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PERFECT AMBITION

Thomas Bodkin: a life, with particular reference to his influence on the early development of Irish Cultural Policy

Volume I

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PERFECT AMBITION

Thomas Bodkin: a life, with particular reference to his influence on the early development of Irish Cultural Policy

In Two Volumes

Volume One: Text

ANNE KELLY

A major Thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Ph. D.

University of Dublin, Trinity College

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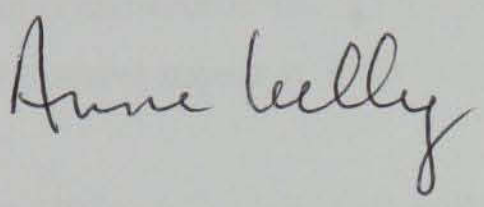
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SUMMARY

This research is an analysis of the development of cultural policy in the context of the Irish life and times of Thomas Bodkin. The research methodology involved the use of primary manuscript material relating to personal, institutional and State papers in archives in Ireland and Britain. Interviews were conducted with relevant individuals, both family members and a number of Bodkin's former colleagues, friends and acquaintances. This was supported by a literature review of secondary material, including books, journals, periodicals and newspaper files. Bodkin's bibliography by Alan Denson was an important source and family papers at the National Archives , as well as Bodkin's own extensive papers at TCD, were central to the research.

The research is presented through a combination of a chronological narrative with a thematic approach in which policy interventions are included at relevant points in the text. Bodkin's life, his family history, his friendships and animosities and his career ambitions, his successes and failures are presented chronologically. This provides a picture of life in the Dublin intellectual world inhabited by Bodkin in the early years of the 20th century. His theories of art, indicated in his prolific writings and lecturing on art are also discussed and placed in context.

The themes presented and analysed involve four main areas. Bodkin's role as a Trustee of the National Gallery and ultimately its Director is analysed and this provides an insight into the management of a key cultural institution at an important stage of its development. Bodkin's association with Hugh Lane was a most significant one and he was a major figure in the fight to return the Lane pictures to Ireland. Research at the National Gallery in London and at the Public Record Office builds on Bodkin's book on Lane and subsequent work. The issue has never before been considered from the British perspective and this study draws extensively on the records of the National Gallery in London as well on British Government papers relating to the codicil to Lane's Will.

The benefits of developing art education were frequently outlined by Bodkin and he had a strong interest in design issues. The research examines his role in the design of the new

Irish currency in 1927. On the coinage design he worked on a Committee chaired by W.B.Yeats, and Percy Metcalf was selected as the artist who produced the designs for what is now recognised as a successful and aesthetically signficant set of coins for the new Irish State. On the note design Bodkin was active in the selection of John Lavery as the artist and his wife Hazel as the model for the notes. His close friendship with her was a symbiotic one and she worked unsuccessfully to have him appointed as High Commissioner in London shortly after his appointment as Director of the National Gallery. The public response to the two design outcomes was different and this is also a subject of analysis in the research.

Bodkin's time at the National Gallery came to an end in 1935 following a period in which all efforts by him to improve conditions at the Gallery failed. He established the Barber Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Birmingham but continued to influence cultural policy in Ireland. One of his most important policy initiatives involved his report on the arts in Ireland, commissioned by the Government in 1949. This allowed him to draw together the policy proposals he had been articulating for many years but the response of the Government was a limited one. The Arts Council was established and Bodkin's role in this is analysed and its outcomes discussed. His hopes to return to direct the Council were dashed following a change of Government but his friendship with John A. Costello brought him back in a consultancy capacity to advise on the development of the Council. This was by no means a successful outcome and it undermined the arms-length principle which he and Costello had envisaged for the Council. He was never to return to work in Ireland and died in Birmingham in 1961.

ABBREVIATIONS

ARC CE	Arts Council, Comhairle Ealaion
BI	Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham
TB cited in references	Thomas Bodkin
Bodkin papers	Thomas Bodkin papers, Trinity College Dublin
CO	Colonial Office, London
DO	Dominions Office, London
E	Department of Industry and Commerce, National Archives
F	Department of Finance, National Archives
FNCI	Friends of the National Collections of Ireland
HLMGMA	Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art
Lane papers	Hugh Lane papers National Library of Ireland
McGreevy papers	Thomas McGreevy papers, Trinity College Dublin
NA	National Archives
NGI	National Gallery of Ireland
NGLondon	National Gallery, London
NLI	National Library of Ireland
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew
Sarah Purser papers	Sarah Purser papers, National Library of Ireland
RHA	Royal Hibernian Academy of Arts
S	Provisional Government, Executive Council, Department of the Taoiseach and Cabinet Files, National Archives
James Stephens papers	James Stephens papers, Trinity College Dublin
T	Treasury, Public Record Office
TS	Treasury Solicitor's Department, Public Record Office
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
UCD	University College Dublin

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This has been a long study over a period of ten years and I owe a debt of gratitude to a number of individuals and institutions. My supervisor, Dr. Philip McEvansoneya has been a constant source of inspiration and academic guidance and he has supported the necessary latitude of enquiry for an interdisciplinary cultural study within the history of art area. I am most grateful to him and to Professor Roger Stalley who had the initial supervisory role. Encouragement was also received from Dr. Edward McParland and Professor Ann Crookshank who is one of Bodkin's literary executors, and to both I extend my thanks.

The study could not have been completed without a period of sabbatical leave from University College Dublin and for this I am grateful for the support of Professor Michael McCarthy. Dr. Niamh O'Sullivan who took over my academic responsibilities at UCD did an exceptional job while completing her own doctoral studies. I am grateful to a number of people for access to archives and information, including Dr. Bernard Meehan and the staff of the Manuscripts Department at TCD, Raymond Keaveney, Adrian le Harivel and the staff of the library at the National Gallery of Ireland, Aideen Ireland and Catriona Crowe at the National Archives, Croine Magan and Aidan O'Flanagan of the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland, Barbara Dawson, Daire O'Connell and Maime Winters at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Mary Clark and Terry Wogan of Dublin City Archives, Charlotte Brunskill at the library of the National Gallery in London, the staff at the Public Records Office at Kew, Lynda McLeod and Gregory Martin at Christie's, Julia Armstrong-Totten, Education Department of the Getty Foundation, Catherine Johnston of the National Gallery of Canada, Paul Spencer-Longhurst at the Barber Institute, and Ann Docherty of the Central Library, Birmingham.

A number of people granted me interviews which were essential for the research. I am particularly grateful to Thomas Bodkin's daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth Jameson, Mrs. Anne Bodkin Parker and Mrs. Brigid Hardwick and his nephew, Richard Robinson for their time. James White was a friend of the Bodkin family and an excellent source of

information, as were Dr. Kenneth Garlick, Dr. Ben Davis and Cornelius Russell in Birmingham. Sir Denis Mahon was a key source of information for an important element of the research and I want to extend my grateful thanks to him for meeting me in London to discuss the Lane affair and allowing me access to his personal records of the events. I also had a conversation with the late Terence de Vere White who knew Bodkin and considered writing a biography of him at one stage.

I should like to place on record my gratitude to the following for permission to reproduce material for inclusion in this thesis: The Board of Trinity College Dublin, the National Archives, the National Gallery of Ireland, the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, the Bodkin Trustees, Mrs. Elizabeth Jameson, the National Gallery of Canada, the Ulster Museum, Sligo County Museum, the *Irish Times* and Independent Newspapers.

I want to record and acknowledge the assistance of a number of friends, colleagues and family: Carla Briggs, Pat Cooke, Ciaran Costello, Alan Denson, Jean Earley, Mary Ellen Fox, Michael Gorman, Joe Hassett, Charles Horton, Brian P. Kennedy, Sinead McCoole, Risteard Mulcahy, Paula Murphy, Peggy O'Brien, Tim and Christine O'Neill, Harriet O'Donovan Sheehy, Elizabeth Powis, Alistair Rowan, Harlan and Delia Walker, and Aidan Walsh. My special thanks go to my tolerant and supportive husband Peter Kelly and my family, Jonathan, Judy, Ben and Matthew Kelly.

ABSTRACT

PERFECT AMBITION

Thomas Bodkin: a life, with particular reference to his influence on the early development of Irish Cultural Policy

Anne Kelly

This is a study of cultural policy and development in the context of the Irish life and times of Thomas Bodkin. Bodkin had a role in a number of important cultural decisions made in the early years of the new Irish State and, following a period as a Trustee of the National Gallery of Ireland from 1917, became its Director from 1927 to 1935. He advised the Government on key cultural issues, including art education and the importance of good design and made some significant policy interventions, particularly in relation to Hugh Lane and his pictures. He resigned from the National Gallery in 1935 and established the Barber Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Birmingham, but his influence on Irish cultural affairs continued and he returned to report on the Arts in Ireland in 1949. This report led to the formation of the Arts Council in 1951 and Bodkin was later appointed by the Government to advise the Council. This research is an examination and analysis of his influence on Irish cultural policy.

Bodkin was born into a politically active, upper middle-class family where his love of literature was encouraged. It was through books that he first encountered the art that was to become his passion, and his introduction to Hugh Lane led to the friendship which was to be a guiding influence in his life. He became involved with Lane's efforts to establish a modern gallery in Dublin and on the death of Lane was named in the codicil to his Will which requested that Bodkin would assist in the acquisition of such a gallery. His book on Lane, which was commissioned by the Government, became the main statement of claim for the return of the Lane pictures to Ireland. This issue is one of the central themes of the research and material not previously examined at the National Gallery in London and in the British Public Record Office provides new insights into the Lane bequest from the British perspective.

Bodkin's position as a Trustee and Director of the National Gallery illuminates the workings of that organisation in the Dublin cultural world of the early years of the 20th century. His prolific writing and lecturing on art, and his art theories, are examined and his friendships and antagonisms with key Irish literary and artistic figures add to the body of knowledge which exists concerning Irish cultural life at this important time. His involvement in the Lane affair brought him to prominence in Ireland and the research also analyses his influence on the design of the currency in 1927. While working on this he was adding to the national collections at the National Gallery, and gaining attention

for them. However, while he had a number of strategic political associations, his relationships within the administrative structure were problematic. Issues of economic stringency were relevant but Bodkin's advanced cultural policy objectives in relation to the cultural infrastructure and educational provision were unlikely to be supported in a cultural climate which was conservative, protectionist and without dynamism. Bodkin's own difficult personality and the dichotomy which existed between his private and public persona, as well as his distance from the nationalist sentiment of the times were also factors.

Bodkin left Ireland in 1935 to establish the Barber Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Ireland. However, he continued to have a role to play in Irish cultural affairs and the final chapter of the research examines this. His return to report on the arts in Ireland for the Government contained a number of dynamic proposals, including the establishment of a department to rationalise the disparate cultural interests of the State. What emerged at that time was the foundation of the Arts Council, a Council that Bodkin had ambitions to lead. It was a weak political response to the decline and decay which his report had portrayed, and a change of Government meant that he was not to return to lead the organisation which emerged. When he ultimately took on an advisory role for the Taoiseach on the policies and operation of the Council his involvement was a weakening of the arms-length principle which he had advised in his report was critical for the healthy development of the arts in Ireland. He never returned to work in Ireland and died in Birmingham in 1961.

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1 FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Arabella Norman and Mathias Bodkin in 1885, the year of their marriage (NA 1155/3/8)

Portrait of Thomas Bodkin in 1890, aged three, by J.D.Reigh and drawn direct onto a lithographic stone (NA 1155/3/8)

Thomas Bodkin with his parents and John Boyd Dunlop driven by his son at Clongowes. J.B.Dunlop invented the pneumatic rubber tyre. The priest is Fr. J. O'Reilly, S.J. (NA 1155/3/8)

The Bodkin family: Mathias and Arabella surrounded by their children, from left centre, Rose, Norah, Matthew, Emma, Thomas and Margaret (NA 1155/3/8)

Hugh Lane, Thomas Bodkin's close friend and greatest influence (TCD Bodkin papers 7019/128)

The wedding portrait of Thomas Bodkin and Aileen Cox, February 1917 (NA 1155/3/8)

3 Wilton Terrace. Watercolour by Thomas Bodkin showing his home at Wilton Terrace, now demolished; Bodkin and his wife are in the foreground and the Irish and Papal flags fly at the door. (Collection Mrs. Elizabeth Jameson)

2 THOMAS BODKIN AND THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND

***The Parable of the Lord of the Vineyard*. NGI 898. After Domenico Feti. Presented by Bodkin (as autograph) in 1927**

***Joseph Selling Corn in Egypt*. NGI 890. Pieter Lastman. Bodkin's first purchase for the NGI**

***The Apotheosis of Jean Jacques Rousseau*. NGI 896. Hubert Robert. Purchased by Bodkin in 1927**

***A Peasant Wedding*. NGI 911. Pieter Brueghel, the Younger. NGI 911. Purchased by Bodkin in 1928**

***The Pietà*. NGI 942. Perugino. Purchased by Bodkin in 1931 and regarded by him as his 'greatest bargain'.**

The Virgin and Child with Angels. NGI 943. Giovanni del Biondo. Purchased by Bodkin in 1931

3 WORKS OWNED BY THOMAS BODKIN

The Lamentation. Quentin Matsys. Sold by Bodkin at Christie's in 1924 for £4,095. He had bought it for £500 borrowed from his father. It is now at the National Gallery of Canada, NGC 4942

Venus Anadyomene (c 1772). James Barry. Part of the Bodkin bequest through the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland and now at the Ulster Museum. U14

Portrait of a Young Mandarin. George Chinnery. Part of the Bodkin bequest through the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland and now at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, 1214

Rousseau's Tomb. Daubigny. Part of the Bodkin bequest through the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland and now at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, 1215

Marsh's Library, Dublin. Walter Osborne. Part of the Bodkin bequest through the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland and now at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, 1216

Drawing of a Girl. William Orpen. Part of the Bodkin bequest through the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland and now at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, 1217

Thomas Bodkin. Estella Solomons. This portrait was admired by Bodkin who was frequently painted and drawn. Now at Sligo County Museum as part of the Bodkin bequest through the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland

4 THOMAS BODKIN AND THE NEW SOCIETY

Set of the Irish coins designed by Percy Metcalf. Bodkin was a member of the Coinage Committee which was chaired by W.B.Yeats (Collection Central Bank of Ireland)

Thomas Bodkin and W.B.Yeats (TCD Bodkin papers 7019/73)

Thomas Bodkin with W.T.Cosgrave at Mullingar Races (TCD Bodkin papers 7019/27)

The new haute bourgeoisie at a National Gallery opening, undated, but between 1927 and 1932. From left, Hugh Kennedy, Chief Justice, unknown woman (possibly

Mrs. Kennedy), Mrs. W.T.Cosgrave, Richard Orpen, Dermod O'Brien, President of the RHA, James McNeill, Governor General, his wife, Josephine, Thomas Bodkin, W.T.Cosgrave, General Mulcahy, John Marcus O'Sullivan, Minister for Education, Lady Hanson, wife of Sir Philip Hanson, one of the Governors and Guardians of the National Gallery. (TCD Bodkin papers 7019/25)

***The Chairman of the Board.* Caricature by Thomas Bodkin of Hugh Kennedy, Chairman of the Board of the National Gallery. (TCD Bodkin papers 7020/92)**

INTRODUCTION

This study began ten years ago with the identification of Bodkin as a significant figure in Irish cultural affairs from the foundation of the State to the late 1950s. He emerges clearly for students of the history of Irish cultural policy-making as the individual who was active in most public arts initiatives in the early years of the State. Even before this, as a Governor and Guardian of the National Gallery from 1917, and ultimately its Director, he was involved in the administration and development of a key cultural institution. This role and his prolific writing and lecturing on the visual arts brought him the prominence which enabled him to influence artistic planning and decision-making. He had assisted Hugh Lane from 1908 in Lane's ambitions to establish a Municipal Gallery, and following Lane's death played a major role in the protracted battle to return his pictures to Dublin. He was consulted by the Government on a number of cultural commissions and his ambitions to develop high standards in Irish design gave him an opportunity to influence national currency and stamp design . His influence reached a high point in 1949 with his seminal report on the arts in Ireland which ultimately led to the foundation of the Arts Council.

This research draws on a number of primary manuscript sources in Irish and British archives and develops a number of themes. One of the most important of these concerns the Lane pictures debate to which Bodkin was a significant contributor through his book on Hugh Lane which outlined the Irish Government claim. This is relatively well known from the Irish perspective but until this study, unknown from the British. Research at the archives of the National Gallery in London and in the Public Record Office have produced critical new insights into the Lane bequest from the point of view of the Trustees of the National Gallery and the British Government. These archives have never before had the attention of researchers and this work introduces new material not included in Bodkin's book on Hugh Lane, or in Robert O'Byrne's recent biography of Lane. The research therefore is important in the context of the 1959 British and Irish agreement regarding the ongoing exhibition of the pictures between Dublin and London.

Bodkin's extensive collection of papers at Trinity College has been a key primary source for this research. They have been widely consulted by authors writing on his contemporaries, for example, Sarah Purser, Harry Clarke, Hazel Lavery and Hugh Lane. This research adds to the body of knowledge which has been emerging on such artistic and literary figures in an expanding area of studies. Bodkin's friendships and animosities throw new light on such figures as James Stephens, AE and W.B.Yeats and his interests and activities convey a picture of the world of the visual arts in the Ireland of his time. He lived through a period in Irish life which is well documented in political and historical terms, but social and cultural life has had less academic attention. The papers of Bodkin's close friend James Stephens, and those of Thomas McCreevy, also at TCD provided a useful source of information on the incestuous art world of early 20th century Dublin. At least as important is the focus of the research on the emergence of cultural policy decisions in Ireland. The relations between politics and administrative life have not had significant attention from scholars, particularly as they relate to the development of the cultural institutions. No comprehensive history of the National Gallery or the National Museum exists and this research adds to existing knowledge of the development of these institutions through Bodkin's eyes. The Bodkin collection at TCD has been consulted in relation to political correspondence between Bodkin and leaders such as W.T.Cosgrave and John A. Costello. The National Gallery of Ireland archives were instructive in relation to Bodkin's different roles there and a number of manuscripts at the National Library were also relevant in relation to Bodkin's father, Mathias, as well as for the papers of Sarah Purser and Hugh Lane. The National Archives provided a source both for Bodkin family papers and State papers in relation to Bodkin's administrative and policy roles. Arts Council files at the National Archives also provided material on one of Bodkin's most significant policy interventions, and Hugh Kennedy's papers in the archives of University College Dublin were also useful. The archives of Dublin Corporation were also examined as were those of the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art for information on the Lane pictures. Bodkin was a founding member of the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland and this archive source has also been instructive for the research.

Bodkin left Ireland in 1935 to establish a major collection at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Birmingham. The Barber Institute files were consulted for material on Bodkin in Birmingham, and the auction houses Christies and Sothebys and the National Gallery of Canada also provided useful information on Bodkin's art purchasing for the National Gallery and for his personal collection. The archives of the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland were consulted for information on Bodkin's role with that organisation. Bodkin's surviving daughters, Elizabeth Jameson, Ann Bodkin Parker and Bridget Hardwicke, and his nephew Richard Robinson were also consulted and provided useful material. An interview with James White, who knew the Bodkin family, was important, as were meetings with a number of Bodkin's colleagues and admirers in Birmingham. Of considerable significance was an interview kindly granted by Sir Denis Mahon who had first hand experience of the Lane affair as a Trustee of the National Gallery in London. His forensic study of the matter was invaluable for the research and he deserves recognition for persisting in stating the case from Lane's perspective, and thereby strengthening the argument for the arrangement which emerged between the Trustees of the National Gallery and the Irish Government.

The research builds on a number of secondary sources, among them being Brian Kennedy's important book on Irish cultural history, *Dreams and Responsibilities,* which identified Bodkin's ambitious cultural policy initiatives including those for the arts in education, and the development of the National Museum in the early years of the State. In Kennedy's view, Bodkin was ahead of his time in his policy proposals, and this study supports the view that there was little evidence of political commitment to cultural initiatives in times of severe economic stagnation. Alan Denson's admiring and detailed bibliographic survey was an invaluable source which provides evidence of Bodkin's remarkable versatility and his prolific output. Denson was a friend of Bodkin's and would disagree with Bruce Arnold's view that Bodkin played 'a modest but important part in the controversies which would affect art in Ireland'.[1] The research will show that this is an underestimation and that the influence of Bodkin was far from modest, although he might well have achieved much more in a different cultural climate, and he was never satisfied that the new Irish State was facing up to its responsibilities to the development

of the arts. Lady Gregory's Journals in two volumes and her own biography of Lane, along with that of Robert O'Byrne, are important secondary sources and in this context the research also builds on Bodkin's own study of Lane.

Monk Gibbon intended to divide his proposed biography into Bodkin's Irish and English lives. This study considers his life in Ireland and while recognition is given to his early years in England, which ultimately made him widely known to the British public, this period is not the subject of the research. Neither is it intended to comprehensively assess Bodkin as an art historian, although his views on art and its place in society are discussed in the context of contemporary artistic theory. The research does not evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of his art purchasing policy for either the National Gallery or the Barber Institute. Such a study would need to concentrate on the international art market at the time Bodkin was buying to assess whether or not he could have bought better. Bodkin often indicated an interest in finding bargains through dealers and auction rooms, and while this could yield good results, and it allowed him to build a personal collection of some value, it might not have guaranteed that the best possible work was acquired for the national collection, even given scarce resources. However, Bodkin bought well for the National Gallery, as the list in Appendix 1 indicates, and the attributions have stood the test of time. Detailed art historical research on his purchases for the National Gallery and the Barber Institute, and on his bequest through the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland (see Appendix 2) might well be the subject of a future study of Bodkin.

This research concentrates on Bodkin's influence on Irish cultural policy in the context of his family and friends. His life and work in Britain is included briefly and for the most part as it refers back to the Irish experience. Biographical detail is included for Bodkin's parents as well as for his own family, although his later family life in Birmingham has not had attention here. By 1935 the pattern of family life and relationships had been established and conversations with the Bodkin daughters indicate that the essential nature of family relationships was to remain unchanged as they became adults. Bodkin's own parents represented the relatively affluent Irish professional class in the early years of the

20th century – a class not often considered in Irish writing. Yet this description does not do justice to Bodkin's delightful and light-hearted father Mathias who, although ultimately appointed a County Court Judge, had also displayed his talents for journalism, politics, and novel writing. These activities kept him in contact with the bohemia he enjoyed, even if he was somewhat curtailed by his rather stern and formal wife, Arabella. Thomas Bodkin's youthful years provide some insight into life in such a family and as well as indicating his own precocious development. The years of his early maturity illuminate the spirit of the times which included the later days of the Celtic Revival, the 1916 Rebellion and the birth of a new State. The study therefore places Bodkin in the artistic and intellectual life of the time and the inclusion of the biographical material is also an attempt to reveal and understand his difficult and contradictory personality. The personal and institutional antagonisms which were to emerge played a significant part in frustrating Bodkin's own career ambitions, and put considerable limitations on his cultural policy expectations for Ireland.

The research is presented in chronological narrative form with Bodkin's key policy interventions included at relevant points in the text. This method was considered more appropriate than a purely thematic one, given the inclusion of biographical material. The young Bodkin is referred to as 'Tom' in early textual reference and this becomes 'Bodkin' as the adult emerges and TB in the endnotes. He was 'Tommy' to his friends and to his wife, but this diminutive never seemed appropriate for such a formal person. Bodkin's involvement with the affairs of the National Gallery run through the text, both for the years 1927 to 1935 when he was Director and also for the period 1917-1927 when he was active as a Governor and Guardian. He was re-appointed to the board in 1955 but his later role was much less significant although no less adversarial.[2] The profound influence of Hugh Lane on Bodkin also emerges in the research and his relationship with Lane was a formative one which guided and influenced him throughout his life. It is therefore appropriate that the Lane pictures affair receives considerable attention in this work. The research in relation to other policy areas indicates the difficult institutional context for the arts in the new Irish State and Bodkin's attempts to put the visual arts in particular on the political agenda. His persistence was ultimately successful in a number

of key areas and the research provides some indication of the reasons, both personal and institutional for the limitations in cultural policy initiatives in these critical years.

PREFACE

When Thomas Bodkin died on 24th April, 1961 his widow Aileen, as his literary executor, inherited ninety six boxes of his papers. His sense of history and of his own role in it, along with a lifelong instinct to collect, had ensured that few letters or other documents were ever discarded during his lifetime. As a result, a vast and fascinating collection had been accumulated, and Aileen Bodkin was faced with the formidable task of examining the papers and eliminating what she considered to be irrelevant or insignificant.

The question of a biography had been occupying Bodkin's mind and Mrs. Bodkin had lengthy discussions with Monk Gibbon, an old friend, who spent a week at the Bodkin home in Birmingham and undertook to do the work. Agreement to publish was reached between Gibbon and Constable but a disagreement between Aileen Bodkin and Monk Gibbon meant the project never went beyond a brief outline. Subsequently, Aileen Bodkin proposed to write her husband's memoir but she received little encouragement from Bodkin's brother Matthew, a Jesuit and himself a literary figure. He had written a manuscript on Tom, "sealed and labelled" and not to be read in either of their lifetimes, if ever. "I don't think it (a 'life') is often possible for an intimate or is easy for a contemporary". Perhaps discouraged by this, Mrs. Bodkin never completed the task. Alan Denson compiled a bibliographical survey in 1966 and much of the Bodkin Archive material is now at Trinity College Dublin and at the National Archive, where family papers were lodged in 1987 by Bodkin's daughter, Anne Bodkin Parker. Mrs. Parker has closed the considerable correspondence between her parents for 50 years

1 FAMILY, EARLY INFLUENCES AND HUGH LANE

"The Bodkins sneeze at the grim Chinese
They come from the Phoenicians." [3]

The folklore attaching to the Bodkin name has a rich genealogical tradition, and one which was particularly fascinating for Thomas Bodkin, both for its aristocratic and its romantic connotations. The Bodkins, with the Earls of Desmond and of Kildare, were said to have descended from a common ancestor, Maurice Fitzgerald, Lord of Windsor and one of the first invaders of Ireland under Strongbow. [4] Thomas, Earl of Desmond was said to be the ancestor of the Bodkin family whose name originated, according to tradition, from a victory about the year 1300 over a valiant Irish knight encountered in single combat. His use of a short spear or weapon - in Irish a baudekin, earned him the surname Buaidh Baudekin, or the victory of the Bodkin, a name afterwards retained by his descendants. In support of this myth a characteristic of the Bodkin tribe is said to be "bloody".[5] More tangible and less warlike as far as Thomas Bodkin was concerned was the Fitzgerald connection which was "fully ascertained by the testimony of antiquaries, by ancient stone sculptures and monuments and from the genealogies of the Geraldines, whose arms the Bodkin family bore for many generations and whose motto "Crom aboo" they retain to this day."[6] "Crom" was a pseudonym frequently used by Thomas Bodkin, principally in his undergraduate years.[7]

The Bodkins, whose name was also originally said to have been Poiticin, were one of the families which settled the town of Galway and contributed to its future prosperity. They were one of the fourteen Tribes of the city, the term "tribe" being used by Cromwellian settlers as a term of contempt. Later the families adopted the title themselves as a mark of distinction "serving to distinguish them both from the Cromwellians and from their fellow

townsmen."[8] Fables abound on the origins of the tribes, including one which involved the King of Spain sending twelve "rogues" to Galway instead of the requested twelve pairs of "brogues".[9] From 1484 to the conquest of 1653 the fourteen ancient families had ecclesiastic as well as municipal control. The Freemen of Galway secured Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction from the Archbishop of Tuam when he surrendered his authority for "a valuable consideration".[10] From then on the Collegiate Chapel of St. Nicholas was exempted from the See of Tuam and was ruled by a Clerical Warden and eight Vicars elected by the Mayor and fourteen Tribes. These families kept to themselves and insisted on English nationality and the maintenance of an English stronghold in the West. They were said to have been public spirited, wealthy and powerful and, ruling city and port, they lived in considerable luxury and splendour until deprived of their status and property by Cromwell. The Bodkins "came prominently into notice" [11] from 1652 onwards when Galway, after nine months siege surrendered to Cromwell's forces. Many of the gentry fled to France but some gave "singular good service" [12] to the English government and were rewarded. As county families they lived on in a dominant position in Connacht until the last half of the 19th century saw the progressive elimination of the landlord order.

Thomas Bodkin's great-grandfather John Bodkin, built himself a large stone house in Tuam, Co. Galway in the first half of the nineteenth century. His son Thomas was born in 1800 and having trained in medicine became known as the "Poor Man's Doctor". He lived at Eastland House, Tuam following a period spent sailing around the world as a ship's doctor. A friend of Daniel O'Connell and sharing his Emancipation vision, he was deeply religious, and provided not only medical help during the famine but also food. He never became a dispensary doctor because he did not think it compatible with the dignity of his profession, but he saw all his patients free on a Saturday, rich as well as poor, "in honour of Our Lady".[13]

Religious fervour and a tradition of public service were an important part of the life into which Mathias McDonnell Bodkin (and later his son Thomas) was born in 1849. Son of Thomas and Maria, he went to school at the Christian Brothers and afterwards at Tullabeg, a Jesuit school later amalgamated with Clongowes. Travelling by canal boat, he spent the whole year other than the summer months at school. In spite of this "no fellow ever had a pleasanter school time that I had."[14] It was a time of "undiluted happiness" and Tullabeg was a happy family and "perhaps the best intermediate school in Ireland." It was here that the love of literature, which was later to inspire his son Thomas, and of Shakespeare in particular, began in what was largely a classical education. The greatest and most inspiring master was Father Delany, a man of charm and fascination in whom "bigotry and prejudice could never survive". Father O'Carroll was a wonderful linguist who had fixed beside a mirror in his room a Sanskrit grammar which he memorised as he shaved. His mathematical ability equalled his linguistic skills but his lack of understanding of games put him out of sympathy with the boys. "My boy what do you want to go out to kick a piece of leather for, (his words for an exciting match) when you could be doing this beautiful problem with me." Matt Bodkin was in later life to exhibit considerable problem solving skills himself.

There was no atmosphere of cram at Tullabeg and religious knowledge as taught was nothing more than a memorised Catechism test. In consequence it fell into contempt and to be first in it was regarded almost as a disgrace. For Matt this did not reflect the moral or religious status of the school where he recalls never seeing the slightest sign of immorality. There was little corporal punishment even for deeds such as putting gunpowder in sods of turf for a priest's fire, or capturing swarms of wasps and bees in matchboxes for simultaneous release by every boy in the school. Food was good and plentiful. Tea was drunk from soup plates with spoons but no beer or intoxicating drink was allowed. This was not so for the priests and to the boys A.M.D.G. ("Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam") stood for "Alfred Murphy Drinks Grog." Alfred Murphy was the kindly but somewhat pompous rector of the school. Sick boys

went to the infirmary where Matt was a frequent visitor in his first year. He once complained that the eyes of a certain picture of the Virgin were bothering him by seeming to wink at him. To placate him the "presiding spirit" covered it with a cloth muttering to it as she did so:- "It's only to keep off the dust asthore." Medicine and pills were frequently thrown by the boys from the windows to be greedily swallowed by the hens and ducks in the yard below "with what results we could only guess."

Debates were common at Tullabeg and Matt Bodkin a regular prize-winner, as was his son Thomas in later years at Clongowes. It was on such an occasion that the nationalist feelings which were to play a major role in Matt's future were first publicly displayed. At a debate on the theme of the national aspirations, Matt "seized the chance" for an impassioned speech, "not I think much to the taste of the good Fathers my masters." However, an old brother signalled him to accompany him to his cobblers shop where he rewarded the speaker with "a great glass of beer," in spite of the restrictions. It would have been difficult to be immune to the "national aspiration" in post-famine Ireland particularly when a career in journalism was the path initially chosen by Mathias Bodkin. When he left Tullabeg he was keen to go to University but his mother had strong conscientious objections to the "Protestant University", Trinity College. They agreed to refer the question to their friend, the Dominican Father Tom Bourke whose verdict was conclusive. "No Catholic could enter Trinity College" he declared, "without danger of shipwreck of Faith and morals." Such a dire prediction could not be disobeyed by the pious Bodkins. Following a brief period at the unendowed Catholic University, Bodkin opted instead for a job as junior reporter with the *Freeman's Journal* while studying for the Bar. He married in 1884 Arabella Norman, daughter of a solicitor, Edward Norman and his wife Margaret Adrian. Arabella (whose pet name was Pidgie) was one of thirteen children of a Protestant/Catholic marriage in which the boys were brought up as Protestants and the girls as Catholics. The family lived at 16 Granby Row and were considered to be rather more financially secure than the Bodkins. In fact "it would be hard to

imagine a greater contrast in the backgrounds"[15] of Mathias and Arabella, and the Normans initially frowned on the marriage. It was a marriage between a relatively impoverished young man, up from the country and working his way through the Bar via journalism at the *Freeman's Journal*, and a young city woman whose background was that of Ascendancy Dublin, albeit in decline. The Norman wealth, which came from the Adrian side of the family, had its origins in manufacturing and the invention of a scarlet dye which made their woollens much in demand for army uniforms and scarlet jackets.[16] The Adrians were descended from a Huguenot family with a medical tradition like the Bodkins. An ancestor, John Adrian a surgeon, was a member of the United Irishmen and a friend of Lord Edward Fitzgerald.[17] In 1798 when Lord Edward was mortally wounded by Major Sirr, he was attended by John Adrian who initially practiced in Meath Street. As his practice grew he moved eastwards and having lived in Great Ship Street and Eustace Street he finally took the fine house 20 Dawson Street, the town residence of Lord Northlands and now the Royal Irish Academy. The connection with Lord Edward Fitzgerald must have inspired Mathias Bodkin who, perhaps also recalling the Fitzgerald/Bodkin tradition, subsequently wrote a novel based on the life of Lord Edward.[18] Political ancestry also existed on the Norman side. Henry Grattan's niece married Robert Norman who was Arabella's great-grandfather.

Mathias Bodkin and Arabella Norman settled down to life in Great Denmark Street in what seems to have been a marriage in which two very different personalities had in common their strong Catholic beliefs. The Normans eventually accepted Matt for their daughter, perhaps finally seeing that he was a rather carefree, as well as "a very amusing and a really good fellow."[19] His interest in politics continued to grow and his journalism was gradually curtailed following his admission to the Bar in 1877. The question of a seat in Parliament was raised and at one point he was the unanimous choice of the priests as Nationalist candidate for Tuam. He declined and Parnell's candidate Matt Harris was selected.[20] Some days later a message to Bodkin from Parnell

conveyed that a seat elsewhere was at his disposal if he wanted to enter Parliament. He saw no way of supporting himself in London "so my poverty, and not my will, refused."[21] Wilfred Blunt remembered him as "far from a revolutionist in his ideas. He is really as clever a man and speaker as any of them but he cannot afford to go into Parliament as he has his living to make: but as soon as there is a Parliament in Dublin he will stand."[22] Arabella on the other hand was "a rather domineering sort of person"[23] who was strict with the servants and ran a smooth household. She was very much a city person, "very gay and very elegant",[24] who did not enjoy visits to the country cousins in Kildare. When the family moved to 52 Upper Mount Street and the newspapers arrived in the morning "the *Freeman* would go into Matt and the *Irish Times* would go upstairs for Arabella".[25] In spite of her Catholicism and her marriage to Matt the Norman Protestant and Ascendancy tradition remained strong. Two of her sisters were regarded to have married rather better than Arabella, a fact that did not escape the more malicious Dublin gossips.[26] However, although her physical appearance was somewhat severe compared with her husband's genial looks, she was a very good hearted person who was kind to anyone in trouble and generous in looking after the needy.

The arrival of a family must have made Matt's parliamentary ambitions seem even more distant. The first-born arrived on 21st July 1887. Thomas Patrick Bodkin was named after the 'poor man's doctor' and his son Patrick, also a doctor, who died young of cholera while attending patients during an epidemic in Tuam. Tom was the first of six children, four girls and two boys, and he was delicate and prone to illnesses in his early years.[27] This made him the odd one out in a very robust and active family. His father was a keen cyclist and as the children grew up he took them on bicycle tours, or swimming. Tom would never take part in such energetic activities and from the outset was regarded as different by the other children. In spite of this, family relationships were strong and loving, although tempestuous from time to time.

During Thomas Bodkin's early years his father's political interests continued to grow. He became involved again in journalism when William O'Brien, his old

colleague at the *Freeman's Journal*, became editor of the Nationalist campaigning paper, *United Ireland*. This paper had been started in 1881 as" a vehicle for Parnell's own ideas and policies."[28] O'Brien, an M.P. for Mallow, his birthplace, from 1883, had been agitating for land reform and in his absences from the paper and from the country in 1890 had nominated Mathias Bodkin as his deputy. Bodkin was acting as editor and chief writer of *United Ireland* when the Parnell scandal occurred and upon him therefore, had fallen "the immediate responsibility for the line taken by the paper in the confusing weeks that followed the Parnell divorce case."[29] He initially adopted a pro-Parnell stance but later, "the influence of O'Brien and Dillon and the declaration of the Catholic hierarchy induced him to change his views, and he strenuously opposed Parnell's claim in what he believed to be the best interests of the Irish movement, though never with a trace of the scurrility which too often disgraced that sad controversy."[30]

Matt Bodkin admired O'Brien and considered him a friend. O'Brien was godfather to Bodkin's second child, Margaret although he could not be present "to officiate in person and take charge of my little godchild.....it is one of the inconveniences of choosing so stormy a petrel as myself for any useful domestic office."[31] As his deputy at United Ireland it would have been inconceivable for Bodkin to disobey instructions from the editor in relation to the paper's treatment of Parnell. Following instructions from O'Brien, on 6th December 1890 the paper declared strongly on the anti-Parnell side and this led to its take-over by Parnell and some supporters and the removal of Bodkin from his position.[32] Bodkin had been caught in a battle of strength between the two wings of the party. He was by no means a radical revolutionary and while he was committed to Home Rule, his strong Catholic upbringing and background and his links with some of the hierarchy, who regularly communicated with him at the paper, made an anti-Parnell position inevitable.[33] Conor Cruise O'Brien has pointed out that those closer to the clergy tended to be anti-Parnell while his support was largely from those who were more

individualistic.[34] In the case of Mathias Bodkin both tendencies apply. He was both a strong minded individual and had close links with the clergy. The split caused deep personal bitterness, particularly among MPs like O'Brien, "partly because they were revolutionary politicians; they had come into politics as reformers and campaigners and had had strong ideological convictions.....all possessed....a certain dash of fanaticism"[35] something which would have been completely out of character for the genial Bodkin. While describing himself as ''a convinced and outspoken Home Ruler"[36] he took little part in active politics before being called to the Bar. During the hectic period which followed the Parnell takeover of *United Ireland* Bodkin's health suffered and he lost one and a half stones in weight.[37] He initially brought out a paper called *Suppressed United Ireland* but following legal action by the Parnellites to prevent the use of United Ireland in the title, the paper was renamed *Insuppressible*, a title borrowed from a cable of William O'Brien. This lasted for three weeks, with the supply of copies never coming near to reaching the demand. It was an unpaid job for Bodkin and it ended with the collapse of *Insuppressible* on 24th January 1891.

It is not difficult to imagine the effect of this turmoil on the young Bodkin family and on the precocious four year old Tom. By now two daughters, Norah and Margaret, had been born and Arabella was expecting their fourth child. They had received condolences in their troubles from many friends, including Bishop Donnelly, Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin, who wrote to "Pidgie" about "the shameful treatment to which your good husband was subjected...at the hands of that awful scoundrel".[38] Her husband was "a thousand times too good to be throwing himself away on such a crew...Be of good heart. Your husband is a truly good man." The question of a seat in Parliament arose again and this time, in spite of his young family and some financial constraints, he consented to stand for the National Party in the constituency of North Roscommon against J. J. O'Kelly. Although it was regarded as a forlorn hope and he acted as his own election agent, he won the seat after a desperate fight by the narrow margin of fifty two votes. It was "a genuine old-fashioned Irish election"[39] afterwards

commemorated in his novel "White Magic". This was written in the intervals of his parliamentary life, from which many incidents and scenes were drawn.

Leaving the family in Dublin, he found it possible to live "fairly comfortably" as a member of Parliament on £150 a year in London. This involved using his favourite mode of transport, his bicycle, to get to the House of Commons. For four years he was active in the last Gladstone parliament in which Home Rule was carried in the Commons and rejected in the Lords but he decided not to seek re-election on the dissolution in 1894. The period in London had not been without cost because Matt refused to accept payment from his party, by then impoverished. His savings disappeared and Arabella was anxious about the future.

In spite of long absences from home, the influence of his father on the young Thomas Bodkin was strong. To Tom's childish eyes his father was "a noble specimen of perfect manhood,"[40] and to him in particular Tom owed "the taste for reading which has been the greatest pleasure of my life."[41] It was a pastime that particularly suited a child who was delicate and subject to ill-health, something naturally of great concern to his parents. Matt was an affectionate and demonstrative father who shared his thoughts and concerns for young Tom with an unusual friend. Before his marriage to Arabella he began a correspondence with a fifteen year old American girl, Irene Putnam, a poet from Bennington, Vermont who published in the *New York Tribune*. She corresponded from the outset with "Dear Matt" and continued to do so for some twenty years. They exchanged books and poems and shared a love of writers such as Poe and Lamartine and, of course, Matt's favourite, Shakespeare. By then Matt had begun his own writing career - he published many novels and stories, some strongly influenced by the work of Charles Lever - and Irene loved the stories which gave her glimpses of a life so different from her own. Matt published her work in United Ireland and sent her photographs of the children. She found his eldest child, Tom, "the sweetest and prettiest baby"

and was charmed by the "darling little boy,"[42] and upset to learn that he had had another severe illness.[43]

As a small delicate boy of seven or eight Tom was rarely allowed out by himself but life seen from the windows of the nursery at 9 Great Denmark Street was full of activity and colour. Men passed by carrying great white dishes, calling "Honey", and fishwives cried "Dublin Bay Herrings". Street performers including pipers, drummers and ballad singers also provided entertainment for the little boy. A Christmas treat for the Bodkin children was shopping with their father and winding up with a large tea in Bewley's in Westmoreland Street. The many generous country relations provided the turkey for Christmas dinner and toys were simple. But the panto was a great favourite and looked forward to from one year to the next. However to Tom's later recollection Christmas was a disappointing time, never celebrated in Dublin with "Dickensian exuberance.....Great expectations were always followed by bleak house and often by hard times."[44] When special guests came to dinner Tom was sometimes sent out by his father to buy a packet of Novelty Dukes Cameo cigarettes at Mitchells in Sackville Street and as he grew older he went out to music lessons. "Old Munroe" who played in the Empire Theatre provided lessons on the fiddle and visits to McNeills, who made musical instruments in Capel Street, provided hours of entertainment at the back of the shop where, rumour had it, the bugle that sounded the charge at Balaclava was made.[45]

It was at school at the Loreto Convent in North Great George's Street that he first fell in love, aged seven, with a girl called Alice Doyle who was fifteen. They never spoke. However, shyness and reticence were not in character for Tom. As the only boy in the Bodkin household until the arrival of the youngest child when Tom was nine, he was highly regarded by his sisters. He was capable of kindness, making a Noah's ark for Rose, but also of mischief, even cruelty. At one time when the family was away "for the season" he came behind his nurse and cut off her plait. "I know it was only for the fun of it you

done it", wrote Lizzie Nolan many years later when she had heard him on the wireless.[46]

Lizzie also remembered the great care Arabella took of Tom when he was ill. It was following another illness that ten year old Tom was despatched to stay with his Aunt Kate (his father's sister) and Uncle Frank in Beauparc House in Co. Kildare. This was to begin a memorable friendship with an uncle and godfather whom he loved and admired, and a happy period of life the memories of which long lingered. "More than a quarter of a century has gone by since then and yet I am closer to that dead man than to most of my friends and kindred still living. His being is part of my own."[47]

Beauparc was a large, well-proportioned house, built in the early 19th century and standing on a rise at the end of a long timbered drive through ancient pastures. Young Tom remembered the house with its sweep of blue limestone steps leading to an entrance hall paved in black and white marble and inner doors opening on to the comfortable cluttered living rooms. At Beauparc and with the guidance of his uncle he discovered Dickens, Scott, Fenimore Cooper, Captain Marryat, Wilkie Collins, Trollope and Charles Lever. Lever was also a particular favourite of Matt's and an influence on his writing:- "Once upon a time Lever's books were the most popular pictures of Ireland...hard-drinking, hard-riding, frolicking, rollicking Irish hero's [sic]."[48] At Beauparc too, during endless summer days, Tom discovered *Tom Sawyer*, and *Huckleberry Finn*, but reading Bram Stoker's *Dracula* proved too exciting. That night "my heart beat louder and faster.....as I waited in anguish to see the vampire Count glide down the ladder of moonbeams to the bare floor and creep towards me to suck my blood."[49]

Some outdoor pursuits such as fishing and cricket also attracted Tom at Beauparc and he was led to these by his literary explorations. Mark Twain's *Celebrated Jumping Frog of the Calaveras County* had him collecting "a battalion of large frogs from the pond" to see "which of them could spring

farthest down the wide staircase from the first-floor landing"[50] of the house. This incurred the wrath of Uncle Frank but it was superficial and short lived in the kindly man. Uncle Frank was a doctor and his treatment of the convalescent Tom involved some familiar orthodoxies such as "copious draughts" of iron tonic and cod-liver oil, both of which he detested. The oil in particular was "peculiarly noxious" coming as it did in an unrefined state from a Dublin fishmonger. Uncle Frank's recipe for good health was "sunlight, sound food and a good woman to look after you" [51], the latter no doubt providing the invalid with the fresh butter, calves-foot jelly and cracknel biscuits which were also part of the recipe for recovery. At Beauparc the days were long and full. "Between each dawn and sunset, time without limit, full of rich experience and adventure, seemed to lie stretched before me. I took life carelessly as it came and found it good indeed."[52]

Life back in the city was beginning to centre in the arts activities that were to become dominant for Thomas Bodkin. When he was thirteen he entertained a friend of his father's at the National Museum who wrote afterwards to Matt to say how charmed he was by Tom - "your most delightful boy" with "his bright little ways and chatter in the Museum".[53] Tom knew all the birds and minerals but, either being the perfect host, or reflecting his father's political influence, "better still, every brave Irishman who fought or strove for the 'old land'". When Tom brought the visitor to statues of Robert Emmet and Lord Edward FitzGerald, his guest noticed one or two policemen laughing as he pointed out "the casts of the two great heroes." School was now at Belvedere College where he began to be interested in pictures and where "an older boy" attracted his attention. He was good-looking, something of a figure. It was James Joyce.[54] A Jesuit education was family tradition following his father's happy days at Tullabeg, and Tom later recorded his debt to the Order which he remembered "with affection and esteem." However he remembered that "a good many" of the community in Belvedere at that time had "a distinct trace of sadism"[55] in their characters. One of the priests, Father Cullen, who brought on a temporary bout of piety in Joyce following a retreat, was particularly

disliked by Tom for his "repellent way of addressing his young congregation at retreats as "My dear little brothers in Jesus Christ". He indulged his sadistic instincts and "found it humorous to offer to shake hands with young boys and then squeeze their hands until they yelled with pain." At the time when Tom and James Joyce were students there the rector, Father Henry, was "a harsh insensitive man" and Belvedere was "not a happy school".[56]

At fourteen, and again following family tradition, Tom was sent as a boarder to Clongowes, where he quickly excelled academically, taking prizes for English and debating. His long writing career began with a piece in the school journal the Clongownian. "Home for the Holidays" written in 1903 when Tom was sixteen, anticipates Stephen Dedalus. "We mount our car, prepare our time-honoured cigarette, and amid a hearty send-off, we start. We bowl merrily on our way past the bare racing hedges; we clatter through Clane, where there are many windows open and many forms peering out already to see us pass; we pass in a rush and a jolt the Liffey bridge and soon we are in Sallins."[57] Stephen Dedalus later echoes this experience: "Going home for the holidays! That would be lovely: the fellows had told him. Getting up on the cars in the early wintry morning outside the door of the castle. The cars were rolling on the gravel. Cheers for the rector! Hurray! Hurray! Hurray! The cars drove past the chapel...They drove merrily along the country roads...Through Clane they drove, cheering and cheered. The peasant women stood in the half doors, the men stood here and there...."[58]

For most boarding school students the concept of "home" naturally engenders longing and for Tom Bodkin the very word conjured "an infinity of tenderness". Nevertheless Clongowes was almost as pleasant an experience for him as Tullabeg had been for his father. In this it was quite unlike the Belvedere experience. One reason for his happiness was that the competitive and ambitious spirit that was to develop and intensify throughout much of his life had room to flourish at Clongowes. The all male environment provided respite from what at home was a female dominated atmosphere, albeit a robust and

lively one. There is no evidence that Tom suffered the agonies or "torpor of the soul" of Dedalus at Clongowes and unlike his father he was not renowned for his sports activities. He was a member of the school choir, a poetry scholar and a second assistant in the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary in which Joyce had also served. But his special strength lay in debating and in 1903 his contribution on the topic of "Whether Scott or Dickens has left the truer and more imposing gallery of literary pictures" inspired the comment: "T. Bodkin was remarkable for his style, which was very good; his arguments which were very well developed; and his delivery, which was very impressive.....T. Bodkin was very good on all points, his delivery being very fine."[59] In the following year Tom began contributing to the *Irish Packet*, the weekly journal then being edited by his father, and doing reviews for the *Freeman's Journal*. Some work was surreptitiously written in the study hall along with the caricatures which were also to be part of his creative life.

Friendships were made at school which were later cemented at university. Tom left Clongowes in 1905 to begin university and he was naturally drawn to the main debating society in the Royal University. He became a member of the Literary and Historical Society in the year of its Golden Jubilee in 1905 at a time when the society was very alive and intensely active. He joined with fellow Clongownians Maurice Healy, Michael McGilligan and Joseph Brennan, all of whom had been contestants in previous years in the Clongowes Higher Line Debate. Maurice and Tom in particular had been "old antagonists"[60], a rivalry that was to continue for over thirty years. They competed for auditorship of the L & H with Tom winning in 1908/9. The times were exciting for students and meetings were uproarious. In 1905 there had been problems with College authorities because some members of the L & H, including Francis Cruise O'Brien, known as Crusoe, John Kennedy and Sarsfield Kerrigan had participated in a scene at conferring in the previous year when the organist was forcibly prevented from playing "God Save the King."[61] Paddy

Little was on the Committee with Tom and neither could have anticipated then how their fates were destined to meet in a fundamental way in later years.

The role of women was beginning to be challenged by the Society with debate topics such as "it is not for the advantage of a nation that its women should be educated on exactly the same lines as its men", and a motion that "whenever the word 'students' occurred it should be interpreted to mean both male and female students". Tom Bodkin was absent for the latter, but "I certainly should have spoken against it."[62] He chaired a motion to reverse the decision to admit ladies and the minutes record: "Bodkin in summing up said he was against having women in the Society." The admission of women was raised continuously and Tom "had a great deal of difficulty in silencing or side-tracking the advocates of that disastrous proposition." It was not until 1910 that women were finally admitted to membership, Tom having ceased to be an active member "when the women invaded it." As far as he was concerned, when societies had a mixed membership "the men compete for the attention of the ladies and the ladies seemed very willing to provide distraction from serious business." He was never to change this point of view and even in 1955 felt the debating standard of the L & H would be higher still "were women persuaded to drop out of the Society or compelled to do so."[63] For him the Society was fun but it was also "serious business" because it was "the best part" of the education he got at University. His real learning, he later said, began with the practice of his profession and through making mistakes.[64]

The "real learning" which was to have the greatest influence on Tom began with Hugh Lane, who, although less than twelve years older than Tom, was already well-established as a successful art collector and dealer. For a period of about six months between 1905 and January 1906 Tom lived in Paris, having persuaded his father to allow him to make the trip and miss some time at University. In Paris he had "an extraordinarily pleasant stay....learning a little French, looking at a lot of pictures and doing nothing that could properly be called "work".[65] By now he had met Hugh Lane who was to have the most

formidable influence on the direction his life was to take. They met through Tom's father whose literary pursuits involved a passion for theatre and a role as dramatic critic for the *Freeman's Journal* for some twenty years. Matt was at home in the world of the arts. "The theatre is an adjacent province to the newspaper office in the pleasant kingdom of Bohemia."[66] His own bohemian spirit had taken him in 1904 to a meeting of the World's Press Parliament in St. Louis, Missouri but one of his main objects in the visit was to meet his young pen friend, Irene Putnam. Each year "a score, at least, of long and confidential letters" had been exchanged between Matt and his "child friend", now a woman. "At our first meeting Irene gave me her hand. 'That's too cold', I said, 'for such old friends as you and I,' and I kissed her. She was all and even more than all, her letters had promised, and our correspondence is more cordial than ever since we met." [67]

Matt Bodkin's "editorial duties" at the *Freeman's Journal* made him acquainted with Hugh Lane who became a frequent visitor to the Bodkin house. Matt's carefree character is evident: "Though I yield to no man in my ignorance of painting, I agreed to write the notice (on Lane's first exhibition in Dublin in 1905) for the *Freeman's Journal*, and by the assimilation of hints and suggestions, a very necessary faculty of the journalist, and by writing all the little I knew and carefully evading the great deal I didn't know, I contrived a three-column article that pleased and helped him. His gratitude was the beginning of our friendship." [68] Matt was fascinated by Lane's "strange gift" with pictures. "He lives for pictures and by pictures. His eyes are more discriminating of artistic excellence than the sensitive palate of the taster in determining the quality of tea or the vintage of wine." The relationship with Lane was warm and friendly and presents were frequently exchanged. Matt wanted to give Lane a picture but he refused to accept it on the grounds that "I reserve the monopoly of picture giving to myself."[69] Lane gave the Bodkins a Copley-Fielding water-colour inscribed on the back:" To Arabella from Hugh who likes her good cakes and hates her bad bridge."[70] He offered to clean a large landscape for the Bodkins and said their collection would soon be famous.

He wanted them to have their portrait painted while they were both "lively and handsome" and sent them oranges at Christmas. Arabella, whom Lane called his "Fairy Godmother", sent him the iced plum cakes he loved, and in 1914 his Christmas card, a reproduction of St. George, after Mantegna was inscribed "To Arabella with love, Hugh."

The friendship with Tom began when he was about sixteen and Lane a sophisticated man of the art world. Tom had won Lane's favour by his own "discriminating taste for pictures"[71] and went on picture hunts in Dublin with Lane, who also showed him how to clean pictures. Although there is no evidence that they met while Tom was in Paris, Lane is likely to have influenced the way Tom spent his time there in 1905 and to have persuaded Matt and Arabella of the desirability of the visit.[72] The Bodkins were not wealthy and the expenditure incurred would have been significant for them. In fact the family had been "in terms of the circles in which they moved, really hard up at times."[73] It was in Paris that Tom began "to learn something about art and some French" and he spent most of each day at the Louvre "looking at pictures to some advantage."[74] He had begun to develop a small working library of art books, "which he thickly interleaved with extra illustrations, mostly cut out of magazines,"[75] and bought his first picture – a May Guinness of the Luxembourg Gardens in 1908.[76] Tom helped in the arranging of the rooms and the hanging of Lane's collection at 17 Harcourt Street in 1908. "The memory of many delightful weeks spent in his company at the time, from morning till night, is still clear and precious."[77] They corresponded on art sales as well as gallery developments. They dined together in Dublin, at the United Arts Club in Lincoln Chambers, where Tom, aged eighteen was nominated for membership by Lane. Tom was to remain an active member of the Club (and President for a period) throughout his life. The two men attended the Abbey Theatre together, sometimes in the company of "Valentine William" and it was at the Abbey that Tom recalled first meeting Lane's aunt, Lady Gregory, at the first night of her adaptation of Goldini's Mirandolina, entitled "Mary Ann

Dolan".[78] This was not one of her best works, Tom felt, and he was surprised at the lavish praise from Lane, which was sincere enough. However, "Lane was no judge of literature despite his extraordinary sensitivity where the visual arts were concerned."[79] He was also very proud of his aunt's success. Lady Gregory, while always polite to Tom, was "slightly condescending"[80] to him, although they met infrequently. Lane and William Orpen had devised the decoration of the Abbey - the black and gold of the proscenium arch, the feigned marble, the laurel moulding of the frieze and the two great circular mirrors framed in beaten copper.[81] Lane was in awe of his "Aunt Augusta" and jealous or resentful of her patronage of W.B.Yeats whom he met in 1900 at Coole as a fellow guest. He considered Yeats to be "a highly affected and pretentious person"[82]. The feeling was mutual with Yeats instantly disliking Lane, finding him "full of his recent success" and, talking of "the great houses where he had been, his own ambitions seemed worldly".[83] To Yeats, Lane's intelligence was not obvious and he appeared ignorant of modern writers and painters. But in spite of the bad beginning, the men became quite friendly later on and Yeats supported Lane in his ambition for a gallery of modern art for Dublin.

Tom visited Lane in London, at his home Lindsey House, 100 Cheyne Walk: "There's the garden to play in. Do come."[84] This must have been as irresistible a view of another world for Tom as Irene Putnam's glimpse of the Irish literary and political renaissance provided by Matt for the young girl from Vermont. For Tom, Lane's world was real, it was exciting, but it must also have been full of conflict and contradictions. In spite of his father's undoubted bohemian lifestyle on the fringes of the theatrical and artistic life of Dublin, the Bodkin background was solid bourgeoisie with the female oriented household firmly in Arabella's hands. William O'Brien's wife, Sophie described Arabella as having "great qualities of charm, of artistic taste, and ..a more practical turn of mind than her husband."[85] Matt on the other hand had "a giant's frame, a catching laugh, a heart of gold." Matt adored his wife and although she could be thought of as hard on him, theirs was a long and affectionate marriage. He

expressed his love in poems written for Arabella to mark every possible occasion..."love has grown with every hour that fled". Arabella enjoyed this and asked him to write verses for her, something that often constrained his style. "The love that was born when we first met has grown with each happy Christmas that fled..." Pidgie was the "dearest wife on earth" and on Valentine's Day, "Love itself I never knew, Until Sweetheart I looked at you...."[86] The Bodkin home, where William and Sophie O'Brien were often entertained, was a happy and comfortable place, with children brought up "admirably" and Matt "at his best...surrounded by his children and friends, throwing all cares to the wind."[87]

The world inhabited by Lane could not have been more different from this. A bachelor living in some style at Cheyne Walk, Lane's world must have epitomised glamour and freedom to the younger man. It was also free of women because "the society of women did not seem to give him any special pleasure".[88] However, Lane's social life was lively, with tea parties, dinners and weekends in country houses, all of which as well as being enjoyable, were also good for business. Lane particularly enjoyed fancy-dress occasions and Tom later recalled an evening when he called to the Bodkin house dressed as a French cavalry colonel and insisted on taking him to a fancy-dress ball. Tom was "a raw youth at the time, highly self-conscious",[89] and refused to go at first. However, Lane devised "a bizarre costume for me and carried me off in his wake." Lane had another "magnificent costume" in which he appeared as a courtier of Philip II of Spain, and Tom, who had obviously enjoyed the fancy-dress experience, later impersonated a "medieval Spanish gentleman" at the Nine Arts Ball and in another year won a prize while emulating his friend at the same Ball as Philip II of Spain.[90]

A turmoil of the soul which was absent during Tom's time at Clongowes was becoming associated with his English visits and expressed in his poetry:

"Among the Elms, by the silver Thames
Deep in the imagined age to be,
He pulled flowers of a far-come Time
And brought them back to me,
He swept me forward to the lonely shore
of a dead world beside a rotting sea
I saw, I felt, I heard what is to come
As in an extasy [sic]"[91]

In his romantic poem "April" written before September 1907 there is evidence of unhappiness:

"Oh that I might far from the city fly,
From all the din and turmoil of the streets,
And breathe the incense-bearing breath of spring
Drinking the perfume of the rich moist air;
And lying on the grass might lay my face
On Nature's breast and whisper all my toil,
For she alone can soothe my sickened heart
And gather all my sobbing into sleep."[92]

Part of Lane's fascination must have been that with him Tom met like-minded people, sometimes on motoring trips in the English countryside. After Lane's death one correspondent recalled a visit to Browham Beeches with Tom and Hugh Lane. "I remember our conversation in the wood...I had lately felt that there was a great community of feeling between us, and just when we were seeing more of each other than ever previously this awful thing has happened.....I look back with pleasure on that day that we spent together with him..."[93]

At a certain point the friendship between the Bodkins and Lane had become focused on Tom and although correspondence from Lane to Tom almost always

ended with "my love to all" it was Tom who now attracted Lane. Bodkin's support of Lane and of the cause of the return of the Lane pictures to Dublin is well documented but his "posthumous advocacy on Lane's behalf has over-shadowed his significance to the live lion."[94] Lane basked in the adulation of the younger man, and kept press-cuttings of Tom's articles about his work. The men had a love of pictures in common and the younger man's literary pursuits also provided the flattery and support that Lane so badly needed. Tom admired Lane's attractive personality, "so romantic and appealing", his "large, intelligent, brown eyes...his shapely, expressive hands; his distinguished carriage and his soft, cultured voice."[95] Lane was "something of a dandy and spent a good deal of time and money on his clothes."[96] In this Tom emulated Lane throughout his life, wearing the pins and attire of a fastidious gentleman of his time, at least as far as his more limited finances would allow. In later life he was described as "a dandy as defined by Barbey d'Aurevilly...manicured to the finest meniscus of cuticle..chevelured to the finest strand of his silvery head and beard."[97] Tom's writing skills were now well-developed and his abilities were "probably the most penetrating and appreciative" of any Lane had.[98] In 1914 Lane thought an article of Tom's "quite excellent" and wrote: "I will come in tomorrow evening if my courage - cheek does not fail me."[99] This was likely to have been one of several pieces written in the press on Lane's gift to the National Gallery. Lane was a regular caller to the Bodkins at 52 Upper Mount Street where Tom entertained his friends in his room on the top floor. There the lively conversation centred on the Dublin arts, and in particular, the visual arts world.

