

Fall, 1966
 Hollins College
 Virginia 24020

Dear Member:

Arrangements for the 1967 meeting (May 4, 5, 6) continue. At this writing the Honorable William Fay has accepted the invitation of Hollins President John Logan to attend the banquet on Friday, May 5th and barring any other obligations, to participate in one of the literature sessions. Benedict Kiely, Thomas Kinsella, and Sean White will be panelists in a session on contemporary literature; the first two gentlemen will also read from their own works. Mary Bromage will take part in the history session devoted to Ireland in Treaty times and after. In light of all the current publication on that subject this promises to be an exciting part of our congress. John Messenger is presently arranging the social science section of the meeting. In his last communication, he stated that this Thursday night session will deal with changes and constants in family structure or class stratification, or the manifold consequences of emigration. Arthur Gallagher, recently returned from Ireland where he engaged in a rather detailed and often controversial study of the family in that area, has consented to be one of the participants.

(NOTE: The Thursday evening session has been established to slow down what had grown to be a very quick-paced annual meeting on Friday afternoons and Saturdays. In so far as this has been done for your general convenience, be sure to patronize it as enthusiastically as you would your own area interests.) John Moore and your editor have not forgotten that there will be a Swift anniversary at about the time of this session, and Professor Moore is presently trying to make arrangements with a well-known Swift scholar. For our entertainment (aside from the banquet and usual campus bacchanalia) Gráinne Yeats, daughter-in-law of the late poet, will give a harp recital on Friday evening. You are in for a pleasant surprise if you are unfamiliar with native performances on this instrument or if you have only heard the slick and over tremulous recitals on most Irish records.

John Moore and your editor wish to thank all who have made suggestions for the meeting. We have tried to carry out as many of these as practicable under the circumstances. If some of your suggestions have not been taken up, I suggest that you make them again as soon as the chairman for next year's meeting is announced. This announcement is usually made at the annual meeting. The same holds for candidates for papers.

News items from the membership have increased some from last year. Time and space have necessitated omitting some of these for the present issue. The latest issue of The Hollins Critic contains an article by Benedict Kiely and this will be circulated free to the membership, courtesy of the school. Those of you who have connections with scholarly publications which have articles of Irish interest from time to time could consider a similar enterprise. Each of us has a mailing list. The financial resources of ACIS are not large enough to send out very much of the good work being accomplished. (Most dues go for this purpose.) However, it may be that your school would be willing to underwrite such a disbursement once every year or two - or three. It certainly would aid the interdisciplinary spirit the ACIS continues to promote.

SWIFT COMPETITION

The Irish Times has announced an award of L25 for the best poem on Swift submitted before 1 January. Only one poem per entrant will be allowed.

NELSON'S PILLAR

On September 6th of this year in a gesture of good-will an English antique dealer returned the battered and patched head from the late admiral's monument to Dublin authorities. It is rumored that the head was earlier smuggled out of the country by college students.

POPULATION STATISTICS

The Irish government has released a partial report on the last census. The Irish Times (31 August) capsulized some interesting items on that report: since 1961 the population has increased by 62,411 or 2.2%; as of April 1966 the Republic's population stood at 2,880,752; the West continues to lose numbers and Dublin continues to gain; for the period 1961-1966 the total leaving the country was 83,855 which is an average of 5.9 per 1,000 for that period; in the period 1955-1961 the average per 1,000 was 14.9; during the 40 years from 1926, only 1951 had shown an increase in the population; not only is emigration down, but the present pattern indicates that, unlike previous years, male and female births are about equal.

BALLINTUBBER ABBEY

On 9 September in Mayo, national dignitaries, local residents, and others celebrated the 750th anniversary of the abbey during restoration ceremonies; 135 families had worked in the restoration of the church; Mass has been said there since its founding in 1216 by Cathal O Connor, King of Connacht, for the Canons Regular of St. Augustine.

WORKS COMPLETED

Helen Mulvey's "Ireland's Commonwealth Years, 1922 - 1949" in The Historiography of the British Empire: Commonwealth Trends, Interpretations, and Resources, ed. Robin W. Winks, Duke University Press, 1966. The same author has written the bibliographical essay in Modern Irish History Since 1940: A Bibliographical Survey (1600-1922); The Historian, XXVII (August, 1965), 516-559 which was distributed by ACIS will appear this fall in a collective volume published under the auspices of the Conference on British Studies: Changing Views on British History: Essays on Historical Writing Since 1939, edited for the Conference on British Studies by Elizabeth Chapin Furleer, Harvard University Press, 1966.

