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grapevine

MARCH • 1967



T R I B U T E

They told me Heraclitus they told me you were dead.
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed.
I wept as I remembered, how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.
And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
A handful of grey ashes long long ago at rest,
Still art thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales awake,
For Death he taketh all away but them he cannot take.

(Johnson-Cory)

The passing of my friend and colleague of many years,
Mr. C. O'Brien, brought to my mind the above lines which
I feel are most appropriate and which many of the staff
will feel expresses their own thoughts. An outstanding
personality who made an unforgettable impact on us all.
May God grant him eternal rest.

HUGH de LACY.

COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

KEVIN STREET

E D I T O R I A L

It is with a profound sense of sadness that we preface this issue with what must, of necessity, be a totally inadequate tribute to the memory of the College's oldest inhabitant, Mr. Christy O'Brien. If we presume to give voice to the presiding memory of Kevin Street we have to look back over close on sixty years of Mr. O'Brien's service to the College. When the guns of 1916 boomed through Dublin he had already given the same length of service as the present writer.

As the College grew Mr. O'Brien, as Head Porter, played a vital role in moulding its character. With his resourcefulness, dignity and a great measure of personal charm he was the perfect P.R.O. Many young teachers, maintenance and technical staff, had reason to recall his courteous and helpful directions when they first arrived to take up their posts.

The high esteem in which he was held by the students is illustrated by the following:

"The neat, dapper figure of Mr. O'Brien remains a memory to ex-students when all else has been long forgotten. He seems impervious to the many changes that have taken place down through the years. Truly it may be said that while boys may come and boys may go, Christy goes on forever."

This quotation is from the student produced "The Alchemist" of December 1955.

The white-haired gentleman we have known and respected in latter years is, we feel, well represented by those words. Applied to Christy the clichéd "One of nature's gentlemen" becomes meaningful. To his family we tender sincere sympathy.

Ar dheis laimh De go raibh a anam.

As the first article of this issue we are glad to present the theme of 'The Good Old Days of Kevin Street.' To Dr. Dillon goes the thanks of the Editors. Besides the interesting account of the College's work in the early years of this century we recommend to the attention of our readers his interesting comments on examinations within the College. On this point we promise to present very soon a very valuable edition of "The Grapevine" which, we feel, will be material for much worthwhile discussion.

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In our office of providing an outlet for Muses within the College we are happy to publish our first sample of locally brewed poetry. We would direct readers attention to the lilting rhythm of Mary Ladley's poem. The verve of Donegal breezes blow through the piece. The sentiments of the last stanza the Editors endorse enthusiastically.

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What are all these people who are seen "going to meetings" around the building up to? George Murphys article will help to answer that question. He looks for opinions. We are waiting to publish yours.

.....

Our first short story from a staff member comes from Barry Moynihan under the title of "Oyster Shyster! Mr. Moynihan takes as his theme an aspect of human pathos handled, we feel, in a mood of surrealism. This can become a trend-setter if you take up our oft-repeated invitation for contributions.

Editors.

Thomas Dillon, D.Sc., M.R.I.A.

In the first decade of what we used to call the New Century, I came from Queen's College, Cork, to continue my study of chemistry at the Royal College of Science, then situated in the premises occupied to-day by the Office of Public Works. The National University had not yet been founded and I soon heard of the Kevin Street Technical School, which had many connections with the College of Science. Whether any of the chemical staff of the College taught in Kevin Street I cannot recall; but I am fairly certain that Lyons, the highly competent Lecturer on Physics spent an evening or two per week there; while we all knew that John Taylor, the Scottish Lecturer on Engineering, having taught in the College from nine to four on five days a week during the term, taught in Kevin Street from seven to ten on the evenings of the same five days. Another Scot Brown, Lecturer in Electrical Engineering, also probably taught in Kevin Street.

As a preliminary to an account of my own connections with Kevin Street, I should perhaps recall that in 1908 the Royal University of Ireland, an examining body on the London model, with no teaching functions or premises, was abolished, and its graduates were registered in

the National University of Ireland with its three University Colleges in Cork, Dublin and Galway. I was appointed to an Assistantship in the Department of Chemistry of the new UCD and moved in to the extensive laboratories at Earlsfort Terrace which had been used by the RUI solely for examining, to teach for about ten years. From the beginning of the National University, if not before it, I stood in occasionally for teachers of chemistry who were absent for a night or two through illness or for some other reason; but a more permanent connection with the School came about in 1911 or 1912 through Ben Fegan.

