SEARCHING FOR *PROUD ANTOINETTE*: EVIDENCE AND PROSPECTS FOR WHITMAN'S PHANTOM NOVEL

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In 1962, while looking through the Feinberg Collection for fiction-related Whitman manuscripts, scholar William White came across a set of notes toward what appeared, to him, to be a short story. It is a tale about secret identities, murder, and prostitution, which White largely dismissed, along with Whitman's fictions in general, as "melodramatic, sentimental [and] moralizing."[1] While the story itself would not turn up for White—nor does he sound especially hopeful that it will—nevertheless, the notes he discovered have turned out to be very valuable manuscripts indeed. Four pages in total, likely written in 1858 or 1859, these notes appear on the back of the canceled newspaper notice Whitman had drafted for a proposed men's wellness series (a subject to which Whitman often returns in his notes of the period). However, neither the story nor the series were thought to have eventuated. Ultimately, these manuscripts were collected in Edward F. Grier's six-volume collection of Whitman's *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, where their presence would lead, in 2016, to the recovery of the very wellness series Whitman had proposed: *Manly Health and Training*, a 47,000-word work of journalism he had serialized, under a pen name, in late 1858.[2] It is one of the latest in a string of rediscoveries of Whitman's unknown journalistic work. Yet, I would like to suggest that these same manuscript pages may yield additional discoveries. The evidence they contain—of Whitman's having constructed the foundations of a substantial sensation fiction—suggest that he may have been more serious about novel-writing in the late 1850s than scholars have previously thought.

The fate of that fiction, a romantic murder mystery the poet tentatively titles *Proud Antoinette: A New York Romance of To-Day*, is unknown.[3] But its odds of having been completed, even published, have increased substantially since the discovery, in 2017, of Whitman's previously unknown sensation novella, *Life and Adventures of Jack Engle*, published while he was composing the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*.[4] Whitman's journalism and fiction of the mid-to-late 1850s

may offer more surprises yet.

As far as Whitman's fiction-related notes and manuscript materials go, those for *Proud Antoinette* can seem oddly familiar; they are notably similar, in style and scope, to those connected to *Jack Engle*. They are also extensive. Indeed, all told there may be *more* materials connected to the former than to the latter.[5] However, these materials have never been collected in one place for researchers to consider them as a constellation. For that reason, this article presents all manuscripts and materials related, or potentially related, to *Proud Antoinette*. After reproducing their page images and full transcriptions, I discuss their relationship to other writings, while enumerating the events of Whitman's life in 1858-1859, his literary activities in general, and his thoughts on sensation novels in particular. I also note the possible periodicals to which Whitman would have been likeliest to submit fictions in the late 1850s, as well as those periodicals where it can confidently be said it was not published (based on systematic, hair-graying searches of them).

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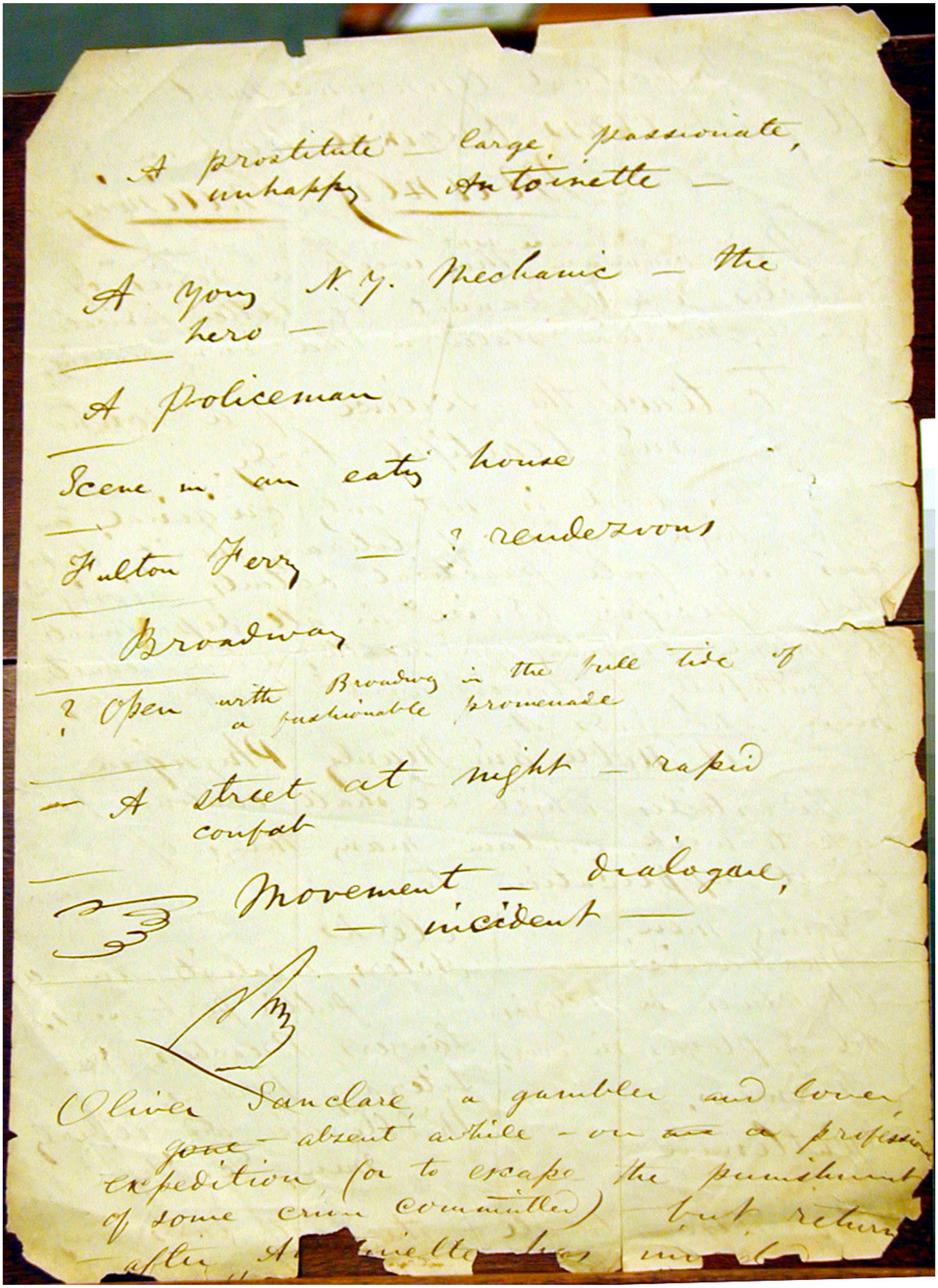
Sometime during or after the fall of 1858, while or after beginning a series of journalistic articles about urban men's health and wellness, Whitman jotted down plans for what appears to be a long story or a novel. By this time he had already published two longer fictions that we are aware of. His first was the newspaper-extra temperance tale *Franklin Evans; or, the Inebriate*, which first appeared under his own name in 1842; his second, published a decade later under a pseudonym, was *Life and Adventures of Jack Engle: An Auto-Biography*, a rowdy, Dickensian city mystery, also serialized in newsprint. The projected third novel, should Whitman have written it, would have been sensational in all senses of the word: a blood-soaked tale of innocent love, secret identities, marriage-breaking, and murder.[6]

