Irish Literature in the Yale Collection

Irish literature, both Anglo-Irish and in the Irish language, has a rich tradition dating back a thousand years. Current collecting in Sterling Memorial Library continues to document the ancient glories but has recently expanded in recognition of a rebirth of interest in Irish writing, especially by young modern poets and novelists.

The catalyst for the library’s new focus has been Victor Luftig, Assistant Professor of English and co-director of the Bass Writing Program. When he first came to Yale in 1988, Luftig found that the collection reflected a fairly limited and conventional range of Irish writers, though there were often impressive holdings for those particular authors.

The expansion of Yale’s collection reflects not only changes in curriculum but developments in Irish literature itself. An expanding consciousness of Irish literature within the framework of the European community is one element of this flowering. Another is the increased attention to a number of Irish women writers. Recent award winners in poetry and fiction have included Nuala Archer (who taught at Yale in 1989–96), Moya Cannon, Mary Dorcey and Nuala Ni Dhomhaill.

Irish literature, according to Luftig, is now extraordinarily diverse; composed in at least two languages, it is generated from a number of classes, regions, and age groups. It increasingly encompasses the work of the vast Irish emigrant community as well as of those writers born and/or still living in Ireland. Perhaps typical of the new generation of Irish writers, as Luftig notes, is Eva Burke, a German immigrant to Ireland who in turn belongs with the remarkably diverse Galway literary scene centered around Salmon Publishing, the eclectic press that recently also published works by the working-class poet Rita Ann Higgins, the American sometimes-Irish-resident Richard Tillinghast, and the Northern Irish Protestant moderate Sam Burnside.

In his courses on modern and contemporary Irish literature and on Joyce and his legacy, Luftig focuses students’ attention on living writers whose careers they can follow long beyond their time in Yale’s classrooms. When a piece by a contemporary writer sparks students’ interest, they are likely to find in Sterling all the most recent works of that writer and some of the earlier ones as well. According to Luftig, “The Irish holdings are coming to constitute not only a fine research collection but also an excellent teaching collection; indeed, it’s only because the library has been so successful in its acquisitions that I’ve been able to construct the courses in the way I have.” —SJS

The Social Science Data Archive

The Social Science Data Archive at the Social Science Library provides computer files of numeric data for researchers’ use at Yale. The Social Science Library was one of the nation’s first academic libraries to incorporate computer files into its regular collection when, in 1972, it acquired the data files held by the Political Science Department and set about expanding the collection to include data of central value to social scientists. This special collection, stored primarily on magnetic tape, contains public opinion surveys, election results, census data, financial, trade and other economic data, surveys of economic behavior, health surveys, vital statistics, and data on political events such as wars and exchange of diplomats. Users of these files can extract
Starr Foundation Gift for Renovation

The reference collection of Sterling Memorial Library has grown steadily and seen constant use since the library's opening in 1930. Since that time, the main reading room it occupies has become an area in urgent need of care. To help the University modernize these aging facilities, The Starr Foundation of Manhattan has offered $5 million for a complete restoration of the main reading room and for the creation there of an updated reference center.

Yale President Benno C. Schmidt Jr. and Starr Foundation President Ta Chun Hsu jointly announced the contribution. Upon accepting the gift, President Schmidt praised The Starr Foundation, long a supporter of educational activities, for granting a "valuable academic asset."

"Yale has a unique heritage not only in the breadth and depth of its educational and cultural programs, but also in the architectural range of the exceptional buildings which serve these programs," said Mr. Schmidt. "In this dual sense, Yale's buildings are among the University's most valuable academic assets. This most generous gift from The Starr Foundation enables us to achieve our goal of establishing a state-of-the-art reference center in an extraordinarily beautiful setting. For that, we are ever grateful."

The new C.V. Starr Reference Center located in Sterling will house reference works which are heavily

Stained glass windows representing knights and ladies in the main reading room of Sterling Memorial Library.

data without the expense of conducting a survey or of converting printed data to machine-readable format. During the last year, for example, SSDA has provided researchers with data on the economics of alcoholism, attitudes toward big government and toward health care, the sociology of suicide rates and factors of labor force participation. One file, Citibase, contains economic time series data for the United States and was used 1,800 times during the 1990-91 academic year for teaching and research.

Reference librarians advise users about the location of data in an appropriate file, whether already in the collection or from an outside source. The library can readily acquire new data from government agencies, such as the Bureau of the Census; intergovernmental organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund; or large data archives, such as the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research or the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research. SSDA staff also help users interpret codebooks: printed information that tells what is in a data file, how the data were collected, and their organization within the file. SSDA staff work closely with the Social Science Statistics Laboratory teaching users how to extract and analyze data and providing support for managing access to and control of the tape collection.

