

Frederick Faust

by Jon Tuska

Frederick Schiller Faust was born in Seattle, Washington, on May 29, 1892. An author of poetry, romances, fairy tales, legends, parables, allegories, fantasies, dreams, and psycho-dramas, Faust was one of the world's greatest storytellers who by a fortuitous accident for his legions of devoted readers happened to write in addition to many other kinds of fiction over 300 Western novels and stories. Of Faust's many pseudonyms, George Owen Baxter, David Manning, Evan Evans, and above all Max Brand are the bylines most common in his Western story appearances.

At a very early age Faust moved with his parents to the San Joaquin Valley in California. His parents were poor and, apparently to compensate for a life in which there was sometimes not enough to eat, Faust turned to medieval romantic literature and his own vivid imagination for solace. It was the extraordinary amount of physical labor Faust did as a youth that strained and enlarged his heart. Many of his protagonists would be confronted early on in his narratives with similarly brutal manual labor. When orphaned, he went to live with a distant relative, Thomas Downey, a high school principal. Faust was sixteen when Downey introduced him to a Classical education. Greek and Latin literature and mythology fired Faust's mind and remained a lifelong frame of reference. As late in his career as "Gunman's Bluff" in *Star Western* (4/34), it was not unusual for Faust to include in a description of an impending gunfight a Classical reference: "Martindale converged on Rafferty's saloon. Not all of Martindale, for the women and children remained at home, of course, and they formed the whispering chorus against which the tragedy was enacted." Faust's images and even his characters would shimmer and intimate those once bright forms born in the vivid light of the lands bordering what Herodotus called $\eta\delta\epsilon\ \eta\ \Theta\alpha\lambda\alpha\sigma\sigma\alpha$ and Julius Caesar *mare nostrum*. Years hence, when Faust found himself in that enchanted land of the Mediterranean, he commented: "Wherever there is Greece there is magic. And when mountains or islands appear blue, there is usually a silver or golden slope shining through the mist. One rarely

finds a landscape that is all dark.” Faust would find the dark landscapes, though, as had Odysseus, and he would project them outward into the mountain desert of the great American West, but always there was the brilliant light in the pantheon of the firmament. Homer, Vergil, Dante, Shakespeare, Æschylus, yes, — not so much Sophocles, and never Euripedes (who dared look into the abyss and see that the universe at base was irrational and therefore incomprehensible to reason) — these were the purveyors of the worlds and the moods that preoccupied Faust and they left an eternal imprint on what he wrote.

He matriculated at the University of California at Berkeley and showed significant promise even then as a writer. His natural inclination toward poetry helped make one of the most moving experiences of his undergraduate years hearing Rupert Brooke reading aloud from his own works. Faust was too much of a maverick, his mind too questing, to be a docile student and, after four years, he was denied the right to graduate.

Faust became convinced that to die in battle was the best, most heroic kind of death, a romantic notion that presumably prompted him to try getting into the Great War by immigrating to Canada. All of his efforts, however, were of no avail and in 1917, in New York, unable to get shipped overseas even in the Ambulance Corps, Faust turned to what from then on would be his principal aim in life, to become a major poet. In a letter of protest to *The New York Times*, working at manual labor and voicing his outrage, Faust objected to the social injustice of his lot and, amazingly, was given assistance by Mark Twain’s sister who arranged for him to meet Robert Hobart Davis, an editor with the Munsey publications. His acumen and immense talent impressed Davis and Faust soon became a regular contributor to *All-Story Weekly*, a magazine Davis edited. By the time he sold his third story to Davis, he had adopted Max Brand as his byline. There was a sound reason for this beyond the desire for anonymity. The United States was at war with Germany and many Americans considered anything German anathema. What name could be more recognizable as German in origin than Faust?

Presently he felt his new career as a magazine writer sufficiently secure that he returned to California intent on marrying his college sweetheart, Dorothy Schillig. They were married that year and from this union came three children, Jane Faust born on

March 29, 1918, John Faust born on November 2, 1919, and Judith Faust born on February 3, 1928.

In 1918 Faust wrote his first Western fiction for *All-Story Weekly*, although a mining novel from the previous year began in the then-contemporary West. First came the novelette, “Above the Law,” followed by the short story, “Bad-Eye, His Life and Letters.” It was Davis’s idea, since he had lost Zane Grey to the better-paying slick-paper magazines, that Faust should try to duplicate Grey’s success and write Western fiction in the same mode. Unquestionably *THE HERITAGE OF THE DESERT* (Harper, 1910) was one of the Grey stories Faust read. It had run serially in *The Popular Magazine*. It is scarcely a coincidence that Mescal, Grey’s heroine, who rides a mare called Black Bolly with Wolf, her faithful wolf-dog, always at their side, should have been transformed by Faust into the striking images of Dan Barry, his stallion Satan, and his wolf dog Black Bart in his first Western novel to be published in book form following its serialization in *All-Story Weekly*. He titled it *THE UNTAMED* (Putnam, 1919). While both Grey and Faust would eschew realism in their finest Western fiction in preference for psycho-dramas in the realm of the dream and the archetypes of the collective unconscious, they went about it in very different ways. Grey tied his dreams to a vivid depiction of the wilderness and the vast terrain of the West as he personally experienced it. Faust plunged instead into the no less vast cavity of his soul — that expanse which is without measure, as Heraclitus said — and for him the experience must have been much as he would later describe it in 1926 for Oliver Tay in what became *THE BORDER BANDIT* (Harper, 1947): “...He was seeing himself for the very first time; and, just as his eye could wander through the unfathomed leagues of the stars which were strewn across the universe at night, so he could turn his glance inward and probe the vastness of new-found self. All new!” Dan Barry is not a hero, Western, traditional, or otherwise, but an archetypal projection of the shadow: “They seemed like one being rather than three. The wolf was the eyes, the horse the strong body to flee or pursue, and the man was the brain which directed, and the power which struck.” The antagonist Dan Barry battles in *THE UNTAMED* is Jim Silent. It is Silent who in his fistfight with Dan brings to him “this first taste of his own powers — this first taste...of blood!” Dan is more feral than human and that is how he is depicted when, as an “ominous crouched

animal with the yellow eyes, the nameless thing which had been Whistling Dan before, sprang up and forward with a leap like that of a panther.” Faust continued Dan Barry’s saga through two more books, *THE NIGHT HORSEMAN* (Putnam, 1920) and *THE SEVENTH MAN* (Putnam, 1921) before Dan is dead, killed by the heroine, Kate Cumberland, in order to protect their daughter from him. It is Joan Barry’s story, narrated after her father and then her mother are dead, that concludes the saga in *DAN BARRY’S DAUGHTER* (Putnam, 1924).