Lane, like so many other creative people at the time, was attracted to alternative lifestyles, including spiritualism, and this must also have been in conflict with Tom's solid bourgeois Catholic and Jesuit background. Lady Gregory[100] described a period in 1913 when Lane's "nerves" were "unstrung" and Tom later recalled his friend's delicate constitution as having been "seriously damaged" and becoming "distinctly neurasthenic".[101] He found relief in being driven fast in his motor and in attending "the more unorthodox

type of nerve-specialist". Treatment was of a "quasi-hypnotic kind" as described by Bodkin or, in his aunt's terms, at the hands of a "faith healer" or Christian Scientist. Following Lane's death a medium, Hester Travers Smith, wrote to Tom regarding a séance in which she saw Hugh Lane. "What was far more convincing to us (Lennox Robinson and me) than that first sitting was one we had last August in the presence of Sir N. and Lady Barreti. Sir Hugh came in a state of tremendous agitation to chide me for my doubts of his identity on the night of the Lusitania sitting! The force of the thing was most amazing and the sense one had that someone was in a towering rage! also the expressions were just those one would expect from Sir H - Of course these things lose much in the telling."[102] Tom replied to this and got the response: "My impression is that you and your church are right; it is often a dangerous experiment if carried far and only a little can be gained from it - but it is hardly as fascinating or perilous as opium smoking."[103] Tom was aligning himself with his religious background and avoiding the seduction of alternative lifestyles.

Tom heard of the sinking of the *Lusitania* when he was in the Arts Club. He received the news "with great distress for I had reason to think that Hugh Lane was on board".[104] He had lost "a very great friend...the kindest and best friend I have ever had." When Tom last saw him "he was an upright, handsome, gay man, full of ability, full of generosity, and obviously at the very peak of a great career." Through Lane Tom had been introduced to another exciting and cosmopolitan world but without his friend and mentor he turned away from this in favour of a more conventional life that he was sure could be created in the arts in Dublin. Lane, whom he later regarded as "worldly"[105], was for Tom "a handsome and charming man, the most delightful of companions, but he was human like us all, and showed at times the difficult side of his highly temperamental nature."[106] This "difficult side" was incompatible with the path chosen by Tom who wanted a safer, more familiar route through life, and one more likely to lead him towards happiness and fulfilment. But the influence of Lane, and of what might have been, was to remain and to have an effect on his friendships and on his future marriage and career. And the "codicil of

forgiveness" to Lane's will, which referred to "my friend Tom Bodkin", was to allow him an important role in the fight for the return of the Lane pictures to Dublin.

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[1] Bruce Arnold. *Mainie Jellett and the Modern Movement in Ireland*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1991, 66
[2] Interview with James White June, 1991. It was indicated that TB made life difficult for two directors who succeeded him, George Furlong and Thomas McGreevy.
[3] Quoted in M. McDonnell Bodkin. *Recollections of an Irish Judge, Press, Bar and Parliament*. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1914, 2.
[4] James Hardiman. *The History of the Town and County of Galway from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*. Dublin: printed by W. Folds, 1820.
[5] Anthony MacDermott. 'The Tribes of Galway'. *Irish Genealogist*, 2, 4, 1946, 99.
[6] Hardiman, 10.
[7] Alan Denson. *Thomas Bodkin: Bibliography*. Dublin: The Bodkin Trustees, 1966, 66.
[8] MacDermott, 100.
[9] NA 1155/1/2/12 M. McDonnell Bodkin, 'High Old Times', 1/2.
[10] MacDermott, 100
[11] NA 1155/1/4/7 ms. presented to TB by G.V. Martyn, January 1925.
[12] ibid.
[13] NA 1155/1/4/7 notes by Emma Bodkin.
[14] NA 1155/1/2/12 Mathias Bodkin 'Sixty five years ago', reminiscences dictated to Matthew Bodkin.
[15] NA 1155/1/4/31 ms. Aileen Bodkin, 'Thomas Bodkin'.
[16] Conversation with Richard Robinson, son of Margaret, sister of TB, 20th November 1991.
[17] NA 1155/1/4/7 ms. in papers of Emma Norman and notes on the Adrian family made by Mattie Bodkin, September 1965.
[18] Mathias Bodkin. *Lord Edward FitzGerald: An Historical romance.* London: Chapman & Hall, 1896
[19] NA 1155/1/2/13, quoting Wilfred Scawen Blunt's memoirs.
[20] M. McDonnell Bodkin.
[21] ibid., 20.
[22] NA 1155/1/2/13 quoting Wilfred Scawen Blunt's memoirs.
[23] Conversation with Richard Robinson.
[24] NA 1155/1/4/31 TB 'The reluctant exile' ms. Aileen Bodkin, 18.
[25] Conversation with Richard Robinson.
[26] One sister, Cis, married Sir James Murphy of the shipping firm Palgrave Murphy, and another, Margaret, married Sir Andrew Horne, President of the Irish College of Physicians and founder of the National Maternity Hospital, Dublin.
[27] Conversation with Richard Robinson.

[28] F.S.L.Lyons. *The Fall of Parnell 1890-91*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960, 155, and Sally Warwick Haller. *William O'Brien and the Irish Land War*. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1990.
[29] Lyons, 156.
[30] NA 1155/1/2/13 ms. by TB, undated.
[31] NLI F.S.Bourke Collection 10,702 William O'Brien to Mathias Bodkin undated, but Margaret was born in October 1888.
[32] Lyons, 157, and Warwick Haller.
[33] NLI F.S.Bourke Collection 10,702 William J. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin to Mathias Bodkin outlines Archbishop's role in anti-Parnell strategy for bitter Kilkenny election.
[34] Conor Cruise O'Brien. *Parnell and His Party*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957.
[35] Tom Garvin. *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1981, 84.
[36] M. McDonnell Bodkin, 147.
[37] ibid. 175/7.
[38] NLI F.S.Bourke Collection 10,702 Bishop Donnelly to Arabella Bodkin, 10th December 1890.
[39] NA 1155/1/2/13 ms. unsigned (possibly for an obituary by Thomas Bodkin).
[40] TB, *My Uncle Frank*. London: Robert Hale, 1941, 35.
[41] ibid., 69/70.
[42] NLI F.S.Bourke collection 10,702 Irene Putnam to Mathias Bodkin, 13th March 1888.
[43] ibid., 19th February 1902.
[44] TCD 6934/67 Broadcast, T.B. with Brinsley McNamara (undated).
[45] TCD 6934/1-24 Broadcast 'Looking Back' No. 1.
[46] NA 1155/1/4/10 Lizzie Nolan to TB, undated but following broadcast by TB.
[47] TB, *My Uncle Frank*, 144.
[48] NA 1155/1/2/12 'High Old Times', 1.
[49] TB, *My Uncle Frank*, 72.
[50] ibid., 38.
[51] ibid., 62.
[52] ibid., 107.
[53] NLI F.S.Bourke collection 10,702 M.B.Kennedy to Mathias Bodkin, 1 December 1900
[54] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/25-105 Broadcast script, 12, 7 February 1954.
[55] Richard Ellman. *James Joyce*. New York: OUP, 1959, 49.
[56] ibid.
[57] Thomas Bodkin. 'Home for the Holidays'. *The Clongownian*, 3, 2, 1903, 50/51.
[58] James Joyce. *A Portrait of the Artist as Young Man*. New York: The Modern Library, 1928, 17.
[59] *The Clongownian*, 3, 2, 1904, 85.
[60] James Meenan ed. *Centenary History of the Literary and Historical Society of UCD 1855-1955*. Tralee: Kerryman, 1955, 102/112, contributed by T.B.
[61] ibid and TCD Bodkin papers 6912/57-81; Meenan, ed.
[62] ibid.

[63] ibid., 110
[64] TCD 6934/1-24, Record No. 3 Broadcast archive.
[65] Meenan ed., 104.
[66] M. McDonnell Bodkin, 281.
[67] ibid. 330. Correspondence in this file ends in September 1903.
[68] ibid. 252. TB dates his own friendship with Lane to 1903. See no. 85 below.
[69] TCD Bodkin papers 6968/1-51, Hugh Lane to Mathias Bodkin.
[70] TB. *Hugh Lane and his Pictures*. Dublin: Arts Council, 1956, 71 (first published 1932) and NA 1155/1/4/31, 4, Aileen Bodkin quotes the inscription "... who loves her good cakes...".
[71] M. McDonnell Bodkin, 253.
[72] NA 1155/1/4/25 Aileen Bodkin to Matthew Bodkin, 7 October 1934 refers to TB's education and Hugh Lane's advice that he should follow his "rather obvious bent to the picture world."
[73] NA 1155/1/4/31, 'For the Family only' Aileen Bodkin, ms. 53.
[74] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/1-24, Broadcast archive, Record No. 3.
[75] NA 1155/1/4/31, 'For the Family only' 4.
[76] TCD Bodkin papers 6941/280-330 TB to Mary Guinness, 25 October 1943. This was exhibited at Bodkin Irish Collection exhibition June/July 1962 as Nora McGuinness, No. 37. Aileen Bodkin's copy of the catalogue amended this to 'May Guiness'.
[77] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 18.
[78] *Mirandolina*, a three act comedy translated and adapted by Lady Gregory from the Italian (*La Locandiera*) of Goldini, was first produced at the Abbey on 24 February 1910.
[79] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/25-105 Broadcast archive, TB in discussion with Brinsley MacNamara on Lady Gregory, 23 September 1954
[80] ibid.
[81] ibid.
[82] ibid.
[83] Lady Gregory. *Hugh Lane's Life and Achievement, with some account of the Dublin Galleries*. London: John Murray, 1921, 32.
[84] TCD Bodkin papers 6968/1-51, Hugh Lane to TB undated.
[85] Mrs William O'Brien. *My Irish Friends*. Dublin & London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1937, 95.
[86] NA 1155/1/2/5-6 Mathias Bodkin to Arabella Bodkin, 6 August 1927.
[87] O'Brien, 95.
[88] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 73.
[89] ibid., 71.
[90] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 100 and 108.
[91] TCD Bodkin papers 6913/116-38, Poem inscribed in flyleaf of first edition of book with inscription in Aileen Bodkin's hand "written when T.B. was 15?". In the preface to *Hugh Lane*, T.B. says he was "closely associated" with Lane from 1903 onwards.
[92] TCD Bodkin papers 6913/1. This poem was written in a notebook of verses with the following verses dated September 1907.
[93] TCD Bodkin papers 6969/1-49, T. Martin Wood to T.B., 14th May 1915. The manuscript of Martin Wood's biography of Lane was rejected by Lady Gregory: "very

painful to read, very unsatisfactory". *Journals* 1, 87. Wood was impaired by a stroke in 1919 and died shortly afterwards leaving Lady Gregory to negotiate with Wood's brother and executor for the return of Lane's letters in exchange for the manuscript. Alec Martin also found the manuscript "unsatisfactory". See also Robert O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane 1875-1915*, Dublin, The Lilliput Press: 2000, 222-3

[94] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 76.

[95] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 68.

[96] ibid., 69.

[97] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/25-105, Broadcast archive, 12, H.L. Morrow, 7 February, 1954.

[98] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 76.

[99] TCD Bodkin papers 6968/1-41 Hugh Lane to TB, 12th July (no year). Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 76, notes an article on Lane's gift to the National Gallery in the *Irish Times*, 2nd May 1914, another on important new pictures at the National Gallery on 14th July and one on 19th December on the same subject and on Sir Hugh Lane's work.

[100] Lady Gregory, *Hugh Lane*, 261.

[101] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 73.

[102] TCD Bodkin papers 6969/1-41, Hester Travers Smith to TB, 5th November 1917. Hester Travers Smith (formerly Dowden) was the mother of Lennox Robinson's wife, Dolly. She was painted by John Butler Yeats and by the terms of her Will the portrait was to be offered to the National Gallery. Her daughter felt the NGI would not want the portrait and following enquiries by the Tate, she asked TB's advice on valuation. TCD Bodkin papers 6999/1238-1277 Dolly Robinson to TB, 11 January 1950 and TB to Mrs. Lennox Robinson, 13 January 1950. The portrait was purchased by the NGI from Mrs. Robinson in 1959, NGI 1395.

[103] ibid., 7th November 1917.

[104] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/57 Broadcast archive, talk by T.B. on RE, 7th May 1955.

[105] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 184. In T.B.'s copy of Elizabeth Coxhead. *Lady Gregory, a Literary Portrait.* London: Macmillan, published in 1961, the year T.B. died, he underlined "worldly" of Hugh Lane on page 81. At the end of the work he wrote: "It is consoling to think that the grand old woman died in peace and good faith".

[106] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/25-105 Broadcast archive, February 1954.

2 PASSIONATE FRIENDSHIPS AND PRECOCIOUS BEGINNINGS

The world which Thomas Bodkin found most attractive and congenial was that of the arts and literature. It was a world in which he had learned to be at ease, because in the company of artists, writers and creative people his own gregarious nature and flair for conversation came into their own. The Dublin Arts Club provided one outlet for the delivery of witty light verse written for his friends and he continued to write art criticism and dramatic criticism for the newspapers. However, the question of a more stable career could not be avoided by one with an essentially practical nature. Not for him the unpredictability of a life in the arts, as a dealer like Lane, or even as a journalist or reviewer or critic, however much he enjoyed the ambience. Familiarity with his father's insouciant approach to life, and its associated financial uncertainty, still lingered, although Mathias Bodkin's reward was his appointment as a County Court judge for Clare in 1907. This good fortune, combined with what Norman money remained, would ensure comparative comfort for the elder Bodkins. But there was no real family wealth to support the kind of lifestyle which Bodkin had glimpsed with Lane. He was in no doubt about the limitations of his expectations from his parents beyond the financing of his education. His brother Matty later recalled "I know Mother and Father's financial life was mad and I'm sure inimitable, but there was something noble about it too.....(it) so persistently refused to consider financial security and at the same time was so conscientiously solvent and content."[1] But their elder son needed something more, perhaps because of an extreme sensitivity to things financial, and an anticipation of a threat to the position of families like theirs in time of social and political change. The family, on both the Bodkin and Norman sides, had been firmly established in the Irish elite. They represented the privileged professional class and the wealthier merchant class with strong political ties to the National Party then in decline. The sociologist Vilfredo Pareto describes history as a graveyard of aristocracies,[2]the history of societies being the history of a succession of privileged minorities which appear, struggle, take power, enjoy that power and fall into decadence to be replaced by other minorities. In the Irish case pressure for political change was also present, with Matt a strong supporter of

Home Rule, and this was likely to have been influential on a bright young man like Thomas Bodkin in his choice of career.

The Bar seemed to present an attractive and familiar alternative to the uncertainty of a life in journalism or the arts, particularly in view of his successes as an orator at the L & H. The Bar would also allow him time to continue to develop his interest in art and, with many of his closest friends going on to study for the Bar, Bodkin also opted for King's Inns when he left UCD in 1909. His time at King's Inns was not taxing and allowed plenty of time for amusement. It was while studying in the National Library that he came across Endymion, the famous Dublin eccentric of the time who enjoyed his reputation as a popular lunatic. Bodkin later likened his humour to that of the Marx Brothers and he described Endymion's antics at the National Library where he had developed a taste for annoying one of the assistants. This assistant was an enemy of the students because at the slightest noise he would descend from his invigilator's seat and threaten to eject the perpetrator[3]. Endymion would stride into the Library, slap the counter with one of the swords he carried, point it at the assistant and shout "Give me The Lady". When the magazine was delivered to him he would flick through it and depart noisily. His name, from Gogarty, implied that he was "moon-struck" but his real name - James Boyle Tisdell Burke Stuart Fitzsimons Farrell - he signed in full in the attendance book of the National Library on each visit.

Bodkin's studies also allowed time to return to his former debating interests and he followed in his father's footsteps with a UCD gold medal for oratory. This was followed by the Law Students' Debating Society auditorship and gold medals for legal debate as well as other prizes, including the Lord Chancellor's prize. The subject of equal legal and political rights for women continued to be debated and Bodkin's speech against the motion on one occasion meant that "the young ladies from Loreto left in a hurry, either because they resented his jeers, or because they were afraid to go home in the dark..."[4]He was called to the Bar in 1911 and began to practice as a barrister in the same year. Life at the Bar also had its compensations, although these were certainly not of a financial nature, at least initially, and his income from that source for the first couple of years was

slender indeed. In 1913 he made under £100 at the Bar[5] but the scarcity of briefs allowed him time to continue his intellectual and artistic development at a time when Dublin was likened to "a sort of Periclean Athens".[6] Literary excitement was in the air in Bodkin's young days, with, at various times, Moore living in Ely Place and Douglas Hyde, Yeats, AE (George Russell), Colum, Gogarty and James Stephens all contributing to the cultural renaissance. Dublin was a hospitable place and Bodkin frequented AE's at 17 Rathgar Terrace, Stephen McKenna's at 5 Seaview Terrace and James Stephen's different locations around the city. At Colum's house in Howth he met "all the writers of that great age."[7] Shaw was occasionally to be found, and Dunsany, Ledwidge and Thomas McDonagh were part of the literary and political elite. "It was a friendly familiar crowd and there was an amazing intellectual life. It cost very little to those who entertained us and any evening of the week there were open houses where you met and exchanged ideas with men who are now regarded, and rightly regarded, as the great figures of the day."[8]

The seduction of this for Bodkin can be imagined. He had identified an intellectual elite and had every intention of becoming a member. For Pareto, "the successful businessman, the successful artist, the successful *demimondaine,* the successful professor - all these belong to the elite."[9] One might add to this the successful man of letters, and such an elite was Bodkin's natural home, and as an exceptionally bright young man he deserved a place. Membership would also cushion him from any threat to his social position which the uncertain political times of the early years of the 20th century portended. Life was changing for families like the Bodkins and they were in danger of losing social position in the new Ireland being anticipated and debated by the cultural elite. The period between the death of Parnell and the Rising of 1916 is often described as representing a political vacuum in Ireland and one that was being increasingly filled by ideals of cultural nationalism. However, seismic political changes were occurring from 1910 and Mathias Bodkin's old Nationalist Party was splintered and out of touch. What was occurring was "a clash of generations"[10] between the older parliamentary era and the younger less compromised generation. Many complex and different strands of culture and politics, representing Irish Ireland and Anglo Ireland, Protestant and Catholic, rural

and urban, became entwined and seemed to converge, at least temporarily, at this time. Labour unrest which culminated in the lock-out of 1913 was supported by cultural figures such as Yeats, AE, James Stephens and Padraic Colum as well as by the militant political figures who would later be part of the 1916 Rising. These factors and the romantic revival of all things Irish were major elements in the sense of crisis of the early years of the 20th century. The Bodkin family represented the older established bourgeois order whose nationalist sympathies were expressed in parliamentary terms. For Mathias Bodkin, Home Rule and an independent parliament was still the dream as late as 1921 when the political landscape had changed utterly, and these ambitions were no longer relevant or sufficient.[11] The young Yeats had a derogatory view of the professional classes, "who in Ireland, at least, appear at no time to have thought of the affairs of their country till they first feared for their emolument".[12] While this description could not in justice be ascribed to the Bodkins, their nationalism was of another age and had been superseded by the political transformations and modernization that were occurring.[13] Thomas Bodkin, while generationally part of the new Ireland, was without the dreams and ambitions of the literary nationalists or the language revivalists and cut adrift from the comfort of his own heritage which he could no longer take for granted. At a time when a new Ireland was being imagined by many, he had doubts about the future.

Of all the literary figures it was James Stephens who became Bodkin's particular friend. They met about 1908 when Bodkin had been going to AE's celebrated Sunday evening parties for some years, and just before the publication of Stephens' *Insurrections*, which was dedicated to AE. The two men quickly became friends and this friendship was instrumental in bringing Stephens to work as Registrar of the National Gallery in later years. Stephens came to the Bodkin house in Mount Street at least once a week in the evening to drink tea and smoke in Bodkin's bedroom on the top floor, and discuss books and people for hours on end. Stephens delighted in performance and would read poems to his friend, or more often chant or sing them "with immense dramatic effect."[14] At this time Stephens lived in Holles Street in rather bohemian and chaotic style compared with the Bodkins' more sedate lifestyle under Arabella's careful eye. In 1909 Stephens lived with Cynthia Kavanagh, whom he later married, and their two young children, one by

Cynthia's previous marriage. But the two men enjoyed bachelor pursuits and took long walks together in the Dublin mountains - Kippure, Djouce, Cruagh and Killakee, all described in Stephens' *The Crock of Gold*. They borrowed books from one another in both English and French, and Bodkin often lent money to his penurious and improvident friend. When he was depressed Stephens consoled him: "For Heaven's sake as soon as you are out of the black clouds give me an evening on the top floor."[15] Some of his gloom was associated with the scarcity of briefs at the Bar, and his friend was sympathetic. "It's too bad that Ireland is so crimeless. How are honest barristers to live if that damned virtue is triumphant?"[16] Stephens regarded Bodkin as "a fellow worker"[17] in poetry, and Bodkin had been publishing verse since his student days. However it was his translations of French poetry that Stephens most admired and it was for these that he provided his advice and assistance. "In spite of all these notes your collection is excellent...It is easily better than any of the translations by other folks which you sent me.[18] By 1913 Stephens and his young family were living in Paris and the writer was suffering "a gentle melancholy" for Dublin in spite of finding French girls prettier. What made the French noteworthy was their "attitude of independence and self respect. I wonder is it sexual freedom which has the women so self-possessed."[19] Bodkin's arrival on a visit from Dublin was eagerly awaited. "I have not gone to any of the monuments or galleries and won't until you come across, which I pray may be soon." Life in Paris had, by 1913, become "as comfortable and as careless as in Dublin" although for Stephens the Irish and English were "a better folk". Social life was more cosmopolitan however and he had met the novelist and poet Gertrude Stein, then at the height of her success, who invited him to her house which was the home of the avant-garde in Paris. This was in the rue de Fleurus which was both a literary salon and an art gallery where she had, in Stephens' estimation, about 150 pictures of Matisse, Picasso and the modern painters. To walk into the room where they were hanging was "an experience" and he proposed to take Bodkin there when he came. He could also introduce him to Matisse. There is no evidence to suggest how Stephens got an entrée to this society, particularly as he was only learning to speak French which he told Bodkin, was "as coy as your Gaelic."[20] He had begun to learn in January and quickly learnt to read the language but could never speak it fluently.[21] However, Stein held an "open

house" once a month and he may have been introduced in this way.[22] Neither is there any evidence to suggest that Bodkin met Stein or Matisse but Stephens wrote to Stein in 1921 to provide an introduction to Sarah Purser.[23]

Stephens was in awe of AE whose friendship he cherished and whom he felt was a better poet than Yeats and the greatest of men as well as "the best and kindest"[24]. He was glad that Bodkin was seeing AE. "It's good for the two of you. I will convert you to his poetry some day".[25] In spite of this adulation AE was critical of Stephens' work and on occasion "thumped" him for his verses - "four pages of solid whacks"[26]. There was a danger of dissipating his poetic talent in novels and AE wrote: "you cannot eat your poetic cake in prose and have it afterwards in verse." This made Stephens homesick for Dublin where he returned briefly in 1914 following Cynthia Stephens' nervous breakdown. Bodkin helped find rooms for the Stephens family in Rathmines and Stephens and AE visited him in Mount Street to "mange your brack" on the top floor. Arabella had stored the Stephens' kitchen utensils "all beautifully scoured"[27] while they were in Paris.

Following the Stephens' return to Paris, Yeats paid a visit to the city and the two men dined a couple of times. It was Yeats who wrote to Stephens in 1913 to inform him that he was to receive the Polignac prize for *The Crock of Gold*. The prize money of £100 had been a godsend for the family, relieving them from the extreme poverty which threatened Cynthia Stephens' health. Stephens found that Yeats "more than improves with acquaintance" although he regarded Bodkin and AE as his only friends in Ireland. He had "dipped into" Joyce's book which he found "interesting but unpleasant and must be counted among his many wild oats. That man's crop seems interminable. Having got rid of these illnesses he might do good work for he knows how to write, or he may be one of those whose youth is his sole energy and who grow old and barren in a flash."[28] He later changed his views of Joyce's work and the men became good friends.[29] His own literary aspirations by 1915 were expressed to Bodkin as a need to write *La Comédie Humaine* of Ireland.[30] This indicates the level of Stephens' assimilation of French cultural influence- he read French very well by then - and in particular, his familiarity

with Balzac's monumental masterpiece which provided a model of the 'scientific' objectives and methods of the modern novel. AE had said that before Ireland could achieve a social system "it must become somehow conscious." For Stephens this would not be done by the politicians or the traders or the co-operative societies but he was confident that he could do it in literature. For him Ireland could be the literary capital of the world, but "we lack a mirror, a synthesis, we cannot see ourselves." He wanted to invent or discover a national psychology, a need which reflects his knowledge of developments in the French novel, as well as of the literary excitement of the times in Ireland, conveyed by his friends AE and Bodkin. Irish literature had long become conscious of itself as a national movement and Stephens was aware of the controversies in which AE took an active part, not least those relating the new dramatic movement to ancient mythology.[31]

Bodkin found the company of AE and Stephens congenial, although he was never as close to AE as Stephens was, and certainly did not share in their theosophic or mystic interests. He recalled a "wonderful week-end"[32] in the previous year which the three men had spent in Virginia, Co. Cavan. "AE painted in Lord Headfort's woods amid thousands of pheasants, till we were all ejected by a keeper. We rowed on the lake, where in brilliant sunshine James Stephens composed and recited to us his poem, "Washed in Silver is the moon". In the evenings we capped verses, and when our stock of quotations was exhausted, I went to the village and bought a pack of cards and a large bag of pink comfits for use as counters, and taught the two poets to play poker. AE proved a master of the game and rooked us both. On the journey back to Dublin he produced the comfits and cards, made a table with our suit-cases, had the door of the railway carriage locked, and played with equal efficiency all the way up to town. I don't think he ever played the game again, and he used to get a little disconcerted whenever I alluded to the escapade in the company of his more serious followers."[33] The experience enabled Bodkin to study AE's method of work in painting. "AE selected a view-point, set up a little portable easel on which he placed his canvas, and opened one of the smallest and, certainly, the dirtiest paint-boxes which I have ever seen. His palette was clotted with old, dried pigment; his brushes were in a lamentable state. Without making

any preliminary drawing he started to paint the scene before him. The result bore little resemblance to his model; but was yet an extraordinarily beautiful rendering of a sunlit glade."[34] Watching AE at work was instructive for Bodkin who had been making pen and ink sketches and ultimately watercolours since his time in Paris in 1906.[35]

While in Bodkin's view AE would be remembered more for his poetry than his painting, he regarded AE as having "a streak of genius" as a painter, with "a fine sense of color, a great gift for composition", although "his draftsmanship, particularly in figures, left occasionally much to be desired." Of particular loveliness for Bodkin was the long landscape frieze which AE did for Sir Horace Plunkett's house, Kilteragh, Foxrock. The house was destroyed by fire during the Civil War in 1923.[36] In an unsigned review in the *Irish Times* in 1911, attributed by his bibliographer to Bodkin,[37]of an exhibition by five artists, including AE and 'Mr. and Mrs. Henry'[38] his friend escaped some harsh criticism:-"Excepting Mr. Russell, these painters seldom rise above the dead level of mediocrity, and too often fall below it. Their works are more remarkable for the ambition that characterises them than for their achievement. The ambition is at times vaulting to the very verge of arrogance." Mrs. Henry's "Lost Sheep" incurred particular censure. It showed "neither truth, beauty, nor executive ability, although her "Meenaun Cliffs, Achill Island" did "rise above the general ruck." Paul Henry's work was judged to be "generally superior" to that of his wife but he showed no picture as pleasing as her "Meenaun Cliffs". Grace Henry and her husband Paul had been living in Achill from 1910 and it is clear that Bodkin was not impressed by their work which at that time showed the modernist influences with which he had little sympathy.[39] His views of AE's work have to some extent survived the test of time, although it is now regarded that the eclectic range of AE's interests meant that his development as an artist suffered.[40]

However, Bodkin's admiration for AE did not stop him from criticising his views on post-impressionism, although not his literary style. He found his article on the Post Impressionist Exhibition at the United Arts Club in 1911 to be 'narrow, prejudiced, brilliant' and he took AE to task for finding in the works 'barbarism and decrepit decadence...the fumbling hand expressing nothing'.[41] Furthermore AE's views reflected

those of "the London critics" while Bodkin displayed his intellectual virtuosity and preference for "educated Continental opinion..... What better proof can one find of the esteem in which Gauguin was held in France than the benefit performance at the Vaudeville, organised as far back as 1891, offered to Verlaine and Gauguin!-where Maeterlinck's 'L'Intruse' was produced; where Catulle Mendès and Morice read poems, where Garnier recited for the first time Mallarmé's translation of Poe's 'Raven'." Bodkin was undoubtedly distancing himself from British critics in favour of progressive Continental ideas in a way that reflected the debate between nationalism and cosmopolitanism which emerged in Ireland in 1899.[42] Declan Kiberd has suggested that the Irish literary revival had elements of a revolt against "the provincialization of England" by the forces of industrial society which took the form at that time of a level of self satisfaction and a loss of curiosity about anything other than British forms of cultural expression. This resulted in a change of focus: "the axis which had once run from Dublin to London now ran from Dublin to Paris instead." It may well be that Bodkin sensed the relevance of this concept for the visual arts, which have been described as having, in late nineteenth-- century Britain, "a chronic inclination to subside, even from the most vigorous beginnings, into a tame and soft compliance with genteel taste."[43] The axis between Dublin and Paris had also been well established for visual artists since the 1850s, for example Hone, O'Meara, Lavery, O'Conor, Leech, Henry, Garstin, Swanzy and Purser.[44] For this reason Bodkin was happy to disagree with the London critics in their assessment of post impressionism and to look further afield in support of his judgements. Some years later he expressed the view that while the Irish, both individually and collectively, were more conscious of their race than at any time during the previous century, they had come to realise that "national art all over the world has burst, long ago, the narrow boundaries within which it was cradled, and grows more cosmopolitan in spirit with each succeeding generation."[45]

At the Post-Impressionists Exhibition Bodkin judged Gauguin's 'Two Maori Women'[46], one of eight Gauguin pictures exhibited, as 'a masterpiece' and explained why. "This picture is, first of all, remarkable for its classic simplicity. With a sincerity, purifying as fire, it sweeps aside all the tricks and conventional artifices with which modern artists

had bound and bedizened themselves, laying before us a result as superbly realistic as the Egyptian artist ages ago gave us in the famous squatting "Scribe" of the Louvre.... (Gauguin) simplifies his planes. He eschews glazing. Yet, where may one find firmer modelling....Who but Gauguin could take those two dark faces, those scarlet and blue dresses, those glowing trees and plants, that bright sky, and weld them all into one harmony!.... [47] It has been suggested that the views of the exhibition expressed by Bodkin and AE largely reflect the nineteenth-century century Ruskinian rule of "truth to Nature"[48]and that having no alternative philosophy they judged many of the painters as being "insincere, incompetent and even childish." However, while this may be attributed to AE, Bodkin's response in this instance was obviously an enthusiastic one, particularly to Gauguin, with his main criticism reserved for the works of Picasso and Matisse. In this he was consistent throughout his life with his dislike of their work intensifying so that in 1945 he objected to the "invasion of the V & A Museum"[49] by an exhibition of their work, "of highly disputable merit" and he went so far as to suggest that children "should be barred from this crazy guying of mankind." This goes beyond 'insincerity', 'incompetence' and 'childishness' to something closer to a charge of dishonesty on the part of the artists. It is an indication of Bodkin's absolute certainty in his artistic judgements and of his failure to appreciate the immense significance of these great artists.

By late 1914 French cultural life had begun to pall for James Stephens. His novel *The Demi Gods* was published with a dedication to Bodkin.[50] The war had a dramatic effect on Paris, with papers and cinemas censored and the cafes "like tombs".[51] His optimism and literary hopes had diminished and life in Paris was looking bleak and hungry. The charms of the French literary scene were also waning and a letter to AE showed his disillusion with France and French literature and ideas, with which in any case AE had little sympathy.[52] He was unable to write - "No one will buy my stuff....I made friends with poverty long ago and am acquainted with her ways.....myself and destitution were bowing to each other...if that clerkship can be gotten for me I'll take it and be glad."[53] The 'clerkship' was the job of Registrar at the National Gallery which Stephens succeeded in getting in August 1915 following a brief change of heart when his fortunes improved. AE also prevailed on him to come back and Bodkin provided the loan of £15

which helped the family return home to Dublin from Paris. The job at the Gallery was to be made all the more pleasant because Stephens had been informed by AE that Bodkin was "practically certain" to become Director of the Gallery. "Next year you would be there waving the sceptre and orb.....If I get this and you get that why we can pull on the same oar."[54]

How had it come about that, at the relatively tender age of twenty eight, Thomas Bodkin had reached such a level of prominence in the visual arts in Dublin? Several factors, and not least his own manoeuvring can be considered. He was by then well known as a member of the intelligentsia in the small world of the arts and letters- the cultured elite -, and had an ability to attract publicity to himself and to his various causes. He was a regular contributor to the correspondence columns of the press on art matters, something he intensified throughout his life, and his versatility was significant and likely to attract attention. He published cartoons captioned with facetious verse as well as poetry in both French and English. His contributions in the visual arts ranged from unsigned reviews of art books and exhibitions, the acerbic style of which was as recognizable as a signature, to signed articles on the collections of the National Gallery. As early as April 1907 and while still at university, he queried, in a letter to the *Evening Telegraph*, why the Milltown Collection[55] was not yet on view in the Gallery, and this incurred an official reply. After the pictures finally went on display to the public he wrote, with supreme confidence for a twenty year-old: "There is little or nothing in the collection that would warrant the building of a new wing to house it, at a cost of £21,000."[56] In his view, the Collection was not a great acquisition for the Gallery. "There are at least three roomfuls of poor Italian pictures of the most decadent period. Blowsy nymphs and cupids are swept by whirlwinds in various stages of undress across large canvases, amid the flappings and flutterings of vivid red, blue, and yellow cloaks and carpets." He felt that there were, in all, about a dozen pictures worthy of notice, the foremost of these being "a large portrait group by Sir Joshua". This is likely to have been the Reynolds portrait of George Greville, Marquess of Buckingham and his family rather than the artist's more famous caricature "Parody of 'The School of Athens'", one of four caricatures which came to the Gallery as part of the bequest, and believed to be Reynolds' "most ambitious

work in this vein."[57] The Milltown Collection has been described as "one of the most important collections of works of art from the Grand Tour"[58] and the only one of its kind surviving in Ireland. It has been referred to as a "typical Grand Tourist's collection with pictures by such fashionable painters of the day as Rosalba and Batoni and a large group by the Italian and French masters of the previous century who were then in vogue."[59] The quality is therefore likely to have been variable and Bodkin clearly disliked some of the more florid elements. His negative comments on the Gift in 1907 were signed with the strangely appropriate nom de plume "Silken Thomas". He was not often so reticent and in the following month, the *Freeman's Journal* published a lengthy report of Bodkin's lecture entitled "Art in Ireland" to the Literary and Historical Society at UCD.[60]

The theme of art in Ireland was became a recurring one, bringing Thomas Bodkin to national attention in a number of publications in the early years of the century. His review of Robert Elliott's *Art and Ireland* [61]in 1906 indicates his strong views on such issues as the poverty of design and execution in domestic and ecclesiastical art in Ireland at that time. Robert Elliott was a painter and a strong critic of all branches of ecclesiastical art and architecture as well as domestic architecture in Ireland from 1902 to 1904. His book had a preface by Edward Martyn who was also an outspoken critic of Catholic Church art.[62] Bodkin agreed with Yeats: "the fact of the matter is-as Mr.W.B.Yeats pointed out in *Ideas of Good and Evil*- the Arts no longer pay. The first consideration nowadays is cheapness; efficiency is a bad second, and beauty is nowhere." Bodkin found Irish houses to be lacking in original design and Elliott had pointed to the quality of materials and decoration as well as speculative conversion of suburban meadows into terraces of "bay-windowed eternity".[63] Bodkin also considered that the average parish church was without merit. "We all lament that the Irish Catholic's desire to honour God should not find expression in the building of churches more worthy of his fervid spirit of devotion". What Elliott was objecting to was a "stock" architecture of "worn-out Puginism" and "shop-worn" British stock at that.[64] He was also pleading for a national ecclesiastical art in the face of a flood of bad ecclesiastical imports, particularly from Italy. Even militant nationalists like Patrick Pearse objected to these, in typically idealistic terms: "I often fancy that if some of the Old Masters had known rural Ireland,

we should not have so many gross and merely earthly conceptions of the Madonna as we have."[65] For Bodkin, what we in Ireland lacked was the care and love of detail of the mediaeval craftsman or the asceticism of the Japanese and "something of this spirit must return to Ireland before her arts will again be worthy of her. The Artist must rank above the Professions, and not be, as at present, a mere servant of the Trades." It was Bodkin's view, frequently expressed[66], that the Irish were "the greatest masters"[67] of applied art in medieval times and their jewellery was "more delicate and graceful" than that of any other European nation at that time. However, "centuries of strife, lack of social or commercial intercourse with other nations, a state of civil and political serfdom, a want of money, and a want of teaching, have all combined to crush our native Irish Art for centuries." Bodkin obviously discounted social and commercial intercourse with Britain for four hundred years because the nature of the relationship was the imperial one of dominance and subservience. What his review indicated was his consciousness of deficiencies in the broad spectrum of the visual arts in Ireland. In architecture, just as in the other arts, a national self-consciousness movement was evident in the early years of the 20th century and this mirrored what had occurred elsewhere in Europe where small nations were struggling for independence and searching for identity through the imagination.[68] In Irish architecture an intensive period of church building had begun after Catholic emancipation in 1829. This resulted in what Foster described as the domination of towns by "ostentatiously splendid Catholic churches",[69] or as Trollope saw it in 1848, the "large slated chapel, not quite finished."[70] Poverty prevented many churches from being completed but their dominance in the landscape could not be ignored, and certainly not by Bodkin. For Elliott "that late 19th century of steeples"[71]indicated that inappropriate designs were transplanted without consideration of harmony of surroundings or materials or lines in sympathy with landscape. Bodkin agreed strongly with Elliott's views and was also aware of the poor design standards which existed in some art industries,[72] a subject to which he returned throughout his career.

For Bodkin at this time, hope for the future lay in Hugh Lane's efforts in establishing a modern art gallery and in placing the Hibernian Academy on a firm business footing.

The Academy did not compare favourably with its Scottish counterpart in terms of funding and administration. Bodkin said that the Irish Commission of Art had recommended that the Academy School should be suppressed and the Metropolitan School encouraged. However it was difficult to compare the schools given the difference in their funding, and Bodkin regarded the Commission decision as one which reflected its "personnel"[73]. Schools of art were important - "we must learn and we must teach" - and the best teachers were themselves artists. History of art was also important, being at least as interesting and instructive as the history of literature and, if taught, future generations would appreciate what was "truly great and noble in Painting." Bodkin's reference to the Commission of Art related to a Parliamentary Enquiry of 1906 which had as its main issue whether fine art education should be continued in the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art (DMSA) and the RHA or in one amalgamated school. The issue was naturally one of some jealousy between the two institutions both of which were found wanting in the report. Bodkin was correct in his assessment that comparisons could not be made between them because the DMSA as the State school was better funded than the RHA. He favoured the RHA and in this he was part of the fine art lobby who wanted the life classes at the DMSA removed from departmental control and to support the RHA as the main centre of fine art. George Moore was one of those who had provided evidence for the Committee and he was critical in particular of accepting large numbers to the DMSA where on one occasion he found "a Christian brother laboriously trying to turn a piece of clay into the shape of an apple, not because he wanted to do it, or because he had any interest in the matter, but because he wanted to be paid for teaching other people to take other lumps of clay, and make them more or less like apples."[74] The outcome of the report[75] was inconclusive, with official thinking in the majority report and a minority report in support of the Academy. One recommendation was that life classes be developed on a new footing at the DMSA and this is what emerged when William Orpen was employed on a regular visiting basis to the school.[76]

The role of the University was also significant for the arts, and it was at the request of Hugh Lane that Bodkin wrote a long letter to the Dublin newspapers in January 1909, calling for the creation of a Professorship of Fine Arts for the newly-established National

University.[77] For him, while schools of art could teach painting and art appreciation, a modern university should consider providing a Professorship of Fine Art. In the university "some knowledge of art should be as essential a part of a man's culture as some knowledge of literature".[78] It was the duty of the National University to follow the example of the American universities, Harvard and Yale, and teach the principles of art criticism and art history. The cost would be slight "but even if it were great, that should be no obstacle. For Art-teaching is not a luxury. It is a necessity." A Chair in Architecture was established in UCD 1909[79] and this may have been the impetus for Lane's attempt at a similar move for the fine arts. While not having a university education himself, he recognised at this early stage the importance of establishing an academic infrastructure for art education. This is an indication that Lane's ambitions for art in Ireland went beyond the provision of a modern gallery. He had been a member of the Governing Body of UCD from its inception in 1908[80] and obviously wanted Bodkin to make the public moves on the issue. Bodkin was a willing participant and shared Lane's ambitions.

In the following year the subject of Irish in the National University was discussed in the *New Ireland Review*[81] and Bodkin, arguing against all educational compulsion in terms of individual rights, declared himself firmly against compulsory Irish on the grounds that if the matriculation student found Irish to be "a nutritious mental pabulum" offered in an attractive form, he would take it. "But if it is rammed down his reluctant throat, he will either reject it immediately, or it will disagree with him". Bodkin was correct in this analysis and compulsory Irish was to fail as an educational ambition to restore the language. However his antipathy to the language also suggests that he was more in sympathy with the literary cosmopolitanism of writers like Edward Dowden and John Eglinton (W.K.Magee) than with nationalist revivalists like Lady Gregory and Yeats or even George Moore.[82] Eglinton "feared that a successful restoration of the Irish language would cut people off from the rest of Europe....." [83]although, as Declan Kiberd points out, he badly underestimated the European dimension of Gaelic culture.

While still a student, Bodkin was full of conviction, particularly on art matters and on the role of art in society, and consciously developing a national profile. He was forthright in expressing his views and his tone was clearly censorious in one so young. These less than endearing characteristics might have been predicted to lead him into trouble later on. "It is a painful fact that the people of the Irish capital are particularly apathetic in matters of art" he wrote, aged twenty in 1907.[84] The National Gallery was unvisited and unappreciated in spite of its collection of masterpieces. Two years before this, George Moore had provided an exotic image of the Gallery as "the most perfect image of the Sahara that I know. Now and then one sees a human being hurry by like a Bedouin on the horizon…No one goes there except when it rains."[85] However Moore did not agree with Bodkin on the quality of the collection which he felt was generally worthless and without artistic interest. In contrast, Bodkin indicated that so remarkable was the national collection that most people need not go to the Continent in order to see "Great Masters". (He later wrote that the Corots and Monticellis which Lane brought to Dublin in 1906 and 1907 were the first works by modern continental artists which AE had ever seen and that he did his best work as a painter at this time.[86]) Yet he agreed that the Gallery remained comparatively empty[87] and the public was unaware of the treasures on view. "Let these pictures be talked of, let them be reproduced frequently, let them be written about; and Dublin will come to love art more, and be more ready to loosen her purse-strings when the time comes for picture buying." Here he is emphasising the relationship between knowledge of the work of deceased artists to the well being of living artists whose work has a better chance of being acquired if a discerning love of the old masters is encouraged. His own particular favourites at the Gallery were Rembrandt's "Rest on the flight into Egypt by Moonlight"[88], a "masterly" and "pleasing" picture, and with the possible exception of "The Mill", "the finest landscape the Master ever painted", and Fra Angelico's "Two Saints Condemned to be Burned Alive,"[89] a work so beautifully "wrought" that "it is signed all over." His judgement in this instance is well supported with the Fra Angelico later described as an "absolute masterpiece",[90]which in his book *Dismembered Masterpieces*, Bodkin suggested should be returned with panels in other galleries to the Museo di San Marco in Florence.[91] However, for Bodkin these were not necessarily the greatest works in the Gallery and there were, of course, some "atrocious

things". "Pass with a shiver if you will, the flat hideousness of the pedal appendage supplied to Venus; turn from the chubby, muddy, boys and the dirty pillars of the cartoons (Raphael's[92]); search out the real beauties of our National Gallery and you will be rewarded with much that is truly noble and great."

Such writings were important initial steps for a young man keen to make a career in the arts if such an option presented itself, and a useful way of displaying not just his considerable academic knowledge of art, but his ability to respond to pictures. Albert Moore's *Midsummer* he described in romantic terms, writing of the picture's leit-motif as "a three-note harmony - apple-green, blue-black, and vivid orange-yellow. Each of these colours ripples and runs into a thousand shades and half-tones: yellow, from palest straw to deepest red-flushed gold; green, from the faintest tinge in the east at sunset, to the rich emerald of the summer sea; black, from the dark cold marble, to the cool soft greys of the silver throne. The mother-of pearl cabinet in the background, and the rosy arms and faces of the figures, reflect and link all this rich beauty into one sweet melody."[93] Tom envied the owner of this masterpiece. He "holds an estate in Fairyland...From the muggy, clamorous, gloom of a London winter, he can step at will into the silent sunlight, and sleep away the time with those three saffron-clad Graces." This is a painting to make one:

> "Dream strange dreams that ever at the heart
> Do seem to sing and flutter like wild birds
> Making great music....."

The theme of the three graces was one to which he was also to return frequently. [94]

However, these writings were for a relatively limited, though important, audience and at least equally significant, and for wider, potentially national, consumption, was the association with Hugh Lane, and in particular with his ambition to establish a Municipal Gallery in Dublin. This provided an important high profile cause and was to become a

key factor in his public recognition. Bodkin was not a member of the first committee which supported Lane in displaying the putative Municipal Collection in the National Museum in May 1905,[95] being still at Clongowes until that year. In late 1905, when he was studying in Paris, Lane visited France and Spain in the company of Sir William Orpen. While there is no evidence that Bodkin met Lane in Paris, it is likely that he was at least aware of the visit, as Lane had been instrumental in persuading his parents of the desirability of the Paris sojourn. While in Paris at that time, Lane borrowed Manet's *Eva Gonzalès*, *Le Concert aux Tuileries* and Renoir's *Les Parapluies* which, "with several other most important modern works...he destined for Dublin."[96]

Following the acquisition of Clonmell House by Dublin Corporation in 1907, Lane transferred all his modern pictures and statuary to this location in Harcourt Street and set about establishing a Municipal Gallery of Modern Art of which he was to be director. Bodkin worked with him in arranging the rooms and on 18th January 1908[97] the stage was set and the Gallery was ready to be opened to some of the invited 1000 guests.[98] "The old Georgian rooms, with their fine stucco ceilings, mahogany doors and marble mantelpieces, were beautified not only by the great collection of pictures, but with a few choice eighteenth-century couches and chairs, and side-tables on which Lane had set porcelain bowls and bronze vases full of flowers and foliage."[99] Lane did not speak at the opening, which was performed by the Lord Mayor, nor did he even enter the room where the ceremony took place, but stayed outside on the stairs "lest the ancient floors should give way under the weight of the great crowd which had gathered."[100] That same evening Lane insisted that Bodkin should sit down and write an article on the Gallery for *The New Ireland Review*.[101] Lane was always conscious of the importance of positive publicity, and had even "a genius for publicity....as well as an almost monomaniac tenacity in pursuit of any goal he set for himself."[102] He also used Yeats and Lady Gregory to get press publicity for his project, and the attendance figures for the new gallery were dramatic in the first year.[103] He wanted Bodkin to review an exhibition of work by living Irish artists at the Franco-British Exhibition in 1908[104], and his interest helped Bodkin to intensify his art reviewing for journals and newspapers.. This was a

creative and prolific time for the young man who also continued to publish romantic verse:

> Whisper and say,
> When I am clay
> You know we shall regreet someday.
>
> My thirst I'll slake
> In Lethe's lake
> In hope to have thee when I wake;
> O never weep
> For it would keep
> Me troubled in my waiting-sleep.[105]

The question of a permanent site for the Municipal Gallery continued to concern Hugh Lane, and the Corporation had undertaken to provide this so that the formal transfer of the part of the Lane collection known as the "Conditional Gift of Continental Pictures" should take place. A number of sites had been proposed, including one in St. Stephen's Green, and in 1912 Lane commissioned Sir Edwin Lutyens to prepare drawings for this site. This was vetoed by Lord Ardilaun, as son of the donor of St. Stephen's Green, and with controversy raging in the press, Lane became disenchanted and threatened to remove part of his collection from Dublin. The Lord Mayor invited a number of Lane's supporters, including Bodkin, to meet him and following this, announced a public meeting at the Mansion House. This was held on 29th November and a Citizens' Provisional Committee, again including Bodkin, was elected to oversee the acquisition of an appropriate site and to raise funds. At a meeting of the Corporation in the following January, £22,000 was pledged towards the cost of housing Lane's collection, providing the Committee could present a site, at no cost to the City. Lutyens visited Dublin and proposed the construction of a bridge across the Liffey, with two flanking galleries, on the site of the Metal Bridge. The site would have been free and drawings were submitted. Lane's enthusiasm for the plan was such that he informed the Committee that

if it were not adopted he would immediately withdraw his "Conditional Gift" from Dublin. The proposed Gallery was to cost £45,000 and the Committee undertook to raise £23,000 by public subscription. Lane asked Bodkin to inform the Corporation that should the costs exceed this amount he would undertake personal liability for them.[106]

A period of intense activity followed, with lengthy correspondence in the press during 1913, much of it opposing the plan. Bodkin attended a meeting of the Corporation on 8 September and spoke as the representative of the citizens' committee. The atmosphere of the meeting was "unfavourable" with frequent interruptions of Bodkin's contributions. These related to Lutyen's nationality and were not assisted by Bodkin's reminder that Lutyen's mother was Irish. Lutyens had already worked in Ireland but while most architects accepted that he was talented, there had been a campaign among architects against his bridge design.[107] The meeting of 8th September was inconclusive and at a further meeting on 19th September the Corporation went against Lane's proposal, deciding that "the selection of the site and the nomination of the architect must be left to its own decision."[108] Lane's response was to remove his "Conditional Gift" from Clonmell House on 27th September. The British pictures went on loan to the Municipality of Belfast and the remaining thirty nine Continental pictures were transferred to London. At Lane's request the money raised by public subscription, amounting to £11,174. 6s. 3d. was returned by the citizens' committee to the subscribers.

The dispute was to linger on but Lane's attention was diverted early in 1914 by the pending appointment of a new Director of the National Gallery of Ireland to replace Sir Walter Armstrong who was retiring. For the previous ten years Lane had been a member of the Board of Governors and Guardians of the Gallery and a generous donor and lender and was urged to apply for the position. This he did and he was elected by a two to one majority of the Board on 26th February 1914, receiving a congratulatory telegram from Bodkin among others.[109] He decided not to take his salary of £500 on condition that he should be allowed to add it to the grant-in-aid for the purchase of pictures, and within weeks of his appointment had presented a number of important pictures to the Gallery. These were described by Bodkin in the *Irish Times*: "Sir Hugh Lane has inaugurated his

Directorship of the National Gallery of Ireland by a characteristically munificent gift.[110] The three "noble" pictures by El Greco, Paolo Veronese and Gianbattista Piazetta, were masterpieces which any gallery in the world should envy, but "they have a further peculiar importance in the Dublin Gallery, for they were specially chosen to supplement deficiencies in our collection."[111] Bodkin was aware of the importance of having a collections policy at the National Gallery, where none existed, so that an excellent, but also a representative collection could be developed. Of the three pictures presented, he found the "most interesting" to be that of Saint Francis by El Greco which, he later said, bore "a strong resemblance to the donor."[112]This portrait was significant for Bodkin because El Greco "always sought the soul of his subject" unlike Veronese, who "was satisfied with a sumptuous surface." The "spirituality " of the El Greco "is as great as its technical accomplishment. The austere face upturned in ecstasy, the slender, quivering hands pierced by the stigmata are painted with passionate sympathy. People who have no taste for any art will yet be deeply moved by this great picture," and the Gallery was enriched financially as well as aesthetically.

Later in 1914 Bodkin wrote again on the theme of new pictures at the National Gallery and of his friend Lane's work there.[113] This was a year in which Lane had concerned himself almost exclusively with the affairs of the National Gallery and the collection had been rehung following repainting and the acquisition of new pictures. Lane had also prepared a new catalogue but Bodkin did not find this to be entirely satisfactory because Lane "had no taste for exact scholarship, nor leisure for research."[114] But the Gallery looked very impressive now with some of Lane's own collection included on loan. "By bringing over on loan three Poussins, a Claude, and a Chardin, to hang beside his recent gifts of works by Desportes and Vallain, Sir Hugh Lane has been able to arrange a room with works of the great French masters, who were hitherto strangely ignored by the makers of our National collection."[115] The rearrangement was so successful that the Gallery "seems to have taken on a fresh character.....This result proves that the hanging of pictures is itself a kind of art, both valuable and rare."[116]

While Lane's new appointment was his main preoccupation, he remained director of the Municipal Gallery and continued to add to the collection there. Bodkin had been using every opportunity to get publicity for Lane's work for the municipal collection, stressing the need for a new gallery to house the works. Describing the new pictures at the Municipal Gallery in 1912 he wrote: "And still the wonder grows! The pictures newly hung in the Municipal Gallery have made a collection already unique for the high standard of merit it maintains, unique also for the symmetrical representation of all that is most important in Modern Art."[117] However, "the chief thing that strikes visitors to our Municipal collection is the woeful and utter inadequacy of the housing provided for such treasures. A collection, which is envied by every city in the world, is hung in an old and somewhat ramshackle private house, apart from the centre of the city. The pictures are under-insured, and if a fire occurred the loss, not only to Ireland, but to civilisation, would be irreparable." Clonmell House had some works stored in the cellars because of lack of wall space and the lighting of pictures was also poor. If there were more room Hugh Lane had said that he would provide "more wonders for our delight". A plea for a new Gallery was also included: "The time has come for the Corporation to make arrangements to build a worthy Gallery on some suitable site to house the collection. Our wealth of art entitles Dublin to take her place as one of the great art centres of Europe. It is a disgrace to our city that such a cause for civic pride has gone so long neglected and unknown."

The loss of Hugh Lane on the *Lusitania* was a personal blow to Bodkin, reflected in the bleak opening lines of his appreciation in the *Irish Times*: "Sir Hugh Lane has not been saved from the wreck of the *Lusitania*. There is no hope of that now....It is inexpressibly painful to try to write about his lovable personal qualities. All intimate memories of him must be most precious and tender, for he was a charming companion and a loyal, kindly friend."[118] There followed a period which, for the normally prolific Thomas Bodkin, was comparatively unproductive. Of course the loss of his friend and mentor had also created that interesting directorship at the National Gallery to which James Stephens referred. For Stephens, the position of Registrar at the Gallery must have been particularly attractive, with Bodkin rumoured to be in line for the directorship.

However, it was not to be, and on 24th May 1916 Robert Langton Douglas was appointed Director. This began a stormy period at the National Gallery and one in which Thomas Bodkin, hopes dashed and ambition deferred, played a not insignificant part.

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[1] NA1150/1/4/10 Mattie Bodkin to TB undated.
[2] Raymond Aron. *Main Currents in Sociological Thought.* London: Pelican, 1967,162
[3] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/45 Broadcast archive, 8 October 1954.
[4] *The National Student*, 1, 1, 1910, 23/24 Account of Inter-debate between the Literary & Historical Society and the Law Students Debating Society on the topic "The legal and political status of women should be placed on an equality with that of men."
[5] TCD Bodkin papers 6959/2 Barristers fee book 1913.
[6] NA 1155/1/6/3 Monk Gibbon, 'Outline of Biography of Thomas Bodkin' ms, undated.
[7] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/1-24 Broadcast archive,1, undated.
[8] ibid.
[9] quoted in Aron, 159.
[10] R.F.Foster. *Modern Ireland 1600-1972.* London: Allen Lane, 1988, 432
[11] An Irish King's Counsel (Mathias Bodkin). *An Independent Parliament: The Path to Peace*. Dublin: Talbot Press, 1921
[12] Richard Ellmann. *Yeats: The man and the masks.* London: Penguin, 1987, 49
[13] David Fitzpatrick. *Politics and Irish Life 1913-21.* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1977; Tom Garvin. *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics.* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1981.
[14] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/44 Broadcast archive, 30 September 1954.
[15] TCD Bodkin papers 7000/1403-44 James Stephens to TB, 29 February 1912.
[16] ibid., James Stephens to TB, July 1913.
[17] ibid., James Stephens to TB, 7 October 1913.
[18] ibid., James Stephens to TB, 7 October 1913.
[19] NA 1155 James Stephens to TB, May 1913.
[20] ibid., James Stephens to TB, 9 July 1913.
[21] Hilary Pyle. *James Stephens, His Work and an Account of His Life.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965, 60.
[22] Julian Campbell. *The Irish Impressionists: Irish Artists in France and Belgium 1850-1914.* Dublin: The National Gallery, 1984, 108.
[23] Birgit Bramsback. *James Stephens: A Literary and biographical study.* Upsala: Norwood Editions, 1978, 99, (orig. pub. 1959).
[24] NA 1155 James Stephens to TB, 7 October 1913.
[25] TCD Bodkin papers 7000/1403-1444 James Stephens to TB, 26 December 1913.

[26] NA 1155 James Stephens to TB, 22 February 1914.
[27] TCD Bodkin papers 7000/1403-1444 note in Aileen Bodkin's hand, 11 July 1914.
[28] TCD Bodkin papers 7000/1403-1444 James Stephens to TB, undated. This is likely to have been *Dubliners* published in 1914.
[29] Bramsback, 16,19.
[30] TCD Bodkin papers 7000/1403-1444 James Stephens to TB, 29 February 1915.
[31] In 1918 Stephens began *Tain Bo Cuailnge* which he intended as a five volume treatment of the famous epic although first envisaged as a play. See Pyle, *James Stephens,* 93
[32] John Eglinton. *A Memoir of AE*. London: Macmillan, 1937, 53.
[33] quoted in ibid., 114/115.
[34] TB. 'A note on AE and Painting'. Alan Denson. *George W. Russell (AE).* Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1961, 213-218.
[35] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 203. Denson notes the existence of a list of 309 mounted sketches, identifying the subject and the date of execution, the latest being 7 August 1946. Some of these were given to relatives and friends and 3 to the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (one of the latter is of Bodkin's home at Wilton Terrace and another of Merrion Square from the National Gallery).
[36] James White. 'AE's Merrion Square murals and other paintings'. *The Arts in Ireland*, 1, 3, 1973, 4/10.
[37] 'The Five Artists', Pictures at Leinster Hall, *Irish Times,* 16th October 1911.
[38] The other artists showing at this exhibition in Leinster Hall, which Bodkin said was "one of the artistic events of the year in Dublin" were Count Markievicz and Mrs. Frances Baker.
[39] S.B.Kennedy. *Irish Art and Modernism 1880-1950.* Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies for the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, 1991, 18; Kenneth McConkey. *A Free Spirit: Irish Art 1860-1960.* London: Antique Collectors Club in association with Pyms Gallery, 1990, 158/165; Julian Campbell, *The Irish Impressionists: Irish Artists in France and Belgium 1850-1914*. Dublin: The National Gallery, 1984, 104-5,106-7. Paul and Grace Henry were among the artists in *Twelve Irish Artists*. Dublin: Victor Waddington Publications, 1940, to which TB contributed the introduction. Waddington chose the artists.
[40] Brian Fallon. *An Age of Innocence: Irish Culture 1930-1960*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1998, 87.
[41] TB letter to the editor, *Irish Times*, 27 January 1911, in response to review article by AE 'The Post-Impressionists. Art and Barbarism', *Irish Times*, 26 January 1911; see also TB 'Post Impressionists', *Freeman's Journal*, 26 January 1911.
[42] Declan Kiberd. *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation.* London: Vintage, 1996, 136/165.
[43] Andrew Graham-Dixon. *A History of British Art.* London: BBC Books, 1996, 202. In 1910 mentors at the Slade felt a responsibility to protect their students from the full effects of post-impressionism. See Charles Harrison. *English Art and Modernism 1900-1939.* London: Allen Lane, 1981, 65.
[44] Campbell, 14.

