MVSA Newsletter

Newsletter of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association

Number IX, July 1986

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Martha Vicinus, our retiring President and Victorian(ist) Abroad, inspired MVSA to new heights of achievement at our Tenth Annual Meeting in Cincinnati. Papers from Victorian scholars in history, literature, and art history; papers that drew on the visual arts, fiction, and writings of journalists, travelers, anthropologists, and military men as well as on modern social and psychological theory--all these made our meeting a rich and diverse experience. We began with the delightful and witty reminiscences of one of our founders, Larry Poston, paused in the middle to enjoy the dramatic monologues of Richard Howard, and ended with the pleasure of Peter Stansky's company and scholarship. Special thanks for their contributions to this very successful meeting should go to the Local Arrangements Committee, Robin Sheets, Sharon Propas, and Henry Winkler, whose institution, the University of Cincinnati, generously sponsored Richard Howard's and Peter Stansky's participation as well as underwriting the elegant food at Friday's reception. Thanks, too, to Kris Garrigan, who in her second year as Executive Secretary is shepherding us all most effectively from meeting to meeting. We welcome two new members to our Executive Committee, Robin Sheets (English, University of Cincinnati) and Harold Perkin (History, Northwestern University). Susan Dean and Linda Hughes left the board at the close of this year's meeting. Their enthusiasm, imagination, and hard work have greatly benefited the Association. As for me, what academic task can be more fun than being President of MVSA?

--M. Jeanne Peterson

CALL FOR PAPERS

"Victorian Scandals: Decorum and Its Enemies" will be the topic of the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association in Chicago, April 24-25, 1987. The Association welcomes proposals examining challenges to accepted standards--social, moral, aesthetic, or intellectual--in Victorian Britain. Eight- to ten-page papers or two-page abstracts should be sent no later than November 10, 1986 to Kristine Ottesen Garrigan, MVSA Executive Secretary, Department of English and Communication, DePaul University, 2323 North Seminary Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614-3298.

TREASURY REPORT

Balance on hand, July 1, 1985		$ 743.18
Income		
Dues	$ 1380.00	
Annual meeting registration fees	1309.00	
Donations	105.50	
Interest	53.19	
Miscellaneous	25.00	
		2,872.69
Expenditures		
Printing and duplication	$ 505.03	
Supplies	91.96	
Word processing services for directory	100.00	
Annual meeting expenses	1152.34	
Postage	304.50	
Bank service charges	13.75	
Miscellaneous	70.00	
		2,237.58
Balance on hand, July 1, 1986*		$ 1,378.29

*Account payable to DePaul University on July 10, 1986 for reimbursement of costs of major mailings: $390.65 for duplication, $252.80 for postage.

Many thanks to these people whose 1985-86 donations helped to subsidize graduate student and speaker registrations at our 1986 Annual Meeting: K.K. Collins, Robert Wellisch, Jane Stedman, Robert A. Colby, Virgina Grossman, John Reed, Walter Arnstein, Nicholas Temperley, Betsy Cogger Rezelman, M. Jeanne Peterson, Mary Burgan, Pearl Warn, Joan Corwin, Steve Elwell, and Beth Kalikoff. We also thank DePaul University for its generous support in underwriting day to day expenses of the organization and providing secretarial assistance.

MVSA AT TEN YEARS

With an important milestone, MVSA's tenth anniversary, approaching, the Executive Committee felt it would be appropriate to offer as part of our Tenth Annual Meeting a retrospective look at the organization's history. And who better to review our glorious past than MVSA's Founding Member and first Executive Secretary (now our new Vice President as well), Larry Poston? His delightful account was so enthusiastically hailed that we reprint it here in full. Harken now as this august personage recalls Great Moments in Victorian Studies and tells what it was like to be

Present at the Creation

Lawrence Poston
University of Illinois at Chicago
Department of English

When Kris Garrigan told me that my services were required today to mark the tenth anniversary of MVSA, I recalled that at some point in the past I received a copy of the newsletter to learn that I had been named Founding Member. This honorific title has a bit of an edge for me, inasmuch as it has always suggested the oldest member of some sedate club, let us say the Diogenes Club, who is discovered dead behind his newspaper after the passage of some three days. I asked Kris whether I should be portentous, along the lines of "One dark gray day ten years ago," or "One sultry Dog-day, after much perambulation, toiling along the dirty little Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Enfer," but she said that this organization discourages that sort of thing, which suggests to me that MVSA has changed very little over the last ten years. I thought, therefore, I could borrow a page from the inaugural address of our founding president Walter Arnstein and say, "Who would have guessed ten years ago, when we were conducting our first meeting in a small smoky room in the Midland Hotel in Chicago, that in a decade we would be conducting a meeting in a small room in the Netherland Plaza in Cincinnati?" Nonetheless, I believe this occasion demands some rhetorical heightening.

Actually, the seeds of this organization were not planted in the environs of City Hall in the last days of the Daley administration, but amidst the rose-strewn paths of the University of British Columbia, where I was giving a scholarly paper--back in the days when I was still writing them--at the Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada. I still recall that trip with pleasure, notably a spectacular flight along the Oregon/Washington coast at sunset, and the royal suite at the Hotel Vancouver where my wife and I were housed because the hotel had overbooked and where my delusions of imperial grandeur were first nurtured. But however nice it is to have an excuse to go to British Columbia, I began thinking it would in the long run be nicer to have a gathering of Victorians a little closer to home. The northeastern group had, I believe, just gotten started, and in an era of shrinking travel budgets the idea of regionalization had a strong appeal. I went back to Tulsa, where I was spending a year as a visiting faculty member, wrote to Martha Vicinus for the Victorian Studies subscription list for the midwestern and Great Plains states, moved to Chicago where the inspiration of being at the nerve center of the Rust Belt was a constant stimulus to endeavor, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Who, in the scant fifteen minutes grudgingly allotted him by a dismissive

younger generation of leadership, could possibly do justice to the intricacies of that history--the drafting of a constitution, the rise and fall of successive administrations, the development of trade routes, and all that goes into the emergence of a new power? Since I do not have the leisure of a James Mill, I must content myself with recalling a few of those undramatic but illuminating moments which a mere perusal of the archives by some present-day cliometrician could not possibly uncover. One was getting a letter from Josef Altholz, who warned me not to turn over the drafting of bylaws to a bunch of English professors. I turned that task over, however, to myself, having failed to excite the imagination of any of the members of our planning group to that end, and with the trepidation of a novice law clerk sent it off to Professor Altholz, who, perhaps noting that it guaranteed that at least every other President would not be from the field of English, wrote back a generous note to the effect that the bylaws were not too bad. I felt as though I had won my first out-of-court settlement.

