ACIS ELECTION RESULTS

Results of the triennial ACIS elections, as reported at the General Business Meeting on April 25, establish the composition of the 1975-1978 Executive Committee:

**President:** Lawrence J. McCaffrey, History Department, Loyola University.

**Vice-President:** Emmet Larkin, History Department, University of Chicago.

**Secretary:** Johann Norstedt, English Department, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

**Treasurer:** Thomas Hachey, History Department, Marquette University.

**History Representatives:** Gilbert Cahill, History Department, State University of New York at Cortland; Joseph Curran, History Department, LeMoyne College.

**Literature Representatives:** Maureen Murphy, English Department, Hofstra University; Robert Rhodes, English Department, SUNY—Cortland.

**Representatives from the Social Sciences and Other Disciplines:** John Messenger, Anthropology Department, Ohio State University; Alan Ward, Political Science, College of William and Mary.

**Irish Academic Representative:** Maurice Harmon, University College Dublin.

**Ex-Officio Members:** John R. Moore, English Department, Hollins College; Janet E. Dunleavy, English Department, The University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

Members of the American Committee for Irish Studies are encouraged to communicate with the Executive Committee on any matter of concern to the general membership. Address all letters to the Secretary; announcements and other items for publication in the ACIS Newsletter, however, should be sent to the Editor, Janet E. Dunleavy; information for the ACIS Archives should be sent to Robert Davis, Tarkio College, Tarkio, Missouri; dues should be paid directly to the Treasurer. Suggestions for program content and other items related to the Annual Conference may be addressed either to one of the representatives from the various disciplines or to the Conference Coordinator. Coordinator of the 1976 Conference will be Blanche Touhill, Associate Dean, University of Missouri—St. Louis.

IN MEMORIAM: Martin J. Waters of the Department of Humanities, Cooper Union, died in Dublin last May, while on sabbatical leave, following a three-month illness. A candidate for office in last year's elections, Professor Waters had been a member of the American Committee for Irish Studies for nearly ten years. He leaves a widow and two children, to whom ACIS Secretary Johann Norstedt has expressed regrets, on behalf of all who knew and worked with him during his ACIS years.

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University of Missouri—St. Louis
To Host 1976 ACIS Conference

For the second year in succession, the Annual Conference of the American Committee for Irish Studies will focus on a theme related to the celebration of the American Bicentennial: "Irish Nationalism: Ireland and America." Scheduled for Thursday through Saturday, April 28-30, 1976, at the University of Missouri—St. Louis, the Conference will be under the local direction of Blanche Touhill, Associate Dean of Faculties, with the assistance of ACIS elected representatives from the various disciplines. Describing the theme as "twofold," Dean Touhill has announced that she will welcome program recommendations. ACIS members are urged to make their plans now to attend the 1976 Annual Conference and to watch the ACIS Newsletter for further details.

Other conference invitations received for 1976 were equally attractive, making the final choice of 1976 conference site especially difficult for the Executive Committee and for members who attended the General Meeting. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, members voted to ask new ACIS Secretary Johann Norstedt, elected for the 1975-1978 term, to explore the possibility of these invitations being postponed for acceptance in specific future years.

Members are reminded that, in general, ACIS attempts to vary conference sites from year to year in order to assure all members of the opportunity to attend a conference reasonably accessible to them at least in alternate years. However, since most of the ACIS membership is concentrated in the East and Midwest, those situated west of the Mississippi, by necessity, have been under the greatest disadvantage. Plans for a future western conference are now under discussion.

As in the past, the ACIS Executive Committee welcomes all inquiries about and suggestions for future conferences. Communications should be addressed to Professor Johann Norstedt, ACIS Secretary, Department of English, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061.

ACIS VOTES EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE, BONUS FOR CURRENT MEMBERS

At the recommendation of the Executive Committee, members attending the 1975 Annual Conference voted to establish an ACIS job opportunity information exchange.

Members seeking jobs should list themselves with the Secretary, Professor Johann Norstedt, English Department, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061. Members having any information about possible job openings, even temporary or visiting positions, should describe them to the Secretary, with the understanding that sources will not be identified unless the Secretary is otherwise instructed.

The Secretary will notify all job seekers of all potential openings, leaving it to each to evaluate his or her own qualifications and to determine whether or not an application for a specific position is warranted.

