

Revised 27 March 1924

retyped ditto

revised 25-30 August 1924

Revised 11-16 July 1928

Revised 28 January - 1 February 1934

Revised 2-3 January 1943

MEMOIRS OF CARWIN THE BILLOQUIST

1798

1803-5

In the "advertisement" to Wieland Brown made the statement that

the publication of Carwin depended upon the reception to be accorded

^{so that} ~~Wieland, and from it~~ we might ^{be lead to think} ~~conclude erroneously~~ that he had the

finished work all in hand. ^{Un fortunately} ~~Unfortunately~~ Carwin never ^{was completed} ~~became anything~~

~~so it remained~~ ^{incomplete} ~~fragmentary~~, ~~but it was much~~
~~more than a fragment~~

even when later published.

~~For reasons to be seen presently~~
~~there was no reason why it should be~~

The earliest record of the composition is ~~to be found~~ in Smith's

Journal of 8 August where he says:

"Read Brown's "Carwin" as far as he has written it."

as we have seen
He had completed Wieland ^{three days before} ~~on the 24th~~; at least he thought it
was completed though he was soon persuaded by Dunlap to write another chapter
so that On 24 August ~~he adds:~~

(Smith) records:

"Read Brown's addition to "Wieland" and the rest of his
"Carwin"."

On 4 September Smith gives his ^{last} ~~latest~~ reference to the work ^{which} and shows

^{but, aside, temporarily} ~~abandoned~~
why it was put aside for Stephen Calvert; as follows:

"Read the pages of Brown's continuation of his "Carwin"
and his new begun Stephen Calvert."

In the joint letter of 4 September 1798 to Dunlap, ~~we have another~~

~~statement relative to Carwin.~~ Brown himself says:

"I have written something of the history of Carwin, which
I will send. I have desisted for the present from the
prosecution of this plan."

entirely different

It appears ~~that~~ the idea for another story had taken possession of his mind; therefore he left Carwin as ^{it was} a ~~fragment~~ and applied himself to the composition of Stephen Calvert. That he intended to continue it is clear but he never took it up again.

The fact that Carwin was written while Wieland was being corrected in proof is of course against literally following out our plan to consider the work as if it were written as ^{However} a part of Wieland. All the details in Wieland correspond to those given here and with ^{some} the ~~slightest~~ ^{and clarification} alteration the Carwin will fit perfectly in the last chapter of Wieland at the point where Carwin confided the story of his life to Thomas Cambridge.

see on next page
~~1 Garnett, Cornhill Magazine October 1902, p. 497 says Carwin is "a variation upon Wieland"!!~~

under Reginald X

our study of Admiral and others

Dunlap's

1004

In ~~the earlier part of our work~~ we have noticed ~~the usual state-~~
ment in regard to Brown's Utopian studies. None ^{one, except Garnett,} seem^s to have observed

the ideal commonwealth here in Carwin. Just where it was ~~to be~~
~~located~~ is unknown, the geographical position being ^{more than} ~~over~~ twenty-

five degrees west of Garnett's guess of the Gilbert islands ~~in a~~ ^{where there}

^{is} ~~spot of~~ no land, the nearest being the Admiralty islands, ~~belonging~~ ^{which before the World War}

~~to Germany~~ ^{a colony} ~~But~~ the details of the plan for their Atlantis are

actually ~~here~~ presented, and ^{while they} are ~~only~~ of interest to us ^{to indicate} ~~as showing~~

~~that~~ Brown ~~was not without~~ wished to speculate on the possible

improvement of humanity and its earthly conditions, ^{they also have a great}
value, to show ^{that his Utopian} ~~that his~~ ideas have a continuity of development, appearing first
in Admiral, ^{showing in Admiral and here almost into full bloom.} ~~and here almost~~

The plan of the ~~two~~ Utopian islands seems to have ~~been a~~ resulted from

~~of~~ the failure of the Jesuits in Paraguay ^{to} which Brown ~~has~~ attracted

attention ~~to~~ by ^{reference} ~~giving a part of his information~~ in a note. ^{Historically} It seems

that after a half-century of struggle the Jesuits had succeeded in

persuading Peru the home country to allow them to bar all Europeans

from the colony of Paraguay. Legislation, administration and society

were then modelled on a primitive Christian community and for over

a half century its inhabitants ~~had~~ lived in an ideal Utopian state..

Presently the colony degenerated and ^{came} ~~had now come~~ under Spanish rule.

