Thoreau, Emerson, and the culture of success]

Schulenberg, Ulf. "Books, Rocks, and Sentimental Education—Self-Culture and the Desire for the Really Real in Henry David Thoreau." *Amst* 51:167-91. [Thoreau, Emerson, and pragmatism]

Simmons, Nancy Craig. "Emerson and His Audiences: The New England Lectures, 1843-1844." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 51-85. [Emerson's rising cultural authority as a lecturer]

Sklansky, Jeffrey. "Business and Solitude." *MIH* 3:357-69. [Emerson's cultural impact]

Smith, Caleb. "Emerson and Incarceration," *AL* 78:207-34. [Emerson's changing view of incarceration and solitude]

Stadler, Gustavus. *Troubling Minds: The Cultural Politics of Genius in the United States, 1840-1890*. Minnesota. [Emerson, Fuller, and "genius"]

Stoneley, Peter. "Sewing in Concord." *WS* 35:397-412. [Sewing groups and social reform in Concord]

Tauber, Alfred I. "The Reflexive Project: Reconstructing the Moral Agent." *HHS* 18 [2005]:49-75. [Emerson and Kierkegaard on intellectual "reflexivity"]

Tharaud, Barry, ed. *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Bicentenary Appraisals*. Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier. [Republication of the Emerson Bicentennial volume of *Nineteenth-Century Prose*]

Thomas, Joseph M. "Poverty and Power: Revisiting Emerson's Poetics." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 213-46. [Emerson's "skeptical" poetics]

Van Cromphout, Gustaaf. "Emerson on Language and Action." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 315-33. [Emerson's language theory]

Von der Heydt, Jim. "The Writer's Occupation: Dickinson and Emerson Out of Doors." *ESQ* 51 [2005]:307-39. [Emerson and Dickinson as spatial poets]

Von Frank, Albert J. "Emerson and Gnosticism." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 289-314. [Emerson's Gnostic stance]

Von Mehren, Joan. "Margaret Fuller, the Marchese Giovanni Ossoli, and the Marriage Question: Considering the Research of Dr. Roberto Colzi." *RALS* 30:104-43. [New research into Fuller's marriage]

Walls, Laura Dassow. "'If Body Can Sing': Emerson and Victorian Science." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 334-66. [Science and Emerson's London lectures]

Warren, James Perrin. *John Burroughs and the Place of Nature*. Georgia. [Burroughs's response to Emerson and Thoreau]

Webb, Joe. "Echoes of Paine: Tracing *The Age of Reason* Through the Writings of Emerson." *ATQ* 20:513-25. [Emerson and Paine on Jesus]

Wider, Sarah Ann. "Chladni Patterns, Lyceum Halls, and Skillful Experimenters: Emerson's New Metaphysics for the Listening Reader." *Emerson Bicentennial Essays*, pp. 86-114. [Strategies of communication in Emerson's lectures]

Wilson, Leslie Perrin. "'No Worthless Books': Elizabeth Peabody's Foreign Library, 1840-52." *PBSA* 99 [2005]:113-52. [Peabody's library and transcendentalism]

Wilson, Leslie Perrin. "'The Tenant is More Than the House': Selected Portraits in The Concord Free Public Library." *NCP* 33:73-116. [Emerson portraits in the library]

Wulf, Naomi. "The Politics of Past and Progress in Jacksonian Democracy." *ATQ* 20:647-58. [Brownson, transcendentalism, and Jacksonianism]

Xu, Wenying. "An Exile's Will to Canon and Its Tension with Ethnicity: Lee." pp. 145-64 in *Multiethnic Literature and Canon Debates*, ed. Mary Jo Bona and Irma Maini. SUNY. [On the contemporary poet Li-Young Lee]

Xu, Wenying. "Transcendentalism, Ethnicity, and Food in the Work of Li-Young Lee." *boundary* 2 33:129-57. [On the contemporary poet Li-Young Lee]

Reviews

Emerson Bicentennial Essays.
RONALD A. BOSCO AND JOEL MYERSON, EDS. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006. xx + 473 pp. $60.00 cloth.

