The Cambridge Companion to Irish Poets offers a fascinating introduction to Irish poetry from the seventeenth century to the present. Aimed primarily at lovers of poetry, it examines a wide range of poets, including household names, such as Jonathan Swift, Thomas Moore, W. B. Yeats, Samuel Beckett, Seamus Heaney, Patrick Kavanagh, Eavan Boland, and Paul Muldoon. The book is comprised of thirty chapters written by critics, leading scholars and poets, who bring an authoritative and accessible understanding to their subjects. Each chapter gives an overview of a poet’s work and guides the general reader through the wider cultural, historical and comparative contexts. Exploring the dual traditions of English and Irish-speaking poets, this Companion represents the very best of Irish poetry for a general audience and highlights understanding that reveals, in clear and accessible prose, the achievement of Irish poetry in a global context. It is a book that will help and guide general readers through the many achievements of Irish poets.

GERALD DAWE is Professor of English and Fellow of Trinity College Dublin. A distinguished poet, he has published eight collections of poetry with The Gallery Press, including, most recently, Selected Poems (2012) and Mickey Finn’s Air (2014). He has also published several volumes of literary essays, and has edited various anthologies, including Earth Voices Whispering: Irish War poetry, 1914–1945 (2008).

A complete list of books in the series is at the back of this book.
THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO IRISH POETS

EDITED BY
GERALD DAWE
Trinity College, Dublin
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www.cambridge.org
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Nicholas Allen is director of the Wilson Center for Humanities and Arts and Franklin Professor of English at the University of Georgia. His books include Modernism, Ireland and Civil War (2009), George Russell and the New Ireland (2003), The Cities of Belfast (2003) with Aaron Kelly and Coastal Works: Cultures of the Atlantic Edge (2015), edited with Nick Groom and Jos Smith.

Fran Brearton is Professor of Modern Poetry at Queen’s University Belfast and assistant director of the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry. She is author of The Great War in Irish Poetry (2000) and Reading Michael Longley (2006), and co-editor of Incorrigibly Plural: Louis MacNeice and His Legacy (2012), Modern Irish and Scottish Poetry (2011) and The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Poetry (2012). She edited the 1929 original edition of Robert Graves’s Good-bye to All That for Penguin Classics (2014).


Matthew Campbell is Professor of Modern Literature at University of York. His publications include Irish Poetry under the Union, 1801–1924 (2013), and he is editor of the Cambridge Companion to Contemporary Irish Poetry (2003).

Lucy Collins is Lecturer in English Literature at University College Dublin, Ireland. She was educated at Trinity College Dublin and at Harvard University, where she spent a year as a Fulbright Scholar. She edited a special issue of the Irish University Review in 2012 on Irish poetry 1930–1970. Other recent publications include Poetry by Women in Ireland: A Critical Anthology 1870–1970 (2012), Contemporary Irish Women Poets: Memory and Estrangement (2015) and a co-


**John Dillon** is a Notebaert Graduate Fellow in the English Department at the University of Notre Dame. His research and teaching interests include European Modernisms, Irish Studies and the Digital Humanities. Recently, he has published a translation of Seán Ó Riordáin’s aesthetic essay, ‘What Is Poetry?’ in *Selected Poems* (2014), and ‘Mary Battle and W. B. Yeats – from Folklore to Gesamtlebenswerk’ (*Folklore & Modern Irish Writing*, 2014). He is the co-founder and director of *Breac: A Digital Journal of Irish Studies* (http://breac.nd.edu).


**Alan Gillis** teaches at The University of Edinburgh and is editor of *Edinburgh Review*. He recently published his fourth book of poems, *Scapegoat* (2014), and was chosen as one of the Poetry Book Society’s Next Generation Poets 2014. As a critic, he has written *Irish Poetry of the 1930s* (2005), and recently co-edited *The Edinburgh Introduction to Studying English Literature* (2014) and *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Poetry* (2013).

