

CALLS FOR PAPERS

The official ACIS session at the 1979 MLA meeting in San Francisco will be devoted to "Sexuality and Modern Irish Literature." Papers or inquiries should be addressed to Professor Morris Beja, English Department, Ohio State University, 164 W. 17th Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43210. Participants will be strictly limited to twenty minutes apiece.

The 1979 Mid-Hudson MLA conference, to be held at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York, on November 26-27, will feature an Anglo-Irish literature section chaired by Edward A. Hagan. Papers on any aspect of Anglo-Irish literature may be sent to Professor Hagan at his home address, 5614 Netherland Avenue, Bronx, New York 10471. Deadline for receipt of papers is August 15, 1979.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The twelfth annual Canadian Association for Irish Studies conference will be held at the University of British Columbia, May 2-5, 1979. The theme of the conference will be "Irish Culture: New Directions." A registration fee of \$27 in Canadian currency for CAIS members (\$32 for non-members) includes a lunch and two receptions as well as the meetings. For further details, write to Registrations, Centre for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., V6T 1W5, Canada.

The Irish Literature section of the 1979 Northeast Modern Language Association meeting is scheduled for March 30 at 10:45 a.m. in the Colt Room of the Sheraton Hotel, Hartford, Connecticut. The session, organized by Daniel J. Casey, will be devoted to "The Priest and the Community in Irish Short Fiction." For advance copies of papers dealing with the stories of Liam O'Flaherty, Sean O'Faolain, and Frank O'Connor, NEMLA members may write to Professor Casey at the English Department, SUNY, Oneonta, New York 13820.

The topic of the fourteenth annual History Symposium at Rhode Island College, April 5, 1979, will be "Ireland: First of the New Nations." Participants will include L. Perry Curtis, Jr., of Brown University, Emmet Larkin of the University of Chicago, and Lawrence J. McCaffrey of Loyola University. For further information, write to Professor Ridgway F. Shinn, Jr., Department of History, Rhode Island College, Providence, Rhode Island 02908, or call him at (401) 456-8309.



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ACIS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia will be the site of the 17th Annual Meeting of the American Committee for Irish Studies, April 26-28, 1979. Co-chairmen of the meeting are Mark Hawthorne and Martha Caldwell. The program theme, "Conflict of the Individual and the Community in Ireland," will be developed through the following sessions:

Session I: The Community and the Individual (keynote session). Participants: Terence Brown, Trinity College, Dublin; Senator John Murphy, University College, Cork; Alan Ward, College of William and Mary.

Session II: Parnell: The Individual in the Community. Papers: "The Parnellian Tradition" by William Michael Murphy, University of Chicago; "Parnell and Joyce" by Bonnie K. Scott, University of Delaware.

Session III: The Individual Outside the Community. Papers: "The Tinker in Anglo-Irish Literature" by Bob Rhodes, SUNY College at Cortland; "Me fein: The Individual Outside the Community" by Jay Browne, West Chester State College; "The Priest as Outsider in the Irish Short Story" by Deborah Averill, Eastman School of Music.

Session IV: The Irish in Britain. Papers: "The Irish in Cardiff and Wales" by John Hickey, Loyola of Chicago; "The Irish in Lancashire" by William J. Lowe, Lake Erie College.

Session V: The Community and the Individual (session established by The Irish Foundation for Human Development). Papers: "Personal Identity in a Changing Ireland" by John Cullen; "Education, Social Change and the Community in Modern Ireland" by Paddy Walley.

Session VI: Music in Ireland. Participants: Larry McCullough, Pittsburgh ("The Role of Irish Music in the Study of Irish-American Culture History"); Mike Moloney, Philadelphia.

Session VII: Art and Architecture: The Creator and the Community. Participants: Mary F. Holohan, Delaware Art Museum ("Althea Gyles: Irish Book Designer and Illustrator"); James White, National Gallery of Ireland; Rory Quinn, Dublin.

Session VIII: The Conference Theme. This session is still being established under the leadership of Maureen Murphy. There will be nine or ten participants including Blanche Touhill, F.M. Carroll, Thomas O'Keefe, and Herman Chessid.

The convention organizers are planning a picnic on the banks of the Shenandoah River, a banquet with Grainne Yeats providing the entertainment, and a party by the University's lake.

