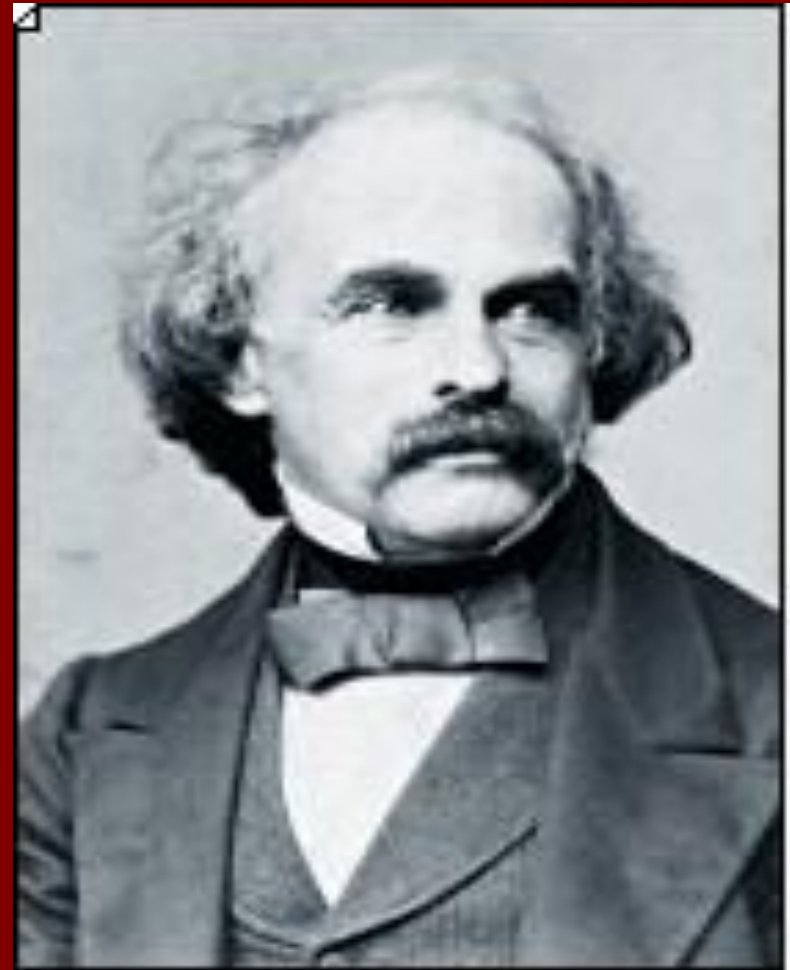
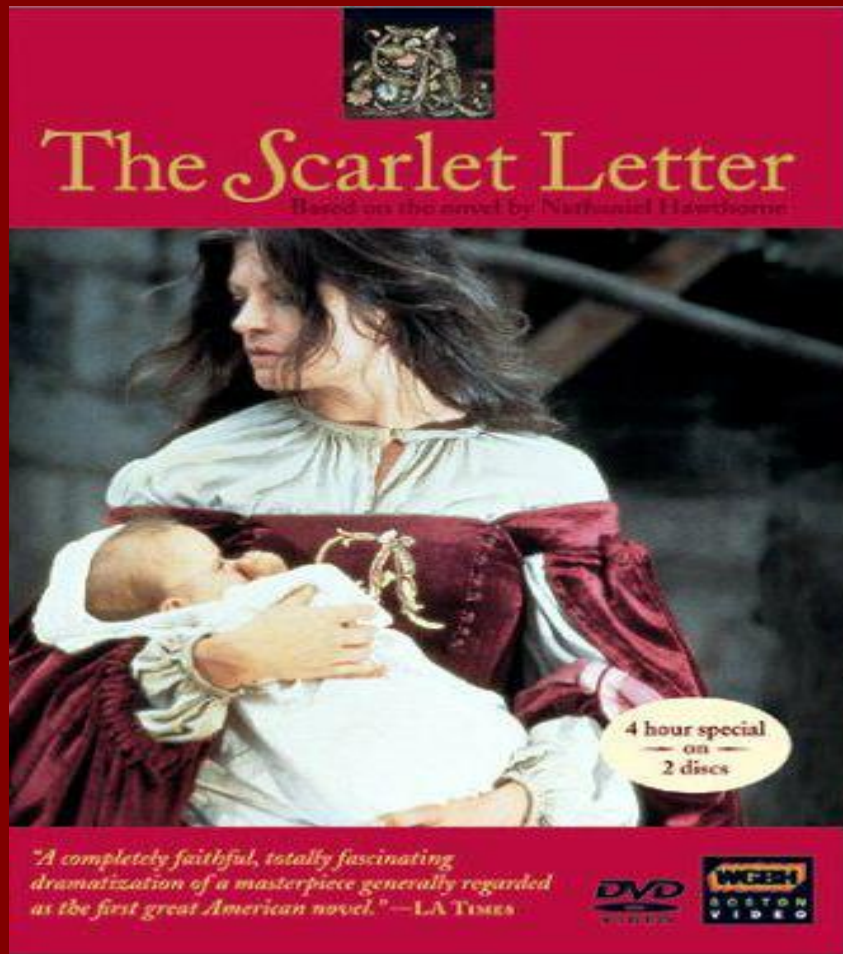


