

## MEETING SITE CHANGED

Congratulations to Professor John Messenger, whose sabbatical leave has been approved for 1978—and regrets that he therefore has to withdraw his invitation to hold the annual ACIS conference at Ohio State University.

Subject to approval at the next annual meeting at Metropolitan State College, Denver, for which dates are April 28-30, 1977, current plans are to change the site of the 1978 meeting, as a result, to SUNY—Cortland, with Madison College, Harrisonburg, Virginia as host institution in 1979.

Coordinator for the 1978 meeting will be Professor Robert E. Rhodes; for 1979, Professor Martha Caldwell.

## MIDWEST REGIONAL HELD

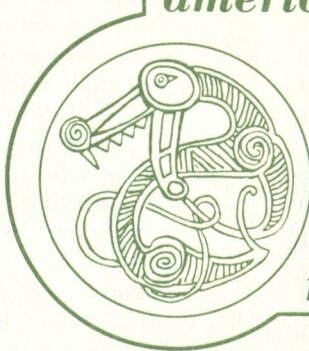
Loyola University of Chicago was the site of the first Midwest Regional Conference of the American Committee for Irish Studies, on October 16.

A one-day event, as most regional meetings will be, the Loyola conference began with a panel discussion on *Some Makers of Modern Ireland* chaired by Joseph M. Curran, LeMoyne College; participants included Gareth W. Dunleavy, University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee speaking on Douglas Hyde; Virginia London, University of Kansas, speaking on Arthur Griffith; and Paul Rempe, Carroll College, on Horace Plunkett. The late-morning session was devoted to *Issues and Problems in Post-Treaty Ireland*, chaired by Gilbert Cahill, State University of New York at Cortland; participants were Alan J. Ward, College of William and Mary, speaking on “Irish Government in Comparative Perspective” and Thomas Hachey, Marquette University, on “The Moral Dimension of Irish Neutrality.”

Following a luncheon break, which included a speech by Charles Fanning of Bridgewater State College on “Finley Peter Dunne’s Mr. Dooley, Social Historian of the Chicago Irish,” the early afternoon session focused on *Some Aspects of Irish-American Literature*, chaired by Harold Orel, University of Kansas, through papers by Joseph Browne, West Chester State College, on John O’Hara and Tom McHale, a subject Browne also investigated successfully at the 1976 annual meeting in St. Louis; and Daniel Casey, State University of New York at Oneonta, on “Heresy in the Diocese of Brooklyn: An Unholy Trinity (Kilslin, Flaherty, and Hamill).” The last session, on *The Midwest Irish*, chaired by James S. Donnelly, Jr., University of Wisconsin—Madison, included presentations by JoEllen Vinyard, Marygrove College, on “The Detroit Irish Experience,

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## ACIS ARCHIVES IN NEW HANDS

Accepting with regret the resignation of ACIS Archivist Professor Robert Davis of Tarkio College in May, 1976, Professor Lawrence J. McCaffrey, ACIS President, immediately appointed Father William Feeney and Professor Arvid Sponberg as Archivist and Assistant Archivist, to assure that the important work begun by Davis would not be interrupted. As temporary archivists, Feeney and Sponberg volunteered to serve until the next formal meeting of the Executive Committee, in April, 1977, when recommendations concerning the future operation and administration of the Archives will be reviewed. ACIS members wishing to make recommendations should send these to ACIS Secretary, Professor Johann Norstedt, English Department, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061. Meanwhile, members wishing to submit materials for the Archives should address these to either Father Feeney, English Department, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois 60604, or Professor Arvid Sponberg, English Department, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana 46383.

One valuable and expanding file in the Archives consists of data related to the teaching of Irish studies throughout the United States: course descriptions, course enrollment, figures, syllabi, etc. Another contains information about library holdings and manuscript collections of importance to teaching and research. At the suggestion of Professor Maureen Murphy, Hofstra University, the Archives also will become a source of information concerning graduate programs in Irish studies in the United States.

All these and other files will be complete, valuable for, and useful to ACIS members only if all ACIS members respond to requests from the ACIS Archivist. If you have not sent information concerning your teaching, other course offerings, and your university’s holdings to the ACIS Archivist, or if information previously sent should be updated, please include it with your description of graduate programs in Irish studies at your institution. If there are no graduate programs at your institution, please contribute other data necessary to the development of the Archives.