Then there was the moment at which my bank informed me that in order to transact business under an assumed name in Cook County, we had to file legal papers and publish an advertisement of our intentions in a "major Chicago daily." Since the signatures of two persons were required, Carol Simpson Stern and I, pretending to be officers (as yet there were none formally elected), appeared before a notary public for that purpose, feeling rather as if we were getting married--a move which, given the fact that we both had existing commitments, would have been highly impolitic, not to mention illegal. Some three hundred dollars later, I discovered that if I had gone to another bank a few blocks down the street I could have just opened an account, but the die was cast, and now that our wealth is once again in Cook County after several years' sojourn in Fort Wayne under Fred Kirchhoff's watchful eye, I was pleased to be able to furnish Kris with the documentary proof of our legality.

And then there was that moment at which the fortunes of our frail bark very nearly foundered once and for all, though few knew how close we came. One January morning at the Newberry, the saving remnant of God's elect, which is to say the then-Executive Committee, gathered to deliberate the shape of an upcoming program. It was spitting snow as I rode the "L" down that morning, but as we ventured forth from the library shortly after twelve, "spitting," that aldermanic term, hardly describes what had been going on. The drifts seemed to be piling higher by the moment, and traffic had practically ground to a halt. We frantically spooned down some Indian food at the last surviving restaurant on the Near North side, and then, with one final embrace, parted for our respective destinations. We deposited John Reed with directions at the Chicago Avenue subway stop, knowing, in our heart of hearts, that we might never see him again, and that the surviving members of the Executive Committee could expect some tart inquiries in the near future from the Wayne State University administration. Florence Boos, as I recollect, was staying over with friends, and therefore we did not have to worry about her braving the highways back to Iowa. As for our fearless leader, he in the event faced the most difficult tribulations of all. Walter had come to Chicago on the last of Victorian artifacts, the train. Knowing that where all else fails, Amtrak, like Galileo's earth, nonetheless <u>does</u> move, he and his wife made their way with some confidence to Union Station, where two successive trains were cancelled under his eyes. Aghast at this breach of etiquette--I have, you see, this vision of Walter standing under the monitor and accosting a frightened station

attendant with raised umbrella and the stern words, "But I am president of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association!"--Walter and Mrs. Arnstein returned to the hotel where they had stayed the previous night, and were fortunate enough to recover their room. Night fell, the blizzards howled, and the next morning, in a world of Siberian beauty and calm, the Arnsteins made their way again to Union Station. Again, no train. You must forgive these embellished memories of an old man, but it is my recollection that this went on for some days, if not quite long enough for them to secure a weekly room rate. Finally, with that characteristic gesture of sudden abandonment of all precautions that marked the turbulent Arnstein years but led us, guided by his brilliant intuition, from one victory to the next, Walter and his wife decided to catch a train, not to Urbana, but to Bloomington, Illinois, since the state Department of Transportation apparently put a higher premium on keeping connections open to Springfield than to our sister campus to the south. In Bloomington, Walter later assured me, they had actually found a cross-country bus to Urbana. I am strongly of the opinion that such a conveyance on such an unlikely route does not and never did in fact exist, but I am also convinced that Walter discovered that he had the power to summon it ex nihilo and was simply too modest to say that that was what he had done. But in my sinuous manner, I do wind my way toward a point worth making, which is that the very same snow which brought down Mayor Bilandic failed to shatter MVSA; we survived, and went on to that record of triumphs that constitutes our public history and on which it were redundant for me to comment.

ABSTRACTS FROM THE TENTH ANNUAL MEETING

OPENING SESSION: "Imperialism and Ideology"

Bringing Up the Empire: Captain Marryat's Midshipman

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Captain Marryat, the seafaring Dickens, started his naval career at age 14 in 1806, the year after Trafalgar. For the first three years, he served as a midshipman on board the Imperieuse, a frigate in combat in the Mediterranean. The young Marryat participated in at least fifty engagements, was wounded three times, commended for gallantry twice. He served altogether in the navy for 27 years, proceeding to the rank of captain, and was a much-decorated naval hero.

He began writing about his experiences before he retired from the navy, publishing twenty novels as well as numerous other works before his death in 1848. His early novels, best known of which are Peter Simple and Mr. Midshipman Easy, all are based on his youthful experiences as a midshipman. These novels set the pattern for the imperialist adventure fiction that flourished throughout the nineteenth century, culminating in Kipling and Conrad. Conrad himself wrote of Marryat's "undeniable greatness" and called him "the enslaver of youth."

The rhetoric and structures of adventure that characterize Marryat's fiction were adumbrated in at least two earlier forms. My paper starts with quotations from Marryat's midshipman's log -- his juvenilia so to speak -- seeing in its entries the "deep structure" of all adventure fiction. It is also illustrated with slides of a set of color engravings executed in 1821 by George Cruikshank, entitled "The Progress of a Midshipman, Exemplified in the Career of Master Blockhead." Cruikshank based his cartoons on drawings by Marryat; Blockhead is a caricature self-portrait of Marryat, Midshipman.

