

The Elizabeth Oakes Smith Society Newsletter



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New NCLC volume publishes most comprehensive account of Oakes Smith critical reception to date

Society Officers Project EOS Research Scholarship at Annual Meeting

Upper Level "One Woman Writer" course at NEIU brings Oakes Smith to students and broader communities

New research, and a conference paper on Bertha and Lily.

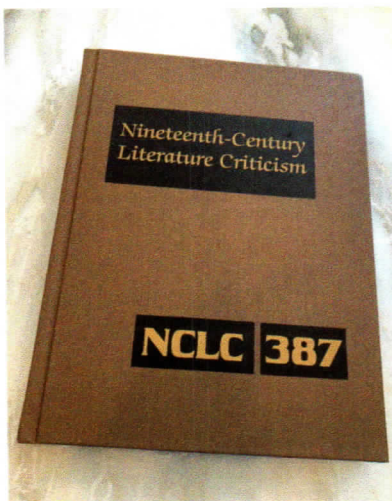
"Ideas do not go backward,
but sometimes it is well to
recover a neglected thread."

The Queen of Tramps

NCLC entry provides scholars full scope of writing on EOS

The first full review of critical commentary on Oakes Smith is out this winter in the latest volume of Gale's *Nineteenth Century Literary Criticism*: 387 (2020).

This eighty-five page entry features an updated biographical introduction and review of Oakes Smith's major works, with details not available to Scherman (vol 239) or Belasco (vol 243) in their entries for Gale's *Dictionary of Literary Biography*.



Of course it is difficult for these publishers to include the latest scholarship in full text, but even the critical work included here will offer scholars a more capacious view. Included in full text are

- > Rufus Griswold's headnote on Oakes Smith's work and extensive selections from her work from his *Female Poets of America* (1849);
- > John S. Hart's entry on Oakes Smith for *The Female Prosewriters of America* (1852);
- > Caroline May's entry on Oakes Smith from *The American Female Poets: With Biographical and Critical Notices* (1853);

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New resources for scholars...

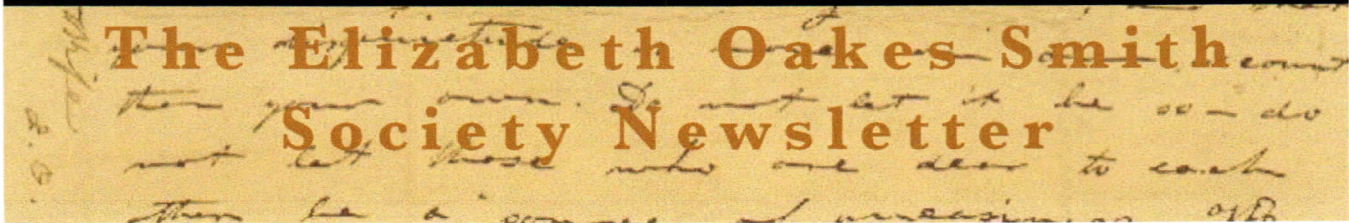
Society Officers Hold Annual Meeting, Agree on Offering EOS Scholarship for 2021

With the COVID-canceled ALA conference last May delaying the first official meeting of the incorporated Elizabeth Oakes Smith Society, we had a very full agenda at our ZOOM meeting in early December. Issues discussed were revisions to the website, new forms for membership, and several possible conference panels—at ALA, SSAWW or our own virtual conference at a time convenient for scholars during the summer.

Most exciting, perhaps, was the one motion requiring expenditures, passed unanimously by the officers of the Society. Timing will depend on the re-opening of libraries and accommodations in and around Portland, but the officers agreed to inaugurate the Society's first scholarship this year, providing \$1500 for one annual recipient to study the life and work of EOS over a minimum of four days at the recipients' choice among archives in the area, at the Maine Historical Society library, the Maine Women Writers collection at the University of New England, and other locations and institutions in the area.

If conditions prevent arrangements for this year's recipient to complete work during the calendar year, there will be two recipients for 2022.

