On 10 December 1833, a group of distinguished citizens of Albany, New York, organized the “Young Men’s Association,” based upon the Young Men’s Christian Association begun just four years earlier in England. The stated mission of the Association was to establish and maintain a library and reading room, sponsor lectures in the arts and sciences, host debates, and encourage “other means of promoting moral and intellectual development.” Within a short time its leadership was able to claim the “support of the best men and women of Albany,” with early membership exceeding 750 persons. At first the Association drew its presenters from a pool of local academics and clergy, but as its membership and reputation grew so did its ability to attract better known speakers, among them Ralph Waldo Emerson. Between 1849 and 1869 sizeable audiences gathered to experience “the phenomenon of Ralph Waldo Emerson—outstanding lecturer of his age,” at each of his eight known appearances in Albany.

Plans for Emerson’s first public appearance in Albany were drawn up in a 28 September 1848 letter from Emerson to M. W. Lamoureux, Chairman of the Young Men’s Association. That first lecture took place on Friday evening, 11 January 1849, at the North Pearl Street Methodist Church. The Albany Evening Journal hailed Emerson’s reading of “Instinct and Inspiration” as a resounding success, “if large audiences and unanimous applause are any proof of the fact.” The reviewer described the lecture as “cool, penetrating, sagacious and witty. We all form preconceptions of a writer with whose works alone we are familiar, and these conceptions are always more or less incorrect. Many may have been disappointed, but we are sure that none were disappointed unpleasantly.”

Two weeks later Emerson spoke at Albany’s First Presbyterian Church. The building’s new facade was still under construction, but the Young Men’s Association was confident that this would not deter people from attending.

“The reputation of the Lecturer, as well as the subject he has chosen,” announced the Association in the Evening Journal, “will undoubtedly secure a full house.” Emerson delivered “The Spirit of the Times” on the evening of 26 January, remained in Albany for two more days, and arrived back in Boston by the 29th.

Nearly one year later, on 2 January 1850, Emerson informed his brother that he was “expecting to go to Albany next week….” J.N. Cutler, Recording Secretary for the Young Men’s Association, anticipated an overflow crowd for Emerson’s return and felt it necessary to announce in the Evening Journal that his organization had hired for this event “a competent person to attend the door…with directions to admit no person who has not a regular ticket.” Members of the Association having its interest at heart, will at once see the propriety of co-operating with the committee in the enforcement of this salutary rule.” The paper announced on 10 January 1850 that “Emmerson [sic] the embodiment of American transcendentalism, delivers the lecture to-night.” The address, given at the North Methodist Church, was supposed to have been “The Spirit of the Times” but was changed instead to “Instinct and Inspiration” from his series Natural History of Intellect. Emerson had worked on the series since April 1848 and drew lecture material from it during 1849-1850. He remained in Albany for several days before continuing his lecture tour through Buffalo, Sandusky, Cincinnati, and on to St. Louis.

Emerson had likely left the city when a sharply critical review of his 10 January lecture appeared in the 15 January Evening Journal. The reviewer, identifying himself only as “X,” called Emerson’s remarks “carelessly made” and wrote that the lecturer “flatters himself, if he supposes that it is the novelty of his views which gives offence: it is their untruth.” “X” called Emerson’s admirers “those unsettled and perturbed spirits, who are ready to embrace the first
EMERSON SOCIETY PAPERS
The newsletter of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society Published at Worcester Polytechnic Institute www.emersonsociety.org

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PROSPECTS.
American Literature Association
The Ralph Waldo Emerson Institute presents two papers in Boston, Mass., during the sixteenth annual conference of the American Literature Association, which will be held 26-29 May. Both panels are on Friday, the 27th, at 8 and 11, with our annual business meeting to follow at 12:30.

