

# From Private Grief to Public Mourning : Roger Malvin ' s Unaccomplished Burial

著者	KOMIYAMA Mamico
雑誌名	長野工業高等専門学校紀要
巻	50
ページ	1-8
発行年	2016-06-30
URL	<a href="http://id.nii.ac.jp/1051/00000971/">http://id.nii.ac.jp/1051/00000971/</a>



# From Private Grief to Public Mourning

: Roger Malvin's *Unaccomplished* Burial \*

KOMIYAMA Mamico \*1

"Roger Malvin's Burial" (1832) is one of the Hawthorne's earliest tales, combining actual history and imagination, in a style later termed Romance. Although based on "Lovell's Fight" in 1725, the battle between the colonial farmers of Massachusetts and Pigwacket Indians, Hawthorne eliminates the bloody battle scene itself, and instead traces Reuben Bourne's subsequent life over eighteen years, focusing especially on his psychological aftermath of the Indian fight. Reuben's mental downfall is caused by his failure to fulfill his promise to bury Roger Malvin, Reuben's comrade as well as father-in-law-to-be. This paper explores a parallel relation between the function and the meaning of "burial" not only in the fictional/private sphere, but also the real public/national space in the early period of America's history.

Keywords: 19<sup>th</sup> century American Literature, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Memory, The Work of Mourning

## Introduction

Since Hawthorne defined his type of working as "Romance," combining actual history and imagination, he often used actual materials such as historical events, real places, or existing characters in his works. These 'past' materials are sometimes strongly related to the work of mourning like graves and burial that evoke the image of death itself. Among works representative of Hawthorne, the most impressive depiction of the grave is the sharing of one tombstone by two sleepers at the end of *The Scarlet Letter* (1850). Before attracting public attention through this work, Hawthorne wrote nearly one hundred tales and sketches. "Roger Malvin's Burial" (1832) is one of Hawthorne's earliest tales written in a style later termed as Romance, which borrows material from an historical event, integrating the significance of characters' deaths into the plot, and tries to draw readers' attention to their past.<sup>1</sup>

The story of "Roger Malvin's Burial," which first appeared in *The Token* in 1832, is based on "Lovell's Fight" in 1725, the battle between the colonial farmers of Massachusetts and Pigwacket Indians.<sup>2</sup> Taking his inspiration from the historical source, Hawthorne eliminates the bloody battle scene itself, and depicts Reuben Bourne's subsequent life over eighteen years in the frame of family-community, focusing especially on his psychological aftermath of the Indian fight. Two types of death are placed into this narrative: Roger Malvin's death is placed at the beginning of the story and Cyrus Bourne's death comes at the end of the story. Roger, Reuben's comrade as well as father-in-law-to-be, was left alone to die in the wilderness beneath the grave-like-rock, and at the very same spot that Reuben had left Roger, Cyrus was accidentally shot and killed by Reuben who perceived his son as a deer.

As this narrative's frame is circular in shape, with Reuben's son passing away in the spot where his father-in-law had laid down to die, many critics interpret the shooting of Cyrus as being an act of expiation using Cyrus as a Reuben's sacrifice.<sup>3</sup> One powerful vision that Frederick Crews

---

\* This is a revised version of the paper presented at the 48<sup>th</sup> American Literature Society of Japan held at Akita University on October 10, 2009.

\*1 Associate Professor, Department of General Education  
Received May 20, 2016

presents uses Freudian psychoanalysis, in which he interprets this act as “a sacrificial murder” dictated by Reuben’s unconscious charge of patricide.<sup>4</sup> However, it seems fair to say that the act of “burial” itself has been treated collaterally, as even though the title includes “burial,” the action of burying has been tactfully evaded in the principal argument.

Assuming that the cause of Reuben’s family disruption arises from ‘the delay of Malvin’s burial,’ I would firstly like to examine whether Reuben had experienced feeling of mourning toward Malvin. Then, I will consider what the public act of mourning of the dead or ancestors means in the colonial period. This paper, therefore, explores a parallel relationship between the function and the meaning of “burial” not only in the fictional/private sphere, but also in the real public/national space in the early period of America’s history. By focusing on the performance of burial, I would like to investigate the possibility that just as Reuben lost his future generation through his son’s death, so too will America without a proper burial of its historical past.

