THE AUTHENTICITY AND TREATMENT
of the
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
in
THE REVOLUTIONARY ROMANCES OF WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS

by
Edward A. Cabell

Presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the
degree of Master of Arts

Montana State University
1967

Approved:

[Signature]
Chairman of Board of Examiners

[Signature]
Chairman of Committee on Graduate Study
Let our homage be
Large as that splendid prodigality
Of force and love, wherewith he stanchly
wrought
Out from the quarries of his own deep
thought,
Unnumbered shapes; whether of good or ill,
No puny puppets whose false action frets
On a false stage, like feeble Marionettes;

But life-like, human still;
Types of a by-gone age of crime and lust;
Or, grand historic forms, in whom we view
Re-vivified, and re-created
stand,
The brave who strove through cloud-encompassed
ways,
Infinite travail, and malign dispriase,
To guard, to save, to wrench from tyrant
hordes,
By the pen's virtue, or the lordlier sword's
Unravished Liberty.
The virgin huntress on a virgin strand! *

of Sims and delivered on the night of the 13th of December, 1877 "at the Charlestown Academy of Music," as prelude to the "Dramatic Enter-
tainment" in aid of the "Sims Memorial fund." p. 315.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Introduction: Purpose of Study | 1 |
| History in Plot, Setting and Character | 2 |
| Simms, The Writer | 3 |
| The Revolutionary Romances | 6 |
| Simms's Writing Plan | 9 |
| Sources of Information | 13 |
| Simms's Beliefs about History in His Writing | 15 |

**Authenticity of Events in Plots of Revolutionary Romances**

**Authenticity of Historical Settings**

**Authenticity of Information about Characters**

**The Treatment of Historical Materials**

**Treatment of Setting**

**Treatment of Character**

**Conclusion**

**Bibliography**
Introduction: Purpose of Study

William Gilmore Simms, thoroughly American in the choice of his subjects, second only to Cooper in his ability to construct an interesting plot and tell a story effectively, ranks as one of the foremost of the early American novelists. An accurate chronicler, he wrote about the people of South Carolina in the embittered times of the closing years of the Revolution and sketched with fidelity the events of this period. The purpose of this study is to trace the authenticity and treatment of the historical background in his seven revolutionary romances. These novels of the Revolutionary War were chosen as the subject of this study chiefly because, for a long time they enjoyed great popularity, especially in the South, and are considered even today by most critics as his best works. Unlike The Leatherstocking Tales of James Fenimore Cooper, these seven novels were written in historical order, many of the events and characters carrying through from one narrative to another.
History in Plot, Setting, and Character

Sims's use of history finds characteristic outlet in his plots, settings, and characters. In the first of these, his plots, he captured the movement and color of a historical period. To him history was not a dull sequence of haphazard events, a skeleton of dead facts, but rather something alive that without too much effort could be moulded into story form by the pen of a capable writer. His attitude is shown in his own words:

"The chief value of history consists in its proper employment for the purposes of art." Adventure, brave deeds, violence, all within the range of history -- these are constituents of romantic plot. And yet historical plot is not acceptable to Sims unless it is based upon authentic settings, which are as much a part of his novels as are his plots and like them concern the South. They are well-drawn, exact, and true to the actions, characters, and general tone of his narratives.

Charleston, Savannah, Ninety-Six, Dorchester, Camden, Grangeburg can still be found on the modern map as can

1. Views and Reviews in American Literature, p. 15.
M. William P. Trent's 'William Gilmour Smith', p. 129.

... are numerous writings pertaining to the Civil War. As a
peculiar representation and reflection of the South-

William P. Trent, then became next to Edgar Allen
Cartwright in 1865. By 1870, according to the biographer
these holes in the base for the works. Born in South
your resource, not even Cooper, was better qualified to

profound purpose expressed the part. He early aver-
First of all, he was pre-eminent among those who for
of this study, what can be said about Sherman's
ability

after the foregoing discussion of the purpose

Here, the writer

that changed the course of a nation.

dead! In the pages of these they speak the language
these about which Sherman wrote. These heroes are not
Robert, Mathe and Greene, Colonel Tarleton, Governor
transport when the infantry was famous names as Paken-
less without characters and there, too, Sherman set his
But plot and setting, however constructed, would be life-
also the Kelsoo, Conner, Hitter, and Padee Rivers.
accept this. Since these knew the South intimately, they
created society that he adopted but which refused to
did for public action and a place inCharteram article.
born in a broad environment, communities surging in he
most of which I now wholly forget. He may have been
left behind him over eighty volumes of prose and poetry.
He proceeded to be important in the later writing years, and
literary experiences did wonders to the young boy, and
these martyrs of exportation of the American Revolution.
And, still more with their varied reminiscence of Indian
the heroic ground of South Carolina, listening to
sentimental country. Young tribes frequently rambled over
read the boy of the great personal experiences in the
once an Indian fighter under General Andrew Jackson,
attention listener would put them to use. His father, too,
continued heretofore largely to extracting tales of the hero-
whence in her conversations with him, the grandmother
boy.

4
novels contain a wealth of information about colonial life, data which are becoming each year more difficult to find.

Sims used three themes for the basis of most of his novels: The Indian, the frontier, and the Revolutionary War. Though like Cooper, he also turned to the more "refined" materials in foreign backgrounds, like Cooper, too, he found that his revolutionary romances proved to be by far his most fruitful field. In these spirited chronicles he carried the reader through the whole period in the South from the fall of Charleston in May, 1780, to the surrender of Cornwallis in October, two years later.

His romances concern events rather than persons, yet since the two are closely related, he made the one as independent as he possibly could of the other. Sims had a great liking for history of all kinds, and especially the unwritten or unconsidered history which to him was the great essential. He wrote about errors and wrongs, of courage and tenacious patriotism. These narratives center around the well-known partisan warfare in the South, a struggle which constituted one of the most brilliant chapters in our revolutionary history.
They seek to illustrate some of the events which grew out of and characterized this warfare. Along with its courage and patriotism, Simms displayed, likewise, its crimes and horrors. He disliked unreal idealism. To him a story in which rainbow colors predominated was too easy a challenge. He was interested in life as it was really lived -- man in all his phases, modified by circumstance. In consequence, his object was to adhere as closely as possible to the actual event. To stimulate the imagination and curiosity in his reader was, for him, a chief concern. History was, of course, a necessary adjunct. His tales highly interested a local audience because of their patriotic and sectional pictures and temper.

The Revolutionary Romances

Simms as a writer, however, becomes pertinent to this study chiefly as the author of seven historical romances to which several references have already been made.

5. Hellicampas, Advertisement, p. 5.
In 1836-1838 he published two romances somewhat resembling Cooper's The Spy in theme and treatment. These were The Partisan and Hellishamps, the first dealing with the events of the Revolutionary War. The others in the series, Jimson (later The Scout), or The Black Riders of the Consecrated Katherine Keiton; or The Rebel of Barnaboy; Woodcraft, or The Sword and the Distaff; The Forevers, or The Field of the Dead Days; Eutore, A Sequel to The Forevers, all appeared between the years 1836 and 1838. These novels are not merely chronicles of traditional heroes. As indicated earlier many of his characters are national figures, familiar to our daily reading; his plots truly portray the conditions of the time. The leading events — every general action — and all chief characteristics have been taken from the records of history or from scarcely less reliable oral tradition.

Sinnes wrote most of these romances when his mind was full of Francis Marion and his ragged troopers, of

brave deeds done by loyal men, of midnight excursions
from camps hidden in the depths of the swamps — in
short, of guerilla warfare in all its picturesque ness.
He had read Marion's own letters, had conversed with
old men who had served under the 'Swamp Fox,' and had
walked over all the spots of Revolutionary War fame.
9
He consulted Moultrie, Drayton, Ramsey, and Johnson,
all great American figures of the Revolution, for his-
torical data relating to the close of the Revolutionary
period and the development of South Carolina from a re-
bellious colony into an independent republican state.
These have been his chief sources of information; though
in his progress, he found it advisable to consult, in
addition, the accounts of Holmes, Barcroft, Graham,
Tarleton, and several other writers of the period.

Although Simms was a poet, dramatist, historian,
bio grapher, essayist, lecturer, and journalist, he was,
above all, a novelist. He moved in a field that was
native to him, the memories of his own region. He re-
discovered the South, and that section about which he

wrote offered rich human material. Simms was trying to do for his section of the country what Cooper had done for the North. He believed that Cooper was the first to awaken American writers to the fictional possibilities of the American scene. To him, as one of the early romantic novelists, the human and American materials could never be depleted. Political and social causes kept "his South" in isolation, and since her author was a native South Carolinian, Simms's romantic novels are characteristically southern. On his treatment of historical themes he said,

It is local, sectional and to be national in literature, one must needs be sectional.12

Simms's Writing Plan

The Partisan was projected by Simms as a sort of a ground plan on which he was to erect a subsequent series to comprise familiar events, habits, and manners.

11. Views and Reviews in American Literature, p. 311.
12. The Virgin and the Cabin, dedicatory epistle, p. 4.
He endeavored to maintain a proper historical connection among the revolutionary tales, corresponding to the several transitional periods of the Revolutionary War in South Carolina.

While *The Partisan* opened this series of seven novels with the fall of Charleston and the disheartening defeat of the first continental army under Gates at Camden, the second unit, *Walisbampa*, illustrated the interval between this event and the arrival of Greene with his poorly equipped and poorly trained second army; and was really intended to do honor to the intense patriotism of these scattered bands of slaves, swamp-suckers, plantation hands, and planters which still maintained a lively warfare against the foe among the swamps and thickets, not operating decisively for its rescue but rather keeping alive the spirit of the country.

Concerned as it was with the third period in the historical sequence, *Katherine Walton* was designed to close the careers of certain parties introduced to the

---

Left the enemy at the same time in such a weak condition
of military spirit as an event when, though a British victory,
foreordained the territory. The Coast cleared with the stage
and with the view to impress the people in various see-
and at the time to impress the people of the country.

Gen to make intellectual feel in the show but gradual ascension
of the territory when the sky policy of Greene be-
and orthogonally published under the name of The Athenian, had

The Coast, the next novel in the series of weird.

By presence.

which they had so long held possession became dangerous.

able to maintain their hold upon the strong places of

whole territory, the question whether they would be

insecure, and that, taking an over-all glance at the

the conflict was continued, that their confidence were

the third time, the British were made to understand that

This tale brought down the record to a period when, ter-
dual interest and their influence upon the General History.

In addition, dealt with certain events of great import-

cost, the spirit in which it was carried on, and,

Still's trilogy. It showed the fluctuations of the

Reader by The Persian and Wellington and to complete
as to render their short-lived triumph of little value.

The Forayers, the fifth in the series, is a departure from Simms's usual procedure in that it subordinates the historical narrative to a discussion of social conditions, conditions which under tensions of all sorts were continually shifting. Here Simms became novelist instead of historian.

In Eutaw, the sixth novel in the series, the battle of Eutaw Springs left little else to describe. Neither of the two great opposing parties was in a condition to undertake any bold enterprise, and the final capture of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown forced Great Britain to concede independence to the revolted colonies. That her colonies would rise into free states was quickly becoming a reality.

Woodcraft, the last in the series of seven, dealt with the period when peace was agreed upon, when the British army was about to evacuate Charleston, and when the Americans were crowding about their outposts eager to come in. The provisional articles of peace with King George III were signed at Paris on November 13, 1782.
The British forces in Charleston prepared to abandon the city early in the following December, an event which took place on the fourteenth of that month.

