

BEGINNING THE BICENTENNIAL

Ireland and America is the theme of the 1975 ACIS Conference to be held April 24-26 at Stonehill College, North Easton, Massachusetts. An all-inclusive conference fee of \$18.50 will cover admission to all academic sessions, buffet supper, banquet, and receptions. Full details, including information concerning housing, transportation to and from airports, etc. are in the conference mailing sent to the membership in March; additional copies are available from Fr. Francis Phelan, Stonehill College, Conference Coordinator.

In addition to events noted in the program, *Irish Directions*, an exhibit of Irish art, will be on display.

IRISH SESSIONS AT ACHA

Boston College will host the 1975 Spring Meeting, April 4-5, of the American Catholic Historical Association.

On April 4, Jocelyn Hillgarth, Boston College, will chair a session on "The Irish Abroad in the Early Middle Ages." Participants will include Joseph F. Kelly, John Carroll University, "Irish Influence in England from the Synod of Whitby to the Viking Invasions," and Robert E. McNally, S. J., Fordham University, "The Irish in Early Medieval Bavaria: St. Virgilius of Salzburg." John F. Contreni, Purdue University, and Glenn W. Olsen, University of Utah, will serve as commentators.

On April 5 Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Loyola University, will chair a session on "Heritage of Conflict: Religious and Political Tension in 20th Century Ireland." Participants will include Maurice R. O'Connell, Fordham University, "The Catholic Nationalism of Thomas Davis"; William D. Griffin, St. John's University, "The Attitude of the English Military Toward the Irish People"; and Marie V. Tarpey, Wilmington College at New Castle, "Joseph McGarrity and the I.R.A." Commentators will be Gilbert A. Cahill, SUNY College at Cortland, and Albert J. Hamilton, John Carroll University.

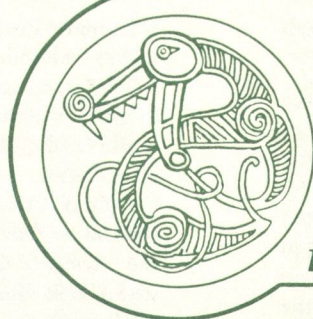
IRISH SESSIONS AT NEMLA

April 3-5 are the dates of the Northeast Modern Language Association Annual Conference, to be held in Montreal at the Sheraton-Mt. Royal Hotel.

Maureen Murphy, Hofstra University, will chair the NEMLA-ACIS session on Irish Literature (Friday, April 4, 9-10:30 a.m., Alpine); Joseph Browne, West Chester State College, will serve as secretary. Participants will include Basil Payne,

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PROGRAM: 1975 ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, April 24

2 - 6 p.m.: Registration, Stonehill College Center.

2 p.m.: Executive Committee Meeting, Donahue Hall Conference Room.

6 p.m.: Buffet Supper, Stonehill College Center. Guest Speaker: Risteard O'Broin, Director, The Galway Irish Language Theater (Taibhdearc na Gaillimhe).

8:30 p.m.: Irish films, including "The Cuckoo Spit" by Mary Lavin (RTE), Hemingway Auditorium.

10:30 p.m.: An Evening at Brother Mike's Pub. Paddy Maloney, Uilleann Pipes; David O'Docherty, Piper.

Friday, April 25

9 a.m.: Coffee and doughnuts, Duffy Academic Center.

9:30 a.m.: Session I. *Images of the Irish in Ireland and America* (panel discussion). Chairman: Alvan Ryan, University of Massachusetts; commentator: Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Loyola University. Panelists: Thomas Brown, University of Massachusetts, "Irish in United States Politics"; John Kelleher, Harvard University, "Irish Humor."

11:15 a.m.: Session II. *Finley Peter Dunne*. Charles Fanning, Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

2 p.m.: Session III. *The Young Ireland Movement* (panel discussion). Chairman: John A. Murphy, University College, Cork. Panelists: Alf MacLochlainn, Deputy Director, The National Library of Ireland, "Thomas Davis and Irish Racism"; Blanche Touhill, University of Missouri-St. Louis, "William Smith O'Brien"; Maurice O'Connell, Fordham University, "O'Connell and Young Ireland."

