



0. MARGARET MITCHELL GETS a BOOK DEAL - Story Preface

1. MARGARET MITCHELL and SCARLETT O'HARA

2. GONE with the WIND TAKES SHAPE

3. MARGARET MITCHELL GETS a BOOK DEAL

4. SOURCE of the TITLE - GWTW

5. SCARLETT O'HARA - SOURCE of the NAME

6. WORLDWIDE IMPACT of GWTW

This portrait photo of Margaret Mitchell depicts how the soon-to-be-famous author appeared at about the time she was writing her untitled novel (which she ultimately called *Gone with the Wind*). Tracy O'Neal took the photo sometime in the 1920s or 1930s. Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library. Fair use for educational purposes.

Although Margaret Mitchell's novel was essentially complete, by 1929, it took many additional years for the author to write her first chapter.

She told virtually no one about her story-in-the-making. If people came to visit her, Peggy Marsh—as she was known after her marriage to John Marsh—would throw a towel over her writing table.

Only her husband—who also served as her critic—knew about the work which would ultimately take the literary and film world by storm.

How the manuscript became a published novel is, in itself, an interesting and improbable story. Mitchell was unwilling, for a long time, to place her manuscript—which was “as big as a house,” according to Harold Latham, from The Macmillan Company—into the hands of a potential book-buyer.

Finally willing to allow Latham—Macmillan's editor-in-chief—to read her work, Mitchell gave him the manuscript during the spring of 1935. By late July of that year, Macmillan gave her a contract with the following key terms:

- A \$500 advance: \$250 payable when Mitchell signed the contract and another \$250 when she delivered the final manuscript;
- Ten percent royalties on the first 10,000 copies sold;
- Fifteen percent royalties on all copies sold thereafter.

Since the manuscript still had no title, Macmillan and Latham referred to it as “MS [manuscript] of the Old South.”

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Portrait Photo of Margaret Mitchell

Portrait photo of Margaret Mitchell, taken sometime in the 1920s or 1930s by Tracy O'Neal.

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