B. J. Fegan was an Associate of the College of Science (ARCSci) who had also read for the Royal University Degree and having passed the first and second year examinations just before the dissolution, was allowed to sit for the final examination for the degree at UCD and took a B.A. Degree with first class honours in physics and chemistry (B.A. was the primary degree for all in the RUI, B.Sc. being a higher and somewhat unusual degree). He joined the staff of the Dublin City Laboratory under Sir Charles Cameron, whom he later succeeded as City Analyst. He taught chemistry for many

years in Kevin Street. After the establishment of the Irish Government, he was prominent in founding the Institute of Chemistry of Ireland on which he served a term as President. In earlier times, requiring to attend a course in London for the Associateship of the Institute of Chemistry (now the Royal Institute) in Food and Drugs, he asked me to take his place for the session in Kevin Street.

The old Technical School was built before the days of the electric lift and whatever I may have forgotten, I remember well to this day, the weary climb, after a day's work at University College, to the top floor on two nights a week. When, however, I reached the top, I had my reward, not only in interesting teaching, but also in meeting Hutchinson an interesting man who taught another practical class in the same laboratory.

Hutchinson had been an Irish Civil Servant in, I think, the Inland Revenue in London and had attended night classes in chemistry in a technical college, where he was taught by Gilbert Morgan later Professor in the College of Science in Dublin. Whether he had any diploma I do not recall, but Jacobs, biscuit manufacturers, took him in as their chemist. Hitherto they had employed an analyst on a part-time basis and the directors showed towards their first whole-time chemist a spirit of enlight-

enment rare indeed in those days before the first world war. They told him that they would not prescribe any duties for him, but that he was to go round the factory and see where he could make any improvements. He saved them his annual salary in a few months. If that salary had been large, he would not have been teaching at night; but it increased considerably as he continued to show his worth and if he still continued to teach, it was for love of the work.

My students, who were almost, if not quite, without exception, keen and intelligent, were a mixture of civil servants, studying the subject from purely intellectual interest, technicians, and teachers. I recall one outstanding teacher, who later was the author of a text-book which was in much demand in schools.

My connection with Kevin Street as a teacher came to an end after one session. It was to be renewed many years later as an examiner for the Department of Education, a task for which I confess I had no liking. I disapprove strongly of the system, apparently regarded as sacred in this part of the world, under which pupils are examined, not by the person who has been teaching them, but by somebody whom they have never seen. This practice must seriously hamper the work of a good teacher and if a teacher is not fit to examine his pupils,

he is not fit to teach them. I hope, therefore, that the day is not too far off when the new College of Technology founded on the old Kevin Street Technical School, will no longer enter its pupils for London B.Sc.s or G.C.E.s or Department of Education

Certificates, but will have them examined by their teachers - with extern examiners if it is thought desirable - for their own certificate. The day when that takes place will be noted as a day of very great progress in our system of education.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Dear Sir,

I take this opportunity of informing your readers of the existence of a Safety Committee which was formed on 12th January 1967. The main subjects for investigation by this committee are as follows:

- (a) Fire prevention, fire fighting and evacuation procedures.
- (b) Safety in Workshops.
- (c) Safety in laboratories.
- (d) Safety in swimming pool and gymnasium.
- (e) Health hazards.
- (f) Traffic regulations in College grounds.

A draft report regarding recommendations on the first three items is in its final stages and will be completed in the very near future. All suggestions or literature on the above topics will be welcomed by the following members of the committee: Mr. K. Culliton, Mr. J. Loftus, Mr. J. Mahon, Mr. B. Moynihan and myself. Mr. M. Farrell unavoidably had to withdraw his services from the committee; Mr. L. Breen has been made available for inclusion on the proposed new First-Aid Committee.

To fulfil its recommendations this committee will require the full co-operation of all members of the staff. May we rely on this?

Yours faithfully,

JOHN J. FARRELL

(Chairman)

A YEAR OF PROMISE

George Murphy.

In February 1966 a School Committee was formed in the College. The Committee was prepared to operate at two levels. A constitution adopted by the Dublin Branch of Cumann na nGairm-Mhuinteoiri on a one-year trial basis required the formation of school committees in all schools to promote the interests of the Association at local level. In addition the Kevin Street School Committee felt that it could do much useful work in promoting a good working atmosphere in the College. The Dublin Branch has decided that School Committees do not serve the interests of the Association and School Committees have therefore been discontinued. It is opportune to review the year's work of the School Committee in the context of the second function it undertook.

It was decided that the Committee should consist of representatives of each department, representation to be based on the number of teachers in each department. The following were elected:

Department of Chemistry	L. Breen
Department of Electrical Engineering	J. Farrell
Department of Electrical Installation Work	D. McManus
	G. Murphy (Chairman)
Department of General Studies	B. Conway (Treasurer)
Department of Mathematics	M. Wallace
Department of Telecommunications Engineering	F. Brennan (Secretary)
	D. Harley
Department of Physics	None

At the inaugural meeting the officers were elected and it was decided to seek a meeting with the Principal with the object of establishing cordial relations between himself and the Committee. The Principal welcomed the setting up of such a committee and promised every reasonable support. At further meetings we aired a couple of minor grievances and discussed with him the setting up of Safety and First Aid Committees.

