

CSANA Newsletter, 10.1
Bealtaine, 1991



celtic
studies

association
newsletter

THE CELTIC STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

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Catherine McKenna, Vice-President
Edgar Slotkin, Secretary-Treasurer

Members-at-Large:
Dorothy Africa
John Carey
Robin Chapman Stacey

Incorporated as a non-profit organization, the Celtic Studies Association has a membership drawn from the United States, Canada, Ireland, Wales, England, Europe, and Japan. CSANA produces a bi-annual newsletter and bibliographies of Celtic Studies. The bibliographies may be ordered through the Secretary-Treasurer (Professor Edgar Slotkin, English, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio 45221-0069).

Membership in CSANA is open to those with a serious interest in Celtic Studies. Dues are \$15 per year, or, for non-US residents, the equivalent of fifteen American dollars payable to "CSANA" in a check or international money order, to be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer. Members are entitled to receive the Newsletter and the bibliographies as they are issued; members may also, for \$1, order a list of current CSANA members from the Secretary-Treasurer.

The editor (Joseph Nagy) would like to thank all those who helped him with the Newsletter, especially the staff and students of the UCLA Folklore and Mythology Program.

All future correspondence relating to the Newsletter should be addressed to the new editor, Professor Catherine McKenna, English, Queen's College, CUNY, Flushing, NY 11367.

Professor Kenneth H. Jackson

Professor Kenneth Hurlstone Jackson; Born November 1, 1909; died Edinburgh, February 20, 1991. Fellow, St. John's College and Faculty Lecturer in Celtic, Cambridge University 1934-39; Professor of Celtic, Harvard University, 1939-49; Associate Professor of Celtic Languages, Literatures, History and Antiquities, Edinburgh University 1950-79; FBA 1957; CBE 1985.

Kenneth Jackson's academic career will be familiar to the readers of this Newsletter. Trained in classics at St. John's College, Cambridge, he received first class honors with distinction in both parts of the tripos (1930, 1931) and won in addition the Sir William Browne medals for Greek and Latin verse. Instead of pursuing what would undoubtedly have been a brilliant career in classics, Professor Jackson turned to the study of Celtic, Anglo-Saxon and Norse (under the Chadwicks), again winning first class honors with distinction, this time in the archaeology and anthropology tripos (1932). From Cambridge he went to Dublin and Bangor, where he studied with Osborn Bergin and Ifor Williams respectively, returning to Cambridge as a Fellow of St. John's in 1939. The rest, as we know, is history. His scholarly achievements and his influence in Celtic Studies reflect the rigorous standards he set for himself and expected of others. Intellectually and academically, he was exacting, but I have not yet met one of his former students who wished that he had been otherwise or regretted the paces this frail taskmaster set. Indeed, once he took a student on--and his reluctance to do so is the source of many a wry tale--his manner became collegial, his guidance and energy bountiful, and his influence powerful and lasting.

He was a gentleman. A serious, dedicated student of nature, a hill-walker with vast knowledge of British flora and fauna. An enthusiast of America and especially New England. A reader of mystery stories (Rex Stout was one of his lifetime favorites). And to many of us, a much beloved teacher and friend.

A.T.E. Matonis
Temple University

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At the CSANA business meeting, Vice-President Nagy ascended giddily to the presidency of the organization, while Catherine McKenna of Queens College, CUNY, was chosen as the new Vice-President (and thereby as the new editor of this Newsletter). Kenneth Nilsen's term as an At-Large Member of the CSANA hierarchy came to an end, and Robin Chapman Stacey (University of Washington) was elected to take his place.

Profuse thanks were (and continue to be) tendered to the outgoing CSANA President A.T.E. Matonis, Professor Nilsen, and 1990-91 Acting CSANA Secretary-Treasurer Kathryn Lorenz for all their contributions to the Association.