Sources of Information

Simms followed the best authorities he could find in his endeavor to pick out specific characteristics and illustrate the careers of his military figures. Some of these sources hitherto had never appeared in print. In addition, he read and consulted Joseph Johnson's *Traditions and Reminiscences of the American Revolution* (1851); the two-volume work entitled *Memoirs of the American Revolution* written by John Drayton and published in 1821; he carefully studied the two volumes of William Moultrie's *Memoirs of the American Revolution* (1802); he used David Ramsey's *History of the Revolution in South Carolina* which was published in 1785. These histories, even today, are recognized as being the chief authentic sources for the

early history of South Carolina. Though his treatment of certain textual chronicles (General Gates, for instance) may seem at times to be too harsh, nevertheless, these strictures are based upon authority. Though his revival of certain facts, however true, might have been questioned by readers of his own day as lacking in good taste, he regarded this attitude irrelevant, since he was more concerned with what future generations might say about his work than with the opinions of his contemporaries. He strongly believed that in certain instances the individual had to be made an example of for the benefit of the race. The disasters of the country, especially those which arise from obvious errors of its people, should be painted in the strongest possible colors. The people would then know how best to avoid future evils. By this means mistakes and misfortunes could be made contributing factors to an eventual triumph. In this way his novels could be made useful to both man and society.

17. Allan Nevins, The American States Luring and After the Revolution, 1775-1789, p. 667 (of these works only Johnson was available for this study.)

18. Views and Reviews in American Literature, p. 25.
Simms's Beliefs about History in His Writing

Simms was one of America's first highly equipped professional writers of romance. His "undiluted" historical themes were genuinely and originally American. He was a magnificent attempt to assist in the development of a home literature in the South, and he made every effort to aid an enterprise that in any way promised to develop southern literature.

Simms's first major work in the field of history was the first school History of South Carolina published in 1840. In 1917 Mrs. Mary Simms Oliphant, his granddaughter, revised the history and secured its adoption for the public schools of South Carolina by the State Board of Education. New editions were printed in 1918, 1922,

20. Ibid.
1932, and 1940. In addition to this work, Simms wrote his *South Carolina in the Revolutionary War* (1853), *The Lily and the Tutan*, or *The Insurrecients in Florida* (1853), and *The Rock and Destruction of the City of Columbia, to South Carolina* (1855).

As a biographer Simms made two contributions which are considered source material for the revolutionary history of his state. In 1844 his *Life of Francis Marion* was published, and in 1856 appeared his *Life of Nathanael Greene, Major-General in the Army of the Revolution*. Both of these works have a definite bearing upon South Carolina’s struggles between the years 1780-1782, the period covered by Simms’s revolutionary novels. His *Geography of South Carolina* was published in 1842, as a companion to his history, and *Father Abbot, or The Hong Territor*, another geography, was printed in 1849.

These foregoing titles amply indicate that Simms’s knowledge of local geography exerted an important influence

22. Ibid., pp. 105-108.
on his general treatment of history.

A single biography of Simms remains as the chief biographical source. In 1892 William Gilmore Simms, by William F. Trent, was issued by Houghton, Mifflin and Company in the American Men of Letters series. Despite the priority of the volume and the reputation of its author, Trent's study has been severely questioned, as is shown in the following judgment:

Although the author was grossly unjust to Simms, to Charleston, to South Carolina, and to the whole South, he filled the book with errors, misrepresentations, and displays of bitter prejudices. 24

In this work, however, Trent contributed a rather complete Simms bibliography which proved helpful to later scholars. The latest contribution toward this study, compiled over a period of sixty years, is the Catalogue of the Salley Collection of the Works of William Gilmore Simms, printed for A.S. Salley, Columbia, South Carolina, in 1943.

Reprints, essays, and addresses written and given by Simms, also form a special section of his works and

24. Ibid., preface, p. 5.
Portrays and presents an too rich to detail to be present of the historical authenticity. Of course, these
were through the course of a century is unforgettable
century. The fact that there's retention but retained
is to the indistinguishable worker of the early nineteenth
will resolve how understood trenchent century everybody
related (1830), that cover the same trend. These
The Revolutionary War and theMilitary Period of the
American Revolution, vol. 1, 1763-1776, 1901. John Pake. The
American Revolution, 1776-1783, 1904. John Pake. The
American Revolution, 1783-1795, 1904.
Kneen, then the American
original notion, I am substantiating for correspondence four words
In order to give new relationship items to an idea
of these appeared in southern newspapers and magazines.
Many about literature and history. Before publication many
understanding of these, especially in regard to the idea
particularly, offer additional information famed a letter
enough be left unnoticed. This editorial, much of it

16
used more than in outline or as general background, but in those two particulars, especially, they have proved invaluable to modern scholarship. In addition to Nevins, Schlesinger, Fiske, and Greene, Simms’s own *History of South Carolina* was used as was also his *Life of Francis Marion* and *Life of Nathanael Greene* to obtain information about specific historical characters. Reference has also been made to the *Official Correspondence between Brigadier-General Thomas Sumter and Major-General Nathanael Greene from 1780-1783* in order to check specific military information and action. This *Correspondence* forms a section of the *Year Book, City of Charleston, South Carolina, 1899.*

**Authenticity of Events in Plots of Revolutionary Romances**

In this particular section (pages 19-70) I wish to parallel the historical background as Simms presents it in his revolutionary novels with passages from modern, well-known historians, Arthur Meier Schlesinger, John Fiske, Francis V. Greene, and Allan Nevins. By a comparison of this kind, Simms’s reliability as a recorder of historical events can be clearly shown. For these historians not only went to the sources which Simms himself consulted, but drew heavily upon him, as is shown by their references in text, footnote, and bibliography. In the first event, by consulting these sources directly, they establish the fact that both they and Simms possessed a common confidence in what
they were doing; in the latter event, of course, they were revealing a confidence in Simms himself.

Though the narrative of The Partisan begins in the summer of 1780, Simms reminds his reader that it is necessary to go back to the beginning of the revolutionary campaign of 1779 in the North in order to get an adequate picture of the conditions influencing enemy action in the South, conditions which soon turned the invading British forces toward Charleston and the rich plantation lands of South Carolina.

At the opening of the 1779 campaign, according to Simms's own narrative, the British army was unable to make any decided impression, climate and topography offering few opportunities, and since the available wealth was no longer an inducement for further action, the invader gave up all hopes of effecting a conquest of the states north of Chesapeake Bay.

---

26. "When the war had been in progress for four years without producing any substantial results except the establishment of a base at New York, it was determined to make the South the principal theatre of operations, in the hope that if the North could not be subdued, at least its importance could be greatly diminished and its expansion prevented by restoring the Southern Colonies to British allegiance, and thus creating a barrier on the south similar to that of Canada on the north." Francis V. Greene, The Revolutionary War and the Military Policy of the United States, pp. 182-3.
In consequence, the British turned their attention to the southern states where the scattered population and greater wealth seemed to promise easier progress and abundant spoils. The northern armies, although engaged in decisive enterprises, afforded the employment of troops rather than the accomplishment of results.

The arrival of a strong fleet from England under the command of Arbuthnot enabled the already twice-defeated General Clinton to operate offensively by concentrating his power upon Charleston and the southern states. It was in December, 1779, that the British general with the best of his army sailed from New York to make his third attempt against the Confederacy. His plan, Simms reminds us, was to begin at the extremities and cut the country off state by state rather than strike at the center where his foe was more deeply concentrated. It must be remembered that the South, at no time, possessed such an army as was maintained during the whole war in and around the chief northern centers. Charleston, South Carolina's chief

---

27. Ibid., p. 205.
28. Ibid.
city, which stood an eight-week siege and suffered a
famine, fell to Clinton's forces on the twelfth day of
May, 1780. The city was overwhelmed by a vastly superior
force at the moment of her greatest weakness. Almost
all of her regular army assigned to her assistance had
become prisoners of war. The chief resistance thus
being broken, the invader immediately began to advance
into the very heart of South Carolina.

According to Simms, the fall of Charleston was
followed by a train of circumstances which exhausted the
spirits and resources of the country. Having accomplished
their first object, the British next wanted to secure the
general submission of the state. To this end the victors, marching
toward North Carolina, planted garrisons at prominent points of

p. 178.

30. "Sir Henry Clinton jubilantly wrote three
weeks later (June 4, 1780) from his headquarters in
Charleston, 'I may venture to assert that there are
few men in South Carolina who are not either our prison-
ers or in arms with us.' " Allan Nevins, *op. cit.*, p. 376.
the country during their progress. Their advance caused
the retreat of bodies of Americans which had gathered
for the purpose of relieving Charleston. The British
were triumphant everywhere. The state, without a domestic
government or without any provisions to supply its small
scattered bands of fighters, was despondent.

Dorchester, located about twenty miles from
Charleston, was one of the many military posts sufficiently
ly scattered for the general control of an extensive
territory. It was amply provided with munitions of
war, well fortified, and was garrisoned by large bodies
of troops under experienced officers. The people, under
British rule, generally put on a show of acquiescence
which few in reality felt and which many were secretly
but emphatically determined never to submit to.

These were the conditions existing in South Carolina
and Dorchester, the village which became the pivot for
patriotic deeds in Simms's novel, The Partisan, the first
in the series of his seven romances. These were the

discouraging circumstances under which the partisan warfare began. It is at this point in the early summer of 1780 that *The Partisan* picks up the thread of historical events which comprise the background of Simms's revolutionary tales.

The unrest and false patriotism in the citizens of Dorchester toward the English crown, and portrayed by Simms, started a general hatred for the British, a feeling greatly enhanced when General Clinton, commander of Charleston and the southern British forces, issued a military proclamation affecting the life of each citizen. This order while denouncing all who continued in arms, offered pardon for past offenses and a reinstatement of all former privileges. Able men were given twenty days to fight for the crown or else be treated as rebels. The British needed more troops

---

32. "The British commander could hardly have taken a more injudicious step. Under the first proclamation, many of the people were led to comply with the British demands because they wished to avoid fighting altogether; under the second, a neutral attitude became impossible, and these lovers of peace and quiet, when they found themselves constrained to take an active part on one side or the other, naturally preferred to help their friends rather than their enemies." John Fiske, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
to start their proposed campaign into North Carolina and Virginia. Citizens incendiary cried vengeance for the many crimes the enemy, both British and Tory, committed against them. One of the main characters in *The Partisan* expresses this attitude in the following outburst:

"I'd rather eat acorns, ... and sleep in the swamps in August, than hush my tongue when I feel that it's right to speak. They can't crow over me, though I die for it ... flesh and blood can't stand their persecutions. There's no chance for life, let alone property." 33

The murder of innocent Mrs. Freampton by a British dragoon in the ranks of Mass, the infamous Tory captain, was a story of brutality -- which in the fierce Tory warfare in the South, when neighbors fought neighbors was almost a daily occurrence. These events poured fuel upon the fire of hatred which slowly drove the Carolinians to take up arms against their detested foe.

---


34. "They (the British) had hanged many opponents, especially men charged with violating paroles, they had 'burnt a prodigious number of houses, and turned a vast many women, almost naked, into the woods'; in short they seemed determined 'to break every man's spirit, or, if they can't, to ruin him.' But the spirit of South Carolina was not to be broken. With surprising rapidity an effective partisan resistance was begun." Allan Nevins, *op. cit.*, p. 376.
As Simms mentions in *The Partisan* the British treatment of Carolina as a conquered province provoked the spirit of determined resistance, starting partisan warfare which blurred and spread quickly throughout the entire territory. Against many difficulties the partisans supplied themselves with arms and ammunition, and when victorious relied upon the dead for the ammunition for the next campaign. The men from Lorchester formed only one of the many small squads that rose in arms in every part of the state; they fought the British and Tories whenever there was prospect of success, and they pressed from one place to another wherever they heard of an enemy party. It was not long after the fall of Charleston, however, that these groups began to reap the first small rewards of their efforts.