The aim of the Safety Committee is to work out a co-ordinated approach to evacuation and control in the event of the outbreak of fire in any part of the building. This Committee is now functioning under the chairmanship of John Farrell.

The First Aid Committee with Dr. Nolan as Chairman has the task of investigating potential sources of accidents in both laboratories and workshops. It is envisaged that a series of lectures on first

aid will be given to all technicians to enable them to deal on the spot with any likely accident.

With respect to the salaries and status of teachers in the College, the Committee concerned itself with the advancing of the status of the Class III College Teacher. At first it was decided to investigate the seeking of the existing specialist category for all Class III College teachers. The idea that prompted this move was the fact that the Specialist Category was already in existence and consequently a great deal of negotiation and time would be saved. To this end liaison was established with the School Committee of Bolton Street which resulted in a joint meeting of the teaching staffs of both Colleges. For various reasons the Specialist Category was found to be unsuitable as a basis for continued negotiations and it was left in abeyance.

A Meeting was convened in Kevin Street which included representatives of the four Dublin Colleges - Bolton Street, Rathmines, Cathal Brugha Street, and Kevin Street. At this meeting agreement was reached to proceed on a common basis to seek a new category for teachers, lying between the existing Class III and Grade III Categories.

At a following meeting of the Dublin Branch this motion was carried and a Steering Committee elected. The Committee were:

T. Bridgeman	Bolton Street
M. Brady	Cathal Brugha Street
B. Conway	Kevin Street
D. Harley	Kevin Street
G. Murphy	Kevin Street
A. O'Brien	Rathmines

This salary claim has now been taken up by the Central Executive of the Association and an early meeting of the Conciliation Council will discuss the matter.

From what you have just read it will be obvious that the School Committee have been active over the past year and indeed achieved a measure of success in a number of spheres.

Last but by no means least, this very journal owes its origin to the School Committee.

Since the School Committee has now ceased as an integral part of the Dublin Branch of Cumann na nGairm-Mhuinteoiri, I feel that it would be tragic do allow it to become defunct. It still can play an important part in school relations and in co-ordinating the common interests of College teachers. To this end members of the existing committee are interested in obtaining the views of all teachers in the College on maintaining a school committee. If the idea is favourably received, arrangements will be made to elect a committee for the coming year.

L E T ' S D A N C E

Sung to the air of "6 Miles from Bangor to Donaghadee".

Kevin Street had their dance some time ago
In the Central Hotel that we all know.
It started at nine and went on till half two
Oh!! What a night and Oh!! what a do.

To start off the night from amongst all the delph
Came the voice of Mr. de Lacy the big chief himself
(sorry about that!)
Would you believe that he told us to enjoy ourselves well
'Cause soon it would be over and then back to

The dinner was top class, and we all screamed with glee
When we saw what was coming - yes, the Omelette ^usurprise.
Everyone started to shout for some more
Some had two helpings, some 3, 6, some 4.

The dinner being over, we started to dance
And the men left their wives to give us a chance.
The wives, they just stood there, some looking in doubt
What they were thinking - we'll just leave that out.

There were lots of spot prizes to add to the fun
There were bottles and boxes to please everyone.
Perhaps the most useful were the "ould" pinking shears
Which will cut nearly everything, watch out for that beard!!

The office staff choir brought great rounds of cheer
When they sang their two songs - the tops of the year.
The Corkman then sang so soft and so sweet
And then came the man who swept all off their feet.

To John, Dick and Moira I'd just like to say
Thank you for your great work you made everything so gay.
To conclude my wee song, I'M hoping to hear
That more of you will go to our dinner next year.

Mary Ladley.

CLASS CAPTAINS IN ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION DEPARTMENT

These youths represent a very important link between the administrative staff, the teachers and indeed the students of various groups. They represent their respective class groups in matters relating to damaged furnishing and equipment. They communicate decisions from the office on schedules of work or clarifications of same; they explain the reasons why certain disparities occur in subject matter between some groups; they make representations to the administrative staff in matters pertaining to facilities for certain activities such as accommodation for meals, etc.

If they are observant people with common sense, as they should be, they can play an important part in communications. This is very important in view of the fact that the department is operated from three different buildings.

The first representative meeting of Captains took place on Tuesday, 28th February 1967. Primarily it was called (1) to stress the need for discipline and disciplinary action where necessary (2) to explain the relationship between education and industry (3) to explain how courses lost some subject hours in the change over from P.E.I. to S.E.S.B. time tables and (4) to indicate to the students new opportunities of employments in an expanding industry.

