

"dead men's bones, dead men's beliefs"

ideas of antiquity
in upstate new york
and "theron ware"

john rees

Are they here—
The dead of other days? . . . Let the mighty mounds
That overlook the rivers, or that rise
In the dim forest crowded with old oaks,
Answer. A race, that long has passed away,
Built them; a disciplined and populous race
William Cullen Bryant, "The Prairies" (1833)

Joseph [Smith], Sen., and his family . . . would say, that nearly all the hills in this part of New York, were thrown up by human hands, and in them were large caves, which Joseph, Jr., could see . . . that he could see within the above mentioned caves, large gold bars and silver plates—that he could also discover the spirits in whose charge these treasures were, clothed in ancient dress

Affidavit of William Stafford, Palmyra, New York,
in Eber D. Howe's *Mormonism Unveiled* (1834)¹

The Damnation of Theron Ware, Harold Frederic's best novel and the last of his New York State fiction, has several kinds of interest, but surely the psychological aspects of this strikingly advanced, experimental work of 1896 are among the most important ones. It is a familiar point that such a story as this, of the spiritual disintegration of a gifted young Methodist minister, could hardly have been written even a few years earlier, before Frederic's exposure to the encouragement, challenge and example of the Naturalist-Decadent-Yellow Book epoch in literary London. Doubtless his London experience through the mid-Nineties did give Frederic fresh psychological perspectives, did help him to sense what more could now be done with his regional material, and the value of doing it.

Still, a special psychological potential, whatever now prompted Frederic to exploit it, had long been latent in this regional material itself. For religion, history, legend and other cultural forces had joined to give the upstate New York locale of his tales and novels a climate of consciousness in some respects unique in nineteenth century America. These unique features have faded long since, and they were only briefly as marked in literature as in the region's creeds and folklore. But as I want to speculate here, that special regional consciousness may well have contributed something important to the psychological interest of *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.

Commentary on the workings of Theron Ware's mind has reflected two main viewpoints, but both stress intimidation. In one, the impressionable backwoods youth is a casualty on the battlegrounds of recent intellectual history, an anachronism who represents "the vestigial remains of the consciousness of the early nineteenth century, once powerful, now vulnerable"; his primitive Methodist creed and Emersonian ideals cannot sustain him against the attacks of Celia Madden's *fin de siècle* Hellenism, the post-Darwinian scientism of Dr. Ledsmar and what pass for the transatlantic heterodoxies of the modernist priest, Father Forbes.² From this perspective, the demoralized Theron can recover only by learning pragmatism from the Soulsbys, and cultivating the detachment and opportunism the new, relativistic age calls for. Complementing this history-of-ideas approach is a second, more Freudian one, which asserts that Frederic has made sex "the main-spring of his action"; here the protagonist is seen as a modern neurotic, who abases himself in guilty ambivalence before one surrogate parent after another, from his wife Alice and the regal Celia to Father Forbes and Sister Soulsby.³

But another pattern of intimidation can be pointed out besides these; Theron Ware's enlightened new acquaintances inadvertently force a chilling sense of the past on him. References to peoples fallen or in decline and to age-old human traits and customs pervade their conversation, along with other implied and open denials of the "utterly baseless and empty . . . idea that humanity progresses" (249). Ironically, the bleak, haunted world of these modernists seems far older than his, and his imagination's surrender here is a fatal sign of his "damnation." In one way or another Celia, her usual antagonist Ledsmar, and Sister Soulsby all stress to Theron eventually that human character has not changed since the Stone Age; the smug dogmatism he detests in his parishioners, they clearly agree, is after all "'pure human nature,' " which has "'always been like that'" (181).⁴