A detailed application for the Oakes Smith Research Scholarship will be circulated by March 1, with a deadline for applications May 1 and decisions made by May 30.



NCLC Entry...cont'd

- > a review of Oakes Smith's novel *Bertha and Lily* from the *North American Review* (1854);
- > an entry on Oakes Smith from Birdsell and Jones, ed., *A Century of American Literature, and the Lives and Portraits of our Favorite Authors* (1901);
- > Mary Alice Wyman headnote to her *Selections from the Autobiography of Elizabeth Oakes Smith* (1924);
- > "Elizabeth Oakes Smith's Ventures in Books, from Wyman's *Two American Pioneers: Seba Smith and Elizabeth Oakes Smith* (1927);
- > Milton Ellis's review of Wyman's work published in *American Literature* (1932);
- > Robert Woodward's "Bryant and Elizabeth Oakes Smith: An Unpublished Bryant Letter from *Colby Library Quarterly* (1959);
- > [Caroline Woidat](#)'s "Puritan Daughters and 'Wild' Indians: Elizabeth Oakes Smith's Narratives of Domestic Captivity" from *Legacy* (2001);
- > [Rebecca Jaroff](#)'s "'I Almost Danced Over My Freedom': Elizabeth Oakes Smith's Liberation from the Literary Marketplace" from Yarrington and De Jong, eds, *Popular Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers and the Literary Marketplace* (2007); and
- > Woidat's introduction from her Broadview edition of Oakes Smith's *The Western Captive* (2015).

Annotated summaries are available for the work of [Cynthia Patterson](#) (2016); [Adam Tuchinsky](#) (2016); [Nicholas Syrett](#) (2016); [Dorri Beam](#) (2013); [Leslie Ginsberg](#) (2013); [Susan Manning](#) (2013); [Tiffany Wayne](#) (2005); [Eliza Richards](#) (2004); [Jane Rose](#) (2001); [Mary Louise Kete](#) (2000); and [Yopie Prins](#) and [Virginia Jackson](#) (1999).

While Rebecca Jaroff has done the most work on EOS's career as a dramatist, even she may be surprised to read in the commentary of Rufus Griswold details about Oakes Smith's play *The Roman Tribute; or Attila the Hun* (1849). Along with Woodward's note from the 1950s, Griswold's extensive entry provides new clues to an under-documented moment in Oakes Smith's career directly preceding her own emergence on to public stages as a Convention leader and lecturer.

Research and Teaching Notes

- At the American Academy of Religion conference for 2020 (virtual), [Ashley Reed](#) (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University) delivered a paper in the session "Women Shaping Theology and Religion in the Nineteenth Century" entitled "The Fictional Medium: Spiritualism and Women's Religious Authority in Elizabeth Oakes Smith's *Bertha and Lily*."
- [Timothy H. Scherman](#), Chair of English and Linguistics at Northeastern Illinois University, is offering an online seminar this spring entitled "ENGL 391: One Woman Writer," cross-listed with a graduate seminar on material culture and research as well as NEIU's English Institute, open to the broader community—perhaps the first such course delivered on the life and work of Elizabeth Oakes Smith.
- [Carly Gielarowski](#), Independent Scholar, spent the summer as a paid research intern for the Oakes Smith Society, locating, annotating and uploading more than 30 previously uncatalogued Oakes Smith poems, stories and sketches to our website.

Calls for Papers

The American Literature Association Conference, July 7-11 2021, Boston

Now that the American Literature Association has delayed its Boston conference this year until early July, and its proposal deadline until March 1, scholars have plenty of time to contact us with paper abstracts.

Panel organizers are interested in abstracts for papers of 15 minutes on any literary or historical subject clearly related to Oakes Smith studies. Papers that situate Oakes Smith's work in relation to other major writers and movements of the period are preferred.

For our ALA panel, abstracts of 200-300 words must be received by February 21. Email: rjaroff@ursinus.edu or tscherman@neiu.edu with abstracts or inquiries.

Scholars accepted for our panel at ALA will be asked to update their dues to that Association before the conference.

JOIN US! See the attached membership form for details!