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1980

The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter, vol.4, no.3, 1980

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Eugene O'Neill Society, "The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter, vol.4, no.3, 1980" (1980). *Eugene O'Neill Newsletter*. 12.

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The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter

WINTER 1980

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FOREWORD: EDITORIAL ENTREATIES

Before I get to the entreaties (a series of pleas, or pleases), let me begin the last issue of Volume IV with an expression of gratitude to all whose contributions (and at the moment I'm referring to literary and not financial contributions) make it at least the equal of its predecessors: to R. Viswanathan, for revealing how hastily or inaccurately many of us have previously assessed the ship scene in *The Emperor Jones*; to Winifred Frazer, for her sensitive and kindly study of O'Neill's not-always-felicitous poetry; to Paul Voelker, for showing, in his review of *Desire Under the Elms*, how even a bad production can provide important insights about interpretation and stagecraft; to LeRoy Robinson and Susan Tuck for delineating the affinities between O'Neill and (respectively) John Howard Lawson and William Faulkner; to Bill Costley, for providing both biographical information on Eric Linklater and a copy of the pages from *Juan in America* that are reprinted herein; and, finally, to all who have sent in news, articles and production/publication information that I would not otherwise have seen or been able to share. If only more would do the same--but that leads to one of my pleas, so I'll defer it. Thanks to all of you, I believe I have been able to make good on my promise that a two-issue Volume would not be "a diminished thing" other than in times of issuance. Now to the entreaties--the "pleases."

Please forgive the periodic tardiness of issues, a sin that I have decided, from this issue onward, to preclude (or mask) by giving each issue a season rather than a month as its date. (The designations for the three issues in Volume V, all of which will appear within calendar year 1981, will be Spring, Summer/Fall, and Winter.) As Chairman of an English department, with only an associate editor and a tireless secretary to aid me in the Newsletter endeavor, I find that administrative tasks (heaviest in autumn) impede the speedy and punctual construction of a strictly Fall issue. Hence your December receipt of the enclosed, its designation as the "Winter 1980" issue (there's far more of the current winter in 1981 than in 1980, but I hope this arbitrary designation is acceptable), and the turgid explanation/apology in this paragraph!

Please resubscribe to the Newsletter if your current subscription concludes with this issue. (If it does, the envelope also contains a renewal blank.) Only through the renewed monetary endorsement of its subscribers can the Newsletter continue to flourish.

Please mention the Newsletter to others with a concern for O'Neill and American drama who might also be interested in subscribing. (If Aunt Midge is still aglow about Lynn Fontanne's performance in the 1928 *Strange Interlude*, consider buying her a subscription as a gift.) Or if you are affiliated with a college or university, remind the librarian that the Newsletter is a "must" for any reasonably complete drama collection and urge that a subscription be initiated forthwith.

Please remember that, if you join the Eugene O'Neill Society for 1981, a Newsletter subscription is automatically included--at no additional cost to you. So if it's renewal time and your dedication to O'Neill continues unabated, why not "support two birds with one check"? Rather than resubscribing, turn to the O'Neill Society section of this issue, find your membership category, and send a check for that amount to Jordan Miller at the address listed there. You'll be assured, not only of helping the development of a myriad of Society activities, and of participating in them, but also of receiving all the issues in Volume V.

Please join the roster of *active* subscribers--those who send in clippings (with source, date and page), information about performances of O'Neill's plays, notes and queries, and longer articles. (Aunt Midge is herewith invited to *recapture* Miss Fontanne's 1928 brilliance in a descriptive reverie for a future issue.) I sift through all the sources of information available to me, but they don't begin to cover the United States, let alone the world. As I've said too often already, the *Eugene O'Neill Newsletter* is a vehicle for the dissemination of the opinions, discoveries, news and writings of its subscribers; and the fifth and subsequent volumes will be as good as (or better than) the first four only if that world-wide network of O'Neill devotees become in effect co-editors--participants in, and not just recipients of, its thrice-ennial life.

With these entreaties, I conclude this foreword, Volume IV, and 1980. Please have a happy and prosperous 1981, filled--to use one of James O'Neill, Sr.'s favorite Crocker House toasts--with "sunny days and starry nights"!

THE SHIP SCENE IN *THE EMPEROR JONES*

The Gelbs, in their well-known biography, list the various ship scenes in O'Neill drama as bearing testimony to the deep impact that the playwright's voyage experiences had on his art.¹ Quite understandably, though somewhat inconsiderately, they exclude Scene Six of *The Emperor Jones* from the list.² In setting as well as in spirit, this scene stands out from all other nautical scenes in O'Neill as something unique, for it introduces the ship only as part of a vision encountered by Brutus Jones in the jungle. Obviously the Gelbs omit it because the ship here is sheer fantasy. But the meaning of this fantasy is not perhaps so simple as many take it to be, and for this reason a closer look at it may not be unavailing.

A major charge levelled against *The Emperor Jones* is that the implications of the visions in the forest are a little too obvious.³ This is, perhaps, not very true of the ship vision, and some critics, who have either not read the scene very closely or have ventured to infer its pattern from the preceding ones, have even lapsed into a few minor factual errors in their interpretations of it. Doris V. Falk, for example, fails to perceive that the vision consists of a ship and explains it merely as Jones lying down to rest, "surrounded by a group of savages--his ancestors--" in whose desperate wail he actively joins after an initial aversion.⁴ Clifford Leech, in his otherwise helpful summary, mistakenly assumes that Jones fires a shot at the spectacle of the slave ship,⁵ whereas in fact this is the only forest vision in the play in which Jones does not use the pistol at all.

What is the significance of this particular vision? That it is a projection of Jones's racial memories and forms a part of his compulsive psychic regression to the past is evident. From the descriptions of the Negroes as "sitting in crumpled, despairing attitudes" (p. 199), and also from the preceding slave market scene, it can be inferred that the Negroes are slaves being carried to the United States. But such an inference raises some difficult questions. A slave ship should have contained a few white men too as slave masters, and O'Neill's inclusion of white men in this scene would only have been in full conformity with the pattern of the earlier scenes. In Scene Four, for example, the laboring Negro prisoners are supervised by a white prison-guard. Scene Five similarly presents a mixture of black slaves brought for sale by white auctioneers and white planters who have come to buy them. In addition to conforming to this pattern of the earlier scenes, the presence of white figures on the vision-ship would further have invested the scene with an element of tension between the white and black cultures, which has all along prevailed in the play. O'Neill's exclusion of the white slave masters from the ship, despite all this, therefore appears to have been deliberate, and the reasons for it are worth investigating.

The first thing to be borne in mind in an interpretation of any scene in the play is that O'Neill's primary intention is not to trace the history of the Negroes as a series of visions but to dramatize the inevitable self-confrontation of an individual of that race through his psychological regression into the personal and atavistic past on an occasion of crisis.

¹ Arthur and Barbara Gelb, *O'Neill* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 157.

² *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill*. 3 vols. (New York: Random House, 1954-55), III, pp. 198-99. This is the edition of the play used in this study and is the one to which subsequent parenthetical page numbers refer.

³ Barrett Clark says, for example, that "the play reveals itself at once." *Eugene O'Neill: The Man and His Plays* (New York: Dover, 1947), p. 72. Clifford Leech similarly observes that the play "remains a diagram of regression; once perceived it has no more to offer." *O'Neill* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1963), p. 40.

⁴ Doris V. Falk, *Eugene O'Neill and the Tragic Tension* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1958), p. 40.

⁵ Clifford Leech, p. 39.

History is therefore only the basis, while regression is the essential meaning of the vision of the protagonist. This means that the emphasis in each vision has to fall not so much on the details of history as on the experience undergone by Jones in response to it.

In this connection, it is worth pointing out that even the Negroes in the ship are presented somewhat ambiguously, for their appearance does not fully confirm that they are slaves. They are not visibly fettered but create such an impression only by their gestures and postures:

They are sitting in crumpled, despairing attitudes, hunched, facing one another with their backs touching the forest walls as if they were shackled to them (p. 199, italics mine).

This vagueness of details cannot be explained away as something common to all visions in general because the other five visions in the play are all presented with the utmost clarity. In the prison-guard scene, for example, the Negroes are shown as "shackled to a heavy ball and chain" (p. 194). This is not to contend that the Negroes in the ship are not slaves simply because they are not chained or watched by slave masters. As a matter of fact, O'Neill himself mentions them as slaves retrospectively at the beginning of the next scene (p. 199f). The only point stressed here is that the vision lends itself to more than one level of perception. Taken as pure history, it certainly is the presentation of the voyage of Jones's ancestors from freedom to slavery; but as an experience, a psychic voyage can have implications other than history, and O'Neill's objective in making the historical details incomplete and vague appears to have been to suggest some deeper meanings which the voyage embodies.

A very obvious paradox, which persists in all the vision scenes of the play, is that every step of Jones's advance into the forest becomes a step backward into the past. In this respect, the visionary voyage, in which Jones also joins by taking his seat along with the other Negroes, has the impact on him of a mental regression from America to the Congo; and, strikingly enough, the ship scene functions as a chronological link between the vision of an American slave market and that of a sacrificial altar of the crocodile god in the Congo. The impression that the voyage scene, which is immediately followed by the Congo scene, creates in the audience is that the hero's mind is sailing its way back from the land of civilization to its original land of a primitive culture.

The vision of a few men of his own race voyaging together is, certainly, a revelation to Jones that he too should sail with them and thus accept his racial tradition and its code of beliefs. At least from Jones's behavior it is evident that the vision has upon him the impact of a revelation. His initial reaction to the spectacle of the voyage is one of terror and repulsion. Unable to stand the sight, he "throws himself down" (p. 199). But the next moment, "as if under some uncanny compulsion," he joins the others in the long wail of despair, and then rises to a sitting posture, swaying back and forth like the rest. Thus, after an initial attempt at evasion, he is, by strong subconscious drives, forced to identify himself as one among the Negroes in the ship, and in adopting the pose of a voyager he is in effect undergoing the experience of a mental Odyssey, of a regression to the Congo. Hence the vagueness of scenic details previously noted.

The meaning of a regressive, homeward sailing, as thus perceived in this vision on the basis of textual evidence, has the sanction of Jungian psychology as well. Jung conceives of water as an archetypal symbol of the soul itself and interprets the subconscious longing for a contact with it, manifested often in dreams of swimming or sailing, as suggesting the soul's need for repossessing a lost cultural legacy. He recounts two or three such dreams, dreamt by men on occasions of spiritual crisis, and concludes:

Therefore the way of the soul in search of its lost father--like Sophia seeking Bythos--leads to the water, to the dark mother that reposes at its bottom. Whoever has elected for the state of spiritual poverty ... goes the way of the soul that leads to the water. This water is no figure of speech but a living symbol of the dark psyche.⁶

⁶ *The Basic Writings of Carl Gustav Jung*, trans. R.F.C. Hull, ed. with introd. Violet Staub De Laszlo (New York: Random House, 1959), p. 300.

Jones's psychological confrontation with the ship is very much like the dreams mentioned by Jung and becomes an expression of his dormant desire to reinherit his native tradition--a tradition which he had rejected amidst his hectic pursuit of the superficial comforts of civilization. The need to embrace it is what forces him to identify himself with the sailors, instead of defensively shooting at them with the pistol as in all the other vision scenes.

--R. Viswanathan

EUGENE O'NEILL, *POEMS: 1912-1944*: A REVIEW

It is pleasant to hold in the hand this orange-colored, well-made little volume containing most of the available poems which O'Neill is known to have written.¹ It includes the thirty published in the Sanborn and Clark *Bibliography* of 1931 and forty-two others collected from manuscripts and typescripts in the Yale collection of O'Neill's papers and in the Berg Collection of the New York Public Library, as well as three from the Clifton Waller Barrett collection at the University of Virginia.

It is no doubt not the final edition of O'Neill's poems which may in time be printed. Donald Gallup mentions in the introduction that love poems addressed to Maibelle Scott and to others exist. He also wrote the present reviewer, "If there's ever a second edition, we'll see that your discovery is included"--referring to "The 'American Sovereign'" discussed in "A Lost Poem by Eugene O'Neill" (*Eugene O'Neill Newsletter*, May, 1979). Also it appears that at least one poem, "Friedman's Soup," dated during the Gaylord farm period by William H. Davenport in his description of the Yale holdings ("The Published and Unpublished Poems of Eugene O'Neill," *Yale University Library Gazette*, October, 1963) is not included.

No matter how many poems of O'Neill's may surface in the future, however, it is doubtful that they will enhance his reputation as a poet, any more than does the present volume. The O'Neill revealed here is more intimate, more lyrical, and less satirical than in the thirty poems previously published, all of which had appeared in print between 1912 and 1917--twenty-six in the *New London Telegraph*, and one each in the *New York Call*, the *Masses*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, and the *Pleiades Club Year Book*. Except for his poems to Elizabeth Ashe, however, his unpublished work differs little from that already in print. There are, for example, take-offs on well-known poems of the kind appearing in the "Laconics" column of the *Telegraph*. "Lament of a Subwayite" is written "With Apologies"--as several were in that column--in this case to "J. Milton." Beginning "When I consider the many hours spent/As suff'ring on the Subway trains I ride," it predictably ends, "Methinks I hear the song the harsh wheels sang:/They also pay who only stand and hang.'" Although more personal, less political or social, than several in Sanborn and Clark, it is obviously of the same type.

