

a view long prevalent in literary history that Modernist precision is aesthetically superior to “Victorian clutter.” While Allison’s conclusions thus perpetuate a traditional reading of the stylistic binary between “Victorian” and “Modernist,” he nonetheless situates this binary at the centre of Yeats’s poetic imagination, at the core of his divided self. This binary was one in which the early Yeats, as an aesthetically-inclined Victorian poet in the late-Romantic mode, was considerably invested, and Allison’s critical focus continually draws us back not to the received judgements of literary history, but instead to Yeats’s own conflicted sense of self and art – to, as Yeats himself writes in the 1895 Preface to *Poems*, “a narrative of his own development.”

Bound for the 1890s accomplishes that often elusive goal in a collection of essays penned by diverse hands. While remaining historically and thematically coherent, it affords fresh perspectives on a number of familiar (and some less familiar) 1890s figures. The essays in this volume would not have been possible without the pioneering scholarship of James G. Nelson, and by building on that scholarship, its contributors admirably illustrate book history’s manifold critical and scholarly possibilities.

Gregory Mackie

Michael Field and Their World edited by Margaret D. Stetz and Cheryl A. Wilson. High Wycombe, Bucks: Rivendale P, 2007. 255 pp. + 6 b/w illus. ISBN 1-904201-08-3. \$55.00; £30.00.

This handsome collection of essays responds, even in its title, to the many paradoxes and asymmetrical binaries that constitute Michael Field (Katharine Bradley and Edith Cooper): a couple and a singularity; female and masculine; pagan and Catholic; performative and private. Critical recognition of Michael Field’s importance for studies of fin-de-siècle aesthetics and poetics has been growing steadily in recent years, along with Field’s interest for studies of gender and sexuality, the history of the book, and the oft-neglected area of nineteenth-century drama. This collection, which developed from the innovative 2004 conference of the same name held at the University of Delaware and the Delaware Art Museum, amply demonstrates Michael Field’s power to complicate and enrich our literary and aesthetic experience even (and perhaps especially) while challenging our categories of historical understanding.