

WOMEN'S FRIENDSHIP IN THE WORKS OF

SARAH ORNE JEWETT:

*The Country of the Pointed Firs**

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要 旨

本稿は、サラ・オーン・ジュウエットの作品における女性の友情パターンと性質を研究する一連の試みの第二稿である。第一稿では作者の初期の作品である *Deephaven* を扱ったが、本稿では後期の作品で最高の傑作とされている *The Country of the Pointed Firs* を扱うこととする。女性の友情に関する枠組み設定はすでに第一稿でなされており、それに照らしてどのような相違があるかを明らかにする。

この二つの作品は、約二十年の時を隔てて出版されたが、作品の構成、場面設定、登場人物、および主題など多くの共通点を有するものである。にもかかわらず、女性の友情という視点から見ると、二作品には大きな乖離がある。すなわち、若い女性の感傷的な友情と成熟した大人の女性の社会性を帯びた友情である。

この乖離は作者自身の二十年間の実体験に帰することができると考えられる。したがって、次稿はジュウエット自身の女性たちとの友情について検証する。

INTRODUCTION

This paper is the second in a series which aims to explore the pattern and nature of women's friendship as described in the works of Sarah Orne Jewett. The first paper introduced five categories of friendship as proposed by Janet Todd; namely sentimental, erotic, manipulative, political and social.¹⁾ By so doing, it has established the framework of women's friendship for the following discussions of Jewett's individual works. It also analysed one of her early works, *Deephaven*, in contrast to this paper which will discuss Jewett's later work, *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, her acknowledged masterpiece.

Section I examines *The Country of the Pointed Firs* in general terms and then more specifically from the perspective of female friendship. In Section II a comparison between *Deephaven* and *The Country of the Pointed Firs* is made in terms of structure, themes, characters as well as Jewett's artistic skills. In addition, another comparison is examined in regard to the pattern and nature of women's friendship in the two works.

I

(1)

The chapters of *The Country of the Pointed Firs* first appeared as a series of sketches in issues of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1896. By the end of that year those sketches were organized in book form. From its publication the book was very well received by literary critics as well as by general readers. Indeed, people, especially

* S.O.ジュウエットの作品における女性の友情：『とんがり樅の木の国』

women, of rural New England are vividly portrayed ; the natural landscape is beautifully described as is the universal harmony between man and nature ; the quality of quietness and subtlety, which is rare in industrialized societies in this century, is very impressive ; her style reaches its height ; and a sense of great significance in everyday life is evoked.

Willa Cather was a personal friend and admirer of Jewett. As quite often quoted, in the Preface to the new 1925 edition²⁾ of *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, she said as follows :

If I were asked to name three American books which have the possibility of a long, long life, I would say at once, "The Scarlet Letter," "Huckleberry Finn," and "The Country of the Pointed Firs." I can think of no others that confront time and change so serenely.

Miss Cather's prophetic statement was proved to be true as far as the Jewett's *Pointed Firs* is concerned. More recently, in her beautifully written biography of Jewett published in 1994, Paula Blanchard writes :

Several waves of criticism have washed over American literature since it [*Pointed Firs*] was published almost a century ago, but *The Country of the Pointed Firs* has held its own place and remains as much loved and as much read as another off beat classic, *Walden*. Like that book too it has continued to provoke new interpretations, depending on the generation and experience of its readers.³⁾

Pointed Firs is set in a fictional place called Dunnet Landing. Other than *Pointed Firs*, there are four more stories which are related to Dunnet Landing : "The Queen's Twin," "A Dunnet Shepherdess," "The Foreigner," and "William's Wedding." The first two were published in 1899, the third in 1990, and the fourth was published posthumously in 1910 though it was not finished at the time of Jewett's death in 1909. *Pointed Firs* and these four stories constitute "the world of Dunnet Landing."⁴⁾

The facsimile reproduction⁵⁾ of the 1896 first edition of *Pointed Firs* shows that the original edition did not include those four stories and therefore it consisted of 21 chapters. In fact this work has had a strange history of publication.⁶⁾ In the 1910 Houghton Muffin edition "A Dunnet Shepherdess" and "William's Wedding" were added as two chapters before the last, "A Backward View." Then in 1919 "The Queen's Twin" was also included in the Visitor's Edition as chapter 23. When Willa Cather edited the collection of 1925, she incorporated all three of those stories. "The Foreigner," once lost and then found, was included for the first time in this group of works in 1962 when David Bonnell Green published *The World of Dunnet Landing*. However, he did not include this story as part of *Pointed Firs*. As a matter of fact, he maintained the original organization of *Pointed Firs* and added to it the four stories separately as a group of Dunnet Landing-related stories.

