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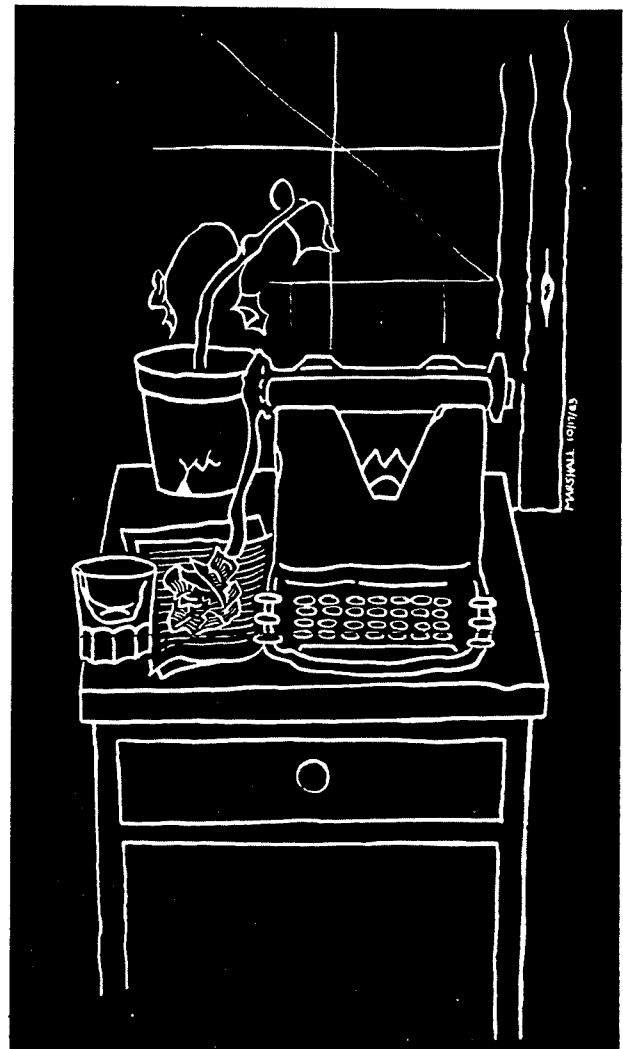
The Eugene O'Neill Newsletter

WINTER 1983

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"TOMORROW,"
Marshall Brooks' tribute
to O'Neill's short story
that herewith returns to
print after 66 years.



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EDITOR'S FOREWORD: SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING BORROWED

It is a joy to reprint "Tomorrow," O'Neill's only published short story, which has waited too long for republication since its appearance in the June 1917 issue of *The Seven Arts*; and to follow it with the first half of Louis Sheaffer's correction of the biographical record, which first appeared in *Comparative Drama*, and which provides, on p. 20, an account of the events that inspired the 1917 narrative. Concurrent presentation of the pearl and the grain of sand is the happiest of accidents--and a particularly appropriate one, coming on the eve of the March 1984 conference on O'Neill's "early years." The Newsletter is proud to conclude its seventh year and volume so grandly, and to precede "Tomorrow" with a cover illustration by associate editor Marshall Brooks that skillfully combines the story's three major objects.

O'Neill sent the longhand manuscript of the story to *Seven Arts* editor Waldo Frank from Provincetown on March 26, 1917, identifying it as the work "about which Louise Bryant spoke to you," and expressing the hope that it "may prove to be something in the line of what you are looking for." Evidently it was, with reservations, for a second letter, of March 31, with which O'Neill returned the manuscript, now much shortened and pencil-pruned, speaks of "the imperfections you mentioned in your letter"--especially a substantial postscript which O'Neill, admitting that it "goes overboard," had deleted. "I hope I have sharpened the story," he writes. "At least I have shortened it about a thousand words."

The second letter's explanation of the now-removed ending offers insight into O'Neill's creative plans at the time of writing. "When I first wrote the story," he tells Frank, "I planned it as the first of a series of Tommy the Priest's yarns in which the storyteller was to hog most of the limelight--a sort of Conrad's Marlow--and once I had that idea I couldn't let go and it rode me into the anti-climax."

The present reprinting follows the *Seven Arts* text exactly, retaining three errors--two of them minor (uncertainty for uncertainty on p. 5, and presentment for presentiment on p. 10), and the third (on p. 9) more arresting: the description of Jimmy's typewriter as "grey with a layer of long-accumulated lust"! But Freudians may keep their seats; the error is doubtless due to the story's having been set from manuscript. The challenges posed by O'Neill's handwriting, even early, are legend. As he explained in the March 31 letter, "my typewriter has not come yet; also there is no typist in this hamlet; also, if there were, I could not pay her! The last reason having it, I remain, Apologetically Yours, Eugene G. O'Neill." (How is it, then, one wonders, that the previous letter, on the 26th, was typed?!)

The story itself needs no apology. From its inspired first sentence to the abrupt thud of its altered conclusion, it is a gem, albeit a minor one. I hope it provides pleasure, and welcome readers' responses. Happy New Year!

* * *

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Tomorrow

By Eugene G. O'Neill

It was back in my sailor days, in the winter of my great down-and-outness, that all this happened. In those years of wandering, to be broke and "on the beach" in some seaport or other of the world was no new experience; but this had been an unusually long period of inaction even for me. Six months before I had landed in New York after a voyage from Buenos Aires as able seaman on a British tramp. Since that time I had loafed around the water front, eking out an existence on a small allowance from my family, too lazy of body and mind, too indifferent to things in general, to ship to sea again or do anything else. I shared a small rear room with another "gentleman-ranker," Jimmy Anderson, an old friend of mine, over an all-night dive near South street known as Tommy the Priest's.

This is the story of Jimmy, my roommate, and it begins on a cold night in the early part of March. I had waited in Tommy the Priest's, hunched up on a chair near the stove in the back room, all the late afternoon until long after dark. My nerves were on edge as a result of a two days' carouse ensuing on the receipt of my weekly allowance. Now all that money was gone--over the bar--and the next few days gloomed up as a dreary, sober and hungry ordeal which must, barring miracles, be endured patiently or otherwise. Three or four others of the crowd I knew were sitting near me, equally sick and penniless. We stared gloomily before us, in listless attitudes, spitting dejectedly at the glowing paunch of the stove. Every now and then someone would come in bringing with him a chill of the freezing wind outside. We would all look up hopefully. No, only a stranger. Nothing in the way of hospitality to be expected from him. "Close that damned door!" we would growl in chorus and huddle closer to the stove, shivering, muttering disappointed curses. In mocking contrast the crowd at the bar were drinking, singing, arguing in each other's ears with loud, care-free voices. None of them noticed our existence.

Surely a bad night for Good Samaritans, I thought, and reflected with bitterness that I counted several in that jubilant throng who had eagerly accepted my favors of the two nights previous. Now they saw me and nodded--but that was all. Suddenly sick with human ingratitude, I got out of my chair and, grumbling a surly "good-night, all" to the others, went out the side door and up the rickety stairs to our room--Jimmy's and mine.

The thought of spending a long evening alone in the room seemed intolerable to me. I lit the lamp and glanced around angrily. A fine hole! The two beds took up nearly all the space but Jimmy had managed to cram in, in front of the window, a small table on which stood his dilapidated typewriter. The typewriter, of course, was broken and wouldn't work. Jimmy was always going to have it fixed--tomorrow. But then Jimmy lived in a dream of tomorrows; and nothing he was ever associated with ever worked.

The lamp on the table threw a stream of light through the dirty window, revealing the fire-escape outside. Inside, on a shelf along the windowsill, a dyspeptic geranium plant sulked in a small red pot. This plant was Jimmy's garden and his joy. Even when he was too sick to wash his own face he never forgot to water it the first thing after getting up. It goes without saying, the silly thing never bloomed. Nothing that Jimmy loved ever bloomed; but he always hoped, in fact he was quite sure, it would eventually blossom out--in the dawn of some vague tomorrow.

For me it had value only as a symbol of Jimmy's everlasting futility, of his irritating inefficiency. However, at that period in my life, all flowers were yellow primroses and nothing more, and Jimmy's pet was out of place, I thought, and in the way.

Books were piled on the floor against the walls--and what books! Where Jimmy got them and what for, God only knows. He never read them, except a few pages at haphazard to put him to sleep. Yet there must have been fifty at least cluttering up the room--books about history, about journalism, about economics--books of impossible poetry and incredible prose, written by unknown authors and published by firms one had never heard of. He had a craze for buying them and never failed, on the days he was paid for the odd bits of work he did as occasional stenographer for a theatrical booking firm, to stagger weakly into

Tommy's, very drunk, with two or three of these unreadable volumes clutched to his breast--books with titles like: "A Commentary on the Bulls of Pope Leo XIII," or "God and the Darwinian Theory" by John Jones, or "Sunflowers and Other Verses" by Lydia Smith. Think of it!

I used to grow wild with rage as I watched him showing them to Tommy, or Big John, if he was on, or to anyone else who would look and listen, with all the besotted pride in the world. I would think of the drinks and the food--kippered herring and bread and good Italian cheese--he might have purchased for the price of these dull works; and I would swear to myself to thrash him good and hard if he even dared to speak to me.

And then--Jimmy would come and lay his idiotic books on my table and I would look up at him furiously; and there he would stand, wavering a bit, smiling his sweet, good-natured smile, trying to force half his remaining change into my hand, his lonely, wistful eyes watching me with the appealing look of a lost dog hungry for an affectionate pat. What could I do but laugh and love him and show him I did by a slap on the back or in some small way or another? It was worth while forgetting all the injuries in the world just to see the light of gratitude shine up in his eyes.

This night I am speaking of I picked up one of the books in desperation and lay down to read with the lamp at the head of the bed; but I couldn't concentrate. I was too sick in body, brain, and soul to follow even the words.

I threw the book aside and lay on my back staring gloomily at the ceiling. The inmate of the next room, a broken-down telegrapher--"the Lunger" we used to call him--had a violent attack of coughing which seemed to be tearing his chest to pieces. I shuddered. He used to spit blood in the back room below. In fact, when drunk, he was quite proud of this achievement, but grew terrified at all allusions to consumption and wildly insisted that he only had "bloody bronchitis," and that he was getting better every day. He died soon after in that same room next to ours. Perhaps his treatment was at fault. A quart and a half of five-cent whiskey a day and only a plate of free soup at noon to eat is hardly a diet conducive to the cure of any disease--not even "bloody bronchitis."

He coughed and coughed until, in a frenzy of tortured nerves, I yelled to him: "For God's sake, shut up!" Then he subsided into a series of groans and querulous, choking complaints. I thought of consumption, the danger of contagion, and remembered that the window ought to be open. But it was too cold. Besides, what was the difference? "Con" or something else, today or tomorrow, it was all the same--the end. What did I care? I had failed--or rather I had never cared enough about it all to want to succeed.

I must have dozed for I came to with a nervous jump to find the lamp sputtering and smoking and the light growing dimmer every minute. No oil! That fool Jimmy had promised to bring back some. I had given him my last twenty cents and he had taken the can with him. He was sober, had been for almost a week, was suffering from one of his infrequent and brief efforts at reformation. No, there was no excuse. I cursed him viciously for the greatest imbecile on earth. The lamp was going out. I would have to lie in darkness or return to the misery of the back room downstairs.

Just then I recognized his step on the stairs and a moment later he came in, bringing the oil. I glared at him. "Where've you been?" I shouted. "Look at that lamp, you idiot! I'd have been in the dark in another second."

Jimmy came forward shrinkingly, a look of deep hurt in his faded blue eyes. He murmured something about "office" and stooped down to fill the lamp.

"Office!" I taunted scornfully, "what office? What do you take me for? I've heard that bunk of yours a million times."

Jimmy finished filling the lamp and sat down on the side of his bed opposite me. He didn't answer; only stared at me with an irritating sort of compassionate pity. How prim he was sitting there in his black suit, wispy, grey hair combed over his bald spot, his jowly face scraped close and chalky with too much cheap powder, the vile odor of which filled the room. I noticed for the first time his clean collar, his fresh shirt. He must have been to the Chinaman's and retrieved part of his laundry. This was what he usually did when he had a windfall of a dollar or so from some unexpected source. Never took out all his laundry. That would have been too expensive. Just called at the

Chink's and changed his shirt and collar. His other articles of clothing he washed himself at the sink in the hallway.

I eyed him up and down resentfully. Here was a man who ought always to remain drunk. Sober, he was a respectable nuisance. And his shoes were shined!

"Why the profound meditation?" I asked. "You'd think, to look at you, you were sitting up with my corpse. Cheer up! I feel bad enough without your adding to the gloom."

"That's just it, Art," he began in slow, doleful tones. "I hate to see you in this condition. You wouldn't ever feel this way if you'd--only--only--" he hesitated as he saw my sneer.

"Only what?" I urged.

"Only stop your hard drinking," he mumbled, avoiding my eyes.

"This is almost too much, Jimmy. The water wagon is fatal to your sense of humor. After a week's ride you've accumulated more cheap moralizing than any anchorite in all his years of fasting."

"I'm your friend," he blundered on, "and you know it, Art--or I wouldn't say it."

"And it hurts you more than it does me, I'll bet!"

Jimmy had the piqued air of the rebuffed but well-intentioned. "If that's the way you want to take it--" he was staring unhappily at the floor. We were silent for a time. Then he continued with the obstinacy of the reformed turned reformer: "I'm your friend, the best friend you've got." His eyes looked up into mine and his glance was timidly questioning. "You know that, don't you, Art?"