**Nicholas Grene** is Professor of English Literature at Trinity College Dublin, a Senior Fellow of the College and a Member of the Royal Irish Academy. He has published widely on Shakespeare and on Irish literature. His most recent publications include *Yeats’s Poetic Codes* (2008), the New Mermaids edition of *Major Barbara* (2008) and *Synge and Edwardian Ireland* (2011), co-edited with Brian Cliff. His book *Home on the Stage: Domestic Spaces in Modern Drama* was published in 2014.


Florence Impens is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the John Rylands Research Institute, University of Manchester. She has essays forthcoming in After Ireland: Essays on Contemporary Irish Poetry (2017), The Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature (2017), Sigmund Freud, The Uncanny (2003) and Irish University Review. She is currently working on a project on poetry in translation in the United Kingdom and Ireland after 1962.

Maria Johnston received her Doctorate in English Literature in 2007 and has since worked as a lecturer at Trinity College Dublin, the Mater Dei Institute (DCU) and Oxford University. Her reviews and essays have appeared in a range of publications, including The Guardian, Poetry Ireland Review, Edinburgh Review, Poetry Review and Oxford Tower Poetry Matters, and she has contributed essays to The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Poetry and The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary British and Irish Poetry. She is the co-editor of Reading Pearse Hutchinson (2011) and is currently working on a book on contemporary Irish poetry.

Benjamin Keatinge is Dean of the Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communications and Head of English at the South East European University, Macedonia. He has published (as co-editor) Other Edens: The Life and Work of Brian Coffey (2010) and France and Ireland in the Public Imagination (2014), and is currently editing a collection of critical essays on Richard Murphy.

Seán Lysaght taught in the English Department at NUI Maynooth from 1990 to 1994, where he completed his PhD on the life and writings of the naturalist Robert Lloyd Praeger. He now lectures in Irish studies at the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, Castlebar. He has published seven collections of poems and translations, and a verse narrative of the life of Edmund Spenser. His Selected Poems was published in 2010.


John McAuliffe is Reader in Creative Writing and Modern Literature and director of the Centre for New Writing at the University of Manchester, and editor of the...
online journal *Manchester Review*. He has published three volumes of poetry – *A Better Life* (2002), which was shortlisted for a Forward prize, *Next Door* (2007) and *Of All Places* (2011), which was a Poetry Book Society Recommendation. He writes a monthly poetry column for the *Irish Times*, as well as contributing poems, reviews and essays to a wide range of other books and journals in Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

**Peter McDonald** is Professor of British and Irish Poetry at the University of Oxford, and Christopher Tower Student and Tutor in Poetry in the English Language department at Christ Church, Oxford. He was born in Belfast. He has published several volumes of poetry, including *Collected Poems* (2012), and is the author of a number of critical books, including *Serious Poetry: Form and Authority from Yeats to Hill* (2002) and *Sound Intentions: The Workings of Rhyme in Nineteenth-Century Poetry* (2012). He has edited Louis MacNeice’s *Collected Poems* (2007), and is currently editing a three-volume edition of *The Complete Poems of W. B. Yeats*.

**Chris Morash** is the Seamus Heaney Professor of Irish Writing at Trinity College, Dublin. He has published on a range of topics in the field of Irish writing, including Irish Famine literature (*Writing the Irish Famine*, s/s1995), Irish theatre (his *History of the Irish Theatre* [2002] won the Theatre Book Prize) and the first comprehensive history of the Irish media, from the earliest printed word to the present (*A History of the Media in Ireland*, 2009). *Mapping Irish Theatre* (with Shaun Richards) was published in 2013, and he co-edited, with Nicholas Grene, the *Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Theatre*. He is also currently writing a book on Yeats and theatre. He was elected to Membership of the Royal Irish Academy in 2007, and has chaired the Compliance Committee of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland since 2009.

