March 1961

James Stephens at Colby College

Richard Cary.

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/cq

Recommended Citation
Colby Library Quarterly, series 5, no.9, March 1961, p.224-253

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Colby. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colby Quarterly by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Colby.
shadow and symbolize death: the ship sailing to the North Pole is the Vehicle of Death, and the captain of the ship is Death himself. Stephens here makes use of traditional motifs for the purpose of creating a psychological study. These stories are no doubt an attempt at something quite distinct from what actually came to absorb his mind — Irish saga material. It may to my mind be regretted that he did not write more short stories of the same kind as the ones in *Etched in Moonlight*, the most poignant of which is “Hunger,” a starvation story, the tragedy of which is intensified by the lucid, objective style.

Unfortunately the scope of this article does not allow a treatment of the rest of Stephens’ work, which I hope to discuss in another essay. I have here dealt with some aspects of the two middle periods of his career, and tried to give significant glimpses of his life in Paris, and his subsequent years in Dublin. In 1915 he left wartime Paris to return to a revolutionary Dublin, and in 1925 he left an Ireland suffering from the after-effects of the Civil War. But, whether living in or away from Ireland, it was always his own country that inspired him, and it is as an interpreter of his own native land that Stephens will always capture the reader — apart from the fact that *The Crock of Gold*, which established the writer’s fame, is an immortal book.

---

**JAMES STEPHENS AT COLBY COLLEGE**

*By Richard Cary*

The following accumulation of materials by and about James Stephens in the library at Colby College is predominantly a part of the James A. Healy Collection of modern Irish literature. Some of the items, notably those in American periodicals, are to be found in the general stacks.

The objective of selection here is to lead researchers to significant materials — no brief “mentions” in books, essays or newspapers are included; no mere reprints in newspapers and magazines of poems or stories previously published, unless the
first appearance is not available; no anthologies which simply extract from his published works. Book reviews written by JS are noted; reviews of his publications, too numerous for inclusion here, are readily accessible in other lists.

The principle of organization is chronological, except in the final section, "Biographical and Critical Materials," where it is alphabetical.

I. SEPARATE WORKS BY JS


2. Same edition. (Ernest Boyd's copy inscribed on flyleaf, "We are bound out to the stories / of things / And all is over. / James Stephens.")

3. Same edition. (Author's signature on flyleaf.)

4. Same edition. (With Paul Hyde Bonner's bookplate.)


2. *Mary, Mary.* Boston, Small, Maynard, 1912. (First American edition.)


226 Colby Library Quarterly


4. London, Macmillan, 1926. (One of 525 copies printed on hand-made paper, with illustrations in color and decorative headings and tailpieces by Thomas Mackenzie. Author's signature on flyleaf.)


2. Same edition. (With Carroll A. Wilson's bookplate. Pasted in are newspaper obituaries of Colonel Henry W. Fielden and Claud Lovat Fraser. Laid in are a newspaper obituary of Fraser and a holograph note identifying Colonel Fielden.)

3. Same publisher, same year. (Large paper edition, with color decorations by Lovat Fraser, and author's signature on title page.)


_The Adventures of Seumas Beg. The Rocky Road to Dublin._
London, Macmillan, 1915. (First English edition. Ernest Boyd’s copy with author’s signature on flyleaf. Two reviews laid in, one from _Times Literary Supplement_, the other unidentified.)

2. Same edition. (With Norman F. H. Freudenthal’s bookplate.)

3. _The Rocky Road to Dublin The Adventures of Seumas Beg._ New York, Macmillan, 1915. (First American edition.)


2. Same edition. (With W. Van R. Whitall’s bookplate and inscribed on flyleaf, “To W. Van R. Whitall / From James Stephens / This book was commenced on the 1st day of the Irish Revolution, and / was finished on the last day. I / think its sale abroad was interfered / with or suppressed, but in Ireland it / was published without any trouble. / It merely represents how the wild / days seemed to one who had waited / and hoped for these days to come.” Review from _Irish Homestead_ laid in.)