All my peevishness vanished in a flash before his woeful sincerity. I reached over and grabbed his hand--his white, pudgy little hand so in keeping with the rest of him--warm and soft. "Of course I know it, Jimmy. Don't be foolish and take what I've said seriously. I've got a full-sized grouch against everything tonight."

Jimmy brightened up and cleared his throat. He evidently thought my remarks an expression of willingness to serve as audience for his temperance lecture. Still he hesitated politely. "I know you don't want to listen--"

I laughed shortly. "Go ahead. Shoot. I'm all ears."

Then he began. You know the sort of drool--introduced by a sage wag of the head and the inevitable remark: "I've been through it all myself, and I know." I won't bore you with it. Coming from Jimmy it was the last word in absurdity.

I tried not to listen, concentrating my mind on the man himself, my nerves soothed by the monotonous flow of his soft-voiced syllables. Yes, he'd been through it all, there was no doubt of that, from soup to nuts. What he didn't realize was that none of it had ever touched him deeply. Forgetful of the last kick his eyes had always looked up at life again with the same appealing, timid uncertainty, pleading for a caress, fearful of a blow. And life had never failed to deal him the expected kick, never a vicious one, more of a shove to get him out of the way of a spirited boot at someone who really mattered. Spurned, Jimmy had always returned, affectionate, uncomprehending, wagging his tail ingratiatingly, so to speak. The longed-for caress would come, he was sure of it, if not today, then tomorrow. Ah, tomorrow!

I looked searchingly at his face--the squat nose, the wistful eyes, the fleshy cheeks hanging down like dewlaps on either side of his weak mouth with its pale, thick lips. The usual marks of dissipation were there but none of the scars of intense suffering. The whole effect was characterless, unfinished; as if some sculptor at the last moment had suddenly lost interest in his clay model of a face and abandoned his work in disgust. I wondered what Jimmy would do if he ever saw that face in the clear, cruel mirror of Truth. Straggle on in the same lost way, no doubt, and cease to have faith in mirrors.

Although most of his lecture was being lost on me I couldn't prevent a chance word now and then from seeping into my consciousness. "Wasted youth--your education--ability--a shame--lost opportunity--drink--some nice girl"--these words my ears retained against my will, and each word had a sting to it. Gradually my feeling of kindness toward Jimmy petered out. I began to hate him for a pestiferous little crank. What right had he to

meddle with my sins? Some of the things he was saying were true; and truth--that kind of truth--should be seen and not heard.

I was becoming angry enough to shrivel him up with some contemptuous remark about his hypocrisy and the doubtful duration of time he would stay on the wagon when he suddenly digressed from my misdeeds and began virtuously holding himself up as a horrible example.

He began at the beginning, and, even though I welcomed the change of subject, I swore inwardly at the prospect of hearing the history of his life all over again. He had told me this tale at least fifty times while in all stages of maudlin drunkenness. Usually he wept--which was sometimes funny and sometimes not, all depending on my own condition. At all events it would be a novelty to hear his sober version. I might get at some facts this time.

To my surprise this story seemed to be identical with the others I had been lulled to sleep by on so many nights. Making allowances for the natural exaggeration of one in liquor, there was but little difference. It started with the Anderson estate in Scotland where Jimmy had spent his boyhood. This estate of the family extended over the greater part of a Scotch county, so Jimmy claimed, and he was touchy when anyone seemed skeptical regarding its existence.

He loved to dilate on the beauty of the country, the old manor house, the farms, the game park, and all the rest of it. All this was heavily mortgaged, he admitted; and he was not in good standing with most of his relatives on the other side; but he declared that there was one aunt, far gone in years and hoarded wealth, who still treasured his memory, and he promised all the gang in the back room a rare blowout should the old lady pass away in the proper frame of mind. To all of this the crowd would listen with an amiable pretence of belief. For, after all, he was Jimmy and they all swore by him, and a fairy tale like that is no great matter to hold against a man.

But here he was spinning the same yarn in all its details! I looked at him suspiciously. No, he was certainly stone sober. Could there be any truth in it then? Impossible. I finally concluded that Jimmy, after the fashion of liars, had ended by mistaking his own fabrications for fact.

He continued on through his years in Edinburgh University, his graduation with honors, his going into journalism first in Scotland, then in England, afterwards as a correspondent on the Continent, and finally his work in South Africa during the Boer War as representative of some news service.

I had never been able to verify any of this except that relating to the Boer War. An old friend of his had once told me that Jimmy did hold a responsible position in South Africa during the war and had received a large salary. Then the old friend, old-friendlike, shook his head gravely and muttered: "Too bad! Too bad! Drink!" Whether the rest of Jimmy's life, as related by him, had ever been lived or not hardly mattered, I thought. Undoubtedly he had been well educated and what is called a gentleman over there. Of course the Anderson estate was a work of fiction, or, at best, a glorified country house.

"And mind you, Art, up to that time," Jimmy's story had reached the point where he was at the front in South Africa for the news service company, "I had never touched a drop except a glass of wine with dinner now and again. That was ten years ago and I was thirty-five. Then--something happened. Ten years," he repeated sadly, "and now look where I am!" He stared despondently before him for a moment, then brightened up and squared his bent shoulders. "But that's all past and gone now, and I'm through with this kind of life for good and all."

"There's always tomorrow," I ventured ironically.

"Yes, and I'm going to make the most of it." His eyes were bright with the dream of a new hope; or rather, the old hope eternally redreamed. He glanced at the table. "I'll have to have that typewriter fixed up."

"Tomorrow?"

"Yes, tomorrow, if I can spare the time." He hadn't noticed my sarcasm.

"Why, is your day all taken up?" I asked, marvelling at his imagination.

"Pretty well so." He put on an air of importance. "I saw Edwards today"--Edwards was a friend of his who had risen to be an editor on one of the big morning papers--"and he's found an opening for me--a real opening which will give me an opportunity to show them all I'm still in the race."

"And you start in tomorrow?" I was dumbfounded.

"Yes, in the afternoon." His face was alive with energy. "Oh, I'll show them all, Art, that I'm still one of the best when I want to be. They've sneered at me long enough."

"Then you really are about to become a wage slave?" I simply couldn't believe it.

"Honestly, Art. Tomorrow. Do you think I'm spoofing you about it?"

"I must admit you seem to be confessing the shameless truth. Well, at any rate, you seem to be pleased, so--" here I jumped up and pumped his hand up and down--"a million congratulations, Jimmy, old scout!" Jimmy's joy was good to see. There were tears in his eyes as he thanked me. Good old Jimmy! It took him quite a while to get over his emotion. Then, as if he had suddenly remembered something, he began hurriedly fumbling through all his pockets.

"I must have lost it," he said finally, giving up the search. "I wanted to show it to you."

"What?"

"A letter I received today from Aunt Mary." Aunt Mary was the elderly relative in whose will Jimmy hoped to be remembered. "She complains of having felt very feeble for the past half year. She appears to be entirely ignorant of my present condition, thank God. Writes that I'm to come and pay her a long visit should I decide to take a trip abroad this Spring. Fancy!"

"And you've lost the letter?" I asked, trying to hide my skepticism.

"Yes--was showing it to Edwards--must have dropped on the floor--or else he--" Jimmy stopped abruptly. I think he must have sensed my amused incredulity, for he seemed very put out at something and didn't look at me. "I do hope the poor old lady isn't seriously ill," he murmured after a pause.

"What!" I laughed. "Have you the face to tell me that, when you know you've been looking forward to her timely taking off ever since I've known you?"

Jimmy's face grew red and he stammered confusedly. He knew he'd said things which might have sounded that way when he'd been drinking. It was whiskey talking and he didn't mean it. Really he liked her a lot. He remembered she'd been very kind to him when he was a lad. Had hardly seen her since then--twenty-five years ago. No, money or no money, he wanted her to live to be a hundred.

"But you've told me she's almost ninety now! Isn't she?"

"Yes, eighty-six, I think."

"Then," I said with finality, "she's overlingered her welcome, and you're a simpleton to be wasting your crocodile tears--in advance, at that. Besides, I've never noticed her sending you any of her vast fortune. She might at least have made you a present once in a while if she cared to earn any regrets over her demise."

"I've never written her about my hard luck. I hardly ever wrote to her," Jimmy said slowly. His tones were ridiculously dismal, and he sat holding his face in his hands in the woebegone attitude of a mourner.

"Well, you should have written." A sudden thought made me smile. "What will the bunch in the back room say when they hear this? You may give them that long-promised blowout--tomorrow." I added maliciously.

Jimmy stirred uneasily and turned on me a glance full of dim suspicion. "Why do you keep repeating that word tomorrow? You've said it now a dozen times."

"Because tomorrow is your day, Jimmy," I answered carelessly. "Doesn't your career as a sober, industrious citizen begin then?"

"Oh," he sighed with relief, "I thought--" he walked up and down in the narrow space between the beds, his hands deep in his pockets. Finally he stopped and stood beside me. There was an exultant ring to his voice. "Ah, I tell you, Art, it's great to feel like a man again, to know you're done for good and all with that mess downstairs." After a

pause he went on in a coaxing, motherly tone. "Don't you think you ought to go to work and do something? I hate to see you--like this. You know what a pal I am, Art. You can listen to me. It's a shame for you to let yourself go to seed this way. Really, Art, I mean it."

"Now, Jimmy," I got up and put my hands on his shoulders. "I say it without any hard feeling, but I've had about enough of your reform movement for one night. It'll be more truly charitable of you to offer me the price of a drink--if you have it. Your day of reformation is none so remote you can't realize from experience how rotten I feel. I can hear polar bears baying at the Northern Lights."

Jimmy sighed disconsolately and dug some small change out of his pocket. "I borrowed a dollar from Edwards," he explained. "I'll pay him back out of my first salary." The self-sufficient pride he put into that word salary!

But his financial aid proved to be unnecessary. As I was about to take half of his change, there was a great trampling from the stairs outside. Our door was kicked open with a bang and Lyons, the stoker, and Paddy Mehan, the old deep-water sailor, came crowding into the room. Lyons was in the first jovial frenzy of drink but poor Paddy was already awash and rapidly sinking. They had been paid off that afternoon after a trip across on the American liner St. Paul.

"Hello, Lyons! Hello, Paddy!" Jimmy and I hailed them in pleased chorus.

"Hello, youself!" Lyons crushed Jimmy's hand in one huge paw and patted me affectionately on the back with the other. The jar of it nearly knocked me off my feet but I managed to smile. Lyons and I were old pals. I had once made a trip as sailor on the Philadelphia when he was in her stokehold, and we had become great friends through a chance adventure together ashore in Southampton--which is another story. He stood grinning, swaying a bit in the lamplight, a great, hard bulk of a man, dwarfing the proportions of our little room. Paddy lurched over to one of the beds and fell on it. "Thick weather! Thick weather!" he groaned to himself, and started to sing an old chanty in a thin, quavering, nasal whine.

"A-roving, a-roving
Since roving's been my ru-i-in,
No more I'll go a-ro-o-ving with you, fair maid."

"Shut up!" roared Lyons and turned again to me. "Art, how are ye?" I dodged an attempt at another love-tap and replied that I was well but thirsty.

"Thirsty, is ut? D'ye hear that, Paddy, ye slimy Corkonian? Here's a mate complainin' av thirst and we wid a full pay day in our pockets." He pulled out a roll of bills and flaunted them before me with a splendid, spendthrift gesture.

"Oh, whiskey killed my poor old dad! Whiskey! O Johnny!" carolled Paddy dolorously.

"Listen to 'im!" Lyons reached over and shook him vigorously. "That's the throuble wid all thim lazy, deck-scrubbers the loike av 'im. They can't stand up to their dhrink loike men. Wake up, Paddy! We'll be goin' below." He hauled Paddy to his feet and held him there. Come on, Art. There's some av the boys ye know below waitin'. Ye'll have all the dhrink ye can pour down your throat, and welcome; and anything more you're wishful for ye've but to name. Come on, Jimmy, you're wan av us."

"I've got something to do before I go down. I'll join you in a few minutes," Jimmy replied, wisely evading a direct refusal.

"See that ye do, me sonny boy," warned Lyons, pushing Paddy to the door. I turned to Jimmy as I was going out. "Well, good luck till tomorrow, Jimmy, if I don't see you before then."

"Thank you, Art," he murmured huskily and shook my hand. I started down. From the bottom of the flight below I heard Lyons' rough curses and Paddy wailing lugubriously: "Old Joe is dead, and gone to hell, poor old Joe!"

"Ye'll be in hell yourself if ye fall in this black hole," Lyons cautioned, steering him to the top of the second flight as I caught up with them.

The fiesta which began with our arrival in the bar didn't break up until long after

daylight the next morning. It was one of the old, lusty debauches of my sailor days--songs of the sea and yarns about ships punctuated by rounds of drinks.

The last I remember was Lyons bawling out for someone to come down to the docks and strip to him and see which was the better man. "Have a bit av fun wid 'im" was the way he put it. I believe I was Dutch-courageous enough to accept his challenge but he pushed me back in my chair with a warning to be "a good bye" or I'd get a spanking. So the party had no fatal ending.

