STEPHEN CRANE'S PRESENTATION OF WAR

APPROVED:

[Signature]
Major Professor

[Signature]
Minor Professor

[Signature]
Director of the Department of English

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School
STEPHEN CRANE'S PRESENTATION OF WAR

THESIS

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By

Fred E. Wilson, B. A.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The standard edition of Stephen Crane's writings is the twelve-volume collection *The Work of Stephen Crane* (1926), edited by Wilson Follett. This edition includes all of his previously published material except *Great Battles of the World* and some of his journalistic reporting as a correspondent.

Although Crane wrote stories and poems on many subjects, he has long been recognized and admired for his treatment of war. Most of his book-length fiction was originally published in serial form in various magazines or newspapers. For example, *The Red Badge of Courage* was sold to a syndicate for ninety dollars, and the story came out in a serial form in the Philadelphia Press and the *New York* Press.\(^1\) It subsequently appeared in book form in October, 1895. This work established Crane not only as an author but also as an expert on the psychology of war.

Most of Crane's short stories also first came out individually in popular magazines and then were later combined in book form. Some of the volumes of short stories

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were collected posthumously; for example, the *Whilomville Stories* were first published in *McClure's Magazine* and in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* but not collected into book form until 1900. *Great Battles of the World* and *The O'Ruddy* were left in manuscript at the time of Crane's death, and *The O'Ruddy* was then completed by Crane's friend Robert Barr.

Although the literary career of Stephen Crane lasted only nine years, it was rather productive. During this relatively short period, he completed five books, three more volumes of poems, *Whilomville Stories* (some of these are only sketches), and fifty-nine separate short stories. Three of the five books and twenty-two of the fifty-nine short stories pertain to war, either directly or indirectly, and constitute Crane's most admired literary accomplishment. His books are *The Red Badge of Courage*; *Active Service*; *Great Battles of the World*; *Maggie, A Girl of the Streets*; and *The O'Ruddy*. Of these, the latter two are in no way related to the subject of armed conflict.

Except for the *Whilomville Stories*, tales of childhood, Crane's short stories deal primarily with four general areas: the Bowery; Mexico; the American West at the turn of the century; and war—the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and the Greco-Turkish War of 1897. The Cuban rebellion and the Greco-Turkish conflict gave Crane an opportunity to
observe actual battles and to gather firsthand information for many of his tales about war. As a matter of fact, his largest group of war stories came from the Cuban revolution: "The Clan of No-Name," "Virtue in War," "His Majestic Lie," "The Second Generation," "The Price of the Harness," "The Lone Charge of William B. Perkins," "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen," "The Revenge of the Adolphus," "The Sergeant's Private Madhouse," "Marines Signalling under Fire at Guantanamo," "War Memories," "The Open Boat," and "Flanagan and His Short Filibustering Adventure." Some of the best stories, however, came from the Civil War and were based entirely on imagination and on impressions Crane received from illustrated magazine articles and from veterans' tales. Included in this group are "The Little Regiment," "Three Miraculous Soldiers," "A Mystery of Heroism," "An Indiana Campaign," and "Grey Sleeve." Out of the Greco-Turkish struggle, Crane got his inspiration for "Death and the Child" and for the novel Active Service, which is concerned only indirectly with the war. Two stories, "Ol' Bennet and the Indians" based on the frontier fighting during the American Revolution and "The Kicking Twelfth" about a fictitious rebellion, must be classified separately.

In addition to purely literary work, Crane's commercial output as a war correspondent in Greece and Cuba enhanced
his reputation as a writer about armed conflict. Most of this material has not been collected and has therefore not been available for study.

Crane also wrote several volumes of poetry in which may be found a number of pieces inspired by war or about it. Although some of the poems have no title, they carry an unmistakable undertone of conflict and reveal Crane's attitude toward the subject of this study; one example is the well-known title piece, "The Black Riders," which will be considered later. The volume War is Kind, and Other Lines represents a more direct presentation of war as a subject. Wilson Follett later placed The Black Riders and War is Kind with a set of poems called "Intrigue," and called this volume The Black Riders.

Since Crane wrote extensively about war and has been generally acclaimed for his mastery of the war story, consideration will be given in the following pages to the circumstances of his life that motivated him to choose this subject and to his techniques and attitudes. It is a larger purpose of this study more or less to isolate and evaluate Crane's contribution to the war literature of the world and consequently to the thinking of all people about an overpoweringly important aspect of human behavior.
CHAPTER II

THE GROWTH OF CRANE'S WAR INTEREST

Although no major war occurred during Stephen Crane's formative years, the bloody and terrible Civil War had terminated only seven years before Crane was born in a Newark, New Jersey, parsonage on November 1, 1871. ¹ The spectre of this conflict loomed large above the American scene and no doubt had much to do with stimulating public interest in war.

There were also other factors that may have kindled and fanned the flame of Crane's interest in war and war fiction. It might be considered unusual for the youngest son of a Methodist minister to develop an intense interest in the subject of war, but certain experiences in Crane's early life served as a basis for his interest. The Crane family had been active in the American Revolution, and Stephen Crane, with an intense pride, "continually marvelled over the military feats of his forefathers,"² although what these feats were is not known. At another time, he commented


²Thomas A. Gullason, "New Sources for Stephen Crane's War Motif," Modern Language Notes, LXXII (December, 1957), 573.
that "the Cranes were a family of fighters in the old
days, and in the Revolution every member did his duty."³
Since both of his parents were interested in literature,
it was only natural that the family possessed numerous
books, and "there was more than enough in the father's books
to inspire his son's war theme."⁴

As might be expected in a child at this time, young
Stephen showed a strong interest in war. On inclement days
when he could not go outside to play as a little boy would
have liked, "he marched his mother's buttons up and down in
little regiments, absorbedly, into inscrutable battles."⁵
At other times he spent long hours brooding over Harper's
Illustrated History of the Rebellion. This History con-
tained many vivid pictures of actual battle scenes of the
Civil War, as well as of gun emplacements, camp life, and
wounded troops. Later his older brother Edmund gave him
various volumes of Harry Castleman's "Frank" series for
boys. These books, which Crane seemed to enjoy, were un-
pretentious, straightforward stories about a boy in the
Civil War, and apparently stirred his imagination.⁶ Thus
an early interest in the military was being fostered in the
mind of the young, impressionable boy, although probably

³Robert W. Stallman, Stephen Crane, An Omnibus (New
⁴Gullason, p. 573. ⁵Berryman, p. 13.
neither the mother nor the older brother had any such intention. They apparently were only endeavoring to keep the boy occupied. The actual effect that these family actions had on the boy's future thinking and writing can only be surmised, since Stephen Crane had never commented about them.

His older brother William was considered to be an expert on the strategy of Gettysburg and Chancellorsville. These controversial maneuvers no doubt elicited many conversations and arguments which could only increase Stephen Crane's already growing interest in war. Port Jervis, too, was the home for many Civil War Veterans, and Crane listened avidly to their tales of various battles. Thus Crane, although reared in the peaceful and quiet atmosphere of a parsonage, was nevertheless indoctrinated with various ideas of war. No doubt Crane heard a great deal about the Civil War during his childhood. His situation may have been similar to that of the youth of today who hear about battles and incidents pertaining to World War II.

As Stephen Crane matured, he was an energetic boy despite the fact that he was often sick. His father had suddenly died when he was nine, and his proper education and development were a concern to his mother. She once commented to some friends that "Stevie is like the wind in

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7Berryman, p. 78.
Scripture. He bloweth where he listeth." To solve the perplexing problem of continuing the education of her "Stevie," Mrs. Crane, according to Berryman, seemed to believe that "military training in a decent Methodist school was what was wanted, so off at sixteen went a lean fair boy who could catch barehanded any baseball thrown in Asbury Park." The mother's strong devotion to Methodism prompted her to send her son to the Methodist sponsored Claverack College, which was also a military academy. Here again can be noted the unintentional military influence on the young Stephen Crane as he developed toward manhood.

Claverack College had been absorbed by the Hudson River Institute, although the school was still referred to by its former name. It

... was a military academy, equipped by the Government with antique rifles ..., and that touch of personal experience so essential to the birth of a great idea must have come to Crane through his connection with Claverack's student battalion. Its four straggling companies were in fact the nucleus of that "blue demonstration," the very heart of his subsequent conception of an army.

Crane was a first lieutenant in Company C of the student battalion, and he would have been responsible for drilling

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8 Ibid., p. 15.
9 Harvey Wickham, "Stephen Crane at College," The American Mercury, VII (March, 1926), 293.
11 Ibid.
his company. Harvey Wickham, one of the men in Company C, has referred to an outward manifestation of the earlier military influences in Crane's life.

But if he had a slightly sheepish air on the parade ground—which Wickham attributed to his fear of ridicule, especially his own—he was a serious, severe drillmaster, with "enough of the true officer in him to have a perfectly hen-like attitude toward the rank and file." 11

Claverack College also probably swayed Crane's thoughts toward the idea of war in another way. The faculty members dined with the students, and it is believed that Crane learned as much about the Civil War at the dining table as in the classroom—possibly even more. Having had his attention directed to the Civil War most of his life, Stephen Crane would naturally want to know more about the war and the men who had been there. His history teacher, the Reverend General John B. Van Petten, had participated in the Civil War. 12 Since Claverack was a small college, the student-teacher relationship would have been fairly close, and Van Petten's tales of the Civil War probably assumed a realistic tone to Crane. Van Petten had been with the 34th New York Regiment when the regiment experienced a disastrous rout. 13

Military matters, however, were not Crane's sole or even main interest. Various sports seemed to have occupied a

11 Berryman, p. 18.  
12 Cady, p. 118.  
large portion of his time, particularly baseball, for which he had an affinity. When he was older, Crane remembered his emotions on the athletic field. He said that "heaven was sunny blue, . . . and no rain fell on the diamond when I was playing baseball. I was very happy, there." At another time he commented, "I believe that I got my sense of rage of conflict on the football field."  

