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Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle. Eds. Clyde De L. Ryals and Kenneth J. Fielding. Vols. 13-15. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 1987.

There is no question that personal letters give us a remarkable record of a writer's life and thought but it is a limited record. Each letter is a bit of autobiography, a piece of actual human experience. What Carlyle said of an autograph letter of Cromwell's may be said of his own, or of Jane's: "it was once a piece of the general fire and light of Human Life." A good letter "will convince any man that the Past did exist;" it has the power of "rendering the Past credible, the Ghosts of the Past in some glimpses of them visible." (I:xii) Certainly Thomas and Jane Carlyle seem brilliantly alive in their letters, not ghosts at all, yet it is true that each letter is but a glimpse. Taken together they form "an irregular row of beacon-fires, once all luminous as suns." Reading them in sequence, as we do in these three volumes, we may receive a false impression of completeness. The narrative necessarily proceeds by jumps; there are omissions, interruptions, repetitions. Moreover, the letters are not naive, unself-conscious revelations but were composed to achieve a purpose or to produce an effect often finely attuned to the feelings of the correspondent. They do not give us a continual record of the Carlyles' life together, only a continuous one, broken by time intervals, refracted by their strong personalities. They wrote for the moment, according to their variable moods and purposes. The letters are to this extent fictions, but true fictions, since their moods and purposes were also true.

Here then is the record in letters of the Carlyles' life in London during the years 1841-1842. Following the success of his *French Revolution* and his four public lectures Carlyle is still trying to write a major work on Cromwell and the English Civil War period. Early in January 1841 he is so distressed by daily interruptions that he "will go to Puttock

itself and write my Book!" (13:7) The real difficulty, as he knows, is his failure so far to find a right form for the book, and he will nearly exhaust himself during the next two years plowing through dull books about Cromwell and his times, hoping that with continued hard work the right form will come to him.

Jane writes her wonderful letters to their friends and relatives, about her health, which is not good, about Carlyle's health ("he is as usual, never healthy, never absolutely ill," 13:11), about her reading of French novels; she writes comically about visitors to Cheyne Row: e.g. talking to the eccentric Cavaignac "rather *wittily* (as I thought)--he said to me *brusquely*--'spare me your *cleverness Madame!* Je ne le veux pas--*moi*, it is not *my pleasure* to rank among those for whom you have to *make minced meat* of yourself!" (15:209) Or she wryly describes an altercation she had with Carlyle over a missing pamphlet: "'one of those books seen for a moment--laid out of his hand, and then swept away *irrecoverably* into the general chaos of this house'--It was found of course in his own bookpress the first thing I saw on opening it--But the music of our souls was jarred for the day!" (15:137)

Carlyle in his letters makes no complaint against Jane. The 'jarred' side of their married life so often felt in her letters is not to be found in his. He complains eloquently enough against himself for his lack of progress with Cromwell, that 'unlaid and unlayable ghost' as Jane calls it. His bitterest self-complaints are to be found in his Journal or in fragments now lodged in the Forster Collection: "No son of Adam is more helpless than I: the *word* sticking to my throat, no bringing of it up; the matter all unutterable." (15; 118, n. 10) Writing to his mother he shows, as always, a brave front: "I continue *boring* here, 'underground', as I call it; I shall get *above* ground one day!" (15:5) As late as December 1842 he is still below ground: To Varnhagen von Ense, "The man remains imprisoned, as under AETna-Mountains of rubbish: unutterable, I suppose, forever." In all the letters of these two years his frustration with Cromwell can be heard like a *basso continuo*, never inaudible for long.

Yet this is a calmer Carlyle than we have seen before. His health seems better (though he still doctors himself with "Castor and blue pills"). His finances have improved so that he need give no more lectures, and he redeems the time attending to daily matters. There is the unfinished business of hiring a librarian for the London Library. After lengthy correspondence and deliberation by the committee members this

is narrowly resolved with the election of Carlyle's candidate, John G. Cochrane, by a single vote. Another concern is the publication of his *Heroes* lectures. In January 1841 Fraser, having refused earlier, finally agreed to publish them as a book and pay Carlyle £75 ("the dog would give no more"). We remember that the year before Jane, wanting to help, had herself confronted Fraser with a demand of £150--in vain (12:277). Now, preparing the Lectures for publication tempted Carlyle to make revisions and it was March before the book appeared. Sheets of *Heroes* were sent to Emerson for publication but before they arrived Appleton of New York issued a pirated edition and chapters appeared in New York newspapers at 6 cents a copy. (13:140, n.3) There was still no International Copyright and some American publishers like Appleton defiantly pirated whatever they could. Carlyle bore it amiably, telling Emerson, "I can now stand robbery a little better." Fraser agreed also to publish a 2nd edition of *Sartor Resartus*--a thousand copies being worth another £75. "Poor Teufelsdröckh," he wrote his Mother, "it seems very curious that money should lie even in him! They trampled him into the gutter at his first appearance; but he rises up again, finds money bid for him" (13:28).

The flow of letters to his family is constant as ever. Whatever else he is doing, whatever his worries, nothing, it seems, interferes long with his letters home. His seventy-year old mother's health is an increasing concern: he begs her to keep warm, asks his youngest sister Jenny to take good care of her, fills his letters with news of his writings and activities--as when he tells her the amusing story of how, called to jury duty, he resolved the problem of a hung jury by blatantly flattering the one stubborn jurymen into agreement. (13:39) As before, he writes oftenest to his brother John, whose undemanding job as private physician to a wealthy family leaves him considerable leisure time and £1300 a year. In contrast, he tells his brother Alick, "I can get for four months close labour the handsome sum of £75!" (13:18) He writes to James about the farm at Scotsbrig, to Jean at Dumfries for detailed news about all of them; letters to Mary of the Gill, if he wrote any at this time, have not survived. The distance between London and Annandale has not weakened the close-knit family ties. Carlyle urges them all to write him; from time to time he sends them money, and they in turn supply him, often on request, with clothes, meal, potatoes, butter, tobacco, provisions from the family hearth being preferable to London-bought, and cheaper. The butter

comes from Isabella (James' wife, at Scotsbrig), shirts of flannel, cambric, and muslin are sewn by Jenny, the "expert needlewoman of the Whole," and special tobaccos are sent by James.

Carlyle's circle of friends continues to widen. Many visitors, eminent or obscure, call at Cheyne Row" Mazzini and the Ruffinis of the Young Italy Party, exiled and plotting liberation of their country; Bronson Alcott sent by Emerson; Dickens, Browning, Tennyson, Thackeray, come oftener. Erasmus Darwin, identified as the grandson of "the celebrated Zoonomic Dr. Darwin" rather than as the brother of Charles, becomes a close friend; Mill calls less frequently ("a pity . . . our orbits running in a perverse concentric way!" 13:46). Carlyle's old pupil Charles Buller, M.P., comes when he can; John Sterling, much loved, but ill, is seen mainly through letters; Richard Monckton Milnes, M.P. and poet, and John Forster, busy political journalist, become close friends and frequent correspondents.

Jane too has friends, friends she can call her own. Forster still comes by when Carlyle is away to take her to the theater. Hensleigh and Fanny Wedgwood were old friends; so was Harriet Martineau. Geraldine Jewsbury, who had written Carlyle in April 1840 asking for spiritual advice (12:104n), now entered into a steady and intimate correspondence with Jane. Erasmus Darwin too called often and took her for drives. Few of Jane's letters to her mother have survived. There is a question how often or fondly she wrote her mother. Their relationship was certainly not like that between Carlyle and his mother. Yet when Grace Welsh died suddenly in February, 1842, after what seemed a minor illness (Jane had traveled as far as Liverpool when she heard the news) she collapsed completely and could go no farther. It was a tragedy from which she would never wholly recover. For years she felt guilt as well as grief. Carlyle went immediately to Templand to settle and dispose the estate. Out of this tragedy, however, came a new friend, one of her Liverpool cousins, Jeannie Welsh. "Babbie" as Jane called her, returned with Jane to Cheyne Row to care for her and run the household. She stayed on while Jane visited the Bullers in Suffolk (11 Aug to 8 Sept), whence Jane wrote her, and there began an affectionate and spirited correspondence that continued when Babbie returned to Liverpool and for years thereafter. The thirty-five letters we have of Jane's, written to Babbie from August to December 1842, are among her best. Clearly the writing of them, and Babbie's replies, afforded Jane relief from her sorrow and stimulated her sharp

mind. She is by turns playful, rueful, caustic. When Mazzini announces to her the discovery of "a power for regulating balloons" which will enable him and his compatriots to liberate Italy, "his eyes flashing hope, faith, and generous self-devotion," she observes "Surely between the highest virtue and the beginning of madness the line of separation is infinitesimally small." (15:141) Or, describing the bizarre visit of her cousin Dr. Adam Hunter, she comes downstairs to find him "thin, bent, feeble, . . . in the act of unmuzzling himself from a *respirator*." He seemed "more concerned about my appearance than he even *expected me* to be about *his*, . . . and considered me a pretty way gone in consumption--'Dear! Dear!' he said looking at my face and placing his finger and thumb in the hollows of his cheeks--'Dear! Dear! This is not as it should be!" and advised that "I should try coming to *him* at Hastings for a month or two . . . I would have the benefit of his medical advice--and Mrs. Hunter I would find a *chatty body!* . . . He told Carlyle that his own spitting of blood (in quarts!) was all brought on by overexcitement--had nothing to do with consumptions--(poor unfortunate!)" (15:133-4).

