

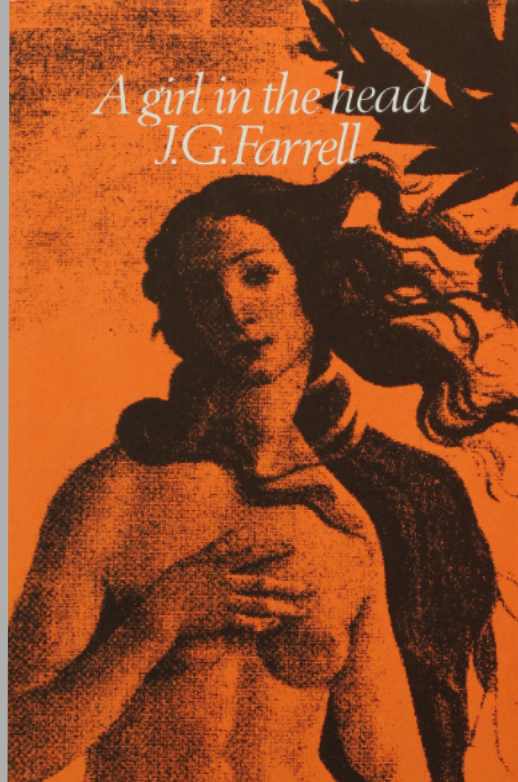
JAMES FARRELL



a man from elsewhere

New Authors Limited

A girl in the head
J.G. Farrell



J.G. FARRELL

A complete collection
of his novels

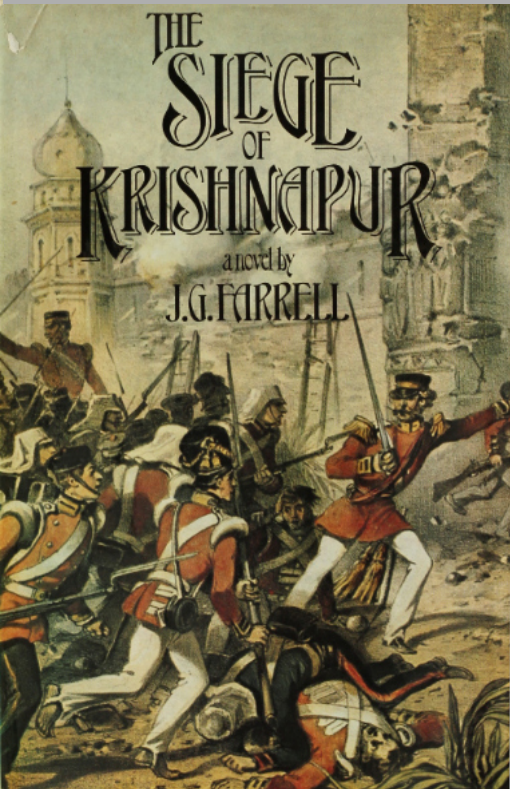


Type & Forme MMXXII

TROUBLES
J.G. FARRELL



THE SIEGE
OF
KRISHNAPUR
a novel by
J.G. FARRELL



THE LUNG
James Farrell



J.G. FARRELL
THE SINGAPORE GRIP

By the author of
The Siege of Krishnapur



The Novels of J.G. Farrell

A catalogue of works from the library of Peter Danby-Smith, comprising a complete set of Farrell's six completed novels, the posthumous publication of his unfinished last work, *The Hill Station*, and two critical works on Farrell.



I am deeply interested in trying to write universal as opposed to regional novels, the sort of books in which people trying to adjust themselves to abrupt changes in their civilization whether it be in Ireland or Japan may be able to recognise themselves.

J.G. Farrell

in his draft for his application for the Harkness Fellowship, quoted in Ralph Crane and Jennifer Livett, *Troubled Pleasures: The Fiction of J.G. Farrell* (1997), p. [11]

J.G. Farrell (1935-1979)

Life

James Gordon Farrell was born in Liverpool in 1935, to William Farrell, an accountant who had recently been invalided home from India, and Josephine Farrell, his Protestant Irish wife. In 1947 the family moved to Co. Dublin, Ireland, while Farrell was educated in England, first at Terra Nova preparatory school and then at Rossall School, where he wrote for the school paper under the pen name 'Seamus' and grew to be a tall, muscular member of the school's rugby team. After an extended interlude between school and university – which he spent, among other things, driving around America in a second-hand Chrysler – Farrell began studying modern languages at Brasenose College, Oxford, specialising in French and Spanish. By great misfortune he contracted polio shortly before the Salk vaccine (which would successfully provide widespread immunisation) was introduced and spent some time in an iron lung, but nevertheless managed to graduate in 1960.

Over the following years Farrell established himself as a writer and acquired a wide circle of literary friends and associates, which included Margaret Drabble, Derek Mahon (who considered Farrell 'the finest novelist of recent times'), Olivia Manning, John and Hilary Spurling, and Paul Theroux. Farrell was also the subject of some of their writings – most notably Derek Mahon's 'A Disused

Shed in Co. Wexford' (1973) and 'The World of J. G. Farrell' (1997) – and was the model for the hero of Drabble's novel *The Gates of Ivory* (1991).

At the age of forty-four, Farrell's life ended tragically when he drowned while fishing at Bantry Bay.

Writings

As Farrell's biographer Lavinia Greacen astutely observed, '[b]y chance the final polio epidemic coincided with the Suez crisis, and there is ironic symmetry in the fact that a victim whose life was changed at that historical point should become the outstanding literary obituarist of the British empire. [...] Farrell's first book, *A Man from Elsewhere* (1963), influenced by Sartre, was the product of a solitary period spent teaching in France at Mende and Toulon, absorbed by the Algeria crisis and racked by self-doubt and despair. *The Lung* (1965), a surreal and cathartic alchemy of his hospital experiences, and the equally contemporary *A Girl in the Head* (1967) steadily followed, despite a peripatetic existence in Paris, Morocco, Dublin, and London, led under the frugal terms of a writer's apprenticeship. All three novels were, he realized, sighting shots' (ODNB).