Crane left Claverack College and registered at Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania, on September 12, 1890. Here he underwent a new experience— an experience of intense fear as a result of hazing, which was common there. Crane had refused to answer a hazing summons of sophomores, who thereupon broke the door to his room. A contemporary of the group has described the scene:

Steve was petrified with fear and stood in a grotesque nightgown in one corner of the room with a revolver in his hand. His usual sallow complexion seemed to me a ghastly green. Whether he ever pointed the revolver or not, I do not know, but when I saw him, both arms were limp and the revolver was pointed to the floor.  

The maturing Crane was experiencing those emotions common to the field of battle, and he would subsequently couple these and other such emotional experiences with the vivid impressions of war that he had received earlier in life.

At Lafayette, a change came over Crane. In retrospect, he said the "curriculum of the college did not appeal to me.

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14 Berryman, p. 17.  
15 Stallman, p. xxix.  
16 Berryman, pp. 19-20.
Humanity was a more interesting study."\(^{17}\) This interest in humanity would influence the course of his literary career, but the vivid childhood impressions of war would remain also. Thus, various unplanned events were to serve as a foundation for his future accomplishments.

Before Crane finished college, he decided that he wanted to be a writer. He had no idea that war fiction would be his introduction to success, nor did he realize the significance that past military influences would have on his writing. His mother was willing for him to be an author, and in one of her last letters she urged him always to be good, independent, and honest in his writing.\(^ {18}\) These instructions apparently became a basic creed for his entire literary life and were always a matter of concern to him. In a personal letter, Crane once commented that "there is a sublime egotism . . . in talking about honesty. I, however, do not say that I am honest. I merely say that I am as nearly honest as a weak mental machinery will allow."\(^ {19}\)

Unfortunately, Crane accomplished very little formal study at either Lafayette or Syracuse. This lack of academic training was subsequently reflected in his stories and in basic skills, such as spelling. The original manuscript of *The Red Badge of Courage* is now owned by

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\(^{17}\)Ibid., p. 24.  
\(^{18}\)Beer, p. 57.  
\(^{19}\)Berryman, p. 4.
Clifton Waller Barrett of New York City. In this final typewritten copy for the typesetter, Crane's spelling resembles that of a student in the elementary grades.  

Crane was always short of funds early in his career. After the success of The Red Badge of Courage, he found a waiting market for more war stories. And so somewhat against his inclinations, he immediately turned out The Little Regiment and other war stories to obtain some ready cash. In a letter to Nellie Crous on February 5, 1896, he wrote:

I am engaged in rowing with people [Phillips and McClure, publishers] who wish me to write more war-stories. Hang all war-stories. Nevertheless I submitted in one case and now I have a daily battle with a tangle of facts and emotions.

Since Crane evidently was not a very efficient manager, his financial problems seemed to increase as the years passed. His poverty and lack of thrift affected most of his later works. For example, in a letter on August 4, 1899, to his American agent, he wrote:

I shall develope [sic] Lippincott's plan as soon as I finish the war-stories. The U. S. book-rights of the war-stories were promised to Stokes last year when I was in America. He is to advance $1000.

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Thanks for the book and the cheque for £25. Have you yet sold any of the stories?\textsuperscript{22}

The Lippincott plan referred to \textit{Great Battles of the World}, and the war stories were the volume \textit{Wounds in the Rain}. The continued deterioration of his finances and the resulting pressure on his literary endeavors may also be seen in James B. Pinker's reply on October 24, 1899, to Crane's pleas for money.

\ldots You telegraphed on Friday for £20; Mrs. Crane, on Monday, makes it £50; today comes your letter making it £150, and I very much fear that your agent must be a millionaire if he is to satisfy your necessities a week hence, at this rate. \ldots There is a risk of spoiling the market if we have to dump too many short stories on it at once.\textsuperscript{23}

Thus the continued shortage of funds required Crane to write in quantity, and as a result the quality of his product frequently suffered, as is shown by \textit{Great Battles of the World}. War stories found a ready market, and also short stories were easy for Crane to produce. They could be completed in a short time to provide him with cash, and he resorted primarily to creating this type of fiction.

Crane's early success with war stories led to his becoming a war correspondent. There is some difference of opinion about Crane's ability as a newspaper reporter. He lacked the temperament and the tolerance for success in journalism and resented editors' revising his reports.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 223.
\item \textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 236.
\end{itemize}
Beer said that Crane was a complete failure as a war correspondent, but the validity of this dogmatic statement can be seriously questioned. According to Richard Harding Davis, one of Crane's battle reports from Cuba had the most famous image of the war: from a Cuban hillside, "a spruce young sergeant of marines, erect, his back to the showering bullets, solemnly and intently wig-wagging to the distant Dolphin . . . ," a United States cruiser that was shelling the hills in support of the army. At another time, Davis said that "Crane was the best of the Cuban war correspondents." Writing in Harper's Magazine in 1899 about the many reporters in Cuba, Davis expressed his opinions about Crane in considerable detail.

The best correspondent is probably the man who by his energy and resource sees more of the war, both afloat and ashore, than do his rivals, and who is able to make the public see what he saw. If that is a good definition, Stephen Crane would seem to have distinctly won the first place among correspondents in the late disturbance. . . . His story of Nolan, the regular, bleeding to death on the San Juan Hills, is, so far as I have read, the most valuable contribution to literature that the war has produced. . . . Crane is quite as much of a soldier as the man whose courage he described. . . . But it never occurs to Crane that to sit at the man's feet, as he did, close enough to watch his lips move and to be able to make mental notes for a later tribute to the marine's scorn of fear, was equally deserving of praise.

24 Berryman, p. 173.  
25 Ibid., p. 221.  
26 Cady, p. 66.
Crane was the coolest man, whether army officer or civilian, that I saw under fire at any time during the war. He was most annoyingly cool, with the assurance of a fatalist.27

Crane's yearning and eagerness for honesty in everything that he wrote probably forced him to exert his maximum ability. He took risks which other correspondents would not even think of.

Normally the thoughts of war would be objectionable to the general public, both in Europe and in America, especially in view of the terrible suffering that all had experienced as a result of armed conflicts in the last half of the nineteenth century. Poetry, fiction, and periodicals expressed ideas pertaining to the military struggles, a subject popular with the reading public. Various reasons may be given for this paradoxical popularity, one being that it was compatible with the economic trends of the times.28 Rapid industrialization with enormous production increases was forcing governments and businessmen to find markets for their manufactured products. Imperialism seemed to be the solution, and "it was such a 'tidal mood of mankind' which carried Kipling to unprecedented literary success in the decade following 1890," and during which "Englishmen


began to develop an interest in what Bismark once called their 'sporting wars' . . . ." Many authors of the period glorified imperialism in a logical reaction to the declining anti-imperialism.\textsuperscript{30} William E. H. Lecky, the eminent historian, gave another justification of the tendency to glorify war when he asserted that the common man would learn the tastes of the civilized man as a result of the spread of militarism and universal service. He would travel, learn new ways and ideas, and in general be culturally elevated.\textsuperscript{31} The ideas of war became less repugnant, and people actually gloried in military actions, thus making war fiction not only acceptable but popular. Although previously the United States had expanded her holdings through the Mexican War, the imperialistic fever had not seized the masses then as now. National pride, pressure for markets, and a natural sympathy for others struggling for their freedom only enhanced the interest in war. Such factors helped to make the horrors of war less noticeable, and many writers found the subject not only popular but almost a necessity for success. War was considered in a light mood, almost that of a frolic. A martial spirit pervaded, and the terrors and the agonies of the common soldier in battle were minimized. The accent was on the glories of war and on the officer

\textsuperscript{29}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 82. \textsuperscript{30}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 70. \textsuperscript{31}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 89.
class, but a young, unknown American writer was to present war in a different perspective with a resulting fame for himself. This concept of war had been forming in him since his early youth and was shaped unintentionally by different events and people in his life.
Although an enthusiast for certain sports, such as baseball, Crane basically was not a gregarious person. He was essentially a "loner," not only in life, but also in his literary endeavors. Even in Claverack College his classmate, Harvey Wickham, noted that Crane "was rather given to holding aloof, especially if the human animal was manifesting its capacity for collective action."¹

In New York City there was a group of struggling, impoverished artists and writers with whom Crane became associated and by whom he was influenced. They were warmly referred to as "The Indians," and consisted of the following: R. G. Vosburgh, David Ericson, Nelson Greene, Frederick Gordon, W. M. Carroll, Edward S. Hamilton, Wolf from, and Corwin K. Linson.² "The Indians" frequently gathered in Linson's attic studio to discuss their work.

After one of Crane's early visits to Linson's studio, Linson composed an excellent description of Crane as a young man.

¹Berryman, p. 16.
Crane shed a long rain ulster and was surprisingly reduced in bulk by the process, showing a comparatively slight figure, of medium height, but with the good proportions and poise of an athlete. His face, lean but not thin, was topped by rumpled blondish hair that neither convention nor vanity had yet trained. The barely discernible shaping of a mustache had just begun to fringe a mouth that smiled with engaging frankness.

It took more than the afternoon's low-keyed light to reveal the quality of his eyes. Something in their gray-blue intensity explained much when later he penned his manuscripts with so precise a phrasing that seldom was a change made in them.

This intense young man, Crane, frequently reviewed and discussed his writings with "The Indians" at Linson's place, and these "men with whom Steve lived used to receive his 'lines' as good copy for the comic papers. He told Hamlin Garland that those jeering 'Indians' nearly cracked his ears in their vociferous glee over them." Although none of "The Indians" who laughed at Crane's writing became famous for their work, Crane did achieve fame. Although no doubt many of their remarks were given as friendly jesting, they also served as excellent criticism for the young author. Intelligent criticism apparently never bothered Crane, but he did shun and resent indifferent comments.

In Linson's studio a dilapidated divan became Crane's favorite retreat. An adjacent bookcase was stacked high with back copies of various magazines which Linson accumulated, among which were Century Magazine, containing

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3Corwin K. Linson, My Stephen Crane (Syracuse, 1958), p. 2.
4Ibid., p. 51.  5Ibid., p. 33.
"The Battles and Leaders of the Civil War." Crane spent much time browsing through the various issues, and such reading intensified his interest in war. At that time Linson probably did not realize the great influence which those hours of reading and companionship with "The Indians" would have on the future of his friend.

