

W.B. YEATS'S AUTOBIOGRAPHIES IN THE
CONTEXT OF OTHER IRISH AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL
WRITINGS

Thesis submitted for examination for PhD
in English Literature

Gerard Paul Moran,
Bedford College,
University of London



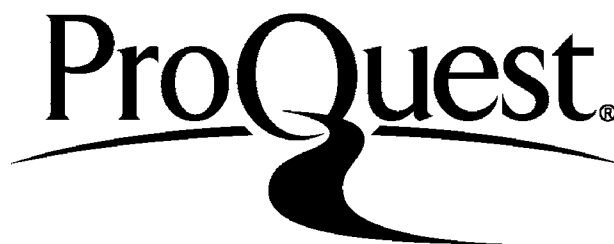
ProQuest Number: 10107336

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10107336

Published by ProQuest LLC(2016). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

ABSTRACT

The thesis discusses an area of Anglo Irish literature that has received little critical attention in the past: the autobiography. The opening chapter introduces the subject of literary criticism of the autobiographical genre together with its development in recent years, and it stresses the importance of autobiography in Ireland especially as part of the Irish Literary Revival. It ends with a synopsis of critical commentary on Yeats' Autobiographies up to the present time. Taking into account this body of criticism, the next five chapters present a detailed study of Autobiographies often relating aspects of Yeats' work to other examples of autobiography, especially, but not exclusively, those written by Irish writers. The thesis recognizes that, despite the increased amount of discussion in recent years about the nature of autobiography and how best it should be studied, there has been little agreement on these matters. As a result it employs a variety of critical approaches in an attempt to avoid the rather restricted approaches made by previous critics of the work. This multiform method is appropriate to an autobiography written at various intervals, in various ways, over many years by a writer who presented a number of different selves to the world during his career. The final two chapters survey a selection of Anglo-Irish autobiographies. These works illustrate how styles and methods of writing memoirs have changed since the nineteenth century, how writers use different autobiographical strategies to achieve their separate purposes (not all of the works mentioned are by literary figures) and how, in many cases, the development of the self is described in

tandem with the development of the new Irish nation. It is hoped that the thesis will introduce new aspects in criticism of Yeats' Autobiographies, of Anglo-Irish autobiography and of the autobiographical form in general.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	An Introduction
CHAPTER 2	Yeats' <u>Autobiographies</u> : 'Reveries over Childhood and Youth'
CHAPTER 3	Yeats' <u>Autobiographies</u> : 'The Trembling of the Veil'
CHAPTER 4	Yeats' <u>Autobiographies</u> : 'Dramatis Personae'
CHAPTER 5	Yeats' <u>Autobiographies</u> : 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge'
CHAPTER 6	Yeats' <u>Autobiographies</u> : 'The Bounty of Sweden'
CHAPTER 7	Irish Autobiographical Works - 1
CHAPTER 8	Irish Autobiographical Works - 2
APPENDIX ONE	A Passage removed from W.B. Yeats' 'Reveries over Childhood and Youth' after the 1916 MacMillan Edition
NOTES TO CHAPTERS 1 - 8	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	

CHAPTER I

AN INTRODUCTION

Hamm: I've got on with my story. I've got on with it well
Ask me where I've got to.

Clov: Oh, by the way, your story?

Hamm: What story?

Clov: The one you've been telling yourself all your ...
days.

Hamm: Ah you mean my chronicle?

Clov: That's the one.

(Endgame - Samuel Beckett)

Beckett's jokes are not hard to see: Clov, his habitually dull wits now sharpened in order to play out the endgame with his oppressive master, perceives that Hamm's trammelled existence and vision can not be said to add up to a life - merely to a succession of days. Beckett's play upon words includes the phrase 'telling yourself' too, which suggests a degree of self-deception in Hamm's narratives; yet, ironically, it is Hamm himself who provides the appropriate word to describe the incessant fictionalizing of his own past - it is a 'chronicle'. Hamm's unintentional pun is a revelation to Clov - 'That's the one' - for Hamm is in truth a 'chronic' mental and physical case. Many of Beckett's characters obsessively tell themselves the story of their days in one way or another but seem to gain little in so doing other than the realisation that such story-telling is a further symptom of the chronic illness of their existence, and that self-consciousness is a torment that even death may not eradicate. Hamm, as told by Hamm, fails to endear: Clov eventually refuses to listen, as does his deputy, Hamm's father, Nagg, when the bribes run out. The stories Hamm tells, though obliquely autobiographical, elicit no sympathy

for their teller. Autobiographical fictions bring next to no amount of self-elucidation to Hamm and fail to inspire pity in his immediate audience.

This short passage from Endgame is relevant to any exploration of the art of autobiography for a number of reasons: Clov's sneer that Hamm is telling himself a story isolates the criticism that autobiography is intrinsically a lie told about the self and to the self, and it encompasses another commonly-voiced sentiment that autobiography is an egocentric indulgence rather than a fully imaginative literary entity. Hamm's 'chronicle' seems to be a daily re-iteration of events from his past, vacillating between first and third person singular and between present and past tenses that finally ends in silence when his audience deserts him, emphasising that autobiography, despite being an intensely private act, requires a dimension of public display to validate it. Furthermore, Beckett's acute etymological sense would tell him that the word 'chronicle', deriving as it does from, and in this case punning upon 'chronic', embraces not only the sense of something established and constantly recurring (like Hamm's illness) but also has its origin in the Greek word Khronos - time. Memory and recall, so essential to autobiographical acts, are obviously associated with matters of time; autobiography can create its own particular time scale, inhabiting the gap between events narrated and the narrative act itself, recalling time past into time present, interbreeding past selves and present selves and, in some cases, ultimately regaining lost time. Finally, Beckett is an Irishman and the Irish are said to have that natural eloquence and garrulity which should facilitate the writing of autobiography, it is, then, perhaps appropriate that a

quotation from one of his plays should introduce a discussion of autobiography in Anglo-Irish literature.

Not everyone who studies autobiography takes such a jaundiced view as Beckett's Clov does, but at one time autobiography was regarded as lacking in full literary status, as not being a genre in its own right and, as such, was given scant critical attention. However, in more recent years, many critics have turned to the problems inherent in the study of autobiography. This was only to be expected; in terms of numbers, autobiographies are at a peak; many people from all areas of life, for a variety of reasons, deem their lives to be of sufficient interest to write and publish versions of those lives. Henri Peyre gives one reason for the preponderance of the autobiography:

The fondness of our age for the autobiographical literature stems from its ease. The author finds a book almost ready made in the narrative of his youth. 1

There is a grain of truth in this glib comment, anyone with a past, a memory and a degree of literacy may create some sort of autobiography, but this does not satisfactorily explain why autobiographies should be written nor does it explain their function for writer or reader.

Michel Foucault delves more deeply into the matter in an essay headed "What is an Author?",² arguing that in modern Western culture - 'the age of individualization' - the author-figure has replaced the common need for the immortal hero. An author's narrative can ward off death and oblivion in the same way that a mythological hero might ward off firstly death and then oblivion by the fame or notoriety of his deeds. Foucault's essay is not geared specifically to autobiography but the issues he raises are apposite: he challenges the view

of author (or autobiographer) as hero because it involves, what he calls processes of identification and authentication of a work by means of an author's biography. He prefers to see the writer as an 'author function' that is only discernible within the text and he points out that traditional methods of study may involve a process of 'author construction' that bears only a spurious relation to the 'author function'. It is because author anonymity is an uncomfortable notion, he says, that even modern criticism still employs terms like 'maturity', 'evolved style' and 'influence' in attempting to solve problems of identification. He suggests that this bias towards personality is attributable to a deeply-embedded assumption that literature, like modern Western society, is based on a system of private ownership - an idea he wants to impart in the important phrase 'the age of individualization'. This embraces the sense that a literary establishment sees the author's name on a work as evidence of ownership and as a means of classification (Yeatsian, Homeric, Shavian, etc.) or as a means of authentication and explication of a text. This phrase also suggests that this tendency is related to the modern Western cult of the individual, so easily propagated by the workings of mass media, that has come to replace the formerly held religious and metaphysical beliefs notably absent in the West today. Many popular autobiographies exemplify Foucault's argument: remove the well known name from, say, a film star's memoirs, thus leaving only an 'author function' within the text, and the work loses much of its appeal and commercial attraction.

Aspects of this argument will be familiar to readers of Yeats since his view of Western civilization and its history was that it showed a trend towards individualization

(character) ever since the high-point of the Renaissance (personality) and he felt this trend was one of decadence. The premises and conclusions of both writers differ, though since Foucault implies that individualization in literature is symptomatic of a political system built upon a proprietorial basis, while Yeats holds that the decline would be arrested, not by political innovation, but by a common return to the primal traditions and symbols of the Great Memory. But a continued comparison of the two writers is useful: Foucault says it is as wrong to confuse the first person of a narrative with its author; a work, he claims, is capable of containing a number of simultaneous selves. Yeats actually practises this multiplicity of self by giving his partial life-story a plural title, Autobiographies, and by employing a number of autobiographical styles to evoke that infinite capacity of the self to generate other selves. Foucault's warning against the common assumption that the presentation of the author in a text is equatable with the total self that is the author's personality, is a salutary one when considering autobiography, the literary form most likely to invite that false assumption.

Given that there will always be a discrepancy, whether intentional or unintentional, between what a person says he is and what he really is, one wonders why, as long as an audience is available, that person continues to pursue the need to tell others his life story. Anthony Storr makes one suggestion. He sees, not just autobiography, but all creativity as a confession of a latent desire for omnipotence over one's fate and as an attempt to fashion a permanence in the face of threatening mortality.³ In creativity, he argues, there is also a chance offered of wish-fulfilment and, by extension, one can see that this applies also in autobiography,

which is a re-creative act. For there one has the potential to mould the past according to one's present desires. This is true of Sean O'Casey, for example, who re-fights old battles throughout his six volumes of autobiography, and though he may not always win them, he conveys a general sense of having fought out of the noblest of principles and of having been right when all others were wrong. He even re-shapes his physique through his narrator-figure; the sickly and under-nourished youth of the early volumes (and of reality) becomes a broad-shouldered navvy, 'the only man in the gang who could mount a ladder with a hod carrying near eight stone in it, balancing it with equal ease on right shoulder or on left'.⁴ Beyond wish-fulfilment is the desire expressed in many creative forms for the artificer to belong within a particular society, age, school of thought or mythological system. An example of such might be any religious autobiographer who may delight in showing himself an instrument of God's divine pattern whereby his life is given a purpose and a goal. Others may look exclusively inwards to find their significance and in order to do so may create autobiographical personae as a means of uncovering and articulating the deeply-buried true self. Anthony Storr examines the necessity for this split within the creative personality thus:

Creative people may be more divided than most of us, but, unlike neurotics have a strong ego: and, although they may periodically suffer from neurotic symptoms, have an especial power of organising and integrating opposites within themselves without recourse to displacement, denial, repression and other mechanisms of defence. Creative people, and potentially creative people, therefore, may suffer and be unhappy because of the divisions within them, but they do not necessarily display neurosis. 5

Such a view owes a good deal to Jung in seeing creativity as a way of recognising, articulating and thus subduing the potential for division within the self. It is the

first step towards what Jung calls 'individuation', and though the persona of an autobiography may not be representative of literal, historical truth to life, it can represent an artistic and universal truth about personality which the reader can identify, and an efficacious truth for the author who has employed his conscious faculties to mine, explore and understand some parts of his conscious being.

Roy Pascal, author of a seminal work on autobiography, while agreeing with the theory put forward by Storr, has to disagree when it comes to the practice of creativity in modern autobiography. He sees disharmony and division impinging upon individuation from without: 'What more profoundly affects modern autobiography is a general lack of relationship between personal and social being'.⁶ Few autobiographers in his opinion, other than Wordsworth, Yeats, Henry James and Proust present any sense of totality or harmony or produce a satisfactory mythic parallel for their lives in their work. Storr and Pascal seem to share a common view (though the former refers to all creative acts while the latter concentrates more narrowly upon autobiography) but both have to guard against a shortcoming in their respective theories since both imply that there is a fixed and true self discoverable at the heart of the seemingly meaningless bundle of incoherencies that make up an individual personality. Yet Jung himself held that a man never is, but is always becoming, and in autobiography the importance need not lie in the past life of the subject and whether it is true to self or not, but in the way in which the present self sees its past experience. Thus will the personality of the author be altering and re-defining itself even as he enters upon the path of self discovery

associated with the autobiographical act. This point was first made to real effect by Georges Gusdorf in 'Conditions et Limites de l'autobiographie' in 1956.⁷

This shaking of the concept of the fixed individuality of the author when taken with the tendencies of recent criticism to banish the importance of author-identity from critical study, presents major problems for commentators. Autobiography is ostensibly a personal document opened for public view and becomes meaningless in some cases when detached from authorial identity and from historical or social background. Perhaps in an attempt to stave off uncertainty and perhaps because of the wide variety of styles and forms open to an autobiographer now, critics have used different methods in approaching autobiography and many different provisional definitions have emerged. Although the study of autobiography is now well established - Anna Burr's The Autobiography was published as long ago as 1909 - there is no concensus of opinion, methods of approach are as heterogeneous as conclusions.

William C. Spengemann's The Forms of Autobiography and Wayne Shumaker's 'English Autobiography, Its Emergence, Materials and Form'⁸ are two works which approach autobiography from an historial perspective, while Paul Delany in British Autobiography in the Seventeenth Century divides autobiography into 'religious' and 'secular' groupings and sees the period as the seed-bed for modern works. On the opening page of that work he writes that a critic must offer a working definition of autobiography 'even if it is bound to give rise to anomalies in practice' but soon admits to the futility of trying to pin down or evaluate certain elements of autobiography: 'the problem of truth or sincerity in autobiography becomes hopelessly confused

when an autobiographical statement is inextricably linked to
some larger and aesthetic design'. Yet nearly all
autobiographers and critics would argue that autobiographical
statements need to be submitted to a larger design without
which they lapse into the status of catalogue or diary, and
this reveals the major shortcoming in Delany's working
definition. That design may be highly sophisticated, as with
the Wagnerian-inspired structure of George Moore's
Hail and Farewell, or may exist solely because the author has
excluded certain events to avoid repetition, tedium or
embarrassment. Selection, shaping and a use of the imaginative
faculties are pre-requisites of autobiography and represent a
controlling aesthetic design, a fact which Henri Peyre omits to
mention when explaining the current popularity of the
autobiographical form.

Briefly noting that George P. Landow has edited a
collection of essays on autobiography using an historical
criterion for his starting point, one can move on to find other
means of classifying the subject: there have been studies of
Women's Autobiography and Black Autobiography, while Robert F.
Sayre uses a geographical criterion in examining auto-
biographies written by Americans. He suggests that 'the best
way to begin is by describing what is not autobiography' and he
excludes diaries, journals and collections of letters on the
grounds that an autobiographer, 'like the biographer and the
novelist, ideally composes a complete and unified work'. This
process of elimination is cumbersome and meets difficulties in
dealing with Yeats' Autobiographies, for example, where
diaries, journals and even, in 'Dramatis Personae', letters are
employed as part of a varied autobiographical method. Further-
more, Autobiographies is not 'a complete and unified work'

which does not deter Pascal from finding it one of the most successful modern works of its kind. In fact, Pascal in Design and Truth in Autobiography (a work which uses a thematic approach to the subject as the title implies) attempts definition of the genre and illustrates the necessity for always having to qualify one's statements when discussing autobiography and not specific autobiographies:

It involves the reconstruction of the movement of a life, or a part of a life, in the actual circumstances in which it was lived. Its centre of interest is the self, not the outside world, though necessarily the outside world must appear so that, in give and take with it, the personality finds its peculiar shape. But 'reconstruction of a life' is an impossible task 13

It is hardly necessary to quote further from Pascal, one can see his definition drifting into interminable clause and sub-clause and labyrinths of qualifying statements. One laments that so much of the prima materia of autobiography is excluded by Sayre's definition and that the type of autobiography, or more strictly, reminiscence, that sets out to define a society, community or way of life that has passed, has been refused autobiographical status by Pascal, because its centre is not the self alone, but the self in its community. 14
15
Anna Burr, in one of the earliest works devoted to the subject, sensibly attempted to avoid the pitfalls of definition of autobiography, preferring to dwell upon the 'autobiographical intention' of the author. 16 The advantage of this method is that it is prepared to admit worthy and interesting specimens inhabiting the fringes of autobiography, the major disadvantage is that in the absence of a preface or of a direct statement of the author's intention, can a critic be sure that he or she can detect the precise autobiographical intention?

Other interesting but evidently limited methods of classifying autobiography include Martha Ronk Lifson's study of

the myth of the Fall and images of lost Edens in autobiographies, especially confessional works and those dealing with childhood and the loss of innocence, and William Howarth's 'Some Principles of Autobiography' which uses the painter's self portrait as a means of describing different types of autobiography, while George P. Landow in introducing a collection of essays on Victorian autobiography makes the useful distinction between autobiography and 'autobiographicality' which includes works from genres adjacent to the autobiographical, such as the journal or the autobiographical novel.

It is with Wayne Shumaker that one sees a recognition of the shortcomings of attempts at inclusive definitions of autobiography; he opens his fine article with an admission that a loose definition can include every written work bearing the slightest trace of its authors' personality and that a tightly-phrased definition may rule out many interesting examples of 'autobiographicality'. James Olney agrees with Shumaker about the problem of defining just what autobiography is:

definition of autobiography as a literary genre seems to me virtually impossible, because the definition must either include so much as to be no definition, or exclude so much as to deprive us of the most relevant texts. 20

Consequently, he declines from offering a general definition of the genre but he does elaborate upon a convincing method of study for his specifically selected examples of autobiography. His central idea is to see the autobiography as 'metaphor' or as 'myth of self' for metaphor alone can mediate

between the internal and external, between your experience and my experience, between the artist and us, between conscious mind and total being, between a past and a present self, between one might say, ourselves formed and ourselves becoming. 21

This allows him to define the autobiographies he

chooses to study as falling into two categories: firstly, those autobiographies of the 'single metaphor' in which he includes those of Fox, Darwin and John Stuart Mill, and those of the 'double metaphor' in which Montaigne's Essays, Jung's Memories, Dreams and Reflections and T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets are included.

An autobiographer of the 'single metaphor' creates an 'autobiography simplex' in which the individual 'daimon', as Olney calls it, is the dominant function or faculty that formed part of his whole self and which the work sets out to describe and record. In terms of Anglo-Irish Autobiographies to be discussed in this study, those of Ernie O'Malley and Tom Barry, for example, could be said to fit into this category since they do not treat the wholeness of the subjects' selves but merely present their subjects in terms of the Anglo-Irish war and their service therein. Their 'daimons' are military ones. An author of the 'double metaphor' autobiography, or 'autobiographer duplex', is in a position where the 'daimon' equals the self and the self is greater than the sum of its parts - a writer for whom the autobiography is not 'after the part, but only a part'. The obvious example here is Yeats, though George Moore and Frank O'Connor can be said to fit into this category too, as will be shown.

Olney's method of separating autobiographies into 'simplex' and 'duplex' does not involve or imply value judgement and, as a method, it holds good for his purposes, perhaps because he works closely with a small and selected number of texts which all have something in common - they all fit within the categories he has defined. This may appear to be a description of a circular argument - Olney's work, in fact, far surpasses that - but it does illustrate an

indisputable point about the study of autobiography: unless the critic restricts himself to a limited number of works for study which he is able to classify in some way, the almost inevitable tendency will be for the discussion to become very diffuse or very tortuous. The method of critical study used in this thesis owes a little to Olney: firstly, distinct limits have been set upon the type of autobiography referred to in so far as it pertains either to Irish history or to Irish literary history, and secondly, where appropriate, Olney's means of classifying autobiographies in terms of the 'single metaphor' and the 'double metaphor' is invoked.

This very brief summary of some of the methods of critical approach to autobiography illustrates, if nothing else, one thing: that there is no single, practical working definition of autobiography in general; were there one, with the great deluge of study on the subject in recent years, it would certainly have been formulated by now. My personal conviction is that each individual autobiographical work (be it memoir, diary, journal or whatever) has the potential ability to create its own individual form out of the indisputable uniqueness of its subject matter and should be deemed worthy of attention, or not, according to the relation between its subject matter and its method of presentation. Such is the fascination of Yeats' Autobiographies where a variety of methods are put to use and where textual analysis reveals a prose style almost as scrupulous in its construction as is his verse style, though it is perhaps purchased at less effort and less pains.

W.B. Yeats' autobiographical writings, begun in 1914, represent only one example of many such enterprises in Ireland around that time. George Russell (AE) observed that a

proliferation of memoir writing was already in existence when reviewing Katherine Tynan's Twenty Five Years in the same year that Yeats began his autobiography; yet many more were still to follow and the problems AE identified were to increase:

Ireland is more prodigal of literature about itself in proportion to its size than any other country in the world. But it is difficult for us to point to any book and say, 'Comrade. This is no book. Who touches this touches a people.' Hardly any before entering the witness box of literature to give evidence about Ireland has taken mentally the vow to tell the truth and nothing but the truth. 22

Although AE is here concerned about the liberties taken with truth, it is of equal significance that, in talking of two autobiographical works, Katherine Tynan's Twenty Five Years and George Moore's Ave; Salve; Vale; he assumes that they are as much concerned with Ireland as they are with their authors' lives: 'Ireland' he says 'is more prodigal of literature about itself... than any other country in the world'. The literary, cultural and political renaissance which Ireland underwent from the later years of the nineteenth century into the early years of this century was a deliberately staged national revival, a self consciously avowed attempt to achieve not just political independence but also a renewed individual cultural identity, in which AE was one of the prime movers. The popularity of the autobiographies as a means of recording the history of that movement, and the resulting high degree of literary matter about Ireland itself contained in them, can be explained by the fact that it is one of the most self-conscious of literary forms and is therefore most appropriate for the purpose of recounting the aims and achievements of the movement.

Autobiography offers not only a personal view of national events, as is the case with Twenty Five Years, but

also the opportunity for an individual writer to place him or herself within a national and political context, or within an historical event, and thereby fulfil that quality of autobiographical writing (or of all creative work as Storr argues) which provides a larger, extra-personal and secure context for the life and achievements of that individual. In many Irish memoirs this trend is evident in a coupling of the growth of the individual with events in the growth of the nation. For instance, the 'Martin' persona of Micheal MacLiammoir's fictionalised autobiography, Enter A Goldfish, decides that his allegiance and future lie in Ireland when he encounters the literary revival (in the form of Yeats' Ideas of Good and Evil) and the language revival (in the form of a London branch of the Gaelic League), a decision which is confirmed by his reaction to the death of the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rebellion. In a like manner, the end of the Civil War marks the end of the youth of Frank O'Connor's 'Michael', the central figure in An Only Child.

Other special features of the autobiography help to explain its strong position in literature of the Irish Revival; one being that it is a good medium in which propaganda, advertisement or self-justification can be offered as a narrative of personal history, or as an explanation of personal view. Yeats, for example, in the concluding section of Autobiographies, 'The Bounty of Sweden', offers a description of the stable and artistically thriving Swedish nation as a paradigm for the newly established Irish Free State to emulate. Or, to take a more extreme example, Michael Collins, in a book which in fact appeared in the year after his death, tells his story to an eager and somewhat sycophantic American journalist, Hayden Talbot, as he simultaneously helps organise the official

army in the Civil War. He runs rapidly through his childhood days, into Easter Week 1916 then interrupts the narrative and specifies that lengthy interviews between Talbot and Eoin MacNeill and then Arthur Griffith should take up places in the work. Here, the vindication of the Free-State side begins along with the anti-Irregular propaganda, as more and more criticism of die-hard Republicans, then fighting the Pro-Treaty forces, mounts up. Ultimately the autobiographical purpose is abandoned in favour of an overtly political exploitation of the literary form.

A third reason for the popularity of autobiography is that it can offer its author the chance to give a retrospective account of the growth of a movement or organisation which emphasises his or her part in its success. This is especially true of those memoirs which deal with the Irish Dramatic Movement in which Lady Gregory, George Moore and Yeats all give varying accounts of its early days. They all stress the role of the dramatists in its inception and practice, but Maire nic Shiubhlaigh and W.G. Fay both set out to emphasise the cardinal importance of the players' companies and the enthusiastic response they elicited from Irish audiences.

24

A final possible cause for the flood of autobiographical works which occurred in Ireland at this time could lie in a belief held by many that the simple act of printing and publishing a personal life story or the history of a movement in some way ennobles, enshrines and commits the subject to posterity. (One recalls that autobiography has some roots in genealogy which does precisely that). Many who participated in the early revival saw their mission as sacred and blessed, their achievements as monumental and lasting. Having been chosen, they were among an elite suitably distinct

from their compatriots to merit the special status that autobiography endows. This belief in the sacerdotal and immortalizing powers of literature is testified to by the fact that even as early as 1894 W.P. Ryan wrote and published a history
25
of the Irish Literary Revival, and by the eagerness of Yeats and Sir Charles Gavan Duffy to establish the production of the books that would give the movement some credibility as well as a place in an historical continuum. Furthermore, as Herbert
26
Howarth has admirably demonstrated, both Yeats and AE, who firmly believed for some time in the promised arrival of an Irish Messiah or Avatar, felt that a 'sacred book' must be written to pave the way for this coming. Their hieratical view of the role of literature may have helped to foster a like view towards autobiography as a branch of literature, for when George Moore took up the Irish Messianic theme and sat down to write the 'sacred book', he cast it in the form of an autobiography - the comic but ultimately serious Hail and Farewell.

If the early phase of the literary and political revival was characterised by an eager, mystic impulse (and George Moore is more the exception than the rule) then the later phase presented a sharp contrast. The political struggle became a bloody one: the 1916 Insurrection led to a build up of Republican sympathisers, the declaration of an independent Republican Government in 1919 helped precipitate the 'Tan War' and the Treaty which ended it led to two more years of Civil War. The change in mood is reflected in the writers mentioned later in this study: Ernie O'Malley and Tom Barry commanded IRA Flying Columns in the South. Other figures now established as literary personalities were involved to varying degrees: Frank O'Connor joined the IRA in the Civil War, was captured and impounded, Liam O'Flaherty was present at the siege of the

Four Courts, Sean O Faolain served in the IRA, though not on active service, and other writers like Austin Clarke and Sean O'Casey deal with Easter Week 1916 in their autobiographical writings, while James Stephens wrote and published an eye witness account of Dublin during that Uprising.

Many of the autobiographies of writers of a later generation than Yeats' illustrate the necessity of having to temper youthful ideals and aspirations against the harsh actuality of war, civil war and the difficulties of administering an independent government that would live up to the expectations of all who had helped to make it possible. Some, like O'Connor and O Faolain tell how the public and active world of politics was in itself unsatisfactory for them and how they turned inwards to more private and imaginative spheres of action.

But, as George Moore writes, 'the Irish movement rose
27
out of Yeats and returns to Yeats', and it is to Yeats and autobiography that the attention now turns. To judge by his attitude to some of the autobiographical and semi-autobiographical writings mentioned in his letters, Yeats thought highly of the genre. Some works he read for their value as entertainment, such as Granville Leveson Gower's
28
Private Correspondence 1718 - 1821, which Landow might describe as 'autobiographicality' rather than as autobiography. Others Yeats seems to have read because they dealt with people or events which he knew of personally. This could be the reason why he read Lord Alfred Douglas' Autobiography in July 1929 since he had read, some years previously, Douglas' Oscar Wilde and Myself. Having written at some length in his own memoirs of Wilde, whom, after all, he knew none too well, he may have been taking an autobiographer's interest in how a more intimate

associate would deal with the subject of Oscar Wilde. It is possible that it was a desire to find out more about Wilde's circle that led him to read the notorious memoirs of Frank Harris in 1933, though little relevant information would he have found there.²⁹

Another source of information regarding Yeats' opinions of autobiography can be seen in the reviews which he wrote of examples of the genre, three of which deal with, appropriately, Irish autobiographies. His review in February 1897 of John O'Leary's Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism³⁰ is of only limited interest in this context since O'Leary, a personal friend and distinguished public figure, could not be criticized even though Yeats found that the work was not to his taste. In 'Ireland after Parnell', with O'Leary dead and his sister Ellen likewise, he could be more frank, but at this stage he showed tact by ignoring the literary merit of the work and by praising its author instead:

And his book has a strange impartiality, which must make it, ill-arranged, rambling even, as it is, of the utmost importance both to Irish and to English historians. It has called up for me, who am more interested in the history of the soul than in the history of things, the picture of an impressive personality. 31

The critical judgement that it is 'ill-arranged' and 'rambling even' is quickly smothered by the comment that its value as an historical document is superlative, and, despite claiming to be 'more interested in the history of the soul than in the history of things', Yeats sees O'Leary's recollections, as he does other autobiographical works, as being of more value as histories of a society or culture than as histories of an individual. This is his approach to The Life of William Carleton, the first volume of which is an unfinished autobiography in which the author records a rapidly disappearing Gaelic way of life

not as one who observes with the philosophic indifference of the historian, but with the moving sympathy of one who has himself mourned and conspired and learnt and taught and gone on pilgrimage, and to one whom all these things are natural and inevitable. 32

From this one can see that even if Yeats did regard autobiography as serving an informative role as a social document rather than as a personal document, he at least felt that its individually based outlook made it superior to a comparable kind of document produced by an historian.

It is difficult and perhaps dangerous to attempt to establish what Yeats thought of the subject of autobiography through studying his reviews because he was never happy as a reviewer. In his youth he was forced to take the work to alleviate the threat of poverty and, perhaps as a consequence, these early reviews of autobiographies are vapid, offering few insights into the genre. When, in 1933, he reviewed Maurice O'Sullivan's Twenty Years A'Growing he admitted that the result was 'something else altogether dressed out to look like a review' and said later it would be the last he would write. Again, he used O'Sullivan's book merely as a lever to make known his own feelings on an older and more cohesive form of Irish society and culture without analysing either content or style from a literary point of view. But this is not to say that he under-estimated the value or power of memoir writing, he believed it could assist in increasing the impetus of the Irish Literary Revival as he expressed in a letter to John Quinn in June 1922, apropos of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy's Young Ireland: 'I have always been convinced that memoirs were of great importance to our movement'. He even put pressure upon members of his own family to write their own memoirs, perhaps in the hope that not only would there be an unofficial but

personal history of the literary movement, but also a comparable history of the Yeats family which was artistically very active. But when all is said and done, the present collection of Yeats' letters which is far from complete and the two comprehensive volumes of Uncollected Prose, yield very little information on the question of his opinion and attitude towards autobiography. One is led therefore to the Autobiographies for evidence.

Critical study of Autobiographies which in recent years has considerably increased, begins with the work's reviewers among whom are such well known figures as Leonard Woolf and L.A.G. Strong.³⁵ The most extensive critical review, however, came when Ian Fletcher reviewed Memoirs in the TLS in 1973,³⁶ and Fletcher also provided one of the earliest detailed studies of Autobiographies in an essay that was shortly followed by Joseph Ronsley's full length study, Yeats' Autobiography : Life as Symbolic Pattern.³⁷ Since then many articles and essays have been published often elucidating particular aspects of Autobiographies but always illustrating the same problem that the essay form is too brief to allow a full discussion of the complexities and variety of the work. Dillon Johnston in an article in Eire-Ireland,³⁹ 'The Perpetual Self of Yeats' Autobiographies', typifies the problem. He offers a concise and synoptic view of the work arguing that it has a four part structure involving (i) Yeats establishing an identity for himself by invoking his West of Ireland background and his ancestral line, (ii) a dislocation of identity and surroundings as he enters a nomadic phase in 'The Trembling of the Veil', (iii) a period where self-definition is approached by attempting to fit in with various cultural groups, and (iv) a final separation from these groups and an achieving of self

image.

There are many informative points made by Johnston in the article, not least his argument that Yeats' method of proceeding with the narrative is not one based solely on a chronological criterion but one that relies as much upon a spatial, geographical and social principle for its organisation. But its inadequacies are evident too. As with Fletcher's essay and Ronsley's book, the closing stages of Autobiographies are here given a disproportionately small amount of consideration in relation to 'Reveries' and 'The Trembling of the Veil'. 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge', for example, are peremptorily dismissed when Johnston writes that they 'slacken into aphorism and memoir', and the necessity of maintaining a condensed style means that Johnston is also prone to over-generalisations. This is not to single out Johnston. When David Wright (in an article that makes an extended comparison between 'Reveries' and Joyce's Portrait of the Artist) writes pithily that Yeats isolates himself 'in Reveries' by taking his self away from his surroundings, in 'The Trembling of the Veil' by taking his surroundings away from himself' he is being made a victim of his own terse phrasing for in the final section of 'The Trembling of the Veil', the surroundings at Coole are, in fact, made to play a most important part in the development of Yeats' self.

Other critics have chosen to put Autobiographies into larger frames of reference: Kevin P. Reilly discusses the work in relation to five other Irish literary autobiographies and Meredith Cary traces the details of the reply which 'Dramatis Personae' makes to Moore's Hail and Farewell. Marjorie Perloff in "The Tradition of Myself": the Auto-

biographical Mode of Yeats', studies the relationship between the autobiographical prose and the poems remarking, as David Wright does, how Yeats' method of omitting precise dates or sequences of events gives him great flexibility when it comes to arranging his experiences into patterns of meaning.

James Olney discusses another type of vagueness associated with Yeats' autobiographical method, the facility which he has for forgetting facts. This allows him to ignore the inconveniences of historical accuracy and meticulous detail in description of character in preference for the anecdote which 'captures character at its most typical, thus catching a glimpse of the essence that lies behind...the accident'.⁴⁷ And so the common complaint of amnesia becomes in Olney's essay anamnesis, 'the recollection or intuition from within this life of forms viewed and known perfectly in eternity between this life and an earlier one',⁴⁸ or a means whereby Yeats can find the Platonic type for the souls of individual friends or associates who appear in the memoirs.

This is merely a selection of varied critical approaches taken to Autobiographies, there are other articles and essays as well as passages on the work in studies of the autobiographical genre and in studies of other aspects of Yeats' work.⁴⁹ In a sense, the body of criticism has gathered a cumulative momentum, with one critic responding to or supplementing the work of another. This is the case with the two most recent full length studies of the subject: Shirley Neuman's Some One Myth : Yeats' Autobiographical Prose, and Daniel O'Hara's Traic Knowledge : Yeats' Autobiography and Hermeneutics.⁵⁰

Shirley Neuman follows Ronsley's lead in arguing that Yeats provides a parallel history of his search for unity of

being and his attempts to thrust his country into unity of culture, with his mystical-historical system as the intermediary factor:

Personality in autobiography would become a microcosmic image of an universal and historical system; the philosophical system would find its explication in Yeats' own personality and experience. 51

Autobiographers, she argues, must transform 'myth into biography, find myth in biography', and, accordingly, she goes to the source books of Yeats' mysticism and of his involvement with the Golden Dawn to identify particularities of the mythic structure of the work. But she says that Yeats abandons the antithetical structure of myth and biography in 'Ireland after Parnell' as he turns from optimism and wild hope to 'necessary pessimism, the conviction that Unity of Being can be achieved only at the price of a Body of Fate productive of personal crisis and loss'. Like Fletcher and Ronsley who, as O'Hara points out, see Yeats as 'a man whose grandiose aesthetic schematization consistently backfires on him', Neuman alights upon the process of disillusion embodied in the dualistic tendencies of the later stages of the work:

through Mask he transcends biography in mythic pattern, but, because always tinged with ironic despair, the myth in its turn is suffused with biographic limitations. Autobiographies charts the patterning of the self between the two tensions; except for some rare moments, they have not expanded and become one. 55

But she extends the argument a stage further: if there is a touch of ironic futility in Yeats' personal victory as described in 'The Bounty of Sweden', then there is also nobility in the defeat of his heroic vision of his country's future that went unrealised. And she feels that the lecture, 'The Irish Dramatic Movement', is a 'poignant coda to Autobiographies'.

This suggestion, that the work ends poignantly, the author seeking refuge behind the mask of heroic defeat, is rather like O'Hara's idea that Yeats evokes in his lecture a sense of wasted potential in the Irish theatre, and both critics, as a result, present Yeats as far too passive a figure at the end of Autobiographies. Neither take into sufficient account that the whole pressure of 'The Bounty of Sweden' derives from Yeats exhorting the young Irish state to look to its own permanent indigenous traditions as a base for its future - a point to be discussed at length in Chapter Six. Nor do they make reference to the fact that the lecture was written and delivered at a time when, far from withdrawing into ironic or passive resignation to the fate of the new Ireland, Yeats was actively involved in the legislation-making processes of that country and was, furthermore, attempting to create an Irish Academy of Letters. This inevitably has its bearings upon 'The Bounty of Sweden' and it is significant that Shirley Neuman must go outside Autobiographies to 'On The Boiler' for evidence of Yeats upbraiding and haranguing his country; but 'On the Boiler' was not bound in with Autobiographies and no evidence exists that Yeats wanted it to be.

Daniel O'Hara's work ^{represents} ~~respects~~ the most important critique of Autobiographies to date and not just because it takes full account of modern trends in criticism, though this is an important part of it. He takes as his starting point the fact that Yeats' text is one that relies heavily on antithetical patterns and he examines the effect of this, concluding that the dialectic produces a series of ironies. These develop, in his view

from a defensive, metaphoric measure used to reduce the trivial present in light of a monumental past, to a symbolic method of recreating or staging one's

life as a sublimely heroic drama, so as to recover one's lost imaginative power, which is represented as a mythic image of the daimonic creator. 58

And because Yeats' text is a labyrinthine structure employing various archetypal representations of the self as the daimonic creator, it avoids final synthesis, leaving a semantic void that invites a number of interpretations from the reader.

O'Hara's contention is that any form of traditional criticism that either seeks closure or seeks to impose an interpretation alone will be, necessarily, only dealing with one part of the text. The most valid way, he proposes, of dealing with such self-reflexive texts as autobiographies is to borrow an hermeneutical methodology from Paul Ricoeur. Ricoeur sees the act of reading not as an interpretation of author-intention, nor as an existentialist appropriation of the text, nor indeed as a person to person appeal, but as a fusion of the horizons of the reader and the text in which the reader undergoes a process of self-discovery through wilfully recollecting all earlier partial-identifications with those figures that have heightened and universalised his or her imagination. Metaphor for Ricoeur is the affective mode of reading and it explodes boundaries of conventional meaning. The reader then builds upon the ruins of his or her former conceptions adding new significances that invite further thought. Such a critical procedure is a progressive, meaningful and open-ended one in O'Hara's view and is especially suited to the exegesis of a text like Yeats' that functions by inviting comparisons through antithesis rather than by attempting to create a final and closed synthesis.

The O'Hara-Ricoeur approach to autobiography has many virtues, not the least of which is that it acknowledges the potential for multiplicities of meaning throughout Yeats'

Autobiographies. Furthermore, it avoids the extremes of other critical methodologies which O'Hara characterises by dividing them into two major camps. The first involves the traditional, Romantic interpretation of the crisis-autobiography (and O'Hara views Yeats' as just that) which sees the subject of the autobiography as moving from crisis to recovery and then into a higher state of being. This he finds fault with on the grounds that it is not so much a dialectical process of interpretation but rather a spiral that may travel uncontrollably ever upwards. The second and opposed critical extreme that O'Hara identifies is the Derrida-inspired view of autobiography. This denies the ability of metaphor to create meanings; instead it argues that metaphor simply exposes the doubts and perplexities of the author because the creation of images by the autobiographer for the autobiographee simply gives rise to new tropological systems that can only re-state the original dilemma of anyone who seeks self-elucidation or self-expression through finding metaphors for the self. It was against such a nihilistic reading of metaphor that Ricoeur reacted.

Despite its strengths, there are aspects of O'Hara's work that one would wish to call into question, particularly in his discussion of other critical orthodoxies. Leaving aside the matter of the advantages and disadvantages of an hermeneutical approach to autobiography, the obvious question is to what degree O'Hara over-emphasises the faults of two types of critical discourse, both Romantic and deconstructionist, that he wishes to supplant? Surely critics of autobiography who may use or refer to elements in either methodology do not have to obey slavishly the principles of that methodology but could use it more sparingly or intelligently? Despite claiming to be outside the polemics of

modern criticism, O'Hara spends a considerable amount of time defending his particular critical position, sometimes oversimplifying the issue, especially when describing what he sees as the opposition, in order to effect that defence. As a result, he often comes very close to the tendency to controversy that he rejects in others.

Secondly, in his analysis of Autobiographies as a text resonating with ironies and with archetypal images of the daimonic creator, O'Hara rejects the extended use of historical contextualizing. This is, of course, a valid method, especially in the study of autobiography which is often dogged by those who wish to measure autobiography against the known facts of biography, but it is a method that can lead to misreadings because of its ahistorical approach. Minor examples of this under-informed reading of the text can be found in O'Hara's discussion of 'The Tragic Generation' especially when he talks of Yeats' view of Oscar Wilde as a victim of both society and of his own imagination, for here he fails to refer to the very specific use which Yeats makes of the concept of victimage in that book. This may be a minor example, but it does illustrate a possible pitfall for a critical method that analyses exclusively how a work signifies at the expense of what that work may signify.

Despite the large amount of critical study of Autobiographies and despite the high quality of aspects of O'Hara's examination of Yeats' use of irony, there are still many points that remain unmade. Most of the deficiencies in criticism to date occur because the individual commentators have argued either for a particular form of unity within the work that ignores the effect of its variety, or for a particular method of approaching the work that is too

inflexible to cope with factors that are extraneous to but influential upon the prose. The single dominant feature of a first reading of Autobiographies is this variety of prose styles and techniques, and yet this fruitful eclecticism has often evaded attempts at commentary. As a result of this, this study addresses itself to the different strategies and methods employed by Yeats, and it uses an heterogeneous critical method itself in aiming to make pertinent comment upon Yeats and ultimately upon aspects of the autobiographical genre in general. In broadening critical horizons it seeks to avoid the familiar view that Autobiographies possesses a coherence and unity despite its superficially uneven qualities, a view that will be taken as firmly established by others. In devoting the final two chapters to other Irish autobiographical works the hope is to give substance to the examination of Autobiographies as autobiography by surrounding it with a local and appropriate context; the further and final hope is that in so doing it will draw attention to a field of Irish literature that has received an undeservedly small amount of consideration.

CHAPTER II

YEATS' AUTOBIOGRAPHIES : 'REVERIES OVER CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH'

W.B. Yeats wrote 'Reveries over Childhood and Youth' over the course of the year 1914, the Preface bears the date 'Christmas Day 1914', on which day the work was finished. It was originally announced in the Cuala Press prospectus as, 'Memory Harbour : A Reverie on my Childhood and Youth', but by the time of its first publication by the Cuala Press, in an edition of 425 copies on 20 March 1916, the title had changed to that by which it is now known. The reason for this was that the title 'Memory Harbour' had been used by one Alexander Bell Filson Young for a book published in 1909 and although Yeats still wished that it should be used as a subtitle, it was finally excluded altogether from the title page. His keenness to include the phrase somewhere was due to the fact that his brother, Jack B. Yeats, had painted a water colour in 1900 called 'Memory Harbour' representing a foreshortened view of a harbour - 'houses and anchored ship and distant lighthouse all set close together as in some old map' - and that watercolour, which not only depicts some of the places mentioned in 'Reveries' but also evokes the mood and style of the work, was reproduced in a portfolio accompanying the Cuala Press 'Reveries' alongside two John B. Yeats paintings, one of Mrs. Yeats in 1867 and one self-portrait. Jack's 'Memory Harbour' and a note accompanying it remained a part of 'Reveries' through its subsequent editions by MacMillan and Company, firstly in October 1916, then in the Autobiographies of November 1926 before being dropped from the Autobiographies

of 1955, now the standard text.

'Reveries' is unusual among the other autobiographical books in that it was never serialised in a periodical publication, however, as a book, it represented something of a landmark in the history of his sister's Cuala Press for a number of reasons: Thomas Sturge Moore was specially commissioned to provide two devices for the work which he duly did with the 'Monoceros de Astros' and 'Candle in the Waves' designs, the book was not only the longest printed by Cuala to that date, but was also their only two-volume work, the portfolio of illustrations comprising the second volume, and, its publication came at a time when the Press was in financial straits.³ Yeats felt confident that 'Reveries' would be an economic help to 'Lolly's Press', as he wrote to his father on Boxing Day 1914, 'Everybody to whom I have shown the work has praised it and foretold great success',⁴ and the fact that the family was so involved in both the content and the publishing of this book is underlined by Yeats' attempts in this same year to persuade his father to write his own autobiography; but, with a lack of promptitude perhaps characteristic of J.B. Yeats, his Early Memories did not appear until 1923.

Throughout the four editions of 'Reveries' there are many changes in the text, the most significant of which are described by Curtis Bradford in Yeats at Work.⁵ The additions to the text show, in general, how Yeats learnt and incorporated more facts about his family history; there are also a number of small alterations in phrasing, paragraphing and syntax illustrating how Yeats continually worked to improve his prose style.

The excisions from the text fall into two major

categories: one involves the removal of material which now figures in more detail in 'The Trembling of the Veil', such as the descriptions of John O'Leary and J.F. Taylor which were pruned down at some stage between the 1916 'Reveries' and the 1926 Autobiographies, as was a long passage, formerly in Section XXIX, involving Yeats' youthful hopes for his country and its literature. Another category of long passages has been removed from the text for reasons of discretion. Section XIV, as it now stands, presents a more moderated account of the awakening of sex in a boy's life, presumably because Yeats felt that the original version, in the typescript, was too descriptive to be discreet, and there are also instances of Yeats removing material that might give offence to his family or to old associates. A passage regarding the demise in the social status of the Middleton family is one example since it, too, was removed from the typescript of section II before publication, as was a similar section concerning the Misses Fury of Castle Fury from Section X, while Lily Yeats insisted that a description of Elizabeth Pollexfen, in a state of mental breakdown, should be taken out of Section VII before publication went ahead. Yeats acceded to her request realising that such family matters were best left unmentioned and he bore his sister's advice in mind in subsequent autobiographical writings. Although in what is now called the 'Autobiography', that is to say the first draft of much of the 'Trembling of the Veil', Yeats writes that, 'In almost all the members of my family there is some nervous weakness', no comparable phrase appeared in the final text of Autobiographies.

It has been remarked that 1914 was the most significant year for autobiography in Ireland and it is tempting to think

so; Vale was published to complete Moore's trilogy, Lady Gregory embarked upon what was later to become Seventy Years, Katherine O'Shea's semi-autobiographical Charles Stewart Parnell, his love story and political life, which was to influence Yeats' view and portrayal of Parnell, was published in London, and James Joyce's autobiographical novel, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young man, was serialised in The Egoist in twenty-five instalments starting on 12 February 1914.⁷ Meanwhile, Yeats was writing 'Reveries' and badgering his father to begin his memoirs.

The first of Katherine Tynan's five autobiographical works, Twenty Five Years, published in late 1913, is sometimes wrongly supposed to have been the origin of the subsequent rush; however, Moore's plans for Hail and Farewell date back at least as far as 1906 and most likely before then. One must also remember that Lady Gregory had seen Our Irish Theatre, published in 1913, as a "chapter of autobiography"; furthermore, Yeats' own autobiographical writings, if one discounts the autobiographical fiction John Sherman and The Speckled Bird, really began with the Journal he kept from 1909 onwards, sections of which were later transposed into Autobiographies as 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge'.

It is the very title 'Estrangement', given at a later date to the work from which, one could argue, the whole of Yeats' autobiographical venture stems, which suggests that dissatisfaction and unease lay behind the whole undertaking of Autobiographies. In 1914 Yeats wrote in 'Reveries', 'I am melancholy because I have not made more 'or better verses' (p.52) while in the introductory rhyme to Responsibilities, dated January 1914, he asked of his forefathers:

Pardon that for a barren passion's sake
Although I have come close on forty-nine,
I have no child, I have nothing but a book
Nothing but that to prove your blood and mine. 8

Not only had Yeats no child, he was not even married ~~(though at the wedding of Ezra Pound and Dorothy Shakespear in the U.S.A. that year he did meet Georgie Hyde Lees who, three years later, became his wife)~~ and, although Responsibilities came out in May, for some time previously, Moore, amongst others, had been claiming that Yeats' poetic greatness was a thing of the past, a jibe that perhaps had power to annoy or disconcert a Yeats who was evolving a different poetic style. With the conclusion of Hail and Farewell, which came while Yeats was on a lecture tour in the U.S.A., he realized the extent of Moore's satirical portrait of him, especially in Ave and Salve and so some desire that 'George Moore's disfiguring glass will not be the only glass',⁹ compounded with a need to take stock of his own life to date, may have been behind the composition of 'Reveries'.

It is clear that a close relationship exists between the moods, tones and structure of 'Reveries' and Responsibilities as one would expect from two major works issuing from one writer at approximately the same time. The tone of self-dissatisfaction in 'Reveries' is balanced to a certain extent by its function as a means of investigating, defining and establishing for Yeats a secure identity of himself as a poet and public figure (it concludes significantly with the time at which he published, by subscription, his first book of poems) and this is the beginning of the public challenge to Moore's then senior and superior position in Ireland as a writer. Likewise in Responsibilities, the critical self appraisal of his failure to produce either children or books that match the deeds of his ancestors is counteracted by certain poems that

show the self confidence of a man who can strive to separate himself from the public opinion and attempt to rise above Dublin bourgeois life (viz - 'To a Wealthy Man', 'To a Shade', 'September 1913', amongst others); furthermore, the structures of the two works bear similarities since Responsibilities, like 'Reveries' ends with an assertion of his public position. This takes the form of his aloof dismissal of Moore's criticisms and sarcasm in the closing rhyme, in the famous lines, 'till all my priceless things/Are but a post the passing dogs defile'.¹⁰ Aloof, because Yeats plays the part of a poet so well established in the security of his reputation that Moore's jibes fail to injure, he can 'forgive even that wrong of wrongs' with a magnanimity that disarms and transcends any form of criticism. And Yeats himself, always alert to the possibilities offered by the arrangement of individual poems within a collection, or of the interplay between one of his works with another, stressed this inter-relationship between 'Reveries' and Responsibilities in a letter to MacMillans ^{Walt} regarding the volume of poems that became Responsibilities:

He [Sir Frederick MacMillan] might consider the question whether it should or should not come out with "Reveries". If he does not like the suggested title "New Poems" he can call it "Responsibilities" which [word [indecipherable] with "Reveries". I have called it "New Poems" because it has sections from different works. 11

Since 'Reveries' deals with the years from Yeats' birth in 1865 to 1886, the year in which he was twenty-one years old, the age of majority, it is not surprising that it also shows the young man achieving his independent identity through breaking with his father. Of course, as Richard Ellmann¹² illustrated in Yeats: The Man and The Masks, there is an irony in that J.E. Yeats' influence upon his son's thinking was at this time approaching its height through their correspondence,

but the younger Yeats, determined to portray his youth as something of a conflict with his father's views, realised that the severity of his portrait of his father in 'Reveries' might offend. He wrote to him reassuringly, 'You need not fear that I am not amiable', and a year later wrote a long letter on the subject of 'Reveries' explaining why he had to criticise J.B. Yeats' old friend Edward Dowden. This letter also makes placatory moves towards the father's anxiety about the contents of his son's memoirs: 'If you feel inclined to be angry with me, please remember the long life of a book', and it shifts its emphasis at the end from 'Reveries' to the awaited memoirs of the older man, in an attempt to involve J.B. Yeats in a mutual project:

I think you will like the early part, and I would like from you any reveries or suggestions that occur to you. You wrote to Lily once that you began writing a letter to me about your early years but gave that up and began your memoirs instead. I suppose you have abandoned them, as I have not heard, but may I not see what you have done? 13

Yeats' procrastinations over sending a copy of 'Reveries' to his father could have exacerbated J.B. Yeats' anxiety and when it arrived some of JBY's suspicions were confirmed. His hostility, mild in comparison to his hostility to 'Four Years', was perhaps justified. Yeats describes the older man's contemporaries, especially Edward Dowden as failing to match their potential abilities and as being hide-bound by convention, he hints at the Pollexfen disapproval of J.B. Yeats' attitude towards maintaining a regular income. The mention of the loss of the Kildare land holdings under his father's governance must surely have rankled. He tells of his father's inability to finish portraits and of his short temper in throwing a book at his son's head when endeavouring to teach him to read and in this context regrets that his father did not

ensure an education in the classics for him. But what must surely have caused pain and embarrassment is the conclusion to Section XIII where Yeats' mother, it is stated, 'never went to an exhibition even to see a picture of his, nor to his studio to see the day's work', and there is a dark hint that marriage with a none-too-successful artist meant a life time of strict economy for her which only a drastic event could alleviate:

I remember all this very clearly and little after it until her mind had gone in a stroke of paralysis and she had found, liberated at last from financial worry, perfect happiness feeding the birds at a London window. (p.62)

Of course, there is a degree of praise and gratitude shown by the son to his father in 'Reveries' but against this amount of negative criticism it may have counted for very little with J.E. Yeats.

Such is, briefly, the literary-historical and personal context for Yeats' 'Reveries', as for the nature of its subject matter and literary style one immediately sees pointers to this in the title. The word 'reveries' is particularly apt since it not only defines Yeats' method of recall which is an evocatory rather than a systematically researched method, it also declares, quite frankly, that an imaginative element will take precedence over the literal, since a reverie is a musing and not an analytical investigation of fact. The plural form of the word is important - the first three of the four editions of the work all carried, not as a title but as a heading to the text, the words 'A Reverie over Childhood and Youth', it was not until the 1955 MacMillan edition that the change was made in the heading. The importance of the plural lies in its ability to suggest a sequence of only faintly connected events rather than a single premeditated unity of design and in the way that it immediately introduces the idea that there is not

just one version of the self open to the autobiographer but a number of possible versions. Yeats' awareness that an absolute monolithic truth is impossible in autobiography (he must select among his reveries) on account of the author presenting not the self but an attitude to a former self, is reflected in the plurality of the title of this first book and in the overall title Autobiographies. Although the American edition bears the title The Autobiography of William Butler Yeats and has done since 1938, it is the English title which seems more appropriate and successful since it implies that the book is concerned with facets of the self and not with quintessential self, though quintessential self may, indeed,
15
be a matter of multiplicity. The title prepares one also for the ensuing method of reverie as memory which, in the absence of a rigorously chronological structure, breeds a child-like association of ideas, places and events that provides the impetus for and momentum of the narrative, such as one finds in the, at this stage, uncharacteristically long paragraph beginning on page thirteen ('There was a large garden behind the house...'). It moves from a description of the garden's apple trees, flower beds and grass plots to the ships' figure heads therein, to how Yeats used to judge people's social status by the length of their avenues, to the Protestant stable-boy, Johnny Healy, who introduced him to rhyme, to childhood dreams of fighting the Fenians, to the collecting of wood to build a ship for this purpose, to the captain who picked him up to show him Africa and, finally, to the memory of Ben Bulbin and the Fern-Mill.

Although 'Reveries' is not, strictly speaking, the first of Yeats' autobiographically based prose works, it does occupy a position of strategic importance in that it sets out the

prima materia developed in many later sections of the book, sections which Yeats saw, at this time, as only 'fragments'. This establishing of basics is naturally correct in an autobiographical study of childhood for it is in that period that the foundations are laid for much that occurs in later life, and Yeats' concern with fundamental matters manifests itself in a number of ways. The sense that primary issues are to be dealt with is imparted by the parallel that is drawn in the first sentence, 'My first memories are fragmentary and isolated and contemporaneous, as though one remembered some first moments in the Seven Days', (p.5). Though it is not a comprehensive similarity, this parallel with the Biblical Genesis is detectable at various stages apart from just the opening of the book: there is the description of the delightful garden in which the young boy played, and 'Reveries' does close with death, as does Genesis with the death of Joseph. The deaths of both of Yeats' maternal grandparents, and the return of his 'old childish fear' of death that the tales of the banshee howling at his brother Robert's death, had provoked, represent something of a Fall, too, since they usher in a period of disorder after an era of stability:

Before he [the grandfather] was dead, old servants of that house where there had never been noise or disorder began their small pilferings, and after his death there was a quarrel over the disposition of certain mantelpiece ornaments of no value.' (p.106)

Yeats obviously wanted these deaths to serve some representative function since, chronologically speaking, they do not belong in 'Reveries' at all: Elizabeth Pollexfen died in October 1892, five years after the period with which 'Reveries' ends, and her husband, William, joined her some six weeks later.

Daniel O'Hara has remarked upon the large number of

images of creating that are present especially in 'The Trembling of the Veil', and their aptness in the autobiography of a poet who himself creates in his work; here, then, in the Genesis parallel, one has the source and starting point for these images. But one must take care not to strain the comparison. A work like John Ruskin's Praeterita, dealing as it does with 'first things', openly exploits and invites comparisons with the myth of the fall from grace and innocence in his description of the garden at Herne Hill in his childhood:

The differences of primal importance which I observed between the nature of this garden, and that of Eden, as I had imagined it, were, that, in this one, all the fruit was forbidden; and there were no companionable beasts; in other respects the little domain answered every purpose of Paradise to me; and the climate, in that cycle of our years, allowed me to pass most of my life in it 16

and later in the same second chapter, 'Herne Hill Almond Blossoms', Ruskin's description of the befouling and polluting of an idyllic footpath perhaps has overtones not of Paradise but of man's inheritance of labour and toil and of those tangles of thorns and thistles that replaced Paradise after the Fall. However, in Yeats' case the path out of childhood was not a painful one for that period had seen him often, as he writes, unhappy, melancholy, miserable, lonely or fearful:

Indeed I remember little of childhood but its pain. I have grown happier with every year of life as though gradually conquering something in myself, for certainly my miseries were not made by others but were part of my own mind. (p.11)

And so the positive aspects of attaining experience and attendant wisdom outweigh any pains involved in the loss of childhood innocence, a pattern that actually contradicts the Genesis and Edenic myths, and suggests that the comparisons

between the two works can only be made at a relatively superficial level.

It is with some economy that Yeats draws together his early impressions of an early encounters with such basic issues as religion, sex, education, friendship and isolation, and awareness of death. Many of these subjects are interconnected; in fact religion and education in the more conventional sense of the words are originally offered as alternatives, Yeats choosing between Sunday reading lessons and church going, and finding the former preferable. His view of religion and education broadens considerably over the course of 'Reveries': if religion may be said to include the many encounters with supernatural events that punctuate 'Reveries', whether experienced by Yeats or by others, then it is quite a religious book. These mystical and mythological inclinations pave the way for the mystical, and religiously entitled, 'Trembling of the Veil'. His first thoughts upon procreation were apprehended, he says, in terms of religion:

I asked everybody how calves were born, and because nobody would tell me, made up my mind that nobody knew. They were the gift of God, that much was certain, but it was plain that nobody had ever dared to see them come, and children must come in the same way.... I was certain there would be a cloud and a burst of light and God would bring the calf out of the cloud of light. (p.26)

With such an apocalyptic view of the subject he could be nothing but disillusioned with the truth when it was told to him - 'it was the first breaking of the dream of childhood' (p.27), and this shock is perhaps meant to account for his stoical attitude to sex once he became adolescent for he talks of 'having conquered bodily desire and the inclination of my mind towards women and love' and of being 'as prudish as an old maid' (pp.72 and 73). Still the primary concern in 'Reveries'

rests in the matters of education for it is through this that all other matters are to be approached. Schooling means little to Yeats, it is by no means synonymous with education since most of the passages devoted to the subject describe how he failed to make much impression as a pupil though he willingly joined, with great inexperience, in the sports and the fighting with other schools. (Indeed, L.A.G. Strong commented that 'It is surprising how often the word 'violent' occurs in 'Reveries over Childhood and Youth' and how many references there are to violent action¹⁷). Instead of seeing education in terms of his schooling, he created his own ideas of education and, as Section XXIV describes, he desired the opportunity to question some schoolmaster about his philosophical defence of the system of education under which he (Yeats) had suffered, feeling that the ordinary system was a weakening of one's impulsive being. To begin to create an individual view, Yeats had had to extricate his own views from those of his father, a task not easily performed, even in his drawing and painting he fell unavoidably under his influence; one could argue that the rough justice meted out to J.B. Yeats in 'Reveries' is a further symptom of the son's struggle for intellectual independence. Such a struggle involved a high degree of introspection and it was in the attempt to evaluate the comparative values of inward looking contemplation and of social contact and knowledge gained from external sources that Yeats saw the root of his problems concerning a view of education.

'Reveries' describes how it was always problematical for Yeats to understand the external forces that shaped his character; he speculated as to just how audible a voice of conscience should be, eventually resolving the matter by

believing he hears an actual voice in his ear, it is the same voice, he says, he heard throughout his life at odd moments in his head, a voice that is 'sudden and startling'. Undoubtedly he believed in its autonomous nature and he accepted this exteriority and other paranormal experiences with ease. However there is always an element of inquisitive scepticism present in the acceptance and such doubts were not helped nor dispelled by conventional learning. It seems likely from the text that at least part of the cause for his indecisiveness lies in the misrepresentation by others of facts in his childhood. It is amusing that he should go to sleep as a young child in fear and dread of a telegraph boy who will blow London town up, and the autobiographer, with hindsight, can offer to share a joke about his naiveté when he tells of the black hairy dog who 'had no tail because it had been sliced off, if I was told the truth, by a railway train', or of the sea captain who 'put a hand on each side of my head and lifted me up to show me Africa'. But such jokes had an unsettling effect later as, for instance, when he came across an entry on sexual reproduction in an encyclopedia which he had to read because he began to doubt if the boy who told him about it 'had spoken truth'. His reading in Huxley, Wallace, Darwin and Haeckel was used to question the truth of Genesis and in 'Four Years' as well as in 'Reveries' one can detect a familiar pattern in which the young Yeats searches for some authoritative empirical evidence to verify received facts and ideas. This pattern complements his desire to experience an intuitive way of gaining knowledge, through the voice of conscience for instance, and to have that experience verified in some way. The attempt to weigh intuition against intellect, mysticism against rationality and empiricism, is expressed as the major dilemma for Yeats in his

young and formative years: he concludes Section XXI, which is devoted to supernatural experiences, with his quandary:

I began occasionally telling people that one should believe whatever had been believed in all countries and periods, and only reject any part of it after much evidence, instead of starting all over afresh and only believing what one could prove. But I was always ready to turn into a joke what was for all that my secret fanaticism. When I had read Darwin and Huxley and believed as they did, I had wanted, because an established authority was upon my side, to argue with everybody.

(pp.78 - 9)

The problems of defending a personal and individually conceived philosophy (though there are, admittedly, touches of Paterian eclecticism in it) when by nature shy, are evident enough here. Yeats has shown that such problems were accentuated by his mother encouraging him to suppress any display of emotion as a young boy, and by his refusal to show any signs of exertion after violent exercise at school because he wanted to appear more self-possessed than his athlete friend, Harley Veasey; even in later youth he would willingly suffer mental agonies in the presence of strangers all for 'schooling's sake'. Caught between his own sensitivity - not just to the squeal of a shot rabbit but to the more evanescent presences of rural Ireland's spirits and ghosts - and his father's scepticism which had pervaded his outlook, Yeats says he set out to face the terrors of the rhetoric of his enemy, J.F. Taylor, to gain the self-possession necessary to defend his private beliefs, his fanaticism. In the 1916 Cuala edition of 'Reveries' the description of Taylor made him out to be even more formidable than the final text did:

Conversation with him was always argument, and for an obstinate opponent he had such phrases as, "have you your head in a bag, sir?" and I seemed his particular aversion....

