



Jaap and Susquesus with the “wigwam” in the background. “Prairie” chiefs honoring Susquesus. Frontispiece in the G. P. Putnam’s Sons limited edition (undated) of the Complete Works of J. Fenimore Cooper. The illustrator is the Canadian Henry John “Hy” Sandam (1894).

Incongruities in The Redskins

by Norman Barry

I. The “Injins” and Absentee Landlords

The Redskins constitutes the third volume of the Littlepage trilogy,¹ an unsuccessful attempt to defend the manorial system of tenancy introduced by the Dutch, which was limited to upper New York State along the Hudson River. The time frame of the often overlooked anti-rent war, which Cooper viewed as a blatant perversion of the rights of property owners (the size of the estate being inconsequential in Cooper’s assessment), was from 1839 to 1846. In the latter year,

the Constitution of New York was finally changed to remove a system of land ownership involving enormous tracts of land rented out to lease-holding farmers by hereditary landlords called “patroons.”

A central aspect of *The Redskins* and the most hard-hitting rejection of the anti-renters is the so-called “Injins,” white anti-renters poorly disguised as native Americans, oblivious to property rights and out to carve up large manorial estates while sending the “patroons” packing. Their ideology: “One man is as good as another, so why should one man possess more?”² Cooper immediately sided with the manor system, not simply due to his love of the law but (by extension, this reader assumes) due to the vast land holdings of his father, which, though dissipated by his heirs long before 1846,³ he felt a sense of filial piety to defend. Cooper presents a fascinating, if rather long-winded, defense of the antiquated Dutch system. There was also the concern that corrupt politicians might succumb to the will of greedy, land-hungry voters to change the law. A parallel concern was that the jury system might also be corrupted by outside sources, a prelude to *The Ways of the Hour*.⁴

A positive aspect Cooper presents is that lease-holding farmers, who were too poor to pay for land, received the land without being burdened by cash payments. “Rent” could be provided by parting with a few “fat hens” and undesigned services rendered to the landowner. Also, the patroons were able to help populate their large estates by encouraging and paying for passage of settlers from Europe.⁵

On the negative slate relating to the rise of dissatisfaction among the lease-holders on Ravensnest is the amazing neglect the Littlepage estate in Ravensnest was subjected to as a result of landlord absenteeism. The first-person narrator, the twenty-five-year-old orphan, Hugh Roger Littlepage (“I was always called Hugh”) and his uncle and guardian by the same name (generally referred to as Uncle Ro) had spent five years abroad:

My Uncle Ro and myself had been travelling together in the East, and had been absent from home fully five years, when we reached Paris. For eighteen months neither of us had seen a line from America, when we drove through the barriers, on our way from Egypt, viâ [sic] Algiers, Marseilles, and Lyons. Not once in all that time, had we crossed our own track, in a way to pick up a straggling letter; and all our previous precautions to have the epistles meet us at different banks in Italy, Turkey, and Malta were thrown away.⁶

Both Uncle Ro and Hugh—now at the tender age of twenty-five becoming the legal owner of Ravensnest—were seldom on the property should any problems arise and often not in contact for months on end. Particularly Uncle Ro was perhaps more European by inclination than American:

My uncle was an old traveller—I might almost say an old resident—in Europe; for he had passed no less than twenty of his fifty-nine off the American continent.⁷

Added to the problem of inadequate supervision was the unavoidable but spurious speculation that the two men spent their time in riotous living abroad, squandering needed funds for improvements on their estates. By the end of the novel, the reader notes that the charge of landlord absenteeism at Ravensnest has not been remedied, as Uncle Ro will be returning to Europe and Nephew Hugh will reside in Washington, D.C., lobbying for more security for

manorial estates, and —should his efforts fail (which they in fact do)—Italy is beckoning, as the unnamed “editor” of the Littlepage manuscript notes at the end of the story:

I forget to add, Mr. Littlepage significantly remarked, at parting, that should Washington fail him, he has the refuge of Florence open, where he can reside among the other victims of oppression, with the advantage of being admired as a refugee from republican tyranny.⁸

II. “Finishing School” and the Virtues of Individualism

The strong emphasis Cooper places on Europe as a sort of “finishing school” for the “roughhewn” American upper crust has a long tradition. Cooper’s love of Europe and his unquestioning assumption that travel and a lengthy residence abroad—anything under one year being regarded as totally insufficient—served as a major prerequisite for overcoming American provincialism while, in the process, creating a true American gentleman (or gentlewoman).⁹

On the other hand, a diametrically opposed image is the simple-minded and honest Natty Bumppo of the *Leather Stocking Tales*, who decries the sound of the settlers’ axe, is himself a squatter, and—like the American Indian—is driven into the prairie to escape a civilization he can no longer live with. Perhaps the spiritual meeting point between a Natty Bumppo and a Hugh Littlepage is a rejection of conformity and a strong sense of the virtues of individualism, even if this means exile.

III. The Future of the Red Man

One topic that is implicit in the novel but largely ignored is the question of the legality of Hugh’s ownership of Ravensnest, even though it has been in his family for generations and was a prerevolutionary acquisition granted the Littlepages by “royal warrant.” Apart from the sophistry of whether prerevolutionary purchases recognized by the British Crown were null and void, there is the embarrassing question of whether the land was not stolen from the Native Americans. Hugh is quick to assert the legitimacy of a “purchase,” while, only a few lines later he asserts, with great emphasis, that no “owner” preceded his Littlepage ancestor, Herman Mordaunt:

Even the red man had been fairly bought off by Herman Mordaunt, the patentee, and so Susquesus, the Redskin of Ravensnest, as our old Onondago was often called, had ever admitted the fact to be. It was natural that I should love an estate thus inherited and thus situated. NO CIVILIZED MAN, NO MAN, INDEED, SAVAGE OR NOT, HAD EVER BEEN THE OWNER OF THOSE BROAD ACRES, BUT THOSE WHO WERE OF MY BLOOD.¹⁰

Set against Hugh’s naïve belief that the Native American had been fairly “bought off,” a group of chiefs from the distant prairies, after visiting the “great paleface father” in Washington, arrive at Ravensnest to pay the ancient Susquesus their respects:

There they did come, indeed; seventeen of the finer specimens of the redskins, as they are now sometimes seen passing among us in bodies, moving to or from their distant prairies; for the white man has already forced the Indian, with the bears, and the elk, and the moose, out of the forests of America, upon those vast plains.¹¹

The question of why seventeen Indian chiefs from the prairie should be interested in paying their respects to the President of the United States is left unanswered. Also, the names of the tribes represented remain in the dark. The reader is only informed that an Iowa chief named Flintyheart and two unnamed “ancient Onondagoes” were among the party of “prairie” Indians.¹² Although there was the hope of convincing Susquesus to return to his tribe, Susquesus pointed out that he was simply too old for such a journey:

“My sons, the journey you ask me to make is too long for old age. I have lived with the pale-faces until one half of my heart is white; though the other half is red. One half is filled with the traditions of my fathers, the other half is filled with the wisdom of the stranger. I cannot cut my heart in two pieces, I must all go with you, or all stay here. The body must stay with the heart, and both remain where they have dwelt so long. I thank you, my children, but what you wish can never come to pass.”¹³

When addressing the chiefs, Susquesus paints a dismal picture of the future of Indian culture and of the environmental destruction wrought by the white man on the land that once had been the home of his tribe:

“When I was young, beautiful woods covered these fields. Far and near the buck and the moose leaped among the trees. Nothing but the hunter stopped them. It is all changed! The plough has frightened away the deer. The moose will not stay near the sound of the church-bell. He does not know what it means. The deer goes first. The red-man keeps on his trail, and the paleface is never far behind. So it has been since the big canoes of the stranger first came into our waters; so it will be until another salt lake is reach beneath the setting sun. When that other lake is seen, the red-man must stop, and die in the open fields, where rum and tobacco and bread are plenty, or march on into the great salt lake of the west and be drowned.”¹⁴

Already in *The Chainbearer*, the second novel in the Littlepage trilogy, the tendency to see land ownership through the value system of Anglo-Saxon law is apparent:

“Do you wish to buy, Trackless?”

“Injin own all land, for what he want, now. I make wigwam where I want; make him, too, when I want.”

“I know very well that you Indians do claim such a right; and, so long as the country remains in its present wild state, no one will be apt to refuse it to you.”¹⁵

Professor McWilliams adds the following:

Cooper allows Susquesus, the admired “Upright Onondago,” forcefully to challenge the right of any white man, including the Littlepages, to purchase any Indian land, but Cooper also maintains the legitimacy of the Littlepage deeds in accord with the European conception of land ownership. The three generations of Littlepages, like many a Hudson River proprietor, thus have the advantage of long occupancy and long recognized title.¹⁶

IV. Susquesus and Jaap: The Odd Couple

Without placing a final verdict on the anti-renters (which the reader can decide according to his or her own sense of justice), the incongruous pair of supercentenarian individuals who have housed together for decade upon decade at Hugh Littlepage's Ravensnest, the native American Susquesus and the African American Jaap, deserve special attention. Jaap's adopted name is Jacob Satanstoe:

All this the fellow did, moreover, without orders; deeming it part of his duty to follow his young master [Corny], even if he followed him to evil. No dog, indeed, could be truer in this particular than Jaap, or Jacob, Satanstoe, for he had adopted the name of the Neck as his patronymic; much as the noble of other regions style themselves after their lands.¹⁷

The spelling of Jacob's name fluctuates in the novel: Yop or Jaap or Jaaf. He is sometimes simply referred to rather crudely but without condescension by the chiefs as "Thick Lips." The n-word, "n-----r," is also used, even by Jaap when referring to himself.¹⁸

The Onondaga chief Susquesus in *The Redskins* is on occasion affectionately shortened to Sus by Jaap and the Littlepages; otherwise his attributes are referred to: the Trackless or the Upright or the Withered Hemlock. In *The Chainbearer*, Susquesus is often referred to as Sureflint,¹⁹ which disappears in *The Redskins*. A much less favorable "appellation," Crooked Turns, crops up in Satanstoe when Susquesus steps onto the Littlepage stage:

This Indian was about six and twenty years of age, and was called a Mohawk, living with the people of that tribe though, I subsequently ascertained that he was, in fact, an Onondago by birth. His name was Susquesus, or Crooked Turns [my emphasis], an appellation that might, or might not speak well of his character, as the turns were regarded in a moral, or in a physical sense.²⁰

Particularly, the mystery of who shot Aaron Thousandacres in *The Chainbearer* points directly to Susquesus, who had been granted parole with the solemn promise not to take scalps or make use of a rifle.²¹ Here, the question of what "Indian justice" means is ambivalent in Susquesus' character. "Parole" or "furlough," as in *Deerslayer*, was regarded as sacred.²² Another question is whether it was just to kill Thousandacres, who, together with his wife Prudence, was guilt-stricken over what had happened to Chainbearer, when, if Lowiny's warning is to be believed, Aaron's son Tobit was the most likely culprit.²³ As Morduant Littlepage states:

For myself, I believed from the first, that Susquesus had sacrificed the squatter to the manes of his friend Chainbearer, dealing out Indian justice, without hesitation, or compunction. Still, I could not be certain of the fact, and the Onondago had either sufficient prudence, or sufficient philosophy to keep his own secret. It is true that a remark, or two, did escape him,²⁴ soon after the affair occurred, that tended to sustain my suspicions; but, on the whole, he was remarkably reserved on the subject—less from any apprehension of consequences, than from self-respect and pride of character.²⁵

What amazes the reader from the very start is Cooper's contention that both individuals exceeded 120 years of age. Jaap is thought to be the oldest of the two, while each man has allegedly exceeded 120 years of age!²⁶

By comparison, women's longevity is much greater than that of their male counterparts. The oldest verified woman in our times, a Frenchwoman, Jeanne Calment, died at the age of 122.²⁷ The reader is required to swallow perhaps more than is credible, even though both men are said to have led temperate lives.²⁸ Cooper, however, believed that such longevity was possible:

It is common to say that the great age so often attributed to the people of these two races is owing to ignorance of the periods of their births, and that they do not live longer than the whites. This may be true, in the main, for a white man is known to have died at no great distance from Ravensnest, within the last five and twenty years, who numbered more than his six score of years; but aged negroes and aged Indians are nevertheless so common, when the smallness of their whole numbers is rendered, as to render the fact apparent to most of those who have seen much of these respective people.²⁹

Jaap and Susquesus, through their alleged longevity, serve to unify the three novels. Cooper, however, did not check the dates he provided in *Satanstoe*, which fail to corroborate the "six-score" contention. Corny (Cornelius Littlepage) states,

"I was born on the 3rd May 1737, on a neck of land, called Satanstoe, in the county of West- Chester, and in the colony of New York."³⁰

On p. 28 of Chapter II (*Satanstoe*), Jaap is introduced:

"Even a negro boy, who was about my own age, and whose name was Jacob, or Japp, but who was commonly called Yaap, grinned at the remark...." Given that *The Redskins* was published in 1846, Jaap could not have been older than 109.

