

Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin will host the Second Annual Midwest Regional Conference of the American Committee for Irish Studies on Saturday, October 15. Conference coordinator Paul Rempe reports that the all-day program will be divided into four sessions:

The Role of Violence in Irish Society, 9:30-11:00 a.m. Emmet Larkin, University of Chicago, will chair a panel consisting of Patrick Casey of Loyola University, James Donnelly, Jr., of the University of Wisconsin—Madison, John Hickey of Loyola University, and James Liddy of The University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

Ireland in the Twentieth Century, 11:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m. John Steinberger of Marquette University will preside over papers by Alan Ward of The College of William and Mary ("Devolution in Britain: The Irish Experience") and John W. Boyle of the University of Guelph ("The Political Abdication of Irish Labour, 1918-1921"), with commentary by Barton R. Friedman, University of Wisconsin—Madison, and Nancy M. Walczyk, University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

Afternoon Program

James Joyce: A Re-Examination, 2:15-3:45 p.m. Mary Helen Thunette of Indiana University—Purdue University (Fort Wayne) will preside over papers by Susan Siefert of Alverno College ("Erin's Uncrowned King: An Examination of Joyce's Artistic Manipulation of the Parnell Figure"), Robert Boyle of Marquette University ("Joyce's Eucharistic Image"), and Philip Kenny of Rosary College ("Violence in the Fiction of James Joyce"), with commentary by Florence L. Walzl of The University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

Irish Folklore and Traditional Music, 4:00-5:30 p.m. Janet Egleson Dunleavy of The University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee will preside over papers by Maureen Murphy of Hofstra University ("Jeremiah Curtin: An American Pioneer in Irish Folklore") and Betty Messenger of Ohio State University (" 'You'd Easy Know A Daffer': Folksong, Folklore, and Job Satisfaction in the Northern Ireland Linen Industry"), with commentary by Sean V. Golden of Notre Dame University, and a demonstration-lecture on Irish folksong by Clare Condon of St. Louis.

Seamus Deane of University College Dublin will address the conference luncheon at 12:45 p.m. on "The Second Irish Revival? Some Reflections," and the Shamrock Club Dancers will entertain at a reception immediately following the academic portion of the program.

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Volume VII

October, 1977

ACIS IRISH AMBASSADOR

William V. Shannon, ACIS member, author of *The American Irish*, and editorial writer for *The New York Times*, was appointed United States Ambassador to Ireland in July, a wise and happy choice for both countries.

NEW JOURNAL, NEWSPAPER

Eire 19, a journal of nineteenth-century Irish life and letters, is now available for \$7.00 from ACIS member Eileen Sullivan, 330 Little Hall, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611. Contents of the first issue reflect an interdisciplinary focus.

A new newspaper, the *Chicago Irish-American News*, began publication in 1977. Of potential interest to members teaching Irish-American history or literature, it is available from Irish American News, Inc., P.O. Box A66218, Chicago, Illinois 60666.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Sixteenth Annual National Conference, American Committee for Irish Studies, Cortland, New York, April 1978. Coordinators: Professors Gilbert Cahill, History Department, and Robert E. Rhodes, English, SUNY College at Cortland, Cortland, New York 13045. Interdisciplinary.

Twenty-First Annual Missouri Valley History Conference, Omaha, Nebraska, March 9-11, 1978. Coordinator: Professor Jacqueline St. John, History Department, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska 68101. Traditional topics, plus quantification, psychohistory, teaching methodology, research tools and techniques, interdisciplinary studies.

Seventh Annual Meeting, International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April 13-16, 1978. Program Coordinator: Vytautas Kavolis, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013. Interdisciplinary.

YEATS ISSUE PLANNED

A special Yeats issue of *Modern British Literature* has been planned for spring, 1979. ACIS member James Lovic Allen has been named guest editor. Manuscripts on any aspect of Yeats's life or work will be considered. Authors are requested to submit two copies of their essays, one to each of the following addresses: Professor Edward A. Kopper, Jr., Editor, *Modern British Literature*, 108 Farmington Drive, Butler, Pennsylvania 16001; Professor James L. Allen, Department of English, University of Hawaii at Hilo, Box 1357, Hilo, Hawaii 96720. Deadline for all submissions is November 1, 1978.