The collection has grown to over 15,000 files recorded magnetically on almost 1000 computer tapes. Preservation of the collection is a continuing concern because magnetic media can develop errors and become unreadable within five to ten years without regular copying and use. Changes in technology present another concern for the Social Science Data Archive; for example, SSDA's first collection of punched cards and early computer tapes are unreadable today's computers. Changes in technology require copying the collection to new media.

Increases in the number of files being made available, the costs of the files, and the variety of formats (tape, diskette, CD-ROM) also challenge the Social Science Data Archive. For example, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development now issues annually 28 files of economic data on diskette; many of these may also be available on computer tape, so the library must select which files to acquire and in which format.

Several libraries at Yale collect data in computer-readable formats and have bibliographic databases available, particularly on CD-ROM. The unique services of the Social Science Data Archive are a significant facet of the Yale Library services in identifying, interpreting, and extracting data from a large and complex body of research materials. For information call Joanne Dionne at 432-3301. —JLD
Western Faces at the Beinecke Library

Pioneers, Native Americans, miners, railroad workers, civilians, and soldiers are among the Western Faces in the Beinecke Library’s current exhibition. These men, women, and children of the 19th-century American West are depicted in some 150 historical photographs on display until April 4.

The earliest photograph on display is a portrait of the Reverend Peter Jones, a Mississauga Indian from the Great Lakes region, who was also a Methodist minister. Produced by the studio of Hill and Adamson, based in Edinburgh, it is the earliest identified photograph of a Native American.

Among the photographers represented in the exhibition are A. J. Russell, an official photographer to the Union Pacific Railroad; Alexander Gardner, who created a series of studio photographs of Native Americans in 1872; Edward Curtis, who made silverprints in the American Southwest; William Soule, the photographer of settlers and soldiers of Fort Sill, Indian Territory (now Oklahoma); Julian Vannerson, Timothy O’Sullivan, and Samuel Cohner. Some of the earliest pictures are by an unknown British photographer who recorded the British/U.S. border survey in the Pacific Northwest.

Other photographs on view are drawn from the collection of Walter McClintock, an 1891 Yale graduate who photographed the Blackfoot Indians in Montana. McClintock went on to write several books about the Blackfoot, becoming a popular lecturer on American Indian culture.

Most of the photographs in the exhibit are standard albumen prints, common through the second half of the 19th century. There are, however, examples of calotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, and even Kodak snapshots from the 1880’s and 1890’s.

Included in the exhibit are a number of handmade books—volumes composed of letters, journal entries, clippings, and ephemera, illustrated with original photographs—as well as public documents, such as cartes de visite, early calling cards with small photographs, or boxed and framed portraits intended as keepsakes. A particularly interesting genre of public photograph is the composite group portrait—the graduating class, the club, the team. One amusing example in the exhibition shows the Cheyenne Bicycle Club in 1893.

Arranged by George Miles, Curator of Western Americana, to suggest the range of subjects and photographic processes available for study in the collection, the show presents a sampling of the approximately 10,000 photographs in the Western Americana Collection at Beinecke Library. —CAS

used by the Yale community. Additionally, over 5,000 people from outside the Yale community, including foreign officials, journalists, independent researchers, and analysts, come to use these resources each year, according to University Librarian Millicent D. Abell.

The funds from The Starr Foundation will be used to expand the space for the reference collection, improve the lighting, reconfigure the reference desk, and install modern temperature and humidity controls that meet current standards for the preservation of books. The task of restoring the room to its 1930 architectural glory includes repairing significant damage to the ceilings, stonework, and windows, as well as refinishing or reproducing the room’s original furniture.

To create an up-to-date reference center, the reference holdings will be gathered into one convenient location from their present locations, which include the Linonia and Brothers Reading Room, the Bibliography Room, and the main reading room. Currently, the inadequate electrical system prevents the use of essential new electronic reference tools in the reading room. With the renovation, a new area will be created where electronic resources can be installed and used without disturbing readers. In addition a portion of the Starr gift will be used for related infrastructure repairs in Sterling. —KOH
Lost Medicine (Wancan-ya-ke), one of a series of portraits of Dakota Indian delegates in Washington, DC, taken in 1872 by Alexander Gardner, the famous Civil War photographer, currently on exhibit in the Beinecke Rare Book Library.

**The Henry H. Tweedy Reference & Resource Program**

The Divinity School Library recently marked the inauguration of the Henry H. Tweedy Reference & Resource Program. In development for over a year, the program will provide Divinity Library patrons with access to resources in electronic formats, including databases on CD-ROM and magnetic media as well as audio and video materials.