Subsequently, during Question Time, many expressions of opinion were voiced on disciplinary actions; more time for certain subjects, facilities and amenities for examination requirements, etc.

In the time available many queries could not be answered. Another meeting has been arranged.

L. TRUNDLE

Head of Department.

OYSTER SHYSTERS

Barry Moynihan, B.Sc.

Some weeks ago, Olga and I set off on our customary walk to North America collecting oysters. You can appreciate how we felt when the weather began to misbehave. Thirtyfour inches of rain fell in our path the very instant we reached Westport.

I turned my ample back on the raging Atlantic and Olga phoned Chichester.

"You've done admirably" he said. "Believe me when I say that over 100 years ago a boat journey from Dublin to Westport took at least 90 days".

"Don't lose heart now" he ran on, "keep those chins up".

He told us about an old friend called Moses O'Mahoney, an old hand at parting things, but who had since died.

Suitably reinforced we decided to battle on. First, we borrowed a currach from a neighbouring county. Then we set sail. It wasn't going to be easy.

Some few hundred miles out we decided to marry, honeymooning under ice-berg Jenny. The day had just begun. Solemnly we split everything. For a start I took the bow round the other side. Each evening I returned as it didn't do to be together too long.

It wasn't, all in all, a happy iceberg. Before long, we'd decided upon leaving.

We had hardly cast off when we were joined by a school of frozen fish swimming protectively on the starboard. Possibly, they mistook us for sea creatures. But then, how could they know. My wife, yes; my stock was good.

We were divorced at the next iceberg. It was difficult, I know, but one was quite certain it was for the best. We'd been slowly drifting apart under the stress.

Now and again an oyster or two passed to our left doing twenty. They never ventured very close. I spent long periods shouting cat-calls, but to no avail.

It was March now, and nothing had been sighted for a month. Nothing, that is, but my wife. Unable to find anything suitable (to say) she asked would I marry her.

"Out here" I said " you must be crazy".

"Well, its happened before".

"I know, but two wrongs don't make a right".

End.

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Feline Feelings

Wish I were an natty cat
Since natty it would be
Such catch a fatty wot-nat
As fatty wot-nat see
For blinding catty no bat
A eejit I do be.

ANONYMOUS.

.....

The above needs interpretation.
One suggestion is that these were the private feelings
of the second most famous mouse in history - the one
which Robert Burns destroyed with a plough and tried to
compensate by

"Wee timorous cowerin' bestie"

.....

THE CLOCK

"Clarence the Clocker"

In a Technological College, where progress is the key-word and where the staff must keep pace to provide the service that progress demands, it is, perhaps disappointing to learn that there is an outdated mechanism still in use in a 'dreaded nook' in one corner of the College namely "The Time Clock".

In this College the Technician is looked upon with an eye of awareness, but, when one considers that the same person is asked, and expected to, care for and repair expensive and elaborate equipment it shows that we are falling down in establishing his deserved status. In no other comparable position would it be required of a technician to make so public a declaration of his movement to and from his place of employment. In industry the integrity of a technician is not challenged after he has proved himself capable of carrying out his duties. For once we fall behind Industry and we must take a leaf from their book before it is too late.

For some time past the technicians have discussed carefully the pros and cons for the retention of the clock and have decided most emphatically, that for the following reasons, no members of the technician staff be required to "clock in": (1) the time spent by technicians outside their normal working hours, on projects, merits him the responsibility of deciding for himself, (2) in no other comparable position outside would it be required, (3) it brings the technicians' reputation into disrepute, (4) technicians write time sheets, (5) in the next few years many more technicians and technologists will be required and to attract the best, conditions of employment will have to be brought into line with modern trends. If the technicians of Kevin Street who played a vital role in moving 'house' from the old to the new College and setting up laboratories in record time, have been praised in high terms, but, now the time has come when the nice words should be replaced by a more tangible proof of recognition.

Some months ago, a programme on Telefis Eireann dealt in general with job prospects for the youth of Ireland. It advocated that technicians would play a major role in the future of this country. It outlined that by 1970, 10,000 technicians would be needed in various sections of employment. At the moment there are about 4,000 and it was pointed out that by 1970 it is most unlikely that the required

number of technicians would be available . It appears that present-day youth are not attracted towards the position as one might like them to be. I believe that conditions are not attractive. The authorities are in a position to make the job sufficiently attractive to recruit suitable people to their ranks.

Technicians in general do not worship at the shrine of "Status" but appeal to those people in authority who are concerned (and we believe they are concerned) to remove the "Time Clock" and thus make the job more attractive to the 6,000 who are still needed.

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