Farrell's 1966 return to America on a Harkness fellowship would finally lead to greater success in the form of his *Empire Trilogy* of three novels: the first,



Troubles (1970) won the Faber Memorial prize and the Lost Man Booker prize in 2010; *The Siege of Krishnapur* (1973) won the Booker prize; and *The Singapore Grip* (1978), published in the year before Farrell's death, has been judged 'a triumph' (Lavinia Greacen in *The Irish Times*, 13 September 2020). Each of the novels that form the *Empire Trilogy* 'deals with a moment of historical displacement: Ireland approaching 1921, the Indian mutiny of 1857, and the Japanese attack of 1941. Simultaneously tragic, funny, questioning, and surreal, they are infused by Farrell's distinctive personality, embodied by the sympathetic hero of *Troubles*, the bachelor Major Brendan Archer' (ODNB).

Publication

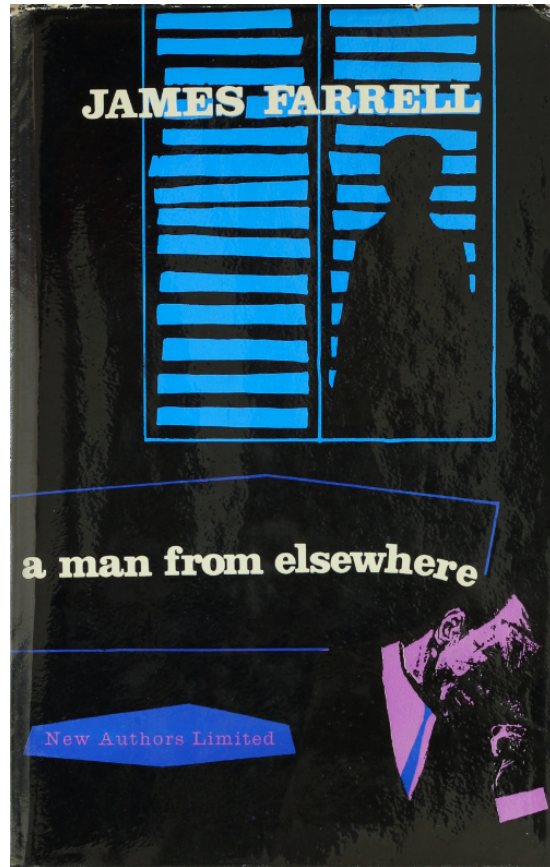
Across his career, from young writer to established author, Farrell worked with three main publishers, and consequently the first editions of his works capture the spirit and breadth of publishing in the 1960s and 1970s very well. His first book, *A Man from Elsewhere* (1963), appeared under the aegis of Hutchinson's profit-sharing venture the 'New Authors' series, which also published Maureen Duffy, Stanley Middleton (another winner of the Booker Prize), Barry Unsworth, and others. Farrell then graduated to the Hutchinson imprint for his second book, *The Lung*, which was published two years later with an iconic dustwrapper design by Jenny and Tony Williams.

A Girl in the Head (1967) marked the switch to Jonathan Cape, who then benefitted from publishing *Troubles*, the winner of both the Faber Memorial Prize and of the retrospective Booker Prize. Both of Farrell's Cape books were bound by the noted London bookbinders G. & J. Kitkat Ltd, and their dustwrappers were designed by Bill Botten, who had started working with Cape after Richard Chopping left the

company. Botten designed dustwrappers not only for the first editions of these two novels by Farrell, but also for books by Kingsley and Martin Amis, Salman Rushdie, Ian McEwan, William Plomer, Kurt Vonnegut, J.G. Ballard, and numerous others.

The final two books issued in Farrell's lifetime were published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson, who poached him from Cape following the triumph of *Troubles* and were clearly committed in his future success, as Farrell's fellow-Harkness Fellow Malcolm Dean later recalled: '[e]ven after the Faber prize for *Troubles*, awarded by three serious Sunday journalists, Jim still had not been interviewed in any Fleet Street paper. Belatedly his Weidenfeld editor persuaded him to let me write up an interview with him for the *Guardian* feature pages in September 1973' (J.G. Farrell: A Memoir of the Award Winning Writer and Harkness Fellow', see harknessfellows.org.uk). Farrell's first book with Weidenfeld, *The Siege of Krishnapur*, was published in the same year, winning the Booker Prize, and the second, *The Singapore Grip* (1978), had a dustwrapper which incorporated the famous portrait by Snowden, which shows the author before a window in which two cats are sitting. Farrell's posthumous, unfinished novel *The Hill Station* appeared under the Weidenfeld imprint in 1981.

The bibliographical reference cited in abbreviated form in the catalogue is to Ralph J. Crane's 'J.G. Farrell: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources', in Ralph J. Crane, ed., *J.G. Farrell: The Critical Grip* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), pp. 196-210.



FARRELL'S FIRST NOVEL

1. **FARRELL, James Gordon.** *A Man from Elsewhere*. London: The Anchor Press, Ltd. for New Authors Limited, 1963.

Octavo (196 x 126mm), pp. 190, [2 (publisher's advertisements)]. (Very faint marginal marking on pp. 17 and 57.) Original black boards, spine lettered in white and decorated in blue and pink, dustwrapper with design by Peter Edwards using photograph by Michael Brett, not price-clipped. (Extremities lightly rubbed and bumped, top edges spotted, fore-edges of final quire

lightly spotted, dustwrapper lightly rubbed and chipped at edges, plastic coating lifting slightly, short tears on rear panel, one causing small loss.) A very good copy in the dustwrapper.