It seems unfair to an author if someone rearranges the organization of any of his/her works after his/her death without his/her authorization. Moreover, in the case of Jewett's *Pointed Firs*, when those four stories are included in the work, the chronology of events as well as the entire rhythm of the work are definitely destroyed. *Pointed Firs* opens up with the narrator's arrival in Dunnet Landing in June, proceeds with the summer, and ends with her departure in late summer. "William's Wedding" occurs in May of the following year. Then, if it is placed before the last chapter of *Pointed Firs*, the whole structure of the work certainly becomes chronologically

unnatural. Regarding the rhythm of the work, due to the difference of the form and length of *Pointed Firs* and the four stories, when they are incorporated into the work, its rhythm or balance is disturbed. Whereas none of the chapters of *Pointed Firs* is divided into sections, each of the four stories is divided into several sections and therefore longer than any chapter of *Pointed Firs*.

For the reasons mentioned above, this paper deals with *The Country of the Pointed Firs* in its original organization. Among others, two major themes of the work have been recognized 1) the contrast between city and country—a nostalgia for a decaying fishing village in New England which represents the value of pre-industrialized society, and 2) the contrast among self-reliance, solitude and community. However, with the new wave of feminist literary criticism, another theme can be added: Female friendship between the narrator and her landlady, Mrs. Todd. The validity of taking up female friendship as one of the major themes in Jewett's literary works was discussed in the first paper of this series⁷⁾ and it is confirmed by some of the critics since then including June Howard with her following statement:

... Jewett's biography confirms the existence and importance of these powerful bonds among women. ... The wide-ranging significance of these female bonds is a necessary context for understanding both the texture of Jewett's life and the centrality of relations among women in her fiction, including *The Country of the Pointed Firs*.⁸⁾

The "powerful bonds among women" quite often take the form of friendship.

Since the purpose of this paper is to analyse some of Jewett's works in terms of women's friendship, only "William's Wedding" among the four Dunnet Landing stories will be discussed. Certainly the narrator and Mrs. Todd appear in the other three stories, too, but the major topics of those stories are not about friendship between the two women whereas the topic of "William's Wedding" is the reunion of the two women, though the major event is William's wedding.

(2)

The first chapter of *The Country of the Pointed Firs* depicts the return of the narrator to Dunnet Landing, a seacoast fishing village in New England that she had briefly visited a few years previously. It is late June and the following chapters proceed with the development of the season of summer, from fresh green pennyroyal to frost-bitten goldenrod. The narrator, whose name is unknown to the reader, is a middle-aged city woman and a writer in her own right.

As in *Deephaven*, there is an allusion to friendship in the first chapter:

When one really knows a village like this and its surroundings, it is like becoming acquainted with a single person. The process of falling in love at first sight is as final as it is swift in such a case, but the growth of true friendship may be a lifelong affair.⁹⁾

In the second chapter, the narrator secures lodging in Mrs. Almira Todd's house and already in the above passage of the first chapter "the growth of true friendship" between the two women is suggested.

Mrs. Todd is a herbalist and she brews some compounds from her herbs so that she can give them to neighbors as remedies for their illness. The narrator observes:

It may not have been only the common ails of humanity with which she tried

to cope ; it seemed sometimes as if love and hate and jealousy and adverse winds at sea might also find their proper remedies among the curious wild-looking plants in Mrs. Todd's garden. (p. 5)

June is the beginning of the herb-gathering season and, therefore, she must go out in the field and spend much time there. The narrator, out of pure kindness, helps her receive her customers and patients during the day, although this seriously delays writing. So she has to tell Mrs. Todd that she cannot help her anymore as she must go back to her own work. Mrs. Todd responds to her as follows : "Well, dear," she said sorrowfully, "I've took great advantage o' your bein' here. I ain't had such a season for years, but I have never had nobody I could so trust. (p. 9) This response of Mrs. Todd shows her deep confidence in the narrator. Indeed, "Mrs. Todd and I [the narrator] were not separated or estranged by the change in our business relations ; on the contrary, a deeper intimacy seemed to begin." (p. 9) And in some evenings ;

... Mrs. Todd would feel that she must talk to somebody, and I was only too glad to listen. We both fell under the spell, and she either stood outside the window, or made an errand to my sitting-room, and told, it might be very commonplace news of the day, or, as happened one misty summer night, *all that lay deepest in her heart.* (p. 9) (Italics mine.)