In academic culture, anniversaries usually serve as occasions that multiply the output of disparate interpretations to which an author's works are subjected. So it had been with Emerson's in 1982, and so it was in 2003. While the 100th anniversary of his death provided the stimulus for an enormous revitalization of Emerson studies, the bicentennial of his birth in many ways resembled more an intellectual taking of stocks, a reviewing of the many new Emersons constructed from a multiplicity of theoretical models over the past two decades. *Emerson Bicentennial Essays* is, in the words of Ron Bosco and Joel Myerson, an attempt to define "where Emerson studies stand at the beginning of the third century in his ever-lengthening shadow" (xv).

The collection in many respects fulfills this goal admirably. It is a splendid assemblage of high-profile essays that features a number of renowned scholars who summarize their groundbreaking readings of Emerson or add interesting new facets to them. Of this nature are the pieces by Phyllis Cole and Len Gougeon, as well as three of the essays appearing in the final section, "Emerson and the World of Ideas": Susan L. Roberson's probing extension of her study on the development of Emerson's philosophy of self-reliance in the sermons; Laura Dassow Walls' account of her trailblazing book on Emerson's connections with the Victorian natural sciences; and David M. Robinson's lucid continuation of his previous reflections on Emerson's increasingly pragmatic orientation in light of the newly published *Later Lectures*. In addition, there are experimental forays such as Sarah Ann Wider's use of reader-response criticism to investigate how average (i.e., non-academic) readers reacted to Emerson's writings, or Robert E. Burkholder's experientially oriented attempt to combine eco-criticism and textual analysis. Almost without exception celebratory in tone, the essays explore the profundity of Emerson's thinking, the intricacies of his style, and the importance of his work as a deeply engaged public intellectual.

The individual contributions frequently speak to each other in productive ways, not least because they are cleverly organized in thematic rubrics, of which the first two—"The Construction of Emerson" and "Emerson's Audience"—address the history of Emerson's reception and iconization as an author. Robert D. Habich sheds new light on the diverging iconic images of Emerson created by his early biographers, and Nancy Craig Simmons fruitfully investigates the original audience of his 1843-1844 lecture tour. The section "Emerson the Reformer" reflects one of the main trends in post-1982 Emerson studies: the rediscovery of his involvement in the contemporary reform movements. As the leading authorities in their respective fields, Gougeon and T. Gregory Garvey give almost unreservedly positive assessments of his engagement in the abolitionist cause, while Cole shows us an Emerson largely supportive of the women's rights movement. In addition to Burkholder's essay, the section on "Emerson the Poet" contains Joseph M. Thomas's very useful critique of still prevailing misconceptions about Emerson's inspirational poetics. A final section on the history of ideas features learned and insightful studies by Gustaaf Van Cromphout and Albert J. von Frank—the first on Emerson's Romantic philosophy of language, the second on the parallels between Emerson's thinking and ancient Gnosticism—as well as Wesley T. Mott's superb examination of "one of the most neglected and misunderstood aspects of his personality and vision: his cultivation of feeling and his various ways of arousing it in his audience" (367). These pieces are nicely complemented by Robert N. Hudspeth's and Barbara Packer's revealing interrogations of the new ideas and contexts which inform Emerson's later writings.

Notwithstanding all the praise this volume deserves, I share Lawrence Buell's uneasiness--expressed in his thought-provoking contribution, "Saving Emerson for Posterity"—over the inherent danger of a project such as this to monumentalize its subject or the images we have made of him. I also agree with Buell's concerns about the participants' hesitancy to "engage in boat-rocking" (33). I cannot but point out a few shortcomings of the volume when considering it as a look into the future, or even as an account of the status quo of Emerson studies. First, none of Emerson's outspoken and influential *critics*, such as John Carlos Rowe or Christopher Newfield, are represented. Whatever one thinks of their arguments that Emerson epitomizes conformist liberal humanism and/or an imperialist racism (I myself find their claims unconvincing), such voices should have been heard here, even at the price of disturbing the harmonious atmosphere of enthusiastic Emersonians.