HIGGINS RECEIVES AWARD

Novelist Aidan Higgins is the recipient of the 1977 American Irish Foundation Literary Award. Born in Ireland in 1927 and educated at Clongowes Wood College, Higgins first achieved recognition with publication of a collection of stories, *Felo De Se*, in 1960. His novel *Langrishe Go Down*, published in 1966, won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the Award of the Irish Academy of Letters. He recently completed his fourth novel, *Scenes From A Receding Past*.

PRE-COLUMBIAN CELTS?

A symposium to examine the evidence for and against theories of Celtic and other European settlements in pre-Columbian Vermont will be held at Castleton College, Castleton, Vermont, on October 14-16. Registrants will be offered, in addition to two full days of lectures and panel discussions, opportunities to visit a New England lithic site which has been the subject of continuing controversy over more than one hundred years and to observe patterns of terrain disturbance around Vermont's lithic sites from the air. A complete program and further information are available from Dr. Warren L. Cook, Conference Chairman, Castleton State College, Vermont 05735.

reviews

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

Best Irish Short Stories, David Marcus, ed., London: Elek Books Limited, 1976. 180 pp. \$7.95.

On the one hand, any collection of the "best" contemporary Irish short stories that lacks the work of say, Mary Lavin, Michael McLaverty, Sean O'Faolain, and Liam O'Flaherty—to name only the few that immediately come to mind—automatically brands itself guilty of sins of omission. On the other, no one takes such proclamations seriously, and, since there's both a certain likable jauntiness about the self-confidence of such titles and absolutely no way of disproving the claim therein, one might as well conclude simply and at once that, on balance, the present collect is no better or no worse than most such packages. Was there ever a single volume by several hands that earned and deserved unqualified praise for all the entrants?

Following what seems to have become a compulsory rehearsal of the Irish penchant for and success with the short story in the past, editor David Marcus's "Introduction" modulates into some speculations on the current situation of the genre, the first of which emphasizes "Ireland's new-found freedom," which has "enabled it to treat of themes which were up to recently taboo, to discuss deviations even the existence of which had hitherto not been recognized, and to express views and attitudes which only yesterday would have resulted in their propagator's ostracism or exile, or frequently both." To this new dispensation, Marcus adds the already extant "maturity of technique" of Irish short story writers, and concludes that the new Irish short story has been able to "render the new material with that brand of understated revelation which constitutes the most powerful charge a short story can deliver."

High claim, indeed, and though Marcus is doubtless correct in his additional claim that readers might fairly expect to see Ireland's new openness reflected "in any selection of stories culled from the best work of recent times," his concluding remarks are more modest and cautionary against unduly high expectations of new departures: "[This anthology] suggests an Ireland in a state of flux, an Ireland of the old, but not ancient, and of new, but not trendy. Traditional themes and traditional treatments are still lovingly engrossed, but one can find recorded, alongside the stresses of a culture being inexorably, if not rudely, reduced, the often traumatic

responses of a hitherto shielded national sensibility forced at last to regard the unacceptable face of reality."

Cautionary—and just, for two of the most persistent themes of Irish fiction—loneliness, solitude, isolation, and the conflict between illusion and reality—thread their usually dark way through virtually everyone of these fifteen stories. Both are introduced in the first, John A. Ryan's "The Heel of the Hunt," where Batty Harrington, aged forty-three, swanks and swaggers, drinks and wenches his way to illusory security with the horsey set, though at the end none of it shields him from perceiving his essential aloneness: "I'll have a drop of Remy Martin," but it wasn't because he wanted it. Nor was it camaraderie that made him say it. It was, rather, a kind of terror. It was something very like defeat."

