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# Willa Cather, Edith Lewis, and Collaboration: The Southwestern Novels of the 1920s and Beyond

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In *Willa Cather: A Memoir*, Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant makes Edith Lewis, with whom Cather shared a home for nearly four decades, a relatively minor character in Cather's life, and yet occasionally, Lewis moves to the forefront. Describing Cather's "personal life" in the 1920s, Sergeant notes that when she visited their Five Bank Street apartment,

Edith Lewis, who now worked at the J. Walter Thompson Company, was always at dinner. One realized how much her companionship meant to Willa. A captain, as Will White of Emporia said ... must have a first officer, who does a lot the captain never knows about to steer the boat through rocks and reefs. (212)

This portrait of Lewis as domestic engineer, unobtrusively steering the ship of the Bank Street apartment, has appealed to subsequent biographers, but they never cite the following sentence, which concludes Sergeant's brief portrait of Lewis: " 'It takes two to write a book' was another line of [White's] creed" (212). Sergeant does not explicitly apply White's maxim to Cather and Lewis, moving on instead to afternoon visits, when she found Cather alone (because Lewis was at the office), but she nevertheless implies that Lewis collaborated in the production of Cather's fiction.

Rather than portray Lewis as collaborator, however, scholarship has long represented Cather as an autonomous and solitary author in the Romantic tradition, creating in isolation and in opposition to the modern social world. In *The Voyage Perilous: Willa Cather's Romanticism*, Susan Rosowski claims that Cather privileges the power of the individual creative imagination to "wrest personal salvation from an increasingly alien world" (xi). Placing Cather in the tradition of British Romantic forebears such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats, Rosowski argues that she followed them

in “their separation of self and world, private and public” (xi). Rosowski takes the title of her study from one of Cather’s early newspaper columns, in which she describes “the voyage perilous” of an “idea” “all the way from the brain to the hand [to] transfer it on paper a living thing with color, odor, sound, life all in it” (qtd. in Rosowski 6).

At an important stage in her creative process, Cather sat down with pen (or pencil) in hand or at a typewriter, transferring ideas to paper. However, as Whitney Chadwick and Isabelle de Courtivron argue in *Significant Others: Creativity & Intimate Partnership*, “the agonizing loneliness of artistic and literary production....the wrenching pain of sitting alone in front of a blank page or a blank canvas” is only one part of the story of artistic creation, which “doesn’t end—or for that matter doesn’t begin—there” (12-13). Moreover, as Marjorie Stone and Judith Thompson observe in *Literary Couplings: Writing Couples, Collaborators, and the Construction of Authorship*, scholars must “distinguish[] between ideology and practice,” between the “powerful metaphors of lyric solitude, egotistical sublimity, and heroic individualism” and the “surprising variety of creative practices” incorporating collaboration that British Romantic poets employed (16). Crucial collective and social experiences occur before, concurrently with, and after the isolated, individual moment of “the voyage perilous.” As Holly Laird argues in *Women Coauthors*, “It would be difficult to find an author who has not written with someone else,” whether “under other writers’ influence, with the aid of editors’ revisions, in response to generative conversation, or literally together with someone else” (3). As she also argues, attentive readers will find “collaboration...itself reproduced and thematized in writing” (4).

In this essay, I reconstruct the place of Lewis, with whom Cather shared an intimate partnership, in Cather’s creative process, taking as a case study two of Cather’s Southwestern novels, *The Professor’s House* (1925) and *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927). Cather and Lewis traveled to the Southwest together four times in the teens and twenties, and they shared transformative experiences in 1915 (a trip to the cliff-dweller ruins at Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado) and 1925 (the “discovery” of the life stories of Archbishop Jean-Baptiste Lamy and Bishop Joseph Machebeuf during a trip to northern New Mexico) that inspired and became sources for the novels’ incidents and themes. Lewis’s memoir *Willa Cather Living* (1953)<sup>1</sup> has long been a key scholarly source, but much material has come to light recently documenting Lewis and Cather’s relationship and their collaboration in producing *Professor’s House* and *Archbishop*. Letters, photographs, notebooks, manuscripts and typescripts, and inscribed copies of Cather’s novels create a rich, multi-layered archive of these novels as collaborative texts.

Despite gaps, this archive documents both their shared social experiences as domestic partners and traveling companions and Lewis’s role as Cather’s editor, and a crucial contention of this essay is that this editing was a form of collaboration. Indeed, Cather’s collaboration with Lewis as editor resulted

in Cather's famously stripped-down prose style, theorized in her essay "The Novel Demeublé." Their multi-layered collaboration—from shared experiences of transformative travel, through generative conversation, up through preparation of text for publication—also produced a sense of joint textual ownership, with Lewis and Cather sharing pleasure in Cather's fiction.

Laura Gilpin's photographs of the landscapes and Native peoples of the American Southwest, some produced contemporaneously with Cather's fiction, provide an instructive parallel. In *Willa Cather and Others*, Jonathan Goldberg identifies Gilpin's work as "a lesbian project" because it grew out of experiences she shared in the region with her partner, Elizabeth Forster, and because Gilpin's photographic subjects served as a site of projection and identification for the lesbian artist (162). *Professor's House* and *Archbishop* similarly constitute a "lesbian project": they are grounded in Cather and Lewis's shared Southwestern travel, Lewis played a key role in their production, and they reproduce and thematize Cather and Lewis's collaboration in portrayals of affectionate bonds between men (Godfrey St. Peter and Tom Outland and Tom and Roddy Blake in the former and Bishop Latour and Father Vaillant in the latter).<sup>2</sup> Putting Cather and Lewis beside the missionary priests of *Archbishop*, I identify Cather's portrayal of the relationship between the men as a private homage to her relationship with Lewis. Equally complexly and playfully, Cather's portrayal in *The Professor's House* of Godfrey St. Peter editing Tom Outland's journal of his experiences in the cliff-dweller ruins of the Blue Mesa pays tribute to Lewis as Cather's editor.

I build these claims through interpretation of an incomplete archive of private documents, but I do not tell a story of lesbian collaborators in the closet. Rather than treating their life together as a shameful secret, Cather and Lewis lived together openly for thirty-nine years, their partnership recognized and respected by family and friends (Homestead, "Willa Cather"). Their creative collaboration producing fiction published under Cather's name occupies the same indeterminate zone as the intimate relationship in which it was inextricably embedded—not a secret, but not explicitly labeled; not hidden, but not part of Cather's public performance of authorship. It is precisely in this in-between zone that Cather and Lewis as creative partners found space for pleasure and play.

**"[O]ur wonderful Adventures in the Southwest": The Origins of *The Professor's House* and *Death Comes for the Archbishop***

In 1947, shortly after Cather's death, Lewis began corresponding with Stephen Tennant, whom she had only met once. Recognizing the importance of Tennant's friendship to Cather, Lewis expressed a desire to "to talk with" him about "many things," including "some of our wonderful adventures in the Southwest" she had "been thinking [of] lately." The key words in this wistful recollection are "adventures" and "our": for Cather and Lewis, Southwestern travels represented an escape from the pressures of modernity into

a realm of adventure, experienced collectively as a couple.<sup>3</sup> Cather first experienced the region in 1912, when she traveled to the new state of Arizona to visit her brother Douglass, who worked for the railroad. The trip famously inspired the Southwestern section of *The Song of the Lark*, in which Thea Kronborg visits cliff-dweller ruins and discovers her artistic identity.<sup>4</sup> Although Lewis did not accompany Cather in 1912 or on a second Southwestern trip in 1914, she accompanied Cather on all subsequent trips, and Southwestern travel became Cather and Lewis's shared passion.

Both women sought escape from oppressive Manhattan summers, but the other forces driving them out of the city differed. When they went to the Southwest in 1915, Cather had resigned her position as an editor at *McClure's Magazine*, but Lewis was still in the thick of the magazine world as an editor at *Every Week Magazine*. Her need for therapeutic escape from the pressures of office work was a constant theme in family correspondence. In 1919, her mother, Lillie Gould Lewis, wrote that she was "awfully glad" that Edith had given up an earlier "distress[ing]" plan to skip vacation to get a "good grasp" on her new job (as an advertising copywriter at the J. Walter Thompson Co.), electing instead to take August off from work so "that Miss Cather will go with you on a vacation." In 1924, Lillie expressed sympathy with Edith over the "rush of work at the office to get ready to leave" for a month on Grand Manan with Cather, and a "hope [that] nothing will happen to interrupt your vacation and a real rest." Once Edith Lewis was on vacation, her employers often pressured her to return ahead of schedule.<sup>5</sup>

Cather's work was writing, which she could do anywhere, but she still sought peace and quiet away from New York City to get work done. Travel became an integral part of Cather's creative cycle, with various stages (initial drafting and typing by Cather, editing typescripts and reading page proofs by both Cather and Lewis) often taking place away from New York. Lewis's escape from work thus paradoxically freed her to participate in Cather's work. Conversely, despite Lewis's desire to escape the office, her vacations sometimes became working vacations, making Cather an observer and hanger on while Lewis worked.

Letters sent from the Southwest, particularly letters to Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant, richly document Cather's 1912 trip. Until recently, however, the primary documentation of Cather and Lewis's 1915 trip contemporaneous to it were a newspaper report picked up by the *New York Times* of Cather and Lewis getting lost in a canyon at Mesa Verde and letters Cather wrote from Red Cloud, Nebraska, when she stopped to visit her family on her way back to New York. Lewis writes in *Willa Cather Living* that Cather on her "early visits" to the Southwest "did not keep any notebook or diary; and...did not write a line about it, save in letters" because she was not interested in its "literary possibilities"; instead, "she loved the Southwest for its own sake," not as a source of literary material (101).