They were tremendously encouraged by the news that not only were they to be furnished with weapons and munitions but that a regular army led by General Gates, the hero of Saratoga, was coming to assist them. This news, music to patriot ears, forced the British to take

---

indiscriminate action in order to effect complete sub-
mission before Gates arrived. This fury, Sims reveals,
only caused more southerners to join the ranks of the par-
tisans and increased the zeal in those who valued liberty
above all else. For months their only shelter was the
woods and swamps, and hardened by exposure, they left
their hiding places when the enemy least expected them.
They cautiously sent from thicket to thicket; they hung
upon the flanks of the British when they were on the march;
they shot down enemy sentries — always taking a bloody
toll whenever the enemy entered their territory, a toll
which even included Captain Travis, a coadjutor of Huck,
the loyalist, whose name had become associated with some
of the most cruel atrocities during the Revolution.

It was in this manner that Sims introduced his
historical background to form the foundation for his
series of seven novels. It strengthened the thread of
his narrative, and from it he created many of his char-
acters. The activities of Colonel Richard Walton, the
considerate southern gentleman and father of Katherine.

37. History of South Carolina, p. 255.
who will be mentioned in connection with subsequent
novels, form a part of this narrative. At the beginning
of the war, Colonel Walton commanded a cavalry troop
and fought the British under Prevost. He offered to
submit shortly after the fall of Charleston when Clinton
and Arbuthnet named him peace commissioner, his chief
duty being that of restoring harmony in the revolted
colony. This called for nothing but neutrality from
the inhabitants; therefore, it assured Walton without
subjecting him to military duties which the British had
a perfect right to ask. He settled down at "The Oaks,"
his plantation, where he lived with his daughter, Katherine,
and niece, Emily Singleton, and enjoyed a secluded and
quiet home life. Notified by the commander of the Der-
chester post that the new proclamation issued by Clinton
allowed him only twenty days to take up arms for the crown,
the colonel became angry at the enemy's dishonorable
actions and lies and refused to submit. Swearing that
he would never fight his countrymen, he left his home
to join the fighting partisans.

38. Prevost was the British commander who tried
unsuccessfully to obtain the surrender of Charleston in
It was shortly after Colonel Walton's decision that news about Lord Rawdon, the British commander, reached camp. Communications between enemy military posts had been cut down by parties of raiding Americans, and now only the posts of Ninety-Six, Camden, and Augusta were occupied by the British. Slowly Rawdon evacuated the minor garrisons and drew his men and material into these remaining outposts. Hearing that Gates was on his way to attack his position, he concentrated his strength in the best defensive areas.

In the swamps the news of Rawdon's maneuvers had reached the band of patriots. Dispersing a body of Tories under Gainey at Britton's Neck, Marion continued to harass Tory and British outposts and communication lines so that the enemy would continue to withdraw troops from out-of-the-way positions.

In midsummer the news of the approach of seven 39 thousand Continentals (an exaggerated number) led by

39. "Gates was at Rugely's Hills, thirteen miles north of Camden, with a force which he imagined numbered 7,000 men, but in reality, as his adjutant-general informed him on the following morning, numbered 3,052 present fit for duty." Francis V. Greene, op. cit., p. 216.
Gates spread widely in South Carolina. Such assurance, Simms mentions, helped to stir even the lukewarm Americans who had not yet begun to fight. As for the general run of the people, they were highly excited, gathering in small squads throughout the colony, whispering the name of Gates. In the meantime, other victories by Sumter in the up-country; Marion on the Pee Dee; Pickens with his newly organized cavalry; of Butler, Horry, James throughout the various sections of the state, kept alive the ferment. Smaller successes nearer home greatly bolstered morale. Hostilities began in remote areas where fighting never before had taken place. Upon hearing news of this recent promotion and plan of General Gates, the Black River country was up in insurrection. This was Marion's province, and it was largely through his efforts that such a widespread outbreak was begun.

At this juncture a little group of partisans around Dorchester, headed by Major Robert Singleton, temporarily moved from under cover of the swamps to join Colonel Marion who was gathering his guerilla forces in anticipation of Gates's arrival.
Colonel Walton, the loyal partisan, was on the alert. His troop, having easy movement without baggage wagons and prisoners, pushed forward toward the borders of North Carolina where this leader hoped to join forces with the continental of Maryland and Virginia under the Baron de Kalb. Walton resolved to offer his personal services to his friend, Gates, whom he had known in Virginia before the war.

While enroute to this predetermined meeting place where Gates was to assume supreme command, followers of Major Singleton heard the story of Amos Gaskena, a Tory, who had raised a party and was devastating the neighborhood of St. Stephens and St. Johns, Berkley. Gaskena was the scourge of this section, and history recorded many of his terrible deeds. His party fell into a partisan ambush, and after a brief struggle the Tories were dispersed, prisoners freed, and Gaskena himself killed. To the partisans war was always a duty, never a pleasure, since after all Tories were brother colonials. Nevertheless the loyalists under Fyles, Husek, Tynes, and Harrison


41. *The Partisan*, p. 381. This cannot be authenticated by works cited.
continued to molest the patriots whenever their scouts were able to locate American positions.

After the encounter with Gaskens, Singleton's followers finally effected their meeting with Marion's brigade to march toward a union with Gates.

According to the narrative of The Partisan, this union (August 15, 1780) was a relief to his predecessor, the brave German soldier, Baron de Kalb. Not only were there no provisions, but the militia came in slowly and in unimportant numbers. Despite these handicaps, however, Gates was not discouraged. Near of their march, the soldiers received none of the provisions Gates had promised them at the outset. To make matters worse, Marion's brigade, made up as it was of Negroes, boys, and men, was the object of great excitement on the part of the Continentals who, in contrast, provided some kind of a military spectacle, for they were well mounted, despite poor attire and inadequate equipment.

42. "Gates found things in a most deplorable state: lack of arms, lack of tents, lack of food, lack of medicines, and, above all, lack of money. The all-pervading neediness which in those days beset the American people, through their want of an efficient government, was never more thoroughly exemplified. It required a very different man from Gates to mend matters." John Finke, op. cit., p. 187.
Lacking the imagination of a great leader, Gates was indifferent toward the service proffered him by Marion, laying more emphasis on the appearance of the brigade and its leader than he did on the past achievements and ability of the "Swamp Fox." According to Simms, Marion was not allowed to employ his troops with the main army, being given only minor duties while the main force continued its way to meet Lord Rawdon at Camden. The army pressed forward, ignorant of its course, unconscious of the steps they were taking. In contrast, the precautions taken by the British general, Rawdon, were timely and well-judged. His command was very shortly delivered into yet able hands, for with the approach of the southern army, Cornwallis, with a part of his garrison from Charleston, set forth from Camden. Though lacking in intelligence about the enemy, Gates continued his advance against the advice of

43. "His movements were not known to Rawdon, who commanded at Camden. He called in his outlying detachments, reported the facts to Cornwallis and urged him to come in person with reinforcements from Charleston. Cornwallis did so, and arrived at Camden three days before the battle." Francis V. Greene, op. cit., pp. 513-16.
friends. To further prove his ineptitude, Simms mentions that he accepted the information of a British spy sent to him from Camden, never once doubting what the stranger said. Even though only a few hours' march separated him from the scene, he did not know that his rival was not Rawdon but Cornwallis. Self-confidence blinded him.

On the fifteenth of August, 1780, the two armies met. Though the ill-trained and poorly equipped soldiers of the South fought bravely, the odds were against them from the beginning. With not too great difficulty Cornwallis led his regulars through the American lines, and in the consequent wild confusion the patriots forgot the little they knew about warfare. The melee ended with the death of de Kalb. Camden was a complete victory for the

44. "De Kalb was an experienced soldier, and he had carefully studied the situation and formed a definite, careful plan of operations. It was submitted to Gates, with the approval of all the senior officers. But Gates declined to consider it and forthwith issued an order for the army to march immediately against Camden, the principal British post." Ibid., p. 215.

45. "But strange as it might seem, a day and a night passed by, and Gates had not yet learned that Cornwallis had arrived, but still supposed he had only Rawdon to deal with." John Fiske, op. cit., p. 190.
British who dispersed Gates's army, inflicting heavy 46
losses in dead, wounded, and prisoners. Colonel
Marion heard the news of the defeat from an escapee, as
he was still performing his piddling duties. Undeterred,
he continued his warfare in the swamps.

The second novel in the series, Melishamps,
continued one of the suspended threads of events which
formed the plot of The Partisan. The fatal defeat of
Gates lost everything in the shape of stores, baggage, and artillery. Every article was to be supplied anew,
and Congress had no money. The rest of the Americans was
complete. Not one company retired in order, every
trooper escaped as he could. In another section of
Carolina, Hunter's forces were dispersed by cavalry
under Tarleton. The town of Dorchester was burned
to the ground, the single ray of hope being that
Colonel Walton was rescued from the British who had

46. Francis V. Greene, op. cit., p. 218.
47. Ibid.
48. "Another staggering British blow, already
alluded to, was delivered a few days later against Hunter
at Fishing-Creek. For the moment North Carolina believed
that the war was lost, and some Britons that it was won ..."
Allan Nevins, op. cit., p. 378.
captured him at Camden. By this time Marion, having made
a name for himself, was commissioned a general by Governor
Rutledge. The most wealthy and populous portions of
the state were assigned to the "Swamp Fox" as his charge;
the portion which, even though under complete control
of the invader, afforded the wooded retreats with which
the partisans had been familiar. A feeling of optimism
permeated the British ranks, optimism such as that shown
in a speech of a British officer:

"This last licking of Sumter and the wholesale
defeat of Gates, have pretty well done up the
rebels in this quarter. Georgia has been long
shut up, and North Carolina will only wake up to
find her legs fastened. As for Virginia, if
Cornwallis goes on at the present rate, he'll
straddle her quite in two weeks more. No! I
think that rebellion is pretty nigh wound up!
and, if we can catch the 'Swamp Fox', or find
out where he hides, I'll contrive we shall have
no more difficulty from him." 49

Marion's band was feeble, consisting of small groups
from the lower country which had seen little regular
service. However, though few in number and lacking in

49. Hellichampe, p. 49. This optimism may also
authenticated by Fiske. "Cornwallis, flushed with victory,
boasted that he would soon conquer all of the country
south of the Susquahanna. For the moment it began to
look as if Lord George Germain's policy of tiring the
Americans out might prove successful, after all." John
Fiske, op. cit., p. 196.
resources, catching the spirit of their leader, they were never inactive. *Mehlischamps* reveals that promptness and surprise were their essential tactics. Their leader risked nothing. He hung about the enemy, secured intelligence, obstructed military actions whenever and wherever possible, and cut off unwary detachments. By such maneuvers the partisans continued to maintain a haphazard position along the Santee river. Utterly unfurnished with war equipment, they even converted into sabers the saws taken from S1 mills. They engaged in battle when they did not have three rounds of powder for the man. They came into the sight of the foe, simply to tease the British into action and thus scatter enemy forces, and yet the entire group did not have more than seventy-five men, sometimes only one-third that number.