As for Susquesus, if he was indeed twenty-six years of age when hired on by the Littlepages during the failed Abercrombie attempt to take the French fort at Tigonderoga (Fort Carillon) in 1758,³¹ this would put his maximum age in 1846 at 114. It would seem that Cooper did not reread the dates provided in *Satanstoe* to be sure that they aligned with those in *The Redskins*.

One wonders whether two such singular individuals, marked by incredible longevity (if not quite "six score plus") and of different races, residing in the very same cabin (also referred to as the "hut" or the "wigwam"³²), might not, in their very persons, tell a tale of each race:

"There are the two old fellows, sunning themselves this fine day!" exclaimed my uncle, with something like a tremor in his voice, as we drew near enough to the hut to distinguish objects, "Hugh, I never see these men without a feeling of awe, as well as of affection. They were the friends, and one was the slave of my grandfather; and as long as I can remember have they been aged men! They seem to be set up here as monuments of the past, to connect generations that are gone with those that are to come."³³

Cooper's rule of thumb regarding which race is prejudiced against which may reflect his own feelings or even those of his fellow Americans, but it is hardly borne out by the development of the plot. As already seen, Susquesus, in his very person, constitutes a chronicle of the fate of the American Indian. It should be noted that Susquesus in *The Redskins* was greatly relieved not to be placed in the undignified role of a basket-maker in his old age. In *The Chainbearer*, Susquesus was not so fortunate:

“One time, ole warrior live in wigwam, and tell young warrior of scalp, and council-fire, and hunt, and war-path; now, make broom and basket.”³⁴

Jaap, with all the savvy of a businessman, states:

“Some time he make basket and broom; but dey uses better broom now, and Injin lose dat business.”³⁵

Both men enjoy a form of “assisted living,” provided by the Littlepages:

“Betty Smith, sir—you remember Betty, the widow of the old coachman, that died when you was at college, sir—well, Betty has done nothing these four years, but look after them two old men. She keeps everything tidy in their hut, and washes it out twice a week, and washes their clothes for them, and darns, and sews, and cooks, and looks after all their comforts. She lives hard by, in the other cottage, sir, and has everything handy.”³⁶

Even Jaap’s work in the garden received “assistance.” It is clear that his “Herculean strength”³⁷ of yesteryear has dissipated:

There was a garden, and it had been properly made that very season, the negro picking and pecking about it, during the summer, in a way to coax the vegetables and fruits on a little, though I well knew that the regular weedings came from an assistant at the ‘Nest, who was ordered to give it an eye and an occasional half-day.”³⁸

Hugh seems to underrate Jaap in comparison with Susquesus, generalizations which should be approached with caution:

A slave he had been, a slave he had lived, and a slave he would die. This, too, in spite of the law of emancipation,³⁹ which had, in fact, liberated him long ere he had reached his hundredth year. I have been told when my father announced to Jaaf the fact that he and all his progeny, the latter of which was very numerous, were free and at liberty to go and do as they pleased, the old black was greatly dissatisfied. “What good dat all do, Masser Malbone,” he growled. “Whey ’ey won’t let well alone? Nigger be nigger, and white gentle’em be white gentle’em. I ’speck, now, nuttin’ but disgrace and poverty come on my breed! We always hab been gentle’em’s nigger, and why can’t ’ey let us be gentle’em’s nigger, as long as we like?”⁴⁰

In certain regards, Jaap’s reaction is understandable. A centenarian obviously has no desire to pull up stakes and move elsewhere. Even the suggestion may be deemed hurtful. (Consider Susquesus’ similar rejection of the invitation to return to his tribe.) Jaap’s “progeny” (never presented in *The Redskins*) must also feel “at home” with the Littlepages. Jaap has spent his entire life with the Littlepage family and is well aware of the social status it imparts. He may regard the Littlepages as his social superiors, but this does not mean that all whites are regarded as his superior. When Uncle Ro and Hugh decide to go incognito and disguise themselves as travelling peddlers from Prussia, Jaap immediately looks down upon them:

As a slave of a Littlepage, he held pedlars as inferior beings; for the ancient negroes of New York ever identified themselves, more or less, with the families to which they belonged, and in which they so often were born.⁴¹

Cooper, however, does not consider “shades of grey” in his portrayal:

It is another trait of human nature, that while the negro affects a great contempt and aversion for the red-man, the Indian feels his own mental superiority to the domestic slave.⁴²

The most damning comment regarding blacks is the following:

As men, in the higher meaning of the term, the reader will remember that Susquesus was ever vastly the superior of the black. Jaap’s intellect had suffered under the blight which seems to have so generally caused the African mind to wither, as we know that mind among ourselves; while that of his associate had ever possessed much of the loftiness of a grand nature, left to its native workings by the impetus of an unrestrained, though savage liberty.⁴³

The glorification of the red man’s intellect and the “dementia” withering the minds of African Americans can, in this reader’s view, be rejected. Both men, Jaap and Susquesus, do, however, seem to live and dream more in the distant past of their youth, which can hardly be equated with “withering.”

It also seems illogical that Jaap could accept and even love Susquesus, and Susquesus could feel the same for Jaap, while each man, according to Hugh, could disregard the merits of the other’s race.

That Jaap was honored to be the first one to speak before the assembled chiefs must also make one wonder whether the red man was really so biased against African Americans as Hugh asserts. In Deersfoot’s appeal to Jaap to be the first to speak, Deersfoot states, “The Great Spirit sees all things; he makes all things. In his eyes color is nothing.”⁴⁴ So, who shall we believe—Deersfoot or Hugh? This reader is much more susceptible to the role social status plays in the Redskins rather than assertions of prejudice founded on race.

The anti-renters regarded the Littlepages as too “aristocratic.” The Littlepages see themselves and large landowners as a civilizing influence in the new Republic. Jaap, as a servant of the Littlepages, sees himself as contributing to the well-being of the Littlepages. Susquesus, who has lived so long with the Littlepages, is also—like Jaap—at least an integral part of the Littlepage family. In this unlikely combination, social status and a sense of belonging rather than race become determining factors.

Should Jaap be taken seriously when he flippantly claims, “Nigger is nigger, and Injin is Injin; and nigger best”? Or, “Ole Sus, too, berry much alter of late—can’t hold out much longer, I do t’ink. But Injin nebber hab much raal grit in ’em.”⁴⁵ Or, have we got an old married couple of sorts, as is suggested by the following passage:

“How do the old men get along together?”

