When I finally opened the purple box given me by my friend Roberta Vinciguerra, I could not imagine that I was to remember my 30th birthday forever. I had just delivered my first public lecture on Emerson, occasioned by the presentation of my book Diventa chi sei in my hometown, and I was eager to share my joy and relief with a couple of friends by dining out at a vegetarian restaurant. This happened in mid April 2006.

We were having dessert when Roberta placed the box on the table with a knowing smile. Inside was a yellowish, handwritten letter that was both vaguely and unmistakably familiar to me. Roberta had tricked me—and succeeded far too well! Using an Internet alias (lest she spoil her planned surprise), she had asked my “expert” opinion on an autograph, signed letter of Emerson she had supposedly found among her grandfather’s papers. In fact, she had found it on eBay (Italian version) and wanted to authenticate it before bidding. As a result, Roberta not only bid with confidence and won the auction as the only bidder, but she made herself the lovely instrument of the most genuine demonstration of friendship I have ever experienced.

I thus prepared myself to enjoy the rare privilege of touching a letter written by the hand of the “Sage of Concord.” Accompanying it, scraped on a piece of paper, there was a note from the Italian eBay seller which stated that the letter had been saved from the fire of Baron Horace de Landau’s and his heiress Mrs. Finaly’s archive in the Villa Landau at La Pietra, Florence.

Having miraculously survived a fire, the letter is in good condition. The scorched edge was eventually trimmed, apparently with scissors, and as a consequence the sheet is split in two halves. The strip of paper thus removed, however, has not caused the loss of any relevant part of the text, which is overall clearly legible. The ink itself looks still bright and fresh. Emerson filled in only three of the four pages of the letter and folded the sheet twice, so that it could fit into a small envelope. The sheets measure about 7” x 4¼” each. Distinguishing marks: 1) two brownish fingerprints (Emerson’s?) on the lower right edges of both page 1 and page 3; 2) four and three pinholes, respectively, in the upper right corners of the two separate sheets; 3) a “33” penciled askew on the upper left corner of page 2.

The letter was once part of a large collection of books and manuscripts housed in the Villa Landau-Finaly at La Pietra (The Stone), a 15th-century villa built in the vicinity of the first milestone—hence the name—on the road that linked Florence to Bologna. In 1845, Lord Normanby, the last English minister at the Grand-ducal Court, purchased the villa and lived there until 1864. In the same year, James Rothschild, owner of a bank in Turin, purchased the Villa Normanby and, in 1866, he sold it to Baron Horace de Landau, a representative of the Rothschild banking house across Europe.

Baron Horace de Landau (1824-1903), a Hungarian citizen with Jewish origins, was a famous bibliophile and a man of vast culture. In a hall of his Florentine villa, he created one of the largest private libraries in Europe—60,000 volumes—with a full-time librarian in service. After Landau’s death, the villa and all his possessions were inherited by his niece Jenny Ellenberger, who was married to Hungarian banker Hugo Finaly, a cousin of Landau’s. Mrs. Finaly would eagerly follow in her uncle’s footsteps in taking care of the library and the manuscript collection, and in 1936 she employed a young German librarian, Rudolf Blum, who was to remain in service until 1943. According to Blum, the fire in the Landau library broke out in 1926.

The letter is addressed to English poet Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-1861) and is dated London, 20 March 1848. Emerson had arrived in England in the autumn of 1847 and he first heard from Clough in November 1847, when the young poet, then a Fellow and Tutor at Oriel College, Oxford, wrote to invite him there. Clough’s letter reached Emerson when he was in Liverpool, and on 3 December 1847, Emerson replied from Manchester: “I shall esteem it
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Prospects.

American Literature Association Conference

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Society will present three panels in San Francisco during the nineteenth annual conference of the American Literature Association, which will be held 23-25 May 2008. Times and dates for the panels and for our annual business meeting will be announced later. For details check the ALA’s Web site, www.americaniiterature.org.

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"Kairos, War, and the Power of Eloquence," Roger Thompson (VMU)

SESSION III: Emerson’s Representations of Asia, Asia’s Representations of Emerson
Chair: Susan Wider (Colgate University)

"Heracitus in Emerson," Soji Goto (Rikkyo University, Japan)

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a high privilege to claim the opportunity of seeing the Colleges, which you offer me, as soon as I find myself in your neighbourhood. I fear, it will not be until after the vacation."