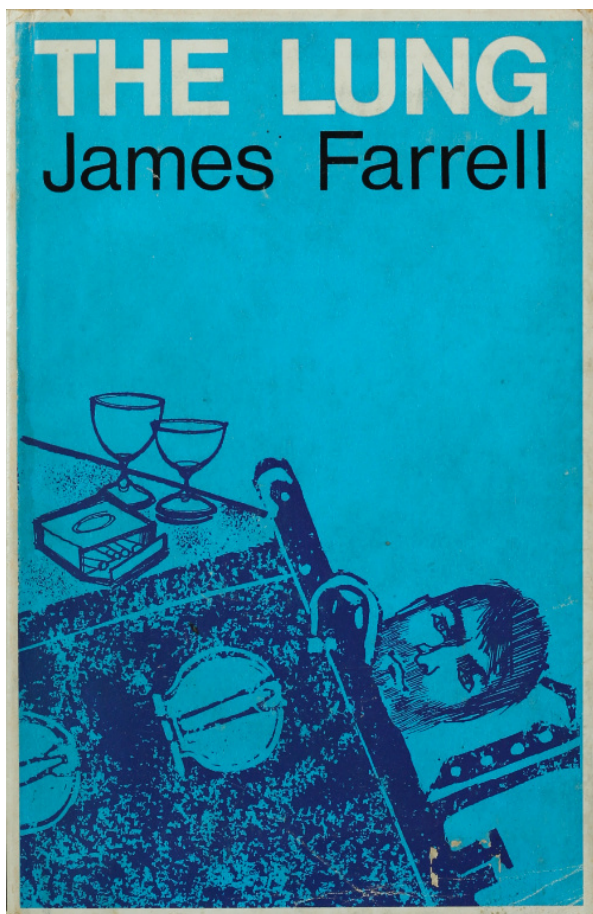
£950

First and only edition. 'Sayer is a young Communist journalist working in Paris. A rootless man, his only enduring passion is politics – in place of religious belief, his justification for existence. He is sent by his editor to destroy the reputation of Regan, a former Communist and famous writer, now dying in his village home in the South of France. James Farrell, in this beautifully written first novel, shows Sayer's involvement, closer than he had ever expected, with Regan, Luc a film script writer, and the beautiful but disturbing Gretchen, in the heat burdened village of Saint Guilhem' (dustwrapper blurb). *The Times* reviewed the novel positively and concluded that 'Mr. Farrell handles his material with an assurance uncommon in a first novel' ('New Fiction', 19 September 1963, p. 15).

A Man from Elsewhere was published under the imprint of 'New Authors Limited', which was established by the publisher Hutchinson on the basis that 'all the participating novelists received the same advance and pooled their annual royalties. Another winner of the Booker Prize, Stanley Middleton, began in the same stable' (Farrell's obituary by David Holloway in *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 August 1979, p. 14). As Farrell's first novel, *A Man from Elsewhere* did not enjoy the large print runs of his later titles and was never reprinted; therefore, it is scarce on the market, particularly in the dustwrapper.

Crane, J.G. Farrell: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources', I, A1.

INSPIRED BY FARRELL'S EXPERIENCES
AS A POLIO PATIENT



2. FARRELL, J.G. *The Lung*. London: Cheltenham Press Ltd. for Hutchinson & Co (Publishers) Ltd, 1965.

Octavo in 16s (196 x 128mm), pp. 207, [1 (blank)]. Original black boards, spine lettered and decorated with publisher's device in silver, grey-blue endpapers, dustwrapper with design by Jenny & Tony Williams and author's portrait on rear flap, not price-clipped. (Spine leant, top edges spotted, extremities lightly rubbed and bumped, dustwrapper lightly rubbed and creased at edges, slight dampmarking around spine, short tear on upper

panel.) A very good copy in the dustwrapper. *Provenance*: Domingo M. Aviado, M.D. (ownership inscription on front free endpaper and inkstamps on front endpapers).

£595

First edition. Inspired by his own experience of being supported by an iron lung during his polio infection as a young man, Farrell's *The Lung* 'may be one of the earliest accounts of the experience of life-support from a patient perspective' (Brian O'Brien, letter to the editor, *Irish Times*, 29 January 2019). 'The greater part of James Farrell's second novel, *The Lung*, is set against a hospital background but it is only indirectly concerned with illness. Rather it traces the re-birth of a tragic and suffocated figure into a world where he can once more make contact with other people. And yet *The Lung* is also designed as a comedy. The characters, if they are insane, are (as they say themselves) not seriously deranged ... just a little excitable. In this world the hospital merely provides the window through which the characters stare out at the wreckage of their lives ... the window in whose reflection they continually rehearse the mistakes they have already made. *The Lung* is a remarkable novel, which will certainly set the seal upon James Farrell's reputation as an important new writer' (dustwrapper blurb). The author profile on the rear dustwrapper flap reads, somewhat enigmatically, 'James Farrell was twenty-nine when he wrote *The Lung*. For the past few months he has been living in a greenhouse in Notting Hill Gate'.

The former owner of this book, Domingo M. Aviado (d. 2004), was a medical doctor in the United States who, among other subjects, specialised in the health consequences of passive smoking.

Crane, 'J.G. Farrell: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources', I, A2.



**FUELLED BY
AN 'ALMOST
NABOKOVIAN
OBSESSION
WITH MINUTIAE'**



3. FARRELL, J.G. *A Girl in the Head*. London: Ebenezer Baylis and Son, Ltd, The Trinity Press for Jonathan Cape, 1967.

Octavo in 16s (186 x 124mm), pp. 223, [1 (blank)]. Original red boards by G.J. Kitkat Ltd, spine lettered and decorated with publisher's device in gilt, top edges sage-green, dustwrapper with design by Bill Botten, not price-clipped. (Extremities minimally rubbed, small light mark on upper joint, bookblock very slightly leant, small mark on upper pastedown offsetting onto front free endpaper, dustwrapper minimally rubbed at edges, head of rear flap very lightly spotted and creased.) A very good copy in the dustwrapper.