Defeat or depression is not the only note, but it's the most insistent—sometimes, for example, in stories of marriages gone sour: Maura Treacy's "Separate Ways," John Jordan's "Honeymoon," and Neil Jordan's "Skin," in whose middle-aged Irish housewife "the need for the inner, secret life still bloomed"; sometimes, for instance, in stories of school-teachers who are prisoners of their colleagues, their classrooms, their profession: Eithne Strong's arty Miss Gormley in "Normal Procedure," Ita Daly's Anne in "Compassion," and Vincent Lawrence's Hennessey in "Tell Me Once Again You Love Me" who, at evening's end, "retreats once more, out onto the very tip of the same [lonely] promontory, which lurks within the secret places, the windy desolate barrenness of his heart's core, there to stagnate, while his other self, his outward bold exterior, will doff his hat, raise his hand, wave and proceed jauntily toward a future of Miss Molly Church, and children, and money in the bank, and a merging of minds which will lend security to all his length of days. In a pig's arse, Hennessey, in a pig's arse." Against so much of this, the triumphs of Ben Kiely's and Bryan MacMahon's narrators (in "A Cow in the House" and "The Miler," respectively) may suggest to us that older writers such as Kiely and MacMahon are less typical of the writers of the Ireland in flux that Editor Marcus seeks to represent than they are of writers who have more completely come to terms with Ireland and with life.

Of course, little of all this is peculiar to Ireland and the Irish; loneliness and illusion are no more endemic to Ireland than are macho swaggers, marriages gone wrong, or

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CORRECTION IN ACIS RESEARCH REPORT

In the *ACIS Report on Current Research* dated May, 1977, H. David Argoff was listed erroneously as the sole author of the *Report of the Committee on Language Attitudes Research*, in the History section. Mr. Argoff writes, "although I was acting director and assistant director of the Sociolinguistic Research Project which did the work leading to production of the *Report*, no authors other than the *Coiste Um Thaighde Ar Dhearcadh An Phobail* are listed in the report, and that was the intent of that body . . . I do not wish to be claiming authorship of a work which involved a great input of effort by many excellent researchers." . . .

The editors of the *ACIS Report on Current Research* apologize for the error.


JOYCE LIBRARY TO VILLANOVA

Mabel Worthington, long-time ACIS member and Professor Emeritus, English Department, Temple University, has donated her extensive collection of books and music related to the life and works of James Joyce to Villanova University.

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An all-inclusive conference fee of \$7.00 has been announced by Professor Rempe. A fee of \$3.50 will be charged those who do not wish to attend the luncheon. For further information, including recommendations on travel and hotel arrangements, members may write directly to Professor Rempe, History Department, Carroll College, 100 N. East Avenue, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186.

american committee for

**Irish studies**
newsletter

The *ACIS Newsletter* is published four times annually in February, April, October, and December, at The University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201. Annual subscription, \$6.00; \$3.00 students. Vol. VII, Serial No. 3.

Editor: Janet Egleson Dunleavy
Book Reviews: Nancy M. Walczyk
Editorial Assistant: Ruth Duffy
Bibliographer: Jim Ford, Boston Public Library

frustrated schoolmasters. But two of the stories of the collection make a particular effort to root the persistent themes in an Ireland that has not yet bridged past and present, rural and urban. Ita Daly's "Compassion" and Brian Power's "Water from the Well" are both first-person narratives, faintly old-fashioned in their narrators' liking for rumination on the meaning of it all. Daly's Anne travels from her position in a large Dublin school to the Donegal home of Peggy McMenamin at the end of a road "full of pot-holes and twist[ing] through bleak and barren bog," and there understands why Peggy's journey from bog to Dublin led to the "disintegration of [the] dream." Power's narrator, going from Galway and his wife Isabelle, a "Galway city girl with an Arts degree," to visit his two older sisters in Kerry, takes the car ferry from Killimer to Tarbert and thinks: "Somehow it gave me a feeling of strangeness to find myself crossing water to reach my sisters, as if the experience emphasized the width of the gulf which separated my world from theirs."

A final word. Bryan MacMahon's "The Miler" alludes briefly to the troubles in the North, but only Dermot Healy's "Banished Misfortune" of these fifteen stories deals at length with that agonizing paradigm of divisions and illusions. One must wonder if there were none or if Marcus could find no other worthy stories on this subject. Either way, something seems lacking in a collection dedicated to exploring the "traumatic responses of a hitherto shielded national sensibility forced at last to regard the unacceptable face of reality."

