KNICKERBOCKERS WEST:
HOW THREE PLAYWRIGHTS SHAPED THE IMAGE OF THE AMERICAN WEST

A Dissertation

presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

at the University of Missouri-Columbia

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

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DECEMBER, 2009

The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

KNICKERBOCKERS WEST:
HOW THREE PLAYWRIGHTS SHAPED THE IMAGE OF THE AMERICAN WEST

presented by Mary Barile

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and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my family, friends, and staff members at Ellis Library and the State Historical Society of Missouri. No work such as this can be done without encouragement, support, and humor, and each page is imprinted with the kindness and generosity of many people, foremost among them professors Cheryl Black, Heather Carver, Larry Clark, Susan Flader and Elaine Lawless.

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ABSTRACT

In the 1840s, George Catlin, painter and ethnographer of the trans-Mississippi Native Americans, mourned that "Few people even know the true definition of the term 'West' and where is its location? – phantomlike it flies before us as we travel." Despite the ambiguity associated with the term, however, the American West has remained a compelling force in film, literature and the modern stage, but little research has been directed towards the emergence of this historical-mythical region on the early American stage. The three earliest plays to depict or imagine the West were Alphonso Wetmore's *The Pedlar* in 1821, William Dunlap's *A Trip to Niagara* in 1828, and James Kirke Paulding's *The Lion of the West* (later renamed *The Kentuckian*) in 1831. This study examines how the "West" is depicted in the plays; discusses how the distinctive nature of each playwright's vision of the West was created through the use of character, setting, language, folklore, and plot; and examines the relationship among the three differing visions. The study also discusses how these relationships (similarities and dissimilarities) may be accounted for by investigating the playwrights' backgrounds and their processes of dramatic creation.

Chapter 1 – Westward Where?

The Setting

Backcountry. Backwoods. Wilderness. Frontier. The West. Somewhere else. Anywhere else. In the early nineteenth century, America was restless with a fever that burned quickly and left few survivors. It was an old sickness, this movement west. The men and women who stepped off the Mayflower were not yet Americans, but they brought the migration fever in their blood and passed it down through generations. From the Atlantic shoreline, settlers moved inland, north and south seeking relief for their land desire. When lands filled with plantations and farms, when the land wore out from tobacco and wheat farming, then Americans picked up and moved again, following the sun. Across York State to Pennsylvania, onward to Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, down and west to the Alleghenies, the Appalachians, and finally to the great western rivers.

If the last quarter of the eighteenth century defined the way in which America "became," then the first thirty years of the nineteenth century defined what it might become. America had many benchmarks by which to measure its own creation: the Declaration of Independence, the ratification of the Constitution, the first census and the discovery that in 1790 there were nearly four million people in the country including more than 240,000 African slaves, the death of Washington in 1799 and the 1800 census that showed a gain of approximately 1.5 million whites and 200,000 slaves. The "old states" – colonies in existence before America declared independence from Great Britain – were now joined by territories largely unknown. Here was a country that suddenly

found itself with unimaginable miles of land, contact with Native Americans little known and even less understood, and independence made possible by the work of slaves. Here was a place where the energy was so great, the imagination so broad, that new words had to be invented in order to express what was driving America's emigrant soul: "slantindikular," "screamer" "ring-tailed roarer."[1] Good, bad, but never indifferent, Americans were ready to populate and run the country in ways untested: the political theory of democracy was now giving way to practical needs and desires of daily life, among them the need for cultural expression.[2] Americans were no longer Easterners or Southerners, now they were looking west, and into another, even newer, world.

By the early nineteenth century, Americans watched with trepidation the "foreign lands" beyond the Mississippi River, where people chattered in French, Ioway or Spanish and other governments held sway. Perhaps the most famous emigrant into the foreign

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[1] A "ring-tailed roarer" was used in print by the 1830s, in Davy Crockett's *Almanac*. Although the *Oxford English Dictionary* refers to this as an imaginary creature, anyone who has spent time around an enraged, full-grown raccoon understands the origin of the phrase. As for "screamer," the cry of a panther or bobcat on a dark night makes the hair stand on end. "Slantindicular" or 'slantendicular" -- spellings varied -- dates as early as the 1830s. It is an example of what was later dubbed by Lewis Carroll a "portmanteau" word, created by combining two existing words, in this case "slanted" and "perpendicular": it means aslant.

[2] The settlement of America was accomplished by many races at many times. For an historian, the word "American" is loaded with preconceptions, denials, involuntary and voluntary offenses, and may provide readers with the desire to argue a point rather than consider the study overall. Therefore, for clarity in this paper, the word "American" will be used to indicate anyone who had settled in the United States as a permanent resident – whether voluntarily or involuntarily; "emigrant" refers to an American citizen of white European extraction who moved into a new settlement area; "slave" to a Black American held in involuntary servitude; "Indian" to a member of an indigenous group which predated white settlement, "free Black" to a person of African race who was born free, purchased freedom or was granted freedom. Of course, offense is never completely avoidable, and the author takes full responsibility for her definitions and opinions.

lands was Daniel Boone, a man used to trailblazing paths and settlements. The Spanish government, having failed to attract many settlers to Upper Louisiana, offered Boone land and a judgeship in exchange for moving from Kentucky to present-day Marthasville, Missouri. Boone had lost his Kentucky lands through legal deceptions and was in severe financial straits. He agreed and his reputation was such that emigration by Americans to the interior of Missouri Territory increased.[3] When Spain transferred the region between the river and the "Stony" Mountains to the French government (which called it Upper Louisiana), President Thomas Jefferson watched with trepidation. He knew that unless America negotiated a treaty with Napoleon Bonaparte, the Mississippi River could be closed to trade or, worse yet, imported and exported goods and agricultural products might be taxed beyond measure with the rates depending solely upon the whims of a dictator. Jefferson did not wait, but released a series of documents announcing that war with France was inevitable unless the United States could purchase New Orleans. Cash-strapped Bonaparte could not finance another war and agreed to a sale, but instead of offering merely New Orleans to the United States, he directed Talleyrand in 1803 to sell all of Upper Louisiana for fourteen million dollars.[4]

Along with the acquisition came a new, neat, and seemingly simple geographic division for the country – east or west of the Mississippi River –as well as a region called

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[3] Stephen Aron, *American Confluence: The Missouri Frontier from Borderland to Border State* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 97-98. Boone was not the first emigrant, but he was the most famous, and the Spanish benefited from this early promotional campaign.

[4] Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion.* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1960), 244ff. The offer took the American ministers by surprise. Robert Livingston of New York, who was hard of hearing, thought he had misunderstood Talleyrand's offer.

the trans-Mississippi west, an area stretching west from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean.[5] Settlement of the region was slow to start, in part because of the War of 1812. But after peace was declared, into the trans-Mississippi West flowed a new stream, a tributary of the Father of Waters carrying fresh currents: emigrants from New York, New England, the deep South, the backwoods and western areas of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Arkansas.

As the land was settled by these emigrants it began to emerge like an island from the fog, and assume a shape distinctly its own. During the first fifty years of the republic, the American West was any inland region beyond the Eastern seaboard. After the American Revolution, western New York State, Pennsylvania and Ohio were the West. So were western Virginia and Kentucky. The great Stony Mountains lay to the west, as did the deserts and the Pacific Ocean. Once a family crossed the Hudson River, it seemed they were always heading west. The West was certainly a place, but just where was it? George Catlin, painter and ethnographer of the trans-Mississippi Native Americans, mourned in the 1840s that "few people even know the true definition of the term 'West' and where is its location? – phantomlike it flies before us as we travel."[6]

To the East, the West appeared a place that stretched and changed, sometimes daily. The Louisiana Purchase doubled American landholdings overnight and President Thomas Jefferson quickly sent the Corps of Discovery to "the western country" in 1803,

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[5] For clarity's sake, I will refer to the "west" when using a direction, and the "West" when referring to a region. The American use of "trans" in conjunction with a region began in the 1770s, when John Adams noted in his diary on October 23, 1774 the presence of a "trans-Alleghanian" preacher from the Virginia backwoods.

[6] Quoted in Edwin Fussell, *Frontier: American Literature and the American West* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 3-4.

to explore the Missouri, Colorado and "Oregan" rivers.[7] In 1814, Zadok Cramer told of a man below Wheeling who had twenty-two children, a situation Cramer said was "favorable to the population of the western country."[8] Frontier actor/manager Noah Ludlow referred in 1817 to a "young Kentucky friend…being raised in the West."[9] The Reverend John Mason Peck wrote letters home in 1818 joking of "the F-A-R-W-E-S-T" as he visited Illinois and Missouri.[10] Alphonso Wetmore traveled through Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas beginning in 1819, and called the Missouri River frontier one of "the great regions of the west."[11] Washington Irving believed the West began "where there is neither to be seen the log house of the white man nor the wigwam of the Indian", a place of solitude where nothing existed except the sense of a place.[12] The "West" was

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[7] A. Scott Earle and James L. Reveal, *Lewis and Clark's Green World* (Helena MT: Farcountry Press, 2003), 7-8.

[8] Zadok Cramer, *The Navigator* (Pittsburgh: Cramer, Spear and Eichbaum, 1814), Appendix. Cramer's river guides were indispensable to emigrants.

[9] Noah Ludlow, *Dramatic Life As I Found It: A record of personal experience…in the West and South* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1966), 154.

[10] Rufus Babcock, *Memoir of John Mason Peck* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1864), 155. Upper Louisiana was all that land west of the Mississippi River to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. The Missouri Territory included the land which now comprises the state, although the territory itself contained much of the old Louisiana Territory.

[11] Alphonso Wetmore, "Random Ranger's Marches," *Missouri Saturday News*, June 23, 1838.

[12] Washington Irving, *A Tour on the Prairies* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 10. Only 30 years after the Louisiana Purchase, Irving was concerned about missing the American wilderness experience, so he visited a frontier now "several hundred miles beyond the Mississippi."

an all-embracing term for anything beyond the East: the trans-Mississippi, as well as the "western" backwoods of Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee.[13]

Still, despite the geographic indistinctness of the West, the idea of the West was a place of curiosities and adventure, of the untamed, the exotic, where one could find Missouri River steamboats shaped like dragons, the long and dangerous Santa Fe Trail, and Conestoga wagons billowing like clouds as they followed traces into the sunset.[14] The West was dangerous, threatening, brutal and yet, a land of promise. It was peopled with folks unlike the more "settled" Europeans, or the more "Puritan" Easterners: men like the brawling politician Thomas Hart Benton, the wild-eyed boatman Mike Fink and the dashing Major Bennett Riley who fought a drunken duel with a brother officer on a Mississippi River island and then continued downriver in fellowship. The West was also not a land for the spiritually timid: Reverend John Mason Peck came from New York to save souls, but he acknowledged the challenge Missouri presented, citing a popular boast that the Sabbath never crossed and never would cross the Mississippi River.[15] The West

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[13] The West influenced other, more settled parts of the country as well: humor *not* from the original thirteen colonies was called southwestern humor. Even the "modern" concept of the American West is inconclusive regarding geographic boundaries. Popular American culture considers any of the twenty-two continental states west of the Mississippi River as part of the West. The US Census Bureau classifies states beyond the Mississippi River as Western, Midwestern (Missouri and North Dakota) or even Southern (Oklahoma). http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/hvs/qtr307/q307def.html, accessed February 6, 2008.

[14] In 1819, Stephen Long was sent by Congress to explore the upper reaches of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers. His ship, *The Western Engineer,* was the first steamboat to ascend the Missouri River. The craft was painted to resemble a dragon and steam issued from the "dragon's" mouth.

[15] Rufus Babcock. *Forty Years of Pioneer Life: Memoir of John Mason Peck D.D.* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1864), 87.

was simply not the settled, organized, "civilized" East: not in character, agriculture, people, towns or safety.

As the grand flow of emigration into the West continued, its geographic and mythic boundaries stretched: it was a place of promise, a place of the imagination, and an excellent sowing ground for stories, legends and drama. Historian Patricia Limerick complained that the "Old west treated 'actual western places only as stage settings for the repeated sequential performances of the frontier play.'[16] Limerick's comment was in opposition to the Frederick Jackson Turner model of frontier settlement as succeeding waves of explorers, miners, farmers and townspeople, but her image of the West as stage is striking. The "sequential performances" of the West fit the dramatic model perfectly: the physical frame of a show (the West) is fixed onstage, but the production and stories change due to cast, audience and playwright. As Limerick and other historians seem to say, Nature provided the raw material for the West and the Native Americans and emigrants created and then "performed" daily life in the West. Soon after came the writers, artists and journalists who offered representations of the West based on their experiences and imagination, as well as on varying degrees of "reality." The fictional "West" was a personal place by turns vibrant, humorous and raw, and it was the playwrights who translated these experiences to the stage. While Americans are familiar with films such as *The Searchers* or *Silverado* and plays like Sam Shepard's *True West*!, an examination of plays from the earlier era, when the notion of the West was emerging, is crucial to a fuller understanding of how our image of the West came to be.

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[16] Patricia Limerick, "The Unleashing of the Western Public Intellectual" in *Trails: Towards a New Western History* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 69.

The Questions

In examining more than one hundred plays written from 1790-1835– a period known as the Young Republic and corresponding to the early emigration West and development of the region as a metaphorical and regional entity, three plays were identified as particularly suitable for examination: Alphonso Wetmore's *The Pedlar* (1821), William Dunlap's *A Trip to Niagara* (1828) and James Kirke Paulding's *The Lion of the West* (1831).[17] This selection was based upon a review of playlists including Dunlap's *A History of the American Theatre*, the Smith and Ludlow autobiographies, Literature On Line (LION) database, Odell's *Annals of the New York Stage*, Larson's *American Regional Theatre History to 1900*, Carson's *Theatre on the Frontier* and *Managers in Distress*, and *Meserve's Heralds of Promise: the Drama of the American People during the Age of Jackson.* Although a broader study might have included a few additional titles (for example, Louisa Medina's bloody melodrama *Nick of the Woods*, first produced in 1839), the nature of this study requires a narrower focus, both chronologically and generically, and the three selected plays not only share a chronological frame of a decade, they represent a distinct subgenre of Western social satire.

Further examination of the context and content of the plays reveals that they are connected – subtly and overtly – by theme, setting and authorship (all three were written

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[17] Alphonso Wetmore, *The Pedlar* (Louisville: University of Kentucky, 1955); William Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara*, in *Dramas from the American Theatre 1762-1909* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1966); James Kirke Paulding, ed. by James Tidwell, *The Lion of the West* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1954).

by New Yorkers). Scraps of evidence show tantalizing connections among the men : Dunlap and Paulding were friends, and counted Alphonso Wetmore's cousin among their social group. Wetmore had his portrait painted by Chester Harding, an itinerant artist who gave art lessons to Nathanial Parker Willis, friend of Paulding and Washington Irving, as well as painting portraits for the social circle.[18] Irving (Paulding's brother-in-law) served during the War of 1812 at the same fort where Wetmore was stationed, and later visited towns in Missouri where Wetmore lived. Wetmore visited New York several times after his posting to the West; he was an admirer of Irving's writing as well as a copyist of Irving's style.[19] Perhaps most importantly, Paulding and Irving were founders of the Knickerbocker school of literature, and Dunlap helped establish the Hudson River School of art.

Neither "school" was rigid regarding membership, but style was quite important. The painters looked to the environment for inspiration, and were awash in the sense of aweful grandeur which was a part of the Romantic movement. When placed within the context of their creation, *The Pedlar, A Trip to Niagara* and *Lion of the West* provide readers with two-way mirrors into the trans-Mississippi West: from Knickerbocker Manhattan to the West, and from the West back onto the Eastern stage. Man and place were mutually affected by and affected each other, and ignited a fascination with the dramatic West to which audiences still respond in film and text.

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[18] James T. Callow, *Kindred Spirits: Knickerbocker Writers and American Artists, 1807-1855*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1967), 82-84.

[19] James S. Hutchins, "Dear Hook: Letters from Bennet Riley, Alphonso Wetmore, and Reuben Holmes, 1822-1833" (*The Bulletin* XXXVI, no. 4, part 1, 1980), 203-220. Wetmore noted "[I will] continue a *burlesque* History of *these parts*, in imitation of Knickobocker."

Of the three plays, *Lion of the West* is by far the best known by critics and historians (and generally, though mistakenly, identified as the first to introduce a Western character in a leading role), while *The Pedlar* and *A Trip to Niagara* have received limited critical attention from scholars. None of these plays is a classic in the sense of continuing fame or fortune. They are rarely performed today. But they presented Eastern audiences with the earliest dramatic depiction of Western life and character, whether in the form of a buckskinned backwoods brawler, river soundings or mythic river men. *The Pedlar*, *A Trip to Niagara*, and *Lion of the West* were intrinsic in shaping the popular perception of the early West within, and beyond, theatre. Exploring these early dramatic depictions of the West increases our understanding of how our ideas about the west, and therefore about ourselves and our national identity, were formed, as well as the important role that theatre in general, and these three plays in particular, contributed to that formation.

Despite the continued American love for westerns, scholars have often neglected the early onstage West. The study of the West in relationship to American theatre has been addressed by Rosemarie Bank, Tice Miller and Walter Meserve, among others, who examined how actors, scripts, audiences and settings explored the new regions of settlement. These scholars often focus on playwrights and plays such as Royall Tyler's *The Contrast*, which have already received their critical due. Few theatre scholars considered the trans-Mississippi West and early theatre, among them William G. B. Carson in his studies *Theatre on the Frontier* and *Managers in Distress*.[20] Carson traced

[20] William G. B. Carson, *The Theatre on the Frontier* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932), 318 ff. It appears from Carson's playlist that the first American play

the history of performance in St. Louis from 1814-1840 and compiled playlists from St. Louis theatres during that era. An examination of the lists reveals four plays by American playwrights on American topics: *Yankee Chronology* by William Dunlap (War of 1812), *The Contrast* by Royall Tyler (American spirit versus English), *The Politician Outwitted* by Samuel Low (the Constitution) and *The Pedlar* by Alphonso Wetmore. A fifth play – actually a comic opera – *The Better Sort or A Girl of Spirit* – lampooned Americans' love of foreign ideas but did not list a playwright.[21] Only *The Pedlar* was connected to the West.

The West did not leap onstage with a hoot and holler, but grew from the experiences of Americans and the imaginations of playwrights, yet of the three plays to be considered within this study, few historians consider the plays important. In general, critics tend to examine only a few plays about the West, including *Nick of the Woods* (Louisa Medina), later plays like *Davy Crockett* (Frank Murdoch), *Across the Continent* (James McCloskey), *A Woman in the Mines* (Alonzo Delano), or the "wild west shows" of William "Buffalo Bill" Cody.[22]

Given this large and important gap in research and knowledge, it is the object of this study to examine how the "West" is depicted in *The Pedlar*, *A Trip to Niagara* and *The Lion of the West*. I am interested in exploring the distinctive nature of each playwright's vision of the West through the use of character, setting, language, folklore,

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performed in St. Louis was *Yankee Chronology*, 1818. William Dunlap wrote *Chronology* to support the patriotic fervor engendered by the War of 1812.

[21] Walter J. Meserve, *An Outline History of American Drama* (New York: Feedback Theatrebooks, 1994), 34.

[22] Louis Warren, *Buffalo Bill's America* (New York: Knopf, 2005) is an outstanding study of how the West was packaged and performed.

and plot, as well as the relationship among the three differing visions. I am also interested in how these relationships (similarities and dissimilarities) may be accounted for by investigating the playwrights' backgrounds and their processes of dramatic creation.

Literature Review

The Pedlar, *A Trip to Niagara*, and *The Lion of the West* were selected for this study based on their early dramatic depictions of the West through the use of setting, imagery, vocabulary or characters. Although both West and frontier were used as keywords when searching for literature, this is a study of the West.

Of the three plays, only *The Lion of the West* has received anything akin to critical analysis. The *Lion*'s script was lost for more than a century after Paulding's death: the few articles that mentioned the play depended upon newspaper reviews of the 1830s for the plot. Nelson Adkins in "James K. Paulding's *Lion of the West*" attempted to recreate the plot from the reviews. Stuart Hyde used the recently republished *Lion* by James Tidwell to discuss the roots of the backwoods brawler in "The Ring-Tailed Roarer in American Drama".[23] In 1939, W. T. Conklin addressed "Paulding's Prose Treatment of Types and Frontier Lore before Cooper" for Studies in English; but without *The Lion* at hand, Conklin used examples set by Paulding in Virginia, Ohio and New York's Mohawk Valley. For years, *Lion* was given slight mention other than as "the first play to contain a

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[23] Nelson Adkins, "James K. Paulding's *Lion of the West*" (*American Literature*, November, 1931): 249-258; Stuart Hyde, "The Ring-Tailed Roarer in American Drama," (*Southern Folklore Quarterly*. Vol. XIX, no. 3, 1955): 171-178.

frontiersman as a main character."[24] (As this study reveals, however, *The Pedlar* contained such a character a decade earlier than Lion.) James Tidwell's rediscovery of a script for *The Lion of the West*, resulted in an essay in which he examined the literary and production history of the text, but he did not include, or was more likely unaware of, the last known version of the play.[25] In a more recent essay, "Shaping the Authentic: St. Louis Theatre Culture and the Construction of American Social Types, 1815-1860" Louis Gerteis mentions *The Kentuckian* (a later version of *Lion of the West*) but does not discuss the differences between the versions.[26]

The Pedlar and *A Trip to Niagara* have fared even worse. William G. B. Carson dismissed *The Pedlar* as "being of no literary merit whatsoever," and Scott C. Osborne, in his introduction to a 1955 reprint called the play nothing more than an historical oddity.[27] Robert Boyd provided a deeper analysis of *The Pedlar* in his dissertation "Literary Activity in Antebellum St. Louis, Missouri," but he explored neither the roots of the play nor literary influences on the play. Julian Mates in "William Dunlap's *A Trip*

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[24] Vera Jiji, ed. *The Lion of the West*. Vol. 1, *Showcasing American Drama: A Handbook of Source Materials* (New York: Humanities Institute of Brooklyn College, 1983.)

[25] James Tidwell, *The Lion of the West* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1954), 7-14.

[26] Louis Gerteis, "Shaping the Authentic: St. Louis Theatre Culture and the Construction of American Social Types, 1815-1860." In *St. Louis in the Century of Henry Shaw*, Louis Gerteis, ed. (St. Louis: Missouri History Museum Press), 190-217.

[27] William G. B. Carson, *The Theatre on the Frontier* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932), 74.

to Niagara" offers the only in-depth analysis of the play, but he does not address the play's connection to emigration or frontier experiences.[28]

Primary sources are also slim in discussions regarding the three plays. Actor/producers Noah Ludlow and Sol Smith wrote charmingly about their experiences in the Mississippi Valley a decade after the Louisiana Purchase and William G. B. Carson's studies traced the contributions made by St. Louis theater to the theatrical history of the western territory, but Ludlow, Smith and Carson emphasized personal history, the construction and condition of theatres, the listing of seasons, the anecdotes of the road: the mechanics and experiences of theatre, not the theatrical literature. [29] More recent studies that consider the dramatic literature of the period include three dissertations: Tena Helton's "The Literary Frontier: Creating An American Nation, 1820-1840," Matthew Rebhorn's "Pioneer Performances: Staging the Frontier, 1829-1893 and Maura Jortner's "Playing America on Nineteenth-Century Stages: or Jonathan in England and Jonathan at Home."[30] Helton's study is concerned with ethnography of narrative and seeks connections between character and context in depicting the written West through an examination of genre and language, but she does not consider dramatic literature.

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[28] Julian Mates "William Dunlap's *A Trip to Niagara" The Journal of American Drama and Theatre*, 13 no. 2, (2001), 85-96.

[29] Noah Ludlow, *Dramatic Life As I Found It* (Bronx, NY: Benjamin Blom, 1966), 180-200; Solomon Smith, *Theatrical Management in the West and South for Thirty Years* (New York: Harper & Brothers), 49ff.

[30] Tena Helton, "The Literary Frontier: Creating an American Nation (1820-1840)," (Ph.D. diss., Louisiana State University, 2005); Matthew Rebhorn, "Pioneer Performances: Staging the Frontier, 1829-1893" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2004); Maura L. Jortner, "Playing America on Nineteenth-Century Stages: or Jonathan in England and Jonathan at Home" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2005.

Rebhorn discusses *Lion* at length, but in relationship to melodrama and not to the representation of the Western aesthetic as it developed onstage. His lens of "reterritorialized dramatic aesthetic" or "melodrama of wonder" is used to view the play as an interaction between the English and Americans and to explore the "fantasy of the frontier."[31] He begins with *Lion of the West* and moves forward in history, so there is no connection with the frontier – or fantasy – before 1831. He also employs William Bayley Barnard's early version of the play, and does not consider the unpublished promptbook in his analysis. Maura Jortner uses post-colonial theory to examine how the Yankee character developed in the trans-Atlantic worlds of England the United States. She does not consider Yankee characters in the West or the development of western personalities.

Methodology

Theatre historians generally use "frontier theatre" to describe theatre performed on the frontier, as in *The Cambridge Guide to American Theatre*.[32] But the frontier is not always the West: the frontier moved on once emigrants settled and towns were established, the people left behind in the West. In fact, the West embraced and then dismissed the frontier and the backwoods, keeping what was useful (stories and folklore) in order to tell its story, and looking ahead to the future (development of literature).[33] Therefore, since the word "frontier" is not consonant with "West," this study will use

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[31] Rebhorn, 22.

[32] Don Wilmeth and Tice Miller, eds., *Cambridge Guide to American Theatre* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[33] Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997), 19-20.

"Western theatre" to describe theatrical literature which depicts or performs the life, actions and philosophy of the American West, and "frontier" to describe the edge of settlement. In addition, based upon the historical and demographic indications of settlement patterns beginning at the Mississippi River – the movement into the trans-Mississippi West after the War of 1812 – this study will geographically locate the "West" during the decade of the three plays (1821-1831) as the area embracing the trans-Mississippi and Missouri regions to the Rocky Mountains, along with immediately adjacent areas of western Kentucky and Tennessee from which many of the emigrants in that period originated.

The plays in this study were selected after an extensive review of dramatic literature written or produced during the Young Republic, a time during which American literature – dramatic and otherwise – arose. Scripts were reviewed for setting (the trans-Mississippi West), character, language or images commonly thought of as representing the West (Native Americans, log cabins, brawlers, mountain men, panthers, buffalo.) Some plays could not be located in print, or existed only in title or passing mention.[34] Only *The Pedlar*, *A Trip to Niagara* and *The Lion of the West* satisfied the requirements of this study.

Eliminated from consideration were plays which, although contemporary with *The Pedlar*, *A Trip to Niagara* and *Lion of the West*, were set outside the West: these included works including M.M. Noah's *She Would Be A Soldier or The Plains of Chippewa* and William Craft's *The Sea Serpent*. Some plays implied a Western setting,

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[34] A series of newspaper comments in 1828 about "flying Indians" led to the stage adaptation of *Peter Wilkins and the Flying Indians*, which deserves a study of its own; unfortunately, the Indians were of the lost island kind, and not of the American West.

but failed to provide specific characteristics (landscape setting, language, folklore) congruent with the trans-Mississippi West. These included *The Indian Prophecy* by George Washington Parke Custis (1828) set in 1772 "in the Kenhawa, and mountains adjacent, in the West of Virginia," and which despite the descriptive title, offered few specific attributes of the region, one of the wildest in the colonies. *The Fair Americans* (1815) is set near Lake Erie on the New York frontier in a bucolic and happy setting, instead of the rough region that was western New York. The melodrama *Oolaita* by Lewis Deffebach (1821) portrays the prairie-dwelling Sioux living in cabins amid a "palmetto's shade," a charming if completely incomprehensible picture.[35]

This dissertation approaches the three plays chronologically and examines the texts through an analysis of language, characters, setting and plots in relationship to the history and literature of the trans-Mississippi West. The plays, each of which was written by a playwright who considered himself a New Yorker, will be examined through the lens of the beliefs and aesthetic perspectives of Knickerbocker authors and Hudson River School painters. Accounting for the nature of the depictions of place and character within these extremely influential aesthetic movements will provide a framework for examining how New York playwrights created a vision of the new American West. The other side of the western vision – the self-reflected view of the West onstage – will guided by Elliot

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[35] William Dunlap in *A History of the American Theatre* called the play "an Indian curiosity well worth preserving. The Museum, probably, would be the best place for that purpose." Other Indian plays – including *Tecumseh* and *Pontiac* – are set in Canada, Detroit and regions not associated with the trans-Mississippi West. *She Would Be a Soldier* is set in Canada, while *The Fall of Iturbide* takes place in Mexico.

West's study, *The Way to the West*.[36] Each chapter of this study includes a discussion of the playwright's background, the context in which the play is set and the connection of the play with the West, whether this was accomplished through costumes, language, folklore or other aspects. As importantly, a comparison of the plays based upon the connections – personal and professional – of the playwrights will draw from letters, diaries, and literary productions.

Organization

This study is organized in six chapters and three appendices. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter Two will place *The Pedlar*, *The Lion of the West* and *A Trip to Niagara* into the context of the decade 1821-1831, drawing on the political, social and cultural changes in America specific to western emigration. A discussion of the Hudson River School of painting and the Knickerbocker School of writers provides a framework in which to investigate development of the American sense of place regarding the West as depicted by the three New York writers: Wetmore, Dunlap and Paulding.

Chapter Three analyzes *The* Pedlar, featuring a short biography of Alphonso Wetmore, review his non-theatrical works and his interest in the writings of the Knickerbockers, provide a synopsis and analysis of *The Pedlar* including Wetmore's use of language, character, setting and folklore in reflecting the West. This chapter demonstrates how Wetmore translated the daily experiences of a settler onto the stage by

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[36] Elliott West, *The Way to the West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 127-166.

comparing contemporary accounts of Missouri life with Wetmore's dialogue and characters.

Chapter Four focuses on *A Trip to Niagara*, presenting a short biography of William Dunlap, reviews his non-theatrical works as they pertain to the New York frontier, provides a synopsis and analysis of *A Trip to Niagara* including Dunlap's use of language, character, setting and literature, and the panorama; this analysis includes a discussion of his friendship with James Fenimore Cooper and its effect on Dunlap's vision of the West.

Chapter Five explores *The Lion of the West*, presenting a short biography of James Kirke Paulding, a survey of his non-theatrical works as they pertain to the West and Old South West, a synopsis and analysis of *The Lion of the West* including the production history and the differences among the three versions of the play. I then analyze Paulding's use of language, character, setting to create his representation of the West, and explore how *Lion* was used as propaganda to influence an important political dispute and election.

Chapter Six discusses the relationships among the three plays, and attempts to account for the nature of those relationships, and offers conclusions about how the plays presented different views of the West and how the Knickerbocker and Hudson River School aesthetics influenced audience interpretation of the plays. This chapter summarizes the findings of this study and offers conclusions regarding the significance of those findings.

Chapter II – The Context: Into the West

The dramatic vision of the American West developed under three sets of conditions: the direct experiences of the emigrants who moved into the West, the perceptions of Eastern writers and audiences who depended upon second-hand descriptions of the West and the transference of eastern life and history to the West. Even though the United States was a new country with few of its own traditions and beliefs, American artists, authors and playwrights did not create in a cultural vacuum. Their perceptions and even imagination were grounded in the contemporary world of the early nineteenth century, and influenced by the aesthetics of the East's literature, art and history. It would therefore be useful to consider this world in order to discover how it helped shape the image of the West.

After the Revolution, America was forced to reinvent itself quickly, madly and audaciously, to throw off the English halter and assume a new place in the world order. America's cities heaved with a rawness and bustle rarely seen in a Europe so long settled and civilized. A visitor to the streets of Manhattan in the early part of the nineteenth century was drowned by the sounds, sights and smells. A lusty combination of Dutch, English, German, Guinea, Mohawk, and patois called back and forth across the roads and alleys. Trade was bustling, the wharves filled with ships bound for England, the Indies and beyond. Cotton was moving from princeling to king due to an intense trade between England, New York and the southern states, and a commensurate increase in slavery. Brick and wooden buildings jostled along a pied streetscape, and the air filled with the stinks of smoke, tanyards, privies, and harbor. Fresh water was no longer found in

Manhattan, and yellow fever stalked the city each summer. Manhattan was dangerous, alive and open to the world.

But despite America's detestation of European government, the country was still in thrall to the Old World. Little time had passed since Independence, and much of that was spent in holding together the states née colonies for economic purposes. As for the new American arts, there were few that did not imitate European styles. The Revolution only served to highlight the lack of American art forms, including theatre. The best-known American playwright during the Revolutionary period was Mercy Otis Warren, who wrote *The Group* and *The Adulateur* as satires on the failure of British rule, but her works served as published critiques and were not published. During the Revolution, English General Howe and Sir Henry Clinton staged extravaganzas as well as plays at the former John Street Theatre, which they renamed the Theatre Royal.[37] General "Gentleman" Johnny Burgoyne provided theatrical entertainment for his troops in Boston. A skilled playwright, Burgoyne worked with David Garrick before being posted to the colonies and continued his theatrical successes upon return to England, with works including *The Heiress*.[38] Shakespeare, Sheridan, Congreve and other European

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[37] *New York Times*, Jan. 9, 1909, 5.

[38] Potter, Lois. "Sir John Burgoyne." *The Literary Encyclopedia*7 July 2001. [http://www.litencyc.com/php/speople.php?rec=true&UID=646, accessed 13 March 2009. In addition to Burgoyne's Boston productions, General Richard Howe and Sir Henry Clinton supported military theatre in New York. George Seilhamer indicates that Clinton's productions were sometimes for the benefit of widows and orphans, although at least one playbill indicated that "No children in laps will be permitted." George Seilhamer in *History of the American Theatre in America: During the Revolution and After* (Philadelphia: Globe Printing House, 1889), 44. The Continental Congress was appalled at the thought of theatre performances during revolution and the October 20, 1774, the Continental Congress proclaimed that "Frequenting playhouses and theatrical entertainments has a fatal tendency to divert the minds of the people

playwrights were popular both before and after the war, but had virtually nothing to say about the new country.[39] Manhattan attracted the cultural elite of the country including Burr, Hamilton, and Washington, who appreciated art and culture more than war.[40] The arts provided a social center for the country and Manhattan was at its heart, setting the stage for an American mixture of politics and theatre: On the occasion of his attendance at Dunlap's *Darby's Return*, Washington was watched by the audience and playwright with as much concentration as they watched the play.[41]

America soon began to reflect upon itself, onstage, in painting and in literature. The Young Republic was a time of innovation, invention and satisfaction, of political

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from a due attention to the means necessary for the defense of the country and the preservation of their liberties." Theatres were closed or heavily fined until the end of the war. At http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/contcong_10-20-74.asp, accessed November 4, 2009.

[39] Alden T. Vaughan, "Shakespeare Discovers America, America Discovers Shakespeare," *Shakespeare in American Life* exhibition catalog. Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library, 2007, 2. Shakespeare did, in fact, depict the New World on stage: *The Tempest* is believed to have been based upon the wreck of the *Sea Venture* in 1609 off Bermuda. The crew, passengers and one dog survived, and spent months on the island building a new ship. Shakespeare may have helped popularize a phrase that became associated with America: the cry of "Westward, ho!" was used by Thames boatmen to call for fares ("Eastward, ho!" was just as popular, of course.) In *Twelfth Night*, Viola says "westward ho!" during a meeting with Olivia. Did American emigrants popularize this phrase because of Shakespeare? Or was the phrase used on American waterways of the early nineteenth century?

[40] Harold Dickson, *Arts of the Young Republic: The Age of William Dunlap* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 3 ff. Aaron Burr, for all his nefarious plots and intrigues, knew talent when he saw it: Burr funded the training of John Vanderlyn, Kingston, NY. Vanderlyn was a portraitist and an early proponent of panoramic painting, which heavily influenced Dunlap's work on *A Trip to Niagara*.

[41] William Dunlap, *A History of the American Theatre from Its Origins to 1832* (New York: J. Harper, 1832; reprint Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 87 (page citations are to the reprint edition), 88-89. Dunlap reported that during a performance of *Darby's Return* which alluded to the general, Washington looked by turns serious, embarrassed, happy and finally offered "in what was rare for him, a hearty laugh."

upheaval and debate, economic swings, crashes and peaks. The War of 1812 made the United States a world political power; the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 made the country – especially the East – an economic engine.[42] The Santa Fe Trail provided a direct trading route between Europe and Mexico, with the United States as corridor. New belief systems and religions emerged, including the millennial Millerites, the Mormons, and the celibate Shakers, and revival meetings were so intense that areas where the gatherings were held were called the "burned over districts."[43] More than seven million people were enumerated in the 1810 census, but fewer than one million lived west of the Appalachian Mountains; the rest were concentrated in seaboard towns and cities.[44] General Andrew Jackson "saved" New Orleans for the country (after the war had ended), and parlayed his popularity into the presidency. Jackson was raised in rural poverty, and struggled with reading and writing. He was a farmer, slave owner, fighter, and possessed a cutting sense of humor and a fierce temper.[45] While he may have given his name to the

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[42] Francis W. Halsey, ed. *Great Epochs in American History* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1912), 172ff. The Grand (Erie) Canal Celebration had more than a touch of the theatrical. Canalboats left Rochester in October 1825, bringing wild animals, Lake Erie water and a Native American to New York City. Samuel Woodworth, playwright of the "domestic opera" *The Forest Rose* and composer of "The Hunters of Kentucky" provided a new song "The Meeting of the Waters of Hudson and Erie," sung by Mr. Keene, who played the jealous lover in *Rose.*

[43] Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 173.

[44] Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 41.

[45] Jon Meachem, *American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House* (New York: Random House, 2008), 302. One story related how Jackson offered a reward for a runaway slave, and additional money to those who whipped the slave.

era, he did not represent the beliefs of all Americans, despite his election to office. Jackson supported the forcible removal of Native Americans from their land, was paternalistic and cruel by turns. His “kitchen” cabinet was a corrupt collection of politicians, and symbolized the intense political partisanship, rivalries and hatreds of the time.[46]

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, the country was split culturally as well as politically. Americans were either rural or urban, and the separation between the two groups was extreme. Rural men and women worked the land, maintained family ties in order to maintain family farms, and had limited chance for education beyond what was available in the country. Their lives revolved around seasonal work, and they spent little time in cities. Entertainments included corn shuckings, harvest dances and an occasional traveling theatre troupe that took over a hall or tavern and presented Romeo and Juliet or the thundering scenes of Pizarro. The urban dweller faced a much different life: he worked in a business or as an artisan, was more prone to catching diseases such as cholera and measles and had ample chances (and some spare time) in which to join social groups within a city. Restaurants, oyster bars, promenades, dances, ice cream gardens and theatres beckoned city audiences of all economic backgrounds. Where the wealth was, influence settled, and New York set the style and cultural tastes for much of the country.

Americans profited from the bustle and hustle of these years. They experienced the benefits of an emerging middle class that included leisure time as well as money. The railroad as mass transportation was still in the future, but steam travel was available on

[46] Daniel Walker Howe, 4.

the Hudson River, and the Erie Canal opened the way for travelers through central New York and on into the "northwest" of Ohio. In his later years, Washington Irving recalled, "A voyage up the Hudson in those days was equal to a voyage to Europe at present and cost almost as much time; but we enjoyed the river then."[47] A trip that once took a week or more was now an overnight excursion. Steamboats departed Manhattan for a two-day trip to Albany, stopping at towns with sonorous names like Poughkeepsie, Esopus, and Catskill. Travelers did not voyage in ignorance, for they might purchase maps that highlighted the views from the steamboat's deck and delineated mountains, highlands, settlements and rivers and the legends of goblins, ghosts and Native American monsters that attached themselves to the geography. But now visitors were able to visit the distant lands, to disembark and travel inland to experience magnificent overlooks, deep, blue mountain passes and grand waterfalls, such as the Kaaterskill Falls, higher in total drop than Niagara.[48] Grand hotels including the Catskill Mountain House raised their facades nearly two thousand feet above the valley, the better to sell the view and attract visitors. In less than fifty years from the Revolution, the Hudson Valley, Catskills and Mohawk Valley had changed from wilderness into entertainment for those with the dollars to visit. Nowhere was there a greater sense of making the land dance for its supper than at

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[47] *Collected Works of Washington Irving*, ed. W. Irving, *Biographies and Miscellanies* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Son, 1869), 481-482.

[48] The Catskill Mountains were once called the Blue or Blew Mountains, perhaps from the deep blue-green tint of the old hemlock forests.

Kaaterskill Falls: here, a landowner/entrepreneur had built a dam, allowing him to stop and start the falls for the price of admission.[49]

As this interest in the landscape grew and as the landscape become more accessible, writers flocked to the Hudson Valley and Catskills, each attempting to offer prose more purple than previous attempts when describing thunderstorms, snow showers and sunsets. The Mountain House was located on a precipice where five states were visible on a clear day and guests spent their time on the piazza or stood on a separate "platform" for viewing nature and watching a "diorama" below.[50] In describing the view of mists below, one author gushed, "The sea so measureless; so disturbed to the eye; so near, and yet so speechless to the ear. It was not a dead sea, for it moved; but it was the movement of oblivion."[51] The valley was a theatre, and the piazza was the boxes, a place from which to watch the natural world in its sublimity while enjoying the safety of a well-appointed hotel. Ironically one of the early guests was not Washington Irving, who set his story "Rip Van Winkle" within a glade below the Mountain House.[52] Irving's tale of the past and future colliding in one mountain dweller may have been borrowed from

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[49] Kenneth Myers, *The Catskills: Painters, Writers, and Tourists in the Mountains 1820-1895* (Yonkers, NY: The Hudson River Museum of Westchester, 1987), 16.

[50] Charles Rockwell, *The Catskill Mountains and the Region Around* (New York: Taintor Brothers, 1867), 226. The states that could be seen from Catskills high peaks were New York, Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire.

[51] Rockwell, 249. The author continues in this vein, claiming the "king appeared" instead of "the sun rose."

[52] Pierre M. Irving, *The Life and Letters of Washington Irving* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1883), 186. Although Washington Irving had traveled the Hudson River as a youth, he had seen the "Blue Mountains" or the Catskills from afar; he did not visit the Mountain House until years after he wrote "Rip Van Winkle."

German folktales, but it became immensely popular because of its Catskill Mountain setting. The Headless Horseman galloped the valleys of the Hudson: his physical body that of a sturdy Dutch brawler, Brom Bones, but his spiritual body that of a Hessian soldier who had lost more than the battle that killed him. Irving may have used the lore of the old country, but he embodied it as a new land and people.

At the same time that literature was assuming an American hue, artists were beginning to see and describe their landscape not as a surface upon which things occurred, but as an experience that offered deeper meanings through the observation and depictions of weather, color, symbolism. Dead trees and drear lakes spoke of mortality, giant rocks were in fact the Devil's Kitchen, thunderstorms and sun showers revealed the suffering and joy of the human soul. This partnership of writers and painters – the Knickerbockers and the Hudson River School – viewed a geographic place as being imbued with a spirit of its own, a belief that would have a profound effect on how the American West was portrayed onstage.

Paint and Word: Romanticism, Knickerbockers and the Landscape

The American delineators of the wild lands – the wilderness – may have been innovative in their approach to the subject as artists, but the idea of wilderness was not new. From New England came an early description of the American wilderness and backwoods:

> Besids, what could they see but a hideous & desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts & wild men?...and ye whole countrie, full of woods & thickets, represented a wild & savage heiw?. If they looked behind them, ther was ye

> mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now as a maine barr & goulfe to seperate them from all ye civill parts of ye world.[53]

Pilgrims and painters alike were familiar with the Biblical sense of a "howling wilderness" (Deuteronomy 32:10), indicating that wildness afoot was not always physical, but spiritual as well. Men and women who left palisaded villages for the interior woods had left the enclosed safety of civilization. "Out there" were Indians, darkness, shadows, the Devil; inside was the walled Eden of the enclosed garden, where safety, food and companionship were offered. Death came from outside, and the wilderness was unforgiving; those who survived and thrived in the wilderness were mythic, more powerful than nature, demi-gods.

America's wilderness was becoming fashionable in the republic, and it entered the culture through visual art. Benjamin Franklin, who lived in cities and moved easily in the sophisticated European capitols, was painted in the late eighteenth century wearing a bearskin cap and coat. The portrait offers viewers a double-edge in meaning: Franklin, the Eastern man, controls the wilderness, subdues the wild and leads the country into settlement. It took courage to track and kill a bear in any age, but it was just as likely Franklin was playing dress-up and enjoying the sense of being a frontiersman without the work and danger that implied. Unlike Franklin, Daniel Boone had shot many bears. When Chester Harding painted Boone's portrait in 1820, the great woodsman was shown leaning on his hunting rifle, relaxed and yet alert, a favored dog at his feet. Although the original portrait was destroyed, it was copied by other artists and became an icon and symbol of the American settler. By the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the

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[53] William Bradford, *Bradford's History Of Plimouth Plantation* (Boston: By Order of the General Court, 1899), 95. The original manuscript dated from 1647.

wilderness and frontier had entered into the popular culture, and were about to be embraced and celebrated by writers and playwrights as never before.

Even as Americans were establishing the new physical and political boundaries of their world, they were struggling to identify themselves culturally. The pre-Revolutionary arts in America were imitations of European styles and techniques. Dutch "patroons" hired portrait artists to record the solid wealth of the landowners and their wives. Painters were trained to follow the artistic conventions of Europe; seventeenth century century artists had not lived long enough in the New World to separate themselves from the homeland. The wilderness was frightening but a painting of one's home and hearth was reassuring and so these artists looked inward and not to the outside. New Netherlands was still an outpost of the mother country and art was employed to reflect that relationship.[54] Stolid, dour, unsmiling portraits of settlers reflected the success, honesty, propriety and morality of the sitter, wife or husband and family, a tradition continued by the English.[55] In nearly all cases, painting was used to advertise and record a man's place in the world. That this place was a new colony, a new country, meant little: the techniques, the painters, the styles were European.[56] Indeed, throughout

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[54] Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World* (New York: Vintage, 2007).

[55] The portrait tradition continued well into the nineteenth century, when George Caleb Bingham painted scores of unsmiling subjects, even as he was becoming a master of genre painting as "The Missouri Artist." It was difficult to paint a smiling subject who would easily tire from the grimacing, but when a serious phiz was coupled with sober tints and backdrops, the effect was chilling rather than impressive.

[56] M. P. Naud, *American Art from the Colonial and Federal Periods* (New York: Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 1981), 5. Naud notes that in 1670, "Although a strong sense of linear design gives the best of these early works an exciting, primitive character, their forms are

the nineteenth century Americans would continue to study painting and sculpture in Europe, in the belief that a country with only a few decades to its credit could hardly be considered a repository of "fine" art.[57] American architecture took its influence from Greek buildings; landscapes were based upon the views, walks, pools and statuary of ancient Rome. American independence might well be revolutionary, but it hadn't much to offer those of "superior taste" when it came to the arts.

In fact, pride in being "American" was dimmed by the belief that American art was so new that it had little to say. John Trumbull painted American history in the Neoclassical style, employing heroic subjects, formality in tone, style and distance from the viewer, and a clear sense of, if not righteousness, then solidity in subject.[58] All this is found in Trumbull's 1786 picture "The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker Hill," small in size but monumental in scope with its carefully composed battle scene, religious symbolism and roiling sense of movement and battle that implies the Revolution might come to a sudden, inglorious end.[59] In the heat of battles, all appears grand; it is only after, when breathing room is restored, that American artists realized they had a very

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essentially the same as Northern European and English artists had been using for more than 100 years."

[57]Louise Minks, *The Hudson River* School (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2001), 6 ff. Perhaps Trumball's most "American" subject was the *Declaration of Independence* (1818), painted with the guidance of an elderly Thomas Jefferson. However, scholarship has indicated that the Declaration was not signed by all members of Congress on July 4, 1776, and so Trumball adjusted history to suit art.

[58] Laurie Schneider Adams, *Art Across Time* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 736.

[59] Minks, *The Hudson River School*, 10.

large void to fill once the British were defeated. A new country lacked history as well as subjects for the artist's brush.

For a time after the Revolution, Americans had nowhere to turn but Europe for art. American artists who wished to be considered of any account whatsoever in the art world still depended upon Europeans teachers for training. At least two "American" painters – John Singleton Copley and Benjamin West – sailed to England before the Revolution and set up their studios in London.[60] Copley and West wielded enormous influence over American painting culture and during the early years of the republic many young artists, including Gilbert Stuart, William Dunlap, Washington Irving and John Vanderlyn, sailed to England where they apprenticed to West and studied the techniques of the Old Masters.[61] Along with techniques, these painters and writers were exposed to a world that was ancient. Europe held to its past, in part, because countries depended for existence upon monarchies, the clergy and familial transfers of power. To justify one's right to rule, a king must regard the past as more important than the future, for the past granted power, while the future might destroy it. This had all been turned upside down by

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[60] Laurie Schneider Adams, *Art Across Time* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001), 729ff. Copley was raised in Boston, the son of Irish emigrants. He disagreed with independence from England, and emigrated to London in 1775; ironically, his most famous American painting is the portrait of silversmith and hero, Paul Revere. Benjamin West was a Pennsylvania Quaker who became the court painter to George III. Stuart returned to England after the Revolution and set up a studio that attracted young artists like Samuel Morse and Dunlap.

[61] Louis L. Noble, *The Course of Empire* (New York: Cornish, Lampart & Company, 1843), 102. Thomas Cole may have been England born but he was American bred and so wrote to a patron "I believe you are acquainted with the strong desire I have long had to visit Europe for the purpose of studying the works of the Great Masters, and know the advantages young artists may derive from that study." Irving traveled to Europe in 1805, and his friendship with artists nearly convinced him to become one himself.

the American Revolution, and Americans who visited Europe discovered, along with the old, the blossoming of a new philosophical vision, Romanticism.

Although closely identified with the nineteenth century, Romanticism was rooted in the 18th-century writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau who called for a return to the wildness and sublimity of the natural world. Here in nature, man and woman would discover their true souls, free from the vice imposed by civilization and the impositions of modern life. Sublimity was not only the looking beyond to something grander, but the realization that joy without terror or peace without insanity were merely static states: it was the pull and push of the wild and unknown that allowed humans to understand the value of beauty and silence. Romanticism sought inspiration in the natural world, especially from weather (the wilder, the better), the sea, and the wilderness.[62] Since to turn to the natural world was – for adherents of Romanticism – to turn backwards towards Eden and the past, Romanticism looked for distance in time and place: far away (the wild lands) and long ago (in the "perfect" republics of Greece and Rome).[63]

In America, there was little history to turn back to, so the country's geography became the focus for Romanticism turned outward, towards the land and the West. European painters drew from the land for inspiration, but they were limited by frontiers of political or geographic construction. Heading west (or in any other direction for that matter) was a far different jaunt in Europe than it was in America: the former was beset by other countries, while emigrant America headed into its own, unknown lands. And as

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[62] Adams,753.

[63] Adams, 754.

for geography, Europe and America both had lush meadows, high peaks and river bluffs, but in the view of American painters, the American landscape was bigger, bolder and as grand and natural as anything found in Europe. The artists who began to depict the American experience have been called luminists (from their use of light as to express emotion), the Native School or, more recently, the Hudson River School. The latter has been defined by historian Trewen Copplestone as a group of artists connected by "a passionate romantic attachment to the inspiring landscape of the new discovered…continent, together with a desire to imbue the land itself with a spiritual identity." [64] While the landscape was the initial – and strongest – influence on the artists, they would also turn their pencils and brushes to contemporary literature, illustrating works by James Fenimore Cooper and Washington Irving.[65]

The "school" had no common techniques, no agreed upon styles, no single subject. In fact, although several of the first "students" of the school were close friends or colleagues, the Hudson River School later stretched far beyond its namesake watercourse, encompassing artists such as Albert Bierstadt and George Caleb Bingham whose works included views of the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains.[66] While there were hints of the foundation for this school beginning with the works of landscape artists like Washington Allston and Thomas Doughty,the cornerstone of this group was Thomas

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[64] Trewen Copplestone, *The Hudson River School* (New York: Gramercy Press, 1999), 15.

[65] Minks, *The Hudson River School*, 6.

[66] Bingham is best known for his genre paintings of raftsmen, politicians, and Missouri folks. His most famous genre works appeared beginning in the mid-1840s, and so do not fall into the era considered within this study.

Cole. Born in England but raised in Cincinnati, Cole left Ohio to study art.[67] By the 1820s he had made his way to New York. Inspired, in part, by Washington Irving's "Rip Van Winkle," Cole took trips into the Catskill Mountains, hiking for miles with his parasol and paintbox and sketching the wild scenery of the deep cloves, and lakes. The paintings were unlike any previously seen in America: accurate depictions of landscape infused with a haunted and brooding atmosphere both frightening and enticing. Cole was unknown and nearly destitute in 1825 when he persuaded a New York picture framer to display several of his paintings in a shop window. Fortunately, the artist John Trumbull happened upon the shop, saw the paintings and purchased two. Trumbull returned with two friends, Asher Durand and painter/playwright/manager William Dunlap. The men purchased nearly all the paintings Cole had on display and began to promote the young artist in New York society.[68]

Trumball, Dunlap and Durand were riveted by this new painting subject: the American landscape in all its wildness, all its wilderness. The style caught on quickly and Americans began to "adorn our houses with American prospects and American skies."[69] Those who lacked the skills to paint flocked to exhibits, and then the landscape itself to enjoy the views, the sublime, the terror and the glory of weather, mountains and rivers. Americans were not only learning how to appreciate American art – they were learning to look beyond the landscape of rocks and trees, and see it as a place of aesthetic influence. Hudson River painters delineated darkness as much they did light, painting images of

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[67] John Howat, *The Hudson River and Its Painters*. (New York: Viking Press, 1972, 33.

[68] Minks, *The Hudson River School,* 10.

[69] Howat, *The Hudson River and Its Painters,* 35.

lakes rimmed by trees and overgrown forest understory that blotted out the sky. The play of dark and light presented a sense of time to the viewer: a quiet as the forest appears on canvas, in a second there may be the bounding crash of a deer or the call of a bird, or the thunder of an approaching storm. The land appeared quiescent, but it was always a breath away from action and movement. Perhaps it was in this silence that the Hudson River artist ensnared a viewer, causing her to stop and wait for the next sound. However it happened Americans were now looking at, and not merely living on, the land. The land had become a living thing that changed and grew and was conquered and in turn, conquered, a theatrical character that depicted a world's coming-into-being. Inspired, in part, by America's infatuation with the land and its riches, Wetmore, Dunlap and Paulding would each view their play's settings through a brand new lens of the American landscape, including its characters, geography and something less tangible but no less important: what the land said about Americans.

Concurrent with interest in the land's physical imagery came writers who recorded their philosophies of wilderness with pen and word instead of crayon and oil. Alphonso Wetmore, William Dunlap and James Kirke Paulding had much in common regarding literature and writing. They each produced essays, fiction, news articles, books and plays. Although prolific writers, they varied widely in interests. Dunlap was the author of numerous plays and two histories (of American art and American theatre.) Paulding wrote novels, essays, letters and plays. Wetmore authored a gazetteer, essays, news commentaries and plays.[70] Well-educated young men were expected to dabble in

painting, poetry, essay writing or even acting, and to experience European writing as a way to develop their techniques and themes.[71] Paulding, along with his friends Washington and William Irving turned this tradition on its ear, and from 1807-08 published Salmagundi, a journal of essays, poems and theatre reviews.[72] The journal's tweaking of older traditions, generally Dutch, proved popular with the young society of Manhattan, and resulted in recognition of the gentlemen as a group that became known as the Knickerbockers. The style of writing, however, came before the title: not until 1809, when Washington Irving created the word in reference to Dutch New Yorkers, did "Knickerbocker" mean anything but a maker of marbles ("knikkerbakker" or marble baker) or a family surname.[73]

The Knickerbocker authors shared a common social educational background and, perhaps most importantly, lived in the place whereof they wrote. Like Paulding, several of them claimed ancestors who settled in New Amsterdam during the early seventeenth century, while the Irvings and William Dunlap came from old English stock.

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[70] After the production of *The Pedlar*, Wetmore wrote at least one tragedy, with the subject of Major John André; as far as can be determined, the script disappeared after Wetmore's death in 1849.

[71] Among the texts used by aspiring writers and actors was *The Thespian Preceptor*. Gothamite Elam Bliss was responsible for introducing the book, – the first acting manual in America – in 1810. *The Preceptor* provided acting guidance along with excerpts from European dramatic literature. Charles Hemstreet ("Literary Landmarks of New York," *The Critic*, Jan. 1903, 42) noted Bliss's firm was a gathering place for literati and that Bliss was called a "generous and liberal minded bookseller" by William Cullen Bryant.

[72] "Salmagund" was a salad of anchovies, eggs and other ingredients mixed up together.

[73] An inquiry into the definition of "Knickerbocker" literature proved enlightening. *Project Muse* contained no recent articles about the Knickerbocker writers as a group, but many articles about the basketball team. *Jstor* had more than 615 articles about the Knickerbockers, none of which solely focused on the group's writing style.

Knickerbockers honored their past, and often called upon Dutch and English traditions to inform their stories. Their writing style included an ironic turn of phrase, wit, whimsy, a bit of criticism and a lighthearted touch of humor. Perhaps the best "definition" of Knickerbocker style was presented in the first issue of Salmagundi, January 1807, where William and Washington Irving and James Kirke Paulding noted:

> In two words, we write for no other earthly purpose but to please ourselves. While we continue to go on, we will go on merrily; if we moralize, it shall be but seldom; and, on all occasions, we shall be more solicitous to make our readers laugh than cry; for we are laughing philosophers, and clearly of opinion that wisdom, true wisdom, is a plump, jolly dame, who sits in her arm-chair, laughs right merrily at the farce of life – and takes the world as it goes.[74]

Here was the credo that guided much of Knickerbocker writing: a love of home and tradition, along with the belief that knowledge and wisdom arise from humor and acceptance of fate, rather than the dark rants and raves of tortured philosophies.[75] The "jolly dame" could have been any Knickerbocker's grandmother and was certainly someone met on the streets of Gotham daily.

While Knickerbockers were famous for humor, their contributions to American literature and dramatic literature in particular included something more important: the Knickerbockers were aware of their own time and geography. They understood this "sense of place" and they recorded their daily world with precision, affection and

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[74] *Collected Works of Washington Irving*, ed. W. Irving, vol. 1, *Salmagundi* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Son, 1869), 6-7.

