WHERE he is known at all, George Lippard seems to have been the most misunderstood man in American letters. Very nearly everything that was written about him, and articles are not numerous, is erroneous in statement. From such sources we are expected to picture an ignorant, half-starved, slovenly creature, carrying a crust of bread in his pocket, and resembling nothing so much as the Distrest Poet in one of Hogarth's engravings. Allibone, who included him in his Dictionary of Authors, appraising Lippard's work, contented himself by quoting a line from a review in the London Athenaeum\(^1\) of one of the novelist's books. This odoriferous comment was: "The scavenger's trade may be useful but we don't like his company"; which may be epigrammatic, but a little unfair. Where his name is mentioned, the impression is given that he did nothing but spread a kind of moral pestilence. He was even regarded as an immoral person. All of these opinions are not only most unjust, but are positively unwarranted. This remarkable man was one of the most original and striking literary personalities of his time in this country; his books were "best sellers"; and he received for his work the highest rates then paid by American weeklies to any of their writers. Two names may be excepted in this characterization—Longfellow and Cooper, who, however, did not contribute much of their work to literary weeklies.

During the decade between 1844 and 1854, Lippard was the most read writer in the United States. His books sold in quantities greatly in excess of those of any author of fiction then writing in America; and his stories were reprinted in newspapers throughout the country. There was in his attitude toward the life around him that which excuses the designation, "The Lawless Mr. Lippard," for while he broke few laws of God or man, he persistently twisted past recognition the conventions of society.

No one had created either the idea or the name of the New Deal

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\* This paper was read before the Philobiblon Club, February 28, 1935.
\(^1\) Athenaeum, Oct. 18, 1845.

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GEORGE LIPPAARD

From an enlarged photograph of a miniature presented to the Society by Mrs. Joseph M. Peale
in 1844 when the young novelist, who had been writing historical novels, suddenly began to preach his new crusade.

A murder of the unwritten law type (although that convenient designation had to await half a century to be invented) stirred the young writer to a sense of his personal responsibility. The murderer had sought to avenge the honor of his sister; and George, too, had a sister—four sisters to be precise, and Sir Galahad was not more chivalrous than he. Very slender basis for a movement to secure social justice this may appear; but there were other circumstances involved, and it must be understood that Lippard always was intense, and in grim earnest. He was twenty-two at this time, and for some years had struggled with conditions colored by poverty. Indeed, the whole of his short life was tinged by the lack of care and proper nourishment. He knew from experience how the other half lived, for he belonged to the class he always believed was exploited. He probably is the most heroic figure in American literature, as he also may be said to be one of the most pitiful. Poe was a pathetic figure at times but never a heroic one; while young Lippard, despite his frail physique and frailer health, charged boldly through life with the courage of a Hector for what he believed to be right.

George’s father, who was a descendant of John Libbert, one of the Palatines who arrived in Pennsylvania in 1736, had been City Treasurer of Philadelphia, but retired to a farm at West Nantmeal Township, Chester County, where the boy was born April 10, 1822. Then, when George was little more than an infant, in 1824, the father, injured in an accident which incapacitated him for farm work, returned to the city, to keep a store at Sixth and Callowhill Streets.

The boy, always a soulful-eyed, dreamy creature, already had ambitions. He read incessantly, of history and such romances as came in his way. He roamed the picturesque roads and forests in the Wissahickon Valley, made historic by the presence of Washington and his soldiers in the dark days of the Revolution; and was determined to become an author. His father wanted him to become a minister of the gospel; and he was sent to the Classical Academy, Rhinebeck, on the Hudson, to prepare to enter the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Connecticut.

Unlike his schoolmates, and even the heads of the academy, George took his Christianity seriously and literally. The result of his
stay in his schools was a firm conviction that the church around him had drifted away from that strong sense of social justice he believed to be inseparable from the lives of all who walked in the path of the Founder of the Christian religion. He became disgusted with the way he was treated at the Academy, and left. While he was at the University, his father died, and his schooling came to an end.