In the early 1920s Faust took his family to live in Katonah, New York, and it was here that he raised white bull terriers that he would permit to run loose over the estate. He must have studied their habits carefully because one of his most notable, although perhaps least appreciated, books has a white bull terrier for its principal character, *THE WHITE WOLF* (Putnam, 1926). As Jack London who came in *WHITE FANG* (Macmillan, 1906) to repudiate the message of freedom with which he had concluded *CALL OF THE WILD* (Macmillan, 1903), Faust rejected the wilderness into which he had earlier consigned Satan and Black Bart and had White Wolf come to live a happy, domestic life with his former master. This novel also points up two peculiarities about Faust: his own ambivalence about freedom versus domesticity, a dilemma about which he never did become reconciled, and his uncanny ability to depict animals, especially dogs and horses, so that they are real characters while never becoming anthropomorphic extensions of human notions.

When Davis was over-bought for the Munsey publications, Faust changed his primary affiliation to Frank Blackwell, editor at Street & Smith’s *Western Story Magazine*. Blackwell, for whom Faust under various pseudonyms might have as many as two serial installments and a short novel appear simultaneously in a single issue (or at least a serial and a novel), preferred the basic pursuit plot and his favorite narrative device was delayed revelation. Much of Faust’s fiction for *Western Story Magazine* thus falls into a variety of pursuit story but, depending on how closely his stories are read, there is often an open question as to what it is precisely that is being pursued. One of Faust’s finer efforts for Davis had been *TRAILIN’* (Putnam, 1920). It is one of Faust’s strongest examples of a plot with delayed revelation prior to the Blackwell period and it combines mystery, suspenseful parallel plotting, a childish and sullen protagonist who

can scarcely be viewed as a hero, and an off-beat heroine in Sally Fortune. “With deft, flying fingers she rolled a cigarette, lighted it, and sat down cross-legged. Through the first outward puff of smoke went these words: ‘The only thing that’s a woman about me is skirts. That’s straight.’” Anthony Woodbury learns that his real name may be Anthony Bard and he goes West to find out all he can about his identity. While searching a deserted house with rotted floors, Anthony is reminded of that “fabled boat of Charon which will float a thousand bodiless spirits over the Styx but which sinks to the water-line with the weight of a single human being.” When Steve Nash, William Drew’s foreman, comes to tell Drew that Bard is on his way the reader is told that Drew loomed over Nash “as the Grecian heroes loomed above the rank and file at the siege of Troy. He was like a relic of some earlier period when bigger men were needed for a greater physical labor.”

Size would become increasingly a factor in the physical make-up of Faust’s characters, particularly his protagonists, but in part this is to be viewed as an analogy to that belief Faust had that “there is a giant asleep in every man. When that giant wakes, miracles can happen.” That, too, increasingly was to happen in Faust’s fiction, something that runs counter to the basic impetus of the Western story: the encounter with the miraculous. Indeed, much of the tone of 20th-Century American fiction has been that of realism, naturalism, and materialism. The human soul, accordingly, shrank until it was often little more than an atrophied collection of quiet resentments and bitter, petty neuroses. Faust could instead, as he did in “The Garden of Eden,” a serial in *All-Story Weekly* (4/15/22-5/20/22), provide a Western story in which not a single shot was fired and in which the protagonist, David Eden, could confess to Ruth Manning as they leave his sequestered valley: “How wonderful are the ways of God!” Leading his horse Glani with Ruth astride, David remarks: “Through a thief he [God] has taught me wisdom; through a horse he has taught me faith; and you, oh, my love, are the key with which he has unlocked my heart!” In contrast to the powerful hold the Christian religion and the Christian God had upon those who did brave the perils of the frontier, it is a curiosity that in most of the fiction written about characters based on these historical prototypes faith is reduced to a banal utilitarianism. The Biblical overtones that run throughout Faust’s Western fiction are as striking and unique as his imagery from Classical literature.

Indeed, Zane Grey's avowed pantheism is wan beside the vivid evocation of the presence of God in Faust's fiction, whether as the Great Spirit of the Plains Indians or the Christian Deity. Walt Coburn in his fiction during his Golden Age from 1926 through 1934 frequently evoked *El Señor Dios*, but never with quite the same conviction as Faust did in his stories, although Faust seems not to have been overtly religious in his personal life. As late as the novelette "Lawman's Heart" in *Star Western* (5/34), a masterful example of Faust's ability to clothe a psycho-drama in the trappings of supposedly realistic fiction, it is stated when Dr. Channing dies that "a bullet, mercifully straight, struck the consciousness from him, and loosed the life from the body, and sent the unharmed spirit winging on its way." Yet, it is clearly by means of an act of grace, as it is termed, that the Deity acts upon the lives of humans and animals, for pervading Faust's psychic world in his fiction, flickering always in the dark heavens, is the inexorable law of destiny, of fate, of *rota Fortunae*. It is as if, even more than Dante, Faust sought to embrace the medieval unity and yet to remain withal a pagan devoted no less to the magic and wonder of Classical Antiquity.

In 1921 Faust made the painful and, for him, tragic discovery that he had a chronic and incurable heart condition from which he might die at any moment. Different parts of his heart would beat at different rates and, sometimes, would seem not to beat at all. This may have been due in part to physical strain as a youth but an even greater factor may have been emotional in origin in Faust's erratic, contradictory and, in truth, tormented life. After consulting a number of cardiac specialists, Faust became even more depressed over the lack of progress in his literary work than in his physical condition and sought consultation with H.G. Baynes in the United Kingdom, a Jungian analyst, and finally conversed with C.G. Jung when Jung passed through London. Jung did not take him as a patient, but he did advise Faust that his best hope was to live a simple life. This advice Faust seemingly rejected because he went to Italy where he rented a large villa, lived extravagantly, and was perpetually in debt. Faust believed that to be able to write the prose fiction he wrote he had to dream. Part of that dreaming may have been the life style he pursued in his Florentine villa. What Faust would not accept as a dream was his intention to write great poetry, even though on one occasion he had to publish his poetry himself. In *MAX BRAND'S BEST POEMS: A CENTENNIAL SELECTION* (Fithian

Press, 1992) is found the definitive collection of that poetry Faust worked on so conscientiously for so many years.