Lounging on Linson's couch, Crane frequently spent an entire day reading "The Battles and Leaders of the Civil War." This series was published in the Century from November 1884 to April 1888, and Crane possibly reread many from his childhood. They contain vivid illustrations of the fortifications and gun emplacements of both Confederate and Union positions. One picture in the March 1885 issue was of the Confederate battery at Yorktown, showing a series of large cannons in position on a bluff. There were maps of battle areas, other pictures of vast military camps, and one of a soldier crouched behind a small breastwork as other soldiers moved forward. In the issue of June, 1886, panorama pictures of battles show line after line of troops moving over valley and hill to an attack. There is also a battle with shells exploding in the air, troops spread over a vast area, cavalry waiting behind a low hill, and rows of field artillery pieces placed strategically on a

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6Ibid., pp. 36-37.

higher hill overlooking the fighting. Other pictures show Union infantry charging through a corn field, and a long row of dead Confederate soldiers beside a rail fence.8 Such a presentation of war would make an indelible picture in the vivid memory of an imaginative person like Crane, and such an influence cannot be minimized. Each article is written in detail, as Linson commented:

... what happened was told down to the last belt and button. ... This vast amount and precision of detailed information was just what made Steve recoil. He was squatting like an Indian among the magazines when he gave one a toss of exhausted patience and stood up.

"I wonder that some of these fellows don't tell how they felt in those scraps! They spout eternally of what they did, but they are emotionless as rocks."9

Crane's vivid portrayal of war scenes and the emotions of soldiers in battle amazed his early critics, since he had not yet witnessed any actual fighting. Evidently these critics never studied the long Civil War series in Century Magazine or considered them with the imagination and feeling which Crane had.

The first real authors Crane met were Hamlin Garland and William Dean Howells. This meeting occurred in 1891 when Crane reported Garland's lecture on American authors


9Linson, p. 37.
for the Tribune newspaper. Both Garland and Howells were impressed with Crane's account. An enduring friendship among the three men resulted, which was beneficial to Crane. Later in New York City, Crane frequently turned to Garland for inspiration and assistance, which he always received, as Garland apparently recognized a budding genius in Crane. When Maggie seemed to be a failure, Garland gave him encouragement. Crane later commented that "I wrote a book. . . . Hamlin Garland was the first to overwhelm me with all manner of extraordinary language." And it was to Garland that Crane first took the original draft of The Red Badge of Courage when Garland invited the impoverished Crane to lunch. The story had not been given a title, and part of the manuscript was "in hock" for typing, but Garland loaned Crane the necessary fifteen dollars to redeem it. Again Garland encouraged Crane to finish the story, and subsequently used his influence in obtaining a publisher.

On one of his visits to Garland's room, Crane showed some of his poetry at which "The Indians" had been jeering, and Garland recognized the poetic quality and message. He requested additional poems, and Crane replied by pointing to his temple and saying, "I have four or five up here, all

10 Berryman, p. 28.
12 Berryman, p. 80.
in a little row." To Garland's amazement, Crane then wrote several short poems without hesitation or rewording. Garland could not believe they were original until he consulted some of his scholarly friends.  

If left to the jeering "Indians," very possibly such poetry would have been lost. Also, if it had not been for the occasional words of hope—so vital during periods of great discouragement experienced by most struggling, novice authors—the creative mind of Crane could have been stifled and his masterpiece lost. Throughout their lives, Garland and Crane remained loyal friends with the experienced Garland sustaining the apprentice Crane at crucial periods. Crane best expressed the great value of this friendship in a letter to John Northern Hillard in January, 1896.

The one thing that deeply pleases me in my literary life—brief and inglorious as it is—is the fact that men of sense believe me to be sincere. "Maggie," published in paper covers, made me the friendship of Hamlin Garland and W. D. Howells, and the one thing that makes my life worth living in the midst of all this abuse and ridicule is the consciousness that never for an instant have those friendships at all diminished.

Crane felt closer to Garland than to Howells. The difference in age and Howells' status in American literature naturally made their relationship more distant. Some critics inferred from this, and from Howells' delay in reading

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13 Ibid., pp. 75-76.

Maggie, a lack of sincere friendship. However, Howells' support of Crane was invaluable and virtually essential in fending off Crane's vicious American critics. The profoundness of their relationship was cogently expressed by Howells in a letter to Cora Crane on July 29, 1900.

Hamlin Garland first told me of "Maggie," which your husband then sent me. I was slow in getting at it, and he wrote me a heart-breaking note to the effect that he saw I did not care for his book. On this I read it and found that I did care for it immensely. I asked him to come to me, and he came to tea and stayed far into the evening, talking about his work... Inevitably there was the barrier between his youth and my age, that the years make, and I could not reach him where he lived as a young man might. I cannot boast that I understood him fully;... but I was always aware of his power...15

Through the years, there were other visits and long discussions. Despite the triumvirate friendship, Crane did not adopt the Howells-Garland manner of writing. During his career, Crane changed styles several times.16 However, he remained true to his own technique and style, and never attempted to imitate the popular trend of his contemporaries.

After Cora and Stephen Crane moved to Brede Place in England, they became neighbors and friends with the Joseph Conrad family. A respect developed between the two authors, and frequent literary discussions occurred, but apparently Crane was not swayed by Conrad's technique or style.17

15 Ibid., p. 306. 16 Stallman, p. xxxix.
17 Ibid., p. xli.
During his years of writing, Crane consistently denied that any other writers had influenced him. He always refused to reveal any specific source for any of his stories, including *The Red Badge of Courage*. Some critics have asserted that Crane acknowledged Kipling as an influence, although Crane never admitted it publicly, and there is some doubt that he ever did privately. In fact, one of the things that "makes Crane of such exceptional critical interest is the great range and number of comparisons with other artists—echoes and parallelisms that suggest themselves to any critic who has studied the man and his art."\(^{18}\) Hence, some similarity to other authors as well as possible sources for *The Red Badge of Courage* should be considered here.

Even while Crane was living, some writers detected the influence of Zola in some of his works. Similarity between Zola's *La Débâcle* and *The Red Badge of Courage* is easily discernible. Both novels open with opposing armies at rest, a young recruit in doubt about his future conduct, periods of confused marching, and chaotic military orders, but Crane denied any literary influence by Zola.\(^{19}\) As both

\(^{18}\)Ibid., p. xl.

stories deal with the subject of personal fear in combat, a likeness would be only natural. However, Crane disliked most of Zola's works, and resented hearing that he had imitated *La Désâche*. When asked about Zola, Crane commented that "Zola is a sincere writer but—is he much good? . . . I find him pretty tiresome." In 1897 Crane expressed his resentment in a letter to James Huneker, an American critic and writer, thus: "They stand me against walls . . . and tell me how I have stolen all my things from DeMaupassant, Zola, Loti, and the bloke who wrote--I forget the book." A careful reader can detect resemblances in most belles-lettres based on related subjects, but even though the author may be emotionally involved, some credence must be given to his word.

In a letter to the editors of *Leslie's Weekly* in November, 1895, Crane made the following statements:

I decided that the nearer a writer gets to life the greater he becomes as an artist, and most of my prose writings have been toward the goal partially described by that misunderstood and abused word, realism. Tolstoi is the writer I admire most of all.

The second part of the statement has been considered by many critics without proper regard for the first part.

Thomas Beer stated that Crane asserted Count Tolstoy was

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22 Stallman and Gilkes, p. 68.
the world's foremost writer. Other critics question the implication that Tolstoy's Sevastopol furnished Crane the inspiration for writing *The Red Badge of Courage.* Crane's concern to make writing realistic is shown in the first statement, but his admiration for Tolstoy did not influence him. There is a basic difference in the works of the authors, for "unlike the fiction of Zola or Tolstoy, none of Crane's war stories, not even his novel, shows any interest in the ideas, values, or causes of war." Crane also objected to Tolstoy's preaching in "Anna Karenina," and he believed Tolstoy's endless panorama in *War and Peace* made the story tiresome. Although a similarity of certain passages and ideas may be detected between Tolstoy and Crane, as noted between the works of Zola and Crane, Crane was concerned with the mind and the actions of a youth unaccustomed to war, and not with the fate of nations or the panorama of history as Tolstoy and Zola were. Actually,

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23 Beer, p. 55.
26 Beer, p. 157. 27 Ibid., p. 143.
Crane's close study of America—"not, as most critics insist, the novels of Tolstoy (War and Peace, Sevastopol) and Zola (La Débâcle)—served him for the creation of his masterpieces of war fiction.  

Walt Whitman, a pioneer in realistic writing with his true-to-life manner of describing the suffering in the military hospitals, may have influenced Crane. John William DeForest, another realistic author, wrote about his experiences in the Civil War as a captain. Although evidence suggests DeForest influence, critics generally have failed to give such relationship much recognition. DeForest's narratives of Civil War battles appeared in Harper's New Monthly Magazine between 1864 and 1868. Crane probably read some of these accounts when he was loafing in Linson's studio and reading Linson's accumulation of magazines. DeForest commented about individuals who fled when under fire, and later were charged with cowardice by their commanders. Such articles could have inspired Crane to create Henry Fleming's cowardly flight. DeForest stated that "defeated and retreating soldiers do [not] run at full speed...

29 Thomas A. Gullason, "Additions to the Canon of Stephen Crane," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, XII (September, 1957), 160.

for any considerable distance." thirty-one Henry Fleming did not run for any distance. In referring to scattered soldiers after an attack, DeForest notes "the greatest trouble with them seems to be that they have got out of their places in the military machine." thirty-two Crane repeatedly referred to war as a big machine and noted how the individual soldier seemed insignificant to such a machine. DeForest believed that officers were usually braver than soldiers, thirty-three and this concept may have influenced Crane to create Fleming as a soldier rather than as an officer.

Crane's friendship and respect for William Dean Howells also possibly directed his attention to some of DeForest's novels. DeForest had "won the esteem of Howells, who kept re-introducing him and praising him to the reading public." thirty-four Such praise from a distinguished mutual friend almost certainly prompted Crane to read DeForest's masterpiece Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty, originally published in 1867.