A friend of his father, William Badger, a Philadelphia lawyer, took him into his office to study law; later he was in the office of the Attorney General of Pennsylvania, Ovid Fraser Johnson, for the same purpose. Once more, the impressionable boy was rudely disillusioned. He believed from what he saw there that there was nothing good in the private lives of the aristocracy, especially such as were connected with banks in his home city. He received these impressions from hearing the stories of these first families as they were told to their attorneys. Law, he concluded, after four years, was not for him.

He wanted to be the author of books. So, before he was quite twenty, he is found on the staff of a sensational daily, The Spirit of the Times, writing sketches of life and character, obviously inspired by Dickens’s Sketches of a few years earlier.

Very little money came to him from this source, but the experience he accumulated within a few months was almost like a fortune to him. And how hard he worked! Column after column written by Lippard appeared each day, and very soon the result of this tremendous labor was reflected in the newspaper’s rapidly rising circulation figures. Lippard was convinced that the very few thousand dollars his father left had been lost to him and his sisters by dishonest bankers. This feeling became an obsession with him, and soured his disposition. Bank failures all over the country at the time were by no means of rare occurrence, and a few Philadelphia financial institutions, in one of which the Lippard estate had been deposited, closed their doors.

The youthful writer wrote sarcastic and denunciatory stories about one of the banks; and even had the temerity to mention it by name. He attended the police court each day, and described some of the humorous, pathetic, and sordid cases brought before the committing

magistrate. This kind of journalism was new here at the time. These experiences completed his disillusionment—and he was only twenty. Surely an early age for the production of a misanthrope; but really he was not misanthropic, or even pessimistic, but his blood flowed hotter, with the strong sense of wrongs inflicted upon the poor, and the firm belief that the Scriptures did not err when they declared it difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

By this time he had decided the Church was not fulfilling its duties; that the practice of law had little concern with the distribution of justice; that the poor were being exploited by the rich; and that no rich man was really honest in his dealings with those he hired. It must be admitted that his judgment was not unprejudiced.

In less than six months’ time George had worked himself sick. He was compelled to abandon the newspaper position and try to recoup his health. In those days he often had little to eat, but his ambition seemed to grow stronger as his frail body became weaker. The dread disease, consumption, was beginning to claim the youth for its own. But not yet, for Lippard was a gritty fighter, who never lost courage. Before he abandoned daily journalism, his literary idol, Charles Dickens visited Philadelphia, and Lippard wrote for his newspaper, The Spirit of the Times, a characteristic account of the historic levee in Dickens hotel, at which the then local Democratic leader, Thomas B. Florence, who was popularly alluded to as “The Widows’ Friend,” officiously presided, to the confusion of Boz.

A period of rest followed the young man’s retirement from Journalism, and after a few months, he plunged himself into authorship, by writing a European tale, which he entitled “Phillippe De Agramont.” Taking it to The Saturday Evening Post, he encountered the immense joy of having it accepted, paid for, and published. The amount he received was fifteen dollars.

That was all the encouragement a nature and temperament like Lippard’s needed. He now was an author, and had started upon his professional career. “Phillippe De Agramont” was a rather flashy tale in what its author took to be the grand manner, made familiar to novel readers of that day by the production of several popular British novelists. The locale of the story permitted Lippard to de-
scribe ancient Oxford, which his love for antiquity, and shall we say, his occasional lapse into pedantry, caused him to call "Oxenford." It is a fourteenth century romance, and has all the "atmosphere" supposed to denote that early cycle of English history. In doing this, however, he is no more to be censured than Poe, who did the same sort of thing.

Although displaying some of the magnetic style of the writer, the story had all the defects of a first attempt at fiction writing. Lippard had not yet decided in which direction to drive his steed. Encouraged by the acceptance of his essay, he set to work on a novelette, *Herbert Tracy; or, the Legend of the Black Rangers*, his first American historical novel.

In this work he plunged into the field of the historical novel, and for a few years made the American Revolution the theme of his romances and it must be admitted, he took the aridity out of history writing and made the Revolution a fast moving, living drama. His history was exceedingly unreliable, however; but novelists seem to be privileged to do what they please with historic facts.

