EUGENE FIELD'S YEARS AS A CHICAGO JOURNALIST (1883-1895)

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
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PATRICIA LILLIAN WALKER
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ABSTRACT

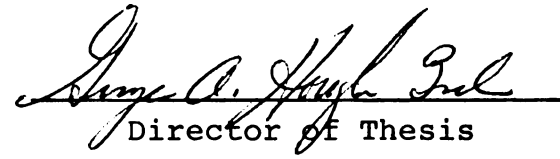
EUGENE FIELD'S YEARS AS A
CHICAGO JOURNALIST
(1883-1895)

by

Patricia Lillian Walker

This is a study of the historical importance and contributions of Eugene Field to the era of Chicago journalism that produced such journalists and literary figures as George Ade, Finley Peter Dunne, Theodore Dreiser, and later Carl Sandburg and Edgar Lee Masters, and such editors as Melville Stone, Slason Thompson, and Wilbur Storey. Field's quick fame and definition as a children's poet has obscured his contributions as a humorist and journalist, his life-time occupation. This study re-examines Eugene Field in light of his career in journalism which reached its greatest height and importance as editorial columnist for the Chicago Daily News. It is based on the newspaper files of the Chicago Daily News, biographies, literary criticisms, and other sources of the period, and on private papers and special collections relating to Field's acquaintances.

Accepted by the faculty of the School of Journalism, College of Communications Arts, Michigan State University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree.



Director of Thesis

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By

Patricia Lillian Walker

A THESIS

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Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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The unpublished materials and collections and the microfilms of newspapers from the period used in this study were obtained through the permission of the Chicago Public Library and the Chicago Historical Society. I also wish to acknowledge the helpful assistance of Professors George A. Hough III and W. Cameron Meyers who gave counsel and criticism in the preparation of this thesis.

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INTRODUCTION

This study gathers together the facts and work of Chicago journalist Eugene Field. I chose to concentrate on Field's twelve years as a Chicago writer because these were the most productive and publicized years in his career. They also were the last years of his short life. Other information on Field's early life may be available in Denver, Colorado, or St. Louis, Missouri, where he spent his youthful years as a reporter and editor, but for the purposes of this study the accent is on his Chicago years.

The newspaper career and writings of Eugene Field are an historical researcher's delight, because virtually nothing has been collected or analyzed on either one for publication. Once involved in the research of this study, it became obvious why nothing had been published. First, few facts about Field's life are available in one place. Albums, letters, and manuscripts are spread over an area from Amherst, Massachusetts, to Denver, Colorado, and, for the most part, in private collections. What facts that are available are contradicted or obscured by Field himself. Second, the period of journalism in which Field wrote from about 1870 to 1900 has not been thoroughly analyzed or pieced together for an over-all understanding

of what was happening. Third, the majority of Field's newspaper writing has not been collected. His poetry was thoroughly investigated early in the 20th century, but his newspaper work was not. Slason Thompson published some of the paragraphs of Field's column, "Sharps and Flats," in the book Sharps and Flats, but this is mainly a collection with no attempt at analysis and with a strong emphasis on Field's poetry.

Faced with these limitations I found the study had to follow a specific structure. Chapter I is an introduction to Field and his personality. He was eccentric, yet extremely influential in his profession, and to understand his importance it is necessary to understand the man first. Chapter II is a brief summary of the era, city, and newspaper business in which Field worked. Since little had been written about Chicago journalism of the 1880s and 1890s, I used Frank Luther Mott's American Journalism and secondary sources published in the late 19th century and my own analysis of the six leading Chicago newspapers. These included the Chicago Evening Journal, Chicago Times, Chicago Daily Tribune, Daily News, Inter-Ocean, Chicago Herald, and are available on microfilm in the Chicago Public Library. The newspaper business in Field's day was quite different from the one we know today. Since there is such a void in knowledge of journalism for this period, I chose to include what information I could gather on

newspapers of the era to serve as a record and to provide a basis to which Field's talents and contributions could be compared.

Chapter III is an examination of Field's development as a journalist. It is not intended to be a biography. Five biographies written by Field's acquaintances provide the details and chronological events of his life; however, none of these or any other materials about Field attempt to take a critical look at his development as a famous journalist. Chapter III pieces together the past events in his life for Chapter IV, an analysis of his contributions and influence in journalism.

The last chapter discusses how Field influenced the journalism of the era through his new approach in humorous writing, his attempt to be a literary writer for a newspaper, his campaigns as a journalist, and his influence on other writers. Samples from Field's "Sharps and Flats" column were taken from the Daily News files at the Chicago Public Library for an analysis of his writing style.

I also have included a complete list of Field's published works in the annotated bibliography. It may be, however, subject to additions. Field wrote some stories and poems which were never published but passed among friends and bibliophiles. Recently some of his more bawdy poems, previously unpublished, have appeared in

paperback books by Zebra Row and Evergreen presses. There may be more of these works as yet unpublished.

This study, however, is a critical look at Field as a journalist and newspaperman and the only study to pull this material together in one place.

CHAPTER I

GRAND OLD FIELD

Prosperity, invention, and individualism created an "American way of life" in the late 1800s that set a pace for development for years to come. Journalism and its young enterprising leaders were participants and contributors to that change. Men such as Henry W. Grady in Atlanta, Edward E. Scripps in Cleveland, Melville E. Stone and Victor Lawson in Chicago, William Rockhill Nelson in Kansas City, and Joseph Pulitzer in New York, revolutionized newspaper concepts and developed new practices that laid a foundation for the first vibrant daily newspaper era in American history. They sought improved writing, better make up, and a popularized content for their papers, according to journalism historian Edwin Emery, that created an altogether "new journalism."[1]

One of the exponents of the new order of journalism was the Chicago Daily News founded in 1876 by Melville E. Stone. A four page, five columns a page, two-cent paper,

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[1]Edwin Emery, The Press and America (2d ed.; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), pp. 354-355.

the Daily News was famous for its style of news presentation. It also was one of the few papers that were free of political and outside financial pressures and that maintained aggressive editorial policies. These characteristics were perpetuated by a nationally famous editorial staff which included columnist Eugene Field; cub reporters George Ade, Finley Peter Dunne, and George Harvey; and special contributors James Laurence Langlin and Richard T. Ely.[2]

The wit, fantasy, and satire of the newspaper were the contributions of Eugene Field, more remembered for his children's poetry and his eccentric antics than his newspaper writings. But Field was above all a journalist. He devoted twenty-two years of his life to the profession as city editor of the St. Joseph, Missouri, Gazette, editorial writer for the St. Louis Journal and St. Louis Times-Journal, managing editor of the Kansas City Times and later of the Denver Tribune.[3] His greatest contribution, however, came in the last twelve years of his life when he was a columnist for the Chicago Record, the morning edition of the Daily News. It was in the rough and tumble Chicago newspaper competition that Field polished his talents as newspaper executive, satirist, humorist, and poet.[4]

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[2]Emery, p. 362.

[3]Eugene Field, "AutoAnalysis," The Complete Tribune Primer (Boston: Mutual Book Co., 1901) p. 4.

[4]Charles H. Dennis, Eugene Field's Creative Years (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1924) p. 9.

According to one biographer, Field was a personal theater of discussion, opinions, and adventures on matters paramount and picayune.[5] He entertained the 100,000 readers of the Daily News company's morning paper, the Chicago Morning News later renamed the Chicago Record,with a daily average of 2,000 words on subjects ranging from baseball to bibliomania, from cats to culture and from politics to pie. Walter Blair, American humor historian, claimed that Field's drolleries and audacities gained the attention of the whole country and set the pace for the revival and modern development of the editorial columnist.[6]

His most prosperous years in journalism also coincided with his years of literary production.[7] The voluminous writings of this period in Field's life include prose and verse for both children and adults. The most popular of his publications are A Little Book of Western Verse, A Little Book of Profitable Tales, Culture's Garland, and Love Affairs of a Bilbiomaniac. Melville Stone recalled that Field's literary activities were not divorced from

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[5]Sheldon A. Mix, "Eugene Field," Inland, No. 33 (Winter, 1961), 15-16.

[6]Walter Blair, Native American Humor (1800-1900) (Chicago: American Book Company, 1937) p. 104.

[7]Slason Thompson, Eugene Field: A Study in Heredity and Contradictions (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901) I, p. 248.

his profession, for almost everything he wrote after 1883 was incorporated in his column at one time or another.[8] One day's column might be devoted to an original tale, the next might consist of forty unrelated paragraphs, while the next might be composed of a mixture of prose and poetry.

Journalism historian Frank Luther Mott describes the development of columns, or "colyums" as they were called in the slang of the times, as an example of departmentialization of humor in news. Such matter had commonly been in the form of signed sketches appearing almost anywhere in the paper, "but the tendency was to follow the Daily News, Burlington Hawkeye, and Atlanta Constitution and put it in a regular titled column, edited by the paper's humorist or in a Sunday section."[9]

Field used his daily column, "Sharps and Flats," as an outlet for his comments on the passing American scene whether it be in prose or verse, for literary affect or for news value and editorial opinion.[10]

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[8]Melville E. Stone, Fifty Years a Journalist (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1922), p. 132.

[9]Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1950), p. 582.

[10]Mix, Inland, No. 33, 16.

His versatility and variability in these columns prompted critics and historians to tag him with numerous and conflicting titles. For example, literary critics dubbed him the "children's Shakespeare," others called him "a sort of Eulenspiegel."[11] Edmund Stedman, a contemporary and poet, metaphorically describes Field as "Yorick but with more than a dash of Ariel--when he was not Mercutio." But his friends and biographers, Slason Thompson, Charles Dennis, and Francis Wilson, knew him to be first and foremost emphatically himself--"Grand Old Field" according to his own frequent mock heroic characterization, the "Chicago Dante, the bard of pork and lard."[12]

To interpret Field in light of his role in newspaper history, it is first necessary to understand the man, a difficult assignment, for Field was as versatile and variable in his personality as he was in his writing. He delighted in surprises, pranks, and fanciful characterizations,[13] and would not hesitate to fabricate a fact, his friend Thompson said, if it would confuse a seeker of truth or fiction.[14] For example, while in Denver in June, 1883,

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[11]Dennis, pp. 1-2.

[12]Thompson, I, p. vi.

[13]Ida Comstock Below, Eugene Field in His Home (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1898), p. xiv.

[14]Thompson, I, pp. 155-56.

he wrote the poem "The Wanderer" and it was published in the Denver Tribune under the name of Helena Modjeska, a famed actress of the period much admired by Field. The poem gained great popularity and the actress was engulfed in publicity. Field flatly denied writing the poem despite Modjeska's protests. He continued to renounce the poem and its authorship until 1892 when he published it in his collection A Little Book of Western Verse.[15] This is only one of many stories about Field's pranks and life-long marriage with merriment. And it is understándable why his biographers avoided an analysis of the man and presented an interpretation of him as Dennis described, a "bundle of contradictions."[16]

The elements of Field's personality, although not easily interpretable, are descriptive of the man. An example is the office in which Field did most of his work at the Daily News. It was one of several seven feet by twelve feet size cubicals surrounding the main city room, and distinctive in its pretensions of decoration. In one corner was a cupboard shaped pigeon-file, alphabetically arranged to hold Field's daily clippings from the exchanges. Scattered about the tobacco stained floor were dumb-bells, Indian clubs, and other gymnastic apparatus which Field

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[15]Thompson, I, p. 157.

[16]Dennis, p. 219.

never touched and which the janitor had orders not to disturb. Above his desk hung a sheet of tin, which he used as a call bell or to counter the noise of the office boy poking the big globe stove. On one wall hung a rusty old carpenter's saw surrounded by burglars' tools and a convict's uniform hanging on a peg. Comfortably fitted into these surroundings, sitting with great ease on the curve of his spine with his legs propped up on the pine table-desk, a cigar in his mouth and a yellow pad of paper resting on his lap, Eugene Field wrote his varigated column of satire, wit, and persiflage.[17] Both Dennis and Thompson described Field and his office in these terms.

He seemed to thrive on surprise and contradiction. A typical Field episode is recorded by Melville Stone in his autobiography, Fifty Years A Journalist. It was the custom in the Morning News office to give each married employee of the paper a turkey for Thanksgiving. But Field would have no part of the tradition. A day or two before the holiday, Stone received a formal letter, written in Field's unmistakable script, suggesting that if it was all the same to Stone he would prefer a suit of clothes, as he had no particular use for turkey. Stone, finally having an opportunity to counter Field with a prank, acquired a suit of "stripes" from the state prison, and on

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[17]Dennis, p. 216-217.

Thanksgiving day presented his petitioner with the "suit of clothes."[18] The gift so delighted Field that the prison uniform hung on a special peg in his office and would be brought out on particular occasions. Stone recalled:

> Now and then a country editor would call and I would assign a reporter to show him over the establishment. In his wandering he would reach this loft (the city department off which Field's room was located). While the conducting reporter dilated upon the wonders of a metropolitan newspaper the door of one of the petty dens would open and a tall, gaunt creature almost bald and smoothshaven, in prison stripes and an old pair of carpet slippers, would step out, seize a poker and proceed to shake down the ashes in the stove. This done he would set about sweeping the floor and raising a cloud of dust that would choke a behemoth. The visiting editor, gasping, would ask what this meant. With well-stimulated embarrassment, the reporter would reply that he was afraid to explain. This was the skeleton in our closet. It was the one thing about the place that all the employees disapproved of but did not dare to discuss. In strictest confidence, however, he would tell. The editor of the paper was a friend of the warden of the penitentiary and took advantage of that fact. "The man before you," he would say, "is a life convict. He is a trusty. To save expense, Mr. Stone has induced the warden, Major McClaughry, to let him have this poor wretch to serve as janitor for the Daily News office. It is wrong, but, you can well understand, we cannot afford to open our mouths about it." The editor would join with the sympathetic reporter in denouncing the outrage, while Field, the wretched convict, was chuckling over the prank. In one case, a week later, down in Central Illinois, a weekly paper appeared with an editorial pouring out its vials of wrath upon McClaughry and myself for this shameless performance.[19]

Field did not confine his pranks to the newspaper office nor to his friends, but often offered all of Chicago

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[18] Stone, p. 130.

[19] Stone, p. 132.

his humor. Thompson cites an incident that occurred shortly after Field moved to Chicago. The new resident decided on the first bleak December day that it was time the citizens of Chicago knew there was a stranger from Missouri in town. He clothed himself in a long linen duster, buttoned from knees to collar, donned an old straw hat, tucked a shabby book under one arm and held a palm-leaf fan in his hand; he marched all the way down Clark Street, past the City Hall, to the Daily News office on Fifth Street. Everywhere along his route he was greeted with jeers or sympathy, as his appearance excited the mirth or pity of the passer-by. Upon reaching the office, he dismissed the noisy school-boy crowd that followed him with a grimace and cabalistic gesture, and mounted the two flights of stairs to recount his successful adventure with his journalist cohorts.[20]

It may appear that Field worked harder and longer at his play than on his copy, but there was a method in his ways that made play of much of his work. He seldom arrived at the office before eleven o'clock and never settled down to work before three o'clock. These four hours were spent puttering over the exchanges, gossiping with his steady stream of visitors, quizzing every other member of the staff, and playing havoc generally with the office routine. Thompson recalled: "He was a persistent,

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[20]Thompson, I, p. 191.

insistent, irrepressible disturber of everything but the good fellowship of the office, to which he was the chief contributor."[21] But when it came time to work, Field was admirable in his efficiency. Within two hours, uninterrupted, he completed his daily column of forty paragraphs[22] which were a crystallization of what he read, heard, and seen during his hours of fooling. Whether it be about people, places, or things:

> Col. Joseph Medill, the veteran and venerable editor of the Chicago Tribune, has come home, and, as a natural consequence, the desks in the editorial rooms have been moved around again. And here in does history repeat itself, for who does not remember the story succintly told by the inspired poet in this couplet:
>
> "A prince had moved his writers' table when the king appeared and moved them back again?"[23]
>
> The good work goes on in Ohio. The Cleveland Leader is moved to refer to the democratic alderman of that city as sheep thieves. Ohio is taking her place in the front rank of American commonwealths.[24]
>
> The lightening-express train on the Illinois and Iowa route came in last night, three weeks overdue. The report that it had ivy and moss growing on the driving wheels of its locomotive is not true.[25]

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[21]Thompson, I, p. 294.

[22]Dennis, p. 46.

[23]Chicago Morning News, May 7, 1887, p. 4.

[24]Morning News, April 12, 1887, p. 2.

[25]Morning News, April 2, 1887, p. 2.

Unfortunately Field's importance and influence during this period of Chicago journalism is seldom mentioned in most journalism histories and literary surveys. This can be attributed to a lack of biographical facts,[26] objective interpretation,[27] and studies of the journalism of that era. However, the biographies of Field and accounts written by journalists living during this era, indicate that Field was both an influential writer and vital stimulus to the profession of journalism and to the literary movement of the late 1800s. Edward D. Cowen, a Denver journalist, claims Field did much to build the circulation of the Denver Tribune through his direction of the editorial staff and his daily paragraphs.[28] Charles Dennis, city editor of the Daily News, recalled: "There have been many newspaper columnists, so-called, but the greatest of them all was Eugene Field."[29] Literary critic Ludwig Lewisohn views Field as a leading newspaper columnist, a "trailblazer who shot arrows towards a far shore

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[26]Dennis, p. 11; Thompson, p. 183.