SESSION I
Reconsidering The Conduct of Life
Chair: Joseph M. Thomas
Terry Byrd; John T. Wilson

SESSION II
Emersonian Dilemmas: Individual and Community
Chair: Elizabeth Addison


"Considerations by the Way," Richard Geldard (Independent Scholar)

"Silence, Truth-Telling, and Realism in Emerson's 'Worship,'" Richard Geldard (Independent Scholar)

"Emerson's Political Reluctance," Jennifer Gurley

The ALA conference will be held at the Westin Copley Place, Boston, 20-23 May 2005. See our web site for full papers and abstracts, or contact the Emerson Society (www.americanliterature.org) for more information.

R.W.E.ORG
The Ralph Waldo Emerson Institute is pleased to announce the launch of a totally revised R.W.E. ORG. It is an updated, membership-based home for The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Based on XML encoding technology, the new site features new navigation, new searchers, and new offerings. R.W.E. ORG seek students, teachers, scholars and general readers access to all the material published in the Complete Works. In addition to all the published works, including the poems, the site also provides complete searches of all content, through Google technology, plus the key Concordance to aid in accurate research.

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Institute is incorporated not-for-profit in the State of New York. Its mission is to promote to a global audience a greater understanding and appreciation of the life and work of Ralph Waldo Emerson. The primary means of reaching this goal is through research on Emerson's Complete Works. In addition to publishing the Complete Works, the Emerson Society will publish occasional essays on Emerson's life and work.

Spring 2005
The bicentennial of Ralph Waldo Emerson’s birth in 2003 provided a natural opportunity for organizations and institutions within Concord and beyond to collaborate in celebrating the life and work of Concord’s best-known resident. The planning and coordination of events invigorated all involved with the idea that Emerson “is the property of the whole Concord Community”—an idea reflected in the holdings of the Concord Free Public Library Special Collections to suggest the various ways in which Emerson influenced the community of Concord and in which Concord in turn embraced him as its leading citizen—formed the Library’s major contribution to the festivities. I was privileged to plan and execute this display—a responsibility that provided enormous professional and personal satisfaction. Ron Bosco and Joel Myerson spoke movingly at the official opening of “Emerson in Concord” on 21 March 2003. Anniversary celebrations of important events are always exhilarating. But just as surely as they approach, so they inevitably also pass. At the end of May 2003, I dismantled the array of manuscripts, printed books, photographs, and ephemera in the exhibition and moved on to other projects and activities, the most pressing of them the packing and moving of the Special Collections to temporary headquarters in the Fowler Branch Library in West Concord to permit renovation and expansion of the Main Library building. Although the bicentennial is now behind us, Emerson research and scholarship remains a priority for the Special Collections. We continue to devote significant thought, energy, and institutional resources to advancing Emerson scholarship through collection development, increase of access to holdings, interpretive outreach, and improvement of facilities. Several years ago, I wrote an article titled “Emerson in the Concord Free Public Library” (Spring 2001 issue of ESP). That piece provided an overview of the types of types of Emerson-related materials the Library offers and how they fit together. This article, essentially a continuation of that, outlines the ways in which we are working to enhance the relevance and usefulness of the Special Collections to Emersonians. Research collections must grow to sustain the long-term interest of scholars exploring multiple facets of a complex subject. Over the past few years, important manuscript, printed, and photographic materials of potential value for Emerson research and scholarship have been added to Library collections through both gift and purchase. Some of you will remember that in 1999 Virginia Hoar Frecha—a great-granddaughter of Emerson’s good friend Ekkehard Rockwood—deaccessioned the Concord Free Public Library with an outstanding collection of Hoar family papers, including unpublished letters from Emerson to E.R. Hoar and letters from Emerson’s brother Edward and Charles to Samuel Hoar. In 2003, Mary Sherman Parsons—another great-granddaughter of E.R. Hoar—donated a second collection of Hoar papers, in which I was delighted to find a manuscript plan of property on Ampersand Pond in the Adirondacks purchased in 1931 for $40,000 to be transformed by Club Hoar, and probably in 1893 (the year after the club’s famous excursion to Follansbee Pond, Emerson’s one and only Adirondack trip), as well as materials (including letters and a sketch by architect Hammatt Billings) relating to Concord’s Soldiers’ Monument, at the 1867 dedication of which Emerson spoke. In 1999, the New York Society Library deaccessioned and gave to the Concord Free Public Library a collection of 19th-century materials, among them “Memories of Concord,” a manuscript lecture by Sarah Hosmer Lunt (a daughter of Concord farmer and Emerson friend Edmund Hosmer) containing anecdotal reminiscences about Emerson and others. An extensive collection of Emerson-related materials assembled by Wintifid L. Sturdy and bequeathed by Sturdy to the Library. Although invento- ried, the collection was not completely processed until the fall of 2003, when I tackled the job. Many gems surfaced, including the manuscript list of subscribers for Lennel Shattuck’s 1835 A History of the Town of Concord. (As many of you know, Emerson relied heavily on the proof sheets for Shattuck’s book in preparing his discourse for the September 1835 celebration of the bicentennial of Concord’s incorporation, the manuscript of which is held by the Concord Free Public Library. The subscription list shows that Emerson, who committed himself for ten copies, was the heaviest sup- porter of Shattuck’s book—a fact that did not escape the notice of historian Robert A. Gross, who soon after the find- ing aid are completed consulted the Sturdy collection for information for his forthcoming book The Transcendentalists and Their World.)