Only rarely is she sorry for herself. "When I feel myself quite, quite ALONE, with only *myself* to rely upon--then I am true to myself! . . . but the petting and consideration I have of late been used to once more has revived the *leaning* tendency of my earlier days--and I feel dreary and helpless as in the *first unlearning* to be a much-made-of Only Child." (15:209) We see her reading to fill the time, lying on the couch with headaches and, when she can go out, doing little kindnesses for the needy, which sometimes backfire. She is always intellectually lively, her expression ranging widely through slang ("dud"), literary quotations, coterie speech, and neo-verbalisms, in a supple, spontaneous prose. Her wit is charming but never frivolous. With Scottish disdain she describes the aristocratic life of the Bullers where the chief excitements of the day are a carriage ride in the country and an evening game of chess. Then she notes the cruel contrast between the luxury of their life at Trosten and the plight of Manchester factory workers, underpaid or unemployed, who, roused by Chartists and anti-Corn Law agitators, are rioting in protest: "one hears of these insurrections so near as tidings from another world." (15:20)

Carlyle's concern for the condition of the working class, and the unworking class, runs deeper than Jane's, or is at least more sharply voiced. Toward the 'insurrections'

in Manchester, Paisley, and elsewhere, he shows both sympathy and disapproval, sympathy because the relations between employer and employed are so inhumane (13:333), disapproval because the Chartist incited riots have only made matters worse. "We are all fearfully to blame" he wrote, but put major blame on inactive government. "O Peel, O Russell-- and indeed O England and all Englishmen! We have gone on the accursed Law of Egoism and Mammon, and every sort of *Atheism*, which was a lie from the beginning; and now has broken down under us, and unless we can recover ourselves out of *it*, the abyss is gaping for us." (14:183) The abyss of the Hungry Forties was already gaping. "There never was, I believe, such a stern universal period of distress in England as even now." (14:185) His hope that Peel might repeal the Corn-laws was five years premature. In the meantime what could he himself do, if anything, to help England avoid the abyss. Encouraged by friends he thought now and then of editing a Radical Review to combat "the poor hidebound Benthamite Radicalism" (13:289). The crucial question was "What *writers* were there" (15:160), of right conviction and talent, to ensure its success? Too few, probably, but by November 1842 Carlyle had a more promising venture in mind, not articles for a periodical, but a book, and not *Cromwell* but *Past and Present*.

Much of what Carlyle had written (or torn up) while reading about Cromwell bore on his own time, on the Victorians' need for a Cromwellian kind of leadership. Long before October 1842 when Jocelin's *Chronicle* swam into his ken he had lauded Labor as the corrective to Idleness, had attacked Mammonism, Puseyism, and Benthamism as chronic ills of society, and had called for a new aristocracy of "industrial *barons*. . . workers *loyally* related to their taskmasters--related in God." (13:317) These were immediate concerns, and though they were connected in his mind with Cromwell and Puritanism he had found he could not put them together in writing. The difficulty, as he explained to Emerson, was that "I cannot write *two Books at once*; cannot be in the seventeenth century and in the nineteenth at one and the same moment." (15:57) It was hard enough to "be" in the seventeenth, which was "*worthless* except precisely in so far as it can be made the *nineteenth*". For "my heart is sick and sore in behalf of my own generation; nay, I feel withal as if the one hope of help for it consisted in the possibility of new Cromwells, and new Puritans"--which left him with the still unsolvable problem of how to write either on Cromwell or his own generation, or on both of them

together. So far he had written only fragments that might at best be worked into articles for his once projected radical periodical. Articles, however, were not what he wanted; "The thing that will not run together as a book," he wrote Sterling, "we fling it out in detached splashes as Articles. We should have *made* it run together; fused it, roasted, tortured it, till the divisive dross had been all tortured out of it; and then--" (15:229)

The letters record the gestation of *Past and Present*. It would be a mistake to think that it sprang full-grown from his first reading of Jocelin's *Chronicle* in mid-October 1842. He quickly saw it was "worth something," (15:129, n. 4) and seems to have begun writing experimentally on Jocelin, trying to live in the twelfth century. "A curious old world that monk one," he reflected in his Journal. Nevertheless for another month Cromwell remained his primary, still frustrating concern: "he is clear, burning before my heart; he told Jane Wilson, "I write much; but it goes into the fire . . ." (15:223); and to Sterling on 21 December, "No Cromwell will ever come out of me in this world. I dare not even try Cromwell." But that very day Jane, writing to Babbie, mentioned seeing "A considerable bundle of M.S. *not* about Cromwell at all!--but about that old Abbot of St. Edmonds Bury!" (15:246) In mid-November he had been writing "a small thing," "Some of it *will* stick to paper I think," but not until 28 December does he admit that it may be a publishable book. Even then he faces agonizing labor: "it prospers very ill with me," he tells Charles Redwood, on the last day of the year, "I have enough to say: But it seems to lie as if at the centre of the Earth, and whole continents are to be torn up before it can get utterance." In the same letter there is the clear suggestion that he is joining the two centuries together, writing about the Present as well as the Past. "It is difficult to speak: and yet who can hold his tongue? England, like a bleeding Gethsemane, in dumb agony, too eloquently calls on all men to speak. We shall see."

Carlyle was not the first to complain bitterly about his inability to write, even when he was writing fairly steadily. Flagellation seems to have spurred him on. *Past and Present* was to be completed quickly, by March of the following year. It was surely a welcome release from his fruitless efforts with Cromwell, and it stands as a sort of climax of these two relatively unproductive years. In 1843 Cromwell would have to be faced again, with eventual success as we know. On this point the Editors make an interesting speculation. Based on

a Carlyle *MS* in the Forster Collection containing some attempts to write on what he called 'Cromwell's first letter', they suggest that he may, late in October 1842, have hit unconsciously on the very way to solve his Cromwell problem that he eventually adopted--reassuming the guise of Editor and cementing all the letters and speeches together with his own commentary. (15:129, n.4)

The Editors wisely avoid much speculation. Rather they endeavor, as has been so well done in the earlier volumes, to establish a complete and accurate text of each letter and to provide both necessary and supplementary information about it: the date and place of writing, the correspondent, the present location of the original, and whether or not it has been published before. Missing dates have been supplied, wrong dates corrected: Carlyle's misdating of a letter to Lady Harriet Baring (15:7) is corrected by a combination of internal and external evidence. Where the correspondent is not known (13:23) they call on their expert knowledge of the period to make or to suggest an identification. In tracking down allusions and locating people, places, and events, their sluething is admirable. They are, in fact, meticulous, in the true sense of that word: fearful of letting any explainable item go unexplained. Carlyle writes his brother John that "Perry's men are on the roof fixing a leak," and we are told that the men were "Probably those employed by John Perry, builder, 29 Lawrence St., Chelsea." (13:281, n.2) Persons not named, such as "the Cooper," "a poor Edinr lad," and a "modest Yankee's Letter"--all in Carlyle's letter to Jane (15:19)--could not be identified and are so footnoted. The result is a superabundance of footnotes, containing all available personal or historical material. Relevant passages are quoted from Carlyle's Journal, from letters *to* the Carlyles, and from the notes Carlyle made to Jane's letters after her death. The expense of publishing these generous annotations must be great, but great also are the benefits to the reader; for they add another dimension to our understanding of the Carlyles' world, filling in the gaps between the letters and illuminating what is in them. One example: When Carlyle asks the Scottish antiquary David Laing (13:75-76) whether the legendary story of Jenny Geddes' throwing the cutty stool, in 1637, at the Priest's head in St. Giles Church had any basis in historical fact (he had already asked Lockhart, Forster, and David Aitken the same question) a footnote tells us that Laing replied that it had not, and tells us further that Carlyle so wanted to believe it true that he would tell it anyway in *Cromwell* (Works 6:96-

97), ranking Jenny even above Helen of Troy. No fewer than twenty-two footnotes are needed to follow out the threads of this letter. Without them its full significance would be lost.

With all this editorial help, however, some matters may be open to question. Is it necessary, for example, to translate such obvious foreign phrases as "*grandes passions* [grand passions], "*couleur de rose* [rose-color]," and "*tant mieux* [so much the better]?" If the reader cannot understand these one wonders what else in these volumes he cannot understand. Some French phrases may need translation of course, German too, and Latin. But consider that "*Laborare est orare* [to work is to pray]", appearing four times in the text and notes, is translated each time, and is indexed as well. Is it a sad necessity of our time, or simply a matter of consistent editorial policy? "*au secret*" and "*Voila*," however, did escape translation.

There seems to be a question also about the correcting of textual errors. Carlyle's omission of words necessary to the sense: "or if not I come to receive you," is not noted, yet the "t" missing in "wan[t]" is supplied. (13:198-9) His omission of the "f" in "which cut of --K. Charles's head" (13:74) is not noted, though omitted letters are generally supplied in square brackets. There are serious typos, like "my dead Mother" (for "dear") which go unnoticed and uncorrected (15:75), and lines have been transposed (15:121). On the same page, following two bracketed corrections, the word "unadulterated" is left uncorrected and unfootnoted. With Jane's "haphazard spelling" too there is a problem. To correct or not to correct? Omitted letters are usually supplied in square brackets, then footnoted as "Letter omitted"; "lonliness" however is ignored. (15:206) The "t" missing in "nex" is not supplied but the missing "y" in "speed[y]" is. (13:308) "enraptu[r]ed is corrected but not footnoted (13:169) as are "tell[s]" and "nonsens[e]" (13:170). Her usual spelling of "headach" is accepted, though she occasionally adds the "e" (15:215), while other misspellings are either corrected without footnote or passed over without correction or footnote: "matrass" (13:197), "mistified," "dozes" (13:231), "Gohst" and "Chirst" (13:176). Other misspellings like "imimitate" (15:167) and short words that have been unconsciously repeated like "and and" are allowed to stand, with the footnote "Thus in MS"; but this footnote is also used where missing letters of a word have not been supplied in square brackets (15:32,n.3). Editorial practice here seems not to follow any consistent method of

indicating textual corrections, and results in some needless as well as some needed annotation. Still other errors remain. Nevertheless the Editors must be praised not only for their perseverance in tracking down every allusion and reference and recording failures honestly as "unidentified," "untraced," or "unexplained" (there are not many of these), but also for correcting their own earlier mistakes in dating or identification made in the earlier volumes (e.g., 14:11,n.2 and 15:145,n.3). We might add that, from the point of view either of the general reader or the informed scholar, an abundance of footnotes is to be preferred over too few. Many letters are provided with over twenty footnotes, long and short.

At the risk of being too critical we might touch on one further point. These three handsome volumes seem quite slender. On the average each comes to fewer than three hundred pages. Would it not have been more economical to publish their 525 letters in two volumes? True, there is a certain neatness in the present arrangement, Vol. 13 containing all the letters of 1841 and Vols. 14 and 15 those of 1842, which does indicate the Carlyles' writing twice as many letters in 1842 as they had written in 1841. But since Vols. 14 and 15 already divide a year, and since Vols. 5 through 9 of *The Collected Letters* also divide years irregularly, what would really be lost in compacting these two years into two larger volumes? The Editors no doubt considered this, and seem to have valued neatness over economy.

