

John Atkinson. A Bibliography of the Monographs of Samuel Beckett from His Early Years (1930-51), with Collection Analysis of the Holdings in the Rare Book Collection of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A Master's Paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. April, 2005. 26 pages. Advisor: Charles B. McNamara.

A detailed description of the Rare Book Collection's holdings of the monographs of writer Samuel Beckett's early years (1930-51). Includes a brief introduction to Modernism, especially fellow writer James Joyce and Beckett's debt to him; a discussion of the Rare Book Collection's collection development strategy, including its Grove Press material; a bibliography of the Beckett titles spanning the years 1930-51; and a report of conclusions with a desiderata list.

Headings:

Beckett, Samuel

Beckett, Samuel -- Bibliography

Modernism

Modernism -- Bibliography

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE MONOGRAPHS OF SAMUEL BECKETT FROM HIS
EARLY YEARS (1930-51), WITH COLLECTION ANALYSIS OF THE
HOLDINGS IN THE RARE BOOK COLLECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL.

by
John Atkinson

A Master's paper submitted to the faculty
of the School of Information and Library Science
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina
April, 2005

Approved by

Charles B. McNamara

Introduction

Modernism, Paris, and James Joyce

The early 1900s were a time of high achievement in literature and the arts. A group who came to be known as the Modernists--though not always closely connected except by virtue of living in Europe at the same time--produced some of the most significant work of the century. Paris became the geographical center of this activity, serving at various times as the adopted home of Pablo Picasso, Ezra Pound, Ernest Hemingway, Marc Chagall, and many others. The powerful influence of these artists would be felt by everyone who followed them.

Among these figures was Irish novelist James Joyce--considered by many to be the quintessential Modernist writer. His novel *Ulysses*, published in 1922, stands as the ultimate expression of the Modernist aesthetic, some of the salient characteristics of which include representation of internal or psychological states (instead of the traditional approach of reporting action in a realistic, dramatic, "external" fashion); formal experimentation--sometimes as a strategy for representing the interior life

--such as stream-of-consciousness, shifting narrative points of view, and typographical oddities; and expanding the "plasticity" of language by incorporating word-games, puns, and allusions to other works into the fabric of the narrative. These innovations arose from a feeling that the turn of the century had ushered in a time utterly unlike any that had come before--that many of the assumptions and certainties that had informed previous generations had broken down and that a new mode was required to reflect this new world. (Other movements, like Cubism and Surrealism in painting, arose from the same feeling.) Whatever the justice of these claims, they produced many lasting artistic achievements--especially in the case of Joyce.

Samuel Beckett, Eternal Latecomer, Meets Joyce

By the time the young Samuel Beckett moved to Paris in 1928, much of this activity had been in full swing for years. In a sense, it was as though he'd shown up late for the party, and in fact this feeling of "lateness" would persist throughout his life, perhaps partially accounting for the heavy gloom that pervades his work--a paradoxical notion, considering Beckett's strong avant-garde proclivities. But Beckett was young when Modernism was at

its peak; he was a "late bloomer" artistically, reaching his full power only in middle age; and he outlived all other Modernists by many decades, dying in 1989. (One biography of Beckett, by Anthony Cronin, is titled *The Last Modernist*.) Though Modernism faded after World War II, Beckett remained true to his origins, despite the many changes in literary fashion that followed. There is even a grim, Beckettesque humor in realizing that a man dedicated to the ideals of 1920s Paris lived to see George H. W. Bush elected President.

But back in 1928, Beckett was young and eager to absorb the atmosphere of the time. Luckily for him, he managed to meet James Joyce. Joyce was 24 years older than Beckett, but in terms of accomplishment could well have been twice that--he'd already published his story collection, *Dubliners*; his autobiographical novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; his masterpiece, *Ulysses*; and was work on his final book, possibly the most daring (and exasperating) novel ever written, *Finnegans Wake*. Beckett revered Joyce, who was a fellow Irishman as well as a great writer, and Joyce for his part seems to have enjoyed the reverence and took Beckett on (in his characteristically persnickety, avuncular fashion) as a kind of research assistant.