“Why, sir, they quarrel a good deal⁴⁶—that is, the nigger quarrels; though the Indian is too much above him to mind what he says. Nor will I say that Yop actually quarrels, sir, for he has the greatest possible regard for his friend; but he aggravates in the most surprisingest manner—just like a nigger, however I do suppose.”⁴⁷

Also, Susquesus’ self-effacing sobriquet “Withered Hemlock” hardly conveys a sense of superiority:

“My children, you are young. Seventy winters are a great many for one of you. It is not so with me. Why I have been left standing alone here near the hunting-grounds of my fathers, is more than I can say. So it is, and it is right. A withered hemlock is sometimes seen standing by itself, in the fields of the pale-faces. I am such a tree. It is not cut down, because the wood is of no use, and even the squaws do not like it to cook by. When the winds blow, they seem to blow around it. It is tired of standing there alone, but it cannot fall. That tree wishes for the axe, but no man puts the axe to its root. Its time has not come. So it is with me—my time has not come.”⁴⁸

If Jaap thinks he is racially superior, then why does Sus invariably lead and Jaap follow, wherever the two men go? Cooper writes:

Notwithstanding the habitual grumbling of the negro, the Indian always led when they made a movement. He had led in the forest, on the early hunts and on the war-paths; he had led in their later excursions on the neighboring hills; he always led when it was their wont to stroll to the hamlet together, to witness the militia musters and other striking events; he was even foremost when they paid their daily visits to the Nest....⁴⁹

Jaap, in spite of the racist assertion of a “blighted” intellect, may be an inveterate curmudgeon. But he was not blind to the reason why the chiefs had sought out Ravensnest. And he dressed in his finest, reminiscent of that once worn in New York City’s Pinkster frolic, which was of African origin:⁵⁰

Nor had Jaaf neglected to do honor to a festival that was so peculiarly in honor of his friend. Grumble he would and did, throughout the whole of that day; but he was not the less mindful of the credit and honor of Susquesus.⁵¹

And when “Hawkeye” Jaap is the very first to spot the advancing mob of disguised “Injins,” why would he, if he thinks his race “best,” turn to the alleged “younger” Sus for protection? Jaap declares, “Get your rifle, Sus; get your rifle, boy, and mind dat ole Jaaf be at your elbow.”⁵²

Hugh Littlepage viewed slavery, as it once had been, in positive terms:

It is the fashion of the times to lament the disappearance of the red-men from among us; but, for my part, I feel much more disposed to mourn over the disappearance of the “nigger.” I use the Doric, in place of the more modern and more mincing term of “colored man”; for the Doric alone will convey to the American the meaning in which I wish to be understood. I regret the “nigger;” the old-fashioned, careless, light-hearted, laborious, idle, roguish, honest, faithful, fraudulent, grumbling, dogmatic slave: who was at times good for nothing, and, again, the stay and support of many a family. But him I regret in particular is the domestic slave, who identified himself with the interests,

and most of all, with the credit of those he served, and who always played the part of an humble privy counsellor, and sometimes that of a prime minister.⁵³

In Hugh's view, Jaap, if not rising to the role of a "prime minister," was fondly regarded by the Littlepages more as "an humble and distant relative than as a slave."⁵⁴

Cooper's notion of a stratified society (in contrast to a classless democracy threatening to run wild) provides a sort of self-justification for his defense of an American "landed gentry." Uncle Ro states:

"I say that, in a country like this, in which land is so abundant as to render the evils of a general monopoly impossible, a landed gentry is precisely what is most needed for the higher order of civilization, including manners, tastes, and the minor principles, and is the very class which, if reasonably maintained and properly regarded, would do the most good at the least risk of any social caste known."⁵⁵

Although an integral part of the Littlepage family, both Jaap and Susquesus are relegated to an outsider's role within a white man's society. Neither Susquesus nor Jaap have been converted to Christianity.⁵⁶ Susquesus still thinks in terms of Indian religion. In Jaap's case, the reader of *The Redskins* is left completely in the dark, although in *Satanstoe*, a superstitious side is alluded to:

I say all, but Jaap ought to be excepted, for nothing in the shape of danger ever gave that negro any concern, unless it was spooks. He was afraid of "spooks" but he did not fear man.⁵⁷

Susquesus, in his person, provides a chronicle of the North American Indian with a gloomy prediction of the future of the red man: drown or assimilate with a complete loss of cultural identity. Jaap, in his person, also provides a chronicle of the fate of the African American, but Cooper fails to recognize the great potential Jaap's progeny will have in future times while only lamenting the loss of his role as a domestic slave in supporting wealthy landowning families in upstate New York. The relationship between the two men is not as clearcut as Cooper projects it. Indeed, it strikes this reader that Cooper does not grasp the amount of affection and regard each man feels for the other, without which their lengthy domestic coexistence would not have been possible. This places both men on an equal footing in spite of their racial and apparent social differences.

V. Susquesus' Voluntary Self-Exile: An Argument for the Continuation of the Manorial System?

The question why the greatest Onondago chief his tribe had ever known would desert his tribe and voluntarily serve the white man is finally answered at the end of the novel. Susquesus confesses that it was a mistake not to have married as a young man:

"When he [Susquesus, speaking of himself in the third person] had seen thirty winters, no chief of the Onondagoes had more honour, or more power. He was the first among the Onondagoes. There was but one fault in him. He did not take a squaw into his wigwam."⁵⁸

When Susquesus finally fell in love, it was with a beautiful Delaware girl, a prisoner taken by another member of his tribe named Waterfowl. Waterfowl refused to relinquish his prize: “A law of the red-men gives every warrior his prisoners. If he brings off a warrior, he is his; if a squaw, she is his.”⁵⁹ Although the captive Delaware girl also wished to become Susquesus’ wife (“He was the noblest moose of the woods, in her eyes”),⁶⁰ Indian law forbade their union. The squaws in the tribe supported Susquesus; so did an overwhelming majority of the braves. Waterfowl had virtually no support. In spite of this, Susquesus recognized the power of the law and gave up the girl. The tragic consequence:

“I must go into the woods for a while. When my mind is at peace, Susquesus will return.”
[...]

“His mind was never at peace, for he never came back.”⁶¹

Susquesus then exhorts the anti-renters to follow his own example and obey the law. As a result, they disperse, ashamed of their own actions.⁶²

Laws can be amended or revoked. One can ask whether Susquesus’ tribe profited from a law which led to the exile of its chief. Furthermore, is it right for a woman to be married to a man against her will, whether she be Indian or white? And, is it not allowed to question a law as to its legitimacy if an overwhelming percentage of a given society (whether Indian or white) sees only disadvantages in its observance? Did Susquesus, who had the support of his tribe, not make a tragic mistake in believing that the law was always right? Added to this, can a problematic Indian law be used in support of a problematic paleface law, which, in fact, was abolished in the same year *The Redskins* was published?