Art, Imperialism, and the British Museum: A Question of Categories

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Department of History

Just as British imperialism resulted in the re-evaluation of culture which provided the ground for the development of anthropology, so the appropriation of artifacts from colonized lands forced a redefinition of the nature of art. The British Museum changed over the same period, from a limited access collection housed in a remodeled aristocratic mansion to a public showcase and repository for the spoils of empire, appropriately displayed behind an imperial neoclassical facade surmounted by Westmacott's frieze depicting the progress of civilization. The system of categories imposed on the collected artifacts of empire supported and reinforced the ideology of imperialism in much the same way that early anthropology and accounts of "primitive" art did, if less systematically.

By denying a direct government role in the appropriation of most of the artifacts in the collection and insisting that British Museum holdings depended on private donations and purchases through "normal trade channels," official and semi-official accounts of the museum fail to make the connections to imperialism clear. Nevertheless, a survey of major contributors to the collections reveals the close links between museum and empire. Even the founding collections depended on connections with early imperial expansion in the East and West Indies. At the outset of the nineteenth century, French Egyptian artifacts and the Elgin marbles came into British control with their military victory over the French in Egypt in 1801.

The connection between expansion of empire and the expansion of the museum is even more clear for the Victorian period. The list of major contributors to the museum during the period reads like a summary of imperial roles: explorers, missionaries, diplomats, civil servants, and military officers. The close ties between imperialism and museum collecting were underlined by the shifting emphases of the museum's ethnographic collections, dominated by Oceanic holdings before 1880, with the expansion of African collections during the scramble for Africa after 1880. The culmination of the process can be seen in the complete spoliation of the art treasures of Benin in the wake of the Punitive Expedition of 1897, the disbursement of artifacts being overseen by the Foreign Office.

Early art historical approaches to "primitive" art reinforced imperialist assumptions by formulating stages of cultural evolution. The exact character of these stages was disputed, some arguing for an origin of art in geometric patterns, others for a borrowing of patterns from industrial arts such as weaving, others for an initial impulse to imitate nature. In all cases, however, "primitive" art was considered a category separate from art as such. Repeatedly, the art of "primitives" was compared with that of children or of prehistoric man, metaphors familiar in the writings of anthropologists and imperialist novelists as well.

Although the British Museum collections were not organized to show stages of cultural evolution, this ideology remained central to the principles of organization and arrangement. The acceptance of cultural evolution as a basis for understanding "primitive" art was not surprising, given the close connections between museum officials and contemporary anthropologists. As early as 1853, C.T. Newton outlined the principles of the museum arrangements in terms of an organic metaphor of the stages of civilization. Museum officials such as A.W. Franks figured prominently in the early years of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, as C.H. Read, O.H. Dalton and others would later in the century. In addition, the Christy collection of ethnographic materials, absorbed by the museum in 1870, was explicitly designed to demonstrate cultural evolution.

The museum's incorporation of an ideology supportive of imperialism shows first of all in the ambivalence toward ethnographic collections and the problematic categorization of them. Originally part of the natural history collection, these artifacts were moved to the department of Antiquities, later lumped into the catch-all category of Oriental Antiquities, and did not become a separate department until 1946. The first guide to ethnographic materials did not appear until 1910.

Several themes emerge in an examination of this pattern of arrangement and re-arrangement. The separation of ethnographic collections from antiquities served to appropriate the monuments of the ancient Mideast to Europe, positing a developmental sequence of great civilization culminating with classical Greece and Rome, and looking forward to Britain's place as the new Rome. This coincided with a more general denial of history to colonial peoples, implicit in the non-chronological arrangement of ethnographic materials, as well as in the equation of "primitive" with prehistoric art. In addition, the insistence that "primitive" art could only be understood in the context of cultural artifacts, that in fact no clear lines could be drawn between art production and other forms of production in the case of "primitive" peoples, denied to that art the autonomous status granted to European arts, and to a lesser extent to the arts of antiquity.

Finally, defenses of the ethnographic collections explicitly emphasized their utilitarian value to the proper functioning of empire. Repeatedly, museum officals insisted that understanding "primitive" people through the displays in the British Museum would better enable the Englishman to govern and to trade with the "savage races" under British dominion.

Boundary and Difference in Colonialist Journalism

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My thesis is that the colonial situation places the writer in a kind of "boundary situation" which leads to an obsessive rhetorical devaluation of the cultural Other as a defense against its covert seductive powers. In other words, I want to treat a recurring tendency in colonialist rhetoric--that of devaluation, moral condemnation, and vilification--as connected both to individual psychology and to ideological necessity.

A theoretical precedent for this project can be found in the work of the psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva, who has shown that the phenomenon of abjection has consequences both for the definition of the self and for the principles of exclusion and domination that operate in colonial societies. My paper, then, focuses on the particular dangers to individual and cultural identity posed by the various forms of the boundary situation.

This situation arises in the lure of the primitive for the colonialist writer, as well as in the encounter with the Europeanized native. Both cases undermine a system of symbolic difference on which the ideology of colonial domination is based; this threat to a symbolic as well as political order in turn creates a need for the rhetorical devaluation of the Other as a means of restoring that crucial system of difference.

My examples are drawn from three occasions in colonialist journalism of the Victorian period: H.M. Stanley's visit to British Tropical Africa in 1873 during a punitive expedition against the Ashantis, Rudyard Kipling's description of a debate in the Calcutta Municipal Council in 1888, and Winston Churchill's coverage for the London Daily Telegraph of another Imperial military campaign, this one against the Mohmand tribes in India's Northwest Frontier in 1897.

In each case, I examine the symbolic representation of disorder and indifferentiation that the writer places over against his own effort to reinforce a system of difference and exclusion. In such instances one can see how the logic of colonialist discourse careers wildly from one position to its opposite: colonized peoples are held in contempt for their lack of civility, loved for their willingness to acquire it, and ridiculed when they have acquired too much. We can say about colonialist discourse what Kristeva says about misogyny: that "it confesses, through its very relentlessness against the other, that it is threatened by an asymmetrical, irrational, wily, uncontrollable power."