I had once seen what I had believed to be an enraged bull in a field and had walked up to it as a test

of courage to discover, just as panic fell upon me,
that it was merely an irritable cow. I braved Taylor
again and again as one might a savage animal as a
test of courage 18

and yet Yeats paid fascinated attention to his mesmeric oratorical powers suggesting that he envied him them. What stopped him emulating his adversary's example was that he was suspicious of all logic and rhetoric because it did not emanate from within the individual and was not personal utterance, but instead required of the individual that he submit personality to its own autonomous swell and progress. To Yeats, Taylor was like a puppet manipulated by an unseen, and hence dangerous master over whom he had no control, he had 'stiff movements as of a Dutch Doll' (p.99), in one early draft Yeats even suggests that Taylor was verging on the insane and Yeats had good and personal reasons to be wary of frenzied but uncontrolled, inspired but unguarded behaviour, especially if its origin lay outside the individual personality. For, soon after describing Taylor, he tells of the first séance which he attended (also described by Katherine Tynan in Twenty Five-Years) where he felt himself possessed by a greater force than his own powers and was compelled into violent movements he did not will:

For years afterwards I would not go to a seance or turn a table and would often ask myself what was that violent impulse that had run through my nerves. Was it a part of myself - something always to be a danger perhaps; or had it come from without, as it seemed? (p.105)

Here, in the concisest way possible, one has the most basic issue under examination in 'Reveries': what are the sources of personality and knowledge?

Yeats provides no single, clear-cut answer. The implication is that he realized that the alternative to self-possession in a sensitive being may well be possession to some degree whether it is a spiritual possession, as is the case

with the séance, or possession of the imaginative faculties by an abstract form like that of logic or of rhetoric. But dramatizing the problem of the quest for self-possession was little help; despite striking the pose of a Hamlet, amongst other roles, Yeats failed to find the solution because he says, firstly he had many ideas but 'did not know how to choose from among them those that belonged to my life' (p.83), a problem foreshadowing the greater crisis described in 'Hodos Chameliontos', and secondly, because

I did not discover that Hamlet had his self possession from no schooling but from indifference and passion-conquering sweetness, and that less heroic minds can but hope it from old age. (p.94)

This is a fascinating comment for Yeats to make in 1914 since it pre-empts any poetic treatment of the idea of indifference leading to self contentment and ecstasy by almost twenty years, at which stage, a poem like 'A Dialogue of Self and Soul' in The Winding Stair and Other Poems gives it mature expression:

When such as I cast out remorse
So great a sweetness flows into the breast
We must laugh and we must sing,
We are blest by everything,
Everything we look upon is blest. 19

Although it is a common enough event for Yeats to examine an idea in the prose medium before putting it into verse (the prose into poetry formula is easily traceable throughout Auto-biographies) it is unusual for the idea to precede the poem by such a long period of time.

Yeats also sees in the period of his life described in 'Reveries', the beginnings of a national, historical and ancestral context for his personality which he asserts in writing about it in 1914. Paul Delany has described in his study of the early British Autobiography how the link between autobiography and genealogy evolved with secular European Renaissance historians adding biographical and autobiographical

material to family histories. This led to the transitions made from genealogical studies to autobiography in early British autobiographies which often used filial piety as an excuse for what was then deemed a show of unseemly egotism. Yeats needed no such excuse, autobiography was an acceptable genre by 1914, and though there is a certain pride in his ancestry, there is also the uneasy sense in Yeats that he may be an unworthy successor. That said, it does nevertheless, along with the interest in the Irish rural tradition described in the later chapters of 'Reveries', offer him security, permanence and roots in Ireland that effectively counter the unsettling effects of the numerous shiftings of his family between Ireland and London in his youth, in much the same way as Anthony Storr argues that creative examination of the self can bring about a new and meaningful order to an individual.

Despite the cutting of various sentences dealing with Ireland and its literature and politics, it is still clear from 'Reveries' that Yeats' interest in his country was spurred not entirely by a political ideology but was tempered by the personal influence of the old Fenian, John O'Leary. The material relating to O'Leary was cut from the 1926 MacMillan edition too, to a certain extent, though some of it re-appeared in condensed form in 'The Trembling of the Veil' where it is more appropriately sited. Even so, the salutary effects of O'Leary's "moral genius" upon the hitherto violently controversial political utterances of Yeats and the seminal importance of both his conversation and of the books which he lent Yeats are not muted in any way by the cutting. Since this search for a national and historical identity was such an important step towards Yeats' individualism, it is odd that such lengthy excisions were made in relevant material after the

1916 MacMillan edition. In fact, the single most substantial cut is of a passage which used to follow directly on from what is now the end of Section XXIX and which dealt exclusively with how Yeats began to synthesise his writing and his nationalist commitments. The omitted text is given in Appendix One and one can see from it many possible reasons why Yeats dropped it from the 1926 edition. Firstly, it is congested with information and the retrospective assessment of his successes in literary nationalism makes the syntax of the prose very tortuous. Also, when he writes 'I foresaw a great deal that we are doing now', he pinpoints a major reason why this section of 'Reveries' was inappropriate to his purposes in 1926 - much of this campaigning for Ireland and for Irish literature really belongs to the period covered in 'The Trembling of the Veil'; the formation of the theatre which he anticipates and the related dreams of the new form of Eleusinian rites for both a new Irish mystic religion and new Irish drama really belong to 'Dramatis Personae', and the subsequent disillusion with the popular demand for 'realism' in the theatre and in literature is only ever hinted at, not directly stated, in the later stages of Autobiographies. This passage is simply not in the right mood or tone for 'Reveries', though his original reasons for writing the passage can be accounted for by the letter to his father on 26 December 1914:

Yesterday I finished my memoirs; I have brought them down to our return to London in 1886 or 1887. After that there would be too many living people to consider and they would have besides to be written in a different way.... I dare say I shall return to the subject but only in fragments.. 21

So, at this time, he was doubtful if the period concerning the early days of the literary revival would ever be included in any thorough way in his memoirs and he, perhaps, wished to

register his disillusion in case the opportunity should not arise again. But, obviously, it did arise and Yeats, having seen how he would handle the subject through writing out the 'Autobiography - First Draft', could now afford to keep his attitude as a young man to Ireland and its literature on one level in 'Reveries'. Rather than attempt to deal with the political and literary situation further than the introduction of Taylor and O'Leary, he kept the subject of Ireland closely associated with its mythology and peasant-lore tradition without implying that the political and literary world would ever offer him disappointment and disillusion. However, along with the disappearance of his literary and cultural manifesto from Section XXIX went some of the most direct statements of the personal and mystical motivations behind his literary nationalism:

I had planned a drama like that of Greece, and romances ... to bring into the town the memories and visions of the country and to spread everywhere the history and legends of medieval Ireland and to fill Ireland once more with sacred places. I even planned out, and in some detail (for those mysterious lights and voices were never long forgotten,) another Samothrace, a new Eleusis. 22

'Reveries' provides accounts of some of the incidents - 'those mysterious lights and voices' - that prompted Yeats to believe in and plan the revival of the hallowed and sacred nature of certain locations in rural Ireland where a particular emotion or spirit haunts a place with tangible or palpable results. Such spiritually-charged places were not only to be celebrated in a literature that drew its strength from precise reference to geographical location, they could also reveal their secret nature to sensitive and willing persons like Yeats and his companion AE who, with the American Theosophist, James M. Fryse, devised a means of tapping the secrets of such ancient, sacred places through a system called 'psychometrising'. Yeats

went to some lengths to establish through 'Reveries' that the Irish literary revival in his view was not merely a political or social affair but a matter of the renewal of ancient rites in a hallowed land, rites that had the sanctions of spirits and faery, and while this cut in the text removes an obviously direct comment to that effect, even as it now stands, the text of 'Reveries' still introduces, especially in Section XXI, the idea of sacred locality which was to find consummate autobiographical expression in 'The Stirring of the Bones'.

One further aspect of 'Reveries' is its anti-Victorianism evident in many ways but especially in the treatment of Edward Dowden who had died in 1913 and who had been a friend of J.E. Yeats. Writing in 1915 in an attempt to allay his father's fears about the forthcoming memoirs, Yeats expressed, in a way that was incidental to his main theme, his view of 'Reveries':

I am rather nervous about what you think. I am afraid you will very much dislike my chapter on Dowden, it is the only chapter which is a little harsh, not, I think, really so, but as compared to the rest, which is very amiable, and what is worse I have used, as I warned you I would, conversations of yours....I couldn't leave Dowden out, for, in a subconscious way, the book is a history of the revolt, which perhaps unconsciously you taught me, against certain Victorian ideals. Dowden is the image of those ideals and has to stand for the whole structure in Dublin, Lord Chancellors and^{all} the rest. 24

For 'Reveries' to be a 'history of the revolt...against certain Victorian ideals' implies that a degree of incidental information about that period must be present too, and this is the case. The younger Yeats' readings in Darwin and in the determinist, materialist philosopher, Thomas Henry Huxley, which brought him face to face with the conflicts between Genesis and geology, and his interest in the natural sciences and his collecting of butterflies, rare beetles and geological specimens take us into the heart of typical mid-Victorian

interests. One also has in 'Reveries' a relatively rare account of the late Victorian aesthetic phenomenon of Bedford Park in its earliest days before it had attracted much public interest and before Norman Shaw had taken over from the original architects, Godwin, Coe and Robinson. The Yeats' had moved there, to 8 Woodstock Road, in 1876 and the picture W.B. Yeats paints in 'Reveries' of Bedford Park is idyllic:

The streets were not straight and dull as at North End, but wound about where there was a big tree or for the mere pleasure of winding, and there were wood palings instead of iron railings. The newness of everything, the empty houses where we played at hide-and-seek, and the strangeness of it all, made us feel that we were living among toys. We could imagine people living happy lives as we thought people did long ago when the poor were picturesque and the master of a house could tell of strange adventures over the sea. (p.43)

Disillusion with this unreal world of Bedford Park came with the move to 3 Elenheim Road in 1888 since, as Ian Fletcher and Mark Girouard both indicate, by this time this garden suburb had become passé. In 'Four Years' Yeats tells how exaggerated criticism took the place of this initial enthusiasm shown by Bedford Park residents and how he 'could not understand where the charm had gone' that he had felt as a younger child among the unfinished houses, and a passage, subsequently omitted from Autobiographies, presumably because it seems so repetitive of material in 'Reveries', echoes this:

Sometimes I thought it was because these were real houses while my play had been among toy-houses some day to be inhabited by imaginary people full of the happiness that one can see in picture books. 26

Even as it now stands 'Reverie' on its own hints at what Yeats saw as the demise and decay of the late Victorian Romantic artistic world when it says that 'The commercial builder had not begun to copy and to cheapen...' (p.43). This falling-off is represented in the fine arts by J.B. Yeats' friends, Wilson,

Nettleship, Page and Potter who, though they did not live in Bedford Park (unlike another example of faded grandeur, John Todhunter) were at the tail-end of a dying Pre-Raphaelite tradition and had, to quote Yeats, 'lost their confidence'. Their clichéd Romanticism was an element that Yeats wanted to eliminate from his own work (p.74), mainly because he saw in the art of this 'Brotherhood' that it was a burnt-out, spent force, another part of the Victorian era against which he had revolted in writing 'Reveries'. David Grylls has established that it is a familiar pattern for a revolution against the Victorian era and its values to include a revolution against the Victorian father, and though JBY is no domineering tyrant casting long shadows across the nursery, he does represent one aspect of his era in so far as he supported the deductive philosophy of John Stuart Mill:

27

It was only when I began to study psychical research and mystical philosophy that I broke away from my father's influence. He had been a follower of John Stuart Mill and so had never shared Rossetti's conviction that it mattered to nobody whether the sun went round the earth or the earth round the sun. (p.89)

But it was Dowden who bore the brunt of Yeats' revolt against Victorianism and who seems to be cast as a surrogate figure for JBY in 'Reveries'. This was not the first time Yeats had criticised Dowden in print (see the article 'The Poetry of Sir Samuel Ferguson' in the Dublin Review, October 1886, where he is taken to task for failing to support Irish literature); but this, the second major public criticism of the man was in fact toned down in between the stages of the typescript and first published edition, by the removal of the following passage:

Dowden, another old friend of my father's, was our principle enemy, for academic youth admired him and all Dublin looked upon him as our one great man

of letters. He did not attack us openly, and was in private friendly but he managed by silences and evasions and indirect allusion to suggest that we were of no account. All his youth had been spent over books, scarcely perhaps even reading the newspapers, and, as is the way with [the] sedentary, he lost his head with political excitement. The rise of Irish nationality meant to him, as all nationality means to the revolutionary socialist, an affront to his international idea of progress. He could be complimentary, even enthusiastic in conversation or private letters; he would have thought himself false to Shakespeare and Goethe and above all to Wordsworth did he not discourage us in the public eye. 28

Had this passage stood, Dowden would indeed have been the victim of the full force of Yeats' attack, but without the passage it is both interesting and unfortunate that the criticism appears to come from Dowden's own friend, J.B. Yeats. Section XXIV tells of JBY's attitude to Dowden's 'failure in life' and to his 'timidity', an impression of Dowden that after many years 'had not changed'. The passage culminates in the re-telling of an old antagonism between the two friends over their opinions of Wordsworth's poetry that had come to light through the posthumous publication of a selection of Dowden's letters in 1914 and also in Yeats saying that, even at this stage, JBY 'decided, it is plain, that Dowden was a provincial' (p.89). His father's fulmination against 'Four Years' when it was published had its origins in his reception of 'Reveries' and of his son's inconsistent attitude towards Dowden. That Yeats was unfair in his treatment of his seniors is undeniable because, had he so wished, he could have drawn attention to two letters of Dowden's that were complimentary to himself, or, indeed, to Dowden's last letter to JBY signed 'ever affectionately yours', a letter that clearly indicates that not long before Dowden's death, JBY had written to him of his own free will and in friendly terms. Instead, he had chosen to unearth a disagreement between the two that, although it had

happened many years previously and was sufficiently defused by 1914 to appear in the published correspondence, could have been exacerbated once again by some of the less considered phrases in 'Reveries'. Coming so close to Dowden's death, the passage ran the risk of estranging both father and son from those of Dowden's relatives who were still living. Yeats' acknowledgedly harsh judgement of Dowden illustrates one of the disadvantages of a method often used in Autobiographies whereby an individual is made to stand for an abstract idea. In this case Dowden is in Yeats' own words 'the image of those [Victorian] ideals' and he 'has to stand for the whole structure in Dublin, Lord Chancellors and the rest'. This forestalls any detailed evaluation of a complex personality but it must also be said that it does not always work to the detriment of a subject. One thinks of the portrait of Aubrey Beardsley in 'The Tragic Generation' where the artist is used as an illustration of Yeats' idea of 'victimage' and is all but canonized in the prose as a saint.

Having seen some of the basic issues introduced to the autobiography by 'Reveries', and some of its other qualities, one can begin to pass comment upon Yeats' autobiographical method in general and upon his style in 'Reveries' in particular. One of the most striking qualities of 'Reveries' is its humour, present not only in the entertaining and informative anecdotes but also in the self portrait. Whether Yeats is trotting more at the dogs' heels than they at his (p.13) or regretting that the loosely tied sailor-knot in his tie 'could not always be blown out by the wind like Byron's in the picture' (p.83), the effect of the humour remains the same: it provides an element of self-deprecation that guards against excessively self-indulgent introspection, de-romanticizes its

subject and suggests that if the autobiographer can see faults in his younger self and act upon them, then the propensity for further development in the author is still possible and the autobiography is not a static or completely finished artifact but an organically developing work sharing a mutual growth with its creator. To paraphrase James Olney, it becomes an autobiography of the double metaphor, an 'autobiography duplex' that is, for the writer, not 'after the part, but only a part'.

As the title suggests, the method of recalling and remembering the past used in 'Reveries' is an impressionistic one and manifests itself in an impressionistic style of writing; visual images are allowed to float up into the memory of the author and, consequently, 'Reveries' is littered with paraphernalia and bric-a-brac, often of a nautical nature: a mastless toy boat, bits of coal, a jar of water from Jordan, Falconer's Shipwreck, a painting of a ship darkened by time and Chinese pictures, an Indian ivory walking-stick, some coloured prints of battles in the Crimea and a tongue of leather over a keyhole, all of which create the impression of Victorian interiors. However, Yeats is actually making the point that the awakening of strong emotions, the awakening of consciousness even, is accompanied by visual memories of the most insignificant of objects and yet these associations are rarely, if ever, dispelled. These isolated and unlikely objects anchor down the impressionistic surface of the prose in much the same way as Moore uses small or trivial actions to give substance to his fluid prose in Hail and Farewell, and, furthermore, by allowing these pictures to float up into his mind - and Yeats says in the Preface that he will 'describe what comes oftenest into my memory' (p.3) - he lets memory dictate, to a certain degree, the structure of the work.

Although he does not appear to be quite so artless as does, for instance, Tomas O Crohan in The Islandman, since the numerous small revisions alone suggest the degree of Yeats' literary mind at work, there are grounds for comparison between aspects of these two books. (There are also basic differences: Yeats' book deals with a period of naiveté while O Crohan's book is part of a naive or primitif tradition in itself). O Crohan ends his work thus:

I have set down nothing but the truth; I had no need of invention, for I had plenty of time, and have still a good deal in my head. It's amazing what a lot there is in an old man's head when somebody else starts him talking and puts questions to him. All the same, what I've written down are the things that mean most to me. I considered the whole course of my life, and the things that had meant most to me were the first to come back to memory. 30

In Yeats' case, this autonomously-functioning means of shaping a reminiscence through giving memory a free reign, involves a highly pictorial method of recall, significant in a volume which discusses the importance of specific geographical places and perhaps typical of someone with a degree of artistic training and with a father and brother both respected artists. But it is also the dramatic qualities of memory that help to structure 'Reveries'. Whole scenes are important to him, as he writes, "I constantly see people as a portrait painter, posing them in the mind's eye before such-and-such a background' (p.83), unlike the portrait method used by his father which aims to make statements about personality through the features of the subject alone without the aid of specific backgrounds. This method of seeing people against backgrounds or in specific situations, which after all is one of the characteristics of his anecdotal technique, is emphasised by Yeats' apology for forgetting so many names and faces among his school friends: 'mainly no doubt because it was all so long

ago, but partly because I only seem to remember things dramatic in themselves or that are somehow associated with unforgettable places' (p.32).

This is clearer than the version of the passage appearing on page thirty four of the original Cuala Press edition:

mainly no doubt because it was all so long ago, but partly because I only seem to remember things that have mixed themselves up with scenes that have some quality to bring them again and again before the memory.

Yeats also says that during the period of heightened sensitivity in his adolescence the power of his experiences was so strong that he was forced to isolate himself in order to savour them to the fullest, 'I notice that now, for the first time, what I saw when alone is more vivid in my memory than what I did or saw in company' (p.63). David Grylls sees this as being a distinctive feature of Gosse's childhood as it is told in Father and Son:

On several occasions he observes how his life, as it ceased to be solitary, ceased also to be distinct. Solitude, suffering even, made possible his spiritual autobiography. 31

Yeats too finds that in the act of writing his memoirs, the value of solitude, and the resonances of experiences undergone in solitude are great, so great indeed that the individual musing upon the past can create a pattern of associated images sufficiently robust to provide a framework for the structure of an entire autobiographical work.

While it would be wrong to suggest that Yeats' autobiographical style influenced subsequent Irish autobiographies, for many autobiographies of quality have their style and format dictated more by the life described than by literary trends, it is a valuable exercise to put 'Reveries' in something of an Irish literary context, even if only because it illustrates some of the more general characteristics of the

genre. David Wright's article on Yeats' Autobiographies sets out many similarities between Autobiographies, especially 'Reveries' and James Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man; he suggests that Joyce's work encouraged and fired Yeats' enthusiasm for autobiography and he shows how

Both works exploit changing styles to dramatic developing consciousness. The impersonal fragmented manner of Yeats' first few pages recalls the opening of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man; present tense forms and simple syntax early in 'Reveries' evoke the sensibility of the child as do similar features in the first chapter of Joyce's novel. 32

He points out that Joyce's title is comparable in effect to the plural forms of Autobiographies and 'Reveries' and, amongst other things, he demonstrates how both 'Reveries' and A Portrait go up to the point where the subject is free to become an independent artist in his own right. While this is true and while there are many other fortuitous similarities between the two works, it must also be remembered that there are also only a limited and small number of methods open for an autobiographer to present his childhood, and use of the historic present tense to create some sort of mimetic between the prose and the consciousness of the child is now a particularly common one. The Dublin dramatist, Hugh Leonard, in a recent autobiographical reminiscence, Home Before Night, does, however, manage to bring together two methods of describing childhood with great inventiveness. The first chapter of this work builds upon a good tradition of describing the author's family with the author-persona cast as the 'I' figure, it ends with the words; 'They are childless. For that matter none of the Doyles of Chris's generation had children - including my mother'. Chapter Two surprises one by moving into the third person singular, with the subject, recognisably the

same person, now called 'Jack', and it narrates a painful and embarrassing scene with his drunken stepmother; Chapter Three picks up the narrative in the first person while Chapter Four reverts to the third person, and so on for sometime. In Leonard's case this is a particularly appropriate device; the child is an orphan and the dual claims of his adopted family and his unknown original family, such as it may be, are nicely suggested by it; furthermore, in the second and rather sad chapter, the third person singular gives a greater sense of distance from the implication of the events and one feels it is being deliberately used as a means of control. The reader, though aware of the pain and discomfort of the child when, for instance, his stepmother, still drunk, reminds him of his dubious origins in front of two girls in a railway carriage, is not coerced into a potentially stifling sympathy. The distancing device and the apparently dispassionate presentation of events hold the reader in a position where he can appreciate the effects of the stepmother's behaviour without feeling pressure from the author to empathise with the child. It is appropriate that in the fourth chapter it is the boy Jack who should ask questions about his real mother and not the 'I' figure, and Leonard, who does not employ the first person singular when discussing emotionally-charged episodes, also takes full advantage of the more fictional mode of reminiscence offered by the third person form, often going beyond the expected limits of accurate recall without disturbing the reader's sense of credulity and at the same time produces a memoir that also contains the benefits offered by the use of the first person singular. But Hugh Leonard is something of an exception; Joyce and Yeats are pioneers of what is now an established tradition that an autobiographer will use changing

styles to dramatise developing consciousness, and beside the similarities between these two writers it is as well to remember that fundamental differences exist too. Joyce, for instance, uses the third person singular form, his opening pages reveal a much more systematic method of introducing the various senses of his subject than do Yeats' and, in general, his technique is that of the novelist rather than the technique of the autobiographer Yeats, who allows himself greater liberty of form and association in his less programmatically devised reveries.

The interpolation, out of chronological order, of the deaths of Yeats' grandparents at the end of 'Reveries' says something about the very nature of autobiography itself. Many autobiographies of childhood have in them encounters with death in one form or another. A child's first encounter with the subject is often a significant stage in his or her development and, staying within an Anglo-Irish context, Hugh Leonard opens his work with the humorous sentence, 'My grand-mother made dying her life's work'.³⁵ Sean O'Casey begins his six-volume autobiography with the death of the second child whom his parents had christened Johnny as a prelude to the birth of the third Johnny, the subject of the work, and Mary Colum's³⁶ autobiography, Life and the Dream, is relevant too. This is described in a recent dictionary of Irish literature as 'a romantic view of the Irish revival as seen by an impressionable student', and though such a persona is adopted by the authoress for part of the work, such an evaluation of Life and the Dream omits reference to the very fine portrait of childhood and youth in the opening pages. Her description of convent schooling is both evocative and impartial; she offers credible explanations for the curious and often objectionable behaviour

of some of the more ostentatiously devout girls and in so doing she criticises some aspects of convent education, but she does not militate against the doctrine of suppression of the self preached by the nuns because she perceives the inner peace which may be brought about by retreats, devotions and rigid self discipline. Death is very much present in these early pages: the dedication is to her grandmother 'whose wake and funeral are described in this book'. She remembers the killing of many animals in the rural community in her youth, there is a young and pretty aunt who dies from pneumonia and, most significantly, there is the ever-open grave at the convent which constantly awaits the death of the next member of the community. This common convention much present in Irish works, by which autobiographical accounts of childhood include the presence of death, often marks the coming to awareness by the writer of his or her own mortality. Here Colum's work is subtle and involved; she implies that the inescapable presence of death in the convent helped the young people to form a healthy view of its ineluctability and also to form a more acute awareness of its opposite - life:

Death, and making all life a preparation for death, filled the atmosphere, but when the [funeral] procession left the garden and went on to the chapel, life began again. 37

Life, seen in the context of death, can be valued more highly than if its ultimate and inescapable conclusion is ignored: such a frame of mind is inseparable from the meditative mood that forms part of any autobiographical impulse because the act of reflecting upon one's life implicitly recognises and emphasises the passing of one's allotted time, and any autobiographer is aware that an autobiography is a book that can never be fully completed by the author - that function is left to death. In Mary Colum's case, her convent schooling is

seen to have helped her appreciate life as time gained from the onset of death and oblivion, just as she appreciated the peaceful and joyous mood that followed on from religious retreat and rigorous devotions as a result of the spirit defining its liberty through a brief period of its suppression. And, incidentally, this antinomial patterning gives a shape to her account of childhood and youth so that her arrival in a Dublin, teeming with the various movements of the revival, must be seen in the context of the quietude of her convent days to have its full effect on the 'impressionable student'.

The deaths of the Pollexfens provide a suitable means of concluding the family history in 'Reveries' and this was their obvious importance for Yeats. He had already, in the privacy of the Journal, confronted the death of J.M. Synge and its implications; he may have had some inkling that later in the autobiography he would write of the death of friends and associates again in the passing of the members of the 'tragic generation'; what he could not have known was that he would also deal with the passing of even more friends and of some of his most cherished hopes in 'Dramatis Personae'.

CHAPTER III

YEATS' AUTOBIOGRAPHIES : 'THE TREMBLING OF THE VEIL'

The largest of the individual books which comprise Auto-
biographies is 'The Trembling of the Veil', the 'literary
mosaic' which Ian Fletcher has found 'tonally and structurally
1
puzzling'. No doubt one of the reasons for the odd structure
of the book rests in its genesis and in the chequered history
of its growth from a private exercise in autobiography to the
highly finished public work it now is. Yeats' attitude to
continuing his memoirs after 'Reveries' was an ambivalent one;
he wrote of there being 'too many living people to consider',
yet also said he would return to the subject but only in
2
fragments'. He also wrote that 'while I was immature I was a
different person and I can stand apart and judge. Later on, I
3
should always, I feel, write of other people'; and so any
memoirs subsequent to 'Reveries' would require him to find
greater objectivity in his attitude to his past self and would
also require a change of literary style in order to present
those 'other people' from his past. Having decided to press
ahead with the work, the method he chose for distancing,
ordering and patterning his past was to write out a first draft
of the material for his eye alone and then to re-write for
publication, removing what he deemed inappropriate, and
4
organising and adding to what remained.

Out of the First Draft or 'Autobiography', written
between 1915 and 1917, grew 'Four Years', the first of what
might be called the fragments that Yeats had envisaged as
following 'Reveries'. The precise date of its composition is
hard to define but it was under way by March 1921, possibly

having been started at an earlier date in the winter of 1920-21; since its serialization began in The Dial and The London Mercury in June 1921 it is safe to surmise that it was completed by that date and most likely even earlier. As a result of its serialization, the publishers, T. Werner Laurie, offered Yeats £500.00 for the right to publish the memoirs appearing in The London Mercury and their sequel, memoirs that Yeats had decided to carry down to the start of the Irish Literary Theatre. The Cuala Press rights to 'Four Years' were honoured and it appeared in book form in December 1921, but the rest of 'The Trembling of the Veil', incorporating 'Four Years', was published by Laurie.

If 'Four Years' had been a speculative venture it had also been a success; Yeats could press on with fitting it into a larger framework, having the guarantee of financial backing, and his enthusiasm was evident. He urged AE to write and to publish an essay on Unity and Culture which, he felt, through its close relations to 'Four Years', would give some unity to the Cuala prospectus (AE's essay failed to materialise); more importantly, with a rough model behind him in the shape of the First Draft - Autobiography, he very quickly wrote the remainder of 'The Trembling of the Veil' so that by October 1922 Laurie was able to publish it in its entirety. An indication of the rapidity of composition is that various sections of 'Ireland after Parnell', 'Hodos Chameliontos' and 'The Tragic Generation' appeared in serialized form from May 1922 onwards. This rapidity may account for the oddities Fletcher finds in 'The Trembling of the Veil' but there is a more plausible explanation for the structural quirks in that 'Four Years', an introductory and a tentative work, sets out to acquaint one with a large number of preoccupations of the

younger Yeats, such as his magical studies, his political commitments, the beginnings of his ideas of literary nationalism, his views on art and art history and, of course, his growth and development as a poet. But, as for the larger scope of 'The Trembling of the Veil', the chronological organisation of 'Four Years' would have made for a very congested history of all of these elements in his life. At certain points in 'The Trembling of the Veil' Yeats sacrifices strict chronology to other forms of organization so that 'Ireland after Parnell' deals mainly with political concerns, 'Hodos Chameliontos' with magical practices and 'The Stirring of the Bones' divides itself, roughly speaking, two-thirds to one-third between politics and magic with a clear line dividing these interests; it is these two methods of organizing the book that account for its oddities of structure. As for the puzzling tone, one explanation is that much of Yeats' personal history of the time referred to is removed because there were still too many living people to consider. Another is that, because he is presenting a history of the self and at the same time indirectly suggesting things descriptive of characters and events in the main, and also because here and there he directly states philosophical ideas about Ireland and about human nature in general, the result is that the focus of attention shifts periodically throughout the book.

Of all the component parts of Autobiographies, 'Four Years' has the most complicated compositional and bibliographical history. Obviously there is the First Draft - Autobiography, though both Bradford and its editor, Donoghue, agree that Yeats did not have it on his desk as he wrote 'Four Years'; Bradford has drawn attention to the existence of two complete manuscripts (though since one is both signed and

carefully written it is most likely a fair copy intended for sale to John Quinn as part of the financial arrangement to keep John Butler Yeats in funds in the U.S.A.) and also to the major variations between these manuscripts and the Cuala Four Years of 1921. However, it must also be remembered that variations exist between the Cuala version and the one serialized in The Dial and London Mercury since Yeats sent his sister Lollie a printed version of 'Four Years' from The Dial with his corrections and alterations from which she was to set up the Cuala edition. ⁵ There are variations too between the Cuala Four Years and the Laurie Trembling of the Veil, as well as differences between this latter and the MacMillan Autobiographies version of 1926. One alteration that Yeats made between the Laurie and the MacMillan editions has already been mentioned in discussing 'Reveries' and Bedford Park; for the main part, other alterations do not fundamentally change the meaning or affect the prose (there are, for instance, hundreds of verbal and grammatical emendations) but two are worth further consideration.

In the second instalment of 'Four Years' to be serialised in July 1921 (i.e. in the first published version of 'Four Years') the following appears:

I spent a few days at Oxford copying out a seventeenth century translation of Poggio's Liber Facetiarum or Hypnerotomachia of Poliphilo for a publisher - I forget which for I copied both - and returned very pale to my enraged family. 6

J.B. Yeats, weakened by internal haemorrhaging, less than a year away from his death and already disappointed with the first of his son's autobiographical books, took great exception to the word 'enraged' when he read The Dial and he wrote to his son:

I remember when you came back from Oxford how glad I

was to see you and hear your account of your visit & how during the fortnight you talked with no-one, living all the time in solitude in empty Oxford. . . . As to Lily and Lollie they were too busy to be "enraged" about anything, Lily working all day at the Morrises, and Lollie dashing about giving lectures on picture painting and earning close on 300 pounds a year They paid the penalty for having a father who did not earn enough and was besides an Irish landlord. I am sure that "enraged family" was even a slip of the pen. I fancy you yourself did regard us as having the brand of inferiority, but that they didn't mind. What woman does? 7

The degree to which Yeats felt his father's chastisement is indicated by the fact that he changed the passage for the Cuala edition in December to 'and returned very pale to my troubled family', an emendation that still stands. 8 9

JBV's strong words provoked this small but significant change and later, when the T. Werner Laurie Trembling of the Veil appeared, strong words from the widow of MacGregor Mathers determined a more extensive alteration to the 1926 MacMillan Autobiographies. She objected to the 'caricature portrait' of her husband, saying it was incorrect and contained half-truths, finishing her letter thus:

Now with this awful book of yours between us I can never meet you again or be connected with you in any way save you make such reparation as may be in your power. If you sincerely regret some of the aforesaid misrepresentations as I gather from your conversation you have done, could you not in some immediate future work refute at least some of the lying statements that must have been reported to you. You yourself may think of some other way. 10

Yeats' replies to Mrs. Mathers' letters are not published, but it is evident from her letter of 12 January 1924 that he firstly suggested she should make a full list of her objections to his portrait of Mathers:

I thank you [she wrote] for your letter of January 8th 1924. I think your suggestions are quite the best that could be made under the circumstances. As soon as I can, I will go through your book very carefully and will write to you again on the subject, noting the few passages that I think can be altered without disturbing your character study in any way. 11

and secondly, from her letter of 4 February 1924, that Yeats promised to act upon her criticisms:

A certain reconstruction of "S.R.'s" character in your book would be the solution. I quite admit its "quixotic" element. And this was I know especially in evidence during those very difficult early years of the "G.D." when you knew him. 12

Mrs. Mathers' major point of objection was Yeats' statement that Mathers 'was to die of melancholia, and was perhaps already mad at certain moments on certain topics', and though this phrase was originally in 'The Tragic Generation' and was subsequently removed, the reconstruction of Mathers' character had repercussions for the structure of 'Four Years'. Bradford points out that everything following the first paragraph of section XX of the final, published version of 'Four Years' in the 1926 'Trembling of the Veil', down to the end of the section, was new; to this can be added the fact that the revisions were due to Mrs. Mathers' objections. Also, part of the interpolated material involved a re-writing of the passage dealing with the Japanese animal painter whose painted horses stepped out from his painting, which had appeared on page seventy-eight of the Cuala edition, and so is not entirely new having come from the section that had described Madame Blavatsky. Furthermore, having re-arranged the passages on Mathers and disturbed those on HPB, he had to revise, for this edition, section XIX which dealt with her. Finally, too, the correspondence with Mrs. Mathers indicates that the alteration of the sentence: 'I believe that his mind in those early days did not belie his face and body, though in later years it became unhinged, for he kept a proud heart amid great poverty' in the first three editions, to 'I believe that his mind in those early days did not belie his face and body - though in later years it became unhinged, as Don Quixote's was unhinged -

for he etc' (p 183), was an alteration that met with her approval and did not disturb the character study 'in any fundamental way', since, in her letter of 4 February 1924, she had admitted to the 'quixotic' element in Mathers' character.

Apart from these alterations to the text made at different stages in the history of 'Four Years', most of the other alterations, at whatever stage they may occur, usually concern character studies of Yeats' friends and associates (for example, he extends a description of Florence Farr for the Laurie edition), with the exceptions of the addition of the refrain-like condemnation of 'Huxley, Tyndall, Carolus-Duran and Bastien Lepage', for which there is no analogue in the First Draft, and of the reshaping of the conclusion for the Laurie edition so that it led more smoothly into 'Ireland after Parnell'. It should also be noted that there is no corresponding passage in the First Draft-Autobiography for the long essay on Unity of Culture and Mask and Image that appears in section XIV of 'Four Years'.

As with parts of 'Reveries'. 'Four Years' looks back some thirty years for its subject, but unlike "Reveries" it was written at a time of personal stability for Yeats. He had, since the writing and publication of "Reveries", composed and published new works and re-issued selections of his poems, he had married, had established Thoor Ballylee as his summer house and, despite the troubles in Ireland at the time of writing, there is little suggestion in 'Four Years' that he was disturbed by contemporary events. This is attributable to the fact that from May 1920 to early 1922 the Yeatses were living either at their home in Broad Street, Oxford, or nearby, and so were away from any fighting. 14

The four years of the title take one up to 1891, the year

in which Parnell died, an event seen by the younger Yeats as a land-mark in his vision of Irish literary nationalism:

It was the death of Parnell that convinced me that the moment had come for work in Ireland, for I knew that for a time the imagination of young men would turn from politics. 15

But there is another resonance of meaning to these four years suggested by the passage that Yeats removed from 'Reveries' (see Appendix One), in which he refers to the four productive years of Thomas Davis' working life in Ireland and which he uses as an implicit contrast to the four years he himself spent away from Ireland ('Though I went to Sligo every summer, I was compelled to live out of Ireland the greater part of every year' pp. 149-50); a contrast heightened by the reference to the man who, once Yeats had begun to organise a literary movement, compared him with Davis, and to another who 'said I could organize like Davitt and I thought to succeed as they did, and as rapidly' (p. 201).

16

Subtle evocations and faint echoes of Davis and 1848 are in keeping with the underlying movement of 'Four Years' towards Yeats' own literary nationalism, since he shapes the re-telling of the events of 1887 to 1891 so that they lead naturally into the conclusion, and so that his experience at that time seemed to vindicate the need for involvement with the future of the country of his birth and to sanction the sacred necessity for establishing the 'new Eleusis'. In fact the whole swell of 'Four Years' is one that creates great pressure on and gives great significance to this work for nationalism, especially since the contemporary English artistic and cultural milieu is portrayed as being flawed in so far as it fails to base its works on an ancient attachment to sacred tradition.

'Four Years' is also a description of a number of quests: he searched, he says, for the secrets of ancient wisdom,

characterised by the Old Jew, Ahasuerus, from Shelley's 'Hellas', and personified by both Madame Blavatsky and MacGregor Mathers with their insight into arcane matters. Unfortunately both of these colleagues fail to live up to the atavistic status Yeats had hoped to find in them. He quests too for self-possession, integrity of his actions, and a full engagement of his whole being in his creative work, seeking to extend the personal quest for harmonious individual well-being into a desire to effect the same for his country as Unity of Culture. He states categorically in the closing stages that 'nations, races and individual men are unified by an image, or bundle of related images, symbolical or evocative of the state of mind which is...the most difficult to that man, race or wisdom' (pp.194-5).

The references to the 'old white-haired Oxfordshire clergyman' (p.184) who searched for the elixir of life (in fact Revd. William Alexander Aytoun, a fringe member of the Order of the Golden Dawn) and to others who laboured with crucible and athanor, which were added significantly when Yeats re-wrote the entry on Mathers, have a thematic relation to his own personal history at the time. Like the alchemist, he sought for a conjunction of elements into an organised and unified image by turning his back on modern thought and science and by looking to the secret wisdom of the past. Also like the alchemists, his wildest hopes were for a most difficult yet most treasured goal, hopes that were almost certainly doomed to failure and unfulfilment - for such is the trend of the whole of 'The Trembling of the Veil' as it makes its journey towards meeting the first autobiographical work, the Journal, begun in 1908, which embodies the disillusion he felt with Dublin and with its reception of Ireland's literary renaissance.

'Four Years' is also closely related to its predecessor, 'Reveries over Childhood and Youth' in many ways. Even though it covers a shorter time-span, it is of comparable length; the format of both works is similarly conventionally autobiographical, showing none of the stylistic experiments that one gets with the direct inclusion of Journal extracts in 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge'. More specifically, individuals are made to stand for elements greater than the merely individual in the same way Dowden stood for 'Lord Chancellors and the rest' in 'Reveries'. In fact, the narrative is largely carried forward by a series of encounters with important and representative figures of the day. The significance of this is that the gregarious Yeats learns by experience and not by bookish study alone and so, for instance, having introduced in abstract fashion the quest for arcane wisdom through quoting Shelley's 'Hellas' in Section XVIII, he immediately fleshes out the idea with the introduction of the very real figure of Madame Blavatsky in Section XIX. Occasionally Yeats uses eulogy in his study of admired associates, just as he had eulogized his ancestry in 'Reveries'; Morris is associated with the great artists of pre-Renaissance days, Henley becomes another Cosimo de Medici and Florence Farr is granted a high and mythological status in being associated with an image of Demeter.

Despite its overall trend suggesting a deterioration in English culture and English artistic personalities, created in order to stress by means of contrast Yeats' belief that Ireland was an emergent nation with the potential to attain unified cultural civilization, 'Four Years' treats many of its subjects in a kindlier way than do corresponding passages in the First

Draft. And so references to Edwin Ellis' 'many casual sexual adventures' and to his conversation being 'wholly concerned with religion and sex' disappear,¹⁷ Henley is no longer described as 'lame from syphilis, always ailing and with no natural mastery of written words',¹⁸ and much the same is true of references to Maud Gonne being 'the troubling of my life', to her being 'unscrupulous' in political activity, and to O'Leary and George Pollexfen's disapproval of her.¹⁹ Although there is a sense that artists and intellectuals of his father's generation or a group like The Rhymers' Club do not possess what Yeats calls 'unity of being', he only partly uses these people as negative exempla against which he measures his own successes. There always remains a positive thrust to his interest in personality designed to give the impression of pushing him towards his crusade for Ireland since he is careful to guard against allowing the recognition of failure and dismay to pervade too soon. This carefully-paced halting of the narrative is a feature of the prose throughout 'The Trembling of the Veil'. Consequently, contact with dominant, and often older, figures like Henley, Morris and even York Powell, coincides with a growth in his own self-confidence, but it was a self-confidence that was raw and brash. He says that he could only talk on set topics 'being in the heat of my youth', he rages at Florence Farr's lack of self-discipline, listens to the more mannered acting in Todhunter's Sicilian Idyll with 'raging hatred' and leaves Morris' Socialist group as a result of 'all the arrogance of my raging youth'. Yet, remarkably, such passion bore little relation to personal conviction - 'and yet I did not always believe what I had said' (p. 149).

This far from completed quest for stability and self-possession emphasises the continuum which is also present in

Yeats' analyses of history, of place and nationality, and of the educative process. History is made to serve various autobiographical purposes and manifests itself in various forms in 'Four Years': recent history, in the shape of his father's generation, provides him with an awareness of possible pitfalls in the artist's life, while in the closing stages of the book he can anticipate the importance of the Irish literary movement and even see himself as part of a future historical moment. But his view of history is also a synoptical one, and he ranges freely between recent and ancient history, using images drawn from the sculpture of Attica to elaborate upon his hopes for modern Ireland. However, whether Yeats is talking of history in the short or long range sense, he shares Walter Pater's view that a civilization or historical moment is best interpreted through its artistic achievement. Recent history is seen in terms of the fine arts: Pre-Raphaelitism has his approval, Impressionism, some of the works of the Brotherhood, the photographic realism of Carolus Duran and the scenes of peasant-life by Bastien-Lepage, his scorn. Ancient Greece, with what Yeats saw as its unified culture, is judged by its sculpture in the famous passage about the statues of Mausolus and Artemisia, while the growth of abstraction out of the Middle Ages into the Renaissance period in England is offered solely in literary-historical terms (section XXIII, P. 193).

The interest in the power and sanctity of specific locales, especially in the evocation of theme within works of art and literature is carried over from 'Reveries' too. This is self-evident from Yeats' statement that he believed that 'if Morris had set his stories amid the scenery of his own Wales' or 'if Shelley had nailed his Prometheus upon some Welsh or Scottish rock' they would have achieved 'a breadth and

stability like that of ancient poetry' (p.150). Morris is also referred to in the continuing discussion of the nature of the educative process when Yeats recounts an episode in which J.B. Yeats' criticism of Morris' prose destroys his son's simple and unconscious pleasure in reading it and forces him to employ more critical faculties to judge it, a change which the younger W.B. Yeats felt was one of loss.

'Reveries' had established a broadly-based interest in education by discussing the very source of knowledge and the relative merits of innate and received ideas within the larger context of rational and mystical philosophy. Yeats had illustrated how his natural proclivities and his experiences had led him towards favouring an anti-rationalist aesthetic, but how the legacy of his father's scepticism made an unconditional acceptance of paranormal experience difficult. By the end of this four-year period, and hence by the end of 'Four Years', Yeats makes tentative statements that begin to affirm the autonomy of an uncorporeal world. This resulted from his meetings with Madame Blavatsky and especially those with MacGregor Mathers whose experiments with magical symbols satisfied the sceptical side of Yeats' nature by presenting him with the materialisation of the apparently immaterial. As he describes, he was quick to seize upon the implication of the rather banal nature of Mathers' experiments and to translate magical principles to his view of art, since the transforming power of the symbol, to a symbolist, is reminiscent of the potential power of all art. The principle is illustrated by a memory Yeats has of a pamphlet that described the coming to life of horses in a Japanese painting and how these horses trampled over neighbouring rice-fields. Put another way, he recalls and describes an incident in which a representational

notion of life becomes an animated, autonomous and heightened form of life itself. He also tells of hearing of a student of Mathers' who awoke from a dream of fighting a cat to find scratch marks on his chest, and he says that he asked himself, 'was there an impassable barrier between those scratches and the trampled fields of rice' (p.187). The use of the word 'impassable' rather than 'passable' is typical of his continued reserve and scepticism, but this reserve is portrayed as being no longer an insuperable object restricting belief in the Great Memory. By the closing stages of the events that make up the book, this synthesis of art and magic becomes acceptable to Yeats and, since the emphasis of the work is upon nationhood, the synthesis suggests itself as a means to Unity of Culture:

Perhaps even those images, once created and associated with river and mountain, might move of themselves and with some powerful, even turbulent life, like those painted horses that trampled the rice-fields of Japan.
(p. 194)

Henceforward, both in his life and in 'The Trembling of the Veil', magic and mystical philosophy figure greatly in endorsing the 'wild hopes' he held for Ireland at the time.

Although I have emphasised the many similarities between 'Reveries' and 'Four Years', the latter does have its distinguishing features too, the most significant of these being a new emphasis upon the precision and individuality of its language. If autobiography is concerned with creating a distinct and definable myth of the self, then it follows that a distinctive use of language may be one of its requisites. Yeats says that he wished to see daily life enacted with the intensity of tragic drama and, in seeking for a language to convey the idea of life lived at a heightened pitch, he also desired that this language should be understandable to all men. Consequently, the terminology of 'Four Years', where he says

that 'we begin to live when we have conceived life as tragedy' (p.189), is often recognisably taken from common use but is invested with a new precision of definition that suggests the intensity of tragic drama. Hence Yeats pauses to explain what he means by 'convictions' - those thoughts that sustain us in defeat, or give us victory when tested by passion' (p.189), 'a turbulent life' is not one that is chaotic but one in which personality lives and experiences each event to the fullest, while 'tragedy' is used in the sense that Walter Pater uses the idea of the fullest life as permanent 'crisis'; that is, a snatching away from the flux, or from exterior fate, of individual sensations, impressions and experiences which define both themselves and the individual. It is not so much that Yeats was creating for himself a new and precise terminology between the years 1887 to 1891, even though he was trying to evolve a personal philosophy, it is rather that he uses this occasional and specific terminology in referring to that period. The result is that the language enacts the process of Yeats attempting to make sense of a period of confusion as he experiences it and that it presents a picture that expresses the diversity of his activities at that time but avoids being either confused or disparate.

Alongside the issue of language, the expansion of the range and type of imagery in 'Four Years' illustrates how Yeats developed a more overtly sophisticated literary style to convey his larger and more complex themes. Not only does he go to the fine arts for a source of images in describing movements in culture or in people that he knew, he also plunders from a vast expanse of history and historical figures. Yet there is, further, a cluster of images drawn from the dramatic arts which centres upon the idea of life as tragedy and expands both to

take in one aspect of 'mask' and to assist in describing someone like Henley whose single-mindedness is likened to a great actor's passion. When taken all together, these images from the fine and the dramatic arts, along with the various references to alchemy, complement the discriminating use of the Eden-images from 'Reveries' and, as Daniel O'Hara has noted, all have their root in the forms of creative activity and so are appropriate to the autobiography of a poet.

'Four Years' is not without the sort of self-deprecating humour that one finds in 'Reveries'. To a certain extent Yeats mocks some of his youthful pretensions: 'Sometimes I told myself very adventurous love-stories with myself for hero, and at other times I planned a life of lonely austerity, and at other times mixed the ideals and planned a life of lonely austerity mitigated by periodical lapses' (p.153). He skilfully employs humour too when talking about mystical interests as a means of diverting potential scorn away from the heart of the matter and out to its peripheries. The unlikely mixture of earthly humour and spiritual experience is embodied in Yeats' description of the 'pythoness' of the Theosophical movement, H.P. Blavatsky, 'a sort of old Irish peasant with an air of humour and audacious power' (p. 173). Her gaiety and her propensity to mock non-believer and over-ardent devotee alike, serve Yeats as a safety valve for any misdirected laughter from a scornful reader and illustrate how he appreciated her in much the same way as he appreciated Morris: 'They had more human nature than anybody else; they at least were unforeseen, illogical, incomprehensible'.

The character study of HPB is but one of many in 'Four Years'; Yeats' self-presentation necessarily diminishes because of the historical and cultural contextualizing which

involves other individuals and groups holding the stage for prolonged spells. Indeed the presentation of the London cultural and literary scene is an achievement in itself since at that time it was composed of numerous coteries of artists with widely differing views and practices. While a figure like the arch-Imperialist, W.E. Henley, with his interest in Vers Libre and in impressionistic realism in poetry, may at first appear to be at an opposite extreme to the dandified Oscar Wilde whose life and home Yeats likens to a 'deliberate artistic composition', one, in fact, realises just how complex late nineteenth century London literary life was when Yeats recalls that a brief friendship passed between the two men. For the purposes of the 'The Trembling of the Veil', Yeats chooses to make The Rhymers' Club the most important literary feature of the time, giving a summary, though barely accurate description of its founding, and casting an eye forward to 'The Tragic Generation' by noting that he had once said: 'None of us can say who will succeed, or even who has or has not talent. The only thing certain about us is that we are too many' (pp.170-71). In keeping with his strategy of emphasising the promise latent in Ireland by contrasting it with an artistic torpor of England, Yeats puts side by side the unadventurous conversation of the gentlemanly atmosphere of the club and his own Celtic impulsiveness and so distinguishes his nature and his fate from those of the remainder of the Rhymers. This is more clear in the First Draft - Autobiography when he writes that 'Only when some member who was Irish ... led the talk was there animation', and it is to Ireland and to the relation of individual to nation that 'The Trembling of the Veil' next moves.

Having looked at the growth and at some of the

alterations of the text of 'Four Years', and also at what might be called some of the autobiographical strategies employed in ordering and organising his material, especially at the way Yeats restrains a too-rapid development of events and ideas, one can now turn to the remaining four books of 'The Trembling of the Veil' to see both their similarities and their differences from the first and major book of the set.

It is not surprising that Yeats should call a book that studies his own involvement with Irish literary nationalism after Charles Stewart Parnell since, as F.S.L. Lyons has said:

For Yeats himself through most of his life Parnell remained an evocative symbol which could be put to many uses, but which he related again and again to the theme of nobility overcome by baseness. 26

When Herbert Howarth emphasises the importance of Parnell to Messianic themes in Yeats' work he bears out this idea of Parnell as an evocative symbol, and Malcolm Brown, who establishes the pattern of development of Yeats' 'literary Parnellism' and shows the importance of Parnell to Yeats' view of Irish history, also adds to an already wide range of critical discussion of Yeats and Parnell. It is not surprising either that Yeats should change the title of the book from 'Ireland after the Fall of Parnell' as it was in the Laurie Trembling of the Veil in 1922, to 'Ireland after Parnell' in 1926, since between these years civil rancour in Ireland had died down and the potential for the country to fulfil Yeats' former vision of its greatness still existed. Parnell had acted as a type of the ritual-sacrificial victim for Yeats since through his death he is seen to usher in a period of cultural renewal for Ireland; his sacrifice ('nobility overcome by baseness') postulates re-birth and therefore his demise was not a fall from grace but a prelude to national resurrection. Little does it matter that in the bitterness of

the late poem, 'Parnell's Funeral', Yeats was to pronounce the cycle of sacrificial death and cultural renewal as ended, for now he still sees Parnell as the beginning of a new tradition of Irishry, rather than as the end of a tradition of great Statesmen originating in the eighteenth century, as he was to see him in that poem.

But despite the undercurrent of ideas concerning Parnell as ritual-sacrificial victim and Messiah figure in 'The Trembling of the Veil' (the anthropological gloss acquired by 'The Stirring of the Bones' relates closely to Yeats' use of the Parnell theme), this group of images clustered around Parnell lies, if anywhere at all at this stage, well beneath the surface of the prose. Instead Parnell (to whom there are only three references in 'Ireland after Parnell') is used as an ideal of the conjunction of passionate intensity and utter self-possession, a state for which Yeats is seen to strive in ²⁸
Autobiographies. For the main part Yeats actually wishes to

keep separate the mystical and the political aspects of his ²⁹
life, consequently the description of George Russell in terms of Mask and Image is in a very different mood from, say, the anecdotal descriptions of the literary societies, the satire of Gavan Duffy or the detailed narrative about the struggle over publishing the New Irish Library. David Wright has commented on the fluctuation of styles of writing within 'The Trembling ³⁰
of the Veil' and Bradford's study of 'Ireland after Parnell' at manuscript stage indicates that Yeats was especially aware of ³¹

it as a problem with this book. But this is not to say that there is no fusion of the mystical and politico-literary issues in 'Ireland after Parnell'; there is, and when it occurs it takes up the prominent positions of both the opening and conclusion of the book. By carefully locating references to

the mystical element Yeats presents a structural answer to the problem of varying styles and to the problems stemming from the wide range of subjects requiring discussion in the work.

He begins 'Ireland after Parnell' by implying that the reason for turning to literary organisation was founded in a mystical revelation he had had that an intellectual not a political movement would follow on from Parnell's death:

and now I wished to fulfil my prophecy, I did not put it in that way, for I preferred to think that the sudden emotion that came now to me, the sudden certainty that Ireland was to be like soft wax for years to come was a moment of supernatural insight. How could I tell, how can I tell even now? (p.199)

Yeats' confession that there was a degree of volition for a manipulation of the spiritual directive to set up an intellectual movement appears to cast doubt upon its validity, but in altering so radically the emphasis of the paragraph by ending it with a question: 'How could I tell, how can I tell even now?' he shifts the scepticism on to himself and limits the chances of outright denial by the reader of the part played by the supernatural. All that follows in 'Ireland after Parnell' has, Yeats implies, the sanction of the supernatural, right down to the final of the four narrative fragments with which it ends. This fragment concerns a member of the National Literary Society whose interests extended to spiritual matters and who, prompted by AE, became a Theosophist before an equally abrupt return to Catholicism. In a characteristically oblique way this story hints at the vacillations of the spirit that will trouble Yeats in the subsequent pages of 'Hados Chameliontos' and also at the pattern of Yeats and AE's success in their prophesying and proselytizing for a new Irish consciousness free of traditional and restrictive values. This ominous individual case of a lapsed convert is symptomatic of

the more general public conservatism against which Yeats fulminates in 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' and it recalls O'Leary's warning that 'In this country... a man must have upon his side the Church or the Fenians, and you will never have the Church' (p.209). The image that arises from 'Ireland after Parnell' of Yeats' views on what nationalist literature should be and his methods of propogating those views illustrate why he did not have the Fenians on his side either.

'Ireland after Parnell', since it is an autobiographical work, places Yeats at the centre of its action with the result that it seems at times that he alone was the initiator and sole motivator of the literary renaissance in Ireland in the 1890's. However, a reading of W.P. Ryan's The Irish Literary Revival : Its History, Pioneers and Possibilities (1894), even allowing for errors and a little partiality on the author's side, makes it plain that Yeats schematizes and simplifies his history of the movement, as well as ignoring whole areas of the movement that he did not know of. Like Yeats (whom he found too concerned with 'the passing craze of occultism and symbolism'), Ryan interprets Parnell's death as a significant event since the internal struggles of the Irish Party seemed to turn people from political to cultural activity; there is every possibility that the idea may have come to him from Yeats. Unlike Yeats though, he mentions the fact that Sir Charles Gavan Duffy had chaired a meeting of the Southwark Irish Literary Club (founded 1882) in 1887, the year before Yeats first attended a meeting there and so he allows one to see that Duffy was not the parvenu who arrived in 'Dublin fresh from Australia as Yeats implies he did in section VIII. Ryan gives more emphasis to the roles played by D.J. O'Donohue and T.W. Rolleston in rejuvenating this club into the Irish Literary

Society (which met, before settling into Bloomsbury Mansions, at The Cheshire Cheese, home of the Rhymers' Club) and he also sketches in a background of literary movements in Dublin that preceded Yeats' arrival there. The most prominent of these was, in Ryan's view, not the Gaelic League which was founded in 1893, but the Pan-Celtic Society (founded in 1888) which, despite its emphasis upon the use of the Irish Language, joined in with the efforts of the National Literary Society set up by Yeats and John T. Kelly in the summer of 1892. All in all, Ryan's work makes it clear that the problems Yeats encountered in starting work on his sacred mission in Dublin did not spring entirely from the failure of Irish Literature to have progressed beyond the days of Thomas Davis, as is implied in 'Ireland after Parnell', but sprang as much from Yeats stepping into an already complex network of literary societies and movements that included some well-established reactionary elements within them.

These problems were not limited to clashes over the publishing of seminal works of Irish culture, in which Yeats encountered both Fenianism and the Church in the respective shapes of Gavan Duffy and Archbishop Walsh, nor to differences of opinion over what should constitute good nationalist literature. Instead there was, in Yeats' view, a fundamental difference with the Young Ireland movement (or the 'Harps and Pepperpots' as he characterises anyone holding that movement's views) over his very right to question the quality and validity of nationalist activity. Yeats insisted that artistic merit should come before traditional or sentimental expressions of patriotism and he says that this was forever met by the simple, intractable retort of 'it must be either English or Irish'. The polarities of Dublin debate did not allow for his own

complexities and uncertainties of thought and he portrays himself as an outsider, being estranged from both popular literary nationalism and from the protection and leisured cultural milieu that Dublin's 'pleasanter houses' might have offered him (p.234).

But it is towards aristocratic patronage, intellectual freedom and anti-egalitarianism that Yeats leans in his retrospective account of those years:

I did not yet know that intellectual freedom and social equality are incompatible (p.229)

I began to feel that I needed a hostess more than a society, but that I was not to find for years to come. I tried to persuade Maud Gonne to be that hostess, but her social life was in Paris (p.230)

Without intellectual freedom there can be no argument, and in Nationalist Dublin there was not - indeed there still is not - any society where a man is heard by the right ears, but never heard by the wrong, and where he speaks his whole mind gaily, and is not the cautious husband of a part; where fantasy can play before matured into conviction; where life can shine and ring and lack utility. Mere life lacking the protection of wealth or rank, or some beauty's privilege of caprice, cannot choose its company, taking up and dropping men merely because it likes or dislikes their manners and their looks (pp. 230-31)

Of course, the protection of wealth and rank was to come to him eventually, as were invitations to the pleasanter houses, especially to Coole whither, along with 'The Stirring of the Bones', these passages, thanks to the benefit of hindsight, were obviously pointing. ³⁴ 'Ireland after Parnell' clearly addresses itself to the question of the artist's role in his society, the artist's part in politics and to the effect of involvement in public affairs upon individual personality and integrity. Throughout, Yeats emphasises that he was too young and too rash to remain aloof from those he tried to influence. John O'Leary advised an aloofness that the younger W.B. Yeats found impossible to achieve, but the older W.B. Yeats chooses to examine this quality of detachment in O'Leary himself.

He concludes from this character study that the quality is not an entirely desirable one because, although O'Leary possessed a considerable personality and acted as a loadstone attracting a generation of Nationalists around him, his highly moral and sophisticated view of political activity precluded those executive qualities that could have set him apart as a great leader. He says that O'Leary was capricious, 'he would desert me if I used a bad argument, and would not return till I found a good one' (p.227), a habit that frustrated the keener Yeats who was anxious to make headway in the cause of Irish Nationalism. Despite living through a period of change similar to that which Dostoevsky examined in The Possessed and managing to maintain an individual stoic nobility, and despite his refusal to support the use of arms, O'Leary, as Yeats' narrative would have it, was an incomplete man and consequently could not provide a model for Yeats' own mission in Ireland.

Unable and unwilling to judge O'Leary solely on his achievement as a nationalist, Yeats turns to what he sees as the ultimate yardstick against which to measure any person's success, that is in the endurance of his or her artistic achievement. He had written a very reserved review of O'Leary's Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism on its publication in 1897 but here, with both O'Leary and his sister, Ellen, dead, he speaks more freely. He finds it unreadable, 'dry, abstract, and confused' in spite of the laborious toil that O'Leary had expended in writing it. Indeed O'Leary's 'immense trouble with every word and comma' (p.212) parallels the near-inertia of his political reserve in his old age and presents Yeats with the dilemma that, on the one hand there were the 'Harps and Pepperpots' with their naively polarised politics, and on the other hand there was O'Leary's style of

nationalism which, weighty with morality and scruples, failed to get things done. Which was Yeats to choose?

The answer was not to be simple and Yeats' vacillations on the subject form the matter of much of the rest of Autobiographies; but in 'Ireland after Parnell' he turns once again to art and to posterity to form his judgements. Speaking of J.F. Taylor, his bête noire throughout Autobiographies, Yeats says that though Taylor was a considerable orator in his day, he soon dwindled into obscurity:

Did not Leonardo da Vinci warn the imaginative man
against preoccupation with arts that cannot survive
his death? (p.216)

Much the same is implied in his criticism of Cavan Duffy whose writings failed to produce 'one sentence that has any meaning when separated from its place in argument or narrative' (p.225), whereas Yeats himself even in his memoirs sought to write general and detachable philosophical truths. He had even stated outright to AE that his object in Autobiographies was to suggest 'things descriptive of characters and events in the main, and only here and there to directly state certain philosophical ideas about Ireland, and about human nature in general'.
38
Even William Morris' language failed to match up to these criteria, Yeats says 'he had few detachable phrases and I can remember little of his speech', whereas AE's conversation sometimes gave out 'some stray sentence beautiful and profound' (p.240). Those who committed their energies to transient matters are reduced by Yeats to the level of the inanimate. Hence the Ultra-Nationalists become 'harps and pepperpots', their abstract arguments 'like the fixed idea of some hysterical woman, a part of the mind turned into stone' (p.234) and J.F. Taylor even becomes at one point 'an automaton, a wooden soldier, as if he had no life that was not dry or

abstract' (p.213). Obviously Yeats' concern with independence of mind and vision relates to the struggle for self-possession and the fear of possession by some outside force, whether it be from the spirit world or simply the force of the power of abstract logic and rhetoric. This continues a line of development begun in 'Reveries'. Furthermore, this is also a reverse side to the portrait technique used elsewhere in 'The Trembling of the Veil' by which certain people become mythologized, even deified; here his enemies become not only de-mythologized but also de-humanized.

'Ireland after Parnell' describes and enacts the problems which the public self of Yeats encountered in his foray into Irish literary nationalism and it anticipates the greater confusion he mentions in 'Hodos Chameliontos'. It is a book replete with ironies and sets of opposites; Yeats, at one stage, suggests that in some ways he was working against his own stated aims at the time:

I was preparing the way without knowing it for a great satirist and master of irony [Synge]... and to help me I had already flitting through my head, jostling other ideas and so not yet established there, a conviction that we should satirize rather than praise, that original virtue arises from the discovery of evil. (p.207)

'Ireland after Parnell' also deals with the question of apparently irreconcilable opposites, explores the problem of synthesizing public and private selves and articulates how Yeats was seduced by the easily gained success of organising literary groups and societies and how he gave way to 'the chief temptation of the artist, creation without toil' (p.201). Counterbalancing the problems of finding the right blend of personal integrity and political efficacy is the rough outline of his own brand of Parnellism: his fierce involvement with his sacred mission to establish Ireland's cultural renaissance

tempered by a high disdain for any small mindedness in the arena of politics. But it is only a partially evoked image of self possession that Parnell provides because of the paucity of references to him in the book. Even though the text to some degree enacts the mood of aggressive self-assertion that Yeats says was one of his own characteristics of the time especially in its satirical portraits of his adversaries, self-assertion in public life did not mean self-possession in private life, as 'Hodos Chameliontos' makes clear.