A sense of trust, deep intimacy, and profound feeling develops between the two women.

The narrator hires a little white schoolhouse where she can seclude herself for the work of writing since it is empty during the summer vacation. One day she receives a visitor there, Captain Littlepage, a lonely old man who used to be a sea captain. The story he tells her, "The Waiting Place," is a very strange one about "a kind of waiting-place between this world an' the next" (p. 39) in an arctic town which seems to represent timelessness. The subject of time is one of the themes of this work.

The narrator and Mrs. Todd are together again in the evening in chapter VII. Mrs. Todd brings for them both a mug of beer she has brewed from the celler :

"I don't give that to everybody," said Mrs. Todd kindly ; and I felt for a moment as if it were part of a spell and incantation, and as if my enchantress would now begin to look like the cobweb shapes of the arctic town. (p. 47)

The phrase "I don't give that to everybody" suggests that to Mrs. Todd the narrator is a special person. Here again a sense of intimacy is observed. "Their intimacy presents yet another instance of transcendence, perhaps the most significant in the work."¹⁰⁾

The words "spell" and "incantation" connote some supernatural, mysterious powers that Mrs. Todd has. In fact in this work she is described as a woman with such powers. In the following passages, for example, these abilities are suggested :

There were some strange and pungent odors that roused a dim sense and remembrance of something in the forgotten past. Some of these might once have belonged to sacred mystic rites, and have had some occult knowledge handed with them down the centuries ; but now they pertained only to humble compounds brewed. . . in a small caldron on Mrs. Todd's kitchen stove. (p. 4)

Her [Mrs. Todd's] height and massiveness in the low room gave her the look

of a huge sibyl, while the strange fragrance of the mysterious herb blew in from the little garden. (p. 10)

There was something lonely and solitary about her [Mrs. Todd's] great determined shape. She might have been Antigone alone on the Theban plain. . . . An absolute, archaic grief possessed this country-woman; she seemed like a renewal of some historic soul, with her sorrows and the remoteness of daily life busied with rustic simplicities and the scents of primeval herbs. (p. 78)

In these mysterious moments, the relationship between Mrs. Todd and the narrator has a nature of "transcendence" —transcending time and space.

In the following four chapters, Mrs. Todd and the narrator make a one-day trip to Green Island. There lives Mrs. Todd's mother, Mrs. Blackett who is eighty-six years old, and her son William who is age sixty. The story of William is told again later in "William's Wedding."

Mrs. Blackett is a delightful, lovely little woman who is self-reliant and independent in mind and spirit. Although she lives in physical isolation, she is remembered by many different people as is described in a later chapter of a family reunion. The narrator observes that "she [Mrs. Blackett] had that final, that highest gift of heaven, a perfect self-forgetfulness." (p. 73) Furthermore she feels:

Her [Mrs. Blackett's] hospitality was something exquisite; she had the gift which so many women lack, of being able to make themselves and their houses belong entirely to a guest's pleasure, —that charming surrender for the moment of themselves and whatever belongs to them, so that they make a part of one's own life that can never be forgotten. (p. 73)

The narrator feels very much at home at the Blacketts and feels close to the family. It is in this context that friendship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd further deepens. After lunch they set out for pennyroyal gathering. They come to the place where genuine pennyroyal grow and while gathering it, Mrs. Todd says:

"There, dear, I never showed nobody else but mother where to find this place; 't is kind of sainted to me. Nathan, my husband, an' I used to love this place when we was courtin', and". . . .

I had never heard her speak of her husband before, but I felt that we were friends now since she had brought me to this place. (p. 77)

Here the narrator is treated as a family member, just like her dear mother and husband, the status only a closer friend deserves.