SECOND FRIDAY SESSION: "Confronting the Other: Victorian Travel Narratives"

George Borrow and Richard Burton: Pursuing Romantic Identity

Joan Corwin
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Department of English

George Borrow and Richard Burton figure among those larger-than-life explorers and adventurers whose interests, talents and ambitions required a broader field of action than that of the stolid Victorian domestic context. They abandoned the landscape of the realist novel for pleasures and powers inconceivable at home. Through foreign travel, they created a context for romantic identity, to be realized later in the writing of the travel account. Thus, they became magicians, artificers of their own identities in life and in text.

Burton and Borrow attempt to become the foreign Other. Their self-transformations are effected by means of their remarkable linguistic talents. Foreign languages become spells to clothe their Protean personalities.

The Bible in Spain is George Borrow's account of three trips he made from 1835 to 1839. Because he traveled during a civil war, when the appearance of strangers provoked some unease, almost every scene of his book is saturated with questions about his identity. The necessity of defining himself with every encounter allowed him to exploit his ability to transform himself. He is taken for a Jew, a gypsy and even the Pretender to the Spanish throne. He remains elusive, however, never actively embracing a new identity, but allowing himself to be recognized by others. Throughout the narrative, his most conspicuous qualities are the negative ones of a prudent pliability and an impulse toward flight which translates into an instant rapport with outcasts and misfits.

The tradition of Europeans adopting Moslem dress to pass unmolested through Islam arises before Richard Burton's 1853 Arabian journey. But Burton made the gesture famous and set the convention for later generations. A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El-Medinah and Meccah is an adventure into the Arab mind by means of a self-transformation achieved progressively from exterior to interior. A sustained and complex imposture, this single metamorphosis unifies three levels of plot: the geographic penetration of the Moslem world parallels Burton's deepening knowledge of the Moslem mind and the increasing subtlety of his transformation into Moslem. At the moment of his greatest triumph, however, as he enters the forbidden shrine at Mecca, Burton is keenly aware that he is an intruder. If the Pilgrimage can be read as a book-length consideration of who Burton is, then at the climax of this book, he is other than Moslem.

If Borrow is mistaken for a variety of characters, he is often more correctly taken for a "wizard" or "fairy man." Similarly, the identity that emerges from Burton's penetration of the Kaaba is not that of a devout Moslem, but that of the demonic artist who has contrived an elaborate illusion to gratify his pride. Finally, it is only as artist-magicians that Borrow and Burton remain constant to an identity. They realize their romantic potential not in any one impersonation, but in their ability to re-create themselves. This special talent manifests itself in their writing, where in re-creating themselves, they re-write reality. This idea, that through imagination one can create experience, lies at the heart of romanticism.

Eothen: A.W. Kinglake's "Wicked" Tale of Eastern Travel

Charisse Gendron
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Department of English

A.W. Kinglake's Eothen, published in 1844, gives an account of the author's youthful travels in the Middle East ten years previously. Despite the scruples of John Murray, who refused to publish the book on the grounds that its irreverent tone might cause offense, Eothen was a great success. It amused the wits of the day, intrigued schoolboys, and even captivated the middle-class readers Murray expected to be put off by a book so pointedly lacking in social usefulness or moral seriousness.

Gallantry, bravado, and a Byronic independence of opinions likely to be held by many of his readers constitute Kinglake's most evident "sins." We see these sins dramatized in passages that depict the author teasing a group of innocent Christian girls in Bethlehem; bearding the plague in a Cairo bazaar; jaunting among the dubious religious sites of the Holy Land; flirting with Roman Catholicism at the shrine of the Virgin Mary. Actually Kinglake does nothing scandalous; he merely employs a rhetoric of daring that, from any but the most naive point of view, entertains rather than shocks. Nonetheless, what reviewers warned against were not actions but words--the jesting tone with which the author distances himself from received opinions of womanhood, religion, and society. This tone, they observed, was the mark of true skepticism.

Yet Eothen must have reassured readers even as it titillated them with suggestions of the author's barely-curbed badness. In part, they would have admired his display of the English virtues of courage and independent-mindedness, so long as these potentially disruptive qualities were safely exercised abroad. Second, discerning readers would have recognized from the author's tone that, since his travels, he had been fully socialized. In continuous references to home, Kinglake recreates the mores of middle-class England, and uses these mores as a foil for his own adventures and for his encounters with the incongruities of the East. But while the practices of country churchgoers and City businessmen are evoked with gentle irony, this irony is that of the tolerant insider, not the reforming satirist. And finally, Kinglake's mockery is perhaps most delightful when directed against himself, as a romantic youth living out his fantasy of Oriental travel.

To discover at this date whether the majority of Kinglake's readers embraced him because or in spite of his jesting attitude is impossible. What we can deduce from the book's popularity, however, is that in it the author, perhaps unwittingly, provides his readers with a consummate portrait of the free-thinking Englishman abroad, for them to interpret heroically or mock-heroically, according to their inclinations.

"A Kind of Pink Jail": Dickens's Picture of Italy

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Department of English

Charles Dickens spent 1844-1845 in Italy hoping to find respite from financial worries, family problems, and the frenetic pace of his early publishing career, and to write a great new novel at leisure. These personal goals were not achieved and the artistic results of the year are disparate: the travel book, Pictures from Italy; a Christmas book, The Chimes; and a later novel partly set in Italy, Little Dorrit. These works reveal the impact Dickens's year on Italy had on him and form a semiotic construct of the themes and political sympathies that recur in his work.

Beginning with the high spirits of a Pickwickian adventure, Pictures from Italy purports to be merely an account of a mid-Victorian Grand Tour. Dickens strains to carry out this theme, partly as a response to the xenophobic stance of many English tourists, by an enthusiastic account of his excursions and by distancing himself from his subject through narrative devices. The desultoriness of these approaches, however, cannot conceal the vehemence of his social criticism of Italy.