And the Bonus—

In a separate action at the 1975 General Business Meeting, a vote to change the membership period from the academic to the calendar year was approved. To effect the change, the 1974-1975 membership period has been extended to December 1975, when 1976 membership fees will be due. Unpaid memberships will be cancelled on January 1, however,

Continued on page 2
reviews


The use of estate records in studying the Anglo-Irish society and economy in the nineteenth century is a comparatively new and significant field. The potential for such scholarship was first shown by John Bateman in 1876 in his work on the Downshire Estate in Great Britain and Ireland. The strength of this pioneer work, however, lay chiefly in its setting and arranging of the facts of the case, and not in the sophisticated subject matter. More recent studies, particularly since the Second World War, have been more analytical, Monographic studies of the Downshire Estate in Ireland by W. A. Maguire or B. A. Kennedy's work on 'The Struggle for Tenant-Right in Ulster', have focused on particular geographic areas or specific problems related to estate records. The kind of scholarship it has promoted a deeper understanding of such upheavals as the great famine or the nineteenth century land troubles, or the legalities for the development of Irish social history. Such is the intent of the present work.

In his statistical analysis of the Downshire Estates in Ireland W. A. Maguire provides an interesting microscopic view of the operation of a great estate in the early nineteenth century. He ably complements his facts and figures with a humanistic study of the Hill family and the third marquis in particular. The latter is portrayed as a remarkably devoted and efficient administrator. Downshire's transactions are further detailed in perspective with an examination of much comparative material from the studies of other estates. The chief importance of the work, however, lies in its systemic analysis of the practice of subdividing land on the Downshire Estate. Maguire takes a past from the present, the great famine preceding the famine. More than any other factor, however, maintains, subdivision was responsible for the agrarian distress in Ireland during the mid-nineteenth century. We are shown that the same problem was demonstrated in Downshire's southern lands than those in Ulster. Maguire concludes that 'there is little or no evidence in estate records to suggest that landowners initiated or even actively encouraged, the trend toward subdivision.' Indeed, the author attributes the real cause of the distress not to the greed of the landowners, but to the hunger of the Irish masses for more lands to feed an increasing population.

NEW JOURNALS IN IRISH STUDIES

Edited by Andrew Parkin, the University of British Columbia, The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies, published by the Canadian Association for Irish Studies replaces Yestas Studies, formerly included in the CAIS members' journal. The new periodical, available to nonmembers for $5.00, extends the scope of the previous newsletter.

Finally, members supported to a six-page ACIS Newsletter, increasing space available for reviewing books. This issue will include the work of the ACIS archivist, Robert M. Davis, and the ACIS Reprint Editor, Emile Larkin, in the next issue. Emile has been an important figure in any discussion of ACIS members' complaints to MLA.

INFORMATION REQUEST

The ACIS newsletter is available for purchase by responding to an announcement recently appeared in the ACIS newsletter. Editorial Director, Dr. P. J. Dwyer, St. Edmund's House, Cumnor, Oxford. The editorial staff of the ACIS newsletter is directed to the Secretary, who will respond to all ACIS members' complaints to MLA.

ACIS, continued from page 1

so it will be necessary to pay the 1976 dues notice promptly to avoid interruption of services.

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continued from page 4

"Bare ruined choir" seems a good description of the great poetry of Yeats's old age but Gogarty had something else in mind.

The letters show Gogarty as a deeper, more serious person than one might have suspected from Ulysses. His mother forced him to go on a retreat to a monastery, and the results are not as unexpected as one might think. Gogarty was particularly in his monastic, life-rejecting aspects, in favor of what he thought was a sterner code of morality, "Surely not the life of the monastery has made me a wicked man, the knowledge that life is at best a burden: a knowledge that makes men bear what face it: a knowledge that our greatest, fondest desires arevanishing in the end, and indeed feebled by words, but one sees in Gogarty a tendency to compromise which must have turned Joyce off—Joyce with his seemingly chaotic and almost nihilistic attitude to life. Information to develop his literary talent to the fullest degree.