As always, items for publication in the *Newsletter* should be sent to the Editor; items for the agenda of the next ACIS meeting, job information, and general queries should be sent to the Secretary at the address given above; dues payments and inquiries about dues should be sent to the Treasurer, Professor Thomas Hachey, History Department, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233.

### QUERY FROM ARCHITECT

Professor K. Edward Lay, Assistant Dean, School of Architecture, University of Virginia, would appreciate suggestions for reading, sites to visit, and scholars to consult for a study of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century vernacular architecture of the Scotch-Irish in America and its antecedents in Europe.

### FOCUS ON CELTIC IRELAND

Professor Peggy Walsh, History Department, Metropolitan State College, Denver, Colorado 80201 has announced that the theme of the 1977 ACIS Annual Conference, April 28-30, will be Celtic Ireland. Members wishing to present a paper at the meeting should send a precis to Professor Walsh before November 15.

# reviews

*Ireland and the Irish Question, A Collection of Writings by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.* New York: International Publishers, 1972. Foreword by C. Desmond Greaves. Introduction by L. I. Golman. 518 pp. \$2.95.

This volume collects most, although not all, of the writings of Marx and Engels that relate explicitly to Ireland. The selections are imaginative in their variety, including the usual excerpts from *Capital* (in which, claims C. Desmond Greaves in his "Foreword", Marx "postulated a special variant of the universal law of capitalist accumulation") to hold in Ireland and Engels' unfinished *History of Ireland*, but also portions of some heretofore much more obscure works, such as Jenny Marx's articles for the French newspaper *La Marseillaise* on O'Donovan Rossa and Marx's notes for talks to English workmen's associations. Where the material required fresh translation, it has been done competently.

Nevertheless there are some curious omissions, and the critical apparatus, especially the "Introduction" (by L. I. Golman), leaves much to be desired.

First, in reading Marx and Engels on *Ireland and the Irish Question*, it is hard to evade the judgment that however useful a general "Marxist" approach might be in analyzing contemporary Ireland, their direct pronouncements on the "Irish Question" are currently of exiguous relevance, and of purely historical interest. Marx and Engels did not believe that there might be any significant divisions between the bourgeois classes of the North and the South, and they did not discern much evidence of any patterned inequalities of development between the North and the rest of the island. Consequently, Golman's remark in the "Introduction" that

The only solution consistent with the basic interests of the Irish people and the principles of true democracy is contained in documents written by Marx and Engels.

is extremely difficult to take seriously, as is the similar confidence of Greaves that

... Marx and Engels faced and solved problems which are essentially those that still lie before us today ...

Moreover, although Engels had direct ties to Ireland (via his mistress Mary Burns, who was never, *pace* Greaves' "Foreword", actually his wife, and her sister, Lizzie, whom Engels finally made into an honest woman only on her deathbed), Marx seems to have interested himself in Ireland only for the sake of an English revolution, demanding the separation of

ACIS members who wish to review books or special issues of journals should write to the Editor, stating specific areas of academic interest.

Ireland from Britain, as Lenin once phrased it, "not to secure 'justice for Ireland', but in the interests of the revolutionary struggle of the British proletariat..."

There are other deficiencies as well. It is obvious that the selections have been chosen to prevent any hint of chauvinism from leaking through. The sections of Engels' *Conditions of the Working Class* that unflatteringly portray the Irish immigrants in Manchester were left out, as were sundry musings by Marx and Engels on the "Irish character."

Finally, the notes appearing in the rear of the book, although occasionally a bit cumbersome to use, are extensive and very helpful in exploring the many contemporary or historical references in the text. There are a few errors of omission, as when the English edition compiler forgot to take over the warning of the East German (Marx-Engels) *Werke*, that "Table II—Paupers in Ireland" in Marx's *New York Daily Tribune* article of September 16, 1859 (p. 94) actually refers to paupers in *Scotland*: and that the correct figures, the ones not reproduced in either the *Tribune* or *Ireland and the Irish Question*, powerfully reenforce Marx's point (the correct table is reprinted in the *Werke*, 13, p. 494). This uncharacteristic lapse in the presentation of the text does not seriously mar a work which, while its pretensions to contemporary relevance are not to be taken at all seriously, is nevertheless a welcome and useful addition to the rapidly proliferating body of Marx texts in English.

