last century or so. He examines the role played by the Homeric epics in the growth of the ‘humanities’ as a discipline from the late nineteenth century on, and in the development of ‘great books’ courses. Schein interestingly shows that a ‘main reason for the rise of great books courses was not so much academic as ideological’ (p. 273), since they came into being during the First World War as part of an educational programme designed to explain why the war was being fought and how it represented a struggle of civilization against barbarism. After the war, ‘These courses continued to serve patriotic purposes, presenting Western Civilization, especially the civilization of the United States and western Europe, as in effect the telos of world history’ (p. 274). At the same time, classical learning came increasingly to be regarded as a commodity of high social value. Hence the popularity of series of uniform ‘sets’ of classic texts, including the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which could be purchased by middle-class families to display their culture and status. Schein points out that very often, in great books courses in the USA, the Homeric epics are taught as expressions of very generalized ‘values of Western culture’—such as ‘freedom’ or ‘individuality’—without history or context; and he calls for a more nuanced and contextualized historical reading of the Homeric epics in such courses.

Taken all in all, this is a rich and stimulating collection of essays which should open many avenues for future research into the uses (and abuses) of the Homeric epics in contemporary culture—not just in the West but worldwide. The extensive bibliography on its own will prove most useful. It is a pity that the high price of the book will put it out of reach of many individual scholars (certainly those in the developing world); but all should ensure that their library orders the volume.

**WILLIAM SCARBOROUGH: A BLACK CLASSICIST IN THE UNITED STATES**

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The name William Sanders Scarborough certainly rings a bell today because of the prize that the MLA established in 2001 to honour him, a short time after Ronnick identified him as its first African-American member. But his life and his work have
not been accessible outside specialist circles before now. Ronnick’s work has opened up these at times very dark, but nevertheless extraordinarily interesting, chapters of the history of the Classics in the United States. She has edited the autobiography of Scarborough and his minor works. The former is published now for the first time eighty years after the death of its author. This review will focus on those aspects which are relevant for classical philologists, commenting first on the Autobiography, then on the Works, and finally on the editorial work done by Ronnick.

The Autobiography of William Sanders Scarborough

Scarborough describes his life in twenty-eight chapters, which show both his wide interests and his abilities as a writer. The basic data of his life are quickly summarized: Scarborough was born in 1852, in Macon, Georgia. His parents, who despite official interdictions had learned to read and write, were Jeremiah, a manumitted slave, and Frances Gwynn, a nominal slave whose owner William K. DeGraffenreid permitted her and her family many liberties (chapters 1 and 2). Thus, although he himself was legally a slave and consequently subject to the same restrictions, he nevertheless was given basic education by other educated blacks and an otherwise overtly racist white neighbour. After learning carpentry and shoemaking, he studied at Atlanta University and Oberlin College, Ohio (1869-1875; chapters 3 and 4). He then became a teacher at Lewis High School where he met his future wife Sarah Cordelia Bierce, a white divorcée, but when the school was burned down (p. 59), he abandoned the south and resumed his studies at Oberlin College (chapters 5 and 6). Upon receiving the MA, he became professor at Wilberforce University in Greene County, Ohio (chapter 7). From 1891 to 1897 he taught New Testament Greek

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1 Apart from brief notes here and there, such as B. Brawley, The Negro Genius: A New Appraisal of the Achievement of the American Negro in Literature and the Fine Arts (New York 1966) 169.


4 On Wilberforce University in general, see E. E. Beauregard, ‘Wilberforce University: Black America’s Oldest University’, in J. W. Oliver et al. (edd.), Cradles of Conscience: Ohio’s Independent Colleges and Universities (Kent, Ohio 2003) 489-508.
at Payne Theological Seminary (chapter 12). After his return to Wilberforce University, he became its Vice-President and later President (1908-1920; chapters 15-18). His presidency, however, was overshadowed by severe financial restraints and the First World War (chapters 20-24). Finally, he held a position at the Department of Agriculture (1921-1924; chapter 26). Two years later he died at home in Ohio (chapter 29, written by his wife).  