Faust came to love the grand gesture — pretending that time, money, and courtesy were endless, while privately he was besieged and overburdened by his many debts. The bills did compel him to do one thing: to write and publish between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 words every year in various pulp magazines. It is to the time he spent amid Jungian ideas, however, that is perhaps owed the kinds of dreams he dreamed in many of his finest stories and the nature of the psycho-dramas enacted within them. The conflict within the third and final part of *THE BORDER BANDIT*, for example, is the wild and free life lived by the Mexican bandits and by Yellow Wolf, the Comanche brave who befriends Oliver Tay, and its alternative. Oliver begins this narrative in three parts searching for wholeness but deserts this goal at the conclusion through his love for a woman. The struggle at the center of *THE WHITE WOLF* or the Dan Barry stories was now focused far more precisely but the resolution is bathed in irony. Yellow Wolf's inner voice is the last one heard as he reflects: "To each man his own strength. To each man his own weakness. But, alas, what weakness was so great as the love of a woman? For it seemed to him that already he saw the mighty shoulders of Oliver Tay bowed to the plow." A psycho-drama is not always resolved in this fashion because Faust knew wherein the achievement of wholeness resided even if in his personal life he chose a different direction.

This knowledge came to him most intensely in the decade of the 1930s and it is little wonder that it was during this decade that he produced some of his finest work. In "Lucky Larrabee" in *Western Story Magazine* (4/2/32-5/7/32), Faust had all the elements in hand to realize the dream of achieving wholeness even if he himself might not be able to attain it. The protagonist is introduced in this way: "Larrabee was plain no good. Larrabee was low." He is sent by his father to live with his cousin's family where he proves lazy, shiftless, and spends most of his time in town drinking and playing cards (even upon occasion cheating). What changes all this is the appearance of Sky Blue, the magnificent stallion that has never been ridden. Dan Gurry is the owner and he hopes that one of the cowboys in the district will be able to break Sky Blue so he can race him. Larrabee has a run-in with Josiah Ransome III, son of Major Ransome, a rich and very

influential man in the district, and he bests him. Ransome becomes bitter about his humiliation. One cowboy after another is thrown off by Sky Blue until it is Larrabee's turn and he is able to ride him easily. Larrabee, attracted to Arabelle Ransome, bets her the ring she is wearing that he will ride Sky Blue. The ring, which she surrenders reluctantly, has a special meaning and her freely giving it will mean a total commitment. There is something magical and marvelous about the entire episode and Arabelle is not so much a character as a projection of what Jung called the anima [even her very name comes from the Latin in which *ara* is altar as in *ara maxima Herculae* and means literally "beautiful altar"]. However, Larrabee cannot worship at this shrine before he has achieved wholeness.

In a race against Colonel Pratt's thoroughbred mare, Sky Blue and Larrabee become as a centaur. Larrabee leans forward in the saddle and "out his lips came a thin, small, sharp straining cry. Sky Blue lifted his head and pricked his ears. He thought he had heard that sound before, the scream of a hawk, half lost in a windy sky, or was it the far-distant neigh of a neighboring stallion from another hilltop? But, with pricked ears and head lifted for a moment, he listened to the cry of joy which had rushed from the throat of the man, and in that instant they were welded together, made of one flesh, of one brain, of one mighty spirit!" When they catch up to the colonel and his mare, "the colonel looked around at them as though the earth had been split and the steeds of Poseidon had risen out of the gap." While living in Italy, Faust hired a tutor to help him learn ancient Greek so he might read Homer in the original. It was an act that brought a new dimension to his fiction and new resonance to his style.

Ransome places a burr beneath Sky Blue's saddle and the horse bucks off Larrabee at his highest moment of fulfillment and recognition, the stallion fleeing then so swiftly he cannot be caught again. With this begins the pursuit part of the story and, in terms of the psycho-drama that goes on beneath the dream-like surface, it brings about the transformation of Larrabee through his ordeal until he becomes known first to the Indians and then to everyone alike as "the" Larrabee. Dan Gurry, Colonel Pratt, and Larrabee begin the pursuit. An encounter with Cheyenne Indians, also after the stallion, puts Larrabee in the position of giving back to Shouting Thunder his life — for Larrabee has the power to kill him and does not. Shouting Thunder makes Larrabee a blood

brother, Larrabee's first step in reconciling with the shadow, the inferior part of his nature which, as Jung once noted, is frequently projected into the dusky form of the American Indian in dreams by Americans. "...He gave me life, and spared my soul," Shouting Thunder thinks. "Therefore I shall spare his soul. We shall stand up together among the Sky People. If there is one horse between us, I shall run on foot and he shall sit in the saddle!" So it becomes a quaternity, a mandala, in the pursuit of Sky Blue with the shadow also in pursuit, the mysterious white leader of the Crows. Shouting Thunder in this psycho-drama assumes the rôle of the old wise man, the one who will act as Larrabee's guide into the realm of the archetypes of the collective unconscious.

On the surface this pursuit story has Sky Blue as its objective, a stallion that refuses now to have its will broken, that once trusted a human being and was injured, and will never surrender again. One by one the quaternity drops off, Gurry dying to make room for the new member of the quadrant constellation, the Crow leader, the white man who is also an Indian and who was responsible for Sky Blue's injury in the first place. Josiah Ransome is Larrabee's shadow, a man who went to live among the Crows after Sky Blue's flight. When they first confront each other, Larrabee is uncertain of Ransome's identity, mistaking him for Shouting Thunder. The conflict in this novel is resolved psychologically, not physically as is so often found in more conventional Western fiction. Only when Larrabee willingly sets Sky Blue free, after having captured him, does the horse follow Larrabee of his own accord. In Larrabee's soul the drama has been to find the self and Sky Blue is the means by which this search is fulfilled: "His inward richness of mind would be the knowledge that the horse was free and happy...."

Larrabee cannot achieve wholeness until he has overcome his estrangement to the shadow, until he has reconciled with it, at which point the fever that has driven them all, the fever to possess, to capture Sky Blue abandons him and he is free at last, whole at last, in quite the way Jung had suggested to Faust he could free himself of the demons that possessed him. Shouting Thunder as the old wise man is the source of wisdom who leads Larrabee to the self, to wholeness: "He was really far beyond the realm of reason. He was in that dreamy realm of the mystic to which Shouting Thunder had introduced him. Remembering the words of the Indian, he told himself that whatever fate ruled this world, it had determined beforehand what man, if any, should ride Sky Blue." In the