[27]The four major biographers of Eugene Field, Slason Thompson, Charles H. Dennis, Ida Comstock Below, and Francis Wilson, were friends who wrote of personal incidents and relations rather than attempting objective analysis.

[28]Edward David Cowen, Newspaper Career of E. D. Cowen (Seattle: Western Company, 1930) p. 37.

[29]Dennis, p. 41.

in literary humor."[30] Actor and friend, Francis Wilson, said that Chicago "well-nigh idolized" Field, and Charles A. Dana, editor of the New York Sun, referred to Chicago as "Colonel Eugene Field's town."[31]

In light of these comments, it is important that the career and newspaper writings of Grand Old Field be re-examined in an attempt to evaluate his importance and contributions to the profession of journalism and the literary movement of 1880 to 1895.

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[30]Mix, Inland, No. 33, 15.

[31]Francis Wilson, The Eugene Field I Knew (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), p. 1.

CHAPTER II

COLONEL EUGENE FIELD'S TOWN

Colonel Eugene Field's town, as the New York Sun called it, in the 1880's, was a noisy, braggart city that boasted of a river that flowed backwards and a booming commerce. It was a city totally immersed in an age of Gibson girls, free lunch, nickel beer, robber barons, Gentleman Jim Corbet, Buffalo Bill, and Sweet Rosie O'Grady.[1]

Chicago was a "ra-ta-toddy" town for the gaudy, ambitious and enterprising. But it was not unlike the rest of the nation during the 1880's and 1890's, rather a microcosm of it.[2] From its immigrant population to its meat and grain lords, to its railroad interchanges and parks and universities, Chicago had all the characteristics of the era.

The era coincided with the twelve years that Eugene Field worked in Chicago (1883-1895) and was a period of

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[1]Lee Coyle, George Ade (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1964), p. 27.

[2]Bernard Duffey, The Chicago Renaissance in American Letters (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1954), p. 6.

major economic and social change in the nation manifested in vast mechanization and urbanization.

The financial success and industrialization of the United States was based on a huge reservoir of natural and labor resources, a large and available market, and scientific invention and advancement, according to historian Henry Bamford Parkes.[3] The enterprising men that put these resources to work were immortalized as the "captains of industry:" men such as Jay Gould and J. P. Morgan in banking, James Hill and George Pullman in railroading, John D. Rockefeller in oil, Andrew Carnegie in steel, and Philip D. Armour and Gustavus F. Swift in meat packing.[4]

The key to financial success was mechanization and the resulting philosophy of business was to produce a product quicker, cheaper, and in greater quantity to capture the market. Some believed, as did Adam Smith, that competition among manufacturers would require them to be efficient and drive down prices to reasonable levels.[5] However, the theories of mass production often produced tragic side results such as the collapse of wheat and

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[3]Henry Bamford Parkes, The United States of America (2nd ed., rev., New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), p. 396.

[4]Ray Ginger, Age of Excess (New York: MacMillan Company, 1965), pp. 19-25.

[5]Ginger, Excess, p. 19.

cotton prices, rail rate wars, and corporate mergers called combination pools.[6]

Many Chicagoans benefited from the economic boom of the period, but they also felt the pains of its partner, urbanization. About 26 million people were migrating to the cities during the last decades of the century.[7] They came from Canada, Germany, Ireland, England, and Scandinavia seeking jobs in the new get-rich-quick world. By 1880 Chicago had 500,000 residents, 40.7 per cent of them immigrants.[8] The majority of the new residents settled in areas dominated by their own nationality groups, and the city blocks soon became districts called Kilgubbing, Conley's Patch, Germantown, Bronzetown, and Little Italy.[9]

The underlining philosophy of the expanding society in the nation was a popularization of Charles Darwin's Origin of Species published in 1859.[10] Herbert Spencer compared Darwin's survival of the fittest theory to

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[6]Ginger, Excess, pp. 19-25.

[7]Arthur Schlesinger, The Rise of the City, 1878-1898 (New York: MacMillan Company, 1932), as quoted in Edwin Emery, The Press and America (2nd, Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), p. 342.

[8]Bessie Louis Pierce, A History of Chicago, Vol. III, The Rise of a Modern City 1871-1893 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957), pp. 29-21.

[9]Duffey, Renaissance, p. 5.

[10]Russel B. Nye, Midwestern Progressive Politics (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 1959), p. 27.

industrial America, and his explanation gave businessmen a rationale to justify their own monopolistic tendencies and society a simple explanation of the current contrast between spiritual ideals and social practices.[11]

As big business expanded and the cities continued to grow, a greater interdependence and a consequent need for social reform developed. Reform did come in the latter years of the century through events like the formation of the Populist party, Pullman strike in 1894, the Sherman Anti-trust act in 1890, the Interstate Commerce act in 1887, and the formation of the American Federation of Labor in 1886.[12]

During these turbulent years of individualism verses social reform, the newspapers and their editors took sides in the struggle. Charles Dana, New York Sun editor, Edwin Godkin, New York Evening Post editor, and Whitelaw Reid, New York Tribune editor, opposed government interference in economic affairs and supported the theory of individualism. The exponents of the new journalism, Joseph Pulitzer, New York World editor and publisher, Edward Scripps, founder of the Scripps newspaper chain,

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[11]Thomas C. Cochran and William Miller, The Age Enterprise (Rev. Ed., New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961), p. 122.

[12]Nye, Midwestern, p. 30.

and William Randolph Hearst, founder of the Hearst chain, campaigned for liberal reforms in society and big business.[13]

Chicago was not ready for reform when Eugene Field arrived in 1883. It was too busy making money. At least a dozen gambling houses and poker parlors were located within a radius of four blocks around Clark Street, in what is now the downtown "loop" area. Most of Chicago accepted the fact that wide-open gambling was an excellent thing for the city. After all, "it put money into circulation."[14] There also were other forms of entertainment for the more thrifty including league baseball games in Grant Park and Theodore Thomas' summer night concerts.

The government of this booming city was headed by Mayor Carter Harrison, and housed in the Rookery, "a two story shack having the architectural charm of an icebox or a livery stable."[15] Carter ruled the city for four terms, from 1879 to 1887. His reign was direct and rather autocratic, and it left little room for political systems.[16]

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[13]Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism, 1962 ed. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1950), pp. 460-500.

[14]Charles Dennis, Eugene Field's Creative Years (Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1924), p. 43.

[15]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 44.

[16]Henry Justin Smith, Chicago's Great Century 1833-1933 (Chicago: A Century of Progress Consolidated Publishers, Inc., 1933), p. 85.

The Chicago of the early 1880's extended only from Fullerton Avenue on the north to Thirty-Ninth Street on the south and Crawford Avenue on the west, approximately 36.152 square miles.[17] Lake View, the suburb to the north, was then mainly composed of cemeteries and celery farms while Hyde Park to the south was distinguished for little else than its magnificent distance. Lincoln Park in the northern part of the city was still in part a cemetery as well as a place of recreation.[18]

One could take a cable car from Madison Street to Twentieth Street in only 31 minutes, or use one of 850 passenger and freight trains on 20 lines.[19]

The Chicago river was congested with lumber hookers and tugs and canopied with flimsy wooden bridges that swung open at the command of a boat whistle. The river was black and polluted, a problem of serious concern for the city.[20] The death rate figures for 1889 show sixty homicides, one hundred deaths at railroad crossings and 2,000 deaths from typhoid fever.[21]

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[17]Pierce, A History, p. 25.

[18]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 45.

[19]Smith, Chicago's Great, p. 90.

[20]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 45.

[21]Smith, Chicago's Great, p. 100.

The central business district, the present "loop" area, had its share of vacant lots, many of which displayed the debris and blackened bricks of the great fire in 1871. Not a single building stood along the west side between Monroe and Van Buren Streets except a little wooden shack on stilts whose owner sold sandwiches and pie to night workers.[22]

The only other all-night restaurant was Bill Boyle's in "Gamblers' Alley." "At Billy's," Charles Dennis related, "the social atmosphere was truly remarkable. There mingled our most eminent journalists, our most impressive police officials, and our most popular politicians."[23]

Mott says that an unusual "espirit de corps" developed among Chicago newspaper men in the 1890's.[24] It was like a college fraternity with the newspaper business as the common bond. They worked together and relaxed together. Some of the hard drinkers and the morbid wits of the press gang went as far as formalizing the bond by organizing the notorious Whitechapel Club, more noted for its sordid pranks than contributions to journalism.

Modern journalism in Chicago had its beginnings in the 1870's and 80's when the city had room for expansion

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[22]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 44.

[23]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 45.

[24]Mott, Journalism, p. 561.

and an ambitious aggressive reputation. It was a place where the "new journalism" could take roots and grow. Prior to the 1880's, the city's journalism parallelled that of rural newspapers in which news was gathered by clipping stories from the London papers and New York periodicals.[25]

But with the coming of better presses and publishing methods and enterprising men with money and ideas, Chicago journalism developed from a country business to a city press. Some of the innovations which changed the newspaper scene included the personal reporting of news events, competition for "scoops," exclusive stories, Wilbur Storey's founding of foreign news bureaus, and Melville Stone's investment in outstanding writers for his news staff.

By the time Field came to Chicago in 1883, Chicago journalism was a robust and hardy industry supporting six major newspapers and eleven other daily, religious, or foreign language papers. The major newspapers were the Chicago Daily Tribune, the Chicago Times, the Inter Ocean, the Chicago Herald, the Chicago Evening Journal, and the Daily News.[26] Field often commented about personal politics of these papers and their publishers in his columns.

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[25]A. T. Andreas, History of Chicago, Vol. III: From the Fire of 1871 to 1885 (Chicago: The A. T. Andreas Company, 1886), p. 697.

[26]Mott, Journalism, pp. 462-67; Andreas, Chicago, pp. 695-708.

One of the oldest papers was the Chicago Daily Tribune founded June 10, 1847, by James Kelley, John Wheeler, and Joseph Palmer.[27] From 1865 to 1874 the paper was under the editorial control of Horace White. The principal owner was Alfred Cowles. During White's leadership, the Tribune was independent of political party dictations.[28]

Joseph Medill took command of the paper in November, 1874, after purchasing the controlling interest in the Tribune company. Medill had bought stock in the Tribune in 1855, but disagreed with White over editorial policy and took little interest in the paper while he was mayor from 1872 to 1874.[29]

Under Medill's control, the Tribune was an avid supporter of the Republican party. It opposed the greenback movement and high tariffs, and the formation of a temperance party and prohibition.[30]

In the political arena, the Tribune opposed the nomination of Blaine in 1876, but campaigned for him in the election of 1884. In the 1880 election it opposed the

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[27]Philip Kinsely, The Chicago Tribune, Its First Hundred Years, Vol. II 1865-1880 (Chicago: The Tribune Company, 1945), p. xi.

[28]Andreas, Chicago, p. 695.

[29]Andreas, Chicago, p. 695.

[30]Kinsley, Tribune, pp. 321-25.

nomination of General Ulysses Grant for a third term and was influential in bringing about his defeat in the convention.[31]

In the middle of the 1880's, the Tribune was a seven column paper with approximately 8 to 12 pages an issue with about 16 pages in the Sunday edition. It sold for five cents a copy. The company had six branch offices for advertising solicitation. Its main offices were located at Madison and Dearborn Streets.[32]

Mott estimates circulation to have been 35,000 which doubled by 1890. He also considers the Tribune "one of the best newspapers in the whole country."[33]

As a contemporary writer, Field often lampooned the Tribune and its methods of operation in his column. Joseph Medill, then editor-publisher, was the bulls-eye of his target. For example:

> We wonder that Col. Joseph Medill does not rebel against the President's orders to the cattlemen who have invaded the Indian reservations with their herds. It was only a few months ago that Col. Medill was hankering after a lodge in Oklahoma and seemed ready to head an army of invaders. We are beginning to believe that the colonel is one of those soldiers who fall mortally wounded when the bugle sounds its first blast.[34]

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[31]Andreas, Chicago, p. 696.

[32]Chicago Daily Tribune, Jan. 1 through 31, 1885.

[33]Mott, Journalism, p. 466.

[34]Chicago Record, July 30, 1885, p. 2.

The Chicago Times, founded in 1871 by Wilbur F. Storey was the boldest and most sensational newspaper in the city. Mott describes the Times and "old Storey's" actions as "a shock to the respectable, sometimes indecent sensationalism."[35] Storey mainly was fond of publishing lottery drawings, seduction stories, and "scoop" news stories.

The Times is best remembered for its alliterative, often punning headlines, many of which were written by Horatio Seymour, its telegraph editor. In one instance, Seymour wrote the headline "The House That Vanderbilt" over a story on the Cornelius Vanderbilt will. The paper's scandal paragraphs were often headed "Frail Females" or "Sexual Skullduggery." The notorious was a headline over the story of four murderers who before their hanging prayed. The Times headed it--"Jerked to Jesus."[36]

Storey and the Times recovered slowly after the fire in 1872, but by 1877 the paper was located in a new five-story building at Washington Street and Fifth Avenue with new type and new presses.[37]

The paper changed from a party organ to a position of independence in the early 1880's which greatly

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[35]Mott, Journalism, p. 466.

[36]Mott, Journalism, pp. 466-67.

[37]Andreas, Chicago, p. 697.

contributed to its success. Storey redoubled his energy and forces to establish news agents all over the world, including a bureau in London to cover the Russo-Turkish war. By 1880 the Times had a European news bureau in London with sub-agencies in the capitols of other countries.[38]

In its political policies the Times strongly opposed Horace Greely in 1872, supported Hancock in 1880, and Cleveland in 1884. It favored low tariffs.[39]

In 1884 Storey was judged insane. He died the same year, but his influence on western journalism was significant. Storey pioneered in the investment of time and money to gather news, an approach unknown to the newspaper business at the time. When he died, the Times was valued at one million dollars.[40]

After his death, the paper was mismanaged and plundered. In 1891, former Mayor Carter Harrison purchased it. By 1885 it was consolidated with the Chicago Herald under the name Times-Herald.[41]

In the 1880's the Times was an eight column paper, tabloid size, averaging eight to twelve pages, and selling

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[38]Andreas, Chicago, p. 697.

[39]Andreas, Chicago, p. 697.

[40]Andreas, Chicago, p. 697.

[41]Mott, Journalism, p. 467.

for five cents a copy. Its main offices were at Washington Street and Fifth Avenue. The company also published a weekly paper.[42]

Field usually had a weekly jab for the Times in his column, such as: "We notice that the esteemed Chicago Times has indulged in a new style of make-up; what the Times needed however, was not so much a new make-up as that which rhymes with make-up."[43]

The Chicago Herald was a late arrival in Chicago journalism. Founded in 1881 by James W. Scott, Frank Palmer, A. M. Jones, and Daniel Ship, it was Chicago's pioneer two cent morning paper. Mott reports it to have been "one of the handsomest papers in the country." It gained second place in the circulation race among Chicago papers in the late 1880's.[44]

An historian of that period, A. T. Andreas, reported that the Herald was founded as a representative of stalwart Republicanism, but under a series of owners it drifted to an independent position in its first year. In the year of its founding, the Herald purchased the Chicago Daily Telegraph's national press franchise and the Herald became the Chicago Morning Herald on May 10, 1881.[45]

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[42]Chicago Times, Jan. 1 through 31, 1885.

[43]Chicago Record, March 12, 1887, p. 4.

[44]Mott, Journalism, p. 467.

[45]Andreas, Chicago, p. 702.

It was a seven-column paper consisting of four pages and printed on good paper. It sold for two cents. On Sunday it published an eight-page paper for three cents a copy.[46]

The Herald attracted some of Eugene Field's comrades to its staff in the eighties, among them John Ballantyne and Slason Thompson. Under their influence the paper was mainly Republican in its editorial policy, "entertaining and sparkling."[47]

After another change in management, the paper's editorial policy became independent of political parties, and favored low tariffs and civil service reform. It supported the election of Cleveland and supported the policies of his administration.[48]

Andreas said its news columns were carefully edited and provided news in a compact readable form.[49]

The Inter-Ocean was founded in the spring of 1872 by J. Young Scammon. It was a 10-column blanket sheet (large size) and its motto was "Republican in Everything, Independent in Nothing."[50] It had changed ownership twice

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[46]Chicago Herald, Jan. 1 through 31, 1885.

[47]Andreas, Chicago, p. 702.

[48]Mott, Journalism, p. 468; Andreas, Chicago, p. 702.

[49]Andreas, Chicago, p. 702.

[50]Andreas, Chicago, p. 698.

before Oliver Nixon purchased it in 1884. By this time the Inter-Ocean was publishing a paper daily with four page supplements on Wednesday and Saturday. The Sunday paper averaged sixteen pages.[51] Its weekly circulation was slightly over 125,000.[52]

The Inter-Ocean had a notable career as a supporter of high tariffs. It projected the image of a newspaper for respectable classes and a representative of cultural interests.[53]

Field described the Inter-Ocean's news presentation as follows:

> The esteemed Genesee News passes the following criticism upon one of our valued local contemporaries; 'Somehow the Chicago Inter-Ocean always did have a depressing effect. There is something about it suggestive of cold pancakes on over-due oysters or long-degerred eggs or tea made by mistake from day-before-yesterday's grounds. When the Inter-Ocean tries to paint anything red, that anything always comes out a pale yellow, while over all and around all that the Inter-Ocean says or does (or attempts to say and do) hangs in indescribable atmosphere of the bluish pallor of skimmed milk.' Perhaps this is why our valued local contemporary has come to be known as the Tripe Sandwich. As we are told, the tripe sandwich is endowed with that peculiarly delicate hue inaptly likened to the complexion of decreamed milk.[54]

[51] Inter-Ocean, Jan. 1 through 31, 1885.