This impressive career was achieved under the constraints of a society which forced him to fight on three frontiers at the same time. First, he had to suffer preposterous acts of racial discrimination. While still a young man, he was forbidden to enter an omnibus (p. 57). Later in life it was mostly hotels, for example, in Williamstown (p. 134) and Ohio (p. 157), which insisted on segregation and refused to accommodate him. In Baltimore the Hotel Belvedere would ‘not undertake to serve a dinner at which members of [his] race might be present’, though he was a speaker at the APA meeting held there (p. 207). The disarming ironic humour, which Scarborough applies to these descriptions of otherwise unbearable acts, will win him the sympathy of every reader. In London, however, a courageous hotel manager decided rather to see his white American guests leave under protest than to permit any maltreatment of Scarborough (pp. 173-75, 185). Moreover, the captain of the Carmania ‘had informed the waiters that if [he and his wife] were not properly served he would wait on [them] himself’ (p. 215). Secondly, when Scarborough was a student, Calhoun had publicly asserted ‘that no Negro could learn Greek’ (p. 44; cf. the index). Scarborough was proud that he proved him wrong twice (p. 78), once by learning Greek and a second time by writing a teaching book about Greek. Scarborough had made himself living proof that blacks were indeed able to achieve the goals of higher education. Thirdly, Scarborough struggled with the then prominent anti-classicist position among blacks. Its most prominent propagator was Booker T. Washington, who held that practical skills were more important for African-Americans than the classical curriculum. Scarborough, however, clearly saw that this unnecessarily limited the chances of blacks by effectively excluding them from key positions in society and, in the long run, from a more prosperous future.

Scarborough’s autobiography helps the reader to contextualize his philological works. His renown was to rest exclusively on two books: First Lessons in Greek, which had become in his day a standard work in Greek tuition of both black and white students, and Birds of Aristophanes.  

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5 For more about Scarborough’s life, see his obituary by J. F. Slater, *Journal of Negro History* 11.4 (1926) 689-92. Being one of the few African Americans who had the opportunity to travel, Scarborough also used his narrative talent to describe the deep impression that these travels left on him (*Autobiography*, chapters 16, 19, 21, 25; *Works*, pp. 141-57).

6 W. S. Scarborough, *First Lessons in Greek: Adapted to the Greek Grammars of Goodwin and Hadley, and Designed as an Introduction to Xenophon’s Anabasis and Similar Greek* (New York 1881); *Birds of Aristophanes: Theory of Interpretation* (Boston 1886).
was ever published. Financial pressures forced Scarborough to abandon the
publication of his edition of Andocides, which was otherwise ready for press (p. 105; see also Works, p. 328). And publication of his Questions on Latin Grammar was pre-empted by a similar work published at the same time (pp. 93, 355 n. 10).

The Works of William Sanders Scarborough

The second book to be reviewed here hosts a selection of the minor works of Scarborough (p. xxv). The majority of articles pertain to African-American issues. Ronnick has arranged them thematically into the following categories: ‘Military’ (pp. 1-8), ‘Speeches’ (pp. 9-36), ‘Journalism’ (pp. 37-46), ‘Introductions to Books’ (pp. 47-64), ‘Book Reviews’ (pp. 65-90), ‘Obituaries’ (pp. 91-96), ‘Biographies’ (pp. 97-140), ‘Travel Narratives’ (pp. 141-58), ‘Education in General’ (pp. 159-84), ‘Education of Blacks’ (pp. 185-232), ‘Philology in General’ (pp. 233-70), ‘Classical Philology’ (pp. 271-332), ‘Politics, Policy, and Prejudice’ (pp. 333-484), and ‘Farming’ (pp. 485-92). Although there is a special section on Classical philology, some classics-related works are categorized elsewhere: for example, the introduction to his own First Lessons in Greek (pp. 49f.), a review of a book on how to teach Latin (pp. 78-81), a discussion of the utility of studying Greek which probably will still help motivate many a teacher of that language (pp. 159-66), and two contributions on Iphigenia plays (pp. 255-60, 267-70). The section on Classical philology itself then contains the strictly philological publications.

To give a glimpse of Scarborough’s achievements in the Classics, some examples will be summarized here. In his article ‘On Fatalism in Homer and Virgil’ (pp. 274-81), he establishes that the words mo‹ra, fatum, ‘Fate’ are polysemous and may indicate either ‘the will of the Gods’ or the ‘blind impersonal force, behind the Gods and beyond their power’ (p. 275). He holds—pace Grote—that ἀνεξπιστοί in Thuc. 6.17 (pp. 305-10; summarized p. 282) means ‘hopeless of success’ (p. 305), or in other words ‘that the Peloponnesians were “hopeless” in the sense that they were not powerful enough, had not resources enough to make a successful resistance against the Athenian forces’ (p. 310; see also pp. 322-25, 329f.). He establishes that ancipiti in Caesar, De Bello Gallico 1.26.1 (pp. 289-93; summarized p. 283) ‘means “doubtful” in the sense of “critical” or “uncertain”’ (p. 283). In the question which author should be read in undergraduate reading courses, he prefers Andocides over Xenophon because of the ease of his language in combination with the interesting

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7 One should, however, not fail to mention the authoritative pamphlet by W. S. Scarborough, The Educated Negro and his Mission (Washington, DC 1903).