FIFTH IRISH CONFERENCE OF MEDIEVALISTS

The Conference, under the auspices of the Medieval Academy of Ireland, the National Museum of Ireland, and St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, will be held at the College on 27-29 June 1991. The fee (30 Irish pounds) covers all documentation, coffee, lunch and tea on each day, and any receptions. The conference dinner on the final evening will be 20 pounds. A special rate of 20 pounds will apply to students and will allow them to participate in all events except the conference dinner. Accommodation will be available in College at 10 pounds per night for bed and breakfast.

For more information, please contact Professor Donnchadh Ó Corráin, Irish History, University College, Cork, Ireland.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CELTIC FOLKLORE

This first conference, to be held at University of Wales College of Cardiff on 19-23 July 1992, will have sessions on: narrative folklore in Celtic countries; material culture; dialect; folksong, music and dance; folklore and the rise of consciousness. Papers can cover either historical or contemporary aspects of folk culture in Celtic countries, orality and literacy, and the history of folklore studies in Celtic countries. Proposals addressing or illustrating these topics, as well as proposals for short papers communicating participants' current research, are welcomed. Delegates are welcome to make their presentations in English or Welsh.

To submit proposal titles, or to ask for further information, please write to Dr. Sioned Davies, Conference Secretary, Dept. of Welsh, University of Wales, College of Cardiff, P.O. Box 910, Cardiff CF1 3XW (Phone: 44-222-874843; Fax: 44-222-371921).

CSANA '92 IN NOVA SCOTIA

In late Spring '92 CSANA will meet in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, under the auspices of the Celtic Studies Department of St. Francis Xavier University. The seminar will be held on Síscéalta Ó Thír Chonaill (Fairy Legends from Donegal), collected by Seán Ó hEochaidh, edited by Séamas Ó Catháin and translated into English by Máire Mac Neill (Dublin: Comhairle Bhéalóideas Éireann, 1977). A call for papers, and an announcement of the dates for the conference, will be published in the Samhain issue of the Newsletter. In the meantime, if you would like more information, please write to Professor Kenneth Nilsen, Celtic Studies, St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 1C0 (phone 902-867-3947; 863-3300).

AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE OF CELTIC STUDIES CALL FOR PAPERS

Our colleagues from Down Under write:

In 1992 the University of Sydney will be host to the first conference of Celtic Studies to be held in Australia (July 5-9). The University, the oldest in Australia, is a short distance from the city centre. St. Andrew's College, the accomodation venue, is made up of several fine buildings in Scottish Regency style--themselves a part of Australia's Celtic history. The college is a two-minute walk from the lively community of Newtown, embracing the greatest variety of low-cost restaurants (of every ethnicity) in Australia.

The conference will stretch over five days. As well as the plenary sessions by our guests, there will be exhibitions, tours and public lectures organised in conjunction with the conference. Among the guests of honor will be: Anders Ahlqvist, Wendy Davies, David Dumville, D. Ellis Evans, William Gillies, R. Geraint Gruffydd, and Conn Ó Cléirigh.

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Registration for the conference will cost approximately 90 Australian dollars (approximately 80 American). The fee will include tea and coffee and a book of abstracts. Accommodation at St. Andrew's College will be approximately \$60 per night.

Offers of papers are invited on any aspect of the Celtic languages and literatures, past and present; Celtic history and archaeology; and modern study and revival of the Celtic past (particularly where it relates to Australia).

Sessions already proposed are in the areas of Celtic Law, Celtic Art, Welsh Poetry, Early Christian Archaeology, Saints' Biographies, and Celtic Linguistics. Any offerings will be considered by the committee.

Registrations and offers of papers (with an abstract of no more than 100 words) should be sent by 31 January 1992 to the Australian Conference of Celtic Studies, A17, University of Sydney, Australia 2006 (FAX: 2-692-4203; telephone: 2-692-3790).