VI. A Love Story with a Happy Ending?

As is typical in so many a Cooper novel, the marriage of a young couple provides the crowning moment, which, sadly, does not help in resolving the thorny issues the novel raises. In *The Redskins*, the union is between a poor rector’s daughter, Mary Warren, and the proprietor of Ravensnest (and numerous other properties), young Hugh Littlepage. Needless to say, the element of divergent social status could make such a union volatile or raise eyebrows in a “finer society.”

When Uncle Ro, Hugh’s guardian, returned to Ravensnest, there were two objects in his mind: saving the ‘Nest from the anti-renters and finding a suitable wife for Hugh.

In Chapter 3, the name Hannah More is mentioned. Her famous best-selling novel, which already in Cooper’s first novel *Precaution* was a guiding light, was entitled *Cœlebs in Search of a Wife* (1809). As might be expected, Uncle Ro, following Hannah’s precepts, had his own ideas as to who Hugh should wed. Two of his wards at Ravensnest were well-endowed and had been bred for upper-class society. A third candidate not on Uncle Ro’s list bore the rather alarming name Opportunity Newcome, sister of Seneca Newcome, an ardent anti-renter. Whatever may be said in defense of Opportunity’s timely warning of the danger approaching Ravensnest, the reader may suspect that she had ulterior motives. As Cooper has his Marquess of Eltringham state in his 1820 novel *Precaution*:

“I view these husband-hunting ladies as pirates on the ocean of love, and lawful objects for any roving cruiser like myself to fire at. At one time I was simple enough to retire

as they advanced, but you know, madam,” turning to Mrs. Wilson with a droll look, “flight only encourages pursuit, so I now give battle in self-defence.”⁶³

Apart from Hugh’s sweet sister Patty, there is Patty’s best friend, the rector’s daughter. As the daughter of the widower Rector Warren, a righteous Episcopalian who was fearless in standing up to the anti-renters, Mary was deeply concerned about the safety of her father. Hugh was impressed (and even awed) by the filial piety and attachment Mary exhibited.

Also, Mary could act if action was required. When Seneca Newcome and his crony tried to burn down the Nest, it was Hugh’s good fortune that Mary was close by when Seneca had Hugh pinned to the floor. Only with her help could Hugh free himself and overcome Seneca.⁶⁴

The gold watch provides some idea of the social disparity between the Warrens and the Littlepages:

“Oh! Mrs. Littlepage!” she exclaimed, after looking in astonishment at the offering for a moment, and in silence. “You cannot have intended that beautiful watch for me!”

“For you, my dear; the beautiful watch is not a whit too good for my beautiful Mary.”

“But, dear, dear Mrs. Littlepage, it is altogether too handsome for my station—for my means.”

“A lady can very well wear such a watch; and you are a lady in every sense of the word, and so you need have no scruples on that account.”⁶⁵

The question of the canopied Littlepage pew which both Mary, “this intelligent, yet simple-minded girl”⁶⁶ and her father regarded as un-Christian and singularly aristocratic and which Hugh stubbornly refused to tear down unless the anti-renters desisted, points out that differences of opinion could, in fact, arise. Neither Hugh’s insensitivity to the canopy (the existence of which he hardly remembered due to his lengthy absence from Ravensnest) nor its final ignominious fate as shading a pig-pen after being dismembered by anti-renters, seemed to cloud the young couple’s feelings for one another.⁶⁷

Although Mary was endowed with a religious upbringing as a rector’s daughter and was “pretty, gentle, timid, yet spirited and intelligent,”⁶⁸ the reader may get the feeling that the Littlepages felt she was not “qualified” to marry a Littlepage without Uncle Ro’s settlement in her name to the tune of \$50,000.⁶⁹ Yet another question regarding the future happiness of the young couple is whether Mary’s separation from her beloved father might not create matrimonial tension.⁷⁰

VII. Concluding Remarks

The Redskins contains a number of exciting plots to alleviate the drudgery of reading far-too-long discourses on property rights. Although an apology of sorts is appended by “the editor” at the end of the novel for “the tone” of the book,⁷¹ much less argumentation and more action would have provided relief to this reader. After all, Cooper had already sufficiently stated his case in the first two Littlepage novels.

Why Cooper would have written a trilogy attacking a relatively unknown moment in American history restricted to upper New York State and, one might think, whose outcome was predictable, only shows that, as an author, there was no topic he would shy away from, particularly if it hit, in more ways than one, close to home.⁷² Although the law of manorial property rights could (and indeed would) be overturned, Hugh Littlepage, though allowing the possibility, seems, on the whole, blind to the momentum of current events that was about to sweep away the antiquated Dutch landholding system.

The choice of three generations of first-person Littlepage narrators in the trilogy (who often show that Cooper did, in fact, have a sense of humor), the unifying role of the “odd couple,” and the juxtaposition of poorly disguised anti-rent “Injins” and real Indians combine to help tone down Cooper’s pronounced tendency to engage in strained expository assaults on the anti-rent war and the reader’s patience. The ever-present advocacy of the benefits of an aristocratic gentry engaged in “civilizing” American society appears to rest on a shaky pedestal. In this reader’s opinion, Cooper’s racist comments directed at Jaap and an over-glorification of Susquesus are not borne out in the trilogy.

The need to somehow “elevate” the bride, Mary Warren, with a fat cash settlement, to make her socially “acceptable” both in “finer circles” as well as by the have-nots, who would expect the rich only to be drawn to the rich, sadly fits into Cooper’s mindset. Also, the notion of swooping Mary off to a foreign clime (without asking) has little to do with women’s emancipation. Hugh, unthinkingly, even seems to make the mistake of intuitively regarding Mary within an Italian context: “Mary blushed like an Italian sky at eventime, and looked down, to conceal her confusion.”⁷³

The American Civil War ended a radically different type of manorial system, one based on slavery in the South. This was the beginning of the lengthy struggle of black Americans to achieve recognition in a society still very much racist. That Jaap’s progeny would lead to a black American president is surely one striking example of the progress African Americans have achieved.

That Native Americans, who were robbed of their homelands, which were quickly environmentally despoiled by white settlements, have either lost their cultural identity (often by coercion) or been relegated to reservations, stands in sharp contradistinction to Cooper’s portrayal of the “Noble Savage.” If Susquesus is to be a representative of this ideal, his abandoning his tribe because of a Delaware squaw strikes this reader as a singular lack of stature. A “Noble Savage” should have the inner strength to overcome his infatuation and think of the greater good of his tribe. Also, his promise to return was never fulfilled due to his own weakness. Susquesus’ (translated “Crooked Turns”) violation of his parole in *The Chainbearer*, though quickly forgotten by Cooper in *The Redskins*, finds a disappointing sequel when Susquesus finally reveals the rather embarrassing reason for his self-imposed exile. Even the sobriquet “Trackless” can be interpreted not only literally as leaving a trail no-one can follow, but also, figuratively, in the sense that the logic of his decisions throughout his life is difficult to follow.