Registration information and accommodation forms will be mailed to ACIS members in early March. There is a Howard Johnson's motel adjacent to the campus; those with cars might prefer to stay at the Holiday Inn, Pleasant Valley Road, Harrisonburg. Harrisonburg is located on Interstate 81 and US 11. The Shenandoah Valley airport (Piedmont only) is a few miles from the campus; Washington and Richmond are about two and a half hours away by car, and there is also good bus service available through Greyhound. If you have the time, a drive along the Blue Ridge Parkway will prove very relaxing.

The conference organizers and James Madison University are pleased to host this important cultural and scholarly event.

current books of irish interest

Compiled by Jim Ford
Boston Public Library

(Note: These categories were omitted from the bibliography published in the December issue.)

Irish Language

Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla. Nial O Dónaill a chuir in eagar. Baile Atha Cliath: Oifig an tSolathair, 1978. £5.00. This Irish-English dictionary is the companion volume to the English-Irish dictionary edited by Tomas de Bhaldraithe, published earlier.

Labor

McCarthy, Charles. *Trade Unions in Ireland, 1894-1960*. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1978. £15.00.

Irish in the United States

Fanning, Charles. *Finley Peter Dunne and Mr. Dooley: The Chicago Years*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1978. \$14.50.

Literature: Criticism

Bradford, Curtis, ed. *W. B. Yeats and the Writing of The Player Queen*. Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1977. \$30.00.

Carens, James F. *Surpassing Wit: Oliver St. John Gogarty, His Poetry and His Prose*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1978. \$15.00.

Casey, Daniel J., and Robert E. Rhodes, eds. *Irish-American Fiction: Essays in Criticism*. New York: AMS Press, 1978. \$19.50.

Costello, Peter. *The Heart Grown Brutal: The Irish Revolution in Literature from Parnell to the Death of Yeats, 1891-1939*.

Davis, Robert B. *George William Russell (AE)*. New York: Twayne, 1977. \$7.95.

Fallis, Richard. *The Irish Renaissance: An Introduction to Anglo-Irish Literature*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1978. \$18.00 (\$7.95 paper).

Farag, Fahmy. *The Opposing Virtues: Two*

Essays. New York: Humanities Press, 1978. \$8.00. New Yeats Papers, 15.

Ferrar, Harold, and Brenna Katz Clarke. *The Dublin Drama League*. New York: Humanities Press, 1978. Irish Theatre Series, 9.

Finneran, Richard J. *The Olympian and the Leprechaun: W.B. Yeats and James Stephens*. New York: Humanities Press, 1978. New Yeats Papers, 16.

Flannery, Mary C., and Colin Smythe. *Yeats and Magic: The Earlier Works*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1978. \$10.50. Irish Literary Studies, 2.

Fletcher, John, and others. *A Student's Guide to the Plays of Samuel Beckett*. Salem, N.H.: Faber, 1978. \$13.95 (\$5.95 paper).

Groden, Michael. *Ulysses in Progress*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977. \$13.50.

Henke, Suzette A. *Joyce's Moraculous Sindbook: A Study of Ulysses*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1978. \$15.00.

Herring, Phillip F., ed. *Joyce's Notes and Early Drafts for Ulysses*. Selected from the Buffalo collection. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978. \$42.50.

Hodgart, Matthew. *James Joyce: A Student's Guide*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978. \$15.50 (\$5.95 paper).

Hogan, Robert, and James Kilroy. *The Abbey Theatre: The Years of Synge, 1905-1909*. New York: Humanities Press, 1978. \$30.00. Modern Irish Drama, vol. 3.

Jeffares, A.N., ed. *W.B. Yeats: The Critical Heritage*. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978. \$18.95.

Kenner, Hugh. *Joyce's Voices*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978. \$8.50.

Luke, Peter, ed. *Enter Certain Players: Edwards-MacLiammoir and the Gate, 1928-1978*. New

York: Humanities Press, 1978. \$20.00 (\$5.00 paper).

O Hehir, Brendan, and John M. Dillon. *A Classical Lexicon for Finnegans Wake: A Glossary of the Greek and Latin in the Major Works of Joyce*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977. \$22.50.