subjects touched (p. 284). He adds that the fact that his colleagues chose Cebes’ Tablet shows at least that the case against Xenophon was gaining momentum (pp. 287f.). Concerning the infamous reference to a child in Vergil, Eclogues 4 (pp. 297-301; summarized p. 286), he concludes (p. 286) that the reference is, if to anyone, to ‘Marcellus, the son of Octavia by her former husband of the same name (Aen. vi.861 sqq.)’. ‘On the Accent and Meaning of Arbutus’ (pp. 294-96), he insists that the antepenultimate syllable is to be accented and ‘that the meaning of the word is that of a tree, and not the common Mayflower, as popularly used’ (p. 294). In ‘Bellerophon’s Letters, Iliad VI.168 ff.’ (pp. 302-04), he demonstrates ‘that σῆμα, aside from its ordinary meaning, may express the idea of written characters’ (p. 302). On the phrase hunc inventum inveni in Plautus, Captivi 422 (pp. 311-14), he states that ‘[i]f we make hunc refer to the son of Hegio, Philopolemus, the meaning is clear and the interpretation is simple’ (p. 313). In discussing the connotations of ‘Cena, δεῖπνον, prandium, ἄριστον’ (pp. 320f.), Scarborough determines that the former two referred to meals ‘from noon to midnight and possibly later’ and the latter two ‘from early morn to midday’ (p. 321). In his ‘Notes on the Meaning and Use of φιλων and ξένων in Demosthenes, De Corona, 46’ (pp. 326f.), he comes to the conclusion ‘that φιλων and ξένων are used in a derisive sense’ (p. 327), and paraphrases the passage thus: ‘For at one time those (whom Philip had deceived and bribed, sc. φιλων καὶ ξένων) were regarded as friends (φιλοι)—friends in the ordinary sense—also friends (ξένοι) in the sense of parties mutually pledged by gifts or otherwise to support each other regardless of the nature of the cause or compact’ (p. 326).

Even after a century has passed, Scarborough’s contributions to classics have lost nothing of their value. They still provide inspiring reading and testify to the stylistic mastery of their author. Most of the positions he takes and the conclusions he arrives at are such as one could adopt today without being old-fashioned, let alone wrong. Those who want to belittle Scarborough’s philological output must not forget that all this was achieved under the greatest limitations and pressures—including constant shortage of money and abundance of workload.

The Editorial Work of Michele Valerie Ronnick

In her introductions, Ronnick explains the difficulties that she faced in the process of editing. The original manuscript of Scarborough’s autobiography, for instance, was lost early after its author’s death. So Ronnick had to rely on copies made by Savoy and Robinson, and bases her edition on Savoy’s manuscript. The printed text, thus, is

the result of philological efforts similar to the puzzling intricacies of a critical edition. Restoring the original text of the author, including the deciphering of abbreviations and clarification of unclear references, took Ronnick eight years (Autobiography, p. 21) and resulted in explanatory notes that fill almost seventy pages of the book (pp. 333-400). Similarly, the edition of Scarborough’s Works took another eight years because they had appeared in a wide array of journals spanning a fifty-year period and no comprehensive bibliography of Scarborough’s works had ever been made. Some of the material was nearly unreadable and in certain sections well corroded by time. Other articles, Henry Louis Gates Jr. informs us in his foreword (Works, p. xvii), would have been lost had not the paper versions been converted into microfilm during the 1930s. So the collection literally preserved them from extinction.

Ronnick consistently marks her corrections in the text by square brackets. The need for polishing up the editions is undeniable, and the readers need not know the nature of every misprint that typesetters have produced one hundred years ago. However, obvious but unbracketed errors in the edited text of the Works leave the reader wondering which publishers are responsible for them. Errors in the Greek script like ἀμοῖ (for ἀμφῖ) and ἄνη (for ἄνη) (Works, p. 291) do not enable one to identify which publisher is the source of the error, but errors due to the old-fashioned German script (Fraktur) point to the 2007 publishers: ‘näre’ (read ‘wäre’), twice; ‘jetyt’ (read ‘jetzt’); ‘zueier’ (read ‘zweier’); and ‘enöchte’ (read ‘möchte’) all on one page (Works, p. 306). Of course, no error is so grave that consultation of the original would seem necessary. And every scholar citing Scarborough’s works will have the sense tacitly to correct these errors without further ado.

Both books are beautifully hardbound. The Autobiography comes with sewn pages at an incredibly cheap price, which makes it an affordable reading to any student of Classics or Black History. The Works, however, although they cost more, are not sewn. Lengthy indices, which include everything that the reader might look for, round off both books. One can only hope that the books attract many readers who pay more attention to the personality than to the skin colour of the original author and that they encourage more blacks to study Classics in the footsteps of Scarborough.