The Tories made up the main part of the enemy force in this section of Carolina. Led by Barstfield and Tarleton, Tory and British officers, they ravaged both plantation and village. It was one of these groups,

---

50. "To distress the enemy in legitimate warfare was a business in which few partisan commanders have excelled him." *Ibid.* p. 183.


led by Barstield, which the partisans met in sharp conflict, routing them and even slaying Barstield's assistant. Gabriel Marion, nephew of the "Fox," likewise fell in the conflict. With a large detachment Tarleton vainly continued to pursue Marion. Unable to engage him, he changed his course and started after Sumter, whom he named the "Game Cock." Tarleton continued his chase, while Marion's forces returned to their swamp retreats to await the coming of General Nathanael Greene, the new successor to Gates.

These events bring the reader to the story which is continued in Katherine Walton, the third romance in the series, and the one which completes the trilogy as it was first designed by Simms. The narrative of Katherine Walton opens early in September, 1780, not long after the defeat of Gates at Camden, a defeat which, as previously indicated, was almost a disaster. The treatment of American prisoners was atrocious, many

---

54. Ibid., p. 279.
being executed upon the slightest pretext or severely
punished on questionable testimony. The escape of Col-
nel Walton at Dorchester and the burning of the village
angered Colonel Balfour, the commandant of Charleston,
driving him to seek reprisal. Major John Proctor, Dor-
chester post commandant and unsuccessful lover of Katherine
Walton, was blamed for the escape. By this time seeds
of dissension had been sown within the higher ranks of
the British army. Dissension largely created by individ-
uals interested more in their own personal gains than
in the welfare of the Empire. As early as 1780 the accused
Proctor foretold the eventual outcome of the Revolution:

"Great Britain is destined to lose her colonies.
She is already almost exhausted in the contest.
Her resources are consumed. Her debt is enormous.
Her expenses are hourly increasing. She can get
no more subsidies of men from Germany, and her
Irish recruits desert her almost as soon as they
reach America. Her ministers would have abandoned
the cause before this, but for the encouragement
held out by the native loyalists."88

The difficulties of supply and demand were too great.
The War, according to Proctor, could not last much longer.

88. Katherine Walton, p. 121.
"The vast tract of sea which spreads between this country and Europe is itself sufficient security. To transport troops, arms, and provisions across this tract is, in each instance, the equivalent to the loss of a battle." 57

Simms related that in September of 1780, when Greene superseded Gates in command of the southern army, he faced a serious situation, for he brought with him no troops, and his new army "was rather a shadow than a substance." In all, it consisted of less than two thousand troops who were without pay, clothing, tents, or blankets. 58

While Gates and Greene were recruiting new forces, Marion and the other partisan commanders were likewise busy achieving victories, which, although minor, nevertheless, not only increased the reputation of the patriot leaders, but raised the morale of their men. On the other hand, perhaps more important events took place elsewhere.

57. Ibid.


59. "It is a great misfortune that the little force we have is in such a wretched state for the want of clothing. More than one-half of our numbers are naked, so much so, that we cannot put them on the least kind of duty. Indeed there is a great number that have not any clothes on them, except a little piece of a blanket in the Indian form around their waists." Official Letters of Maj.-Gen. Nathanael Greene. Yearbook, City of Charleston, S.C., 1899, pp. 76-7.
superiors, they demanded their honor as did the public
strongly believed in false societal characterization. Nevertheless,

apart from her status, floated like a distant star. On her;

the group that was portrayed in Kershiro's novel, at character-

stage influence influenced by military action, a military escape-

within the walls of character; fermentation and a combat

imperial, fell into the hands of the party;

troops killed, wounded, or taken, lieutenant, the enemy

mutilated properly driven by lieutenant, the enemy

will disheartened the toy captain's furnace, led a

bit long after the instant, the situation

by concentrating to act on a permanent shift in the battle

gradually distancing of English power, he returned to the fold.

city in an employment of the enemy, latter remaining the

bit long after the instant, lack up with vitality within the walls of the

the Brits were loggers, John, after the evacuation

and gathered the stories of several that crossed the area and

imparted moments. Right on this action, the captured

gathered important information regarding Brits: escape

of a British officer, in and about the city of Charleston,

when the situation of fortune, Brits, under the determined
of the Middle Ages. Their hospitality was lavish, and abundance, even during wartime, was a prime requisite of every entertainment. Though complacent, Charleston was never barbarous, for she possessed a picturesque civilization marked by charm of mind and manners. On the one hand, were the fashionable Rivingtons, Smiths, Harveys, Campbells -- those who had much in common and who through their wealth, social status, and feelings, were closely attached to English society. On the other hand, were the Cademans, Savages, Edwards, Fergusons, Finckneys, Eilott -- names allied with dignity and patriotism. Charleston was never without her social affairs, not even during the bitterest period covered by this study. This society was the foundation of ante bellum Charleston. Later this same society consistently enabled or disregarded the attempts of anyone outside its narrow clique to effect changes in social policy. It was this same society that was to break the heart of Simmons, Charleston's greatest man of letters.

While performing his military duties in the outskirts of the city, General Williamson was taken prisoner.

by Colonel Walton who did not know the general had been convinced by Singleton to act as a spy for the American cause. Everywhere the loyalists were in alarm over the capture of Williamson, but the patriots in the city were keyed to a high degree of exaltation. Immediately the British cavalry was sent to rescue the captive. Surprising the partisan camp, they succeeded in recapturing Williamson and at the same time took Colonel Walton prisoner.

Having fallen in love with Katherine Walton, Colonel Balfour, the British commander in Charleston, demanded her hand in marriage as the only possible means of releasing her father. While under oath to her father, she refused the commander's offer until the time when Colonel Walton was prepared for his execution. When she did consent, she was too late; her father had paid the penalty. In the last paragraph of Katherine Walton, Sims clearly reveals his method of treating the above historical incident:

It may be well to mention that, in our progress, we have dealt largely with real historical personages. Our facts have mostly been drawn from the living records. Our dialogues, our incidents, our portraits, have mostly a traditional, if not an historical origin. We may add that many of the details in the narrative of Colonel Walton have been borrowed from those in the career of the celebrated Colonel Hayne. It was Hayne who
the general increase, caution, and courage, keep the
judgment that the country later was to pave open
general cause, doomed and disappointed. This to March
considered by the fee to be under complete control
drawn out of the other occasions, and thereof there were
British heart; became the reason for all the longevity
strive, youth, caution, and caution, completely under the
accorded to be deferred the time and the article. According to
money, experience, training, and even policy, the sooner may
at the time, were left to carry an unengaged handker. Looking
their men and materials to the southern causes united
as an unnecessary endeavor, almost wholly transferred
with England. The money, leaving the northern causes
In the ardent, marked the ending of five years of war
The opening chapters of The Earl, the Fourth March
the type of living assistance; the greater of the execution are gathered from
endurance given in the case of military and
experience; he pleaded and gathered under the very
work; friends or themselves, as described in any
bring out the essence of our
with the bare fragments of his army he could expect nothing except disaster unless he baffled his opponents. Time alone could bring victory. Every delay increased his own ranks at the same time decreasing those of his opponents. Simms infers the reader that small bands kept filtering in from bordering states to offer their assistance. North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware began to shake themselves free from the British yoke. Still more daringly the partisans continued to leave their hiding places to prey upon their adversaries. Gradually, after many defeats, the American troops began to lose their timidity, and by their indecisive yet brilliant attacks, raised the hopes of Greene.

The British forces under Ferguson, one of their ablest partisan commanders, were annihilated at King's Mountain. At Cowsden the invincible Tarleton was beaten by Morgan with his greatly inferior army. In The Scout Simms reveals that Mariam

64. John Fiske, _op. cit._, pp. 247-8.
65. _Ibid._, p. 255.
fought the enemy in the swamps in the southernmost parts of the state, while Sumter, in a chain of rapid actions in the middle country, seriously impaired the strength of smaller enemy parties which were scattered throughout the entire territory in an effort to suppress native resistance. Thus in South Carolina the turn of affairs changed rapidly for the better as the panic following Gates' debacle wore off. Though forced from the field at Guilford, after several days Greene turned upon his opponent, Cornwallis, and chased him out of the state.

After the exit of Cornwallis, Lord Rawdon again took command defeating Greene at Hobkirk's Hill, a fruitless victory, however. Though losses were about equal on both sides, the Americans had a slight advantage in that they gained the sympathy of the surrounding inhabitants. At this time the struggle between the Whigs and the Tories was at its height. No attention was paid either to sex or age. Fire and murder were the

two chief principles of warfare as invader and invaded
tore at each other like wild beasts.

The entire territory was overrun by bands of out-
laws coming from the borders of Georgia or the wilds of
Florida to a place where there was almost a complete absence
of civil authority. Mounted on horses, these renegades,
as portrayed in The Scout, swept the entire state, first
operating on the Savannah, then descending the Pee Dee. The
more the inhabitants suffered from these roving marauders,
the more they gathered in small defensive groups until al-
most all of South Carolina was up in arms. This dark
period marked, perhaps, the severest trials the state
was to experience.

As time drew near to the closing battles of the
Revolution, many of the Tories, converted to the patriot
cause, displayed their bravery fighting on the popular

68. The Scout, p. 15.

69. “Fouder and depredation prevail...so in every
quarter I am not a little apprehensive all this Country
will be laid waste. Most people appear to be in pursuit
of private gain or personal glory.” Letters of Maj.-Gen.
Nathanael Greene, p. 74.
side. Simms wrote as fellows about the reasons for individual and group differences:

The Revolutionary War in South Carolina, did not so much divide the people, because of the tendencies to loyalty, or liberty, on either hand, as because of social and other influences—personal and sectional funds—natural enough to a new country in which one-third of the people were of foreign birth.70

The foregoing discussion of the general background of The Scout prepares us for a more detailed analysis of its plot. This fourth book in the series opened with the excursions of the group of Tories, the Black Riders of the Congaree, who ravaged the entire countryside during the critical period of the early 1780's. While they pursued personal and petty plunder on the Wateree, Lord 71Random fled Camden, leaving it in flames. Sumter's

70. The Scout, p. 159.
71. See i.n. 69.
72. "The fall of Fort Watson, breaking Random's communication with the coast made it impossible for him to stay where he was. On the 10th of May the British general retreated rapidly, until he reached Monk's Corner, within thirty miles from Charleston; and the all-important post of Camden, the first great prize of the campaign, fell into Greene's hands." John Fiske, op. cit., p. 264.
forces surrounded Orangeburg; Marion and his men effected the surrender of Fort Hotte; the British evacuated their post at Nelson's Ferry. The only fortified possession they held was the one at Ninety-Six, a station of extreme importance to the enemy in the back country, which, accordingly, they planned to defend until the very end.

In comparison to the petty spoils that fell into the hands of the Black Riders, their dangers were plentiful and immediate -- as many that they became discouraged, thinking their leader had bungled. Thus the patriots were by no means the only fighting group that was having difficulties.

After a brief skirmish with the British, the

---

73. "Victories followed now in quick succession. Within three weeks Lee and Marion had taken Fort Hotte and Fort Granby, Sumter had taken Orangeburg, and on the 5th of June, Augusta surrendered to Lee, thus throwing open the state of Georgia." Ibid.

74. "Determined not to lose this last hold upon the interior, and anxious to crush his adversary in battle, if possible, Hamden collected all the force he could, well-nigh stripping Charleston of its defenders." Ibid., p. 363.
partisans under Colonel Conway, half-brother of the leader of the Black Riders, pressed forward with increased speed for Ninety-Six to prepare General Greene for the coming of fresh British troops to be used to assist Colonel Cruizer in defending his post. According to Simms, Ninety-Six was well garrisoned, being the most valuable of all the posts in the state. To secure it against attack was essential, since it not only offered communication with the Indians, but checked the Whig settlements in the west and at the same time protected the loyalists in the north, south, and east. In addition, it was a depot for recruits drawn into the fold from the neighboring areas.