[45] quoted in Paul Larmour. *The Arts and Crafts Movement in Ireland.* Belfast: Friar's Bush Press, 1992, 201.
[46] S.B. Kennedy, 34, suggests that this may have been the picture now known as *Tahitian Women with Mango Blossoms*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
[47] TB, letter to the editor, *Irish Times,* 27 January 1911.
[48] S.B.Kennedy, 16
[49] TB and D.S.MacColl, letter to *The Times,* 17 December 1945, was the subject of further correspondence.
[50] James Stephens. *The Demi Gods.* London Macmillan & Co. 1914.
[51]NA 1155 James Stephens to TB, 3 November 1914.
[52]Alan Denson, ed. *Letters from AE.* London: Abelard-Schuman, 1961,106.
[53] NA1155 James Stephens to TB, 17 June 1915 and 15 July 1915.
[54] NA 1155 James Stephens to TB, 9 July 1915.
[55] The collection was started by Joseph Leeson, first Earl of Milltown and heir to a rich Dublin brewing family, in 1735. It was housed at Russborough, designed for Leeson by Richard Castle and Frances Bindon and begun in 1740. The collection came to the NGI following the bequest of Evelyn, widow of the sixth Earl in 1902.
[56] TB, 'The Milltown Collection', *Hermes*, 1,3 October 1907, 93.
[57] Michael Wynne. 'The Milltowns as Patrons'. *Apollo,* 99, February 1974, 110.
[58] Sergio Benedetti. *The Milltowns: a family reunion.* Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland 1997, viii.
[59] John Cornforth. 'Russborough, Co. Wicklow II'. *Country Life*, December 12 1963, 1623.
[60] 'Art in Ireland'. *Freeman's Journal*, 6 May 1907.
[61] TB, 'Art in Ireland', *The New Ireland Review*, 26, 2 October 1906.
[62] Paul Larmour. *The Arts and Crafts Movement.* Belfast: Friar's Bush Press, 1992, 128,136.
[63] Robert Elliott. *Art and Ireland.* Dublin: Sealy Bryers and Walker, 1906,103.
[64] ibid., 61.
[65] quoted in Foster, *Modern Ireland*, 449.
[66] see for example, TB, 'Modern Irish Art'. *Saorstat Eireann/Irish Free State, Official Handbook.* Dublin: The Talbot Press, 1932, 239, 244; TB, *Report on the Arts in Ireland.* Dublin: Stationery Office, 1951, 7.
[67] TB, 'Art in Ireland'. *Hermes*, 1, 1, 114-121, February 1908.
[68] Sheehy, Jeanne. *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past: The Celtic Revival 1830-1930.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1980, 190.
[69] R.F.Foster, ed. *The Oxford Illustrated History of Ireland.* Oxford University Press, 1989, 192.
[70] quoted from *The Kellys and the O'Kellys* in Foster, *Modern Ireland,* 337.
[71] Elliott, 101. Only one architect, W.A.Scott (1871-1921), is named with approval. He later became Professor of Architecture in UCD. One of his most successful churches was the Hiberno-Romanesque design for Spiddal, Co. Galway.
[72] Larmour, 127.
[73] TB. 'Art in Ireland'. *Hermes*, 1, 1, February 1908.

[74] quoted in Adrian Frazier. *George Moore 1852-1933.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000, 350.
[75] *Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the work carried on by the Royal Hibernian Academy and the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art.* London: HMSO, November 1906.
[76] John Turpin. *A School of Art in Dublin since the 18th century: a history of the National College of Art and Design.* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1995, 190, 217; John Turpin. 'The RHA Schools 1826-1906'. *Irish Arts Review Yearbook 1991-92*, 198, 209.
[77] TB. *Hugh Lane*, 23. Lane did not seek such a post for himself being conscious of his deficiencies in art history, "though what he lacked in scholarship was more than made up for by his amazing taste and practical knowledge."
[78] TB letter to the editor of the *Freeman's Journal,* January 8 1909.
[79] Sean Rothery. *Ireland and the New Architecture 1900-1940.* Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1991, 62.
[80] Robert O'Byrne. *Hugh Lane 1875-1915.* Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 2000, 109; Lady Gregory records being told by Yeats that Lane had succeeded in getting the Governing Body to provisionally allocate £300 to establish a Professorship of Art but when it was proposed that the position should be confined to old Irish art Lane disagreed on grounds that "we have got all we can from that art, considering we have covered match-boxes and table-legs and everything we could lay hands on with it." It was suggested that Lane wanted a professor of Impressionist painting, a school which would soon cease to be heard of and Lane thought the encounter shocked the board. Lady Gregory, *Hugh Lane*, 86/87.
[81] TB. 'Irish in the National University'. *New Ireland Review.* May 1909, 143-148.
[82] Frazier, 289. Moore predicted a time when all the major literature of Ireland would be in Irish and felt that children should be forced to learn Irish. Having no children of his own he proposed that his brother's children should learn it.
[83] Kiberd, 158.
[84] TB. "Two great pictures in the Dublin National Gallery". *Hermes*, 1, 1, 6-7 February 1907.
[85] quoted in Frazier, 350.
[86] TB, 'A Note on AE and Painting', 216.
[87] No record of attendances at the NGI is available between 1894 and 1910.
[88] *National Gallery of Ireland Summary Catalogue of Paintings.* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan 1911, Rembrandt, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, NGI 215
[89] *ibid.*, Fra Angelico, *The attempted Martyrdom of SS Cosmas and Damian with their brothers*, NGI 242.
[90] Federico Zeri. 'Major and Minor Italian Artists at Dublin'. *Apollo,* 99,144, February 1974. It formed part of the predella of the most important panel, the altar-piece for the high altar of the church of S.Marco at Florence.
[91] TB. *Dismembered Masterpieces: A Plea for their Reconstruction by International Action.* London: Collins, 1945, 20-21.
[92] *National Gallery of Ireland, Catalogue of Pictures of the Italian Schools.* Dublin: Stationery Office, 1956, *Ss. Peter & John at the Beautiful Gate*, NGI 171; *Elymas the Sorcerer struck with blindness*, NGI 172. The two cartoons in the NGI are from the collection of Sir Joshua Reynolds, found by him during his tour of the Low Countries

where they were used as tapestry designs. They are copies of *Healing of the Lame Man* and *Conversion of the Proconsul*, see John Shearman. *Raphael's Cartoons in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen and the tapestries for the Sistine Chapel*, London: Phaidon, 1972, 145.

[93] TB. 'Midsummer'. *Hermes*, 1, 3, 1907 68-69.

[94] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin,* 71. TB proposed to write a book on the Three Graces theme but this was never completed.

[95] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 14 There were 34 members, including Countess Markievicz, Dr. Mahaffy, Horace Plunkett and W.B.Yeats.

[96] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 16.

[97] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane,* 108. O'Byrne gives 20 January 1908 as the opening date but this is the date on which the opening is reported in the *Irish Times*.

[98] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 108

[99] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 19.

[100] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 20.

[101] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 19; TB. 'The Impressionist Room in the Dublin Municipal Gallery'. *New Ireland Review*, 28, February 1908, 360-365.

[102] Fallon, 61.

[103] O'Byrne, 109-110.

[104] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 23. Lane sent TB a copy of his catalogue inscribed "Please give us a 'boom". There is no record that he did this in print.

[105] Crom (TB). 'Hic Jacet Amator'. *Hermes*, 1, 4, February 1908,107.

[106] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 35.

[107] Rothery, 49/50. Lutyens had being working on Lambay Castle, Lambay Island from 1905.

[108] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 35.

[109] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 200.

[110] TB. 'Important New Pictures. Gift of Sir Hugh Lane'. *Irish Times,* May 12 1914.

[111] The pictures were El Greco, *St Francis receiving the Stigmata* NGI 658; Paolo Veronese, *Portrait of a Lady*, NGI 657; Giovanni Battista Piazetta (studio of) *A pastoral outing*, NGI 656.

[112] TB, *Hugh Lane*, Plate IX.

[113] TB. 'New Pictures in the National Gallery. Sir Hugh Lane's work'. *Irish Times,* 19 December 1914.

[114] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 42; Robert O'Byrne suggests that Walter Strickland probably provided much of the contents for the catalogue, although Lane's views can also be detected. O'Byrne, 202.

[115] These later became part of the NGI collection. O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 202.

[116] TB 'New Pictures in the National Gallery. Sir Hugh Lane's work', *Irish Times,* December 19 1914. The pictures were Francois Deportes, *Group of dead game with dog*, NGI 670 and *Group of dead game*, NGI 671; Nanine Vallain, *Portrait of a Lady,* NGI 669. For full list of Lane's donations to the NGI see Lady Gregory, *Hugh Lane*, Appendix 1, and Robert O'Byrne. *Hugh Lane's legacy at the National Gallery of Ireland*, Exhibition Catalogue for 'Hugh Lane - a Tribute', 18 October-10 December 2000.

[117] TB. 'Municipal Art Gallery. The New Pictures', *The Freeman's Journal*, 12 July 1912.
[118] TB 'Sir Hugh Lane - an Appreciation'. *Irish Times,* 10 May 1915.

3 AMBITIONS AND CULTURAL POLICY PROPOSALS

The year 1915, the spring of which was marked by the death of a friend and mentor, was memorable also for Thomas Bodkin for happier reasons. By the end of that year he had proposed to a bright and very beautiful young woman. Aileen Cox, his junior by ten years, received his proposal by letter, to her "wildly naive surprise, and indeed consternation"[1] following a courtship which was actively discouraged by her, at least initially. On the face of it, Aileen was an ideal choice of life partner for Thomas Bodkin. She was the youngest of three girls brought up in London by their mother, Frances Cox, a daughter of the Mooney family which established the chain of public houses in Ireland and in England. The most obvious similarity in their backgrounds was that Aileen's father, Joseph Richard Cox, from Co. Roscommon, had, like Mathias Bodkin, been an MP for the National Party. He joined the Land League at its inception and was imprisoned in the 1880s as a "suspect" for Land League activities. He had been Secretary to two Lord Mayors of Dublin, where he was to meet his wife, Frances Mooney. As Aileen later pointed out: "In those days nationalist Lord Mayors of Dublin and their Mansion House stood in relation to the Catholic merchant bourgeoisie as the Lord Lieutenant and the Castle stood to the Protestant Ascendancy, (and the Catholic aspirant ascendancy), of the time." Joe and Frances Cox had a comfortable life in London where they lived at Kincora, Blackheath - a house bought with the present for that purpose from Mr. Mooney of "a signed blank cheque".[2] It was at Blackheath that Aileen was born, but her parent's marriage seems to have ended when Aileen was very young. Joe Cox disappeared from their lives and the Cox girls and their mother, although based in London, spent the summer months at their grandmother Mooney's house, at Carickmoleen, Killiney. Mrs. Mooney was a strong woman, like Arabella Bodkin - a matriarch who had eleven children and who took over the substantial public house empire in Dublin, Cork, Belfast, London and Liverpool and ran it after her husband's death.

It was at Carrickmoleen that Thomas Bodkin met the Cox girls, having been introduced to the family by his friend from Royal University days, Aidan Cox, the girls' cousin. Bodkin was first regarded as a suitor for Geraldine, the eldest daughter, the clever young

barrister being considered by Frances Cox to be an ideal husband for her first girl. The summer days at Carrickmoleen were idyllic for the family from London, filled as they were with activities and cousins and friends. Bodkin played tennis with the older Cox girls and their friends, and there were swings for the younger Aileen, a solitary child, and daily drives to bathe at Vartry in the pony and trap. The world which the Mooney's and, by association, the young Cox's inhabited, was one of privilege, comfort and social acceptance in the merchant bourgeoisie of Dublin. There were nevertheless some subtle social distinctions between the Bodkins and the Mooneys which, however slight they may appear, were felt in particular by Arabella Bodkin, and were later to become manifest and significant as far as her daughter-in-law was concerned. Arabella was, after all, referred to in her family as "Her Ladyship", a title she never acquired, unlike two of her sisters, but one which the Dublin gossips felt she had aspirations towards.[3] The lines of social demarcation were finely drawn in the changing world of Dublin and the Mooney's wealth had come from "trade". Aileen later recalled the complete absence of social exchange between her uncle Gerald's household at Vartry Lodge in Killiney and their neighbours Sir George[4] and Lady Fottrell, which she ascribes to the Cox's being "merely Mooney's Pubs" and the Fottrells' consciousness of belonging to quite a different social class - "Catholics though the Fottrells also were - possibly all the more strictly aloof just because they were Catholics, and therefor [sic] not natural 'Ascendancy'".[5] Arabella Bodkin was very likely to have understood only too well such a distinction and allowed it priority over the close nationalist political affiliation in the contemporary family backgrounds of the Bodkins and the Cox's.

In London, the Cox family lived at a number of addresses in Chelsea, with Aileen's education initially in the hands of a French governess, before she was sent at age seven or eight to her well-loved Benedictine boarding school at Ventnor in the Isle of Wight, and later to the Faithful Companions convent, Gumley House, Isleworth. Although a Catholic, Frances Cox had a "strong anti-nun complex" from her schooldays at a convent at Highgate. Perhaps because of this, she rarely visited her daughter at school, where like Mathias Bodkin in another time and place, Aileen also spent Christmas and Easter holidays. Frances Cox seems to have been distant from her youngest daughter as well as

delicate and often in bad health. In 1913 she became ill again, and returned to Dublin, to the Salthill Hotel in Monkstown, where she died of cancer in August at the age of forty nine. Her daughter, Aileen, was sixteen years old, and her mother's Will specified that she was to be sent to university at Oxford. Something of the spirit of old Mrs. Mooney encouraged Frances to seek education and independence for her own youngest daughter.

Aileen left school in July 1914 but her mother's plans for her education faltered when she failed to pass one of the necessary subjects for entry to Oxford to study English. Her guardian and uncle, Michael Cox, decided that to improve her chances of entry, she should come to Dublin for coaching from a graduate of the National University. By that time Geraldine Cox had married and was living in Africa, so her other sister, Dorothy gave up their flat in Chelsea and took lodgings with Aileen in Bray. It was on the tram, on the way from Bray to her tutor's flat in Henry Street, that Thomas Bodkin recognised Aileen, although they had not met since about 1909 when Mrs. Mooney died and the happy visits to Carrickmoleen ended for the Cox family. Bodkin was on his way to the Four Courts and his practise as a barrister on the Leinster circuit when he renewed his acquaintance with Aileen. Her uncle's advice had been well founded and she passed her Oxford entrance examination and began her studies at Magdalen College in January 1915.

The courtship of Aileen Cox by Thomas Bodkin was largely by letter and Bodkin was determined that it would be successful.[6] Seeing more of the object of his affections was imperative and he even took up horse-riding in order to meet Aileen when she was having lessons in Phoenix Park, an activity with which he did not subsequently persevere and which seems totally out of character with his non-athletic personality. As a child at Carrickmoleen, Aileen had found the man her sister Geraldine later married, Kerry Brindley, to be more fun than Bodkin, and his interest in her was initially unwelcome. He was a serious young man, slight and thin in appearance with a heavy moustache and a small chin - a squint had been corrected in childhood - and Aileen did not find him particularly attractive. However, the courtship was successful and she eventually relented. Her guardian, Michael Cox, while not directly encouraging her, raised no

objection when, at the age of twenty, she became engaged to Bodkin in 1916 and came down prematurely from Oxford.

Perhaps the burden of his charge made her guardian approve of her choice of husband rather too readily. The match was a socially acceptable one as far as he was concerned, and only her tutor "strongly deplored the step". She had spent five terms at Oxford, and it was "a definite goodbye to all that".[7] Her time at Oxford had included association and friendship with fellow students such as Aldous Huxley, Frances Petersen, Lewis Gielgud, elder brother of Val and John and the inclusion of her work in an anthology of poetry.[8] It was a lifestyle which involved intellectual stimulation and a certain sophistication for the young woman who sported an eyeglass and smoked in public, affectations which Bodkin would have found unpleasant in another girl but regarded as immensely charming in Aileen.[9] There was considerable independence for the young woman, and the relatively free lifestyle for a remarkably beautiful young woman in the early years of the century must have worried her guardian in Dublin and made him lean towards the idea of a husband to relieve him of his burden. Furthermore, he would have approved of Aileen's choice of husband and the association with the highly-regarded Bodkin family. The choice had not been lightly made - the chase had been an intense one which ended finally for Bodkin with a considerable prize: a young, beautiful, talented woman with a strong personality who had moreover proved her worth by her membership of a bright artistic circle at Oxford. Success must have been sweet indeed. "The most wonderful girl in the world"[10] had promised to be his wife. He commissioned Gerald Brockhurst to paint a portrait of his fiancée and this was done in the Brockhursts' bedroom in the Shelbourne Hotel and shows Aileen, with monocle in her hand, which was "not quite the pure affectation it seems, since my left eye has always been less efficient than my right, and in those days 'spectacles' were frumpy rather than stylish."[11] The portrait is one which conveys Aileen's good looks but when a Bodkin family friend enquired whether their son was marrying Aileen for her looks or her money, one of Bodkin's sisters replied that she thought it was 'for her brains.'[12]

Although Aileen Cox did not finally consent to marry Thomas Bodkin until the summer of 1916, it may well have been his hopes of an impending marriage, indeed confidence and even certainty that he could bring this about, that made Bodkin look again at his career. There was some anticipation that Aileen's fortune would be substantial, based as it was on the Mooney empire. The Cox family projected a considerable air of affluence, and Aileen had been brought up in some style. However, her income was never to fulfil its expectations and was to be the subject of some family acrimony in the future. Life at the Bar was enjoyable and entertaining for Bodkin, and by 1916 more lucrative, although still uncertain and irregular. The Leinster circuit provided another outlet for his talent with light verse, in this case adapted to well known tunes during evening entertainments with other barristers. However, Bodkin showed some dissatisfaction and impatience with his relatively low status as a junior, finding that "judges are exalted to such positions of power.....and publicity that they are and ought to behave like, ordinary professional men earning their livelihood by the exercises of their wits in competition with their follows."[13] And, although Bodkin considered that Maurice Healy had a "keen eye for the idiosyncrasies of the judicial bench in his day....he didn't do justice to Rt. Hon. Thomas T. O'Shaughnessy, or Tommy O'Shaughnessy as everyone called him." At one time Bodkin appeared before him representing Nathaniel Hone, then aged eighty four and "magnificently handsome". The case, which was one of Hone's last public appearances, concerned the damage his motorcar had done to a passing horse and wagon. Hone was convinced that his chauffeur was not to blame for what had occurred and came to court to vindicate his chauffeur's character.[14] Bodkin was cross-examining and in his view the judge seemed to nourish some grudge against the artist. "Do you expect me to know anything about this fellah Hone, whoever he is?", he enquired. When Bodkin made the case on behalf of his client, the judge exclaimed: "Mr. Bodkin, would you like to know what I'm thinking of?" Bodkin bowed his head respectfully and murmured: "If your Lordship pleases....With a sinister chuckle Tommy replied: Well, I'm just wondering if you think you're impressing me with them would-be debonair airs of yours."[15] Bodkin might well have recalled the verses dedicated to him by his Father some years before:-

"The climb to fame is long and steep,
But you must work, and smile, and weep,
With brain and grit your course you'll keep
Young Bodkin.....

A few years hence like Lyndhurst too
The bells he heard shall ring for you,
Bewigged and gowned in regal hue

Lord Bodkin."[16]

Brain and grit and wigs notwithstanding, Thomas Bodkin gave up the Bar in 1916 in the month following the Easter Rising. This national milestone for families like the Bodkins, as indeed for almost everyone in Dublin, was unexpected and came as a considerable surprise. Reports of the event indicate indifference and hostility as the main reactions of the average Dubliner.[17] The first news of the occupation and barricading of the GPO came to the Bodkin house after lunch on Easter Monday.[18] Thomas Bodkin's own recollection of the event is bound up with his courtship of Aileen who had arrived in Dublin for the Easter holidays. The relationship had not been going well at that point and the proposal of marriage was still not accepted, but on Easter Saturday the couple rode in the Park and discussed Bodkin's ambitions about the directorship of the National Gallery and an administrative job at the Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests.[19] They had tea at the Metropole, and when Aileen had returned to the Brindley's house where she was staying, Bodkin spent the evening in his room with James Stephens who was "most honestly hopeful for my getting the Gallery and most optimistic - though without reason or cause - about my chances".[20] Earlier in the month, Stephens had sent Bodkin a list of the applicants for the job at the Gallery, [21] no doubt in return for Bodkin's support in securing his own return from Paris to work at the Gallery. On this evening, the men amused themselves with Greaves Irish songbook and Stephens learned the 'Lark in the Clear Air', agreeing with Bodkin that this was the "loveliest air extant and wonderfully well worded." [22] Sunday afternoon was spent with Aileen at the Brindleys where Aileen "was got up deliciously in a large white hat, a wide black and

white check coat and a soft dark blue silk dress....."Arrangements were made to go to the Gaiety the following night but momentous events intervened and this was not to be.

It was Bishop Donnelly who brought the news to the Bodkins on Monday of a revolution in the city and Bodkin recorded his actions and feelings about the event with "a sad and irritating" sense of his "inability to be wholly sincere" even with himself, although he strove for "absolute truth" in the record of the experience, his memory blurred but the emotions felt still clear.[23] He went out towards St. Stephen's Green on a "wonderfully lovely" day with the city "most ominously quiet" and spoke to a number of acquaintances, including a worried President of UCD, Denis Coffey. People were standing about "with a strange air of disturbed expectancy" and Bodkin quickly gathered that the Post Office was the Rebel headquarters and that every important point in the city had been seized. He was advised not to go along the Green as some people had been shot, "but as there seemed little danger I went". Wanting to be part of the event, but also needing to be with Aileen, he volunteered for the RAMC as a Red Cross stretcher bearer at Dublin Castle, on Thursday of Easter week, bringing in the wounded, work which continued intermittently with seeing Aileen. His father had been told that the insurrection was "very insignificant"[24] as far as the number of insurgents was concerned. A "high Government official" said that no more than two thousand took part in Dublin. "They behaved with desperate courage and did their best to put a stop to looting. There was no instance of wanton pillage or destruction of property on their part." Mathias Bodkin's analysis of the Rising was one which reflected his political allegiance to John Redmond and the Irish Party while admiring the courage of the participants: "It was of course a mad attempt on their part...the majority were...wild vissionaries[sic] and the rank and file were duped into grotesque belief that they were fighting for Ireland instead of against the best interests of the country." The danger when the rising was "finally extinguished" was the "undue severity which may convert general indignation at the mad attempt into sympathy with the wretches." What he saw as responsible for the Rising - "something recognised even among Unionists in Dublin" was Sir Edward Carson and his preparations for an armed revolt against the constituted authorities. "If there had been no Ulster Volunteers raised for the purpose of rebellion there would have been no Sinn Fein

Volunteers and no rising in Dublin." For him the main problem was that the "Sinn Fein Rising" might have a negative effect on Home Rule and in this analysis he conveyed the popular although inaccurate view that Sinn Fein was organizationally a part of the Rising.[25] Sinn Fein had drawn such attention to its philosophy of political, economic and cultural self-sufficiency for Ireland that they were assumed, even by someone as politically aware as Mathias Bodkin, to have been responsible for the Rising instead of the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

Ironically, in James Stephens' account of the Rising he correctly identified the insurgents as the Volunteers and while his friend Thomas Bodkin "did splendid work"[26] at the Castle, Stephens new job at the National Gallery allowed him a perfect vantage point from which to monitor events. The timing of the Rising was fortuitous for him, having returned from Paris in time to observe actively what might have creative potential for him in his search for an Irish consciousness. The job at the Gallery was not demanding and Stephens' main concern on Easter Monday revolved around a present which Bodkin had promised him of a dulcimer. To enable him to make the best use of this, Stephens was learning the alphabet of music and although it was a Bank Holiday "for employments such as mine there are not any holidays"[27] so he went to the Gallery at the usual time, and "after transacting what business was necessary I bent myself to the notes above and below the stave, and marvelled anew at the ingenuity of man". He became aware of the Rising as he walked home to lunch that day and following an inspection of the activities in the streets around St. Stephens Green, he returned to the Gallery and ordered the gong to be sounded to announce its closing. It was the last public institution to close on that eventful day. From behind the closed doors he continued his music lesson, but excitement and restlessness did not allow him to contain himself and he spent the following days between the Gallery and the streets recording the events that marked the beginning of the "great adventure" for Ireland.

Almost a month to the day following the Rising, a new Director was appointed to the National Gallery, and on that same day - 24th May 1916 - Thomas Bodkin took up his Civil Service appointment as Secretary to the Commissioners for Charitable Donations

and Bequests on a salary of £500 a year.[28] He was regarded as foolish by some of his friends for giving up the Bar for a more secure job, but this view was not shared by his father. "I do not know what might you will attach to my opinion but I must say I do not in the least share this view."[29] Mathias felt that business at the Bar was decreasing so the prospect of an adequate income was not hopeful. Furthermore, his son's health would not stand up to the hard work involved in building up a practice. "£500 a year at thirty is better than £5000 at sixty. Money is not everything."[30] Matt's own philosophy had given him a happy and fulfilled life and he wanted his son to achieve the same kind of lifestyle and attitude. He advised his eldest son: "Try to enjoy what is instead of regretting what can't be. You have no extravagant tastes and are lucky in having so many artistic and intellectual sources of employment. Your mother and I were never more happy than when we were very poor. We are indeed a happy old pair in children and in grandchildren."[31] But a father cannot bequeath his genetic makeup or outlook on life, and the father's carefree disposition was not inherited by the son. Regretting what could not be, was to be a recurring theme in his life along with tastes, which while they may not have been extravagant in his father's eyes, left him continuously aware of what he regarded as his own unsatisfactory financial situation.

The coincidence regarding the take-up of his new administrative position at the Commissioners and the arrival of Robert Langton Douglas to the National Gallery must lend credence to the notion that Bodkin was a serious contender for the Directorship and that he held open his decision to take the Commissioners job until Douglas was appointed. Writing to congratulate Stephens in 1915 Bodkin said that his appointment was "a good omen for my success as Director and I have set my heart and soul on getting that job for a multitude of reasons."[32] A month before the Gallery appointment was confirmed, Bodkin wrote to Sarah Purser: "When writing to Martin you might say that I, though not yet entered, am a likely candidate."[33] Bodkin and Sarah Purser had already intrigued on the issue of the appointment of Stephens to the Gallery and now Bodkin proposed to Miss Purser that "Strickland should be appointed to the Gallery for a year"[34] and another Director should be appointed but should not take office until Strickland retired. But the intervention this time was too late and Bodkin's timing and indirect

approach to securing the position, having had access to the list of candidates from Stephens, meant that an opportunity was missed, even though it is by no means certain that he would have got the job. It also suggests that Stephens was repaying Bodkin for his work on his behalf, and says something about the incestuous nature of the Dublin arts world of the time. The correspondence between Bodkin and Purser also referred to the commission of a window for Clongowes, for which Bodkin was supporting Sarah Purser.[35] As regards the Gallery, Bodkin later claimed that Langton Douglas had approached Professor Mahaffy, the Provost of Trinity College, asking for his support for the job. He also claimed that "he stood down for Douglas, his senior by some twenty years, but it is by no means certain that this is so."[36] His approach to Sarah Purser would tend to support this view. For Alec Martin there was no comparison between Bodkin and Douglas[37] and Lady Gregory regarded Douglas as "a real expert".[38] However, in spite of the competition for the job, and Bodkin's disappointment, the two men got on well initially and Douglas, who was a dealer, bought pictures from Bodkin and "tried to sell others for him, including a Cotman and two pictures by...James Collinson."[39] In this he was unsuccessful, but the two men had their intense interest in art in common. Douglas, blissfully unaware of the difficulties in store, was anxious to have Bodkin appointed to the Board. This occurred in June 1917 following lobbying on Bodkin's behalf by Douglas who believed that Bodkin should be appointed "rather than some official who knows little about art and is not very keen about the development of the Gallery and art education in Ireland."[40]. His appointment effectively ended the good relations between them. "Douglas's time as Director was to some extent bedevilled by his relations with Thomas Bodkin who....had been anxious to secure the directorship."[41]

The trouble between the two men began immediately, Bodkin finding his first board meeting "a strenuous one" which he found "dreadfully unpleasant", because "Langton Douglas had been exceedingly decent to me and had done more than anyone, except Waldron, to get me on the Board."[42] Laurence Ambrose (Larkie) Waldron whose support for Bodkin was critical, was a rich Dublin stockbroker, originally from a landed Co. Tipperary family, a Nationalist MP who was a member of the Board of the Gallery and a patron of the arts, most notably of the work of Harry Clarke. It was through Waldron

that Bodkin met Clarke and a friendship developed between these two men that was to be a longstanding one and particularly beneficial to Clarke's career. Waldron entertained lavishly at his home, Marino in Ballybrack[43] where he provided "Johnsonian feasts"[44] for distinguished company which included Hugh Lane, Provost Mahaffy, the Starkie family and his good young friend Thomas Bodkin. Evenings at Marino, where the host was renowned as a 'connoisseur in talk, even more than in pictures, books or wine', replaced those at AE's for Bodkin and moreover, were professionally useful as well as entertaining. Waldron's influence helped to get Bodkin on the Gallery board and Bodkin's period as Governor coincided, variously with W.B.Yeats, Sir John Lavery, Sarah Purser, Alec Martin and Dermod O'Brien.

It is not surprising that the first difficulty between the Director and the new board member should have been connected with Bodkin's friend and mentor, Hugh Lane. Indeed he might have been expected to take a particular interest in Lane's affairs, especially where the Gallery had an interest in the outcome. The first row between Douglas and Bodkin concerned the implementation of instructions in Hugh Lane's will of 11 October 1913 which stipulated that pictures at Lindsey House and other assets were to be sold for the benefit of the Gallery. Bodkin arranged with Ruth Shine, Lane's sister, that Oliver St. John Gogarty could call to Lindsey House to see Lane's collection before it was dispersed.[45] In this he was doing a favour for a man he regarded as a friend, although ironically, in view of his own verbal acidity, he feared Gogarty's tongue and for this reason did not often visit his house in Ely Place.[46] The situation regarding the collection was a complex one, with the Governors of the Gallery seeking and receiving in the Courts permission to retain *in specie* a proportion of the more important pictures instead of selling them as Lane's will stipulated. Douglas had been directed to make the selection and he listed forty-one pictures for retention.[47] However Bodkin charged that Douglas had a conscientious objection to departing from the terms of the will, and that furthermore he did not wish to carry out the Board's decision because the sale of the pictures would realise a sum which would permit him to acquire even better works for the Gallery. Douglas's biographer, Denys Sutton finds Bodkin's submission to the Board to be "a selective document", but it is not clear on what he bases this judgement. In the

submission, Bodkin, ever loyal to Lane,[48] quoted a letter from Douglas to the Crown Solicitor of 23rd November 1917 in which he challenged the view that the Gallery could never again acquire pictures equal to those bought by Lane. Douglas cited the example that he had bought in the previous month, at a suburban sale, "an important and attractive example of Giovanni Bellini (certainly one of the most 'expensive' of Italian Masters) for less than £400.)"[49] Douglas was confident that he had bought far more of importance, and for better prices, in the ten years up to Lane's death, but the idea that anyone could buy better than Lane, or get a better bargain, was clearly unacceptable to Bodkin. It was all the more galling and unpalatable coming from the man who occupied the position to which he had felt himself to be the rightful heir.

The presentation of the Lane Collection by Douglas was another source of contention between the two men, and on this issue also Bodkin, with his knowledge of the pictures and of Lane's exhibition policy, must have felt himself to be better equipped than the Director to arrange the exhibition. Bodkin was also offended by being turned down by Douglas when he suggested that he should lecture on the Lane pictures, and more trouble was provoked by the preparation of the catalogue of Lane's Old Masters. By then, Bodkin had established himself on sub-committees of the Board and when a sub-committee was set up to deal with the catalogue, Bodkin and Richard Caulfield Orpen were appointed with Douglas. The work took some time and Douglas "rightly brooked no interference"[50] and completed the work himself. The Board cannot have been overjoyed to receive a telegram informing them: "Am sending catalogue complete to the stationery office direct. The catalogue is my affair". It is clear that relations between Douglas and the Board were strained to breaking point and that Bodkin was instrumental in challenging Douglas. A particular vulnerability for Douglas was his attendance at the Gallery. He lived in London and for a time, during his period as Director of the Gallery, he also worked at the War Office. In October 1919 the statutory period of residence in Ireland was fixed at 120 days per annum. Douglas informed the Board that "they had engaged a Director, not a chambermaid for the Gallery."[51] He failed to fulfil a number of commitments on behalf of the Board, including missing meetings, and although his biographer finds he was "not to be judged as other men"[52] his behaviour was sufficiently

erratic to cause him considerable difficulties. However, the most serious criticism related to the purchase of pictures for the Gallery from his own picture stock. Furthermore, he felt no obligation, moral or legal to sell to the Gallery works he had bought cheaply as a result of his specialist knowledge, and he sold to the Gallery at commercial rates, pictures that he had been unable to sell elsewhere. The question of conflict of interest did not seem to arise. As far as Bodkin was concerned, Douglas also missed opportunities, such as that of buying a portrait by Hone, and John Linnell's Portrait of William Mulready[53] was only acquired at Bodkin's insistence. One of the most serious allegations concerned the failure by Douglas to purchase for the Gallery a painting by de la Cruz from a firm of Dublin art dealers because he wanted it himself. This was raised by Bodkin at a Board meeting and the picture was purchased.[54]

The affairs of the Gallery which began to absorb Bodkin even before his appointment to the board in 1917 coincided with important developments in his personal life. On 2nd February 1917 he and Aileen were married by Bishop Donnelly, the longstanding friend of the Bodkins, at St. Mary's, Haddington Road. The weather was exceptionally cold and dreary and the occasion "was certainly not a gay wedding."[55] Dorothy Cox, although "slightly antipathetic"[56] to the groom, was bridesmaid and Edmund Swayne K.C., with whom Bodkin had devilled at the Bar, was best man. Notably absent from the Church was Arabella. Bodkin's mother, "who had apparently accepted me graciously enough beforehand, when it came to the point, did not see her way to attending the church." She even went so far as to be less than gracious to the best man for his involvement, as he and the groom left Mount Street for the Church. However, after the ceremony, she received the bride and her bridesmaid for morning coffee - "there was no nonsense about a wedding cake". Aileen's guardian gave no reception other than a small dinner some nights before at his house at 26 Merrion Square which Judge and Mrs. Bodkin attended. The wedding was, in Aileen's terms "a rather bleak business", although she wore "a rather lovely sapphire blue velvet" wedding dress which matched her sapphire and diamond engagement ring. The couple then set out for Greystones, en route to the Grand Hotel, Tramore where the honeymoon was spent, following a photographic session in Waterford. The wedding photograph shows the groom sitting in front of the bride in a

heavy overcoat, and the bride, "a slight, apparently acquiescent, but inwardly seething, figure behind him." [57]

The signs were not good and the start was by no means an auspicious one for the couple. They spent a mild and sunny fortnight in Tramore where Bodkin made several pencil sketches, including one of an "enormous fortified sandcastle" which the couple made on the empty beach. For Bodkin, sketching was a habit developed during law vacations which he mostly spent walking in Normandy, and it resulted in a considerable collection of mounted water-colour sketches made all over Europe.[58] In his travels on holidays or business he always demanded a room with a view which he could sketch.
Domestic life for the Bodkins began in a boarding house in Fitzwilliam Place while they negotiated to purchase a house at 3 Wilton Terrace, close to Leeson Street Bridge.[59] Shortly after the wedding Bodkin wrote to Ruth Shine, Hugh Lane's sister: "You may be interested to know that I got married last month to a very young, pretty and clever girl. I hope some day to present her to you."[60] The conquest was complete, documented by the Brockhurst portrait, painted on the occasion of their engagement in 1916, and the conqueror wanted due recognition and acclaim. He had the opportunity in the following year to meet Mrs. Shine when they were both present at the National Gallery to receive Lord French, the new Lord Lieutenant. The report of this in the *Irish Times* also contained a piece by Bodkin on the Lane Collection in the National Gallery. Sixty two pictures were then on display in three rooms of the Gallery, and they represented "both evidence of the noble redemption of an undertaking which was unsolicited and unrewarded, and evidence of a taste and generosity unique in the history of our country and hardly to be matched elsewhere."[61] Lane's pictures were of particular value because they were "all things which appealed to him personally" as "he was never a dealer in the ordinary sense of the word and never bought a picture which he was not willing to live with."

Bodkin's new job was at the Commissioners' offices in Kildare Street, although during 1917 he continued to devote a good deal of his time to the National Gallery and to his other arts and literary pursuits. One task was to review Harry Clarke's illustrations for

Fairy Tales from Hans Christian Andersen[62] for *Studies*. The two men first met in 1916 when Bodkin was attracted to drawings by Clarke's wife Margaret Crilley of Larkie Waldron's nieces. The men had much in common, Bodkin being less than two years older than Clarke and both former Jesuit boys from Belvedere. Bodkin's "interest, encouragement, constructive criticism and personal and published assessments of Clarke's work were to be vital not only during the formative years of the young and diffident artist's career, but also for his morale and confidence."[63] Bodkin admired the artist's work and expressed his views of the illustrations: "There are two ways of illustrating a book. One is by following the author closely on his way and helping him to make his effect. The other is by disregarding the author's possible aim or desire and by using his work merely as a starting point for a voyage of the artist's fancy."[64] The second method he regarded as rarer and more difficult, and "fine works in that manner are few," but this was the method used, successfully, by Clarke in the publication. Beardsley's illustrations for Wilde's *Salome*, published in 1894, he regarded as another fine example of this method. Clarke had not "made the slightest effort to sink his striking personality into that of Andersen. He has read the stories, been moved by them, and has gone away to evolve types, characters, and patterns from his own profound and independent imagination. The initial impetus came from Andersen, but it drives Mr. Clarke off on quite a different course." The book had been published in three editions, with much acclaim, but Bodkin's favourable review was not matched by the *Studio* critic who upset Clarke by accusing him of emulating Beardsley,[65] an acknowledged influence on the artist's early work. Bodkin's only reservation concerned the "unsolved difficulties of colour printing" which although of a high standard indicated that "colour illustration of really good painting is still a mistake." Bodkin also encountered Clarke's work in 1917 in the Arts and Crafts Society, the society founded by the Earl of Mayo following the British arts and crafts movement inspired by Ruskin and Morris.[66] Bodkin, along with Waldron, Sir John O'Connell, R.M.Butler, Professor William Scott and Oliver St. John Gogarty supported and ran the Society in which Harry Clarke played a major part. In Clarke's view, Bodkin's positive public critique of his work helped to counteract Sarah Purser's negative attitude. He was "mighty sorry that it should be necessary for you to fortify against the attacks of Miss Purser through your having given

me a favourable notice....."[67] The Clarke Studio and Purser's Túr Gloine were in competition for commissions, one of the most important being those for the Honan Chapel windows which Purser lost following the discovery of Harry Clarke by the Honan Trustee, Sir John O'Connell. This good fortune for Clarke is also likely to have come through his friendship with Larkie Waldron, another important patron. But Bodkin's private support and good opinion of Clarke's work was even more important because it "has stiffened me into making efforts I might not otherwise have made." Clarke hoped that one day he might do something worthy of Bodkin's opinion of him.[68] Bodkin's collection included a stained glass panel, *The song of the mad princ,e* which he commissioned following the completion by Clarke of Waldron's commission of a series of nine stained glass "Queens" based on Synge's poem "The Queens".[69] The two men visited London in May 1919, a visit planned to coincide with Diaghilev's season at the Alhambra where they attended three ballets and made plans for a joint literary artistic project which never materialised.[70]

Civil service life and a bride in Wilton Place seem not to have inhibited Bodkin who continued to have plenty of time to pursue his arts interests. Freedom from the Bar allowed him to publish his book of translations of modern French poems, *May it Please Your Lordships* in the year of his marriage to Aileen.[71] In the preface Bodkin indicated that he wanted the poems to read "as though they were spontaneously planned in English" and selected the work on this basis. George Moore wrote to him in praise of the publication, for which he had also had the advice of James Stephens, and the poet praised "the translator's felicity in the work.[72] Bodkin had originally proposed the title "Verses Made for Aileen" for the book, but substituted this for one which had the association with his former life at the Bar. Other activities at this time included appreciations of Nathaniel Hone who died in October 1917 at the age of eighty six. A month before the artist's death Bodkin visited him at his home, St. Doulough's Park, Raheny. The purpose of the trip from the city was to be an essay on his art, and his description of the visit[73] provided another opportunity for Bodkin to record the "gross ignorance of all that concerns painting" so prevalent in Ireland, an issue frequently expressed in his writings. In his view Hone was regarded as no more than "a gifted amateur" in his own country."[74]

Bodkin greatly admired Hone's work and although he was not an intimate friend of the artist's, his collection contained the artist's early work *Petite Afrique*.[75] Of this he said "I do not know of any work of his more sumptuous in colour."[76] Bodkin lent this picture to Paul Henry for his Civic Week exhibition in September 1927.[77] Following Hone's death Bodkin communicated with Mrs. Hone on the subject of the picture *Etretat*.[78] However, Magdalene Hone, who was then ill and who died within eighteen months of her husband, replied that she "could not part with that".[79] Bodkin's admiration of the artist was expressed in his work, *Four Irish Landscape Painters*, described as 'the fullest account of Nathaniel Hone that had yet been published.'[80] However Miss Frances-Jane French, a Hone relative, found the Hone chapter to be 'flawed with inaccuracies' and Bodkin's bibliographer takes him to task for omitting the artist's precise date of death.[81]

Research for this publication, Bodkin's first book on art, began with a series of Hermione lectures given at Alexandra College in Dublin in November 1918. Bodkin was the first Irishman to lecture on Irish art for the Hermione series since it was established twenty five years previously.[82] The publication of Strickland's *Dictionary of Irish Artists* in 1913 provided one of the sources used by Bodkin in the research, and he included a quotation from his friend Arnold Bennett at the beginning of the book: "In an artistic sense the majority and backbone of the world have not yet begun to be artistically civilized. Ages must elapse before such civilisation can make any appreciable headway. And in the meantime the little hierarchy of art, by which alone art lives and develops, exists precariously in the midst of a vast dangerous population - a few adventurous whites among indigenous hordes in a painful climate." Sentiments such as these, which obviously had Bodkin's support, reflect their time and place. They suggest the sense of isolation among cultural thinkers and the fear of the growth of mass society and social crisis which were outcomes of the industrial revolution. This heralded the greatest social changes seen in Britain since the Reformation and the character of the British landscape and townscape was changed forever. "New science meant new industries. New industries meant new working practices, new cities and new living conditions as huge numbers of people switched from agricultural work to form dense urban communities organized around mining and manufacturing."[83] The arts were seen to have a humanising

influence in the face of industrial society and bringing "the hordes" into the hierarchy of art, through education, and otherwise was a path down which Bodkin was beginning to travel. The industrial revolution had little effect on an Irish society which was largely agrarian outside the north-eastern counties but the ideas and the values which developed out of it seem to have been shared by Bodkin. He would certainly have been conscious of the wide gap between the poverty of rural Ireland and the relatively small educated elite for whom art was significant. The path towards bridging this gap was one which was to be filled with frustration for him in the new Ireland, and one which continued to engender in him a sense of being an outsider with a mission to elevate others.

Martin Archer Shee, who later became President of the Royal Academy, in an early justification for state expenditure on the arts in 1805 said that the arts "elevate us above the animal and the machine". [84] Later, theorists such as Matthew Arnold expressed faith in the notion of culture as "the study of perfection"[85] and of the arts as ennobling and elevating in the face of the dangers of mass society and the threat posed to man's humanity which the Industrial Revolution had brought about. These views had their origins in the 18th and early 19th centuries when modern interpretations of 'arts' and 'artists' begin to emerge. [86] From that time onwards, 'art' becomes an abstract concept with its own internal principles rather than with any obvious external purpose, either utilitarian or decorative. The aesthetic value becomes inherent in the work of art, and the artist, as a gifted individual with creative and imaginative attributes, was determined as having access to a special kind of truth. Art therefore had a moral significance. "The art or general productive and formative energy, of any country, is an exact exponent of its ethical life. You can have noble art only from noble persons...."[87] The notion that aesthetic, moral and social judgments are closely interrelated is essentially a product of eighteenth century Enlightenment thinking, although with roots in the classical period, and Joshua Reynolds *Discourses* played a powerful role in the dissemination of ideas and values which related aesthetics to some of the moral and philosophical complexities of the period.[88] It was ultimately to be this, along with the growth of government that began in Britain in the 1820s, which brought the arts into the policy domain. However, the theories concerning the ethical value and benefit to society, voiced frequently in the

1840s have been judged to be "little more than wishful thinking" and "symptomatic of the tenacity with which the Victorians clung to their faith in man's power of self improvement through education."[89]

In *Four Irish Landscape Painters* Bodkin quoted William Morris: "If we are to be excused for rejecting the arts, it must not be because we are contented to be less than men, but because we long to be more than men." The potential of the arts to contribute to human perfectibility - this 'perfection' for Reynolds "dimly seen, at great though not hopeless distance"[90] - is clearly a position shared by Bodkin, although his optimism is less clear as far as Ireland is concerned, and his impatience soon becomes obvious. He must have been familiar with Thomas Davis's view that "when we speak of high art, we mean art used to instruct and ennoble men; to teach them great deeds, whether historical, religious, or romantic; to awaken their piety, their pride, their justice, and their valour..."[91] He would also have been familiar with Morris's conclusion that art in its "co-operative form..is extinct, and only exists in the conscious efforts of men of genius and talent..."[92], the latter concepts also capable of being traced to the Enlightenment, and in particular to the writings of Reynolds and David Hume[93]. Bodkin recalled the more inclusive golden age of Irish art, which even Ruskin "who did not find the Irish temperament congenial"[94] had to admit existed. When seen in this context, Bodkin's admiration of Harry Clarke's work can be interpreted in terms of Clarke's "love of intricacy and brilliancy"[95] which Bodkin related back to the work of the scribes who produced the great manuscripts such as the Book of Kells. For Bodkin, Clarke's work suggested "the temperament peculiar to the Irish race" and he must have felt that this link between the ancient and the modern which was so much part of the literary revival, might yet play a role in the emergence of a distinctively Irish art. The causes of stagnation in the cultivation of art in contemporary times Bodkin did not wish to address in his book, in the interests of harmony and a desire for his book "to be as uncontroversial and as inoffensive as possible."[96] Yet he decried the Dublin professional classes who believed they were "happy possessors" of 'Old Masters'"[97] yet lacked interest in modern pictures. This he believed was because "they have no tests nor standards"[98] for contemporary arts "since ' The Lane Gift' was lost to Ireland through their lethargy." The fact that such

sentiments might not be conducive to working with these people, either on arts committees or boards or through his civil service employment did not seem to concern Bodkin. But there is no doubt that such publicly expressed admonitions delivered in a didactic tone were not conducive to winning sympathy for his point of view among those who might have taken up his cause in future when he needed them. In art historical terms, while Bodkin modestly addressed himself to those with an "honest liking for pictures" rather than to art historians, his book has been judged as "one of the classic books on Irish art" and "a ground-work on which subsequent studies of Irish art have been able to build."[99]

The Hermione Lectures, which were reported in detail in the press, brought Bodkin to further prominence in the visual arts in Ireland. Board meetings of the Gallery were reported in the *Irish Times*, as was Bodkin's appointment by the Board as a judge in the Taylor Art Competition in June 1920. This competition and its prizes, which were very significant for artists, had been endowed by George A. Taylor through the Royal Dublin Society. The National Gallery had the right to nominate one of the judges, with the RDS and the RHA. The years up to the foundation of the State were also prolific ones for Bodkin. He continued to write and lecture on art matters and his eclectic interests are expressed in reviews of poetry, of drawings from the War by Muirhead Bone, of the Hone and Lane Bequests to the National Gallery, and of course, the ubiquitous reviews of Harry Clarke's work. His discovery of a set of drawings of Greek vases by Adam Buck, and his illustrated lecture on them to the Classical Association of Ireland were described in the *Irish Times* in 1919.[100] But the inspiration and potential opportunity presented by the establishment of a Department of Fine Art in the Second *Dáil* (26th August 1921 to 9th January 1922) were to draw Bodkin into the arena of public arts administration. This short-lived Ministry was headed by George Noble, Count Plunkett, Vice-President of the Royal Irish Academy and President of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. Bodkin was invited to submit proposals on 'The Functions of a Ministry of Fine Arts' and was subsequently asked by the Professor of Education at University College Dublin to write on the role of art in general education. The latter memorandum was referred to the Minister for Education, J. J. O'Kelly,[101] and the views expressed by Bodkin are

remarkably egalitarian. These stemmed from a conviction that interest in and knowledge of art are not mysterious special aptitudes confined to a favoured few. Any child, he said, who can be taught to read a legible hand can be taught to draw. Neither was there a need for specialist teachers and it should not be the aim of a drawing teacher to produce artists. Drawing should not be regarded solely as an accomplishment but as another form of speech. His concept of art as a universal language or symbol system was shared by Yeats: "I cannot now think symbols less than the greatest of all powers whether they are used consciously by the masters of magic, or half unconsciously by their successors, the poet, the musician, and the artist".[102] The concept is also relevant to contemporary educational thinking which identifies art as one of the symbol systems, or literacies of society, with both intrinsic and extrinsic values.[103] Extrinsic values relate to the skills promoted by arts education which are transferable into a wide range of non-arts contexts, while intrinsic value is located in the notion of the arts as distinctive forms of knowing. For Bodkin it was most important that the child be taught to observe and memorise, and art taught in this way colours all departments of life rather than being a separate profession. Furthermore, widespread knowledge of art was an important commercial asset to a community as it affected all trades, manufactures and handicrafts.[104] This theme of highlighting the extrinsic value was also to be a recurring one for Bodkin who took a particular interest in design issues, and the importance of a visual education for the development of good industrial design.

In the following year Bodkin submitted another memorandum to O'Kelly's successor, Michael Hayes, proposing the restoration of the Ministry of Fine Arts. What he envisaged was 'a small and inexpensive office'[105] the importance of which lay primarily in the existence of liaison officers in all the other ministries. These officers 'should have power to investigate and report on such functions of these other ministries as overlap the province of the Ministry of Art.' Such intervention would relate, for example, to the design of coinage, stamps, pillar boxes, state uniforms, public buildings, national monuments, industrial design and art in schools. Interventions like these have been part of contemporary French cultural policy for many years and the recognition that all ministries of government can have a cultural role to play suggests a coherence in relation

to the policy process that the new Irish State was unable or unwilling to pursue. Bodkin also recommended a system of State honours for artists "who have achieved great reputation", a policy which in a rather different form was ultimately brought into being with the establishment of *Aosdána* in 1983. In these policies it was, as Brian Kennedy says, an understatement to say that Bodkin was a little ahead of his time. "He was offering advanced arts policy proposals to politicians who had neither the resources nor the inclination to implement them.....He was a lone voice in submitting arts policy documents to government departments."[106] He had the support of Horace Plunkett, who wrote to President W.T.Cosgrave suggesting Bodkin as 'eminently suited' to head the 'rumoured' Department of Fine Arts. Bodkin's work for the Department of Education had been gratefully acknowledged and the Minister's reply included the statement: "YOUR ASSISTANCE WILL NOT BE LOST SIGHT OF WHEN THE PROPER TIME COMES." [107] But once again Bodkin's ambitions were not realised. The times were not right, but even if they had been, his autocratic approach was unlikely to find favour with a Department of Finance which was generally successful in "preventing ambitious and even modest arts projects from winning political support."[108] However, Bodkin had established himself in the area of public administration as someone who could not be ignored in the cultural field and he was to continue to make his presence felt in the cultural life of the new State for some time to come.

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[1] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the Family Only', 15.
[2] NA 1155/1/5/4 Joe Cox to Michael Cox 5th June (no year).
[3] Conversation with James White, June 1991.
[4] Sir George Fottrell was Clerk of the County and City of Dublin and lived at Dunmara, Ballybrack. *Who Was Who: a Companion to Who's who, containing the biographies of those who died during the Period 1916-1928*, London: A & C Black, 372.
[5] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the Family Only', 6.
[6] Conversation with Richard Robinson. The correspondence between TB and Aileen Cox Bodkin at the National Archives is closed until 2037 at the request of the Bodkin family.
[7] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the Family Only,' 21.
[8] ibid, 22; 'The Station' in Basil Blackwood's series of *Oxford Poetry* circa 1917, edited by A.L.H. (Aldous Leonard Huxley).
[9] TCD Bodkin papers 7013/1-15 TB ms on 1916 Rebellion, undated.
[10] NA 1155/1/1/1-9 Margaret Bodkin to Aileen Cox, 26 September 1916.
[11] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the Family Only', 42. This portrait is in the collection of Mrs. Elizabeth Jameson, Bodkin's daughter. Bodkin's collection also included a Brockhurst

drawing *An Irish Model* dated September 25 1919, exhibited at National Gallery, Exhibition of 20th Century British Paintings, 1940 and sold by Sotheby's at their sale, *Old Master and Modern Drawings and Paintings from the Collection of Professor Thomas Bodkin,* November 11th 1959, lot 86.

[12] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the Family Only', 31.

[13] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/44, Broadcast archive, 8 October 1954.

[14] TB. 'An Appreciation'. *Freeman's Journal*, 16 October 1917.

[15] ibid, 45. This incident may have inspired the title of TB's book of translations of poems from the French, *May it Please Your Lordships*. Dublin: Maunsel, 1917 and is also a convention at the Bar. Maurice Healy's *Old Munster Circuit* provides an account of this period at the Bar. See also V.T.H.Delany. *Christopher Palles: His Life and Times*. Dublin: Allen Figgis, 1960, 148 for an example of TB's courtroom caricatures. Palles was Lord Chief Baron of the Courts from 1874 to 1916.

[16] TCD Bodkin papers 7012/1-18. Poem dedicated to TB by his father, 23 October 1912

[17] James Stephens. *The Insurrection in Dublin.* Colin Smythe: Gerards Cross, 1992, xvii.

[18] TCD Bodkin papers 7013/1-15 TB ms on 1916 Rebellion, undated.

[19] ibid.

[20] ibid.

[21] NA1155/1/4/7 James Stephens to TB 3.4.1916. The names included: F.C.Murray, Norman Garstin, Ed. McCurdy, Victor G. Davey, E.B.C. de Vit, D. Piper, John Corbett, W.T.Bobart.

[22] TCD Bodkin papers 7013/1-15 TB ms on 1916 Rebellion, undated.

[23] ibid.

[24] NLI 10,702 F.S.Bourke Collection 'My darling Boy', Mathias Bodkin to Mattie (his son), 8 May 1916.

[25] ibid.; Stephens, *The Insurrection in Dublin,* Introduction John A. Murphy, ix.

[26] ibid.

[27] ibid., 4.

[28] Lady Gregory said that TB's new job was "supplied" through the *Freeman's Journal* and the Parliamentary Party and she incorrectly gives his salary as £600 p.a. The implication is that Mathias Bodkin, who had longstanding connections with the *Freeman's Journal*, had been influential in securing the position for his son. Lady Gregory. *The Journals 1*, Coole Edition, ed. Daniel J. Murphy. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1978, 6.

[29] NA 1155/1/2/1 Mathias Bodkin to TB undated (from Ennis).

[30] ibid.

[31] ibid

[32] TCD James Stephens papers 104/26/281-292 TB to James Stephens, 8 July 1915.

[33] NLI Sarah Purser papers10201/4 TB to Sarah Purser 22 April 1916. Alec Martin was a close friend of Hugh Lane's, an art expert at Christies in London and a Trustee of the NGI from February 1924.

[34] NLI Sarah Purser papers 10,201/4 TB to Sarah Purser, 6 June 1915.

[35] ibid., 21 June 1915.

[36] Denys Sutton. *Robert Langton Douglas, Connoisseur of Art and Life.* London: Apollo 1979, 157.

[37] John O'Grady. *The Life and Work of Sarah Purser.* Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996, 125.
[38] Lady Gregory, *The Journals* 1, 6.
[39] TCD Bodkin papers 6961/1-56, 10 May, 1917; Sutton, 159 The two pictures by Collinson remained in the Bodkin collection until the end of his life.
[40] TCD Bodkin papers 6961/1-56; R.L.Douglas to TB, 18 April 1917; ibid., 27 April 1917; ibid., 10 May 1917. The vacancy had occurred on the death of William F. Bailey and Sarah Purser had hoped Lady Gregory would be appointed in his place. She declined to have her name put forward but said that Bodkin would be "more intelligent than anyone able to attend and he would put energy into it." Quoted in O'Grady, 127. Lady Gregory had earlier noted in her Journal, when Bodkin was a candidate for the directorship, that he was "quite incompetent" for the job compared with Douglas. Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 6.
[41] Sutton, 158.
[42] NLI Sarah Purser papers 10201/4 TB to Sarah Purser (undated). The first reference to Bodkin as a member of the Board is in the minutes for 2nd July 1917.
[43] This house has been renamed Abbey Lea and is the residence of the Australian Ambassador.
[44] Nicola Gordon Bowe. *Harry Clarke.* Monograph and catalogue for exhibition Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College Dublin, Nov/Dec. 1979,17.
[45] NLI Lane papers 13071-72 TB to Ruth Shine, 1915.
[46] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/47 Broadcast archive, 14 October 1954.
[47] Sutton, 159.
[48] Bodkin was likely to have been aware that Douglas was not a friend of Lane's and Ruth Shine told Sarah Purser that the two men were not in sympathy. O'Grady, 125. The rivalry is not surprising because the men had competed as dealers in London.
[49] Sutton, 159.
[50] ibid., 160.
[51] ibid.
[52] ibid.
[53] This was a version of the portrait in the National Portrait Gallery, London. NGI 843
[54] This was *Portrait of Juana da Galinas* by Juan Pantoja de la Cruz. NGI 829.
[55] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the family only', 26.
[56] ibid, 32.
[57] ibid, 28.
[58] This collection is in the possession of TB's daughter, Anne Bodkin Parker.
[59] This terrace was demolished in the nineteen-sixties to make way for an office block, Fitzwilton House, Wilton Place.
[60] TCD Bodkin papers 6968/1-51 TB to Ruth Shine, 2 March 1917.
[61] TB. 'The Lane Collection in the National Gallery'. *Irish Times,* July 8 1918.
[62] *Fairy Tales from Hans Christian Andersen Illustrated by Harry Clarke*. London: Harrap, 1916; TB. 'Fairy Tales from Hans Christian Andersen Illustrated by Harry Clarke', *Studies*, 6, 22, June 1917.
[63] Nicola Gordon Bowe. *The Life and Work of Harry Clarke.* Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1989, 22.

[64] TB. 'Fairy Tales from Hans Christian Andersen Illustrated by Harry Clarke'.
[65] Gordon Bowe, *The Life and Work of Harry Clarke,* 26.
[66] Larmour, 1, 9.
[67] Gordon Bowe, *The Life and Work of Harry Clarke*, 90.
[68] TCD Bodkin papers 6941 H.Clarke to TB, 9 January 1919.
[69] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 13, incorrectly states that TB's collection contained one of a series of nine stained glass panels based on Synge's poem "The Queens". These were commissioned by Waldron for the library of his home. TB provided information to Clarke when he was working on the panels, Gordon Bowe, *The Life and Work of Harry Clarke*, 78. TB's panel was purchased from hiss daughter Elizabeth by the NGI in 1987. NGI 12074.
[70] ibid.,108.
[71] TB. *May it Please your Lordships: Reproductions of Modern French Poems.* Dublin and London: Maunsel, 1917. TB was a Director of Maunsel.
[72] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 10.
[73] TB. 'Mr. Hone and his Art - A visit to St. Doulough's'. *Irish Times*, 16 October 1917.
[74] TB. *Four Irish Landscape Painters.* Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1987, 55 (orig. pub. 1920).
[75] Collection Mrs. J.P.Jameson. (Mrs. Jameson is TB's daughter, Elizabeth) It is possible that this was in exchange for Bodkin's legal work for the artist, referred to above. It was included in *Four Irish Landscape Painters* where Bodkin accounts for it thus: 'Mrs. Hone allowed me to choose it, after her husband's death, from a selection of almost all the works by him then in her possession.' In Campbell, provenance for this picture is described as 'presented by the artist to Professor T. Bodkin', 154.
[76] quoted in Campbell, 154.
[77] TCD Bodkin papers 6941/280-330 TB to Paul Henry, September 1927. Campbell says the picture was never exhibited.
[78] This may have been *A View of the Cliffs at Etretat*, bequeathed by Ms. Hone to the NGI 1429, or one of a number of pictures of the cliffs done by Hone.
[79] TCD Bodkin papers 6941/280-330. Mrs. Hone acknowledged Bodkin's cheque for £30 for "Stout" picture and the correspondence indicates that Bodkin also purchased a watercolour sketch for £8.
[80] TB, *Four Irish Landscape Painters*. Julian Campbell, Introduction to new edition.
[81] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 15.
[82] Mr. Justice Madden, presiding at Hermione Lecture, *Irish Times*, 27 November 1918.
[83] Andrew Graham-Dixon. *A History of British Art.* London : BBC Books, 1996, 164.
[84] quoted in Janet Minihan. *The Nationalization of Culture: The development of state subsidies to the arts in Great Britain*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977, ix.
[85] Matthew Arnold. *Culture and Anarchy: an essay in social and political criticism.* London: Smith, Elder, 1889, xi.
[86] Raymond Williams. *Culture and Society.* London: Penguin, 1961, 15; Nicholas Pearson. *The State and the Visual Arts.* Milton Keynes: OUP, 1982,5.
[87] John Ruskin quoted in Williams, 142.
[88] Michael Bartholomew, et al. *The Enlightenment.* Milton Keynes: The Open University, 1992, 247,268.

[89] Minihan, 95.
[90] *Joshua Reynolds 1723-1792 – The Literary Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, London: George Bell, 1886; Joshua Reynolds. *Discourses on Art.* ed. Robert R. Wark, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975, 169,171; .
[91] quoted in Jeanne Sheehy. *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past: The Celtic Revival 1830-1930.* London: Thames & Hudson, 1980, 30.
[92] William Morris. 'The Lesser Arts' (1877) quoted in Oliver Bennett, ed., *Art, Culture and Society: Some Nineteenth Century Opinions*. Warwick: Centre for Policy Studies, 1990, 33.
[93] Joshua Reynolds, *Discourse IX*, 169-71; David Hume 1711-1776 *Essays & treatises on Several Subjects in two volumes,* Dublin: Printed for J. Williams, 1779; David Hume, *'On the Standard of Taste', Essays: Moral, Political and Literary*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963.
[94] TB, *Four Irish Landscape Painters*, ix.
[95] quoted in Gordon Bowe, *Harry Clarke*, monograph, 33.
[96] TB, *Four Irish Landscape Painters*, xi.
[97] ibid., xiii.
[98] ibid.
[99] ibid., introduction.
[100] 'Adam Buck's Book' report, *Irish Times,* 20 May 1919.
[101] Brian Kennedy. *Dreams and Responsibilities, The State and the Arts in Independent Ireland*. Dublin: The Arts Council, 1990, 7.
[102] quoted in Ellmann, *Yeats,* 94.
[103] see for example *The Arts in Education*, discussion document, Curriculum and Examinations Board, 1995; *The Arts Council and Education 1979-1989*, Dublin, The Arts Council, 1989, 9-13; *Education for a Changing World, a submission by the Arts Council in response to the Green Paper on Education*, Dublin, The Arts Council, 1992, appendix 1.
[104] TCD Bodkin papers 6965, TB to Rev. T.Corcoran, Art in Education, 1921.
[105] Brian Kennedy, 8.
[106] ibid., 9.
[107] ibid., 8.
[108] ibid., 9.