[52] Andreas, Chicago, p. 699.

[53] Mott, Journalism, p. 463.

[54] Chicago Record, March 7, 1887, p. 2.

Contrary to this view, Mott ranked the Inter-Ocean of 1892 as one of the four great papers in Chicago.[55]

A sidelight to the Inter-Ocean's respectable reputation was a reporter's description of the news department in the 1890's when the paper was under the direction of publisher Herman Kohlsaat. The reporter, Robert J. Casey, wrote in Such Interesting People:

> The published product was a study in perfectly edited dullness. Inwardly, it was a joyful madhouse, architect's model for all the Hollywood journals ever screened. The staff had the permanence of a crowd in a railroad station. Nobody ever took his hat off or sat back in his chair.[56]

> There was never enough advertising to make news space a problem. It was mere routine for the head of the copy desk to go down every evening to 'The Sewer,' a charming basement saloon next door, and sort out the copyreaders able to stand on their feet. . . . Despite the haphazard methods by which the news got itself covered, edited, and eventually printed, and Inter-Ocean always reached the street as one of the most dignified and error-free newspapers on the continent.[57]

The Chicago Evening Journal, ranked by Mott as a secondary paper in Chicago journalism,[58] was founded in 1844 by J. Young Scammon.[59] The paper was mainly under the

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[55]Mott, Journalism, p. 600.

[56]Robert J. Casey, Such Interesting People (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1943), p. 56.

[57]Casey, People, pp. 56-7.

[58]Mott, Journalism, p. 662.

[59]Andreas, Chicago, p. 703.

control of Andrew Shuman who became editor-in-chief in 1861. In 1883 the Journal company was reorganized.

Slason Thompson was editor in the early 1890's.[60] The Journal, an evening paper, was a nine-column, four-to-six page paper which sold for five cents. Its first edition came out at 3 p.m. and the second edition at 5 p.m. Its main offices were located at 159-161 Dearborn Street.[61]

In its politics, the paper was first Republican, then independent, then Democratic. It finally was merged with the Daily News in 1929.[62]

In a typical Field spoof, the Evening Journal's advertising campaign underwent jovial harassment in the Record:

> We have been inexpressibly shocked to see a large number of sensational lithographs strewn about the city under the pretense of being advertisements of our venerable contemporary, the Evening Journal. These cards are about 15 inches in length and about 8 inches in width; upon each appears the picture of a young woman engaged in persuing a copy of the Evening Journal. The picture is of a rapid young woman--not one of your prim, precise, Chicago girls, but one of the horse racing, cigarette smoking kind. She wears an ultra-Gainsborough hat, and there is a seductive light in her eyes and naughty expression about her mouth. Of course no such 2:14-1/2 girl ever read the Evening Journal, and even if she did, Col. Andrew Shuman would be the last man in the world to advertise the fact. No the truth

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[60]Slason Thompson, Way Back When (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1929), p. 42.

[61]Chicago Evening Journal, January 1 through 31, 1885.

[62]Mott, Journalism, p. 463.

> is that Col. Shuman has been imposed upon; this abominable lithograph is a wicked, malicious forgery.[63]

The Daily News was founded December 25, 1875 by Melville Stone, Percy Meggy, and William E. Dougherty. It began as a one cent evening paper with a combined capital of $5,000 and an office on the first floor of a building at 123 Fifth Street.[64]

The first regular edition of the paper was published January 3, 1876.[65] Andreas claimed the paper did not succeed until the Republican convention in 1876 when Hayes was nominated. Stone took a chance and published a story saying Hayes had won the nomination. The edition was on the street before the news was sent on the Western Union telegraph wires. This drew attention to the paper and upped the circulation to 15,000.[66]

Soon Victor Lawson joined the paper and took charge of the business department while Stone handled the editorial and news departments.[67] The paper, however, was not assured success until the summer of 1877 when Stone showed his capacity to gather news during a strike and riot. In the

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[63]Chicago Record, May 21, 1887, p. 4.

[64]Andreas, Chicago, p. 700.

[65]Mott, Journalism, p. 463.

[66]Andreas, Chicago, p. 700.

[67]Andreas, Chicago, p. 700.

period of highest excitement of the strike, he published an edition nearly every hour. Circulation jumped to 70,000.[68]

Stone also was fond of criminal detection and often pursued a suspense or crime story himself. This greatly added to the exciting, exclusive news content of the paper.[69]

On March 21, 1881 Stone started a two cent morning edition, the Record, thus establishing two regular daily newspapers. By 1886 the circulation of Stone's papers reached 200,000.[70]

Field often celebrated his paper's spectacular circulation with a subtle comment such as:

> We wish all our local contemporaries, the Times, the Tribune, the Herald, the Inter-Ocean, the Mail--a very happy new year. Not that they deserve it, but because in the abundance of our prosperity and out of the fullness of our magnanimity we can afford to be felicitous this new year's morning.[71]

The morning edition, the Record, was kept entirely separate from the afternoon editions, both in business and editorial management. Although under the same company name, the Daily News, and ownership, the News and Record were treated as separate properties.[72]

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[68]Andreas, Chicago, p. 700.

[69]Mott, Journalism, p. 463.

[70]Andreas, Chicago, pp. 700-701.

[71]Chicago Record, January 1, 1887, p. 4.

[72]Andreas, Chicago, pp. 700-701.

Even though the paper took a strong and decisive interest in political issues and in all elections, the Daily News pursued an independent course and did not regularly support any party. In the presidential campaign of 1880, it turned away from General Garfield, and in 1884, it advocated the election of Cleveland, but would have supported Arthur if he had been nominated.[73]

Its writers and reporters were free of the paper's political views. Field praised the merits of James B. Blaine in his "Sharps and Flats" column while the paper strongly advocated Cleveland.[74]

In 1886, Andreas wrote, the Daily News was "outspoken and vigorous in support of civil service reform and low tariff. It is courageous on all questions."[75] Mott called the founding of the Daily News the "outstanding event of Chicago journalism in the post-war period."[76]

Chicago was a rough town for a writer when Eugene Field settled there. Its background was business and industry and its populace was geared to live and function in a highly competitive environment which had little understanding of culture and the fine arts. Its six major

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[73]Andreas, Chicago, p. 701.

[74]Sheldon Mix, "Eugene Field," Inland Winter, 1961, no. 33, pp. 16-17.

[75]Andreas, Chicago, p. 701.

[76]Mott, Journalism, p. 462.

newspapers were as young, crude, and competitive, as the rest of the town. But Chicago was not unusual in relation to the vast mechanization and industrialization that the nation underwent at this period in its history, merely more commercial.

Eugene Field loved Chicago for what it was. He once told Hamlin Garland that he did not want to leave Chicago because "I can tumble around and yell without falling in a fit for lack of breath." Although the city was "wide-open" when Field came in 1883, it had changed, like Elizah Dolittle, from a crude rowdy child to a cultured young lady by 1895, and Field helped to educate and polish the culture of the lady so that, by the turn of the century, she had an identity of her own.

CHAPTER III

EUGENE FIELD'S LIFE

If Eugene Field had written a study of his life, Slason Thompson wrote, "it would probably have been the most remarkable work of fiction by an American author that ever masqueraded in the quaker garments of fact."[1] Field preferred to tell of his many humorous adventures than to relate facts of birth, development, daily life, and works, and he took great delight in creating confusion whenever a writer or friend sought the facts of Field's life. In some instances, he purposely obscured or created facts and stories about himself.

It is no wonder that the four biographers--Slason Thompson, Charles Dennis, Ida Comstock Below, and Francis Wilson--contradict each other in their accounts of Field's life. Yet their sentimental stories about their eccentric friend are valuable for their depiction of the man in the years that they personally knew him.

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[1]Slason Thompson, Eugene Field: A Study in Heredity and Contradictions (2 vols., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), I, p. v.

The known facts of Field's life are by no means complete. His early childhood in St. Louis, his years as a journalist, and his personal life are for the most part undocumented.[2] Ida Comstock Below, Field's sister-in-law, was able to gather some interesting facts of his New England heritage. The first family ancestor to immigrate to America in 1630 was Zachariah Field.[3] He settled in Dorchester, Massachusetts, in which state his descendent, Martin Field, was born in 1773. The second generation Field became a noted lawyer and married Esther Smith Kellogg, who was the grandmother celebrated in Eugene's stories and poems. The couple settled in Newfane, Vermont, then Fayettville and raised three children Charles Kellogg, Roswell Martin, and Mary. Roswell was to become the father of Eugene.[4]

"Them Field boys," as Charles and Roswell were called by the local residents, were infamous in Newfane for their spontaneity, perennial gaiety and tom-foolery.[5]

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[2]Charles H. Dennis, Eugene Field's Creative Years (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1924), p. 11.

[3]Ida Comstock Below, Eugene Field in His Home (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1898), pp. 2-8.

[4]Below, Field in Home, pp. 2-8.

[5]Slason Thompson, Life of Eugene Field, The Poet of Childhood (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1927), p. 2.

Throughout their schoolboy years they were a constant problem to their father causing the family continued embarrassment. In a letter written to his daughter, Mary, Martin Field expressed dismay that Charles was dismissed from Middlebury College and Roswell incurred public admonition for their misconduct. "The boys' conduct has already brought a disgrace upon our family which we can never outgrow. They undoubtably possess respectable talents and genius, but what are talents worth when wholly employed in mischief?"[6]

The boys did make use of their talents and became lawyers although their primary goal was to match wits as their father's opponents in every justice court in New England. While a young rogue about town, Roswell fell in love with a charming New England lady. Unfortunately, she reneged on her promise to marry him and wed someone else while Roswell was out of town. The young lawyer brought suit against her in court and lost. The Supreme court decision so outraged the rebuffed lover that he went West to St. Louis to forget her. In time it was to his benefit for "he became the original counsel in the Dred Scott case, and gained national fame."[7]

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[6]Thompson, Life, p. 7.

[7]Thompson, Life, p. 4; Below, Field in Home, pp. 12-15.

After nine years in St. Louis, Roswell married Frances Reed of St. Louis. They had six children. Only two, Eugene and Roswell, survived infancy.[8] The controversy over the facts of Field's life begin with his birth. It remains uncertain as to what was the exact date and place of his birth. In his "Auto-Analysis," a biographical sketch, Field says he was born September 3, 1850;[9] however, his brother, Roswell, claims that he was probably born on the second day of the month.[10] Field further confused the situation by stating in an autobiographical sketch for A. T. Andreas' History of Chicago that he was born on September 2, 1850.[11]

It is surmised by his friends that Field undoubtedly fostered the conflict on the premise that surely two birthdays were better than one and a friend would always have a chance to redeem himself if he forgot the birthday on the September 2 date.

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[8]Charles Kellogg Field, A Geneological History of General Martin Field and his English and American Ancestors, as quoted in Ida Comstock Below, Eugene Field in His Home (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1898), p. 15.

[9]Eugene Field, "AutoAnalysis," The Complete Tribune Primer (Boston: Mutual Book Co., 1901), p. 4.

[10]Thompson, Life, p. 2.

[11]A. T. Andreas, History of Chicago, Vol. III: From the Fire of 1871 to 1885 (Chicago: The A. T. Andreas Company, 1886), p. 702.

Field also disagreed with his brother as to the location of his birth. Eugene contends it was at 634 South Fifth Street while Roswell claims it was at the home on Collins Street.[12] The exact solution to these mysteries will be left to the collections of Fieldiana, but for the purpose of this biography Field "was born in St. Louis, Mo., September 3, 1850, the second and oldest surviving son of Roswell Martin and Frances Reed Field."[13]

Little information about Field's early childhood has survived. His name does not appear on any records until his mother's death in November, 1856. Most of his biographers assume that upon the death of his wife Roswell Field shipped his sons off to his sister's daughter, Mary Field French in Amherst, Massachusetts.[14] Field was then six years old. But records at St. Louis University indicate that the father may have attempted to keep the boys with him for two years.[15] On the month of their mother's death two entries appear on the university registration records--Edgar and Rhoderic Field. The father registered residence in a boarding house nearby. The reasons for the

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[12]Below, Field in Home, p. 1.

[13]Field, "Auto Analysis," p. 3.

[14]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 52.

[15]Laurence J. Kenny, S. J., "A Mystery of the Childhood of Eugene Field," Museum Graphics, VII, No. 4 (Fall, 1955), 5.

incorrect names and lack of further information is unexplained. But in later life Field gave evidence that he probably was at the university from a poem he wrote. "Perfesser Vere de Blat" describes an instructor similar to Alexander Blanc who taught at the university during the 1850's[16] and who directed the musical exhibitions, a likely attraction for little Eugene.

When Field was eight years old, Roswell Martin sent the boys to live with cousin Mary for seven years.[17] Cousin Mary was a spinster, as Field delighted to call her, and about 30 years old. She was "a lady of strong mind, and much culture, with a sound judgment and decision of character and very gracious manners," the Rev. Dr. James Tuft, the boys' Munson school tutor, recalled.[18] Slason Thompson speculates that Field was permitted to have pretty much his own sweet way by his cousin and aunt.[19]

During these years the impressionable boys became imbued with the New England traditions and strict observance of the Puritan customs. But in no way did it dampen their spontaneity and impish spirits. For example, the boys made occasional visits to Grandma Esther Field in

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[16]Laurence, "Mystery Childhood," 6.

[17]Below, Field in Home, p. 19.

[18]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 54.

[19]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 55.

Newfane, Vermont, but the visits were enough to fray the Puritan lady's patience.[20] Field claims his longest stay, when he was nine years old, "lasted seven months and the dear old lady got all the grandsons she wanted. She did not invite us to repeat the visit."[21]

Although little is recorded of Field's boyhood, Charles Dennis recalled that Field told him in 1895 of his plans to write a book, "A New England Boy in Wartime." It would be about his experiences and impressions during the Civil war years, sketching the actions of the men and women holding the lines behind the Union armies. "Field told me that he would attempt to show how the long and desperate conflict affected individual men and women, what they said and did, how their strong characters reacted to the shocks of lost battles and their grief over slain sons."[22]

In 1865 when Field was 15 years old, he was sent to a boarding school in Munson, Massachusetts, directed by the Rev. James Tufts. This school was selected because the Rev. Mr. Tufts had known Field's parents and grandparents and had an interest in the boy.[23] In Tufts' correspondence

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[20]Eugene Field, "My Grandmother [part of a series on the "Woman who most influenced me"], Ladies Home Journal, XII, No. 2 (January, 1895), 1.

[21]Thompson, Life, p. 20.

[22]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 14.

[23]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 74.

with Slason Thompson, he described Field: "He did not seem to care much for his books or his lessons anyway, but was inclined to get along as easily as he could, partly on account of his delicate health, which made close study irksome, and partly because his mind was very juvenile and undeveloped." Eugene gave little if any indications of becoming a poet or even a writer.[24] He was a bright, lively conversationalist, abounding in wit and pranks, and possessing a rich, strong musical voice which would later turn his interests to the theater.

After three years of training in Greek, Latin, and the works of Cicero, Virgil, and Homer which were later to influence his writings, Field entered Williams College in 1868. He lasted eight months at Williams, at which time President John Hopkins asked the patient Tufts to persuade Eugene to return home. There are various interpretations as to why Field was asked to leave. Thompson speculated, after personal inquiry in Williamstown, that Field put in more time at Pettit's sporting resort, than at his studies.[25] Dennis, however, speculated that the serious-minded faculty at Williams decided Field had too little love for learning and too great a fondness for mischief to be a desirable student.[26] There was no dismissal, rustication, or

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[24]Thompson, Contradictions, pp. 76-77.

[25]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 80.

[26]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 16.

official reprimand, Field simply faded out of the class of 1872.

Three months later he was summoned to St. Louis. His father was seriously ill and died on July 12, 1869. Professor John William Burgess at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, became his guardian and in the fall of 1869, Field entered Knox College as a sophomore.[27]

While at Knox, Dennis said, Field lived in a leading hotel where he lived among stacks of books that bedazzled his fellow students. Unfortunately, Field's library and all the letters his father had written to him from 1856 to 1869 were destroyed in the hotel fire.[28] One of his friends at Knox recalled Field at 19 years old sitting his room, carelessly dressed and wearing his hair rather long, smoking a cob pipe and surrounded by youths who listened to his droll stories.[29]

During his year at Knox Field developed an interest in writing and contributed frequent articles, mainly on college topics, to the Galesburg Register. Dennis said that a common question about the college was: "Have you read what Field had in the Register today?"[30] These incidents are not documented in Dennis' biography.

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[27]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 84.

[28]Dennis, Creative Years, pp. 16-17.

[29]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 17.

[30]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 17.