As a novelist, Dickens's imagination and social conscience are fired by urban settings. In Pictures from Italy, too, the poverty and squalor of urban life move him to comment on the ills of a society in need of democratic reform. A sympathizer of the cause of Italian nationalism, Dickens presents his political views obliquely through an interpretive description of the evidence of misrule. The master image in this description is typically Dickensian: dirt--dirty houses, people, and Renaissance masterpieces. Indicative of an unjust society, Dickens implies, are public executions and the careless handling of infants and the dead. Responsible for this injustice, he suggests, are the "petty princes" who oppose nationalist reform and the church.

The social criticism implicit in Pictures from Italy results in the arabesque of criticism and maudlinism in The Chimes which Dickens wrote during the first half of his year in Genoa. In the artifacts of Renaissance art and of ancient Rome, however, he finds means of salvaging the wrecked society of Italy, and he translates these means--the idealized role of woman and the lesson of history--into a myth of bourgeois realism in Little Dorrit, which he wrote ten years later.

Dickens's metaphor for Italy, "a kind of pink jail," depicts it as an inviting land of warmth and great variety but also trapped in its own history, laden with mouldering ruins and outworn ideologies. As a tourist he is tolerant, welcoming the unfamiliar, whether attractive or repellent to the senses, but as a novelist commenting on his travels, he turns his travel book into a revolutionary document. As a social critic, Dickens grows impatient with Italy, restlessly darting from place to place only to find more squalor and returning to England half way through the year in order to regain his equilibrium. These conflicting reactions merge in his fiction which draws on his travel in Italy when he elaborates principles for salvaging a ruined world.

FIRST SATURDAY SESSION: "New Worlds: Women and Children Traveling in North America"

Little Victorians Abroad

Trevor J. Phillips
Bowling Green State University
Educational Foundations and Inquiry

As early as the 1830s, private philanthropic agencies attempted to rescue destitute children from the slums of England, provide them with the basics of an education, the trappings of a trade, not a little biblical knowledge, and send them, escorted only by the agency representatives -- in some instances, entirely alone -- to the far-flung corners of the Empire to begin their lives anew. By the end of the first quarter of the present century, there were sent to Canada alone, 100,000 children between the ages of five and eighteen, unaccompanied by their parents.

Support for child emigration as a policy came, in part, from those motivated by economic, religious, and even imperialistic considerations: young vagrants were becoming too much of a drain on the nation's relief resources, while the underpopulated but expanding colonies could always absorb those who otherwise would be condemned to dismal futures at home.

Maria Rye and Annie Macpherson were reformers primarily interested in saving young lives, souls, or both, and who saw in 'Greater Britain,' the salvation - literally - of thousands of 'street Arabs.' Although Rye was the uncontested pioneer of child emigration to Canada, to Macpherson must go the credit of greatly expanding the movement. Her erstwhile associate, Thomas Barnardo, would soon, however, dominate all other efforts to send children out from England, and would lead an organization whose achievements in child emigration were soon to be felt worldwide.

Early efforts by Macpherson and others were crude in the extreme. Notices were placed in local newspapers alerting Canadian farmers of the imminent arrival of a 'lot' of children available for adoption or apprenticeship. Such a hit-and-miss method of placing children could not be allowed to continue and was replaced by the establishment of 'distributing homes' which served as gathering and holding places for the young Victorians until such a time as their placement was assured.

Reasons for the acceleration of the rescue work are various, one of the most prominent being a combination of the fear instilled in the public by the pervasiveness of the 'dangerous classes,' and the afore-mentioned economic. humanitarian and imperialistic instincts. The words of one keen, turn-of the century observer succinctly weave together the separate but interlocking strands:

> It is essential that this form of disposal of our orphan and pauper children should be greatly increased, so as to preserve the ascendancy of British sentiment. Famine is unavoidable in this country unless more lads are sent out to till the land

> of the Dominions...Most of our paupers and pensioners represent potential colonists who were not helped out in time.

Did the ends really justify the means? Child emigration's means -- often characterized by radical, violent upheaval and displacement -- were effected to avoid what was perceived by so many as totally unacceptable ends: hopelessness, crime, death. To engage in the movement was to have the children leap from the frying-pan, certainly; into the fire...perhaps. Those who took the skillet in both hands...and tossed, gambled on a dream which, it is true, was to produce some nightmarish aspects. But over time, there were, indeed, redeeming features. An Empire-become-Commonwealth can testify to that.

Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon: Off the Beaten Path in New Orleans

Carol E. Bastian
Centre College
Department of English

Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon (1827-91) is known today as an early feminist and as George Eliot's warm-hearted friend. She was also one of the considerable number of Victorians who traveled through the United States in the 1840s and 1850s, recording their impressons of the democratic experiment. Most of the travelers, like Bodichon, were convinced of the evils of slavery. What is unusual in Bodichon's record of her wedding trip--journal letters published in 1972 as An American Diary, 1857-58, edited by Joseph Reed, Jr.--is the section describing a nine-weeks stay in New Orleans. She claims justly to have seen there far more of "the life of the lowly" and of "the real facts of slavery" than did those English ladies and gentlemen who stayed in good hotels and presented letters of introduction to Americans of their own class. That she had the freedom of mind and movement to experience life off the beaten path in New Orleans, I attribute to her own marginal social position. Her curiosity, indignation, and sympathies were those of a woman at once inside and outside the Victorian intellectual mainstream.

Barbara Leigh Smith's inside standing in mid-Victorian England came by virtue of her birth into the Unitarian-Radical connection. Daughter of Benjamin Leigh Smith, a noted Liberal M.P., granddaughter of the abolitionist William Smith, she was cradled in reform and educated privately to develop her talents. Her family had money; they traveled widely and had some of the best people to dinner. But the five Leigh Smith children were all illegitimate and most publicly so. Barbara, as George Eliot noted on first making her acquaintance, belonged to the "tabooed family." Her independent income, settled on her by her father when she was twenty-one, undoubtedly softened social disapproval as well as enabling her to study painting seriously and to support causes. She arrived in America with Eugène Bodichon, a French-Algerian doctor more eccentric than herself, and with an already well-developed disdain for social conventions.