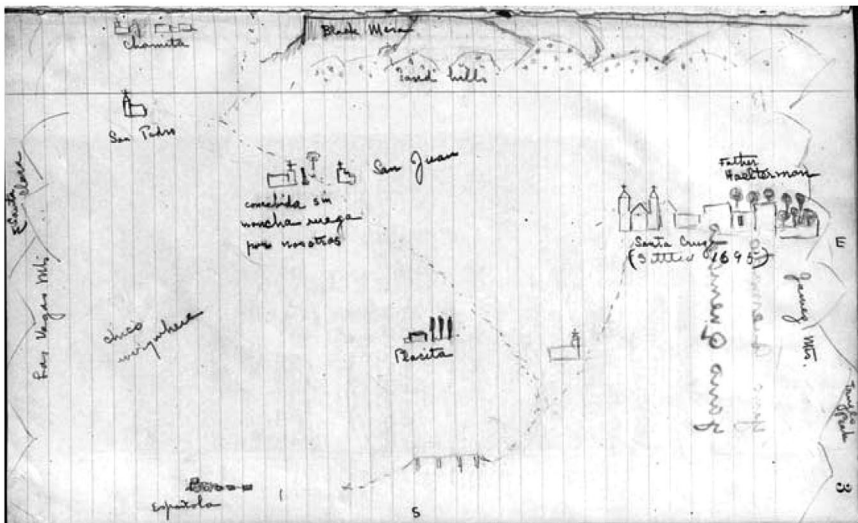
What Lewis fails to mention is that *she* kept a “notebook or diary” in 1915, in the pages of a blank book. As she describes in *Living*, “It was necessary to be on the alert for every landmark, otherwise we were likely to lose our way” on their long rides through the countryside; “Each Mexican village had its own vivid identity and setting, did not look like all the other Mexican villages. Each little church had its special character” (100). In response to this disorienting landscape, she drew charmingly detailed pictorial maps, featuring miniature sketches of natural and human landmarks, such as mountain ranges, mesas, mission churches, and pueblos and train locomotives marking stations. Lewis did not follow cartographic conventions but drew from the perspective of an observer situated in the center of a landscape—this suggests that she drew the maps on site. Two maps remain in the blank book, one of Taos and one of the Española Valley (located between Santa Fé and Taos). Lewis, pursuing her lifelong hobby of sketching, also drew Indian pottery on one page and a tree against the backdrop of a mountain range on another.<sup>6</sup> The crude design of the hardbound volume in which she sketched—printed on its endpapers are tables of information on “Carrying Capacity of a Freight Car” for agricultural commodities, a “Short Method for Calculating Interest,” “Years which a given amount will double at several rates of interest,” and quantities of seed required to plant acres of specified crops—testifies to its intended use by farmers and businessmen in an agricultural region. The volume was thus likely purchased in a general store in a small Western town rather than in a stationery store in New York City. Lewis’s on-the-road responses to their 1915 trip became the nucleus of a scrapbook/notebook she shared with Cather on their return east.<sup>7</sup> Some time well after their 1915 trip, someone cut many pages from the volume, including pages adjacent to these sketches and maps. One excised page was clearly an extension of the Taos map, and although it is impossible to know what appeared on the other missing pages, it is probable that Lewis similarly recorded impressions of the Colorado and Mesa Verde portion of their trip on some of them.

Either during their trip or on their return, Cather engaged Lewis’s record of it. On a page on which Lewis had written (and misspelled) the name of a place they visited in New Mexico, “Yano Quemado” (properly *Llano Quemado*), Cather copied over the words below Lewis’s. She also annotated the map of the Española Valley, noting that Santa Cruz, New Mexico was “settled in 1695” (Figure 1). Most strikingly, in the back of the volume, near Lewis’s map of Taos and her sketches of Indian pots, Cather wrote:

Youth’s Adventure  
 A Young Adventure  
 The Blue Mesa  
 The first lapp [?]  
 The first half

When Cather wrote this list, she was clearly engaged in work on the freestanding story “The Blue Mesa,” conceived in the late teens and then transformed in the twenties into the “Tom Outland” section of *The Professor’s House*.

However, in the immediate aftermath of her 1915 trip with Lewis, Cather first planned to write a Southwestern travel book rather than a work of fiction. Writing to her editor Ferris Greenslet at Houghton Mifflin from Red Cloud, Cather complained about Ernest Peixiotto, a travel writer and staff illustrator for *Scribner’s Magazine*, who was “down there doing a book for Scribners, and he stayed one day at the richest places and merely rode through the others.” Although she professed him “charming,” she contrasted his approach to the Southwest to hers and Lewis’s. Boasting of their insider connections, she wrote, “Miss Lewis and I met several old friends in the artist colony at Taos,” including Herbert Dunton and Ernest L. Blumenschein (13 Sept. 1915, Jewell and Stout 208), two members of the Taos Society of Artists who painted Western and Native American subject matter.<sup>8</sup> She further boasted of her and Lewis’s “constant climbing and horseback riding in New Mexico and Colorado.” To Sergeant, Cather boasted about the “rough twenty-four hours” that “we had” at Mesa Verde, but she “never learned so much in any other twenty-four hours.” She professed her desire to return to “be mauled about by [the canyon’s] big brutality” (21 Sept. [1915], Jewell and Stout 209). Edith Lewis’s account of the same events to her friends the painters Achsah Barlow-Brewster and Earl Brewster apparently made them sound less strenuous, although equally dramatic and transformative.



**Fig. 1.** Edith Lewis’s map of the Española Valley in northern New Mexico, 1915. Note Willa Cather’s annotation of the founding date of Santa Cruz and the ragged edge of an adjacent page that has been removed from the book. Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Libraries.



"We all enjoyed your Mesa Verde letter so much," wrote Barlow-Brewster. "It sounded magical and restful as well as inspiring."

Cather complained to Greenslet that her Kodak snapshots of the Southwestern landscape failed to convey the visual impact of the landscape and would thus be unsuitable for publication in a travel book. Nevertheless, Lewis and Cather brought the personal side of their Southwestern adventures home by taking snapshots of each other. Extant photographs of the two women together—ones requiring the assistance of a third party—are extremely rare, but like many tourists they enjoyed handing the camera back and forth between them. In their matching khaki adventure gear, consisting of jodhpurs and belted jackets with broad-collared blouses and ties underneath, each posed sitting on the same wall at the Cliff Palace at Mesa Verde, prefiguring Tom Outland in *The Professor's House*. Despite their matching outfits, their hats (Cather's has a high crown, while Lewis's is closer to her head) and Lewis's more slender build differentiate them (Figure 2).

Lewis also, however, went to the Southwest as a contributing editor to a weekly magazine, and her vacation travel became fodder for *Every Week*: an account of the discovery of the Mesa Verde cliff-dweller ruins appeared in the magazine several months after their return. In the "picture caption" section of the magazine, photographs of seven "Lost Cities" (the Cliff Palace at Mesa Verde, Babylon, Astur, Mitla, Pompeii, Boro Budur, and Mercur) accompanied informative and humorous text in *Every Week's* signature style. When Cather tantalized Ferris Greenslet with the prospect of a Southwestern travel book, she referred to borrowed professional photographs giving a much better sense of the visual impact of the Mesa Verde ruins than her



**Fig. 2.** Edith Lewis (left) and Willa Cather (right) in the Cliff Palace ruins at Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado, 1915. Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, University of Nebraska- Lincoln Libraries.



amateur snapshots. The photograph of the Cliff Palace published in *Every Week* is likely one of those borrowed photographs—together, Cather and Lewis evidently persuaded people to lend them photographs based on their roles as author and magazine editor well positioned to disseminate the images to promote tourism.<sup>9</sup> A caption for the Cliff Palace photograph, certainly authored by Lewis, describes the story of the Wetherill brothers that inspired “Tom Outland’s Story” in *The Professor’s House*:

THIS is what two-cow-boys, hunting for stray cattle on the Mesa Verde, in Colorado, accidentally stumbled on one day—a whole city, with walls and towers, built up in the wall of the cañon. And that was how the Mesa Verde cliff-dwellings came to be discovered, the oldest prehistoric ruins in America. The more enterprising of the two cow-boys, whose name was Richard Wetherill, wasn’t satisfied with discovering one city. He and a younger brother spent five winters on the Mesa, and discovered twenty or more cliff cities, to say nothing of a few cart-loads of pottery and flint weapons, which they sold to scientific societies for upward of \$30,000. After that the government got busy and decided to make a government reserve of the Mesa Verde.

In her *Every Week* caption, Lewis, like Cather later in *The Professor’s House*, embeds Mesa Verde’s ruins in the context of other ancient cities. In Cather’s first published account of the “discovery” of Mesa Verde, a January 1916 newspaper article promoting tourism to the region, “Mesa Verde Wonderland is within Reach,” Cather, like Lewis in her “Lost Cities” caption, recounts the story of Richard Wetherill and an unnamed brother. However, her emphasis strikingly differs from Lewis’s: she downplays, as she later did when she fictionalized Richard Wetherill as Tom Outland, his commercial motives.<sup>10</sup> In *Living*, Lewis does not explicitly draw attention to her own presence when, in August 1915, in Mancos, Colorado, Cather heard an oral account by a Wetherill family member about Richard Wetherill’s “discovery” of Mesa Verde; however, Lewis’s “Lost Cities” caption makes clear what should be unsurprising: she and Cather shared this experience. Together, their two journalistic accounts of the Wetherill discovery published shortly after their 1915 trip capture the contradictory strains of the Mesa Verde story Cather fictionalized in *The Professor’s House* as a conflict between Tom Outland, who focuses on the aesthetic values of the ancient culture, and Roddy Blake, who commodifies the artifacts by selling them to a German collector.

Their 1915 trip so inspired Lewis that she insisted on returning in 1916. Willa Cather, writing to her brother Roscoe Cather in July 1916 from Taos, professed, “I would have preferred Lander [Wyoming, where Roscoe lived], but Edith wanted very much to return here, where we had a delightful week last summer.” She suggested that after two weeks at Taos, she might visit her brother in Lander. In a letter the same day to her brother Douglass (then

still living in Arizona), Willa focuses instead on her and Lewis's shared pleasure in Southwestern travel and her plan to go to Lander only after Lewis's return to New York: "Edith and I are here again [in Taos] after five gritting hot days in Denver. The nights are cool here and the days are hot for only a few hours. We can get excellent horses. Edith is a showy rider, and I can at least manage to get about on a horse and don't much mind a rough trail." Proposing to meet up with Douglass, she suggests, "we may take another driving trip among the Rio Grande pueblos about Española, if Edith is well enough" (8 July [1916], Jewell and Stout 224). Willa Cather gives a glimpse here of the therapeutic function of Southwestern travel for Lewis, the debilitated Manhattan office worker, who "must be in New York on the 25th of July" (a date later moved up to July 23) and whose "vacation so far has been more interesting than restful" (224).

Lewis and Cather did not return to the Southwest for nearly a decade, by which time Lewis had left *Every Week Magazine* for advertising copywriting. While their first two Southwestern trips provided the fodder for *The Professor's House*, their 1925 trip engaged both women with the nineteenth-century history of northern New Mexico and especially the lives of the two French missionary priests fictionalized in *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. A stay at Mabel Dodge Luhan's compound outside of Taos proved a crucial catalyst, and Achsah Barlow-Brewster, one of Lewis's most important friends, initiated the chain of events that led to Luhan's invitation. Barlow-Brewster and Lewis first met when they were assigned as roommates at Smith College.<sup>11</sup> After graduating from Smith and before her marriage, Barlow studied painting in New York City, and she and Lewis continued their friendship there. When Cather moved to New York in 1906 (Lewis moved in 1903), she also became acquainted with Barlow, and one suspects that Cather and Lewis first acquired their "old friends" in the Taos arts colony at this time (Ernest Blumenschein taught at the Art Students League, where Barlow and Herbert Dunton studied).<sup>12</sup> When Barlow married fellow New York art student Earl Brewster in 1910, they left the United States for Europe.