_Green Branches._ Dublin and London, Maunsel & Co., 1916. (Advance copy of the first English edition of 500 copies, un-
numbered and marked "Sample Copy." Tan wrappers, with title and publisher's imprint in black lettering, without ornament, on front wrapper. Ernest Boyd's copy inscribed on half-title page, "To Ernest Boyd / from James Stephens / hoping he will soon be home / again. Oct 10th 1916." Photograph of JS with facsimile signature laid in.)


3. Same edition. (Number 94 of 500 copies printed. Presentation copy inscribed on half-title page, "To Patrick H. Browne / with the compliments of / James Stephens.")

4. New York, Macmillan, 1916. (First American edition, limited to 500 copies, in boards. With the bookplates of Frederick Spiegelberg and Raymond J. Schweizer.)


2. Same edition. (Presentation copy inscribed on flyleaf, "All good luck to / Oliver Gogarty for ever / From / James Stephens / 16th April 1919 / after reading Gogarty's fine / poem on Iscult.")


2. Same edition. (Crosby Gaige's copy, with author's signature on flyleaf.)


2. Same edition. (With Frederick Burton Eddy's bookplate.)


Little Things. New York, The Brick Row Book Shop, Inc. Christmas 1923. (First separate printing of the poem, in form of Christmas card. Lettering in black and red, illustration in red, green and white.)

2. Freelands, privately printed, 1924. (One of 200 copies, with signed etching by Power O'Malley. Ernest Boyd's copy inscribed on flyleaf, "To Ernest Boyd / James Stephens / Little things that run & quail, / And die in silence and despair. / Little things that fight & fail / And fall in silence & despair - - -" [a variant of the title poem]. A clipping from the New York Times Book Review regarding the title poem is laid in. In the top margin on page 14 the author has written the word "Title" within a circle, and over the printed title "On the Freedom of Ireland" he has written with a flourish, "A Minuette.")

3. Same publisher, same year. (One of 25 copies on Japanese vellum. Presentation copy inscribed "To Mr Louis M. Dillman / With whom I fell in love in / New York, wishing him every / thing that he wishes himself, / and the double of that. / James Stephens" on blank page [4]; and on blank page [5], "Like a dream in a sleep / Is the rose in the wind, / And the fish in the deep / And a man in his mind / James Stephens / Dublin, May 1924.")

4. Same edition. (Dudley Digges' copy inscribed on blank page [5], "Dreaming to see / All that is his, / Dreaming to be / All that he is / James Stephens / Dublin, May 1924.")

In the Land of Youth. London, Macmillan, 1924. (First English edition. Ernest Boyd’s copy inscribed on flyleaf, "To
Colby Library Quarterly

Ernest Boyd / From his friend / James Stephens / wishing him every good thing.” Small newspaper photograph of JS laid in.)

2. Same edition. (Inscribed on flyleaf, “With the compliments of / James Stephens.”)


2. Same edition. (With author’s signature on title page.)

3. Same edition. (Second issue.)


2. London, Macmillan, 1925. (First English edition. Ernest Boyd’s copy, with author’s signature on flyleaf.)


The Hill. London, Oxford University Press, [1925]. (Set to music by Colin Taylor.)


2. Same publisher, same year. (Large paper edition, one of 500 copies printed. Author’s signature on flyleaf. Contains same Preface.)

3. Same edition. (Ernest Boyd’s copy.)


2. New York, Macmillan, 1928. (First American edition. Ernest Boyd’s copy, number 694 of 750 copies printed, with author’s signature on flyleaf.)

3. Same edition. (Number 732, with Frederick Spiegelberg’s bookplate.)


*Optimist.* Gaylordsville, The Slide Mountain Press, 1929. (First edition. Number 82 of 83 copies printed, with author’s signature on half-title page.)

*The Outcast.* London, Faber & Faber, 1929. (First edition, in green wrappers, with drawings by Althea Willoughby. Ernest Boyd’s copy.)

2. Same publisher, same year. (Large paper edition. Number 300 of 500 copies printed, with author’s signature on flyleaf.)

*Julia Elizabeth a comedy in one act.* New York, Crosby Gaige, 1929. (First edition. Number 263 of 861 copies printed, with author’s signature on page [26].)