Nathaniel Hawthorne



Nathaniel Hawthorne Early Years

- Born in 1804 in Salem, Massachusetts.
- His parents were devout Puritans - a member of an English religious group in the 16th and 17th centuries who wanted to make church ceremonies simpler, and who believed that it was important to work hard and control yourself and that pleasure was wrong or unnecessary
- Grandfather was a judge during The Salem Witch Trials - a series of hearings and prosecutions of people accused of witchcraft in colonial Massachusetts between February 1692 and May 1693. More than 200 people were accused, nineteen of whom were found guilty and executed by hanging.
- Mother gave birth alone while father was out at sea.
- Had aspirations to be a writer at an early age.



Hawthorne's place of birth.

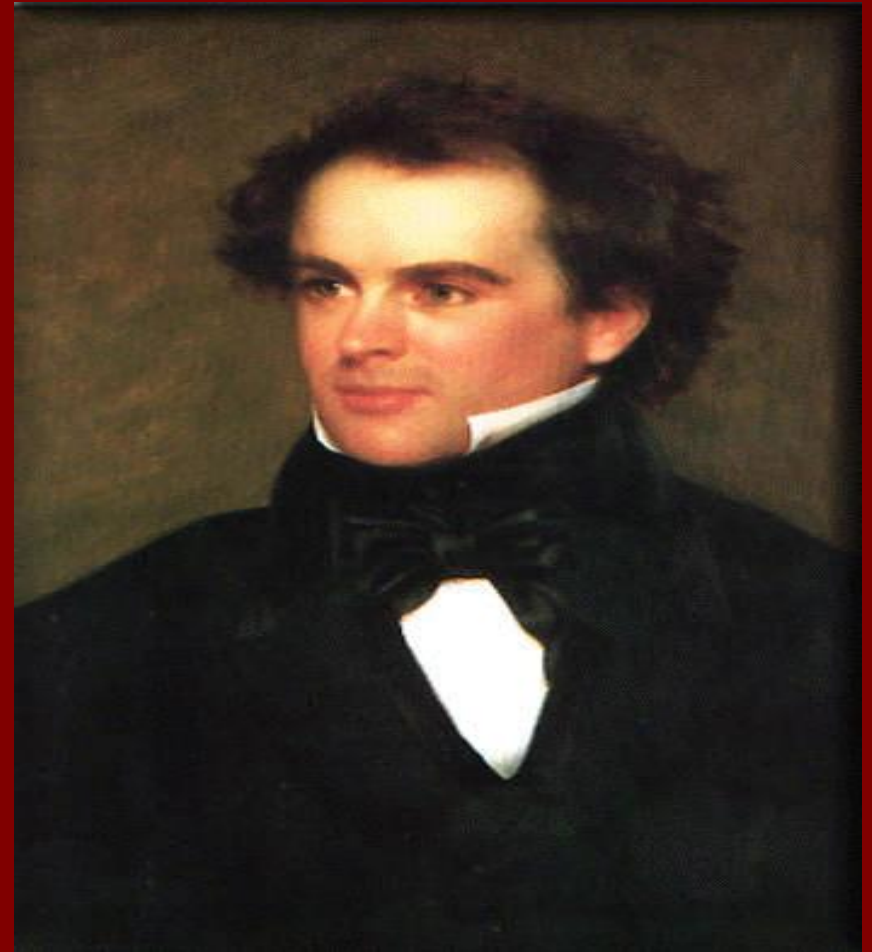
College 1821 - 1824

- Attended Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine
- Classmates with:
 - Harriet Beecher Stowe who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
 - Franklin Pierce who became the 14th President of The United States.



Young Adult Life 1824 - 1842

- Burned first published work after it sold only 1000 copies.
- 1837: College friend, John O'Sullivan, published first short novel *Twice Told Tales*.
- Worked on and off at many office jobs.
- Engaged to his fiancée Sofia Peabody for 7 years before he told his mother, 6 months before they were married.



The Influence of the Romantics-

a style of art, literature, etc., during the late 18th and early 19th centuries that emphasized the imagination and emotions.

- Befriends Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau in Concord, Massachusetts.
- Learns about the importance of the individual
- All three men had Puritan heritage.