After the first exchange of notes, Emerson was fully occupied for several months with a strenuous season of lectures in the north of England and in Scotland. On 1 March 1848, Emerson settled in London in John Chapman's house—the Strand, No. 142—where he had "a good sitting-room & chamber." He had begun his equally wearing round of dinners and receptions in London before Clough reminded him, in a letter dated 12 March 1848, that I should wait for two invitations before going to Oxford. Emerson settled in London in John Chap.

The "lost" letter of which Lowry and Ruskin had found only the envelope among the manuscripts from the collection of Mr. Arthur Clough, the son of the poet, is the very letter my friend Roberta has given me for my birthday—everything coincides perfectly.

Here follows the transcription of the letter:

[Page 1]

A.H. Clough, Esq.
20 March 1848

Dear Sir,

I beg you not to think it an index of my inclination, that I should wait for two invitations before going to Oxford, but only a proving what an unskilful traveller [p. 2] I am who suffer myself in each new place to get at once entangled in a net of engagements. I have a great desire to see Oxford. Your first kind summons was, I think, the most real benefit I have had from my English visit, this genius of Clough...I have a new friend, & the world has a new poet.

Arthur Hugh Clough died in Florence, Italy, on 13 November 1861. Whether it is a blind coincidence—but "Shallow men believe in Luck," said Emerson—or a shining illustration of the Law of Compensation, I cannot help but see a link between the fact that Clough died in Florence and that Baron de Landau, also residing there, would later come into possession of a letter addressed to Clough. I do not doubt that deeper research would even cast some light upon how Baron de Landau came into possession of that letter, as well as reveal why that same letter was eventually "taken out" of the Landau collection, seriously damaged by a fire in 1926, and ended up being auctioned on eBay by the owners of the villa are the thirteen Universities of Paris and He de France, heirs of the old University of Paris. A website devoted to Villa Landau—Finaly can be reached at www.villafinaly.univ-paris1.fr.

2. In 1938 Mrs. Finaly moved to France, where she died not long afterward. In 1940, when France and Italy waged war, the villa was confiscated. In 1944 the villa became headquarters for the Allied Forces, and in 1945 it was returned to its heirs, who, in 1953, respecting Mrs. Finaly's and Baron Landau's wishes, donated the villa to the University of Paris. The current owners of the villa are the littérature Universitariens de Paris et Ile de France, heirs of the old University of Paris. A website devoted to Villa Landau—Finaly can be reached at www.villafinaly.univ-paris1.fr.


Emerson went to Oxford on 30 March and spent something more than two days very happily. They all thought he had come to stay a good while, and marveled much at his rapid departure at the end of 48 hours. Clough, however, was to meet Emerson again in London in April, and the bond between them was drawn even more closely in May, when they witnessed the spectacular Revolution in Paris. Returning to London from Paris on 6 June, Clough again saw Emerson and heard him give three lectures. Finally, on 15 July at Liverpool there were farewells.

Of the subsequent course of their friendship, including the reunion in America in 1852, the later correspondence gives a clear account. Altogether it was a fortunate association. In 1848 Emerson reflected in his journal upon his first reading of Clough's The Bothie: "'Tis, I think, the most real man's house—the Strand, No. 142—where he had "a good vacation."
reform movements that engaged Emerson and a younger generation. Haven was passionately committed to many of the same ideas as Wesley or Wordsworth.

David, Solomon, Moses, or Paul, nor, for that matter, was he considered "a prophet of misty incoherency." Emerson's "Brahma": "The slain knew he was not slain" by the "higher law" theory as fervently as Thoreau, Emerson, and the Eighth Massachusetts Regiment.

