

ACIS NEWSLETTER

LUCY McDIARMID, PRESIDENT
ROBERT G. LOWERY, TEMPORARY EDITOR
SPRING 1999

NEWSLETTER OF THE
AMERICAN CONFERENCE FOR
IRISH STUDIES
FOUNDED 1962

"It's often said that academic politics are particularly nasty because the stakes are so low."

-David Price, WSJ

*All Out For Roanoke!
It Looks Like a Great Conference!
And the Setting is Perfect!*

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ACIS BUSINESS MEETING IN ROANOKE

THE ACIS Business Meeting will take place Saturday 15 May 12:45 at 3 p.m. All members attending the conference are urged to attend. The Executive Committee has voted (12 yes, 3 abstentions) to have the following items placed on the Agenda:

- ACIS Elections, national and regional
- Conference Programs
- The Newsletter
- The Annual
- Governance and Structure of the ACIS
- Miscellaneous Issues relating to general conduct of business

For most of the agenda items listed above, the discussion may begin with a summary of reports presented to the Executive Committee by various ad-hoc committees. See also the report on Program Procedures in the fall Newsletter.

AAUP REQUEST

The ACIS has received a request from the AAUP that we endorse the 1940 "Statement of Principles." This statement has been endorsed by many other academic organizations, and copies of the statement will be distributed in Roanoke for a vote by the membership at the meeting. The statement may be found on the AAUP website at [www.aaup.org].



AMONG the groups that will appear at the ACIS conference in Roanoke is Shillelagh Law, from Youngstown State University (A local group, "No Strings Attached," will also appear.) Although all are English professors and published poets, the members of Shillelagh Law come together from different places and with different musical backgrounds.

- Phil Brady grew up in Flushing, New York, listening to his mother's Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem albums. Today, he's known among the members of Shillelagh Law as the "walking Irish music juke box," including some songs collected in pubs when he was living in Cork, Ireland. A self-taught bodhran player, he's also the group's lead storyteller and responsible for some of their funniest moments on stage.

- William Greenway has played American and Scottish folk music since he was in high school in Georgia. William has collected many Scottish and Welsh songs during his extensive travels in the British Isles. He is a particular fan of the songs of Robert Burns as well as Scottish fight songs. He brings strong guitar playing and an expressive lead baritone to the group's performances.

- Sherry Linkon learned Irish music at MacCafferty's pub in St. Paul, Minnesota, and her interest grew when she became active in the folk music and dance scene in Boulder, Colorado. Her music interests range from folk to opera, and she has ever served as an amateur cantor for several Jewish groups. She adds high, clear vocals and guitar to the group's sound.

- Steve Reese has performed popular and folk music in bars and coffeehouses since his college days at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. The group's most accomplished guitar picker, he also sings lead on many of the group's ballads, including the songs he has written. Steven also serves as the group's harmony coach, arranging many of the songs Shillelagh Law performs.

A.C.I.S. REPORTS

Re: Mid-Atlantic Regional Report

Sender: mkealy2@glic.immaculata.edu

The annual meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Region was held at the Lincoln Center Campus of Fordham University on October 30 and 31, 1998. The theme "Fin-de-siècle Ireland" resulted in 10 panels, which discussed topics ranging from Oscar Wilde to contemporary literature and social studies. The plenary address by Elizabeth Butler Cullingford focused on "Yeats, the Apocalypse and Popular Culture." At the business meeting the following officers were elected: Robert Mahony (regional representative), Monica Brennan (treasurer), Christina Hunt Mahony and Vivian Valvano Lynch (delegates at large). The conference attendance was 106 and special thanks are due to Nancy Curtin who convened the event. We are also grateful to Fordham University, the Consul General of Ireland, and the societies that supported the regional meeting.

—Sister Marie Hubert Kealy
Mid-Atlantic Representative

Re: Western Regional Report

Sender: aweekes@u.arizona.edu

Robert Garratt and Audrey Eyler hosted the Western Regional Conference at the University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington, October 2-4. Titled "Ireland and Europe 1798-1998," the conference attracted 45 participants and a broad range of excellent papers, which included a strong selection of history as well as literature papers. The wealth of papers allowed us to start our conference on Friday and continue it through Sunday morning. The excellent drama session which opened the conference was followed by equally stimulating sessions on Fiction, Contemporary Perspectives, Intersects of Irish and European History, and a Forum on Northern Ireland. Papers were challenging, prompting lengthy and lively audience participation. The poet and fiction-writer Mary Dorcelly delighted the audience with her reading of familiar and many new, yet-to-be-published poems. She also participated in a public interview on Sunday morning and answered many questions on the writing process and on writing in Ireland. Thanks to Robert Garratt, we were also entertained with another delightful performance, music from the works of James Joyce, featuring two tenors, a baritone, and a soprano. And Audrey Eyler is to be credited with bring us Molly Lyons' production and performance of "Granuaile," the story of Grace O'Malley. Participants were very positive about the packed, smooth-running 1998 conference; for this we were indebted to Rob and Audrey's friendly and courteous organization. We look forward to our next meeting at Colorado State University in October 1999.