Buell also identifies several neglected or controversial subfields in Emerson studies that he believes are the most promising, especially if we are to avoid entering a season of intellectual exhaustion in the future. Significantly, none of these is taken into view by the *Bicentennial Essays*. He names, for example, the study of Emerson's role in the development of modern philosophy through his influence on Nietzsche, William James, and other Pragmatists, and also his responsiveness to south Asian religions, which has to be understood as an expression of the hitherto largely unacknowledged anti-nationalist, cosmopolitan orientation of his intellectual work. That said, however, the collection remains an invaluable contribution to a fuller understanding of this endlessly fascinating writer, and a must-have source book for anyone working in the field.

—JAN STIEVERMANN
University of Tuebingen

Supplement to Ralph Waldo Emerson: A Descriptive Bibliography.
JOEL MYERSON. Pittsburgh: Oak Knoll Press, 2005. xviii + 303 pp. $98.00 cloth.

Since its publication in 1982, Joel Myerson's *Ralph Waldo Emerson: A Descriptive Bibliography* has been the essential bibliographic study of Emerson. That the *Supplement* is now available is very good news for scholars and collectors alike. In the years between publications, Myerson, working tirelessly, discovered and classified previously unknown work by and about Emerson: rare editions and collections, pamphlets, and reports of appearances in periodicals and anthologies. Myerson also has corrected some errors in the original bibliography and offered additional descriptive material to standing entries, such as the delightful note to an edition of *Essays: First Series* and *Essays: Second Series* which states that "Walt Whitman received a set ... bound in 'half calf' and boxed, on 1 October 1888" (12)). Also new are entries on the many newly published primary materials, such as Emerson's *Poetry Notebooks* and *Later Lectures*. Book and reception historians in particular will find Myerson's bibliography invaluable thanks to the substantial amount of new material in the section on "Reprinted Material in Books and Pamphlets"; the wealth of new entries on nineteenth-century gift books and textbooks provides much needed information about Emerson and the reading practices of children and women. Since the classification system employed is the same as the 1982 bibliography, the two easily can be used in tandem. The *Supplement* ensures that Myerson's will continue to be the standard Emerson bibliography for many years to come. All serious scholars and collectors of Emerson will not want to be without it.

—TODD RICHARDSON
University of Texas of the Permian Basin

Der Sündenfall der Nachahmung: Zum Problem der Mittelbarkeit im Werk Ralph Waldo Emersons. [The Original Fall of Imitation: The Problem of Mediacy in the Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson].
JAN STIEVERMANN. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2007. 953 pp. EUR 118 cloth.

In his monumental study, Jan Stievermann takes Emerson's concern with the accessibility (or inaccessibility) of the Real to be the guiding question of his philosophy. Specifically, Stievermann shows that despite tremendous turns in his intellectual life, Emerson's concern with the Real and its mediation remained profoundly religious throughout. This book offers an important counterpoise to interpretations that understand Emerson as a pragmatist or even deconstructionist *avant la lettre*. Stievermann's extraordinary erudition allows him adequately to root Emerson in the philosophical, theological, and literary context of nineteenth-century America. Together with parallels he points out between Emerson and the *German Frühromantiker*, Stievermann's contextualist approach substantiates his claim that Emerson might best be understood as an innovative religious thinker.

The book demonstrates that Emerson's ongoing concern is with the problem of mediacy and immediacy, most visible in his engagement with the principle of imitation, which carries religious, literary, and ethical connotations. Drawing on Stephen Whicher's paradigm, Stievermann presumes that Emerson's work can be divided into three phases; but opposing Whicher, he insists on the continuities rather than the ruptures in Emerson's philosophical development. While in his first phase (ca. 1826-1836), Emerson largely conceived of imitation in Unitarian terms as the need to imitate the example of Christ; he gradually moved toward the deification of the individual, and thus successively cast off any heteronomous demands on the cultivation of the subject. His search for a radical immediacy through an individualized piety increasingly set him at odds with the Unitarian emphasis on the guiding moral function of Jesus.