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32 Ibid.
34 Ibid., p. v.
Although Crane did not locate the battle scene of The Red Badge of Courage in the swamps of Louisiana, the similarity of much of the fighting in the woods is comparable to Chapter XX in Miss Ravenel's Conversion. Crane created his battle pictures from his imagination and the accounts of others, but DeForest used his experience of fighting in Louisiana and the long attack on Port Hudson.

Crane confuses the critics by never admitting that any one author or any one book influenced his writing. Similarity of certain passages or ideas of Crane with other authors' may be detected; yet there always remains a difference that complicates such comparisons.

It is not feasible to consider every possible source for The Red Badge of Courage, and there appears to be no one specific source. A story that is as complex as this one "in which influences of several kinds are synthesised into an original expression with a unity of effect which almost successfully disguises the diversity of its origins" only complicates the source problem.

The influence of Claverack College, a military institution, must be recognized as it "is closer to the heart of

35 John William DeForest, Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty (New York, 1867), pp. 243-254.

The Red Badge of Courage than it has been possible hitherto to know." The feeling of pride in the military service, in the uniform, in being one of the men of the unit, in directing the actions of his company must have been experiences invaluable to Crane in drafting parts of the book. As the platoons of blue uniformed students passed in review on the parade ground, mental impressions were probably imbedded in Crane's subconsciousness until drawn on for the creation of the vivid descriptions of the masses of blue uniformed troops.

Crane had a strong desire for his stories to reflect as nearly as possible situations as they may have actually happened. Therefore, he probably used some of the Reverend General Van Petten's tales of actual experiences in the Civil War as a basis for incidents in his stories. General Van Petten commanded the 34th New York Volunteers, but Crane created a fictitious 304th Regiment for his story. Some of Van Petten's more memorable experiences probably furnished many interesting hours of discussions for the old general and his eager, enthusiastic boys, especially after a day on the drill field or after a successful parade. Such periods could easily have furnished valuable source data for Crane.

38 Stallman, N. on p. 255.
In this manner, "the conception of the rout, the color-sergeant killed and the colors saved, the loss of more than half the regiment (end of Chapter XIV), and then its slow overnight reassembling, show the marks of Van Petten's Claverack tales of the 34th New York at Antietam." The Battle of Antietam was a terrible experience for Van Petten's 34th Regiment, and "certainly his accounts of that last day's battle could have provided Crane with all the necessary details he needed to authenticate the panic scenes in his great novel." Another critic believes that "Crane's unheroic treatment of the panic-stricken youth has been largely responsible for the position of The Red Badge of Courage among war novels." Surely Van Petten told his students about such a notable event as the flight of the regiment at the Battle of Antietam, and Crane could then inject his own thoughts and emotions into his hero to achieve the dramatic presentation of Henry Fleming's flight. In this manner Van Petten's experiences at "Antietam may well have provided . . . the idea of Henry's panic and flight, and the heroism of the wounded color-bearer." However,

39 Berryman, p. 78. 40 Ibid.
a better source is Major Gazaway in Miss Ravenel's Conversion. DeForest shows Major Gazaway as a complete coward, petrified with fear when any shooting starts, but whose political influence makes it possible for his cowardly acts to be whitewashed and for him to receive a promotion over other officers. This may have inspired Crane to let Fleming's cowardly act remain hidden and also make him the hero. Gazaway was a hero in his political district, due to the governor's promotion.

The battle action in The Red Badge of Courage closely parallels the actions at Chancellorsville, and not Antietam. Evidence shows Crane used Chancellorsville for the battle of his story. Not only did the Union forces have a new commander, General Hooker, who drilled and reviewed the troops as Henry was drilled; but "the strategy Jim had predicted was precisely that of Chancellorsville, ... description fits aptly the march of the Second Corps, ... the regi mental movements which Crane describes loosely parallel the movements of many regiments at Chancellorsville, ... topographical features, in 1863, characterize the area south and east of Chancellorsville itself." Also, Henry's being wounded in the evening compares to the time of the Eighth

42 DeForest, Miss Ravenel's Conversion, p. 297.
43 Ibid., pp. 342-343.
Pennsylvania Cavalry Charge.\textsuperscript{44} Such resemblances to Chancellorsville indicate Crane did not create a fictitious battle, but "used a factual framework for his novel; and the anonymity of the battle is the result of that framework."\textsuperscript{45} A comprehensive study of the story and of Chancellorsville "indicates that Crane was not merely a dreamer spinning fantasies out of his imagination; on the contrary, he was capable of using real events for his own fictional purposes with controlled sureness . . . . Many details of the novel are clearly drawn from that battle; none are inconsistent with it."\textsuperscript{46}

Of all the battles of the Civil War, definite reasons motivated Crane to select Chancellorsville for his story in preference to other battles. William Crane's study and comments about Chancellorsville directed Stephen Crane's interest to this particular engagement and to its significance in the Civil War. Therefore, Chancellorsville was a military action with which Stephen Crane was familiar. He could use this battle with confidence, and it also served his artistic purposes.\textsuperscript{47} This particular military action had many characteristics essential for certain points of \textit{The Red Badge of Courage}, such as the first battle of the year, the first battle for many regiments, and the first real experience of

\textsuperscript{44}Hungerford, pp. 520-526.
\textsuperscript{45}Ibid., pp. 530-531.
\textsuperscript{46}Ibid., p. 530.
\textsuperscript{47}Ibid.
fighting for many untried soldiers. One article in the November, 1885, issue of *Century Magazine* starts with this statement:

The Chancellorsville campaign was the most eventful one of the late Civil War.\(^46\)

The same article closed with the following:

Chancellorsville was typical of all the campaigns and battles of the war of the Army of the Potomac.\(^47\)

Such comments could only act as pointers to a young imaginative writer searching for some battle to use as a framework for his story. In this same issue of *Century* are many stirring pictures which have a striking similarity to some of Crane's vivid descriptions of the fighting in *The Red Badge of Courage*.

Crane's refusal to give any source for *The Red Badge of Courage*, along with the complexity of the story, resulted in speculation as to various other possible sources. Eric Solomon in *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* noted a similarity of plot to Joseph Kirkland's *The Captain of Company K*. Both writers used the plot of a hero's escape from the accusation of cowardice, but Kirkland, a combat veteran, wrote approximately four years before Crane.\(^48\) Another critic believes

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\(^47\) Ibid., p. 761.

that Crane drew extensively from Walter F. Hinman's story, *Corporal Si Klegg and His "Pard."* Webster cites the similarity of this story to *The Red Badge of Courage* as to regiment losses, the evening camp, the long marches, and other such incidents.\(^4^9\) The noted critics Caroline Gordon and Allen Tate accentuate the wide variance in opinion as to Crane's possible sources when they state, "Crane tells us that the battle scenes in Stendhal's *La Chartreuse de Parme* inspired him to write his masterpiece, *The Red Badge of Courage."\(^5^0\) Although they definitely state that Crane gave credit to Stendhal's influence, they fail to indicate their source for Crane's alleged statement. They do cite certain similarities between the two stories, but such comparisons of *The Red Badge of Courage* can be made with other stories. However, DeForest's *Miss Ravenel's Conversion*, the Battle of Chancellorsville, and *Harper's* and *Century* magazines apparently were Crane's basic sources, supplemented by lesser sources.

Crane's religious upbringing suggests other interesting possibilities. The control exerted by pious and devout parents must have had some bearing on his writing, although


\(^5^0\) Caroline Gordon and Allen Tate, editors, *The House of Fiction* (New York, 1950), p. 211.
not frequently or obviously. One of Crane's better known short stories, "A Mystery of Heroism," shows evidence of the religious environment of his early life.

One critic comments about the remarkable similarity between II Samuel 23, 13-17, and "A Mystery of Heroism." Although there is a likeness in the obtaining of water under hazardous conditions and then the loss of the water, considerable question can be raised about Crane's obtaining his inspiration from the Biblical passage. Actually, Crane was probably endeavoring to explain his personal concept of the idea of heroism, and his past religious training unconsciously helped to shape his opinion of the meaning of heroism, possibly as a result of the cited verses in II Samuel. Crane wrote "A Mystery of Heroism" before he witnessed an actual battle; thus the story is another creation of his imagination.

The popularity of his works about combat and other human stress caused Crane to be a war correspondent for both the Greco-Turkish War and the Cuban rebellion. From these armed conflicts, he received inspiration for additional stories. Some of them lack his former quality, and Willa Cather's strong criticism of one, "God Rest Ye,

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Merry Gentlemen," is very appropriate when she said, "This one of Crane's war sketches is much tainted by the war-correspondent idiom of the times. In the others he wrote better than the people of his day, and he wrote like himself." At this time Crane's health was rapidly deteriorating as a result of his reckless neglect of his health most of his adult life. He also was suffering from malaria and advancing tuberculosis. Very possibly Crane lacked the stamina and the energy necessary for effective creative writing.

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CHAPTER IV
CRANE'S PRESENTATION OF WAR

Crane’s concept of war and his manner of presentation have been the important factors contributing to his fame. He did not share the prevailing imperialistic ideas. In the first paragraph of "War Memories," Crane probably expressed his basic philosophy of war through the war correspondent Vernall, who said, "It is because war is neither magnificent nor squalid; it is simply life, and an expression of life can always evade us. We can never tell life, one to another, although sometimes we think we can."  
Crane had both admiration and disgust for war, and he saw it as a mixture of good and evil, like life itself. War was more than shooting and military action as it was the conflict of life, the rush, the noise, and the pressures in a city. One time when Linson showed one of his paintings to Crane portraying life in a city, Crane named the picture "The Sense of a City Is War." In essence, Crane saw war

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3Cady, p. 90.
as "a way of life— a good life, a life of action— but it lacks any rationale." This lack of reason bothered Crane, as can be seen in the complexity of some of his stories.

After he had witnessed actual fighting, he saw war as illogical and businesslike, with the unemotional regular soldier as the best. Then the English admiration for war influenced Crane, but with "The Kicking Twelfth," Crane returned to his original approach as shown in The Red Badge of Courage. Through his various stories, Crane attempted to show the universality of all wars.