Even in some of his poems to Beatrice Ashe, he parodies well-known verse. One dated 1915 is written in imitation of Leigh Hunt's "Rondeau," which begins "Jennie kissed me." In its light-hearted way it conveys a particular note of satire on the sentimentality of the original--that is, satire on this kind of poetry itself. As an example of his light touch, it is worth reproducing in its entirety.

RONDEAU, TO HER NOSE

I wiped her nose! At her request
I rubbed and pinched with loving zest
That roguish feature numbed with cold,
As on the beach in Jan. we strolled
Mid icy blasts from north-nor'-west.

¹ Eugene O'Neill. *Poems: 1912-1944*, ed. with introduction by Donald Gallup. New Haven & New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1980. vii + 119 pp. \$9.95.

That it was red must be confessed,
 And that I kissed it I'll attest,
 And proudly shout to all: "Behold!
 I wiped her nose!"

She had no handkerchief--she guess'd--
 I took out mine; softly caressed
 That tender nose of fairest mould,
 And kissed it, too! The tale is told.
 On this my claim to fame must rest--
 I wiped Her nose!

In another poem to Beatrice Ashe, he complains of jealousy of her many lovers. He had written a "Villanelle" for Maibelle Scott, which appeared in a "Laconics" column in 1912, and which, more typical of this 19-line form, extolled her charms; in 1915, however, to Beatrice he writes "Villanelle to his Ladye in Which Ye Poore Scribe Complaineth Sorely Because the Cursed Memory of the Thousand Others Doth Poison His Dreams of His Beatrice" and signs the poem "Knight One Thousand and One." The pun in the signature may be corny and a review of the lady's charms neglected in the stanzas, but the repetition of line one, "I dream of all your lovers who have wooed," in line 6, 17 and 18, and of line three, "I am but one among a multitude," in lines 9, 15, and 19, exactly as is proper for the villanelle, induces a kind of sympathy for the lover. Some lines--"I gnash my teeth in truly tragic style"--are less felicitous. In the Yale carbon typescript among the papers acquired from Agnes Boulton, the last three words of the title, "of His Beatrice," are heavily cancelled in pencil, indicating apparently that although the girl was out of mind, the poem was worth preserving in more than one carbon, for a similar one exists in the Berg Collection.

A number of lyrical effusions, inspired by O'Neill's love for Beatrice Ashe, show a certain feeling for sound and rhythm. Although the poet might seem to be nearer seventeen than twenty-seven, O'Neill's age in 1915, they are not entirely without merit as poetry and are of considerable interest biographically. Among the least pretentious is "A Dream of Last Week," a poem of eight stanzas, each extolling some beauty of the beloved, from whom he has had to part but whose image he vividly remembers.

I remember your face
 So white in the gloom
 Of our trysting place;
 So sad for a space!
 I remember your face.
 I curse at my doom.

The last stanza, with the same beginning as the preceding seven, sums up his loneliness.

I remember my "Bee"
 And her heart, My Home.
 All her witchery
 Casts its spell on me,
 I remember my Bee
 As I dream alone.

In a more rollicking poem, "'The Woman Who Understands,'" he again pays tribute to the same lover.

As the tide went out she found him
 Lashed to a spar of despair--
 The wreck of his ship around him,
 The wreck of his dreams in the air--
 Found him and loved him and gathered
 The soul of him to her heart;
 The soul that had sailed an uncharted sea--
 The soul that had thought to win and be free--
 The soul of which she was part;
 And there in the dusk she cried to the man:
 "Win your battle--you can--you can!"

O'Neill may have been reading Whitman when he wrote another poem in the summer of 1914 for Beatrice Ashe, "'Upon Our Beach'":

Upon Our Beach we two lie, side by side--together!
 Before us the sea, sparkling, vibrant with motion,
 thrilling beneath the amorous sun's warm kisses.
 Behind us a field of tough, wiry grass that waves
 and ripples in wind-swept abandon.
 Around and under us the hot sand glittering
 with innumerable tiny jewels.
 Above us a soft blue sky, the robe of the beneficent God
 who blesses us.

There are some 150 lines of this kind: "Your limbs are beautiful, your breasts are beautiful--/ my lips yearn for them--your hips, your feet, your hands are/all beautiful./ I ache to possess you./ Today, I love life." The last line is repeated at the end of a number of stanzas including the last one. Beatrice Ashe, who must have been of a more practical than poetic temperament, has identified (on the carbon typescript in the Berg collection) the "millionaire's house" on a far hill as the Harkness estate, and the beach where they lay as the property of Edward Crowninshield Hammond. Interesting as this information may be to the biographer, how one wishes that she had been more of a Freudian and elucidated other aspects of the poem!

In the little three-stanza "A Song of Moods," the poet fairly dances at the thought of his beloved in the sunlight: "My glad heart sings to the winds of Thee--/ Ah, wantonly! So wantonly!/ Of thee." But "When the grey waves sulk on the sullen sea/. . . My sad heart sobs in its need of Thee--/ Ah, longingly! So longingly!/ For Thee."

As a poet of love O'Neill thus exhibits considerable variety of free and controlled forms, many times, it must be admitted, in close imitation of some known poet or style. One wonders if he perhaps had more sense of humor than he is sometimes given credit for, or if perhaps, living in the age of modernism, he expressed more of the self-irony in his imitations and direct parodies than appears on a casual reading. In "'Just a Little Love, A Little Kiss'" (the title derived from a song of almost the same name which Beatrice sang), O'Neill looks at a sordid city street scene and remembers the beach of the summer before.

Cooped in this prison cell I call my room,
 Which goads me with its glaring sordidness,
 I drink the very dregs of bitterness,
 I wander in abysmal depths of gloom.

Seeing a cold, "wan-faced woman" trundle out a battered organ and begin to grind "sad old tunes" (presumably *not* "A Little Love"), the poet recalls "A ledge of rocks that juts into the sea," and "My Own, My Heart's Desire." When the music stops, however, "The spell has fled. I am alone, alone!/ And oh, My Love, I want you, need you so!"

Besides several other poems to Beatrice, there are two for nurses at the Gaylord Farm Sanatorium, dated 1913 or 1914. A "ballade" for nurse Katherine Murray urges her to "Come to the land where love is king"--

Penance for sins we've paid in advance,
 T.B. is punishment full and dire,
 Paid is the piper! On with the dance!
 Oh come to my Land of Heart's Desire!

--the last line being the refrain of each of four stanzas. And a "ballade" thanking Mary A. Clark for her services, "Hope's Hebe to the fever-toss'd," wishes her, in the refrain, "Top of the morning and long life!"

In 1940 at Tao House Carlotta typed a number of O'Neill's poems, which (no matter what low opinion he claimed to hold of his poetry at the time that Barrett Clark arranged to reprint those in the *Bibliography*) would seem to mean that he wanted not only them but others to be preserved. O'Neill then annotated some of them as to time and place of composition. In the years 1915 to 1917 he wrote several in the Hell Hole, the bleak message of which is much better conveyed in the play, *Ice-man*. In one a man on a park bench is addressed: "It is night,/ Wan One,/ And autumn./ And the day/ Is also dead."

In another the tom-toms reverberate in "the Congo of the soul" "Until one's atheism/ Shrieks in the Dark/ And cowers on a heap of dung/ To pray!" In a satire, "'Tis of Thee," the poet visualizes buildings that ".... scrape the sky/ With a relentless itch against color/ Frozen grey phalluses/ In a world that chatters belief/ In monkey glands." And one called "Good Night" seems prophetic of the theme of *Iceman*: "Chatter, chatter, chatter/ Runs the little talk/ Of the little people/ As they lie/ To each other."

Most of the poems are preserved in Carlotta's typed copies, but one in the poet's hand, called "Revolution" and dated "Hell Hole 1916", is curious in that, although it was from Freiligrath's poem "Revolution" that O'Neill took the thematic lines repeated several times in *Iceman* ("The days grow hot, O Babylon!/ 'Tis cool beneath thy willow trees!"), this poem is about a tiger. It begins "Tiger, tiger!/ How beautiful you look!" and ends "But are you a tiger/ Or merely an overgrown/ Alley cat?" No connection with revolution is discoverable.

Three autograph manuscripts in the Virginia library were written in 1925 in Bermuda. A short one, "To Alice," praises a girl with whom O'Neill used to swim--"The sun/ And you/ Two things in life/ Are true."--while two longer, untitled poems are filled with images reflecting nervous uncertainty about life. One concludes his failing love for Agnes no doubt depressed him at this time,

Before one's meager eyes
The stark horizons of the past and future
Expand like rubber bands,
Gaping to contract on one's heart
Until the cosmos is barred rays of light
Through which one's faint-eyed soul
Stares like an orphan out of a book.

and the other ends just as despairingly,

Oh Jehovah, I hope your bosom is as hairy
As ten Ostermoors!
For I am awfully tired, Daddy,
And I deserve sleep!

Most of the new poems would seem attributable to O'Neill in the light of those published earlier. They are lyrical or satirically parodic or naturalistically pessimistic, all in varying verse forms. Their imagery is not original, but some of the rhythms are catchy, and some of the diction rings with sound which seems to verify Eugene and Jamie's enthusiasm for oral recital of poems as diverse as "The Rubaiyat," "The Hound of Heaven," and "The Ballad of Reading Gaol." One, however, which strikes me as not typical is a prose-like poem of some fifty or sixty sentences printed from a typescript acquired from Agnes Boulton, with the date "September 1919" added in pencil in an unidentified hand. It begins, "The golden oranges in the patio dream of the Hesperides./ The earth is a sun-struck bee, its wings sodden with golden/ pollen, sifted dust of sunbeams." Another section begins, "O sea, which is myself! How I love to reveal my nakedness/ to the sun on solitary beaches! How I love to play unconscious/ly, dancing like another heat-wave to its own rhythm, freed from/ the fretting, lukewarm glance of human eyes!" The poem seems more like an imitation of some of the imagists than like O'Neill's other poetry. Granted that he identified with the sea in more than one play, did he ever visualize belly dancing naked on the shore? Could it be that Agnes slipped one of her own into the papers she sold to Yale?

Two short poems are inscriptions to Carlotta: "Quiet Song in Time of Chaos," written for her birthday, December, 1940, and "Song in Chaos," written for the same occasion two years later. The first begins, "Here/ Is home./ Is peace./ Is quiet." The second ends, "Love is here,/ In my heart,/ For you,/ My dear." Both indicate that Carlotta provided a haven, an ordered little world, which saved the playwright from the chaos outside and perhaps from that within him.

A series of "Fragments," some in O'Neill's hand, some in typescript, written in 1942 and revised in 1944, express the despair which infected the physically weakened playwright during the war years.

Oh, I have tried to pray
In simple faithlessness!
Ground my bloody knees
Into the stone!

(Not my real knees,
You understand,
They cannot kneel.)

I have cried beseechingly
"O God!"

.

"O God!
O Universal Life!
O Cosmic Reproduction!"

(Any name will do
When all names
Are but names.)

These fragments reinforce the evidence from Carlotta and others that O'Neill's pessimism during the years in which he worked on his projected cycle of plays was overwhelming. They add nothing, however, to his stature as a poet, and indeed, except for the love poetry he wrote to Beatrice Ashe, the recently published poems are not superior to the doggerel which he wrote for the "Laconics" column. Those earlier poems have a lot of life, sometimes humor, and, as parodies should, they throw some light on the original. How about "To a Bull Moose (With apologies to Bobby Burns)"?

So, Moosie, cease thy bragging vain
We canna hear thee wi'out pain
The best laid plans of Moose and men
Gang aft/ agley
We can but hope that thine will wend
The self-same way.

The present collection of *Poems* is also printed in a paperback edition--*Poems 1912-1942: A Preliminary Edition* (Yale University Library, 1979)--which will do just as well for those who are not collectors. Although it includes two years less in its title, the poems are exactly the same, O'Neill's revisions in 1944 apparently being the reason for the inclusion of that date in the hardback. Pagination in the two is different, but the excellent index is the same, enabling the scholar to locate expeditiously those poems formerly printed and those in the various library collections in manuscript or typescript.

Mainly in chronological order, the poems are annotated as to location, the kind of copy from which the poem is printed or the history of its printing. It would be pleasanter if a sonnet, "Noon," had not been split in the Ticknor and Fields edition so that one must turn the page to find the last four lines. And why page 93 ends with "non-" when there is enough space at the bottom to include the next line, which one must turn the page to find, is hard to explain. In the main, though, the poems are well arranged, and occasional notes, such as "Compare John Masefield's 'Sea Fever'" following "The Call," are helpful, if infrequent.

It is fortunate that, before Donald Gallup retired, he performed the service for O'Neill scholars of editing the poems in so satisfactory an edition. The availability of any of O'Neill's unpublished writing is welcome, not least that in a genre which he attempted a number of times through the years.

--Winifred Frazer

LUST UNDER SOME ELMS: *DESIRE* AT THE GUTHRIE

If Robert Brunstein's assertion in *The Theatre of Revolt*--that "O'Neill will be primarily remembered for his last plays"--is ever to be demolished, it will not be done by productions

like the Guthrie Theater's recent *Desire Under the Elms*. Performed in repertory from August 23 to November 22, it had just the opposite effect and seemed to confirm Brustein's further observation that "the bulk of O'Neill's dramatic writings before *Ah, Wilderness!* are ... riddled with fakery, incoherence, and clumsy experimental devices."