'Ireland after Parnell' deals mainly with politics, with Yeats' public self and his public interests; 'Hodos Chameliontos' deals with magic, his then private interest, and with his private self at a time of crisis. Although the two books seem opposed in substance, they are complementary in structure. Both show the interpenetration of his public and private interest and just as the first ended with references to magic when its subject had been mainly political activities, so the second ends with a statement of political import by stating that all that has been said about the individual applies to countries too: 'And these things are true also of nations' (p.274). But the equation of the two books is not entirely as simple as that, 'Hodos Chameliontos' is not without its paradoxes. Although it deals with a period of personal turmoil and crisis, it understates any emotional implications that this may have had, either stating baldly that 'I began to feel myself not only solitary but helpless' (p.263) or else describing his difficulties in the remote references either to a cabbalistic manuscript or to figures from the lesser known novels of Flaubert:

But now image called up image in an endless procession,
and I could not always choose among them with any
confidence; and when I did choose, the image lost its

intensity, or changed into some other image. I had but exchanged the temptation of Flaubert's Bouvard et Pécuchet for that of his Saint Anthony, and I was lost in that region a cabbalistic manuscript, shown me by MacGregor Mathers, had warned me of; astray upon the Path of the Chameleon, upon Hodos Chameliontos. (p.270)

It seems paradoxical too that, despite the subject matter being a mixture of arcana and a description of a period of bewildered confusion in Yeats' life, the prose style of this the shortest of the books in Autobiographies, should be as lucid, investigative, discursive and even as didactic as it is at times. For instance, when Yeats describes in section II the experiments in telepathy conducted with George Pollexfen, the prose reads empirically, like a scientific report; when extending the implications of his findings into his philosophic discourse, the prose becomes rhetorical so that six out of the ten sentences that make up section III end with a question mark; and when concluding the book, Yeats moves into a more authoritative and impersonal mood, abandoning any semblance of autobiographical reminiscence in Section IX, and adopting a present-tense narrative that finally gives way to poetical expression of his ideas.

But perhaps it should come as no surprise that 'Hodos Chameliontos' should be so coolly analytical in tone since, primarily, it develops the major themes of Autobiographies despite its ostensible subject of confusion. All of the experiments described were directed towards understanding the origins of personal knowledge, whether it is from the self or from extrinsic sources, a theme common through 'Reveries' and 'Four Years'. Now, these experiments form part of Yeats' recounting of his investigation of his own poetic creativity:

When a man writes any work of genius, or invents some creative action, is it not because some knowledge or power has come into his mind from beyond his mind?

(p.272)

And the crisis of not knowing how to put the procession of the mind's images into some order and discipline is not so much seen as a state of inner chaos but as a disjunction of private belief and public action:

From the moment when these speculations [about the Great Memory] grew vivid, I had created for myself an intellectual solitude, most arguments that could influence action had lost something of their meaning. How could I judge any scheme of education, or of social reform, when I could not measure what the different classes and occupations contributed to that invisible commerce of reverie and sleep.....?
(p. 263)

Obviously this passage illustrates just how central the theme of education is to the early stages of Autobiographies, but it also illustrates how 'Hodos Chameliontos', though differing in subject matter, in style and in organisation, ultimately returns to the same issues that 'Ireland after Parnell' had discussed. Or rather one should say that it deals with the reverse side of the same issues that its predecessor had treated. Where 'Ireland after Parnell' looked at the problems of the conduct of the self in the public world of action, 'Hodos Chameliontos' reviews the role and function of less easily determinable factors in public life such as sleep, reverie and dream. In effect, sleep becomes a positive agent in the development of the imagination because (as in the case of the visions of Mary Battle, George Pollexfen's servant) it is the repository of dreams and hence a point of contact between the individual and the Anima Mundi. It is also a time when the shapes and impulses of thought can pass freely to and fro within the general mind as a sort of 'invisible commerce'. In terms of the structure and general strategy of Autobiographies, 'Hodos Chameliontos' marks off Yeats' acceptance of the autonomous nature of received images and ideas, an issue introduced in 'Reveries' and it prepares the ground for some of

the visionary experiences in 'The Stirring of the Bones'. Yeats interpreted these as a sign to change direction in his work for the literary revival and they function as a bridge between 'The Trembling of the Veil' and the later part of Auto-biographies that deals with the dramatic movement.

The argument of the book does not end there: Yeats further refines his subject by saying that to search for enlightenment through contemplation, through willing revelation to happen, is of no use. One must live the fullest life in all spheres of action and inaction and must earn contemplation if one is to achieve what he calls the moments of crisis in which the day-to-day self becomes conjoined with the deeper intuitive self or with the race consciousness. Despite the mystical paraphernalia of 'Hodos Chameliontos' and despite the apparently convoluted and obscure references to cabbalistic manuscripts and symbols, at heart Yeats is affirming the need to become actively involved in life if one is to earn the benefits of contemplation. The suggestion is obviously close to Pater's 'hard gem like flame' exhortation from the conclusion to The Renaissance, but there are closer associations in Pater's essay on Dante Gabriel Rossetti in Appreciations in which the idea of crisis is explored:

For which Rossetti this sense of lifeless nature after all, is but translated to a higher service, in which it does but incorporate itself with some phase of strong emotion. Everyone understands how this may happen at critical moments of life... To Rossetti it is so always, because to him life is a crisis at every moment. A sustained impressibility towards the mysterious conditions of man's everyday life, towards the very mystery in it, gives a singular gravity to all his work: these matters never become trite to him. 42

The influence of Pater upon Yeats was a complex and changing one, but here it is evident that it was also an enduring one since, even though Yeats questions the value of Pater's

influence upon the tragic generation, he is still in later life echoing aspects of the philosophy of the Oxford sage.

The older W.B. Yeats makes an overt appearance in the text of 'Hodos Chameliontos' in the passage beginning 'Now that I am a settled man...' (section VII, p.270), in order to lend authority to the ideas conceived in the period under discussion. It is a very different appearance from the wistful and dissatisfied man of nearly fifty who closes 'Reveries'; he is now indeed settled and can refer to his daughter's intuitive awareness of the child in her mother's womb and in so doing evoke the homely wisdom of the family man against the problem of innate ideas that Locke 'waved aside' (p.271). The device of introducing the finished man into the very text that is re-creating him is one that is not uncommon in Autobiographies and is an important aspect of the strategy of 'The Bounty of Sweden' with which Yeats finishes the collection.

'Hodos Chameliontos' is an unpredictable piece of prose; its first title, 'Hodos Camelionis', used in the T. Werner Laurie edition of 1922, though an accurate rendition of the title of the manuscript in question as he informs us in a footnote, was grammatically inaccurate (Yeats was forced to write to Sarah Purser's brother, Louis, for a more accurate title, and even as it now stands it represents a strained version of a Greek phrase).⁴⁴ Despite its crucial importance in the history of the development of Yeats' thought on intuition and revelation as part of creativity, when it came to be serialised for the general readership as part of 'More Memories' in The London Mercury and The Dial in 1922, he quite mercilessly cut out many of the passages dealing with the subject. It seems strangely perverse too that the book,

with its bizarre title, its accretion of footnotes and its strange content, promises much about the extraordinary and the occult, yet when Yeats does get on to the subject such matters are offered as only one part of experience; instead, he insists that man must live in the public, quotidian world as much as he does in the magical:

it is only when the intellect has wrought the whole of life to drama, to crisis, that we may live for contemplation, and yet keep our intensity. (p.274)

Having provided so far in 'The Trembling of the Veil' details of the Irish cultural background and of his developing interest in magic, Yeats moves on in 'The Tragic Generation' to portray his literary and artistic associates of the time, especially those who lived and worked in London. Many of them were among the most notable and notorious people of their day and, as a result, this book provides a good sense of that very distinct period, often a by-word for decadence, the 1890's. Here are Ibsen and Shaw changing the stock of contemporary drama, Wilde and the court cases that precipitated his fall from public favour, the new journalism, the yellow books and their publishers, the moral revolt of the public against the values enshrined in the art and literature of the day, the Rhymers and their individual fates, and (before the rural atmosphere of much of 'The Stirring of the Bones' and much of 'Dramatis Personae') vignettes of the urban settings of London, Dieppe and Paris.

Curtis Bradford explains how the structure of 'The Tragic Generation' came about with Yeats stitching together a series of tragic fates of friends and associates from the First Draft - Autobiography to make a theme for the book. He points out too that much of the material had been tried and tested in public and had been proved popular through the lecture Yeats

used to give called 'Friend of my Youth'. What was new, then, was the packaging of this familiar material since Yeats uses extensive metaphors based on ideas articulated in his poem, 'The Phases of the Moon', to describe the characters of many of his contemporaries and so creates a firm bond between this book and both versions of a A Vision. However, contrary to his normal practice exemplified by his editing of 'Hodos Chameliontos', when preparing 'The Tragic Generation' for serialization he did not remove the references to his philosophical system or to his lunar metaphors even though he had to cut down considerably on the book in general. He was obliged to include the highly theoretical and un-autobiographical third section in order to explain the principles of his portrait-method in the rest of the book. Even then he was worried that the occult background was insufficient, especially in the case of the portrait of Lionel Johnson, a portrait that was incomplete owing to the non-publication of section VIII in The London Mercury version. Anxiously, he wrote to Olivia Shakespear defending his method, apologizing for the truncation of the character sketch and regretting that even the finished book could not rely more heavily on his private philosophy:

It needs the wild mystical part to lift it out of gossip, and that mystical part will not be as clear as it should be for lack of diagrams and the like. 46

Obviously, then, Yeats was sensitive to the possibility of such a charge as Ian Fletcher's 'glittering libels' comment, and, in truth, was guilty of the charge on some counts. But the two major points of criticism levelled against 'The Tragic Generation' have been that it over-schematizes the history of the time in an attempt to make it fit into a predetermined view of cultural history, and that it seeks sensationalism in concentrating upon the degeneracy of its subjects' lives. To

emphasise the first of these points is to ignore both the fact that Yeats goes to some lengths to explore the differences in personality that mark off one member of the generation from another, and the fact that he does not give any one reductive reason for what he feels to be a high proportion of tragic fates. Instead he states that he has 'never found a full explanation of that tragedy' (p.300).

Among those who incline towards the second view that Yeats dwells morbidly upon his associates' vices and fates is Rupert Croft Cooke, who claims in Feasting With Panthers that the book is melodramatic and that:

there is no justification for working up a sentimental picture, based on the last days of Johnson and Dowson, of a generation of tragic young men. There are too many precedents to quote from other periods, from Chatterton to Dylan Thomas. 48

Cooke is correct to point to the high number of suicides and self-destructive tendencies in people of artistic temperament. Al Alvarez in his study of suicide, The Savage God, finds examples of such tendencies in the actual suicides of Sylvia Plath, Virginia Woolf and Mark Gertler to name but a few; he also refers to a form of death-wish in the life-styles of Brendan Behan and Dylan Thomas, to the 'artistic suicides' of Rimbaud (who abandoned poetry at the age of twenty) or Kafka (who wanted all his writings to be destroyed). He points to the general (and Yeats-inspired) idea that the modern artist is no longer a hero or liberator, but an inward-looking, divided personality who often verges on madness, as Strindberg, Artaud and Virginia Woolf all did. In short, says Alvarez the artist⁴⁹ 'has become a victim, a scapegoat'. But supposing that Cooke is right about Yeats 'working up' a picture of a generation of tragic young men, then surely the very fact that the other suicides he cites are isolated cases, and not members of a

generation or group of doomed literati, should alert him to their inappropriateness as precedents.

But Cooke is inaccurate in his first supposition that 'The Tragic Generation' is about 'a generation of tragic young men'. John Davidson's is the only suicide that is mentioned, Johnson and Dowson the only two who are said to precipitate their own downfalls willingly. Although Oscar Wilde opts to stand sentence when he could have escaped imprisonment and, Yeats says, did seem at times to take pleasure in visions of his degradation, the pride and the nobility that underlay his decision to defend publicly his own conduct and beliefs are emphasised. If, as Cooke suggests, Yeats was determined to create a widely sentimental picture of his generation, then an ideal subject would have been the fate of his close friend, Arthur Symons, who suffered a mental breakdown in Italy in 1907, not long after the years described in 'The Tragic Generation'. But Yeats is discreet and tactful when writing of Symons, avoiding naming him in the anecdotes of section XVII about the 'painted ladies' of Paris, and not even hinting at the fate that later befell him and prevented him from fully living up to the promise of his earlier years. The portrait is a rather formal one, being objective about very close friends is no easy task; some might argue that the reticence springs merely from a fear of giving offence to someone still living. However, so lavish is the praise for Symons as friend, teacher and translator of European literature - his 'are the most accomplished metrical translations of our time' - that it is clear that Yeats seeks to eulogize and 'definitely not to exploit.

Although the myth of a generation of tragic young men is announced by the title (and is accepted far too readily by

Cooke) it is seen to be only one part of the book when fundamental, simple, critical analysis is carried out. For instance, aside from the discussions of Johnson, Dowson and Davidson, there are discussions of others who do not belong to the myth. Pater and Rossetti were of another period, Florence Farr was not a young man, tragic or otherwise, George Bernard Shaw was a successful writer of notable longevity. Henley was almost twenty years older than Dowson or Johnson, Symonds outlived Yeats, Mathers, though quixotic was not tragic, and though Wilde and Beardsley had different forms of tragic fate, there is no gratuitous melodrama or sensationalism in Yeats' portraits of them. The tone of the work is varied too, and is not uniformly tragic at all; Yeats' own 'wild mystical' passages are punctuated with amusing anecdotes about, for instance, Verlaine's strange companion, Bibi La Purée, who steals umbrellas at his friend's funeral, or with humour at the expense of the young aesthetes and would-be magi, as is seen in the Parisian stories which round off the book.

When one asks oneself what Yeats does actually write about in 'The Tragic Generation' one finds that, rather than simply exploiting the fates of some of his colleagues, he endeavours to defend the right of the artist to explore 'subjects long forbidden' not only with a moral purpose, 'but out of sheer mischief, or sheer delight in that play of mind' (p.326). Also that he defends the necessity for an artist to recover the 'vision of evil' if he is to be able to subjugate sensuality to a realistic place in the scheme of things, as he feels John Donne did. Furthermore, one finds that Yeats attacks censorship, as he was to do later as an Irish Senator, and, especially in the cases of Wilde and Beardsley, that he assigns a special status to the artist in society.

One finds too that 'The Tragic Generation' is often constructed either around series of pairs, such as the characters of Shaw and Wilde, or of Johnson and Dowson; or else around apparent dualisms and paradoxes, such as the opposition of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic temperaments in the Rhymers' Club, or the fact that some Irish lyrics, faulty in form, were charged with passion while some of Rhymers' lyrics, near perfect in form, were but arid in content. Indeed the central and unexplained enigma of certain of the Rhymers, as Yeats sees it, lies in a dualism: they were most conventional in dress, appearance and in their public lives, yet abandoned and turbulent in their private worlds. Again, when one looks at the method of portraiture in the book, it reveals itself to be greatly varied. Mary Flannery in Yeats and Magic: The Earlier Works has pointed out that there is often an underlying Christological element in Yeats' work that springs from his involvement with Cabbalism and with the rites of the Golden Dawn. There are suggestions of a Christological element at work in the portrait of Parnell, both in the sense of him as a sacrificial, redemptive victim and in specific details like his coming among his followers with his hands full of blood, torn by his nails, an obvious hint at the stigmata. With the portrait of Wilde, this same idea is used extensively and overtly; Yeats singles out for attention 'The Doer of Good', Wilde's 'heresy' on the story of Christ as well as Wilde's praise for Yeats' own story on the sacrificial victim theme, 'The Crucifixion of an Outcast' (p. 287). Furthermore, he quotes the comments of Wilde's brother, Willie, that Oscar decided 'to stand the music like Christ' and that his followers 'swung incense before him' (pp.288-9) as though he were some deity. Both Christological and Christian matters concern

Yeats in his character studies. In developing the general theme of religion running throughout Autobiographies to date, he recalls that Coleridge, Rossetti, Stenbock, Dowson and Johnson were all Christians; he could have mentioned Wilde's death-bed conversion to Catholicism too, but the most extensive study of the subject comes in the portrait of Aubrey Beardsley.

For Beardsley Yeats employs his lunar metaphor technique, casting him as a man of the antithetical, thirteenth phase and consequently close to the phase of complete subjectivity, the fifteenth. He also uses this idea of the antithetical phase to explain the curious mixture of sincerity and irreverence in Beardsley's attitude to Catholicism, saying that while Beardsley wanted to - and in fact did - choose Catholicism (which Yeats sees as a passive form of religion) then the active, antithetical phases came forth to challenge his new, primary characteristics by presenting him with images that mocked and satirised his new religion. But to Yeats this explanation was inadequate since it left little to choice and all to chance. As a result, in summarising Beardsley's last days, he chooses to dwell upon Beardsley's intellectual freedom to select subjects for his drawings:

and yet perhaps I am mistaken, perhaps it was merely recognition that historical Christianity had dwindled to a box of toys, and that it might be amusing to empty the whole box on to the counterpane. (pp. 333-4)

Yeats' emphasis upon religion in portraying Beardsley's life and works is a perceptive and justified one. At the end of Chapter One I mentioned, briefly, the idea of victimage that Yeats derived especially from Huysmans' St. Lydwine of Schiedam through which an individual takes upon him or herself the sins and afflictions of others as a surrogate victim. Obviously, Lydwine is a typological representation of Christ's suffering

and expiation of mankind's sins, as Huysmans wrote in a letter on finishing his hagiography:

everyone is responsible to a certain extent for the sins of others and must to a certain extent expiate them ... God was the first to submit to these laws when he applied them to himself in the person of his son, allowing Jesus to pay the ransom of others.

Huysmans developed this idea of a universal law of expiation through the examples of various saints and into the lives of everyday people:

unfortunately there are now fewer saints, and the contemplative orders are dwindling in numbers or becoming less austere, so that Our Lord is obliged to turn to us, who are not saints. Hence our illnesses and afflictions, which undoubtedly ward off catastrophes. 51

Yeats skilfully states that he has the wild thought that Beardsley took upon himself not the consequences but the knowledge of sin and so allowed others who had never heard his name to recover innocence (p.331). In so doing he also hints rather obliquely that the tubercular Beardsley was, like Blessed Lydwine, one of those 'who really did cure disease by taking it upon themselves' (p.330). But Beardsley has been seen as a man who is partly orthodox Catholic, partly the satirical scourge of Catholicism, a man who partly chooses the images he draws and who partly has them thrust upon him, hence Yeats' concentration on his drawing of St. Rose of Lima. She, like Lydwine, voluntarily mortified her flesh: when asked to wear a garland of roses for decoration by her mother, she turned the thorns inward, when praised by a man for her beauty, she scourged her face with abrasives rather than let the man be led astray by desire for her beauty. As an example of victimage, Yeats' Beardsley is unconsciously drawn towards St. Rose. However, because of the conflict between primary and antithetical qualities, between sincere Catholicism and the recognition that historical Christianity had 'dwindled to a box

of toys', he cannot treat the subject with entire gravity, portraying the Saint 'her face enraptured with love, but with that form of it which is least associated with sanctity' (p.333). In completing his study of Beardsley with a reference to this picture, Yeats finds an iconographical embodiment of the various tensions that he sees as creating Beardsley's personality, since in the image both potential forms of beauty and spiritual rhapsody and of profanity are present. Beardsley is one of the few contemporary artists who can accommodate the 'vision of evil' in his work.

Obviously the simplicities of a Croft Cooke are not sufficient grounds for a reading of 'The Tragic Generation' but neither is it entirely appropriate to be led by the lunar metaphors into a comparative study of 'The Tragic Generation' (or 'The Trembling of the Veil') and A Vision, as critics from Joseph Ronsly to Shirley Neuman have often done. The net effect of this type of criticism is not to explicate the meanings or structures of the various texts in Autobiographies but to further a process of mystification of Yeats' works and ideas. Furthermore, it is critically unsound to over-develop tangential ideas at the expense of fundamental issues. The essential questions to ask about 'The Tragic Generation' should concern its function within Autobiographies and its nature as autobiographical writing. On the first issue it must be said that Yeats makes little discursive autobiographical comment amidst the biographical content of the book and leaves one by implication with the likelihood that the members of this generation are meant to stand as examples of what his own fate could have been had he not avoided it by becoming involved with his Irish crusade when he did. And so one deduces that 'The Tragic Generation' provides background to the life of 'The

Trembling of the Veil' and only makes its autobiographical comment obliquely; but to do so it takes up a proportionately vast amount of space, being the second longest book of 'The Trembling of the Veil'. It is precisely because 'The Tragic Generation' deals with a period of literary-historical interest and does so in an idiosyncratic way, and because it makes major statements about Yeats' own aesthetic that it has often been at the centre of criticism on Autobiographies whereas its true function in the work is minimal in terms of narrative progression. As a piece of autobiographical writing, then, it is notable just how far back the autobiography of the subject fades in preference for contextualising. There is little direct comment on Yeats' personal development or on how he survived to be a commentator upon, rather than a victim of the tragic generation. In fact most of the propulsion of narrative in Autobiographies occurs as a result of short bursts of intensive narrative concerning significant moments in the life, which is what one finds in the ensuing book, 'The Stirring of the Bones'.

However, one of the most significant episodes in 'The Stirring of the Bones', the account of the various dreams of the Archer figure, only found its way into the text after the publication of the 1922 edition. Yeats had been uncertain of the dream's precise mythological significance until he met a Dr. Vacher Burch (whose name he subsequently forgot) who persuaded him to publish both the accounts and an anthropological gloss that he provided for use as a footnote. These appeared in 'A Biographical Fragment', in The Criterion in July 1923; for the writing of this supplement Yeats almost certainly used the First Draft - Autobiography as a means of checking exact details of the dreams.

The first two-thirds or so of 'The Stirring of the Bones', that is up to the point where the new material was interpolated in section VI, is a synopsis of the contemporary Irish political scheme featuring both a compact study of Michael Davitt and narrative evocations of the ceremony to lay the foundation stone of the Wolfe Tone Memorial and the troubles surrounding Queen Victoria's jubilee visit to Dublin. Even though Davitt and Yeats were neither good friends nor close acquaintances, it is not surprising that a portrait of him should be especially devised for 'The Stirring of the Bones' since he is one of a succession of formidable older men in ⁵³ Autobiographies. He has some of the qualities of O'Leary both in his intolerance of bad arguments and in his desire to improve the quality of Irish political representation; he also has some of the self-possessed qualities of Parnell, though ⁵⁴ political actuality found the two men as adversaries. Like Henley, he was to Yeats a figure of maimed strength, though no mention is made of the fact that he had lost an arm in an accident when working as a twelve year old in a Lancashire mill. But the real significance is that despite the force of his personality, Davitt was a failed personality at a time when Ireland itself, in Yeats' view, was failing to achieve its own political independence:

One felt that he had lived always with small, unimaginative, ineffective men whom he despised; and that perhaps through some lack of early education, perhaps because nine years' imprisonment at the most plastic period of his life had jarred or broken his contact with reality, he had failed... to dominate those men. (p.357)

It is a sympathetic portrait in the main - Davitt and Yeats ⁵⁵ shared a common enemy in the 'Mad Rogue', F. Hugh O'Donnell - ⁵⁶ Yeats disagrees with Davitt's 'Highland Plan', even though he shows little enthusiasm for its remote and 'vague possibilities'

(p.357); rather, it is that in chronicling his own disillusion and severance with the Nationalist movement (in autobiographical terms) before switching his efforts to the dramatic movement, he must show that even the best elements in Irish politics were no longer effective.

Yeats achieves this sense of growing separation from the political zeitgeist by subtle but simple forms of overstatement. He portrays himself as being naive, optimistic and conciliatory, wanting to unite Parnellites, Anti-Parnellites, Old Fenians, Ribbon Fenians with the new group of Unionists disenchanted with the over-taxation of Ireland, all into a Convention with an Executive Committee that would carry the political initiative back to Ireland yet still keep channels for negotiation with Westminster open. These were, he says, 'some of the worst months of my life' (p.355) and later, though not in a political context he emphasises his immaturity by saying that he was in poor health, 'the strains of youth had been greater than it commonly is' (p.376) even though he was thirty-two at the time referred to. Against this youthful artlessness Yeats presents a mildly overstated view of internecine wrangling conducted with all the ferocity of a two-headed Cerberus at the gates of hell; while a certain amount of double-dealing by his close friend, Maud Gonne, who though seeming to support his plan often urged entire withdrawal from Westminster when not in his presence, emphasises by contrast Yeats' picture of himself as ingenuous. (In keeping with the de-centralizing of Yeats' private and emotional history in 'The Trembling of the Veil', much of the story of his troubles with Maud Gonne is left out and so the full effect of her lack of commitment to his plan is not registered).

But it is not just Yeats' plan for unity that fails; the

coming of the new Irish Messiah who would emerge out of a period of turmoil and strife, that is to say the violent disturbances related in section V, is seen to fail to take place too. Instead there are dark hints in the passage about James Connolly that the legacy of these disturbances is the sacrificial blood-letting of the Easter Uprising, while in the case of the passage about Maud Gonne encouraging schoolchildren to swear enmity against England, that legacy, it is implied, goes yet further into the 'Tan' War and the Civil War. Indeed, not only does the fragmented and episodic form of section V mirror the directionless and unproductive nature of the political disturbances, it also puts forward a series of ironic juxtapositions of bungling ill-administration with dangerous violence, of humble contributors to the cause and quibbling pettiness at the head of its processions. There then comes an abrupt caesura between public matters and Yeats' private dreams and interests in Cabbalism; Coole Park is suddenly introduced along with the mysterious revelations that came to him there.

Obviously these dreams and revelations by their late inclusion sharpen the effect of the transition, and that Yeats found them of great importance is indicated by the care he took in the slight modification made to his own dreams for publication. ⁵⁷ Furthermore, the fact that similar or complimentary dream visions occur to Symons, to a character in a Fiona MacLeod story and to the child of a pupil of Mathers approximately at the same time not only attests to the power of the vision but also offers verification, to Yeats, that the dreams result from some movement in the spirit world and are not just a series of unrelated events in terrestrial life. (It is one example of what Jung calls synchronicity: 'a coincidence

in time of two or more causally unrelated events which have the same or similar meaning, in contrast to "synchronism" which simply means the simultaneous occurrence of two events'). From the glossarial footnotes the significance of these dreams as a postulation of some form of ritual re-birth is evident; such a renewal not only occurs in Autobiographies but is also multi-form. For Yeats it represents the passage through a period of personal crisis originating in the unrequited love-affair with Maud Gonne (though this is only hinted at in the final version of the events), and also through the difficulties experienced in trying to write his novel, The Speckled Bird. He now moves into the shelter of Coole Park where he is seen to recover physical health and mental stability under the aegis of Lady Gregory. The dreams also signify his sloughing off of the uncomfortable mantle of active politician and the gradual recovery of his creative skills as poet. For Ireland they imply that the burden of deliverance has passed from the hands of the politicians and firmly into those of the cultural figures, and so, again, his view of an intellectual movement as Ireland's salvation is re-stated.

As part of his autobiographical strategy of only gradually unfolding events and not announcing their significance too quickly, Yeats holds back from stating the exact significance of the visions:

59

I remember that I quoted Balzac's description of the straight line as the line of man, but he [a fellow, unnamed cabbalist] could not throw light on the other symbols except that the shot arrow must symbolise effort, nor did I get any further light. (p.375)

At this point the reader is directed to Vacher Burch's footnotes which offer a new trail of secondary, expository material. If one stays with the main text however, the subdivision of the section, indicated by a series of printer's

dots, immediately makes one aware of a change of narrative direction. After having left one wondering and expectant about the symbolism of his dreams - 'nor did I get any further light' - Yeats says that 'a couple of weeks' afterwards, Lady Gregory and Coole Park entered his life. The result is that one immediately searches for the connections on either side of the divide in the text, those connections which Yeats rather archly refuses to make for his readership. If one had, though, paused to read the footnotes the effect would have been that one would have tried to fit the information gleaned from them back into the main text at the point of resumption. Either way, Yeats primes his readers to seek for mystical significance and for evidence of providential interference in his life immediately after the dreams. The effect is enhanced by an apparent but tantalisingly oblique relationship between Megarithma's warning to 'live near water and avoid woods because they concentrate the solar ray' (p.371) and the landscape of Coole demesne. The consequence of this careful re-arrangement of events for 'The Stirring of the Bones' is that Lady Gregory's appearance at this time seems part of the prescribed general pattern of deliverance and renewal. In a more gentle and understated way Yeats is affirming what he had said in the passage removed from 'Reveries' after 1916 (included as Appendix One), that he was still out to create a new Eleusis in Ireland and that now his method was not to be a political one, instead he would concentrate on one of the most important of the Eleusinian Mysteries, the rite of the drama. Ending the book as he does with praise for Lady Gregory's part in that sacred mission suggests that he had it in mind to make her a central figure in the next stage in the autobiographical project, and his original title for 'Dramatis Personae' was

indeed, 'Lady Gregory'. Nowhere else would a comparative reading of the First Draft - Autobiography and 'The Trembling of the Veil' reveal Yeats' autobiographical method and strategy more clearly than at this point, for the deliberate holding back of all references to the dramatic movement until 'Dramatis Personae', and the careful re-arranging of the events that seem to precede it, represent the single largest liberty that Yeats took with his material in presenting the whole book.

The detailed notes about Yeats' dream of the Archer are of considerable interest especially if one wishes to make a study of Yeats' philosophy through his version of its development in Autobiographies. There is much to detain one in the content of the symbolic dreams, and one should not pass by without comment on the carefully structured series of metaphors in the main text of both natural trees and the cabbalistic Tree of Life that help inform 'The Stirring of the Bones'. There is much that could be said too about Yeats' passing references to daimons in the book, especially the possibility that daimonic activity was at work in the revelations that came to him at Tulira and Coole because, significantly, he finds nothing unusual in such a fusion of pagan and early Christian mythology inherent in the possibility. Not only does the subject of daimons extend the discussion of religion that threads its way through 'Reveries' and 'The Trembling of the Veil', it also draws in the earlier debates about the source of knowledge showing how Yeats now favours the reality of external, revelatory voices and so takes one back to his early childhood worries about 'the voice of conscience'.

Furthermore, 'The Stirring of the Bones' both re-iterates and enacts a dialectical process in creativity set up between conscious, purposeful public activity and 'the invisible'

commerce' of sleep, reverie and dream in 'Ireland after Parnell' and 'Hodos Chameliontos'. For the voice that speaks to him cryptically through his sleep and the subsequent explanation and elaborating of that revelation that occurs when Burkitt's Early Eastern Christianity falls open at the appropriate page (even though this happens many years later) like the other mystical experiences and emotions described in the final section, all come about when he is absorbed in some other form of activity. So the importance of these experiences is a twofold one: firstly, their content helps him formulate his thought on the concepts of Mask and Antithetical Image, and, secondly, the realisation that they occur when he is either in a semi-conscious state or when he is involved in other matters, 'as though it were necessary for the exterior mind to be engaged elsewhere' (p. 378), teaches him by illustration the value of antithesis. In adapting Section XL of 'First Draft - Autobiography' for this part of Section VI of 'The Stirring of the Bones', the accounts of the dreams, visions or revelations that Yeats chose to retain all have reference to Christian thought; those he chose to reject tend to relate to pagan mythology. And yet Yeats' conscious mind was, he says, steeped in pagan myth at the time, in collecting folk and faery tales and in creating a map of sacred places in the ancient mythology of Ireland. Clearly, the rationale behind the selection of these experiences is one that seeks to sharpen the antithetical relation between the unconscious and the conscious mind, between the passive and active elements of creativity and mystical thought.

It is here that the most important significance of the Archer dream and of the related network of symbolic meanings lies. Yeats is, admittedly, evasive and vague about the

dream's precise importance ('nor did I get any further light'), but he is straightforwardly plain about what, in autobiographical terms, those symbols reduce themselves to: the straight path of deliberate effort as opposed to the tortuous path of the chameleon. Quite what the path of deliberate effort is lies open to various interpretations too: it is the path of the flight of the arrow of Sagittarius; it is the path of the long straight line that goes up through the centre of the Tree of Life; it is, as Yeats' collaborator suggests, the path of wisdom through the study of magic; Yeats recalls and refers to Balzac's observations on the straight line of man, in much the same way as he uses Flaubert's novels as invitations to alternative readings of the significance of his period spent on 'Hodos Chameliontos'. But these all remain elaborations on the symbolic theme and not exclusive readings of it. It must be remembered that Yeats had originally felt that the simple description of the interplay of his efforts to recover both his lost creativity and his emotional stability with the mystical revelations that resulted directly from the re-channeling of his energies, would be sufficient in itself to suggest and to establish his view of the creative act. What the addition of the dream-vision of the Archer does is, ultimately and simply, illustrate how he found some endorsement and even impetus for the change of course that leads, in the autobiographical scheme, to the next phase of his life. As he puts it himself in later years, 'When I went to Coole the curtain had fallen upon the first act of my drama (p. 395)'. That revelation comes to him in this phase of deliberate effort is both an unexpected by-product and a bonus and it helps create, within Autobiographies, a mood of optimism for the future. But it is all part of a familiar and planned strategy since Yeats was

aware in 1922 that the completion of 'The Trembling of the Veil' brought closer the period of dis-illusionment belonging to the Journal. When he came to write what was in fact the last instalment, 'Dramatis Personae', this promise of optimism and of cultural renewal was to have an ironical flavour about it.

CHAPTER IV

YEATS' AUTOBIOGRAPHIES : DRAMATIS PERSONAE

As was usual with many of Yeats' autobiographical writings, 'Dramatis Personae' appeared in both book and serial form. It was first published as a book by the Cuala Press, in an edition of 400 copies, on 9 December 1935, and in serial form in The London Mercury in November and December 1935 and January 1936, and in The New Republic from late February to late April 1936. Later that year it appeared with 'Estrangement', 'The Death of Synge' and 'The Bounty of Sweden' under the title Dramatis Personae; eventually this was incorporated with 'Reveries over Childhood and Youth' and 'The Trembling of the Veil' in the volume Autobiographies in 1955.

With so many printed versions of 'Dramatis Personae' hundreds of minor textual alterations and corrections could be enumerated but the most significant comparisons of text are to be made between the serialised periodical versions and the final version as it stands in the latest edition of Autobiographies. The length of 'Dramatis Personae' had to be reduced for serial publication in order to fit in with the differing requirements of The London Mercury and The New Republic and the result is two versions that differ interestingly from the version now more widely known. In The London Mercury version, apart from the inevitable minor grammatical and stylistic re-arrangements, Yeats cut out much material that was not directly necessary to the narrative leaving a more anecdotal, quicker-paced and more objective-seeming account of the years covered; some of the clutter

attendant upon the inclusion of direct quotation from correspondence is cleared away too. However, balanced against this streamlining of the narrative is the loss of much of Yeats' evaluation of his own craft of play writing, the more philosophically-based passages in which he reflects upon his experience and views, and the loss of the whole framework of thematic reference to a strong, Protestant, Anglo-Irish tradition of culture and politics rooted in the eighteenth century which enriches the complete text and extends it beyond the mere narrative-memoir form. Obviously Yeats wanted to popularize and simplify 'Dramatis Personae' for the more general readership of periodicals in much the same way as he had done with 'The Trembling of the Veil', and the reducing of the text to narrative essentials is carried a stage further in the five extracts published in The New Republic. Here not only is the thematic and stylistic unity sacrificed to isolate and clarify the narrative line, but the whole structure of the book is altered as is indicated by the five sub-titles under which it appeared. The first was 'Lady Gregory and George Moore' where the passages referring to Roxborough proselytism and to the biographical details of Count Florimond de Basterot are removed. The second, 'The Beginnings of the Irish Theatre', omits some of the details of the rehearsals of The Countess Cathleen and The Heather Field. The third 'George Moore and the Irish Leaders', presenting as it does portraits of various personalities makes a massive cut in the text excising sections XII to XIVC (pp. 425-431) of Autobiographies in which the events surrounding the writing of The Bending of the Bough and the second season of plays staged by the Irish Literary Theatre are described. The fourth suggests the main front on which Yeats launched his satirical attack on George Moore since it is

headed 'A Discussion on Style' and pares down the section dealing with Diarmuid and Grania. The fifth and final sub-title, 'The Quarrel with George Moore' heads an extract that not only removes the discussion of the publisher A. H. Bullen and of A.E.'s Deirdre play but also substantially reduces the long quotation from Gods and Fighting Men which functions as an elegy for Lady Gregory, and in so doing it inevitably lessens her significance in the closing passages of 'Dramatis Personae'.

The arrangements of the serialised extracts reveals the strong narrative element which is attributable to Yeats' anxiety to propel the autobiographical enterprise further onwards, having neglected it for some years. After the work on 'Estrangement', 'The Death of Synge', and 'The Bounty of Sweden' between 1925 and 1928 there was a hiatus of nine years before the final composition of this piece. Although in autobiographical terms it follows on from 'The Trembling of the Veil', it was the last of the autobiographical fragments to be written. I use 'fragments' advisedly since in writing to Olivia Shakespear he revealed that he originally planned a comprehensive work dating from 1900 to the date of the letter, 1926:

This work on Oedipus - unless I break off in the middle as I may for change [']s sake - puts off my new Autobiography. I had hoped to bring you chapters not for present publication and hear similar chapters of yours. My new Autobiography - 1900 to 1926 - may be the final test of my intellect, my last great effort, and I keep putting it off. 2

Whether or not apprehension about facing 'the final test' of his intellect was the reason for the lack of completion will never be known. Yeats faced other very challenging tests after 1926 in revising A Vision for general publication, not to mention his flood of later verse and plays in the remaining

twelve years of his life. Perhaps he felt these works were more worthy of his attention or even that they made a good deal of autobiographical comment in themselves. One could conjecture too that the book stops at 1902 because Yeats would have found the subject of Annie Horniman's period at the Abbey Theatre beginning in 1903 too sensitive a matter to write about frankly while she was still living and, also, at a time when the Abbey had become a national institution, it would have been undiplomatic to reveal that its past had seen much argument and rancour behind the scenes. It is always possible, furthermore, that Yeats simply ran out of time in which he could finish the autobiography (a reviewer in the TLS found a suggestion in the text that Yeats intended to write more: 'In a later contribution to his Autobiography Mr. Yeats indicates that he may deal more fully with the author of 'The Brook Kerith') for only a short time was left in which Yeats, becoming increasingly ill, could have written the 'new Autobiography - 1900 to 1926'. Since beginning in 1914, it had taken him over twenty years to cover thirty-seven years of his life (1865 - 1902), to have brought the autobiography up to date after the publication of 'Dramatis Personae' would have meant covering another thirty-five or so years and, though he could not have been aware of the fact, he had only a couple of years left in which to do so. Of course, one cannot realistically measure the autobiographical act in such a quantitative fashion as this, but if one imagines all of his life treated in such a detailed manner as the years 1887 to 1902 were (i.e. the years included in 'The Trembling of the Veil' and 'Dramatis Personae') one not only realises that Autobiographies would be a multi-volumed work but also one sees another reason for 'his inability to finish his autobiography to his satisfaction, and his retreat

into increasingly documentary forms' - that of shortage of time.

But at least a start was made and this can be accurately dated. On 27 February 1934, Yeats wrote to Olivia Shakespear:

I come out of my reveries to write to you. I do nothing all day long but think of the drama I am building up in my Lady Gregory. I have drawn Martyn and his house, Lady Gregory and hers, have brought George Moore upon the scene, finished a long analysis of him, which pictures for the first time this preposterous person. These first chapters are sensations and exciting and will bring George much household money when she sends them out to English and American magazines. I am just beginning on Woburn Buildings, building up the scene there - alas the most significant image of those years must be left out. This first part will probably be made up of extracts of letters to Lady Gregory and my comments. My first fifty pages - probably to be published before the rest - will bring me to about 1900. They being where my old autobiography ends. It is curious how one's life falls into definite sections - in 1897 a new scene was set, new actors appeared. 6

Unfortunately this letter gives no indication as to whether or not he still intended to go as far as 1926 in the 1934 autobiography; the importance of it however is that it gives an accurate scenario for the opening of 'Dramatis Personae' (or 'Lady Gregory' as he called it at this stage), it reinforces the fact that his autobiographical method involved 'revery', and that the single predominant image for the work was rooted in the stage. It points to the lack of reference to 'Diana Vernon', a pseudonym for his correspondent, and it indicates the vigour with which the now elderly Yeats attacked his writing. It can be deduced, however, that at this stage, Yeats had no intention of going up as far as 1926 with this autobiographical excursion because in a letter to MacMillans the publishers written a few days later than the one above, he states the following:

I have written the first fifty pages of the book we talked over about the Irish literary movement. It will be a considerable book and contain a great deal that is new. I deal with the foundation of the Irish

Theatre and with the personalities of our movement.
I have just finished what I think is a very vivid and
surprising account of George Moore. I delayed
starting on this book as I had to collect material,
letters, etc. It will be my principle [sic] work
for next year. It will be ready in the early spring of
next year. 8

There is no mention here of any subject beyond those dealt with
in the eventual 'Dramatis Personae', 1902 seems to be the set
limit for the work and, remembering that Yeats had many years
literary experience behind him, one can safely deduce that he
knew approximately how long it would take him to cover his
subject and was not therefore considering going any further
than that date.

There is a vitriolic energy in some of the prose of
'Dramatis Personae' that is in part traceable to the eventual
appearance of a chance for Yeats, now well established as the
leading Irish man of letters in residence and Nobel Prize
Winner, to square matters with George Moore. He had waited
long for the chance to satirise the man who had mocked him in
Hail and Farewell, having written to Olivia Shakespear as far
back as 1927 that he did 'hate leaving the last word to George
Moore': evidently he had been privately threatening to respond
to the challenge since George Russell had written the following
to him on 27 February 1928:

So poor George was carried to hospital where he lies
a-dying - they say - and now can't we have - not
all the autobiography - but just a little book all
about him by you? 10

Moore did not die until 1933, by early 1934 Yeats had begun his
response to the trilogy, in the same spring he underwent the
allegedly rejuvenatory Steinach operation that perhaps helped
him to find the zest necessary to take on Moore's comic skill:

You asked about my health and I forgot to reply.
That operation has almost made me a young man. I do
not yet know how it has effected ~~my~~ blood-pressure,
but it has given me back my energy. I no longer feel
myself at the end of life putting things in order or

putting them away. 11

But despite the obvious element of score settling in 'Dramatis Personae' Yeats' portrait of Moore reveals a fascination with his buffoonish vitality, particularly with what he sees as near-violent insanity in some of his deeds:

I am still busy writing about George Moore, and in reading him that I may write, I find him amusing and tragic, given over to his incredible violence except when moved by some objective scene. 12

and, remembering the tone of the later poetry and plays, Yeats' attitude towards violent energy in personality is not one of entire disapproving. Indeed, so prevalent is the presence of Moore in this book it would have been a misnomer for it to have carried the originally intended title of 'Lady Gregory'. The alteration of title appears to have taken place very close to the date of first publication: the following extract is from a letter which can not be accurately dated but must be near to 2 March 1935 when the Cuala Dramatis Personae was published:

The proof sheets and type scripts I am correcting for the Cuala edition of Dramatis Personae as I call the coming instalment of autobiography....14

while the following letter to MacMillans is dated 10 October 1935 and so makes it clear that the 'Lady Gregory' title had been dropped by that time:

I shall shortly send you a new prose book called Dramatis Personae and other autobiographical papers, a book that should have a good sale. There will have, I think, to be portraits of Lady Gregory, George Moore etc., portraits of them as they were forty years ago. 15

Both letters I would say are close in dates and lend substance to the idea that, having finished this book, Yeats realised that it had dictated its own shape and content and that Lady Gregory did not figure so extensively as he had imagined she would when he was in the early stages of composition in February 1934, and that it was only when the book was complete

that he knew a title with such an emphasis upon one person was inappropriate and that the plural form of 'Dramatis Personae' was more apt.

It is difficult to write at length about friends, as was the case with Arthur Symonds in 'The Trembling of the Veil' and may be the case with Lady Gregory here. In later years, the Yeats - Gregory theatrical collaboration became, however, more strained than it had been prior to 1902. Yeats' interest in European drama, his greater degree of receptivity to modern dramatic trends and his continued interest in a personal and increasingly non-realistic dramaturgy based upon symbolist principles meant that, no matter how much he was involved in the business of administering the Abbey and defending its major dramatists against public criticism, his real creative sympathies lay elsewhere, away from peasant drama. While Lady Gregory continued to nurture the peasant quality of Abbey plays and to Kiltartanize Molière and Goldoni, Yeats was forced to look elsewhere for a stage for his new plays, a fact which could not have escaped his notice and which may have some bearing on his decision not to keep his original title for this part of the autobiography which deals with the Irish Dramatic Movement. 'Dramatis Personae' does not extend far enough to deal with the matter, perhaps intentionally, and anyway using an autobiography to look for facts in the history of a movement is a business fraught with danger as Una Ellis Fermor warned, in a gentle but unmistakable way, long ago:

It is the leaders themselves that have left the 'source books' of the movement; Lady Gregory, Moore, Yeats. Widely as the books differ - as widely as the winds that produced them - they have one thing in common. They are all, without exception, what one would desire source books to be; autobiographic and immediate. Lady Gregory, in addition records a large number of verifiable facts. 16

The suggestion is that the various writers tend to make unverifiable or exaggerated claims to self importance and if subsequent commentators have also allowed themselves certain biases, the precedent was at least there. Yeats, for example, constantly refers to the beautiful voice of Florence Farr, her elocution and 'her mastery of poetical rhythm' (p.407), he found her performance in The Countess Cathleen as Aleelel unforgettable, yet, although others do mention her, no one else is so enthusiastic in their praise and even her biographer, Josephine Johnson, suggests that the younger Yeats 'no doubt described an idealised and not the actual performance at the Bedford Park Clubhouse' of Todhunter's Sicilian Idyll. And what she says of his attitude to her - 'He was after all, so smitten with Florence Emery's culture ... that he may have been blinded to her real worth as an actress' - seems to have been true of his lifelong view of her. The example is but a small one, but it illustrates the subjective nature of these source-books.

By one of those characteristically curious time-loops in Autobiographies, the subject matter of 'Dramatis Personae' was anticipated by the opening moments of what is now the final section of the book, that is to say the lecture 'The Irish Dramatic Movement. This had been delivered in 1924 to the Swedish Royal Academy as part of the Nobel Prize proceedings. This contains a direct statement of disappointment with the path the theatre followed, a disappointment never categorically stated in 'Dramatis Personae', a book dealing with a more satisfactory period of progress in the theatre:

We were to find ourselves in a quarrel with public opinion that compelled us against our own will and the will of our players to become always more realistic, substituting dialect for verse, common speech for dialect. (p.562)

Yeats delivered the lecture 'without notes' (p.553) and so was

forced to recall from memory the speech when he included it in the Cuala edition of The Bounty of Sweden in 1925. That version now differs from the final one in a number of minor ways and in one major way. Yeats removed 'Note Two' in which he had discussed Edward Martyn, his 'pretentious modern Gothic' house, his shrinking from women, his fear of losing his soul if he were to read books on the Papal Index, Expurgatorius, his vacillating support for the The Countess Cathleen and his 'unhappy, childless, laborious, unfinished state ... typical of an Ireland that is passing away.' This was removed, I suggest, because it is not in the same tone as the rest of the piece and because with the inserting of 'Dramatis Personae' before 'The Bounty of Sweden' it became repetitive and redundant. On the subject of this speech it is worth noting that the printed version bears no mention of Moore at all and gives an unpardonably slight reference to the generosity of Annie Horniman.

Yeats' account of the founding of the Irish Literary Theatre, more detailed here than in the lecture, is well known but requires a little comment. Speaking of Count Florimond de Basterot's residence at Duras and the conversation held there with Lady Gregory on the subject of a national dramatic enterprise, Yeats writes:

In his garden under his friendly eyes, the Irish National Theatre, though not under that name, was born. I may then have used for the first time the comparison which in later years I turned into a proverb. Except during certain summer months, when they roost in the fields, crows at nightfall return to the vast rookeries round Tulira Castle, whirling, counter-whirling, clamorous; excited, as it seems, by the sublime dance. It was the one unforgettable event of my first visit as of other visits there. And I was accustomed to say to Lady Gregory when it seemed that some play of mine must be first performed outside Ireland, or when it seemed, as

it did one or twice, that I myself might find it impossible to live in Ireland: 'The crows of Tulira return to their trees in winter' or 'The crows return at nightfall', meaning that, after my death, my books would be part of Irish literature. (p.398)

These birds, representing both the dramatic movement and Yeats' own relationship with it, suggest the altercations and intrigues of the movement that were always outweighed by the overall Irish success in the drama. Despite temporary losses of direction in the whirling and counter-whirling a settled order is eventually achieved in an organic wholeness. The benefit of hindsight corroborates the truth of Yeats' proverb: the modest beginnings of the Irish National Theatre developed in a protean fashion but maintained a basic coherence because of its origins in a localized and specifically national cause:

A movement develops in darkness and timidity.....
a movement is like an animal, its shape is from the seed. (p.441)

That seed was sown in 1896 with the original discussions, among writers, about the theatre: others chose to disagree with this idea and saw the theatre's origins in the acting companies already at work by that time in Ireland, but, remaining with Yeats for the moment, one notices a wistful tone to the proverb about the crows. By 1934, and well before in fact, he had realised that he had not found and would not find in his lifetime, an Irish audience for his plays. This is the further significance of the proverb, the true audience lay among the indomitable Irishry of the future, not in the present, since, between 1919 and 1929 only one premiere of a new Yeats play took place at the Abbey. He had turned to private houses and smaller theatres (like 'The Peacock' a studio theatre adjacent to The Abbey Theatre) for locations, and to smaller groups, like Lennox Robinson's 'Dublin Drama League', where the Abbey style did not predominate, for

performances of his work. 'Dramatis Personae' while celebrating the founding of a national theatre also pinpoints the split between author and audience as starting at the outset with a hostile reaction from conservative elements to The Countess Cathleen providing another meaning to the saying 'a movement is like an animal, its shape is from the seed'.

Despite its often mandarin attitude, 'Dramatis Personae' does bear Yeats' confession that the misunderstandings between himself and his audience were a two-way affair. He was unable to anticipate the enthusiastic public response to plays on specifically Irish topics such as Martyn's Maeve, or The Bending of the Bough on which he had collaborated with Moore, and while he felt pride at a popular success like Cathleen ni Houlihan he was aware that his unorthodox and complex vision of a national theatre was too far removed from the political orthodoxy ever to be united with it. He even reprints a letter to Lady Gregory in which he saw himself as withdrawing from politics and from demonstratively political literature (p. 448). In re-evaluating his early dramatic work as part of the retrospective analysis of the dramatic movement, he tends to be dismissive: The Countess Cathleen is a 'piece of tapestry', The Pot of Broth 'a little farce' with a confusion of dialects, Where There is Nothing 'a bad play' subsequently banished from the canon - his judgement of others' plays was raw and often altered once he had seen them in performance. He discusses the need his own works had for a greater rationalisation of rhythmical emphasis in order to point up climactic movements and the need for a concrete style to be built around one vivid controlling image. There is a degree of self effacement and a frank confession of mis-judgements to be weighed against the degree of self indulgence in his account of the founding of the

theatre. However, on the minus side remain the failure to do justice to Martyn's financial and artistic contributions to the theatre's early days and the brevity of a cursory compliment paid to William Fay, which when one remembers that Martyn and Moore are characterised as peasants, could be read not as a compliment at all ('He could play dirty tramp, stupid countryman, legendary fool, insist on dirt and imbecility, yet play - paradox of the stage - with indescribable personal distinction'. pp.451-2). These, rather than the reply to Moore's recognisedly distorted view of the early days of the theatre, and the lack of credit given to the acting companies, are the reasons for the other autobiographical versions of the founding and establishing of the Irish National Theatre which challenge Yeats' version.

In James Olney's terms theatrical autobiographies are likely to turn out as examples of the 'autobiography simplex', when the individual daimon of the author is the dominant function and not the individual himself, indeed there can be few more exacting and demanding daimons than the stage. Olney's view is certainly true of W.G. Fay's The Fays of the Abbey Theatre and Maire nic Shiubhlaigh's The Splendid Years, two books which bear marked similarities in discussing the growth of the Irish theatre except for in one noticeable area, the change from amateur to professional status of the Abbey actors. Maire nic Shiubhlaigh elaborates upon the row it caused because, she writes, 'the full story has never been told before', whereas Fay, whose loyalties and interests at the time were divided, passes over the matter very quickly. It is striking that neither actually wrote the works in question: Fay employed Catherine Carswell to prepare his memoirs and Miss nic Shiubhlaigh tells her recollections to Edward Kenny. These are

not works by literary types and neither make a pretence to go further than repeating things as they were in the drama of their day. Fay's title suggests that the brothers' greatest achievement - creating the Abbey Theatre acting style - supercedes their own intrinsic importance as individuals. Maire nic Shiubhlaigh's title also suggests that hers is a partial - not a total autobiography and the fact that neither makes literary claims is important because both criticize what they see as the over-literary activities of members of the movement. An obvious target of theirs is Yeats, though both seem reluctant to name him in this context. Both wish to correct what they feel is an erroneous view that the Abbey evolved through the activities of its dramatists as Moore, Lady Gregory and Yeats implicitly suggest (Fay's book could not have been influenced by 'Dramatis Personae' however) and both wish to put the emphasis upon the actor's and audience's part in its development. Fay in particular wants to reinstate Annie Horniman as a prime-mover, but both he and Maire nic Shiubhlaigh have to qualify any statements about her with evidence of their own unbending patriotism. For example, as soon as Fay begins to mention the Abbey he dissociates it from the Irish Literary Theatre:

The only connexion between the two was the purely personal one that Mr. Yeats was actively associated with both

and underplays Lady Gregory's part in its founding:

Another popular error identifies the name of Lady Gregory with the Abbey Theatre in a manner which she, I am sure would have been the first to disclaim. As an author and director Lady Gregory rendered services of the greatest value, and for technical reasons.....was made the nominal patentee; but the real sage femme of the Abbey Theatre, without whose aid it would have been still born, was Miss Horniman, an Englishwoman who had no concern with Irish literature and politics but only an intense love of the art of the drama. And here now is my great point that can never be sufficiently emphasised

(and he italicizes it)

The Abbey Theatre was first and foremost a theatrical, not a literary movement. It was the creation not of men of letters but of actors. 20

His main hypothesis is that the Abbey's success was provided by its actors who were fortunate enough to find a large audience 'that wanted what we could give them - plays about Ireland written by Irishmen and performed by Irishmen'.²¹ Maire nic Shiubhlaigh argued that Annie Horniman's failure to appreciate the nationalist nature of the Abbey company indirectly brought about the end of the first phase of the National Theatre Society.²² Being a Republican and member of the Irish Citizen Army during the 1913 Dublin Lock-out. Miss nic Shiubhlaigh wanted to stress the populist tradition of the theatre and she regards Inghinnide na hEireann as an important factor in the development of the company. And so there is a general concurrence of views between the two books as to the non-literary origins of the Abbey. Padraic Colum in introducing The Splendid Years praises it for getting down 'memorably to the theatre as theatre' and not as 'literary expression, words and the delivery of words' which makes it quite clear that Yeats was a target for criticism.

To diverge for a brief moment, a word can be said about the other Irish theatrical autobiographies that exist. George Bernard Shaw's Sixteen Self Sketches (1949) though it deals little with the theatre is nevertheless the work of an Irish dramatist, but his humorous disdain for the genre - 'All autobiographies are lies ... I mean deliberate lies' - means that he is happy merely to present a few random sketches and not a finished self-portrait. Lennox Robinson's Curtain Up (1942), though it deals greatly with the Abbey is disappointing as a work of literature, illustrating the danger for autobiography

dealing with the theatre to rely too much on theatre history, too little on literary form. It is Micheal MacLiammoir, in the elegant prose of All for Hecuba (1942) who provides the most remarkable Irish autobiography devoted to the theatre. Instead of the normal trend for an autobiographer, in the act of retrospective assessment of his or her life, to find a pattern, shape or meaning in that past and a possible signpost for the future, MacLiammoir frankly recognises that his purpose and fulfilment lay within the task he set for himself of dedicating his efforts to the theatre, specifically the Irish Theatre, and of perfecting his life and art therein. The scope of the book lies within these self imposed confines but this does not prohibit him from imposing an aesthetically satisfactory pattern upon his memoirs. For instance, he provides a possible cause for the shape of his career in referring to the decision he made to make as much of his life as possible after the tragically wasteful death of a young and close friend: he also pays much attention to literary style, rounding each phrase often with a Yeatsian sonority and, furthermore, he solves the problem of finding a suitable way of concluding his book in using the announcement of the news that the Dublin Gate Theatre, the focus of most of his life's work, must be demolished. ²³ All for Hecuba illustrates how the 'autobiography of the single metaphor' need not necessarily be a lesser example of the autobiographical genre.

Certain aspects in Fay's, Maire nic Shiubhlaigh's and William Carleton's memoirs relate to an important theme in 'Dramatis Personae'. Fay tells of an extraordinary incident at Foynes when The Pot of Broth played to stony silence, the curtain going down to no applause whatsoever. On learning that the audience had never seen a play before, knew little of

theatre convention and probably felt that to laugh would have offended, he went in front of the curtain, told the play's story, re-ran the performance and met with an enthusiastic response. He comments with the sagacity of a man who knew the barracking of Synge's works.

The Gaels never had a theatre of their own and therefore little understanding of the function and values of the stage. They had not the needful sophistication to accept a play and leave it at that ...24

Maire nic Shiubhlaigh's memory of In the Shadow of the Glen involves a similar conclusion:

In those days if an actress played an unpleasant part then it followed that she was an unpleasant person. Similarly, if a dramatist wrote a nasty play he was a nasty fellow. 25

The confusion of dramatic representation with reality is also seen in an incident related by Carleton who mounted a performance of The Battle of Aughrim in which both Catholics and Protestants acted. Approaching the conflict with which the play closes, these actors could not restrain religious resentment and, had the audience not intervened to restrain them, the wounds inflicted on stage could have been more serious than they were. 26

In 'Dramatis Personae' Yeats explains how, when his unnamed collaborator on Where There is Nothing, (Douglas Hyde) provided him with the name of a real tinker for the play, the results were unexpected:

A farmer who had read the United Ireland supplement reproached that tinker for letting his daughter marry a man with no visible means of subsistence and permitting her to solemnize the marriage by jumping over a bucket. The angry parent called God to witness that he had done no such thing, other farmers and tinkers joined what grew into a considerable fight, and all were brought up before the magistrate. (pp.454-5)

He also quotes a letter to Lady Gregory in which he tells of a play by Fr. O'Leary 'about a man who...arranged his own funeral

to escape the bailiff. There was immense local enthusiasm over it, and deep indignation among the descendants of the bailiff' (p.411). The blurring of the lines between fiction and reality occurs in the story of Richard Gregory disguising his young wife as a boy and her subsequent metamorphosis into "Jack the Sailor", from a story of Dibdin's'; there is also the long quotation from The Cat and the Moon (p.402) a play which fictionalizes two real characters as beggars. Indeed, Yeats says that he realised in 1899 that a general confusion of literal and representative truth caused the troubles over the scene in The Countess Cathleen where a Catholic shrine is trampled:

the disturbances were in part my own fault. In using what I considered traditional symbols I forgot that in Ireland they are not symbols but realities. But the attacks in the main, like those upon Synge and O'Casey, came from public ignorance of literary method. (p.416)

These are not merely anecdotes added for amusement's sake, they add up to a major theme in 'Dramatis Personae' in a way in which they do not in Fay's, nic Shiubhlaigh's and Carleton's books since Yeats extends the idea into his portrait of George Moore. Moore is capable of being jealous of a character from his own novel, he lifts a passage from Huysmans' A Rebours and transposes it into his own conversation as one of his own deeds, he has to imitate Zola even to the point of pretending to be almost asphyxiated by gas because Zola had earlier died from charcoal fume poisoning, he steals a story from Dostoievsky, is jealous of his brother's law-suit and so contrives a fiction in order to threaten one against Yeats. The numerous roles which he can play, 'including 'country gentleman', lover and even, when required, a self-abnegatory role, are apt in an autobiography where the main characters are dramatis personae. But others suffered as a result of Moore's

deliberate mixing or unconscious confusing of symbolical and literal truth:

All his friends suffered in some way; good behaviour was no protection, for it was all chance whether the facts he pursued were in actual life, or in some story that amused him. (p.403)

Why does Yeats give so many examples of the Irish failure to distinguish fiction from reality and yet draw so few conclusions? It is possible that, especially with the examples drawn from the theatre, he was preparing the reader for the time when the autobiography would deal with Synge and the 'Playboy' riots, even the row over The Plough and The Stars, and the banality of the criticisms levelled against them (an Irish girl would not spend a night in a house with a single man without a chaperone, the Irish tricolour would never be taken in to a public house, etc.). Although the autobiography never did deal with these subjects extensively the theme is still pertinent. Yeats singles out and pursues this failure of the popular audience to see drama as a method of analysing, not depicting, the Irish way of life to indicate the extent to which his own idea that the theatre should examine and alter the soul of a race was misunderstood or rejected. It amounts to a guarded but definite criticism of the insistence in the Abbey upon a peasant drama which merely reflected one romanticised aspect of Irish life and failed to question it.

The numerous references to the mixing of reality and fiction, of life and art is a means for Yeats to brand both the audience at the Abbey and George Moore and his naturalistic novels as unsophisticated, and this is in keeping with the hauteur of Yeats' pose in 'Dramatis Personae'.