3:45 p.m.: Business Meeting, Hemingway Auditorium.

7 p.m.: Banquet, Stonehill College Center. Guest Speaker: A Minister of Ireland.

9:30 p.m.: Entertainment at Brother Mike's Pub: David O'Docherty, Pipes; Norwood Irish Dancers.

Saturday, April 26

8:30 a.m.: Coffee and doughnuts, Duffy Academic Center.

9 a.m.: Session IV. *Myth and Invention*. Charles Bowen, University of Massachusetts.

9:45 a.m.: Session V. *The Irish Short Story*. Chairman: Robert E. Rhodes, SUNY College-Cortland. Participants: Janet Egleston Dunleavy, The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, "Men in the Stories of Mary Lavin"; commentator, Catherine Murphy, Merrimac College (Massachusetts). James Matthews, Eckerd College (Florida), "Priests in The Short Stories of Frank O'Connor"; commentator, Mark Hawthorne, Madison College (Virginia). James O'Brien, Western Washington State College, "The Irish Short Story, 1960-1970." Maureen Murphy, Hofstra University, "The Short Story in Irish."

11:45 a.m.: Session VI. *Ireland and America*. Alan Ward, College of William and Mary.

reviews

Richard M. Kain, *Susan L. Mitchell*, Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1972. 103 pp. \$4.50.

Richard M. Kain's *Susan L. Mitchell* is a perfect match of a writer, a subject, and an occasion. Of the author—one of the earliest and still one of the finest scholar-critics of Anglo-Irish literature—one need not speak. The subject, while admittedly not in the first rank of even the minor writers of the Revival, deserves to be remembered as an active participant in the Dublin literary scene for more than twenty years and as the writer of a few striking poems, particularly some of the satires. Thus the format of the Bucknell University Press Irish Writers Series (approximately 100 pages, no footnotes) is ideal for a sketch of Mitchell's career.

Kain begins with a general survey of her work, stressing the different genres in which she wrote, and brings together the scanty biographical facts. He quotes many of the accounts by her contemporaries (John Eglinton, Seumas O'Sullivan, and others) and tries to give the flavor of her voluminous articles and reviews in *The Irish Statesman* (almost 200 items). In chapter two Kain treats *Aids to the Immortality of Certain Persons in Ireland*, noting the superiority of the 1908 pamphlet over the 1913 enlarged printing in book form. Many of the topical allusions in the *Aids* are cogently elucidated. Kain also prints a manuscript parody of "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" from his own collection.

The third chapter centers on *The Living Chalice*, also published in booklet form in 1908 and enlarged, in this case more successfully, for the Maunsell hardcover of 1913. Kain suggests that "her themes are those of traditional religious dedication, in which the central tension is that between natural and supernatural allegiances." After a discussion of her *George Moore* (1916), "more causerie than criticism," Kain concludes by commenting on some of her uncollected or unpublished writings.

Susan L. Mitchell contains numerous asides, on topics ranging from the critical reception of *New Songs* (1904) to the Lane affair. Although informative, one or two of these might have been eliminated in favor of an examination of Mitchell's *Frankincense and Myrrh* (1912), a small Cuala Press volume with a frontispiece by Jack B. Yeats (not re-issued by the Irish

ACIS members who wish to review books or special issues of journals should write to the Editor, stating specific areas of academic interest.

University Press, as it was privately printed for the author). On Kain's valuable "Select Bibliography," one regrets that *The Irish Statesman* printing of "To a Tall Silk Hat" was not located (the citation is to a reprint in the *Madras Mail*). More importantly, in his listing of Mitchell's contributions to anthologies, Kain has overlooked the three poems in Grace Rhys's *A Celtic Anthology* (1927). "The Star of the Heart" was taken from *The Living Chalice*. Kain refers to "Fears" in the Armagh Co. Museum manuscript of Mitchell's poems, where it is called "The Arrows of Light." He does not note the third poem, "The Builders," which concludes with an image reminiscent of O'Shaughnessy's famous "Ode":

From what dark hour the singer knew
Came they, the anguish and the power—
Winged words that to high cities grew?
Who sings the song rebuilds the tower.

A Celtic Anthology appears to be the unique publication of "Fears" and "The Builders."