### 1. The story of a survivor

As the narrator mentions in the first pages of the story that “history and tradition are unusually minute in their memorials of this affair,”<sup>5</sup> the battle of “Lovell’s Fight” is engraved in memory as part of the French and Indian War resulted from frontier conflict between the Britain and France in North America.<sup>6</sup> A brief overview of this historical affair is as follows: On May 8<sup>th</sup> 1725, Captain John Lovewell organized a small company of colonists and ambushed the Abenaki village of Pigwacket as they slept. The little army slaughtered and scalped the Pigwacket and set fire to their camp in the name of strengthening the frontier security.<sup>7</sup> Lovewell and some other men were killed in the skirmish and the remaining men retreated from the field by their own efforts. During the battle, the Indian chief Paugus was shot to death and the Indian party was badly damaged as well. The four men including Captain Farewell who received a fatal injury ran away from the battle, but only two

men survived: Eleazer Davis and another man who had fled from the field by a different route.<sup>8</sup>

It is not difficult to imagine that Hawthorne, who was known to be a keen reader of history books, knew and understood these historical facts.<sup>9</sup> In particular, in 1825, seven years before this work appeared in *The Token*, an event to commemorate the centenary of the battle at Lovell’s Pond was held in Fryeburg, Maine. Hawthorne could hardly have failed to notice that Bowdoin’s Professor Thomas C. Upham devoted his ballad “Lovellpond” and one of Hawthorne’s school fellows Henry Longfellow scribed a poem for this ceremony of the battle in 1825.<sup>10</sup> This commemorative event or nationalistic performance might have been intended to stimulate public self-consciousness about 100-year-ago-battle at this moment of America. In 1829, four years after the event, Andrew Jackson refers to the scheme of removing Native American tribes in his State of the Union address and then he signed the Indian Removal Act for the national government on May 28, 1830. This law authorized that southern Indians were forced to remove their territory to the west of the Mississippi River in exchange for their ancestral homelands. In order to justify the violence of depriving Native Americans of their territory, it was considered to be important to share and retain incidents from the past for stronger unity within the communities in America. Therefore, for America, which at this time was expanding its territory by removing the Indians who were in their way as they tried to form a nation, such commemorative events and shared historical accounts were of great importance.

Here, however, I would like to emphasize one thing: these historical records or memorial ballads were not written by people who had taken part in the battle a hundred years before. Yet even though such texts were not written by actual witnesses to the events, these accounts in effect constructed a collective memory which was believed by subsequent generations as if a true fact. It should be noted that survivors’ testimonies, but that were modified in accordance with the social contexts of later years, and facts were

rewritten so that they would be easily accepted by subsequent communities. The 19th century was a time when leading personalities and major historical events became objects of commemorative veneration. Communities began to construct memorial monuments and rituals came to play in the public sphere in order to preserve their memory to register an official testimony of the events through a system of 'group confirmation.' Looking back on the historical facts, the purpose of Lovell's Fight was depredation so the white fighters attacked the Indians of Pigwacket and intended to take their scalps to Boston.<sup>11</sup> In addition, in spite of making a pre-emptive attack on the Indians, Lovell's party suffered a crucial setback in the end. By omitting these unfavorable facts, however, this historical event was recognized as a 'tale of heroic triumph' through commemorative veneration in 19th century.

Confronting contemporary writers' and community's admiration of "Lovell's Fight," Hawthorne's narrative uses the imaginary survivor's memory to function as the 'counter-memory' of national discourse. What Hawthorne adapts into his story from the historical facts is the viewpoint that there were two types of people who tried to retreat from the battle: those who survived the battle like Eleazer Davis, and those who were left to perish in the wilderness. Thus, what Hawthorne fictionalized using "the moonlight of romance" (337) in his narrative is one survivor's aftermath of the Indian battle especially focusing on his shameful experience of leaving his friend on the verge of death, which the public was unaware of. Reuben's story tries to depict what the community repressed, and through this family romance and the relationship between Roger and Reuben, Hawthorne might have intended to invite readers to imagine what the past that was not included in the modified frame of history that the communities knew was really like. By shedding light on Reuben's long-lasting psychological conflict toward Roger who was left in the wilderness, we might find a new perspective on history. At the very heart of the narrative, there is one promise that was

made between a man who was dying and one who had survived.