Turning away from Unitarianism, Emerson located humanity's redemptive potential within the subject, thus initiating his second, Transcendentalist period (ca. 1836-41). The "original fall of imitation" was not a singular event that had occurred in a remote past, but one that recurs with any instance of uncritical repetition of established patterns, even if the *exemplum Christi* figures as the reference point. Stievermann meticulously reveals these radical thoughts in Emerson's early sermons, so that his Divinity School Address must not be understood as a radical break, but as a consequential reorientation of his thought. Moreover, Emerson's deification of the subject culminated in the demand that we also "enjoy an original relation to the universe" (*Nature*), a demand which also manifested itself in his poetics. In a typically Romantic manner, Emerson saw the poet-prophet as the mediator of immediacy who thus comes as close as possible to the original well of being, for even he never can reach through to that well, but must creatively appropriate material passed down to him.

Emerson's confidence in the redemptive potential of art and his belief in the possibility of finding an immediate relation to the universe were shaken in his third period, the post-romantic and post-transcendentalist phase (ca. 1841-75). Acknowledging that the Me can never fully penetrate to the Not-me, Emerson seems to accept the fall of man as irreversible. While Emerson moved beyond his earlier idealism, this is not tantamount to a disintegration of his religiosity, for, as Stievermann shows, Emerson's writing remained profoundly religious and sought a new way of conceptualizing our vain attempts at immediacy. In what is probably the most original and important part of his study, Stievermann points out that Emerson syncretistically blended elements of Christianity and classical Greek philosophy with Hinduism, Confucianism, and Buddhism and thus what Stievermann calls an "existentialist philosophy of intermediacy," a term that seeks to capture Emerson's attempt to mediate between extreme positions to achieve a balanced ethics of life. Emerson accepts the unattainability of an unmediated presence and substitutes a leap of faith that throws us into an open form of existence.

This indispensable book raises important questions that might lead to a reevaluation of contemporary conceptions of Emerson. Can we really discern Emerson's later writings as proto-pragmatist, increasingly secularized texts, or should we not rather read them as syncretistic religious texts concerned with existential questions? Do his canonical and, above all, his later works not continue the philosophical project he commenced in his early sermons rather than constitute a separate body of work? Moreover, if we accept Emerson's religiosity, do we not have to allow for the possibility of more than one road into modernity? Finally, from a social perspective, we need to ask how the religious quest for what Emerson eventually acknowledged as an unreachable ideal is influenced by sociopolitical tendencies of nineteenth-century America. We can only hope that Stievermann will publish parts of the book in English so as to make it available to a larger audience.

—CLEMENS SPAHR
University of Mainz

***The Conduct of Life*. By Ralph Waldo Emerson. The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Vol. VI.**
DOUGLAS EMORY WILSON, TEXTUAL EDITOR. BARBARA L. PACKER, HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION. JOSEPH SLATER, NOTES. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003. xciii + 455 pp. $80.00 cloth.

This latest addition to the new and greatly improved *Collected Works* delivers an Emerson-in-progress whose philosophical writings are embedded in the times and whose processes of composition perhaps never have been as clearly and closely revealed. Barbara Packer introduces Emerson's nine essays by situating them in terms of his struggles between 1848 and 1860 to define his relation to politics and speak to the national crisis over slavery. "It is ironic," she argues, "that *The Conduct of Life*, born of Emerson's involvement in one of the most turbulent decades of the nation's history, should have acquired in our own day a reputation for aloofness and unconcern with events" (lxvi). As an effort to correct this view, Packer's introduction particularly complements the current scholarly interest in portraying an activist Emerson as it tracks his evolving philosophical considerations of human action and current events in the journals, notebooks, the recently published (2001) *Later Lectures* (1843-1871), and also in the new *Conduct of Life*

(Continued on page 14)

Reviews

(Continued from page 13)

itself, which includes Douglas Emory Wilson's 26-page index of "Parallel Passages" in Emerson's private writings.

