

Program Brief

**“THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE: THE EARLY
YEARS” and “TRYING OUT *THE SCARLET
LETTER*: HAWTHORNE’S RAW
MATERIALS”**

Lectures by

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Courses Taught

Spring 2004 - ENGL 310: American Fiction, 1860-1910
Winter 2004 - ENGL 754: Approaches to American Realism (Topic: Race, Class, Gender, and Money)
Winter 2003 - ENGC 800: Contexts for Literary Study
Fall 2002 - ENGL 401: Huck Finn and His Tradition

Recent Publications

Books

Henry James and the Suspense of Masculinity. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.
Roman Holidays: American Writers and Artists in Nineteenth-Century Italy. Co-edited with Robert K. Martin. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2002.
Aesthetic Headaches: Women and a Masculine Poetics in Poe, Melville, and Hawthorne. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988.

Forthcoming

The Scarlet Letter and Other Writings. Norton Critical Edition. New York: W. W. Norton, 2004.

Special Issues

Co-editor (with Teresa A. Goddu). *The Scarlet Letter after 150 Years. Studies in American Fiction* 29 (Spring 2001).

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Articles

"Hawthorne's Early Tales: Male Authorship, Domestic Violence, and Female Readers," *Hawthorne Bicentennial Essays*, ed. Millicent Bell (Columbus: Ohio State UP, forthcoming).

"Steinbeck's Queer Ecology: Sweet Comradship in the Monterey Novels," *Steinbeck Studies* 15 (Spring 2004): 7-21.

"Falling into Heterosexuality: Sculpting Male Bodies in *The Marble Faun* and *Roderick Hudson*," *Roman Holidays: American Writers and Artists in Nineteenth-Century Italy* (Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 2002), 107-39.

"Still Me(n): Superman Meets The Bostonians," *Henry James Goes to the Movies*, ed. Susan M. Griffin (Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 2002), 99-124.

"The Golden Film: Charlotte Stant and the Palace Guards," *Henry James Review* 23 (Winter 2002): 25-37.

"Poe's Philosophy of Amalgamation: Reading Racism in the Tales," *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race*, ed. J. Gerald Kennedy and Liliane Weissberg (New York: Oxford UP, 2001), 205-24.

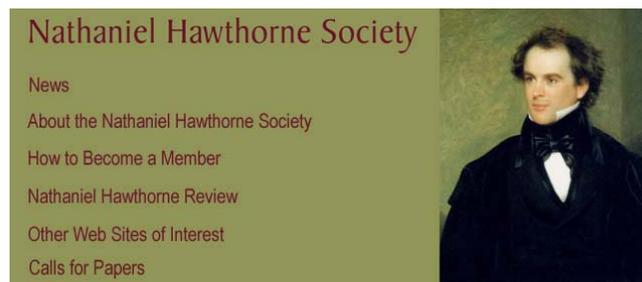
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"Poe and Nineteenth-Century Gender Constructions," *A Historical Guide to Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. J. Gerald Kennedy (New York: Oxford UP, 2000), 129-65.

"Jamesian Sadomasochism: The Invisible (Third) Hand of Manhood in *The Golden Bowl*," *Questioning the Master: Gender and Sexuality in Henry James's Writings*, ed. Peggy McCormack (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2000), 149-75.

"Missing Letters: Hawthorne, Melville, and Scholarly Desire" (with Robert K. Martin), *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance* 46 (2000): 99-122."



<http://asweb.artsci.uc.edu/english/HawthorneSociety/nh.html>



Courtesy of USIA

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Source: *Encyclopedia of World Biography*, 2nd ed. 17 Vols. Gale Research, 1998.

BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

The work of American fiction writer Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) was based on the history of his Puritan ancestors and the New England of his own day but, in its "power of blackness," has universal significance.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in Salem, Mass., on July 4, 1804, into the sixth generation of his Salem family. His ancestors included Puritan magnates, judges, and seamen. Two aspects of his heritage were especially to affect his imagination. The Hathornes (Nathaniel added the "w" to the name) had been involved in religious persecution with their first American forebear, William, and John Hathorne was one of the three judges at the 17th-century Salem witchcraft trials. Further, the family had over the generations gradually declined from its early prominence and prosperity into relative obscurity and indigence. Thus the Pyncheons and the Maules of Hawthorne's Salem novel *The House of the Seven Gables* represent the two different faces of his ancestors, and his feelings about his birthplace were mixed. With deep and unbreakable ties to Salem, he nevertheless found its physical and cultural environment as chilly as its prevalent east wind.

Early Life and Education

Nathaniel's father, a sea captain, died in 1808, leaving his wife and three children dependent on relatives. Nathaniel, the only son, spent his early years in Salem and in Maine. A leg injury immobilized the boy for a considerable period, during which he developed an exceptional taste for reading and contemplation. His childhood was calm, a little isolated but far from unhappy, especially since as a handsome and attractive only son he was idolized by his mother and his two sisters.