With youthful pride in his success he sought out Edgar A. Poe, who lived on North Seventh Street, not far from Lippard’s home. Poe, at his request, read *Herbert Tracy* and one or two other tales he had written, and kindly commented upon his work. A romance entitled *The Ladye Annabel*, had preceded *Herbert Tracy* in book form, and this work seems to have made a deep impression upon Poe.

"You seem to have been in too desperate a hurry," observed Poe in a letter to the author, "to give due attention to details; and thus your style, although generally nervous, is at times somewhat exhuberant—but the work as a whole, will be admitted, by all but your personal enemies, to be richly inventive and imaginative, indicative of the genius of its author."

No more concise, or juster appraisement of the work of Lippard is ever been made, and it must be admitted probably no other person at that time was half so competent as Poe to deliver an opinion upon the writings of the young novelist. Poe wrote what is regarded as ill-natured criticisms of many of his contemporaries, but this poor boy appealed to him. He did not fear him as a rival, realizing that Lippard, like himself, had to struggle, and he wanted to help him. Certainly Lippard never had for Poe any other than the most grate-

4 "Letter from Mr. Poe," in *Herbert Tracy* (Philadelphia, 1844).
ful feeling and admiration. What is more when, a few years later, the great author of "The Raven," was penniless, in distress in mind and nearly a wreck in body, Lippard took him into his home until he had recovered from his wretchedness, and placing money in his hand, put him upon a train for Maryland, where he soon afterward died. After Poe's death, his beautiful poem, "Annabel Lee" was first printed. Is it rash to suggest that the music of the name first came to the poet from reading Lippard's romance, "The Ladye Annabel"?

If there is one characteristic more noticeable than another in all of Lippard's writings, it is his obvious haste in composition. We have it on the authority of one of his friends who saw him in the printing office, writing some of his tales, while he smoked large black cigars, that he never read his manuscript after penning it, and seldom took the trouble to glance at a proof.

This apparent carelessness can very well be accounted for when it is understood that Lippard's needs were keen; and there is a suspicion that he realized he was unlikely to live many years. He also was hungry for fame, a phantom he pursued with a tirelessness that is amazing for one in his condition. His brain was as active as an electric motor, but after he created a story or a character, he put his thoughts on paper with great rapidity. This done he had no strength left to go over it again and correct and polish his work. He always acted like a man condemned, who strived to accomplish as much as possible during the brief interval that remained to him.

Lippard, on occasion has been regarded as a male Mrs. Radcliffe; again, he has been viewed as one inspired by Bulwer or Eugene Sue. The works of these authors were not unknown to him, and, perhaps, unconsciously, like all youthful writers, he was imitative. After all, however, he was the product of the world in which he lived. To attempt to study him apart from that life would result in failure to get the proper perspective. We do not study Chaucer, or Shakespeare in the light of the Twentieth century; no more should we apply our present standards of criticism to Lippard.

Frankly I do not believe anyone today could read with pleasure or satisfaction, any of Lippard's novels; but when they were penned there was an enormous public thirsting for his sensational fiction, and impatiently awaiting the fortnightly appearance of "The Monks of Monk Hall."
The period in which Lippard lived and wrote was one of great unrest, not only in the United States, but in Europe as well. It was an era of change, which, on the Continent became violent. In this country excitement was caused by several anti-movements; by the labor movement, then known as "The Workies," which blindly was struggling for improved conditions, and larger wages; by lecturers who were listing the wrongs of the workers, but who failed to suggest any reasonable remedy for eliminating them.

Then there was the great delusion of the Millerites; the Anti-Catholic riots in Philadelphia, and elsewhere, which really was a family feud which had been transferred from Ireland. Financial security had received a jolt, for between the war on the Bank of the United States, the daily closing of banks all over the country, and the flood of counterfeit and raised bank notes, it was difficult for business to continue on an even keel.

Politically the country was in a state of ferment, caused by the Anti-Masonic and Native American Parties, and the rising tide of the Whigs. The Republic of Texas was knocking at the door to be admitted into the Union; the Oregon Boundary was threatening to draw us into another war with England; and the Abolitionists were preventing any effort to forget the slavery question.