—Ann Weekes
Western Regional Representative

Re: Southern Regional Report

Sender: cwayne@CLEMSON.EDU

"Ireland in the Arts and Humanities, 1899-1999," the Tenth Annual Southern Regional ACIS Conference, was organized by Wayne Chapman and hosted by Clemson University, Clemson, South

Carolina. Besides ACIS, co-sponsors included the South Carolina Humanities Council; the Clemson University Vending Committee, Departments of English and Performing Arts as well as the College of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities; the Irish Chara Club; and Southern Wine and Spirits (for a quaffing gift in kind). The theme of the meeting tells all: the conference especially emphasized scholarly papers with perspective on Irish drama, fiction, and poetry in historic, political, and cultural contexts, acknowledging the century of renaissance in Irish arts and letters. Panels ranged in topics from individual writers such as James Joyce, W. B. and Jack Yeats, Lady Gregory, Seamus Heaney, Brian Friel, Ciaran Carson, and others, to topics such as "Shaping and Packaging the Nation: Maps, Myths, and People," "Ireland and the USA," "Creative Writing and Performance Art" and recitations of J. M. Synge's *Riders to the Sea* and Damian Gorman's *Loved Ones*. Particularly interesting were Frederick and Emily Lapisardi's scenes from Yeats's *The Player Queen* by puppet presentation and presentations by Tom Redshaw, Dillon Johnston, and Elizabeth Grubgeld in one of the closing panels, "Visual Art and Publication Design in Contemporary Irish Literature." The plenary events were open to the public and included a reading by feisty Galway poet Rita Ann Higgins, a screening of the documentary film *Women's Work* (followed by discussion led by *Irish Times* correspondent Nuala Haughey), and a finale closing event featuring three distinguished speakers and a staged reading of W. B. Yeats's play *The Countess Cathleen* in recognition of its first controversial production at the inaugural of the Irish Literary Theatre in 1899 and of the Abbey Theatre revival of the play in 1911. The speakers were Alma Bennett (Clemson University), "Words and Music: Uneasy Liaisons?"; Ronald Schuchard (Emory University), "*The Countess Cathleen* and the Revival of the Bardic Arts"; and Michael Sidnell (University of Toronto), "*The Countess Cathleen* as a Study in Theatrical Genre." The unique text adapted for the Clemson Players' presentation stems from the edition of the manuscripts recently completed by speaker Sidnell and emcee Chapman, published in April 1999 by Cornell University Press. Immediately after the staged reading of the play, the closing reception featured music by members of several Irish bands, libations and treats thanks to the ingenuity of the ad hoc conference committee at Clemson and local friends of all things Irish in the historically Scotch-Irish and African-American Upstate region of South Carolina.

—Wayne Chapman,
Southern ACIS Conference Coordinator

Re: 1999 Midwest Regional

Sender: ljpmcc@email.msn.com

The 1999 Midwest ACIS Regional will take place on October 8 and 9 on the campus of St. Ambrose University, Davenport, Iowa. The main theme of the conference is "Symbiotic Relationships in Irish Studies." Paper proposals should be submitted by July 15 to Larry McCaffrey, 1227 Maple Ave., Evanston, IL 60202. Gary Nolan, Director of Professional Development, at St. Ambrose is organizing local arrangements and program publication and mailing.

—Larry McCaffrey

Re: Revised Research Report Form

Sender: Rbizot@GW.UNF.EDU

The ACIS Executive Committee has approved changes in the research report form by which information is annually gathered and disseminated about members' recently published work and work in progress. The most significant change is that the report can now be made electronically, from the ACIS website. Near the top of the front page of the website—

(<http://athena.english.vt.edu/ACIS/FRONTPAGE.HTML>)— is a new heading, "1999 Research Report Form." Members who click on that heading will find the new research report form and, by following directions there, may submit information for the annual report without touching a piece of paper. (Research reports may also be submitted in the traditional manner: on paper.)

The other significant change is the addition of four research fields: Cinema, Cultural Studies, Folklore and Irish Language. These changes have come about as a result of recommendations made by a subcommittee of the ACIS Executive Committee and submitted to the Executive Committee as a whole. The subcommittee consisted of Richard Bizot (chair), Cheryl Herr and Gary Owens. Robert Brinlee, who oversees the ACIS website, has set up the report form there, adjusting it many times to accommodate recommendations from the subcommittee and the Executive Committee as a whole.

Research report information, whether submitted electronically or on paper, will still be compiled by DeeGee Lester. The printed (paper) version of the report form, identical with the electronic one, is still being mailed to all member. Members should report by one or the other means, but not both.

—Richard Bizot
Professor of English and
Coordinator of Irish Studies
University of North Florida
President, Southern Region,
American Conference for Irish Studies

Last Call

Sender: doan@polaris.acast.nova.edu

The deadline for receipt of deposits for the 2000 Southern ACIS Cruise Conference, "The Irish in the Atlantic World," on board the Carnival Ecstasy, and sailing from Miami to Nassau (Feb. 4-7, 2000), has been extended to March 30, 1999. Berths are available for \$425.00 per person (inside cabin) or \$475.00 p.p. (ocean-view cabin) based on double occupancy. Single occupancy is \$755.00 or \$805.00, respectively. Indicate whether you wish to share a cabin, and with whom. Final payment is due by October 1, 1999. Deposits and remaining payments should be sent payable to: Prof. James E. Doan, Dept. of Liberal Arts, Nova Southeastern Univ., 3301 College Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33314. Abstracts should be sent to Mary Donnelly (Mangansis@aol.com) as soon as possible. Five-minute position papers, panels organized around a common theme or round table discussions are encouraged. For further information contact either Donnelly or Doan at: (doan@polaris.nova.edu).