Six public access microcomputer workstations, which will be added to the Divinity Library’s Local Area Network (LAN), form the heart of the Tweedy Program. The workstations will make available networked resources on CD-ROM, including the ATLA Religion Indexes, the forthcoming Patrologia Latina database, and full-text biblical research tools called CDWord. Since licensing restrictions prohibit putting some databases, including the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae and the Packard Humanities Institute database of ancient texts, on the network, patrons can use them at stations equipped with separate CD-ROM drives.

The Tweedy Program will also support access to electronic copies of the registers for the Divinity Library’s manuscripts and special collections. These will be indexed by keyword. Through each public workstation users can log on to Orbis, Enterprise, VM/CMS, or BITNET. The Tweedy Program will provide additional compact shelving for the storage of non-print media, as well as public audio and video playback facilities connected with those of the Divinity School’s Keck Communication Program. The resources on the Library network will thus be available in classrooms for instructional presentations.

Administered by Duane Harbin, Information Services Librarian for the Divinity Library, the program was designed and implemented with the assistance of the University Library Systems Office and Yale’s Distributed Computing Services. The Tweedy Program is made possible by a gift from Mary J. Tweedy of Brewster, New York, in honor of her father-in-law, Henry Hallam Tweedy, Professor of Theology at the Divinity School from 1909 to 1937, and Acting Dean from 1905 to 1911. A portion of Mrs. Tweedy’s generous gift will fund the start-up costs of the program and provide for future upgrades and replacement of equipment; the remainder will enable exceptional students to study at the Divinity School. For information, call Duane Harbin at 432-5289. —DGH
Southeast Asia Preservation Grant

The Southeast Asia Collection received in 1989 a grant of $290,000 from the Henry Luce Foundation to provide four years of support for preservation and cataloging projects. The preservation project has focused primarily on journal titles, government documents and other serial titles relevant to the economic history of the colonial period in Indonesia, an area in which Yale’s collections have great depth and extraordinary breadth. However, rare and/or fragile materials from other countries in the Southeast Asia Collection are included in the project as they come to the attention of the collection’s staff. Since the preservation project began in July 1989, 218 serial titles consisting of over two thousand volumes have passed through the preservation microfilming process. Four copies are made of each reel of microfilm. The master negative reel is deposited in an underground vault in Pennsylvania, and the duplicate negative is used for the production of positive copies. Of the two positive copies, one is for the Sterling Microtext Reading Room and the other copy is deposited in the Southeast Asia Microform Project at the Center for Research Libraries.

The collection has recently begun experimenting with a new preservation process for monographs and pamphlets. It produces a master preservation negative microfilm, but reading copies in microfiche, a more convenient format for readers. Although preservation has received highest priority, the Luce Foundation grant has also made it possible to tackle long-term cataloging backlogs, some predating 1960, when the Southeast Asia Collection was established. Vietnamese and Khmer cataloging backlogs have been eliminated, and work has now begun on the much larger backlog of materials in Indonesian languages. —CRB

The Advisory Committee on Library Policy, appointed by the President, provides advice and counsel to the University Librarian on policy matters and provides a forum for discussion of long range plans and concerns. Its current members are:

- Millicent Abell (University Librarian), Paul Bracken (Political Science), Robert Gordon (Geophysics and Applied Mechanics), William Kelly (Anthropology), Howard Lamar, Chairman (History), Joshua Lane (graduate student), Kyu Rhee (undergraduate student), Alexander Schonker (Slavic Linguistics), Karin Trainer, Secretary (Associate University Librarian), Frank Turner (Provost of the University), Juozas Vaisnys (Electrical Engineering and Geophysics), Heinrich von Staden (Classics and Comparative Literature).

The presidentially appointed University Council Committee on the Library, as part of the Yale University Council system, reviews the activities of the Yale University Library and reports every fifth year to the full Council. Current members are:

- Ms. Y.T. Feng, Mr. Conrad Harper, Mr. Robert Lawrence, Mr. Gerard Piel, Mr. Charles Taylor
Thiš 1986 portrait of Vladimir and Wanda Toscanini Horowitz is on display in Sterling Memorial Library along with other pieces from their recently processed archive.

Calendar of Exhibits

BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

Western Faces
February through April

The Cartoonist and Artist Robert Osborn (Yale '28)
April 13 through June

DIVINITY LIBRARY

Five Centuries of Documentation of the Missionary Enterprise
through May

Missionaries and the African Slave Trade
through May

MEDICAL LIBRARY

Nurse Specialist: Modern Nursing at Yale
February through May

MUSIC LIBRARY

Giacomo Meyerbeer, 1791–1864
through April

STERLING MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Vladimir and Wanda Toscanini Horowitz Archives
March 23 through late Spring

Yale University Library
P.O. Box 1603 A Yale Station
New Haven, Connecticut 06520-7429

Nota Bene ♦ News from the Yale Library