MEMORIAL VOLUME FOR BRENDAN O HEHIR

A volume of studies in medieval Celtic languages and literatures is to appear in late 1991 to honor the life and work of the late Professor Brendan O Hehir, a founding member of CSANA and the first chair of the UC Berkeley Celtic Studies Program (see below). The volume will focus on the issues of oral and literary tradition, poetics, language, and mythology that were central to Brendan's own work.

It will be edited by Kathryn Klar and Eve Sweetser, and we have commitments for papers from David Dumville, Vincent Dunn, Patrick Ford, Geraint Gruffydd, Eric Hamp, Gary Holland, Colin Ireland, Joan Keefe, Catherine McKenna, Proinsias Mac Cana, Daniel Melia, Joseph Nagy, Annalee Rejhon, Eve Sweetser, Robert Tracy, Maria Tymoczko, Thomas Walsh, Calvert Watkins, and J.G. Caerwyn Williams. The publisher is Pangur Publications, who also publish the Harvard Celtic Colloquium proceedings. A full table of contents is available on request.

To obtain a copy at prepublication price, and place your name on the initial tabula of contributors, send a check for \$30 (MADE OUT TO PANGUR PUBLICATIONS) to Eve Sweetser, Department of Linguistics, University of California, Berkeley CA 94720. Indicate the form of your name you wish to appear on the tabula.

WARNING: DO NOT mail to PANGUR PUBLICATIONS using the address given out at the CSANA meeting in March. The post office has altered the box number, and is forwarding irregularly. Send your check via Eve, who keeps the tabula records anyhow, and has Pangur's new address.

PLEA: Anyone willing to contribute more than \$30--we could really use the help. Make out a (tax-deductible) contribution to CSANA and mail it to Eve Sweetser. NOTE that all eventual profits from the volume will go to CSANA, as Brendan would want them to.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

CSANA Member Nancy Dorian, Professor of Linguistics at Bryn Mawr College and Assistant Editor of the IJSL, writes:

For the "Small Languages and Small Language Communities: News, Notes, and Comments" section of the International Journal of the Sociology of Language, I would be glad to hear from Celticists about any language support or promotion efforts, small scale or large, that you happen to know of, encounter or be involved with, in Irish, Scottish, Welsh, or Breton regions.

Examples might be such things as preschool playgroups; innovative bilingual/bicultural education programs; children's literature production efforts; drama groups; well organized social clubs in urban areas; sports leagues or competitions; films (documentary or otherwise); creation of oral history archives;

and so forth.

If you should be involved in any such effort yourself, I would be happy to have you write a guest column of 3-4 printed pages for an upcoming IJSL issue. If you are not involved yourself, but know of some such effort, I would be grateful if you sent me the name(s) and address(es) of people I should write to for information (P.O. Box 704, RR1, So. Harpswell, Maine 04079).

M. PHIL. IN IRISH STUDIES AT UCD

CSANA Member Angela Bourke, Director of the M.Phil. in Irish Studies at University College, Dublin, writes:

Some of your students may be interested in UCD's M.Phil. in Irish Studies. The Master of Philosophy is a full-time, two-year post-graduate degree. Students follow courses in two subjects, a major and a minor, from the list offered, and also attend a common interdisciplinary seminar which draws on all or most of the subjects offered. In addition, students are expected to acquire a working knowledge of the Irish language, and a language course is provided.

To qualify for admission, graduates must have attained a first or high second-class honours degree or equivalent. For North American students a grade point average of at least 3.5 on a four-point scale is required.

The major subject chosen should be one in which the student already has a good grounding--generally interpreted as honours at undergraduate degree level--but the minor subject may be a new area of study.

Individual reading and research are central to the M.Phil., and there is considerable scope for a student to follow his or her own interests. At the end of the second year each student presents a thesis of 20,000-30,000 words, and is also required to take examinations in both subjects chosen. There are no examinations in the first year.