In a letter to Nellie Crouse on January 26, 1896, Crane gave some additional light on his concept of a battle, when he wrote:

When I speak of a battle I do not mean want, and those similar spectres. I mean myself and the inherent indolence and cowardice which is the lot of all men. I mean, also, applause.

War was not a light and easy thing, as Crane saw it, nor was it an adventure or a glorious excursion. In "War Memories," he stated that "war is death, and a plague of the lack of small things, and toil." The toil of combat was again shown when Peza, the war correspondent in "Death and the Child," questioned passing Greek soldiers, and found that

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4Solomon, p. 74. 5Ibid., p. 78.
6Stallman and Gilkes, p. 105.
"they knew nothing, save that war was hard work. . . . They were weary."\(^8\) Despite the toil of war, Crane recognized that "war is a spirit. War provides for those that it loves. It provides sometimes death and sometimes a singular and incredible safety."\(^9\) But this providing was a mission or purpose in life for some who were uncertain as to the reasons for existence, and not the supply of the nicer things of a civilized life.

After some observations of actual combat, Crane saw that actual warfare was not as shown in books. In Cuba, the soldiers found that "actually there was not anything in the world which turned out to be as books describe it."\(^10\) Wars were not a series of swift actions, but instead they "laggerd and lagged and lagged."\(^11\)

Many authors of war fiction try to be military strategists and devote much analysis to battle maneuvers, but Crane "knew that the movement of troops was the officers' business, not his. He was in Cuba to write about soldiers and soldiering."\(^12\) This writing about soldiers and

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\(^8\)"Death and the Child," *The Work,* XII, 254.
\(^10\)"Virtue in War," *The Work,* XX, 186.
\(^12\)Willa Cather, Introduction to Vol. IX of *The Work,* xii.
soldiering remained the primary basis of his fiction. He consistently presented his concept of war through the thoughts and actions of the individual. The soldier was Crane's primary concern. He delved into the emotions and the experiences of the individual, and portrayed such feelings with a stark reality. H. L. Mencken stated very appropriately that Crane's "superlative skill lay in the handling of isolated situations; he knew exactly how to depict them with a dazzling brilliance, and he knew, too, how to analyze them with a penetrating insight."  

Crane had scant interest for commanders, but his concern for the ordinary soldier remained. When there were five correspondents with the Rough Riders in Cuba, Crane noted the total absence of reporters with the regular troops. He also deplored the actions of newspapers in failing to report the casualties of the regulars, although the casualties of the volunteers were always reported in detail. In his earlier works, Crane was primarily concerned with the novice soldier, and then later he admired the hardened professional soldier; but he retained his interest in the individual soldier, the most important person to him.

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14 Berryman, p. 224.
After Crane had observed actual combat in Greece and Cuba, he realized some of the esprit de corps of the regulars. This mutual feeling and love for the service was something which other writers often overlooked, but Crane expressed it through the regular soldier, Nolan, during some fighting in Cuba.

He sprang to his feet and, stooping, ran with the others. Something fine, soft, gentle, touched his heart as he ran. He had loved the regiment, the army, because the regiment, the army, was his life--he had no other outlook. . . .

This love for the service and higher sense of comradeship is a basic thing in an efficient team of fighting men. Crane, like so many other writers of war fiction, apparently was vaguely aware of this when he wrote The Red Badge of Courage, but this comradeship esprit de corps of the regular soldier was subdued and muted in his earlier stories. This trait of the combat soldier was accented in his later works. Crane seemed to become more cognizant of the various emotions of the fighting man after he had witnessed some combat in Greece and Cuba, when he wrote that "the fine thing about 'the men' is that you can't explain them." Some of the men who had captured San Juan Hill were returning to a main base for rest and passed a group of regulars en route to

16"War Memories," The Work, IX, 211-212.
another battle area. Crane expressed the feeling of the men as he related the incident:

"Here they come." Then the men of the regular army did a thing. They rose en masse and came to attention. Then the men of the regular army did another thing. They slowly lifted every weather-beaten hat and dropped it until it touched the knee. Then there was a magnificent silence, broken only by the measured hoof-beats of the little company's horses as they rode through the gap.\(^1\)

Crane's absorbed interest in the individual soldier probably resulted from a characteristic of his own personality. At Claverack College, Harvey Wickham had noticed that Crane "had, beside, a sneaking fondness for the underdog as such,"\(^18\) and in the individual soldier Crane found an empathy for the underdog which he could express with stark realism.

Through much of the war literature various writers have noted the machines of war, and the destructive role of such machines in combat. However, machines of war had a different connotation to Crane. He saw the actions of battles and of wars as the working of some monstrous, intangible machine which was ever present with its visible destruction and horror. The promulgation of orders to initiate a battle was merely "the machinery of orders,"\(^19\)

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\(^{17}\)Ibid., pp. 250-251.  
\(^{18}\)Wickham, p. 295.  
\(^{19}\)"The Little Regiment," The Work, II, 30.
and Henry Fleming "was unaware of the machinery of orders that started the charge." Fleming's "education had been that success for that mighty blue machine was certain; that it would make victories as a contrivance turned out buttons." This comparison of battles to a machine is interwoven through the various phases of combat action. During the height of the actual fighting, Fleming felt "the battle was like the grinding of an immense and terrible machine. . . . He must go close and see it produce corpses." The destructive force of this machine was shown by the torn bodies after an engagement which "expressed the awful machinery in which the men had been entangled." Even the individual soldier wished that his rifle "was an engine of annihilating power." Later, as the initial impetus of an attack slowed, Crane said that "the regiment was a machine run down." In describing the tenseness of a soldier on night guard at an outpost in Cuba, Crane expressed the atmosphere of tension by stating that "everything was on a watch-spring foundation."

Machines served as an excellent medium for Crane to convey to his civilian readers his impressions of a battle.

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21 Ibid., p. 134.
22 Ibid., p. 98.
23 Ibid., p. 101.
24 Ibid., p. 190.
25 Ibid., p. 221.
Many readers could not visualize realistically what a battle would be like. During the period of imperialism and industrialization in which Crane was writing, ponderous machinery, clanking and roaring, was a thing of wonder that the average man could see and realize. Such machinery therefore served as an excellent symbol for the roar, the confusion, and the awesome grinding of war. Also, the machine idea may have been a result of Crane's own struggle to imagine what war may have been like. The use of this idea is more common in *The Red Badge of Courage*, which Crane wrote before he had witnessed any battle. After he had observed actual combat in Greece and Cuba, Crane did not use the machine symbol as consistently as he did in his earlier war fiction.

In many descriptions of battles Crane seemed to consider man as a subordinate thing in the actual conflict, and the cannons and the guns as the actual combatants. In fact, at times the human being almost ceased to do the fighting as the guns assumed more of the personality of individuals. In one battle description in *The Red Badge of Courage*, Crane states that "the guns squatted in a row like savage chiefs. They argued with abrupt violence."27 Crane would give the guns human characteristics; for example, "the battery was disputing with a distant antagonist," and

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"the guns, stolid and undaunted, spoke with dogged valor."28

Even the human emotion of hate is personified in the cannons: "a long row of guns upon the northern bank had been pitiless in their hatred."29 Then the battle starts; but instead of men in a hand-to-hand struggle, it is this: "a battery on the hill was crashing with such tumult that it was as if the guns had quarrelled and had fallen pell-mell and snarling upon each other."30 Just when the combatants most needed assistance, "the cannon had entered the dispute. In the fog-filled air their voices made a thudding sound."31 The human element of the inanimate guns is continued as "the voices of the cannon were mingled in a long and interminable row,"32 and then their comrades join the fight as "one by one the batteries on the northern shore aroused, the innumerable guns bellowing an angry oration at the distant ridge."33 The big cannons, made of lifeless metal, seem almost to come to life when Crane states that "the artillery was assembling as if for a conference," and "they belched and howled like brass devils guarding a

28Ibid., pp. 81-82.
30Ibid., p. 43.
31The Red Badge of Courage, p. 177.
32Ibid., p. 197.
33"The Little Regiment," The Work, II, 34.
Describing a battle by giving human qualities to the guns tended to create an illusion of reality and an at-oneness with a raging conflict. Many authors would use soldiers in the scenes of fighting, but by using the guns for this purpose, Crane could use the individual soldier to express the individual's emotions during the conflict. This method permitted Crane to accentuate such emotions without detracting from the sense of battle, especially when he wanted to portray the individual's feeling of fear. Such a technique also made possible a more compact story by having a separate medium to express and accent different actions and experiences of a battle.

After Crane had witnessed some fighting, the sounds of battle seemed to have fascinated him, and a method of presenting realistically such sounds so that the reader could receive a true impression of them appeared to have intrigued him. To express the beginning of a day of fighting, Crane referred to the sound of the rifles as "drumming," and then the day of battle began with the boom of artillery. Later the whine of bullets was described as "wire-string notes," and on another occasion "the crackle of

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36 *Ibid.**, p. 27.
musketry began to dominate the purring of the hostile bullets."37 Such expressions normally sufficed, but in The Charge of William B. Perkins Crane made free use of onomatopoeia to express the sounds of the various weapons of war, of which the following are examples.

... the old familiar flut-flut-fluttery-fluttery-flut-flut...

Sss-s-swing-sing-ing-pop went the lightning-swift metal grasshoppers over him and beside him.

Then a field-gun spoke! "Boom-ra-swow-ow-ow-ow-pum!"
Then a Colt automatic began to bark! "Crack-crk-crk-crk-crk-crk," endlessly.38

Crane's fascination for the sound of weapons firing is further indicated by his description of the roll of musketry when he said that it was as "beautiful as I had never dreamed," and instantly added, "This is one point of view. Another might be taken from the men who died there."39 Although the sounds of cannonading and of small arms interested him, he was always aware of the ordinary soldier who was the object of such actions, and his sensitive nature kept him from ever becoming callous toward the suffering and toil of the men.

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37 "The Little Regiment," The Work, II, 43.
39 Berryman, p. 176.
War is never a glorious or wonderful thing. Although some writers of fiction have tried to create such an impression, Crane recognized the terrible horror of combat and vividly expressed it. He made no attempt to dramatize the mutilations of living humans. Such writing would have been offensive to his compassionate nature. Rather he presented realistically that which he first visualized and later actually saw of death and carnage on battlefields.