**Louis de Paor** is Director of the Centre for Irish Studies at the National University of Ireland, Galway, and author of numerous articles on modern and contemporary poetry and fiction in Irish. His most recent publications include a critical edition of the selected stories of Máirtín Ó Cadhain and an edited volume of essays on the poetry of Máire Mhac an tSaoi. He has also published a monograph on narrative technique in the short fiction of Máirtín Ó Cadhain and edited critical editions of the work of Liam S Goğan and Máire Mhac an tSaoi. He was a contributor to the *Cambridge History of Irish Literature* and the *Cambridge Companion to Irish Modernisms*. He is currently researching the diaries of Seán Ó Riordáin and the Irish language element in the early work of Flann Ó’Brien.

**Richard Pine** worked in the Irish national broadcasting service for twenty-five years before taking early retirement, moving to Greece, and establishing the Durrell School of Corfu (2002–2014). He is now the Curator of the Durrell Library of Corfu, and an advisor to the British-Greek Research Centre of the Ionian University in Corfu. He is the author/editor of twenty books, including *The Diviner: The Art of Brian Friel* (2nd edn., 1999) and *Lawrence Durrell: The Mindscape* (1994), and


**Jeffery Vail** is a senior lecturer of Humanities at the College of General Studies, Boston University. He has written widely on Romantic-era literature, especially that of Lord Byron and the Irish Romantic poet and songwriter Thomas Moore. He is the author of *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron and Thomas Moore* (2001) and the editor of *The Unpublished Letters of Thomas Moore* (2013). He has lectured on British and Irish Romanticism in the United States and abroad, including Dublin, Galway, Belfast, Paris, Salzburg and the United Kingdom. He is currently preparing an edition of Moore’s unpublished prose satire, *Sketches of Pious Women*. 

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Notes on Contributors

Tom Walker is the Ussher Assistant Professor in Irish Writing at Trinity College Dublin. Born in Sydney and brought up in London, he completed his BA and DPhil at the University of Oxford, as well as an MPhil in Anglo-Irish Literature at Trinity College Dublin. He has published articles on several aspects of twentieth-century Irish literature, including the work of Louis MacNeice, Austin Clarke, Flann O’Brien, Denis Johnston, Derek Mahon, John McGahern and Patrick McCabe. His study on Louis MacNeice and the Irish Poetry of His Time was published in 2015. He is currently undertaking research into the relationship between the work of W. B. Yeats and the visual arts.

James Ward lectures in Eighteenth-Century Literature at the University of Ulster. He has published essays and articles on Swift and eighteenth-century literature, as well as on representations of the eighteenth century in modern film and fiction. He has written for the London Review of Books and the Dublin Review of Books, and served as academic director of the Trim Swift Festival.

David Wheatley is a senior lecturer at the University of Aberdeen. His Contemporary British Poetry was published in 2014. He has published four collections of poetry, and has edited the poetry of James Clarence Mangan (2003) and Samuel Beckett’s Selected Poems 1930–1989 (2009).

Guy Woodward was awarded a doctorate by Trinity College Dublin in 2012, and from 2012 to 2013 he held a Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship, awarded by the Irish Research Council. He has lectured at Trinity, the Institute of Public Administration, Dublin and at the Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico. He is the co-editor of the collection of essays Irish Culture and Wartime Europe, 1938–48 (2015) and contributed the essay “‘We Must Know More Than Ireland’: John Hewitt and Eastern Europe’ to Ireland, West to East: Irish Literary and Cultural Connections with Central and Eastern Europe (2014). His book Culture, Northern Ireland, and the Second World War was published in 2015.
### CHRONOLOGY