As you can well imagine I slept like a corpse all the next day and didn't witness Jimmy's departure for his long hard climb back to respectability and the man who was. When he came home that night he appeared very elated, full of the dignity of labor, tremendously conscious of his position in life, provokingly solicitous concerning my welfare. It would have been insufferable in anyone else; but Jimmy--well, Jimmy was Jimmy, and the most lovable chap on earth. You couldn't stay mad at him more than a minute, if you had the slightest sense of humor.

Had he toiled and spun much on his first day, I asked him. No, he admitted after a moment's hesitation, he had spent the time mostly in feeling about, getting the hang of his work. Now tomorrow he'd get the typewriter fixed so he could do Sunday special stuff in his spare moments--stories of what he'd seen in South Africa and things of that kind. Wasn't that a bully idea? I agreed that it was, and retreated to the gang below who were still celebrating, leaving Jimmy with pencil poised over a blank sheet of paper determined to map out one of his stories then and there.

I didn't see him the next day or the day after. I was touring the water front with Lyons and Paddy and never returned to the room. The fourth day of his job I ran into him for a second in the hallway. He said hello in a hurried tone and brushed past me. For my part I was glad he didn't stop. I felt he'd immediately start on a heart-to-heart talk which I was in no mood to hear. Later on I remembered his manner had been strange and that he looked drawn and fagged out.

The fifth day Paddy and Lyons were both broke, but I collected my puny allowance and we sat at a table in the back room squandering it lingeringly on enormous scoops of lager and porter which were filling and lasted a long time. We were still sitting there talking when Jimmy came back from work. He looked in from the hallway, saw us and nodded, but went on upstairs without speaking.

"What's the matther wid Jimmy?" grumbled Lyons. "Can't he speak to a man?"

"He looks like he was sick," said Paddy. "Go up, Art, that's a good lad, and ask him if he won't take a bit of a drink, maybe."

"I'll go," I said, getting up, "but he won't drink anything. Jimmy's strictly temperance these days. He's more likely to give us all a sermon on our sins."

"Divil take him, then," growled Lyons, "but run and get him all the same. He looks loike he'd been drawn through a crack in the wall."

I ran quickly up the stairs and opened the door of our room. Jimmy was sitting on the side of his bed, his head in his hands. I glanced at the typewriter. The keys were still grey with a layer of long-accumulated lust. Then he hadn't had it fixed. The same old tomorrow, I thought to myself.

"Jimmy," I called to him. He jumped to his feet with a frightened start. When he saw who it was a flush of anger came over his face.

"Why don't you scare the life out of a man!" he said irritably. I was astonished. I'd never known him to flare up like this over a trifle.

"Come down and join us for a while. You don't have to drink, you know. You look done-up. What's the trouble--been working too hard?"

He winced at this last remark as if I'd shaken my fist in his face. Then he made a frantic gesture with his arms as though he were pushing me out of the room. "Go! Go back!" His voice was unnaturally shrill. "Leave me alone. I want to be alone."

"Jimmy!" I went to him in genuine alarm. "What's the matter? Anything wrong?"

He pressed my hand and tried a feeble attempt at a smile. There were dark rings under his eyes, and, somehow, in some indefinable manner, he seemed years older, a

broken old man.

"No, Art, I'm all right. Don't mind me. I've a splitting headache--"

"Don't be a fool and let them work you to death." He raised his hands as if he were going to clap them over his ears to shut out my words.

"Leave me alone, Art, will you? I'm going to bed," he stammered.

"Right-o, that's the stuff. Get a good sleep and you'll be O. K." I went downstairs slowly, vaguely worried about him, wondering what the trouble could be. In the end I laid his peculiar actions to a struggle he was having with his craving for drink. Paddy and Lyons agreed with this opinion and called him a "game little swine" for sticking to his guns. And as such we toasted him in our lager and porter.

When I went up to the room to turn in he was asleep, or pretending to be, and I was careful not to disturb him. The next morning I heard him moving about, but as soon as he saw I was awake, he appeared in a nervous flurry to get away, and we didn't speak more than a few words to each other. That night he never came home at all. I went to bed early--everyone was broke and there was nothing else to do--and when I was roused out of my slumber by the sun shining on my face through the dirty window, I saw that his bed hadn't been touched. A somber presentment of evil seemed to hover around that bed. The white spread, threadbare and full of holes, which he had tucked in with such precise neatness, had the suggestion of a shroud about it--a shroud symbolically woven for one whose life had been threadbare and full of holes.

I tried to laugh at such grim imaginings. Jimmy had stayed with Edwards or someone else from his paper. What was strange in that? This wasn't the first time he'd remained away all night, was it? If I was to give way to such worries I might just as well put on skirts and be done with it.

But my phantoms, however foolish, refused to be laid. I got dressed in a hurry, anxious to escape from this room, bright with sunlight, dark with uncanny threat. Before I went down, struck by a sentimental mood, I got some water from the sink in the hallway and poured it on his ridiculous geranium plant.

After a breakfast of free soup, I walked with Paddy and Lyons down to the Battery. We spent the afternoon there, lounging on one of the benches. It was as warm as a day in Spring and we sat blinking in the sunshine drowsily listening to each other's yarns about the sea and lazily watching the passing ships.

When the sun went down we returned to Tommy the Priest's. On the way back I remembered this was Jimmy's pay day and wondered if he would show up. He owed me some money which I hoped would be forthcoming. Otherwise the night was liable to prove an uneventful one. And a farewell bust-up was imperative because Paddy and Lyons would have to go on board ship the following day if they wanted to make the next trip.

The evening didn't pass off as dully as we had feared. Old McDonald, the printer, was in a festive mood and invited us to join him. Two of the telegraph operators, out of a job at that time, had borrowed some money somewhere and were anxious to return the many treats they had received from us in the past. So the time whiled away very pleasantly.

It was shortly after midnight when Jimmy came in. As soon as I saw his face I knew that something had happened to him, something very serious. He was incredibly haggard and pale, and there were deep lines of suffering about his mouth and eyes. His eyes--I can't describe them. There was nothing behind them. He nodded and took his place at the bar beside us. Then he spoke, asked us what we'd have, in a strained, forced voice as though it cost him a tremendous effort to talk. He took whiskey himself, poured out a glass brim full, and downed it straight. Big John changed a bill for him, and without looking at me, he held out the couple of dollars he owed me. I put them in my pocket. Jimmy motioned to Big John and called for another round. A spell of silence was on the whole barroom. Everyone there knew him well. They had all joked with him during the week about his being on the wagon, but they had secretly admired his firmness of will. Now they stared at him with genuine regret that he should have fallen. Their faces grew sad. They had done the same thing themselves so many times. They understood.

"Jimmy!" He caught the reproach in my voice and turned to me with a twisted smile. "It doesn't matter," he said. "Nothing matters." His voice became harsh. "Don't forget what you said about my lectures and start in yourself." He immediately felt sorry for having said this. "No, Art, I don't mean that. Never mind what I say. I'm upset--about something."

"Tell me what it is, Jimmy. Maybe I can help."

"Help?" He laughed hysterically. "No, no help please. After all, why shouldn't I tell you now? You're bound to find out sooner or later. They'll all know it." He indicated the others who, feeling that Jimmy wanted to be alone with me, had taken their drinks to a table in the rear and were sitting around talking in low, constrained voices. Jimmy blurted out: "My job, Art, is gone to hell!"

"What!" I pretended more astonishment than I felt. I had guessed what the trouble was.

"Yes, they asked me to quit--politely requested. Edwards was very nice about it--very kind--very charitable." He put all the bitterness of his heart into these last words.

"The rotten swine!"

"Oh no, Art, it wasn't his fault. If they hadn't--fired me--I'd have had to resign anyway. I--I couldn't do the work."

"That's all nonsense, Jimmy. Well, cheer up. All said and done, it's only a job the less. You can always get another for the asking."

He looked at me with a sort of wild scorn in his eyes. "Can't you understand any better than that? What do I care for the job itself? It isn't that. I tell you I couldn't do the work! I tried and tried. What I wrote was rot. I couldn't get any news. No initiative--no imagination--no character--no courage! All gone. Nothing left--not even cleverness. No memory even!" He stopped, breathing hard, the perspiration glistening on his forehead. "It came to me gradually--the realization. I couldn't believe it. I had been so sure of myself all these years. All I needed was a chance. It had been so easy for me in the past--long ago. These last few days I've guessed the truth. I've been going crazy. Last night I walked--walked and walked--thinking--and finally--I knew!" He paused, choking back a sob, his face twitching convulsively with the effort he made to control himself. Then he uttered a cracked sound intended for a laugh. "I'm done--burnt out--wasted! It's time to dump the garbage. Nothing here." He tapped his head with a silly gesture and laughed again. I began to be afraid he really was going mad. "No, Art, it isn't the job that's lost. I'm lost!"

"Now you're talking like a fool!" I spoke roughly, trying to shake him out of this mood.

"I won't talk any more," he said quite calmly. "Don't worry. I'm all shot to pieces--no sleep." He broke down suddenly and turned away from me. "But it's hell, Art, to realize all at once--you're dead!"

I put my arm around his shoulders. "Have a drink, Jimmy. Hey you, John, a little service!" What else was there to do? Life had jammed the clear, cruel mirror in front of his eyes and he had recognized himself--in that pitiful thing he saw. "Have a drink, Jimmy, and forget it. Take a real drink!" I urged. What else was there to do?

After we had had a couple at the bar, Jimmy filling his glass to the brim each time, I led him in back and we sat down at the table with the crowd. More drinks were immediately forthcoming, and it wasn't long before Jimmy became very drunk. He didn't say anything but his eyes glazed, his lips drooped loosely, his head wagged uncertainly from side to side. I saw he'd had enough and I hoped his tired brain had been numbed to a forgetful oblivion.

"Come on to bed, Jimmy," I shook him by the arm.

He stared at me vacantly. "Bed--yes--sleep! sleep!" he mumbled, and came with me willingly enough. I helped him up the stairs to the room and lit the lamp. He sat on the side of the bed, swaying, unlacing his shoes with difficulty. Presently he began to weep softly to himself. "It's you, Alice--cause of all this--damn you--no--didn't

mean that--beg pardon," he muttered. He lifted his head and saw me sitting on the other bed. "One word advice, Art--never get married--all rotten, all of 'em--"

This was something new. "What do you know about marriage?" I asked curiously. "Nothing from experience, surely."

He winked at me with drunken cunning. "Don't I, though! Not half! Never told you that, what? Never told you what happened--Cape Town?"

"No, you never did. What was it?"

"Might s'well tell Art--best friend--tell you everything tonight--all over. Yes--married in England--English girl, pretty's picture--big blue eyes--just before war--took her South Africa with me, 'n left her in Cape Town when I went to front. I was called back to Cape Town s'denly--found her with staff officer--dirty swine! No chance for doubt--didn't expect me to turn up--saw them with my own eyes--*flagrante delictu*, you know--dirty swine of a staff officer! Good bye, Jimmy Anderson! All over! Drink! Drink! Forget!" He blubbered to himself, his face a grotesque masque of tragedy.

In a flash it came back to me how he'd always stopped in the stories of his life at the point where he'd commenced drinking. Even at his drunkest he'd always ended the history there by saying abruptly: "and then--something happened." I'd never attached much importance to it--thought he merely wanted to suggest a mysterious reason as an excuse for his tobogganing. Now, I knew. Who could doubt the truth of his statements, knowing all he had been through that day? He was in a mood for truth. So this was the something which happened! Here was real tragedy.

Real tragedy! And there he was sobbing, hiccuping, rolling his eyes stupidly, scratching with limp fingers at the tears which ran down and tickled the sides of his nose. I felt a mad desire to laugh.

"I suppose you and she were divorced?" I asked after a pause.

"No--I couldn't--no proof--no money. Besides, what'd I care about divorce? Never want to marry again--never love anyone else." He wept more violently than ever.

"But didn't she get a divorce?"

"No, she's too cute for that--thinks Aunt Mary'll leave me money--and I'll drink myself to death. No," he interrupted himself hastily, "can't be that--not s'bad s' that--not Alice--no, no, mustn't say that--not right for me to say that--don't know her reason--never can tell--about women. Damn shoes!" He gave up the attempt to get his shoes off and flung himself on the bed, fully dressed. In a minute he was dead to the world and snoring. I left him and went downstairs.

Most of the people in the back room were asleep, but Paddy and Lyons and the operators were still drinking at one table, and I sat down with them. I talked at random on every subject that came up, seeking to forget Jimmy and his woes, for a time at least. His two confessions that night had got on my nerves.

Later on I must have dozed, for I was jolted out of a half dream by a sharp cracking smash in the back yard. Everyone was awake and cursing in an instant. Big John appeared from behind the curtain, grumbling: "Dot's right! Leave bottle on the fire escape, you fellers! Dot's right! Und I have to sweep up."

We heard someone racing down the stairs and Jimmy burst into the room. His face was livid, his eyes popping out of his head. He rushed to the chair beside me and sat down, shaking, his teeth chattering as if he had a chill. I told Big John to bring him a drink.

"What's the trouble now, Jimmy?" I asked him when he'd calmed down a little. He appeared to be quite sober after his sleep.

"The geranium--" he began, his lips trembling, his eyes filling up.

"So that's what fell down just now, is it?"

"Yes, I woke up, and I remembered I'd forgotten to water it. I got up and went to get the water. The window was open. I must have stumbled over something. I put out my hand to steady myself. It was so dark I couldn't see. I knocked it out on the fire escape. Then I heard it crash in the yard." He put his hands over his face and cried heart-brokenly like a sick child whose only remaining toy has been smashed. Not drunken tears this time, but real tears which made all of us at the table blink our eyes and swear fiercely at nothing.