[75] Ironically, Paulding and the younger poet Edgar Allan Poe admired each other's works. Poe did have a sense of humor, albeit a bit grim and heavy.

knowledge. Washington Irving suggested this in an "Author's Apology" for the 1849 edition of Knickerbocker's History of New York:

> Before the appearance of my work the popular traditions of our city were unrecorded; the peculiar and racy customs and usages derived from our Dutch progenitors were unnoticed, or regarded with indifference, or adverted to with a sneer. Now they form a convivial currency, and are brought forward on all occasions; they link our whole community together in good-humor and good-fellowship; they are the rallying points of home feeling; the seasoning of our civic festivities; the staple of local tales and local pleasantries; and are so harped upon by our writers of popular fiction that I find myself almost crowded off the legendary ground which I was the first to explore by the host who have followed in my footsteps…. I please myself with the persuasion that I have struck the right chord; that my dealings with the good old Dutch times, and the customs and usages derived from them, are in harmony with the feelings and humors of my townsmen; that I have opened a vein of pleasant associations and quaint characteristics peculiar to my native place.[76]

Irving's description holds for much of the early Knickerbocker work: humorous, convivial, but most important, the works create a local feeling for a community: 'quaint characteristics peculiar to my native place." Above even their humor, Knickerbockers were most concerned with creating a strong sense of home and surroundings, and recording daily events like dinners, sledding parties, hunting picnics and theatre excursions. They were young men who were certainly in step with their times, but who also proffered a gentle affection and nostalgia for times past. No matter how tongue-in-cheek the chaffing of the past, it was something no Knickerbocker wanted to forget.

This self-awareness and feeling for home influenced the playwrights who are the topic of this study. Wetmore, Dunlap and Paulding borrowed from the Hudson River

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[76] *Collected Works of Washington Irving*, vol. 2, *Knickerbocker's History* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Son, 1849), xi-xii.

School the artists' sense of physical grounding in a specific region, a geographic place that was a stage; from the Knickerbockers came the inspiration to look at one's social surroundings, record them for future generations and have a laugh while doing it.

"Domestic Incidents" and National Drama

Manhattan was the center of American theatre during the first decade of the nineteenth century and it was a world intimately known by Knickerbockers. Salmagundi contributor Irving's reviews reveal not only the ambiance of New York playhouses of the time ("The good folks of the gallery…issue their mandates [by] stamping, hissing, roaring, whistling and …groaning in cadence") but also the quality of the plays ("What this scene had to do with the rest of the piece, I could not comprehend; I suspect it was part of some other play thrust in here by accident.)[77]

Audiences who attended any of the nearly three dozen New York theatres in 1821 could enjoy a number of entertainments, including panoramas, flying Indians, equine shows, circuses, museums of curiosities, water shows and even unadorned drama.[78] Theatres were patronized by all levels of society from prostitute and tough, workingman and women – the "b'hoys" of Irish descent – to sophisticated and wealthy patrons. Pushing, shoving, noisy audiences were common, with prostitutes displaying their wares

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[77] Dunlap, *A History of the American Theatre*, 303-305. Dunlap notes Irving's contributions to dramatic criticism as well as to literature. The quotation originally appeared as "Letter 1," under Irving's pseudonym, "Johnathan Oldstyle, Gent." in the *Morning Chronicle*, 1802.

[78] Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace. *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 487; Mary C. Henderson, *The City and the Theatre* (New York: Back Stage Books, 2004), 38.

and gallery gangs tossing comments and rotten fruit at actors with equal enthusiasm. Actors were expected to tolerate all these challenges and more: sometimes audiences flowed onstage during a show.

Theatres were suffocating and hot in summer, poorly lighted, abysmal and cold in winter: two reasons that dramatic seasons often ran from September to November and May to June. The spaces were stuffy, noisy, and unsafe because of open flames for lighting and effects. Managers attempted to prevent fires with announcements like this, from the Park Row Theatre: "The offensive practice to Ladies, and dangerous one to the house, of smoking segars during the performance, it is hoped, every gentleman will consent to an absolute prohibition of."[79] Actors and managers faced hostile audiences who cared little for theatre etiquette or safety – a poor performance might result in catcalls and fisticuffs or a riot.

In addition to the physical aspects of theatre, the art had earned an appalling reputation during the Revolution. British officers flaunted their mistresses during shows, and drunkenness prevailed among the audiences and soldiers. William Dunlap, whose parents were Loyalists and who remained in British-held Manhattan throughout the Revolution, was horrified by the licentiousness of English theatre. Although he held theatre was not an art corrupt in and of itself, Dunlap believed theatre had been corrupted both by poorly-trained actors and badly-behaved audiences. "The indecency and immorality of the plays…belonged to the state of society, and not to the stage or the writers for it.…[T]hose who know that music, painting, poetry and the art of the player

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[79] Joseph Norton Ireland, *A Memoir of the Professional Life of Thomas Abthorpe Cooper* (New York: Dunlap Society, 1888), 17.

may be made salutary instruments for refining the mass of the population, unite in supporting and by their presence purifying and directing the theatre." [80] The Revolution demonstrated America's desire to select her own destiny. Therefore, Dunlap argued, if theatre was a reflection of society as a whole, then a good society required good theatre full of onstage "patriotism, virtue, morality and religion."[81] While there was nothing inherently wrong with Dunlap's argument, it failed to provide for the character, as well as the characters, who would emerge from the great democratic experiment. No one – least of all conservative, sturdy and hopeful William Dunlap – had any idea of what American theatre would become.

No one knows how many plays were written and performed during the period from the end of the American Revolution in 1787 to the debut of *The Pedlar* in 1821. News accounts are scanty and few copies of the published plays survived. Walter J. Meserve noted that American drama before 1800 offered much in the way of dramatic political ranting, bad acting and productions of plays by European playwrights.[82] One of the rare "American" successes of this era was *Liberty in Louisiana* by Anglo-Irish lawyer James Workman. *Liberty* satirized the Spanish, Irish, and Americans at the time of the Louisiana Purchase. Workman had an exquisite ear for language and dialect, and

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[80] Dunlap, *A History of the American Theatre,* 71. "The indecency and immorality of the plays…belonged to the state of society, and not to the stage or the writers for it."

[81] Op cite, 71. Dunlap believed that he was saved by marriage from a life of wastrel dissolution – in his words, "inevitable destruction". Fortunately, his sense of humor appears to have survived the conversion.

[82] Walter J. Merserve, *An Outline History of American Drama* (New York: Feedback Theatrebooks, 1994), 42-44.

included a Spanish noblewoman (played by an English-speaking actress) mocking a Kentucky backwoods boatman:

> Don Bertoldo de la Plata
> Did you not hear, Theresa, how that Kentucky rascal abused me the other day, for only insisting on having a few barrels of his provisions at my own price? And when I threatened to chastise him with my cane for his impertinence, the impudent villain immediately presented his rifle, and laughed and mocked at me.
>
> Theresa
> So he did, your worship---And he said with a terrible oath---"Take care, (mimicking the back-country pronunciation) you mister; for if you put your gouty foot into my boat, nation to me if I don't shoot out your two remaining rotten old grinders ---and save you the expence of tooth-drawing." [83]

While *Liberty* was performed throughout the Eastern seaboard, its popularity lagged after the Louisiana Purchase lost its immediacy for the public.

But it was not until nearly a generation after the Revolution that an American play was a true hit. Royall Tyler's *The Contrast* still charms audiences with its wit, caricatures and flirtatious fun.[84] Tyler was followed by William Dunlap who, along with translating and staging German playwright August von Kotzebue's popular works for the stage, advanced American theatre through original works including *André* and *Yankee Chronology*.

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[83] James Workman, *Liberty in Louisiana* (Charleston: Query and Evans, 1804), 20. In addition to being a lawyer, Workman was a scalawag: he was implicated in Aaron Burr's plot to create a new southwestern country, and was tried for treason by the double agent and traitor, General James Wilkinson.

[84] William Dunlap, *A History of the American Theatre from Its Origins to 1832*, 75. Dunlap did not appreciate Tyler's efforts, writing "*The Contrast* ranks first in point of time of all American plays, which had been performed by players. It is extremely deficient in plot, dialogue, or incident, but has some marking in the characters."

Dunlap called for an American theatre to be formed along the French lines of sponsorship and government support, but he was also extremely protective of his work as a translator. In his 1832 list of plays produced in America, he waspishly noted that one Charles Smith did "several bad translations from Kotzebue." Dunlap fought a war on two fronts, encouraging translations because of the money they brought in, but offering original American works that drew from his theory of "patriotism, virtue, morality and religion." This was not always appreciated: *André* failed at the box office because Dunlap included an American military officer who, angry with the decision to hang the eponymous hero, throws down his military hat and stomps upon the American cockade. Moral he may have been, but the character's action offended viewers. The boos that erupted from the audience resulted in a quick rewrite by Dunlap, but the play's popularity was never great. It is a measure of the battle faced by newly American playwrights that Dunlap was more renowned for his German translations than for his original dramas and comedies.

The need for a national drama was growing along with an American citizenry that was becoming more sensitive to the lack of original theatre that focused on the American experience. Although Washington Irving had attained the greatest measure of success with his short stories and *Knickerbocker's History of New York* he alone could not be responsible for America's cultural life. As late as 1820, Sidney Smith wrote his famous critique of American literary output, including the stage:

> During the thirty or forty years of their independence, they have done absolutely nothing for the Sciences, for the Arts, for Literature, or even for the statesman-like studies of Politics or Political Economy… In so far as we know, there is no such parallel to be produced from the whole annals of this self-adulating race. In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? or

> goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue?[85]

Smith's dismissal stung Americans. Dunlap had started the call for American theatre and his colleague, James Kirke Paulding, took up the cry for the development of a national drama:

> By a national drama, we mean, not merely a class of dramatic productions written by Americans, but one appealing directly to the national feeling – founded upon domestic incidents – illustrating or satirizing domestic manners, and above all, displaying a generous chivalry in the maintenance and vindication of those great and illustrious peculiarities of situation and character by which we are distinguished from all other nations. We do not hesitate to say, that next to the interests of eternal truth, there is no object more worthy the exercise of the highest attributes of mind than that of administering to the just pride of national character, inspiring a feeling for national glory and inculcating a love of country."[86]

Paulding's cris de coeur was specific: he wanted "domestic incidents," satire and good nature in plays about American character. This was exactly what was happening in American theatre, beginning with *The Contrast* and growing as quickly as corn in July.

First, the Yankee emerged as a symbol of the new American spirit.[87] "Jonathan" – for that was a most popular name among Dutch and English settlers – was a term of

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[85] Sydney Smith, *Sydney Smith's Essays* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1874), 381.

[86] James Kirke Paulding, "American Drama," *American Quarterly Review*, No. 2, 1827, 331.

[87] The word "yankee" has been traced back etymologically– albeit with no firm conclusion – to words from Native American, English and Dutch speech. Whatever its true origin, it has been in use since the seventeenth century to refer to inhabitants of New England. It was not until the nineteenth century that the word was applied to all people living above the Mason-Dixon line.

affectionate kinship in use before the Revolution. A "Jonathan" or Yankee was a country cousin – honest speaking, unsophisticated, rough and ready but good hearted. Jonathan was also sly, kind, lusty, shrewd. He often appeared a fool on the surface, as when *The Contrast*'s Jonathan mistakes a theatre for a private home: "Why, I vow…they lifted up a great green cloth and let us look right into the next neighbor's house!", but he is good-natured and open to new experiences. "Jonathan" was country personified – none of the city slickness, none of the elite New England schools or the New York sophisticates. A Yankee used humorous dialogue, dialect, and inserted stories within the story (as with the neighbor's house/theatre visit), using the "traditional tongue of his New England soil."[88] The character spoke to the new "American" audience, and the audience in turn, embraced plays such as *The Yankey in England* by David Humphreys (1815) and *The Forest Rose* by Samuel Woodworth (1825).[89] James Kirke Paulding's early literary work *The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan* (1812), portrayed Jonathan as a shrewd youngster, who promised a great deal for America once he attained his full growth and power.

Jonathan (although he went by other names as well) was known for his unusual stage clothing including a wide-brimmed hat, striped waistcoat, a long linsey-woolsey coat with short sleeves, patterned trousers and a stock.[90] The homespun, baggy trousers

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[88] Richard M. Dorson, "The Yankee on Stage – A Folk Hero of American Drama," *The New England Quarterly*, (Vol. 13, No. 3, Sept., 1940), 467-493.

[89] To help a reader understand the New England dialect, Humphreys included with the playscript a glossary of New England words. This was the first regional wordlist printed in America.

once led James Kirke Paulding to pun that while some folks thought Jonathan had no bottom, they learned quickly that once riled Jonathan, indeed, had one.[91]

The Yankee actors were known for their stage business, their accents and dialects, and their improvisations. Two of the most famous were James Hackett and George Hill. Hackett played Solomon Swap and Industrious Doolittle, while Hill portrayed limber-legged Nathan Tucker and farmer Jedidiah Homebred. Jonathan would thrive until the Civil War, although Toby shows carried his goodhearted earnestness, his honesty and craftiness into the present.

The Yankee played an important role in the wars of independence and was easily identified at a later date with Uncle Sam. Yankee language, dress and commonsense transferred well to stage and instantly identified the character as a specific type, new to the American stage. He was of the "folk," and a comfortable character onstage, since storytelling, music, song and dance were part of his daily rural life.[92] The Yankee thrived for more than a generation, and is invoked readily by historians as providing a "stimulus for a critical view of the American abroad" and an inspiration for "a new realistic interpretation of the American."[93]

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[90] Dorson, 478. Jonathan's red wig survives today in the rural Toby shows of the Midwest.

[91] James Kirke Paulding, *The Bulls and the Jonathans* (New York: Charles Scriber and Company, 1867), 10.

[92] Constance Rourke, *The Roots of American Culture and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1942), 128-130.

[93] Hodge, 8.

But by the 1820s, the Yankee was no longer the sole American character on stage. Although the East was the center of theatrical life in America, the trans-Mississippi West was providing a lively performance area. St. Louis, Boonville, Louisville and other cities offered dramatic entertainments by the early nineteenth century. Managers including James Caldwell, Sol Smith and Noah Ludlow provided the West and South with comedies, farces, dramas and musical interludes. Theatres ranged from spaces with log and plank seats, to tavern lofts and elaborate buildings like the St. Louis theatre with its expansive stage and boxes.[94] The first St. Louis theatrical entertainment by a "professional" took place in 1814 when Eugene Leitensdorfer performed magic tricks (including "The Enchanted Pistol") at the house of Joseph Robidoux which was apparently a tavern.[95] In 1820, the St. Louis Thespians sponsored the construction of a wooden theatre that seated 600 people.[96] There is little indication of how it was configured, other than it held a substantial stage approximately 40 feet wide by 60 feet deep, a single tier of boxes, and a large pit running under the boxes.[97] Professional actors who performed in theatres traveled overland and by boat through dangerous territory and under uncomfortable and terrifying conditions.[98] The actors offered thundering melodramas and comedies and all varieties of Shakespearean drama.[99]

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[94] Walter G. B. Carson, *Theatre on the Frontier* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932), 76.

[95] Carson, 12.

[96] The 1820 U.S. Census showed St. Louis city and county with 10,049 people.

[97] Noah Ludlow, *Dramatic Life As I Found It* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1966), 185.

The plays were either translations or imports, with three exceptions: Yankee Chronology in 1818, by William Dunlap, Sylvester Daggerwood in 1820 by James Hackett and *The Pedlar* in 1821 by Alphonso Wetmore. These three plays by Eastern playwrights appear to be the first American plays performed in the trans-Mississippi West.[100] But only *The Pedlar* was of the West, a bridge between the old colonies and new possessions as well as between eastern and western characters, both of which appear within the play. Here is the time when close on the Yankee's heels came the balance and the foil: for during the Young Republic, the Westerner strode out from the wings fully formed and ready for a fight.

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[98] Solomon Smith, *Theatrical Management in the West and South for Thirty Years* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1868). In his memoir, Smith recalled actors disappearing at sea, drowning in rivers and being attacked by wolves; he does not mention critics.)

[99] Sol Smith, *Theatrical Management*, 80.

[100] Carson, 319. Carson places *The Pedlar* in December, 1820 or Spring, 1821. Given the publication of the play in May 1821, I have chosen to use the later date for the play's debut. I have also used "American" to indicate white, Anglo-Irish emigrants. It is possible that Spanish, French, Black and Native Americans may have participated in theatrical events of Upper Louisiana, it is beyond the scope of this study to address this area.

Chapter III Alphonso Wetmore and *The Pedlar: "A burlesque history"*

It was nearly 6 p.m. one April evening in 1821 when patrons, friends, and relatives of the St. Louis Thespians made their way over cobblestones to a narrow side alley off Main Street and entered a theatre. Gentlemen tapped tobacco from their pipes before purchasing tickets — pit, $1.00 — and servants plumped themselves down to defend their family's box from intruders. Once seated, the audience could spend time chatting with neighbors or viewing the "well-painted" stage scenery done by an aptly named Mr. John H. Dauberman.[101] Whether the curtain rose promptly is unknown but once it did, the audience settled in to enjoy the antics of soldiers, citizens, and professional actresses who presented *The Pedlar, A Farce in Three Acts.*

The knockabout comedy by local military officer and playwright Alphonso Wetmore took less than an hour to perform, but it represented a benchmark in American theatre history: the first play written by an American and performed in the trans-Mississippi West. Loosely based upon *She Stoops to Conquer, The Pedlar* has been viewed by critics as a curiosity rather than an important contribution to the American dramatic canon. The play brought a stage Yankee, a slave and backwoods brawler to western audiences, incorporated local dialect and presented the first appearance (and published record) of Mike Fink, the American scalawag.

That Alphonso Wetmore wrote the first play about the American West reveals how "new" the West was to emigrants. He was an Easterner, a career officer and an avocational playwright: no other works of his for the stage have been located. He received little, if any,

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[101] Noah Ludlow, *Dramatic Life As I Found It* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1966), 28. Ludlow calls Dauberman a good actor, and a "genius" in painting.

acclaim during his life for *The Pedlar*, but he is best remembered as the first historian of the Santa Fe Trail. Yet an examination of Wetmore's life and writings reveals sources which directly influenced *The Pedlar* and helped shape the vision of the American West on stage.

The Playwright

Alphonso Wetmore was born February 17, 1793 in Winchester, Connecticut. His parents, Seth and Lois, had deep roots in New England, at least ten children and countless relations.[102] Wetmore's ancestors were sturdy folk who chose the main employments in New England – ministers and farmers, businessmen and soldiers – but now and then among the family tree branches appeared a new character. Seth Wetmore, Alphonso's father, served his country in the Revolution, and later publicly defended the extension of suffrage to all men, regardless of wealth or land ownership. An outspoken advocate, Seth stated that "every man who is 21 years of age and pays taxes has a natural right to vote." He called the laws against this "tyrannical and oppressive."[103] This protest resulted in his prosecution under the alien and sedition laws and a fine by the Federalist-controlled Connecticut government. In 1803, Seth and other like-minded Republications moved their families to a town on New York's Mohawk Valley frontier.[104]

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[102] James C. Wetmore, *The Wetmore Family of America*, (Albany: Munsell and Rowland, 1861, 73. Few publications discuss Alphonso Wetmore or his work in any detail, and all draw from the Wetmore memorial for the basic facts of his life and family history.

[103] J.C. Wetmore, 57-58. According to *Connecticut Journal*, September 16, 1802, 4.

[104] J. C. Wetmore, 58. Seth prospered in New York, serving as a judge and sheriff until his death in 1836.

New York's Mohawk Valley was a frontier region that carried the brunt of warfare during the French and Indian War, and suffered during the American Revolution. Many from the valley recalled massacres, kidnappings and depredations by all sides in the conflicts: men, women and children were carried off to Canada and held for years until ransoms were paid by destitute families.[105] If his later adventures are any indication, Alphonso Wetmore must have relished the dark woods and rivers of his boyhood, and listened closely to the tales of carnage and pillage from those who had felt the results. Scalpings were common and the history of warfare in the region dated from the late seventeenth century century: antiquarian Henry Howe recorded a gruesome case of cannibalism during a military expedition. [106]

Little is known about Wetmore's boyhood on the frontier. His familiarity with classic and dramatic literature, with Shakespeare and Goldsmith, may be inferred from his later writings and indicates a formal education. Wetmore himself hinted at the study of law in several essays, and family lore continued the tradition. But it appears that his formal education ended when the War of 1812 intervened and Wetmore – then 18 years old – enlisted in a rifle regiment and was sent to the Niagara frontier. The fighting was brutal, and during a river crossing Wetmore lost his right arm when "a six pound field piece carried it away."[107] He survived an amputation, regained most of his health, was promoted to lieutenant and married

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[105] Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of New York* (New York Tuttle, 1841), 273ff.

[106] Henry Howe and John Barber, 182. Howe and Barber related a story of an American officer who was served a stew in which was floating the hand of a French enemy.

[107] Kate L. Gregg, "Alphonso Wetmore," *Missouri Historical Review* (Columbia: State Historical Society, April, 1941, 385-389.

Mary Smith of Ames, New York in 1813.[108] They remained in New York State at Governor's Island until 1819 when he received orders to embark for the frontier town of Franklin, Missouri, 120 miles upriver from St. Louis. Wetmore later recalled:

> With some reluctance, but in a spirit of obedience, Random Ranger read the order on parade, which doomed his regiment (in which he was acting adjutant) to frontier service on the Missouri River. He was not afraid of tomahawks or the red men who carry them, but he felt more at home in the vicinity of his birthplace. He had moreover an imperfect idea of the great regions of the west.[109]

Wetmore's comments are ironic: although exchanging one frontier for another, it is clear that for him one's own place, no matter how desolate or difficult, is far better than the unknown, and that an "imperfect idea" of the West must have been filled with imaginings and secondhand stories.

Despite his fears, Wetmore adapted quickly to frontier life. In his writings, Wetmore noted that he wrote with his left hand, rode horses, and fired rifles and pistols. His travels took him from St. Louis and Franklin to Nebraska, Kansas, Santa Fe, Washington, New York, Pennsylvania and perhaps Florida, and from the Red River to the Missouri, riding, boating and walking thousands of miles a year. He traveled to Santa Fe as the caravanbachi, or caravan leader, put down a mutiny among traders, and participated in a coup attempt in Chihuahua, Mexico. For a time, he shuttled his family between Franklin and St. Louis, eventually resigning his commission and making a permanent move to the city in 1833.[110] In later life he published the first Gazetteer of Missouri and was owner and publisher of the Missouri

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[108] Gregg, 387.

[109] *Missouri Saturday News*, June 23, 1838, 5.

[110] Gregg, 391.

Saturday News in partnership with fur-trader Charles Keemle. Wetmore contributed a number of essays to the paper styled "A Biography in Masquerade," that featured his alter ego, Captain Rainmore. The essays focus on Wetmore's life, times and adventures and many of the stories were based upon his experiences. Ever the adventurer, Wetmore traveled to California in 1849. He returned to St. Louis later that year, and died during a cholera epidemic.

When Wetmore arrived in Franklin during the summer of 1819, he stepped onto the streets of the largest frontier town west of St. Louis. The area around Franklin was growing quickly and increased from 120 log houses in 1819 to 1,000 people by 1823. Franklin was less than a mile square, divided into neat blocks and unimproved streets, and boasted cabins, a log jail, more than thirteen shops, and professional offices for doctors, lawyers, and teachers. It was also home to the first General Land Office west of the Mississippi River. Travelers came by keelboat, canoe, or raft, or rode overland by horse from St. Louis; the trip could take weeks, depending upon the weather and the river, and was made miserable by biting flies, mosquitoes, and poor roads. But the town was home to educated and ambitious men as well as adventurers and dreamers and artists.[111]

Franklin may have been the farthest town west of the Mississippi, but it claimed one of the finest newspapers in the territory. The Missouri Intelligencer and Boonslick Advertiser was published by a New England native, Nathaniel Patten Jr., and garnered a reputation for well-composed articles from contributors including scientists, gentlemen farmers, explorers, traders, and military officers. Among the latter was Wetmore, who

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[111] Wetmore's friends included Chester Harding, an itinerant artist. Harding's autobiography detailed a boyhood much like Wetmore's – a move from New England to western New York State and a home in the wilderness. Harding later painted Wetmore's portrait and boasted friendships with both William Dunlap and James Kirke Paulding, an intriguing link among the playwrights considered within this study.

began to compose poems and essays for the Intelligencer as early as 1820. Along with his own name, Wetmore wrote under several pseudonyms including Captain Rainmore, Random Ranger, Aurora Borealis, and possibly Jacques. Franklin was a small town and newspaper publishing a difficult business: Patten must have been glad for the constant stream of material that flowed from Wetmore's pen.[112]

An acute observer of his community, Wetmore was a natural journalist, reporting with wit and local color on horse races, Pawnee ceremonies, Santa Fe caravans and local eccentrics. In an early essay, Wetmore introduced Mike Shuck, a beaver hunter and trapper who moved through the lands between Franklin and the Arkansas River. Mike's 1822 appearance set the town abuzz:

> He arrived at this village at 12 o'clock…He brought with him from his forest haunts a pet bear, that accompanied him in the double capacity of companion and servant. This animal has been trained as to serve with great sagacity as a packhorse, and Mike Shuck, in his advanced age is no longer forced to bear the oppressive burthen of his traps, beaver, &c…I offered [Mike] a chair but he threw himself down on an old trunk…while his packhorse [the bear] took possession of the chair. [113]

The essay was reprinted to acclaim in several newspapers including the Army and Navy News and Washington Daily National Intelligencer and Wetmore's name spread beyond the confines of Franklin.

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[112] Newspapers of the time often republished materials from eastern papers.

[113] *Missouri Intelligencer*, October 29, 1822. Scott C. Osborn (Introduction to *The Pedlar*, University of Kentucky Library Associates, 1955) posited that Mike Shuck was a composite of several frontier trappers, even though Wetmore stated that Mike's last name was Shuckwell. The essay later appeared in a children's book by Charles Ellms, *Robinson Crusoe's Own Book or The Voice of Adventure* (New York: Joshua Pierce, 1843.)

Wetmore and the Knickerbockers

In addition to his frontier experiences, which provided immediacy and the exotic to his stories, Wetmore's writing was also heavily influenced by Knickerbocker authors. Washington Irving was famous for his pseudonyms Geoffey Crayon and Diedrich Knickerbocker, "doppelgangers" who stood in for Irving as storytellers and critics, providing a humorous and useful mask with which to hide author from audience. The conceit allowed Irving to be in two places at once, the teller (Knickerbocker) who lived what he told and the critic (Irving) who prodded at the foibles of friends and foes. While the use of pseudonyms was a popular authorial technique –all the Salmagundi writers, including James Kirke Paulding, used false names – it was Irving who lifted these characters off the page and gave his pseudonyms lives of their own: Geoffrey Crayon wrote *The Sketch Book* and Diedrich Knickerbocker left behind the notes and papers found by Irving and Crayon. Irving's Knickerbocker was "born" in 1809, with The History of New York and a hoax. In order to attract interest to the upcoming publication, Irving had printed in Manhattan's Evening Post an appeal from Diedrich Knickerbockers' "landlord":

DISTRESSING.

> Left his lodgings some time since, and has not since been heard of, a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat, by the name of "Knickerbocker." As there are some reasons for believing he is not entirely in his right mind, and as great anxiety is entertained about him, any information concerning him, left either at the Columbian Hotel, Mulberry Street, or at the office of this paper, will be thankfully received.[114]

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[114] Washington Irving, *The History of New York* (New York: Inskeep, 1809), reprinted by G.P. Putnam and Son: New York, 1869, 245. The advertisement appeared in the *Evening Post* on October 26, 1809.

After a number of these appeals and letters of concern from Manhattanites, Irving's joke was revealed. But the "small, elderly" gentleman in the cloak and cocked hat had become a citizen of Manhattan, as real to people as Irving, with his ancestral roots deep in the Dutch world. Irving had learned to spin facts into the stout thread of fiction, giving his stories a powerful sense of place, truth and enchantment.[115]

It was little wonder then that Wetmore was a fan of Irving and consciously mimicked his comical, satirical style. Wetmore grew up in the very places Irving wrote about, the river wilds of New York, and as will be seen, had as much a sense of adventure and imagination as Irving. Wetmore makes his influences clear in an 1824 letter to a friend,, Major James Harvey Hook. "I will…continue a burlesque History of these parts, in imitation of Knickobocker" wrote Wetmore, "[and] I have shewn many chapters of this merry tale to persons competent to give opinions on such productions, and the result has been highly encouraging."[116]

Although Wetmore would not publish his biography for more than a decade, it is clear that he was working on the text while he lived in Franklin, Missouri. He was familiar with Irving's A History of New York and drew upon the style for inspiration as he experienced the new world of the West on a daily basis. While many of the Knickerbocker authors blended humor, criticism, and history within their stories, it was Irving who mastered the storytelling

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[115] Washington Irving, *The Sketch-Book* (New York: C. S. Van Winkle, 1819). Reprinted in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and Other Writings*, New York: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2006, with notes by Peter Norberg.

[116] James S. Hutchings,"'Dear Hook': Letters from Bennett Riley, Alphonso Wetmore, and Reuben Holmes, 1822-1833", *The Bulletin (*Missouri Historical Society, July 1980), 214. A man of wit and culture, Hook wrote to Wetmore, "Although thou art of thy right hand bereft, Right well thou writest with the hand that's left." James H. Hook later assisted Washington Irving in the purchase of Captain Bonneville's notes from his western travels. Bonneville is best remembered today for the western salt flats that bear his name.

frame of telling a tale through a fictionalized character. Wetmore copied this method early on in his storytelling, relating adventures with a sly, tongue-in-cheek style that brings attention to the teller of the tale as well as to the tale itself. In his thinly-disguised "Biography in Masquerade" for the Missouri Saturday News (1838-39) Wetmore employed the character "Captain Rainmore" as a mouthpiece through which to relate his adventures and attitudes. Here, Rainmore is the upright, well-spoken officer faced with the smart and crafty New Englander, both characters based upon real people but transmuted by language and action.

> "Do you diskiver any Indian sign?" said the quaint spoken and observing Mike Terrapin to Captain Rainmore, who was looking over the plain through the magnifying medium of a good glass. "I can perceive horses distinctly," was the answer; — "let me have the advantage of your practiced eye?" Mike gazed long and earnestly, and at length replied,— "There are thar, no mistake! Wild horses have no trail ropes, and the red rascals have squat, to play counterfeit; they will raise the devil, or a stompeed (stampido) to-night, if we don't skin our eyes pretty considerable. For my part, capting, as you have made me sergeant of the guard, in place of Old Blatcher, the creaser, I'll given'em Jessy , if they come sloping about the diggings."[117]

Like Irving, who preserved the past through language and culture, Wetmore/ Rainmore used the language of New England to face down the threats of the new world, the West.

Wetmore and Irving shared much in common. Wetmore's life (1793-1849) fit neatly into the span of years allotted Irving (1783-1859). Wetmore and Irving spent their youth in the wilderness regions of New York, places replete with dark (and darkly humorous) legends.[118] As

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[117] *Missouri Saturday News*, *May 5*, 1838, 4.

[118] William M. Reid, *The Mohawk Valley* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1901), 186. Near Johnstown (not far from Wetmore's childhood home) was the Butler Mansion. Several of the doors had a half-moon cutout on the bottom edge, and a tarred covering of

a particular admirer of Washington Irving, Wetmore may have crossed paths with the prince of Knickerbockers during military service.[119] Irving was on the New York's governor's staff, and responsible for inspecting New York's western and northern defenses, some of the same forts where Wetmore served. While it is not known whether the men met, Wetmore would have been aware of Irving's visit since, in the close world of the American military, little was secret. In addition, both men became essayists and playwrights: Wetmore in 1820 or 1821 and Irving as a co-author with John Howard Payne, penning the popular *Charles II; or, The Merry Monarch* (1826) and *Richelieu* (1826). [120] And most importantly for literature and theatre, Irving and Wetmore came of age as writers along with the image of the nineteenth century American landscape and used the land as "character": Irving with the Hudson Valley, and Wetmore in his essays and his play about the West.

The Knickerbockers began their lives in a small world: in the year of Washington Irving's birth, 1783, only 20,000 souls lived in Manhattan. By 1790, when Irving was seven years old and James Kirke Paulding 12, at least 49,000 Manhattanites were on the island. The growth became explosive: in 1820, 120,000 people were counted and 166,000 by 1825. [121] Anyone who recalled eighteenth century Manhattan saw the new people and cultures drown the

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rough linen. The belief was that a ghost could leave the house but once outside, it could not return without being caught on the tar.

[119] Brian Jay Jones, *Washington Irving: An American Original* (New York: Arcade, 2008), 60. Irving did not serve long in the military, but appears to have enjoyed his travels on the governor's behalf.

[120] Don B. Wilmeth and Tice L. Miller, eds. *Cambridge Guide to American Theatre* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1993), 368. Payne and Irving met in Europe and their shared interest in theatre resulted in a successful but little analyzed playwriting partnership. Although an actor, playwright and manager, Payne is today best known as the lyricist of "Home, Sweet Home."

[121] Mary Henderson, *The City and the Theatre* (New York: Backstage Books, 2004), 39.

old ways beneath billowing waves of immigration, and so the Knickerbockers' attempts to record their own past were not unexpected.

One of the Knickerbocker "techniques" was the transposition of real people onto the page. James Fenimore Cooper wrote about the area of Cooperstown, named for his family and the place of his youth. James Kirke Paulding gained his fame with Dutchman's Fireside, a novel based upon the memoirs of Mrs. Anne Grant, a Scottish settler who lived above Albany before the Revolution.[122] Washington Irving offered a literary style filled with a propensity for lively images and sharply drawn characters who were often based on friends and family, one of the most famous being Ichabod Crane:

> The cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable to his person. He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weather-cock, perched upon his spindle neck, to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield. [123]

Irving may have shaped his lanky, bemused and haunted schoolmaster Ichabod Crane after schoolmaster friends Samuel Youngs or Jesse Merwin, but he named the character after Ichabod Bennett Crane, a captain in the Marines during the War of 1812. It is possible, even

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[122] James Kirke Paulding, *Dutchman's Fireside* (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1831).

[123] Washington Irving, *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon* (C. S. Van Winkle, New York, 1826), 127. The book was published by the gentleman who loaned his name to another of Irving's heroes, and the Van Winkle name took to the stage throughout most of the nineteenth century in the form of "Rip," played by James Hackett and Joseph Jefferson.

probable, that Irving met Crane him in upstate New York and borrowed Crane's name, a practice Irving was wont to do as a joke.[124]

Wetmore worked within the same frame of narration, but he claimed the Yankee and the Westerner:

> I had forgotten to mention an occurrence in this trapping excursion, which deserves a place in the annals of the far West. It was on the morning of our departure from the hunting-ground, and when I had taken up my last trap, that I was surprised by the nasal sounds of psalmody in that wild region. The songster was a Downeaster, or, as he told me, a freeholder of Barkhampstead, Connecticut. He said "he felt lonesome, and had tried whistling a while, but" added he, "there is nothing like Old Hundred amid tribulation, or in a howling wilderness," and he struck up a stave or two, by way of sample:
>
> "Oh ! is not this a holy spot?
> 'Tis the high place of freedom's birth!
> God of our fathers! is it not
> The holiest spot of all the earth!?
>
> "Now," said he, "my pork and beans are done, and I guess you haven't got better to hum; dine with me now, and I'll do you as good a turn some time. My name is Jonas Cutting."[125]

Wetmore's Jonas (a derivative of the Yankee "Jonathan") appeared in print in 1837, after Hackett and Hill established the Yankee onstage, but the character was likely recorded by Wetmore in the early 1820s. As a transplanted Yankee himself, Wetmore was comfortable describing both areas of the country and following Irving's style in the selection of odd, even unnerving characters. The Saturday News and The Gazetteer of Missouri contain Wetmore's

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[124] Peter Malia, "Ichabod Crane," *New York Times*, October 27, 2002, 17.

[125] Alphonso Wetmore, *Gazetteer of the State of Missouri* (St. Louis: C. Keemle, 1837), Appendix.

short stories with touches of the macabre mixed with humor as well as haunted castles, witchcraft and headless corpses.[126]

Wetmore's short story, "The Annals of the Shop," echoes Irving's tales "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and the lesser-known but morbidly funny "The Devil and Tom Walker." "Annals" tells how a thin and avaricious gambler – called "the spectre" by townsfolk –receives his comeuppance at the hands of village jokesters. Wetmore's gambler, after a night of gambling and drinking, awakens near dawn and cock's crow:

> As he slowly and painfully lifted his eyelids, and stretched out his bony fingers to collect the scattered cards on the table, he exclaimed impatiently, "Partner, it's your deal; wake up, you pale-livered imp! and cut'em! I'll deal for you if you are too drunk." Receiving no answer, the gamester stretched out his legs and justled those of the skeleton. Perceiving no signs of life in the carcass, he became enraged, and exclaimed vociferously as he lifted his crutch, "You're playing possum, are ye? after fobbing my money all night! I'll tickle your catastrophe!" and, suiting the action to the threat, he struck the hollow brainless scull from the shoulders of skeleton, and it rolled across the floor, with well imaged judgment-day rumbling.
>
> That day, the spectre gambler departed for the steamboat-landing."[127]

Irving used Ichabod as a foil with which to skewer the traditions of Dutch country life and courting, but even Irving succumbs to the lure of the West for it is Ichabod who daydreams

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[126] Alphonso Wetmore, *Gazetteer of the State of Missouri* (St. Louis: Charles Keemle, 1838), 339.

[127] Ibid.

himself, Katrina and the children setting out for "Kentucky, Tennessee, or the Lord knows where."[128]

Alphonso Wetmore, however, did not only emphasize the Westerner, but savored the clash of ideals and personalities that occurred when Yankee faced off with a fur trapper from the Missouri River country. His newspaper articles were filled with the language and description of his western world:

> "I allow I had better go on and camp on the next creek, about five or six miles from here— the sun is a half hour high yet."
> "Are you well supplied with provisions?" said the senior officer?"
> "I reckon," was the reply ; "here's a couple of elk marrow bones and little jerk, and I have a small pone or two, and some biscake fixings, that the old 'oman put into my wallet — mighty little bread does me, with jerk and marrow."
> "How is the game along down Field's trace," said Captain Rainmore ; "shall we have any sport on the way?"
> "The game is getting sorta skace along the trace; and I never travels it, excepting where I strikes it on the devides, and at some of the fords. I commonly take a bee line."[129]

Wetmore created characters who drew life and spirit from his surroundings, and it did not take him long to step from the restrictions of the page to the more liberated expanse of the stage. While Robert Boyd suggested that Wetmore "never attained the grace that marks the work" of

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[128] Irving, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," 172.

[129] *The Army and Navy Chronicle*, April 5, 1838, 1. It is unclear when Wetmore wrote his essays about western life; although the essays were published in the 1830s, Wetmore kept journals that are now lost. When matched against articles in the *Missouri Intelligencer*, it appears that Wetmore was consistent with many facts across the decade. This suggests he was working from notes or the journals.

Irving, Wetmore did as much to capture his surroundings with verve and spirit as a western Knickerbocker. [130]

Wetmore and Theatre

Exactly when and where Wetmore wrote *The Pedlar* remains unknown. Records show he owned property in Franklin and rented a log house in St. Louis and his children were born in both villages. *The Pedlar* was not published until after its debut performance, and no copies previous to the published version exist. An announcement appeared in the St. Louis Enquirer May 17, describing a proposal for the play's publication by subscription, although the insertion date of the advertisement places the play's birth before May 12:

> Proposal, by John A. Paxton for publishing by subscription a newly written farce in three acts, called *The Pedlar*. Written for the St. Louis Thespians by whom it was performed with great applause. The Publisher hopes as he will have to incur considerable expense, that those gentlemen who wish to patronize American literature and the Drama, will subscribe liberally; more particularly as it is the first work of its kind ever published in Missouri. CONDITIONS: the price to subscribers will be 50¢, payable on delivery. It shall be printed on good paper, and with Type entirely new.
> St. Louis May 12, 1821.

The play's dedication reveals a little more about the writing of the play. Wetmore claimed to have written the play in 48 hours to honor of his friend, Benjamin Larned:

> Sir,
> THE friendly relations which exist between us, will, I presume, supersede the necessity of an apology for dedicating to you this little production, which is intended for our mutual amusement, and that of our friends, the Thespians… I have appropriated only forty-eight leisure hours to the accomplishment of this novel task.

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[130] Robert C. Boyd, "Alphonso Wetmore," *Dictionary of Missouri Biography* (Columbia, Curators of the University of Missouri: Columbia, 1999), 790.

> Permit me to add, that so far from having made writing a profession I have seldom attempted any thing of greater importance than an epitaph on some favorite quadruped, or a dutiful family epistle.

How "literary" a script was *The Pedlar*? Scholars including Scott Osborn in 1955 and William G. B. Carson in 1932 called the play "crude" and "of no literary merit whatsoever."[131] William Carson was a founder of frontier theatre historiography, and his word carried weight. Scott Osborn in his introduction to the only modern printed version of *The Pedlar* echoed Carson and Robert Boyd admits that Wetmore's characters were new to the American stage, Boyd aligns himself with Carson's attitude. It is ironic that of the three, Carson was the only one who saw the play in production: he directed *The Pedlar* at Washington University in St. Louis in the 1930s.[132]

The story was adapted –perhaps "inspired" is a better word – from Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*. [133] Nutmeg, a Yankee peddler, visits the cabin of Old Prairie on the frontier and proceeds to sell his goods. Old Prairie has three young people in his house: a nincompoop son (Oppossum) who lives to hunt and fight, a tart-tongued daughter (Mary), and a pretty niece (Pecanne.) Old Prairie's friend and neighbor, Old Continental, lost his only son years ago and now has settled on Mary as his love interest. Enter Harry Emigrant, a Massachusetts sailor who wants to settle down on some land and mistakes Old Prairie's cabin for a hostelry. As with *She Stoops*, a series of

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[131] Carson, *Theatre on the Frontier*, 74.

[132] Robert Boyd, "Literary Activity in Antebellum St. Louis" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1988), 248.

[133] Carson, *Theatre on the Frontier*, 77.

mistaken identities and misadventures result in the weddings of Nutmeg and Pecanne, and Harry and Mary and the revelation that Harry is the lost son of Old Continental. Wetmore was clear in his selections: Oppossum is Tony Lumpkin the bumpkin; Old Prairie is a cranky Mr. Hardcastle; Old Continental is Sir Charles without the polish; Mary is Kate, the main love interest; Pecanne, Mary's cousin, is a frontier Miss Neville; and Young Marlow is Harry.

She Stoops remained extremely popular with audiences after its 1773 debut, and was performed in St. Louis by the Drake Company in 1820, just a year before *The Pedlar* was produced.[134] Wetmore's new farcical elements only added to Goldsmith's original romp. For example, Old Prairie's line, "To be jolted through a back-woods road, four or five miles, was not enough, I must be capsized at the end of my journey," was borrowed lock, stock and wagon from *She Stoops*. Implicit in this line is more than Lady Hardcastle's comeuppance (or Old Prairie's), it is the humor of life on the frontier where such journeys were daily fare.[135]

For a literary flourish, Wetmore did not stop with Goldsmith but included a speech for Nutmeg parodying Wolsey's farewell in Shakespeare's *The Life of King Henry VIII*. Instead of bemoaning the loss of his greatness and power like Wolsey, Nutmeg regrets the dissipation of his stock including onion seeds and lanterns, Merino sheepskins,

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[134] Ludlow, *Dramatic Life As I Found It*, 191.

[135] The lack of a Mrs. Hardcastle may speak to the lack of actresses on the frontier; perhaps the character was eliminated because there were not enough women to fill the roles.

coal painted indigo to fool the unwary, patent medicines, and the "Redheiffer's (sic) patent cathartic perpetual motion."[136]

Although the plot was loosely based upon Goldsmith's, some of *The Pedlar*'s characters hint at Washington Irving. Abraham Van Brunt, better known as Brom Bones in The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, "was always ready for a fight or a frolic; but had more mischief than ill-will in his composition… In cold weather he was distinguished by a fur cap, surmounted with a flaunting fox's tail." Opposum may have been Bones' cousin, since he could "out-jump, out-shoot, out-hop and out-run" any challenger. Although not as nattily behatted as Bones, Opposum still flaunted a coonskin cap with tail. The coquettish Katrina Van Tassel wore short petticoats to show off her stockings and Wetmore's Pecanne trades her stockings for a kiss. Ichabod Crane hails from Connecticut and hopes for a farm and marriage in the West. Nutmeg is named for his state, and gains a farm and his love in the West.[137]

The Pedlar's setting is unnamed, but there should be little doubt that Old Prairie's cabin stood in Missouri. Wetmore lived in St. Louis and Franklin, traveled north to Camp Missouri on the river, and was familiar with the prairie regions of Missouri territory. None of his essays or short stories describe regions unfamiliar to him, and as far as is known, he never spent time in Kentucky or West Virginia.[138] The script indicates

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[136] Wetmore, *The Pedlar*, 17. According to Stanley Angrist, "Perpetual Motion Machines," *Scientific American*, vol. 218 (January, 1968,) 114-22, Charles Redheffer, a confidence artist and hoaxer, tried in 1812 to convince people that he had invented a perpetual motion machine. He was unmasked as a fake by none other than Robert Fulton.

[137] Hutchins, "Dear Hook," 207.

[138] Gregg, 384.

Oppossum had lived in Kentucky, and Old Prairie was originally from Virginia, but these were common backgrounds for Missouri emigrants. Old Prairie and Nutmeg argue over cut money (coins cut down into smaller pieces), a political issue in Missouri during the 1819 bank panic.[139] Perhaps most important for locating *The Pedlar* is the fact that the Boatman is named "Mike Fink." Fink was famous along the Allegheny and Ohio rivers for his temper and his jokes, but by 1820 he was working on the Missouri River for fur trader General William Ashley, an acquaintance of Wetmore.[140] Legends about Fink's life and death abound, but most historians agree that Fink died in 1823 near the Yellowstone River upriver from Wetmore's post at Camp Missouri, Nebraska.

An examination of *The Pedlar*'s production history indicates a work that was launched with some hopes but sank below western waters after only a few performances. The premiere of *The Pedlar* occurred sometime between late March and early May 1821. Military records indicate that Wetmore was serving as paymaster to the 6th Rifle Company, stationed at Fort Atkinson (earlier Camp Missouri) on the Nebraska side of the Missouri River.[141] His appointment required travel by raft, boat and horse between the fort, Franklin and St. Louis several times a year. Exhaustive searches of The Missouri Intelligencer and Boonslick Advertiser and The Missouri News fail to reveal an advertisement announcing the first performance of the play. However, the venue is well

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[139] Mary Barile, *All's Set: A Santa Fe Trail Companion* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010), 37.

[140] Wetmore and Ashley were neighbors: Ashley is buried on a hill overlooking the Lamine River not far from Franklin.

[141] Salley Johnson and Marvin Kivett, *The Sixth's Elysian Fields: Fort Atkinson on the Council Bluffs (*Omaha: Nebraska Historical Society, 1962), 1-38.

known. In 1820, the St. Louis Thespians sponsored the construction of a wooden theatre that seated 600 people, a large venue when there were only 10,000 people in the city and surrounding regions.[142] There is little indication of what the interior looked like, other than it held a stage approximately 30 feet wide by 60 feet deep, a tier of boxes, and a large pit under the boxes.[143] However much the Mississippi Valley may have been the frontier, its citizens were not unsophisticated: Ludlow noted a Kentucky theatre that had backless seats covered with painted canvas and a separate room for the sale of beer and refreshments.[144] Solomon Smith described a contemporary Tennessee theatre decorated with a painted curtain depicting mermaids supported by cannonballs and musical instruments, holding a sign declaring "The world in miniature." [145] The St. Louis Thespian's theatre boasted scenery painted in watercolors that "though plain…was very neat and tasteful."[146]

Little was written about the play's production. The debut date is unknown, and the place of performance is assumed. [147] No contemporary announcements or reviews exist. However, an examination of the script and cast list reveals much. The cast list

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[142] The U.S. Census of 1820 indicated St. Louis city and county had 10,049 people.

[143] Ludlow, *Dramatic Life*, 185.

[144] Ibid, 90.

[145] Smith, *Theatrical Management in the West and South for Thirty Years*, 73.

[146] Ludlow, *Dramatic Life*, 185. Theaters in St. Louis were open year round, although success often depended upon a good heating system in winter and no cholera in summer.

[147] Carson notes that a theatre was built for the St. Louis Young Thespians and I have assumed *The Pedlar* debuted there.

included amateurs and three professional actresses who were stranded in St. Louis during March 1821.[148] Mrs. Groshon, Mrs. Hanna and Miss Seymour were members of the Collins & Jones troupe that had ceased operations during late winter due to extreme cold and poor audience numbers.[149] Mrs. Groshon had extensive acting experience in the East, while Mrs. Hanna and her daughter, Miss Seymour, traveled and acted throughout the Mississippi Valley.[150] Mrs. Groshon had been praised as "superior to any actress we have ever seen on these (St. Louis) boards."[151] She received a benefit at the end of the troupe's season in February 1821, but by April the ladies probably needed to help fill the family coffers. [152] Sable – "a black girl" – was played by Miss Seymour, a white actress of 15 "well-grown and rather good."[153] Sable was the first Black stage character who lived in the trans-Mississippi West. It is also possible that Sable was the first character portrayed in blackface makeup in this region.

Mrs. Hanna, her mother, was "about ten years older than her husband, and quite stout, — a very good appearance for old women, which she played respectably."[154] One

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[148] *The Pedlar* was later performed in Kentucky (1825) and again in St. Louis, 1835.

[149] Ludlow, *Dramatic Life*, 256. The cast list for the St. Louis 1821 production is found in the Appendix.

[150] Carson, *Theatre on the Frontier*, 74.

[151] *Missouri Gazette*, January 10, 1821.

[152] Ludlow, *Dramatic Life*, 212. Ludlow complains that his acting troupe drew lots and held benefits for several of the members. His benefit was snowed out – "the most terrific storm of snow, rain and sleet I ever witnessed" – and he netted only $25.

[153] Ludlow, *Dramatic Life*, 182.

[154] Ibid, 182.

has to imagine *The Pedlar* casting was accomplished with tongue firmly planted in cheek, since a stout "middle aged" woman of 35 or so played Mary, the romantic interest of both Harry Emigrant and Old Continental.

For the male roles, *The Pedlar* cast was composed not of ignorant frontier brawlers, but of intelligent men. John Paxton (the Boatman) was a printer, an occupation that required a high degree of literacy and general knowledge.[155] Benjamin Larned (Nutmeg) was an army officer who later served as Lincoln's paymaster general.[156] The other men in the cast were merchants, soldiers and professionals involved in St. Louis business and trade. All of them lived at least part of the time in St. Louis: like Wetmore, the soldiers split their time between St. Louis, Franklin and Fort Atkinson NE. But in the small world that was the frontier military, they knew each other and may have performed together in other plays.[157]

The Pedlar was subtitled "a farce in two acts" and Wetmore's settings included interior and exterior sites: a road in front of a cabin, a cabin common room, a court room, an auction room, a woods, and a drinking room. These were a lot of changes for a short play, and as if the set changes were not enough, the cast was asked to climb in and out of windows, slam and lock doors and run through a forest. Walter Carson points out that Wetmore's use of stage directions such as "the scene opens" and "the scene closes" indicates the show called for sliding flats

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[155] John Paxton, *Directory of St. Louis* (St. Louis: Paxton, 1821), 3ff. Paxton also published the first St. Louis Directory, which listed many of the cast members.

[156] Johney Larned, *Though Silent They Speak* (New Braunsfels, TX: Xlibris, 2006), 103.

[157] James Kennerly, "Diary of James Kennerly" *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, Vol. VI, (1928-31) 55. James Kennerly recorded in his diary the daily life at Fort Atkinson which included amateur theatre. He complained about missing a rehearsal for *Love Laughs at Locksmiths* –a headache kept him from the practice sessions.

along floor grooves, which allowed for change in the ground plot of the stage.[158] Old Prairie is described as listening behind a scene, indicating there may have also been painted drops along with the rigid flats. [159]

Since *The Pedlar* was a contemporary play, the cast probably had few problems with locating costumes. Wetmore indicated a few requirements in the script: a broad brimmed hat for Old Prairie, a blue coat with scarlet facings and a three corner "scraper" (tricorne hat) for Old Continental, a glazed leather hat, red flannel shirt and linen overalls for the Boatman, a raccoon-skin cap, buckskin hunting shirt, overalls, a hatchet and knife for Oppossum, and for Nutmeg an elegant Yankee get-up consisting of a white hat, fair-topped (high) boots, grey coat, striped vest, and grey overalls faced with buckskin.[160] The Yankee-come-West did so in a style instantly recognizable to the St. Louis audience.[161] Wetmore's sense of place was strengthened by his selection of props. Pistols, raccoon pelts and skins and a dirty pack of cards (no doubt marked) were the tools of the wilder West, while a whip, wagon and peddler's goods represented the commercial East.[162]

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[158] Carson, *Theatre on the Frontier*, 75.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Gregg, "Alphonso Wetmore," 386. Nutmeg's dress was familiar to Wetmore who was a son of the Nutmeg State by birth.

[161] Wetmore did not list the female characters, which had to do with the custom of the times by which actresses provided their own costumes.

[162] Smith, *Theatrical Management in the West and South for Thirty Years*, 30. An illustration in *Theatrical Management* shows props hung up on the back of the flats, while others are stacked in the corners; *The Pedlar*'s backstage area was busy.

The Characters

When Wetmore completed *The Pedlar*, his work represented more than the first American play written in the trans-Mississippi West. The characters were the first to step onto the frontier stage and represented strong types: Old Prairie, the elderly, tough settler; Old Continental, the soldier who relives the war over and over to everyone's dismay; the ingénue and her companion, the lusty lover; troublesome brother, the silly servant and assorted townsfolk. None of these as types were new to the stage, but Wetmore managed to shape the characters with colorful layers of Western experiences.

The majority of *The Pedlar*'s characters are drawn from old and seasoned stock, both English and American. Old Continental was a running joke. America had not yet the time nor the heart to pity men who fought the first battles for independence; the grandchildren of war veterans were too busy to waste time on sympathy. Wetmore's father, Seth, descended from a family who endured the Revolution in Connecticut, and there is a strong possibility Old Continental was inspired by Seth's memories of relatives and friends.[163] Nothing about Old Continental indicates a change from East to West, however, and the character was nothing more than a reason for a hearty laugh at old men with little to do and less to say. If anything, his connection to the West was as a comment that the past was old and worn out: in the nineteenth century to be "not worth a Continental" was to be worthless, referring to the valueless money printed by the colonies during the Revolution. Wetmore carried this feeling

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[163] Wetmore has Harry Emigrant describe his father as having "one spar shivered," which in nautical terms meant a cracked or splintered timber. Wetmore himself had lost an arm in battle, a common injury when cannons were employed by the enemy. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "shiver my timbers" as an image or oath was first used in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* in 1881. Wetmore may have been very close to creating an early piratical catchphrase in *The Pedlar*.

onto the Missouri stage, mocking the old and dying as the young and hearty out-ran and out-hopped the world.

Wetmore may have drawn on his own memories for Old Prairie. His father, Seth Wetmore, was a surveyor and engineer who owned thousands of acres of wilderness land in New York's Adirondack Mountains.[164] The character is a father, cranky, overprotective and set in his ways. There is no way of knowing whether Seth influenced Old Prairie, but it is not beyond the realm of possibility that Alphonso tweaked his father onstage. Regardless of who inspired Old Prairie, he reflected the West of Wetmore's day. A prairie was flat or rolling grasslands, and the word was from Latin and French meaning "like a meadow."[165] The West of Missouri was an inland sea of prairies, millions of acres rippling with tall grasses and wildflowers. The land had once been thought useless by emigrants who instead settled along the unhealthy river bottoms, so it is difficult to know how Western people viewed a prairie in 1821. Wetmore hints at the attitude in an essay written in 1837:

> For a long period after settlement of this part of Missouri, the cultivation of prairie-lands languished, and the axe was freely laid to the root of the tree. The value of the prairie-lands was not fairly estimated. It was feared that the soil on which timber had not taken root would yield other products sparingly.[166]

Neither of Wetmore's homes were on the prairie: Franklin was in the river bottoms, and St. Louis was along the Missouri River, so it is possible that Old Prairie, like Old Continental,

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[164] Jeptha Simms, *Trappers of New York*, (Albany: J. Munsell, 1850), 345. Simms tells the story of a survey party in 1811 that included Seth Wetmore. The men were in the Adirondack region, and found nearly 200 turtle eggs near a lake. They whipped up some eggnog and enjoyed a Fourth of July celebration in the wilds.

[165] Barile, *Santa Fe Trail*, 171.

[166] Alphonso Wetmore, *Gazetteer of the State of Missouri* (St. Louis: Charles Keemle, 1837), 65.

represented something problematic to the community, an annoyance to be avoided instead of cultivated.

However he was viewed, Old Prairie appears to have been a typical man for the era: he lived in a one-story log cabin. He was wary of peddlers, but offered hospitality to travelers:

> I don't know what you mean by taverning my house, stranger! But I can give you as prime hog and hominy as any farmer in Kentuck; and my bed, that I keep for travelers, is as good as wild fowl could make it.[167]

Old Prairie dislikes the "yankies" and worries that they will steal his slaves, cheat him out of his money and make him appear a fool. In order to defeat Nutmeg and Harry, and marry Mary off to Old Continental, Old Prairie appears dressed like a woman and is forced to suffer the indignity of a kiss from his own son:

> OPPOSSUM
> What game have I started here? Old woman are you lost?
>
> OLD PRAIRIE
> Yes sir, I'm lost – (aside) irrecoverably I believe. I've come to see the Justice.
>
> OPPOSSUM
> Oho ! I understand, been ill treated by some young rake?
>
> OLD PRAIRIE
> Yes, sir, a pair of 'em.
>
> OPPOSSUM
> Then let me make a third? I'll do your business. I'm a Constable, Come give me a kiss ; She's got as much hair on her face as my dog, Alligator.
>
> OLD PRAIRIE
> Stand off, Oppossum! or I'll knock you down.
>
> OPPOSSUM
> She knows my name! Now, if I believed in witchcraft, I'd swear she was my father.

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[167] Alphonso Wetmore, *The Pedlar*, 7.