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<td>1537 Acts for the suppression of Irish monasteries</td>
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<td>1541 Henry VIII declared 'king of Ireland' by statute of Irish parliament</td>
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<td>1549 Order for use of English Book of Common Prayer in Ireland</td>
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<td>1550–7 Plantations in Laois (Leix) and Offaly (established respectively as Queen’s County and King’s County in 1556)</td>
<td>The English Book of Common Prayer used in Ireland</td>
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<td>1555 Papal Bull of Pope Paul IV declares Ireland a Kingdom</td>
<td>1571 First printing in the Irish language, in Dublin</td>
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<td>1561–7 Rebellion of Shane O’Neill; English campaigns led by Sussex and Sir Henry Sidney</td>
<td>1577 The Great Comet recorded in Annals of the Four Masters</td>
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<td>1588 Ships of Spanish Armada wrecked off Irish coast</td>
<td>1580 Edmund Spenser in Ireland with Lord Leonard Grey, Lord Deputy of Ireland</td>
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<td>1592–1603 Rebellion of Hugh O’Neill, earl of Tyrone</td>
<td>1592 Charter incorporates Trinity College, Dublin</td>
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<td>1595 Spanish army lands at Kinsale, Tyrone and ‘Red Hugh’ O’Donnell defeated at Kinsale; O’Donnell leaves Ireland for Spain</td>
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<td>1603 Surrender of Tyrone at Mellifont</td>
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1607 Flight of the Earls (including Tyrone and Tyrconnell) from Lough Swilly

1608–10 Preparations for plantations in Ulster counties

1613 Opening of parliament in Dublin

1621 Patents granted for plantations in Leitrim, King’s County (Offaly), Queen’s County (Laois) and Westmeath

1641 Outbreak of rebellion in Ulster

1642–9 ‘Confederation of Kilkenny’: government of Catholic Confederates

1649 Oliver Cromwell arrives in Dublin as civil and military governor of Ireland. Massacres at Drogheda and Wexford. Death of Eoghan Ruadh O’Neill (Owen Roe O’Neill)

1650 Cromwell returns to England

1652–3 Act for the settlement of Ireland; Cromwellian land confiscations

1663 First of series of acts restricting Irish trade and exports

1670 Possible birthdate of Aogán Ó Raitheille

1689 James II arrives in Ireland. Siege of Derry begins; ends in July

1690 Forces of James II defeated by those of William III at River Boyne

1691 Battle of Aughrim: Williamite victory. Treaty of Limerick, allowing evacuation of Irish army to France and promising toleration to Irish Catholics

1691–1703 Williamite land confiscations

1695 Beginning of ‘Penal Laws’: Acts restricting rights of Catholics to education,
to bear arms or to possess a horse worth
more than five pounds

1704 Further ‘Penal Law’ introduced,
including ‘tests’ on Catholics and Protestant
dissenters for holding of public office;
amended and strengthened August 1708

1718 Beginning of large-scale migration of
Ulster Scots to American colonies

1720 Declaratory Act defines right of English
parliament to legislate for Ireland

1740–41 ‘Bliadhain an Áir’ (‘The Year of the
Slaughter’): large-scale famine, with
mortality estimated at over 200,000 from
a population of approximately 2 million

1760 Catholic Committee established in
Dublin to advance Catholic interests

1770 Oliver Goldsmith, The Deserted Village

1783 British Renunciation Act acknowledges
exclusive right of Irish parliament to
legislate for Ireland (inaugurates ‘Grattan’s
parliament’, to 1800)

1790 Edmund Burke, Reflections on the
French Revolution

1795 Foundation of Orange Order

1829, Royal Dublin Society)
1796 French fleet, with Wolfe Tone, at Bantry Bay

1795 Act passed for establishment of Catholic Seminary at Maynooth

1798 United Irishmen rising: rebellion begins in Leinster (May); outbreaks in Ulster in June; French force lands in Killala (August); French force surrenders (September). Death of Wolfe Tone

1800 Act of Union dissolves Irish parliament and declares legislative union

1801 Act of Union takes effect

1803 Robert Emmet’s rebellion in Dublin; Emmet executed in September

1816 Failure of potato crop leads to first major famine since 1742; widespread typhus epidemic continues until late 1819

1801 Copyright Act renders illegal the publication of pirate Irish editions of British publications


1821 Failure of potato crop; fever follows in west of Ireland in summer 1822

1823 Foundation of Catholic Association by Daniel O’Connell

1825–41 Ordnance Survey of Ireland carried out

1828 Daniel O’Connell elected MP for Clare

1829 Catholic Emancipation Act enables Catholics to enter parliament and to hold civil and military offices

1831 State system of National Education introduced

1834 James Clarence Mangan contributes poetry to Dublin University Magazine

1837 Accession of Queen Victoria

1838 English system of Poor Law is extended to Ireland

1838 Father Mathew founds Abstinence movement

1840 Repeal Association founded

1842 First number of The Nation
CHRONOLOGY

1841 Census of Ireland: population of island
8,175,124

1845 Arrival of potato blight in Ireland first noted

1845–51 An Gorta Mórr (‘The Great Irish Famine’): mortality estimated at in excess of 1 million