After a while he grew quiet again, attempted a smile, asked our pardons for having created a foolish scene. He stared at his drink standing untouched on the table in front of him; but never made any motion to take it, didn't seem to realize what it was. For fully fifteen minutes he sat and stared, as still as stone, never moving his eyes, never even seeming to breathe. Then he got up from his chair and walked slowly to the door like a man in a trance. As he was going out he turned to me and said: "I'm tired, Art. I think I'll go to sleep," and something like a wan smile trembled on his pale lips. He left the door open behind him and I heard him climbing the stairs, and the slam of our door as he closed it behind him.

A buzz of conversation broke out as if his going had lifted a weight of silence off the roomful of men. Then it happened--a swish, a sickish thud as of a heavy rock dropping into thick mud. We looked wildly at one another. We knew. We rushed into the hall and out to the yard. There it was--a motionless, dark huddle of clothes, a splintered, protruding bone or two, a widening pool of blood black against the grey flags--Jimmy!

The sky was pale with the light of dawn. Tomorrow had come.



CORRECTING SOME ERRORS IN ANNALS OF O'NEILL (PART I)

"It is extraordinarily moving to find the inmost track of a man's life and to decipher the signs he has left us." Saul Bellow, *The New York Review of Books*, Feb. 17, 1983.

Eugene O'Neill was generally critical of what was written about him. When his first biographer, Barrett H. Clark, sent him a sketch based on a number of sources--on interviews and articles in newspapers and magazines, on material drawn from questioning O'Neill's friends and associates--the playwright wrote back that the sketch "is legend. It isn't really true. It isn't I" (*Clark*, p. 7).

Decades later he sounded a similar note while reminiscing about his life to Hamilton Basso, who was writing a "Profile" of him for *The New Yorker*. (This was the last time he ever was interviewed for public print.) After his wife Carlotta Monterey had interjected, in one of his sessions with Basso, that "nearly everything" that had been written about him was "all wrong," O'Neill added: "What Carlotta just said is true. Nearly everything that has been said about me *is* all wrong" (*Basso*, 3/13/48).

Since he felt this way, you would imagine that he must have made some efforts to correct the record; yet, on the whole, the opposite appears true. According to Barrett Clark, Miss Monterey once told him that she had "discussed with her husband the anecdotes I had picked up from time to time. She had had 'quite a talk about these things, and I begged him to take the time some day and go over them with you, straightening out the anecdotes, putting "truth" in them! He said, "Nonsense, what do I care what they say--the further from the truth they have it, the more privacy I have! It's like a mask!"" (*Clark*, p. 8)

O'Neill did more than take comfort from his "mask"; he helped to create it. From years of researching his life to write a comprehensive biography, I found a good many errors in print, chiefly about the years before he became famous, and it turned out that some of them could be traced to O'Neill himself. He gave misleading impressions or accounts, for instance, of his seagoing career, of his suicide attempt at Jimmy the Priest's (the waterfront dive that would give him material for both *Anna Christie* and *The Iceman Cometh*) and of his brief fling at acting with his father in vaudeville. By and large, however, others were responsible for the errors that I have noted and corrected

here. (For the sources identified by a catchword in the text, see the list of works cited at the end of the article.)

* * *

Forebears. "I know little about my father's parents," Eugene replied to a writer who was working on a monograph of James O'Neill. "Or about his brothers and sisters. He had two older brothers, I think. I remember him saying one brother served in the Civil War ... was wounded, never fully recovered and died right after the war. He had three sisters, all dead now [in 1940], whom he never saw except when a theatrical tour brought him to the Middle West where they lived" (*San Francisco*).

In one respect, regarding the sisters, O'Neill's account is inaccurate. According to Mary Keenan, a cousin of the playwright, James O'Neill had five sisters, not three, while yet another relative, Manley W. Mallett, who has done extensive genealogical research on the O'Neills, discovered that there were six. The following family history is partly based on Mr. Mallett's summary of his findings. (Letter from MWM to LS, 11/12/74; for previous accounts of James O'Neill's parents and siblings, see: *Bowen*, pp. 23-24; *Alexander*, pp. 29-30; *Gelb*, pp. 20-22; and *Sheaffer I*, pp. 27-28.)

James O'Neill's parents were third or fourth cousins, with Mary, the mother, hailing from the "Black Nialls" and the father, Edward, who was about twenty years older than his wife, from the "Red Nialls." Fleeing from the potato famine in Ireland, they sailed about 1850 with their eight children on the *Great India* to Quebec, a voyage of six weeks, and settled in Buffalo, where their ninth and final child was born. Richard, the oldest one, died relatively young, while the family still lived in Buffalo. The other children, in the order of birth, were Josephine, Anna, Edward, the Civil War veteran; James, Mary, Delia, Anastasia (Mr. Mallett's grandmother), and Margaret.

After the family had lived in Buffalo a few years, the father, leaving his family to shift for themselves, returned to Ireland, where he died soon afterward from poisoning. One of Mr. Mallett's sources of information, his uncle Frank A. Kunckel (a son of Anastasia), told him that the elder O'Neill was "poisoned by saleratus bisquits baked by his favorite niece. She had mistaken a can of strychnine for baking soda."

Eugene O'Neill, who had heard about the poisoning from his father, mentions it in a secret document he wrote, intended solely and strictly for his own eyes, in which he summarized his parents' family backgrounds and their early years together. The paper was an attempt on O'Neill's part to organize his thoughts about the forces that had shaped his elders and, in turn, himself. The paper reads, in part:

"M [his mother]--Lonely life--spoiled before marriage ... fashionable convent girl--religious & naive ... ostracism after marriage due to husband's profession--lonely life after marriage ... husband man's man--heavy drinker--out with men until small hours every night ... stingy about money due to his childhood experience with grinding poverty after his father deserted large family to return to Ireland to spend last days (He died of poison taken by mistake although there is suspicion of suicide here in a fit of insane depression--guilty conscience for desertion (?)) (In later days of his life husband periodically talks when depressed of doing as his father did, deserting family, going back to Ireland to die ...)" (*Sheaffer II*, pp. 509-12).

In *Long Day's Journey Into Night* the playwright-son again referred to his grandfather's abrupt death when he has James Tyrone (read James O'Neill) say: "When I was ten my father deserted my mother and went back to Ireland to die. Which he did soon enough, and deserved to, and I hope he's roasting in hell. He mistook rat poison for flour, or sugar, or something. There was gossip it wasn't by mistake but that's a lie. No one in my family ever--"

By 1860, after nearly ten years in Buffalo, Mary O'Neill was living in Cincinnati with her younger children, including James; the older ones, while still quite young, had left their hard-pressed mother to strike out on their own. "The eldest daughter Josephine," Mr. Mallett writes, "was said to have been married at the age of 13 to a prosperous saloon keeper from Covington, Ky. In any event, she apparently was well established in the Cincinnati area before her father died and no doubt was instrumental in moving the family from Buffalo."

Mr. Mallett next alludes to a published interview with James O'Neill in which he said that when aged about fourteen he went to work for a brother-in-law who dealt in military uniforms in Norfolk, Virginia, during the Civil War. "He was a man of liberal tastes," said James, "and, liking the theater, took me with him twice a week. It was then that I formed my taste for the theater. When the war was over my brother-in-law sold out his business and moved back to Cincinnati, and I went with him" (*Theater Magazine*, April 1908).

"If James O'Neill's story of living in Norfolk with an older sister is true," Mr. Mallett continues, "only Josephine could meet the description. As I knew her at age 80, she was ... tall, erect, energetic, well-read and cultured. She seemed to have always lived well, but never had any children, and might well have taken an interest in this young brother." Apparently overlooking that he knew this great aunt and his grandmother only in their final years, Mr. Mallett adds, "Neither Josephine nor Stasia spoke with the Irish brogue which James struggled to overcome [as an actor]."

Since James' contacts with his sisters and their families appear to have been minimal after he had turned actor, it seems likely that his relatives tended at once to admire and resent him, an assumption that is verified by Frank Kunkel. In a letter to his nephew, Mr. Mallett, in 1937, he said: "I can still see him strutting across the stage and hear him call out, 'The world is mine!' He married a Cleveland Society Girl who was close to a Millionairess, and that [was] the reason we never saw or became intimately acquainted with him, and as far as [his being our] uncle, us poor kids might just as well not had an uncle."

"My uncle [James O'Neill] hardly knew his sister Stacia's married name." Rather cryptically, he added, "But if my father, your Granddad, had been a little reasonable, things might have been better."

Turning his thoughts to another side of the family of whom he was critical, Mr. Kunkel wrote: "The Platzes--that's Aunt Maggie's family--always wanted to be High Society and always lived in the Silkstocking Neighborhoods. But they never really crashed up there."

Aunt Maggie--more formally, Margaret Platz--became a footnote in James O'Neill's history when, all in black, she suddenly appeared, unexpected, uninvited, at his funeral in New London, Connecticut, in 1920. Arriving in midservice at the church, still carrying her suitcase, she looked around with an irate expression before joining the deceased's immediate family. Much to the annoyance of Ella O'Neill and her two sons, Mrs. Platz wanted a final look at her renowned brother; in the end, the coffin was opened briefly for her sake at the cemetery. That same day, after Mrs. O'Neill had retired to her hotel suite, Mrs. Platz called on her to ask about her brother's will; on learning that he had left everything to his widow, she lost no time in returning home.

A few years later her daughter, Alma O'Neill Platz, who had literary ambitions, published a newspaper article that was widely reprinted in which she reminisced, under the name of "Alma O'Neill," about the celebrated playwright as her "mother's favorite nephew" (*New York Post*, 12/19/25).

How O'Neill felt about the Platz family can easily be imagined. In reply to the writer of the James O'Neill monograph, who had asked about these relatives, the playwright said, "I have no information about Mrs. Platt [the writer had her name wrong] except that she lived in St. Louis, not in Cincinnati" (in the monograph and *Gelb*, p. 432). This was untrue, for Mrs. Platz had lived--and died--in the Ohio city. Evidently O'Neill hoped to prevent the writer from locating, and interviewing, any of his aunt's children, particularly "Alma O'Neill."

* * *

Home Base. The nearest thing to a home the James O'Neill family ever had, the Monte Cristo Cottage in New London, Connecticut, which inspired the settings of both *Ah, Wilderness!* and *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, was scarcely the showplace some accounts suggest. From *Bowen* (p. 32) we learn that "some reports said it cost \$50,000," while *Alexander* (p. 12) says the report of a Boston paper that "the house had cost \$40,000--a fortune in 1883--could not have been far off," an estimate repeated by *Carpenter*

(p. 21) and *Raleigh* (p. 90). In reality, the cottage was put together, at a cost of a few thousand, from several structures already on the site--a combination store-and-dwelling and a onetime schoolhouse (*Sheaffer I*, p. 48). The New London *Day* on September 1, 1897, described it as "quaint, picturesque but old-fashioned and plain."

* * *

Dead Child. In a serious error, *Bowen* (p. 32) says: "In March of 1885, while on tour with his parents, little Edmund [the O'Neills' second child] contracted measles and died." Actually, had the child been with his parents at the time, his fate would have been different, although it's impossible to guess the course his life might have taken. Following, at any rate, is what really happened:

Yielding to her husband's plea that he was lonely without her, Ella O'Neill left year-and-a-half old Edmund and Jamie, aged six, in her mother's care in New York to join her husband for a time as he toured in the West (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 16-17). During her absence, Jamie caught the measles, and then the baby, after Jamie had ignored orders to keep away from him, fell victim. As soon as the parents in Denver heard about the children, Mrs. O'Neill rushed to catch the first train home, but before she could, word came of Edmund's death--a death that would shadow the family members all their lives. Ella, never able to forgive herself for having left the children, also continued over the years to blame her husband for urging her to join him, Jamie for infecting his brother. "I've always believed that Jamie did it on purpose," the mother says in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. "He was jealous of the baby. He hated him."

The circumstances of Edmund's death, a memory kept alive and exacerbated by Mrs. O'Neill's charges, were a major source of the intense guilt feelings within the family circle.

Had Edmund lived to adulthood, it seems doubtful that Eugene O'Neill would ever have been born. Against Ella's wishes, at her husband's urging and pleas, she had a third and final child to replace poor Edmund. When Eugene eventually learned that his mother had unwittingly become a morphine addict as a result of his birth, he inherited his full share of O'Neill guilt.

* * *

Mrs. O'Neill's Cancer. At some stage of her life Ella O'Neill had a mastectomy, but her son's biographers differ among themselves as to when this happened. Obviously, it is important to know when, for if she underwent the ordeal while relatively young, it undoubtedly would have had a more drastic effect on her outlook, on her personality, and, through her, on the family climate than if she had had cancer late in life. In 1887 Mr. and Mrs. O'Neill spent several months in Europe--on holiday, the actor told friends--but both *Bowen* (p. 32) and *Alexander* (p. 14) contend that the trip was made so that Ella could be operated on for cancer of the breast. According to the two writers, London and Paris had noted surgeons who specialized in the new operation. (*Alexander* also maintains that it was in this period that Ella became a drug addict, a statement contrary to evidence from various sources which indicated that she became addicted as a result of Eugene's birth a year later.) On the other hand, *Gelb* (p. 109) declares that the second time the O'Neills went abroad, in 1906, was the time Ella suffered from cancer and had the operation. None of the writers, however, documents or cites any sources for his or her account.