Old Prairie, despite his embarrassing situation, was clearly not a man to be trifled with. According to *The Pedlar*'s character list, Old Prairie was played by Mr. T. Goddard, a St. Louis "conveyancer," or an attorney who specializes in real estate transactions. The casting of Goddard provided the audience with an inside joke, since Old Prairie envies the good fortune of Old Continental who inherits much real estate from his late brother.[168]

Pecanne and Mary provided the audience with two very different views of women in the West. Pecanne was named after the sweet-flavored nut that provided emigrants with a rich source of mast for animals and protein for humans. Nutmeg calls her his "nut-brown maid, " referring to her sun-darkened coloring and implying she spends times outdoors. [169] A hoyden willing to exchange stockings for a kiss, to jump from a cabin into the arms of Nutmeg, to marry a man of "two hours acquaintance," to outbid men – in particular her rambunctious cousin— at a public auction for a hunting frock: Pecanne represents the independence and strength of the new West, the stage mother, so to speak, of all cowgirls to come. She cares little for public opinion: her own uncle calls her a "huzzy" but she blithely goes on with her plans for elopement. Pecanne's choices are a far cry from the constrained world of Miss Neville in *She Stoops* to Conquer.[170] Her

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[168] Wetmore, *The Pedlar*, 22.

[169] *The Oxford English Dictionary. 2nd ed. 1989. OED Online.* Oxford University Press, 18 October 2009, http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/display/00328631?keytype=ref&ijkey=8DijHxx.9KYFk

[170] Wetmore, *The Pedlar*, 7.

marriage to Nutmeg blends the cunning and economy of the East with the spirit and freedom of the West, a potent pairing indeed.[171]

Mary is the Eastern side of the West. Wetmore named the character after his wife, and there is a strength and firmness about the stage character that lifts her above pure farce and into playful comedy. The "real" Mary came to adulthood in upstate New York, followed Wetmore to the frontier in 1819, where she raised eight children, managed two households (Franklin and St. Louis), ran the family farm, and coped with her husband's extended absences on military duty.[172] Wetmore portrays the stage Mary as strong minded about her choice of a beau and unlikely to leap out a window like cousin Pecanne:

> HARRY EMIGRANT
> Stay. (seizes her arm.) Now if I could believe you had ever been out of sight of land, I'd splice myself to you, yard arm and yard arm, and never give up the ship while I had a sound timber in my body. What d'ye say, my little cockle shell, did you ever smell salt water?
>
> MARY
> Never till now – nor a tarpauling either – release me, sea horse!
> (Enter Oppossum.)
>
> OPPOSSUM
> That means me. I'm half sea horse & half sea serpent. Did you ever see my coon dog, stranger?
> (Whistles.)
> Which eye shall I take out, Mary?
>
> HARRY EMIGRANT
> Who is this fellow?
>
> MARY
> My amiable brother – I'll leave you to his care.
> (Exit)

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[171] Perhaps Ado Annie from *Oklahoma!* would not have existed without Pecanne.

[172] Barile, 19.

She is neither tease nor fool: she makes it clear that if greenhorn Bostonian Harry Emigrant cannot survive a round with backwoods Oppossum, then Harry will not survive the West and is unsuitable as a husband. Wetmore creates a woman of the West who is literate, smart and humorous, as in this exchange with Old Continental about his marriage proposal:

MARY
And you don't expect to have another son?

OLD CONTINENTAL
No, yes – it depends upon circumstances. But will you marry me?

MARY
No, yes – it depends upon circumstances; I think I'll wait for your son – or, till you arrive at the years of maturity – I think, Mr. Continental, you are too young to undertake the management of a family. (exit)

Mary survives the threat to her freedom, and chooses her own way and her own partner. She is outspoken, secure in her own decisions and has no compunction about berating men in public:

MARY
(To Harry)
You would'nt disappoint your blooming young bride there, (pointing to Old Prairie) would you. (To Old Prairie seriously.) You fascinating young hussey. How dare you seduce the affections of my dear Harry, when he had pledged his honor to marry none but me ? (To Harry) And what have you to say for yourself, Mr. Constancy ? "did you ever know an American Tar to give up the Ship?" Ha !

OLD PRAIRIE
Mary ! My daughter Mary ! don't you know your poor old father? I'm old Prairie, your dear father.

MARY
My father in petticoats ! the grave old Mr. Prairie in petticoats ! that's a good one If you had called yourself my mother, 'twould

> have done better ; you're old enough, and in that dress, ugly enough to be the mother of Macbeth's witches.

Perhaps the stage Mary's independence is closer to the real Mary's than in name alone. Wetmore wrote how in 1812 as military officers, he and a friend both fell in love with Mary and good-naturedly gambled for her miniature portrait. Not long after, the friend was killed in battle and Wetmore lost his arm to a cannonball: he later swore his life was saved when the portrait turned aside the shrapnel. Wetmore returned to marry Mary, who seemed unfazed by his injuries as well as the challenges she would face as a military wife.[173]

The depiction of stage women in the West began with Wetmore, and *The Pedlar* demonstrates that a strong female was prized on the frontier and respected when capable of outsmarting the men. But Wetmore saw his whole world, which included those held in bondage: his depiction of Sable, a slave, was also a first in the West. Although she exists only as a caricature, it is possible that Sable can offer historians a slight sense of Black life on the frontier.

Wetmore owned several slaves: in one letter he described a homecoming in which " every member of my family, including the blacks & my spaniel dog were exceedingly glad to see me again among them. This classification of my negroes and dog together may appear a little unchristian; but when it is remembered the former poor divils, have generally (mine always excepted) a dogs life of it, it may not be esteemed mal appropos."[174] Sable's name suggested deep skin coloration and indirectly, value: the "sable" – not the Russian animal, but

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[173] Barile, *Santa Fe Trail*, 12. Mary also knows enough of Shakespeare to allude to Macbeth and the witches, indicating an education above many women on the frontier.

[174] Hutchins, 212. Wetmore's financial health was often shaky, and his slaves were sometimes attached by the Sheriff for debt.

the American marten – is a relative of the weasel. The small animal was unfortunately burdened with valuable fur that was pursued by trappers in the Rocky Mountains.[175] Sable represents the first time blackface was used onstage west of the Mississippi River. She is the property of Old Prairie, the companion of Pecanne and Mary, and is goaded into dressing up and mimicking Mary. Missouri was a slave state and entered the Union as such in 1821, the year of *The Pedlar*. White owners prided themselves on a "humane" form of slavery, often threatening slaves with being sold "down river" to Louisiana, where even greater brutality awaited on sugarcane plantations.[176] In Wetmore's case, he was away from his home for months at a time leaving his slaves to manage the work, actions which implied trust and confidence in the men and women. Wetmore's suggests that the slaves were not kept from the family, but participated in the family dynamic: while Sable agrees to help Mary dupe Old Continental in return for a used frock, it is clear that Mary has to negotiate the masquerade, that Sable is part of the family. When Sable's language changes from the "massa" of a stage Black to the well-spoken comments of a white woman, the audience no doubt laughed; but Sable played a pivotal role in the story and was no more ridiculous than anyone else onstage.

Wetmore's introduction of the East into the West comes in the shape of three men: Old Continental, Nutmeg and Harry Emigrant. The first was the old East, the past nearly forgotten, but Nutmeg and Harry Emigrant are transition characters into the West. Although Nutmeg is the first stage Yankee to visit the West, he was not the first to make an entrance, having appeared as early as *The Contrast*. Nutmeg comes over the mountains from Connecticut

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[175] It is possible that Wetmore was also punning on the name of Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable, the founder of Chicago. Du Sable was Afro-French; he spent his last years in Missouri, dying at St. Charles in 1818.

[176] Barile, *Santa Fe Trail*, 30-31.

(Wetmore's natal state) with a goal of skinning the locals, calling himself "A traveling merchant, sir – all the way over the mountains, from the town of New Haven, with a cart load of very useful, very desirable and very pretty notions: such as, tin cups and nutmegs, candlesticks and onion seed, wooden clocks, flax seed and lanterns, Japanned coffee pots, and tea sarvers, together with a variety of cordage and other dry goods." His list was common to peddlers, the items being portable in wagons as well as attractive to women in backwoods' settlements. Nutmeg is the consummate Yankee, looking to fleece his customers with false goods (coal in place of the expensive indigo, wooden nutmegs for expensive spice) and make a profit.

Harry Emigrant could be Nutmeg's opposite: a Bostonian seafarer, with little to his name, no plans and a desire to move in name and need: he wishes to cast anchor in a snug harbor and settle down in the West.[177] Emigrant throws nautical terms around like a nor'easter, and is completely out of his element, figuratively and literally. He tosses things "overboard," calls the horse's tack "riggin," his father a "hulk" and Mary, "a frigate under sail." Whether his seamanship will translate to the Missouri River is unknown, but he is now on the prairie, the inland sea of grass. He does bring an independent spirit to the West, and a sense of being able to adjust to any place: he quickly makes friends with Oppossum and is willing to risk all for his love, before coming into great expectations from a future inheritance.

Nutmeg and Emigrant may have sounded like another of Wetmore's characters, the New Englander Ebenezer Horn:

> I calculate the old saying is true, that every generation grows wiser and wiser. It is a marcy on us that people get killed off sometimes, or the world would get so smart there would be no living with

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[177] Wetmore, *The Pedlar*, 8.

> them. It's the nater of man to keep inventing all sorts of new fangled machines; and derights there won't be nothing left for nobdy to dew, and they won't want any help. I shouldn't think it strange if they keep guine on in this way that before long all there would be left to dew would be to wind up the world with an almight great key, and set it a-runnin; and then all un us may lie in the shade , or 'swing on a gate, and lap lasses.'
>
> "You are a deeper philosopher than I had supposed," said Random Ranger to his servant, "where were you educated, Ebenezer?"
>
> "I haint got no edication, leftenant, of any great valley; but I did go two or three winters to night scule, and chopped cord wood in day time; but the sculing I got from the minister, when I did his chores and worked in a dishmill was nice. He larnt me to cipher, and I guess that's sculing enough for the ground rules of a fortin."[178]

Wetmore understood that the West would succeed only on the backs of men and women of strength and native intelligence, and he was obviously proud of his eastern relations, the Nutmegs and Emigrants.

The Auctioneer appears to represent a touch of local color, and an inside joke for the town, but little more.[179] David B. Hoffman, the actor who played the Auctioneer, is listed in the St. Louis Directory as a merchant, certainly an appropriate choice for a character who sells goods. Wetmore introduces the Auctioneer once Nutmeg is convicted, in absentia, of a crime and Old Continental directs that the peddler's goods be sold. The goods to be sold are a laundry list of pseudo-cures, hoaxes and jokes:

> AUCTIONEER
>
> Gentlemen and Ladies! I'll offer you the goods of a traveling Merchant, who has recently declined trade, much against his will – thanks to the Justice, Constable and Complainant – much to my interest. I'll read the Invoice.

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[178] *Missouri Saturday News*, June 30, 1838, 5.

[179] Paxton, 12.

(reads)

Three wool hats – One case of family medicines, consisting of doctor Rodgers' vegetable pulmoniac detergent decoction, Lee's Scotch Ointment, Relf's cough drops, Lee's patent Windham bilious pills, warranted not to stick in the throat, Redheiffer's patent cathartic perpetual motion, &c. &c. – four and half cards of ginger-bread – John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progess – One odd volume, of Select Tricks upon Travellers – three boot Jacks, and a small keg of pickled herrings – one gallon bottle of Cider Brandy – three pounds and a half of dried peaches – one Merino sheep skin – four tin pans – three hundred and twenty rifle-flints – one package of artificial nutmegs and garden seeds, with a quantity of stone coal Indigo – several newly invented patent bee-hives, and thirty-three unfinished powder-horns. Also – the magazine of provisions, of the aforesaid delinquent, stowed into a gentleman traveller's frock. All the aforesaid articles are to be sold for ready cash, or coon skins; beginning with the last mentioned article. Bid, or gone – will nobody say any more? (first bid one half,) half nothing and a half. Nothing and a half, going, going; a dram to the next bidder.

OPOSSUM

Three coon skins.

AUCTIONEER

Thank you, good Mr. Oppossum, take a drink out of that bottle (drinks). Going, at three coon skins; upon the honor of an auctioneer, the article is worth twice the money – going, going, going; will you see the honest gentleman's property sacrificed? Let me appeal to the honor of that lady?

PECANNE

Four coon skins.

AUCTIONEER

Thank you, my little pot of incense. Four coon skins --- can't dwell, 'pon my honor – heap of plunder to sell; once, twice, th—thr—three times. Gone, your name, Miss?

Wetmore captured the fun of a frontier auction, with pelts as payment for bids, and hard cider for refreshment. Each item mentioned for sale must have drawn laughs from the audience with nonsensical names for patent medicines, items such as coal and indigo (which revealed a peddler's hoax of substituting the cheap mineral for the expensive dye), a copy of Pilgrim's Progress (good reading for a peddler) and more common items like peaches, herrings and

gingerbread.[180] "Redheiffer's patent cathartic perpetual motion" certainly drew the most laughs: Charles Redheffer had claimed to discover a perpetual motion machine and a "cathartic" was an extremely strong laxative. No western audience could fail to recall bouts of dysentery and "summer complaints" which caused many a trip to the outhouse. The Auctioneer as a character was no more West than East, since auction houses were a longstanding tradition in cities like New York and Boston, especially for sale of imported goods. But Wetmore turns the short scene into a snapshot not only of a peddler's pack, but of his audience's sense of humor.

The most Western of all the characters are Opossum and the Boatman. They were unique, and were not adaptations of Europeans simply because these characters could not exist outside the United States. Although they begin as Tony Lumpkins, the jokester with more humor than brains, Opossum and the Boatman quickly separate themselves from their English cousin. They arose from a new way of life in a new country under what was still an experiment in democracy. Oppossum is dedicated to his "M'Kinny mare (a trotter from Kentucky bloodlines), his dog Alligator, his rifle, and brawling, all things distinctly American. The American tradition of brawling appalled European visitors and Opossum contributed to the tradition. When he first meets Nutmeg, Oppossum offers to "out-jump, out-shoot, out-hop, and out-run" him, then challenges the peddler to a wrestling match, sets the rules ("You wo'nt gouge?) and ends the meeting by reminding all, "I'm half horse and half steamboat." Steamboats, noisy and dangerous, exploded in a fury of steam, fire and wood, and conquered the rivers. Brom Bones may have ridden headless through the Hudson Valley on a dark night,

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[180] A "card" of gingerbread was created by imprinting a stiff dough with a carved wooden press. Gingerbread, like hardtack, had little fat in it and once dried would keep for months or longer.

but Oppossum stood in broad daylight and made his challenge, unafraid of losing anything but his pride. Nothing and no one in the East could do this, and no one had done this onstage.

Oppossum's brawling partner, the Boatman, was found only on American rivers. The Boatman makes his entrance "a little drunk" and singing soundings, a way of signaling the river's depth to a pilot by using musical phrases for each level ("mark twain" meant safe water.) *The Pedlar* ends with Oppossum identifying the Boatman by name, offering that "Mike Fink and I will go and catch a barr" for the wedding supper, the first mention of Fink in print. [181]

Later, Wetmore allows his two frontiersmen a rare self-description that is not a boast. The Boatman and Oppossum appear with blackened eyes, a bottle of liquor and hunting dogs named Alligator and Planter. The Boatman offers his thoughts on domestic goods, saying "I would'nt give one glass of this old Monongohela for all the Madeira slops in Philadelphia .... for a picayon I can get as happy as a lord; and for a bitt, dead drunk on whiskey." As a soldier and frontiersman, Wetmore was familiar with "Monongohela," the strong rye whiskey known for its kick and its popularity among the boatmen. The audience needed no prompting to understand any of these. [182]

Oppossum and the Boatman identify themselves variously as steamboats, snapping turtles, wildcats and snags, boasts typical of a brawl tradition that begins with a ritual declaration. A brawler's ideas for entertainment consisted of stretching a rope across a street

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[181] Wetmore, *The Pedlar*, 31.

[182] In a rare footnote, Wetmore defines a "picayon" as "six and a fourth cents" and the bit as "twelve and a half cents." The money reflected both the French and Spanish heritage of Missouri, but not all of Wetmore's audience may have been familiar with the older currencies.

with several "keelers" on each end. At a signal, they ran down the street, tossing everyone and everything into the air. When a brawler found a worthy foe, he looked for a fight: "Who are you, stranger?" Oppossum calls out. "A steam boat, damn your eyes," returns the Boatman. "I'm a snag, a five-horse team, a Missouri snag, I'm into you." The battle was then joined in order to win a red feather, the mark of a champion. One of the earliest books to mention these river challenges was Travels on an Inland Voyage. The author, Christian Schultz, recorded a brawl between two boatmen in Natchez,1808:

> In passing two boats next to mine, I heard some very warm words; which my men informed me proceeded from some drunken sailors, who had a dispute respecting a Choctaw lady. Although I might fill half a dozen pages with the curious slang made use of on this occasion, yet I prefer selecting a few of the most brilliant expressions by way of sample. One said, "I am a man; I am a horse; I am a team. I can whip any man in all Kentucky, by G-d." The other replied, "I am an alligator; half man, half horse; can whip any on the Mississippi by G-d." The first one again, "I am a man; have the best horse, best dog, best gun, and handsomest wife in all Kentucky, by G-d." The other, "I am a Mississippi snapping turtle: have bear's claws, alligator's teeth, and the devil's tail; can whip any man, by G-d." This was too much for the first, and at it they went like two bulls, and continued for half an hour, when the alligator was fairly vanquished by the horse.[183]

Wetmore appears to have drawn from a common well for his brawlers' boasts, or perhaps from Schultz's text; that may never be known. But the Schultz description indicates that Wetmore was not creating a new language for the stage, but recording and transmitting the vernacular to the stage.

Backwoods brawlers had a vocabulary born of and on the river regardless of where

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[183] Christian Schultz, *Travels on an Inland Voyage in the Years 1807 and 1808*, Vol. II, (New York: Riley, 1810), 145-146.

they were fighting. “Snags” were vicious river obstructions, either the “sawyer,” a tree rooted in the river bottom that “sawed” up and down with the current, or a “planter,” a tree hidden just below the surface. A ship ramming a snag could sink in seconds with great loss of life. The “chain pump” was a ship’s mechanism consisting of chains and valves. If the chain snapped under pressure it caused considerable damage, much as a brawler would after the last glass of rye. The threat “to blaze your leader” refers to hitting hard, the same way one might blaze a tree with an axe to mark a trail. Indeed, Oppossum takes a swing at the Boatman and the fight begins in earnest with a strike at the face, a typical, vicious brawler’s blow.

But suddenly, the Boatman stops and asks “No gouging?” and Oppossum agrees, “And no ear biting.” Elliott J. Gorn, in his study of backcountry violence notes brawling was vicious, with combatants seeking to tear off testicles, bite off a nose or gouge out an eye: “liberating an eyeball quickly became a fighter’s surest route to victory and his most prestigious accomplishment.”[184] Indeed, when Oppossum first meets Harry, he asks his sister “Which eye shall I take out, Mary?” Oppossum is the more hearty brawler, taking on Nutmeg, Harry and the Boatman during the play. But Wetmore’s Boatman is somewhat tentative about living up to the standards of Alligator-Horses, a mythical river creature that was potent, vicious, quick and fearsome and claimed by brawlers as their totem. Perhaps Wetmore had a joke hidden here, since the Boatman was acted by John A. Paxton, a publisher of St. Louis city directories and not, to anyone’s knowledge, a frontier bully.

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[184] Elliot J. Gorn, “‘Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch’: The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry,” *The American Historical Review*, 90, Feb. 1985), 18-43.

Wetmore drew from his life in the West when the Boatman claims kinship with a steamboat. As paymaster for the Yellowstone Expedition, Wetmore was one of the earliest travelers to ascend the Missouri River by steamboat. He was unimpressed with the craft noting, "Marvelous as it might seem, some malconstruction of the machinery which was designed to propel the boat worked inversely, and carried her stern-foremost up stream," and he considered steamboats an "abortion of science and art."[185] Wetmore must have enjoyed creating his stage image of a river brawler moving backwards in a fight, puffing and flailing away with no discernable gain.

The Pedlar's text contains detailed costume descriptions for Wetmore's brawling duo, providing the Boatman with a "Glazed leather hat, red flannel shirt, linen overalls" and Oppossum with "raccoon skin cap, buck skin hunting shirt and overalls, hatchet and knife suspended by a leather belt." Of course boatmen dressed according to their individual tastes, but an examination of Missouri artist George Caleb Bingham's paintings such as "Watching the Cargo" shows that Wetmore was accurate in his description. Skin caps and coverings – raccoon, wildcat, wolf, fox – were worn by Native Americans and adopted by white trappers and traders by the eighteenth century. Wetmore would have seen the caps later associated with Daniel Boone and David Crockett on the streets of St. Louis and Franklin, in Native villages, on the flatboats, and keelboats of the Mississippi River.[186] The leather clothing of Oppossum was common, worn by

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[185] *Missouri Saturday News*, September 1838, 5.

[186] Neal Hammon. *My Father, Daniel Boone* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 37. Walt Disney may have popularized Boone and Fink, but according to Boone's youngest son, Nathan, "My father…always despised the raccoon fur caps and did not wear one himself, as he always had a hat."

frontiersmen such as Daniel Boone who died in Missouri the year before *The Pedlar*'s debut. Oppossum boasts, "What do you think this suit [of leather] cost me? I'll tell you, one charge of rifle powder, half an ounce of lead, four pence ha-penny worth of alum water, and two hours labor." Oppossum's boast was somewhat overstated – preparing the hide properly required more time than is given. But if the boast is accepted in the American spirit of "what can be imagined can be accomplished," then Oppossum was merely speaking the frontier truth to an understanding audience.

Throughout *The Pedlar*, Wetmore displayed an eye for the details of the rough and tumble frontier world: indeed, his was an artistic eye. By the 1820s, popular painting subjects included genre paintings of daily life and people of the region, and now the frontier had a face. Wetmore accomplished the same with his Western characters. The landscape of his play was New England come West to a small town. The personality of the landscape was in the people – those who had adapted to the land, and not those who imposed themselves on the land. His portraits of Oppossum and the Boatman may have lacked sophisticated dialogue but their spirit and behavior were fresh, wild, and unlike anything yet experienced on the American stage.

Whither *The Pedlar*

Unlike *The Lion of the West*, *The Pedlar* was never a lost play, only a forgotten one. Yet in the small world of theatre during the 1820s, actors, managers, and writers borrowed, shared, and were influenced by other works, and *The Pedlar* may have been known far beyond its boundaries. What were the implications of this possibility? No less

than whether the other two playwrights considered in this study created their works with knowledge of *The Pedlar* and Wetmore's scripts. The distance *The Pedlar* traveled may offer some clues to its influence.

The documented production history of *The Pedlar* encompassed the 1821 St. Louis production, a January 1825 production in Louisville, and a March 1835 performance by the St. Louis Juvenile Thespian Association, possibly organized by Wetmore who was living in the city at the time.[187] The Kentucky show was performed by the Lexington Thespian Society: "Saturday evening, January 15, 1825, The Lexington Thespian Society presented Rob Roy M'Gregor along with "a New Farce, written by a citizen of Missouri called *The Pedlar*."[188] The play was presented at "the Theatre" described by Noah Ludlow:

> "Many of us were surprised to find in the principal town of the State the poorest specimen of a theatre. I was informed the building had been a brewery….The second story, a long and narrow one, had been fitted up for dramatic performances by an amateur society. It was probably seventy to eighty feet in length by about twenty-five to thirty feet in width."[189]

It is unclear how *The Pedlar* ended up at a thespian society in Kentucky, although there is an intriguing connection with the 1821 production: Mrs. Groshon, who

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[187] Ralph Rusk, *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier*, vol. 2 (Columbia University Press, 1926), 420; Lexington *Kentucky Gazette*, January 13, 1825. Not until Walter Carson's production in the 1930s and a University of Missouri production in 2007 would Wetmore's characters again take to the stage.

[188] *Kentucky Gazette*, January 13, 1825.

[189] Noah Ludlow, *Dramatic Life As I Found It* (St. Louis: n.p.,1880), 89-90. Lowell Harrison et al, *A New History of Kentucky* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1997), 162. Ludlow was pleased with the dressing rooms and the theatre owner's wife, who served plum pudding to the cast.

performed Pecanne had also performed with the Drake Company in Lexington. Although she passed away January 31, 1822 in Cincinnati, she or others from the Company may have promoted *The Pedlar* to other managers.

Knowledge of the play seems to have been broader than the scant productions would suggest. Paxton's published scripts exist in several libraries: the St. Louis Mercantile Library, the University of Michigan, the Boston Public Library and the American Antiquarian Society (AAS) in Worcester, MA. The AAS copy of *The Pedlar* is signed "Wm. Jennison," and contains an additional photostated title page from an unlocated copy. This copy was signed by James H. Caldwell, and presented to the Opelousas (LA) Thespians.[190] Caldwell founded many theatres in the Mississippi Valley and built the first theatre for Anglophone plays in New Orleans. He introduced gas lighting to the theatre (and to New Orleans, where he was dubbed the Father of Light). He was active as a theatre manager in St. Louis, Kentucky and Louisiana. He was famous, wealthy and a force in theatre. And he owned a copy of *The Pedlar*. Perhaps it had been presented to him by Wetmore, or sent by an interested third party – that may never be known. William Jennison is listed in the Opelousas census for 1817 and 1827 – he was a merchant who sold plows and farm equipment.[191] Although the existence of a single copy means nothing, the existence of perhaps two copies in a Louisiana town may point to a production or at least to interest in the play.

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[190] Personal communication, Elizabeth Watts Pope, head of Readers' Services, AAS, September 22, 2008.

[191] William Jennison was also listed in Massachusetts during the 1820 Census. Should *The Pedlar* script have belonged to this New England Mr. Jennison, it would demonstrate an even broader distribution of the play in America.

Another indication of *The Pedlar*'s distribution comes from William Dunlap, who listed *The Pedlar* in The History of the American Theatre.[192] According to Dunlap, John F. Foote, an actor with the American Theatre, was writing a *Biographia Dramatica* and provided Dunlap with a list of American plays.[193] Dunlap lists Wetmore's work with the correct title*: The Pedlar: A Farce in Three Acts*. Either Dunlap or Foote owned a copy of the play, or they had been sent the correct title by a third party. Perhaps Prosper Montgomery Wetmore passed along his cousin's script. Nearly a decade later, S.T.W. in The Dramatic Mirror describes *The Pedlar* as "a drama in five acts," which is incorrect on two points.[194] No matter: the play's name was known in New York by playwrights and authors, knowledge which may have had an important impact on the playwrights James Kirke Paulding and William Dunlap.

Alphonso Wetmore crafted a play in a limited time, and he did it solely for the entertainment of friends and neighbors. He did not need to please critics, only friends, and he knew he would see his actors long after they left the theatre. Perhaps that alone led him to portray the West as a comically bloody and nonsensical place. He lived in a world where fighting was a daily event: court documents from Boonville (just across the river from Franklin) contain descriptions of local fights. In 1819, John and Barnett Hicklin pulled one Mary Turner out of her house and "plucked large quantities of her hair

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[192] Dunlap, *History*, 412.

[193] Dunlap, *History*, 409. Extensive searches failed to locate the *Biographia*. John Augustus Stone would also attempt a compilation of dramatic works.
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[194] Oddly enough, S.T.W. lists M.M. White as the author of *Liberty in Louisiana*, which was, in fact written by James Workman; this is the same error as found in Dunlap's *History*. But Dunlap (and Foote) correctly identified *The Pedlar* as a farce in three acts, leading one to think that S.T.W. was using two different sources for his list.

off her head and with stick and their fists struck" her. The defendants were hauled into court for slapping, punching, kicking, and beating Mary. In 1821, four ruffians attacked warmly dressed Alexander Allen and tore off his clothes, including "one great coat, one other coat, two waist coats, one shirt, two pair of breeches and one hat." Poor Mr. Allen was then thrown about in the snow. A notice printed in 1822 announced that William Turner tried to kill W. H. Curtis. Turner was fined $500 and sentenced to a year in the Boonville jail. But in December, he broke out and headed south. Folks were warned he was small, blond, and "subject to drink, quarrelsome and abusive in his language."[195]

Wetmore watched daily life in the West and created characters filled with an energy rarely seen on the Eastern stage: does Oppossum ever stop moving, unless he's drunk or drinking? Wetmore cleverly saves the long speeches for Nutmeg who represents not only the wiliness of Yankee, but the formalized language and presentation of Eastern theatre. Nutmeg is a dandy, a cheat, a lover but even he is eventually seduced by the West. He throws over his ancient, Yankee ways as trickster, and joins the frontier. Nutmeg points out to Harry Emigrant that marriage means more inland channels to explore: an off-color pun but also an acknowledgment that the West is a place with new secrets to ponder and new experiences to enjoy. Oppossum and the Boatman will spend their lives hunting, drinking and chasing the hounds, living off the land until it disappears or fortune catches up.

Wetmore was not a performer and did not appear in *The Pedlar*, yet he was onstage as much as any of the characters. Was he disguised as Harry, again marrying his beloved Mary? Was he Nutmeg, dressed like a dandy, shrewd, an Ichabod Crane who

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[195] Barile, *Santa Fe Trail*, 38.

avoided the horseman's revenge? Wetmore traveled the West with little protection other than his wits and a rifle. He was disabled, but this hardly stopped him: he went to Santa Fe, Chihuahua, Mexico, New Orleans, and eventually California. He owned slaves, a farm, helped start a library in Franklin and owned a mill, wrote of drinking parties, Fourth of July celebrations and elk hunting. Wetmore had imbibed the liquor and the sounds and the tastes of the West. He was no longer an Easterner, he was Oppossum. In *The Pedlar* he gave voice to the West, offering specific glimpses of language, home life, politics and culture as they existed and were shared by trans-Mississippi citizens. But the East knew little of him or *The Pedlar*, and Eastern playwrights had their own West in mind.

Chapter IV – Dunlap's *A Trip to Niagara* and the West

The author of *A Trip to Niagara*, William Dunlap, was a Renaissance man of the Young Republic, respected by his peers and recognized by modern scholars as the first historian of American art and theatre: yet his plays are rarely performed, and his art is nearly forgotten. A writer, painter, manager, actor, playwright, member of the militia, dutiful son and devoted father, Dunlap was prolific in writing and painting, and counted among his friends the Knickerbockers, the painter Thomas Cole, newspaper publishers, government officials and, most germane to this discussion, the author James Fenimore Cooper.

It was Cooper who first helped shaped the image of the West in American literature – he was among the most popular authors of the nineteenth century – but it was Dunlap who placed onstage Cooper's most famous fictional frontiersman: Leatherstocking. Although Dunlap's play *A Trip to Niagara* is only occasionally discussed among theatre historians, it is an important opening into understanding how the East, and more specifically New York, understood and interpreted the West.

Although the American West was a thousand and more miles from Manhattan, the region's image was shaped, in part, by a writer who rarely crossed the Hudson and never crossed the Mississippi. William Dunlap was born in Perth Amboy, NJ in 1766, a descendant of Irish and English ancestors. Dunlap's father served in the military, married and prospered as a merchant of china, and sent William to school as befitted his station. The family were Royalists and had little desire to separate from Great Britain, although William once wore a liberty cap around Manhattan – perhaps more from youthful high

spirits than from any sense of political leanings.[196] According to Dunlap he learned his love of art and literature from local "hermit" Thomas Bartow, a retiring and learned man who allowed William the run of an extensive personal library. In 1777, William and his family moved to New York where they waited out the Revolution amid the roistering and cultural life of the English military. It was in New York that William saw his first play, The Beaux' Stratagem, which resulted in a lifelong passion for the theatre.[197] A childhood accident blinded Dunlap in his right eye, but he took up drawing and painting and, through social connections, was invited to draw a portrait of George Washington from life.[198] William's father was impressed with the work, and sent the youth to England for lessons with the American artist, Benjamin West. But instead of learning to paint, William spent three years as a lad of leisure, attending the theatre and viewing art, rarely lifting a brush. He was summoned home by his father in 1787.

Dunlap wrote his first play later that year, The Modest Soldier or Love in New York, which was not produced.[199] But he persevered, and became the most prolific playwright of his time, specializing in American themes such as the capture of the spy,

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[196] Oral Sumner Coad, *William Dunlap, A Study of His Life and Works and of His Place in Contemporary Culture* (New York: The Dunlap Society, 1917), 6.

[197] Coad, 8. Although the Continental Congress called for an end to theatre and entertainments during the war, the British had no desire to make their time in the colonies anything but pleasant. Generals Gage and Howe encouraged theatrical productions and extravaganzas.

[198] William Dunlap, *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States* (New York: George P. Scott and Company, 1834, reprint C.E. Goodspeed & Co., 1918), 252 (page citations are to the reprint edition.)

[199] Coad, 15. While Dunlap created a role for Thomas Wignell, he failed to provide one for the temperamental Irish actor John Henry and his wife, which doomed any chance for a production.

Major John André (André), the War of 1812 (Yankee Chronology, Battle of New Orleans) and the republic (The Glory of Columbia.)[200] Dunlap noted with pride in A History of the American Theatre from Its Origins to 1832 that "most of these were acted successfully."[201] However, along with his original works, Dunlap was best known for his translations of the thunderously melodramatic plays by popular German playwright Augustus Von Kotzebue. Kotzebue's work was adored in England and more to the point, produced financial results. This encouraged Dunlap to introduce in 1798 Kotzebue's The Stranger to the American theatre public.[202] Between Kotzebue and Thomas Cole, it seems that among Dunlap's talents was the ability to identify and promote the genius of others.

In his later years, Dunlap was a popular member of The Friendly Club, where he hobnobbed with scientists, jurists, artists and authors, including James Fenimore Cooper.[203] Along with John Trumbull and Asher Durand, Dunlap discovered and promoted the work of Hudson River artist Thomas Cole and wrote the first histories of

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[200] Dunlap, 226. *André*'s earliest audiences booed a character who threw his hat – and American cockade – to the ground while pleading for André's life. Dunlap rewrote the offending scene, but the play faced other stage problems as well. One night, an actor went up on his lines, and tried to cover his memory lapse by repeating "Oh, André, oh, André." Finally, he despaired of recalling the lines or avoiding audience laughter, and said to his fellow actor playing "André": "Oh, André, damn the prompter, oh André! What's next, Hodgkinson?"

[201] Dunlap, 410.

[202] Coad, 211. The play followed the adventures of a fallen woman and a hermit who later discover they are husband and wife. Not all viewers were impressed with Kotzebue: an article in the *British Critic* wished for a law limiting Kotzebue translations to Coptic.

[203] Dunlap dedicated *A History of the American Theatre* to Cooper, who in turn used Dunlap's text for local color in Cooper's novel *Satanstoe.*

American art and theatre as well as a biography of novelist Charles Brockden Brown. Dunlap served as a paymaster for the New York State militia, managed the Old American Company, published a magazine, and wrote novels, histories and articles until his death in 1839. William Dunlap represented a living bridge between the cultural life of the American colonies and the Young Republic. He lived through the Revolution from the center of the British occupation in Manhattan to the field command of General George Washington.[204] He experienced the economic downturns caused by the War of 1812, struggling to keep both the American Company and the Park Theatre open. His younger Knickerbocker acquaintances included Washington Irving, James Kirke Paulding, Prosper Wetmore and James Fenimore Cooper, men raised on the New York "frontier" and familiar with the folk memories and legends of the wilderness.[205] Dunlap was a New York playwright but, unlike the nostalgic and younger Knickerbockers, his vision of the West in *A Trip to Niagara* was a call for radical change.

Enter Leatherstocking

Dunlap, born in 1766, and James Fenimore Cooper, born in 1789, were close friends despite differences in age and financial standing. While Dunlap struggled to pay bills, Cooper enjoyed a somewhat more settled life, yet both men shared a passion for

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[204] His portrait of Washington is now in the collection of the United States Senate.

[205] Bryan Waterman, *Republic of Intellect: The Friendly Club of New York City and the Making of American Literature*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 34. The men were members of the Friendly Club, founded to provide good conversation, fellowship and intellectual stimulation. Prosper Montgomery Wetmore was thrown out of the club in 1795 for questionable business practices, a fact that did not seem to hurt his standing in New York theatre society. Paulding and Irving lived 75 miles from Manhattan; Cooper was raised deeper in the wilderness, more than 150 miles from Manhattan, near present day Cooperstown, Otsego County, New York.

their world. Dunlap pursued painting and playwriting, while Cooper was a writer whose novels first introduced the American emigrant experience to readers. But in order to understand Dunlap's sense of the West, it is first necessary to examine how Cooper contributed to *A Trip to Niagara*.

James Fenimore Cooper was raised in Cooperstown, New York, in the central frontier region of the state. He is best known for his "Leatherstocking Tales" – a series of five novels in which readers encounter the backwoodsman Leatherstocking.[206] By the 1828 debut of *A Trip to Niagara*, Cooper had written The Pioneers (1823), The Last of the Mohicans (1826) and The Prairie (1827) and was renowned for his stories of wilderness days in New York State and of western emigration.[207] Cooper and Dunlap enjoyed travel, and in 1823 the men embarked on a steamboat tour up the Hudson River to Albany. Also along on the trip was popular British "play-actor" Charles Mathews, Sr., known for his comic roles and solo performances. Dunlap was introduced to Mathews and Cooper and he spent time with the actor after dinner, writing that Mathews was a charming raconteur but disliked many things about America, including sharing sleeping space on the ship with women.[208]

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[206] Leatherstocking was called by several names, including Natty (Nathaniel) Bumppo, Pathfinder, Longue Carabine ("Long Rifle"), the trapper and Deerslayer.

[207] George Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage Vol. 3* (New York: Columbia University, 1927), 63. Cooper may have been a playwright before Dunlap, since Dunlap's diary entry for April 28, 1833 alludes to a possible adaptation of *The Pioneers* by Cooper in 1823. Odell prints a cast list of show, but nothing more.

[208] Dunlap, *A History of the American Theatre*, 388-389. At one point during his American tour, Mathews attended a rehearsal with his nose stuffed with cotton plugs so that he would not have to smell any more mutton.

Mathews was a notorious complainer and critic, who loathed nearly everything American (except the benefits and ticket sales). He traveled through the US in 1821-22 and returned to England in 1824, where he presented a one-man show called *A Trip to America.* The full script has not been located, but from published excerpts it appears Mathews portrayed America, Black and white, with dialects, costumes and corrosive wit that British audiences enjoyed immensely.[209] Mathews's trip had been less than a generation after the War of 1812 and only forty years since the Revolution. Both times the British had lost America, and this rankled. In the 1820s, the former colonies became the target of English writers who thrived on recording every quirk and oddity of Americans, and then returned home to spread what Americans considered wild stories and rank distortions.[210] Whether Dunlap was upset with Mathews' portrayals or with Mathews' abuse of Americans onstage is not recorded. Dunlap wrote graciously of an evening spent with Mathews aboard the ship The Chancellor Livingston, but later when asked to write a script for a panorama, Dunlap aimed his pen squarely at Mathews and created *A Trip to Niagara* for American audiences.

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[209] Francis Hodge, *Yankee Theatre: The Image of America on the Stage, 1825-1850* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964), 67. Mathews appeared at the Park Theatre during his 1822 tour and was well received by American audiences, who followed him wherever he went. Mathews would spout nonsense cloaked as conversation, knowing that his fans were too naïve (or foolish) to know the difference; he later skewered onstage many of the people he had met. Mathews was referred to by Dunlap, Cooper, and Irving as a gentleman, but Irving also noted that *A Trip to America* was "stupid."

[210] Mathews's writings were an early example of the "travel and tell" school. Close on his heels were Basil Hall (*Travels in North America*, 1829), Frances Trollope (*Domestic Manners of the Americans*, 1832), Fanny Kemble (The *Journal of Frances Anne Butler*, 1835) and Charles Dickens (*American Notes*, 1842). Not all British travel writing was dishonest, by any means. Mrs. Trollope was appalled by tobacco spitting and who wouldn't be? Fanny Butler (neé Kemble) was horrified by slavery. Even Mathews made fun of Americans' insistence on freedom while owning slaves.

A Trip to Niagara or *Travellers in America* debuted November 28, 1828 at the Bowery Theatre, New York. Technological novelties were popular at the time, and Dunlap created A Trip merely as a painted background, noting "The last piece I wrote for the stage was a farce, called '*A Trip to Niagara,*' the main intention of which was to display scenery." Unfortunately, the technology overshadowed the text, and resulted in the work being labeled a novelty, a stage bauble that was quickly forgotten.[211] In this case, the "scenery" was a mechanical wonder, the moving panorama. Dunlap was both playwright and pragmatist, a family man concerned with staying out of debt and an artist concerned with staying au courant. The "panorama" (Greek, pan ("all") horama ("view") was a neologism coined by Irishman Robert Barker, a painter often credited with inventing the art form in 1792. The panorama began with a room-sized, circular painting– generally of a battle scene or cityscape – that was then masked top and bottom with curtains so that a viewer would have the sense of looking outside. Some panoramas included three-dimensional additions such as wagons, rocks, or props like guns and military equipment. Visitors walked in a circle along a raised platform and natural light flooded in from above.[212] For a viewer, the world seemed to revolve around oneself, perhaps an excellent metaphor for the nineteenth century.[213]

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[211] Dunlap, *History of Theatre*, 363.

[212] Bernard Comment, *The Painted Panorama* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1999), 7.

[213] Comment, 19. Panoramas had a strong connection to America. Robert Fulton, of steamboat fame, was also an artist. In 1800 Fulton was in Paris, and had built two circular buildings (much like a rotunda) for the display of his panorama. Another New York artist, John Vanderlyn, exhibited his panorama of Versailles (18 feet high by 167 feet in circumference) in Manhattan, 1819; both Fulton and Vanderlyn were acquaintances of

The panorama became a craze. America was fascinated by invention –the Erie Canal, steamboats: in 1807, it took 32 hours to go from Manhattan to Albany, and by the 1820s less than half that time.[214] Theatrical managers kept up with invention and innovation as well. It was hardly practicable to ask an audience to move around a theatre: but what if the theatrical "view" passed by the audience? London audiences had been enjoying a "moving panorama," where instead of a circular panorama, a long roll of canvas painted with scenery, was rolled between two wooden "pins" to create a moving panorama.[215] Dunlap's play was written in order provide a reason for the panorama and to compete with the Park Theatre, that had offered a panorama earlier in 1828; but the city had enjoyed moving panoramas since 1823, when a "mechanical panorama" entertained people for the cost of a quarter. Panoramas were accompanied by music and narration to describe the view, while shadows, color and intensity of light were manipulated by backlighting the canvas. *A Trip* generated interest before it debuted:

> *A Trip to Niagara* – The species of moving scenic exhibition, which causes the pleasing delusion of making the spectator feel as if he moved and passed the scenes which in reality pass before him, was, we believe, first displayed at the Park theatre to an American audience….The managers of the Bowery, have had, for months past, in preparation a display of this nature, which, from the talents of those engaged, is expected to equal any thing of the

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Dunlap. The success of the venture encouraged Fulton to construct a panorama building in New York City that failed financially; Vanderlyn's panorama is still on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

[214] David Lear Buckman, *Old Steamboat Days on the Hudson River* (New York: The Grafton Press, 1907), 14. One of the farmers who witnessed a steamboat chugging upriver hurried home to warn family and friends that he "had seen the devil going up the river in a sawmill."

[215] Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1978), pp. 198-210.

> kind seen by us of the western world. With great judgment the scenes of our native country have been selected for the pencil and the brush, and a native dramatist employed to compose the plot and dialogue which is to give intellectual entertainment while the external senses are delighted by the magnificent views which our rivers and mountains present.[216]

The "native dramatist" – Dunlap – was a painter, but news accounts indicate Messrs. Wall, Duke White, John Leslie, Gordon, Reinagle and Jones were the panorama artists.[217]

A Trip to Niagara was advertised as an "eidophusicon" (Greek, "natural form"). Eidophusicons were more elaborate than moving panoramas and used ropes, pulleys, and models to create the effects of moonrise, waves, and ships at sea. Whether A Trip used the special effects or merely co-opted the name for publicity purposes is unknown. But a description of the "moving scenery" includes New York harbor with ships at anchor, the Palisades, an approaching storm, a storm complete with thunder and lightning, boats passing through a fog, a rainbow, the setting sun, West Point, Newburgh by moonlight, the Catskill Mountain House, and "the continuation of scenery."[218] The result was to

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[216] *The New-York Mirror: A Weekly Gazette of Literature and the Fine Arts*, Nov. 22, 1828, 159.

[217] *The New York Evening Post*, November 17, 1828, 3. According to an article in the *Post*, Mr. Jones painted much of the panorama, including Niagara Falls. Reinagle had recently painted the interior of the Bowery Theatre. *The Critic* (Dec. 13, 1828) stated that Mr. Wall did the sketches, and Jones "enlarged" the sketches and "corrected by personal observation." Francis Hodge (162) comments that Leslie was a former sailor who specialized in marine paintings and effects. It was common for large panoramas to have a team of painters, sketch artists and designers. Estimates of the canvas length for *A Trip* ranged from 200 feet in length to 25,000 square feet in area. After the play closed, the panorama continued to be exhibited accompanied by music and narration; its location and later history are unknown, but many panoramas suffered the fate of being cut into theatre backdrops.

[218] Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara*, 26-27. Dunlap called the moving scenery a "diorama" in his script; "eidophusican" was a panorama, according to *The Critic*, December 13, 1828,

"produce a romantic effect on the feelings, and charm and tranquilize the mind of the spectator with all the power of real nature.[219] The landscape had become a soporific.

Descriptions of a panorama's mechanism show two sets of upright rollers and gears, each with a winding handle. The rollers were set up offstage at either side. One roller held the canvas stretched across the stage to the other roller; the upper edge of the canvas was attached to a rope that reduced sagging.[220] At the opposite side, a worker wound the handle and the canvas was pulled across the stage, giving the sense of movement as the "landscape" passed by.

Additional and presumably non-moving scenery showed Little Falls on the Mohawk, the Erie Canal, and "Niagara presented with the superior advantages of the immense altitude that this Theatre [the Bowery] affords." Given that the script calls for a depiction of "the falls of Niagara as seen from below" on the American side, and the Table Rock, the Bowery stage must have had most of its space underwater, at least figuratively. Comment states "the invention of the panorama was a response to a particularly strong nineteenth-century need – for absolute dominance. A double dream came true – one of totality and of possession."[221] Yet the panorama accomplished more than creating a sense of possession – it created a sense of safety. It was a way of viewing

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"as the playbills learnedly term it" and theatre and film historians refer to moving panoramas, a more accurate description of the scenery depicted by Dunlap.

[219] *The Critic*, December 13, 1828, 6.

[220] "Banvard's Panorama," *Scientific American*, December 16, 1848, 100. It is unknown how Dunlap's panorama worked, but sound effects and music may have masked creaking or other noises from the mechanism.

[221] Comment, 19.

the odd, the "Sublime," the threatening and then taking the egress back to safe, humdrum daily life. It was an art of reassurance: "there" was threat and "here" was home.

By the time *A Trip to Niagara* joined in the "panoramania," the art form was slightly older than a quarter century and familiar to Americans through Vanderlyn's work.[222] The theatre audience of *A Trip to Niagara* had no need to travel beyond Manhattan, especially if they had enjoyment without adventure, and possession of a region without the effort of visiting. Dunlap's script emphasizes a movement of the characters north and west, as far west as one could travel in New York through a landscape controlled by steamboats, canal boats and settlement.

Dunlap's "background for scenery" was meant to compete with The Park Theatre, and to fill seats in The Bowery. The "new" Bowery had been completed only months before as a replacement for the old theatre, which had been destroyed by fire.[223] The *New-York Mirror*, Aug. 23, 1828 noted with complete sincerity that the theatre was "simple and elegant" and offered faux-marble stucco, real marble steps, doors placed to allow for free circulation of air during the warm months, four exterior Grecian candelabras eight feet high, Doric columns, gas lighting (more than 600 lights in cut class lamps), a dome ("a concave semi-spheroid, very triflingly oblate"), blue, pink and gilt paint and decorations, sculptures and paintings of Grecian ladies, the Muses Thalia,

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[222]The small world of Manhattan theatre offered up interesting coincidences, secrets and mysteries. The artist John Vanderlyn was a protégé of Aaron Burr, who was an acquaintance of Dunlap. Theodosia, Burr's daughter (whose portrait was painted by Vanderlyn), disappeared at sea off the Carolinas and one crackpot theory held that John Howard Payne, the playwright and actor, captained the privateer that attacked Theodosia's ship.

[223] Coad, 107.

Melpomene, Fame and Shakespeare. Nothing, it seems was left to chance – the shade "apple blossom" was selected for the rear wall of the boxes in order to display the spectators to as great an advantage as the actors. The drop curtain was replaced by a drapery curtain:

> "Frequenters of dramatic entertainments must have noticed the disagreeable effect frequently produced by the falling of the drop-curtain, particularly when it descends to slow and solemn music, cutting off, in its downward progress, first the tops of the scenes, next the heads of the performers, and thus gradually closing the view of the spectator in a most unnatural and ludicrous manner."[224]

Opening night at the theatre was a glittering affair, and The *New-York Mirror* noted "the utmost hilarity prevailed." Among the honorees that night was Prosper M. Wetmore, who won second prize for the best address to be spoken at the opening of the theatre.[225]

The plot of *A Trip to Niagara* was as colorful as its setting: Englishwoman Amelia Wentworth and her brother are traveling through America, she defending the young country's spirit and brother Wentworth detesting everything he sees and everyone he meets. At a New York hotel John Bull, Amelia's erstwhile beau who had left England to see the world and its women, conveniently appears and resumes his wooing of Amelia. The former lovers agree that if Bull can cure Wentworth of his dislike for America, Amelia will set a marriage date. Amelia and Wentworth set off on *A Trip to Niagara*, traveling up the Hudson River to Little Falls, the Erie Canal and, finally, Niagara Falls.

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[224] "The New Bowery Theatre," *The New-York Mirror and Ladies' Literary Gazette*, August 23, 1828, 49.

[225] Ibid, 50. Prosper Wetmore's poem described the burning of the Bowery with lines such as "When the hot breath of the red whirlwind came, And desolation fanned the crackling flame." Never considered a great writer, Prosper was well-connected politically, and a great supporter of theatre.

The group meets a free Black theatre manager, Leatherstocking, and an Irishman in search of a way back to the old country. Along the way, Bull appears in disguise as a good-natured Frenchman and a stalwart, sly Yankee, and finally opens Wentworth's eyes to the worthiness of America and her people.

Dunlap invoked many elements of early farce, including disguises, overheard conversations, mistaken identities, racial and ethnic stereotypes, dialects and misunderstandings based on the dialects.[226] Job Jerryson is an educated free Black; Dennis is country Irish, who believes Black men are white men with the yellow fever:

> Job Jerryson
> What is your wish, friend?
>
> Dennis Dougherty
> Kape off, if you plase.---Can you tell me the way---a little further off, if you plase.
>
> Job Jerryson
> As far off as you please, friend. I do not wish to be nearer, I assure you. I am black, Sir; so was "noble Othello."---How do I know but he was one of my forefathers?

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[226] Marvin McAllister, *White People Do Not Know How to Behave at Entertainments Designed for Ladies & Gentlemen of Colour: William Brown's African and American Theatre* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 161. "A Dark Subject," *The Literary Companion* (New York, Aug. 18, 1821, 156) Jerryson is an Eastern dandy and a character who could not have existed in Missouri territory or where slavery was practiced. Dunlap based the character on actor Charles Taft and actor/manager William Brown of the African Grove Theatre in New York City. The African Grove was a popular gathering place for Black actors and Black and white audiences, as well as a training ground for tragedians including Ira Aldridge. In "A Dark Subject," The African Grove attracted the ire of a journalist who berated the "negroes" for seeking equality in fashion, leisure and possessions: "they return from their romantic promenades in the "African Grove," (a lately established ice-cream and punch garden) and their midnight debaucheries, to climb into their masters' windows." The writer (possibly the editor and playwright M. M. Noah) ranted against the thought that Blacks were searching for liberty: "The vassal names of Sambo, of Pompey, Nic, and Caesar, they have dropped; and their masters' names, with a Mr. before, and Esq. after them, have become the substitutes." The African Grove moved to several different locations after harassment from white competitors, finally closing in 1823.

Dennis Dougherty
Four fathers! You don't pretend you had four fathers!

Job Jerryson
Yes, Sir.

Dennis Dougherty
And how many mothers?

Job Jerryson
Contemptible!

While in a Catskill Mountain hotel, Wentworth listens through a wall and believes that John Bull (in the guise of the Frenchman), is plotting his murder when Bull is merely talking to himself in a looking glass while shaving: "There he stood by the table, the candle shining full upon the razor and his ugly black face, he stropping away and feeling the edge now and then, aha! says he, 'this will do, this will take it off at one sweep.' Meaning my head---no doubt." Bull's Yankee carries a squash tied to a twig, and tries to convince Wentworth that it is an American pear:

Jonathan
Doolittle---at your sarvice, Miss.

Amelia
What have you got there?

Mr. Bull
It's a sample of our Yankee pears. I guess as how, Mister, you mightent ha got sich in your country.[227]

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[227] William Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara or Travellers in America* (New York: E.B. Clayton, 1830). Dunlap's Jonathan is among the first stage Yankees, complete with regional dialect and clothing. The role was played by George Hill, one of the great portrayers of onstage Yankees. Jonathan was "borrowed" by James Hackett for an 1830 play, *The Times: or Life in New York*, and appeared under the guise of "Industrious Doolittle," a Yankee who was running for public office. It is possible that Industrious inspired a later character, the Westerner Wildfire. In turn, George Hill borrowed

Free Black dandy Job Jerryson invites the maid to visit his theatre: she believes he is proposing marriage.[228]

Job Jerryson
Very well---Nancy, or Ann---You will learn Miss Ann, or Miss Nancy, after being a short time in this country, to set a proper value upon yourself. Now, if I might be permitted, I would propose for you------

Nancy
You! You propose for me!

Job Jerryson
If you would do me the honour, I would propose------

Nancy
I would have you know, fellow, that when I marry, I shall at least--

Job Jerryson
Marry!---'pon honour, that is too good!--- I do not marry I assure you---Miss---
Takes snuff.
Nancy---I am not a marrying man. As the man of colour says, in the play---I would not my free condition put in confinement for seas of wealth. If you would like to see our theatre, I can give you an order. I am one of the managers. We rehearse every club night--the Shakspeare Club--- and there is my friend Tom Dickson, the young coloured gentleman next door, we rub up---I would say---we brighten our memories of a morning, as we rub up the brass knobs and knockers at the street doors.

Nancy
I think you had better rub up your memory now, and take my Mistress's letters.

Job Jerryson
Looking at the letters through his glass.
Ah, true!
Takes snuff.

Doolittle back, in the guise of *Lion of the East, or Life in New York* (1834.) This back and forth trading of characters was typical in this era.

[228] Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara*, 43.

> My honour is pledged for their safety.
> *Takes letters from table*.
> ---As I told Miss Diana Dingy. "The service of the fair sex is my delight."---Adieu--- mung share.
> *Exit.*

Although Job mispronounces his French and is affected in his use of snuff, he is also manager of a theatre and quotes Othello. Although a figure of fun, Dunlap showed restraint with Job during a time when minorities, women and foreigners were often depicted onstage as one-sided simpletons.

Onward, West

Dunlap's script emphasizes a movement of the characters north and west, as far west as one could travel in New York through a landscape controlled by steamboats, canal boats and settlement. The main characters – Amelia, Wentworth, John Bull and Dennis – have discovered what concerned Irving while he was in Europe: that the American wilderness was disappearing. In 1817, the Erie Canal was a grand idea; by 1828, the canal was three years old, a 340-mile long commercial "road" and, for those with money, an extended tourism site. Wilderness along the canal gave way to towns and villages, that clustered around lock keepers' homes, hotels, and taverns. None of Dunlap's characters bemoan the loss. On the canal boat in the Mohawk Valley, Wentworth asks of John Bull, "when shall we get to the wilderness?" and Bull, in the guise of Jonathan, replies:

> "Ah, that's what every body says. But these curst creeturs have spoilt all that. What with their turnpike roads, and canals, they have gone, like tarnal fools as they are, and put towns and villages, gardens and orchards, churches and schools, and sich common things, where the woods and wild beasts and Indians and rattlesnakes ought to have been."

Bull's tongue was planted firmly in cheek, but not on the side of wilderness. His comments represent classic New England "wilderphobia": "Jonathan's" Puritan heritage continued to equate the dark forest and wilderness with paganism and disorder. Dunlap came from an Anglo-Irish heritage, but he understood his "American" audience, and the audience understood the joke: these foolish Europeans thought Americans preferred the wilderness to settlement. Americans - at least Gothamites - were as civilized as anyone else and devoted to sending Eastern order into the West: in effect, to tidy up the wilderness using commerce and trade as the new brooms.[229]

The play entertains this notion with more than text: it takes the audience on a trip to see for themselves how America was pushing the wilderness back into the West. To participate in the journey, the "passengers" – that is, the audience – faced the west bank of the Hudson River as the ship headed north from Manhattan to the first stop at Catskill Landing.[230] The landscape depicted by the panorama was Romantic, but not unadulterated wilderness – settlements and villages like Poughkeepsie had been in place along the Hudson River nearly two centuries before the *Trip to Niagara*. In addition to frontier now made accessible by steamboat, the audience experienced the power of nature – fog, thunder, sunrise – acting on the land. But it was a predictable and safe encounter: no damp clothing, no chance of drowning, no Indian attacks, not even mud on skirt hems.

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[229] Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 417. Washington Irving dubbed natives of Manhattan "Gothamites" after the village in England where men played fools in order to outwit the King.

[230] The east bank of the Hudson River was just as scenic, but since the travelers were debarking at Catskill for the next scene, it made sense for them to view the Palisades and Hudson highlands.

Along the way, Amelia gushes that the views are sublime, bold and picturesque, but never is there a feeling within the play of the "true" Sublimity as defined by Edmund Burke: that strange awe underlaid with fear, horror or risk, the attraction and repulsion that come with viewing the unknown, the powerful, the threatening.[231] But with true sublimity comes discomfort, and Amelia's comments about the landscape make it clear that the "threat" of the wilderness is over and done with.