Susquesus’ prediction of the future of his race contains more than a grain of truth. Reduced earlier in life to a maker of brooms and baskets, his later life made bearable only by assisted living and the companionship of his friend (who dies before Susquesus), one wonders whether he ever questioned his decision to leave the Onondaga.

Notes

1. Perhaps due to the roughly four-generation timespan of the trilogy, the generation of young Hugh's Littlepage parents has been completely omitted by Cooper. The reader is consequently left in the dark as to why or how Hugh's father, not to mention his mother, "died early." The "noble boy," the eldest son of Mordaunt and Dus, mentioned in Ch. 30 (392), of Chainbearer, remains a mystery. To this reader, it is somehow enervating that Uncle Ro can always speak of "my mother," i.e., his own mother, (Hugh's grandmother), whereas young Hugh never once mentions his mother, not even her name. See Cooper, Chainbearer, Preface (2) and Explanatory Notes 2.6 (395).

2. Cooper, Redskins, 1:248 (Ch. 15): "...but if one man is as good as another, why do we have the trouble and cost of elections? We might draw lots, as we do for jurors, and save a good deal of time and money."

A similar argument is in Homeward Bound, 72 (Ch. 8):

"If one man is as good as another, a lottery would be cheaper, easier, and sooner settled. Why an election, or even a lottery at all? Why not choose the President as the Persians choose their king, by the neighing of a horse?"

3. Taylor, William Cooper's Town. See Ch. 14, "Inheritance Lost," 372-375. To avoid misunderstanding, William Cooper, James Fenimore Cooper's father, was not a patroon and did not run his large tracts of land on the manorial system. He was also successful in working with the "Yankees," whom his son seems to regard in a very negative light. In other words, his vast tracts of land were not endangered by disgruntled settlers. In the following quotation, the overriding importance of "the active presence" of a landlord is stressed.

[William] Cooper identified four keys to attracting and inspiring the critical mass of early settlers: freehold title, credit sales at a modest price, opening all lands to settlement, and, above all, the active presence of an encouraging but vigilant landlord. "A moderate price, long credit, and a friendly landlord are infallible inducements to a numerous settlement," he wrote. Taylor, 99 (Ch. 4), quoting William Cooper, A Guide in the Wilderness (Dublin, 1810), 8. The latter is in the public domain on Google Books.

4. Cooper, Redskins, 1:142-143 (Ch. 9).

5. See Cooper, Satanstoe, 273-274 (Ch. 19) for a consideration as to why Herman Mordaunt thought it best to "visit Ravensnest in person." As for the manorial system providing an incentive for increased immigration from Europe, see the following, stated by Uncle Ro:

"In the cases of the older estates, such as those of the Van Rensselaers, the equity is still stronger in their favor, since the conditions to hold the land included an obligation to bring so many settlers from Europe within a given time; conditions that were fulfilled at great cost, as you may suppose, and on which, in truth, the colony had its foundation." Cooper, Redskins, 1:45 (Ch. 3)

6. Cooper, Redskins, 1:7 (Ch. 1), first page of chapter.

7. Cooper, Redskins, 1:7 (Ch. 1).

8. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:229-230 (Note by the Editor at end of Ch. 15).

One might wonder why Hugh would consider lobbying in Washington when the leasehold system was restricted to New York. Albany would have been a more likely choice. See *The New Encyclopædia Britannica, Micropædia*, vol. 1, 15th ed., “Antirent War” (1839-46).

9. Cooper, *Redskins*, 1:11 (Ch. 1):

As for falling into the narrow, self-adulatory, provincial feeling of the American who has never left his mother’s apron-string, and which causes him to swallow, open-mouthed, all the nonsense that is uttered to the world in the columns of newspapers, or in the pages of your yearling travellers, who go on “excursions” before they are half-instructed in the social usages and distinctive features of their own country, I hope I shall be just as far removed from such a weakness....

10. Cooper, *Redskins*, 1:119 (Ch. 8). James is effectively repeating his father’s misleading impressions that Otsego was virgin land, untouched by human hand:

In recounting his vision, William Cooper erased all of the land’s previous owners and users: the Indians who had dwelled on the land for centuries, the white hunter-squatters who replaced them, and a generation of land speculators who had preceded Cooper. He implied that no predecessor, Indian or white, had owned or worked the land. (Taylor, 34)

The unusual emphasis placed on unquestionable ownership suggests that the legitimacy of ownership had been questioned.

11. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:27 (Ch. 2).

12. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:32 (Ch. 2) & 2:37 (Ch. 3).

13. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:207 (Ch. 14).

14. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:76 (Ch. 5).

15. Cooper, *Chainbearer*, 91 (Ch. 8). See also 347-349 (Ch. 24) of *Satanstoe*:

“All Injin land once!”

16. Cooper, *Chainbearer*, “Historical Introduction” by John P. McWilliams,

xxxviii. The sobriquet “The Upright” is not introduced in either *Satanstoe* or *The Chainbearer*. The confusion of Susquesus’ nicknames (pseudonyms or sobriquets) extends throughout the trilogy. Cooper is only consistent with “the Trackless.”

17. Cooper, *Satanstoe*, 313 (Ch. 22).

18. Cooper, *Redskins*, 1:125 (Ch. 8): The notion of systematically paraphrasing a word which nowadays is totally taboo would seem to detract from the actual language found in *The Redskins*. For example:

“I’m York-nigger born, and nebber seen no Africa; and nebber want to see him, nudder.”

Even Cooper in the 1840’s was aware of the problem:

It is scarcely necessary to say that Jaaf belonged to a school by which the term of “colored gentleman” was never used. The men of his time and stamp called themselves “niggers”; and ladies and gentlemen of that age took them at their word, and called them “niggers” too; a term that no one of the race ever uses now, except in the way of reproach, and which, by one of the singular workings of our very wayward and common nature, he is more apt to use than any other, when reproach is intended.

19. See Cooper, *Chainbearer*, “Explanatory Notes” by Lance Schachterle, 424, for the textual problem with Sureflint and Trueflint.

20. Cooper, *Satanstoe*, 297-298 (Ch. 21). The term “appellation” is somewhat misleading. This is the only mention of “Crooked Turns” in the whole trilogy. “Crooked Turns” is, in other words, a translation into English of Susquesus!