Labor was poorly paid—women were making shirts by hand, for the sewing machine had not yet arrived—for seven cents a piece, and were making pants for five cents a pair. Laborers were paid from seventy-five cents to a dollar a day; carpenters and masons received the highest pay given to mechanics, from a dollar and a quarter to a dollar and three-quarters a day, and a work-day usually was twelve hours in length.

It was an era of mass violence. No city had an organized police worthy of the name. Mobs were quickly formed to burn buildings when an unpopular lecturer was scheduled to speak. Schooling was neglected, and every volunteer fire company had its followers, youthful toughs, ready for any enterprise. It was dangerous for anyone to be alone on the streets after ten or eleven o'clock at night.

Immorality was so prevalent that the New York Female Moral Reform Society was formed to spread broadcast, through its magazine, conditions and the evils of brothels. This fortnightly publication gave such salacious details that it had nearly seventeen thousand
subscribers; and was accused of spreading the evil it was designed to eliminate.

Here was the stage set for the realist in fiction, but Lippard was the only writer to appear in that character. While it has been loosely asserted he found his models among certain British writers, in reality he was compelled to create his own style. Perhaps that is why it was not a model one.

As he is best known by his novel now called *The Quaker City* which applied by way of derision, that nickname to Philadelphia for the first time, something about its history may be told.

Philadelphia was excited in the winter of 1843 by a murder which had for its scene a Camden ferry boat. Early in the evening of February 10th, that year, as the ferry boat *John Fitch* was entering the slip on the other side of the river, Mahlon Hutchinson Heberton, a well-known Philadelphian, who was in a carriage on the boat, was fatally shot by another young Philadelphian, Singleton Mercer, who was just turned twenty. Heberton was fleeing the city to hide away in South Jersey, from the vengeance which he feared would overtake him. His fears were well grounded, and, alas, he did not succeed in staying the hand of his Nemesis.

Mercer was arrested and taken to Woodbury for trial. The murder had been deliberate and cold blooded, and this was admitted. But enough explanation of the cause of the tragedy had been circulated that when the prisoner went to trial there was a general desire for his acquittal.

He was placed upon the stand, and told the story of his victim's depravity, and of his own sister's kidnaping, and forced detention in a house of infamy, which led the jury to acquit him in less than half an hour, after listening to evidence for nine days. Owing to the prominent character of the principals in this tragedy, both of whom were familiar in the oyster cellars and other places frequented by that class alluded to in those days as men about town, the case was one of the leading topics of conversation for a long time.

At the time Lippard was writing for a paper called, *The Citizen Soldier*, and later changed to *The Home Journal*, in which appeared his romances, "The Battle-Day of Germantown," "The Ladye Annabel," and "Adrian the Neophyte."

Following the murder excitement, the city was next thrown into
turmoil by the Anti-Catholic riots, in 1844. These revelations of the amount of tragedy which may be found in such a supposedly reputable, quiet and staid community as Philadelphia, seemed to inspire Lippard to expose the sham. In more recent times we should refer to such an action as "taking off the lid." Of course, George was a romancer; he never allowed his style to be cramped by facts. When he wanted something resembling facts, he manufactured them.

In September, 1844, he began the publication in parts, of his Philadelphia romance, *The Monks of Monk Hall*. While the Heberton murder obviously had inspired the work, Lippard sought safety in an advertisement in the first number, in which he asserted "no living character is introduced, nor has any story of real life, whether tragedy, comedy or farce, to which publication has been given, been interwoven with the incidents of this romance."

In the next sentence he tells us, "The work is founded on facts, however, which occurred since January, 1842." From these quotations it will be noted that the author could look two ways at once. However, he states that "The secret life of the Quaker City is laid bare to the public by these disclosures."

Few readers of *The Monks of Monk Hall* were at all in the dark after they had finished reading the first chapter. Obviously it was a romance built upon the story of the two young libertines and the sister of one of them, resembling the Heberton-Mercer affair. That is only one cross section of the long drawn out tale.

A character as cheerful as Caliban is introduced in the eleventh chapter. He is the porter, or janitor, who takes care of Monk Hall, and is given the bewitching name of Devil Bug.