£275

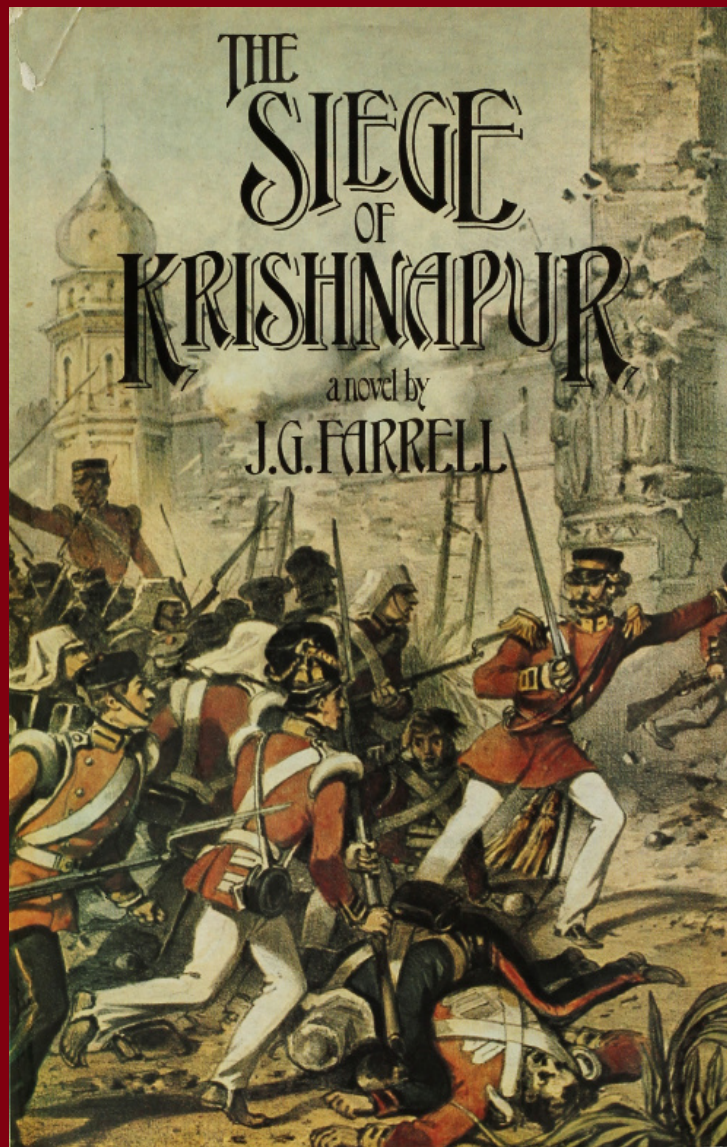
First edition, first state of the dustwrapper. J.G. Farrell has created a brilliant and memorable character in Boris. An ageing cynic, touching and turbulent, and an arid English seaside resort are brought effortlessly to life and idiosyncrasy. The strength and versatility of J.G. Farrell's prose makes of Boris, his disasters and desolation, an intense and living world of comedy and pathos' (dustwrapper blurb). Farrell was at the time, as the author profile on the rear dustwrapper flap explains, 'living in the United States on a Harkness Fellowship. [...] The *Guardian* described Farrell as "an exuberantly gifted writer" with "sure signs of the developing powers of a considerable talent"'.

The Times reviewed the book with bemusement about its 'typographical eccentricities – in appearance rather like the Mouse's Tale in *Alice in Wonderland*' but concluded that this was 'more than compensated for by the comedy, by the sharpness of observation, and by the almost Nabokovian obsession with minutiae' (17 August 1967, p. 5). *A Girl in the Head* was published at 22s. 6d., and later states of the dustwrapper have been clipped to remove this printed price, which is replaced with a price-sticker on the upper flap.

Crane, 'J.G. Farrell: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources', I, A4.