Volumes 13-15 are the first in which the name of Charles Richard Sanders does not appear on the title page as General Editor. As the project's onlie begetter, he will be missed. Kenneth J. Fielding, of the University of Edinburgh, however, has been a principal Editor since the beginning of the project and he is now joined by Clyde de L. Ryals, of Duke University, as Co-Editor, with Ian Campbell, Aileen Christianson, and Hilary J. Smith. It is appropriate that Professor Fielding should review their progress, in a brief Introduction (13:ix-xiii), from 1970 when Volume I appeared to the present. Over 2,000 of the Carlyle Letters have so far been published, which must leave nearly five times that many still to come. A third of these 2,000 have never been published before and the proportion in these three volumes is nearly half. Whether the new letters tell us anything new about the Carlyles "their texts are new, and the picture a fresh one." Many more letters have come to light since 1970, and several untapped sources--previously unpublished passages

from Carlyle's Journal, drafts of his early attempts at Cromwell, his notes on his reading for the *Heroes* lectures-- have provided "a new and unmatched opportunity to verify and explain what their . . . letters were about."

Although it is promised that "In our own editing no comments (apart from redating) are passed on predecessors' mistakes," comments are indeed passed on Froude's in his editing of the *Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle* and in his four-volume *Life of Carlyle*. Even Froude's defenders have not defended his inexcusably careless handling of texts, though some have noted sympathetically that he was working alone and under pressure. But here new sins are heaped upon his head. It is, strangely, Froude's "vigor and intelligence" that have "preempted how Carlyle is seen" and his "deliberate alterations" in the text of Carlyle's letters while pretending to be exact have created "a misleadingly dependable impression." Silent omissions, turning Carlyle's Scottish words into English, and countless inaccuracies all made by Froude to "conform to modern standards" disguise the bias of his biography, giving us "a generalized account of the Carlyles, contracted into a closed circle, with their individuality suppressed--all from someone who proclaimed that he wrote the truth with 'no reserve.'" (13:xi) These criticisms may or may not be deserved, but it does seem ironical that whereas Froude in his own time was vilified for revealing too much about the Carlyles he should now be taken to task for suppressing Jane's caustic comments about Emerson's *Essays* (13:xi, n.5), or for regularizing her spelling, or for omitting Carlyle's telling his brother John (13:201) how he bathed in "sheer nakedness" in the Solway--in short, for 'silently expunging' their human qualities. Yet these punches are pulled: Jane's remarks about Emerson were "perhaps understandably censored;" the anglicizing of Scottish words was "innocent enough but part of the normalizing tendency;" and it is admitted that Carlyle himself "tidied" Jane's misspellings. We confess to some puzzlement regarding these 'comments' on Froude, which strike and then withdraw. Even his crime of "dehumanizing" the Carlyles is "possibly unintentional." What seem intentional however, and unforgivable, are Froude's pretensions to accuracy. When the first two volumes of his *Life of Carlyle* appeared in 1882 he was attacked for making Carlyle all too deplorably human. In the "Introductory" chapter of Volume Three he sought to explain, in his own defense, why he was not writing the usual white-washing *Life and Letters* but felt bound by Carlyle's trust in him to tell all the truth as he

saw it including Carlyle's human faults as well as his virtues. In that day, more than in this, the phrase "no reserve" had limits.

One more point: attached to Carlyle's letter of 9 October 1841 to his brother John (13:272, n.10) is a footnote reference to Froude's explanation of Carlyle's difficulty in beginning "Cromwell" as "due mainly to a wish to say something about the present time." (The reference to Froude 3:324 is a mistake for 3:224.) Froude's explanation is called "less than a half truth." The rest of the footnote documents Carlyle's confessed inability to understand either Cromwell ("Oliver like an iceberg") or the "prophetic meaning" of human life itself in Cromwell's time, or in his own. Yet Froude (3:223) has just quoted Carlyle in his *Journal* asking himself whether his duty should be "to paint mere Heroisms, Cromwells, &c" when there is such a dire "need of some speaker to the practical world at present." The judgment against Froude seems somewhat gratuitous. His explanation might at least have been granted "a half truth."

The causes of Carlyle's bafflement by his Cromwell task are indeed intermixed. Earlier he had complained (11:15-16) that the subject was inherently less interesting than the French Revolution. Cromwell's character fascinated but eluded him, and the whole Civil War period still seemed unmanageable. Repeatedly he had to persuade himself that there really was a book there for him to write. So much time and energy had been invested in the project that he could not drop it, and was held to it, it seems, both by his desire to correct the popular misconception of Cromwell's character and by his conviction that Cromwell's strong leadership should serve as an example to Victorian England.

Yet, Carlyle's long preoccupation with Cromwell was by no means disabling. His letters, like Jane's are filled with the business of daily living. There are visitors from America to receive, friends from Scotland, London friends to entertain or call on. There are delightful trivia: the new *white hat* and knapsack Carlyle bought for his journey from London to join Jane at Trosten, the Bullers' home in Suffolk--to Ipswich by steamer, Stowmarket by coach, and the remaining 11 miles by foot--to which Jane replied immediately, "the steamboat-and-knapsack-speculation is all nonsense--and will come to no good--better get yourself transported here first and foremost . . . and then astonish the world with your white hat and knapsack afterwards as much as you like" (15:53); the shower-bath which he proudly tells his mother he has rigged up at Chelsea, somewhat like the one

at Scotsbrig, complete with pullies, *suggle* (shower curtain), and winch (for Helen to fill and raise the bucket of cold water); "two minutes from awakening, the cold torrent is splashing over me--rousing me to be as lively as a hawk! For a while after, I always feel as if I were *completely* well." (14:191, 224) We read about the noise of street vendors outside the window, and of the neighbor's chickens which disturbed them both; about Jane's exasperation with her little maid Helen Mitchell who "with all her good qualities is *a fool* every inch of her" and impudent besides. "Ergo she shall go as soon as I can find another servant that looks feasible"--which prompts her to exclaim, more than once about such vexations "Oh the prose of life!" (15:233). Carlyle, hampered by poor writing paper and iron pen, prefers a quill. There is a robbery at 5 Cheyne Row, thieves breaking in through the back kitchen window but scared off in time by Helen and Babbie; Carlyle afterwards had a joiner put 'iron stauncheons' outside the window, and Mazzini was to arm Carlyle with "a sufficient horsepistol." (15:96)

If there is prose in their life, showing them human enough, there is also the poetry. During these two years they are often separated, away from each other over six of the twenty-four months. Carlyle is seven weeks at Fryston visiting Milnes, seven weeks at Templand settling the Welsh estate; Jane stays three weeks with the Welshes at Liverpool recovering from the shock of her mother's death, and three weeks at Trosten visiting the Bullers. Carlyle spent three days in Belgium with Stephen Spring Rice, and was often at Scotsbrig to see his mother and family. In his protective, loving letters to Jane he talks to her as if they were together. Jane in her devoted and loyal, but spirited replies, tells him all she has done and thought, seen and heard, practicing with evident pleasure the considerable talent for dialogue and description that might have made her a novelist. We may ask, is the poetry of their life heard only when they are apart? Carlyle writes from Fryston, "Think not hardly of me, dear Jeannie: in the mutual misery we are in we do not know how dear we are to one another. By the help of Heaven, I shall get a little better, and somewhat of it shall abate Write instantly; say how you are, how all is." (13:82) Jane writes from Trosten, "God bless you my dear husband--I hope you are rested and going to Lady Harriet--and I hope you will think of me a great deal--I do not desire any more of you--Your own JC" (15:11) It appears so. We have, after all, no such authentic, intimate view of their home life together, with all its prose, as we have, in

these letters, of their life apart. That the poetry is there, transcending the prose, can be inferred from what and how they write to each other, and to others. If sometimes "our souls were jarred for the day," there is her strong loyalty to him against all critics, her selfless concern for his health and welfare, her eagerness always for his return. When they are apart they hang on each other's letters; when together their meeting of minds, their perfect trust in each other bespeaking a lifelong bond of love, the stronger perhaps for being childless, were certainly the poetry of their life.

The Editors emphasize the "deplorably human" qualities of the Carlyles, whatever that means. To this reader they appear rather bravely and nobly human. Though less financially straitened than before their future still depended on the success of Carlyle's work, which now seemed unclear. With so many admiring friends and acquaintances they were not alone, yet they were still transplanted Scots in London, and felt alone. John Carlyle, their nearest relative, was undependable, appearing suddenly in London from the Isle of Wight on the same day that he had invited Carlyle to visit him there for a rest, and, though a doctor, unhelpful when Jane complained of a mysterious pain in her side. A phrenologist had "found him *capable of anything* but not capable of turning his capacity to account." (13:110) Carlyle, trying to turn his capacity to account with Cromwell and plagued by failure and frustration, remained strong.

True, there is still a trace of his early tendency to belligerence, which had shown in his mathematical dispute with other young mathematicians in the 1814 issues of the *Dumfries Courier* (I, 8, n.7) and more recently in his sarcastic letter of 27 June 1840 to the *Times* defending the London Library project against a critic; but the tendency yields generally to reason and good humor. On one occasion Carlyle tells the joke on himself. He describes to Jane the unwanted visit of a stranger, "a man of huge coarse head, with projecting brow and chin (like a cheese in the *last* quarter) with a pair of large protrusive, glittering eyes . . . Good Heavens can this be some vagrant Yankee; Lion-hunting Inspidity,--biped perhaps escaped from Bedlam; coming in on me by stealth?" Such an intruder might have been expelled summarily, but proved to be Richard Owen "the Geological Anatomist, a man of real faculty, whom I had wished to see; my recognition of him issued in peals of laughter," and they had "two hours of excellent talk." (15:51-52) A similar shift occurs in connection with Bronson Alcott. Sent by

Emerson, he calls and startles Carlyle into total and perhaps uncivil disagreement with his humorless gospel of vegetarianism, "saving the world by a return to acorns and the golden age." (14:230) Writing to Emerson Carlyle tempered his words, but to Milnes "this Potato Quixote" was an infinite bore. (14:246) Browning who was also visiting quizzed him unmercifully, and when Carlyle continued to express his "total, deep irreclaimable dissent from the whole vegetable concern" (15:150) Alcott was deeply offended and departed "in almost open wrath" declaring he would never call again. When however he did call again, before leaving England, and found Carlyle unfortunately out, Carlyle responded with a kindly farewell letter: "You leave me . . . as an incorrigible heretic and infidel, which verily I am not." He wished Alcott well with his vegetarian mission: "Though not precisely my church, I do reckon it a branch of the true church, very worthy to spread and root itself according to its power in a world so overgrown with falsity and jungle as ours is . . ." (15:100) Thus he made what amends he could. Yet there is irony in Carlyle's description of Alcott to Emerson as "a rustic man; ignorant of the life-methods of civilized men, which civilized men have adopted that they may not be intolerable to one another." (15:58)

Jane often aims her pen at fools, at friends too. Dr. Hunter, Cavaignac, Sterling, even Carlyle, become targets of her mockery. Once when she was away at Trosten with the Bullers, Carlyle wrote from Chelsea describing how Babbie "comes down in the morning in a kind of shawl *dressing gown*, almost with air of a little wife, to make coffee to me!" (15:21) This prompted her retort: "I like very ill the notion of Babbie cinderallaing while I am playing the fine Lady here--poor little Babbie in her 'flowered dressing gown!' Since you absolutely have not the pluck to kiss her for me give her at least my warmest regards and say I will write to *her* next time." (15:26) Babbie is scolded, in the third person: "Oh yes! I know very well how like *a little wife* she looks!--and if there were a spark of jealousy in my disposition I would have taken out my seat in the next Bury coach, immediately after reading that sentence--and returned in all haste to put a check to such dangerous illusions." (15:28) The offense lay less in the dressing gown than in Carlyle's phrase "like a little wife." With all his loving letters she often felt neglected, taken for granted, treated as an inferior because she was a woman and wife--all the more difficult for her to accept in view of Carlyle's interest in liberated career woman like Geraldine Jewsbury, Elizabeth

Paulet, and Harriet Martineau. Jane's resentment and her feminism were growing, and will grow further.