4 THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND CULTURAL APPOINTMENTS

Events at the National Gallery began to absorb more of Thomas Bodkin's time in 1923 when matters concerning the relationship between the Director and the Board came to a head. The high-handed behaviour of Langton Douglas had continued throughout his term of office, and in January 1923 he informed the Board by letter that he was travelling to New York for five or six weeks, at his own cost, with a view to "interest Irishmen in America in the National Gallery and the Municipal Gallery."[1] It was his view that the National Gallery needed money to buy the house beside the building in Merrion Square, to start a collection of photographs for the use of students, and to buy pictures of schools of painting not represented, or inadequately represented, in the Gallery. He felt that the Municipal Gallery needed funds to buy modern pictures so that they could pass on to the National Gallery works which had 'stood the test of time'. This was in line with Hugh Lane's objective in founding the Gallery. However, Langton Douglas had no authority from his Board to make this visit, and his stated aims did not reflect Gallery policy at the time. The Board had no plans to buy a house in Merrion Square and while funding the Municipal Gallery was an ongoing problem, it was not Douglas's brief to solve this.

At a meeting on 7th February 1923, held in his absence, a motion censuring his actions was proposed and carried by the Board.[2] This was recorded in the minute book and when, on his return, Douglas saw the book he removed the relevant page and prepared his counter attack. Bodkin was undoubtedly on the front line for this, and in a letter to him, Douglas pointed out that his term of office as a trustee of the Gallery had expired in June 1922. Bodkin had therefore been out of office for meetings held after this date, including the critical one as far as Douglas was concerned, on 7th February. Furthermore, Douglas charged that as only four members were present for this meeting, it had not been legally held, and he had been advised by Counsel that his action in taking the offending page out of the minute book was permissible.[3] Bodkin had discovered a law that gave three years' hard labour to anyone found 'tampering with' or 'mutilating' State documents and when he attended a meeting on 6th June, (in spite of Douglas's challenge to his presence), the issue was raised and a strong vote of censure on Douglas

was passed unanimously. The Board had received a seven page letter, written on the same date by Bodkin, which outlined a long list of the Director's misdeeds. These ranged from neglect of the Gallery and library, and missing the opportunity to buy important pictures, to failure to publish a new catalogue. Bodkin also questioned Douglas's acquisition policy for the Gallery and drew attention to the serious issue that most of his purchases had come from his own picture stock.

Langton Douglas tendered his resignation at a board meeting on 4th July 1923 and there is no doubt that Bodkin was instrumental in bringing this about. At the meeting, the technicality of Bodkin's membership was addressed and he was formally reappointed on grounds that the precedent in other institutions was that Boards were elected and requested to carry on until Government addressed the question of reappointment. It is clear that matters other than the reappointment of Governors were taking up the time of the new Government. Douglas's resignation was accepted unanimously with immediate effect, but in spite of the obvious acrimony, he presented to the Gallery, at his last meeting, a gift of a Brazilian landscape by Frans Post.[4]

The appointment of a new director would seem to have presented another opportunity for Bodkin to take over the direction of the Gallery, particularly as he was included in a committee formed to run the Gallery until a new director was appointed.[5] However, he was not a candidate and when the selection was made, one of the other Governors, the architect Lucius O'Callaghan, replaced Langton Douglas with the Board split on the appointment and Bodkin supporting another candidate. The position had been advertised in the main Irish, English, French, Dutch and German papers and O'Callaghan and R.R. Tatlock, editor of the *Burlington Magazine* were finally short listed. Bodkin had been actively involved in headhunting for the position and encouraged Tatlock to apply when he consulted him in London on his opinion of the applicants. Tatlock felt that "commercial disinterestedness" was very important and having initially recommended Roger Fry to Bodkin, re-considered the matter and wondered if he himself could do the job while continuing at the *Burlington*[6]. Bodkin had not guaranteed his support because "Borenius" was also a candidate. Tatlock described Tancred Borenius as "one of the

most extensive dealers in Western Europe" at a time when dealers did not operate alone as in Lane's time, but in rings. He warned Bodkin about Borenius: "Crooks were afraid of Lane because he was honest, but I fear they are very fond of 'TB' as they call him".[7] Bodkin and Tatlock had met in London and Tatlock was aware that O'Callaghan had the support of Miss Purser who had also been actively involved in the selection process. In fact, O'Callaghan had been urged to apply by Miss Purser, Dermod O'Brien and other Governors.[8] Miss Purser had been canvassed by Roger Fry on behalf of Tatlock but Fry appears to have envisaged a position for himself as advisor to Tatlock in the event of his appointment.[9] Such an outcome was unlikely to have appealed to the Board. Bodkin supported Tatlock, but O'Callaghan was appointed on a majority vote.[10] Bodkin must have informed Tatlock that he was out of the running because he replied before the selection had taken place expressing his offence. He had been turned down on what he regarded as the grounds of being a foreigner, when as a Scot he had "always favoured Home Rule" and had "heckled speakers at elections on that since I was a boy."[11]

The matter might have ended here, but on the evening of the selection meeting, Bodkin and Hutcheson Poe, another dissenting Governor, wrote to the *Irish Times* condemning the appointment. "On personal grounds and on the grounds of nationality we welcome Mr. O'Callaghan's appointment, but we consider that his qualifications for a post so responsible and so important to Ireland in no way warranted his election, having regard to the qualifications, experience and reputations of other candidates for the office."[12] Editorial comment in the *Irish Times* on the day the letter was published pointed to the need for "high qualifications" for the position and while Lucius O'Callaghan of the Royal Hibernian Academy was "a skilled and popular architect" they felt it necessary "to express our adhesion to a principle which, as we conceive, the Free State, in these times of foundation, will defy or ignore to its own great loss. The only ground on which offices of authority in the domain of science and the arts, ought to be filled is the ground of superior fitness and achievement." The *Freeman's Journal* editorial also referred to the appointment and reported the view of one of O'Callaghan's supporters that he would "learn his business as he goes along."[13] The issue was considered by that paper in terms of the use of public finances and whether a country like Ireland could afford to take any

risks. "Other things being equal, an Irishman should have the preference for an Irish post, but in art we have so much leeway to make up that it is of vital importance to choose the best man for the work." The question of appointing an Irishman to the position, rather than the best qualified candidate, gave rise to criticism of the Governors of the Gallery, but Bodkin and Poe were also criticised for their actions in going to the press. Dermod O'Brien said he could not understand the action of those who wrote the letter and explained his support for O'Callaghan on grounds of fitness for the job, devotion to the National Gallery and "because he is a resident of the country and not a bird of passage".[14] The implication was that Langton Douglas had been just such an exotic creature and his infrequent presence in Dublin obviously had an effect on O'Brien's decision in favour of O'Callaghan. Jack B.Yeats, the artist and brother of W.B., also took the view that O'Callaghan was the best choice "because he is on the spot and an Irishman." Paul Henry wrote to the *Freeman's Journal* and expressed the view that the public had a right to know the number of applicants for the post, their names, their suitability and why their claims were considered insufficient, "as it is by appointments of this kind that the new Free State will be judged by the outside world as a cultured or a semi-civilised community."[15] However, Dermod O'Brien, writing in this instance as President of the Royal Hibernian Academy quite rightly felt that it would be "most unfair to the candidates rejected, and to him whom we selected, were their merits or demerits discussed in the public Press."[16] AE wisely refused to become embroiled in the controversy on the grounds that he knew "nothing whatever about the qualifications of the other candidates." Bodkin, when questioned for the same press report was not prepared to add to the sentiments expressed in his controversial letter, other than to say that he had nothing personal against O'Callaghan, "who was his friend", and "if Mr. O'Callaghan justifies the expectations expressed by his supporters we will be as pleased as they." If Bodkin seriously regarded O'Callaghan as a friend, and was prepared to deal with a friend in this way, one can only speculate on how much his enemies had to fear at his hand. When the matter was raised in the *Dáil* by Major Redmond[17], President Cosgrave, observing some distance from the matter, refused to intervene because for him responsibility for the appointment rested with the Board of Governors. However, he suggested that "as the new Director's salary would be on the

estimates, the House could express its agreement with the critics by the drastic method of stopping the salary."[18] It seems highly unlikely that such a course of action, which in effect would put the *Dáil* into the position of deciding, ex post facto on the appointment, would have been seriously considered by Cosgrave. He undoubtedly hoped that the matter would fade out of public consciousness in time and in this his judgment was correct.

The issue is one which must be seen in the context of the times. The establishment of the new State had been followed by a terrible civil war and the debate in essence reflected the differing concepts of nationality as well as the cultural insecurity of the times. The Civil War had deeply divided the country and apart from a horrific death toll, left a sense of bitterness and loss in its wake. Roy Foster notes that public opinion during the Civil War did not repudiate even the most draconian actions, such as summary executions, shooting on sight of public representatives, journalists and ex-British army members by the Free State government, because this government was 'Irish'.[19] There was therefore an inflamed sense of national consciousness in the period immediately after the war and the notion of appointing Irish people to positions of authority would certainly have had majority support in a country defined by rigorous conservatism and whose cultural self-definition was against Britain.[20] The Irish state was going through a process of "gaelicization" which Foster finds was "the kind of process typical of many post-colonial states, highly sensitive to the influence of a once-dominant neighbour.[21] Bodkin was a nationalist who was far from sharing such views, as his actions in support of Tatlock indicate, and he was undoubtedly angry at the actions of Sarah Purser and other Board members in controlling and effectively negating the selection process at the Gallery by agreeing to advertise the position internationally and then inviting O'Callaghan to apply. While this action was not made public by Bodkin, taking the issue in general of appointments on merit rather than on nationality into the public arena was courageous because it questioned the conventional thinking of the time and was not likely to be popular. It also indicated that he stood well outside the social consensus and was not afraid to stand up to powerful forces on the Board of the National Gallery who could not afford to take him for granted in the future.

The start of Lucius O'Callaghan's term of office could hardly have been more inauspicious, with the Governors of the Gallery publicly divided on his appointment, controversy reigning in the press and the matter raised in the *Dáil*. The issue had also been reported in the British press.[22] It was a humiliating beginning for O'Callaghan and the controversy also points to the uncertainty of the times, with the need on the one hand to establish high standards in public life and on the other, to assert cultural identity by promoting Irish people to positions of authority. The view that the two positions were mutually exclusive seems to have had some support. The *Irish Times* rather loftily pointed out, the Free State was "standing today on the threshold of nationhood" with decisions being made likely to become "the traditions of posterity."[23] On these grounds "the tradition that merit, and merit only, must be the touchstone of public service" deserved attention, and the Governors should be in a position to refute the charges made by Poe and Bodkin. This they did not do and the appointment stood.

One can only speculate on why Bodkin himself was not a candidate this time around. It may have been that his close association with the removal of Langton Douglas meant that it was not appropriate for him, as someone directly instrumental in his downfall, to go forward. More probable is that his ambitions were focused on an even higher office - that of head of the proposed Department of Fine Arts. This position was still a possibility in the absence of a decision on the establishment of the department. Both issues were relevant, but the most likely reason is that Bodkin nurtured real hopes that the Department would be established. Horace Plunkett's letter to President W.T.Cosgrave recommending Bodkin as head of such a Department had been written on 16th May 1923[24] so the question of this appointment was still very much alive two months later when the Gallery vacancy arose, and Bodkin had every reason to believe that the Government would establish such a Ministry. Furthermore he had the highest possible recommendation for the position. Plunkett told Cosgrave that he first met Bodkin twenty years previously with Hugh Lane and "although perhaps Mr. Bodkin does not possess to the same extent the extra ordinary 'flair' for a fine thing" as Lane, "he has many points in common with him." Both were "catholic, in the fullest sense of the term" and "broad-

minded", very important qualities for the Head of the new Department. "Mr. Bodkin has the advantage over Lane in that he is a man of far wider culture and reading" than Lane ever professed to be. He had "business aptitude.....enthusiasm.....tact.....judgment..... would disarm and conciliate factious opposition, such as I fear would inevitably fall to the lot of any administrator who might be called upon to organise and co-ordinate the different branches of Irish Art." This anticipated development did not occur, but it was not until 1924 that the Ministers and Secretaries Act was passed which designated most of the State's arts responsibilities to the Department of Education. This finally closed the matter of the Department of Fine Art and with it, the possibility of the appointment for Bodkin. But by then Lucius O'Callaghan was Director of the National Gallery.

The period which ended in this controversy had been a busy one for Bodkin, although the affairs of the National Gallery had low priority during the early 1920s when the building had been closed to the public due to the Civil War when some damage had been done to the Gallery by gunfire.[25] The suggestion was made in 1922 that Gallery loans to public institutions such as the Vice-Regal Lodge should be recalled.[26] Board meetings were postponed 'owing to the state of war' or as Bodkin described it "lawless disorder."[27] However, Bodkin kept himself active as a judge in the Taylor Art Scholarship competition and on sub-committees of the Board, particularly in relation to the Lane Fund, established on 17 January 1922. This was the only non-voted Fund administered by the Board, and it was the outcome of the bequest from Hugh Lane's Will which directed that the revenue from investments be spent on buying pictures by deceased Masters of recognised merit. It allowed the Governors sufficient independence to be of concern to the Department of Finance, so that in 1926 special Bye Laws were enacted by the Board to ensure that the income from investments would remain in their own hands for the benefit of the collection.[28] This was essential in view of the limited funding available from government.

Bodkin's other diverse interests also kept him occupied. The year 1923 began for him with a series of four lectures delivered before a "large audience" at Trinity College.[29] The lectures were held in the Graduates' Memorial Building and presided over by the

Provost of the College, "who referred in eulogistic terms to him as an authority on the subject to which he had devoted the better part of his life."[30] Bodkin's theme was "The Importance of Art" and this allowed him to return to the subject of the centrality of art for the development of mankind, and particularly for the child. Art was "all embracing, its forms were universal and those skilled in it could describe everything that had been seen and suggest everything which had been felt. No subject of study....is more to a great university, for art touches life at every angle."[31] He supported this thesis with wide ranging examples from Palaeolithic man to the empires of Egypt and China, to the Renaissance and the neglect of the arts in modern times. The power of a painting to inform was greater than a historical account of a period. "No pages of history could rival the truth, clarity and impressiveness of a thousand such pictures as Regnault's *Louis XIV*, Philippe de Champaigne's *Richelieu*, Velasquez's *Surrender of Breda*, Terbourg's *Peace of Munster*, or even David's *Coronation of Napoleon*. A picture delivers not only its painter's message; it tells also what manner of man he was, what society he lived in, what was his nation and generation. Art is history; not the mere record of history, but the actual deeds, undying and ever eloquent." Furthermore, the artist needed a public and "every work of art was the outcome of a process of collaboration....the true artist is always conscious of the collaboration between himself and his public, knowing that he must find recipients willing and able to accept the gifts he has to offer, and that the predilections of his public exercised an influence in fashioning his gifts." The notion that public taste influences artistic outcomes is supported by a contemporary analysis which suggests that what Irish artists produce has been affected by the small art buying community in Ireland "which tends to lack initiative, to lack the knowledge and confident visual ideology of the centrally positioned international patrons and dealers."[32] This is because of lack of access to regular "trend-setting exhibitions and museums and to the whole complex milieu of connoisseurship and influential patronage." Bodkin's thesis may also be read as a plea for patronage for art in a country which at that time had few wealthy patrons, and a middle class which Bodkin found lacking in enthusiasm for contemporary art. The historical weakness of this class was identified by Dermod O'Brien as due to the absence of a wealthy mercantile element "into which the peasantry could rise and from which the nobility could draw fresh blood".[33] A further important

element regarding patronage, to which Bodkin rarely alluded, was the absence of a dominant role by the Church which was so important in the development of art in Italy, France, Spain and in England. For O'Brien an educated clergy was as important as the education of students and of the artist. However, contemporary analysis has indicated that the 1920s and 1930s saw "an upsurge"[34] in private patronage of the visual arts with the acquisition of works for public collections. Bodkin was later actively involved in this through his advisory role to the Gibson Bequest and the Haverty Trust. As regards his plea for a role for the university, no Chair in the history of art was to emerge at either TCD or the NUI for some considerable time to come, although a token gesture had been made to the fine arts in the old Royal University by the appointment of an honorary professor in 1854.[35] Bodkin's own lectures at TCD were to be the only initiative of this kind in 1923,[36] and it was not until 1935 that a diploma in the history of European painting, endowed by Sarah Purser, began on an alternating basis in TCD and UCD.[37]

In the context of the new Irish State, Bodkin used the occasion of his first lecture at TCD to consciously draw attention to the issue of art as a reflection of the ideas of a people and a place. "The art of every free nation is the expression of the nation's social and political virtues, and every free nation had the art that it deserved." Ireland had no distinctive school of art since the 8th century, when "the germ of ruin was in the Irish penman's work....he developed a superb technique and used it to no purpose. He brought no better talents to his work than patience, skill and taste." We would have no art in the future "unless we prove ourselves worthy of it, unless we remember to play our part as a people in its production, unless we collaborate with our artists." Stressing the importance of art for the developing nation was essential for Bodkin and the association of art with nationhood reflects the sense in which he as an intellectual with wide-ranging experience and knowledge of art felt he had a role to play in raising consciousness through art in a new Ireland. He later identified Thomas Davis as the only patriot in the struggle for Irish freedom who expressed concern about the future of the arts, but "his was a voice crying in the wilderness".[38] By the 1920s many British critics doubted whether art could confer any social benefits at all, although "when people assigned a positive value to the arts and urged Parliament to promote them, they still, in most cases, believed that art was a

principal agent of education and, by implication, of moral improvement."[39] This was certainly a position shared by Bodkin and articulated in his writings and lectures on art. For him art touched life at every point and was a national asset which repaid investment both commercially, but perhaps more importantly, in terms of a better citizenry. It was particularly important, in view of his ambitions for the establishment of an Irish ministry of art, to draw attention to the responsibility of the state in the area. This could only be achieved by articulating the wider social benefits of art rather than its aesthetic function in any plea for the investment of scarce state resources in artistic development. Bodkin therefore had a political agenda and the timing of his interventions, as well as the subject matter, was critical. He still had reason to hope that in the new state there would be a role for art, particularly in view of the earlier initiative. He could not have realised that the State which emerged in 1922 would prove to be an inhospitable place for art.

The sentiments expressed in his 1923 lecture were supported by an editorial in the *Freeman's Journal*, and the lecture was followed by a more specific, and less political one on the art of Venice the following week. This was also widely reported in the press and added to his public profile. In the same year Bodkin continued to review exhibitions, including one of Sarah Purser's at the Engineers' Hall, Dawson Street.[40] His disagreement with Miss Purser over O'Callaghan's appointment and his friendship with Harry Clarke did not prevent him from giving her exhibition a positive review. The exhibition contained nearly one hundred pictures - portraits, subject-pieces, landscapes and still life - and it was representative of every phase of the artist's long career. For Bodkin, her early work was reminiscent of the work of Carolus Duran, Bastien Lepage or Marie Bashkirtseff[41] while the work of her "ripe maturity" represented "a delightful response to the influence of present day ideals." He singled out some works for special mention, including *Le petit dejeuner* as "one of the most charming things in the whole show."[42] However, Bodkin did not lose the opportunity to decry the ignorance of the potential viewers. "For those to whom good painting is no attraction - and unfortunately there are many such among us - this exhibition may appeal for its historic interest." This refers to the inclusion in the exhibition of a number of portraits of prominent public figures, including AE, Maud Gonne and W.B.Yeats. The year had been a particularly

bad one for exhibitions with the National Gallery closed, and no exhibition at the Hibernian Academy which had conferred a public distinction on Miss Purser by electing her as its first woman Associate.

The Municipal Gallery was also closed and, writing later in the same month[43] Bodkin referred again to the "present disorders" which kept the galleries closed to the public. "Their re-opening at the earliest possible moment is ardently to be desired in the interests of the country at large and of the youth of the country in particular." In the light of the turmoil of the early years of the 1920s the decision to hold the 6th exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland in 1921 had been greatly welcomed. This was recorded by Bodkin in the *Studio*: "The Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland is a small body, but it has a great spirit. Hardly had the rain of bombs and bullets ceased to fall in the Dublin streets than it set about organising its sixth exhibition...In spite of the fact that Irishmen - and Irishwomen - have been devoting more attention of late to the arts of war than to the arts of peace, this exhibition proves to be the best which the Society has ever organised."[44] However, other arts issues did not have the same priority for Bodkin. During the previous year there had been a proposal to transfer the Municipal collection from Harcourt Street to Dublin Castle and Bodkin had expressed the view that "the present seems to me to be a singularly inopportune time for raising the question of the proper housing of our modern pictures. I think that the Government have many vastly more pressing problems to deal with first. Were they to busy themselves unduly just now with such a minor affair, they might, with some show of reason, be accused of fiddling while Rome burned."[45] However the question of the return of the Lane Pictures from London was a different, and more important and immediate matter. It was raised in the *Seanad* in May 1923 when a unanimous resolution was passed asking the Executive Council to press the British Government for the return of the pictures.[46] A similar resolution was passed in the *Dáil* on 18th May 1923 and the Government "made immediate and pressing representations to the British Government asking them to introduce legislation which would enable the pictures to be returned to Ireland." It was to be some considerable time and following legal interventions and protracted negotiations between the two countries before a temporary solution was agreed.

The activities and interests which engaged Bodkin were pursued along with his Civil Service job, a social life among artists, including in particular at this time Harry Clarke, and intellectuals, and a domestic life which rapidly grew more demanding. Life with Aileen at their home in Wilton Place could not have been more different from his bachelor existence on the top floor in Mount Street where he had entertained James Stephens and his male friends. Four daughters were born to the couple in the first five years of their married life, between 1917 and 1922.[47] Bodkin's expectations regarding domestic life had naturally been inherited from his mother, who appears to have run an exemplary home with the help of her domestic staff. The appointment of Mathias Bodkin as County Court Judge for Clare in 1904 had brought with it the financial security for the family which was absent from the earlier years of relative penury in politics and journalism. But Aileen was not like her mother-in-law when it came to household management, and the first ten years of married life were marked by "non-stop servant difficulties," which were not helped by her husband's lack of appreciation of the cost of living, and of wages in particular.[48] To maintain Mount Street standards in his own home in Wilton Place involved expenditure that he either did not have, or was unwilling to spend. He was, of course, building up an art collection and this was an important priority for him.[49] Aileen's income from her Cox inheritance had been controlled by her husband from the time of her marriage.[50] This was initially welcomed by her, but his intervention in the family Trust was a cause of considerable acrimony between the Cox sisters[51] and eventual resentment by Aileen.[52] Wilton Place was a relatively large three storey town house, with a stone-flagged kitchen, maid's bedroom and children's nursery cum school-room in the semi-basement. The standards of the time required a staff to run the house and this was even more necessary given Aileen's admitted lack of even the most basic domestic skills. Moreover, Bodkin had been trained by his mother to be served in his own home because to Arabella any man who offered to help with a household chore was a 'manty-maker'.[53] Harmony therefore did not prevail in Wilton Place and it was particularly galling for the young bride to observe how her mother-in-law was regarded by Judge Bodkin: "In her adoring husband's eyes, Mrs. Bodkin could do no wrong, nor ever deviate from the absolute truth in any statement she might

make.....[54] It was very little consolation to Aileen that the Bodkins' friend, the Jesuit Father Connolly, editor of *Studies* defined their servant difficulties and those of other families like them, as "the beginning of a real social revolution."[55]

Little wonder then that the regular weekly dinners in Mount Street were a source of torture for Aileen Bodkin who found herself paraphrasing Keats as 'sick for home, standing in tears amid the alien corn'.[56] These occasions were made all the more difficult for her by the presence of her husband's three unmarried sisters. The atmosphere was certainly "disconcertingly different" from Aileen's former life at Oxford and in London, and it may be that what she felt to be "acrimonious argument" between the family may well have been the rough and tumble of Irish family life, particularly as the Bodkins were a highly verbal and lively family. On one such occasion Aileen burst into tears and had to be helped from the room and calmed by her sister-in-law Emma.[57] It was not her husband who came to her rescue. However he cannot have been unaware of her general state of distress and perhaps his translation from the French of the poem "The Mirror"[58] reflects this.

The mirror, that once chanced to see
your tears, your wild bewildered air,
hangs calm and clear, mysteriously,
a faithful witness there.....

And, though the image of your pain
in its obedient heart was set,
the mirror hangs without a stain,
ever the same....And yet

when I before it bend and stare
never, within its narrow space,
see I the sign of my own care
nor the line of my own face.

With home life lacking the peace and harmony he anticipated from his married state, Bodkin nevertheless found time to continue his writing in his study on the hall floor at Wilton Place, while family life with his wife and daughters and intermittent unsatisfactory domestic help went on below stairs. The year 1924 was a particularly prolific one for him and one which also marked his election to the Royal Irish Academy.[59] His friend Harry Clarke was elected an Associate of the Royal Hibernian Academy in the same year. In the previous year Bodkin had signed a contract with Chatto and Windus for a book to be written with Denis Eden. This was *A Guide to Caper* for which Bodkin provided the text and Eden the drawings.[60] The book was for children, with Eden inventing an imaginary city called Caper in which children were free to wander, and Bodkin's text providing the guide. The book was reviewed by AE[61] who found Eden's pictures to have "the right mixture of mystery and precision....What child is there who would not want to run about those antique lanes or creep tremulously under their dark doorways or think how full of mystery the city was under the stars, or how delightful it would be to drowse under the Fountain in the Fruit Market or to let the spray from the Fountain cool one, as Mr. Bodkin suggests?" Bookshops in Caper are kept open all night "in case any inhabitant of the city might finish his book before he was sleepy and wanted to begin another.....Books here can be bought for a flower, oh happy inhabitants of Caper!" The book sold well and an American edition was published in 1924 as well as a new British edition in 1943.

However, while writing for children was an enjoyable diversion, it was largely writing on art matters that engaged Bodkin's time and interest. Early in 1924 he gave a lecture in the Theatre of the College of Surgeons, under the auspices of the Royal Dublin Society, and this provides another indication of his philosophy of art. The lecture was entitled 'What to Look for in a Picture', and while acknowledging that aesthetic philosophers failed to agree on any canon of ideal beauty which might serve as a touchstone for the art of painting, he gave his own analysis that a picture "should concern itself with the expression of an emotion springing from a personal visual experience seeking an outlet, and (was) incomplete until it found a haven in the spirit of those to whom it was

displayed."[62] We should "go on constantly looking at pictures, for we shall receive an immense reward when we succeed in penetrating to the inner sanctuary of a picture - where the painter's spirit burns in readiness to kindle in our own spirits a similar radiance."[63] Art asserts once more the importance of communication between artist and viewer which for Bodkin was a vital part of the artistic process. Art therefore for him was an act of communication, with the artist working at his art because he had something to say, and the whole process incomplete without the engagement of the viewer. This act of communion is similar between a poem and the reader: "The taste of the apple...lies in the contact of the fruit with the palate, not in the fruit itself; in a similar way...poetry lies in the meeting of poem and reader, not in the lines of symbols printed on pages of a book."[64]A similar interpretation comes from Declan McGonagle: "Art is in your head...The product and process meet in the mind of the audience, the viewer, the participant..."[65] However, Bodkin's definition was also an academic one, with a stress on the importance of knowledge in the transaction. In the case of Venetian art, for example, people could not fully appreciate Venetian pictures without knowledge of Venetian history, "of that mighty State enduring for a thousand years, establishing ideals of authority and splendour which had not since been paralleled elsewhere." But experiencing and enjoying the work of art, through constant looking, came before analysis and yet another kind of pleasure in pictures came from an understanding of the technical craft of painting. Bodkin explained the unity achieved in all great pictures in the gesture, or line, the colour and the composition, as well as the physiology and psychology of colour. As for composition, "every great painter made of his work a unity - a single rounded utterance, a rhythmic harmony wedding all its elements into repose", with the result being decorative and appealing to the senses in the first instance, as well as to reason. "Emphasis moulds emotion into form" and Bodkin disagreed with Clive Bell's view that a picture could be completely non-representational. He supported the Platonic view that the representation of natural objects was inevitable and for him "Bell and Plato stood on opposite banks and were divided by a raging torrent."

Bodkin's thesis can be seen in practical critical application when he reviewed an exhibition of the work of Estella Solomons and Mary Duncan in 1919.[66] This consisted

of work which, he said "whatever the demerits of its execution is unmistakably sincere." The artists "ape nobody. They are concerned only to record in colour and line emotions they have experienced before objects that attract them." However, while the paintings displayed "plenty of feeling" they also indicated "a complete absence of thought." What they represented was "in short: studies, notes, motifs, sketches, what you will; but in no proper sense of the word are they pictures." The practical Bodkin nevertheless urged people to buy at the exhibition, because for him, the paintings were so much better value than many a Romney or a Lawrence at the current market rates. Furthermore, "were Dublin people wiser they would buy these things with avidity instead of the cheap prints of Kirchner, '*Snaffles*' and Mabel Lucy Atwell, or the spurious old paintings that so excite their cupidity." Bodkin was an advocate for the contemporary artist and in an earlier article on changes in the market value of pictures[67]he stressed that "each of us should occasionally back our fancy by purchasing pictures from contemporary painters. Even if the buyers taste be bad no great harm is done, no large sum is lost, and he has something for his money which gives him honest delight." His rather patronising view of the work of Estella Solomons must have changed shortly afterwards because she painted his portrait[68] in 1920, and the result was one which pleased him. Another interpretation is that with his awareness of the power of the great portrait painter to "seek the soul of his subject" he chose to be painted in a more superficial way.

This portrait was exhibited at the R.H.A. in 1925 with the title *Portrait of a Gentleman*[69] and in his review of this exhibition Bodkin disingenuously refers to the work as having "won deserved praise as a sympathetic presentment of an unsatisfactory type of sitter." He was less than excited by the exhibits of his friend Harry Clarke, which were "comparatively slight", and in the same review he refers glowingly to another exhibit, Jack Yeats' *Music in the Train*, which Yeats himself did not rate so highly as his *Liffey Swim*[70] but on which Bodkin took a different view. Though admiring both pictures "enormously", for Bodkin, *Music in the Train* seemed "to exemplify (the artist's) remarkable gifts in their perfection. It has all the dramatic qualities which we value in this artist, and, in addition, an exquisite suavity and dignity of treatment which he sometimes fails to achieve. It is a work to which the word "genius" may be deliberately

applied....."and Bodkin's admiration for the work of Yeats is supported by contemporary analysis which puts Yeats as the most important Irish painter of the 20th century.[71] Furthermore this analysis places Yeats firmly in the modernist tradition with which Bodkin indicated, in general, very little sympathy. However Yeats is also identified as a distinctively Irish painter and Bodkin was undoubtedly attracted to his work for this reason. He was quoted by Lily Yeats, Jack's sister, as saying in 1929: "This man has a European mind. Anyone buying his work now is getting something of great value."[72]

Critical distinction between the work of Yeats and Nathaniel Hone was an issue which had drawn Bodkin into print in 1924. A review by him of an exhibition and sale of the work of Nathaniel Hone[73]at the home of Dermod O'Brien drew a response from Thomas McGreevy[74] (with whom he was often to cross swords and who later became director of the National Gallery) which challenged Bodkin's statement that "no Irish painter, living or dead, had equalled, much less surpassed the purely aesthetic quality of his (Hone's) art." McGreevy felt that "No Hone that I have ever seen could, I think, equal, much less surpass, the aesthetic quality, the impressive design, the massive movement, the fine colour of *Morning after Rain*, in the last Jack Yeats exhibition here....." This had the effect of eliciting a sharp rejoinder from Bodkin[75]which charged McGreevy with, among other inadequacies, being "unneccessarily[sic] prolix", although his own contribution to the debate was at least as long and included a lesson on aesthetic theory. "The aesthetic quality is only one element of the successful picture. It is an element essential, but seldom predominant. Notable and praiseworthy pictures possess it in varying degrees. It is a difficult thing to define. A sufficient aid to its recognition may be found in the working formula: 'The aesthetic quality of a work of graphic art resides exclusively in the emotional relationship of its lines and colours', which relationship has been called, by Mr. Clive Bell, 'Significant Form'." The essence of his argument is that Hone was chiefly concerned with forms "for their own sake. His pictures are never complicated by side-long glances at humanity, nor by vain architectural interests....."On the other hand, he said, "no one could claim for Mr. Yeats that his concern was chiefly for form..." His work indicated that "he is profoundly concerned, in almost everything he paints, to express ideas and opinions, to record emotions and experiences that have nothing

whatever to do with the purely aesthetic quality, and may often, indeed, impede its expression." So for Bodkin, Hone was "pre-eminent" in that one respect, and he was certainly not asserting Hone's "general superiority" over Yeats, a comparison which he claims would have been odious. There the matter lay, but the exchange indicates that it was the brave person who engaged publicly in print with Bodkin on aesthetic matters. He seems to have come out on the winning side more often than not. His piece on the Hone exhibition also allows him to once again deride "national taste" by stating that "there are many among us who would prefer a gaudy-coloured process print of *Scotch cattle in a mist, Gondolas on the Grand Canal*, or even, *I'se bigger than Doggie*, to the best thing Hone ever painted."

Allied to his work as a reviewer, the publication of academic papers on various art historical themes had been an outlet for Bodkin's interests since his college days. *Studies*, under the editorship of Father Connolly, frequently published these, as well as a number of Bodkin's reviews, in the 1920s. An historical piece in 1922 on James Barry[76], whom Bodkin greatly admired as a painter and a man, was followed by articles on Adriaen van de Venne[77] and Domenico Feti[78] in the following year. In the latter he refers to his "considerable acquaintance with, and study of Feti's work", and points to the "marked points of resemblance between the technique of Feti and that of Castiglione", both of whom had been employed at the Court of Mantua by the Duke Ferdinando Gonzaga.[79] Van de Venne, Feti and Castiglione were all represented in Bodkin's own collection, and it is evident that he supported his interest in particular artists by buying their work when he could find it.[80] In the case of some of his purchases, it may well have been that his good fortune in finding undiscovered treasures in Dublin stores and at auctions, a pleasure he developed in his youth with Hugh Lane, led him to research an artist further. His satisfaction with the Feti purchase is evident, and although admitting partiality, he described the picture, which was one of a series, as "the only one on which the artist lavished the full resources of his technical skill...painted in solid satisfying impasto with glazings and scumblings...the sky has a new, significant intensity...The trees are less theatrical. The chiaroscuro is bolder and deeper. The design is more subtle and yet not more obvious or elaborate. The colour scheme is rich and marvellously related to

the clean blacks and whites of the Samaritan's turban....When exhibited at Florence it was described by one of the best living authorities on its period as "un esemplare grazioso di quelle interpretazione affascinanti delle sacre Parabole in cui eccelse il Feti."

It seems natural that this account of Feti should be followed by one on Castiglione, and this was published in *Studies* in 1924.[81] In it he deals mainly with the work of the artist, but he also used the opportunity to discuss the changes occurring in art criticism, which were marked by a move away from the practice in which anyone with "an eye"[82] or "taste" "adventured gaily into the difficult business of attribution and, more often than otherwise, emerged unscathed." Such people he termed as "dilettante" and the modern critic as "properly, more timorous". Although not known for his timidity, he undoubtedly located himself in the latter category, and it was here that he felt the future lay. Furthermore, "most Universities worthy of the name have now their faculties and professors of art", so that scholars were contributing to a developing a body of knowledge, revealing "hordes of old errors", and resurrecting "a number of fascinating personalities from oblivion." It seems likely that Bodkin was referring to the German academic system which had first given recognition to art history, rather than to the development of the discipline in Britain or Ireland where it was evolve later.[83] For Bodkin, scholarly work had identified Castiglione as "an artist of surprisingly great powers and amazing versatility" and Bodkin reproduced four works from his own collection for *Studies*,[84] in a paper which ranges widely over the attribution of the artist's works. This included two pictures from the Madden Collection in the "small drawing room" of the Provost's house at Trinity College, which were reproduced for the first time, but also "here for the first time, though confidently, attributed to Castiglione" by Bodkin.[85] Even in his own terms, as one of the new breed of art historians he had both "an eye", and "taste" and the confidence to back his judgements, as he does here. Much of his research for this article was done in the library of Sir Robert Witt, who had acquired some of the best examples of Castiglione's work in a 1920s sale[86], and Bodkin recorded his own "good fortune" while the article was in print, to discover in Dublin and to acquire "a particularly fine example of Castiglione's work"[87] which he also reproduced here and which to him resembled that of the work in the National Gallery of Ireland. His

own purchase was reproduced again with an article in the *Burlington* in 1926 on new attributions to Castiglione, although here it is described as from a "Private Collection".[88]

There can be no doubt that Bodkin was adding considerably to his art historical knowledge, and to his ability to recognise important works of art. It cannot have gone unnoticed that if he could purchase so well on his own behalf, and on a relatively limited income, what could he do for an institution such as the National Gallery? He had already provided an indication. An article by him in 1923 on William Mulready reports his discovery of "a brilliant and hitherto unrecorded little portrait" of the artist, which "I discovered last year in a London dealer's shop" and which "has recently been added to our National collection."[89] The portrait of Mulready was by his friend John Linnell whose work was also represented in Bodkin's own collection.[90] As a Trustee of the National Gallery, Bodkin was finding treasures for the collection and these articles on international art and artists can only have enhanced Bodkin's reputation as a scholar with an astute capacity to discover a fine work of art. Furthermore, it was not just in Irish journals like *Studies* that he was publishing. In 1924 in the *Burlington Magazine*, he wrote of his purchase, in January 1921 of a picture by Gerard Dou, *The Flautist*,[91] and this period is remarkable for the number of publications recording details of Bodkin's own collection. In the same month in 1924, a biographical piece in the *Dublin Magazine* on John Butler Yeats included a sketch by the artist of his daughter Lily Yeats from Bodkin's collection. Bodkin felt that John Butler Yeats had never had recognition and was never a popular portrait painter in Dublin, "in the sense that Walter Osborne was, or Catterson Smith"[92] His work was never "deliberately collected" and Bodkin recalled the exhibition of the work of Yeats and Nathaniel Hone in 1901, which although a success, "did not alter to an appreciable extent the deadly apathy of Dublin to both of these distinguished artists."

Bodkin admired John Butler Yeats as an artist and for "his extraordinary conversational talent" which took so much of the time he might have devoted to painting. He had also supported and promoted the work of the artist in his lifetime,[93] although not to the same extent as he supported Harry Clarke, whose work was also in Bodkin's collection.[94] Bodkin had become the Irish correspondent of *The Studio* in the summer of 1923, and he

reported there on the successful exhibition at Clarke's Studios and gave more prominent coverage to Irish art than had previously been the case.[95] In *The Studio* he also wrote on another artist he admired. This was Gerald Leslie Brockhurst who had painted Aileen's portrait on her engagement to Bodkin, and this picture was reproduced in the *Dublin Magazine* in April 1924, now with the title *Portrait of a Lady*.[96] This had now been joined by the companion piece of his own image by Estella Solomons, *Portrait of a Gentleman*. The same magazine published two other reproductions from Bodkin's collection in the following September. These were Frederick Sandys *Portrait of a Girl*[97] and *Au bord du Foret* by N.V.Diaz.[98] Bodkin's collection was further extended in 1925 following a review of his on the work of Norah McGuinness in *The Studio*. For this he received "a small drawing in acknowledgment of my first article."[99] However, these gifts, commissions and purchases were relatively insignificant when compared with Bodkin's "two really big buys" in 1923 and 1924. The first was "the Caneletto" referred to by Aileen Bodkin[100] and by Bodkin's friend Arnold Bennett who asked him to "bring the Canaletto" when Bodkin was to visit Bennett at his house at 75 Cadogan Square in London, en route to Holland.[101] The second major purchase was also referred to by Bennett in 1924. This was *The Entombment of Christ* by Quentin Matsys which Bodkin bought in Dublin for £500, with the help of a loan from his father, and sold "soon after" at Christies for around £4,000.[102]

Lecturing, writing and reviewing took up a good deal of Bodkin's time in 1925 and 1926. He signed a royalty agreement with Bells in 1925 for a book, *The Approach to Painting*[103] and work on this was under way. In the *Burlington* he engaged in art historical disputations with Professor Mayer and Roger Fry on Jan van Eyck[104] and with Sir Charles Holmes, Director of the National Gallery in London on Chardin.[105] However his attention was somewhat diverted from history of art matters with his appointment by the Government, on 19th May 1926 to membership of the committee which was to advise on the design of the coinage under the Coinage Act 1926.[106] It has been suggested that a nation's coinage is its most enduring national monument, outliving many other forms of cultural expression[107] and while this may be an over estimation, there is no doubt that the strong emphasis placed on designing the Irish coinage was a significant policy move.

Ireland was the first modern State to design an entire coinage and Bodkin was to serve with W.B.Yeats, Dermod O'Brien, President of the RHA, Lucius O'Callaghan, Langley A. West, Master of the Corporation of Gold and Silversmiths of Ireland and Leo T. McCauley. Yeats had been in communication with the Government on the issue of official designs for seals and medals from 1923 when he informed Hugh Kennedy, the Attorney General that he, William Orpen, John Lavery and Charles Shannon, who was one of the artists included in Lane's Municipal Gallery exhibition of 1908, "consented to act" provided the committee was not enlarged so that their authority would be reduced. Shannon he described as a man who "has practised half a dozen different arts and is a scholar in all of them."[108] He also proposed Gogarty and the Director of the National Gallery as members. Kennedy informed President Cosgrave of his discussions with Yeats, indicating that it was good to have Orpen interested in "our affairs". Although he found him to be not very friendly no one questioned that he was "a genius and a man of very original if somewhat bitter mind."[109] What Kennedy was proposing was a committee of honorary art advisers for whom certain conditions would be prescribed. The attitude was a cautious one and the committee "would certainly have to follow tracks laid down for them." However there is no evidence that the matter went further at this time but following this, Yeats was obviously in a position to take a lead on the design of the coinage.

The first meeting of the Commission was held at 5 Ely Place on 17th June 1926, and with West not able to act on grounds of ill health, Barry Egan, head of a Cork firm of goldsmiths and jewellers was added to the committee instead. Yeats, who had become a Trustee of the National Gallery in 1924 with Sir John Lavery,[110]was appointed Chairman of the committee and his fascination with old Greek coinage, along with a suggestion by William Orpen, led to a proposal to the committee that the designs should express the typical natural products of the country.[111] These were ultimately limited to animals but the Committee was not to have complete freedom and was presented with a decision made by the Minister of Finance following consultation with George Atkinson of the School of Art about the design of the coins.[112] Atkinson had asked if portraits of individuals would be admissible on the coins, providing the examples of Griffith and

Collins. However, he said that "so far as British opinion is a relevant factor I imagine that while it would not very much mind the elimination of the King in favour of some impersonal design it might look otherwise on the replacement of the royal by another effigy." Ernest Blythe, who was Minister for Finance, agreed that no portrait should be used and the coins were to be manufactured at the Royal Mint in London.[113]. Two other decisions of the Minister were also conveyed to the Committee. These were that a harp should be shown on one side of the majority of the coins, if not on all, and that the inscriptions should be in Irish only.[114]

The specific terms of reference for the Committee related to advising on procedures for the submission of designs and on those most suitable for adoption. A report by the Committee was presented to the Minister for Finance on 6th August 1926 which recommended, along with the use of a harp and the words "Saorstat Eireann" the symbols of a horse, a salmon, a bull, a wolf-hound, a hare, a pig, a woodcock and a hen, possibly with chickens. These represented what the committee considered to be "the natural products of the country, its sports and industries.[115] The committee were "constrained to reject other popular symbols such as the round tower, shamrock and sunburst", and had some misgivings about including the pig, but relented on the grounds that it earned a place in the series as a valuable product of the country. It was decided that a limited competition should be held for designs and seven artists took part in this.[116] The results of the competition were considered by the committee on 15th February 1927 and Percy Metcalf's designs, being "incomparably superior" to the others were the final choice of the committee. This time there was no question of appointing an Irish person to do the designs and the result was that the best entry won the competition. Work on this committee was to take up a considerable amount of Bodkin's time until the new currency was launched in 1928.

Another public appointment followed for Bodkin in 1927. The question of the education of artists had been raised by Sean Keating in 1925 when he prepared a memorandum on the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art for the Secretary of the Department Education.[117] Keating pointed out in emphatic terms the problems of the School, and following a

memorandum by the Department to the Government, a Committee of Experts was appointed with terms of reference to investigate and report on conditions at the School. Dermod O'Brien and Bodkin were also asked to submit their views. While this was going on, the Department of Education also established a similar enquiry on the National Museum. For this enquiry five experts were appointed, and this time Bodkin was asked to serve on the committee which was chaired by Professor Nils Lithberg, Director of the Northern Museum of Stockholm. This committee was formally established on 31st March 1927 but Bodkin's attention must have been distracted because on 2nd February that year Lucius O'Callaghan had resigned from his position as Director of the National Gallery, with his decision described as "irrevocable"[118]in spite of efforts by the Board to change his mind. His resignation was to take effect on 31st March or when a successor was appointed, but this was postponed until 30th June at the special request of the Board. The announcement in the *Cork Examiner* mentioned Bodkin as the likely successor,[119]and following advertisements for the position in Ireland and Britain, seventeen applications were received.[120] At the meeting of the Board on 1st June, "letters of application for the position of Resident Director" were read and considered. This time Bodkin's application was included. He was proposed by Dermod O'Brien, and seconded by Jonathan Hogg and unanimously appointed. Yeats expressed regret that this was the final meeting for O'Callaghan and suggested that he should remain as a member of the Board to fill the place vacated by Bodkin, who would retire on his appointment as Director. This suggestion was acted on and O'Callaghan, whose term of office as Director had begun in such depressing circumstances was finally rewarded by his reappointment to the Board of the Gallery, a position he had been required to surrender on his appointment as Director. Bodkin must have felt that his hour had come, that public recognition was finally his, that his time at the Gallery was to be the beginning of a glittering career in the arts in Ireland as well as guaranteeing a position on the international arts arena. However, success in his professional life occurred in a year that marked the ending of his close friendship with Harry Clarke. His longstanding friendship with James Stephens was also to end and soon Lennox Robinson was provoked to describe him as "strutting around like a paycock"[121] following his appointment to the Gallery. The appointment also alienated his former ally Sarah Purser.

His influence on Irish cultural life was to reach its highest, but the personal costs in terms of his family life and his friends, were also to be considerable.

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[1] Sutton, 162.
[2] NGI Board minutes, 7th February 1923 indicate that the Board placed on record that Douglas's action was "quite irregular" and his absence from a statutory meeting was "without authority".
[3] ibid. Bodkin was appointed secretary to the meeting but the minutes were subsequently cancelled on grounds of no quorum.
[4] Anne Kelly. 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland'. *Irish Arts Review Yearbook* 1991/92, 172. The picture was *A Brazilian Landscape*, NGI 847
[5] NGI Board minutes, 18th July 1923.
[6] TCD Bodkin papers 6530/68-160 R.R.Tatlock to TB, 4th November 1923
[7] ibid.
[8] O'Grady, 133.
[9] ibid., 135.
[10] NGI Board minutes, 5 December 1923. In the final vote O'Callaghan was supported by 6 votes: Hogg, Sarah Purser, Lord Mayo, Hanson, Dermod O'Brien and Orpen. Hutcheson Poe, Tisdall, and Bodkin were against.
[11] TCD Bodkin papers 6530/68-160 R.R.Tatlock to TB, 21st November 1923.
[12] TB and Sir William Hutcheson Poe, 'The National Gallery of Ireland', letter to the editor, *Irish Times*, 7 December 1923. The *Freeman's Journal* and the *Irish Independent* also published the letter on the same date.
[13] 'The National Gallery' news report, *Freeman's Journal*, 12 December 1923.
[14] 'Irish art' news report, *Freeman's Journal,* 11 December 1923.
[15] Letters to the editor, *Freeman's Journal*, 8 December 1923.
[16] Letters to the editor, *Irish Times*, 14 December 1923.
[17] 'The National Gallery' news report *Freeman's Journal*, 12 December 1923.
[18] 'Public Appointments' editorial, *Irish Times*, 13 December 1923.
[19] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, 513.
[20] At a superficial level the issue might be compared to the appointment of the current NGI Director following the initial selection of a British candidate, or the appointment of a British Director of the National Gallery following the initial selection of an American. However, in the Irish situation it was suggested that there was political intervention to secure an Irish appointment (*Dáil* debates, 383, 28-29, 19 October 1988:http://www.oireachtas-debates.gov.ie/D.0383.198810190005.html).
[21] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, 518.
[22] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 79. Reported in the *Observer,* 16 December 1923.
[23] 'Public Appointments' editorial, *Irish Times*, 13 December 1923.
[24] TCD Bodkin papers7003/1a Horace Plunkett to W.T.Cosgrave 16 May 1923.
[25] NGI Board minutes, 6 December 1922,
[26] Kelly. 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland', 172.
[27] TB. 'An Irish Artist: Miss Purser's Pictures'. *Irish Times*, 12 May 1923.
[28] Kelly, 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland', 172.
[29] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 78.

[30] 'Nature's Mirror - Famous Lecturer on the importance of art', *Freeman's Journal*, 21 February 1923. Bodkin was then thirty six.
[31] ibid.
[32] Tom Duddy. 'Irish Art Criticism – A provincialism of the Right?'. Fintan Cullen ed. *Sources in Irish Art: a Reader.* Cork: Cork University Press, 2000, 98.
[33] O'Brien, Dermod. 'Irish Art and Its Possibilities'. W.G.FitzGerald, ed., *The Voice of Ireland*, Dublin and London: Virtue, 1923, 499. See also Cyril Barrett. *Irish Art in the 19th Century*. Exhibition Catalogue, Crawford Municipal School of Art, October/December 1971, 8 for historical and sociological reasons for the absence of patronage, including the exodus following the Act of Union and during the famine.
[34] S. B. Kennedy, 84.
[35] Donal McCartney. *UCD: A National Idea: The History of University College Dublin.* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1999, 4. J.H.Pollen, the architect of the University Church was appointed by Newman but there is no indication that his role was other than honorary. In McCartney's history there is no reference to the appointment of a Chair in the History of Art at UCD which occurred in 1977.
[36] TB. 'The Condition and Needs of Art in Ireland'. W.G.FitzGerald ed. *The Voice of Ireland*, 494.
[37] O'Grady, 136. The teaching of art history at university level originated in Germany, with the first Chair at Berlin in 1844. The first Chair in Britain was at the University of Edinburgh in 1879, and the Courtauld Institute at the University of London was endowed in 1932. TB informed the Barber Institute Trustees that the Slade Professors at Oxford and Cambridge delivered a dozen public lectures annually. BI, TB Memorandum, 13 March 1935
[38] TB. *Report on the Arts in Ireland.* Dublin: Stationery Office, 1949, 7.
[39] Minihan, 179.
[40] TB. 'An Irish Artist - Miss Purser's Pictures'. *Irish Times*, 12 May 1923.
[41] TB's views are supported by contemporary analysis and Sarah Purser's artistic style has been described as having "affinities of purpose" with artists including Bastien-Lepage. O'Grady, 25, 26.
[42] A contemporary analysis of this picture, which is at the NGI,1424, is that it is one of Sarah Purser's finest early portraits. Campbell, 173
[43] TB. 'Our Art Galleries'. *Freeman's Journal*, 24 May 1923.
[44] TB quoted in Larmour, 196.
[45] TB. 'Housing the (Lane) Pictures'. *Freeman's Journal*, 12 October 1922.
[46] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 51.
[47] Mary Geraldine, December 1917; Anne Margaret, January 1919; Elizabeth, September 1920; Helen May 1922.
[48] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the family only', 36.
[49] The catalogue of the Sotheby and Co. sale of Old Master and Modern Drawings and Paintings from TB's collection, held on 11 November 1959 indicates that all the drawings and paintings included, i.e. 105 lots, with one exception, were acquired before 1927. This sale realised £19,928. TB also sold pictures from his collection from time to time through Sotheby and Co. and other houses.
[50] NA 1155/1/4/31, 'For the family only, 53.

[51] NA1155/1/4/15, Geraldine Cox Brindley queried the Trust solicitor on why TB had knowledge about the Trust, 27 November 1924; Dorothy Cox to Aileen Bodkin objecting to the involvement of TB with the Trust, 11 February 1926.
[52] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the Family only', 53.
[53] ibid., 37.
[54] ibid.
[55] ibid., 36.
[56] ibid., 34.
[57] Emma Bodkin was born in 1892 and became a chartered accountant, said by the family to be the first female chartered accountant in Ireland. She worked with the firm Craig Gardner in Dublin. TB's only brother Matthias McDonnell Bodkin was born in 1896 and became a Jesuit priest.
[58] TB. translation from the French of Henry Spiess, 'The Mirror'. *Irish Statesman,* 3, 15 20 December 1924, 460.
[59] He became a Council member of the Royal Academy in 1927.
[60] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 15; TB. *A Guide to Caper.* London: Chatto & Windus, 1924. Denson notes that Eden seems to have been impecunious and TB arranged that all royalties were to be paid to Denis Eden. The book was also published in the United States in 1924, and a new edition in London in 1943. The editions were widely reviewed internationally.
[61] Y.O. (George Russell, AE). 'Children's Books'. *Irish Statesman*, 3, 308, 15 November 1924.
[62] TB. 'Pleasure in Art'. *Irish Times,* 9 February 1924.
[63] TB. 'Colour Psychology'. *Freeman's Journal,* 9 February 1924.
[64] Jorge Luis Borges quoted in Seamus Heaney. *The Redress of Poetry.* London: Faber and Faber, 1995, 8.
[65] Declan McGonagle. 'Things Change: The need for new transactions in cultural management'. M.Fitzgibbon, and A.Kelly. *From Maestro to Manager: Critical Issues in Arts and Culture Management*, Dublin, Oak Tree Press, 1997, 26.
[66] TB. 'The Art of Estella Solomons and Mary Duncan'. *Irish Statesman*, 1 November 1919, 464.
[67] TB. 'Pictures and their Prices'. *Irish Statesman*, 12 July 1919.
[68] The portrait is at the County Library, Sligo.
[69] This was the 96th exhibition of the RHA held in the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, the Academy's own premises having been burned to the ground during the Rising of 1916. TB reviewed it in *Irish Statesman*, 4, 6, 18 April 1925.
[70] This picture was a gift of the trustees of the Haverty bequest to the National Gallery, NGI 942.
[71] S.B.Kennedy, 26.
[72] quoted in William M. Murphy. *Family Secrets: William Butler Yeats and his relatives.* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1995, 316.
[73] TB. 'Pictures by Nathaniel Hone'. *Irish Statesman*, 3, 6, 27 September 1924.
[74] Thomas McGreevy. 'Pictures by Nathaniel Hone'. letter *Irish Statesman*, 3,6, 18 October 1924.
[75] TB. 'The Art of Nathaniel Hone'. letter *Irish Statesman*, 3, 7, 25 October 1924, 205

[76] TB. 'James Barry'. *Studies*, March 1922, 11, 41. In the catalogue for the exhibition at the Municipal Gallery, 'Bodkin Irish Collection', 18 June 1962 to 15 July 1962, two works are listed: *Birth of Venus*, proof engraving in colours, no. 4, (now at the Ulster Museum) and *Jacomo and Imogen (from Cymbeline)* attributed to Barry, no. 6. (now at the NGI (1759) Both were part of the Bodkin bequest through the FNCI.
[77] TB. 'Adrien van de Venne'. *Studies*, 12, 46.
[78] TB. 'Domenico Feti'. *Studies*, December 1923, 12, 48.
[79] Feti was court painter to Vicenzo Gonzago.
[80] Catalogue Sotheby and Co. sale TB collection, 11 November 1959. Domenico Feti, *The Good Samaritan*, lot no. 34 TB recalled in *Studies*, December 1923, 12, 48, 618, that he bought the picture some years before, "unframed, unrecognised and unappreciated, in a Dublin cabinet-maker's store" and had lent it to an exhibition at Palazzo Pitti, Florence in 1922. The catalogue lists three Van de Venne works, *Crippled Beggars*, lot no. 77; *Crippled Beggars Carousing*, lot. no. 78 and *Woman's rule is Man's Woe*, lot no. 79 - all works on panel.
[81] TB. 'Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione (Il Grechetto)'. *Studies*, 13, 51, 431, September 1924.
[82] ibid.
[83] A survey conducted by Nikolaus Pevsner in 1960 indicated that until the Courtauld Institute was established in 1931, and even until the end of the second World War, art history was not regarded as a serious subject in British universities. In 1960, eleven of the twenty-seven British universities did not teach history of art at all. Editorial, 'The Teaching of Art History in British Universities'. *The Burlington Magazine*, CIII, 698, May 1961, 163-164.
[84] These are *The Sacrifice of Noah*, on which Bodkin later wrote in the *Burlington Magazine,* May, 1925, XLVII, and sold at Sothebys Bodkin sale, lot no. 25, *Adam naming the Beasts* and the *Entry into the Ark*, framed as a pair and sold at Sothebys Bodkin sale, lot no. 26. Also sold at this sale, lot no. 24, was *A Dalmatian, a tortoise and farmyard fowl standing in a landscape* which TB bought as *Still Life* from the collection of the Duke of Leinster, sold on 2 December 1925 and attributed to Castiglione in TB. 'New Attributions to Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione'. *Burlington Magazine*, 48, 278, 1926, 264.
[85] A footnote records that these pictures "are not assigned to any painter by Strickland, in the *Descriptive Catalogue of Pictures, Busts and Statues in Trinity College Dublin, and in the Provost's House*, 1916 and TB also corrects their attribution from Teniers to Castiglione.
[86] TB. *Studies*, 13, 51, September 1924. The sale was that of Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, December 7-10, 1920 where there were 10 pictures by Castiglione, "the best" of which were bought for the Witt collection.
[87] *Abraham journeying to Canaan*. This picture was sold at Sotheby's as *The Sacrifice of Noah*, lot no. 25 - reproduction in Sothebys' catalogue is the same as that in *Studies*.
[88] TB. 'New Attributions to Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione', *Burlington Magazine*, 48, 278. see Plate II F.
[89] TB. 'William Mulready,R.A.'. *The Dublin Magazine*, 1,5, December 1923, NGI 843.

[90] Sotheby's catalogue Bodkin sale 11 November 1959 records two pictures sold: *Portrait of a Gentleman*, lot no. 102 and *Portrait of a Lady*, lot no. 103.
[91] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 79. Plate A was purchased by TB in Dublin, 15 July 1921 at an auction at Bennett & Son, 6 Upper Ormond Quay. It was formerly the property of Pierce Finucane and Denson indicated that it was bought for the National Gallery of Canada at Sotheby's sale, 15 July 1960: lot 100. However, the sale was at Christies and the picture is now titled *An Interior with a Pipe-Player* attributed to Quirin Brekelenkam. Information from Julia Armstrong-Totten, Getty Foundation by email, 15 May 2001.
[92] TB. 'John Butler Yeats, RHA'. *Dublin Magazine*. 1,6, January 1924, 478.
[93] Joan Hardwick. *The Yeats Sisters, a Biography of Susan and Elizabeth Yeats*. London: Pandora, 1996, 200.
[94] Three works are listed in catalogue *Bodkin Irish Collection* exhibition at Municipal Gallery, 1962. These are *The Mad Mulrannies*, ink drawing on paper, which was given by the artist to his godchild Elizabeth Bodkin, *Drawing for the Corporate Seal of the National Gallery of Ireland* and *Stained Glass Panel*, 1917.
[95] Gordon Bowe, *The Life and Works of Harry Clarke*, 156.
[96] Reproduction of Gerald Leslie Brockhurst's *Portrait of a Lady*, *Dublin Magazine*, 1, 9, April 1924.
[97] This picture was sold as lot 105 in the Bodkin Sotheby's sale 11 November 1959.
[98] This may have been *A Wooded Landscape at sunset* by Narcisse Diaz de la Pena, sold at Bodkin Sotheby's sale, 11 November 1959, lot no. 99. Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 80, reports that *Au bord du Foret* was bought for £20 from Clarke & Son, 21 Rosemary St., Belfast on 22 November 1918.
[99] TB, 'The Art of Miss Norah McGuinness'. *The Studio*, 15 September 1925, and Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 81.
[100] NA 1155 Aileen Bodkin, 'My Dear T.B. Some letters to Thomas Bodkin from Arnold Bennett', unpublished and undated ms., 51. The picture was *London: Westminster Bridge from the North, Lambeth Palace in the distance,* in the collection of Earl Strathcona in 1989. See W.H. Constable and J.A. Links. *Canaletto, II,* (catalogue raisonnée). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, 424.
[101] NA 1155 Aileen Bodkin, 'My Dear T.B'Arnold Bennett to TB, 5 August 1923, 43
[102] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 179. TB bought it from Dean Cowel in Dublin and it was said to have come from the family of the Earl of Carysfort. TB sold it at Christie's, 18 July 1924, lot 86, to the dealer Frank Sabin who held it until 1938. The National Gallery of Canada bought it from Emma Reifenberg in New York in 1949. It is listed at NGC as *The Lamentation*. Information by email from Catherine Johnson, National Gallery of Canada, 26 April 200l.
[103] TB. *The Approach to Painting*. London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1927.
[104] TB. 'A Jan van Eyck Problem'. letter, *Burlington Magazine,* 48,278, 1926. This concerned the attribution of the *St. Francis* at the Turin Gallery which TB believed to be a copy. Mayer had said in a previous article that it was an original. Fry, who had cleaned the original work, supported TB and agreed that the Turin work was a copy.
[105] TB. 'Chardin in the London and Dublin National Galleries'. *Burlington Magazine*, 47, 269, 1925. TB claimed priority for the Irish picture, *La Lecon de la Lecture* which was

part of the Lane bequest (NGI 813, *The Young Governess*) over a similar work at the National Gallery London.