After a year at Galesburg, Field joined his brother Roswell at the University of Missouri in Columbia, where he entered as a junior. He apparently continued his mischievous ways and avoided earnest study. Thompson gives the following testimony of the University's "aged and honored historian," who he does not name, as follows:

> I knew both of them well (Roswell and Eugene). Eugene was an inattentive, indifferent student, making poor progress in the studies of the course, a genial sportive, song-singing, fun-making companion. Nevertheless, he was bright, sparkling, entertaining and a leader among 'the boys.' In truth he was in intellect above his fellows and a genius along his favorite lines. He was prolific of harmless pranks and his school life was a big joke.[31]

At Columbia in 1870 Field met Edgar Comstock, a fellow student, who was later to introduce Field to his sister, Julia, who became Field's wife. Ida Comstock, another sister and Field biographer, was the first of the family to meet Eugene during her visit with Edgar at the university. She recalled that often in the afternoon when Eugene was supposed to be studying his room was filled with young ladies and a chaperone.[32] "At that time he did not call his writings poetry, but he always contrived to have for amusement of his guests some humorous rhyme or funny anecdote." His programs consisted of parodies, comic songs, and impressions.

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[31]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 86.

[32]Below, Field in Home, pp. 32-34.

After classes were ended for the year, Field visited his friend Edgar in St. Joseph, Missouri, and there he met Julia Comstock.[33] Apparently, it was a love-at-first-sight affair, for at the end of his visit Field announced his intentions to marry 14-year-old Julia. Her father opposed the marriage on the basis that Julia was yet too young. The love-struck Eugene promised to establish himself in business, and wait until Julia's father approved of his plan.[34]

At the end of his junior year in 1871 and at age 21 Field collected an $8,000 inheritance from his father's estate.[35] In true Field tradition he decided to tour Europe and take Edgar, whose expenses he paid, with him. Field had to wait for Julia to grow up before he could marry, so a trip seemed to be in order. After six hilarious months in England, Ireland, France, and Italy, and with all money spent, the two returned to Missouri with the financial aid of Melvin Gray, administrator of the Field estate.[36] There is no record of the students adventures in Europe except a few stories of pranks and good times.

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[33]Below, Field in Home, pp. 36-37.

[34]Below, Field in Home, p. 37.

[35]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 87.

[36]Below, Field in Home, p. 38.

Completely out of funds and determined to establish himself to marry Julia, Field got a job as a reporter for the St. Louis Evening Journal.[37] Why he chose the newspaper profession as an opener is not known, but at age 22 the gawky youth had taken his first step to a famed career.

Field's thoughts, however, were about Julia during the first few months as a reporter, and he made long visits to his young love in St. Joseph. The sojourns were enough to convince the family that the couple should be married, so on October 16, 1873, before Julia turned 17 years old, they wed.[38]

It is debatable whether Field was a smashing success as a cub reporter. Two biographers, neither of whom knew Field at age 23, present contrasting viewpoints. Dennis said, "Before the end of the year his ability won promotion for him and he was made the city editor of the newspaper."[39] Thompson's account said: "He was not much of a success as a reporter for the simple reason that his fancy was more active than his legs and he was irresistibly disposed to save the latter at the expense of the former."[40]

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[37]Field, "Auto Analysis," p. 3.

[38]Below, Field in Home, p. 49.

[39]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 23.

[40]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 112.

Richard H. Sylvester worked with Field on the Journal and sketched the Field he knew for the St. Louis Star many years later:[41]

> In those days Eugene Field was not as neat in his attire as he became in after years. An attractive suit he owned was an imitation of seersucker and after its first laundering, the fit of the pantaloons to his long and somewhat spare legs was like glove fingers with the ends cut off on a well drawn-out hand, while the coat dropped on either side from over weighted pockets and the rear formed the upper part of a circle. Extended feet and garters, a straw hat and white shirt made up the remainder. He was tall angular, smooth-faced, and walked with a nonchalant air and swagger. His favorite haunt was 'The Beanery' a restaurant where other members of the journalistic trade gathered.[42]

In his second year as a reporter for the St. Louis Journal, Field toured Missouri to report on the political campaign of Senator Carl Schurz who was then seeking re-election. Field played countless jokes on the campaigning Senator, one of which became infamous. When Schurz had arrived at one town to speak, the local celebrity, who was to introduce him, failed to appear: Schurz expressed his annoyance to those seated near him. Hearing this, Field jumped up and advanced to the front of the platform. Imitating Schurz's German accent and coughing repeatedly Field said: "Ladees und chentlemens, I recret it dot I haf a fery bad coldt. I am so sorry to say it, but I cannot make

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[41]Harry R. Burke, "Eugene Field's Newspaper Days in St. Louis," Missouri Historical Review, XLI, No. 2 (Jan., 1947), 143.

[42]Burke, "Days in St. Louis," 137.

dot speech. Hoeffer, it gifs me creat bleasure to introduce to you mine tear friendt, dot prilliant chournalist Meester Euchene Fieldt" turning and waving his hand toward the amazed and indignant Schurz. Then he sat down.[43]

Another writer, Harry R. Burke, cites a Globe-Democrat report of Field's persecution of Schurz in an incident in Clay county, where Schurz was to speak at a barbeque. He "had scarcely launched into his address before there were sudden rumors followed by terrified cries, the 'James Boys' are coming." The audience stampeded and Schurz took refuge under the box that was serving as his speaker's stand and "an Idle wind," said the Globe-Democrat, "scattered the pages of his manuscript like leaves upon a strand."[44]

In 1875, Field moved to St. Joseph, Missouri, where he was city editor of the St. Joseph Gazette for a year.[45] A city editor in 1875 was reporter, writer, and editor all in one. A detailed and humorous sketch of Field's job on the Gazette and newspaper work of the period was given by Field himself in his poem, "St. Jo Gazette" included in the appendix.

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[43]Dennis, Creative Years, pp. 23-24.

[44]Burke, "Days in St. Louis," pp. 142-43.

[45]Field, "Auto Analysis," p. 3.

Field's early days in newspaper work, 1873 to 1880, were also the days of a personal journalism in St. Louis. J. B. McCullagh was laying the foundation for modern news evaluation and providing lively content in the columns in the Globe-Democrat. A young Hungarian reporter, Joseph Pulitzer, on the Westliche-Post was developing a style of interpretative reporting that he would incorporate later in the New York World. It was here, too, that Field was beginning to develop a sense for news values and a pungent writing style.[46]

While at the St. Joseph Gazette, Field credits himself with anticipating the Little Big Horn battle. Early in the summer of 1876, he visited the city railroad agent, as his daily practice, seeking information for the paper's news columns. Hearing from the agent that there had been serious trouble somewhere and many men were killed, Field surmised that it had something to do with the Sioux and General Custer. He knew the two were about to clash in Wyoming. Writing a first class battle story from his imagination, Field gave the Gazette a scoop on the Custer massacre. The Gazette claimed it was the first paper to publish the story.[47]

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[46]Burke, "Days in St. Louis," pp. 139-40.

[47]Dennis, Creative Years, pp. 24-25.

Field was beginning to gain local fame for his lively reporting and writing. But he did not enjoy the daily routine and long hours at the Gazette and yearned for old friends in St. Louis. In 1876 he returned to the St. Louis Evening Journal, which by then had been consolidated with the Times, as an editorial writer and paragrapher.[48]

As a cub reporter in St. Louis his first two years, 1873 to 1875, young Field wrote little of the event he was sent to report. The peculiarities and not the conventions appealed to him. When the Journal-Times sent him to Jefferson City to report the proceedings of the Missouri state legislature, it did not get an account of the legislature business, but a "running fire of pungent comment on the idiosyncrasies of its officers and members."[49] Thompson said that there was little about his work at this time that gave promise of Field's future as a spicy, light-hearted western paragrapher.

But the St. Louis paper called him back, and by 1878 Field had created a column of clever quips and sallies published under the heading "Funny Fancies." This probably was Field's first steps in his career as an editorial columnist. The following "Funny Fancies" by Field appeared

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[48]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 115.

[49]Thompson, Contradictions, pp. 126-27.

in the St. Louis Journal-Times on August 3, 1878, and preserved in Thompson's Eugene Field: A Study in Heredity and Contradictions.[50]

> We have tried every expedient and we find that the simple legend: "Smallpox in this House" will preserve the most uninterrupted bliss in an editorial room.
>
> There is a moment when a man's soul revolts against the dispensations of Providence, and that is when he finds that his wife has been using his flannel trousers to wrap up the ice in.
>
> Mr. Deer was hung at Atlanta. Of course he died game.
>
> A great many newspaper men lie awake night after night mentally debating whether they will leave their property to some charitable institution or spend it the next day for something with a little lemon in it.

For four years Field romped about St. Louis. He lived on Adams Street with his wife, daughter, Mary French or "Trotty" as he called her, his mother-in-law, and Edgar, Carrie, Georgia, and Gussie Comstock. His first two children, Roswell Martin and Mary French, were born while he was in St. Joseph, but Roswell died at two months of age.[51] While in St. Louis two more sons were born, Melvin G., named after Melvin Gray, and Eugene Jr., who being born during the pinafore craze, was tagged "Pinny" by his father.[52]

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[50]Thompson, Contradictions, pp. 130-31.

[51]Below, Field in Home, pp. 50-51.

[52]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 113.

Field continued his semi-bohemian life despite the demands of a growing family. He organized the Owl Press Club, a quartet, composed of local journalists. The boys were frequent singers at political conventions and one story of their adventures has survived. During one of the informal gatherings at the Madison House, a local politician became involved in a personal quarrel with a rival delegate. In those days respectable Missourians were always armed. As the argument grew more heated, Field feared a showdown, so he gathered his Owl Club and crowded it between the opponents to sing "Nearer My God to Thee."[53]

During his last years in St. Louis, he wrote his first serious poetry, "Christmas Treasures" in 1878.[54] His "Auto-Analysis" gives the year as 1879, but Dennis and Thompson claim it was probably written the Christmas of 1878. Field had written verses which appeared in the paper prior to this time, but they were humorous ditties created in spoof of someone or in fun.

Early in 1880 Field received an offer to become managing editor of the Kansas City Times[55] under its fiery editor, Dr. Morrison Munford, a Southerner and ex-Confederate soldier.[56] It was a stormy period in the West, both

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[53]Burke, "Days in St. Louis," p. 144-45.

[54]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 135.

[55]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 136.

[56]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 24.

for Kansas and journalism. Thompson claimed that the 30-year-old Field made the Times a vehicle for every kind of quaint and exaggerated story that the free and rollicking West could furnish or invent. Of his news approach Thompson said: "He was not particular whether the Times printed the first, fullest, or most accurate news of the day, so long as its pages were racy with the liveliest accounts and comments on the daily comedy, eccentricity, and pathos of life."[57] Strikingly these newspaper methods were being developed by other men and would come forth in the last of the century as new journalism under Pulitzer, Hearst, and Storey.

Field seldom wrote for the paper while he was managing editor except for a little ditty, "The Little Peach." It had a fascination and attraction for the people of that time, and was widely copied until 1889 when Francis Wilson, actor of the period, rediscovered the verses in London sung to a tune composed by Hubbard T. Smith. Wilson had John Braham of Boston choreograph a dance for it, and it was added to the opera "Nadjy."[58] The verses, however, brought no money to the author. Field in 1887 wrote the following

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[57]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 136.

[58]Francis Wilson, The Eugene Field I Knew (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), p. 82.

note upon a script copy of it now in the George Yenowine collection.[59]

> Originally printed in the Kansas City Times, recited publicly by Henry E. Dixey, John Mackey, Sol Smith Russell, and almost every comedian in America. Popular but rotten.

While Eugene Field labored for a year in Kansas City, there happened to visit a western journalist, Edward David Cowen, who was a special writer for the Denver Republican. He made Field's acquaintance and the two became friends immediately. In that week's time, Cowen described Denver in glowing terms and attempted to persuade Field to go there.[60]

Meanwhile in 1881, the Denver Tribune management was reorganized with O. H. Rothaker, as editor, and Fred J. V. Skiff, later to become the head of the Field Columbian museum in Chicago, as business manager.[61] The popularity of Field's lively and fast-paced approach to the news, had spread beyond Kansas. Rothaker, who met Field through a mutual acquaintance, Frank Mulvaney, believed Field had the qualities that would give the Tribune a strong impetus to achieve first place in Colorado

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[59]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 139.

[60]Edward David Cowen, Newspaper Career of E. D. Cowen (Seattle: Western Company, 1930), p. 17.

[61]Cowen, Newspaper Career, p. 23.

journalism.[62] He promptly made a two year contract with Field to be managing editor of the Tribune at a magnificent salary of $50 a week, an increase of $15 over his Kansas salary.[63]

Soon Cowen returned from New York and his assignment with the Denver Republican to join the Tribune staff. C. A. Murray, Cowen's friend and biographer, wrote in 1934 that the trio of Rothaker as editor, Field as managing editor, and Cowen as city editor "was as brilliant as the country has produced . . . and an alliance unique in newspaper history."[64]

Denver in 1881 was much like San Francisco in the Gold Rush days of 1850. It was the center of the state's mining interest, railway grants, and political power. The whole community was busy, boisterous, and rough.[65] Denver journalism from 1881 to 1883, Field's exact years at the Tribune, Edwin Cowen remarked: "Will always fill a unique chapter in the history of western journalism. Her newspapers by virtue of the talent employed in them, constantly kept in advance of state progress." This new

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[62]Cowen, Newspaper Career, p. 23.

[63]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 33.

[64]Cowen, Newspaper Career, p. 17

[65]Cowen, Newspaper Career, p. 3.

journalism in 1880 was "something of the type described as yellow journalism."[66]

As a managing editor, Field mapped out and directed the work of his Tribune staff with shrewdness and awareness of what the public and his railroad, political-oriented owners wanted. Tribune readers were kept guessing what sensation or reputation would be exploded next in its pages.[67] But Field could not surpress his desire to write. He began writing daily paragraphs and verses for the editorial page under the heading "Nonpareil Column." His comments created much attention and other newspapers quoted them so often that he later gave the column the title "Odd Gossip."[68]

Field also wrote the theatrical and musical reviews. Willard S. Morse, then treasurer and manager of the Tabor Grand Opera house in Denver, recalled that Field was an ardent theater-goer and was constantly at the Tabor to greet its performers.[69] Alexander Woollcott called Field's acid review of a Denver "King Lear," "the most celebrated dramatic criticism in the history of

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[66]Cowen, Newspaper Career, pp. 18-25.

[67]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 145.

[68]Dennis, Creative Years, pp. 34-35.

[69]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 35.

American literature."[70] Field wrote: "Last night Mr. Creston Clarke played 'King Lear' at the Tabor Grand. All through the five acts of that Shakesperean tragedy he played the King as though under momentary apprehension that someone else was about to play the Ace."[71]

A few months after Field joined the Tribune, his primer sketches began to appear. Written as though for a children's lesson, they were often satire on current events and everyday affairs, but more mischievous than constructive. According to Cowen, who was city editor, the inspiration for the primers was a libel suit against Field and the Tribune brought by Governor Evans. To ridicule the governor's action Field used the primer method three times. The success of these satires encouraged him to write more. Two of his sketches on newspaper life of the times or his interpretation of it are:[72]

The Reporter

> What is that I see? That, my Child, is the News Interviewer and he is now interviewing a Man. But where is the Man? I can see no Man. The Man, my Child, is in his Mind.

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[70]Sheldon A. Mix, "Eugene Field," Inland, No. 33, (Winter, 1961), p. 34-35.

[71]Mix, "Eugene Field," p. 34.

[72]Thompson, Contradictions, pp. 145-49.

The Steam Press

> Is this not a Beautiful Steam Press? The Steam is Lying Down on the Floor taking a Nap. He came from Africa and is Seventy Years Old. The Press prints Papers. It can Print Nine Hundred papers an Hour. It takes One Hour and Forty Minutes to Print the Edition of the Paper. The Paper has a circulation of Thirty-Seven thousand. The business Manager says so.

The Tribune started a series of publications called "The Tribune Series," of which only two were printed. O. H. Rothaker wrote issue No. 1, a criticism of Colonel R. G. Ingersoll. Field wrote issue No. 2 in 1882, "The Tribune Primer."[73] It was a collection of his sketches in the Tribune from October 10 to December 19, 1881.[74] It was a 48 page pamphlet with pink paper covers. The same year a Brooklyn publisher named Tredwell pirated it, added drawings by an artist called "Hop," and titled it "The Model Primer."[75] It is estimated that no more than fifty of the original primers were published of which only nine are in existence.[76]

As in St. Louis, St. Joseph, and Kansas City, Field continued his bohemian life of merry-making, mimicry,

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[73]Wilson, Field I Knew, p. 86.

[74]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 146.

[75]Wilson, Field I Knew, p. 86.