Probyn, Clive T., ed. *Jonathan Swift: The Contemporary Background*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1978. \$19.50.

Raine, Kathleen. *From Blake to A Vision*. New York: Humanities Press, 1978.

Raleigh, John H. *The Chronicle of Leopold and Molly Bloom: Ulysses as Narrative*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978. \$12.50.

Ronsley, Joseph, ed. *Myth and Reality in Irish Literature*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1978. Based on papers given at the Conference of the Canadian Association for Irish Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 1973.

Rosenthal, M.L. *Sailing into the Unknown: Yeats, Pound and Eliot*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978. \$10.95.

Shewan, Rodney. *Oscar Wilde: Art and Egotism*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1977. \$22.50.

Worth, Katherine. *The Irish Drama of Europe from Yeats to Beckett*. New York: Humanities Press, 1978. \$20.00.

Literature: Drama

Behan, Brendan. *The Complete Plays of Brendan Behan*. New York: Grove Press, 1978. \$4.95. Introduction by Alan Simpson.

Clarke, Austin. *Liberty Lane: A Ballad Play of Dublin*. Dublin: Dolmen, 1978. £8.50. Dolmen Editions, 27.

Friel, Brian. *Living Quarters*. Salem, N.H.: Faber, 1978. \$4.95.

Also, the following entry was printed without the annotation:

Holinshead's Irish Chronicle, ed. Eileen Power and Liam Miller. New York: Humanities Press, 1978. \$96.75. Contains the intended text for the 1577 edition with the cancelled parts restored in the text and the substitutions given in appendices.

THE IRISH IMAGE

A major article on Irish studies in the United States appeared in *The Irish Times* for Thursday, November 16, 1978. Entitled "The Irish Image in America," the article by Christina Murphy quotes ACIS member Maureen Murphy as suggesting that many students begin with an interest in Joyce or Yeats and proceed to a broader interest in Irish literature, history, language, and culture. As evidence that the study of Ireland is helping to dispel old stereotypes, Maureen Murphy notes that on St. Patrick's Day last year a New York television station did its usual story at an Irish bar, but "this year they did a programme based on the exhibition of early Irish art. Now I think that is progress."

The article also noted the roles of ACIS and the Irish Teachers' Association in promoting Irish studies in America, and it called attention to increasing opportunities for American students to study in Ireland.

D.I.B. MEETING

Editors of the proposed dictionary of Irish biography will have a luncheon meeting on Friday, April 27th during the ACIS annual meeting at James Madison University. William Powell, Professor of History, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, will be present. Mr. Powell is editor of the Dictionary of North Carolina Biography and has served as a consultant for similar projects in Virginia and South Carolina.

LYDIA HAWTHORNE

Lydia Seaber Hawthorne died November 22, 1978, after two years of illness. She attended the 1978 ACIS meeting at Cortland. Her husband, Mark Hawthorne, is co-chairman of the arrangements committee for the 1979 annual meeting at James Madison University.



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Editor: Patrick A. McCarthy
Review Editor: Laurie Kaplan
Bibliographer: Jim Ford, Boston Public Library

reviews

T. Ryle Dwyer, *Irish Neutrality and the USA, 1939-47*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1977. 241 pages. \$16.50.

Carolle J. Carter, *The Shamrock and the Swastika: German Espionage in Ireland in World War II*. Palo Alto, California: Pacific Books, Publishers, 1977. 287 pages. \$12.95.

A new chapter in Irish historiography began with the 1969 publication of Kevin Nowlan and T. Desmond Williams' excellent collection of edited essays, *Ireland in the War Years and After, 1939-51*. This volume was followed in 1972 by Joseph T. Carroll's book, *Ireland in the War Years*, which received much deserved acclaim as the first scholarly monograph on Irish neutrality since the recent opening of World War II government archives in several countries. The title notwithstanding, Carroll's book tells us not so much about Ireland in the war years as it does about the British Government's response to Irish neutrality as seen, for example, in the correspondence between United Kingdom Representative to Eire Sir John Maffey and various officials in London. In much the same way that Carroll utilized the papers of the British representative in Dublin, each of the two books under review offers perspectives of Irish neutrality which are drawn principally from the correspondence of the American and German ministers to Dublin with their respective governments. Dwyer's study is the first to employ American Minister David Gray's rich collection of personal papers, as well as the Roosevelt-Gray correspondence. Dwyer does not, however, cite any German documents other than those already published for the years 1939-1941 in Series D of *Documents on German Foreign Policy*. By contrast, Carter consulted all of the unpublished German archives containing the official correspondence between German Minister to Dublin Edouard Hempel and government officials of the Third Reich. Yet, when quoting from communications between David Gray and Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Carter relies on such a secondary source as an article from the *Irish Press*. Neither Carter nor Dwyer could have profited from one another's monographs since both were published in 1977, but future studies concerning Ireland in the war years will be well served by these interesting accounts gleaned from the contemporary vantage point of American and German officials.