The Bodichons, temporarily short of money, set up housekeeping in a lodging house. Finding her painting and her fellow lodgers sufficient entertainment, Barbara puts aside letters of introduction. She gets to know her Yankee landlady and a good-natured, silly dressmaker in the house. Soon she is calling on white and black women in the neighborhood, breaking the social code and getting away with it. One neighbor lives with her three daughters by a white plantation owner in a comfortable home among books and musical instruments. Such unions, she learns, are frequent and accepted. Other neighbors, whites and freed "ladies of colour," own a slave or two.

Aside from such calls, Barbara fills her days painting (a good way to meet the curious) and walking the by-ways of the town to visit schools, black churches, and slave auctions. And always she is testing what she has read and what she has been told against what she observes and hears. The paper ends with her account of a last slave auction, one she characteristically attends alone, going around the corner to talk to the women waiting to be sold. She does not color her report; the atmosphere sickens not because of any particular brutality, but because people are treated as things. As the young man in her lodging house says, "they sell them just like so many rocking chairs."

Isabella Bird: A Victorian Lady as Western Heroine

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Department of English

Isabella Bird, a Yorkshire cleric's dutiful daughter, began traveling when she was in her forties. After her parents' deaths, her own health declined, and, with a modest income, she followed her doctor's advice of a change of scene and found a new purpose in life. After her first trip in 1872, Isabella became a professional traveler and travel writer and never looked back. With an eye to commercial success that would finance further travels, Bird wrote in the popular idiom that emphasized the sights rather than the viewer. She nonetheless transcended the conventions of that genre to achieve the scope that has characterized the best literary travel narratives: A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains, a narrative as a reflection of its author's state of mind, takes as its subject not the American West, but Isabella Bird in the American West.

Although her observations appear, at times, perfunctory, predictable, or even suspect, the celebration of herself as independent heroine of her story is authentic. That she was able to escape the censure of reviewers or the public is a measure of Bird's skill in creating a persona that balanced unshakeable respectability with frankly thrilling possibilities. After establishing her credentials as a discerning lady with commentary on Western civilization, manners, and morals worthy of Mrs. Trollope, Isabella shifts her attention to the exhilaration of the natural American West, and, in turn, she appropriates the myth of the Western hero for her own enactment.

A Victorian gentlewoman who wears her gentility as armor can learn to shoot, travel alone on horseback through the Rockies, herd cattle, and take up residence as the only woman in an isolated community of men with impunity. Her consummate faith that a lady will always be treated as a lady gives Bird license to experience anything that interests her, to test her physical limits, and to please herself in circumstances that would be unthinkable in Yorkshire--

all with the assurance that right conduct and right principles absolve adventure of any apparent compromise. She adapts easily to life in the mountains, stays long enough to make her influence felt, then, like the Western hero, ruefully acquiesces to the inner drive to move on.

Both the formulaic Western pattern and the conventional travel narrative are driven forward, not by the promise of the next novelty to be registered by the traveler, but by the needs of a psychological state that spoke directly to the reader. Paul Fussell identifies lust as an impetus to 20th-century British literary travelers between the wars. Although Bird had less freedom to formulate that motivation, a great many coded variations on the theme appear as structuring principles to her story. The lust for adventure and physical testing are certainly components, but the continuance of the narrative and the trip is figured largely by her response to the sublime in nature. Hardships or flagging spirits that might threaten to send her back to England are always overcome by the promise of the wilderness and a thrilling and terrifyingly sublime landscape.

At the center of the narrative, the attraction of the sublime in nature is displaced by the sublime in the person of the notorious desperado, Rocky Mountain Jim. Jim's dual nature is made explicit: One half of his face is handsome, blue-eyed, angelic; the other is horribly disfigured from an incident in his past. Isabella nurtures his poetic, gentle nature that repents of his deeds, while she is sublimely fascinated by the potential of his dark moods. The stories of his past form "one of the darkest tales of ruin I have ever heard or read."

Isabella is the embodiment of high-minded yet feeling Victorian principles and values. Only the virtues of the good woman could have saved Jim, and those same virtues are the first necessity to sustain women settlers in their hard lives. Isabella, however, chooses rather firmly not to succumb to creating as a duty for herself the fulfillment of either role. She is the Victorian lady transformed to the Western hero who chooses, instead, to move on.

Isabella Bird's narrative offers description and critique that conform to a standard catalog of observations on the West: her sense of settlers, mining towns, Indians, Mormons, lawlessness and violence, accommodations and modes of travel deliver the flavor of the West distilled by a discriminating Victorian taste. At the same time, she extends to her readers the excitement and the reassurance of the possibility of the proper Victorian lady finding independence, adventure, and the freedom for self-creation, not by casting off the values of gentility, but precisely by the agency of those virtues. The mantle of serene and confident principles both protects her and makes available and acceptable a widely expanded range of experience and encounter.

SECOND SATURDAY SESSION: "The Fine Arts Abroad"

The Victorian Grand Tour: A School for the High Arts

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The tradition of the "Grand Tour," an extended sojourn on the continent to view the monuments of European high culture, may be traced to sixteenth-century England, when Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, made a journey to Italy to study the ruins of classical antiquity. In subsequent centuries, the Grand Tour became the mark of the cultured gentleman, that finishing touch to a complete education, distinguishing the traveler as a man of taste. The value of serious sightseeing to an artist's education was recognized early in the tradition, when Howard invited Inigo Jones to join him on a journey to Italy. By the eighteehth century, the importance of this pilgrimage, particularly for the young artist, was indisputable. The Tour, embarked upon at the conclusion of formal education, generally in the company of a tutor, could last from months to years, and was regarded as the rite of passage to taste. By mid-century, artists such as Joshua Reynolds, Benjamin West, James Barry and Joseph Wright of Derby, flocked to Italy, to study the remnents of classical culture, in the light of the writings of Johann Joachim Winkelmann.