With the aid of his prosperous maternal uncles, the Mannings, Hawthorne attended Bowdoin College from 1821 to 1825, when he graduated. Among his classmates were poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; Franklin Pierce, the future president of the United States, who was to be at his friend's deathbed; and Horatio Bridge, who was to subsidize the publication of Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales* in 1837. At Bowdoin, Hawthorne read widely and received solid instruction in English composition and the classics, particularly in Latin. His persistent refusal to engage in public speaking prevented his achieving any marked academic distinction, but he made a creditable record. On one occasion he was fined 50 cents for gambling at cards, but his conduct was not otherwise singled out for official disapproval. Though small and isolated, the Bowdoin of the 1820s was an unusually good college, and Hawthorne undoubtedly profited by his formal education, as well as making steadfast friends. Such men as Longfellow, Pierce, and Bridge remained devoted to him throughout life, and each would render him timely assistance.

Years as a Recluse

Hawthorne's life was not externally exciting or remarkable, but it presents an interesting symbolic pattern. As John Keats said of Shakespeare, he led a life of allegory and his works are the comments on it. Returning from Bowdoin, Hawthorne spent from 1825 to 1837 in his mother's Salem household. Later he looked back upon these years as a period of dreamlike isolation and solitude, spent in a haunted chamber, where he sat enchanted while other men moved on. The "solitary years" were, however, his literary apprenticeship, during which he learned to write tales and sketches that are still unrivaled and unique.

Recent biographers have shown that this period of Hawthorne's life was less lonely than he remembered it to be. In literal truth, he did have social engagements, played cards, and went to the theater and the Lyceum; his sister Elizabeth remarked that "if there was any gathering of people in the town he always went out; he liked a crowd." Nevertheless, he consistently remembered these 12 years as a strange, dark dream, though his view of their consequences varied.

"In this dismal chamber Fame was won," Hawthorne wrote, perhaps a little ironically, in 1836. To his fiancée, Sophia Peabody, he later confided, "If ever I should have a biographer, he ought to make great mention of this chamber in my memoirs, because so much of my lonely youth was wasted here, and here my mind and character were formed."

On the whole, he felt that his isolation had been beneficial: " ... if I had sooner made my escape into the world, I should have grown hard and rough, and been covered with earthly dust, and my heart would have become callous by rude encounters with the multitude"--an observation that he made more than once.

Writing the Short Stories

Most of Hawthorne's early stories were published anonymously in magazines and giftbooks. In his own words, he was "for a good many years, the obscurest man of letters in America." In 1837 the publication of *Twice-Told Tales* somewhat lifted this spell of darkness. In the preface to the 1851 edition he spoke of "the apparently opposite peculiarities" of these stories. Despite the circumstances under which they were written, "they are not the talk of a secluded man with his own mind and heart ... but his attempts, and very imperfectly successful ones, to open an intercourse with the world." The *Twice-Told Tales* he supplemented with two later collections, *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846) and *The Snow-Image* (1851), along with *Grandfather's Chair* (1841), a history for children of New England through the Revolution; the *Journal of an African Cruiser* (1845), edited from the observations of his friend Horatio Bridge while he was purser on an American frigate; and the second edition of the *Tales* (1842).

Hawthorne's short stories came slowly but steadily into critical favor, and the best of them have become American classics. It may well be claimed for them as a whole that they are the outstanding achievement in their genre to be found in the English language during the 19th century. Lucid, graceful, and well composed, they combine an old-fashioned neoclassic purity of diction with a latent and hard complexity of meaning. They are broadly allegorical but infused with imaginative passion. The combination has produced very different opinions of their value, which Hawthorne himself acutely foresaw, remarking that his touches "have often an effect of tameness," and that his work, "if you would see anything in it, requires to be read in the clear, brown, twilight atmosphere in which it was written; if opened in the sunshine, it is apt to look exceedingly like a volume of blank pages" (1851 Preface, *Twice-Told Tales*).

Hawthorne is a master of balance and suggestion who inveterately understates: the texture of his tales, as of his novels, is so delicate that some readers cannot see it at all. But many, too, will testify as Herman Melville did to his "power of blackness." Of Hawthorne's story "Young Goodman Brown," Melville wrote, "You would of course suppose that it was a simple little tale.... Whereas it is as deep as Dante: nor can you finish it, without addressing the author in his own words: 'It is yours to penetrate, in every bosom, the deep mystery of sin.'"

Out in the World

By his own account it was Hawthorne's love of his Salem neighbor Sophia Peabody that brought him from his "haunted chamber" out into the world. His books were far from profitable enough to support a prospective wife and family, so in 1838 he went to work in the Boston Custom House and then spent part of 1841 in the famous Brook Farm community in hopes of finding a pleasant and economical haven for Sophia and himself.

It is curious that the seclusive Hawthorne was always interested in experiments in community living: in Brook Farm, in the New England Shaker settlements, and later in Greenwich Hospital in London. He was to record his mingled feelings of sympathy and skepticism about Brook Farm in *The Blithedale Romance* (1852).