X Cornhill Magazine, Oct., 1902, p. 500.

h. 4 Such had been the preliminary to the plan of Ludloe for Carwin, while the bilquist was undergoing the tests of a novitiate, ~~for the great secret society.~~

What the secret society was is not known definitely for it is given no name, ~~by Brown~~ Dunlap in his diary entry 14 September 1798 speaking of Carwin says Brown "has taken up the schemes of the Illuminati".¹ The same idea has been suggested by Garnett and Loshe;² neither of whom could have seen the Dunlap record; but they and probably Dunlap himself may have drawn their conclusions from their knowledge that 1798 was the year when Jedediah Morse launched his controversy over the intentions of the Illuminati. Among other Americans who took a hand in the publication of anti-Illuminism was Theodore Dwight of Hartford from whom Brown personally could have received information. George Forman, Brown's New York printer of Ormond was also the printer and publisher of the 1798 fourth edition of John Robison's Proofs of a Conspiracy which Morse recommended and defended as a true picture of a danger threatening the United States. The newspapers of the day, espec-

¹ Cornhill Magazine October 1902, p. 498.

² L.D. Loshe: Early American Novel, N.Y., 1907, p. 41 ff., apparently indebted to Garnett.

~~³ Our copy was formerly Elisha Boudinot's.~~

ally Cobbett's Porcupine's Gazette, were full of the exposures made by Morse and a host of others. In 1790 La Secte des Illumines had been published. So that Brown had ready at hand plenty of material to inform him of the details of the organization.

Brown's interest in Illuminism was apparently a part of his natural love for mystery. He could not have been a member for he was a Federalist. He probably was not a Mason; at least there is nothing to suggest he was. This interest remained with him after the 1798 controversy had been ridiculed to death. When in 1802 Wood was making another exposure similar to Morse's, he published in his American Review and Literary Journal¹ a review of Seth Payson's publication which had attempted to revive the controversy.

The Guerinets and Alambrados who were in some way supposed to be connected with the Illuminati were Schiller-like ghost seers and the rites and mysteries of their orders were perhaps in some details the same as those in Brown's Carwin. But Brown, despite Dunlap, did not confine his mysteries of Carwin to Illuminism alone. To its most obvious rule of confession by

1 Vol.II,p.66 and note.

the Minerval to his Mentor he added an elaborate scheme of an Utopia,as well as the ventriloquial motive which he had already found successful in Wieland. Under the circumstances neither he nor any other person can give an identifying name to the secret society of Carwin.

Mixed up with the Illuminism matter is the order of Jesuits for Ignatius Loyola the founder of that order had been suspected as a member of the Illuminati and some connection between the two orders has been often asserted. Thus all sorts of mysterious possibilities exist,and the imagination can be given free rein and wander aimlessly and endlessly as it always does when speculating on any secret order.

After all,Brown's secret society is there and it has no name. Whether Ludloe was a Mentor,an Epopt or an Areopagite,whether the name of the order was Jesuit,Illuminist or Ludloeist or what not,the point is of importance only as it makes one of the story's motives reasonable,which it surely does.

The plot ~~probably~~ equals if it is not superior to that of Wieland for with few details excepted it is carefully built on a logical scheme. Intrinsically there is no reason why it could not have been completed. Any one who thinks it became so tangled it could not be solved does not know Brown.

Without actually saying so ^{he} ~~Brown~~ does his best, even going to the extent of ~~employing~~ italics, to suggest ~~that~~ Ludloe knew ~~of~~ the power Carwin possessed. That he suspected it seems too clear for dispute. ~~ff~~
 The mystery--which we have no means of deciding--is whether he understood the power. The explanation held in suspense was perfectly appreciated by Brown.

As we ^{may} shall see ^{in the study of} ~~when we come to our study of~~ Ormond there has been a deal of talk about Brown's relation to Godwin--in fact much more than is warranted. Catalogueing most of our authors from their own view point the British critics constantly called him the American Godwin so that many think his ideas of marriage Godwinish. Apparently

they have not read Johnson's Rasselas

~~did not~~ Supplement on Voyages

~~de Beauvilliers.~~
 In Carwin we may find ~~that~~ Ludloe is almost Godwin himself but the ideas expressed on woman's ^{education and her} position in the world may be ^{more} as reasonably ^{derived from} ~~the sources~~ ^{studied by us in connection with} Alcibiades, ~~the French revolutionary talk of the time.~~