He is represented as a creature who, to quote the novelist's words, "loved not so much to kill; as to observe the blood of his victim fall drop by drop, as to note the convulsive look of death, as to hear the last throttling rattle in the throat of the dying." A few pages further along, he is described as fanning a charcoal fire, which is to be used in one of the mysterious chambers of Monk Hall, to send some victim to slumber for the last time.

Despite this blood-curdling melodrama, which illumines every page, there is a speed of action, which, with a long cast of characters, made a direct appeal to the romance readers ninety years ago.

The book in numbers, which were issued twice a month, became so popular, that everyone in Philadelphia was talking about it and
usually to condemn the work for its immorality. It is true there are very few respectable persons to be met with in *The Monks of Monk Hall*; and for pure, unadulterated villainy probably no novel has produced its equal. But all this kind of thing created sensational interest in the work, which was originally issued anonymously; and this secrecy served to put a keener edge on curiosity. After a few numbers had appeared, the manager of the Old Chestnut Street Theatre got the idea that the novel would make a play for his stage, and by perseverance he learned that a young man named George Lippard was the author.⁵

He sent for the novelist, and together they agreed upon a dramatization which was completed in two weeks. Lippard wrote the play himself, and it departed somewhat from the novel. He named the piece, “The Quaker City,” and the manager was delighted at the prospect of full houses for a long period. Then, rumors of trouble began to be set into circulation. It was currently believed that the exposé was to be complete, and every office-holder, every thug, every libertine in the city shivered in expectation. Judges, prominent attorneys, members of the best social circles called upon the manager to learn if they were to be represented; and in each instance, shaking a threatening finger at the playhouse magnate. Looking at the situation from this distance, it appears that there were a good many conscience-stricken Philadelphians in those days; and there must have been some truth in Lippard’s alleged disclosures.

Finally the mayor of the city was appealed to to prevent the performance, for Singleton Mercer had tried to purchase a large quantity of tickets with the intention of filling part of the house with rioters. The manager offered the manuscript in evidence to show that no prominent citizen was represented, but the Mayor, who had recollections of the fatal riots that had scandalized the city earlier in the same year, decided that the performance should not be given. The play subsequently was performed in the Chatham Street Theatre, New York. Lippard really did not suffer from the suppression, which naturally, increased the sale of the book. Within five months after the play had been withdrawn, forty-eight thousand copies of the novel had been sold. In England, where it was pirated under the name *Dora Livingston, the Adulteress*, Lippard tells us,

⁵ F. C. Wemyss, *Twenty-six Years of the Life of an Actor and Manager* (N. Y., 1847).
sixty thousand copies were sold. In Germany, Gerstaker made a translation, which is said to have gone through three editions. The original novel found its way to England, where it was reviewed at some length—rather an unusual honor in those days for a piece of American fiction. Allibone has told us part of what *The Athenaeum* thought of it. But Ainsworth, in *The New Monthly Review* for October, 1845, devoted several pages to a very careful consideration of *The Quaker City*. “We are introduced in this remarkable work—one of the most remarkable that has emanated from the New World—to life in Philadelphia, in one of those characteristic grottoes of sin, an oyster cellar, and never has such a receptacle of vice been more graphically portrayed.” He concluded by remarking “We shall very probably recur to this work, and make some extracts from it to exhibit its remarkable power.” With few exceptions the book was warmly praised by American reviewers. As he had transferred his allegiance from *The Saturday Evening Post*, to the more successful *Saturday Courier*, the journal in which Poe’s first tales were published. The *Post*, feeling the keen competition, made a passing reference to *The Quaker City* with the statement that it was “a work which we would hesitate to notice in our columns at all.” However, *The Courier* was gleeful at securing Lippard and his series of Revolutionary legends, for within a short time its circulation jumped from fifty thousand to seventy thousand copies a week. For a youth of twenty-two it was a remarkable production, this *Quaker City* of his, even if it did display much that was discordant. However, there is much lively dialogue, and the descriptions are really amazing.