event, it is not even Larrabee who rides Sky Blue, but the projection of the anima, the feminine side of his soul. Once Larrabee achieves wholeness, accepts the shadow as part of himself, the conflicts are resolved and Ransome and he agree that with all the dangers ahead and around them they are fortunate to have each other for company even if they do not speak to each other. Arabelle makes her decision. Sky Blue has touched the earth. He has left his wrong steps behind him, it is observed, as so too has Larrabee. In the way Hermann Hesse learned from Arthur Schopenhauer, so Faust learned from the Greeks and Larrabee learns from experience that fate rules life, not us. It is — as Jung had once observed — not, I think therefore I am, but the thought occurs within me. How did I make this misstep, Schopenhauer asked, and then did I really make it? How else explain the alterations in Sky Blue's color, as when Larrabee is shocked to discover that "it seemed to him that the horse of his imagining had grown larger and that it was black." Or when Major Ransome and Larrabee's father are together watching at dusk and the major asks what color is the horse that is being led by the man? "'Dark,' said Larrabee. 'Black, I should say, but this light is bad.' The major leaped from his chair. 'Black, did you say?' he exclaimed. 'A big, powerful looking black horse?' 'No, not big. Compared to the horse the girl is riding, it's no more than a pony.' 'Compared to the horse that the girl is riding?' echoed the major, baffled, and straining his eyes vainly. 'But Arabelle's little mare would never — what sort of horse is she riding, then?' 'A high-headed demon,' said Larrabee, 'that dances along like a racer on parade, a light-colored horse, a luminous horse. He has the head of a stallion.'" The words shimmer with subtle meanings. In fact, every story Faust ever wrote seems to have to a degree both surface action and a subtext, a story within the story that functions on the deepest level.

Tertullian in *DE CARNE CHRISTUS* wrote: "*Certum est quia impossibile est* [It is certain because it is impossible]." Or as Josiah Ransome puts it: "'But Larrabee — damn him! — is the only man who's given up Sky Blue and, therefore, he'll be the only man who'll get him.'" Larrabee was lost, but now as the Larrabee — the Indians know there is only one, *the* Larrabee — he is found. Just as Sky Blue was lost, so he was found. It is a realm, as Shouting Thunder knows, that is beyond reason. When Faust chose to call his protagonist "Lucky" he meant the words as Hesiod did — τῶν εὐδαιμῶν τε

και ολβιος — or lucky [fortunate, well-starred, eudaimonious] is Larrabee with respect to them (the days of his life).

Faust wrote to Leonard Bacon after his talk with Jung in England that Jung “told me, in short, that the only way to be honest in writing was to search my own mind, because no outsider could put his finger on what was bunk in me and what was real.” In an essay revised for the last time in 1954 titled “*Über die Archetypen des kollektiven Unbewußten*” [“The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious”], Jung observed that “it is generally believed that anyone who descends into the unconscious gets into a suffocating atmosphere of egocentric subjectivity and in this blind alley is exposed to the attack of all the ferocious beasts that the caverns of the psychic underworld are presumed to harbor. ...Whoever goes to himself risks a confrontation with himself. ...This confrontation is the first test of courage on the inner way, a test sufficient to frighten most people away, for the encounter with ourselves belongs to the more unpleasant things that can be avoided so long as we can project all that is negative into the environment.”

“Werewolf” by Max Brand in *Western Story Magazine* (12/18/26) involves just such an inward journey for Christopher Royal who is convinced he is a coward and flees a confrontation with Harry Main who is a gunfighter. There comes a time in this story — when Christopher encounters the aged Indian, the old wise man — that the terrain shimmers with the multiple affinities of meaning conjured by the unconscious, which Vergil once sought to capture within an image both awesome and sinister: *numina magna deum* [the great divine power of a god].” For Christopher, in fleeing, finds that he has become a wanderer, a searcher, and it is in the deep fastnesses of the wilderness through the medium of the ancient Indian that he is confronted with the terrors of his own soul and the meaning of his life. He has found love, as deep and abiding as it is ever given to human beings to know, but it is lost to him until his own spiritual odyssey shall have completed its course, until he has had his spirit vision, confronted the terrifying shadow within, with only the mournful howl of an ancient werewolf to accompany him on this lonely, and terrible, and anguished journey to the center of his soul. Having experienced the terrors of his own unconscious, Christopher is no longer afraid of a mere mortal, but “to the end of his life, while all the rest of his hair was black, there was a decided

sprinkling of gray about the temples, and one deep crease drawn down the very center of his forehead. The werewolf had put its mark upon him.”

Each morning Faust devoted to poetry. His afternoons were reserved for his fiction. He had deadlines set and he did his best to meet them, the afternoons often extending into the hours of darkness. He was a one-man fiction factory and he did it by himself, sitting before a battered typewriter he called “my oldest friend,” pounding out every word with two fingers. Dorothy proof-read all that he wrote and it is to her that is owed the small number of technical errors that were allowed to remain in his stories and serials. In *TWENTY NOTCHES* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1932), the protagonist, a tramp referred to as the Sleeper, at one point is made a prisoner and escapes with the help of a pistol smuggled to him. He fires two shots and, although he has no ammunition, he afterwards reloads the spent chambers. *TWENTY NOTCHES* is one of Faust’s “fairy tale” Westerns but that is not to imply that it is without its referents to Homer’s world. The Sleeper has in his possession for a time what is believed to be a magical gun and “as the strange flower of the moly, white blossom and black root, had saved Odysseus, so the thought of the gun and its equal magic saved the tramp.” At another moment in the story, “the Sleeper stood up and almost laughed in the darkness. So Perseus, with winged heels and the magic sword, might have stood beside the Gorgon.”

When he wrote poetry in the mornings, Faust would feel a good day one in which he might write three lines. In the afternoons, his sleeves rolled up, he banged out thirty pages of a story, with none of the passion for revision he showered on his poetry. Faust used to like to read aloud to his family and friends after dinner and he had committed thousands of lines from Shakespeare to memory. He would also read aloud from Milton and Chaucer. Carl Brandt became Faust’s agent in 1925 and was over the years a devoted friend as well. Faust might follow Shakespeare or Milton with his own poetry. In his Introduction to the first volume of *MAX BRAND’S BEST WESTERN STORIES* (Dodd, Mead, 1981) William F. Nolan had occasion to quote Brandt about these readings, “recalling that ‘Faust had a beautiful speaking voice and read poetry musically, with passion and conviction. I would sit and listen to him read. Drugged by the spell of his voice, at three in the morning, I’d be convinced that his verse was great. But in the

next day's cold white light, reading the same lines, it became clear how personal a thing his poetry was, and how little of it was really publishable.”

