

# COLLABORATIONS & NETWORKS

## Virtual Symposium Irish Women's Writing Network 4-5 September 2021

The period 1880-1940 was marked by the emergence of a diverse range of Irish women writers into both the public sphere and public consciousness. This development was not accidental but was instead fostered by a variety of networks and collaborations that connected Irish women to one another across space and time. Katharine Tynan and Dora Sigerson, for instance, hosted literary gatherings at their family homes that facilitated wider networks of influence, while collaborative writing efforts forged by Irish women during the period stretched from the works of Somerville and Ross through to the transnational publishing efforts of the Ladies' Land League and into educational and journalistic endeavours in which Irish women played central roles. These included the foremost Irish literary periodical of the day, *The Irish Monthly*, in which women writers featured regularly, and the Irish Fireside Club, whose central 'Uncle Remus' role was fulfilled by two Irish women writers (Rose Kavanagh and Hester Sigerson). Meanwhile, the efforts of women editors including L. T. Meade, whose London-based periodical *Atalanta* promoted Irish authors abroad, and family-based connections from the widely known (Constance Markievicz and Eva Gore-Booth) to the more obscure (M. E. Francis, Agnes Castle and Margaret Blundell) were central to Irish women's creativity and innovation.



LADY LAND LEAGUERS AT WORK AT THE DUBLIN OFFICE

*The Graphic* (12 November 1881). Private Collection.

With close attention to both individual collaborations and wider networks, the symposium will direct attention to how women writers endeavoured to tell, share and publish their stories. Recognizing the need for research in the field of Irish women's writing that moves beyond the single-author approach, we are particularly interested in work that considers new critical perspectives on women writers' creative innovations through collaboration across genres and media and their personal networks and strategies to establish themselves as writers within a rich web of personal connections alongside institutional and infrastructural possibilities, both at home and in transnational contexts.

This symposium will feed into a double issue of *English Studies*.

Prospective contributors are invited to submit 300-word abstracts for max. 15-minute papers for the one-day symposium. Topics might include but are not limited to the following:

- collaborations between literature and other forms of production (ie. co-authoring; text and image; dramatists and theatre makers)
- cross-media storytelling
- collaborative work and activism
- collaborations across genres
- collaborations across media
- women writers and their private and public networks
- collaborations between networks
- self-promotion (memoir/autobiography; travel writing; journalism)
- salons, “At Homes”, reading groups
- learned societies and associations
- alternative networks and spaces (incl. National Library of Ireland; British Library; the Society of Women Journalists etc)
- networking through paratexts (dedications; prefaces etc)
- writers and their publishers
- writers, editors, periodicals and print cultures
- national and transnational collaborations and networks
- writing women’s literary history in the period
- protégées and mentors
- women writers’ archives and archive networks
- methodological approaches and challenges

### ***Format***

In keeping with the theme of ‘Collaborations and Networks’, the symposium’s structure will follow a more engaged format to focus on time for dialogue between participants. Speakers will be invited to submit short papers of 2500 in advance, which will form the basis of a 10-15 minute presentation to be followed by facilitated discussions via a respondent. Presenters will be encouraged to prepare some questions and/or flag areas where they would like specific feedback. Given this format, there is a 2-stage submission process:

1. Please submit your **300-word abstract** for 15 mins presentations with title and a short biography **to [collaborationsandnetworks@gmail.com](mailto:collaborationsandnetworks@gmail.com) by 31st March 2021.**
2. Accepted papers of max. 2,500 words are due by 31st July 2021.

### ***Publication***

For the publication of the double-issue of *English Studies*, we seek to invite a selection of symposium contributors to submit an extended article of max. 10,000 words by 31st January 2022. All submissions considered for publication will be subject to peer review.

**We look forward to receiving your abstracts.**