Over the past year, I updated the online finding aid for our Ralph Waldo Emerson papers, integrating into the collec- tion the letters I recently purchased and two Emerson manu- script fragments from a 1995 gift by Concord resident and local historian Mary R. Fenn. I also processed and prepared a finding aid for our Edward Waldo Emerson papers, supervised a Simmons College intern in creating and describing a collection of Emerson family papers formed by combining new acquisitions and items long part of the old CFPL letter file, and guided another intern in processing and preparing a finding aid for the Parsons gift of Hoar papers.

In the months leading up to the Emerson bicentennial, the spring 2003 Joyce’s work will not be available until the revamp of the entire file has been completed, this project will ultimately permit Emersonians more easily to identify images for research and personal use when appropriate. Moreover, in response to the ever-growing reliance on the Internet by students and scholars, we have created electronic files for a number of existing finding aids and mounted them on the Web in HTML (HyperText Markup Language), edited finding aids already online to the Web to reflect the addition of new items to the collection, and created new finding aids with Web presentation specifically in mind. This work will continue indefinitely. (To access our online finding aids, go to www.concordnet.org/library, then click to Special Collections, then to Finding Aids, then to the specific finding aid you wish to see.)

Some surprising discoveries turn up during the pro- cessing of collections that have been in an archive for some time but have remained unprocessed. In 1990, through gener- ous donations by a number of Concord residents, the Concord Free Public Library purchased from the Harvard (Mary R. Fenn) a selection of 19th-century materials—Emerson holdings among them—to one of Kenneth Sacks’s Brown University literature classes in September of 2003, for example, and always look forward to the annual January visit by students from Calvin College. Nothing conveys a sense of the process of authorship in the 19th century like direct contact with manuscript treasures. Nevertheless, I recognize that the Internet is now the most effective tool for introducing research collections to multiple audiences and for providing the interpretive context necessary to understand why an archive is important. For this reason, once the exhibition “Emerson in Concord” was installed in the Library art gallery in March of 2003, I collab- orated with Concord Free Public Library Technical Services Associate and Webmaster Robert Hall to create a permanent online version of the display. The feedback from viewers has been gratifying. I am particularly pleased to know that some of you have been forwarding links to those who haven’t already done so to explore it for its teaching applications. (The display is accessible at www.concordnet.org/library, then click to Special Collections, then to Exhibits, then to “Emerson in Concord.”)

I believe that the best adaptation of the Internet to archival purposes lies not in the wholesale scanning of docu- ments but rather in the intelligent integration of human and technical capabilities. With that in mind, I expect that within the next few years we will design and mount additional Emerson-related interpretive presentations on the Library’s Web pages.