As with *Jack Engle*, this one was to be populated with thieves, murderers, prostitutes, and Quakers, including a titular character who is all four at once—alongside a liberal helping of handsome New York mechanics. Many of Whitman's longstanding concerns, both fictional and poetic, are evident in these manuscripts: ferries on the East River, Broadway foot traffic, prostitutes as real people, morally conflicted Quakers, and so on. Today, these four manuscript pages are archived in the Library of Congress's Charles E. Feinberg Collection, from which, with all due credit, the following images are sourced:



A prostitute — large, passionate, unhappy — Antoinette —

A young N.Y. Mechanic — the hero —

A Policeman

Scene in an eating house

Fulton Ferry — ? rendezvous

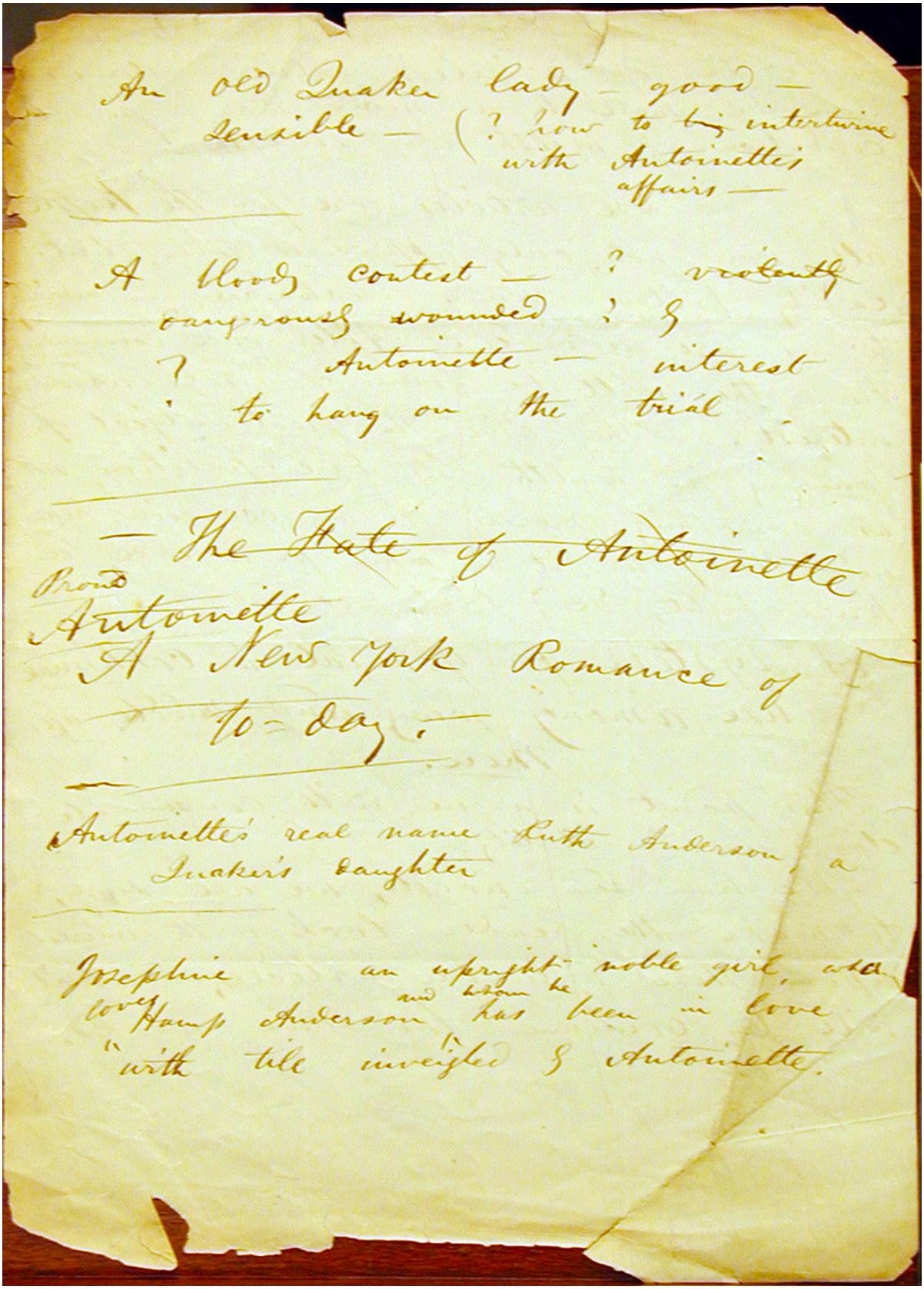
Broadway

? Open with Broadway in the full tide of a fashionable promenade

— A street at night — rapid combat

Movement — dialogue, — incident —

Oliver Sanclare, a gambler and lover gone — absent awhile — on ~~an~~ a professional expedition (or to escape the punishment of some crime committed) but returns after Antoinette has [illegible]



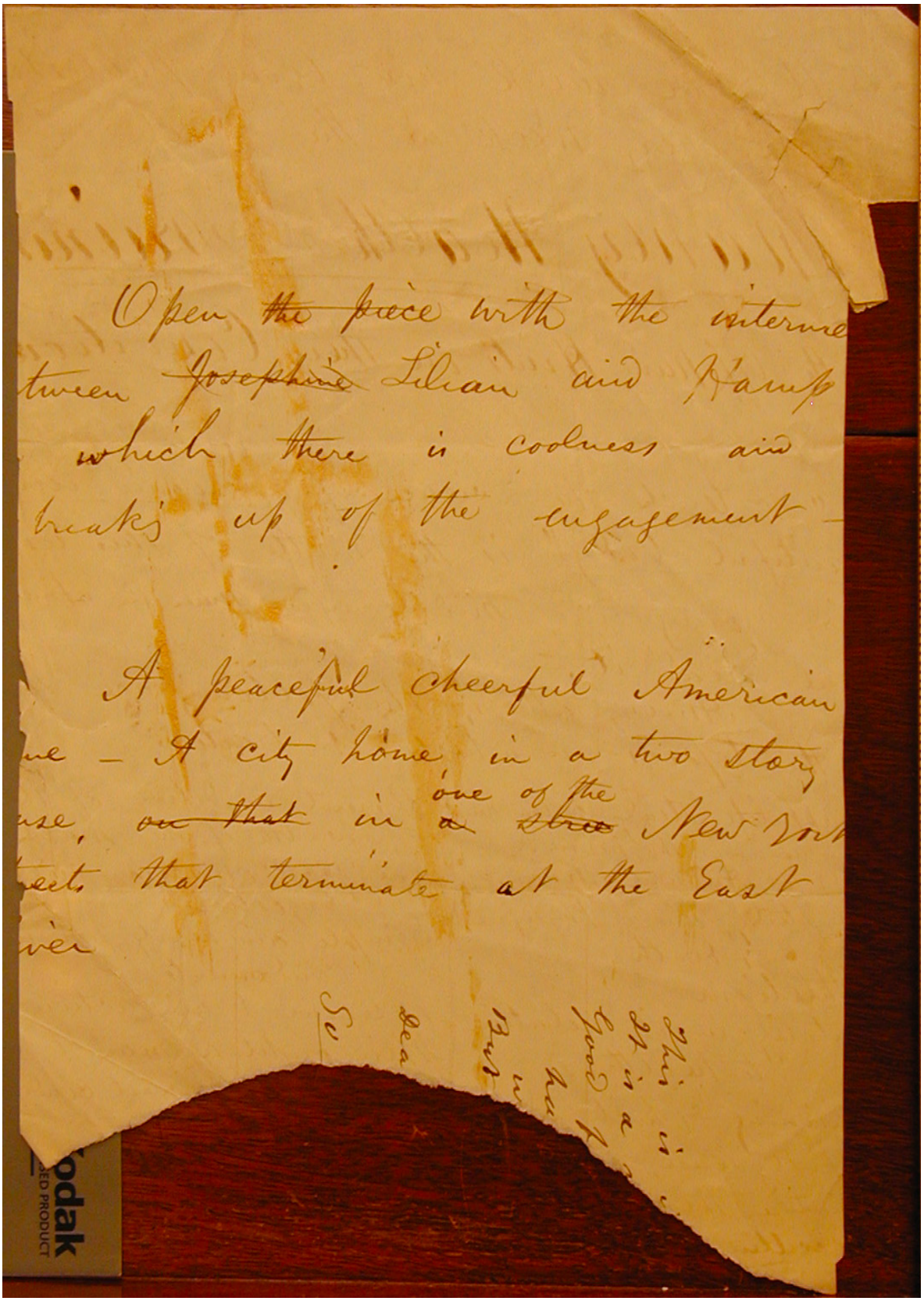
An old Quaker lady — good — sensible — (? how to bring interview with Antoinette; affairs —