The introduction to the volume and the headnotes to the individual letters are excellently done, with a full knowledge of the literary milieu. The footnotes supply some information on Gogarty's literary allusions, but not all. If one considers the fact that the letters were written in a time of war, it is no wonder that the writer decided to deal with, one is satisfied with partial identification. It took an expensive liberal education to write these letters and a similarly expensive education is needed to read them. They are a few types in proper names (perhaps Gogarty errors un-der-ed) such as "Euripides," "Terence," "Johnsonian" lyrics, which are probably meant, "Lawrence" for "Lawrence" Housman.

The letters are a pleasure in themselves, but for anyone interested in the letters and areapt to be disappointed if read out of context, they are indispensable. The villain, the betrayer of Bloomday, speaks on his own behalf and he is obviously a character that posterity has not yet even under-estimated. His letter to Gogarty, whom Joyce found it necessary to resist.

J. P. Froy

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign


This brief but stimulating biography gives much-needed information on the life and achievements of a man who is in his prime. It is a pity that there is no detailed, as well as some reminder of the personal worth of Peadar O'Donnell and the merits of his literary works at a time when the political and social ideals for which he so valiantly fought hold little appeal for the average Irishman and still less for the reader abroad.

Frewer gives us the man, and shows us how his life experiences determined the content and direction of his writing. O'Donnell's six novels, autobiographical works, and shorter pieces are for the most part in the poverty-stricken West. This is not an old man's tune; it is a young man's song and devout peasant who often tragic lives are lived out at the background of a poor Donesgal farm off the wild Atlantic coast. It was a setting that he knew well; as Frewer points out, his distinguishing marks as a writer and social reformer are his "understanding of the countryman and the countrywoman and his knowledge of the problem of poverty," which he knew firsthand.

The six novels is in part auto- biographical, a fact which makes them a valuable commentary on the crucial years of the Rebellion against England, the ensuing Civil War, and the acute economic problems faced up Ireland as a free nation. O'Donnell gained a wealth of Continued on page 4
experience of Irish life as a schoolmaster, IRA freedom fighter bitterly opposed to the 1921 Treaty with England, political prisoner under the Northern Ireland Act of 1938, and editor of revolutionary newsletters and weeklies for his party, socialist agitator for the betterment of the poor (particularly the workers of the West), rebel against the forces of established order, playwright (though not successful in his one published dramatic work), literary academician, being managing editor of The Free World and editor-in-chief of The Irish Literary Review, which he founded with Sean O'Faolain.

This varied career is quickly and effectively sketched by Mr. Freyer and integrated into the biographies of his subjects' works, which, considering the limited number of pages, give thought-provoking appraisals of O'Donnell's major novels: Nabilers, Adiogdo and The King's Messenger. Indeed, Mr. Freyer deserves commendation for his skill in compressing so much of O'Donnell's life and literary achievements into his nine short chapters without the loss of undue pressure. He manages to touch on every important aspect of O'Donnell's life, not only as biographer but also as an evaluating critic and judicious interpreter of his subject's social ideals and activities. He mentions O'Donnell's occasional spars with the Church, its active dislike of censorship, and his ever-present diatough with publication, the latter increasingly affront Irish; but he does not dwell unnecessarily on aspects of his life which often earned him unfavorable criticism from the clerical, social, and civic powers—criticisms which account for his being remembered unfavorably in some quarters today to the detriment of his obviously talented accomplishments in writing. The biography ends, however, rather abruptly with a short chapter on O'Donnell's last novel, The Big Window. A summary paragraph is not enough to give the work the final sense it deserves.

From Grattan Freyer's account emerges the picture of a man considerably gifted as a writer but intensely engaged in numerous social and political movements in Ireland and abroad, all doomed to failure. Though he may seem to be a fighter of lost causes, O'Donnell's literary work well deserves our attention. It is to be hoped that this book (with bibliography of O'Donnell's published works) will do more to attract attention to O'Donnell than the interest in this brilliant but sometimes obscure Irish writer and political. It is to be hoped that he will be followed by popular editions of all his important novels and works, so that present and future readers will again see in his pages that fascinating but almost vanished rural life of Western Ireland.

Eileen M. Cotter
University of Redlands


In Ireland, historical facts clearly literature in ways that escape purely literary annotation because modern Irish literature is a strange blend of passions and frustrations of the long, tragic history of Ireland. For this reason, some kind of historical background is necessary to an understanding of the works of these writers and their cultural and political environment. Some kind of historical background is necessary to an understanding of the works of these writers and their cultural and political environment.