[76]Illinois Illustrated Review, I, No. 4 (November, 1909), p. 131.

and practical jokes. He caroused around Denver in the evenings with his theater, writer, and assortment of fun-loving friends and was known as an eccentric newspaper man and good fellow of the community.[77] Thompson claims this was the zenith and finale to the "hobble-de-hoy" period of his life.[78]

Now in his early thirties and father of three children, Eugene began to take his writing and profession more seriously. Rothaker's and Skiff's expectations of Field were fulfilled. He produced the lively and forceful newspaper needed to inform the wild Denver populace and compete with the town's other dailies. As a successful managing editor, he was now able to aid the talented writers who came to his attention. One such discovery of Field's was Edgar W. (Bill) Nye. In 1882 Nye was writing for the Laramie Boomerang without much recognition. His peculiar humor caught the attention of Field who wrote and persuaded Nye to contribute a weekly letter to the Tribune. At first Field paid him $5 a letter, then $10, then $15 at which point Nye packed his bags and rode to Denver to see who was so interested in his writing.[79]

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[77]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 40.

[78]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 143.

[79]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 160.

Field has a special method of greeting visitors. Over his desk hung the sign "This is my busy day," and on the opposite wall a sign "God bless our proof-reader. He can't call for him too soon." The only other furniture besides the clippings on the floor was a large bottomless black walnut chair through which his unassuming visitor, Bill Nye, dropped into a lifelong friendship with Field,[80] and the beginning of a career as a Western humorist.

The managing editor developed another trait in Denver, one which was to mold his own career and add to his fame--his distaste of sham or public characters who flaunted hypocrisy in public. One of Field's major dislikes was the railway controls in Colorado government and business. A representative of the Pullman company was in Denver to win the votes of the state legislators for a rate reduction bill with bribes of money and champagne. The representative also attempted to woo Field, whose paper was at this time highly influential and a terror to public officials, Cowen claimed. Field ordered his staff to have no part of the man of his gifts. The cool reception so outraged the official that he ransacked the Tribune office. Field refused to comment on the incident in his paper, but he did have his revenge. Approaching

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[80]Cowen, Newspaper Career, pp. 129-30.

the Pullman agent as if the ransacking was a good practical joke, the conniving Field wined and dined the man all evening. When the agent was totally drunk, he hitched him to an express wagon in place of the haggered sted, and called the local police complaining of a disturbance in the street. Needless to say, the railroad official was out of town within the hour.[81] The excitement in Denver journalism subsided after Field's departure in 1883, Cowen said. The following year, 1884 the Tribune was absorbed by the Republican.[82] "We gave him (Field) a splendid farewell banquet at the Windsor and he took with him the good wishes of the community," John E. Leet, a fellow Denver journalist, said. But he never returned.[83]

He had a better offer in Chicago. The motivations for Field's move to Chicago are many. His two-year contract with Rothaker was completed. He had, through his daily routine of managing editor during the day and celebrity about town at night, developed dyspepsia, severe indigestion, which caused a state of chronic depression, Cowen said.[84] Melville E. Stone, who was then in

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[81]Cowen, Newspaper Career, pp. 122-129.

[82]Cowen, Newspaper Career, p. 31.

[83]Cowen, Newspaper Career, p. 40.

[83]Cowen, Newspaper Career, p. 132.

the process of building an editorial staff for his two-year old Chicago Morning News, happened to be in Denver in 1883. He had met Field in 1873 in St. Louis and was familiar with the popularity of the "Tribune Primer" skits. In his autobiography, Stone recalled hiring Field:

> Early in 1883, William Eleroy Curtis, the well-known newspaper correspondent, and I took our wives for an outing in the West, having as our destination a visit to the wonderful Zuni Indians in Arizona. On the way we stopped over at Denver, and one evening went to Taber's Opera House to hear Emma Abbott. I went out for a stroll between the acts. When I returned who should be sitting in the back row but my old-time friend Eugene Field.
>
> I asked him to come to Chicago and take a place on the Daily News. We left the theater walked the streets for an hour, and his engagement was settled. That is, if upon reflection he should conclude that he would like to join me. There was no contract. Neither of us wanted one.[85]

On April 26, 1883, Field sent a letter to Stone stating that he would accept the position with the Daily News but could not leave until after August 2. He asked for a two-to-three-year contract with a salary of $50 a week the first year to $55 a week the third year, and $100 moving expenses.[86] There were no stipulations, Stone recalled, as to the type of work he was to do.

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[85]Melville E. Stone, Fifty Years a Journalist (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1922), pp. 127-28.

[86]Stone, Fifty Years, p. 129.

"After talking it over, we agreed that he should have a column of his own. He wished it so that he might stand or fall by the excellence of his work."[87]

At age 33 Eugene Field was ready to settle down to raise his family to which he had added another son, Frederick, to care for his failing health, and to write extensively. Chicago was to be his home for the last 12 years of his life. The family settled in a small apartment on Chicago Avenue about three blocks from the lake.[88] It is at this point in Field's life that Slason Thompson and Charles Dennis, his two principle biographers, made his acquaintance.

Dennis, a police reporter for the Daily News at that time, recalled: "We at the Daily News office had been awaiting his coming with a good deal of curiosity, for we had heard many stories about his drolleries, and we were familiar with his 'The Little Peach' and his 'Tribune Primer.'"[89]

The Chicago Morning News in August, 1883, was two years old. It had been started on March 20, 1881. Stone and Victor Lawson already had established the city's

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[87]Stone, Fifty Years, p. 129.

[88]Thompson, Contradictions, p. 191.

[89]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 44.

leading afternoon paper, the Daily News, and were ready to expand. Stone said, "If we were to succeed, we must present a new type of journalism. There were four existing and well-to-do morning papers. We set out for a departure from their methods of operation."[90] The same formula for success of the Evening News was applied to the Morning News: divorcement of the editorial and business departments; a concern for the readers first with independence of any political party; only two sources of revenue--sale of papers and sale of advertising.[91]

In the editorial department, of which Stone was the sole manager, he applied his three principles of journalism: to print news, to guide public opinion, and to furnish entertainment.[92] This also was the order in which he employed these principles in his four-page, two-cent newspaper; news on the front page, editorials second, and entertainment third. Stone's approach to the news was unique at this time compared to what the Chicago papers were publishing: full page ads on the front page, serials of the latest best selling book, or editorial viewpoints dispersed amongst the news.

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[90]Stone, Fifty Years, p. 107.

[91]Stone, Fifty Years, pp. 52-53.

[92]Stone, Fifty Years, p. 53 and 107.

In presenting the news, Stone sought to publish all the news, but in a tightly edited form. On the editorial page he adopted the London Times approach which was to hire specialist writers in the various fields of human interest. Other American newspapers used the "leader writer" approach that required three or four writers who were supposed to be well-versed on all subjects.[93] Stone built his famous news staff by using this specialist approach. In its early history the staff included Dr. Frank W. Reilly on science, health, and English literature; W. S. B. Matthews on music; Prof. Richard R. Ely on sociology. The News later attracted young writers George Ade, Finley Peter Dunne, Henry Guy Carleton, Theodore Dreiser, and Carl Sandburg, and cartoonist John T. McCutcheon.[94]

For the entertainment division he brought Eugene Field, and later Bill Nye, James Whitcomb Riley, and Kate Field. But Stone believed that the entertainment or humor of the paper "must be real fun, not stupid buffoonery to make the unskillful laugh and the judicious grieve."[95] He, therefore, did not want a separate humor department for the paper.

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[93]Stone, Fifty Years, p. 110.

[94]Stone, Fifty Years, pp. 110-112.

[95]Stone, Fifty Years, p. 115.

On August 15, 1883, Field began to write his first column of paragraphs under the heading "Current Gossip," a column which already had been established to give miscellaneous bits of information.[96] Morning News readers who had been accustomed to find dull comments in the far right hand column of the second or fourth page, now found such curt quips as:

> Mr. J. W. Hinkley has bought the New York Graphic. Little is known of the fact that $750,000 was the price paid for the property. It is reasonable to surmise that Mr. Hinkley never was a practical journalist.[97]

> Governor Butler may be a very cranky, incompetent official, but he deserves the gratitude of the rest of the country for keeping those sleepy Boston editors awake. Until Gov. Butler appeared on the scene, the average Boston editor never woke up except on July 4, Dec. 25, and the date of the Phi Beta Kappa oration.[98]

Field's last twelve years as a writer and journalist showed a gradual process of change which can be divided into two main periods six years each from 1883 to 1889 and from 1889 to 1895. These were the most productive and publicized years in his career, that would establish him as a leading journalist of his era.

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[96] Dennis, Creative Years, p. 48.

[97] Morning News, Aug. 16, 1883, p. 2.

[98] Morning News, Aug. 20, 1883, p. 2.

CHAPTER IV

THE FORGOTTEN CONTRIBUTOR

The influence and significance of Eugene Field to journalism and the literary movement of the late 19th century are forgotten. Where, how, and why they were forgotten is of little importance. No doubt it happened as easily as one literary historian, James Aswell, wrote, regarding his own collection of Native American Humor: "Eugene Field's acid Denver Tribune Primer makes me laugh out loud. Not so with my publishers and my patient jury of friends. So out it went."[1] But the fact is Field introduced new approaches to humorous writing and developed the basis for modern columnist techniques. And he helped to mold and shape the direction of both Chicago journalism and its literary movement.

Henry Justin Smith, historian, author, and Chicago journalist of the period, regarded Field "as an exception among the well-known writers who attempted journalism and failed."[2] Actually, Field was a journalist who attempted

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[1]James R. Aswell, Native American Humor (Garden City, N.Y.: Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., 1949), p. xii.

[2]Henry Justin Smith, "It's the Way It's Written," addresses delivered by Smith (Chicago: Sterling North, 1934), p. 75.

to write and succeeded. Critics, mostly the literary buffs of the period, contended Field did not enjoy being a journalist and had long yearned to be a writer.

Julian Ralph told Charles Dennis that Field "was rather a literary man on a journal; a wit, an essayist, a rhymester upon a newspaper . . . not a journalist."[3] Dennis, however, disclaims such statements, "Field was first of all a journalist. Those who have pictured him as a captive Samson toiling at the mill of the Phillistines did not really know him."[4] Even long after he had achieved fame throughout the English-speaking world, Dennis wrote, he maintained a "keen interest in public affairs and his comments on men and measures were as admirably conceived and as incessive as ever."

Dennis also cites writer James "Fitz Mac" McCarthy's comment: "He was himself a very complete journalist--the swiftest and the easiest in handling his work that I have ever known."[5]

Field himself best described his position in an interview with a persistent young realist author, Hamlin Garland, who aggravated him to the point that he quipped:

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[3]Charles Dennis, Eugene Field's Creative Years (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page, and Company, 1924), p. 12.

[4]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 6.

[5]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 13.

"Garland, I'm a newspaper man. I don't claim to be anything else."[6]

In a letter to a friend while in London in 1889, he wrote, "If I have an honest purpose . . . it is to give the lie to the absurd heresey that a newspaper writer cannot write literature for his paper."[7] In the late 19th century literary movement those who professed to be the literary writers and those who chose to be the journalists had great animosity for the other's profession, and it was difficult for them to concede that a writer could be both and survive.

Contrary to popular opinion of the period, the qualities of a journalist, humorist, and poet can be easily crossed, combined or mashed into an unseparable mixture. Such was the case of Eugene Field in 1890, and probably the reason why he could never easily fit into an anthology of American humor, literature, or journalism. As a humorist, Field was among the first to write a humorous column daily for a newspaper and succeed. He fluctuated between dialect and standard English as a device to capture his readers, and he employed a variety of techniques that were

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[6]Hamlin Garland, "Real Conversations II, A Dialogue between Eugene Field and Hamlin Garland," McClure's Magazine, I, No. 3 (August, 1893), p. 202.

[7]Harry R. Burke, "Eugene Field's Newspaper Days in St. Louis," Missouri Historical Review, 41, No. 2. (January, 1947), p. 145.

to be copied by many of the columnists who followed him. As a poet and writer of literature, Field gained popularity quickly but then was overshadowed by the literary figures that followed him. However, during his popularity he attempted to bring poetry and literature to the reading public through his daily column, and thus tie literature and journalism together.

Field was the first modern newspaper columnist. His satirical attacks on the political and cultural sham, and his burlesque of the elements of pretense in society set an example for other newspaper columnists and writers to follow. He entertained as well as informed through a concise, readable, yet vivid writing style, which influenced some significant young writers who would later develop their own style.

Field's approach to humor is probably the most difficult to describe. Constance Rourke, one of the first to explore the roots of American humor, said that there is scarcely an aspect of the American character to which humor is not related. "It has moved in literature, not merely as an occasional touch, but as a force determining large patterns and intentions. It is a lawless element, full of surprises."[8]

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[8]Constance Rourke, American Humor (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1953), p. ix.

Prior to Field's work, some of the best writings during the fifties and sixties went to newspapers and periodicals under pen names or were published anonymously. James Aswell contended that the "New England literary gentlemen who appointed themselves custodians of our national culture lowered a drape of starched respectability," which caused the humorous writers of the period to keep their names off their work.[9] Where else could they publish under such terms but in a newspaper?

After the Civil War and in conjunction with the local colorist movement, the crackerbox philosophers developed. They used dialect and a local setting to tickle the nation's funny bone, and appeared first and mainly in the daily newspapers. However, by 1890 most of the popular crackerbarrel writers had passed their prime or died. David Ross Locke "Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby" died in 1888. Henry Wheeler Shaw "Josh Billings" wrote little after 1881 and died in 1885. Robert M. Newell's Papers were written from 1862 to 1868.[10]

Rising in popularity amongst the urban and educated city dweller was a new type of humorist, the solid citizen, who stumbled through life. The solid citizen approach,

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[9]Aswell, Native Humor, p. xi.

[10]Norris W. Yates, The American Humorist, Conscience of the Twentieth Century (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1964), p. 19.

Yates reported, was a more urbane, decorous humor that appeared in the magazines after 1890.[11] Eugene Field was a member of both schools and grew in popularity at just this transition point.

In the newspaper world publishers were reaching out for larger circulations from classes where news events were not a lure. It was necessary to create interests in the papers for them. In the attempt to provide the broadest possible appeal, the skill and ingenuity of clever writers and humorists was important.[12] At the same time it also was necessary, Mott said, for newspapers to departmentalize feature news because of the increased number of pages. Newspapers were from two to eight pages in length with sometimes as many as 16 pages on Sunday. Feature items were put in regular columns and often edited by the paper's humorist.[13]

Newspapers served a different function then, than they have in the past 60 years. People were not concerned with the latest news. There was no television or radio and few could afford the luxury of attending the theater;

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[11]Yates, Humorist, pp 20-29.

[12]Bernard Duffey, The Chicago Renaissance in American Letters (A Critical History), (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1954), p. 10.

[13]Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1950), p. 552.

consequently, the newspapers' entertainment and gossip sections were of greater importance to the circulation and readership.

Yates noted that between 1900 and 1920 the humorous column of the urban daily, conducted in each case as the personal organ of one writer, grew to become the most important medium for American humor.[14] Field was by 1890 a humorist in just such a position. Stone allowed him the absolute freedom in the space allotted to him that was to become the right of the journalist-humorists in the 1900s.[15] His witty and satirical comments on the day's events or exchanges varied in style from a rural gossip approach to urbane quips. They provided a relief from the impersonality or sensationalism of news and serious editorials for his readers. This became part of the function of the later humorists who wrote for newspapers.[16]

Constance Rourke wrapped up Field's importance as a humorist of the period when she wrote: "Chicago was rich in columnists, but Eugene Field set an example until his death with 'Sharps and Flats' in which he sometimes used dialect and sometimes wrote in correct prose."[17]

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[14]Yates, Humorist, p. 32.

[15]Yates, Humorist, p. 32.

[16]Yates, Humorist, p. 32.

[17]Rourke, American Humor, p. 34.

> Col. John Cockerill says Hendricks is tolerably sure of having something to do for his country. Should the old ticket miss fire he will probably be governor of Indiana.[18]

> The valued Philadelphia Times prints an interview with Col. Henry Watterson, the able editor of the Louisville Courier Journal. At the end of the interview Mr. Watterson is represented as saying that 'he guessed he would call upon' such and such a friend, etc. Now just that little word 'guessed' shakes our confidence in the genuiness of the whole interview. As a typical southern man Col. Watterson would not--could not--have 'guessed': he would have 'reckoned.'[19]

Field also wrote dialect in verse. He knew the New England speech and Missouri dialect from association in his youth, but he was less proficient in the western mining camp slang and Mid Western accents. Most of his work in dialects is long in length, and not included here.

Field's humor is closest to that of the literary comedians, a unique breed of writers who followed the older crackerbarrel philosophers, but were distinguishable from them by their play on variations of themes already introduced to the reading public.[20] They were like the writers of the Southwest--men of world-wide experience, who happened to wander into humorous writing, and who often wrote in the guise of a comic character.

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[18]"Current Gossip," Chicago Record, July 25, 1883.

[19]"Sharps & Flats," Chicago Record, January 25, 1887, p. 2.

[20]Walter Blair, Native American Humor (1800-1900) (Chicago: American Book Company, 1937), p. 104.

F. L. Pattee in his A History of American Literature Since 1870 called these humorists a "new school," but Walter Blair and other critics of humor contend they were merely different in that they were more versatile and urbane.[21] The literary comedians, however, differed from the crackerbarrel writers: they were regarded with higher esteem; they acknowledged authorship which no longer made them a substitute for their own comic character; they were aware that the audience influenced humor, and therefore, humor needed to be of national scope; they were more concerned with amusing their readers within a sentence or paragraph than within an entire story.[22]

Field fits into this literary comedian mold, except for a little trimming necessary because of his own eccentricity. He was well travelled: he had visited Europe twice, and lived in the East, West, and Mid-West. He partook of most of the tom foolery in all areas. He did not have a great passion or plan to be a writer, but wandered into it out of the necessity to eat regularly. Sometimes he would write in the guise of a fictituous character such as the son of actor William Crane, or sometimes he would create a news event or entire situation for the merriment

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[21]Blair, Native Humor, p. 104.