Corwin K. Linson, with whom Crane spent much time in New York City, noted that Crane recognized that war in some ways could be conceived of as a sport, or a great show, but such a concept gave him a tinge of normal guilt. Even before Crane witnessed any battles, and before he had written The Red Badge of Courage, he recognized that "there was an agony to the actual deaths far more horrifying than anything he had imagined for readers."\textsuperscript{40} Crane also recognized a lack of basic human compassion, which was effectively presented in "Making of an Orator," one of his Whilomville Stories. In little Jimmie Trescott's trying to make his speech before his school class and the class's cruel reaction to his efforts, Crane recognized that even little children were sometimes "no better than a Roman populace in Nero's time."\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{40}Cady, p. 62.

\textsuperscript{41}"Making an Orator," \textit{The Work}, V, 71.
Human beings naturally do not like to face death. Even the combat soldier averts his eyes from imminent death: when the Cuban soldier raised his weapon, "the young lieutenant closed his eyes, for he did not want to see the flash of the machete."\(^4\)

The combat veteran becomes partially inured to the needs of others. Sometimes his replies seem almost callous, but Crane noticed such reactions and gave a proper perspective to them. When asked where a doctor was, "a man answered briskly: 'Just died this minute, sir.' It was as if he had said: 'Just gone around the corner this minute, sir.'"\(^5\) Crane realized that some actions which may seem heartless were in reality only a struggle with almost insurmountable problems under adverse conditions, as shown by this incident in *The Price of the Harness*:

Martin plucked a man by the sleeve. The man had been shot in the foot, and was making his way with the help of a curved, incompetent stick. It is an axiom of war that wounded men can never find straight sticks. Then as Martin struggles on, he is asked to help carry another man, who was also wounded.

"Can't carry myself, let alone somebody else."

This answer, which rings now so inhuman, pitiless, did not affect the other man. "Well, all right," he


said. "Here comes some other fellows." The wounded man had now turned blue-grey; his eyes were closed; his body shook in a gentle, persistent chill.  

The dying man, although near death, did not resent Martin's reply, as each man with his own struggles and suffering was painfully aware of the difficulties of others. They knew they had to master their own situation, and those who could help would. The veteran soldier controls his emotions, but under his superficial harshness is a deep and true compassion for his comrades, often expressed in a few poignant words.

"Oh," said Grierson, "here's his hat." He brought it and laid it on the face of the dead man. They stood for a time. It was apparent that they thought it essential and decent to say or do something. Finally Watkins said in a broken voice, "Aw, it's a damn shame." They moved slowly off toward the firing line.  

Crane did not let the hatred of war blind him to a sympathetic feeling for the enemy, especially the dead. A single, unknown dead Spanish soldier on the battlefield made him realize the terrible, desolate loneliness of dying alone in a foreign country. Crane, with human compassion, tells of such an incident in "Wounds in the Rain." He wondered how many people would ever be cognizant of the dead Spaniard, and then, as if speaking to the corpse, Crane wrote, "And foreigners buried you expeditiously.

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45 Ibid., p. 34.  
46 Ibid., pp. 39-40.
while speaking a strange tongue. Sleep well, red-headed mystery.\textsuperscript{47} In "The Open Boat" Crane expresses a similar feeling when the correspondent thought of an old poem about a soldier of the Legion who lay dying in Algiers.\textsuperscript{48}

In every battle there is the horror of mortally wounded men, and Crane told of such in simple, direct statements without dramatizing. Yet such a presentation seemed to make the wounded more real and their suffering more vivid. In "Death and the Child," the war correspondent in Greece relates meeting two soldiers on a mountain trail helping a comrade whose jaw had been shot away. The two friends were tearful, and the wounded soldier, with his breast soaked in blood, gave Peza a mystic gaze, due to his state of shock.\textsuperscript{49} The simple description of an incident and the isolation of it from other actions of the battle only heightens the effect. Crane described a somewhat similar scene in "War Memories":

Then suddenly one would be confronted by the awful majesty of a man shot in the face. Particularly I remember one. He had a great dragoon moustache, and the blood streamed down his face to meet this moustache even as a torrent goes to meet the jammed log, and then swarmed out to the tips and fell in big slow drops. He looked steadily into my eyes; I was ashamed to return his glance.\textsuperscript{50}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[47]"War Memories," \textit{The Work}, IX, 238-239.
\item[48]Men, Women and Boats (New York, 1921), pp. 46-47.
\item[49]"Death and the Child," \textit{The Work}, XII, 260.
\item[50]"War Memories," \textit{The Work}, IX, 234.
\end{footnotes}
When Crane wrote *The Red Badge of Courage*, he had only his imagination and Civil War pictures from which to form a mental impression of a dying man. Although such passages are authentic, the phrasing accentuates the grotesque more than is done in his later writings. He would describe the death tremors as the legs dancing "a sort of hideous hornpipe" and the "arms beat wildly about his head in expression of implike enthusiasm."\(^{51}\) In his later writings, after he witnessed numerous deaths in combat, he expressed the death struggle in a more serene manner. In "The Kicking Twelfth," a dying soldier "looked meekly at his comrades,"\(^{52}\) and in "The Price of the Harness" a man "was shot; . . . and more than in any other way it affected him with a profound sadness."\(^{53}\) However, Crane did not lessen the gruesomeness of approaching death; in fact, his more exact descriptions were rather repulsive, as noted in "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen."

. . . then the little settlement of the hospital squad; men on the ground everywhere, many in the path; one young captain dying, with great gasps, his body pale blue, and glistening, like the inside of a rabbit's skin.\(^{54}\)

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\(^{52}\) "The Kicking Twelfth," *The Work*, IX, 162.


\(^{54}\) "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen," *The Work*, IX, 74.
Crane did not have an aversion to death, and this attitude remained fairly consistent in his works. Death seemed to be merely a calm rest. In *The Red Badge of Courage*, when a man dying regarded "death thus out of the corner of his eye, he conceived it to be nothing but rest." A similar concept was expressed in one of Crane's later stories when a man "did not know he was dying. He thought he was holding an argument on the condition of the turf."56

As a war correspondent in Cuba, Crane commented to a fellow reporter that the mental attitude of men in combat interested him. Through Henry Fleming, Crane revealed this thought when Fleming wondered how he would act in battle, when he would have to face "blaze, blood, and danger" to find out, not just a mental picture. In some later works, Crane recognized that among experienced veterans "a wound gives strange dignity to him who bears it. Well men shy from this new and terrible majesty."59

57 Stallman, pp. 187-188.
Before experiencing any actual battle, some people have the impression that war is a series of heroic encounters, something glorious and great, but Crane realized that the "Greeklike struggles would be no more." However, among the fighting men, Crane sensed there was a mysterious fraternity. In one instance he indicated how a "soldier watched over his comrade's wants with tenderness and care."61

Apparently Crane desired to experience for himself and to capture the feelings of a man in combat. One night in Cuba, when he was too sick to eat, Crane "shocked Henry Carey and Acton Davis by saying it must be interesting to be shot";62 and another time at Guantanamo, Crane climbed "over the redoubt, lighted a cigarette, and stood for a few moments with his arms at his sides while bullets hissed past him. . . ."63 Such actions on his part were not of a suicidal desire, but an over-enthusiastic search for the truth, truth being a basic credo for him. He had spent so much time imagining war that this real warfare enthralled and entranced him. Actual combat seemed to hold a deep fascination for him.

61 Ibid., p. 163.  
62 Beer, p. 190.  
63 Berryman, p. 222.
Fear is one emotion that all men in combat eventually experience, and this emotional reaction always seemed to intrigue Crane. Rather than showing various aspects in different individuals, Crane selected one inexperienced soldier, Henry Fleming, as a portrayal of fear. Crane's handling of this situation in *The Red Badge of Courage* is a primary factor contributing to his fame.

With the Civil War raging, it was only natural for a country boy to have grandiose dreams. With careful development Crane shows how doubt and uncertainty slowly take root and develop in Fleming while in camp awaiting action. From this time the problem of fear rapidly increases as he moves into combat. Then when the battle rages in the forest, the noise, the confusion, and the uncertainty of the wavering line overwhelm him, and the small germ of fear with which he set forth explodes in completely disorganized panic. Realizing that fear is a universal experience which is seldom frankly admitted, Crane does not chastise or praise his hero for his cowardly act. Instead, after the surge of fear subsides, Fleming realizes that he is still a man who has to live with himself, although his mistake had been performed in the dark. After some wandering and uncertainty, Fleming permits a cut received from an annoyed

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soldier to pass as cover for his act of fear when he eventually rejoins his unit, and surprisingly finds others also had experienced the same fear that he had. Crane, however, keeps the other soldiers in the background to accentuate more effectively the fear and its mastery. In trying to rectify his cowardly act, Fleming becomes aggressive and masters his fear. He later resolves "not to budge whatever should happen. Some arrows of scorn that had buried themselves in his heart had generated ... hatred." In Fleming's retrospective realization that "elfin thoughts must have exaggerated and enlarged everything," Crane presents his concept of fear. Linson describes the book as "a study of human emotion under the conditions of war, of reactions in the soul of a boy." The title of *The Red Badge of Courage* underscores much of the irony in the story. General Philip Kearny's division in the Third Corps of the Army of the Potomac wore a red diamond, or a red badge, with such distinction that it became a famous mark for valor. However, Crane uses the red badge as a private badge to conceal cowardice instead of representing courage.