Nevertheless, as we have said, the dominant note in these letters is harmony. They love and cling to each other during this relatively quiet period in their life. She supports his work; he consoles her in the loss of her mother. As 1842 draws to a close they are opening Christmas presents; Jane takes a barrel of potatoes to Cunningham's widow, and Carlyle, still worried about Cromwell but working steadily at the book he has yet to name, takes time to help young Verran and to assist with the charitable aid to Burns' sister and her daughters.

To the modern reader on this side of the Atlantic the quality of Jane's writing, and Carlyle's, is rich and strange, so expressive of their unique, individual natures but so difficult, even impossible, to describe. Hence our liberal use of direct quotation to convey the sense of their energy, their courage, their humanity--the sense of two remarkable people living in another age who write such letters as are hardly to be found today. Penny-Post has not hurt them. To both the Victorian scholar and the general reader they are a treasure-house of information. In spite of our few cavils it must be stated that they have been superbly edited. All that one needs is there. Again, we heartily commend the Editors and wish them well as they labor toward completion of this monumental Duke-Edinburgh Edition of the Carlyles' wonderful letters.

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The Complete Letters of Robert Burns. Ed. with Introd. by James A. Mackay. Ayr: Alloway Publishing. 1987. 862 pp. Authorized by the Burns Federation.

James Mackay, editor of the *Burns Chronicle*, has completed a notable editorial double in bringing out a Bicentenary Souvenir Edition of Burns's Letters to accompany his earlier one of the poet's Complete Works (1986), also published by the enterprising Alloway Publishing Company. The Burns Federation have lent their authority to both editions, and the fact that each has appeared in the first place as a subscription edition has helped to bring all of Burns's poetry and prose before a wider public at reasonable cost.

As is appropriate, Mr. Mackay acknowledges indebtedness to Professor G. Ross Roy, whose complete revision of the De Lancey Ferguson edition of the Letters was published by the Clarendon Press in 1985. He brings out that, because of its superb textual accuracy, scholars will continue to refer to the Clarendon edition "as the definitive study of Burns's letters for many years to come." Its cost, however, has been found "exorbitant" and "a major disadvantage." In his own words, "the appearance of the [Clarendon] edition was sufficient to whet the interest of the Burns movement, and thus it was that consideration of a new edition, at an affordable price, became imperative" (Preface, p. 8).

Part of the pleasure to be obtained from Burns's correspondence has to do with the intriguingly varied friends and acquaintances to whom he wrote and the different kinds of letter they elicited. James Mackay has served his readers imaginatively and well by grouping letters by recipients, and arranging them in chronological order. This allows for consecutive study of all the letters to particular correspondents. It is fascinating to observe certain friendships grow and develop, while others yield to time, changing moods, and the pressure of chance. Burns's treatment of his friends throws light on "the multi-faceted and multi-layered personality of Scotland's most complex genius" (Introduction, p. 10). Mrs. Frances Dunlop, George Thomson, and many others emerge as personalities in their own right.

It adds considerably to the merit of this editorial arrangement that Mr. Mackay supplies biographical notes on all of Burns's identifiable correspondents. These are informative and pithily expressed. In many instances, James Mackay adds original biographical insights of his own to information gleaned from Maurice Lindsay's *Burns Encyclopedia* and other reputable sources. Further, he draws attention to the letters which stand out, as in his note on William Dunbar: "Of particular interest is the letter (VI) written between 14th January and 2nd February 1790 giving details of Burns's arduous workload as farmer, exciseman and poet" (p. 282). All this unobtrusive and expert editorial work is of direct benefit to those who consult the Bicentenary Souvenir Edition.

James Mackay's Introduction offers among much else of interest a thoughtful, well-judged defence of Burns as letter-writer against Professor Carol McGuirk's recent influential criticism in *Robert Burns and the Sentimental Era*. As a historian of postal systems, Mackay includes in

Notes on the Text of the Letters a fascinating section on the franking of letters in Burn's day. This is not the only place where the editor is able to draw on unusually wide knowledge of Scottish social history. It is of a piece with his consistently generous interpretation of an editor's responsibility to his readers that he includes in an Appendix a compelling account of late nineteenth-century forgeries of Burns manuscripts by "Antique" Smith. Another impressive example in his glossing in the margin of Scots words in Burns's letter to Nicol of 1 June 1787.

The edition is attractively produced and illustrated. As was inevitable in a work on this scale, there are a number of misprints. Overall, however, Alloway Publishing deserve to be congratulated on a thoroughly creditable achievement.

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David Groves, ed. *James Hogg: Selected Poems and Songs*. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press. 1986. xxxiii + 232 pp. Association for Scottish Literary Studies, Vol. 16.

David Groves. *James Hogg and the St Ronan's Border Club*. Dollar: Douglas S. Mack. 1987. 46 pp.

To the reader, especially the non-Scottish reader, James Hogg presents some initial difficulties. There is, of course, the language problem, and in addition the remarkable variety of his *corpus* tends at first to bewilder and to diffuse attention rather than to focus it. Nonetheless, the last few years have witnessed a marked burgeoning of interest in Hogg, thanks in large part to the sustained scholarly endeavors of David Groves. These two volumes extend that work, offering new insight into two quite distinct and intriguing aspects of Hogg's work and life.

The *Selected Poems and Songs* supplements rather than replaces Douglas Mack's 1970 *James Hogg: Selected Poems*. More than two thirds of the present selections have been reprinted for the first time in their original forms, so that we now have easy access to poems such as "The Minstrel Boy," "Love Came to the Door o' My Heart," and "This Warld's an Unco Bonny Place" previously available only in manuscript or their original periodic form. Appended commentary indicates the source of each text and gives a few explanatory notes. Groves remains faithful to first editions and only rarely

changes punctuation or spelling. He concludes his introduction with an apt admonition to the "unilingual" reader not to be daunted by Hogg's language and thoughtfully provides a glossary. In including texts ranging from 1810 to 1831, he assembles a well chosen variety to demonstrate the remarkable versatility of Hogg's poetic gifts.

The editor's excellent critical introduction makes a persuasive case for the essential unity of Hogg's poems which repeatedly illuminate the imperfection of human nature and urge acceptance of the relativity and contingency of the self. Groves convincingly demonstrates the omnipresence of a metaphorical voyage motif "that embodies the journey of a creative mind from its initial sense of freedom and power to its inevitable sense of weakness, and finally towards some kind of resolution." While this pattern is more immediately discernible in the longer narratives than in the lyrics, it does indeed seem to be present in many of these shorter poems too, although one might question its applicability to a humorously bawdy trifle like "The Mistakes of a Night," Hogg's first published poem.

The vexing problem of Hogg's primitivism receives considerable attention. Groves rightly places it in a wider Romantic context and links Hogg's views on spontaneous composition to those articulated by Shelley in the "Defense of Poetry." It remains difficult, however, to correlate Hogg's philosophy of poetry as uneducated self-expression and his distaste for refinement with his occasional reliance on stifflingly conventional sentiments and imagery, as in "The Summer Midnight":

The breeze of night has sunk to rest,
Upon the river's tranquil breast,
And every bird has sought her rest,
 Where silent is her minstrelsy.
The queen of heaven is sailing high,
A pale bark on the azure sky,
Where not a breath is heard to sigh--
 So deep the soft tranquility.

In this period of poetical ploughmen and poetical milkwomen, the Ettrick Shepherd assiduously cultivated his own persona, and it is impossible to accept at face value unqualified primitivist poetics from this consummate master of public relations.

The Scots poems give us Hogg at his finest, and Groves fortunately includes some standard favorites like "Doctor

Monro," "The Witch of Fife" and "When the Kye Comes Hame." There is a generous selection of parodies, a genre in which Hogg excels, and a goodly collection of his most engaging songs, complete with musical scores when Hogg has designated the preferred tune. Unfortunately the photographic reproductions of some of these scores render the text almost illegible, a problem only partially solved by an addendum slip reprinting two of them. The volume includes *The Pilgrims of the Sun* in its entirety as well as several pages of astute commentary in the introduction on this very difficult poem. Groves points out that Hogg habitually wrote through masks designed to "represent either an actual person or a common character-type of the present or past." This reader was pleased to discover, however, that among the most affecting selections are simple ones such as "The Monitors" and "A Bard's Address to his Youngest Daughter" in which the poet speaks directly in *propria persona*. Unfortunately Hogg is occasionally offensive to modern sensibilities, and the nasty racism of "This World's an Unco Bonny Place" is hardly mitigated by Grove's attempt to deny its existence. Perusal of the entire volume, however, leaves one with an overwhelming impression of extraordinary variety as well as of a poet of humane sanity whose wise counsel to "The Lass o'Carlisle" must needs be recalled:

The best thing in life is to mak
The maist o't that we can.

The *Selected Poems and Songs*, an Association for Scottish Literary Studies annual volume, is a most welcome contribution to Hogg scholarship and amply fulfills the stated purpose of the series "to promote the study, teaching, and writing of Scottish literature, and to further the study of the languages of Scotland."