A.C.I.S. Annual

Sender: harrin@cooper.edu

The second volume of the A.C.I.S. annual, *Politics and Performance in Contemporary Northern Ireland*, will be shipped in April to A.C.I.S. members who have paid dues for the 1998-99 year. Final notices on unpaid dues were mailed to delinquent members at the end of February. Inquiries can be sent to the A.C.I.S. Treasurer, John Harrington, at harrin@cooper.edu.



Former ACIS president Maureen Murphy received the inaugural American Irish Historical Society Culture Award last year. Dr. Murphy was presented the award by President-General of the American Irish Historical Society, Kevin M. Cahill. John McCarthy of Fordham University was the event chairman. Professor Murphy teaches at Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York. She is the editor of the recently-published writings of Asenath Nicholson, *Annals of the Famine in Ireland (1850)*, from Lilliput Press.

Re: Call for Articles, "Women's Studies"

Sender: maureengary@earthlink.net

Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal invites contributions to an upcoming special issue (to appear in 2000) on Irish women writers after 1798. Forward submissions (in duplicate, conforming to MLA style, and no longer than 25 pages) to Associate Editor Maureen O'Connor, Department of English, Claremont Graduate University, 143 East Tenth Street, Claremont,

CA 91711-6163, by 1 October 1999. Forward inquiries to womstudj@cgu.edu, or call the journal's offices at 909.607.2974.

Re: Brian Friel Conference

Sender: dhand@macollamh.ucd.ie

A Conference on Brian Friel will be held in University College, Dublin's Newman House, May 11 - 20, 1999. Speakers will include Declan Kiberd, Katherine Worth, Fintan O'Toole, Richard Pine. Productions of Friel's *Freedom of the City*, *Living Quarters* and *Aristocrats* will be on in Dublin at the same time. For details write to Tony Roche, Department of Anglo-Irish Literature and Drama, University College, Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4. Phone: 353-1-7068192; Fax: 353-1-7061174.

—Derek Hand

Re: Call for Papers

Sender: W.Lazenbatt@ulst.ac.uk

The forthcoming issue of *Writing Ulster*, the literary arts journal published annually by the University of Ulster, seeks papers on the theme of "Northern Narratives." In particular it invites contributions in the form of critical essays on recent prose writers from Ulster, or with an Ulster interest. Critical assessments of the work of such novelists as Bernard McLaverty, Eoin McNamee, Deirdre Madden, Jennifer Johnston, Glen Patterson and/or contemporaries will be very welcome, as will articles dealing with contemporary Irish writers in general. Contributions should not normally exceed 6,000 words in length and should be submitted in hard copy, if possible with accompanying Microsoft Word disc. The deadline for submission is 30 April 1999, but proposals for contributions should be sent to the editor as soon as possible at the following address: Editor, "Writing Ulster," Room 12G11, University of Ulster at Jordanstown, Shore Road, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim, BT37 0QB N Ireland.

Tel: 011 - 44 - 1232 - 366460; Fax: 011 - 44 - 1232 - 366824

Re: New Irish Studies Series

Sender: eobmac@iol.ie

Ireland in Theory: Irish Studies Series

This series of book-length studies, to be published by the Edwin Mellen Press, is a new venture in the area of Irish Studies. Its thematic approach will be interdisciplinary so that the developments in literary and cultural theory can be brought to bear on issues concerned with Irishness. *Ireland in Theory* will imbricate the theoretical developments of the last fifty years with a questioning of the epistemological status of Irish writing, Irish culture and Irish identity, and their interaction. By refusing to be limited by the traditional frameworks of academic disciplines, such a series will cross the boundaries that have kept literature, cultural studies, social studies, political studies, ideological studies and ethnic and racial studies apart, and bring about a new constellation in which all aspects of the Irish experience can be studied in new and challenging ways. I would see such a series as concentrating on the following areas:

- Studies which bring new theoretical perspectives to bear on the works of individual writers, or groups of writers, of any period or genre.

- Studies of more general areas in terms of historical periods, or generic divisions, wherein new interpretations of the underlying trends could bring about some genuinely fresh conclusions. Various related issues, such as folklore studies, ethnography, cultural studies and literary and theoretical studies could be included in the series, making it a comprehensive contribution to the field.

- Studies which interrogate the political or ideological consequences of texts, and their readings, and which view the works of Irish writers as constitutive of different notions of Irishness, and Irish identity.

- Studies which examine the different enunciations of Irishness—republican, nationalist, unionist, loyalist, religious, pluralist—or the interaction of any of these.