Robert E. Rhodes
SUNY College at Cortland

Thomas E. Hachey. *Britain and Irish Separatism: From the Fenians to the Free State, 1867-1922*. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1977. 343 pp. \$9.95 (\$4.95 paper).

A basic axiom of reviewing should be, never review a friend's book. Lose the editor's invitation and leave town because even the mildest criticism can lead to an embargo on the author's hospitality. Luckily I read and admired this book before I was asked to review it and I felt I could accept without jeopardizing a standing invitation to visit Milwaukee. Tom Hachey has written a superb account of the struggle for Irish independence from the Fenians to the Free State. It deserves to become a standard college text, and the hardcover edition should be in every library.

Hachey drew primarily upon his comprehensive knowledge of the secondary literature of the period, but his extensive research in private and public archives, particularly the Public Records Office in London, was used throughout the second half of the book which deals with the period after 1916. The result is a sophisticated synthesis and an excellent introduction to modern Irish political history. It does not pretend to be a general history, treating social, economic, agricultural and religious developments very sparingly, but the varieties of Irish nationalism, the Irish question in British politics, the evolution of separatism, and the influence of Irish-Americans are all comprehensively explored in a remarkably detailed study. Furthermore, Hachey writes extremely well with very few lapses into purple prose to suggest a loss of his characteristic self-control. Friendship dictates that readers find these for themselves. En route they will find the book extremely easy to read, largely because the author controls his material by the astute use of chapter subheadings which introduce biographical sketches and important developments in the story. The device works well so that students will find the book absorbing, and scholars will find it a useful reference work. In addition it contains an excellent bibliography and thorough documentation.

Some will, no doubt, fault the book on one ground or another. There are a few, inevitable, errors of fact but they are minor and easily corrected in a second edition. The book is heavily weighted towards the period from 1916 to 1922, which is to say, the period of Hachey's research interest. However, the earlier period is certainly not neglected, and the author's self-indulgence may strengthen the book by offering more original scholarship than is usual in such a survey. This reviewer would have strengthened the case for Unionism in chapter 3 and diluted, to some degree, the American connection in chapter 9. He would also question whether the evidence cited in chapter 5 really justifies the chapter heading, "The Ascendancy of Revolutionary Separatism in Ireland (1914-1916)." Ascendancy is too strong a word. However, these are relatively minor criticisms.

The essential characteristic of this book is its moderation. It is not polemical, nor does it present a particular thesis. This is, perhaps, both its strength and its weakness, depending on one's perspective. Irish historiography has suffered from ideology disguised as history but there have been a number of recent interpretive histories (Kee's *The Green Flag*, for one) which have advanced our understanding. Hachey eschews both approaches, although his restraint and his moderation can be seen as an interpretation in its own right. Those who have strong feelings and love to apportion blame will be disappointed by his book, and those who already know their Irish history well and are searching for novel explanations will not find them here. But what Hachey set out to do he has done extremely well. Analysis has to begin with information, not indoctrination, and he presents a great deal in an admirably balanced introduction which will provide a very firm foundation for any student of Irish and Anglo-Irish history.

Alan J. Ward
The College of William and Mary

P. J. Drudy, ed. *Anglo-Irish Studies*. Bucks, England: Alpha Academic Books, Volume I (1975) and Volume II (1976). 118 and 131 pp. respectively. \$12.50 per volume.

Anglo-Irish Studies, an annual hard-bound periodical devoted to the study of Irish and Anglo-Irish culture and learning, attempts "to complement rather than duplicate the work of existing periodicals." The editors of this publication, which draws mostly on literature, history, and the social sciences, affirm that "no relevant discipline will be excluded."