For all of his obsession with the ostentation of wealth and with its ready acquisition one of his more common themes, Faust himself seems never to have been the least interested in accumulating money, only in spending it. It was in its way as much a mania with him as buying yachts, building houses, or lavishing gifts on relatives and secretaries would be for Zane Grey. Also, as was the case with Zane Grey, as dependent as Faust was on Dorothy and as much in love with her as he claimed to be, he seemed incapable of fidelity and became involved from time to time with other women. Possibly Faust could only keep dreaming the eternal dream of the anima by plunging amid all those fair forms he sought out in his waking life. Unlike St. Augustine, however, who in his *CONFESSIONS* admitted that eventually he came to realize the power and majesty behind all those fair forms, the *primum mobile* responsible for their creation, for Faust they brought him nothing but torment and filled much of Dorothy's life with anguish. No god from the unconscious or beyond shouted his name and burst his deafness, as one had for Augustine. Yet, a theme as persistent in Faust's Western fiction as the narrative structure of a pursuit story and delayed revelation is the possibility for spiritual redemption. Often the most profoundly moving scenes in Faust's narratives are the instances where a character manages to achieve personal salvation by a confrontation with the shadow within as happens to Annan Rhiannon in *SINGING GUNS* (Dodd, Mead, 1939), for a long time Faust's most popular Western novel, to Jack Ripley in *SMUGGLERS' TRAIL* (Harper, 1950), and to Gaspar Sental in *THE RETURN OF THE RANCHER* (Dodd, Mead, 1933), to give only three examples among many.

A close friend of Faust's once suggested that in his poetry Faust should cease writing about mythical gods and Titans to which Faust replied: "It isn't really a preference for those themes, but a lack of all other themes that determines my choice. Since modernity is impossible, what remains?" It is perhaps this same posture that explains Faust's preference for a Western story set in no particular time frame and in no particular place, but rather in the vast domain of the imagination where marvelous things can and do happen and, more importantly, a world in which a reader can accept them as happening. Notwithstanding this proclivity for the timelessness of the unconscious

combined with a distaste for modernity, Faust sometimes seems guilty of introducing all manner of anachronisms into a Western story. In “Riders for Fortune” serialized in *Western Story Magazine* (9/15/28-10/20/28) and published later as *THE BORDER KID* (Dodd, Mead, 1941), one character makes reference to someone turning on a big ceiling light and another sees a man dodging “very like a football player running through a crowded field.” Yet, in truth, in a timeless world no such thing as an anachronism is conceivable. Moreover, it was a convention in much of the fiction in *Western Story Magazine* in the 1920s that the events depicted had more or less occurred somewhere in the West in the very recent past or had happened even in the present time.

Because Faust himself had for so long been an underdog — so much so, even, that a follower of Alfred Adler’s Individual Psychology might make a solid case of explaining Faust’s extravagance and his terrific, driving energy as an almost frenzied compensation for perceived inferiority — his fiction invariably transforms the underdog, elevates him, becomes for the underdog an apotheosis and a perpetuation. Similarly, some of Faust’s finest creations are his Mexican and Indian characters, many of whom embody the highest virtues in Faust’s moral lexicon. There is the notorious bandit leader, Mateo Rubriz, in the three novels about the Montana Kid. There are the four Mexicans who help Oliver Tay in *THE BORDER BANDIT* nearly attain his quest for wholeness. Most often Cheyenne Indians occupy the rôle of the old wise man as when Broken Knife befriends Johnnie Tanner in *VENGEANCE TRAIL* (Dodd, Mead, 1941). Johnnie is much in need of such a spiritual guide in the West because upon his arrival there from New York, the reader is told, Johnnie “swept his eye around the vast and circling skyline of the prairie, and it seemed to him that here, where the heavens were wider, the hearts of men were greater also. Their passions were more important. Hatred was more than human; it was devilish. And in friendship there was something divine.” Indeed, friendship with Indian characters is divine in such serials as the Rusty Sabin saga that came to comprise three books: *CALL OF THE BLOOD* (Macaulay, 1934), *BROTHER OF THE CHEYENNES* (Macaulay, 1934), and the conclusion of the trilogy first serialized as “The Sacred Valley” in *Argosy* (6/10/35-9/14/35) and later published as *CHEYENNE GOLD* (Dodd, Mead, 1972); in the Thunder Moon stories; and, above all, there is the remarkable “The Horizon of Danger” serialized in *Western Story Magazine*

(12/21/29-1/25/30) and later published as *THE RESCUE OF BROKEN ARROW* (Harper, 1948).

In “Gunman’s Bluff”, there is a silent observer. “The Chinaman grinned and bobbed his head at her. Chinamen never understood anything except how to be kind. And that’s the lesson the world needs most.” Yet, if Faust’s imaginative treatment of the Chinese on the frontier did not venture so far as making them heroes, his novel *CLUNG* serialized in *All-Story Weekly* (4/10/20-5/15/20) explored in Clung the psychology of a white man raised since infancy in Chinese culture and thought to the point where he is essentially Chinese. The contrast between Clung’s racial origin and his cultural orientation is at the very soul of the conflict in the narrative, with the Arizona community in and around the town of Mortimer regarding Clung as a half-breed “Chink” and treating him as less than human, something that continues even once it is known that he is not Chinese by birth. Although it was first published in book form in the British market as *CLUNG* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1924), an American edition had to wait decades before *CLUNG* (Dodd, Mead, 1969) finally appeared. No doubt there was still some hesitation even then about public acceptance of the subject matter since, for paperback reprint, the title was changed to the more innocuous *THE GHOST RIDER* (Pocket Books, 1971). Similarly, in the novelette “Outcast Breed” in *Star Western* (10/34), the subject of the story is the poison of racial prejudice toward John Cameron, both among the white community and among the Indians, since as a half-breed he belongs to neither race and is rejected by both.

Street & Smith’s book publishing arm, Chelsea House, began issuing Faust’s serials from *Western Story Magazine* in the 1920s as novels by George Owen Baxter and David Manning. The name Max Brand, which had been the name used on all the early Putnam books, now was reserved for the books published by Dodd, Mead that took over the Max Brand book publishing program from G.P. Putnam’s Sons with publication of *THE BLUE JAY* (Dodd, Mead, 1927). Yet some of Faust’s finest Western fiction appeared under the name Evan Evans, novels that were polished with unusual care. It was under pressures from his agent that Faust found himself coming more and more to the United States, usually leaving his family behind in Italy. For periods of time he was literally a captive of Carl Brandt, working many long hours in Brandt’s office revising a

story or writing a new one to specification. It was in 1932 that the president of Harper's told Faust that Zane Grey's sales had dropped off to 30,000 copies a year. Dodd, Mead had been enjoying great success with the Max Brand books. Harper's wanted its own line of Westerns from Faust and so the Evan Evans series began.