Haven proved to be an energetic and imaginative editor. Though his reviews of Society and Solitude are unsung, external and internal evidence point to Haven as the author. His friend and early biographer George Prentice wrote that Haven took special pride at "not noticing books." The reviewer, moreover, recalls walking ten miles, "sometimes through high drifts," to hear Emerson's "Representative Men" lectures. A few months earlier, in August 1845, he had heard Emerson give an address during commencement festivities for his graduating class at Wesleyan College and thought it "the greatest treat" of the season—this at a time. Prentice recalled, when Emerson was still widely considered "a prophet of misty incoherency." His last work is quite reticent on Christ and Christianity. It talks of art, farming, books, society, ambition, courage, domestic life, and age; it has a multitude of acute and attractive sayings. Mr. Emerson's mind is of the type of Socrates, Bacon, and Franklin. His eye is the shrewdest to detect analogies under the heading "Literary." I am grateful to the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, for access to its rm of Zion's Herald.

Notes
1. The review appears on page 269 in the reviews section "Our Book Table" (generally "Literary"). I am grateful to the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, for access to its rm of Zion's Herald.
6. ibid., p. 81. The first of "three practical rules" for reading that Emerson offers in the chapter "Books" in Society and Solitude (Boston: Fields, Osgood & Co., 1845), 187, "Never read any book that is not a year old." It is stone blind.
7. "I am the owner of the sphere, Of the seven stars, and the solar year; Of Caesar's hand, and Shakespeare's strain, Of Lord Christ's heart, and Plato's brain." had he said "St. John's heart," his aphorism would have been perfect.
8. This was his usual strain. Every essay treated with sublime blasphemy the claims of Christ and Christianity. He summed up his philosophy of man and nature, in the Papal pitch of infallibility, and put under his portrait "I am God," though the ditty was one of the most "blasphemous." "There is none else;" he was generous. All were else in like sympathy. Everybody was God. A wild inful, at the late free religion anniversaries, made this declaration of himself, and was wildly sympathizers cheered responsive. Mr. Emerson's last book differs from the first in being far less obtrusive in this form of unbelief. He feels that chill and weakness of age which he so graphing his "great treat," and his clear brain cannot but confess that such a uttering of forces is not consistent with Godhood. He rebels and protests, but he can't help it. The bread fullness of the June era of his life, and things and thought a soberer and sadder—
9. "coloring from the eye" That has looked out on man's mortality.
10. His last work is quite reticent on Christ and Christianity. It talks of art, farming, books, society, ambition, courage, domestic life, and age; it has a multitude of acute and attractive sayings. Mr. Emerson's mind is of the type of Socrates, Bacon, and Franklin. His eye is the shrewdest to detect analogies under the heading "Literary." I am grateful to the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, for access to its rm of Zion's Herald.
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12.预
13. Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey," 1. 102. The juice of "knowledge" and "wisdom" which he so graphing his "great treat," and his clear brain cannot but confess that such a uttering of forces is not consistent with Godhood. He rebels and protests, but he can't help it. The bread fullness of the June era of his life, and things and thought a soberer and sadder—
extends Dewey's notion of the "art of communication" into what she calls "the art of translation" (152). Drawing on Emerson's other as the "object of knowledge" but is rather "the matter of coincidence with Emerson's "conversions." Of course, an argument mutual learning by being attentive to the different other" (152), the chief importance of her book, lies in the ways she mobi lizes Emerson's and Dewey's ideas about individuation in the tradition of historical philosophy and rationalism is no mean feat. For she persuasively argues that Emerson's philosophy coincides to a large extent with Dewey and Emerson, be transmitted to modem educational prac...
Reviews
(Continued from page 9)