A. Thomas Ferguson, Jr.  
Princeton University  
Stephen J. O'Neil  
Loyola University

Flann O'Brien/Myles na Gopaleen, *Stories and Plays* and *The Poor Mouth* (trans. Patrick C. Power), New York: Viking Press, 1975. \$8.95, 208 pp., and \$7.95, 128 pp., respectively.

"I'm told it's a grand language by them that knows," said the Sandycove milkwoman, long before Brian O'Nolan mastered it entirely and wrote *An Beal Bocht*. Long suspected of being a comic masterpiece and a unique experiment with

the Irish language, its initial exposure in 1941 displeased those in Ireland who had the dead-serious Answer to the dead-language Question. Under his Myles na Gopaleen penname, The Nolan published his irreverent novel of the Gaeltacht just two years earlier, under his Flann O'Brien penname, he had published a bizarre novel of life in Dublin and environs. In fairness to The Nolan—and to the Irish language—it should be noted that *An Beal Bocht* was not exactly written in Kathleen's *echt mamaluschen*, but in a patois that might be classified as Flannish or Mylesian. Translating it into English was considered nigh impossible by many, and one can surmise that Patrick C. Power had obstacles that ranged beyond the uniqueness of the language involved.

Only someone fluent in Irish, with a sense of humor, can evaluate the qualitative likeness of the translation to the original, but any reader of Flann's English novels will recognize the transmutation of his style in *The Poor Mouth*, at least in the narrative flow of the novel. The dialogue, on the other hand, is phrased in a comic exaggeration similar to Buck Mulligan's parodies of Synge, obviously an intended characteristic of the speech in the Irish original. "Do you think, oh sublime ancient," asks Bonaparte O'Coonassa of *The Poor Mouth*, "that there will ever be good conditions for the Gaels or will we have nothing forever but hardship, famine, nocturnal rain and Sea-cattishness?" Such overwhelming questions in such an overblown mode of naive questioning characterizes this Tom-Jones-of-the-Gaeltacht, a picaresque hero who goes from unexpected birth to uncomprehending incarceration during the course of the novel, battling poverty and bad weather, pigstench and schoolmaster brutality, marriage and paternity, illgotten gains on illconceived voyages, all with equal aplomb and an occasional series of sighs and groans.

The book is a travesty on Irish life, it is also a testament to Irish endurance, although a groatsworth of realism subsists within a sackful of satire. Yet the pathos of the concluding scene is undercut by the paucity of the adventures, the fragmented format, and a repetitiveness that is only sometimes effective. The benign idiocy that highlights *At Swim-Two-Birds* is certainly present, but not the complex superstructure nor the delving into diabolical depths.

Episodic structure, which depends upon reaching climactic heights with each incident, seems to defeat the author here, since he works for muted effects and caps the entire sequence with his final moment when, en route to a 29-year prison term, Bonaparte meets his father for the first time, en route home from a concluded stretch in jail. As a baby he had been told that his father was in the jug: "when I had the opportunity I looked in the jug," he reports; "there was nothing in it but sour milk and it was a long time until I understood the Old-Grey-Fellow's remark." Fine touches like these are not overly abundant in *The Poor Mouth*: instead there are vignettes of hermits escaping the hardships of Gaelic life in undersea caves (Sitric O'Sanassa), eating sealmeat and keeping warm by sealoil fires, or in mountain caves (like Maeldoon O'Poanassa), existing on whiskey fountains for fuel and nourishment. Two caves might be one cave too many, except perhaps for Freudian enthusiasts, for whom the book may prove an unexpected delight: "I was born in the middle of the night in the end of the house," Bonaparte reports; "My father never expected me because he was a quiet fellow and did not understand very accurately the ways of life."