But the chief spokesman for the supremacy of the past in *The Damnation of Theron Ware* is Father Forbes. To him, present-day mankind are "'still very like savages in a dangerous wood in the dark, telling one another ghost stories around a campfire'" (247); every Catholic ritual stems from some pagan one, he is confident, although "'we can

never dig deep enough for the roots of these things. They all turn up Turanian if we probe far enough' ” (47). So in one sense even the Testaments are too recent to rely on; the personages they portray retreat into deeper antiquity, fading into spectral archetypes, at the scholar's approach. The Biblical Abraham, Father Forbes explains, “is not a person at all: he is a tribe, a sept, a clan.’ ” Then he appalls Theron with a casual analogy between Christ and the earlier Chaldean savior-god Merodach, and the speculation that “if we could go back still other scores of centuries, we should find whole receding series of types of this Christ-myth of ours’ ” (72, 74). The “modern” world, then, is not modern at all; it can only relive its past, remaking itself endlessly from its own rubble, always conforming to ancient law. As Father Forbes dramatically tells Theron, at their second meeting:

... You see, there is nothing new. Everything is built on the ruins of something else. Just as the material earth is made up of countless billions of dead men's bones, so the mental world is all alive with the ghosts of dead men's thoughts and beliefs, the wraiths of dead races' thoughts and imaginings (74).

All these arguments take effect inexorably on the young minister. The cheerless thought they convey “seems to be springing up in my path, wherever I turn,’ ” he tells Sister Soulsby, midway through the novel. “It oppresses me, and yet it fascinates me—this idea that the dead men have known more than we know, done more than we do; that there is nothing new anywhere; that—’ ” (181). Sister Soulsby's sensible advice to forget all this comes too late here, for the oppression and fascination of the idea are already far advanced. At last we see him mastered by it, in an atavistic moment at the novel's climax. When Celia dismisses him as a bore, he feels himself a murderous savage again, in a lurid primordial world; then as even his rage deserts him, turning to fear, he is banished still further into the past, and left terrified “in the Egyptian night which lay upon the face of the deep while the earth was yet without form and void. He was alone on it—alone among awful, planetary solitudes which crushed him” (333). His convalescence in the last pages, and his business career waiting in Seattle, may lead to a full recovery from this collapse, but not unless they shield his imagination somehow from these baneful visions of antiquity. We can only guess at his prospects.

As we look back, moreover, the whole growth of Theron's response to the idea of the past has been mysterious and intriguing. This response stands out from his usual reactions, to other new ideas and experiences that pose threats to his Methodist literalism. Some of these he assents to quickly, uncritically, scarcely seeing threats in them at all, as when Father Forbes administers the last rites to a dying workman, and Theron to his surprise finds the Romish ceremony impressive but not sinister. Other novelties he rejects out of hand, however, like the air of clinical detachment that repels him in Dr. Ledsmar. But the idea of a past more

darkly potent than that of Genesis, a past infinitely older yet everywhere at hand, grows on Theron despite his dread; it sinks into his consciousness even as he resists. Why?

Such questions of course are never fully answered, in literature or out of it. But one reason why Theron Ware yields to this particular idea in the way he does, I believe, may well be that he has been exposed to it longer than we assume at first, longer than we can pinpoint. At any rate, doubt, reservation, and irony are at work early among his convictions about progress and the fresh, Romantic promise of the New World, even before the Nedahma Conference that opens the novel. Certainly Frederic's own irony undercuts that promise quickly.⁵ Octavius, Thesaly, Tyre, even Nedahma and Tecumseh—these very place-names the minister has lived among since boyhood are subtly ironic, for they testify with Father Forbes that fallen civilizations and vanished races remain mute, ineluctable presences in contemporary life.⁶

Moreover Theron has entered the ministry, we remember, after an "early strenuous battle to get away from the farm" (19), and he sounds most like an Emersonian progressive when he is shirking something. While robins sing in the elms overhead, he belittles "'any one's ideas of hell It seems to me that we never *feel* quite so sure of God's goodness at other times as we do in these wonderful new mornings of spring.'" But this heady declaration is largely escapism, for the Wares have just moved into their mean little Octavius parsonage, and though the setting is changed, they are returning in low spirits to a meager, all-too-familiar routine. Rather than an advance, Octavius means only a starting-over for Theron, with a miserly, fundamentalist congregation that is itself in decline. His first survey of the parsonage backyard shows him all that seems bleakest in his situation, and he looks away, at the elm tops, in a kind of shock. Uncounted past tenants have left the yard a waste land.