As a matter of fact, it was all laboratory work, for Lippard had few, if any, contacts with the life of the underworld, excepting what he had learned in the police court. But he had a positive genius for creating characters and situations, although his plots are not convincing. When he became known as the author of *The Quaker City* he was loudly condemned; he even was threatened with bodily injury. Now it was that he attracted the attention of an equally unconventional minister, the Rev. C. Chauncey Burr, who was in charge of the Second Universalist Church, then on Callowhill Street below Fifth. Mr. Burr threw open his church to the young novelist, and there Lippard plead his case before a throng that crowded the building. This appearance had disclosed to him another field of
activity—the lecture platform, and from that time until a few months before his untimely death at the age of thirty-two, he lectured in many cities and towns in the Eastern part of the country.

His series of romances about the Revolution, which he called “Legends,” after being popular in the weeklies, were collected into a book under the title of *Washington and His Generals*.

After his work had been announced another book with the same title, by the Rev. J. T. Headley, was advertised by a Philadelphia publisher. Mr. Headley appears to have had a better gift of writing than for making researches, for he boldly plagiarized and rewrote whole chapters from Lippard. George came back at him viciously in an open letter, charging him with plagiarism, and in proof of it confessing that he had only written fiction, and not history. Headley never made any public reply, for there was none to be made.

About this time Lippard, one of the most unconventional men who ever lived, married, by the most original ceremony ever devised. I have said he had an aversion to most clergymen, because he did not believe them saintly enough. In *The Quaker City* he introduces a scoundrel, who is given the title of Reverend, and in that work he shows how mock marriages were performed in that castle of evil, Monk Hall. But what did he do? He became acquainted with a young girl, named Rose Newman, and I think we have something like an exaggerated picture of her in the novelist’s tale, *Rose of Wissahickon*, written just after his marriage. One evening in May, 1847, just as the sun was setting, Lippard and his betrothed walked out on Mom Rinker’s Rock, also called High Rock, on the Wissahickon; and while the birds chirruped over their heads, they took each other’s hand, agreeing to live as man and wife, and raising their faces to the heavens to ask God’s blessing upon their union. News of this fantastic ceremony to which none were witnesses, soon was circulated, and did nothing to make Lippard more popular where prejudice against him already was nursed. The young wife died five years later, and before her death, their two tiny children passed away, a loss from which the young writer never fully recovered.

He was at the height of his career at the time of his marriage, moving into a four-story house on North Sixth Street, and enjoying more comfort and luxury than he had ever known. He was still re-

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*The Saturday Courier, May 15, 1847.*
siding there in 1849, when one morning, his friend Poe, in a wretched state, dragged himself into Lippard's office, then in the neighborhood of Third and Chestnut Streets. Poe explained to him that he was sick, hungry, and penniless; that he had spent the night in Moyamensing Prison, charged with drunkenness, when he only was sick in mind and body. Lippard took him to his home, attended to his wants, and told him to lie down and rest, while he went for assistance. Within a short time the novelist had collected from his friends sufficient money to pay the poet's fare to Baltimore, and leave something over for future needs. Late in the afternoon, Lippard put Poe on a train bound South, and bade him good-bye for the last time. All of this is new, for, after Poe's death, Lippard in his own weekly called The Quaker City wrote feelingly of the poet, defending him against the slurs of Griswold, and describing his last day in Philadelphia.

Some of his legends of the Revolution were for a long time solemnly accepted as facts by persons who should have known better. There is a yarn about the little grandson of the bell ringer in the old State House, shouting up the stairway to the old man that Congress had declared for Independence. Even Lippard was stunned when he discovered some enterprising artist had made a picture of the alleged historic event, which was the purest fiction. Then there was his tale of Washington, when the opposing armies were drawn up at Brandywine, ready for the battle, going out between the lines and kneeling in prayer; General Howe, according to this ridiculous story, also strolled away from his headquarters, on the same occasion, and coming upon Washington, offered him a dukedom if he would throw down his arms.

I have mentioned that Lippard wrote his stories with great rapidity, and without having a carefully prepared plan. On one occasion, when he was writing The Man in the Mask, the second of his triology, Mysteries of the Pulpit, one of his characters, trying to escape by way of a grape arbor, finds below him a man he wanted to avoid. At the same time he cannot retrace his steps. When George got that far, he handed the copy to the waiting printer, put on his coat, lit a big cigar, and was about to call it a day. The printer,

*The Quaker City*, Oct. 20, 1849.
glancing over the copy, for even his printers read his stories with interest, observed:

"George, how are you going to get him down?"