generally refuses to place its observations in relation to specific
Pressures encountered in distinctive phases of careers.
Richardson's aim is to "follow the moves in the American
language game that comes to be known as Pragmatism, specifica-
tly, the method of thinking described by William James in his 1907
volume" (84). This language game has its origins in the notion of
providential history because that left Americans writers the sense
that "being lost among signs ... was prerequisite to reform" (ix).
Ref orm would then be mostly a matter of emphasizing the power
to articulate lived experience. Hence "truth" could no longer be
an ideal, timeless property. Rather it had to be located in provisional
assertions realized by a mode of thinking that was firmly situated
in particular occasions. These Americans understood thinking to
be "a life form, subject to the same processes of growth and
change as all other life forms" (1). That sense of truth would
allow performative utterance to serve as "its testimony"; Embod-
ied thinking affords the vehicle for the Jamesian process of "com-
mitting" truths into the world. Richardson shows how art can resist
integration into its dominant culture by providing testimony for alternative values artists see their cul-
ture destroying. Fourth, her often brilliant excursions into scientific
matters are rarely connected clearly to what writers state to be
their basic concerns in what they are doing.
I find most problematic her claim that Emerson's "under-
standing of the processes underlying the transformations of matter
and of words as matter derives from the sources he shared with
Darwin" (90). Technically this claim is supportable, and Richard-
son notes the differences between thinkers caused by Darwin's
"having to integrate the actual facts ... into his account" (93). But
what she does when she moves from sources to alluded themes is
misleading. Historically, Darwin the proto-pragmatist was not the
Darwin Emerson would have come to know (after writing most
of his work on nature). That Darwin would have been the figure
who seemed to deny spirit so that he could find an utterly natural
mechanism for selection (which Richardson almost admits on
page 93). And that Darwin would have been not the figure who
reconstructed "thinking" but who deadened it by emphasizing expla-
nences to his effort to remake language so that it can embody the
large-scale shifts in populations by explaining how over time cer-
tain characteristics succeed and others fail to reproduce in suffi-
cient numbers. There is no ideal sphere, no sense of how individ-
ual models might gather strength because of what is distinctive to
how the work performs a mode of thinking. Integrity and forceful-
ness are nothing; adaptation everywhere. The American writers
might have wanted to participate in the evolution of the culture,
but not by forms of replication that erase their specific performa-
tive energies.

—CHARLES ALTIERI
University of California
at Berkeley

Whitehead, whom she frequently cites, and Spinoza, whom she does
not cite, provide the overall framework. Second, I suspect that at
some point accounts stressing relatability must at least desire to
establish underlying structures that shape relations. Third, her
pragmatist instrumental view of the aesthetic facilitates the work's
"integration and expression within the philosophical grid of its cul-
ture" (224). But this is a very weak and general sense of "aesthetic" that ignores the stronger uses of the concept that
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Engaging as this is, I cannot shake what seem substantial
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their basic concerns in what they are doing.
Gary L. Collison, a longtime member of the Emerson Society and Professor of English and American Studies at Penn State-York, died on 19 September 2007. Scholars of nineteenth-century American life have lost a friend and an accomplished colleague.

I first knew Gary when he enrolled in my Penn State graduate seminar on Emerson and Thoreau. He quickly showed himself to be a very engaged, accomplished reader, one whose work was characterized by perception and wit. It was my good fortune subsequently to be Gary’s dissertation director as he worked his way through the correspondence of Theodore Parker and Convers Francis. I often shuddered to think how hard Parker made it for Gary: an all-but-indecipherable hand coupled with endless streams of obscure titles in several languages. But persevere Gary did and produced a work that remains to this day the only modern edition of a portion of Parker’s correspondence.

Gary was not one to settle into a rut. In the mid-1980s he began work on a book so hard to research that it is a wonder that it ever was written: Shadrach Minkins: From Fugitive Slave to Citizen. Gary painstakingly worked through public and private papers to write a biography of a former slave well known to history but about whom we had known almost nothing. The book, published by Harvard in 1997, is a model biography, one that earned a nomination for the Pulitzer Prize. The book is, as Gary says, the story of how “Shadrach Minkins and his fellow refugees could create new lives, find new identities, and build a new community.”

After his work on Shadrach, Gary turned to gravestone studies and became the editor of Markers, the journal of the Association for Gravestone Studies. One of my best afternoons in Concord was when he took me on a tour through the lower part of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. It was fascinating to hear him describe the style the craftsmen had used, what era they worked in, and what was routine and what unique among the markers. While we are all aware of gravestones, few of us stop to think of them as works of art that have distinctive styles. I was delighted to learn some of this from someone who so obviously knew what it all meant.

While members of the Emerson Society will remember Gary most for his scholarship, it was his teaching that was most on his mind late in his life. In a letter he wrote me a few months before he died, he said: “I have come to love teaching and love my students in ways that I never, ever imagined were possible for me. It has been an unbelievably satisfying and fulfilling period. Teaching has become a mission to me, and the goal has become in every class to break down the alienation that so many of my students are afflicted with.” Gary will be sorely missed by them and by us.

—Robert N. Hudspeth