T. Ryle Dwyer's book does examine Irish neutrality and Britain's response to that policy, but such new insights or disclosures as his study provides are largely within the framework of Irish American history. The author recalls how the particular significance of the Irish Americans was their influence in the Democratic party which gave them control over votes Roosevelt would need to assist Britain with "lend-lease" and other legislation. But Irish-American sentiment and American foreign policy were not to be confused, a distinction often overlooked by people in Ireland. Dublin-Washington relations were occasionally strained by the misplaced zeal of American Minister David Gray who alienated Irish Prime Minister Eamon de Valera by entreaties and innuendos calculated to bring Eire into the war or, at least, to obtain military facilities for the Allies. Gray conducted voluminous correspondence with the President and urged a variety of sanctions and retaliatory moves against Dublin when de Valera refused to compromise Irish neutrality. One of Gray's more extreme recommendations involved taking the desired Irish ports by force. Should de Valera resist, Gray urged that he be replaced by parliamentary opposition leader William Cosgrave. If Cosgrave refused, a general in the Irish army might be selected or an American general could be placed in Dublin to administer the country. As

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

Dwyer explains, Gray believed that neither Berlin nor London would respect Irish neutrality. Since even the Irish agreed that Germany would occupy Ireland if England fell, it seemed to Gray only reasonable that Dublin should do all in its power to prevent that circumstance. What Gray never anticipated was that Britain would both win the war and respect Irish neutrality.

This is a well written book, and it is regrettable that insufficient attention is given to proper documentation in the footnotes. A rather uninformative citation, like the class number "Cabinet 65," for example, without accompanying file or paper reference, or date of same, appears as the only footnote for lengthy sections of the manuscript which are drawn from British Cabinet minutes encompassing the entire period of World War II. There are a few rather minor factual errors, such as the author's contention (p. 154) that Irish officials were unaware of Eleanor Roosevelt's visit with David Gray in Dublin until after her departure. It might also be argued that David Gray's and the Irish American community's influence upon America's war-time policies was probably not quite as appreciable as this book suggests. Nevertheless, Dwyer has afforded us with a valuable and insightful account of this often misunderstood chapter of World War II history, including a narration of the determined American effort to deny de Valera's making the Ulster problem a post-war issue in Anglo-American relations. But the author agrees with those who have argued that de Valera's commitment to neutrality superceded even his proclaimed objective of the eventual unification of Ireland. Dwyer presents de Valera's frequently stated reasons for Ireland's policy of neutrality, most notably that country's almost total lack of defense against air attack. David Gray, however, is shown to have felt that the Irish leader's motives were also politically inspired. From his conversations with one of the Taoiseach's close friends, Gray concluded that de Valera did not really desire the country's unification since the inclusion of eight hundred thousand Irish Protestants in an all-Ireland parliament would yield them inordinate control over Irish affairs as they would become the balance of power between Dev's Fianna Fail party and its opposition in Dail Eireann.

Carolle Carter begins her study with the contention that Ireland's true position vis à vis the belligerents can be determined by examining the manner in which the Dublin government dealt with Nazi Germany during World War II. While that proposition is not entirely demonstrable, Carter's book does convincingly refute those who would claim that Ireland under de Valera was pro-Axis. Moreover, and herein lies the value of this book, the author provides an informed view of the eminently fallible German intelligence effort in Ireland, which on several occasions provided its spies with maps so dated that abandoned Irish railroad lines were shown as operational; against that record Carter ably contrasts the secret and effective cooperation between British and Irish counter-intelligence agents. The latter activity understandably was conducted with the greatest secrecy and, the author believes, both London and Dublin regarded widespread American criticism of de Valera's policies as useful in further deceiving Berlin about the true nature of Anglo-Irish collaboration.