Surprisingly, perhaps, where the Guthrie *Desire* is concerned, only the first two of Brustein's three charges were actually testified to, for no "clumsy experimental devices" were to be found in the Minneapolis production. The famous four-room, two-story house with the removable walls, of which O'Neill was so proud, was not created on the Guthrie stage. Scenic designer James Guenther's dwelling contained only three rooms--two bedrooms above and one room below, which doubled as the kitchen and the parlor. As a result of the doubling, two intermissions were required simply to effect the set change. Also missing from Mr. Guenther's design was the stone wall which is to run across the front of the stage. The gate, which is supposed to be centered in the wall, appeared down right, supported by two small columns of rock.

Nor did the Guthrie stage contain "two enormous elms." It did not, in fact, contain *one* enormous elm. What was visible, for the delectation of those in the upper reaches of the auditorium, were three elm branches, suspended high in the air by imperceptible wires. In theory, the viewer had no cause for complaint about the artistic choice, for the naked displays of desire were, after all, taking place *underneath* elms. Nevertheless, if the spirit of O'Neill was yet waiting for the elms and "the house as character" he always wanted, it will have to wait awhile longer.

The Guthrie stage is not the sort O'Neill wrote for, and because it is not a proscenium stage, many compromises had to be made with his set description. The stage's extreme thrust, which allows the audience to be seated around seventy-five percent of the main acting area, does not permit a house with any sort of facade, either transparent or removable. Nor does the smallness of the main acting area allow space for two different lower rooms as well as an exterior acting area. Similarly, space and sightline problems prohibit the inclusion of stone walls. Finally, either budgetary restrictions or the requirement that all sets must be struck in one hour (so the next play in the repertory can be set up) or both in combination do not seem to permit the utilization of large trees. In consequence, the Guthrie *Desire* was very far from a realization of the scenic environment O'Neill calls for. (If a home for O'Neill's plays is ever built, it would appear that it must have a proscenium stage.)

That the Guthrie is so ill-suited to realizing O'Neill's intentions is a hard fact with which any designer there must wrestle; and it may be that Mr. Guenther's solution to this problem is the best one could hope for. Yet even the scenic elements which did appear contained little of the texture and visual poetry which the script seems to demand, and the play which remained did little to dispel impressions of "fakery" and "incoherence." And these impressions were augmented, rather than subdued, by a particular stylistic decision of director George Keathley. The keynote for the remaining elements of the production was literal realism, surface verisimilitude.

For example, throughout the early scene between Simeon (Edwin J. McDonough) and Peter (Peter Thoenke)--a scene which was played largely for its humor--Eben (Richard McWilliams), without a wall of the house to hide behind, was kept busy actually preparing the called-for meal. The aroma which wafted back to the fifth row was definitely the smell of bacon, and testified to some stage technician's effort to place a working gas burner inside an antique wood stove. As a further result of the drive toward surface realism, scene breaks in the text were obscured completely by action which flowed continuously from room to room. In consequence, the evolution of the characters from scene to scene seemed forced and contrived rather than credible and convincing.

In the crucial bedroom scene of Part Two, directorial and design decisions combined to remove the necessity of wondering whether Eben and Abbie (Katherine McGrath) were in telepathic communication during the monologue of Ephraim (Tony Mockus). The bedroom doors, instead of opening upstage, as O'Neill directs, faced each other across a hallway which

ran downstage, thereby facilitating the continuous flow of the action. As a result, for a person seated center-front, Eben and Abbie seemed to be peeking directly at each other. This overt interaction removed the focus from Ephraim's speech completely. It was almost impossible to pay attention to it.

All of the concern for surface realism created several problems. First, one never sensed a higher level of metaphysical reality; when Eben and Abbie finally arrived in the parlor, the references to the mother's spirit seemed mere silly superstition on Eben's part and calculated design on Abbie's. Second, the expressionism of Simeon's and Peter's choric responses at the end of the first scene sounded a jarring, disconcerting note. But the most unfortunate result was the effect on character development. The relationship between Eben and Abbie did not evolve, it jumped, as if the characters were randy marionettes manipulated by a pornographic puppeteer.

Finally, however, what was most distressing is that the effort toward literalism was not consistently maintained. In the celebration scene, which opens Part III, the fiddler was obviously faking his playing, while among the dancers appeared a young, blond boy whose teased and blow-dried hair and mod wristwatch had clearly just arrived from the late twentieth century.

But despite all this, the Guthrie literalism did provoke an insight into the play. As Eben, Richard McWilliams was the picture of current commercial notions of virility, with his sculptured face surrounded by long, soft curls; his neatly trimmed moustache; and his hairy, well-muscled upper torso. Similarly, as Abbie, Katherine McGrath was as buxom and voluptuous as a first-class stripper. Thus, when she discoursed on the heat of the sun in Part Two, Scene One, the phallic imagery of "makes ye grow bigger--like a tree" was not just suggested or even suggestive; it was blatantly explicit. Further, the recurrent references to "hardness" and "being hard" consistently brought to mind the notion that the major erection of interest to O'Neill was not a two-story house.

Is such a suggestion out of place or out of proportion? O'Neill did, after all, refer to "desire" under the elms, not love. And by linking the sexual drive of Eben and Abbie to the rampant materialistic possessiveness towards the farm, which drives all the principal characters, it is possible to glimpse a universe in which the lust for power is the primary motive behind life. From this perspective, *Desire Under the Elms* could be seen as a sort of sexual *Titus Andronicus*--that is, as a play that achieves its primary emotional impact in the form of audience revulsion which culminates in exhausted relief that the horror is over.

Such a view would seem to suggest that the characters ought to be perceived as being, in Brooks Atkinson's words, "in the grip of forces they cannot master," and that the dominant theme ought to be taken to be, to quote Atkinson again, "the great theme of the fury of nature." It was, of course, this approach which was the basis for Atkinson's seemingly extravagant opinion that *Desire* "may turn out to be the greatest play written by an American." Atkinson had seen the Harold Clurman revival of *Desire* at the ANTA Playhouse in 1952 (with Colleen Dewhurst in a minor role) and had no knowledge of *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. But even so, if the Guthrie production is any indication, it is difficult to grasp why he would have chosen to elevate *Desire* over *The Iceman Cometh* or even *Death of a Salesman* or *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Nevertheless, Atkinson's view of the play as another O'Neill probing of "the Force behind" at least provides a possible rationale for what in the Guthrie production appear to be crudely inconsistent characters who kill babies and turn their lovers in to the sheriff only because those are good ways to create a painful ending. In consequence, at the end of the performance in Minneapolis, this viewer felt no sense of the "redemption through love" which Stark Young found on the opening night in 1924, nor of the "redemption in recognition of error and the assumption of responsibility" which Travis Bogard presents in his lengthy discussion of the play. Whether such an ending is possible or appropriate in a production which would emphasize sexuality as a deterministic force (rather than a prurient appeal), because the Guthrie version contained no plane of significance above the

literal surface, the ending brought only a sense of relief that the "fakery" and "incoherence" had finally come to a stop.

This sense of relief was accompanied by three observations. First, if the Guthrie version of Eugene O'Neill were alive today, he would be chief story editor for "The Young and the Restless." Second, failure seems inherent in a glossy production style more appropriate to "Little House on the Prairie." Third, it is devoutly to be wished that the Guthrie's newly-designated artistic director, Rumanian-born Liviu Ciulei, will be able to restore the stature of what was once this country's outstanding regional theatre.

---Paul D. Voelker

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON'S *SOULS*: A HARBINGER OF *STRANGE INTERLUDE*

In his *Chrysalis* article of 1952 (reprinted in the September 1979 issue of the Newsletter), Frederick C. Packard, Jr. refers to O'Neill's "great innovation" in *Strange Interlude*--the "courageous adoption ... of the old stage device of the 'aside'," which the playwright "transformed into the central medium of expression for a profound psychological drama." O'Neill scholars may be interested to know that twelve years before, when he was 20-21 years old, John Howard Lawson had experimented with a *similar* "adoption of an old stage device" as the "central medium of expression" of the self-consciousness of characters. In his as yet unpublished autobiography, Lawson states only the general nature of his experiment: "All the action took place in the minds of the characters." The play, in which this experiment comprises the second act, is *Souls*: "A Psychic Fantasy" (copyrighted without the subtitle on May 21, 1915, but begun in 1914 under the title *Atmosphere*). I offer a brief description, which may be of interest for comparison's sake.¹

Souls is a "triangle" story. Gordon Milborn, a rich, middle-aged dilettante, expects to marry Mary Morse, his 22-year-old secretary and mistress, who unconsciously loves Roland Rood, a young romantic poet, who--consciously but secretly--reciprocates her affection. Aside from this story, the structure of *Souls*, a play of dialogue rather than of action, is similar to that of *The Iceman Cometh*: the above three characters are confronted by a fourth--a superior, master-like man named Robert Howells, a psychologist with a markedly moral bent--who urges them to bare the truth of their souls.

The action of *Souls* begins in Milborn's library, where Howells probes Milborn's soul, "as a surgeon probes the flesh," and exposes its "dirtiness": "Outwardly you are benevolent, cultured, artistic, wise, but in your soul there's tyranny and hate and damnation." Subsequently, Howells gets Milborn, Mary and Roland to bare the truth of their souls themselves. (Howells does not bare his own soul in the copyrighted *Souls*, but in its first draft, *Atmosphere*, he says he lives in a cold, dismal place, a Palace of the Intellect, a brain laboratory.)

In *Souls* this soul-baring is done almost exclusively by soliloquies, which Lawson calls "Interludes," each with its own setting corresponding to the soul of the soliloquist. These three Interludes, which occur one after the other and comprise Act Two, are similarly titled: "The Interior of Gordon Milborn's Soul," "The Interior of Mary Morse's Soul," and "The Interior of Roland Rood's Soul." Unfortunately, the Interludes are not always consistent to themselves: sometimes when one character soliloquizes, baring his soul, another converses with him or her about something the soliloquist has said. But in their Interludes the characters reveal themselves with considerable frankness, and these soliloquies can easily be called "confessionals."

¹ *Souls* remains unpublished and has never been produced. Mr. Robinson has described its contents at greater length in an article in *Keiei to Keizai*. The editor will share his copy of that article with any reader who requests it.

In "The Interior of Gordon Milborn's Soul," staged in a dim room with black pillars and twisted recesses, Milborn confesses that his life is a damnable mockery. He suspects everyone's motives and dislikes Mary's pretense of innocence--she may have known a lot of men too intimately. But nothing makes much difference to Milborn, who considers love a laughable lie and is marrying Mary because it's the easiest thing to do: if he doesn't, she may make trouble. Another reason he's marrying Mary is to save his conscience. When he was seventeen "the thing happened"--a sixteen-year-old farmer's daughter had had his baby--and he never paid any attention to either mother or child. Even when both died he had cared very little. But it has preyed on him--not consciously, but buried in his soul--and his current plans are partly an unconscious attempt at making amends.

Roland interrupts this soliloquy and calls Milborn a damnable cur. Milborn, who would thrash Roland if he said that to his conscious self, is in his soul pleased to be called a cur. He wishes he *were* thoroughly bad, but the curse of his life is that he's neither good nor bad, simply half-and-half. As for Mary, when he wants a thing he usually takes it if he can get it, and it was easy to get Mary, who appealed to him in a sensual way. He is even pleased that Mary is afraid of him, for the fear gives him a delusion of power. He doesn't understand Mary, but he dislikes her. He had also disliked his first wife and had subtly, unconsciously, encouraged her dislike of him. Milborn ultimately admits that he's a trivial man. His soul is empty; he thinks he should be pitied.

"The Interior of Mary Morse's Soul" is staged in a place of grey fear and cloudy uncertainty--grey walls without any decoration, a gate with iron bars wrought in a complicated design. The significance of the setting is soon apparent: Mary confesses that she lives in a house of fear--partly because her father used to get drunk and beat her; and partly because, while she has pretended to love Milborn, she is afraid of him because of his cleverness and his sexual appeal. (When he had kissed her, violently, it gave her a thrill. The thrill was disgusting, but she hadn't ever felt a thrill like it before, and she was frightened. The more frightened she got, the more she let Milborn kiss her, pretending it was love for she'd always been vaguely waiting for love.) Besides, Milborn was rich and she was tired of being poor and was sick of prudence and self-control. So she let herself be carried away, knowing (in her soul) that she would be unhappy with Milborn and that her dislike would become hate. But now it's too late: she admits to being a trivial and frightened woman who is in a hopeless situation.

In the third Interlude, Roland tells Mary that, though he outwardly scorns her, in his soul he loves her. He confesses that he too has had a few bouts with lust--and that, whereas Mary had sinned blindly, he sinned knowingly--but he refuses to admit to helplessness, stating that "love is above right and wrong." Roland and Mary go off together, and Milborn is left alone (with his invalid mother, who dies; and with Howells, who continues probing his soul), obsessed with the idea of the interiors of souls. Milborn considers but rejects suicide.

At the time of writing the melodramatic, talky *Souls*, John Howard Lawson was a fledgling playwright, working largely alone, who felt compelled to follow the direction of his show biz-oriented agent, Mary Kirkpatrick, who rejected *Souls* as non-commercial and urged Lawson to stop his experimentation and learn tried and true Broadway techniques. One wonders what might have happened if Lawson too had associated himself with the Provincetown Players, whose members could have been more supportive artistically than Mary Kirkpatrick. Perhaps a rewritten version of *Souls*: "A Psychic Fantasy" would have been the first American drama to present the "great innovation" of an old stage device. Even as it is, the three Interludes of *Souls* comprise a rough, even crude, presage of that later, rather more polished theatrical landmark, *Strange Interlude*.