"The Chaucer Ascription in Trinity College, Dublin, Ms. D. 2.8," Ambix (Journal of the Society for the Study of Alchemy and Early Chemistry), XIII, (1965), pp. 2-21. Introduction to the text by Gareth Dunleavy.

THE IRISH CLUB

The Irish Club at 82 Eaton Square, London, S.W.1., a private club with extensive dining facilities and gracious overnight accommodations, has forwarded information to the A.C.I.S. Those who are planning a visit to England should consider membership if they are to stay for any length of time and would like to take advantage of reasonable rates at this exclusive Belgravia club. The annual subscription for overseas members comes to about \$13. The tariff for rooms start at \$6.00 for a single. The Club's bar and lounges are quite posh, and would serve as an excellent camping ground after a long day at the Records Office or Museum. For further information write to the above address for membership blanks.

MLA/ACIS

The ACIS meeting with the MLA will be on December 29th in New York; it is designated Conference 43 in the Program of the meeting. This year Professors George Brandon Saul of Connecticut and Marilyn Gaddis Rose of Stephens will speak.

SLIGO

An impressive collection of materials dealing with the Yeats family and other Renaissance figures associated with Sligo (the Core-Boothe sisters, George Russell, Susan Mitchell, Mary Colum) is available to American scholars at the Sligo County Library and Museum, Stephen Street, Sligo. The collection, now valued at 50,000 pounds, has come into existence largely because of the effective, dedicated efforts of the library director Miss Nora Niland. Miss Niland, who makes American scholars most welcome, would appreciate receiving publication notices from ACIS members.

W. B. Yeats is the central figure in the collection with first editions and other materials relating to his activities as poet, playwright, senator, and editor. The library collects translations of his work and keeps up with current scholarship. Senator Michael B. Yeats has put the Nobel Prize medal on permanent loan, and the poet's widow has made outright donations of invaluable scrapbooks. The John and Catherine Deane Healy Memorial Collection of Jack B. Yeats's paintings forms the core of an excellent collection of his painting and writing. Incidentally, Lady Dorothy Mayer recently donated Lady Gregory's letters to Sara Allgood to the library. In addition the library has lecture tapes of the seven Yeats International Summer Schools available.

At present Miss Niland is making preparations for an AE exhibition in connection with his forthcoming centenary.

WORK IN PROGRESS/INFORMATION REQUEST

Maurice O'Connell, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Fordham University, Bronx, N. Y. has begun work on editing the correspondence of Daniel O'Connell. He is anxious to learn of any letters from O'Connell or to him in America.

BOOKS OF IRISH INTEREST/REVIEWS

Whenever possible, the editor will note volumes of possible interest to the membership. Whenever time and space permit, the Newsletter will publish unsigned reviews of some items. Those who wish, may submit 500 word review essays for possible publication here. Copy which is not used will not be returned. The essays should aim at abstracting some of the work's contents along with an appraisal. The ACIS newsletter is not intent on becoming a journal of scholarly opinion, but it does wish to offer the essay service carried in such newsletters as Seventeenth-Century News and the Victorian Newsletter.

The Irish Uprising: 1916-1922, Eamon de Valera, Goddard Lieberson, Thomas P. O'Neill, Sean T.O'Kelly, and Benedict Kiely. The Macmillan Company \$7.95.

This book is a commemorative collection of essays and photographs on the fiftieth anniversary of Easter 1916. What gives it a special value is the photographs and newspaper samples taken from those years. Much of what is stated in the various essays is not new, but the commentary is rarely cliched all the same. Those who wish an excellent collection of news photographs of the period will find them here, along with varied and interesting appraisal intended for the general reader. The late Sean T. O'Kelly has contributed a very personable account of the vantage of participant in Easter week. Two of the other essays are also outstanding; the one by Lieberson is a well-reasoned argument of a non-Irishman's view of that country and its ageing heroes; Benedict Kiely's article is written with the full faculty of a novelist who can write as Irishmen and as artist without getting maudlin. O'Neill's essay is more factual than the other two. However, he has been unable to check his emotional involvement with the period and seems more patriot than historian. This is unfortunate, because the pictures and newsclippings do a much more effective job of showing the bloody squalor of Ireland in rebellion and the nobility

of its major figures than any handy bundle of patriotic adjectives could accomplish. If one filters out these descriptors though, O'Neill's essay can be read as a good general introduction to the period. One final quibble: it is difficult to see why Irish and Americans alike continue to call Patrick Pearse, Padraic. Pearse rarely if ever mixed the Irish and English forms, preferring either P. H. Pearse or Patrick Pearse, or the entire Irish rendering.

Casualties of Peace, Edna O'Brien; Johathan Cape.