[106] TCD Bodkin papers 6963, Department of Finance to TB, 19 May 1926.

[107] Brian Cleeve. 'The Yeats coinage'. *W.B.Yeats and the Designing of Ireland's Coinage*, Dublin, Dolmen Press, 1972.

[108] UCD Archives, Hugh Kennedy papers 4/1331 W.B.Yeats to Hugh Kennedy, 21 November (1923).

[109] UCD Archives, Hugh Kennedy papers 4/1332 Hugh Kennedy to W.T.Cosgrave, 28 November 1923.

[110] NGI Board minutes, 6 February 1924.

[111] W.B.Yeats. 'The designing of Ireland's coinage'. *Ireland of the Welcomes*, 15, 2, July-August 1966,14. W.B.Yeats. 'What we did or tried to do'. Brian Cleeve, ed. *Yeats and Ireland's Coinage*. Yeats particularly admired the coins of the Greek colonies, especially those in Sicily and one coin of Carthage. He also admired one with the Fascist emblem.

[112] Ronan Fanning. *The Irish Department of Finance 1922-58*. Dublin: IPA, 1978, 178 .

[113] Maurice Moynihan. *Currency and Central Banking in Ireland 1922-60*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan 1975, 31.

[114] ibid., 32.

[115] ibid., 32/33.

[116] The artists were Jerome Connor, Albert Power, Oliver Sheppard, Percy Metcalf, Wilhelm Carl Milles, Publio Morbiducci and Paul Manship. An invitation to compete was sent to Ivan Mestrovic but did not reach him in time.

[117] Brian Kennedy, 17.

[118] NGI Board minutes, 2 February 1927.

[119] 'National Gallery Appointment', *Cork Examiner*, 25 March 1927.

[120] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 6.

[121] quoted in Gordon Bowe, *The Life and Work of Harry Clarke*, 277.

5 AN AMBITION REALISED, THE DUBLIN ART WORLD AND THE STATE'S NEW CURRENCY

Before he took up his position at the National Gallery Bodkin saw the publication of his book *The Approach to Painting* on 29th March 1927. His friend Arnold Bennett had written to him in 1925[1]: "I look forward to *The Approach to Painting*. I know it will be original." He was not disappointed. Bennett had been indirectly involved in the previous book, *The Guide to Caper* through his friend and bibliographer Frank Swinnerton who knew the artist, Denis Eden and introduced him to Bodkin. Bennett and Bodkin first met in Dublin in 1917, probably through James O'Connor K.C., later Lord Justice O'Connor, and this began a friendship which quickly involved Bodkin in purchasing pictures and furniture for Bennett. An entry in Bennett's Journal[2] for 29th August 1919 noted "Hired a taxi and went with O'Connor and Bodkin to search quays in pouring rain. I bought four pictures, two lacquer tables and 3 fine Victorian vases. I went to bed at 5 p.m. and got up at 7 to go to Bodkin's. Good dinner. Goodish talking. Especially from old Miss Purser who had known Marie Bashkirtseff intimately and now, at 73, owns a stained-glass factory in Dublin and bosses it herself. Bodkin is acquiring fine pictures for songs. Fancy getting a Diaz in Belfast for a song. He has a magnificent Bloemart[3], and a Domenico Feti[4]. And he knows a deuce of a lot. He saved me from buying an alleged oil painting in the style of Poussin by suspecting that it was merely painted on an engraving. The dealer, who was quite honest, took the backing to pieces and we all examined it, and it WAS painted on an engraving. Last night's was a mixed dinner - I really believe the first I have been to in Dublin." Bennett was obviously surprised that women were present at dinner in Dublin and all-male dinners were more common in Bodkin's circle in 1919. This trip by Bennett to Dublin also included a visit to AE, a meeting with Susan Mitchell, a journey with Bodkin to the National Gallery where he met James Stephens, "a little thin man, untidy, strange accent, with a continuous flow of ideas and fancies". The visit to see "young Clarke's stained glass" was followed by lunch at the Dolphin and the races at Phoenix Park. He is amazed by this glimpse of the Irish way of life: "The mystery of how Irish people cut the dash they do is very deep.

They must be improvident. Racing a gay sight. Vast crowds. Much money lost as the starting prices are an organized swindle.....However, nobody cares."

Bennett was a self-made wealthy man and seems himself to have been anything but improvident. On the contrary, he seems to have recognised an opportunity to extend his collection through the Dublin market. He quickly arranged for Bodkin to buy the Victorian pictures and furniture he was collecting, at least some of which were to fulfil a rather idiosyncratic purpose. In October 1919 he refers to the arrival at his London home of "three Victorian vases....two round pictures...the Cuculain [sic] trio of books....Tain Bo...catalogues...the lacquer table" and the non-arrival of "the larger pictures" and "the ladle".[5] He gave instructions to Bodkin to buy "any picture you like for me up to £50. without me seeing it, or hearing of it in advance....I like your taste and your taste is a rock in whose shadow I will be in the Dublin Market." In 1922 the unusual nature of Bodkin's task becomes evident when Bennett acknowledged receipt of some purchases. "The horror of those two Victorianisms is exquisite. I gloat over them and they shall at once add to the fantastic perversity of my dining-room. I have seen nothing so perfect for years. I thank thee deeply. You have finally proved yourself to be among the really great collectors. Shortly I shall send you a book.[6] And later," your two perspective scenes in my dining-room are the wonder and ecstasy of all diners."[7] Bodkin provided this service as a friend, without charging commission, and Bennett was pleased with the arrangement. In return he entertained Bodkin in London, sent him books and watercolours he had painted, and when Bodkin had his wallet stolen on a trip to Italy, Bennett and some other friends made a collection to help him make good the loss. Bennett was not disappointed in the arrangement with Bodkin and clearly admired his work. When Bodkin's book was published in 1927 he wrote: "Its author...knows painting from the inside....He understands the creative processes, an assertion which can be made of few critics of art and few critics of literature. He writes admirably: he has a wide and detailed historical knowledge of his subject, which knowledge does not encumber his style."[8]

The book is confident and opinionated, although accessible and engagingly written and it makes parallels between the condition of art and that of the social order. It shows Bodkin's strengths and weaknesses and it is easy to see why it became a remarkable popular success for him because it is aimed at the intelligent literate public rather than the academic reader. It allowed Bodkin to develop in a popularising way the aesthetic theories already dealt with in lectures and articles and in it he discussed a number of these theories, but "delivers us bound to none" as AE remarked in his review.[9] Bodkin expanded further on the issue of what distinguishes a picture from a painting which he had earlier defined. A painting was "the expression of an emotion springing from a personal visual experience seeking an outlet.... (and) incomplete until it found a haven in the spirit of those to whom it was displayed." The elements of knowledge, unity and harmony were also essential, but in *The Approach to Painting* he argued that the element of "rhythm" is also vital. "The nearest approach (Bodkin) allows himself to an aesthetic dogma is when he says that which distinguishes a painting from a picture is the presence of rhythm".[10] AE agreed with him in this analysis, but not on his dictum "Art is not, and never can be, merely for art's sake" and this represents a fundamental difference between their philosophies of art. For AE "the artist has a secret delight in the art of creation which none who see the result only can ever share, and that is because in the art of creation, when we are manifesting ourselves to ourselves, we are following a law of life, and I am sure if I was condemned to a lonely existence and could exercise one art, then I would chose to paint pictures and would have a delight in the painting, though I was certain no other eyes than my own would see what was done." The process of communication with others which was so central to Bodkin's view of art, was not essential for AE. AE's recommendation of the book also paints a flattering picture of Bodkin. "Mr. Bodkin has a very wide knowledge of pictures, and what I like about him is that he is able to like painters so different as Michael Angelo and Cézanne, and it is this capacity to enjoy any kind of talent which makes him so admirable a writer on art. He is a scholar but is never pedantic. His learning is never displayed for its own sake but because it helps us to understand a picture....."However the book also showed Bodkin's capacity for intolerance of other writers on art, including Sir Claude Phillips and Viardot who 'deserve ridicule for their sentimental conjectures'[11] concerning Van Eyck's painting

of Arnolfini and his wife. Bodkin was not inhibited in the use of intemperate language to describe the views of other critics, a tendency which remained with him throughout his career and which may well have excluded his work from serious academic discourse.

Bodkin and AE were not close at that point, because "it was the pull of Larkie Waldron's circle that had become more congenial to T.B. than that which surrounded AE."[12] Aileen Bodkin felt that AE must have been "deeply hurt by this defection" and remembers meeting him in St. Stephen's Green some years after her marriage and expressing regret at not having seen him for so long, "to be met with most reproachful look from AE." She understood him to be blaming her, as a young bride, for keeping her husband away from Rathgar instead of recognising the reality of the situation which was that Bodkin had changed his circle of friends.[13] However this obviously did not influence AE in writing his generous review of Bodkin's book, which was also widely reviewed elsewhere and was something of a critical success. By June, three months after publication, 500 copies had been sold out of 2000 copies printed[14]. 750 copies were sold on by the publishers to the United States for an American publication and a new agreement for another edition was finalised with a different British publisher, Collins in 1945. This was published in January 1946, and Collins sold almost 40,000 copies of the book which was regarded as a "best seller" by 1961. It finally went out of print in 1966.

The pleasure Bodkin felt in the success of his publication was accentuated by his arrival on 1st July 1927 at his new job at the National Gallery. He was to continue as Secretary of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests because the job at the Gallery remained part-time, and as a civil servant he had been obliged to get the consent of the Ministers for Justice and Finance before applying for the Directorship.[15] In effect the day to day running of the Gallery was in the hands of the Registrar, Brinsley MacNamara who had replaced James Stephens on 9th February 1926.[16] Bodkin's duties at the Gallery were not strictly defined but the tasks which interested him were to be purchasing for the collection as well as writing and lecturing on art matters. He lost no time in adding to the collection and his first purchase was made in the month after he took up his position. This was Pieter Lastman's *Joseph selling Corn in Egypt*, dated

1612 described by Bodkin to his friend and Gallery Trustee, Alec Martin of Christie's as "the picture which Rembrandt copied in a careful drawing now in the Albertina."[17] Two issues had priority for him initially and he lost no time in dealing with them. The first was the arrangement of the Gainsborough exhibition to be held in October 1927 and the other, and more strategically significant task, was to get a change in the bye-laws of the gallery in relation to the purchasing power of the Director. The latter indicates his desire to determine purchasing policy as well as a strong position for the Director and it reflects his experience at one of the earliest Board meetings he attended as Director when a picture could not be purchased because fewer than a quorum of nine members were present[18]. He proposed a change to Bye Law 16 on the powers of the Director in relation to purchases and this resulted in an increase in the limit of his discretionary power from £500 to £1,500 without reference to the Board.[19] Not more than £500 of any individual purchase was to come from the grant-in-aid, but the change was of considerable benefit to Bodkin. Another important issue, and one which had caused problems for Lucius O'Callaghan as Director was that of lending from the collection and this matter was also quickly dealt with by Bodkin. O'Callaghan had been "pulled up" over lending a picture and the opinion of the Attorney General was obtained. This indicated that the Board had no power to lend and that legislation was necessary should they want to do so.[20] The result was the enactment of the National Gallery of Ireland Bill 1928 which received the King's Assent on 30 July 1928. It authorises the Governors and Guardians 'to hold public exhibitions of pictures selected by them from the pictures in the National Gallery which belong to the said Governors and Guardians, and to lend them for exhibitions inside or outside Saorstat Eireann.'

Important issues outside the Gallery also required Bodkin's attention in 1927. In June the Committee on the School of Art made its report[21], and as well as making specific recommendations, the report broadly expressed the democratic status of art and its role as an integral part of the education system, sentiments already articulated in Bodkin's writings. He therefore had no difficulty in endorsing the report, but action on it was not to be forthcoming and the inability to tackle the issue at this critical time in policy terms, meant that the role of the arts in education continued to fall below the political threshold.

On another front - that of the Coinage Committee - difficulties were being encountered which demanded attention in the autumn. A disagreement arose between the Committee and the Ministers for Finance and Agriculture which resulted in the resignation of the Committee. The issue at stake was the instruction to Percy Metcalf for a change in the designs without reference to the Committee. It seems that when Mr. Hogan, the Minister for Agriculture, was shown the designs he criticized them from his own point of view, "as an authority on the points of the animals portrayed."[22] The Secretary of the Department of Finance, J.J.McElligott felt bound to communicate these criticisms to the Minister for Finance, Ernest Blythe and "to advise that they should be acted upon." Blythe agreed with his colleague, even though he, like the Committee, favoured the original designs submitted. There was a clear attempt at political interference in four of the designs and the Committee was naturally outraged. However, the resignation would have been a political embarrassment and before it became public there was an attempt at conciliation on the grounds that what was most important was that the designs should be as good as they possibly could be made.

Yeats pointed out[23] that the Committee had spared no effort and wanted the designs to be firstly, "excellent as art" and secondly conformable to the requirements of "various agricultural experts", who had been consulted in the process. He provided details of some of the reasons for selecting the designs the Minister now proposed to alter. Each of the four issues at stake was dealt with and the exchange indicates the intense interest of the Committee in the fine detail of the artistic task as well as the utilitarian aspect of the use of the coinage. A compromise was accepted on a number of points but Yeats pointed out that the design for the woodcock was a "fine" one and although the Minister wanted to use it on a more commonly used coin, the Committee reiterated their belief that it should be used on the farthing on the grounds that "the farthing is rarely seen in Ireland. The woodcock is a scarce shy bird. The association of the two would seem therefore to be appropriate.....to place the woodcock on the three penny piece would seem to us to be giving the bird an undue prominence over the hen which appears upon the penny." The Minister was asked to reconsider his decision, and Yeats would then "gladly consent to withdraw" the resignations. Furthermore, if the recommendations of

the Committee were not taken, the Minister should inform the public that he had overruled the Committee's advice. Undoubtedly the stature of Yeats, and his high public profile, allowed the Committee to take such a strong line with the bureaucracy, and he finally felt that the coins had "suffered less than we feared"[24] although "the horse, as first drawn was more alive than the later version...it lost muscular tension...the first bull had to go, though one of the finest of all the designs, because it might have upset the eugenics of the farmyard". The change to the pig was even more upsetting even though "the state of the market for pigs cheeks made the old design impossible...with the round cheek of the pig went the lifted head, the look of insolence and of wisdom, and the comfortable bodies of the little pigs. We have instead querulous and harassed animals, better merchandise but less living."

This matter took up a good deal of Bodkin's time and working with Yeats must have been an additional burden for him. Although their relations were publicly cordial, Bodkin did not like Yeats. He found him in his later years "an arrogant aggressive man, avid for power of any kind, an intriguer and a frequently disloyal colleague.[25] He had reason to be estranged further by the attitude of Yeats to the National Gallery appointment. Although Bodkin was selected unanimously for the job, Yeats had initially put Thomas McGreevy forward as a candidate,[26] an action which cannot have endeared Yeats to Bodkin or made for an easy relationship between the men. The support of Yeats for the position was sought by McGreevy who corresponded with his friend Lennox Robinson and was informed that Yeats "says emphatically that you should apply for the post"[27] and that if it were to be a full-time position he would support McGreevy. McGreevy was anxious in case he might be used "as a weapon to hit Bodkin" but was assured that that this would not be the case. The incestuous nature of the Dublin arts world meant McGreevy and Bodkin belonged to the same circle, had their work interests in common, and although not themselves close, had a number of friends in common. Like Yeats, Lennox Robinson had also wanted the Gallery job for McGreevy and said so in his fair but cool letter of congratulation to Bodkin: "Just a line to say that I am very glad - I'd have liked anything that would have brought my friend Tom McGreevy back to Dublin but you have every qualification for the post and I wish you every success and

happiness in it."[28] In fact Robinson had angrily taken McGreevy to task for his attitude to Bodkin: "You know that I'd like you - above everyone or everything else - to have it, but I can't see anything monstrous in Bodkin's appointment. If I were a Director and weighing his qualifications and yours I should vote for you but he *has* qualifications and I should not call any man a kranc [sic] or a trimmer who voted for him. For God's sake don't let yourself get small and mean about it, its sickening to have you writing about him having to bring up his children on a salary of - whatever it is. Its Arts Club, its .....- its calling people Jews - anyone could say the same of yourself - could say the same of any of us - its the side of you that would make me afraid (though I'd do it - vote I mean if I had a vote - and risk the consequences!) for you in a responsible position. Forgive me for saying this."[29]

Robinson's reference to the malicious nature of Dublin society was not lost on his friend and Yeats later writing to Lady Gregory about Bodkin and Sarah Purser said: "the 'water lilies' are what they are because their lives are spent in a small circle of personal interests and no matter what they say they believe no one disinterested.'[30] The relationship between McGreevy and Robinson was a close one which survived the passionate admonition and Dolly Travers Smith, who later married Lennox Robinson, also commiserated with McGreevy on Bodkin's appointment: "I hope you gather that it was yours if he had not been there and there is no reason to suppose he'll keep it for ever."[31] She felt he might get something else out of it and warned him: "I should be careful not to show disapproval of Bodkin. This city fair frightens me, I always feel as if I was walking on five thousand eggs at once and to be hanged if one gets cracked.....I wish you'd got the Gallery....everyone felt full of love towards you." McGreevy and Sarah Purser were also friends who went to the theatre and took tea together and enjoyed gossiping, generally at Miss Purser's instigation: "Look in any evening and have coffee and a cigarette and we could blaspheme together....."[32]There is no doubt that Bodkin must have been the subject of their conversation on the issue of the Gallery appointment. Harry Clarke, who was also friendly with McGreevy, had earlier told Bodkin that McGreevy was going to Paris to work - "spect this takes him off your course".[33] So the rivalry between the two men was known, at least among their friends in the arts world,

and for someone of the stature of Yeats to prefer McGreevy over Bodkin for the National Gallery directorship must have been a considerable slight. However, Bodkin later found a supporter in Yeats on the Gallery Board and eventually Yeats called unexpectedly at Bodkin's house and said: "I have for a long time entertained and spread prejudices against you, which I have lately felt to be quite unfounded. With your consent I will go to certain members of the Government and explain my altered views."[34] There is no evidence to indicate whether or not he did this, but Bodkin tried to persuade him from that particular course of action.

Soon after Bodkin's arrival at the National Gallery he became engaged on another important currency design issue - that of the bank notes. In November 1927 his friend Joseph Brennan, Chairman of the Currency Commission, who had been at Clongowes and university with him, invited him, together with Lucius O'Callaghan and Dermod O'Brien to meet him to discuss designs for the new notes.[35] This time it was proposed that from the security point of view, human features would be appropriate for the design, but Brennan felt that there was "little likelihood of getting any agreement for a portrait of an actual person living or dead." Bodkin was asked if he was "acquainted with any good painting or drawing such as a figure representing Erin either in the National Gallery or elsewhere." This was a significant request because it gave Bodkin an opportunity to put forward a person with whom he had recently become acquainted and one who was to become a close friend - Hazel Lavery, the wife of the Northern Irish painter, Sir John Lavery. The relationship was to be a symbiotic one. The following month - December 1927 - Bodkin and Lady Lavery discussed the idea of using her portrait, painted by her husband, as the central motif on the new Irish banknotes. In the same month James MacNeill was chosen to be the new Irish Governor General and Bodkin looked for Lady Lavery's support as MacNeill's replacement as High Commissioner in London.[36] The reasons why Bodkin would have considered such a move, so soon after achieving his ambitions at the National Gallery are mystifying. It may have been that the part-time nature of the Gallery job did not please him, or that he was already encountering obstruction from the civil service even at this early stage, or indeed that his own personal ambition was boundless. Hazel Lavery had all the right connections in the London

political and social world and she quickly began to work on Bodkin's behalf while he used his own position in Dublin to ensure "lasting recognition"[37] for her. What neither seems to have realised was that social and political connections in London were no longer significant in relation to Irish appointments in London such as the High Commissionership.

John Lavery was delighted with the proposition to work on the note and he wrote to Bodkin: "Hazel has shown me your kind letter stating that it is the wish of the note committee that I should design a head for them, preferably I take it one of my wife, which makes me feel greatly complimented."[38] However, he accepted Bodkin's opinion that there were reasons against such a commission and suggested instead an open competition instead of the limited competition for the coinage, with the winning design to become the property of the Bank. "This would avert much of the trouble you speak of, and to my mind meet with general favour." Bodkin had obviously informed him that the proposal to put a portrait of Hazel on the notes would not meet with general approval and Lavery suggested instead that John (Sean) Keating would be an appropriate artist. "I cannot think of a better artist than John Keating, nor of one better fitted for the job, and my idea of a competition is to prove this." However, with Bodkin's help the Lavery proposal was accepted and the formal commission from Joseph Brennan outlined the requirements of the Currency Commission for a "portrait of a beautiful female head treated in some emblematic fashion which might perhaps have some Irish association."[39] Brennan also stipulated that the portrait "would need to be done in an oval or some such shape which would suit generally the rest of the design of the note"[40] and he proposed to call on Lavery in London to discuss the technical details. Lavery in his reply said: "I am delighted if I can be of any help in adding distinction to the new currency note"[41]but reminded Brennan about the competition proposal to Bodkin and had another suggestion: "that you have a selection of photographs of beautiful and *purely* Irish types submitted to your Commission, an artist might be chosen to design a suitable oval, the photograph and the design might then be given to your engravers." The idea of a competition or other selection process was ruled out by Bodkin on grounds that there was no time, but even worse, given his previous experience of the coinage design, the Commissioners might

want to judge such a competition themselves. This would be particularly undesirable because, he wrote to Hazel Lavery, "their award would probably favour a portrait of some farmer's daughter. They are men of business, but, emphatically not men of taste. I know them all. So, for the honour of Ireland and the cause of Art, I do hope that Sir John will be asked and will consent, to do a portrait of you for the notes."[42]

Hazel expressed her gratitude and delight to Bodkin in fulsome terms: "I really feel you are too kind and generous when you suggest that my humble head should figure on the notes and you know I said from the first that I thought it wildly *improbable, unlikely, impracticable, unpopular, impossible* that any committee would fall in with such a suggestion. Indeed apart from anything else I think a classic head, some queen of Ireland, Maeve perhaps would be best, someone more robust and noble and fitted for coinage reproduction...."Her husband would be "delighted" to do anything Bodkin thought suitable and the competition was a solution because "he does *not* think that *his* particular manner of painting is the right thing for reproduction of this sort". However Lavery could scarcely withstand his wife's wishes in the matter because "as a matter of fact the "Red Rose (the Cork picture) is as good an example as he could paint for it was never called a portrait of me, and was what is generally termed a "fancy picture".[43] So except for people who recognised it as Lady Lavery, the "Red Rose" was only a model. However, she did not discount the idea of a head painted by Keating, although at this point she must have known that with Bodkin's support her image was likely to be used. Keating "could do a strong peasant's head in a shawl, which would reproduce well as he paints in bold lines and is not too subtle in tone and form as Lavery is." She expressed herself to be "honoured by your even hoping that the picture in Cork could be used and I take it as further evidence of your valued friendship and kindness for me and mine." In fact, John Lavery worked instead on a "half-length oval representation of Kathleen ni Houlihan, the legendary heroine mythologised by Yeats"[44]for which his wife was the model.

Bodkin was charmed by Hazel Lavery and from the start of their friendship behaved with gallantry towards her, sending her flowers - a "delicious nosegay of carnations"[45] which,

to her, did not compensate for missing an appointment with him. Theirs was a meeting of minds and character rather than a romantic association and each seemed to understand the need in the other for success and acclaim and association with power. Bodkin and Hazel also shared an ability with words and in particular with the acerbic use of language, frequently personalised, which in Bodkin's case can at least partly be attributed to his lengthy formal education and his adversarial career at the Bar. Their correspondence reflects their shared personal animosity towards certain individuals with Hazel referring to Josephine McNeill, whom she envied for her husband's Dublin appointment, as the "Empress Josephine" and her husband as "King James". The Attorney General, Hugh Kennedy, a rather rotund individual, who was also Chairman of the Trustees of the National Gallery for a period, became "Huge Kennedy" in their communications. Yet Hazel's intelligence and quick wit must have delighted Bodkin. His interest in her was so intense that even the most traditional family occasions did not interfere with his need to communicate with her. He wrote to her on Christmas Day 1927 telling her of the objections to her portrait on the notes[46] and thereby making his own work on her behalf all the more significant and worthwhile. These objections centred on the issue of Hazel's image being recognised and her "suitability" as an Irish figurehead, the latter a view obviously not shared by Bodkin who argued that "Masaryk's daughter appeared on the Czech notes because it was put there simply as a lovely national type."[47] Hazel Lavery was an American but Ireland was undoubtedly her spiritual home and to Bodkin she represented an ideal of beauty and femininity which was perfectly appropriate as the symbolic embodiment of the new nation. It is likely that he knew of her association with Michael Collins and was aware of the rumours circulating about her relationship with Kevin O'Higgins which "may have been responsible for tainting her reputation."[48] When she later became involved in the Lane pictures issue President Cosgrave intimated to Bodkin that he did not fear her "interference" because "in these matters any indiscretion of hers is never offensive."[49] The implication is that the potential for indiscretion was recognised and there were therefore obvious sensitivities to be observed concerning her suitability as a symbolic representative of the new Irish state.

The symbiotic nature of the relationship between Bodkin and Lady Lavery is indicated by Hazel Lavery's willingness to work on Bodkin's behalf in relation to securing the London appointment for him. This undoubtedly added to her attractions for him and it began in December 1927 when she recounted her attendance at dinner where "several 'notables' and powerful persons were present, including two Cabinet Ministers."[50] One of the people present had heard all about Bodkin from Eddie Marsh, Winston Churchill's private secretary who was a "great admirer" of Bodkin's writings, and they "are all agreed that you and Mrs. Bodkin would be 'ideal'" for the London position. However the name being mentioned for the High Commissionership at the dinner party was that of "Sir T.... Esmond", but "I really feel you should make every effort to come here for the "love of Ireland". You are needed here and you can still keep closely in touch with the Gallery.....I can't help wishing there were some way to bring your name directly to Mr. Blythe or Cosgrave". To her Bodkin's willingness to do the job was an act of patriotism and "a considerable sacrifice for the sake of the Free State's dignity and prestige here in the London office." The proposition that Bodkin could do the job in London while keeping on his position at the Gallery was a highly unlikely one, given the previous difficulties with absent directors. A week later she reported on a letter from Tim Healy, the outgoing Governor General who agreed: "Mr. Bodkin is *ideal* but I hear that McGilligan's brother is the likely choice."[51] But Hazel remained hopeful on Bodkin's behalf: "I still pray that the powers(?) in the Free State will have a glimmer of common sense and send you and Mrs. Bodkin to save Ireland in London. I shall hope against hope that this will happen, but there are certain elements in Dublin who seem to have a perfect passion for biting off their noses to spite their faces and a genius for the commonplace and mastery of the obvious directly opposed to the charm and imagination of the Irish temperament. Perhaps it is a reaction from tradition we have so long believed in and fostered of the 'Land of the Shi'."

There is no doubt that Hazel Lavery used her femininity to the full with her male friends and that Bodkin found this attractive. He also appreciated her work on his behalf and his vicarious connection to the London social and political scene. She became a model of the ideal woman for him[52]something which did not endear her to Aileen Bodkin who was

coping with her young family in very different circumstances at Wilton Place. However, although Aileen found Hazel's correspondence with her husband "a mostly catty commentary on the personalities of the early days of the Irish Free State"[53] she too appreciated Hazel's interventions for her husband, and perhaps also the prospect of leaving her less than happy life among the Bodkins in Dublin to return to a more familiar life in London. Hazel's initiatives were not yielding positive results however, and in January 1928 she wrote: "... the question seems in abeyance until the President's return."[54] She had seen Desmond Fitzgerald who "seemed to lean towards *Smiddy* and although I used all my powers of ridicule and disapproval, and he veered around during the afternoon, I feel that S. may get the President's ear in America...but D.F (what unfortunate initials) was not enthusiastic when I rather casually mentioned "our" candidate....I did not press the matter but merely said that I thought the "gentleman in question" was ideal, and for that reason he "probably would not be appointed judging by the usual procedure of the Free State Cabinet in always choosing the wrong man for the brightest posts."

The two issues of the London position for Bodkin and Hazel Lavery's portrait for the bank notes were the subjects of their correspondence in the early months of 1928. In February Hazel reported that John had "greatly improved" the head for the note and altered the size "by reducing the drapery around the head and making it less clumsy about the chin: he also accentuated certain things about the face and had it re-photographed."[55] Lavery worked closely with the Currency Commission and in January 1928 agreed a fee of one hundred guineas for the commission,[56]although ultimately Hazel said that "John wanted to waive the matter of compensation entirely feeling that the honour paid his work sufficient recognition."[57] However, the figure of 250 guineas was felt by Joseph Brennan to be more appropriate for the work[58] and the Laverys' satisfaction with the fee made Hazel more aware that Bodkin's work in securing the commission had not been remunerated: "You have been so wonderfully kind and so *unpaid*"[59] The payment was to be 'in kind' and Hazel continued to express her hopes that the Bodkins would come to London as "H.Cs".

The initial intention of the Currency Commission was that de la Rue should print the notes, but it was finally agreed that Waterlows would do the work[60]. From the technical point of view it was particularly important that the head was a "good size" and when it was thought that Lavery was painting a three-quarter length portrait, Brennan reminded him that "the oval space in the note should be filled mainly by the head", something which was important from "the protective point of view". Lavery submitted photographs of his work and these were discussed at a meeting of the Commission at which Bodkin was present. Sir William Waterlow also conferred directly with Lavery on the best way of using portion of the picture for the lower denominational notes. The issue here was whether on these notes the hand of the model could be eliminated.[61] Bodkin was consulted and had "settled the matter" as far as Lavery was concerned.[62] Attention was also being devoted to the watermark and Brennan sent Lavery a specimen of the head to be used in the notes for this purpose. The design had been taken from a model in the National Museum of a sculpture by John Hogan and in Brennan's view this would "compare favourably with anything to be found on any foreign note."[63] This figure was also intended to be "a representation of Erin" although "the face is in fact that of Hogan's wife, who, I believe, was an Italian lady." It seems ironic that the two female symbolic representations of the new Ireland on the notes were to be drawn from models who were not themselves born in Ireland. Although John Lavery had "no comments" to make on the watermarked head, other than to say that it "outwardly appears to me to be very suitable"[64] his wife displayed less restraint to Bodkin: "...do find out if the fat female symbolical figure of 'Erin' as the watermark is a portrait of the late Mrs Hogan and whether she was born and bred in Ireland and has no taint of Liverpool, Glasgow or American-Irish in her veins..."[65] Her bitterness at the secrecy and the questions of 'suitability' surrounding her own portrayal on the notes was profound: "It would be terrible for Mr Blythe if (the figure) should prove to be *not* Mrs Hogan but someone else's wife who sat for the 'Emblematical head'. Forgive me for frivolling but they are funny in their anxiety to disassociate me from any place in the new currency or give me any credit for anything." However the final designs had been passed and Joseph Brennan informed the Laverys: "We must conclude that the changes John wished made were carried through, and may all be well." Other design features for the notes had been less

contentious. A series of neptunes for the backs were based on engravings of the heads representing Irish rivers which were sculpted in the 18th century by Edward Smyth of Dublin for Gandon's Custom House. The Commission selected seven of the twelve wax models of the heads in the National Museum and Waterlow's engravings were based on these[66]

The need for discretion in relation to the model for the note design was irksome for Hazel Lavery, who, like Bodkin, enjoyed and needed public acclaim, but she was anxious to assure Brennan of her own exemplary behaviour in this regard. When thanking him for his "generosity" in buying John Lavery's picture, on which the bank note design was based, for the Central Bank, she reassured him of her discretion in relation to the model: "I need not tell you how very gratified I am to have had any share in the result but I shall continue to be very discreet as to the model for the head in the shawl".[67] In spite of this guarantee, the matter was not to be a secret for long, and the following month Hazel had reason to write again to Brennan: "Was it not very disagreeable of the *Express* to publish that comment on the new notes....I need not tell you that the story did not come from us. We have really been discreet for your sake and our own - the notes are beautiful we think by the way!"[68] However, Brennan expressed the belief that it was just as well there was some leakage of information on the notes because "when the notes finally make their appearance any remarks made about Sir John's design - at least so far as concerns the model - will no longer have the interest of novelty."[69] As far as Brennan was concerned, if and when he was obliged to say anything on the matter, he would follow the lead of John Lavery who, when questioned by a reporter from the *Independent* the previous month had replied that the representation "was not to be a portrait of any particular person."[70] Hazel had also mentioned comments in *The Catholic Herald* doubting if John Lavery could have had the 'bad taste' to put his wife's head on the design for the bank notes and expressing certainty that he was not 'guilty' of so grave a 'breach.'[71] Her husband was "rather annoyed and thought of replying that he had never heard it called bad taste for an artist to use his own wife for a model. Rembrandt and others had weathered the accusation through centuries." She sent cuttings from the Observer which she said, had not taken her husband to task on grounds of 'good taste', and she

reassured Brennan once more: "In any case we are blameless in the matter of the report that it was a portrait or that a certain model was used. For once in my life I was most drastically discreet!"

However, notwithstanding all the assurances, in May the *Express* named Hazel as the source of the leak:"....she disclosed to a friend her identity with the head of Erin."[72] So while she did not inform the press directly, her understandable need to communicate her good fortune to one of her friends may have made the matter public. Her husband defended her to Brennan in a letter in which the artist expressed himself not totally satisfied with the prints of the £1 and 10/- notes - they "do not represent quite what I had hoped".[73] The reduction of the portrait for the lower denominational notes had not been a happy artistic compromise as far as Lavery was concerned. He reported that his wife was "very annoyed that the 'reptile' Press should have attributed the leakage regarding the designs to her. She says it is the first time in her life she ever kept a secret absolutely and under great provocation and she feels it hard luck to be so rewarded for her single act of discretion." Although the Currency Commission was "pleased and satisfied" with the outcome of the note design, Lavery's sense was that the designs had been compromised by the reduction and did not quite come up to his expectations. He expressed his awareness of "the many difficulties involved" in the design for these notes, and also "that they serve the main purpose in that they are difficult to forge," but his artistic need for perfection had not been fulfilled in the reduction of the figure. His experience, and that of Percy Metcalf for the coins, indicates the difficulty which artists encounter in working on designs when artistic compromises are an inevitable part of the process.

While work on the notes was progressing in the Spring of 1928, Hazel Lavery reported to Bodkin any gossip she heard on the appointment to the High Commissionership in London, although she warned him about the financial stringencies associated with the position: "James and Josephine got in an awful mess here I am told, financially, and saw to it that they had very comfortable additions to the VR salary - this of course is confidential."[74] The following month she told him of her visit to Josephine McNeill thought Smiddy or Dulanty were likely to be appointed as High Commissioner. Mrs.

McNeill pointed out that in view of their position, it would be inappropriate for her husband or herself to interfere in any way with the appointment. Hazel was not nearly so inhibited at a Fancy Dress ball which "nearly all the Cabinet" attended: "I still go on putting in my small word for the HC appointment, but I am not sure whether my "candidate" still would care for it. Let me know what you think" By the end of March she still hoped the Bodkins would come to London as "H.Cs", but, she wrote to Aileen Bodkin whom she still had not met: "I am rather embittered and disillusioned about things Irish at the moment and have little hope that the government will do anything so just or intelligent as to appoint your husband."[75] She had been reading his "brilliant little book" on painting which he sent her.

By the summer the McNeill's departure from London for the Governor General position in Dublin was imminent and Hazel wrote to Bodkin from "the rich and luxurious home of Mrs. Greville in the midst of a very Royal House party"[76] from which she found herself "wishing hourly that you could be here to enjoy and smile a sly respectful smile at the whole assembly." She found the occasion "all very grand and stiff, but it could be such fun if only I had an understanding eye that would occasionally meet mine." Her husband she found to be "hopeless" on these occasions and she longed for a kindred spirit with whom she could share the same sense of humour in such regal surroundings. She reported a conversation with Lord Granard who told her that de Valera had expressed the view that when the Republicans got in power their first appointment would be Lord Granard himself as Governor General and failing him "the Laverys or Londonderrys." Hazel used this opportunity to tell Lord Granard "who has the 'ear' of the President that he should convince him of the crying need of a H.C. in London" and that Bodkin was "the only choice". Two weeks later[77] she again wrote on the McNeills and her now unconcealed disapproval of their appointment, and professed herself to be "heartsick of all things Irish.....I am trying to wipe Ireland out of my mind and heart." This was provoked in particular by the anniversary of the death of Kevin O'Higgins and the failure of the Government to acknowledge the event: "They have forgotten Kevin. They fear and neglect even his memory, not a word from his colleagues on Irish papers or Parliament on the anniversary of his cruel murder.....Alas! poor Kevin, no lonlier [sic] in

his death than living." Although this was written and marked 'Confidential and Personal' to Bodkin at the National Gallery, Hazel wrote again the following day[78] regretting her "indiscretion in pouring out "State" secrets and posting them unsealed, but she expressed her trust in his friendship: "I am trusting however to your being a "well as deep as deep" of true discretion, and you never fail me." As far as she was concerned "the book is closed.....on my Irish Free State interests. RIP." Characteristically, this did not last long and she continued to look for gossip from Dublin from Bodkin and the following month invited him to lunch with her in London. She proposed to call for him at Berners hotel and "we can wander into some pleasant entertainment for luncheon."[79]

The following month saw the Laverys home from a trip to Scotland, with Hazel glad to be back to her own "hovel".[80] It was a relief, she reported, to be home because in other people's houses "the beds are always *just* wrong, the pillows too soft, the Irish lace and monograms too rich and scratchy, so that one wakes in the morning with a coronet stamped on one's cheek from the gorgeous pillow slip." By then the Laverys had received copies of some of the new currency notes which Hazel found to be " on the whole very delightful". However, the following month brought the bad news that Bodkin was not to be appointed High Commissioner in London. Hazel had heard "that *Smiddy* is to be HC in London"[81] and expressed herself forcefully: "This is really too much! I wonder if the British sheep will continue to placidly accept every sort of impertinent and ignorant act of the Foreign Ministry in Dublin.....I am really very miserable about this Smiddy thing." She derides the man in the most personal terms: "there was even scandal talked about a female associate and himself....Catholic circles in America hummed with this.....but that seemed to me to be the least of his drawbacks." Perhaps understandably in view of her own associations she was unwilling to point the finger on such grounds, but she was "personally upset because I had so hoped you could be prevailed upon to come, greatly as it would have been to your financial disadvantage, but it would have been so good for Ireland's prestige and such fun for me. I give them up. I really do." Bodkin had still not given up hope and some days later Hazel wrote again expressing herself glad that "its only a rumour and still unofficial....Long may it

continue so." [82] However the rumour proved true. Timothy Smiddy, who had been Professor of Economics at UCC and diplomatic representative of the Irish Free State in Washington[83] was appointed by the Government in October and in December Hazel expressed herself "miserable about the HC appointment in London."[84] When, early the following year, Desmond Fitzgerald gave Smiddy a letter of introduction to her, Hazel took the opportunity to express her rage and wrote Fitzgerald the "*rudest* letter I have ever sent to *anyone*."[85] Her loyalty to Bodkin had been severely tested and not found wanting and she wrote consolingly although floridly to him: "I delight in your letters with their mordant perspicacity of judgments and your censorious worldliness so rooted in wisdom and so divorced from vanity and any pettiness of spirit - always refresh and comfort my soul when I despair of Ireland, and as was said of Doctor Johnson such was the 'amplitude of his learning and the magnificent copiousness of its communication.' I value all you write on the many subjects you know so well, and when I think of Professor Smiddy in London representing Ireland I bow my head and weep." Whether her social skills overcame her loyalty and she eventually received Smiddy is not known, but her friend Ramsay MacDonald, whose Government was then in power wrote to Hazel that he found Smiddy "quite pleasant though as you say it is a pity that while Ireland has people who could hold their own with anybody in London from the intellectual point of view that they don't send them."[86] However, Bodkin could never have hoped to compete with Smiddy for the appointment in London, given Smiddy's diplomatic experience and political connections. And it must have been particularly difficult for Bodkin two years later when Smiddy's position allowed him to become active in the Lane pictures issue at the request of Lady Gregory and President Cosgrave.[87]

Bodkin's disappointment at the Smiddy appointment almost coincided with the issue of the three lowest denominational notes into circulation and saw him busy defending the design. This was on 10 September 1928 and Hazel wrote to Brennan expressing her gratitude: "John felt it an honour and a pleasure to paint the design and we appreciate *your* generosity and courage in choosing him as the artist. I know that you and Mr. Bodkin had to 'stand a bit of a racket' on several occasions when that choice was criticized particularly about the model for the female head."[88] By then Brennan was

reconciled to the identification of Hazel as the model and he wrote to a banking colleague following the issue:".....as is now generally known, Lady Lavery was the artist's model and the picture bears some resemblance to her although it cannot in any strict sense be considered a portrait of her."[89] The issue of the re-working of a portrait by the artist for the purpose of the design was not acknowledged by Brennan or the Commission: "The records of the Currency Commission do not support the suggestion that the portrait on the legal tender notes was originally executed for another purpose."[90] What was no longer at issue however was the identity of the model although Ernest Blythe was a lone voice still protesting: "The head on the notes is not Lady Lavery and does *not* bear the slightest resemblance to her,"[91] following a report in the *Irish Times* that "the striking resemblance between the colleen painted by Sir John Lavery on the new Irish Free State currency notes and Lady Lavery, has been commented upon by many persons" and not denied by the Laverys.[92] A studio portrait of Hazel was published by the *Irish Times* on 14th September and printed beside the head from the currency and as a result the newspaper was brought to court by the Currency Commission under the Forgery Act and had to destroy the plates used for making the copy.[93] However, the currency was well received and the public attitude was so positive that Brennan was reassured: "the operation of retiring the British currency notes in the Irish Free State would give you very little trouble."[94] Hazel however had picked up a suggestion in the press "that John's design resembles the advertisement for 'Colleen Soap'! This has depressed and annoyed him deeply . We are longing to have the higher notes with the whole design appear. It was cutting off the head which made people call it a 'portrait. The whole figure would have simply been an 'emblematic' female as desired! However, Christopher Hobbes.....tells me that he heard 'great praise' of the notes in all sorts of odd unexpected quarters."[95] Lavery did not convey his annoyance at the press comments when he wrote to Brennan: "I was prepared for criticism of my wife's and my share in the lower denominational notes but we are both happy to say that nothing of that nature has yet reached us which makes us feel that the complete design may have the same good fortune - but you never can tell..."[96] Hazel added to this letter an account of lunching with the Duke of Connaught who showed the Laverys the Canadian notes with his daughter's portrait on them, but he found these to be "not nearly so attractive as the Irish notes....May I

compliment you and Lady Lavery and the Free State in the beautiful new currency notes." He went on to say "all sorts of kind things about Ireland and the progress and peace brought about since the Treaty." Hazel's account of the same event to Bodkin was rather more frank when she recalled the Duke's words to her husband: "...the Free State Government have quite rightly paid you and Lady Lavery a charming tribute. The notes do all three of you credit and honour..... Don't breath [sic] on this to Huge or Blythe as it will bring forth another anti-British outburst in the 'National Government Organ.'".[97]

The Laverys greatest pleasure was reserved for the issue of the higher denominational notes on 3rd December 1928 and Hazel wrote to Brennan: "We are so delighted with the 10 pounder...it pleases John enormously to have his design carried out so truthfully - in all its entirety - altogether the note is a most distinguished production and we...hope it will be liked in Ireland and that due credit will be given to you personally. I have often felt so miserable to think that your kindness to the Laverys may have been the source of unpleasant criticism to you."[98] Brennan had sent her press cuttings and she was not impressed at the critical standards particularly when her personal vanity was involved: "the light-hearted absence of *any* artistic or capable criticism is deplorable..." Brennan also reported to John Lavery, who was "enchanted with the £10 note",[99] that there had been "only a negligible amount of adverse criticism and even that as a rule was not disinterested."[100]

The situation was rather different for the public issue of the coinage shortly afterwards, on 12 December 1928.[101] The coins did not meet with universal approval in spite of Bodkin's efforts "to quell the rising squall with arguments."[102] The issue followed an exhibition of the designs at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art on 30 November at which Bodkin gave an address. An editorial the next day in the *Irish Times*, (which also reproduced the coins, this time without incurring the wrath of the Currency Commission), provides an indication of the areas of contention.[103] Bodkin pointed out "that the issue of an entirely new series of eight coins was an event that was unparalleled in the modern history of numismatics," and the editorial said that "most people will agree that the new coins have been executed with skill and with considerable beauty of design" but seemed

to doubt whether the exercise of designing a new currency was necessary: "If a sweeping change in the whole character of the Free State's coinage was necessary.....". The second difficulty related to the use of animals as symbols when, for some people, religious symbols and figures of saints or of contemporary persons were more appropriate. Another view was that "'a truly rural' coinage is inconsistent with national dignity." The leader in the *Evening Herald* felt that Bodkin's statement at the exhibition "is well calculated to silence some of the criticisms that have been directed against, first, the project of issuing a new coinage, and secondly the actual designs that have been chosen.[104] Bodkin addressed the issue of the choice of designs and recalled that "some of the loveliest coins that have been recovered from antiquity are adorned with representations of animals - such, for instance, as the bull of Thurium and the horses of Carthage and of Larissa."[105] Religious symbols and figures of saints were ruled out because they would be exposed to irreverence and "Dr. Bodkin conjured up a vision of what might occur on the fair day in any Irish town, instancing the possibility of a peasant being paid for a bonham with the image of St. Patrick and being impelled by the habit of centuries to spit upon the image for luck before he rammed it into his trousers pocket; or a couple of loafers in a public house tossing as to which of them should pay for drinks according as to whether the image of St. Brigid or St. Colmcille came uppermost!"[106] Both newspapers praised Percy Metcalfe, the designer, for his artistic success and Bodkin also used the occasion to refer to the less controversial design for the notes. This pleased Hazel Lavery, who admired the coins and thanked him: "how nice of you to say a quiet word for the poor "emblematical female" of the "sad eyes and mournful mountains" but then you have been so kind all the way through...."[107]

Not surprisingly, Bodkin incurred the wrath of some and the disapproval of many for his part in the design of the coinage and his particular defence of the choices made by the Commission. A letter writer to the *Independent* stated: "Mr. Thos. Bodkin, in his special pleading in favour of his committee's pagan coinage, exhibits the usual superiority complex of all our aesthetes.....Spain is about to issue a special stamp in honour of St. Francis Xavier. Is the ultra reverent mind of Mr. Bodkin not shocked at the thought that these stamps will actually be defaced with indelible ink by heavy strokes of a

date stamp, wielded, possibly, by (a) Spanish 'peasant'.....or is it only Irish 'peasants' who offend? To the injury and degradation inflicted on a Christian country by having such symbols as the swine and the hen selected to represent is added the insult of the explanation."[108] However, the same issue reported the large numbers visiting the exhibition and the "astonishing demand" for the sample packets of the new coins being issued at the Currency Commission and in the banks. Some of the negative comments related to the failure to place the effigies of the founders of the State on the coins while others were more concerned with the absence of religious symbolism in the coinage. The Tuam Deanery passed a unanimous resolution: "That we consider the designs of the proposed new coins utterly unsuited for the coinage of this ancient Christian nation. We are strongly of opinion that they should give expression to the ideals which kept the national and Christian spirit alive in this land through the centuries."[109] An anonymous personal correspondent reprimanded Bodkin for explaining the omission of religious symbolism from the designs. This person found it to be: "grotesque, very vulgar and comes with very bad taste from one so closely connected with religion as you are.[110] Bodkin's defence of the use of animals rather than religious symbols for the coins was undoubtedly provocative and likely to infuriate, and it is interesting to compare his explanation with that of Yeats who commented later on the project. For Yeats the designs should express the natural products of the country. These were ultimately limited to animals and Yeats felt that with these the artist "might achieve a masterpiece....and please those that would look longer at each coin than anybody else, artists and children....Besides, what better symbols could we find for this horse-riding, salmon-fishing, cattle-raising country?"[111] However the use of such symbols was likely to be acceptable, or at least publicly understood when articulated by Yeats but was less acceptable from Bodkin, coming as he did from strong Irish Catholic stock.

Hazel Lavery was dismayed by the negative public reaction to the coins and was somewhat hysterical and personal in her frank comments to Joseph Brennan who had sent her a set of the new coins: "...what ridiculous nonsense they say about those beautiful coins! I think and so does John that they are quite Greek and most dignified in their own felicity. I like too the critics alternative suggestions for "heads of Irish heroes" Dan

O'Connell, de Valera and Mr. Cosgrave. The morals of the first one would surely not pass the censor and much as I like Liam J. McCosgair he is *not*, bless him, an "*heroic*" figure...[112] She later reported to Bodkin that Winston Churchill had thought the coinage "simply beautiful" and had informed him that "this is greatly your doing....."[113]

Praise for the coins also came from other sources. The *Irish Statesman* found the work of the committee to have been justified and "Senator Yeats, Dr. Bodkin, the President of the Academy, and their colleagues have saved us possibly from artistic horrors in silver and bronze rivalling our postage stamps in stupidity, and acting on their advice, the Free State has a coinage of which people may be proud."[114] Bodkin must also have been consoled by P.V. Higgins, a priest from Shanagolden who complained of the "idiotic frame of mind of so many" and expressed his surprise at the attitude of so many of the clergy, "who surely might have known better."[115] Public opinion abroad on the coins was more favourable with some of the English press describing the coins as the most beautiful in the world,[116]although the *Kolnische Zeitung* expressed "surprise inasmuch as their reverse side only shows effigies of animals and their obverse a harp."[117] Bodkin expressed the appreciation of the Commission for the praise from abroad, "though it would have been still more welcome had it come from their own countrymen, particularly as we have plenty of reason to believe that the opinions of our English critics are shared by the vast majority of intelligent Irish men and women."[118]

Public reaction in Ireland to the notes and to the coinage was fundamentally different, and for the notes, the issue of Hazel Lavery's nationality and 'suitability' was not in the end important. Bodkin was right in believing that she represented the symbol of Ireland, the ideal type of a country which in myth and legend had long identified the nation with a beautiful woman. She was the personification of Kathleen Ni Houlihan, portrayed on the notes in Irish national costume, seated with her left elbow resting on a clarsach - the Irish harp - with typically romantic Irish scenery in the background. This fulfilled national expectations which had a long tradition in Ireland. "The image of Kathleen Ni Houlihan in visual terms continues more than one hundred years of representation where a static yet beautiful woman is offered as the embodiment of the nation."[119] The coins on the

other hand, representing animals, and particularly the pig with its many negative connotations for the Irish, failed to live up to such expectations. The coins did not symbolise heroic figures - historical, political or religious and they were therefore subject to considerable criticism. The failure to reflect the national traditions, myths and sentiments of the people, was judged by many to be a betrayal. Bodkin played a major role in both projects and the Lavery commission he "orchestrated..almost single-handedly."[120] Nevertheless, Brennan, as a senior administrator must have been concerned at the risk which he had taken in using the Lavery design, because when work was being done for the design of the Consolidated Bank Notes he asked Bodkin "to get something with half or full figure without getting too near the Lavery design on the legal tender note of £10." He wanted Bodkin to get if possible, "a more or less conventional Erin in a seated or recumbent attitude or perhaps something on the lines of a peasant at a plough. Something in the style of the drawing on the Abbey Theatre programme might also be suitable."[121] The new nation, in search of an identity, wanted expressions of Celtic nationalism in material culture, and the glorification of the peasant and 'contact with the soil' which was so much part of the Celtic Revival in literature might also have a place in visual representation as far as Brennan was concerned. A drawing by Dermod O'Brien of a man ploughing with a pair of horses was ultimately approved by the Currency Commission some of whose members had rejected a Mestrovic design of a harper.[122] E.L.Laurenson prepared a number of designs for the back of these notes.[123]

Bodkin received copies of the legal tender notes, and the following year was presented with a silver box containing a specimen set of coins as a token of the gratitude of the Government for his service to the Currency Commission.[124] Ernest Blythe expressed his appreciation of the co-operation of a Committee, "the reputation of whose members in artistic matters is unquestioned." But Bodkin was by then encountering difficulties with civil servants in his work at the National Gallery and may well have considered his role in the currency design to be a factor in this because Hazel Lavery wrote: "I would hate to have *you* in any way penalized for the advocating of the design for the currency notes." Perhaps because of this, she continued to work on Bodkin's behalf and their friendship lasted until her death at the age of fifty five in 1935.

[1] TB, *The Approach to Painting.*
[2] Newman Flower. *Journal of Arnold Bennett*, Vol.11 19ll-1920. London: Cassell, 1932. quoted in NA 1155 'My dear TB', 11 .
[3] This was probably *A Herdsman and cow in a landscape* sold at Bodkin's Sothebys sale, lot no. 15.
[4] TB owned two Feti works, the major one being *The Good Samaritan*, sold at Bodkin Sothebys sale, lot no. 34.
[5] NA 1155 'My dear TB', AB to TB, 11.10.19 and 19.10.19, 27-28.
[6] ibid., AB to TB, 13 February 1922.
[7] ibid., AB to TB, 9 May 1922.
[8] *Evening Standard.* 19th May 1927, quoted in ibid., AB to TB, 12.
[9] YO (George Russell AE), *Irish Statesman*, 16th April 1927.
[10] ibid.
[11] TB, *The Approach to Painting*, 96.
[12] NA 1155/1/4/31Aileen Bodkin, 'Thomas Bodkin. The reluctant exile', unpublished ms, undated, 14.
[13] The rift between the two men widened in 1930 when AE felt the need to apologise to Bodkin and others for inviting them to join an association for peace and brotherhood between all nations and creeds. Their reply indicated that no such ambition could be realised outside the "one true Catholic Church." William M. Murphy. *Family Secrets*, 438/0.
[14] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 19.
[15] Kelly. 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland', 172.
[16] NGI, *Director's Report,* 1926.
[17] TB to Alec Martin, 6 July 1927 quoted in Kelly. 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland'. The picture is NGI 890. See Appendix 1 for a list of TB's purchases for the National Gallery between July 1927 and February 1935.
[18] NGI Board minutes, 5th October 1927. The picture was *The Apotheosis of J.J.Rousseau* by Hubert Robert, NGI 896. A special meeting had to be held to complete the purchase.
[19] Kelly, 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland', 173.
[20] NGI, TB to Alec Martin, 11 April 1927.
[21] TCD Bodkin papers 6965/30 'The Report of the French Delegation on the reforms that are necessary in Artistic and Technical Education in the Free State, and especially in the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art', 8 June 1927.
[22] TCD Bodkin papers 6963 J.J.McElligott to TB, 28 October 1927 and copy f.17/3/25 Department of Finance to W.B.Yeats.
[23] TCD Bodkin papers 6963, W.B.Yeats to J.J.McElligott, 29 November 1927.
[24] W.B.Yeats. 'What we did or tried to do'. *W.B.Yeats and the Designing of Ireland's coinage.* Dublin: Dolmen, 19.
[25] TCD Bodkin papers 6912/57-81. TB 'An Unfriendly Poet' ms review (undated) of Monk Gibbon, *The Masterpiece and the Man:Yeats as I knew him.* London: Hart Davis, 1959.
[26] Joseph Hone. *W.B.Yeats*, 1865-1939. London: Macmillan, 1967, 385.

[27] TCD McGreevy papers 8103/141-177 Lennox Robinson to T.McGreevy, 14th May 1927.
[28] TCD Bodkin papers 6999/1278-1293 Lennox Robinson to TB, undated.
[29] TCD McGreevy papers 8103/141-177 Lennox Robinson to T.McGreevy, May/June 1927.
[30] W.B.Yeats to Lady Gregory, February 1929 quoted in Lady Gregory. *The Journals, 2.* The Coole Edition,Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1987, 507.
[31] TCD McGreevy papers 8103/141-177 Dolly Robinson to T.McGreevy, undated.
[32] TCD McGreevy papers 8124/25-43 Sarah Purser to Thomas McGreevy, 29th March 1933.
[33] TCD Bodkin papers 6941 Harry Clarke to TB, 4 February 1927.
[34] Hone, 386.
[35] TCD Bodkin papers 6963 Joseph Brennan to TB, 28 November 1927.
[36] Sinead McCoole. *Hazel, A Life of Lady Lavery.* Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 138.
[37] ibid., 139.
[38] TCD Bodkin papers 6942 John Lavery to TB, 30 December 1927.
[39] McCoole, 140.
[40] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020 (1) Joseph Brennan to John Lavery, 30 December 1927.
[41] ibid.
[42] McCoole, 140.
[43] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, St. Stephens Day 1927.
[44] Kenneth McConkey. *Sir John Lavery.* Edinburgh: Canongate Press 1993, 164. In Sinead McCoole's account, Lavery reworked an early portrait, *Mrs. Lavery* (1909) into Erin.
[45] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 31 August 1927.
[46] ibid., 25 December 1927.
[47] McCoole, 140.
[48] ibid., 142.
[49] NA S2531A Liam T. MacCosgair to TB, 12 December1929.
[50] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 20 December 1927.
[51] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, St. Stephen's Day 1927.
[52] Conversation with TB's daughter Ann Bodkin Parker, July, 1992.
[53] NA 1155/1/4/31 'The Reluctant Exile', 10.
[54] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 22 January 1928.
[55] ibid., 24 February 1928.
[56] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020(1) John Lavery to Joseph Brennan, 15 January 1928.
[57] ibid., Hazel Lavery to Joseph Brennan, 3 March 1928.
[58] Maurice Moynihan. *Currency and Central Banking in Ireland 1922-1960.* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan in association with the Central Bank of Ireland, 1975, 126.
[59] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 4 March 1928.
[60] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020 (1) Joseph Brennan to John Lavery, 12 January 1928.
[61] ibid., 19 January 1928.
[62] ibid., 29 January 1928.
[63] ibid., 1 February 1928.
[64] ibid., 2 February 1928.

[65] quoted in McCoole, 142.
[66] Moynihan, 127. The heads were represented as follows: 10/- = the Blackwater; £1.= the Lee; £5.= the Lagan;£10.= the Bann; £20.= the Boyne; £50= the Shannon; £100.= the Erne.
[67] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020 (1) Hazel Lavery to Joseph Brennan 3 March 1928. The portrait *Killarney/Lady Lavery as Kathleen Ni Houlihan 1928* is in the collection of the Central Bank, Dublin.
[68] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020 (1) Hazel Lavery to Joseph Brennan, 6 April 1928.
[69] ibid., Joseph Brennan to Hazel Lavery, 30 April 1928.
[70] quoted in McCoole, 141.
[71] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020 (1) Hazel Lavery to Joseph Brennan (undated April 1928).
[72] quoted in McCoole, 142.
[73] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020 (1) John Lavery to Joseph Brennan, 25 May 1928.
[74] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 24 February 1928.
[75] ibid., Hazel Lavery to Aileen Bodkin, 31 March 1928.
[76] ibid., Hazel Lavery to TB, 1 July 1928.
[77] ibid., 16 July 1928.
[78] ibid., 17 July 1928.
[79] ibid., 12 August 1928.
[80] ibid., 26 September 1928.
[81] ibid., 3 October 1928.
[82] ibid., 7 October 1928.
[83] James Meenan. *George O'Brien: a Biographical Memoir*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1980, 95. Smiddy later became a director of the Central Bank and economic adviser to Eamon de Valera.
[84] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 2 December 1928.
[85] ibid., 19 February 1929.
[86] quoted in McCoole, 151.
[87] NA S9984/Lane Pictures Official Government Action 1923/30, correspondence between W.T.Cosgrave and T.A.Smiddy, 29 November 1929 and 17 December 1929; Lady Gregory, *The Journals II*, 424, passim.
[88] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020(1) Hazel Lavery to Joseph Brennan, 10 September 1928.
[89] ibid., Joseph Brennan to H Parker Willis, 22 September 1928.
[90] Moynihan, 125.
[91] quoted in McCoole, 146.
[92] Moynihan, 127.
[93] McCoole, 147.
[94] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020 (2) H Parker Willis to Joseph Brennan, 12 October 1928.
[95] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 3 October 1928.
[96] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020 (1) John Lavery to Joseph Brennan, 30 November 1928.
[97] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 2 December 1928.
[98] NLI Brennan Papers 26,020 (1) Hazel Lavery to Joseph Brennan (undated) Sunday.
[99] ibid., John Lavery to Joseph Brennan, 8 December 1928.
[100] ibid., Joseph Brennan to John Lavery, 3 December 1928.
[101] These coins were in circulation until decimalisation brought new designs in 1971.

