

FOREWORD

Although the present number of *Explorations* was planned to appear in tandem with the *Studies in Memory of J. G. Cornell* published by the *Australian Journal of French Studies* in February 1993 (both as n° 1 of 1992 and as a separate monograph edited by Elliott Forsyth, Peter Hambly and Joan Lindblad Kirsop), it is reaching its audience a little later. For this we offer our apologies. At the same time we are pleased to be making some headway at last with the process of bringing our schedule back to normal.

The *AJFS* volume represents contributions by more than one generation of Cornell's students in Adelaide. The long interview with Colin Nettelbeck transcribed here was focused on the history of the Alliance Française in Victoria in the 1920s and 1930s, but it embraces a good deal more than that. Consequently it can serve not only as our tribute to the memory of an authentic *grand seigneur* and *honnête homme* of Australian French studies, but also as a reminder of the diversity of Melbourne cultural life before the Second World War. In particular readers will learn something of the plays that were performed at that time. The tradition has not been entirely lost in the 1990s, even if University people are a little less prominent than they were in these endeavours. Amateur interest and participation are an important part of theatrical history, a point brought home to the Editor in the course of a bibliographical foray into seventeenth-century editions of Rotrou. To see a copy of a play marked up and annotated for private performance is to grasp something of a period's dramatic life. When the players offer themselves for public scrutiny and acclaim, as happened and still happens in Melbourne, one can begin to measure movements of taste. We have to be grateful to have the testimony of one who was more than a bystander.

The Editor is grateful to J. G. Cornell's family and to the *Adelaide News* for the opportunity to use again a 1963 portrait that is the frontispiece of the *AJFS* volume. He also wishes to thank Miss Colette Reddin for the photograph of the cast of *Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon* from the archives of the Alliance Française.

W. K.