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THE SOURCES AND THEMES OF HAWTHORNE'S "THE GENTLE BOY"

G. HARRISON ORIANS

FOR much of his reading after his graduation from Bowdoin, Hawthorne turned to early newspapers, magazines, and general historical works in order to garner ideas for a series of New England stories. He did not, however, follow closely one narrow line of research, and his extensive browsing only infrequently supplied material for immediate use. But it did provide enough facts in quasi-historical fields to be of service in his later literary work and to make him a master of Old New England history.

Out of such activity his provincial tales took shape, notably "Roger Malvin's Burial," "Endicott and the Red Cross," and "The Gray Champion." "The Gentle Boy," a thrice-told tale, was one of the earliest of these to be written and printed. In his search for ideas he had drawn Sewel's *History of the Quakers* from the Salem Athenaeum for a month,¹ and in the story he specifically referred to the "historian of the sect"; but he nowhere implied that this was his sole source or tried to obscure other borrowing.

The story opens with a sketch of a page and a half of historical background, and terminates with added items of a summary character. Much of this general information may have been pieced out from William Sewel's *History of the Quakers*, but not all, and certainly the objective temper of it could not have been found in his highly partisan account. Six records besides those of Bishop² and Sewel had summed up events in Boston from 1656 to 1660 with details ample for Hawthorne's account. These included Hutchinson's *History*

¹ Cited in "Books Read by Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1828-1850," Essex Institute *Historical Collections*, LXVIII (1932), 68.

² George Bishop, *New England Judged* (London, 1703).

of *Massachusetts* (1764), William Hubbard's *General History of New England* (1815), Neal's *History of New England* (1720), Morton's *New England's Memorial* (1669), Morse and Parish's *Compendious History of New England* (1804), and Felt's *Annals of Salem* (1827). Of these, the last three are not long or specific enough to be of material aid. Morton's account, *New England's Memorial*, chiefly concerned with New Plymouth, referred to the "corrupt and damnable doctrines" of the Quakers "vented up and down the country" and recognized their real threat to the stability of both church and commonwealth but supplied no narrative details. Cotton Mather's *Magnalia*, which has been cited as a major source for this story, definitely does not supply adequate material for the close-grained sketch of Hawthorne.³

From any of the remaining histories he could have procured most of the actual facts with which the story opens. Certainly from Sewel, an admitted source, he gleaned such details as the time of the persecution, the universal rejection of the sect, the mention of death victims, the laws enacted against the Quakers, and the sense of current rage which resulted in banishments and heightened prejudice. Directly from Sewel came Hawthorne's adverse judgment of Governor Endicott for the rigorous action taken against the Quakers. This matter might also have been preserved in family tradition, since a Hathorne was involved as magistrate in the troubles of the time, or inferred from the record of Humphrey Norton's abuse of Thomas Prince at New Plymouth, adequately recounted by Francis Baylies. Hawthorne's mention of "actions contrary to the rules of decency" and of "most indecorous exhibitions, which, abstractly considered, well deserved the moderate chastisement of the rod" referred to Elizabeth Horton's wild declaiming in the streets of Cambridge and to the appearance in Salem of Deborah Wil-

³ What indebtedness there is to *Magnalia Christi Americana* will be noted in the following pages. References are to the 1853 Hartford edition.

son naked, as a protest against the community's cruelty and immodesty in the stripping and whipping of women. These cases were ready at hand in Hutchinson,⁴ as well as in Cotton Mather.⁵ One item of the introductory sketch, however, could not have been gleaned from any of the seventeenth-century sources. Hawthorne says the Quaker activities were so demonstrative that the popular antipathy "endured nearly a hundred years after actual persecution had ceased." Backus' remark in his *History of the Baptists in New England* (1777) that the prejudice existed to his day seems to be the chief warrant for Hawthorne's statement.⁶

Hawthorne, while sympathetic in his account, nevertheless knew that the Quakers were the aggressors and that their excesses heightened the Puritan rage.⁷ In the first printing of the story he cited some of the extenuating circumstances and beliefs which were responsible for the persecution of the Quakers in 1656. The passage was omitted in the shorter, more compressed version of 1837:

That those who were active in, or consenting to, this measure, made themselves responsible for innocent blood, is not to be denied: yet the extenuating circumstances of their conduct are more numerous than can generally be pleaded by persecutors. The inhabitants of New England were a people whose original bond of union was their peculiar religious principles. For the peaceful exercise of their own mode of worship, an object the

⁴ *History of Massachusetts Bay*, I, 174. Citations are from the Mayo edition (Cambridge, 1936).