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Malcolm Brown, in his Preface to The Politics of Irish Literature, explains the unexpected, the impractical, the incomprehensible of his undertaking. It demands, he says, like old-time religion, a baptism through total immersion. With an objective endowed

by the warmth of personality, he has made of history an art that should be fruitful if it is not a master of the brief biographical method and the undisciplined historian, he can only speculate how long he has had time to fit in the personal drama. With wit and irony and sympathy, he makes the plots sworn by idealists, a better way of life, not only because of his political, but also of his personal, contacts with human life.

Describing the Old Liberator Daniel O'Connell's ability to seduce his listeners with his political oratory as a humorous, palaverizing manner, a habit for which his somber contemporaries used the term "unde levity." The Irish word game and the King's Messenger, "Orange Peel" to deflate the redoubtable Sir Robert, it was his opinion that the lord chancellor, Sir Edward Sugden, bore a large measure of responsibility for the neglect of the Irish drama. The Sugden was more agreeable than ironic, more rhetoric than not, but was blunt, lurid, sarcastic, and devoid of gentility of manner.

The Politics of Irish Literature is divided into four parts: The Peculiar Irish Setting, Young Ireland, Fenianism, and Home Rule. Since Irish political histories have scarcely touched Irish literature, this social history—Thomas Davis called "felt history"—has been drawn from the Irish press, ballads, old wives' tales, chance episodes, and local personal dignitaries and anecdotes. The novelists, William Kergh, Pierce Nagle, John Kenyon, or A. M. Sullivan, all of them insignificant in formal history, but extremely important carriers of true meanings and genuine affections in "felt history." From Robert Emmet's eloquent speech to the crowd of a day, "I was born with blood and my bloody execution before St. Patrick's Church on Thursday night in 1803," to the Irene's last night for Irishmen for years to come), through the rise of Daniel O'Connell in the early decades of the following decade, to the defeat of the Irish political party, to the execution of the revolutionaries from 1898 to 1909 is especially useful, not only for the light it sheds on them, but also because it helps explain the bishops' opposition to the Irish revolutionary cause. If the bishops had not done what they did during the revolutionary period, one wonders if the Irish history would be as it is.

The most interesting feature of the book is its discussion of the bishops' divergent opinions on almost every issue, which makes it difficult for us to understand how misleading it is to think of the Church as monolithic.

For the most part, the author's conclusions are balanced and well supported with facts. However, in his discussion of the oppression of Ulster Unionists to any kind of all-Ireland settlement, even the qualified optimism which Miller expresses is still open to the possibility of a violent reaction.

On the other hand, the bishops' opposition to the Irish revolutionary cause, if it is justified by the facts, would be a reason for the bishops' opposition to the Irish revolutionary cause, if it is justified by the facts, would be a reason for giving the bishops' position more recognition. The author's analysis of the situation is clear and logical, and the suggestions for improvement are well thought out. The book is a valuable contribution to the study of the Church and its role in Irish life.

Several criticisms deserve mention: the book is too long in places; the author's style is sometimes dry and uninteresting; the book is not as well organized as it could be; and the author's conclusions are sometimes too optimistic. However, these criticisms are minor compared to the strength of the book's arguments and conclusions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the history of the Church in Ireland, the political developments of the period, and the role of the bishops in Irish affairs. The book is well written, clear, and informative, and it should be read by anyone interested in these topics.

Donal E. Morton
Oakland University


A book such as this contribution by Professor Skelton to the Irish Writers Series suffers a paradoxical existence. Those most likely to read it will be least able to evaluate it. The chronological approach will certainly not guide newcomers to Synge's life and writing. But Professor Skelton makes an argument which only those familiar with Synge and his place in Irish literature need consider.

Page 12, Professor Skelton states his theme: "although [every Synge] in his lifetime appeared almost incapable of reflecting upon what happened or why. His work is a fascinating study of the making of an artist who, with hard work and talent, produced an important literary achievement."

Synge was an artist of great talent and promise who, through his own efforts and those of his friends, succeeded in achieving a lasting legacy. Throughout his life, Synge struggled to create a body of work that would reflect his love of the Irish landscape and his desire to preserve the culture of his people. He was a complex and sometimes controversial figure, but his influence on Irish literature and culture cannot be overstated.