- Studies which examine the influence of Europe on constructions of Irishness; or which examine diasporic influences on Irishness in all its facets. Hyphenated notions of identity, or borderline notions of Irishness, either literary or political are also encouraged.

The series is open to any of these approaches, or to any interrogation the way in which the notion of Ireland has been enculturated, is being enculturated or might possibly be enculturated in the future.

Please send abstracts, proposals or inquiries to: Dr Eugene O'Brien, Editor *Ireland in Theory*, Department of Languages and Cultural Studies, Department of English, College of Humanities, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland.

—Eugene O'Brien

Summertime in Dublin

Sender: forourke@ollamh.ucd.ie

A printed souvenir program marking the 50th International Summer School in Irish Studies held at University College Dublin in July 1998 is available free of charge on request. It includes an unpublished sonnet by Seamus Heaney as well as drawings of Seamus Heaney and musician Derek Bell by Irish artist Paul Funge. Email: summer.school@ucd.ie The 51st International Summer School will take place 30 June - 16 July 1999. Details: International Summer School, UCD, Dublin 4.

Website: www.ucd.ie/summerschool.

—Dr. Fran O'Rourke

Director, International Summer School
Philosophy Department

University College Dublin, Dublin 4

Tel: 353-1-706 8124; Fax: 353-1-269 3469

Celebrating William Kennedy

Sender: Vvlynch@aol.com

The Associated Writing Programs (AWP) Annual Conference will take place at the Omni Hotel, Albany, New York, April 14-17, 1999. Frank McCourt is the Keynote Speaker. "William Kennedy: A Celebration," a symposium co-sponsored by the University at Albany, the New York State Writers Institute, and Associated Writing Programs, will be part of the proceedings; invited to present papers are Vivian Valvano Lynch, Benedict Giamo, Christian Michener, Michael Patrick Gillespie, and Neila C.

Seshachari. Conference program can be viewed at: www.albany.edu/writers-inst/; for registration and further information call (703) 993-4301 or e-mail awp@gmu.edu.

Jefferson Smurfit Corporation

Professorship in Irish Studies

The University of Missouri-St. Louis is pleased to announce the establishment of and a search to fill the Jefferson Smurfit Corporation Professorship in Irish Studies. The scholar will be expected to play a leadership role in the development of Irish Studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The professor will be expected to take an interdisciplinary approach and exhibit, in his or her scholarship, both intellectual rigor and accessibility to a wide audience. The professor will teach courses and conduct research in his/her academic discipline. Preference will be given to a scholar in the arts, humanities or history.

Working with the Center for International Studies, the Irish-American community and the community at large, the professor will develop programs for campus and community audiences about Ireland and the Irish expatriate experience. The professor will also collaborate with holders of other international professorships and Center programs to develop a comprehensive international program highlighting the diversity of St. Louis' ethnic heritage.

Qualifications: Candidates must have a distinguished record of research/creative activity, teaching, and service. Experience working with the community is desired.

Rank and Salary: Rank is open for this tenured appointment, but preference will be given to applicants who can be appointed at the full or associate level. Salary will be commensurate with the qualifications of the candidate; endowment funds will be used to support the activities of the professor.

Applications: The appointment may be made for Fall 1999 or as soon thereafter as possible. Review of materials will begin on April 1, 1999, though nominations and applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Applicants should include a letter describing how their background and experience prepares them for this important position. Applications should also include a curriculum vitae and names, addresses and telephone numbers of four references. (Candidates will be notified before references are contacted).

Please address application materials to: Jefferson Smurfit Professorship in Irish Studies Search Committee, Dr. Joel Glassman, Committee Chair, Center for International Studies, University of Missouri-St. Louis, MO 63121-4499. Applications made be submitted electronically to the following e-mail address: "intlstud@umslvma.umsl.edu".

George J. Mitchell Scholarships

Sender: vargo@us-irelandalliance.org

In September 1998, Taoiseach Bertie Ahern announced that the Irish government would provide \$3 million endowment to the US-Ireland Alliance for the establishment of the George J. Mitchell Scholarships. Named in honor of the former Senator's pivotal contribution to the Northern Ireland peace process, these scholarships will allow Americans to pursue one year of postgraduate study at institutions of higher learning in Ireland, including the

seven universities in Ireland and the two universities in Northern Ireland. The Crucible Corporation of Dublin has also committed to funding a Mitchell Scholar. The first scholars will be selected in fall 1999 and will begin their studies in fall 2000. It is anticipated that between three and five scholars will be selected the first year. Trina Vargo, who launched the US-Ireland Alliance, a Washington-based, non-partisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to educating Americans about Ireland and to consolidating existing relations between the U.S. and Ireland (see *Washington Post*, July 19, 1998), will be at the national A.C.I.S. conference in Roanoke to provide information about the scholarships. A website is being designed and will be found at www.MitchellScholar.org. If you are interested in further information, Ms. Vargo can be contacted at US-Ireland Alliance, 701 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, 9th floor, Washington D.C. 20004. Telephone 202-434-7467; email address is vargo@us-irelandalliance.org.