The posthumous translation of *The Poor Mouth* follows the publication of *The Third Policeman* and *The Best of Myles* and is accompanied by *Stories and Plays*, a collection of fugitive pieces most of which have appeared in print. The

novelty is *Slattery's Sago Saga*, or *From under the Ground to the Top of the Trees*, Flann's unfinished novel. Concerned with a young Irishman's campaign to foil a devious plot to undermine the potato and replace it with sago (so that no famine would ever again send a deluge of Irish to the sacred States), the residual seven chapters prove ineffectual, despite some high points and a segment of typical Flann esoterica. The volume's other long piece is *Faustus Kelly*, the play (it had its premiere at the Abbey in 1943) about an Irish politician who sells his soul to the devil: stuffing ballotboxes backfires, and the devil, like the sago-schemer, decides that he doesn't want cantankerous Irishmen in his domain anyway. In addition *Stories and Plays* consists of an essay of sorts, two short prose sketches that are not quite stories, and a one-act play. The better pieces, "A Bash in the Tunnel" (the essay) and "John Duffy's Brother" (a sketch), retain those elements of diabolism, demented logic, and involuted juxtapositions that mark the best of The Nolan. The uniform editions of *The Poor Mouth* and *Stories and Plays*, in their handsome covers, will look fine on your bookshelf, but the chances are that a much-thumbed paperback of *At Swim-Two-Birds* will retain its revered place on your night table or desk.

Bernard Benstock  
University of Illinois

Darcy O'Brien, *W. R. Rodgers*. Irish Writers Series. Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1970. 103 pages. \$4.50 (paper \$1.95)

Darcy O'Brien's *W. R. Rodgers* is one of the earliest volumes published by the Bucknell University Press Irish Writers Series. Professor O'Brien mixes his warm personal reminiscences of Rodgers with adroit critical commentary, neither overplaying nor minimizing the accomplishment of a person who occasionally wrote poetry. Although it is in no way Professor O'Brien's major intention, this attractive testimonial from a man who "knew Bertie Rodgers during the last two and a half years of his life" (pp. 7-8) is evidence that Rodgers's life and achievement were incontrovertibly modest.

A few passages of psychoanalytic speculation are simply not to my personal taste, but the external details of W. R. Rodgers's life are, as a matter of fact, the most interesting items in the book. For example, Rodgers married his second wife after a "clandestine affair, lasting seven years" (p. 66) almost immediately following the death of his first wife, who had suffered from schizophrenia. In addition, Rodgers had been a Northern Irish Presbyterian parson who left behind him his pastoral duties and Ulster to become a radio broadcaster for the BBC in London. Rodgers's broadcasts concerning Irish writers, discussed by O'Brien in Chapter 4, have recently been published as *Irish Literary Portraits* (New York: Taplinger, 1972). They suggest that Rodgers had the interviewer's self-effacing talent of drawing out some unexpected hints about major Irish writers from their family and friends.

Now, let me candidly admit that I suspect that my tangential references to *Irish Literary Portraits* is the result of my inability to concentrate on the contents of the book under review. *W. R. Rodgers* seems somehow too long because of O'Brien's prose, which is consistently lucid and graceful. A paucity of material to write about is tacitly intimated in the "Chronology," which includes no entry between "1909: Born" and "1931: B.A.," and in the bibliography, which cites only four published works—one a pictorial guide to Ireland.

The Irish Writers Series, which encompasses literary

## AIHA LIBRARY IMPORTANT NEW SOURCE


ACIS members Professor Joseph V. O'Brien and Professor William Griffin have undertaken the significant task of cataloguing and putting in order the library of the American Irish Historical Association, Fifth Avenue at 81 Street, New York City. Readers familiar with the AIHA may recall the many shelves of books that grace the high-ceilinged, five-story mansion once the home of the president of the Moore-McCormack Line; some may have explored them sufficiently to realize that a unique and valuable collection is housed there. Professor Griffin, AIHA librarian, is eager to make these books available to scholars in Irish studies and to provide a center for re-

search at AIHA headquarters. When the AIHA catalog is complete, a copy will be made available to ACIS members through the ACIS Archives.

Because the AIHA has no funds for library acquisitions, all items now in the library were gifts, many of them from prominent Irish-Americans of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In recent years, new acquisitions have dwindled in quantity to only a few items per year.

Griffin and O'Brien would therefore appreciate contributions from ACIS members of copies of their own books and of any other books in Irish studies members wish to donate, especially those published in the last fifty years. All contributions to the AIHA are tax-deductible.