--Le Roy Robinson

"BLACK BREAD" VS. *STRANGE INTERLUDE*: O'NEILL PARODIED

Something Edmund Wilson failed to include in *The Shock of Recognition* (1943) was a parodistic synopsis of O'Neill's *Strange Interlude* (1928) by a young Scots novelist, Eric Linklater, born March 8, 1899 in Aberdeen. Linklater collected the Americana in his *Juan in America* (1931) while on a Commonwealth (U.K.) Scholarship in the U.S. during 1928-30. Since *Strange Interlude*, opening on January 30, 1928, at 5:15 p.m. at the John Golden Theater in New York, was destined to become a landmark due to its length and theme, it finds its way into the thinly disguised semi-novel&travel fiction as "Black Bread," successor apparent to *Abie's Irish Rose* as a melodramtic smash, and packing them in nightly at the "New Artists' Theatre." Juan, the picaro/naif of Linklater's novel, is told it is the most play for the money in New York. (Incidentally, *Strange Interlude*'s 1929 Massachusetts run--in Quincy because of Boston censorship--made an obscure ice-cream stand famous: Howard Johnson's, due to its proximity, caught the supper-break audiences.)

Linklater, after serving as a private in the Black Watch in WWI, had been Assistant Editor of *The Times of India*, Bombay (1925-27) and Assistant Professor of English Literature at his alma mater, Aberdeen University (1927-28), before his U.S. junket. He was later the author of a continual stream of light comic novels, including *Poet's Pub* (1930)* and the better known *Laxdale Hall* (1951), and various plays. His autobiography, *The Man on My Back*, appeared in 1941, and he reported on 1951 in *A Year of Space*, a travel-diary. He died in Aberdeen, after having served as Rector of the University, on November 7, 1974, at the age of 75.

It appears that Alexander Woolcott had Linklater's company in disliking *Strange Interlude* in its first run. According to the Gelbs' *O'Neill* (1962, p. 662), Woolcott panned it in the New York *World* a week after it opened, in his "Second Thoughts on First Nights" column. Most critics loved it, though, and it won O'Neill his third Pulitzer Prize.

Linklater's parodistic synopsis has never appeared in anybody's Great Plots, any more than the Marx Brothers' one-reel "Strange Innertube" appears in anybody's Great Screenplays. Note the injection of a racial motif in Linklater's parody--part of the landscape of 1930s Americana as then interpreted by a Scots comedist. The feminist content of *Strange Interlude* might salvage it for our time, but it evidently provoked extreme reactions among O'Neill's detractors in his own time, among whom Linklater ranks notably.

--Bill Costley

* 2 copies available @ Box 162, Waban, MA 02168.

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FROM ERIC LINKLATER'S *JUAN IN AMERICA*

The following section of Eric Linklater's *Juan in America* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1931) appears on pp. 80-84 of Book Two ("The Land of Infinite Possibility," pp. 63-202). The resemblance between "Black Bread" and *Strange Interlude*, and between Knut Blennem and Eugene O'Neill, may be minimal, and the treatment of miscegenation certainly passes beyond the borders of the indecorous. But the parody deserves a glance by all O'Neillians, if only for historic reasons, and is herewith offered as a "Christmas bonus"! --Ed.

Black Bread was the sensation of New York. Its author, Knut Blennem, was recognised to be the leader in histrionic innovation and the adaptation of stage practice to modern theory. It was he who had said: "Psychology is our generation's gift to the world. Psychology has revolutionised philosophy, art, science, and society. Psychology has made men like gods. It was psychology that taught me to write plays."

Ecstatically the critics had lauded his play. Their columns had been stuffed to bursting-point with superlatives and semi-naïve confessions of the emotional havoc which it had wrought in their semi-naïve but critical minds; for emotional havoc is much sought after in America. "Here is a play to tear your heart out," said one. "Pity caught at my throat and choked me," said another. This one's soul was slashed with anguish, that one's wrung with terror, and still another's turned in his breast like a babe in torment. When this was its effect on critical hearts and souls, what was the reaction of ordinary people likely to be? Juan asked the girl who sold cigarettes on the mezzanine floor of the Hotel Connecticut.

"Say," she answered, "it's a panic, it's a wow!"

And so wherever it was mentioned Mr. Blennem's name went up like a balloon on shrill blasts of adulation. For this play was to-day's asseveration of its powers, and before such powers as these it was clear that the so-called Immortals of yesterday were nothing but flops, four-flushers, and false alarms. For one and all they had died without ever hearing of psychology.

Black Bread was the story of the woman Kathleen and her three lovers, Sidney Bush, Walter Hood, and Gerald Tomkins. A secondary plot dealt with the affection entertained by Livia (Kathleen's sister) for Walter Hood; a vain affection. There was not very much action in the play. Every half-hour the scene shifted. Kathleen was introduced on the verandah of her home in the Adirondacks. She was talking to Sidney and Gerald. Then she was shown in bed, talking to Walter. Then in the living room, the dining room, on board a train, in an art gallery (some enlightened observations were offered here), a corridor, a garden, and a bathroom. But wherever she was she talked, and Walter, Gerald, and Sidney very often replied to her. But more often they wrote in their diaries. For this was the revolutionary device invented by Mr. Knut Blennem for discovering to the audience the true and secret thoughts of his *dramatis personae*.

It is notorious that we speak no more than half-truths in our ordinary conversation, and even a soliloquy is likely to be affected by the apprehension that walls have ears. Only to our diaries do we tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and by writing a play whose characters were all habitual jotters-down of errant thought, Mr. Blennem was able to show in the fullest detail his masterly psychological insight.

No less admirable than the original concept of dramatic diary-makers was Mr. Blennem's device for revealing to the audience, piecemeal and as they were written, the endless confessions of his characters. A frame of white screens surrounded the stage, each one clearly marked by a name, as Walter, Sidney, or Kathleen. And as each character wrote in his diary, what was written appeared on the appropriate screen, flashed on to it by a projector of the kind used in cinemas.

For example, Kathleen would say to Walter: "I am weary to-day. I feel the life under my heart." (For she was pregnant.)

And Walter would answer: "The weather is growing sultry. There are more and more clouds in the sky."

But in his diary he would scribble this, and this would flash on to the screen: "The woman frightens me. I feel the dark power of her soul, and my soul struggles feebly in the whirlpool of her *ens*. She has engulfed me. Will she never tell me if I am the father of her child, or if Sidney begot it; or perhaps Gerald?"

For all three men were Kathleen's lovers, and all three knew that she was pregnant, but none (perhaps not even Kathleen herself) could say who was the father of the coming child.

In sharp contrast to Kathleen was Livia, who had no lovers, and her diary revealed with great sincerity her sex-starved--indeed famine-stricken--soul. She was in love with Walter, but he was frightened of her and always, when he was staying in Kathleen's house, slept with his door locked. This offended Livia who wrote in her diary: "An open door is God's blessing to a wall. He who bolts a door will deny his Master. Dear heart, and his bed so broad!"

After several acts in which Kathleen grew more and more mystical and her lovers wrote quicker and quicker, the baby was born, unexpectedly, in a florist's--"In the beauty of roses did I labour. Between white roses and dark roses was my baby born. In the scent of many flowers he first smelt life"--so the mother-triumphant, some time later, described her ordeal. But not before a scene almost too dramatic, and very harrowing to conservative opinion in the audience.

The baby was black.

Sidney, Gerald, and Walter were all quite white. They had hereditary taints to prove their impeccable ancestry. And there was only one other male character in the cast--Kathleen's negro chauffeur, Ham.

Ham, the gigantic Nubian, was the baby's father.

Their feelings intolerably wounded, Sidney, Gerald, and Walter make ready for a lynching, and Ham is apparently willing to submit. But before removing his collar he sings a few verses of "Swing low, sweet chariot," and the noise brings Kathleen to his defence.

She is wearing a dressing-gown which Gerald at once declares (through his diary) to be symbolic. It has a black and white chequer-board design. With Ham crouched at her feet, shapeless, inhuman, looking indeed rather like an outcrop of black basalt, Kathleen declares: "I sing the song of miscegenation. Black shall mate with white, negro with northerner, and the strength of Africa run hot in Nordic veins. Zion shall lie down with the Lap and the pledge of their love be fertile over the earth. In my heart are many mansions, and every nation is my guest--Eskimo, Teuton and Gael; Slav, Polynesian, Trinobant"

There was a majority of women in the audience. The spectacle of Kathleen with her court of four men exalted them, for they had no more than one man apiece (if that) and he, perhaps, was tongue-tied, and gravel-blind to their deserts, and weak in the back, and given unduly to sleep. But there, on the visible stage, was a woman with a man at every point of the compass, a man in every corner of the room, so that wheresoever she might turn there was one to cosset and comfort her, and foment the unhealing wound of Eve. So should all women be accommodated, thought the esurient ladies in the audience, and loudly clapped their hands; and such husbands, lovers, and male dinner-partners as were present clapped too, without enjoyment indeed, but realising--as good Americans--that when it comes to culture women know best.

FURTHER ADDENDA TO MILLER: ELUSIVE ARTICLES, BOOKS,
AND PARTS OF BOOKS ABOUT O'NEILL, 1966-78

In the course of my work on an international bibliography of modern drama studies published since 1966, I have located many substantial discussions of O'Neill which, for one reason or another, are not included in Jordan Y. Miller's excellent *Eugene O'Neill and the American Critic: A Bibliographical Checklist* (2nd ed., rev., 1973). About fifty of these, restricted to parts of books, appeared in the January 1979 issue of *Eugene O'Neill Newsletter*. The present list adds a few more chapters and sections in books, but features two types of material: whole books on O'Neill that scholars are apt to overlook, and articles that appeared neither in Miller's volume nor in my annual bibliographies compiled for *Modern Drama* since 1974. Perhaps half of the items cannot be found in the *MLA International Bibliography* or the *Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature*: most, in other words, are genuinely elusive. Again, I welcome addenda to the addenda.

--Charles A. Carpenter

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THE EUGENE O'NEILL SOCIETY SECTION: ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

1. SPECIAL O'NEILL SESSION AT MLA '80.

A Special Session on "Eugene O'Neill and Music" will be a highlight of the first evening of the 1980 MLA Convention in Houston, Texas, on Saturday, December 27. To be held in the Ebony Room on the fourth floor of the Hyatt Regency Hotel from 9:00 to 10:15 p.m., the session will be chaired by Thomas F. Marshall and will feature a paper by Travis Bogard, followed by the discussion of a distinguished group of panelists--Winifred Frazer, Jordan Miller, Dennis Rich and Timo Tiusanen--and of the assembled audience.

2. SECOND ANNUAL MEETING: SAME EVENING, SAME ROOM.

The Second Annual Meeting of the Society will follow immediately after the Special Session on December 27 in the same room. Current business and future activities will be discussed, and new memberships and membership renewals will be accepted. All members--and all who would like to *become* members--are urged to attend.

3. "DE LONG GREEN": TIME FOR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL.

Members should note that, with the beginning of a new calendar year, it is time to renew Society membership. Anyone unable to attend the Houston meeting should send the appropriate dues to Secretary Jordan Miller at the Department of English, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI 02881. The following are the various membership categories and concomitant dues:

General - - \$20	Family - - \$30	Life (one payment) - \$500
Emeritus - - \$10	Sponsor - - \$50	Institutional - - - \$ 30
Student - - \$10		

Since these figures are the same as last year's dues, Society membership is more of a bargain than ever in these days of ubiquitously ascending prices.

Non-members are reminded that membership dues, which are tax-deductible, include a subscription to the *Eugene O'Neill Newsletter*. The Society relies on a large and vigorous membership to aid it in championing America's greatest playwright, and members' dues are of supreme importance to the achievement of the many projects that are imminent. So, if you are already a member, please reassert your commitment by sending a hasty renewal check. And if you have not yet joined, please do consider membership now and book passage for that exciting, double-barreled December evening in Houston. While the O'Neillian order has no secret grip, you'll be able to answer affirmatively when a Society member approaches and says, "Me'n you, huh? --bot' members of this club!"

4. PRESIDENT'S ILLNESS.

It is the editor's sad duty to report that President Horst Frenz will be unable, because of illness, to attend the Houston meeting or to continue in office at the present time. He suffered a stroke during the early fall, and while he is reportedly making good progress, his recovery is expected to be slow. Accordingly, as dictated by the by-laws, Vice President Winifred Frazer has assumed the duties of the presidential office and will preside at the meeting on December 27. Friends wishing to send cards to President Frenz may address them to 421 Blue Ridge, Bloomington, IN 47401. No society could have two better or worthier officers, and we wish Horst a speedy return to our midst and Winifred great success at the helm.

REVIEWS, REPRINTS AND ABSTRACTS

1. Susan Tuck, "O'Neill and Faulkner: Their Kindred Imaginations."

[While not technically a reprint or abstract, because it is a report of work still in progress, Ms. Tuck's description of her dissertation (Indiana University; projected date of completion: September, 1981) seemed sufficiently significant and meritorious to present immediately, as a foretaste of a valuable study that many will wish to consult in future years. Seldom, except in Peter Egri's comparative studies of O'Neill and Chekhov and John Henry Raleigh's study of O'Neill's place in the wider context of American literature (in *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill*, Chapter 5), has O'Neill's work been compared to that of non-dramatic writers. As Ms. Tuck notes, "novelists tend to be compared to novelists, dramatists to dramatists. I propose to deal with the manner in which the work of Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953) and William Faulkner (1897-1962) has significant similarities in themes, characterization, and technique." --Ed.]