As it happens, two doctors' reports are extant (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 440-41) which establish that the surgery took place toward the end of her life. The reports follow in their entirety:

34 West 76 St. [New York City]

April 14, 1919

Dear Mr. O'Neil [sic],

I am enclosing a report of the pathologist in the findings of the specimen sent him. It shows a recurrence of the primary disease. We shall live in hopes that it may not recur again.

Very truly yours,
John Aspell (M.D.)

St. Vincent's Hospital--Dept. of Pathology
 Accession No. 2999
 March 28, 1919 Dr. Aspell
 Patient: Mrs. O'Neil [sic]

Div. Gynecology Tissue: Cicatrix (breast)
 Examine for: Pathology
 Chief symptoms: Nodule following breast amputation of about 6 mo. ago.
 Clinical diagnosis: Recurrent carcinoma
 Pathological report: Adeno Carcinoma

Alex Fraser
 Pathologist

End of doctors' reports. So far as is known, Mrs. O'Neill never suffered a further recurrence of cancer before her death in 1922.

* * *

Phantom Railroad. Around the turn of the century James O'Neill employed a press agent known as A. Toxen Worm (full name, Conrad Henrik Aage Toxen Worm, a Dane) who, like many of his fraternity, tended to embroider on fact and even to weave whole cloth from thin air. Seeking to foist on the public the illusion that the actor lived as munificently offstage as in his role as the Count of Monte Cristo, Mr. Worm told the press that Mr. O'Neill "is now having prepared the plans and specifications for a magnificent library which he is to present to New London. The estimated cost of this temple of literature will not be far short of a million dollars." The New London *Telegraph* published the story on January 3, 1900, under the headline: NEWS THAT IS FALSE.

Undeterred, the incorrigible Mr. Worm issued a story that Mr. O'Neill had given his 12-year-old son a junior-size railroad, consisting of an engine and car large enough to carry Eugene and a companion that ran on hundreds of yards of track around the family's summer home in New London. Although the plaything, which would have cost a few thousand dollars (today, over a hundred thousand), was another of the agent's fabrications (*Sheaffer I*, p. 47), the story appeared at length in the New York *Herald* on December 9, 1900, together with a drawing of the alleged railroad.

While the story of the million-dollar "temple of literature," published only in the New London daily, was quickly forgotten, the railroad fable was picked up by other newspapers, and twenty-five years later it again figured widely in print when Alma O'Neill Platz wrote about Eugene as "my best beloved playmate." (In reality, she scarcely ever saw him.)

Her story, which originally appeared in the New York *Post* on December 19, 1925, reads in part: "His father had a railroad engine, child's size, built for him. A track was laid on the grounds surrounding their cottage. Gene had to be both fireman and engineer to enjoy this toy, but to him it was all play ... the engine consumed half a ton of coal a day. The miles he traveled in that engine, both actually and in fancy!"

As a result of Miss Platz's reminiscences in the *Post* and other papers, the phantom railroad rolls again in *Alexander* (p. 19) and *Gelb* (pp. 62-63). Offhand, this whole matter may seem unimportant, but the Worm-ridden story serves to contradict O'Neill's portrait of his father in *Long Day's Journey Into Night* as miserly. How could James O'Neill have been tightfisted if he gave his young son so costly a toy?

* * *

Fall from Innocence. In *Long Day's Journey Into Night* we are told that Edmund Tyrone (read Eugene O'Neill) first learned of his mother's drug addiction when she, out of morphine, dashed from their cottage one night and tried to drown herself in the nearby river. "It was right after that," Edmund recalls, "that Papa and Jamie decided they couldn't hide it from me any more. Jamie told me. I called him a liar!... But I knew he wasn't lying. (His voice trembles, his eyes begin to fill with tears.) God, it made everything in life seem rotten!"

Carlotta Monterey, the playwright's widow, gives a different version. According to her, he returned unexpectedly from school one day to the family's New York apartment to find his mother injecting herself with a hypodermic needle, after which his father and brother explained that she was a victim of morphinism, that her addiction had begun innocently with his birth.

Since we know that O'Neill revised reality in some respects, for structural and dramatic purposes, in writing his autobiographical drama, Miss Monterey's story can not be dismissed out of hand. At the same time the writer knows from first-hand experience that his widow, in recalling their life together and various things he had told her, tended to edit fact and not infrequently to indulge in outright invention.

Although *Bowen* (p. 36), *Gelb* (pp. 72-73) and *Carpenter* (p. 28) follow her account, the bulk of circumstantial evidence, including one of her details, suggests that *Long Day's Journey* is closer to what actually happened. On the Sunday following Eugene's disillusionment, as he and his father were descending the stairway at home, bound for Mass, the widow has said, Eugene suddenly declared that he would never again go to church. Mr. O'Neill, her story continues, grabbed his son and tried to take him along by force, but he finally had to desist as his son fought back. The struggle on the stairway could have occurred only at the cottage in New London, not at the New York hotel apartment.

O'Neill learned about his mother, everyone agrees, while in his early teens. In 1903--when he was nearly fifteen--the summer began in New London with a dreary month of rain, fog, and foghorn. Most likely it was during this period that Ella O'Neill, marooned at home for weeks and unable to renew her supply of morphine, ran from the house in her nightdress for the river. The O'Neills had endured other stretches of bad weather in the house by the Thames River, but this time, evidently, the prospect of remaining there all summer became intolerable (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 87-89). Jamie suddenly took a job with a stock company in Massachusetts, while Mr. O'Neill shipped his horses and carriage to New York and, before leaving town, told friends he was taking his wife and younger son to the Adirondacks.

* * *

Interviewer Nods. While being interviewed for a series of articles in the New York *News* entitled "The Odyssey of Eugene O'Neill," January 24-30, 1932, the playwright recalled at one point that he had prospected for gold in Spanish Honduras in 1909 and 1910. Mischievously, apparently to test the alertness of the writer, O'Neill said that he had returned home by way of the Panama Canal. And thus it appeared in the *News*, subsequently in *Gelb* (p. 137), but the Canal, under construction since 1904, was not opened until 1914, a few years after O'Neill had left Honduras.

* * *

The Seaman. The smell of salt air is seldom missing from O'Neill's writings; indeed, ships and the sea bulk so prominently in his works that one gets the impression he must have followed the sea for years. "Bound East for Cardiff" and "Thirst," "Fog" and "In the Zone," "Ile" and "The Moon of the Caribbees" all take place entirely on the water, while three other one-acters, "The Long Voyage Home," "Warnings," and "Where the Cross Is Made," also have a maritime flavor. Further, shipboard episodes or the lure of the sea figure importantly in many of his long works, from *Beyond the Horizon* and *Diff'rent to Gold* and *Anna Christie*, from *The Hairy Ape*, *The Fountain*, and *Marco Millions* to *Strange Interlude*, *Mourning Becomes Electra*, and *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. In reality, though, the playwright's seagoing career was surprisingly short; he shipped out as a crew member less often than he led us to believe.

Reminiscing years afterward about a voyage he had made in 1910 on a Norwegian wind-jammer, the *Charles Racine*, from Boston to Buenos Aires (a two-month sailing he always treasured as a high point of his life), O'Neill said: "It happened quite naturally--that voyage--as a consequence of what was really inside of me--what I really wanted, I suppose. I struck up one day by the wharf in Boston with a bunch of sailors, mostly Norwegians and Swedes. I wanted to ship with somebody and they took me that afternoon to the captain. Signed up, and the next thing we were off" (*Boston Post*, 8/29/20).

Taking their cue from his words, a good many articles and quite a few books, including *Bowen* (pp. 45-46), *Alexander* (pp. 138-42) and *Gelb* (pp. 144, 148-52), draw colorful pictures of O'Neill splicing ropes, clambering up among the rigging, and reefing sails while the vessel pitched and swayed. The fact is, though, his presence on the wind-jammer did not happen as casually as he said, nor was he a regular member of the crew (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 160-70).

While serving as assistant manager for *The White Sister*, in which his father was touring, Eugene, always drawn to the sea, hung around the waterfront when the drama played a fortnight in Boston. He was particularly attracted to the *Charles Racine*, among the last of the old sailing ships, and in talking with some of its hands he learned that while it was not certified to carry passengers, it sometimes unofficially, for a price, took along a man or two who occupied an in-between status. In the end, O'Neill, with his father's approval, paid \$75 for his passage to Buenos Aires (no small sum in those days) with the understanding that he was to help in the lighter duties, nothing hazardous, at the captain's discretion. Rather than being squeezed into the fo'c'sle with the crew, O'Neill and a friend of his, who likewise paid for his passage, had a small cabin to themselves (usually, the sick bay) and they took mess with the ship's officers.

In a moment of truth-telling years later, O'Neill said, "I landed in Buenos Aires a gentleman, so called, and wound up a bum on the docks in fact" (New York *Herald-Tribune*, 8/8/26). But scarcely any of his chroniclers seem to have noticed the first part of his remark.

O'Neill arrived in Buenos Aires at the start of August 1910 and left in latter March of the following year. During the period, he often told interviewers, he made a round-trip between Buenos Aires and Durban "tending mules on a cattle steamer," but he was not allowed to go ashore in South Africa since, as required by local law, he did not have at least a hundred dollars. There is reason, however, for doubting that he ever made such a voyage. His name does not appear among any of the crews on file with Britain's General Register and Record Office of Shipping and Seaman for vessels that made the round-trip during the period in question (he once identified the ship as British). Although the voyage, both ways, would have taken about two months, "tending mules" was all he ever said about it, yet he had a good deal more to say about ships on which he served a much shorter time. When, furthermore, he signed on the British freighter that carried him home from Argentina, he stated that this was his "first" ship, meaning his first berth as a regular deckhand. Since he was a "workaway," anxious to make the trip to New York, he received the nominal pay of one shilling a month, not, as one biography says, \$25 a month.

Some ten years after he had quit the sea, he told a reporter that he could not recall the name of the tramp freighter that had brought him back from Buenos Aires--a vessel that became the model for the fictional *S. S. Glencairn* in some of his one-acters. Apparently he wanted to prevent anyone from tracking down and interviewing some of his old shipmates, for years still later he did name the vessel, but whether he or his interviewer was at fault, it appeared in the New York *News* (6/25/32), and subsequently in *Gelb* (pp. 158-61), as the *S. S. Ikalis*. In reality, he returned on the *S. S. Ikala*, a sister ship of the other one (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 185-87).

The remainder of his seafaring consisted of a round-trip to England on passenger ships--shipping out as an ordinary seaman (not, as one biographer says, as an able-bodied seaman) on the *S. S. New York* and returning as an A.B. on the *S. S. Philadelphia*. In summary, excluding the *Charles Racine*, where he had a special status, and the questionable turn-around trip to South Africa, Eugene O'Neill spent a total, on the *Ikala* and the two liners, of only about six weeks as a regular, *bona fide* seaman.

* * *

Jimmy the Priest's. Between ships, O'Neill used to hole up at a waterfront saloon and flophouse in lower Manhattan known as "Jimmy the Priest's" after its proprietor, an enigmatic figure who looked rather clerical and yet, for all his quiet manner, had an intimidating air. His name, though unknown to any who frequented his place at 252 Fulton Street, was James J. Condon; his counterpart would later appear as Johnny the Priest in

Anna Christie, with the opening scene of the play modeled on his saloon.

"Jimmy the Priest's," in O'Neill's words, "certainly was a hell hole. It was awful. One couldn't go any lower. Gorky's Night Lodging was an ice cream parlor by comparison. The house was almost coming down and the principal housewreckers were vermin" (*New York Times*, 12/21/24, and *New York World*, 11/9/24).

But he dramatized the place, he exaggerated; it was much sturdier than his words suggest. About a hundred years old when he took refuge there in 1911, the building, starting in the early 1920s, was occupied by a ship's chandler that loaded its floors with heavy maritime machinery and supplies until it was razed in 1966, together with other structures of the area, to make way for the World Trade Center (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 189-92).

In the only O'Neill short story ever published, "Tomorrow" (*Seven Arts Magazine*, June, 1917), set in Tommy the Priest's, a place similar to Condon's, the author in writing of his waterfront period took liberties with fact. The story has been accepted, however, by some of his chroniclers as more or less factual (*Bowen*, p. 49; *Alexander*, pp. 149-51, and *Gelb*, pp. 161-63). It is of minor significance that the flophouse accommodations at Condon's were cruder, more basic, than in the story, but it is important that "Tomorrow" helps to give, by implication, a misleading impression of the time O'Neill felt so forlorn and desperate that he tried to kill himself.

Told in the first person, the story ends with the narrator's ineffectual roommate, "Jimmy Tomorrow," who constantly vowed to get a grip on himself and reform tomorrow, committing suicide by jumping from an upper window at Tommy the Priest's. Since a friend and fellow-lodger of O'Neill, one James Findlater Byth, nicknamed "Jimmy Tomorrow," did end his life in such a way, the story leaves the impression that Eugene was living there at the time. Lending weight to the notion, O'Neill years later disclosed to George Jean Nathan, as the latter reported, that he had attempted suicide through an overdose of Veronal at Jimmy the Priest's "a month or so after James Beith (a friend of O'Neill's) took his life" (*Nathan*, pp. 35-36). By now, since Nathan's account has been followed by *Bowen* (pp. 42-44), *Alexander* (p. 154), *Gelb* (pp. 186-87), and *Carpenter* (pp. 31-32), it is universally accepted that O'Neill's suicidal mood was partly induced by depression over his friend's death. In reality, Byth (not Beith) killed himself more than a year after O'Neill's skirmish with death and his permanent departure from the Fulton Street dive" (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 211-14). In fact, Byth was chiefly responsible for saving Eugene from his suicide attempt.