Dunlap strengthens his own view of civilization's power over nature when the characters arrive at the Catskill Mountain House, a hotel built in 1824 on one of the higher Catskill peaks. The Mountain House perched on a rock ledge overlooking the Hudson Valley. A journalist wrote in 1826:

> The road which pursues a zig-zag course all the way up the mountain, here made several abrupt turns and brought us very suddenly to the broad tabular rock upon which the House is set. We could hardly realize it. After threading in the dark for two or three hours a perfect wilderness, without a trace save our narrow road, to burst thus suddenly upon a splendid hotel and, glittering with lights, and noisy with the sound of the piano and the hum of gaiety – it was like enchantment.[232]

It was not the beauty of the wilderness that enchanted the author, but civilization's veneer on the wilderness. Dunlap's Amelia comments "See how beautifully the majestic Hudson, diminished by distance to the size of a rivulet, meanders through fields, forests,

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[231] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, Harvard Classics, vol. 24 (New York: Collier and Sons, 1909). Burke suggested that terror, awe, fear and pain were "sublime" because they created the strongest emotions. By the time of the high Romantic Era, the "sublime" was a bit less caught up with suffering and more inclined towards providing a strong, nearly physical emotion of awe, surprise and wonder.

[232] *Boston Recorder and Telegraph*, July 1826.

and meadows, which are reduced in appearance to garden flower beds."[233] From the panoramic view above the valley, it appeared that the Catskills had given up their wildness, and were neatly reduced to the prettiness (and safety) of an English garden.[234] Wentworth, Amelia's brother, complains that he is heading north and west, only to see the same people and the same places. Dunlap made it clear to the audience (especially those who had not traveled there) that upstate villages were quite as modern as those downstate, wilderness be damned.[235]

In Dunlap's *Trip*, Wentworth stood in for Charles Mathews, and dignified Job Jerryson replaced the offensive Maxmillan and Agamemnon. John Bull was that rare thing, an open-minded Englishman, and Amelia Wentworth echoed Americans who were proud of their new landscape and settlement, and tired of the ruins from the old world:

> "Yes, all fresh, in youth, strength and beauty and therefore most worthy of the attention of travellers from the Old World. I would rather, dear brother, see flourishing towns, with laughing inhabitants, than the ruins of barbaric Castles, or the tombs of their guilty and tyrannic Lords. I should prefer, anywhere, health to decrepitude. But here I see society in all the vigour of early life, supported and protected by the wisdom and experience of past ages. If America takes warning by the errors of Europe, she will soon be the pride of the Universe!"

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[233] Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara*, 30.

[234] Although this study is not about the Catskills, it should be noted the region was named for the wild cats (bobcats) of the forests. The view of which Amelia speaks is a short hike from where Thomas Cole – friend and benefactee of Dunlap – painted his iconic "portrait" of North Lake in "Lake with Dead Trees." Although Amelia Wentworth and by extension, Dunlap and his audience viewed the region as under the cultivation and control of man, they had but to hike north into the Catskills to see wilderness on its own terms, complete with poisonous snakes and irate bears.

[235] Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara*, 47.

Dunlap echoed America's sense that a new country was a vibrant country, and the citizens' responsibility was to banish the wilderness and push the frontier so far west it would leave the sun behind. To accomplish this onstage, Dunlap added another voyager on the Trip: Leatherstocking, the frontiersman, lifted lock, stock, and barrel from the pages of Cooper's novels. [236] Dunlap described his "Leather-Stocking" as Cooper had drawn him:[237]

> Enter Leather-Stocking ---dress as described in J. F. Cooper's Pioneers. On his head, a cap made of fox skin--- hair gray---face sun burnt---check shirt---deer skin coat, with the hair on, tied with a belt of coloured worsted--- buckskin breeches and leggins---a belt over his shoulder, suspending a horn for powder. A leather pouch before him for balls, &c. A long rifle.[238]

Leather-Stocking was frontier made flesh. Cooper based his novel on childhood memories of growing up in Cooperstown (named for his father, William), and most likely used David Shipman, a local character known for his hunting skills, as the inspiration for

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[236] In *The Life and Letters of Washington Irving* (New York: G.P. Putman's Sons, 1883), v. II, 151 Pierre Irving recounted his uncle's visit to Mathews in London after a show. Mathews was told that an American wished to see him, and going into the hall was surprised to discover Irving, saying "My God! Irving, is it you, my dear fellow? I am very glad to see you." Irving replied, "Yes, it is me, but confess that you expected to find a tall Kentuckian with a gun on his shoulder."

[237] James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers* (New York: Charles Wiley, 1823; reprint, New York: Barnes & Noble, 2007), 11 (page citations are to the reprint edition.) Leather-Stocking is described as wearing a fox-skin "cap," which could mean a plain fur cap, or one in which the fox tail is left for decoration. Henry Inman (father of the Santa Fe Trail historian) drew Leather-Stocking for the first edition of *The Pioneers* (1823.) In that picture, Leather-Stocking is wearing what appears to be a substantial hat: tall, almost shaped like a bishop's mitre. Certainly not the standard raccoon cap associated with Daniel Boone and David Crockett or the foxskin cap of Brom Bones.

[238] J. A. Cuddon, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (New York: Penguin, 1999), 875.

Leather-Stocking.[239] Dunlap – who dedicated A History of Theatre in America to James "Fennimore" Cooper – made no apologies for his absconding with the frontiersman, writing in the Preface to *A Trip to Niagara*, "The Author has not hesitated to use any material, not already appropriated to the drama, which might answer the importance of keeping the audience in good humour while the scenery and machinery was in preparation."[240]

Cooper crafted Leather-Stocking as a melancholy muse of the wilderness, one who illustrated how the old ways were disappearing. Dunlap continued in this vein. Not surprisingly, Dunlap's artist's eye influenced the stage selections of both language and scenery:

> Scene --- the Mountain, or Pine Orchard House. The stage represents the rock in front of the house---a view of the house and of the distant scenery. Sun rises during the scene.[241]

Although Dunlap was not the scenery painter, he offered his audiences the most famous American view at the time. The Mountain House was situated on an outcropping

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[239] James Fenimore Cooper, *The Chronicles of Cooperstown* (Cooperstown: H. & E. Phinney, 1838), 19. Cooper referred to Shipman as "the Leather-Stocking of the region." In another twist, Cooper drew on James Kirke Paulding's *The Backwoodsman* for the title-page motto: "Extremes of habits, manners, time and space, Brought close together, here stood face to face, And gave at once, a contrast to the view, That other lands and ages never knew." Paulding's play, *The Lion of the West* has a character much like Leather-Stocking.

[240] Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara*, Preface. Cooper's novel, *The Spy* had been adapted for the stage by Charles Clinch in 1822 and was a hit; it was also the first American novel adapted for the stage. Cooper's own adaptation of *The Pioneers* ran for three nights in 1823. Dunlap may have been joking about his borrowing from a novel that had not yet been used on stage. He was also commenting on the importance (or unimportance) of his play in relation to the moving panorama.

[241] Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara*, 30.

of rock and jutted over the Hudson Valley, providing a panoramic view for more than 100 miles on a clear day. An artist who stood slightly west of the House, gained a view of the House, the trees below (Pine Orchard), the distant river and mountains, the Catskills, Berkshires, and Shawangunks.[242] People visited the House to view the famous sunrise. Clouds floated below the piazza and ledge, where visitors reported that during certain atmospheric conditions, people could see the building's reflection in the clouds, so clear that individual faces could be ascertained.[243] The meta-theatrical placement of the scene on the ledge increased the sense that wilderness could be bound safely within the self-limiting stages of the natural and built worlds. This captured wilderness was placed onstage through the artists' brushes and Dunlap's stage directions: the sunrise from the Mountain House was indeed sublime, and performed nightly through the specific effect within the theatre.

While the weather provided a place for imaginative stagecraft to flourish, it was an actor who brought the West onstage. Leather-Stocking's appearance was dramatic:

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[242] William Bartlett's "View from the Mountain House" (1836) provides a sense of *The Trip's* scenery for Act III. The huge hotel floats over the ledge, and tiny figures of bonneted women and well-dressed men point towards the Hudson River. Bartlett was an English engraver who traveled the United States in the 1830s recording scenic views. In "Mountain House," the openness of the view was breathtaking, especially for people who had never been more than a story or two above Manhattan's streets. Bartlett was known for his "antique" themes: scenes with ancient buildings and ruins. He must have been somewhat frustrated by the sparkling new Catskill Mountain House. Still, as tiny as the humans appear in his painting, they represent the domination of the wilderness. Leather-Stocking would have looked ludicrous inserted into this scene, and he probably did onstage.

[243] Charles Rockwell. *The Catskill Mountains and the Region Around (*New York: Taintor Brothers, 1873), 244. Another description of the atmospheric phenomena appeared in "Reflections in the Clouds in the Catskills, near the Mountain House" in *American Journal of Arts and Science* (New Haven: Printed by the Editors, Vol. XVI, 1858), 298.

his clothing indicated “wilderness” at once, and his lines indicated a somewhat melodramatic despair: “All changed! The beasts of the forest all gone! What is worth living for here, now! All spoilt! All spoilt!” These are Dunlap’s words, not Cooper’s and Leather-Stocking continues several lines later in the same vein, crying “What’s worth living for, here? I am going far west, with the deer and the Indians; “I thought I would look once more at the Catskills, for old acquaintance sake. But all is spoilt---the settlers spoil all!” Although Cooper’s attitude toward Leather-Stocking was one of reverence and melancholy – a cry of “ubi sunt” in the wilderness– Dunlap’s attitude is decidedly more lighthearted. It would make little sense to bring a farce to a grinding halt with a pensive and downhearted backwoodsman, and Dunlap nimbly avoids that. Amelia and Wentworth are amazed by Leather-Stocking, and they listen to his life’s story until Leather-Stocking describes saving a woman from a “painter.”

> Leather-Stocking
> I’ll guide you, and help your delicate limbs over the rough and wet places, although I am rough myself. On that spot I speak of, I once saved a beautiful woman, like you, from the spring of a painter.
>
> Amelia
> A painter?
>
> Wentworth
> One of those foolish fellows, I suppose, who go about, to places like this, climbing precipices, at the risk of their necks, with port folios and three legged stools and pencils, to make sketches of what they call fine scenery. Ha! Wasn’t it?
>
> Leather-Stocking
> Anan?
>
> Wentworth
> What did you do with the painter?
>
> Leather-Stocking
> I shot him.

Amelia

Shot him!

Leather-Stocking

I never miss my aim.

Wentworth

Poor devil---but it served him right. What do people thrust themselves into harm's way for, when they should be safe at home?

Leather-Stocking

He was at home. It was the young woman who was abroad.

Wentworth

The painter was not an Englishman, then?

Leather-Stocking

Anan?

Wentworth

Was he a native?

Leather-Stocking

No doubt---and the biggest I ever saw.

Amelia

And you shot him?

Leather-Stocking

Just as he was going to spring on the gal.

Wentworth

I always had a bad opinion of those vagabond sketching blades.

Amelia

And you saved her?

Leather-Stocking

She didn't see the creater, and he didn't see me---I leveled just over her shoulder, and hit him between the eyes. Chuckling. He! he--- He roll'd down the rock, harmless as a lamb---the gal was skeart---but I saved her!---I wore the creater's skin ever since.

Amelia

Horrid!---His skin!

Wentworth

The painter's skin?

Leather-Stocking
This coat is made of it.

Cooper had nothing to do with this sketch: it is pure Dunlap, with wily, sly digs at his artist friends, and an excellent build to a punchline.[244] His response to Leather-Stocking is less worshipful than Cooper's and he was appealing to the audience's need for novelty, as well as to their views of the future. The Young Republic had little time for war veterans. Wetmore joked about his "Old Continental" and Paulding would write a novel with that title in 1846, remembering but gently mocking those who survived the Revolution.[245] Although Dunlap was more gentle with the elderly Bumppo than Wetmore was with his Continental, Dunlap used Leather-Stocking to represent the wilderness as conquerable artifact of the past.

The cast included "Mr. Forbes" as Leather-Stocking. William C. Forbes was in his early twenties at the time of *A Trip*. Described by Noah Ludlow as a man of medium height, with light hair, blue eyes and a less than forceful delivery, Forbes styled himself a tragedian.[246] As Leather-Stocking, he would have seemed out of place within the farce, a

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[244] Dunlap prefigured by fifty years (1880) William Schwenk Gilbert's *The Pirates of Penzance*, where misunderstanding between the pirates and their captives revolves around the words "orphan" and "often."

[245] James Kirke Paulding, *The Old Continental or The Price of Liberty* (New York: Paine and Burgess, 1846). Revolutionary War veterans in particular were badly treated; many did not receive pensions until 49 years *after* the War.

[246] Noah Ludlow, *Dramatic Life As I Found It* (St. Louis: G. I. Jones & Co., 1880), 398. There is no way of knowing how Forbes portrayed Leather-Stocking onstage, but it is telling that while reviews of *A Trip* note the main characters and the plot, there is only a

figure of fun within the fun. Dunlap would not have inserted serious drama, but he would have encouraged the tragic to appear ludicrous.

The comic "painter" scene was farce, but Leather-Stocking had a more subtle role within the play: he reassured the audience that the wilderness was under control and no more a threat:

> Amelia
> It must have been a melancholy life. To roam over these hills, and look upon this beautiful stream below, without a soul to speak to.
>
> Leather-Stocking
> Melancholy – no, young woman! It was cheerful. When the trees began to be kiver'd with leaves, and the ice was out of the river; when the birds came back from the south, and all nater lifted its song to its Maker – think you not that the hunter's thanksgiving went up to Heaven with the song of all around him?
>
> Amelia
> Oh yes---but he was alone---but now , see the smoke rising from a thousand habitations, and the fields covered with grain and fruit, for a thousand happy families.

"Alone" is key to Amelia' description, revealing how "civilization" saw the west/wilderness, a place where control was lost, reliance was self-imposed and families must have been unhappy. If Dunlap was unfamiliar with dispatches made by Western travelers, explorers and ministers (such as John Peck), a few audience members could have been aware of Timothy Flint's well-received Recollections of the Last Ten Years in the Mississippi Valley.[247] Flint's descriptions of rough living, roisterous behaviors, and difficult economic conditions among the settlers could only reinforce the perception of the frontier and wilderness as places to be improved by those fortunate enough to live in

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mention of Leather-Stocking, and no details about how Forbes and Leather-Stocking were accepted by the audience.

[247] As will be seen, James Kirke Paulding found Flint an excellent resource.

the safely settled East. That, and the fact one of the popular sayings of the time was that the Sabbath had never crossed the Mississippi River and never would.[248]

Despite Dunlap's bias towards Civilization, he was a playwright, and placed his characters in situations ripe for humor. The language of the frontier was as unclear to "civilized" folks as their love of crowds was to Leather-Stocking. Dunlap uses this to comic effect with Leather-Stocking's query "Anan" and Amelia's overwrought response, of artistic ecstasy:

> Leather-Stocking
> It's a drop for old Hudson. I've sat on the shelving rock many a long hour, and watched the bubbles as they shot by me, and thought how long it would be before that very water would be under the bottom of a vessel and tossing in the salt sea.
>
> Amelia
> And then raised to the clouds, and descending on the mountain top again. So turns the great wheel of nature! In one immutable round of mutation! One unchanging circle of incessant change!
>
> Leather-Stocking
> Anan?
>
> Amelia
> O! I am impatient to see the place you have so eloquently described.
>
> Wentworth
> After breakfast. [249]

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[248] John Mason Peck, 123.

[249] Warren S. Walker, "Natty Bumppo's 'Anan,'" *American Speech* 28. no. 4 1953, 309. Walker notes that Cooper most likely borrowed "anan" from nautical speech, where it indicated that the listener did not understand a command. ("Raise the anchor, sailor!" "Anan [what did you say], sir?") Wentworth's response is perfectly timed comedy. Cooper's Leatherstocking was unlettered: "I have never read a book in my life," said Leather-stocking, "and how should a man who has lived in towns and schools know anything about the wonders of the woods." Civilization was literate; the wilderness was not. Ironically, while Leatherstocking considered himself a simple, unschooled man, Cooper had him spout lush descriptions of the land and philosophy and then lapse into his laconic "Anan." This caused Mark Twain to growl in his essay "Fenimore Cooper's

Historian Kenneth Myers suggests that James Fenimore Cooper's narrative style was not only descriptive, but educational: it demonstrated to people how they might perceive the wilderness.[250] Cooper's Leatherstocking was a man of destiny, carrying the seeds of his own destruction: he will be followed into his beloved wilderness by the "civilized." Leather-stocking's exit meant far more for the onstage West than is first evident – surrounded as he was by tourists, this Leather-Stocking is diminished, dismissed, a figure of fun, the servant of civilization, not the master of the wilderness. Cooper's words on the page resound with sadness, but onstage the exit of an actor merely makes way for farewell applause, and the entrance of others. *A Trip to Niagara* reassured the audience that there was no need to understand the West, no need to consider what was being lost in the way of culture, or even landscape, as the forests gave way to the plow. Dunlap's Leather-Stocking believes civilization has ruined things and says he will head "away to the woods and the prairie and the grave" and following the stage directions, "Goes off slowly." This is hardly a buoyant pioneer looking forward to the next mountain or adventure, but a defeated man forced deeper and deeper into the remains of wilderness not his.[251] Leatherstocking may flee, but civilization is following close on his heels. The

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Literary Offenses," (http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/projects/rissetto/offense.html, accessed November 9, 2009) "when a personage talks like an illustrated, gilt-edged tree-calf, hand-tooled seven-dollar *Friendship's Offering* in the beginning of a paragraph, he shall not talk like a negro minstrel at the end of it."

[250] Kenneth Myers. *The Catskills: Painters, Writers, and Tourists in the Mountains 1820-1895*. Yonkers (NY: The Hudson River Museum of Westchester, 1987), 36.

[251] While beyond the scope of this study, the idea of a "personal" wilderness is clearly indicated by Leather-Stocking's statements. He knows and loves the Catskills and western New York, but now he is pushed out into Pennsylvania, Ohio and nearer to the trans-Mississippi wilderness. Fauna, geology, flora, weather: all will be different enough

last line in The Pioneers calls Leatherstocking "the foremost in that band of pioneers who are opening the way for the march of the nation across the continent." He is "to open the way," but for what? The destruction of what he loves most. Dunlap's script was far more than a background for the moving panorama: in it, Dunlap offers the earliest theatrical depiction of manifest destiny, if not by name, then in spirit.

A Trip to Niagara provides a singular example of how Americans viewed their physical, natural world and their place within that world. Dunlap's characters emphasized the freshness, the newness of America, unscarred by the architectural reminders of failure and abandonment so common in Europe. The land was beautiful and wild, but in Dunlap's depiction, it must be trimmed and cleared and pruned so that it grew straight and strong. *A Trip* was not only a voyage up the Hudson, but a voyage through the stages of civilization on the land, from wilderness on the river to an image of neat gardens at the Mountain House and finally back to wilderness again as Leather-Stocking moves West. The subjugation of the land was a prominent theme among Hudson River painters, and Dunlap took it to heart.[252] His was a unique view: as both artist and author, Dunlap

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to challenge the old pioneer and he removes slowly to the new world. In contrast, Daniel Boone was associated with an active move into a new wilderness, leading the way, over mountain passes, across forests, down rivers. Boone – if not the inspiration for Leatherstocking, at least a model of a frontier man – is generally credited with moving to Missouri because he could see his neighbor's chimney; in fact, Boone had lost his land to speculators and been badly treated by the state of Kentucky. Boone, unlike Leather-Stocking, understood that he could enter and leave the wilderness at will and did so without bitterness. Perhaps this adjustment to two worlds is why Boone was never the hero of a nineteenth century play: he did not fight against the wilderness and therefore, provided no dramatic contrast or conflict.

[252] Trewin Coppplestone, *The Hudson River School* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1999), 36-27. During the early 1830s, Thomas Cole painted *The Course of Empire*, a series depicting the growth of civilization from wilderness to the height of civilized development, through war, and finally, back to wilderness.

controlled his image of the West through words and imagination as well as through paint and canvas. He did not physically create the panorama, but he imagined it, and his characters react to it as does the audience, the real and fictional joined in a meta-theatrical voyage of discovery. Both groups are meant to be awed by the landscape and encouraged to support the domination and control of the wilderness. Dunlap's Leather-Stocking, for Cooper's creation has been subsumed by the stage, is a figure of the past. He is now the story keeper, and no longer the story maker. For the Knickerbockers and Dunlap, Leather-Stocking is easily changed from frontier adventurer into a figure of fun, old fashioned and outdated. He inhabits a land that will soon be dominated by man, and not the reverse. In *A Trip to Niagara*, a new frontier is created daily as settlers push west, wilderness is disposable and the West imagined as a future Eden once it comes under the domination of plow and flower garden.

Chapter 5 – Paulding's Lion Comes East

Of the three plays considered here, the best known is James Kirke Paulding's *The Lion of the West* or *The Kentuckian*. Lion was a theatre fixture for three decades and provided a star vehicle for an internationally-acclaimed actor, James Hackett. Lion was preceded by two plays which offered very different windows into the West. *The Pedlar* presented the West as experienced and translated by a member of the trans-Mississippi community through the concrete images, characters and language of daily life. *A Trip to Niagara* revealed the West as an imagined place which needed to be cultivated and controlled as a New World extension of eastern seaboard mentality. The last in this triumvirate was *The Lion of the West*, in which the West returned to the East and provided a reflexive view back across the Mississippi, through the political lens of Jacksonian America.

First produced in 1831, Lion was a popular hit for more than two decades, and then disappeared from view. The script was lost for a century: Paulding's son and literary executor, William, could not locate it among his father's papers, and no copy was to be found in American libraries or archives. After years of detective work by scholar James Tidwell, in 1951 the script was located in the Lord Chamberlain's Office, London.[253] The Tidwell playscript has become a mainstay of theatre history studies, and over the past fifty years, scholars have continued to examine its "importance in the

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[253] James Tidwell, ed. *The Lion of the West: A Farce in Two Acts by James Kirke Paulding* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1954), 10. As Tidwell notes, the Finnish scholar Nils Erik Enkvist, had rediscovered the play at the same time.

history of the American drama."[254] Before Uncle Tom's Cabin, Lion was the most popular play in America. It has been mistakenly identified as the first play to depict the West of the Young Republic as well as the first to star a backwoods roarer. Some scholars posit that playwright James Kirke Paulding wrote Lion to emphasize American characters and themes, and to propagate a native theatre.[255] Others claim that Lion was used by the Whig party in their political maneuverings.[256]

While Lion certainly popularized the theatrical theme of American drama, this study has shown that the play was essentially the last of three to introduce the stage West and less an artistic innovator than a popular phenomenon. However, one aspect of *Lion*'s history has often been misinterpreted or overlooked: that the play's conception, writing, and production were meant to sway the outcome of a national election by personifying the American West. Gary Richardson has noted that "The popularity of *The Lion of the West* at the height of Jacksonian power presents an interesting instance of the ways in which the popular stage adapted itself to changing political and social circumstances by providing popular audiences the opportunity to examine their new champions in action."[257] But the play did more than allow audiences to watch heroes: *Lion* was used to subvert the political agenda of one party and ensure a win for the other. An examination

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[254] Tidwell, 9.
[255] Nelson F. Adkins, "James K. Paulding's *Lion of the West*," *American Literature*, vol. 3, no. 3, Nov. 1931, 249-258; Floyd C. Watkins, "James Kirke Paulding's Early Ring-Tailed Roarer," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* (Vol. XV, no. 3), 183-187; Francis Hodge, "Biography of a Lost Play: *Lion of the West*," *Theatre Annual* (Vol. 7, 1954), 48-61. As recently as 2000, Donald. R. Anderson in "The West of Frederick Jackson Turner in Three American Plays," *Journal of American and Comparative* Cultures 2000 23(3): 89-97, calls Wildfire the "prototypical ring-tailed roarer."
[256] William C. Davis, *Three Roads to the Alamo* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999), 312-319.
[257] Gary Richardson, "Plays and Playwrights: 1800-1865," in *The Cambridge History of American Theatre*, ed. Donald Wilmeth and Christopher Bigsby (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 275.

of the playwright's history, the script and characters of *Lion* reveals how the West was presented to the American public as a breeding ground for singular language and characters. An examination of the play's social and political setting in the context of plot, character and language reveals that *Lion of the West* played a heretofore ignored role as delineator and definer of the trans-Mississippi West and its denizens in popular culture and politics.

Biography of James Kirke Paulding

James Kirke Paulding was born in 1778 in the upstate village of Great Nine Partners, Dutchess County, New York.[258] His father, William, provided financial support to the struggling colonies during the Revolution, but was repaid in worthless Continental dollars and then jailed for debt. Paulding family history recalled a grandfather who was severely injured and left mentally disabled after being struck by British soldiers when he would not call out "God Save the King."[259] Young Paulding watched his father's struggles, and blamed the recent war: his hatred of the British would color his writings for decades. He received little formal education as a youth; one of the few joys Paulding recalled was reading Oliver Goldsmith's The Citizen of the World, which he credited with helping shape his writing style.[260] The early death of Paulding's father resulted in severe poverty for the family and this financial predicament forced a move to Manhattan,

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[258] Philip H. Smith, *General History of Duchess County from 1609 to 1876 Inclusive* (Pawling, NY: by author, 1877), 42. The region East of the Hudson River was part of the Little Nine Partners Patent, awarded in 1706 to nine "patroons" or patrons.

[259] Larry J. Reynolds, *James Kirke Paulding* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984), 2.

[260] Reynolds, 4.

where he worked for the city of New York and boarded with his sister and brother-in-law, Julia and William Irving.[261] Paulding became close friends with the youngest Irving brother, the redoubtable Washington, and the two young men spent much time exploring the Hudson River Valley and New Jersey.[262]

When Paulding was 29 years old, he, William and Washington Irving published a collection of satirical and humorous essays and reviews under the title Salmagundi, an old cookery word meaning a spicy dish of varied ingredients. The articles used humor, history, and satire to poke fun at contemporary politics and community foibles, and the journal was an immediate success. Irving eventually became a full-time author, but Paulding spent much of his life in government service, winning a reputation as a defender of United States policy and an enemy of Great Britain.

Paulding was a prolific author, writing essays, reviews, short stories, novels, satires, and several dramas.[263] His best known works depicted the early days of white

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[261] Reynolds, 4. Reynolds notes the Paulding family included a cousin responsible, in part, for aiding in the capture of Major John André, the British spy who had enticed Benedict Arnold to turn traitor. André became the subject in 1798 of the eponymous play by William Dunlap. James's elder brother, William, served as New York City's mayor in 1824-26.

[262] James Grant Wilson, *The Memorial History of the City of New-York from Its First Settlement to the Year 1892*, vol. 2 (New-York History Co.: New York, 1893), 215-16. The Irving brothers Washington and William, along with James K. Paulding, created a literary "society" dubbed The Lads of Kilkenny, or The Nine Worthies, or the Ancient Club of New York. Most of the "lads" enjoyed "madcap pranks and juvenile orgies" including fishing, practical jokes and hidden stores of chilled cider, rum and gin. The Lads were one of several private clubs that encouraged cultural discussion along with food; James Fenimore Cooper founded The Bread and Cheese Club, Prosper Montgomery Wetmore belonged to The Friendly Club. Many of these men became authors in the Knickerbocker vein.

settlement, beginning with *Koningsmarke*, a popular novel which depicted Blacks and Indians with some sympathy.[264] *The Dutchman's Fireside* was inspired by the memoirs of Mrs. Anne Grant, a Scotswoman who lived near Albany before the American Revolution and *Fireside* reflected the land and cultures of the Hudson Valley. *Westward Ho!* followed a family moving from Virginia to Kentucky. Paulding served as Secretary of the Navy under President Martin Van Buren. As an admirer of Andrew Jackson, Paulding later supported states' rights (and therefore, the right to choose for, or against, slavery), and the expansion of American settlement across the continent. He died in 1860 and, with few exceptions, his work has been forgotten by the general reading public.

Paulding was a well-known author by the time he composed *The Lion of the West*. His success and fame rested on his novels, but he also published diatribes against the British, including *The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan* (1812), *A Sketch of Old England by a New England Man* (1822) and *John Bull in America or the New Munchausen* (1825). Americans were extremely sensitive about their "experiment" in democracy: they knew the country was unsettled and "uncivilized," filled with people who worked at manual labor, and lacking the artworks and monuments of the old country such as mossy tombs, decaying castles, ancient bridges and magical wells.[265] The War of

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[263] Reynolds, 94. Paulding wrote two published plays, *The Bucktails* and *Lion of the West*, and two unpublished plays, *Fanaticism and Hypocrisy* and *Sea Nymph* which are currently lost.

[264] The novel also contained "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. Where is the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?" Paulding borrowed the rhyme from a British text, but is often credited as the originator.

[265] Amelia Peck, "Alexander Jackson Davis (1803–1892)", in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000) http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/davs/hd_davs.htm (October 2004). This gap in

1812 had nearly resulted in the United States (or a good part of it) returning to England's rule, so any criticism of the new American culture was a raw reminder that the country had far to go. Perhaps the criticism most despised by Paulding was the writing genre that involved a relatively short trip to America by an educated European, followed by a book about the experience.[266] No matter if a writer said something honest but negative, the writer could be vilified and dismissed as an imbecile who missed seeing and acknowledging the true, good heart of all Americans. William Dunlap addressed this with humor and gentle sarcasm in *A Trip to Niagara*, but it remained for James Kirke Paulding to respond in a more full-blooded style. Paulding had been developing his own theories about American theatre, which he published in 1827.[267] He was an advocate for an American theatre, with American topics. As a novelist who evoked the Eastern settlements in his work, Paulding understood the importance of localized setting and character for theatre, commenting that "There is probably no country in the world, which affords more numerous and distinct characters than the United States." He continued

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ancient monuments was solved somewhat by the introduction of the Gothic aesthetic, with its created ruins and vistas. Beginning in the 1830s, Alexander Jackson Davis was an architect and proponent of the American Gothic Revival. Born in Manhattan, Davis befriended painters and writers of the era, including Rembrandt Peale. It was Peale who traveled to the Yellowstone River with Stephen Long in 1819, and the expedition was accompanied by the 6th Rifle Corps, with Captain Alphonso Wetmore as paymaster. Davis was also involved in the theatre world, and may have contributed scene paintings early in his career.

[266] Among the English who published travel accounts by the early 1830s were William Cobbett, Basil Hall, and Frances Trollope. Later authors included Fanny Kemble, who took up the cause of slavery, and Charles Dickens, who detested much that was American. Eventually, Americans got their revenge through the writings of Sam Clemens: *Innocents Abroad*, *A Tramp Abroad*, and *Following the Equator*.

[267] James K. Paulding, "American Drama," *The American Quarterly Review* (June 1827), 331.

> The want of a National Drama, is the first thing that strikes us in this inquiry. By a national drama, we mean, not merely a class of dramatic productions written by Americans, but one appealing directly to the national feelings; founded upon domestic incidents – illustrating or satirizing domestic manners – and, above all, displaying a generous chivalry in the maintenance and vindication of those great and illustrious peculiarities of situation and character, by which we are distinguished from all other nations. [268]

Paulding wanted to foster a theatre that emphasized national character, national glory and love of country. He attended theatre with the Irvings for many years, developed a critic's eye and ear and collected playscripts: "We have actually in our possession, nearly sixty American dramas, consisting of tragedies, comedies, operas, serious and comic, melo-dramas and farces, besides others that baffle all our attempts at 'codification.'"[269] He saw that American theatre had become a pipeline for European writers and actors, and that the new "star" system resulted in productions that often were nothing more than a series of monologues by a visiting thespian. Paulding detested the overuse of stage effects he called "pasteboard and trumpery," but he held his highest disdain for the people most directly responsible for theatre: actors/managers and playwrights. The nineteenth century represented the bridge between acting techniques accumulated during the previous three centuries, and a more natural way of presenting onstage. Paulding would have seen many examples of the "teapot school" and "windmill school" of acting: in the former, actors would take an elegant pose, prop hand on hip,

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[268] Ibid.

[269] Ibid, 332.

and gesture with the "spout;" in the latter, they would stand in place, swinging, heaving and waving in the storm of emotion.[270] He believed that:

> Wit, whim, and elegant badinage require far more talent in a performer than ranting, mouthing, starting and slapping the stomach; and hence it has arisen, that vulgar writers have too often, of late, usurped the drama; vulgar actors the stage; and, as a natural consequence, vulgar audiences have abounded in the theatres."[271]

Paulding proposed that American theatre abandon the star system, offer well-written plays and eliminate the spectacles and "perpetual novelty." This, he believed, would cause the "more enlightened portions of society" to return to theatre; and as a consequence, the lower classes would follow and be raised up as well. Of course, the "vulgar audiences," as Frances Trollope noted, needed to stop spitting tobacco juice, reeking of whiskey and onions, talking loudly and arguing during the scenes, wearing their hats (men, not women) while seated, sitting on the box or pit railings, eating and throwing shells and rinds into the orchestra and beating on the balustrade with sticks as a show of approbation for the performers.[272] Mrs. Trollope was not alone*: The North American Magazine* published an article entitled "Evening at Saint's," written as a script. The dialogue was among several men about town, including "Rattle Newstyle" who complains:

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[270] Alan S. Downer, "Players and the Painted Stage" *PMLA* 61, No. 2 (Jun., 1946), 522-576.

[271] Paulding, "American Drama," 333. Paulding's concern over vulgarity was not about stage characters, but about the viewers and the performers. As will be seen, a vulgar character with a heart of gold is not the same as a drunken actor or tobacco-spitting audience member.

[272] Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London: Whittaker, Treacher, and Co., 1832; reprint, New York: Knopf, 1949) 133. Of course, the British authors conveniently forgot that it took a century for Restoration loucheness to wear off in *their* theatres.

> "And when we go to the theatre, havn't we the delightful startling sounds of slamming the box doors, in the midst of some of the finest scenes, the rattle and running out of one box into another, striding over the seats and standing on them, to show our rise and progress? Don't the critics sometimes hear a speech with their backs to the stage, and report progress in a flaming puff of two lines? Call you not this amusement?" To which Jonathan Doolittle replies "By gosh! It is, and I hate settin still; I want to look about and see what folks are doin; that's all the playhouse is good for ; and I a'nt alone in that – I guess we go to church for purty much the same thing."[273]

The West was no better at the time: The Western Luminary reported December 5, 1827 on the following:

> The theatre at Nashville is considered a public nuisance…Mrs. Russell [the actress] it is said, was frightened into hysterics by the tremendous whopping of a good natured gentleman from the western district, and the horrible yelling of several persons from the other side of the Cumberland mountains. The cry of Indians and Fire! Was raised, the bells rang, and the volunteer companies paraded….It turned out that some honorable gentleman who had never been in Drury Lane or Castle Garden, had only been applauding Mr. Caldwell's superior performance. "Well done, Red Jacket," cried one – Huzza my tiger! cried another – Wake snakes! cried a third.[274]

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[273] Joyce Henry, "Five More Essays by James Kirke Paulding?" *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 66 (1972), 310-321. Paulding wrote these sketches in 1832, and they appeared in the *New-York Mirror* during July and August. The last essay contains a satire on Mrs. Trollope and the theatre – portraying her as a foolish dupe who swallows every tall tale she hears. Paulding claimed that the essays were "Found among some loose papers accidentally left at her lodgings," a tongue-in-cheek reference to Washington Irving's introduction to the *Sketch Book.* Paulding pokes enormous fun at Trollope's *Domestic Manners*, particularly in the section about theatre. "All their ladies dress in the most tasteless and extravagant style, and yet betray the most incontrovertible evidences of vulgarity, sitting on the banisters with their backs to the stage, between the acts, eating Carolina potatoes, and drinking ginger pop. This is done every night at the Park, and some good-society females smoke "long nines" with a degree of audacious ease and familiarity that are really shocking." *New York Mirror,* August 12, 1832, 6.

[274] "Mr. Caldwell" was James Caldwell, the father of theatre in the Mississippi River valley, as well as the "illuminator" of New Orleans, for it was he who introduced gas lighting to the city.

Paulding was conservative in thought, writing and politics, but he was passionate about theatre and canny in the ways of how theatre worked.[275] A theorist, he was also a practical artist: he had written an unproduced play called *The Bucktails or Americans in England* just after the War of 1812. He was also aware of friend Washington Irving's theatrical success in Europe.[276] So when James Hackett announced a contest prize of $250 (later raised to $300) on April 24, 1830 in the *New York Evening Post* for a play to highlight "the manners and peculiarities of our country and the numerous subjects and incidents connected with its history," Paulding appeared to be a perfect fit. A prize of $300 was no mean inducement: the average wage of skilled laborers and artisans in 1830 was approximately $1.37 per day.[277]

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[275] Paulding's conservatism led him to support states' rights and therefore, slavery. A conservative, as Secretary of the Navy he balked at changing from sail to steam, calling steamships "sea monsters."

[276] Gerald Bordman and Thomas S. Hischak, "Charles the Second; or, The Merry Monarch," *The Oxford Companion to American Theatre* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 232. John Howard Payne – actor, songwriter, playwright – and Washington Irving co-authored *Charles the Second*, which ran at Covent Garden in 1824. The play was adapted from an earlier work, but Irving added his own touches, including a bumbling captain and a ribald song which is never quite completed by the singer: "And his crew of Bigbreeches, Those Dutch sons of _____." Paulding's penchant for imitating Irving was demonstrated by his revival of *Salmagundi* after the departure of the Irvings, a move that failed. Paulding was later mocked by Nathaniel Parker Willis as the jackal to Irving's lion, a vicious attack from a nasty piece of literary pretension, but in truth, Paulding often mimicked his friend's work.

[277] Donald R. Adams, Jr. ,"Wage Rates in the Early National Period: Philadelphia, 1785-1830," *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Sep., 1968), pp. 404-426.

It is not known when Paulding decided to enter the contest, but it appears he did so after Hackett approached him with details not included in the advertisement. According to Paulding's son:

> Sometime in the year 1830, Mr. James H. Hackett, the Falstaff of this century, and then known as a rising American comedian, offered a prize of three hundred dollars for "an original comedy whereof an American should be the leading character." For this prize, he induced Mr. Paulding to compete, suggesting, as I learned from himself, the title of drama and hero; viz:, "*The Lion of the West*" and "Nimrod Wildfire." The drama was announced by the committee, composed of William Cullen-Bryant, Fitz-Greene Halleck and Prosper Wetmore, the best offered for their consideration.[278]

Hackett had recently starred in another play he had commissioned, *The Times: or Life in New York*, and it appears he asked Paulding to reshape *Times* into a new play with a western theme.[279] Two plays were submitted to this contest: *Lion* and *The Moderns or A Trip to the Springs*. Only an actor's side exists for the *Moderns*, and a partial one at that. Hackett staged *The Moderns* in late May, 1831, and it was acknowledged as "Hackett's

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[278] William Paulding, *Literary Life of James Kirke Paulding* (New York: Charles Scribner and Company, 1867), 218. Note that the judges were personal friends – or at the very least, social acquaintances - of Paulding. James Henry Hackett was among the foremost American actors of the nineteenth century. Born in Manhattan in 1800, as a young man he began the study of law, married an actress and became a merchant. Financial reverses sent him to the stage as a career, and his rise to fame was followed by an acting career that continued until the Civil War. Like Paulding, Hackett believed in the development of an American dramatic literature.

[279] Hodge, facing 106. Play contests were one way for a performer to gain new material for the competitive theatre world. The plays were purely "work for hire," giving the actor complete and permanent control over the material. *Lion* appeared to mirror *The Times* through characters including wealthy New Yorkers, pompous English characters, a Black dandy and the Yankee "Industrious Doolittle," Hackett's role. Although neither script – *Times* or *Lion* – survives, it is clear that Hackett reused, recrafted and expanded materials from play to play.

new prize comedy" and offered as the benefit for Mrs. Hackett.[280] The play's author is a mystery: it was credited to "a gentleman of New York." Some scholars theorize that the "gentleman" was Augustus Stone, a playwright to whom Hackett turned for the first rewrite of *Lion*. But this suggestion seems at odds with Stone's tendency towards formalized and serious language, not to say his complete lack of humor. *The Moderns* contains vernacular language, full of New England-isms ("Cheese and rice!" "A pumpkin for a head!") and a scene in which a Yankee schoolteacher (and music instructor) faces off against his students with apples and peas. The schoolteacher has designs on a young lady, Miss Tabby Tittipup, and is somewhat awed by country life in "York." The teacher also jokes about writing an opera.

Could it have been possible that Paulding wrote *Moderns* as well as *Lion*? He used a character named "Tippy Tittipup" the "king of the dandies" in *Salmagund*i (second series) and Alderman Flattenbarrack's name in *Moderns* was borrowed from the Dutch "verlattenberg" ("old hill"), an older name for Manhattan's Exchange Street, located nearby Paulding's home at State Street.[281] Paulding was often "inspired" by friends' writings: Washington Irving used "a gentleman of New York" as a pseudonym. And Irving must be considered a possibility for the authorship of *Moderns*. The echoes of schoolteacher Ichabod Crane are strong in the play, and Irving completed at least two opera libretti in the 1820s as well as the play *The Merry Monarch* in partnership with John Howard Payne. One character in Moderns pokes fun at the operatic practice of

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[280] *Atkinson's Saturday Evening Post*, May 28, 3.

[281] *New York in Literature* (Primavera Press, 19), 9.

having a "dying" character sing for several minutes, a conceit that Irving used in the first series of Salmagundi. Irving was in London during the period of Hackett's contest, but it would have been possible for him to submit a manuscript. While the mystery of the "New York gentleman" remains, Irving and Paulding must be considered among the proposed solutions.

The winner of Hackett's play competition was not announced until October, so Paulding may have worked on *Lion* for several months.[282] Hackett's choice of title and character would prove to be immensely important to the success of the play, as well as to the image of the West. The title was both formal and popular: a lion represented strength and power, while to lionize someone was to treat him as a celebrity.[283] The term was not new: Rochester was nicknamed The Young *Lion of the West* in the 1820s. When the Erie Canal opened in 1825, canal boats traveled from Buffalo to Manhattan in celebration. One of the boats was named The Young *Lion of the West*: it carried government bureaucrats, along with wolves and raccoons, meant to represent the triumph of American ingenuity over the once-unconquerable natural world.[284] The popular 1828 song, "Jim Crow" also included a mention of the "lion":

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[282] Vera Jiji, *A Handbook of Source Materials on The Lion of the West* (Brooklyn: Humanities Institute, Brooklyn College, 1983), 4.

[283]Oxford English Dictionary, 3rd ed., http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/display/50133810?keytype=ref&ijkey=YwKrZLgLOHRfA, accessed July 30, 2009. A "lion" (celebrity) descended from the tradition of visiting the lion house at the Tower of London's Royal Menagerie. The exotic animals later represented anything new and popular.

[284] Cowdrey, S., et al. *Report of Alderman Cowdrey, Alderman Webb, Mr. Assistant Agnew and Mr. Assistant Hedden*. New York: Committee of the Common Council, 1825. Cowdrey notes that Charles Rhind was a representative of the New York Marine

I wip de lion ob de west, I eat de alligator;
I put more water in my mouf, den boil ten load ob ’tator.
De way dey bake de hoe cake, Virginny nebber tire;
Dey put de doe upon de foot, an’ stick’em in de fire. [285]

Nimrod Wildfire was also aptly named and the symbolism easily understood by audiences of the day. “Nimrod” was a mighty hunter, descended from Noah and founder of the Babylonian culture. He was powerful, awesome, and had a touch of the god in him. The surname “Wildfire” was even more descriptive: hot, blazing, fast moving, furious, sending people, animals, and things flying in confusion before it. Wildfires had both destructive and regenerative powers: Native Americans and emigrants knew that burnt over prairie grew back healthy and strong, even as the wildfire was one of the most fearsome experiences in the West. Knock down a wildfire with wet feed sacks and another flame springs up tall and strong, ripping and tearing its way through the tinder-dry grasses. Destroy and reclaim – Wildfire was certainly a name worthy of an American stage character.[286]

Department for the opening of the Erie Canal. Rhind report states “The *Young Lion of the West*, was loaded with flour in half-barrels, butter, apples, &c. and had on board a quantity of cedar tubs and pails, of very elegant workmanship, manufactured in a peculiar manner, at a new establishment in Rochester, and some brooms of a superior quality; and had on deck a collection of wolves, foxes, raccoons, and other living animals of the forest.”

[285] Quoted in C. Vann Woodward and William S. McFeely, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, 7.) There were dozens of verses that might be sung to the tune; this version includes both Wetmore’s “old Virginny never tire” as well as a backwoods boast. It is interesting to note that the stage debut of another American stage icon came during “Jim Crow.” Joseph Jefferson III, known for his adult portrayal of Rip Van Winkle which he “inherited” from James Hackett was three-years old in 1832. During one performance in Washington, T. D. “Daddy” Rice opened a large satchel and out leaped Jefferson in blackface to mimic Rice’s performance.

Paulding had a title and a character courtesy of James Hackett, and now he needed to fill those shoes. Not long after Hackett announced the contest, Paulding wrote to artist John Jarvis:

> My good friend
> I called to return your visit in the first place, and want to impress upon you the obligation You will confer upon me, by furnishing me with, a few sketches, short stories & incidents, of Kentucky or Tennessee manners, and especially some of their peculiar phrases & comparisons. If you can add, or invent a few ludicrous Scenes of Col. Crockett at Washington, You will be sure of my everlasting gratitude. "D—n You," as the Kentucks say.
> Yours very truly
> J K Paulding[287]

Jarvis was a popular painter and raconteur who spent much time in Washington where he had many portrait clients, including Andrew Jackson. Paulding's specific request for "ludicrous scenes of Col. Crockett at Washington" was the first clue to what Paulding had in mind. By the December 4, 1830 issue of *The New-York Mirror* there was little doubt:

> Prize comedy – the premium offered by Mr. Hackett last spring for the best comedy which should represent some of our prominent national characteristics, has elicited talents of the very first order. Messrs. Halleck, Bryant, Brooks, Lawson, Wetmore and Leggett were the committee appointed to examine the several pieces written on the occasion, and to adjudge the prize…James K. Paulding was the successful candidate, a gentleman whose honourable and patriotic notices in entering the lists of competitions cannot be too highly appreciated. His established reputation and great popularity placed him above the reach of the ordinary incentives which would

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[286] Of course, a tornado – or Devil Wind as Indians called the storms – might have served as a guiding image and name for an American hero. But since boasters – including Davy Crockett – would soon tell of lassoing tornadoes and going for rides across the plains, perhaps only Wildfire was unconquerable.

[287] Ralph M. Aderman, ed., *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), 136. John Wesley Jarvis was an eccentric painter and illustrator known for his work on Washington Irving's books and stories.

> impel authors of minor note. It was a noble ambition to second the efforts of our indigenous comedian in laying the foundation for a national drama, which alone actuated him, and the result will, we venture to prophesy, be gratifying to his own vanity as well as that of his admiring countrymen. The hero of the comedy is a congressman from the west. We anxiously await its production.[288]

Paulding shaped the play around Congressman David Crockett from Tennessee, well-known for his backwoods skills, his wit and his fists. [289] He fought alongside Andrew "Old Hickory" Jackson, served in the state legislature and finally, Congress. He did not suffer insults easily and early in his career he challenged a state legislator to a duel after being referred to as "the gentleman from the [cane]brake." A Jacksonian Democrat in his early years, Crockett broke with the party in 1830 over ideological differences, including the Indian Removal Act, which he believed morally wrong. Crockett was quoted as saying about Jackson, "I bark at no man's bid. I will never come and go, and fetch and carry, at the whistle of the great man in the White House no matter who he is."[290] By insulting Andrew "King Mob" Jackson and joining the Whig Party, Crockett administered two insufferable slaps to the honor and reputation of the Jacksonians, and he became the target of vicious political attacks. The Democrats

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[288] *The New-York Mirror*, December 4, 1830, 6.

[289] Crockett's wit was sharp and quick: according to one tale, a flock of guinea hens began to scream and cackle during a stump speech, and the candidate told his listeners that the hens were crying "Crockett, Crockett, Crockett!"

[290] Davy Crockett, *An Account of Colonel Crockett's Tour to the North and Down East* (Philadelphia: Carey, Hart and Co., 1835), 173. This quotation appeared five years after Crockett pronounced it, in a book he did not write – the book was written by a Crockett friend, Augustin S. Clayton. Another variant came from a later book by John S.C. Abbott in *David Crockett, His Life and Adventures* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1874), 258, which sounds more like Crockett: "I would as lieve be an old coon-dog as be obliged to do what any man or set of men would tell me."

determined to remove Crockett from his Congressional seat: a rumor that James Kirke Paulding, conservative Democrat and Jackson admirer, must have followed with interest.

It seems the selection of David Crockett for the stage Colonel Nimrod Wildfire could be examined from a political point of view. James A. and John B. Shackford noted in their biography *David Crockett: The Man and the Legend*, that Paulding's choice of Crockett was not accidental.[291] Both Hackett and Paulding were Democrat-Republicans, and Paulding was a strong supporter and friend of Andrew Jackson, who became President in 1828.[292] Tennessee roots and all, Jackson was popular in New York. Democrats attended the Eighth of January grand balls to commemorate the Battle of New Orleans, of which Jackson was the hero.[293] Among the New York Jackson supporters was Martin Van Buren, Paulding's neighbor who later appointed the writer Secretary of the Navy. Jackson's exploits had long been popularized onstage, including William Dunlap's *A Yankee Chronology* (1812) and Richard Penn Smith's *The Eighth of January* (1829). The most intriguing dramatic work must have been *Old Hickory and the Alligator*, described in the *New-York Mirror* as "calculated to please an intelligent audience."[294] Among the characters were "three Kentucky sharp-shooters, Ralph Welling, Sam Pineknot, (the "Mississippi Snag"), and Bob Sawyer…'real cock-eyed

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[291] James Atkins Shackford and John B. Shackford, *David Crockett: The Man and the Legend* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994) 255.

[292] Paulding would later use Jackson as one of the models for the hero of *Westward Ho!*

[293] Charles H. Haswell, *Reminiscences of New York by an Octogenarian 1816-1860* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1896), 150. Haswell notes that in 1831 Manhattan had approximately 200,000 inhabitants.

[294] *New-York Mirror*, February 5, 1825, 6.

Kentuckymen…game to the back-bone… half horse, half alligator, a little of the snapping turtle, and a touch of the steam-boat."[295] The writer goes on to praise the scenery: "Water with boats sailing in different directions…Yankee fortifications, &c. &c. In one scene we discover a large alligator, which swallows a man and plunges into a lake !!!" [296]

It was this backwoods folk hero whom Crockett defied.[297] The Jacksonians were furious at what they viewed as betrayal, and set out to destroy Crockett's chances of winning the 1831 summer election in the Ninth District of Tennessee. They attacked him in print, calling him an adulterer, a cheat, and an alcoholic.[298] They set up political meetings in his name, and when he did not appear, argued that Crockett was too scared to attend.[299] But Crockett had been attacked by the Whigs earlier in his career and was well-versed in smear tactics. The Whigs once circulated a story about Crockett's visit to the White House, depicting him as a backwoods boor who grabbed a whole goose for his plate, drank from his fingerbowl water, and ate all the syllabub. Partly because of the smear campaign, Crockett became one of the most well-known names in Congress by1830.

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[295] The script for this play has not been located. Jackson may have been the hero, but the most interesting character seems to have been Bob Sawyer, ancestor of the future Tom.

[296] *The New-York Mirror*, Feb. 5, 1825. The benefit of this show was for a Mr. A. Allen, - more than likely Andrew Jackson Allen - referred to in the *Mirror* as an eccentric genius, a "real Knickerbocker," and "the oldest actor in the United States."

[297] If this was not the first duel of folk heroes in American history, it was certainly the most lively.

[298] *Missouri Republican*, April 1829, 4. Although this early attack came while Crockett was still associated with Jackson, it indicates Crockett's notoriety in the public area.

[299] Shackford, *David Crockett*, 131-132.

It was not odd, then, that the announcement of Paulding's Western "congress man" resulted in the public's immediate identification of Crockett as Wildfire. Paulding requested that the *New-York Mirror* clarify its contention that Wildfire and Crockett were one and the same, and the following appeared on December 18:

> The Lions (sic) of the West: or, A Trip to Washington – It having been erroneously stated in some of the public papers, that the hero of this piece was intended to represent a late member of congress from the state of Tennessee, we are authorized, and requested, by the author, to say that it is not so. The design was to embody certain peculiar characteristics of the west in one single person, who should thus represent, not an individual, but the species. There was no intention to bring any particular individual before the public, and it is hoped those papers which have given currency to the error will take the earliest opportunity to correct it.

The "correction" makes it clear that Wildfire was the child of Crockett.[300] Other papers commented on the Crockett rumor, which had taken on a life of its own. On December 15, 1830 Paulding sent the following "plea" to Richard Henry Wilde, a friend, writer and Congressman from Georgia:

> If you have any acquaintance with Col. Crockett of Tennessee, You will oblige me by delivering the inclosed letter into his hands. It relates to certain mischievous and unfounded rumours which lately appeared in the newspapers, stating that I had made him the Hero of a Comedy, I lately wrote for Hackett of the Theatre. You will also I hope do me the favour to assure him, provided your knowledge of me will justify the assurance, that I am incapable of committing such an outrage on the feelings of any Gentleman.
> I do not wish him to Publish the letter, as I have taken measures to have the whole story contradicted in the newspapers.
> I am Dr Sir
> Yours very truly
> J K Paulding [301]

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[300] Shackford, 254. The *Mirror* was not the only newspaper to bandy Crockett's name about: the *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer* printed the same rumors.

The enclosure is lost, but Paulding received a reply several weeks later:

> Sir your letter of the 15 Inst was handed to me this day by my friend Mr. Wilde – the newspaper publications to which you refer I have never seen; and if I had I should not have taken the reference to myself in exclusion of many who fill offices and who are as untaught as I am. I thank you however for your civility in assuring me that you had no reference to my peculiarities. The frankness of your letter induces me to say a declaration from you to that effect was not necessary to convince me that you were incapable of wounding the feelings of a strainger and unlettered man who had never injured you—your character for letters and as a gentleman is not altogather unknown to me.[302]

Paulding completed *Lion of the West* by December, 1830, and the play debuted April, 1831. The *New-York Mirror* ran an article before the Monday April 25 opening:

> The manner in which this piece has been announced in some of the newspapers, with the most friendly intentions certainly, is, we think, calculated to excite expectations which will not be realized. It may, therefore, be proper to state, in justice to the author, and we do so at his request that it does not aspire to the rank of a regular comedy. It was originally written with a desire to introduce Mr. Hackett to the public in a new character, and to aid in producing a taste for dramatic performances, founded on domestic incidents and native manners.[303]

The article continues to deny that the principal part was "designed to represent a member of congress, somewhat noted for his eccentricities" and "peculiarities."

For nearly a year before *Lion*'s debut, audiences had anticipated a new play about David Crockett by a Knickerbocker author. Biographer James Shackford suggests that Crockett as a Whig benefitted from the publicity and interest shown by the public in the

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[301] Ralph M. Aderman, ed., *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), 112.

[302] Ibid, 113.

[303] *New-York Mirror*, April 23, 1831, 5.

play and, therefore, gained status with the American people. There were also intimations that Crockett's response to Paulding was not written by Crockett, but by a Whig supporter intent on duping Paulding.[304]

It may be the opposite was true. *Lion of the West* was proposed, written, and performed during this vitally important election year.[305] Paulding was keenly aware of how theatre affected audiences; he must have realized that the more publicity the play gained before its production, the more the public would identify Wildfire with Crockett, and by extension, assume Crockett behaved like Wildfire. Any response Paulding made to newspapers, any letters he wrote to public figures, any gossip, would eventually become grist for the public mill. Paulding the Jacksonian, and not the Whigs, controlled the public perception of Crockett in Manhattan. His continued denials that the "congress man" was Crockett only kept the debate before the public. Was Paulding copying his friend Irving's famous hoax? In 1809 Irving created the fictional character Diedrich Knickerbocker and convinced New Yorkers through printed advertisements that Diedrich had disappeared, prompting an outcry, a search – and a great deal of publicity for *A History of New York*.

Paulding's denials and defenses of *Lion* garnered much attention even before the show was on the boards, but audiences were primed to know what they should expect: a rambunctious, comic character from the West. Between Hackett's choice of character and Paulding's plot, the two men began to create an onstage vision of the new West. But this was a vision based not on personal experience but solely on imagination and borrowings

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[304] Shackford, 254.

[305] Ibid, 133.

from other authors. At the time of *Lion*, Paulding had not visited the trans-Mississippi West. He had traveled through Virginia and the region that would become West Virginia in 1816, and later published his experiences in the fictionalized *Letters from the South*.

It is difficult to separate fact from fancy in the *Letters*. Among the stories is that of a valley filled with giant snakes; another tells of the "Battle Between a Virginia Batteauxman and Wagonner."[306] This may have been one of the few times that Paulding, like Wetmore, drew from experience. A boatman and wagon driver settle in at a camp, trade insults, and eventually do battle over who owned the best rifle. Whether Paulding saw such an altercation or heard stories during his trip or even pieced together several events is unknown, but he captured some local language: The batteauxman "cocked up his eye at the wagonner, and the wagonner looking askance down on the batteauxman, took a chew of tobacco with a leer that was particularly irritating." The men took a stance and crowed like roosters, whistled insulting songs and then compared each others' sweethearts, horses, and finally rifles. The ensuing battle ended with the defeat of the wagoner.

Throughout his writing career, Paulding avoided the limitations imposed by a lack of real experience by borrowing freely from other writers. Timothy Flint, Washington Irving, and others contributed source material and especially descriptions of landscape, characters, and folk stories such as raftsmen and fantastic creatures, which Paulding then gilded with his own special style of irony and wit. Arlin Turner noted Paulding's borrowings in a comparison of Timothy Flint's *A Condensed Geography and History of*

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[306] James Kirke Paulding, *Letters from the South* vol. II (New York: James Eastburn and Company, 1817), 90-91.

the Western States and *Recollections of the Last Ten Years* and Paulding's *Westward Ho!*[307] Paulding drew heavily from Flint to provide atmosphere for his novel.[308] However, he did not hide his borrowings and in fact, recommended that readers seek out Flint's works. In his essay on theater he stated, "It has always been customary for dramatic writers to borrow the groundwork of their plays, and long prescription justifies the practice. By having the incidents ready prepared to his hand, a writer is at full liberty to give the whole force of his genius to the thoughts, sentiment and dialogue."[309] Paulding later backtracked, claiming that "It is proof of a want of genius to borrow from others; and of a want of taste to borrow bad models."[310] Of his next work, *Westward Ho!* he noted "The story professes no connexion with history, and aspires to no special chronological accuracy; though it is believed that sufficient regard has been had to truth in this respect to give it the interest of something like reality."[311]

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[307] Arlin Turner. "James Kirke Paulding and Timothy Flint," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 34, 1 (1947), 105-111.