But this is not simply an autobiographical work about the theatre, there is a strong satirical purpose to the book

nowhere more evident than in the portraits of Edward Martyn and George Moore. Vivian Mercier has suggested that Irish literary satire has its origins in verbal magic and has thereby explained the superstitious fear of being satirized which existed in Ireland well into the nineteenth century,²⁷ unfortunately he did not bring his views to bear upon autobiographies or upon, what he called autobiographical romans à clef because, he says, 'they seem to me a spurious form of satire in that their ultimate aim is to inflate their authors rather than to deflate the foolish and evil'.²⁸ Mercier has a point in that it takes a master like George Moore to handle sustained satire without falling into such a trap, but one has to waive such rigid considerations when reading 'Dramatis Personae' or a work like Gogarty's Sackville Street if they are not to become joyless books. In introducing his edition of Hail and Farewell, Richard Cave writes that 'In the tradition of comic satire and burlesque, weaknesses of character are capriciously exaggerated but there is always a basis in fact';²⁹ this would seem a fair criterion for judgement of satirical works and certainly comes closer to identifying the spirit of such work than Mercier does. That said, there does remain an unpleasantness in Yeats' portrait of Martyn as a peasant that never encroaches upon Moore's portrait of his cousin in Hail and Farewell. When one remembers that Yeats was present at Tulira as an invited guest, the jokes about barefoot servants, the poor taste domestic-Gothic and the comments about the fire that destroyed 'whatever old furniture or pictures the family possessed, as though fate had deliberately prepared for an abstract mind that would see nothing in life but its vulgarity and temptation' (p.386), already begin to err on the side of impoliteness. His method of making external attributes and

material possessions manifest the inner state of Martyn's character has a precedent in Moore's picture of Martyn as a Paterian aesthete, John Norton, in his novel A Mere Accident, where Norton's study is described by an extensive cataloguing of the decor, artifacts and books within it. However, because Martyn showed discrimination in his taste for art, Yeats can not characterise him as peasant-like on that score and so he uses a mockingly psychological method saying that his Degas appealed to him because it robbed the dancing-girl subject of 'voluptuous charm' and that his Utamaro, though depicting a beautiful woman had an 'abstract pattern' and did not stir our Western sense' (p.387), both of which are references to Martyn's misogynism. He even pokes fun at a ruddy-faced country girl, introduced by Martyn's mother as a possible wife for her son, because she mistakes an 'incomparable Utamaro' for a Beardsley. Since he is insinuating that Martyn can only appreciate art so long as it does not upset his views and so is limited in his tastes by his strong idiosyncracies, unlike Lady Gregory whose art treasures at Coole symbolise good-breeding and discrimination, it is to be expected that Yeats himself will avoid the pitfall of placing limitations upon the values and role of art since, in his view, Martyn does just that. But in playing the part of the cultured man of taste, and in satirising people for their cultural failings, he adopts an elitist position in which paintings and works of art are seen merely as icons of the possessor's taste and social standing and not as being valuable for their own merit. Moore's own humorous self-abasement in Hail and Farewell precludes this danger and its contrast to the hieratic snobbishness of 'Dramatis Personae' is the explanation for its portrait of Martyn that leaves one with the impression of some form of

affection for its subject. Yeats, on the other hand, gives himself too little room to develop his comedy with the result that he is often blunt and unsophisticated. He ignores or twists facts at his will too, so that Martyn's long family line (Tulira was a Catholic stronghold in the time of Cromwell) is less important than his mother being 'but one generation from the peasant' (p.388) and so that Martyn's failure to produce offspring becomes both a literal form of barrenness and a barrenness of literary output that is itself an emaciated anti-self of its creator's corpulent physique:

He sat down daily to some task...I was certain even then, I think, that though he would find subjects, construct plots, he would never learn to write; his mind was a fleshless skeleton. I used to think that two traditions met and destroyed each other in his blood, creating the sterility of a mule. (p.388)

Taste, breeding and literary prowess, then, are seen as being dependent upon inheritance and not necessarily upon endeavour or the work of individual will, and while it might be interesting that literature is compared to progeny throughout Autobiographies, in this instance the emergence of a eugenic theory of creativity repels. Martyn's Catholicism is also a target for Yeats' satire, he sees it not as pious devotion but as motivated by a sinister fear related to the 'secret torture' of his conscience that his mother's ghost might haunt him for having opposed her wishes (p.426). Yet, in reality, Martyn was a cultured and accomplished man who inspired and financed many of the minor arts of the Irish Renaissance and who constantly kept trying to add a European, modern context to the Dublin dramatic scene. However, his greatest gift, as both Yeats and Moore state, was not in literary or dramatic composition. In fact his literary persecutors argued between themselves over the former's harsh judgement of A Tale of A Town. Moore, characterising Yeats as the Grand Inquisitor Torquemada, turns

the tables upon Yeats by using the poet's own opinions and language to judge him ('He is all intellect ... Opinions make people cruel - literary as well as theological... The intellect outlasts the heart and the heart of Yeats seemed to me to have died ten years ago...'), yet surprisingly Yeats in referring to this passage - 'Later when he described the scene he compared me to Torquemada' (p.427) - does not defend himself against the charge. A reason for this is to be found in the same paragraph when he claims that certain 'bitter sentences' put into the mouth of Deane in The Bending of the Bough were his, and not Moore's work. The key word here is bitter since not only does Yeats explore this quality in 'Dramatis Personae' and in the poetry running concurrent with it, he also finds it a laudable quality to have had in 1900. It makes autobiographical sense that, having referred the need for a satiric dimension in Irish literature (p.206) and to the darker side of one's character, or the 'Vision of Evil' as he calls it (p.310), he is happy to have displayed such qualities himself.

The attack upon George Moore, though direct and full-blooded is not a pernicious one because it is humorous and because it is part of an understanding between Yeats, Moore and even Martyn that they should satirise one another publicly and accept the consequences of the battle. Since Moore was only temporarily resident in Dublin and since his fastidious taste in décor was so well known, Yeats could hardly characterise him through the medium of his home and possessions as he does Martyn and Lady Gregory. Instead, he uses a variety of methods including seeing him as a peasant: 'Lady Gregory once told me what marriage coarsened the Moore blood, but I have forgotten' (p.402) and so makes him, 'the peasant sinner', complement the 'peasant saint', Martyn. This is not the only case of

Moore being paired with someone else (pairing of personalities for purposes of comparison is a common device in Auto-biographies); describing the dinner given by the Daily Express to mark the first Dublin productions of the Irish Literary Theatre, Moore is measured, by Yeats, against J.F. Taylor and is seen to be lacking oratorical skill and style. He is reduced to the level of caricature - 'insinuating, upflowing, circulative, curvicular, pop-eyed', he is 'a man carved out of a turnip, looking out of astonished eyes' (p.405) which is Yeats' way of describing and criticising the portrait of Moore done by his friend Manet. This caricaturing process extends to the anecdotes told about Moore, his ignorance of how to keep his trousers up, his exchanging of a pair of pants for a glass of milk reduce him to the level of a simple country fellow, but the anecdotes also serve an autobiographical point for Yeats who once again uses the portrayal of an associate as a means of making autobiographical comment. For instance, although he writes that he disliked Moore's 'now promiscuous, now sentimental amours', he is equally critical of his own naiveté in such matters at the time, calling himself 'a romantic, when romanticism was in its final extravagance' who thought 'one woman, whether wife, mistress, or incitement to platonic love, enough for a lifetime' (p.431). Moore's unpredictability, his rapid changes of mood, his ability to thrive in the midst of a self-induced controversy showing little respect for bourgeois mores, exercise a fascination over Yeats - 'upon occasion it made him brutal and witty', which are important characteristics of 'Dramatis Personae' itself.

Moore's capacity for playing a number of roles and his gift for self parody which went so far as to invent an alter-ego for himself in Amico Moorini, run close to Yeats' own

concept of playing with all masks but differ from it in two major ways. One is that he lacks restraint: 'violent and coarse of temper, he was bound to follow his pendulum's utmost swing' (p.428) and Yeats finds in Moore's violence evidence of near insanity, and the other is that Moore exercised no control over his choice of roles but was simply led by extremes of character or fashionable trends. This is the major thrust of the critical portrait of George Moore: his works and his character both lack the selectivity and style necessary to genius. In fact, this idea of a lack of style and selectivity in Moore's work and character goes unrecognised by Meredith Cary when he writes that

Yeats' hostile remarks about Moore in 'Dramatis Personae'...are too divergent to constitute a living characterization. Even if the gathered comments were taken as a structured sketch, the total effect adds nothing to the central concepts of 'Dramatis Personae', and any such thematically non-contributing passage would have been cancelled at Moore's conscientious hand. 32

Since this lack of control over the imagination went so far as to cause Moore to mix fact with fiction, both unconsciously and deliberately since Yeats sees Moore as a liar and plagiarist too, the portrait obviously contributes 'thematically' to one of the central concepts of the book as I have shown. When Moore is unwittingly confused between reality and art he is as un-sophisticated as the rowdier elements of the Abbey audiences; when he deliberately dramatizes his own self in a role which he does not suit he may be at fault morally, this was the case with the unnamed scholar:

he attacked with indifference so long as nothing suffered but his victim's dignity of feeling... yet when he thought he might have deprived that scholar of a post he was miserable. (p.404)

Here Yeats' method aims at revealing a shallowness in Moore's character; alternatively, this self advertisement and desire

for constant public modernity illustrates a superficiality and a rootlessness denying him the quiet assurance of the country gentleman Yeats says he emulated. This is a reflection of the lack of tradition that is seen as the major fault of Moore's novels and literary philosophy. Although he admits that his own tastes were narrow and although he appears to praise A Mummer's Wife for being the first novel of social realism in the English language, Yeats also criticizes it for being:

the first novel where every incident was there not because the author thought it beautiful, exciting or amusing, but because certain people who were neither beautiful, exciting, nor amusing must have acted in that way: the root facts of life, as they are known to the greatest number of people, that and nothing else. (p.406)

This attack upon the lack of selection of incidents and upon the failure of the imagination to shape the work is meant, by extension, to apply to naturalism in literature and its popularity with the 'greatest number of people', and though Yeats says he went on to read more of Moore's work, no longer underrating him, and found 'five great novels', the compliment is not all it seems. The latest of the five mentioned is The Lake first published in 1905, all the subsequent work, including the popular The Brook Kerith, is not mentioned, Moore's experiments with prose style upon which he spent much time, revising old novels, writing new ones and moving away from social realism, are simply ignored and negated. One could say, like Yeats, that a discussion of the later novels belongs rightly to a later phase of Autobiographies, but this is countered by the fact that one, A Story-Teller's Holiday, actually a collection of stories, published in 1928, is mentioned by name. It is ridiculed on the grounds of historical inaccuracy, that is to say on grounds of naturalistic inconsistency, a deliberately perverse reading of

Moore's historical style designed to reply to a challenge implicit in the Story-Teller's Holiday as observed by Howarth who says that it was written

to show Yeats that George Moore was the better Irishman, in touch with the soil and folk art, and also the better artist, able to convert folk-art into work of international and permanent interest. 34

And so 'Dramatis Personae's' criticism of Moore is based upon his literary style, his public standing and upon his personality, all of which are presented as being closely bound together, since the lack of control over style manifests a flaw in personal and mental make-up. 'The Trembling of the Veil' testifies to Yeats' struggle off 'the path of the chameleon' and on to the path of 'deliberate effort' (p.375) and so yokes understanding of self to development of literary style: with the force of this behind them, the comments upon Moore's failure to make these connections are obviously designed to be devastatingly belittling:

Hodos Chameliontos had no terrors for Moore; he was more simple, more naive, more one-idea'd than a Bank-holiday schoolboy. (p.437)

One can see that these remarks add up to thematically valid contribution to the central concepts of 'Dramatis Personae'; and though much effort has gone into the studied, grandiose dismissal of Moore there is evidence of an irresistible fascination on Yeats' side with the energy and unconventional aspects of his adversary's character. One incident bears this out: Yeats resigned from the Irish Literary Society over their accepting and then blackballing of Moore. Though their contributions to Irish literature differed greatly in detail, they had a similar net effect he says:

He and I had given the Society what energy it had, keeping it out of the commonplace that was bound

to overtake it in the end. (p.433)

It is significant that Barry O'Brien, Moore's chief critic in the incident, 'could not abide' Parnell and his Island because that work, as with Synge's works, though with much less subtlety, highlighted the intolerance of the Irish for anything which criticized their race. Though they had not the same friends, Yeats and Moore occasionally had the same enemies, and Yeats, in 'Dramatis Personae', is prepared to allow ambiguities and inconsistencies in his portrait of Moore when it comes to defending artist against mob.

It remains to be said that 'Dramatis Personae' in dealing with Moore attempts to eradicate the efficacy of Hail and Farewell by casting doubt upon the motives of Moore's return to Ireland, implying that he was both seeking new material to stimulate a jaded imagination and trying to keep in with fashionable literary trends:

He had exhausted his England in A Mummer's Wife and Esther Waters and had turned to us, seeking his new task with an ungovernable childlike passion. (p.428)

However, Yeats goes beyond simply replying to Hail and Farewell, indeed it is unlikely that he even had it to hand while writing 'Dramatis Personae'. Instead he could top Moore's portrait of himself by waiting until his subject was dead and by then isolating the essentials of his character and dealing with them selectively to present an assessment of the self, not simply of an interim phase or work. Howarth, in discussing AE's severe judgement of Moore in The Avatars, gives one possible reason for Yeats' holding fire until Moore was dead:

The pages are fascinating as further evidence of how Moore made himself hated, and as further evidence of how those who hated him did not dare to publish their hate till he was dead (though this may have been due to a queer compassion for his sensitivity). 36

Fletcher makes a related point:

As Yeats remarked, only the dead are perfect, their lives have the finished quality of a work of art, can be patterned. It always remains possible, as with Yeats himself to produce a disturbing last phase 37

and James Olney says that Yeats' associates become transformed when they appear in Autobiographies as a result of the meeting of the historic facts of their existence and the artist's shaping vision, one sees 'character at its most typical, thus catching a glimpse of the essence that lies behind...the accident'.³⁸ In practical terms this can be seen in the familiar Yeatsian technique of comparing one acquaintance with an appropriate mythological personage to give a universality to the usually particular autobiographical ambience: Moore, for example, is seen, appropriately in a paragraph discussing style, as a Lancelot figure, a literary type for an adulterer and for a failure. The finished quality of Moore's life was matched by the finished quality of Yeats' anecdotes about him:

No man took more pains to perfect a good story. A great deal of ingenuity was devoted to paying back old scores against George Moore, and the final selection of stories arranged against him was exquisitely calculated to make him appear limp and ridiculous. 39

Sybil Bristowe, in an article from T.P.'s Weekly in 1913, quotes Yeats as saying,

Both he [Oscar Wilde] and George Moore seemed to me like Tennyson's Lancelot, who, by sheer vehemence of nature all but saw the Grail...but the full vision was only for the meek Galahad. 40 /

The story, originally intended for Wilde, had been in Yeats' mind since a date preceding 'Reveries'; it had obviously been polished and perfected since the final version concludes with:

I said once: 'You work so hard that, like the Lancelot of Tennyson, you will almost see the Grail'. But now, his finished work before me, I am convinced that he was denied even that almost (p.438)

the final twist, replacing the reference to 'meek Galahad', neatly sums up the ironical tone of 'Dramatis Personae'.

Yeats' presentation of Lady Gregory further reveals the variety and deftness of his methods of portraiture as well as the importance of the biographical study to 'Dramatis Personae'. First and foremost it is a public and formal expression of his gratitude for her good agencies towards him during a period of strain at the close of the last century and a testament to the following years of friendship and literary collaboration in which she was an instrumental figure in the founding of the Theatre. As such, it picks up the threads left deliberately trailing at the end of 'The Stirring of the Bones'. Working systematically in briefly describing Coole demesne, the house's interior and then Lady Gregory herself, he is portraying her in the way in which he says he sees people - 'as a portrait painter, posing them in the mind's eye before such and such a background' (p.83). Most important in this design is the cataloguing of the house's contents which emphasises the formality and neo-classicity of its art treasures, evoking an air of cultured ease and tasteful good-breeding in a pointedly non-naturalistic way: Balzac might have wanted to give twenty pages to the stairs in Lennox
41
Robinson's view, but Yeats is doing for the house what he does for people in Autobiographies, distilling the essence not describing external appearance alone. The contrast with Martyn is obvious, the refinement of the late eighteenth, early nineteenth century aura of Coole outshines the mock-medievalism that Yeats once preferred at Tulira. Indeed, this whole late eighteenth, early nineteenth century period is made to figure as an historical milieu for Coole, with the enthusiastic description of Richard Gregory 'who at the close of the eight-

eenth century was a popular brilliant officer in the Guards' (p.389) and the casting back in time of Lady Gregory's 'seven brothers' as characters from Sir Jonah Barrington's Personal Sketches. That said, it might seem curious that in describing Lady Gregory herself Yeats makes mention of 'her own strange feudal, almost medieval youth' but he is, in fact, removing her from all historical accident, despite what he does for her house, by not associating any one specific period alone since, for him, great personality is acausal, finding its fullest expression outside and regardless of historical conditioning - 'her point of view was founded, not on any narrow modern habit, but upon her sense of great literature' (p.392). More than just a passing slur upon Moore's rootless craving for modernity and immediacy, this method of portraiture cleverly anticipates and disarms the obvious criticism that there were contradictions between Lady Gregory's apparent and professed ultra-nationalism and her position as the wife of a landowner during the Land War waged in the name of nationalism by Irish tenants:

Born in 1852, she had passed her formative years in comparative peace, Fenianism a far-off threat; and her marriage with Sir William Gregory in her twenty-ninth year, visits to Ceylon, India, London, Rome, set her beyond the reach of the bitter struggle between landlord and tenant of the late 'seventies and early 'eighties. She knew Ireland always in its permanent relationships, associations - violence but a brief interruption - never lost her sense of feudal responsibility, not of duty as the word is generally understood, but of burdens laid upon her by her station and her character, a choice constantly renewed in solitude. (p.395)

This attempt to abstract Lady Gregory from the history of her time is an about turn in the politics of a former member of the I.R.B. but it is not without its specific purpose. Having suggested the violence and divisions of the Land War in the 1870's and 1880's were only a brief disturbance in the permanent relationships of rural Ireland, which he sees as an

idealised form of feudalism, Yeats can argue that Lady Gregory's absences abroad put her beyond such ruptures in good relations so that she was not in a position to take sides. The argument stretches credibility and fails to understand the true nature and success of the Land War, yet it manages to serve the purpose of dissociating Lady Gregory from any taint or tinge of the 'Gregory clause' which her husband had put forward in 1846. This had obliged tenants to strip their holdings down to one quarter-acre before being eligible for government famine-ruling, had encouraged much migration and had allowed wealthier dealers to buy land at reduced cost. Such was the clause's unpopularity, it was remembered with bitterness for many years: Sir William defended it in his autobiography by saying 'it pulled up suddenly the country from falling into the open pit of pauperism on the verge of which it stood...those who really understood the condition of the country have always regarded this clause as its salvation.' Rather than defend Sir William's unmitigated claims to political foresight, Yeats chooses to sidestep the matter and to emphasise the self-imposed philanthropic duties of his wife, exonerating her from any attempt to ally her with her husband's contribution to those 'permanent relationships' of landlord and tenant.

While it is true that Lady Gregory is exempted by this portrait-method from any blame that may be attached to her ambiguous position as both landowner and defender of peasant life, it is not true to say that the separating of character from its actual historical background is done solely for this purpose. Yeats' view of political history in the 1930's was one that challenged the simple analysis of Irish politics whereby two camps faced each other in Ireland in the struggle for independence with, on one side, Catholics, peasants and

pro-Republicans and on the other a Protestant landed gentry who had supported the Anglo-Irish Union. Instead he recognised a greater historical complexity which is something of a sine qua non to a full understanding of his attitude in 'Dramatis Personae', and which is more discursively rendered in Wheels and Butterflies where he looks back to the days of Grattan and the brief period of Irish self government as the end of the eighteenth century. This predominantly Protestant tradition, an alternative to an exclusively Catholic-Republican analysis of history, is implicit in the portraits Yeats paints of Comte de Basterot and of Standish O'Grady.

In purely narrative terms, Florimund de Basterot is not of great significance to 'Dramatis Personae' - he merely provides the garden in which Yeats and Lady Gregory first discuss the Irish National Theatre project - but the biographical sketch is thematically important because it indicates Yeats' own fascination with an aristocratic tradition dying out with the rise of popular rationalist thinking dating from the mid-eighteenth century but epitomised for Yeats in the French Revolution. The fact that de Basterot with his string of titles and orders comes from a line that fled the 1798 Revolution and that illustrated high dignity in taking up arms against a debt collector who wished to impound his father's body and prevent its burial until settlement, makes him a suitable embodiment of the aristocratic self assertion that Yeats saw as the antithesis to modern abstract thought and egalitarianism. In Peter Faulkener's view, this interest grew initially from contact with Lady Gregory and Coole and was reinforced by his readings in eighteenth century literature, especially in Swift and Berkeley. Indeed there is a Swiftian element in his distrust and dislike of the power of 'the many'

in the state and though he welcomes the example of de Basterot, he recognises in this elegiac and profoundly disillusioned work that the example is fading away to nothingness:

De Basterot fulfilled a saying I had heard somewhere:
'Things reveal themselves passing away'. We never
saw him again. (p.398)

With that passing away there could be no resumption of the optimum balance in the state between 'the one, the few and the many' because that balance relied upon the aristocrats, 'the few', taking upon themselves duties and responsibilities for no personal reward but out of service to the common weal: liberty of the state 'depended upon a balance within the state...for which Swift was prepared to sacrifice what seems to modern man liberty itself'.⁴⁴ Though Swift was not aristocratic by birth, his intellect and fierce independence of mind made him one of the few and his example illustrates the importance which Yeats attached to Lady Gregory's sense of feudal responsibility towards her tenants in his use of Coole as a microcosm for the state.

Standish James O'Grady (1846-1928) lends himself to a comparison with Lady Gregory, both were providers of the raw material for future generations of Irish writers because of their collecting and disseminating of folk lore and therefore both knew Ireland in its 'permanent relationships'. Furthermore, both were concerned with the need for a distinctly Irish independent national identity though neither chose the course of Republicanism or Fenianism to achieve it. O'Grady was 'a hater of every form of democracy' (p.220) and claimed that England, being democratic, was without fixed principles (p.424), something he stated upon discovering that England had over-taxed Irish landowners who were first used, in his view, as a garrison but then left deserted among enemies by England.

Yeats includes this reference in 'Dramatis Personae' at a time
45
when he himself was pondering the state of Irish government,
and when he felt more and more a member of Protestant Anglo-
Irish tradition than of the Catholic peasant tradition from
which he had formerly drawn material for his writings and out
of which he had modelled his ideal of Ireland. He hints as
much when he says in speaking of Irish folk mythology and
supernatural occurrences that he had discussed it 'only too
much elsewhere' (p.401). O'Grady is a representative member of
the alternative tradition of Irish nationalism and as such was
something of an anachronism in the Ireland of his times; he is
furthermore a mixture of Swiftian indignation in his scourging
of his contemporaries: 'He wrote for his equals, wrote as
Grattan spoke, not for the mob he scorned' (p.420), of Augustan
control and clarity of expression in his speech at the Daily
Express dinner, and of Berkleyian idealism and assertiveness in
his defence of Irish civilization against the democratic
decadence of England. One could criticize Yeats' portrait of
O'Grady as being a false one dictated by the author's own
sympathies at the time of writing and because it calls upon a
tradition at odds with its subject's role as folklorist. But
to do this would be to see an opposition that Yeats simply did
not recognise for he could link Berkeley with a much more
Romantic tradition through the timeless nature of Berkeley's
idealist philosophy:

The romantic movement seems related to the idealist
philosophy; the naturalistic movement, Stendhal's
mirror dawdling down a lane to Locke's mechanical
philosophy. 46

Thus are historical barriers easily overturned leaving
individuals to be seen as quintessentially individual and not
as products of their own immediate historical age:

We should see certain men and women as if at the edge
of a cliff, time broken away at their feet ... [Swift
and Berkeley] stood there free at last from all
prepossessions and touched the extremes of thought 47

Standish O'Grady with his vision of a stable but non-democratic
state rooted in rule of landlord-stock belongs more with the
eighteenth century than with the twentieth but Yeats does not
see this as a fault. Bishop Berkeley contradicts his own
particular zeitgeist (characterised in Yeats' historical
schematics by Descartes, Locke and Newton) with his assertive
idealist philosophy and Lady Gregory maintains and acts upon a
sense of feudalism in an era moving rapidly towards
urbanisation and egalitarianism. One can see that the
rationale for removing these people from - or setting them at
odds with - their historical movement is, in fact, a neo-Platonic
rationale because Yeats implies that there is an ideal or
permanent structure of relations in Ireland that is not
contingent upon the fluctuations of history. Outside
causality or of temporality great individuals may 'touch the
extremes of thought but someone like Moore with his materialist
vision (as Yeats describes him in 'Dramatis Personae') is
trapped in his temporal environment and can only articulate
that which is immediately around him.

This interest in the Irish eighteenth century which
colours the portraits and gives a thematic unity to the
narrative of 'Dramatis Personae' also gives the prose a formal
and public quality which, though apt for certain people, when
one comes to the Lady Gregory passages, is at odds with what
Yeats had intimated in 'The Stirring of the Bones' he might
present:

It is more fitting, however, that in a book of memoirs
I should speak of her personal influence, and especially
as no witness is likely to arise better qualified to
speak (p.381)

Yet this never materialises to the degree one would expect, instead there is more of a study of her public role as a writer and organiser in the literary movement during which Yeats praises her prose works and handling of dialect and dialect translations but is more reserved about her aptitude for dramatic composition. It is a curious omission given that he collaborated so extensively with her in play writing during the years under scrutiny but the praise for her other works is so high that the omission it can be easily overshadowed. Her dialect prose had the 'occasional poignancy of Tudor English' (p.456) and in speaking of her literary powers Yeats states that:

A writer must die every day he lives, be reborn, as it is said in the Burial Service, an incorruptible self, that self opposite of all that he has named 'himself' Lady Gregory, in her life much artifice, in her nature much pride, was born to see the glory of the world in a peasant mirror. (p.457)

This analysis, calling to mind as it does the famous passage in 'Four Years' where the subjective creative temperament and psychology is described as 'an intellectual daily re-creation of all that exterior fate snatches away', illustrates how the most elevated and tested of Yeats' ideas and beliefs about literary creation are brought to bear upon aspects of his companion's work and the degree to which he thought it worthy of praise.

Obviously more could be said about the portrait of Lady Gregory but, essentially, the characterisation is flawed by the discrepancy between this high formal praise and the relative lack of space given to her in 'Dramatis Personae' and in the Autobiographies generally. The problem is that Yeats is seeing her primarily as a writer and public figure, and as a writer no one single major work of hers can be pointed to as being of seminal importance to Irish literature, especially in

dramatic terms as Una Ellis Fermor has pointed out:

She is at her best in prospecting, exploring and discovery, and perhaps because her achievement is, never in any one instance among the highest, her indirect service to the theatre and to later drama is liable to be underestimated. 48

Sadly the same is true of her autobiographical works which do not rank among the highest either, though she is perhaps unfortunate in that Our Irish Theatre is overshadowed by the finer exponents of the autobiographical art, by Moore and Yeats who both write on the subject of the theatre. She began the long process of writing and assembling Seventy Years 1852-1922 as early as 1914, that important year in Irish autobiography, and she doubtlessly consulted Yeats throughout its composition as the text states. There are various points of contact in style and method with Yeats and other Irish autobiographers whom she knew but this can be accounted for as much by the limited number of methods open to an autobiographer as by any possible case of one author influencing another. She opens the work in the third person singular (as does O'Casey in his autobiographical venture begun in 1939) later shifting to the first person, she uses much secondary, documentary material in the text but does not incorporate it into a literary framework with the same inventiveness as Yeats does with 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge'. Quotations from letters figure greatly but like Yeats in 'Dramatis Personae', she does not explore an epistolary technique for any purpose of gaining different perspectives upon an issue, this is no doubt because since both use actual, not imaginary, documents, neither can tailor them to narrative purposes with the licence that an epistolary novelist has. The single greatest fault with Seventy Years is its lack of selection: all events, all anecdotes are included where isolation of one or a few of each would have eased the

rhythm of the prose. This is particularly true of her handling of biographical portraits often given at too great length. Yeats' skill and variety in this area have been discussed as has his ability to use biographical elements for autobiographical purposes as both positive and negative examples in the process of self-assessment.

J.F. Taylor, for instance, appears many times in Auto-biographies; in actuality Yeats pitted his wits and rhetoric against him in order to steel his public image, in autobiographical terms, Taylor acts as a gauge of the degree of success in Yeats' quest for self possession. One can compare this to Christopher Isherwood's device of fabricating 'the test' or 'the war' in his autobiographical novel, Lions and Shadows, as an objective yardstick against which the central character measured his growth in personality and in creative powers. By the time of 'Dramatis Personae', written from a position of securely established public position and fame, Taylor is no longer an indication as to how much of Yeats' quest remains to be done, but as to how great his success in achieving his goal of self possession has been. It is an imaginative, if uneven, use of the biographical sketch that finds no parallel example in Lady Gregory's autobiographical writings.

The main structure of 'Dramatis Personae' is based upon the portraits of Moore, Martyn and Lady Gregory which give way to a chronicle of the first three years of the dramatic venture ending with an elegaic passage about Lady Gregory. While there is no radical experimenting with format there is a new substructure to the prose centred upon certain thematic interests extra to the chronological sequence of events. There is the aristocratic theme and pose and the interest in and

employment of an Irish, conservative tradition of national consciousness which he sees as passing away. Having allied himself to this tradition - and it must be emphasised that this is something he does as autobiographer not as autobiographee, he was still allied with Celtic mysteries and the village folk-lore tradition at the time - it might seem that he is rejecting his earlier interests but one only has to look at works contemporaneous with 'Dramatis Personae' to see this was not so. The supernatural and spiritualistic interests, underplayed in 'Dramatis Personae', are still present in a work like 'The Words upon the Window-pane' where they are pared of specifically Celtic associations and are grafted on to the eighteenth century tradition. There are the fleeting presences of Berkeley and Swift in 'Dramatis Personae' that are so much more than a quaint literary device since their significance grows out of an informed philosophical understanding of Plotinus;

the first philosopher to meet his daimon face to face, for he was the first to establish the timeless individuality or daimon instead of the Platonic idea, to prefer Socrates to his thought. This timeless individuality contains archetypes of all possible existence whether of man or brute, and as it traverses its circles of allotted lives, now one, now another prevails...some other existence of Socrates may take the place of Socrates, yet Socrates can never cease to exist. If we accept this idea strange or beautiful things become credible. 49

Here, in the plainest of terms, is Yeats' explanation of his view of the timeless individuality put to use in portraying Lady Gregory and of his belief that though a great period of Irish history may have passed away with the end of the senatorial Protestant tradition of government, its daimons can still populate the present time.

By the time he came to write 'Dramatis Personae' Yeats was obviously satisfied that his magical and mystical beliefs,

such as his lunar-phasing metaphor for history and personality, had been sufficiently aired elsewhere not to have to be reiterated as part of the new autobiography. But it could be argued that in portraying himself in the role of business man and theatre director he is guilty of neglecting the mystical reasoning which lay behind the whole Irish theatre project and that had been built up through the closing stages of the 'The Trembling of the Veil'. Perhaps Lady Gregory provides an explanation for this lack of a mystical dimension to the theatre project in the 'Dramatis Personae' account when she quotes Yeats as saying 'one could never make a real portrait of oneself'.⁵⁰ Throughout Autobiographies he offers a number of partly-complete self-portraits allowing a degree of interplay between them all and, instead of seeing autobiography as a form limited by the boundaries of strict fact and verisimilitude, he contravenes such rules in order to make autobiographical statements. In portraying others he makes liberal use of the satirical anecdote, the essence of which is not scrupulous attention to fact but a succinct and plausible evocation of the characteristics of one's adversary in response to a situation which leaves him ridiculed by his own actions. Many of the stories Yeats tells of Moore may be apocryphal but that does not stop him charging Moore with distortion of the facts since the important thing is to get in as many blows as possible rather than to present a consistent moral stance. Yeats deems it eligible to twist any breach of the rules of the game by an adversary to his own advantage while breaking them himself: the very title of the work implies that fact and events are dramatised for effect, a fitting symbol for an autobiography that aims at artistic coherence rather than literal truth. Yeats extends autobiography ('that which seems to depend on

actual and potentially verifiable events in a less ambiguous way than fiction does') through the devices of mythologizing and universalizing its subjects, and of patterning personal and public histories in the interests of form, and he continually plays with a mixture of factual and fictive events to illustrate the potential of the imaginative and creative faculties. This may have resulted from his theory of 'masks' or conversely may have helped him to formulate his understanding of the concept of life as a legitimate playing with all masks. (The word 'persona' is derived from the Latin term for a mask assumed by actors). In the terms of Auto-biographies, a single component book will not give a picture of Yeats as he was known to friends or associates, it may even present a deliberate distortion, as is the case with 'Dramatis Personae' where he ignores his developing interest in magic which ran parallel to the early years with the Literary Theatre, but the sum total of all the books, given that Auto-biographies may not have been completed to the extent which Yeats would have liked, is one that gives a clearer picture and a sense of greater potential than slavish obedience to an homogeneous autobiographical style would have done.

Paul de Man, writing about the autobiographical form, points out that it can easily slide into neighbouring genres such as the fictional autobiography, diary, chronicle, memoirs even into epitaph and prosopopeia; in fact at one stage in his article he suggests that autobiography may belong to a simpler form of fiction:

It seems to belong to a simpler mode of referentiality, of representation, and of diegesis. It may contain lots of phantasms and dreams, but these deviations from reality remain rooted in a single subject whose identity is defined by the uncontested readability of his [the author's] proper name. 52

A reader of Yeats would be immediately struck by the fact that

phantasms and dreams are not deviations in his works but present the very core of his self appraisal. His autobiographical method when seen in terms of the above is perversely brilliant. One can see autobiography as being furthest from its true nature and purpose the closer it approximates to fiction (i.e. deviates from reality) but one can see too, especially in 'Dramatis Personae' that autobiography can result from a fictional approach to reality. One may be tempted, in lieu of the absent working definition of autobiography to seek for an image of autobiography: for instance one could say that autobiography is a system of mirrors employed in self portraiture, reflecting partial images of the subject-creator but always accountable to the portraitist in the midst of them all. De Man sees autobiography as being rooted in the very process of image-making, its real interest being

that it demonstrates in a striking way the impossibility of closure and of totalisation...of all textual systems made up of tropological situations

he goes on to mention Legnère who made the distinction between the author of the autobiography and the author in the autobiography and says that:

The study of autobiography is caught in this double motion, the necessity to escape the tropology of the subject and the equally inevitable reinscription of this necessity within a specular mode of cognition. 53

Yeats exploits this twisting, turning, evanescent nature of autobiography by investigating how fact and fiction can intermingle and inter-penetrate one another yet still produce a work referential to one single subject, the development of a creative worker's craft.

CHAPTER V

YEATS' AUTOBIOGRAPHIES : 'ESTRANGEMENT'

and 'THE DEATH OF SYNGE'

The publishing history of these two books is a straightforward one: 'Estrangement' first appeared in book form as Estrangement; Being some Fifty Thoughts from a diary kept by W.B. Yeats in the Year Nineteen Hundred and Nine; this was published by the Cuala Press in August 1926.¹ 'The Death of Synge' was first published as a book, again by the Cuala Press, using for the first time its new press-mark, executed by Elizabeth Yeats, of a tree, in May 1928 under the title The Death of Synge and other passages from an old diary.² In May 1936, flanked by 'Dramatis Personae' and 'The Bounty of Sweden', both works appeared in Dramatis Personae, which, in its turn, was later joined to the preceding autobiographical books to form Autobiographies. A study of all of the various published texts yields little reward; apart from some reshuffling of entries and some corrections of minor errors, the entries in the Journal tally with the corresponding passages in all published versions down to the most recent one.

The Journal itself was written in a bound manuscript book, possibly a gift from Maud Gonne since it was similar to one she gave him in Paris in 1908, and this fact prompts Curtis Bradford to suggest it may have been kept as 'a record of his thoughts when separated from Maud Gonne'.³ But Bradford also cites Journal entry forty-four where Yeats says he is writing 'for a friend', arguing that this is 'one piece of evidence that the friend may have been Florence Farr'.⁴ There is undoubtedly some truth in both suggestions; the evidence for the

Maud Gonne theory is certainly too significant to be dismissed by saying it 'gives Maud Gonne too much spiritual weight' as Joseph Ronsley does,⁵ for her presence in The Green Helmet and Other Poems, published in 1910, is undeniably one of the most important factors in that collection. Florence Farr, with her mystical interests, would be a plausible recipient of a book describing many meditative moments and astrological references, but whether the Journal was intended for either, neither or both women, the fact remains that, even if Yeats had originally set out to keep it for one person's benefit alone, he could conceivably have changed his mind - and the purpose of the book - as the Journal grew in size. Certainly the nature of it alters as it progresses: Yeats fails to keep one note from leading on to another as he had first wished, and eventually it is put to fairly extensive use as a manuscript book for his poems. By 20 March 1909 it seems unlikely that he intended the book for Maud Gonne since he puts down: 'Maud Gonne writes that she is learning Gaelic...', which becomes "F_____ is learning Gaelic..." in 'The Death of Syme' (p.504), while in entry 140 of the Journal he also writes of Florence Farr in the third person: 'A Visionary woman once said to me...' which becomes 'Florence Farr once said to me...', suggesting that she was no longer the proposed recipient. In the absence of conclusive evidence it can only be said that the book had either become intensely private in function or else he had decided that it might be suitable for future publication for a larger audience than one single friend.

In discussing these two works one is always faced with the complication that they belong to two places in time, being written mainly in 1909 but edited and published in a new context in the late 1920's. At the earlier date, Yeats, in his

mid-forties, was preparing the poems of The Green Helmet, had written, since 1903, six plays, although two, The Shadowy Waters and The Player Queen, were to undergo drastic revision before reaching a form acceptable to their author. He was continuing his active interest in magic having resumed his studies with The Order of the Golden Dawn in 1906, and he had had something of a reconciliation with Maud Gonne in France in late 1908. In early 1909 he was in sole charge of the now professional company at the Abbey Theatre for a while, seeming to resent the time these duties demanded, and in a letter of 9 March 1909 to Florence Farr there is some indication that nervous strain gave way to a breakdown of sorts. This should not be taken too seriously, there is no reference to it in the (admittedly de-personalized) Journal, furthermore it does not seem to have affected his day-to-day life in any significant way. His association with the popular George Russell had dwindled away, not to be renewed until 1913 when AE wrote a conciliatory letter thanking Yeats for a speech supporting the strikers in the Dublin Lock Out. Even then it was only an inhibited and hesitant renewal of a friendship that always remained brittle. The result of the rift was that much of Yeats' time in Dublin when not at the Abbey was spent at the United Arts Club being, to a certain degree, estranged from the large section of Dublin Literary Life that met weekly at AE's Rathgar home, drawn by the great popularity of the editor of The Irish Homestead and by his sympathetic help to new and young writers. The Journal contains a record of Yeats' disappointment with the new breed of Irish writers and with the course that Abbey drama had taken. Clarke and Ferrar quote Frank O'Connor's view that 'the Playboy's fate struck at the heart of Yeats' dream of an Irish theatre [.] It left a hidden

but unhealed wound of futility'. When Synge's death in 1909 is added to this disappointment and to the impenetrable conservatism of the audience and of his fellow Abbey director, Lady Gregory, one can see that Yeats, in 1926-8, looking back upon his Journal, saw the period it initially covered as a watershed in his involvement with the theatre. Although he continued to defend both publicly and artistically the theatre he had done so much to create and consolidate, that theatre was producing the work of dramatists like W.F. Casey and George Fitzmaurice, work which he records as disliking in Journal entry sixty-five ('Estrangement' XXXVI) tactfully omitting to publish their names. Gradually but unrelentingly the Abbey was moving away from his original idea of an Irish National Theatre and, in looking back over the Journal, Yeats could have seen his drafting-in of Lennox Robinson as the first acknowledgement to himself that he needed a potential ally in the battle to broaden and improve the quality of the Abbey repertoire.

With this growing awareness of isolation from the public and from certain of his allies, Yeats appears to have looked inwards to his own thoughts, a process that is one of consolidation and one of reassurance that his convictions hold true at a time of crisis. In this, he and a writer like Virginia Woolf are alike, in fact so fruitful is a comparison of these two writers' diaries that a number of references to her diary will be made in this chapter. Both articulate their estrangement from the public, though in Virginia Woolf's case the separation sometimes arises out of physical loathing of the masses and is always more extreme, being symptomatic of her general neurotically sensitive condition: 'What a queer fate it is - always to be the spectator of the public, never part of

it'. Both commit the transience of their thoughts and musings to the permanence of paper, in Yeats this is the first major example of a non-fictional autobiographical undertaking: neither seeks immediately to shape the raw matter into coherent form, Yeats deliberately striving against the tendency for a while, Virginia Woolf allowing her diary to grow believing that its true shape, form and value will signify when she looks back upon it at a time in the future:

Moreover there looms ahead of one the shadow of some kind of form which a diary might attain to. I might in the course of time learn what it is that one can make of this loose drifting material of life...I should like to come back, after a year or two, & find that the collection had sorted itself & refined itself & coalesced, as such deposits mysteriously do, into a mould, transparent enough to reflect the light of our life, & yet steady, tranquil composed with the aloofness of a work of art. The main requisite, I think on re-reading my old volumes, is not to play the part of censor, but to write as the mood comes or of anything whatever; since I was curious to find how I went for things put in haphazard, & found the significance to lie where I never saw it at the time. 10

In reading Virginia Woolf's diary it quickly becomes clear that it not only acquires its own identity - she was amused 'to find how its grown a person, with almost a face of its own' ¹¹ - but that she was also able to make considerable conscious and scrupulous use of it in her later fiction. And so the keeping of a diary serves a function for her not only at the time of its writing but also it continues to radiate throughout her other works as she continues to write it. The same complex relations of the diary to the rest of an author's written corpus exist in Yeats' case where the complexity is compounded by the inclusion of the diary within Autobiographies. But, surprisingly, the Journal, 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' have not figured greatly in critical studies of Autobiographies, even in a full length study like Joseph Ronsley's where they are dismissed

peremptorily and, I would suggest, erroneously. Ronsley is keen to maintain his interpretation of Autobiographies as an expression of Yeats' quest for the unities of being and of culture and so he emphasises Yeats' arrangement of his life 'into patterns of experience informed by philosophy and moving towards a preconceived goal'.¹² So, for example, he sees in 'Estrangement',

Yeats' sense of being alienated from popular Irish attitudes, from the factiousness and ignorance that he believed stood in the way of unity of culture during those years, and [he] discovers by a difference method and in difference circumstances what he had already discovered in "The Tragic Generation" - the potential destructiveness for the artist of conventional values and of popular movements. 13

It is more than likely that Yeats saw his Journal as a linking piece in the autobiographical jigsaw that could connect 'The Trembling of the Veil' to the essay on the visit to Stockholm, and so was able to pattern his experience and push his work on to a preconceived goal. One can also see what Ronsley means when he says that the 1909 Journal shows what Yeats had already discovered in 'The Tragic Generation' (written in 1922) despite the confusion of chronology, but one cannot fail to see also that Ronsley's analysis of 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' is essentially a reductive one paying no attention to the hesitations, vacillations and struggles of the intellect exhibited in the Journal. Nor does he take into account Yeats' radical experimenting with an autobiographical style (by grace of their inclusion in Autobiographies these works become autobiography, not just autobiographicality) and finally, in concentrating upon 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' solely as a stage in the march towards unity of being he fails to comment upon their important bearing on the different phases of the writing of the autobiography. For, although the Journal

was begun and written mainly in 1909 it did remain in irregular, infrequent service as late as 1930 when all but one of the autobiographical books were written. These elements deserve attention.

In discussing 'Dramatis Personae' above, it was observed that Yeats may not have continued that work beyond 1902 because of difficulties involved in writing about troubled periods at the Abbey Theatre. With the definite linking of 'Estrangement' to the autobiography in the publication of Dramatis Personae in 1936, a gap of some seven years was made evident. The reason for this may well have been one of tact, but it is equally true to say that Yeats' autobiographical method is a sporadically intensive one, rather than an exhaustively continuous one. His aim was neither to present an 'authoritative history' of the dramatic movement as Ronsley claims,¹⁴ nor to present an unbroken thread of memoir. Indeed, he appears to have recognised his inability to be succinct in retrospectives; rather he was happy to leave lacunae in his account of his life and to concentrate intensively instead upon certain important and significant events and periods. This is the characteristic feature of the closing books of Autobiographies. 'Estrangement' deals with a short period: January to March 1909, 'The Death of Synge' focuses for the main part on the remainder of March and on April 1909 (Yeats even chooses not to add the year to the dates of the final five sections giving the impression that they all belong to a similar period, when in fact they extend as far as October 1914), and 'The Bounty of Sweden' deals solely with his trip to that country in late December 1923. The obvious importance of this period in 1909 is that Yeats' awareness of the likely failure of his vision of a national theatre and his growing detachment from Irish

literary trends conspire to coincide with the death of Synge, the Abbey's one truly great dramatist, to thrust him to a nadir in his struggle to remain optimistic about a unity of culture in Ireland. But before turning to the content of these two books, more needs to be said in summary about the strategic importance of the Journal from which they originate and about the functions it served for its author.

As Autobiographies now stands, 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge', when taken together, occupy the penultimate position, but Bradford, studying Autobiographies in a bibliographical context re-organises the various books by date of writing and places these two first in order of composition, quite rightly transposing 'The Bounty of Sweden' and 'Dramatis Personae' too. There is some room for a debate discussing whether or not Yeats' emendations of the Journal for publication sufficiently alter their nature to justify positioning them before 'Dramatis Personae'. But since he does not re-write so much as select, the logical outcome of such a debate would be to agree with Bradford. Thus it can be seen that the Journal is the first work with a truly autobiographical impulse behind it and is possibly the force behind the whole venture. Such an argument is reinforced when one considers that the final section of 'The Death of Synge':

A good writer should be so simple that he has no faults, only sins (p.527),

was originally written in the Journal in October 1914, at a time when Yeats was well into the composition of 'Reveries'. There are even two entries for 1917 showing that the book that was to be 'my life' (p.461) was still in use at the very time when his autobiographical impulse was at its greatest. Of particular interest in this context is the Journal entry 245 (Memoirs pp.269-71) which is a study of George Moore and, less

so, Edward Martyn, written in terms that fore-echo 'Dramatis Personae':

I have been told that the crudity common to all the Moores came from the mother's family, Mayo squireens, probably half-peasants in education and occupation, for his father was a man of education and power and old descent. His mother's blood seems to have affected him and his brother as the peasant strain has affected Edward Martyn. There has been a union of incompatibles and consequent sterility.

The passage is clearly dated 'January 1914', the month in which he began to write 'Reveries', proving the strong links between Moore and Autobiographies, but also reaffirming that it was Ave, possibly Salve, but not the then unpublished Vale that Yeats ultimately wanted to answer.

The Journal continued to be important to Yeats for many years. There is evidence that he was looking in it for some purpose, possibly with an eye to including it in Autobiographies even before he had finished writing 'The Bounty of Sweden'. For in that work he tells of an incident in which he realises that he has been talking, at too great length, about his psychic research to a beautiful, stately woman at the Nobel Prize celebrations. With grace, he pretends to falter 'as though I could think of nothing more to say, that she may pass upon her smiling road' (p.452). This clearly echoes 'Estrangement' XXVI:

Life confesses to the Priest and honours him, but
we confess to Life and tell it all we would do if
we were young, beautiful and rich, and Life answers,
'I could never have thought of all that for myself,
I have so little time'. And it is our praise that
it goes upon its way with shining eyes forgetting
us. (p.475)

From 1925 to 1928 he was once again much occupied with the autobiographical project, the Journal figuring significantly in his plans. In November 1925 he ordered two copies of Reveries
16
from MacMillans and it is possible that one of these copies at

least was for his private use, since his normal practice when sending his books to associates was to request that the appropriate work was sent to its recipient and that the cost be charged to his account. This order comes between the publishing of 'The Bounty of Sweden' in July 1925 and the first publishing of 'Estrangement' ten months later. Two months later still, Autobiographies appeared; it seems likely that Yeats was looking back to 'Reveries' in order to get a comprehensive picture of the whole autobiography to that date.

This diary functioned as something of a pressure valve through which Yeats could release his strong feelings about 'the day's war with every knave and dolt'. One look at 'Estrangement' XKL where 'the lower middle classes' are described as an emasculated force - 'They contemplate all creative power as the eunuchs contemplate Don Juan as he passes through Hell on his white horse' - or 'The Death of Synge' XIV, where he criticises well-to-do Ireland for ignoring the work of Synge, is enough to see this is the case. It functioned too as a companion in a period of estrangement. Unable to find the open public forum for intellectual debate called for in 'Ireland After Parnell', Yeats creates his own arena in the Journal where he can 'speak his whole mind gaily... where fantasy can play before matured into conviction; where life can shine and ring and lack utility' (p.231). But the notes in the Journal were not just to be natural, they were to be useful too. Where Yeats toys with ideas and images, Virginia Woolf, being a writer in the prose medium rather than poet, actually uses her diary to perfect her writing skills:

It strikes me that in this book I practise writing;
do my scales, yes & work at certain effects ...

... the diary writing has greatly helped my style,
loosened the ligatures. 17

Although it is not so marked and not so evident, Yeats also uses his Journal as a workshop for the sharpening of his literary techniques. His prose style in the book is of sufficiently high quality to acquit itself well in an independent published form with the minimum of revision. It also signifies an important stage in the development of his later, more economical prose style; and, as mentioned, it also served at times as a manuscript book in which he would work out satisfactory versions of some of his poems.

Looking at 'Estrangement' proper now, and not at the Journal in general, the immediate problem is the lack of large-scale structure confronting any commentator. Examination and analysis of a few selected passages can solve the problem to a degree, especially if some crucial and some representative entries are chosen. In this case entry 1 is particularly suitable since it says a lot about Yeats' original aims in having sporadic recourse to a diary. Although it now opens the selection of sixty-five entries taken from the first ninety-five of the Journal, dating from 14 January to 12 March 1909, it is in fact the fifth entry in the Journal. It is self evident why it was upgraded to this introductory role:

To keep these notes natural and useful to me I must keep one note from leading on to another, that I may not surrender myself to literature. Every note must come as a casual thought, then it will be my life. Neither Christ nor Buddha nor Socrates wrote a book, for to do that is to exchange life for a logical process. (p. 461)

This provides the reason and the justification for the Journal, and despite its brevity, provides much that is relevant to a subsequent reading of the work. Firstly, in the journey from private journal to public autobiography there has been a re-arranging and sharpening of phraseology that does not alter

meaning in any significant way; such a revision typifies the nature of those made throughout 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' in general. Secondly, the passage contains three major ideas: that Yeats wanted the notes to be natural, to be useful and not to be literary in any pejorative sense of the word. It illustrates how the first attempt at self-portraiture (whether intended for publication or not) aimed to embody his life through a random articulation of casual, unconnected thoughts, while the major autobiographical thrust, beginning with 'Reveries', presented a stylised version of the self in a carefully patterned, larger, historical and even mythologised context. This attempt to allow the non-literary, the non-artistic to manifest itself without any intervening method of control or shaping is soon abandoned, which was inevitable since, from the outset, Yeats is within the literary and artistic pale, using as he does the literary medium and method. Notes soon run together, often only separated by the typographical lay-out of the book; reducing literary style to its sparsest components can not shake off the ineluctably literary nature of writing. Again a comparison with The Diary of Virginia Woolf is illuminating: Yeats is striving to create a set of crystallized meditations, aphorisms and sententiae, something essentially mineral-like, hard and durable. Virginia Woolf, although aiming for this permanence - 'I feel time racing like a film at the Cinema. I try to stop it. I prod it with my pen. I try to pin it down'¹⁸ - uses appropriately vegetative imagery to describe her book as 'a rather dishevelled, rambling plant, running a yard of green stalk for every flower'¹⁹. She recognises, albeit with frustration, the impossibility for a diary to transcend entirely daily life and its trivia - 'What happens is, as

usual, that I'm going to write about the soul, & life breaks in' - and recognises too that if such a book as Yeats desires did exist, it would be the greatest book in the world:

This is what the book would be that was made entirely solely & with the integrity of one's thoughts. Suppose one could catch them before they became "works of art"? Catch them hot and sudden as they rise in the mind ... Of course one cannot; for the process of language is slow and deluding. One must stop to find a word; then, there is the form of the sentence, soliciting one to fill it. 21

Yeats, in not wanting to 'surrender' himself to literature, puts one in mind of examples of his apprehension about accepting completed systems of thought as described in 'Reveries' and 'The Trembling of the Veil'. However, the case is overstated here; the idea that to write a book is to exchange life for a logical process does not have universal reference. But one must see these and allied comments as an expression of personal requirements and fears at a time of potential crisis in creativity, or else a gross oversimplification of equating literature and logic is effected. Here one sees a major drawback of an aphoristic diary or autobiographical technique: Yeats, in a bold and frank pursuit of first principles through a process of trial and error, statement and retraction, will often sound pompous, even ludicrous, especially since he eventually lays bare the daily workings of his intellect as it covers their full extent, from the simply anecdotal to the deeply philosophical.

By section III the major paradoxes of the Journal become more visible. Although Bradford says that 'Yeats removed most of his accidence from the Journal begun in 1908 when he edited parts of its for publication', it is equally true to say that he did not eliminate his belief in accidence as a counter-measure to abstract or logical systems of thought: 'the fool'

he writes 'is as likely as the sage to speak the appropriate answer to any statement' (p. 461). If truth is full of hesitation and doubt then the hesitant, stop-start form of the Journal is ideally suited to the subject matter - the search for truth. But just as the green stalk is essential to the flowers in Virginia Woolf's diary, so is the emergence of common themes and connecting images between the several sections of Yeats' Journal unavoidable. And so, for example, one has an investigation of the qualities of charm, breeding, style and spontaneity running through sections one to five. Struggling against the inevitable inter-connectedness of any man's thoughts over a short period of time is Yeats' search for definition through a pithy, aphoristic style of writing, a style that often relies upon a negative impulse to spur it into reaction against the ideas of others. This dialectical method of progression of thought can deny the possibility of more complex and more just considerations at times. In the Journal, his predisposition to judge the group around George Russell as representative of the new Dublin he dislikes forces him to retract a too hastily made judgement upon a Padraic Colum play (see Memoirs entry 23 and footnote) while entry six which reads thus in the Journal:

I have been talking to one of the group around George Russell, typical of the new class which is rising in Ireland: often not ill-bred in manner and therefore the more manifestly with the ill-breeding of the mind.

(Memoirs, p.139)

has to be changed to read like this in 'Estrangement' III:

I have been talking to a man typical of a class common elsewhere but new in Ireland: often not ill-bredetcetera (pp. 461-2)

Apart from the obvious differences between the two passages above one can also see a definite tightening in the expression of the idea that is characteristic of numerous similar, small

adjustments made to the original text. But these improvements are not the only alterations made to the Journal since there are also structural changes made. Section X is a synthesis of modified versions of entries twenty and twenty-one from the Journal, and Section XXV, for example, the longest in 'Estrangement', compounds three entries. The principles governing such alterations are partly in the interests of thematic unity, partly to vary pace and rhythm for the readership gained in publication. However, with other sections like XIII to XVIII the case is different. These are slightly altered versions of entries twenty-five to thirty, six entries made on one day, 25 January 1909; here the divisions are not made according to a diurnal pattern but correspond to the principle set out in the beginning of 'Estrangement', being part of the deliberately anti-formalist strain and desire to reproduce spontaneity and accident.

As a result of trying to enact the natural workings of all the meditative faculties there is a great heterogeneity in the quality of the various Journal entries. In one section, say XX, Yeats may enjoy an example of intellectual vacuity in one of AE's disciples, Miss A--- E---, (in fact, Ella Young) in relating that she praises a picture gallery, not for its pictures, but for its 'muffed glass' (p. 469). Yet alongside such lightweight passages can be a highly intricate observation of a mystical-philosophical nature, such as XVII which uses terminology suitable to vast, global-historical proportions to express the idea that the growth of a play in a playwright's mind parallels the growth of Christianity out of the philosophy of Asia. This mixture of gossipy anecdote, sometimes of a malicious nature, and sublimity of thought is a feature of Virginia Woolf's diary too. Since one would rarely associate

humour with Yeats' Journal it is worth considering section XII in detail to see the satire underlying the comment that 'like an artist described by Balzac, AE's followers 'long for popularity that they may believe in themselves' (p. 466). Denis Donoghue identifies the artist in question as Dubourdieu from Les Comediens sans le Savoir who is told by another character, Bixiou, that

'In fifty years time you will be for the world at large what you are for us now - a great man. It is only a question of holding out till then. 23

Turning to the description that Dubourdieu offers of his sculptural representation of Harmony (rather than to Yeats' description of it in Explorations) one can see that not just the 'enormous Savoy cabbage', recalling AE's involvement with the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, is part of the satire, but also a number of the other features are too, in fact AE's whole philosophy seems to have been anticipated. The figure of Harmony has her feet resting

upon two clasped hands, which enclose the globe between them, to signify the brotherhood of man; beneath her lie broken fragments of cannon, because all war is abolished, and I have tried to give her the serenity of Agriculture triumphant. At her feet, besides, I have put an enormous Savoy cabbage, the master's symbol of Concord. 24

A comparative study of the Journal and the published extracts from it illustrates how impossible it is to make valid generalised statements about the nature of the textual emendations. One might expect that passages dealing with complex ideas would undergo the greatest revision, but this is simply not the case, nor is it true that shorter, simpler passages receive little alteration; reductive or formulaic comments upon the differences between the two versions are simply not tenable. 'Estrangement' XXII, for example, is a very complex proposition and major statement of Yeats' belief

that the assumption of the mask of a second, public self is a rigorous discipline corresponding to the demands of theatrical sense in an actor, and is exemplified by certain illustrious ancients and by some moderns who have tried to live by 'classical ideas'. One might expect to find the passage had been refined, the phrasing sharpened, but in the journey from manuscript to print, no alteration of consequence is made at all.

In terms of style, the prose work most closely related to 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' is 'Discoveries', yet there are other, and stronger links between the Journal and 'The Cutting of an Agate' from which 'Discoveries' comes. By late January 1909 Yeats was using the Journal to full advantage and with great felicity of expression; section XXIV is another example of a published passage that changed only negligibly from its original form, suggesting that Yeats was satisfied with it in 1909 and in 1926. A more immediate use was found for it however; in March 1909, he wrote to Florence Farr and told her of the 'large MS book in which I write stray notes on all kinds of things [.] These will make up into essays', and this is precisely what happened to entry thirty-six (XXIV) which became a preliminary major source for 'The Tragic Theatre', also in The Cutting of an Agate.

This essay has been examined by many critics, especially critics of the drama, so here only a few brief points about prose style will be made through comparing a passage from 'Estrangement' and a corresponding passage from the published essay:

Tragedy is passion alone, and rejecting character, it gets form from motives, from the wandering of passion; while comedy is the clash of character. Eliminate character from comedy and you get farce. Farce is bound together by incident alone. In practice most

works are mixed: Shakespeare being tragi-comic.
(pp. 470-71)

In the essay, still echoing Pater's prose style, the above is seen from an historical angle:

Yet when we go back a few centuries and enter the great periods of drama, character grows less and sometimes disappears, and there is much lyric feeling, and at times a lyric measure will be wrought into the dialogue, a flowing measure that had well befitted music, or that more lumbering one of the sonnet. Suddenly it strikes us that character is continually present in comedy alone, and that there is much tragedy, that of Corneille, that of Racine, that of Greece and Rome, where its place is taken by passions and motives... In writers of tragi-comedy (and Shakespeare is always a writer of tragi-comedy) there is indeed character, but we notice that it is in the moments of comedy that character is defined..... 26

Considering that the two passages are almost synchronous, it is remarkable how different the prose styles are. However, the earlier of the two, while more incisive and business-like, could not carry the added weight of the impressionist-type criticism of the second. Nor would it be suited to the addition of the extra factors of an historical perspective and the inclusion of the idea of the lyric form in tragedy. The clipped, tersely assertive sentences of the Journal are ideal for clarity of expression but necessitate some degree of simplification to work well, certain passages like section XXXIII where too much is going on become hard to digest. For a full discussion of ideas the Journal style could not replace the essay form, it lacks the necessary bridging devices. Furthermore, if the process were reversed and the more verbose essays were rendered into the aphoristic medium, the greater length and inescapable fragmentation of phrasing would become tedious. It is the divided and broken structure of 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' that allows one to assimilate gradually the density of the matter: the gaps between entries are like margins on a page, resting places that

fulfil the same function as do the more relaxed phrases in the essay, like 'Yet when we go back...' 'Suddenly it strikes us...' do. It is, however, unlikely that the longer prose works, including A Vision could ever have achieved the clarity they have without the over-hauling of prose style which Yeats executed in the Journal and 'Discoveries'. Indeed a new significance for the Journal in relation to Autobiographies is registered when one considers that it may have facilitated the writing of 'Reveries' five years later.

Apart from introducing the narrative that in the next book will tell of Synge's last days, his death and funeral, the remainder of 'Estrangement' deals with a large number of other subjects that, on account of the expository prose style, require no paraphrasing. However, on the same account, they are so detailed and diverse that it is impossible to summarise them briefly. One could not reasonably hope to discuss all the implications of two autobiographical books so dense in meditative content as 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' are. Among the many subjects discussed by Yeats is a sporadic but nevertheless full examination of the ideal relationship between an artist and society, which involves an extended comparison of 'the long established life of the well born and the artist's life'. (pp. 73-4). Behind this comparison lies a network of images so complex in its connection of Lady Gregory and Coole Park with Castiglione's Book of the Courtier and Yeats' view of Renaissance Italy, that Corinna Salvadori has devoted a book to the issue. ²⁷ Also constantly appearing and re-appearing is an interest in religion, and the idea of Incarnation, usually arising out of discussions with Edward Evans, 'E---' of the published text, a member of the Arts Club whose Bible classes Yeats attended. Obviously many of Yeats'

views on the dramatic movement are also to be found here, as are his views on art and art history; indeed, a great deal of the 1913 essay, 'Art and Ideas', exists in rough-hewn form in the Journal. Perhaps the only comprehensive way to comment upon these two books will be found in the forthcoming definitive critical edition of Yeats' works.

'The Death of Synge' comprises forty-one extracts taken from the 155 entries made in the Journal between 12 March 1909 and October 1914. The greatest number of these extracts were originally recorded in the mid months of 1909; by 1910 Yeats was making fewer and less frequent observations, though the evidence is that the Journal played some part in the composition of the poetry and prose for some time after that date. Its first public appearance in June 1928 came between The Tower and The Winding Stair and consequently 'The Death of Synge' must be seen, in an historical sense, as a record of an earlier, more unstable period in the career of a poet who had since become, by virtue of his position as a Nobel Prize Winner, a more established - indeed a great - poet. Again, as with 'Estrangement', 'The Death of Synge' is a rich and complex book, so much so as to preclude exhaustive commentary upon it, but two major areas deserve attention. The first involves Yeats' study of the workings of personality, the second involves J.M. Synge, Yeats' response to him and to his death, and his manner of portraying him in the book.

R.A. Fothergill has shown how not only are there a number of different types of literary diary but also how the diary 'is continually slipping away on all sides into its many kindred forms'. Yeats' Journal at times appears like a writer's notebook, acting as a store of ideas that would make up into

essays, poems and plays; it has even been suggested that it is the prolegomenon to a projected conventional autobiographical piece or that it is a journal intime.²⁹ Fothergill, in discussing modern literary diaries sees them as emerging from this very source: the journal intime, prevalent in nineteenth century France, in which occurs 'the serious exploration of the life of the psyche'.³⁰ However, this Journal does not fit into this category because, while it does explore the life of the psyche, it does not have a specifically intime flavour. Its central concern is not to lay bare the condition of an individual psyche, nor is it a confessional book, instead it constantly strives to universalize its findings, establishing general truths out of individual experience.

Ronsley quite rightly points out that the opening sentence of section V is evidence that Yeats found the writing of the journal 'primarily therapeutic'.³¹ Yeats states as much himself in the Journal:

I dare say that these notes, if some chance eye light on them, may seem morbid; but they help me to understand myself, and I remember hearing a man of science once argue that all progress is at the outset 'pathological'. I know that I have already made moral gains.

(Memoirs, p. 190)

And while it is clear that the second version of this entry is more economically expressed,

These notes are morbid, but I heard a man of science say that all progress is at the outset pathological, and I write for my own good. (p. 502)

the need to defend his notes against the charge of morbidity still remains. The argument that one turns briefly to the morbid in order to triumph over it is exploited by Yeats in his appreciation of Synge:

Some early poems have a morbid melancholy, and he himself spoke of early work he had destroyed as morbid, for as yet the craftsmanship was not fine enough to bring the artist's joy which is one of substance with that of sanctity... All minds that have a wisdom come of reality seem morbid to those that are accustomed to writers who

Here one sees a dismissal of the morbid (or intime?) as an acceptable element in literature and a clever re-admission of it as an inevitable part of the development of the writer who has tragic intensity. His own experience, gained and comprehended through the act of recording a diary, is transposed onto his views of Synge. In fact the opening section to 'The Death of Synge', with its juxtaposing of the private sympathetic qualities and the dispassionate public qualities, could act as a motif for the whole book:

Why does the struggle to come at truth take away our pity, and the struggle to overcome our passions restore it again? (p. 499)

For here Yeats sees that the pathological progress from morbidity to health and joy may involve the loss of the delicate, refined or sensitive qualities in the same way that the search for truth may mean the loss of pity. Intellect and sentiment do not make a comfortable partnership. At the same time, he implies that pity is self-restorative, does not obey will but has a will of its own, re-appearing when least expected, that is, during the struggle to overcome the passions. Essentially Yeats is still exploring the part accident and arbitrary unpredictability play in the personality, as he had done in the opening pages of 'Estrangement'.