Volume I, consisting of lectures given to the Cambridge University Hibernian Society, reflects the rich and diverse nature of this new publication. Literary and philosophic concerns are addressed in Bernard Sharratt's "Samuel Beckett: Language and Being There" which explores the Cartesian dimensions of Beckett's *Murphy*, *Waiting for Godot* and other works. David Blake Knox's article on "Ideological Factors in Yeats' Early Drama" demonstrates how historical and literary factors can combine to illuminate the interpretation of Yeats' work. Specifically, Knox argues that the tension between nationalism and sexuality in Yeats' thought found its release in the concept of "blood sacrifice." The journal's commitment to analyses of cultural and artistic movements in Anglo-Irish scholarship is ably represented by John Turpin's contribution "Daniel Maclise and his Place in Victorian Art," while political and historical concerns are addressed directly in Gearoid O Tuathaigh's "Nineteenth Century Irish Politics: The Case for 'Normalcy'." In his essay, O Tuathaigh presents the provocative thesis that the "Irish Question," far from representing a lone "diabolus ex machina" which disrupted an otherwise stable

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Westminster political universe, was, in fact, more parabolic than real in nature. That is, the so-called "Irish Question" served, in reality, as a kind of parable which enabled British politicians to discuss issues like property, nationalism and imperialism which were central British domestic concerns but whose discussion in a British domestic context was considered inadvisable. O Tuathaigh effectively challenges the conventional classification which sees 19th century Irish political life to be a series of alternating phases of "constitutional" and "physical force" politics.

Volume II is heavily literary and historical in nature. More general aspects of Anglo-Irish culture are discussed in Barbara Hayley's "Irish Periodicals from the Union to the Nation" while other contributors assess the literary impact of O'Casey, Yeats, and the interaction of Parnell's fall with the rise of Irish literature, respectively. The major historical contribution in the issue is Patrick O'Farrell's "Millenialism, Messianism and Utopianism in Irish History."

One of this publication's major virtues is its interdisciplinary nature. The student of Anglo-Irish culture can find essays on history, literature, politics, and cultural features within one volume and, additionally, many of the essays are themselves interdisciplinary in nature. For example, John Kelly's contribution on "The Fall of Parnell and the Rise of Irish Literature" explores the relationship between politics and literature in a crucial year in Irish history—1891.

Besides providing a valuable resource and a rich number of perspectives on Anglo-Irish culture, this publication may serve an even higher and more global end. In volume I, Garret FitzGerald, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Ireland, remarks on the "richness and ambiguity" of the term "Anglo-Irish" and observes that Anglo-Irish relations have, in the past, been a fertile breeding ground for misconceptions, myths, stereotypes, and caricatures. It is Mr. FitzGerald's hope that journals like *Anglo-Irish Studies* will preserve a "free-zone" of ideas where scholars of Britain and Ireland, as well as the rest of the world, can meet openly and without restriction. Perhaps *Anglo-Irish Studies* will provide the kind of forum which will help Mr. FitzGerald's wish become a reality.

Susan E. Siefert
Alverno College

Michael H. Begnal. *Joseph Sheridan LeFanu*. Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1971. 83 pp. \$4.50.

Michael H. Begnal's *Joseph Sheridan LeFanu* illustrates again the need for more and better scholarship on nineteenth-century Irish writers. Little read because of the general inaccessibility of most of his fiction, LeFanu has suffered from neglect and, as Mr. Begnal indicates, well deserves a critical revival. Such new critical attention needs to proceed with caution. LeFanu, a superb weaver of gothic fantasy, was greatly admired by M. R. James and H. P. Lovecraft for his ability to create suspense, atmosphere, and occasional horror. This ability in itself should give him a solid reputation as a substantial second-rate writer of popular fiction. But to find in his novels the social criticism of a Dickens, the psychological profundity of a Hardy, or even "a sympathy with the feminine mind" that is comparable to Joyce's reveals more of the critic's invention than it tells us why LeFanu should be revived. When Mr. Begnal asserts that LeFanu studies the ills that plagued his society, one wonders if he has not mistaken the stock in trade of the gothic movement for insights. LeFanu has much to offer simply because he is a masterful teller of entertaining stories; he does not need to be transformed into a