Achsah and Earl met D. H. Lawrence and his wife Frieda in Italy in 1921, and the four traveled together to Ceylon in 1922. On Achsah and Earl's only trip back to the US in 1923, Earl wrote to Lewis in July asking, "Have you seen the Lawrences? They arrived in NY July 15th. Achsah gave them your address and I presume they will have called. Just a line came from him this morning saying that they would be in New Jersey for a while." In *Living*, Lewis reports "the Brewsters had begged Lawrence to look us [Lewis and Cather] up while he and Frieda were in New York" (139), and at the end of Lawrence's two afternoons visiting with Cather and Lewis, they "spoke of our all meeting again in New Mexico" (139).<sup>13</sup> The Lawrences finally returned to New Mexico in 1924, resuming their stormy and perplexing relationship with Luhan, who was determined to lure artists to Taos to produce works representing the region.<sup>14</sup> Lawrence never met Luhan's expectations,

setting works in Mexico instead of New Mexico, but he clearly suggested that Luhan invite Cather to visit, and the Taos region became key to *Archbishop*.

In spring 1925, Luhan issued her invitation to Cather to stay in one of her small guesthouses. Cather and Lewis were already planning a Southwestern trip, but they treated the invitation with indifference. "I have decided to go to the Grand Canyon first and then spend a little time at a ranch near Española," Cather wrote in late May 1925. "I hardly think my friend and I will get to Taos at all, but if there is any chance of our doing so, I'll signal you and ask whether you have a house for us. I doubt whether we will stay in one place long enough to begin housekeeping. I would like to see you in Taos, though, and your own house there." When Cather and Lewis arrived in New Mexico in June, Cather continued to put off Luhan's invitation. "My friend and I have just drifted about down here," she wrote; "We'll be at the San Gabriel Ranch near Española while I read the proofs of my new book, then we'll go to the country about Albuquerque." She again suggests that they might come through Taos but wouldn't "be in any one place long enough" to go into housekeeping. A little more than a week later, after a stopover in Santa Fé, they indeed drifted down to San Gabriel, where page proofs of *The Professor's House* awaited them. At the end of their week at the ranch, Mabel Dodge Luhan arrived in a car driven by her Pueblo Indian husband Tony Lujan to take them to Taos.

Despite Cather and Lewis's seeming lack of interest, when they grudgingly accepted Luhan's invitation they transformed their trip. In 1927, in a published letter to the Catholic magazine the *Commonweal*, Cather attributed the urge to write a historical novel about Lamy and Machebeuf to coming across *The Life of the Right Reverend Joseph P. Machebeuf* by Joseph Howlett in Santa Fé in 1925 ("On *Death Comes for the Archbishop*" 376). In *Living*, Lewis implicitly places this reading of Howlett's book before their trip to Luhan's ranch: they "stop[ed] first in Santa Fé" where "in a single evening, as [Cather] often said, the idea of *Death Comes for the Archbishop* came to her, essentially as she afterwards wrote it" (139). However, another recently discovered document, a notebook Lewis purchased in the Southwest in 1925 and in which she kept an account of their trip, provides documentation contemporaneous to the events and establishes that Lewis herself and the time she and Cather spent together at Luhan's ranch were crucial to the genesis of *Archbishop*.<sup>15</sup>

Lewis wrote her name on the front cover of the small, blue, softbound school composition notebook, made by the Blue Jay Company, and all entries in the first half of the notebook are in her hand. She began with a day-by-day journal of their stay at Luhan's ranch, apparently reconstructing it on their return to Santa Fé rather than while they were in Taos.<sup>16</sup> Lewis briefly cataloged her and Cather's travels each day—walks into the town of Taos; drives with Tony Lujan into the mountains, up canyons and to pueblos; horseback rides on their own, with Mabel, or with another of Mabel's guests, Mary Hubbard Foote, including a horseback ride into Taos to visit painter

Herbert Dunton, whom they also visited in 1915; and their visit to D. H. and Frieda Lawrence at their ranch. At the end of the daily journal, Lewis cataloged names of places, animals, and people in Taos and the Española Valley.

This portion of the Blue Jay notebook reveals that Cather and Lewis were imagining their experiences as source material for a historical novel about Lamy and Machebeuf. For Saturday, July 11, Lewis wrote, "Rode on horse back up into the foot hills. Rode in car to Hot Springs, and came back through Llano Quemado, Los Ranchos, Talpa," writing in the adjacent margin "Padre Martinez," the name of the historical Mexican priest who was the antagonist of Lamy and Machebeuf and whom Cather made, under his own name, the antagonist of her fictionalized Latour and Vaillant. Cather and Lewis's travels paused on July 12 and 13 when they stayed in the Pink House to "Read Prescott." William Hickling Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico* (1843) would have refreshed their memories about the history of the region through the sixteenth century, the closing of the era of Spanish conquest and exploration Godfrey St. Peter takes as his subject in *The Professor's House*. Prescott does not continue into the nineteenth century (the subject of *Archbishop*), but Lewis and Cather would have found interesting chapter two of volume two, "Modern Mexico—Settlement of the Country—Condition of the Natives—Christian Missionaries—Cultivation of the Soil—Voyages and Expeditions."

When they returned to Santa Fé, Cather and Lewis both wrote effusive letters to Luhan from the La Fonda Hotel. Writing about their plans to visit the Laguna Pueblo, Cather exclaims "of course we'd like to start right back to Taos!" and closes her letter "one of your 'hangers-on' hereafter! Admiringly yours" (Jewell and Stout 372).<sup>17</sup> Lewis was equally enthusiastic: "Taos was the most beautiful part of all our travels. I liked everything there; our little house, and the flowers, and the horses, and our drives up canyons. But the best thing was to meet someone that I could admire so much. That is more exciting than beautiful country. Thank you for all your wonderful kindness to us both. I shall never forget it." Lewis's letter also suggests that Luhan's advice fueled their continuing pursuit of the history and experiences that would ground *Archbishop*. "Miss Cather is still pursuing Father Martinez," Lewis wrote, "through all the books in the Museum. Each new book tells a new story. We sit up late at night reading about priests. Tomorrow, we are driving to Chimayo, as *you suggested*, and the next day we go to Lamy" (emphasis added).

The closing pages of the Blue Jay notebook, also written on Cather and Lewis's return to Santa Fé, make clear how inseparable Cather's writing of *Archbishop* was from her and Lewis's 1925 experiences in New Mexico. These pages contain notes from the research Lewis described to Luhan: Lewis's notes about the Spanish language (including religious sayings), Kit Carson as a friend of Lamy, Machebeuf and Lamy's lives, nineteenth-century New Mexico, and Padre Martinez; and Cather's notes on "Santa Fé in 1840," the Navajo War, and other nineteenth-century events related to

characters and events in *Archbishop*. In the notebook's center—after Lewis's travel diary and before Lewis and Cather's research notes—is Cather's early pencil draft of a chapter of the novel. Titled "Party at Oteros [?]," it is related (but not identical) to portions of Book Six as published, "Doña Isabella."<sup>18</sup> When and where Cather drafted the chapter is not clear, but its position in the notebook suggests how the shared record of travel and research informed Cather's compositional process. Cather drew information from the notebook—the names of the two mules in *Archbishop*, Tranquilino and Contento, appear in Lewis's catalog of names they encountered in Alcalde and Taos, for example—but she also drew inspiration from memories of their travels, and then sketched out a chapter in the conveniently empty pages at the notebook's center. The Blue Jay notebook, then, reveals how inextricably Cather and Lewis's travels in the Southwest intertwined with Cather's creative process—the *Archbishop* is nestled deeply in the middle of a shared, collaborative travel experience.

Nearly a decade later in 1934, Edith Lewis remembered this trip as magical. Writing to Mabel Luhan after reading an unpublished portion of Luhan's multi-volume memoirs,<sup>19</sup> Lewis wrote, "It makes me terribly want to go out West again" (she never did). Lewis pointed particularly to Luhan's "description of [her] trip with Tony to the cave," which reminded her of her and Cather's trip to the same location, an experience transformed into Latour's trip to a cave with Eusabio. Reading Luhan's memoir "brought back," Lewis wrote, "as if it were yesterday the time you and Tony took Willa and me and Ida Rauh there. It is one of the rides I remember best. I remember the bridge you speak of, and the little church, and the road to Arroyo Seco. But the wooded country just before you get to the cave I recall as having an almost fairy-like beauty, fresh and full of trickling streams with white stones."

Lewis and Cather undertook their last Southwestern trip in May 1926, after composition of *Archbishop* was well under way, deliberately pursuing information and experiences to inform the novel. On previous Southwestern trips, Cather had met with members of her family in Colorado, Wyoming, and Nebraska after Lewis's work obligations took her back to New York. On their 1926 trip, in contrast, Lewis shared family visits with Cather, first stopping in Red Cloud on the way west and then spending more than a week in the company of Cather's brother Roscoe, his wife Meta, and their three daughters in Santa Fé at the end of her trip (Cather stayed on in Santa Fé after Lewis's return to New York).

As Cather reported to Mabel Luhan on May 26, "Edith got a nasty cold coming out of Nebraska in a prairie heat wave," so they had to spend several days in Gallup, New Mexico, in "very comfortable rooms" where "Edith has been very happy and relaxed in bed for two days" while Cather "made several strange and terrible acquaintances" (Jewell and Stout 380). Cather worried that Lewis's cold might prevent them from taking a planned trip to Canyon de Chelly, but she reported to Luhan on June 5 from Santa Fé that

they had made that “thrilling trip” (381). Cather asked that proofs of *My Mortal Enemy* be sent to Gallup, but they arrived only a day before their departure for Santa Fé.<sup>20</sup> There, Cather and Lewis would have turned immediately to reviewing the proofs before Cather settled into writing *Archbishop*; she began before Roscoe Cather’s family arrived and continued after their and Lewis’s departure. On June 26, Willa wrote to Roscoe that she “went right up to Mrs. Austin’s house to work that morning as soon as you left, and found my Bishop there waiting for me” in the quiet, empty house Austin had lent her to write in (382). Meanwhile back in New York, Lewis experienced the city at its worst. “New York seems pretty awful after all that beautiful open country,” she wrote to Roscoe Cather also on June 26. “It is cool, but the sky hangs right down over your head, a dirty gray color, thousands of people rush past you with tense, stony looks as you walk along the street, and instead of hearing meadow larks, you hear the radio.” Looking back wistfully, she sent “love to all [Roscoe’s] family. I shall always remember our ride to Española as one of the loveliest trips I ever took.”