⁵ *Magnalia*, II, 527.

⁶ (Newton, 1777), I, 262.

⁷ *The Token*, 1832, 194-195. In a concluding sentence not reprinted in 1837 Hawthorne remarked concerning the reaction of the Puritans to their own stern measures: "My heart is glad of this triumph of our better nature; it gives me a kindlier feeling for the fathers of my native land; and with it I will close the tale" (*The Token*, 1832, 194-195).

Other omissions in the later version of the story were considerable. Hawthorne left out lengthy descriptions of the Pearson household (202-203) and the congregation in the village church (208), and shorter notes on the preacher's sermon (210), Pearson's conversion to Quakerism (227), and the old Quaker (229). Other changes were largely word substitutions.

very reverse of universal liberty of conscience, they had hewn themselves a home in the wilderness; they had made vast sacrifices of whatever is dear to man; they had exposed themselves to the peril of death, and to a life which rendered the accomplishment of that peril almost a blessing. They had found no city of refuge prepared for them, but, with Heaven's assistance, they had created one; and it would be hard to say whether justice did not authorize their determination, to guard its gate against all who were destitute of the prescribed title to admittance. The principle of their foundation was such, that to destroy the unity of religion, might have been to subvert the government, and break up the colony, especially at a period when the state of affairs in England had stopped the tide of emigration, and drawn back many of the pilgrims to their native homes. The magistrates of Massachusetts Bay were, moreover, most imperfectly informed respecting the real tenets and character of the Quaker sect. They had heard of them, from various parts of the earth, as opposers of every known opinion, and enemies of all established governments; they had beheld extravagances which seemed to justify these accusations; and the idea suggested by their own wisdom may be gathered from the fact, that the persons of many individuals were searched, in the expectation of discovering witchmarks. But after all allowances, it is to be feared that the death of the Quakers was principally owing to the polemic fierceness, that distinct passion of human nature, which has so often produced frightful guilt in the most sincere and zealous advocates of virtue and religion.

Hawthorne's quiet reference to the extravagances and various violations of civil order as "a singular contrast to the staid deportment of their sectarian successors" he drew from Hutchinson⁸ or from his own convictions. His general views in the historical sketch represent either a sceptical examination of Quaker history, which would have been in accord with his mental discipline, or the reading of such works as Neal's and Hubbard's histories, in which the reasons for the persecution are cited, or that of Baylies, who

⁸ I, 169 and 173-175.

remarked of the Quakers in New England that they appeared there "during the first effervescence; the materials were still fermenting, and had not as yet worked off the scum and the dregs which all new religious sects are sure to bring up."⁹

So much for the main points of the introduction. The story itself is largely a family history and shows the causes which led Tobias Pearson and his wife to embrace Quaker doctrines. Structurally, it turns upon the misfortunes of the boy Ibrahim, his need for human association, the blow which his trust in mankind suffered from a violent playmate, and his death, with a last-minute reunion of surviving parent and child.

Of the characters, the closest to the lad was Pearson, whose name Hawthorne found in Hutchinson and Sewel as one of the twenty-seven friends of Wenlock who were released¹⁰ when he was set at liberty. Pearson and Judith Brown were given twenty stripes at a cart's tail through the town of Boston.¹¹ Pearson's conversion to Quakerism in "The Gentle Boy," through the joint forces of sympathy and persecution, had no single model, but there was ample precedent in Sewel and Bishop in the careers of Nicholas Upshal,¹² Eliakim Wardel,¹³ John Smith,¹⁴ Lawrence Southwick,¹⁵ Edward Whar-ton,¹⁶ and John Chamberlain.¹⁷ All these show how compassion for the oppressed and reaction to the excessive sever-

⁹ Francis Baylies, *Historical Memoir of the Colony of New Plymouth* (Boston, 1830), II, 31. Even Sewel adverts to odd actions not approved by other members of the Society. See Preface, xvii, and pages 175-185.

¹⁰ Bishop, I, 211, and Sewel, I, 345. The Sewel references throughout this paper are to the New York edition of 1844. The first English edition of the *History of the Quakers* was published in 1722.

¹¹ Hutchinson, I, 173.

¹² Sewel, I, 203.

¹³ Sewel, I, 416.

¹⁴ Hutchinson, I, 174.

¹⁵ Sewel, I, 218.