Colonel Cruizer, an American loyalist, was in command of the post. Calling in the help of neighboring slaves, he soon completed a ditch around the stockade to facilitate safe communication between various points of defense. For defense, Cruizer chose a select group

75. Francis V. Greene, op. cit., p. 250.
of about six hundred, many of them riflemen of the first
quality.

With the aid of the celebrated Polish patriot,
Kosciuszko, Greene started his siege with an inadequate
force. The siege itself, one of the most critical events of
the southern war, described by Simms, had lasted about a
month when Colonel Conway, the partisan leader, joined
the besiegers. All methods to force surrender were used
while the enemy’s provisions were fast being depleted. This
loss could not be sustained long; the fall of the
garrison was imminent. Conway, on his arrival, warned
Greene of Rasdon’s approach, much to the consternation
of the attackers, for the fort was on the verge of
79 capitulation. After one more desperate attempt

77. "This place had been elaborately and somewhat
curiously fortified with stockades and deep ditches. Its
garrison numbered 550 men, a Tory regiment from New York,
another from New Jersey and some South Carolina loyalists.
Cruger made a spirited defence." Francis V. Greene, pp.
615., p. 250.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid., pp. 250-1.
In the face of all this, the Roman empire, at least, and Italy appears to have remained firmly committed to its Roman heritage. The Roman provinces took place almost entirely within the empire at this time. The operations of the Britons in

Great Britain, though well intentioned,

in invading any new territory engaged or occupied by the Romans. The empire was exalted, and the military forces, prepared to reinforce the British

were in the hands of the partisans, and those that remained connected with British sentiment had by this time fallen

overboard with the country. The country was in a state of general distress, unrest, and rebellion. The part of Kent was abandoned immediately.

The part of Kent was abandoned immediately.

The part of Kent was abandoned immediately.
In this area Lord Rawdon proposed to hold his forces for any attack that the patriots might launch at anytime. However, the total concentration of his troops was still inadequate, for Greene offered his battle on the Edisto. Humiliated by his defeat, Rawdon finally turned his command over to Colonel Stewart after a short stay in the vicinity of Orangeburg and then retired inside the walls of Charleston.

At the time of Stewart’s promotion, the numerical strength of the British and American forces was nearly equal; Stewart’s numbered between 1500 to 2000 while Greene’s was fully 2000. Although Greene had no regular infantry, he was more than a match for his opponent in cavalry. Simms mentions that there was no better cavalry anywhere, and it grew more numerous daily by accessions from the country gentry.

82. Ibid., p. 252.

83. "Greene had 2,300 men of whom 1,254 were continentals and the rest militia. Stewart had an equal number, but all veterans; 6 regiments — 3d, 63d, 64th, Grenadiers, New York Volunteers and New Jersey volunteers." Ibid., p. 254.
Unwilling to fight except on his own terms, Greene was still in no condition to invite hostility. On the other hand, Stewart, weighted down with his new responsibilities, was afraid to take the chance of any bold action. Meanwhile Rawdon, still in Charleston and sensing the plight of Stewart, gathered a small force and marched toward Orangeburg in order eventually to effect a meeting with his successor. Though Rawdon was soon to be strengthened by Cruger's retreating army, these reinforcements had not arrived as yet, and Cruger might even have been cut off by Pickens, one of the most famous of the partisans of Carolina. Fortunately, for the British, however, Pickens's cavalry was too tired to continue pursuit, and thus Cruger was allowed to continue unmolested.

The partisans under the commands of Marion, Sumter, Pickens, Lee, Mahan, Hampton, Horry, Tayler, and many others were allowed to respite. Throughout the entire spring and early summer of 1781, their cavalry was kept in motion, inflicting defeat whenever and wherever possible.

84. Ibid., p. 252.
The above events form the background intervening between the narratives of *The Scout* and *The Farawyer*.

*The Farawyer*, the fifth in the series of the seven revolutionary romances, picks up the history at this point of the struggle.

In contrast to others in the series, this novel subordinates historical background to social events which, strange as it may seem, contributed greatly to South Carolina's internal troubles, owing largely to the many diverse social and temperamental elements in the people themselves. For instance, the first settlers, coming to the low country as early as 1701, founded their settlements, not together, but in separate colonies. Here in one place were the Scotch, loyal and stubborn. In another section lived the Irish, enthusiastic yet seldom loyal to English domination. Among these larger units were scattered settlements of Quakers, rigid of habit, unaccommodating, desiring little social union except among themselves. German, Swiss, and French, regarding each other with unfriendly eyes, settling in small groups, did not

---

participate in common purposes. According to The Foreyers, the country from settlement to settlement was marked by the old, narrow Indian footpaths which were the only roads the settlers had. A large number of these settlers were graziers who kept great herds of cattle. Large bodies of wild land, sometimes many miles remote from their own settlements, were taken up and established as pastures. A naturally selfish policy made the owners hostile to the approach of new settlers, for each additional colony abridged the open range. Thus, many of the problems arising in this long stretch of partisan struggle were the result of disinterested or even disunited groups. To increase dissension were the slaves, the poor whites, the plantation laborers, and planters, all with interests too diverse to form a stable whole.

Throughout many chapters in The Foreyers, Simms expresses his ideas on society. Willie Sinclair, in his discussion of his love for Bertha Travis with his sister Carrie, is Simms's mouthpiece for expressing his

86. Ibid., p. 145.
own views

No one, more highly than myself, esteems the claims of social castes. It is a natural condition, and rightly possesses authority; but, God forbid! that I should sullenly and sternly reject the occasional individual whose personal claims put him above his condition in society! He has received from nature his badges of mobility, and society is simply ridiculous when it opposes itself to the credentials which some patent from the hand of God Himself! Be assured that, in all such conflicts, the class refusing to acknowledge the individual only proves itself unworthy, and peril all the securities upon which it prides itself. 97

The warfare between Whig and Tory continued unabated, each trying to get the upper hand in the control of not only the spoils of their plunder, but also the feelings of the people in the territory of their activities. The Tory band under “Hellfire” Dick of Tophet continued to drive cattle belonging to plantation owners to places where it could sell them for its own private needs. The citizens suffered, but little could be done to alleviate the crisis. Many landowners were forced to abandon their homes and join either the

97. The Foragers, p. 97.
partisan or Tory bands or lose all their possessions and perhaps even their lives. One example was Colonel William Sinclair, a natural aristocrat, a southern gentleman of the old school, a loyalist whose son had joined the patriots. It was the plan of "Hell-Fire" Dick and his band to surround Sinclair's Barony and seize what property they could.

The supreme commander of the British forces, Lord Rawdon, unable to effect a meeting with Colonel Stewart, at this time fully engaged with the foraging parties of Marion and Sumter, marched his remaining detachment toward Orangeburg. Still retreating from Ninety-Six, Colonel Cruger, too, was marching to Orangeburg to join Stewart. On the 18th day of July, 1781, Stewart reached Orangeburg after suffering minor rear-column defeats by Marion's troopers. Though not finding it
difficult to repel the patriots or keep them at a distance, Stewart could not shake them off. Greene, lacking infantry and proper arms, ordered his men to withdraw from the vicinity of Orangeburg after hearing of Gruger’s approach to assist Rawdon.

Such was the situation as pictured by Simms when the partisan leaders and Governor Rutledge met to plan their strategy, a strategy which was shortly to compel the enemy to abandon all remaining interior posts — Orangeburg, Rutan, Wantoot, Watboo, Biggin, Monk’s Corner. When Rutledge suggested that the plan be carried out the following mid-summer, his proposal was seconded by General Greene and all of the other leaders. Since this combined action was to take place in the hottest part of the season, the movement was known as the Raid of the Dog Days. The united council ended with the memorable frog and alligator feast prepared and served by Captain Forgy who, according to one critic, is the most interesting fictional character in the seven novels of this series.

89. History of South Carolina, p. 319.

On the 13th of July the army was in motion. On the 14th Sumter's detachments (he was to command the campaign) swept into the low country, driving the scattered enemy behind the walls of Charleston.

The above circumstances formed the background for *Eulenspiegel*, the next to the last novel of the revolutionary series. The Americans continued their small but forceful advances which cut down enemy territory hit by hit. In the meantime, while loyalist renegades ravaged the territory, the British attempted to concentrate their forces in order to withstand this unexpected and concentrated drive. The situation was by this time becoming so severe that even Lord Rawdon, in his talk with the loyalist Colonel Sinclair, felt that the war was soon to end:

"Nothing that could occur tells more unfavorably for the British cause than these two facts — the defection of old friends, and the rising of those, at this moment, who have hitherto been content to remain in quiet under our protection. It argues, in both cases, a growing conviction of our declining power."

Greene had withdrawn his tired army to the Santee Hills for a much-needed rest, leaving the low country

between Orangeburg and Charleston (the only places supposedly unassailable still held by the British) to Sumter and the other patriot leaders and their men. According to Simm's narrative, Lee's troops took Dorchester where they found large booty of horses, stores, and fixed ammunition. At the same time Henry Hampton captured the post at Four-Holes bridge. Wade Hampton pressed toward Goose-Creek bridge, destroying the post at that place and cutting communication between Dorchester and Monk's Corner. Unable to effect a meeting with Sumter, Hampton continued his successful advance toward the outskirts of Charleston, giving the garrison an unpleasant scare, for it was never more inadequately prepared than at this moment. But the outskirts was as far as he got, since General Greene's forces were too poorly

92. "Greene gave his little army six weeks' rest in the comparatively salubrious region of the Santee Hills. During that time he received some fresh levies from North Carolina, carrying his strength to something over 2,000 men. He then resumed the offensive, and marched to attack Stewart." Francis V. Greene, op. cit., p. 254.

93. This entire action is fully cited in a letter to Greene. Sumter headed the letter, "Camp at Fawve Fonds, Santee, 22nd, July, 81.", Letters of Brig.-Gen. Thomas Sumter, pp. 45-6.
equipped and tired to come to his assistance. Unwilling to risk an attempted attack on the city with his small group, Hampton retreated to again join with Sumter in an endeavor to drive the foe out of Biggini. Seeing the danger in the ever-increasing numbers of patriots, the British, under Coates, hurried their accumulated supplies, and before the arrival of the patriots, escaped by a route that Sumter had left unsevered. Pursuing, Lee and Haynes met the British at Quimby bridge where the enemy submitted after stiff resistance. The victors captured much booty including the British war chest and a large number of stores. The assault on Quimby was made on the 17th of July, about four weeks after the relief of the siege of Ninety-Six. This expedition, though not as successful as it might have been, for Coates's entire force might have been captured, was an important victory as it inspired the country with confidence in its native valor.

Meanwhile, Coates needed the reinforcements that Lord Rawdon himself brought to him from Charleston. With a part of his own detachment Rawdon strengthened Coates. On his way back to Charleston he reoccupied

Dersherster and sent the garrison a strong body for its protection. He restored all the posts which the "forayers" had captured recently, and, satisfied that Greene was still unable to move against him, took for granted that Colonel Stewart would be able to maintain control of the British posts. He did all that was in his power to put the British cause in good condition before he left the country.