In the foreword to this volume, Richard J. Hayes contends that most previous studies of Irish neutrality have contained inaccuracies owing to the unavailability of essential documentary sources. Perhaps so, but Carter's book neglects pertinent archival sources that were accessible. It is not

true, nor was it when Carter published her book, that the official files of the British and Irish governments were closed to historians, as Hayes contends. Admittedly, only a small portion of the Irish government papers up to the election of June 1944 were open, but the British archives for the entire Second World War were made available in 1972 as an exception to the "thirty year rule" and as a service to historians. No mention is made of the U.S. State Department archives, nor of the presidential papers for this period, both of which were certainly obtainable. It may be argued, given the focus of this study, that the German archives are truly the documents of greatest consequence. But although the sum total of the Nazi papers provides a wealth of information, much of it serves to illustrate how poorly informed was the German Minister in Dublin, Edouard Hempel, in his analysis of British intentions and strategies. Had the author consulted the possibly less voluminous but often more reliable British and American archives, she might have avoided certain factual errors. For example, she might not have portrayed Churchill's public anti-de Valera remarks as possibly intended to enhance the Taoiseach's anti-British image (p. 56) since the London government's Cabinet and Premier papers copiously reflect Churchill's unequivocal dislike for de Valera. Lastly, the narrative has a somewhat confusing organization scheme which is both topical and chronological, a prose style which is sometimes overly anecdotal, and some strange footnoting procedures. For example, a German Foreign Office document (p. 75 fn. 24) is cited as the source for a communication between Cordell Hull and de Valera.

Students and specialists alike, however, will be obligated to Carole Carter for this pioneer study of German policies and Ireland during World War II which both complements and expands upon Enno Stephan's durable study, *Spies in Ireland*. Carter's book, like Dwyer's study, is recommended to readers of modern Irish history and is certainly a worthwhile acquisition for university and public libraries.

Thomas E. Hachey
Marquette University

Michael H. Begnal and Grace Eckley. *Narrator and Character in Finnegans Wake*. Lewisburg, Pa. and London: Bucknell University Press and Associated University Presses, 1975. 241 pp. \$12.00.

This pair of monographs, so different in style and critical approach, share an appreciation of the importance of traditional elements in this most inventive of literary works. Michael Begnal's singularly lucid essay, "The Dreamers at the Wake: A View of Narration and Point of View," delineates a coherent narrative pattern in the *Wake* as a whole by analyzing it as an exercise in traditional narrative fiction. According to Begnal, "The critical standards and assumptions that we bring to the conventional novel (plot, character, point of view, purpose, etc.) should be the tools used for this novel too. This may be something of an unusual tale, but it is still a tale as we know one and it has its own special group of tellers." Begnal admits that on "one thematic level" all the voices and characters "may represent the various aspects of the character of HCE," but he removes HCE from his usual prominence as single dreamer and sole narrator by demonstrating that on the primary narrative level in the *Wake* there are several distinct characters whose simultaneous dreams are orchestrated by an omniscient narrator. Begnal describes each of the dreams of HCE, ALP, Shem, Shaun, and Issy as distinct narrative voices with characteristic styles, matters of concern, and themes. Through such an analysis Begnal demonstrates that "what at first seemed incomprehensible changes in the style and tone of Earwicker's monologue may now be revealed as quite logical

shifts in point of view from one character to another."

The third chapter, "Their Master's Voice," explores Begnal's interesting theory that all the dreams are orchestrated by an omniscient narrator who, according to Begnal, "almost assumes the status of a character in his own right." Arguing that "his function rather than his face is what matters," Begnal focuses his analysis on *how* this narrator carefully controls the reader's experience of the *Wake*. Such an approach could easily ignore the relative, fluid nature of the events presented in the *Wake*, but Begnal is careful to show that the narrator presents not fact but a circulation of rumor. Begnal proceeds to show that the *Wake's* so-called interpolated tales are actually conventional fictional techniques, in the tradition of the "old Man of the Hill" pause in *Tom Jones*, which Joyce used to achieve structural coherence. Begnal concludes his reassessment of Joyce's use of traditional narrative elements with an analysis of how riddles and questions have the important thematic function of encouraging in the reader a habit of questioning so basic to Joyce's presentation of reality in the *Wake*. This exceptionally well written monograph is an important reconsideration of narrative control and structural design in the *Wake*, and proof that critical approaches to the traditional novel can offer fundamental and penetrating new perspectives on *Finnegans Wake*.