#### **“It takes two to write a book”: Editing as Collaboration**

In *Willa Cather Living*, Lewis rarely makes her own actions and presence prominent in her narrative of Cather’s life, but she is not invisible. Before commencing her chronological narrative with Cather’s family history and childhood in chapter one, she briefly introduces herself in relation to Cather in order to establish her authority to narrate the events of Cather’s life as a creative artist. Although *McClure’s Magazine*, where Lewis and Cather worked together, gets its own chapter, *McClure’s* also appears in Lewis’s introduction, in which she explains:

During the year or more that Willa Cather was working in Boston on the Christian Science articles [about the life of Mary Baker Eddy]—her first McClure assignment—I was sent often to Boston to read proofs with her. This was the beginning of our working together. From the time that she wrote *The Song of the Lark*, we read together the copy and proofs of all her books. It was one of our greatest pleasures. (xxxiii-xxxiv)

Lewis thus grounds her authority in a history of shared pleasure shaping Cather’s prose, a practice originating in their shared professional responsibilities at *McClure’s*. She also, as Ashley Squires’s essay in this issue reveals, grounds their work together in the larger collaborative enterprise of magazine writing—*McClure’s* “assigned” Cather to the Mary Baker Eddy exposé, but she was not sole author of the text as published in the magazine or as a book. Nor did Cather seek publicity for her contributions, maintaining an editor’s professional discretion rather than seeking to take credit away from the named author. We should understand Lewis’s own discretion about her work as Cather’s editor in this professional context—even if magazine and



book editors in the early twentieth century were mostly invisible, they were also powerful, and the invisible exercise of power could be pleasurable.<sup>21</sup>

The key documents that make Lewis's editing visible are draft typescripts of Cather's works. Cather typically wrote her earliest drafts in pencil; then, with the pencil draft beside her, she typed a new draft, liberally revising as she typed. After these early typescripts were marked up, Cather either retyped them herself or had them professionally retyped. Both Cather and a professional typist might produce multiple typescripts of a given work, and Cather and/or Lewis hand-marked typescripts for revision at every stage.<sup>22</sup>

The Willa Cather Scholarly Edition (WCSE) has insistently interpreted Lewis's hand on the typescripts as evidence of secretarial labor. In his textual essay for *Obscure Destinies*, textual editor Frederick Link, confronting Lewis's hand on typescripts of Cather's short story "Two Friends," one a photocopy of an early typing by Cather with changes primarily in Cather's hand and the other a final professional typing with changes primarily in Lewis's, explains that "Lewis clearly acted at Cather's direction or served as her *amanuensis*" and that Lewis "collaborated in the *transcription* of revisions Cather wished to make" (338-39, emphasis added). In his essay for *Shadows on the Rock*, Link, confronting two marked versions of the same typing, a face typing and its carbon, characterizes the carbon, which features markings solely in Lewis's hand, as showing her "transferr[ing] most of Cather's changes" from the face copy (560). He insists on this interpretation even though, as he also notes, Lewis "alter[ed]" or "omit[ted]" many of "Cather's" changes in the process of copying them over (apparently, Lewis was a bad secretary) (562). For *The Professor's House*, only one typescript, extensively marked in Lewis's hand, is known. In his textual essay for the novel, Link does not describe Lewis's markings as secretarial but nevertheless attributes editorial agency to Cather: Lewis "would not have made significant changes on her own, and Cather would in any case have reviewed the proposed changes as she prepared the next draft" (398-99).

In *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius*, Jack Stillinger argues that some scholarly editors following the Greg-Bowers school of copy text sometimes "view every alteration and revision by friends, relatives, copyists, editors, printers, publishers, and censors alike as impurity or contamination. Their object is to expunge the impurity when it is possible to do so (for example, by reversion to a prepublication form of a work)" (199). He cites "the extreme instance" of the Pennsylvania Edition of Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900), which took an early typescript as copy text in order to privilege Dreiser's solitary intention and purge the many editorial hands that contributed to the novel as published. Although the WCSE follows Greg Bowers principles, by contrast it always takes first book publication as copy-text, thus by default incorporating Lewis's editorial revisions into Cather's "authorial intention" (at least when her revisions persisted in the first book edition). The



WCSE also provides rigorous collations of textual variants, including prepublication ones, effectively documenting Lewis's extensive editing. However, these lists of variants also render her editing invisible because they do not distinguish between changes made in Lewis's and Cather's hands. Instead, the WCSE locates "Cather's authority" in Lewis's hand, and Lewis vanishes into Cather (Link, "Textual Essay," *Obscure Destinies* 339).

The WCSE's scholarly rigor and the reliability of its texts are unimpeachable, but it misrepresents the nature of Lewis's role in producing those texts: Lewis was an editor, not a secretary, and her editing made her Cather's collaborator.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Lewis never acquired what in the early twentieth century became identified as feminized secretarial skills. In 1903, when she moved to New York as a recent college graduate seeking editorial work, learning to type could have relegated her to the secretarial track. When, as a middle-aged woman in 1918, she filled out an application for a position at the J. Walter Thompson Co., she replied to the question "What types of office machinery can you operate?" with a succinct "none." At Thompson, she was a highly compensated professional woman with a demanding work schedule. By the 1930s, she had her own private secretary in an office environment in which the small group of female advertising copywriters anxiously policed the boundaries between themselves and the overwhelmingly female clerical workforce.<sup>24</sup> Cather, in contrast, apparently learned to type as a working journalist in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century and in the masculine space of the newsroom, where reporters composed at the typewriter.

Lewis quite precisely describes her contributions to Cather's creative process in *Willa Cather Living* and a 1950 letter to E. K. Brown, and in both she describes editorial, not secretarial, work. Brown wrote to Lewis asking whether Cather had experienced a "religious worry or crisis" in the 1920s. Lewis answered "no," further explaining that Cather was not a churchgoer because

Saturdays and Sundays and holidays were my only free time, except in summer, and we worked very hard together on those days, when there was copy-reading or proof-reading to be done. When there was not, she found Sunday quieter than other days for writing. After Miss Bloom became her secretary she nearly always spent Sunday morning dictating letters, for Miss Bloom was free only on Sundays and late week-day afternoons.

Notably, Lewis distinguishes her work from that of Sarah Bloom, Cather's secretary from the mid-1920s on: Lewis works "together" with Cather on "copy-reading or proof-reading," while Bloom takes dictation (Bloom's typing of dictated letters and of Cather's fiction took place off site). Lewis also makes clear that her own time was valuable and that if Cather wanted her expertise, she could claim it only when Lewis was not at the office. Would Lewis relegate herself on her "own free time"—or would Cather relegate her—to the work of "transcribing" or "copying" what Cather had written

during the week or what she dictated? And what imaginable scenario would feature Lewis sitting in front of a typed document while Cather “dictated” the marking of revisions? Furthermore, as Lewis notes in *Living*, Cather dictated letters but “never tried to dictate a piece of creative work. She felt it to be, for her, a psychological impossibility” (175).

Having considerable experience as a magazine editor, Lewis used the term “copy-reading,” the same term she uses in *Living* (she and Cather “read together the *copy*...of all her books”), precisely. To copyread is “to edit (as manuscript or copy) for printing.” The definition of “copyread” necessarily incorporates the definition of “edit,” “to alter, adapt, or refine esp[ecially] to bring about conformity to a standard or to suit a particular purpose.” A copyreader is “a publishing house editor who reads and corrects manuscript copy” or “one who reads and evaluates usu[ally] unsolicited manuscripts for publication” (Webster’s). Lewis did not, as at *Every Week Magazine*, act as gatekeeper (the second definition of copyreader), but she surely gave Cather evaluative feedback orally, leaving no paper trail. The typescripts, however, provide a rich archive of copyreading, also known as copyediting.

In trade publishing, a copyreader might correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors and enforce a uniform style, but not all copyreading occurred at this late stage. As Stillinger observes, the trade editor’s hand is a “routine presence” on manuscripts of early twentieth-century novels (141), with editors substantially altering and reshaping them. Stillinger points to the “already sufficiently famous” example of Maxwell Perkins at Scribners, “the editor and in effect the collaborator in the works of Thomas Wolfe, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and others” (141). However, as James West points out, Perkins “was not especially good at the detailed work of editing”; he wrote letters giving advice about large-scale revisions (the editorial advice Lewis could have given Cather orally) rather than marking changes directly on typescripts (57). When Lewis “copyread,” she resembled another famous early twentieth-century trade editor, Saxe Commins, who had, as John O’Hara protested, a “surgical glint” in his eye when he took up his pen to edit authors’ manuscripts (qtd. in West 65). Lewis was, then, not Cather’s secretary but her skilled professional editor. Indeed, one might think of Lewis as Cather’s “in-house” editor: as she specifies in her letter to Brown, she and Cather copyread Cather’s fiction “together” in their shared homes in New York and Grand Manan, suggesting parallel silent activity in domestic space relieved and informed by conversation and the exchange of roles and documents.

The number of known typescripts continues to increase. Nevertheless, they represent an incomplete archive of compositional and editorial process and present genuine interpretive issues, particularly in the case of works represented by a single typescript, such as *The Professor’s House* (there are no typescripts of *Archbishop*, but there are fragmentary pencil drafts in Cather’s hand, including the Blue Jay notebook fragment). A much more

complete archive exists for the short stories anthologized in *Obscure Destinies*, and Cather inscribed a copy of *Obscure Destinies* to Lewis (discussed below) in a way that suggests she recognized Lewis's joint ownership of the story "Two Friends." Thus an analytical case study of these stories grounds my claims about Cather and Lewis's usual practices and my reading of Lewis's editing of the *Professor's House* typescript.

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Archives and Special Collections currently holds three typescripts of "Two Friends": an early face typing by Cather, which both Cather and Lewis marked for revision in pencil; the corresponding carbon to this early typing, which only Cather marked in pencil; and a late professional typing by Sarah Bloom, which Lewis marked extensively, Cather marked in a few instances, and a copyeditor at Alfred A. Knopf marked minimally (these latter markings identify it as typesetting copy for the story's appearance in *Obscure Destinies*). Notably, at the time the WCSE produced its edition, the editors had access to the early carbon only in photocopy, making identification of it as either a face typing or a carbon impossible, and the corresponding early face typing had not yet surfaced.

The changes in Lewis and Cather's hands on the recently discovered face typing are so intertwined they are nearly inseparable. Sometimes an entire page or continuous group of pages shows verbal changes in one hand, but many pages show changes in both hands. Both the face typing and corresponding carbon (marked only by Cather) feature extensive cross-outs and the same reversals of some cross-outs (the same lines marked for elimination but then reverted). With only a few small exceptions, cross-outs and verbal changes are designed to produce the same end result, even though the changes are sometimes styled differently. Comparing these two typescripts with the later setting copy typescript reveals that Sarah Bloom re-typed the face copy to produce the setting copy.