Being starved out of his post at Orangeburg, Colonel Stewart with an estimated 2300 troops evacuated his post and set out with the hope of finding better rations or perhaps of contacting Greene, who, though gaining in the number of his troops was yet very weak. By forced marches, Stewart hurried south from the Congaree and took position at Eutaw Springs where his troops, now thoroughly concentrated, numbered close to 3000 men. In perfect security, as he thought, he did not anticipate the union of Marion and Greene. Greene's army, by its rest, had gained both in health and morale. Strengthened by Pickens and Lee, Greene now resolved to give Stewart battle.

95. John Fiske, op. cit., p. 266.
Simms mentions that the chief units of the southern army led by Greene, Rutledge, Henderson, Marion, and Suter, Lee, and Pickens met the British troops under Stewart, Coffin, Sheridan, and Majoribanks on the 8th of September, 1781. Completely triumphant in the beginning, the Americans pressed forward to prevent the British from rallying and to cut them off from any protective covering. If the patriots had been successful in this endeavor, the victory would have been complete. The engagement which so far had promised to be a well-earned victory, ended in disappointment, even in temporary defeat. Unable to withstand the withering fire, the American lines fell into the utmost confusion. Thus ended the famous battle of Stono which both parties claimed as a victory, involved, as it was, in great confusion and doubt. Details of specific

96. Ibid.

97. "In the first action the British line was broken and driven from the field. In the second Stewart succeeded in forming a new line supported by a brick house and palisaded garden, and from this position Greene was unable to drive him. It has therefore been set down as a British victory. If so, it was a victory followed the next evening by the hasty retreat of the victors, who were hotly pursued for thirty miles by Marion and Lee. Strategically considered, it was a decisive victory for the Americans." Ibid., pp. 266-7.
action were subjects of considerable question. In the
general management of the conflict, there was undoubtedly
much bungling. Nevertheless, the British power in South
Carolina was completely prostrated by this battle, for the
British regulars had lost their reputation for invincibility.

The battle of Eutaw ended the thread of historical
events in Sime's novel of the same name; however, this
same novel connected its predecessor, The Foragers, with
Woodcraft, the last of the revolutionary romances which
continued the narrative at this point. Woodcraft is
oftentimes considered the best novel in the whole series
of seven, not because of its historical background but
98 because of its fictional quality. With Woodcraft the
Revolutionary War in South Carolina drew to a close, a
struggle that had lasted over two and one-half years.
No longer was it possible that a large section of our
country would remain under complete control of a foreign
power. No longer was the entire status of the people,
government, and country in jeopardy.

Prior to their evacuation from Charleston, the
British had control of only small and scattered sections

98. Cambridge History of American Literature, Vol. I,
p. 312-17.
along the Atlantic seaboard. Persecution was still rampant, however, for the invaders were angered at the loss of so much land and property. Up to this point South Carolina had lost twenty-five thousand slaves who were, during the course of the war, transferred from Carolina ricefields to the sugar estates of the West Indies. According to Simms, the provisional peace was drawn and signed at Paris on the 13th of November, 1782. The 14th of December of the same year marked the evacuation of Charleston. How embarrassing it must have been for these proud Britshers to leave a place that had been so rewarding in both pleasure and profit. Reluctantly, General Leslie, successor of Lord Rawdon, drew up final plans. The legions of General Wayne were ordered to occupy the abandoned garrison. Since none of the forces under Harlen, Sumter, or Mayhem were permitted to be present at the re-occupation of the city, the partisans were deeply indignant. The militia, likewise, were not

99. Ibid.

100. _Haccraft_, p. 5. This date cannot be authenticated in works cited.


102. Ibid., p. 396.
allowed to witness the withdrawal of the enemy, the reason for this exclusion being that all were too poorly attired to appear at such a public ceremony. Embarrassed and sorrowful, Marion dissolved his brigade. With this dissolution, which was the last significant historical incident in the background of his novels, Simms brought the narrative in his revolutionary series to a close.

Despite the fact that a reading of these novels will show that Simms romanticized his historical events, a close study of this history, carrying through the entire series, reveals that the chronology of these major events paralleled the dates of the actual happenings as recorded in the modern works which have been used as the basis for this study. In many cases, for example, the fall of Fort Nette and Orangeburg, the date of Greene’s assumption of command of the southern army, and numerous other dates marking the progress of the Revolutionary War in South Carolina, including the time of various actions which took place in other areas and upon which this progress was based, have not been mentioned outright. The reason for this is quite evident. Simms wrote his novels with the idea of writing interesting fiction of which history
was a necessary ingredient. Fiction cluttered with
dates did not fulfill this requirement. Instead, he
mentioned only the significant dates of major events and
proceeded to create other important actions using these
dates as stepping stones in the development of his plots.
Interest in the narrative is what Simms wanted to create.
Nevertheless, the interested reader would not be too troubled
in making an accurate check on specific happenings by re-
verting to the proper times and checking these occurrences
against the information that he gave in his works. Although
Simms's chronology is not entirely sequential (for many
points mentioned in The Partisan, especially, are again
brought out in subsequent novels), the emphasis placed
upon these circumstances establishes their significance
in the over-all portrayal of the general history. His
ability to be accurate and true in his interpretation of
specific military exploits might be attributed to his
being a military man himself. With his vast store of
knowledge in practically every field, Simms was a helpful
counselor to the Confederacy during the Civil War. Trent
had this to say about his military prowess:
Simms was an able student of tactics. During the Civil War, he anticipated moves made by the confederate staff in connection with the relief of Fort Sumter. 103

William B. Cairns, also, in his analysis of Simms's fiction, thought that his military endeavors might have had a bearing on his work.

He (Simms) advocated extreme measures, and when the Civil War came Simms took great interest in the attack on Sumter, and made suggestions for fortifications, some of which were adopted. 104

With this military interest as a part of his guiding force, Simms chose the period between May, 1780, and December, 1782, as the time to be covered by his series, for the engagements of these two years in Carolina are strategically the most interesting of the whole war. In his narrative background lies a wealth of historical information which cannot be found elsewhere. A study of the events of this period would certainly be incomplete if his works were not included. By consulting them the scholar would not only get history in the general sense but also a history backed by an exciting, moving, and revealing narrative.

In regard to the progress of the military part...
Authenticity of Historical Settings

In addition to specific military information, these afore-mentioned maps have been invaluable in tracing and establishing the various boundaries to which Simms referred in his romances. They are exact in pointing out the specific areas which were under the jurisdiction of certain leaders and groups of American patriots and British dragoons. The topographical legends indicate the numerous swamps in which the partisans fought, the areas where the Americans camped, rivers that were mentioned throughout the narrative, and all of the local settings which composed the background for Carolina's partisan warfare. These maps trace the true warfare of the country. By them the reader can check the sparseness of the settlements and the extent of the plains which indicated the employment of cavalry; the intricate woods and morasses as strikingly denote the rise and importance of riflemen. The partisan brigades combined the qualities of both. These maps further establish the fact that Simms knew his geography, not only of South Carolina but also of some of North Carolina and Georgia. He wove his geographical information into
his novels with a skill unlike that of an ordinary writer of fiction but like that of a skilled geographer. Fifty years passed between the period about which he wrote and the time during which he wrote his novels. Many descriptive details are undoubtedly the products of his imagination, but the general characteristics of the forest, swamp, and plain do not change to any great degree over such a short period.

Simms's geographical interest does not lie in the individual engagements, but in the strategy of the campaign as a whole. To understand this approach it is needful to have a clear comprehension of the physical peculiarities of the country. The reader may look at South Carolina as divided into large sections, separated by rivers, each fringed by large belts of swamp. For troops to cross these obstacles, even in small parties, great care and local knowledge were requisite. The transportation of artillery and stores was out of the question. Moreover, the unhealthful nature of the climate made prolonged activity in the lower districts impossible. Further inland, the rivers branched into smaller streams, the soil became more solid, the air more wholesome. Thus throughout the entire period
of the campaign each army endeavored to push its opponent in order to secure the advantage of the more traversable country. The battles, for the most part, excluded geography, for they were really matters of hard fighting in which abundant courage was shown.

Authenticity of Information about Characters

Simes could not have been authentic in his plot and setting without including reliable information with reference to actual historical figures who not only planned and executed the strategy of specific encounters but engineered the many different groups toward a complete and final victory. These characters live in their surroundings and are to be considered not so much for themselves as for the parts they play in a larger field of action. Both military and civil characters were essential in the complete fulfillment of the military endeavors of the people. Remove these characters and the plots would change into a hodge-podge of disorganized and confused activity. How could the story of the Revolutionary War be told without mentioning and revealing the military prowess of Francis Marion? What fictional character could Simes have created to take Marion's place?
in the narrative without at least patterning his partially on the "Swamp Fox's" magnificent accomplishments? It was Marion and men like him who made the Revolution in the South. It is true that Simms could have substituted the fictional for the historical, but why do so when the reader could readily identify the characters by their activities? By their activities and their accomplishments the reader knows them. Cornwallis, Tarleton, and Majoribanks are as much a part of British and Tory revolutionary history as Greene, Sumter, Pickens, and de Kalb are a part of the patriot cause. His characterizations are as closely drawn as are these same personages in the later writings of Fiske, Greene, Nevins, and Schlesinger. Not only does Simms stress the military abilities of these celebrities since most of them are military figures, but he also lays emphasis on the traits that make them what they are.

Space does not permit a detailed analysis of each historical character in any one of the seven volumes which average nearly five-hundred pages in length. However it would be quite unjust to omit even a partial sketch of at least a few of those who played major roles. In his delineations of character, as in his portrayal of specific
military actions, Simms was not partial. He pointed out the faults as well as the virtues.

Since Marion is considered as the representative of the genius of partisan warfare, his activity and character are more completely drawn in detail than are the actions and persons of the other characters. Greene aptly evaluated the performance of this partisan leader in a letter dated April 24, 1781, which was sent to Marion himself. In it, perhaps, lies the key to Marion's greatness. He wrote:

To fight the enemy bravely with the prospect of victory, is nothing; but to fight with intrepidity under the constant impression of defeat, and inspire irregular troops to do it, is a talent peculiar to yourself.106

The famous partisan leader had the art of securing the fidelity of those around him in quite as great a degree as he possessed that other great military art of extracting good service out of the most doubtful materials. He commander was more concerned about the comfort and safety of his men. He was father as well as commander. His

106. Life of Francis Marion, p. 244.
men had confidence in his love of justice, and this made them always willing to abide by his decisions. No duel took place among his officers during the entire term of his command. Simms, throughout his pages, pictured Marion as being kind and indulgent in his nature, but stern and resolute in war.

In The Scout, a portrayal of the activities of General Greene after he had succeeded Gates in command of the remnants of the southern army, Simms compared the abilities of both Gates and Greene:

Gates' true merit lay in the prudence with which he prosecuted an enterprise, which he had sacrificed by caution and imprudence. The genius of Greene was eminently cautious, and his progress in South Carolina was un-marked by any rashness of movement, or extravagance of design.108

Of General Sumter, the "Game Cock," the reader gets a partial picture through the character of Cornwallis who considered him the greatest obstacle which the British had encountered in this country. The great responsibilities tendered Sumter when put in command of the "Raid of the Dog Days" and his ability to handle his assigned duties

to completion are ample evidence of his military accomplishment. Aside from his military duties, Governor Rutledge was a profound and honorable politician, an acute lawyer, and an admirable orator, one of the ablest in that day, in all of the Confederacy. In the character of Rutledge, Simms portrayed the workings of the civil element and the part it played with the military in winning the war.

It was in men like these (excluding Gates) that South Carolina was particularly strong, and it was their devotion, talents and extraordinary endeavors that finally brought victory. They were national figures in whom she could entrust her future. They are only a few of the many heroes who have continued to live after almost two hundred years.