The future playwright first met Byth when the latter became James O'Neill's press agent about 1907. Although Eugene, a shy, wary soul, was usually slow to make friends, he took an early liking to the agent, a cheerful bantam with an inordinate thirst for liquor, a whimsical sense of humor, with himself often the butt of his stories, and, as he told it, a colorful, adventurous past. In time Eugene heard about the immense family estate in Scotland ("heavily mortgaged," the other admitted), an extensive journalistic career, not only in Edinburgh and London but as a Reuters correspondent in the Boer War, and his decline in family regard as he became the black sheep of the Byths (*Alexander*, pp. 115-16).

Although Eugene doubted some parts of the other's history, his doubts didn't go far enough (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 129-31). The son of a struggling upholsterer in a coal-mining area of Cornwall, Byth never had a privileged upbringing and, while he may have worked obscurely as a reporter in Britain, he never served as a Boer War correspondent. His made-up memories of the war (O'Neill would draw on them in writing *The Iceman Cometh*) were acquired while working as a publicist for "The Great Boer Spectacle," a theatrical extravaganza shown at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 and later at New York's Brighton Beach. Down on his luck a few years afterward, from drinking himself out of jobs, he joined his good friend, the youngest of the O'Neills, at Jimmy the Priest's.

By naming Byth as a factor in his suicidal mood, Eugene showed that the other man was important and dear to him, a fact emphasized by his several attempts to give "Jimmy Tomorrow" literary immortality, first in "Tomorrow," next in "Exorcism," a one-acter based on the author's near-fatal move, and at last definitively in *The Iceman Cometh*. Further, by linking Byth to his own desperate act, O'Neill used him as a coverup of the real reason he had felt suicidal. Shortly before he took the Veronal in the early days

of 1912, he had gone to a whorehouse, with several men as witnesses, to provide evidence for his first wife's divorce suit against him. The episode had left him feeling degraded, in the darkest of moods, so disgusted with his past and hopeless about his future that death seemed the only solution.

The suicide of another regular of the Fulton Street saloon, a burly seaman named Driscoll who was one of Eugene's favorite drinking companions, is also mentioned by *Gelb* (pp. 171, 186) and *Carpenter* (p. 31) in connection with O'Neill's attempt. Driscoll, whose image recurs in the *Glencairn* playlets and most importantly as "Yank" in *The Hairy Ape*, was, in O'Neill's words, a "giant of a man, and absurdly strong. He thought a whole lot of himself.... It seemed to give him mental poise to be able to dominate the stokehold" (*New York Times*, 12/21/24). Yet, for all his swaggering self-confidence, he jumped overboard in midocean; but here again, as in Byth's case, his suicide had nothing to do with O'Neill's despair, for he vanished into the sea in August 1915, several years after O'Neill's ascent from the lower depths (*Sheaffer I*, p. 335).

Like Driscoll and Byth, Chris Christopherson, an aging seaman reduced to bargeman, was another Fulton Street hanger-on who came to an untimely end, but his was accidental. "He had followed the sea so long," O'Neill said, "that he got sick at the thought of it ... he spent his time getting drunk and cursing the sea. 'Dat ole davil,' he called it. Finally he got a job as captain of a coal barge....

"His end in real life was just one of the many tragedies that punctuate the history of Jimmy the Priest's. Everybody got very drunk at Jimmy's one Christmas Eve and Chris was very much in the party ... [He] tottered away about 2 o'clock in the morning for his barge. The next morning he was found frozen on a cake of ice between the piles and the dock. In trying to board the barge, he stumbled on the plank and fell over."

O'Neill's account, which appeared originally in the *New York World* (11/9/24) and the *New York Times* (12/21/24), is repeated in *Bowen* (p. 117), *Alexander* (p. 269), and *Gelb* (p. 170). However, whether O'Neill was misinformed or as a born dramatist could not keep from embellishing the story, Chris fell overboard not at Christmastime but in October 1917, and his body was found floating a week later near the Statue of Liberty. In any case, like Byth and Driscoll, he helped to inspire O'Neill's writings; a few years after his death he appeared under his real name, still cursing "dat ole davil," in *Anna Christie* (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 202-03).

* * *

Two Poems. Shortly after his last turn at sea, in 1911, O'Neill visited New London, where he had a reunion with friends of his on the two local newspapers, the *Telegraph* and the *Day*. Not long afterward, the *Telegraph* ran a poem entitled "Not Understood" whose author was given as "Unknown." Following is one of the stanzas:

Not understood. We gather false impressions
And hug them closer as the years go by,
Till virtues often seem to us transgressions;
And thus men rise and fall and live and die--
Not understood.

For several reasons--chiefly, he had ambitions as a poet and, further, "Not Understood" sounds like him--*Sheaffer I*, (p. 201) surmises that he was the author. In reality, the poem was written by Thomas Bracken, an Irishman who emigrated to Australia in the mid-19th century, and is well known Down Under. It seems likely, though, that Eugene came across the poem while on the beach in Buenos Aires--the international mix there included Australians--and that he brought it to the *Telegraph's* attention.

In another misattribution, *Sheaffer I* (p. 290) has O'Neill making up some lines that he inscribed for a friend in a copy of *Thirst*, his first volume of plays. Instead, the poem, which begins, "All that I had I brought," was written by Ernest Dowson.

* * *

Vaudeville Tour. To believe O'Neill, the weeks he and his brother toured with their

father in vaudeville in 1912, in a tabloid version of *Monte Cristo*, were a time of drunken hilarity. "The least said about those acting days," he wrote to a friend, "the better. The alcoholic content was as high as the acting was low. They graduated me from the Orpheum Circuit with a degree of Lousy Cum Laude" (EO to Charles O'Brien Kennedy, 10/29/38). And to another friend: "I am proud to say that I preserved my honor by never drawing a sober breath until the tour terminated. My brother and I had one grand time of it and I look back on it as one of the merriest periods of my life" (EO to Joseph A. McCarthy, 2/18/31).

Eugene's appearance with the troupe, he used to say, happened entirely by chance. His story, substantially, was as follows: While living at Jimmy the Priest's he found five dollars, ran it up to five hundred (a thousand in one version) at a gambling casino, threw a party for everyone at Condon's, where the liquor flowed like water, and he came to his senses a day or two later on a train bound for New Orleans. By coincidence, his story continues, his father was headlining there at the time in vaudeville; since Eugene was now virtually broke and his father refused to pay his return fare, he had no choice but to join the tour.

O'Neill's account of the tour as a farcical high point of his life can be found in *Alexander* (pp. 158-60) and *Gelb* (pp. 173-75, 181-85). One important fact he never mentioned was that his stint in vaudeville followed directly after his suicide attempt; had he linked the two developments together, his friends would rightly have suspected that he was glossing over a painful period of his life. Contrary, however, to most evidence that he underwent his crisis prior to New Orleans, *Gelb* (pp. 186-88) maintains that O'Neill, quitting the tour before its end, returned to Jimmy the Priest's and that it was during this period that he tried to kill himself.

O'Neill's picture of the circumstances under which he joined the vaudeville production and of his behavior--his brother's too--onstage and off is contradicted on practically all points by Charles Webster, a young actor with the troupe. A summary of his account follows:

In mid-January 1912, while the Dumas piece was playing in Memphis, Tennessee, members of the company noted that Mr. O'Neill appeared agitated, as a rumor spread among them that his younger son had suffered "some kind of misfortune." Soon afterward they heard that he had sent money to Eugene to join him, which he did in New Orleans, the next stop of their itinerary. As for the brothers' conduct, Webster said that if Eugene "gave the impression later on that the two of them pulled all kinds of funny things on stage, well, he was just making up a good story." The actor added that Jamie "practically always smelled of alcohol when he went on, but he was never staggering, it was impossible for the audience to tell he'd been drinking," while Eugene, he continued, "took a drink or two after a performance, but never before." It seemed to him that both brothers were "pretty respectful" toward their father (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 214-21).

* * *

Rival Reels. After half a lifetime of playing the Count of Monte Cristo, James O'Neill, in his final appearance, performed the role for the movie cameras in 1912 under the auspices of the Famous Players Film Company, newly organized by Adolph Zukor and Daniel Frohman. Despite publicity that the film would be made at great expense in Bermuda with well-known actors in the supporting cast, it was filmed at a cost of slightly over \$13,000 in ten days at sites in and around New York, with James the only name player in a cast that included his elder son. The New London *Telegraph* reported in an interview on August 13, 1912, that as Mr. O'Neill "recounted the way in which the scenes were laid, his voice shook with emotion and his mobile face took on the varied characteristics of his part." According to the report, he was offered \$10,000 outright for his interest in the film, but that he expected to make more from his twenty percent share of the profits.

Before long, when a three-reel *Monte Cristo* made by William Fox preceded the five-reel O'Neill film to the screen, the veteran actor realized he had made the wrong choice. It is not true, however, as reported by some movie historians, as well as *Gelb* (p. 220), that Famous Players withdrew their production after a few showings. Instead, the longer film was widely shown for several years, but it was never the money-maker its star had

hoped; Mr. O'Neill's share finally totaled close to four thousand (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 223-24)

* * *

Cub Reporter. After O'Neill had become famous, some of his friends in New London liked to recall that he was once considered a hopeless aspirant for success as a writer. It appears, in fact, from their reminiscences that his brief career on the local *Telegraph* set a new low in journalistic history. In an article that has been widely quoted, Malcolm Mollan, the *Telegraph* city editor, once recalled that he complimented the cub reporter on the way he had set the scene in a story before he, Mollan, added: "But would you mind finding out the name of the gentleman who carved the lady and whether the dame is his wife or daughter or who? And phone the hospital for a hint as to whether she is dead or discharged or what? Then put the facts into a hundred and fifty words and send this literary batik to the picture framers" (*Philadelphia Public Ledger*, 1/22/22).

Two veteran newspapermen, Arthur McGinley and Robert A. Woodworth, both of whom said that they were on the *Telegraph* at the same time as O'Neill, have added other details. McGinley, whom Eugene used to consider a wit, said that if the other was sent to cover an accident or a fire, he would return with an "Ode to Death." His description is almost complimentary compared with the article Woodworth wrote under the headline, "The World's Worst Reporter" (*Providence Journal*, 12/6/31). After sketching O'Neill as haunched meditatively over his typewriter without writing a word, he adds: "Night after night for a week or more it is the same story. Smoke and dream, smoke and dream!"

"Hey, Mall! When is that guy going to get busy and do some work?" one of us asked the city editor. "He sits in there and smokes, but he never turns in any copy. If he'd do something, some of the rest of us wouldn't have to run our legs off...."

The article runs on at length in this vein, but at a time when Woodworth and others were said to have run their "legs off" because of the unproductive cub reporter, Woodworth was on the rival newspaper, the *New London Day*. So, for that matter, was Art McGinley.

Apparently corroborating the legend of his incompetence, O'Neill himself cheerfully agreed once that he had been a "bum reporter." But what good writer ever looks back with pride on his fledgling efforts? Actually, the future playwright made a quite creditable start in journalism. Like virtually all novices, he overwrote in his eagerness to make an impression (hence Mollan's allusion to "literary batik"); but a close survey of the *Telegraph* in the few months Eugene was on the staff turns up a good many stories that, from internal evidence, appear to have been his--all this in addition to a score or so of poems, topical, humorous, at times serious, that he contributed to a special column of the paper (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 226-31, 233, 236).

Further, in direct contrast to the recollections of Woodworth *et al.*, Frederick P. Latimer, the paper's editor-in-chief, said of Eugene: "The four things about him that impressed me at once were his modesty, his native gentlemanliness, his wonderful eyes and his literary style. It was evident that this was no ordinary boy...." A man of good-will and independent thought, a lover of books, the editor, who was better equipped than Mollan and the others to appraise O'Neill, also said: "From flashes in the quality of the stuff he gave the paper and the poems and play manuscripts he showed me, I was so struck that I told his father Eugene did not have merely talent, but a very high order of genius" (*Clark*, pp. 18-19).

O'Neill in turn said that Latimer was "the first who thought I had something to say, and believed I could say it." In more lasting tribute, the playwright used him as the chief model for the genial father, a newspaper publisher, in *Ah, Wilderness!* Even their names are similar--Latimer, Nat Miller. (For other accounts of O'Neill as a reporter: *Bowen*, pp. 58-59; *Alexander*, pp. 163-66, and *Gelb*, pp. 195-202.)

* * *

Two Sanatoria. After working for the *Telegraph* several months, O'Neill had to quit late in 1912 when he fell ill with chills and fever, a condition tentatively diagnosed as

"pleurisy." But he was stricken with something far more serious, tuberculosis, commonly called at the time "the White Plague" or "the Great Killer," also known as "the Irish disease" because so many Irish succumbed to it in their homeland or the tenements of America.