. . . The garden parts had not been spaded up, but lay, a useless stretch of muddy earth, broken only by last year's cabbage-stumps and the general litter of dead roots and vegetation. The door of the tenantless chicken-coop hung wide open. Before it was a great heap of ashes and cinders, soaked into grimy hardness by the recent spring rains, and nearer still an ancient chopping-block, round which were scattered old weather-beaten hardwood knots which had defied the axe, parts of broken barrels and packing-boxes, and a nameless debris of tin cans, clam shells, and general rubbish. It was pleasanter to lift the eyes . . . (14-15).

Soon Alice will set about turning this squalid tract into a flower garden, but without Theron's help. Already she grasps that he would "never get at it." The scene at hand is too real, the possibility of a truly fresh start among these ruins too remote. The death-laden images in the passage seem to stretch drearily back from "last year" toward prehistory. Here they suggest mere seasonal change, there petrification, here a garbage

dump, there some ancestral kitchen-midden, until even the hyperbolic “ancient” lends what we see of the aspect of an archaeological site. The backyard becomes a half-comic, half-appalling emblem of man’s past.

This backyard, local place-names, his church trustee Brother Pierce’s attack on evolution (30), one earlier upstate source or another—Theron may or may not have any of these in mind when he tells Sister Soulsby, weeks after this, that he finds reminders of the dead and the earth’s long, repetitive history wherever he turns. But in any case, he is right; the reminders *are* everywhere around him, not just on the lips of his new acquaintances who speak for European culture and turn-of-the-century scholarship. Their ideas about antiquity reach Theron first as intimations from the homely, homespun world he has always known. Low-keyed but insistent, this foreshadowing is deft and psychologically acute, but it has still another kind of aptness. For Frederic makes his upstate setting reflect in fiction what his birthplace region in nineteenth century New York often conveyed in reality, to those who lived there—a sense that their young towns and farms had been built, as in the Old World, “on the ruins of something else.”

Frederic’s family on both sides had lived along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers since early colonial times, and the democratic pride and sectional loyalty he traced from this ancestry underlay his lifelong interest in regional and state history.⁷ This interest served him well in two callings. His understanding of how present-day social and religious issues grew out of the New York State past helped him greatly as a reporter and pro-Democratic editor in his native Utica and Albany. And during his overseas years after 1883 as foreign correspondent for the *New York Times*, he continued to draw on family memories and systematic research, in his historical tales and novels of what he called “the greater New York.” These ranged from *In The Valley*, a Revolutionary romance of the lower Mohawk country, to *The Copperhead*, *Marsena*, and other stories of the Civil War years in and near “Dearborn County,” a fictional version of the next district west, around Utica. Although *Seth’s Brother’s Wife*, *The Lawton Girl*, and *The Damnation of Theron Ware* portray Dearborn County in the Gilded Age present, these too reflect the author’s assimilation of the past century of upstate history.⁸

In central New York, the Utica region south of the Adirondack forests, this history is variegated. The communities here at the western end of the Mohawk Valley are younger by a generation and more than those downstream. The more or less feudal society of Frederic’s Dutch, Palatine German, and English ancestors had pushed well up the valley from Albany by 1750. But Utica itself, and the hilly lowland corridor stretching westward from it toward Buffalo, were not settled until the broken Iroquois Confederacy left its lands after the Revolution. Besides Mohawk Valley migrants, including Frederic’s great-grandparents, the

new settlers along this corridor were mainly New Englanders. They brought with them most of the Calvinist zeal and contentiousness, the eagerness for a dramatic salvation, that we see in *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, along with other traditions and attitudes which also deeply influenced life in this part of the state for generations. Not long after 1800, the Second Great Awakening overflowed its Massachusetts and Vermont borders and went "over into Macedonia." New England evangelists and millennial reformers and their local successors, from Charles Grandison Finney to John Humphrey Noyes and Gerrit Smith, sent wave after wave of revivalism through the New York frontier region from Utica to the Finger Lakes and beyond, until it was known by mid-century as "the Burned-over District."⁹