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67 Linson, p. 43.  
In his short story "A Mystery of Heroism," Crane portrayed not only courage in battle, but also the confusion of war and the interaction of men and events. In Collins, Crane gives a psychological portrait of fear and analyzes Collins' consciousness as he runs across the open field of battle; and he shows the foolishness of any emotion in war. In this story Crane presents war as a civilian would. Some critics consider "A Mystery of Heroism" the most intellectualized war story that Crane wrote.\(^{69}\)

Besides fear, Crane was also greatly concerned with moral conduct. In "The Clan of No-Name," Crane was specific as to the importance of proper conduct in war, as revealed in the following:

\[\ldots\] he ran on, because it was his duty, and because he would be shamed before men if he did not do his duty. \[\ldots\] There was a standard, and he must follow it, obey it, because it was a monarch, the Prince of Conduct.\(^{70}\)

This obligation to duty and proper conduct in combat seemed to be a matter of concern to Crane. He did not think war was pretty or heroic, but saw it as a duty, and as a very grim one.\(^{71}\)

As a creator of war fiction, Crane did not believe that heroes were glorious. He had a rather mundane concept of


\(^{70}\) "The Clan of No-Name," The Work, II, 162.
heroism. In a letter in 1897 to John Northern Hilliard, Crane wrote that he tried "to give to readers a slice out of life; and if there is any moral or lesson in it, I do not try to point it out. I let the reader find it for himself." In order to make the antiheroic aspects of war more vivid, Crane deliberately underplays heroism, and his real heroes are the quiet workmen who went to war. Crane commented, "They went because they went." Crane jeers at the romantic idea of heroism by making Collins' heroic acts ludicrous, and he gives a nobler concept by having Collins help the dying officer. Crane "identifies heroism with the ideal of brotherhood, most effectively dramatized in The Open Boat." The thoughts of Collins can best summarize Crane's disagreement with the usual idea of what a hero is:

When Collins faced the meadow and walked away from the regiment, he was vaguely conscious that a chasm, the deep valley of all prides, was suddenly between him and his comrades. . . . Human expression had said loudly for centuries that men should feel afraid of certain things, and that all men who did not feel this fear were phenomena—heroes. . . . This, then, was a hero. After all, heroes were not much. . . . he was an intruder in the land of fine deeds.

72Stallman and Gilkes, pp. 158-159.
74Gargano, p. 23.
Although Crane may seem to belittle heroism, he was very conscious of the risk and the sacrifice the men took to accomplish their deeds. He was quick to defend the bravery of the soldiers, as he noted in a letter to Elbert Hubbard on May 1, 1899, about Rowan in "A Message to Garcia."

When you want to monkey with some of our national heroes you had better ask me, because I know and your perspective is almost out of sight. . . .

Hubbard had made fiction out of a routine act, and Crane believed this cheapened the many real heroic acts of other soldiers who never received any recognition.

Crane seemed to be fascinated by colors, which he often used to express ideas in a manner different from other authors. The artist Linson remarked that "Steve reveled in the use of words as a painter loves his color." Crane seemed to use color almost as much as the painter to express shades of meaning as the artist shades a picture.

Crane's remarkable use of color was noted by critics early in his career. A writer in The Critic (1895) says of The Red Badge of Courage:

... we must name also the quick eye for color which is shown on every page, and not for the mere externals of color alone, but for the inner significance of its relation to events and emotions under hand."

76Stallman and Gilkes, p. 220.

77Linson, p. 31.

Red seemed to have a particular appeal to Crane. Even as a boy he liked red.\footnote{Berryman, p. 9.} When Crane started writing The Red Badge of Courage, he planned to use a different title. The subsequent fame of the book resulted in red being associated with his name. In the book, the tall soldier, after cleaning his rifle, produces "a red handkerchief of some kind."\footnote{The Red Badge of Courage, p. 62.} Some authors would have had the soldier draw out a handkerchief that was dirty, torn, or bloody, but Crane makes it simply a red handkerchief. The kind of handkerchief was not so important, but Crane felt it was important to specify that the handkerchief was red.

Instead of being a scene of desolation, a battlefield with Crane's use of color became a panorama of varying shades, as in this example: ". . . a dark battle line lay upon a sunstruck clearing that gleamed orange color."\footnote{Ibid., p. 42.} The windows of a distant farm house were not merely red, but one window glowed "a deep murder red,"\footnote{Ibid., p. 199.} leaving to the reader's imagination the exact shading of murder red and signifying the pending fight. A fire across the river was not just a reflection to Crane; he says, "a glaring fire
wine-tinted the waters of the river." The idea of red wine permitted the reader to conceive of the depth of color in the water and the impression of sustenance of life often associated with both liquids. Crane even described the noise of battle in terms of color: "... a crimson roar came from the distance." Since flowers usually denote color, exploding shells "looked to be strange war flowers bursting into fierce bloom." Crane's skill in the frequent use of color to convey impressions of war helped to stimulate images in the minds of different readers. The impressions so created are consistent with the story and are necessary to a correct understanding of it—all indications of Crane's ability.

Human emotions were frequently described in terms of color. Even the difficulties of war were "red, formidable." When Henry Fleming was wandering back to his unit after his cowardly flight, one of Crane's most famous passages uses color to express Fleming's thoughts when "he wished that he, too, had a wound, a red badge of courage." In retrospect, near the end of the story, Fleming "had been where there was red of blood and black of passion." The facial expressions of the men in "The Little Regiment" reflected changes of emotions like the flashes of colored lights.

83Ibid., p. 37. 84Ibid., p. 95. 85Ibid., p. 76.
86Ibid., p. 74. 87Ibid., p. 106. 88Ibid., p. 262.
89"The Little Regiment," The Work, II, 47.
Although other writers use terms of color in describing morning or evening camp scenes, the shades of colors that Crane uses are different from the usual shades to depict such scenes. Daybreak is described as "the first cool lavender lights," and then when "the day wore down to the Cuban dusk . . . the steep mountain range on the right turned blue and as without detail as a curtain." Oddly, the usual shades of red, gold, or orange are not used for dawn or twilight. To describe the camp fires only as red or glowing was not enough for Crane. He used more specific and descriptive terms, for the ammunition-guard's fire was a "tiny ruby of light"; or in another instance, "a few fires burned blood-red." The night fires of an army bivouac in *The Red Badge of Courage* are "like red, peculiar blossoms, [that] dotted the night." Crane usually preferred some shade of intense red, not just red, and colors were an important means of conveying an impression.

The sun had a special importance to Crane. Actually it was more than a bearer of light; it was a metaphor of dramatic or symbolic purposes. At the end of Chapter IX

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of The Red Badge of Courage, the statement "the red sun was pasted in the sky like a wafer" has intrigued critics. It might help to note that one meaning of "wafer" is a transitive verb, "to seal, close, or fasten with a wafer." The image occurs immediately after the death of Fleming's friend, Jim Conklin, and it portrays Fleming's intense anger. Conklin's life is sealed, and Fleming's past is closed with the bloody death of his friend. The youth's innocence in war ends.

One plague of all military commanders has been civilian and political interference by their own people. Crane had this in mind when he said, "The papers should have sent playwrights to the first part of the war." He had a strong dislike for able-bodied men who deliberately avoid the military service, and he referred to such malingeringers in Greece as "that scurvy behind-the-rear-guard," but remarked that "the manhood of Greece had gone to the frontier." In a story based on the Cuban insurrection, a Cuban woman complains that the populace is "not blockaded by the Yankee

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96 "His Majestic Lie," The Work, II, 204.
97 Active Service, The Work, IV, 211.
warships; we are blockaded by our grocers." This recognizes the commercial exploitation of war with its resulting hardships for everyone. Crane is especially critical of political intervention in military matters, devoting much of the story "The Second Generation" to this subject. Berryman quotes Crane, here at his most violent, in the following message which Crane cabled from Havana:

In our next war, our first bit of strategy should be to have the Army and Navy combine in an assault on Washington. If we could once take and sack Washington, the rest of the conflict would be simple.  

Unfortunately, Crane's bitter attacks on political interference with combat actions went unnoticed. It was not a crusading matter with him, but he did express his strong opinions about the subject at times.

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98 "His Majestic Lie," The Work, II, 220.

99 Berryman, p. 232.
CHAPTER V

AN EVALUATION OF CRANE'S WAR WRITING

Too frequently Crane is recognized only for his masterpiece, or for one or two of his better short stories. Consequently, his real ability has been overlooked. Joseph Conrad was both a neighbor and a friend when Crane lived in England, and Conrad referred to him as "a man who was certainly unique in his generation."\(^1\) Conrad, an author well known for his own ability, would be competent to give a valid evaluation of Crane as they were intimate friends and frequently discussed various literary works.

In preparing his book *Stephen Crane, an Omnibus*, Stallman studied Crane's writings in detail, and concluded that "in style and method Crane had no predecessors."\(^2\) Among American writers, Thomas Beer recognized that Crane ignored all the prevailing rules of writing which had plagued national fiction, thus making him unique in American literature for his period.\(^3\) In addition to his ability for effective expression, Crane had a gift of feeling conveyed

\(^1\)Joseph Conrad, Introduction to *Stephen Crane* by Thomas Beer, p. 1.

\(^2\)Stallman, p. 180. \(^3\)Beer, p. 77.
through such characters as Fleming, Collins, and Nolan, even though he had not experienced the emotions of war which his characters expressed. Not only was Crane concerned that the reader comprehend certain emotions, but he wanted him to achieve a sense of at-oneness from the experience, as if he had lived it with the characters. This was accomplished in part by Crane's seemingly easy visual description, and his use of simple statements which created "a haunting effect of complete justice to a scene." Despite these literary qualities, Crane has remained relatively unrecognized until recent years. Even during his life, he did not receive the recognition or critical approval he deserved. Crane was disregarded in proper society due to the rumored scandals about his personal life. His works were not given serious consideration until the past decade.

Another important point is that "Crane never outlived his apprenticeship," and "his critics have paid too little attention to the forces and attractions of the American society through which he sought." An editorial in The Critic in 1895 almost forecasts a renewed recognition in

\[\text{Stallman, p. 176.} \quad \text{Beer, p. 214.}\]
\[\text{Willa Cather, Introduction to Vol. IX of The Work, xiii.}\]
the following comment: "But all these are small matters compared with the genuine force which must set Mr. Crane, as was said of him when he was even younger, among those who are henceforth to be reckoned with." 8

Crane's writings have not always been accepted by the reading public, and even The Red Badge of Courage has received some harsh criticism. One writer said "that the book was sensational trash." 9 When the strictness of society at the turn of the century and the original conception of the story as a serial publication for the newspapers are considered, such criticism is not surprising. Ironically, one of Crane's best recognized literary devices is his use of color, but the propriety of using it to describe emotions has been questioned. Also, Crane's "grammar was wildly moulded to the needs of a point." 10 Admittedly, Crane did often violate some of the more precise rules, but he apparently believed they were simply a means to assist in conveying certain impressions to his readers. This concept is more readily accepted today than it was during Crane's life. Crane's idea of expression probably originated from one of his basic beliefs about writing. He said, "Forget what you think about it and tell

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9 Beer, pp. 128-129. 10 Ibid., p. 128.
how you feel about it. . . . You've got to feel the things you write if you want to make an impact on the world."\textsuperscript{10} The results of his literary efforts indicate that he adhered to this belief.