## 2. Distance between being alive and being dead: The meaning of 'be buried'

Judging from the result, Reuben Bourne had left Roger Malvin alone in the wilderness and completely abandoned him, but this decision was actually based on mutual consent. Roger, who was seriously injured in the battle against the Indians, preferred to remain in the wilderness alone than to waste their two lives for nothing, so he persuaded Reuben to leave him in the forest to die. However, Roger made two solemn requests of Reuben before they parted: one is to return here and "lay my bones in the grave, and say a prayer over them" (344) when Reuben's wounds were healed, and the other is to change his posture. Most critics have debated over only the first request, but the second one is as significant as the first. After asking for his future burial, he said "raise me, and let me lean against the rock" (345) in order to see Reuben off and Reuben offered his hands to Roger to sit him up in the leaves as he requested. The key point to notice here is that Roger preferred a sitting position to a lying position on his deathbed. Furthermore, Roger raised his body with the support of Reuben's hands and altered his posture, and it was this image that haunted him repeatedly after his return from the wilderness.

For years, also, a thought would occasionally recur, which, though he perceived all its folly and extravagance, he had not power to banish from his mind; it was a haunting and torturing fancy, that his father-in-law was yet sitting at the foot of the rock, on the withered forest-leaves, alive, and awaiting his pledged assistance. (349)

According to the narrator, this extraordinary idea comes from a superstitious fear that was rumored among the frontier inhabitants. It is believed that the Indians had a custom of battling against the dead as well as the living, so they were buried sitting up to watch. Carson reports that

around Ossipee Lake near Fryeburg, Maine, there is a large burial mound from which several Indian skeletons, “all buried in a sitting position”, have been taken.<sup>12</sup> In addition, Juhasz, McIntosh, and Tsuji point out that the last hours of Roger’s posture or the burial style seems to accord with the burial custom of native cultures introduced in Freneau’s poem “The Indian Burying Ground” (1787):<sup>13</sup> The following passage is a quotation from his poem:<sup>14</sup>

In spite of all the learned have said,  
I still my old opinion keep;  
*The posture, that we give the dead,*  
Points out the soul’s eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands—  
The Indian, when from life released,  
And is seated with his friends,  
And shares again the joyous feast. [...]

His bow, for action ready bent,  
And arrows, with a head of stone,  
Can only mean that life is spent,  
And not the old ideas gone. [...]

*They do not lie, but here they sit.*<sup>15</sup>  
(all italics mine)

Since “I” in this poem believes that Indians’ souls live beyond the years of their lives on earth, their sitting burial position has been interpreted as their war readiness. In order to take part in battle at any time, “they do not lie, but here they sit.” Thus, the close resemblance between Roger’s final bodily position and Native American burials is the main argument so far: Reuben leaves Roger “sitting upright in the posture of Freneau’s Indian hunter” having the effect that “he[Reuben] has buried him[Roger] alive as if he were an Indian.”<sup>16</sup>

I would like to focus in particular on the typical western way of burial described in the first part of the poem. As “*the posture, that we give the dead*” (italics mine), when people in the West give family members or those close to them a decent burial, they make the body lay down on the ground.

It means that in order to send the dead to eternal rest, the living people’s hands inevitably work on them. Furthermore, “rites of sepulture” are not only for the dead but also for the living who survive their loved ones. Through the action of making the soulless body lay down on the ground, the performer, who may be the close relatives, can acquire a sense of fulfillment that the entity is indeed already dead. This very performance is a funeral procedure that sets a clear boundary between life and death, and the people who were left behind can go into the process of mourning. However, in the case of Reuben, it is the other way round. By the action of making Roger sit up as he requested, Reuben intentionally creates a distance away from death.

The reason why the phantasm of Roger sitting and waiting his pledged assistance haunted Reuben repeatedly must result from the missed opportunity to bury Roger properly with his own hands. By acting contrary to the tradition—raising the dying man up to lean against the rock—Reuben leaves his duty unfinished and fails to accept Roger’s death, which causes psychological difficulties to increase day by day.

### 3. Reuben Bourne: a melancholic man

After leaving Roger, Reuben wandered in the wilderness under extreme exhaustion and hunger, until he was finally rescued by a search-and-rescue party and taken to his own residence. Although Reuben married Dorcas as her father Roger had expected, until returning to this promised spot, Reuben was “transformed into a sad and downcast, yet irritable man” (350) over the subsequent eighteen years. His changes began to be visible by those around him: his lands lay fallow, his neighbors quarreled with him, his debts mounted and finally he was expelled from his community. Why does this happen to him gradually overtime? Here I would like to examine the reason why Reuben had to ruin himself even though he had survived Indian battle and death in the woods.