University College, Dublin is ideally placed to offer courses in the various aspects of Irish Studies. Student numbers are small, and individual attention is assured. The large modern campus is about three miles to the south of Dublin city centre and offers excellent residential accommodation, sports, and other facilities.

Please contact me by letter (Irish Dept., University College, Belfield, Dublin 4), FAX (353-1-694409), or electronic mail (ABOURKE@IRLEARN.BITNET) if I can be of any further assistance.

SUBMISSIONS TO FOLKLORE

Folklore, the journal of the Folklore Society, is happy to consider academic articles on any aspect of British (especially Celtic) folk traditions. Manuscripts, typed with notes at the end of the article, are to be sent to Dr. Jacqueline Simpson, Editor of Folklore, c/o The Folklore Society, University College, Gower St. WC 1, London, U.K.

AMERICAN CONFERENCE FOR IRISH STUDIES

CSANA Member James Doan writes:

Among the papers presented at the 1991 ACIS meeting at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (April 10-13) were: "Armagh, Bangor and the Banshenchas Tradition" (Dorothy Africa); "Forbidden Love in Celtic Literature and Folk Tradition" (James Doan); "The 'Celtic Wild Man' and Woman" (Brian Frykenberg); and "Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill's Écriture Feminine" (Linda Revie).

James Doan has been elected the new Celtic Studies representative on the ACIS Executive Committee. Anyone interested in reviewing books dealing with Celtic Studies for the Irish Literary Supplement should write to Dr. Doan, Dept. of Liberal

Arts, Nova University, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33314.

The 1992 ACIS meeting will be held 4-11 July at University College, Galway. Any ACIS members interested in proposing individual papers or sessions should send one-page proposals by September 1 to: Professor Mary Helen Thuente, Dept. of English, Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, IN 46805. The theme of the conference is "An Island Between Two Worlds: Ireland, Europe, and the Americas." Interdisciplinary perspectives are particularly welcome.

OUTPOURINGS

Holy Wells and Sacred Water Sources in Britain and Ireland, an annotated bibliography by GSANA Member Arthur Gribben, has been accepted for publication by Garland Press. The volume also contains a lengthy introductory essay by Gribben concerning the tremendous range and continuity of cultural assumptions pertaining to water in the East and West, as well as a foreword by Barre Toelken.

REVIEW

Michael Richter, Medieval Ireland: The Enduring Tradition, translated from the German by Brian Stone and Adrian Keogh. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988. Pp. x + 214.

The most persistent question raised by this book is both extraneous and essential: for whom was it written? The original audience is identified right enough. The work evolved from a series of lectures on medieval Irish history and culture at the University of Vienna. In that process of evolution Richter seems, however, to have lost sight of his potential, much less ideal readership. Is the final product still to be seen as an introductory text? Much of the information, virtually all in the section on "Early Ireland (Before c. A.D. 500)," consists of materials with which the scholar will be familiar. Indeed the first three chapters, including the material on "Celtic" Ireland, are pretty much a synthesis of the available research, with the text full of phrases like "it is assumed" or "it is debated." But if the Celticist will find little to pause over in these chapters, the student or interested reader may well be every bit as dissatisfied for different reasons. Particularly troubling in this context is the book's rudimentary scholarly apparatus. One can hardly fault Richter for not settling all the central issues of Celtic scholarship on early Ireland in three dozen pages, but one can question the utter inadequacy of his suggestions for further research, his conscious decision to leave his bibliography "only a basic guide." For example, the list of supplementary readings for his chapter on the Celts comprises four books and one article, none more recent than 1977, while that for the section on "Ireland in Prehistoric Times (Before c. A.D. 500)" consists of eight books (two of them versions of the Táin, one Thurneysen's Heldensage, and one his Grammar) and five articles, the most recent from 1979. Nor are such deficiencies rectified in the later chapters that form the main focus of Richter's study. The original German edition of Medieval Ireland did appear in 1983, but the author states that "the bibliography has also been updated and revised." Five years should have provided enough time for its more considerable expansion to meet the needs of a new and larger English-language readership.

