

# CONTENTS



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vii
CHAPTER ONE. Foreword: Toward an "Inside Narrative"	3
1. Argument	3
2. Perspective	6
3. Point of View	9
4. Limitations and Procedures	15
CHAPTER TWO. Origins: Poetry and the Puritan Imagination	17
1. Puritan Culture and the Life of Poetry	17
2. The Poetry of Dogma and History	19
3. Anne Bradstreet	22
4. The Elegy and the Structure of Puritan Life and Art	24
5. Taylor	42
6. The Poetry of Enlightened America	54
CHAPTER THREE. The Long View: An American Epic	59
1. "Ideas of Glory"	59
2. <i>The Columbiad</i>	63
3. <i>Song of Myself</i>	69
4. <i>The Cantos</i>	83
5. <i>The Bridge</i>	101
6. <i>Paterson</i>	111
7. The Hero in History	130
CHAPTER FOUR. American Renaissance (1): The Poet as Simple, Separate Person	137
1. The World of the Anti-Poetic	137
2. Poe	141
3. Emerson	153
4. Whitman	164
5. Emily Dickinson	174
6. "We too must write Bibles . . ."	186

## CONTENTS

CHAPTER FIVE. American Renaissance (2): The Poet and the People	192
1. "The American Idea"	192
2. Antecedents: The Case of Freneau	198
3. The Business of Poetry	202
4. Bryant	206
5. Longfellow	210
6. Lowell	214
7. Holmes	220
8. Whittier	226
9. Timrod and Lanier	233
10. Popular Culture: Genuine and Spurious	246
CHAPTER SIX. The Old Poetry and the New	253
1. Poetry and the "General Heart"	253
2. Robinson	256
3. Public Speech: A Note on Lindsay and Sandburg	269
4. Frost	271
5. A New Poetry	284
CHAPTER SEVEN. The Modern Age (1): Counter-Current	293
1. Pound and the New Poetry	293
2. Eliot: The Poetics of Myth	296
3. Ransom and Tate: The Harvest of Southern History	318
CHAPTER EIGHT. The Modern Age (2): Talent and the Individualist Tradition	335
1. Williams and the "New Mode"	335
2. Aiken	348
3. Cummings	359
4. Marianne Moore	366
CHAPTER NINE. The Modern Age (3): Wallace Stevens and the Ultimate Poem	376
1. "Ploughing North America"	376
2. "This happy creature . . ."	377
3. "But in the flesh it is immortal"	382

## CONTENTS

4. "The poem of the act of the mind . . ."	389
5. The Supreme Fiction	393
6. Creation and Decreation	404
CHAPTER TEN. Afterword: The Idea of Poetry and the Idea of Man	420
1. <i>Ex Post Facto</i>	420
2. Denouement: "... a momentary end/ To the complication . . ."	423
3. Conclusion (In Which Nothing Is Concluded)	429
INDEX	435