O'Neill and Faulkner are remarkably similar, personally as well as artistically. Both were almost pathologically shy and withdrawn men who periodically sought oblivion in alcohol. Shunning celebrities, they were most comfortable with "common folk," Faulkner with hard-drinking hunting buddies in Mississippi, O'Neill with hard-drinking sailors or dissipated would-be poets in New York City's various hell-holes. As Dorothy Commins, the widow of Saxe Commins--editor and trusted friend of both Faulkner and O'Neill--commented in a letter to me (June 25, 1980), "both these men guarded their privacy--as few men I know in literature." Perhaps their common shyness is the reason that they (apparently) never met, even though they had several mutual friends.

Of course, Faulkner and O'Neill need not have met to have been aware of each other's writing. That Faulkner was familiar with O'Neill's work is easily verified. In the early twenties, the fledgling novelist wrote, for *The Mississippian*, a review of O'Neill's *Gold and Moon of the Caribbees* as well as a short article on American drama; and the Faulkner library at Rowan Oak contains a copy of O'Neill's *Nine Plays*. O'Neill's knowledge of Faulkner is more difficult to ascertain. No mention of the novelist is made in the playwright's letters (Beinecke Library, Yale University), nor are there copies of Faulkner's books in the O'Neill collection at C.W. Post Centre of Long Island University. However, Arthur Gelb, O'Neill's biographer, commented in a letter to me (June 25, 1980), "[Saxe Commins] told me many times about conversations he had had with O'Neill about Faulkner, and Faulkner about O'Neill, but I don't think he ever managed to bring them together."

Whether O'Neill and Faulkner influenced each other can be debated; whether their thematic concerns are similar cannot be doubted. Both authors show man as victim, not necessarily of a hostile society or of an indifferent nature, but of himself and of his past. Characters are often divided, split between dreams and reality, between the desired and the possible. In both writers' work, man struggles for self-knowledge--for Truth--only to find that Truth is but an infinite variety of truths. Often what self-knowledge the characters are able to attain is too great to bear: Hickey (*The Iceman Cometh*) hastens to retract calling his beloved Evelyn a damned bitch in the same desperate tones that Quentin denies hating the South at the conclusion of *Absalom, Absalom!* Both artists explore man's limitations and incapacities yet convey a grandeur about the human race, a sense that somehow mankind will not only endure but prevail.

Each wrote unceasingly about man's need to belong; *The Hairy Ape* and *Go Down, Moses* depict man's struggle to find a place in a world that is becoming increasingly fragmented. O'Neill and Faulkner saw the Black as especially cut off, a victim not only of an uncaring world but of his very color. *All God's Chillun Got Wings* and *Light in August* deal with black men who have relationships with white women, yet the plight of the individual characters is transcended and the authors express the sense of isolation that is the universal condition of mankind. Both writers sought belief in a world without God, O'Neill in *Lazarus Laughed* and *Dynamo*, Faulkner in *A Fable*. Both retreated

into their childhoods to find the happiness and security that was lacking in their adult lives, O'Neill in *Ah, Wilderness!* and Faulkner in *The Reivers*. Often their characters retreat into the past, ignoring the present in an attempt to retrieve meaning for their lives: Cornelius Melody (*A Touch of the Poet*) or old Bayard (*Flags in the Dust*). Often, however, men cannot escape the events of the past, and history becomes a nightmare from which they try to awake. *Mourning Becomes Electra* and *Absalom, Absalom!* show that the past is a web that traps generation after generation. As one Faulkner character comments, "The past is never dead. It's not even past" (*Requiem for a Nun* [1951; rpt. New York: Random House/Vintage, 1975], p. 80).

In characterization, too, the writers are similar. Often the female is accorded a larger-than-life, almost mythic status: Lena Grove, that pregnant but still unravished bride of *Light in August*, and Eula Varner, the "primal uterus" of *The Hamlet*, share many attributes with Cybel, the sacred cow of *The Great God Brown* or the virgin/whore Josie Hogan in *Moon for the Misbegotten*. The belle dame Temple Drake (*Sanctuary; Requiem for a Nun*) and the lamia-like Nina Leeds in *Strange Interlude* tower over their men, making them seem inferior, incomplete. Eben's mother in *Desire Under the Elms* and Addie Bundren in *As I Lay Dying* are both dead, yet they continue to exert a powerful force on their children. Women in Faulkner's and O'Neill's writing often seem to know more than their male counterparts, often seem to be stronger in their capacity for creation or destruction. And, as we see in *The Sound and the Fury* and *Long Day's Journey into Night*, their capacity for destruction is very great indeed.

Faulkner's and O'Neill's males are often Romantic dreamers, doomed characters with the fatal flaw of self-consciousness: young Bayard (*Flags in the Dust*) and Darl (*As I Lay Dying*); Robert Mayo (*Beyond the Horizon*) and Dion Anthony (*The Great God Brown*). We think of Quentin Compson and Edmund Tyrone, both half in love with easeful death, moving Hamlet-like in a seemingly unfathomable world. Contrasting with these loath-to-act types are such materialists as the infamous Snopeses (*The Hamlet; The Town; The Mansion*), Januarius Jones (*Soldiers' Pay*), and Jason (*The Sound and the Fury*); Marco (*Marco Millions*), Billy Brown (*The Great God Brown*), Andrew Mayo (*Beyond the Horizon*), and Jamie (*Long Day's Journey into Night*).

Both authors are also iconoclasts of technique. O'Neill's innovations include the pulsing tom-toms of *The Emperor Jones*, the automata figures in *The Hairy Ape*, and the use of masks to indicate the splitting of personality in *The Great God Brown*, *Days Without End*, and *Lazarus Laughed*. The contrapuntal technique in *The Wild Palms*, the seemingly endless circularity of *Absalom, Absalom!*, the constant time shifts in *Sanctuary*, and the point of view in *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying* are as experimental as O'Neill's use of the "spoken thought" device in *Strange Interlude* and *Dynamo*, the plastic dome in *The Emperor Jones*, and the exterior/interior stage setting device of *Desire Under the Elms*.

Finally, both O'Neill and Faulkner are epic writers who strive for an all-encompassing completeness. O'Neill wrote several massive plays: *Strange Interlude*, *Mourning Becomes Electra* and *The Iceman Cometh* ask a great deal of their audiences in sheer viewing time. The dramatist was attracted to cycle plays because that form conveys a sense of unity; his early sea plays are part of a cycle, as are *A Touch of the Poet* and *More Stately Mansions*. Similarly, Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!* are most effective when read together, as are *Sanctuary* and *Requiem for a Nun*, and the Snopes trilogy. Yoknapatawpha, the setting for many of the novelist's books, adds to the sense of unity in Faulkner's fiction because it provides a common milieu.

2. Harvey Sabinson, "A Coronet for O'Neill," *Theatregoers' Guide* (advertising supplement to the *New York Times*, Sept. 7, 1980), pp. 12-17.

In this excerpt from his book, *Darling, You Were Wonderful*, Mr. Sabinson, a theatrical press agent from the 1940's until 1976, recounts the trepidation with which he and client Lester Osterman, who had recently purchased the Coronet Theatre on West 49th Street, approached Carlotta Monterey O'Neill to request permission to rename the playhouse in honor of her late husband. (Their August, 1959 visit to her apartment

in the Carlton House had been arranged by a mutual friend, José Quintero.) The excerpt records her remarks during an hour's monologue between first turning down their proposal ("Gene would never approve of having a Broadway theatre named for him. If it had been an Off-Broadway theatre ... that would be different") and ultimately agreeing to the suggestion and thanking her guests for making it.

It was Carlotta's reputation as "a woman with a short fuse" that had aroused the men's trepidation:

nothing we had heard or read was particularly favorable to her. During the playwright's declining years, she set up a protective wall around him, excluding his friends, theatre associates, and family. She encouraged the impression that O'Neill's mental faculties were failing. But her own stability was questionable. At one point, she had been institutionalized, and there was little doubt that she suffered from periods of paranoia, convinced of a great conspiracy against her.

But her graciousness disarmed them, as did her beauty: that part of the Carlotta "legend" was corroborated ("she was still one of the most beautiful women in the world"). And in the hour-long conversational interval between no and yes, she offered many insights into her life with O'Neill. Here are four of particular interest.

- a. About a framed letter, one of a number in the entrance hallway, that had attracted Mr. Sabinson's attention: "it's an apology from Gene after he had signed a petition committing me to a state mental hospital in Massachusetts. They made him say that I was incapable of taking care of myself. He didn't know what he was doing. After all, he was in a hospital too, at the time, suffering from that broken leg. Afterwards, he was sorry.... Most of these letters ... are letters of apology. Like so many sensitive people he was capable of extreme cruelty. He could be loving at one moment and hateful at the next."
- b. About her 1956 release of *Long Day's Journey*: "You know, it's simply not true that Gene wanted publication and production ... held up for twenty-five years after his death. He'd been persuaded to do so by Eugene, Jr., who had some personal reason. After Eugene's suicide in 1950, there seemed to be no logic in withholding its release. Before he died, Gene told me that he no longer wished it to be withheld."
- c. About the nadir of their twenty-four-year marriage: "The worst time was Marblehead. Gene always wanted to live by the sea. He loved the sea. We didn't have much money, and I paid for it out of a small account I had. He was so ill, and at times it made him violent. We had terrible disagreements, and on several occasions he struck me. Then he would suffer great remorse and write these letters asking my forgiveness."
- d. About their destruction of unfinished manuscripts: "You know, I've received a great deal of criticism for helping him destroy six unproduced plays after we had moved into that hotel in Boston. He knew he didn't have long to live and would never be able to finish them. We tore them up, bit by bit. It was as if we were killing our own children."

As Mr. Sabinson admits, nothing revealed on that "humid night early in August" of 1959 is new or startling in 1980--"but it seemed remarkable hearing it from one of the players in this tragic drama." One hopes that Eugene O'Neill will not suffer the same fate as nineteenth-century actor Edwin Forrest, whose name the same theatre had originally borne before becoming the Coronet in the late 1940's. Whether it fortifies that hope or not, it is interesting to note that the current owner of the Eugene O'Neill Theatre is a fellow playwright, Neil Simon. --Ed.

3. "Before Breakfast" as Opera.

An operatic adaptation of O'Neill's harrowing one-act monodrama, "Before Breakfast," had its premiere, as part of a triple bill collectively entitled *An American Trilogy*,

at the New York City Opera on October 9, 1980. This report of the production and its critical reception is derived from the following articles and reviews, to which subsequent parenthetical citations refer:

- Gerald Clarke, "Opere Is Still Alive in New York," *Time* (October 20, 1980), pp. 86, 88.
 Peter G. Davis, "Three American Composers--Three New Operas," *New York Times* (October 5, 1980), Section II, pp. 23, 32.
 Donal Henahan, "Opera: 3 New Works, 'An American Trilogy,'" *New York Times* (October 11, 1980), p. 12. (Cited as Henahan 1.)
 Donal Henahan, "The 'Prickly Thickets' of American Opera," *New York Times* (October 26, 1980), Section II, pp. 23, 25. (Cited as Henahan 2.)
 Leighton Kerner, "Old Pearls, New Paste," *The Village Voice* (October 29, 1980), pp. 74, 78.
 Patrick O'Connor, "A hundred best tunes," *Times Literary Supplement* (October 24, 1980), p. 1198.
 Andrew Porter, "Musical Events," *The New Yorker* (October 27, 1980), pp. 163-164.
 Gregory Sandow, "Modern Opera--Sort Of," *The Village Voice* (October 29, 1980), pp. 45, 48.

With a set by Lloyd Evans, which Kerner saluted as "grubbily realistic" (p. 78), and performed by soprano Marilyn Zschau, whom Gerald Clarke applauded as "generally impressive" despite enunciation problems (pp. 86, 88), the opera itself received less than enthusiastic notices, the main exception being Clarke, who found it "an intense work, musically as well as dramatically, [of which] both the composer and the singer made the most" (p. 86). Otherwise, negative criticism predominated, and was fairly evenly divided between score and libretto.

Of the music of Thomas Pasatieri (who, at 34, has composed sixteen operas and is in his first season as artistic director of the Atlanta Opera), there was general agreement that it was derivative, the only disagreements concerning of whom--Menotti (Clarke, p. 86; Kerner, p. 78; Porter, p. 164: "worthless sub-Menotti stuff") or Puccini. Donal Henahan batted on both teams, calling it "neo-Menottian" in his first review (Henahan 1) and "post-Puccinian" in his second (Henahan 2, p. 23). The composer, in an interview before the opening, described the score as "real low-life American verismo" highlighted by "some very juicy tunes" (Davis, p. 23). Unfortunately, both qualities aroused disapproval, one critic dismissing the "verismo" component as "conservative," mere "bits and pieces ... out of the operatic warehouse" (Sandow, pp. 45, 48), and another noting that one of the "juicy tunes" was not by Mr. Pasatieri [Kerner identifies it as Jimmy McHugh's and Dorothy Fields' "Freeze and Melt"] and that both of them--"a Duke Ellington record and a honky-tonk piano which plays a nostalgic waltz"--served only to "upstage" the remainder of the score (O'Connor). In Kerner's words (p. 78), the Duke Ellington arrangement of the aforementioned "Freeze and Melt" "put Pasatieri's stuff on an even more awkward footing."