Chapter XII deals with Mrs. Fosdick's visit to Mrs. Todd's. Mrs. Todd, "in spite of some preliminary grumbling, was really delighted with the prospect of entertaining *an old friend*." (p. 87) (Italics mine) After many days of waiting, she finally appears before Mrs. Todd to stay in her house as guest. The narrator is introduced to the guest and soon they are on friendly terms. One evening the three women sit around the Franklin stove and the conversation there leads to the episode of Joanna Todd in the next chapter. But before that, towards the end of this chapter, there is again a mention of friendship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd. Mrs. Fosdick says:

"There, it does seem so pleasant to talk with an old acquaintance that knows

what you know. . . .”

Mrs. Todd gave a funny little laugh. “Yes’m, old friends is always best, ‘less can catch a new one that’s fit to make an old one out of,” she said, and we gave an affectionate glance at each other which Mrs. Fosdick could not have understood, being the latest comer to the house. (pp. 96-97)

It is obvious here that, although this statement is of a general nature, with “a new one” she alludes to the narrator and with “an old one” Mrs. Fosdick. An “affectionate” friendship is developing between the two. There is an atmosphere where the two women share the secret of affectionate friendship.

The following three chapters all relate to Joanna Todd who is a cousin of Mrs. Todd’s husband. In her youth Joanna was betrayed by her lover and, in her extreme disappointment, she rejected God. Since she believed she can never be forgiven by God, she wanted to isolate herself from the rest of the world. She moved to barren Shell-heap Island and lived there until her death twenty years later.

One small thing in Joanna’s episode plays a very important role in relation to the friendship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd as described in the last chapter of the work. That is “a beautiful coral pin” brought back for Joanna from somewhere in the Mediterranean by Nathan who knows nothing of her change. Once Mrs. Todd visits Joanna on Shell-heap Island to invite her to come back ashore and live with people. But Joanna, with a strong determination, refuses to do so. With nothing more to say, Mrs. Todd acts as follows :

... I [Mrs. Todd] got Nathan’s little coral pin out o’ my pocket and put it into her hand ; and when she saw it and I told her where it come from, her face did really light up for a minute, sort of bright an’ pleasant. ‘Nathan an’ I was always good friends ; I’m glad he don’t think hard of me,’ says she. I want you to have it, Almiry, an’ wear it for love o’ both o’ us,’ and she handed it back to me. (pp. 121-122)

This passage proves that for Mrs. Todd this coral pin is very special : her husband Nathan has brought it back for Joanna and Joanna asked her to have it on her behalf.

In the chapters from XVI through XIX comes the climax of this work, the Bowden Family Reunion. Asked by the narrator whether she would like to have her go to the reunion, Mrs. Todd responds :

“Oh certain, dear !” answered my friend affectionately. “Oh no, I never thought o’ any one else for comp’ny, if it’s convenient for you, long’s poor mother ain’t come. (p. 137)

This passage shows that Mrs. Todd considers the narrator to be a special person or friend next to her own mother. Again affection on the part of Mrs. Todd is felt.

To their surprise and great delight, Mrs. Blackett comes to join them and together they start to go to where the reunion is to take place. During the expedition Mrs. Blackett is greeted with many different faces with extreme warmth. At the reunion, too, she is received by everybody with special delights “as if it were pleasure enough for one day to have a sight of her [Mrs. Blackett].” (p. 160) ““Mother’s always the queen,” said Mrs. Todd.’ (p. 161)

The reunion highlights the sense of community in the work. And gradually the narrator feels herself to be a part of that community. Mrs. Todd tells the narrator, ““I’ve always meant to have you see this place, but I never looked for such a beautiful

opportunity—weather an' occasion both made to match. . . .” (pp. 164-165) On the way back the narrator observes as follows:

Neither of my companions was troubled by her burden of years. I hoped in my heart that I might be like them as I lived on into age, and then smiled to think that I too was no longer very young. So we always keep the same hearts, though our outer framework fails and shows the touch of time. (p. 183)

And thus the Bowden Family Reunion ends.

After returning to Dunnet Landing, the narrator meets one more lonely person who is a fisherman and lives in solitary isolation. His life is full of memories of his wife whom he is still mourning eight years after her death.

Then comes the day of the narrator's departure from Dunnet Landing in the last chapter. It is a day in late summer:

Mrs. Todd had hardly spoken all day except in the briefest and most disapproving way; it was as if we were on the edge of a quarrel. It seemed impossible to take my departure with anything like composure.

....

“I've seen to everything now,” she told me in an unusually loud and business-like voice.

I glanced at my friend's face, and saw a look that touched me to the heart. I had been sorry enough before to go away.