Finally, in 2003 and 2004 the Library Corporation under- took major construction to enlarge and upgrade the 129 Main Street building. This project—largely privately funded—has enhanced the research experience of all Library users. Emersonians included. The expanded and improved Special Collections space—now named the William Munroe Special Collections in memory of the Library’s founding benefactor—is flanked by the gleaming new quarters of the Library’s associa- torial assistance. The new reading room is nearly three times larger than the old, well lit, and equipped with spacious reading tables.
Douglas Emory Wilson (1910-2005)

Doug Wilson led a remarkably long, varied, and productive life. He was a scholar, a military officer (retiring from the U.S. Army in 1970 as a Lieutenant Colonel), a neighborhood activist, and Textual Editor and General Editor of The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Details of his career are provided in Ron Bosco’s tribute in ESP (8 [Fall 1997]: 1), published after Doug received the 1997 Ralph Waldo Emerson Society Distinguished Achievement Award. Here—in the newsletter Doug edited for its first fifteen years—representative Emersonians fondly remember him as editor, colleague, and friend.

Doug Wilson was certainly the most august member of the group of Emersonians who spent August in Cambridge reading in the Houghton, dining together in local restaurants, and then reading together in the living room so quietly that the Snow House mice came out to inspect our shoes. I soon learned that the scrupulousness that made him a fierce textual editor never related, for when I mailed him a copy of my Emerson’s Fall in autumn 1982, he sent back by return mail a friendly thank-you letter accompanied by a list of fourteen misprints.

After the Snow House years ended, I saw Doug chiefly at meetings of the American Literature Association, but work on The Conduct of Life kept us in frequent touch by telephone. Though our conversations usually began with some reference to the edition, they soon wandered off into more general topics—his life in Anniston, where he wrote the newsletter for the Retired Officer’s Club and served as treasurer when the local library held a book sale. He liked libraries of all kinds; one of the last letters he sent in July 2004 enclosed a photo of him presenting a copy of The Conduct of Life to the Jacksonville Society Papers Spring 2005

Doug Wilson in 1994

Doug's visits had a pattern that's probably familiar to all of his readers, and the prospect of seeing him at conferences or at my house in Doug swung out like a salute to say goodbye for now. And twice a year I would send galleys from Worcester, Massachusetts, to Anniston, Alabama. And until the last issue he sent off to his next tour of duty. Perhaps, as someone who had been trained in the classical languages, he would appreciate the judgment he displayed in his work on the volumes of the American Literature Association conferences. Our home on Martha's Vineyard soon became a stop on his epic summer treks to the Northeast. Doug was preeminently a man of culture and taste. He was also utterly unpretentious and perfectly at ease in any environment. He was as progressive a thinker as he was at home in any company. He could only talk about with younger Emersonians with the prefix "you." He was the uncle of us all, the steady presence whose remarkable transformation from career army officer to premier textual scholar and literary critic made him a welcome anomaly among all of us lifelong academics. He was the antithesis of the conventional image of the military man, for it was impossible to imagine him barking orders while slapping a riding crop against his thigh a la Patton, but on the other hand there was a reserve, a deliberation, a coolness of judgment that evoked less flamboyant figures—Omar Bradley or George Marshall, say. To have a conversation with him about textual subtleties was to see the fineness of his mind in such matters, and no one even questioned the judgment he displayed in his work on the volumes of the Emerson Works edition. In my files are all the letters Doug ever sent me, and when I heard of his death I read them all over because I wanted to hear his voice one last time. What a wonderfully precise yet elegant handwriting he had, with that one note of extravagance at the end, where the loop of the “g” in Doug swung out like a salute to say goodbye for now.