To sketch in briefly the remainder of the argument of section V: - Yeats says that pain inflicted upon the self by others passes away, personal blunders which hurt vanity do not. Vanity is so closely associated with spiritual identity that such blunders remain painfully embedded in the memory, more so than serious sin, or pain inflicted by the self upon others. Presumably this is so because personal blunders resulting in hurts to the pride belong more to the province of involuntary

memory than does serious sin which can be buried in changing events and in time. Obviously such playing with ideas as one sees here represents a clearing of the ground for the creation of the poems 'Remorse for Intemperate Speech', 'Stream and Sun at Glendalough', 'A Dialogue of Self and Soul' and 'Vacillation', where he extends the ideas further relating the discovery that casting out of remorse may lead to ecstatic experiences. As such, the notes in the Journal are important documents telling us once more that, often, many of the ideas expressed in the poetry of later years were first explored in prose from years earlier, and suggesting to us that the Journal, begun in 1908, used sporadically for twenty more years and revised for publication around a time of great creativity, is a work that figures in the birth of many other, more recognisedly great works.

But these ideas have a bearing upon a study of Autobiographies too. Yeats, in saying that the past, especially one's own embarrassing mistakes in the past, can affect the present and future, is expounding a basic premise of autobiography in that, in autobiography, the past is deliberately summoned, often in order to elucidate a present state of being. Here the emphasis is upon painful, unavoidable, involuntary memory, in the later poetry the starting up of emotion from the depths of personality is more positive and productive. Also, he says that the autonomy of memory proves that 'we are never a unity, a personality to ourselves. Small acts of years ago are so painful in the memory that often we start at the presence a little below "the threshold of consciousness" of a thought that remains unknown' (p.503). This means that the self is at least partly fragmented, memory can disobey will. The lack of unity and consistency in the self is clearly exemplified by the form and

content of the Journal, a book that aims to embody the day-to-day selfhood of its subject. And so the inconsistencies of the Journal do not represent stylistic failure, on the contrary they reflect the vacillations in the self while keeping a unity by always being referential to the outer confines of the authorial self. Figuratively speaking, these inconsistencies of meaning are like synapses across which aspects of the self may flit, run and jump in safety, not voids and chasms into which they fall to perish. 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' with their disrupted structures, mirror in miniature the whole of Autobiographies with its concentration on different times of Yeats' life, different aspects of his character and interests, and different autobiographical prose styles. They assert individuality and the dynamic of personality by plotting its ability to change and, on a diurnal scale, they invoke (~~teleologically~~) the (~~infinite~~) capacity for change. The pattern for both books emerges through the pressure of daily experience and cogitation and is always open to the possibility of taking a new direction so long as external impulses exist. These books could be described as the present tense state amidst what one usually associates with autobiography, the past tenses.

Yeats' view of Synge's development as a writer, it has been remarked, resembles his view of the progress of his own Journal, being a journey from morbidity into wisdom. In Synge's case, Yeats equates the foreign or European influences on Synge's early work with the morbid and sees the release of his true genius coming only after his visit to the Aran Isles when those influences were abandoned. Interesting though this view of Synge's development is, what is of more immediate interest is that, as with many others of his contemporaries in Autobiographies, Yeats eschews an approach based on biographical accuracy in the interests of creating a type or

image. The note he wants to strike in his published references to Synge's death is one of his subject's placid stoicism and acceptance, redolent perhaps of the understatement Synge witnessed among Aran Islandmen facing death daily on the Atlantic:

Synge is dead. In the early morning he said to the nurse, 'It is no use fighting death any longer' and turned over and died. (p. 507)

The incident is not heightened, nor is any expression of pity or mourning made. A mood of heroic nobility is allowed to speak for itself facilitating Yeats' final public view of Synge as an imperious artist, outcast by a philistine society, who refuses to stoop to self-defence, heroically embracing the death which was a release from the squabbling of fools. But the Journal in its raw and more accurate state belies this image; consequently, to create an image of Synge as a man unsullied by minor faults, evidence of his human weakness and moments of uncertainty had to be eliminated. Journal entry 121, for example, which reproduces the invective blast of 'To a Sister of an Enemy of the Author's, who disapproved of The Playboy', also tells of Synge's mirth at the story of the woman receiving syphilis from her husband after the poem was written. Being inappropriate to an image of Synge transcending pettiness this story disappears in 1928. Entry 124, a detached appraisal of his character which suggests that he had little control over his will - 'the external self, the mask, the persona was a shadow: character was all' (Memoirs, p. 204), and that his mother's death hastened his own is also inappropriate because it is both too open to misinterpretation and it weakens the case that his death was hastened by public hostility. Entry 160 is omitted because it would clash with XVI on the grounds that Synge's comments to the MacKennas recorded therein were in fact made to Mrs. MacKenna alone and on the occasion of his

visit to hospital in April 1908, not on his final stay in hospital a year later. It also tells that a few hours before he died he was in fact looking forward to life, planning to take lodgings, which may have aroused Molly Allgood's glimmer of late optimism. The Journal also bears much evidence of the argument between Yeats and George Roberts, the manager of Maunsel and Company, whose insistence, contrary to Yeats' wishes, that the study 'In the Congested Districts', should be included in Volume IV of the collected edition of Synge's works, led to Yeats withdrawing his introduction. Significantly, Yeats felt that this inclusion blemished the high quality of Synge's prose and he wanted only a perfect image to be left to posterity.

The true extent to which Yeats alters his views on Synge for publication both here and elsewhere can easily be recorded by comparing them with the biography of Synge by Greene and Stephens.³³ This contradicts Yeats' romanticized view of Synge's days in Europe, it points out, too, that Synge on the subject of Ireland was not so apolitical as Yeats would have him, it corrects the date of their meeting and tells of Synge's petulance, jealousy and hypochondria displayed in the relationship with Molly. In general it bears the sort of relationship to the Synge portrait in Autobiographies that one would expect an objective biography to do.

The two passages in 'The Death of Synge' headed 'Celebrations' and 'Detractions' represent prose elegy pared down to its barest minimum until it becomes a numbered inventory of its subject's qualities. Synge's character is seen in terms of Yeats' heroic ideals of the personality that dies and is re-born daily and that can maintain a comic gaiety in the face of imminent death. In fact life and this world are scorned as lesser realities:

We are parched by time...
He had no need of our sympathies. It was as
though we and the things about us died from
him and not he from us. (p. 511)

Even the detractions are qualified by various forms of praise: the 'egotism of a man of genius....,' 'he never said any of those self confident things I am enraged into saying..', 'one did not think of him as an egotist. He was too sympathetic in the ordinary affairs of life and too simple'. The addition of a tail-piece to section XVIII in which Yeats intimates that he envied Synge his absorption, a quality that is supposedly a detraction, indicates the extent to which Yeats idealised or mythologized Synge. Perhaps by the time of writing he saw the Journal as a potentially publishable work and consequently was offering an image of Synge that would rebuke the public that had shunned him; perhaps Yeats was creating for himself an image of Parnell-type prepossession and aloofness as a paradigm in the personal quest for such qualities. The motive is difficult to define but since the 'Celebrations' and 'Detractions' passages do not vary significantly from their prototypes one can not say with any certainty that Synge is mythologized to the extent that certain people are in 'The Trembling of the Veil'. The effect in both books may be similar but one can not fit the portrayal of Synge unconditionally into the strategy of Autobiographies because there is no evidence that the technique of mythologizing acquaintances had been conceived or planned at the time of Synge's death. Certainly it is easy to overlook the fact that Yeats was personally upset at the event, the angry outburst at the grave-side hypocrisy of some of the mourners at Synge's funeral confirms that he was, as does AE's comment in a letter to John Quinn when he writes, 'I think Yeats feels Synge's death very much. He was much more Yeats' friend than mine...'.
34

This difficulty of ascribing motive to the author is a

central one in the study of autobiography. Some autobiographers will write prefatory material in order to dictate the terms upon which all that follows is to be read. Since there is no recognised, working definition of the genre and since it might appear that an author knows most about his or her subject, that subject being him or her self, it would appear that such a demand from the author is justified. This is not the case. Once an author publicizes the private, he or she relinquishes the right to be sole judge; for instance, how can an author know how he appears to others? Self-knowledge is always imperfect, as must be any attempt to articulate self-knowledge. One could equally argue, however, that in the absence of a theory of autobiography one must be sensibly practical and start by accepting that, in the majority of cases, since an author is attempting to be sincere, his or her autobiography must always be referential to authorial personality or experience. The problem then is that many autobiographies, especially popular autobiographical works, achieve this referentiality in a very indirect manner. Take for instance, in the field of Irish autobiography, the examples of Ernie O'Malley's On Another Man's Wound, or the autobiographical works by Brendan Behan, where the authors are defined by, or claim their interest through, outstanding events in which they have participated. Were these works turned into third person narratives and tailored accordingly, they could easily serve as creditable fiction on account of narrative content. I would suggest that part of the fascination in reading such an autobiography is the knowledge that the extraordinary adventures related actually happened to a person living in the same world as the reader, perhaps one could even say that the reader realises the potential for him or herself, to experience similar events. Most definitely the reader

obtains an insight into a human psyche at a critical or spectacular juncture in its existence. Because the most memorable parts of, say, O'Malley's autobiography are due more to the chemistry of individual plus extraordinary event and not simply to the, still fascinating, inner self of the author alone, one is grateful for verification and ratification of these events having happened to an actual person, the author outside the text. Perhaps this is why an entry on O'Malley in a dictionary of Irish biography gives such ratifying but, in terms of his literary skills, unimportant details as 'after an hour's fighting he had been hit by twenty one bullets, sixteen of which were later removed'. Or why Rae Jeffs gives a biographical note to an edition of Confessions of An Irish Rebel when one would expect a biographical note to be a superfluity in a work that centres on the author's life. These, and related, works are complemented or made total by the extraordinary environment or set of circumstances in which the protagonist has moved (though this does not exclude their literary merit) and the experience of reading them is often enhanced by the knowledge that these events and circumstances were momentous for many others and not just for the author. As much is true of the majority of memoirs written by politicians or soldiers; the significance of their contents rests upon the historical background.

Yeats, in 'The Death of Synge', makes the event of Synge's death appear central by using it as a title, but little is told of the event leading up to the death itself or of the effect that it had upon Yeats in any personal or emotional sense. One is perhaps disconcerted by the lack of narrative shaping and by the lack of any sense of personal relations between the two men. Neither 'Estrangement' nor 'The Death of Synge' typify the sort of autobiography that relies upon

spectacular event for the centre of interest; they even seem to deny wilfully such a reading. The sense one gets from reading them is unsettlingly fragmentary, even within the framework of Autobiographies, a framework denied to their first readers, and this paradoxically is where their attraction lies. It is their open-endedness, the apparent lack of a guiding, shaping hand belonging to an omniscient narrator that can fascinate the modern reader. For in reading them one is witnessing a mode of thought, and seeing a process, rather than an end result. The powers of change, development and accommodation are incorporated into the autobiographical act, an act which traditionally carries a mood of finality, of having done, and of having been, rather than of becoming. It is, however, not so different a sensation from that which one experiences in seeing the infinite resourcefulness of the human personality to adapt to extraordinary events (as O'Malley did): 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' are ultimately about surviving crises of the spirit.

CHAPTER VI

YEATS' AUTOBIOGRAPHIES : THE BOUNTY OF SWEDEN

'The Bounty of Sweden', as is the case with the rest of Autobiographies, has been extensively researched and discussed by critics, yet, despite this, very little emphasis has been placed upon its nature as an occasional work or upon its historical context. It could be argued that, for critics like Ronsley and O'Hara such an approach would distract attention away from the autobiographical function of the text, but it must be remembered that with the end of 'Dramatis Personae' the perfected manner of retrospective account ceases. 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' present a method of self-examination conducted in a vitrified style of present tense, so to speak, and in 'The Bounty of Sweden' the proximity of the events narrated to the date of composition is so close that at times the events are recorded in actual present tense form, as though in a diary. Thus the historical context of the events described by Yeats is also the context of the events surrounding him as he writes, and this needs to be taken into account when studying the work. Furthermore, these 'Stockholm Impressions', as he calls them, are 'to be a sort of bread and butter letter to Sweden, and at last, a part of my ¹ autobiography', and are therefore a highly unusual form for an autobiographical work to take; this, too, is a subject that deserves some attention.

But if 'The Bounty of Sweden' is unusual on account of its being both an autobiographical work and a specifically occasional literary work, it is made even more so by the fact

that it is the final book of the autobiography, so much so, that one might even wish to call its status as the conclusion into question. Neither Yeats' letter to Lady Gregory about the work as 'a part of my autobiography', nor his letter to Olivia² Shakespear in which he speaks of planning to take the work up as far as 1926 suggests that, at the time of writing 'The Bounty of Sweden', he saw it as the endpiece. Unfortunately he neither directly refutes nor negates that possibility and one is left with the probability that in supervising and approving the final edition of Autobiographies shortly before his death, Yeats appreciated that some sort of inner unity and cohesion did exist and that he left the project at that. He had published 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' and 'Dramatis Personae' in order to build a bridge between 'The Trembling of the Veil' and 'The Bounty of Sweden' but this does not prove that he wrote it with a view to making it the final episode because he could have made such a decision after its completion. Judging by the internal evidence of Autobiographies, it is unwise to force 'The Bounty of Sweden' into acting entirely and solely as a final tying-up of themes introduced throughout the rest of the book because Yeats does not overtly come to a point of rest at fixed ideas; he is still exploring and even challenging the aesthetic and political views proposed in the preceding autobiographical components, as will be seen. Also the lack of any direct autobiographical comments at the end of the piece, and the uncertainty displayed by publishers over how the whole of Autobiographies³ should end, lends weight and persuasion to the view that 'The Bounty of Sweden' is not entirely satisfying as the conclusion to the undertaking.

However, there are satisfyingly summary and concluding

elements in 'The Bounty of Sweden' and in the events that inspired it; for example, it rounds off that major theme in Autobiographies that deals with Yeats' development as a poet, a theme mainly embodied in 'Reveries' and 'The Trembling of the Veil'. His individual Nobel prize was awarded for 'his always inspired poetry, which in a highly artistic form gives expression to the whole spirit of a nation', and was an international endorsement of his position as leading Irish man of letters - ample recognition for a man who once went astray on the Path of the Chameleon. This, no doubt, provided much personal satisfaction yet he chose to see it as a tribute not just to his poetry but also to his dramatic work and to other people who helped make both types of work possible. This is the tenor of his lecture on the Dramatic Movement; it is also clear from the conclusion to his formal speech of acceptance that others must take some credit in his success:

And now you have conferred upon me this great honour. Thirty years ago a number of Irish writers met together in societies and began a remorseless criticism of the literature of their country. It was their dream that by freeing it from provincialism they might win for it European recognition. I owe much to those men, still more to those who joined our movement a few years later, and when I return to Ireland these men and women, now growing old like myself, will see in this great honour a fulfilment of that dream. I in my heart know how little I might have deserved it if they had never existed. 5

This highly courteous tribute to those other men and women is not simply altruism, it also recognises that the Nobel Foundation is as much interested in politics as it is in cultural matters and that it may have been offering recognition and encouragement to the newly founded and newly peaceful Irish Free State. This may also explain why the award for literature did not go, as many had expected it would, to the ageing Thomas Hardy. Seen in this light, Yeats' decision to accept the award on behalf of the Irish Dramatic Movement and his emphasis

throughout 'The Bounty of Sweden' upon his dramatic achievement, make the work a fitting conclusion to that second part of Autobiographies that discusses the growth of the dramatic movement and its part in creating a new national consciousness.

A further unusual quality of 'The Bounty of Sweden' is that it was written very swiftly in comparison with other of Yeats' substantial prose works; in a preface to the Cuala edition he writes:

Every winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature is invited to deliver a lecture before the Royal Swedish Academy and to send a copy to be printed in the proceedings of that body. I spoke at my own choice about our Theatre, and a couple of months ago dictated to a friend as many of my words as I could remember - having failed pen in hand and sitting at a table to overcome my indolence (9) - and added there to certain explanatory notes. But immediately upon my return from Stockholm I had written the meditation 'The Bounty of Sweden' which pleases me better because it has a newer theme; and now I have put both into this little book, adding nothing new but a couple of notes.

This preface, dated 15 June 1924, and the letter to Lady Gregory of 13 January 1924 suggest that the main body of the work was complete before at least April, that is 'a couple of months' before the date of the preface. It is even possible that this is over-cautious dating since Yeats says twice that it was written immediately upon his return, being underway in mid-January. The freshness of the description of the images and of the impressions of the visit suggest too that they must have been recently experienced, and the fact that the manuscript is remarkably clean by Yeats' usual standards suggests that the tone, carefully balanced between altruism and self satisfaction, and the gentle humour of much of it, was struck with some ease.

Apart from the prose style of 'The Bounty of Sweden'

being more markedly relaxed than anywhere else in Autobiographies, the work also stands apart because it approximates a travelogue, a form of autobiographicality more common in the early age of maritime exploration (and a form subsequently satirised by Swift in Gulliver's Travels). The interest in such a work was originally as a source of new information and not as an exploration of selfhood and, likewise, Yeats' stated intention is to absorb the shock of new material encountered on voyage. However, he also puts it to use in a re-appraisal of his previously held views and convictions since, as an artist 'setting out to find knowledge, like some pilgrim to the Holy Land' (p. 470), he maintains a constantly vibrant response and readjustment of the self to the infinite variety of existence. He also presents this travel book in the traditional form of a diary, the most suitable means of recording a sequence of new impressions, recalling Mathers' exhortation on Yeats' first visit to Paris to 'write your impressions at once, for you will never see Paris clearly again'. He is correct when he calls the work only a 'kind of diary' because, strictly speaking, it can not be a diary having been written on his return and not during the visit. Of course, the extensively used present tense form is a literary device but it does evoke the sense of immediacy that one also finds in, for example, section XX of 'The Tragic Generation' where memories of Paris are conjured up in a disjointed style. Yeats' expectations, he says, in recalling his Stockholm impressions are that they 'must get whatever value they have from excitement, from the presence before the eyes of what is strange, mobile and disconnected' (p. 531) but it is a little ingenuous for such an experienced writer to suggest that his powers of control and organisation will be at the mercy of his

subject matter.

As it is, much of the information he brings back from Sweden, many of these 'mobile' and 'disconnected' impressions are strategically and specifically directed towards his contemporaries and his compatriots - one must remember that while it is a 'bread-and-butter' letter of thanks to his hosts, it is actually written in English for circulation among an English and Irish, and not a Swedish reading public. And in the comparisons of an idealised Sweden with Ireland it must be remembered too that, having played the role of courtier in Stockholm, Yeats continues to do so with a little flattery in the formal address of thanks, exaggerating the triumphs of Swedish culture and ignoring any shortcomings. (He could, for instance, have referred to the considerable industrial unrest in the country at the time or to the American-style prohibition that was being forced on to an unwilling Swedish people) but he prefers to idealise for effect, even making something of an admission of the fact at one point: 'But preference after so brief a visit may be capricious, having some accidental origin' (p.552)).

The contrast between the two nations is most sharply drawn in section eight when the peacefully established Swedish state, based on a system of mixed democratic Government with a monarch as nominal head of state, is seen against the internecine warring and factionalism of Ireland before its recent truce:

When the Crown Prince and Princess leave the railway station for the Palace, the salvos of artillery begin. After every salvo there are echoes, and I feel a quickening of the pulse, an instinctive alarm. I remember firing in Dublin last winter, the sudden noise that drew like echoes from the streets. I have to remind myself that these cannon are fired out of gaiety and goodwill. There are great crowds, and I get the impression of a family surrounded by loyalty and affection. (p.543)

Here the prose is sufficiently heightened to make the Sweden-Ireland parallel stand out; but again and again in less direct ways Yeats makes his discussion of Swedish education, art, politics, history and architecture reflect upon his own country, upon Europe and even upon Soviet Russia, as this chapter will discuss.

Yeats sets out for Sweden with next to no knowledge or no prior experience of Northern Europe and Scandinavia and so he is seen to learn as he goes along. At dinner on board the Harwich-Esbjerg steamer, conversing with a Danish exporter of agricultural machinery, he is seen to play the part of diplomatic envoy for his country (he had assumed his seat in the Senate in January 1923). He is spared a discussion of the civil war, and, when asked why the Irish have little self-reliance he deftly turns the question back upon his interrogator: 'Were the Danes always self-reliant?'. The reply: 'Not till the Bishop established his Schools', allows Yeats to express to his readership, through the ideas of Bishop Grundtvig, his own ideas upon education within the State structure, plus his belief in, and previous attempts, to establish an independence for Ireland through intellectual and cultural, not just political means:

I know something of Bishop Grundtvig and his Schools, for I often hear A.E. or some other at Plunkett House tell how he educated Denmark, by making examinations almost nothing and the personality of the teacher almost everything, and rousing the imagination with Danish literature and history. 'What our peasants need', he had said, 'is not technical training but mental'. (p.535)

Already his introduction to matters Scandinavian allows him to see both parallels and contrasts between his own country and Scandinavia; this is no new thing since he had drawn comparisons between the Irish dramatic movement and that which had been previously established in Norway; now, he sees

possible similarities between Grundtvig's Folk Schools and the work of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society as part of the national revival and stirring of the nation's imagination. Furthermore, the Bishop is a prototype for the real hero of 'The Bounty of Sweden', Prince Eugene of Stockholm, who is not a career politician but instead a man of culture. The significance of this is that Yeats, the artist, has been chosen by the Nobel Foundation as a representative of the new Irish State; the outside world appears to have recognised that the intellectual thrust towards nationalism in Ireland was as important as the political thrust, even if the Irish themselves had sometimes refrained from admitting the fact. The sheer existence, then, of 'The Bounty of Sweden' is evidence of the vindication of Yeats' claims for the cultural aspects of Irish nationalism and the celebration of cultural reformers like Grundtvig and Prince Eugene underlines it.

Education is, once again, the theme at the press conference at Esbjerg prior to his journey by train to Copenhagen and then by train and ferry north-east to Stockholm. And again he is very much the silent observer learning about his new surrounding, avoiding loaded questions about Irish independence and once again turning the tables by asking 'many questions' of the journalists. He learns about, but omits to comment upon, the present Danish education system which, according to one interviewer, allows preservation of the social hierarchy but makes education available to the lower levels in that order; according to another it educates those who should never have been taught to read, softening the Danish intellect into sentimentalism. The fact that Yeats does not comment upon the following suggestion that the Danish monarchy has become bourgeois and sporting appears to be as courteous as his

refusal to speak on the issue of education is, but this very reticence makes a sharp contrast to his enthusiasm later for the 'educated and intelligent' Swedish Royal Family. His doubts about the Danish High School system make themselves felt when he muses silently on the suggestion that Denmark may one day have a Socialist government:

I begin to wonder what Denmark will make of that mechanical eighteenth-century dream; we know what half-medieval Russia has made of it. (p.537)

If the path from the Folk Schools (in Sweden closely connected with the Trade Union movement) leads to High Schools and then on to Socialism, Yeats politely, discreetly but firmly disapproves, dismissing Socialism as outmoded, mechanical and abstract and as having had an unspecified detrimental effect on semi-feudal Russia. Perhaps he is recalling the bloodshed at the end of the Czarist regime, or fears the recent creation of the United Soviet of Socialist Republics, ratified in January 1924 and involving Soviet Russia's domination of White Russia, the Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the Transcaucasian Federation. Perhaps he detects the early stage of the patient build up of power which Stalin had begun in mid 1922 and which he was using against Trotsky in January 1924, the month of Lenin's death. More likely than this however, he is voicing a general objection to Denmark's move into the modern epoch, the epoch he saw as the legacy of Newton, Descartes and Locke, since in section VIII he attributes to the architecture of Copenhagen all the characteristics of a modern age that abandons social hierarchies:

Copenhagen is an anarchy of commercial streets with fine buildings here and there, but here [Stockholm] all seems premeditated and arranged. (p.543)

Anarchy for Yeats is simply a modernist attribute regardless of political allegiance, and 'The Bounty of Sweden'

is to echo with Yeats' anti-democratic sentiments and with his own socio-political views based on an archaic form of benevolent monarchism. This is embodied in Prince Eugene, 'friend and patron of Swedish artists' who spent two years working daily with the builders and craftsmen as the Stockholm City Hall was being constructed, and who chose to stand with them at the opening ceremony. He also saw to it that 'every artist was given freedom to create as he would' (p. 537), he himself painting the decorative frescoes in the half-open gallery to the south side of the Civic Court along which one can gain ingress to the Tower. The theme of his works was, suitably 'Stockholm's Shores'; however, Yeats does not dwell upon the artistic merit of these frescoes, choosing instead the social relevance of Prince among workmen for his subject. Eugene's support for the freedom of expression among artists and craftsmen suggests that analogies with Ruskin and Morris could be made, especially since Ruskin, in defending the virtues of Gothic architecture, had argued along similar lines in saying that Gothic allows a liberty of spirit for the individual mason not present in the tyranny of form in other architectural styles:

Its elements are certain mental tendencies of the builders, legibly expressed in it, as fancifulness, love of variety, love of richness and such others. 13

Yeats would have observed such qualities in the carvings around the City Hall, one of which included an example of the rough humour admired by Ruskin in Gothic since it illustrates a fisherman thumbing his nose at a Bishop. 'Love of variety' and 'love of richness' are exemplified too in the ironwork, Ragnar Ostberg describes a corner near the southern portico thus:

[there is]

a richly wrought iron grill outside the entrance to the

City Hall Cellar's Kitchen. In the Bellmann ironwork we find, when we look closely, a series of motives which the smith has hewn 'in passing' from Bellmann's lyre, and which he has hammered into the iron with his sledge and file. 14

At first sight it seems that Eugene's liberality (he left his possessions to the public at his death in 1947) is reminiscent of both Ruskin and Morris's idea that the individual workman should be freed from the tyrannies of rigid architectural style and from its modern equivalent, the ravages

15

of mass production. Yeats shares Ruskin and Morris's views that the age is too mechanically orientated to allow individual expression, but there the analogies must end for a variety of reasons. Firstly, Ruskin writes mainly of religious architecture, Yeats of a secular building: also, though the

City Hall is Northern and 'Romantic' (p. 554) it is not Gothic in style nor is it Gothic according to Ruskinian definitions.

16

Furthermore, Ruskin judges the imperfect finish of the mason's craft as evidence of Man's imperfect and fallen nature; Yeats, in praising the rough brickwork of the Town Hall exterior, does so from an aesthetic - even social but not religious standpoint:

the great walls where the roughened surface of the bricks, their carefully varied size and tint, takes away all sense of mechanical finish. (p. 555) 17

In general terms, Ruskin approaches Gothic architecture through religion, Morris through the plight of the worker and the social necessity of beauty, and Yeats through a belief that society had become increasingly abstract and mechanised since the eighteenth century, lacking in both beauty and stability. It is in Yeats' accompanying belief that only the re-establishment of an educated nobility could halt the decline that the sharpest divergence from Ruskin and Morris is to be found.

What exuberance there is in Yeats' reaction to Stockholm derives from the shock of new material, the sudden discovery of a part of the European continent that did not have the associations that the decadence of fin de siècle Paris or Dieppe had for him. Scandinavia surprised him by providing reassurance that the anarchy of commercialism he saw in Copenhagen was not universal. His favourable comparison of Stockholm with another sea-fretted city, Venice, deliberately evoking thoughts of Ruskin's Stones of Venice, seeks to elevate the city to a position of major cultural and artistic standing. Architecturally speaking, in Yeats' view, it comes out on an equal footing with London and Paris,

it has the better even of Paris in situation. It seems to shelter under the walls of a great Palace begun at the end of the seventeenth century. (p.542)

This has an obvious metaphorical significance in so far as it suggests the idea of patronage as well as describing the actual Royal Palace (Kunqliqa Slottet) situated in the north-east of the Gamla Stan. In fact this palace, built by Nicodemus Tessin, architect to the French Court, on the site of the Tre Kroner castle that burnt down in 1697, was an important part of the prospect that Yeats and his wife enjoyed during their stay in the Normalm area of the city:

I discover at last a vast, dominating, unconfused outline, a masterful simplicity. The Palace is at the other side of the river, and away towards our left runs the river bordered by tall buildings, and above the roofs of the houses, towards our right, rises the tower of the new Town Hall. (p.543)

A prospect that does appear harmonious, 'premeditated and arranged' and so fulfils his vision of modern public art expressed in 'The Death of Synge' XXVIII and, in so doing, creates another complex pattern of associations in Auto-biographies. Whether Yeats saw the relevant Journal entry again before setting off for Sweden (versions of 'Leda and the

Swan' entered in this book are dated 18 September 1923), or whether he referred to it in writing 'The Bounty of Sweden', or whether he simply remembered or never lost the idea of unified public and private taste must remain open to debate; suffice it to say that there are definite connections to be made between Journal entry 153, which refers to the Catholic Cathedral at Westminster, and the description of the Town Hall decorations as being Byzantine in flavour. Strictly speaking, the latter works are more inspired by art nouveau but the linking thought is not one of architectural nicety but a belief that in Byzantium there was this harmony of public and private taste.

Although Yeats leaves his judgement upon the Stockholm vernacular architectural style suspended - he does not even define it, simply saying it has 'spread everywhere' - he is decidedly enthusiastic in Section XIII about 'the greatest work of Swedish art', the Town Hall. His obvious concern to find correlatives between Sweden as a developing culture and Ireland standing on the threshold of a new epoch is evident here in his references to the Byzantine elements of the building. T.R. Henn outlines one major significance of Byzantium for Yeats:

There were parallels between Rome and England as imperial powers, and Byzantium might well symbolise a new Ireland breaking away from its masters so it might develop, or rather return to, its own philosophical, religious and artistic destiny. As for the past, both Byzantium and Gaelic Christendom might be judged to stand for a similar interpretation of religion and art....18

He goes on to point out that what are now the Byzantium poems originally dealt with Ireland alone, only later did the geographical location shift into a less literal dimension. Giorgio Melchiori also emphasises Yeats' conception of Byzantine culture in The Whole Mystery of Art, and in a

footnote suggests that the Stockholm Town Hall impressed Yeats more than the Ravenna mosaics did, and that it was from Stockholm that he re-traced his steps in order to re-appraise Byzantium.¹⁹ An unpublished letter from Yeats to MacMillans corroborates Henn's assertion that Ireland's position can be mirrored by the image of historical Byzantium, and in fact it even illustrates how Yeats thought Byzantine culture influenced Irish handicraft design. The letter, dated 1926, the year after the publication of 'The Bounty of Sweden', proposes that Norah MacGuinness should illustrate one of his works

in the style of Byzantine wall-pictures - we spent the evening looking through photographs of Sicilian mosaics and the like and she went away full of the idea. The reason why I want Byzantium is that there was great Byzantine influence upon Ireland. In two private Irish collections there are wooden crucifixes entirely Byzantine in type and of great beauty, and these crucifixes continued to be made in North Connaught and perhaps elsewhere till about 80 years ago. 20

And so it is plainly evident that Yeats saw Byzantium as a palpable presence in his native country until the mid nineteenth century, relatively close to the time when the cultural renewal was sprouting. He also finds a Byzantine influence in the Stockholm Town Hall and so to a limited extent there exists an equation between Sweden and Ireland in his mind through the medium of Byzantium. Henn draws our attention to similarities between Byzantium and Ireland as cultures struggling to free themselves from imperialism; in a slightly more oblique sense Yeats can make this same equation between Sweden and Ireland since the City Hall rejected the French influence that had dominated in Swedish culture and architecture since the eighteenth century, in favour of a local style reminiscent of the austerity he found in Byzantine art. When he writes:

Here there is no important French influence, for all that has not come out of the necessities of site and material,

no matter in what school the artist studied, carried
the mind backward to Byzantium (p.554)

he is offering a paradigm or model to the newly liberated Irish
nation for its architecture, culture, crafts and literature to
affirm the importance of the local and national in public arts.
He will do much the same in discussing painting in general and
Impressionism in particular, but for now he refers to only two
other comparable architectural structures: the Pennsylvania
Terminus in New York's 34th Street and the Catholic Cathedral
at Westminster to suggest the scarcity of good modern public
art, a fact emphasised by his severe reservations over aspects
of Westminster Cathedral. The City Hall, however, is
described as a Gothic-style triumph with

decorations by many artists, working in harmony with
one another and with the design of the building as a
whole, and yet all in seeming perfect freedom (p.555)

It grew out of a happy collaboration of the old (royalty in the
form of a Prince) and the new (the wisdom of a Socialist
Minister of Culture) and this is a message of pacification also
tendered to rivals in the Irish Free State. It was constructed
and decorated by 'myth makers' and 'mask makers', even the
statuary, depicting great Swedes, is modelled naked 'as if they
had come down from some Roman heaven'. But this is Yeats
exploiting Roman antiquity for much the same reason as he
exploits Byzantine antiquity: to lend authority to a
discussion of a modern artifact, since to take but one example,
the statue in marble on the Waterside Terrace 'To Gustav
Froding, Poet', by Carl Eldh, suggests work in a modern vein,
the only similarity to Roman statuary being its naked form. It
is upon this apparently paradoxical fusion of ancient and new -
'novelty' and an 'immeasurable past' - that he rhapsodizes in
ending the section with high praise for the Town Hall, saying
that it imposes order and pattern, 'subordination, design, a

sense of human need' upon our individualistic anarchy 'growing always, as it seemed, more violent'. He gains inspiration and hope that this growth may be checked and a healthy body and unified being emerge stemming from the bounty, achievement and example of Sweden. Indeed, momentarily this growth of violence does stop since he writes it 'seemed' to be getting worse, and not that it merely seems to be doing so. Perhaps this use of a past tense suggests that with the end of the years of fighting in Ireland Yeats felt optimistic for peace and artistic achievement.

Painting, particularly portrait painting, is a subject mentioned often in Autobiographies, which is hardly surprising given Yeats' family background and early training in art but, remembering that he felt that Impressionism had been a pernicious influence upon his father's style, it is a little surprising that he is so well disposed towards Swedish Impressionism. While Monet's studies of a pond under differing light conditions might be more fruitful than J.B. Yeats' attempts to paint the pond near Burnham Beeches (p.28), they have their limitations: 'but then it is precisely the light that interests him [Monet], and interests the buyers of those almost scientific studies' (p.551). He is equally guarded when pronouncing upon French Impressionism in general, saying that 'one has to live with it and make many comparisons, I think, to write more than a few sentences' (p.550). Yet the pantheon of great painters: Blake, Ingres, Puvis de Chavannes, Rossetti, Watts, Moreau, Calvert and Ricketts, apparently sacrosanct throughout 'The Trembling of the Veil', is now described as lacking in the ability to create a universal language or tradition. Impressionism has superseded this dying Romantic tradition:

Impressionism's gift to the world was precisely that it gave, at a moment when all seemed sunk in convention, a method as adaptable as that box of architectural Renaissance bricks. (p.550)

This seeming swing towards modern art is tentative and only temporary, Yeats attacks both it and modern sculpture in the form of Wyndham Lewis and Brancusi in A Vision in the following year. But special room for pro-Impressionist sympathies has been found in this occasional piece and for specific purposes too. Firstly Impressionism encourages a healthy and full response from its spectator, as Yeats says in terminology rarely applied to it:

It has suddenly taught us to see and feel...all those things as wholesome as rain and sunlight, to take into our hearts with an almost mystical emotion whatsoever happens without forethought and premeditation.

Secondly, in Sweden, Impressionism burgeoned as part of an awakening of national cultural activity in the 1880's (again a parallel with Ireland since both countries were culturally thriving in the eighteenth century and again in the late nineteenth century), and so it is important in a social dimension. Gradually he defines Swedish Impressionism as being very different from French Impressionism. Despite sharing Monet's technique of painting en plein air, Eugene Jansson, Yeats' representative Swedish Impressionist, differs greatly from the Frenchman:

as much as the light pleased his imagination, one feels that he cared very much for the fact before him, that he was never able to forget for long that he painted a well-loved scene. (p.551) 22

In Yeats' versions of Impressionism one is back with essentially Romantic traits of votive and inscriptional art: Jansson paints to enshrine popular places that are sanctified by popular sympathy. This is an act of painting that creates an 'emotion of multitude', a truly public art, Swedish

Impressionists having found an emotion held in common:

I get the impression that their work rouses a more general interest than that of other painters, is less confined to small groups of connoisseurs; I notice in the booksellers' shops that there seems to be some little paper covered pamphlet, full of illustrations, for every notable painter of the school, dead or living, and the people I meet ask constantly what I think of this painter or that other, or somebody will say 'This is the golden age of painting'. (pp.551-2)

Yeats compares Jansson's aims with those of his own brother, Jack B. Yeats, but keeps the distinction that Jack does not find a widely appreciative audience in Ireland. Swedish Impressionism is more successful in taking the popular mind back to archetypal national symbols present in the landscape. One recalls Robert Langbaum's discussion of the characters in Wordsworth's poetry that not only have strong emotional and mystical bonds with the landscape but also seem to flow from it and return to it. 'Place', Langbaum writes, 'is the spatial project of psyche, because it is the repository of memory'.²³ But, in his view, Yeats works at a time when a Wordsworthian Weltanschauung, in which personal experience and archetypal substance combine to inform a landscape, is no longer possible since the Romantic era had passed. He argues that since Wordsworth's landscapes are mythologized or sanctified through the personal experience occurring within them, they are intrinsically valueless without human figures, often being bleak, desolate or only partially evoked locales. With Yeats, he proposes, place can be independently and objectively sacred because a supernatural presence may pervade it, and 'Reveries' section XXI or the discussion of Coole Park in 'The Stirring of the Bones' would bear his argument out. The implications of Yeats' view that the landscape may be itself animate (i.e. have a soul by grace of the presence of accumulated human experiences and responses recorded within it) are wide-ranging

but here that view is used to account for the particular power and strength of public response to Swedish Impressionism.

Yeats was not impressed with Sweden's neo-Impressionists alone, but also with the plenitude of work by others such as Ernst Josephson whose portrait paintings

prove that their painter was entirely preoccupied with the personality of the sitter, light, colour, design all subordinate to that. (p.552)

Josephson is used as a representative painter of portraits, just as Jansson is the type for Swedish Art which he would have seen in Stockholm since no mention is made of work done after neo-Impressionism. ²⁴ But this complex and tentative praise of an Impressionist-style school does reveal a mind probing its own ideas and yet, at the same time, paying court to the nation that had entertained and impressed Yeats.

It is significant that Yeats chooses to see and to praise nationalistic elements in Swedish landscape painting since 'The Bounty of Sweden' is a strongly anti-internationalist work that exhorts Ireland to develop its own indigenous cultural identity and not to be seduced by modern trends in art from abroad. Throughout the book Yeats politicizes a great deal of what he witnesses for the purposes of his comparison of Ireland and Sweden; most of the longer meditations upon state occur in the descriptions of the award ceremony, of the Prize-Winner's reception and at his lecture to the Academy, and so they are seen to grow out of his direct observations of the workings of an alternative system of state to that of the new Irish Senate and Dáil. The most striking difference between the two countries is that Sweden has a monarchy. Remembering Yeats' approval of Bishop Grundtvig's system of education where the personality of the instructor is of crucial importance, and remembering his admiration for the strength of personal

leadership in Prince Eugene, it comes as no surprise that, at the Awards Ceremony, Yeats should look for and find evidence of extraordinary qualities in the appearance and personalities of the King and Princess Margaretha. In the King (and also in the President of the Academy) he sees imaged in the outer appearance that self-possession that he had sought for himself for many years and which, incidentally, he exhibits at the awards ceremony; while in the Princess he finds impassivity suggesting that 'final consummate strength which rounds the spiral of a shell'. This beauty, impassive yet containing architectonic strength is granted greater power in Yeats' description of it by a renewed evocation of the ancient world, this time eighteenth dynasty Egypt:

one finds a similar beauty in wooden busts taken from Egyptian tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, and not again until Gainsborough paints. Is it very ancient and very modern alone or did painters and sculptors cease to notice it until our day? (p.540)

Despite its idiosyncratic nature, this plexus of historical associations is fashioned to further the connection between Sweden and Ireland and their respective histories. The hub of it all lies in the description of Princess Margaretha's beauty when he compares the wooden busts of ancient Egypt and the formalised beauty of a Gainsborough portrait. This is certainly a very elegant, courtly thing to say about one's hostess since it casts her into the permanent world of timeless ritual, but it is equally an unlikely comparison to make in art-historical terms. However, the real centre of interest lies not in the accuracy of the observation about wooden busts and Gainsborough portraits but more in the significance of the historical periods referred to. Gainsborough (1727-88) brings with him into the text associations from the eighteenth century; Yeats' view on the importance of that century,

especially in Irish history where it coincides with the height of Anglo-Irish Protestant cultural achievement will be well known to a reader of Autobiographies, especially of 'Dramatis Personae'. Even though 'The Bounty of Sweden' pre-dates that work in terms of composition, there is little doubt that Yeats was interested in that century in the mid 1920's since, as Donald Torchiana has indicated, part of the Nobel Prize-money went on buying the 1784 Thomas Sheridan edition of Swift's works. ²⁷

It is also apposite for Yeats to summon up images of the eighteenth century in his tribute to Sweden and its royalty since, for that country too, it was a significant period of historical development. In the early part of the century Sweden lost much of her power status in Northern Europe and as a result turned inwards to stabilise the state through cultural means. In 1739, the Royal Academy of Sciences was inaugurated, in 1757 Nicodemus Tessin's Royal Palace was completed, Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) belongs to this period, in literature The Swedish Argus acted as a model for the development of prose and, with the ascendancy of Gustavus III, came a brilliant flowering of high culture and an embellishment of the court. Although Stockholm is no longer a predominantly eighteenth century city (the Royal Opera House of 1782 and the Royal Theatre of 1788 no longer remain) the Academy, in which Yeats received his prize, was built in order to be an arbiter of public taste under the patronage of Gustavus III in 1786. ²⁸ And it is significant that shortly after the visit Yeats' interest in Royal Irish Academy was re-kindled; he wrote to its President on 27 July 1926 that

we are anxious to see added to the Academy an autonomous committee of men of letters who would give it the character of the French Institute.

The letter, written on behalf of AE and Lennox Robinson as well

as himself, goes on to state that

once such a body were established it would have no difficulty in finding out duties for itself, our feeling is that at the beginning of a new State, where conditions are unsettled, it is important to have an authoritative body, not merely in matters of learning but in creative literature. 29

There were to be problems; Yeats resigned from the R.I.A. in 1927 since nothing was done about these proposals, but in late 1931 he succeeded in getting Government permission for the foundation of the Irish Academy of Letters. This institution which was to champion the work of native writers, awarding prizes and medals on an annual and tri-annual basis and which was also to fight the censorship imposed by the Catholic establishment in the 1930s, has at least part of its origins in the Nobel Prize ceremony, in the eighteenth century flavour of the Swedish Academy and Court and their effects upon the imagination of Yeats.

Yeats uses three points in history at which he can make comparisons and contrasts between Sweden and Ireland: one of these is obviously the contemporary period in both countries, another is the late nineteenth century when both countries underwent a cultural renewal and another, less obvious one, is the eighteenth century. References are few and subtle: the reference to Charles XII, for example, as 'the last of Sweden's great military Kings' (p. 544) is one that would have great significance to Swedish nationalists. Charles XII, the costume of whose eighteenth century reign is still worn by the Palace sentry, had become a symbol of all attempts by Sweden to regain her former imperial status in later years. He was adopted as a hero by the eighteenth and nineteenth century Revanchists who preached war with Russia, and he was popularly seen as something of a Titanic figure having fought against the near overwhelming odds of the might of Imperial Russia. But

there is another side to the century besides the glorification; one recalls Yeats' view of Socialism as 'that mechanical eighteenth century dream' and one remembers that the cynical critic of the spectacle of the Swedish court is described as being moved to a 'Jacobin frenzy'. 'Jacobin' being a term derived from the French Revolution - an event, in Yeats' view, that ushered in the age of anarchy, individualism and debased cultural values, as he expresses idiosyncratically in Section X of 'Ireland after Parnell'. Clearly Yeats is propounding his opinion that two distinct strands issue from the European eighteenth century: one, that of rationalist thinking, is linked with materialism, revolution and internationalism while the other is linked with the growth of civilised philosophical thought in which nationalism and Neo-Platonism may find mutual ground in a figure like Bishop Berkeley. Unfortunately, in Yeats' view, the first of these has proved to be the stronger strain and here one can see a possible significance in Yeats' parallel between the eighteenth century and the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty other than the method common to 'The Bounty of Sweden' of using antiquity to lend authority to discussion of more recent times. The funeral art of the eighteenth dynasty represents something of a peak in its genre and it was followed by a decline into the less highly regarded art of the New Kingdom and of subsequent dynasties. Yeats, with his membership of the Golden Dawn and his acquaintance with the amateur Egyptologist, Florence Farr, may well have been aware of this fact and could be using it as part of the pattern of history in which periods of history in 'the ancient world correlate to periods in the modern world. This, after all, is a basic principle of A Vision.

While it is plain that a vision of an ideal Renaissance

court, whether at Urbino or at London, underpins the presentation of the Swedish court (much of Section IX is devoted to comparing the court favourably with modern democracy) and that the European Renaissance is extended as an analogue for an idealised modern society, it is necessary to remember that Yeats' historical theories range more widely than this one comparison. He sees cultural history as a series of universal renaissances that allows him to travel between the eighteenth dynasty and the eighteenth century with ease. This explains too the ambiguity of tone in his discussions of modern Ireland in 'The Bounty of Sweden'. Since the work sets out to praise Sweden and to use it as a model for Irish government, it is obvious that Ireland must suffer in the comparison to some extent, and Yeats believed he had good cause for criticizing his country where he felt that a cultural renaissance had been dealt heavy blows by what he saw as an artistic failure at the Abbey Theatre, by the growth of a philistine bourgeois class in Dublin, and by a Civil War that threatened to destroy the very root-fibre of Ireland's non-political, artistic traditions. But he was receiving the Nobel Prize on behalf of the literary movement and he was to remain very much involved in that movement too, hence there is much about his country that is favourable and promising. Ireland, the Civil War recently resolved, stands at a crucial point in its history and has one of two major paths to follow; by constant emphasis upon the achievement of Sweden placed in a wide historical context, Yeats points to the path he thinks it should take.

Before leaving this contemporary, political, social and cultural dimension to 'The Bounty of Sweden', it should be said that, in a deeply conservative way, Yeats boldly implies which direction the Irish government should not take. Having praised

the Swedish Princess for her beauty, the King for his affable wisdom and intelligence, the Prince for his beneficent disposition towards the community, and the court for its rituals; having faulted Danish Folk-High Schools and the rise of Socialism in Europe, could Yeats be said in any way to be advocating Republicanism? This calculated eulogy upon a titular Royalty must have been seen by many as a deliberate flying in the face of the new quasi-Republicanism in Ireland and of the new government (by 1932 that government became even more strongly pro-Republican when De Valera's Fianna Fail party took office). Yeats' Free State sympathies, as opposed to any strongly pro-Republican views, are openly aired in 'The Bounty of Sweden' as are his views upon monarchism which was still a very important issue in Ireland since the sovereignty of the British crown over Ireland had been a major factor in the Treaty negotiations that led to the Civil War.

One thing that Yeats learns in his encounters with the Press on his way to Stockholm is that, while August Strindberg was not exactly persona non grata in Sweden, there was still much ill-feeling about his battles with the Academy over 'the book about his first wife'. The result of this discovery is that Yeats treats Strindberg in a different way while actually in Sweden from the way he writes about him after the event. While a guest of the Academy he treats the matter deferentially; he says that in his speech to the assembly he suggested how the Scandinavian theatre had acted as a model for the Irish theatre and that, as well as Swedenborg, he praised Ibsen and Strindberg. In fact, he omitted reference to Strindberg in the speech. This may have been an error of memory in writing 'The Bounty of Sweden' or, more likely, was a tactful move that saved offending the very Academy with which

Strindberg had battled. The speech is recorded in Nobel Prize Lectures (1969) and this, in truncated form, is what he said on the subject:

I have been all my working life indebted to the Scandinavian nation. When I was a very young man, I spent several years writing in collaboration with a friend the first interpretation of the philosophy of the English Poet Blake. Blake was first a disciple of your great Swedenborg and then in violent revolt and then half in revolt, half in discipleship. My friend and I were constantly driven to Swedenborg for an interpretation of some obscure passages of recent years I have gone to Swedenborg for his own sake, and when I received your invitation to Stockholm, it was to his biography that I went for information. Nor do I think that our Irish Theatre could have ever come into existence but for the theatre of Ibsen and Bjornson. 32

Obviously Yeats wanted to make associations between Strindberg and the Abbey Theatre; in Section V he recalls that it was in Paris, at the time of Strindberg's presence there, that he (Yeats) first heard of 'stage scenery that might decorate a stage and suggest a scene, while attempting nothing that an easel painting can do better' (p. 538). It is pleasing for him to think that the idea may have originated with Strindberg himself, but it was not a connection he wished to make while in Stockholm. In the retrospective account where he can talk with more freedom, Strindberg comes to Yeats as a writer of autobiography rather than as a dramatist. That 'book about his first wife' was Le Plaidoyer d'un Fou (translated as 'Confessions of a Fool', 'A Madman's Manifesto' and, best of all, 'A Madman's Defence') in which he adopts autobiographical techniques and apparently autobiographical events for fictional purposes since, in the concluding pages of his Inferno, he refers the reader to it as part of his autobiography. The argument it provoked on publication was another stage in what Gustafson calls the Strindbergsfejden. It was written during 1887-8, in French so that his first wife, Siri Von Essen, whom

he eventually divorced in 1891, would not have her suspicions aroused. It is ostensibly autobiographical, being written in the first person form, the narrator being a madman, and it loosely chronicles the affair, marriage and eventual separation of the couple. But strictly speaking it is not autobiography, the narrator is a madman called Axel, not August, his lover is called Marie not Siri and Strindberg exaggerates the madman's musings to demented and satanic proportions, even within the preface which is part of the fictionalizing construct:

What brought it about?
The obvious necessity of washing my corpse before
it is sealed up for ever in my coffin. 34

The neurotic element and its symptom of an urgent need for self-justification exert pressure upon the tone and style of the book so much that it is easy to see how a puritanical audience in Sweden could have been outraged by it if it had accepted only the autobiographical element of the work and not the fictive framework. Indeed the characterization of the madman as suffering from a persecution complex could have confused a readership into thinking it was meant as literal truth:

Mania? Did I say 'mania'? But I was being
persecuted, and consequently it was altogether
logical I thought I was being persecuted. 35

It was an easy mistake to make: Strindberg was himself prone to persecution mania and to bouts of misogyny, and he may even have constructed the narrative to disguise, rather thinly if this is the case, a desire to revenge himself upon Siri and to épater les bourgeois at home. It is even possible that he may have begun to create experiences within his marriage to fuel the writing process, or may have elaborated upon events in the marriage in order to create a satisfying tone for his harrowing work; this was the case with Inferno as Mary Sandbach has

pointed out, and Evert Sprinchorn in his introduction to his translation says the same about Le Plaidoyer d'un Fon.

This is one of the few works belonging to the autobiographical genus that Yeats mentions by name in Autobiographies and even then there are few similarities between Yeats and Strindberg as writers of autobiography. What few there are, however, do prove to be interesting. Both can be said to have created autobiographical works that have fed themselves back into the authors' lives: Strindberg created experiences in order to write about them, while Yeats did not only record events in his Journal, he used it as a way to re-fashion his prose-style and to create a fund of images and meditations that would enrich his essays and his poetry for years to come. The narrator/author of Le Plaidoyer writes, he claims, to wash his corpse before it is put in the coffin; put less dramatically he sees the autobiographical act as a therapeutic or cleansing act. Yeats, too, it has been remarked, felt that memoir-writing refreshed him as though he had bathed and put on clean linen.

37

Close parallels exist between Strindberg's and Yeats' autobiographical writings. The very form of 'Estrangement' and 'The Death of Synge' appears to correspond to the diary-like format of Inferno; both journals were kept at a time of personal crisis when their respective authors were in their forties, and both writers included them (with a degree of adjustment) in their autobiographical canons, where they act as evidence of the unburdening of problems through the articulation of those problems. Strindberg's Inferno covers mainly May and June 1897, a crucial part of the larger Inferno-crisis that lasted in varying degrees of intensity between 1894 and 1897, during which time he pursued both chemistry and

alchemy and during which time Yeats observed him in Paris. However, a number of fictional interjections were added to the work before it was published, to such an extent that Strindberg even referred to it as fiction in one of his letters. These additions facilitated his building up of a number of Swedenborgian correspondences through a retrospective analysis of the diary while keeping the illusion of spontaneity and implicit denial that he had the benefit of hindsight, which he in fact possesses. The importance of this was that it was from his own discovery of Swedenborg's writings that he found an explanation of his personal problems and the resulting salvation from the devils that he felt had purposed him out of Paris and across much of Europe. The retrospective re-arranging, shaping and heightening of these Swedenborgian correspondences give a sense of progression, coherence and destiny to the work as a whole as it moves toward its resolution. Such an autobiographical method is employed by Yeats to a limited extent within 'The Bounty of Sweden' since he composes that work on a diurnally-structured basis even though it was written after the events it describes. Through this device he can give out thematic unities that were imperceptible as the events unfolded from day to day. But these similarities do not obliterate the fact that there are very great differences between the two men as writers of autobiography since Yeats is neither so manic nor so obsessive in his writings as Strindberg can be, nor is he so persistent in wanting to force significance on to the minutely accidental. Strindberg is greatly concerned with the psyche per se, Yeats is rarely introspective to the same degree. While A Madman's Defence was a succès de scandale, Yeats was not only discreet about personal matters, he also went to some lengths to alter

the First Draft - Autobiography in order to remove much of the significance of his love life from the crisis he underwent.

Quite what the autobiographical nature and function of 'The Bounty of Sweden' is, is a problem in itself and the temptation to see it simply as either a tying up of the themes of Unity of Being and Unity of Culture or to see both it and the lecture as a kind of coda expressive of the failure of Yeats' aims for Ireland, is indeed great. But I have suggested that to do either would be only part of the picture: on the first count, Yeats' views are not static but are seen to be still evolving in 'The Bounty of Sweden', still responding to the shock of new material. On the second count, the whole trend of the book is not towards a withdrawal into disillusioned inertia but is one that thrusts itself forward to provide a positive model for the public arts and for the principles of government for the new Irish State to adopt. There is disillusion, certainly, which a reader can sense beneath the prose of 'Dramatis Personae' and in the books which follow, and, since 'Dramatis Personae' is the last of the books to be written, it is true that in one way Autobiographies reflects Yeats' disappointment that his hopes for the Irish Theatre were only partly realised. But the significance of the various books of Autobiographies lies in the positions that they take up after Yeats has arranged them in the order of the life they describe. To the general reader of Autobiographies, then, this book will end with a lecture that is balanced between some disappointment that the dramatic movement did not live up to the expectations of its founders, and some pride that it has been successful enough for one of its members to merit receiving the Nobel prize. As such, it is not an entirely resolved conclusion to the collection of books that

precedes it since it ends with a degree of ambivalence. However, it is modified by the one book that immediately precedes it and of which it is a part; in 'The Bounty of Sweden' there is, admittedly, some disappointment at Ireland's failure to achieve the sort of cultural unity that Sweden is described, a little fantastically, as having achieved. However, there is also a constant drive towards the unrealised potential of the future of the State of Ireland, and there is one moment of unbounded optimism when Yeats says that the tide of European history suddenly turned. This came with the completion of the Stockholm City Hall, an event which Yeats invests with enormous significance:

No work comparable in method or achievement has been accomplished since the Italian cities felt the excitement of the Renaissance, for in the midst of our individualistic anarchy, growing always, as it seemed, more violent, have arisen once more subordination, design, a sense of human need. (p.556)

The potential for universal change and for cultural renewal is therefore very much a reality in Yeats' mind, and especially in a newly independent and newly settled country like Ireland which was then something of a tabula rasa.

But this still leaves one with the question of just how autobiographical 'The Bounty of Sweden' is since it does only focus on one brief time in Yeats' life, a moment that occurs well after the events described in the preceding autobiographical book. Obviously there is a very wide significance to this historical moment, it is not merely adrift from the rest of the books, and an historical and social critical approach does demonstrate what that significance is. This is not true of, say, 'The Trembling of the Veil' where a study of the development of the text and of Yeats' autobiographical strategies takes one further than a single

process of contextualizing does. There are two reasons why this approach is appropriate to 'The Bounty of Sweden': the first, as stated at the outset, being that the historical context of the event described tallies with the context of events surrounding Yeats as he writes, and the second being that the major autobiographical function of the book lies as much in the importance of the event it describes in relation to what precedes it, as it does in the method of presenting that event. More simply, the whole of the book is an extension of a device exploited elsewhere in Autobiographies whereby Yeats brings in glimpses of the autobiographer for contrast with the autobiographee. In 'Reveries' one sees a 'sorrowful and disturbed' author (p. 106) who has accomplished too few of his plans and who gains little comfort from recovering his familial and his personal past through the memoirs. In 'Hodos Chameliontos', for example, one meets the settled man, the family man who has found some of the stability lacking in the author of the first autobiographical book; and in 'The Bounty of Sweden' one meets an author who is so recognisedly successful and celebrated that the self portrait withstands moments of comic mocking, such as when he likens his poetic faculty to the ramblings of a mad old woman who parades the Dublin quays or when he and his wife cook sausages to celebrate the news of his Nobel Prize. This device of bringing the finished product into the process of fabrication is one that stresses and renews the dialectic of change that is unavoidably created when present self reviews past self and is modified by it. Just as Yeats implies the potential for development and achievement of his nation, so does he reach a point in 'The Bounty of Sweden' which is, at one and the same time, something of a conclusion since both he and the cultural movement receive

widespread recognition for their successes, and yet is also a starting off point for the next phase which came about with the later poems and plays, and which was never chronicled by Yeats. Ultimately, Autobiographies like any other autobiography, remains an open book.

CHAPTER VII

IRISH AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WORKS - 1

In the opening chapter various reasons were put forward to explain why Ireland, in the words of AE, 'is more prodigal of literature about itself in proportion to its size than any other country in the world', and why autobiographical works make up so much of this self-reflective literature. This thesis implies that a tradition of Irish autobiographical works written in the English Language actually exists, but it also seeks to emphasise that the tradition owes its existence to a commonality of theme and subject matter in its constituent works. It is not a tradition that relies upon a single and unbroken thread of literary influence and development since it is rarely that one autobiographer looks to another for a model for literary style and method. These final chapters will seek to identify various sub-groupings within the tradition and will point to both similarities and differences in those styles and methods adopted by the various autobiographers; in so doing I aim to make comment upon aspects of Irish literature, Irish autobiography and autobiography in general.

There are many works which could qualify for inclusion in this study but do not for various reasons. If one looks through William Matthew's bibliography of British auto-
1
biography, one will find numerous examples of reminiscences written by English politicians and servants of the crown about their experiences in Ireland, these are excluded because the Irish connection is merely coincidental and not instrumental to their works. Many of these memoirs were written, naturally enough, during the days of the Protestant Ascendancy; other

Anglo-Irish autobiographies of this time include a high number of doctors' and medical men's memoirs and many others relating to the 1798 Rebellion - including The Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone, a greatly popular book enjoyed by many including Yeats - which are left out because of pressures of space. This is also true of the Fenian memoirs dating from the mid to late nineteenth century, though the section of this chapter which deals with autobiographies relating to the more recent troubled political history of Ireland says much that would otherwise be said about them. Some classes of Irish autobiography have been discussed already, as is the case with those works relating to the dramatic movement in the chapter on 'Dramatis Personae'. There are, furthermore, autobiographies by major literary and artistic figures that are also excluded: J.B. Yeats' Early Memories² has been the subject of critical attention, most notably in an essay by George Bornstein,³ and little more could be said about the work without repetition. Lady Gregory's autobiographical works do not figure greatly because they are not particularly interesting examples of the genre;⁴ J.M. Synge's do not figure at all for much the same reason. There is simply not room to discuss in detail a number of fine examples of the genre such as those by Brendan Behan, Elizabeth Bowen, Patrick Kavanagh, Padraic and Mary Colum and Katherine Tynan;⁵ and, finally, order to keep these chapters down to manageable proportions, no autobiographically-based novels have been included.

Of the autobiographies which ante-date the flourish of autobiographical writing in Ireland in the second decade of the twentieth century, three have been selected for study not just because they were known to Yeats but also for their own intrinsic merit. They are Sir Jonah Barrington's

Personal Sketches of His Own Times, in three volumes published between 1827 and 1832; Yeats had either read all or parts of this work,⁶ The Life of William Carleton, an unfinished autobiography which D.J. O'Donoghue complete and edited for publication in two volumes in 1896,⁷ and John Mitchel's Jail Journal, published in 1868; parts of this Yeats read aloud to his father in May 1887.

Personal Sketches is the work of an educated and highly literate man, yet it bears traces of a pre-literary, oral tradition of popular story telling. This is not entirely surprising since this tradition which is so obviously behind especially the early anecdotes of Volume One, existed in Ireland until late in the nineteenth century. Lady Gregory's and Yeats' folk-lore gathering expeditions illustrate this and George Moore's interest in the shanachie tradition culminated in A Story Teller's Holiday which was published as late as 1928. But Barrington was using a tradition that had not, at that stage, become a fashionable aspect of a literary Renaissance, with the result that the folk-lore, the story-telling and the elements of saga literature are not openly referred to but lie, instead, behind the prose. Much of it is present in the macabre and grotesque humour of stories like that of Mr. Waddy who, during the 1798 Rebellion, inadvertently lowered his portcullis onto a priest, severing him in two. Mistakenly believing his house under siege, Mr. Waddy cannibalised the half which had fallen within the gate. There are other equally ghoulish, equally apocryphal stories concerning, most memorably, the accidental self decapitation of a peasant, the slashing, blistering, peeling and skinning of a black child in a search for the white underneath and the gruesome tale of the setting of a farmer's broken back. Vivian

Mercier in The Irish Comic Tradition devotes a chapter to macabre and grotesque humour tracing much of it back to the games once played at wakes where merriment alternated with and ultimately helped to overcome grief and dread of death. That Sir Jonah's grotesquerie fulfils some equally deep-seated need in the reader to blend experience of pain with laughter is obvious, and at least one of his stories is a modern re-telling of an ancient story in which the audience is invited to laugh at the misfortune of one whose greed and lusts brought punishment upon himself. The ancient story concerning Conan the Bald is not specifically from the shanachie tradition but it has considerable ancestry existing in very early, almost primitive folk-lore. ⁸ Generally speaking, the story involves Conan being unable to resist sensual temptations offered by supernatural creatures who then delight in trapping, tormenting, fooling or thwarting him. In the sixteenth century Poem Book of Finn where the story is told, Conan and the Fianna are glued to their seats by magic at a feast in a fairy dwelling but are then given a balm which will release them. Only Conan insists on first eating the feast by which time the balm has run out, he is pulled free but sacrifices in the process skin from his heels, shoulder and the back of his head. Barrington, in his chapter 'Irish Dissipation in 1778', relates how he arrived at a scene one morning to find drunken revellers snoring and slumbering against freshly plastered walls, one of whom is removed from the hardened plaster at the cost of his hair and scalp, a fact which provides much merriment for his more fortunate colleagues. In both stories there is a surrogate figure, a butt for the audience who laugh partly in relief that they are not the victim and partly with a primitive sense of justice in so far as the victim has brought misfortune

upon himself through over-indulging the senses. Sir Jonah is giving current validity to a traditional tale and is keeping a folkloric theme alive in so doing.