“I guess you'll excuse me if I ain't down there to stand round on the w'arf see you go,” still trying to be gruff. (pp. 208-209)

Here Mrs. Todd is suppressing her emotion. Therefore in reaction she can hardly speak and when speaking, her voice is “unusually loud and business-like.” Her reactions to the situation described above show that she can hardly stand the narrator's departure. The friendship between the two women has become so close that parting is very painful.

Mrs. Todd turned and left me as if with sudden thought of something she had forgotten, . . . I could not part so; I ran after her to say good-by, but she shook her head and waved her hand without looking back when she heard my hurring steps, and so went away down the street. (p. 210)

There are none of the hugs and kisses that usually go with a good-by between friends. It seems that Mrs. Todd intentionally avoids them in order not to show her gathering emotions. Indeed, she is a “strangely self-possessed and mysterious” (p. 211) woman.

Some critics interpret this refusal to say good-by in the usual manner on the part of Mrs. Todd as a kind of condemnation against the narrator. Warner Berthoff, for example, asserts that when “she [the narrator] leaves in September, she must accept the rebuke implicit in Mrs. Todd's disinclination to stop for good-byes.”¹¹⁾ However, it seems more valid to interpret it as an avoidance on her part of losing control of her emotions. As a mature woman, Mrs. Todd does not want to show her dear friend that she is extremely sentimental or emotional on her departure. In fact, Mrs. Todd is very much thoughtful and full of affection for the narrator as is depicted in the next quotation.

When the narrator went into the house again, she finds a few things left in the

kitchen for her.

I found the little packages on the kitchen table. There was a quaint West Indian basket which I knew its owner had valued, and which I had once admired; there was an affecting provision laid beside it for my seafaring supper, with a neatly tied bunch of southernwood and a twig of bay, and a little old leather box which held the coral pin that Nathan Todd brought home to give to poor Joanna. (pp. 210-211)

At the departure of the narrator, Mrs. Todd gives her among others a very special thing, the coral pin, as a token of their deep friendship. Their friendship is neither exciting nor romantic like the one between young girls. But it is a subdued yet profound friendship between the two matured women. Thus the final image of *Pointed Firs* is that of a serene but profound friendship, separation, and solitude.

“William’s Wedding” was never finished but was published in 1910. As was mentioned earlier in this paper, although the central event of this story is the wedding of William and Esther, a Dunnet shepherdess, this tends to be outshone by the presence of two women, Mrs. Todd and the narrator.

The narrator returns to Dunnet Landing the following May. The familiar surroundings of the place makes her “feel solid and definite again, instead of a poor, incoherent being.”¹²⁾ of her city life. She has long been “homesick for the conditions of life at the Landing the autumn before.” (p. 279)

The reunion between the narrator and Mrs. Todd, therefore, is described in a highly emotional fashion in the following passage :

My heart was beating like a lover’s as I passed it [the garden] on the way to the door of Mrs. Todd’s house,

“She has n’t gone away?” I asked Johnny Bowden *with a sudden anxiety* just as we reached the doorstep.

. . . .

Then *on my homesick heart* fell the voice of Mrs. Todd. She stopped, through what I knew to be *excess of feeling*, to rebuke Johnny for bringing in so much mud, and I dallied without for one moment during the ceremony; then we met again face to face. (p. 277) (Italics mine)

The wedding ceremony itself takes place in the minister’s house and is invisible in this story. Mrs. Todd and the narrator stands close together and watches William and Esther going into and coming out of the parsonage. Everything is depicted in relation to Mrs. Todd and the narrator. The newly weds visit their sister’s house before going back to Green Island where Mrs. Blackett, William’s mother, is waiting for them. After seeing them off, the two women comes home hand in hand: “We went home together up the hill, and Mrs. Todd said nothing more; but we held each other’s hand all the way.” (p. 286)

The two women share an overwhelming feeling about William’s wedding. Their friendship becomes more emotional than in *The Country of the Pointed Firs*: it is reflected in the fact that they hold each other’s hand all the way to Mrs. Todd’s house.