Doug Wilson in 1994

Doug Wilson was a member of that band of Emerson stalwarts who used to gather at the Snow house in Cambridge every summer back in the 1970s and 1980s, occasions that one can only talk about with younger Emersonians with the prefix "you." He was the uncle of us all, the steady presence whose remarkable transformation from career army officer to premier textual scholar and literary critic made him a welcome anomaly among all of us lifelong academics. He was the antithesis of the conventional image of the military man, for it was impossible to imagine him barking orders while slapping a riding crop against his thigh a la Patton, but on the other hand there was a reserve, a deliberation, a coolness of judgment that evoked less flamboyant figures—Omar Bradley or George Marshall, say. To have a conversation with him about textual subtleties was to see the fineness of his mind in such matters, and no one even questioned the judgment he displayed in his work on the volumes of the Emerson Works edition. In my files are all the letters Doug ever sent me, and when I heard of his death I read them all over because I wanted to hear his voice one last time. What a wonderfully precise yet elegant handwriting he had, with that one note of extravagance at the end, where the loop of the “g” in Doug swung out like a salute to say goodbye for now. And how clearly he expressed himself, always with an underlying courtesy and touches of very wit! I'll miss those periodic letters, and the prospect of seeing him at conferences or at my house in those summer visits he used to make. Doug lived a long and useful life, and his place in Emersonian disc is secure. As a military man he would surely want an appropriate sendoff to his next tour of duty. Perhaps, as someone who had been trained in the classical languages, he would appreciate my saying for all of us, Doug, Ave atque vale! —Robert Orth

Note of Thanks

The Emerson Society is grateful to Dr. Carol Simpson, the new provost of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, for a grant supporting publication of Emerson Society Papers. The society has enjoyed the support of its members and the clearance from WPEN permits since its first issue was published in 1990.
Reviews

Emerson


Lover or parian, Laurence Buell's Emerson is an event. No one concerned with Ralph Waldo Emerson or even American literary history may be surprised to learn that the book has been heavily reviewed, popularly and scholarly. Significant: the collection of 36 years' labor that "reflects an adult lifetime of meditation and teach- ing" (28) on Emerson's work, with an "abiding interest in the" (162) figures, the writing, too, can be gorgeous. Buell's project, like most others published in Emerson's bicentennial year, assumes where we now find Emerson as it redrews our attention to the manner in which writing, even though consistently reinterpreted, can have a self-saving look. Each of Emerson's two books is directed by a particular issue, a "concept" that the intellectual (an epithet that was somehow has packed up good democratic Emerson into an elite Press, 2003. 397 pp. $29.95 cloth.

Buell further examines Emerson's relational thinking as the lat- est "rise above themselves" as they came also to "desire to see others empower to do the same" (334). Buell's book, like that of Emerson, is hardly out of print, and if we so choose we can purchase him for little more than the cost of a candy bar (in Dover Thrift Edition). Whether we are academics or successful novelists or high

Emerson's work with these texts as well as the subsequent reception

But we should note that Emerson was not primarily a nation-maker, but a "writer-intellec- tal" (4) caught between expressing an American culture via an American identity—"and maintaining his commitment to world literatures, and, 2. that Emerson's scholar, or, in modern colloquy, the "public intellectual" (an epithet that was

called "anti-mentor" (the name he earns in the title of the book's clos-

Emerson in The New York Times ("Big Dead White Male," 4 August 2003, Section 3), the religious epics (such as the Bhagavad-Gita) and treatises of the

"It is a noteworthy characteristic of most good teachers to be an

This view, for more than the self.

"The relation of knowledge, is, I think," "an infinitely

"I am a strongly exercised judgment" (243) and one's private "impulse to speak to others" (269). These remarks are not quite the same thing, but quotes some saint or sage" (85). Self-reliance means thinking adversely by challenging any self-satisfied or uncritical understanding. Once again, how does one reconcile a call for aversive thinking when, in fact, descriptively speaking, all meaning is deter-

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Emerson in the Concord Free Public Library

(Continued from page 5)

Windor chairs for researchers, and comfortable wing chairs for more casual visitors. It includes—for the first time—a staff work area for manuscript processing, exhibition preparation, and other space-consuming tasks. It also offers multiple public computer workstations and accommodates wireless laptops.

Shelving capacity in both the reading room and the vault has been expanded to accommodate the thousands of linear feet of shelf space, we have been able to bring several especially valuable parts of the Concord Authors Collection—including the fine English translation of Emerson's New York: Downey—downstairs. Secure, climate-controlled, and protected from fire, the facilities are also equipped with a large selection of Library artwork and ornaments, as well as the collection of bookshelves. Moreover, we have permanent showcase space both in and near the Special Collections reading room for small exhibitions throughout the year.