Critics such as Turner who reads this work as “guilt and expiation” points out that Reuben’s guilt

comes first “when he allows Malvin’s daughter, his fiancée, to believe, for her comfort that he stayed with her father and saw that he was buried, and after that when he breaks his vow to return and bury Malvin’s bones.”<sup>17</sup> Interpreting literally, there is no lie in his actual words when Dorcas asks about her father’s fate. He does not say anything like ‘Roger was dead’ or ‘I buried him with my hands,’ but just says “I did what I could” (348). Not Reuben but rather Dorcas speaks out that “he [Roger] died!” and by looking at Reuben’s reaction “he spoke not; he only bowed his head” (348), she interprets his gesture as his affirmation. Thus, as Juhasz suggests, if Reuben felt guilt toward Dorcas, “his was a crime of omission” and it is Dorcas who declares her father’s death.<sup>18</sup> If we read the text in this way, what is actually missing from the story is Reuben’s real voice, which is mourning Roger.

Repressed emotion over Roger alters with the lapse of time. Since Reuben fails to accept Roger’s death properly, his psychological fear later conjures up the two uncanny phenomena: Roger’s ghost “sitting at the foot of the rock and awaiting his pledged assistance” and his voice “calling to him, out of the wilderness” (349). At first this calling annoys him as Roger’s voice is audible only to himself, but eventually it affects Reuben’s repressed mental wounds directly to “command him to go forth and redeem his vow” (350). Year after year, that “unheard but felt” summons affects him continuously and when he recognizes this other’s voice as his own voice, “he transformed into a sad and downcast, yet irritable man” (350). Then, how do we interpret this transformation of Reuben over those eighteen years?

Here, an examination of Freud’s psychoanalytic discussion “Mourning and Melancholia” (1917) can be used to account for Reuben’s mental deterioration and his downfall.<sup>19</sup> Freud writes that both “mourning and melancholia are normal mental reactions to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one’s country, liberty, an ideal, and so on.”<sup>20</sup> Whereas mourning is conscious of the object who

has died or whom he has lost, in the case of melancholia he not only “cannot see clearly what it is that has been lost” but also “cannot consciously perceive what he has lost.”<sup>21</sup> In melancholia, the notion of mourning itself has slipped from a patient’s mind and therefore he could not move on to the mourning-process. The patient who is refusing to accept the loss of his object displays “an extraordinary diminution in his self-regard” and “an impoverishment of his ego on a grand scale.”<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the patient displays melancholic symptoms like suffering from a painful dejection and gradually refuses to make contact with the outside world.<sup>23</sup> In fact, Reuben loses interest in a social interaction with his neighboring settlers and becomes a neglectful husbandman having frequent quarrels with them. In spite of surviving the verge of death, he finally becomes a ruined man over eighteen years. His long-term depression illustrates the melancholic trait where the acceptance of loss is never achieved, and in particular where the patient desires to be cast out and punished. It might, therefore, be concluded that the collapse of Reuben’s family results from the lack of a proper burial of the dead.

In addition, Freud’s conception of melancholia’s sense of time can be accountable for the phenomenon that Roger’s living ghost irritates Reuben constantly as already mentioned before. Eng and Kazanjian explain the sense of time used in “Mourning and Melancholia” as follows:

For instance, we might observe that in Freud’s initial conception of melancholia, the past is neither fixed nor complete. Unlike mourning, in which the past is declared resolved, finished, and dead, in melancholia the past remains steadfastly alive in the present. By engaging in “countless separate struggles “with loss, melancholia might be said to constitute, as Benjamin would describe it, an ongoing and open relationship with the past —bringing its ghosts and specters, in flaring and fleeting images, into the present.<sup>24</sup>

One of the features melancholic patients is they

have an open relationship with the past as well as the present. This concept of time makes it possible to have a new relationship between two-time-flow with 'present progressive form' bringing the symbolic past images like ghosts and specters into the present. 'Present time' is supposed to emerge when people can make a boundary between life and death. Shimokobe writes "when people witness someone's death and its body and soul crosses over to the next world," people who survived their beloved's death not only feel sorrow and anger but also they can realize that they "have to accept the vanished past is irrevocable" and move to the mourning process.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, as the melancholic patients' sense of time is a mixture of present and past tense, it prevents the flow of time which is supposed to move straight toward the future.