At any rate, Hawthorne and Sophia, whom he married in 1842, resorted not to Brook Farm but to the Old Manse in Concord, where they spent several years of idyllic happiness in as much solitude as they could achieve. Concord, however, contained Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Ellery Channing, and Hawthorne was in frequent contact with these important thinkers, though his was not a nature for transcendental affirmations.

Writing the Novels

Facing the world once more, Hawthorne obtained in 1846 the position of surveyor in the Salem Custom House, from which as a Democrat he was expelled after the Whig victory in the 1848 presidential election. He did not leave without a fight and considerable bitterness, and he took revenge in the "Custom-House" introduction to *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and in *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), in which he portrayed his chief Whig enemy as the harsh and hypocritical Judge Pyncheon. His dismissal, however, turned out to be a blessing, since it gave him leisure in which to write his greatest and crucial success, *The Scarlet Letter*. Except for his early *Fanshawe* (1828), which he suppressed shortly after publication, *The Scarlet Letter* was his first novel, or, as he preferred to say, "romance"; thus his literary career divided into two distinct parts, since he now almost wholly abandoned the shorter tale.

The period 1850-1853 was Hawthorne's most prolific. Doubtless stimulated by the enthusiastic reception accorded *The Scarlet Letter*, he went on with *The House of the Seven Gables* and *The Blithedale Romance*, along with *A Wonder Book* (1852) and *Tanglewood Tales* (1853), exquisitely fanciful stories for children from Greek mythology. During 1850 the Hawthornes lived at the Red House in Lenox in the Berkshire Hills, and Hawthorne formed a memorable friendship with novelist Herman Melville, whose Arrowhead Farm was some miles away on the outskirts of Pittsfield. The association was more important to Melville than to Hawthorne, since Melville was 15 years younger and much the more impressionable of the two men. It left its mark in Melville's celebrated review of *Mosses from an Old Manse*, in the dedication of his *Moby-Dick*, and in some wonderful letters. Hawthorne's share in their correspondence has not survived, but he clearly aided Melville with insight and sympathy.

Years Abroad

In 1852 Franklin Pierce was elected to the presidency of the United States, and Hawthorne, who was induced to write his campaign biography, was appointed to the important overseas post of American consul at Liverpool, in which he served from 1853 to 1857 with considerable efficiency. These English years resulted in *Our Old Home* (1863), a volume drawn from the since-published "English Note-Books."

It was to give considerable offense to the English public. Hawthorne felt a very deep affinity for "our old home," but as with his other "old home," Salem, his feelings were mingled, and he did not hesitate to express them.

In 1857 the Hawthornes left England for Italy, where they spent their time primarily in Rome and Florence. They returned to England, where Hawthorne finished his last and longest complete novel, the "Roman romance" *The Marble Faun* (1860). They finally returned to the United States, after an absence of seven years, and took up residence in their first permanent home, The Wayside, at Concord, which Hawthorne had bought from Bronson Alcott.

Last Years

Hawthorne was to live only four more years. Although he had always been an exceptionally vigorous man, his health inexplicably declined; and since he refused to submit to any thorough medical examination, his malady remains mysterious. During these last years in Concord he struggled with no less than four romances, *The Ancestral Footstep*, *Dr. Grimshawe's Secret*, *Septimius Felton*, and *The Dolliver Romance*, but completed none of them. Ironically, they are obsessively concerned with the theme of "earthly immortality" and the "elixir of life," which he had earlier touched upon in stories like "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" (*Twice-Told Tales*).

Hawthorne died on May 19, 1864. He had set off for the New Hampshire hills with Franklin Pierce. He had always been fond of such expeditions and hoped to benefit from this one. But he died the second night out in Plymouth, N.H., presumably in his sleep. The circumstances of his end were somehow representative of the man, at once settled and at the same time restless when too long in one place. He once said that New England was enough to fill his heart, yet he sought the broader experience of Europe. Modest in expectations, he had yet desired to live fully.

Hawthorne's Literary Background

The case of Hawthorne is complex, in his life and in his writings. A born writer, like Edgar Allan Poe he suffered the difficulties of the writer in early-19th-century America: an unsympathetic environment, the materialism of a physically expanding nation, the lack of an artistic tradition. His Puritan heritage was both a support and a drawback. Its tradition of soul-searching encouraged profundity, and its penchant for seeking God's Providence in natural events provided Hawthorne with a way of seeing and interpreting. It was a highly literate tradition as well. It was, however, notoriously unfriendly to art--fiction as make-believe was mere vanity, and as imitation of God's creatures and creations it was idolatry. A natural artist, Hawthorne was always to worry about the morality of imitating and analyzing human nature in his art of fiction.

With his Puritanism, Hawthorne also inherited the Augustan culture of the early 18th century--a common case in New England, but especially powerful in his. Thus came the purity of his prose style, and its coolness and balance, in a sense retrogressive in his own time. Yet he was also responsive to the influence of his near contemporaries, the English romantics.

He read widely and was vitally influenced by all the chief romantic poets, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and John Keats. Hawthorne drew especially upon Coleridge's critical principles for his own theory of the prose romance. Like the romantics, he too desired to live fully and make the best use of his sensibilities, but his impulses were tempered by Augustan moderation and Puritan self-distrust.