¹⁶ Sewel, I, 290, 410, and 414.

¹⁷ Sewel, I, 290. Sewel remarked that Chamberlain was so moved by the pious speeches of Robinson and Stevenson at their execution that "he received the doctrine of the Truth."

ity of human laws jointly resulted in conversions among the tender and less rigid members of the colony.

Pearson was represented as being comforted during the fatal illness of Ibrahim by an old Quaker who had quietly returned from banishment, and in the midst of their mutual consolation they thought the knock of the mother was that of a constable come to persecute them.

In the aged companion of Pearson, Hawthorne described the most representative Quaker of the story, for though his part in the narrative was small, he had long pursued a life of testimony and witness; he had suffered imprisonment; he had been banished from the colony and whipped from village to village with knotted cords; he had borne valiant testimony. He wore long hair beneath a broad-brimmed hat which he had refused to remove even before angered civil authorities. Through all persecution he maintained the enthusiasm and raptness of the zealot.

For his delineation Hawthorne found no direct original in the history of the times, though the old Quaker's return to a colony from which he had been banished on pain of death had so many parallels as to require no special prototype. One affecting detail, however, Hawthorne drew partially from Marmaduke Stevenson's prison composition, as printed by Bishop and Sewel.¹⁸ Stevenson's account declared that when the word of the Lord came unto him, he was required to leave his "dear and loving wife and tender children."¹⁹ This foundation statement Hawthorne amplified into the Quaker's desertion of the bedside of a dying daughter as a measure of the dispatch with which the believers of the inner light obeyed what they regarded as the divine command.²⁰

¹⁸ Bishop, 108, and Sewel, I, 284-285.

¹⁹ Sewel, I, 284, and Hutchinson, I, 170 and 173.

²⁰ Similar obedience to a call was related of Mary Clark, who left husband and children to come to New England to issue a warning. Sewel, I, 218, and Hutchinson, I, 169.

But the central character in the narrative is Ilbrahim, whose story, related as loving biography, has some reliance on historical facts, though in scattered passages only. The sole reference in the available annals to a child of Quaker visitants is that of Patience Scott, eleven years of age, who was subjected by the authorities to serious questioning.²¹ There was little in her career that Hawthorne could have turned directly to fictional purposes, except the detail that her answers to the questions of the authorities confounded them.²² However, the poignancy of her state may have set him brooding over the lot of a quiet child amid fanaticism and persecution. Thus the basic interpretation of the gentle boy crushed by human inhumanity Hawthorne largely supplied from his own imagination.

In order to make clear the symbolic and fanciful character of the tale, Hawthorne always spoke of Ilbrahim as the gentle spirit, as "that sweet infant of the skies that had strayed away from his home," and as having a pale, spiritual, but bright-eyed countenance and a superfluity of sensitiveness. The last attribute was of course necessary to show how cruelty could waste so tender a boy to death. That his tale of the refined lad with all of its unreality might at least be grounded in earthly heritage, he introduced representative Quakers as mother and father. Ilbrahim's parentage was nevertheless strict coinage.

The father of Ilbrahim was hinted to be one of two men executed at Boston in 1660, and the scenes which follow present both the everyday and the imaginary Boston of those days when Robinson and Stevenson met their death. Only the latter of these was a married man (whose family still resided in Yorkshire), but this fact did not stay Hawthorne in his interpretation. For him the problem was a human

²¹ Adequately related in Hutchinson, I, 170. Two Quaker women spoken of in early narratives, however, were mothers of six children each. See Daniel Neal, *The History of New England*, I, 295.

²² Sewel, I, 279.

one, as it was for Whittier in "The Changeling." What would be the fate of a grief-stricken son in a community which in pious rage had meted out the death penalty to the father?

The answer to this question hinged in part upon the character of the mother, Catherine, who was anticipated in several originals in Sewel, Hutchinson, and elsewhere. Hawthorne identified Catherine as the "woman who had assaulted the Governor with frightful language as he passed by the window of her prison," a passage gleaned from Hutchinson's description of Mary Prince.²³

Hawthorne's statement about the Quakeress' "banishment in the wilderness" could have been secured from most of the histories of New England, especially Hutchinson,²⁴ Hubbard,²⁵ and Neal,²⁶ or from an extended account of two women in Sewel, Elizabeth Horton and Joan Broksup, who were conveyed inland out of the colony jurisdiction. Elizabeth, returning after a visit to England *via* Virginia, was again carried miles into the wilderness "where there were many wolves, bears, and other wild beasts, and many deep waters to pass through."²⁷ The same histories (exclusive of Sewel) also supplied details of banishment in the cases of Mary Wright, Mary Taylor, and Ann Austen.²⁸

The additional phrase of the author that she had been "adjudged to suffer death and had been preserved only by involuntary banishment" echoes the language of Sewel and Bishop and connects the imaginary heroine more directly with Mary Dyer, who was once reprieved but upon a second return received the full penalty of the law.²⁹ Her reprieve came directly upon the intercession of a son, and the com-

²³ I, 168.