Items from the Library art collection are now better displayed throughout the building. Substantive captions for all major pieces. David Gilmer's "Back Roads," Stillman's "Philosophers' Camp," and French's "Front from life and seated Emerson among them. This provides a significant boost to the curators. Those of you who have been to the Library before will be interested to know that the only Library holding remains in the building during the period of most invasive costruction was the secluded Emerson, which warded the tumult of drumming, hammering, and falling debris within a protective "mound of stone," and that steel supports to reinforce the building's bearing capacity of the floor below the statuel were installed in the course of the project.

The Library, now fully climate-controlled, boasts comfortable conference and meeting areas for small groups—perhaps gatherings of the Emerson Society in Concord come July. But regardless of whether you have an immediate use for the facilities or a specific research purpose, I urge all of you who come to town to drop by for a look around.

The Concord Free Public Library is an old institution with established research collections and a tradition of service to the scholarly community, but it is not the same Emerson in Albany, New York

(Continued from page 12)

2 John McCaile, Ralph Waldo Emerson: Days of Exequy (Boston: Little, Brown, 1848), 495. Citil hereafter as "McCaile".
5 Letters 4:174. See Albany Evening Journal, 8 January 1850, p.3.
6 Albany Evening Journal, 10 January 1850, p.3. See Robert D. Richardson, Emerson: The Mind on Fire (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 449. Citil hereafter as "Richardson." Though not advertised by title, an extensive review of the 10 January address appeared in the Albany Evening Journal, 15 January 1850, p.3. The review notes that Grossman "alludes to the idea that the whole is the sum of its parts," and that he "proves the point with examples of Emerson's writing that are both instructive and entertaining.
7 Albany Evening Journal, 15 January 1850, p.3.
9 Letters 5:123-130.
10 Albany Evening Journal, 12, 13 January 1859, p.3. See JMN 14:466.
20 This was presumably the "Little Classic" edition, but it consisted of nine volumes in 1862, not seven.

Emerson in Albany, New York

Reviews (Continued from page 9)

(God). Individualistic, personal expressions—if authentic and faithful to one's self—ultimately become "unmeaning" to the Universal Mind. One can just as easily read Emerson in light of more religious authors and the sacred texts of the world. Of course Cavel's method does not preclude the possibility of engaging in such cross-disciplinary readings. So why does he refrain from doing so? Perhaps, in some cases, the potential for an extended and complex challenge of existing religious and philosophical notions, to reiterate, Cavel's self-reflexive and allusive style places the ons of interpretation upon the reader who must read, wrestle, and re-read in conjunction with his other works, in order to realize that Cavel's philosophy is a system or set of assertions and more a way of seeing that allows for the collapse of traditional boundaries between academic disciplines. The desire to emulate Emerson's wide range of human expressions leads the reader to ask what precisely Cavel intends from this or that particular juxtaposed reading of texts or insights. Without explicitly telling readers what he wants them to grasp—for that would be tantamount to conformity—Cavel leaves it to the reader to form his or her own interpretations. This freedom, however, tends to opacity rather than illuminate. Cavel himself acknowledges his critics who suggest that his readings are self-indulgent, complicated, and need to be further "figured out" and "made plain." At its most optimistic, Cavel's style empowers us to become self-reflexive readers. Yet it is more likely that his reliance on allusion betrays his ambition for returning to the ordinary and speaking in the spirit of Emersonian friendship.

—JOSEPH M. THOMITZ
San Francisco, California

A Year With Emerson.

Emerson's more unpopular ideas in this collection are, that they are really savage, have poor small sterile heads—no

"restorers of readings, the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all

"natural subjects.

"Each practical mistake that has been made, each inaccuracy is an opportunity to return to the ordinary and speak in the spirit of Emersonian friendship."