[22]Blair, Native Humor, pp 108-24.

of it all, for example, his account of the romance of Edward W. Bok, editor of the Ladies Home Journal, and heiress Miss Lavinia Pinkham. Some of these merry plots that appeared in his column are discussed in Thompson's Sharps and Flats and Dennis' Eugene Field's Creative Years.

The eccentric Field was regarded with high esteem within the profession. He sat on Stone's editorial board daily, and he was often quoted or reprinted in leading newspapers, including the New York Sun. Although his column, "Sharps and Flats," did not carry his by-line, readers came to know through his style that Sharps and Flats meant Eugene Field. He was extremely aware of his audience and what made them chuckle. Whether they lived in Chicago, Kansas, or Ohio his quips and satirical punches could be appreciated nationally. An example of this ability to entertain all readers was his quick retort on the opening of another St. Louis newspaper on July 14, 1885: "If our foreman exercises extraordinary alacrity, he may be able to get this announcement in print before the Critic suspends publication." And then he added his cutting analysis of St. Louis paper competition in one sweeping comment: "We believe the safest way to announce a newspaper venture in St. Louis is to append an obituary notice."[23]

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[23]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, July 14, 1885, p. 2.

The strongest tie Field had with the literary comedians was his delight in the amusement of his readers either with witty paragraphs on different topics, or half a column to a column of a humorous tale or concocted audacity. This approach characterized his early years at the Daily News and was employed by him off and on throughout his writing career. His goal was to expose the streak of hypocrisy and pretense in the political and social world.[24] From 1883 to about 1886, he wrote many brief paragraphs of terse comment on political and theatrical personalities. The latter he often misrepresented. He borrowed from a bag of literary devices stored in his mind, and used them to create the desired affect. Exaggerations, alliteration, and comparisons for implied meanings were his favorites.

His exaggerations were mainly directed at a political situation, for example this comment on Ohio candidates:

> Whenever you see a newspaper picture of a man with a full beard and a sort of have-tried-two-bottles-of-your-medicine-and-been-benefited look about the eyes, you are to know that there is another Ohio candidate in the field.[25]

His use of alliteration was most effective when directed at individuals, especially if he suspected them of political sham:

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[24]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 83.

[25]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, October 22, 1883.

> What has become of Theodore Roosevelt? A short time ago he was a Burning Issue; now he might parade up and down Christendom with a bell and not find anybody who had ever heard of him. Yet he should be remembered at least as the great American firecracker.[26]

His comparisons, however, conveyed some of his best satire because of their double or implied meanings. There is a subtle but terse comment in his comparison of Hearst employees to horse-car drivers. "Young Editor Hearst's determination that none but Harvard graduates shall work on the San Francisco Examiner is slowly but surely depriving western horse-car companies of their most talented drivers."[27]

Field appeared to find humor in most anything, including the mistakes of others, especially in the newspaper world. His method was to begin with the unassuming author's quote or paraphrase of it, congratulate him on his intelligence, and then propose a hypothesis or question that crumbled the essay to rubble. Only two examples are given here, for lack of space:

> The last number of the North American Review has a forcible article on "Vulgarity" by Ouida. We congratulate Mr. Rice on his wise selection of authors. No more appropriate choice could be made in this case. Ouida condemns the press for retailing scandalous stories about prominent people. She is quite right: but what are we to think of a writer who will in cold

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[26]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, January, 1891.

[27]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, May 21, 1887.

> blood wholesale scandalous stories about persons who never existed?[28]
>
> The New Tribune says that "If Henry Ward Beecher had not gone counter to his lifelong principles," etc. etc. Would the relic of Horace Greely's genius be kind enough to inform us how it is possible for a man to counter his lifelong principles while his life is not yet ended?--Or is a so-called lifelong principle something that exists only during a part of one's life.[29]

Another favorite device of Field's was to begin with an unassuming commentary as if to relate a bit of news. The reader follows the report innocently, only to be greeted with a closing sentence that destroys the whole pretense. Of the many literary devices employed by Field, this was one of his best and is easily understood and appreciated today. A few of these, selected for their variety and timeless wit:

> It is stated on seemingly good authority that the president of Podunk Grand Truck route was born in Connecticut and used to peddle doorknobs as fresh eggs.[30]
>
> It is announced that the Hon. H. W. Leman has introduced into the state senate a scheme to regulate the building of wharves and warehouses on the lake front. It is gratifying to know that Mr. Leman has at last succeeded in getting Editor Medill's permission to let the public know that there is any such person as Leman in the Legislature.[31]

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[28]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, February 8, 1887, p. 2.

[29]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, July 8, 1886, p. 2.

[30]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, April, 1887.

[31]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, March 24, 1887, p. 2.

> There is a growing suspicion that the Century magazine will be very apt to loose literary caste by becoming an exclusively military portfolio and monthly scrap basket for information about the late war. Within six months the Atlantic Monthly has once more become the ideal magazine of America.[32]

Not all of Field's paragraphs were this compact. Many of these satirical commentaries are longer. Some run to two or three paragraphs, but using short punch endings.

Field's humor was consistently one of phraseology rather than of comic character. His writings abounded in the burlesque of the oratory of the day, or current events, or literature, or of the elegant style of the essay. However, much of the burlesque was too topical and current to be read and enjoyed decades later, a fact that has contributed to Field's lack of recognition as an important journalist and humorist.

As his popularity grew in the late eighties, he began to employ a variety of techniques, so that by 1887 his column sometimes was devoted to one long tall tale, letters from readers which he wrote himself, anecdotes, and essays. His tall tales were usually about famous personalities such as banker Rothschild's distribution of his property to the Communist party, the worldly wisdom of Phillips Brooks, and why the old man of the mountain is a man. The tales are of considerable length, and therefore

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[32]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, October 5, 1885, p. 2.

not quoted here. But a sampling of these tales can be found in Slason Thompson's collections from the column, Volume II, Sharps and Flats.[33]

His anecdotes were short paragraphs usually at the end of his columns and related a joke or story he had heard that day from his many visitors and cohorts. Burlesques of letters and essays were among his favorite techniques in his latter writings. He often wrote these himself, using the name of a noted doctor, clergyman, actress, or poet, a trick which would probably attract lawsuits today, but never did for Field. One such letter was datelined Washington, D.C., July 17 (1887) and began:

> To the editor: You seem to take it for granted that I am coming to Chicago at once to edit Literary Life and to clothe the western Venice in Tyrian purple. Such however, is not the truth . . .

The letter continued to describe all the trivial reasons she would not take editorship, and was signed "Rose Elizabeth."[34] Field fabricated this audacious letter and plot in anticipation of Rose Elizabeth Cleveland's visit to Chicago. Miss Cleveland, President Cleveland's

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[33]Eugene Field, Sharps and Flats, collected by Slason Thompson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), II, 160-170.

[34]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, July 20, 1886, p. 2.

sister, had once remarked that she did not read newspapers. No doubt she did that summer.

No matter what technique or device he used to bring a chuckle to his reader, satire exaggeration, comparisons, tall tales, anecdotes, or burlesques of style, Field had one unique quality. No humorist of his period went to such extremes to create gaiety as Field. He did not rely on news or events to make topics for his column, but created his own. If there was not a situation with a fault that wit could play upon, he contrived it, no matter if it fit the truth or not. If he lacked letters of complaint, he wrote his own so as to be able to answer them. If the most basic elements were lacking to be developed into comedy, he planted them. Dennis recalled many of these plots against Henry Ward Beecher, Helena Modjeska, and Dr. Isaac Watts.[35]

One of the more outlandish was his lauding of the poetical works of Judge Cooley, chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission. Field published what purported to be a review of the poems Cooley was supposed to have written as a young man. He provided copious extracts to cement any doubt. The judge soon tired of the reputation as a poet which Field had thrust upon him,

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[35]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 91.

and publically denied he had ever written poetry. Thereupon, Field replied in his column how sorrowful it was that the judge was discouraging other young men from following his example and achieving poetic fame as he had done. He continued to attribute such ditties as "The Dimple Of My Thisbe's Arm" to the somber judge.[36]

Although Field created his own situations for humor and played upon them in so many different ways, his satirical comments on political and cultural pretense and his burlesque of the pompous social world contributed greatly to the humorous unmasking of life as it was in Chicago.

His early poetry, that of the late 1880s, used many of his humorous techniques only in verse form. His "White House Ballads" were a Camelot spoof of Grover Cleveland's marriage.[37] "The Song of the Mugwump" and "Song for the Departed" harrassed the waning mugwump writers.[38] And sometimes he just created his own humor, as in "An Overworked Word."[39]

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[36]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 91.

[37]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, April 12 through May 4, 1886.

[38]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, September 2, October 5, 1885.

[39]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, March 6, 1886.

We wake up and make up,
We rake up, we fake up,
And use the word "up" when we can.
We drink up and think up,
We kink up and shrink up,
And do up a shirt or a man.

We slack up or back up,
We stack up and whack up,
And hold up a man or an ace;
We beer up and cheer up,
We steer up and clear up,
And work up ourselves or a case.

We walk up and talk up,
We stalk up and chalk up,
And everywhere "up"'s to be heard;
We wet up and set up,
But hanged if we let up
On "up," the much overworked word.

Most of these poems and ditties were written for their humorous affect and not their literary value. As a serious poet and literary writer, Field enjoyed more popularity in his last years 1890 to 1895, and his work continued to gain fame twenty years after his death. But by the 1920s his work was overshadowed by other writers.

His spontaneous fame came because Americans were looking for an American image in their literature, which they had not yet experienced until the 1870s and the local colorist movement.[40] After other American authors began writing about common Americans, Field's writing was no longer as unique as it first seemed. Although he was

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[40]Blair, Native Humor, pp. 124-130.

not a great poet in comparison to those who followed him, his poems are highly characteristic of their time and place.

Field's most popular and lasting poetry were his children's poems. His childhood was a happy one; and consequently he could call upon its memories as a time of tenderness. He wrote with a common touch, usually in a fluent rhythmical verse, and made a quick and frequent appeal to the emotions.

Critics of children's literature claim Field's poems can be grouped into three types.[41] First are those written "in retrospect or as an adult trying to capture that appeal which children have for adults." These are the poems such as "My Name Is Will" in which the reader is almost invariably conscious of Field himself, aware of the transitory nature of childhood and of the pathos of parental love. Second are those poems of a humorous and nonsensical nature. "The Sugar Plum Tree" or "The Tale of the Flimflam" are of this type. They construct a nonsensical idea in sometimes nonsensical language. Third are his lullabies which, for most part, are the most child-like of his poems. He uses melodious sound

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[41]Cornelia Meigs, Anne Thaxter Easton, Elizabeth Nesbitt, Ruth Hill Viguers, A Critical History of Children's Literature (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1953), p. 410.

in rhythm with the syllables of words. Although some of these poems are prone to sentimentality, they often reflect a sincerity of feeling.[42]

Field also produced a novel. This new adventure during his writing career came the last few years of his life. As far as records can be researched, he did not attempt to write any type of long fictional prose until the Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac (1896). If he lived longer no doubt he would have pursued this literary form more diligently, for on his death bed he was writing the last chapter of the Love Affairs and had talked of writing another novel.[43] Although this was his only novel, it still merited mention by literary critics, including Carl Van Doren, who wrote: "The Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac chronicles no passions more violent than the desire for books, but it chronicles that desire in forms as diversified as Field's own career as a collector, and in a tone as piquant and whimsical as that of his own personality."[44] The unusual fact about Field's one novel is that he managed to inject the sprightly humor and grace usually reserved for his verse, in narrative prose.

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[42]Meigs, Children's Literature, p. 411.

[43]Thompson, Contradictions, II, p. 310.

[44]Carl Van Doren, The American Novel (New York: MacMillan Company, 1926), p. 237.

Whatever the literary device or form Eugene Field used, it is important to note that he developed and polished them in his column in the Daily News. His poetry, comic skits, essays, everything except his novel, were published first in his column. Both Charles Dennis, then day editor of the News, and Melville Stone, publisher and editor, confirm this.[45]

However, in the past year some new works of Eugene Field's have been appearing in paper back books from small publishers. These are some of the poems which Field wrote to be circulated amongst friends and fellow writers and were not for publication. They are his bawdy, ribald poems which still may be in private collections. Only a Boy and Stand Up Friend With Me are the two books in circulation. According to Ralph Ginzburg "An Unhurried View of Erotica," "Only a Boy" is ascribed to Field. Another authority George Ryley Scott, says "Only a Boy" is in the same category as "A night in a Moorish Haven," "Mania Monk," and the "Lustful Turk." Unfortunately reference material is sadly lacking in this area.

As a journalist, Field was the first to develop the techniques of a modern columnist, and successfully tie journalism and literature together. "Though Chicago papers had been served by feature writers before 1883,

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[45]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 124.

that year marked the coming to the city of Eugene Field and the beginning of major literary effort in the Chicago newspaper world,"[46] noted Bernard Duffey in his Chicago Renaissance of American Letters. It is curious that, as in Denver, the arrival of Field to the city marked the beginnings of a progressive and vigorous writing movement. Although it cannot be concluded that Field triggered literary journalistic movements wherever he went, he was a major innovating influence on a situation ripe for development.

The ground was not easy to cultivate. Chicago may have been ripe for such clever writers, but its commercial business foundations were to be a constant problem for the creative writer. "He was the jester of the market place rather than of the court," Duffey says, and as perceptive intelligent and eloquent only as his formulas allowed for the smuggling in of these qualities.[47] Field smuggled brilliantly, in his daily diet of humor--the column.

The originator of the humorous column in newspapers will probably remain anonymous until the history of journalism in the 19th century is more thoroughly

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[46]Duffey, Chicago Renaissance, pp. 12-13.

[47]Duffey, Chicago Renaissance, p. 12.

investigated. Present records are too sparse for certainty, but Willard Thorp, professor of liberal arts at Princeton University, concludes the apparent originator to be James M. Bailey, who after the Civil War consolidated two papers as the Danbury (Massachusetts) News. He wrote a column of folksy stories about pranks of small boys, domestic crises, and small town personals. In the early seventies Robert Jones Burdette wrote a column "Hawk-eyetems of Roaming Robert" for the Burlington (Iowa) Daily Hawk-Eye and Charles Bertrand Lewis began his "M. Quad" column in the Detroit Free Press.[48]

Thorp considers Field the forerunner of the modern columnist, "a more sophisticated humorist than these earlier columnists who introduced the sharp comment on public figures which characterized the writing of later columnists."[49] Others contend Field was the first of the modern columnists. He produced the genuine column, The Literary Digest of 1924 said, "the daily stint of humor clever comment, pathos, verse, all served up in brief paragraphs." It bestowed him the title of "Father of the colyumists."[50]

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[48]Willard Thorp, American Humorists (Pamphlets on American writers, no. 42) (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1964), p. 28.

[49]Thorp, American Humorists, p. 28.

[50]Literary Digest, II (January, 1924), p. 718.

A literary critic of the period, Ludwig Lewisohn, viewed Field's influence in a slightly more romantic and idealistic light, Dennis said. "He created that modern American type of jester to whom, as to the king's fool, much is permitted in pungency of speech and freedom of criticism" Lewisohn considered Field's successors to be Keith Preston, Franklin P. Adams, Don Marquis, and Heywood Broun.[51] Broun was Thorp's choice of a successor to Field.[52]

Field's influence is most noticeable in the comments of young writers of the period who were feeling their way into the new journalism and literary movement. Theodore Dreiser recalled that during the year 1890 he had been formulating his first dim notion as to what he wanted to do in life.

> For two years and more I had been reading Eugene Field's Sharps and Flats . . . and through this, the various phases of life which he suggested in a humorous though at times romantic way, I was beginning to suspect vaguely at first that I wanted to write possibly something like that. Nothing else that I had so far read--novels, plays, poems, histories--gave me quite the same feeling for constructive thought as did the matter of his daily notes, poems, whereas nearly all others dealt with foreign scenes and people.[53]

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[51]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 41.

[52]Thorp, American Humorists, p. 28.

[53]Theodore Dreiser, A Book About Myself (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1922), p. 1.

Dreiser also added that the evidence of his attempts as a poet and playwright could be found almost any day in a wastepaper basket belonging to Eugene Field.[54]

George Ade, author and playwright, also was impressed by Field and his individualistic writing style. Lee Coyle, one of Ade's biographers, says Ade lusted after the fame and fortune of the Eugene Fields, Arthur Brisbanes, and Finley Peter Dunnes, that he and all America knew.[55]

Field often received manuscripts and poems from struggling young writers, and queries on how to become a newspaper reporter. To one he gave these instructions:

> To be a good reporter these qualifications are necessary: Health, the news instinct, a sense of humor, the ability to write a simple style in legible hand, eternal vigilance, temperance, amiability, patience, determination, and ambition. Then furthermore, it behooves the reporter to be a constant student and reader, informing himself fully upon every variety of subject that interests mankind. For the profession of newspaper reporting we have the highest regard, and we find pleasure in this opportunity of saying that from the companionship of newspaper reporters we have derived incalculable profit; for of all the classes and conditions of men (excepting perhaps, the printer) the newspaper reporter seems to bound most liberally in wit, humor, invention, generosity, good nature, patience, pluck, fortitude, and those other qualities and accomplishments which do so much toward brightening and bettering human life.[56]

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[54]Dreiser, p. 3.