[308] Timothy Flint, *A Condensed Geography and History of the Western States*, 2 vols. (Cincinnati, 1828) and *Recollections of the Last Ten Years* (Boston, 1826); and James K. Paulding, *Westward Ho! A Tale*, 2 vols. (New York, 1832). Paulding stated in his introduction to *Westward Ho!* "For very many of his ideas of the great Mississippi Valley the author is under particular obligations to the 'Recollections' of the Rev. Timothy Flint, which contain by far the most picturesque description of that remarkable region which has ever fallen under his observation. This work has not met its deserts [sic], and he should be highly gratified if this passing notice served in any way to call the public attention to its interesting details."

[309] Paulding "American Drama," *The American Quarterly Review*, 331.

[310] Ibid.

[311] James Kirke Paulding, *Westward Ho!* vol. 1 (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1832), 4. *Westward Ho*! was published a year after *Lion* debuted, suggesting an overlap between

Paulding is clear that to borrow a plot/frame ("the groundwork") is acceptable, but to borrow the specifics of character and language is not. In addition, he was unconcerned with following a story through history, seeking only to offer readers familiarity in place of accuracy. Paulding considered a plot as an empty stage, waiting to be filled with the details and colors of his imagination.

Cant and Invention

Both *Lion of the West*, and later, *The Kentuckian*, present scripts that depict the image of the West as manifested in Colonel Nimrod Wildfire. *Lion* went through at least four major revisions. Paulding's original script has not been located, but the play opened at the Park Theatre on Monday, April 25, 1831, and a detailed synopsis was published in *The Morning Courier* and *New York Enquirer*.[312] In the original Paulding plot, Cecelia Bramble, daughter of a wealthy governor, travels with her father to Washington, DC where she falls in love with a Parisian count, who is an imposter. Her cousin, Colonel Nimrod Wildfire, visits from Kentucky and agrees to help reveal that the Count is a coward; Wildfire challenges him to a duel, and the Count runs away. After a farcical

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the projects. While both incorporate "West" in their titles, *Lion* has a Kentucky hero, and *Westward Ho!* a Virginian who emigrates to Ohio. By 1832, the Santa Fe Trail had been open for a decade, Missouri was a state and more than 12 million Americans called the country (and its territories) home. The Old Southwest – a broadly defined swath of country extending from as far east as Virginia and as far southwest as Texas – was developing its own style of humor. Paulding knew the West had crossed the Mississippi River, but his penchant for nostalgia and the old ways – whether Knickerbocker or Kentucky – may have led him to ignore the new frontier in favor of what he was most familiar with, the South.

[312] *Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer*, April 27, 1831, 6. M. M. Noah owned this paper, which mistakenly reported in 1836 that David Crockett survived The Alamo.

scene in which the Count mistakes the room of a man for that of Cecilia, Wildfire finally unmasks the pretender and sends him on his way. Cecelia shows remorse and promises to live a life worthy of her lover, the decent Roebuck. The show ends with an address of the Colonel to the pit.

The review in The *New-York Mirror* was less than enthusiastic. Although the play was "received by a numerous audience with decided marks of approbation," and Hackett (along with Wildfire) "kept the house in a roar by his comical and characteristic narrations," the paper noted the play was badly cast and the ballroom scene poorly staged.[313] *The Morning Courier* and *New-York Enquirer* offered greater detail and more approbation, calling Wildfire "an extremely racy representation of western blood…ardent, generous, daring, witty, blunt, and original…[an example of] The amusing extravagances and strange features of character which have grown up in the western states...possessing the genuine spirit of the West."[314] The article continues to praise Paulding as "a successful delineator of native manners and indigenous character" but suggests that Hackett needed to work some on his portrayal of the Westerner:

> The specimen of the West is as slow and precise in his highest flight, as the Bond-street dandy – he is as measured in his cadences as the Broadway merveilleaux – as calm and dignified in his demeanour as a hero, which he feels himself to be. It is the odd contrast between dignity and calmness of demeanour, and the high flights of western fancy, that marks the western original.[315]

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[313] *The New-York Mirror*, April 30, 1831, 8.

[314] *Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer*, April 27, 1831, 6.

[315] Ibid, 6. James Watson Webb, according to his obituary in the *New York Times*, June 4, 1884, was publisher of the *Courier* and until 1832, a staunch Jacksonian. He joined the Army (1819-1827) and served under General Winfield Scott and was stationed on the

The critic – James Watson Webb – noted that Hackett's characterization was "a little too rapid, his gesticulation a little too quick and versatile." Webb was one of the rare New York reviewers who knew whereof he spoke: he had served as a frontier soldier under Winfield Scott and spent time in the West.

The tepid and mixed reviews did not seem to affect the play's popularity. As early as May 28, an article about David Crockett mentions that anyone who went to Washington needed to see Crockett and his "grotesque appearance, his rough manners and jovial habits…[and] strong, though undisciplined, mind" otherwise the visitor "betrayed a total destitution of curiosity, and a perfect insensibility to the lions of the West."[316] Hackett knew that Nimrod Wildfire was a starring vehicle, but the play was weak; William Paulding recalled that Hackett called the play "a vivid initial sketch." [317] The *New-York Mirror* reported September 17 that a new play would be written by John Augustus Stone, with a less complex plot, and more stage time for Wildfire.[318] The paper noted that since Paulding had "neither leisure nor inclination for the task, it was, with his full approbation, committed to Mr. Stone…who has arranged an entire new piece, with the exception of Colonel Wildfire."[319]

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northern Illinois frontier in 1820. Webb knew the frontier: in 1822 he traveled overland alone during winter from Fort Dearborn (MI) to Fort Armstrong on Rock Island (IL).

[316] *The Ariel: A Semimonthly Literary and Miscellaneous Gazette*, May 28, 1831, 38. Published less than a month after *Lion of the West* opened, this note offers an intriguing hint that the description may have been used for Crockett before the play.

[317] William Paulding, *Letters of James Kirke Paulding,* 124.

[318] *New-York Mirror,* September 17, 1831, 83.

[319] Ibid.

Why did Paulding refuse to rewrite the script? The play was not a failure, and Wildfire was worth watching. Several reasons may explain Paulding's dismissal of the play. He was in the process of writing *Westward, Ho!* for publication in 1832. He was known as a fast and furious writer who would have benefitted from more thought and trimming, and rewriting was not his strong suit. Or he may have felt that his work was completed: David Crockett had been defeated in the summer election.[320]

According to William Dunlap's diary entry for October 17, 1832, Paulding told Dunlap that

> Hackett proposed putting "*The Lion of the West*" into Stones hands to which he [Paulding] assented. That Hackett overcharges the part for which the play is written and fills it with every cant phrase he can pick up. Paulding puts into my hands for my opinion & correction a manuscript Comedy called (as appears by pencil writing) "The Stranger in England or the Sons of the West" and in another hand writing "The Bucktails or Americans in England." He suggests our uniting to produce Comedies and upholding the American Stage.[321]

Paulding was obviously still interested in having his plays staged, although he never succeeded with The Bucktails.

Once John Augustus Stone worked on the script, he created a vastly different play, a melodrama with comic interludes. In the Stone version, Wildfire is again the relation of a young woman ("Fredonia") who is the target of a fortune hunter ("Lord

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[320] Regardless of Paulding's motive for writing – or not writing – *Lion*, by 1833 he was so identified with Crockett that *The Literary Journal* published an article denying reports that Paulding was the author of *The Memoirs of David Crockett.*

[321] Dorothy C. Barck, ed. *Diary of William Dunlap (1766-1839) The Memoirs of a Dramatist, Theatrical Manager, Painter, Critic, Novelist, and Historian* (New York: New York Historical Society, 1931), 144.

Luminary”). Fredonia was rescued as an infant from an 1812 battlefield by the wealthy Mr. Bonnybrown (uncle to Wildfire) and raised by Bonnybrown and his relative, the dignified “Miss Albina Towertop.” The plot involved abductions, duels, a hero accused by a hired “creature” of false love, and finally, the revelation of the long lost father’s existence (he was a mysterious neighbor) . The play also introduces Wildfire’s fiancée, Patty Snags, in a cameo appearance during the last scene.[322]

The Stone version was played by Hackett throughout the country. One review indicated that “the roaring of the ‘Lion of the West’ was echoed as usual by the audience.”[323] Did Hackett encourage the audience to respond to him through the stage business of roaring? Or was this merely a journalist’s image, intended to communicate the audience reaction? Given Paulding’s belief that Hackett “overcharged” the role, it is probable that the actor improvised, mimicked and changed the lines nightly, making the show one to which audiences could return again and again.

Response to the play was varied. It was popular in Boston, while reviewers in Philadelphia were less certain they were watching great theatre. “The character of Nimrod Wildfire as written by Paulding and personated by Hackett…embodies great originality and affords much amusement. We never saw an audience in a better humour.” But the paper prophesied that “the piece will have its day no doubt, and then sink to the ‘receptacle of things lost upon earth.’ It was never written for immortality but for the moment – for effect and laughter. It may be performed half a dozen times for half a dozen

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[322] *The New-York Mirror*, Oct. 1, 1831, 102.

[323] *Morning Courier*, November 24, 1831, 31. This was Hackett’s benefit night, so the excessive response to his character must have been enjoyed by all.

seasons, and then give place to something better or newer."[324] In June, The *New-York Mirror* reported that

> Mr. Hackett appeared [at the Park Theatre] on Tuesday, in Nimrod Wildfire. We learn the report, that *The Kentuckian*s had "looked down slantendicular," at the humorous points in this character, is without foundation. His sketches of this description are strong, though peradventure, exaggerated likenesses; not precisely of a species, but of individuals to be met not unfrequently.

The newspaper was referring to problems that Hackett faced on a Western tour. E. T. Coke, a British traveler, wrote about his Philadelphia visit:

> The first evening I was ashore, I attended the Arch Street Theatre… for the purpose of seeing Mr. Hackett, who was in high repute with his countrymen, perform the part of "Nimrod Wildfire," in the "Raw Kentuckian; or, *Lion of the West*." The play is intended to censure and correct the rough manners of the States west of the Alleghany mountains, and delighted the audience exceedingly; though to me the greater part of the dialogue consisted of unintelligible idioms…I was informed that the effect of his performance in the West was such as to excite a strong feeling against him; and so incensed the "half-horse, half-alligator boys," "the yellow flowers of the forest," as they call themselves, that they threatened "to row him up Salt River," if he ventured a repetition of the objectionable performance." [325]

The title of the play mentioned by Coke is of interest: was Hackett using a new title, or had the printer erred? Coke was not critical, although his dislike of "unintelligible idioms" indicates Hackett used cant at best, a wild rant at worst.

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[324] *Philadelphia Album and Ladies/ Literary Portfolio*, Nov 5, 1831, 357.

[325] E.T. Coke, *A Subaltern's Furlough* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1833), 28. Coke was offended by comments made about England in the play and wished that old issues might be buried.

David Crockett, meanwhile, appeared to have embraced Wildfire with as much grace as possible. Benjamin Perley Poore related a visit of Crockett to a Washington production of *The Kentuckian*:

> When Mr. Hackett took his benefit it was announced that at the particular request of Colonel David Crockett, of Tennessee, the comedian would appear on the boards in favorite character of "Nimrod Wildfire," in the play called "*The Kentuckian*: or, a Trip to New York." This brought out a house full to overflowing. At seven o'clock the Colonel was escorted by the manager through the crowd to a front seat reserved for him. As soon as he was recognized by the audience they made the very house shake with hurrahs for Colonel Crockett, "Go ahead!" "I wish I may be shot!" "Music! Let us have Crockett's March!" After some time the curtain rose, and Hackett appeared in hunting costume, bowed to the audience, and then to Colonel Crockett. The compliment was reciprocated by the Colonel, to the no small amusement and gratification of the spectators, and the play then went on.[326]

Crockett's personality reflected his backwoods' upbringing: he was a well-known clogger or "buck" dancer" and musician who, according to legend, fiddled at the Alamo. Susanna Dickinson, one of the few people to survive the battle, recalled Crockett and John McGregor playing fiddle and bagpipe to see who might make the most noise. Dickinson claimed "John McGregor always won so far as noise was concerned, for he made strange and dreadful sounds with his queer instrument." [327]

Another Westerner took umbrage at Wildfire's behavior, and was devastating in his comments about the character and his setting. William Joseph Snelling claimed a

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[326] Benjamin Perley Poore, *Perley's Reminiscences of Sixty Years in the National Metropolis* (Philadelphia: Hubbard Brothers, 1886), 181. Crockett may have written this reel, also known as The Route or The Rout,

[327] Sandy Ridlington, "Wand'ring Minstrels," *Overtones* (March 2009): 4.

background that appeared to prepare him for the criticism he hurled at Paulding's work. Snelling was raised on the frontier, and lived among the Dakotah Indians near Fort St. Anthony in Minnesota, learning their language and writing stories based on his experiences.[328] After Snelling returned to Boston, he published essays and books, including *Truth*, an eccentric critique of contemporary literature. Snelling detested writings by Cooper, Prosper Wetmore, and James Kirke Paulding, and commented on the latter's play:

> Then last, and worse by far than all the rest,
> Stalks forth the blackguard, "*Lion of the West*,"
> Hight Nimrod Wildfire, one to all intents
> A libel on the land he represents:
> Extravagance, vulgarity and rant,
> The hackney'd gleanings of a hackney'd cant,
> Make up his speech. – Ah! Paulding, thou hadst best
> Beware the vengeance of th' insulted West.
> Shouldst thou beyond the Laurel Ridge appear,
> Ashe or Fearon had such cause for fear.

Snelling went on to write in his notes to *Truth*:

> If a playwright should take from Joe Miller all the blunders ascribed to Irishmen, … that character would be as much an Irishman as Nimrod Wildfire is a Kentuckian. No such person as Nimrod Wildfire was ever seen on the Ohio or the Mississippi. He would be as ridiculous there as he is here. His language was never the language of common parlance even among the boatmen.[329]

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[328] Josiah Snelling, William's father, was a commanding officer of the Sixth Infantry in which Alphonso Wetmore served. Wetmore must have met William as a youth.

[329] William Snelling, *Truth: A Gift for Scribblers* (Boston: B. B. Mussey, 1832), 31. Joe Miller, English actor who died in 1738, gained even greater fame when *Joe Miller's Jests; or, The Wits Vade Mecum* was published posthumously under his name. Many of the jokes had to do with the gullibility of the Irish. Henry Bradshaw Fearon, an Englishman, wrote a critique of America in 1818, Thomas Ashe in 1808; both men were detested for their "slander" on the country.

James Joseph Webb criticized Hackett's overacting; Snelling was offended by the "vulgar" and "extravagant" language of Wildfire and the rant of Hackett.[330] Adding to the difficulty of determining what was offensive about *The Lion of the West* is Hackett's known use of improvisation, which annoyed Paulding as well. At first glance, perhaps Snelling thought some humor risqué, as when Mrs. Wollope and her maid realize that Wildfire expects marriage:

> Mrs. Wallope
> "This savage will marry me by main force, thrust me into his covered wagon, and then –
>
> Mary
> La, ma'am, don't think of it![331]

But Snelling's issues may have not been about the language or imagery at all. In 1831, Snelling published what he called an impartial biography of Andrew Jackson, but the introduction to the book suggests otherwise:

> We shall proceed in a spirit of candor to weigh him in the moral balance, and if he be found wanting, his must be the blame, not ours….We have no personal interest in the result of the approaching political contest. We have no office to lose, or any expectation of our getting one. We do not write for any electioneering purpose, having no more depending on the

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[330] Snelling's belief that no boatman sounded like Wildfire is difficult to challenge; however, Michael Allen in his classic study notes that boatmen on the inland waters were probably as "wild and reckless as the rivermen of folklore and tradition." *Western Rivermen, 1763-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990). 111. Snelling may have known some sober businessmen who happened to own flatboats, but his time in the West must have exposed him to language strong enough to curl a skunk's tale.

[331] James Tidwell, 47. Alphonso Wetmore beat Paulding to an off-color punch, when Old Continental comments that women thought him "too old to mount guard."

> vicissitudes of politics than the most obscure of our fellow citizens has.[332]

Like Crockett, Snelling was anti-Jackson, and his rant in *Truth* make sense as a defense of Wildfire/Crockett's reputation rather than a dismissal of *Lion of the West*.

It was ironic, but Paulding's reputation was suffering because of a character over which he had no control and a play that was no longer his. Hackett – as did other actors of the time – improvised, adapted and changed text without any consultation with a playwright. The nineteenth-century actor looked for a character who would become his trademark and produce income: for example, Hackett had Industrious Doolittle, Solomon Swop and Rip Van Winkle and he used *Lion* the same way. Although none of the texts indicate exactly what was written by Paulding and what was interpolated by Hackett, it is clear that Paulding created the character of Wildfire, and Hackett embroidered the character. He had purchased the *Lion* script, and it was his to do with as he liked including commissioning a third version.

Colonel Nimrod Wildfire underwent one more transformation, but this time in England. In 1823, Hackett had faced British audiences as a young actor and was booed offstage for his Yankee character sketches meant to compete with Charles Mathews' *Trip to America.*[333] Hackett returned to America, bloodied but unbowed and determined to build his reputation as an actor. He spent nearly ten years developing Yankee characters, and Colonel Nimrod Wildfire, and in October 1832 he sailed again for England. Hackett

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[332] William Joseph Snelling, *A Brief and Impartial History of the Life and Actions of Andrew Jackson (*Boston: Stimpson and Clapp, 1831), 4.

[333] Francis Hodge, *Yankee Theatre* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964). 92.

was still unhappy with John Augustus Stone's *Lion* script and at some point engaged William Bayle Bernard to rewrite it. Bernard had been born in Massachusetts to a theatre family: his father John was the author of *Retrospections of the Stage*, a memoir of his acting work in America and England. William Bayle Bernard was an actor, critic, and playwright, whose works included *The Mummy* and *Rip Van Winkle*, which he adapted in 1832 for James Hackett.[334]

Bernard's script was retitled *The Kentuckian* or A Trip to New York. First Paulding, then Stone, and now Bernard: this third version has Kentucky-bred Colonel Nimrod Wildfire visit his New York cousins, the Freemans, and discover their daughter Caroline being wooed by a bounder posing as a count. Along the way Wildfire attends a dance, challenges the fake nobleman to a rifle duel, and finally unites Caroline with her true love, Percival, an honest English merchant. In addition to the new plot, Bernard created a new antagonist for Wildfire to blaze away at: Mrs. Wallope, an Englishwoman traveling in America with an eye towards writing a book about her experiences.

The character is based upon Frances Trollope, whose 1832 book *Domestic Manners of the Americans* shone a critical light on everything in the United States from clothing and dining to brush arbor religious revivals and the theatre. Trollope had come to America to recoup her finances, and settled in the frontier town of Cincinnati. There she built an eccentric building in the Persian style, befriended artists including sculptor Hiram Powers and promptly failed in business. Neither a fool nor a rattlebrain, Trollope's comments made observations that were often honest. She was embraced by the English and despised by the Americans, so her onstage character would certainly draw attention.

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[334] John Bernard, *Retrospections of America 1797-1811* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1887), vi. Bernard may have inspired Edgar Allan Poe to write "Some Words with a Mummy."

The Paulding and Stone scripts are unaccounted for; the Bernard script was lost for nearly a century until folklorist James Tidwell located it in 1953 at the Lord Chamberlain's Office, where it had been deposited for copyright in 1833.[335] The Bernard version was renamed *The Kentuckian or A Trip to New York* and contained the full script with dialogue, cues, and stage directions ("A" version.) Also in the Chamberlain's Office was a "B" version by Bernard and also with dialogue, cues and stage directions. The "B" version which contains a major change: Mrs. Wallope has been renamed "Mrs. Luminary."[336] The Bernard scripts A and B were published by Tidwell in 1954, and have become the standard reference for scholars and historians.

However, a third version of *The Kentuckian* exists, one that sheds additional light on the play and the portrayal of the American West. This version, also called *The Kentuckian*, is in the Theatre Museum of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, as part of the James Hackett Promptbooks collection. The script has been mentioned infrequently by historians, and as far as can be determined, has never been compared with the preceding versions of the script regarding characters, production, language or plot. Notes in the Promptbook indicate the play was "altered from the Hon. J.K. Paulding's original production and first performed at T.R. Covent Garden in March and T. R. Hay Market, May 1833. By W. Bayle Bernard."[337] Hackett, in the role of Colonel Nimrod Wildfire, appears to have used this promptbook for performances in England and

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[335] James Tidwell, *The Lion of the West* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1954), 10.

[336] Presumably because she "illuminated" Americans about their failings.

[337] James Henry Hackett, *Promptbooks & Actor's Copies* (Ormonde Publishing Ltd.: London, 1983), text-fiche, 97-176.

America. The promptbook uses lines or dashes to indicate missing text and provides only a few words per line as cues for Wildfire. A comparison of the Bernard A/B and Promptbook versions of *The Kentuckian* reveals substantially different texts among the three versions: in the Promptbook, language has been cut or streamlined, there is "strong" language ("damn") and most intriguingly, there is a very different ending – the marriage of Mrs. Luminary and Wildfire. Because of this ending and what it implies regarding cultural relations between England and America, it is the Promptbook version of *The Kentuckian* which is considered here.

Enter Stage West

How did Nimrod Wildfire present the West to English and American audiences? *The Kentuckian* contains one Western character: Nimrod Wildfire, and it is his language which made the play memorable for nearly thirty years of international performances after the English debut. Before his entrance, Wildfire is dismissed as barbaric, brusque, a savage and eccentric. Mr. Freeman's defense of Wildfire as an "open hearted childish giant" even as he dismisses him as "no specimen of American good breeding" reduces Wildfire to a curiosity from the West.

Who created the language of Nimrod Wildfire? While Bernard reworked the script and Hackett improvised nightly, Paulding's hand was still clearly in the shaping of the play. As early as the first (Stone) rewrite, newspapers commented, "*The Kentuckian* remains as originally drawn by the author for Mr. Hackett."[338] Paulding created Wildfire

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[338] *The New-York Mirror*, October, 1, 1831, n.p.

and his language, and it may be presumed that certain set speeches or stories were carried through the productions. Paulding drew the language of the backwoods roarer from sources including his *Letters from the South*, a fictionalized account of his 1816 trip through the Virginias. Here in the backcountry were men who were "half horse, half alligator with a touch of an arthquake, and a burst of steamboat."[339]

In both the Bernard and Promptbook versions, Wildfire is first introduced through the medium of a letter to his cousin, Mr. Freeman:

> Washington, July 1st, 1815.
> Uncle Pete!
> Here am I, a heap high nigher New York, than when I clard out from Kaintuck. The very day I got your coaxing letter, I rousted out my best clothes, and my other plunder and toted about North East—I had a raal rounabout catawampus clean thro' the deestrict—If I hadn't I wish I may be te-to-taciously exflunctified![340]

Basil Hall, the English traveler was asked by Noah Webster why he so disliked American vocabulary. "Because," Hall replied, '"there are words enough already." Hall was wrong. To describe the American West, one needed new words, new ideas, new concepts.[341] And oh, what words emerged, bursting with energy and images. Paulding's

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[339] William Bayley Bernard. *The Kentuckian* in *Promptbook and Actors' Copies (*Theatre Museum, Victorian and Albert, London; New York: Clearwater Publishing Company, 1983). Text-fiche.

[340] All quotations are from the Promptbook, unless otherwise noted.

[341] Newspapers of the day borrowed, reprinted, and adapted articles and notes from each other, making it difficult to pin down origins of words and phrases. Western newspapers such as *The Missouri Intelligencer and Boonslick Advertiser* shared subscriptions with newspapers back East. A phrase such as "the mighty dollar" might be taken up by Western politicians to describe local events – but the phrase originated in New York with Washington Irving. The exchange of language was frequent and robust, with people adopting popular slang no matter where they lived.

language, as carried through the Tidwell and Promptbook versions, shows an ear for contemporary slang and folk language which included the pulling and extending of known words ("total") into nonsensically twisted fun like "te-to-taciously," "'jubus," from dubious, and "swillybub," a bastardization of the dessert, syllabub.[342] Wildfire was unstoppable in motion and language: "catawampus," from catamount, a mountain lion, and rumpus, or catercorner and wumpish; "slantendicular," from slanting and perpendicular; "exflunctified – from the slang "exflunct," completely worn out.[343] "Wake snakes, June bugs are coming" was identified with Wildfire through all the versions of Lion/Kentucky. It was a cry to rouse up and take action, to join in the fun which was about to begin.[344]

Wildfire beat the Yankees at their own game. A Yankee peddler might be sly and sharp with deals, but the Western man wove stories too big for Yankee craws. "I wish I may be stuck into a split log for a wedge," swears Wildfire when telling a story. "Aha, says I, you may be a screamer, but perhaps I'm a horse!" he tells an obstreperous river catfish. His former sweetheart, Patty Snags, shot a bear when she was nine-years old, and made Wildfire a cap to remember her by. Still, Wildfire as the West depends less on individual words than on storytelling and style, strewing sayings and descriptions about like sycamore leaves in a gale.

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[342] A syllabub was milk punch and could be frothed up by milking the cow directly into the bowl.

[343] *New York Times*, "On Language," August 12, 1990. Although the column notes "exflunct" and its meaning, it does not provide a source for the word.

[344] John Bartlett, *The Dictionary of Americanisms* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1859), 498. The second edition of Bartlett's collection contains more Western words than the 1849 edition.

Wildfire chooses tales which are so big, so unbelievable that audiences waited to see how he could possibly top himself. Two of these tales were reprinted extensively by newspapers of the time: the Wildfire description of his fight with a boatman and the hat story. The fight was based upon Paulding's story of "The Batteauxman and the Wagonner" in Letters from the South and is chockful of Western exaggeration:

> I can tote a steam boat up the Mississippi and over the Alleghany mountains. My father can whip the best man in old Kaintuck, and I can whip my father. When I'm good natured I weigh about a hundred and seventy, but when I'm mad, I weigh a ton.

None of this had been heard in Yankee plays or in any other theatre piece. Hackett and Paulding, in the creation of Wildfire, had taken folktales, challenges and "windies" – stories puffed up to a lying magnitude never seen before – and filled the stage with new images, rough language and humor:

> Look you here now, tother day, I was a horseback paddling away pretty comfortably through No-bottom swamp, when suddenly---I wish I may be curry-comb'd to death by 50,000 tom cats, if I didn't see a white hat getting along in mighty considerable style all alone by itself on the top of the mud---so up I rid, and being a bit jubus, I lifted it with the butt end of my whip when a feller sung out from under it, Hallo, stranger, who told you to knock my hat off? Why, says I, what sort of a sample of a white man are you? What's come of the rest of you? Oh, says he, I'm not far off—only in the next county. I'm doing beautifully—got one of the best horses under me that ever burrowed—claws like a mole—no stop in him—but here's a waggon and horses right under me in a mighty bad fix, I reckon, for I heard the driver say a spell ago one of the team was getting a leetel tired.

Where did Paulding acquire the language? Did John Wesley Jarvis, who had traveled extensively throughout the South and Southwest (Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas), send Paulding word lists and anecdotes? Paulding obviously raided his own texts for inspiration, and attempted to recreate a local dialect both with vocabulary and

structure ("What's come of the rest of you?") Paulding's complaint that Hackett filled the play with cant phrases, and Hall's dismissal of the dialogue as often unintelligible may have been honest evaluations of the text, but it is this dialogue which helps make the play "Western." Within a year after the play debuted, a "Nimrod Wildfire" meant a western hunter and backwoods roarer, and the tall tales were being reprinted and credited to David Crockett.

The Kentuckian is a star turn, although Wildfire plays off other characters as well. The name "Luminary" appears in earlier versions of *Lion* as the name of an Englishman. Later, Mrs. Trollope/Mrs. Wallope needed some tweaking when she returned to England with Hackett, and Barnard introduced Mrs. Luminary, who wanted to "illuminate" the Americans regarding their need for education and culture. Her trip from England to New York provided enough for her tablet and pen, but Wildfire – who lived even greater distances West – was an overwhelming presence, untamed, unshackled by fine manners or education.[345] Wildfire's wooing of Wallope is hard, fast and bawdy: he will "fix her flint," hammer her in a wagon, offer her "husbandry," and a "mighty heap of boys." She calls him a brute and savage, but eventually succumbs to the Western pressure and desire for settlement and family.

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[345] Mrs. Cornwell Baron-Wilson, *Our Actresses* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1844), 90. Mrs. Luminary was played by a Mrs. Gibbs. If this was the same actress mentioned in *The Biography of the British Stage* (1824), she was born in 1772, was George Colman's lover and muse, and specialized in women's roles like that of Mrs. Candour in *School for Scandal*. Mrs. Gibbs would have been in her 60s for *The Kentuckian* – but reports noted she appeared much younger onstage than her years indicated. Hackett, born in 1800, was nearly half her age as *Wildfire*.

Wildfire's relationship with the servant, Caesar, presents questions about the interpretation of the latter character among the different versions of the play. In the Bernard scripts, Mrs. Wallope mistakes Caesar for a slave, and is quickly corrected by the horrified man:

> Caesar
> Slave! I hab de honor to inform you dat I am a free gemman of color!
>
> Mrs. Wallope
> A free gentleman of color? I thought all black people in America were slaves?
>
> Caesar
> No, marm, only in the suddern states. Here de color'd gemman support trade and help to polish society.

Caesar, in the tradition of Job Jerryson in *A Trip to Niagara*, has no intention of being silent about his position in society; he does not allow the error to go uncorrected, and stands his ground against the imperious Wallope.

But the Promptbook version is very different. The following lines were entered into the script, and then lined out; whether or when they were performed is unknown:

> Mrs. Luminary
> Very well! Now my poor slave—
>
> Caesar
> Slabe! I hab de honor to inform you -- not as I know's on [sic] I am a free black gemmen ob color.
>
> Mrs. Luminary
> A free black gentleman of color! Indeed! I thought <u>all</u> the blacks in America were slaves.
>
> Caesar
> No maam. only dem lowest kind of black niggers dat goes up de chimbles but de true colored gemman walks right into de very first societies and polishes all de understandings. (<u>pointing to his shoes</u>).

Mrs. Luminary
Then sir, I suppose you consider yourself my equal. Display none of your freedom in my presence!

Caesar.
What maarm! You wish to stinguish cibil liberty?

Mrs. Luminary
Civil liberty! Certainly not, but impertinent liberty, familiarity, sir, so keep you distance and answer some questions respecting the state of manners in this city.

Mrs. Luminary is shocked to discover a free Black in America: England would not pass the Abolition of Slavery Act until August, 1833, months after the English debut of *The Kentuckian*.

Continuing with the Promptbook, Caesar is later abused by Wildfire, who shows a roughness typical of slave state Kentuckians. He maligns Caesar as a black snake, kicks him to the ground during a dance, and threatens him with death after Wildfire mistakenly tries to revive him with a kiss. Regardless of who wrote them – Paulding, Stone, Bernard or Hackett – the jokes were racist:

Mrs. Luminary
What Sir is one free citizen of America averse to one of another color?
Wildfire
[The Niggers! why no, madam, but they're such lazy varmints. I had one once myself, he caught the fever and ague---the fever he kept, but the] ague wouldn't stay with him.

Mrs. Luminary
Indeed! why not?
Wildfire
He was too lazy to shake.[346]

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[346] Bernard, *The Kentuckian*, 30-31.

Given the lined-out dialogue, it is unclear whether the English, and later American, audiences understood Caesar's status as a free man, or whether this mattered at all. A "servant" in the American West often meant a slave, but regardless of how the audience perceived Caesar, they would have seen him portrayed by a white actor in blackface.

Perhaps the most "western" scene in the Promptbook (at least for 1833 audiences) was the duel between Jenkins and Wildfire. Jenkins, the Englishman, expects to talk his way out of the misadventure, as Wildfire calmly dismisses any protestations and prepares to fight with rifles at close range: "Pistols? Oh, nonsense. Good for nothing popguns that are sure to lodge the ball in you and wound your feelings. A rifle sends it clean through, clean as a whistle." Jenkins is terrorized into running away, leaving the West triumphant, and demonstrating what Americans had always believed: the English were effete cowards.

Wildfire's behavior and dress are pointed out in the Promptbook as those of a country man with little education. The only known illustration of Hackett as the character of Wildfire shows a costume of a fringed and furred hunting frock, a fur hat (of an apparently unknown species) with a front-hanging tail, and a Kentucky long rifle with flint.[347] The outfit is loosely based upon the gear in the common view of a backwoodsman. Ironically, David Crockett wore a hunting shirt while stumping for votes in the backwoods, but he dressed conservatively in jacket and stock when Congress was in session. Crockett like Daniel Boone, preferred a wool or felted hat, and did not wear a

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[347] Paulding, *Lion of the West*, frontispiece. The ca. 1833 illustration of James Henry Hackett as Wildfire was based on a portrait of the actor.

coonskin cap. Wildfire's clothing reflects his backwoods behavior, and his stage persona matched.

Although there are almost no suggestions of blocking in the Promptbook (other than placement on stage and curtain cues), the script certainly gave Hackett opportunities to leap, dance and shoot. When meeting Mrs. Luminary, Wildfire straddles a chair, and wishes he could put his feet out the window to cool them.[348] When Wildfire attends the dance at the Freeman's home, he stops the orchestra, orders them to play the rousing tune "Speed the Plow," and begins a wild dance which ends with his kicking the syllabub tray from Caesar's hands.[349] Wildfire's rambunctious behavior ends the act as he throws money about freely; later, he offers financial help to Percival, suggesting the Englishman "draw like a horse," from Wildfire's accounts. It is the money that attracts Mrs. Luminary, who is in search of a way to finance her school and at the end of the play,

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[348] The addition of the Trollope/Luminary character was timely: Frances Trollope published *Domestic Manners of the Americans* in 1832 and was at the height of her fame (or infamy) in 1833. She impacted the theatre outside of her double, "Mrs. Luminary" – it became popular for audience members to cry out "Trollope" whenever one spied the outré behaviors described by her. Maybe they changed the name to avoid too much attention?

[349] John S. C. Abbott, *David Crockett: His Life and Adventures* (New York: Dodd & Mead, 1874), 260ff. This was based upon a foul description of Crockett during a visit to the White House. His political enemies published stories in 1828 portraying Crockett as a boor: "The first thing I did, said Davy, after I got to Washington, was to go to the President's. I stepped into the President's house…Then I saw a man coming along carrying a great glass thing, with a glass handle below, something like a candlestick. It was stuck full of little glass cups, with something in them that looked good to eat. Says I, 'Mister, bring that thing here.' Thinks I, let's taste them first. They were mighty sweet and good, so I took six of them. If I didn't, I wish I may be shot!" The caricature was so vicious, that a group of Crockett's constituents insisted he refute it.

Wildfire provides his family and friends with free land in Kentucky: here is the West as an endless bank account for the benefit of the East.

The Bernard A/B scripts have Wallope stalk off vowing she will write her book and "posterity shall judge between" the barbarity of America and the polish of England.[350] The Promptbook offers an entirely new ending to the Wildfire saga: Mrs. Luminary agrees to wed the colonel. Although she claims her reputation would suffer if she refused, there is little to indicate that she is averse to the match:

> Mrs. Luminary
> What can I do? If I refuse to marry him after what has passed, my character may suffer and if I consent?
>
> Freeman
> My dear Madam, let me congratulate you.
>
> Mrs. Luminary
> Well colonel if you will <u>have</u> it, there's my hand. But remember I give it you only on one condition, that for the first month after we are married you neither will call me a screamer, nor yourself a horse.

Here England (Mrs. Wallope) is finally overlooking the roughness of American ways in exchange for financial security – and perhaps a bit of matrimonial fun with the irrepressible backwoods Colonel. It appears that the change was a success, for *The Kentuckian* proved popular with English audiences: "Mr. Hackett continuing to be honoured with rapturous approbation in the character of Colonel Nimrod Wildfire, and the whole performance having been received with incessant bursts of laughter and applause, The New Farce of *The Kentuckian* or A Trip to New York, will be repeated To-

[350] James Tidwell, ed. *The Lion of the West*, 62.

Morrow, Saturday, and Monday next."[351] From stage manager notes in the Promptbook, it appears that the "wedding" version was performed in America as well: Memphis, Philadelphia, New Orleans and Baltimore are all listed, along with dates and managers.[352] Hackett had his starring vehicle, and traveled in it comfortably for nearly three decades.[353]

The Lion of the West and *The Kentuckian* helped popularize the backwoods image as the wild West of emerging myths. Despite the thicket of authors and script versions and in spite (or because of) the political motivations for the play Wildfire remained the only the reason for the show. Perhaps the most famous western character in the nineteenth century, Wildfire remains difficult to analyze. Scholars have only a single illustration of Hackett as Wildfire: in the portrait, Hackett is in costume and appears taut as a spring ready to release. Hackett holds his rifle at the ready, legs apart, and waiting for whatever comes at him. His clothing blends elegance and homespun, a fur collar, and fringed hunting frock; underneath the frock appears a dark vest or coat, a white stock,

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[352] Bernard, *Promptbook*, 32.

[353] Interestingly, Hackett wrote a short story in imitation of a Wildfire tale in1834, under the title "Original Tales of the West: A Kentuckian's Account of a Panther-Fight." The story appeared in *The New-York Mirror* February 8, 1834, and is about a hunter who saves his dog from a panther, only to be attacked by panther is return, and saved by the dog, who expires from the effort. There is very little humor in the piece, except for the language – the dog dies at the end, so it appears Hackett would have wrung both laughs and pathos from the tale: "My dog grew mighty loving- he jumped a-top and seized her by the neck, so we all rolled and clawed and a pretty considerable tight scratch we had of it." When he was about to kill the panther, the hunter declared himself "savagerous," a lovely portmanteau word of savage and dangerous. The death of the dog must have caused audiences to tear up, and the piece appears to be a character sketch for the stage. Although the story's origin is unclear, it is possible that may have been an original part from *The Kentuckian*, and published here much as the "floating hat" story had been in 1831.

gaitered trousers and slim-cut boots. Hackett/Wildfire scowls into the distance, daring any man to be sure he is right before he goes ahead with the battle. It is a stage – and staged – image of a Western myth and, whether done purposefully or not, the portrait of Hackett as Wildfire bears an eerie resemblance, in attire and physiognomy, to David Crockett.[354] This blending of the actor, the character, the politician and the myth could only have impressed audiences with the power of the West to shape men in its image.

Since there are few records of how Hackett portrayed Wildfire, and no scripts that include Hackett's improvisations, analyzing Wildfire's motivations can be done only through the script. It is clear that Wildfire is inspired by his love of his natal land and his sense of fairness and honesty:

> Well, look here, Percival---I like an honest man let him come from what land he may and perhaps I like John Bull the best because we all come from one mother hen, tho' our brood was hatched this side of the water, but I hate a cheating possum, and if you are] only sure this lord is a possum.[355]

He is willing to extend his hand to a former enemy, but he is implacable if someone is a possum: a faker who hisses when cornered, then hightails it home or falls over dead. Wildfire is defined by two characteristics which ensured survival in the wilderness: the will to fight and the ability to accept (and enjoy) new adventures:

> Poh, says I, what do I keer for that? I can tote a steam boat up the Mississippi and over the Alleghany mountains. My father can whip the best man in old Kaintuck, and I can whip my father. When I'm good natured I weigh about a hundred and seventy, but when I'm mad, I weigh a ton. With that I fetched him the regular Ingen

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[354] William C. Davis, *Three Roads to the Alamo*, facing 204. Davis notes that the Hackett portrait was often mistaken for that of Crockett, and especially after it appeared in *Davy Crockett's Almanack* by 1837.

[355] Bernard, *Promptbook*, 25.

> warwhoop. Out he jumped from his boat, and down I tumbled from my waggon---and, I say, we came together like two steam boats going sixty mile an hour. He was a pretty severe colt, but no part of a priming to such a feller as me. I put it to him mighty droll---tickled the varmint till he squealed like a young colt, bellowed "enough" and swore I was a "rip staver." Says I, ain't I a horse? Says he, stranger, you're a beauty anyhow, and if you'd stand for Congress I'd vote for you next lection. Says I, would you? My name's Nimrod Wildfire. Why, I'm the yaller flower of the forest. I'm all brimstone but the head and that's aky fortis.[356]

Wildfire's baroque language moves from challenge ("What do I keer for that?") through boast, battle and victory to acceptance of audience admiration ("you're a beauty anyhow") and finally to self-admiration and boasting once again ("I'm the yaller flower of the forest".) It is this last which sets Wildfire, with Oppossum and the Boatman, apart from earlier American stage characters. Wildfire is not the noble, doomed hero from Metamora nor the naïve Yankee in *The Contrast.* He sizes up a conflict, makes his choices and wades right in to despair of enemies:

> Wildfire
> Well, we'll have the engagement right off. Here, take your choice of these rifles. Either of them will do, any thing but talk.
> (Forces a rifle into Jenkins hand)
>
> Jenkins
> Fight with rifles! Does the man take me for a Buffalo? (Aside)
>
> Wildfire
> I believe he's going to skulk. I must warm his blood a bit. A word in your ear: hang me, but I think you're a possum.
>
> Jenkins
> What's a possum?
> Wildfire
> If that don't make him fight, he's a trifling feller!

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[356] Ibid, 26.

Jenkins

Here's a pleasant situation! in one word sir, I refuse to fight you today.

Wildfire

Come, come, stranger. You have called me out, and if you think to get rid of me without exchanging a shot, you might as well try to scull a potash kettle up the falls of Niagara, with a crowbar for an oar.[357]

This boasting represents the dichotomy of American society during the Jacksonian era. The country was secure and confident in its abilities to defeat the enemy (British), expand its holdings and settle the land. But the country was changing from a solely agricultural economy to industrialization, the older leaders such as Adams and Jefferson were passing away, and the East was now faced with embracing and shaping the West. Heroes such as Jackson, Crockett, and Wildfire were needed in order to reassure Americans that the "can-do" attitude of the American Revolution and the War of 1812 would continue, and that the country could survive. The industrialization of the East was a bewildering process, resulting in new work hours, crowded and unhealthy factory towns, mass emigrations to cities. Wildfire and his kind offered Jacksonian America a reminder that there was a place where free spirits could drink, royster, honor and battle: the West as Valhalla of the new heroes.[358] There, the Westerner outwits all others because he knows no boundaries, and if he fails at the game, he shrugs, takes a drink, and tries again, being reborn daily. He had all the space and all the time in the

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[357] Bernard, *Promptbook*, 29-30.

[358] Michael Allen, 24. Allen posits that nostalgia for the past helped create the Western hero, who replaced past heroes like Israel Putnam and Oliver Hazard Perry. The Knickerbocker writers were among the first to use nostalgia to create characters, but their nostalgia.

world, or so it seemed. But the expansive enjoyment of the new world did not extend to everyone. Wildfire's chauvinism towards Blacks reflected the general fears of white America during a time when the Missouri Compromise slashed the country along a racial dividing line.[359] "Skulk you infernal black snake" Wildfire warns Caesar, chasing him off, also calling him a "nigger" and threatening to eat him whole for dressing in Mrs. Luminary's clothing.[360] The West may have been extensive but in Wildfire's world it had no space for Blacks unless slaves.

His admiration of women and their accomplishments is sincere: "Well, uncle, how are the women---how's Aunt and how's cousin Carry? You writ me she's going it on the big figure, in the Edication line---understands Trignometry and Metyfustian and all that. Why, I say, she must be a sneezer!"[361] But women are still to be wedded, bedded, and raise small Wildfires in the West:

Wildfire
Husbandry? I thought you meant that.

Mrs. Luminary
Yes, schools, Colonel.

Wildfire
Then go with me. I'll get you a mighty heap of boys.

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[359] Barile, 29. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 banned slavery outside of the proposed state of Missouri but allowed the institution within Missouri's boundaries. In writing the Compromise, Congress thought it less inflammatory to say where slavery was not allowed, rather than to say where it was allowed: "That in all that territory ceded by France to the United States, under the name of Louisiana, which lies north of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes north latitude, not included within the limits of the state…slavery and involuntary servitude, …shall be, and is hereby, forever prohibited."

[360] Barnard, *Promptbook*, 14, 15, 31.

[361] Bernard, 9.

There is no refusing this proposal, and so England as Luminary come under the spell and control of the West.

Colonel Nimrod Wildfire was born in the image of David Crockett and raised by Paulding, Stone, Bernard and Hackett. The stage hero may have been associated with the politics of the day and reflected the fear of the future but he soon grew beyond the control of any single group or playwright. Wildfire took on a life of his own and provided audiences with anyone they needed at the time: hero, jokester, fool or inspiration. Paulding's offspring may have been Crockett on the surface but underneath, Wildfire was the Jacksonian spirit: "the most roaring, rollicking, game-cocking, card-playing, mischievous fellow."[362]

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[362] John Meacham, *American Lion* (New York: Random House, 2008), 20.

Chapter VI – Conclusion

Even as the fire of the Civil War flickered, exploded and burned the country to ashes, James Hackett continued to portray the aging Nimrod Wildfire. A character who entered in his prime (Hackett was 31 in 1831), Wildfire flared up as late as 1865, if the promptbook is to be believed.[363] By this time, however, while it "amused …most of its jokes had lost their point by the changes of time place and circumstances."[364] Hackett, the West, and theatre on the frontier changed enormously between 1821 and 1865. No longer were Indian plays mourning the loss of the native peoples, no longer was the American Revolution a point of pride, of service, of ancestry. Manifest destiny had begun to accomplish its vision, the transcontinental railroad would connect the coasts, and William Cody as Buffalo Bill take to the stage, himself a theatrical invention of Ned Buntline.[365] Plays like *The Far West*, *Across the Continent* and *The Forty-Niners* moved beyond the early settlement days, pulling the West along behind them, and setting up

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[363] The promptbook contains signatures of stage managers and dates as late as 1867, with shows noted in Memphis, Buffalo and New Orleans, although it is difficult to tell whether the later signatures indicated productions with Hackett; if so, then he played Wildfire for more than 36 years.

[364] William I. Paulding, *Literary Life of James K. Paulding* (New York: Charles Scribner and Company, 1867), 219. Hackett, at the time writing to Paulding's son and literary executor, noted he had acted Wildfire for more than 20 years.

[365] Louis S. Warren, *Buffalo Bill's America* (New York: Knopf, 2005), 112ff. "Ned Buntline" was the pen name of Edward Zane Carroll Judson (E.Z.C. Judson). Buntline is credited with, if not inventing the dime novel, then taking it to new heights of popularity in the 1870s. He authored the play *Scouts of the Plains* in 1872, that starred William Cody, and as a Cincinnati columnist noted "*The Scouts*…have become the lions of the stage." Warren points out that Cody attended at least one play based on his exploits, and stood up to the cheers of the audience, much as Crockett did with Hackett.

camp to offer overwrought melodramas. The frontier was segmenting, drying up, heading towards the day when Frederick Jackson Turner would declare it dead and closed. It was no longer the old frontier of Nutmeg, Leather-stocking and Wildfire, with its raucous and physical comedy, neologisms, and outrageous, exotic characters.

Written within a single decade, 1821-1831, *The Pedlar*, *A Trip to Niagara* and *The Lion of the West* presented widely differing visions of the West. Each play has been examined as to how it defined and depicted the West through language, characters, settings, story and other factors. Each play has been placed into historical context and the playwrights' biographies examined for interconnections and sources of frontier themes. But there remains to be examined how the plays' visions of the West supported or contradicted each other, as well as how audiences responded to those visions.

Seeing the Elephant

The many depictions and descriptions of "West" and "frontier" discussed in this study indicate there was no common agreement among nineteenth century Americans about the concepts and therefore, little agreement regarding the presentation of the West onstage. Still, there were some basic components of these concepts shared among the plays. Historians Leonard Thompson and Howard Lamar defined a frontier as requiring "territory; two or more initially distinct peoples; and the process by that the relations among the peoples in territory begin, develop and eventually crystallize."[366] This description well suits a theatrical production, and the three playwrights in this study did

[366] Leonard Thompson and Howard Lamar, "Comparative Frontier History," in the *Frontier in History: North American and Southern Africa Compared*, Leonard Thompson and Howard Lamar, eds. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 3ff.

in fact, depict their West as a frontier, using territory (setting), peoples (characters and audiences) and relations (plots) to enact the region. Wetmore, Dunlap, and Paulding may not have related the same story, but in sharing the dramatic components by that to frame and create their stories they set up a theatrical portrayal of the West, both as the method and the style. The West was big, bold and new, and suited the storytelling methods of theatre as well, if not better, than a book.

This storytelling was not only a common process of dramatic creation among the playwrights, but it would become a trademark of the West. In speaking of films, social historian Elliot West noted that "Westerns did not arise in the West and go eastward to tell the world about that country and its people. They were born in the East, then marched beyond the Missouri," a process that well described Wetmore, Dunlap and Paulding as playwrights, physically and figuratively.[367] Once in the West, the playwrights discovered that plot, characters or language changed from what they would have been in Manhattan: "[T]he West," noted Elliot West, "was fundamentally separate, the nation's geographical "other."[368] This detachment, this independence from the East, forced Wetmore and Paulding to record or create new language to describe what they and their characters experienced: steamboats, and alligator horses, Mike Fink, and roarers and screamers. For Dunlap and Leather-stocking, they sought the geographical other because separation was

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[367] Elliot West, *The Way to the West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 132.

[368] Ibid.

freedom, in the shape of wild men and wild animals: "What's worth living for, here? I am going far west, with the deer and the Indians."[369]

A third connection among the playwrights is their use of Western myth to anchor their stories. In each of the plays a hero emerges from the backwoods to defend the West and then returns to its embrace. Whether it is Oppossum and Mike Fink wrestling for the honor of being champion, or Wildfire dueling for his cousin's honor (and thus, America's) or Leather-stocking protecting an English visitor, all the heroes are triumphant and then return West to their homes.[370]

The West's "awayness," its sense of being "them" in opposition to the Eastern "us," forced Wetmore, Dunlap, and Paulding to step back from the familiar and imagine how the world might appear from the opposite geographic side of America. This displacement created a new dramatic lens for examining the world, a Western lens. And while each playwright saw something different, by sharing the lens they remained connected.

All three plays view the West as land of myth and possibilities: here an outsider like Nutmeg might find the pot of gold, or Leather-stocking stop the march of time and settlement. By the time of the plays, many personal accounts of the West appeared in newspapers and magazines, written by men and women who had seen the elephant for themselves.[371] The missionary Timothy Flint wrote that the western landscape was "of a

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[369] Dunlap, *A Trip to Niagara*, 33.

[370] In Irish legend, the land of Tír na nÓg (Land of Youth) is in the West on an island near the setting sun. This is where heroes never age and time moves slowly. In Missouri, the folk saying "Before I catch the train west" indicates "before I die."

higher grandeur and intensity than on the east side of the mountains. Nature has a deeper and richer dash of poetry in her composition," and then asserted that "the Atlantic states have nothing to compare with the rivers of the west."[372] The land was "mighty and bold," the "loftiness of the hills" awe-inspiring, the trees had no equals. This was a place where stories and characters must suit the geography, and to place this all on stage would prove a challenge. Wetmore, Dunlap or Paulding could do one of two things to reveal the West in its glory onstage: experience the West for themselves, or translate others' experiences into their own.

Wetmore chose to use experience, and so he employed local language and local concerns. He is not as interested in the physicality of the land or in the description of the frontier or the shape of the West as he is in the people who live on the land. His few notions of the geography include the mention of a cabin on a road, a town (presumably where the Fourth of July celebration and auction take place), a river (implied by the entrance of the Boatman) and the woods, but beyond these no description of the land is provided. Wetmore gets at the land through the people, language and action, through a layering of images which Elliot West describes as a way of giving a land "its peculiar, mental mythic shape."[373] Oppossum in his buckskins is every settler, not the sly Yankee

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[371] *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, "elephant," accessed October 20, 2009. "Seeing the elephant" was a phrase that gained popularity by the 1830s, but its first use probably predated that. It meant "to see the world," to see something beyond home. One apocryphal story tells of a farmer in town on market day who saw a traveling circus walk by. His horses spooked and turned over the wagon, ruining all the farmer's produce. But he didn't care about the loss because, he said, "he had seen the elephant."

[372] *The New-York Mirror*, June 16, 1832, 5.

[373] West, 139.

but a whoopass wildcat big enough to fill the prairie by himself. Mike Fink was as real as John Chapman, David Crockett and Daniel Boone: too many men had felt his fists to argue otherwise. Fink steps onto the stage for a few minutes in his "glazed leather hat, red flannel shirt and linen overalls" and sings the soundings that echoed over the land and warned folks of shallow waters and hard times ahead.[374] His declaration, "I'm a steamboat, damn your eyes," would have sounded like a crack of thunder on a New York stage, but along the St. Louis waterfront, it only echoed to laughter and recognition from the audience.

Because of this local recognition, *The Pedlar* reflected its surroundings and was at its finest when presented to its own people.[375] Fink and Oppossum might have walked off the docks into the St. Louis theatre, taken their seats and cheered themselves on. This sense of being within one's place, of owning the West as it is shown onstage, is what sets *The Pedlar* apart from *A Trip to Niagara* and *Lion of the West*. For a land to exist it requires bedrock, soil and water; for a place to exist, it requires land as well as history; for a community to exist, it requires land, history and people.[376] Cultural geographers suggest that in order to tell a place's story, the teller requires knowledge of the physical setting, the history ("what humans have done there") and the meaning of that history for

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[374] Wetmore, *The Pedlar*, 14. The Boatman's cry of "quarter less twain" indicated 10½ feet, safe enough for a raft.

[375] *The Pedlar* scripts – at least those that can be traced –followed the Mississippi River south and the Missouri west.

[376] West, 139.

its people.[377] But what this does not take into account is personal experience. Wetmore collected the "texts," the "basic source, the pure stream" of his neighbors and fellow river men, and poured it back to them enriched by a sense of joy and fun.[378] *The Pedlar* was simply the art of the folk, and folk art needs to be accurate because people viewing the art recognize their own lives. Wetmore wrote of the land and the West with an intense personal sense of the people and the land:

> In this hunt we were mounted on their well-fed saddle horses, that Gall said outsnorted the biggest buck he ever seed! and they flew over the level prairie a little swifter than a streak of pale blue lightning, chasing a switch-tailed salamander to kingdom come!...There," said my comrade, "when that full team of barr dogs reach him, his hide won't hold shucks in two minutes! they'll swallow him without greasing, a leetle slicker than the earthquake did New Madrid.[379]

Wetmore recorded the folk language ten years before either Paulding or Crockett gained the attention of newspapers for their "Western" vocabularies. His humor is obvious, with puns taking the lead ("Light up your own empty scull" growls Old Prairie, when Oppossum wonders if the lanterns will work.) Mike Fink swears he won't gouge, if Oppossum won't bite off an ear, and the two "disappear fighting." They later sit with blackened eyes among their hunting dogs, drink themselves happy on rum, and discuss the economic problems of the West. ("We must encourage domestic manufactures" offers Fink, the Boatman.) Wetmore wrote for an audience filled with soldiers, wives, scholars, printers, government workers, and illiterate rivermen. To reach such a group, Wetmore

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[377] Ibid.

[378] Richard M. Dorson, *Buying the Wind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 1.

[379] Alphonso Wetmore, *Gazetteer of Missouri* (St. Louis: Charles Keemle, 1837), 332.

had to recreate their world in a nutshell, and make them laugh at their own blusterations and nonsense. Perhaps his humor was obvious but it was familiar: he even managed to include risqué jokes that have always been at home in the West.[380] The audience was in on the joke from the start. Although Wetmore cast his stories in the shape and form of a playscript, *The Pedlar* was, in fact, storytelling by and among a specific cultural group. Despite the formal setting of a theatre, Wetmore's audience was waiting to join in performance about their own lives, to allow a storyteller to reflect their lives on a stage.[381]

The West may have been a place of authenticity and greatness, of expansiveness and bunkum, but bunkum can exist only when everyone is in on the joke.

Wetmore's stage vision of his frontier life did not travel outside the boundaries of the West, and thus *The Pedlar* remained locked inside the West, a myth for its own people. Yet as knowledge of the West and stories of its wonders began to appear east of the Mississippi River, the region gained status as a place apart. Travel journals were published –the most famous about The Corps of Discovery – and newspapers filled with news of exploration.[382] The West was looming on the horizon and stories about the

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[380] Old Continental mourns the thought that "every pert little Miss thinks me too old to mount guard" and Harry Emigrant promises Mary that he'll "never give up the ship while I had a sound timber in my body."

[381] Richard Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1977), 16. Wetmore's script uses many of the "communicative means" noted by Bauman to indicate that a story is about to be performed. Special language (Western vocabulary and sayings), appeal to tradition (Old Continental's stories of Bunker Hill), figurative language (comparing a man to a ship), paralinguistic features (stage directions) are all evident. Wetmore was not creating a play for outsiders, but a story for those inside the frame of performance, including the audience.

region were unavoidable, but eastern playwrights presumably did not see a great western figure big enough to attract audiences to the stage. Despite this apparent gap, the West had, in fact, entered into the popular imagination.

William Dunlap was seemingly uninterested in the West or frontier in *A Trip to Niagara*, yet the play is important for what it foreshadowed of the West's future: in Leatherstocking, Dunlap made flesh the men who would later destroy the West. But for now, audiences packed the theatre only to see places they might never visit, and had no intention of visiting. They enjoyed the new and novel: a moving painting of the land. Gothamites wanted to experience the awe and grandeur of Nature, to feel small in her presence, to recreate the sense of an all-encompassing wilderness as depicted by Thomas Cole in his painting "Daniel Boone Sitting at the Door of His Cabin on the Great Osage Lake, Kentucky" (1826).[383] Audiences, however, wanted a clean and neat frontier, and did not want to wet their feet or muddy their boots while experiencing the wilderness.

Dunlap as writer had no personal sense of the trans-Mississippi West, yet he created one for *A Trip to Niagara*. It was a place where the old America goes to die, pursued by the twin harpies of civilization and neatness. Unlike Wetmore's lively Oppossum and simple staging, Dunlap's Leather-stocking is a defeated figure, losing the

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[382] Barile, 13. Wetmore was part of the Yellowstone Expedition, a government and military project meant to explore the upper Missouri and Yellowstone rivers. The head engineer, Stephen Long, wrote long dispatches about the western lands and newspapers reported frequently about the expedition's success and travails.