The development of friendship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd has been discussed so far. At the outset of *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, their relationship is that of a lodger and a landlady. As time goes by and the narrator comes to take

part in the many different events of Mrs. Todd's life, their relationship develops into a friendship which steadily becomes closer and deeper. At times Mrs. Todd shares with the narrator "all that lay deepest in her heart," and also the latter is treated by the former as if she were a member of her own family. A sense of trust and profound intimacy has developed between the two women in the form of friendship. Yet, as has been analysed, their friendship is not a sentimental nor romantic one as is often seen between young girls. The narrator and Mrs. Todd are both middle-aged women of maturity. Hence in their friendship their emotions are well controlled as is described, for example, in the scene of their parting in the last chapter of this work.

When it comes to "William's Wedding," however, in the first section the re-encounter of the narrator with Mrs. Todd after eight months is described in a very emotional manner as has been observed. Also the last scene of the story shows the two women with full of emotion holding each other's hand, which is hardly imagined in *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. There should be at least two reasons why they are to that extent emotional. Firstly, the narrator has long been homesick for Mrs. Todd as well as for the life at Dunnet Landing. Secondly, her brother's late wedding makes Mrs. Todd very excited and emotional; when she watches William and Esther going into the parsonage to get married, the tears are running down her cheeks. Therefore, it can be considered to be a special and exceptional occasion for both of them.

II

(1)

The Country of the Pointed Firs (published in 1896) shares many things in common with *Deephaven* (published in 1877) although there are some differences observed. In fact, the latter is often called the "mother-text"¹³⁾ of the former, or sometimes it is said that the former is the revision of the latter. The structures, settings, characters, and themes are almost the same. However, due to the long interval of almost twenty years during which the author further developed her insights into human life as well as her literary arts, *The Country of the Pointed Firs* is evaluated as a refined and artistic work than *Deephaven*.

Regarding the structures of the two works, they are almost identical in that in both works individual sketches are loosely connected to form one book. In the case of *Deephaven* the only unifying thread running through those sketches is the presence of two young city girls, Kate Lancaster and Helen Denis, who are best friends living in Boston. In this work Helen Denis, who is still in her twenties, serves as the narrator. In *Pointed Firs*, however, the narrator is a middle-aged woman who is also living in a city. As in *Deephaven* the only unifying factor of this work is the presence of the narrator throughout the book, although there does appear another important main character, Mrs. Todd. As was discussed earlier in this paper, unlike Kate and Helen, the relationship of the two women is that of a landlady and a lodger at the beginning of the book. But as time progresses, the narrator is able to involve herself in different aspects of Mrs. Todd's life, and a true friendship between the two grows.

The settings of the two books are also very similar. Though *Deephaven* starts with a scene in Boston, all the events take place in a shipping port village, Deephaven, seemingly in New England, once prosperous but now decaying. Dunnet Landing, the setting of *Pointed Firs*, is also a seacoast fishing village in New England left behind by prosperity and progress.

Kate and Helen visit Deephaven to spend a summer there and the people and life of the decaying shipping port are observed and portrayed through the eyes of the two

girls. However, Kate and Helen always remain outsiders to the events and characters of the story: they do not take part in the action or the world of *Deephaven*. On the other hand, though the narrator of *Pointed Firs* returns to Dunnet Landing also as a visitor, she becomes gradually involved in the events and people there: she takes part in the community and eventually she becomes part of it although she has to leave it in the end. Therefore, unlike *Deephaven*, *Pointed Firs* has the narrator's growing intimacy with the people and life of Dunnet Landing as the delicate link between the sketches.

The endings of the two works also show some differences. Since the two girls in *Deephaven* remain outsiders to the end, there is hardly any deep sentiment of missing the people and the place on their part when they leave *Deephaven*. This is because they scarcely feel any empathy towards the world of *Deephaven*: they just visited there and enjoy being there. Therefore, with no pain of separation at the end of the story, it is rather difficult to find any suggestion of the two girls returning to *Deephaven* in the near future. On the other hand in *Pointed Firs*, the narrator's friendship with Mrs. Todd becomes so tightly rooted in the women's community in Dunnet Landing, more specifically in the mind of Mrs. Todd, that there is a pain of separation when she leaves the place as discussed earlier. It is easy to predict from its ending, therefore, that the narrator will soon return, which actually happens in "William's Wedding."