James Hogg and the St Ronan's Border Club is a slighter effort, to be sure, but a most amusing bit of social history. It clearly conveys the relationship between Hogg's gregarious and convivial nature and the almost instinctively patriotic foundations of his art. In 1827 Hogg founded the St. Ronan's Games at Innerleithen in an effort to provide amusement and a sense of community for an area demoralized by a declining standard of living and gloomy economic prospects. The name derives from Scott's fictional transformation of this Border village in his 1823 novel *St. Ronan's Well*. Until his death in 1835 Hogg participated in the games as organizer, host, patron and contestant; and of course his music and general

joviality furnished the life of the party at the Club's annual banquets.

Hogg's passion for sport is evident in much of his writing, and he was apparently an accomplished cross-country runner in his youth and later a skilled archer. Groves's account of the games relies primarily on newspaper reports, which indicate that they expanded rapidly in terms of both the numbers and the social status of the spectators. The annual summer meetings were soon supplemented by preliminary meets and football matches at Mount Bengier in March and informal fishing contests in the autumn.

Most interesting to the scholarly reader is the somewhat tenuous but intriguing relationship between the St. Ronan's Border Club and *Pickwick Papers*. The London publisher John McCrone was a guest of Hogg's in the autumn of 1832 and participated in the festivities attendant upon the October fishing and archery contests. Three years later he suggested that Dickens write a comic novel based on the misadventures of a similar "Nimrod Club." Although Dickens declined the suggestion as stated, Groves speculates that "it still seems likely that the example of the St. Ronan's Club had at least some influence on Dickens's invention of the Pickwick Club."

While this connection hardly places Hogg in the mainstream of early nineteenth century British literature, it underlines the multi-faceted character of his works and personality. Shepherd, writer, critic, suppliant, role-player, musician and now athletic impressario, Hogg is a man and artist of many complexities. David Groves's two volumes significantly advance our access to and understanding of the life and writings of this fascinating figure.

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Andreas Jäger. *John McGrath und die 7:84 Company Scotland: Politik, Popularität und Regionalismus im Theater der siebziger Jahre in Schottland*. Amsterdam: Verlag B. R. Grüner. 1986. 262 pp. Münchner Studien zur neueren englischen Literatur, 1.

Studies of contemporary Scottish drama and theater are still fairly scarce, even in Scotland, and the fact that the first monograph on John McGrath and the 7:84 Company Scotland comes from Germany is all the more surprising as McGrath is virtually unknown to the average German theatergoer. Jäger's

doctoral thesis is a solid introduction to McGrath's work in the 'seventies; it views the Scottish plays in the wider context of twentieth-century political drama and the tradition of popular entertainment and, geared as these plays are to local Scottish audiences, also pays due attention to the Scottish element in them. Since the major works of that period are discussed in individual chapters, the book will prove a welcome study aid to drama students approaching McGrath selectively; to those looking for comprehensive information Jäger's systematic exposition of McGrath's dramatic theory and dramaturgy in the latter part of the study will also be gratifying in spite of a certain repetitiousness in the arguments.

As the title indicates, Jäger sees the dramatic ventures of McGrath and the 7:84 Company Scotland as being based on the triple foundation of politics, popularity, and regionalism. Though there are various references to Scotland's national identity, the term "nationalism" has consciously been eschewed, and for some good reasons, for the Marxist playwright McGrath, an Englishman of Irish descent with a Scottish wife, has always tended to attach prime importance to his company's links with the working class and the regional or local community, and to view Scottish nationalism as a bourgeois movement aimed at lulling the people into an acceptance of their social misery. (The company's name refers to the fact that seven per cent of the British population possess eighty-four per cent of the country's wealth.) Jäger analyzes the political and cultural situation that led to the foundation of the 7:84 Company Scotland in 1973, but when he talks of the plays his major frame of reference is not so much the tradition of Scottish drama as that of the international left-wing theater, whose development he outlines at some length in his introductory chapters. Jäger also stresses the influence of Antonio Gramsci's concept of a *cultura nazionale-popolare* on McGrath's dramatic theory. He mentions Barrie, Bridie and the Glasgow Unity Theatre (pp. 86-9), but finds closer affinities with the epic theater of Brecht and Piscator, Joan Littlewood's theater workshop, and Peter Cheeseman's community theater.

In his discussion of McGrath's concept of theater as "working-class entertainment," Jäger repeatedly alludes to the tradition of Scottish entertainment and its social and regional roots, but unfortunately does not expound on this topic. The dearth of scholarly works on the traditions of Gaelic and Scots folksongs together with their commercialized

modern equivalents, and on the Scottish music hall and variety show is a handicap frequently found in modern Scottish studies, and it also makes itself sadly felt in this otherwise well-researched book. Jäger's limited knowledge in this field becomes obvious when, for instance, in his interpretation of *The Cheviot, the Stag, and the Black, Black Oil*, he refers to "These Are My Mountains," a commercial song of the 1960s by James Copeland, as "a folksong popular in the Highlands" (p. 132). But he competently points out the varied dramaturgical functions of music and variety-show elements and their employment for political purposes in McGrath's "shows."

Jäger limits his analysis of individual works to the seven plays McGrath wrote for 7:84 Scotland between 1973 and 1980, of which there are printed versions. Although he is well aware (p. 124) of the methodological inconsistency of this latter restriction in dealing with an author who considers his "shows" to be, first and foremost, "complex social events" and who looks down upon the literariness of the majority of left-wing writers with open contempt, Jäger (not too convincingly) argues that this choice is in the interest of the general reader, who is largely dependent on printed texts; he tries to overcome the dilemma by incorporating in his interpretations more or less detailed descriptions of the performances he has attended. However, given the numerous references to parallels and contrasts between McGrath's Scottish plays and the works of other English playwrights, such as Arden, Edgar, Brenton, or Griffith, it is difficult to see why there are no allusions at all to McGrath's English works of the same period or to other contemporary Scottish plays. Not only would the discussion of McGrath's use of music and his attitude towards Brecht have gained by a glance at *Yobbo Nowt* (1974, 7:84 England), but the particular slant of McGrath's treatment of the socialist John Maclean and his impact on modern Scottish life in *The Game's a Bogey* (1974) might also have become clearer in a juxtaposition of this play with C.P. Taylor's *Walter* (Traverse Theatre Club, 1977), or, for that matter, with the poetic portraits of Maclean by Hugh MacDiarmid, Sydney Goodsir Smith or Hamish Hamilton. Still, Jäger succeeds in presenting us with a vivid image of the themes and techniques that are pertinent in McGrath's work for the 7:84 Company Scotland, and of the changes it underwent from *The Cheviot* to *Blood Red Roses*.

The strength of Jäger's study lies in its clear-cut presentation of McGrath's dramatic and social theories and

their application in the individual plays, its weakness in the author's reticence in making critical judgments. McGrath's narrowing down of Scottish history to the double aspect of exploitation and expropriation and the frequent parallels he draws between past and present events are hardly assessed at all, nor does the priority of the social function over the aesthetic value of his plays elicit any critical comment. McGrath's reduction of the characters to caricatures and of the dramatized social conflicts to a crude us/them opposition, his loose plotting, his insertion of historical documents in fictitious episodes, these and other peculiarities are faithfully recorded but not sufficiently evaluated. Likewise, the reader would have liked to know how McGrath's insistence on "immediacy" as a major dramatic concept, the topicality of his shows and direct reference to particular audiences (pp. 100-14) agrees with the inherent claim to timelessness and universality (p. 135, cf. p. 76), and why his attempts to bridge the gap between politics and entertainment are successful in some instances and rather less so in others (pp. 169, 222ff.). McGrath's ideal of a Scottish rural socialism (*Boom*) seem to appeal to Jäger (p. 148), while the idea of an independent socialist Scotland (*Little Red Hen*) he rejects as political utopia (p. 180), without there being any attempt at viewing these two notions in perspective. After the numerous references in the book to McGrath's subtle strategies for manipulating the audience, it comes as a surprise to read that the reception of the plays often depends solely on the political standpoint of the individual theatergoer (pp. 225, 232ff.).

Is McGrath's recent departure from the tradition of Scottish "working-class entertainment" and his rediscovery of the realistic Glasgow Unity plays of the inter-war period (p. 203) as secret admission that the project of 7:84 Scotland has failed? Jäger dodges this question, but seems to imply that there has been a gradual decline in McGrath's inspiration since the unquestionable success of *The Cheviot* (cf. pp. 154, 170, 182, 190). He talks of a decrease in Scottish political consciousness after the abortive devolution project of 1979, refers to the reduced subsidies for alternative theaters in Britain, but also mentions a "certain exhaustion of the creative energy" in McGrath to account for the recent changes (pp. 186, 205). Jäger sees an increasing literariness on the one hand and diminishing audience participation on the other in McGrath's later plays (pp. 210, 213), but in a final appreciation underlines the

continuing attraction of the social, political, and entertaining qualities of his theatrical work.

With his doctoral thesis Jager has ventured onto a hitherto unexplored field of modern Scottish studies. The book, which happily avoids most of the jargon of many recent investigations with a socio-cultural bias, conveys a lot of valuable information to the student interested in McGrath and contemporary theater; it touches upon many aspects of drama, from textual analysis to performance, from dramatic theory to the British system of theater subsidy, and it stresses both the cultural interaction of Scotland and England and Scotland's own developments in this field. Being a pioneering study, it is not without some shortcomings; it sometimes lacks focus due to the novelty of the texts and the complex issues of their production and reception, and it is very tentative in its conclusions. But Scottish studies would be poorer without it.

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John Stock Clarke. *Margaret Oliphant (1828-1897), A Bibliography*. Victorian Fiction Research Guides, 11. St. Lucia: Department of English, University of Queensland. 1986. 102 pp.

Merryn Williams. *Margaret Oliphant, A Critical Biography*. New York: St. Martin's Press. 1986. xvi + 217 pp.

Recently, there has been a marked revival of interest in the novels of Mrs. Oliphant, as in other extra-canonical Victorian women writers, yet her relation to Scottish culture, and other Scottish writers, still receives little attention. She was a professional writer, living by her pen for over forty years, and in realistic late-Victorian terms, that meant succeeding in the London literary marketplace; only a portion of her later fiction is set in Scotland, and and she lived in England for much of her adult life. But she was born of a Scottish family, brought up initially in East Lothian, reared in the church of the Disruption, and connected throughout her career with *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. Her very first novel, *Passages in the Life of Mrs. Margaret Maitland* (1849), alludes in its title to Lockhart; many of her non-Scottish novels use Scottish scenes or rework themes from her Scottish works; and her non-fiction included books on the history of Edinburgh, Edward Irving, Dr.