A bloody contest — ? violently outrageously wounded ? & ? Antoinette — interest ? to hang on the trial.

— ~~The Fate of Antoinette~~ From Antoinette A New York Romance of To-day.

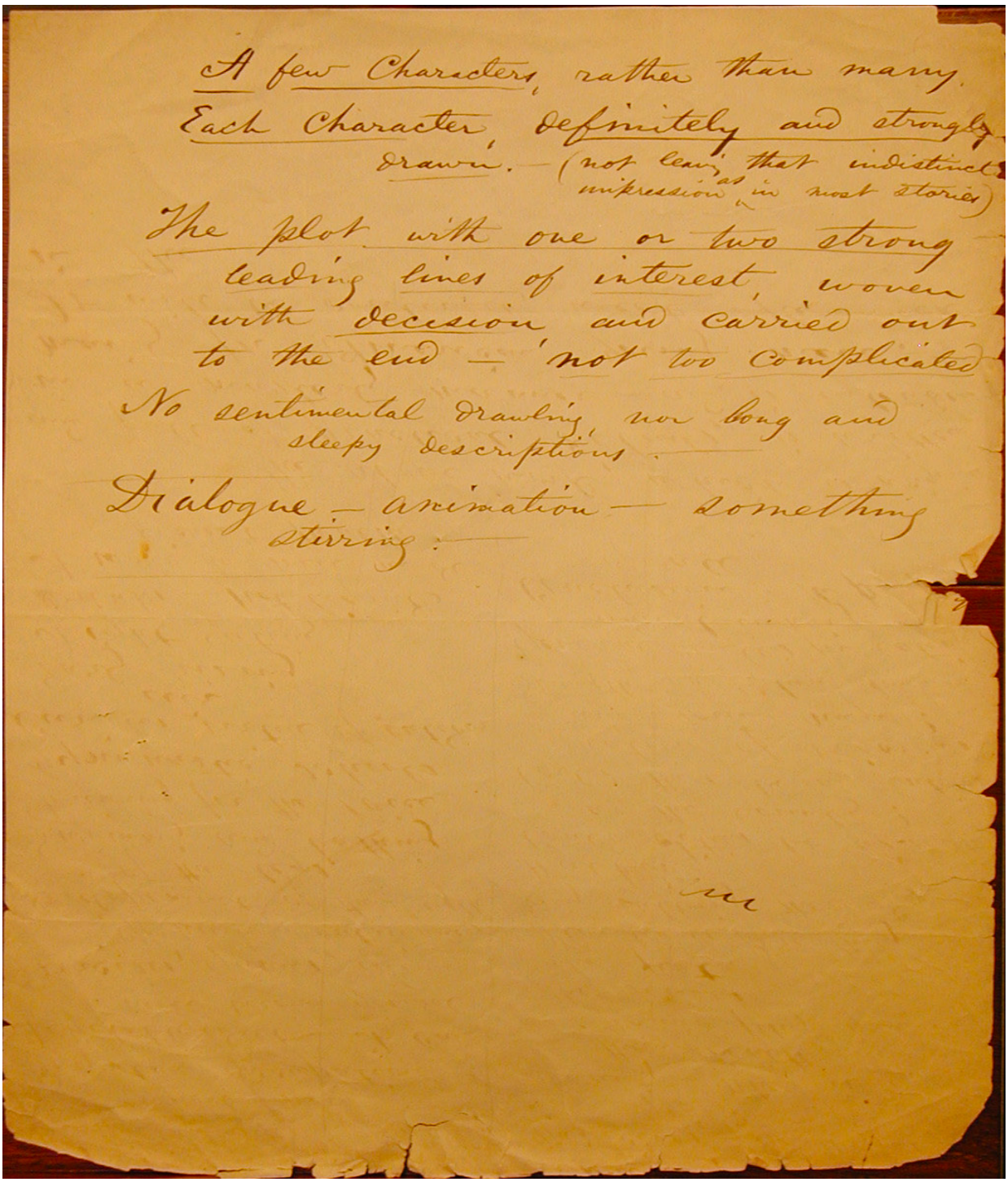
Antoinette's real name Ruth Anderson, a Quaker's daughter

Josephine an upright noble girl, and whom he loves Hamp Anderson has been in love with Lile inveigled & Antoinette.



Open ~~the~~ piece with the interme
tween ~~Josephine~~ Lilian and Ramp
which there is coolness and
breaks up of the engagement —

A peaceful cheerful American
me — A city home in a two story
use, ~~on that~~ in one of the ~~a three~~ New York
eets that terminate at the East
ver



A few Characters, rather than many.
Each Character, definitely and strongly drawn. — (not leaving that indistinct impression as in most stories)

The plot with one or two strong leading lines of interest, woven with decision and carried out to the end — not too complicated

No sentimental drawling, nor long and sleepy descriptions.

Dialogue — animation — something stirring.

In transcription, these pages read as follows, with all of Whitman's misspellings, word variants, and idiosyncratic name spellings maintained:

[1]

A prostitute — large, passionate,
unhappy — Antoinette —

A young N.Y. Mechanic — the
hero —
————

A policeman
————

Scene in an eating house
————

Fulton Ferry — ? rendezvous
————

Broadway
————

? Open with Broadway in the full tide of
a fashionable promenade
————

— A street at night — rapid
confab
————

☞ Movement— dialogue,

☞ —incident—

Oliver Sanclare, a gambler and lover,
~~gone~~ — absent awhile — on ~~an~~ a professional
expedition, (or to escape the punishment
of some crime committed) — but returns
— after Antoinette has inveigled

[2]

An old Quaker lady — good —
sensible—(? how to ~~bring~~ intertwine
with Antoinette's
affairs —

————

A bloody contest — ? ~~violently~~
dangerously wounded ? by
? Antoinette — interest
to hang on the trial

————

~~— The Fate of Antoinette~~
Proud
Antoinette
A New York Romance of
To-day. —

————

Antoinette's real name Ruth Anderson,
a Quaker's daughter

————

Josephine an upright noble girl, who
^ loves Hamp Anderson ^ and whom he has been in love
with till inveigled by Antoinette.