[55]Lee Coyle, George Ade (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1964), p. 27.

[56]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 118.

A concise, readable, yet entertaining column was his product. An examination of Field's style shows a conglomeration of juxtaposed incongruous predicates, misquotations of Scriptures or the classics, incongruous nouns, mixed figurative language, puns, and made-up words. He was most concerned with amusing his readers. A laugh a sentence or at least every paragraph was his aim, and he employed amusing verbal devices to produce his effect.

Field's sentence structure usually varied with the approach he wanted to use with the subject on the chopping block. He seldom wrote a simple sentence except to give impact to the beginning or a turn of the knife to the end of a satirical paragraph. "The good work goes on in Ohio. The Cleveland Leader is moved to refer to the democratic alderman of that city as sheep thieves. Ohio is taking her place in the front rank of American commonwealth."[57]

> The Kans' City papers are raising a terrible hue and cry because the supervising architect of the treasury has not given them a clock in the new government building at that point. Money was raised for a clock and a chime of bells to be placed in the building and they have not been finished. This confirms the rumor that there isn't a watch in Kans' City except the ancient affair which Doc. Mumford inherited from his grandfather. By all means let Kans' City have its play things.[58]

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[57]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, April 12, 1887, p. 2.

[58]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, August 26, 1885, p. 2.

Unfortunately, one of the distracting elements of Field's varied style is the lengthy complex sentence structure he sometimes used. He piled clauses, phrases, and compound sentences into the structure to the point that it almost would burst from the flow of words. Yet this was in part the writing style that built his popularity. The modern reader would find these cumbersome to read.

Syntax is a crucial factor in Field's style. To achieve the satirical affect that he desired, he would employ clauses and prepositional phrases to a dramatic build up, and then cut short with a simple word or phrase. In the following example he used a compound sentence with a clause supported by three prepositional phrases before he reaches the key words.

> "It takes a whole hour to bake a mince pie." It is when we take up our valued contemporary, the Louisville-Courier-Journal, and read such editorials as this that we are called to a realization of the power and practical usefulness of that mighty engine of civilization, the provincial press.[59]

His style is also characterized by the use of vivid verbs to drive home his point. In the following example, the placement of the word slaughtered at the end of the sentence emphasizes the idea and reveals the writer's feeling about the situation.

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[59]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, August 14,1885, p. 2.

> The inter-state commerce law has had the good effect of putting an end to editorial excursions and conventions of journalists. In the past these free junkets have been the fame of journalism, and that nuisance seems now to have been permanently slaughtered.[60]

The verb slaughtered is incongruous, but not to the noun nuisance. Another example shows the words which have the strongest impact on the meaning to be the verbs.

> We see that our esteemed friend, the New York World, continues to howl for the nomination of Allen G. Thurman as governor of Ohio. We admire the World for its habits of enterprise, but we deprecate this palpable effort to go harrowing in the national cemetery on a dead issue.[61]

The first infinitive phrase of the above example, "to go harrowing in the national cemetery on a dead issue," points to another stylistic characteristic, Field's choice of words whether for alliteration, exaggeration, or comparison. He used descriptive nouns or complement adjective nouns as the prongs on his fork of satire. For example his reference to the New York Tribune as the "relic of Horace Greely's genius," or to Theodore Roosevelt as "the great American firecracker."

The majority of his prose employs three syllable words which lend a certain tone of intellectual stuffiness,

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[60] "Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, May, 19, 1887, p. 2.

[61] "Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, July 25, 1885, p. 2.

but they lay a perfect background for the sharp predicates and descriptive nouns and adjectives he uses for his humorous twists or points of satire. He sometimes intentionally uses polysyllablic words as a burlesque of pompous pretense. In his advice to Republican editors on lauding senators, he uses them effectively.

> Expatiate upon his "integrity," his "incorruptibility," and his "spotless honesty," and "congratulate" his fellow-citizens that they have elected to a body of notorious boodlers a man who is unalterably opposed to the spirit and methods of boodleism.[62]

Being a writer who enjoyed working with words and their sounds, he was fond of using puns and rhymes, mainly for his own pleasure in constructing them.

> One of the three editors-in-chief of the New York Epoch has resigned. This sort of thing if pursued to the limit will slowly but surely reduce the best-regulated epoch to the meek and lowly condition of an era, merely.[63]

> Recent events indicate that it is but a step from the altar to the halter.[64]

Field's precision in the use of words is probably the distinctive element of his style and success as a writer. He once wrote that a young writer cannot be too

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[62]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, January 12, 1887, p. 2.

[63]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, April 7, 1887, p. 2.

[64]"Sharps and Flats," Chicago Record, January 19, 1887, p. 2.

careful in his choice of words. "But a writer must know his weapons before he can use them with effect. It is brutal of him to employ a bludgeon when the services of a rapier are demanded, and he exhibits unpardonable senselessness who fritters away time at fencing when only a club can achieve his purpose."[65] He encouraged young writers to study synonyms, and to test and prove words for their possibilities.

In retrospect this jester of the news columns has made important contributions to the newspaper world in the last decades of the 19th century. He was foremost a journalist, spending twenty years of his life in the profession as a reporter, editor, managing editor, and columnist.

Field started as a reporter and editor in the early days of daily newspaper journalism when the territory was wide open to any type of writing. As a managing editor in both Kansas City and Denver, he helped to develop western journalism, the elements of what was to become "yellow journalism," a rollicking, sensational, gossipy type of journalism, which served the wild West perfectly. Although Field played upon the public's attraction for sensationalism, he also fought the political sham and corruption that was so much a part of the West and its pioneer journalism.

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[65]Dennis, Creative Years, p. 118.

His reputation in Denver still stands to his credit. As managing editor he helped to bring talented writers into the profession. His encouragement of Bill Nye brought Nye more fame as a humorist than Field had gained for himself.

His move to Chicago gave him the opportunity to develop his own writing talents through a daily column. A daily column was a new idea to journalism and Field was one of the pioneers who developed the techniques and humorous devices that helped to sustain its popularity in the 1900s and provide a major medium for American humor. As a columnist, Field introduced the sharp comment on public figures. He was a strong supporter of the need to inform the reader regardless of the newspaper's political ties.

It was through his column that Field introduced poems and tales which were later published as his literary works, which were popular at the turn of the century. But Field used the newspaper to present his work in the belief that writers could produce literature for a newspaper. In so doing he influenced many young writers while he was in Chicago, among them, has been noted Theodore Dreiser and George Ade.

One of Field's major contributions to journalism was the development of a concise yet entertaining style that relied on short terse paragraphs and descriptive synonyms.

In early biographies of Field, he is remembered most for his antics, practical jokes and, struggles as a literary writer, all of which are part of the saga of Eugene Field. But his work as a journalist should not be brushed aside as easily as it has been in the past.

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SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Biographies

Below, Ida Comstock. Eugene Field in His Home. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1898.

A good work for details on Field's family history and episodes of his youth and early manhood.

Dennis, Charles H. Eugene Field's Creative Years. Garden City: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1924.

The most compact and chronological of the biographies and the best for details on Field's career in journalism in Chicago.

Fischer, Henry Williams Hubert. Abroad with Mark Twain and Eugene Field. New York: N. L. Brown, 1922.

The only work with highlights of Field's trip to Europe in the 1890s.

Thompson, Slason. Eugene Field: A Study in Heredity and Contradictions. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, Vol. I, II, 1901.

An excellent work for copies of Field's letters to friends and for author's inquiries and research in Field's early life. A little too sentimental in some sections.

_____. Life of Eugene Field, the Poet of Childhood. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1927.

A condensed version of his first two volume biography. No new facts added.

Wilson, Francis. The Eugene Field I Knew. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898.

A good source for stories about Field, his experiments in the theater, and the details of his first published books.

Biographies in Periodicals

Burke, Harry R. "Eugene Field's Newspaper Days in St. Louis," Missouri Historical Review, XLI, No. 2 (January, 1947), 137-146.

One of the few sources for a description of Field's early days in newspaper reporting. Includes anecdotes about Field not found in other biographies.

Field, Eugene. "My Grandmother" (Part of a series on authors and the women who most influenced them) Ladies Home Journal, XII, No. 2 (January, 1895), 1.

Probably the only article Field wrote about his New England childhood. One of three articles he wrote for this magazine. Available in the Michigan State University library.

Kenny, Laurence J., S. J. "A Mystery of the Childhood of Eugene Field," Museum Graphics, VII, No. 4 (Fall, 1955), 5-6.

A valuable article for its probe of Field's whereabouts after his mother's death, but only a brief investigation. Available in the Chicago Historical Society Library, 4th Floor.

McCabe, Nellie. "The Story of Eugene Field," Owen-Instructor Kit Series. New York: F. A. Owen Publishing Co., 1907.

A horrible, inadequate pamphlet about Field's life for children in elementary schools. Available in the Chicago Public Library vertical file in the reference department.

Mix, Sheldon A. "Eugene Field," Inland, No. 33 (winter, 1961), 12-17.

A summary of the various published biographies. Does not provide new information only a rehashing of known facts.

II. Histories

Cochran, Thomas C. and Miller, William. The Age of Enterprise. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961.

A good study of the economy and society of the late 19th century in America. Contains no information about Field.

Dondore, Dorothy Anne. The Prairie and the Making of Middle America: Four Centuries of Description. Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press, 1926.

A readable history of the Mid-West with a brief mention of Field as writer of his time.

Ginger, Ray. Age of Excess. New York: MacMillan Company, 1965.

A good analysis of the late 19th century events and society. Makes no mention of Field.

Lewis, Lloyd and Smith, Henry Justin. Chicago the History of Its Reputation. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929.

A subjective, but fairly thorough history of early Chicago. Brief mention of Field as a newspaperman and writer.

Masters, Edgar Lee. The Tale of Chicago. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1933.

An excellent work for a vivid description of early Chicago, its people, and motivations. No mention of Field.

Nye, Russell B. Midwestern Progressive Politics. East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 1959.

An excellent study of the political and social implications of the era related to Field. No comments on Field.

Pierce, Bessie Louise. A History of Chicago. Vol. III; The Rise of A Modern City 1871-1893. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957.

A very factual account of Chicago development. Makes no mention of Field.

Smith, Henry Justin. Chicago's Great Century 1833-1933. Chicago: A Century of Progress Consolidated Publishers, Inc., 1933.

A good account of Chicago events and personalities with a brief comment on Field.

III. Literary Histories

Aswell, James R. (ed.) Native American Humor. Garden City: Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., 1949.

An important work for the author's analysis in the editor's forward and for early American humor selections although Field's work is not discussed.

Blair, Walter. Horse Sense in American Humor. New York: Russell and Russell, 1962. Copyright, University of Chicago Press, 1942.

One of few studies with a chronology of humor. Does not discuss Field.

_____. Native American Humor (1800-1900). Chicago: American Book Company, 1937.

A valuable work for its discussion of literary comedians and local colorists. Includes comments on Field and an excellent selected bibliography.

Duffey, Bernard. The Chicago Renaissance in American Letters (A Critical History). East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State College Press, 1954.

The most detailed and informative book on the Chicago literary movement in the late 19th and early 20th century with a description of Field's influence on movement.

Hansen, Harry. Midwest Portraits. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1923.

A personal recollection of author's friendship with many Midwestern writers, but does not include Field.

Meigs, Cornelia, Eaton, Ann Thaxter, Nesbitt, Elizabeth, and Viguers, Ruth Hill. A Critical History of Children's Literature. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1953.

The best analysis of Field's children's poetry.

Quinn, Arthur Hobson (ed). The Literature of the American People. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951.

A valuable work for its chapter on "The Journalist" and his function in fiction, but does not comment on Field.

Kramer, Dale. Chicago Renaissance. New York: Appleton-Century, 1966.

A general and not very thorough description of the literary movements in Chicago's late 19th century. Does not mention Field.

Masson, Thomas. Our American Humorist. New York: Moffat Yard and Company, 1922.

A subjective analysis of humorists who passed before Masson, managing editor of "Life." Did not know Field.

Rourke, Constance. American Humor. Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1953.

One of the basic sources for study of the development of American humor.

Stone, Herbert Stuart. First Editions of American Authors. (A manual for book lovers) with an introduction by Eugene Field. Cambridge: Stone and Kimball, 1893.

A rare publication. Only 50 copies of this book were printed. One available in the Chicago Public Library.

Thorp, Willard. American Humorist (Pamphlet on American writers No. 42), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1964.

One of the most recent and informative publications on American humorists. Gives added research on popular humorists and a good analysis of Field.

Van Doren, Carl. The American Novel. New York: MacMillan Company, 1926.

A valuable work for comments on development of the American novel including comments on Field's one novel.

White, E. B. and White, Katherine, S. (eds). A Sub-Treasury of American Humor. New York: Random House, Inc., 1948.

A collection of humorous writings including samples of Field's writings.

Yates, Norris W. The American Humorist. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1964.

An excellent discussion of humorists in the 1800s and 1890s, with comments on Field's importance to era.

IV. Related Biographies and Histories

Baker, Ray Stannard. American Chronicle. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945.

A good autobiography for depicting events and newspaper business of the era. Knew Field but does not mention him.

Cowen, Edward David. Newspaper Career of E. D. Cowen. Seattle: Western Company, 1930.

A small collection of Cowen's and other journalists' observations of Denver newspapers during Field's stay, including many comments about Field. One of few publications on the subject, available in the Chicago Historical Society Library, 4th Floor.

Casy, Robert J. Such Interesting People. Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill Company, 1943.

A valuable collection of newspaperman's observations of the newspaper business in 1800s and 1890s in Chicago. Does not comment on Field.

Coyle, Lee. George Ade. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1964.

A good biography with an excellent bibliography for research on the late 19th century, and comment on Field's influence on Ade.

Dreiser, Theodore. A Book About Myself. New York: Boni and Liveright, Inc., 1922.

An interesting autobiography that includes an exciting description of Chicago and newspapers in the 1890s and Field's influence on Dreiser.

Emery, Edwin. The Press and America. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962.

One of few histories of journalism that gives analysis of newspapers in the late 19th century, but gives only a brief sketch. Comments on Field.

Kinsley, Philip. The Chicago Tribune Its First Hundred Years. Vol II 1865-1880. Chicago: The Tribune Company, 1945.

A history commissioned by the Tribune. Good only for facts about the early Tribune Company. Does not discuss other newspapers or Field.

Mott, Frank Luther. American Journalism. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1950.

One of the best histories of Journalism, but lacks adequate information on Chicago newspapers in 1880s and 1890s. Gives subjective analysis of the papers and only a mention of Field.

Smith, Henry Justin. Extra! Extra! Deadlines, and Josslyn. Chicago: S. North, 1934.

A subjective and sketchy discussion of some important newspapers. Not important to study of Field.

Stone, Melville E. Fifty Years a Journalist. Garden City: Doubleday, Page, and Company, 1821.

A valuable autobiography for Stone's observations on Field, but often contradicts facts in other biographies.

Thompson, Slason. Way Back When. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1931.

An entertaining autobiography that gives more insight into Chicago journalism in 1880s and 1890s than his biographies on Field.

V. Newspapers

Chicago Daily News. June 17, 1939.

A news item on the removal of Field's body from Graceland cemetery to be placed in Holy Comforter Church shrine, Kenilworth, Ill. Clipping available in the Chicago Public Library, vertical file on Eugene Field, in reference room.

Chicago Daily Tribune. Nov. 4, 1895.

This issue contains Field's obituary. Available in the Chicago Tribune morgue files in the city room in the Tribune Tower, Michigan Avenue, Chicago.

Chicago Record. Aug. 15, 1883-Dec. 9, 1895.

The main source for Field's "Sharps and Flats" columns. Microfilms of the Record from March 21, 1881-March 27, 1901, can be found in the Chicago Public Library, Newspaper reference room.

Glencoe (Ill.) News. "Eugene Field Shrine in Kenilworth, Ill." July 10, 1936.

A news feature about the Field Kenilworth shrine to be built by 1939. Clipping available in Chicago Public Library, vertical file on Field, reference room, or from Hollister Publications, back files, in Wilmette, Ill.

VI. Articles in Periodicals and Journals

Field, Eugene. "Tribune Primer," Illinois Illustrated Review, I No. 4 (November, 1909) 131-7.

Selections from Field's Denver primer and explanation of what has happened to copies.

Garland, Hamlin. "Real Conversations II: A Dialogue between Eugene Field and Hamlin Garland," McClure's Magazine, I, No. 3 (August, 1893), 7-11.

A valuable article for the comments made by Field, a romanticist, to Garland, a realist. Available in the Chicago Public Library, magazine section in reference room.

Gunsaulas, the Rev. Dr. [Frank.] "A Tribute to Eugene Field," The Columbian, I, No. 2 (November, 1895), 130-32.

A three page poem written in Field's memory. Available in the Chicago Historical Society's Library, 4th floor.