As for Reuben, the image of Roger sitting at the foot of the rock alive with his voice demanding the vow to be redeemed intrudes into Reuben's consciousness constantly. For eighteen years what actually attacked Reuben's mind was that he helped Roger into a sitting position, which made the consciousness of not conducting a funeral for him more vivid.<sup>26</sup> If only Rueben had placed Roger on the ground with his own hands, or kept Roger lay on his bed of oak leaves, Rueben could have recognized that Roger was ready for his death and that he had done the preparation to send him to the other side. However, in the actual story one decided to remain the wilderness and the other, who had make a vow to bury his friend, survived. The purpose of a funeral or memorial service is to recognize the survivors current position compared to the situation in which they might have been otherwise' rather than to comfort the spirits of the dead.<sup>27</sup> Thus, a memorial service attaches a much more valuable meaning to the people who survived as well as being their duty toward the dead. The source of Reuben's anguish was that he imagined Roger's ghost and heard his voice, and thus what makes Reuben a ruined man is wholly ascribable to his one act: not having buried Roger. As a consequence, now Reuben is constantly in a melancholic state.

#### 4. The burial outside the text

Here, I would like to consider whether Rueben can ultimately accomplish his promise to Roger in this text. Then, I will examine the possibility that the long-term stagnation of melancholic time, and the mixed relationship between past and present, interrupts the circulation of the healthy time flow toward the future not only within the family but also at the wider community level.

Rueben who has been in the melancholic state of mind once realizes that he needs to mourn Roger's loss when he accidentally happens to stand at the very spot where Roger was left for dead eighteen years before. He even hoped that "he might find the bones, so long unburied; and that, having laid the earth over them, peace would throw its sunlight into the sepulcher of his heart" (356). But the next moment, Reuben heard a sound in the underbrush and shot at the prey with his rifle. He had accidentally killed his own son Cyrus where Roger had lain. This tragic family incident mirrors the theme of America's national destiny: it does not just mean the loss of a successor within the range of one family but it also signifies a loss of future in the American community. However, if we read this incident along with actual American history, people in his community anticipate that Cyrus will be "a future leader in the land" (351) and the narrator of this story imagines he would be "the father of a race, the patriarch of a people, the founder of a mighty nation yet to be" (352).

Reflecting the time differences, in that Hawthorne writes this work about one century after the Lavell's Fight, it is natural that he takes into account the subsequent American history. Eighteen years after Lavell's Fight, Cyrus becomes fifteen in 1743. According to historical facts, the battles with Indians fanned out throughout the North American lands, and once the French had given up all its territories in North America under the terms of the Treaty of Paris in 1763, the battle over land was reignited. Had Cyrus stayed alive, the time when he would have reached full manhood to old-age coincides with the times when

America headed toward the War of Independence.<sup>28</sup> Thus, if the present time in this text accords to actual time, it is possible that Cyrus would have become a "the founder of a mighty nation" (352) as the narrator expected.

Has then Reuben who lost his beloved son fulfilled the promise that he had made eighteen years before? Let us examine the final part of the story. Reuben drew his wife Dorcas to the front of the rock where her father had left and now her son is lying, and said "this broad rock is the grave-stone of your near kindred" and "your tears will fall at once over your father and your son" (360). After Reuben has made his confession, even though his wife did not hear him at all, the oak leaves fall upon the rock, Reuben, his wife and child, and Roger Malvin's bones, and this story concluded as follows:

Then Reuben's heart was stricken, and the tears gushed out like water from a rock. The vow that the wounded youth had made, the blighted man had come to redeem. His sin was expiated, the curse was gone from him; and, in the hour, when he had shed blood dearer to him than his own, a prayer, the first for years, went up to Heaven from the lips of Reuben Bourne. (360)

Whereas the narrator says "the vow [he] had come to redeem," we could not find the clear answer, because the request that Roger had made was "return to this wild rock, and lay my bones in the grave, and say a prayer over them" (344). As for the first request, we cannot find an exact description such as 'Reuben buries Roger's bones with his own hands', but only that oak leaves cover the place where Roger had once been. Regarding the second request, it is said that when he had shed blood "dearer to him than his own," words of prayer went up from Reuben's lips. As this last sentence is written not in Reuben's own voice but as a narrative part, we could read this part in several ways that his prayer is directed toward his father-in-law and his own son, or only toward his son, or just for himself. If we focus on the action of

burial, there is some ambiguity in the text and it seems fair to say that the story of "Roger Malvin's Burial" is more like "Roger Malvin's *Unaccomplished Burial*." Then how do we, the readers outside the text, interpret and accept this ending when the story finishes so abruptly?