These minor points aside, however, *Susan L. Mitchell* remains an exemplary study. Though Kain will conclude his distinguished teaching career at the University of Louisville this year, we are fortunate that his publications show no sign of diminution. All students of Anglo-Irish literature look forward to such works as his Bucknell volume on AE (with James O'Brien) and his chapter on general studies in *Anglo-Irish Literature: A Review of Research*.

Richard J. Finneran
Newcomb College, Tulane University

George Brandon Saul, *Daniel Corkery*, Bucknell University Press, Lewisburg, Pa., 1973. 69 pp. \$4.50.

Professor George Brandon Saul's *Daniel Corkery* is a marvel of compression since it is only sixty-nine pages, including front matter, a chronology and a bibliography. The actual text is about 13,000 words. Such extreme brevity, one assumes, was dictated by the format of Bucknell University Press's Irish Writer Series, to which this volume belongs. If that is the case then Professor Saul would probably be the first to admit that a short book is always harder to write than

a long one, particularly when it is supposed to deal comprehensively with a writer whose life was as long and as productive as Daniel Corkery's was. And yet, when one realizes that Corkery is almost a forgotten man today, in fact a source of embarrassment to the anthologist and literary historian, a short book like this—hard-hitting, readable—is just what is needed to place Corkery on the agenda, so that there can be some discussion and evaluation before Corkery disappears from view altogether, as I fear he very well may.

Corkery was one of the last of the hedge schoolmasters, for he not only worked many years as an elementary school-teacher but he was also largely a self-taught one. Professor Saul is not very profuse, or indeed very detailed, in giving us biographical information about Corkery, but what he does tell us indicates that Corkery's formal education consisted of his having attended, for an unspecified number of years, an elementary school in Cork city run by Presentation Brothers, and having studied for one year in a teacher's training college in Dublin when he was twenty-eight years of age. After teaching in elementary schools for fifteen years—Professor Saul makes it "over two decades," but this is not clear from the dates he gives us—he held positions as "Clerical Assistant to the County Cork Inspector of Irish" (1923 to 1928) and "Irish Organizer for County Cork Vocational School Educational Committee (1928 to 1931). Then, in 1929—he was now fifty-one years old—he was awarded an M.A. degree by University College Cork "for independent research on Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature." In other words the M.A. degree was a thesis degree, and the thesis Corkery submitted was the manuscript of his book *Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature*, a strange proceeding when he had no undergraduate degree.

University Appointment

But the university did something even better than this—they published the thesis and appointed its author to the Professorship of English. Irish, and indeed British, universities have occasionally manifested somewhat less than a normal regard for what might reasonably be considered minimal professional qualifications for academic appointment. But few appointments to Irish university professorships—and there were some dillies in the early years of the Free State government—can have been more unusual than this one. At the time of the appointment Corkery was fifty-three years old. The author of one novel, a number of plays, three volumes of short stories and *The Hidden Ireland*, he was not only Cork's leading man of letters but also apparently its only one—neither Frank O'Connor nor Sean O'Faolain had yet appeared on the scene. But considering the political atmosphere of the time one might wonder if Corkery's literary reputation was as important a factor in his appointment as one might think. One might also reasonably wonder how his work as "Irish Organizer for the County Cork Vocational School Educational Committee" prepared him for the chair of English literature. Professor Saul, quite understandably, does not go into such questions, though he does remark that Corkery's appointment was made "if common rumor may be credited, despite some vigorous opposition."

As for Corkery's achievement as a creative artist, as poet, dramatist and writer of fiction, Professor Saul is moderate and discriminating. But on Corkery's two volumes of literary history or criticism Professor Saul is harsh, and in my judgment, a little too much so. *The Hidden Ireland* (1925), that remarkable account of eighteenth-century Munster poets who wrote in Irish—Egan O'Rahilly, Owen Roe O'Sullivan and Brian Merriman—and the world they lived in, Professor Saul characterizes as chauvinistic, sentimental, defective in scholarship,

faulty in its critical and aesthetic judgments, the work of an enthusiast who was not only repetitious but who was not above creating facts out of his own imagination. "Even its occasional patches of charm are clouded by an emotionalism constantly running off into the verbose." Professor Saul has the support of some other critics, as he demonstrates by citing L. M. Cullen, Frank O'Connor and Sean O'Faolain, who wrote: "its arrangements of facts, and of half-facts, and of pious beliefs, by a man with an inadequate knowledge of Irish history, is tendentious in the extreme."