Yenowine, George H. "Eugene Field Memorial," in Yenowine News (a privately printed magazine by George Yenowine), XXII, No. 556 (1895).

VII. Miscellaneous

E. L. Cooper. "List of poems published in the Chicago Daily News by Eugene Field 1889-92."

An unpublished list of Field's poems first appearing in his column. Compiled especially for the Chicago Historical Society. Available in its library, 4th floor of the Historical society.

Eugene Field Shrine. Newspaper clippings regarding the moving of Field's body to Kenilworth, Ill. In curio file "F" at the Chicago Public Library, Reference room.

French, Charles Newton. A magazine clipping claiming the authorship of Eugene Field's poem "Little Boy Blue." In curio file "F" at the Chicago Public Library, Reference room.

Henry, Jesse Powell. "The Eugene Field Shrine'; catalogue collection in shrine in St. Louis, Mo. In vertical file, Reference room in the Chicago Public Library.

Nicholas, Mrs. Anne M. "Reminiscences of Journalism in Chicago." Written for the Friends in Council of Chicago, 1926. In the Chicago Woman's Club Historical Manuscripts, Vol. I (1929) 263-297. Available in the Chicago Historical Society Library, 4th floor.

Smith, Henry B. Justin. "A Gallery of Chicago Editors." Six lectures delivered under the auspices of the University of Chicago. Collected and printed by the Chicago Daily News, Inc., No. 44, 1930. Available in the Chicago Historical Society Library, 4th floor.

Whitechapel Club. Miscellaneous pamphlets about the Chicago club available at the Historical Society Library, 4th floor.

VIII. Special Collections

Charles Henry Dennis Collection, 1868 to 1943. Newberry Library, Special Collections, Chicago, Ill.

Momentos of Eugene Field kept by Dennis. The researcher will find little value in this collection. Most of it has been transferred to Amherst University Library.

Franklin Meine Collection.

A private collection maintained by Meine in his Chicago home. Includes first editions of Field's books, family album, and Field's address book. However, Meine died December, 1968 and widow may sell his collection.

IX. Eugene Field's Published Works

Field, Eugene. A Little Book of Profitable Tales. (Cameo ed.) New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1895.

A collection of some of Field's early poems selected by Field for publication.

_____. A Little Book of Tribune Verse. Collected by Joseph G. Brown. Denver: Tandy, Wheeler, 1901.

Uncollected poems from Field's days in the West.

_____. A Little Book of Western Verse. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896.

Another collection of Field's early poems and tales.

_____. An Auto-Analysis. Chicago: 1896.

A pamphlet published with only the autobiography as content. Found in the Chicago Public Library under call no. C, 17893.

Field, Eugene. Culture's Garland. Boston: Ticknor, 1887.

A spoof of Chicago's pretense to culture. One of his most popular books.

_____. Echoes from the Sabine Farm. (Written with Roswell Martin Field) Chicago: A.M. McClurg, 1892.

First book Field published with his brother.

_____. Field Flowers. Chicago: A. L. Swift and Company, 1896.

A collection of poems published after the death of Field by Mrs. Field and a committee to raise funds for a monument.

_____. The Gingam Dog and the Calico Cat. Illustrated by Helen Page. New York: Follett Publishing Co., 1956.

A revival of some of Field's children's poems.

_____. The Holy Cross and Other Tales. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908.

A collection of some of Field's less popular tales.

_____. Hoosier Lyrics. Chicago: M. A. Donohue and Company, 1905.

A little known collection of Field's mid-western poems.

_____. The House, An Episode in the Lives of Reuben Baker, Astronomer, and His Wife Alice. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896.

One of Field's first attempts to write longer tales.

_____. How One Friar Met the Devil and Two Pursued Him. New York and Boston: H. M. Cadwell Co., 1901.

A collection of tales and poems including a copy of the Auto-analysis.

_____. The Love Affairs of A Bibliomaniac. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896.

Field's only novel and last work written in his life.

Field, Eugene. My Book. With vignettes by C. M. Seyppel. St. Louis: W. K. Bixby, 1905.

A private publication with a limited number of copies. One available in the Chicago Historical Society, 4th floor.

_____. Only A Boy. New York: Zebra Row, 1968.

One of new paperback books with Field's bawdy poems previously unpublished until this edition.

_____. Papillot Clignot, et Dodo. New York: Ariel Books, 1964.

A free French translation of Field's Wynken, Blynken, and Nod, by Francis Steegmuller and Norbert Guterman. Illustrated by Barbara Cooney.

_____. Penn-Yan Bill's Wooing. Cedar Rapids, Ia.: The Torch Press, 1914.

One of Field's more popular poems first appearing in private print.

_____. Poems. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1949.

A complete edition of poems.

_____. Poems of Childhood. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1897.

A collection of Field's children's poems.

_____. Second Book of Verse. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1898.

An additional volume to Field's Little Book of Verse. Includes more poems.

_____. Second Book of Tales. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903.

An additional volume to Field's Little Book of Profitable Tales. Includes more stories.

Field, Eugene. Sharps and Flats. Collected by Slason Thompson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907.

A collection of comments and verse appearing in Field's column. Not comprehensive in content.

_____. Songs and Other Verse. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900.

A collection with poems which have already been published.

_____. The Stars: A Slumber Story. New York: New Amsterdam Book Co., 1903.

A collection of children's poetry which Will M. Clemens believes demonstrate Field's love of children.

_____. The Complete Tribune Primer. Boston: Mutual Book Co., 1901.

A collection of Field's Tribune primer sketches in addition to his original primer publication.

_____. The Tribune Primer. Illustrated by son, Roswell Field. (Abridge of complete edition.) Chicago: Reilly and Britton, 1916.

A condensed version of the Complete Tribune Primer.

_____. Tribune Primer. Denver: The Denver Tribune Co., 1882.

The original primer published by the Tribune. Fifty copies are believed to have survived. A copy is available in the Chicago Public Library rare book collection.

_____. Verse and Prose. ed. by Henry H. Harper. St. Louis, Mo.: Wm K. Bixby, 1917.

A privately printed edition of which only 100 copies were made. Poems and tales collected by owner of a Field collection. Includes a list of books by Field and a list of books and manuscripts in the George H. Yenowine collection.

Field, Eugene. With Trumpet and Drum. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892.

First printing of poems from later writings in Field's life.

_____. Writings in Prose and Verse. 12 volumes. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898-1901.

A reprinting of all of Field's published works in a special bound set.

A Little Book of Western Verse

A Little Book of Profitable Tales

Second Book of Verse

Poems of Childhood

The Holy Cross and Other Tales

Echoes of the Sabine Farm

The Love Affairs of A Bibliomaniac

The House

Songs and Other Verse

Second Book of Tales

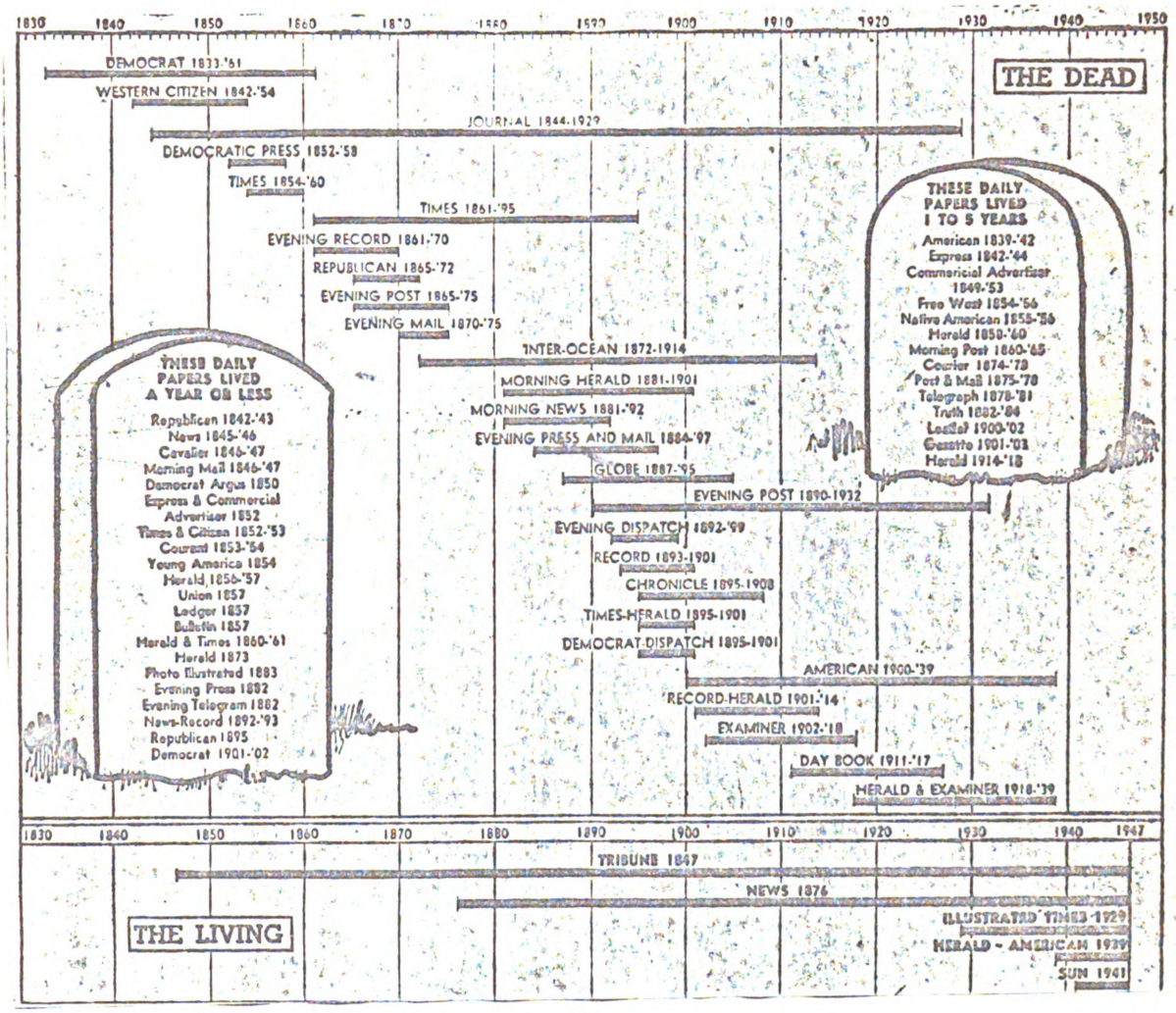
Sharps and Flats 2 vols.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

CHART OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS

This chart appeared in the Chicago Daily Tribune on the 100th anniversary of the paper in 1947. A copy of the chart can be found in the Newspaper department of the Chicago Public Library. It shows the 62 daily newspapers that were founded and that folded or emerged between 1833 to 1947. In the case of Field's newspaper, the Daily News morning paper, it is recorded as the Morning News 1881-1892 and the Record 1893-1901. However, it was the same paper only the name changed in 1893.


1830 1840 1850 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950
DEMOCRAT 1833-'61
WESTERN CITIZEN 1842-'54
JOURNAL 1844-1929
DEMOCRATIC PRESS 1852-'58
TIMES 1854-'60
TIMES 1861-'95
EVENING RECORD 1861-'70
REPUBLICAN 1865-'72
EVENING POST 1865-'75
EVENING MAIL 1870-'75
INTER-OCEAN 1872-1914
MORNING HERALD 1881-1901
MORNING NEWS 1881-'92
EVENING PRESS AND MAIL 1884-'97
GLOBE 1887-'95
EVENING POST 1890-1932
EVENING DISPATCH 1892-'99
RECORD 1893-1901
CHRONICLE 1895-1908
TIMES-HERALD 1895-1901
DEMOCRAT-DISPATCH 1895-1901
AMERICAN 1900-'39
RECORD-HERALD 1901-'14
EXAMINER 1902-'18
DAY BOOK 1911-'17
HERALD & EXAMINER 1918-'39
THE DEAD
THESE DAILY PAPERS LIVED A YEAR OR LESS
Republican 1842-'43
News 1845-'46
Cavalier 1846-'47
Morning Mail 1846-'47
Democrat Argus 1850
Express & Commercial Advertiser 1852
Times & Citizen 1852-'53
Courant 1853-'54
Young America 1854
Herald 1856-'57
Union 1857
Ledger 1857
Bulletin 1857
Herald & Times 1860-'61
Herald 1873
Photo Illustrated 1883
Evening Press 1882
Evening Telegram 1882
News-Record 1892-'93
Republican 1895
Democrat 1901-'02
THESE DAILY PAPERS LIVED 1 TO 5 YEARS
American 1839-'42
Express 1842-'44
Commercial Advertiser 1849-'53
Free West 1854-'56
Native American 1855-'56
Herald 1850-'60
Morning Post 1860-'65
Courier 1874-'78
Post & Mail 1875-'78
Telegraph 1878-'81
Truth 1882-'84
Leader 1900-'02
Gazette 1901-'03
Herald 1914-'18
1830 1840 1850 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1947
TRIBUNE 1847
NEWS 1876
ILLUSTRATED TIMES 1929
HERALD - AMERICAN 1939
SUN 1941
THE LIVING

APPENDIX II

THE "ST. JO GAZETTE"*

When I helped 'em run the local on the
"St. Jo Gazette,"
I was upon familiar terms with every one I
met;
For "items" were my stock in trade in that
my callow time,
Before the muses tempted me to try my hand
at rhyme,--
Before I found in verses
Those soothing, gracious mercies,
Less practical, but much more glorious than
a well-filled purse is.
A votary of Mammon, I hustled round and
sweat,
And helped 'em run the local on the "St. Jo
Gazette."
The labors of the day began at half-past eight
a.m.

For the farmers came in early, and I had to
tackle them;
And many a noble bit of news I managed to acquire
By those discreet attentions which all
farmer-folk admire,
With my daily commentary
On affairs of farm and dairy,
The tone of which anon with suble pufferies
I'd vary,--
Oh, many a peck of apples and of peaches
did I get
When I helped 'em run the local on the
"St. Jo Gazette."

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*Eugene Field, Second Book of Verse (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), pp. 147-152.

Dramatic news was scarce, but when a
minstrel show was due,
Why, Milton Tootle's opera house was then
my rendezvous;
Judge Grubb would give me points about
the latest legal case,
And Dr. Runcie let me print his sermons
when I'd space;
Of fevers, fractures, humors,
Contusions, fits, and tumors,
Would Dr. Hall or Dr. Baines confirm or
nail the rumors;
From Colonel Dawes what railroad news
there was I used to get,--
When I helped 'em run the local on the
"St. Jo Gazette."

For "personals" the old Pacific House was
just the place,--
Pap Abell knew the pedigrees of all the
human race;
And when he'd gi'n up all he had, he'd
drop a subtle wink,
And lead the way where one might wet one's
whistle with a drink.
Those drinks at the Pacific,
When days were sudorific,
Were what Parisians (pray excuse my
French!) would call "magnifique;"
And frequently an invitation to a meal I'd
get
When I helped 'em run the local on the "St.
Jo Gazette."

And when in rainy weather news was scarce
as well as slow,
To Saxton's bank or Hopkins' store for items
would I go.
The jokes which Colonel Saxton told were
old, but good enough
For local application in lieu of better stuff;
And when the ducks were flying,
Or the fishing well worth trying--
Gosh! but those "sports" at Hopkins' store
could beat the world at lying!
And I--I printed all their yarns, though not
without regret,
When I helped 'em run the local on the
"St. Jo Gazette."

For squibs political I'd go to Colonel Waller
Young,
Or Colonel James N. Burnes, the "statesman
with the silver tongue;"
Should some old pioneer take sick and die,
why, then I'd call
On Frank M. Posegate for the "life," and
Posegate knew 'em all.
Lon Tullar used to pony
Up descriptions that were tony
Of toilets worn at party, ball, or
conversazione;
For the ladies were addicted to the style
called "deckolett"
When I helped 'em run the local on the "St.
Jo Gazette."

So was I wont my daily round of labor to
pursue;
And when came night I found that there
was still more work to do,--
The telegraph to edit, yards and yards of
proof to read,
And reprint to be gathered to supply the
printers' greed.
Oh, but it takes agility,
Combined with versatility,
To run a country daily with appropriate
ability!
There never were a smarter lot of editors,
I'll bet,
Than we who whooped up local on the "St.
Jo Gazette."

Yes, maybe it was irksome; may be a
discontent
Rebellious rose amid the toil I daily
under-went.
If so, I don't remember; this only do I
know,--
My thoughts turn ever fondly to that time
in old St. Jo.
The years that speed so fleetly
Have blotted out completely
All else than that which still remains to solace
me so sweetly;
The friendships of that time,--ah me! they
are as precious yet
As when I was a local on the "St. Jo
Gazette."

APPENDIX III

STEPS IN EUGENE FIELD'S NEWSPAPER CAREER

1873 to 1875 - reporter for the St. Louis *Evening Journal*

1875 to 1876 - city editor for the St. Joseph *Gazette*

1876 to 1880 - editorial writer for the St. Louis *Journal* and St. Louis *Times-Journal*

1880 to 1881 - managing editor of the *Kansas City Times*

1881 to 1883 - managing editor of the *Denver Tribune*

1883 to 1895 - columnist for the Chicago *Daily News*