Chalmers, and Principal Tulloch, as well as her massive history of the house of Blackwood. The canon of Victorian Scottish fiction is still very fluid, and we need to work out what kind of place Mrs. Oliphant deserves in it, and why.

The problems in reassessment have been those of scale, of accessibility, and of her reputation as debilitatingly over-productive. Mrs. Oliphant herself recurrently deprecated her novels as weakened by hasty writing under financial pressure, and the only previous modern study of her writing, *Equivocal Virtue* (1966), by Robert and Vineta Colby, used newly-available publishing archives to discuss her industrious exploitation of the literary marketplace. She once challenged Trollope as to who had written more novels, and won easily, but this was the kind of achievement that hasn't helped her with critical posterity.

J.S. Clarke's worthwhile but frustrating new enumerative checklist lists over a hundred fiction titles, most written to the generous requirements of the commercial three-volume format, as well as a substantial body of shorter fiction; her novels were frequently serialized before book-publication, and Clarke has entries both for serial publication and for the cheaper one-volume reprints most of her titles enjoyed in the later Victorian period, before they dropped out of print. Since, in mid-Victorian fashion, she almost always preferred to sell her copyrights at first publication, no reprint royalties freed her from the need to go on producing, year after year, two, three, or even four, new books (including, in early years, some published under her brother's name). Unfortunately, Clarke's listing does not cover Mrs. Oliphant's extensive non-fiction writings, either in book form or for the periodical market; the appendix to her posthumously-published *Autobiography* listed well over two hundred contributions to *Blackwood's* alone. Clarke's checklist is frustrating to use, too, because the seven-hundred-odd entries are arranged partly around the date of a title's first publication, and partly by the series or group to which a title or story belonged, and yet Clarke provides no alphabetical title index; he does, however, give separate indexes to publishers and periodicals, and in line with the series format, he introduces the checklist with an intelligent and remarkably comprehensive brief survey of Mrs. Oliphant's career (pp. 1-22). Clarke's checklist will be an essential tool for future researchers.

To the problem of scale has been added the problem of inaccessibility; for many years much of even her best work was out-of-print. Though Q.D. Leavis edited *Miss*

Marjoribanks in the late nineteen-sixties, and several titles were included in Robert Lee Wolff's mammoth Garland series in the seventies, it is only recently that Oxford and the women's imprint Virago have started rival reissues of Mrs. Oliphant's major English sequence, the *Chronicles of Carlingford*, and there are still only two of her Scottish titles in modern editions, Merryn Williams's edition of her late novel *Kirsteen* (Everyman, 1984) and Margaret Gray's selection of her MacDonald-like *Stories of the Supernatural* (Scottish Academic Press, 1985). The vast majority of her writing still remains inaccessible, even in serious academic libraries.

Merryn Williams's new study of Mrs. Oliphant's enormous *oeuvre* is, therefore, both timely and welcome. In it, she combines a biographical narrative with critical reassessment of several major novel-groups, and she wisely assumes that most readers will need generous quotation and a fair amount of plot-summary to follow Mrs. Oliphant's writing career. Perhaps understandably, in view of other demands on space, she has paid little attention to the periodical non-fiction (less than the Colbys did), but most of the novels get at least some attention. The broad outlines of her story were known, from the patchy and incomplete autobiography and from the Colbys' study, but Dr. Williams has had access to new family papers and has been able to fill out and clarify some phases of the life (for instance, on Mrs. Oliphant's relations with the Rev. Robert Story in 1860-63).

Though Dr. Williams's final claim is that Mrs. Oliphant "was a great writer, who has been neglected too long" (p. 188), it is, paradoxically, more as woman than as writer that her subject emerges from at least the biographical chapters of the book, and even there the book seems something of a missed opportunity. Williams still reads Mrs. Oliphant's life very much as Mrs. Oliphant herself did, and her narrative even shares something of the choppy, episodic nature of the *Autobiography*. Mrs. Oliphant's own version is very hard to resist, for it is an extraordinarily dramatic story, of domestic struggle and lonely survival, as the heroine copes not only with motherhood, and widowhood, and multiple bereavements, but with the sisyphian responsibility of writing enough to provide both for her children and for an extraordinary extended *menage* of adopted relatives; only briefly (like Mrs. Oliphant herself) does Dr. Williams entertain the repressed counter-reading, in which Mrs. Oliphant's independence and generosity reappear as a manipulative dominance, for in this biography Mrs. Oliphant

is admitted to have flaws only in her novels, not in her life.

As Dr. Williams points out, there is a close connection between the struggles of Mrs. Oliphant's life and the rather tough-minded ironic tone modern critics most appreciate in her works. She points out, too, that her life influenced her plots, against untroubled marriages or happy endings. What is notable, however, is how early Mrs. Oliphant began to rewrite the Victorian novel's characteristic focus on marital dependence. Even in her first novel, *Margaret Maitland*, written before her own marriage, let alone widowhood, she focuses on an independent woman; in some ways one feels that Mrs. Oliphant wrote her life on the pattern of her novels, as the omnipresent woman narrator, coercively unsentimental in understanding the weakness of the essentially secondary characters who peopled her pages or household. Dr. Williams makes frequent cross-reference in her biographical narrative from Mrs. Oliphant's marriage and family life to the plots of her novels, in a fairly literal way, but, because of her interpretative closeness to Mrs. Oliphant's own reading of the life, does not offer the kind of integrated psychological or feminist reinterpretation one might expect nowadays. The strong suffering women, the weak silly women, the weak dithering men, and the underrealized but recurrent villains of Mrs. Oliphant's novels all seem to call for rereading, not as literal transcripts from her life, but as self-interested displacements, misinterpretations, and restructurings of the life-experiences she labored to keep respectable.

It is in the critical inter-chapters, rather than the main biographical text, that the book's limitations are most apparent, through the section reassessing the later anti-marriage works is valuable and persuasive (chapter 11, "The Great Novels"). Dr. Williams writes very much from the Cambridge tradition, and like Q.D. Leavis before her, tries to assimilate Mrs. Oliphant to the realistic irony of Jane Austen or George Eliot. She sees, for example, the strength of the Carlingford novels in their characterization, and ironic observation, and sense of social geography, and she is correspondingly censorious about the "glaring faults" of their "ridiculous" mystery or sensation-novel elements, which are accordingly dismissed as mere "sub-plots" (see, e.g., pp. 78, 80); the same distrust of melodrama shows up in discussion of one of the "great" late novels (p. 155). Dr. Williams seems uncomfortable, too, with the supernatural stories, rating even *The Beleagured City* noticeably lower than the Colbys did. Interestingly, Dr. Williams recognizes

some link between Mrs. Oliphant's use of non-realistic plot-elements and her Scottish background--in an early chapter, she blames these lapses on the Covenanting tradition (p. 53). The Cambridge school's rather simple categories of moral realism vs. unrealistic melodrama have surely now been long discredited. They never fitted very well with mainstream Victorian fiction, and they fit especially badly with most Scottish novels. Both modern novel theory and such feminist rereadings as Gubar and Gilbert's *Madwoman in the Attic* have made Dr. William's rather summary dismissal of non-realistic fictional conventions very suspect, so that her book still leaves ample scope for new critical readings of Mrs. Oliphant's major novels.

As far as her relation to Scottish literature, almost everything still remains to be done. The best explorations so far are F.R. Hart's masterly chapter in *The Scottish Novel* (1978), reading *Salem Chapel* as a displacement of Scottish theological romance, and the Colbys' contribution to Ian Campbell's *Nineteenth Century Scottish Fiction* (1979), stressing the connections between her Scottish fiction and non-fiction. One incidental passage from her history of Blackwoods suggests the interrelatedness between her attitude to Scotland and her broader psychological themes:

Scotland has always had plenty of revenges upon the more abundant neighbour who, for general purposes, has swallowed up in his, like a husband with his wife, an equally dignified and considerable, if not so wealthy, name. She has never been without her large share in actuating the policy of the copartnership (*Annals of a Publishing House*, 1897, I, 4).

Both the books under review will help Scottish scholars in the necessary preliminary charting of Mrs. Oliphant's life and career, and it is to be hoped that they will also provoke more critical reexamination of her works, especially from a Scottish perspective.

PATRICK SCOTT
University of South Carolina

Walter Scheps and J. Anna Looney. *Middle Scots Poets: A Reference Guide to James I of Scotland, Robert Henryson, William Dunbar, and Gavin Douglas*. Boston, MA: G.K. Hall. 1986. 292 pp.

There are several outstanding bibliographies of Middle Scots literature, perhaps foremost among them Florence Ridley's "Middle Scots Writers" in Hartung's *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English* (1973). Given the number of such bibliographies available, one might wonder why Scheps and Looney have chosen to produce yet another. The answer to that question might be found in the organization of the bibliography, the currency of their citations, and the convenience of one-volume annotated edition. In most of these regards, the volume succeeds admirably.

First, the bibliography offers citations of works about four major Middle Scots authors, along with a general bibliography, in chronological order under each author heading. Editions and criticism are cited by the year of publication in alphabetical order. It is therefore possible for one to observe the high and low tide of scholarship with regard to a particular author. Such historical perspective is a clear reflection of the influence of Geddie and Ridley. The work provides particularly valuable insights into the recent resurgence of criticism that all four authors have received. It also helps in tracking down "classics" of scholarly activity. Certainly there are some problems with this organization, and I shall deal with them later, but his major bibliography continues the Geddie tradition of providing an historical overview of criticism of Middle Scots writers.

In terms of its attempt to update other bibliographies of Middle Scots criticism, the volume is less successful. For the most part, criticism is included only up until 1978, an extension of roughly five years beyond the date of publication of the Ridley bibliography. Yet, in selected cases, the editors have seen fit to include later works. Thus the landmark Oxford editions of the poetry of Dunbar and Henryson (edited respectively by James Kinsley and Denton Fox) are to be found in the bibliography while contemporaneous critical works are not. This particular problem may likely not be the fault of the editors. Publication delays, which sometimes reach legendary proportions in scholarly conversations, have likely had an impact on the development of the book. Yet one must wonder about the reasons for not including other criticism and

studies up until near the date of final editing for publication. If the problem is related to "author's emandation" costs, then the fault must be borne by G.K. Hall. If the problem was simply a lack of motivation on the part of the editors (which one might doubt), then the difficulty is theirs. Nonetheless, the value of this bibliography could well have been expanded by including all items available up until the very last moment.