Early Irish Literature, Eleanor Knott and Gerard Murphy; Routledge and Keegan Paul. This is a collection of three lectures first given in the Thomas Davis series on Radio Eireann: Irish Classical Poetry (Knott); Saga and Myth in Ancient Ireland and Ossianic Lore and Romantic Tales of Medieval Ireland (Murphy)

Dublin 1916, ed. Roger McHugh; Arlington Books. A well-praised collection of memoirs, valuations, and the like of people on either side of the rebellion, their families, associates, and by-standers. TLS considers it a very readable supplement to the history of the time. N.Y. Times says that it can be read as history or literature.

The Civil War in Ireland, Eoin Neeson; The Mercier Press, Cork.

Ireland's Birds, Robert Ruttledge; H. F. & G. Witherby. For those jaded by sociological, anthropological, or morphological studies, there is always ornithology.

The Irish Economy: Problems and Policies Since 1922, James Meenan; Liverpool University Press (January 1967). The publishers advertise this as the first comprehensive economic study of modern Ireland.

The Irish Question: 1840-1921, Nicholas Mansergh; University of Toronto Press.

Catalogue of historical source materials (150 titles) is available from the Irish Manuscripts Commission, 73 Merrion Square, Dublin 2; no charge.

Old Ireland, ed. R. J. McNally, S. J. (Dublin and New York, 1965). This has nine essays on early Christian Ireland written by Ludwig Bieler, Diarmuid O Lao haire, John Hennig, Jeremiah O'Sullivan, Robert McNally, James Carney, Jocelyn Hillgarth and Gareth Dunleavy.

The Northern Fiddler, Brian Higgins; Methuen.

New Dubliners: Urbanization and the Irish Family, Alexander J. Humphreys, Associate Professor of Sociology, Loyola University; Routledge and Keegan Paul.

The Testament of Samuel Beckett, Josephine Jacobsin and Wm. R. Mueller; Faber. This is a general guide to the novels and plays.

Twelve and a Tilly: Essays on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Finnegans Wake, Jack Dalton and Clive Hart, eds.; Faber.

Scandinavian Elements in Finnegans Wake, Dounia Bunis Christiani; Northwestern University Press.

Bernard Shaw: Collected Letters 1874-1897. Dan H. Laurence and Max Reinhardt. The Bodley Head.

The Making of Modern Ireland: 1603 - 1923, J. C. Beckett; Alfred A. Knopf.

James Camlin Beckett was born in Belfast in 1912; he is the Professor of Irish History at Queen's University, a post he has held since 1958. Although more up-to-date and more statistically accurate than the larger-spanned History by Curtis, Beckett's work is not as well-composed as the first work. The author seems to feel that the course of three hundred years can best be demonstrated by recounting the dates of congresses and various financial accountings. This last and a rather stiff academic style make the work difficult going for the general reader. Despite the statement on the jacket that "the work is remarkably free from bias on a subject that has rarely called forth this virtue," the author is very obviously quickened with the spirit of an Unionist civil servant. While Professor Beckett was born in Ireland, he is always ready to value Ireland's social or economic condition by an English analogy. And there are times when his estimate of an Irish condition shows an appalling misunderstanding of indigenous Irish culture. Speaking of 15th century Ireland he says, "nothing, perhaps, is more expressive of the poverty, backwardness and isolation of the country than the failure of all efforts to establish a university" (p. 15). If one has any inkling of the native regard for letters and its uses in the period, one would realize that the idea of a college as manifested in England and the Continent was totally foreign to the Irish. This might betoken isolation, as he states, but hardly backwardness or poverty in Irish culture. Moreover, realizing Ireland's various religious, cultural and political connections with the Continent from the middle ages onwards, one would have to define with great caution the quality of this isolation. In a further chapter on Ireland in the early 17th century, he outlines well the general and obvious cause for failure in converting the Irish to the colonial church, but he spends hardly any space at all in determining the quality and success of the Roman Catholic clergy. This is bias by omission. Here and elsewhere, Beckett merely presumes the power of the native clergy, but in no way does he come to terms with the character of Ireland's strongest political, economic, and culture institution.

The major flaw in Beckett's history as intimated at the start is that he has no sense of milieu in native Irish situations. It may be a pity that Irish took an inordinately long time in developing a middle class, as he laments in one place, but that tells a reader very little of Ireland's one-time agricultural/manorial society and it is this same slant, albeit undeliberate, which prevents the author from giving us little more than a parliamentary history of Ireland before the treaty.

Your editor would appreciate the title and author of any work which you feel should be included in the listing of current books and essays.