1846 Repeal of the Corn Laws

1846 Recurrence of potato blight, leading to large mortality in winter of 1846–7

1847 Death of Daniel O’Connell

1848 Abortive rising by William Smith O’Brien at Ballingarry, Co. Tipperary: beginning of short-lived Young Ireland Rebellion

1848 Queen’s University founded, with colleges in Belfast, Cork and Galway

1851 Census of Ireland: population of island
6,552,385

1848 John Mitchel establishes United Irishman newspaper

1854 Catholic University of Ireland founded, with John Henry Newman as rector

1856 Births of George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde

1858 James Stephens founds Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) in Dublin

1859 Irish Times Newspaper founded

1859 Irish Church Act disestablishes Church of Ireland

1861 Census of Ireland: population 5,798,967

1865 Birth of W. B. Yeats

1866 Fenian rebellion: disturbances in England and Ireland in February; execution of Fenian ‘Manchester Martyrs’ in November

1869 Irish Church Act disestablishes Church of Ireland


1876 Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language Founded
CHRONOLOGY

1877 Charles Stewart Parnell elected president of Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain

1877 National Library of Ireland established

1879 Foundation of National Land League of Mayo by Michael Davitt

1880 Parnell elected chairman of Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP)

1880 ‘Boycotting’ coined during the land war after Captain Boycott

1882 ‘Phoenix Park murders’ of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Thomas Burke

1884 Foundation of Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) Announcement of ‘Plan of Campaign’ to withhold rents on certain estates

1886 Gladstone’s Home Rule Bill defeated

1888 Foundation of Gaelic League (Conradh na Gaeilge) Douglas Hyde, Love Songs of Connacht

1890 Split in IPP, with majority opposing Parnell

1890 National Museum of Ireland opened

1891 Death of Parnell

1891 Foundation of Cumann na nGaedheal led by Arthur Griffith

1892 Labour Party established in Belfast

1892 National Literary Society established; Douglas Hyde’s address, ‘On the Necessity for De-Anglicising the Irish People’

1893 Second Home Rule Bill passed by House of Commons but defeated in House of Lords

1893 Foundation of Gaelic League (Conradh na Gaeilge) Douglas Hyde, Love Songs of Connacht

1894 Opening of Abbey Theatre Ulster Literary Theatre founded

1895 First production by Irish Literary Theatre

1896 W. B. Yeats’s play Cathleen Ni Houlihan performed Cuala Press established (–1946)

1898 Irish Local Government Act

1898 Queen Victoria visited Ireland

1899 Census of Ireland: population 4,458,775

1900 Foundation of Cumann na nGaedheal led by Arthur Griffith

1902 Foundation of Cumann na nGaedheal and Dungannon clubs become Sinn Féin League

1904 Opening of Abbey Theatre Ulster Literary Theatre founded
CHRONOLOGY

1908 Foundation of Irish Transport Workers’ Union (later ITGWU)

1911 Census of Ireland: population 4,381,951

1910 J. M. Synge, The Playboy of the Western World performed at the Abbey Theatre. The Irish International Exhibition opened in Dublin. Marconi Trans-Atlantic Telegraphy starts between Clifden in County Galway and Cape Breton Canada

1908 Irish Women’s Franchise League formed

1912 Third Home Rule Bill passed by House of Commons; twice defeated in House of Lords (January and July 1913). Solemn League and Covenant signed in Ulster