After Michael Begnal's analysis of how Joyce used elements from one genre of traditional narrative, the novel, to achieve structural coherence in *Finnegans Wake*, Grace Eckley's monograph, "Queer Mrs. Quickenough and Odd Miss Doddpebble: The Tree and the Stone in *Finnegans Wake*," demonstrates how Joyce used materials from two other genres of traditional narrative, mythology and folklore, for thematic complexity. Eckley considers the ALP section as a key to understanding *Finnegans Wake*, and argues that "the washerwomen, in their combined functions of telling the story of Anna Livia and transforming into the brothers Shem and Shaun (the tree and the stone), represent Joyce's view of artistic and material creation and establish characteristics for determining Shem and Shaun identities throughout the novel." Unfortunately, the value of Eckley's interesting essay is somewhat eclipsed by the involuted and quotation-saturated sentences which result from her close textual analysis.

The two monographs make valuable contributions to scholarship on Joyce and point to new directions in the exploration of the *Wake*. Grace Eckley's discussion of how Joyce used two subjects from traditional narrative for thematic complexity, and the important results of Michael Begnal's analysis of *Finnegans Wake* as a narrative in the tradition of the conventional novel, suggest that the generic distinctions in traditional narrative—myth, folk tale, and legend—might also illuminate the structure and design of the *Wake*.

Mary Helen Thuente
Indiana University-Purdue University
at Fort Wayne

David Fitzpatrick. *Politics & Irish Life 1913-21*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1977. 394 pp. £ 15.

"If revolutions are what happens to wheels, then Ireland underwent revolution between 1916 and 1922. In the tumultuous years after the Easter Rising its major social and political institutions were turned upside down, only to revert full circle upon the establishment of the Irish Free State," concludes David Fitzpatrick in his study of the forces that led to and culminated in the establishment of a partitioned Ireland.

In his well documented work, Fitzpatrick explores the general political forces at work in Ireland immediately prior

to and during the revolution. More importantly, however, he paints an in-depth picture of the changing aspects of both political and social life and their interplay in County Clare as representative of Irish rural life of the period. In his complex picture he shows effectively the confusion of the era and the great interdependence of political and social conditions within rural Ireland.

Of particular interest are the chapters "Forces of the Crown" and "Sinn Feiners." In the first, Fitzpatrick illustrates vividly British attempts to maintain control. His discussion of the decline socially of the RIC and the eventual establishment of the Black and Tan and Auxiliary forces points up vividly the confusion existing at the time. In addition, he discusses the various problems of jurisdiction, command, and responsibility which led to jealousies and unrest among the various British forces. All this served to create a climate of confusion in which an ill-trained, ill-equipped Irish army can develop, grow, and function.

The rise and fall of Sinn Fein once again illustrates the fluctuating political and social tides within Ireland during the revolutionary period. Here Fitzpatrick discusses not only the early Sinn Fein victories and later setbacks, but he presents an insight into the reasons behind these events. He traces in depth the party's methods of organization, campaign tactics, financing, and control in the County Clare region. The discussion again illustrates the complex motives and forces at work within this dynamic but short-lived political machine.

Throughout, Fitzpatrick shows the Irish as a group experienced, even in rural areas, in playing at politics to better their social conditions. The complex strands of forces at work make the fabric of Irish rural and national life extremely rich and colorful. As the author illustrates, not only the planned political maneuvering within Ireland but also the accidental blunders by British officials and the end of World War I add to the chaotic conditions.

One feels the major subject of the book, although purportedly politics, is actually the individual. The reader finds policeman, peasant, Unionist, revolutionary, publican, politician, priest, each playing a vital and changing role in what prior to 1916 Yeats called the "casual comedy." However, far from comic, each seeks some stability and dignity within the upheaval of the times.