All of this may be true, though one can detect a note of petulance and a degree of exaggeration in O'Faolain's criticism. Corkery was a propagandist, a super-patriot, and an arrogant one at that. But it can be said in his defense that he was not unaware of at least one of his deficiencies. He admits, in the Introduction to *The Hidden Ireland*, that he lacked the scholarship to write such a book. But he also realized, he says, that no one else, including those who it might be assumed did have the scholarship, seemed to think such a book worth writing.

Corkery's Nationalism

Of Corkery's other critical work, *Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature*, Professor Saul is equally critical, finding it "in many respects scarcely happier in critical scholarship than . . . *The Hidden Ireland*." He quotes the late Alan Price, who described it as "a plea for intolerant nationalism." Corkery's *Synge* is, to be sure, a cantankerous work, indicative of Corkery's bigoted kind of Gaelic nationalism. Corkery was not opposed to the idea that Anglo-Irish literature could have validity and play an important role in Irish culture, although Professor Saul seems to imply this when he tells us that Corkery refused to accept membership in the Irish Academy of Letters because his associates would have been Anglo-Irish writers. Corkery was not hostile to all Anglo-Irish writers—only those who accepted and reflected the prejudice implicit in the Ascendancy point of view. He was careful in fact to divide all Anglo-Irish literature into "the literature of the Ascendancy writer and that of the writer for the Irish people," and Professor Saul points this out. Of course, the division Corkery makes leaves very few representatives of the latter group. Even Griffin and Prout, who were not Ascendancy, were seduced away because they used "Ascendancy moulds." Nevertheless Corkery's thesis is not unreasonable. Most Anglo-Irish literature did paint an unflattering picture of Irish life. What saved Synge, Corkery argues, was that he became an Irish nationalist, learned Irish, and lived with country people. The only thing wrong with that theory was that Irish people on the whole did not—some still do not—think Synge's view of Ireland was any more acceptable.

Nobody today would argue that Corkery's *Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature* has any unique insights to offer. But I do not understand why Professor Saul dismisses it as irresponsible. There are very good things in the book, still worth reading: for example, Corkery's reminder that Synge's characters "were all peasants, even if a few of them carried crowns upon their heads. When they laughed, the laugh was loud and coarse, as befitted their background, a country public-house or a tinker's ditch; when they sorrowed, the sorrow was unrestrained and wild: the glens were there to receive it . . . their intercourse was chiefly with Life and Love and Death."

Professor Saul's book is welcome. One can disagree with some of his judgments but nobody is likely to find his final summing up anything but reasonable. Corkery's significance, he writes, "lies in the sporadic quality, by no means the quantity, of his work . . . What is bound to persist in the end

Continued on page 4.

NEMLA continued from page 1

Glassboro College, "The Elder Poet: The Evolution of the Poetry of Austin Clarke"; Robert E. Rhodes, SUNY College at Cortland, "Clarke As Critic"; and James MacKillop, Onondaga Community College, "The Celtic Ireland of Austin Clarke."

Other events of Irish interest are "Words Into Music: *James Joyce's Opus One*," Richard Nickson, Paterson State College, Music and Literature section (Thursday, April 3, 4-5:30 p.m., Sheraton North); also "Dialect in the Irish Novel: Thackeray, Lever, and Carleton," Jane Early, Temple University, and "Irish Politics and the Novels of Anthony Trollope," Janet Egleson Dunleavy, The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Victorian Literature section (Friday, April 4, 2:20-4:10, Copper).

A Samuel Beckett session, chaired by Albert Sonnenfeld, Princeton University, (Friday, April 4, 4:20-5:50 p.m., Stratford) will feature "The 'I' in Beckett's *Not I*," Enoch Brater, University of Pennsylvania; "Apatma, Athambia, and Other Disorders," Joyce B. Markle, Loyola University; and "Some Notes on Beckett's Poetry," Melvin Friedman, The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Johann Norstedt, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, is soliciting papers and paper topics for the 1975 meeting of SAMLA scheduled to be held in Atlanta, November 4-6. Topic of the Irish Studies section will be "The Artistic Use of Autobiography in Irish Prose, Poetry, and Drama."