2. Same edition. Ernest Boyd’s copy, marked “out of series” of 861 copies printed.

*Theme and Variations.* New York, The Fountain Press, 1930. (First edition. Number 20 of 892 copies printed, with author’s signature on half-title page.)

2. Same edition. (Copy number 356.)

Colby Library Quarterly

Stars Do Not Make a Noise. Los Angeles, The Deux Magots Press, 1931. (First edition. Number 35 of 100 copies printed, with photographic facsimile of an inscription in The Crock of Gold tipped in on back flyleaf.)


2. New York, Macmillan, 1931. (First American edition. With Harold Trowbridge Pulsifer's bookplate. Inscribed on flyleaf, "For Harold—/With Merry Christmas/and all affectionate greetings./from Rosalind R.")


II. CONTRIBUTIONS BY JS TO BOOKS


V. V. Rozanov, Fallen Leaves. London, 1929. (Foreword by JS, pp. iii-v, with facsimile signature.)


III. CONTRIBUTIONS BY JS TO PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS


“Why Thomas Cam was Grumpy,” *A Broadside* (January 1909), 2.


“Shame,” *Living Age*, CCLXVII (November 5, 1910), 322.

“In the Poppy Field,” *Irish Review*, I (March 1911), 20.


“Mary: A Story,” *Irish Review*, I (April 1911), 92-99; (May), 142-149; (June), 197-204; (July), 248-256; (August), 300-308; (September), 352-360; (October), 407-414; (November), 454-465; (December, 505-517; (January 1912), 560-568; (February), 610-617.


Colby Library Quarterly


Review of Padraic Colum’s My Irish Year, Irish Review, II (September 1912), 384-387.

“The Daisies,” Irish Review, II (January 1913), 574.

“A Heavy Husband,” Living Age, CCLXXVI (January 11, 1913), 119-122.

“The Reason,” Irish Review, III (May 1913), 129.

“In the Cool of the Evening,” Living Age, CCLXXVII (June 28, 1913), 770.

“With the Daisies,” Harper’s, CXXVII (July 1913), 216.


“By the Curb,” Harper’s, CXXVII (October 1913), 751.


“A Winter Reverie,” Harper’s, CXXVIII (December 1913), 113.

“Four Poems,” Irish Review, IV (April 1914), 75-78. [Contains: “Deirdre,” “The Voice of God,” “The Centaurs,” “In the Dark.”]

“Check!,” Harper’s, CXXX (March 1915), 616.


"The Story of Tuan MacCairill," *Irish Statesman* (Wells), I (June 28, 1919), 9-10; (July 5), 36-38; (July 12), 68-69.


"Desire," *Dial*, LXVIII (June 1920), 677-683.


"In Dublin Town," *Literary Digest*, LXXI (November 19, 1921), 34.

"Ireland Returning to Her Fountains," *Survey*, XLVII (November 26, 1921), 302-304.

"From the Katha Upanishad," *Literary Digest*, LXXII (January 14, 1922), 34.

"Green Weeds," *Literary Digest*, LXXII (February 25, 1922), 35.


"The Pit of Bliss," *Literary Digest*, LXXIII (May 6, 1922), 42.

"The Outlook for Literature. With Special Reference to Ireland," *Century*, CIV (October 1922), 811-818.


"Little Things," *Living Age*, CCCXVI (February 24, 1923), 486.

"Etched in Moonlight," *Dublin Magazine*, I (August 1923), 70-78; (September), 152-160; (October), 240-248.

"In Tir na n-Og" [*In the Land of Youth*], *Irish Statesman* (Russell), I (September 15, 1923), 11-13; (September 22), 41-43; (September 29), 74-75; (October 6), 105-107; (October 13), 138-139; (October 20), 170-171; (October 27), 201-202; (November 3), 232-234; (November 10), 267-268; (November 17), 297-299; (November 24), 330-331; (December 1), 362-363; (December 8), 394-395.

James Esse [pseud. of JS], "An Interview with Mr. James Stephens," *Irish Statesman* (Russell), I (September 22, 1923), 48, 50.

"The Novelist and Final Utterance," *Irish Statesman* (Russell), II (April 12, 1924), 140-141.