²⁴ Hutchinson, 168 and 173.

²⁵ *General History of New England*, in Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, Second Series, Volume VI (Boston, 1815), Chapter LXV, 571.

²⁶ Neal, *History of New England*, I, 295, 302, 304, and 311.

²⁷ Sewel, I, 409 and 412-413.

²⁸ Hutchinson, I, 167 and 173, and Neal, I, 295.

²⁹ Sewel, I, 335, and Hutchinson, I, 171.

mutation of the death penalty to banishment upon her first return was widely noticed, though Sewel supplied the fullest and most partisan details. Hawthorne borrowed material from the Dyer and Horton accounts in having Catherine return to Boston after her banishment.

But he wrote another identifying passage, touching upon her life before coming to New England :

... her voice had been already heard in many a land in Christendom; and she had pined in the cells of a Catholic Inquisition before she felt the lash and lay in the dungeons of the Puritans. Her mission had extended also to the followers of the Prophet, and from them she had received the courtesy and kindness which all the contending sects of our purer religion united to deny her. Her husband and herself had resided many months in Turkey, where even the Sultan's countenance was gracious to them; in that pagan land, too, was Ilbrahim's birthplace, and his oriental name was a mark of gratitude for the good deeds of an unbeliever.

The Turkish portion of Catherine's story, except for the husband and son, was compounded largely from Sewel's notice of Mary Fisher.³⁰ The mention of the Spanish Inquisition was borrowed from his account of Catherine Evans,³¹ a Quakeress who suffered greatly at the hands of the friars.

Thus the life-story of Catherine was largely reconstructed from details in Sewel about the careers of famous Quakeresses, with additional items from other historical sources. The final creature had all the fire, all the zealot's single-mindedness, all the devotion to the faith, all the submergence of ordinary human concerns to the divine call that made her a representative Quaker figure. But she was no mere puppet, and Hawthorne did endow her with human frailty and human passion.

The outstanding incident in connection with Catherine was her appearance in the meeting house. For such an item

³⁰ Sewel, I, 318-319.

³¹ Sewel, I, 360-398.

Hawthorne could have found precedent in Quaker conduct as chronicled by Daniel Neal. He described two women and T. Harris of Barbadoes as speaking aloud in the meeting-house at Boston and disturbing public worship, and cited the attempt of two men to speak in the church after sermons.³² Felt, Sewel, and Hutchinson chronicled such public disturbances, Sewel adding that the interruption by Sarah Gibbons and Dorothy Waugh occurred after the "lecture was ended."³³

For his interpretation of Catherine's words in church as extravagant and malignant, Hawthorne could hardly have relied upon Sewel, though material for a rudimentary generalization might have been found there; he possibly had in mind the language of Stevenson,³⁴ or of Mary Prince³⁵ and Humphrey Norton³⁶ in their revilings of the magistrates, or more probably the graphic description of the frenzied Quaker style supplied in Cotton Mather's *Magnalia*.³⁷

For her appearance in sackcloth and ashes, precedent was set by Catharine Chatham, cited by Bishop, who appeared at Boston clothed with sackcloth "as a sign of the indignation of the Lord coming upon you," for which breach of civil peace she was cast into prison.³⁸ Granting that Hawthorne may not have seen Bishop, he could still have found precedent for the sackcloth appearance from Sewel. Daniel Baker

³² Neal, I, 302. The prototype of the preacher to whom she listened was either John Wilson, the high-priest of Boston, anti-Gortonist, who was represented by Sewel and Bishop as taunting the death-victims for not uncovering, or Reverend John Norton, author of *The Heart of England Rent* (Sewel, I, 249, 288, and 419-420). See also the case of Charles Chauncey, minister at the College, (Sewel, I, 246).

³³ Sewel, I, 243. See the incident of Christopher Holder's speaking in the meeting at Salem after the minister had finished (Sewel, I, 218). Hutchinson refers to disturbances by Stevenson (I, 170) and Smith (I, 174).