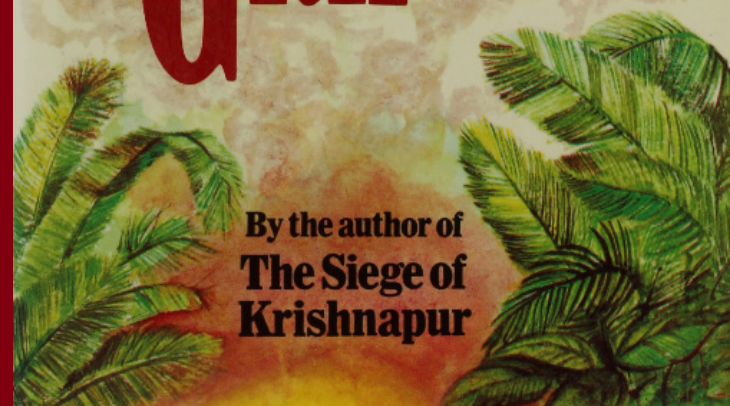
TROUBLES

J.G. FARRELL

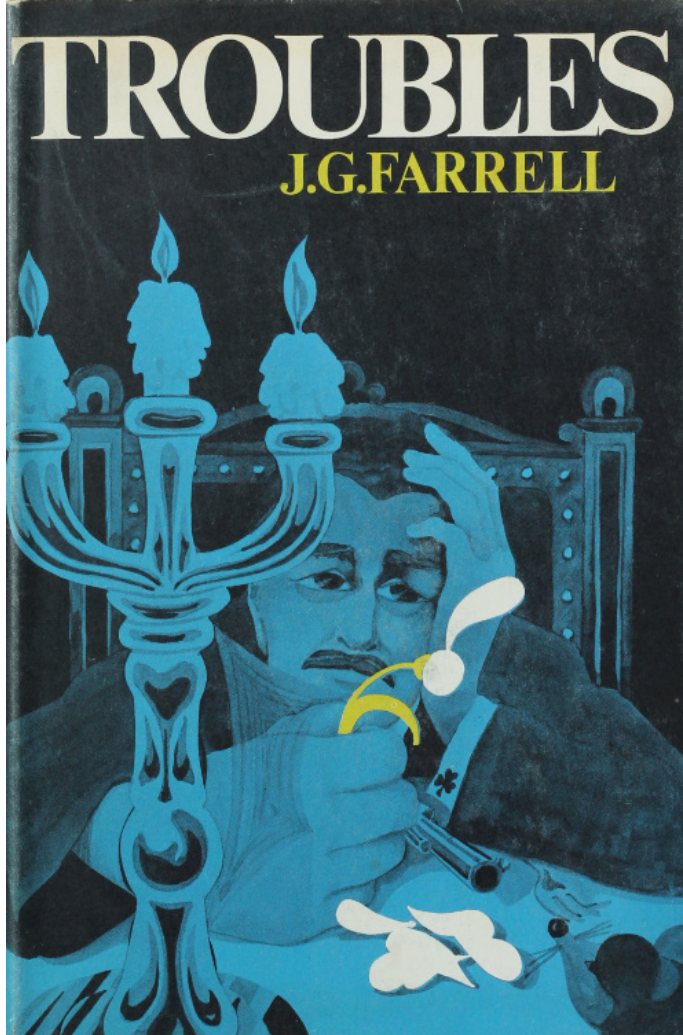


J.G. FARRELL

THE SINGAPORE GRIP



THE EMPIRE TRILOGY



4. FARRELL, J.G. *Troubles*. London: Ebenezer Baylis & Son Ltd, The Trinity Press for Jonathan Cape, 1970.

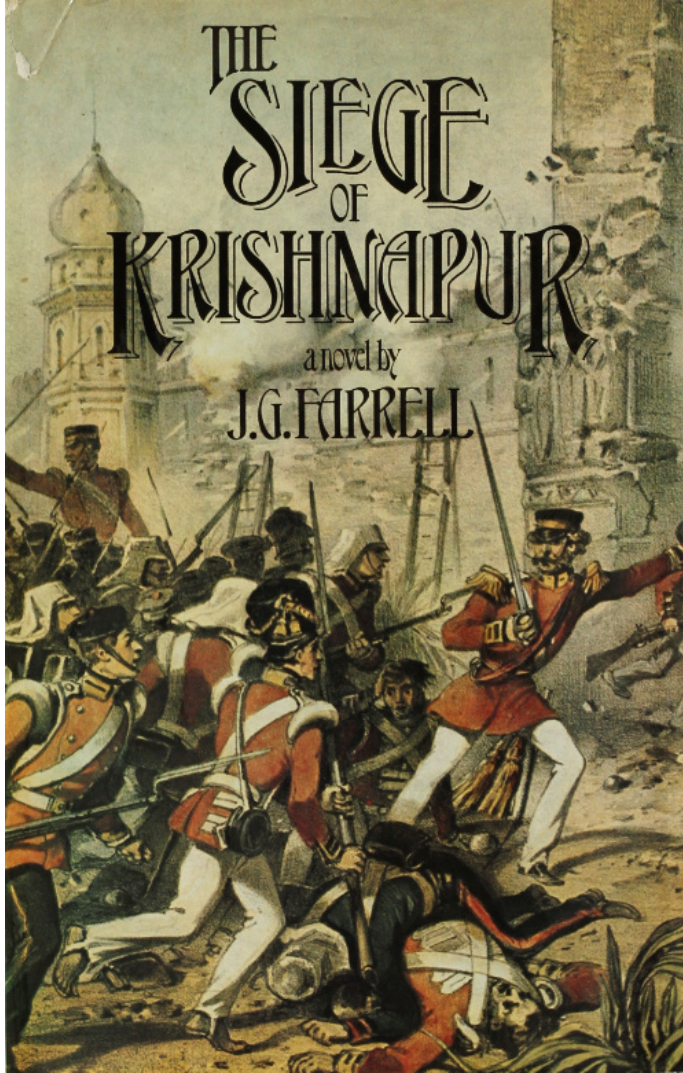
Octavo in 16s (196 x 128mm), pp. 446, [2 (blank l.)]. Original purple boards by G. & J. Kitkat Ltd, spine lettered and decorated with publisher's device in gilt, top edges red, dustwrapper with design after Bill Botten, not price-clipped. (Spine slightly leant, light spotting on top and fore-edges, extremities minimally rubbed and bumped, light marking on lower edges of boards, dustwrapper lightly rubbed at edges and with some light spotting.) A very good copy in

the dustwrapper. *Provenance*: Foyles, London (bookseller's ticket on front free endpaper).

First edition. *Troubles* concerns the period of the 'troubles' of 1919-1921 in Ireland and begins Farrell's 'three-novel historical study of the decay of Empire' with the subject of 'a country to which, like many literary Irishmen, he was deeply though ambivalently attached' (Ralph J. Crane and Jennifer Livett, 'Newspapers, War, and Games: *Troubles*', in *Troubled Pleasures. The Fiction of J. G. Farrell* (Dublin, 1997), pp. 68-82, at p. 68). Reviewing *Troubles* in *The Times*, Derek Mahon judged that 'Mr. Farrell writes with wit and distinction' and 'is an eccentric and highly gifted writer. There is a depth and compassion in his work rare among contemporary novelists, and a sense of style which may owe something to Nabokov', concluding with the comment that '[h]is picture of Ireland around 1920 is absolutely convincing' (8 October 1970, p. 14).

Farrell was still struggling with finding an audience for his works when this book was published. As he remarked upon winning the Booker Prize for his following novel, *The Siege of Krishnapur*, 'none of my books has sold well. The one which I think was my previous best, "Troubles," only sold about 2,000 copies [...]. But I have always felt that I would prefer to do something I really enjoyed, even if the rewards were small' (Keith Nurse, 'Booker Prize for Raj Novel', *Telegraph*, 29 November 1973, p. 14). This strategy was vindicated by the critical reception of *Troubles*, which won the Faber Memorial Prize in 1971 and, in 2010, the retrospective Booker Prize for novels published in 1970.