A serious and conscientious craftsman, Hawthorne yet was not committed (as was Henry James) to the craft of fiction, not being minded to sacrifice either himself or those who depended upon him to its demands. He held a rather too pessimistic view of his own talent, and his deep Puritan skepticism of the value of merely human effort was also a deterrent to complete dedication to fiction; the volume of his writing is substantial but not great.

Power of Darkness

Hawthorne's belief in Providence could be discouraging, but it was also a source of strength. Along with Melville, he was one of the great "no-sayers" of 19th-century America. He accepted, imaginatively if not literally, the doctrine of the Fall of Man, and thus the radical imperfection of man. In his work there is as much light as darkness, but the dark is perhaps the more dramatic hue. In imaginative literature evil can be an esthetic element with the dark as a contrast to light; and Hawthorne used contrast so effectively that Henry James believed his "darkness" to be mere fanciful playing, with evil and pain used simply as counters in his fictional game. Melville, however, perceived more deeply that Hawthorne might be fascinated with the problem of evil as an element of his design, yet at the same time treat it with the utmost seriousness ("Hawthorne and his Mosses").

Tragedy is traditionally the most complex literary form, while it is also an imaginative testing ground, in which the human spirit is broadened and deepened by its struggle with the utmost imaginable adversity. In *The Scarlet Letter*, for example, the protagonists Hester and Dimmesdale are opposed not only by Puritan society but by something in themselves, and by a mysterious and invisible principle of reality still more powerful.

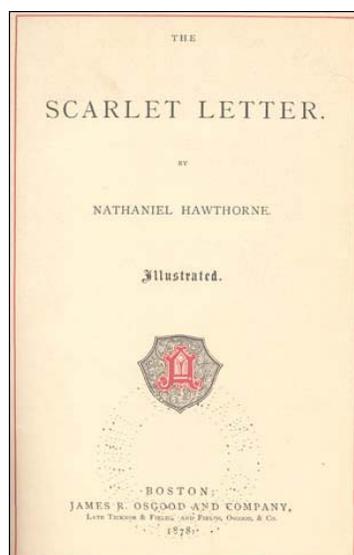
Allegorical Structures and Themes

Hawthorne's fictional structures are basically allegorical confrontations of good and evil, and his characters can usually be classified as types. He writes, however, not to prove points or teach moral lessons, which are themselves his fictional materials rather than his conclusions. *The House of the Seven Gables*, for instance, has a message, "the truth, namely, that the wrongdoing of one generation lives into the successive ones, and, divesting itself of every temporary advantage, becomes a pure and uncontrollable mischief." But Hawthorne reflects that when romances do teach anything, "it is usually through a far more subtle process than the ostensible one.... A high truth, indeed, fairly, finely, and skillfully wrought out, brightening at every step, and crowning the final development of a work of fiction, may add an artistic glory, but is never any truer, and seldom any more evident, at the last page than at the first" (Preface, *The House of the Seven Gables*).

Isolation or "alienation" is Hawthorne's principal theme and problem, and loss of contact with reality is the ultimate penalty he envisions. Characteristically, this results from a separation of the "head," or intellect, and the "heart," a term that includes the emotions, the passions, and the unconscious. The heart is the custodian of man's deepest potentialities for good and evil, and it is man's vital connection with reality. Too much "head" leads always to a fatal intellectual pride, which distorts and finally destroys the wholeness of the real world. This, for Hawthorne, is the worst sin or calamity that man is heir to.

FURTHER READINGS

- Randall Stewart, *Nathaniel Hawthorne* (1948), is the standard biography. Newton Arvin, *Hawthorne* (1929), contains criticism and psychological analysis. Mark Van Doren, *Nathaniel Hawthorne* (1949), presents a balanced interpretation of Hawthorne's life and principal works. Older works include Henry James, Jr., *Hawthorne* (1879).
- Notable treatments of Hawthorne's art in its historical and national contexts appear in Yvor Winters, *Maule's Curse: Seven Studies in the History of American Obscurantism* (1938); F. O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* (1941); Charles Feidelson, Jr., *Symbolism and American Literature* (1953); and Richard Chase, *The American Novel and Its Tradition* (1957), which is illuminating on the tradition of "romance" in America.
- More specialized interpretations of Hawthorne's fiction are Richard Harter Fogle, *Hawthorne's Fiction: The Light and the Dark* (1952, rev. ed. 1964) and *Hawthorne's Imagery* (1969); Hyatt H. Waggoner, *Hawthorne: A Critical Study* (1955, rev. ed. 1963); and Roy R. Male, *Hawthorne's Tragic Vision* (1957).



Source: <http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/images/image.php?name=MMD1184>
Courtesy of [Peabody Essex Museum](http://www.pem.org) (<http://www.pem.org>)

The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. 2001

(<http://www.bartleby.com/65/pu/Puritani.html>)

PURITANISM

in the 16th and 17th cent., a movement for reform in the Church of England that had a profound influence on the social, political, ethical, and theological ideas of England and America.