Dearborn County derives more clearly from the Burned-over District than from the longer-settled Mohawk Valley area it adjoins. The Fairchild dynasty of *Seth's Brother's Wife* and *The Lawton Girl* began, we learn, with a revolted cobbler who walked to this upstate wilderness, and cleared land he had bought at ten cents an acre. Frederic also records that the anti-Masonry movement and Whig-Democrat struggles of the 1820's and 1830's were still vivid memories in the county's crossroads settlements decades later, and ascribes much of the local antagonism of the Civil War period to still other persisting frictions between the descendants of the old Yankee and Yorker pioneers.¹⁰

It does not follow, and need not be claimed, that Frederic could recognize every sign of Yankee influence in central New York, plainly though this influence interested and often exasperated him. But it is important, given his mastery of his region's history and folkways, that certain New England beliefs had become too conspicuous there for him to miss—whether or not he knew their source, or took them seriously himself. These were beliefs about pre-Columbian America.

Since 1500, no group had persevered more than the Puritans in linking the American Indians to Biblical history. According to Roy Harvey Pearce, most early Puritans traced Indian descent through Adam and Noah to Tartars who had crossed a land bridge from northern Asia; President Ezra Stiles of Yale and other New England scholars held variations of this view in the eighteenth century.¹¹ But such influential divines as Roger Williams, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards had argued that the Indians were descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, and this idea gained support steadily in the colonial period. Meanwhile, other theories current in the Northeast fixed the overseas home of the Amerinds in Canaan, Phoenicia, Egypt, Carthage, Rome, Wales, and Iceland. These conjectures survived in the fledgling sciences of the American Enlightenment, and in the legendry of upland New England, where digging for ancient Indian treasure long remained a familiar if bootless pastime.¹²

After the Revolution, interest in the aboriginal mounds and palisaded

forts beyond the Appalachians redoubled all this speculation. The mounds and forts were especially striking atop the drumlins and ridges of the Burned-over District, where they engrossed the imaginations of the devout Yankee settlers. Throughout the Second Great Awakening there, it has been said, revivalist zeal and fascination with the ruins combined to make "almost everyone in the area . . . an amateur antiquarian."¹³

Who were the Mound-builders? Where had they come from, and what had happened to them? Superb pottery and copper ornaments found in the tumuli seldom resembled the work of modern Indians. A dramatic consensus grew before 1840 that the huge, earth-covered heaps of skeletons were cemeteries of a physically and mentally superior race, a vanished civilization of farmers and metalworkers that had thrived from the Aztec cities of lower Mexico across inland North America. But then centuries ago the Mound-builders had declined, and been wiped out by the ancestors of the Indians, in pitched battles in the northern Ohio Valley and upstate New York. *Ubi sunt*; beneath the rising American republic lay an empire of the dead.¹⁴

Like the earthworks themselves, interest in them was widespread. Franklin, Jefferson, and Noah Webster, and later Bryant and Cooper alluded to the remains left by the lost civilization, and many popular works appeared on the subject. Most of these pressed the Israelite thesis, among them Elias Boudinot's *A Star in the West; or, a Humble Attempt to Discover the Long Lost Tribes of Israel* (Trenton, 1816); Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews; or the Ten Tribes of Israel in America* (Poultney, Vermont, 1823); Epaphoras Jones's *On the Ten Tribes of Israel, and the Aborigines of America* (New Albany, Indiana, 1831); and Mordecai Noah's *Discourse on the Evidence of the American Indians Being the Descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel* (New York, 1837). Published just before his presidency, William Henry Harrison's spirited "Discourse on the Aborigines of the Valley of the Ohio" (1839) had similar broad interest for laymen.¹⁵