[102] Moynihan, 36.
[103] 'Free State Coinage', *Irish Times*, 1 December 1928 .
[104] 'Our New Token Coinage', *Evening Herald*, 1 December 1928.
[105] 'Free State Coinage', *Irish Times*, 1 December 1928.
[106] 'Our New Token Coinage', *Evening Herald*, 1 December 1928.
[107] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 2 December 1928.
[108] 'Pagan Coinage', *Irish Independent,* 4th December 1928.
[109] News report, *Irish Independent,* 7 December 1928.
[110] TCD Bodkin papers 6963 anonymous postcard to TB, 3 December 1928.
[111] quoted in W.B.Yeats. 'The designing of Ireland's coinage' reproduced in *Ireland of the Welcomes*, 15, 2, July-August 1966, 14 .
[112] NLI Brennan papers 26,020 (1) Hazel Lavery to Joseph Brennan, undated, Sunday.
[113] TCD Bodkin papers 6942/573-582 Hazel Lavery to TB, 26 March 1929.
[114] Report in *Irish Statesman,* 8th December 1928.
[115] TCD Bodkin papers 6963 P.V.Higgins to TB, 23 December 1928.
[116] Moynihan, 36.
[117] NA F/17/22/27 *Kolnische Zeitung* 'The New Coins of the Irish Free State' 6 December 1928.
[118] Moynihan, 36.
[119] Fintan Cullen. *Visual Politics: The representation of Ireland 1750-1930.* Cork: Cork University Press, 1997, 156.
[120] McCoole, 147.
[121] TCD Bodkin papers 6963 Joseph Brennan to TB, 1 March 1928. The Abbey programme drawing was commissioned by W.B.Yeats and produced from a woodcut by Elenore (Elinor) Monsell. It represents Queen Maeve with an Irish wolfhound and a rising sun. Information from the Mairead Delaney, Archives Department, Abbey Theatre, 15 August, 2001. The artist also designed the Dun Emer pressmark first used in 1907. See Larmour, 158.
[122] TCD Bodkin papers 6963 Joseph Brennan to TB, 1 March 1928.
[123] Moynihan, 127. The Commission selected the Custom House, St. Patrick's Bridge, Cork, the facade of the Commission Office at Foster Place, the Rock of Cashel, Croagh Patrick and Killiney Bay for the different denominations from £1 to £100 respectively. These drawings were reproduced annually as cover designs for the Report of the Central Bank of Ireland from 1961/2 to 1966/67.
[124] TCD Bodkin papers 6963 Ernest Blythe to TB, 22 October 1929.

6 MANAGING THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND MAKING ENEMIES

The work which provided the most intense interest for Bodkin during his early years as Director of the National Gallery was that of building up the collection. Essential to this was his own discretionary power to purchase works without reference to his Board, and this he had quickly arranged through the change of the Gallery's Bye Laws. Another important matter rapidly dealt with was that of his dual role of buying for the Gallery and adding to his own collection. Bodkin by then had developed his keen eye and had been wisely adding to his collection for many years. His appointment made it imperative that the distinction between his personal interest and professional position should be clarified and made clear to his Board. At a Board meeting on 4 April 1928 he produced a small picture by Abraham Begeign which he had purchased for £7.10/-.[1] As far as he was concerned, this was not the kind of picture which the Gallery should acquire, although he described it as a cheap and not uninteresting work, in good condition and by a minor master represented in such galleries as the Louvre and the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin. Begeign was not represented in the National Gallery collection but Bodkin found the picture to be worthy of inclusion in his own collection.[2] At the meeting Bodkin pointed out to the Trustees that he was under no obligation to purchase pictures for the Board which were not submitted to him as the Board's representative or offered at sales he attended in his official capacity at State expense, or by dealers he visited in the same circumstances. He assured the Trustees that he would always buy or submit to the Board any picture "of real merit" by a master who should be, or was not adequately represented in the Gallery, no matter what its value, however small the price or circumstances in which it was offered. If, however, he was offered in his private capacity a fine picture by a master already represented by similar work in the Gallery, he considered himself at full liberty to acquire such a picture for his own collection.

Experience with former directors who had also maintained careers as dealers made this an essential distinction to be made in relation to the role of the new Director, and the

Board agreed to Bodkin's proposal, with some reservation, while trusting the Director's 'discretion and sense of duty.'[3] Interestingly, while it was suggested by Chief Justice Hugh Kennedy, who was one of the Trustees, that Bodkin's statement regarding his personal purchases should be recorded as an expression of his views and not entered in the minutes,[4] the matter was nevertheless recorded. This may go some way to understanding the animosity towards Kennedy which Bodkin developed and shared with Hazel Lavery, although he was publicly cordial with Kennedy. At the same meeting Bodkin presented a work by Claesz Dirckz van der Hecke which he had undertaken to purchase for his own collection if the Board refused to accept his recommendation that they should buy the work. This the Board accepted but Bodkin's exchange with the Board at this meeting was undoubtedly an important test case for him, with the question of his personal purchasing being relevant but rather less important than establishing a strong position in relation to his Board. As well as making the distinction between adding to his own collection and purchasing on behalf of the National Gallery, the outcome indicates the power of his personality and his determination to set the agenda, and outline his management style, at the earliest possible opportunity.

Writing later, Bodkin expressed his views on the role of a gallery director, and indicated that a strong (even autocratic) director supported by a good Board had the best chance of raising a Gallery from mediocrity to greatness. The combination of a strong director and a board comprising non-arts specialists was for him a good one and at the National Gallery "few members of the Board have up to now been critics, connoisseurs or collectors of pictures. Yet judges, scientists, masters of foxhounds, stockbrokers and distinguished members of the medical profession have combined on the Board to direct its business affairs with reasonable efficiency and have generally given the Director his head in the tricky business of making suitable acquisitions."[5] A director admired by Bodkin was Wilhelm von Bode of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, who although strong, exhibited no desire for personal glory or monetary reward, both of which Bodkin himself might have been accused of seeking. Certainly, from the beginning of his time at the Gallery he frequently expressed dissatisfaction with his terms of employment, and his ability to attract attention to his work was unrivalled. In Ireland he felt that Henry

Doyle had been the greatest director of the National Gallery, excluding Hugh Lane's short period in office. This he judged to be because Doyle's bachelor status allowed him time to devote to his duties and this, combined with his friendship with the then Viscount Powerscourt, who dominated the Board, allowed him to make excellent purchases.

As the early exchange with his own Board indicated, Bodkin did not favour purchasing for the collection by committee because this led to compromise and half-hearted decisions as well as delay in decision-making in an area where speed was essential. Bodkin had previous experience of this when the picture *The Apotheosis of Jean Jacques Rousseau* by Hubert Robert was being purchased by the Gallery. The danger of losing a picture in such circumstances was therefore a very real one for Bodkin. For him, the role of the governing committee should be to determine broad policy issues such as developing a particular school of painting or increasing the number of portraits in a collection. But purchasing was for the Director: "A director should be given as free a hand as possible and if he makes too many mistakes, or even one serious avoidable mistake, he should be dismissed."[6] Such harsh terms of employment could be compensated for by paying the Director an adequate salary and guaranteeing him a good pension, conditions Bodkin was never to achieve at the National Gallery.

Having determined what he felt to be a good working relationship, Bodkin had few difficulties with his Board and in later years he wrote that from the time of his appointment the Board had "never run counter to my advice."[7] He was generally given his head in Gallery affairs but later, he strenuously denied "bossing" the Trustees. To the charge "everybody knows you boss the Trustees and in fact every committee you are on"[8] Bodkin replied: "I have neither the power nor the desire to boss anyone except possibly the younger members of my own family." However, his period in office was one in which the director took a much more proactive role at board meetings than previous directors had done. But the increased activity at the Gallery did not stop Bodkin from travelling, lecturing and writing and in November 1927 he received a D.Litt (honoris causa) from the National University of Ireland.[9] In the same month he wrote to the *Irish Times* in defence of the National Gallery as well as contributing a piece to the

newspaper on Irish pottery. His schedule for the following month included lectures by him on Venetian pictorial art, delivered in Belfast, and one on the National Gallery delivered two days later to the Royal Dublin Society.[10]

At his first Board meeting as Director, Bodkin presented a gift to the Gallery of Domenico Feti's *The Parables of the Lord of the Vineyard.*[11] The end of his first year in office was marked by his first exhibition as Director. This was the Commemorative Bi-Centenary Exhibition of Thomas Gainsborough for which Bodkin prepared a brief catalogue.[12] The private viewing of the Gainsborough exhibition was well attended by politicians, diplomats and bureaucrats, representing the new haute bourgeoisie emerging in Ireland. The Governor General, Tim Healy declined to attend because he did not like appearing at public functions at that time, in deference to the memory of Kevin O'Higgins[13] who had been assassinated in July. The writing paper from the Vice Regal Lodge was black-bordered in mourning. Bodkin had also known and respected O'Higgins and at the request of his wife, who was related to O'Higgins, he wrote an admiring article about him for the Clongowes magazine[14]. The Gainsborough exhibition was opened by President Cosgrave and members of the Executive Council also attended, as did Paul Henry, Sean Keating, Douglas Hyde, Eoin MacNeill and Ernest Blythe. Student attendance at the Gallery, for copying, increased in 1927[15] and attracting people into the Gallery was regarded by Bodkin as one of his important functions. However, the only initiatives in relation to this seem to have been his annual exhibition of new acquisitions and his public lectures on the collections delivered at home and abroad.

The use of the increased discretionary powers granted to the Director under Bye Law 16 of the National Gallery allowed Bodkin to make one of his most important purchases, *A Peasant Wedding* by Pieter Brueghel, the Younger in December 1928. For this he received the congratulations of the Board for his wise choice.[16] In the same year he bought Jan Siberechts' *The Farm Cart*[17], on his own responsibility through the Lane Fund. Sarah Purser had drawn attention to the importance of the Lane Fund for the National Gallery in July 1928. In a plea for recognition for Lane at a time when Charlemont House was being considered for use as a Municipal Gallery of Modern Art,

she pointed out that Lane had "more than doubled the endowment of the National Gallery, so that more than half of its additions each year we owe to him....."[18]

To draw attention to new purchases, and encourage attendances, Bodkin instigated the practice of holding an acquisitions exhibition annually to introduce the public to the new works. In 1928 the opening of this exhibition was attended by six hundred guests and Bodkin delivered a lecture on the works. A re-hanging of the Gallery in 1929, with a reception for the Board to view the work followed by hospitality in Bodkin's home, also drew the approval of his Board.[19] The re-hanging "almost entirely"[20] of the Gallery collection had been "a frightful job" and he was "dead beat." He had a clear vision of how a gallery should be hung and later articulated this, outlining the changes in the classification of museum objects based on materials to historical arrangement. The latter was still used but he did not find it always successful because of its "lifeless" nature.[21] He favoured instead a hanging in which the spectator could see and understand the individual picture and its relation to other pictures about it. Central to this was not just observing the historical order but also bringing out the sequence of style. "The characteristics of the different styles are taken into account and the riches of the different centuries are emphasised – the Renaissance preference for figure compositions in contrast to the more varied interests of the 14th century." However the decorative arrangement of the pictures must not be allowed to dominate to the extent of "killing the meaning of one picture while appearing to attach a false importance to another, merely in order to preserve the symmetry of the wall." Through such changes Bodkin hoped to make the National Gallery more attractive to visitors as a source of pleasure and instruction. One practical outcome of the re-hang in 1929 was that it had given him the opportunity to return to the National Gallery in London "a great white elephant…a brute of a thing" for which had no space "or inclination to exhibit."[22] This was Landseer's *A Dialogue at Waterloo.* In the same year he lost an opportunity to purchase a painting due to shortage of funds. He had been on the trail of "a miraculous small Greco which a convent has got permission to sell."[23] However, the Gallery could only afford a down payment and Bodkin was authorised by the Board to go ahead with the purchase on this basis, "if after inspection he considered such purchase desirable."[24] But the vendors were not prepared

to wait and sold to a cash purchaser. In the following month the Gallery was offered a study by Raphael, two pictures by Tiepolo and a panel by Luini all of which were declined.[25]

Public lectures continued for Bodkin and during 1928 he gave four Hermione lectures at Alexandra College, following lectures at universities in Berlin and Leiden. In Berlin he was the guest of the Director of the State Museum and his theme was the English and Irish schools of painting before an audience of between five and six hundred people.[26] Bodkin's Hermione Lectures, held in honour of Hermione, Duchess of Leinster, began in March and he used the opportunity in his first lecture to draw attention to the fact that while the concept of an institution such as a national gallery was accepted by all well-organised States, most people tended to postpone visiting the institution.[27] One of his purposes in the lectures was to induce his audience "to go and see the pictures for yourselves, and see how much finer the realities are than the shadows of them" which his slides would indicate. He described the genesis of the collection in 1760 when plans were first made for the establishment of the National Gallery by the Irish Society of Artists. In Bodkin's view, the building which emerged in 1864 was not particularly well suited for the exhibition of pictures. He found that the hall in which the Italian pictures were shown was too high, although the rooms housing the Milltown collection were models of what a gallery should be, and housed most of the great works of the collection at that time. In terms of collecting works, it was Bodkin's view that the Irish experience fell between the English policy of acquiring masterpieces without particular attention to their relationship to each other or to the representation of schools, and the German one of allowing visitors the opportunity of viewing schools of art and comparing their characteristics artistically and nationally. What had emerged in Ireland was a national collection with some gaps which nevertheless was one of the finest for its size in Europe.

International recognition of the importance of the National Gallery collection was vital for Bodkin and this was greatly improved when the legislation necessary to lend works was passed in 1928.[28] Bodkin had pressed for this legislation because while the Gallery had important works to contribute to such exhibitions as the Flemish Exhibition at

Burlington House, the Gainsborough Bicentenary Exhibition at Ipswich and the Goya Exhibition in Madrid, they were precluded from doing so. This, for Bodkin, created a bad impression of the National Gallery. The Gallery is rich in Dutch masters of the seventeenth century and following the legislation was able to lend to the Exhibition of Dutch Art, at Burlington House in London, Rembrandt's *Shepherds Reposing at Night* and Jan Steen's *The Village School.*[29] However, Bodkin was disappointed that the catalogue for the Dutch Exhibition did not list the Irish Free State among the governments who lent pictures.[30] This was particularly galling for him because he had worked on getting the Bill drafted to authorise the loans. The Irish Government "went out of their way" to facilitate prompt passage of the Bill and "even then some of my Board were restive about lending pictures to England." He wanted an assurance that there would be an acknowledgment in revised editions of the catalogue along with apologies for the "careless slip" to be corrected in future editions. The following year five pictures were lent to the Exhibition of Italian Art at Burlington House, where "the generosity of the Irish Free State who have altered the laws to make their contribution"[31] was acknowledged by Sir Austin Chamberlain M.P. following Bodkin's intercession with Lady Chamberlain.[32] Lending to prestigious exhibitions was important for Bodkin because it raised the international profile of the Gallery. It also had the effect of making a good impression and creating a positive climate in Britain on a subject close to Bodkin's heart - Ireland's claim to the Lane pictures. He was able to report to President Cosgrave that the lending of the pictures to the Italian exhibition "has created an excellent impression" and, somewhat optimistically, that public opinion was "becoming increasingly favourable to the Irish claim."[33] The visit to Dublin of the Commissioner of this exhibition, Signor Modigliani, Director of the Brera in Milan, brought public recognition for Bodkin. Modigliani had been appointed by Mussolini, whose interest in art included bringing the people closer to the great Masters, and he was full of praise for the Irish collection. He found the pastoral by Piasetta [sic], which was part of the Lane bequest, to be "the greatest canvas in existence by that master,"[34] and drew attention to the importance of Bodkin's work at the Gallery which was in the "fine traditions" of Hugh Lane and Henry Doyle.

Having determined from the beginning what he felt was a good working relationship with his Board, it is not surprising that Bodkin experienced few difficulties from them and this position was strengthened further from the earliest days following his appointment, by establishing a strong influence on nominations to the Board. It was suggested by the Minister for Education that Bodkin should nominate suitable persons for recommendation by him to the Executive Council.[35] This he refused to do formally because of the invidious position in which he, as a Board appointee, would be placed. However, he complied informally and used the opportunity to ask the Minister to make it clear that the appointments were for the statutory period of five years. The general practice was to regard appointments as virtually for life, and it was frequently difficult to get the necessary quorum of nine members to sanction the purchase of pictures. Members such as John Lavery and Alec Martin, Christie's expert, lived in London and so attended meetings infrequently. For Bodkin the statutory period in office was sufficient and it brought the Gallery into line with similar institutions abroad. The National Gallery in London precluded the holding of office for more than five years consecutively. The Irish experience had been that members had "occasionally outlived their interest in the Gallery and their utility as Governors and Guardians" and "it would seem to be desirable to interest as many members of the public as possible in the management of the Gallery by enabling them to serve for a period upon the Board." When a vacancy arose, Sir Robert Wood's name was informally suggested to the Minister by Bodkin and Wood was appointed in June 1929; and following the death of Lord Cloncurry in August that year, Dr. Denis Coffey, President of UCD was appointed to the Board.[36]

Managing the Gallery was hindered from the start by the poor resources from government in the 1920s and 1930s. A part-time Director, full-time Registrar and eleven attendants constituted the staff when Bodkin took over, and the issue of resources brought him into contact with an attitude from the Civil Service that was not accommodating. Bodkin travelled widely, "dealer crawling and gallery hunting"[37] and this he obviously enjoyed in spite of the financial constraints imposed by the Department of Finance. His travelling expenses were an issue which the Board referred to the Department[38] and the department had a "tendency to scrutinize too minutely the various accounts of the

Gallery's expenditure."[39] The grant-in-aid which stood at £4,480 for 1927/28, Bodkin's first year in office, declined to £4,105[40] for the following year and by 1934 had declined further to £3,875.[41] Of this £1,000 was for the purchase of pictures, an amount unchanged since the estimates for 1919/20 and one which was not increased to £2,000 until 1937.[42] This indicates the significance of the Lane Fund which in 1930 provided an additional £1,400 for purchases.[43] Financial stringency was such that even the pennies collected from the lavatories had to be returned to the Exchequer. In the Director's absence, the Registrar, Brinsley MacNamara, administered the Gallery without clerical support, although at the end of 1928 the Department of Finance was "prepared to give you the services of a shorthand typist on the occasions when a specially large amount of shorthand typing has to be done at the Gallery."[44] Problems with the civil service arose from the start and Bodkin's own attitude must have been partly responsible. A little more than six months after he took up his appointment he wrote to the Department of Education saying that he was staying on in the Gallery in spite of the difficulty of having two jobs because "there is no other Irish man at present fully fitted to occupy the most responsible post of Director".[45] His hope that this was not "too arrogant an opinion" is unlikely to have made his self-importance any easier to take by the civil servants. He indicated that the Board had put pressure on him to become a candidate for the job and that he had had a number of conversations with Mr. Boland, the Minister, before applying. His salary was no inducement and he found himself overworked and unable to deal with his own literary projects or go hunting after Old Masters on his own account. At this time he was, of course, actively working with Hazel Lavery to secure the position of High Commissioner in London and his confident attitude may be interpreted in the light of this.

The matter of the Gallery finances also seems to have been a problem for Bodkin from his earliest days in office. He was particularly unhappy about the suggestion that he should be required to receive authority for sending pictures for restoration and this allowed him to retort that "one does not employ the surgeon who tenders the lowest estimate for an operation of particular importance." In November 1928 the Department of Finance wrote to him concerning the "unwelcome news" that an excess of £150 was

probable on the Vote for the Gallery for that year.[46] This followed queries on the purpose of his journeys, and of his travel expenses, by the Department.[47] A budgetary overspend was likely to cause concern to the civil servants, but the tone of the correspondence is harsh, indicating that a statement was required "at once" on why the excess had been incurred.

Part of the problem was that Brinsley MacNamara, a man of letters, was not strong on figures and this led to a complaint in 1929[48] by the Auditor-General that they were having "a good deal of trouble" with the Gallery Account. Not only did it not balance but "it was full of inaccuracies". It took his staff three days to work out and disentangle the figures, which his staff said was not their job and they were not called on to provide this service for any other Account submitted. Not surprisingly, a suggestion by the Department of Finance that the Secretary at the Department of Education, which had departmental responsibility for the Gallery, should act as Accounting Officer was not acceptable to the Board. Bodkin got on well with MacNamara and defended him until eventually things improved and in 1932 he was informed that general accounting procedure at the National Gallery was "quite satisfactory".[49] However, Bodkin's own relations with the Department of Finance did not improve. He had asked for sanction for a press cutting service from the English and Colonial press in 1928 following an offer of services to himself and the National Gallery[50] from a London firm. Bodkin had been availing of a personal press cutting service for some years.[51] The Department refused permission and Bodkin went public on this in his Director's Report for 1929 and continued to refer to it in subsequent reports. This was a public attack on the Department of Finance and although his grounds were that "all important art galleries" employed such a service, it was politically unwise to deal with such a relatively unimportant issue in this way.

It is difficult to understand how the risk of alienation from such an important Department seems not to have concerned Bodkin, particularly as he was now looking to the Office of Public Works, which was attached to the Department, for an extension to the Gallery building.[52] In July 1929 he had submitted a memo[53] for the Board's consideration on the

subject of Gallery accommodation and the necessity for the immediate provision for an extension. No extension had been built since 1903 and the need for more space had been accentuated by the growth of the collections following the Lane bequest of sixty two important pictures and the Hone bequest which introduced two hundred and thirteen oils and four hundred and forty six watercolours to the Gallery collections. These could not be viewed because of lack of space. Bodkin's proposal was unanimously approved by the Board, subject to some "recasting" to emphasise the position of the Irish section of the collection, and his request to the Government was to acquire some or all of the property lying between Clare Street and the Gallery. The proposal was sent to the Office of Public Works for consideration.[54] However, in the atmosphere of suspicion which prevailed between the Gallery and the Department of Finance it is difficult to see how progress was to be made on this issue. In spite of continuous requests the only proposal forthcoming was one in 1933 to re-house part of the collection at the Vice-Regal Lodge.[55] The President's Department had asked the OPW to give its views on the use of the Lodge and demesne and it was suggested that a picture gallery or a combination of a gallery with a museum might be appropriate. A special meeting of the Board of the Gallery opposed the division of the collection as "largely destructive of its interests or utility"[56] and the building as unsuitable for exhibition purposes. However, the Gallery continued to lend pictures "of an unimportant type" for furnishing the Lodge. The best that could be achieved for the Gallery in terms of space was the provision of storage racks for the basement and even these were not installed until Bodkin had resigned.

The problem of scarce resources was compounded by constant difficulties with attendant staff. Following a ruling by the Executive Council, first preference for employment in the public service had to be given to ex-members of the Defence Forces suffering from disablement resulting from their military service. This applied to the National Gallery attendants and politicians frequently put forward names of constituents who fitted this category. Candidates were also supplied by the Department of Industry and Commerce and many were unfit for work and in poor circumstances. Bodkin had strong views on the type of attendant suitable for Gallery work and he expected higher than average intelligence, a good level of education and, rather optimistically, some knowledge of the

history of art. "They should be neat with their fingers and not suffer from any physical disability which would make them unfit for the duty of moving most valuable and occasionally heavy pictures."[57] When one disabled ex-soldier complained that his application for a job was rejected, the Department of Finance wrote and queried Bodkin's decision. Bodkin replied that he could not employ the man because of the disability of his arm.

The level of bureaucratic vigilance is also indicated by the departmental response to a request for caps for the attendants. Bodkin paid a lot of attention to detail and his frustration can be imagined when his request for thirteen uniform caps was queried on the grounds that there were only eleven attendants. The extra caps were for the floorman and the furnaceman who sometimes did duty in the Gallery. The Department wanted to abolish all caps, but Bodkin was strict on such matters: "Caps help to give the men the appearance of tidiness and authority"[58] and uniformed attendants were essential for maintaining order in the Gallery. What disorder can have been anticipated in the institution at this time it is difficult to imagine. However while this was a battle won, Bodkin had lost another to the Department on the question of the uniform suit and had to make do with 'jacket suits' like those worn at the National Museum instead of the 'frock suits' which he preferred.[59]

Bodkin was drawn into a more public controversy in 1928 on the issue of the use of Irish at the National Gallery. For the reasons already indicated which largely related to his concept of nationalism, Bodkin had little sympathy for the language, something which cost him dearly in later years when the Arts Council was being established.[60] A letter appeared in the press on the antagonism to the Gaelic movement exhibited by the absence of bilingual descriptions of pictures. The Gallery had earlier complied with the Provisional Government's requirement that stationery "be headed distinctively in the Irish language"[61]but had made no other efforts to recognise the language. Bodkin's response was that providing bilingual descriptions would do little to help in disseminating Irish culture. "To translate for example Baldassare Castiglione by Tiziano Vacellio, or Antonio Ciocchi del Monte Sansosvino by Sebastiano del Piombo into Irish would seem

to call for scholarship of an unusual kind and to use it to little purpose."[62] There was also a suggestion from *Conradh na Gaeilge* that the Gallery should be identified by its Irish name on the building, to which Bodkin replied disingenuously that he could find nothing in the records to indicate that in the first quarter century of the Gallery's existence objections had been raised to the form of the title above the main entrance. This was carved in stone and would be impossible to alter without great trouble and expense. Indeed, adding the title in Irish would involve rebuilding part of the facade, he said. However, in 1929 bilingual signposts directing visitors to the different sections of the collection were introduced and a bilingual plan of the Gallery displayed.[63]

For Bodkin the Irish language was insignificant as a symbol of nationhood when compared to the importance of art. Without the development of a unique Irish art "we can never lay claim to a distinct nationality."[64] To support this thesis Bodkin used the examples of Italian, Dutch and English art which anyone with a little study could clearly identify. It was even possible for people "of average eyesight and intelligence" to separate work done in Florence from that done in Venice, and in Holland even between Haarlem and Leyden which were barely eighteen miles apart. Nothing of this kind had emerged in Ireland and in the years since the foundation of the Free State "we could not claim to have produced anything which proves us to possess an art of our own." The ambition for the emergence of a distinctive Irish art in such a short period of time, (particularly when Bodkin also believed that great work needed conditions of both peace and prosperity), would seem to have placed a major and unrealisable burden on Irish artists. However Bodkin was greatly concerned that the necessary policy decisions and infrastructural changes which were conducive to the development of art in the new State, were not being made. His feelings about the Irish language as an element of national revival reflect those of Yeats, who had posed the question about literature: "Can we not build a national tradition, a national literature which shall be none the less Irish in spirit from being English in language?"[65] His conviction that "there is no great literature without nationality and no nationality without literature"[66] can be compared with Bodkin's views on the symbiotic relationship between nationality and the visual arts. He

found a distinctive quality of Irishness lacking in Irish art, a view shared by Mainie Jellett much later. For her it was absent except in the work of Jack Yeats, as late as 1943.[67]

The impatience and frustration which Bodkin was experiencing about the lack of progress in visual arts continued to dominate his lectures and public addresses, and he did not shirk from placing the blame where he felt it should be. As a civil servant himself, this was likely to lead him into difficulties. The Report which dealt with art education, particularly at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art,[68] had recommended numerous measures for improving the system of education, but no action by government had followed. In a public lecture in Rathmines in December 1929 Bodkin departed from his script to underline the needs that continued to be unresolved. Drawing was not seriously taught in Irish primary or secondary schools and neither of the universities provided education in the history or appreciation of art. "What wonder was it that the majority of our people failed to understand that art is a national asset which affected every activity of the citizen, and that the people of a country in which an interest and knowledge of art was widely diffused were likely to excel less favoured nations in civic efficiency and every kind of manufacture and commerce."[69] Once more he articulated the view that art could not only encourage a better citizenry but that economic well-being could be improved through good design. Bodkin drew attention to the absence of good designers who could ensure, for example, that Belleek porcelain became as famous as Copenhagen porcelain. The "almost complete extinction of the Donegal carpet industry" and the "parlous state" of the linen industry was also due to the lack of designers. Posters advertising Irish goods such as chocolates, soaps, jams or cigarettes told the same story and did not indicate high standards of graphic design or "the slightest trace of Irish character". In marketing terms, if comparison was made with similar French products, "the French method of presentation made an almost irresistible appeal to the purchaser". In France the Ministry of Fine Arts worked closely with the Ministry of Commerce and Bodkin drew attention to the relatively substantial investment by the French State, at both central and local government level, to the cultivation of art for economic purposes. In many countries this investment was closely related to tourism benefits, because of the capacity of art exhibitions to attract visitors. The five pictures which the National Gallery had

lent to the Italian Exhibition in London "would be seen by more people within the next two months than would see them in fifty years in our National Gallery." Ironically, similar sentiments were being expressed by some of the Trustees of the National Gallery in London to support the retention of the Lane pictures there.

The Irish government was not making the kind of cultural policy decisions which Bodkin regarded as essential to the new nation, both in terms of the development of national identity and of economic growth. He failed to appreciate that his concept of "nationhood" was not universally shared and that the new and conservative State was beginning to look inward at a time when he continued to look to other external models of cultural development for inspiration. Like Yeats, he believed that "a nation could only achieve consciousness through exposure to others."[70] The curtailment of such exposure, which Bodkin had identified as significant in relation to the poor visual tradition, was by the end of the 1920s becoming evident. An era of Irish cultural protectionism and chauvinism was beginning and this insularity was manifest in particular in the draconian censorship legislation of 1929.[71]

The involvement which Bodkin had in the Committee of Enquiry on the National Museum was also a source of frustration for him. This committee, to which Bodkin was appointed by the government, had reported in December 1927[72] and proposed a number of organisational changes, including an independent advisory Board for the Museum. However, this important symbol of Irish nationhood continued to be neglected and in 1929 Bodkin again drew attention to the "unsatisfactory state"[73] of the National Museum, and of the "discouraging reports" which continued to be issued by the Board of Visitors to the Museum. One of the recommendations of the Committee concerned the establishment of local museums, but this was not approved by Bodkin, who added an "Explanatory Note of Reservations on the Main Report". His concern was that if a local authority was unable to fund its museum, "any government which refused to relieve such a situation would either incur serious odium or be driven to deplete the resources which should be available for the purpose of the National Museum."[74] He also had reservations on grounds that objects of national significance, found locally, might be brought to local

museums which might not surrender them to the National Museum. In this it is clear that Bodkin's stated inclination towards cultural democracy was overruled by practical considerations about available resources. This is not surprising in view of the way in which his own national institution was being seriously hampered by lack of funds. He was unwilling to recommend any initiative which might attract resources away from the national cultural institutions, particularly in the light of the unfavourable economic climate of the times.

His concern was unnecessary because while this Report, unlike the previous one on arts education, brought a response from the Minister of Education, it was one which would involve no cost to the Exchequer. The Government was asked to agree a statement of purpose for the National Museum, and this was accepted and it continues to be used in the Museum's mission statement today.[75] The other recommendations concerned the removal of plaster casts and replicas to educational institutions and the transfer of the Museum collection of engravings and watercolour drawings to the National Gallery. In exchange the Gallery should transfer its collection of topographical prints and maps to the Museum.

The Report on the National Museum, like the previous one on art education, was not published and the opportunity for a public debate on the issues was avoided. However, Bodkin's lecture in Rathmines[76] and his unscripted remarks were reported in the press and this provoked a response from his Department. He had incurred the anger of the Department of Education and Bodkin had to apologise for his critical comments.[77] He was informed that as a Civil Servant he would have to get permission to speak in public, or write on the subject of the National Gallery in the future. This undoubtedly disabled him and hampered his freedom of expression and the position continued to disimprove until he ultimately wrote to a friend: "The warnings issued by Civil Servants against discussing or writing about anything which comes within the ambit of their official duties are of such an emphatic kind that I myself have practically given up writing anything about the Gallery or its contents. The Departments of Finance and Education require me

to obtain official permission even to lecture in public on the Gallery....." [78] He was effectively being silenced.

Bodkin's friendship with President Cosgrave continued however and he frequently provided scripts for the President's speeches on arts matters, including the Lane pictures. In Brian Kennedy's view, the Rathmines address was an example of Bodkin's enthusiasm getting the better of him in view of the fact that he had been once more appealing to Cosgrave to establish a Ministry of Fine Arts,[79] and was hopeful that his ideas were getting the attention they deserved. Earlier in 1929 he had provided an updated version of a memorandum he wrote in 1922 about "The Functions of a Ministry of Fine Arts" to a number of Ministers. One of these, Patrick McGilligan, Minister for External Affairs and Industry and Commerce, advised Cosgrave that the time might be right to deal with the issues raised by Bodkin. A preliminary meeting was arranged by Cosgrave three days before the Rathmines lecture, but predictably, the outcome was a limited response from the Department of Education: "Of the many issues raised the most important is probably that of improving the position of certain industries by establishing a closer relationship between them and up-to-date instruction in design."[80] Bodkin's critical comments reduced his credibility in the eyes of the civil servants and no more meetings on the matter were arranged by Cosgrave. Undeterred, Bodkin continued to raise the matter with the President and in 1931 he again wrote on the "stagnant and out-of-date"[81] state of all the artistic institutions and "our national industries from boot-making to bottle-making, stand in urgent need of good designers." But the response he hoped for was never to be forthcoming.

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[1] see Kelly, 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland,' 173.
[2] Abraham Begeign, *A wooded Landscape* was sold with other works from Bodkin's collection at Sotheby's, lot no.14, on 11 November 1959.
[3] NGI Board minutes, 4 April 1928.
[4] NGI, Board minutes, 4 July 1928.
[5] TB. 'On Buying Pictures for a public Gallery'. Franz Philipp and June Stewart eds., *In Honour of Daryl Lindsay, Essays and Studies*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1964, 21.

[6] TB, 'On Buying Pictures for a public Gallery'.
[7] ibid.
[8] NGI TB to John L Burke, June 1933 quoted in Kelly 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland.'
[9] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 82. This was conferred on 21 December 1927 on the same day as John McCormack was conferred.
[10] ibid.
[11] NGI Board minutes,14 December 1927. NGI 898, (after Domenico Feti. Presented as autograph).
[12] A general catalogue of the collection had been prepared by Lucius O'Callaghan and was at the printers when Bodkin came into office.
[13] NGI Tim Healy to TB, 25 October 1927.
[14] TB. 'Some Personal Reminiscences of Kevin Christopher O'Higgins 7th June 1892-July 10th 1927'. *The Clongownian,* June 1928.
[15] NGI *Director's Report* 1927 records 144 students attending which TB noted was 'a considerable increase' on the previous year. However the number fluctuated and declined to fifteen in 1929 (NGI *Director's Report* 1930). TB noted that while public attendance was increasing, professional students of art showed 'a depressing apathy to the lessons to be learned from the achievements of the Great Masters.'
[16] NGI Board Minutes, 5 December 1928. NGI 911. The purchase was made from Louis Wine through the Lane Fund. While a member of the Board, Bodkin had audited this fund, which was the duty of two members each year.
[17] NGI 900.
[18] Letter to the editor, *Irish Times,* 6 July 1928, quoted in Mary Brennan-Holahan, *A Portrait of Sarah Purser*, Dublin, PCD and J Publishing, 1996. See also Robert O'Byrne. *Hugh Lane's legacy at the National Gallery of Ireland*, Exhibition catalogue for 'Hugh Lane – a Tribute', 18 October-10 December 2000. This notes that 66 pictures had been purchased to date from this fund.
[19] NGI Board Minutes, motion of congratulations passed, 4 December 1929.
[20] ibid., TB to Alec Martin, November 1929.
[21] ibid., 'The National Gallery of Ireland' undated ms.
[22] ibid., TB to W.G.Constable, April 1929.
[23] ibid., TB to Brinsley MacNamara, 23 May 1929. No further details on this have been located.
[24] ibid., Board minutes, 5 June 1929.
[25] ibid., TB to Brinsley MacNamara, 23 May 1929.
[26] 'A Visit to Berlin' news report, *Irish Times*, 29 February 1928.
[27] 'Our National Gallery of Art' news report, *Irish Times* 2 March 1928.
[28] *National Gallery of Ireland Bill 1928* was passed on 25 July 1928.
[29] NGI *Director's Report* 1928.
[30] ibid., TB to Sir Robert Witt, 7 January 1929.
[31] ibid., Director's Report 1929.
[32] ibid., TB to President Cosgrave, 23 January 1930.
[33] ibid.

[34] 'The National Gallery: Italian Expert's Tribute' news report *Irish Times*, 31 July 1920. This is from studio of Giovanni Battista Piazzetta, *A pastoral outing* NGI 656 which was part of the Lane Gift (presented as autograph).
[35] NGI TB to Minister for Education, 10 June 1929.
[36] ibid., acknowledges "with gratitude" the prompt appointment.
[37] ibid., TB to Brinsley MacNamara 21 September 1929.
[38] ibid., Board minutes 6 June 1928.
[39] ibid., TB to Mr. Maher, Department of Education, 14 January 1928.
[40] ibid., Copies of Estimates for Government Expenditure 1927/28 and 1928/29.
[41] ibid., Director's Report 1934.
[42] The annual purchase grant of £1,000 had been suspended from 1914 to 1919 because of the War and was re-inserted in the Estimates for 1919/29. NGI memorandum, Civil Services, Class IV, 16, 1922; National Gallery of Ireland Illustrated Summary Catalogue of Paintings, Dublin, NGI 1981, xxxvi.
[43] ibid., Circular No. 15/30 Audit of Non-Voted Accounts, June 1930.
[44] ibid., Department of Finance to TB, 14 November 1928.
[45] ibid., TB to Mr. Maher, Department of Education' 14 January 1928.
[46] ibid., Mr. Boland to TB 29 November 1928.
[47] ibid., correspondence on travelling expenses, November 1928.
[48] ibid., Auditor-General to TB 14 December 1929.
[49] ibid., quoted in TB to H.N.Bowesman, Department of Finance, October 1932.
[50] ibid., Woolgar & Roberts to TB 9 September 1928.
[51] ibid., Bodkin's personal service was supplied by Durants.
[52] ibid *Director's Report* 1929.
[53] ibid., Memo TB to the Board, TB 3 July 1929.
[54] ibid., Board minutes, 3 July 1929.
[55] ibid., NGI from OPW, 31 January 1933.
[56] ibid., Board minutes, 3 February 1933.
[57] ibid., TB to Secretary, Department of Industry and Commerce, 17 August 1931.
[58] ibid., TB to S. O'Broin, Department of Finance, 13 June 1929.
[59] ibid., from Department of Finance, 6 March 1928.
[60] Anne Kelly. 'The Church, the State and Thomas Bodkin'. *Irish Times*, 28 December 1987.
[61] NGI, Provisional Government Order, 17 June 1922.
[62] ibid., TB to Sean hUadhigh, November 1928.
[63] ibid., *Director's Report*, 1929.
[64] 'The Place of Art in Ireland: Need for National Awakening: Dr. Bodkin's lecture', news report on lecture delivered in Rathmines Town Hall, *Irish Times*,19 December 1929.
[65] quoted in Kiberd, 155.
[66] ibid., 162.
[67] S.B.Kennedy, 116. The view was that of Mainie Jellett expressed in the context of RHA exhibitions.

[68] TCD Bodkin papers 6965/30 'The Report of the French Delegation on the reforms that are necessary in Artistic and Technical Education in the Free State, and especially in the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art', 8 June 1927.
[69] 'The Place of Art in Ireland: Need for National Awakening' news report *Irish Times*, 19 December 1929.
[70] Kiberd, 165.
[71] *Censorship of Publications Act 1929.*
[72] NA S5392, Nils Lithberg, *Report on the National Museum*, 20 October 1927.
[73] 'The Place of Art in Ireland: Need for National Awakening' news report, *Irish Times*, 19 December 1929.
[74] Brian Kennedy, 21.
[75] 'The main purposes of the National Museum of Ireland should be to accumulate, preserve, study and display such objects as may serve to increase and diffuse the knowledge of Irish civilisation, of the Natural History of Ireland and of the relations of Ireland in these respects with other countries.' In 1996 this statement was endorsed and a new mission statement adopted. *Report of the Interim Board of the NMI to the Minister for Arts Culture and the Gaeltacht*, May 1995, unpublished.
[76] 'The Place of Art in Ireland' news report *Irish Times*, 19 December 1929 .
[77] TCD Bodkin papers 6965/42 TB to John Marcus O'Sullivan, 19 December 1929.
[78] NGI, TB to Denis Gwynn, 31 January 1934.
[79] Brian Kennedy, 22, 23.
[80] quoted in Brian Kennedy, 23.
[81] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/31 TB to W.T.Cosgrave, 9 March 1931.

7 THE LANE BEQUEST FROM THE BRITISH PERSPECTIVE

In a diverse career, the death of Hugh Lane in 1915 and the controversy surrounding the codicil to Lane's Will were a constant preoccupation. The Will was dated 3 February 1915 and written on the official writing paper of the National Gallery of Ireland. "This is a codicil to my last will to the effect that the group of pictures now at the London National Gallery, which I had bequeathed to that Institution, I now bequeath to the City of Dublin, providing that a suitable building is provided for them within five years of my death. The group of pictures I have lent to Belfast I give to the Municipal Gallery in Harcourt Street. If a building is provided within five years, the whole collection will be housed together. The sole Trustee in this question is to be my aunt, Lady Gregory. She is to appoint any additional Trustees she may think fit. I also wish that the pictures now on loan at this Gallery remain as my gift." This was signed by Lane and he then added and signed the following: "I would like my friend Tom Bodkin to be asked to help in the obtaining of this new Gallery of Modern Art for Dublin. If within five years a Gallery is not forthcoming, then the group of pictures are to be sold, and the proceeds go to fulfil the purpose of my will." Ireland's claim to the Lane pictures quickly became the genesis of a moral issue and one on which Irish opinion was, for once, united. At one stage or another political figures as diverse as Michael Collins, Lord Carson, Lord Craigavon, Arthur Griffith, Eamon de Valera, and W.T.Cosgrave were involved in pleading the Irish case. Nomination in the codicil had given Bodkin an important public role at a time when he was still relatively unknown, and he was active throughout the protracted controversy.

In almost half a century the issue has been examined and presented by Lady Gregory, Bodkin and others from the Irish perspective. However little is known of the history of the affair from the British point of view and this is the major focus of the research in this chapter. What is striking is the extent to which at crucial times each side in the dispute was ignorant of the real purposes and motivations of the other. The material in British archives, had it been known to the Irish side at the time, would have substantially changed the Irish negotiating position. This material, in which Bodkin is

at times a shadowy figure, supplements his book about the controversy, for seventy years the authoritative record of the Irish case.

Even before Hugh Lane's death Bodkin had been involved in the contentious issue of a gallery of modern art for Dublin, and his inclusion in what Lady Gregory termed the "codicil of forgiveness" indicates that Bodkin, who up to his involvement with Lane was not primarily interested in contemporary art, was in sympathy with Lane's expressed aims for a modern gallery for Dublin. Such a gallery "should serve as a feeder and a sifter, a sort of artistic reduction furnace where a man's art work is held for the judgment of his fellows during his life, and if worthy passed after his death to that of coming generations..."[1] Bodkin, writing later to Sir Hutchison Poe, who had been a Trustee of the National Gallery, pointed out that Lane "always considered that the Dublin Municipal Gallery should eventually occupy the same relation to the National Gallery as the Luxembourg does to the Louvre, that is to say, to serve as a temporary resting place for fine modern pictures pending their maturity into old Masters.[2] Those works which survived this test would pass to the National Gallery of Ireland.[3] A modern gallery in Dublin "would create a standard of taste and a feeling for the relative importance of painters...would encourage the purchase of pictures...would be necessary to the student if we are to have a distinct school of painting in Ireland".... The theme of 'standards of taste', and the absence of these in Ireland, was recurrent in Bodkin's writings, particularly in relation to modern art. He chided the professional classes in *Four Irish Landscape Painters* for their failure to purchase a modern picture – "an adventure far beyond their range. They have no tests nor standards for such articles since "The Lane Gift" was lost to Ireland through their lethargy.[4] Like Lane he saw the possibility of the emergence of a distinct school of painting although this was certainly not on grounds of cultural nationalism at the same degree of fervour as Yeats' and Lady Gregory's literary vision of a new Ireland. Lane was described by his aunt as being "as determined about Ireland as we are ourselves",[5] and he was described by his friend D.S.MacColl as having "large ideas coupled with passionate Nationalism.[6]

An important dissenting voice in relation to the powers being attributed to art at that time was George Moore, for whom by 1904 "neither nationalism nor education nor even Irishness seemed valuable anymore."[7] Although part of the Celtic Revival

movement, Moore's support for a modern art gallery was on grounds that it was not national but international. Neither would it lead to an Irish school of painting because in his judgement the conditions for artistic production were a mystery, and he questioned whether exhibitions of the vanity of the rich could inspire new painters. "We find that art comes suddenly and swiftly, and that nobody has any clue as to how it comes."[8] For Moore, art could neither be stopped nor encouraged and could not be taught to children in schools, sentiments that were far from those of Bodkin or Lane, whose plans for a modern gallery he ultimately supported.

In September 1913 Lane had removed his 'conditional gift' of 39 pictures from Clonmell House to the National Gallery in London. Robert O'Byrne in his recent biography of Lane, points out that Lane had made arrangements to lend to the National Gallery before Dublin Corporation declared itself unable to accept his terms.[9] However, Bodkin quoted Lane's letter to the Director on 27th July in which he said that if the pictures were hung in the National Gallery or the Tate Gallery, "it might encourage the Corporation to fulfil my conditions."[10] This implies that at this time Lane was using the National Gallery exhibition as a bait to draw attention to the importance of the pictures and their desirability to Dublin Corporation. Lane was informed by the National Gallery on 12 August 1913 that his pictures would be accepted by them, on two conditions. A new room then being built was to be completed before the loan could take place, and secondly, the Trustees could not pledge themselves to exhibit the pictures for a definite term of one or two years.[11] Lane did not object to either condition and made his Will on 11 October 1913 bequeathing the pictures previously lent by him to the National Gallery. However, Lane was not made aware of a third condition which applied, which was that pictures were only accepted on loan if there were prospects of their being given or bequeathed or purchased. In February 1914 Lane was informed of a decision of the Trustees of the National Gallery who had viewed his collection that they were "disposed to think that, while some of these pictures are well worthy of temporary exhibition in the National Collection, there are others which hardly attain the standard which would justify their inclusion".[12] Fifteen [13]were deemed to be worthy and the remainder were to be housed at Lane's "convenience". He was also now informed for the first time of the rule that pictures were only exhibited in cases where there was a "reasonable chance" of their being acquired at a later date by purchase or gift or bequest. Since

the Board had access to limited funds, Lane was asked "to be good enough to inform them" about his intentions regarding the future disposition of the fifteen pictures in question. Understandably, Lane was annoyed and refused to comply, pointing out that this condition should have been indicated in the first instance.[14] The National Gallery Trustees were not happy with this and the proposed limited exhibition was abandoned.

Lane was made Director of the National Gallery of Ireland on 26 February 1914 and in March D.S.MacColl,[15] then Keeper of the Wallace Collection, suggested to him the possibility of an exhibition of the collection, or the greater part of it, at the Tate Gallery, to which Lane agreed.[16]. Lane also indicated to MacColl at this time that he had never felt any enthusiasm for giving his pictures to a wealthy country. The project in Dublin having fallen through, he had been brought to contemplate the gift to England under the pressure of his friends, he said. In November 1914 he wrote to the National Gallery: "I understand that my distinguished friends who are responsible for (the pictures) being at the N.G. are hoping to arrange to exhibit them at the Tate Gallery. It was this suggestion that induced me to refrain from publishing the particulars of this worrying affair……I hope that the question of exhibiting these Dublin pictures will soon be settled. I cannot ever return them to Dublin without removing the slur that has been cast on them."[17] Lane expressed awareness that the "suffragette danger" which caused concerns about vandalism in the Gallery had absorbed the time of the Board, but with that issue now quiet he hoped that the exhibition might be held at the Tate. The mining magnate Sir Edmund Davis[18] and Joseph Duveen[19] were also consulted on the possibility of a new gallery for modern foreign art and Lane confirmed that such a development would also decide him in favour of London as a home for his pictures. However, nothing had come of these initiatives by 3 February 1915 when Lane added the controversial unwitnessed codicil to his Will, bequeathing the 39 pictures to the City of Dublin, provided a suitable building was provided within five years of his death. The friends whom Lane regarded as influential – MacColl and Charles Aitken, Keeper of the Tate Gallery - had not succeeded in providing either an exhibition at the National Gallery or the Tate, or in securing firm agreement from a donor for a new gallery. Pressure had been put on Lane by these friends who were using the pictures as a first step in

securing a modern foreign gallery – they could propose, but they did not have the power to decide.

The power lay with the Trustees of the National Gallery and Lane was unaware of the turmoil that existed among them. MacColl described the Trustees in 1912 as "of an old-fashioned type, consisting of territorial magnates and men of wealth or leading position in public affairs, all of them in some degree interested in art, and possessed of art collections, inherited or acquired. Few of them...would be described as connoisseurs or experts in the field of painting...."[20] In 1915 they included Lords Curzon, Ribblesdale and Plymouth as well as Sir Edward D'Abernon. The powers of the Director had become limited in practice as in theory to bringing proposed purchases for the decision of the Board, although he had larger powers in relation to the hanging of pictures and their conservation. Lane's initial discussions at the National Gallery in 1913 were with the Director, Sir Charles Holroyd and the Chairman of the Trustees, Lord Curzon. Although Curzon later denied that he had approached Lane to lend the pictures[21], he had an interest in acquiring a modern collection because he chaired the Committee which was set up in 1911 to study the problem of pictures leaving the country. One of its recommendations was the creation of a gallery of modern foreign painting and sculpture.[22] Lane was therefore confident that his exhibition project was in line with the recommendation of the Curzon Committee and that it could be delivered with the backing of two such powerful allies. Holroyd, in the company of Lane, did the hanging of the pictures, with three omitted by mutual agreement, for the exhibition which was aborted in 1914. The date of 20th January had been fixed for the opening and Lane was asked to provide a list of people to whom invitations should be sent.[23] On 13th January the Board viewed the pictures, took a dislike to many and decided to exhibit fifteen, only if Lane would give or bequeath, there being no funds available for purchase. In effect the Board had gone back on its earlier decision – a decision arrived at through Curzon's use of discretionary power in accepting the collection initially. Lane's angry letter in response to the rejection of more than half his collection enraged a number of the Trustees and at a Board meeting on 24 February 1914 a motion of Lord Ribblesdale was proposed: "That it is undesirable to continue the correspondence and negotiations with Sir Hugh Lane and that it is desirable to return his Collection in polite but definite terms."[24]

It is ironic, in view of the vigour with which the Trustees fought to keep the Lane pictures at the National Gallery from 1915 onwards, that this motion was carried by the Board. It is a further irony that the Board's resolution to return the pictures was the last one recorded during Lane's lifetime. At this meeting another Trustee, Lord Redesdale, had gone to the trouble of having a confidential memorandum outlining his position printed. In this he compared some of Lane's collection with the work of the "pavement artist", although he admitted "a few pleasing examples" including three small Corots, but in his judgement "not even one of these could stand the test of being shown with the old masterpieces" for which the National Gallery – "a great Temple of Art" - was built.[25] The memorandum also accused the Director of manipulating the situation by proposing to call in the advice of two outside experts – John Sargent RA and D.S.MacColl both of whom, he said, were likely to support Hugh Lane's proposal. Having Holroyd for an ally proved to be of no assistance to Lane because Holroyd was not supported by Curzon at the meeting, although Curzon had been involved in the negotiations for which Holroyd was being criticized.[26] Curzon was indeed exhibiting the "mendacity" of which Lady Gregory felt he was capable.[27] Only one Trustee, the Earl of Plymouth felt that the management of the affair had been "unfortunate",[28] and proposed that Hugh Lane's offer be accepted and the pictures be hung in a room in the National Gallery. If this was not accepted he believed that Hugh Lane was due an apology. His motion was defeated and at the next Board meeting on 10th March when Curzon, on the instigation of MacColl suggested the possibility of a Tate exhibition of the pictures, an even more negative position was adopted by Redesdale. [29]He protested strongly against "any portion of the National Gallery or the Tate being assigned to Sir Hugh Lane, who is a picture dealer, for the purpose of holding an exhibition of his wares." He quoted a letter from Hugh Lane to Charles Holroyd on January 17th 1907 in which Lane said that the pictures "were offered to Dublin some years ago and rejected as 'not worth the price of their frames'." Hugh Lane he described as "a very persistent trader" and it seemed to him to be "a monstrous proposition that the Gallery built in the interest of British Art…should be opened to the reception of what are for the most part the crazy extravagances of modern French decadents. If one dealer is to be allowed to advertise his goods at the expense and under the aegis of the Trustees of the National Gallery, then let other dealers have the same advantage." The fact that Lane, although

he promoted contemporary artists, and had donated such works to the Municipal Gallery[30], did not deal in modern pictures was not considered. The sentiments indicate that Lane was right when he said: "I should never have dreamed of submitting my pictures for selection to members of the Board, who, however distinguished in other respects, have no competence as experts in modern painting."[31] It is clear that Lane never realised the extent of the animosity towards him and his pictures on the part of the National Gallery. Had he been aware of this before he sailed to the United States, the outcome in relation to the thirty nine pictures might have been very different.

No one could have anticipated that the saga which began following the death of Lane was to last for more than forty years until a temporary solution was agreed in 1959. The battle survived through a revolution and the formation of the new Irish state and was initially driven and stage managed with the greatest tenacity by Lady Gregory, until her death in 1932. She began as soon as the codicil to the Will was found by taking a copy of it to Lord Curzon, chairman of the National Gallery Trustees, and was pleased when he told her that Lane's wishes, "so clearly expressed, ought to be respected."[32] Her biography of Lane[33] published in 1921, was an important element of the campaign, and her journals[34] also provide an account of her work and her determination to return the pictures to Ireland. This became a consuming passion for her and it is not surprising that few could match her level of commitment to the task. She was driven by her love for Lane and her certainty about what Lane would have wanted for the pictures, as well as a keen sense of the injustice being perpetrated by the National Gallery. This would have been reinforced even more had she been aware of the extent of the reaction of the Trustees to his pictures until they learnt of his Will. Lady Gregory's sense of mission about the pictures could not be matched by anyone else, and even Yeats fell by the wayside from time to time. The meetings of the Lane Picture Committee, of which Bodkin was a member were described by her as "languid",[35]and no one had the same sense of urgency about the pictures as Lady Gregory did. Bodkin's role in the matter is outlined in his own biography of Lane[36]published in 1932, after Lady Gregory's death. As a commission from the Irish Government, with the purpose of making the Irish case for the return of the pictures, this had an official imprimatur.

It might be expected that the common cause of the fight for the pictures would unite Lady Gregory, as Lane's Trustee and Bodkin, as the nominated assistant in the cause. However, their relationship was strained, particularly in the early years, and Lady Gregory seems to have initially disliked and underestimated Bodkin: "I didn't think much of Mr. Bodkin."[37] She may well also have resented the friendship between Lane and Bodkin who saw each other constantly during the last ten years of Lane's life.[38] This friendship had now been given public expression by her much loved nephew in the codicil to his Will. Her suspicion of Bodkin is also accounted for by her awareness of his ambitions about the National Gallery job and his role in the unseating of Langton Douglas, whom she admired. She had a tendency to "harsh judgements"[39]particularly on those for whom she had little sympathy. The feelings were reciprocated by Bodkin who found Lady Gregory to be at times "a tart difficult old lady,"[40]although she had become "that wonderful old lady"[41] by the time he added a chapter to his book on Lane in 1956. However, Lady Gregory was happy to use Bodkin, particularly after 1927 when he acquired the status of Director of the National Gallery. Before that, as a Governor of the Gallery, he contributed what she regarded as a "welcome enrichment"[42] of one of the chapters of her biography of Lane by providing a description of the National Gallery and its collection. This had the function of highlighting the importance of Lane's many bequests to the Gallery. The relations between the two were polite in public but not cordial in private and for her W.B.Yeats was a far more important ally than Bodkin in her fight for the pictures. Yeats had an international public profile which was strategically significant for her, particularly as the battle was to be waged in London against the National Gallery Trustees with, she hoped, the help of British politicians. She needed allies who would carry some weight in London and she identified her foes at an early stage as Lord Curzon, D.S.MacColl, Charles Aitken and Robert Witt, who became one of the Trustees in 1924[43], for their affidavits in support of the British case. In this she was correct but she could have had little idea of the strength and the conviction with which the Trustees in general were prepared to fight to keep the pictures in London, or of the institutional unity between them and governments of all political persuasion down through the years. No government was prepared to act without the approval of the Trustees and this was not to be forthcoming.

The views being expressed about Lane and his collection by the Trustees before his death were quickly forgotten when his Will became known. The Will was admitted to probate on 29 September 1915 and a High Court order of 25 May 1917 directed the Executors of the Will to hand them over to the Trustees of the National Gallery.[44] The task now was to secure the collection for the National Gallery.[45] The pictures now took on the status of a nucleus of a modern collection without which the Gallery would have inadequate nineteenth-- century French representation. The pictures which had formerly been so forcefully rejected by the National Gallery assumed an iconic status as representing an important element of the national collection. In a review of the situation in 1919 Charles Holmes, who succeeded Charles Holroyd as Director in 1916, reminded Curzon that the pictures were seen from the start as the nucleus for the foundation of a modern Foreign Gallery in London.[46] Added to this in the post-War period may have been a more accepting attitude to French art following the war-time alliance with France. The tide of opinion at the National Gallery turned with the acquisition of a number of important modern paintings at the Degas sale in 1918[47].

On the Lane pictures Bodkin had a role to play on the Irish side at different levels during the long and contentious battle, and he was one of the few survivors when a compromise finally emerged and a temporary solution acceptable to both sides was found in 1959. By then, Lady Gregory, and most of the other protagonists had died. Bodkin's life of Lane was re-issued in 1956 and contained an updating epilogue on the affair and his own role in it.[48] A literary, or documentary approach had been adopted in the Irish case from the start. Lady Gregory's life of Lane was an early pleading of the Irish case and Bodkin's book had a similar purpose. The British case was less clearly defined and was defensive from the start. The Irish side admitted at an early date their lack of legal right to the pictures and by doing this they moved the argument to moral grounds. For the British side therefore, to engage in argument was to engage in moral argument, and while the Trustees maintained their position on their legal rights, they tended to be drawn into moral argument. Lane's intentions at the time of writing the codicil were central to the argument for both sides and each provided affidavits from witnesses who had spoken to Lane about his plans for the disposition of the pictures. A particular strength for Lady Gregory was the affidavit of Alec Martin, who had travelled to Liverpool with Lane and was the last person to

hear his views about the disposition of the pictures before he sailed to the United States.

At the start, Lady Gregory was intent on having the codicil legalised through an Act of Parliament[49]and this put the Trustees into action in defence of their position, a phenomenon that was to re-occur at regular stages and with increasing force until 1959. She had written to the Trustees in 1915 and 1916 and they had confirmed the legal position, which was that they had no power to dispose of the pictures by gift to the National Gallery of Ireland, or any other body.[50] They would however, should the enhanced powers of loan then being requested through Parliament, be granted, "respond favourably" to any requests for the loan of some of the pictures to the galleries in Dublin. Such an offer was unlikely to be acceptable to Lady Gregory as it would have involved compromise at a stage when the issue had not yet been fully investigated. In any event the legislation referred to was abandoned without ever reaching the Commons, its last appearance being in the House of Lords on 20 December 1916.[51] The advice to pursue a legislative approach with the Trustees was given to Lady Gregory by Robert Ross in October 1916.[52] Ross informed her that to repudiate the bequest would expose the Trustees to possible legal action on breach of trust. So she cannot have been surprised at the reaction of the Trustees to her letters. By 1916 Lady Gregory also knew the position of MacColl, Robert Witt and Aitken, then Keeper of the Tate Gallery, who were on the side of the Trustees. MacColl was at that stage involved in research into Lane's life for the biography later taken over by Lady Gregory. His proposal to write an article in *The Nineteenth Century* containing a full statement of the reasons why the Trustees would not be morally justified in relinquishing their legal claim to the pictures was recorded in the National Gallery Minutes in January 1917.[53] The article was published in the following month and in March the Trustees, in an effort to strengthen their case, put the pictures on exhibition. This had the effect of drawing attention to the potential loss involved in ignoring the legal status of the pictures.[54]

Lady Gregory had strong allies also and she was not reticent about using them. Augustine Birrell, Chief Secretary of Ireland until 1916 was one, and following her intervention, James Macpherson who became Chief Secretary in 1918, took action on the introduction of a Bill to empower the transfer of the pictures from London to

Dublin. This became the first major political battle on the matter. In August 1919 Macpherson took action on the basis that "there was considerable agitation throughout the whole of Ireland that this course should be adopted."[55]Two previous Chief Secretaries had also favoured the return. In reply, the Trustees were required to provide a detailed memorandum on the affair for the War Cabinet, and this they did.[56] At a further meeting on 24 October, the Chief Secretary for Ireland said that when he came into office "he was approached by what he considered to be a very remarkable deputation, composed of Irishmen of all parties and of all shades of political opinion....who had pressed upon them the necessity of recovering for Ireland what, in their eyes, was a great national asset, bequeathed to their country by a great Irishman."[57] Macpherson said that Hugh Lane's intentions were clear and that the implication was that the pictures "were to be sold rather than be left in London." He quoted affidavits of distinguished people in support of Dublin and a letter signed by "a very remarkable collection of artists." The only issue was the unwitnessed state of the codicil which "in any other country in the world...would be regarded as a perfectly legal and binding document." The Trustees were standing on their technical rights in order to keep the pictures in a country which Sir Hugh Lane regarded as "alien."