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REVIEWS, *continued from page 3.*

is the best of the purely creative work—a little set of plays and at least two volumes of short stories fine enough to stand in the front rank of their category.”

David H. Greene
New York University

Gareth W. Dunleavy. *Douglas Hyde*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1974. (Irish Writers Series) 92 pp., \$4.50.

A good monograph should inspire confidence not only that the writer is in command of his materials, but that the materials were worth treating in the first place. On both counts this abbreviated treatment of Douglas Hyde scores handsomely. Gareth Dunleavy's command of primary sources is impressive. Particularly welcome is a straightforward summary of the little-known 194-page dream-allegory manuscript (now at the National Library of Ireland) that signaled the development of Hyde's decision not to become a Protestant minister, as his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had been. For Hyde politics and religion were to be “the two fruitful springs of pain and cruelty and heart scalding all over this earth,” and in later years he would carefully avoid “the day's political disputes.” Dunleavy also calls our attention to the six important “Notes” appended to the Gaelic texts of *Leabhar Sgealaigh-eachta* (1889), the twenty folk tales that introduced Hyde's talents to a wider audience. They were written in English to help those who might use the stories to learn Irish, and they argued eloquently the reasons for keeping Irish alive while they defended deviations from philological over-niceness. In his next book, *Beside the Fire* (1890), he carried on the fight against those who traduced the Irish past to make their tales “more palatable for English readers, and not telling readers who gave them their stories or where” (Crofton Croker, Kennedy, Lady Wilde, and the American Jeremiah Curtin). It is refreshing to see how much of a piece Hyde's writings were. From the beginning he was a scholar propagandizing the Gaelic-language faith, with erudition based upon wide readings in a rich but neglected language, countless conversations with Irish speakers in Roscommon, Galway, and Sligo, and a bottomless well of common sense. It is difficult not to respond

sympathetically to the openness and diffidence contained in Hyde's Preface to *Ubhla De'n Craoibh* (*Apples from the Branch*), a gathering of thirty-three Irish poems written by Hyde and published in various weekly newspapers: “I would like better to make even one good verse in the language in which I am now writing, than to make a whole book of verse in English. For if there should any good be found in my English verses, it would not go to the credit of my mother Ireland, but of my stepmother England.”

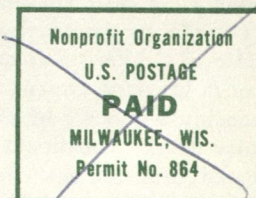
As for Hyde's importance and literary merits: Dunleavy moves beyond the usual stereotyped notations on Hyde's seminal speech “The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland,” the influential *Love Songs of Connacht*, the still-respectable judgments contained in *A Literary History of Ireland*, the trail-blazing Irish plays (*Casadh an tSugan* was the first Irish play produced in any theatre), the presidency of the Gaelic League, the distinguished academic career at University College, Dublin, and then the political years as Senator in the Irish Senate and as the first President of Eire. We knew all that before, but we knew it largely in terms of Hyde's impact on Moore, Lady Gregory, Yeats, and Synge; we have not seen it clearly from Hyde's point of view until now; and Dunleavy's book, crammed with useful information, written in a lean style, contains a number of critical insights — those of contemporary reviewers and of his own devising — that stimulate our desire to read Hyde's creative work and to judge for ourselves. Hyde, who retrieved legends, songs, and dramatic confrontations from “the detritus of monastic Ireland,” was a literary figure of some importance in his own right, and is well worth getting to know. Altogether, a splendid tribute to a great and wise man, and one of the better monographs in the Series.

Harold Orel
The University of Kansas

IN MEMORIAM: *ACIS members regret the loss of our long-time friend and colleague, John P. Hughes, distinguished linguistic scholar, teacher of Gaelic, professor of linguistics at St. Peter's College (New Jersey), who died on October 26, 1974. Our sympathies to his widow, the former Patricia Conway, who continues with us.*

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