But this antiquarianism remained strongest in central and western New York. Following DeWitt Clinton's 1811 report on three mounds on the future Erie Canal route, such founders of American archaeology and anthropology as E. G. Squier, W. M. Beauchamp, Henry Schoolcraft, and Lewis Henry Morgan worked in the region. Foremost among the nation's popularizers of prehistory was the Albany writer Josiah Priest, in *The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed* (1825) and *American Antiquities* (1833), a flamboyant account of the rise and fall of the Mound-builders, which sold twenty-two thousand copies in the first three months. Meanwhile the upstate press also reflected the local fascination with antiquities, in a steady stream of features and editorials.¹⁶

No single event in the Burned-over District drew greater attention to the lost empire than the 1830 publication of *The Book of Mormon*

at Palmyra, New York, by Joseph Smith, Jr., “Author and Proprietor.” Born in Vermont in 1805, and a treasure-hunter in the Yankee tradition, Smith reported that the angel Moroni had told him in a vision to dig in a hill near his father’s farm at Palmyra. There, besides a sword and breastplate fit only for “a man of extraordinary size,” he reported finding gold plates inscribed and buried by the Nephite historian, Mormon. According to the plates, the Hebrew patriarch Lehi had led his family to America about 600 B.C., to escape the foretold fall of Jerusalem. From his rebellious son Laman descended the modern Indians, cursed with red skins; a more dutiful son, Nephi, founded the progressive nation of whites whom Smith’s contemporaries knew as the Mound-builders. Christ visited these godly Nephites after the Resurrection, but sinister groups reminiscent of the Masons and the Catholic Church later weakened their civilization from within, until the red Lamanites exterminated all of them but Mormon and his son Moroni at “the hill Cumorah” near the Smith farm, around 400 A.D. Although Smith’s claims to divine authority sharply divided his neighbors, *The Book of Mormon* mirrored many of their beliefs about ancient America.¹⁷

Other real and reported discoveries besides the plates of Nephi kept scripture-based theories of antiquity alive upstate, far into the century. More pliant than Bishop Ussher or Frederic’s Brother Pierce, many religionists squared their ideas of the Creation readily enough with the local museum exhibits, from marine fossils to the mammoth bones found along the Hudson between 1801 and 1867. Mere hearsay finds sustained the credulous still better: a guide to red Israelite treasures hidden in central New York; an old Hebrew phylactery unearthed at Pittsfield, Massachusetts; a cryptic Indian history, found in Canada in a hollow tree. Ethan Smith and Josiah Priest retailed the legend of still another ancient Indian book, recently buried with a dead chief, after the tribal elders could no longer read it.¹⁸ And shortly before Frederic’s birth in 1856, Adirondack loggers north of Utica allegedly found an antique vase from the eastern Mediterranean, enmeshed in the roots of a huge hemlock stump they were pulling up. The artist-journalist W. J. Stillman wrote sadly that the vase had been destroyed in a wrangle over ownership, but his lack of evidence only bolstered an already agreeable tale with a pious moral.¹⁹

Frederic was thirteen when one last spectacular pre-Columbian find was reported within sixty miles of his home. Whatever prompted him to include an unsavory “Brother Barnum” in Theron Ware’s congregation (131), the author surely knew P. T. Barnum’s part in the Cardiff Giant affair, for this local hoax became a protracted, national news sensation in the early 1870’s, just before Frederic himself began as a Utica reporter. Late in 1869, well diggers near Cardiff, New York, dug up a huge stone effigy of a reclining man, eight feet long and weighing a ton and a half. Many had thought the Mound-builders an outsized race,

and here was a petrified specimen worthy of the Nephite breastplate. The former Burned-over District's fundamentalists hailed this rebuke to Darwin, citing *Genesis* VI, 4: "There were giants in those days." Many scientists and dignitaries inspected the stone figure, including Emerson and Holmes; several pronounced it genuinely ancient, most were gravely noncommittal, and only one or two called it a fraud. Showmen in the Soulsby tradition exhibited the Cardiff Giant across the state and in Boston, refusing rent and purchase offers from Barnum himself, until the great impresario was goaded into displaying a plaster of paris copy. For months the rival exhibits prospered on Broadway, two blocks apart; Barnum left the field only after an Iowan admitted hewing the original from a white gypsum slab. Even then the Giant remained profitable enough for an extended national tour.²⁰