At the beginning of the text, Hawthorne explains using the narrator's voice that this story borrows some historical facts that later society confines "certain circumstances judiciously into the shade" (337)<sup>29</sup>. If we accept Hawthorne's words, since Roger's burial did not take place within the text, the responsibility for his burial is left in the hands of his readers outside of the text. While the time directly connects the past to future, history is created by those who look back on an event from a later perspective.<sup>30</sup> Assuming that if we substitute 'past' and 'future' in this text for the 'grandfather' Roger and the 'son' Cyrus and set this family's origin as Roger, it is natural that Roger's era is taken over by his son-in-law, Reuben who is placed in 'present' position. But Reuben's 'present time' is thoroughly affected by melancholia and is being constantly intervened into by 'past time.' Taking into account these facts, having neglected his duty of providing a proper funeral for Roger, who symbolizes 'past,' the most significant source of loss might be that of Cyrus who will carry his community into the future. Burying of the dead by the living is the act of connecting time from past into future, which is why a proper funeral is the most significant issue for the people living in the present time. Reynolds points out that "the tragic death of young Cyrus Bourne in the story can thus be read not only as expiation of Reuben Bourne's personal guilt" but also, as Colacurcio put it as "a prophecy of some bloody purgation from national guilt."<sup>31</sup> The time when Hawthorne wrote this text is the same period when the Indian Removal Act (1830) was signed into law by Andrew Jackson which led to eliminate Native Americans, and America entered a new transition in her history on account of this movement. Hawthorne must have noticed that now is the time to reconsider the importance of the past. Therefore, the loss of Cyrus must not only be



Reuben's personal burden but also a serious matter that would endanger the future of his own community and put the future of the nation in crisis. Whereas in this story, it is Reuben's role to be responsible for burial, Hawthorne tries to impress upon his readers that contemporary readers outside the text are also responsible for carrying out a proper burial of their nation's past.

### Conclusion

Even before America became independent, frontier territory had expanded as soldiers and hunters were buried in the place where their death had occurred.<sup>32</sup> Burying their family or comrade in the very spot where they had died in battle and marking the land where they were buried, the community had changed this act into the ideology of American expansionism and the conquest of the frontier. Laderman suggests that this simple act of burial was considered as a public act to promote a national unity in the colonial period as follows:

For peace on the frontier, prosperity in the settlements, and success in the move West, the dead – especially those who died in the fight to control the frontier—must be buried appropriately in the very land under contention. The domestication of the wilderness surrounding the colonists, and the subsequent conquest of the frontier in the nineteenth century, required the familiar presence of a “civilized” practice – “rites of sepulture”—that could transform a harsh natural landscape into a cultured, habitable environment.<sup>33</sup>

When we put this “rites of sepulture” into a historical context, it could be linked to the fate of the nation as well. Taking this into consideration, it is quite natural that “Reuben's false act of burial is not only the individual moral matter but also the social and national duties for the frontier in the early eighteenth century” as Masunaga notes.<sup>34</sup> By ensuring the dead had an appropriate burial, colonial communities negotiated the boundary between nature and culture, and to

make clear the location of the burial ground, they justified their action as a rational discourse for control over the land. The importance of the act of burial as a social duty links to Hawthorne's description in the beginning of *The Scarlet Letter*, a story set in colonial Boston in the seventeenth century, as follows: “the founders of a new colony [ ... ] have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison.”<sup>35</sup> At the same time the act of mourning means making a clear line between their lost objects and those who survived. By laying down the dead and burying them with our own hands attach a meaning to one absolute fact that we survived and they were survived by us.