"Growth in Fiction," *Irish Statesman* (Russell), II (May 17, 1924), 301-302.

"His Will," *Dublin Magazine*, I (July 1924), 1020.


Review of Ambrose McEvoy’s *Contemporary British Artists*, *Irish Statesman* (Russell), II (August 2, 1924), 666.

"Christmas in Freeland," *Irish Statesman* (Russell), V (December 26, 1925), 488.


"The Rose," *Literary Digest*, CI (May 18, 1929), 34.

"That is a young tree ..." *Dublin Magazine*, VIII (July-September 1933), 1.


"Is Verse-Speaking a Lost Art?" *The Listener*, XXV (June 12, 1941), 840.


"Let us sing and dance . . .," *Cuala Industries Prints* (Dublin, n.d.), 1 p. Another in the same series.


"I heard a bird at dawn . . .," *Cuala Press* (Dublin, n.d.). Number 100 of the same series.
IV. MANUSCRIPTS

The Crock of Gold. Title page and first two pages of Chapter I. A revised fragment of an early draft, in ink on ruled sheets torn from a stenographer's notebook. With inscription, "To Helen Byrne Hackett / this fragment. / Dublin 28th July 1923." [See page 239.]

"Saluting Maeve, Queen of Connacht; Queen of Hearts: Queen of the Fairies." Thirty-two pages, the first seven lines in ink, the remainder in pencil, profusely revised. Inscribed at the end, "James Stephens / Café Napolitaine / Boul. des Italiennes / Paris / 14 Sep. 1921."

V. LETTERS BY JS

Photocopy of ALS to Miss Sarah Purser, Dublin, January 25, 1911, 1 p. (Original in National Library of Ireland.) Mentions George Moore, AE, Lord Dunsany, John Eglinton and George Birmingham as prospective contributors to the Irish Review.

ALS to Ernest Boyd, Paris, July 5, 1913, 2 pp. Deplores Boyd's choice of occupation, because it "threatens a defection from pens in favour of consulship. Thats no job for you." Discusses Boyd's scrap with Mrs. H.

APC to Ernest Boyd, Versailles, September 8, 1913, six lines with valediction and initials on a card depicting Le Chateau et la Grille d'Honneur. Apologizes for missing an appointment; suggests another place and time.

ALS to Ernest Boyd, Paris, December 12, 1913, 2 pp., with a drawing of himself "in great haste" following signature. Mentions AE's Collected Poems (Macmillan, 1913). "Its mighty. He is a great poet, perhaps the greatest living today." Discusses influences of the older and newer schools of Irish writers upon his writing.

ALS to Stephen MacKenna, Paris, November 1, 1914, 3 pp., with addressed envelope. Discusses the effect of war on Paris, also the situation in Ireland. "Ireland will be the beloved of the world in a way that no other nation has ever been. For such a birth there must be a long gestation."
MANUSCRIPT TITLE PAGE OF *THE CROCK OF GOLD*

*At Colby College through the kindness of James A. Healy*
ALS to Ernest Boyd, Paris, January 7, 1915, 3 pp. Surveys the effects of war in Paris and in the United States. Dedicates himself "to write le Comedie Humaine of Ireland," which he thinks will take some thirty years to do.


ALS to Ernest Boyd, Dublin, January 19, 1918, 1 p. Proposes that Boyd visit Gertrude Perry, who has shown him a manuscript collection of poems by Roger Casement.

ALS to Ernest Boyd, Dublin, September 26, 1918, 1 p. Invites him to join Best, O'Neill and others to hear "a bit of a story I have finished."

Typewritten summary of a 2 pp. ALS to Mildred, Dublin, September 10, 1919, 1 p. Discusses AE, the insurrection in Ireland, and Seaumus' first days at a boys' school.

ALS to Ernest Boyd, Dublin, March 21, 1921, 2 pp., with signature heavily underscored. Tells about a manuscript of JS which Huebsch has kept for seven months without a word. Has asked Quinn "to unbury my stories from that Huebsch . . . I wont publish with such a man."