Faust began appearing in Popular Publications such as *Dime Western* and *Star Western* in the early 1930s because Blackwell at *Western Story Magazine* could no longer afford to pay Faust's regular rate of 5¢ a word nor was he willing to accept some of Faust's serials. Faust was dropped to 4¢ and then to 3¢ in the same move toward economy and to maintain circulation that eventually reduced the price of the magazine from 15¢ to a dime. It would be difficult for a reader only of Faust's fiction for *Western Story Magazine* to realize that what was happening at that magazine had less to do with Faust than with the way in which the Western story was being packaged in pulp magazines. The most successful magazines launched by Street & Smith in the late 1920s were *Complete Stories* and the new *Wild West Weekly*. These magazines offered readers all stories complete in a single issue. Serials often prompted subscriptions so a reader wouldn't miss an installment. As the economic collapse stretched out into years, choices had to be made, such as purchasing a single issue without a commitment to purchase more. The very name *Dime Western* signified the new emphasis on a lower price. Only when the first issue of *Star Western* appeared, dated October, 1933 at a cost of 15¢ did one know that the worst of the depressed magazine market had passed.

Beyond these economic factors, Popular Publications in their Western pulp magazines introduced a new dimension in the Western story. The heroes of the 1930s were increasingly cast as protagonists surrounded by armed camps of opposing factions and are seemingly threatened from all sides. This was not the kind of narrative structure Faust had been employing in his serials. The financial appeal of a serial was that it could be assigned back to the author and published as a hardcover book. Novelettes of 30,000 words or less did not suit this marketing approach. Faust's agent encouraged him to write short novels instead of serials and to stress series characters — hence Reata, Speedy, and so many more, above all Jim Silver, were created.

There had always been some editorial intervention in Faust's Western fiction. The first time he chose to include a number of Mexican characters in a serial — in

“Crossroads: A Sequel to Luck” in *The Argosy* (1/31/20-3/6/20) — it is evident that in Faust’s narrative voice the pejorative term “greaser” was substituted for “Mexican.” This may be somewhat understandable, if not exactly pardonable, since the U.S. Army had been recently involved in numerous border clashes with Pancho Villa’s revolutionaries and anti-Mexican sentiment was running high before it was augmented with anti-German sentiment during the Great War. There would seem to be less excuse a decade later for altering Faust’s title of “The Death Trail” to “The Greaser Trail” in *Western Story Magazine* (5/21/32). Yet now such tampering increased even more.

Rogers Terrill, editor of *Dime Western*, had had his training at *Action Stories* and only occasionally had written a story for Street & Smith (where he once had his name on a cover with Max Brand and George Owen Baxter). Terrill bought Faust’s “The Strange Ride of Perry Woodstock” and retitled it “Death Rides Behind” for its appearance in *Dime Western* (3/33). It is interesting to contrast how Terrill was able, by editorial intercession, to turn Faust’s poetic imagery and sterling prose into ½¢ a word pulp writing. Here is how Faust opened the story:

An owl, skimming close to the ground, hooted at the very door of the bunkhouse. That door was wide, because the day had been hot and the night was hot, also, and windless. Therefore, Perry Woodstock jumped from his bunk, grabbed his hat in one hand and his boots in the other, and still seemed to hear the voice of the bird in the room, a melancholy and sonorous echo.

The owl hooted again, not in a dream but in fact, farther down the hollow, and Woodstock realized that he had not been wakened by the voice of the cook calling to the punchers to “come and get it,” neither was it a cold autumn morning at an open camp, neither was there frost in his hair nor icy dew upon his forehead, and his body was not creaking at all the joints....

And here is how Terrill altered that opening scene:

The door of the bunkhouse was wide, because the day had been hot and the night was hot, also, and windless. Perry Woodstock jumped from his bunk, grabbed his hat in one hand and his boots in the other. Something had awakened him. Some sound had come to that door. He stood tense for a moment.

His nerves were on edge, his heart pounding with the effect of some strange alarm....

Faust was invariably a master of understatement and eschewed the obvious. His knowledge of human character was too subtle. This, too, was repaired by Terrill, as illustrated by the way Faust ended this story:

“Rosemary!” he broke out at her, “I’ve got to say something to you.”

“Don’t,” she said, “because words are silly things between us, now!”

And the way Rogers Terrill recast that ending:

“Rosemary!” he broke out at her. “I’ve got to say something to you!”

“Don’t,” she said. “Because words are silly things between us, now. When two people are in love they have no need for them...”

And together, riding stirrup to stirrup, they left the mountain top where love and death had waged grim battle for the pair of them...

Both Faust and Brandt were convinced that the only way to cope with the Great Depression was for Faust to move into the slick magazines that paid much better. Faust, studying the market, readily realized that restrictions in the slicks were more rigid and confining than they had ever been in the pulps. Writing for *Western Story Magazine*, he had had to concern himself with such general notions as a pursuit plot. Writing for the slicks, he realized that the editors sought to dominate a contributor’s mind. Attitudes and ideas were everything. Beyond entertainment, which both pulp and slick fiction alike provided, slick fiction had to deliver an ideological message to readers that agreed with the editorial policies of the magazine and these were dictated by the advertisers and their agencies. Perhaps it is for this reason that so much of the slick fiction of the 1930s and 1940s has become hopelessly dated while pulp fiction from that same period still pulsates with imagination and iconoclasm. Ideology is time-bound. Faust wrote for the pulps for most of his career and possibly this is why his stories have continued to live and to be loved, while so much of the Western fiction written for the slicks by others seems sterile and empty by comparison with the vitality still to be found in the pulps from the same period.

Faust’s last important series of interrelated novels that he wrote for *Western Story Magazine* appeared in the years 1933 and 1934 and brought back a new variation on the triumvirate hero of the early Dan Barry stories. Jim Silver, better known as Silvertip, in the first of these stories, “The Stolen Stallion” in *Western Story Magazine* (3/11/33), pursues the stallion Parade to the point of mutual exhaustion. His quest is finally fulfilled and Silver even wins a race riding Parade. “I’ve spent a life, so far, trying to find one thing I really wanted,” Silver comments at the end. “I’ve got it now, and I’m going to use it. I don’t know for what.” Frosty, the hundred-and-fifty-pound wolf, completes this new trio in “The Iron Collar” in *Western Story Magazine* (8/5/33). Silvertip persists in

his vague mission through the adventures recorded in these thirteen novels, in many of them battling his arch-enemy, Barry Christian, and in “The False Rider” in *Western Story Magazine* (7/1/33) even confronts a Doppelganger. Still, there is nothing in “The Stolen Stallion” or its immediate sequel, “Silvertip” in *Western Story Magazine* (3/25/33), that would give an indication that these novels were intended to launch a new series character and, based on internal evidence, the order in which the series of novels was conceived and in which they appeared in *Western Story Magazine* gives no real indication of any inherent chronology. Perhaps for this reason when Dodd, Mead began publishing the Silvertip stories in a uniform edition of hardcover books in the 1940s no internal chronology was followed, either. Ever since, Silvertip titles have sporadically appeared in reprint without acknowledgment that it was a series until Dodd, Mead finally began a new program of systematic reprints in the 1980s, curtailed about halfway through when they went out of business.