To whom, then, should we attribute the verbal substance of the changes on the face copy of this early typing? Pages of the face copy marked entirely in Lewis's hand might plausibly be interpreted as evidence that Lewis copied over Cather's changes from the carbon, making the face typing the "copy" and the carbon the "original." Similarly, when pages of both documents feature edits only in Cather's hand, they might be interpreted as Cather copying her own changes from the carbon to the face copy. These scenarios of "original" and "copy" cannot logically account, however, for pages of the face typing in which Cather and Lewis's hands alternate—why alternate in "transcribing" Cather's solo edits from one document (the carbon) onto the other (the face copy)? Making sense of these documents requires abandoning a fixed role scenario—Cather as originator and Lewis as copyist—in favor of the fluid interchange of roles. To insist, as does the WCSE, that Lewis could not have originated substantive changes to Cather's text is to dismiss out of hand the idea that Cather might have valued Lewis's verbal skill and expertise. Furthermore, Cather found such verbal alterations important

enough to undertake them herself—that is, Cather was, no matter how we read these typescripts, also her own editor—and, as a fuller reconstruction of the circumstances of the production of these typescripts reveals, Cather sometimes was indeed her own “amanuensis.”

Cather and Lewis took up the editing of Cather’s typing of “Two Friends” while on Grand Manan Island in summer 1931. A close examination of the face typing reveals that they worked it over multiple times, handing it back and forth and making—and erasing—changes multiple times in pencil. When Cather finally decided the story was ready for retyping by her secretary, she mailed the face typing to New York on August 22, asking Sarah Bloom to return the marked-up typescript with Bloom’s new typing (a new face typing and corresponding carbons). Cather’s scrawled pencil draft of her instructions to Bloom remained in Grand Manan with the old carbon.<sup>25</sup> Confronting uncertain international mail from a small Atlantic island to New York City, Cather asked Bloom to use registered mail and, as a backup, copied the changes—both hers and Lewis’s—onto the carbon, and calculated the number of words on the last page of the carbon (7,800 words) so that she would have this information available when she wrote to the Knopfs about the planned volume of stories.

Cather’s erasures and failed attempts to erase on the carbon make clear she copied edits from the face typing more than once. Apparently believing that the editing of the face typing was final, she copied changes and cross-outs onto the carbon; however, she and Lewis then worked over the face typing again, erasing some cross-outs. After this second round of editing, the carbon no longer preserved the edited text in its most advanced state, so Cather went back to copy changes, including reversions, onto the carbon. She and Lewis could erase cleanly on the face typing’s bond paper, but Cather reverted changes on the carbon with difficulty because of the lower quality ink and paper. She thus frequently resorted to “stet” markings rather than complete erasures (Figure 3). Cather did not undertake this “secretarial” work of copying her own and Lewis’s edits onto the carbon because Lewis was absent—in 1931, Lewis remained on Grand Manan through early October (Lewis to Kohl).

This interchange of roles and back-and-forth negotiation between two editors also appears on the setting copies of “Two Friends” and “Neighbour Rosicky” (the latter not available to the WCSE). Both feature chain edits, instances in which Cather and Lewis canceled each other’s edits. In “Two Friends” a sentence describing the two characters begins “My two aristocrats,” which Lewis crossed out, substituting the names of the characters, “Dillon and Trueman.” Cather then canceled Lewis’s change to substitute a version of the story’s title, “My two friends” (174). In “Neighbour Rosicky,” the chain of revisions alternates in the opposite direction (Figure 4). Early in the story, when Doctor Burleigh visits the farm of Anton Rosicky, a sentence in the typescript begins, “He arrived just when the boys had come in from the barn.” In pen, Cather crossed out, inserted, and relocated texts so

the sentence read, "The Doctor drove in when the boys had just come back from the barn." Finally, in pencil, Lewis reversed some of Cather's changes and made additional ones, producing the version of the sentence published in the book, "He had driven in just when the boys had come back from the barn" (11). The WCSE points to the "Two Friends" example as evidence of

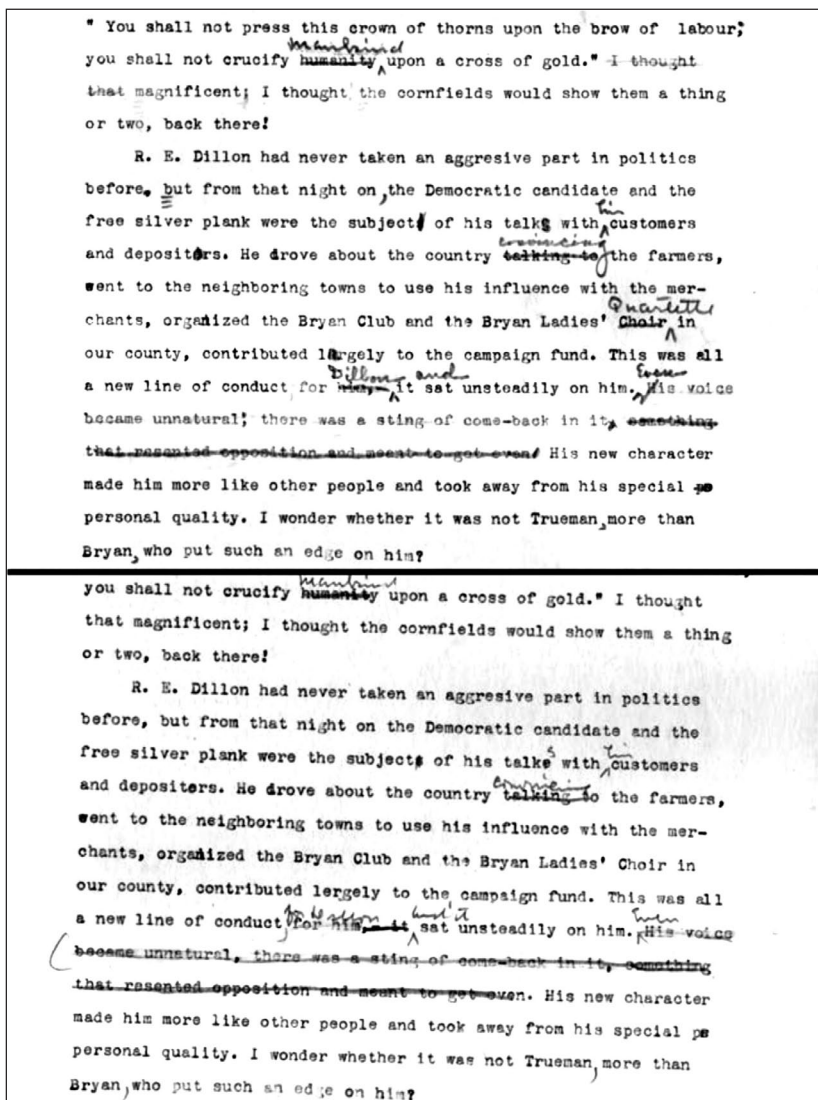


Fig. 3. The face copy (top) and carbon (bottom) of the same typing of a page from Willa Cather's Story "Two Friends." On the face copy, revisions appear in the hands of both Cather and Edith Lewis, and the cancellation of a line of text was fully reversed by erasure. On the carbon, Cather copied over both her own and Lewis's edits and failed to completely revert the cancellation by erasure, marking it for inclusion with a parenthesis.

Cather's final authority over Lewis's hand,<sup>26</sup> but the "Neighbour Rosicky" example complicates such assumptions and suggests Cather trusted Lewis to make late-stage editorial revisions on her own authority.

Cather herself typed all elements of the extant *Professor's House* typescript, which is a document encompassing a few short segments cut and pasted from an earlier typescript, segments crossed out in the main typing, and typed revisions of the crossed-out segments inserted as numbered half pages. Lewis extensively edited the main typing in ink, while Cather's few penciled edits appear mostly on the inserted segments from the earlier typing.<sup>27</sup> In the middle of the typescript, Cather jotted a note to Sarah Bloom instructing her to "Make two carbons from here on through the story." Although the typescript represents an advanced draft of the novel, it memorializes a compositional stage preceding the *Collier's Magazine* serial text and is thus several stages before the final book text.<sup>28</sup>

The more richly documented example of "Two Friends" suggests that Lewis was not taking Cather's dictation or copying Cather's edits from another document on this *Professor's House* typescript. Instead, she was exercising her own editorial judgment, as evidenced by many instances in

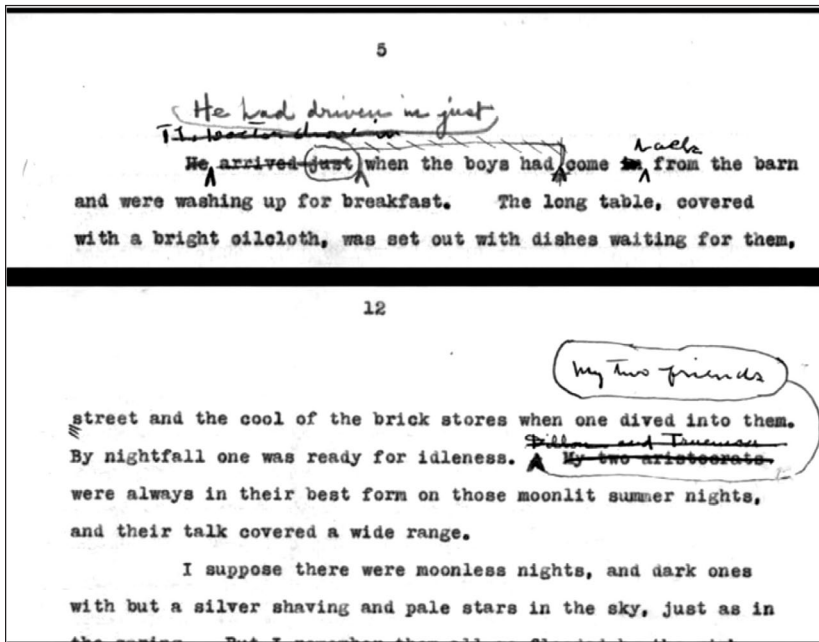


Fig. 4. In a typescript page from Willa Cather's story "Neighbour Rosicky" (top), Edith Lewis canceled one of Cather's edits and substituted her own. In a typescript page from Cather's story "Two Friends" (bottom), Cather canceled one of Lewis's edits and substituted her own. Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries.



which she corrects herself, rewriting, revising, or clarifying her own edits. In contrast to extensive back-and-forth between Cather and Lewis evident on the early "Two Friends" typescript, the predominance of Lewis's hand on the *Professor's House* typescript, with no reversions or additional edits by Cather, suggests a different dynamic in which Cather ceded authority to Lewis and let her choices stand when she sent the document to Bloom to retype (there is no evidence that Cather "reviewed the proposed changes," as the WCSE insists). Both the "Two Friends" and *Professor's House* typescripts point to a similar conclusion, however: when Cather and Lewis edited Cather's fiction, they held "authorial" intention jointly, exercising little or no distinction between their choices.