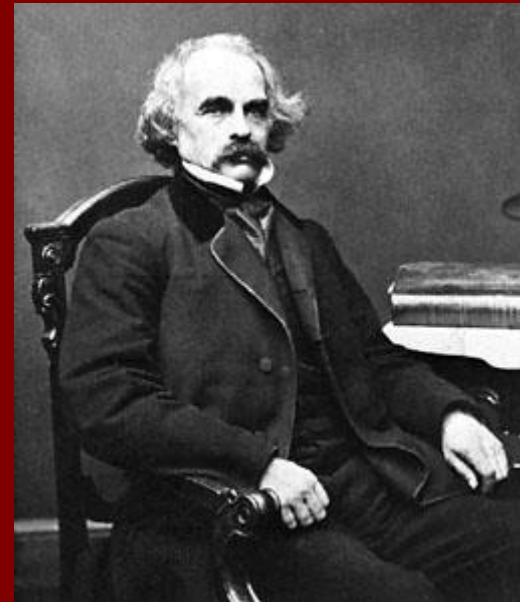
The Custom House

- Writes a biography for his college chum, Franklin Pierce, that helps him get elected president.
- Pierce helps Hawthorne get a job at the custom house at the Port of Salem.
- Hawthorne wrote a friend:
- "I have locked myself in a dungeon and I can't find the key to get out."
- After three years, fired amidst a political scandal.



Late Life

- Earned a fellowship in Liverpool, England
- Spent time traveling in Italy
- Returns to the U.S. after The Civil War
- Dies in 1864 and given lavish funeral.
- All his novels are still in print.



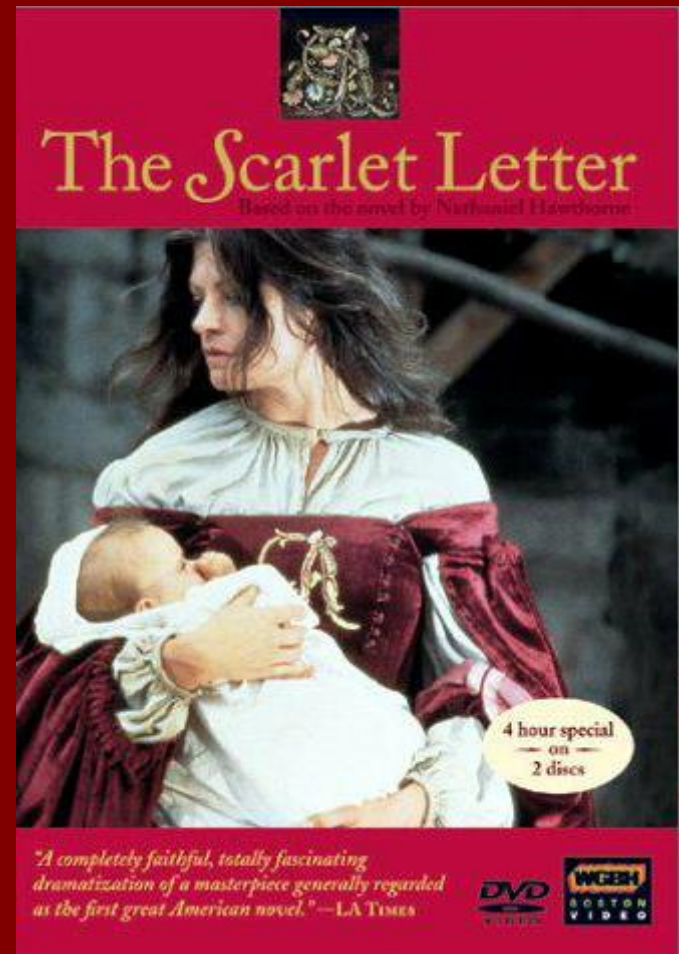
The Genesis of *The Scarlet Letter*

- After being fired from the Custom House, wrote *The Scarlet Letter* in six weeks.
- His wife, Sofia, wrote a letter to a friend: “Mr. Hawthorne is writing feverishly!”
- The novel is an instant success amidst the political scandal surrounding Hawthorne.



The Plot of the *The Scarlet Letter*

- The plot of *The Scarlet Letter* surrounds the protagonist, Hester Prynne, and the controversy over who is the father of her illegitimate child.



Themes in *The Scarlet Letter*

- **Individualism:** The conflict between the individual and society
- **Naturalism:** The conflict between the natural realm vs. society.
- **Repentance:** The conflict between sin and guilt.
- **Fictional Story in a Historical Place:** Though the story takes place in Puritan Boston, many parts of the story are more Romantic than Puritan
- **Symbolism:** Symbols change meaning over the course of the novel.