Wilson's meticulous textual editing likewise enables us to appreciate this Emerson forever revising his writing and his views. Following the editing principles established for the *Collected Works* as a whole, Wilson has collated "critical and unmodernized" (lxviii) forms of the nine essays that appeared together for the first time in the 1860 *Conduct of Life*. Each essay here is compiled from differing mixtures of Emerson's original manuscript (when extant), his emendations (of which he made many), and the 1860 and later printed editions (1870; 1876; 1883; 1904). In most cases, the original manuscript serves as copy-text (in three cases, printed versions must be used), because the aim is to recover Emerson's true intentions (lxviii; lxxi) from beneath the decisions of previous editors. Wilson's Textual Introduction, as well as the opening pages of the textual apparatus, lucidly explain the complicated editing process; the apparatus itself and an appendix of "Alterations in the Manuscripts" record variant readings and when necessary discuss the reasoning behind Wilson's own choices. His precision is simply stunning. What emerges is a portrait of Emerson as a composer "whose process of assembling the elements of a composition and then organizing and revising them to produce the [occasional] effect he desired" became his "art" (419). Flipping between the finished essays and their textual, authorial, and editorial origins, we feel as if we are watching Emerson at work.

Joseph Slater's 126 pages of notes are marvelous. More than simply a guide to Emerson's literary allusions or an index of personal events that might have shaped his writings, Slater's pages clarify (and at times interpret) moments in the essays in variously philological, historical, literary, philosophical, theological, scientific, and practical terms. Slater is, for example, as fluent in the world's wisdom traditions as he is knowledgeable of rudimentary lighting implements: In one moment he traces Hindu mythology, in the next he corrects Emerson's claim in "Illusions" to have "shot Bengal lights"—"flares of chemically treated paper"—into Mammoth Cave. In fact, Slater informs, Emerson would have used Roman candles (295).

My only concern is that the editorial practices at times produce moments that almost eclipse rather than highlight the dialectical development of Emerson's thinking on critical issues. For example, the essay "Wealth" appears here in a form that includes a decisive paragraph Emerson wrote in 1870, for *Prose Works*, and not in 1860, for the original printing of *The Conduct of Life*. The paragraph reverses Emerson's earlier view that immigrants drain the country of wealth, and claims instead that they help produce it. Wilson explains that the editors of the 1883 Riverside and the 1904 Centenary editions of the *Collected Works* did not add the 1870 paragraph because they likely "preferred to print Emerson's first thoughts but not his reconsiderations" (322). Having both views on hand seems critical; but placing the 1870 paragraph in the main body of the text, presenting it as *if* it were produced in 1860, seems to misrepresent the Emerson in his times that this wonderful new edition otherwise offers. (For a somewhat different view of this example, see Phyllis Cole, "Emerson at 200," in *Resources for American Literary Study* 30 [2005]:316-30.)

The work that went into compiling this volume is daunting, and as a result of it we have the first truly critical, scholarly edition of this crucial Emersonian text. We now eagerly await the appearance in January 2008 of *Society and Solitude*, the seventh volume of *The Collected Works*, edited, introduced, and annotated by Ronald A. Bosco.

—Jennifer Gurley
Le Moyne College

WES MOYT

Concord 2007: "Emerson and the Quotidian Life"

A packed Masonic Temple in Concord, Mass., enjoyed this year's Emerson Society panel at the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering on 13 July. In keeping with the Gathering's theme, "'Simplify, simplify': Thoreau's Timeless Message," the speakers explored various aspects of Emerson's everyday ethics. Moderator Bob Habich stands with the speakers (from left) Elizabeth Addison, Susan Dunston, and Sarah Ann Wider.

In Memoriam

Joan Welch Goodwin, 1926-2006

Joan Goodwin—independent scholar, religious educator, historian and preserver of women's heritage—died on 13 October 2006. When I think of Joan, I see her gentle presence: serene, unhurried, thoughtful, a source of strength and inspiration. A wise woman with strong and evolving beliefs, she lived what she believed and she accomplished much. She leaves a huge legacy in the hearts and minds of all who knew and loved her.