Lewis made significant changes to Cather's prose in the *Professor's House*. In the typescript, she pruned wordiness, condensed and eliminated characters' internal thoughts, and sharpened and realigned key images, with many of her changes surviving through subsequent revisions to appear in the novel as published. In Cather's typing of the early chapters, when Godfrey St. Peter surveys the attic study he shares with the seamstress Augusta and the sewing forms she uses to produce dresses for his daughters and wife, he thinks, "It was just there, under Augusta's archaic 'forms,' the two speaking, structural paradoxes, that he had always meant to put the filing cabinets he had never spared the time or money to buy." Lewis revised the sentence to read, "Just in that corner, under Augusta's archaic 'forms,' he had always meant to put the filing-cabinets he had never spared the time or money to buy" (33). Her changes are both stylistic (eliminating the wordy "It was," specifying "that corner" for the vague "there," eliminating the later "that") and substantive (removing Godfrey's overly-obvious internal commentary on the dress forms). In Cather's original typing of another key scene involving Godfrey's study, when Godfrey has been working into the evening after an unpleasant conversation with his daughter Kathleen about Professor Crane's claim to profits from Tom's invention, "factory whistles blowing" interrupt his concentration and turn his thoughts back to the ill feeling between his daughters. Lewis substituted "the Angelus...ringing" (88) for the factory whistles, a more symbolically resonant image: the bells ring at Augusta's Catholic parish church, and Augusta later saves the professor from suffocation by gas in his study. As John Murphy argues, this moment provides one of the structuring central metaphors of the novel, "the laboratory and the Virgin" as contending "kingdoms of force" as in *The Education of Henry Adams* ("Holy City" 63). Lewis, with the stroke of a pen, eliminated factory whistles and substituted bell ringing associated with the annunciation of the Virgin Mary, effecting a significant shift in the novel's symbolic register. She executed this shift throughout—factory whistles and the factories themselves of the college town as Cather originally imagined it disappeared without a trace from the published novel.



Cather strategically withholds for several chapters the story of how Godfrey and his wife Lillian met and how his marriage led him to take his teaching position at a university he does not respect. Lewis meticulously revised the paragraph making these revelations. In Cather's typing, "French people" think Lillian is an "English girl" not "an American" because of "her gold hair and fair complexion," "her reserved and almost forbidding beauty," and "because she was reserved and imperious in manner." Lewis lined out Lillian's "reserved and imperious manner" and turned her "forbidding beauty" into "her really radiant charm" (50). Lewis also granted Lillian more verbal subtlety in a later scene in which Godfrey stages a historical tableaux vivant featuring his sons-in-law, Louis Marsellus and Scott McGregor. In Cather's typing, Lillian "said something about heavy-handed caricature being rather tiresome now-a-days, when even cartoonists were becoming subtle." Lewis revised so that Lillian "said dryly that she was afraid nobody saw his little joke" (74). Lewis's edits to "Tom Outland's Story" are small, but pervasive, including revisions to Tom's spoken idiom and changes in small details of Southwestern local color, such as descriptions of the cliff dwellings.

One of Lewis's most telling revisions occurs after "Tom Outland's Story" in the opening of the final section, "The Professor." In Cather's typing, the narrator describes Godfrey St. Peter's ruminations on his life thusly: "The most disappointing thing about life, St. Peter thought, was the amazing part that blind chance played in it. After one had attributed as much as possible to indirect causation, there still remained so much, even in a quiet and sheltered existence, that was irreducible to any logic." Lewis boldly substituted one new sentence for Cather's two: "All the most important things in his life had been determined by chance, St. Peter thought" (Figure 5). In a later editing documented in a missing typescript, Cather and/or Lewis subtly revised this key sentence into its final form: "All the most important things in his life, St. Peter sometimes reflected, had been determined by chance" (257).

"Cather's" mature stripped-down style, theorized in her essay "The Novel D  meubl  ," was thus a product of her collaboration with Lewis as editor. Lewis eliminated from Cather's draft of *The Professor's House* what Cather criticizes as "[l]iteralness" in "presenting of mental reactions and... physical sensations" in what Cather called "over-furnished" realist fiction (50). In his analysis of Cather's "chastened style," Glenn Love applies "The Novel D  meubl  " to *The Professor's House*, tracing the pattern of linguistic diminution across the novel's sections. "Book One: The Family" is characterized by what Love calls "linguistic overstuffing" (301), "Book Two: Tom Outland's Story" by "directness and clarity of description" (303), and "Book Three: The Professor" by "linguistic brevity" reflecting "a deterministic inevitability" and "a kind of death of language itself" (305). Love argues that "Tom Outland's Story" "exercise[s] a corresponding stylistic influence upon its follower" (305).

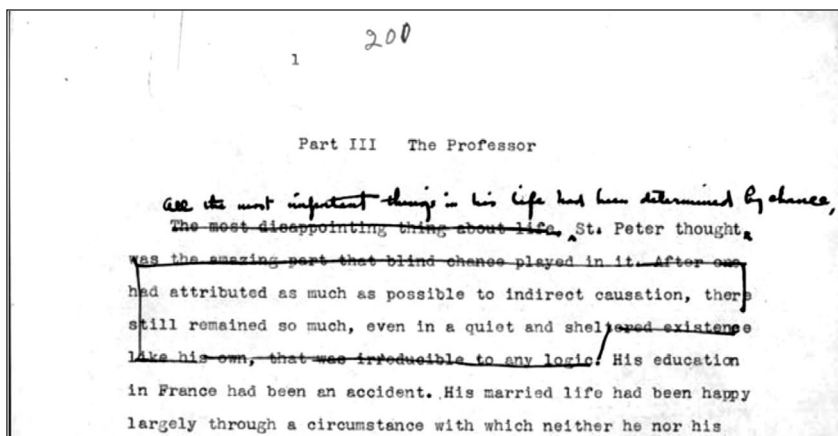


Fig. 5. Edith Lewis's revision to the opening sentences of the final section of *The Professor's House*. Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries.

Lewis's revisions are key to this effect. Before she took up her editorial pen, "The Family" was even more linguistically over-stuffed, and revisions to "The Professor," including cuts, are her most substantial. It is difficult to imagine "The Professor" opening with Cather's discursive and torturous sentences about determinism rather than Lewis's elegant and direct substitution, the sentence that, slightly revised, readers have known for nearly a century. "Whatever is felt upon the page without being specifically named there," Cather writes in "The Novel Demeublé," "that, one might say, is created. It is the inexplicable presence of the thing not named, of the overtone divined by the ear but not heard by it, the verbal mood, the emotional aura of the fact or the thing or the deed, that gives high quality to the novel" (50). Lewis's hand as editorial collaborator on the typescript pages of Cather's fiction is a key unnamed element creating "Cather's" distinctive voice.

#### **"For Edith Lewis, who discovered the Archbishop with me":**

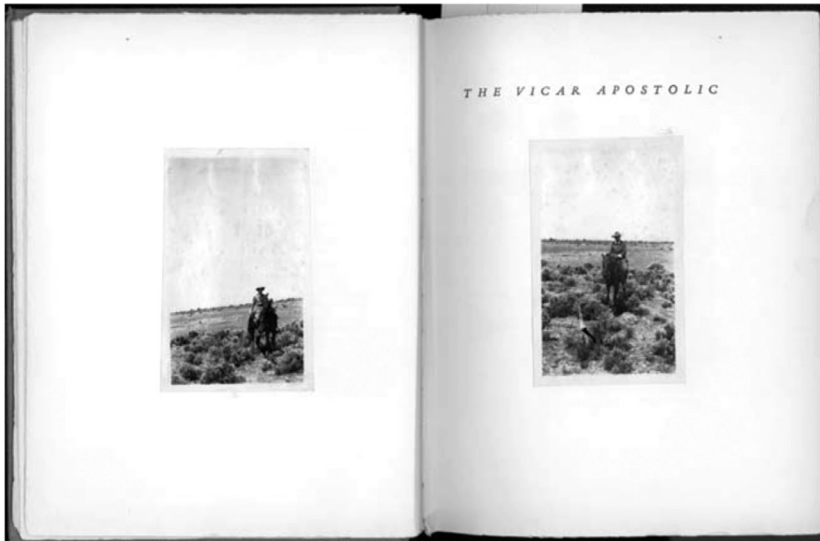
#### **Reading Lewis and Cather into the Southwestern Novels of the 1920s**

As Jack Stillinger observes, "historical authorship" can shape "our reading, understanding, and appreciation of a literary text," and "when the circumstances of composition are investigated in detail, the identifiable authorship turns out to be a plurality of authors" (22) (for Stillinger, editing constitutes "plural authorship"). Recovering the "plurality" of historical authorship thus opens up new possibilities for literary interpretation. Furthermore, as Linda Karell argues in *Writing Together, Writing Apart: Collaboration in Western American Literature*, even though "the image of Willa Cather as solitary, inspired author" is a commonplace in Cather criticism, "collaboration best describes the power relationships circulating in [many of her] fictions" (28). The circumstances of historical authorship recovered in the

previous section provide a fresh interpretive frame for Cather's Southwestern fiction. Put another way, Cather and Lewis's collaboration both produced and became the subject of *The Professor's House* and *Death Comes for the Archbishop*.

The documents on which I base this claim sometimes employ a private language that both requires and resists interpretation. Cather did not publicly dedicate a book to Lewis as Laura Gilpin dedicated her book *The Enduring Navaho* to her partner Elizabeth Forster, "What fun we had evolving this book....As a tribute to our long and happy friendship, this is your book" (qtd. in Goldberg 165). However, manuscript evidence points to a sense of shared ownership of Cather's fiction grounded in Cather and Lewis's shared experience and collaboration. For example, when a revised and expanded edition of Cather's early book of poetry, *April Twilights*, appeared in 1923, Cather inscribed a copy of the British edition "Edith Lewis / Her Book / Willa Cather," hinting that Lewis, a publishing poet two decades earlier, urged the project of republishing Cather's first book and participated in editing it (poems were added, subtracted, and revised). Cather inscribed a copy of *Obscure Destinies* to "Edith Lewis, To whom especially belongs the story of 'Three Friends.'" Precisely why it "belong[ed]" to Lewis or why Cather called the story "Three Friends" instead of "Two Friends" is not clear; however, Cather's inscription signals a sense of indebtedness and joint ownership. Finally, Cather inscribed *Death Comes for the Archbishop* "For / Edith Lewis / who discovered the Archbishop / with me. / Willa Cather," pointing to their shared experiences of Southwestern travel as the novel's source.

Conversely, copies of Cather's fiction inscribed by Lewis to friends and family suggest that she also felt her own sense of ownership. She presented *O Pioneers!* to her father: "Henry E. Lewis / from E. L. L. / July 2, 1913." *The Best Stories of Sarah Orne Jewett*, with Cather's famous preface, went to her mother, "Lillie Gould Lewis / for her Birthday / from Edith / November 24, 1925." Both Cather and Lewis inscribed copies of Cather's books to Achsah Barlow-Brewster and Earl Brewster.<sup>29</sup> In the teens, Lewis inscribed to Achsah all surviving copies, while in the twenties, Cather inscribed extant copies to both Earl and Achsah and included their daughter Harwood in her inscription for *Archbishop*. Notably, Lewis, not Cather, inscribed the *The Professor's House* to "Achsah, from her loving / E. L." Lucy Marks suggests that Lewis could only have sent this inscribed volume "with Cather's approval," and David Porter suggests that Lewis must have sent it to "remed[y]" Cather's "omission" (Marks and Porter 136, 88), but why should we assume so any more than we should assume that Lewis was Cather's amanuensis when she marked the typescript of *The Professor's House*? *The Professor's House* was also Lewis's book, based on Southwestern experiences shared with Cather (Achsah and Earl would have recognized this based on her letters to them) and produced in editorial collaboration with her.