~~It is clear, from the similarity of subject and the ideas expressed¹ of the possibility of others learning the ventriloquial art, that Brown had in mind the note on biloguism as given in Wieland, but aside from any interest this may have in itself it offers no assistance to locate Carwin as a part of the better known work.~~

As we have seen there was an attempt to claim a German source for Wieland in Schiller's Der Gheistersehr. In Carwin we have what ~~hastily~~ might be believed an incident of indebtedness. Ludloe reminds Carwin of his Christmas day visit to the cathedral church of Toledo, and says:

"You met there, for the first time, a female,"

A similar incident of meeting in a church is the opening event of Schiller's work so that ~~it is possible~~ ^{Could} Brown ~~may~~ have been indebted to the German for that scene. On the other hand there is nothing to be peculiarly stamped as exhibiting genius in such an ordinary incident ~~as this~~ and if ~~the Germans~~ ^{Anyone} insists/ on claiming it we must suggest the credit may belong to Monk Lewis if not to Petrarch meeting Laura (1327) and Boccacio meeting Fiammetta (1334). Brown gives no description of the lady so she cannot be compared to the one used by Schiller.

~~1 Vol. II, pp. 295-6.~~

1008

When we find such statements made by Carwin of Ludloe as these:

"I knew that he regarded the present institution of marriage as a contract of servitude, and the terms of it unequal and unjust"

also

"While women are formed by their education, and their education continues in its present state,"

we see ~~that in Carwin~~ we have a very strong echo of the dialogue

of Alcuin, which we have already treated at length. *most of the Utopian matter is likewise developed from Alcuin. Ludloe's relation to Carwin is as a precursor of that of Welbeck in Arthur Mervyn.*
Like Wieland, Carwin owes something to the book of De la Chapelle,

Le Ventriloque. The account of the holy image speaking in the

church may be derived from L'avare converti ^{2 or} and the account of the

image ³ in the digression which follows the Témoignage de Jérôme

Oléaster. Perhaps the case of the Lady of Seville owes something

to ^{those} ~~the cases~~ given among Les Religieux Dupés. ⁴

The thirst for knowledge by the boy; the study at home in preference to attendance at college; his ambition; and Ludloe's book of manuscript maps are undoubtedly autobiographic. Perhaps the father's opposition to his desire for an advanced education was true of Brown
^{it is unlikely for} but we have no evidence to support it ^{even} though there is some to suggest it.

~~1 p. 242.~~

2 (Vol. II,) p. 452 ff.

3 (Vol. I,) p. 186.

4 (Vol. II,) p. 471 ff.

The passage¹

"You may weave stockings, or write poems, and exchange them for money; but these are tardy and meagre schemes."

we ~~shall~~ ^{may also} see ~~again~~ partly in Arthur Mervyn but ~~they~~ ^{it also} recall ^{would be} Brown's poetic early days. That he may have been able to weave stockings ~~is~~ no surprise; in fact not half so much so as ~~his~~ obtaining money for ~~his~~ verse.

Whether the making of Carwin a ^a cataloguer of antiquities was the result of autobiographical influence we know not. Brown never made clear that he had any unusual interest in antiquities, as such, though ^{he may have had for} ~~we shall see~~ his magazines contain many articles of that character.

Related to Brown's life and work ^{Carwin} ~~this fragment~~ has been considered as standing for little, when in reality it is one of the most important ^{and} ~~of~~ undoubtedly the most interesting ^{of the small part} his unfinished works. Had he made clear ^{Completed} ~~that is cloudy in it and woven~~ it so as to make ~~it perfectly~~ ^{might} ~~it into~~ ^{become} Wieland he would have ^{another} ~~been~~ the author of ^{the} ~~the~~ greatest piece of ^{of} ~~the~~ American prose fiction. No ~~such~~ happy thought having occurred to Brown ^{he} making the two works independently complete but complementary ~~has left that distinction to Hawthorne in the Scarlet Letter~~ Wieland

^{was left as} therefore ~~became~~ his greatest work and Carwin fell into the class of ~~an~~ abandoned efforts that serve mostly for explanatory comment. The pity of the lost opportunity is that he thereby buried some of his best nature description, for which ^{most} ~~reason~~ ^{and the selling mystery} ~~alone~~ the work deserves a careful reading. ^{and Alcorn and Arthur Mervyn.} ~~that~~ ^{or Wieland and as a link between} ~~That is unjust to his genius for it is much~~ ^{1 P. 241.} ~~more than~~ ^{that}