Crane, 'J.G. Farrell: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources', I, A8.



5. FARRELL, J.G. *The Siege of Krishnapur. A Novel.* London: Willmer Brothers Limited for Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973.

Octavo in 16s (215 x 136mm), pp. [5 (half-title, author's works, title, imprint, dedication)], [1 (blank)], 344, [2 (blank l.)]. Original green boards, spine lettered in gilt, dustwrapper with design by Rod Josey, not price-clipped. (Top edges spotted, extremities lightly rubbed and bumped, dustwrapper lightly rubbed and creased at edges, 2 short

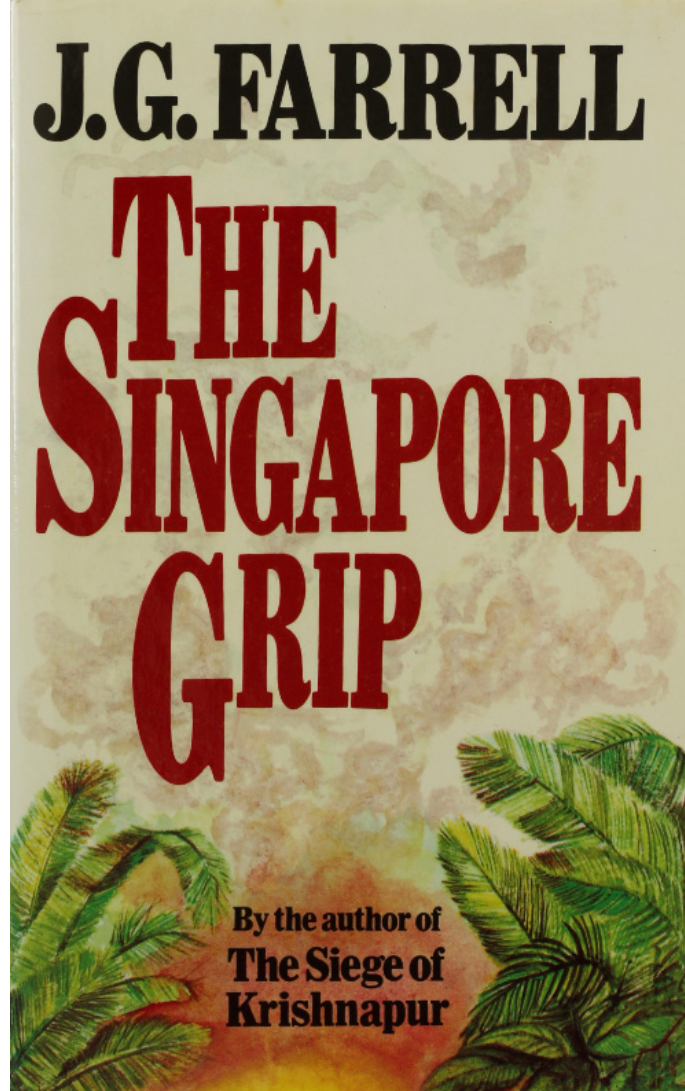
tears with old adhesive tape repairs on verso.) A very good copy in the dustwrapper.

First edition. The events told in *The Siege of Krishnapur* evolve around Indian rebellions against British rule in the summer of 1857, and in this novel J. G. Farrell has created not only an exciting nineteenth century adventure story, rich in detail, passion and drama, but also a novel which explores the nature and value of civilisation and revives some of the fundamental assumptions about society which we have quietly abandoned over the last hundred and twenty years' (dustwrapper blurb).

Reviewing *The Siege of Krishnapur* in *The Times*, David Williams wrote: '[s]uspense and subtlety, humour and horror, the near-neighbourliness of heroism and insanity: it is rare to find such divergent elements being controlled in one hand and being raced, as it were, in one [yoke]. But Farrell imagines just that here: his imaginative insight and technical virtuosity combine to produce a novel of quite outstanding quality' (27 September 1973, p. 15). *The Siege of Krishnapur* won the Booker Prize in 1973 and was also shortlisted for the 40th-anniversary 'Best of Booker Prize' in 2008.

Farrell would return to India for a projected novel which was unfinished at his death, but was published posthumously as *The Hill Station* (see item 7 below).

Crane, J.G. Farrell: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources', I, A16.



6. FARRELL, J.G. *The Singapore Grip*. London: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd for Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978.

Octavo in 12s and 16s (214 x 130mm), pp. 558, [2 (blank l.)]. Original red boards, spine lettered in gilt, dustwrapper with design by Behram Kapadia using illustration by Gerry Downes, and with author portrait photograph by Snowdon, not price-clipped. (Extremities lightly rubbed and bumped, upper edges somewhat and fore-edges and