The British, too, were not without their memorable leaders. Earl Cornwallis, one of the best of the many soldiers sent by the mother-country to the colonies, had taken charge of the southern army after the fall of Charleston. Portrayed with an excellent judgment, "he was

too good a soldier to omit, or to sleep in the performance of his duties." His legionary, Tarleton, active, cruel, unscrupulous of courage, "seemed to confide in the impetuosity of his onset than to any ingenuity of plan, or careful elaborateness of maneuvers."

Simms did not forget the all-important role of women and their influence on the general outcome. In his heroine, Katherine Walton, he embodied all the attributes of the southern lady, performing, as she did, all she could for the cause of independence. Of her and the women of South Carolina he said:

She gloriéd in the name of a rebel lady, and formed one of that beautiful array, so richly shining in the story of Carolina, who, defying danger, and heedless of privation, spoke boldly in encouragement to those who yet continued to struggle for its liberties.

The Treatment of Historical Materials

The forty years from 1820 to 1870 marked a remarkable change in American literature. Often referred to as the Romantic Movement, this change gave America a new literature

110. The Partisan, p. 15.
111. Ibid.
112. Ibid., p. 120.
European literature. In this work, charity in the Revolutionary
building an American literature which could be free from
movement. Like other he's too, became interested in
sharing are one of the writers who assisted the

create a distinctly characteristic literature.
for literary abundance. It must, that material is much
that there existed in the native population a great future
soon to become more openly expressed in the
therefore, reduced to the minds of the
never
a change which though generally overlooked, was never
literature would have another chance of equal importance?
and open development, with this external change in the
reflected in the economic and social conditions to allow
never more certainly than, there were two very rare

since the social and political changes in the new country
were a definite lesson of proportion in all the writing,
and a definite lesson of proportion in the field of letters. Naturally, these
advanced rapidly in the field of letters. Naturally, those
then England, the Middle Atlantic area, and the South as
literary growth in the rural sections of the country?
meet articulating characteristic of the trend we immediately
literature of England during the same period. The
which, in breadth and quantity, were comparable to the
romances there appear the life, landscape, and ideals of
his native state. In this respect his novels show a mix-
ture of both national and sectional characteristics.

Like many writers he believed that a work to have
a lasting quality should contain historical information.
It was for this reason that he exploited the past, relating
historical incidents in a manner more inclusive than that
of any other American writer before his time. To his
history in fiction was art in fiction. Paradoxically art
and history were separate yet inseparable. Simms believed
that in a real sense the artist was the true historian, for

It is he who gives shape to the unseen fact,
— who yields relation to the scattered frag-
ments,— who unites the parts in coherent de-
pendency, and endows, with life and action,
the otherwise automata of history. It is by
such artists, indeed, that nations live. It
is the soul of art alone which binds periods
and places together; — that creative faculty
which, as it is the only quality distinguishing
man from other animals, is the only one by
which he holds a life-tenure through all time —
the power to make himself known to men, to be
sure of the possessions of the past, and to
transmit, with the most happy confidence in
fame, his own possessions to the future.

By the standards with which he judged the artist
and the historian, he himself can be judged. According

113. View and Reviews in American Literature, p. 23.
to Simms, the historical romancer had the power to

preserve the treasures, — provide the jewels of a nation, when they embalm, in the 'cedar oil' of immortality, the great deeds which have done honor to mankind. 114

The chief purpose of art, Simms believed, was to please and to instruct, emphasizing not as much the period when the work was written, but the period when future generations would use his history to satisfy their curious minds. With this idea in mind he wrote his romances. The bare skeleton of meaningless dates and names was nothing to him, except that a skeleton history was necessary to furnish it with life and character. Didactic or moralistic fiction never could possess the individuality which was essential to its life; it would be as characteristic of one country as another and would fail, therefore, to excite a very strong enthusiasm in any. Ruins of the historic past were a part of the basic skeleton and to this extent were their own historians. In chapter two of his novel, The Partisan, Simms made this point clear when he chose Dorchester as the background for his narrative.

114. Ibid., p. 36.
115. Ibid., p. 41
It is one of the visible dwelling places of Time; and the ruins that still mock to a certain extent, his destructive progress, have in themselves a painful chronicle of capricious change and various affliction. They speak for the dead that lie beneath them in no stinted number; they record the leading features of a long history, crowded with vicissitudes ... But our purpose now is with the past, and not with the present.116

But how did he arrive at the necessary material for a story?

In selecting his theme, Sime was careful to select one which was national in character, because a national theme seemed to him to be the most enduring. To be thoroughly convinced of this fact he looked back into literature to the most popular writers of all periods. He noticed that these writers selected any one of three leading subjects -- their religion, their country, themselves. Whether he as the writer spoke directly of himself, his country, or his religion, he would have to speak sincerely from "the fulness of his soul and from the overflowings of his burdened heart." The truest and most valuable inspiration would be found either in

116. The Partisan, p. 18.
117. Views and Reviews in American Literature, ed. cit., p. 29.
the illustration of the national history or in the national characteristics. It was his belief that any theme which was unallied to these would—very likely—lack permanence and general interest. The physical causes had always been used in the formation and fashioning of literary works; therefore, he had to receive much of the character of his writing from the physical properties of the country. The diversified character of the population, too, was to be one of the strong, modifying influences upon his work.

As an artist he had to discover that which was hidden from all other eyes—what other minds had not preyed upon—that which other persons had not sought. If he failed in this, he believed that he was not the man to preserve a nation's history. To him the romancer's privilèges began where those of the historian ended, and the events which he used had to allow him to use the full exercise of his imagination. He had to be free to think, to see, and to invent his material without being afraid to cross the boundaries of truth and of such history that was found in undisputed records. In this respect his

118. Ibid.
novels, then, would fall within the realm of romance, including, as they did, writing which had a romantic or imaginative character or quality and showed a suggestion of or association with the adventurous or chivalrous.

Simms believed that thought, taking the form of specific judgments based upon conjecture, constantly arose beyond the limits of reality, and by reasoning what should have been from what was before him he separated the true from the probable. He kept asking himself what should be and what should not be. About inquiry he said:

The inquiry is not idle, and history itself is only valuable when it proves that inquiry — that it excites a just curiosity — awakens noble affections — elicits generous sentiments — and stimulates into becoming activity the intelligence which it informs.

By keen thought and never-ending study which identified facts with their classes, tracing character through long series of details, and arriving at specific causes from associated results, he was able to prepare history. Accumulating all of this material, he created a store of knowledge which allowed him to speak and write with confidence on his subject. In putting down this information

119. This is the essence of romantic fiction as given in The New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, Vol. VIII, p. 767.

120. Views and Reviews in American Literature, p. 39.
on paper his imagination joined with his judgment to lead and advise his thought, direct it to the desired facts, and portray in his mind's eye the heroes and the events. To Simms the whole underlying principle of history was the delightful guessing of what might have been from the slip-shod skeleton of bare facts that he knew. He made analytical studies of the many probabilities which he said were covered by the dust of past years. He had the necessary experience; he obeyed the laws of study and research, and recognized the guiding rules and general standards of examination.

When all the necessary information from which his product of art developed was ready for his workmanship, he became a painter and a creator. His picture grew beneath his hand, and the story moved with action. He became a living and authentic witness of the past and all the circumstances which he undertook to lay before the reader's eyes. From the beginning he attempted to dress his narrative with an atmosphere of a desired richness that would never be found in the works of an ordinary historian.

As regards passion, Simms believed that it was a
departure from the general laws of nature when one exhibited
in a work of art, in fiction, the exercise of one passion
exclusively. Nature usually did not work after this
fashion, for the passions existed or dwelled in groups.
However, one of them could exercise a predominating power,
and at least a part of the others would be still working
as tributaries. The reader would be able to detect their
presence in the over-all picture of the work. Perhaps no
better example of this can be found in his revolutionary
romances than in the character of Tarleton, the ruthless
British commander, whose deeds were some of the most
atrocious in the annals of South Carolina history. These
deeds shown in The Partisan presented a contrast to what
was known about him when he appeared in Melchamps. He
became less popular with his own party as the story pro-
gressed, and his former enemies began to think more fav-
orably of him. In this novel the reader can detect
Tarleton’s inner feelings at rare moments, feelings that
were in opposition to his general practices and character.
Simms explained this treatment by stating:

The sensibilities are more active at one moment
than another, and he whose mood is usually merci-
less and unspiring, may now and then be permitted
the blessing of a tear, and the indulgence of a tenderness, under the influence of an old and hallowed memory kept alive and nursed in some little corner of the heart when all is ossified around it.122

Although Simms wrote historical romances, he cannot be considered a "genuine" romanticist in every sense of the word. He is one only in degree. He objected to the treatment which stressed only the highest attributes of the individual or of society. He disliked the inclusion of only that which was the ideal in the mind or in the workings of a delicate imagination. Throughout his series, he painted in vivid colors the erring actions of certain individuals and groups.

Many of the events in the series are based upon tradition. In several instances he altered the names of specific characters as they appeared in leading events. The traditional account of Janet Berkeley as given in chapter thirty-seven in Hellichamps closely resembled the historical account of notorious loyalist Colonel Brown of Augusta. The death of Marion's nephew, Gabriel, varied

122. Ibid., p. 3.
123. Ibid., p. 2.
from the historical fact, but, it, too, was supported by tradition. When visiting the home of "Bertha Travis" in 1819, Simms gained a knowledge of the parties and events which formed the love story of Bertha Travis and Willie Sinclair in *Eutaw*, the sixth novel in the series. Out of many which could be cited these are only three of the instances based upon traditional accounts.

_Treatment of Setting_

Throughout his novels, Simms had a reason for the descriptions of his native state; each scene, a new event, each carrying forward the action of the plot until he reached his climax. If the reader failed to understand the country where he placed the plots of his stories, he would fail to get a clear picture of the type of fighting for which the South was so well noted. Though beautiful, Carolina in those days was also primitive, and one must remember that Simms alone could have brought his readers the enjoyment they got because he knew the country about


125. *Eutaw*, p. 582.
Treatise on Character

...
a Negro among a thousand; one of those adroit agents who quickly understand and readily meet emergencies; one who never could be thrown from his guard by any surprise, and who, in the practice of utmost dissimilation, yet wore upon his countenance all the expression of candor and simplicity. Add to this that he loved his master and his master's daughter with a fondness which would have maintained his faithful, through torture, to his trust ... he took readily the instructions given him in their fullest scope.127

Bledgett in The Forayars and Bostwick, the Squatter, in Handcraft typified the southern poor white at his very worst. Captain Forsy, the fat and philosophic gentleman who appeared in all of the revolutionary novels except The Scout and Colonel Sinclair in The Forayars were examples of the southern gentleman and planter. Marion, Greens, and Carmellis were only three of the national military figures characterized in these romances. Rutledge, governor of the state during the revolutionary period, greatly assisted partisan endeavors to oust the British from the South. Simms's women characters also represented both high and low types. Katherine Walton, the heroine in The Partisan, and Katherine Walton and Flora Middleton in The Scout represented the southern lady -- tall, fresh, well-mannered, courageous, and intelligent. Mrs. Bledgett in The Forayars is the opposite -- ignorant, ill bred, ugly, and selfish.

Of all the characters created by Simms, Captain

Porgy and the poor white seemed to be the author's favorite. Porgy stands out as the most interesting figure in the revolutionary romances; nevertheless, one can say truthfully that Simms loved the rogue. Vernon L. Parrington made the following statement about Simms's rogues: "A gentleman's villain turns to a thing of wood in his hands, but a low-born he creates out of living flesh and blood."