The result of this arrangement was a long apprenticeship, during which Beckett wrote an appreciative essay about a portion of *Finnegans Wake* (still unpublished at the time and therefore called *Work in Progress*), as well as a great deal of original creative work, most of which he would later renounce on the grounds that it was derivative. (Of his first effort at a novel--not published until many years later--called *Dream of Fair to Middling Women*, Beckett lamented that it "stinks of Joyce.") While it's true that Beckett would become Beckett only after he'd left Joyce's considerable shadow--and equally true that mature writers often come down hard on their younger, flailing selves--it's impossible to imagine that Beckett's time with Joyce was anything but an asset. After all, if Beckett hadn't spent all those years dutifully fact-checking for James Joyce, we might never have had *Waiting for Godot*.

Context

Among its many strengths, the Rare Book Collection of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's holdings of Modernist material are of enviable depth. The Beckett collection is particularly strong, as a result of both active collection development and the Grove Press collection. Grove is a publishing house based in New York that began by specializing in publishing avant-garde or experimental writing. The Rare Book Collection has made Grove books a focus of its acquisition efforts and, because Grove brought out most American first (and frequently later) editions of Beckett's work, a significant portion of the Collection's Beckett holdings have come through this avenue.

This fact reflects an important change in collection development policy that has taken hold in recent decades--namely, that a rare book collection ought not to be only a repository for first editions and expensive rarities but rather a more comprehensive resource for scholars whose holdings represent a broader historical context. By housing multiple editions and printings, as well as

biographical and critical sources, a rare book collection offers researchers a wider field for understanding their subjects.

As a result of the size of the Rare Book Collection's Beckett holdings, I have found it necessary, due to the limited scope of this project, to focus on the early years of Beckett's writing career (1930-1951)--right up to the appearance of *Waiting for Godot*, when Beckett achieved (or, as he might have put it, was afflicted by) worldwide fame and attention. My hope is that my inventory will be useful to the Collection in understanding its strengths and weaknesses in this area and to scholars who might be researching Beckett's early years, perhaps with an eye on his development from fledgling neophyte to acclaimed playwright and future Nobel laureate.

Sources and Structure of the Bibliography

Sources

Of printed sources, I have drawn on two: *The Grove Companion to Samuel Beckett* by C. J. Ackerley and S. E. Gontarski and, to a lesser extent, *A Beckett Canon* by Ruby Cohn. While neither is a bibliography in the strict sense, both offer a comprehensive analysis of all Beckett's work, the latter helpfully arranged chronologically. I also consulted various on-line sources, such as WorldCat, the Advanced Book Exchange website, and the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America website. All sources are listed and described below.

- *Ackerley*. Mentioned above, *The Grove Companion to Samuel Beckett* by C. J. Ackerley and S. E. Gontarski (New York: Grove Press, 2004) is an encyclopedic survey of the Beckett universe. Nearly every entry on Beckett's books includes bibliographical information on editions, printings, presses, etc.

- *Cohn*. Also mentioned above, *A Beckett Canon* by Ruby Cohn (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001) is a more generally descriptive inventory of all Beckett's written work. Less bibliographical in content, it is nevertheless helpful in establishing chronology.
- *WorldCat*. OCLC's comprehensive on-line catalog, which gathers records from thousands of libraries, including many academic institutions with rare book collections.
- *ABE*. Advanced Book Exchange's site, which lists book dealers' inventory. Many rare books are sold here, along with other kinds. Descriptions are written by the dealers, so they are not infallible.
- *ABAA*. Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America's website lists inventories of member dealers and so is more "selective" than ABE but equally reliable.

Structure

Arranged chronologically, beginning with 1930 and concluding with 1951, the bibliography covers all items held by the Rare Book Collection. A list of desiderata follows the bibliography.

Under each heading for the year, individual titles are listed with multiple editions, when appropriate, listed as subheadings beginning with "a." and proceeding alphabetically.

The first line of each record contains basic publication information, such as place, publisher, and year.

The second line lists more detailed publication data, such as edition, number of copies, any special features, etc.

The third line lists the source(s) consulted for confirmation of the above details.

The fourth line lists the Library of Congress call number. In the case of a book found in the Grove Press collection, this number is preceded by the designation "Grove."

Finally, the fifth line contains some noteworthy descriptive details about the copy in the Collection, especially regarding the physical condition of the book, as well as the presence of a signature (if any), notes on the paper used, etc. All details have been confirmed by visual inspection of the item.