In conclusion, I would strongly recommend this book to anyone interested in the life and work of J. M. Synge. Professor Skelton's analysis is thorough and insightful, and his arguments are well-supported. This book is a valuable addition to the study of Irish literature and a must-read for anyone interested in the life and work of one of Ireland's greatest writers.
REVIEWS, continued from page 5

that all his work was subjective and came out of moods in his own life.” Professor Skelton, however, emphasizes the polemics and interprets every work as an analysis of cultural alienation. He accuses Synge of always “preaching a sermon” (p. 50) and lays on his back the “... cause of liberty of the individual,...” (p. 84). Synge’s characters carry banners. The tinkers are, “in contemporary jargon, dropouts” (p. 49) and tax conventional society with the “wildnesses and simplicities of the human heart” (p. 50). Christy is a hero “not simply because of his poetry, but because he symbolizes in his murderous act the the peasant’s attitude toward moral and political authority” (p. 64). Deirdre, “like others of Synge’s protagonists, rejests the world of convention in order to find spiritual and emotional richness and freedom” (p. 84).

Synge’s work was influenced less by the cause of liberty than by traditional oral and written literature, by his desire to write something which the Abbey could produce, and by the mood of which he spoke to Colum. Readers unfamiliar with Synge should find more here about his frustrating years in Germany and Paris where he failed as a musician and critic. But Professor Skelton largely ignores the intellectual and cultural background. Readers should learn more here about the painstaking dramatic poet revealed so clearly under Professor Skelton’s editorship of the Collected Works. But Synge’s language is not discussed in detail, the jacket flap notwithstanding. The reader should discover here Synge writing for Sara, Molly, and “Dossy” at the Abbey, but Professor Skelton does not even mention Frank and Willie Fay.

Mechanical and quotation errors give a rushed appearance to this expensive, short book. Synge, who was more than an orthodox rebel, deserves more than seventy-one pages of text. Professor Skelton doesn’t mention it, but Synge once wrote: “The drama, like the symphony, does not teach or prove anything” (Collected Works, IV, 3). During the Playboy riots, Synge wrote a letter to the newspapers attacking the “sneer and slobbering” doctrines of the Gaelic League and Irishmen in general who “fear any gleam of the truth” (D. H. Greene and E. M. Stephens, J. M. Synge, London, 1959, p. 264). He never sent it. While Yeats attacked the mob from the Abbey stage, Synge went to bed with a cold and wrote letters to Molly. In contemporary jargon, Synge was a lover, not a fighter.

Arvid F. Sponberg
Valparaiso University

IRISH SESSION IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

On November 15, the joint meeting of the National and Southern Conferences on British Studies, to be held at the Folger Library, Washington, D.C., will feature an Irish session entitled “Religion, Politics, and Society in Ulster.” Chaired by Josef L. Altholz of the University of Minnesota with commentary by Gilbert A. Cahill, SUNY-Cortland, the program will include papers by Hugh Kearney, University of Pittsburgh; Joseph Curran, LeMoyne College; and Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Loyola University.

Irish sessions scheduled for the December MLA and AHA meetings will be announced in the December ACIS Newsletter.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Submitted by: Thomas E. Hachey, ACIS Treasurer

Total balance as of May 1, 1974 $3,643.82
Plus dues collected from members 2,285.23
Plus interest through March 1, 1975 186.90

$6,115.95

Minus following expenses:

1974 ACIS Conference expenses
V.P.I., Blacksburg $597.96
ACIS Newsletter subsidy 419.88
ACIS Secretary’s expenses, including
cost of duplicating and mailing of
membership list 159.30
ACIS Treasurer’s expenses, incurred
in preparation, mailing, collection,
disbursement, and correspondence
involved in record keeping of dues 177.89
ACIS telephone calls 16.00
ACIS Research Report
Robert B. Davis 138.00
ACIS-MLA and ACIS-AHA receptions 120.96

1,629.99

Total balance of ACIS funds, as of April 24, 1975 $4,485.96

NOTE: Outstanding obligations and bills not yet rendered
(hence not included above) include 1975 conference expenses,
printing and mailing charges for two titles in the ACIS Reprint
Series, and additional expenses for the ACIS Research Report.