Frank Corsaro, who also directed, provided the libretto, which moved the story to the 1930's and added one bit of exposition that the composer described in his *New York Times* interview: "Frank ... got the idea of making the woman a former marathon dancer. That was her one moment of glory, and after that everything for her has gone steadily downhill.... She is harsh and coarse and cruel to her husband, but we must understand what drove her to this" (Davis, p. 23). While the resultant libretto offered the performer "the opportunity to play at getting drunk on gin, to scream at an offstage husband, to shimmy around in her underwear to a Duke Ellington arrangement on the record player and, finally, to regress into infantile shock" (Henahan 1), it was generally scorned as a "stagy confection" (Porter, p. 164) that succeeded only in "expanding and sentimentalizing the O'Neill original" (Kerner, p. 78).

Clark's review in *Time* contains the fullest synopsis of the whole (p. 86):

The setting is a grim Depression flat. [The Woman] is preparing breakfast for

her husband before leaving for her own job as a waitress. While she flops around the room in her slip, she carries on a one-way conversation with the silent and unseen spouse as he gets up and goes into the bathroom to shave. Mostly she berates him as a cheat and a loafer. She is an immigrant's daughter; he is the son of a millionaire who lost his fortune. They met at a dance marathon and married soon after. Now she supports him by waiting on tables, while he spends his days writing, drinking and philandering. She assaults him with this sorry history, until finally, past mere desperation, he uses his razor to cut his throat. [The wife] rushes into the bathroom and emerges, appropriately, with his blood on her hands.

The opera had been commissioned by the National Endowment for the Humanities, in 1976, as a television vehicle for Beverly Sills; but Miss Sills, the composer explains, "decided to retire before I had finished the music" (Davis, p. 23). A wise move. If Donal Henahan is just in dismissing the operatic "Before Breakfast" as "a musically inane and theatrically blunt instrument" (Henahan 1), we and Miss Sills may be lucky that it didn't get to her in time. --Ed.

4. Paul Kresh, "The Actor's Art Captured on Disks," *The New York Times* (February 19, 1980), Section II, pp. 35, 42. [Mr. Kresh's terse assessment of drama on phonograph records includes, on the first of its two pages, the following helpful survey of the currently available recordings of O'Neill plays. --Ed.]

"For a writer with an essentially tin ear, O'Neill unaccountably could sear the soul with the power of his language, and it is possible to take his earlier solemn, symbolical studies and technical experiments more seriously on records than it is in the theater. The Caedmon productions are superb. Richard Miller is the young O'Neill spending an idyllic July Fourth in the idyllic year 1906, discovering life and love in a small Connecticut town in *Ah, Wilderness!* (TRS 340 c). James Earl Jones plays the pullman porter who works his way up to the rank of emperor on a West Indian island in *The Emperor Jones* (TRS 341 c). Theodore Mann directs both these plays, as well as *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, in which Salome Jens is the prostitute Josie who joins Mitchell Ryan as James Tyrone, Jr. (the fictional counterpart of the playwright's older brother Jamie) on the route to self-destruction (TRS 333 c). José Quintero once started to record the complete O'Neill oeuvre for Columbia, and one of his efforts has survived on the Caedmon label--*More Stately Mansions*, an unfinished play about the rivalry between a practical wife and a dreamy mother for the love of a New England scholar, with Ingrid Bergman as the mother, Colleen Dewhurst as the wife and Arthur Hill as the husband who gives up books for big business (TRS 333 c). Quintero's version of *Strange Interlude*, the story of Nina Leeds and the three men in her life, does wonders with the famous O'Neill asides which come off much better on disks than on the stage, and the cast includes Betty Field, Jane Fonda, Ben Gazzarra, Pat Hingle, Geraldine Page, Franchot Tone--an all-star roll-call if there ever was one, but the album is hard to come by (Columbia 688). *The Iceman Cometh*, the play about what happens to failures and outcasts when their illusions are shattered, is available only through the American Film Theater movie sound track, with outstanding performances by Robert Ryan and Frederic March, but the key role of Hickey, the illusion-shatterer, is badly muffed by Lee Marvin (TRS 359 c). Another great Ryan performance distinguishes Arvin Brown's treatment of *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, the story of five living ghosts haunting their houses and each other, written "in tears and blood" out of the playwright's memories of tragic days in the history of his family, and performed to perfection by Stacey Keach, Geraldine Fitzgerald, James Naughton and Paddy Croft (TRS 350 c). There is also an American Shakespeare Festival production of *Mourning Becomes Electra*, with the Greek idea of Fate translated into Freudian terms and a change of venue to a small New England town at the close of the Civil War, excellently done by a cast that includes Jane Alexander, Lee Richardson, Sada Thompson, Robert Stattel and Gene Nye, under Michael Kahn's intense direction (Caedman TRS 345 c).

[I'm sure that Jason Robards once recorded his incisive performance of *Hughie*, and would be grateful if anyone can tell me what record company produced it and whether it is still available. Mr. Kersh also omits a marvelous solo recording by Robards of scenes from a number of the plays, featuring, as side two, a searing reading of Hickey's monologue in the last act of *The Iceman Cometh*: "Dramatic Readings from Eugene O'Neill" (Columbia Records Collectors' Series, AOL 5900). The first side includes speeches by Jamie in *Long Day's Journey*, Jim in *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, and Paddy in *The Hairy Ape*. --Ed.]

5. Ronald Hayman, "*The Iceman Cometh*," *Plays and Players* (March 1980), p. 23. A review of the National Theatre production at the Cottesloe Theatre, London, directed by Bill Bryden.

Mr. Hayman approved of director Bryden's "great respect" for the play's length (with intermissions, the production ran five hours and twenty minutes), but was displeased at his *lack* of respect for its *breadth*, as reflected in the shallowness of the playing area: "O'Neill asks for the tables to be arranged in three rows; Bryden puts them all in one long line so the curtain goes up on an implausible frieze of recumbent bodies slouched in alcoholic stuper"--a straight line formation that "makes it almost impossible for actors to make eye contact with each other, and, more important, makes it equally difficult for them to show that the characters mostly don't want eye contact. So we're aware neither of their interaction nor of their isolation."

The production's other faults were (1) a "lack of sharpness in focus" (Hayman suggests staging the play in the round as a solution to the problem, evidently unsolved at the Cottesloe, "of focusing the audience's attention away from the silent alcoholics when they aren't listening and apportioning it when they are"); (2) a "lack of sharpness in articulation" (the "mixture of New York slang with educated rhetoric and foreign idiom" proved troublesome to "an Anglo-Irish cast"); and (3) one disastrous bit of casting. Jack Shepherd, the production's Hickey, lacked, according to Hayman, "not only the charm and the exuberance and the emotional range but also the vocal incisiveness for the long monologues. It's essential to the plot that his persuasiveness is irresistible to the drunks, who muster all the little resolution they still have in a last ditch effort at adjusting to reality; Jack Shepherd's pep-talk would have been no more effective than halibut liver oil, and no more appetising." Highest praise went to Tony Haygarth (Hugo Kalmar), who "lurched believably from drunken supinity to animation, and then back again"; and to Niall Toibin (Larry Slade), who made "every word tell, and made his silences equally meaningful, listening intently, sustaining both wary alertness and vulnerability through all his attempts to erect barricades against the onslaughts on his sensitivity, the appeals for sympathy or condemnation."

6. Hugh Leonard, "Can a Playwright Truly Depict Himself?", *New York Times* (November 23, 1980), Section II, pp. 5, 26.

"Perhaps," writes Mr. Leonard, author of *Da* and *A Life*, "it is time to throw quotation marks about the term autobiographical drama. Invariably, it shows its subject as the unfocused still center of the storm about him. The author is prepared to confront his past, but not himself." Agreeing with British historian Philip Guedalla that "autobiography is an unrivaled vehicle for telling the truth about other people," Leonard adds that it is also as a felicitous vehicle "for telling lies about oneself."

His primary example, aside from Williams's *Glass Menagerie*, is *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, which he calls "undoubtedly the best autobiographical play ever written [and] also one of the least reliable." He describes the play as "a confessional in which the playwright, as priest, hears his family's sins and pronounces absolution." But is the priest himself blameless? In the play he is, but in real life he was not, as Mr. Leonard shows in a comparison of the four Tyrones and their factual models.

So the play, as a vehicle in which "Eugene is unjustly accused, confronts the real criminals and attains vindication," corroborates Leonard's addition to Guedalla's remark: *Long Day's Journey*, as autobiography, abounds in personal untruths.

"Why," he asks, "did O'Neill falsely arraign his dead parents and brother and then 'forgive' them for their non-existent betrayal of himself? The answer, I suspect, lies in his own almost pathological inability to accept guilt.... It was a feat that became a pattern throughout his life." Whenever a tragic event occurred, "or when there was no one but himself to blame, he spoke of the curse of the O'Neills."

Mr. Leonard's point is a challenging one, though he exonerates the playwright from conscious duplicity: "O'Neill was never a liar. He willed himself to believe that he was a man dogged by malevolent fate: the same fate that doomed his characters."

7. *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, dir. Robin Phillips. Avon Stage, Stratford Festival, Ontario, October 1980.

This will be more a reverie and appreciation than a review--more the report of an old ember rekindled. I've always felt a special attachment to *Long Day's Journey*, having sat in the front row center (for the then top weeknight price of \$4.40) at the play's first American performance, which, Manhattan theater annals notwithstanding, took place at Boston's Wilbur Theatre on October 15, 1956, on the eve of the 68th anniversary of O'Neill's birth. Cyrus Durgin, reviewing the premiere in the *Boston Globe* the next morning, recorded the exultant response of all who had been in attendance: "At the final curtain the house rang with cheers--something almost unheard of in a Boston theater in this reviewer's time.... In years of many striking performances, I have experienced no acting which so sears the heart."

Never to be re-experienced was the sheer visceral impact of confronting the play "cold," without having read, reread, studied, pondered and taught it. There's much to be said, as I often tell students, for reading a script in advance of a production; and for reading criticism as well. But there are times when one benefits from an immediate, head-on collision with a work of dramatic stature; and the interaction of Frederic March, Florence Eldridge, Jason Robards and Bradford Dillman, under the perceptive guiding spirit of the playwright's words and Quintero's direction, was a literally stunning experience that turned one first row youth into a lifelong acolyte of O'Neill.

Can such a moment ever be recaptured? Can the experienced eye be as affected as the "innocent" one had been? Can one, for instance, reenter such an epiphanic moment by poring through the critical studies that the play has since churned up in the academic world? Assuredly not; for wisdom, though obviously of value, is a different sensation than enlightenment; and how quickly the light fades in human memory. It is only in the theater, if anywhere, that such illumination (or reillumination) can be gained.

So I have searched in playhouses for a production that would equal, or at least approach, that ecstatically right first one. A second Boston production, in 1977, suffered from imbalance--despite Michael Kahn's sensitive direction and the electrifying Jamie of Len Cariou--because Jose Ferrer's James was too shufflingly moribund and Kate Reid's Mary too nastily acidic for one to feel the appropriate blend of scorn and pity for either of them. There are textual justifications for both portrayals--James *is* at times a broken man, and Mary *is* at times accusatorially vindictive--but in each case only part of the portrait was realized. A Brooklyn production in 1976--ironically featuring Jason Robards as director and in the role of James, Sr., and nowhere near as effective as he had been as that progenitor's alcoholic firstborn--had a luminous Mary in Zoe Caldwell, and an underpowered but lurchingly passable Jamie in Kevin Conway; but the miscasting of Robards was detrimental, and Michael Moriarty's Edmund, while looking and acting eminently qualified for admission to a sanatorium, offered no intimations at all that he would ever reemerge from it. Moriarty was winningly sweet, but showed none of the stubborn reserve of power that Edmund must demonstrate if we are to realize that, of the four, he alone has a future and that the

harrowing day is, for him, a journey into light. The 1977 Milwaukee Rep production, performed in tandem with *Ah, Wilderness!*--while showing the relation between the two plays because the same actors played father, mother and younger son, and a fourth doubled as Jamie and Uncle Sid--lacked the inspired acting that is required to turn a domestic tragedy into a universal one.

My most recent attempt at relighting that old flame was far more successful than any of the previous three. If there's ever to be a production to equal that first North American one, this was it. (Sadly, it was the last production to be directed at Stratford by Robin Phillips, who has resigned as Artistic Director and severed all ties with the Festival, leaving behind a six-year legacy of productions that were the finest this reviewer has ever seen.) Phillips' hallmark has always been a scrupulous attention to a playwright's words, and his 3½-hour *Long Day's Journey* continued that admirable fidelity to text. Every line was clear and was delivered with persuasive vocal coloration and gesture. Even if an occasional line-reading sounded a bit too studied to be believably spontaneous--like James's pause between "any place you like" and "within reason" in Act Four, when he is trying, and failing, to overcome his deep-engrained penuriousness and let Emund choose whatever sanatorium he wishes--the production suffered not at all, and such moments were extremely few.