ALS to Frederick B. Eddy, Dublin, November 6, 1923, 1 p., with addressed envelope. Thanks him for the "very pleasant" review of Deirdre and reveals his intention "while making the story as old as time to make it at the same moment as modern as tomorrow."

ALS to Mr. Peabody, c/o Mrs. H. Vaughan Moody, Chicago, April 13, 1925, 1 p. Apologizes for the cancellation of a scheduled lecture about which he was not consulted. This letter is pasted to the front endpaper of Collected Poems of James Stephens (New York, 1926).

ALS to Mr. McAdoo, Chicago, April 18, 1925, 1 p. Has to decline McAdoo's invitation because JS's tour is being extended and he will not return to New York in time.

ALS to Edward G. Conklin, Jr., Chicago, April 18, 1925, 2 pp., with addressed envelope. Criticizes two pieces of prose submitted to him by correspondent. Counsels "patience & vigi-
lence & attention,” then adds, “All counsel is, of course, a counsel of perfection, and useless.”

ALS to AE, London, June 3, 1927, 5 pp. Depressively states, “I haven’t written a line for ages & times. I don’t want to. Wish I were rich. . . . I don’t admire anybody much.” Prefers current American fiction to English, “Ichabod for England, and delend est for her.” Ends on a nostalgic note for Ireland, which he misses badly.

VI. LETTERS TO JS

ALS from Claud Lovat Fraser, London, February 15, 1920, 1 p., with addressed envelope. Referring to a watercolor in blue, green and yellow, which he has incorporated in the letter, the artist says, “I’ve not got a photograph to send you so it’ll have to be a drawing. Ths is me in the country, walking. -- It’s a good likeness, even if it fails as a work of art.”

ALS from AE, Dublin, September 1, 1926, 1 p. Arranges for a meeting in Paris.

TLS from AE, Dublin, May 8, 1928, 1 p. Thanks JS for a poem he has promised to send. Mentions meeting George Moore.


ALS from AE, Dublin, n.d., 2 pp. Discusses the work of JS, Yeats, O’Sullivan, Colum, Hyde, himself and others, including that of American contemporaries.


ALS from AE, Dublin, n.d., 2 pp. Tells JS of another touring possibility if he had not “had enough lecturing to last you for the remainder of your life.” Mentions Frank O’Connor, Yeats and Pound.
242  Colby Library Quarterly

ALS from AE, Dublin, n.d., 1 p. Wants to meet him as soon as he returns from America in September, "to hear all the news and all the new poems."

ALS from AE, Dublin, n.d., 2 pp. Discusses JS's shift in direction. "I can see that airy mind of yours has been hovering about the only thing which matters in life and that you are getting more age in your thought. I do not know whether those you [sic] have followed you with delight in your fantasies will follow you so eagerly into this rarefied region."

APC from AE to Mrs. JS, London, 1933, ten lines, signed with initials. Explains his difficulty with London busses; is sorry James is away.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY


B. D. Cutler and Villa Stiles (editors). Modern British Authors, Their First Editions (New York, 1930), 132-133.

William Targ. Modern English First Editions and Their Prices (Chicago, 1931), 85-86.


Helen Hefting and Jessie W. Dyde. Index to Contemporary Biography and Criticism (Boston, 1934), 201.

George Brandon Saul, "James Stephens' Contributions to The Irish Review," Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, XLVI (Fourth Quarter, 1952), 398-399.


VIII. PHOTOGRAPHS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Head in bronze cast by Edmond T. Quinn (see reproduction on page 253).

Photograph of portrait by Patrick J. Tuohy, the original of which hangs in the National Gallery of Ireland (see frontispiece).

Photograph, posed in his office at the National Gallery, Dublin. Inscribed “To Helen Byrne Hackett / from James Stephens / Dublin 28 July 1923.”

Photograph, informal outdoor snapshot. Inscribed on back, “Given to me by James Stephens / in his office in the National / Gallery, Dublin July 28th 1923. / This picture was taken in Paris about eight years ago. / Helen Byrne Hackett.”

Lithograph, by Mary Duncan, frontispiece of *Dublin Magazine*, I (October 1923).

Photograph, *Bookman*, LXXIV (November 1931), 256.