Origins

Historically Puritanism began early (c.1560) in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I as a movement for religious reform. The early Puritans felt that the Elizabethan ecclesiastical establishment was too political, too compromising, and too Catholic in its liturgy, vestments, and episcopal hierarchy. Calvinist in theology, they stressed PREDESTINATION¹ and demanded scriptural warrant for all details of public worship. They believed that the Scriptures did not sanction the setting up of bishops and churches by the state. The aim of the early Puritans such as Thomas Cartwright was to purify the church (hence their name), not to separate from it. However, by 1567 a small group of lay rigorists was discovered meeting secretly in London to worship after the pattern of the service of the church in Geneva.

Branches

Although Puritans believed that if they searched the Scriptures long enough they would eventually agree, they early differed on the nature of the church polity advised in the Bible. The parish was the unit of the Puritan church; the parochial group of church members elected ministers. The main body of Puritans, the Presbyterians (see PRESBYTERIANISM²), favored a central church government, whereas the SEPARATISTS³, INDEPENDENTS⁴ or Congregationalists (see CONGREGATIONALISM⁵), defined the church as any autonomous congregation of believers, emphasized the point that one could arrive at one's own conclusions in religion, and opposed a national, comprehensive church.

Persecution and Emigration

During the reign of James I, the Presbyterian majority unsuccessfully attempted to impose their ideas on the established English church at the Hampton Court Conference (1604). The result was mutual disaffection and a persecution of the Puritans, particularly by Archbishop William Laud, that brought about Puritan migration to Europe and America

¹ see footnote on p. 13

² see footnote on p. 13ff

³ see footnote on p. 15

⁴ see footnote on p. 15f

⁵ see footnote on p. 16f

(see MAYFLOWER⁶). Those groups that remained in England grew as a political party and rose to their greatest power between 1640 and 1660 as a result of the English civil war; during that period the Independents gained dominance. The great Puritan apologist of this period was John Milton. During the Restoration the Puritans were oppressed under the Clarendon Code (1661–65), which secured the episcopal character of the Established Church and, in effect, cast the Puritans out of the Church of England. From this time they were known as NONCONFORMISTS⁷.

Influence on American Society

In New England, in the Puritan “Holy Commonwealth,” some 35 churches had been formed by 1640. The Puritans in New England maintained the Calvinist distinction between the elect and the damned in their theory of the church, in which membership consisted only of the regenerate minority who publicly confessed their experience of conversion. Ministers had great political influence, and civil authorities exercised a large measure of control over church affairs. The CAMBRIDGE PLATFORM⁸ (1648) expressed the Puritan position on matters of church government and discipline. To the Puritans, a person by nature was wholly sinful and could achieve good only by severe and unremitting discipline. Hard work was considered a religious duty and emphasis was laid on constant self-examination and self-discipline. Although profanation of the Sabbath day, blasphemy, fornication, drunkenness, playing games of chance, and participation in theatrical performances were penal offenses, the severity of the code of behavior of the early Puritans is often exaggerated.

In 1662 it was made easier for the unregenerate majority to become church members in Massachusetts by the adoption of the HALF-WAY COVENANT⁹. Clerical power was lessened by the expansion of New England and the opening of frontier settlements filled with colonists who were resourceful, secular, and engaged in a struggle to adapt to a difficult environment. In 1692 in Massachusetts a new charter expressed the change from a theocratic to a political, secular state; suffrage was stripped of religious qualifications.

After the 17th cent. the Puritans as a political entity largely disappeared, but Puritan attitudes and ethics continued to exert an influence on American society. They made a virtue of qualities that made for economic success—self-reliance, frugality, industry, and energy—and through them influenced modern social and economic life. Their concern for education was important in the development of the United States, and the idea of congregational democratic church government was carried into the political life of the state as a source of modern democracy. Prominent figures in New England Puritanism include Thomas Hooker, John Cotton, Roger Williams, Increase Mather, and Cotton Mather.

⁶ see footnote on p. 17
⁷ see footnote on p. 17f
⁸ see footnote on p. 18
⁹ see footnote on p. 18

Bibliography

See P. Miller, *The New England Mind* (2 vol., 1939–53); E. S. Morgan, *Visible Saints* (1965); J. E. C. Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (2d ed. 1967); H. C. Porter, *Puritanism in Tudor England* (1970); C. L. Cohen, *God's Caress: The Psychology of Puritan Religious Experience* (1986); C. E. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety* (1986); S. Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1570–1700* (1991).

