**Biography of Stephen Crane**

Stephen Crane (1871-1900), American journalist, poet, and author wrote *The Red Badge of Courage: an episode of the American Civil War* (1895);

But he was amid wounds. The mob of men was bleeding. Because of the tattered soldier's question he now felt that his shame could be viewed. He was continually casting sidelong glances to see if the men were contemplating the letters of guilt he felt burned into his brow. At times he regarded the wounded soldiers in an envious way. He conceived persons with torn bodies to be peculiarly happy. He wished that he, too, had a wound, a red badge of courage. --Ch. 9

An exemplary novel of realism, Henry Fleming's experience as a new recruit and his struggles internal and external while under fire was hailed as a remarkable achievement for Crane and remains in print today. Crane lived a very short but eventful life--author and publisher [Irving Bacheller](http://www.online-literature.com/irving-bacheller/) hired him as reporter and he travelled across America, to Mexico, down to Cuba to report on the Spanish-American conflict, and later to Greece. He was respected by many authors, among them [Henry James](http://www.online-literature.com/henry_james/) and [H.G. Wells](http://www.online-literature.com/wellshg/), and influenced many others including [Joseph Conrad](http://www.online-literature.com/conrad/) and Ernest Hemingway.

Stephen Townley Crane was born on 1 November 1871 at 14 Mulberry Place in Newark, New Jersey into the large family of Mary Helen Peck (1827-1891) and Jonathan Townley Crane (1819-1880), Methodist minister. After his father's death the Cranes moved to 508-4th Avenue in Asbury Park, New Jersey. The home is now preserved as a museum. After attending public school, Crane attended the College of Liberal Arts at Syracuse University, but did not graduate. For many years he had been writing, but his first novel, which he published himself, *Maggie, a Girl of the Streets: a Story of New York* (1893) was unsuccessful. The grim story of a prostitute and tenement life did however gain the notice of editor and author [William Dean Howells](http://www.online-literature.com/william-dean-howells/).

After school Crane began writing sketches and short stories for newspapers, living in New York's bowery district. Started as a serial, *The Red Badge of Courage* gained Crane almost instant fame and the esteem of Bacheller. Crane's ensuing travels inspired further works including "The Black Riders and Other Lines" (1895), "The Little Regiment" (1896), "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky" (1897), *The Third Violet* (1897), "The Blue Hotel" (1898), "War Is Kind" (1899), *The Monster and Other Stories* (1899), *Active Service* (1899), and, said to be his finest short work, "The Open Boat" (1898), a fictionalised account of his own harrowing experience adrift in a boat after the *Commodore* sank.

Crane met Cora (Howorth) Taylor (1865-1910), owner of a brothel in Florida, and instantly fell in love. They moved to England, first living at Ravensbrook House in Oxted, Surrey, then Brede Place in Northiam, Sussex. The same year that *Wounds in the Rain* (1900) and *Whilomville Stories* (1900) were published, Crane became gravely ill again. He went to a sanatorium in the Black Forest of Badenweiler, Germany. At the age of twenty-eight, Stephen Crane died on 5 June 1900, and now rests in the family plot at the Evergreen Cemetery in Hillside, Union County, New Jersey. Cora survived him by ten years.

*As he gazed around him the youth felt a flash of astonishment at the blue, pure sky and the sun gleamings on the trees and fields. It was surprising that Nature had gone tranquilly on with her golden process in the midst of so much devilment.* --from Ch. 5, *The Red Badge of Courage*

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