Fitzpatrick "explores Irish political behavior during a period of extraordinary social upheaval, reaching from the passing of Home Rule through the House of Commons in 1913 to the signature of the Anglo-Irish 'Treaty' in 1921." In this exploration he presents a human concern so frequently dismissed in ordinary historical exploration. Although the sample is admittedly narrow, County Clare, it brings to life rural Ireland in crisis. The work adds a valuable tool for any reader or scholar of Ireland and the Irish.

Ronald G. Hoover
Pennsylvania State University — Altoona
James Liddy. *Corca Bascinn*. Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1977.
64 pp. £2.50.

As the inside front cover tells us, *Corca Bascinn* is the Irish name for "the gothic West Clare region of sea-cliff and castle, stone wall and treeless hill." And *Corca Bascinn* is James Liddy's long and meditative poem on the physical and cultural properties of this strange and beautiful area.

The book is organized into nine sections, standing somewhat independently but interrelated through imagery and theme. The first of the sections, "Shore," provides a significant introduction to the narrator. His presence is crucial, for despite all the references to seascape and history, the poem is really about the poet-lover. He sees in the structure of sea anemones and starfish a simplicity he would claim for poetry, and he is in search of the spirit underlying all images and

of a love to be experienced both through and beyond sensuality. He gives us precise images in lines like these:

The tips of the fronds become swollen
The tide comes in they fuse to make spores
. . . The spores settle on sand on mud on rocks;
but we see he wants more:

Beach
I laid my heart down
On the sand
For the invisible shapes

The next five sections continue the pattern of lyrical observation leading to meditative interpretation. Liddy's quest for spiritual values resumes in "Shrine," now surfacing in the Christian terminology that is to come in and out of the poem ("Asking what grows in the pool is asking/ What is the root of Jesus"). It is obviously the coast that Liddy loves, for "Ocean," "Sandhills," "Birds" and "Cliffs" never take us far from the shore or the sea itself. The ocean is alive with the swimming dead, with "an island of strange love," with "mad sea waves." Over the sandhills rides Donna Duimche, "one of the fairies of Doughmore." Donn is also, through some sort of metamorphosis, giving a party to which the poet is invited. The poet is going to drink Donn's drinks and meet his beautiful guests, who will be a contrast to "Patrick's following/ Who make love abstract."

In "Birds" Liddy's descriptive powers are at their best, with images of cormorants and gulls; but we learn that this section is, finally, about the death of friends:

This is a love story
My dead friends
All my friends will die.

The last three sections are "Love Songs of Corca Bascinn," "History" and "Exile." The love songs, which are poignant, varied, and (sometimes) enigmatic, mingle erotic passages with references to "turbary rights," "the Congested Districts Board," and "Vergil and Christ." The passages in "History" include a poem in memory of George Fitzpatrick of Kilkee, the "publican of the piano," and also a series of delightful proverbs. "When soya sauce appears in Kilrush the memory of the famine will fade" seemed a wisecrack until its truth hit me. And it's certainly true that "several tongues enter your mouth as love." Occasionally there is a Blakean flavor: "The road of sex leads to the brothel of wisdom."

The final section brings us back to the poet. As he writes, he is an exile, remembering Kilkee and wishing for a drizzly day and a pint. He is also an exile from love, writing letters to ex-lovers and moved by "moments of memory of the sex death/ Pollen-odoured warm warmer nights."

My comments are fragmentary. They identify points in the poem, but not necessarily the high points. Reviewing this book is frustrating because it is a book not easily summarized, and I find there is always more to be discovered beneath the attractive surface of image and allusion. *Corca Bascinn* is not easy, but it is rewarding, reading. It is, simply, Liddy's loveliest and most powerful work to date.

Knute Skinner
Western Washington University
Place, Personality and the Irish Writer, ed. Andrew Carpenter. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1977. 189 pp. \$19.50.