Six photographs, *Saturday Review of Literature*, XI (September 15, 1934), 111.


Photograph, *Irish Press* (October 23, 1947), on receipt of D. Litt. at Trinity College, Dublin.
IX. BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL MATERIALS


Richard Aldington, prefatory note to "Poetry," [eight poems by JS], *Poetry Review*, I (June 1912), 264-265.


Ernest A. Boyd. The Contemporary Drama of Ireland (Boston, 1917), 111, 180.

Ernest A. Boyd. Portraits: Real and Imaginary (New York, 1924), 246-254.


Austin Clarke. Poetry in Modern Ireland (Dublin, 1951), 32-33, 38.

Collier's Encyclopedia (New York, 1957), XVIII, 212.

Mary Colum. Life and the Dream (London, 1947), index.


246 Colby Library Quarterly

Padraic Colum. *Arthur Griffith* (Dublin, 1959), index.
James H. and Margaret E. Cousins. *We Two Together* (Madras, 1950), 93, 138.
Gerald Cumberland. *Written In Friendship* (New York, 1924), index.
*Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago, 1953), XXI, 387.
Lloyd Frankenberg, "James Stephens — Touchstone," Saturday Review of Literature, XXX (March 22, 1947), 11-12, 42.


Oliver St. John Gogarty. As I Was Going Down Sackville Street (London, 1937), 82-83.

Oliver St. John Gogarty. It Isn’t This Time of Year At All! (New York, 1954), 229-232.


Lord Grey. Biographical note inserted in a copy of the first edition of The Crock of Gold and presented to Clara Kirchoffer at Christmas 1912. [This is a typewritten copy of about 150 words.]


Joseph Hone. Life of George Moore (New York, 1936), index.

Joseph Hone. Life of W. B. Yeats (New York, 1943), index.


Benedict Kiely. Modern Irish Fiction (Dublin, 1950), index.

Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft (editors). Twentieth Century Authors (New York, 1942), 1339-1340. With photograph.

Valéry Larbaud. Ce Vice impuni, la lecture . . . (Paris, 1925), 261-270.


Colby Library Quarterly 249


Roger McHugh, "Literary Treatment of the Deirdre Legend," Threshold I (February 1957), 46-49.


Obituaries:
Publisher's Weekly, CLIX (January 6, 1951), 52.
Wilson Library Bulletin, XXV (February 1951), 412.

Colby Library Quarterly


Harold Speakman. *Here’s Ireland* (New York, 1925), 310-311. With a caricature by “Mac.”


Estella Ruth Taylor. The Modern Irish Writers (Lawrence, Kansas, 1954), index.


Katherine Tynan. The Years of the Shadow (London, 1919), 24-25, 28-29.


Ernst Vowinckel. Der Englische Roman (Berlin, 1937), 212.


Stephensisms: Swans and dogs are frequent in JS’s life and works. Of the first, it is said he wrestled one for possession of a castoff piece of bread when he was a boy. Of the second, he once declaimed, “I am a sort of honorary dog myself. There is an understanding between us, only I never bite first.”

His “hand to hand fight with the French language” is monumentally evident. Ernest Boyd vouches for the story that, on ordering un vin blanc gomme, JS was ceremoniously presented with a postage stamp. And Stephen MacKenna tells of the time Yeats and JS had hired a tutor to teach them French. After fifteen minutes of drill on the rules of agreement of past participles, JS broke in, “Excuse me, M. Dupont, but what is meant by agreement of the past participle?” To which WB added, “I was just going to ask you, Monnshure, what is a participle?”

JS had a wry way with an epigram. When sufficiently pressed by inquiring reporters, he could deliver himself of some baroque gems. Two samples: (1) “There are two things in the world that give beauty to a woman, a squint and a mustache.” (2) “I know when I have a poem the same way a hen knows she has an egg.”

James Joyce saw mystic significance in the facts that he and JS were both born in Dublin, on the very same day, had two children each—a boy and a girl, and that he had chosen Stephen as his hero’s name in Portrait and Ulysses.
BRONZE SCULPTURE by EDMOND T. QUINN

At Colby College through the kindness of Charles Cary Rumsey