NANCY SIMMONS

It is difficult to believe that Joan was almost eighty. Her youthful appearance and eagerness and enthusiasm for all experience bespoke her open mind and spirit. She stayed fully present to whatever she was doing and whomever she was with. That is, she was truly self-reliant in the Emersonian sense: trusting herself and others because she knew "the absolutely trustworthy…seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being."

I was privileged to know Joan for almost twenty years. We met about 1987, soon after I began my Mary Moody Emerson letters project. Joan, semi-retired after fourteen years on the staff of the Unitarian Universalist Association in Boston, was returning, after thirty years, to her biography of Sarah Bradford Ripley—Waldo Emerson's other significant aunt. I saw her during frequent research trips to the Boston area; at Collegium (Association of Liberal Religious Scholars), one of many organizations to which Joan introduced me; and, with Phyllis Cole, at the July meeting of our "Mary Moody Emerson Society" during the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering in Concord.

As our friendship grew, I often stayed at Joan's Brookline apartment when in the area. She was a gentle hostess, always understanding my need to accomplish as much as possible in the library every day. We'd breakfast—yogurt, granola and fresh fruit; I'd take off for the T at the bottom of Hawes Street; and when I returned at whatever late hour, she'd greet me cheerfully, her spirit beaming: what did you learn today? One of my strongest memories is of Joan's daily morning practice. She left her bedroom door open and rose early; by the time I awoke on the living room sofa, she was already well into her practice, sitting quietly in meditation or moving through the graceful forms of Tai Chi. There I saw the source of her equanimity and strength

Joan's biography was published as *The Remarkable Mrs. Ripley* (Northeastern University Press, 1998). As she reveals in the preface, Joan identified strongly with her subject, an intellectual woman constrained by the mores of her age, who managed to rock babies, shell peas, and read Greek simultaneously. She understands Sarah's "tormented spiritual struggles" as her researches into science conflicted with her pious religious upbringing. Unlike Sarah, Joan did not replace theology with science as her "principle authority." Instead, one strand of her career—and her life—focused on intersections between science and religion. Hence her dedication to the Institute for the Study of Religion and Science.

Following the memorial service at Boston's Arlington Street Church in December, Phyllis Cole remarked on finally meeting "all the Joan Goodwins at once." Only then did many of us learn that Joan held an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, awarded in 1984 by Starr King School for the Ministry, Berkeley, Calif. Joan is an inspiration to all, as woman, teacher, scholar, friend, and contemporary "Transcendentalist," who makes even the most devoted skeptic believe in "spirituality." Thank you, Joan Goodwin, for raising our spiritual consciousness, for being you, and for sharing your light—the life of a very private, but also very humane, friend.

—Nancy Craig Simmons

Barbara Packer
(Continued from page 1)

synthesis of recent scholarship in the field. She not only makes dialogic use of the recently edited letters and journals of Emerson, Thoreau, and Fuller; she also integrates these deftly with their major published works and a myriad of other players and contexts, from Orestes Brownson and Theodore Parker to Marianne Dwight at Brook Farm and the female prisoners visited by Fuller at Sing Sing. With new insight she grounds the movement in philosophy and church history. She credits Fuller alongside Emerson and Thoreau as a major voice of the movement and weaves gender concerns into her study of women and men alike. She pays full attention to political and social reform, not only Brook Farm and Fruitlands but also the crisis of conscience over slavery. Her literary history genuinely encompasses the revolutions in textual and interpretive scholarship that have transformed this field over the past three decades. Indeed the accomplishment grows when we realize that no one else has attempted a full-scale literary history of Transcendentalism since Octavius Brooks Frothingham in 1876. It is surely fitting for the Emerson Society to recognize Barbara Packer's achievement both in this book and through the decades of her scholarship.

—*Phyllis Cole*

BOB HABICH

Barbara Packer is announced as recipient of the Distinguished Achievement Award.