[383] Cole's depiction of Boone was painted six years after the frontiersman's death, and drew from Chester Harding's portrait for inspiration. Nearly 30 years later, George Caleb Bingham would paint Boone "Escorting Settlers Through the Cumberland Gap." Bingham – who studied with Chester Harding – lived on the frontier in Franklin MO, a neighbor of Alphonso Wetmore. Bingham wanted the painting to be the first of its kind, showing emigration as triumphal entry into the promised land.

freedom of his land, dwarfed onstage by the special effects of Niagara Falls and a moving diorama. This Leather-stocking is the subverted image of Daniel Boone (an inspiration for Leather-stocking), who lost his Kentucky holdings, lived with his son, and ranged the West as the frontier closed behind him. Boone loved the wilderness and he refused to imagine its demise, perhaps because he knew how much wilderness there was. Oppossum doesn't give a tinker's damn about tomorrow, but lives in the West and the wilderness for today alone. Leather-stocking, however, grew under the pens of men who never experienced the West and imagined it only as an extension of the East: compact and manageable once enough people were in place. For Leather-stocking's audiences, the West would, and must, become the East if America was to remain whole.

Dunlap's claim (and the agreement of historians) that he created the plot of *A Trip to Niagara* to suit the art overlooks something far more telling: Dunlap reduced the West to a show. By choosing Leatherstocking, an image of the lost New York frontier, and placing him into a comedy, Dunlap scraped away the granite-edged sadness of the original character. Cooper's Leatherstocking/Natty Bumppo/Hawkeye knows he is a dying breed: the last man to understand the Indians from the heart out, the last man to claim the woods as free to all and owned by none. Leather-stocking moves between two world, white and Indian: when first seen by Amelia, she comments: "Is he an Indian? A wild and noble figure. An Indian?" and her brother replies: "I hope so – yes – yet he don't look like the wax Indian in the museum at New York."[384] Leather-stocking is a

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[384] Winifred Howe. *A History of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum, 1913), 74. Wentworth is probably referring to Reuben Peale's Museum and Gallery of the Fine Arts (or the New York Museum), that opened in 1825 at 252 Broadway. Peale, in copying the work of his brother Rembrandt Peale, provided

joke from the start, a wax image. Although he immediately places himself apart from the forest – "No, I am a white skin…Pure white, without a cross" – Leather-stocking is now apart from the East, and must seek for acceptance in the West.

Dunlap also emphasizes Leather-stocking's age. The hunter describes the Catskill Mountains and Hudson Valley in times past, the Revolution and the days before settlement.[385] He uses ancient, quaint words such as "anan" and "painter." He wears the panther's skin as a reminder of his great battle with Nature. He walks the woods rather than take a steamboat or even a horse. For all Dunlap's comic touch within the rest of the play, Leather-stocking is musty and ancient, the last of his breed, darting deeper and deeper into the woods for protection, only to emerge onstage in full light, where he is an object of laughter. He is the old frontier, moving west to the new frontier. He is fleeing civilization, and hopes to die alone. Like Boone, Leather-stocking brings with him the infection of the new: he pushes on only to open the land he loves to the emigrant, the peddler, the artist, and the fool. Dunlap's entertainment may have been created to accompany a panorama, but onstage there was a panorama of another kind: a visionary destruction of the wilderness, a warning, an exultation, a triumph in canvas, footlights and dialogue. Dunlap's view of the West was as a region crying out for settlement of its land was far distant from Wetmore's theatre vision of possibilities on the land. Was Dunlap more patriotic than Wetmore in his vision of the West? For his time, perhaps. In

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history, art and science as entertainment. One of the most popular events at Reuben Peale's museum was the unwrapping of mummies for an audience; the museum and presumably, the Indian, were later purchased by Barnum. Note that William Bayley Bernard's play, *The Mummy*, was turned into the farce *The Virginia Mummy* by "Daddy" Rice, and influenced Poe's story.

[385] Leatherstocking was 70 in *The Pioneers*.

using Fenimore Cooper's image of Leather-stocking, Dunlap supported the belief in settlement and civilization of all America. Wetmore, however, he chose to stay in the West and accept the wild land for what it was: in all of Wetmore's essays, he never voiced a hope of domination over the West.

The third playwright in this triumvirate, James Kirke Paulding, cared only for characters and nothing about life in the West. He did not visit, he had heard little of the language, and he crafted Wildfire from imagination and newspaper clippings. That Wildfire was "the West" infuriated those across the Mississippi. Among the critics was Daniel Drake who thundered about Cooper and Paulding and their depictions of the West:

> [The writings fail] because Mr. Cooper in his *Prairie*, and Mr. Paulding in his *Westward Ho!*, is conclusive evidence, that in delineating the West, no power of genius, can supply the want of opportunities for personal observation on our natural and social aspects. No western man can read those works with interest; because of their want of conformity to the circumstances and character of the country, in that the scenes are laid. [386]

Drake was perhaps the loudest critic when it came to suggesting that the West should create its own literature, and not depend upon outsiders like Paulding. Drake also suggested something that must have shocked many in the East: the West was not a region filled with fools dependent upon imported books and plays. The West was a place where educated men and women were aware of their lives and surroundings and had come to expect an accurate depiction of such. No wonder Wildfire was booed in St. Louis: he was

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[386] Daniel Drake, *Discourse on the His tory, Character, and Prospects of the West* (Cincinnati: Truman and Smith, 1834), 55. Drake was a medical doctor and historian who grew up and studied in the East, but like his near contemporary, Wetmore, Drake settled and practiced in the West.

an outsider trying sound like the West, while Oppossum breathed the language as naturally as air.

Paulding admitted that the West could be the place for new literature – and new theatre:

> I have always looked for something new or original in the literature of the West, and have seldom been disappointed. It seems to me that if we are ever to have a national literature, characteristic and original it will grow up far distant from the shores of the Atlantic where every gale comes tainted with the moral, political, and intellectual corruption of European degeneracy, and where the imitative faculty seems exercised to the exclusion of all others…I have observed that the new Republics rising in such vigorous grandeur in the vast regions of the Mississippi Valley, are turning with a new and primitive race, that while it possesses all the natural strength and energy of mind to think for itself, at the same time cherishes the love of literature and the Arts. Such a people is already great and will become greater, if it retains the courage to think for itself.[387]

But while Paulding agreed that the West needed its own literature, he obviously did not believe that the West was ready to produce its own literature, dramatic or otherwise. He also makes the point that the "primitive" race, while vigorous, has not yet started to think for itself and requires good literature (that of the East) to educate them aesthetically. Paulding and Dunlap echoed each other's beliefs that the educated classes could improve the under classes through the mediums of literature and theatre. This suggests that the use of stories (or plays) created in the West might be acceptable only if told in the sophisticated style of the East or by an Easterner. Paulding's Wildfire was familiar to audiences because they had read about David Crockett and "heard" his language through

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[387] Ralph Aderman, ed. *The Letters of James Kirke Paulding* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), 58.

the use of "eye dialect" in newspaper articles. Whether it was accurate did not really matter: the audiences were there to be entertained. Unlike Wetmore, who lived among an audience that daily experienced western life, Paulding had no need to understand the West before creating Wildfire.

Finally, the question remains: why, in any case, did Americans need these three plays at all? They were, after all, only plays, stories that lasted an hour or less and then faded into the fly space. On the surface perhaps, they mattered not all, at least not in the way that science or new inventions mattered: no one who attended *A Trip to Niagara* went out inspired to build a better steamboat. But when relating America's story, the way in that it was done mattered immensely to audiences and historians.

Wetmore, Dunlap, and Paulding chose different ways to tell the story of the West: Wetmore spoke from inside the region, while Dunlap and Paulding spoke from outside about the region. *The Pedlar* was "true" to its local sense: Wetmore evidently based some of his characters on friends and townspeople and the cast was drawn from within the community.[388] Although few Missourians were born there, they supported the idea of seeing themselves onstage, and in sharing this sense of self and place with their neighbors. They were not "Westerners," at least not in the sense of having a long history there, but they were Westerners in the sense of adapting to the land and remaining on it and true to it.[389]

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[388] The exceptions were the actresses, as few local women would have set foot on stage.

[389] While it is unclear where many of *The Pedlar* cast went after 1821, it is known that Wetmore, his friends Bennett Riley, John Paxton (the Boatman), and Benjamin Larned (the play's dedicatee), as well as Wetmore's commanding officer, Henry Atkinson, remained in the West for the rest of their lives and careers.

Dunlap's *A Trip to Niagara* was the opposite of Wetmore's *The Pedlar*: A Trip presented to audiences a West that was an unknown and ill-described place. The West was only a symbol for Dunlap: the end goal of manifest destiny, but when or where might never be discovered. This West was ill-defined, with unclear edges and borders, a misty place beyond the rivers. The stage West drew Leather-stocking onward, siren-like, but Dunlap made no pretense about Leather-stocking seeking an actual place, like Missouri or Kentucky. Instead, the West represented for Dunlap a true wilderness, empty, and uncivilized, waiting for the East to render the wilderness useful. Audiences for A Trip enjoyed the journey up the river and along the canal, but they stopped at Niagara Falls, the end of civilization. Let Leather-stocking prepare the way, suggested Dunlap, and Americans would then plant their gardens. Dunlap's version was one of bringing the "here" (the East) into the "there" (the West), in order that the "there" became us.[390]

James Kirke Paulding brought a third interpretation of the West to the stage and if accuracy may be required to achieve a sense of a place, then this play was the least historically "accurate" of all. Crockett/Wildfire returns to the East and proceeds to use his "western" skills to make things right for the Freemans (the East). He depends on native instinct and skills as well as good-heartedness. Still, Wildfire's family does not accept these characteristics in place of correct behavior:

> Mrs. Freeman
> Well I hope he will not happen to favour us with his company whilst Mrs. Luminary is our guest. What opinion would she form of our national manners from such a man?

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[390] Elliot West, 142.

Mr. Freeman

The only just one. That my wild nephew is an eccentric ~~[character]~~ individual and no specimen of American good breeding.[391]

Why the word changed from "character" to "individual" is unknown, but the change was a telling one, for it makes it clear the East will never accept the West: both characters such as Oppossum and Wildfire and individuals such as the Freemans stand apart by their very natures. Wildfire may visit, even marry in the East, but he will never belong there. And Paulding makes it clear that the East (Mrs. Luminary and Mr. Freeman) will tolerate the West for its oddities as long as there are profits of some form or another to be made. Wildfire is a construct of Paulding and based upon imagination, politics and entertainment. *The Kentuckian* enjoys the wilderness because it provides stories for him to tell: the underground rider, the fight with a catfish, the brawl. Yet he offers no sense of his own place, as Oppossum does when discussing domestic manufactures or Leather-stocking when describing the Catskills wilderness. Paulding's Wildfire belongs somewhere that appears to sound like the West and behave like the West. But as loud and as lively as Wildfire is, he is a theatrical imitation of a hero. David Crockett's stories raised up from his own world and roots, but Wildfire's emerged from Paulding's third-hand knowledge of Crockett. Entertaining perhaps, but Wildfire was, for all his bluster, merely a shadow.

So, Knickerbockers, West or not? Since the nineteenth century, academics have agreed that a Knickerbocker –Washington Irving – "created" American literature because he created American characters. But what Irving actually accomplished was to record the

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[391] Barnard, *Lion*, 4.

American memory, understand the landscape and, finally, construct characters who fit that landscape. Irving, the Knickerbockers and the Hudson River painters taught readers and viewers to examine and imagine their land: but it was a land east of the great rivers.

In fact the emergence of the American West poured onstage from Wetmore's pen, fringed and raring for a fight. He lived and died in the West, and his ear was tuned to the songs of the prairie. Most people resent a joke told on them by someone who knows nothing of their culture, but how funny the telling becomes when a countryman does it. Perhaps after all, the most important gift from the Knickerbockers – Dunlap, Paulding and Wetmore – to their theatre audiences was not a character, or a place, or a language but the rip-roaring sound of a good joke told on themselves. And what a sound that was.

Appendix A – *The Pedlar*

Note: The following text reflects the formatting and orthography of the original publication.

***The Pedlar*:**
A
Farce in Three Acts
Written for the St. Louis Thespians
By Whom It Was Performed with Great Applause

By Alphonso Wetmore
Paymaster in the Army of the United States

Published by John A. Paxton.
St. Louis:
Printed for the Publisher, By William Orr
At the Register Office.
Price fifty cents.
1821

TO CAPTAIN BENJAMIN F. LARNED,
PAYMASTER IN THE ARMY OF THE U. STATES

Sir,

THE friendly relations which exist between us, will, I presume, supersede the necessity of an apology for dedicating to you this little production, which is intended for our mutual amusement, and that of our friends, the Thespians. But in perusing it at your leisure, you will doubtless, discover many imperfections, which will be readily accounted for, when you are informed that I have appropriated only forty-eight leisure hours to the accomplishment of this novel task.

Permit me to add, that so far from having made writing a profession I have seldom attempted any thing of greater importance than an epitaph on some favorite quadruped, or a *dutiful* family epistle.

I have the honor to be,

With respect and esteem,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR.

St. Louis, Mo. May 17, 1821.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MEN.

Old Prairie	Mr. T. Goddard
Old Continental	Mr. W. M'Gunnegle
Nutmeg	B.F.L.
Harry Emigrant	E. L. Pearson
Oppossum	W. B. Alexander
Auctioneer	D. B. Hoffman
Boatman	J. A. Paxton

WOMEN.

Pecanne	Mrs. Groshon
Mary	Mrs. Hanna
Sable	Miss Seymour

THE PEDLAR
A Farce in Three Acts

ACT 1
Scene I. Road in front of a Cabin.
(Enter NUTMEG, with several lanterns and tin cups.)

NUTMEG
Halloo the house! I suppose the old cogger is not up yet. He little thinks the greatest genius in the universe, now stands before his door, ready to cheat him out of half he is worth.
(*Window opens, old Prairie puts his head and the muzzle of a rifle out.)*

OLD PRAIRIE
Who the devil are you, Mr. Impudence?

NUTMEG
A traveling merchant, sir – all the way over the mountains, from the town of New Haven, with a cart load of very useful, very desirable and very pretty notions: such as, tin cups and nutmegs, candlesticks and onion seed, wooden clocks, flax seed and lanterns, Japanned coffee pots, and tea *sarvers*, together with a variety of cordage and other dry goods.
(Old Prairie comes out.)

OLD PRAIRIE
Well stranger, you may keep your cordage, you may have use for it, but I'll buy a lantern, if we can agree on the price; but if you'd bro't a few ploughs, and cart wheels along with you, I *recon* you could have sold a smart *chance*, about these parts.

NUTMEG
I've not a single plough left – sorry for it; only one pair of cart wheels either – can't part with those, till snow comes. Which will you take?

OLD PRAIRIE
This one. *(taking one.)* How much is it?

NUTMEG
Two dollars round money, or current paper -- $2,50 cut money.

OLD PRAIRIE
I'll give you two dollars, cut money for it.

NUTMEG
I can't afford it, 'pon my honor; it cost me that in the way of trade, at home.

OLD PRAIRIE

Well, here's your money stranger.

NUTMEG

Thank you sir – I'll warrant it to keep time a year – I shall call here often, and I'll keep it in repair for you. Will you have a few nutmegs?

OLD PRAIRIE

No, I thank you – I've been *grated* a little that way already.

NUTMEG

(receives round money, tries it, by throwing it on the ground. Exit Old Prairie.)
You'll not ring so merrily, when I've had the cutting of you.
(enter SABLE, a black woman, from the cabin.)
Will you buy a lantern, Miss What's Your Name? You can have one for two dollars.

SABLE

Yes – massa wants one a heap.
(takes one, pays for it – exit. Enter Oppossum.)

NUTMEG

Good morning, sir – I guess you want a lantern?

OPOSSUM

I reckon so, stranger, if you'll take *'coon* skins?

NUTMEG

No objections to barter – loss & gain – if five *coonskins* buy one lantern: how many bargains will make a fortune Rule of three – three lanterns sold.

OPOSSUM

You've got a *heap of larnin* stranger, but I can out-jump, out-shoot, out-hop, and out-run and –

NUTMEG

Stop there – I'll try you at that directly—But I'd rather *rastle.*

OPOSSUM

Well, fair play, stranger,
(*They take hold, Nutmeg gets under the hold)*
You won't gouge?

NUTMEG

No – but stop. Let us finish our bargain – go fetch the peltry.

OPOSSUM

Well – but recollect, *I'm half horse and half steam boat.*

(Goes out and immediately returns with skins.)
These are as fine skins as old Kentuck ever saw. – I own the best coon dog – I'll tell you how I caught this fellow—t'was a dam'd dark night, father had got shut of his lantern, my dog Alligator, the swiftest dog, except my little M'Kinny *marr* in all Kentuck by Dod, but no body dare say it but myself –

OLD PRAIRIE

(hallowing without)
O! possum, O! possum, come, help, I say, O! possum, O! possum.

OPOSSUM

Dod dern it, I must run a race with father first.
(runs off).
I'm a snapping turtle!

NUTMEG

Good bye to you! Brisk sale this morning – much obliged to the moon for disappearing – Dark nights for trade, art and mystery – but here comes a young Eve; I hope she may be moon-struck too –
(enter Mary)
I am, madam, your very obsequious, humble servant.

MARY

O! You are the very man I want to see; my father has ordered me to purchase him a lantern, of the first pedlar that should call.

NUTMEG

I'm your chap, madam; here is one of as a fine texture, as any in America – You shall have it for $4.50 – I'm selling off at reduced prices.

MARY

Very well, here's your money, *(aside)* (cheap enough too I reckon)
(Exit with her lantern. Enter Pecanne with a bundle of stockings.)

NUTMEG

My sweet little mermaid, what have you there?

PECANNE

Stockings; do you with to buy them?

NUTMEG

Yes, my dear little wood nymph, if you will take merchandize?

PECANNE

What have you? O! by the powers of love, the very thing my uncle is in want of. I'll give you this whole bundle for it.

NUTMEG

Here, take it, and this cup, and a kiss to boot.

(Kisses her.)

PECANNE

What a sweet breath! *(aside)* He don't chew tobacco, I'm sure.

(Exit.)

NUTMEG

A sweet creature! Now for the race. I'll take odds at the starting point – come whip, wheels, and cart horse, do your duty once more, and Nutmeg is safe.

(Exit, with a crack of the whip.)

Scene II. A room in Old Prairie's house.

Enter OLD PRAIRIE, OPPOSSUM and MARY, from different directions, each with a lantern.

MARY

O! my dear father, I've bought you a lantern.

OPPOSSUM

And so have I too.

OLD PRAIRIE

And so have I three! You blockhead!

(Enter Pecanne and Sable, each with a lantern.)

And here come two more lights of the world—a dam'd yankee trick this.

SABLE

A heap of lanterns, massa.

OPPOSSUM

You'd better light them up, father.

OLD PRAIRIE

Light up your own empty scull, sauce box – Pursue this sharper, Mr. Stupidity, and bring him back; take my rifle.

OPPOSSUM

Shall I gouge him, father? – Sable go call my *barr* dogs, and tell Sam to fetch out the roan *marr*; I'll *tote* him back, cart and all.

(Exit Oppossum, Sable and Mary)

PECANNE

Don't hurt him, coz; he's a right pretty fellow.

OLD PRAIRIE

A pretty fellow with a vengeance! So I suppose you've fallen in love with him to complete the frolic. Did he give you any of his wooden nutmegs, or love powder, minx? You had better mind your knitting.

PECANNE

No, he gave me prettier things than all that, uncle.

OLD PRAIRIE

What were they?

PECANNE

Five or six of the sweetest kisses!

OLD PRAIRIE

Begone huzzy!

(exit Pecanne)

So here's a pretty hoax. Dod *dern* the yankies! I wonder he did'nt steal one or two of my young negroes; I've understood they make a business of kidnapping; I should set'em all down for swindlers, if Old Continental here, my boarder, was not one of 'em; he's as fine a fellow as ever carved a bacon ham, though I taught him how to do it. He must have been a good soldier; for he carries the marks of war about him; and although he fights his battles o'er, he's no egotist.

Well, what shall be done with all these articles of dry goods, as Mr. Pedlar is pleased to call them. Hieghho! I'll e'n stow'em away, against a rainy day, as the saying is; or a dark night, as the saying should be.

(Gathers them up.)

Well, if they were lighted up, I might succeed better than old Diogenes did, in searching for an honest man, at mid-day, with one of these; the most rare article of dry goods in these hard times. Now I think of it, this pedlar must be the same 'scape gallows, that sold me cockle for onion seed, stone coal for indigo, and a common ram, with a merino skin sewed over his own pretty carcase. Dod rot all pedlars, say I. It's very fortunate, however, that my old friend Continental is a justice, that I can have Mr. Swindler's business done for him, in a crack.

(Exit Old Prairie.)

ACT II

Scene I. In front of a cabin. Enter HARRY EMIGRANT, meeting OLD PRAIRIE.

HARRY EMIGRANT

Muddy road, hard trotting horse, and bad accommodations. I shall wish myself at sea again, my old boy, if your house doesn't afford better fare than the last tavern I staid at.

OLD PRAIRIE

I don't know what you mean by taverning my house, stranger! But I can give you as prime hog and hominy as any farmer in *Kentuck*; and my bed, that I keep for travelers, is as good as wild fowl could make it – walk in whilst I carry your horse to the stable.

HARRY EMIGRANT

Well, have him rub'd down, and well fed – do you hear, messmate, if you have a spare bit of riggin, just take a turn or two round his neck, or fore legs, for he has a dam'd trick of slipping cable, although one of his skylights is stove in, and the other as dim as a poop

lantern. I made an exchange a few days since, with a fellow in a cart; I believe the land-lubber cheated me, for the poor beast misstays most damnably.

OLD PRAIRIE

The same fellow who sold out his stock in trade to my poor family – I'm glad to see you, stranger – misery loves company.

HARRY EMIGRANT

Not so miserable neither, old boy, for I intend to cast anchor in the first snug harbor I come to, so I sha'nt want a horse, as I've a poor prospect of finding my old father, that I"ve never seen, since I was the size of a marline spike. Mayhap the old bulk has gone down –

(Exit OLD PRAIRIE)

Well, he's weathered many a gale and I understand he's seen some service too; had one spar shivered, and – What's this -- a frigate under easy sail, by all that's charming –

(Enter MARY with a book; passes H. Emigrant without perceiving him)

Ship ahoy! – looking over your reckoning, hey! What's your name? Where are you bound?

MARY

(aside)

Who's this? Another pedlar, I reckon.

(to him)

Have you any notions to sell?

HARRY EMIGRANT

Yes, I'll sell my *heart,* my *whole soul,* for such a girl as this!

MARY

Yes, the other one was satisfied with my father's cash, but this Mr. Modesty requires my father's daughter. I'm off.

(Ext Mary into the house.)

HARRY EMIGRANT

She's off in a fog, but I'll throw my guns overboard, and make all sail in chase –

(Takes a pistol out of each pocket, & throws them down; exit after her.)

Scene II. Old Prairie's House. Enter Mary.

MARY

Well, as soon as this salt-water spark has finished his dinner, he'll be for supping on wild fowl! But he'll find me too much upon the wing for him. I wish I knew where he was from. He will be a very agreeable fellow, if he proves to have been raised in old Virginia – but here he comes.

HARRY EMIGRANT

Come, if you'll shew me my hammock, I'll turn in shipmate.

MARY

That little snow ball, who waited at table, will shew you your chamber, sir. Adieu.

(Going.)

HARRY EMIGRANT

Stay. *(seizes her arm.)* Now if I could believe you had ever been out of sight of land, I'd splice myself to you, yard arm and yard arm, and never give up the ship while I had a sound timber in my body. What d'ye say, my little cockle shell, did you ever smell salt water?

MARY

Never till now – nor a tarpauling either – release me, sea horse!

(Enter Oppossum.)

OPPOSSUM

That means me. *I'm half sea horse & half sea serpent.* Did you ever see my coon dog, stranger?

(Whistles.)

Which eye shall I take out, Mary?

HARRY EMIGRANT

Who is this fellow?

MARY

My amiable brother – I'll leave you to his care.

(Exit)

OPPOSSUM

I'll tell you, stranger, my name is Oppossum – I'm a "wild date" – I've got the swiftest horse, the sharpest shooting rifle, and the prettiest sister – So if you offer to wrestle with her again, you must run faster than the yankee pedlar did, or my coon dog will tree you.

HARRY EMIGRANT

Come, my honest fellow, I've been a little too rude to this young lady, but if you'll help me to get her father's consent, I'll marry her, and then we'll hunt and fight together.

OPPOSSUM

Where was you born, stranger?

HARRY EMIGRANT

In Boston, the land of codfish and potatoes.

OPPOSSUM

'Twon't do – my father's old Virginia never tire, eat parch'd corn and lie by the fire. I've no time to spare; I'm constable, and I've got a heap of business on the docket to day. Come, won't you go and see one of your countrymen tried.

Exeunt.

Scene III. A Court Room

Enter OLD PRAIRIE and OLD CONTINENTAL

OLD PRAIRIE

Mr. Justice, I'm afraid, we shall have a hard bargain with this Yankee. I wish in my heart, I had let him run, when he was well under way. I presume his whole cargo will hardly sell for enough to reimburse me. You've given judgment against him I hear.

OLD CONTINENTAL

We shall soon ascertain their value. The Constable will offer his goods immediately; and we had better attend the sale; I will buy a few garden seeds, myself.

OLD PRAIRIE

You had better be cautious; they will be as likely to produce young yankies, as vegetables.

OLD CONTINENTAL

But you are in want of a Lantern – Shall I purchase one for you?

OLD PRAIRIE

No, I thank you; I'm well supplied, and am getting a little light on the subject. Take care of yourself, captain, or this yankee will have you sold with dry goods.

(Exit different ways. Enter PECANNE followed by NUTMEG.)

PECANNE

Your assurance is insufferable, Mr. Nutmeg, after forcing upon my uncle, a cart load of your tin ware, to offer your self to me as a husband, with no recommendation, but two hours acquaintance, and a small specimen of honesty, and –

NUTMEG

Honesty! You don't understand the definition of the term – my business as a merchant, is the same when mounted on a cart, as it would be behind the counter of a shop. I press my customers to purchase and charge them as much as I can possible obtain, without regard to cost and charges. And if in the course of business, my eloquence is put in requisition, I have only to own the fact, and plead the custom of the profession – In fact, reasoning, less forcible than mine, has saved more than one culprit from the gallows; and it has often induced a girl of less spirite than yourself, to leap from a second story window, into the arms of a more disagreeable fellow than I am.

PECANNE

(aside) I wish my uncle's cabbin was two story high. I am not disposed to be a dissenter from the doctrine you preach, when the change of masters gains me a pretty fellow, instead of a sour old one; and I must acknowledge my sympathy has been a little excited by your recent misfortunes – pray sir, is y our cart and horse confiscated too? You will require it to carry me off with, for we shan't be able to exist on this side of the mountains, unless you make peace with my cousin and *barr* dogs.

NUTMEG

The cart and horse are still mine; Leave all to me. I have cash enough to purchase the good will of the severest censor. But it is a little in jeopardy at present. In the old canvass bag, where my provision is stored, I've bid a bag of gold. Now, every particle of my goods will be sold at Auction; my appearance will excite suspicion; you must bid for the bag, and bring off – when I get possession of it, your uncle will readily consnt to our marriage.

PECANNE

It shall be done; I'll away to the Auction.

NUTMEG

Remember the wallet is in an old frock, marked with my precious name.

PECANNE

I'll remember, adieu *(exit.)*

NUTMEG

Alas! The dynasty of the nutmegs is at an end! Nothing is left, of all my greatness, but a filty bag of gold, and an empty cart. My merchandise, like that of other great men, has at length come under the hammer. That *dear* extensive assortment of mine, is broken in upon! My heart's delight, that mineral indigo, will be sold at half price1 that incomparable flax seed, will be scattered on stony ground, or choked to death by villainous weeds. Not a particle of onion seed, the glory of Wethersfield, my native country, will be left me. But my tears will flow without onions. – But where is your philosophy, Nutmeg! I'll call to my aid, the precedents left on record, by my illustrious predecessors – ministers of state, who like me, have retired from the bustle of public life, to the peaceful occupations of private citizens, many of whom have not carried with them, even an empty cart – they have not murmured. But I've a treasure left – my little jewel – Pecanne, will smooth the cares and wrinkles of age, and pluck from my trade-worn brow, every premature blossom, that may officiously warn me of approaching dissolution of partnership between soul and body.

(Exit pensively. OPPOSSUM the crier comes in ringing the Bell.)

OPPOSSUM

Oh Yes! Oh Yes! Oh Yes! For sale at Auction, immediately – The merchandise of a traveling merchant, who has been convicted of a suspicion of dishonesty. His whole stock in trade, must be sold for ready cash, or coon skins – a heap of plunder for half price.

(Goes off ringing the Bell.)

Scene IV. Auction Room

Auctioneer with several Bidders about him – offers the tin pedlars' goods. Oppossum and Pecanne present.

AUCTIONEER

Gentlemen and Ladies! I'll offer you the goods of a traveling Merchant, who has recently declined trade, mush against his will – thanks to the Justic, Constable and Complainant – much to my interest. I'll read the Invoice.

(reads)
Three wool hats – One case of family medicines, consisting of doctor Rodgers' vegetable pulmoniac detergent decoction, Lee's Scotch Ointment, Relf's cough drops, Lee's patent Windham bilious pills, warranted not to stick in the throat, Redheiffer's patent cathartic perpetual motion, &c. &c. – four and half cards of ginger-bread – John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress – One odd volume, of select Tricks upon Travellers – three boot Jacks, and a small keg of pickled herrings – one gallon bottle of Cider Brandy – three pounds and a half of dried peaches – one Merino sheep skin – four tin pans – three hundred and twenty rifle-flints – one package of artificial nutmegs and garden seeds, with a quantity of stone coal Indigo – several newly invented patent bee-hives, and thirty-three unfinished powder-horns. Also – the magazine of provisions, of the aforesaid delinquent, stowed into a gentleman traveller's frock. All the aforesaid articles are to be sold for ready cash, or coon skins; beginning with the last mentioned article. Bid, or gone – will nobody say any more? (first bid one half,) half nothing and a half. Nothing and a half, going, going; a dram to the next bidder.

OPOSSUM

Three coon skins.

AUCTIONEER

Thank you, good Mr. Oppossum, take a drink out of that bottle *(drinks).* Going, at three coon skins; upon the honor of an auctioneer, the article is worth twice the money – going, going, going; will you see the honest gentleman's property sacrificed? Let me appeal to the honor of that lady?

PECANNE

Four coon skins.

AUCTIONEER

Thank you, my little pot of incense. Four coon skins --- can't dwell, 'pon my honor – heap of plunder to sell; once, twice, th—thr—three times. Gone, your name, Miss?

PECANNE

Pecanne, Sir.

AUCTIONEER

Miss Pecanne – one frock and its contents, more or less, at four Raccoon skins; tote it away Miss – heap of plunder; cheap bargain without doubt. Now gentlemen, I'll offer you a few bulky articles, outside, such as feathers, wool sacks, and scythe sneaths; please to walk out my good humored customers.

(Exit PECANNE, after putting on the knapsack – exit Auctioneer and Bidders.)

SCENE V. Old Prairie's House. H. Emigrant and Mary

HARRY EMIGRANT

Well, Mary, to run or not to run, that's the question.

MARY

But if you're capable of running away with me – you may publish a new edition with amendments, and so run away from me.

HARRY EMIGRANT

Avast there – did you ever know an American tar give up the ship, or quit his colours, whilst a bit of his standing rigging remained?

MARY

Well, I'll trust to your frankness – but be circumspect: don't alarm my brother or his bear dogs.

HARRY EMIGRANT

Never fear; I've fee'd Nutmeg – and you're to take an airing in his cart. When your brother is gone out cooning, and your father is sound asleep, Nutmeg will erect a ladder at your window – leave the rest to him.

(enter Old Prairie listning behind the scene. Exit Harry Emigrant)

OLD PRAIRIE

(aside) Leave the rest to the devil. I'll disappoint the salt fish for once. Mary, who the devil's going to help Mr. Tarpauling to run away with you – I'll spoil your sport; go into my chamber

(she goes in, he locks the door.) there you are – 'snug as a bug in a rug' – Now I've a mind to be a little frolicsome – what if I turn woman, and run away with this spark – I will – but, hush! Here's my old friend, Mr. Nutmeg. I presume he is desirous of running away with some of the family.

(enter NUTMEG)

Well, *Mr. Tinplater* face, what are your commands?

NUTMEG

I come, sir, on a voyage of matrimony; I have been fortunate enough to captivate your amiable niece, and have come to ask your consent.

OLD PRAIRIE

Marry my niece! O ! you light of the world! – have you a lantern or two about you. You villainous 'scape gallows, have I saved you from the stocks, to witness such insolence.

NUTMEG

But, sir, have a little patience – I've a letter of introduction to you. I beg your pardon for not having presented it before : It might have saved me infinite mortifications : it is from one Mr. Lucre, a good friend of your's, and pretty well known about these parts.

(pulls out a bag of gold.)

You are acquainted with him, I presume?

OLD PRAIRIE

I've known some of the family – Mr. Nutmeg, walk in; this bus'ness requires reflection – its a new light you've thrown on the subject – You'll not find me unreasonable; in fact,

you must make allowance for prejudice, the offspring of my education. I hope, sir, you'll not take offence at any of my hasty expressions – this is the 4th of July, and I've ta'en a few mint juleps before breakfast – but come my dear boy, my friend, old Continental will dine with me, and you shall make one of the party; come in, you shall have my niece.

(exit into the house.)

ACT III

Scene I. Scene opens, and discovers Old Prairie, Continental, Nutmeg and Oppossum, around a table, with bottles and tumblers.

OLD PRAIRIE

Come, captain, give us a patriotic toast – We'll take a bumper to it, standing.

(all fill up and rise.)

OLD CONTINENTAL

Here's to those, who fought, bled, and died, at Bunker's hill, and I am one of them.

(all repeat the toast.)

OLD PRAIRIE

Well, captain, tell us how that great battle happen'd?

OLD CONTINENTAL

I will; but don't let Oppossum interrupt me.

OLD PRAIRIE

He shan't say a word – begin.

OLD CONTINENTAL

Well, you must know that gen'ral gage was shut up in the town of Boston, with the British regulars. Old Putnam and I, commanded the continentals, on Bunker's hill. – we would'nt let them come out; and they would'nt let us come in – poor rule, that won't work both ways – if four and four make eight, then –

OPPOSSUM

That's correct, father – if four and four are eight, then eight and eight, make four.

OLD PRAIRIE

Hold your tongue, Mr. Impudence.

OLD CONTINENTAL

Although the red coast forced their way out, and marched up the hill, we were paraded behind a rail fence. Old Put. And I told the boys, not to fire, 'till they could discern the whites of their eyes – we were all in high spirits – Damme, who's afraid says I – and so spring up to the top of a bar post.

OPPOSSUM

If my coon dog had been there he would have treed all of you.

(enter Boatman, with a red shirt, and tow trowsers on – a little drunk, singing soundings.)

BOATMAN

Quarter less twain.

(OPPOSSUM rises, and advances)

OPPOSSUM

Who are you stranger?

BOATMAN

A steam boat, damn your eyes.

OPPOSSUM

Then I'm a Missouri snag – I'm into you.

BOATMAN

I'm full of chain pumps – come on – I'm a five horse team.

OPPOSSUM

Then I'll blaze your leader.

(Strikes him in the face, they fight, Boatman's hat is knocked off and a dirty pack of cards falls out.)

BOATMAN

No gouging?

OPPOSSUM

And no ear biting.

(They disappear fighting; exit all but old Continental; enter Mary in haste)

MARY

What disturbance did I hear? Has my brother let his bear dogs loose?

OLD CONTINENTAL

No, but he has let himself loose, and that's worse, but the affair has ended before this time, nothing mortal can stand before him.

(Oppossum crosses the stage, bloody.)

OPPOSSUM

Bunker's hill was a fool to this fight – I'm a white *barr.*

(exit OPPOSSUM.)

OLD CONTINENTAL

Well, my little dimple do you know what your father and I have been talking about?

MARY

The wars, I presume.

OLD CONTINENTAL

No – guess again – guess love, and then you'll hit it.

MARY

You are not in love I hope.

OLD CONTINENTAL

Yes, I am, though.

MARY

And who's the happy object of your affections?

OLD CONTINENTAL

Your own sweet, pretty self – I could'nt contain myself any longer – I had a son once – if he had been here, he should have supplied my place, but the sharks have got him, he was cast away at sea, poor fellow!

MARY

And you dont expect to have another son?

OLD CONTINENTAL

No, yes – it depends upon circumstances. But will you marry me?

MARY

No, yes – it depends upon circumstances; I think I'll wait for your son – or, till you arrive at the years of maturity – I think, Mr. Continental, you are too young to undertake the management of a family. *(exit)*

OLD CONTINENTAL

She's off, like a carcass – my time has gone by – once it was the gallant, and young Continental; the very useful Mr. Continental; the blooming captain Continental; but now I'm old; the government has turned me out to graze; and every pert little Miss thinks me too infirm to mount guard.

(enter Old Prairie)

OLD PRAIRIE

Captain, I had forgot to tell you, that this stranger, Mr. Emigrant, has laid a plan to carry off my daughter.

OLD CONTINENTAL

What! Without your consent?

OLD PRAIRIE

Yes, but not without her own. I over-heard them, settling the terms, and in the heat of my indiscretion, I kick'd him out of doors – that was a little inhospitable; but he had the impudence to call my house a tavern & asked for his bill ; I told him I would make out a bill of sale of him, and his effects, if he did'nt decamp immediately. I had locked up my daughter, but the poor little lamb bleated so piteously, through the key hole, that I

concluded to let her out, as the 4th of July only comes once a year; but I'll secure her again this evening in *my* chamber, and disguise myself in her clothes, and so let the young spark take me off, instead of my daughter; won't that be a good joke, ha?

OLD CONTINENTAL

But you won't let him marry you, will you?

OLD PRAIRIE

Hear me, you shall mask yourself and personate this Emigrant; so when I'm gone, bring off the girl; you'll find me and my run-a-way at the magistrate's house; you can there be furnished with my consent, and the business shall be finished.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE II

Road in front of OLD PRAIRIE's house. Enter NUTMEG, with a ladder on his shoulder, PECANNE following with a mask in her hand.

NUTMEG

I heard OLD PRAIRIE contrive the whole plan, and if you'll step behind the smoke house, I'll bring out this female uncle of yours.

(She retires. NUTMEG puts on the mask which PECANNE previously gave him.)

Now, NUTMEG is himself again – plot and counter plot, my old boy – I'll give you a ride in my coach and one, and that will cure you of run-away matches.

(sets up the ladder to the window)

I must personate the lover now.

(whispers)

Mary, my angel ! come forth, my love, my head is wet with the dew, and my locks, with the drops of the night.

(The window opens, OLD PRAIRIE appears disguised like a female masked.)

Are you there, my sweet little night-mare?

(Old Prairie hands him a lantern and descends the ladder.)

Some of my merchandize, by all that's honest.

(When Old Prairie is descending, Nutmeg trips the ladder from under him.)

OLD PRAIRIE

Oh ! I've sprained my ancle ; support me, my love.

NUTMEG

Never mind, a good beginning makes a bad ending.

(Takes the lantern and leads him off. Enter Sable and Pecanne.)

PECANNE

You must go and put on one of your young mistress' dresses; then clap this mask on your face, and put on these gloves; and when old Continental calls for you, go off with him.

SABLE

Won't he sell me?

PECANNE

No – Never fear, he won't hurt you; make him believe you are Mary; when he urges you to marry him tell him to procure the consent of your father; when you get into the woods, complain of fear; call him your dear Harry, talk about your brother; manage this well, and I'll give you one of my old frocks.

SABLE

I will; but I won't let him marry me, he's too old.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE III.

A wood. Enter OLD CONTINENTAL, leading SABLE, disguised. Both masked.

SABLE

I begin to feel alarmed, my dear Harry; you are sure my father was asleep and my brother gone out.

OLD CONTINENTAL

Yes, your terrible brother had settled his difficulties, in an honorable manner, with his new *steam boat* acquaintance, and they have taken all the dogs, and guns on the premises, & are, by this time, in full chase of a bear; your father has a snug berth under the table, and we are bound for the port of matrimony.

Enter OPPOSSUM, running and hallowing, with a rifle. He runs against OLD CONTINENTAL, smacks him down.

OPPOSSUM

I'm a whirlwind, stranger, did you meet my *barr* dogs, and a gentleman boatman?

OLD CONTINENTAL

No – I with the devil had you and your dogs.

(Oppossum runs off hallooing.)

SABLE

Did that raccoon hurt you, my dear?

OLD CONTINENTAL

Not much, he only broke my neck, and left leg; that's all.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE IV.

A room; OPPOSSUM and BOATMAN sitting by a table, both with eyes blacked, with a bottle and tin tumblers, two large dogs lying by them.

OPPOSSUM

That dog Planter's an earth quake!

BOATMAN

He's a gentleman, and so's Alligator.

OPPOSSUM

Damn Alligator; coon skins are under par now; tires are hard; we must have a circulating medium; these dandy pedlars carry off all our earnings.

BOATMAN

Yes ; We must encourage domestic *manufactures*; I would'nt give one glass, of this old Monongohela, for all the Madeira slops in Philadelphia – 'twill cost one of your city dandies, five dollars to get *cozy*, as they call it; -- but for a *picayon** I can get as happy as a lord ; and for a *bit†* , dead drunk, on whiskey.

OPPOSSUM

Yes, and 'twould cost more plunder, than father and I are both worth, to dress me up like a dandy; what do you think this suit [of leather] cost me? I'll tell you, one charge of rifle powder, half an ounce of lead, four pence ha'penny worth of allum water, and two hours labor – speaking of labor, I'll bet you two coon skins, I can out-hop you.

BOATMAN

Done! But I won't fight again; I believe you gouged this eye a little.

OPPOSSUM

I don't know what I might have done, if father hadn't taken me off : my fingers have done a heap of that sort of truck ; but you and I won't differ again ; come along, I'll tell you how my roan *marr* and I, out-run a tin-pedlar.

(Exeunt)

SCENE V.

A room. Enter HARRY EMIGRANT, and OLD PRAIRIE (the latter masked.)

HARRY EMIGRANT

Stay here my love, and I'll go into the next room for the magistrate ; don't be impatient.

(Exit.)

OLD PRAIRIE

Well here I am, a wolf in sheep's clothing, or a sheep in wolf's clothing, I don't know which. Let me see? Old Prairie in Petticoats; a very pretty subject for bridal purposes; lilies and roses, blended amongst wrinkles and grey hairs. Instead of joyous timidity, and flattering anticipations, I'm tortured with fearful forebodings, and frightful apprehensions. I wish these petticoats were returned to the right owner, or the right owner returned to them, I don't care which. I believe I'm not quite as neat in my person, and habiliments, as a country lass should be. I'm a little soiled and drabbled. Now I fancy I look amiable, like a garden, or young widow in the weeds. But since I left the toilette, I have passed thro' fiery trials. I'd as soon be cast into a Lion's den, as a tin cart, or *coach and one*, as my delectable nephew-in-law that would be, is pleased to term it. To be jolted through a back-woods road, four or five miles, was not enough; I must be capsized, at the end of my journey. I begin to smell a rat, or a yankee in this business, but if my old friend Continental, can but succeed, in getting off my daughter safely, I'll e'en put up with my share of the business. Ha ! that must be him, if my old eyes don't deceive me.

(Enter Oppossum)

No, no, my hopeful son ; then all's over with me. I shall be murdered. If my legs were not broken, I'd try doctor Nutmeg's remedy – I'd run away.

OPPOSSUM

What game have I started here? Old woman are you lost?

OLD PRAIRIE

Yes sir, I'm lost – *(aside)* irrecoverably I believe. I've come to see the Justice.

OPPOSSUM

Oho ! I understand, been ill treated by some young rake?

OLD PRAIRIE

Yes, sir, a pair of 'em.

OPPOSSUM

Then let me make a third? I'll do your business. I'm a Constable, Come give me a kiss ; She's got as much hair on her face as my dog, Aligator.

OLD PRAIRIE

Stand off, Oppossum ! or I'll knock you down.

OPPOSSUM

She knows my name! Now, if I believed in witchcraft, I'd swear she was my father.

(Exit whistling, enter HARRY EMIGRANT)

HARRY EMIGRANT

My dear ship mate, the chaplin, with his splicing materials, will be here directly ; off with your false colours, and let us have a little fair weather.

(Old Prairie unmasks – Harry starts.)

OLD PRAIRIE

You've outwitted the old boy, ha ! a yankee trick, that's all, "Shipmate" – Your old friend, the tavern keeper. I presume you want your bill, *Mr. Salt Fish.*

HARRY EMIGRANT

No, I thank you; I've been billing long enough.

(Enter Old Continental leading in Sable.)

OLD CONTINENTAL

Well, my little recruit, we have got to head quarters at last ; you shall be mustered, and paid off directly.

HARRY EMIGRANT

That dam'd old land lubber, has got the weather gauge of me – but I'll give him a broad side that shall shiver his timbers.

(To Old Continental)

Who the devil appointed you prizemaster of that little Weather-cock?

OLD CONTINENTAL

That runaway companion of yours.

(pointing to OLD PRAIRIE)

HARRY EMIGRANT

Surrender her instantly, or I'll blow –

(putting his hands into his pockets)

my guns were thrown overboard, in the chase.

(enter PECANNE, with a pair of pistols)

PECANNE

And I picked them up ; a disappointed lover, should never be without them.

(Gives them to HARRY EMIGRANT.)

If you blow your brains out, you'll be a horrid ugly corpse; you had better hang yourself.

(Exit.)

HARRY EMIGRANT

Here shipmate, take your choice, if you feel disposed to contend for the prize.

(Old Continental takes one.)

OLD CONTINENTAL

Do you think a Bunker's Hill boy, will surrender without firing a gun or two?

(SABLE throws off her mask in a fright.)

OLD PRAIRIE

Another damn'd yankee trick!

HARRY EMIGRANT

On my beam's end again! Damme, I'd give all my spare rigging, to be stowed away in Jonah's berth. I shouldn't be for administering an emetic to his Whale-ship very soon.

Enter MARY and PECANNE, laughing.

PECANNE

A fine lot of goods here ! Let me read the Invoice : one old woman in wedding garments, with a beard on; one young sailor in love with old Mr. Prairie, and about to lay violent hands on himself; one superannuated captain, colonizing the Blacks ; one little mink, just a going, going, going, will nobody say anymore?

MARY

(To Harry)

You would'nt disappoint your blooming young bride there, *(pointing to Old Prairie)* would you. *(To Old Prairie seriously.)* You fascinating young hussey. How dare you seduce the affections of my dear Harry, when he had pledged his honor to marry none but me ? *(To Harry)* And what have you to say for yourself, Mr. Constancy ? *"did you ever know an American Tar to give up the Ship?"* Ha !

OLD PRAIRIE

Mary ! My daughter Mary ! don't you know your poor old father? I'm old Prairie, your dear father.

MARY

My father in petticoats ! the grave old Mr. Prairie in petticoats ! that's a good one If you had called yourself my mother, 'twould have done better ; you're old enough, and in that dress, ugly enough to be the mother of Macbeth's witches.

HARRY EMIGRANT

Listen to me, one moment, my dear angel.

MARY

Fallen angel, you should say. Oh ! Harry, I did'nt think so much depravity could have been concealed under your blunt frankness. What villainy! To persuade me, to abandon my friends, for your sake, and after buffeting the pitiless storm in search of you, to find you, about to throw yourself into the arms of that old hag; and at the same time, bullying a war-worn veteran out of all his earthly comfort: his dear little blackbird! Oh ! Harry, you're a thorn between two roses.

(Harry at this time stands between Old Prairie and Sable.)

OLD CONTINENTAL

Blackbirds ! Roses ! Thorns ! the devil! Eve ! Satan ! Ho, the fruitful little hussey – how fortunate I am, in escaping this little petticoat Governor. I'd as soon be under the command of Benedict Arnold. I'll resign ; I'm deranged already. I'll retire, and spend the remainder of my days, in rendering unto tin Pedlars, the things that belong unto them. (En*ter Nutmeg.)*

NUTMEG

That's right, Mr. Justice. I'll reciprocate the favor. First, let me introduce you to your son : Mr. Emigrant, this is your worthy old father that you've been so long (in) pursuit of. He's your rival, but he's determined to abdicate in favor of his son.

(Both stand astonished till Nutmeg is done speaking.)

HARRY EMIGRANT

My cruise is over, at last. Come, father, grapple.

OLD CONTINENTAL

My tour of duty's ended.

(they embrace.)

I thought the sharks had you, long ago.

(enter Oppossum)

OPPOSSUM

I'm a shark !

NUTMEG

My tour of duty is not finished, until I have handed in my report, to the commanding officer here, *(hands papers to Old Continental)* there is a passport, your brother, old Hunks, could not take to heaven with him because he wa(s)'nt bound to that port, and they were esteemed a little too combustible for t'other place; so he selected the very pink of honesty, and the flower of integrity, to be the bearer of them, to you, believing I would never deliver them. But I've cheated the devil for once. Don't be alarmed, it is a will, a few deeds, &c. all real estate – no use to me, couldn't stow it all into my cart. I deal altogether in moveables.

OLD PRAIRIE

I wish I'd been real estate.

OLD CONTINENTAL

I'm equally astonished at the liberality of my brother, and the honesty of Mr. Nutmeg *(to him.)* I can't hold out much longer, without a fresh supply of water, and my tears won't start; at any rate, when I surrender to the grim Messenger, you shall be reimbursed in a rich legacy.

NUTMEG

I think you, captain, but here's the legacy that will quiet me; this little nutbrown maid, is to give me marching orders in future.

(taking PECANNE by the hand.)

But here's another channel of inland navigation to be explored

(points to MARY)

Between this young lady and Mr. Emigrant.

HARRY EMIGRANT

Come, Mary, hoist sail, and scud into port. *(opens his arms.)*

MARY

(to Old Continental) I told you, I would wait for your son. *(embraces HARRY EMIGRANT)*

NUTMEG

What do you say, Mr. Hermaphrodite?

(to OLD PRAIRIE)

OLD PRAIRIE

You know I'm governed by the old golden rule: have you a lantern to light us home by, or a coach and one, for the accommodation of the ladies?

NUTMEG

I must refer you to the Auctioneer.

PECANNE

I presume Mr. Oppossum will not forbid the bands, if our improvements do not interfere with his hunting grounds.

(Enter Boatman singing.)

BOATMAN

By the deep nine!

OPPOSSUM

No, if you'll let me live single, till after dog days, Mike Fink and I will go and catch a barr, and we'll have a barbecue, for wedding supper, *any how*.

THE END

COSTUME

OLD PRAIRIE – Domestic dress, broad brimmed hat.

OLD CONTINENTAL – Blue coat, faced with scarlet – hat, three cornered scraper.

NUTMEG – White hat, fair-topped boots, brown or grey mixed coat, striped vest, grey overalls, faced with buckskin.

OPPOSSUM – Raccoon skin cap, buck skin hunting shirt and overalls – hatchet and knife suspended by a leather belt.

BOATMAN – Glazed leather hat, red flannel shirt, linen overalls.

A TRIP TO NIAGARA; OR, TRAVELLERS IN AMERICA.

A FARCE , IN THREE ACTS.
WRITTEN FOR THE BOWERY THEATRE, NEW-YORK.

PREFACE.

The following Farce, for, be it remembered, it makes pretensions to no higher character, was written at the request of the Managers, and intended by them as a kind of running accompaniment to the more important product of the Scene-painter. The Author has not hesitated to use any material, not already appropriated to the drama, which might answer the important purpose of keeping the audience, or spectators, in good humour while the scenery and machinery was in preparation; but the best jokes, he believes, were never book'd before. The plan of making the prejudiced traveller owe his cure to one of his own countrymen, prevents (or was so intended) any disagreeable nationalities, and serves the further purpose of giving the author an excuse for the imperfections of the French, or Yankee character, as the representative of both is an Englishman. As his Frenchman is no Frenchman, and his Yankee an Englishman, he gains this important advantage, that any mistake of idiom, will be characteristic.

CHARACTERS.	**[Actors]**
Mr. Wentworth	Mr. Fisher
Mr. Bull	Mr. Chapman
Dennis Dougherty	Mr. Wallack
Leather-Stocking	Mr. Forbes
Job Jerryson	Mr. Reed
First steam-boat Runner	
Second steam-boat Runner	
Steam Engineer	
Landlord at Catskill	
Waiter at Catskill	
Waiter at Buffalo	
Porters	
Travellers	
Amelia Wentworth	Mrs. Hughes
Nancy	Miss Fisher
Travellers	

ACT I.
SCENE .

An Apartment in the City Hotel, New-York. ***Amelia Wentworth*** *is discovered seated at a table, writing.* ***Nancy*** *, at some distance behind, sewing.*

Amelia
So! I have finished my description of Philadelphia, and given a sketch of our journey to New-York. Ninety miles, without fatigue, in nine hours. Superb steam-boats---good coaches--- civil people. Landscapes presenting proofs of universal prosperity, and tables testifying overflowing abundance. And then the view on entering the bay of New-York; its islands; its rivers; its shipping, and its city! I think my sister will believe *me*; although my letters are so directly in opposition to the book-making journalists, who have prejudiced her mind against the land of civil and religious liberty. Nancy!

Nancy
Did you call, Ma'am?

Amelia
I wish to see my brother before I seal my letters for England. Where is he?

Nancy
He has gone out, Ma'am.

Amelia
It is no matter. I will not wait his return.

Nancy
O Miss Wentworth, I wish we were going to Lunnun again, instead of the letters you have been writing.

Amelia
Why so? are you tired of travelling?

Nancy
No. Ma'am, but I don't like to be where the servants are neegurs. It makes a servant-body think one's self no better nor black almost.

Amelia
You have only to look in the glass, to be convinced of the contrary.

Nancy

I'm sure, Ma'am, you can't like this country as well as ould England, if it is only because it isn't home.

Amelia

Home is indeed dear to me, girl.

Nancy

Besides, Ma'am, here are no Princesses or Princes; no Dukes or Duchesses: no Lords or Ladies, why, Ma'am, I haven't seen one coach-and-six in the country!

Amelia

That *is* terrible.

Nancy

And then, Ma'am, there is our Tummus, who came from home with us, a right good English serving-man---now---for all he as good as promised me---so he did---now, he says he won't go home and be a servant, but he will go into the woods, and buy wild lands, and be a Congress-man.

Amelia

So! so! you fear you shall lose Thomas.

Nancy

No, indeed, Miss.

Amelia

Well, well, go, and send Thomas to *me.*

Nancy

But you won't, Miss, mention…

Amelia

Not a word---I will not betray you. *Exit Nancy.*
Poor Nancy! she has not seen one coach-and-six in the country! Is it not strange that those who are most debased by the splendid pageantry and inordinate wealth of the great, are the most ardent admirers, the most devoted adorers of that which destroys them. Like the worshippers of the Hindu Idol, they adore the tawdry image whose chariot-throne crushes them under its wheels.
Goes to the table, closes and seals her letters.

Enter Mr. ***Wentworth.***

Wentworth

So, sister. Still scribbling.

Amelia

I have finished my letters for the packet, and have given our sister some account of this interesting country.

Comes forward.

Wentworth

I wish I had never seen it. I should have taken warning from others, and not have commenced my travels in this fag-end of creation. I should have gone to Rome, and looked with delight on the ruins of greatness. But here every thing is new---no ivy crowned towers! no mouldering monuments ---nothing worth a traveller's crossing a kennel to see---all fresh---all bright as a brummagem button.

Amelia

Yes, all fresh, in youth, strength and beauty and therefore most worthy of the attention of travellers from the Old World. I would rather, dear brother, see flourishing towns, with laughing inhabitants, than the ruins of barbaric Castles, or the tombs of their guilty and tyrannic Lords. I should prefer, any where, health to decrepitude. But here. I see society in all the vigour of early life, supported and protected by the wisdom and experience of past ages. If America takes warning by the errors of Europe, she will soon be the pride of the Universe!

Wentworth

Will be! Yes, you have the true Yankee cant. Every thing that is worth having is to come.

Amelia

Better so than that the good should be past and leave only ruins and tombs. Better the prospect of a glorious futurity, than the remains of past greatness.

Wentworth

Sister---I have no patience with you---you are a downright democrat! A radical in petticoats, and no Englishwoman.

Amelia

Brother, you know better---I love dear old England, as every Englishwoman ought---but I can see and admire what is lovely in other lands. But you------

Wentworth

I am a true born Englishman---unprejudiced except in favour of my own country and countrymen, as I ought to be.

Amelia

A truce! A truce! Have you secured our berths in the steam-boat for Albany?

Wentworth

They told me at the office that there were no berths in the boat.

Amelia

You have made some mistake brother. The boat leaves the wharf at five o'clock this afternoon ---arrives in Albany at six or seven to-morrow morning; and the passengers sleep, of course, during the night.

Wentworth

I was very particular in my inquiries, and was told that we should be in Brunswick before night.

Amelia

Brunswick! Why this is as bad as going up the Delaware to Trenton, when you intended going to Baltimore. Where is your geography?

Wentworth

No man understands the geography of Europe better than I do.

Amelia

But we are now in America---therefore, pray, brother, go and secure berths in the steam-boat for Albany---and do be particular as to where the boat is going; for one would not choose to be carried south when our destination is north---and do be civil to the people---do now---for my sake.

Wentworth

Well, well---I will---but they have no respect for a gentleman---talk to me as familiarly as if I was one of their own democratic herd, just broke loose from the sty. The more I endeavour to teach the brutes manners, the more they stiffen the bristles of their republican insolence.

Amelia

But as we are travellers for our own pleasure, and not missionaries to teach manners, suppose
we take things as we find them, and make the best of our bargain.

Wentworth

Well, well---it's a hard bargain, but I'll try. It's in vain to look for comfort out of old England.

Exit.

Amelia

What would I not give that I could cure my good brother of his prejudices against America and Americans! It seems as if he had crossed the Atlantic for the sole purpose of confirming the notions he had previously gained from the misstatements of journalists and reviewers. He finds, or makes, all wrong---and turns the pleasures of life to torments.

Enter Mr. ***Bull.***

Mr. Bull

Miss Wentworth! Do I intrude?

Amelia

Mr. Bull! You in America?