—JOSEPH M. THOMITZ
San Francisco, California

The inclusion of Emerson's more unpopular ideas in this collection is one of the book's strengths, for it demonstrates Grossman's attention to the richness and complexity of Emerson's thought. He cannot fully escape the prejudices of his own time and place. Grossman may still have some way to go in that respect. But he has also not pleased today's female readers: "Each practical mistake that has been made, each inaccuracy is an opportunity to return to the ordinary and speak in the spirit of Emersonian friendship."

—JOSEPH M. THOMITZ
San Francisco, California

...the inclusiveness expressed by Emerson's claim that it is "genius" and not "merit... that will increase the number of his works..." the inclusiveness that the soul's activity encourages lay readers to cultivate their minds, to free them from their souls' obstructions. Lay readers are reminded by Emerson to affirm the relevance of the knowledge and experience that each reader brings to his or her engagement with Emerson. Without explicitly telling readers what he wants them to grasp—for that would be tantamount to conformity—Grossman leaves it to the reader to form his or her own interpretations. The desire to emulate Emerson's wide range of human expressions leads the reader to ask what precisely Cavel intends from this or that particular juxtaposed reading of texts or insights. Without explicitly telling readers what he wants them to grasp—for that would be tantamount to conformity—Cavel leaves it to the reader to form his or her own interpretations. This freedom, however, tends to opacity rather than illuminate. Cavel himself acknowledges his critics who suggest that his readings are self-indulgent, complicated, and need to be further "figured out" and "made plain." At its most optimistic, Cavel's style empowers us to become self-reflexive readers. Yet it is more likely that his reliance on allusion betrays his ambition for returning to the ordinary and speaking in the spirit of Emersonian friendship.

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Emerson in Albany, New York
(Continued from page 1)

error that presents itself, be it never so absurd. There are always
those...who would be ready to fall down and worship LUCIFER,
if he would present one of his plausible lies in a brilliant form.
"Emerson's glory, "X" predicted, "will be as transitory as his philosophy...--we venture to predict, that, in a few years, he will be remem-
bered only as an erratic man who squandered a brilliant intellect."

Like many of Emerson's critics, "X" primary objection to the lect-
er was his view of organized religion and his questioning "the author-
ity of the Sabbath, of the Priesthood, or of the Church." He was dis-
mayed that Emerson classed Plato, Socrates, Confucius, and Jesus
together. "The only deity he worships is PAN, the God of Nature."
"X" warned that Emerson's emphasis on "instinct" threatened to
undermine all that is good in ethics, metaphysics, and religion, and
sought to leave mankind "to fall to the ground, or to float transcen-
dentially between Heaven and Earth..." As for the young person who
would admire Emerson's philosophy, "Mr. Emerson would have him,
like NARCISSUS, the beautiful youth, fall in love with himself." "X"
went on to accuse Emerson of having "the supernatural cunning of an
insane man.... We hazard it as the opinion of all sensible and intel-
gent persons who heard his lectures in this city, that it is the falsest,
most inconsistent, egotistical and selfish, which the ingenious intel-
lect, or the deceitful heart of man, ever devised."

It may never be determined whether Emerson ever saw the
review, or if he had, whether its hostile tone would have prevented
his timely return to Albany. Whatever the reason, he did not lecture
again in the city for nearly nine years. It is not known whether this
was by his design or that of the Young Men's Association. Despite
such reviews, however, Emerson's popularity continued to grow. His
itinerary reached a new peak during his "Western Lecture Tour" of
December-January 1852-53, which took him through Albany and on
to Schenectady, Utica, Rochester, Buffalo, Sandusky, Cleveland,
Cincinnati, and St. Louis. And he passed through Albany at least four
times during lecture tours from 1855 to 1858.8

Emerson's 22 October 1858 note informing William H. Fish that
he was "to be at Albany on 13 Jan. [1859]" marked the end of his
absence from the city. He confirmed this in a 10 January 1859 letter
to Ellen Emerson saying that he would "be at Albany 13 (Care of
Mercantile Lib. Assoc.)." After an 11 January lecture in Brooklyn,
Emerson returned to Albany on the 13th.9