Some of the bitterest exchanges in *Long Day's Journey Into Night* take place between Edmund Tyrone (read Eugene O'Neill) and his father over the question of the sanatorium he should enter; indeed, this issue is one of the central points of conflict in the play. James Tyrone favors a state-run institution (one, in reality, in Shelton, Connecticut) that costs almost nothing and is chiefly for the poor, while Edmund counters furiously: "... to think when it's a question of your son having consumption, you can show yourself up before the whole town as such a stinking old tightwad! Don't you know [Dr.] Hardy will talk and the whole damned town will know. Jesus, Papa, don't you have any pride or shame?"

In the play, as the father relents, the two agree on a sanatorium subsidized by a philanthropic group that has a good reputation and charges only a modest fee (in reality, the Gaylord Farm Sanatorium in Wallingford, Connecticut). In life, however, Eugene did enter the "state farm" in Shelton. Referring to this episode, *Gelb* (pp. 221-23) says, "Apparently his destination was an ugly secret between father and son," since none of Eugene's close friends at the time could later recall that he had gone to the state institution.

Actually, New Londoners did know, for both local papers published the news. The *Telegraph*, for instance, said on December 9 under the headline GOES TO SHELTON TODAY: "Eugene O'Neill of the *Telegraph* staff, who has been seriously ill with pleurisy ... will leave today for Shelton, where he will take what is called the 'rest cure' for several weeks. The acute attack of pleurisy ... was a heavy strain on his lungs and, while neither is affected, it was deemed wise by his physicians to give them the benefit of outdoor living and sleeping...."

Where one biography talks of an "ugly secret," the author of another, who evidently didn't know that such a place as Shelton existed, much less that Eugene had ever gone there, assumes that Gaylord was the state-run institution that aroused Eugene's opposition and anger, as expressed through young Tyrone (*Alexander*, pp. 166-73).

It appears, at any rate, that none of Eugene's friends remembered Shelton because they were more or less ignorant about the place; hence the news of his going there made little, if any, impression on them. Indeed, since he did enter Shelton, it appears that he himself knew almost nothing about it; but it was so desolate and forbidding that he left there in two days. Thus, it was *after* he had gone there, not *before*, that he was furious at his father; but in writing *Long Day's Journey* he took liberties with, among other things, chronology (*Sheaffer I*, pp. 236-43).

Shortly after Shelton, he was examined by two nationally-known physicians, specialists in tuberculosis, and was admitted to Gaylord, the scene, he used to say, of his "rebirth." There, for the first time in his life, he had the leisure, quiet, and peace to meditate on his past and think of the future; there, he made the crucial decision to write for the theater.

--Louis Sheaffer

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REVIEWS OF O'NEILL PLAYS IN PERFORMANCE

1. *A MOON FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN*, directed by David Leveaux. Riverside Studios, London, June - July, 1983. (Later moved to the Mermaid Theatre for a run through November.)

Frances de la Tour, a tall, gawky woman who has generally been stuck with comic roles, proved again (for those who didn't already know) what a powerful and sensitive serious actress she is by turning herself into O'Neill's earth mother Josie for what was, amazingly, the first London production of *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. Josie's gruffness and bawdy humor are relatively easy to play, and within the range of many actresses; where de la Tour broke new ground was in letting us see, long before the character wanted to admit it, how vulnerable and desperately in love--or, rather, how desperately in need to be allowed to love--she was. Her natural nasality and the drawn-out vowels in her dialect were made a part of the character, giving every speech a sound of longing that was neither sigh nor whine but hinted at both. Even in the strikingly comic squabbling with her father (Alan Devlin) that dominates the first act there were hints of the pain and the sacrifice to come; the sight of her tensely awaiting Tyrone's arrival for their date was a tableau of intense pathos; and in the poetry of the night and the morning after, she made us believe and share her brief fantasy of love and her quiet triumph in being strong enough to carry on when hope was gone. Only two things kept this performance from truly mythic stature: minor problems with an accent that came and went; and the difficulty of playing in an emotional vacuum, for this deep and sensitive Josie was virtually checkmated by the shallow and empty Jim Tyrone of Ian Bannen.

Bannen, who has played all the Jason Robards roles in England, was allowed by director David Leveaux to take the references to Tyrone's spiritual deadness too literally. He played him as a sleepwalker or zombie, talking as if from great distance in a flat voice, a beat behind in all his reactions, frequently shaking himself or rubbing his eyes as if trying to wake up, just as frequently retreating into glassy-eyed catatonia. Aside from giving de la Tour virtually nothing to play against and thus making her accomplishment all the more remarkable, this strange (but clearly deliberate) performance was deadeningly alienating. We never got inside this automaton and thus never felt his anguish, his self-disgust (Robards' strong point) or, ultimately, his relief. And if the night's sleep in Josie's lap is *not* a precious respite from Tyrone's pain, then there is no might-have-been, no sense of Josie's great sacrifice of undemanding love. Frances de la Tour showed us a Josie who accepted the impossibility of her fantasy with heroic dignity; one wished she had been allowed to show us her satisfaction in having made that acceptance a gift to the man she loved.

--Gerald M. Berkowitz

[P.S. The London production, cast intact, will cross the Atlantic and join the winter season of the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, MA, in rotation with other ART productions from late December through February 4, 1984. A review of its American manifestation will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter. --Ed.]

2. *LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT*, directed by Malcolm Morrison. High Point Theatre, North Carolina Shakespeare Festival, July 29 - August 31, 1983.

It's a good thing that, when I purchased my ticket to see *Long Day's Journey* at the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival, I didn't know that I was a member of its opening night audience. There was none of the hoopla that is normal on such a special night. "But this is summer stock," an elderly patron reminded me later, "and in North Carolina at that. If you want hoopla, you belong at the tobacco auction!" I never feel comfortable at a premiere--how many times have we heard actors or directors say, "we could have used one more night of rehearsal"? Thanks to my ignorance, I made myself completely at home and sat back for an evening of genuine O'Neill.

And my expectations were met. This production was far and away the tightest of any O'Neill I've seen. It was obvious that when Malcolm Morrison went hunting in New York, he had this show in the front of his mind: the casting was superb ... well, almost superb! Ann Owens, although a very capable actress, seemed to struggle at times with the complexities of the character of Mary Tyrone. And the result was apathy, instead of sympathy. Mary's whole battle with the morphine up to her climactic return at the end of II, i usually arouses images of a larger-than-life morphine bottle (indeed, it is the sixth character) lording it over a battered and dejected victim. Here, the image was closer to the dimensions of a Vick's nasal spray. A vocal monotone (I think this was for affect) added to making Owens's a one-dimensional Mary. What a shame!

To add to the problem, Mary was ill-served by the lighting design, which did nothing to enhance her isolation. For instance, when she entered at the end with her wedding gown, the entire stage was flooded with bright light--so bright that the three male Tyrones had to squint. Suffice it to say that the design here was either unfinished or just plain bad. And the set design, although creative and ambitious, was very, very far from 1912, and even further from Connecticut. Let's imagine Paris in 1940!

As Edmund, Eric Zwemer never quite captured the pathos the role calls for. Perhaps his all too light opening was too high to reach and tackle by evening's end; and Mary's failure to show any sincere concern for him took its toll as well. Slightly effeminate at the start, and increasingly so from the effects of the "Barleycorn," this Edmund was at times a chore to believe in. All in all, though, Zwemer's good points far outweighed his defects. He clearly demonstrated his understanding of Edmund as well as his complex relationship to the others.

Mel Shrawder's Jamie was the wastrel we know, deplore, and love. Whether sober or "blotto," this Jamie was the reincarnation of Mephistopheles, even if a rather exhausted one! When he entered, "drunk as a fiddler's bitch," he was finally at ease in his semi-"misbegotten" state. As he should be; we all felt the relief that resulted from his involuntary verbal lashes at both his brother and father. But Shrawder, like Zwemer, had his minor flaws. How does Jamie feel about still living at home, mooching off the old man? The performance provided no answer. But the confessional speech was just right--just the explosion/plea he needed to round out his character. And his manifestation of the philosophy of cynical materialism created a sparked conflict with Edmund's views of the aspiring artist.

All three of these actors were strong enough to stand on their own and hold an audience; and with that as a base, it's no wonder why every confrontation was gripping. But the really mesmerizing force throughout the show was the James Tyrone of Max Jacobs. Of all the performances I've seen, only Christopher Plummer's Iago was more powerful. There were very few dry eyes in the house after his "poorhouse" speech. Still possessing the Irish "brogue you could cut with a knife," Jacobs' Tyrone was every tear of the "hopeless hope"!

And finally, I tip my hat to Malcolm Morrison, who can't have wasted a minute of

rehearsal time. He had carefully blended all *eight* Tyrones into a beautiful reverie of pain and suffering. Not only did he achieve the difficult task of creating all of the play's invisible "characters"--the fog, the whiskey, the past, etc.--but he brought them vividly to life. My favorite of all the invisibles is the vague cloud of Eugene O'Neill's spirit, which observes the "journey" and suffers all the while. To create this image is one feat; but to have O'Neill dry his eyes and applaud is an unforgettable achievement. Passing flaws notwithstanding, it may be years before I see O'Neill at this level again.

--Joedy Lister

THE EUGENE O'NEILL SOCIETY SECTION: MORE ON MLA '83

The first of the three O'Neill Society-related events at December's Modern Language Association Convention in New York City was described at length in the Society Section of the last issue: a special session entitled "Reevaluating O'Neill: New Approaches, New Discoveries," directed by Michael Hinden, with papers by Michael Manheim, Frederick Wilkins and Paul Voelker. For paper titles, see p. 36 of the Summer-Fall issue, but the time and place had best be repeated:

Date: Wednesday, December 28.

Hour: 10:15-11:30 a.m.

Room: Clinton, New York Hilton.

Two other events, both on the same day as the special session, at noon and 5:15 respectively, can now be announced.

1. Meeting of the Society's Board of Directors: noon to 1 p.m. in the suite reserved by Indiana University in the New York Hilton. The room number will be announced at the 10:15 special session. The agenda will include endorsement of a slate of candidates (officers and board members) for 1984-85; nomination of honorary board members; planning for the 1984 special session on O'Neill; discussion of centennial events; dues merger of the Society and the Eugene O'Neill Foundation, Tao House; and any other matters that board members wish to add.
2. 1983 Annual Meeting of the Society: 5:15-6:45 p.m. at the Museum of Broadcasting, One East Fifty-third Street, a short distance from the Hilton. Annual elections for officers and members of the board will be held at that time, and many matters of interest to all O'Neillians will be aired and discussed.

Remember: all three events occur on Wednesday, December 28. Dues for 1984 will be accepted at any of them. For non-members contemplating joining the Society, the 28th will be a splendid opportunity to meet the membership and learn about imminent activities. Window-shoppers are welcome!

NEWS, NOTES, LETTERS AND QUERIES

1. PROVINCETOWN PHOENIX SOARS. Thanks to the dedication of Producing Director Adele Heller, the Provincetown Players, heirs to the first architects of authentic American drama, are back in business. Architecture remains a problem, of course, and they won't have a playhouse until the summer of 1985; but they succeeded in recreating the soon-to-be Players' very first double bill, from the summer of 1915, in a large hall of the Provincetown Art Association last September 22 and 23. The program, appropriately titled "Beginnings," comprised *Constancy* by Neith Boyce and *Suppressed Desires* by Jig Cook and Susan Glaspell. The latter, long a staple of

community theatres, is well-known; but *Constancy*, never performed since 1915, was the real shocker: a light (and lightly veiled) treatment of the tempestuous relationship between John Reed and Mabel Dodge, it demonstrated great wit and literary skill, and the issues it raises are as "relevant" today as they were 68 years ago. Professional actors, directed by John MacDonald, brought both plays to delightful life; and the evening included slides of 1915 photographs and reminiscences by several of the original Players' descendants--Miriam Hapgood DeWitt, Trixie Faust, Joel O'Brien, Peter Steele and Heaton Vorse--that recaptured the spirit of excitement that attended the Players' birth. The full performance will be repeated next March 23, as part of the O'Neill conference at Suffolk University in Boston.

Prior to that, the two plays will be performed by the same cast at the Smithsonian in Washington, in the Great Hall of the National Portrait Gallery, on December 28, 29 and 30, in conjunction with two related exhibits--"Portraits in Motion" at the NPG, and "Provincetown Printers: A Woodcut Tradition" at the National Museum of American Art. Times and ticket information are available from Sandra Westin at the Smithsonian (tel. 202-357-3178). Viewers, in December or March, are in for a treat.

2. LETTERS, I: THAT PICTURE. I remember being taught, before becoming a teacher, that one should not ask a question for which one doesn't have the answer in advance. I've luckily disregarded the instruction, and have learned a lot from my students as a result. And now I've learned that, as an editor too, an admission of ignorance can lead to enlightenment. What I didn't know was the site and date of the photograph of O'Neill on the cover of the last issue. (I also didn't know that it would be cropped, and I apologize to all who sought the announced autograph, which I promise will be on view in Boston next March!) The answer was provided by Margaret Loftus Ranald, Professor of English at Queens College, to whom I send thanks and congratulations. Her speculations, subsequently corroborated, were these:

The picture just HAS to have been taken at Tao House, above Danville, California. I should pick the precise location as the ground floor patio outside "Rosie's" room, where the player piano was kept and Blemie slept. Note also the hillside in the background. Incidentally, this patio is partially roofed by the verandah upstairs, to which both Carlotta and Eugene's bedrooms had direct access. The view is over to Mt. Diablo. Judging from the colour of his hair, this might be fairly late in the Tao House period (October 1937-January 1944), but I'm surprised to see him photographed holding anything, since his tremor was very pronounced by then. I would date this around 1940-1941 for the above reason. I have no specific evidence except recognition of the patio site. Perhaps someone at the Tao House Foundation may have the answer.