FOOTNOTES

¹ PREDESTINATION

in theology, doctrine that asserts that God predestines from eternity the salvation of certain souls. So-called double predestination, as in Calvinism, is the added assertion that God also foreordains certain souls to damnation. Predestination is posited on the basis of God's omniscience and omnipotence and is closely related to the doctrines of divine providence and grace. A predestinarian doctrine is suggested in St. Paul, but it is not developed (Rom. 8.28–30). St. Augustine's interpretation of the doctrine has been the fountainhead for most subsequent versions, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. Pelagianism argued against St. Augustine that by granting every individual freedom of choice, God wills the salvation of all souls equally, a view that became popular in liberal Protestant theology. The Roman Catholic view, as stated by St. Thomas Aquinas, maintains that God wills the salvation of all souls but that certain souls are granted special grace that in effect foreordains their salvation. The damned may be said to be reprobated to hell only in the sense that God foresees their resistance to the grace given them. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that predestination is consistent with free will since God moves the soul according to its nature. Calvinism, on the other hand, rejects the role of free will and teaches that grace is irresistible and that God by an absolute election saves the souls of some and abandons the souls of others. Jansenism was a corresponding predestinarian movement within the Roman Catholic Church. Traditional Jewish theology may be said to be predestinarian in the general sense that everything ultimately depends upon God. Islam teaches an absolute predestination, controlled by a God conceived of as absolute will.

See P. Maury, *Predestination* (1960); J. H. Rainbow, *The Will of God and the Cross* (1990).

² PRESBYTERIANISM

form of Christian church organization based on administration by a hierarchy of courts composed of clerical and lay presbyters. Holding a position between episcopacy (government by bishops) and Congregationalism (government by local congregation), Presbyterianism sought a return to the early practice of appointed elders as described in the New Testament.

Church Organization

The basic spiritual order of the church is composed of the presbyters (elders), all of equal status, divided into teaching elders (ministers) and ruling elders. The deacons and trustees complete the order; they may manage temporal affairs. The presiding minister and ruling

(Footnotes ctd.)

elders make up the session or consistory; it is the first in the hierarchy of courts. Since both the minister and ruling elders are elected by the congregation, the Presbyterian polity is ultimately determined by the people.

Appeal from the session may be made to the presbytery or colloquy, the next highest court. The presbytery includes equal numbers of ministers and lay elders. The presbytery holds jurisdiction over church properties and ministers and confirms a church's call to a minister. The synod, the next court in the hierarchy, consists of ministers and elders from a stated number of presbyteries; it exercises limited supervisory authority over both presbyteries and congregations. Finally, there is the general assembly, composed of lay and clerical representatives in equal numbers, which meets annually to supervise the interests of the whole denomination.

Beliefs

Spiritually, Presbyterianism embodies the principles of Calvinism and forms the main branch of the Reformed churches. The Westminster Confession and the Larger and Shorter Catechism composed by the Westminster Assembly, convened (1643–49) by the British Parliament, provide the doctrinal and liturgical standards for Presbyterian churches. These assert the sovereignty of God and the prime authority of Scripture as guides to church doctrine. The Bible is held to be the rule of government and discipline, as well as faith. Presbyterians accept the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are opposed to state interference in ecclesiastical affairs.

Presbyterianism in Europe

Calvinism first influenced the Protestant churches of Geneva and of the Huguenots. In the Netherlands the Protestant church was Presbyterian in government but not independent of the state until the middle of the 19th cent. By the mid-16th cent., Presbyterian sentiment was strong in England and Scotland. The English Presbyterians were never numerous after Oliver Cromwell's time; in 1876 various branches united to form the Presbyterian Church of England. In 1972 this church merged with the Congregational Church in England and Wales to become the United Reformed Church in Great Britain, now with an estimated 150,000 adult members (1997). The Church of Scotland, founded in 1557 under the leadership of John Knox, is the only Presbyterian state church established by law; however, it maintains the traditional independence from the state. There are an estimated 641,000 members (1997). Presbyterianism in Northern Ireland began early in the 17th cent. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (1840) is the principal body; it has an estimated 300,000 members (1997). The largest Protestant church of Wales, the Calvinistic Methodist Church (also called the Presbyterian Church of Wales), has an estimated 45,700 members (1998). The World Presbyterian Alliance merged with the International Congregational Council in 1970 to form the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

Presbyterianism in America

Presbyterians were to be found in most of the English colonies of North America. Through the efforts of Francis Makemie, a missionary from Ireland (1683), the first presbytery in America was formed at Philadelphia in 1706; a synod was constituted in 1716. New England had its own synod (1775–82). In the 18th cent. American Presbyterians divided temporarily over the question of revivals and evangelism: the Old School rejected them; the group known as the New School encouraged them. Before the

(Footnotes ctd.)

Revolution the Presbyterians established the College of New Jersey, now Princeton Univ. The General Assembly of 1789 in Philadelphia represented a united Presbyterian Church. A Plan of Union with the Congregational associations of New England that existed from 1792 until 1837 was disrupted when the Old School Presbyterians, favoring separate denominational agencies for missionary and evangelistic work, prevailed. The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions was then established.

Until 1982 the main body of Presbyterianism in North America was the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. It was formed by the merger (1958) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, descending from the Philadelphia presbytery of 1706, and the United Presbyterian Church of North America, which had been constituted (1858) by a union of two older churches. In 1983, the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America merged with the second largest body, the Presbyterian Church in the United States (also known as the “Southern Presbyterian Church”), to form the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); it is now the main body, with about 3.6 million members (1997). Thus was healed the major division in American Presbyterianism, which originated shortly before the Civil War over the issue of slavery and resulted in the formation of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States. In 1810 the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was established by the secession of revivalist groups in Kentucky; many of its congregations were reunited with the main body in 1906. The ones who remain independent now number about 88,000 members (1997), not including members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (originally set apart in 1869 as the Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church).