The Young Men's Association advertised Emerson's appearance
in the 12 and 13 January editions of the Evening Journal informing
readers that the lecture, "Town and Country," would likely be well
attended. In what may have been a belated attempt to make up for its
past harshness to Emerson, the Evening Journal described him as "the
best type of a clever, crystallized intellect, unencumbered by interfer-
ing physical conditions of any American author.... Emerson, to use a vul-
gar western figure of speech, dives deeper, stays down longer, and
comes up drier than any other explorer of modern times." This was a
far cry from the paper's previous depiction of Emerson as a corrupting
influence bent upon the destruction of reason, religion, and inno-
cent youth. The lecture was not reviewed and Emerson left Albany to
speak at Auburn, Cortland, and Batavia.10 He continued to lecture
throughout the North from 1862 through 1865, though the Civil War
forced him to reduce the frequency of his appearances. He did pass
through Albany en route to Chicago on 12 May 1862, just six days
after delivering the eulogy at Thoreau's funeral.11

Emerson wrote to Pastor Amory Dwight May of Albany's
Unitarian Church on 12 November 1862, agreeing to lecture at its
meeting room in Rechabite Hall on State Street. The 15 December
Albany Evening Express announced that Emerson would read
"Perpetual Forces" before the Independent Lecture Association
on that 26 December. On 24 December, Emerson informed Henry
Burlingame, Chairman of the Association's Lecture Committee, that
upon arrival he would be staying at the city's fashionable Delavan
House.12

Emerson next returned to Albany on 12 January 1865 to present
"Social Aims in America" at Tweddle Hall before continuing on to
Dansville and Cleveland. He returned to the Hall later that year on
30 November to read "Resources," the Evening Journal assuring its
readers that the lecture, "should command the attention and attendance of a large audience. The subject
is well chosen, and the lecture deserving of our highest considera-
tion." Arriving from Catskill, where he had lectured the night before,
Emerson read "Hospitality and How to Make Homes Attractive."
Unfortunately, no reviews of these last appearances made their way
into the local press.13

The Evening Journal of Friday, 28 April 1882, carried an obit-
uary for Emerson, stating that he "may claim the paramount position
in the literary development of the country that is accorded
to Washington in its political history." The paper also paid tribute to
Emerson's rare intuition and compared his genius to that of Charles
Darwin, who had died a few days earlier on 19 April. Emerson, the
Journal declared, "has been the translator and interpreter to our peo-
lude of the new power" of human perception and intuition that deals
with "the intangible rules of our conduct and thought.... Although
the creative genius is stopped, what it has accomplished remains as
a source of power and inspiration." Many of Albany's citizens could
still recall attending Emerson's lectures, and the Journal offered its
readers this reminiscence:

Emerson's personal appearance was striking. His tall and
slender form, with the slightly drooping shoulders of a
student, bore a head, well formed and of great character.
His nose was aquiline and large, chin prominent and eyes
keen but generally preoccupied. The meagerness of his
features and form were an outward evidence of the keen-
ness and subtlety of his intellect. One was impressed by
his appearance rather than with the unusual brilliancy or tremendous intellectual
power that were his.

And, in what may have been one final effort to compensate for its
unflattering treatment of Emerson a generation earlier, the Journal
pointed out that "for years Emerson was the subject of great differ-
ences of opinion in this country, many holding him to be a mere charlatan and word-juggler, and it is within the last ten years that his
works have been even admitted to the libraries of many of the smaller
orthodox colleges.... He succeeded in overcoming early prejudices
against him" and "has exercised the strongest influence, extending
generally beyond the world of opinion into the world of action."15

The paper concluded by recommending to readers the seven-volume
edition of Emerson published by Osgood & Co., calling it "the best
and most accessible." All in all, it was a fitting tribute to the memo-
y of Ralph Waldo Emerson, once vilified but more commonly
praised by those fortunate enough to have encountered him in Albany,
New York.

(See Notes, page 11)