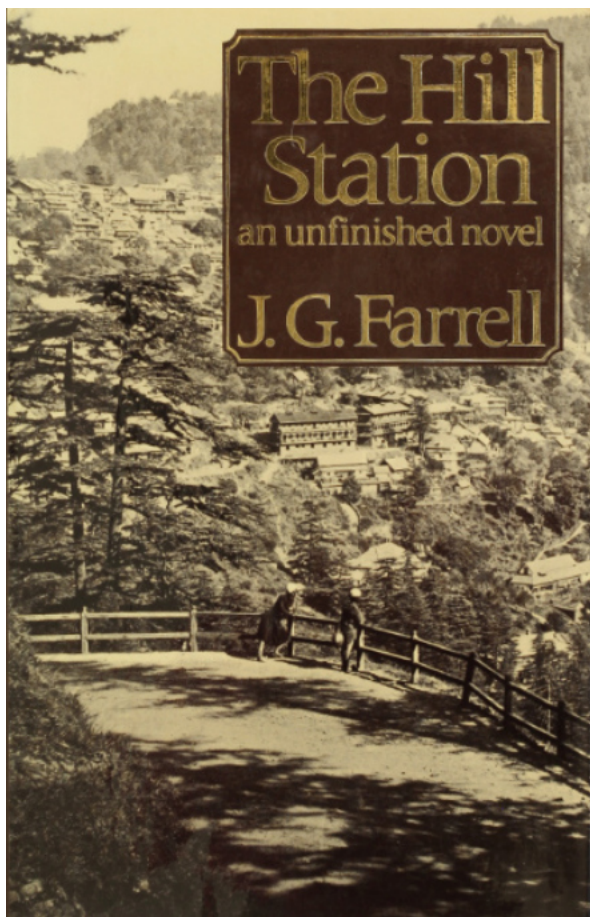
endpapers slightly spotted, dustwrapper edges slightly creased and verso and turn-ins slightly spotted.) A very good copy in the original dustwrapper.

First edition. 'When *The Singapore Grip* was published in September 1978, a fledgling novelist called Timothy Mo had this to say about Farrell's longest and most ambitious novel to date: "The novel may well be Farrell's private attempt at *War and Peace*. It is both a hilarious picture of the humanely ludicrous and an acute historical analysis, examining the old imperialism at its moment of dissolution in the Far East and considering the difficulties of behaving decently within that order". In dealing with events leading up to the fall of the colony of Singapore to Japanese forces in February 1942, Farrell addresses an historical affair which was, not only, one of Britain's greatest disasters of the Second World War but also signalled the beginning of the end of British colonial influence in South and East Asia' (John McLeod, *J.G. Farrell* (Horndon, Tavistock, 2007), p. 79).

As the dustwrapper blurb notes, '[t]his is a novel on the grand scale, as brilliant in its narrative power as it is in its historical and social analysis'. Notably, Farrell spent 'a prolonged visit to the Far East to research the background for this novel'. Loosely inserted are newspaper clippings of two reviews of the novel, one from *The Guardian* of 21 September 1978.

Crane, 'J.G. Farrell: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources', I, A25.

FARRELL'S UNFINISHED NOVEL ON INDIA



7. FARRELL, J.G. and John SPURLING (editor). *The Hill Station: An Unfinished Novel and An Indian Diary*. London: Butler & Tanner Ltd for Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981.

Octavo in 16s (214 x 136mm), pp. x, 228, [2 (blank l.)]. Original yellow boards, spine lettered in gilt, dustwrapper with design by Andrew Kay and with

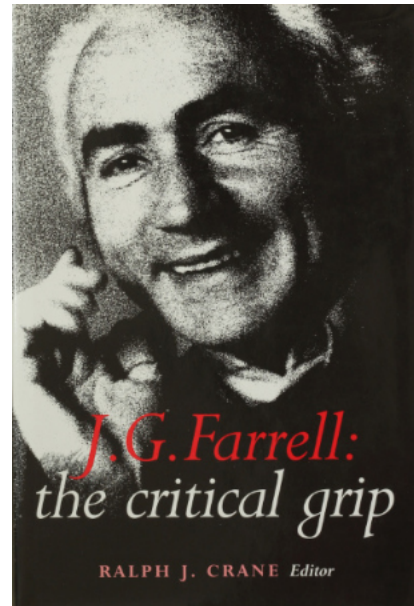
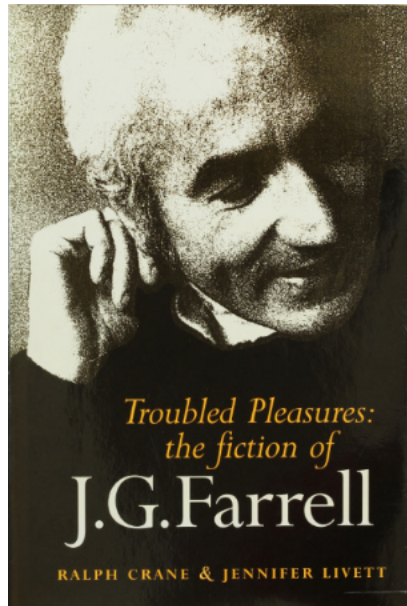
author photograph by Michael Leonard, price-clipped. (Corners lightly bumped, top edges lightly spotted, dustwrapper slightly faded on spine, and lightly rubbed and creased at edges.) A very good copy.

£29,50

First edition. 'When J. G. Farrell died in August 1979, he left behind part of a novel. This fragment – about fifty thousand words – was read by several of his friends and fellow-writers, and there was a strong feeling that it should be published'. The novel, titled *The Hill Station* by its editor, is set in India in 1871, and the 'reader will appreciate the ironic wit and acute observation of human nature for which J. G. Farrell was rightly acclaimed'. *The Hill Station* is accompanied by 'a diary kept by the author whilst he was in India in 1971 researching *The Siege of Krishnapur*. [...] The volume includes a personal memoir by Malcolm Dean and critical appreciations by Margaret Drabble and John Spurling, who has edited the volume' (dustwrapper blurb).

As James Hynes' review notes, '[a]lthough by the end of his life Farrell had come to disbelieve in the impotence of the individual in the face of history, he had said something important about the fate of the nations, something Britain learned the hard way [...]: that, as the Collector comes to believe at the end of *The Siege of Krishnapur*, "A people, a nation, does not create itself according to its own best ideas, but is shaped by other forces, of which it has little knowledge"' (*Chicago Review* 33 (1983), pp. 126-130, at p. 130).

Crane, 'J.G. Farrell: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources', I, A33.



8. CRANE, Ralph J. and Jennifer LIVETT. *Troubled Pleasures. The Fiction of J. G. Farrell.* Dublin: Hartnolls Ltd for Four Courts Press, 1997.