[3]

Open ~~the piece~~ with the interview
between ~~Josephine~~ Lilian and Hamp
[?] which there is coolness and
[?] breaking up of the engagement —

A peaceful cheerful American
[sce?]ne — A city home, in a two story

[ho?]use, ~~on that~~ in ~~a stree~~ one of the New York
[s?]treets that terminate at the East River

[The following text, at the page bottom,
is turned sideways and partially torn away]

This is i
It is a n
Good f
Ha
w
But

Dea

Su

[4]

A few Characters, rather than many.
Each Character, definitely and strongly
drawn. — (not leaving that indistinct
impression ^ as in most stories)

The plot with one or two strong
leading lines of interest, woven
with decision, and carried out
to the end — not too complicated

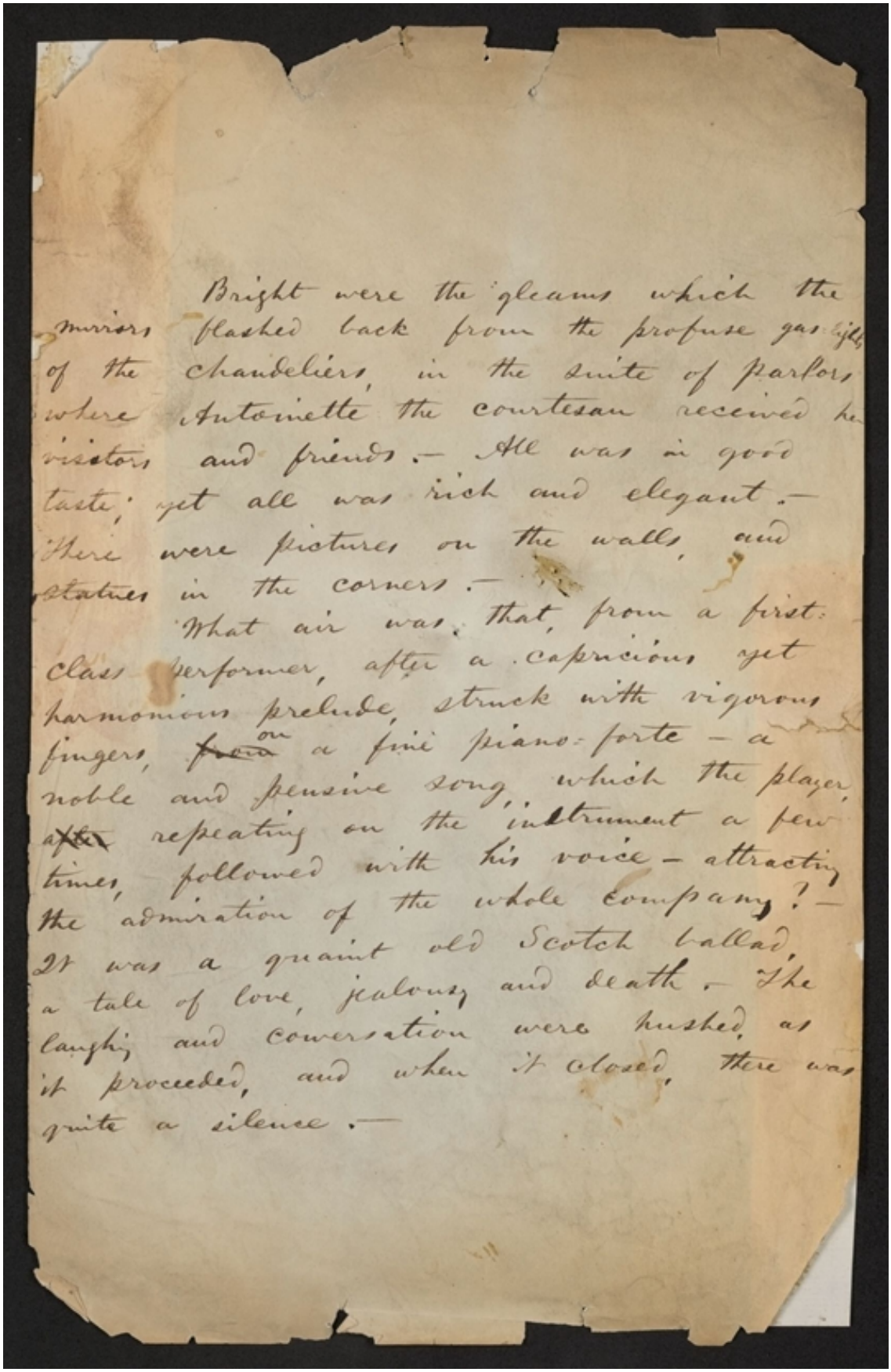
No sentimental drawling, nor long and
sleepy descriptions —

Dialogue — animation — something
stirring. —

Without the benefit of having Whitman's *Manly Health* series yet at hand, White dated these manuscript pages to the late 1840s or early 1850s. Grier more accurately pegs them between 1859 and 1861—based, impressively, on nothing more than the poet's tenuous finances of the late 1850s (and his consequent likelihood of writing popular fictions for money); the possibility, now confirmed, that the draft placard on the back of these notes might have yielded a "book on health and physical training" in the late 1850s; and the style of Whitman's handwriting.[7] Because Whitman cancels (strikes through with a vertical line) the *Manly Health* placard notices on the reverse of the *Proud Antoinette* notes, we may more or less confirm Grier's chronology: *Manly Health* likely came first, making September 1858 the earliest date at which Whitman can reasonably be expected to have flipped the pages and begun plotting out a new fiction.[8]

He seems to have begun writing that fiction, too. As White discovered, the Feinberg Collection also contains a one-page prose manuscript in which Whitman describes a courtesan named Antoinette receiving guests in her handsome, mirrored salon. The manuscript page comes to an end just as all present are arrested by the voice, and elegant chordwork, of an unidentified male pianist. Given Whitman's emphasis here on expository writing, establishing setting, and introducing a new character, this fragment may have been intended as the beginning of, or an early passage in, whatever work it was written for:

> Bright were the gleams which the
> mirrors flashed back from the profuse gas-lights
> of the chandeliers, in the suite of parlors
> where Antoinette the Courtesan received her
> visitors and friends. — All was in good
> taste; yet all was rich and elegant. —
> There were pictures on the walls, and
> statues in the corners. —
>
> What air was that, from a first-
> class performer, after a capricious yet
> harmonious prelude, struck with vigorous
> fingers, ~~from~~ [on] a fine piano-forte — a
> noble and pensive song, which the player,
> ~~after~~ repeating on the instrument a few
> times, — followed with his voice — attracting
> the admiration of the whole company? —
> It was a quaint old Scotch ballad,
> a tale of love, jealousy and death. — The
> laughing and conversation were hushed, as
> it proceeded, and when it closed, there was
> quite a silence. —