Ms. Vargo is working with the National Distance Education Center at Dublin City University on a project involving the use of distance learning in Irish Studies programs. The National Center in co-operation with all the Irish Universities has developed a Humanities degree, which is awarded through Dublin City University; National University of Ireland, Maynooth; University of Dublin, Trinity College; University College Cork, National University of Ireland, Galway; and the University of Limerick. Ms. Vargo and Chris Curran (Director of the National Center) would like to meet informally with professors at the conference to explore ways in which the programme might be made available, in whole or in part, to students in the United States. If you would be interested in discussing this with Ms. Vargo and Professor Curran, please look for them at the conference.

Re: 1999 J. C. Beckett Prize

Sender: ronan.gallagher@four-courts-press.ie

This message is intended for those working in colleges and universities where there are students completing PhD and major MA research dissertations. By now, you should have seen from the new Four Courts Press catalogue (page 22 to be precise) that we have inaugurated an award for students working in the fields of medieval and modern Irish history. We are asking you to encourage students to submit an essay of 12,000-15,000 words based on their dissertation, and to do so before 31 May 1999. (The dissertation should have been awarded before 31 March 1999.) The winner will receive a beautiful medal plus £500 in cash and the possibility that the dissertation will be published. Subsequently, the Press also intends publishing an annual (or biannual) volume of essays called *Beckett Essays in Irish History*. The judges are: Raymond Gillespie, Thomas Bartlett, S.J. Connolly, Nancy Curtin and Roy Foster. They will also call upon an advisory panel of judges for essays that fall outside their extensive knowledge and wisdom. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. However, entries should be addressed to Martin Fanning at Four Courts Press, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8. Tel.: (Int+353-1) 453 4668. Fax.: (Int+353-1) 453 4672. E-mail: ronan.gallagher@four-courts-press.ie

Visit our web site: http://www.four-courts-press.ie

Re: Midwest and New England response

Sender: celtic42@saluki-mail.siu.edu

The following is the response of the Midwest and New England Regional Representatives of ACIS to the report of the Committee on Mission and Procedures (the so-called CAMP Report) which was published in the last edition of the ACIS Newsletter.

The establishing of the five-person Committee on Mission and Procedures was proposed by Conor Johnston on 18 April 1998 at the Fort Lauderdale business meeting of ACIS, following the irregular election of the last Vice-President of ACIS and the unauthorized change of direction taken within the organization as regards the acceptance of papers for national conferences. Johnston's hope, in successfully proposing the establishment of this committee, was that the committee would examine these two issues and would also make a fresh, objective examination of our 37-year-old organization, with a view to making some positive recommendations that would guide us into the new millennium.

Sadly, both the committee and its work turned out to be disastrous. The committee should have been elected openly by the ACIS executive committee, in accordance with Johnston's motion and ACIS bylaws 4D and 5C. Instead, ACIS President McDiarmid set up a secretive and Byzantine process which resulted in the election of a committee that is grossly unrepresentative of the ACIS membership. (Four of the committee are in literature; one is in history; all five are female.) Not only is this committee unrepresentative, but it is illegal, having been formed in a manner that violated both the Fort Lauderdale motion and the ACIS bylaws, specifically bylaws 4D and 5C.

Once formed, the committee proceeded to survey the ACIS membership by means of a questionnaire that was clearly designed to elicit responses suited to the committee's own preconceptions. It is a tribute to the intelligence of our membership that the vast majority ignored the survey. Fewer than 9% responded (8.71% to be exact), and it is a travesty that the so-called CAMP Committee would issue a report based on such pathetically sparse returns. For the committee to claim, as it did in its report, that these meager returns indicate a general level of satisfaction among the ACIS membership, is as insane as it would be to claim that the low turnout in U. S. Congressional elections indicates voter satisfaction with U.S. politicians.

A prime characteristic of any mature organization is tolerance of informed dissent among its members. This so-called CAMP Committee would, however, allow for no such dissent. Thus those of us—and there are many—who were concerned at the irregular nature of the last vice-presidential election and at the ACIS's turning its back on the concept of inclusiveness mandated in its charter, were characterized in the CAMP report as being "unprofessional, spiteful, childish, sexist, and homophobic," as having acted in an "unprofessional and destructive manner" towards ACIS, and as having engaged in "public defamation and personal harassment." Is this outrageous calumny the price one has to pay for asking that

ACIS elections be properly conducted and that our scholarly organization remain true to its charter? We would also point out that the unpleasant atmosphere at the Fort Lauderdale business meeting, which the CAMP report blames on us dissenters, was actually the result of the mishandling by the ACIS President of both the business meeting and the Executive Committee meeting which preceded it.

Further, we regard as ominous the authoritarian references in the so-called CAMP report, first to the "collective authority of the majority of the Executive Committee" (a concept which exists neither in the ACIS charter nor in the American political system), and second, to the notion that there should be a procedure for censuring those who challenge that so-called "collective authority."

The CAMP report is, in our view, a gratuitous, distorted, inflammatory, and destructive piece of nonsense, based on statistically nightmarish responses to a slanted questionnaire issued by an illegally constituted committee. As we stated in the last newsletter, the so-called "CAMP report" is not a report at all, but "an attack, an irrational, distorted, unrepresentative attack, against reasoned dissent within this organization."