1912 The Titanic sinks on its maiden voyage

1913 Foundation of Ulster Volunteer Force. Beginning of ITGWU strike in Dublin, becomes general lockout. Formation of Irish Citizen Army and Irish Volunteers

1914 ‘Curragh Mutiny’: resignation by sixty cavalry officers in the British army at Kildare. Ulster Volunteer Force gun-running. Foundation of Cumann na mBan (women’s auxiliary league). Home Rule Bill passes again in Commons. Howth gun-running by Irish Volunteers. United Kingdom and Germany go to war. Home Rule Bill suspended; John Redmond calls on Irish Volunteers to support British war; movement splits into National (pro-Redmond) and Irish (anti-Redmond) Volunteers

1914 James Joyce, Dubliners. W. B. Yeats, Responsibilities

1914 James Joyce, A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man; Thomas Mac Donagh, Literature in Ireland

1916 Death of Francis Ledwidge during third battle of Ypres, WWI (July)

1915 Sinking of Lusitania

1916 Easter Rising (May). Execution of rebel leaders. Battle of the Somme (July)

1915 Alcock and Brown completed first non-stop trans-Atlantic flight from Newfoundland to Clifden, Co, Galway

1918 Sinn Fein victory in general election. Countess Markievicz elected to Westminster Parliament but refuses to take her seat

1919
1919 First meeting of Dáil Éireann at Mansion House, with Eamon de Valera elected president. Irish Volunteer organisation increasingly known as Irish Republican Army


1922 Treaty approved by Dáil Éireann (sixty-four to fifty-seven): establishment of Irish Free State. Beginning of Irish Civil War between pro-Treaty (Free State) and anti-Treaty (Republican) forces

1922 James Joyce, *Ulysses*

1923 Censorship of Films Act. W. B. Yeats is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature

1924 BBC Northern Ireland first broadcast

1925 Findings of Boundary Commission leaked April 1926 Census of Ireland: population of Irish Free State 2,971,992; population of Northern Ireland 1,256,561

1925 George Bernard Shaw is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature

1926 Foundation of Fianna Fáil

1926 Radio Éireann begin broadcasting

1927 Irish Free State Justice Minister, Kevin O'Higgins assassinated

1928 Irish Manuscripts Commission founded. Samuel Beckett moves to Paris. W. B. Yeats, *The Tower* Opening of The Gate Theatre First citizen of an independent Ireland Dr. Pat O'Callaghan wins a Gold Medal at the Olympic Games in Amsterdam

1930 Ireland elected to the Council of the League of Nations

1930 First Censorship Board appointed in Irish Free State

1932 Fianna Fáil wins general election. Thirty-First International Eucharistic Congress held in Dublin
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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Foundation of Fine Gael (replaces Cumann na nGaedheal)</td>
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<td>1935</td>
<td>Samuel Beckett, <em>Echo's Bones and other Precipitates</em></td>
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<td>1936</td>
<td>IRA declared illegal</td>
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<td>1937</td>
<td>De Valera’s new constitution (Bunreacht na hÉireann) approved; Éire declared official name of state</td>
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<td>1937</td>
<td>Charles Donnelly killed fighting with International Brigade during Spanish Civil War</td>
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<td>1938</td>
<td>Douglas Hyde becomes first president of Ireland. Eamon de Valera elected president of the League of Nations</td>
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<td>1939</td>
<td>Éire’s policy of neutrality announced</td>
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<td>1939</td>
<td>Death of W. B. Yeats in France. Louis MacNeice, <em>Autumn Journal</em>. Irish Red Cross Established Inaugural Trans-Atlantic Air Service to the United States</td>
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<td>1939–45</td>
<td>‘Emergency’ years</td>
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<td>1940</td>
<td><em>The Bell</em> begins publication</td>
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<td>1941</td>
<td>(April and May) Air-raids on Belfast. Approximately 700 people killed</td>
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<td>1941</td>
<td>Samuel Beckett joins Paris-Based Resistance cell (Gloria SMH)</td>
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<td>1942</td>
<td>Patrick Kavanagh, <em>The Great Hunger</em> Committee for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) founded in Belfast</td>
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<td>1948</td>
<td>Fianna Fail loses overall majority; replaced by coalition government under John A. Costello. Republic of Ireland Act under which Éire becomes Republic of Ireland and leaves Commonwealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Re-interment of W. B. Yeats in Drumcliffe, Co. Sligo</td>
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<td>1951</td>
<td>Catholic hierarchy condemns ‘Mother and Child’ Scheme; resignation of Dr Noel Browne as Minister of Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td><em>Envoy: A Review of Literature and Art</em> founded by John Ryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Thomas MacGreevy appointed director of National Gallery of Ireland (retires 1963)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Republic of Ireland joins United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Arts Council of Ireland founded. Dolmen Press founded by Liam and Josephine Miller. Lyric Theatre founded by Mary and Pearse O’Malley</td>
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</table>