Bright were the gleams which the
mirrors flashed back from the profuse gas-lights
of the chandeliers, in the suite of parlors
where Antoinette the courtesan received her
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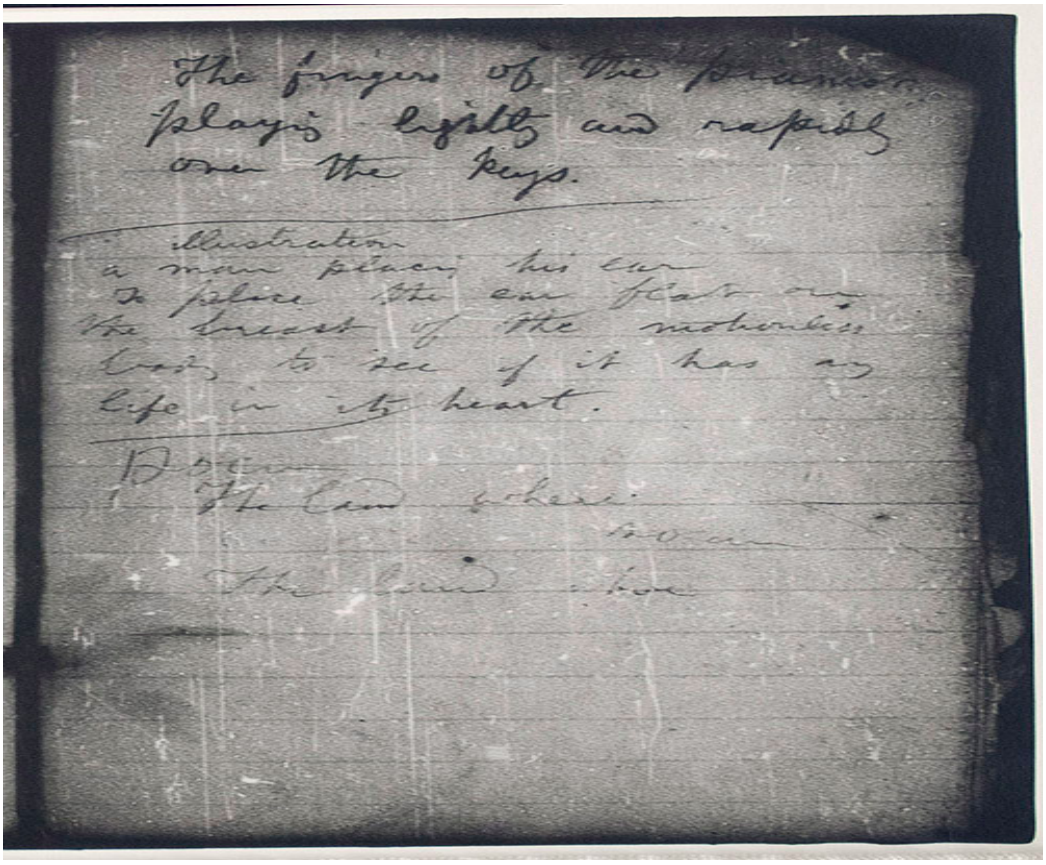
a tale of love, jealousy and death. The
laugh, and conversation were hushed, as
it proceeded, and when it closed, there was
quite a silence. —

White himself writes that this "seems to be a projected beginning for the Antoinette story," and Grier agrees, as do I: it is a start.[9] However, it is doubtful that this passage is the final word of the *Proud Antoinette* story, at least as it exists in manuscript. Consider the following prose lines, penciled into the top third of a page in Whitman's "women" notebook, written around the same time:



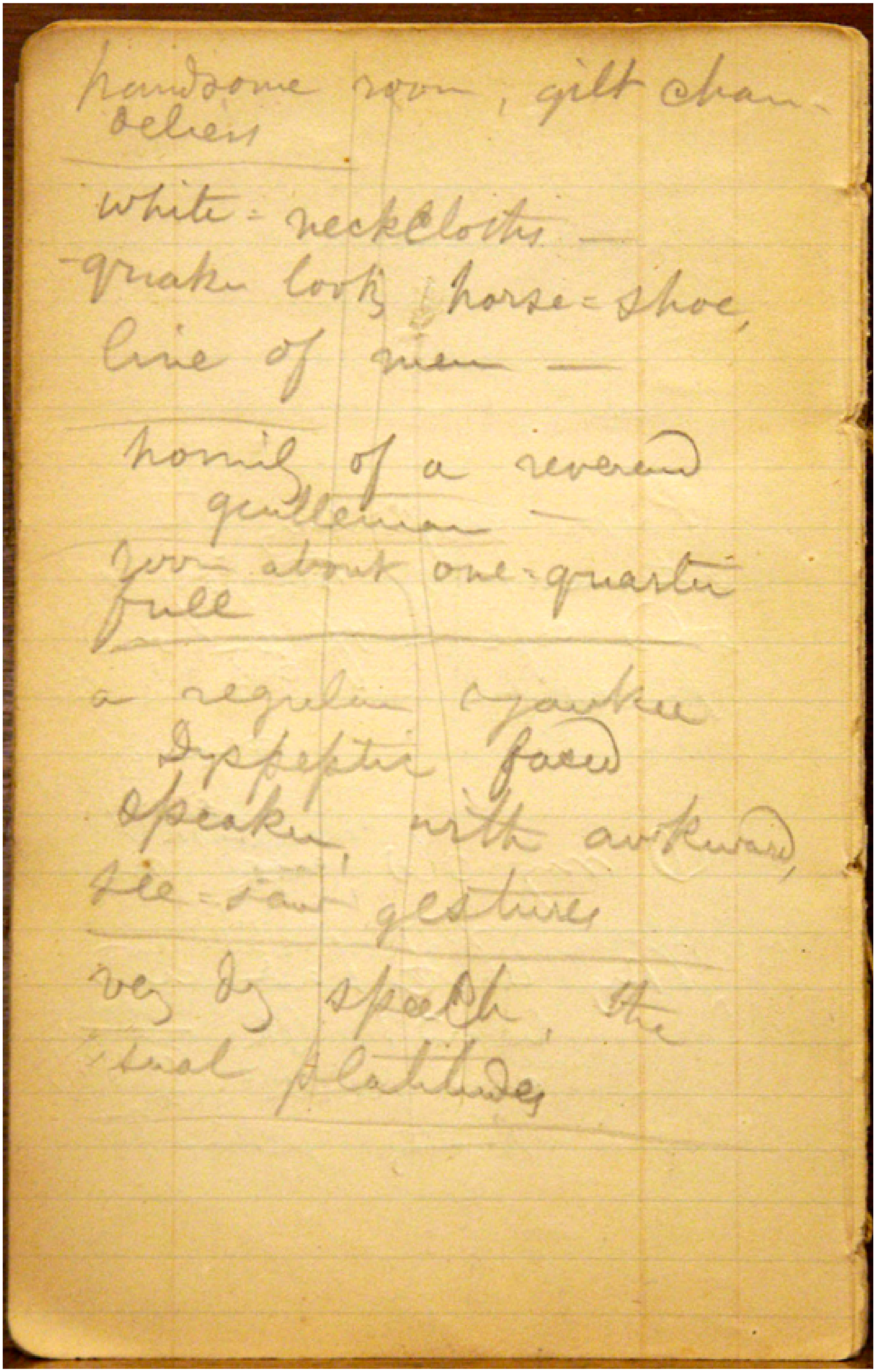
The fingers of the pianist
playing lightly and rapidly
over the keys.
————

illustration
a man placing his ear
To place the ear flat on
the breast of the motionless
body to see if it has any
life in its heart.[10]
————