Mr. Bull

Yes, Amelia, John Bull in America. I heard, below, that your brother was here, or I should not have presumed------

Amelia

Travelling has made you mighty ceremonious, Mr. Bull. To meet an old acquaintance abroad is not usually an unpleasant circumstance; but really you look as if you had met with a rattle-snake, instead of a countrywoman and cousin. You are, I see, quite an altered man.

Mr. Bull

A little older, and I hope a little wiser than when I left England; but, at heart, still John Bull. I confess that I was surprised to hear of Mr. and Miss Wentworth being in New-York.

Amelia

Surprised! Displeased, it would seem.

Mr. Bull

After a long pause. Cousin Amelia Wentworth!

Amelia

Well, Cousin John Bull!

Mr. Bull

You may, perhaps, remember, that I once on a time was silly enough to ask you to marry me.

Amelia

Yes, by chance, I do remember it. And I told you, you may remember, that you were a very green young gentleman, and had best go abroad, grow older, and if possible wiser, and learn the value of your giddy home-made cousin, by comparison with women made of foreign materials.

Mr. Bull

You did. That is, you gave me a travelling ticket. I have since seen the women of France and Germany, Spain and Italy;---I have seen all their enchanting attractions combined in the sylph-like females of this Yankee-land---and, thank you for your sage advice, I find-------

Amelia

In comparison with those lovely and fascinating sylphs------

Mr. Bull

My home-made Cousin Amelia is the woman of my choice after all.

Amelia

O, you most incorrigibly constant John Bull.

Mr. Bull

True; and if I had not heard of your arrival in New-York, I should have taken passage for England, to claim your implied promise.

Amelia

My promise!

Mr. Bull

"Implied" that if I did not change my mind, you would take------

Amelia

Your case into serious consideration.

Mr. Bull

And, instead of waiting my return, here I find you three thousand miles from home, in the land of Yankee-doodles.

Amelia

Poor Johnny Bull! And is the finding me a cause of complaint? How do you know but I came here to seek you? But, seriously, my brother promised to give you notice of our intention, by letter. He was seized violently with the rambling-fever, and I thought best to attend him, as his nurse, in the hope to cure his fault-finding propensities, or at least to protect him, Minerva like, from the evils which might result from them.

Mr. Bull

How does he like the country, now that he sees it.

Amelia

He *will* not see it. He teazes me to death by his obstinate determination to see nothing but through the coloured glasses of the book-makers of our own dear country. Never was poor nurse more tired of the patient committed to her charge, than I am.

Mr. Bull

I think I could cure him, if I joined your party as a fellow-traveller.

Amelia

You!

Mr. Bull

I have been several months in the United States. I have travelled from Maine to Louisiana. The objects of my pursuit were pleasure and instruction; and I found both. Good humour on my part was met by good humour on the part of the natives, whether consumers of codfish and switchel, or hoe-cake and bacon. I did not expect perfection in this country, any more than in my own; but I can say that my liking, both of the people and institutions, has increased every day since I landed among them. Now, with such a stock of experience, and a knowledge of the patient and disease, I will undertake to cure your brother---with the aid and co-operation of his nurse.

Amelia

He is a desperate subject.

Mr. Bull

I can cure him---but I must be rewarded.

Amelia

He *ought* to pay his physician.

Mr. Bull

You , must pay me.

Amelia

Do you expect a fee beforehand?

Mr. Bull

No. No cure no pay. But if I succeed…

Amelia

Well, well, I can be grateful------

Mr. Bull

And you will------
Takes her hand.

Amelia

Withdrawing it. No fee beforehand, you know.

Mr. Bull

It is enough---a bargain---one John Bull shall cure another. I will travel with you *incog*. Which way do you bend your course?

Amelia

We are now bound for the Falls of Niagara.

Mr. Bull

When do you go?

Amelia

This afternoon.

Mr. Bull

I have no time to lose then. You shall see me again before the time of embarkation. Adieu! Confide in the physician, Mrs. Nurse.
Exit.
Enter ***Nancy*** *, followed by* ***Job Jerryson.***

Amelia

Where is Thomas?

Nancy

Tummus is gone, Ma'am. He tould master he was a free- *man* , and would have his wages, and set up for himself. So, Ma'am, I have brought this black---gentleman---waiter---thinking he might do instead.

Amelia

Give him the letters for England.
To Job.
You will see them put in the letter-bag of the Liverpool packet.
Exit.

Job Jerryson

I shall do myself the honour, Madam.

Nancy

The black imp!

Job Jerryson

Taking snuff.
You---may---give me the letters---young woman.

Nancy

You may take them yourself. There they are.

Job Jerryson

O!---Ah!---
Puts up his snuff box.
Those are---
Looks toward them through his eye glass.
But I---upon my honour had quite forgot---
Looking at his watch.
I do not think I can be spared from the hotel at this time.

Nancy

Go and ask your Master.

Job Jerryson

"Master!"---I have no master. Master indeed! Demmee! That's well enough! I am my own master.

Nancy

I thought the keeper of the hotel was your master.

Job Jerryson

Not at all. He is keeper, and I am waiter. We have no masters here! You wait upon Miss Wentworth, but you would not call her mistress.

Nancy

But I would; and I do.

Job Jerryson

That may do for whites of the old country: but not for gentlemen and ladies of colour, in America. You will learn, Miss Nancy---Nancy, I think is your name?

Nancy

They call me Nancy for shortness, but my name is Ann.

Job Jerryson

Very well---Nancy, or Ann---You will learn Miss Ann, or Miss Nancy, after being a short time in this country, to set a proper value upon yourself. Now, if I might be permitted, I would propose for you------

Nancy

You! *You* propose for *me!*

Job Jerryson

If you would do me the honour, I would propose------

Nancy

I would have you know, fellow, that when I marry, I shall at least------

Job Jerryson

Marry!---'pon honour, that is too good!--- I do not marry I assure you---Miss---
Takes snuff.
Nancy---I am not a marrying man. As the man of colour says, in the play---I would not my free condition put in confinement for seas of wealth. If you would like to see our theatre, I can give you an order. I am one of the managers. We rehearse every club night---the Shakspeare Club--- and there is my friend Tom Dickson, the young coloured gentleman next door, we rub up---I would say---we brighten our memories of a morning, as we rub up the brass knobs and knockers at the street doors.

Nancy

I think you had better rub up your memory now, and take my Mistress's letters.

Job Jerryson *Looking at the letters through his glass.*

Ah, true!
Takes snuff.
My honour is pledged for their safety.
Takes letters from table.
---As I told Miss Diana Dingy. "The service of the fair sex is my delight."---Adieu---*mung share.*

Exit.

Nancy

O dear! O dear! Is not this too much for flesh and blood to bear!---Oh that I was in dear old England once more, and never might see a black face again. They may talk of well-favoured and ill-favoured---but of all favours, deliver me from a black favour!

Enter ***Dennis Doherty.***

Dennis Dougherty

Faver!---Is it yellow faver you're spaking of, my dear.

Nancy

No---black.

Dennis Dougherty

Worse and worse. And didn't I meet a fine gentleman going out of the house, with a face as black as my shoe? Was it him you meant?

Nancy

Yes, I did mean him.

Dennis Dougherty

And does the yellow faver turn men black? To be alive, and turn black! Oh that's too bad! I am sure that the black-faced gentleman was alive; for he grinn'd when I ax't him for Mr. Wintwort, and told me to come up here.

Nancy

Do you wish to see Mr. Wentworth?

Dennis Dougherty

Fait, and I do. I want to see some person from the old country, to give me comfort and advice. His Britannic Majesty's Counsel is out of town, and the clerk told me that all the Irish who came to the country died of the faver in saisoning. So I ax't him to recommend me to some English gentleman for advice, and he sent me here to Mr. Wintwort---here's his name on the paper.

Nancy

Reading.

To Judy M'Graw.

Dennis Dougherty

That's not it. That's a letter I wrote aboard ship, to inform my frinds of my safe arrival --- but I think I shall carry it mysilf. That's the subscription for Mr. Wintwort.

Offers another paper.

Nancy

My Master has gone out, but I will inform my Mistress.

Going, meets Mr. **Bull.** *Enter* ***Bull*** *, as a Frenchman.*

Mr. Bull

Ah ha! Ma pretty leetle rogue a---vere is your Lady? Vere is Mam'selle Wentawort?

Nancy

I am going to call her to this gentleman.

Exit.

Mr. Bull

Ah ha! ver goot!

Taking snuff.

Gentleman? Take a some snuff, Sair? I sink you are not of dis contree?

Dennis Dougherty

You may say that, Mounseer; and I wish you could as truly say I am not mysilf *in* this country.

Mr. Bull

Vye!---Vat is de mattare vid de contree? Ver goot contree.

Dennis Dougherty

Yes. If people could live in it.

Mr. Bull

Vye de peeps are lyve. Ha! You are not dead-man, Sair?

Dennis Dougherty

No, not yet. But I soon shall be, if I don't get off.

Mr. Bull

Get off? For vat you come here?

Dennis Dougherty

I came to settle, as they call it, because land is chape, and I have some money to buy with. But I had no desire to settle in the churchyard; or bargain for a plantation, six feet by two. Did not I see a shop full of coffins the first day I landed? O, what a divvil of a place is it where the coffins stand ready to catch a man the moment he stips ashore. I suppose my coffin was ready made for me before I left Ireland, without even the dacent ceremony of measuring the corpse. It's the faver, Mounseer, makes me want to be off---ready-made coffins and faver!

Mr. Bull

Ah! ha! ver goot! you ave got de fevare?

Dennis Dougherty

But have I tho'?---Do I begin to turn yellow or black?

Mr. Bull

Excuse-a-me. I voud say---ave a you got de fevare?

Dennis Dougherty

Not yet---I blave!

Mr. Bull

Ow long you ave been ere in Merreek?

Dennis Dougherty

In--- *mer* ---what?

Mr. Bull

In---a---merry---kee---ow long a ave you been in Amerrykee?

Dennis Dougherty

In a merry key! The divvil a bit of a merry key have I been in, since I saw the coffin shop. I have been chop-fallen ever since.

Mr. Bull

I say, ma frent, how long since you ave been in dis contree?

Dennis Dougherty

Just two weeks too long. I arrived a fort-night ago. And now, as there is no ship about sailing for Ireland, I want to go north, to his majesty's dominions.

Mr. Bull

And for what you go nord?

Dennis Dougherty

For what is it? That I may feel what it is to be cool and comfortable once more, and safe under his majesty's flag.
Enter ***Amelia.***

Mr. Bull

Meeting her. Ah, Mam'selle Wentawort, I ave de honour to pay ma respects to you.

Amelia

Sir! My servant told me you were Irish.

Mr. Bull

No. Mam'selle, upon ma vord!

Dennis Dougherty

Oh! Who would ever mistake that mahogany faced gentleman for an Irishman. Sure it wasn't your *woman* made that *Bull.*

Mr. Bull

Bull?

Amelia

Between them. Upon my word I am in a strange situation, with two persons upon whom I never before set eyes---and both pretty familiar.

Dennis Dougherty

For mysilf, my Lady, I thank you for the compliment. I was as pretty a lad, before I was sweated down, as ivver stept from the Green Isle to the Green Ocean. As to the other gentleman's beauty---it may spake for itsilf in black and yellow.

Mr. Bull

Mam'selle Wentawort, you no know a me?

Amelia

Not I, Sir! Did you send for me?

Dennis Dougherty

That was mysilf.

Mr. Bull

Not know Monsieur Tonson!

Amelia

Only on the stage.

Mr. Bull

Monsieur Tonson---Bee-you-double ell.

Dennis Dougherty

Bee---you---double ell!

Amelia

Is it possible?

Dennis Dougherty

That's Bull, sure enough. If I thought you meant any national reflections, I'd ax you how you spell frog, Mounseer!

Amelia

And this is for the purpose?

Mr. Bull

No cure no pay---Siss is de first part of a ma comedie. Ah, ha! Mam'selle, you acknowlege de acquaintance?

Amelia

I do.

Dennis Dougherty

Now this would puzzle the almanac maker!

Amelia

To Dennis

Perhaps you, too, are an old acquaintance.

Dennis Dougherty

It may be so, my Lady---and the divvil an objection have I---but if it is so---it is so old, that I have quite forgot all about it.

Amelia

Well---be that as it may---your business?

Dennis Dougherty

When I was at home, I was a farmer---but since I have been in New-York, I have had no business but to wipe my forehead, and kill muskeetoes.

Amelia

Ha, ha, ha! But your business with me? You sent word that you wanted to speak to my brother, or to me.

Dennis Dougherty

Oh---Ah---now that's it.

Mr. Bull

Siss very honnest a gentleman---tells a me zat he vould run avay nord to get avay from de ate, and find protection from de fevare under de flag of his Majesty Brittanique! Ha! zat is right, mon Ami?

Amelia

Perhaps the gentleman can tell his story quite as intelligibly as you can, Monsieur Tonson!
To Dennis
You are discontented with this country, and would consult my brother as to the mode of getting home again.

Dennis Dougherty

That's *it* , my Lady---If I had bothered about it all day I could not have said it so well. Fait, I believe it's natural for a woman's tongue to make itself understood, any how, even if she don't spake at all. Long life to the dear cratures; it's musick and dancing too to hear them!

Amelia

But what is your objection to staying in this country?

Dennis Dougherty

Hate, my Lady.

Mr. Bull

Hate! Vat. you hate de contree?

Dennis Dougherty

Not at all.

Amelia

The heat. Monsieur---the heat.

Dennis Dougherty

Yes, my Lady, the *hate.* If I don't run away, I shall run away mysilf.

Mr. Bull

Dat is ver goot!---He runavay if he don't a run avay!

Amelia

But if you *stay* , you will find it cold enough.

Dennis Dougherty

You may say that. It is cold enough under the sod in a churchyard. The first time I went to the Catedral, I took a bit of a walk in the burying ground, just to amuse mysilf wid reading the tombstones---but by my soul the place was planted with Irishmen thicker than potatoes in a well till'd patch, or crosses on a check shirt.

Mr. Bull

Sheck churt---ver goot!

Dennis Dougherty

\I wonder where was the good? I thinks I to mysilf. Dennis, did you come here to be planted in a barbarous country, like these fine hearty fellows, that I see here under ground? Their ages were put on their tombstones; and, by my soul, not one that was over thirty.

Amelia

How old are you?

Dennis Dougherty

Forty before I left Ireland.

Amelia

Then you are safe.

Dennis Dougherty

And am I? Am I?

Amelia

If no Irishman dies older than thirty. You are forty, and therefore safe.

Dennis Dougherty

And I may thank Ireland for that, and not this barbarous country.

Mr. Bull

Siss contree is ver fine contree.

Dennis Dougherty

What signifies *that* , if a man can't live in it?

Amelia

Plenty to eat and drink.

Dennis Dougherty

Faver takes away a man's appetite.

Mr. Bull

For what you complain of favour, ha? I should a wish to aveale favour of dis contree ver much, ma for!

Dennis Dougherty

Every man to his liking, sure enough.

Amelia

Our friend did not say favour, but fever.

Dennis Dougherty

Yes, my Lady--- *faver* ---that's it.

Amelia

After a time you would be pleased with this New World.

Mr. Bull

Siss is de land of Liberty!

Dennis Dougherty

Liberty! O yes! Fait it is. If a man has no shoes and stockings he is at liberty to go barefoot! And then they tell me that in the winter when the snow is up to a man's knees, he has the liberty to walk---if he can.

Amelia

I see my brother coming---you and he will agree marvellously well!
Bull and Dennis retire up.

Enter Wentworth.

Wentworth

All the berths for to-day were engaged--- but as I was coming away, a part forward French man lept up and offered me his berth, then ran off and in a minute secured two for you and your servant ---I refused---but there is no getting rid of a Frenchman's civility and his snuff-box.

Mr. Bull *Offering his box.*

You pinch, if you please, Sair.

Amelia

Monsieur Tonson.

Wentworth

Here he is again!

Mr. Bull

We are old acquaintance for som minutes. I ave been appy to accomodate Monsieur Wentawort wid a my birt in de boat!

Amelia

It is to you, then, we owe------

Mr. Bull

Noting at all---I get a snug caban from de capitain upon deck---ver convenient.

Wentworth

So!---He gets a better place for himself by giving up some dirty hole to us---I thought so. That's French politeness!

Mr. Bull *Offering box.*

Nodare leetle pinch, Sair.

Wentworth *Turns away.*

Who have we here?

Amelia

A stranger, like ourselves, come to visit America.

Wentworth

Another fool.

Bull and Amelia retire laughing.

Dennis Dougherty

You may say that. If ivver I get home again, I'll never complain of the hate, sure.

Wentworth

You don't like this country, it seems.

Dennis Dougherty

Is it the country? It's well enough, if one could get out of it alive.

Wentworth

You don't like the people?

Dennis Dougherty

I can't say much for their civility, any how. As I walk the streets of this town, when I meet a man, I give him the time of day, with a "good morning," says I, and "God bliss you." "Hay," says he---"Nan"---Now I nivver knew that "nan," and "hay," meant "thank you," and "God bliss you," before.

Wentworth

And you want to go home again.

Dennis Dougherty

Fait do I. It has cost me tree hundred dollars to larn what a hot day is.

Amelia

But have you not consulted some friend, English or Irish, who has *resided* in this country?

Dennis Dougherty

That's *what* I did. I went to the office of his Britannic Majesty's Counsel, but he was not in town---there I found a clark, an Irishman from Dublin itsilf, and he told me to get home as fast as I could, for he had been twenty-nine years in the country, and all the Irish died as fast as they came over.

Amelia

But he was alive!

Dennis Dougherty

As jolly and red in the gills as bafe and port wine could make him.

Amelia

After twenty-nine years' residence?

Mr. Bull

Ma foi! He is vat you call touf---he take him twenty-nine years to die! And he lyvf and merry yet---ver goot!

Dennis Dougherty

Yes---but he is in the King's sarvice.

Wentworth

Come along with me my good fellow. I will do every thing in my power to get you out of this country.

Exit, Dennis following him.

Amelia

Alive---I hope.

Dennis Dougherty

Turns about and bows.
Thank your Ladyship.

Exit.

Amelia

My brother will be delighted with this loyal Hibernian. I must make preparation---you will be in time?

Mr. Bull

I will. My preparations are made---I have a snug cabin on deck, where I have deposited some disguises, borrowed from the Bowery Theatre ---and doubt not a happy denouement to our *Trip to Niagara*.
Exeunt Amelia and Bull.

SCENE .

Steam-boat wharf, bottom of Courtlandt-street, New-York. Bell ringing. The usual bustle. Steam-boat Runners inviting passengers. View of Jersey City. Ships in the stream, &c.

1st Runner
This way, Sir!---This way.

Enter Gentlemen and Ladies.

2nd Runner

Which boat. Sir?

Gentleman

The New Philadelphia.

1st Runner

The North America is the fastest, Sir!

2nd Runner

It's false!---This way, Sir!---This way, Sir!---This way, Ma'am!

1st Runner

This way, Sir!---We beat them by twenty minutes last trip.

2nd Runner

We beat *them* , Sir!

Gentleman

Stand out of the way.

1st Runner

That's right, Sir---this way--- *Shows the Travellers on board, and returns.*

Enter ***Wentworth*** *, followed by Porters with baggage. Miss* ***Wentworth, Nancy*** *, with a small basket, and* ***Dennis Dougherty.***

Dennis Dougherty
Let me be carrying that for you, my dear.

Nancy
No, thank you. It's my ridicule.

Dennis Dougherty
Your what?

Nancy
My ridicule.

Dennis Dougherty
Your---that's enough.

2nd Runner
The New Philadelphia, Sir?

Wentworth
No. To Albany.

Enter ***Job Jerryson*** *, showing Travellers to the boat.*

Dennis Dougherty
[*Looking at Job, and pulling Wentworth by the sleeve]*.
Sae him!---Sae him!

Job Jerryson
Permit me to have the honour of showing you the way.
Goes with Travellers on board.

Wentworth
Well---what then?

Dennis Dougherty
Don't go in the same boat with that gentleman ---he has the black faver.

Wentworth
Black enough.

1st Runner
The North America is the best boat, Sir.

Amelia

We have taken our berths---in which boat, brother?

Wentworth

In the boat for Albany.

1st Runner

They are all for Albany.

2nd Runner

Quick, Sir! This way.

Dennis Dougherty

How the craters are all running away from the faver!

2nd Runner

I remember, Sir, you engaged berths on board our boat---you, and a French gentleman.

Wentworth

Then take the baggage on board. No talking!

2nd Runner

That's not my business.

Wentworth

Yankee civility, again!

Amelia

Nancy, show the porter---
To 2nd Runner.
I'll thank you---Sir---

2nd Runner

I will see all safe on board, Ma'am--- but one don't like to be snubb'd.
Assists Nancy and Porter, and goes on board.

1st Runner *To Dennis.*

North America?
*Enter **Job** from the boat, and exit.*

Dennis Dougherty

Yes, as far north as his Majesty's dominions. Sae! There's the black faver again! By the powers he knows his place, and stays in New-York!

Wentworth

You go with us.

Dennis Dougherty

To be sure---but I've left my trunk---

Wentworth

Run---

Dennis Dougherty

Kape the boat! I'll run for dear life.

Exit .

Enter ***Bull*** *from the boat as* ***Jonathan*** *, followed by the Engineer, in warm dispute.*

Mr. Bull

I say it is too short.

Steam Engineer

Not at all.

Mr. Bull

But I know it is.

Steam Engineer

You find as much fault with the machinery, as if you were an Englishman.

Wentworth

There! Amelia! You hear!

Mr. Bull

Why, you must admit, for sartin, that the piston is too short.

Steam Engineer

No, I don't.

Mr. Bull

Goody gracious, you're so tied up to your own notions, that you won't see the nose on your face, for all it stands right between your eyes. I'll appeal to this here gentleman.

Wentworth

I know nothing about it

Turns away .

Mr. Bull

I'll be darn'd but the piston is too short by abyout an inch and a quarter; and that there what d'you call it, is too long. If you would but have every thing to fit---slick---gracious me! you'd make your boat go like a streak o' chalk! so you would. Oh! I wish I had money enough to build a steam-boat ---I wish I had!

Steam Engineer

And what would *you* do, if you *had* the money?

Mr. Bull

Keep it.

Bell rings.

Steam Engineer

[*Runs on board.]*
All on board.

Mr. Bull

Shall I help this Lady---Amelia!

Amelia

[Recognising him].
Is it possible!

Wentworth

Stand out of the way! Amelia, take my arm.

Mr. Bull

Well---when I want to learn politeness, I'll travel.
All go on board.

END OF FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

The Bowery, with a view of the front of the Theatre. Enter ***Dennis*** *, with a trunk and bundles, dropping one while he secures another.*

Dennis Dougherty

I'm bother'd wid ye---so that's *that* ---Sure I must be nare the stame-boat by this time---I've turn'd round 'till I don't know which turn will sarve my turn next. Och! there's the big church, and now I'm to turn to my lift hand---or my right ---by my soul I forgot which---
[*Enter two young men]*.
Good afternoon to you, and God bliss ye, and---
[*They look at him, laugh, and exit.]*
Now there it is! That's all the information I get.
[*Others pass in various directions, and pay no attention to him.]*
Good avening to ye, and Heaven bliss---So! They are gone too!
[*Enter* Job Jerryson *, upper entrance, and comes down behind* Dennis *, and passes him,*

his back towards him.]
Good avening to you, Sir, if you plase.
[*Job turns.]*
Och! it's the black-faced gentleman!---No nearer, if you plase!

Job Jerryson

What is your wish, friend?

Dennis Dougherty

Kape off, if you plase.---Can you tell me the way---a little further off, if you plase.

Job Jerryson

As far off as you please, friend. I do not wish to be nearer, I assure you. I am black, Sir; so was "noble Othello."---How do I know but he was one of my forefathers?

Dennis Dougherty

Four fathers! You don't pretend you had four fathers!

Job Jerryson

Yes, Sir.

Dennis Dougherty

And how many mothers?

Job Jerryson

Contemptible!

Dennis Dougherty

But, before you go, tell me the way.

Job Jerryson

Which way would you go?

Dennis Dougherty

By stame.

Job Jerryson

Where?

Dennis Dougherty

To Albany---kape off, if you plase.

Job Jerryson

My good man, this is the road to Boston.

Dennis Dougherty

And where's the boat for Albany?

Job Jerryson

My good Sir, you are quite out of the way; you must go back again---that way---till you see a church on your right hand.

Dennis Dougherty

That's it.

Job Jerryson

That, Sir, is the Bowery Theatre, and no Church, upon my honour.

Dennis Dougherty

O thunder! A play house! Where shall I go?

Job Jerryson

Go directly back; and when you come to St. Paul's, ask any gentleman, and he will tell you or show you the way.---I must go this way--- I am in haste---
[*looks at his watch]*
The ladies are waiting for me, 'pon honour.
[*Exit*.]

Dennis Dougherty

Back again---St. Paul's.---That's where the old gentleman stands night and day to keep watch over the door with a wooden sword---if he would show me the way to the river again, I'll get on board the first boat that goes by wind or stams---but may be Mr. Wintwort is waiting for me! O! let me get out of this devil of a place, any how!
[*Exit.]*

DIORAMA, OR MOVING SCENERY.

The steam boat is seen as passing up the river.

Scene . Harbour of New-York. Governor's Island. Ships at anchor.

Frigate at anchor. Jersey City.
Hoboken.
Weehawk.
Palisades.
Approaching storm.
Storm.
Boats passing through a fog.
Clearing away and rainbow. Caldwell's landing. Boat stops.
Highlands.

Buttermilk Falls.
West Point. Sun setting.
Highlands continued.
Newburgh by moonlight.
Island near Newburgh.
Catskill Mountains in distance, and Mountain House.
Continuation of scenery.
Catskill landing.
[The boat stops, and the passengers are seen putting off in a small boat, and landing at Catskill, at night.]
[*Bar-room of the Inn at Catskill-landing. Night. Candles.]*

*Enter **Wentworth** , followed by Landlord.*

Wentworth

So! Here we stay all night---the coach broke, and no other to be had.

Landlord

I am extremely sorry, Sir. But you may still be in time to see the sun rise from the front of the Mountain House. It is said to be the finest view in the world.

Wentworth

It may be very well for this country.

Landlord

I see this is a grumbler.

Exit.

Wentworth

What fools we are to leave home, and expose ourselves to dangers and insults! and for what purpose? Can you give us a decent supper? I suppose not though. Why don't you answer? I say, can we have------? Gone! That's free and easy! Familiar! Waiter! Waiter!

*[Enter **Amelia** and **Nancy** , attended by Landlord and Waiter, who assist with baggage, &c. &c.]*

Amelia

Thank you, Sir.

Landlord

This way, Madam---Tom, show the Ladies into the parlour---carry the baggage up stairs!

Amelia

Nancy, will you show which are our trunks, and have them taken care of.

Landlord

[*To Nancy]*.

This way, Miss!
[*To Amelia.]*
I will see everything attended to, Madam.
[*Exeunt Landlord, Nancy and Waiter.]*

Wentworth

So, sister, here we must stay, in this wretched dog-hole, to-night.

Amelia

Dog-hole, brother? Every thing is very comfortable! And the people are very obliging.

Wentworth

Are they? I haven't found it out.

Amelia

Perhaps you did not seek it by the right light. Civility begets civility. Nay, I find that civility is met by the most friendly attentions from the people of this country. But I *have seen* rudeness answered by the treatment it always merits. What a delightful journey we have had!

Wentworth

Have we?

Amelia

Such weather! Such scenery!

Wentworth

I was reading newspapers in the cabin, glad to get rid of the boring of the passengers. There was that infernal Yankee---and that detestable Frenchman---I hate a Frenchman!

Amelia

O brother! brother! You must look through the other end of the glass, or you look in vain for pleasure!
Exit.

Wentworth

I hope, by stopping here, I have got rid of my two tormentors, the Yankee and the French-man. That chattering Frenchman stuck to me like pitch. His civility and his snuff-box are eternally thrust into every man's face!

Mr. Bull *Without.*

Malbrook s'en va---tang ta--- Vaiter, my ver goot friend---good fellow---
[*Enters, shaking hands with the Waiter.]*
Give a me some branty and vater--- *vite* , queek!

Waiter at Catskill

Yes, Sir!

Runs off.

Wentworth

Waiter! Here is my tormentor.

Mr. Bull

Sair! How you do, by dis time---aha--- Von pinch snuff, Sair! You do not speak a to me. Dat is ver polite. Ven I meet a you, I say to you, "good morning, Sair"---You say, "humph"---I say, "take a pinch snuff, Sair"---"humph"---"very fine weddare, Sair"---"homph." Vat is dat "homph." Now I say "Sair" to you---"homph!"

Turns off, and sits.

Wentworth

Contemptible!
Seats himself.

Mr. Bull

Waiter brings him brandy and water.
Dat is my goot fellow---John---you name John?

Waiter at Catskill

Tom, Sir!

Mr. Bull

Ver pret name---Tom! goot fellow, Tom!

Wentworth

Waiter! Waiter, I say! Will no one attend to a gentleman! I suppose I can have no supper! Waiter! bring me a pair of slippers.

Mr. Bull

Vaiter! bring a me two pair slippares.

Wentworth

You infernal scoundrel, why don't you obey me?---I will go to bed.

Mr. Bull

I vill go to two beds.

Wentworth *Jumping up.*

Bring me a candle, and show me to my room.

Mr. Bull

Bring a me two candles, and show me to two room.

Wentworth

There is nothing but vexation in the infernal country. I'll find the Landlord, and blow him to the devil.

Exit.

Mr. Bull

Ha! ha! ha! Vat you laugh at, Vaiter? Tom, for vat you laugh? you dam fellow---ha!--- Tom, take a de candles, and show me to my suppare ---marsh---Tom---aha! Malbrook sen va t'en guere.

Exeunt. Waiter preceding him with candles.

END OF SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

Scene 1

Scene --- *the Mountain, or Pine Orchard House. The stage represents the rock in front of the house---a view of the house and of the distant scenery. Sun rises during the scene. Enter* ***Wentworth*** *and* ***Amelia.***

Amelia

This is indeed sublime.

Wentworth

Humph! Well enough for this country.

Amelia

See how beautifully the majestic Hudson, diminished by distance to the size of a rivulet, meanders through fields, forests, and meadows, which are reduced in appearance to garden flower-beds. You don't enjoy the prospect, brother.

Wentworth

I can think of nothing but that infernal Frenchman; he teazed me all day, insulted me in the evening, by calling, like an echo, for every thing I called for *doubled* ---and in the middle of the night I heard him open his diabolical plan.

Amelia

What?---His plan!

Wentworth

I heard him---but I discovered and defeated his plot---I discovered his *intention.*

Amelia

Indeed---You have, then, discovered------

Wentworth

Yes---I have---I overheard him in the next room to mine, talking to himself---I got up and looked through the key-hole, and I discovered all. I heard enough to let me into the plot.

Amelia

Well, it was an innocent attempt, for your good.

Wentworth

Innocent!

Amelia

Yes, I am sure it was meant for your good, brother.

Wentworth

What? Murder me for my good!

Amelia

Murder you?

Wentworth

Yes, Ma'am! I saw him sharpening a razor. I heard him say, "Aha! Mr. Bull, this will do your business, Mr. Bull."

Amelia

Mr. Bull! Ah! now I understand.

Aside.

Wentworth

All these Frenchmen call us English, Mr. and Mrs. Bull, you know---"this will do your business, Mr. Bull---There he stood by the table, the candle shining full upon the razor and his ugly black face, he stropping away and feeling the edge now and then, "aha!" says he, "this will do, this will take it off at one sweep." Meaning my head---no doubt.

Amelia

Meaning his own beard, more likely. And was this all?

Wentworth

All! Sister! Sister! You are enough to provoke a saint! But I've got rid of the scoundrel ---I took out my pistols------

Amelia

You didn't murder him, I hope! Heavens!

Wentworth

If he had attempted to enter my chamber, I should have tried an English bullet on his French razor! But my taking out my pistols made such a noise, that he found I was prepared, and he gave up the attempt, and decamped, I suppose, for I see nothing of him this morning. Here's another torment.

*[Enter **Leather-Stocking** ---dress as described in J. F. Cooper's* Pioneers. *On his head, a cap made of fox skin--- hair gray---face sun burnt---check shirt---deer skin coat, with the hair on, tied with a belt of coloured worsted--- buckskin breeches and leggins---a belt over his shoulder, suspending a horn for powder. A leather pouch before him for balls, &c. A long rifle.]*

Amelia

Is he an Indian? A wild and noble figure. An Indian?

Wentworth

I hope so---yes---yet he don't look like the wax Indian in the museum at New-York.

Leather-Stocking

All changed! The beasts of the forest all gone! What is worth living for here, now! All spoilt! All spoilt!

Wentworth

He speaks English. Are you an Indian?

Leather-Stocking

No---I am a white skin.

Wentworth

Not much of that.

Leather-Stocking

Pure white, without a cross. But I have lived with the red skins most of my life, and that's not a short one.

Amelia

Do you live here?

Leather-Stocking

No! What's worth living for, here? I am going far west, with the deer and the Indians; and I thought I would look once more at the Catskills, for old acquaintance sake. But all is spoilt---the settlers spoil all!

Amelia

All is lovely! What do you mean?

Leather-Stocking

O! This was a Paradise once! The game was plenty---and none to meddle---only may-hap a party of Delaware's, now and then---or a scout of them thieves, the Iroquois.

Wentworth

Good shooting, and no Frenchmen or Yankees! I like your taste.

Leather-Stocking

There were two or three Frenchmen that squatted in the flats further west, and married squaws.---but I had the mountains to myself.

Amelia

It must have been a melancholy life. To roam over these hills, and look upon this beautiful stream below, without a soul to speak to.

Leather-Stocking

Melancholy---no, young woman! It was cheerful. When the trees began to be kiver'd with leaves, and the ice was out of the river; when the birds came back from the south, and all nater lifted its song to its Maker---think you not that the hunter's thanksgiving went up to Heaven with the song of all around him?

Amelia

Oh yes---but he was alone---but *now* , see the smoke rising from a thousand habitations, and the fields covered with grain and fruit, for a thousand happy families.

Leather-Stocking

The smoke rises to heaven; but do the thanks of the people rise with it?

Wentworth

He's right---they are an unthankful race! *You* are an Englishman?

Leather-Stocking

By descent; but a *born* Yankee. As good as most men I meet with---always excepting the red skins. But I perceive, young woman, *you* look with pleasure on what you see from this hill.

Amelia

I do, Indeed.

Leather-Stocking

So did I once! I was on that there hill-top when Vaughan burnt Sopus. The river was in sight under my feet for seventy miles, looking like a curled shaving, though it was eight long miles to its banks. I saw the Hampshire grants, the highlands, and all creation

beneath me. All that God has done, or man could undo, as far as eye could reach---and the red skins call *me, Hawks-eye.*

Amelia

It was, and *is*, a glorious sight.

Leather-Stocking

For them that likes to be a mile high in the air, and see men's farms and housen, *at your feet*; and rivers looking like ribands. But there's a place a short way back here, that I relish of late more than this; it's more kiver'd with trees, and the water falls from the hill like foam from heaven.

Amelia

Where? Can you not guide us to it.

Wentworth

After breakfast---after breakfast.

Leather-Stocking

I'll guide you, and help your delicate limbs over the rough and wet places, although I am rough myself. On that spot I speak of, I once saved a beautiful woman, like you, from the spring of a painter.

Amelia

A painter?

Wentworth

One of those foolish fellows, I suppose, who go about, to places like this, climbing precipices, at the risk of their necks, with port folios and three legged stools and pencils, to make sketches of what they call fine scenery. Ha! Wasn't it?

Leather-Stocking

Anan?

Wentworth

What did you do with the painter?

Leather-Stocking

I shot him.

Amelia

Shot him!

Leather-Stocking

I never miss my aim.

Wentworth

Poor devil---but it served him right. What do people thrust themselves into harm's way for, when they should be safe at home?

Leather-Stocking

He was at home. It was the young woman who was abroad.

Wentworth

The painter was not an Englishman, then?

Leather-Stocking

Anan?

Wentworth

Was he a native?

Leather-Stocking

No doubt---and the biggest I ever saw.

Amelia

And you shot him?

Leather-Stocking

Just as he was going to spring on the gal.

Wentworth

I always had a bad opinion of those vagabond sketching blades.

Amelia

And you saved her?

Leather-Stocking

She didn't see the creater, and he didn't see me---I leveld just over her shoulder, and hit him between the eyes.

Chuckling.

He! he--- He roll'd down the rock, harmless as a lamb---the gal was skeart---but I saved her!---I wore the creater's skin ever since.

Amelia

Horrid!---His skin!

Wentworth

The painter's skin?

Leather-Stocking

This coat is made of it.

Amelia

O---a panther! Now I understand.

Wentworth

A panther---not a painter---a panther.

Leather-Stocking

Anan? I don't know how the books call the animal, but his skin was the finest I ever saw of the kind.

Amelia

And you saved a female from this terrible beast? The place is free from such now?

Leather-Stocking

It is now only visited by men.

Wentworth

Painters of pictures, and fools who travel to see wonders.

Amelia

And this happened near the beautiful cataract you mentioned.

Leather-Stocking

It did. I had to drag the beast from the stream, that I might save his fur coat; for he fell where the water lights after it leaps from the rock.

Amelia

To what river is the water you speak of tributary?

Leather-Stocking

Anan?

Amelia

Which way does it go?

Leather-Stocking

It's a drop for old Hudson. I've sat on the shelving rock many a long hour, and watched the bubbles as they shot by me, and thought how long it would be before that very water would be under the bottom of a vessel and tossing in the salt sea.

Amelia

And then raised to the clouds, and descending on the mountain top again. So turns the great wheel of nature! In one immutable round of mutation! One unchanging circle of incessant change!

Leather-Stocking

Anan?

Amelia

O! I am impatient to see the place you have so eloquently described.

Wentworth

After breakfast.

Leather-Stocking

Well, when you wish to go, ask for Leather-Stocking, or Natty Bumpo; or if you ask of an Indian, call me Hawks-eye---I answer to all these names, and, he, he, he, *Chuckling*
have one of my own, besides.

[*Exit.*]

Wentworth

Strange animal! Come Amelia.

*[Enter **Bull** , meeting them, as **Jonathan** , with a bell-shaped pumpkin tied to the bough of a pear tree.]*

Mr. Bull

Good morning, Miss---and the same to you, Mister---I'm glad I've met you again, you're so tarnal agreeable, and take to my conversation *so* meazingly.

Amelia

Good morning, Mr. Jonathan---what's your other name?

Mr. Bull

Doolittle---at your sarvice, Miss.

Amelia

What have you got there?

Mr. Bull

It's a sample of our Yankee pears. I guess as how, Mister, you mightent ha got sich in your country.

Amelia

Not as large.

Wentworth

Every bit as large.

Amelia

Oh, brother!

Wentworth

Very nearly as large.

Amelia

Oh, no!

Wentworth

Half as large, I'm sure.

Amelia

No, no, brother.

Wentworth

I'm sure I've seen pears very nearly half as large.

Amelia

Oh, no.

Wentworth

What! would you reduce English pears to the size of nutmegs.

Mr. Bull

I made a cargo of nutmegs once.

Wentworth

You make nutmegs. These Yankees will undertake to make any thing---they make nothing of saying they made it, whether they made it or no. You make nutmegs!

Mr. Bull

Yes, and made a pretty penny by 'em too. I made 'em out of pine plank, and sold the whole cargo to a grocer in York. Uncle Ben said it was as slick a trick as ever was hatch'd east'ard. Did you ever hear of uncle Ben?

Wentworth

Damn your uncle Ben!

Mr. Bull

Oh no! don't darn uncle Ben. Darn me as much as you please---but uncle Ben's a deacon, and it's a kynd of blasphemy to darn a deacon.
Bell rings. Ha! I guess that's for breakfast, up at the house, there.

Wentworth

Come, Amelia---let's get rid of this fool ---or knave.
They are going.

Mr. Bull *Following.*

Won't you put the pear in your pocket?

Wentworth

Damn your pear!

Mr. Bull

I'll carry it in, and have it sarved up for sa'ace at the breakfast.
Exeunt up the stage. Amelia looks back, and shakes her finger at Bull. He follows laughing.

SCENE 2.

The waterfall and cave, or recess in the rock. Enter ***Amelia*** *and* ***Leather-Stocking*** *, he assisting her.* ***Wentworth*** *following down the rocks---stops.*

Leather-Stocking

Now, you are safe, young woman.

Amelia

Thank you. I felt safe all the time, under your care.

Leather-Stocking

Any woman may do that.

Wentworth

You wild man, help me down this curst place! Oh, that I should ever leave home for this! Help!

Leather-Stocking

Puts him in safety.
There! now look around you.

Amelia

Sublime! How bold! How picturesque!

Wentworth

But I would rather sit at home and see it. Besides, I am tired of new plantations, and new towns. A traveller's delight is the remains of cities and temples, the proofs of Time's resistless power---as the poet says.---Give me broken pillars and obliterated inscriptions, bricks from Babel, and mummies from Egypt.

Amelia

And give me present joy, in scenes of happiness spread around me, by the hand of my beneficent Creator. Oh, brother! I had rather, much rather, see the ruby lips, and sparkling glance of youth, than the ashen hue, and leaden eye of age.

Wentworth

Sister, have you lost your veneration for age?

Amelia

For "age by itself age," as we used to say of the letters of the alphabet---yes. But for the wisdom which ought to accompany age, I entertain the deepest veneration.

Leather-Stocking

You, young woman, see and feel the hand of your Creator in his mighty works. You, have a hunter's heart, a heart that is lifted to heaven, while you look on the wonders of the arth. You enjoy, and are thankful.

Amelia

You do me justice.

Wentworth

There is some sense in travelling with a man like you, that can help one at a pinch. I wish you were an Englishman.

Leather-Stocking

What's the difference? Our fathers are the same. I have fought by the side of English-men in Wolfe's war, and helpt 'em cut up the French and Iroquois, in them there times; and many a tough fight, and wild skrimmage has Leather-stocking shared with an Englishman at his side, though he is a Yankee.

Wentworth

You are no Yankee.

Leather-Stocking

He, he, he!
Chuckling.
But I am though, and I have proved it, at Saratoga, and at Tippacannoo, and Chippawa.

Amelia

Have you been all your life a soldier?

Leather-Stocking

No soger! I never carried smooth-bore or baggonet. I have been all my life a ranger, in peace and war. In peace this rifle never mist deer or duck; and in war, it has been as harmful to my country's Invaders, as any smooth-bore or baggonet piece of 'em all. But times are alter'd, I am old, the game is driven west. This is no place for a ranger.

Wentworth

We are going north or west, too---I don't exactly know which---to Niagara.

Leather-Stocking

That was once wild enough. Fit to look on---but it's spoilt now. What has houses and bridges to do among the wonders of heaven? They spoil all---they spoil all!

Amelia

Go with us.

Leather-Stocking

No. I go to the prairie and the wilderness. Men are not for me. I have performed my promise, and shown you a place worth looking at.

Amelia

You have indeed.

Leather-Stocking

Then good by! remember old Leather-stocking, when you return to your country. The country of our fathers! Old England.

Exit.

Amelia

Strange being! fit for scenes like this.

Wentworth

Come! I wish he had staid to help me back again. Come, Amelia---we must go farther, I suppose.

Amelia

On, brother! on to Niagara.

Exeunt.

SCENE 3.

State-street, Albany. The Capitol at a distance. Enter ***Bull*** *as* ***Jonathan*** *, and* ***Amelia.***

Mr. Bull

Could you have thought that prejudice would make any man believe that another man, merely because a native of another country, could design in cold blood to murder him, without cause or provocation? “This will do your business, Mr. Bull.”

Amelia

Prejudice will make men believe any thing. But I don’t see how you are to cure my brother. You make him worse and worse.

Mr. Bull

The disease must be increased to make the cure radical. The crisis is nigh------. Here he comes. You are so tarnal good nater’d, Miss, that I could like to tell you stories all day long.

Enter ***Wentworth.***

Wentworth

I wonder you will suffer that clown to talk to you, sister.

Amelia

You left me, brother, and I was glad to have a fellow-traveller near me. He is acquainted in Albany---knows every body.

Wentworth

Takes out a snuff-box, and takes a pinch.

I have got a head-ach in that tiresome boat.

Mr. Bull

I see you English folk do like a pinch of snuff, now and then, as well as the French. That’s very fine snuff, I guess.

Wentworth

Yes. I bought it in London for my own use.

Puts the box in his pocket.

Mr. Bull

For your own use! So it seems. Now darn it, that puts me in mind of Nathan’s orange. *Wentworth turns from him.* You must know, Miss, our Nathan went to town, and he brought home an orange; ‘twas a meazing fine one, that’s sartin. “Nathan,” says I, “that’s a beauty of an orange”---I thought the creetur would a gin me a bit. “Yes,” says he, “Jonathan, it is a beauty. Look! You may look on it, Jonathan,” says he, “and you may smell on it, but you mustn’t taste on it---cause--- *mother* sets on it.” Now, I guess, you *set on* your snuff, Mister, I reckon.

Enter Porters and Nancy.

Wentworth

Impertinent fool! I have forgot the name of the hotel or tavern they directed me to.

Nancy

Mr. Crooked Mans, Sir.

Mr. Bull

I guess as how you mean Cruttenden's---a little man, up on the top of the hill, yonder, by the Capitol.

Wentworth

Little! every thing is under size in this country.

Amelia

You will except pears, brother.

Nancy

Do you know, Sir, they all said that *that* great pear was a pumpkin.

Wentworth

Go on, Miss Pert, with the baggage. All the servants are spoilt here. Who gave you leave to speak.

Nancy

Every body speaks, as likes, here.

Amelia

Come Nancy---hush!

Exeunt Amelia, Nancy, and Porters with baggage.

Mr. Bull

You find every thing under size in this country, Sir?

Wentworth

What if I do, Sir?

Mr. Bull

I'm of your opinion, Sir. I have been a gret traveller in this country, Sir. I have dicker'd tin-ware for old iron and brass, all the way from Maine to New-Orleans. And I've a notion that the Mississippi won't compare with the Thames, any more than the Falls of Niagara will stand by the side of the cascade in Vauxhall Garden. I know the people of this country brag, and for all I'm a native Yankee, you will find that I think them no better than they should be.

Wentworth

I see you are a man of more sense than I took you for. I like an unprejudiced man.

Mr. Bull

Like yourself, Sir. That's nateral. I'll show you the way to Cruttenden's, the little man on the hill, and I'll let you into the true notion of these Yankees---every mother's son of them.

Wentworth

Thank you. Come along.

Mr. Bull

I will.
Takes Wentworth's arm, who shakes him off.
I'll open your eyes, Sir.
Aside.
You shall know a pear from a pumpkin before we part.
Exeunt. Bull following Wentworth.

SCENE 4 .

The little falls of the Mohawk. A view of the stupendous rocks, through which the river flows. A part of the town. The canal and the aqueduct crossing the river.
Enter ***Wentworth, Amelia*** *, and other travellers. Travellers pass over the stage, and go off.*

Amelia

This is delightful, brother.

Wentworth

Is it?

Amelia

The opportunity we so frequently have, of stepping from the canal-boat, and thus walking on the bank, adds to the pleasure derived from the ever changing scenery that is presented to us.

Wentworth

Pleasure! To be dragged along upon a muddy ditch, hour after hour, in constant dread of lifting your head above your knees for fear of having it knock'd off your shoulders by a bridge!

Amelia

But your head is safe, now, notwithstanding the Frenchman's razor, and the canal bridges, and you must admire this great patriotic work--- this union of the inland seas with the Atlantic Ocean.

Wentworth

What is this, to the work of the Duke of Bridgewater.

Amelia

Let praise be given, where praise is due. There are two names, which will live in the memories of Americans, as long as they can appreciate the blessings that flow in a rapid interchange of every good from one extreme of their republic to the other. Fulton and Clinton. And I hope that the gratitude of their countrymen, will not only be shown to their names and memories, but to their children, and their children's children.

Wentworth

Where's Doolittle? I begin to like that fellow. He sees things as I do.

Amelia

We left him talking with a Dutchman. Here he comes.
Enter ***Bull*** *as* ***Jonathan.***

Mr. Bull

What do you think that tarnation Mohawk Dutchman says?

Wentworth

Praises the great canal, I suppose.

Mr. Bull

No. He says, "Effer since Glinton gut de pig canawl, de peef ant putter of de Sharman-flats ave falt fifty bur shent; ant dey pring all de tam dings to New-York, all de vay from Puffallo, ant de tuyvil knows vere."

Amelia

Ha, ha, ha! Fault finding every where. Brother, I will walk on.
Exit Amelia.

Wentworth

I dare say he is right. But, Mr. Doolittle, when shall we get to the wilderness?

Mr. Bull

Ah, that's what every body says. But these curst creeturs have spoilt all that. What with their turnpike roads, and canals, they have gone, like tarnal fools as they are, and put towns and villages, gardens and orchards, churches and schools, and sich common things,

where the woods and wild beasts and Indians and rattlesnakes ought to have ben. Shall I tell you what my uncle Ben said?

Dennis Dougherty *Without.*

O, ho, ub bub bugh, hallo!

Wentworth

I see some one in that canal-boat, waving his hat to us. I think it is---yes---there! He jumps ashore and runs this way.

Mr. Bull

Who the nation is it?

Wentworth

I believe it's an Irish farmer that the boat left behind in New-York. It is!

Dennis Dougherty *Without.*

Stop a bit Mr. Wintwort! Stop a bit.

Mr. Bull

He thinks the yellow fever is at his heels.
Enter ***Dennis.***

Dennis Dougherty

Ah! Sure enough it is you! I've cotch you at last! And now I may fale safe again, any how!

Wentworth

Safe! why, what has happened?

Dennis Dougherty

Why you know the *first* time I came with you. I came *last*, and I didn't come at all you know *before* , because the boat left me *behind.*

Mr. Bull

So, you came *first* at *last, after all* ; and you didn't come at all, because you were *behind* , before.

Dennis Dougherty

That's *it* .
To Wentworth.
Who may this civil, *clare-spoken* gentleman be?

Wentworth

Mr. Doolittle. One of the natives of this country. A Yankee.

Dennis Dougherty

O! a Yankee. You nivver have the faver among yoursilves, you natives, but only kape it for us of the ould country.

Mr. Bull

Now, you, I wonder how we should keep it if we never have it? That would be cute---I guess.

Dennis Dougherty

I thought, once, I would be made a native, mysilf, that I might be safe.

Wentworth

But you were born in Ireland, you know.

Dennis Dougherty

What signifies *that?* And haven't I seen Irishmen all the way as I came along, and they told me they were made natives. But, now, how could you lave me, Mr. Wintwort?

Wentworth

I thought we had lost you, my friend.

Dennis Dougherty

Not at all; it was I lost my passage. But I wouldn't be left any more, any how, and so I went aboard of the nixt boat that wint off, thinking I would catch you, but she happend to go t'other way, and where do you think they took me to, of all places in the world?

Wentworth

That I can't tell.

Dennis Dougherty

How should you, if you don't know? Will then, they carried me to the place where they put all the yellow faver people at, I suppose to keep one another in countenance.

Mr. Bull

What? To the quarantine ground!

Dennis Dougherty

That's it. "What place is that?" says I. "It's the hospital for the faver," says he. "And sure you wouldn't put me there?" says I. "That's as you like," says he. "The divvil a bit of like, nor will I go ashore at all." And so I wouldn't till they brought me back again to York.

Mr. Bull

That was a Yankee trick. What them there sarpents call a joke.

Wentworth

So you went ashore at York?

Dennis Dougherty

I did. But not on the land. I wen ashore on the river. I landed on a boat, for I took up my board and lodging in the stame-boat for Albany; and I made sure to get a bert in the *fore* -castle, that I mightn't be behind this time, any how.

Wentworth

And so followed me all this long way.

Dennis Dougherty

That I did. For I thought that would be the most likely way to overtake you. And I thought I would have your protection, sure I would, 'till I get safe into his Majesty's dominions. And I axt for you at Albany, and they said you had gone on up the canal.

Wentworth

They remembered me?

Dennis Dougherty

Yes. Says they, "The man that grumbles at every thing." "That's Mr. Wintwort," says I.

Mr. Bull

I told you what the Yankees were.

Dennis Dougherty

So, by the powers, I've been riding in a boat behind tree horses day and night to catch you ---and here you are going a fut all the time.

Wentworth

Our boat is ahead.

Dennis Dougherty

Then you are behind this time.

Mr. Bull

See, Mister, what ignorant creetures these Yankees are.
Points to a sign by a hovel of a tavern: T. R. O. F. for horses to drink out of.

Dennis Dougherty

Sure enough. And they might so azily spelt it right, by only putting another *ef* at the end.

Mr. Bull

True. I see you are a scholar.

Dennis Dougherty

I was once---when I was a little boy.

Wentworth

But, Dennis, my good fellow, you must want money by this time, after travelling so far.

Dennis Dougherty

O fait the stame-boat was chape enough, any how; and when I came to the canal, I work'd my passage.

Wentworth

Work'd your passage?

Dennis Dougherty

Yes. It was my own proposal. For I found my dollars grow light. "Work your passage, Pat," says a civil man, like that gentleman,
pointing to Bull ,
laughing all the time. "You are the man I want," says he. "That's what they all say," says I. So I went on board, and when the boat started, they put me ashore to lade the horses.

Mr. Bull

Yankee, again, forever!

Wentworth

And you walk'd all the way before the horses?

Dennis Dougherty

I'll tell you. "Pat, how do you like sailing in the canal-boat?" says the civil grinning gentleman, like that [*pointing to Bull]* "Fait," says I, "if it was not for the name of the thing, I'm thinking I might as well be walking a fut."

Mr. Bull

Ha, ha, ha! and what said the Yankee?

Dennis Dougherty

"Stip aboard," says he, "and take some bafe and whiskey; you shall work the rest of your passage wid your tathe."

Mr. Bull

Well done, both Pat and Yankee! I see the boat is crossing the river on that unnatural thingumbob they call an aqueduct; and if we don't hurry a bit, we shall be left.

Dennis Dougherty

Lift in this place! it would be horrible!

Mr. Bull

Wouldn't it.

Exeunt---while the canal-boat is seen crossing the river on the aqueduct.

SCENE 5.

Hotel at Buffalo. Chamber. Enter ***Bull*** *as* ***Jonathan*** *, (a cart whip under his arm,) and* ***Wentworth.***

Wentworth

So, this is Buffalo! And I'm on the shores of Lake Erie! And what do I see after all. A town like other towns, water like other water, and people like other people---only made worse by democracy. I have not seen a well behaved man since I came into the country, only a wild half Indian.

Mr. Bull

You must a kept bad company, I guess. But you have such coaxing ways with you, you are so kind and accommodating, that it's a wonder every body doesn't try might and main to please you. But I must say, though I was misfortunate enough to be born in *this* country, that the Yankees are the most ungreateful creeturs upon arth. You are so civil to every body, and so agreeable to every thing---and yet I don't see any body cares a button for you.

Wentworth

What do you mean by that?

Mr. Bull

I've seen the waiters, blacks and all, laugh at you behind your back.

Wentworth *Aside.*

I don't know what to make of this fellow.

Enter ***Dennis.***

Dennis Dougherty

Mr. Wintwort, Sir! Can you tell how all this great big sae came to be here on dry land, out of its place?

Wentworth

What do you mean?

Dennis Dougherty

They call it a lake, but it's a sae, for I saw the ships mysilf. But the people of this country would always be imposing upon furruners---as if I didn't know the Lake of Killarney---what's this to that?

Mr. Bull

I was just a telling Squire Wentworth what a darn'd twistical country this is. Now *you* see the evil of the thing.

Dennis Dougherty

Fait and I see nothing else.

Mr. Bull

And nothing else will you see, among them sarpents, but one slippery trick or 'nother to get inside your head or your pocket. Did I ever tell you. Squire Wentworth, how my own brother Nathan serv'd me?

Wentworth

I don't want to hear.

Mr. Bull

Not about the orange, but another time.

Dennis Dougherty

Let's hare, if you plase.

Mr. Bull

Well---you must know, Nathan and I were out duck shooting on the Connecticut river in father's skiff. We had meazing fine sport, we had; but just as I was priming my gun, some how or 'nother I drops my powder horn, and the curst thing went right over, plump into the river, and pop down to the bottom. "There," says I, "only look o'that!"---"Nathan," says I, "lend me your powder horn to prime." And would you believe it? The stingy creetur wouldn't. "Well then," says I, "you're a good diver---Nathan---there it is---I see it---dive down and fetch it---and I'll give you some." Well---he did so. Down he went---and there he staid.

Dennis Dougherty

For what would he stay?

Mr. Bull

That puzzled me. But I look'd down--- the water was meazing clear---and what do you think he was doing?

Dennis Dougherty

How should I know.

Mr. Bull

There I saw the tarnal creetur emptying my powder into his own powder horn.

Wentworth

At the bottom of the river? Do you think we believe such stuff.

Dennis Dougherty

I don't doubt it at all. And I shouldn't wonder if he had set fire to the river, and blow'd you and the boat to the divvil, and then he would have all the powder himsilf.

Mr. Bull

Did the tarnal creetures ever feed you on tarrappin soup?

Dennis Dougherty

That's the very name of it sure enough! I was going to ate, but I saw something like little black fingers and toes in it.

Mr. Bull

O! you smok'd the thing. Tarrappin is the cant word for young nigger.

Dennis Dougherty

O, thunder!

Wentworth

How this Yankee is quizzing the Irishman.

Mr. Bull

They have another dish they like meazingly. Barbacued papoos. Papoos is the name they give the young Indians.

Wentworth

Pooh, pooh!

Dennis Dougherty

No. Not pooh, pooh---papoos.

Mr. Bull

Yes. Papoos.

Dennis Dougherty

And do they ate Indian?

Mr. Bull

Every day.

Wentworth

No, no! he's quizzing you. No such thing.

Dennis Dougherty

It's true! by the powers its true! and *that* accounts for it. Didn't I mysilf, one day, in the skirts of New-York, just stip into a house, and ax an old woman, who had a big pot over the fire, to give me a drink of water. And what do you think she said? "As soon as I have put the Indian in the pot," says she. Och! I didn't know what it meant---at all---but that accounts for it. I don't wonder they have the fever! Ate Indian! It puts me in a faver to spake of it.

Wentworth

Nonsense, nonsense!

Mr. Bull

Nothing more common. They make Indian dumplings and Indian puddings, and the little white-headed Yankee children fatten upon Indian, as the English boys and girls de upon blood puddings.