At the upcoming ACIS business meeting at Roanoke—at which we demand the presence of a parliamentarian, in order to avoid a repetition of the mishandled Fort Lauderdale business meeting—it is our intention to call for the rejection, in toto of the so-called CAMP report.

We thank you for your attention to the concerns expressed here. Please make every effort to attend and contribute to the annual business meeting at Roanoke. Remember, it is the business meeting, and not the Executive Committee, that is the governing body and court of last resort of ACIS.

Respectfully submitted to the ACIS membership,
Charles Fanning, Midwest Regional Representative, ACIS
Conor Johnston, New England Regional Representative, ACIS



"Could you read the part where Stephen envisions life outside Dublin again?"

The New Yorker magazine has long used Irish subjects in their cartoons. This appeared in their December 28, 1998, issue.

Dublin University Gaelic Society.

A Plea for Irish Studies

(from the Irish Times, Wednesday November 18, 1908, page 7)

THE inaugural meeting of the session of this Society was held last evening in Regent House, Trinity College, Mr. E. J. Gwynn, M.A., F.T.C.D., presiding. There was a large and representative attendance of members and friends of the Society, including a number of ladies. At the opening of the proceedings about a dozen new members were elected.

Mr. Frederick W. Ryan, Barrister-at-Law (the Auditor), then read the opening address on "A Plea for Irish Studies." He thanked his fellow members for having elected him to the post of Auditor, and went on to say that the Society existed for the rank and file of Trinity students, and to them he addressed his remarks. In the words of their distinguished President before a recent Royal Commission, "Apart from its aesthetical qualities, Irish literature has other kinds of interest not yet sufficiently developed. It has great importance for anyone who may undertake to write the history of Ireland. That history has till now been written from without; the true history "must be written from within." Having quoted Keating's statement that Ireland was maligned by historians who strove to vilify and calumniate both the Anglo-Irish colonists and the native Gaels, the Auditor observed that while Keating wrote his history an even greater effort was being made, unknown to him, to give Irish history a deeper character. The Four Masters, headed by Michael O'Clery, were collecting the annals of Ireland. Those great workers preserved the pith and substance of Irish annals down to A.D. 1616. In the time of Charles I, Irish was studied with vigour, English works were translated and published in Irish, and it was ordained by the Board of that College in September, 1627, in deference, no doubt, to the Royal desire, "that the native students, i.e. the scholars, lose their weekly allowance if they be absent from their Irish prayers." And again, it was ordered by the authorities, "That an Irish chapter be read in the Testa-

ment by one of the natives at dinner in the halls." It might come as a surprise to many thus to find Irish, for a brief period at least, the official language of that College. But a chain of events hastened to bring about the loss of the Irish language, or rather arrest its intellectual development, for it was not yet dead, into the forms that literature was

the auditor had placed before them a plea for Irish studies, and asserted that Irish studies were worthy of attention. There had been a great deal of argument in recent centuries over the thesis that the auditor had placed before them. Most of them had argued out the question from the point of view of enthusiastic partisans or almost

equally enthusiastic opponents of the study of Irish. Quoting impartial judgments upon this question, he said that most learned and most liberal of Provosts of Trinity College, Bedel, immediately after his appointment, wrote, "My first endeavour shall be to understand the tongue of this country, which, I say, though it be accounted otherwise, is a learned language and full of difficulty." (Laughter.) The judgment of Lynch, written a generation later, was also quoted, "Such is the elegance of the Irish language that little so ever a person sips of it, he is drawn on to acquire a more profound knowledge." That statement had been, he thought, the experience of thousands in the present age. The Irish language was a language worth studying, because it was what they might call a thoroughbred language, because it contained and offered to them a thoroughbred literature, and because the knowledge spoken of by Lynch was the knowledge of a thoroughbred quality and state of society. Ireland was the one country in Europe containing a wide and copious early tradition and literature which stood outside of the pale of the Roman Empire, the one country in Europe whose institutions were not deeply affected and changed by Roman civilisation. The Irish maintained their ancient social and political systems from the earliest times of which they had any record down to that event mentioned by the auditor, the Battle of Kinsale. Those systems were set forth clearly and abundantly in the literature which had been preserved to them, and it was not too much to say that

Mr. W.B. Yeats
said that
he was astonished at the
change which had taken place
in Trinity College.
Ten years ago
he addressed a meeting
in favor of some movement
toward Irish Studies.
They had on that occasion
only about 20 people present,
and the discussion was one of a
very unreal character.

assuming in other countries. Settled conditions were wanting to allow its development from the forms of lyric and epic poetry and the mere chronicles and the religious records to which it had already attained. The advent of Cromwell, the turmoil of civil war, and the plantations broke up for ever the centres of Irish learning. But still, up to 1600, much real literature had been written in the native tongue. It was their duty, therefore, to take up across the intervening centuries, before it was too late, the threads of history and of Irish literature from the hands of the Four Masters and Geoffrey Keating.