Susan Benson's spacious set of light stained wood and wicker furniture looked appropriately unhomey as a summer residence, giving credence to Mary's having "never felt it was my home." The few gemütlich touches--a lace tablecloth and a fringed lampshade for the chandelier--were effaced by the window seat piled with scattered magazines and tennis rackets, and totally overpowered by the large stage-left windows, whose nakedness was coldly accented by the bare, ringed curtain rods above them. The lower steps of the stairway to the second floor were visible in the hallway beyond the upstage doorway at stage-right--an appropriate visibility, considering how large those stairs loom in the minds of all four family members. Except for that touch, and the placement of Mary's piano upstairs, so that she descended *after* playing instead of before, there were no major departures from O'Neill's opening set description.

Michael J. Whitefield's atmospheric lighting traced, with subtle, almost imperceptible gradations, the arc of day into evening, ending each of the three acts (the first three scenes were played without intermission) with an effective tableau as the lights fade to darkness. Let the first act-ending (after Act Two, Scene Two) serve as an example. Before the curtain falls, Mary, with her back to the audience, says "Goodbye"--not before (as O'Neill has it) but just *as* the screen door slams. Then she turns slowly front, and the light around her fades into engulfing darkness as she delivers her concluding lines. This is, of course, only what the script demands, but every element was done to aching perfection.

The use of non-vocal sound was similarly effective. Each scene began with piano music of Chopin (a melancholy waltz at the start): this was the first performance in which I recall *hearing* the offstage hedge clippers and automobiles; and Mary's upstairs attempt at a Chopin prelude before her last entrance was wistfully and pathetically inept.

Jessica Tandy captured every nuance of Mary's complex personality: the deep and lasting love for James that she frequently hides; the glow of delight when she remembers her past in recounting it to Cathleen; the persistent, obsessive rubbing of hands that at other moments are hysterically birdlike, fluttering to brow, cheek, chin and hair; the ominous, more-than-housework meaning in early lines such as "I can't stay with you any longer" in the first scene; and the "strange undercurrent of revengefulness," balanced by an even stronger undercurrent of hurt, when she says to Edmund, later in the same scene, "It would serve all of you right if it was true!" (Kate Reid's delivery had caught the venom; Ms. Tandy's added the pain.) Unforgettable too were the agonized pauses in the last sentence of her Act Two, Scene One speech about "the things life has done to us," which captured the depths of a soul in torment: "at last everything--comes between you and what you'd--like to be, and you've--lost--

your--true self--forever." (How inadequate mere dashes are to convey the intense meaning of the broken delivery.)

The Jamie of gravel-voiced Graeme Campbell, after an excessive speed and crispness in the first-act verbal duel with his father, was fully effective, especially in his second-scene hysteria at learning of Mary's return upstairs; in the comic bottle incident with James (rather than following O'Neill's suggestion that he pour himself "a big drink" after James has said, "It'd be a waste of breath mentioning moderation to you," he daintily pours a miniscule nip and holds the near-empty glass with elegant delicacy); and in a particularly effective placement--splayed against the wall beyond the stage-left windows--when he begins his confession of "warning" to Edmund.

William Hutt, that finest and most versatile of Stratford veterans (who returned to the Avon stage less than three hours later as the fool to Peter Ustinov's Lear), was a subdued but moving James Tyrone, fully in keeping with O'Neill's initial description of the man. A slight, intermittent hint of brogue suggested "his humble beginnings and his Irish farmer forebears," while a rich resonance at more serious moments conveyed, along with his commanding presence, "the stamp of his profession." The interpersonal tensions were evident from the first scene, when he spat out his disgust at Jamie but addressed Mary with pitying tenderness. The parents' most moving moment was in the third scene: James's quiet "For the love of God, ... won't you stop now?" and Mary's equally soft response, broken briefly by a pose of affronted incomprehension, and then reemerging with "James! We've loved each other! We always will! Let's remember only that, and not try to understand what we cannot understand...." (Sometimes an exclamation point is a signal of intensity of feeling and sincerity, not of increased volume!) At the start of the last act, playing solitaire in near-darkness, and at the very end of the play, when, after Mary's final line, he slowly turns a defeated head in her direction, Mr. Hutt's James was exactly the broken man O'Neill had described.

Despite these three exemplary performances, it was Brent Carver's Edmund that did the most to make the Stratford *Journey* a memorable experience and provided a corrective to my memories of his flaccid predecessors in the role. This Edmund certainly had the "parched sallowness" of "bad health"--he was pale and thin, with a springy walk, a sensitive smile, an angular, gawky sincerity, and a touching delicacy. But he also had the spunk and the considerable reserves of strength necessary to see him through his present personal and familial difficulties. Carver's three best moments were in duets with his parents: in Act Two, Scene Two, his tearful plea, "Mama! Don't!", after Mary's "casual" reference to revisiting the drugstore; in the third act, his screamed taunt--"It's pretty hard to take at times, having a dope fiend for a mother!"--which is a partly-Jamie-influenced reaction to her shouted lines to him immediately before; and his last-act scene with his father, when he "provocatively" recites Dowson and Baudelaire with a skill that equals the old man's, and builds slowly in temperature and volume from mild scorn to a fist-slamming, harrowing scream at "you stinking old miser--!" Mr. Carver, in his spectacular first season at Stratford, brought roundness and believability to, and aroused hope for, the filial eye at the center of the Tyrone family hurricane.

The few scattered details here recorded convey little of the total, overwhelming power of the 1980 Stratford Festival production; but this has been less a traditional, formal review than a personal reminiscence of twenty-four years of *Long Day's Journeying*. I approach the play's second quarter-century on the boards with eagerness and, thanks to Robin Phillips and the splendid Stratford cast, with renewed confidence in its towering greatness.

--Frederick Wilkins

NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

1. O'NEILL FILMOGRAPHY, PART I: RENTABLES.

In response to readers' requests, the editor has scoured all the catalogs he has been able to amass in search of 16 mm films of O'Neill plays that are currently available for purchase or for classroom rental. The results follow, but it is very likely that the list is far from complete. If readers will send in comparable information from sources available to them, a future issue will include an O'Neill Filmography, Part II. (I have no explanation for the wild variety of listed running times for *The Emperor Jones* and *The Long Voyage Home*: evidently some rental agencies offer a shorter voyage than others!) Rental fees, which may well have risen since the catalogs' publication, are generally based on a single showing for which no admission price is charged. For current information about availability and prices, write to the agency involved. Those agencies, as abbreviated in the list, are the following:

ABF Audio Brandon Films, Inc.
34 MacQuesten Parkway So.
Mount Vernon, NY 10550

KPF Kit Parker Films
Carmel Valley, CA 93924

CCJ The Classic Collection
Janus Films/Films Incorporated
1144 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, IL 60091

MMA Museum of Modern Art
Dept. of Film Circulating Programs
11 West 53rd Street
New York, NY 10019

FFE Feature Films and Education
Films Incorporated
1144 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, IL 60091

PNT Paramount Non-Theatrical
5451 Marathon Street
Hollywood, CA 90038

FLI Film Library of Institutional Cinema
10 First Street
Saugerties, NY 12477

TFI Twyman Films, Inc.
4700 Wadsworth Road, Box 605
Dayton, OH 45401

IFA The Image Film Archive, Inc.
300 Phillips Park Road
Mamaroneck, NY 10543

WFC Wholesome Film Center, Inc.
20 Melrose Street
Boston, MA 02116

AH, WILDERNESS! (1935, b/w, 101 mins), dir. Clarence Brown, w/Wallace Beery, Mickey Rooney, Lionel Barrymore, Aline MacMahon, Eric Linden and Cecilia Parker.

FFE, n.p. (Omitted from 1980 catalog but possibly still available)

ANNA CHRISTIE (1923, b/w, silent, 75 minutes), dir. John Griffith Wray, w/ Blanche Sweet, William Russell and George F. Marion.

MMA, \$40 (lease: \$400)

DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS (1958, b/w, 114 mins), dir. Daniel Mann, w/ Sophia Loren, Anthony Perkins, Burl Ives and Frank Overton.

ABF, \$45

THE EMPEROR JONES (1933, b/w), dir. Dudley Murphy, w/ Paul Robeson, Dudley Digges, Frank Wilson, Fredi Washington and Ruby Elzy. Adaptation by DuBose Heyward.

ABF (80 mins), \$35

CCJ (listed in different catalogs as 72 & 128 mins), \$85

FLI (72 mins), \$40

IFA (72 mins), \$40; sale: \$475; 3/4" videocassette: \$350

KPF (72 mins), \$35; sale: \$375

THE ICEMAN COMETH (1973, color, 178 mins), dir. John Frankenheimer; screenwriter, Thomas Quinn Curtis; w/ Lee Marvin, Frederic March, Robert Ryan, Jeff Bridges, Martyn Green, George Voscovec, Bradford Dillman, Moses Gunn and Evans Evans.

ABF, \$125

PNT, \$125; \$200 for non-classroom use

LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT (1962, b/w, 136 mins), dir. Sidney Lumet, w/ Katharine Hepburn, Ralph Richardson, Jason Robards, Dean Stockwell and Jeanne Barr.

ABF, \$75 (uncut, 174-minute version also available)

FLI, \$60

KPF, \$37.50

TFI, \$75

WFC, \$65

THE LONG VOYAGE HOME (1940, b/w), dir. John Ford; screenplay by Dudley Nichols (incorporating "Moon of the Caribbees," "In the Zone," "Bound East for Cardiff" and "Long Voyage Home"); w/ John Wayne (at his most Nordic), Thomas Mitchell, Barry Fitzgerald, Ian Hunter, Ward Bond, Mildred Natwick, Wilfred Lawson, John Qualen and Arthur Shields.

ABF (105 mins), \$37.50

CCJ (109 mins), \$60

IFA (87 mins), \$50

KPF (104 mins), \$30

WFC (100 mins), \$37.50

2. *THE NEW YORKER* STRIKES AGAIN. A previous issue of the Newsletter (January 1980, pp. 21-22) reprinted the capsule comments on O'Neill films that had appeared in October, 1979 issues of *The New Yorker*. One film omitted from that autumnal blitz, *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (1962), has received similar love-hate treatment in a more recent issue (July 14, 1980, p. 18):

This portrait of the artist as an Irish-American has the worst American failings: it's obvious, sprawling, yet crabbed. But if you respond at all, you may go all the way to exaltation. Perhaps just because of its hideous familiarity, its grinding, ludicrous wrestling with expressiveness, *Journey* is, at last, an American family classic; the usual embarrassments are transcended, and the family theme is raised to mythic heights. This is the best film ever made from an O'Neill play (and it's O'Neill's greatest play). Katharine Hepburn, Ralph Richardson, Jason Robards, Jr., and Dean Stockwell are the quartet. Hepburn's transitions here--the way she can look eighteen or eighty at will--seem iridescent. She surpasses herself: the most beautiful screen comedienne of the thirties and forties becomes our greatest screen tragedienne. Sidney Lumet directs; Boris Kaufman did the cinematography. The complete film runs a hundred and seventy minutes; frequently, a version thirty-four minutes shorter is shown, which seriously damages the structure and omits several of Robards' finest scenes.

3. RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

Ahrends, Günter. *Traumwelt und Wirklichkeit im Spätwerk Eugene O'Neills*. Heidelberg: Winter 1978. 286 pp.

Baužytė, Galina. "Eschilas ir Judžino O'Nylo dramaturgija." *Literatūra* (Vilnius), 20 iii (1978), 36-39.

Bernstein, Samuel. *The Strands Entwined: A New Direction in American Drama*.

Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1980. 164 pp. \$17.95. (In a study that focuses, after a general overview of American drama, on five contemporary plays--one each by Rabe, Guare, Bullins, Albee and Robert Anderson--the author delineates the titular strands as "the traditional American realistic-naturalistic style of O'Neill and Miller, and the European Absurdist movement, typified by Beckett,

- Ionesco and Pinter." The resultant fusion of "the careful construction and vivid detail of the former and the flexibility and psychological depth of the latter" has resulted, he demonstrates, in "a viable new dramatic form.")
- Burns, Morris U. *The Dramatic Criticism of Alexander Woolcott*. Metuchen, NJ; The Scarecrow Press, 1980. 292 pp. \$15.00. (A review of the coverage of Woolcott's O'Neill criticism, most of which occurs on pp. 85-92, will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter.)
- Dee, James H. "Orestes and Electra in the Twentieth Century." *Classical Bulletin*, 55 (1979), 81-87.
- Egri, Peter. "Csehov és O'Neill (Eugene O'Neill: Utazás az éjszakába)." *Filológiai Közöny*, 24 (1978), 231-235.
- Fluckiger, Stephen L. "The Idea of Puritanism in the Plays of Eugene O'Neill." *Renascence*, 30 (1978), 152-162..
- Gatta, John, Jr. "The American Subject: Moral History as Tragedy in the Plays of Eugene O'Neill." *Essays in Literature* (Macomb, IL), 6, 227-239.
- Juhl, Peter. "Eugene O'Neills *The Hairy Ape*: Bemerkungen zu Sinn und Struktur des Dramas." In *Theater und Drama in Amerika: Aspekte und Interpretationen*, ed. Edgar Lohner and Rudolf Haas. Berlin: Schmidt, 1978. Pp. 235-253.
- Lemanis, Mara. "Desire Under the Elms and Tragic Form: A Study of Misalliance." *South Dakota Review*, 16 iii (1978), 46-55.
- Melchinger, Siegfried. "Die Yankee-Electra: O'Neill und Aischylos--Vergleichende Bemerkungen." In Lohner and Haas, eds., *Theater . . .*, pp. 254-262. (See Juhl entry for full information.)
- Myers, Andrew B. "'Hysteria Night in the Sophomore Dormitory': Eugene O'Neill's *Days Without End*." *Columbia Library Columns*, 28 ii (1979), 3-13.
- O'Neill, Eugene. "Two Letters by Eugene O'Neill," ed. William J. Scheick. *Resources for American Literary Study*, 7 (1978), 73-80. (The letters are related to *Marco Millions* and *Ah, Wilderness!*)
- Prasad, Hari Mohan. "The Tragic Mode: A Study in Eugene O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon*, *The Emperor Jones* and *The Hairy Ape*." *Osmania Journal of English Studies*, 15, 21-30.
- Sabinson, Harvey. "A Coronet for O'Neill." *Theatregoers' Guide* (advertising supplement to the *New York Times*, Sept. 7, 1980), pp. 12-17. (An excerpt from Mr. Sabinson's book, *Darling, You Were Wonderful*, in which the 1959 efforts to rename New York's Coronet Theatre for Eugene O'Neill are recounted with a number of memorable insights about the playwright, his widow, and their marital relations. See the report in the "Reviews and Abstracts" section of this issue.)