Regardless of where they lived, then, many Americans of Frederic's generation knew something of the long ferment of religious antiquarianism in his part of New York State, if only through the Cardiff Giant or the Mormon Prophet, Joseph Smith. But raised where he was, among active Methodists, Frederic perforce knew that antiquarian tradition far better, from the inside. So too would his protagonist Theron Ware have known it, as a farm boy turned Methodist minister upstate.

To quote John Henry Raleigh's phrase again, Theron still partakes of "the consciousness of the early nineteenth century." (It underscores this point, of course, that of all the shocks the early nineteenth century consciousness had had to bear in Europe and America, none was evidently greater than the discovery of the extent of past time. This discovery was not just implicit in Darwinism; it had already been dramatized for many observers in the spate of archaeological, Egyptological, and antiquarian researches that had followed the Napoleonic campaigns.)²¹ Too often that consciousness has been misrepresented as blindly optimistic—wholly assured about progress, and oblivious of the past. But in the Burned-over District, where here and there the very landscape seemed a vast *memento mori*, the optimism was tempered in at least two ways. For the local speculation about antiquity did not confirm Holy Writ alone. Reflections on the rise and fall of the Mound-builders brought eighteenth century cyclical theories of history up to date, stressing again that New World civilizations, no matter how promising, were not exempt from the fate of Assyria, Persia, Greece, or Rome. And if indeed the lost race had once been supermen, their decline also bore out the pessimism of Buffon, William Robertson, and other physiographic determinists, who had insisted that all life forms degenerated in the harsh American climate.²² The lurking pessimism and self-doubt that we see in Theron Ware as the novel begins are convincing traits of one impressionable man; but they also faithfully typify the sensibility of his time and place.

Plainly, this is not to claim that the novel's modernists simply say aloud what an upstate background has already led Theron to feel about

the past. They do this, I believe, but in reducing the Bible to myth they do more, take him further; beyond pessimism lies despair, even terror. To Frederic's young minister, it is as if scripture has offered the one bearable way for dead men's beliefs to govern the living; with this lone sanction withdrawn, he is helpless at last, deserted in a world of dead men's bones.

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footnotes

1. Reprinted by Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History* (New York, 1945; 2d ed. 1971), 434.

2. John Henry Raleigh, "The Damnation of Theron Ware," *American Literature*, XXX (1958-1959), 215-218, 221-222, 227; quotation from 215.

3. Everett Carter, introduction to *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1960), xv-xvi, xxi; quotation from xxi. (Future references to this edition are parenthesized in the text.) See also David Williams, "The Nature of the Damnation of Theron Ware," *Massachusetts Studies in English II* (1969), 45, and Raleigh, 227.

4. E.g., Celia tells Theron that she sees humanity as forever divided into Jews and Greeks, and everything in later history as a falling-off from the perfection of ancient Athens (200, 265). And in holding the Jews responsible, she gets unexpected support from Ledsmar. He has studied archaeology and other sciences at the expense of his medicine—partly in scorn, he says, for "what the profession regards as its progress"—and he praises the early Jews to Theron as "marvellous old fellows,—who were never more than a handful, yet have imposed their ideas and their gods upon us for fifteen hundred years" (69, 83). Such an achievement is easier to grasp, of course, once one understands how slowly human nature evolves, and Sister Soulsby joins the others in emphasizing this to Theron, in the quotation above (181).

5. The theme of historical decline is among the first the author sounds. The opening chapter draws a foreboding contrast between the oldest and youngest Methodist preachers at the Nedahma Conference—between a remnant of "venerable fathers in Israel" and their ever-weaker successors, down through Theron Ware's generation: "The impress of zeal and moral worth seemed to diminish by regular gradations as one passed to younger faces; and among the very beginners . . . this decline was peculiarly marked. It was almost a relief to note the relative smallness of their number, so plainly was it to be seen that they were not the men their forbears had been" (5).

