

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

13 *Roger Casement*

(After reading 'The Forged Casement Diaries' by Dr. Maloney)

I say that Roger Casement  
Did what he had to do.  
He died upon the gallows,  
But that is nothing new.

Afraid they might be beaten 5  
Before the bench of Time,  
They turned a trick by forgery  
And blackened his good name.

A perjurer stood ready  
To prove their forgery true; 10  
They gave it out to all the world,  
And that is something new;

For Spring Rice had to whisper it,  
Being their Ambassador,  
And then the speakers got it 15  
And writers by the score.

Come Tom and Dick, come all the troop  
That cried it far and wide,  
Come from the forger and his desk,  
Desert the perjurer's side; 20

Come speak your bit in public  
That some amends be made  
To this most gallant gentleman  
That is in quicklime laid.

1936

(From *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*. 2nd. ed.  
London: Macmillan, 1950)