Finally, among the three potential advantages of the volume, one cannot quarrel with the convenience of having a relatively current one volume bibliography of Middle Scots literature. Indeed, in that respect the volume is long overdue. The citations seem to be relatively comprehensive and for the most part the annotations are sensible and objective, even though one might sometimes object to the editors' evaluations of, say, the Small edition of Dunbar-- "in spite of its age, still an excellent edition." Their decision to be as comprehensive as possible in including unpublished dissertations expands the scope and usefulness of their work.

There are some important concerns about the usefulness of this bibliography. As noted above, the cutoff date is the major handicap for those who want a relatively current one-volume reference to later Middle Scots literature. There has been extensive critical attention to Middle Scots since 1978. Therefore, the work must be used with recent reviews of scholarship such as that published annually in *Scottish Literary Journal*. In addition, the traditional format of the organization of the volume, which offers valuable insights into the history of Scottish literary criticism, also poses some problems. The indices to individual authors are extremely valuable in helping to provide a title and subject-matter finding list for each author included. However, because of the complicated title references involved, sometimes the contributions of authors who treat, for example, Henryson in a comprehensive manner become clouded for the student using the book. The following annotation to Thomas F. Henderson's *Scottish Vernacular Literature* illustrates the problem:

Rates Henryson as second only to Dunbar among early Scots poets. Considers 7 to be "tasteful and spirited" and 8 as an adaptation of ballad form for religious allegory; claims that 10 and 12 present "beautiful and touching expressions of a particular mood," but in 3 "classical learning has almost quite smothered the

poetic inspiration." Sees 2 as "an imperfect amalgam of Chaucer and Henryson" because the two poets are essentially different in temperament. Argues that Henryson is at his best in 4 ("the gem of Henryson's production") and 1 ("[a]s an animal allegorist Henryson has no superior"). Discusses B, E, H, and I briefly and D in some detail. Also briefly discusses 9, 11, 15, and 16. Sees Henryson as "a kind of pioneer" as a nature poet and compares him to Cowper and Wordsworth.

While this isolated criticism might be unfair, the use of numbers instead of poem titles to summarize an author's evaluation of numerous works can become confusing. There is precedent for such treatment, and the editors might contend that a student of Middle Scots literature must "reach" to use this bibliography. If, however, it is to accomplish the purpose of providing a ready reference to all pertinent material, this kind of key can be confusing to the user or will cause the user to shift back and forth constantly between 14 pages of text.

This bibliography is a substantial contribution to the availability of information about the later Middle Scots poets. The concerns are, for the most part, minor. It is such a fine project in so many ways, that one can only wish it had been made better. It is an important and useful guide for those who wish to pursue research in later Middle Scots writings.

ROBERT L. KINDRICK
Eastern Illinois University

R.D.S. Jack. *Scottish Literature's Debt to Italy*. Edinburgh: University Press; for the Italian Cultural Institute. 1986. 86 pp.

What marks English studies in Britain off from the remainder of Europe is a determined eschewal of the comparative approach, probably one aspect of the century-long imposture which has seen English literature and culture, in the British Isles at any rate, pose as literature and culture *tout court*. On another level, this narrowness of vision is one aspect of the eternally ambivalent English attitude to Europe, a mixture of superiority and insecurity which perhaps conceals a deep-seated fear of the light a European perspective could throw on their history and culture. The

effects of viewing England within a European context will not become clear until the facade of English studies has crumbled away almost entirely, giving place to a healthy relativism, but we may offer the reassurance that it is likely to be an enrichment rather than an impoverishment of our understanding.

It is extremely encouraging to see that the Scottish tradition, although only recently validated in academic terms and still in the process of retrospective construction, thinks of itself comparatively from the very start. Professor Jack has already published a full-length study of *The Italian Influence on Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh, 1972), which begins with evidence for Robert Henryson's having studied law in Rome and ends moving from the range of Italian elements in Scott's novels to the influence Scott's own writing had on Manzoni or the less well-known Tommaso Grossi. His latest volume covers a wider area from a broader perspective, offering a summary rather than a detailed explanation. Aimed at the general public as much as at a specifically academic audience, it brings the survey up to the present day and is filled with often tantalising hints of the scope a comparative approach can offer.

The predominant influence on James VI's "Castalian band" may have been French, but John Stewart of Baldynneis in *Roland Furious* produced a compressed Ariosto which has an admirable concision and thematic force, not so much a pendant to the original as a creation in its own right. From William Fowler's translation of Petrarch and Machiavelli Professor Jack singles out *The Prince* as a major achievement, while the less successful sequence of 75 sonnets, *The Tarantula of Love*, contains echoes not just of Petrarch but of Rota, Sannazzaro and Boiardo. Brief mention of Sir William Alexander, David Murray and Sir Robert Aytoun leads to a longer study of William Drummond of Hawthornden's reworking of Valerio Belli and of Bembo, and of his rendering of Marino in a quieter, more melancholic tone in passages from *The Floweres of Sion*, the Counter Reformation lending a surprising hand in the Scotsman's struggle towards faith.

The period of the Vernacular Revival in the eighteenth century, with its keen sense of the need to defend a tradition under threat, was less sympathetic to influences of this kind. Nevertheless, Professor Jack insists, literary relations between the two countries merely took a different form. While both Boswell and Hume visited Italy, Thomson's *The Castle of Indolence* reached back through Spenser to Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, and the two poets share an

instinctive leaning towards the very faults they must condemn. Byron's debt to Italy could fill a book on its own, and his use of Italian settings in Book 4 of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* instances influence of a different kind, while James B.V. Thomson of *The City of Dreadful Night* offers a fascinating meditation on the quality and implications of Leopardi's very Italian pessimism.

Italy lagged behind Scotland in the exploitation of the novel form, merely offering Sir Thomas Urquhart and Tobias Smollett settings and food for satire, while Scott benefited from the eternally fertile influence of the romantic epics of Ariosto and Tasso in both the form and the content of his fiction. Professor Jack's final chapter, on "The Second Renaissance," is perhaps the most exciting, if frustrating in that one hopes he will be able to deal with the same material at much greater length in the not too distant future. He compares the lack of confidence of nineteenth-century Scottish writing with the effects of political partition and cultural isolation on Italy in the same period, then focuses on Edwin Morgan's Leopardi, Robert Garioch's Belli, Robin Fulton's versions of Saba and Quasimodo and Hamish Henderson's work with Italian war poetry and, most importantly, the seminal Gramsci letters.

Goldoni, as one would suspect, is an excellent candidate for translation or recreation into Scots, and undoubtedly under-explored at present. With the modern novel, Professor Jack feels that the experience of living in Italy or of visiting the country has been more significant for Douglas and Spark, Mackenzie, Linklater and Massie than any direct influence from contemporary Italian fiction.

This slim, attractively-produced volume is at once a clear guide to its field and an intimation of the tremendous amount of work waiting to be done on Scottish-Italian relations. I can only hope others will not be slow to take up the challenge implicit in Professor Jack's meticulous and pioneering work.

CHRISTOPHER WHYTE
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Carlyle Newsletter. Ed. K.J. Fielding, Ian Campbell, and Anne Skabarnicki. Number 1-9, 1979-1988.

"Every little sect among us," noted the Sage of Ecclefechan with disdain, "must have its Periodical . . . hanging out, like its windmill, into the *popularis aura*, to grind meal," yet the emergence of this periodical devoted solely to the writings of the two Carlyles signifies, not the sectarian character of Carlyle scholarship, but a Carlyean commitment to basing history in documentary research. Many such recent single-author fan-magazines are unabashedly ephemeral; in the *Carlyle Newsletter*, by contrast, the editors have established a resource of lasting value for any scholar or library with research interests in nineteenth-century literature.

In spite of its title, the "newsletter" has been, from its first issue in 1979, a substantial annual pamphlet of anything up to eighty pages. The contents, too, differ from those of the typical author newsletter; they include occasional news of conferences or research in progress (especially from the magisterial Duke-Edinburgh edition *Collected Letters*), and the first four issues provided annual updates to Rodger L. Tarr's bibliography of Carlyle scholarship, but the chief element in every issue has been the description or reprinting of new primary material by or about Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle -- unpublished Carlyle essays, newly-discovered caches of letters, or revealing passages of unused material from the drafts of Carlyle's works. Where ordinary articles have been included, they too have focused on documentary or bibliographical problems, rather than duplicating the conventional interpretative essays for which other periodicals already provide an outlet, and (wisely for a journal that relies on a fairly close-knit group of expert contributors) the editors have also excluded formal book-reviews. The contents pages include most of the names recently active in Carlyle scholarship, from C. R. Sanders onward.

To select items may seem invidious, but some examples of the very significant material that the *Newsletter* has made available to scholars include previously-unpublished Carlyle writings on New Zealand (from the National Library of Scotland, described by K.J. Fielding, in no. 1), on "Phallus-Worship" (from the Beinecke, described by Fred Kaplan, no. 2), on the 1848 French Revolution (from the Victoria and Albert, described by Michael Goldberg, no. 4), and on the eighteenth-century rake George Selwyn (from the Lewis Walpole

Library in Connecticut, described by K.J. Fielding, no. 9), as well as an unpublished Carlyle poem (edited by D. J. Trela, no. 7). Important Carlyle draft-materials have been described and printed from the *Reminiscences* (by Anne Skabarnicki, Edward Sharples, and K.J. Fielding, in nos. 1, 3,4), from *Cromwell* (again by Fielding, no. 2), and from *The French Revolution* (by Rodger Tarr, no. 9). Nearly every issue has reported on new finds of correspondence, as in K.J. Fielding's two-part report on the Spedding papers at Mirehouse in the Lake District (nos. 7 and 8), and the twenty-page report, with many extracts, on the new National Library acquisitions, by Ian Campbell and Fielding (also in no. 8). Readers of *SSL* will want to note that, in keeping with the *Newsletter's* Edinburgh provenance, several of the background articles focus on Carlyle's Scottish connections, as in contributions from Marinell Ash on David Laing (no. 4), Owen Dudley Edwards on Conan Doyle (no. 5), Ian Campbell on the Borders and Thomas Richardson on Lockhart (no. 7), and Jessie MacDonald on Thomas Aird (no. 8).