As for the characters in the two books, many common features are found: old women of different sorts including herb-gatherers, old fishermen, retired sea-captains sometimes half-insane, and even farmers. As Richard Cary put it, "the facet remaining longest in the memory is the population. . . . it is predominantly old, predominantly female."¹⁴ Jewett seems to have been particularly interested in portraying old women. Quite often they are self-reliant living in solitude physically if not spiritually as was discussed in the case of *Deephaven* in the previous paper of this series. The same holds true of *Pointed Firs*. One thing is different, however; in the case of *Deephaven*, those women are described rather separately and sporadically in their settings, whereas in the other work female bonds are developed like a network with Mrs. Blackett as the hub. Mrs. Blackett, rather than the minister, is the one who is always wanted by the dying at Dunnet Landing; and on the way to the Bowden Reunion, she is greeted extremely warmly by people along the road:

A look of delight came to the faces of those who recognized the plain, dear old figure [Mrs. Blackett] beside me; one revelation after another was made of the constant interest and intercourse that had linked the far island [where Mrs. Blackett lives] and these scattered farms into a golden chain of love and dependence. (p. 147)

Moreover, she is the "queen" at the Bowden Reunion where everybody crowds around to welcome her. Here, the above mentioned difference leads to another difference: in *Deephaven* there is hardly a climax in the story but it is obvious that the Bowden Reunion constitutes the climax of *Pointed Firs*.

The themes of the two works also overlap to a certain extent, for example, city v.s. country, and solitude v.s. community or friendship among women. About the theme of solitude v.s. community or friendship, there seems to be some differences between the two works. As was analysed in the previous paper, there are two different texts in *Deephaven*, namely, friendship between Kate and Helen, and the situation of the old women in the village. By placing their friendship in opposition to the situation of old women there, Jewett has successfully made obvious the nature of

the friendship between the two young girls; sentimental and romantic. At the same time, against the backdrop of their sentimental and romantic friendship, the self-reliance and the solitude of the old women had become conspicuous. But in the case of *Pointed Firs*, there is no such overt juxtaposition of the friendship of the younger generation and the solitude of older generation. Rather the friendship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd is mingled into the community or communal bonds of women as a whole. And then, as Josephine Donovan has pointed out, "Jewett established a thematic counterpoint by alternating examples of isolation in one section with models of community in the next,"¹⁵⁾ with some minor variations.

As has been discussed above, there are many features commonly shared by *The Country of the Pointed Firs* and *Deephaven* the publications of which are almost twenty years apart. Then what makes the former *the* masterwork of Jewett? Sarah Way Sherman rightfully explained it as follows:

The vision that produced *Pointed Firs* was the result of long looking and listening, a study of her chosen literary subjects informed as much by emotion as intellect. . . . *The Country of the Pointed Firs* represents a moment of artistic self-realization, a writer's reaching beyond her customary limits and inhibitions to produce a work whose greatness even she cannot quite grasp.¹⁶⁾

(2)

The next question to be addressed is whether there is any observable departure in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* from *Deephaven* in terms of the women's friendship pattern and nature.

As a result of the analysis made in the previous paper, it has become clear that the friendship between Kate and Helen is pure, sincere, and sentimental in nature. Their friendship is straightforward and is characterized by the open admiration unique to younger girls. Helen and Kate somewhat identify themselves with each other and enjoy intense friendship. Meanwhile, the friendship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd is more subdued but a profound one between matured women, as was confirmed earlier in this paper. Paula Branchard said:

The narrator is a kind of disciple, but unlike Helen and Kate, she is no ingenue. A mature woman, she must demonstrate to Mrs. Todd the extent of her own existing knowledge and understanding in order to prove herself worthy of the older woman's love and confidence.¹⁷⁾

Moreover, again unlike Helen and Kate, the narrator comes back to Dunnet Landing alone: she is not accompanied by any friend.

She is dependent on Dunnet Landing for companionship. But if she is in some ways more vulnerable than Kate and Helen, in other ways she is more defined. She is, for example, a writer with a purpose. . . . The narrator is able to stand alone and able to acknowledge her need for support.¹⁸⁾

It is defined in the previous paper that, according to the paradigm proposed by Janet Todd, the very intense and intimate friendship between Kate and Helen can be classified as Sentimental friendship, namely, it is "a close, effusive tie" and it provides "close emotional support." In the case of the friendship between the two mature women, however, it does not fall into the same category. Rather it would be appro-

(25)

priate to classify it as Social friendship. The definition of Social friendship is a nurturing tie, not pitting women against society but rather smoothing their passage within it. The friendship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd is certainly “a nurturing tie” and it helps the narrator to be smoothly accepted by the world of Dunnet Landing.

