



An Uncollected Whitman Letter to Alexander Black

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———. "Farmhouse for a Poet." *House & Garden*, 151 (May 1979), 184. [Text and photos, in color, of the interior and exterior of Whitman's birthplace.]

———. "Walt Whitman Show." *Variety*, 306 (3 February 1982), 127. [David Lenthall and Randell Haynes, "Look for Me Under Your Bootsoles," touring North Carolina.]

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ON THE BACK COVER:

AN UNCOLLECTED WHITMAN LETTER TO ALEXANDER BLACK—When this letter was recently offered for sale, for \$1500, the dealer's catalogue gave no recipient's name; but Charles E. Feinberg—on seeing a facsimile of the letter—did recall the name of Charles M. Skinner, who wrote on Whitman as an editor, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, November 1903. This stirred up memories of someone who worked with Skinner on *The Brooklyn Times*, which eventually led to finding, by a combination of luck and memory, Alexander Black's *Time and Chance: Adventures with People and Print* (New York and Toronto: Farrar and Rinehart, 1937), which includes the letter, on p. 73, in the chapter "Walt Whitman's Desk." The book is listed in Scott Giantvalley's *Walt Whitman, 1838–1939: A Reference Guide* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1981), p. 394, which also cites (on p. 310) Black's *The Latest Thing and Other Things* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1922), in which "The Desk," pp. 163–167, and the letter previously appeared. (The desk, by the way, fell to pieces the year Whitman died, 1892.) Thus, though the Whitman letter is not unpublished, it is not in Edwin Haviland Miller's six-volume *The Correspondence of Walt Whitman* (New York: New York University Press, 1961–1977); and as the Black books are long out of print, Whitman specialists may wish to have the letter available—it is now in the Feinberg Collection, Library of Congress. It must have been written just a day or so after Whitman had light orange stationery printed with an inscription from the *Boston Evening Transcript*, dated 7 May 1891, for the uncollected letter is dated 12 May 1891.

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