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newsletter

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*Book Review Editor:* Nancy M. Walczyk  
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*Bibliographer:* Jim Ford, Boston Public Library

giants as minor talents within a homogeneous format, risks the danger of diminishing even further the importance of the minor talents; and I feel that is what has happened here. Nevertheless, *W. R. Rodgers* brings attention to a writer who might otherwise have been totally ignored. Like all the contributions to the Irish Writers Series, it should prove a valued source of reference whenever the long-awaited definitive history of Anglo-Irish literature is written.

James J. Blake  
Nassau Community College

*Selected Letters of James Joyce*, ed. Richard Ellmann. New York: The Viking Press, 440 pp. \$18.95 (paper, \$5.95)

"The editor's choice of the best letters from James Joyce's three great volumes," Richard Ellmann's *Selected Letters of James Joyce* has achieved a kind of notoriety that might surprise those who have dutifully persevered through the previously published "three great volumes" (Vol. I, 1957, ed. Stuart Gilbert; Vols. II and III, ed. Richard Ellmann, 1966). The current collection is certainly more manageable than the earlier three-piece set, in which cross-checking between volumes is essential to determine the pattern of correspondence for any particular period. Arranged chronologically, complete with cogent introductions to each section as well as helpful footnotes and cross-references to Ellmann's biography of Joyce, this volume attempts to portray James Joyce—the man and the artist—through his letters. Having excised hundreds of the dry, distant, businesslike missives that characterize the bulk of Joyce's personal correspondence, Ellmann has achieved a readable and interesting collection. However, if the implied reader of the *Selected Letters* is less interested in Joyce's art than in Joyce the man, he may be disappointed.

The volume has indeed aroused the interest of readers beyond the pale of Joyce scholarship, primarily by its inclusion of the infamous letters to Nora written in the late autumn of 1909, for the first time available in an unexpurgated version to those who lack the necessary resources or appropriate academic credentials for reading them in the Cornell library. If many readers came to *Ulysses* by way of "Penelope," some will begin this volume on p. 180: Molly's monologue is definitely art, but Joyce's letters are presumably life—and therein lies the voyeuristic interest. These letters, however, do offer some intimations of the relationship between Joyce's life and his art (apart from the patently Freudian readings offered by such critics as Darcy O'Brien or Mark Shechner). And although the letters have shocked by the detail of their erotic subject matter, they are perhaps more disturbing in their conspicuous manipulation of both reader and writer. The letters confirm that Nora initiated sexual advances toward Joyce ("long ago down in Ringsend," p. 182) and continued to be an innovative sexual partner, educating him erotically. Indeed, this masturbatory correspondence originates with Nora (p. 180). Joyce's response is imaginatively deliberate: the sole object is orgasm and, once it is achieved, he can write, "I have come now and the foolery is over. Now for your questions" (p. 191), proceeding to instruct Nora on redecorating the Trieste apartment for his rearrival.

Such manipulation is obvious in all the Joyce letters. The early portion of this volume, for instance, consists of Joyce's pleas to his parents or his brother Stanislaus for money. The most extraordinary of these is, no doubt, the letter to his mother of 21 February 1903 (included in Ellmann's "Preface,"

xvi-xvii) but later ones to Stannie seem equally mean-spirited and selfish. Itemized lists of expenditures, "evidence" of Joyce's extreme frugality, are accompanied by vivid descriptions of his hardship. Frequently these whining requests describe also prodigious eating forays at Triestine restaurants, undercutting the tone of sincerity somewhat: "There's literally no end to our appetites. I don't believe I was ever in better health except for the sedentary life I lead" (p. 116). But these techniques were apparently successful—Stannie (or somebody) always sent the money requested. While the letters confirm the complexity of Joyce's psychological extremes, demonstrating the contrary elements of his character, they also illustrate his power over the Word; indeed, he can do anything with language he wants.