In the subsequent works, Hawthorne often refers to the words that make his contemporary readers aware of the importance of mourning for the past. In “Alice Doane's Appeal” (1835), published just three years later than this story, the narrator appeals for some memorial column to be built on Gallow's Hill, where innocent people had been executed as the witches without coffins and prayer: “here in dark, funeral stone, should rise another monument, sadly commemorative of the errors of an earlier race.”<sup>36</sup> Also in *The House of the Seven Gables*, Hawthorne let Holgrave say that if the burial of Past has not been completed properly, it affects their Future generations explained by an analogy to a grandfather and the young:

It lies upon the Present like a giant's dead body! In fact, the case is just as if a young giant were compelled to waste all his strength in carrying about the corpse of the old giant, his grandfather, who died a long while ago, and only needs to be decently buried.<sup>37</sup>

The decent burial or proper burial as Hawthorne mentions here means nothing other than the completing the ‘work of mourning.’ That is to place the dead who struggled to establish the nation on the ground in the Past time, and this must be the

survivors' duty. In the text, however, through the narrative of Roger's unaccomplished burial, Hawthorne leaves this role to the contemporary reader outside of the text, who is still not reconciled with their collective guilt of their

forefathers. Through this work it is suggested that just as Reuben lost his future generation through his son's death, so too will America without a proper burial of its historical past.

---

Notes:

- <sup>1</sup> This work was intended to be recorded in *Provincial Tales* including "The Gentle Boy"(1832), "My Kinsman, Major Molineux"(1832), "Alice Doane's Appeal"(1835) and other early works, but it was not published. These three works first appeared in *The Token* and are all set in the colonial period before the War of Independence, which shows that the Hawthorne had tended to use historical elements in his narratives from early in his career.
- <sup>2</sup> There are several ways to refer to "Lovell's Fight," which Hawthorne uses. It is also called Dummer's War, Lovewell's War, Lovewell's Fight, Lovell's War. In my paper, I use "Lovell's Fight" as Hawthorne uses in the text.
- <sup>3</sup> As for the murder of Cyrus, Erlich thinks it "as much an act of revenge as of expiation"; Waggoner identifies Cyrus in the role of Christ and argues that Cyrus's death is Reuben's redemption for Roger's death; and Crews labels this work "a parable of atonement." For readings of the psychological and moral action within this work, see Gloria C. Erlich, "Guilt and Expiation in 'Roger Malvin's Burial.'" *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 26.4 (1972), 377-89; Hyatt H. Waggoner, *Hawthorne: A Critical Study* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1963); Frederick C. Crews, *The Sins of the Fathers: Hawthorne's Psychological Themes* (New York: Oxford UP, 1966)
- <sup>4</sup> Crews, 88.
- <sup>5</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Roger Malvin's Burial," *Mosses from an Old Manse*, in William Charvat, et al eds., *The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne* [以下 CE] (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1974), X, 337.
- <sup>6</sup> Just after the battle, some anonymous ballads celebrating the battle appeared. One of the famous works written during that period is as follows: Thomas Symmes, "Lovewell Lamented, or a Sermon Occasion'd by the Fall of the Brave Captain John Lovewell." 1725. ed. American Antiquarian Society (New Canaan: Readex, 1981-1982), microfiche 2705.
- <sup>7</sup> Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Connecticut: Wesleyan UP, 1973), 181.
- <sup>8</sup> Josiah Jones, another of the four wounded who were left the day after the Fight, traversed Saco river and arrived at Saco. In spite of the subsequent search, Farwell's body was never found. See David S. Lovejoy, "Lovewell's Fight and Hawthorne's 'Roger Malvin's burial.'" *A Casebook*

---

*on the Hawthorne Question*, ed. Agnes McNeill Donohue (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1963), 81-92; G. Harrison Orians, "The Source of Hawthorne's 'Roger Malvin's Burial.'" *American Literature* 10 (1938): 313-18.