A Chronological Bibliography of Monographs by Samuel
Beckett (1930-1951)

1930

Whoroscope

a.

Paris: The Hours Press, 1930.

300 copy edition, 100 signed, 200 unsigned

Source: Ackerley

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 W48

Notes: RBC's copy is #11 of 100 signed.

1931

Proust

a.

London: Chatto & Windus, 1931.

3000 copy edition, #7 in Dolphin Book series

Source: Ackerley

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 P8

Notes: Two small tears in dust jacket.

b.

New York: Grove Press, 1957.

Three editions: limited (250 signed, specially bound), regular, and Evergreen paperback

Source: Ackerley, ABE

RBC holdings: Grove PR6003 .E282 P8 1957c (#78 of 250 signed), Grove PR6003 .E282 P8 1957b (regular), Grove PR6003 .E282 P8 1957 (Evergreen paperback).

Notes: All good condition.

c.

(includes "Three Dialogues" with Georges Duthuit) London: John Calder, 1965.

First 100 copies specially bound, signed, and numbered

Source: Ackerley, ABAA

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 P85 1965

Notes: #13 of 100, signed by both Beckett and Calder.

d.

Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1990.

Two editions: limited of 99 copies, trade paperback

Source: WorldCat

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 P814 1990 c.1-2

Notes: c.1 trade paperback, c.2 #22 of limited edition, in glassine wrappers.

1934

More Pricks than Kicks

a.

London: Chatto & Windus, 1934.

1500 copy edition

Source: Ackerley

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M65 1934

Notes: No dust jacket.

b.

London: Calder & Boyars, 1966, 1970.

Two editions: special edition for scholars, regular edition

Source: ABE

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M65 1966, 1970

Notes: 1966 is special edition; 1970, regular.

c.

New York: Grove Press, 1972.

First American edition, two printings

Source: Ackerley, ABE

RBC holdings: Grove PR6003 .E282 M65 1972 c.1-2

Notes: c.1 first printing, c.2 second printing; both paperback.

1935

Echo's Bones and Other Precipitates

a.

Paris: Europa Press, 1935.

327 copy edition, 25 signed (on Normandy Vellum), 250 on Alfa paper, 50 marked *hors commerce*.

Source: Ackerley, colophon

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 E25 1935 c.1-2

Notes: c.1 is #192 on Alfa paper, no cover, signed; c.2 is unsigned and unnumbered, in glassine wrapper.

1938

Murphy

a.

London: Routledge & Sons, 1938.

1500 copy edition

Source: Ackerley

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M8

Notes: No dust jacket, green cloth.

b.

Paris: Bordas, 1947.

First French edition

Source: Ackerley, ABE

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M814 1947b

Notes: Paperback with glassine wrappers.

c.

New York: Grove Press, 1957.

First American editions, including limited of 100 signed copies, regular, and paperback

Source: Ackerley, WorldCat

RBC holdings: Grove PR6003 .E282 M8 1957c; PR6003 .E282 M8 1957; Grove PR6003 .E282 M8 1957 c.1-3; Grove PR6003 .E282 M8 1957b c.1.

Notes: 1957c is #32 of special edition of 100; 1957 and Grove 1957 c.1-3 are all regular editions; 1957b c.1 is paperback.

d.

New York: Grove Press, c. 1957.

Further printings

Source: WorldCat

RBC holdings: Grove PR6003 .E282 M8 1957b c.2-3

Notes: c.2 is fifth printing, c.3 is tenth printing; both paperback.

e.

London: Picador/Pan in association with Calder & Boyars, 1973.

First Picador edition

Source: WorldCat

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M8 1973

Notes: paperback.

1951

Molloy

a.

Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1951.

3000 copy edition, 50 deluxe, 500 signed

Source: Ackerley

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M6

Notes: #194 of 500 on alfa paper; uncut paperback.

b.

Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1951.

3000 copy edition, 50 deluxe, 500 signed

Source: Ackerley

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M6 1951

Notes: Trade paperback.

c.

Paris: Collections Merlin, The Olympia Press, 1955.

Translated by Patrick Bowles in collaboration with the author

Source: Ackerley

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M613 1955 c.1-2

Notes: c.2 is a "special printing for sale in the UK"

d.