In *Satanstoe*, there is no mention of Susquesus being the chief of his tribe. He is never referred to as the Upright. Indeed, there was from the first marked suspicion as to whether Susquesus, an Indian who had mysteriously left his tribe, might not be false and lead his small party into an ambush (307, 335). Only by his repeated help in tracking, guiding, fighting, and providing sound advice were these suspicions overcome.

21. Cooper, *Chainbearer*, 263-264 (Ch. 21).

22. Cooper, *Deerslayer*, 416 (Ch.24).

23. Cooper, *Chainbearer*, 328 (Ch. 24):

“Don’t think of venturing far from the house,” the girl whispered. “The evil spirit has got possession of Tobit, and he has just sworn the same grave shall hold you, and Chainbearer, and Dus.”

See also *Chainbearer*, 337 (Ch. 27): “Tobit, did not get away unscathed. Jaap, in an act of self-defense, had apparently wounded Tobit in the leg, leaving him “a cripple for life.”

24. Cooper, *Chainbearer*, 329-330 (Ch. 26). Susquesus more than hinted that he had pulled the trigger.

“How come you here, Susquesus?” I asked; “and are you armed?”

“Yes, got good rifle. Chainbearer’s gun. He no want him any longer, eh?”

“You know what has happened? Chainbearer is mortally wounded.”

“Dat bad—must take scalp to pay for dat! Ole fri’nd—good fri’nd. Always kill murderer.”

See also Chainbearer, 345 (Ch. 27).

25. Cooper, Chainbearer, 337-338 (Ch. 27).

26. Cooper, Redskins, 2:58 (Ch. 4).

27. Wikipedia, s.v. “List of verified oldest people”:

Women: Jeanne Calment (21 Feb. 1875—4 Aug. 1997), 122 years, 164 days, France

Men: Jiroemon Kimura (19 April 1897—12 June 2013), 116 years, 54 days, Japan.

28. Cooper, Redskins, 2:32 (Ch. 2), regarding Susquesus:

“I can help you in your search. You are looking for a warrior of the Onondagoes; one who left his tribe a hundred summers ago, a red- man of great renown for finding his path in the forest, and who would never taste fire-water. His name is Susquesus.”

It should, however, be noted that Susquesus’ sobriety was no exception in his tribe. Indeed, it was his temperance that led the Littlepages in Satanstoe to hire him as a tracker and runner: “As Susquesus had a reputation for sobriety, as was apt to be the case with the Onondagos, the man was engaged, though one Indian would have been sufficient for our purpose” (298). Susquesus’ uncanny ability to pinpoint even a surveyor’s tree in the middle of the wilderness also stood him in good stead (300-301). Jaap’s temperance, however, might be questioned. One example was his refusal to relinquish the peace pipe:

The negro had noted what was passing, and was much disgusted with the niggardliness which required the pipe to be so soon returned. This he did not care to conceal, as was obvious by the crusty observation he made when the pipe was offered to him. Cider and tobacco had, from time immemorial, been the two great blessings of this black’s existence, and he felt, at seeing one standing ready to receive his pipe, after a puff or two, much as he might have felt had one pulled the mug from his mouth, after the second or third swallow. Redskins, 2:179 (Ch. 12).

29. Cooper, Redskins, 1:121 (Ch. 8).

30. Cooper, Satanstoe, 8 (Ch. 1).

31. Cooper, *Satanstoe*, 297 (Ch. 21) & 320 (Ch. 22).

32. In Cooper, *Home as Found*, 116 (Ch. 11), the newly renovated home of the Effinghams bears the name “Wigwam:”

In the Wigwam, however, as her father's cousin had seen fit to name the family dwelling, there was more of keeping, and a closer attention to the many little things she had been accustomed to consider essential to comfort and elegance, and she was better satisfied with her future home, than with most she had seen since her return to America.

33. Cooper, *Redskins*, 1:122 (Ch. 8).

34. Cooper, *Chainbearer*, 92 (Ch. 8).

35. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:201 (Ch. 14).

36. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:46 (Ch. 3). In Chapter 30 of *The Chainbearer*, 392- 393, Morty had made arrangements for both Jaap and Susquesus, who are “inseparable.” At this point in the trilogy, the reader is informed, “The negro dwells at the Nest, but half the time he sleeps in the wigwam, as we call the dwelling of Sus.”

37. Cooper, *Satanstoe*, 328 (Ch. 23): “A party of Indians pressed us hard, in this retreat, and we ran an imminent risk of our scalps, all of which I ever believed would have been lost, were it not for the resolution and Herculean strength of Jaap.”

38. Cooper, *Redskins*, 1:121 (Ch. 8).

39. “On July 5, 1827, the African-American community celebrated final emancipation in the state with a parade through New York. A distinctive Fifth of July celebration was chosen over July 4, because the national holiday was not seen as meant for blacks, as Frederick Douglass stated later in his famous ‘What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?’ Speech of July 5, 1852.” Wikipedia, s.v. “History of Slavery in New York (state).”

40. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:172 (Ch. 12).

41. Cooper, *Redskins*, 1:124 (Ch.8).

42. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:68 (Ch. 5).

43. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:171 (Ch. 12). In *Satanstoe*, 337, there is the humorous, if racist episode, with Muss and Jaap, recounted by Guert Ten Eyck:

“For five minutes, it was heads or tails, which was to give in, and the nigger only got the best of it, by his own account of the battle, because the red-skin had the

unaccountable folly to try to beat in Jaap's brains. He might as well have battered the Rock of Gibraltar, you know, as to attempt to break a nigger's skull, and so your fellow got the best of it."

Jaap's "uncontrollable fits of laughter" (Satanstoe, 337) are also frowned upon as evincing a lack of self-restraint.

44. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:181 (Ch. 12).

45. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:179, 2:175-176 (Ch. 12).

46. Cooper, *Chainbearer*, 392 (Ch. 30):

The negro dwells at the Nest, but half his time he sleeps in the wigwam, as we call the dwelling of Sus. The two old fellows dispute frequently, and occasionally they quarrel, but, as neither drinks, the quarrels are never very long or very serious. They generally grow out of differences of opinion on moral philosophy, as connected with their respective views of the past and the future.

The *Chainbearer*, 182 (Ch. 15) tends to use the milder term, "dispute":

"No true," answered the Onondago, a little sternly, though a very little; for, while he and Jaap disputed daily, they never quarrelled— "No true, so. Flog bad for back."

47. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:46 (Ch. 3).

48. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:74-75 (Ch. 5). Both Susquesus and Jaap realize that their incredibly advanced age has rendered them useless. Jaap's own words confirm Susquesus' "Withered Hemlock" analogy:

"Oh! I so ole!—I do won'er when my time come! Dere Sus, too, he good for nuttin' at all. Once he great walker—great warrior—great hunter—pretty good fellow for redskin; but he quite worn out. Don't see much use why he lib any longer." *Redskins*, 2:201 (Ch. 14).

49. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:174 (Ch. 12).

50. Cooper, *Satanstoe*, 65 (Ch. 5), for a description of the Pinkster festival.

51. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:173 (Ch. 12).

52. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:183 (Ch. 12). See also *Chainbearer*, 23 (Ch. 2).

Although Jaap had in fact been a sort of bodyguard for Mordaunt (Morty) Littlepage when Mordaunt was away from home, and much earlier had fought with Morty's father, Cornelius (Corny) Littlepage of *Satanstoe*, in the Indian Wars (perhaps an explanation why he was

distrustful of and is said to have “hated an Indian”), the roles of faithful servant, soldier and husbandman are combined in his person. This reader is assuming that, at this juncture in his life, his fighting days are over.

53. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:173 (Ch. 12). The list Hugh presents of confusing and contradictory attributes of the enslaved African American makes one wonder whether Cooper’s own views might be veiled. The question whether Hugh Littlepage’s thoughts on race can be directly identified with Cooper’s should be approached with caution, although this reader wonders whether Cooper’s own mindset was really much more enlightened or whether he was a victim of both his times and social class. For a discussion of this pivotal question, see Hugh Egan’s “Cooper’s Career in the First Person.”

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54. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:173 (Ch. 12).

55. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:163 (Ch. 11).

56. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:170 (Ch. 12):

I am sorry to say that neither of these men had any essential knowledge, or any visible feeling for the truths of Christianity. A hundred years ago, little spiritual care was extended to the black, and the difficulty of making an impression, in this way, on the Indian, has become matter of history.

57. Cooper, *Satanstoe*, 315 (Ch. 22).

58. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:211 (Ch. 14). Susquesus claims in *The Redskins* that he left his tribe at the age of thirty. Corny, in *Satanstoe*, places his age at “about six and twenty years of age” (297). Indeed, the status of Susquesus as the “upright chief” of the Onondagoes is not clearly unveiled in either of the first two novels of the Littlepage trilogy. The extra four years Cooper adds in *The Redskins* may be intended to provide the chief with sufficient time to make his alleged renown more credible. Also, thirty is indeed rather late for a chief to marry.

59. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:211 (Ch. 14).

60. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:211 (Ch. 14).

61. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:213 (Ch. 14). Also, 2:219: “I could not go back to living with my people, for I was afraid of doing what was wrong.”

62. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:223 (Ch. 15): “We were in the library one morning, about a week after the Injins were shamed out of the field by the Indians, for that was the secret for their

final disappearance from our part of the country....” The question whether this tale can indeed shame disgruntled settlers is left to the reader to decide.

63. Cooper, *Precaution*, 343 (Ch. 34). Needless to say, Hugh was on his guard.

64. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:106 (Ch. 7).

65. Cooper, *Redskins*, 1:154-155 (Ch. 10).

66. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:59 (Ch. 4).

67. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:156 (Ch. 11): “This was not a very heroic termination of the career of the obnoxious canopy; but it was one that made me laugh heartily.”

68. Cooper, *Redskins*, 1:128 (Ch. 8). Further features that exerted a strong attraction on Hugh were Mary’s superior mastery of French (in contrast to *Opportunity*, 1:86 [Ch. 6]), her superior education (obtained by the generosity of “a widowed sister of her mother’s,” 1:84 [Ch. 5]), and her seductive voice (again, as contrasted to that of *Opportunity*’s: spoken in a “jerking, fluttering, now rapid, now drawling manner,” 1:87 [Ch. 6]). Indeed, the seductive power of voice alone plays a significant role in Cooper’s estimation of the refinement of a woman:

I [Hugh] confess myself to be one of those who regard an even, quiet, graceful mode of utterance, as even a greater charm in a woman than beauty. Its effect is more lasting, and seems directly connected with character. 1:87 (Ch. 6).

69. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:225 (Ch. 15). In *Chainbearer*, 384 (Ch. 30), Dus was also initially viewed with skepticism:

In nothing is this fitness of things more appropriate than in equalizing marriages; and few things are less likely to be overlooked by a discreet parent, than to have all proper care that the child connects itself prudently; and that, too, as much in reference to station, habits, opinions, breeding in particular, and the general way of thinking, as to fortune.

Naturally, the groom can also be “elevated” by a generous settlement as was the case with Corny. Cooper, *Satanstoe*, 440-441 (Ch. 30).

70. The importance of a bride’s native soil and the strong links of family is evident in all three Littlepage novels.

In Chapter 30 of *Chainbearer*, Morty’s grandmother states:

“He is a Littlepage, and all the Littlepages make excellent husbands” (391).

Could an orphaned Hugh represent a black sheep in the family?

Anneke Mordaunt’s statement in Chapter 27 of *Satanstoe* (394) is worthy of consideration:

“He [Mr. Bulstrode] may be a little mortified [that his proposal of marriage will be rejected in favor of Corny’s], but his fancy will soon be forgotten in rejoicing that he had not yielded to a passion of inclination, and connected himself with a young, inexperienced American girl, who is hardly suited to move in the circles in which his wife must live.”

Also, consider Corny’s response to Bulstrode at the end of the novel: “It is natural, Mr. Bulstrode, that a young woman should prefer to live in her own country, to living in a strange land, and among strangers.” *Satanstoe*, 438.

Dus Malbone’s marriage to Morty at the end of *The Chainbearer* is, like Anneke’s, also destined to be a happy one, particularly due to Dus’s newly established family links:

“This is perfect happiness,” said Dus to me, one lovely afternoon that we were strolling in company, along the low cliff near the Nest—and a few minutes after she had left my mother’s arms, who had embraced and blessed her, as a pious parent does both to a well beloved child—“This is perfect happiness, Mordaunt, to be the chosen of you, and the accepted of your parents! I never knew until now, what it is to have a parent. Uncle Chainbearer did all he could for me, and I shall cherish his memory to my latest breath—but uncle Chainbearer could never supply the place of a mother.” *Chainbearer*, 390 (Ch. 30)

71. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:229 (Ch. 15).

72. A much broader interpretation is offered in the sense that New York’s anti-rent war could spark a second American civil war, the War of Independence being regarded by Cooper (and “modern historians”) as the first civil war. See *Chainbearer*, “Historical Introduction” by Lance Schachterle, xvi. Due to the plenitude of land in the early Republic, which Cooper himself sees as self-evident, this hypothetical fear has been disregarded. *Redskins*, 2:163 (Ch. 11).

73. Cooper, *Redskins*, 2:48 (Ch. 3).

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