David L. Fox, writing about the Silvertips in *Singing Guns* (Fall, 1991/Winter 1992), was no doubt correct that “it is apparent that, consciously or not, Faust had something in mind when he wrote these tales. Whether it was a plan that didn’t quite become coherent or whether it was merely a mood that resulted, desultorily, in specific imagery is not clear. The fragments are there, however, and while they may not quite coalesce, they do lend an enticing atmosphere to these novels.” Ultimately, perhaps, the Silvertips are linked psycho-dramas in which Faust reprised again and again the battle with the shadow in Silver’s struggles with Barry Christian and others and projected by this means the irresolution’s and contradictions in his own psychic life. He did not undertake, as Hermann Hesse had following his sessions with Jung, the ordeal of confronting the sources of his inner torment and achieving wholeness within his own soul. He was unable to resolve the contradictions in his psyche and so was doomed to wander amid the shades of his own inner underworld. Yet, if the final battle was lost and if the price he finally paid was staggeringly high, the consequences of projecting his struggles enriched and enlivened the world of his imaginative creations and the moods of that dark turmoil haunt the tenebrous trails along which Silvertip must pass as ceaselessly as if abandoned in the circles conjured by Dante’s pivotal canticles in the *Purgatorio*.

“Eagles Over Crooked Creek” in *Western Story Magazine* (1/29/38) was the last story Faust published in the magazine for which he had written more of his Western fiction than for any other periodical. It is a short, short story, but a fine farewell, filled with symbolism and sadness. Young Chuck learns that Old Ben has murdered his long-time partner, Uncle Cal. As they descend from the mountain, Old Ben keeps watching the screaming eagles fighting in the sky as his blind horse, sure in his footing, travels knowingly down a path made familiar by countless similar passages through the many years. Perhaps in this blind horse, Pepper, is the symbol of the god of Faust’s unconscious who, as Polyphemus, was destined now forever to walk in darkness, following the same path.

Hollywood beckoned. Faust had been selling stories to motion picture companies for years and his first major success was when Fox Film Corporation bought *THE UNTAMED* as the basis — however unlikely — of a vehicle for Tom Mix. Even Faust’s parodying of the closing books of *Odyssey* in *DESTROY RIDES AGAIN* (Dodd, Mead, 1930) had been adapted as a vehicle for Tom Mix’s comeback in talking pictures. Universal made the film and paid Faust \$1,500 for the screen rights. The appeal of Hollywood now for Faust was that he would be paid \$1,000 a week to work on screenplays. Faust brought his family to Hollywood and, seemingly, turned his back on Europe that appeared relentlessly bent on another war. While at M-G-M, he breathed new life into his Dr. Kildare character — Paramount Pictures had earlier made a film based on Faust’s first Kildare story — and an entire series was launched starring Law Ayres as Kildare and Lionel Barrymore as Dr. Gillespie.

Switching from studio to studio, never very happy, and drinking heavily upon occasion despite the tenuousness of his heart condition, Faust talked more and more about great writers who had started writing their most noteworthy fiction in middle age, because he was middle-aged and he feared with his motion picture commitments, his slick magazine writing and, despite his steady outpouring of stories and novels, he would never achieve his goal. Those who worked with him in Hollywood were amazed at his fecundity, his ability to plot stories. Faust himself had some simple advice on the process: read a story halfway through and then imagine how it will end. Then put on a new beginning and you have a different story, one all your own. However, for all of his

incessant talk about plot and plotting, Faust's Western fiction is uniformly character-driven. His plots emerge from the characters as they are confronted with conflicts and frustrations. Above all, there is his humor — the opening chapters of *THE RETURN OF THE RANCHER* are sustained by the humorous contrast between irony and naïveté. So many of his characters are truly unforgettable, from the most familiar such as Dan Barry and Harry Destry to the marvelous creations of José Rydal in *BLACKIE AND RED* (Chelsea House, 1926) or Gaspar Sental in *THE RETURN OF THE RANCHER*.

Faust had missed the Great War. He refused to miss the Second World War. He pulled enough strings to become a war correspondent and he sailed to the Italian front where he lived with the men in foxholes, in mud, green troops in some of the bloodiest conflict of the entire war, men who had grown up reading his stories with their superhuman heroes and their grand deeds, and that is where he died, on the dark night of May 12, 1944, from a shrapnel wound.

Faust has been condemned by those who admire realistic detail in Western fiction for ignoring historical accuracy and for often failing to provide even minimal descriptions of actual frontier settings. Too often, it may appear, his plots are pursuit stories and his protagonists in quest of an illustrious father or victims of an Achilles' heel, but these are premises and conventions that are of little consequence. He has been criticized for basing his images of Indians on the accounts of James Willard Schultz and George Bird Grinnell, who romantically championed the Cheyennes but took sides against their enemies, the Pawnees. Such a criticism overlooks the main thrust of Faust's Indian narratives: his Indians are archetypal embodiments projected from the unconscious and are not comprehensible as historical Indians. His characters of all kinds are psychic forces. In Faust's fiction as Robert Sampson concluded in the first volume of *YESTERDAY'S FACES* (Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983) "every action is motivated. Every character makes decisions and each must endure the consequences of his decisions. Each character is gnawed by the conflict between his wishes and the necessities of his experience. The story advances from the first interactions of the first characters. It continues, a fugue for full orchestra, ever more complex, modified by decisions of increasing desperation, to a climax whose savagery may involve no

bloodshed at all. But there will be psychological tension screaming in harmonics almost beyond the ear's capacity.”

There will come a time, probably well into this century, when a reevaluation will become necessary of those who contributed most to the eternal relevance of the Western story and in this reevaluation perhaps Frederick Faust will be elevated while popular icons of the 20th Century, such as Owen Wister, judged solely in terms of their actual artistic contributions to the wealth and treasure of world literature may find their reputations diminished. In such a reevaluation Faust might well emerge as a purveyor of visceral fiction of unique emotional power and profound impact that does not recede with time. Faust's Western fiction is timeless in its setting and in this respect shares the same domain as that of his beloved Homer. Faust was extraordinarily productive and, with more than 200 published Western novels and story collections to his credit and a hundred more still to appear in book form, it goes without saying that a false impression can be gained by reading an inferior effort.