seer or a social analyst or even a psychologist—all roles he would have ridiculed—to be deserving of attention. In short, Mr. Begnal ignores or belittles the major support upon which LeFanu's reputation rests. Perhaps the spatial requirements of the *Irish Writers Series* so limited him that he could not fully develop his thesis; nonetheless, the monograph suffers from its superficial treatment of the gothic novel as it had evolved by the mid-nineteenth century. Many gothic novelists, for example, place the supernatural into the sordid realities of contemporary life, and many touch on the psychological depths not found in Walpole, Clara Reaves, or Mrs. Radcliffe. Overlooking these developments in the gothic tradition weakens and possibly invalidates the assumption that LeFanu can be seriously viewed as a social critic of penetrating psychological insight. Instead it reveals that LeFanu is the consummate craftsman who can weave the elements of mystery, terror, and horror in order to evoke a high degree of reader empathy. Where LeFanu succeeds is in bringing to culmination diverse elements of the gothic tradition so that from his success could emerge the fiction of Bierce, Lovecraft, and Stoker, later writers whom he directly influenced. He is far removed from the great tradition, and no amount of critical acumen can bridge the gap between the escapism of the novelist of horror and the insight of the first-rate novelist.

Mark D. Hawthorne
James Madison University

Robert E. Lougy. *Charles Robert Maturin*. Irish Writers Series. Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1975. 89 pp. \$4.95 (paper, \$1.95).

To most Maturin is the author of *Melmoth the Wanderer*. Robert Lougy (Penn State) treats him as a fascinating literary study, a Romantic era Anglican clergyman with a Poesque psyche who wrote six novels and four dramas striving to support his family between 1807 and 1824.

Maturin's pseudonymous first novel, *The Family of Montorio*, is admittedly weak and derivative in plot and character but discloses his persistent themes: fear, guilt, "the midnight darkness of the soul," sexual repression, the effects of fanaticism, idealization of love. To Lougy the novel reveals "how well acquainted Maturin was with the nature of the gothic world and the gothic landscape, where nothing ever happened gratuitously."

The next year, Maturin tried to cash in on the acclaim of Lady Morgan's *The Wild Irish Girl* with *The Wild Irish Boy*, whose protagonist, Ormsby Bethel, is a young man of mysterious background who seeks his father. "The novel contains the stock figures of hero, villain, and seductress. It is also filled with mistaken intentions, secret identities, mysterious lovers, attempted murder, and sundry other devices to what the reader's appetite and fulfill what Maturin assumed to be the public's expectations for the best-selling novels of the day."

Maturin continues Irish subject matter in his 1812 success, *The Milesian Chief*, an intricate story of two brothers, one an Irish rebel and the other a British officer trying to capture rebels. The novel represents an advance in style and technique. In it Maturin explores "the possibilities of touching those realms of our psychic life most affected by the gothic genre without actually employing the machinery of the gothic" and becomes "one of the first writers to explore the nature of the contradiction between the stereotype Irishman—wild, hard-drinking, fun-loving—and the sorrow and poverty concealed by it."

Lionel Stevenson said that Maturin regarded terror as a
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stronger force in human affairs than love, and in three produced plays—*Bertram*, *Manuel*, *Fredolfo*—and the delayed *Osmyn the Renegade*, Maturin plotted lurid melodrama involving passionate violations concealed identities, and family vengeance. These transportations of the Gothic to the stage suggest Byron, but Maturin claims not to have read Byron when he devised his first, only dramatic success, *Bertram* (1816). Lougy considers the unsuccessful *Fredolfo* (1819) the best constructed and psychologically soundest of the dramas.

Maturin's novel of 1818, *Women; or Pour et Contre*, sounds of more interest, with its concerns over redemptive and destructive love. Lougy, who sees the portrayal of Zaira prefiguring Emma Bovary and Sue Bridehead, repeatedly stresses Maturin's understanding of the feminine: "In much of his fiction, women especially are victimized by a religious and social code that demands sexual repression since they, unlike men, did not have access to harlots and brothels for release of sexual passions."

Melmoth the Wanderer (1820) is presented as a structured achievement that fuses the Wandering Jew and Faustus legends, and is read as a religious work, ". . . Maturin's attempt to find a basis for hope and belief; and insofar as none of the persons confronted by Melmoth is willing to sell his soul for worldly happiness, Maturin's world differs from Dante's Hell in the all-important fact that hope has not been abandoned."