**xxii**
Chronology

1956 IRA begins campaign on Northern border

1952 Séan Ó Riordáin, Eireaball Spideoige [A Robin’s Tail]

1953 BBC Northern Ireland TV broadcast Samuel Beckett En attendant Godot

1958 First Programme for Economic Expansion introduced, encouraging exports along with private and foreign investment in manufacturing

1954 Richard Murphy settled in Cleggan, Co. Galway

1955 Austin Clarke, Ancient Lights

1959 De Valera elected president


1960 Patrick Kavanagh, Come Dance with Kitty Stobling

1961 RTE (Radio Telefís Eireann) begins television service

1963 Terence O’Neill becomes prime minister of Northern Ireland Visit of John F. Kennedy Ian Paisley founds Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)

1966 Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), loyalist paramilitary group (taking its name from the 1913 movement), founded January 1967 Foundation of Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association

1968 Civil rights marches in Northern Ireland; clashes between marchers and police in Derry mark beginning of ‘the Troubles’

1962 The Arts Council of Northern Ireland established

1970 IRA splits into Official IRA and Provisional IRA. Foundation of Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) in Northern Ireland

1963 Death of Louis MacNeice (55)

1971 Internment introduced in Northern Ireland

1963–73 Belfast ‘Group’ of poets meets at Queen’s University

1972 Stormont parliament in Belfast suspended; direct rule from London introduced. 30 January ‘Bloody Sunday’: fourteen civilians killed and twelve wounded in Derry by British Army. 21 July ‘Bloody Friday’: twenty-two bombs set off in Belfast by IRA; nine people killed and some hundred and thirty wounded

1967 Death of Patrick Kavanagh (65)


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### Chronology

1973 Republic of Ireland joins European Economic Community (EEC)

1969 Samuel Beckett is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature


1974 Ulster Workers’ Council declares general Strike

1971 Seán Ó Riada dies

1975 Suspension of internment without trial in Northern Ireland

1973 Brendan Kennelly appointed first Professor of Modern Literature, Trinity College Dublin (retires 2005)

1979 Pope John Paul II visits Ireland

1974 Austin Clarke dies

1980 Hunger strikes in Maze and Armagh Prisons


1981 Ten IRA and Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) hunger-strikers die, including Bobby Sands (elected MP, April 1981)

1977 *The Crane Bag* journal founded

1983 Amendment to constitution passed by referendum, seeking to prevent any possible legalisation of abortion


1984 Report of the New Ireland Forum is published

1979 Medbh McGuckian wins the National Poetry Competition (UK)

1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement signed by Garret FitzGerald and Margaret Thatcher