Sir Jonah was writing before the autobiographical fashion had fully established itself in the English Language, consequently he is something of an apologist, giving long justifications for and histories of his work, claiming that his aim is merely to keep the attention of his 'light readers'. But through these comments upon his text he begins to investigate the very act of writing reminiscences. Part of his self defence involves claiming literal truth in all his memories (memory is important for the story teller):

another quality of inestimable value I possess, thank Heaven, in a degree which, at my time of life, if not supernatural, is not very far from it - a memory of the greatest and most wide-ranging powers: its retrospect is astonishing even to myself, and has wonderfully increased since my application to single science has been dispensed with. The recollection of one early incident of our lives never fails to introduce another; and the marked occurrences of my life from childhood to the wrong side of a grand climacteric are at this moment fresh in my memory in all their natural tints, as at the instance of their occurrence. 10

As with much of Personal Sketches one must be wary here of the author's over-emphasis, yet it is interesting that he should refer to the chain of associations that can begin with remembering childhood and past incidents. Paucity of memory is seldom the problem with autobiographers, rather it is the need to edit, abridge and give form to memory that presents the challenge. Personal Sketches, Sir Jonah claims, grew out of the discovery of some old letters that provoked his interest in his past and what he says about them in his Introduction presents a cardinal rule for all autobiographers:

Some of these memoranda were illegible; other just sufficient to set my memory working; some were sad, and some were cheerful; some very old, other recent. In fine, I began to select. 11 [author's emphasis]

His experience in writing his memoirs of recalling and re-embodiment events long past leads him into philosophizing on the subject of memory:

Memory results from a connected sequence of thought and observation: so that intervening occurrences draw up the recollection as it were of preceding ones, and the fresh excited act of remembrance in fact operates as a new incident. 12

And so the terms of reference for his autobiography extend beyond the mere recording of history and continue right into the present, operating as a 'new incident'. Despite its lack of a controlling design and despite the fact that it portrays more of the society and associates of its author than it does the author himself - and hence may not be strictly autobiographical - Personal Sketches does treat, quite seriously, the issue of the role of memory and selection in creativity. It is as if Sir Jonah, having embarked upon a work designed originally to entertain found that he was confronting issues of a more weighty nature than he had expected. This unusual mixture of old fashioned story-telling and modern analysis of the development of the text, in the text, makes Personal Sketches an important document in the history of Irish autobiographical writing.

It has already been remarked how Yeats admired aspects of The Life of William Carleton for its evocation of an older form of Gaelic life; he felt that 'the further we get from that strange, wild Gaelic life, the further we get from all that made Carleton a great voice in modern romance and the founder of Irish prose literature'; this is, in general, a fair judgement of the work. Both Barrington and Carleton discuss the function of memory: the former from the point of view of story-teller and autobiographer, the latter, as many of his short stories illustrate, from his interest in the position of

the poor scholar and hedge-schoolmaster (memory being all important in a way of education that has little access to the written word), as well as from his interest in the subject as an autobiographer. Like Barrington too, he is anxious to establish the power and accuracy of his memory in the autobiography itself: 'All I have to say is, that in the events which I am about to detail, especially those of my later life, the reader may expect nothing but the strictest and most conscientious truth'.¹⁴ Indeed the whole subject holds a fascination for him: he comments at length on his father's prowess for recalling 'the whole of the Old and New Testament by heart' and for remembering old tales, legends and historical anecdotes, charms, ranns, poems, prophecies, superstitions, tales of pilgrims, miracles and pilgrimages, tales of blessed priests and friars and revelations of ghosts and fairies, all of which were impressed by frequent repetition on to his son's mind. His mother's prodigious memory for songs made its mark upon her son too. Such good recall, he emphasizes, is conducive to his particular type of literary skill:

Talking simply of the peasantry, there is scarcely a phase of their life with which I was not intimate. That, however, is not so much in itself, because many have had the same advantages, but not only a cultivated intellect, but strong imagination, and extraordinary powers of what I may term unconscious observation, existed in my case. I take no pride from these, because they were gifts of God. My memory, too, although generally good, was then in its greatest power; it was always a memory of association. For instance, in writing a description of Irish manners, or of anything else connected with my own past experience, if I were able to remember any one particular fact or place, everything connected with or calculated to place it distinctly before me, rushed from a thousand scenes upon my memory. 15

It is interesting that both Yeats and Carleton share an associative memory, at their own admission, in the writing of their respective memoirs. Yeats' technique of reverie, only

occasionally assisted by documentary material, is comparable to Carleton's method of using a mental image of 'a particular face or place' as a starting point for a rushing up from the deeper parts of consciousness of a chain of associated memories. Memory and its importance in the Irish cultural tradition and in the creation of autobiography is not the sole concern of either Carleton's or Barrington's autobiography, both are considerably entertaining, anecdotal works with other points of interest that shortage of space here will not allow to be studied more fully.

In an article in the Irish University Review, Thomas Flanagan has discussed the question of style and of certain ambiguities of tone in John Mitchel's Jail Journal, pointing, on the one hand, to how the irony of the work is vigorously directed against the Imperial Power that had imprisoned him and, on the other hand, to the way in which the irony actually contains and restrains the apocalyptic, anarchic violence of his rebellion against those powers. He also concentrates on the long passage where Mitchel creates a dialogue between an Ego and a Doppelganger figure, suggesting that Mitchel felt unsure about the diary format and about the whole notion of self-dramatization. This results in the sporadic nature of Journal, he says, and is a result of Mitchel's style not being grounded in a constructive impulse but in his resistance to authority. While it is true that there is a righteous indignation at the severity of his transportation sentence, an indignation that at times gives way to bursts of anger, such as when he is denied newspapers from Ireland, it is wrong to concentrate solely upon the transparent rebelliousness and belligerence of this work. There is a further dimension to the erudite wit and humour of Mitchel with which Flanagan does not

deal perhaps because he is continuing the Yeatsian characterisation of Mitchel as a war-monger. Remembering that the work is written in diary form during a period of pressure and duress, the humour can be seen as warding off adversity and as assisting him as he gradually comes to accept and understand the nature of his imprisonment. The following entry, made on board the hulk-ship, 'Scourge', bound for Bermuda, is a good example of this, occurring as it does early in the work:

It has come to blow hard this evening. Dined on four teaspoonfuls of arrowroot. 17

He cleverly manipulates the diary format to suggest the chilling monotony of the voyage:

[June] 14th - Gulf-weed, Portuguese men-of-war, flying fish.
15th - Flying fish, Portuguese men-of-war, Gulf-weed.
16th - Gulf-weed, flying fish, Portuguese men-of-war. 18

and there are many other examples of Mitchel humourously exaggerating the possibilities of despair in order to gain a mental superiority over his fated circumstances which will allow him to persevere with the long wait for the expiring of his sentence. For example, having reached Simon's Bay the ship is denied a berth and he writes

At worst we cannot go much farther from here: if my kidnappers make me sail any farther on that tack, I shall be coming round upon them at the other side: which is one advantage of inhabiting a spherical body or sphaeroid, not heretofore noticed by the learned. 19

Understandably, even the wry humour fails him at times: in the later stages of the journal alarming gaps of months occur between entries, indicating utter tedium not worth recording. Even anguish and momentary fits of despair can creep into his 'notes of nothing':

Shall I go on scribbling in a book, making myself believe that I am keeping a journal? Why, one day is exactly like every other day to me.. Nothing ever happens to me. What have I to write? Or, if

I write my nothings, who will ever read?

But he goes on to recognise the fundamentally valuable service that this form of private record and self-communication provides for him since, in short, it assures him that he exists. It presents a scale of time in what seems to be a void; though composed of subjective utterances, once recorded and fixed it can give an objective confirmation that certain events have happened in the recent past, and it implies that liberty is promised in the future since it will take on an even greater significance once he can afford to reject its demands. He admits the possibility of its worthlessness, it could easily be destroyed or confiscated, 'for I am in their powers', but the autobiographical impulse in times of crisis is strong:

Yet withstanding all these considerations, I feel much inclined to jot down a page or two now and then, though it were but to take note of the atmospheric phenomena... or, in short, to put on record anything, whether good or bad, that may have occurred to my mind - if one may use so strong an expression as mind in this seaweed state. After all, in so very long a voyage, one might well forget from whence he set sail, and the way back, unless he have some sort of memoranda to refer to. This book will help to remind me of what I was, and how I came down hither, and so preserve the continuity of my thoughts, or personal identity, which, there is sometimes reason to fear, might slip away from me. 20
[author's emphasis]

Like Samuel Beckett's Hamm, Mitchel is creating a 'chronicle' in telling himself the story of his days and although he does so in high-ironical style there can be no doubt about the seriousness of its purposes since his mental well-being seems to depend upon it. The Jail Journal is a good, if extreme, example of Anthony Storr's belief that creativity in any form is the expression of a latent desire for the creator to control his or her own fate, and it re-inforces a point made in discussing 'Estrangement' and The Diary of Virginia Woolf that a degree of mental and spiritual comfort can be achieved

through the keeping of a diary during a time of isolation or crisis.

At the time of the publication of perhaps the finest example of Irish autobiography, George Moore's Hail and Farewell, in 1914, the Irish literary renaissance was already a tangible reality and many of the memoirs that would tell the story of that renaissance were underway too. Ireland's political rebirth, however, was yet to come, and the autobiographies that followed the 1916 Uprising and subsequent wars were obliged to face that new reality. Here, then, is the best place to pause and consider Moore's three-volume work. Discussion of it is difficult because of the complexity of its internal time structure in relation to the times at which Moore wrote it. It was planned in the last few years of the first decade of the century, was published between 1911 and 1914, refers to, principally, the years its author spent in residence in Dublin (1901-1911), though it goes back further, and ends with Moore leaving Dublin when Ave, the first volume, was about to come out and when Vale, the third, was still to be finished. Within its singular structure, Moore employs Wagnerian techniques, especially in the use of leitmotif but he also taps incidents from the life of Wagner, a visit to Bayreuth and parts of the Niebelungen myth in order to supplement his own narrative. Although this may sound affected and cultivated, it must also be said that Moore, who at one point identifies his persona with Wagner's heroic Siegfried by ascribing the musical heroic motif to himself, finds space to mock these pretensions. Calling to see Edward Martyn, he whistles the Siegfried motif under his window, Martyn recognises him, invites him in, but points out that he was off-key. A musical analogy is apt for Hail and Farewell since individual phrases, themes and ideas,

previously heard in isolation from one another, fit into an harmonious and ordered climax in which one perceives the masterly composition of the work as one experiences the resolution of its syncretic techniques.

Although many forms of Messianic imagery are present in the work with the author being a Siegfried figure, a Pauline figure and the figure of the deposed 'King' of Ireland, Charles Stewart Parnell, there is also a constant undercutting of the nobility of this theme. Moore subjects himself to as much mockery as he does others, even 'confessing' to impotence in Vale in order to cast off his image of philanderer and to concentrate on his new role as the St. Paul of the gospel of personality. This same self-effacement also provides him with carte-blanche to launch new attacks upon old friends and enemies since he can claim that the harshest punishment is for himself. This is not his only method of self-exoneration: in the 'Overture' he ascribes the whole work to Erin (or Banva, Ireland's name in Pre-Druidic times), 'thinly disguised by the ²¹peurile name of George Moore'. And at other strategic points in the text Moore dissociates himself from authorship and from the responsibility for his destiny, claiming that extra-personal forces speak through him or to him. Another major claim to disowning authorial responsibility comes in his praise of Yeats as the main motivating force in Irish letters; Synge and Lady Gregory, he says, owe their literary careers to Yeats' promptings and Moore adds,

perhaps I should not have gone to Ireland if I had not met Yeats; and if I had not gone to Ireland I should not have written The Lake or The Untilled Field, or the book I am now writing. '22

The joke is that the book he was then writing contained a heavily satirical portrait of Yeats.

23

Wayne Shumaker, in his discussion of Hail and Farewell

argues that Moore's sole purpose of liberating Ireland from the grasp of the Catholic Church gives the book a strength of unity and purpose lacking in most autobiographical works. It is true that Moore organizes his autobiography around this theme, but its success lies as much in other aspects of the work such as his brilliant characterisations, his sustained conversational tone and his powers of describing the natural landscape. Shumaker's suggestion is a worthy one since it does indicate that Hail and Farewell is as much a history of a nation as it is of an individual. The public and private worlds are presented as having influences upon each other, and Moore, like many later Irish autobiographers examines the relationship of man and nation.

And so Hail and Farewell is all of these things and yet more, for amongst the Wagnerian touches, and the portrait of a new nation with its cultural leaders, alongside the too-lengthy discussion of the Catholic Church and art, is a more or less complete and traditional autobiography with its chronological sequence divided up, re-arranged and re-distributed throughout a text that ostensibly covers little more than ten years of Moore's life.

The success of Hail and Farewell helped to spawn the vast numbers of Irish memoirs that were to follow it: Moore's mixture of reminiscence and reverie, with a little fact and a good measure of fiction, not only proved attractive to a wide readership but also influenced the style of subsequent autobiographers and, to a degree, of later fiction. The use of witty dialogue as a means of propelling narrative seems to have influenced Gogarty's style of writing; Moore's free-ranging monologues and his portrait of parts of a city may even have been an influence upon Joyce's Ulysses (Moore was certain that

this was so); his rationalisation of the typographical lay out for the uniform edition is part of a whole tradition that looks back to Sterne and forwards to Joyce and beyond, while his fluidity of style is detectable in writers such as Beckett and Virginia Woolf. Moore does not hinder the progress of his monologues and dialogues with unnecessary reference to their location or circumstances. Instead, significant thoughts or phrases are marked off by the slightest of gestures or settings which give a surprising amount of force to their impact. Here is an example from Ave:

and if the fact be borne in mind that from that day forward I never seemed to have doubted that I was needed in Ireland, and that the words: Highly favoured am I amongst authors! rose to my lips instinctively, as I opened my gate one morning in May, for the true significance of the words was not perceived by me whilst I worked at Natures bidding etc. 24

[my emphasis]

The very difficulty in breaking off the text demonstrates the fluidity of style. The thought 'Highly favoured am I amongst authors!' is given an unobtrusive but dramatic context since it occurs as Moore's hand goes towards the garden gate, yet the typography, which ignores setting the reported speech in quotation marks and indenting it below the line; and the gesture, itself minimal, allow mind and eye to run on, unimpeded, to the significance of the passage. The device of marking off a thought or phrase in conversation by running it contemporaneously with an action described by a present participle is used to varied and subtle effect in Hail and Farewell, keeping the action from being too internalised yet also keeping the external world at bay. Virginia Woolf in To The Lighthouse continues the use of the device; here is Mrs. Ramsay:

No, she thought, putting together some of the pictures he had cut out - a refrigerator, a mowing machine, a

gentleman in evening dress - children never forget.

and again, at the apex of her social triumph in 'The Window':

'Andrew', she said, 'hold your plate lower, or I shall spill it'. (The Boeuf en Daube was a perfect triumph). Here, she felt, putting the spoon down, was the still space that lies about the heart of things, where one could move or rest; could wait now (they were all helped) listening; could then, like a hawk (etc)

As with a number of modern novelists, Moore is prepared to experiment with the role of the narrator, he is equivocal at times, his sophisticated humour often relies upon the reader realising that he is sacrificing truth for humorous effect. He makes no claims, like his precursors Barrington and Carleton, to a good and accurately truthful memory, and small indications like his calling Memoirs of my Dead Life a 'novel' should signal to the reader a need for vigilance.

A selection of passages from the text of Hail and Farewell will amplify some of the more general points about Moore's autobiographical style and technique. In Ave, for example, he offers a number of seemingly unconnected time sequences and events. One, of which the reader is always implicitly aware, is the actual time of writing. He also refers to a visit paid ten years previously by Edward Martyn to King's Bench Walk when they discussed the Irish language; he then describes, as though it were occurring, a prolonged meditation upon Ireland which he experienced as a result of Martyn's visit. Five years or so after this meditation has elapsed, that is in early 1899, Martyn makes another visit, this time with Yeats; Ave relates Moore's visit to Ireland for The Countess Cathleen and The Heather Field, during which he suspects he has had a vision of Cathleen ni Houlihan in Martyn's demesne, and, as the book draws to a close he suddenly realises, in Ebury Street, that he is a pro-Boer and therefore anti-English. Framing all these events in a rhetorical

structure, he confirms what the reader had already begun to expect from the pressure of events:

[I], like many another Irishman, had come to think I was immune from the disease that overtakes all Irishmen sooner or later - that moment in Edward's Park was enough for me, and ever since the disease has been multiplying in secret: the incident in Ebury Street was only a symptom ... A moment after I was asking myself if the microbe were sown that evening in Edward's Park, or if the introduction of it could be traced back to the afternoon in Victoria Street, when Edward and Yeats had called to ask me to join their attempt to give a National Literary Theatre to Ireland. It might be traced further back still, to the evening in the Temple when Edward had told me that he would like to write his plays in Irish: and there arose up in me the memory of that midnight when I wandered among the courts and halls, dreaming of Ireland, of the story of wild country life that I might write. 25

Moore describes this as a moment of dramatic discovery; retrospect reveals that his past experiences were forcing him in one special direction - westwards to Ireland - all of the seemingly haphazard incidents of the past are in fact part of a pattern. Such a technique, as is the case with all autobiography, needs a knowledge or an intimation of the ultimate outcome of events. In Ave it is clear to the reader that circumstances are pushing Moore towards Ireland, it may have been clear to Moore at the time, it definitely was so when he wrote Ave, but to play his hand too soon would spoil this part of the fiction. Ave even contains anticipations of the theme of Salve - that art will not thrive in a Catholic state. En route for Bayreuth, he and Edward pass through Holland:

the train sped through flat meadows intersected by drains, for the country, once marsh, had been redeemed by the labour of the Dutchmen - indefatigable labour, I said. When they drove the Catholics out of Holland, art and Protestantism began together. 26

Another forward echo is to be found when he and Martyn argue about going to Mass:

If you aren't a Catholic, why don't you become a Protestant? And he began pushing me from behind.

I have told you before that one may become a Catholic,
but one discovers oneself a Protestant. 27

Immediately following this incident is a very significant account of Moore's long reveries on the way to Mass in Cort concerning the Masses of his childhood in Carnacun. The outcome is that he decides that the society of his childhood days is now an unredeemable feature of the past and that what has come to replace it is a poor substitute:

My eyes sought vainly the long dark cloak of married life, nor did I succeed in finding an old man in knee-breeches and worsted stockings, nor a girl drawing a shawl over her head. The Irish language is inseparable from these things, I said, and it has gone. 28

His own experience is thus allied with Ireland's experience: he can recall the days of his childhood but he can not relive them because they are past. Ireland can recall the days when Irish was the native tongue, though she cannot reinstate them, they, too, belong to the past. It is not a lament for the days of the Ascendancy at Carnacun, even though it is tinged with nostalgia, but rather it is a bald recognition that time passes, can be recalled but cannot be re-embodied. The logical consequences of this for the Irish Literary Revival Moore does not expand upon at this stage, but the sense that the passage of time is a process of loss registers itself.

His deft manipulation of tenses can convince the reader that he is recalling word for word, or thought for thought, what happened in the recent past. The method is engaging in practice since it tends to keep the reader from distancing himself from those events and from realizing Moore's calculating part in reconstructing them. In the following passage, apart from an array of different tenses and moods, there is a good example of an author using the autobiographical act as a means of self-examination, he is in the middle of a

conversation with AE on the subject of how Western man's deeds move in one direction while his ideas move in the opposite direction:

A sudden thought darting across my mind left my sentence unfinished, and I asked myself what manner of man I was. The question had often been asked before, had always remained unanswered; but that day sitting under my apple-tree, it seemed to me that I had suddenly come upon the secret lair in which the soul hides itself. An extraordinarily clear and inflexible moral sense rose up and confronted me, and, looking down my past life, I was astounded to see how dependent my deeds had always been upon my ideas. I had never been able to do anything that I thought wrong, or my conscience inspired my books.

He gives a synopsis of this in terms of his early novels, then says:

feeling that I had learnt to know myself at last, I rose from the seat, and looked round, thinking that in AE as in myself thought and action are at one. Alike, I said, in essentials though to the casual observer regions apart. 29

The passage is of cardinal importance, the dichotomy between deed and idea is the major fault in the Celtic temperament and Moore, realising something about himself through observing his soul in 'looking down his past life', also realises that he is further estranged from the Celtic inheritance he had crossed the sea to claim. The moment is epiphanic, revelation swamps his self control, as is suggested by the impulsive thought 'darting' across his mind, and by his involuntary breaking of the conversation and rising from his seat. Artistically this is an impressive passage, falling at a moment when his original purpose in returning to Ireland is becoming undermined by a deeper knowledge of the country and as his true role, as a Messiah-Voltaire, is being advanced by AE. The astounding thing is that the whole passage could be entirely fictional, and even if it has its basis in truth, it must be greatly enhanced by Moore's novelistic technique: the chances of him

accurately remembering such lengthy chains of thought and the actions that accompany them are few, as must be the case with a great deal that passes in the course of the three volumes. Again, this is further evidence of the artistic triumph of Hail and Farewell in which Moore creates a plausible fictional surface to decorate the literary examination of self.

The estrangement between Moore and his brother, Maurice, the Colonel was, biographically speaking, felt as a major loss by Moore, and in the mock seriousness of their long dialogues one detects a real seriousness at times. It disturbs his equilibrium as long suppressed memories of unhappy childhood days at Oscott rise up into his mind and these involuntary memories prey upon his creative powers since, in dictating The Lake to his secretary, Miss Gough, he remembers a boyhood incident with his brother near Lough Carra, and he loses his narrative thread:

It was after fifty years had gone by that this long-forgotten episode floated up out of the depths.

I was as detestable in the beginning as I am in the end, I said, like one speaking in his sleep; and catching Miss Gough's eyes again, I laughed a little. I'm absent-minded this afternoon. 30

Here Moore is overwhelmed by memories of his past, just as he had been subject to an epiphanic moment when looking down his past life, but aside from this, there is also a calm and very bold deliberation about his life as recounted in Hail and Farewell. Though the public announcement of his change of faith caused him some second thoughts, it was the boldness of the project and the sense of having made a great discovery that seduced him. Because there is that all-important overlap between the beginning of the writing of the autobiography and the tail end of the events that it relates, one can consider that Moore's self discovery, his discoveries about Ireland, the

Catholic Church and art were conditioned by the need to create the perfect end to the autobiography. The proximity of event and exposition meant that it was quite possible for Moore, in the manner of Wilde, to turn this stage of his life into a work of art in order to perfect this 'sacred book'; for Moore's identification of himself with Siegfried in the climax to Vale is a transmutation of his self and his purpose into a figure and destiny from the worlds of myth and art. This he makes clear:

I realised more acutely than I had ever done before, that Hail and Farewell could not be abandoned for a vineyard. I have been led to write it, by whom I know not, but I have been led by the hand like a little child. And so it was borne in upon me at the same time that a sacrifice was demanded of me, by whom I knew not, nor for what purpose, but I felt I must leave my native land and my friends for the sake of the book; a work of liberation I divined it to be - liberation from ritual and priests, a book of precept and example, a turning point in Ireland's destiny....31

Putting aside a consideration of the humour in the conclusion to Hail and Farewell, it can be seen to have a strongly and fruitfully ambiguous ending. Of course there is little that is ambiguous about Moore leaving the country on a grey, bleak February morning, but it must be remembered that it was also in Vale that Moore turned to where most autobiographies begin, to his childhood. This seems to have been a sad time for him, the memory of himself as a barbarous, cruel boy is an uncomfortable one for him to face, though face it he does. It is a master-stroke to present a prolonged passage about his childhood, traditionally the most buoyant and enjoyable part of an autobiography, just before the end, traditionally the weakest or most difficult part to write of an autobiography. It stiffens the stuff of the conclusion and stimulates the reader's attention but it also serves a thematic purpose. One recalls his memories of the Carnacun chapel as he travelled to

Gort and the weighty statement that his boyhood memories were of an age inseparable from the Irish language 'and it has gone'. He accepts that his childhood is past and that his mission to give back to Ireland her language is a futile one; it, too, has gone; and though autobiography may bring back part of the past that, again, has gone. Now Moore himself goes from Ireland. There is a grey and bleak sense of flat recognition that all things pass and cannot be redeemed. However, Moore is leaving in order to complete and bestow upon Ireland his masterpiece of liberation: a good deal of Salve was written; there was a sketch, 'chapter for chapter, down to the very end' of Vale. Ave was about to come out and a new chapter of Irish literary history was about to start. Just as his childhood appears in the final stages, so does the end of the book contain its own beginning. A sense of renewal is in fruitful tension with the rather more bleak view that things pass away.

One of the satisfying elements of Hail and Farewell is that despite appearing to deal only with Moore's sojourn in Dublin, it is in fact quite as teleological an autobiography as one could wish for: Moore chooses a period in his mature life, coalesces present with past, concluding with a movement that accepts the past as irretrievable but leads one back in to the celebration of those events that make up the work. The resolution is aesthetic in nature, his act gives shape and form to his life, but this is not to say it is restrictive. His interest is in the plenitude and diversity of existence, his mission is to uproot a state of mind ridden by ritual and priests and plant in its place an instinctual way of life, lived in the fulness of the senses and intellect. It might be described by Olney as an example of the autobiography duplex, Moore's self, as presented in the work, is indeed greater than

the sum of its parts. Although he relates at some length his experience of the Irish Literary Theatre Society he can do so 'from a detached standpoint, and include himself in the pageant'; events or institutions, established institutions like the Catholic Church or developing ones like the Irish Dramatic Movement, never supercede the importance of his essential personality because, as Hail and Farewell asserts throughout, personality for Moore is all-important.

Although the narrative and chronological sequence of Hail and Farewell is clearly discernible it is nevertheless presented as a complex and intricate pattern; the work is a decidedly literary one with Moore's characteristic emphasis falling heavily upon style. But, as a group, the autobiographical works to be discussed next, those which deal with the political and ultimately bloody struggle for Irish independence, might suggest themselves to be the very opposite of Hail and Farewell. Their interest might be said to rest not in their literary merits but in the testimony that they bear to modern Irish history, and their centres of interest may appear to lie outside the self. Roy Pascal in Design and Truth in Autobiography classified works which focus upon political or public events as memoirs, placing them a degree below autobiography proper; and, in James Olney's terms, such works would almost inevitably be 'autobiographies of the single metaphor', merely describing and recording the dominant function or interest of the author and not re-creating a self that is greater than the sum of its parts. But to write about the public, active self requires a special skill of its own, not always so demanding as the presentation of private, contemplative self, admittedly, but nevertheless not to be dismissed lightly either. Yeats, for instance, in 'The Bounty

of Sweden' uses tactful self-effacement when tackling the question of public recognition of his literary gifts, a tone that would be unsuitable in, say, 'Hodos Chameliontos'. With the following works by Maud Gonne, James Stephens, Ernie O'Malley and, to a lesser degree, Tom Barry, the whole issue of how an essentially active and involved public figure shapes an autobiographical work in order to dovetail the personal story into the witnessing of, or participation in, historical event will be examined.

Maud Gonne MacBride was so energetic a figure that it is difficult to characterise her life briefly: the Dictionary of Irish Biography opts for the title 'Revolutionary' but this can not do justice to her time as a Dublin belle, her briefer spell as an actress, her role as orator, her part in fighting evictions in the Land War, her time as newspaper editor, her occult experiences, her conversion to Roman Catholicism, her part in Prison Relief work, nor to her influence upon Yeats. In fact, those who look to Autobiographies and to A Servant of the Queen for further enlightenment about the unrequited love affair will be disappointed: each writer takes a back seat in the autobiography of the other. Yeats minimized her role in his life when he revised the first draft of his 'Autobiography' for publication criticizing her harshly for her commitment to politics, while she subjected 'Willie' Yeats to gentle mockery and only discussed him at any length as a young, poetic member of the I.R.B. There are some racy and unjust passages in A Servant of the Queen: the satire of Lady Gregory and Annie Horniman as love-sick rivals for Yeats' affections and her comment that visitors coming back from Coole 'seemed ... less passionately interested in the Nationalist struggle and more worried about their own lack of money' are not wholly

representative of her literary ability and should not prejudice one's view of the whole book. Her response to Yeats' criticism of her single-mindedness is, all things considered, restrained; she simply argues that her method produced results and that that is why she resisted the lure of the stage:

I knew my own weakness and how, when I got interested in anything I was capable of forgetting everything else, - house building, evicted tenants, political prisoners, even the fight against the British Empire, might all disappear in the glamour of the stage. 35

She does not contend Yeats' point, she admits it to be true yet finds virtues therein to which he was blind:

I always realised I was not a leader because I could work effectively only by intense concentration of my whole being on some particular point to the exclusion of all others. 36

Her counter-thrust against Yeats' own political ineffectiveness is gentle, even self critical, when it comes:

I never indulged in self analysis and often used to get impatient with Willie Yeats, who, like all writers, was terribly introspective and tried to make me so. "I have no time to think of myself", I told him, which was literally true, for, unconsciously perhaps, I had redoubled work to avoid thought. 37

Despite the self-confessed total submission to social issues and the emphasis in her life upon doing, rather than theorizing, Maud Gonne displays the skills of a writer herself in her autobiography. Certainly it has its faults: she is too prolix on the relatively unimportant matter of the French background to Irish Nationalism or she allows the benefit of hindsight to colour and to spice the retelling of past events to too high a degree, but she shows an adroitness for autobiographical form. For instance, though abiding by a roughly chronological scheme in a work crammed full of exciting events, she can also expand the content to develop subsidiary themes at certain points. One example is in the opening chapter where she gives her earliest memories including her mother's death

and her father's words at the time, 'You must never be afraid of anything, even of death'. The subject of fear is amplified and discussed with the conclusion that:

If you have no fear, conscious or subconscious,
I believe things will hardly ever harm you.

and, remembering how Yeats makes the struggle of his will against his lack of confidence a major subject in his earlier autobiography, Maud Gonne's attitude to fear is starkly delivered:

I deliberately conquered fear, and I used to be
afraid of many things 38

Such a facility not only to recollect events in sequence but to write more generally of allied emotional development (especially in so uncompromising a fashion) is the mark of a good autobiographer because it implies an holistic and objective perception of his or her life. She also lifts the work out of the category of mere recollection and recitation by suggesting the infinite possibilities of other directions which her life could have taken, not the least of which was the chance of a brilliant life as a socialite in Dublin Castle circles, but the book owes its single greatest debt to the presence of her father, Tommy, which is felt throughout. Just as his influence upon his daughter was considerable, so is his influence upon the shape of the work considerable. His words to Maud concerning fear are behind much of the bravery and daring of her later exploits, his discovery of the deep injustice of British Rule makes a great impact upon her and the event of his death, soon afterwards provides an emotional high-point in the work which is handled with skill, restraint and optimism by his daughter. Before his death through typhoid fever, Maud had dreamt of a funeral procession:

The dream was vivid; when nurse brought me tea,

I asked her what it meant to dream of a funeral.
"Dreams go by contrary", she said cheerfully, "You
will hear of a wedding." 39

Maud Conne then remarks, with simplicity, that Tommy was buried alongside his wife in Tongham graveyard. This shows confidence in her art of story telling as well as her concern to keep Tommy's presence as something of a continuum in the autobiography: it is notable that he makes an appearance towards the end of the book when his voice warns Maud that her proposed marriage with John MacBride will not be a happy one and it is also notable that her refusal to heed his advice heralds the breaking off of the autobiography. One wonders if she means it to be registered that her conscious decision to opt for a short but merry life with MacBride represents a necessary transferring from Tommy's influence to an independence that was to be beleaguered with troubles? The book stops short of 1916 and MacBride's part in the Uprising and his death, and while one is disappointed that the autobiography is so incomplete, one is grateful for a work that combines eventful narrative and literary flair and that proves that a life devoted to crusading action and not introspection does not negate the possibility of a reflective account and examination of the advantages and disadvantages of that life-style.

Irish war memoirs are plentiful in number, so much so
40
that only a representative few can be looked at here, but those that have been chosen devote themselves almost entirely to the fighting that took place in 1916 and after. The first, James
41
Stephens' The Insurrection in Dublin, is hardly a war memoir, being written by a non combatant, and is only autobiographical by virtue of the fact that it is written in quasi-journal form but it is included because it can offer comparisons with the

more typical war memoirs of hardened soldiers. As a chance witness to the event, Stephens has little prior knowledge of it and had made no deliberate choice to be involved, so it follows that his work will have a more detached and more determinedly impartial quality than those by willing participators. That said, one can still detect in the progress of Stephens' journal that a growing understanding of the nature and significance of the insurrection brings with it a swift and clear-sighted judgement of both the importance of the event and his own responses to it. It is also of interest to students of Stephens' work since the rebellion so profoundly stirred his imagination that it rekindled his old and dormant ideas concerning Ireland and led him into a renewed period of creative writing, as Augustine Martin puts it:

during the ten years that followed he devoted his energies to the imaginative recovery of Ireland's poetic and mythological past. There can be little doubt that the impact of the military and political upheaval provided him with a fresh inspiration and pointed the new direction that he had been hoping for..... 42

Stephens was staunchly Republican in his political views, a fact that does not greatly bias his role as reporter and commentator upon the Easter Rebellion. This is remarkable since he had little time to formulate a reaction to it for it is the immediacy of The Insurrection in Dublin that strikes its readers firstly. This is due to its diary-style format which relates the events more or less as they happen, though there can be lapses of a day or two between an event and the reporting of it; this he regards as a possible merit:

The pages hereafter were written day to day during the Insurrection that followed Holy Week, and, as a hasty impression of a most singular time, the author allows them to stand without any emendation. 43

With the city's functions so entirely disrupted by the turmoil following upon public holiday and the fighting, newspapers and

official information were excluded for days. Gossip and rumour had filled the vacuum and part of Stephen's achievement is to sift it carefully, recognise its importance, its shortcomings, its dangers and its role as a barometer of public response to the Volunteers' bold enterprise. This is no mean achievement, for as AE wrote to John Quinn:

People got a kind of dilated consciousness from the sound of guns, bombs, shells and the burning of the city, and in this dilated consciousness the most extraordinary rumours took root and people did the most amazing things and believed the wildest tales which were pure fiction but were no wilder than the reality. 44

Stephens even musters up humour when he claims to have heard a rumour that 'there were one hundred German submarines lying in Stephens' Green pond'.
45

Although the diary form involves necessarily imperfect knowledge, lacking as it does suitable information and retrospect, it has the advantage of being a faithful recording of how the city reacted to the news of the Uprising. It is clear that feeling was divided between sympathy, scorn and loathing and once martial law had been declared and gun boats had begun their way up the Liffey, Stephens weighs public sympathy:

It is considered now (writing a day or two afterwards) that Dublin was entirely against the Volunteers, but on the day of which I write (Wednesday) no such certainty could be put forward

Most of the female opinion I heard was not alone unfavourable but actively and viciously hostile to the rising. 46

As time progresses and as Dublin realizes that the rising is more serious and better organised than had been imagined, Stephens gets a slightly clearer picture of what has happened but is still greatly perturbed by the lack of ascertainable fact. He tentatively commits himself to the Volunteers' side because of his Labour sympathies and he attributes the growth

of the Citizens' Army to the depth of feeling that burgeoned after the callousness of the employers and the brutality of the police during the 1913 strikes and Lock-Out. He is not simply perturbed at the lack of fear among Dubliners for the death which pervades the streets, but is also concerned at their apparent lack of care. History proves him correct: it was the executions and not the bravery of the insurgents that released a flood of popular sympathy. By the time the Republican flag atop Jacob's Biscuit Factory is lowered and the rising is over, Stephens views are clarified: it is the Volunteers who represent true Irish Republicanism and not John Redmond:

It happened because the leader of the Irish Party misrepresented his people in the English House of Parliament. On the day of the declaration of the war between England and Germany he took the Irish case, weighty with eight centuries of history and tradition, and he threw it out of the window

and he is unequivocal in apportioning culpability:

He is the immediate cause of this our latest Insurrection the ultimate blame for the trouble between the two countries does not fall against Ireland. 47

Even at such close quarters, Stephens is able to seize upon matters subsequently seen by historians as crucial: he asks why Eoin MacNeill had resigned immediately prior to the rising and what had happened to the various promises of reinforcements. His opinion that the German part in the affair was negligible is correct as is his estimation that, despite James Connolly's exemplary leadership, the importance of the Labour movement's Irish Citizens' Army in the terms of numbers was limited. He sees and fears the bigotry, reinforced by arms shipments, of the North-East, castigates the Irish Party for not tackling this problem and, on top of this rapid but shrewd political analysis of the events, quite remarkably

anticipates in his Foreword, the subsequent English attitude to Ireland's liberty:

if England allows Ireland to formally make peace with her that peace will be lasting, everlasting, but if the liberty you give us is all half-measures, and distrusts and stinginess, then what is scarcely worth accepting will hardly be worth thanking you for. 48

Part of the enduring success of The Insurrection in Dublin is attributable to Stephens' skill as a writer and reporter, to his knowledge of Dublin and its people and to his personal acquaintance with some of the leading combatants. Part must be due to the fact that it provides a good supplement to orthodox histories of the period while a great part of its success is on account of his judicious use of the diary form. He allows a slight time to lapse before committing his thoughts to paper, perhaps in order to cogitate, perhaps to cool his feelings, but he retains the sense of immediacy which such a literary form can bring. His sifting of rumour and his alighting upon probabilities alone has the result of making the book trustworthy. Where it differs from the retrospective memoirs of fighting men is that it is written from the point of view of a passive witness eager to piece together scraps of knowledge of an event in progress and, until glimpses of the truth of the matter can be achieved, Stephens is tentative about releasing sympathy or support. This final point is of the greatest importance in relation to the two autobiographical reports of the Anglo-Irish war about to be considered, the authors of which were open to the criticism that, because the I.R.A. was an unofficial organisation, their position was that of criminals or traitors. Both authors, however, had pledged themselves to the Provisional Republican Government and so openly ignored even the possibility that such charges were valid. Their aloof, silent rejection of the likelihood of

being open to criticism characterizes their attitude to war-like activities in their autobiographies - put crudely, rebels can't be apologists. Neither Ernie O'Malley in On Another Man's Wound nor Tom Barry in Guerilla Days in Ireland admit to the possibility that their actions were illegal or immoral, to do so would be to give valuable ground to challengers; equally, neither man could have afforded to show hesitancy or deviation in the war against the ruthlessly powerful enemy on account of their own responsibilities to men under their command. Even the mild degree of caution and reserve exhibited by James Stephens would have been a flaw in their fighting duties and would equally flaw their purpose in writing their memoirs.

On its appearance, O'Malley's book brought its author some acclaim, Frank O'Connor, for one, thought him worthy of a place in the Irish Academy:

O'Faolain and myself had been trying to get Ernie O'Malley elected, we had a drink with Higgins and then went out to Yeats' house. Yeats greeted us with his Renaissance cardinal's chuckle and asked: 'What do you two young rascals mean by trying to fill my Academy with gunmen?' 50

O'Malley was elected in 1947 to the Irish Academy of Letters vindicating O'Connor's sound judgement of his abilities: he was no mere inarticulate fighting man but was instead obviously well read, he acquired considerable knowledge of Irish mythology, folk lore and popular ballads and poetry, his early training as a medical student and his reading in military tactics and strategy primed his intellect, and when Erskine Childers urged him to write out his experiences, partly for propaganda purposes, this mental fermentation was distilled into powerful and thoughtful memoirs. As Peter Costello writes:

His book On Another Man's Wound is one of the few memoirs of the period, and the only one which can be read as a fine piece of writing. 51

O'Malley perceived that the essential nature of his I.R.A. service experiences was dramatic and accordingly chose a method of relating them that would enhance the sense of excitement and impart the constant threat of danger under which he lived:

The relationship of events is traced as the situation developed. I have endeavoured to explain action as I then saw it and, and as far as was possible to avoid all retrospective realization of the implication of events. 52

This demanding feat he achieves in a narrative that moves rapidly through his childhood and through Easter 1916 into his active involvement in the Nationalist struggle. It is interspersed with excerpts from his own verse and more importantly from popular songs and ballads. This is appropriate since he stresses throughout that the simple support and loyalty of the people was essential to an Irish victory and that the common person's part in suffering reprisals and brutality from the Black and Tans and Auxiliaries was no less heroic than the part played by the combatants themselves. These same people were the repositories of the Irish mythological and cultural tradition which they kept alive predominantly through word of mouth:

Old Devitt and his friends were like others I had met in this stretch of Clare and in the Rosses. Their sense of literature was on the lips and in their faultless memory. In craggy Carren an old woman recited the whole of The Midnight Court for me. 53

The constant references to the mythological and cultural background strengthens the idea that the I.R.A. were fighting for a deeply rooted popular national identity. O'Malley recognises the power of this tradition in modern life too and credits it with an influence in day to day matters:

The Black Pig of legend had shown himself. His huge

bulk, bristling spine ridges and wicked glaring eyes had been seen on dark nights beyond Elpin... Around the fires I heard versions of St. Columcille's prophecies. The Dark shadow of the Pig loomed through them. 54

So palpable is the beast's presence to him that he decides to 'call it out' which he does to no avail. Even among the rigours and planning of warfare, luck, or (is he suggesting?) the de Danaan, played a part in his own well being. Greater than human forces may have protected some of his adversaries:

I was at the taking of the Ballytrain barracks... a policeman who had been praying during the attack was blown by the explosion of our gelignite through a partition wall without injury. 55 [my emphasis]

It is typical of O'Malley's style that he makes no direct comment upon these matters merely leaving them to stand for themselves since he does the same with the subject of the chivalric code in guerilla warfare. As a newcomer to the field of battle he tried to follow this noble ideal: 'I had a mixture of respect for law and the idea the other fellow should fire first', the penalty for which was a severed artery in the wrist sustained in his first encounter. This sense of honour was upheld, again at a high price, when, meeting unexpectedly with a solitary and unarmed British officer in a field, he declines to shoot or capture him. Later it becomes clear that he had permitted a Brigadier-General to escape. Yet O'Malley also related how, when he himself was suddenly faced with two police tenders in open countryside and without cover, he was allowed to inch away backwards because the police mistakenly thought him a decoy for an ambush. He draws conclusions upon neither incident, they simply stand in balance with one another and, characteristic of On Another Man's Wound, the reader is left to judge.

Authorial presence is kept at a constant and dispassionate minimum throughout, something rare in autobio-

graphical writing, and although Childers urged him to write of his horrific maltreatment in Dublin Castle for propaganda purposes there is no attempt to manipulate the readers' responses in any crude fashion even though the temptation to do so must have been almost overwhelming. The passage concerning this brutality was omitted in the first, British, edition of 1936, but any attempted charge of blatant propagandist writing against O'Malley simply does not adhere. He does not write emotively but with a distance from the events that allows him simply to catalogue his beating by a British Army major and captain, his torture dealt by a red hot poker that burnt his eyebrows and eyelashes, the breaking of his nose, the loosening of his teeth, the Russian roulette inflicted upon him and the fact that when he did emerge close friends barely recognised him. Indeed comment upon this is reserved until he discovers that a raid has unearthed his note books and, realising that his position as a member of General Head Quarters Staff will be made known to his unwitting captors he ironically writes:

I knew I had got by very lightly in the Castle; now
I remembered stories of deliberate torture practiced
thoroughly. 56

This dispassionate style serves two major functions: it exonerates O'Malley from charges of misrepresentation and propaganda by its impassiveness and it gives an official and legitimate tone to passages that describe the author and his flying column on the offensive. This is essential because that offensive involved very sensitive issues: it brought reprisals upon those whom they were trying to liberate, counter-reprisal-reprisals destroyed many houses that were of architectural importance belonging to the ruling Anglo-Irish classes, attacks on enemy trucks and tenders sometimes killed the Irishmen carried in them to deter such ambushes, and the

execution of British Officers, not ranks, carried out to stop unofficial executions of Irish prisoners held in custody was also an inescapable measure against terror. A neutral tone and style suggest the necessity of duty and the inevitability of such issues, the most disturbing of which to face the reader is O'Malley's description of the capture and execution of three British soldiers, for which he was responsible, since rarely is a reader ever faced with a true narrative regarding the putting to death of one man by another. Again the manner of his behaviour is reflected and enacted by the manner of the literary style: no excuses or justifications are offered, the prose is tight-lipped and controlled and emotion is held at bay despite the high feeling of members of the column ('They were fighting ruthlessness and they did not want to give mercy'). Chivalry allows him to permit last letters to be written, sealed and delivered without censorship, the victims' valuables are dispatched to an officer whom they had specified and he offers them the chance of seeing ministers of their own religion, which they decline. And while this contrasts sharply with the notoriously callous form of execution carried out by the British under the guise of 'shot while trying to escape', it is a contrast that the author does not draw. He displays an objective ponderousness and an imaginative sympathy which, remembering his own experiences in captivity, is an informed sympathy: 'It seemed easier to face one's own execution than to have to shoot others', yet he undermines the display of calculating decisiveness with a hint of his own confusion:

"None of us want to do it", I said, "but I must think of our men". I could not see the ultimate implications of our proposed action. 57

And this is as far as he goes in examining these ultimate implications, it is left to the reader to form his own

judgements of the author who deliberately steps out of his own narrative at crucial points. The placing of the account of the executions within three pages of the end of the work means that previous events act as evidence and O'Malley puts himself on trial: whatever one feels about the moral implications of his actions in both war and executions one cannot deny the outstandingly honest and open gesture of the autobiography.

On Another Man's Wound charts the extremes to which an armed insurrectionist may be required to go out of duty to his country and to those under his command. To do this without alienating an audience, the overwhelming majority of which will never have experienced anything like its subject matter and may be predisposed to judge him severely, is a literary accomplishment in its own right. Yet some may argue that O'Malley's memoir owes its success to the events themselves and not to his handling of them. There could be a case for arguing too that he fails to write true autobiography since there is no suitable image, metaphor or myth of the self. While this is undeniable, it is yet a misreading of the work since it is, in this respect, an anti-autobiography or a deliberately non-literary autobiography. O'Malley not only wilfully subordinates personality to service of a cause but also clearly points to the great danger that a mode of apprehending self through a myth or an image of the self would have presented for him in his way of life. In fact he was in the rare position of hearing others effect that transformation of his self into legend since he became the subject of local folk-lore, his name making its way into song, and he resisted it:

Many of us could hardly see ourselves for the legends built up around us. The legends helped to give others an undue sense of our ability or experience, but they hid our real selves; when I saw myself as clearly as I could in terms of myself, I resented the

legend. It made me other than myself and attuned to act to standards that were not my own. That was different from the other subordination of oneself to the movement. 59

The constant threat of capture and death and the responsibility for a body of men's lives precluded anything other than the most practicable and most lucid vision of the self and its functions in his lifetime, why then should the history of that life, especially when it aims to follow mimetically the progress it took, alter those circumstances?

Despite the necessity for this unapologetic literary contumacy, O'Malley can write with personal insight and with self criticism. Here, for instance, he fears that his bookishness further contributes to his separation from the normal domestic, Irish way of life that he defends and champions:

Going through the country I often felt as would a traveller on a railway journey as he looked at the passing life about him, dissociated from it. The people had to live the round of the soil and solve its problems of economic and living relationship, which were more living than my relation to the fighting effort only; beneath the will necessary for the action and decision needed for command was my other less resolute and retiring self. 60

This 'less resolute and retiring self' may also be responsible for those long passages of description of the beauties of the Irish countryside through which he tramped during the changing seasons. He devotes an entire chapter to the natural world and rural life in the section of the work titled 'Gothic', and he displays a keen and observant eye, perhaps in an attempt to counter-balance his portrait of himself as an aggressive and ruthless warrior. In general, On Another Man's Wound achieves a degree of introspection, self-knowledge, and an awareness of the self located in the past not only without recourse to a myth or metaphor of the self but also in a highly dramatic manner that refuses to let retrospective cloud the development

of that self. This alone should guarantee it a place among the finest specimens of modern Irish autobiography.

O'Malley's work is a rarity, it cannot be often that solidly and literary skills meet so fruitfully; Guerilla Days in Ireland, the memoir of 'assertive, aggressive ...
61
fearless Tom Barry' is more representative of this type of autobiographical writing because its aims and accomplishments are more modest than O'Malley's. Barry's work is of the simplest form of autobiography focusing almost entirely upon his experience as commandant of the West Cork Brigade of the I.R.A. in the 'Tan War', it is nevertheless powerfully written and enthrallingly interesting within these confines. The events he recounts overlap with other accounts of the war: Sean O'Faolain refers to the book in Vive Moi, expressing admiration for the achievements of Barry and his ilk, while the closest relation to the work is On Another Man's Wound because towards the end of the war O'Malley was made responsible for organising a Southern Division that would include Barry's Brigade. Apart from referring to the same events in places, these two works bear certain other similarities: both men were stirred to national consciousness by the Easter Uprising neither having previously given much thought to the subject (O'Malley was about to join the Trinity College Anti-Volunteer Squad, Barry had served in the British Army's Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force in Iraq during World War One). Both became fiercely anti-Imperialist, defending their nationhood against, as they point out, almost overwhelming odds and both employ a bold-faced, almost matter-of-fact tone for the writing of potentially controversial memoirs, a tone that emphasises the need for the rational and unemotionable behaviour they exhibited during the war itself. As Barry says,

Guerilla resistors to Imperialism must continually be on guard and ready to act without delay against instruments of terror as those outlined in this and preceding chapters. Sentiment has no place in stopping terror tactics and only a ruthless counteraction can ever effectively halt it. 62

One consequence is that the memoir reads like a military text book, it even includes a map and diagram in the section on the astonishing battle at Crossbarry. Through this shines a definite sense of the author's pride in his Brigade's achievements that warms the otherwise uncompromisingly cold tone. Again, a blunt honesty characterises the work, shortcomings are presented as well as successes: there are numerous tales of explosive charges placed against garrison walls that failed to go off, many times his men are seen to lie in wait to ambush convoys that do not appear and he admits to one foolhardy episode when anger causes him to pursue an individual soldier into dangerous territory from which he escapes only at considerable risk to his life. O'Malley is similarly self critical, confessing to his embarrassingly poor shooting. But what most characterises Guerilla Days In Ireland is its fierce parochialism in the broadest sense of the word. These are the reminiscences of a man who determinedly canalised all his thoughts and deeds during 1919 to 1921 into the Irish war effort, there is hardly any straying from these terms of reference. He is proud of his own Brigade and scornful of neighbouring areas where I.R.A. support and activity were low, he even appears to clash, in terms of temperament, with O'Malley, resenting the amalgamation of the Brigade into a Division. Although both men were happiest when in active service, O'Malley's part involved much travelling from place to place and from column to column; Barry, sticking loyally by his own Brigade, forms strong loyalties and

attachments to its members which serve to increase his feelings of responsibility as its leader. He is unhappy when removed from his province and from the fray; his summons to Dublin to meet Cathal Brugha, Collins and de Valera was a time of trial for him, and having detected the cool relations between Brugha and Collins he expresses resentment, through hindsight, of such division in the movement, yet, at the time he was in no position to understand the full significance of the bad feelings in Dublin:

Because of my youth and inexperience, I did not then realize that cliques, the great curse of every National and Revolutionary movement, were already formed and active in the capital of our country. 63

Barry's first and last resort is always to turn to action, he prefers to operate in a limited sphere where recognisable results can be obtained and he mistrusts most things of a large scale or of an un-quantifiable nature. This is reflected in his brash and straightforward autobiographical method and in a literary style that could be a result of either a deliberate refusal to be introspective and self-analytical, or it could be a result of an incapacity for greater imaginative ability. The former is more likely (especially in O'Malley's case) but even if the latter were true of Tom Barry then the book should not be looked down upon for that reason since physical powers were as essential to the realisation of Irish Independence as intellectual powers were. Neither should one be denigrated at the expense of the other. In the final chapter one will be able to see the extent to which the roles of soldier and writer, man of action and man of intellect became interconnected during and after the Civil War but for now it is fitting to end this chapter with reference again to Ernie O'Malley. His memoir is perhaps the only one in this category that can legitimately bear the title of autobiography, yet at

the same time it raises the fundamental issue that the frame of mind which critics tend to see as essential to the successful creation of an autobiography - that which creates a suitable image, metaphor or myth for the self - is a potentially dangerous and flawed frame of mind for a person actively working under considerable pressure. Had O'Malley introduced such an overtly literary method of self portrayal it would have been both a superfluity and an incongruity and, furthermore, could have represented a lack of taste and discretion in passages which deal with the death of others.

CHAPTER VIII

IRISH AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WORKS - 2

There are a number of autobiographical works by Irish writers of prose, poetry and drama many of which are well known, like Yeats' Autobiographies, Moore's Hail and Farewell, the six volumes of Sean O'Casey's Autobiographies or Oliver St. John Gogarty's As I Was Going Down Sackville Street. But there are others like Frank O'Connor's first volume of autobiography, An Only Child, Austin Clarke's Twice Round the Black Church (and A Penny in the Clouds) or Sean O'Faolain's Vive Moi that have received relatively little critical attention. The merit of all of these works one would expect to be high and, since writers aim to investigate through their work as many of the facets and depths of the human condition as they possibly can, one would also expect a high level of philosophical insight and some explanation of the especial nature of their calling. In many cases the impulse behind an author's autobiography seems to have been a desire to apply the understanding of the general human condition achieved and expressed through a lifetime of writing to his or her personal history. Since so much of twentieth century Irish literature deals with, perhaps grows out of, the disturbed political history of the country, many of the writers see their personal development as inseparable from their responses to the turn of events in the social and political dimension. In fact all of the works mentioned above deal to varying degrees with that greater dimension, but if this thesis sets out to show that there are many similarities between Irish autobiographical works, it also sets out to show how each single autobiography can be unique in shape, form and

method. As a result, the relationship of the author to the nation will not be the only focus of attention in the brief commentaries that follow.

Sean O'Casey, Autobiographies

O'Casey's plays rank him alongside Yeats and Moore as one of the major literary figures in the Irish cultural renaissance; however, his autobiographical undertaking, impressively vast though it is, is not so easily equatable with Yeats' or Moore's. The sheer bulk and size of O'Casey's Autobiographies and the span of years over which they were composed makes succinct criticism difficult - close commentary would be impossibly long while anything less seems dismissive of a work that was written, albeit sporadically, over sixteen years. However, there have been a wide variety of critical opinions expressed, some appreciative and some not too appreciative, but all would agree that the first three, possibly four, volumes put the final stages of the work into the shade. The whole enterprise is idiosyncratically eclectic: O'Casey plunders from his dramatic technique, uses fictional methods that keep the protagonist in the third person form throughout, delves into faintly expressionistic techniques and puns to a degree comparable with Joyce, includes snatches of songs and ballads, offers his critical views on art and artists, literature and writers, and frequently indulges in lengthy passages of fantasy. As Padraic Colum, who sensed a lack of control in this abundance, succinctly put it: 'autobiography, pamphlet, parody are indiscriminately included in this tumultuous work'.

As is the case with Carleton and with O'Connor whose autobiographies and short stories often deal with the same incidents in appropriately different clothes, many of the incidents in O'Casey's autobiographies relate closely to

incidents and theories in his plays and, indeed, many of the incidents that do not do so would readily and easily translate into stage pieces. O'Casey's fertile, strongly visual, representative and dramatic imagination so dominates that all six books register not as fact but as a fictionalizing of his own experience. This can be seen clearly in a chapter from Pictures in the Hallway called 'I Strike a Blow for You, Dear Land'. In narrative terms, what happens is that Johnny Casside (the central character) meets his nationalist friend, Ayamonn, and a young woman on the day of a Transvaal Committee gathering: they and others are hectorred for their pro-Boer sympathies by a grim old woman, they are caught up in a baton and sabre charge, Johnny desperately knocks a policeman from his horse with a flag-pole, the three disperse after having a drink, the young woman tends to Johnny's wounds - a sexual encounter ensues and he leaves her sighing contentedly on the sofa to go back to his studies. These, or approximately similar events may have, or may not have occurred: their veracity is unimportant because O'Casey uses them to represent his growing commitment to Ireland at the time. The Pro-Boer argument, to which he inclines is offered by the 'lissome young woman' whom he ultimately embraces, and her dress is important for its symbolical qualities. She was

dressed in a gay dark-green dress suit, the skirt barely reaching to her ankles; a black bolero jacket, trimmed with flounced epaulettes which were rimmed with a brighter green than the green of the suit, and flecked with scarlet. She wore high-laced boots that disappeared up under her skirt, which, whenever it was swung by a lively movement of the girl's, showed the fringe of a white lace petticoat. Perched daintily on a curly roll of reddish hair was a dark-green felt hat sporting a black-and-white wing of a bird on its side. 4

Thus is she strongly suggestive of Ireland itself with the preponderance of green in her dress (the socialist element is

hinted at with the red flecks) she is not over-refined and thus suggestive of the working class that O'Casey supports and this is described as attractive, even seductive, since she does not repel Johnny's advances. The anti-Boer case is presented by a very different but still Irish specimen :

A woman striding towards middle-age, wearing a disorganised straw hat on her tousled head, patched boots, one brown one black, the brown one darkened with blacking to make it feel more at home with the other. She wore a black-and-white check skirt, the white squares making up to the black ones by the grime gathered in street and house, the whole scalloped by wear and tear along the edges. She wore a large brown shawl flowing down to beyond her hips. 5

Although the analogy is not an exact one, O'Casey is here allowing the Cathleen ni Houlihan legend to inform the episode in which he strikes a blow for his dear land since he is rewarded for so doing with the embraces of a beautiful female figure and the ravaged, sexless features of the older female are swept away by the rush of the crowd. The highly representational nature of this chapter (the young woman, being a dancer, may also represent the lure of the theatre to which O'Casey was to pledge himself) is further emphasised as the Boer flag pole unseats the Imperialist policeman from his saddle.

As Roy Pascal points out in discussing O'Casey in Design and Truth in Autobiography, the constant recourse to the third person form becomes intrusive and wearing over the full extent of the six books. 6 The same is true of the constant portrayal of himself by O'Casey as an underdog, put upon by a society that is invariably characterised as bigoted, ignorant or unjust. Whether Sean, Johnny or Jack is fighting an employer, or trying to point out error in the ways of the I.R.B. at a centre meeting, or asserting his demands as playwright against those of an American costume designer, he is correct yet

misunderstood. In the final two, and less compelling, books of the sextet this proud bearing of the working class stigma wears uncomfortably thin. But it must be said that he portrays his surrogate selves as occasionally proud to the point of fault and self-centred to an extent that is callous in comparison to his mother's romantically portrayed altruism. In the chapter 'Life is More than Meat' in I Knock at the Door, Johnny's theft of a lump of bacon is seen as an amoral act of self preservation, his mother eventually silently endorsing the acquisition. However, when Johnny begins earning six shillings a week and deceives his mother, O'Casey is not too well disposed towards deception :

Every Friday he handed his mother four and six out of his wages, for he let on he'd only five, which was fair and square, for wasn't it him who earned the money, an' hadn't she only to stretch out her hand to take it? 7

Throughout the first three books Johnny/Sean's actions are implicitly judged unfavourably against the patience and charity of his mother, O'Casey is inviting the reader to do the same here. Equally so with Sean's irritation at having his sister's children in the home after the death of their father, for his mother spared 'as much as she could from her own dish' while Sean feels the odd 'surge of hatred' for them and wants to
8
'drive them from the house with swift kicks.' He is also openly frank about Sean's cowardice - 'Sean was no warrior. A harper,
9
maybe, playing others into battle; but no warrior himself' - throughout the chapter 'Prometheus Hibernica' in Drums under the Windows. Again, that chapter may be relating fictional events but even within fictional constructs O'Casey offers a degree of self-depreciation to balance the romantic self-glorification that pervades the autobiography.

All too often, O'Casey's Autobiographies lapse into

verbiage, the great flood of which drowns the better aspects of the work, such as the fine passages of dialogue with their acutely vivid renderings of Dublin-ese. Some of the flights of fantasy, like the animation of the statue of 'St. Laurence O'Toole' who denounces, in Dublin tones, the works of Bernard Shaw, rather outrun the limits of the original and ingenious conceit. But the verbal deluge does at least suggest the enthusiasm of the youthful auto-didact Sean in his discovery of literature, while the fantasy acts to disperse the abject poverty, squalor and pestilential gloom of tenement life. In this sense the work exacts what Sean tried to do in building a collection of books and in wielding his paint-box, or what his mother tried to do with her incessant cleaning and her nurturing of house plants in the drab environment of their rooms. His mish-mash of techniques and styles is to a certain extent assertively life-enhancing and refuses to give way to tenement gloom. A chapter like 'Mrs Casside takes a Holiday' in Inishfallen Fare Thee Well can illustrate how the O'Casey bag of tricks can bring a dignity and a significance to the life on this earth even though it denies any sense of immortality of the soul.

The passage uses numerous devices and shows many influences, the greatest of which is that of Charles Dickens whom O'Casey read, he told Lady Gregory, 'because he was cheap'. Its title is heavily ironical, Mrs Casside's holiday is in fact her death, seen as a release from the treadmill of poverty. Pathos and melodrama, of which O'Casey thought highly, play an important part in recalling Dickensian death scenes, colour is employed in an expressionistic manner, while the conclusion to the chapter echoes two other significant influences upon the author, Walt Whitman and the Bible. As his

mother lies ill, Sean, awaiting a £15.00 cheque for a story he had written, tried to keep her spirits up :

Tired of singing, he had read to her from Scott and Dickens, stopping often to listen to her young, fresh and gleaming laughter, so strange from one who had gone through so hard, bitter and thankless a life for nearly eighty years. 11

The preponderance of adjectives is typical of how O'Casey creates effect by amassing a force of pressure rather than by seeking le mot juste : here, the balancing of 'young', 'fresh' and 'gleaming' with 'hard', 'bitter' and 'thankless' is intended to illustrate the indomitable spirit of his mother and it introduces the repetitive word-patterns that are to follow later in the chapter. He then recapitulates Mrs Casside's history in Sean's memory as he dashes back and forth trying to get the cheque cashed to purchase a few comforts for her last hours. Alongside her history is an enactment of the struggles to survive they had both suffered to date : her struggle is to assert life over death; having seen so many of her family die and somehow managed to keep going herself, it is now her turn to fight for life. His is the perennial struggle to keep an income of sorts. The impediments to his cashing the cheque are presented as a physical and political obstruction - the crowds clamouring to see the Lord Lieutenant's coach - and as social obstructions: the bank demanding it be paid into an account and the grocer needing time for it to be cleared. The social system is seen once again to be at odds with simple acts of necessary charity and the grocer's relations to his customers are seen to be financial, not personal. The naive Sean runs up against both circumlocution-office mentality and the intransigencies of the Dublin cash-nexus. Throughout this frantic rush to buy food, medicine and a means of warmth for his mother he hears her voice and imagines a sentimental vision

of her face :

the shrivelled lips moved in the wrinkled, pallid face in the midst of fuchsia geranium and musk. 12

The Doctor's philanthropy is then exposed as heartless, only motivated by financial recompense :

'Well next time you haven't a fee handy, get the Dispensary doctor, please; that's what he's for - to attend to you people'. 13

while true Christian thankfulness and charitable altruism reside in his poverty-stricken mother - 'the Christian iron of resignation had entered her soul'. Vital forces and images of generation cluster around her : she upbraids Sean for not watering the flowers, while the act that finally kills her, washing clothes and hanging them to dry, is not simply one of courage - 'she had used up her last spark of energy keeping useful in life' - but is characteristic of her life-long fight against the grime of poverty.