The National Gallery case was put by the Director, Charles Holmes. He said they had done everything possible to settle the controversy peacefully, and had even offered to lend the pictures to Dublin Corporation. He admitted that there was a conflict of evidence regarding Hugh Lane's intentions. The Secretary for Scotland agreed that the codicil in Lane's own handwriting was sufficient evidence of his intentions, but the law had prescribed the only means whereby Lane's intentions could safely be judged – i.e. a witnessed signature. There was also concern about the danger of establishing a precedent, and while the Minister for Health indicated that there was no doubt in his mind that Hugh Lane would have preferred the pictures to go to Dublin, if a gallery could be provided for them, (this having been stipulated in the codicil) the outcome of the meeting was negative. The conclusion was that no case had been made which would justify the introduction of a Bill on the lines proposed by the Chief Secretary, and in the view of the Chairman, Lane's intentions were not sufficiently decisive to warrant legislative action. A solution lay in "some equitable arrangement" satisfactory to both the Trustees and Dublin Corporation on a loan for

an agreed period of the whole, or a portion of the pictures. Macpherson was not happy with this and at a meeting with Lady Gregory in October he told her that the Trustees had made their statement and were going to fight.[58] At this meeting, Curzon, Witt, Aitken and MacColl were all identified as the enemy and Macpherson renewed his pledge to continue the battle. At a Conference of Ministers in November he proposed a preamble to a Bill,[59] but the outcome, on the basis of a majority decision was "that it was undesirable to take any steps by Act of Parliament to depart from the intention expressed in the Will of Sir Hugh Lane to leave his Collection of Continental Pictures to the National Gallery in London."

Lady Gregory had lost an important first round battle, but it must have caused some concern to the Trustees that the matter was being fought at this level. Furthermore, the political situation in Ireland was having an influence, and this was a factor that was to reoccur. Two days after the Conference of Ministers meeting, Viscount Long, First Lord of the Admiralty, asked that the decision of the War Cabinet be reconsidered on political grounds. "I greatly fear that if it is definitely decided to have these pictures in England, irritation and annoyance quite out of proportion to the real merits of the case, will be aroused in Ireland, and especially in Dublin, and I am sure my colleagues will agree that at this moment every effort ought to be made to avoid anything of the kind.[60] In the previous month Lord Carson had raised the issue in the House of Lords and Bodkin's role in relation to these political initiatives seems to have been in preparing statements for Lady Gregory to use.[61] His legal experience was useful and at the Public Meeting at the Mansion House in January 1918 he drafted the resolution which called on the Government to take action to restore the pictures to Dublin.[62] However, Lady Gregory was by no means uncritical of his contributions and later in 1918 they had a serious difference of opinion. Bodkin was a member of the Lane Picture Committee, which developed out of the Mansion House meeting, and following a deputation to the Chief Secretary, the Committee decided to write to the National Gallery Trustees proposing that the matter should go for arbitration. Lady Gregory had not been present for the meeting and was outraged that such a proposal should have been considered, on the legitimate grounds that should the arbitration go against them, they could never ask for the pictures again.[63] She came immediately to Dublin and arranged that George Bernard Shaw would be present at a special meeting of the Committee at the School of Art. As Lady Gregory

described it: "We were getting on nicely till Mr. Bodkin appeared, in a thorny mood. He looked black...." Bodkin wanted the pro-arbitration motion to go ahead, but the force of Lady Gregory's argument won the day, with the help of Yeats, and in particular, of Shaw. She cleverly reminded Bodkin that his name had been mentioned as well as hers in the codicil and that she looked to him for help. This form of flattery brought him around to her view, and he finally seemed to be convinced by the arguments. But she continued to be wary of him although she asked him to provide a draft letter to the Prime Minister which was later agreed by the Committee. This was to be used in the event of the failure to secure a Bill.

The matter was now firmly on the political agenda and while Lady Gregory continued her frequent solitary interventions with key figures, pressure points emerged from time to time which brought the matter back into the political arena and produced renewed defensive action from the Trustees. This occurred in 1922 with the political negotiations between Irish representatives and British ministers in London. Michael Collins had been asked to intervene by Lady Gregory.[64] The Director of the National Gallery was informed that steps were being taken to cause the surrender to Dublin of the pictures and Curzon took up the matter with the Secretary of the Cabinet.[65] The issue was raised at a Cabinet committee dealing with Irish affairs in 1922 and reported to the Director. "The Irish Ministers have made a claim that the Lane pictures should be handed over to the Dublin Gallery and this claim will, no doubt, have to be considered in due course by the Cabinet.....Mr. Collins and his colleagues have made a very strong request, apparently almost amounting to a demand, that the Lane pictures shall be handed to the Irish Free State forthwith."[66] A meeting chaired by Sir Hamar Greenwood [67]was to take place that afternoon and the Director was invited to attend, but protested at the short notice for a case to be made. If Curzon could not attend they suggested the meeting should be adjourned. The response of the Gallery was in line with their previous argument – that a revocation of the Will by Act of Parliament would "create a precedent subversive of the elementary principles of English law."[68]However, Holmes also placed responsibility firmly in the hands of the politicians when he said: "On the other hand the Trustees only hold the bequest as trustees for the nation, the real and ultimate beneficiary....if this beneficiary through its representatives – the Houses of Parliament – decided that it is in the general public interest that these pictures should be deposited in Dublin and a free vote of Parliament

recommending this action were communicated to the Board, the Trustees would be relieved of their present liability....and legislation to enable the pictures to leave the country could be incorporated with the Irish Bill." This did not happen, either because the political will did not exist, or because the Irish delegation had other more pressing demands than the Lane pictures. But this relatively neutral position adopted by the National Gallery was rarely in evidence.

Whenever pressure was put on the Trustees by an initiative from Dublin or by politicians, they quickly acted to reinforce their case. Documentation sent to the Government or its departments, from Dublin, was copied to the National Gallery and they prepared their defence. A defence had also been mustered in December 1916 when Lady Gregory wrote to the *Times*,[69] hoping for a sympathetic hearing from the Trustees. Charles Aitken wrote to the *Morning Post*[70] the following week. Aitken was identified by Bodkin as a friend of Lane's and a person of "complete probity" whose recollection of events might nevertheless, Bodkin felt, have been "a little at fault".[71] This related to a conversation which Aitken said he had with Lane towards the end of March 1915, some weeks after the codicil was written, in which Lane indicated that his final decision would depend on how he was treated by the authorities in London and Dublin. The confusion in this instance related to the *Morning Post* letter in which Aitken said that he was sure Lane was "himself undecided" and his intentions "not settled", when he spoke to him in the last few days before he sailed. He believed Lane purposely left the codicil incomplete until he returned from America as he wanted to see whether Dublin or London would first show appreciation for the pictures. Dublin had made no attempt to provide a gallery while in London this was "being actively pursued." In his view, "the moral claim on the part of Dublin is therefore equally non-existent with the legal right". Furthermore, Dublin had got most of his important work apart from the thirty nine, and Lane considered the pictures he had given were neglected. Again in 1918, following a letter from the Lane Pictures Committee putting forward the claim expressed at the Public meeting at the Mansion House, Aitken wrote to the Trustees reiterating that as well as there being no legal claim "there is considerable question whether there is any moral claim either."[72] Lane had called on him about a fortnight before he sailed for America in May 1915 to discuss the question of the exhibition of his pictures and he had expressed pleasure and approval when told "there was a probability of their being

exhibited at Millbank" and also of a permanent Modern Foreign Gallery being provided. Lane explained "in a general sense" that on his return he would decide the final allotment of the pictures by whether the National Gallery or Dublin "gave the more practical proof of its appreciation of them." A donor had "definitely promised" a gallery which would have been built but for the War. Aitken's belief was that Lane prepared and signed the codicil when under the impression that his pictures were not to be exhibited in London and he did not complete the codicil because this then seemed "almost certain". Aiken provided this information so that a reply to the Lane Picture Committee in Dublin could be made by the Trustees, and it was his view that lending the pictures to Dublin would meet any just "moral" claim. He said that the meeting which established the committee was "poorly attended" and it was influenced more by political than by legal or moral considerations. On the latter point, his information seems to have been incorrect. The event was so well attended that Bodkin reports an overflow meeting had to be held in the Oak Room of the Mansion House when the large hall was completely filled, and crowds wanting to attend either meeting had to be turned away because of lack of accommodation.[73]

The dates of Aitken's meetings with Lane have been central to the London case and it is clear that a conflict of evidence is involved here. Bodkin intimated this but provided no further details and it is likely that he was drawing on Aitken's letter to the *Morning Post*. Lady Gregory was also concerned at the implications of the letter.[74] The issue is critical because the theory that Lane had changed his intentions expressed in the codicil is based on this recollected conversation, or Aitken's understanding of it. Aitken also supplied a statutory declaration on the matter which says: "Later on in 1914, when difficulties had arisen in London over the exhibition of the pictures at the National Gallery, he told me that he intended altering his Will in favour of Dublin if his pictures were not to be exhibited in London." [75] More seriously, the summary of Hugh Lane's last wishes included in the National Gallery's Memorandum to Cabinet in 1919 places this important conversation between Aitken and Lane in 1915 instead of 1914. This says: "Hugh Lane also told Mr. Aitken about two months after the execution of the codicil and just before leaving for America that he intended to alter his Will in favour of Dublin."[76] The timing of Lane's intimation that he might alter his Will, and whether this occurred before or after the codicil of 3 February 1915, is

relevant because it is logical before the event but inexplicable afterwards, and it might well be taken as an example of Lane's temperamental and unpredictable nature.

The discrepancy in these dates between primary and secondary sources, was highlighted in an intensive review of the material conducted in 1957 by Denis Mahon who was then a Trustee. He concluded that the visit to Aitken by Lane in 1915 was to discover the precise London situation at that time. It also had the purpose of delivering a warning that the concession he was making to London was temporary and that he would wait to see the results of the negotiations described by Aitken before taking a final step in favour of Dublin. "Hugh Lane took the view that as long as the position was uncertain in both London and Dublin he would prefer that, in the event of his sudden death, the gallery battle between his supporters and their adversaries should be carried on in Dublin rather than London."[77] In Mahon's view, Lane must have felt that what he had been told by Aitken was not sufficient to justify any change because he was back in Dublin a few days later and did not destroy the codicil which he had locked in his desk two months before.

However, the incorrect date which was included in the 1919 memorandum to Cabinet was carried forward in the National Gallery documentation for another political intervention in 1924. This followed from a speech on 14 July by Lord Carson, who had been targeted by Lady Gregory from the start for his support. He gave a lengthy speech in the House of Lords,[78]which had been preceded by resolutions in the *Seanad* and by the Irish Free State Government on the restoration of the pictures to Ireland. In his speech, Carson admitted to hating the whole system of government in "Southern Ireland" but asked the government if legislation was necessary to restore the pictures to Dublin. The Government reply indicated that an impartial tribunal was to be appointed - a Committee of three political figures – J.W.Wilson, G.N.Barnes and J.W.Hills - to report on "whether in their opinion Sir Hugh Lane, when he signed the codicil, thought that he was making a legal disposition, and if so, whether it is proper that, in view of the international character of the matter at issue, the legal defect in the codicil should be remedied by legislation." In the debate which followed, Lord Mayo, who had proposed the Mansion House resolution drafted by Bodkin, welcomed the inquiry which was "the first sympathetic reference we have

had from any Government concerning these pictures." Lord Lansdowne, a former Trustee, and Lord Crawford, a current one, spoke on behalf of the National Gallery.

In his book on Lane, Bodkin provided the terms of reference of the Parliamentary Committee and discussed their report, signed on 28 January 1925 and published in 1926, following a change of government.[79] He had no access to the workings of the Committee, which involved both sides in declarations of their position, and ultimately an appearance to make a verbal case. What is evident is that the National Gallery was given access to documentation made available to the Committee by Dublin, and allowed to draft responses. It is not clear that the same facility was accorded to Dublin. The Colonial Office sent copies of documents received from the Law Agent of Dublin Corporation concerning the motion carried on 25th September 1924. This was an undertaking to provide, within five years of the passing of an Act of Parliament, a suitable Municipal Gallery to house the collection, and at the National Gallery of Ireland until its completion. Should this become impracticable, they were willing that the pictures should become the property of the NGI.[80] Evidence provided by Dublin was given to the Trustees at a meeting with the Committee on 15th October. Additional evidence was provided by George Russell (AE), AW West, Alderman Tom Kelly, John Quinn and Freeman Smith.[81] Curzon's view was that additional evidence had little weight, coming nine years after the event, and this was supported by the Treasury Solicitor.[82] Draft notes of Committee meetings were sent to Curzon, [83] and he was also aware of evidence submitted by the artist, Sarah Cecilia Harrison[84]. She was a supporter of Lane's and a member of Dublin Corporation, but she believed Lane's Will and codicil to be fakes.[85]

Both sides prepared for oral hearings, with the National Gallery using and amending documentation previously produced for the Cabinet Committee in 1919. The case for the Trustees was prepared between Curzon, Holmes, MacColl, Aitken and Witt and presented to the Committee on 15th October 1924.[86] The fight was on all fronts and it included the production of a calculation of the value of the bequest at one seventh of the pictures and estate passed to Dublin.[87] This would seem to be a weak argument based on the notion that the National Gallery deserved the pictures because Dublin had got the bulk of the estate. The issue of compensation to the National Gallery by the Government to the value of the pictures – estimated at £54,000 – was also raised.

MacColl had made a statement which indicated that from Lane's appointment as Director of the National Gallery of Ireland "he wavered in his intentions, and played both sides, encouraging whoever approached him with the prospect of the pictures going one way or another." This view would appear to weaken rather than strengthen the Trustees' position, given the later date of the codicil and following Lane's appointment as Director of the National Gallery of Ireland. For MacColl the main issue was the provision of a gallery for the pictures, but London had not provided either an exhibition or a gallery and did not do so until after Lane's death. When asked by the Committee why Hugh Lane added the codicil, Curzon replied that it was to satisfy his relatives in Dublin. Holmes agreed with this interpretation, which at the very least was a disingenuous response on the part of the National Gallery,[88] given the intimate knowledge Curzon had of the history of the affair.

The Irish case, with additional affidavits, had been presented earlier, on 5th September by Lady Gregory and W.B.Yeats, who had been nominated as representatives of Dublin Corporation before the Parliamentary Committee.[89] Ruth Shine also gave evidence and Lady Gregory had sent three copies of her book on Lane for the Committee members and she expressed herself to be "confident of the result."[90] In fact she was far from confident and on the advice of Lord Glenavy,[91] who coached her on the line to be adopted, Lady Gregory approached the barrister Senator Sam Brown who agreed to help without payment of fees.[92] At the hearing, she felt she had said all she wanted to say and her final hope was for "good news"[93]

She had to wait some time for the outcome. In March 1925, the Trustees of the National Gallery got a confidential copy of the Report and it was approved by them at their Board meeting on 11 March 1925.[94] The Committee had decided by two to one that Lane "in signing the codicil of 3rd February 1915, thought he was making a legal disposition," but, as Bodkin reported, the Committee went on to advise the Government against action to give effect to the codicil.[95] The Trustees felt that the Report was a vindication of their position.[96] Lady Gregory did not hear about the Report until told by Ernest Blythe, the Minister for Finance, at dinner on 8th June, almost three months after the Trustees had heard the outcome.[97] The Irish Government had received a confidential communication from the British Government on 14 May 1925. When Lady Gregory heard formally on 19th June, through Sam

Brown, she became "quite faint and lay on the sofa for a while,"[98] but not for long. She immediately wired to Yeats that she was coming to Dublin at once and would probably go on to London to petition Carson. However she changed her mind on the way to Dublin and decided that the effort now was required in Dublin with the Irish Government rather than in London. Although an ardent Irish nationalist, her instincts still directed her to London rather than Dublin, but the existence of a political power base in Dublin was now becoming significant for her. The report was "unjustifiable" for her because the Committee had gone beyond its terms of reference. In this she and Bodkin were in agreement and Bodkin was critical in particular of what he called the "long, involved, and.....fantastic argument"[99] in the Report which stated that "had (Lane) been spared to witness the growth of the new Gallery at Millbank no doubt could be entertained that he would have destroyed the codicil." Evidence had been given to the Committee on behalf of Sir Joseph Duveen[100] and the Report also raised the issue of a possible breach of faith with the donor of the new rooms at the Tate should the pictures not remain in London. This finding reflects Curzon's evidence to the Committee that there was a possibility of compensation to Duveen who had spent £30,000 for a gallery of continental art on the understanding that the Lane pictures would be hung there. On this, Bodkin later said no convincing evidence was ever produced, and Duveen never referred to it.[101] However, the opening of the extension by the King was postponed in April 1926 when representations were made that offence would be caused to the Irish Free State, "as signifying that the disposal of these pictures had been settled for all time."[102] The ceremony was performed in June 1926 following publication of the Report.

In the same month the Trustees considered one of the findings of the Report concerning the introduction of legislation for extending the power of the National Gallery to lend. The loan solution proposed in this Report reflected that of previous political interventions. However, the Trustees decided it was not advisable to apply for special legislation to amend the Loan Act, but that the principle of a loan of the Lane pictures to Dublin "which had been favourably considered from the first" would not be affected by this decision, although its operation "might be somewhat delayed."[103] What this meant was that the National Gallery would be precluded from lending to Dublin until fifteen years had expired from the date when the pictures came into their possession.[104] Although the Prime Minister was anxious to see a "generous"

gesture towards Dublin[105], the Trustees were determined on maintaining the status quo on lending rather than seek legislative amendment so that a loan could be made within a more reasonable timeframe. Such an initiative at this time would have been a gesture which might have brought a solution to the problem that was to continue for many more years. However, the matter must also be considered in the context of the time, when relations between Britain and Ireland were still strained and when generosity was in short supply on both sides. Frustration was rather more common as indicated by a Minute to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1923: "I must say that I think it a great pity to reopen this question: it was most exhaustively discussed by the late Government. Is there never to be finality on any subject, when the decision is in favour of Great Britain? The minutes of the former discussions stand on record. An invalid bequest to the City of Dublin, now of all moments to be made valid, in order, one supposes to have the collection destroyed by bombs or fire."[106] Two years later the bitterness on the Irish side is evident in the words of the Attorney General, Hugh Kennedy: "I have no hope of our getting the pictures. They would add to our prestige and the British policy, supported by the British Press in Dublin, towards us.....is one of belittlement. The whole thing is miserably mean."[107]

The findings of the Wilson Committee were confirmed following a question to the Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, from J.W.Hills, a member of the Committee, in June 1926.[108] In his answer, the Prime Minister indicated that he had been assured that the Trustees intended to lend to Dublin in due course under the terms of the Loan Act. In fact there had been an attempt at a political solution between the two Governments before the publication of the report. A copy had been sent to President Cosgrave, whose reaction was predictably negative, and following this a proposal was put to the Irish Government that if they were prepared to accept a loan "as a final settlement"[109] the British Government would introduce legislation to enable the Trustees to lend immediately after passage of the Bill into law. Cosgrave rejected this proposal and persisted with the Irish claim, no doubt with advice from Bodkin.[110] He is on record as late as 1955 indicating that he would not agree to a permanent loan and favouring joint ownership between London, Dublin and Belfast.[111] Robert O'Byrne's conclusion that Lady Gregory's obduracy in rejecting a loan was instrumental in protracting the dispute[112] must be seen in the light of these findings. MacColl had proposed to her in 1917 that he would use his influence for a scheme of alternate

exhibition and O'Byrne suggests that had Lady Gregory been willing to compromise at that time the issue would have been solved. However this must be rejected on two grounds. Firstly, MacColl had far less influence with the Trustees than he indicated, and secondly, and more importantly, the National Gallery had no power to lend until fifteen years from the date when the pictures came into their possession. Furthermore, they were unwilling to allow a change in legislation to enable them to lend at this time, or for some considerable time to come.

Cosgrave, while rejecting a loan solution was however, concerned at a weakness in the Irish position which was that no gallery had been provided to house the pictures. This was a condition specified in the codicil and Cosgrave discussed the matter with Bodkin who was also a member of Dublin Corporation's Advisory Committee dealing with the issue. When the matter was raised by the British, the Irish response was that the Civil War had intervened and that it would not have been practicable to provide a gallery for pictures they did not hold. Cosgrave recognised that the building in which the municipal collection was held was not suitable for a permanent gallery, and he proposed that Dublin Corporation should provide such a gallery.[113] At the AGM of the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland, Bodkin welcomed this statement and this began a series of meetings between the Friends and the Corporation and ended in a public inquiry in 1928 on the provision of a modern gallery.[114] Bodkin had conveyed to Cosgrave the Friends' unanimous resolution that the pictures be housed in appropriate accommodation[115] and the two men met to discuss plans for the Gallery. It was to take another five years for the plans to come to fruition, following the proposal of Sarah Purser on the use of Charlemont House, and Bodkin was active in advising Cosgrave on this.[116]

The Irish Government continued to work with their British counterparts on the pictures issue and it seems that there was little agreement between them and Lady Gregory on the tactics to be used. She continued to work in her own way, and in 1929 a conflict emerged over a question in Parliament by a Conservative MP, Patrick Hannon who told Ramsay MacDonald that this was instigated by her. MacDonald was Prime Minister and he indicated that "as far as he was concerned, if he could determine the issue, he would forthwith send the pictures to Dublin."[117] However, he was also a Trustee of the National Gallery and he felt that while an Act overriding

them was possible it was not feasible. Given his position, he was unlikely to be personally or politically interested in such an action. He disapproved of Lady Gregory's method of bringing the matter before Parliament and both Governments were in sympathy on this. For Cosgrave, the trouble was that "Lady Gregory from the best of motives, thinks that every little noise made in connection with the pictures is good business, and I think she is always easier in her mind the more noise that is made."[118] Bodkin advised Cosgrave that Lady Gregory should get a "hint" to go easy on the Lane question[119] and Cosgrave was aware that tactics were required. Change would not come about with individual intervention on an *ad hoc* basis, no matter how well that individual was regarded. He had taken an interest in the question from 1923 but his frustration is evident in 1929 and his sympathies were with his British political counterparts: ""It appears to me that the Government in Great Britain and the Government here are beset with difficulties that are somewhat analogous..." He also recognised that there were people in Ireland who were interested in the politics of the matter rather than in a satisfactory solution. What he wanted was to come to a mutual understanding and appreciation of the difficulties with the Prime Minister so that together they could persuade Lady Gregory and her friends "to exercise discretion in their activities."

The views of Alec Martin were also considered at this time and, with Curzon dead, Witt was identified as the real activist against returning the pictures. Martin's view was that the Trustees might be induced to make a loan to Dublin for an indefinite period, and this would be tantamount to an unconditional surrender of the pictures.[120]Martin, who was a Labour Party supporter and a friend of Ramsay MacDonald, was also critical of his old friend Lady Gregory, for using her endeavours to influence people in an uncoordinated way. Bodkin, who was by now communicating with Cosgrave on the matter[121], was also conscious of the resistance of Witt whom he described with MacColl as "...skilled intriguers, both determined enemies of Ireland and both bitter opponents to our claim for the Lane pictures."[122] However Bodkin was also optimistic that the goodwill generated by the National Gallery loan to the Italian Exhibition in London would assist in creating good feeling in England about returning the pictures.

Bodkin's optimism was premature, and from the point of view of the Trustees, offering a loan under the terms of the fifteen year rule, was to become part of a strategy which had the purpose of taking "the electricity out of the political atmosphere."[123] While this may have had the desired effect in London, it had no such effect in Dublin, where, if anything the issue became more politicised. Bodkin reported Lady Gregory's response to the Wilson report as the publication of the pamphlet "Case for the Return of the Lane Pictures to Dublin."[124] The concept of a loan continued to be unacceptable in Ireland and resolutions and statements of claim continued to be made. The publication of Bodkin's book in January 1932 coincided with a Statement of Claim for the return of the pictures[125]by Dublin Corporation and at the same time plans were under way for the opening of the Municipal Gallery at Charlemont House in the following year. In 1931 President Cosgrave had issued a lengthy statement on the Lane Bequest[126]in which he reported the commissioning of Bodkin to write a full account, amounting to "the fullest possible brief of our case". When the book appeared in January 1932, it was noted at the Dominions Office in London where it was felt likely that it heralded a fresh demand for the pictures.[127] From the perspective of the Trustees of the National Gallery the year 1932 introduced two other new factors. The collection was available on loan from 28th May, and Dublin Corporation had constructed a gallery with special provision for the pictures. "Now Dublin has nothing to lose by agitation, and a generous loan would be better for it than nothing and might unscrupulously be converted into a fait accompli retention" on the part of "such very crooked opponents.....for the Irish are unlikely to desist while there is the least hope of England yielding, whether to a sudden emotion of misplaced sentiment or political wire-pulling...."[128]Bodkin's book was seen to be "not specially convincing" but is included in the chronology of events by the National Gallery. A review of the book in the *Times*[129] which said that "legally and perhaps morally the pictures belong to the National Gallery" nevertheless contended that "sentimentally" they belong to Ireland and ought to be given to Dublin, drew a response from John W.Hills, of the Wilson Committee. Although he had not read Bodkin's book, he believed the reviewer to be "utterly unjust" to England and to the National Gallery.[130]

In July 1932 Ramsay MacDonald approached the Trustees for their views, especially regarding assurances given by them in the past that they would be prepared to lend

some of the pictures to Dublin from time to time. The Trustees confirmed that they were still prepared to lend some of the pictures in accordance with the recommendations of the Wilson Report of 1926. This was as far as they would go and "even this was not reached without some reluctance to part with some of the pictures by some of the Trustees."[131] Although there was now no legal obstacle to lending, the Trustees were not happy about lending and "recent events" in Ireland had not given them confidence "that a loan of the Lane Pictures, if made, would be an entirely wise or safe proceeding!" The pressure was kept up by Dublin and in January 1933 Ramsay MacDonald received a letter from the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alfred Byrne[132] indicating that the opening of the new Municipal Gallery would be a suitable occasion for the restoration of the pictures to Dublin and that the Corporation would be willing to accept a transfer to Dublin of the pictures for an unlimited period, pending legislation. The Prime Minister indicated that there was no change in the position and that the Corporation should approach the Trustees directly for a loan. A draft of this letter had been sent first to the Trustees for their approval, and it would seem that MacDonald was not prepared to take the matter further, in spite of his personal views that the pictures should be in Dublin. The Municipal Gallery opened at Charlemont House on 19 June 1933, without the pictures.

From 1933 to 1938 there was no formal correspondence between Dublin and London on the matter, although references appeared from time to time in the press. In 1937 Yeats announced that the Government had undertaken to press Ireland's demand for the return to Dublin of the pictures.[133] Dublin now had a Municipal Gallery built at a cost of £35,000 and maintained at an annual cost of nearly £5,000. It included a "Lane Room" containing a bust of Lane by Albert Power, a reproduction of the codicil and photographic reproductions of the 39 pictures. What brought the matter to the fore in London was the coincidence of two events. In May 1938 the Eire (Confirmation of Agreements) Bill was debated in the House of Lords and Lord Strabolgi and Lord Marley urged that action should be taken to give effect to the codicil.[134] The reply for the Government indicated awareness of the importance of the issue for Mr. De Valera, who had taken over from Cosgrave six years earlier, and the issue was to be raised with the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs. Privately, Strabolgi was informed that the Government were "very anxious to do as you suggest and are hoping to persuade the Trustees of the National Gallery to adopt the same

point of view.[135] In the *Dáil* on 11 May, de Valera said that "every reasonable effort will be made to secure the return of the Lane pictures." He raised the matter informally at the Dominions Office, saying that he "knew nothing about pictures, and did not know whether these were good or bad ones"[136], but that "artistic circles" in Dublin were very anxious for the return of the pictures and their return would have an excellent effect on opinion in Ireland. He was assured that privately there was "considerable sympathy" that the pictures should go to Dublin. It was hoped to take the matter up but that legislation would be required. The Trustees discussed the issue in June when the Chairman informed the Board that the question of the transfer was being seriously considered at the Dominions Office.[137]Legislation would be required and the opinion of the Attorney General indicated that this could be done.[138] Lord Balniel, Chairman of the Trustees was consulted by the Secretary of State and a suggestion by the Trustee Lord Harlech on the division of the collection between London and Dublin was considered.[139]

The second occurrence at that time was the publication in the *London Mercury and Bookman* in May of an article by D.S.MacColl advocating the restoration of the pictures to Dublin as a gift from the British Government.[140] He had cleared the piece first with the Dominions Office, getting Alec Martin to telephone from Christies.[141] MacColl indicated that he was anxious to help in the discussions then beginning between Irish and British ministers and he realised that some concession on the pictures might be useful as a bargaining counter in the political discussions. While satisfied that Lane's wishes had been carried out, he indicated that he "had always been anxious that the pictures should finish up in Ireland", and he was prepared to play his part in securing "this happy consummation." He had spoken to Kenneth Clark, then Director of the National Gallery, and understood that Clark was "friendly to the idea" although his name could not be mentioned. Witt and Duveen were the remaining opponents of the transfer and he would speak to Witt; he felt Duveen would not "care a damn" now that he had got his own galleries at the Tate. Alec Martin agreed with MacColl's suggestion. What appeared for public consumption in the *London Mercury*, optimistically entitled "A Last Word on the Hugh Lane Affair", showed MacColl in rather bitter mood. He charged Bodkin with "suppression and distortion of facts" in his book which would nevertheless not allow him to be deprived of his "friendship or the wit and fervour of his conversation." The passage of time

had not softened MacColl, who described his old friend Lane, rather unnecessarily, as "more feminine than masculine", with associated characteristics of "fluctuating and fickle." Conceding the pictures to Dublin was appropriate because "the Lane Gift has played its indispensable part in forming a nucleus of modern French painting at Millbank." Subsequent gifts from Courtauld and others had "rendered Lane's pictures less necessary" and they might be ceded, not as of right, but as a gift or an "act of grace" which he would not oppose. The implication of this is that the pictures had achieved what was required of them and were no longer necessary to London. But the tone is not generous: "..there is no arguing with a grievance, especially an Irish grievance..." Bodkin pointed out in the later edition of his book that MacColl was a man who loved argument and he had written to Bodkin in 1948 retracting much of what he had conceded in the *London Mercury* publication.[142] But he was then aged ninety and died later that year.

This did not bring about the desired result and was not "the last word" on the Hugh Lane affair at this time. The Dominions Office saw the value of a gesture to break down the atmosphere of distrust and suspicion in Anglo-Irish relations, and the issue of creating a precedent in relation to the Will no longer applied. Since the Wilson Report there had been some instances of legislation to amend testamentary dispositions, thus removing legal objections to legislation to transfer the pictures.[143] The proposal for joint ownership was put to the Trustees and Lord Balniel reported that this was received with hostility rather than support from them, so that a solution on these lines was not to be forthcoming.[144]

With the intervention of the War, the matter did not emerge again officially until 1947 when de Valera raised it with Lord Rugby, the British representative in Ireland. Bodkin had written to de Valera in February, telling him that MacColl was now in favour of ceding the pictures to Dublin as a token of goodwill.[145] Bodkin subsequently met De Valera, who then sent a copy of Bodkin's book to Rugby. Rugby was not to be convinced of the Irish case however. He wrote to the Chairman of the Trustees in 1948: "The Irish always confidently demand one hundred per cent as a proper settlement for any of their claims. They have much more respect for us when we make a stand. It is distinctly irritating when the issue of the Lane Pictures is raised in an almost hostile spirit with the suggestion that we have no right to them at

all and are withholding Ireland's rightful property from the owner. At the moment it is better for us to keep our own counsel.[146] The time was not judged to be right to re-open the matter, in particular given sensitivities concerning Ireland's neutrality during the War.[147]

However, it was anticipated in London that the new National Art Collections Bill being prepared would again bring strong representations from the Irish Government. This possibility was also discussed by the Trustees, and "the Board expressed strong opposition to yielding the bequest to Ireland."[148] A proposal put forward by the Secretary of State that the six best pictures should be kept, and the remainder given to Dublin Corporation was considered,[149]but rejected on grounds that this would be to admit the moral right of the Corporation to the "dregs" while retaining the "cream" in London. Warnings were issued that if the Government were to act against the wishes of the Trustees, they might well be faced with the resignation of the entire Boards of the National and the Tate Galleries. Joint ownership was again proposed in February when a Treasury memorandum suggested that on moral grounds Dublin had at least an equal claim to the pictures.[150] The Treasury did not want to delay the introduction of the National Art Collections Bill indefinitely, although they also did not want the Trustees to resign as a body.

Following an election in Ireland, John A Costello became Taoiseach and in July 1948 he wrote to the Prime Minister Clement Attlee,[151]seeking to bring the dispute to a "final and friendly settlement". Bodkin was a friend of Costello's and following a meeting with him in London, provided a draft for this letter,[152]which outlined key elements of the Irish case and indicated that accepting a loan would be contrary to public opinion in Ireland. Even joint ownership, which Costello found "in many ways attractive", would present problems, with the necessity for legislation in both Parliaments. His proposal was that the pictures should be given to the Irish nation as a free gift and that they would be returned on loan to British galleries for periods of at least six months in a year. There had been questions in the House of Commons in February and March and these were followed by correspondence in the press in Britain and Ireland. This included a photograph of *Les Parapluies* and a description by Bodkin indicating that this was one of the pictures rejected by the National Gallery.[153] An acrimonious correspondence was conducted between the elderly

MacColl and Sean O'Casey in the *Manchester Guardian*. O'Casey produced a strong appeal to the emotions and he questioned MacColl's friendship with Lane: "He (Lane) did not even mention the name of MacColl in the codicil but the name of 'his friend Tom Bodkin' as the man he wanted to help Lady Gregory."[154] Bodkin, who had given a Hermione Lecture on the Lane pictures in February[155]wrote to the *Times* in April, in response to an article on the controversy, which he felt was the best account that had ever come from an English source. He made the familiar points and drew attention to the many English precedents for "righting an injustice caused by a testamentary document."[156]In relation to Duveen's gift, announced in June 1923, he pointed out that this was described as a "gift to the British nation in thanksgiving for peace", and when it opened three years later, "not one single word was said by anyone at the ceremony about Lane or this 39 pictures." However, this is likely to have been a deliberate omission in view of the highly sensitive nature of the issue at that time. Alec Martin wrote to the *Burlington Magazine* in August, taking issue with an editorial which ascribed "an almost wilful lack of definite intention in Lane, as regards his thirty-nine pictures, on the basis of a rather colourful misreading of his character." His letter strongly supported the Irish claim, and the intervention is unusual because Martin had said very little publicly since the Wilson Report in 1926. He was, of course, in the difficult position of working professionally with Christie's and in this capacity was in regular contact with the National Gallery. In any event, neither the press attention, nor the obvious desire of the British Government to reach an accommodation, could bring about a change, given Costello's unlikely proposal and the attitude of the Trustees. It was decided to postpone the National Arts Collections Bill,[157]which would have meant some readjustment of the legal position of the Lane pictures, and in August, Lord Rugby blamed the current agitation on Bodkin: "These renewed efforts are, I think, due to the presence in Dublin of Professor Thomas Bodkin whose name is kept before the public here by this controversy."[158] Bodkin was mystified to find an enemy in Lord Rugby, having felt he was "fairly sympathetic" to the Irish view.[159]

Bodkin's role had undoubtedly increased with the arrival of John A Costello as Taoiseach. They were in constant communication, and the Lane bequest was frequently discussed. It continued to emerge also in the British and Irish press and in Parliament. When the National Gallery and Tate Gallery Bill came to the House of

Lords for its second reading on 24 November 1953, Lord Moyne spoke in favour of the Irish case and when the Bill next appeared he moved to exclude the Lane pictures from the operation of the Bill. However, the Trustees were informed by Lord Selkirk, the promoter of the Bill that "there was no cause for alarm".[160] Moyne was supported by Lord Pakenham and although his motion was defeated, these two peers, with Bodkin, were to become central to the final phase of the controversy. When the Bill reached the Commons the MP E.L.Mallalieu moved that the pictures should be handed over to the National Gallery of Ireland, and Mallalieu was to maintain his interest in the affair. In 1955, with the issue again on the Irish political agenda, Costello invited Bodkin to write an epilogue to his book on Lane and this was added to the new edition published in 1956. Bodkin had done a broadcast on the anniversary of the sinking of the *Lusitania* and followed this with an interview with Alec Martin, broadcast on Radio Eireann.[161] This was not welcomed by the Trustees. "How tiresome that Alec Martin should have started up again about Lane. I hope the MPs will have forgotten before the next session starts. But, as usual, we must be prepared...."[162]The preparation included recognising that a relatively small number of the pictures were hanging, either at the National Gallery or the Tate, and to counter criticisms, a statement that some of the pictures would be displayed soon was planned.

Pressure was building from Mallalieu, Moyne and Pakenham and the Trustees were on guard. The removal of one of the pictures, Berthe Morisot's *Jour d'Été*, from the Tate by two Irish students drew public attention and this was later returned to the Irish embassy. In September 1956 Pakenham informed Lionel Robbins, Chairman of the Trustees that he and two others had been asked unofficially by Costello to examine the issue again.[163] Bodkin and Moyne were the others involved and to keep the matter on the agenda of the British government, Costello sent a copy of Bodkin's book to Atlee who, in his reply, referred to the matter as "this minor but troublesome irritant. Artists are difficult people."[164] The matter was raised with the Board of the National Gallery and while they produced a statement indicating that it was contrary to public policy to introduce any legislation modifying the terms of the bequest and would oppose "by all means at their disposal any attempt to change the present ownership of the collection"[165], the issue of a loan was one which had to be addressed by them. In November the Duke of Wellington, as a Trustee proposed a division of the collection

between London and Dublin on an alternating loan basis, with the agreement to be signed by the Director and two Trustees on the English side and by Pakenham, Moyne and the Director of the Municipal Gallery on the Irish side. The signatures of the peers were important because "they are as much English as Irish" and this would be "a safeguard against any attempt to keep the pictures in Dublin."[166]Bodkin was not trusted and was actively disliked in London. He was regarded as "the chief agitator" who lost no opportunity to further the Irish case, and who hoped "to go down in history as the 'Deliverer of the Lane pictures'".[167] He was not identified with compromise, and Costello was regarded as incapable of changing a position he had adopted. Yet there were some indications of compromise on the Irish side. Chester Beatty conveyed that Bodkin, and those who thought like him, were not going to achieve their aim of a transfer of the ownership of the pictures, and should accept a loan instead.[168] However, in December Costello, supported by Bodkin was reported to be "most reluctant to envisage any arrangement which would imply recognition on his part that the pictures belonged to the United Kingdom", although "he had not been unimpressed by the arguments in favour of acceptance of the pictures on loan..."[169] However, the following year he conveyed to Moyne that a loan would not gain public support and would be prejudicial to the moral claim.[170] Moyne had agreed to stay in touch with Bodkin on the matter,[171]and Bodkin's influence on the Taoiseach is clear because he had made a statement at the Arts Council in February 1956 "disapproving strongly" a suggestion made by Alec Martin that a permanent loan of the pictures should be made to Ireland.[172]

When the loan issue came up at the December board of the National Gallery, the decision was to do nothing about it.[173] Yet there was concern that the absence of documentation of the English case was embittering Irish public opinion and there was an expectation of further battles to come. In August 1957 the Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan wrote to the Chairman indicating that Pakenham had been to see him and that the ending of the controversy would "afford Her Majesty's Government pleasure".[174] While he was not prepared to introduce a Bill on the question of legal ownership, there was evidence that Pakenham's proposal of a half and half deal over five years might be acceptable to the Irish. The reply indicated that a solution on these terms would not be easy for the Trustees because loans offered in the past had been repulsed. Furthermore the evolution of international art markets would make it

impossible to find adequate substitutes for the pictures, and works of this quality rarely existed outside public galleries.[175] A more realistic interpretation of the response is that the Trustees were afraid the pictures lent might not be returned.[176]At this point, Denis Mahon began a thorough investigation of the documentation on the matter, and while he accepted the thesis of "no change of the legal position" he came to the conclusion that "the Dublin case is a good deal stronger than has ever been openly acknowledged in London; and the paradox is that much evidence for this exists in the National Gallery, and is inaccessible to Dublin."[177]Mahon was applying forensic research abilities to the subject, as well as approaching the evidence from Lane's perspective, something that was not acceptable to some Trustees who felt that this in some way prejudiced what he had to say. He met with considerable resistance because the Trustees saw the new evidence as a challenge to the legal position, which was not Mahon's intention. He was making the case purely from the point of view of establishing the Irish right to a loan on an alternating basis. However, he made the important point that "the Will by which the pictures are legally ours would not have come into existence at all had our predecessors made clear to Lane, when accepting his offer of a loan, all the conditions which attached to that acceptance."[178] Mahon was left with "a decidedly uncomfortable feeling about the circumstances in which our legal title came into existence (not of course about its legality)." Not surprisingly, Mahon received little support from Trustees whose fathers had served before them, and John Witt and Lord Crawford saw little significance in his evidence. However, the Chairman, Lionel Robbins expressed his concern to the Treasury, telling them in 1958 that for six months they had been engaged in "a gigantic inquest into the whole Lane question…on the pros and cons of making some response to Pakenham's suggestion….(and) a few of our number are still unconvinced."[179] He was quite clear that "on any objective assessment of the conflict of evidence, the Irish case has weight, which is not far from equal….with our own." He found the whole affair "immensely worrying and it continues to make me very miserable." It is clear that the Mahon interpretation of the case had an effect on Robbins, although the case for the loan continued to be strongly resisted by the Director and a number of Trustees.[180] Mahon persisted however and went so far as to say that his "assessment of the weight of evidence happens to be …in the order of 90/10 in favour of Dublin".[181]

Negotiations took place between the two sides during 1958. Pakenham was accompanied by Moyne and he made it clear that Bodkin had been closely associated with them since 1956.[182] In fact Bodkin had advised the Taoiseach, Sean Lemass that a loan solution was the best that would be accepted by London.[183] Visits were made to the National Gallery of Ireland to assess conditions there. This was because the need for secrecy about the negotiations meant that Dublin Corporation was not a party to them, and conditions at the Municipal Gallery were not examined until the agreement had been signed. Bodkin was present at a meeting in April 1958 when a draft statement for agreement by the two governments was discussed. The pictures were to be divided and would alternate between London and Dublin every five years for a twenty year period. Each government would refrain from initiating or supporting any campaign intended to overthrow the arrangement, and satisfactory physical conditions were to be ensured. There had been a change of government in Ireland, and the Irish ambassador in London was nominated to act on behalf of the Government, while a committee of the Trustees represented the National Gallery. In September the *Times* reported that talks were going on between the Trustees and a small committee of "influential Irishmen."[184] The Director still voiced his dissent to a loan, which he said was "tantamount …to a gift of half the bequest….a small minority…have been led to believe that Eire has a moral right to the whole bequest…"[185]Negotiations continued however, with minor adjustments on such issues as insurance. One potentially divisive issue concerned the use of the term 'lend' in the agreement. The Trustees wanted this included in statements to be read in both parliaments, while the Irish side wanted the phrase 'will be made available'. Public statements were finally agreed, with 'lend' ultimately acceptable to the Irish side, represented by the Commissioners of Public Works. Bodkin was nominated by the Taoiseach, Sean Lemass, to advise on agreed valuations, with the Director of the National Gallery, for the schedule to accompany the agreement.[186] It was Bodkin's view that the Lane controversy was "ending honourably" after forty four years,[187]a view he would have certainly changed had he been aware of the full details from the London perspective. Later that month he and Philip Hendy discussed the division of the pictures and this was agreed by the Board in October.[188] The agreement was approved by the Treasury on 4 November and formal exchange took place on 6 November at the National Gallery. An announcement was made in the *Dáil* and in Parliament on 12 November 1959. In the House of Lords, Lord Moyne paid tribute to

the National Gallery, and to Pakenham and "expressed admiration of the tireless way in which Professor Bodkin had worked throughout the greater part of his life to give to Dublin the opportunity to enjoy the collection which his old friend Sir Hugh Lane originally formed for the city."[189]

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[1] Lane quoted in Lady Gregory, *Hugh Lane's Life and Achievement*, 50.
[2] NGI TB to Sir Hutchison Poe, February 1931
[3] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 107/8.
[4] TB, *Four Irish Landscape Painters*, xiii.
[5] Lady Gregory, *Hugh Lane*, 220.
[6] Maureen Borland. *D.S.MacColl.* Harpenden: Lennard Publishing, 1995, 199. In *19th Century*, February 1917, 393 MacColl says of Lane: "At no time…was he an Irish patriot so exclusively as Lady Gregory or Mr. Yeats", and in the *London Mercury*, May 1938,13: "He was by no means an ardent Irish patriot."
[7] Frazier, 343.
[8] ibid., 350.
[9] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 189.
[10] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 37.
[11] NGLondon S952.11Lane Bequest 1957, Memorandum to Board on the Lane Problem by Denis Mahon, 10 October 1957. Denis Mahon had been appointed a Trustee that year and in view of the disagreement among the Trustees about the disposition of the pictures, decided to do a thorough investigation of the history of the issue.
[12] NGLondon S952.10 Lane Bequest 1956, Hawes Turner, Keeper & Secretary to Hugh Lane, 15 January 1914.
[13] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 229, indicates that sixteen of the thirty nine works were acceptable but NGLondon records indicate that fifteen were chosen.
[14] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957, Memorandum to Board on Lane Problem, Denis Mahon, 10 October 1957.
[15] D.S.MacColl had earlier advised on the kind of gallery required for Dublin: "a simple carcass-a shell, well lighted, and rain and fire proof" conditions absent in Clonmell House. Lady Gregory, *Hugh Lane*, 100.
[16] NGLondon S952.2 Lane Bequest 1907-14, D.S.MacColl to Curzon, 6 March 1914. (Although the file is dated from 1907 it begins with this, the first paper). The National Gallery of British and Modern Foreign Art, Millbank which later became the Tate Gallery is referred to as the 'Tate' at this point in correspondence, although it was run as part of the National Gallery. The Treasury did not authorise the appointment of a separate director and trustees until 1917. See Minihan, 154-157.
[17] NGLondon S952.2 Lane Bequest 1907-14 Hugh Lane to Collins Baker, 12 November 1914.
[18] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957, Denis Mahon to Lionel Robbins 15 March 1958. He was approached in 1915, the year in which he presented a collection of works by modern British artists to the Luxembourg.
[19] Duveen was first approached in May 1914 but did not definitely undertake to build until 3 November 1916. NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957 Denis Mahon to Lionel Robbins, 15 March 1958.
[20] Borland, 199.

[21] Sir Denis Mahon supports the view that Curzon approached Lane first and says Curzon did not deny MacColl's account of this in the *Nineteenth Century*. Sir Denis says that Curzon annotated a copy of McColl's article borrowed from the London Library, correctly changing the date from July 1913 to August 1913 for the conversation between Lane and himself. Conversation with Sir Denis Mahon, 29 November 2000.
[22] NGLondon S952.9 Lane Bequest 1953-56 W.G.Constable to Lord Crawford, 11 August 1955.
[23] NGLondon S952.2 Lane Bequest 1907-14 Hugh Lane to Hawes Turner, 12 February 1914.
[24] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest Indices 1913-59. Extract from Minutes 24 February 1914. Lady Gregory later counted Ribblesdale among her supporters in the campaign to return the pictures to Ireland. Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 166 passim.
[25] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest Indices 1913-59 Memorandum, Lord Redesdale, undated. Redesdale died in 1916.
[26] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957 Memorandum, Denis Mahon 'The Origins of the Lane Problem, 1913-15', December 1957. Holroyd retired in 1916, with what Mahon described as broken health due to the "electrical atmosphere" of the Boardroom. He died in 1917.
[27] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 3.
[28] NGLondon S952.ll Lane Bequest 1957 Denis Mahon to Sir Thomas Merton, 14 October 1957.
[29] NGLondon S952.2 Lane Bequest 1907-14 Statement of Lord Redesdale, 2 March 1914.
[30] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane,* 137. The collection gathered for Johannesburg included works of Lane's favourite contemporaries, Augustus John, William Orpen and Sargent.
[31] NGLondon S952.2 Lane Bequest 1907-14 Hugh Lane to Hawes Turner, 12 February 1914.
[32] Lady Gregory, *The Journals, 1*, 1.
[33] Lady Gregory, *Hugh Lane*, D.S.MacColl was to have written the biography but following a row with Lady Gregory and W.B.Yeats who challenged MacColl's use of Lane's papers to support the London case, withdrew in favour of art critic Martin Wood. Wood was a friend of Lane's whom TB also knew. (see Ch.1 note 87) Lady Gregory found Wood's work "very painful to read, very unsatisfactory", (*The Journals 1,* 87) and when he became ill and ultimately died, she had the difficult task of retrieving the manuscript from his Executor. See also O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 222-3.
[34] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*; Lady Gregory, *The Journals, 2.*
[35] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 27.
[36] TB, *Hugh Lane.*
[37] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 6.
[38] TB. 'Memories of Hugh Lane'. *Tribute to Hugh Lane.* Cork: Cork University Press, 1961. Bodkin's description of Lane's first job "at the Bond Street Gallery of Martin Colnaghi" here and in his biography of Lane was corrected by Alec Martin who said Lane never went to Colnaghi as a Bond Street gallery. HLMGMA HLG1/10 Alec Martin to Professor Gwynn, 27 January 1961. See also O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 14-16.

[39] Ann Saddlemyer. 'Augusta Gregory and George Yeats: Neighbours and Friendly Rivals'. Lecture *Lady Gregory Millennium Autumn Gathering*, Coole Park, 29 September 2000.
[40] TB, 'Memories of Hugh Lane', 16.
[41] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 80.
[42] Lady Gregory, *Hugh Lane*, 205.
[43] NGLondon, W.G.Constable papers, note of special Board Meeting at which Lord Ribblesdale resigned and Robert Witt was appointed, 25 January 1924. Witt resigned on 9 December 1930.
[44] PRO DO130/87 Lane Bequest pictures, Dominions Office Memorandum, January 1932. An order had been made for delivery of the pictures to the National Gallery where they were being stored. Following this, ten of the pictures were transferred to the Tate and remained there until they were returned to the National Gallery on 23 October 1959. NGLondon S952.13 Lane Bequest 1959.
[45] NGLondon S952.3 Lane Bequest 1914-17 Treasury to National Gallery, 28 May 1917.
[46] NGLondon S952.4 Lane Bequest 1918-22 C.J.Holmes to Lord Curzon, 1 August 1919.
[47] Anne Emberton. 'Keynes and the Degas Sale'. History Today, 46,1, January 1996, 22-28.
[48] *The Times,* 30 March 1948 contained an article on the whole story which described the first publication as "a beautiful volume, reproducing all the pictures and telling the story in the persuasive language of Dr. Thomas Bodkin....brought out for the Government of the Free State...printed in Verona, the plates in Munich, bound in green at Leipzig, and published by the Pegasus Press (Paris) was stated to be as Irish as they make them." The 1956 edition was published by the Arts Council.
[49] HLMGA Ellen Duncan. 'Sir Hugh Lane's French Pictures', pamphlet London 1917.
[50] NGLondon S952.3 Lane Bequest 1914-17 John P.Mellor to Keeper, National Gallery, 24 November 1926, and National Gallery to Lady Gregory, 1 December 1916.
[51] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957, Denis Mahon to John Witt, 25 October 1957.
[52] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 4.
[53] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest Indices 1913-59. Extract from Minutes, 9 January 1917.
[54] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 234.
[55] NGLondon S952.4 Lane Bequest 1918-22 War Cabinet, Committee of Home Affairs meeting at which Chief Secretary for Ireland was present, 6 August 1919
[56] NGLondon S952.4 Lane Bequest 1918-22 Memorandum to Cabinet GT8283 1919
[57] ibid. War Cabinet, Committee of Home Affairs minutes of meeting 24 October 1919.
[58] Lady Gregory, *The Journals* 1, 97.
[59] NGLondon S952.4 Lane Bequest 1918-22 Preamble to Bill, 17 November 1919.
[60] NGLondon S952.4 Lane Bequest 1918-22 Memorandum CP162, 19 November 1919.
[61] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 82, 83.
[62] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 50.
[63] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 27.

[64] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 321, 324, 329.
[65] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest Indices 1913-59. Extract from Minutes, 14 February 1922.
[66] NGLondon S952.4 Lane Bequest 1918-22, R.B.Howorth (Assistant Cabinet Secretary) to C.J.Holmes, 25 January 1922, and notes of conversation with Howorth, same date.
[67] Sir Harmar Greenwood was Chief Secretary for Ireland and he and his wife had taken an interest in the affair at the instigation of Lady Gregory.
[68] NGLondon S952.4 Lane Bequest 1918-22, C.J.Holmes to R.B.Howorth, 26 January 1922.
[69] *The Times*, 6 December 1916.
[70] *Morning Post,* 14 December 1916.
[71] TB, *Hugh Lane,* 47.
[72] NGLondon S952.4 Lane Bequest 1918-22, Charles Aitken, to Trustees, 2 April 1918.
[73] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 49,50.
[74] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 567.
[75] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957, Denis Mahon to John Witt, 11 October 1957.
[76] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957, Denis Mahon to John Witt, 11 October 1957.
[77] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957, Summary of Conclusions 'The Origins of the Lane Problem 1913-15', Denis Mahon.
[78] *Parliamentary Debates*, House of Lords, 14 July 1924, 58, 57. Carson mistakenly referred to 62 pictures instead of 39 and he also mistakenly thought the pictures had been inherited by Lady Gregory.
[79] *Sir Hugh Lane's Pictures: Report of a Committee appointed to consider certain questions relating to thirty-nine pictures bequeathed under the Will of the late Sir Hugh Lane*, London, Stationery Office, 1926.
[80] NGLondon S952.5 Lane Bequest 1924-1925 Colonial Office to National Gallery, 21 October 1924 enclosing Dublin Corporation motion carried 25 September, 1924.
[81] PRO DO 35/10909 Lane Pictures Committee Written Statements. Lady Gregory's evidence, undated.
[82] NGLondon S952.5 Lane Bequest 1924-1925 Curzon to C.J.Holmes, 7 December 1924; A.M.Brown to C.J.Holmes, 9 December 1924.
[83] PRO DO/35/10909 Collins Baker to Committee, 22 October 1924.
[84] PRO DO/35/10908 S.C.Harrison to J.W.Wilson, 17th and 19th July 1924.
[85] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 461, 556. See also O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 226-227 .
[86] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest 1913-1959 Extract from Board Minutes, 14 October 1924. Curzon, Holmes and Witt attended the meeting with the Committee.
[87] NGLondon S952.5 Lane Bequest 1924-1925 Appendix 4 undated, attached to undated memorandum.
[88] PRO DO/35/10909 Note of Lane Pictures Committee meeting, 15 October 1924.
[89] PRO DO/35/10909 Lane Picture Committee Correspondence, Secretary of Committee to J.W.Wilson, 3 September 1924.
[90] PRO DO/35/10909 Lane Picture Committee Correspondence, Lady Gregory to Antrobus, 29 July, 1924.
[91] Lord Glenavy was then Cathaoirleach of the *Seanad*.
[92] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 567.

[93] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1*, 580.
[94] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest 1913-59 Extract from Board Minutes, 11 March 1925.
[95] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 52.
[96] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest Indices 1913-59, Extract from Board Minutes, 11 March 1925.
[97] Lady Gregory, *The Journals 2*, 112.
[98] ibid., 15.
[99] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 53.
[100] PRO DO/35/10909 Freeston to Wilson, 18 November 1924. A.E.Churcher gave evidence on behalf of Duveen.
[101] TB, *Hugh Lane* , 93.
[102] PRO DO/35/10909 Sir Alexander Hardinge to Sir H. Batterbee, 1 September 1937.
[103] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest 1913-59 Extract from Board Minutes, 9 June 1925.
[104] Section 4 *National Gallery (Loan) Act 1883.*
[105] NGLondon S952.6 Lane Bequest 1926-29 Memorandum Lord Crawford, 16 March 1926. Crawford said his colleagues would not be "friendly" towards a special act amending the 15 year clauses.
[106] PRO T218/422 Possession of pictures bequeathed by Sir Hugh Lane, minute to Chancellor of the Exchequer, 31 January 1923.
[107] NA S9984 Lane Pictures Official Government Action 1923/30, H.Kennedy to President Cosgrave 28 May 1925.
[108] *Hansard* 5 July 1926. Question to Prime Minister from Major Hills re action on Report of Committee.
[109] PRO DO130/87 Dominions Office Memorandum quoting L.S.Amery to W.T.Cosgrave, 27 May 1926.
[110] NA S9984/Lane Pictures Official Government Action 1923/30 WTCosgrave to L.S.Amery, 8 June 1926.
[111] NA ARC CE384 Interview with Taoiseach attended by TB and representatives of the Arts Council, 6 January 1955.
[112] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 232.
[113] PRO DO 130/87 Dominions Office, Extract from *Dáil Report*, 2 March 1927, speech of W.T.Cosgrave.
[114] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 65. FNCI report 'Housing of Pictures' includes lengthy resolutions by TB, *Irish Times,* 1 April 1927; FNCI report included proposal by TB to show photographs of the pictures, *Irish Times*, 31 March 1928; FNCI report included TB on environmental conditions for new gallery, *Irish Times,* 25 February 1933.
[115] Brian P. Kennedy, ed. *Art is my Life: a tribute to James White.* Dublin: NGI 1991,17.
[116] NA S2531A W.T.Cosgrave to TB, 17 December 1929; TB to President Cosgrave, 17 December 1929.
[117] NA S9984 Lane Pictures Official Government Action 1923/30, Interview Ramsay MacDonald and Irish High Commissioner in London (T.A.Smiddy), 26.11.1929. In *The Journals 2*, 467, Lady Gregory says that she saw in the *Independent* "that a Mr. Patrick Hannon MP had given notice that he would…ask…if the Lane pictures were to be given back to Ireland!" This implies that she was innocent of the charge of

arranging the question. TB also knew Hannon but there is no evidence that he was involved.
[118] NA S9984 Lane Pictures Official Government Action 1923/30, W.T.Cosgrave to T.A.Smiddy, 29 November 1929.
[119] NA S2531A TB to President Cosgrave, 17 December 1929.
[120] NA S9984 Lane Pictures Official Government Action 1923/30, Memorandum T.A.Smiddy, 17 December 1929.
[121] TCD Bodkin Papers 7003, TB to W.T.Cosgrave, 6 December 1929.
[122] NA S9984 Lane Pictures Official Government Action 1923.30, Bodkin to W.T.Cosgrave, 2 January 1930.
[123] PRO T218/22 Possession of pictures bequeathed by Sir Hugh Lane, L.C.Robbins to A.Johnston, 18 April 1958.
[124] Lady Gregory. *Case for the Return of the Lane Pictures to Dublin.* Dublin: 1926 (pamphlet).
[125] John J. Reynolds, ed. *Statement of Claim for the Return of the 39 Lane Bequest Pictures now at the Tate Gallery, London.* Dublin: Dublin Corporation, 1932. A copy of this, annotated by Bodkin is in archives of NGI. TB disliked Reynolds, the Curator of the Municipal Gallery and resented that Reynolds did not mention his book in the publication. NGI TB to J.J.Reynolds, 5 July 1933.
[126] News report that the *Dáil* had passed a Supplementary Estimate of £300 for the production of TB's book, *Irish Press,* 11 December 1931.
[127] PRO DO130/87 Dominions Office Memorandum, The Lane Bequest 20679/3, January 1932.
[128] NGLondon S952 Lane Bequest 1932-3 'Blackwood's Memorandum', 31 January 1933.
[129] *The Times*, 6 January 1932.
[130] John W. Hills, letter to the editor, *The Times,* 7 January 1932.
[131] NGLondon S952 Lane Bequest 1932-3 Lee of Farnham to H.G.Vincent, 29 July 1932.
[132] NGLondon S952 Lane Bequest 1932-3 Alfred Byrne and G.J.Sherlock to R. MacDonald, 17 January 1933; Dublin City Archives 226 C005. The letter had been submitted to the General Purposes Committee of Dublin Corporation for approval on 10 January 1933.
[133] *Irish Independent*, 19 August 1937.
[134] PRO DO130/87 Memorandum, The Lane Pictures, July 1938.
[135] PRO DO35/8993 Lord de la Warr to Lord Strabolgi, 20 May 1938.
[136] PRO DO35/899/3 Memorandum, Sir Edward Harding, 19 May 1938.
[137] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest Indices 1913-59 Extracts from Minutes, 14 June 1938.
[138] PRO DO35/899.3 Legislation in connection with Lane Bequest, Memorandum Sir D.Somervell, 27 June 1938; Sir D.Somervell to Lord Stanley, 27 June 1938.
[139] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest Indices 1913-59 Extract from Minutes, 14 June 1938.
[140] D.S.MacColl. 'A Last Word on the Hugh Lane Affair'. *London Mercury and Bookman,* 21 May 1938. Ten years later, MacColl wrote to the Trustees indicating that a condition for such a gift was a union of North and South. NGLondon S952.8 D.S.MacColl to Lord Crawford, 6 April 1948.
[141] PRO DO35/899/3 Memorandum, R.A. Scott-James, Lane Bequest Pictures, 13 January 1938.