**Fig. 6.** Photographs of Edith Lewis (left) and Willa Cather (right) on horseback in the desert in northern New Mexico in 1925, pasted into Cather's personal copy of *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Libraries.

Cather's personal copy of the 1930 illustrated English edition of *Archbishop* strongly links Cather and Lewis's travels to the subject matter of the novel, both their "discovery" of the historical Lamy and Machebeuf and their identification with the fictional characters Cather created. Cather pasted a photograph of herself on horseback in the desert under the half title of the "Vicar Apostolic" section of the novel and a similar photo of Lewis on the blank page opposite (Figure 6). The Archbishop rides through the desert alone for two chapters of "The Vicar Apostolic," but most of his rides through the New Mexico desert take place in the company of Father Joseph Vaillant, just as Cather shared her rides with Lewis. By pasting these photographs in the book, Cather symbolically aligned herself and Lewis with Latour and Vaillant.<sup>30</sup> The photographs, likely taken during their 1925 stay at Luhan's ranch, echo the photographs they took of each other in the Cliff Palace ruins ten years earlier and confirm Cather's account to her brother Douglass comparing her skills as a horsewoman with Lewis's. Cather sits her quiescent horse awkwardly, while Lewis sits erectly and stylishly on her more lively horse. Tourists experiencing the desert together on horseback, they handed the camera to each other. The mirror image horizon lines suggest this photographic situation: the line behind Cather descends from left to right, while the one behind Lewis descends from right to left. The movement of Lewis's lively horse as she held the camera also slightly blurred the photograph she took of Cather. As at Mesa Verde, they wear matching khaki

outfits with belted jackets and jodhpurs and white blouses with ties underneath. Lewis's stylish bob peaks out from under her hat's brim, while Cather's hair, pulled back in a bun, is less visible.

Even absent a typescript of *Archbishop*, Cather's inscription to Lewis and Cather's personal copy form part of the deep archive of their collaboration, which also encompasses their letters about their 1925–1926 Southwestern travels and the Blue Jay notebook. *Archbishop* is, as Marilee Lindemann argues in *Willa Cather: Queering America*, “in the smallest and largest senses and to a greater extent than anything else [Cather] ever wrote—a love story” (116), a narrative “fully and frankly...given over to telling the story of Latour's love for Vaillant...[and] completely...driven by the rhythms of ‘their life together’” (123). Latour and Vaillant's relationship also features a “continual shifting of roles and boundaries” (118) and is “collaborative” (123).<sup>31</sup> The archive I analyze here suggests Cather found an affinity between Latour and Vaillant's collaboration in building the Catholic Church in New Mexico and her and Lewis's collaboration in creating *Archbishop*. While I am mindful of Lindemann's methodological caution against reading Latour and Vaillant as “‘really’ lesbians trapped in men's bodies” (123), Latour and Vaillant are, among other things, Cather's homage to herself and Lewis in the Southwest and to their love and collaboration.

No copy of *The Professor's House* Cather inscribed to Lewis has yet surfaced, but the novel itself, like *Archbishop*, pays tribute to their collaboration. In *Living* Lewis opines that *The Professor's House* was “the most personal of Willa Cather's novels” (137). Drawing on Lewis's account, critics have long read the novel biographically, identifying the professor with Cather herself. Psychoanalytic critic Leon Edel, who completed the authorized critical biography begun by E. K. Brown, first linked Godfrey's disaffection with the present and nostalgic longing for the past to Cather's feelings about Isabelle McClung's 1916 marriage to violinist Jan Hambourg (Cather lived in the McClung family home during her Pittsburgh years).<sup>32</sup> More recently, Lindemann and Ann Romines have posited another biographical correlate: when Cather, who was precisely the same age as Godfrey, was writing *The Professor's House* she was also editing and writing an introduction to *The Best Stories of Sarah Orne Jewett*. In the first and third sections of Cather's novel, the professor works on the last volume of his history of the Conquistadores, struggles with editing Tom Outland's diary for publication, and recalls how Tom contributed to his history by accompanying him on a trip to Southwestern sites associated with it

Lewis, however, has occupied a marginal place in biographical readings of *The Professor's House*. Romines, Goldberg, and Judith Fetterley all suggest that Augusta, the aging spinster who labors at the womanly art of sewing, represents Lewis.<sup>33</sup> For Godfrey, Augusta represents the taste of “bitter herbs” and a prosaic future he can neither avoid nor embrace (280).

Identifying Lewis with Augusta, these critics identify her with the domestic and with Godfrey's (and thus Cather's) grudging acceptance of a future devoid of desire. Lewis's editorial hand on the novel's typescript, however, suggests a dizzying array of configurations of identification in these scenes of writing and editing, confounding a simple identification of Lewis with the domestic. Lewis's editorial hand appears throughout, including in chapter 2 of "The Professor," in which St. Peter edits Tom's diary, a "plain account" that is "almost beautiful" because of "the things it did not say," Tom's economical use of descriptive language, and his omission of "the young explorer's emotions" (262). If Godfrey-as-editor is Cather, Lewis edited Cather both *in* and *on* the page: she edited Cather's representation of herself in Godfrey, and she edited Cather's typed words. The typescript also licenses another reading in which Cather, as an affectionate inside joke, represents *Lewis* in Godfrey-as-editor. That is, Cather embeds an image of Lewis-as-editor in the novel by placing Godfrey at his desk editing Tom's diary. Lewis, marking the page, edited a representation of *herself* in Godfrey-as-editor.

Many analyses of the novel turn on the form of Tom's record of his and Roddy Blake's "excavations" of the cliff dwellings. "We numbered each specimen," he tells the professor, "and in my day-book I wrote down just where and in what condition we had found it, and what we thought it had been used for. I'd got a merchant's ledger in Tarpin, and every night after supper, while Roddy read the newspapers, I sat down at the kitchen table and wrote up an account of the day's work" (210). Despite Tom's protestations to Roddy that he never valued these objects monetarily, the form of the volume suggests he was cataloging them as commodities for sale. Read in the context of Lewis and Cather's 1915 Southwestern trip, this "merchant's ledger" carries a different private meaning. Lewis drew maps of their trip and sketched Indian pots in a volume designed for use by rural farmers and businessmen. Measuring 7 ½ by 11 ¾ inches, the tall narrow volume's lined pages came pre-stamped with page numbers. Crude cloth covers its boards, with red ink simulating leather reinforcements on the corners, and "Record" is stamped in the center of the front cover (Figure 7). Together these features invite a small town merchant to record financial transactions in it. Cather thus playfully aligns Lewis with Tom by placing Lewis's record of their 1915 trip in Tom's hands as the "merchant's ledger" in which he records his excavations. Godfrey edits Tom's "diary" recorded in the ledger book as he sits in his study. To return to Lewis's editing of Godfrey's editing scene, she edited him editing a document that mirrored her own Southwestern travel diary. For Cather and Lewis, the scene functioned as a multi-faceted *mise en abyme* of writing and editing, infinitely reflecting back to them their complex interchange of roles in the production of the novel.

Finally, the circumstances of Cather and Lewis's reading of the proofs of *The Professor's House* richly reframe Lewis's widely acknowledged role in proof reading with Cather. In *Willa Cather Living*, Lewis sketches a vivid

scene of mornings outdoors reading proofs for *My Ántonia* in Jaffrey in summer 1918, and more briefly recounts that in 1925, “Before going to Taos, we stopped for a week...in the Española valley, between the Black Mesa and the desert, and read the proofs of *The Professor’s House*” (141-42). When the Knopf firm sent galley proofs to Cather, they returned the setting copy typescript with them. No proofs of *The Professor’s House* are known, but extant proofs of other works show markings in Cather’s hand, not Lewis’s. This suggests that Lewis’s role in “reading proofs together” was not as an amanuensis recording changes dictated by Cather but as what, in the printing trade, was known as the “copyholder.” This person held the manuscript or typescript copy, reading it aloud to the proofreader, who marked corrections on the galley proofs. Standard reference works on publishing procedures in the early twentieth century advised authors to “adopt[] the methods of reading used by the proofreader and copyholder in the printing office” (Skillin and Gay 74-75).

We might imagine Lewis and Cather sitting outdoors in the cool of the morning at the San Gabriel Ranch, with Lewis reading aloud from the setting copy of *The Professor’s House* and Cather marking corrections and additional final changes on the proofs. Indeed, one might surmise that Cather and Lewis returned to the Southwest in late May 1925 so they could read the proofs in the regional setting of Tom Outland’s fictional experiences sparked by their own 1915 adventures (the Black Mesa, which features prominently in Lewis’s 1915 map of the Española Valley, was visible from the ranch). When Godfrey contemplates Tom’s diary, he senses “the ardour and excitement of the boy” in his austere written account of his excavations, “like the vibration in a voice when the speaker strives to conceal his emotion” (262). However, Tom’s story as embedded in the novel is not the diary. Instead, as Godfrey edits the textual artifact he recalls a time before Tom’s death when Tom spoke the story aloud. As Cather sat at a ranch in New Mexico in the shadow of the Black Mesa marking the page proofs of *The Professor’s House*, she and Lewis doubled Godfrey and Tom: Cather took the part of Godfrey as listener as Lewis read aloud Tom’s soliloquy of his experiences on the Blue Mesa, the vibration of her voice bringing alive Tom and his emotions. From this complexly doubled position of recollection, they launched forward into a new “Southwestern adventure” of “discover[ing] the Archbishop” together.

### **Conclusion: Unlocking Cather’s Garret**

Willa Cather was notably fond of attics and attic-like spaces. Her bedroom under the eaves of her childhood home in Red Cloud, Nebraska, was carved out of an open attic dormitory shared by the family’s children. In Jaffrey, New Hampshire, she wrote *My Ántonia* in a tent pitched in a meadow, the tent’s sloped canvas echoing eaves. At the Shattuck Inn in Jaffrey, she preferred a room on the top floor, under the eaves. In her and Lewis’s cottage





**Fig. 7.** The front cover of the ledger volume in which Edith Lewis recorded her impressions of her first trip to the Southwest with Willa Cather in 1915.

on Grand Manan Island, she put her writing desk in the gable end of the attic. In short, Cather liked to write in garrets, where all good solitary geniuses write (and where Godfrey St. Peter writes his histories, edits Tom's diary, and narrowly escapes suffocation).