Octavo in 16s (233 x 153mm), pp. 173, [1 (blank)], [2 (blank l.)]. Original blue boards, spine lettered and with publisher's device in silver, dustwrapper with design by Jarlath Hayes incorporating author's portrait photograph by Michael Leonard. (Extremities lightly bumped, dustwrapper slightly creased at edges.) A very good copy.

£19.50

First edition. 'Troubled Pleasures is a critical re-examination of the fiction of J.G. Farrell, whose work has suffered a generation of literary eclipse. [...] In this first full-length study Crane and Livett provide a close analysis of all his fiction' (dustwrapper blurb). Each of Farrell's novels, through to *The Hill Station*, has a chapter dedicated to it, and

these are prefaced by a biographical sketch, followed by a 'Coda' on his published story 'The Pussycat who Fell in Love with the Suitcase', and supplemented with extensive scholarly notes.

Ralph J. Crane, previously at the University of Waikato, New Zealand, is now emeritus professor of English at the University of Tasmania, where Jennifer Livett lectured in the English department at the time of publication and until her retirement.

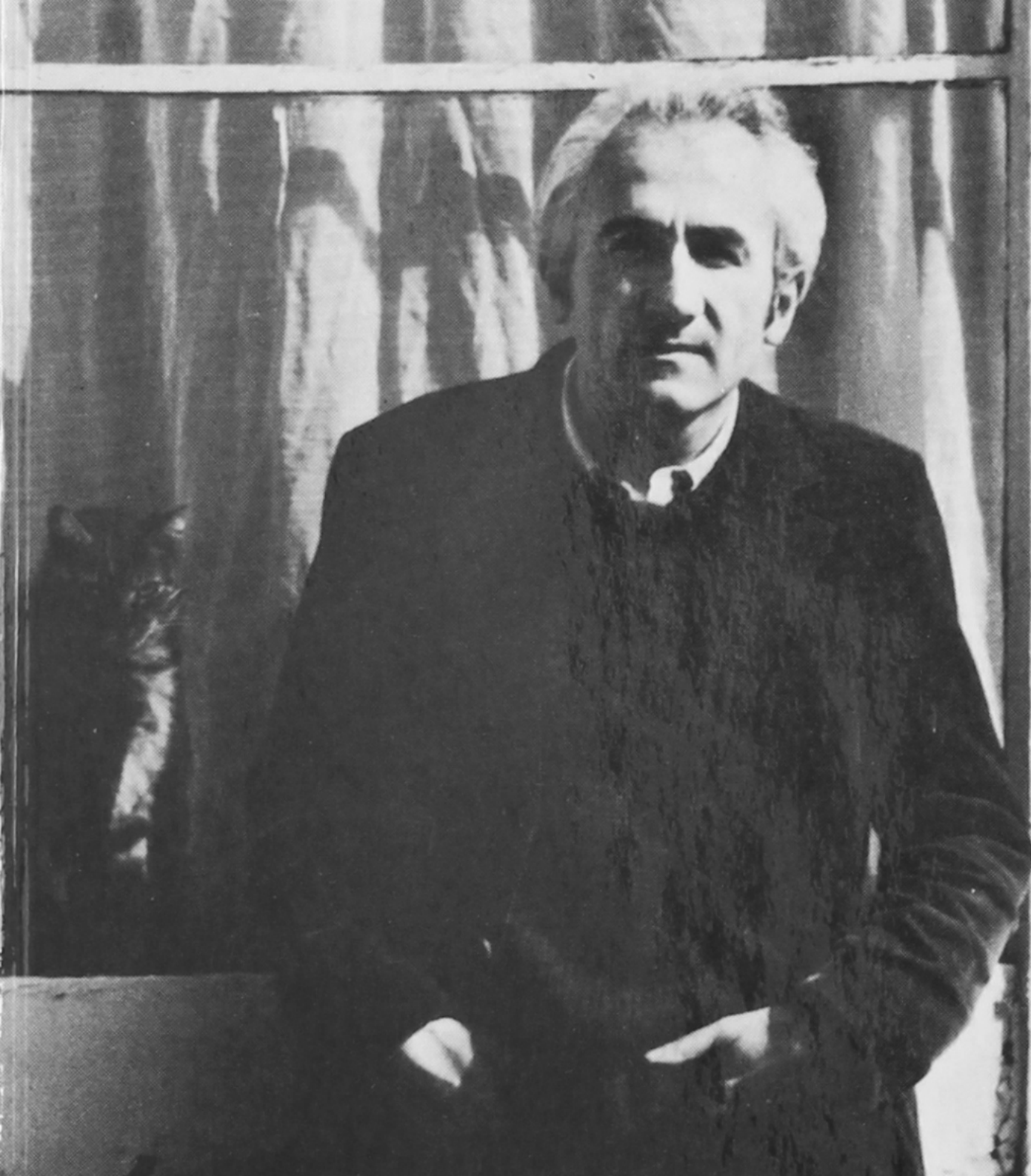
Crane, 'J.G. Farrell: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources', II, J12.

9. CRANE, R.J. (editor). *J.G. Farrell. The Critical Grip.* Dublin: MPS Books for Four Courts Press, 1999.

Octavo in 16s (233 x 153mm), pp. 217, [1 (blank)], [4 (blank ll.)]. Original maroon boards, spine lettered and with publisher's device in gilt, dustwrapper with design by Jarlath Hayes incorporating author's portrait photograph by Michael Leonard. (Extremities minimally rubbed, dustwrapper very slightly creased at edges, small mark at foot of spine and small scratch on lower panel.)

£19.50

First edition. 'This collection of original essays provides a comprehensive and at times provocative analysis of Farrell's fiction' (dustwrapper blurb). Roughly structured around Farrell's work within the context of modern literature and literary criticism, this volume features contributions by a number of well-known writers in the field, concluding with a comprehensive bibliography of publications by and about Farrell.



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