However, for this reason a word of caution might also be in order. Beginning with some of the Chelsea House compilations and the Dodd, Mead editions starting at the time of *FLAMING IRONS* (Dodd, Mead, 1948) — a typically inappropriate title for what was first called “The City in the Sky” and serialized in *Western Story Magazine* (6/11/27-7/16/27) — Faust's Western fiction underwent abridgment to stress the action and often what was so fine in the original stories became compromised by the interpolations of hack work and editorial revisions by other hands. Many of the stories in the Nolan collections, in fact, are no longer really Faust's work. As of 1992, a thoroughgoing effort commenced to restore Faust's work to what he originally wrote, using authentic texts or the author's own typed manuscripts. The consequence of this situation, though, is that a critical literary study of Faust's contributions to the Western story is not really possible without access at least to the original magazine versions and a critical commentary based largely, or exclusively, on the book editions published after Faust's death addresses more often the inadequacies of Faust's editors rather than Faust's fiction as he wrote it.

Sometimes the cutting was not severe. “Western Tommy” runs 55,500 words over five installments in *Western Story Magazine* and as *WESTERN TOMMY* (Chelsea

House, 1927) is 55,400 words. Many times, though, the abridgments have been to the significant detriment of the stories as Faust wrote them. “Ronicky Doone, Champion of Lost Causes” comes to 72,200 words over seven issues of *Western Story Magazine* (10/29/21-12/10/21), but in the Chelsea House edition is a mere 56,400 words. “The Tyrant,” one of Faust’s most compelling psycho-dramas concerned with a man’s relationship with fate, is 64,300 words over six issues of *Western Story Magazine* (1/9/26-2/13/26) and only 59,000 words in the book edition, MONSIEUR (Bobs-Merrill, 1926). The deletion of those 6,000 words and the inept but deliberate deconstruction of Faust’s hexametric prose rhythm turned a powerfully metaphysical and metaphorical drama into a mediocre period piece about quaint rural French-Canadians. “Black Jack” over six installments in *Argosy/All-Story* (12/10/21-1/14/22) comprises 87,000 words and BLACK JACK (Dodd, Mead, 1970) is barely over 60,000 words. Instead of allowing the story to come to its logical conclusion, all the poetry and profundity of the text were excised and the text was brutally condensed by Dodd, Mead.

Yet, the worst example of editorial tampering is unquestionably the Thunder Moon stories. Faust wrote the novelette “Red Wind and Thunder Moon” in *Western Story Magazine* (8/27), then a five-part serial titled “Thunder Moon” was published in *Far West Illustrated* (4/27-8/27). A second novelette “Thunder Moon — Pale Face” in *Western Story Magazine* (9/17/27) followed, a second five-part serial “Thunder Moon — Squaw Man” in *Western Story Magazine* (9/24/27-10/22/27), and a final novelette, “Thunder Moon Goes White,” in *Western Story Magazine* (11/3/28). THUNDER MOON (Dodd, Mead, 1969) is an abbreviated version of the serial “Thunder Moon”. THUNDER MOON’S CHALLENGE (Dodd, Mead, 1982) is, quixotically, a compilation of “Red Wind and Thunder Moon”, “Thunder Moon — Pale Face”, and the first half of the second serial, “Thunder Moon — Squawman”. THUNDER MOON STRIKES (Dodd, Mead, 1982) is a compilation consisting of the second half of “Thunder Moon — Squawman” and the novelette “Thunder Moon Goes White”. Nor was Dodd, Mead the only publisher (besides Chelsea House and Bobbs-Merrill in the 1920s) to make serious and detrimental editorial abridgments in Faust’s work. “Outlaw Valley” in five installments in *Far West Illustrated* (4/28-8/28) is 68,700 words and the book edition, OUTLAW VALLEY (Harper, 1953), is only 64,900. On the other hand, in several

notable cases (most of them occurring while Faust was still alive), his manuscripts would be sent to Street & Smith as well as to the subsequent book publisher. The book publisher might actually cut less of the text than the magazine publisher. "The Path to Plunder" in six installments in *Western Story Magazine* (3/17/28-4/21/28) runs only 74,500 words whereas the book edition, MYSTERY RANCH (Dodd, Mead, 1930), is longer by 400 words. The same is true for THE UNTAMED and TRAILIN'. Both in their book editions are some 400 words longer than in the serial versions.

A writer ought to be judged by his best work. In this case, such an evaluation, of course, can only come once it is determined what is Faust's work as he wrote it and what is not. However, even once that has been done, such a list cannot hope to be comprehensive since Faust's most remarkable achievement is not that he wrote so much, but rather that so much of what he wrote is so fine. Perhaps the best place to begin with him is THE UNTAMED and the subsequent Dan Barry stories, SILVERTIP (Dodd, Mead, 1942) for that series, and MONTANA RIDES! (Harper, 1933) for that series. CALL OF THE BLOOD is perhaps as fine a place as any to begin reading Faust's Indian stories. Beyond these there are LUCKY LARRIBEE, THE BORDER BANDIT, THE RESCUE OF BROKEN ARROW, GUNMAN'S LEGACY (Harper, 1949), SAWDUST AND SIXGUNS (Harper, 1950), STRANGE COURAGE (Harper, 1952), and the truly masterful GALLOPING DANGER (Dodd, Mead, 1979) that has since been restored to its original title of THE QUEST OF LEE GARRISON (Circle V Westerns, 1998). Notwithstanding, reading these novels in their abridged book editions can be only a fraction of the experience one will have when reading them in their original unexpurgated versions. In the Faust bibliography a distinction is made between the abridgments and the original sources and in due course all of Faust's fiction will be restored to the way he wrote it in restorations in the Five Star Westerns and the Circle V Westerns.

If editorial hindrance and the exigencies of book publishing with regard to length are not enough, the serious critical treatment of Faust's Western fiction has been further complicated by the years of so many pseudonyms, not only in magazines but in book appearances as well; although within recent years Max Brand has become his only byline and all that he wrote will eventually appear, or reappear, under this name. William F. Nolan perhaps said it best when he remarked that the finest of Faust's stories "form a rich

legacy, bright threads from the vast tapestry of adventure he left us.” His finest fiction can be enjoyed on the level of adventure, or on the deeper level of psychic conflict. However, it is unjust to dismiss Faust’s Western fiction by quoting Faust’s own disparaging comments about his Western stories. Faust in his heart knew that he had not resolved the psychic conflicts he projected into his fiction and so he could not be expected to speak highly of it. He held out hope to the last that the resolutions he had failed to find in life and in his fiction could somehow, miraculously, be achieved on the higher plane of his poetry. But Faust is not the first writer, and will not be the last, who treasured least what others have come to treasure most. It may even be possible that a later generation, having read his many works as he wrote them, will find Faust to have been truly one of the most significant American literary artists of the 20th Century.