What comes through in this volume (the additional "new" letters and the restoration of portions of previously edited letters contribute) is the strength of Joyce's ego, the certainty of his genius in the face of obstacles that would have deterred less determined young writers (the 10-year fight for publication of *Dubliners*, the laborious restructuring of *Stephen Hero* into *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* while holding a 9-hour a day bank post are illustrative). The intensity of his commitment to artistic form marks a refusal to sell out at any price, under any circumstances, to the corruption of the marketplace, and his hatred of Gogarty may well have its roots in this devotion to principle. Perhaps most extraordinary of all is the record here of Joyce's 17-year labor on *Finnegans Wake* against greater odds than the financial troubles or lonely exile of the Trieste period: uncomplainingly he faces the physical pain accompanying his encroaching blindness and sorrowfully he accepts the inevitability of his daughter's madness.

Yet one feels, upon completing these "best" letters that James Joyce the person remains as elusive as ever. Always formal and distant, even with the closest of friends, Joyce maintains a similar stance in his letters, casting a coldly suspicious eye on life. His admonition to Stanislaus in 1906 may well be a password for the entire volume: "Do not overlook the pith of this card" (p. 108). There are, however, moments when the mask slips a bit and the reader suspects that Shem-the-Sham is winking from behind the next page, a reminder that Joyce's artistic *forte* was the comic. But even in the most intimate of letters to Nora or in the patient instruction of Harriet Weaver in the subtle nuances of *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce remains safely distant from the prying eyes of scholars and students—certainly within his handiwork, but perhaps behind it too. In his letters, as in his art, he is the master artificer, in absolute control of his creation. Richard Ellmann is contemplating a "complete" edition of Joyce's letters, to include many more not yet published (p. vii): will we find the REAL James Joyce hiding there?

Shari Benstock  
University of Illinois

Daphne D. C. Pochin Mould, *The Aran Islands*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1972, 171 pp.

Ruth Willis Shaw (ed.), *J. M. Synge's Guide to the Aran Islands*. Old Greenwich: The Devin-Adair Company, 1975, 127 pp. \$3.95.

The first modern tourist guide to the Aran Islands appeared in 1962: P. A. Ó Síocháin's *Aran: Islands of Legend* (Dubhlinn: Foilsíochain Eireann). It is largely devoted to prehistory and history, although there are short chapters at the end on Synge's interpretation of the Aran milieu and "The

Islands Yesterday and Today." An eminent Irish scholar told me that this book "set back archaeology and history in Ireland 50 years;" its abuse of anthropology is taken up in my "Man of Aran Revisited: Anthropological Critique" (*Irish University Review*, Vol. 3, 1966, pp. 15-47), in which I also evaluate locally Synge's works on Aran and Robert Flaherty's documentary film.

Within the past four years, two excellent guides have been published, of which Mould's is the longer and by far the more scholarly—almost an ethnography. Her book is one of sixteen in "The Island Series," with six more in preparation. Supplementing 115 pages of text are two maps; 11 photographs obtained from Bord Failte, the National Library of Ireland, and *The Irish Times*, as well as 21 of her own; 15 pages of appendices; and five pages of bibliography. Mould first discusses the general features of the islands, then deals at length with the local geology, weather, flora, and fauna. Four chapters take up the prehistory and history of Aran: Celtic, ecclesiastical, secular, and "Life in the Islands in the Nineteenth Century: Home and Farm—Currachs—Fishing—Death." The last two chapters are devoted to "The Gaelic Tradition: Folktale, Custom and Superstition—Hy Brasil—The Influence of the Tradition," and the islands at the present time ("Communications—Farming and Fishing—The Home—Island Dress—The Law, Medicine and Education—The Language—The Church—Tourism and the Islands' Future").

Six appendices are particularly helpful to the tourist: "Exploring the Islands" (hints on transportation, maps, clothing, walks, etc.); "Principal Monuments" (31, by type and by island); "Flora" (42 plants and nine trees and shrubs); "Population Figures" (1812-1971); "Placenames" (48); and "Roderick O'Flaherty's Description in 1684."