These associated problems of overly ambitious scope and uncertain audience plague the book throughout, even those sections on the early Middle Ages where Richter is clearly most at home. Much of what he says about this period is perceptive and provocative, but all too often he denies himself sufficient space to develop what as a result remain rather dogmatic pronouncements. For instance his suggestion that the Irish political map of 1500 is not all that qualitatively different from that of 500 leads to the bald statement that "if this description is

correct, then it seems . . . that English influence had been neutralised and that the strength of the Irish system had prevailed. This is quite a remarkable phenomenon." It is indeed, and cries out for exploration.

Such headlong dashes through intriguing issues are made more frustrating by the author's occasionally disproportionately detailed discussion of other, less suggestive topics. Thus a workmanlike few pages on Scandinavian Dublin is followed by a lightning quick dismissal of the "political scene" in the rest of the country "during the two centuries before the arrival of the English" (p. 113). Again the question of audience is determinant here. Students may well expect judicious summary statements of consensual opinion, and Richter can provide such with concision and clarity, as in: "Irish Society: Old and New Structures" (pp. 167-71) or his concluding "The Enduring Tradition" (pp. 189-93). But scholars and above all teachers will wish that he had distinguished these competent restatements from original or controversial work, such as his uneasy and ambivalent juxtaposition/synthesis of the native and Christian (see pp. 86, 139) or what could be seen, despite his concluding insight that "the history of Ireland in the Middle Ages shows that there was a viable alternative development to that of the rest of Europe," as an implicit assumption that the definitive test of the significance of Irish beliefs , practices, and institutions is in their Continental resonances (see p. 82).

There are also, unfortunately, some errors of fact in the book. For example, Cú Chulainn is not, of course, "handed over" to Conchobor for fosterage (p. 14); the Irish king was, according to the tecosca texts, required to be wise if not old (p. 87); and "Silken Thomas" Fitzgerald was executed in 1537 not 1534 (p. 175). Moreover Irish readers will be startled to learn that the 19th century Famine does not qualify as one of the the three (and why the triadic obsession?) climactic events that "marked a caesura in Irish history" (p. 68), though perhaps less so that "the arrival of the English in Ireland in the 1160s is held by most people to be another turning point in Irish history."

There is much that is sound and interesting in Medieval Ireland. But while scholars will be able to accept it as a useful survey of what they for the most part already knew (or should have), their students, who must ultimately be seen as the book's principal readers, will find it an unsatisfactory introduction to the period. Supported by class lectures, discussions, and above all adequate supplementary readings lists, diligent neophytes could doubtless benefit from Richter's work. Lacking such aids, they will find themselves, like the book itself, in that proverbially distressful locus idir dhá thine Bhealtaine.

Philip O'Leary
Boston College

In memoriam Brendan O Hehir

Brendan O Hehir, a founding member of CSANA, died on St. Patrick's Day at his Berkeley home. As many CSANA members know, this occurred during the annual CSANA meeting, which was hosted by the University of California Celtic Colloquium and the Celtic Studies Program on the Berkeley campus. Earlier the same day, his most recent paper on the *Gododdin* corpus had been presented by co-authors Klar and Sweetser as part of a session leading up to the CSANA text seminar on the *Gododdin*. The seminar itself, a lively discussion, focused in part on Brendan's analysis of the structure and accretion-history of the *Book of Aneirin* manuscript. The news of Brendan's death reached the assembled Celticists as an expected tragedy: he had continued to work and to maintain contact with the scholarly community, despite his battle with metastatic brain cancer during the last months of his life. He is survived by his wife, Laura Morland, and his son, Andrew O Hehir. His loss will be keenly felt by numerous students and colleagues in the U.S. and abroad. CSANA members will particularly miss the blend of erudition and humor with which he graced so many of our meetings. This conference, surely one of the intellectually richest and professionally most productive in CSANA's history, seemed a fitting tribute to his work and his life.