After *Melmoth* failed to redeem Maturin from penury, he sunk increasingly into silent isolation. His last work, *The Albigenses* (1824), a medieval romance in the manner of Scott, holds interest but lacks imaginative vigor. In his "study of religious fanaticism," Maturin deplors the alienating force that deadens sympathy and too often leads to unreligious violence. A Dubliner, he is no less prophetic.

Of the Freud-Trilling school of biography, Lougy writes with a graceful, flowing style only impaired by overworking pairings. While he tells us of Maturin's poverty and struggles, he does not make us feel them, perhaps because his concerns are more critical and psychoanalytical than biographical (and also limited by space). Lougy has performed a valuable rescue service by taking up a neglected figure and showing how he is worthy of consideration because he added a psychic dimension unknown to Anglo-Irish fiction before Joyce. Maturin emerges as tortured man and writer who deserves to be remembered for more than one book. The clarification exceeds the customary.

James McNally
Old Dominion University

Gareth W. Dunleavy and Janet E. Dunleavy, *The O'Connor Papers: A Descriptive Catalog and Surname Register of the Materials at Clonalis House*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977. xxx + 586 pp. \$50.00.

All jests on the subject notwithstanding, some Irishmen are actually descended from kings. The lineage of O'Connor Don can be traced directly to medieval Ireland's last monarch. More remarkable and significant is the fact that the family of the O'Connor Don has amassed over the generations a collection of papers that constitutes a "diary of social, political, cultural and economic aspects of Irish heritage . . . and relations between Ireland and the rest of Europe and America, for a span of four hundred years." Still held by the family at Clonalis House, Castlerea, County Roscommen, the obvious value of the collection hitherto has been limited by the absence of any guide to its specific contents.

Now Gareth and Janet Dunleavy have completed a descriptive catalog of this four hundred years' accumulation of

letters, journals, memoirs, biographical sketches, legal papers, financial reports and accounts, drafts of speeches, and parliamentary bills, etc., and made its treasures accessible to researchers. After arranging, indexing, cross-indexing, and analyzing over a span of six years, they have produced a massive work of reference—which is at the same time a fascinating series of summaries illustrating Irish life from the sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries. In addition, there is a computer-sorted surname register that contains more than seven thousand names, each keyed to the individual documents in which they appear, as well as several indexes arranged by subject and pertinent discipline. The catalog confirms that the O'Connor Papers contain material of significance to the study of Irish language and literature; Irish social, political, economic, and cultural relations with the Continent; the evolution of the British constitutional connection; the changing role of the Irish Catholic Church; Irish emigration to, and life in, America; and such important themes in Irish life as class relationships, land tenure, and education over a period of many generations.

One is tempted to say that the book contains "something for everyone"—but, in fact, its greatest contribution is to emphasize the essential unity of Irish studies, the complex interconnection of "historical," "literary," and "folkloric" materials that renders academic barriers artificial and irrelevant. Indeed, the larger implications of the collection may be more important than the particular chunks of evidence that individual scholars can select to flesh out their theses. The continuity and change of values in a single family over several centuries, the countervailing influences of Gaelic and English culture, and (most neglected of all) the relations of Catholic Ireland with the Continent—such broader themes can now be studied seriously from a rich documentary source.

In commending the diligence and thoroughness of the compilers, one is at the same time appalled by the negligence that left work of this value so long undone. Indifferent bureaucrats and narrowminded foundation officials must bear some of the blame for the primitive state of Irish scholarly resources in many fields. But surely these most at fault are the scholars, both Irish and American, who have preferred to argue the same tired questions or to grub in the same familiar potato patches rather than summon up the imagination and the energy to grapple with the raw materials that still lie untouched.

William D. Griffin
St. John's University

James W. Flannery, *W. B. Yeats and the Idea of a Theatre: The Early Abbey Theatre in Theory and Practice*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976. 404 pages. \$22.50.