The first three lines could, of course, be a trial poetic verse for *Leaves of Grass*, coming as they do in a notebook already peppered with poetic passages. If it *is* poetry, it seems destined for the thirty-third section of "Song of Myself," in which Whitman enumerates a long list of New Yorkers going about their daily work. However, as Grier notes of this passage, Whitman "usually dismissed piano music as trivial and decorative, probably in reaction to the salon music of the time" (*NUPM* 1:152). (Indeed, both references to pianos in the final 1881 edition of *Leaves* are derisive, with Whitman portraying them as "glib" and their tunes uncomplex). Nor does Whitman indent these lines, as he often (though not always) does when composing poetry in manuscripts of the period.[11] Therefore, in connection with the prose description that follows—complete with a note for an "illustration"—this passage makes more sense as a possible note toward a scene, perhaps one (with an anticipated accompanying engraving) from a story like *Proud Antoinette*. In particular, the element of a pianist, juxtaposed with what appears to be the description of a possible illustration of a murder scene, makes this notebook page a potential addition to the known roster of *Proud Antoinette* notes.

There may be another candidate, at that. Near the back of Whitman's "[*illeg.*] Dick Hunt" notebook (composed between roughly 1856 and 1857) appears a page of what Grier calls "[n]otes on a public meeting, led by clergymen, perhaps taken in connection with WW's journalism" (*NUPM* 1:278):

handsome room, gilt chan-
deliers
————————
white-neckcloths —
— quaker looking horse-shoe,
line of men —
————————
homily of a reverend
gentleman —
————————————
room about one-quarter
full
————————————
a regular Yankee
Dyspeptic faced
speaker, with awkward,
see-saw gestures
————————————
very dry speech, the
usual platitudes[12]


handsome room; gilt chan-
deliers

white-neckcloths —
quaker look, horse-shoe,
line of men —

homily of a reverend
gentleman —
room about one-quarter
full

a regular yankee
dyspeptic faced
speaker, with awkward,
see-saw gestures

very dry speech, the
usual platitudes

It is indeed possible that these are notes taken during a Quaker meeting, as Whitman is known to have attended a number of them in maturity, occasionally on journalistic assignment. However, no such scene appears in Whitman's extant journalism, so, absent any further context, these notes may just as easily be interpreted as setting an imagined scene, one that, much like Whitman's earlier novel *Jack Engle*, is to be liberally populated with Quakers. In his notes toward *Proud Antoinette*, Whitman lists at least two characters who are associated with the Society of Friends: "An old Quaker lady — good — sensible," whose relationship to the story's antihero is undetermined, and Antoinette herself, whose "real name [is] Ruth Anderson, a Quaker's daughter" (*NUPM* 1:402). The irony of a Quaker becoming a murderer and "inveigler" (not to mention a prostitute) should be rather clear—as clear, anyway, as it is in *Jack Engle*, whose antagonist, Mr. Covert, is at once a Quaker and a scheming thief. For what it is worth, *Jack Engle* contains its own Quaker-meeting scene, one that is similarly wry about the turnout, the speaker's overwrought gestures, and the likely impact of the sermon.

Whitman wrote such scenes based on real experiences with Quaker meetings, as well as newspaper coverage of Quaker speakers. Indeed, Whitman's recourse to the daily news for story and scene ideas is rather notable in his manuscripts—for which reason I also include here Whitman's brief mention of a broken romance, similar to the projected plot of *Proud Antoinette*, which he jots down in a notebook now called "Poem incarnating the mind" (composed pre-1855):

> story of Julia Scudder
> whose husband left her

Though the details of her jilting are unknown, Julia Scudder was Whitman's paternal first cousin. The daughter of U.S. Representative (and Whitman's uncle) Tredwell Scudder, Julia married a New York merchant named William B. Green in 1834—presumably the man who left her.[13] In any case, besides relating a bit of family history, this small note may be the seed of a plot or subplot, as in several other instances Whitman is known to have adapted news events and family lore into fiction. In his aptly named story-cluster "Some Fact-Romances" (1845), he includes his own mother and maternal grandparents in the final "fact-romance," and for the first one he may have repurposed a news item about a drowning on Long Island.[14]

It is worth lingering for a moment longer on the role of subterfuge in Whitman's fictions of marriage (as well as on a particular word he almost

invariably uses to describe such trickery). If Julia Scudder's husband had left her for another woman, then Whitman's attention to such an event would likely have been for its lurid glimpse into a union built upon a lie. Whether it was a personal preference, or a market-influenced decision to imitate the many sensation fictions of the period depicting marital deviousness, Whitman's fictions are chock-full of marriages proposed for the sake of stealing a partner's fortune. In his notebooks, his succinct term for this marital dynamic is "inveigling"—a word that more broadly refers to deception by flattery. This word, it will be remembered, appears several times in the *Proud Antoinette* notes. In the first instance, Whitman establishes that the upright Josephine (a character he also considers calling "Lillian") "loves Hamp Anderson ^ and [is she] whom he has been in love with till inveigled by Antoinette"; in the second instance, he determines that Oliver Sanclare, a gambler (and likely the story's secondary antagonist) "returns — after Antoinette has inveigled" (leaves 1 and 2 above; compare *NUPM* 1:402).

It is a word, and a concept, of which Whitman is notably fond in his fiction. In *Jack Engle*, inveigling (and then forcing) one's way into marriage for money, is precisely what the antagonist, Mr. Covert, attempts to do—as does the similarly named villain in Whitman's earlier, related story "One Wicked Impulse!" (1845). At that, the original plot notes for *Jack Engle* appear alongside briefer sketches toward other such plots, including one concerning "a schoolmaster [who] ^while intoxicated, was married to a woman, by certain persons to cover their own guilt," and another about a "pickpocket [becoming] the husband of a worthy woman who has been inveigled into marriage with him" (*NUPM* 1:97). Clearly, Whitman found such a situation narratologically generative, the sort of fictional setup likely to yield "[d]ialogue — animation — something stirring" (*NUPM* 1:403).[15]

Of course, the question remains: *Did* it yield those things? Beyond all these notes and fragments, two other bits of evidence suggest that it may have—evidence, at any rate, that in late 1858 and early 1859 composing racy fictions was once again on Whitman's mind. The first is an editorial or letter he published in the Brooklyn *Daily Times* for December 13, 1858, titled "Sensation Stories in Sunday Papers." In it, Whitman writes, with a mixture of condescension and approval, of the popular fictions then finding large audiences in New York's literary weeklies. It is worth quoting nearly in full, as one of the few examples of Whitman speaking at length about popular fictions—and, even more unusually, referring to them with some approval. New York weeklies like the Sunday *Times*, *Dispatch*, *Atlas*, *Mercury*, and *Courier*, Whitman writes,

. . . are immense on blood and thunder romances with alliterative titles and plots of startling interest.—These stories are curious productions in their way, and the cultivated reader on the lookout for amusement may enjoy a hearty laugh at any time over such sanguinary tales as the "Bloody Burglar of Babylon"; the "Maniac Maiden's Fate"; or the "Red-Headed Ragamuffin's Revenge." All these unique publications have second and often third titles of the most mysterious, thrilling, harrowing and altogether insane description—calculated to impress the uninitiated reader with awe and to inflame his curiosity for the "coming events" that cast such portentous shadows before. These things are to literature what the Bowery melodramas are to the stage, and are read by the same class that would hang with rapture over the latter. When the pirate chief drinks the blood of his victims in the largest of gory goblets, and with a burst of savage laughter flings the cup at the head of his trembling prisoner, the appreciative newsboy who reads the eloquent account is impelled to shout "Hi! hi!" in a transport of enthusiasm. When the virtuous young mechanic rescues the lovely but unhappy milliner's apprentice from the base violence of the fast young aristocrat, what delight thrills the reader's breast! When the heroine has been stolen in infancy from her Fifth avenue father, who is possessed of princely wealth, and when in chapter the last, after years of unheard-of privations, she is at length restored to the paternal arms, what Sunday-paper lover of any sensibility but must feel a sympathetic throb when that venerable man falls upon her breast in a burst of confidence and a shower of tears, and ejaculates:—"Ke-ind Heaven, I thank thee!—it is—it is indeed my long-lost che-ild!"