Corroboration came from Travis Bogard, who noted that, on the back of the original at the Beinecke Library, Carlotta had written, "Gene at Tao House when his health began to really seriously break--1942." As for specific locale, he reports that the picture was taken "on the terrace off the living room." When he received a copy of the photograph from Mrs. O'Neill, she "noted ... that it was taken about the time Oona married Chaplin and commented that 'You can see the strain in his face.'" Thank you, Professors Ranald and Bogard; now I know what I've got!

3. LETTERS, II: ANENT PROSCENIA. Does *The Iceman Cometh* require a proscenium stage? That, in essence, is what I asked in the Spring 1983 issue ("*Iceman Cometh* Not," p. 29), after learning that the Robards-Quintero revival was aborted in part because the Circle in the Square, a financially viable house, was rejected since it lacked a proscenium. Thanks to the many who responded, all of whom shared my concern. Here are the two most extended comments.

- a. It seems to me that there can be two rationales behind the rejection of *Circle in the Square* as a space for *Ice-man*: (a) that of Mr. Robards--i.e., I don't want to play in the round because I work better in a proscenium space; or (b) that of Mr. Quintero--i.e., for aesthetic reasons I don't think that the round is beneficial to the spirit of this play. Neither excuse holds much water here! I've tried to contact Messrs. Quintero, Robards and Jones to get their rebuttal, but the last could not be reached and the others chose not to discuss it. However, their respective agents claim that finances were the destroying force. I'm certainly as anxious as anyone to know the real reason.

--Joedy Lister, Tallahassee, Florida

- b. I wholeheartedly agree with your opinion concerning the staging of *Ice-man* in the round.... I played Cora in a New York City theatre group's production six years ago. The production was directed on a three quarter round stage. Local reviews and audience reaction were so positive that the director has decided to direct the production once again, using a three quarter round stage. Audience response to our first production included numerous remarks stating that, due to their seating, they were thrust into the atmosphere of Harry Hope's saloon and were immediately absorbed into the existence of each character's pipe dream. If the three quarter round stage was accepted so positively and the audience was aided in its ability to sympathize with Harry Hope's assemblage of blinded hopefuls, then staging the play in the round would only prove more successful.

--Ellen Christiansen-Marino, Staten Island, NY

4. O'NEILL'S NINETY-FIFTH. The Theater Committee for Eugene O'Neill, headed by Barbara Gelb and George White, celebrated the 95th anniversary of O'Neill's birth in grand style at the St. Regis Sheraton on October 9th. Jason Robards, recipient of the 1983 Eugene O'Neill Birthday Medal, was filming *Sakharov* in London, but his taped acceptance was played, and the medal was received for him by Colleen Dewhurst. Ellis Rabb read a congratulatory letter from José Quintero, who was rehearsing a Saroyan play at Brandeis University; and Geraldine Fitzgerald gave this year's toast to the playwright, whose admirers hope to have all his plays on the boards--and not just in New York, but in New London and Provincetown as well--during and after the centennial year of 1988. May their plans succeed. O'Neill is blessed in his advocates.
5. O'NEILL PLAY BY ROBERTS? Yes, if it's *about* O'Neill, and not *by* him. Which is what author Meade Roberts and director John Cassevetes are currently working on at a New York studio in Westbeth. Fourteen actors, including Ben Gazzara, Patty LuPone and Carol Kane, are rehearsing *Thornhill*, a play "loosely based on the life of Eugene O'Neill," according to Carol Lawson's report in the *New York Times* (Oct. 28, 1983, p. C2). Gazzara plays Theodore Thornhill, a playwright, whose wife, played by LuPone, is "modeled on" Carlotta Monterey. The play, produced by Barry and Fran Weissler, Kenneth-Mark Productions and the Shubert Organization, and "capitalized at a hefty \$900,000," is headed for Broadway this winter after out-of-town tryouts. (Would that such dedication and munificence were allotted to O'Neill's *own* work!) Further developments will be reported in future issues of the Newsletter.
6. PUBLICATION NOTES.
- a. Virginia Floyd has completed work on *Eugene O'Neill*, slated for imminent publication by Ungar as part of its "Literature and Life" series. A review will appear in a future issue of the Newsletter.
- b. Robert K. Sarlos' *Jig Cook and the Provincetown Players: Theatre in Ferment*, reviewed in the Summer-Fall 1982 issue (pp. 40-41) has won the American Theatre Association's Barnard Hewitt Award for distinguished achievement in theatre history.

- c. *Critical Essays on Eugene O'Neill*, edited by James J. Martine, nears publication. Its contents will be listed in a future issue, and a review will follow publication.
 - d. Margaret Loftus Ranald has completed work on *The Eugene O'Neill Companion*, which will be published by Greenwood Press, Westport CT. Included in its contents are detailed summaries of all the plays, critical comments, original cast lists, biographical data on all the O'Neills and assorted friends of the playwright, essays on the state of O'Neill scholarship, bibliographies, lists of film and musical adaptations, and some as yet unpublished letters. "The Companion," Prof. Ranald writes, "is NOT an encyclopedia, but a companion--all you wanted to know about O'Neill (and a lot you didn't care about). I hope that it is reasonably accurate and that people will enjoy it, as well as use it." The *Companion*--something this editor has long wished for--will be reviewed as soon as it appears.
 - e. Normand Berlin's *The Secret Cause: A Discussion of Tragedy*, reviewed in the Spring 1982 issue (pp. 38-40), has been reissued in a paperback edition by the Univ. of Massachusetts Press. The price of \$8.95 will make it available for use in drama courses. Bravo!
 - f. Travis Bogard will edit the two volumes of O'Neill that will be a part of the Library of America series. He will also provide the introduction for a volume of the Selected Letters of Eugene O'Neill (about 500 of the extant 3000), that he is editing with Jackson Bryer and that will be published, probably in 1985 or 1986, by the Yale Univ. Press.
 - g. Eugene O'Neill is one of the 15 authors discussed in Beongcheon Yu's *The Great Circle: American Writers and the Orient*, published this November by Wayne State Univ. Press. A review will appear in a future issue of the Newsletter.
 - h. Paul Voelker's essay, "Eugene O'Neill's Aesthetic of the Drama," which appeared in the March 1978 issue of *Modern Drama*, has been selected for inclusion in a volume of criticism on major American writers being edited by Drs. Prafulla Kar and D. Ramakrishna at the American Studies Research Centre in Hyderabad, India.
 - i. *Panda Zoo*, a collection of the poetry of Norman Andrew Kirk, has been published by West of Boston, in association with *Bitterroot*, an international poetry magazine. It includes "Good Morning, Eugene," which first appeared in the Newsletter. The book is available @ \$10 in paperback and \$20 hardbound (plus \$1 per copy for postage and handling), from West of Boston, P.O. Box 2, Cochituate Station, Wayland, MA 01778.
7. HELP SOUGHT FOR THESIS. Todd C. Hampshire, a Master's candidate in Theatre at Ohio State Univ., has begun research for a thesis on the 1947 try-out tour production of *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. He would welcome leads from anyone who has encountered reports or comments on the production other than those in the standard, readily accessible works on O'Neill. If you have such, please let him know. (Todd C. Hampshire, Dept. of Theatre, Ohio State Univ., 1089 Drake Union, 1849 Cannon Drive, Columbus, OH 43210.)
8. RECENT AND FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS.
- Ah, Wilderness!*, dir. Jerry Turner. Angus Bowmer Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Ashland, OR. In repertory, Sept. 11 - Oct. 30, 1983.
- Ah, Wilderness!* Performed by The Players, Castleton [VT] State Co. Fine Arts Center, Nov. 30 - Dec. 3, 1983.
- Ah, Wilderness!*, dir. Margaret Booker. McCarter Theatre Company, Princeton, NJ, Jan. 18 - Feb. 5, 1984.
- Desire Under the Elms*, dir. Maggie McGovern. Bay Players, Duxbury, MA, Nov. 11-19, 1983.

The Hairy Ape. 725 Broadway Theatre, New York City, Oct. 27 - Nov. 5, 1983.

The Iceman Cometh. Sea View Playwright's Theatre, Staten Island, NY, Sept. 29 - Oct. 2, 1983.

Long Day's Journey Into Night, dir. William Brasmer. Denison Univ. Theatre, Granville, OH, Nov. 12-20, 1982. [For the record; not listed in '82.]

Long Day's Journey Into Night, dir. Malcolm Morrison. North Carolina Shakespeare Festival, High Point, NC. In repertory; closed Sept. 2, 1983. (Reviewed in this issue.)

Long Day's Journey Into Night, dir. Lou Salerni. The Cricket Theatre, Minneapolis, MN, Feb. 5 - March 3, 1984.

A Moon for the Misbegotten, dir. David Leveaux. American Repertory Theatre, Cambridge, MA, Dec. 22, 1983 - Feb. 4, 1984. (The London production, reviewed in this issue. Its transatlantic transplantation will be assessed in the next.)

A Touch of the Poet, dir. James O'Reilly. Body Politic Theatre, Chicago, IL, Sept. 13 - Oct. 21, 1984.

9. *AH, WILDERNESS!* REVIVED IN NEW YORK. Philip Bosco and Dody Goodman won considerable praise for their performances as Nat and Essie Miller in last summer's Roundabout Theater Company revival, directed by John Stix. *Times* critic Frank Rich found "unalloyed pleasure" in both actors' work, especially that of Miss Goodman, who "brings out a deep maternal concern that lends emotional weight to Essie's farcical nagging." But the play itself, he said, "will never make anyone's list of Eugene O'Neill's masterworks" because it is "flimsily constructed." The play's interest, he said, lies in the way it "flirts with the tragic on its way to a happy ending," O'Neill demonstrating a mastery "at tucking the sorrows in slyly, at maintaining the bubbly surface even as hearts seem about to break." The main flaw seems to have been the casting of Scott Burkholder as Richard. Burkholder captured the boy's "melodramatic posturing" and "virginal hysteria in anticipating the naughty joys of sex and drink"; but he failed, in Rich's view, to reveal "a fire within--the touch of the poet that plainly exists in O'Neill's romantic portrait of the artist as a young man." (*New York Times*, June 29, 1983, p. C21.)
10. ACCENT AGUE; or, O'NEILL'S AMERICANS WITH ENGLISH VOICES. As O'Neill's current popularity in England continues to grow, thanks largely to the work of director David Leveaux, more and more British actors must confront the challenge, seldom met in the past, of sounding like Americans. Mel Gussow, discussing the problem in the *New York Times* ("British Actors Baffled By American Accents," Sept. 8, 1983, p. C14), noted that the problem was easily overcome in the successful recent production, reviewed in this issue, of *A Moon for the Misbegotten* in the West End:
The British version ... took a fresh approach to the language problem by realizing the fact that O'Neill's people are Irish-American. The actors assumed modified Irish accents and were thoroughly convincing as characters in the author's New England.
11. TRANSATLANTIC CASTING. American actress Carol Teitel will play Mary Tyrone at England's Nottingham Playhouse this fall and winter, initiating a new (and laudable) exchange agreement between American and British Actors' Equity.
12. MORE ON O'NEILL AT MLA '83. At the special session on British playwright Peter Shaffer, "Assessing Shaffer's Stage Mastery," scheduled for 10:15-11:30 a.m. on Thursday, December 29 in the New York Hilton, Michael Hinden will deliver a paper entitled "Trying to Like Shaffer." Not only does the title echo another critic's erstwhile attempt at affection for O'Neill; the paper itself will continue the pairing of Shaffer and O'Neill that Prof. Hinden began in "When Playwrights Talk to God: Peter Shaffer and the Legacy of Eugene O'Neill" (*Comparative Drama*, Spring 1982).

13. THE MARCH CONFERENCE. A brochure describing the many activities at the March 22-25 conference on "Eugene O'Neill--the Early Years" at Suffolk University accompanies this issue. It is necessarily vague about dates and hours, as plans are still being made, and speakers added, daily. A tentative schedule has been sent to all program participants, and a *somewhat* less tentative one will be sent to all registrants by mid-January. If you read the Newsletter in a library, or are perusing someone else's copy, write for a brochure and preregistration form. Prices increase by \$5 on January 1st, but the fee is still, as many have said, a tremendous bargain, given all that will occur. For tantalizing hints, call 617-723-4700, ext. 271.

PERSONS REPRESENTED IN THIS ISSUE

GERALD BERKOWITZ is Associate Professor of English at Northern Illinois University and author of *New Broadway: Theatre Across America, 1950-1980*. His review of a 50-minute condensation of *Long Day's Journey*, performed at the 1982 Edinburgh Festival Fringe, appeared in the Winter 1982 issue of the Newsletter (pp. 27-28).

JOEDY LISTER, actor and director, is a student at Florida State University. His review in this issue is the loftiest the Newsletter has yet printed, having been written on Eastern Airlines flight #306 to Orlando.

EUGENE O'NEILL, dramatist, is the Newsletter's *raison d'être*, et cetera.

LOUIS SHEAFFER is the author of the two-volume biography, *O'Neill: Son and Playwright* (1968), which won the George Freedley Award of the Theater Library Association as the best theater book of its year, and *O'Neill: Son and Artist*, winner of the 1974 Pulitzer Prize for biography. He is presently at work on a critical study of publications about O'Neill.

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