Mould says that "island life settled to a pattern of farming and fishing that remained virtually unchanged for a couple of hundred years. J. M. Synge recorded such a way of life in the early 1900's, and one suspects that neither he nor any other visitors ever expected it to change as quickly as it eventually did" (p. 86). In fact, acculturation had wrought considerable change decades before Synge arrived in Aran, especially after the establishment of the Congested Districts Board, and has accelerated since. But Ó Síocháin and Shaw, under the influence of nativism (glorification of the nation's past) and primitivism (idealization of the little community), see the Aran of Synge's time persisting today: as the former writes, "They are just the same today. They have not changed at all" (p. 163), and the latter, "Not much has changed in the Aran Islands since Synge's time" (p. xiv). Mould is the realist and Ó Síocháin and Shaw the romantic idealists; their attitudes dominate their books.

Using the theme of an unchanging way of life, Shaw lets Synge describe the islands in 74 pages of quotations in her text of 100 pages. Here and there she adds her own words, usually to illustrate continuities in tradition. She ignores the many discontinuities between 1900 and today and appends to Synge's many errors of fact and interpretation some of her own. But the book has many virtues, including a map; 45 photographs, including two of her own and the rest obtained from Bord Failte, Devin Garrity, and *The Irish Times*; an 11-page appendix; and a one-page bibliography.

Fifteen chapters make up the volume into which are included appropriate quotations from Synge: "Geography, Geology, and Climate"; "Visiting Aran"; "Arrival"; "St. John's Eve"; "The Duns of Aran"; "Aran Churches"; "Inishmaan, A Resting Place" (including dress, knitting and other handwork, language, names, music, and fairy tales); "Climate of Wonder" ("Birds and Beasts"); "Work on the Islands" (including the sea, kelp-making, fishing, agriculture, threshing, thatching,

and shipping cattle); "Horses and Other Animals" (more tales); "Sport" (currachs and bathing); "Doctor and Priest"; "Evictions"; "Dance"; and "Departure." The principle of organization eludes me, but is unimportant given Shaw's approach.

The photographs used by the author are more numerous and informative than those of Mould and are usually accompanied by brief excerpts from Synge's works. "Getting There"—the appendix—may be the most valuable part of the book for tourists, for here is given up-to-date information concerning passports; import of tobacco, liquor, and gifts; sources of information about Aran; clothing and transportation; antiquities and museum; post offices, churches, and bank; accommodations (14, by island, although there are others); recreation, entertainment, and pubs; fishing and bathing; medicine; and miscellaneous (botany, geology, and ornithology). A careful reading of the appendix makes the reader aware that Synge would not recognize the islands today. There are only 15 entries in the bibliography, compared to 67 in Mould's volume.

John C. Messenger  
The Ohio State University

Paul A. Doyle, *Paul Vincent Carroll*. Irish Writers Series. Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1971. 115 pp. \$4.50. (\$1.95 paper).

As in the case of several other volumes in the Bucknell "Irish Writers Series," this is the first book on its subject. That in itself suggests the value of the series, although here as elsewhere it can lead to unnecessarily defensive postures lamenting the sad and unjust neglect which has befallen the given writer. In the case of Paul Vincent Carroll, there haven't even been many articles about his work: Paul A. Doyle's bibliography, which he says is "the most complete" now available, lists only nine articles, six of them dating before 1960. However, I doubt that the chief reason for the lack of criticism about Carroll has been the lack of general interest in him; after all, a great deal of criticism is published about many writers whom hardly anyone reads. Rather, I suspect that critics have been put off by Carroll's accessibility: he wrote works to which most audiences can respond intelligently and appreciatively, without having that response notably enhanced even by a sensitive and perceptive critic.

Doyle's explications of Carroll's plays stress "symbolism" and "symbolic themes"; sometimes they seem to me a bit formulaic (as in his discussion of *The Old Foolishness*), or arguable, as when he asserts that at the end of *Shadow and Substance* Brigid's death results in the Canon's "complete humanization." (Actually, the Canon has been human—all-too-human, so "humanization" is an unfortunate word; but if we assume that it is as flattering a term as Doyle implies, the claim is debatable.)