³⁴ Sewel, I, 284.

³⁵ Hutchinson, I, 168, cites a letter of hers "filled with opprobrious stuff."

³⁶ Baylies, I, 32, and Hazard, *Historical Collections*, II, 558-560.

³⁷ *Magnalia*, II, 530-531.

³⁸ Bishop, 273. Bishop was seven times referred to in the notes of Hutchinson. If a copy was available, I think we may assume that Hawthorne would have consulted it.

appeared in the Catholic church at Gibraltar in sackcloth, shouting "Repentance!" with a loud voice.³⁹ Presumably Hawthorne was familiar with the story of Margaret Brewster,⁴⁰ who marched into the Old South Church in 1677 dressed in sackcloth, with ashes upon her head and her face blackened, an appearance which led Samuel Sewall to exclaim: "*Isaiah* I: 12, 14!"

One important aspect in Hawthorne's interpretation of the Quaker woman was his representation of her as partly self-deluded. Hawthorne portrayed, it is true, the forces of opposition which aroused her: the hostile crowd at the church doors, the beldames and close-drawn shutters, a sermon specifically directed at the intruder. But if he heightened the religious prejudice for the dramatic effect of conflict, he was not impressed by Inner Light; he recognized that individual passions were frequently confounded with piety, and that individual rage might be mistaken for the voice of God. Thus of Catherine he said: "... hatred and revenge now wrapped themselves in the garb of piety... her denunciation had an almost hellish bitterness": she gave vent to a "flood of malignity which she mistook for inspiration." This is an interpretation which Hawthorne may have arrived at as a natural outcome of his theme. It may more logically be referred to Cotton Mather's vigorous outburst against early Quaker abusiveness.

³⁹ Sewel, I, 394. It is probably true that any attendant of a New England church in the nineteenth century would have heard enough of Old Testament "sackcloth and ashes" to have needed no historical incident.

⁴⁰ Hawthorne's reference to Mary Dyer's protest against the authorities, in his *Grandfather's Chair*, Chapter VII, was apparently an attempt to capitalize upon a familiar name. There is no warrant for believing she ever appeared in sackcloth. For model he may have had in mind Hannah Wright, who came from Long Island to warn the Boston magistrates to spill no more innocent blood (Sewel, I, 418), or Margaret Brewster, of whose church appearance Hutchinson remarked (I, 174): "M. Brewster came in with her face smeared and as black as coal." Notice of her performance he could have gained from tradition, from newspaper columns, or from the court records in Boston later cited by Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers* (London, 1753), II, 260-263.

With a mother of such fanatic propensities, what would be the inevitable lot of her child, both in his emotional inheritance and in earthly affairs? What would be her concern for him and his future when her chief object in life was religious propaganda and protest? These were questions Hawthorne devotedly handled.

From his brooding over the problem there emerged a typical Hawthorne theme: real tragedy results when ambition—whether it be for personal advancement, for science, or for a cause—is allowed to trample upon the demands of normal instincts. There is little doubt that the earliest Quaker visitors to New England were afflicted with a martyr complex, and such Hawthorne understood it to have been in his portrayal of single-mindedness overriding other human considerations. Catherine by her marriage vows had assumed family obligations and had a son of that union, yet she never allowed the maternal duties to absorb her energies as she moved through the world in the cause she so zealously accepted. She adopted a design for living that was a product of an inner vanity, though connected with a sect whose creed, a generation later, at least, was one of humility. Thus the demands upon her she wore lightly, even her duties as mother, while she followed the "dictates of a wild fanaticism." Her enthusiasm for the life of the future and martyrdom led her with "unbridled fanaticism" to violate the responsibilities of life and to sever at times her earthly ties. Witness the result of the intransigent spirit of crusading: human affections outraged, human laws ignored, human lives sacrificed. Thus "The Gentle Boy" introduced a theme that Hawthorne later wrote large in "Egotism or the Bosom Serpent," in "Rappaccini's Daughter," and in the *Blithedale Romance*, where reforming zeal is more concerned with the fulfillment of a private program than with the happy solution of community problems. "The Gentle Boy" is the pre-study of this dominance of ambitious projects over human

concerns, of the ascendancy of head over heart. Perhaps this is one of the reasons for his special delight in it.