Another Dunnet Landing story, “William’s Wedding,” shows a different aspect of the friendship between the two adult women in that it is quite emotional as was discussed earlier. But there seem two significant reasons why it is so emotional: one is that the narrator feels homesick, and the other is William’s wedding, a very special occasion for Mrs. Todd. At the end of *Pointed Firs* Mrs. Todd’s distant figure looks “mateless and appealing” (p. 211) but now that the narrator comes back to her, she is with her mate. This could be a third reason. But at any rate, the flooding of emotion described in this story can be interpreted as an exception in the context of their friendship.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the analysis of the friendship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd in *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, the nature of their friendship is identified: the sense of intimacy and trust grows more and more between the two in the context of Dunnet Landing female community; it is subdued with well-controlled emotion; and it is of a somewhat social nature in that it enables the narrator to develop social bonds with the people there.

When compared with the two young girls’ friendship, Kate and Helen, which would be categorized as Sentimental friendship, there are some distinctive differences. The friendship between the mature women could be categorized as Social friendship. To respond to the primary question of this paper about women’s friendship, it can be said that *The Country of the Pointed Firs* is indeed a departure from *Deephaven* in terms of the pattern and nature of female friendship.

This departure can be attributable to and coincided with the author’s personal development in the twenty years between the publications of these two works. During those years, through her own experiences, Jewett had come to realize the importance of female friendship and of the social network of bonds among adult women. To complete the discussion of women’s friendship and Jewett, therefore, her own friendships among the female community will be studied in the next paper, which is the last one of this series.

NOTES

- 1) See the first paper “Women’s Friendship in the Works of Sarah Orne Jewett: *Deephaven*,” in *Bulletin of Seisen Women’s College XXXIX* (Tokyo: Seisen Women’s College, 1991) p. (23)
- 2) This new edition was re-issued by Doubleday & Company, Inc. in 1956 as A Doubleday Anchor Book.
- 3) Paula Blanchard, *Sarah Orne Jewett: her world and her work* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1994), p. 278.
- 4) This phrase was used as the title of a Jewett collection. *The World of Dunnet Landing: A Sarah Orne Jewett Collection*, ed. by David Bonnell Green (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1972)
- 5) Sarah Orne Jewett, *The Country of the Pointed Firs and Other Stories*, edited, with an introduction, by Sarah Way Sherman—Centennial ed. (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1997)
- 6) The publishing information is primarily from Warner Berthoff, “The Art of Jewett’s *Pointed*

- Firs*” in *The World of Dunnet Landing*, p. 397 and Josephine Donovan, *Sarah Orne Jewett* (New York : Frederick Unger Publishing Co., 1980), p. 101.
- 7) “Women’s Friendship in the Works of Sarah Orne Jewett : *Deephaven*,” p. 31.
 - 8) June Howard, “Introduction: Sarah Orne Jewett and Traffic in Words” in *New Essays on The Country of the Pointed Firs*, edited by June Howard (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1994) pp. 7-8.
 - 9) Sarah Orne Jewett, *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, in *The Country of the Pointed Firs and Other Stories*, edited, with an introduction, by Sarah Way Sherman—Centennial ed. (Hanover : University Press of New England, 1997), p. 2. Subsequent page references of *Pointed Firs* refer to this edition.
 - 10) Josephine Donovan, *Sarah Orne Jewett* (New York : Frederick Unger Publishing Co., 1980), p. 105.
 - 11) Berthoff, “The Art of Jewett’s *Pointed Firs*,” p. 388.
 - 12) Sarah Orne Jewett, “William’s Wedding” in *The Country of the Pointed Firs and Other Stories*, Centennial ed., p. 276. Subsequent page references of “William’s Wedding” refer to this edition.
 - 13) Sarah Way Sherman, *Sarah Orne Jewett, and American Persephone* (Hanover : University Press of New England, 1989), p. 198.
 - 14) Richard Cary, *Sarah Orne Jewett* (New York : Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1962), p. 147.
 - 15) Donovan, *Sarah Orne Jewett*, p. 106.
 - 16) Sherman, “Introduction to *The Country of the Pointed Firs*” in the Centennial edition, p. ix
 - 17) Blanchard, *Sarah Orne Jewett : her world and her work*, p. 282.
 - 18) Sherman, *Sarah Orne Jewett, and American Persephone*, pp. 203-204.