The eight essays in this volume, which inaugurates a series to be published annually under the title *Irish Literary Studies*, were presented to the IASAIL conference in Galway in July of 1976. Lorna Reynolds in the Introduction writes that she chose the conference theme, which the title of the collection reflects, on the premise that the beauty of the Irish landscape has some connection with the achievement of Irish writers. To her concern with landscape she added a concern with what seems to be the effect of Irish history on

the writers, though inexplicably, she presents history under the rubrics "space" and "personality." The romantic or enigmatic definition of the key terms for the conference perhaps confused its participants, who seem only sporadically able to consider the effect of living in Ireland, which is after all a real place with a real history, on Irish writers. Thus the book produced by the conference promises organization around an informing idea, but fails to keep that promise.

A. Norman Jeffares tells us that he wants to examine "the way in which Anglo-Irish writers have dealt with the physical entity of Ireland: with its hills and plains, its rivers, loughs and seashore . . ." but does not. His essay consists of summaries or quotations of landscape descriptions from Swift, Goldsmith, Maria Edgeworth, Lady Morgan, Maturin, Emily Lawless, Ferguson, Somerville and Ross, and Joyce Cary. Nothing in the essay explains the selection principle, or indeed much of anything else. The quotations are linked by commentary stunningly empty of content. An example: "Perhaps, however, the best moments in Irish life, literary and actual, are — because of the generally vagarious nature of the climate — those of picnics." Brian Coffey's essay on Denis Devlin makes no genuine attempt to fit the subject to the scheme of the book, nor does it fit Devlin's work into the canon of modern Irish writing. Instead Coffey uses the essay to attack the late Randall Jarrell for critical sins committed against Devlin; he proves the error of Jarrell by the simple expedient of endless quotation from Devlin.

Robert O'Driscoll, in an essay on the ideals of the literary revival, and his colleague Ann Saddlemeyer, in an essay on Synge, employ quotation and commentary in the service of more ambitious concepts than those which occupy Jeffares and Coffey. O'Driscoll's essay is essentially a presentation of what Yeats and AE said about the idea of the Irish nation and the role of literature in shaping that nation. However O'Driscoll cannot distance himself from the concepts of Yeats and AE. Thus he writes: "It is important to realize that the Revival is the modern culmination of blossom of an ancient tradition, the roots of which run deeper than the events that have shaped the western world." Though presented as a critical and evaluative statement, this is romantic impressionism. Ann Saddlemeyer in her essay on Synge is similarly inclined to fuse Synge's attitude toward nature and her own critical commentary on that attitude. Though "assessment of the spiritual values not only of his work but, of necessity, his life" is the aim of her essay, assessment is not possible when the critic completely identifies with the writer under discussion. In the absence of distance between critic

and subject, commentary becomes paraphrase.

In "The Parnell Theme in Literature," F. S. L. Lyons avoids the methodological problems which weaken the other essays in the book. Moreover he actually does consider the effect of Irish historical experience on Irish writers and on Irish politics. To Lyons, not surprisingly, history is a reality rather than a romantic abstraction. His splendid essay is an important contribution to Irish studies and a tantalizing glimpse of the contribution this volume might have made if the other writers were more rigorous in their approach to the volume's announced concern. Further, his essay shows the value of combining historical and literary scholarship in relation to Ireland. With the exception of Malcolm Brown and Thomas Flanagan, very few have undertaken this important task.

The remaining essays consist of a bad-tempered but moderately interesting consideration of Joyce's use of what Richard Wall inaccurately calls the Anglo-Irish dialect of English; a study by Michael Booth of the Victorian theatre, included because it concerned the presentation of Ireland by Victorian stage designers and second-rate playwrights; and a gallant if eccentric attempt by the volume's editor to meet the requirements set by the conference theme. The essays by Wall and Booth are notes better placed in appropriate journals. Carpenter's essay, unfortunately built on a metaphor taken from eighteenth-century optics, makes empty generalizations of a comparative nature on Irish, British, and American literature. Except for the essay of F.S.L. Lyons, this attractive and expensive volume, it seems to me, does not approach the potential of its title and its format. Unless the quality of the essays is improved and the volumes are more faithful to a controlling idea, the series it inaugurates would seem to be in serious trouble.

Jeanne A. Flood
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**ACIS CONFERENCE
AGENDA ITEMS**

Any ACIS member who wishes the Executive Committee to consider any item of business at the Harrisonburg meeting should send the item to the ACIS Secretary, Johann A. Norstedt, by March 19. Professor Norstedt's address is the English Department, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061.

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