It is with added irony that we may now read such a passage, knowing that only a few years previously Whitman had written just such a narrative, about a lost orphan reunited with family (and wealth), spangled with odd, idiomatic dialogue throughout and capped by an absurdly long title.

In an unusually generous mood toward sensation fiction, Whitman continues:

To say the truth, these productions, which obtained the acme of their popularity in the *Ledger* are not the choicest in composition or conception of plot and character, but after all, we doubt very much whether the outcry raised against them in some quarters is sustained by common sense. It may be said with tolerable safety that a large proportion of the admirers of this kind of literature might do worse if debarred from the enjoyment of their favorite mental pabulum. No doubt the reverend editors of *Zion's Trumpet* or of the *Barraboola Banner* would prefer that those excellent publications should be perused in their stead, but with all respect to these well-intentioned gentlemen, we doubt if such a substitution would be altogether successful. The public for whom these tales are written require strong contrasts, broad effects and the fiercest kind of "intense" writing generally.[16]

This final comment is notably reminiscent of Whitman's directions to himself, in his *Proud Antoinette* plot notes, to make "Each Character, definitely and strongly drawn" and to write "something stirring" (leaf 4 above; compare *NUPM* 1:403). It also mirrors notes from the final bit of evidence that Whitman may

have dedicated substantial time to writing popular fiction in the late 1850s, even as he was hard at work expanding *Leaves of Grass* for a hoped-for third edition.

This evidence is a manuscript (now lost) likely written in 1858-1859, which Whitman begins with a rather dejected reminder to himself that "[i]t is now time to *Stir* first for *Money* enough *to live and* provide for *M —To Stir*," that is, enough to "first write Stories, and get out of this Slough" (*NUPM* 1:405). It would be a year or two before the upstart Boston publisher Thayer and Eldridge gave Whitman the opportunity to expand and publish *Leaves* for a third time, and in the meantime it is clear from this manuscript that Whitman was keeping all his writerly options on the table: the handwritten pages contain draft lines of poetry, a proposal for lecture series on religion and Manhattan history, notes on elocution and public speaking, and—most saliently—"*Directions for Story Writing*" (*NUPM* 1:407). They read as follows:

Haste along (Don't stop so long to think)—*write quick. Strongly lined and colored.* Only one or two grand culmination-points (perhaps only one is best,) in one story. *Dash off characters at random*, then fit them in afterward *A strong beginning to arouse curiosity* —and also a well-written ending. *One or two marked characters*. Plenty of incident—Dialogues (*NUPM* 1:407)

These directions bear a striking resemblance to Whitman's thoughts on serialized Sunday sensation fictions, as well as his notebook reminder to compose *Proud Antoinette* with "Movement—dialogue,—[and] incident" in mind. Compare the fourth page of the *Proud Antoinette* plot notes, from above:

A few Characters, rather than many.

Each Character, definitely and strongly
drawn. — (not leaving that indistinct
impression ^ as in most stories)

The plot with one or two strong
leading lines of interest, woven
with decision, and carried out
to the end — not too complicated

No sentimental drawling, nor long and
sleepy descriptions —

Dialogue — animation — something
stirring. —

The preponderance of evidence, it must be admitted, is compelling. All told, the amount of manuscript text related to *Proud Antoinette* is more (by word count) than exists for *Life and Adventures of Jack Engle*, a similarly plotted-out idea that Whitman *did* secretly see into print. While one cannot say with any certainty, the odds are reasonable that in the late 1850s Whitman may have tried his hand at churning out another potboiler. (He could do it quickly, to be sure. Whitman later swore he wrote *Franklin Evans* in three days, at the blistering rate of 17,000 words per day.) If so, there are many newspapers left to be searched for it, nearly all of them undigitized—a few of them not even available on microfilm.

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Though dating Whitman's notes is not always precise work, all of those reprinted above were, or could have been, written in the mid-to-late 1850s, which is in keeping with the likeliest publication window for *Proud Antoinette*. This begins during the composition of *Manly Health and Training* (September 1858) and likely ends when the poet dropped everything to go to Boston, in March 1860, to publish a third edition of *Leaves of Grass*. After the spring of 1860, the odds Whitman was publishing fiction drop substantially, since (a) the increase in extant correspondence for this period gives scholars a greater knowledge of his activities, and (b) those activities largely center around the publication and moderate success of the third edition of *Leaves*, followed by his relocation to Washington, DC, where nursing, poetry writing, and scribal work kept him both busy and remunerated. It is unlikely, though not at all impossible, that Whitman published fiction beyond 1860.

Thus, looking for any published version of *Proud Antoinette*, however fragmentary, will require scouring as many New-York-area literary periodicals published from 1858 to 1860 as are still available in archives, particularly those that Whitman had formerly edited, knew the editors of, is known to have published in, or was at least aware of. Whitman knew well enough which weeklies published sensation novels—he lists a handful of them in the *Daily Times* piece above—and, better still, he knew where he could find their offices. In his "George Walker" notebook (written ca. 1856-1865), Whitman lists a number of such periodicals, including their addresses, which may indicate an interest in either submitting writing to them, or working for them:

—Sunday Courier 15 Spruce
—Sunday Mercury 22 Spruce

—Sunday Times 162 Nassau
—Daily News 129 Nassau st 2d story
—Irish American 116 Nassau
—Sunday Leader 25 Chambers st
—Leslie's Illustrated News 12 Spruce st
—Young America 98 Nassau (*NUPM* 1:239)

Other literary weeklies listed by Whitman include the *Clipper*, the (NY) *Picayune*, and the *Courier & Enquirer* (*NUPM* 1:240). These are the sorts of newspapers that quickly garnered large circulations by publishing those "blood and thunder romances with alliterative titles" referred to above. Whitman's extensive experience placing fictions, and his editorial connections to a number of literary weeklies of the period (above all his close friendship with Henry Clapp, editor of the *Saturday Press*), underscore his proximity to the thriving literary ecosystem of sensation novels, sentimental fictions, city mysteries, temperance tales, and other popular fictions then being serialized in and around New York.