O'Casey's perception of death among the poor is in the Dickensian mode : 'the poor had precious little time or chance to weep' could fit easily into a work like Oliver Twist, as could his evocation of pathos in the scene of Mrs Casside's death. Self pity overwhelms him and his tears splash on to her dying face, briefly rousing her

- 'Ah! Jack, she murmured pitifully, her lips quivering, her worn and gnarled old hand stroking his, resting on the edge of the old sofa; ah! Jack, Jack, Jack! 14

he then shifts into a more dramatic manner, creating a grand setting as though on a stage, flooding the room with a golden haze from a sky that was 'stridently lovely in green, purple and crimson,' but becomes magenta. The moment of death is so peaceful that it is imperceptible and the description of death-chamber and laying-out continues in terms of colour : the phrase 'a gay, warm, golden haze curtained with a magenta sky' is repeated, with only slight variation, three times in one

paragraph. The funeral preparations are deftly painted by the picking-out of certain details of colouration in the golden haze : there are black plumes, white plumes, 'bold black hearses', 'brown coffins aglitter with brass', 'a burden of blossoms', 'a tiny white butterfly', 'a snowy shroud wrapped in tissue paper tied with black tape', 'crimson gladioluses' (sic), and even the three five-pound notes become 'a bright blue and gorgeous haze'. The most striking emblematic imagery is reserved for the coffin :

Over the white shroud, over the coffin, he draped the cloth that had covered the box on which she had sat. It would be her red flag she was, in her bravery, her irreducible and quiet endurance, her fearless and cheery battle with a hard, and often brutal life, the soul of Socialism; and the red symbol, draping her coffin, honoured itself in warming the dead-cold breast of an indomitable woman

and for its contents :

Sean broke off a sprig of fuchsia, another of musk, and a crimson disk from the geranium, and carefully arranged them under a fold of the shroud near her right hand. They would be her gold, frankincense, and myrrh; her credentials to show the first guardian saint she'd meet. I cared for these, she'd say, and honoured them, for they were the gifts the good God gave me. 15

Painful scenes ensue when Sean has to involve himself in an unseemly wrangle with the undertakers who demand cash he does not have ready to hand, he dashes off to borrow the money and the procession leaves without him. Yet the grim conflict with money is not over that: the driver of the cab objects to the tips he loses in carrying only one fare and drops him fifty feet from the cemetery gate to save the ignominy of having such an empty cab. Eventually, O'Casey is able to reach a ponderous conclusion; Sean's beliefs are set against the possibilities of an after life and the final phrase of this chapter, a chapter that blends Dickensian, dramatic and painterly elements, is 'the clay of the grave would bring forth the coarse grass that

would soon hide it from the sight of man forever'. It recalls Isiah 40:6,

All flesh is grass, and the glory thereof is as the flower
of the field

and Peter 1:24,

The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away
There may even be echoes of Whitman's 'Song of Myself', which
O'Casey knew, and in which grass is described as 'the beautiful
uncut hair of graves'.

Andrew Sanders in a recent book, Charles Dickens,
16
Resurrectionist, has made a full study of that author's
attitude to death and, in showing its central significance to
an understanding of Dickens's work, has explained how even
apparently sentimental or mawkish death scenes are always
directed towards his deeply held beliefs in an after-life.
O'Casey, who shared Dickens open-mindedness towards the value of
sentimentality, pathos and melodrama and who was influenced in
his view of the city by Dicken's view of London, does not
appear to hold such strong convictions on immortality. Instead,
by taking the actual material trappings of death and burial he
17
has imaginatively expanded the specific into the general or
universal. Mrs Casside's flowers transmogrify into gold,
frankincense and myrrh while the single figure in a white
shroud becomes the soul of Socialism and the epitome of
Christian suffering and endurance. The philosophies of both
authors may differ in niceties but the general trend of their
sentiment remains the same insofar as death translates the
victim into a state of being greater than the one he or she
previously held. As a chapter, 'Mrs Casside takes a Holiday'
deserves unqualified praise and it is typical of the peaks of
writing to which O'Casey's Autobiographies occasionally
strives. Unfortunately, as a climatic moment it comes too

soon, little that follows in the remaining three volumes can match it and one is left with a disappointing sense of falling-off.

Oliver St. John Gogarty, As I Was Going Down Sackville Street

Despite a considerable contribution to Irish literature that includes collections of verse, plays, words and autobiographies, Oliver St. John Gogarty remains a relatively peripheral figure, more well-known for this appearance in Ulysses and Hail and Farewell than read for his own sake. As I

18

Was Going Down Sackville Street is the best and most often acknowledged of his autobiographically based accounts of the Ireland he knew; it is a celebration of heroism of action and of heroism of the imagination enshrined in men like Michael Collins, Arthur Griffith, W.B. Yeats and George Moore, as J.F.

19

Carens, Gogarty's finest defender, has ably illustrated. It is also a highly satirical work, Gogarty writes that 'Making your rival ridiculous is the chief aim of Irish opponents since the duel was abolished'; even the Irish propensity for bestowing feminine gender and identity upon the country is not sacrosanct. In fact, it is mocked throughout by Gogarty's appropriation of a local male eccentric, one Endymion, as the embodiment of what he sees as an insane post-Treaty Dublin. Indeed he follows the example of Endymion's upside-down, topsy-turvy world (the eccentric wears his cuffs on his ankles and claims to travel backwards in Time, reversing in Space) since he chooses, unlike most autobiographers who select a point in the past from which to travel forwards to the present, to work backwards from a normal day in 1930's Dublin and through the past, to the days of his own childhood. Carens, again the most lucid critic on this matter, links this to an archetypal Edenic

myth-pattern and explains how it is a Dantesque passage from the Inferno of the 1930's, through the Purgatorio of the 1920's back to a Paradisio, a golden age of innocence in his childhood, or an age of heroism to Ireland. Endymion is made to serve another loosely representational function as in Chapter Nineteen for example, in which Gogarty discusses the Anglo-Irish War and the Treaty, for, as a background to the discussion is the story of Endymion calling to collect from a shop a large ham for which he has paid. This he does by thrusting a sabre into the article and making off only to be arrested. The parallel with the Irish claim for independence is obvious enough - 'Arrested for claiming his own property' says Gogarty - but he also makes a more ambiguous comment : 'But' so much depends on the way the claim is made', suggesting some criticism of the Republican struggle and its outcome.

The travelling backwards in time is appropriate to Gogarty's conservatism; one of the major purposes of Sackville Street is to attack the new political administration and Eammon De Valera in particular. Although Gogarty is a wit, he is prone to excessive bitterness as, for example, when he recalls the death of Michael Collins :

There were no Englishmen about when that occurred, but Mr. De Valera was not far away, he who has done more damage in a decade to our country than England did in seven hundred years. England never sapped Ireland's morale, De Valera and degeneration are synonymous. 22

He admits to being a snob, an admirer of the old Anglo-Irish class, and to despising the members of the new administration, the bureaucrats whom he calls 'bagmen', and he sums up the spirit in which much of the book was written when he says, 'By the light of God I'll not let the bagmen or the bog men drag me down'. These rancorous outbursts make Sackville Street a difficult book to accept at times. J.F. Carens, aware of the

problem, took as his starting point the fact that traditional criticism had attacked Gogarty for being a snob, a middle-class social climber, even a Fascist, and for showing it. He attempted to answer this by saying that such an interpretation 'fails either to account for the complexity of the book or of Irish politics[,] Ireland in the thirties refuses to fit the convenient Right-Left dichotomy. His salutary restating of Gogarty's own complex political position (despite supporting Mussolini he was a reformist, a humanitarian and a liberal) and of the many reasons Gogarty had for personally loathing De Valera and Republicanism, along with his detailed analysis of the structure of Sackville Street that concludes by reminding us of the final celebratory "The Same Again!" goes a long way towards saving the book from its excesses. One can see that in the autobiographically-inspired novel, Tumbling in the Hay Gogarty ignores politics and concentrates upon humour and that in It Isn't this Time of Year At All! he turns to lengthy descriptions of the Irish countryside and to evoking the genius loci of the West to soothe his anger, but sadly it remains an incontrovertible fact that, ^{despite} ~~for~~ all Caren's good works, bitterness can sour the wit or nostalgia of much of Gogarty's prose. It is equally sad to contemplate the strong likelihood that, after his emigration to the States in 1939, Gogarty's imagination was profoundly isolated from its past source of stimulus. His over-eagerness to see the shortcomings of the new Republic ('When working to release Kathleen, the daughter of Houlihan, so long imprisoned by the Sassenach, I should have asked myself what sort of soured harridan was likely to emerge'), led him to side with a past that had vanished with the deaths of Collins, Griffith and Yeats, and with the demise of the aristocratic landed class. From that

point his memory took the place of his imagination as far as his autobiographical writings were concerned; as Ulick O'Connor has pointed out, Gogarty helped found the Irish Literary Revival, 'and with the exception of Padraic Colum was the only one of its important figures alive in the late 'fifties',²⁸ unfortunately, in the words of another critic, he 'was unable to realise within himself, as Yeats was, the dichotomies²⁹ dividing the country' and to put them to creative use. Sean O'Faolain puts it most eloquently :

When he retired to New York, where I met him three or four times, he was a particularly lonely man His tragedy was that he outlived Dublin's best age and, like Tithonius, had no option but to die as our green grasshopper. 30

Sean O'Faolain, Vive Moi and Austin Clarke, Twice Round the Black Church

While Sackville Street is more of a memoir than a complete autobiography, Vive Moi examines O'Faolain's life from childhood onwards and makes its main and Wordsworthian tenet that the child and youth should be the guiding spirit of the man. The author stands in wonder before the silent process of the growth and development of character in childhood days :

I am filled with awe when I think of those night hours. They make me think of many other lost hours, lost years - lost because as completely vacant in my memory - that I spent beside those quiet quays in the waking sleep of childish content, a hibernatory cocoon of total happiness. The very thought of those contented years frightens the life out of me when I consider all that I was taking in, all that was being put into one, unknown to my will. 31

And he fears that autobiography will not be able to do justice to the true self it purports to describe :

If all mortal creation, in St. Augustine's tremendous image is a vast sponge in the middle of a sea of infinity, the only part of us which must then not be the absorbent sponge is our surface brain . . while all the rest, perhaps best, of us is deep in the glaucous sea If true, it makes this autobiography pointless, since it means that what I most wish to record is what I have absorbed so deeply as to have incontinently forgotten. 32

Faced with the possibility that his autobiography could be pointless, O'Faolain set about examining the many difficulties of writing a work like Vive Moi. He had, on his own admission, little prior knowledge of autobiography as a genre and his first attempt at the book involved a method similar to that used by Ernie O'Malley :

I had hoped to present my own youth and early manhood with no more knowledge, along the line, than the central characters could have had at that time. It is the normal technique of the novelist.
It did not work. 33

This failure was due to the fact that his major interest, unlike that of O'Malley, lay as much in the form of autobiography as in its contents; but it was only an initial failure, when the work did progress the whole issue of selectivity in its composition fascinated him and he realised, through writing Vive Moi, that the conscious will of the autobiographer is not all :

A coherent image of self was gradually imposing itself on the narration of events. A theme was emerging. 34

This process also helped consolidate the view he held that even the little he knew of that 'surface brain' and of what he had absorbed unconsciously in his childhood could teach him much about himself once contact with it and its sources had been established. The writer must be as much a passive recipient of memory and its strong but latent impression of the self, as he is the conscious selector and organiser of memory, and he must balance both roles out. At one stage in his life, as he relates, O'Faolain had to make a conscious and deliberate act of will that altered the course of his development away from all that childhood experience seemed to be determining. This act of will, he says, was inspired by a production in 1915 that he saw at the Cork Opera House of Lennox Robinson's political

comedy Patriots :

I will not say that I was changed when I left the theatre and walked out into the wet streets of Cork. But I know that I was dazed. 35

From then onwards O'Faolain started on the path which would lead to him devoting his time and energies to the Republican cause and to the Irish language movement. He played a minor part in the Anglo-Irish war and later sided with the Irregulars in the Civil War. He rejected his youth and his education which, although they provided him with many fond memories, were part of an Ireland that had been under foreign subjection. This was not an easy thing to cast off; his father, a policeman, cuts an impressive figure in the early pages of the book and O'Faolain's abandoning of allegiance to the British rule that his father stood for contains a mixture of painful regret and filial partiality:

Men like my father were dragged out, in those years, and shot down as traitors to their country. Shot for cruel necessity - so be it. Shot to inspire necessary terror - so be it. But they were not traitors. They had their loyalties and stuck to them. 36

What he gains and what the country gains in the transformation is questioned too: 'Like all idealists, I was fast becoming heartless, humourless and pitiless'. His personality suffered and the cause with which he had identified himself began to disturb him: he was discomforted by De Valera's apparent vault-face in forming Fianna Fail and, more importantly, he was disenchanted with the intellectual failing of the revolution. Being a liberal humanist, O'Faolain is naturally disappointed that, when his country gained its independence, the void left behind by the evacuation of the Anglo-Irish class and its culture was filled, not by the arts, but by a reactionary Roman Catholic Church. But this realisation of a cultural failing in the new state did not entirely alienate

O'Faolain from his native country as it did Gogarty and as it seems to have done to a number of its other writers. Absence from the country only made him realise the necessity of returning in order to write:

It is a good country for a writer - provided he is willing to live in solitude and can create his own inner heat 38

so he returned from the States, gave up novel writing in favour of the short story métier, also using invective journalism in his renewed crusade to enrich the new and rather more drab form of cultural nationalism that had evolved in the young Irish Free State.

Yeats' Autobiographies, whether by design or as a result of other causes, do not present a complete picture of their subject; they comprise a heterogeneity of styles and methods which reflect his belief that existence is a series of infinite and continuous becomings. For Yeats, the self is a composite of selves altering and modifying one another at every moment in time. Sean O'Faolain prefers to see a finite self in each individual, determined by childhood and subconscious experience in their interplay with active and willed decisions made by the adult. Such a belief involves a high estimation of the value of memory since through memory an adult may begin to perceive the reasons for the patterns of his development. As a result, Vive Moi is more conventional than Yeats' autobiography: it is written in one cohesive style tracing an unbroken line from childhood to adulthood and it goes as far as an autobiography can towards achieving a sense of completeness in its proposition that memory helps to shape the present:

If once the boy within us ceases to speak to the man who enfolds him, the shape of life is broken and there is, literally, no more to be said. I think that if my life has had its shape it is this. I have gone on listening and remembering. 39

Like Sean O'Faolain, Austin Clarke in Twice Round the Black Church values an adult's memories of childhood very highly:

As we explore our own small past imaginatively, we find the fears and joys of childhood have taken a new meaning for us. All has become legend - and symbols are waiting for us. 40

Clarke's psychological outlook is based upon a Freudian view of childhood to a certain extent and, in examining his early days, he sees two major strands of development. One is his subjection to the influence of the Catholic church - an institution he abhors for its pernicious effect in emphasizing sin and evil to the young child. It is a ludicrous and heartless religion, he argues, that can fix the age of responsibility for sin at a mere seven years old. The other major line of development is within the private world of his childhood imagination, often silently at odds with his religious up-bringing, which is manifested as his gazing into half-inch deep puddle outside the coal shed of his Dublin home, in which was reflected the area and the sky. This black puddle, absurd as it may seem, is a harbinger of the primal symbol of water with which he associates the poetic imagination:

Years later, that excitation of the optic nerve became a constant delight whenever I climbed the mountains in the west of Ireland and saw below me rivers and the lakes no man has made. At night when I closed my eyes, I saw a continual succession of lakes and rivers gleaming beneath shadowy mountain ranges. I was much pleased, as water is a symbol of vision. The Gaelic poets were accustomed to think out their poems beside stream or loch though they perfected the assonatal patterns of them lying on their beds in the dark. 41

Between them, the two passages quoted above, demonstrate the density of Clarke's prose and the unity of thematic structure of Twice Round The Black Church. As he writes his autobiography, Clarke enacts his belief that exploring one's own

small past imaginatively - that is in terms of images - turns life into legend and provides it with a level of symbolic meaning greater than the personal. The reflection in the puddle takes on a new meaning of which he writes in the first passage quoted: in later years it is a symbol for his poetry, being water, a sign for vision, which again expands to identify him as part of a Bardic and often Satiric tradition of Irish verse. Even when Clarke refers to 'The lakes that no man has made' he is not just drawing a distinction between natural lakes and the reservoir near which he spent a childhood holiday, he is touching on a distinction important to the thematic structure of the work. For in his embracing of pagan, natural and supernatural symbols, he rejects many aspects of modern life, apart from the Catholic Church, including the increased importance of man's achievements in applied science and technology in normal life. As the author's childhood and the book both draw to a close, the mechanical and electrical age encroaches upon the external world. This genesis of the age of invention provides Clarke with memories of technical bric-a-brac: a myriorama and a bioscope for instance, but, more importantly, he recalls the death of a child in an early motor car accident. With this, one can see what the purpose was in an earlier passage in which he discussed miracle-working and thaumaturgy:

Must we explain by desire those centuries when saints could divert a river from its very bed, cause rocks to float, and watch chapels being transported through the air by angels? Was the human mind in some preparatory trance dreaming of the wonders to come, those scientific wonders which have proved so unpleasant in use? 42

Clarke establishes a relationship between his passage from childhood and the growth of civilization: O'Faolain and O'Connor both make equations of a more modest nature between

personal, private development and the public growth of the Irish nation. Their fates, which bring mixed fortunes, follow the same contours as does modern Irish history. The 'fears and joys' of Clarke's childhood prove to be presentiments because they transmute into more specific fears and joys in adulthood. The joys come with his growth as a poet and they are paralleled with an idyllic picture of historic poets in the Irish Bardic tradition, while the fears came with the growth of the technological age that sullies the natural experiences of childhood. In terms of history, or on the macrocosmic scale of Twice Round the Black Church, the new age provides the actual wonders of which the early church fathers and saints had but dreamt, but which have turned out to be unpleasant in practicality. Such advancements kill off childhood dreams of natural joy as the figure of the dead child in the car crash symbolizes.

43

Clarke's looking back to the Bardic tradition and to a satirical mode of poetry implies a rejection of the Ireland of his day and is comparable with O'Faolain's dissatisfaction with Irish literary nationalism in the dull Post-Treaty years. In both cases the dissatisfaction with and criticism of the era is more pronounced in their respective works outside the autobiographies, but at least Vive Moi and Twice Round the Black Church make the important connection between the individuals coming to maturity at the same time that Ireland herself begins to grow up independently. Both writers feel a sense of loss in their personal development and in the direction taken by the new State but this is tempered by their decisions to remain in their native country and work to change it from within. Comparable events and comparable equations of self and its larger environment characterize the

44

final work discussed, Frank O'Connor's An Only Child.

With the exception of some short articles, next to nothing has been published concerning O'Connor's autobiographical works. This is perhaps surprising since An Only Child, on account of its sustained metaphorical sub-structure, its humour and its rigorous examination and judgement of the author's younger self, is one of the finest of all Irish autobiographical works. To a reader of O'Connor's short stories many of the incidents from the early part of the work are familiar; indeed, the short stories may appear to be more satisfying in their versions of these incidents. However, in the autobiography O'Connor is tracing the lines of a larger developmental pattern, not presenting carefully worked cameos of the incidents of which it is comprised. The interest of An Only Child is not just that it confirms that some of the stories are based in reality, but rather that O'Connor is able to take personal events and create something with universal appeal from them, both in the miniatures of short stories and on the larger canvas of autobiography.

More than the events are familiar, some of the characters are too: his idiosyncratic, irritable and periodically alcoholic father figures greatly in both métiers, but of all the portraits that O'Connor skilfully draws in An Only Child, none is more important than that of his mother. It is true to say that much of the earlier part of the book is given over to her biography and it is to her, both literally and metaphorically, that he returns at its conclusion. An orphan herself, Mrs. O'Donovan's charitable instincts are described as acute, while Michael O'Donovan (O'Connor's real name), her only child, is the sole object of her maternal instincts. There are no brothers and sisters to divert her attention as there are,

interestingly, in some of the stories. Yet despite these motherly solitudes the only child experiences a loneliness which he partly creates for himself through his striving for knowledge and education. The poorer, neighbourhood children see this as snobbishness; the richer, educated children look down upon his presumption. This form of loneliness is not entirely without its compensations: it involves none of the buffetings of human relationships and it casts Michael in the role of an observer of others, a necessary stance for a writer. O'Connor presents this sort of wilful detachment from society metaphorically in saying that Michael was always fond of heights. He would climb up to the outhouse roof and higher, or would look down upon Cork from the vantage point of a quarry-face where he felt like 'some sort of wild bird, secure from everything and observing everything'.⁴⁶ But this yearning for solitude is also seen as the escapism that it partly is: 'afterwards it struck me that reading was only another form of height, and a more perilous one',⁴⁷ since it is an indulgence of the imagination detached from the social intercourse which is equally as necessary to the writer as silent observation is:

But whatever the height, whether that of story book or quarry, the eagle had to descend. Up there I was cold and hungry, and loneliness and the longing for society made me feel even worse. 48

As with the child, then, so with the man, but O'Connor extends the analogy later in the work to an equation of man with nation: the major shortcoming of the Irish revolution was like his personal failings, it never descended from the heights of imagination to accommodate a new and more menacing reality occurring at ground level which was to culminate in full-scale Civil War.

But this is to jump ahead, O'Connor remains with his

self, and dwells upon the eagle-like ambition that led to Michael's haphazardly auto-didactic education. His first ideal for education was naively based on English public schools, as they were presented in the pages of the boys' weeklies that he devoured whenever possible. Again, his imagination ran riot with no checks and he tried to behave like those paradigms of Imperialism-in-the-bud, which only earned him the wrath of his teachers for his pride, and the derision of his peers:

The principal difficulty about the world in my head was that there seemed to be no connection at all between the idea of education I found from the boys' weeklies and the education as it was practised in the schools I knew. 49

Yet he continued to live in his romantic, Anglicized comic-book imagination, siding with poets and dreamers, composing and playing out imaginary operas in a boot-box toy theatre in the dark hallway of his home. He also accepted, without thinking, his father's conservative Unionism and he admired, again romantically, an institution like the British Army to which his father had belonged. This unquestionably Unionist background was enhanced by the boys' weeklies becoming his only form of education after he gave up school. A brief interest in the Irish language, inspired by his remarkable school-teacher, 50 Daniel Corkery, soon petered out, in fact Michael opted to teach himself Flemish in its place. The heterogeneity of his learning, and his unthinking acceptance of the social background to his life were at odds and it was only a matter of time before something would trigger off a crisis:

In April 1916 a handful of Irishmen took over the city of Dublin and were finally surrounded and overwhelmed by British troops with artillery At first my reaction was horror that Irishmen could commit such a crime against England.... the English were calling us traitors again, and they seemed to be right. It was a difficult situation for a boy of twelve with no spiritual homeland but that of the English public schools, and no real friends but those imaginary friends he knew there.

The more news he received the more violent were the shocks to his young life:

The English shot the first batch of Irish leaders, and this was a worse shock, for the newspapers said - the pro-British ones with a sneer - that several of them had been poets, and I was in favour of poets.

Indeed, in writing the autobiography between 1958 and 1960, O'Connor could still recall some lines of Padraic Pearse's, so deep did the impression sink into his own personality:

What made it worse was that most of his poetry has been written in Irish, the language I had abandoned in favour of Flemish. 51

and from this point onwards the imagery describing Michael's personal history and the destiny of the Irish nation becomes as one, which reflects how O'Connor, like Sean O'Faolain, makes his first steps towards individuality and maturity through yoking his fortunes to those of his country.

Michael's initial attempts to out-do his, now tarnished, imaginary public-school friends involved absurd efforts to emulate the youthful, prodigious yet legendary feats of Cu Chulainn - a fine example of O'Connor's humourous self-deprecation at its best. But it is in the decision to steep himself in the Irish language and its literature that O'Connor binds together the separate themes of the book by means of metaphor. Michael's fondness for heights and his equal liking for society had represented the need to balance communion with the imagination in solitude and the restraining influences society places upon the imagination, and it had also represented Michael's struggling aspirations towards education. Force of circumstance, coupled with his own undisciplined reading had dictated that he would have an Anglicized outlook, yet the Easter Rising had confounded and confused his normal romantic mechanisms of response, with the result that his

actions and instincts took control of his personality. Thus he lived alone in the heights of the imagination failing to discipline and scrutinize his thoughts, through the wisdom of experience. The heights-education image links itself to a discussion of the role of the imagination for which a new metaphor is introduced, that of language. The following extract, which should illustrate this, occurs after an Englishman has called at the Cork Railway Office and will only speak in Irish. Michael, though only the humblest of messenger boys, is called upon as the only Irish speaker:

It was also an indication of the extraordinary double life I was leading, a life so divided against itself that it comes back to me now as an hallucination rather than as a memory.... One life I led in English - a life of drudgery and humiliation; the other in Irish or in whatever scraps of foreign language I had managed to pick up without the benefit of grammar.... That was the real significance of my passion for languages: they belonged entirely to the world of my imagination...the imagination seems to have no particular use for grammar. Irish was merely the most convenient of these escape routes into dreams. 52

And so his linguistic interests are but further symptoms of his over-imaginatively romantic view of education, of his self, and now of Ireland: accordingly he gives a wild, uninformed, but well-intentioned lecture on Goethe:

I re-created Goethe in my own image and likeness, as a patriotic young man who wished to revive the German language, which I considered to have been gravely threatened by the use of French. I drew an analogy between the French Culture that dominated eighteenth-century Germany to the English Culture by which we in Ireland were dominated. 53

Yet the lecture went by unquestioned because the whole country was in a comparable position to O'Connor:

It was a period of political unrest, and, in a way, this was a relief, because it acted as a safety valve for my own angry emotions. Indeed, it would be truer to say that the Irish nation and myself were both engaged in an elaborate process of improvisation. I was improvising an education I could not afford, and the country was improvising a revolution it could not afford. 54

Remarkably, both make-believes succeeded up to a point:

Ireland edged towards independence and Michael's published translation into Irish of a Du Bellay sonnet met with acclaim. It is appropriate that it should be a translation that brings his first success because Michael was content not to be creative. He preferred the appeal of tinkering with foreign languages to the systematic study of grammar:

All I wanted was to translate, to feel the unfamiliar become familiar, the familiar take on all the mystery of some dark foreign face I had just glimpsed on the quay. 55

The success of this improvised and imaginative transmutation of terms that he substituted for linguistic study is, in another dimension, the cause of the failure of the Irish revolution:

That, I think, is where the Irish Revolution broke down. The imagination is a refrigerator, nor an incubator; it preserves the personality intact through disaster after disaster, but even when it has changed the whole world it has still changed nothing in itself and emerges as a sort of Rip Van Winkle, older in years but not in experience. 56

Imagination, then, so long as it goes untutored by wisdom, is powerful, dangerous and ultimately self-destructive; this idea is pursued more and more, eventually being applied to the dialectic of the revolution where the imagination, O'Connor decides, finally negated its original aims. The metaphor holds good for Ireland because it explains how the Civil War erupted out of pro- and anti-Treaty factions:

our side [the Irregulars] continued to maintain that the only real government was the imaginary one... What we ignored was that a whole section of the improvisation had cut itself adrift and become a new and more menacing reality. The explosion of the dialectic, the sudden violent emergence of thesis and antithesis from the old synthesis had occurred under our very noses and we could not see it or control it. 57

The disintegration of the old synthesis led to the 'destruction of the old improvisation', the new state failed to integrate the imaginative vision of itself with its experiences, and yet the country that grew out of the Civil War bore few signs of

the improvised ideal - it was 'mediocre'. Gradually it dawned upon Michael that the frozen and unreal picture of the improvised vision of the State that he carried in his imagination no longer bore relation to the actuality. Yet he could not surrender this vision because he had nothing to replace it with; he remained with the I.R.A.:

It was clear to me that we were all going mad, and yet I could see no way out. The imagination seems to paralyze not only the critical faculty by the ability to act upon the most ordinary instinct of self preservation. I could be obstinate enough when it came to the killing of unarmed soldiers and girls because this was a basic violation of the imaginative concept of life, whether in the boys' weeklies or the Irish sagas, but I could not detach myself from the political attitudes that gave rise to it. 58

O'Connor's method of describing how Michael breaks out of the trap of his romantic imagination and separates himself from its ideals involves perpetuating the image of learning a language and the associated concepts that cling to the image. Preparing lessons for a class of Irish whilst in a Free State prison, he reads for the first time an Irish grammar and suddenly realises the cardinal importance of the grammatical structure of a language that he had ignored for years, and, as he says, 'as an image of human life it seems to me out on its own'. It was particularly gratifying to learn that the accusative case existed as a tangible reality outside and independent of the solipistic imagination, and that, by extension, he could be the object of his own thoughts and examination. The accusative case releases him from a closed circuit of idealism:

Maybe it was the grammar that started me off, or maybe the grammar itself was only a symptom of the emergence from a protracted adolescence, but I was beginning to have grave doubts about many of the political ideas I had held as gospel. One was that the Irish Republic founded in 1916 still existed....59

Without the discovery that one can be both subject and object, O'Connor would not have been able to write his autobiography

since this act involves the recognition that he makes, in a different work and context, regarding Heine's monkey chewing his own tail: 'Objectively he is eating, subjectively he is being eaten',⁶⁰ for in an autobiography, objectively one is writing, subjectively one is being written.

So tight has O'Connor's control over his material in An Only Child been, that this discovery of the accusative case serves to represent a number of things: he breaks free from slavery to an old ideal, he re-organizes a potentially destructive imaginative and improvisatory faculty and prepares for life as a writer, he sloughs off adolescence and in so doing unconsciously breaks from the boyish dependence upon his mother. Her words upon his return from prison are simply, 'It has made a man of you':

I had noticed no change at all in myself unless it was the urgent realization of the importance of grammar, particularly the accusative case. 61

The years O'Connor covers in An Only Child are presented as formative years amounting to a realization that one acquires the ability to appraise oneself more objectively with the passing of time; while this discovery brings the degree of detached observation necessary to a writer, it also has its drawbacks, those intuitively described by Mrs. O'Donovan in her son:

it took me some time to realize what mother had seen in that first glimpse of me, that I had crossed another shadow line, and make me wonder if I should ever again be completely at ease with people I loved, their introverted religion and introverted patriotism. 62

Michael is back in the noble eagle heights, lamenting lost society and company below.

The metaphorical structure and pattern of An Only Child is an impressive and comprehensive way of describing Michael/O'Connor's painful emergence from adolescence and the

universal problem of that transition, but what is even more impressive is that the central metaphor concerning the Irish language yokes private and public dimensions of experience in a particularly apt image for a writer.

In a recent article Kevin P. Reilly discussed the subject of Irish literary autobiography. ⁶³ In so doing, he made a few points which coincide with those discussed here, such as the importance of the traditional loquacity of the Irish and how it may lie behind the strong autobiographical element in the country's literature. He also referred to the great variety of Irish literary autobiography. However, the central purpose of his article was to trace the idea of Ireland as a woman-figure in all its various forms from the chaste and motherly image through to that of the mistress-lover, as it is made manifest in the autobiographies of Carleton, Moore, Yeats, O'Casey, O'Connor and Patrick Kavanagh. There is also some discussion of the writings of Edna O'Brien. O'Reilly's article highlighted one interesting aspect of both the lives and the autobiographies of these writers and its very appearance suggested that a more serious view of Irish autobiography may be emerging. That said, O'Reilly's appraisal still remains only a partial one and is rather limited as a result of trying to bind together separate, and in many ways different, works by means of one image common to them all. To focus solely on the mother-son image in Frank O'Connor's An Only Child, for example, is to miss out many important aspects of the treatment and development of the central figure and his attitude to his nation. This is understandable, O'Reilly must understate and over-simplify the importance of that relationship between individual and nation if he is to develop his main hypothesis concerning the nation-mother parallel. Perhaps this is also

symptomatic of the unease in the general critical stance on autobiography which seeks to reduce its subject to a set of governing principles and in so doing wishes to create a manageable rationale or series of premisses from which to conduct discussion of the genre. A systematic or approved initial method for the exploration of autobiography may one day emerge from the currently unresolved debate of the issue. If and when it does emerge, however, it will have to be a dynamic model if it is to take full account of the infinitely variable nature of the relationship between subject and form, and if it is to recognise both that autobiography precludes total closure and that the dialectical relationship of autobiographer to autobiographee, so to speak, is never static but constantly modifying itself.

My reading of Yeats' Autobiographies has tried to be both full and varied; employing in some places detailed textual and bibliographical study, in others an essential process of biographical and historical contextualizing, and, at times, some attempt to understand the autobiographical form itself. This is appropriate perhaps to a work that takes on a variety of forms itself and that enacts its author's belief that the self is a product of the interaction of multiple other selves. Admittedly, this method allows the author more say in how the text should be read than one would normally like to grant. However, where it does seek to be an expansive approach to the potentiality of autobiography is in recognising both the necessity and the ability of Yeats (and the other authors mentioned) to deal squarely with the relationship between the individual and the emerging nation and not just in the rather oblique way that O'Reilly singles out. Ireland itself has been of cardinal importance in all branches of Irish writing for

many years now, and its effect on and place in Irish autobiographical writing has been important enough to allow such writing to be studied as an entity in itself.

In introducing Approaches to Victorian Autobiography, George Landow suggested that the Victorian era was a unique moment in the history of autobiography since the genre, in literary terms, was at a sophisticated stage of development being poised between the end of the Romantic era and the advent of the writings of Freud that were to alter the course of autobiography. He also sees the disintegration of many established social values as a factor determining the need for autobiographical utterance: 'societal disturbances and dislocations, the break up of a culture, produce that sense of self necessary to write one's own life'. I hope that I have shown that there is something of equal interest in the variety and quality of Irish autobiographical writing. Certainly its range is considerable. At one point there is John Mitchel: like William Golding's Pincher Martin (who says that 'In normal life to talk out loud is a sign of madness - Here it is proof of identity'), Mitchel takes the autobiographical act back to one of its primary functions in using his 'notes of nothing' as a proof to himself that he exists in the normal dimension of time. From this hint of a Beckett-like narrative act one can go to the highly cultured prose of Moore's polished dialogues between his past selves. One can find in the twentieth century in particular a number of writers who have chosen to see their personal development as inseparable from the development of their country. Unlike those Victorian exponents of the art to whom Landow refers, these writers have responded not just to the breakdown of an old society but also to the often painful fashioning of a new nation and new society.

I ended with Frank O'Connor whose image of the dialectic blowing up in the faces of the Irish people suggests a failed revolution. One could argue with O'Connor's analysis by saying that the revolution was not so much a failed one but was, instead, incomplete. Ireland's turbulent history did however produce a plethora of autobiographical responses to it, though one would be hard pressed to point to any one single autobiography that stands out noticeably as a great work. But this is not to say that there was a failure or an inadequacy in the literary as well as in the political field. To do so would be to misunderstand the nature of autobiography which has a complex relationship with its historical context since it both responds to it and is partly determined by it. It is the literary form best suited and most applied to an era or to a state of relativity whereby the individual searches for personal meaning in a world that often refuses to behave in accordance with postulation. Since autobiography is the literature of evolution and change and since its form is so indeterminate, criticism is best advised to concentrate on its wealth of potential rather than on its failure to achieve finality or closure. Surely this is how one reads Yeats' Autobiographies, accepting that the various diverse parts make some sort of whole even though they are not complete self-portraits in themselves? In the case of O'Connor's An Only Child there does seem to be a meticulously constructed narrative that appears to encapsulate satisfactorily the completion of a stage in Michael's progress towards maturity. But this is only one part of the larger structure of the book because it is in juxtaposition with what is seen as the national chaos of a failed and incomplete political action. The highly finished nature of the form of the work necessarily draws attention to the chaotic state of

the social context upon which it draws and leaves one with the most important and relevant question of how is that 'revolution of the imagination', partly set in motion by the writers of the Irish literary renaissance, to be made complete? Solving that problem would be of greater significance to Ireland than any new development in the literature or culture of the country.

APPENDIX ONE : A Passage removed from 'Reveries over
Childhood and Youth' after the 1916 MacMillan Edition

It was because of this dream when we returned to London that I made with pastels upon the ceiling of my study a map of Sligo decorated like some old map with a ship and an elaborate compass and wrote, a little against the grain, a couple of Sligo stories, one a vague echo of "Grettis the Strong", which my father had read to me in childhood, and finished with better heart my "Wanderings of Oisín", and began after ridding my style of romantic colour "The Countess Cathleen". I saw that our people did not read, but that they listened patiently (how many long political speeches have they listened to?) and saw that there must be a theatre, and if I could find the right musicians, words set to music. I foresaw a great deal that we are doing now, though never the appetite of our new middle-class for "realism", nor the greatness of the opposition, nor the slowness of the victory. Davis had done so much, in the four years of his working life, I had thought all needful pamphleteering and speech-making could be read through at the day's end, not knowing that taste is so much more deeply rooted than opinion that even if one had school and newspaper to help, one could scarcely stir it under two generations. Then too, bred up in a studio where all things are discussed and where I have even been told that indiscretion and energy are inseparable, I knew nothing of the conservatism or of the suspicions of piety. I had planned a drama like that of Greece, and romances that were, it maybe, half Hugo and half de la Motte Fouqué, to bring into the town the memories and visions of the country and to spread everywhere the history and legends of medieval Ireland and to fill Ireland once more with sacred places. I even planned out, and in some detail (for those mysterious lights and voices were never long forgotten,) another Samothrace, a new Eleusis. I believed, so great was my faith, or so deceptive the precedent of Young Ireland, that I should find men of genius everywhere. I had not the conviction as it may seem, that a people can be compelled to write what one pleases, for that could but end in rhetoric or in some educational movement but believed I had divined the soul of the people and set my shoes upon a road that would be crowded presently.

(Reveries over Childhood and Youth, Cuala Press, Dundrum, 1916, Section XXIX, pp.120 - 122 and Reveries over Childhood and Youth, MacMillan Press, 1916, Section XXIX, pp. 200 - 203.)

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. Henri Peyre, Literature and Sincerity, 1962, p.209.
2. Included in Textual Strategies, Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism, ed. J.V. Harari, New York, 1979.
3. Anthony Storr, The Dynamics of Creation, 1972.
4. Sean O'Casey, Autobiographies I, Drums under the Windows (1945) 1980, p.409.
5. Storr, The Dynamics of Creation, p.229.
6. Roy Pascal, Design and Truth in Autobiography, 1960, p.160.
7. Originally published in Formen der Selbstdarstellung, 1956, but subsequently translated by James Olney as 'Conditions and Limits of Autobiography' and included in Autobiography : Essays Theoretical and Critical, Princeton, N.J., 1980. Louis A. Renza's essay in this volume, 'A Theory of Autobiography' is pertinent in this context since it refers to Roland Barthes' idea that autobiography takes place in the breach between the always stable narrator/subject and the always shifting 'I' (*ibid* p.276 f.)
8. William C. Spengemann, The Forms of Autobiography : Episodes in the History of a Literary Genre, Yale, 1980 and Wayne Shumaker, 'English Autobiography, Its Emergence Materials and Form', English Studies, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1954.
9. Paul Delany, British Autobiography in the Seventeenth Century, 1969, p. 2. This contains an account of the growth of the form from its roots in genealogy, through its burgeoning in and after the Civil War, and its close connections with seventeenth-century religious movements. Over 200 written examples of autobiography from this century are extant according to Matthews and Rader, Autobiography, Biography and the Novel, Los Angeles, 1973.
10. George P. Landow (ed.), Approaches to Victorian Autobiography, Ohio, 1979.
11. cf. Paul John Eakin, 'Malcolm X and The Limits of Autobiography' and Mary G. Mason, 'The Other Voice : Autobiographies of Women Writers', both in James Olney (ed.), Autobiography : Essays Theoretical and Critical.
12. Robert S. Sayre, The Examined Self, Benjamin Franklin, Henry Adams and Henry James, Princeton N.J., 1964, p.4
13. Design and Truth in Autobiography, p.9.
14. Within the context of Irish Literature, Pascal's definition would exclude the Blasket Islands group of memoirs from the autobiographical canon. Tomas O Crohan's The Islandman, translated by Robin Flower, 1929, Maurice O'Sullivan's Twenty Years a'Growin, translated by Moya Llewelyn Davies and George Thomson, 1933 and Peig Sayers' An Old Woman's Reflections, translated by Seumas Ennis, 1962, being written in Irish, fall outside the scope of this study, but it is interesting to note that, to a certain extent they fulfil a prophecy made by George Moore in Hail and Farewell, Ave (1911) Gerrards Cross, 1976, pp. 74-5.
He wrote that literature might awaken
in one of the islanders off the coast where
Edward tells me only Irish is spoken. If such
a one were to write a book about his island he
would rank above all living writers But the
possibility of genius, completely equipped,
arising in the Arran (sic) Islands seemed a

little remote.

Humour and hyperbole aside, Moore was right about the 'book about his island' but wrong in his choice of islands.

15. Anna Robeson Burr, The Autobiography, 1909.
16. A similar approach was canvassed by Bonamy Dobree in an article in The Sewanee Review, LXIV, 1956, pp. 689-706, 'Some Literary Autobiographies of the Present Age': being art, they have a tradition; or, it might be wiser to say, two or three traditions; and these may be defined by the excuses - needless, it is scarcely worth interjecting - with which most autobiographers preclude their divagations.
17. Martha Ronk Lifson, 'The Myth of Fall : A Description of Autobiography', Genre 12,1 (Spring 1979), pp.45-67
18. William Howarth, 'Some Principles of Autobiography', in Olney (ed), Autobiography, pp.84 - 114.
19. See note 9.
20. James Olney, Metaphors of Self, Princeton N.J., 1972, pp.38-9.
21. Ibid, p.35.
22. From a review 'Reminiscences by Katherine Tynan', Irish Homestead, April 25 1914, reprinted in G.W. Russell (AE), Sections from Contributions to the Irish Homestead, ed. Henry Summerfield, Vol.II, Gerrards, Cross, 1978.
23. Michael Collins, Michael Collins' Own Story (told to Hayden Talbot), 1923.
24. Maire nic Shiubhlaigh, The Splendid Years, Dublin, 1955. W.G. Fay, The Fays of the Abbey Theatre, 1935.
25. W.P. Ryan, The Irish Literary Revival : Its History, Pioneers and Possibilities, 1894.
26. In The Irish Writers 1880-1940 : Literature under Parnell's Star, 1958.
27. Hail and Farewell, ed. cit., p.564.
28. Published in 1916 and edited by Countess Glanville, see W.B. Yeats, The Letters of W.B. Yeats, ed. Allan Wade (henceforth called Wade Letters to distinguish it from the forthcoming complete edition of Yeats' letters), pp. 678-9.
29. Lord Alfred Douglas, Autobiography, 1929, and Oscar Wilde and Myself, 1914.
Frank Harris, My Life and Loves, privately printed in Paris, 1922-30.
30. John O'Leary, Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism, 2 vols., 1896. Yeats' review appeared in The Bookman in February 1897 and is now in Uncollected Prose - see note 31 below.
31. W.B. Yeats, Uncollected Prose, Volume One, First Review and Articles 1886-1896, ed. J.P. Frayne, 1970, p.37.
32. Ibid. p.396. The review first appeared in The Bookman in March 1896.
33. To Derek Verschoyle, editor of The Spectator, 21 May 1933, Wade Letters, p.809.
34. Wade Letters, p.684. He also claimed that 'Hyde, Russell, Lady Gregory, my father, myself, will all be vivid to young Irish students a generation hence because of the memoirs we are writing now'.
35. Leonard Woolf, 'The Life that is a Vision', in 'The World of Books', The Nation and Athenaeum, 1 January 1927, p.482.
L.A.G. Strong, in 'Book Reviews', The London Magazine

- 2:6 (June 1955), pp 83-6.
36. I. Fletcher, 'Yeats' Quest for Self-Transparency', TLS, 19 January 1972, pp. 53-5.
 37. I. Fletcher, 'Rhythm and Pattern in Autobiographies', An Honoured Guest : New Essays on W.B. Yeats, ed. Donoghue and Mulryne, 1968.
 38. J. Ronsley Yeats' Autobiography : Life as Symbolic Pattern, Cambridge Mass. and London, 1968.
 39. Dillon Johnston, 'The Perpetual Self of Yeats' Autobiographies', Eire-Ireland IX:4 (Winter 1974), pp. 69-85.
 40. A similar view was put forward by Wulf Kunne in 'Konzeption Und Stil Von Yeats' Autobiographies', Hamburg 1972. According to an abstract of his thesis in English and American Studies in German, Tübingen, 1972, pp.90-92, Kunne argues that Yeats, in attempting to order and shape his past 'gains a better understanding of himself' and of his calling as a poet and that the writing of Autobiographies is a 'dynamic self-projection of Yeats' self-examination in which the reader is asked to participate'.
 41. Johnston, 'The Perpetual Self' etc., p.70.
 42. David G. Wright, 'The Elusive Self : Yeats' Autobiographical Prose', Canadian Journal of Irish Studies IV:2, (December 1978), pp.41-52.
 43. *Ibid*, p.43.
 44. Kevin P. Reilly, 'Irish Literary Autobiography : The Goddesses That Poets Dreamt of', Eire-Ireland XVI:3 (Fall 1981), pp.57-80. This article is discussed in the final chapter.
 45. Meredith Cary, 'Yeats and Moore - An Autobiographical Conflict', Eire-Ireland IV:3 (Fall 1969), pp.94-109.
 46. Marjorie Perloff, 'The Tradition of Myself' : The Autobiographical Mode of Yeats', Journal of Modern Literature 4:3 (February 1975), pp. 529-73.
 47. James Olney, 'Some Versions of Memory/Some Versions of Bios : The Ontology of Autobiography', Autobiography : Essays Theoretical and Critical, ed. Olney, Princeton N.J., 1980 p.261.
 48. *Ibid*.
 49. Such as in Roy Pascal's Design and Truth in Autobiography.
 50. Such as in Peter Ure, Towards a Mythology : Studies in the Poetry of W.B. Yeats, Liverpool, 1946 and Mary C. Flannery, Yeats and Magic : The Earlier Works, Gerrards Cross, 1977.
 51. Shirley Neuman, Some One Myth - Yeats' Autobiographical Prose, New Yeats Papers XIX, Portlaoise, Eire, 1982 p.46.
 52. *Ibid*, p.50.
 53. *Ibid*, p.75.
 54. Daniel O'Hara, Tragic Knowledge : Yeats' Autobiography and Hermeneutics, N.Y., 1981, pp.18-19.
 55. Neuman, Some One Myth, p.119.
 56. This idea is more fully developed in O'Hara's Tragic Knowledge since he gives the idea of self-irony a Nietzschean context.
 57. Neuman, Some One Myth, p.113.
 58. O'Hara, Tragic Knowledge, p.29.
 59. *Ibid*. pp.99 and 100.
 60. As Ian Fletcher pointed out in 'Rhythm and Pattern in Autobiographies', (p.179), Yeats sees Beardsley in

'The Tragic Generation' as a 'Huysmanish saint'. The specific idea is that Aubrey Beardsley assumes the role of a Christological figure who takes upon himself not the consequences of sin as Huysman's St. Lydwine of Schiedam did, but the knowledge of sin. In so doing 'he enabled persons who never heard his name to recover innocence', Autobiographies p.331.

Yeats' idea of 'victimage' seems to have derived from Huysmans especially from Joris-Karl Huysmans, Saint Lydwine of Schiedam, translated by Agnes Hastings, 1923.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. W.B. Yeats, Autobiographies, 1955, p.52. This text will be cited throughout unless otherwise specified; page references will appear in brackets immediately following quotations in the main text.
2. Yeats' anxiety about the importance of 'Memory Harbour' to 'Reveries' is further suggested by a letter to MacMillans written from Calvados on 18 July 1916 in which he emphasises the need for the note accompanying the painting to be in a convenient position : cf. Letter of W.B. Yeats to MacMillans, BM Add. MSS, MacMillan Archive, 55003, Vol. CCXVIII, 30.
3. See Laim Miller, The Dun Emer Press Later the Cuala Press, New Yeats Papers VII, Dublin, 1973, Section V for further details.
4. Wade Letters, p.589.
5. Curtis Bradford, Yeats at Work, Southern Illinois, 1968, Part 3. 'Prose', section 12, 'Autobiographies and On the Boiler'.
6. W.B. Yeats, Memoirs : Autobiography - First Draft, Journal, ed. D. Donoghue, 1972, p.32.
7. Joyce's Portrait impressed Yeats who wrote to the Secretary of the Royal Literary Fund on 29 July 1915 in an (eventually successful) attempt to get a financial award for Joyce:

I have read in a paper called The Egoist certain chapters of a new novel, a disguised autobiography, which increases my conviction that he is the most remarkable new talent in Ireland today. (Wade Letters, pp.598-9).
8. W.B. Yeats, Collected Poems, 1951, p.113.
9. Letter to Katherine Tynan, 12 December 1913, Wade Letters, p.586.
10. Collected Poems, p.143.
11. Letter to Watt , Sunday 30 April (1916 added by another hand in pencil), BM Add. MSS, MacMillan Archive, 55003, Vol CCXVIII, 26 and 27.
12. Richard Ellmann, Yeats : The Man and The Masks (1948), 1961, passim.
13. Wade Letters, p.589.
14. November-December 1915, Wade Letters, pp.602-3.
15. Various critics offer various views on the question of the title: Ronsley prefers the singular form because it ties in with his argument for the unity of the work, while David Wright prefers the 1955 title. MacMillans, who claim that Yeats saw and approved of this edition as it now stands, can offer as yet no conclusive evidence that Yeats preferred the plural title and there is no discussion of the matter in the firm's archives. The temptation is to believe their claim, especially when one remembers the large number of plural titles in his work: Responsibilities, Explorations 'Discoveries' and Mythologies, and also when one remembers that Yeats himself decided upon Autobiographies as a title for the 1926 collection:

Dear Sir Frederick,

I return the proof of the title page and contents of my new book. I think that it is a mistake to give the book no title except that of the two volumes contained in it, [i.e. 'Reveries' and 'The Trembling of the Veil'] especially as you

will have to call it for short by the name of the first which happens to be the least successful.

I have therefore called the book "AUTOBIOGRAPHIES" and put the names of the two volumes as a sub-title.

(Letter to Sir Frederick MacMillan, 30 September 1926, BM Add. MSS, MacMillan Archive, 55003, Vol CCXVIII, 93). But one must always be aware of the possibility that Yeats chose the singular form for the American edition in the year before his death. Perhaps the forthcoming edition of the collected letters, currently inaccessible, will present an answer to the problem.

16. John Ruskin, Praeterita (1885-9), 1978, pp.26-7.
17. L.A.G. Strong, 'Book Reviews - Autobiographies by W.B. Yeats', The London Magazine 2:6, June 1955, p.85.
18. W.B. Yeats, Reveries Over Childhood and Youth, Cuala Press, Dundrum, 1916, p.113. The sentence about the 'enraged bull' was removed before the 1916 MacMillan edition: it is unusual for a major alteration to be made at this stage which says something about Yeats' ambivalent response to Taylor that he would not demean him as an 'irritable cow'.
19. Collected Poems, p.267.
20. Paul Delany, British Autobiography in the Seventeenth Century, 1969.
21. Wade Letters, p.589.
22. See Appendix One.
23. A detailed account of this idea is to be found in John Eglinton, A Memoir of AE, 1937, Chapter Four. George Moore gives an account of this process in action when he describes his trip with AE to the Boyne Valley in Hail and Farewell, pp.279-300.
24. Wade Letters, circa November - December 1915, p.602.
25. Ian Fletcher, 'Bedford Park : Aesthete's Elysium?' in Romantic Mythologies, ed. Fletcher, 1967, pp.169-207 : 'By 1888, indeed, Bedford Park was distinctly old hat'. Mark Girouard, Sweetness and Light, The 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-1900, 1977, Chapter 7, 'Two Queen Anne Communities', 'Bedford Park', pp. 160-176. Girouard suggests that it was not until 1890 that Bedford Park began to lose its appeal.
26. Four Years 1887-1891, Cuala Press, Dundrum, 1921, pp.2-3; and, with a slight variation, The Trembling of the Veil, T. Werner Laurie, 1922, p.129. The passage did not appear in subsequent MacMillan editions of the work.
27. David Grylls, Guardians and Angels : Parents and Children in Nineteenth Century Literature, passim, but especially p.153ff.
28. From the TS of 'Reveries', quoted by Bradford, Yeats at Work, p.361.
29. Edward Dowden, Letters of Edward Dowden and his Correspondents, edited by Elizabeth Dowden and Hilda M. Dowden, 1914. The row over Wordsworth is included in among pp. 44 to 48.
30. Tomas O Crohan, The Islandman, translated by Robin Flower, 1929, p.242.
31. Grylls, Guardians and Angels, p.173.
32. D.G. Wright, 'The Elusive Self : Yeats' Autobiographical Prose', Canadian Journal Irish Studies, IV:2, December 1978, p.42.
33. Hugh Leonard, Home Before Night, 1979.
34. Ibid, p.18.

35. Ibid, p.7.
36. Mary Colum, Life and the Dream (1928), 1947.
37. Ibid, p.22.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. Ian Fletcher, 'Rhythm and Pattern in Autobiographies' An Honoured Guest, eds. Donoghue and Mylryne, 1968, pp.165 and 175.
2. Letter to J.B. Yeats, 26 December 1914, Wade Letters, p.589.
3. Ibid.
4. With the publication of Memoirs in 1972 and Donoghue's introduction to this First Draft, and with Bradford's study of the manuscripts and various printed versions of Autobiographies, the relationship between the First Draft-Autobiography and the final version in Autobiographies has been comprehensively examined, especially when one considers that many others have looked into the matter. As a result, no extensive comparison between Memoirs and Autobiographies will feature here, only isolated instances of comparison with 'The Trembling of the Veil'.
5. The serialised version of 'Four Years' in The London Mercury and the The Dial are exactly similar. Much ill-feeling was caused by Lollie's mistakes in setting up the Cuala edition since in two places she added quotation marks when they were not required and furthermore she used double quotation marks when her brother preferred single.
6. The Dial, July 1921, LXXI, p.80, and The London Mercury, IV, 21, July 1921, p.266.
7. John Butler Yeats to W.B. Yeats, 24 June 1921, quoted by William M. Murphy in Prodigal Father: The Life of John Butler Yeats 1839-1922, 1978, pp.528-9.
8. Four Years, Cuala Press, Dundrum, 1921, p.46.
9. Yeats was still smarting from his father's letter in September 1921 since he wrote to John Quinn saying that back in the 1880s and 90s he was drawn towards dominating men like Henley and Morris and not to his 'drifting, innocent and helpless family', nor to J.B. Yeats' friends. He also says that his father was aggrieved by this:

I find even from letters written in the last few months that he has not quite forgiven me. (30 September 1921, quoted by Murphy, Prodigal Father, p.532).

Yeats would have been more correct had he said that JBY had not quite forgiven him for putting the matter in print for all the world to see.
10. M. MacGregor Mathers to W.B. Yeats, 5 January 1924, quoted in Letters to W.B. Yeats, Volume Two, eds. Finneran, Harper and Murphy, 1977, pp.447-8.
11. Ibid, p.448.
12. Ibid, p.451. "S.R." is short for SRMD, the initials of the motto used by Mathers in the Order of the Golden Dawn, for which "G.D." obviously stands.
13. The Trembling of the Veil, T. Werner Laurie, 1922, p.212.
14. Although there are letters from this period from Coole, most of the published ones dealing with 'Four Years' come from either Broad Street or from a cottage the Yeatses rented at Shillingford in Berkshire. L.A.G. Strong, then resident in Oxford, has twice mentioned that Yeats was working on 'The Trembling of the Veil' when in Oxford. In his review of Autobiographies in The London Magazine in June 1955 he writes of Yeats' memoirs that 'they were

- most carefully composed. Of parts of them, which he wrote at Oxford, some of us heard three or four drafts... (p.84); and in an interview, 'Yeats at his Ease', in W.B. Yeats : Interviews and Recollections, 2 vols. ed. E.K. Mikhail, 1977, Strong refers to Yeats at this time in Oxford working on his autobiography and puzzling over The Rhymers' Club (Vol.2, p.149).
15. Four Years, Cuala edition, pp.91-2, and The London Mercury, p.377, subsequently amalgamated into 'Ireland after Parnell', section I.
 16. For evidence that Yeats was dwelling on the significance of Davis in 1899, see 'Lady Wilde', Letters to the New Island, ed. Horace Reynolds. This letter also indicates Yeats' enthusiasm for memoirs as the historical record most suited to the story of Ireland's cultural renewal:
 Lady Wilde would do great service if she would write her memoirs, the appearance and ways of our '48 men are often so scantily known to us. (p.78).
 17. W.B. Yeats, Memoirs, ed. D. Donoghue, 1972, p.29.
 18. Ibid. p.38.
 19. Ibid. pp 40-43 and 44.
 20. The Brotherhood being the group of artists of which J.B. Yeats was a member.
 21. This is succinctly argued in O'Hara's article rather than in his book, Tragic Knowledge. See 'The Irony of Tradition and W.B. Yeats' Autobiography : An Essay in Dialectical Hermeneutics', Boundary 2 5:3 Spring 1977.
 22. H.P. Blavatsky, the pythoiness of the Movement, holds nightly levees at Lansdowne Road. She is certainly a woman of great learning and character. A London wit once described her as the low comedian of the world to come. This unkind phrase, anything but an accurate account of this strange woman, had this much truth, that she can always enjoy a joke even against herself.
 W.B. Yeats, 'The Three O'Byrnes', The Boston Pilot, 23 November 1889, in Letters to the New Island, pp.83-84.
 23. Memoirs, p.24.
 24. Yeats over-simplified the Anglo-Celtic dichotomy in the composition of The Rhymers' Club; many Rhymers were involved in the Irish Literary Movement and vice-versa. See Karl Beckson, 'Yeats and the Rhymers' Club', Yeats Studies I, 1971.
 25. Memoirs, p.37.
 26. F.S.L. Lyons, Charles Stewart Parnell, 1977, p.611.
 27. Herbert Howarth, The Irish Writers 1880-1940, Literature under Parnell's Star, 1958, Chapters I and IV and passim.
- Malcolm Brown, The Politics of Irish Literature, 1977. Chapter 24, pp.371-90.
- These are not the only studies of the subject; Lyon's lecture, 'The Parnell Theme in Literature', Place Personality and the Irish Writer, ed. Andrew Carpenter, N.Y. 1977, is another example, but these are the major studies of the subject.
28. Yeats' image of Parnell as a man of self possession and as a master of his emotions is drawn greatly from the portrait of him by Katherine O'Shea in Charles Stewart Parnell : his love-story and political life, 2 Vols, 1914. She recounts the incident involving herself and Parnell in a storm on the Chain Pier at Brighton which Yeats

refers to in 'Ireland after Parnell' (p.232), see Charles Stewart Parnell etc., Volume Two, pp.153-4. However the story of Parnell coming among his followers after a speech in the Commons, his hands bleeding because he had torn them with his nails in his intensity, is a little fanciful, being based on an incident in Volume One of Miss O'Shea's book:

he was not a ready speaker, and his constitutional nervousness, hidden though it was under the iron mask of reserve he always wore in public, rendered public speaking very painful work to him... I have seen, from the Ladies' Gallery, his hand clenched until the "Orders of the Day" which he held were crushed into pulp, and only they prevented his nails piercing his hand. (pp.176-7)

29. Although Yeats discusses Russell and Ely Place, he does so more as part of the contemporary Irish scene than as part of any independent discussion of his occult interests.

30. Many of the transitions between sections in 'The Trembling of the Veil' seem abrupt, as though he would prefer greater freedom to make connections irrespective of narrative logic.

Daniel G. Wright, 'The Elusive Self : Yeats' Auto-biographical Prose', Canadian Journal of Irish Studies IV:2 December 1978, p.52.

31. Bradford illustrates how 'Ireland after Parnell' appears to have been the most problematical part of Autobiographies to compose because, firstly, there were many people among his subjects who were still alive and sensitive to criticism and, secondly, there was the problem of making the political background lie easily alongside the Theosophical sections and the description of AE. There are partial manuscripts for the book and one principal MS, a study of all of which makes it quite clear that the chronological arrangement first tried, whereby the Ely Place material precedes Yeats' stay with O'Leary at Clontarf was unsatisfactory to him, and the arrangement of the final three sections, acting as a bridge to the more mystical 'Hodos Chameliontos', was only arrived at after experimenting.

32. W.F. Ryan, The Irish Literary Revival, Its History, Pioneers and Possibilities, 1894, p.135.

33. Among our persons of authority, and among the friends and followers they had brought, there were many who at that time found it hard to refuse if anybody offered for sale a pepper-pot shaped to suggest a round tower with a wolf-dog at its foot, who would have felt it inappropriate to publish an Irish book that had not harp and shamrock and green cover, so completely did their minds move among Young Ireland images and metaphors. Autobiographies, p.203.

34. However it is also true that Yeats was thinking about the idea of a cultural Irish hostess at the time he refers to:

There is a certain Mrs. Rowley, who is a friend of Miss Conne's and I think I may say of mine for I saw her several times when Miss Conne was in London and liked her very much. She is Irish and anxious to help in any way she can in Ireland. Miss Conne has filled her with an idea of trying to keep a kind of 'salon' where conservatives and

nationalists might meet... If you come across her -
you might talk the matter over with her.

Letter to John O'Leary, February 1892, Wade Letters,
pp.202-3.

35. Dostoevsky's novel, known in translation as both The Possessed and The Devils, was published at the author's expense in 1891-92. In it he denounces revolutionaries and nihilists, portraying a group of strange, warped and dilettante figures who, though somewhat risible in the early stages of the novel, become caught up in a brutal political movement that leaves the end of the novel strewn with bodies.
36. However, O'Leary was known to have carried a gun in his earlier years.
37. See Chapter One, footnotes 30 and 31.
38. Letter of W.B. Yeats to George Russell, July 1921, Wade Letters, p.671.
39. There are obviously many thematic connections to be made between this idea of reductive imagery and many of the poems in Michael Robartes and the Dancer of 1921.
40. Flaubert's Bouvard and Pécuchet are two rather dim-witted clerks who, gaining financial freedom, make many attempts at acquiring knowledge and understanding of their own lives and the world about them. In the plan of Flaubert's unfinished novel it is clear that the series of disasters that befall them finally defeat them and they retreat happily into the security of their former occupation as copyists.
- His St. Anthony, a hermit, is subjected to many temptations and bewildering visions while in the wilderness around the Mareotic Lake; he remains untouched by them and earns a vision of Christ's face as reward. A short quotation from Ch. IV of The Temptation of St. Anthony may reinforce Yeats' meaning:
- And next, the plants are indistinguishable from the stones. Pebbles bear a resemblance to brains, stalactites to udders, and iron-dust to tapestries adorned with figures. In pieces of ice he can trace efflorescences, impressions of bushes and shells - so that one cannot tell whether they are the impressions of those objects or the objects themselves.
41. Obviously it prepares the way for some of the dream and vision-experiences of 'The Stirring of the Bones', but only some of them. The dream of the Archer was added at a later date and so is not anticipated here.
42. Walter Pater, 'Dante Gabriel Rossetti', Appreciations, with an essay on Style, 1889 (1898), pp.230-31.
43. He writes that Pater's prose 'taught us to walk upon a rope tightly stretched through serene air, and we were left to keep our feet upon a swaying rope in a storm', Autobiographies pp.302-303.
44. I am afraid that if Chameleon is used as a Greek word - it would have to be regarded as such if you use 'hodos' - the genitive is Chameleontos. The Latin writers mostly use chameleonis but many (e.g. Solinus) chameleontos; so that you might use either form with 'via', but chameleonis would be preferable. The latter part of the word means 'lion'.