The items mentioned here are but examples, but they suggest the permanent value that a file of the *Newsletter* will have for Carlyle research. The ninth number contains a helpful cumulative subject index. For the tenth number, the main editorial office is moving from Edinburgh to New York, but the new co-editors, Michael Timko of Queens-C.U.N.Y. and Ian Campbell, foresee "no extreme change" in policies. The original editorial team can take pride in having established for Carlyleans a journal with both a distinct editorial mission and a very high quality of scholarship.

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Phillip Gaskell. *A Bibliography of the Foulis Press*. 2nd edn. Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies. 1986. 484 pp.

In the history of Scottish printing and publishing the Foulis Press occupies a unique place. For exactly two-thirds of a century Robert Foulis, then Robert and Andrew Foulis, then Andrew Foulis the Younger, published and printed books, the best of which could rival any press in Britain, with the exception of the Strawberry Hill Press. As printers to the University of Glasgow, the firm had to provide texts for the students. This, of course, accounts for the melange of quartos, octavos and twelvemos which they produced, the

latter an unlikely size for a printer of fine books. It also accounts for the substantial number of Greek and Latin books to be found in the list of works they published.

Printing came rather late to Glasgow. First introduced into Scotland by Chepman and Myllar of Edinburgh in 1508, there were printers in Dunfermline, St. Andrews, Stirling and Aberdeen before George Anderson set up his press in Glasgow in 1638. In the eighteenth century several important printers were at work, among them Robert Urie who also produced finely printed books. By the end of the eighteenth century Glasgow had a number of printers and publishers, and by the mid-nineteenth century, with the entry of houses like Blackie and Collins, Glasgow was even with, if not ahead of the capital city of Scotland. In the field of popular printing Glasgow probably always led Edinburgh in the production of chapbooks -- we think of the enormously popular Brash & Reid *Poetry; Original and Selected*, as well as the innumerable chapbooks in the various series "Printed for the Booksellers."

The house of Foulis, however, stands alone in the eighteenth century, both for the quality of their books, and for the numbers of titles as well as the apparent size of their printings. Here, of course, a distinction must be made between their university texts and their fine books. When Robert Foulis (1707-1776) died a year after his brother Andrew (1712-1775) and the business passed to Andrew the Younger, the latter published *A Catalogue of Books, Being the Entire Stock, in Quires, of the Late Messieurs Robert and Andrew Foulis . . .* (1777) which lists the available number of copies of each title of their stock which remained unsold. From this list we can estimate the print runs of some of the firm's books. Most of the titles are texts, as one would expect, since the fine editions in quarto were printed for a particular audience; they may even have been subscribed for before publication. Thus, of the splendid 1768 edition of Thomas Gray (*Poems*, #475) there were only 24 copies left in 1777, all on medium quality paper, although the edition was also printed on fine quality paper. These latter would be copies purchased by people of means, hence their disappearance from the Foulis stock room in the nine years which followed the publication of that work. The works of Pindar, on the other hand, were printed mostly for students, on medium quality paper (although some copies were produced on silk), and the printing must have been large. Thus, although published in four volumes, (1754-8, #274), there

were still 587 complete sets available in 1777, as well as assorted single volumes.

The firm's position as printers to the University of Glasgow, located on university premises, assured them, one supposes, of a virtual monopoly in the market of text books, and probably the continued loyalty of students after graduation, when some may have upgraded a mean edition of Pindar for one of the copies printed on silk. Among the texts which Foulis prepared for use in the university was an edition of the works of Horace (1744, #50), a collectors' item because of its name "the immaculate Horace." The edition came by this name because it is said that proofs of the edition were hung up in the college with the offer of a £50 reward for anyone discovering an error. Despite what one may assume was a pretty careful scrutiny by students and faculty alike, Gaskell mentions that W.J. Duncan in 1831 pointed to six errors which had not been detected.

The heyday of the firm was the period from 1742, when Robert Foulis began printing, until 1776, when he died. During this period the Foulis Press published an incredible 625 items. Once Andrew Foulis the Younger took over, the number of books produced dropped: in the decade to 1785 there were 95, but thereafter the number declined dramatically; in 1790 there were only four.

It is instructive to see what this firm published. Obviously, with their university connection, there were large printings of the classics and they also did a steady business in printing dissertations. There are several titles from Pope, including his translations of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*; Addison, including several editions of the ever-popular *Cato*; plays by Steele; several editions of Edward Young, including the *Night-thoughts*. Of Scottish authors, the two most popular appeared to have been Thomson and Ramsay, including eight editions of *The Gentle Shepherd*; five editions of Drummond's *Polemo-middinia*; an edition of Dunbar's *The Thistle and the Rose*. The Foulises also published some Scottish ballads: *The Battle of Harlaw*, *Chevy Chase* and *Gill Morice* as well as other older poems such as *Christ's Kirk on the Green* with Ramsay's two additional cantos; and Montgomery's *The Cherry and the Slae*. They even published an anthology in 1748: *Poems in the Scottish Dialect by Several Celebrated Poets*. They appear to have kept clear of religious controversy: there are two editions of William Craig's *Essay on the Life of Christ*, but they left it to other publishers to bring out books which might inflame the contestants in the "Auld Licht -- New Licht" dispute,

which occupied Robert Burns at one point -- the works of doctrinal dispute were left to Edinburgh and Kilmarnock publishers.

Gaskell's bibliography was first published in 1964 in the Soho Bibliographies series; this second edition is a facsimile reprint of the original volume, with "Additions and Amendments" (pp. 401-63). Amendments are signaled against the main entry number, but unfortunately additional entries are not indicated in the body of the original text. Gaskell has added a two-page Introduction to this new edition, and has retained the Introduction (pp. 11-62) to the original volume. In view of the thoroughness of that Introduction there was no reason to alter it.

A total of 58 books has been added to the canon, a good many of them dissertations. One of the most interesting items added is 704A: Alexander Campbell's *An Introduction to the History of Poetry in Scotland, from the Beginning of the Thirteenth Century down to the Present Time* (1799). It is surprising that Gaskell missed this item in his first edition; it was not unknown to students of Scottish poetry, and I had included it in my entry on Scottish poetry in the *NCBEL* from the copy in the National Library of Scotland. It was such a large, and we may assume expensive, book that most of the 100 copies printed must still be in existence -- there is a copy in the library of the University of South Carolina. Campbell published another volume that same year which is also in Gaskell's "additions": *Sangs of the Lowlands of Scotland*, which is a good deal scarcer than the other volume.

Other works in Gaskell's "additions" include Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd* (1768), Thomson's *Poems* (1774, which includes his collaboration with David Mallet *Alfred, A Masque*), and Alain René Le Sage's *Le Diable boiteux: or, The Devil on two Sticks* of which Gaskell includes English translations of 1760 and 1768 to add to a hypothetical edition of 1772 and a French edition of 1781. Copies of the majority of new editions are to be found in the National Library of Scotland emphasizing the growing strength of that library as the major repository of Scottish material in the world.

It is appropriate that Scotland's greatest 18th-century publishing firm should have as meticulous a bibliography as the one compiled by Phillip Gaskell.

G.R.R.

Two Glossaries by Robert Burns: The Glossaries to the Kilmarnock and Edinburgh "Poems" Reproduced in Facsimile. Introd. Donald A. Low. Stirling: University of Stirling Bibliographical Society. 1987. Occasional Publications, 6.

Students of Burns will find this pamphlet a useful source for any study of what Burns meant when he used Scots words in his poems and songs. While most editions of the poet include a glossary, these, as Dr. Donald A. Low of Stirling University rightly comments, have usually been compiled by the editor -- "more often than not, Burns's own definitions are simply omitted" (p. v). The two glossaries accompany editions published by Burns in Kilmarnock in 1786 and in Edinburgh in 1787. The 1786 glossary occupies five pages, the 1787 glossary twenty-four. The size of the 1787 glossary surprises no one -- that edition was designed to be sold to readers throughout Scotland, many of whom were ignorant of the Ayrshire dialect, and before the Edinburgh volume was published plans were going forward for a London edition which would obviously require a glossary, in the event it was a copy of that in the Edinburgh edition. But why did the 1786 edition, destined for Ayrshire readers, need a glossary at all? I would suggest that Scottish readers were so used to reading English, not Scots, that the poet was not at all certain that his local readers would recognize Scots words in print, although they would certainly have understood them being recited by Burns. He was no forerunner in appending a glossary to his poetry. Low points out that Allan Ramsay had done so in the early years of the century; so did Robert Fergusson and several other poets and editors before Burns. We may thus say that he followed a tradition rather than created one.

Burns prefixed a short note of explanation to each of his glossaries, and these are interesting to compare too. Most of the 1786 note is given over to an explanation of the English participle *ing* becoming *an'* or *in'* in Scots; this is replaced in the 1787 note by some rules of pronunciation, particularly useful to those who did not speak Scots. It is interesting to see that the text of the poems and songs changed from 1786 to 1787, as Burns reached out to a larger audience. Several of the contracted *an'* forms in 1786 became the more universal *in'* a year later.

His second edition was the last one in which Burns supplied additional material for the glossary. He was no longer in Edinburgh when the 1793 edition of his poems appeared and his publisher there, William Creech, merely

copied the 1787 glossary, despite the fact that several poems and songs had been added (including "Tam o' Shanter"), some of which would have required glossing. Burns does not appear to have been concerned with glossing the songs which he supplied to James Johnson or George Thomson, and neither *The Scots Musical Museum* nor the *Select Collection of Original Scottish* [sic] *Airs* contains a glossary. It is evident, however, that the poet was really interested in supplying readers of his first two editions with useful and accurate glossaries. We can see this in comparing entries in the two lists -- the later one occasionally has a significantly enlarged definition of a word.

A comprehensive study of eighteenth-century Scottish glossaries would make a significant research project -- a good topic for a Ph.D. According to anticipated audience, amount of dialect used, whether the texts glossed were contemporary or older, glossaries run from Burns's modest five pages to James Sibbald's 280 pages in his *Chronicle of Scottish Poetry; from the Thirteenth Century, to the Union of the Crowns* of 1802. Oddly enough the glossary to the Kilmarnock edition is readily available because there have been over twenty facsimiles of that book, whereas there has been only one of the Edinburgh volume. The poems added in 1787 were appended to a facsimile of the 1786 edition published in 1971, but unfortunately the expanded glossary was not included, so Low's pamphlet is the only readily available source for Burns's later glossing. Equally welcome is Low's short Introduction.

G.R.R.