So far, I have searched through a number of newspapers that match or nearly match these criteria (and dozens more that don't) including the Sunday *Dispatch*, the *New York Atlas*, the Sunday *Times* (ed. M.M. Noah), the *New-Yorker*, the *Brooklyn Evening Star*, the *Brooklyn Standard*, and the *Daily Standard*. However, there are many more left to be pored over. Based on Whitman's publication record and his occasional notes to himself, those might include New-York-area newspapers like

the Sunday *Mercury*,
the *Morning Courier & New-York Enquirer*,
M.M. Noah's *Sunday Times & Noah's Weekly Messenger*,
the New York *Leader* (*Sunday Leader* until 1856),
the *Weekly Universe*,

and a number of others. Sunday literary weeklies, especially, might be given extra scrutiny, since in his *Daily Times* editorial Whitman singles them out as the best venues for placing sensation fiction.[17] (And because both of his extant novels appeared in them.) In any case, more newspapers, and historical New York newspapers in particular, are being digitized every day.

It is a good time to be searching for *Proud Antoinette*.

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Notes

1 See White's "Whitman as Short Story Writer: Two Unpublished Manuscripts" in *Notes and Queries* 107 (March 1962), 87. At the time, White was the editor of the freshly founded *Walt Whitman Review*, predecessor to the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* (hereafter *WWQR*).

2 For Grier's transcription of the *Proud Antoinette* notes, see *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, ed. Edward F. Grier, 6 vols. (New York: NYU Press, 1984), 1:401-404, hereafter abbreviated *NUPM*. There, they are titled "a prostitute" and "Bright were the gleams," after their first lines. Due to time and typesetting constraints, Grier presents them in a putative "final" form, with all struck-through words relegated to footnotes. The *Manly Health and Training* placard drafts may also be found in the *NUPM* 6:2255-2256, as well as in my introduction to the republication in full of Whitman's "Manly Health and Training, With Off-Hand Hints Toward Their Conditions," in *WWQR* 33 (2016), 184-310.

3 Whitman's own alternate title is *The Fate of Antoinette*. Based on the manuscripts, transcribed below, White also suggests the hypothetical but plausible title "Antoinette the Courtesan."

4 Whitman's *Life and Adventures of Jack Engle: An Auto-Biography* was first republished in *WWQR* 34 (2017), 262-357.

5 These latter take up most of Whitman's "a schoolmaster" notebook, which is populated entirely with ideas toward fictions. The full manuscript, dateable to 1852 at the latest, may be found at the *Walt Whitman Archive*, ed. Ed Folsom and Kenneth M. Price.

6 I say "third" but Whitman also published an abortive novel fragment in 1844, and completed a full novel manuscript (now lost) in 1850.

7 This is Grier's phrase, in *NUPM* 1:401.

8 A number of Whitman's fiction ideas and notes are still extant, in manuscript: other than those mentioned in this article, they include those traditionally titled "far. Amongst this," "Of a summer evening," "distinctness every syllable," "A large, good-looking woman," "This singular young man," and "The good hostess" (see *NUPM* passim). Others undoubtedly exist, whether as single sentences sandwiched between larger passages in Whitman's notebooks, or elsewhere.

9 See White, 89.

10 Compare *NUPM* 1:152, in which Grier relocates Whitman's strikethroughs to editorial footnotes.

11 For more discussion of Whitman's quasi-predictable practice of hanging indentation in his notebooks, and the consequently fuzzy line between what may be considered poetry or prose therein, see Matt Miller's *Collage of Myself: Walt Whitman and the Making of* Leaves of Grass (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), especially Chapter 1, "How Whitman

Used His Early Notebooks." See also Edward F. Grier's discussion of the significance of Whitman's prose and poetic lineations in manuscript, and of Grier's not always well-founded reasoning for removing such indents as needed, in *NUPM* 1:xviii.

12 Compare *NUPM* 1:278. As with the other transcriptions provided here, I rely (when possible) on the original manuscript pages, whose lineation, indentation, strikethroughs, underlines, and other peculiarities I have tried to maintain.

13 See the *Long-Island Star* (May 4, 1831), 3, leftmost column. The two were married in Islip, Long Island. Oddly, Green appears in a news item five years later in which not he, but an employee of his, was revealed to be a con-man and "arch swindler" living under an assumed name, unbeknownst even to the man's wife. For the latter, see "Prince—The Aeronaut," an item reprinted from the *Sun*, in the *Long-Island Star* (February 22, 1836), 3. Green is listed as a manufacturer of iron chests and—again, strangely—as having forgiven the con-man for having stolen a gold watch from him.

14 Whitman's "Some Fact-Romances" first appeared in *The Aristidean* for December 1845, pages 444-449. In his "Poem incarnating the mind" notebook (written before 1855), he pencils himself a reminder about "The creek on Long Island when the boating party were returning and capsized, and the young man saved his sweetheart and lost his sister" (leaf 13 verso). This premise closely resembles Whitman's first "fact-romance" and may recall one of several such news items Whitman could have read in the 1840s and 1850s. Both the stories and the notebook may be viewed online at the *Walt Whitman Archive*.

15 "Inveigle" is one of those words, like "promulge" or "exurge," whose sound and sense alike seem to have captivated Whitman for life, to the delight of stylometric enthusiasts afterward. He even singles out the word for special etymological consideration, in a late-life conversation with his friends (and literary co-executors) Horace Traubel and Richard Maurice Bucke. At the mention of the word, Whitman asks:

> "What is the origin of 'inveigle'? what does it mean?" This suggested an appeal to the dictionary which was in the pile of books at his feet. Considerable talk as he worked. And "inveigle" led to other words. Bucke asked: "Walt, what did you mean by the word 'fores' in the line, 'Poke with the tangled fores'?" W. made the reply usual in such cases: "Sure enough, what did I?" It seemed obvious enough. Much to my surprise W. answered: "'Fores': the front, the snout, whatever," etc. Nor was he disposed to stop there. "The word 'stoop' would be another puzzler: Mrs. Gilchrist told me when she met a line, 'I went up the stoop, off the stoop,' some such use of the word, she put down her book, wondering for hours what could have been meant." W. said: "It's a good New York word: commonly, everywhere, used up that way: probably of Dutch origin." Referred to Century Dictionary. W. asked: "I wonder if my words will be included? If I found the way open I'd ask if 'Presidentiad' is to be used." Bucke suggested "yawp" also.

Later, after the poet's death, American clergyman Gerald Stanley Lee would wish (in Traubel's *Conservator*) "that Walt could be inveigled into coming back awhile." See *The Conservator* 19 (June 1908), 54; the block quote is sourced from Traubel's *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, ed. Sculley Bradley (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953) 4:243, which may

be found on the *Walt Whitman Archive*.

16 All three block quotes come from the same editorial, reproduced in *The Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman*, 2 vols., ed. Emory Holloway (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1921), 2:19-20.

17 Intriguingly, if opaquely, a torn-away fragment contained in Whitman's *Proud Antoinette* notes includes the incomplete word "Su" (see leaf 3 above). Grier lists this partially removed text as "six lines of unidentifiable verse," but if so, it is not verse that ever appeared in print; these sequential line beginnings do not match verses published in any of the six editions of *Leaves of Grass*, nor in the poems Whitman published in periodicals (*NUPM* 1:403 n27). Though the hanging indent gives the appearance of verse, the underlined partial word "Su" may also suggest prose. In his manuscripts, Whitman rarely underlines words in trial poetry, as that would indicate the need to italicize them during the typesetting process—which is not Whitman's typical practice in *Leaves*.