All of these characters are closely humanized. They perform naturally in their respective roles; their conversations are justified by their descriptions, and they are not out of character from beginning to end. Simms's acquaintance with the lower classes made it possible for him to include the colorful and picaresque figures in his narratives, making them, according to one critic, a part of the finest collection of homespun in our literature. The reader remembers Mrs. Blodgitt by her constant nagging as illustrated in the following


conversation with her weak-willed son:

"Who talks of a fair fight, but your own fool head? ... Lord! if it had been me, I reckon I could have a hundred chances for laying him over the head with a hickory, or driving a sharp knife clear down into his ribs. Thar's always chances enough for any man that's got a man's heart in his buzzon, Pete Blodgit! But you ain't no man at all, as I've told you a thousand times." 130

Likewise, the reader remembers the character of ThumbscREW, the patriot scout in Hellichampe, when he says,

"My idea is, that fighting is the part of a beast-brute, and not for a true born man, that has a respect for himself, and knows what's good breeding; and I only fights when there's brutes standing waiting for it. Soon as a man squints at me as if he was going to play beast with me, by the eternal splinters, I'll mount him, lick or no lick, and do my best, teeth, tusk, and grinders, to astonish him. But afer that, I'm peaceable as a pine stump, lying quiet in my own bush." 151

The evil or abnormal characters he portrayed in a manner which made them true to life. The old maniac Frampton in The Partisan and the half-mad Nelly Elroy in Auton are only two actors of many in the ranks of the minor char-

130. The Forevers, p. 43.
151. Hellichampe, p. 34.
acters who impress the reader. As Simms portrayed Nelly Floyd she,

...was not a mere woman -- not, certainly, an ordinary one; she did not act as is the common mode with her sex. She did a thousand things from which most of them would shrink ... Her mind and heart, eminently just, never seemed to think it necessary to submit her conduct to any other control than her own will ... This regulated her impulses, and she obeyed them....

Many of Simms's fictional characters evoke a lively emotional response. The reader loved Emily Singleton, admired Lance Frampton, was indifferent toward Major Proctor, disliked Conwell, chief of the Black Riders, hated "Hell-Fire" Dick of Tophet, the wily Tory leader who ravaged the homes of the innocent. These characters, clearly defined as they were, gave to the reader, upon first beginning the narrative, hints as to what they might do in given emergencies. In his placement of characters Simms did nothing more than use the artist's privilege.

He pised his groups, in action, at his own pleasure, he used what accessories he saw proper, dismissed others, suppressed the merely leathensome; brought out the heroic, the bold, and the attractive, into becoming prominence, for dramatic effect; and, filled out the character, more or
less elaborately, according to the particular requisitions of the story, without regarding the individual claims of the subordinate. 133

In his characterisations of the southern gentleman Simms was strikingly effective, since he knew him as well as he did any other figure in southern life. He himself was a southern gentleman.

It is quite evident that Simms uses himself as an example of his characterisations. He considered himself a gentleman before he was an author. 134

Judging from the above comment, it seems safe to assume that his gentleman is as closely and as clearly drawn as Simms could have portrayed him. In him as in other characters one can perceive a sense of humor and a sharp observation on the part of the author.

Like his contemporaries, Cooper and Kennedy, Simms, on occasion, reveals his own personal attitudes in these novels even though his environment in contrast to that of Kennedy and Cooper sets him somewhat apart. The favorite son of Charleston and yet outside of the aristocratic ring, Simms never succeeded in gaining prestige

133. Richard Harding, p. 10.
and admiration from the elite. Constantly snubbed into submission, he had great external forces to combat during the period in which he wrote. In contrast to Simms’s social insecurity, both Cooper and Kennedy were members of the social aristocracy, Cooper in New York, Kennedy in Baltimore. Both were accepted by their aristocratic friends; both participated in their respective cliques.

Nevertheless, with this great difference in background all three chose the Revolutionary War, and it is largely by the works dealing with this period that they are remembered. Such a theme offered them rich opportunity. Cooper, in *The Spy: A Tale of the Neutral Ground*, dealt with the revolutionary activities in New York state; Kennedy, in his *Horse-Shoe Robinson*, sketched picturesquely the Tory uprisings in South Carolina in 1780. In his seven novels Simms covered a far larger canvas than his two fellow craftsmen. The works of all these, however, are characterized by an over-lapping of period, time, and incident.

In *The Spy* Cooper portrayed the revolutionary activities in Westchester County, New York, during the
early 1780's. The interest of the plot centered around Harvey Birch, pedler and patriot, and ranged back and forth over the neutral ground between the two opposing armies. Birch was dedicated to his country and was sustained by the confidence of Washington. In his accounts of the Wharton family Cooper depicted the strong loyalist tendencies of the upper classes in the North, a portrayal which was in sharp contrast to the patriotic endeavors of men like Birch and young Henry Wharton, a member of the family, but yet assisted the patriot cause. As an integral part of the plot, Cooper also described the activities of the group of marauders, the Skinners, who mushroomed into activity and "infested the county with a semblance of patriotism, and who were guilty of every grade of offense, from simple theft up to murder."

Like Simms, Cooper was gifted with enormous energy, a gusto that turned him in the case of such early novels as The Bravo, The Heidenmauer, and The Headsman, toward foreign themes for fictional materials. He had a complete understanding of Whig and Tory activities during the Revolution, and combined with his ability to create

striking scenes, he, too, gave a vivid picture of the times. His treatment of history in fiction, in his own words, was much like that of Simms.

A rigid adherence to truth, an indispensable requisite in history and travels, destroys the charm of fiction. 136

Although The Spy, which was greatly admired by Simms, was written fully fourteen years before Simms wrote The Partisan, this differential does not mean that Simms was a mere imitator of Cooper. Granted that Cooper influenced Simms in the writing of his revolutionary romances, The Spy, only one work, was the incentive for seven works by the South Carolinian, all of which reveal the remarkable skill which Simms always showed in his description of conflict. In all these seven novels Simms portrayed with equal skill the officers of the two conflicting armies. His characterizations of Marion, Greene, and Lee are more striking than Cooper's delineation of Washington, for Washington in The Spy is little more than a shadow. In the use of the metal container carried by Harvey Birch and in his delineation of Washington, Cooper used secrecy as one of the romantic

137. Views and Reviews in American Literature, p. 211.
trappings for the creation of suspense. These mysteries do not unfold until the end of the narrative. Sims did not use this method, for his characters and actions are always clearly defined; in this respect he was more realistic than Cooper. While no Harvey Birch appears in Sims's novels, the absence of a dominant character, or hero, is in keeping with his idea that the event rather than character was the more important standard for the creation of a lasting romance. However, in the characters of Ernest Mellichamp, Colonel Singleton, and Clarence Consay, Sims formed personages who, although not as strong from the hero standpoint, are as strong in carrying on specific plot incident. Even though Sims did not intend to create novels of character, his central personalities are portrayed with spirit.

Like Sims and Cooper, Kennedy pictured the disturbed and doubtful conditions of the Revolution. The narrative of Horse-Shoe Robinson is composed of the many battles, hairbreadth captures, treachery, and murders that characterized the Tory ascendancy in the South. The detailed portrayal of the Tory leader's skimming of the live wolf makes the incident one of the most memorable in
the novel. The chief action revolves around the activities of Horse-Shoe Robinson, a blacksmith, and Major Arthur Butler, both ardent patriots. In their adventures through the South, especially through South Carolina, they become entangled in the Tory activities of Tyrrel, a British spy, and Nabershaw's ruffians, only one of the many loyalist bodies who

... waged war with a vindictive malignity that is scarcely surpassed in the history of civil broils. The finest estates were sacked, the dwellings burnt, and the property destroyed with unsparing rage. The men were dragged from their houses and hung, the women and children turned without food or raiment into the wilderness, and political vengeance seemed to gorge itself to gluttony upon its own rapine.136

The love theme is carried out in the scenes between Mary Musgrove and John Ramsey, Mildred Lindsay and Major Butler. Marion, Tarleton, and Cornwallis are portrayed well by Kennedy.

The adventures of Major Butler and Horse-Shoe Robinson combined the characteristic Simms's southern gentleman and his devoted follower whose common sense and brann

lead him out of many close and dangerous situations, a relationship likewise effectively presented by Simms in his characterizations of Major Singleton and Lance Frampton in The Partisan. Like his contemporaries, Kennedy knew the extreme peril embodied in the patriot cause, and in Philip Lindsay, the father of the heroine, he represented the feelings of the wealthier classes. In the concluding section of Horse-Shoe Robinson, he vividly pictured the battle of King's Mountain, a portrayal similar to Simms's accounts of Eutaw Springs, Camden, and Guilford. Kennedy also combined interest of battle with the love theme in the rescue of Major Butler to form the high point of his fine novel. Although the portrayals of action and low-life characters stand out as being Kennedy's forte in Horse-Shoe Robinson, Simms is, nevertheless, Kennedy's superior in these two respects. For every interesting or breath-taking incident that Kennedy has in his novel, Simms has as many as three or four times that number in any of his revolutionary romances. As regards his low-life characterizations Kennedy was too much a gentleman to accurately picture in detail the down-and-outer as he really was.
To do this would have been contrary to his own aristocratic background and true feelings.

All of these writers combined patriotism, loyalty, and family affection with the view of appealing to the greatest number of readers. All show a distinct influence of Sir Walter Scott in their treatment of themes. They choose subject matter so universal that their novels were translated into several languages. Even though all three were highly versatile, Simms was by all odds the most prolific and many-sided, being a historian, geographer, dramatist, biographer, lecturer, essayist, poet, philosopher, Shakespearean editor, orator, legislator, journalist, critic, and novelist. One needs only to refer to his vast store of prose and poetic works to be convinced that in this irrepressible southerner we find no equal.

Simms, Cooper, and Kennedy are alike in their simple plots and in their development of suspense by introducing a variety of action. Although the characters at times seem stilted, because they are portrayed according to the conventions of an early period in our history and of specific sections of our country, they impart dramatic action sufficient to create breathless expectancy in the
reader. At all times there is a positive distinction between the heroic and villainous characters, each performing his duties in a manner to intrigue the reader into completing the story.

Conclusion

In many respects Simms did work of great value, not only from a literary standpoint in that his revolutionary romances mark a transition in the growth of our literature from pre-Civil War romanticism to the greater realism of such writers as Clemens and Howells, but also from a historical point of view in that these romances are authentic portrayals of the life, times, and conditions of our strategic struggle for independence.

In consequence, they should have a distinct place in our high school and college reading lists especially for students interested in history or English. The comparatively recent edition of Simms The Yemassee with an introduction by Alexander Cowie represents what can be done toward introducing Simms to a wider student audience.

For the general reader these romances are full of adventure, love, and historical conflict depicted in quite as lively a fashion as similar events in the tales of Cooper and Kennedy, being even more varied and, at times, more brutally frank in their presentation.

For the advanced student of history or literature there is in Simms likewise an undeniable appeal, since his writing embodies a political, economic, and social account of a section and people during a critical period in the growth of our country, and his treatment of plot, setting, and character illustrates a literary craftsman at work, disclosing how Simms, the artist, either heightened or omitted altogether specific episodes in order to achieve a desired effect.

Thus in William Gilmore Simms we find a writer of varied appeals, one who justifies more serious consideration than he has hitherto received.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Salley, A.S., Catalogue of the Salley Collection of the Works of Wm. Gilmore Simms. Columbia, S.C.: The State Company, 1943. 121pp. (This work is the most complete bibliography of the works of Simms.)


(This work is the chief source of information on Simms's life.)


Magazine Articles