Letter of Louis Purser to W.B. Yeats, 14 December 1922, Letters to W.B. Yeats, Volume Two, eds. Finneran,

- Harper and Murphy, 1977, p.436.
45. Joseph Ronsley, who made use of this lecture in writing Yeats' Autobiography, Life as Symbolic Pattern, subsequently edited the lecture and published it in Yeats and the Theatre, ed. R. O'Driscoll and L. Reynolds, 1975, pp.60-81.
 46. Letter of W.B. Yeats to Olivia Shakespear, June 1922, Wade Letters, p.685.
 47. Fletcher's comment comes in his review of Memoirs, 'Yeats' Quest for Self-Transparency', TLS, 19 January 1973, pp.53-55.
 48. Rupert Croft Cooke, Feasting with Panthers, 1967, p.167.
 49. Al Alvarez, The Savage God, A Study of Suicide, 1974, p.260.
 50. Mary C. Flannery, Yeats and Magic : The Earlier Works, Irish Literary Studies Two, Gerrards Cross, 1977, passim.
 51. Letter of J.K. Huysmans to Princess Bibesco, quoted in Robert Baldick, The Life of Joris-Karl Huysmans, Oxford 1955, pp.290-91.
 52. 'A Biographical Fragment', The Criterion I 4 (July 1923), pp. 315-321.
 53. See footnote 9 to this chapter.
 54. Although both Davitt and Parnell worked for Irish independence and for Land Reform there were fundamental differences between the two men, Davitt in particular disliked the cult of the individual that grew up around Parnell, and felt he should resign from the Irish Party after the O'Shea affair.
 55. Memoirs, pp.114-6.
 56. Davitt said in 1905, 'I am content to be an Irish Nationalist and Land Reformer; but there are many articles in the political creed of Socialism to which I willingly subscribe' (F. Sheehy-Skeffington, Michael Davitt, Revolutionary Agitator and Labour Leader, 1908 (1967), p.191). He was always keen to create International alliances, especially between the Irish and English working classes and thought of encouraging land agitation in the Scottish Highlands. Yeats, with his deep suspicion of Socialism and his nationalist tendencies wrote that Davitt 'had wrecked his Irish influence by international politics'. (Autobiographies p.140).
 57. See especially Howarth, The Irish Writers, p.14 and f.
 58. C.G. Jung, Synchronicity - An Acausal Connecting Principle, Zurich, 1952 (England 1955), p.36. Also cited by Mary C. Flannery Yeats and Magic, p.103.
 59. In Memoirs, Yeats recalls 'that straight line which Seraphita calls the mark of man' (p.101), Seraphita being the eponymous hero/heroine of Balzac's Swedenborgian novel. For 'The Stirring of the Bones', Yeats was less precise and simply recalls Balzac's other Swedenborgian novel, Louis Lambert, the hero does indeed refer to the subject:

'Why is nature so prodigal of the colour green?' he asked me at another time. 'How is it she allows so few straight lines?' Why does man in his creations, seldom use curves? Why should he alone have the sentiment of straight lines?'

Honoré de Balzac, Louis Lambert, 1832. Translated in Volume 38 of La Comédie Humaine by Katherine Prescott Wormeley in 1896. Yeats, also claimed to have read all Balzac's novels, appears to have been acquainted with this series of translations.

60 . Yeats implants the idea that 'myths are the activities of the Daimons' by quoting a fellow student of the Cabbala on the subject (p.373) and hence daimonic activity is implicit in the voices that Yeats hears or that speak through him. That what they should speak should appear to be part of Christian thought may appear as something of a discrepancy because of their origins in pagan myth. Plutarch suggests in a dialogue, 'Why the Oracles cease to give answers' in 'The Decline of the Oracles', Moral Essays IV, I (translated by Rex Warner, 1971 pp.31-96), that they may come from Egyptian or Phrygian magic. He also posits that though they feel human emotions and are subject to change, they are of a higher order than man. Socrates felt that they were a positive force that could work for the benefit of individual man. They appear, in a rather ambivalent form in early Christian thought, and soon become associated with the children of the fallen angels and ultimately become confused with demons. However, in their benevolent form they are surely associated with the idea of individual guardian angels. Perhaps the most fruitful way of viewing them in terms of an autobiographical statement would be to consider a comment by a Karl Jaspers who put a secular interpretation upon them, they are:

the dialectical explications of the wholeness of
the self, experiences as guides of the soul
in the process of self illumination.

(quoted in Wolfgang M. Zucker 'The Demonic : from Aeschylus to Tillich', Theology Today XXCI I pp.34-50).

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. The large number of revisions to the printed versions could have been necessitated by the speed of the original composition:
His revised typescript is to like the version printed by the Cuala Press that it seems fairly certain Yeats accomplished 'Dramatis Personae' as we know it in one manuscript and one heavily revised typescript.
Curtis Bradford, Yeats at Work, p.373
2. 6 December 1926, Wade Letters, p.721.
3. David G. Wright in 'The Elusive Self, Yeats' Autobiographical Prose', Canadian Journal of Irish Studies IV:2 (2 December 1978), p.52, argues that Yeats lost interest in his autobiography because of an awareness of the formal limitations of prose and further suggests that his enthusiasm for Autobiographies may also have waned as he further explored and mastered the art of self-portraiture in his preferred and consummate medium : the lyric poem.
4. 'Mr. Yeats' Reminiscences : Years of Peace and the Age of Disillusion', The Times Literary Supplement, 23 May 1936. The reviewer is referring to what is now on p. 437 of Autobiographies (Dramatis Personae, 1936, p.55) - 'I may speak later of the books he [Moore] was to write under what seems to me a misunderstanding of his powers'. One could also read Yeats' references to John Shawe-Taylor 'who, by an act of daring I must presently describe, made the settlement of the Land Question possible' (p.393) as an indication of a plan to write more fully about the years after 1902 since no further reference to Shawe-Taylor's part in the Land purchase system ever appears in Autobiographies. Gordon Phillips, archivist with the TLS, informs me in private correspondence that the reviewer of 'Dramatis Personae' was 'one A. Clarke - Nothing else known'. It is reasonable to surmise that this was Austin Clarke, especially in the light of what he says in Twice Around the Black Church:
Book reviewing as a profession seems to be disappearing and I was fortunate, therefore in catching the last of its great Fleet Street tradition...In particular, I owed much to Sir Bruce Richmond...He was a man of high principle and had a difficult task as editor of the TLS, for all the reviewing was anonymous. (p.103)
5. D.G. Wright, 'The Elusive Self', p.52.
6. Wade Letters, p.820.
7. In private correspondence, Dr. J. Kelly, editor of the forthcoming complete edition of Yeats' letters, has let me know that not only would it be very difficult to scrutinise the, as yet, unpublished letters for clarification of this matter, but he has also kindly said that, to his knowledge, the unpublished letters contain little new information about Autobiographies.
8. Letter of W.B. Yeats to MacMillan and Company, 9 March 1934, BM Add. MSS, MacMillan Archive, 55003, Vol. CCXVIII, 160-162.
9. 29 November 1927, Wade Letters, p.733.
10. Finneran, R.J., Harper, G.M., Murphy, W.M. (editors), Letters to W.B. Yeats, Volume 2, p.483.

11. Letter of W.B. Yeats to Sir Frederick MacMillan, 15 May 1934, BM Add. MS, MacMillan Archive, 55003, Vol. CCXVIII, 166.
12. Letter to Olivia Shakespear, 10 May 1934, Wade Letters, p. 822.
13. Meredith Cary in 'Yeats and Moore - An Autobiographical Conflict', Eire-Ireland 4:3 (Autumn 1969), pp. 94-109 argues that 'Dramatis Personae' is a 'snide' and 'joyless' response to Moore's Hail and Farewell:
 Motivated neither by fact nor by aesthetic value, then, he sulked through his irrelevant complaint against Moore without in the least tarnishing the grace of Moore's artistic portraiture (p.109).
 Cary's greatest mistake is to fail to appreciate the humour of 'Dramatis Personae', while to see the work as flawed because it was not motivated by fact is to enter upon treacherous ground when writing about Moore himself.
14. Letter to Olivia Shakespear, Wade Letters, p.833.
15. Letter of W.B. Yeats to MacMillan and Company, 16 October 1935, BM Add. MSS, MacMillan Archive, 55003, Vol CCXVIII, 189.
16. Una Ellis Fermor, The Irish Dramatic Movement (1939), 1954, p. xi.
17. Josephine Johnson, Florence Farr - Bernard Shaw's 'New Woman', Gerrard's Cross, 1975, p.42.
18. Brenna Katz Clarke and Harold Ferrar in The Dublin Drama League 1919-1941, Dublin, 1979, trace the parallel histories of the League and the Abbey Theatre and give further evidence of the differences between Yeats and Lady Gregory throughout the 1920's.
19. Maire nic Shiubhlaigh, The Splendid Years - as told to Edward Kenny, Dublin, 1955, p.70.
20. W.G. Fay and C. Carswell, The Fays of the Abbey Theatre - An Autobiographical Record, 1935, pp.105-6.
21. Ibid. p.122.
22. The Splendid Years, p.49 f.
23. For the edition of 1961, MacLiammoir added an epilogue.
24. The Fays of the Abbey Theatre, p.140.
25. The Splendid Years, p.44.
26. William Carleton, The Life of William Carleton, I, pp.26-8.
27. Vivian Mercier, The Irish Comic Tradition, 1962. CF Tomas O Crohan, The Islandman, translated by R. Flower, 1929 passim for evidence of how recently the belief in the magical powers of the satirical poet was held.
28. The Irish Comic Tradition, p.184.
29. George Moore Hail and Farewell (1911-14), edited by R.A. Cave, Gerrard's Cross, 1976, p.38.
30. Ibid. pp.209-210.
31. For Martyn's part in the battle, the following could stand:
Mon ami Moore... suffers from an incurable complaint which manifests itself in the form of a catarrh or looseness of the brain which causes a perennial condition of mental diarrhoea. This must be shot somewhere at once, and necessarily over those nearest to him, his friends. Then in order to hide his infirmity he pretends he has done something very clever and ... clapping his little hands, he laughingly shouts: "I did this because I knew it would annoy you". But it does not annoy somehow, I suppose because it is mon ami Moore.
 From Paragraphs for the Perverse, quoted by Denis Gwyn.

- Edward Martyn and the Irish Revival, 1930, p. 30.
32. 'Yeats and Moore - An Autobiographical Conflict', Eire - Ireland, p.102.
33. The scholar was J.P. Mahaffy as Oliver St. John Gogarty relates in As I Was Going Down Sackville Street (1933), 1980, p.306.
34. Herbert Howarth, The Irish Writers 1880-1940 : Literature under Parnell's Star, 1958, p.76.
35. Evidence for this is Yeats' mislocating and misquoting of a paragraph from Moore's account of the Daily Express dinner (compare Autobiographies, p.422 and Hail and Farewell (1976), p.128), his being unable to remember how Moore and Whelan, the coachman, had avoided mass at Ardrahan Church with Martyn (see Hail and Farewell (1976), p.193 f. for clear reasons for this), his failure to discuss Salve and Vale at all; and St. John Gogarty in Sackville Street, ed.cit., pp.115-6, describing a visit to Yeats at Rathfarnham where he moved in 1932:
- 'I am glad you have come,' he said, 'you are the very man I want to see, I have just been reading George Moore's Memoirs of my Dead Life. And a question keeps rising in my mind which you can answer... Do you think George Moore was impotent?'
- With so much of 'Dramatis Personae' focusing upon Moore as a lover, it is possible that the book is as much a reply to this autobiographical record of Moore's emotional life as it is to the intellectual autobiography of Hail and Farewell.
36. The Irish Writers, p.210.
37. Ian Fletcher, 'Yeats' Quest for Self-Transparency', review of Memoirs, Times Literary Supplement, 19 January 1973, p.54.
38. James Olney, 'Some Versions of Memory/Some Versions of Bios : The Ontology of Autobiography', in Autobiography : Essays Theoretical and Critical, Princeton, 1980, p.261.
39. L.A.G. Strong in W.B. Yeats : Interviews and Recollections, editor E.H. Mikhail, II, p.152.
40. Ibid. I, p.93.
41. Lennox Robinson in Curtain Up, 1942, writes:
- I have written and spoken elsewhere that Balzac writing a novel about her family would have spent fifty happy pages describing that house and its contents. (p.217).
42. Sir William Gregory, The Autobiography of Sir William Gregory, editor Augusta, Lady Gregory, 1894, pp.135-6.
43. Peter Faulkener, 'Yeats and the Irish Eighteenth Century', Yeats Centenary Papers V, Dublin, 1965; and also Daniel Harris, Yeats: Coole Park and Ballylee, 1974, provide detailed background for Yeats' relationship with this period and the Coole Park connection.
44. W.B. Yeats, Wheels and Butterflies, 1934, p.21.
45. Faulkener in 'Yeats and the Irish Eighteenth Century' (pp.116-7) quotes from an article written by Yeats in The Spectator in January 1932 in which he says that Ireland's past obsession with Independence and Home Rule, having gone, could now give way to a search for a model for self-government.
46. W.B. Yeats, 'Bishop Berkeley', Essays and Introductions, 1961, pp.404-5.
47. Wheels and Butterflies, p.26.

48. The Irish Dramatic Movement, pp.161-2.
49. Wheels and Butterflies, pp.37-8.
50. Augusta, Lady Gregory, Seventy Years 1852-1922,
Gerrard's Cross, 1974, p.138.
51. Paul de Man, 'Autobiography as De-facement', Modern
Language Notes 94,V (December 1979).
52. Ibid. p.920.
53. Ibid. p.922.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. 'Estrangement' also appeared in The London Mercury during October and November 1926 as 'Estrangement : Thoughts from a diary kept in 1909', and in The Dial in November 1926 as 'Estrangement : being some fifty thoughts from a Diary'. Sections I, II and V had previously appeared as II, I and III of 'The Folly of Argument' in The Manchester Playgoer in June 1911.
2. 'The Death of Synge' anticipated its appearance in book form by its serialization in The London Mercury in April 1928, while The Dial of the same month carried 'The Death of Synge, and other passages from an old diary'. The section now called 'Detractions', Section XVIII, had been quoted, in near-entirety, by Lady Gregory in her article 'Synge' in The English Review of March 1913.
3. Curtis Bradford, Yeats at Work, Southern Illinois, 1968, p.338.
4. Ibid. p.337. Denis Donoghue, who transcribed and edited the Journal for Memoirs, 1972, supports Bradford's two suggestions in a footnote to p.157.
5. Joseph Ronsley, Yeats' Autobiography : Life as Symbolic Pattern, Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1968, pp.6-7.
6. Letter of W.B. Yeats to Florence Farr, 9 March 1909, Wade Letters, p.526.
7. George W. Russell (pseud. AE), Letters from AE, selected and edited by Alan Denson, London and New York, 1961, p.91.
8. Brenna Katz-Clarke and Harold Ferrar, The Dublin Drama League 1919-41, Dublin, 1979, p.11.
9. Virginia Woolf, The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Volume I 1915-1919, edited by Anne Oliver Bell, 1972, p.222.
10. Ibid. p.266.
11. Ibid, p.317.
12. Yeats' Autobiography. p.28.
13. Ibid. p.122.
14. The lecture on 'The Irish Dramatic Movement' included at the end of 'The Bounty of Sweden' can hardly be said to fill this gap.
15. Yeats' Autobiography, p.108.
16. Letter of W.B. Yeats to MacMillan's, 1 November 1925, BM Add. MSS, MacMillan Archive, 55003, Vol. CCXVIII, 90.
17. The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Vol. II, pp.319 and 320.
18. Ibid. II, p.158.
19. Ibid. I, p.150.
20. Ibid. II, p.234.
21. Ibid. III, p.102.
22. Yeats at Work, p.350.
23. Henri de Balzac, Les Comédiens sans Le Savoir, translated as The Unconscious Mummies and other Stories by E. Marriage in Vol. 36 of La Comédie Humaine, editor G. Saintsbury, 1897, p.44.
24. Ibid. pp.45-6.
25. Wade Letters, p.526.
26. 'The Tragic Theatre', in The Cutting of an Aqate, reprinted in Essays and Introductions, 1961. p.240.
27. Corinna Salvadori, Yeats and Castiglione, poet and courtier, Dublin, 1965.
28. R.A. Fothergill, Private Chronicles : A Study of English Diaries, 1974, p.3.

29. Ian Fletcher, 'Rhythm and Pattern in Autobiographies, in An Honoured Guest : New Essays on W.B. Yeats, edited by Donoghue and Mulryne, 1968. p.165.
30. Private Chronicles, p.35.
31. Yeats' Autobiography, p.182.
32. 'J.M. Synge and the Ireland of his time', in Essays and Introductions, pp.321 and 322.
33. David H. Greene and Edward M. Stephens, J.M. Synge 1871-1909, New York, 1959.
34. Letters from AE, p.66.
35. Ernie O'Malley, On Another Man's Wound, 1956.
Brendan Behan, Borstal Boy, 1958 and Confessions of An Irish Rebel, 1965.
36. H. Boylan, A Dictionary of Irish Biography, Dublin, 1978.
37. The process one witnesses, perhaps, in much of 'The Death of Synge' is that of Yeats' reaction to his grief at the death and the impossibility of rationalising about it finally and satisfactorily.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

1. Letter to Lady Gregory, 13 January 1924, Wade Letters, p.701.
2. Letter to Olivia Shakespear, 6 December 1926, Wade Letters, p.721.
3. The lecture, 'The Irish Dramatic Movement', was not included in the first American edition of The Autobiography, New York, 1938, even though it had been included in the MacMillan Dramatis Personae, published in New York in 1936. It has now been restored to The Autobiography.
4. Nobel Prize Lectures 1901-1967, ed. Horst Frenz, 1969, 'Literature', p.194. The quotation used here is taken from the dedicatory note to the award.
5. *Ibid.* p.199.
6. A discussion of the debate in the Nobel Foundation about the award for literature can be found in Nobel: the Man and his Prizes, editing body the Nobel Foundation, co-ordinating editor W. Odelberg (1950), 1972. Eric Axel Karlfeldt, secretary to the Academy: 'In view of the fact that Yeats, who is much younger, may be considered later, I urge the Academy to award this years' prize to Hardy'. p.107.
7. The lecture, 'The Irish Dramatic Movement' acts as a stop gap measure for bridging the years from 1909 to 1923 which are barely treated in Autobiographies; it may be seen as a conclusion to the phase of the book that deals with the founding of the Theatre Movement, but it does also leave the possibility of a new autobiographical phase open.
8. The Bounty of Sweden: A Meditation, and a Lecture delivered before the Swedish Academy and Certain Notes by W.E. Yeats, Dublin, 1925.
9. It is evident from this and from Yeats saying 'I am speaking without notes' (p.553) why Bradford has not been able to find a manuscript for the lecture.
10. The importance of heightened experience in the keeping of a journal about a specific event is discussed in Chapter VII in relation to James Stephen's The Insurrection in Dublin.
11. See Samhain Number One, October 1901, 'Windlestraws'.
12. Yeats' discovery that Sweden underwent a form of cultural renaissance in the 1880s is important to 'The Bounty of Sweden'; a similar occurrence took place in Denmark in the 1870s where the national revival had a specifically social and agricultural dimension. Jutland forests were planted, bogs drained, moors planted out and there was considerable damming to reclaim arable land:

Behind the agricultural uprising stood the Danish Folk High Schools. During the course of several decades this educational movement had developed into a strong, nationwide organization. Practically all the young people in rural districts now enrolled in the Folk High Schools for additional post-school education. Not only did they learn practical farming, but history and literature too, in fact what spread through the land and turned the 'regeneration' process into a task everybody came to regard as a duty, was a tremendous, deeply enthusiastic elevation of intellectual standards.

Palle Lauring, A History of the Kingdom of Denmark,

- Copenhagen, 1960, translated by David Holmen, p.233. Sweden adopted the Folk High School system in 1868 but it was never too influential. It differed, too, in that it was based on the Trade Union-inspired worker study groups of the 1880s.
13. John Ruskin, The Nature of Gothic (1854), 1892, p.3 This was originally 'On the Nature of Gothic Architecture', the sixth chapter of the second volume of The Stones of Venice, but this edition is cited because it has a preface by William Morris.
14. Ragnar Ostberg, The Stockholm City Hall : A Guide, 1950, p.19 Ostberg was the supervising architect of the project and Yeats entertained him in Dublin in 1926 (see Wade Letters, pp.719-20).
15. Unless man's work once again becomes a pleasure to him, the token of which change will be that beauty is once again a natural and necessary accompaniment of productive labour, all but the worthless must toil in pain, and therefore live in pain.
- William Morris' preface to The Nature of Gothic, 1892.
16. Shirley Neuman in Some One Myth : Yeats' Autobiographical Prose, Portlaoise, 1982, says that Yeats found the town hall 'A Ruskinian Utopia', p. 115, which is a little inaccurate.
17. Ostberg in describing the Blue Chamber writes:
The wall surfaces are composed of brickwork, which consists of machine made red bricks, chiselled out after being placed in position, of the same shape everywhere in the rest of the building. This is known as 'monk brick'... The bricks of the City Hall on the external facade consist of handmade bricks, while the brickwork is of machine made brick.
- In fact the bricks used throughout were modelled on a brick taken from the excavation in 1909 of the Three Crowns Castle, built by Gustavus Vasa in 1523, destroyed by fire and replaced by the Tessin building.
18. T.R. Henn, The Lonely Tower (1950), 1960. pp.221-2.
19. Giorgio Melchiori, The Whole Mystery of Art, 1960, p.217.
20. Letter of W.B. Yeats to MacMillans, 1926, BM Add. MS, MacMillan Archive, 55003, Vol CCXVIII, 95.
21. In the early version of 'The Bounty of Sweden', published in The London Mercury, Yeats had been more overt in his criticism of aspects of the decor of Westminster Cathedral when he wrote,
the most ignoble of all being the Chapel of St. Patrick, planned and paid for by my countrymen,
(The London Mercury, 24 September 1924, p.478).
This reference was removed before the Cuala edition was published, but there was an error in the same passage in The London Mercury and Cuala edition which was not corrected until Dramatis Personae (1936); Yeats refers twice to the Pennsylvania Terminus as the 'Transylvania Terminus', but, amusingly, The Dial, an American magazine, silently and discreetly corrected the error in their version.
22. Eugene Janson's work is partly reproduced in a Swedish survey of contemporary artists (Nils Gustav Wollin, Eugene Janssons Maleri, Sveriges Allmänna Konstforening, Publication 28, Stockholm, 1920), from which it can be

- seen that he painted various studies from nature not only in different lights, but also in different weather, often calling his works by the month or time of day they represent: e.g. 'Vinterbild from Stockholm', 'September evening', 'February afternoon', etc.
23. Robert Langbaum, Mysteries of Identity, New York, 1977, p.44 and the chapter, 'Wordsworth : Self as Process'.
24. Futurism, Dadaism, and a Matisse-inspired movement calling itself the '1909-ists' all flourished in Sweden before the First World War; after this came Intimism and Naivism. Yeats fails to mention these movements; however, going by the evidence of Rolf Soderborg in Introduction to Modern Swedish Art, Stockholm, 1962, public affection for parochial landscape painting was widespread:
- [Axell] Nilsson painted the living room of the Smedsudden House with a view out across the Waters of Lake Maleren with an intensity which will revive in the heart of any Swede the memories of brilliant summers' evenings.
25. When Yeats speaks of the 'President of the Swedish Academy' he appears to be referring to the Chairman of the Nobel Committee of the Swedish Academy, Per Hallstromm, who gave the Presentation speech about Yeats (which was based upon a reading of 'Reveries' and 'The Trembling of the Veil' and which concentrated on Yeats as a lyric, rather than as a dramatic poet).
26. Although stone and basalt busts dating from this period are extant, wooden busts are far from common. However, there is a very striking case from the coffin of the priestess Henutmehit in the British Museum that dates from c. 1300 B.C., i.e. the XVIII-XIX Dynasties. This was acquired by the Museum in December 1907 (I am grateful to the Egyptian Department for help on this matter). At the same time that Yeats was writing 'The Bounty of Sweden', he was also working on A Vision much of the iconography of which seems to derive from various collections in the British Museum. It is possible, therefore, that if Yeats had been refreshing his memory of these collections he may have recently seen this coffin case.
27. Donald Torchiana, W.B. Yeats and Georgian Ireland, North Western States, 1966, p.121, Torchiana's source for this information was Mrs. Yeats. Yeats had written to Lady Gregory telling her of his plans to use the Prize Money:
- I have invested £6,000 of the money and kept £500 to go to pay off the debt on this house, or pay Lilly's expenses as the case may be. There was about £400 which we have spent largely on our trip to Sweden and on completing the furnishing of the house - my bookcases, stair carpets, plates, dishes, knives and forks and something I have always longed for, a sufficient reference library.
- (13 January 1924, Wade Letters, p.701).
28. The absolutism of the Swedish monarch had ended with the demise of Charles XII in 1718. Later in the century, Gustavus III wrestled back much of the monarch's former status and, under the influence of French thinkers, developed a court life again. The nobles in particular mistrusted absolutism and hired an assassin to kill the

- King at a masked ball in Stockholm Opera House in 1792.
29. Wade Letters, pp.716-7.
 30. There is an alternative view adopted by some historians which suggests that Charles XII was an obstinate King whose refusal to negotiate an honourable peace in the Northern Wars with Russia and other neighbours precipitated Sweden's loss of power in the area.
 31. Robespierre, Marat, St. Just and Mirabeau were members of the Jacobin Club which met for a time after its founding in Versailles in 1789 in a property once owned by the Dominican Order. The Dominicans' first house in Paris was in Rue St. Jacques hence their nick-name, 'Jacobins', in France. Jacobin here reflects Yeats' general fear of revolutionary communism in Europe.
 32. The Nobel Lectures 1901-67, ed. Frenz, p.194.
 33. Alrik Gustafson, August Strindberg : 1849-1912, Stockholm, 1961, p.15. Strindberg was a controversialist by nature and was at loggerheads with the Swedish establishment, particularly in the late 1870s, over a number of his works the criticisms of which helped make him feel a persecuted man. He was called back to Sweden in 1884 to stand trial for obscenity over Married, a series of stories and sketches on the nuptial theme. Although he was acquitted, his persecution mania was exacerbated by the incident.
 34. August Strindberg, A Madman's Defence, translated by Evert Sprinchorn from Ellie Schleumer's versions of Le Plaidoyer d'un Fou (1895) called The Confession of a Fool, 1912, p.23.
 35. Ibid. p.254.
 36. August Strindberg, Inferno and From an Occult Diary translated and introduced by Mary Sandbach, 1979, p.69.
 37. Letter of W.B. Yeats to Olivia Shakespear, August 1921, Wade Letters, p.672.
 38. Perhaps the writer who most approximates Strindberg's tone in terms of Irish autobiographical writing is Liam O'Flaherty in Two Years (1930) and Shame the Devil 1934.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

1. William Matthews, British Autobiographies : An Annotated Bibliography of British Autobiographies Published or Written before 1951, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1955.
2. John Butler Yeats, Early Memoirs : Some Chapters of Autobiography, 1923.
3. George Bornstein, 'The Antinomial Structure of John Butler Yeats' Early Memoirs : Some Chapters of Autobiography', in Approaches to Victorian Autobiography, ed. George P. Landow, Ohio, 1979.
4. J.M. Synge, Collected Works II, Prose, 1966, Part One 'Autobiography'.
5. For Brendan Behan see note 35 to Chapter 5.
Elizabeth Bowen, Seven Winters : Memories of a Dublin Childhood, 1942.
Mary Colum, Life and the Dream, (1928), 1947 (See Chapter Two).
Padraic Colum, The Road Round Ireland, New York, 1926.
Patrick Kavanagh, The Green Fool, 1938.
Katherine Tynan, Twenty-Five Years, Reminiscences, 1913.
6. Yeats refers to Sir Jonah in Autobiographies, p.393. He also makes use of a story in Volume One of Personal Sketches regarding a servant who cut off the ears of one of his lady's troublesome neighbours, in 'The Tower', stanza two.
7. Yeats' review of this work is discussed in Chapter One.
8. Details of the history and variations of the Conan story are given by Mercier in The Irish Comic Tradition, 1962, pp.19-21.
9. William Matthews, citing his Bibliography (op. cit) in a lecture published in Autobiography, Biography and the Novel, eds. Matthews and Rader, Los Angeles, 1973, points out that of the 7,000 examples to which he refers, 200 date from the seventeenth century, around 400 from the eighteenth while 90% of them date from the nineteenth and twentieth century. Sir Jonah was writing at the beginning of the nineteenth century, before the proliferation.
10. Sir Jonah Barrington, Personal Sketches of His Own Times, Three Volumes, 1827 - 32, Volume II, pp.259-60.
11. Ibid. Volume I, p.V.
12. Ibid. Volume II, p.261.
13. W.B. Yeats, Uncollected Prose, Volume One, First Reviews and Articles 1886-96, ed. J.P. Freyne, 1970, p.397.
14. William Carleton, The Life of William Carleton, Two Volumes, completed by David J. O'Donoghue, 1896, p.2.
15. Ibid. Volume I, p.148.
16. Thomas Flanagan, 'Rebellion and Style : John Mitchel and the Jail Journal', Irish University Review 1, Autumn, 1970, pp.1-29.
17. John Mitchel, Jail Journal, or, Five Years in British Prisons, New York (1854), 1968, p.38.
18. Ibid. p.43.
19. Ibid. p.205.
20. Ibid. pp.80-81.
21. George Moore, Hail and Farewell (1911-14), edited by R.A. Cave, Gerrard's Cross, 1976, p.52. This edition cited throughout.
22. Ibid. p.564.
23. Wayne Shumaker, 'English Autobiography, Its Emergence,

- Materials and Form', English Studies 8, 1954, Berkeley and Los Angeles.
24. Hail and Farewell, p.51.
 25. Ibid. p.216.
 26. Ibid. p.148.
 27. Ibid. p.195.
 28. Ibid. p.201.
 29. Ibid. p.275.
 30. Ibid. p.425.
 31. Ibid. p.643. Note how Moore shifts any blame and responsibility for his work away from himself.
 32. Oliver St. John Gogarty, As I Was Going Down Sackville Street (1933), 1980, p.256.
 33. Maude Gonne, afterwards MacBride, A Servant of The Queen (1938), 1974.
 34. Ibid. p.322.
 35. Ibid. p.176.
 36. Ibid. p.218.
 37. Ibid. p.308.
 38. Ibid. p.14.
 39. Ibid. p.44.
 40. The Easter Uprising of 1916 has been taken as a starting date for these memoirs; many from the Anglo-Irish war of 1919 to 1921 have had to be excluded including:
Dan Breen, My Fight for Irish Freedom, 1924.
Charles Dalton, With the Dublin Brigade, 1929.
Darrell Figgis, Recollections of the Irish War, 1927
Frank Robbins, Under the Starry Plough, 1971.
and none dealing with the Civil War has been considered therefore excluding O'Malley's The Singing Flame, 1978.
 41. James Stephens, The Insurrection in Dublin (1916), with an Introduction and Afterword by John A. Murphy, Gerrard's Cross, 1978.
 42. Augustine Martin, James Stephens, A Critical Study, Dublin, 1977, p.107.
 43. The Insurrection in Dublin, ed.cit. p.xvii.
 44. Quoted by Howarth, The Irish Writers, p.201.
 45. The Insurrection in Dublin, ed.cit. p.69.
 46. Ibid. p.35 and 36.
 47. Ibid. p.74 and 76.
 48. Ibid. p.xxxiii.
 49. Ernie O'Malley, On Another Man's Wound (1936), 1967.
Tom B. Barry, Guerilla Days in Ireland, 1949.
 50. Frank O'Connor, My Father's Son, 1968, p.99.
 51. Peter Costello, The Heart Grown Brutal, Dublin, 1979, p.124.
 52. On Another Man's Wound, Introduction, p.9.
 53. Ibid. p.84.
 54. Ibid. p.84.
 55. Ibid. p.116-7.
 56. Ibid. p.262.
 57. Ibid. p.338.
 58. William Matthews, in his bibliography of British autobiographies (op. cit., note 1), disagrees, he condemns the work for being too literary!
 59. On Another Man's Wound, p.317.
 60. Ibid. p.323.
 61. Ibid. p.306.
 62. Guerilla Days in Ireland, p.119.
 63. Ibid. p.189.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

1. Once again, it is emphasised that these works represent a selection of many more examples of Irish autobiographical works.
2. Autobiographies is a highly practical title recently acquired by the following works now published in two volumes:
Autobiographies I (1979), I Knock at the Door, 1939
Pictures in the hallway, 1942
Drums under the Windows, 1945
Autobiographies II (1979), Inishfallen, Fare Thee Well, 1949
Rose and Crown, 1952
Sunset and Evening Star, 1954
3. Quoted in R.J. Finneran, Anglo Irish Literature, A Review of Research.
4. Sean O'Casey, Autobiographies I, p.362.
5. Ibid. p.363. Recently two critics have pointed to the number of recurring images of Cathleen ni Houlihan in, especially, the first three volumes of Autobiographies. See Carmel Moya, 'The Autobiographies as Epic' in Essays on Sean O'Casey's Autobiographies, ed. R.G. Lowery, 1981, and Kevin P. O'Reilly, 'Irish Literary Autobiography : The Goddesses that Poets Dream of', Eire-Ireland XVI 3 (Fall 1981), pp.57-80.
6. Ronald Ayling in 'The Origin and Evolution of a Dublin Epic', Essays on Sean O'Casey's Autobiographies suggests that the first person form is inhibitory and explains that the books grew out of a series of stories written for publication in newspapers and have tended to retain their anecdotal, serial form rather than adopting a coherent investigative examination of the self.
7. Ibid. p.252.
8. Ibid. p.474.
9. Ibid. p.441.
10. Lady Gregory, Lady Gregory's Journals, 1916-30, ed. Lennox Robinson, Dublin, 1946, pp.78-9.
11. O'Casey, Autobiographies II, p.13.
12. Ibid. p.18.
13. Ibid. p.19.
14. Ibid. p.21.
15. Ibid. p.25. This gives a sense of the synaesthesia common to O'Casey's Autobiographies; see David Krause, 'On Fabrication and Epiphanies in O'Casey's Autobiography', Essays on Sean O'Casey's Autobiographies, p.185 f.
16. Andrew Sanders, Charles Dickens, Resurrectionist, 1982.
17. The extent to which this is an imaginative rendering of the event can be partly grasped by comparing it with Lady Gregory's report of O'Casey's verbal account as told to her by him:

'I did everything for her, she did not like to have anyone else about her. I had written a little story. The publishers promised me £15 for it, and after it was published I wanted the money and went three times to get it. Then when my mother was so ill I had to go again to press for it, and I did get it, but when I came back she was gone. I made arrangements for the funeral, but when the day came the undertaker said that if I did not pay at once he would take it back again and there would be no funeral. It had to be put off until I got change for the cheque. I thought I should have to go to the

bank, but I went to the Rector and he cashed it. I felt the treatment of the undertaker very bitterly, he was a Labour man, I a Labour man, and I had helped him and worked in the movement, worked for them all, and that is how I was treated.

Lady Gregory's Journal, ed. cit., pp.77-8.

18. Oliver St. John Gogarty, As I Was Going Down Sackville Street (1933), 1980.
19. J.F. Carens, Surpassing Wit : Oliver St. John Gogarty, his Poetry and his Prose, Dublin, 1979.
20. Sackville Street, ed.cit., p.117.
21. Ibid. p.278.
22. Ibid. p.105.
23. Ibid. p.165.
24. Carens, Surpassing Wit, p.112.
25. Oliver St. John Gogarty, Tumbling in the Hay (1939), 1982.
26. Oliver St. John Gogarty, It Isn't this Time of Year At All! An Unpremeditated Autobiography, 1954.
27. Sackville Street, p.240.
28. Ulick O'Connor, Oliver St. John Gogarty : A Poet and His Times, 1965, p.9.
29. Peter Costello, The Heart Grown Brutal, Dublin, 1977, p.214.
30. Sean O'Faolain, Vive Moi, An Autobiography, 1965, p.272 (Tithonius was beloved by Eos, at his prayer the goddess granted him immortality but he had forgotten to ask for youth and vigour, he then grew old and could not bear life, he prayed for removal from the world, Eos, unable to grant this, changed him into a Grasshopper).
31. Vive Moi, p.58.
32. Ibid. p.157.
33. Sean O'Faolain, 'A Story, and A Comment', Irish University Review I, August 1970, p.88.
34. Ibid, p.88.
35. Vive Moi, p.90.
36. ibid. p.36.
37. Ibid. p.164.
38. Ibid. p.267.
39. Ibid. p.288. O'Faolain, in the Irish University Review article (op. cit.n.32) expresses his disappointment felt on reading Yeats' 'Reveries' for its lack of a personal style.
40. Austin Clarke, Twice Round The Black Church : Early Memories of Ireland and England, 1962, p.18.
41. Ibid, p.69.
42. Ibid. p.20.
43. Clarke's second autobiographical work, A Penny in the Clouds : More Memories of Ireland and England, 1968, has a much broader field of reference than its predecessor and lacks the bitterness against the Catholic Church that at times threatens to de-stabilize the first work. In other ways, though, it is a disappointment, being more a string of unconnected anecdotes than a well shaped memoir; however, his handling of description of character is perhaps its greatest strength.
44. Frank O'Connor, An Only Child, 1961. The sequel to this, My Father's Son, 1968, published two years after the author's death was incomplete; Dr. Maurice Sheehy assembled a text from various drafts. It deals with Irish literary life through the late 1920s and the 1930s, including a version of the Boardroom wranglings at the Abbey Theatre; because of the doubts

about the finished quality of the text it is not discussed here.

45. See: Maurice Wohlgernter, 'Mother and Father and Son: Frank O'Connor's Portrait of the Artist as an Only Child', Modern Irish Literature, eds. Porter and Brophy, New York, 1972.

Wohlgernter's approach is to see O'Connor as having to choose between the values of his mother and those of his father and how the subsequent breaking of a romantic view estranged him from faith, politics and the Irish people. The article is too brief to probe the work sufficiently.

Also: B.L. Reid, 'The Teller's Own Tale, The Memoirs of Frank O'Connor', Sewanee Review LXXIV:I (1976), pp.76-97. This is an article on both An Only Child and My Father's Son, the second volume of the autobiography assembled from O'Connor's drafts after his death by Dr. Maurice Sheehy in 1968. This article has little to say about its subject other than "An Only Child is essentially a love-story, the story of Frank O'Connors pride in and love for his small, pretty, dark haired mother" (p.80). Even the most casual reading of the book would tell one that it is much more than that.

46. An Only Child, p.97.
47. Ibid. p.96.
48. Ibid. p.97.
49. Ibid. p.110.
50. O'Connor and Corkery later became good friends.
51. All three quotations from An Only Child pp.122-3.
52. Ibid. p.139.
53. Ibid. p.143.
54. Ibid. p.146.
55. Ibid. p.135.
56. Ibid. p.159.
57. Ibid. pp.166-7.
58. Ibid. p.190.
59. Ibid. p.199.
60. Frank O'Connor, My Father's Son, 1968, p.33.
61. An Only Child, p.217.
62. Ibid. p.218.
63. K.P. Reilly, 'Irish Literary Autobiography : The Goddesses that Poets Dreamt of', Eire Ireland XVI 3 (1981), pp.57-80.
64. G. Landow (editor), Approaches to Victorian Autobiography, Ohio, 1979, p.xviii.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. MANUSCRIPT SOURCES:

MacMillan Archive, Yeats 1913 - 1939. BM Add. MSS 55003,
Volume CCXVIII

2. PRINTED MATERIAL:

(Place of publication London unless otherwise stated).

- Alvarez, A. The Savage God, A Study of Suicide. 1974
- Ayling, R. Sean O'Casey, Modern Judgements. 1969
- Baldick, R. The life of J-K Huysmans. Oxford, 1955
- Balzac, H. de La Comédie Humaine. editor G. Saintsbury
Volume 36, The Unconscious Mummies and
Other Stories, translated by E. Marriage,
1897. Volume 38, Louis Lambert,
translated by K. Prescott-Wormeley, 1896.
Volume 39, Séraphita, translated by
K. Prescott-Wormeley, 1896.
- Barrington, Sir J. The Ireland of Sir Jonah Barrington,
Selections from his Personal Sketches.
editor H.B. Staples, Cincinatti, 1968.
Personal Sketches of His own Times by
Sir Jonah Barrington. 3 Vols. 1827-1832.
- Barry, T.B. Guerilla Days in Ireland. 1949
- Beckson, K. 'Yeats and The Rhymers' Club', Yeats
Studies One. Dublin, 1971.
- Behan, B. Borstal Boy. 1958.
Confessions of an Irish Rebel. 1965
- Benstock, B. 'Chronology and Narratology in Sean
O'Casey's Beginnings, Genre XII 4 (Winter
1979). pp.551-64.
- Bowen, E. Seven Winters, Memories of a Dublin
Childhood. 1942.
- Bradford, C. Yeats at Work. Southern Illinois, 1968.
- Brown, M. The Politics of Irish Literature. 1972.
- Brown, T. 'The Genres of Irish Literature', Genre
XII 4 (Winter 1979). pp.565-89.
- Buckley, J.M. William Ernest Henley. New York, 1944.
- Burr, A.R. The Autobiography. 1909.
- Carens, J.F. Surpassing Wit, Oliver St. John Gogarty,
his poetry and his prose. Dublin, 1979.
- Carleton, W. The Life of William Carleton. 2 Vols.
Completed by D.J. O'Donoghue, 1896.
- Carpenter, A. Place, Personality and The Irish Writer,
(editor) New York, 1977.
- Cary, M. 'Yeats and Moore - An Autobiographical
Conflict', Eire-Ireland IV 3 (Autumn
1969). pp.94-109.
- Clarke, A. A Penny in the Clouds, More Memories
of Ireland and England. 1968.
Twice Round the Black Church, Early
Memories of Ireland and England. 1962.
'Mr Yeats's Reminiscences: Years of Peace
and the Age of Disillusion', unsigned
review of W.B. Yeats' Dramatis Personae,
Times Literary Supplement, 23 May 1936.

- Clarke, B.K. and Ferrar, H. and Collins, M. The Dublin Drama League 1919-41. Irish Theatre Series 9. Dublin, 1979.
Michael Collins' Own Story (told to Hayden Talbot). 1923.
- Colum, M. Life and the Dream. (1928), 1947.
 Colum, P. The Road Round Ireland. New York, 1926.
 Cooke, R.C. Feasting with Panthers. 1967.
 Costello, P. The Heart Grown Brutal, The Irish Revolution in Literature from Parnell to the Death of Yeats 1891-1939. Dublin, 1977.
 Coveney, P.J. Poor Monkey, 1957. (Reprinted as The Image of Childhood. 1967).
 Cross, K.G. and Dunlop, R.T. (eds.) A Bibliography of Yeats Criticism. 1965
 Dale, P.A. The Victorian Critic and the Idea of History. Harvard, 1977.
- Delany, P. British Autobiography in the Seventeenth Century. 1969.
- de Man, P. 'Autobiography as Defacement', Modern Language Notes : Literature, 94 5 (December 1979).
- Dessner, L.J. 'Art and Anger in the Autobiographies of Sean O'Casey, Eire-Ireland X 3 (Autumn 1975). pp.46-61.
- Dobree, B. 'Some Literary Autobiographies of the Present Age', Sewanee Review LXIV (1956) pp.689-706.
- Donohue, D and Mulryne, J.R. (eds.) An Honoured Guest, New Essays on W.B. Yeats. 1968.
- Dostoevsky, F. The Devils. translated by D. Margashack. 1979.
- Douglas, Lord A. Autobiography. 1929.
- Dowden, E. Letters of Edward Dowden and his Correspondents. editors E.D. and H. Dowden 1914.
- Eglinton, J. A Memoir of AE. 1937.
- Ellis-Fermor, U. The Irish Dramatic Movement. (1939),1954.
 Ellmann, R. Yeats, The Man and The Masks. (1948),1961.
 Faulkner, P. William Morris and W.B. Yeats. Dublin, 1962.
Yeats and the Irish Eighteenth Century.
Yeats Centenary Papers V. Dublin, 1965.
- Fay, W.G. and Carswell, C. The Fays of the Abbey Theatre, An Autobiographical Record. 1935.
- Figgis, D. Recollections of the Irish War. 1927.
- Finneran, R.J. (editor) Anglo-Irish Literature, A Review of Research. New York, 1976.
 Finneran, R.J. Letters to W.B. Yeats. 2 Vols. 1977.
- Harper, G.M. and Murphy, W.M. (eds.)
 Flanagan, T. 'Rebellion and Style, John Mitchel and the Jail Journal', Irish University Review I 1 (Autumn 1970). pp. 1-29
- Flannery, J.W. W.B. Yeats and the Idea of a Theatre, The Early Abbey Theatre in Theory and Practice. Yale, 1976.
- Flannery, M. Yeats and Magic, The Earlier Works. Irish Literary Studies 2. Gerrards Cross, 1977.
- Flaubert, G. Bouvard and Pécuchet. translated by A.J. Krailsheimer, (1976), 1978.

- Fletcher, J. (editor) Romantic Mythologies. 1967.
'Yeats' Quest for Self-Transparency', review of W.B. Yeats' Memoirs, Times Literary Supplement, 19 January 1973.
- Fothergill, R.A. Private Chronicles, A Study of English Diaries. 1974.
- Frenz, H. (editor) Nobel Prizes - Literature 1901-67. Nobel Foundation, 1969.
- Girouard, M. Sweetness and Light, The 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-1900. 1977.
- Goffmann, E. The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. 1969.
- Gogarty, O. St. J. As I was Going Down Sackville Street. (1933), 1980.
It Isn't This Time of Year At All! An Unpremeditated Autobiography. 1954.
Rolling Down the Lea. 1950.
Tumbling in the Hay. (1939), 1982.
A Servant of the Queen. (1938), 1974.
- Gonne, afterwards MacBride, M.
Gordon, D.J. and Fletcher, J. (eds) W.B. Yeats, Images of a Poet. Manchester, 1961.
Gosse, E. Father and Son, A Study of Two Temperaments. 1907.
- Greene, D.H. and Stephens, E.M.
Gregory, Lady I.A. J.M. Synge 1871-1909. New York, 1959.
Lady Gregory's Journals, Volume One, Books 1 to 29, 10 October 1916 - 24 February 1925. The Coole Edition of the Works of Lady Gregory, Volume Fourteen. editor D.J. Murphy, Gerrards Cross, 1978.
Lady Gregory's Journals 1916-30. editor Lennox Robinson. Dublin, 1946.
Our Irish Theatre, A Chapter of Autobiography. (1913), Gerrard Cross, 1973.
Seventy Years 1852-1922, Being the Autobiography of Lady Gregory. Gerrards Cross, 1974.
- Gregory, Sir W. The Autobiography of Sir William Gregory editor Lady Gregory, 1894.
- Grylls, D. Guardians and Angels, Parents and Children in Nineteenth Century Literature. 1978.
- Gustafson, A. August Strindberg 1849-1912. Stockholm, 1961.
- Gwyn, D. Edward Martyn and the Irish Revival. 1930.
- Harari, J.V. (editor) Textual Strategies, Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism. (New York 1979), 1980.
- Harmon, M. J.M. Synge, Centenary Papers. Dublin (1971), 1977.
- Harper, G.M. Yeats and the Occult. 1975.
- Harris, D.A. Yeats: Coole Park and Ballylee. 1974.
- Harris, F. My Life, Volume One. New York, 1925.
- Henn, T.R. The Lonely Tower, Studies in the Poetry of W.B. Yeats. (1950), revised edition 1966.
- Hogan, R. After the Irish Renaissance, A Critical History of the Irish Drama since The Plough and the Stars. 1968.

- Howarth, H. The Irish Writers 1880-1940: Literature under Parnell's Star. 1958.
- Howe, I. The Magicians of the Golden Dawn. A Documentary History of a Magical Order 1887-1923. 1972.
- Hunt, H. The Abbey, Ireland's National Theatre 1904-79. 1979.
- Huysmans, J-K Against Nature. translated by R. Baldick 1959.
Saint Lydwine of Schiedam. translated by A. Hastings. 1923.
- Jackson, H. The Eighteen Nineties, A Review of Art and Ideas at the Close of the Nineteenth Century. 1913.
- Jochum, K.P.S. W.B. Yeats - A Classified Bibliography of Criticism. New York, 1978.
- Johnson, J. Florence Farr, Bernard Shaw's 'New Woman'. Gerrards Cross, 1975.
- Johnston, D. 'The Perpetual Self of Yeats's Autobiographies', Eire-Ireland IX 4 (Winter 1974), pp.69-85.
- Josephson, R. Tessin, Stockholm, 1930..
- Jung, C.G. Synchronicity, An Acausal Connecting Principle. (Zurich 1952), 1955.
- Kain, R. (editor and transcriber) 'A Diary of Easter Week: One Dubliner's Experience', Irish University Review 10 2 (Autumn 1980), pp. 195-207.
- Kavanagh, P. The Green Fool. 1938.
- Kunne, W. 'Konzeption und Stil von Yeats' "Autobiographies", Abstract of Thesis in English and American Studies in German 1972, A Supplement to Anqlia. Tübingen, 1972.
- Landow, G. (editor) Approaches to Victorian Autobiography. Ohio, 1979.
- Langbaum, R. The Mysteries of Identity. New York, 1977.
- Lauring, P. A History of the Kingdom of Denmark. translated by D. Holmen. Copenhagen, 1960.
- Lee, J. The Modernisation of Irish Society. The Gill History of Ireland 10. Dublin, 1973.
- Leonard, H. Home Before Night. 1979.
- Lester, J.A. Journey Through Despair: 1880-1914. Princeton, N.J., 1968.
- Levin, G. 'The Yeats of The Autobiography: A Man of Phase 17', Texas Studies in Literature and Language, 1964, pp.398-405.
- Lhombreaud, R. Arthur Symons: A Critical Biography. 1963.
- Lifson, M. Ronk 'The Myth of Fall: A Description of Autobiography', Genre 12 1 (Spring 1979), pp. 45-67.
- Loftus, R.J. Nationalism in Anglo-Irish Poetry. Milwaukee, 1964.
- Lowery, R.G. (editor) Essays on Sean O'Casey's Autobiographies. 1981.
- Lyons, F.S.L. Charles Stewart Parnell. 1977.
- Marcus, P.L. Yeats and the Beginning of the Irish Renaissance. New York, 1970.
- Martin, A. James Stephens: A Critical Study. Dublin, 1977.

- Matthews, W. (compiler) British Autobiographies : An Annotated Bibliography of British Autobiographies Published or Written Before 1951. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1955.
- Matthews, W. and Rader, R.W. (editors) Autobiography, Biography and The Novel. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1973.
- Melchiori, G. The Whole Mystery of Art : Pattern into Poetry in the Work of W.B. Yeats. 1960.
- Mercier, V. The Irish Comic Tradition. 1962.
- Mikhail, E.H. (editor) W.B. Yeats : Interviews and Recollections 2 Vols. 1977.
- Miller, L. The Dun Emer Press : Later the Cuala Press. New Yeats Papers VII. Dublin, 1973.
- Mitchell, J. Jail-Journal; or, Five Years In British Prisons. New York, 1868.
- Montague, J. (editor) The Faber Book of Irish Verse (1974) 1980.
- Moore, G. Hail and Farewell. (3 Vols. 1911-14), editor R.A. Cave, one volume, Gerrards Cross, 1976.
- Memoirs of My Dead Life. 1906.
- Parnell and his Island. 1887.
- A Story-Teller's Holiday. 2 vols. 1928.
- Morris, J.N. Versions of the Self : Studies in English Autobiography from John Bunyan to J.S. Mill. New York, 1966.
- Murphy, J.A. Ireland in the Twentieth Century. Gill History of Ireland 12. Dublin, 1975.
- Murphy, W.M. 'Father and Son : The Early Education of W.B. Yeats', Review of English Literature, (1967), pp.75-96.
- Prodigal Father : The Life of John Butler Yeats 1839-1922. 1978.
- MacLiammoir, M. All For Hecuba : A Theatrical Autobiography. Dublin, (1946), 1961.
- Enter a Goldfish : Memoirs of an Irish Actor Young and Old. 1977.
- Naik, D.G. The Art of Autobiography. Poona, 1962.
- Neuman, S. Some One Myth : Yeats's Autobiographical Prose. New Yeats Papers XIX. Portlaoise, 1981.
- nic Shiubhlaigh, M. The Splendid Years : Recollections of Maire nic Shiubhlaigh as told to Edward Kenny. Dublin, 1955.
- Nobel Foundation (editing body), Odelberg, W. (editor) Nobel : The Man and The Prizes. (1950), 1977.
- Oakley, S. The Story of Sweden. 1966.
- O'Casey, S. Autobiographies One and Autobiographies Two. (1939-54), 1979.
- O'Connor, F. An Only Child. 1961.
- My Father's Son. 1968.
- The Stories of Frank O'Connor. (1953), 1970.
- O'Connor, U. Oliver St. John Gogarty : A Poet and his Times. 1963.
- O Crohan, T. The Islandman. translated by R. Flower, 1929.
- O'Driscoll, R. and Reynolds, L. (eds.) Yeats and the Theatre. 1975.

- O'Faolain, S. 'A Portrait of the Artist as an Old Man' and 'A Story and A Comment' in Irish University Review 6 1 (Spring 1976). Vive Moi, An Autobiography. 1965.
- O'Flaherty, L. 'Autobiographical Note', Ten Contemporaries : Notes Towards Their Definitive Biographies, editor, J. Galsworth, 1933. Shame the Devil. 1934. Two Years. 1930.
- O'Hara, D. 'The Irony of Tradition and W.B. Yeats' Autobiography : An Essay in Dialectical Hermeneutics', Boundary 2 5 3 (Spring 1977), pp.679-706. Tragic Knowledge : Yeats's Autobiography and Hermeneutics. New York, 1981.
- O'Leary, J. Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism 2 Vols. 1896.
- Olney, J. Autobiography : Essays Theoretical and Critical. Princeton, N.J., 1980. Metaphors of the Self. Princeton, N.J., 1972.
- O'Malley, E. On Another Man's Wound. (1936), 1970. The Singing Flame. compiled and edited by F.M. Blake, 1978.
- O'Shea, K. Charles Stewart Parnell : his love story and political life. 2 vols. 1914.
- Ostberg, R. The Stockholm City Hall : A Guide. 1950.
- O'Sullivan, M. Twenty Years A'Growing. translated by M.L. davies and G. Thomson, 1933.
- Pascal, R. 'Autobiography as an Art Form', International Federation for Modern Languages and Literature, Report of Congress 1957. 1959. pp.114-19. 'The Autobiographical Novel and The Autobiography', Essays in Criticism IX 2 (1959), pp.134-50. Design and Truth in Autobiography. 1960.
- Pater, W. Appreciations, with an Essay on Style (1889), 1898. The Renaissance. (1873), 1901.
- Perloff, M. '"The Tradition of Myself" : The Autobiographical Mode of Yeats', Journal of Modern Literature 4 3 (February 1975), pp. 529-73.
- Peyre, H. Literature and Sincerity. Yale, 1963.
- Pilling, J. Autobiography and Imagination. 1981.
- Plutarch. Moral Essays. translated by R. Warner, 1971.
- Porter, R.J. and Brophy, J.D. (eds) Modern Irish Literature : Essays in Honour of William York Tindall. New York, 1972.
- Reid, B.L. 'The Teller's Own Tale, The Memoirs of Frank O'Connor', Sewanee Review LXXXIV 1 (1976), pp. 76-97.
- Reilly, K.P. 'Irish Literary Autobiography : The Goddesses that Poets Dreamt of', Eire-Ireland XVI 3 (1981) pp.57-80.
- Robbins, F. Under the Starry Plough. Dublin, 1977.
- Robinson, L. Curtain Up, An Autobiography. 1942.

- Ronsley, J. (editor) Myth and Reality in Irish Literature.
Gerrards Cross, 1980.
Yeats' Autobiography, Life as Symbolic
Pattern. Cambridge Mass. and London, 1968.
- Ruskin, J. The Nature of Gothic. (1854), 1892.
Praeterita. (1885-9), 1978.
- Russell, G.W.
(pseud. AE) Letters from AE : Selected and Edited
by Alan Denson. New York, 1961.
Selections from the contributions to
THE IRISH HOMESTEAD by G.W. Russell -
AE, edited by H. Summerfield. Volume II
Gerrards Cross, 1978.
- Ryan, W.P. The Irish Literary Revival, Its History,
Pioneers and Possibilities. 1894.
- Salvadori, C. Yeats and Castiglione, poet and courtier.
Dublin, 1965.
- Sayers, P. An Old Woman's Reflections, translated
by S. Ennis, 1962.
- Sayre, R.F. The Examined Self : Benjamin Franklin,
Henry Adams and Henry James. Princeton,
New Jersey, 1964.
- Schlieffer, R. 'George Moore's Turning Mind : Digression
and Autobiographical Art' in Hail and
Farewell, Genre XII 4 (Winter 1979),
pp. 473-503.
- Shaw, G.B. Sixteen Self Sketches. 1949.
- Sheehy-Skeffington, F. Michael Davitt, Revolutionary Agitator
and Labour Leader. (1908), 1967.
- Shumaker, W. 'English Autobiography, Its Emergence,
Materials and Form', English Studies 8.
1954.
- Soderberg, R. Introduction to Modern Swedish Art.
Stockholm, 1962.
- Spengemann, W.C. The Forms of Autobiography, Episodes
in the History of a Literary Genre.
Yale, 1980.
- Stephens, J. The Insurrection in Dublin. (1916),
Edited, Introduction and Afterword by
J.A. Murphy, Gerrards Cross, 1978.
- Stoll, J.E. The Great Deluge, A Yeats Bibliography.
New York, 1971.
- Storr, A. The Dynamics of Creation. 1972
- Strindberg, A. Inferno. From an Occult Diary, selected
and edited by T. Eklund and translated by
M. Sandbach. 1979.
A Madman's Defence (1895), translated
by E. Sprinchon from E. Schliemann's
version of The Confessions of a Fool
(1912), 1968.
- Strong, L.A.G. Review of W.B. Yeats, Autobiographies,
The London Magazine (June 1955)
pp. 83-6.
- Summerfield, H. That Myriad-Minded Man, A Biography of
G.W. Russell, "AE", 1867-1935. Gerrards
Cross, 1975.
- Synge, J.M. Collected Works, Volume II, Prose.
Oxford, 1966.
- Taylor, J.F. Owen Roe O'Neill. 1893.
- Torchiana, D. W.B. Yeats and Georgian Ireland. North
Western States, 1966.
- Tynan, K. Twenty Five Years, Reminiscences. 1913.
- Ure, P. Towards a Mythology : Studies in the

- Wade, A. Poetry of W.B. Yeats. Liverpool, 1946.
- Wollin, N.G. A Bibliography of the Writings of W.B. Yeats, Second Edition Revised. 1958.
- Woolf, L. Eugene Jansons Maleri. Stockholm, 1920.
- Woolf, V. Modern Swedish Decorative Art. 1931.
- Woolf, V. 'The Life that is a Vision', review of W.B. Yeats Autobiographies in 'The World of Books', The Nation and Athenaeum (January 1927), p.482.
- Wright, D.G. The Diary of Virginia Woolf, editor A.O. Bell, 3 vols. 1977-80.
- Wright, D.G. 'The Elusive Self : Yeats' Autobiographical Prose', Canadian Journal of Irish Studies IV 2 (December 1978), pp.41-52.
- Yeats, J.B. Early Memories, Some Chapters of an Autobiography. Dundrum, 1923.
- Yeats, J.B. Further letters of John Butler Yeats : Selected by Lennox Robinson. Dundrum 1920.
- Yeats, J.B. J.B. Yeats, Letters to his son, W.B. Yeats, and others 1869-1902. edited with a memoir by J Hone. 1944.
- Yeats, W.B. 'An Autobiographical Fragment', The Dial Vol 75 (July 1923), pp.13-19.
- Yeats, W.B. Autobiographies. MacMillans, 1955.
- Yeats, W.B. Autobiographies, 'Reveries over Childhood and Youth' and 'The Trembling of the Veil'. MacMillans, 1926.
- Yeats, W.B. 'A Biographical Fragment by William Butler Yeats', The Criterion 1 4 (July 1923), pp. 315-321.
- Yeats, W.B. The Bounty of Sweden : A Meditation, and a Lecture delivered before The Swedish Academy and Certain Notes by W.B. Yeats. Cuala Press, Dublin, 1925.
- Yeats, W.B. 'The Bounty of Sweden : A Meditation', The Dial Vol 77 (July-December 1924), pp. 181-99.
- Yeats, W.B. 'The Bounty of Sweden', The London Mercury Vol X (1924), pp. 466-79.
- Yeats, W.B. Collected Plays. MacMillans, 1977.
- Yeats, W.B. Collected Poems. MacMillans, 1977.
- Yeats, W.B. The Death of Synge, And other Passages from an Old Diary. By William Butler Yeats. Cuala Press, Dublin, 1928.
- Yeats, W.B. 'The Death of Synge, and Other Pages From an Old Diary', The Dial Vol 84 (January-June 1928), p. 271 f.
- Yeats, W.B. 'The Death of Synge, And Other Passages from an Old Diary', The London Mercury Vol XVII (April 1928), pp.637-51.
- Yeats, W.B. Dramatis Personae. Cuala Press, Dublin 1935.
- Yeats, W.B. Dramatis Personae. MacMillans, 1936.
- Yeats, W.B. 'Dramatis Personae', The London Mercury Vol XXXIII (November 1935 - April 1936), pp. 12-21, 140-50 and 280-89.
- Yeats, W.B. 'Dramatis Personae', The New Republic Vol LXXXVI (February-April 1936).
- Yeats, W.B. Essays and Introductions. MacMillans, 1961.
- Yeats, W.B. Estrangement : Being some Fifty Thoughts From a Diary Kept by William Butler Yeats

- in the Year Nineteen Hundred and Nine.
Cuala Press, Dublin, 1926.
- 'Estrangement : Being some fifty thoughts
from a diary kept by William Butler Yeats
in the year Nineteen Hundred and Nine',
The Dial Vol 81 (July-December 1926),
pp. 359-83.
- 'Estrangement : Thoughts from a Diary kept
in 1909, by W.B. Yeats', The London
Mercury Vols. XIV and XV (October 1926
- November 1926), pp. 589-98 and 32-40.
- Four Years. Cuala Press. Dundrum, 1921.
- 'Four Years', The London Mercury Vol IV
(May-October 1921).
- Letters to the New Island. edited and
introduced by H. Reynolds. Oxford (1934),
1970.
- The Letters of W.B. Yeats. edited by
A. Wade. 1954.
- Memoirs. editor D. Donoghue. 1972.
- 'More Memories', The Dial Vols 72 and
73 (May to October 1922).
- 'More Memories', The London Mercury
Vol VI (May to October 1922).
- Reflections. transcribed and edited by
C. Bradford. Dublin, 1970.
- Reveries over Childhood and Youth.
Cuala Press, Dundrum, 1916.
- Reveries over Childhood and Youth.
MacMillans, 1916.
- The Trembling of The Veil, privately
printed for subscribers only by T. Werner
Laurie 1922.
- Uncollected Prose Volume One, First
Reviews and Articles 1886-96. edited by
J.P. Frayne, 1970.
- Uncollected Prose Volume Two, Reviews
Articles and other miscellaneous prose
1897-1939. edited by J.P. Frayne and
C. Johnson, 1975.
- A Vision. T. Werner Laurie, 1925.
- A Vision. MacMillans (1937), 1969.
- Wheels and Butterflies. 1934.
- Yeats, W.B. (editor) Samhain (October 1901 - November 1908),
reprinted in one volume, 1970.
- Young, A.B.J. Memory Harbour : Essays Chiefly in
Description. 1909.
- Zucker, W.M. 'The Demonic, from Aeschylus to Tillich',
Theology Today XXVI I pp. 34-50.