Mr. John McNeill, in proposing "That Irish studies deserve deeper attention than has hitherto been accorded to them," said

one-tenth part of the knowledge of that ancient state of society that this literature afforded had not yet been made available for ordinary students. He urged upon the society the desirability of having a catalogue published of the Irish manuscripts in the Trinity College Library. He hoped that wealthy University would rise to a full sense of its duty, both to the Irish treasure it had in its own hands, and the even greater treasure of the Irish language which still existed, and which he hoped would soon again flourish in this country. (*Applause.*)

Mr. W. B. Yeats, in seconding the vote of thanks, said that in coming to that meeting he was astonished at the change which had taken place in Trinity College during the past ten years. Ten years ago he addressed a meeting in that hall in favour of some movement towards Irish studies. They had on that occasion only about 20 people present, and the discussion was one of a very unreal character. But a great change had taken place in the nation itself. Up to our own day the national movement of Ireland was based on a grievance — the question of the land. Now that that question is being settled the ground of the national movement is changing to a more intellectual basis. A national life is growing up in Ireland similar to that of Norway, which, he understood, had been from the first intellectual and historical. It was not true to say that a national movement could not be based upon intellectual and historical foundations. It was the necessity for intellect in the public life of Ireland which was now stirring the minds of the young in Ireland, and which was bringing Irish thought to be occupied with the Irish language itself. The first speech which he ever made was one attacking Professor Mahaffy. (*Laughter and applause.*) That was a great many years ago. He did not know whether Professor Mahaffy was friendly or opposed to the Irish language revival movement. But he could say that, as he grew older and could realise the needs of Ireland more and more thoroughly, he had begun to value hostile intellect better than friendly folly. In the Irish movement they needed, above all, the intellect of the young. Intellect alone could save them from the follies of popular movements, through which those movements so often defeated themselves. When they would have succeeded in restoring the intellectual life of the nation they

would be on the way to enrich the world, having first enriched their own country. But before that could be achieved, and before those institutions could be got in this country which give so much power to the national spirit, they had to bring back intellect to the national movement itself.

The vote of thanks, on being put to the meeting, was carried by acclamation.

Dr. Sigerson moved—

That the Dublin University Gaelic Society deserves the support of all Trinity students. He said they had not only a great tradition, but they were heirs of one of the noblest civilisations, because it was instinct with chivalry from its origin, and that chivalry had led it never to abandon the persecuted cause, but always to stand for the right against overwhelming prejudice and overwhelming force. These were the lessons taught in the works of their predecessors and their ancestors, works of which the Brehon Laws gave the standard, but not the entire spirit. But that spirit the world of Europe attested, because there was no nation where scholars had the predominant voice which did not recognise that their culture after the downfall of the Roman tyranny was due to the leaders of thought, of education, and of science, such as it was, who proceeded from Ireland. When fighting was the only synonym for chivalry in other countries, this country had a higher and a more ideal conception of chivalry, because their knights were armed, not merely for the fight in the field, but for the fight in the school, in the study, and in the Church. Their knights went forth with minds and souls, and by their learning, their highly educated intellects, and by their ambition and zeal, had evangelised from ignorance, as well as Paganism, the central and controlling parts of Europe. These things were admitted. They were then the apostles of chivalric love, if so they must regard it. They had free minds. That was a most noble characteristic of those ancient people. In other countries men had recourse to force to subdue their opponents, but the Irish scholar was not so dastardly, because he delighted in having an intellectual fight, and knew that he could come out victor, or, if he did not, he submitted to be beaten where intellect was the arm used against him. That was intellectual chivalry; that was the prevailing characteristic when Ireland could display her characteristics

fully. It was different in other countries. It had been different when Rome spread like a fierce lava over the conquered countries and burned out their language, their poetry and their music, of which nothing remained but some wretched remnant of the overflow. Ireland escaped that, as Norway escaped it. Ireland did not seek when she had power, and great power, to destroy the language of other nations. The monopoly of a single language was, he regarded, a tyranny of the intellect because it imposed upon it commonplaces of second thoughts, causing the mind to flow in channels already made and used, and never overflowed to fertilise untrodden ground. Had the Ireland of to-day no duty to Ireland of ancient years? Did they recognise no obligation to those men of old, the great minds, the generous and free, the knightly intellect of the past, who made Ireland in their day the university of Europe? Men came here then for knowledge. Now from here they sent men abroad. Had they none of the sap that moved the hearts of their forefathers, had their minds degenerated to such an extent that they could not revive the glories of ancient days? That certainly was not his opinion. All that was wanting was the will and that would not long be wanting. (*Applause.*)

Rev. Dr. Mahaffy, S.F.T.C.D., in seconding the resolution, said Mr. Yeats had turned to him and said he did not know whether he came there as an opponent or as a friend. He declared he did not know himself. (*Laughter.*) He had heard a great many things with which he thoroughly agreed, and he had heard a great many things, especially from Mr. McNeill, which so far as he (Dr. Mahaffy) understood history, were not at all true; but that was only his opinion, and it was nothing like so good as Mr. McNeill's opinion. (*Laughter.*) Nevertheless the great good of having the Society in the College was that they got free discussion, and he was very much obliged to Mr. Yeats for having put that point that they would not carry out any great movement without criticism, and that they must profit by that criticism. When he first ventured to criticise that movement some years ago he was met with a perfect howl of execration. Even now he could tell them of many men who professed to support the Gaelic movement in its entirety but who had assured him in private that they