Closely joined to this topic of fanaticism and ambition is the allied theme of prejudice by which the tragic implications of the story are enlarged. The distresses of the protagonists were heightened, Hawthorne was quick to suggest, by the dominance of prejudice in the community, both that which rises from ordinary human frailty and that which represents the quickening of human passion from controversial issues. In the account of Tobias Pearson, Hawthorne objectified the conflict between religious prejudice on one hand and compassion on the other. It is a little difficult to imagine the persistence of prejudice to the extent that he describes, even though Ilbrahim was represented as a lad at twelve firmly clinging to his family beliefs. The prospect of bringing a wanderer back to the fold might normally have allayed the intensity of feeling. Hawthorne recognized this paradox, and hence made clear that Pearson and his wife, despite his position, were somewhat suspect among the more bigoted Puritans as a couple upon whom God's judgment had fallen.

When, therefore, through compassion he took in the Quaker lad, who clearly showed himself to be an able casuist, old suspicions began to stir against him: the odium of Ilbrahim's "stubbornness was shared in a large measure by the child's protectors," and this spirit of prejudice and the insults to which it gave rise greatly irritated Pearson and "became imperceptible but powerful workers towards an end which his most secret thought had not yet whispered." In short, the community persecution, especially that which brought on Ilbrahim's misfortune, had the final effect of driving those who had compassion in their hearts into the ranks of the oppressed, partly by the forces of hostility it evoked, partly by the recoiling from the excessive cruelty of co-religionists.

Pearson became "assimilated with the enthusiasts" after his position of honor in the community was lost to him.

Thereafter, he was a visionary; he suffered whippings and imprisonment; he lost his wealth by fines; he was reduced to "danger, want, and nakedness."⁴¹

The prejudice against Ilbrahim was objectified in the action of playground companions whose savagery was that of small boys in whom violent emotions had undergone no sublimation.⁴² From the comments of their elders the lads developed animosities that turned them into cruel persecutors. From the group—but especially from one lad of "moral obliquity"—Ilbrahim received both physical and spiritual hurt which sent his sensitive spirit into a decline, for where he expected kindness he found abuse. By playing up this prejudice Hawthorne was able to introduce what was to become a second favorite theme, that of isolation. The central tragedy was the result of human passions and prejudice separating honest souls from community fellowship. The innocents upon whom the shadow of guilt had fallen were truly pathetic. They had not of their own acts brought on their state, nor could they by any honorable action dissolve prejudice. Thus the guilt of Ilbrahim's father attached itself both to the lad and to his defender; and nought but time could end the bitter feeling aroused. Tragedy, instead of being an ironical accident by which poignancy was evoked, was thus the result of settled human habits, and could not be swept away except by some spring-flood rising in the soul of the sensitive. Upon both Ilbrahim and Pearson suspicion deepened until its weight bore one of them to the grave and the other into the ranks of the despised.

In summary, the story is not only a pre-study of later tales in which the zeal of the individual leads him to override what in his circumstances should have been the demands of

⁴¹ Best single model for Pearson in his role of long-sufferer was Edward Wharton. See Mayo's note in Hutchinson, I, 171; also, Sewel, I, 410, 414, 416, and 417.

⁴² In the *Scarlet Letter*, Chapters v and vi, Hawthorne has two passages, descriptive of the cruelty of the children in taunting Hester and Pearl, which are comparable to these earlier sections in "The Gentle Boy."

higher human nature, but a study early in Hawthorne's career of the theme of isolation, in this case the result of human prejudice and bitterness, and issuing not merely in loneliness and separation, pangs of longing and despair, but in death. Hawthorne loved these outcasts of society, and by portraying the extension of prejudice from Ibrahim to Pearson broadened his idea of human loneliness to the point where no reader of "The Gentle Boy" could escape it.

In his treatment of these themes no great number of incidents was introduced. Hawthorne referred to his own stories as shadowy-stuff concocted from unreality. But "The Gentle Boy" makes clear a consistent principle in his tales, that while incident was not and could not be ignored, it had both an inner and an outward significance; it became important only as it objectified or gave outward form to an inner conflict of heart and head or the travail of the spirit. The story is true to the temper of the time, both in the stout rallying of people to the authorities in attempting to assert their jurisdiction and in the leavening power of Quakerism among the susceptible; at the same time the tale focuses the attention upon imaginary characters drawn with originality by a skilled storyteller. Consequently, "The Gentle Boy" combines the actual and the fanciful, and each is enriched in accordance with Hawthorne's own formula by the presence of the other.