1986 Referendum upholds constitutional ban on Divorce

1980 Field Day Theatre and Publishing Company established

1987 Referendum approves Single European Act

Irish association of artists established by the Arts Council

1982 Medbh McGuckian, *The Flower Master*

1983 John Hewitt made a Freeman of the City of Belfast

1986 Edna Longley, *Poetry in the Wars*

1987 Ciaran Carson, *The Irish for No*

1990 Mary Robinson elected president of Ireland, the first female president

1989 Samuel Beckett dies (83)

1992 Referendum held on three abortion-related issues: the right to travel and the right to information supported

1990 Paul Durcan, *Daddy, Daddy*

1993 Downing Street Declaration signed by Albert Reynolds and John Major

1991 Michael Longley, *Gorse Fires; Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*

1994 IRA and Loyalist paramilitaries declare ceasefires (later suspended and restored)

1992 Derek Mahon, *The Yaddo Letter*

1995 Referendum allowing divorce is carried

1995 Seamus Heaney is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature

1997 Mary McAleese elected president of Ireland

1996 Eavan Boland appointed Bella Mabury Knapp Professor in Humanities, Stanford University, USA. Ciaran Carson, *Last Night’s Fun: About Time, Food and Music*

1998 Good Friday Agreement is negotiated and endorsed in referendums in Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland (May)


1999 Northern Irish Assembly meets. Ireland adopts the euro

2001 Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill appointed first Irish Language Ireland Professor of Poetry

2002 Richard Murphy, *The Kick: A Life among Writers*
### Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997–2008</td>
<td>Economic boom years become known as ‘Celtic Tiger’</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Paul Muldoon awarded Pulitzer Prize for <em>Moy Sand and Gravel</em></td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry, Queen’s University Belfast opened</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008–11</td>
<td>Financial crisis leads to dissolution of 30th Dáil and election of coalition government to oversee programme of financial austerity and EU ‘bail-out’. Election of Michael D. Higgins as thirteenth president of Ireland</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Thomas Kinsella received Freedom of the City of Dublin. Derek Mahon awarded David Cohen Prize for literature in recognition of an entire body of work written in English</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Derek Mahon awarded Griffin Poetry Prize for <em>Life on Earth</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Referendum makes Ireland the first country to legalise same-sex marriage by popular vote: 62%–38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Centenary of the Easter Rising celebrated nationally and globally</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Death of Dennis O’Driscoll, poet, critic and editor of <em>Stepping Stones: Interviews with Seamus Heaney</em> (2008)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Death of Seamus Heaney (74). Paula Meehan appointed Ireland Professor of Poetry</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Deaths of John Montague (87) and Anthony Cronin (88). Opening of The Home Place, dedicated to Seamus Heaney in Bellaghy, Co. Derry. Eilean Ni Chuilleanání appointed Ireland Professor of Poetry</td>
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</table>

This volume aims to provide fresh and lucid accounts of twenty-nine Irish poets writing in English and Irish from the seventeenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first century. While the focus of the individual chapters varies from poet to poet, the intention of each contribution to this Companion is to give an overview of the poet’s work and to guide the interested reader through the wider cultural, historical and comparative contexts, but without overloading or obscuring the primary concentration on the poet’s work. Many of the contributors are poets themselves; others have written substantial monographs and studies of Irish poets other than those they have written about here. The critical and cultural exchange which takes place across the generations of Irish poetry and the resounding resonances and conversations between individual poets and their lives and times is a noteworthy though unintended feature of this volume.

As editor I would like to thank Ray Ryan of Cambridge University Press for his patience and support while the Companion gathered momentum, and Conor Linnie, a doctoral student with the School of English at Trinity College, who helped with the final formatting of the text and the ‘Further Reading’ section. Kyle Hughes, also a graduate student with the School of English, kindly stepped in at a critical moment when a technical issue confounded our best computer skills. I owe a debt of gratitude to Julitta Clancy for producing the Index, an epic poem all to itself. But my main debt of gratitude is to the contributors who responded to their tasks so enthusiastically despite carrying heavy workloads both within the academy and without. As the Companion was going into production we sadly lost one of our contributors, Aodán Mac Póilín, an inspirational presence whose love and knowledge of Irish poetry in both Irish and English was legendary. The book is testament to how we are all as readers still enthralled by what Seamus Heaney praised in his poem, ‘Song’ as ‘the mud-flowers of dialect/And the immortelles of perfect pitch/And that moment when the bird sings very close/To the music of what happens’ (Opened Ground: Poems 1966–1996, 1998, p. 181).

Gerald Dawe
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