That moment of writing was not the beginning or the end of Cather's creative process, but Cather-in-the-garret has served as a powerful organizing metaphor. As Linda Brodkey argues in "Modernism and the Scene(s) of Writing," the "solitary writer alone in a cold garret working into the small hours of the morning by the thin light of the candle" is both "a romantic representation of the production of canonical literature, music, painting, sculpture" and a "picture...from the album of modernism, where the metaphor of solitude is reiterated as the themes of modern art" (396, 398). This scene functions spatially and temporally, Brodkey argues, defining our under-

standing of the nature of writing and writers by "plac[ing] social life on the other side of writing, that which occurs before or after writing, something or someone that must not be allowed to enter the garret" (397). Women are part of the social world excluded from this iconic scene: "The women referred to by the picture are not women who write. Rather they are women who support men who write: a muse or a mistress, a doting mother, wife, or sister" (406). Cather biography and criticism have long been comfortable with the notion of Isabelle McClung as Cather's "muse" for whom she wrote all of her books. Despite claims that the term "marriage" for Cather and Lewis's relationship is "misleading" (Woodress 200), Cather critics safely place Lewis outside the garret by assigning her quasi-wifely secretarial and domestic duties in support of Cather's solitary authorial labors.

Placing a woman author in the garret complicates the scene of writing described by Brodkey but does not necessarily dismantle it. The persistent figuration of McClung as muse and Lewis as domestic and secretarial drudge leaves intact the gendered spatial metaphor of authorship: Cather gets a special pass to enter the masculine garret, where canonical geniuses

write in solitude, but the (female) social remains safely outside. Recognizing Lewis as central to both Cather's creative and social lives, however, re-connects Cather as an artist to the social world from which she seemingly held herself apart, undoing the myth of Cather as solitary genius. As Linda Karell argues, solitary authorship may be a myth, but it is "a myth that, for women writers, may continue to be valuable as a strategic deployment" (xv). In the case of Cather, this strategically deployed myth (which Lewis, in *Willa Cather Living*, helped to fashion) has made her securely canonical. It is time, then, to unlock the garret door in our scholarly imaginations to let in the woman *with* whom (rather than *for* whom) Cather wrote her fiction.

### Notes

Thanks to Michael Everton, Andrew Jewell, and Francesca Sawaya for responses to drafts of this essay; Courtney Lawton for help interpreting Lewis's maps of northern New Mexico; Geneva Gano for help reading the photos of Cather and Lewis on horseback; and the late Charles Mignon for taking my characterization of Lewis as Cather's collaborator seriously long before I knew enough to make such a claim. This essay grew out of an earlier collaboration with Anne L. Kaufman, including a jointly-presented paper at the 2008 Western Literature Association Conference.

- 1 Harrell analyzes at length Lewis's factual errors in *Willa Cather Living*. I also correct Lewis but based on contemporaneous documentation unavailable to Harrell.
- 2 Goldberg, like many other queer critics, reads Godfrey and Tom's relationship as a site of projection and identification but does not imagine Lewis participating in this dynamic, relegating her to providing domestic space for Cather to write (127). He takes up Gilpin because of her "failed collaboration" with Cather (Cather rejected Gilpin's proposal to photo-illustrate *The Professor's House*) (148).
- 3 See John Swift on the "therapeutic antimodern value" of the Southwest as an escape from "the debilitations of modernity" ("Willa Cather" 4) and Caroline Woidat on Cather's touristic escape into a "primitive" past through the touristic protocols of the "Indian detour."
- 4 See Homestead, "Edith Lewis as Editor," on the chronology of Lewis's career at *McClure's* in relation to Cather's.
- 5 Lewis's J. Walter Thompson Co. personnel file is full of letters urging her early return from Grand Manan Island.
- 6 The maps are clearly Lewis's, but whether Cather or Lewis drew the pots is a question of interpretation, and I choose Lewis. See her 1918 job application (in Thompson) for her sketching hobby.
- 7 I claim that Lewis, rather than Cather, purchased and then used the book in the Southwest based on Lewis's claims that Cather did not record her impressions while traveling and on a careful examination of the book as multi-layered artifact. Some pasted-in clippings (e.g., a newspaper notice of G. P. Cather's death in action in France in 1918) date after 1915, although others obscure brief notations by Cather related to the trip ("Wetherill" is partially obscured). Most internal evidence points to Lewis, and other travel diaries Lewis kept in the 1920s and '30s place the volume in the context of her typical practice of travel diary keeping.
- 8 On Blumenschein, see Blumenschein and Chase. On Dunton, see Schimmel.
- 9 The *Denver Times* headline identifies "Misses Willa Cather and Edith Lewis" as

- "Magazine Editors and Novelists" (qtd. in Lee 232), suggesting they represented themselves this way locally.
- 10 By sending Smithsonian archaeological expeditions and designating Mesa Verde a national park the federal government "sought to put commercially motivated explorers like Wetherill out of business," but, as Schubnell argues, giving Wetherill's commercial motives to Tom would not have suited Cather's cultural critique (40).
  - 11 See Marks and Porter for biographical details on both Barlow-Brewster and Brewster, and Homestead and Kaufman for Lewis's college and early New York years.
  - 12 Blumenschein also produced illustrations for *McClure's Magazine* (Stout, *Picturing* 22), but Lewis may have met him and introduced him to Cather before both women joined *McClure's* in 1906.
  - 13 In Lawrence's letters of 1923 and scholarly accounts, Lewis disappears from this scene of introduction. See Lawrence to Brewster, Woodress (353-54), and Lee (256-57). Lee goes further, barely mentioning Lewis's presence in Taos and Santa Fé in 1925.
  - 14 See Burke and Rudnick, *Mabel Dodge Luhan* on Luhan's sense of purpose in her relationship with Lawrence. Both mention Cather's 1925 visit briefly but render Lewis invisible while relying on *Willa Cather Living* as their source.
  - 15 Scholars have previously inferred Lewis's errors and overstatements (e.g. Murphy, "Historical Essay" 351-52), but the Blue Jay notebook provides confirmation.
  - 16 Lewis dated only the last day (July 18), labeled others only by day of the week, and spaced days evenly rather than allotting space based on quantity of descriptive text, put question marks for some days, and left one day (Thursday, July 9) blank. Together, these elements suggest she wrote out the days encompassing their stay at Luhan's ranch after the fact before attempting to memorially reconstruct events.
  - 17 Jewell and Stout date this letter [July 6, 1925?], but Lewis's journal establishes a date after July 18.
  - 18 More recently discovered materials for *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*, *Shadows on the Rock*, and *Archbishop* make clear that Cather radically rewrote or discarded significant portions of early drafts (see Sarah Clere's essay on materials discarded from *Sapphira*).
  - 19 Lewis refers to Luhan's memoir as *Taos Seasons*, but no volume of the four-volume *Intimate Memories* series appeared under that title (see Rudnick, "Introduction"). Lewis likely read *Edge of the Taos Desert*, the last volume.
  - 20 On May 19, 1925, Cather telegraphed Blanche Knopf from Red Cloud requesting the proofs be sent to Gallup; June 3, she predicted their departure the next day for Santa Fé.
  - 21 For a trade editor's discussion of editorial discretion, see Eidesheim (4-5). On the editor's power and pleasure, see Howard.
  - 22 Mignon ("Willa Cather's Composing Process") explains Cather's process in detail and gives more weight to Lewis as editorial collaborator than the WCSE textual essays, but he still places Lewis firmly under Cather's control and claims she "copyedited" only late stage professional typescripts, despite the evidence of the *Professor's House*, to which he had access (he did not have access to several of the *Obscure Destinies* typescripts).
  - 23 I revisit and expand an argument I took up in "Edith Lewis as Editor," where I also discuss Lewis's aggressive rewriting of fiction published in *Every Week*.
  - 24 See the incomplete personnel file, beginning in 1940, for Lewis's secretary Peggy Little (Thompson). On the boundaries between women's secretarial and copywriting work at Thompson, see Scanlon and Davis.
  - 25 See also Cather to Alfred Knopf (31 July 1931) from Grand Manan about having "sent down to my secretary to be typed" the "longest story" of the proposed collection

- (implicitly "Old Mrs. Harris"), and Lewis's anecdote about Cather being "too afraid of loss in the most registered of mails" to send a manuscript version of the concluding section of *Lucy Gayheart* from Grand Manan to New York for typing (*Willa Cather Living* 174).
- 26 Link claims "Cather [likely] went over the typescript after Lewis had finished with it" because "in at least two cases the revision in Lewis's hand is crossed out and another reading supplied by Cather" ("Textual Essay," *Obscure Destinies* 338). The WCSE did not have access to the "Neighbour Rosicky" typescript.
  - 27 The WCSE had access to a photocopy, minus the opening pages.
  - 28 Again, the WCSE collation of variants, which does not include the opening pages of the typescript (see note 27), is crucial, but I interpret the evidence differently.
  - 29 See Marks and Porter (134-36) for these inscriptions.
  - 30 See Mignon, "Cather's Copy," but note that he misidentifies the photograph of Lewis as being of Cather, eliminating Lewis from this dynamic of identification.
  - 31 The priestly celibacy of Latour and Vaillant might, as Lindemann concedes, make the novel "erotophobic"; thus read back onto Cather and Lewis it might desexualize their relationship. However, as Lindemann also argues, the novel is "rich in the pleasures of an eroticized looking that is not subjected to punishment or prohibition" (121). See also John Anders on how Cather both celebrates the "spiritual love" between two celibate priests and "encodes an ambiguously erotic text" (123).
  - 32 Doris Grumbach extends and elaborates Edel's biographically-based analysis, suggesting that Cather experienced "extremes of despair" after losing Isabelle to Jan and thus "objectifies this condition, safely transposing the love she felt so keenly and then lost, to fictional male counterparts, the love of St. Peter for Tom Outland" (338).
  - 33 Fetterley reads the novel as "register[ing] the devastating effect of losing her primary object of desire" (222) (McClung); in response, Cather makes all women in the novel "represent all that is vulgar, cheap, and hard," except "Augusta, perhaps Cather's emblem for Edith Lewis, owner of the hard forms who pulls St. Peter back into a life without delight, commands a grudging respect" (233). Goldberg, defending the novel against charges of misogyny, points to "The professor's female-identified moments, or his bonding with Augusta, [that] arguably hint at a potential movement across gender and sexuality, and in the direction of Cather and Edith Lewis" (147). Romines cites Fetterley on Augusta as Lewis in drawing a parallel to Jewett and Annie Fields's relationship (Lewis "provided much of the domestic continuity in [Cather's] life, as Annie Fields did for Jewett" [163]). Romines further suggests Cather follows Jewett in *Country of the Pointed Firs* by "obliquely broaching issues of a lesbian writer's working life" (163), but she conceptualizes Fields and Lewis as providing domestic space for the working writer rather than collaborating with her.

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