Moreover, especially in the early chapters, we cannot always be sure how much of the irony in the novel's tone is Frederic's, and how much is Theron's own; and our uncertainty on this point makes for legitimate suspense. On one hand, he keeps much of his backwoods susceptibility to the end, but on the other, he has begun his ambiguous steps toward illumination-damnation well before his assignment to Octavius. His mere learning to laugh with Alice, as a young bridegroom, proves to have been sinister after all: soon he sees "a new, droll aspect in men and things," and starts to indulge a "dryly playful" turn of speech in which offhand irreverent conceits "danced up, unabashed, quite into the presence of lofty and majestic truths" (20). Even an early, honest moment of self-scrutiny is ominous, hinting at Theron's helplessness to come, when he hears the whole concept of progress attacked: "He was conscious of having moved along—was it, after all, an advance?—to a point where it was unpleasant to sit at table with the unfragrant hired man, and still worse to encounter the bucolic confusion of knives and forks . . ." (17)

6. Similar antique and Indian place-names are common in central New York, but Frederic features such names much more than others that are equally familiar there, from northern Europe, the British Isles, New England, and the Bible, and honoring national and local leaders. (Invented place-names elsewhere in his Dearborn County fiction include Agrippa Hill, the hamlets Sidon, Juno Mills, Four Corners, and Burfield, and Adams and Jay Counties.)

7. All biographical material on Frederic is from Thomas F. O'Donnell and Hoyt C. Franchere, *Harold Frederic* (New York, 1961), 17-72; for his interest in regional and state history see especially pp. 19-20, 24, 28, 38-41 and 82.

8. E.g., *Seth's Brother's Wife* (New York, 1886), 257-262; *The Lawton Girl* (New York, 1900), 60, 142-147; and *Harold Frederic's Stories of York State*, Thomas F. O'Donnell, ed. (Syracuse, 1966), xv, 3-9, 38, 52, 65-66, 128-129, 182.

9. Thomas F. O'Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago, 1957), 6-15, quotation from p. 9; Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (Ithaca, 1950).

10. *Seth's Brother's Wife*, 17, 56, 81, 396-397; *Stories of York State*, 3, 7-8, 52, 59.

11. *The Savages of America, A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization* (Baltimore, 1953; rev. ed. 1965), 24-25; Stow Persons, *American Minds, A History of Ideas* (New York, 1958), 119; Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 45.
12. *Ibid.*, 18-19, 44-45.
13. *Ibid.*, 34.
14. *Ibid.*, 34-35, 44, 46; Persons, *American Minds*, 120; Henry C. Shetrone, *The Mound-builders* (New York, 1930; reprinted 1964), 1, 6, 14, 18-20.
15. *Ibid.*, 13, 17-21; Pearce, *The Savages of America*, 62n, 101n; Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 45-47.
16. *Ibid.*, 19n, 34, 38, 44n, 45-46, 50, 80, 82, 429-432, 440-441; Shetrone, *The Mound-builders*, 270; David S. Brose, "The Northeastern United States," in James E. Fitting, ed., *The Development of Sorth American Archaeology* (Garden City, New York, 1973), 85.
17. Persons, *American Minds*, 183-184; breastplate quotation is from Lucy Smith, Joseph's mother, in Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 40.
18. *Ibid.*, 19, 35, 46-47.
19. Mary MacKenzie, "Mystery at Bog River Falls," *Adirondack Life*, V, 3 (Summer, 1973), 10-11, 34.
20. Carl Carmer, *Listen for a Lonesome Drum* (New York, 1936), 251-256; Harold W. Thompson, *Body, Boots & Britches: Folktales, Ballads and Speech from Country New York* (New York, 1939; reprinted 1962), 155-157.
21. I owe this useful point to Stuart Levine.
22. For degeneration and cyclical theories current in America before 1860, see Persons, *American Minds*, 115-116, 122-127, 204-205.