In 1973 the Presbyterian Church in America, first known as the National Presbyterian Church, was organized as a constitutional assembly; it has about 279,000 members (1996). There are several other smaller branches of Presbyterianism in America. Presbyterians are the fourth largest Protestant denomination in the United States, after the Baptists, Methodists, and Lutherans. The Presbyterian Church in Canada was formed in 1875; some Presbyterians joined with the Methodist and Congregational churches in 1925 to form the United Church of Canada.

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³ SEPARATISTS

in religion, those bodies of Christians who withdrew from the Church of England. They desired freedom from church and civil authority, control of each congregation by its membership, and changes in ritual. In the 16th cent. a group of early separatists were known as Brownists after their leader, Robert Browne. The name Independents came into use in the 17th cent. Among other separatist groups were the Pilgrims, the Quakers, and the Baptists. See Congregationalism.

⁴ INDEPENDENTS

in religion, those bodies of Christians who claim freedom from ecclesiastical and civil authority for their individual churches. They hold that each congregation should have

(Footnotes ctd.)

control of its own affairs. In a historic sense, it is ordinarily applied to churches in Great Britain now known as Congregational. The name Independents came into use in the 17th cent. and was in use in Great Britain until the end of the 18th cent. See Congregationalism; Puritanism; separatists.

⁵ CONGREGATIONALISM

type of Protestant church organization in which each congregation, or local church, has free control of its own affairs. The underlying principle is that each local congregation has as its head Jesus alone and that the relations of the various congregations are those of fellow members in one common family of God. Congregationalism eliminated bishops and presbyteries.

History of the Movement

In Great Britain

The movement to which the name came to be applied began in the 16th and 17th cent. in England in a revolt against the Established Church. Robert Browne published in 1582 the first theoretical exposition of Congregational principles and expressed the position of some of those separatists. Churches established on such lines were started very early in the 17th cent. in Gainsborough and Scrooby, but government opposition drove them into exile in Holland.

Not until the Protectorate did the Congregationalists make much progress. About that time the name Independents was first introduced, a term long common in Great Britain (it is still used in Wales) but seldom used in America. In 1658, when the Savoy Synod met in London, over 100 churches were represented. With the Restoration came repression for the Independents, partly relieved by the Toleration Act of 1689.

A marked tendency among English Congregationalists in the 19th cent. was toward combination in larger fellowship. Churches of this denomination formed a union in Scotland in 1812 and in Ireland in 1829; in 1831 the Congregational Union of England and Wales was established. The Congregational Union and the Evangelical Union were united in 1896. Membership in Congregational churches in Great Britain has declined in the 20th cent. Congregationalists have been active in ecumenical activities, and in 1972 most British Congregationalists and Presbyterians merged to form the United Reform Church.

In America

Congregationalism was carried to America in 1620 by the Pilgrims, who were members of John Robinson's congregation in Holland, originally of Scrooby, England. In America, Congregationalism reached its greatest public influence and largest membership. In New England numerous communities were established based on Congregational-type religious principles. In 1648 in the Cambridge Platform a summary of principles of church government and discipline was drawn up. Congregationalists took a leading part in the Great Awakening that, in New England, was started in 1734 by the preaching of Jonathan Edwards. As the country expanded, Congregational churches were established in the newly opened frontier regions.

In 1810 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions began its work; in 1826 the American Home Missionary Society was formed. These were followed in 1846 by the American Missionary Association, primarily devoted to missionary work among African Americans and Native Americans. The early part of the 19th cent. brought the

(Footnotes ctd.)

Unitarian secession, when over 100 churches left the main Congregational body. Congregational churches began to meet in local and then in statewide conferences, out of which developed (1871) the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States. But each local church remained free to make its own declaration of faith and free to decide its own form of worship; in the conduct of the local church each member was granted an equal voice. The principal assistants of the pastor are the deacons. In education Congregationalists were always prominent, but the institutions of their founding—Harvard, Yale, Williams, Amherst, Oberlin, and many others—have generally been free from sectarianism.

The trend toward broader fellowship and larger cooperation was notably indicated in the merging in 1931 of the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States and the General Convention of the Christian Church to form the General Council of the Congregational and Christian Churches of the United States. A move to unite the Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church was approved by the councils of the two denominations in 1957, forming the United Church of Christ. The National Association of Congregational Christian Churches was formed in 1955 by churches that chose not to join in the merger; it had about 70,000 members in 1997.