Persons sufficiently interested in Yeats to spend twenty-two fifty for another book about him probably know most of the matter in this one. That this is true is a pity. Professor Flannery, by reputation, understands Yeats's plays better than anyone living, having compiled a distinguished record as a director in the United States, Canada, and Ireland. But the fruits of his labors in the theater have been buried beneath his labors in the library. Much of this book takes us through territory well explored by others. The book suffers the defect of its origins as a Ph.D thesis. Like most works of its class, this is a barge of a book, festooned with footnotes and towing in its wake a 500-item bibliography, unannotated, and an incomplete index.

I do not object to the marketing of theses. But given his interest in revising our views of Yeats as a playwright, Profes-

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sor Flannery (or his editor) should have designed a less forbidding, less expensive book. Professor Flannery wishes to inform and enlarge Yeats's audience but few will stay the course he has set for them, or even pay the price of admission. Without damage to his argument, Professor Flannery could have shed the chapters which justify the subtitle. The metamorphosis of the Irish Literary Theatre into the Abbey Theatre is an old tale and the available sources do not allow Professor Flannery to say much that is new. Moreover, it is apparent that he is more interested in Yeats's ideas than in those forces in the Abbey which thwarted them. Consequently, I think Professor Flannery should follow the example of the master and issue a revised version which better fulfills his purpose: to restore our sense of Yeats's idea of theater and support his claim to greatness as a dramatist.

This is a large task because, as many know, important scholars and critics have dismissed Yeats's plays almost casually. Professor Flannery relishes this challenge and writes best when he traces the origins and development of Yeats's theories about the theater and shows where and how they influenced the plays. He illuminates Yeats's early life, the relation of Yeats's theater to fundamental doctrines of magical practice, the role of the poet in society, the relation of image to culture, and Yeats's plan to use theater to unify Ireland politically and culturally. With fine understanding, he explores Yeats's debts to Wagner, Symons, Villiers de L'Isle Adam, Maeterlinck, and Gordon Craig. These debts are adequately illustrated in eighteen black and white plates. In his final and most provocative chapter, "The Legacy of Yeats," Flannery links Yeats, in spirit, to the experimental theaters of Artaud, Grotowski, and Brook. The sweep of theatrical landscape from *Der Ring des Nibelungen* to *Orghast* is difficult to take in at first. Yet Professor Flannery, with a just and practiced eye, paints a convincing picture.

The style of the book is clear and unobtrusive though marked, occasionally, by exaggeration and a few patches of dissertationese. His general readability is gratifying when, in the chapter "Yeats the Dramatist," he analyzes individual plays. Here Professor Flannery's experience in the theater serves his reader well. The analyses of the revisions of *The Shadowy Waters* and *The Hour Glass* are first-rate and we arrive at the end with a better understanding of Yeats's balancing of poetic language and histrionic power. This discussion would

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TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by: Thomas E. Hachey, Treasurer

Total balance as of July 19, 1976	\$4,281.27
Plus dues collected from members through July 11, 1977	2,652.07
Plus interest through June 1, 1977	194.68
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	\$7,128.02

Minus following expenses:

ACIS Reprint Series Subsidy	\$600.00
ACIS Newsletter Subsidy	550.00
MLA-ACIS reception	97.90
ACIS Newsletter Editor's phone, postage, supplies and xerox expenses	145.58
ACIS Newsletter Editor's preparation and mailing of membership list expenses	94.64
ACIS Treasurer's printing, supplies, postage and phone expenses	227.24
ACIS Secretary's phone expenses	14.23
1977 Denver Conference expenses	228.72
Misc. 1976 St. Louis Conference expenses	20.00
Reimburse members for Overpayment (Library and adv. charges)	7.25
Purchased Directory of Affiliated Societies	1.50
	<hr/>
TOTAL EXPENSES TO DATE	\$1,987.06
Total balance of ACIS funds, as of July 11, 1977	\$5,140.96

certainly have wider influence in a shorter, cheaper book. Many readers will balk at the assertion that Yeats's plays represent "the widest range of experiment of any major dramatist in the history of the theatre." There is no question, however, that this book demonstrates the "consistency of purpose and coherence of thought" in Yeats's dramatic work.

Arvid F. Sponberg
Valparaiso University