had a great deal of sympathy with the objections he once made. For some reason — he could not say why — men who were very high up in the world, and who could receive nothing more, and who were also sure of a high place in the next, seemed to be so afraid of losing popularity that they would not venture to express their own opinions in public. That, he believed, was one of the great dangers in Irish society — the fear of many men to speak out their minds lest they should be booed at in the papers. (*Laughter.*) He did not suffer from that dread. Nobody was likely to take from him anything that he had, and he did not think anyone was going to give him anything that he had not — (*laughter*) — so he considered he was perfectly safe. Well, now, looking back to the time when this movement began, he confessed he was wrong, he was at fault, he did not judge the strength of it nor the permanence of it. He thought it was so difficult to resuscitate a language which was nearly gone, that the youth of Ireland were too busy trying to earn their bread, and that so little had been shown of great literature in the old writings of Ireland, that he must say he never expected to see the movement so great and so strong as it was to-day. He believed that was a good deal due to Mr. John McNeill. (*Applause.*) The arguments used in its favour were not always consistent. As a Commissioner of National Education he had been constantly assailed with two distinct arguments. The first was that there was such an enthusiasm for Irish that nothing could stop it. If that were true, the Commissioners said it would not be necessary to give prizes for its study, and then there was a perfect howl, and they were told that unless they encouraged it with endowments it was sure to die out. He did not believe one word of that. The present system of Intermediate education had been so disturbed by the attempt of many of its promoters to give it an importance far above what it really was entitled to that he was not sure that it would not, in the course of a few years, upset the whole system of education in Ireland. He was sure there were some present who would be ready to say that that would not be the least harm. It was not for him to say whether or not he agreed with that sentiment. But, to come back to the resolution. The adoption of it meant simply the carrying out of a policy

which had made its appearance in Trinity College over and over again, and which had accomplished great work for the Irish language in that College — a work which, he thought, had been altogether too much ignored by Mr. McNeill and others in this country. They had just heard from Dr. Sigerson of the assistance which Trinity College had given to O'Donovan and other students of Irish who had done great work in regard to the literature of the Irish language through that assistance; and he would say that if the Society, as he hoped it would, continued to thrive there it would be only carrying out an old policy which had always existed there. There was one matter to which students of the Irish language — if that language were ultimately to be turned to practical account — should direct their attention, and that was the matter of the various dialects in Irish, with a view to fixing what was to be the classical form of that language. He knew of a book which good Irish scholars had told him was the right book to be known as an example of classical Irish. It was a translation of the New Testament into Irish by Bishop O'Donnell about the year 1602-3. He would like Mr. McNeill to know that, at the present time, the Press of Trinity College was bringing out an edition of that work at a very cheap rate — the Gospel of St. Matthew had been already completed — and he did not know of any book which it would be better to give to children in Ireland from which to learn the Irish language than that matchless work translated by a great Irishman at a time when Irish was

very extensively a spoken language in Ireland. He would, also, like to see a more careful study made of the various Irish dialects — he knew that there must be five or six of them, each differing very much from the other. People coming to Ireland to learn Irish rushed away to the Aran Isles for that purpose. He himself remembered hearing Irish spoken in Dundalk and Omeath, though he was afraid it was now nearly extinct in those places. That dialect, he thought, must have been different from the dialect in the West of Ireland. The country south of the Suir was full of Irish-speaking people, whose dialect differed very much from that of the people in Galway, and he himself had on one occasion whilst sitting on the quay at Spiddal seen a number of people come across the Bay from the Clare Coast, and the people of Spiddal had much difficulty in understanding the dialect spoken by their visitors, who were separated from them by only a comparatively short distance. He also thought the Society should make it its business to study Irish place names, and see how many could be accounted for by Irish derivation. They might then begin to get an inkling of that ancient nation or nations that occupied this country before the Celts came into it. In conclusion, he wished the Society the most hearty success. (*Applause.*)

The resolution was adopted, and the President having added his congratulations to the Auditor, the meeting concluded.

(*Transcription of the preceding article courtesy of Lucy McDiarmid.*)

Rounding Out the Lists

The end of the 20th century has been littered with lists. First there was the 100 best novels, chosen by Modern Library. (Our Jimmy Joyce took that first prize.) Now there are the lists from the Freedom Forum Newseum and from the New York University journalism department, both of which ranked the 100 best journalism stories. The latter has Jon Hersey's "Hiroshima," published in the *New Yorker* in 1946, as their number one story of the 20th century. Rounding out the top ten are Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, Woodward and Bernstein's

investigation of Watergate, Edward R. Morrow's Battle of Britain on CBS Radio, Ida Tarbell's "History of the Standard Oil Company," Lincoln Steffens "The Shame of the Cities," John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*, H.L. Mencken's coverage of the Scopes trial, Ernie Pyle's reports during World War II, and Ed Murrow and Fred Friendly's investigation of Senator Joe McCarthy.

Near the bottom, but still on the list nevertheless, at number 95, is Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes*. A remarkable tribute to a new book. ●

See You in Roanoke for the Annual Conference!



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