The French campaigns into Italy at the end of the eighteenth century temporarily broke the tradition. When the Grand Tour resumed in the 1820s, the objects of attention had changed. Reynolds' generation crossed the Alps to view the antique world. The statues and buildings of ancient Greece, and to a lesser extent Republican Rome, were the primary objects of study. By the 1820s the emphasis had shifted away from the antique to Renaissance, and the frescoes of Raphael supplanted the Hellenistic statues in the Vatican collection, as prototypes of ideal form for study and emulation. Of equal importance was the work of the German Nazarenes, modern, expatriate painters who had successfully mounted a full-scale revival of fresco painting in the style of Raphael. When the young English painter arrived in Rome in the 1820s, he sought out the Nazarene masters, and through them, came to the works of Raphael.

This newly focused Grand Tour was an essential part of the education of three major figures in the Victorian art world. Charles Eastlake, who served as Secretary of the Fine Arts Commission in the 1840s and eventually became Director of the National Gallery and the President of the Royal Academy of arts, traveled to Italy in 1821 and stayed through the duration of the decade. William Dyce, the favored painter of the monarchy and the most influential history painter in early Victorian England, made three Tours, in 1825, in 1827 and in 1832. The young Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, destined to be the most generous patron of the arts in the history of the British monarchy, also experienced the Grand Tour. Albert enjoyed his journey, an engagement present from his father, during the years 1838 to 1839, and he regarded it as an important step in his preparations for the assumption of his position as Consort to the Queen of England. In the 1840s, the taste of the Prince, Dyce and Eastlake left an indelible mark of the history of British art. Under the auspices of the Fine Arts Commission they mounted a grand scheme for fresco painting in the new Palace of Westminister, a program of history paintings that exhibits an unprecedented continental influence. The sources for these works were their respective Grand Tours, and study of their journeys abroad are the key to understanding the history of the high arts in early Victorian England.

The Outsiders: Late Victorian Painters in France

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In recent years Victorian art historical scholarship has focused attention on the complex cross-currents of late nineteenth-century painting. Because the traffic of artists from Britain to the continent was greater at the end of the century than at any other time in the Queen's reign, one central concern of the late Victorian art world was the impact of continental artistic ideas on English art. During the 1880s foreign-influenced works became increasingly visible at the London exhibitions with significant repercussions for English art and the art establishment.

By the late 1870s ambitious young English painters were choosing a new pattern for their art education. After a few years of study in one of England's numerous art schools, they then headed for the continent, Antwerp and Paris in particular. As Anna Gruetzner correctly observes, the verbal laments and fears about this exodus to foreign soils did not begin until the trickle had swelled to a stream in the early 1880s (Royal Academy of Art, London, Post-Impressionism, 178). The Royal Academy Schools received the brunt of the blame but the causes could more accurately have been sought in wider issues. In truth, Paris had become the focus of the European art world and the French atelier system the exemplary method of training. The artists' experiences in France and their reactions to the atelier, student life and contemporary art movements are the focus of this paper. Of special concern are a core of less well-known genre painters whose interest in the work of selected European naturalist painters and whose adoption of certain foreign stylistic traits and aims helped to lower the psychological barriers which had blocked English artists from learning from and being stimulated by the contemporary art of other nations.

A foreign sojourn placed new demands on the English painters. For the first time in their careers, they became members of an international population of students. Whether in the crowded Parisian ateliers, or in the student hotels and cafes, or in the remote rural villages of Brittany and Normandy, English artists lived and worked in close proximity with students of diverse nationalities. Despite their penchant for socializing primarily with countrymen, their circles of friends became considerably more heterogeneous than they would have in London. As a result the English students' parochial attitudes weakened and their understanding of cultures unlike their own broadened. Foreign-trained students later established the British Colonial Society of Artists and demonstrated their desire to lessen their countrymen's ethnocentric attitude toward cultural endeavors and increase communication with the empire's artistic community.

The English students' choices of foreign teachers tells us a great deal about their original artistic goals. Though they did improve their technical proficiency in drawing and painting, as they had hoped, the English students soon realized that their Parisian education had other equally important benefits. The reward for suffering through the atelier's rite de passage was to become a member of a motley but cohesive group who provided advice, practical assistance and companionship. This aspect of atelier life greatly appealed to the English students as it contrasted with their own educational system's isolation of the individual and class

consciousness. Also the atelier exercises were not contributing significantly to the formation of their mature styles and subjects as they might have expected. The students' true education was coming from each other, especially the other English speakers, and exposure to the Parisian exhibitions and museums.

Like their French peers they came to admire and then emulate the work of a few highly visible and much discussed contemporary painters, i.e. Jules Bastien-Lepage, Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret, Jean Cazin, and Pierre Puvis de Chavannes. Rural life, plein airisme, tonalism, these were the subjects which engrossed the early 1880s generation of Parisian art students. During the summer months, when the ateliers closed, the students flocked to villages in Normandy and Brittany to paint rural subjects from life in the open air.

Assuming they would return home when their studies were completed, the English students tried to cultivate a domestic market for their finished work by sending it to British exhibitions. The critics and Royal Academicians often responded negatively to their French-inspired naturalism and as a result, in 1886, the young Englishmen founded the New English Art Club to provide a separate exhibition space for their work. The NEAC thus joined the Grosvenor Gallery and the New Gallery in seriously challenging the hegemony of the Royal Academy. By 1889, however, reviewers noted that the academicians no longer visually dominated the annual Royal Academy exhibitions. The outsiders, as they were called, rivalled them with their original compositions and techniques. By adopting English subjects, avoiding sensitive political and social issues and promoting a healthy and nostalgic vision of rural life, the French-trained painters balanced their desire to modernize with acceptable, patriotic content. The authenticity viewers thought they perceived in Newlyn work in particular was recognized as a welcome breath of fresh air from abroad.