Wentworth

This Irishman will believe any thing.

Mr. Bull

Do you see this here? [*The whip]*. Now what do you think the people of this country do with sich.

Dennis Dougherty

Whip their horses, sure.

Mr. Bull

It's to whip niggers. They drive the black creeturs into the tobacco patches, and keep 'em working in the hot sun, 'till their wool blazes again.

Dennis Dougherty

O, the poor cratures! Fait, and I know what a hot sun is, and I paid for my larning.

Wentworth

Pooh, pooh! You must not believe such tales.

Dennis Dougherty

Now, Mister Wintwort, you naden't think to smooth it over wid blarney. I have sane enough mysilf to make me belave any thing of a country to which they saduce poor Irishmen only to bury them, and have their coffins ready made without even the dasent sirimony of measuring the corpse. And didn't I see the woman boil the Indian? Och! Let me once get safe to Canada, under the king's flag, and you will nivver catch Dennis Dougherty in the states again.

Exit.

Wentworth

Why would you encourage that poor fellow's prejudices, when you know that neither the people nor the country are as bad as you make them.

Mr. Bull

Ah, ha! do you begin to think so?

Wentworth

I begin to think that I have done both the people and country injustice.

Mr. Bull

I am glad of it, Mister, for your own sake. To tell you the truth, I have been quizzing *you* a little. Only for your own good. And though *you* do not believe that the Indian for the pot or the bake-pan is the same that wields the scalping-knife and the tomahawk, you have had prejudices almost as strong as Dennis Dougherty's. Prejudices which have made you a subject of ridicule to the people you have affected to despise.

Wentworth

This is very strange language---and yet--- after all---there is a blunt sort of *John Bullism* about you---that I like---a little.

Mr. Bull

The more you know of me the better you will like me. And now, let me advise you, for your own comfort, to treat every body with civility, wherever you go---and you will find civility and kindness in return.

Wentworth

Well, well, well! I believe you are right. Here, Waiter! come here my good fellow!

Mr. Bull

That's right.

Enter Waiter.

Waiter at Catskill

Please to have, Sir?

Wentworth

Boot-jack and slippers, and a candle, if you please.

Waiter at Catskill

Instantly, Sir!

Running off.

Mr. Bull *As Frenchman.*

Vaitare!
Waiter stops. Von leetle piece candale, and *von* bed, after you ave a served my frent, Mistare Ventawort, if you please, Sair!

Exit Waiter, Amelia appears.

Wentworth

What, are you the Frenchman, too!

Mr. Bull

Neither Frenchman nor Yankee, but your old acquaintance, John Bull, of Westminster.
Throws off disguise.
Give me your hand!

Wentworth

Is it possible.

Enter ***Amelia.***

Amelia

Yes, brother, your English friend, and your English sister, have been in a plot---not to cut off your head, with a razor---but to cure you of a disease which made you unhappy, and caused that incivility from others of which you complained--- *fault finding.*

Wentworth

You are right. Thank ye both. But I am glad my physicians were English! that's some consolation!

Mr. Bull

And I have been stimulated to play two parts in this travelling comedy, by the promise of your sister's hand, as my reward---if I cure you. No cure no pay.

Wentworth

I see it all. And you have been in the plot all this time.

To Amelia.

Amelia

"An innocent plot, brother---I am sure it was meant for your good."---Ha, ha, ha!

Wentworth

Well, I will see things as they are. Take her hand.

Mr. Bull

With all my heart. That's the regular receiving speech, I believe, on such occasions. Remember the lesson, Wentworth, and John Bull will be as much respected and loved in America, as he is in every other part of the world. And now, huzza for the Falls of Niagara!

SCENE 6.

The Falls of Niagara, as seen from below, on the American side. Table-rock. ***Leather-Stocking*** *is discovered sitting on a rock. He rises and comes forward.*

Leather-Stocking

This looks as it used to do, they can't spoil this---yet a while---Hawks-eye has taken his last look at the places he loved, and now away to the prairie, the woods, and the grave.
He turns to go .
Enter Amelia, Nancy**.** Wentworth *and* Bull**.** *In his own dress.*

Wentworth

This is indeed a scene of wonders.

Amelia

What? Our friend the hunter!

Leather-Stocking *Comes forward.*

Young woman---I thought I had taken leave of you---and all! But I am going.

Wentworth

Your hand.
Grasps his hand.
Wherever you go, take the hearty salute of an Englishman.

Leather-Stocking

It is not the first time this hand has grappled a Briton's---as friend and as foe.

Wentworth

Henceforth, forever friends!

Leather-Stocking

Forever!
Goes off slowly .
Enter Dennis.

Dennis Dougherty *Speaks as he enters.*

Mr. Wintwort! Mr. Wintwort! And am I in Canada? Am I safe in his Majesty's dominions?

Mr. Bull

Not yet. But within sight of them.

Dennis Dougherty

And where is the blissed spot.

Mr. Bull

Do you see that rock?

Dennis Dougherty

Fait, I do.

Mr. Bull

That's it.

Dennis Dougherty

And is that Canada?

Mr. Bull

That's the famous Table-rock.

Dennis Dougherty

And sure if a man had his mate on that table, he would have enough water to mix with his whiskey, any how. And Mr. Wintwort, am I in the yellow faver states yet?

Amelia

We are still in the United States. Still in the great and flourishing state of New-York.

Dennis Dougherty

O the divvil! New-York here!

Wentworth

We will cross over, good fellow, and take you with us to his Majesty's dominions.

Dennis Dougherty

And shall I then be safe under the King's flag?

Mr. Bull

As sure as you are an Irishman, travelling for improvement.

Dennis Dougherty

Why then that's sure enough.

Mr. Bull

You have learnt something.

Dennis Dougherty

And it isn't a little I've larnt. I've larnt what hate is; and that cost me something in flesh and money. I've sane the world, and it's cost me all I was wort in the world to see it. And I've sane liberty, of all shapes and colours; and now I'm at liberty to go home again---if I can get there.

Wentworth

You came to me for protection, and you shall find it. I will take you home---put you on a farm---and think myself happy to have so honest a friend and tenant.

Dennis Dougherty

Long life to your honour! I think I am a head of the faver this time, any how.

Amelia

Well, Brother, you are pleased, I hope.

Wentworth

I am amply repaid for all my dangers. When the film of prejudice is removed from the eye, man sees in his fellow man of every clime a brother. And in this happy country, the stranger has ever found a reception that calls for the warmest feelings of gratitude. Yes, sister, I *am* pleased: and if all present agree to be pleased, we shall have reason to bless our *Trip to Niagara*.

THE END.

Appendix C - *The Kentuckian (*formerly *The Lion of the West)*

Note: The following is the unpublished version of "The Kentuckian" from the microform series, *Promptbook and Actors' Copies: Theatre Museum, Victorian and Alber*t; this material is in the public domain. Because this has not been published before in its entirety, I have chosen to include this text in full. As in a promptbook, Hackett – or his stage managers – merely indicated where longer speeches, cues and other stage events occurred, and did not include the complete text. In order to fill in the blanks – literally and figuratively – I compared the prompt book with the William Bayley Bernard/James Tidwell published version of the play. Where the promptbook text matched the Tidwell version, I assumed texts matched, at least to some degree. That material appears below in brackets. Where there was no match or related text, I indicate the gap with a dash, as in the promptbook. I have also included crossed out texts, adjustments and other emendations whenever possible. The original promptbook contained lists of properties, stage directions and comments on the verso sheet, and the script on the rector sheet; those separations have been indicated by line breaks when possible.

The Kentuckian
J.H. Hackett, Prompt Book)

A characteristic drama in 2 acts, (As altered from the Hon. J. K. Paulding's original production and first performed at J, R. Convent Garden in March and J. R. Hay Market, May 1833)

By W. Bayle Bernard.

Performed also at T. R. Hay Market May 1833

Properties

Playing card (King of Clubs)
Large hand bell. Small do. for tea table

(2nd Act)
Salver with breakfast service
Small do with 6 ice creams
Large salver with a doz. cups and saucers (for Caesar to break)
Pair of rifles: one loaded and pistol (ready I. E. L if it misses)
A woman's cloak, bonnet and veil to (disguise Caesar)
Modern chairs

Dram. Pers.	Original Cast Cov. Gardens, 1833
Col. Nimrod Wildfire (A Kentuckian)	Mr. Hackett
Mr. Freeman (A New York Merchant)	Mr. L. Mathews
Percival (An English merchant)	Mr. Durnset
John Jenkins (Lord Granby)	Mr. Forrester
Caezar	Mr. Turnour
Tradesman	"
Freeman's servant	"

Clergyman	”
Mrs. Luminary (An English tourist)	Mrs. Gibbs
Mrs. Freeman	Mrs. Vining
Caroline	Miss Lee
Mary (Maid to Mrs. Luminary)	

Time: One hour & 5 minutes
1st act—40 min.
2nd act—25
Wait between Acts—5

Act 1

Written letters required
W No. 1 Pages 4 & 5;
W No. 2 page 12

Act 2

W No. 4 page 37
No. 5 page 39
N. B. See Servant ready L. with W (with) letter No. 1

Call No. 1

Mrs. Freeman
Mr. Freeman
Servant. 2. W. Letter No. 1.
Time of first Act 40 min.

Act First, Scene First

Apartment at Freemans .1st grooves.
Table (C) with wine and walnuts.
They rise and come down C.

Mrs. F. (R) Again Mrs. Freeman, I must say your views in regard to Caroline, are unworthy of a New York Merchant; your ancestors were English and they deemed it their duty to take their children [on] the grand tour of Europe.

Mr. F. (L) To make them more contented with their own firesides. Well my love admitting that the experiment might be beneficial to our daughter, where could I hope to find ~~[the]~~ a man who would consent to such a roundabout method of possessing her?

Mrs. F. Are you blind to the attention of a certain visitor of ours?

Mr. F. What Percival, the young English Merchant?

Mrs. F. The English merchant.? No! Mr, Freeman! that distingué, distinguished member of the English Aristocracy who honoured our child by accompanying her home from the Springs.

Mr. F. Oh! His lordship?

Mrs. F. Is not this the man to enlarge her ideas?

Mr. F. Yes my love and to contract her fortune.

Mrs. F. Would you refuse your consent to a noble man?

Mr. F. Mrs. Freeman, in our social system, rectitude and talent confer the only titles! Why should I not rather give her to a man whose nobility is in his conduct, not his name.

Mrs. F. (Aside) What republican infatuation!

Mr. F. But come, let us change the conversation. Have you made all your arrangements for our party this evening as Mrs. Luminary visits America to observe our domestic manners, we must permit no remissness to give her an unfavourable impression.

Mrs. F. Rely upon my pride. But is it not odd that when invited to our country seat to avoid the turmoil of the city, she should decide upon previously proceeding to an Hotel?

Mr. F. Such is the usual course of a traveller . Besides a Hotel is a general focus of intelligence.

Enter servant L. with a letter for Freeman

Servant. A letter Sir! (Bows, gives it, Exit L.)

Mr. F. (Opens Letter) Ha! from my nephew Colonel Wildfire.

Mrs. F. Indeed!

Mr. F. It is dated Washington, and he is now on the road to New York to spend the summer with us.

Mrs. F. I regret to hear it.

Mr. F. Regret!

Mrs. F. Yes unless he has corrected that barbarity of which I have heard such descriptions.

Mr. F. Come. Come. Consider the circumstances of his education. My sister emigrated to the back woods when they were much less settled than at present. Thus Nimrod was born a thousand miles from good society, and if his manners are some what brusque, they convey a native humour which I think highly entertaining. Listen to his letter. (Reads)

Washington, July 1st, 1815.
"Uncle Pete!
Here am I, a heap high nigher New York, than when I clard out from Kaintuck. The very day I got your coaxing letter, I rousted out my best clothes, and my other plunder and toted about North East—I had a raal rounabout catawampus clean thro' the deestrict—If I hadn't I wish I may be te-to-taciously exflunctified!"

Mrs. F. There, Mr. Freeman, what do you term that?

Mr. F. A specimen of the veritable Western vocabulary! Stay - hear the conclusion!

"Tell aunt Polly that I'm a full team and going it on the big figure, be sure you let all the fellers in New York know, I'm half horse, half alligator with a touch of an arthquake, and a burst of steamboat. If I aint I'll play to be damned! Heigh! Wake snakes, June bugs are a coming! Good bye!
Yours to the backbone,
Nim. Wildfire"

Mrs. F. A pleasing specimen of unrestrained nature!

Mr. F. Rather eccentric I confess.

Mrs. F. Eccentric! Mr. Freeman, you will use any term rather than call obnoxious people by their right names. The man's a savage!

Mr. F. Mary, you are prejudiced! You will not understand his true character. He may be compared to an open hearted childish giant whom any one might deceive, but none could daunt. All this whimsical extravagance of speech, results from mere exuberance of spirit; and his ignorance of the usages of refined society, he overbalances by a heart which would scorn to do a mean or a dishonest action.

Mrs. F. Well I hope he will not happen to favour us with his company whilst Mrs. Luminary is our guest. What opinion would she form of our national manners from such a man?

Mr. F. The only just one. That my wild nephew is an eccentric ~~[character]~~ individual and no specimen of American good breeding.

Enter Servant.L.

Servant. (Bowing) Mr. Percival, Sir!

Mrs. F. Show him in!

Exit servant. L. and Enter Percival L.

Per. Mr. and Mrs. Freeman, your most obedient.

(Bows and crosses to centre)

Madam, permit me to hope—

Mrs. F. (drawing back) Ahem! Mr. Percival, will you excuse me? I have some directions to give my servant.

Exit formally. R. H.

Per. (R.C.) My friend, pardon me if I am wrong, but within these few days I have observed a very great change in Mrs. Freeman's manner to me. I fear I may have given her some unknown cause.

Mr. F. Poh! Poh! One may see you know nothing of matrimony. If you could explain all the phenomena of a ladies deportment, husbands would often be obliged to you to provide them with an almanac.

Per. I should like however to set my mind at ease.

Mr. F. Well you can do that to night. You are coming to our party?

Per. I have not been invited.

Mr. F. No? Your distinguished countryman is to be here. (Aside) ha! I see a design here. Mrs. F. is desirous of giving his lordship a chance to monopolize our daughter's society. Percival, you must come tonight; I believe its my fault that you have not been invited.

Per. Well then, I'll step home to make some preparations (crosses to L.)

Wildfire. (Without L.) _____ a little arthquake. Heigh!

Mr. F. (Crosses to L.) Ha! Arrived already? Stay 'till I introduce you to my nephew Colonel Wildfire.

Per. Colonel Wildfire of the Army?

Mr. F. Oh No! Of the militia! On your return to England you may rank him a young Niagara. He's a human cataract from Kentucky.

Enter Wildfire. L

Wild. [Well, uncle, here I am---going it on the big figure---] a full team.

Mr. F. Why, Nimrod (shaking hands) you have reached us almost as soon as your letter. Glad to see you. Let me introduce you to my friend Mr. Percival, a gentleman from England.

Wild. (crosses to centre) [What, a rale full-blooded John Bull? Stranger, there's my hand. Let me give you a] cordial alligator grip. (shakes hands)

Per. (lifting his hand as though hard squeezed.) "Alligator grip." I'll be bound it's a good imitation!

Mr. F. Well, Nephew, how have you been?

Wild. [Oh, fair to middling---only had a little sprinkling] of fever and ague.

Mr. F. Fever and ague? How came you by that?

Wild. [Yes, I was chuckle head enough to go down the Mississippi] fishing for lawyers one day.

Mr. F. Lawyers? I thought they were more apt to catch than to be caught.

Wild. [Why, look here. I call catfish lawyers---'case you see they're all head, and] their heads all mouth.

Mr. F. Well did they come up to your bait or lawyer like were they too deep for you?

Wild. [Why, I'll tell you. I was fishing for lawyers, and knowing what whappers some of um are, I tied my line in a hard knot right around my middle---for fear the devils might twitch it out of] my hands afore I knowed it.

Mr. F. A good legal precaution.

Wild. [Well, what do you think if a varmint as big as an alligator didn't lay hold and jerk me plump head foremost into the river---I wish I may be stuck into a split log for a wedge! There was I twisted about like a chip in a whirlpool! Well, how to get away from the varmint I was sort of "jubus," when all of a sudden, I grabb'd him by the gills and we had a fight---he pulled and flounced---I held fast and swore at him! Aha, says I, you may

be a screamer, but perhaps I'm a horse! The catfish roll'd his eyes clean round till he squinted---when snap went the line, crack went his gills, and off he bounced] like a wild injen.

Crosses R and up stage

Mr. F. (Aside to Percival) You perceive the humor of my nephew's character?

Per. Quite an amusing original!

Wild. (coming down centre) [Well, uncle, how are the women---how's Aunt and how's cousin Carry? You writ me she's going it on the big figure, in the Edication line---understands Trignometry and Metyfustian and all that. Why, I say,] she must be a sneezer!

Mr. F. You shall judge of her accomplishments when you see her.

Wild. [So, stranger, you're a traveller, eh? Mean to take a squint, I spose, at old Kaintuck---she's the cream of these United States. When I go back there, I'll take you with me. It's just a leetle]---, only a thousand mile.

Per. A little ride! Well sir, when we can find a little leisure, we'll undertake it some afternoon (crosses to L. U.) Col. Wildfire, I shall have the pleasure of meeting you again this evening. (Exit L.)

Wild. (crosses to L.) [Uncle, I rather like that feller. I should think he's got some Kentucky blood about him. Well, I must go and look after] my trunks and other plunder.

Mr. F. But don't be absent this evening, Nimrod we have a party to receive an English lady, who intends to make the tour of the U. States to pick up general information.

Wild. Where is she?

Mr. F. By this time, I presume at the city Hotel.

Wild. I'll go and see her.

Mr. F. What for?

Wild. I'll give her some general information.

Mr. F. But my dear boy, I haven't introduced you.

Wild. [Then I'll] save you the trouble and introduce myself.

Mr. F. But there are certain forms to be complied with in this city. You are a stranger to our etiquette.

Wild. Who's he?

Mr. F. You must first have a note to the lady and send up your card.

Wild. My card?

Mr. F. Yes. Perhaps you have no cards.

Wild. [Yes, but perhaps I've got a pack] in my pocket.

Mr. F. But why not delay it till this evening? What urgent matter have you to say to her?

Wild. What! why, that if she wants general information, I'll tell her I'm the boy for all sorts of fun from a camp meeting to a Nigger wedding---heigh! (*Runs off*)

Mrs. L (following) But here. Colonel, Colonel!

Exit L; Clear and Change (Ed. Note: a sketch appears here of two chairs around a small tea table.)

Scene 2nd :

Parlour in the City Hotel. 2 groves.
Table, 2 chairs. Small handbell on the table.

(Enter Jenkins, R, reading a note)

Jenk. (Reading) "Mrs. Freeman presents her compliments to Lord Granby and begs the honor of his company to a small evening party on Thursday, July 16th". So, John Jenkins, after a five year campaign at Bath, Brighton and Cheltenham, you have taken wing to America, as the Right Honourable Lord Granby, in search of some rich female who will enable you to escape one prison by opening the door of another and your sole hope is the daughter of this merchant, Freeman. The mother I have found is deeply smitten with a reverence for the Aristocracy and the girl I believe is as true a woman as her mother. For the last six weeks have plied my assiduities, and tonight I think I may venture on a declaration.

Tradesman. with green specs and broad brimmed white hat; all the tradesmen and super do. Discovered smoking segars, and reading newspapers

---

Caesar. (without R.) Dis here way, sar! Dis way.

Jenk. (Looking off right) Ah! passengers from the packet! The sound of passengers from England, always makes me uneasy. Mrs. Luminary, my speculative friend from Bath, has so often talked of emigrating to America, it would be very awkward for me if she chose the present period.

Caesar. (Without R.) Take keer! Dat trunk Mrs. Luminary's!

Jenk. Eh! No! Yes, "My eyes" it is indeed Mrs. Luminary. My fears are realized. What's to be done. If I meet her, I must explain. (Going L.) No. no. I'll run to Freeman's and there take shelter till I learn her destination.

Exit hastily L. U.

Enter Caesar R. H. Bowing in Mrs. Luminary & Mary

Caesar. Yes Marm, dis way, I have de honor to assure you, dis am de city hotel.

Mrs. L. (*Looking round)* Hum! It seems tolerably furnished, and much the same as an English inn. Mary!

Mary. (R.) Yes Marm!

Mrs. L. Did you see that all my baggage was right?

Mary. Yes marm, quite correct.

Mrs. L. (To Caesar) Have you such things as tea in this house?

Caesar. We hab dat honor.

Mrs. L. Bring me some, and show my servant the way to the Post office.
(Mary crosses to L).

Caesar. I hab de honor, dis way young Missy!

Mary. (L to Caesar) Have you got any pavements in your streets?

Caesar. We hab dat honor.
Bows and follows her out L. H.

Mrs. L. (seating herself L. of table) At length, I have reached the scene of my experiment. The plan I have concerted is founded I conceive on a true knowledge of the national character: the root of all evils in this country, is republican familiarity - for where every one is equal, every one is familiar!

Rings handbell. Enter Caesar L. H. with tea tray &c. which he places on the table

Caesar. I hab de honor to inform you Ma'am dat de tea arm ready made (Goes to centre and stands).

Mrs. L. What's your name?

Caesar. Caesar, ma'am.

~~Mrs. L. Very well! Now my poor slave—~~

~~Caesar. Slabe! I hab de honor to inform you -- not as I know's on I am a free black gemmen ob color.~~

~~Mrs. L. A free black gentleman of color! Indeed! I thought all the blacks in America were slaves.~~

~~Caesar. No maam. only dem lowest kind of black niggers dat goes up de chimbles but de true colored gemman walks right into de very first societies and polishes all de understandings. (pointing to his shoes).~~

~~Mrs. L. Then sir, I suppose you consider yourself my equal. Display none of your freedom in my presence!~~

~~Caesar. What maarm! You wish to stinguish cibil liberty?~~

~~Mrs. L. Civil liberty! Certainly not, but impertinent liberty, familiarity, sir, so keep you distance and answer some questions respecting the state of manners in this city.~~

Large handbell rings R. U. E.; Mr. Hackett usually rings if the bell is given him.

Mrs. L. What's that?

Caesar. Dat ma'am am de fuss bell for dinner.

Mrs. L. The first dinner bell! Though the house may be proper enough there is a very common familiarity in the summons. Who are the party?

Caesar. Gemmen in dat room just arrive by de steamboat.

Mrs. L. Open the doors! (Aside) An opportunity perhaps for my experiment.

Caesar opens the folding doors and disappears within. a large round table covered with newspapers and a crowd seated around it each with his legs resting on it. one in center sitting on the table reading news paper. All discovered smoking.

What an extraordinary spectacle! Not one of them with his feet upon the floor. What lounging and unnatural positions! Studying the newspapers with their heads enveloped in a cloud of tobacco smoke.

Rings handbell on table; Caesar runs in (through C. doors) to C.

Inform that ~~gentleman~~ person who is seated on two chairs that I wish to speak to him.

Caesar goes to tradesman seated on table and whispers.

Now to see if I can get a direct answer.

Tradesman comes down L. C.; Caesar exit L.

Tradesman. Did you wish to see me Madam

Mrs. L. May I ask if you are a resident of New York

Trades. No Madam! Merely here transiently, & on business.

Mrs. L. But perhaps you can inform me if among your connections, you know an English gentleman of the name of Jenkins!

Trades. Can't say I do, Madame!

Mrs. L. But possibly your friends in the next room.

Trades. They are strangers here also. but I'll enquire.

Goes up to C door

Does anyone present know a Mr. Jenkins?

All. Jenkins? Jenkins?

Mrs. L. Moved at last.

They all rise and come forward L. of tradesman

Trades. This lady is a stranger and is in search of—

Mrs. L. A Mr. Jenkins, and if anyone present can give me any information of him, I am quite sure he will immediately hasten to.

Bell rings and Cry 'dinner, dinner" R. U. E. The tradesman rush out R. U. E. through C doors which are closed.

Mrs. L. Poor starved wretches! How ravenously hungry they must be.

(Comes forward C)

Enter Caesar L. with playing card.

Caesar. Gemman at de bar send you his card.
(bows and presents it to Mrs. L, goes to L. H.)

Mrs. L. (Looks at card and holds its face toward the audience)
Card? Why it's the King of Clubs!
(turns it over and reads)
Oh! "Colonel Wildfire" Is he a gentleman?

Caesar. Don't know marm! Said he was a horse. Ya! Ya!
Exit L. H.

Mrs. L. A horse? How odd! Oh! He means of the Horse. Some Cavalry officer! Ah! That's the very thing. Now for a specimen of the American army.

L. Enter Wildfire preceded by Caesar, who continues bowing him in and repeating

Caesar. Sir I have de honor!

Wild. _____ honor to clear out?

Caesar. (xes to L.)
Sir, I hab de honor!

Wild. Absquatulate!
Caesar laughs and runs off L. U.

Wild. Your most obedient! (bows)

Mrs. L. Sir! (curtsies)

Wild. Your name is Mrs. Luminary?

Mrs. L. It is sir.

Wild. [Then you know my uncle, Peter Freeman. He tells me you have come among us to take a squint at things in general on this here this] side the big pond.

Mrs. L. Big Pond? Oh! The Atlantic. That, sir is my object.

Wild. [Then I mean to say, madam, on that subject, I can out-talk any fellar in this country---and give him and give him] half an hours start.

Mrs. L. A man of intelligence! Pray be seated.

Wildfire brings chair forward for Mrs. L who sits R. C. and then he seats himself astride another chair the other way.

Ring in full orchestra ready for Sce. 3

Mrs. L. Perhaps Sir, you would prefer an arm chair?

Wild. [No, madam. If it was just after dinner, I should like to put my legs out] of the window.

Mrs. L. A picturesque posture certainly! May I offer you a cup of tea?

Wild. _____all whisky!

Mrs. L. Indeed! Are you stationed in New York, Colonel?

Wild. [Stationed---yes! but don't mean to stop long. Old Kaintuck's the spot. There the world's made upon a large scale.] (We've got a)bigger sun and moon and more stars.

Mrs. L. Ah? A region of superior cultivations? But in what branch of science, do the gentlemen excel?

Wild. [Why, madam, of all the fellers either side the Alleghany hills, I myself can jump higher---squat lower---dive deeper---stay longer under and come out drier] than any feller in this country (Crosses R.)

Mrs. L. Gentleman like exploits! And your ladies Sir?

Wild. [The gals! Oh, they go it on the big figure too---no mistake in them. There's my late sweetheart, Patty Snaggs. At nine year old she] shot a bar

Mrs. L. Shot a bar?

Wild. (A) d—d black bar!

Mrs. L. Oh! You mean a bear?

Wild. [And now she can whip her weight in wild cats. There's] my cap skin of one. She's a screamer!

Mrs. L. Feminine accomplishments certainly. And do your soil and people correspond?

Ready clear Stage

Wild. [The soil---oh, the soil's so rich you] may travel under it.

Mrs. L. What, travel under ground? Oh. I must put that down.
(Takes out her tablets and writes)

Wild. [Yes, madam, particularly after the spring rains. Look you here now, tother day, I was a horseback paddling away pretty comfortably through No-bottom swamp, when suddenly---I wish I may be curry-comb'd to death by 50,000 tom cats, if I didn't see a white hat getting along in mighty considerable style all alone by itself on the top of the mud---so up I rid, and being a bit jubus, I lifted it with the butt end of my whip when a feller sung out from under it, Hallo, stranger, who told you to knock my hat off? Why, says I, what sort of a sample of a white man are you? What's come of the rest of you? Oh, says he, I'm not far off---only in the next county. I'm doing beautifully---got one of the best horses under me that ever burrowed---claws like a mole---no stop in him---but here's a waggon and horses right under me in a mighty bad fix, I reckon, for I heard the driver say a spell ago one of the team was getting a leetel tired.

Mrs L. What a geological novelty.

Wild. So, says I, you must be a pretty considerable feller on your own, but you had better keep your mouth shut or you'll get your teeth sunburnt. So, says I, good bye, stranger. I wish you a pleasant ride, but I prognosticate afore you get through the next sandbank you'll] burst your boiler (goes up)

Mrs. L. (C) Well, this shall be the first well authenticated anecdote in my journal.

Enter Caesar L. H.

Caesar. Mr. Freeman's carriage am at de door marm.

Mrs. L. Ah! to take me to his party.

Wild. (L.C.) [Now, madam, if you are ready, I'll go with you to Aunt Polly's tea squall.

Mrs. L. Tea Squall!

Wild. [I say, madam, there's no mistake in you---you're a screamer---you beat our Kentucky widow all holler. She's got but one eye, but that's as cruel as a scalping knife.] You're a Roarer!

Mrs. L. A Roarer! Oh, he means Aurora, the Goddess of Morning! What a classical compliment for a savage!

Wild. In one harness we'd make a full team.

Caesar. H. Ha. Ha.
(laughs and stoops down till Wildfire slaps him on the back and points L)

Wild. Skulk you infernal black snake.

Clear Stage. Prompter ready to speak L. H.
8: Mrs. Luminary, Jenkins and everybody to end Act 1.
Tray of ices ready for Caesar L. and Large tray of cup and saucers to break, ready R. Prompter announces "Mr. Percival".

Caesar. (goes to L and bows) I hab de honor. (laughs and runs off L.)

Mrs. L. What Sir is one free citizen of America averse to one of another color?

Wild. [The Niggers! why no, madam, but they're such lazy varmints. I had one once myself, he caught the fever and ague---the fever he kept, but the] ague wouldn't stay with him.

Mrs. L. Indeed! why not?

Wild. He was too lazy to shake. (hands her out L. H.)

Scene 3rd
Drawing room at Freeman's elegantly arranged and lighted. Mr. and Mrs. Freemans, Caroline and party discovered. Mrs. Freeman and Caroline come forward Centre

Mrs. F. (R) Caroline, you surely have given no encouragement to do plain a person as this Mr. Percival. A man of whom you have summed up everything when you say that he is

Caroline. (L.C.) Affable, intelligent, and generous.

Mrs. F. Are these qualities exclusively a merchant's? Has nobility no charms? But I'll talk to you no longer. It is my command that you converse this evening only with his lordship.

Caroline. But Ma'am should Mr. Percival approach me?

Mrs. F. Don't alarm yourself, he is not invited

Servant without. L. "Mr Percival"

Mrs. F. Who?

Enter Percival L.

Percival. (Crosses to Caroline to C and bows to Mrs F.)
My dear madam! Mr. Freeman has conveyed to me your wish that I should spend my last evening in town under your hospitable roof.

Turns to Caroline on his left, offers his arm, and they retire up

Mrs. F. So this is Mr. Freeman's design to favour him; but I'll try to thwart it the instant his lordship arrives; and yet there's another terror to be dreaded. My hopeful Nephew! Should he find his way back from the Hotel and meet my Lord I fear his lordship will be as shocked by his manners that he will leave the house.

Prompter. L. "Room for Col. Wildfire"
Caesar Ready. See that Caesar causes no stage wait in this scene.

Servant. (Loudly outside L. H.)
"Room for Col. Wildfire"

Mrs. F. There his is. (R.C.)

Wild. (without L) _____ Make room for himself!

Mrs. F. There now. Every hope is gone!

Enter Wildfire hastily L. H.

Wild. (L.C.) I say Aunt Polly!

Mrs. F. (R.C.) Hush! Hush! (retires up hurriedly)

Wild. Uncle Pete!

Freeman Comes down L. C.
[Well, Aunt Polly, I've brought Mrs. {Luminary}. She's in the next room smoothing her feathers. Well, what's the fun? I'm ready for anything from a] barbacue to a war dance?

Mr. F. Hush Nimrod, softly or you'll alarm the ladies!

Wild. Whar!

Mr. F. Here! (turning and pointing upstage) I'll introduce you! 'My nephew, Col. Wildfire of Kentucky.

Goes up, Wildfire bows. Enter Caesar L. and Crosses rapidly to R. with a tray of ices.

Wild. Hulloa! What you got thar?

Caesar. Broper nice. O! amazin!

Prompter. "Mrs. Luminary"; party (R.), Mrs. F, Mr. F, Mrs. L (L.)

Wild. [Here, something to eat, eh? I'm as hungry as an Ingen in a hard frost. Are they good? Then I'll take 'em all. (*Takes one, spits it out instantly*.) Hullo, do you call] that a custard?

Caesar. Dat Ice Cream!

Percival. (Advancing from crowd) What's the matter Colonel?

Wild. [I've run foul of a snag. This arn't no custard or a swillybub, but a snowball sweeten'd with lump sugar. Han't you got nothing better to eat---no]Wild turkey or bar's meat?

Per. In the next room, Colonel, Caesar will show you refreshments in abundance (points R.H.)

Caesar. Dis way sar, I habe de honor! exit R. H.

Wild. [Is there? Then we'll] go and Liquor together.

Per. Excuse me Colonel just now!

Wild. _____Lynch law. Liquor or fight?

Per. Then I'd rather liquor.

Wild. _____ I belong to the Temperance Society.

Per. Indeed?

Wild. Yes! Between drinks.

Exeunt arm in arm R. H.
Servant in Hall. L. aloud "Mrs. Luminary" Freeman hastens to hand in Mrs. Luminary.

Mr. F. 'Mrs. Luminary!' (presenting her)

Mrs. L. (Aside after looking around) Very tidy, not so barbarous as I expected.

Mrs. F crosses to Mrs. Luminary.
Prompter: "Lord Granby"

Mrs. F. I am happy, madam, that among other welcomes here tonight, I can present to you an illustrious country man of yours, Lord Granby!

Mrs. L (Xes Mrs. F. to R. C.) Lord Granby! He was my brother's most intimate friend.

Mrs. F. (R.C) Indeed! You know him then?

Mrs. L (L.C.) Slightly! The rencontre will afford me much pleasure. The last I heard of him he was in England and dangerously ill.

Servant, without L. announces: "Lord Granby" Mrs. F Turns to L and receives Jenkins who enters L. H. and bows to Mrs. F

Mrs. F. My Lord, permit me to introduce you to –

Mrs. L. (turning to L. from Freeman, with whom she has been conversing in dumb show) Ah! This is a surprise! Why John—

Jenk. A—Lord Granby! (Xes to her, C. hurriedly) (Aside) Hush! My dear Mrs. Luminary. Ha. Ha. Ha. I don't wonder at your astonishment of meeting an old friend unexpectedly in a strange country gives rise to such angular emotions that, that you see (*to Mrs. F*), it has quite deprived my friend Mrs. Luminary, of her speech.

Mrs. L. (aside) What is the Meaning of this?

Jenk. (aside) This way and I'll explain all.
Leads Mrs. L. up stage Mrs. Freeman follows. Re-enter Wildfire and Percival. R.H.

Wild. You put some brandy in that wine?

Per. Oh No! Upon my word!
(Let his arm go and retire up stage)

Free. We're going to have 'a hop'. Will you join in a quadrille, or do you prefer a partner for a waltz?

Wild. (To Mrs L. who comes down L.C.) Shake a foot with me?

Mrs. L. Excuse me, sir, I am engaged (retires up with Jenkins)

Wild. Who'll dance with me?

N.B. the leader of the orchestra should have his cues and instructions written in full, as here

Prompters will see to it. See that Caesar is ready with Tea Tray R.

Freeman brings forward a lady to L.C.

Wild. Take partners for a waltz!
Each Gent selects a partner and group above 1st wing.
Now then for your Waltz. Start steam!

The Orchestra play[s] the waltz from 'Der Freischutz' until Wildfire comes forward to leader with—

Wild. 'Stop your steam!'
(to the bassoon, horn or trombone)
Bear hard on your treble
(the performer sound his deepest bass note)
(To the performer of the Double Bass)
Tickle him hard, make him holler!
(The Double Bass, runs the Gamut)
I look to *you* altogether!

Free. (L.C.) (To orchestra) Play a country dance!

Wild. Take your partners again.
(To orchestra).
Now then, Double quick time and go ahead.

The orchestra play the dance tune "Speed the Plough" as forte as possible and in the quickest time and keep it up, until the Act drop touches the stage.

Wildfire and his partner have space allowed them from the Drop to 1st wing in the dance.
All the other characters form independently by and above 1st wing.
As soon as Wildfire pulls off his coat in the dance, Caesar enters hastily from R. to R. C. with large tray of cups and saucers and attempts passing up center behind Wildfire; whose thigh the tray touches: Wildfire kicks up the tray in the air out of Caesar's hands and it comes down with a crash. Caesar fall sprawling on his back (R. C.) The characters break off the dance and the front circle is formed thus:
Jenk. Car. Caesar. Mrs. F. Wild. Free. Per. Mrs L (with tablet)

Wild. The damage?

Free. No matter.

When Wildfire begins to pay out dollars,
RING FOR QUICK ACT DROP

Act 2, 1.

Mrs. Luminary Mrs. Freeman, Mary, Caesar, Wildfire. W. Letter

Act 2nd. 25 min.

2nd Groove
Apartment at Freeman's. Window at back
L. C. seated Mrs. Luminary R. and Mr. Freeman L of table. Discovered. Both rise and come forward

Free. Well madam, I can offer no opinion myself upon your school system, but I shall meet some friends today, connected with our colleges, whom I will make it a point to bring home with me to dinner.

Mrs. L. Many thanks!

Free. For the present then, Good Morning Mrs. Luminary! (aside) Here's a pedagogue in petticoats. Exit L.H.

Mrs. L. So far, so well. 'tis clear I can't improve the manners of these people, but I may do something for their children, my only difficulty in the case will be want of funds. Now here's this Kentucky Colonel, he's very rich, and very generous; then it becomes me to direct his extravagance to this beneficial purpose. I saw his servant just now in the garden. (Goes to window and beckons) Come here sir! (returns to C.) Yes to draw off a little of this person's super abundance, will be like draining a river to prevent its overflowing.

Enter Caesar L.

Is your master within?

Caesar. He hab dat honor. (bows)

Mrs. L. Present my compliments and say, I wish to speak to him.

Caesar. Wid de utmost *few*licity. (bows and exits left)

Enter Mary L. H.

Mary. Deary me Maam! What can have come to Colonel Wildfire? He behaves as if he was in love.

Mrs. L. In love?

Mary. Yes ma'am! He has been going about all the morning like a November wind; one moment he murmurs, and the next he whistles.

Mrs. L. Interesting object.

Mary. You'd have thought so, Ma'am, if you had only heard what high compliments he paid you.

Mrs. L. Me! Why, what has he said of me?

Mary. He says he's sure with a fair start you could jump over a five ~~barred~~ rail fence.

Mrs. L. High compliments indeed! The brute! Well there's one consolation, I may be able to turn his good opinion to some account

Wildfire without L. Whoops

Bless me! This man is a hurricane! Leave me Mary, I have some business with him.

Exit Mary. R.H. Enter Wildfire L.H.

Wild. _____ to keep the steam up.

Mrs. L. Colonel, I am very desirous of availing myself of your kind advice and cooperation.

Wild. _____ she sees I am a horse.

Mrs. L. You are aware that my object in visiting America is to establish throughout the Union, a system of superior cultivation.

Wild. _____ in cultivating tobacco.

Mrs. L. No! No! Colonel! You mistake me. I allude to mental husbandry.

Wild. Husbandry? I thought you meant that.

Mrs. L. Yes, schools, Colonel.

Wild. Then go with me. I'll get you a mighty heap of boys.

Mrs. L. I shall ground my system of instruction on the new lights of Phrenology. Of course, Colonel, you are acquainted with Phrenology?

Wild. _____ or any of his family perhaps, a new settler.

Mrs. L. I allude to the science of mind, as indicated by physical developments, in vulgar terms, Bumps. Have you ever had your head examined?

Wild. _____ when I was a chicken.

Mrs. L. Well then I suppose I may reckon on your joining me in this affair.

Wild. Distinctly!

Mrs. L. I may place myself in your hands?

Wild. _____the parson, However just as you have a mind to.

See bell on table. 3: Caesar. large boom, clergyman, Percival. newspaper

Mrs. L. The parson?

Wild. [There's a parson close by who hitches teams quicker than any feller in the country. I'll go fetch him by the collar in less than a flash. In five minutes we two will be hammered into one---and then [I have ordered a good strong] covered wagon for the journey.

Mrs. L. Mercy me, Colonel you are mistaken.

Wild. _____Heigh! I'm your boy (Exit L.)

Mrs. L. Oh Dear! What's to be done? To be hammered in a covered wagon. The stupid, ignorant brute! (Rings bell on table violently) Mary! Mary!

Enter Jenkins R.H.

Jenk. Holloa! What is the matter?

Mrs. L. Oh, Jenkins! You've come like a guardian angel I'm so glad, so frightened. Dear, dear. This Kentucky Centaur, this child of the horse, this Colonel Steamboat Alligator! (Leans on Jenkins)

Jenk. Pray, explain yourself.

Mrs. L. Why, pitying the savages' condition I only asked him to subscribe to my school but he in his ignorance of English, interpreted my words into an overture of matrimony.

Jenk. Ha Ha! Funny enough! An amusing mistake!

Mrs. L. Amusing, is it? The frightful monster. Do you know that this Colonel prides himself on being half an alligator?

Jenk. Well, and what then?

Mrs. L. Why he has declared that I asked him and that he will have, and has just run off for an expeditious clergyman.

Jenk. Well, don't alarm yourself. I'll frighten him away to his native woods.

Mrs. L. But how?

Jenk. Shew him pistols and make him smell gunpowder.

Mrs. L. Yes, do! My dear humane friend, shoot him instantly.

Jenk. Leave him to me. But Mrs. L, have you kept your promise to influence Freeman in my favor about his daughter?

Mrs. L. No but if you will but deliver me from his awful dilemma, I'll agree to anything.

Jenk. Very well. (Xes L) Then I'll take my stand and patiently wait for your annoyer (looks off L.) Eh! What do I see? Caroline alone in the garden. I'll embrace the opportunity. (hastens off L.)

Mary. Yes, a black one and a white one!
Tableau Closed in!
When Wildfire Kisses Mrs. Luminary Caesar Cries 'Amen'.
All exit. clear up close in

Mrs. L.
(Sinks into a chair above 1st wing)
Ah! What perils, are we pure philanthropists exposed to. Who leave our own firesides to comforts of a thankless world!

(Wild. without, "Damn it parson, do make haste!")

Mrs. L. (Rises) Oh Dear! The Tarquin's coming! Mary, Mary! (Rings hand Bell)
Mary Runs in R.H.
Run and call Mr. Jenkins. Quick! Quick!

Mary. He is a great way off with Miss Caroline.

Mrs. L. Then who has the Colonel got with him?

Mary. Two Clergymen.

[Mary. Yes, a black one and a white one!]

Mrs. L. Two clergymen? Bigamy! Help!

Drops into chair again, stamps, screams and throws her head back and covers her eyes with her hands. Wildfire runs in from L. dragging in gentleman in black. Caesar following both bowing with a large prayer book. Tableau.

Scene 2nd, 1st grooves

A respectable apartment in a Boarding house. Enter Percival R. with Newspaper.

Perc. (reading) "February 5th, died suddenly at the Hermitage, near Swansea, the Right Hon. Lord George Granby." Can this be possible! My rival an impostor! When I consider his conduct, my doubts rise to conviction. How shall I proceed? To denounce him on so slight a proof, might seem like envy, yet to hazard the happiness of her I love best, is impossible. I will enclose this paper to her father.

Wild. *(without)* Tell him its Colonel Wildfire.

Perc. Ah! My Kentucky Friend! A sound core with a rough exterior.

Enter Wildfire R.

Wild. [Ah, Percival, my boy, how goes it? What, so I discovered last night that you are clinched in a love match with my cousin Carry. Well, she's a peeler, ain't she? But, I say, Percy, you must mind-] hunt close upon the trail.

Per. Ah! Colonel, I'm am afraid I shall never run down my game.

Wild. Won't she squat?

4: Mrs. Luminary. Mary. Cloak and Bonnet. Caesar

Per. Why to be candid, circumstances just now, involve me in some difficulty.

Wild. Difficulty?

Per. Yes, were you never in difficulty Colonel?

Wild. [What! not out of ammunition---don't want money? If you do, I'm your man for five hundred or a thousand dollars. Draw upon *me* ; I'll answer your drafts---] Draw like a horse.

Per. I am obliged by your generosity; but you mistake me, my difficulties are not pecuniary. You must have discovered the preference your aunt displayed last night towards my noble countryman.

Wild. [Last night? No, I didn't see much of anything---I put too much brandy in my water. I was] pretty particularly sprung.

Per. Briefly then, his lordship is a suitor for your cousin's hand.

Wild. [Oh, it's nothing but her vanity makes her listen to that Lord, and "Vanity, thy name is woman." So says Shakespeare and] warn't he a screamer.

Per. But what adds to my uneasiness is a strong suspicion that he is not what he pretends to be.

Wild. [What? Why, you don't think he is cheating, do you---as we say in Kaintuck,] "playing possum'?

Per. I must confess, I have had some cause.

Wild. [Well, look here, Percival---I like an honest man let him come from what land he may and *perhaps* I like John Bull the best because we all come from one mother hen, tho' our brood was hatched this side of the water, but I hate a cheating possum, and if you are] only sure this lord is a possum.

Written letter No. 4. Unless Mr. Hackett as usual has several ready in his pocket. Ready at light.

Per. I have no positive proof upon that point. My doubts arise from a few words in a paper which I have received and can't understand.

Wild. [Well, that's not my case. He has sent me a paper that I do. (*Gives one to Percival).* It's a beautiful piece of furniture] but read it (gives letter)

Per. *(Reading)* "Sir, your presumptuous familiarity with me last night and your subsequent display of Kentucky civility towards a lady who has claimed my protection, warrant me in demanding from you the satisfaction of a gentleman. You will let me know before tomorrow where a friend can wait upon you"

"Granby"

(handing it again to Wildfire)

Why Colonel this certainly does look like a challenge.

Wild. Don't it?

Per. But will you fight him?

Wild. Distinctly!

Per. But Colonel don't get too hot and hasty in such business

Wild. [Hasty? I'm always as cool as an Ingen, but if he wants to pick a quarrel with *me* , he'll stand a mighty sudden] chance of being *used* up.

Per. Of course you allude to the treatment of a gentlemen?

Wild. [A gentleman? Oh, I'll put it to him *like* a *gentleman* , but if this had happened about ten years ago---when I was chock full of fun and fight---I wouldn't have minded] going it in going it in the old Mississippi style.

Per. Indeed! Ah! Some mode once peculiar to the wilderness of the region?

Wild. (long speech) Why, I'll tell you how it was. I was riding along the Mississippi one day when I came across a fellow floating down the stream sitting cock'd up in the starn of his boat fast asleep. Well, I hadn't had a fight for as much as ten days---felt as though I must kiver myself up in a salt bin to keep---"so wolfy" about the head and shoulders. So, says I, hullo, stranger, if you don't take keer your boat will run away wi' you. So he looked up at me "slantindickular," and I looked down on him "slanchwise." He took out a chaw of tobacco from his mouth and, says he, I don't value you tantamount to that, and then he flopp'd his wings and crowed like a cock. I ris up, shook my mane, crooked my neck, and neighed like a horse. Well, he run his boat foremost ashore. I stopped my waggon and set my triggers. Mister, says he, I'm the best man---if I ain't, I wish I may be tetotaciously exflunctified! I can whip my weight in wild cats and ride strait through a crab apple orchard on a flash of lightning---clear meat axe disposition! And what's more, I once back'd a bull off a bridge. Poh, says I, what do I keer for that? I can tote a steam boat up the Mississippi and over the Alleghany mountains. My father can whip the best man in old Kaintuck, and I can whip my father. When I'm good natured I weigh about a hundred and seventy, but when I'm mad, I weigh a *ton*. With that I fetched him the regular Ingen warwhoop. Out he jumped from his boat, and down I tumbled from my waggon---and, I say, we came together like two steam boats going sixty mile an hour. He was a pretty severe colt, but no part of a priming to such a feller as me. I put it to him mighty droll---tickled the varmint till he squealed like a young colt, bellowed "enough" and swore I was a "rip staver." Says I, *ain't* I a horse?

Says he, stranger, you're a *beauty* anyhow, and if you'd stand for Congress I'd vote for you next *lection*. Says I, would you? My name's Nimrod Wildfire. Why, I'm the yaller flower of the forest. I'm all *brimstone but* the] *head* and that's *aky fortis*. (crosses to the L.)

Per. A redoubtable achievement! Well Colonel, proceed as you think best in this affair, but if you do meet his lordship, let it be with the weapons of a gentleman. Exit RH

Wild. [A gentleman's weapons? Oh, of course, he means rifles. May be that Lord has heard of mine. She's a noisy varmint made of Powder house lightning-rod steel and twisted like our Kentucky widow. She's got but one peeper, but if she blinks that at him, his head will hum like a hornet's nest.] Exit LH

½ Dark, Scene last; Lights half down

Scene 3rd (Last)

Gardens of Freeman's Country House; wall at back gate in centre.
Dusk.

Enter Mrs. Luminary in a cloak and bonnet with veil, followed by Mary

Mrs. L. Are you quite sure, Mary that Mr. Jenkins has scared away that Kentucky Colonel?

Mary. I am sure Ma'am he sent him a challenge and I dare say he has run away - but what if he has not?

Mrs. L. What if he hasn't? Why Mary, do you know how I stand committed to this Colonel? In order to pacify and get rid of him this morning, I pretended to consent to marry him tonight and he declared he would order a coach and clergyman at 8 o'clock.

Mary. Well, Ma'am, but its already past 8 and neither in sight, besides Ma'am who knows but he and Mr. Jenkins may have gone somewhere, and fit a duel then, Ma'am, you know whichever gets killed gets quiet and the other has to run away from the police.

5: Jenkins; Wildfire; 2 rifles, one loaded

Mrs. L. True, Mary, I never thought of those facts. doubtless then, he has got shot and quieted.

LH Caesar comes through gate to centre

Caesar. I hab de honor to inform you Marm, dat de coach am come.

Mrs. L. What's that? A coach come?

Caesar. Is so Marm, and de Colonel has cleaned his rifle and says he'll 'fix your flint' fair.

Mrs. L. Colonel, what Colonel?

Caesar. Colonel Ramrod Wildfire!!!
Bows and retires up to gate.

Mrs. L. There, Mary, I'm sacrificed. Shall be shot with a rifle, don't you hear? The ignorant brute has refused Jenkins and means to fight me.

Mary. But Ma'am, Ma'am. Can't we contrive to put him off? Didn't you say that if you could only get safely into the city to night you would set out at daybreak post haste for Philadelphia?

Mrs. L. Certainly, but how can I escape?

Mary. Why ma'am its growing dark, and your figure once slipped into the coach the colonel couldn't tell one person from another.

Mrs. L. Why Mary! What do you mean?

Mary. I mean this, ma'am, that if we could only get anybody else of your height to put on your own cloak, bonnet and veil and sit still in the coach, you might make your way to the city in safety.

Mrs. L. Ah. yes! Yes! But whom could we find Mary?

Mary. Why Ma'am, here's the civil black man.

Mrs. L. What, Caesar?

Mary. Yes Ma'am! Please step aside and let me manage him.

Mrs. L. Do, that's right! Try! Mary twill be such a good joke too! (xes to RH) Do you but conquer Caesar, and I'll say you have the spirit of a Roman. EXIT RH

Mary. Ahem! Mister Caesar Wilkins!

Caesar. (Coming down L.C.) Yes, Miss Mary!

Mary. (RC) You were anxious to know this morning, if you could do me a little service

Caesar. For de ladies, dat am always de devout wish of dis here palpatatin bussum

Mary. What if I were to tell you, you could do so now?

Caesar. You would raise a hail storm of happiness

Mary. Come in doors then and you shall know all about it (Xes to R.) but, it will try your courage.

Caesar. Courage! Dat de only pint of character I want to prove. Den my Miss Phillis worship me. Cause why? "None but de brave, deserve de fair". Lead on Miss Mary!

Follows Mary off RH, Jenkins Enters LH 1.C

Jenk. Confound my luck! At the very moment I had brought the girl to listen to me, here comes a note from her father denouncing me as an imposter and forbidding me ever to enter his house again. I know Caroline is about the garden somewhere, and there's a coach waiting at the gate. If could only meet with her and beguile her into it, I might carry her off, in spite of them. I'm resolved. I'll make the attempt, cost what it may. I'll go this instant and bribe the driver.

(Goes up and opens the gate, through which Wildfire enters dressed as a hunter, with a rifle on each shoulder)

Death and the Devil!

(Retreats, and comes down LC)

Wild. (coming down RC)

[Well, stranger, here I am. I got your letter, and you'll find there's no] No doubt of my being a gentleman.

Jenk. Yes I see you are sir. (Aside) Ah! He's come to apologize!

Wild. [I say, stranger, you're a bran new pen, but perhaps I shall use you up to the stump.

Jenk. Up to the Stump, I don't understand you sir!

Wild. [You don't? (Why, he knows no more of English than a Winnebago squaw.) About this little *duel* business---you had better look to your spurs, or I shall] cut your comb for you!

6: Mary, Caesar, Freeman, Caroline, Percival, Mrs. Luminary

Jenk. Oh! You mean perhaps, you accept my challenge!

Wild. [Yes, ready to] blaze away, like a fire in a prairie.

Jenk. Very Well! Then, as you seem ignorant of the preliminaries we adopt in civilized society, you'll name your friend, and mine shall wait upon him tomorrow morning.

Wild. Not wait, Now; here, right on the spot.

Jenk. What, here on the spot?

Wild. [Well, we'll have the engagement right off. Here, take your choice of these rifles. Either of them will do] any thing but talk.
(Forces a rifle into Jenkins hand)

Jenk. (Xes to left)
Fight with rifles! Does the man take me for a Buffalo? (Aside)

Wild. [I believe he's going to skulk. I must warm his blood a bit. A word in your ear: hang me, but I think you're a] *possum*.

Jenk. What's a possum?

Wild. [If that don't make him fight, he's a] trifling feller!

Jenk. Here's a pleasant situation!. in one word sir, I refuse to fight you today.

Wild. [Come, come, stranger. You have called me out, and if you think to get rid of me without exchanging a shot, you might as well try to scull a potash kettle up the falls of] Niagara, with a crowbar for an oar

Jenk. I'm fast in a man trap

Wild. What shall be the distance?

Jenk. Distance? (Eyeing the length of his rifle) Why I should prefer about half a mile.

Wild. [What? Too far. Do you want me to *strain* my *rifle*?] 12 paces as good as a million.

Jenk. Twelve paces! Why we might as well fight in a sentry box!

Wild. [Come on, now, we'll stand back to back and]we'll each other measure off six—

Jenk. But, stop, stop. these are not my weapons. Pistols only are my weapons.

Wild. [Pistols? Oh, nonsense. Good for nothing popguns that are sure to lodge the ball in you and wound your feelings. A rifle sends it clean through] clean as a whistle

(levels)

Jenk. Ah! Take care! One of us may get hurt. (aside) My only chance to scare him is to bluster. (comes up to Wildfire) Very well sir; no trifling, come on!

Wild. Now then, back to back! (They place themselves) Take your distance!

Jenk. Distance, won't I? (runs off LH)

Wild . Come back, or I'll plug you like a water melon.

Jenkins returns by half steps and slowly

Jenk. There, then!

Wild. [Stop! Look here, stranger. I'll bet you a hundred dollars that I put my bullet between your eyes] without touching your nose!

Jenk. What shall I do? Eh! I see two figures coming from the house. (looking up 2E RH and examines gun)

Wild. [Now back to back and pace off, and when I count one, two, three, turn round and blaze away like a thunder cloud.] If you tickle her trigger, she'll spit fire

Enter Caesar R. 2E disguised in Mrs. Luminary's cloak, bonnet and veil and led slowly towards C Gate by Mary.

Jenk. If I could create an alarm by discharging my gun, I might escape in the confusion!

Wild. Are you ready? One, two,

(Jenk. fires upward, drops rifle and runs off LH. Mary screams and runs back RH 2E. Caesar rushes down C drops on knees and shakes. Wildfire hugs Caesar, closely veiled)

Wild. _____widow got a bullet in her

Enter from C Gate Percival and Caroline, who come down R of C and Freeman L. Mrs. Freeman

Free. What's this? Mrs. Luminary in the arms of my nephew?

Wild. There widow, I'll give you a Kentucky smack. (Lifts veil and discovers Caesar)

Caesar. I hab de honor. (Xes in alarm to L)

Wild. [I can out eat any man in this country (and) wait till I swallow him whole!

Caesar. Yah! Yah! Yah! (runs off leaving cloak)

Wild. _____in my wife's feathers.

Free. Your wife's? They belong to Mrs. Luminary.

Wild. _____and here she comes.

Enter Mrs. Luminary hastily

Mrs. L. What's this I hear? The poor negro wounded?

Wild. _____Mrs. Wildfire, that is to be.

Free. Mrs. L is this true?

Mrs. L. What can I do? If I refuse to marry him after what has passed, my character may suffer and if I consent(?)

Free. My dear Madam, let me congratulate you.

Mrs. L. Well colonel if you will have it, there's my hand. but remember I give it you only on one condition, that for the first month after we are married you neither will call me a screamer, nor yourself a horse.

Wild. [I think you had all better pack up your plunder and tote off to Kaintuck. I'll divide all my land among you on the Big Muddy and the Little Muddy free gratis for nothing, and look here, the ground's so rich there that if you but plant a crowbar over night *perhaps* it will sprout tenpenny nails afore mornin'. (*Coming forward*.) Look here, ladies and gentlemen, strangers, I know I'm a pretty hard sample of a white man, but I don't want to skeer nobody; and as you see I'm in want of a little more genteel education, I hope I may be indulged occasionally] with our trip to New York.

Situations: Percival R, Caroline R.C., Wild. C., Mrs. L, L.C., Free,
End of piece

Ring down Curtain

Misc. end pages

Memphis 1866 C.D. Lovett

Alex Fisher. Prompter, Wheatley's Arch St. Theatre Phila. 23/58

{Signature ?}. Prompter Crisses Saints, Memphis {?}

John M. Clifford. Stage manager, Buffalo 1856

{Name?} Prompter, St. Charles Theatre New Orleans, 1865,6.

{Name?} Prompter {?} Baltimore 1867

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Note: With the exception of *The Argus* and *The Missouri Intelligencer and Boonslick Advertiser,* all newspapers were accessed through the American Periodicals Series Online at Ellis Library, University of Missouri. *The Argus* and *Intelligencer* are available on microfilm at the Newspaper Reference Room, State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia.

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