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⁶ MAYFLOWER, SHIP

ship that in 1620 brought the Pilgrims from England to New England. She set out from Southampton in company with the *Speedwell*, the vessel that had borne some of the English separatists from the Netherlands back to England for the momentous voyage. However, the *Speedwell* proved unseaworthy, and the ships put back to Plymouth, where the *Mayflower* took on some of the smaller ship's passengers and supplies. The *Mayflower*, under the captaincy of Christopher Jones, then set sail alone on Sept. 16. After a two-month voyage the ship sighted land (Cape Cod) on Nov. 19. Some time was spent in selecting a suitable place for the colony, and on Dec. 26 the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth. Before landing, an agreement for the temporary government of the colony by the will of the majority was drawn up in the famous Mayflower Compact. Much effort has been spent on the identification of the *Mayflower*. It is known that she was a wineship, of 180 tons burden, and presumed that she was of a type commonly used in that period. In 1957 a British group sponsored the voyage of a replica of the original *Mayflower* from Plymouth, England, to Plymouth, Mass. The vessel was given to the United States as an expression of international goodwill and remains on exhibit at Plymouth, Mass.

See studies by W. Charlton (1957) and C. Gill (1970).

⁷ NONCONFORMISTS

in religion, those who refuse to conform to the requirements (in doctrine or discipline) of an established church. The term is applied especially to Protestant dissenters from the Church of England. Nonconformity in England appeared not long after the Reformation

(Footnotes ctd.)

in the secession from the Established Church of such small groups as the Brownists and, little later, the Pilgrims. Most of those, however, who objected to the Elizabethan church settlement did not at first intend to secede; their hope was rather to reshape the Established Church (see Puritanism). The conflicts thus engendered within the Church of England were a major factor leading to the English civil war. After the victory of the Puritan party in that war, a Presbyterian church establishment was adopted (1646), but in that period also the separatists, or Independents, gained a stronger foothold. The restoration (1660) of the monarchy also brought the restoration of episcopacy and harsh legislation against the Puritans. The Act of Uniformity (1662) made a distinct split unavoidable, since it required episcopal ordination for all ministers. As a result, nearly 2,000 clergymen left the Established Church. Significant nonconformity dates from that time. The term *dissenter* similarly came into use, particularly after the Toleration Act (1689), in which reference was made to the "Protestant Dissenters." Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Quakers, Unitarians, and Methodists are among the nonconforming denominations in England. In Scotland, where the established church is Presbyterian, the Anglicans, or Episcopalians, are among the nonconformists. In more recent usage, churches independent of the established or state church in both England and Scotland are often called Free Churches.

See C. Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters* (1912); H. Davies, *The English Free Churches* (1952).

⁸ CAMBRIDGE PLATFORM

declaration of principles of church government and discipline, forming in fact a constitution of the Congregational churches. It was adopted (1648) by a church synod at Cambridge, Mass., and remains the basis of the temporal government of the churches. It had little to do with matters of doctrine and belief. The Congregationalists of Connecticut later subscribed (1708), in the Saybrook Platform, to a more centralized church government, resembling Presbyterianism. See also Congregationalism.

⁹ HALF-WAY COVENANT

a doctrinal decision of the Congregational churches in New England. The first generation of Congregationalists had decided that only adults with personal experience of conversion were eligible to full membership but that children shared in the covenant of their parents and therefore should be admitted to all the privileges of the church except the Lord's Supper. The question arose (c.1650) whether this privilege should be extended to the children of these children, even though the parents of the second generation may have confessed no experience that brought them into full communion. It was proposed (1657) and adopted (1662) by a church synod that the privileges should be extended. The measure, to which the nickname Half-Way Covenant became attached, provoked much controversy and was never adopted by all the churches. Portions of many congregations seceded to form new settlements, among them Newark, N.J.

See R. G. Pope, *Half-Way Covenant* (1969).

MEDIA ITEM

“Interview: Paul Auster discusses a side of Nathaniel Hawthorne with which few are familiar, as shown in the newly published diary, *Twenty Days with Julian and Little Bunny*”

(NPR’s Morning Edition, July 28, 2003)

BOB EDWARDS, host:

Writer Nathaniel Hawthorne, author of *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of Seven Gables*, had a reputation for being cold and very private. A newly published excerpt from Hawthorne's notebooks reveals a side of him many do not know, that of being a father. *Twenty Days with Julian and Little Bunny by Papa* is Hawthorne's detailed journal of the three weeks he spent with his son, Julian. Hawthorne's little adventure began on this day, July 28th, in 1851. His wife, Sophia, took their two daughters to Boston to visit her family, so Hawthorne, then 47, and their five-year-old Julian were left alone in their tiny red house in the Berkshires. Novelist Paul Auster wrote the book's introduction.

Audio link available at:

<http://www.npr.org/rundowns/rundown.php?prgId=3&prgDate=28-Jul-2003>

For **full transcript** of this interview please contact the American Reference Center at: arc@usembassy.at.

For information about the United States of America please visit the homepage of the U.S. Embassy Vienna, Austria at: <http://www.usembassy.at>



The page about the programs **“The Life and Writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne: The Early Years”** and **“Trying Out *The Scarlet Letter*: Hawthorne’s Raw Materials”** will be available at: <http://www.usembassy.at/en/embassy/photo/person.htm>

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