Born in Manhattan of emigré parents, Brendan O Hehir was sent to Dublin to live with his grandmother when he was four years old, and received all his education through the Irish language until the age of fourteen, when he returned to New York City. He attended Fordham University and then Loyola, eventually earning his doctorate from Johns Hopkins in 1959. He was hired by U.C. Berkeley the previous year to teach eighteenth-century English literature. Neither he nor anyone else had any expectation at that time that much of his genius and his heart would lie in the native languages and literatures of the Celtic realms.

Brendan's early years at Berkeley saw the publication of the definitive edition of *Coopers Hill*, together with a *Life* of its author, Sir John Denham, both now standard works. Then Brendan took the first step in the direction of his future career by producing *A Gaelic Lexicon for Finnegans Wake and Glossary for Joyce's Other Works* (1967), which trounced for all time the prevailing notion that James Joyce knew no Irish. It was around this time that Brendan taught himself Old Irish, and eventually persuaded the English Department to institute two courses that have since become part of the foundation of the Berkeley Celtic Studies Program: Old Irish Literature in Translation and Old and Modern Irish Language.

Brendan never allowed himself to be limited to one period or to one language: he saw too clearly the links between periods of a tradition, and between strands of a bilingual culture. The foundation of CSANA in 1978 came at the time when, except for the undergraduate survey courses he so enjoyed teaching, Brendan turned aside completely from literature written in England. Its existence encouraged him to develop his research interests in Old and Middle Irish Literature, and in 1980 Brendan began his study of medieval Welsh (with Kathryn Klar and Annalee Rejhon). That same year he and Kathryn joined with Eve Sweetser in an initial reanalysis of *Y Gododdin*, which work eventually culminated into a collaborative new edition of that corpus (now being completed by Kathryn and Eve).

In the last three years of his life Brendan finished three books: *A Polyglossary for Finnegans Wake*, which will be published by University of California Press, *The Poor Mouth* (a translation of Miles na gCopaleen's *An Béal Bocht*), which is being published by Mellen Research University Press, and, of perhaps greater interest to CSANA members: a translation of *Twenty-Four Old Irish Tales* replete with headnotes, footnotes, and a complete glossary of every proper name in every tale.

For years, Brendan taught both Modern and Old Irish at Berkeley on a largely voluntary basis, only occasionally permitted to include these courses in his official load. The formation of the University of California Celtic Colloquium in 1979, which holds a conference at UCLA and UCB in alternate years, helped give ambition to the Berkeley Celts. In 1989, with the leadership of Professor Dan Melia and of Brendan, the combined Celtic faculty at UCB gained official status as an interdisciplinary Celtic Studies Program. Fittingly, Brendan was its first Chair. Both as a continuing supporter of CSANA, and as the founding Chair of the Berkeley Celtic Studies Program, he constantly showed his willingness to give his time and energy to help make Celtic learning known and available to many.

Brendan's lifelong dedication to the teaching of Celtic languages and literatures has assuredly contributed to the lively growth of Celtic scholarship in North America over the last two decades. In difficult financial times, as Celtic Studies struggles to maintain the ground it has gained, we can profit by the example of his courage and selfless persistence, as well as by that of his scholarship and teaching. We can do no better than to join with Eric Hamp, who writes from Aberystwyth to say:

It's not simply that we will miss Brendan. He has been part of something that never happened here in North America before and that can't be thwarted now. We have Celtic Studies now, not as an isolated oddity (like Kuno Meyer once in Urbana) nor as a private hobby (like Roland Smith or Howard Meroney) nor as an exoticism (like Tom Peete Cross) nor as an ethnic display (like some of the evening classes) nor as a tolerated side-line (as with Fritz Robinson at Harvard), but as a proper real field for its own worth. That was part of Brendan's soft insistent integrity.

-- Kathryn Klar & Eve Sweetser