- <sup>9</sup> According to Orians, there is a high probability that Hawthorne had read and referred to the book written by Reverend Thomas Symmes's *Historical Memoirs of the Late Fight at Piggwacket*, which was reprinted in 1822 from the 1799 Fryeburg edition. Orians, 314-15.
- <sup>10</sup> Orians, 314; Michael J. Colacurcio, *The Province of Piety: Moral History in Hawthorne's Early Tales*. 1984 (Durham: Duke UP, 1995), 116.
- <sup>11</sup> Colacurcio, 118. Having set out on an officially sponsored scalp-hunting expedition, for they were to receive a bounty of 100 pounds for each scalp, this atrocious deed was accelerated.
- <sup>12</sup> Janine A. Carson, "Indians of New Hampshire," Thaddeus Piotrowski ed. *The Indian Heritage of New Hampshire and Northern New England* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2008), 108-18.
- <sup>13</sup> Paul S. Juhasz, "The House of Atreus on the American Frontier: Hawthorne's 'Roger Malvin's Burial.'" *CEA Critic*: 68.3 (2006): 48-58.; James McIntosh, "Nature and Frontier in 'Roger Malvin's Burial.'" *American Literature* 60.2 (1988): 188-204. Shoko Tsuji, "Two Obsessions in 'Roger Malvin's Burial' and the Influence of 'The Indian Burying Ground' By Philip Freneau." *Matsuyama Daigaku Ronshu*, Vol. 23, No. 5. (2011), 149-172. According to the anthropological study by Tsuji, "The sitting burial posture" of Indian tribes reflects "a specific view of life and death such as the dead can come back to the living freely." Also she suggests that one of the reasons why they were buried sitting is because of a superstition that "the dead people will be reincarnated as a living people by their own death. Philip Freneau, "The Indian Burying Ground." 1787. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* 1, ed. Nina Baym (New York: Norton, 1979), 807-08.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 807.
- <sup>16</sup> McIntosh, 194. McIntosh sees the similarity between Roger's upright sitting position and the posture of Freneau's Indian hunter as an example of irony, which also has the effect that Reuben has buried him alive as if he were an Indian.
- <sup>17</sup> Arlin Turner, *Nathaniel Hawthorne: an Introduction and Interpretation* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1961), 31.
- <sup>18</sup> Juhasz, 53.

- <sup>19</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 14 (London: Hogarth P, 1973), 243-58.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid., 243.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid., 245.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid., 246.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid., 244.
- <sup>24</sup> David L. Eng and David Kazanjian ed., *Loss: The Politics of Mourning* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2003), 3-4.
- <sup>25</sup> Michiko Shimokobe, *Trauma no Koe wo Kiku*. (Misuzu Shobo, 2006), 174.
- <sup>26</sup> When Reuben left Roger behind eighteen years before, he behaved in a peculiar manner: After leaving him in that spot, he stopped and went back to sneakily watch what Roger did. Reuben finally left him without saying anything, but seeing again his bloodstained banner at that last moment "reminded him of his vow" (346) to return there again. The sitting figure of Roger deeply impressed him, but had Reuben laid him down, he would not have been tormented by that image. The only way to relieve this anguish would be return and bury Roger's dead body with his own hands.
- <sup>27</sup> Tatsuru Uchida, *Tasha to Shisha – Lacan niyoru Levinas*. (Kaichosya, 2004), 162. Uchida thinks that the living mourning the dead is to make sense for the survived people rather than to console the dead over "senseless death."
- <sup>28</sup> In this narrative, as Cyrus becomes fifteen years old after eighteen years since "Lovell's Fight" (1925), he was born in 1728. If he had lived, the time of the American Independence War (1775-83) would have coincided with his later years (age 47-55).
- <sup>29</sup> *The Scarlet Letter*, CE, I, 35.
- <sup>30</sup> Shimokobe, 191.
- <sup>31</sup> Colacurcio, 121. Larry J. Reynolds, *Devils & Rebels: The Making of Hawthorne's Damned Politics*. 2008 (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 2010), 26.
- <sup>32</sup> David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1991), 14.
- <sup>33</sup> Gary Laderman, *The Sacred Remains: American Attitudes Toward Death, 1799-1883* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1996), 68.
- <sup>34</sup> Toshikazu Masunaga, *Allegory Kaitai – Nathaniel Hawthorne Sakuhin Shiron*. (Eihosha, 2004), 153. Masunaga considers this work as a frontier narrative and discusses how Hawthorne fully recognizes the social significance of burying the frontiersmen. Also, he points out that there were "burying parties" to put their comrades and fellows in their proper place.
- <sup>35</sup> CE, I, 47.
- <sup>36</sup> *The Snow-Image Uncollected Tales*, CE, XI, 280.
- <sup>37</sup> *The House of Seven Gables*, CE, II, 182-83.