For his early stories Crane remained at home, and with his keen mind and his exceptional ability to imagine things from pictorial records, he would create the most convincing picture of war. Although his writings had been accepted and praised both in England and this country, Crane was still concerned about the correctness of his idea of combat. After he had witnessed some warfare, he told Joseph Conrad, "My picture was all right! I have found it as I imagined it!"\textsuperscript{11} His imagination did actually transcend his experience, and after his imagined picture of war was replaced by experience, the quality of his works was not of such high caliber.\textsuperscript{12} Wilson Follett appropriately noted, "Crane was greatest when imagination and intuition enabled him to present experiences which he had never had."\textsuperscript{13}

During the short period in which Crane wrote, authors had a tendency to glorify war, but "even in writing of war,

\textsuperscript{10}Stallman, p. xxxiv. \textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, p. xxvi. \\
\textsuperscript{12}Wilson Follett, Introduction to Vol. III of \textit{The Work}, xiii. \\
\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}, p. xii.
he [Crane] wrote honestly when nearly everyone wrote sentimentally. Crane considered seriously his responsibility to the art of writing as "he was a writer really writing when it wasn't being done. That is the wonder of the man." He wrote as he believed writing should be, and not according to any popular trend. In describing Crane's technique, Linson believed that Crane's method was to concentrate on the characters in the story, not allowing the author to enter into the story with his personal opinions. He then quoted Crane as saying that "the public doesn't care a rip about the author's opinions." In addition, Linson believed that "Steve's way was to suggest, not to define." The power of suggestion was enhanced by his use of terms of color, a minimum of detail without any involved analyses, and only a general description of his characters. Crane handles this method with such subtle, compact skill that the reader forms a vivid picture. Linson remembered Crane's commenting "that a story should be logical in its action and faithful to character. Truth to life itself was the only test."

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16 Linson, p. 34.
17 Ibid., p. 45.
18 Ibid., p. 30.
Crane's method of handling point of view has been compared to that of a movie camera, perhaps more so than that of any predecessor. The eyes of the main character, such as Fleming or Collins, serve as the narrator's point of view. Although the reader sees things only as Fleming may have seen them, the reader remains a distinctly separate individual and does not become a part of the personality of the main character. One of Crane's abilities was his capacity to see life through the eyes of an individual and the courage to write as he pleased. Such a creative capacity made feasible realistic war fiction without extraneous background or analytical material.

There is controversy as to whether Crane in his war stories was naturalistic, impressionistic, realistic, or something else. Critics have never agreed.

In a discussion of Crane's works, Eric Solomon believes "the nineteenth century did not produce a more realistic fictional account of the ordinary business of war. Most authors tell the reader how war is carried on; Crane makes the reader feel it. He writes of the soldier's simple needs--food, sleep, and ammunition." Stallman

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19 Cady, p. 120.
asserts: "It was realism that Crane himself aimed at, a photographic copy of reality, and his Red Badge has always been read as just that and nothing more." 22 These opinions can be easily verified by a cursory reading of Crane's writings. His main characters are from an average American background, and Crane does not glamorize them or their experiences. A detailed study could be made justifying Crane as a realistic author, and such a study would also reveal Crane in other ways.

Although Stallman gave credit to Crane's realistic tendencies, he also recognized "in The Red Badge, an impressionistic painting notable for its bold innovations in technique and style"; 23 Crane, he says, "paints with words exactly as the French impressionists paint with pigments." 24 The use of colors to express emotions, actions, and scenes shows his impressionism. This is also true of his lesser known works. In his novel Active Service, "the book glitters with impressionistic phrases. An army is 'a flagrant inky streak on the verdant prairie.'" 25 Frequent use of such vivid expressions is common in all of Crane's war stories, and supports the theory that he was

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22Stallman, p. 175. 23 Ibid., p. xix.
24Ibid., p. 186.
an impressionistic writer, but it is not possible to limit him to this one type of writing.

Crane's presentation of a clear picture of life may lead some readers to think of him as a naturalistic writer. Such a belief has been increased by his lack of concern for religion, and by the similarity of some of his works to the naturalistic writer Émile Zola. However, Crane's protagonists are not killed off at the end, as in naturalistic writing. Crane believed that man was human, and this was one of the main lessons Henry Fleming learned. The usual naturalistic code does not guide Fleming, and "it seems clear that 'The Red Badge' is not a work of naturalism."26

The argument remains as to the type of writer Crane is. This is due to his being entirely of no one specific type. He wrote as he believed, and actually used characteristics of many different types of writing. He started writing when young, and during his short career his inherent independence prevented him from becoming the disciple of any school of thought. Crane's early death prevented him from developing any one particular style of writing. Upon the success of his early works, he continued writing within the same basic formula, but with varying degrees of success and

26 Cady, p. 131.
with some modification. Edwin Cady gave an excellent answer to the controversy:

That it seems is the key to interminable debates about whether Crane was realist, romanticist, neo-realist, naturalist, symbolist, impressionist, or what have you. He was any kind of an "--ist" available to him from the weather of his times because he was investigating, experimenting with it all and trying to find out just which best suited him. But he was not any of them, really, because he was not settled on any.\(^{27}\)

It has been variously asserted that . . . The Red Badge of Courage was realist, naturalist, impressionist, or symbolist. . . . The very secret of the novel's power inheres in the inviolably organic uniqueness with which Crane adapted all four methods to his need. The Red Badge's method is all or none. There is no previous fiction like it.\(^{28}\)

In writing about war, an author has to consider the many different passions of a human being. Hatred, anger, love, deceit, and many other human traits must be considered, "but Crane . . . once mentioned he thought human kindness paramount among the virtues towards which our nature lets us struggle."\(^{29}\) To consider human kindness as the primary virtue of man and then to write about the killing and the agony of war is contradictory, but "Crane is always dealing with the paradox of man. That defines what his stories are really all about."\(^{30}\) To understand Crane fully, the reader must recognize that irony is one of his main technical tools. Not only do "all Crane stories

\(^{27}\)\text{Ibid.}, p. 46. \(^{28}\)\text{Ibid.}, p. 118.  
\(^{29}\)Berryman, p. 26. \(^{30}\)Stallman, p. 373.
end in irony," but "every Crane story worth mentioning is
designed upon a single ironic incident, a crucial paradox
of irony of opposites." Even his masterpiece had an
ironic title. The contradictions of life intrigued Crane,
an interest which is reflected in all of his works.

Immediately after World War I, interest in Crane de-
clined for a period of several years. The "Roaring
Twenties" were in full force, and the terrible deaths of
World War I were too real. Also, warfare had changed
from the type that Crane wrote about. However, World War I
and then the Spanish Civil War provided a fertile source
for another great writer of war fiction, "and in America
Hemingway occupied the place that Crane filled thirty years
before."

Certain Crane influences may be noted in
Hemingway's works, and Hemingway was known to have praised
Crane's writings. Some have considered A Farewell to Arms
as an inversion of The Red Badge of Courage, the hero
in one leaving war, the other returning to it. Both
authors use the same symbolism of a wound, but Crane
"achieved an exact and admirably useful definition of
courage which interestingly anticipates that of Ernest
Hemingway."
In writing war fiction, both authors had the problem of how to include realistic profanity. Crane simply implied it, and let the reader's imagination supply the exact words. His method would be to state "Jem glibly rattled out a stream of profane appellatives which was disgraceful to listen to." Hemingway would occasionally circumvent the problem in a somewhat similar manner, but more frequently he would leave a blank space in lieu of the actual word. Both authors achieved the same effect without offending reader or publisher.

Crane had a certain undefined code of honor and integrity to which his characters must adhere. This was shown in the actions of Fleming, Nolan, Collins, and others. Hemingway developed the code of honor to a pronounced degree and made it a point of major concern for his heroes, such as Lieutenant Frederick Henry.

Both The Red Badge of Courage and The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber are concerned basically with the conscience of the hero. The redemption of both heroes is inadequately motivated.

An assessment of Crane's subsequent influence on war fiction is complicated by radical changes in warfare since

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36 The O'Ruddy (Part II), The Work, VIII, 128.

his time. Social, political, and economic concepts also have changed profoundly, but the influence of Crane is still there.

To return to Crane's sources: although parallels of The Red Badge of Courage and other works can be detected, it remains with no exact predecessor. This book made Crane; "and more perhaps, than any other book, it made the thing we call American literature today." After Crane had slipped into near oblivion after World War I, it is important to note that "Crane was rediscovered not by literary historians, but by creative writers (Joseph Hergesheimer, Willa Cather, Hemingway, and Sherwood Anderson). In Crane, a writer's writer, they recognized a contemporary." Such recognition is indicative of the literary worth of Crane, especially so for a man who wrote for only a few brief years, and who was extremely ill during part of that time with fatal tuberculosis. He never matured as a writer, and yet he left a lasting influence.

One of the distinctive things about Crane was that "the drive of a powerful originality was in him. He was, within his limits, one of the noblest artists that we have

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38 Linson, p. 44.
40 Stallman, p. x.
produced.\textsuperscript{41} The \textit{Red Badge of Courage} is unprecedented and incomparable; Crane's style has been compared to a unique instrument which no one has been able to play after his death.\textsuperscript{42} In recognition of Crane's ability, Sherwood Anderson said, "Stephen was a craftsman. The stones he put in the wall are still there,"\textsuperscript{43} and present indications are that Crane's "stones" will remain indefinitely in the future.


\textsuperscript{42}Stallman, p. xliv.

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