Lockwood Kipling, Sculptor in India

Barbara Groseclose
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Department of Art History

The first trained British sculptor to produce a church monument in Inida was Lockwood Kipling (1837-1911), who came to Bombay in 1865 as a professor of architectural sculpture in the Sir Jamjetsee Jeehjeebhoy School of Art. He spent most of the last decade of the nineteenth century as principal of the art school at Lahore and curator of the museum there. In addition to the church monument, which includes a relief of Hindus and Moslems depicted without the idealization or orientalizing normally applied to such subjects by European artists, Kipling executed only one other public sculpture in India. This work, a pair of reliefs for the Crawford Market in central Bombay, likewise features a careful observation of Indian life, using naturalistically treated figures. (Among western art historians today, Kipling is known solely for the illustrations he created for his son Rudyard's books.)

The sculptures Kipling carved in India, notable for naturalness and absence of bias, differ strongly from the prose he wrote there and from the personal attitude he espoused all his life. In the latter instances, Kipling manifested all the imperialism and racism for which his son has been so frequently excoriated in this century. How does one reconcile the Kipling who produced the Bombay sculptures with the Kipling who advocated "severe repression" of any Indians daring to ask for independence? Kipling's visualizations of Indian life are true to the superficialities

but devoid of empathy because he lived a true Anglo-Indian life: to rule India, the British needed to remain strangers, to be tourists in the country they paradoxically called their own. Of necessity, Anglo-Indian life promoted ambivalence. Lockwood Kipling exemplified it.

LUNCHEON ADDRESS

English Arts and Crafts in Europe: The Case of Darmstadt

Peter Stansky
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Department of History

This slide presentation deals with the influence of William Morris on the Continent, and, after an initial overview of Morris's own work, focuses on the specific case of the capital city of the Principality of Hesse in Germany.

Princess Alice, daughter of Queen Victoria, married the Grand Duke of Hesse and it was their son, Ernst Ludwig, who was interested in the arts very much in the style of an English gentleman, with much greater resources. He supported all the arts, including theatre, music and printing--founding a press similar to the Doves Press--but this paper concentrates on his interest in architecture and design. He commissioned M. H. Baillie Scott to design rooms for his Darmstadt town palace and the furniture for the rooms was also designed and totally built by the Guild of Handicraft, headed by C. R. Ashbee, a leading disciple of Morris's. These designs were very much in the Arts & Crafts tradition. So too, but with allowance made for the Scottish influence, were the great designs of the unexecuted building for the House of a Lover of Art, done by both Baillie Scott and Charles Rennie Mackintosh. These designs became very well known on the Continent and popularized the English traditions of the Arts & Crafts.

In another way, Darmstadt acted as a focus for English Arts & Crafts influence. Ashbee and Mackintosh had been very popular in Vienna, exhibiting at the Secession. The architect of the Secession building, Josef Olbrich, came to Darmstadt as the builder of an artistic colony. Peter Behrens also began his wide ranging artistic career in Darmstadt at this time. This brief case study attempts to demonstrate a link in the modern movement, to use Pevsner's phrase, "from Morris to Gropius," and also to suggest that the Arts & Crafts movement contains both the seeds of modernism as well as its antidote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE VICTORIANS INSTITUTE

The Annual Meeting of The Victorians Institute will be held Saturday, October 18, 1986 at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia. The theme is "Religion and Literature in Victorian England" and the featured speaker will be Jerome J. McGann, talking on Christina Rossetti. For further

information, contact Professor Terry L. Meyers, English Department, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA 23185.

A CONFERENCE ON VICTORIA'S JUBILEES: CALL FOR PAPERS

"Victoria's Jubilees, 1887, 1897: A Centennial Reconsideration" is the theme of a conference to be presented by the Division of Continuing Education, University of Kansas, Lawrence, on March 26-28, 1987. Papers are invited from many disciplines: English literature; women's studies; Irish studies; history, including intellectual and social; popular culture; theatre; and history of art, music, or science. Papers should run no more than twenty minutes' reading time. Send 500-word abstracts before September 1, 1986 to Professor Harold Orel, Department of English, 2041 Wescoe, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045.

MEDIEVALISM CONFERENCE AT NOTRE DAME

A general conference on medievalism will be held at the University of Notre Dame on October 23-25, 1986; papers will deal with varied aspects of medievalism from the end of the Middle Ages to the present day. Although the deadline for paper submissions has passed, information about the meeting itself can be provided by Leslie J. Workman, editor of the sponsoring journal Studies in Medievalism; write her at 530 College Avenue, Holland, MI 49423 before August 15.

NEW CENTRE FOR URBAN HISTORY AT LEICESTER

Victorianists will be interested to learn of the recent establishment of The Centre for Urban History at the University of Leicester, already the site of the flourishing Victorian Studies Centre. Designed as an interdisciplinary research institute, the Centre brings together scholars of urban development in Britain and Europe from classical times to the 20th century for seminars, workshops, and independent research. Inquiries should be sent to Peter Clark, Economic and Social History Department, Attenborough Building, University of Leicester, Leicester, LE1 7RH, U.K. A footnote: The newest volume of the Urban History Yearbook contains a three-page account of MVSA's 9th Annual Meeting last year in Chicago on "Victorians at Home." For information, contact the Leicester University Press.

WHY EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES GET GRAY, or THE CASE OF THE PURLOINED PAGE

When the 1985-86 MVSA Directory was reproduced last February, the second page under individual listings of members was inadvertently omitted. Attached to this Newsletter is the missing page, which you can slip into your own directory. Apologies of the abject variety to Eugene R. August, Lee C.R. Baker, James J. Barnes, Carol E. Bastian, and Cynthia F. Behrman for this error, which, alas, cannot be blamed on a computer.