What Doyle brings to the consideration of Carroll is less critique than evaluation: his expansions upon the necessary plot summaries tend to be estimates of the given plays' success or failure rather than explications. Moreover, the individual evaluations seem to add up to an overall impression that is at odds with the explicit generalization with which he begins his book, when he says that "Carroll must be rated the most important dramatic talent in the Irish theatre since the early writings of O'Casey"—although even in the next paragraph the best he can say of the plays after *Shadow and Substance* and *The White Steed* is that some of them are "better-than-average dramas." Indeed in the various subsequent discussions devoted, more or less chronologically, to all the plays, Doyle is too alert not to recognize their problems. And so—after discussions of the two major plays—we're told

REVIEWS, continued from page 5

that *Kindred* (1939) "fails as a play" and has dialogue that "is generally stiff and unreal, sometimes flat and platitudinous, occasionally even banal"; of *The Old Foolishness*, which closed in New York in 1940 after three performances, the best he can say is that it "reads" well and "makes a poetic and attractive closet drama"; *The Strings, My Lord, Are False* (1942) cannot "be rated a success"; in *Green Cars Go East* (1947), Carroll was "too message conscious"; *Weep For Tomorrow* (1948) has "too much essentially verbose and repetitious material" and "assumes a too obviously didactic and propagandistic tone."

Those last few plays are about Scotland, although the 1940's did see Carroll present "one rather effective serious Irish play," *The Wise Have Not Spoken* (written 1942), which somehow manages to be both "generally slack and slow-paced" and "generally tense, engrossing, and suspenseful." In regard to the non-"serious" Irish plays—the comedies *The Devil Came from Dublin* (1951) and *The Wayward Saint* (1955)—Doyle is able to be more enthusiastic, calling the first "inspired farce" and the second "a delight in its genre."

Theoretically, books on figures who have not been written about before ought to be more interesting than books on writers who have already produced critical industries, but in fact that rarely turns out to be the case. Nowadays, at any rate, Paul Vincent Carroll is a hard dramatist to be exciting (or excited) about. But if Paul A. Doyle has not produced an exciting book, he has provided us with a useful introduction to Carroll's career.

Morris Beja  
Ohio State University

NEW YEATS EDITION PLANNED

With the authorization of the Yeats Estate, Richard J. Finneran (English Department, Newcomb College, New Orleans, Louisiana 70118) is preparing for publication by Macmillan, London, a new and annotated edition of *The Complete Poems of W. B. Yeats*. He will be grateful for information on the location outside the major repositories of relevant manuscript materials, including annotated copies and proofs (particularly the proofs for the 1949 "Definitive Edi-

tion" of the *Poems*). He will also appreciate assistance in the identification of references and allusions, especially for those poems not included in A. N. Jeffares's *Commentary on the Collected Poems*.

REMINDER: American Committee for Irish Studies dues are now payable on a calendar-year basis. ACIS Treasurer Thomas Hachey, History Department, Marquette University, is now accepting dues for 1977, deadline December 15.

The University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee  
Department of English  
P. O. Box 413  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

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Deadline for December Issue: November 1

TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by: Thomas E. Hachey, Treasurer

Total Balance as of April 24, 1975	\$4,485.96
Plus dues collected from members thru July 19, 1976	2,021.11
Plus interest through June 1, 1976	234.41
	\$6,741.54

Minus following expenses:

1975 Stonehill College Conference expenses	\$800.00
Mailing of last years Research Report	88.51
Immigration History Directory	1.00
Martin J. Waters Memorial Fund	100.00
Bad checks	24.00
MLA-ACIS Cocktail reception (San Francisco)	80.00
ACIS Secretary's phone expenses	85.80
ACIS Newsletter subsidy	516.69
Newsletter mailing costs	85.00
Newsletter Editor's phone expenses	71.00
Newsletter Editor's supplies and xerox	28.92
ACIS Treasurer's phone expenses	38.67
ACIS Treasurer's postage, printing and supply expenses	175.07
1976 Research Report	101.75
1976 Univ. of Missouri—St. Louis conference	263.86
TOTAL EXPENSES TO DATE	\$2,460.27
Total balance of ACIS funds, as of July 19, 1976	\$4,281.27

REGIONAL continued from page 1

1850-1880"; Charles Shanabruch, University of Chicago, "The Contribution of the Irish to the Catholic Church in Chicago"; and Ellen Skerrett, "Irish Catholic Parishes in Chicago."

Coordinator of the 1976 Midwest Regional Meeting was Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Loyola University. The site of the 1977 Midwest Regional Meeting of ACIS will be announced in a forthcoming issue of the *Newsletter*.