New York: Grove Press, 1955.

First American edition; English translation by Bowles & Beckett

Source: Ackerley, ABE

RBC holdings: Grove PR6003 .E282 M6413 1955

Notes: Dust jacket.

e.

New York: Grove Press, 1955.

First American edition; English translation by Bowles & Beckett

Source: Ackerley, ABE

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M613 1955b

Notes: paperback

f.

New York: Grove Press, c. 1955

Further printings

Source: WorldCat

RBC holdings: Grove PR6003 .E282 M6413 1955b c.1-3

Notes: c.1 is third printing, c.2 is fourth printing; c.3 is eighth printing; all paperback.

Malone Meurt [Malone Dies]

a.

Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1951.

3000 copy edition, 50 deluxe

Source: Ackerley

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M34 1951

Notes: trade edition paperback.

b.

Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1951.

3000 copy edition, 50 deluxe

Source: Ackerley

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M34 1951b superv'd

Notes: Proof copy in glassine wrappers. Very brittle.

c.

Malone Dies. New York: Grove Press, 1956.

First American printing; hard-bound edition of 500

Source: Ackerley, ABE

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M3413 1956

Notes: #303 of 500, no dust jacket.

d.

Malone Dies. New York: Grove Press, 1956.

First American printing; hard-bound edition of 500

Source: Ackerley, ABE

RBC holdings: Grove PR6003 .E282 M3413 1956b

Notes: #2 of 500, no dust jacket.

e.

Malone Dies. New York: Grove Press, 1956.

Evergreen Book, paperback

Source: Ackerley, ABE

RBC holdings: Grove PR6003 .E282 M3413 1956 c.1-2

Notes: c.1 in fair condition, c.2 in excellent condition.

f.

London: John Calder, 1958.

First English edition

Source: ABE

RBC holdings: PR6003 .E282 M3413 1958

Notes: Dust jacket torn in several places.

Conclusions and Desiderata

Conclusions

Based on my research, I've concluded that for 1930-1951, the Rare Book Collection's Beckett holdings are nearly comprehensive. All major monographs are accounted for, including first editions and hard to find items (like *Echo's Bones and Other Precipitates*, for example). The only real gaps are in the area of later printings of works that had them. In the case of *Murphy*, for example, the first English, French, and American (Grove) editions are all represented--multiple printings in the case of Grove--but later editions from the 1960s and 70s are absent. The only way to be dissatisfied with this state of affairs would be to wish for absolutely comprehensive coverage of each title.

There are a few minor exceptions, listed below. The only real glaring absence, the Nobel Foundation editions of *Malone meurt*, is described in detail.

Desiderata

Below are four items; the first two, while not essential, would add a further element of depth to the collection. The second two (actually two editions of the same publication) would be a find.

Molloy. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1954.

2nd printing of the 1st edition. WorldCat lists 4 copies.

Malone Dies. Dublin: Trumpet Books, 1956.

First Irish edition, abridged. WorldCat lists 2 copies.

Malone meurt & Oh les beaux jours. Paris: Éditions Rombaldi, 1971, 1975.

Ackerly: "published through the Swedish Academy and the Nobel Foundation . . . as part of a series, *Collection des Prix Nobel de Littérature*. It was illustrated by Arikha, with a portrait of SB by Michel Cauvet and cover decoration by Picasso; a foreword, 'La "Petite Historie" de l'attribution du Prix Nobel à Samuel Beckett,' by Dr. Kjell Strömberg, former Swedish cultural attaché in Paris; and a study by John Montague, 'La Vie et l'oeuvre de Samuel Beckett'" (407-8).

Both editions very rare. WorldCat lists 1 copy of first (1971) edition, 4 copies of second (1975) edition.

Sources Consulted

Books

Ackerley, C. J. and S. E. Gontarski. *The Grove Companion to Samuel Beckett: A Reader's Guide to His Works, Life, and Thought*. New York: Grove Press, 2004.

Cohn, Ruby. *A Beckett Canon*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001.

Cronin, Anthony. *Samuel Beckett: The Last Modernist*. London: HarperCollins, 1996.

Websites

Advanced Book Exchange, Inc./Abebooks. www.abebooks.com.

Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America.
www.aba.com.