4. SCHOLARLY WORKS IN PROGRESS.

[These descriptions of their work by O'Neill scholars are reprinted from the October 1980 issue of *Theatre Journal*. All expect to complete their work this year except Matlaw, who has not yet projected a completion date. --Ed.]

Collins, Robert H. *American Realism and the Broadway Stage: A Study in Dramatic Form from O'Neill to Shepard*. "American Realism is essentially domestic, psychological and emotional rather than intellectual drama. It flowered in the late plays of O'Neill and the early plays of Williams. By separate routes these two playwrights developed a fuller, more emotionally powered form of realism for the American stage. More contemporary playwrights like David Mamet and Sam Shepard have often abandoned this form of realism in favor of experimentation, but their finest and most mature work hearkens back to the roots found in O'Neill and Williams."

Manheim, Michael. *Eugene O'Neill's New Language of Kinship*. "O'Neill's final plays--*The Iceman Cometh*, *Long Day's Journey* and *Moon for the Misbegotten*--are usually considered his most autobiographical works. This book seeks to show that suppressed autobiography is more importantly the basis of O'Neill's earlier plays, whereas his last, and greatest, works triumph over autobiography in becoming genuinely universal visions of the human condition."

Matlaw, Myron. *Study of the Life and Career of James O'Neill*.

Robinson, James A. *Eugene O'Neill and Oriental Thought*. "Considers the impact of Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism on O'Neill's religious drama (e.g., *The Fountain*, *The Great God Brown*, *Lazarus Laughed*) and his two late tragedies (*The Iceman Cometh* and *Long Day's Journey Into Night*). The thesis is that O'Neill, who was familiar with the above systems of philosophy and with Western thinkers influenced by them (Emerson, Schopenhauer, Jung, etc.), combined elements of Western and Eastern approaches to reality. This approach focuses on ten plays (starting with *The Moon of the Caribbees* and ending with *Journey*), after an initial discussion of O'Neill's sources and his responses to them."

5. Dissertations on O'Neill reported in *Dissertation Abstracts International*.
 - a. Jensen, George H. "The Eugene O'Neill-Theatre Guild Correspondence" (40: 853A).
 - b. Roland, Laurin Kay. "Biography and Culture in the Later Plays of Eugene O'Neill" (39: 6134A).
 - c. Walker, Herbert Kenneth, III. "Symbolism in the Later Plays of Eugene O'Neill" (39: 6768A-69A).
6. FLOYD READIES MAGNUM OPUS. Virginia Floyd's previously announced study of the O'Neill notes, drawings and other manuscript materials at Yale's Beinecke Library (tentatively subtitled "Eugene O'Neill's Ideas for Plays") is still in progress, with a probable date of Fall 1981 for publication by Yale University Press. In mid-September she reported, "The work is more complex than I had ever dreamed; for example, I have just finished the sixth draft of *Iceman*. By the time I finish a second or third draft in the rough I have to reevaluate previous material. All I can say at this point is that it will prove to be sensational--so many revelations." The book may exceed 500 pages, and may include from 40 to 50 never-before-published set designs that O'Neill drew for his plays.
7. THE O'NEILL-COMMINS CORRESPONDENCE. Katherine K. Oakley has completed work on an annotated collection of the correspondence of O'Neill and Saxe Commins (95 letters by the playwright and 53 by his editor, plus 216 letters and notes to Commins from Carlotta Monterey O'Neill). While Ms. Oakley had originally planned to seek a publisher herself, she reports (on November 15) that "Mrs. Commins has decided to complete the project herself." One hopes that the collection, which would be a boon to O'Neill scholarship, will soon be publicly available.
8. RECENT PRODUCTIONS.

Ah, Wilderness! Polka Dot Playhouse, Bridgeport, CT. July 4-26, 1980.

In the Zone. Ensemble Co., New Haven, CT. Performed July 23-26, 1980, as part of the company's "Summer Cabaret" series.

A Moon for the Misbegotten, dir. Geoffrey Sadwith. The Classic Theater, New York City. Closed Sept. 2, 1980.
9. FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS.

Ah, Wilderness!, dir. Daniel Sullivan. Seattle Repertory Theatre, Seattle, WA, Dec. 31, 1980 - Jan. 25, 1981.

Ah, Wilderness! Boars Head Theater, Lansing Center for the Arts, Lansing, MI, Feb. 12 - March 1, 1981.

Ah, Wilderness!, dir. Geoffrey Sherman. Studio Arena Theatre, Buffalo, NY, Feb. 13 - March 14, 1981.

Ah, Wilderness! Indiana Repertory Theatre, Indianapolis, April 24 - May 16, 1981.

Long Day's Journey Into Night, dir. Lou Salerni. The Cricket Theatre, Hennepin Center for the Arts, Minneapolis, MN, March 13 - April 4, 1981. (The production is tentative. Either *Journey* or *Inge's Dark at the Top of the Stairs* will be performed.)

A Moon for the Misbegotten. Old Globe Theatre, San Diego, CA, Jan 18 - Feb. 22, 1981. (Available for touring to CA cities in March 1981. For information, call 714-231-1941.)

A Moon for the Misbegotten, dir. Frank Wittow. The Academy Theatre, Atlanta, GA. In repertory, Feb.-May, 1981. (The production toured in Florida, S. Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia in the fall of 1980.)

10. "AH, ATKINSON!" (Reprinted from the *New York Times*, October 16, 1980, p. C24.)

"Someday soon a busload of Eugene O'Neill admirers will abandon Manhattan for a village upstate where Brooks Atkinson now aims his critical eye at the parade of nature's creations instead of the theater's. The visitors will be members of the Theater Committee for Eugene O'Neill--a group that includes figures associated with the playwright such as Jason Robards, the actor; Jose Quintero, the director, and Theodore Mann, the producer--who have established a medal commemorating his birth in 1888.

"As the medal's first recipient they have selected Mr. Atkinson, who, as drama critic of the *New York Times* from 1925 to 1960--with a four-year interruption to cover World War II--spanned the most prolific period of the only American playwright to win a Nobel Prize.

"The birthday medal, 'for enriching the universal understanding' of O'Neill, will be awarded each year, George White, the president of the O'Neill Center in Waterford, Conn., said yesterday. He is co-chairman of the committee with Barbara Gelb, co-author with Arthur Gelb of the biography *O'Neill*."

11. *DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS*, Edward Thomas and Joe Masteroff's operatic version of the O'Neill play that was developed at the O'Neill Theater Center's composer/librettist conference during the summer of 1979, had its world premiere last August, "after extensive reworking," at the Central City Opera in Colorado.
12. "O'NEILL AND THE SEA," a one-hour National Public Radio production created by its Washington affiliate (and aired by Boston station WGBH on October 21), provided a documentary portrait of the young O'Neill. Passages from O'Neill's plays, letters and diaries were read by Len Cariou, in addition to comments on the nautical O'Neill by Barbara Gelb and Harold Clurman. The program's highlight was a tape of the first American performance of Beatrice Laufer's one-act opera version of *Ile* at the Yale School of Music. Conducted by John Mauceri, it featured Gerald Pope as Captain Keeney and Mary Law as Mrs. Keeney.
13. O'NEILL AT NYPL. Some early love letters that O'Neill wrote to Beatrice Ashe were on display at the New York Public Library through October 31, as part of a selection of books and manuscripts by twenty-five authors whose works have been added over the past twenty-five years to the Berg Collection of English and American Literature.
14. ANENT PROVINCETOWN. The New Provincetown Playhouse now has a projected opening date of summer 1982, according to a report in the *Boston Globe* (July 16, 1980, p. 53),

which describes its eagerly awaited contents: "The new theater, seating 300, with a smaller 100-seat auditorium, plus a library and museum, will replace the old structure destroyed by fire in 1977."

Incidentally, the November 1980 issue of *Yankee Magazine* (pp. 62-69) includes a pictorial feature on Provincetown--twelve colorful shots of the town today, including the current Coast Guard station at Race Point.

15. ADDENDA TO CARPENTER'S ADDENDA TO MILLER. After the first half of this issue went to press, Professor Carpenter provided two more items which, because of their late arrival, must be presented here.

Frenz, Horst. "Alexander Tairov and the 1930 World Tour of the Kamerny Theater." Pp. 177-94 of Oscar G. Brockett, ed. *Studies in Theatre and Drama*. NY: Humanities, 1973 (stresses performance of *All God's Chillun Got Wings*)

Metwally, Abdalla A. "European Roots in O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*." *Studies in Modern Drama*. Beirut: Beirut Arab Univ., 1971, I, 111-39

16. MORE RECENT PUBLICATIONS: ADDENDA TO ITEM 3.

Schwarz, Alfred. *From Büchner to Beckett: Dramatic Theory and the Modes of Tragic Drama*. Ohio University Press, 1978. 360 pp. (O'Neill is discussed on pp. 132-140.)

Sittler, Loring. "The Emperor Jones: ein Individuationsprozess im Sinne C. G. Jungs?" *Amerikastudien*, 23 i (1978), 118-130.

Wolter, Jürgen. "O'Neill's 'Open Boat.'" *Literatur in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* (Kiel, W. Germany), 11 (1978), 222-229.

Wasserstrom, William. "Notes on Electricity: Henry Adams and Eugene O'Neill." *Psychocultural Review*, 1 (1977), 161-178.

17. AN APOLOGY. Time and space problems have prevented the inclusion in this issue of previously promised reviews of Jean Chothia's *Forging a Language: A Study of the Plays of Eugene O'Neill* and of the chapter on *Long Day's Journey* in the revised edition of Richard B. Sewall's *The Vision of Tragedy*. They will appear in the next issue.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

CHARLES A. CARPENTER (pp. 16-17), Professor of English at SUNY-Binghamton and author of a book on Shaw and articles on Pinter, compiles the annual bibliographies for *Modern Drama* and is at work on an International Bibliography of Modern Drama Studies, 1966-1980, to be published c. 1983. The O'Neill bibliographies in this issue and in the January 1979 issue (pp. 29-31) will be included in that volume. We are grateful for the advance peek.

BILL COSTLEY (p. 14), poet and journalist whose search for O'Neillian echoes in Bermuda ("Spithead Revisited," January 1980, pp. 5-6) received considerable praise, is a native of Lynn, Massachusetts and a contributor to numerous poetry journals across the country. Most recently, his poetry appeared in "Lynn Voices"--a collaborative collection of poems and pictures about his native city--in *Radioal America* magazine.

WINIFRED FRAZER (pp. 5-9), Professor of English at the University of Florida and Vice President of the Eugene O'Neill Society, has published numerous articles on O'Neill in this and many other journals and is the author of *Love As Death* in *"The Iceman Cometh": A Modern Treatment of an Ancient Theme* (1967). Because of the illness of President Horst Frenz, Professor Frazer is currently Acting President of the Eugene O'Neill Society.

LEROY ROBINSON (pp. 12-13), Foreign Instructor of Basic English Conversation at Nagasaki University in Japan, has written extensively on the works of John Howard Lawson. In a number of issues of *Keiei to Keizai* ("Management and Economy," a journal published by the Economics Department of Nagasaki University), he has summarized, for the availability of scholars, the contents of Lawson's unpublished plays. Mr. Robinson is a regular contributor to the Newsletter.

R. VISWANATHAN (pp. 3-5), Lecturer in English at the University Centre, Tellicherry (India), visited the U. S. on a Fulbright scholarship in 1972, received an M.A. (1973) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a 1979 Ph.D. from Calicut University, with a dissertation on "O'Neill and the Sea," from a portion of which the essay in this issue was adapted.

PAUL D. VOELKER (pp. 9-12), Associate Professor of Drama at the University of Wisconsin Center in Marshfield, served as literary consultant to the Milwaukee Repertory Theater Company's 1977-78 productions of *Ah, Wilderness!* and *Long Day's Journey* and is a regular contributor to the Newsletter's pages.

FREDERICK C. WILKINS (pp. 25-27), chairs the Department of English at Suffolk University in Boston, is a member of the Board of Directors of the Eugene O'Neill Society, contributed an essay ("The Pressure of Puritanism in O'Neill's New England Plays," pp. 237-244) to *Eugene O'Neill: A World View*, ed. Virginia Floyd (New York: Ungar, 1979), and is editor of *The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter* and an interminable contributor to its pages.

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