

PIRATES AND DEVILS

William Gilmore Simms's Unfinished Postbellum Novels

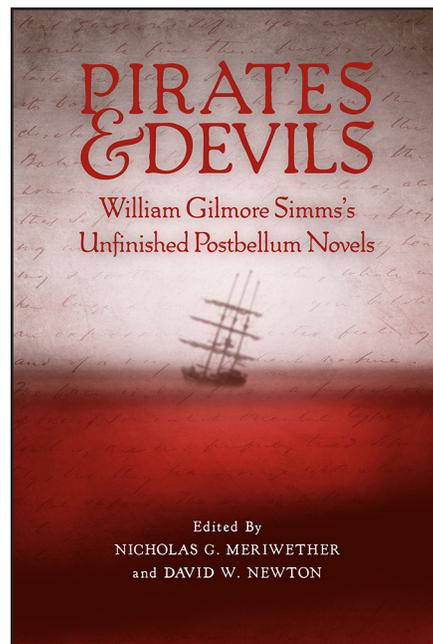
Edited by Nicholas G. Meriwether and David W. Newton

Pirates and Devils, edited by Nicholas G. Meriwether and David W. Newton, presents two significant unfinished works by William Gilmore Simms, a prominent public intellectual of the antebellum South and one of the most prolific authors of nineteenth-century America. These two incomplete works—the pirate romance “The Brothers of the Coast” and the folk fable “Sir Will O’Wisp”—are the last major primary texts of Simms’s expansive career. Recent scholarship about Simms, including *William Gilmore Simms’s Unfinished Civil War*, reasserts the significance of Simms’s postwar writing and makes this volume a timely contribution to his canon.

Incomplete at his death, these two substantial fragments represent the longest of the major primary texts from the last years of Simms’s life. The texts provide insight into his creative process, but, more important, they show him wrestling with issues he and the defeated South faced in the aftermath of the Civil War—economic and social collapse and the triumph of Northern “isms.” In addition, they document the creativity and courage that the author’s commitment represented—and required. Publication of these fragments makes possible a more complete picture of this last phase of Simms’s life as he struggled with the consequences of a conflict that had become the defining event of his life, career, and region.

William Gilmore Simms Initiatives: Texts and Studies

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Nicholas G. Meriwether is an archivist at University of California, Santa Cruz. His work on Simms has appeared in the *Simms Review*, *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, and *William Gilmore Simms’s Unfinished Civil War*, edited by David Moltke-Hansen, published by the University of South Carolina Press.

David W. Newton is a professor of English and department chair at the University of West Georgia. His work on Simms has appeared in the *Simms Review*, *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, the *Southern Quarterly*, and *William Gilmore Simms and the American Frontier*.

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