"I don't know," was the reply. "He will have to stay there until next week." As a matter of fact, George never did get him down from the arbor. If you are curious enough to read the novel, you will find the novelist continued without a second thought of relieving his character from his precarious situation.

Lippard's friends liked his company. He was a good conversationalist, had a fund of humor, and was generous to a fault. One day, when he had laid aside a five dollar gold piece to pay a coal bill, he carelessly placed the coin in his pocket, along with the pennies, levies, and such small change. While he and a friend were walking on Chestnut Street, a miserable-looking man asked them for alms, and George, plunging a hand into his pocket, brought out a coin, which, without examination, he placed in the beggar's hand as he walked on. Later in the day when he sought for the gold to pay his bill, it was missing. His friend suggested a solution of the mystery. "You must have given it to the beggar," he said. And so he had.

His principal work, aside from his novels, was his founding of a fraternity and beneficial organization, called The Brotherhood of the Union. This was organized in the Declaration chamber of the Old State House, in 1849, and at the time of Lippard's death, five years later, had lodges in twenty-six States. The officers were not called President, Vice-President, etc., but Chief Washington, Chief Jefferson, etc. Of course, George was the first Supreme Washington, of the Supreme Council. The order prospered for half a century, or more, but is now an insurance order, and known as the Brotherhood of America.

In various ways Lippard tried to reconstruct the fame of Thomas Paine, the author of *Common Sense*, and of Charles Brockden Brown, our early novelist; and it is not improbable that through his efforts then, the interest in these two very different men of mark has been kept alive. Lippard's greatest defect in character was his carelessness. We have seen how carelessly he wrote his novels, and

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*Geist, op. cit.*
how thoughtless he was in money matters. He was, however, very careful of his attire. He had his own idea of how an author should be dressed. Interpreted from his portraits, in all of which he posed as consciously as an old fashioned stage star, this appears to have meant he should be costumed like an actor of his period, that is, flashily. A rolling Byronic collar, which exposed his throat, was held in place by a voluminous black tie, of the French student type. His slender figure was fitted with a bright blue coat, which had silver buttons, and usually it was left unbuttoned, displaying a fancy waistcoat. Of course, his hair was long, and curled up at its ends where it reached his shoulders. His last portrait shows him adorned with side whiskers. It is small wonder that his friend Burr commented upon the fact that in any assemblage, he was instantly singled out as a person of distinction.

His carelessness in monetary affairs, however, drew a rebuke, of which probably he remained in ignorance, for it is to be found recorded in the manuscript “Annals” of John Fanning Watson. Lippard wrote an enthusiastic review of the second edition of Watson’s Annals of Philadelphia which the annalist thought sufficiently good to preserve. But beneath the clipping he wrote: “The composer of the foregoing, tho’ so cordial in his commendation, was but a shabby fellow in his morals! and did what he could to cheat me out of money he received for my Annals.” We have no means of adequately explaining his charge, but I think it may be assigned to the novelist’s absolute carelessness.

It is known that, as Supreme Washington of the Brotherhood, he did pretty much as he pleased. He was its dictator, and probably reasoned that, as he constantly was speaking and working for the order, it should foot the bills. At any rate, at the time of his death, his accounts were said to have been in a confused condition. His devotion to the order, and the small thought he gave to himself, were admitted, and after his death, he was genuinely mourned.

Many years later, a large granite monument was erected over his grave in Odd Fellows Cemetery, by the Brotherhood he founded. He filled a large place in the lives of Americans of his time, but always had to fight against a certain class prejudice—much the same as Poe had experienced; and both Griswold in his American Prose

Oct. 12, 1885.
Writers, and the brothers Duyckinck, in their *Cyclopedia of American Literature*, ignored his existence, although both preserved names that are unknown today. Yet here was one of the first fiction writers in this country to give us a living picture of the times in which he lived. It was an exaggerated picture, perhaps, but not altogether a caricature.

*Philadelphia*  

*Joseph Jackson*