[142] TB, *Hugh Lane* 79,80.
[143] PRO DO35/899/3 Memorandum, The Lane Pictures, July 1938. The Iveagh Bequest was one example of a precedent. The first Earl of Iveagh, who died in 1927, bequeathed his pictures to the nation but 23 of the pictures were specified in a schedule witnessed by only one person, making the Will invalid. These became the property of his son, who agreed to forego his rights and a Bill was introduced to legalise the schedule and transfer the pictures to the nation. PRO T218/421 Memorandum, The Lane Pictures, 19 February 1948.
[144] PRO D035/899/3 Memorandum, Suggestion of Joint Ownership, 4 February 1939.
[145] TCD Bodkin Papers 7003, TB to de Valera, 12 February 1947.
[146] PRO DO130/98 UK Representative to Eire, Lord Rugby to Lord Jowitt, 8 July 1948 .
[147] PRO T218/421 J.R.A.Bottomley to H.A.Copeman, 14 August 1947.
[148] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest Indices 1913-59, Extract from Minutes, 11December 1947.
[149] PRO T2l8/421 Memorandum Lane Pictures, 10 December 1947.
[150] PRO T218/421 Memorandum The Lane Pictures, 19 February 1948.
[151] PRO T218/421 J.A.Costello to Clement R. Attlee, 26 July 1948.
[152] TCD Bodkin papers 7003 TB to J.A.Costello, 22 June 1948.
[153] *Evening Herald,* 3 March 1948.
[154] *Manchester Guardian,* 12 April 1948.
[155] 'An Irishman's Diary', *Irish Times,* 11 February 1948. This was 'Hugh Lane and the Municipal Gallery of Dublin', the first lecture in the Hermione series 'The Fine Arts in Ireland. A Retrospect of forty years.'
[156] TB, letter to the editor, *The Times,* 3 April 1948. This was in response to a special article 'The Thirty-nine Pictures – Sir Hugh Lane's Disputed Bequest-Claims of London and Dublin', *The Times*, 30 March 1948.
[157] PRO DO130/98 UK Representative to Eire, Sir Eric Machtig to Lord Rugby, 19 March 1948. The matter was considered at Cabinet on 11 March 1948.
[158] PRO DO130/97 Lord Rugby to Sir Eric Machtig, 13 August 1948.
[159] TB, *Hugh Lane*, 86.
[160] NGLondon S952.1 Lane Bequest Indices 1913-59 Extract from Minutes, 8 December 1953.
[161] NGLondon S952.9 Lane Bequest 1953-56 Text of Broadcast discussion from Radio Eireann, 30 July 1955.
[162] NGLondon S952.9 Lane Bequest 1953-56,Lord Crawford to Sir Philip Hendy, 2 August 1955.
[163] NGLondon S952.9 Lane Bequest 1953-56, Lord Pakenham to Lionel C. Robbins, 19 September 1956.
[164] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/215-317 Clement Atlee to John A Costello, (copy) 25 June 1956.
[165] NGLondon S952.9 Lane Bequest 1953-56, Resolution and Reasoned Statement concerning the Lane Bequest, 11 October 1956.
[166] NGLondon S952.9 Lane Bequest 1953-56, Memorandum by the Duke of Wellington, 22 November 1956.
[167] PRO T218/421 Memorandum, L.B.Walsh-Atkins to F.A.K.Harrison, 11 August 1955.
[168] PRO T2118/421 Note LBW-A, 2 August 1955.
[169] PRO T2l8/421 Alec Clutterbuck to Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, 2 December 1955.

[170] TCD Bodkin Papers, 7003 J.A. Costello to Lord Moyne, 19 July 1956.
[171] TCD Bodkin Papers, 7003 Lord Moyne, to J.A.Costello, 3 July 1956.
[172] NA ARC CE 384 Minutes of discussion at Arts Council, 16 February 1956, item 1.
[173] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957, Sir Philip Hendy to Sir Alexander Johnston, 7 January 1957.
[174] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957 Harold MacMillan to Lionel Robbins, 7 August 1957.
[175] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957 Lionel Robbins to Harold MacMillan, 13 August 1957.
[176] PRO TS218/422 Possession of pictures bequeathed by Sir Hugh Lane, Note in file with draft reply to Mallalieu, 10 May 1946.
[177] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957 Denis Mahon to Lionel Robbins, 29 August 1957.
[178] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957 Denis Mahon to Sir Thomas Merton, 14 October 1957.
[179] PRO T218/422 Possession of pictures bequeathed by Sir Hugh Lane, Lionel Robbins to Sir Alexander Johnston, 18 April 1958.
[180] Trustees who ultimately put their dissent from an alternating loan on the record were Lord Bracken, Lord Crawford and Henry Moore. The Director, Sir Philip Hendy, was also against a loan.
[181] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957 Summary of Conclusions based on data set out in Memorandum 'The Origins of the Lane Problem 1913-15', Denis Mahon, December 1957.
[182] NGLondon S952.11 Lane Bequest 1957, Lord Pakenham to Lionel C. Robbins, 27 September 1957.
[183] NA 1155/1/4/31TB, The Reluctant Exile, ms undated, 5.
[184] *The Times,* 30 September 1958.
[185] NGLondon S952.12 Lane Bequest, *Director's report*, 9 October 1958.
[186] NGLondon S952.12 Lane Bequest, TB to Sir Philip Hendy, 23 September 1959; Schedule of Agreement valued the pictures at £847,500.
[187] TCD Bodkin Papers 7003, TB to Sean Lemass, 2 September 1959.
[188] NGLondon S952.13 Lane Bequest, Minutes of Board, 8 October 1959.
[189] Report of House of Lords announcement of Lane pictures agreement, 12 November 1959.

8 THE RELUCTANT EXILE RETURNS TO SHAPE CULTURAL POLICY

Bodkin's departure from Dublin in 1935 might have been anticipated on a number of grounds. Career and public life were dispiriting for him, to say the least, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and he must have needed all the consolation which for him, love of art could provide:" we need (art) ....to purify our rare joys and blunt the edges of our frequent sorrows."[1] Hopes were receding, if not diminished completely, for the establishment of a Ministry of Fine Arts and an appointment in that department, and he was constrained in what he could do or say or publish while employed at the National Gallery. There he was also subjected to the "niggling inquisitions of the back-room boys of the Irish civil service who queried every single item of his travelling expenses" and made him subject to the "increasingly maddening shackles of petty civil service restrictions."[2] With travel so very much part of his job, this was increasingly problematic. Escape, in the form of the job as Irish High Commissioner in London, was no longer possible from December 1928, and the prospects of another job must have seemed dim.

To make matters worse, family life continued to be less than ideal. In 1930 another daughter was born to the Bodkins, adding to the four who arrived within the first five years of marriage. A very young family and an income perceived to be inadequate could strain the best of relationships, and the Bodkins were no exception. Added to this were Aileen's yearnings for London and a life that might have been, and Bodkin's frequent absences on National Gallery business. Financial problems seem to have been continuous, and had long been the source of tension between Bodkin and his family, including his mother: "My own darling Tom, You ought to know that I would do anything I could for you and it frets me terribly the small naggings about money no matter how little or how much you ever got. You are a son to be proud of and I am only sorry we have not more to give you. Forget all the display and come down and see your fretted loving old Mother, Pidgie.[3] However Bodkin's relations with his parents were generally warm and he corresponded with them frequently, addressing his mother as "my dearest Lady" and in later years, his father as "my very dear Judge." Mathias admired his son's work, loved his grandchildren, and in 1929

assured his son: "you are constantly in my thoughts and hopes and prayers,[4] and "that hundred pounds is available whenever you want it. I mean this."

However, loving father that he was, Mathias could be of only limited financial support for his son, and a further difficulty was that Aileen's inheritance was by no means as spectacular as might have been anticipated. Furthermore, her husband's involvement in the Cox family trust from the beginning of their married life was the cause of considerable acrimony between Aileen and her two sisters. Geraldine and Dorothy Cox were active in the trust on their own behalf and deeply resented Bodkin's role in his wife's affairs.[5] Aileen's income from the Cox trust amounted to around £350 per annum in 1918[6] and £250 by 1934[7]and although the Bodkins operated a joint account, Bodkin alone drew cheques on this. He considered that his salary of £500 from two part-time jobs, including the directorship of the National Gallery, was inadequate but his position placed the Bodkins firmly in the Dublin establishment with associated social obligations. This included dinner parties with legal and arts friends, including Lennox and Dolly Robinson and the MacNeills, as well as more masculine "club" dining and bridge-playing which suited Bodkin well. However, his close male friendships with James Stephens and Harry Clarke seem to have ended suddenly in 1928.[8] On Stephens return to Dublin from London, where he had settled, Bodkin found him "withdrawn, abstracted and in a strange way artificial".[9] He wrote a mock epitaph (undated) which shows that their friendship was at an end:

Here lies James Stephens
Who never lied before,
But who now condescends
To count among his friends
A horde who cannot quote
A line he wrote
What more
Can there be said
To prove James Stephens dead?[10]

There is no evidence for what caused the rift but Bodkin had an exceptional ability to form intense and demanding male friendships which, perhaps because of their nature had the capacity to end dramatically and finally. The environment in which these friendships were expressed tended to be the male club, where sporting activities were limited to cards and snooker, but the real purpose was first rate talk.[11] Wit and repartee were a central part of social enjoyment for Bodkin and his liking for the cut and thrust of student debating was carried forward to his adult life.

Arnold Bennett had remarked in 1919 on the mystery of how Irish people "cut the dash" they did, and there is no doubt that Bodkin felt the need to project an image of a lifestyle well beyond his financial means. In fact, an important element of the attraction to the High Commission position in London might well have been the financial reward involved. When, in 1928, Hazel Lavery tried to use her influence on behalf of Bodkin, the salary may have been an important inducement. Hazel had also approached their mutual friend, Arnold Bennett, to do what he could "to help the cause" of Bodkin's appointment.[12] Bennett thought the salary for the job was £1,500 and he told Hazel that Bodkin was unlikely to accept it unless the salary was raised to £3,000. Of course all of this came to nothing but it indicates that Bennett had a view of Bodkin's finances which was unrealistic to say the least. This was no doubt encouraged by such gestures by Bodkin as entertaining Bennett and his wife to lunch at the Ritz on one of those rare occasions on which Aileen accompanied Bodkin to London.[13]

Following the birth of his fifth daughter in 1930 Bodkin's domestic life was totally among women, and this cannot have been easy, given his preference for male company. At least in Upper Mount Street he had had his father and his brother Mattie, who later became a Jesuit priest, to balance the household of mother and four sisters. Soon after Bodkin's marriage two of his sisters, Norah and Rose became Carmelite nuns. Rose was particularly close to Bodkin, sharing his sense of humour and ability with doggerel verse, although she felt herself to be an "ignoramus" on art matters,[14]compared with her brother whose artistic appreciation was a very special gift from God.[15] His elder sister Margaret had already married a "gentleman farmer" in Co. Kildare and the youngest girl, Emma, became one of the first women to qualify as a Chartered Accountant in Ireland.[16] Mathias Bodkin's family was competent,

talented, self-assured and opinionated, and relations between them continued to be affectionate ("it was a real pleasure to have you and hug you when we last met...")[17] but often stormy and outspoken. Family life for Bodkin and his wife at Wilton Terrace was very different, although the house was run in a way that separated Aileen and nursery activities from Bodkin and his work. Those evenings spent at home were in his study when a typist came to the house to deal with his private work – an expense that added to the growing financial burden. A certain standard of living had to be maintained and both Bodkin and his wife had the kind of expectations that went beyond those of many others of their class, living at that time and place. Aileen had wishful memories of the domestic peace and calm of her London life, as well as the relative grandeur of her Grandmother Mooney's well-staffed establishment in Killiney. And while the elder Bodkins' house at Upper Mount Street was not a mansion, and Mathias Bodkin was not a wealthy man, Arabella ran her home with well organised domestic help. Her daughter-in-law, on the contrary, was not domesticated, and although she took cookery lessons, her "attempts to put them into practice were not encouragingly received, either above or below stairs."[18] Domestic help, including a nurse for the children, was considered a necessity for upper middle class families like the Bodkins. However, paying for this was another pressure which caused difficulties for Bodkin, and a considerable amount of domestic instability existed in the household until 1927 when a young girl of fourteen, Hannah (Annie) McMahon, came as a maid to live with the Bodkins and stayed for more than forty years.

It is also clear that relations between Bodkin's mother and his wife which began on such a frosty note in 1917, did not improve as time went by, although in 1926 Mathias reported optimistically to his son that the two women had "grown to like each other better and better."[19] However, there was an impediment to be overcome in the relationship between Aileen and her husband's family and this cast a dark shadow between them. This concerned Joseph Richard Cox[20], Aileen's father, who, like Mathias Bodkin had been an MP for the National party and whom she assumed had died when she was a child, until told some years after her marriage that he was alive.[21] In fact by 1933 he was being maintained, with one third of the costs coming out of her trust fund, at St. John of Gods hospital in Dublin. He had been admitted there as an alcoholic for periods in 1905 and there he remained from November 1905 until his

death in January 1934, outliving both Arabella and Mathias Bodkin.[22] Although Bodkin visited his father-in-law once at the hospital[23] Aileen never knew him or of his whereabouts until "well on in married life."[24] News of her father's death was given to her by a firm of solicitors while her husband was abroad and she was driven to the hospital "to take a last farewell of a handsome bearded old man, who meant absolutely nothing to me."[25] Discovery of the existence of her father finally clarified the reason for the negative reaction she sensed from the Bodkins, and from her mother-in-law in particular. Her husband's attitude indicates the inequality that existed in their relationship, even if this could be judged as misguided paternalism on his part. Her sisters may well have agreed with Bodkin that the truth of the existence of her father should have been kept from Aileen, and it seems strange that when she finally knew the truth she never insisted on visiting him. In view of what her brother-in-law, Mattie described as "her pronounced 'feminist' views" which he found to be "not surprising with her background and history"[26] it seems inevitable that unhappiness should have followed from the missed opportunity to know her father, and with it the chance for domestic harmony. The absence of her father may have had an effect on her choice of an older man for a husband and may have played a part in the Bodkins' troubled relationship, particularly as time went by and Aileen became more aware of the relative constraints of her life compared with Bodkin's. What is clear is that there was little peace between them and Bodkin frequently asked for advice from his brother on this and other matters.[27] For Mattie, the problem between them was that Aileen had been brought up in a style beyond Bodkin's means and he saw this as the source of the original difficulty. But, snobbery and fear of disgrace must also have been elements for the Bodkins, and the effect was the erosion of Aileen's self confidence from the earliest days of her marriage. She was an educated modern woman married to a man who admitted to being "bound fast in ideas of great antiquity."[28] For Aileen, marriage was becoming something of a prison, and the models of her independent grandmother Mooney and her own financially secure, and virtually single mother, were never far from her mind. Furthermore, she had every reason to believe that the existence of her father had been kept from her to avoid being a source embarrassment for her husband and his family.

The Mooney/Cox fortune failed to materialise or to be sufficient to ease the financial difficulties of the Bodkins. Another economic drain, and a source of contention, but

one that had to be imperative for Bodkin, was his collecting of art works, and the bulk of his collecting was done before his appointment to the National Gallery in 1927.[29] His 'finds' were piled up in stacks all over the house and his wife came to the point "of regarding pictures merely as objects on the upper edge of which dust collects."[30] Nor surprisingly, Aileen had little confidence in her own views on art, finding a water-colour which Arnold Bennett gave to Bodkin "a rather lovely little thing...though I know I wouldn't really know.[31]The urge to collect may have been inhibited by Bodkin's financial situation and his position at the National Gallery, but Bodkin was "always picking up some picture or other."[32]Arnold Bennett told him: You do NOT have luck in your acquisitions. You merely get them by the exercise of knowledge and good scent.[33] However, on appointment to the National Gallery he had "imposed a strict self-denying ordinance on himself"[34] in relation to his own collecting, although he had clearly kept open his right to do so with his Board and the Department of Education from his earliest days at the National Gallery. In view of his passion to collect, such self-denial was not easy and he continued to acquire contemporary works including drawings by Augustus John. He acquired "a couple of John's" at the sale following the death of Lady Gregory in 1932, although he regarded them, perhaps disingenuously, as "by no means outstanding things."[35] He also acquired a number of works for the National Gallery at this sale. Another source of personal expenditure was the maintenance of his collection and Bodkin used the firm of Horace Buttery in London to clean some of his own pictures as well as those of the National Gallery.[36]

With expenditure priorities clearly established by Bodkin, some other family needs got less attention and some of these were more significant than others for family harmony. The Bodkins has no car and this meant that for Aileen, the pleasures of Killiney beach she experienced as a child could not be enjoyed with her five young daughters, even though Mathias made his car available to them occasionally. However, her husband had no interest in such trips, having spent his own childhood holidays on "the dreary stony beach at Bray."[37] But, a much more significant source of strife related to the education of the four elder Bodkin daughters who were enrolled at the National School at Haddington Road. In view of her own privileged education this was not at all what Aileen wanted for them and her parting from Mary, her eldest child, on her first day at school was a bitter one. The tears shed by Aileen were

naturally believed by the nun in charge to be normal mother and child parting on such emotional occasions. However, for Aileen they were "nothing of the kind, but, largely, her doubtless excellent self, so different from the nuns I had been used to, and the then squalid school building (since, I believe, much improved)" of the "sordid little day school."[38] What offended her even more was that the other pupils came from a different class to her own, and given such views, it is not surprising that these children were not welcome at Wilton Terrace.[39] With her own income under the "complete control" of her husband, there was no provision for educating her children in a private school as she had been herself. While not domestically inclined, Aileen had a strong interest in education. She was widely read, taught her children to read and prepared them for Holy Communion at home with the help of Helen Eden's rhymed life of Christ for children.[40] However, socially the young Bodkin children had the worst of both worlds. They were unable to make lasting friendships at school and they had a troubled mother and a distant father who was a tyrannical presence at home. The freedom of the fictional world of Caper described by Bodkin in his book for children was a far cry from the real world experienced by his own children. Small wonder then that visits to the grandparents' house in Upper Mount Street were occasions of some wildness and celebration.[41] This was tolerated by the elder Bodkins because the extended family was well aware of the repressed regime that existed at home particularly when Bodkin was present. This did not begin out of a desire to be cruel on the part of Bodkin: "He developed it originally as a means of dodging out of family responsibilities...and he started acting the heavy father....painted himself into a corner....and I think he regretted it....it was very sad from that point of view."[42] It was easier for the children to adopt the view that Bodkin had not been a father so much as a distant public figure and this helped them to cope with his attitude to the family. His sister, Rose, was particularly upset at the difficulties being experienced by the Bodkins and shared with her. She wrote to her brother: "You are right in saying she (Aileen) is good, the things that tantalize are only really on the surface. I'd love you not to let yourself be so unhappy about them. Deep down there is solid worth, clouds pass and waves calm down, the sky, the depths are not affected by them. Oh how I wish! How often I have wished that two such good people really didn't make each other and themselves unhappy when they have so much to make them happy that others must go without."[43]

The circumstances which made life difficult for Bodkin were coming to a head by 1931 and his working life was a constant source of frustration. There were some glimpses of happiness and success however. In November of that year the National Gallery put on show one of Bodkin's purchases which pleased him most, and one he regarded as his 'greatest bargain'. This was Pietro Perugino's *Pietà*, bought at Christies in June.[44] The purchase was made possible because of the recession in Britain at the time, and the Board was pleased. Bodkin told Alec Martin: "you would imagine from the pleasure and pride of some of them that they had painted the thing themselves."[45] Two years later, purchasing policy reflected the stringent economic times and Bodkin reported that they seldom bought anything that was not of outstanding importance or of national interest. A change of government in 1932 had removed Bodkin's ally, President Cosgrave and introduced a *Fianna Fáil* Government with which Bodkin had little sympathy. However, even the presence of an ally in government had been insufficient to improve conditions at the Gallery or to assist Bodkin through the bureaucratic maze. An atmosphere of suspicion prevailed and in these circumstances it was difficult to see how progress could be made in two major areas of concern to Bodkin. These were an extension to house the growing collection, and the reorganisation of the Gallery administration. The latter was a euphemism for a full time directorship, which might have gone some way towards easing Bodkin's financial difficulties, and more staff for the Gallery which would have eased the administrative burden. Bodkin was attempting to modernise the Gallery at a time when it was not economically realistic or politically popular. The economic war with Britain was having a depressing effect on Irish life, and times were difficult. At the social and cultural levels, the inward-looking ethos which was to prevail for decades, brought about an isolationist attitude which was not conducive to improving conditions in the cultural institutions.

Lack of enthusiasm for increased expenditure on the National Gallery might have been anticipated. In fact the vote of the Gallery was under scrutiny by the Government in 1931 with a view of seeing if economies could be introduced.[46]Far from getting approval for more expenditure, Bodkin needed ammunition to protect the existing vote of funds, and his first report on the organisation of the Gallery was submitted by him to the Board in October 1931.[47] To make his case, Bodkin had sent

a circular letter to galleries such as the National Gallery in London, the Brera, the Stockholm Museum of Fine Art, and the Fine Art Institute in Boston, with a questionnaire on issues including their size, financial and staff resources, salaries and lecture provision. Not surprisingly, his research indicated that the administration costs of the National Gallery were extremely low compared with other similar galleries abroad.[48] His approach indicated his belief that providing this comparative information would support his argument, but it is unlikely that any case he could make would have had the desired results given the economic stringency of the time. Bodkin, with a deputation from the Board, met the President and the Minister for Education on 4 December 1931. In an hour-long meeting they proposed a number of administrative changes, including the appointment of a full-time Director and other support staff and the provision of a lecture budget. But in spite of the eloquent plea on behalf of the Gallery, the deputation was informed that there was no prospect of increasing expenditure and that the Gallery grant might have to be curtailed, as in other subsidised institutions. The President urged that it might be better to withdraw the request than to let it go to the Ministry of Finance, where it certainly would not succeed. The head of government was using the almost mythological power of this ministry to shift political responsibility for an unpopular decision. A change of Government in 1932 did not bring any better news for Bodkin or the Gallery,[49] and a request to meet the Minister for Education in 1933 was refused on grounds that any extra financial expenditure was "out of the question."[50] Another request for a meeting later in the year was met with a refusal on grounds that "the circumstances are not such as to alter the decision conveyed to you already in...April 1933."[51] The wisdom of including this internal letter in the published Director's Report for the year must be questioned and it indicates the level of desperation to which Bodkin was now driven. The Department of Finance still resisted any attempt to increase expenditure to improve conditions at the Gallery and insisted that the salary of the Director was comparable to that of the Director of the National Gallery in London.[52] A deputation was received unwillingly by the Minister for Education in July 1934 and was given a "patient hearing", [53]but this time the Ministry of Finance had produced their own figures to indicate that conditions at the Gallery were in line with other institutions abroad. However, now there was a calculated insult to Bodkin when it was indicated that his other duties at the Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests were "comparatively slight", thus allowing him more time to devote to the Gallery.

The Minister had been "most gravely misinformed" on the matter, said Bodkin, who considered himself overworked in both positions. The record of communications with the Departments of Education and Finance in the 1930s is one of barely concealed animosity towards Bodkin. A request for special leave to lecture abroad was denied, although Bodkin pointed out that James Stephens had been given leave to lecture in the United States on literary matters.[54]

Bodkin had drawn attention to the need for an extension to the Gallery building every year from 1929,[55] but not surprisingly, no progress was being made on this issue either. In view of the enlargement of the collection this was a priority for Bodkin, with the walls of the existing galleries overcrowded and re-hanging continually needed to show new acquisitions. This was "detrimental to the pictures" Bodkin felt, and "might result in grave damage to some of the earlier masterpieces."[56] He acquired "three splendid pictures"[57] by Sisley, Delacroix and Forain in 1934 with the help of the Lane Fund, following years in which he had been striving "to strike a modern note". However, the only expenditure finally sanctioned in relation to storage was for the provision of screens for the basement on which pictures could be arranged so as to prevent deterioration. Bodkin's personal humiliation is recorded in his Report for 1934 in which he detailed the response to his attempts to bring about change at the National Gallery. He submitted his resignation at a special meeting of the Board on 14 December. In this he described the severing of his relations with the Gallery as "a bitter experience." He regarded himself as going reluctantly into exile, although he had secured the position of Professor of the History of Fine Arts and Director of the Barber Institute at the University of Birmingham. There he hoped "to use such talent as I may have to better advantage than I could ever have done under existing circumstances in the National Gallery of Ireland." He wrote to the Chief Justice that he felt sure his resignation would "fortify the Board's claim for a reasonable establishment for the Gallery" and that if this were so, "the wrench of leaving Ireland will be substantially mitigated for me."[58]

His analysis was accurate and even his Board, which accepted his resignation "with profound regret" must have realised that no concessions would be granted to the Gallery while he remained as Director. He wrote to Alec Martin the day after his resignation: "I heard last night that the Minister for Education is prepared to

recommend a salary and bonus for the incoming Director...to make his post a whole-time office, which favours if granted to me would have kept me fixed, happy and useful in my native country till the end of my days.....if my resignation has really produced this happy result I have done something for the cause of art in Ireland by going into exile."[59] There can be no doubt that part of the responsibility for 'favours' not being granted to him must lie with his own difficult personality. The economic depression was an important factor in the lack of progress, as was the isolationist cultural climate, but Bodkin kept up a constant attack on the Department of Finance on comparatively trivial issues instead of reserving his energies for the bigger causes. He was also prepared to challenge at the highest political level and in May 1933 he wrote: "things are very difficult here at present and the situation may be a little complicated by the fact that I recently advised the Board not to lend our Tura to Ferrara though the President expressed a strong wish that we should do so."[60] It seems that he was prepared to allow his personal dislike for President de Valera, and his lack of sympathy for the *Fianna Fáil* government, to influence his professional judgement. This cannot have pleased his own Department and his relations with them were strained, to say the least, and at times were barely civil. On one occasion it was indicated to Bodkin by his Department, that civil servants as they grew older tended to develop exaggerated ideas of their prestige and usefulness. Excusing his facetiousness but not his bitterness, he remarked: "while I fear that I may be developing this tendency myself, I recognise that every possible effort has to be made to disabuse me of any such notions. "[61] His departure from the National Gallery was inevitable.

Leaving Ireland was by no means the end of his involvement in Irish cultural affairs, and while he was very active at the Barber Institute, his physical and spiritual connection with the country remained strong. His work in Birmingham involved developing a collection endowed by Sir Henry Barber, a rich industrialist and his wife, who stipulated that works purchased should be of the standard required by the National Gallery and the Wallace Collection.[62] With sufficient resources available to fulfil this ambition, Bodkin was in a very fortunate position, but first he became central to decision-making on every aspect of the work of building the new Institute. Although the architect, Robert Atkinson had been chosen when Bodkin began at the University on 1 March 1935[63] the partnership between them was a very good one.

This could well not have been the case because within a few weeks of his appointment, and before he took up his duties, Bodkin wrote a long letter to Atkinson, giving both positive and negative views of the plans.[64] He proposed several revision of the scheme, in particular on lighting the galleries, using as a model the new rooms at the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, (the Courtauld Galleries). Fortunately, his ideas were accepted by Atkinson,[65]who had no previous experience of gallery design. The two men travelled together to look at contemporary examples of gallery architecture in Holland, Belgium Germany and France, and some of the ideas were incorporated in the Birmingham building. Bodkin's advice on these was also accepted by the architect, including his recommendation of George Atkinson RHA, headmaster of the Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin,(and no relation of the architect) as the designer for the lettering used over the main entrance. Atkinson's work in monumental lettering was regarded by Bodkin as superior to that of Eric Gill. The Institute was to house a concert hall as well as a gallery, but from the outset Bodkin felt it necessary to emphasise the primacy of the visual arts, both in terms of exhibition and art history, over music in the ambitions of the benefactor, Lady Barber. Most of Bodkin's proposals were accepted by the architect, and his intervention at this early stage of the development was significant because it defined the function of the building as "primarily that of an art gallery rather than a concert hall."[66] In this Bodkin had the support of the Chairman of the Trustees, and the Vice-Chancellor of the University. He established excellent relations with the Barber Trustees, in particular with the Chairman, Charles Douglas Medley[67], and this meant that his working life in Birmingham was free of the discord he experienced in Dublin. He no longer had to contend with the tedium of bureaucratic procedures for which he had little patience, and he had a budget to do his favourite work of buying good pictures.[68] He established similar terms on purchasing for himself as those accepted in Dublin,[69] and used his Director's Report for the National Gallery of Ireland as a model for his Report for the Barber Institute.[70]

Bodkin gave the inaugural lecture – 'The place of the Fine Arts in the University' – in October 1935 and his views on this subject had changed somewhat since he wrote on it in 1909.[71] Now that he had practical university responsibilities himself, he agreed with his Vice-Chancellor that while the study of art history as a university subject by itself was desirable, it was not feasible in view of the deficiencies in university

resources. Even when resources such as books and reproductions were in place, he felt that the Barber Institute could never emulate the great European art history schools or the Courtauld Institute, which had access to great collections, staff, specialist libraries and lantern slides. Bodkin saw his own university role as the provision of an annual series of public lectures which would broaden the cultural outlook of the student body, rather than the delivery of an academic course of art history. He knew his own strengths and was drawn much more to a popularising role as a public lecturer than to an academic one, although he also hoped that the university would establish a one-year diploma in the History of European Painting similar to that offered by the University of Dublin. He was also most interested in continuing his own research in art history and criticism and pointed out that this would necessarily involve him in travel away from Birmingham.[72]

The years 1936 and 1937 were devoted to the building and fitting out of the Institute as well as to lecturing at the University and throughout the Midlands, and establishing the collection. The Institute was formally opened by Queen Mary in 1939, although with the intervention of the War, the galleries remained unfurnished until 1944. Nevertheless some of the best pictures were bought while work was still in progress[73] with favourable market conditions during the War. He was able to buy a cast of Rodin's *L'Age d'Airain* in 1942 for 250 guineas and Hugh Lane had paid eight times as much for his version which Bodkin felt was not as good.[74] By 1944 he was able to report to George Bernard Shaw that he had already managed to accumulate works by Cima, Simone Martini, Botticelli, Rembrandt, Hals, Steen, Monet and Corot, and "all of the finest kind" [75] and many on his own authority with Medley's agreement. In many respects Bodkin, on behalf of the Barber Institute, was having the kind of good fortune the young Hugh Lane had at the start of his career in London when owners of large properties had to sell off family collections with the fall in the value of land. He sometimes consulted Kenneth Clark, director of the National Gallery and W.G.Constable, director of the Courtauld Institute, on purchases and seems to have envied Clark for having the press at his command.[76] However, in spite of his very active life in England from the start, Ireland was never far from Bodkin's mind, and in 1937 he began lengthy negotiations with Dublin Corporation to acquire the eighteenth century monumental statue of George I, attributed to John van Nost the Elder.[77] This had been erected on Essex Bridge (now Grattan Bridge) in 1722 and following the

destruction of other symbols of British rule was stored in the garden of the Mansion House, where Bodkin recalled seeing it. He finally acquired it for the very low price of £500[78] and it was erected, on a plinth designed by Atkinson, in front of the Institute. His intervention undoubtedly saved this important work from the fate of other similar examples of public sculpture which did not survive the turmoil of the new Irish State.[79] Bodkin had other fortuitous finds for the Institute in Ireland and bought a Bronze Age gold torque from Carrodore Bog from John Hunt in 1942.[80]

Bodkin frequently returned to Ireland and in June,1937 spent a week in Dublin, to lecture and examine at Trinity College, [81]where he was Honorary Professor of the History of the Fine Arts from 1930. This involved giving two lectures annually and continued for a long number of years. He maintained his social contacts also and was photographed with his friend, former President W.T.Cosgrave at Mullingar Races some months later.[82] Cosgrave wanted Bodkin's advice on the design of a memorial to Michael Collins, for which he favoured a Celtic cross: "beyond that I must depend on you. Can you help?"[83] Bodkin agreed that the Celtic cross was "the most beautiful and appropriate tombstone" for Collins and went further: "The cross, the sign of our redemption should go above every Christian grave and the Celtic cross in particular above that of every Irish Christian. "[84] Whether he believed this or was saying what he thought Cosgrave wanted to hear is difficult to assess. He was a practising Catholic but his religious beliefs were separate from his aesthetic judgements. He had refused to join the Academy of Christian Art,[85]and was often attacked in the columns of the *Catholic Bulletin*[86], although this must be considered a badge of distinction rather than opprobrium given the extremist propaganda of that journal. Bodkin continued to subscribe to *Fine Gael*[87]so he was keeping his options open, or at least closing no avenues in terms of coming back to work in Ireland. He was disappointed that Cosgrave could not attend the opening of the Barber Institute in 1939 because "I feel a sort of sentimental obligation to let you know all of my doings."[88] England had brought him a considerable degree of public recognition but contentment still eluded him and this is reflected in his poem, 'Success'[89] published in the same year:

I CALLED her name in all those splendid pathways
Along the shining sea
In the wide streets of many a lavish city.
No answer came to me.
After long, bitter years, at last I found her
In a dim place and still,
A lonely dwelling in a lilac garden
Below a lofty hill.
And as I entered trembling and exultant
Across the shadowy floor
She broke my heart with one sad, scarce heard whisper:
'You should have come before.'

Bodkin expressed his longing for Ireland to Cosgrave in 1941, although he admired the English "who were standing up so splendidly to their ordeal,"[90] during the War. He presented him with a copy of his book, *My Uncle Frank*, published in the same year.[91] The distance from Ireland and life in wartime Birmingham drew him to reflect on an idyllic life and time in County Kildare, and the book includes in the flyleaf, a quotation from Marie France: 'To set evil from me and to put away my grief, I purposed to begin a book.' He later said he wrote the book, which he described as half fact and half fiction[92] in three weeks for his own diversion. It seems that in spite of his very active life and increasing public recognition, particularly through BBC radio broadcasts on widely diverse themes, Bodkin continued to be restless. Writing a creative account of happier times in the countryside around Dublin was cathartic for him and a spiritual return home.

However, physically returning to Ireland from Britain became increasingly difficult during the War years and Bodkin had to use his public positions, as a Trustee of the National Library and a Charity Commissioner, and his friendship with the High Commissioner in London, to facilitate his travel. By a strange twist of fate, he had become friendly with John Dulanty who was holding the position he had wanted so badly years before. Dulanty regularly assisted in the provision of exit permits which enabled Bodkin to return to lecture at TCD during the war and to attend art sales, such as one at 'Beaulieu', Co. Louth in 1943.[93] He was aware that this collection contained

an important Reynolds portrait of Dr. Richard Robinson, Primate of Ireland, to be sold by auction in Dublin on 23 July 1943. The National Gallery of Ireland was interested in buying the picture but with limited funds could not compete with the Barber Institute. In spite of attempts by George Furlong, who had succeeded Bodkin as Director, to divert the Institute from purchasing, Bodkin was successful in outbidding them for the Reynolds portrait,[94] having returned with great difficulty to Ireland. His loyalties were clearly with the Barber Institute rather than with his old institution and the purchase was such a success that on the invitation of Kenneth Clark it was exhibited at the National Gallery in London on loan.[95]

On the death of AE in 1936 Bodkin had become a Vice-President of the Friends of the National Collections, of which he was a founder-Council member, although he attended their meetings less frequently when he moved to England. He was not able to get permission to return in May 1944 to deliver a lecture for the Friends.[96] For some years he had also been contributing to each issue of the magazine *Maria Legionis*, the official organ of the Legion of Mary, and his contributions were subject to censorship if posted from England. Dulanty assisted in the faster delivery of the material through avoiding the censors. In return Bodkin provided assistance for Dulanty on art matters, something he had been doing from 1929 when the High Commissioner wanted advice on an artist to produce three posters advertising Irish agricultural produce in English markets.[97] Bodkin recommended Leo Whelan and Margaret Clarke, the widow of his old friend Harry, whose work he long supported. It was to Dulanty that he confided in 1940 the news that he had been approached by the British Council to organise a British Institute in Madrid.[98] This he rejected on grounds of not being suitable for the job, not least because he had no Spanish, although two years later he lectured on the fine arts for the British Council in various Spanish and Portuguese universities.

But it was to Ireland that he still longed to return and he wrote to Dulanty in 1945 that he believed some people thought he was a candidate for the vacant directorship of the National Gallery in Dublin. This was not the case, although if it were offered to him 'on a golden dish' he might be weak enough to accept. He still felt the job was a fascinating one but he also believed that his present Trustees were "far preferable to those who reign at the National Gallery." However, "if Dev were to call me back to a

job in Ireland as General Director of art activities in the country, I should fly back quicker than any homing pigeon: but will he, not on your life!"[99] He was more correct than he could have known in his judgement, and he had to wait until 1948 before a change of Government, and the end of a sixteen year reign in office by *Fianna Fáil*, made the political climate favourable to his cause once more. His friend John A Costello of *Fine Gael* had become Taoiseach and he suggested a talk with Bodkin on "our old forgotten scheme of art in industry and the probability of developing artistic schemes in country districts."[100] The two men met in London in June[101] and while the primary purpose of the meeting was the Lane issue, it is likely that broader arts matters were also discussed. The arrival of the new Government in February 1948 occurred in the same month as Bodkin's Hermione lectures on the theme of 'The Fine Arts in Ireland: a retrospect of forty years', and these drew considerable press comment, in particular for his remarks on conditions at the National Museum.[102] It may well be that this brought him, and the need for government intervention in the arts, once more to the attention of Costello, although the two men had of course long been in contact on the Lane pictures. Furthermore, success and acceptance in Britain had made Bodkin even more desirable for Costello who was now confirmed in his own positive judgement of Bodkin. He later referred to him as having "won fame and distinction for himself and brought credit to his country by his work in England."[103]He lost little time in getting in touch with Bodkin on the matter and they began a correspondence on the practical implications of what Bodkin could do for the arts in Ireland.

Brian Kennedy has suggested that from the outset Costello was working from a blueprint for an Arts Council prepared by the *Fianna Fáil* TD, Patrick Little and that Little got no credit for this.[104] Kennedy's analysis is that Costello wanted Bodkin to implement Little's proposals for the arts. Little had been Minister for Posts and Telegraphs in the previous Government and had proposed a number of arts initiatives, none of which, including one for a national concert hall and for an Arts Council, was accepted by de Valera. Little, who had been at university with Bodkin, was a kind and cultivated man, but he was ineffectual and his concept of an Arts Council was a safe official one with strong overtones of narrow nationalism. He later referred to the need for prompt cultural action, "if we believe we are the authentic interpreters of Nationalism according to our traditions...."[105]Neither did his proposed Council have

the focus on the visual arts and art in industry that Bodkin and Costello emphasised. Little was primarily interested in music and his scheme for the purchase of the Capitol Theatre by the Government as a cultural venue provides an example of his impotence as a Minister. He succeeded against the odds in getting the agreement of de Valera, who went against the advice of the Department of Finance in the matter and supported him. However, the deal fell through because the purchase price was considered too high. Having won the political battle he was unable to deliver the project. He was not a strategic thinker and while he retained his *Dáil* seat when *Fianna Fáil* next returned to power, he was not given another ministerial portfolio.

It is inconceivable that Costello would have looked for inspiration to Little, an opposition TD who had failed abjectly to convince his own party in relation to arts policy. Costello's plans were firmly centred on Bodkin from the start, so much so that he wrote to him in August 1948: "the primary object to be looked to is your own personal desires".[106] He had discussed the matter with his colleagues who were in agreement with him and he invited Bodkin to advise him on what sort of post should be created. Bodkin proposed the creation of an office of Commissioner for Arts who would have responsibility for all artistic activities of national concern and be subject to a Cabinet Minister.[107] Not surprisingly, Bodkin envisaged an arms length relationship between the arts and the state, something which had emerged in Britain and was even more desirable in Ireland from Bodkin's perspective. This was a model with which he was familiar and he was naturally attracted to it, given his previous experience of the interventionist Irish bureaucracy. The Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) had developed in Britain during the War, initially with a grant from a private foundation, the Pilgrim Trust.[108] This had enabled the development of significant cultural policy progress during the 1940s and CEMA ultimately evolved into the Arts Council of Great Britain in 1945. CEMA had an active exhibitions touring policy focused on taking works from public and private collections to some of the smaller places where they had never been seen. Bodkin's links with the organisation related mainly to this area. He opened exhibitions for them and lent pictures both from the Barber Institute and from his own collection.[109] He was by no means publicly uncritical of the organisation,[110] but the model it represented emerges clearly in his thinking on Irish arts development. However there had been a clear rationale for the development of CEMA and this was to raise morale

in time of War. Its philosophy was 'the best for the most' and it had the benefit of considerable public support – the kind of support that was clearly lacking in Ireland in the early years of the initiative here. On the institutional position, Bodkin pointed out to Costello that recent British practice had been to appoint chief executives to the BBC, the British Council and the Arts Council and to give these institutions revenues for which they were strictly accountable. They were however allowed "a reasonable latitude" in the formation and implementation of policy and he recommended a similar constitution for an Irish Commission of Art. He would be prepared to accept a reduced salary to direct such a Commission.[111]

It may have been pressure of Government business that delayed Costello from taking the matter further for some time, and he was not to know that time was of the essence for his arts initiative. His was a coalition or inter-party government representing wide ideological differences to be reconciled by a Taoiseach who was himself a compromise choice.[112] A major controversy had emerged for the new government concerning the repeal of the External Relations Act and the declaration of the Republic, and constitutional issues were therefore likely to have diverted Costello's attention in his first year in office. Costello was, nevertheless a vigorous and competent politician who had an interest in the visual arts in particular. Few of his ministers had cabinet experience, although one who did, Patrick McGilligan, Minister for Finance was a friend of Bodkin's, as was, to a lesser degree, Seán MacBride, Minister for External Affairs. McGilligan was familiar with Bodkin's earlier proposals for the arts in Ireland,[113]although he needed to be persuaded by Costello to sanction expenditure on the arts at a time when government departments were being asked to cut their estimates.[114] In December 1948 Costello invited Bodkin to Dublin to discuss the details and 'the sort of machinery' they might set up so that Bodkin would not be a civil servant.[115]Following this meeting Bodkin delayed his final decision for several weeks but he felt reassured that if he did come back the greatest inducement was that he would be working directly to Costello.[116] The following month he asked for more details of the job – it's functions, conditions of employment, budget etc. – and the possibility of preparing a report for the Government on "the present situation and future possibilities of the various departments and institutions concerned with the arts in Ireland."[117]Bodkin also expressed concern at the appointment of a cultural committee at the Department of External Affairs because he

felt this committee would be called on to deal with some of the issues on which he might be asked to advise the government if he came home. This had been an initiative planned by the previous Government and a Cultural Relations Committee was ultimately sanctioned by Seán MacBride.

By early March 1949 Costello, while still hopeful and enthusiastic, had no definite news for Bodkin because he had been unable to see the Minister for Finance on the matter. He was quickly reassured by Bodkin that the Barber Institute Trustees would give him every facility to do the report on the arts, if he was called on to do so, and he also confirmed his ambition to return to work in Ireland. The call finally came when Costello invited him to "give us a comprehensive report on the condition of the Fine Arts in Ireland and all kindred matters such as the encouragement of handcraft, the application of art to Industry……..'[118] The report was to include attention to what tourists could be induced to buy "instead of spurious bog oak ornaments and shillelaghs etc." Bodkin was to work at the Taoiseach's office and be paid a fee so that there would be no question of civil service regulations. And during this time, the two men could discuss the form of a future appointment for Bodkin. The following week the matter became public when Costello spoke at the AGM of the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland and promised an examination of the co-ordination of the administration of public galleries.[119] His approach therefore was completely different from Little's previous attempts in that it set out to evaluate the cultural infrastructure before proceeding further with policy proposals. Bodkin had no difficulty in accepting the invitation and indicated that he would do the report in July.[120] In June he provided draft terms of reference for the report to Costello, and for these he drew on the experience of bodies such as the British Council, the Arts Council of GB, the Royal Commission on Fine Arts and the Council of Industrial Design.[121]Like Costello, he was convinced of the economic benefits of developing good design standards, although he thought it would be "an uphill job"[122] to create any feeling among Irish manufacturers for good design. An Advisory Committee on Design in Industry had been appointed in 1937 which included representatives from the National Gallery and the RHA. Forty two meetings were held and an exhibition to arouse public interest in design and to help improve public taste was planned for 1939 but was abandoned, along with the Committee, because of the onset of the War. However on the suggestion of the Department of Industry and Commerce the terms of

reference for Bodkin's report were expanded to take account of design in industry. The Minister was concerned that steps "might be taken to arouse public interest and the interest of manufacturing industries in this question," [123] and the Government was obviously concerned at the poor standards of design in areas such as handcrafts and tourism artefacts.

In July the decision to commission the report was announced in the *Dáil*, and while no funds were allocated in the Estimate, Costello indicated that it was government policy to develop the arts.[124] In his speech he stressed a dual rationale: "While we are concentrating on our material advancement, we should not, I think, neglect matters of the spirit. We should not neglect the effort to foster, and if necessary to create or recreate, a proper national tradition in art, and the necessity..... for the application of art to industry...."[125]Similar sentiments were to be echoed later by Charles J. Haughey when further arts legislation was being introduced to the *Dáil*.[126] Costello's speech concentrated exclusively on the visual arts and his expectations of the report were that if its recommendations were implemented the conditions would be created not just for spiritual good but also for material advancement. He put particular emphasis on the provision of employment for people on the western seaboard and in country districts where people were living at subsistence level. It might have been anticipated that action to match the political rhetoric would take more than the feelings of goodwill which Costello obviously had for the arts. Bodkin arrived in Dublin in July and stayed until 1 September to work on the report. His terms of reference were broad and involved an examination of the working of the cultural institutions, in particular the National Museum and the National Gallery, the facilities for education in the arts from the historical and practical aspects at all levels, and the relations between the arts and industry in Ireland. They included the assessment of training in craftsmanship, industrial design and advertisements for tourist development, and the steps to be taken to arouse public interest and the interest of manufacturing industries in the importance of design. He was also to consider the advisability of establishing an organisation to encourage a knowledge of the arts in Ireland and of Irish culture in foreign countries. The latter would seem to encroach on the work of the Cultural Relations Committee at External Affairs and this was quickly pointed out by the Department of Finance.[127]The Department also pointed out that the

proposal to enquire into the preservation and acquisition of sites and buildings of national importance seemed to some extent to be covered by the National Monuments Advisory Council set up under the National Monuments Act 1930.

However, the study began without change to the terms of reference and Bodkin consulted widely to fulfil his brief. He met senior officials of the relevant Government departments, including External Affairs which sent him a dossier on development of cultural relations with other countries.[128] He also received information from the British Council of Industrial Design and from the Royal Society of Arts.[129] He approached Richard Hayes, Director of the National Library for help on the Royal Charters which established both the British Council and the Arts Council of GB as independent institutions and for any discussion in Parliament that may have taken place on the expenditure of their grants.[130] The situation of the National Museum was of particular interest to him, given his knowledge of that institution, and he provided precise details for the Director on what he wanted to discuss with him.[131] His approach was meticulous but it was to a great extent informed by his own preconceptions and he drew heavily on previous knowledge and analyses of the institutions. In many respects what emerged in the Report on the Arts in Ireland was a synthesis of the views he had been expressing since the foundation of the State. The examination of cultural provision provided a devastating account of the abject failure of the new State in this regard, and the infrastructural solutions proposed very much echoed his earlier thinking.

Although he denied it, Bodkin was aware of his reputation for being "dangerously outspoken"[132]and the report, which he sent to the Taoiseach in October 1949[133] indicated that he was prepared to be more than forthright. He felt that his report would provoke adverse comment but was prepared for that because of having "no axe to grind and no old score to settle".[134] He had tried "to suggest a few paths out of the waste land which the field of art in Ireland has been for the past fifty years."[135]However circulation of the report was held up because some passages "might have been more happily worded",[136] and contained some personal references and minor inaccuracies. Costello wrote to Bodkin proposing amendments, including removal of the term 'megalomaniacal' to describe a white marble *Pietà* by Luppi in the rotunda of the National Museum.[137] These were all accepted by Bodkin, who

professed himself very grateful for Costello's "sagacious counsel."[138] The Museum came in for particular criticism in the Report at every level, from the building and the collection to its standards of display and the availability of only three postcards for sale.[139] The National Gallery, while having six postcards, was "in a stagnant if not moribund condition," and the education system reflected a state of neglect which almost represented "contempt" for art. Bodkin went through each of his terms of reference and the picture he paints is one of decay and absence of initiative at every level. "We have not merely failed to go forward in policies concerning the Arts, we have, in fact, regressed to arrive, many years ago, at a condition of apathy about them in which it had become justifiable to say of Ireland that no other country of Western Europe cared less, or gave less, for the cultivation of the Arts. It might almost have been assumed that any sense of responsibility for the welfare of Art had faded from our national tradition."[140] He provided recommendations for all the areas of his terms of reference and proposed the establishment of a Department or sub-Department of Fine Arts under an existing Ministry of State, preferably the Taoiseach, to co-ordinate all the cultural functions of the State. It would liase with the other Ministries on any official activities involving artistic matters. He also recommended the establishment of a semi-official council to stimulate artistic activities, to be subsidised by the State and to make annual reports to the *Dáil*.

The report cannot have made pleasant reading for politicians or bureaucrats to whom it was circulated, and in an exercise of democracy the cultural institutions were also invited to comment on Bodkin's findings. These comments tended to be defensive and on the lines that the best was being done with the scarce resources available, although the Director of the National College of Art felt that the Report was "a very reasonable reflection of the existing state of the College",[141] with many pertinent suggestions which would be acted upon. The lengthy response of the National Gallery dealt with all the points raised on the Gallery and pointed out that the constitution of the Board of Governors and Guardians since about 1934 was a problem, with appointments on political rather than on cultural grounds. And appointments were still virtually for life, in spite of Bodkin's intervention on this point when he was Director. In both the National Gallery and the National Museum Bodkin had drawn attention to the absence of catalogues and at the Gallery the one prepared by himself in 1932 was the most up-to-date available and still on sale.[142] A

new general catalogue was being prepared and an illustrated catalogue was "nearly ready" for publication with the help of a donation to the Gallery. However, at the National Museum, it would be impossible, the Director indicated in his response of twenty-four pages, to provide a general guide to the Museum at its current state of re-organisation.[143] While recognising that the major problem was the provision of adequate means for accumulation, preservation and display of the collections, the tone of this document is one of depressed resignation to the status quo. It was pointed out that implementing Bodkin's proposals would be very costly and his solution of a substantial increase of building accommodation would involve an increase in cleaning, attendant and scientific staff. Bodkin had pointed out the overcrowded state of the Museum and the Director agreed with this and with his comment that the Ceramics Gallery was "in a peculiarly unpleasant state of chaos." He had earlier described the "dreadful manner"[144] and the "revolting fashion" in which objects such as the Tara Brooch were displayed to the Director of the British Museum. However, instead of using the Report as a means of drawing attention to the plight of the institution, and as an argument for urgent State attention, the Museum response indicated a lack of vision for change, or a view of the impossibility of getting the kind of investment needed, either from the State or from non-State sources. Bodkin's intemperate language did not help and no pressure for change was therefore coming from the Museum to the Government. He had provided no costings for any of his proposals, for which he was criticised in a response from the Keeper of Art and Industry of the Museum[145] who advised against "exaggerated expenditure or inconsiderate action such as the Report could easily inspire."

Such responses from the institutions which might have hoped to benefit from the Report can have given little consolation to Costello who was trying to make a policy intervention with the help of Bodkin's report. The comments from the various Ministers reflected their different degrees of interest and enthusiasm and the Minister for Agriculture, James Dillon was particularly strong, if unrealistic. He felt that a Council of Art should be established "forthwith,"[146] with Bodkin as Chairman and a grant of £25,000. The Council would have responsibility for the National Museum, National Gallery and National Monuments and would be charged with fostering design in industry, and advertising to develop tourism. The Council would report to

the Minister for Education but he also proposed a "charter" to remove it from the political arena except on the occasion of the annual report. None of the other Departments provided such detailed proposals but the observations of the Department of Finance were, not surprisingly, negative given the implication that increased expenditure was implied. Neither were they in favour of setting up a Commission and proposed instead an advisory Council on the lines of the National Monuments Advisory Council as being all the co-ordination needed. The encouragement of art and the kind of activities covered by the Arts Council of GB "would involve considerable expenditure."[147] The ACGB received £575,000 per annum from the State and the Council for Industrial Design had an income of £275,500 and the current financial situation precluded any large-scale expansion of the nature recommended by Bodkin. To put this in a comparative context, (and bearing in mind the substantial difference in GDP between the countries) total State expenditure on culture in Ireland for the year 1950-51 amounted to £228,628. This included voted funds for all the cultural institutions, the National Gallery, National Museum, College of Art, the OPW, National Monuments, the Abbey Theatre, the Irish Folklore Commission, the Royal Irish Academy, Comhdhail Naisiunta na Gaeilge, Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies and the grant-in-aid for cultural relations with other countries.[148] And while the proposed grant of £20,000 for the Arts Council was small, it was relatively significant in the context of expenditure on the National Gallery which amounted to £9,000, including salaries, in the same year.

The omens were not good for a positive response to the Report and Bodkin was concerned that it would be suppressed like other reports he had written. He wrote to Costello in June 1950 pointing out that it was now nine months since he had submitted the Report.[149] In August he had dinner with Costello and following this provided him with a memorandum recommending the establishment of a Council of Art, with the Taoiseach as President, a whole time Chairman, modelled for the arts on the Attorney General in legal matters, and appointed for life at a salary of £3,000 per annum. He proposed an annual grant of £25,000, excluding salaries and administration, for the six member body which would have powers to co-opt up to five additional members, and he also provided details of the functions and responsibilities the council should have.[150] In the accompanying letter he said: "If you think fit to offer me the post of Chairman of such a Council as I propose I shall accept

it promptly....." In effect he had drawn up his own job description and was eager to begin. The delay in the publication of the Report was by now being commented on in the press,[151]but it was not until October that the Department of Posts and Telegraphs finally submitted their comments.[152]Although Bodkin was now regularly advising on stamp design,[153] in the Report he had deplored their standards which he said were "generally agreed to be disgraceful." The Department denied what they felt was a sweeping condemnation and pointed out that when time permitted they were guided by a committee representative of all interests, including artists. However, they did not quarrel with Bodkin's criticism of the printing process used and felt that here the standard had not been as high as might reasonably be expected.

All except one of the relevant departments had now submitted comments but it had taken a year to go through this exercise, and although the survival of the Government was not under threat at the end of 1950,[154]time was nevertheless running out. Having received a confidential letter from Costello in November, which he destroyed, Bodkin replied "I shall possess my soul in patience until I hear from you again."[155]The information in the letter is likely to have been that Costello had submitted a Memorandum for Government on the establishment of an Arts Council which was based generally on the conclusions of the Report but with particular reference to those arising under one of the terms of reference. The Memorandum shows the influence of Bodkin's previous communication. What was proposed was the establishment of a small, independent, autonomous organisation which would act in an advisory and consultative capacity with the Government and would also undertake work of the kind done by the Arts Council of GB. This included taking steps to develop "a greater knowledge, understanding and practice of the fine arts exclusively and, in particular to increase the accessibility of the fine arts to the public.....to improve the standard of the execution of the fine arts and to advise and cooperate with Government Department, Local Authorities and other bodies on matters concerned directly or indirectly with these objects."[156] The proposed organisation would also be concerned with music, drama, literature and the arts generally, and would, where practicable be in a position to influence the policy and administration of the cultural institutions and Schools of Art, and to influence the teaching of art and the history of art in education from primary to university levels. However, Costello added a number of paragraphs

which he prepared himself, and these include a fundamental weakening of Bodkin's scheme. Section XIII of his Report recommended a Department or Sub-Department of Fine Arts to be established as a branch of a Ministry, and in addition the creation of another and less formal body, the Arts Commission. Costello felt that the establishment of the less formal body would be more appropriate than the creation of a new Department or sub-Department and his intervention was therefore a minimalist one rather than the more fundamental one recommended in the Report. He felt that his approach would go very far to meet a number of Bodkin's suggestions.[157] It was intended that the Council being proposed would, for this reason, have wider functions, though not functions of an executive character than those indicated for the informal body suggested in the Report. The Council was being over-burdened with responsibilities over areas such as the cultural institutions where they would have no powers of intervention. Costello envisaged a short Act on the grounds that legislation was needed to give permanence to the Council. The Director's salary had been reduced to £2,000 with the balance to come from Bodkin's proposed appointment as a Professor of Fine Arts at UCD.[158]

In his proposal for an Arts Council Costello was going against the very negative opinions of J.J.McElligott, Secretary of the Department of Finance for almost a quarter of a century. McElligott's term of office has been described as "marked by tenacious adherence to the classical principle of curbing public expenditure and taxation."[159]He was known, rather like Bodkin, for his willingness to provide "unpalatable advice couched in caustic and coruscating prose" and he did so on this occasion. Feeling that it was premature to bring forward legislation to establish the Arts Council until the Bodkin Report was published and public opinion assessed, he believed that "cultural opinion in this country might not be altogether at one with Dr. Bodkin's criticisms and recommendations". Furthermore there was a danger that the Council might press for action by Government to implement the wider recommendations of the Report and this would involve substantial expenditure on new and enlarged buildings with associated costs. His concern was less to do with the expenditure of £20,000 on the Council and more to do with the potential of the Council to put pressure on the Government which would result in more unwelcome financial demands. Neither did he reserve his comments to fiscal matters but provided a cultural reminder for the Taoiseach of the existence of "issues of some

delicacy concerning encouragement of drama and literature in the country". Most subventions had been for encouraging drama and literature in the Irish language and they might anticipate "very strong criticism" for State encouragement of drama and literature in English by Irishmen. This would represent a reversal of policy adhered to by successive Governments since 1922. It seems that the international success of Irish writers in English such as W. B.Yeats, James Joyce and Sean O'Casey had very little effect on an attitude bordering on the xenophobic at the Department of Finance. However Costello's[160] view of the function of the Department of Finance was that they could indicate what the pitfalls were, but having done so should carry out the policy of the Government, and on this basis he proceeded with his plans, limited as they were.

Two weeks after the Memorandum for Government was circulated the decision was made to publish Bodkin's Report,[161] although this did not appear until 11 January 1951. On 21 December Costello wrote to Bodkin offering him the appointment of Director of the Arts Council, conditional on the enactment of a Bill and sending him a copy for information.[162] It may well have been that at this point a document previously prepared by P.J.Little was used as a basis in drafting the Bill. Brian Kennedy suggested that the Department of the Taoiseach used this for the heads of the bill,[163] but this was a technical drafting issue rather than an indication that Little's ideas were being developed. At the same time Costello was asking Bodkin for advice on whether Leo Whelan or George Colley should paint the portrait of the President.[164] However, Bodkin had read in the *Irish Times* on 16 December that the Council's responsibilities would also include fostering and developing Irish music and original drama and literature in the Irish language. He was concerned because he was not an Irish speaker or an expert on music, literature or the drama and the work he wanted to do, and for which he felt himself competent related to the visual arts.[165] He was reassured, with some cynicism by Costello: "As regards the Bill and the provisions as to Irish literature drama etc. you need not worry about your supposed lack of knowledge of those matters. They were put in to forestall criticism if they had been omitted."[166] This amendment had been suggested by the Department of Education, as Bodkin rightly suspected,[167] and he was still concerned. His solicitor, Arthur Cox, visited Costello bringing with him a draft letter from Bodkin in which he declined the offer on grounds that the maximum grant provided was inadequate, and

that the assignment of functions to the Department of Education rather than the Taoiseach was undesirable.[168] He was also unhappy that no indications had been given to him on the conditions of service of the Director, apart from salary. He formally refused the offer on 29 January 1951[169] and in an informal letter to Costello of the same date he expressed his true feelings that the Bill reflected "the old bureaucratic spirit of the Department of Education that so effectively frustrated the work I might have done when I was Director of the National Gallery. The plain historic truth is that the senior officers of that Department have never had the slightest interest in or knowledge of the Fine Arts and were, therefore, indifferent or openly hostile to efforts made to further, through Art, the prestige and the material prosperity of our country……." He could not work under a Minister for Education and this, more than the reduced resources of the Council, or the inclusion of Irish language cultural interests, was fundamental to his refusal.

In what must be regarded as a measure of the extent of Costello's commitment to Bodkin, he quickly proposed having the Bill redrafted as the Arts Bill 1951. Pointing out that "the whole purpose of my efforts was to secure your services" he intended "to proceed in the face of discouragement and even if it involves doing without your help on which the whole scheme of things originally rested."[170]He blamed himself for not examining the Bill as closely as he should because of pressure of other affairs. By now the Government was deeply divided on a major social issue, the so-called Mother and Child scheme,[171] and this, plus the loss of support of a number of Independent deputies meant that Costello was facing the end of his period in Government. In relation to the Arts Bill he also admitted to being unduly influenced by his senior Departmental officials who felt that responsibility for the Council should be with Education as that would be more in line with the Ministers and Secretaries Act.[172] It had been his own idea to reduce the grant provision from £25,000 to £20,000 to get the approval of the Department of Finance, given the heavy demand on the public purse that year. But he reminded Bodkin that drama and literature were within the scope of the Arts Council of GB and it would be politically impossible to remove drama in the Irish language from the remit of the Arts Council. Bodkin continued to resist and pointed out that the comparison with the Arts Council of GB was not valid given that they had more than £500,000 at their disposal against £20,000 proposed in the Bill.[173]However Costello's new Bill removed the main obstacle for Bodkin, with

the Council to report to the Taoiseach's Department rather than Education, and with no specific responsibility for Irish drama, literature or music. In March Bodkin asked for copies of the *Dáil* debates on the Bill,[174] and some changes were made in line with his suggestions.[175] In April, at Costello's request, he sent him a copy of his report with passages marked for use when he introduced the Bill in the *Dáil*. He advised him to begin his speech by stressing the importance of the visual arts as, "in effect, the only real international languages."[176] He also provided some cost comparisons with Birmingham galleries in the event that the cost of the new initiative might be raised, and pointed out that the per capita expenditure here was one and a half (old) pence per head of population. In the Second Stage debate in the *Dáil* on 24th April Costello used this information,[177] and his statement that the Arts Bill did not go as far as he would like but was nevertheless "a beginning. I think it is a good beginning." And, confirming McElligott's suspicions, he knew that "this would probably be a great shock to the officials of the Department of Finance." On hearing by telegram on that day that the Bill received a unanimous second reading and that there were numerous friendly references to him and his report, Bodkin wrote to Patrick Lynch at the Taoiseach's Department asking him if the Taoiseach might honour him by asking him to withdraw his refusal to accept the post of Director of the Council.[178]

The Bill was passed by *Dáil* and Senate on 2 May 1951 following an amendment at Committee Stage on the use of the name in Irish as An Chomhairle Ealaion. For Costello the outcome was "the fulfilment of a personal ambition going back over many years."[179] What emerged was: "An Act to stimulate public interest in, and to promote the knowledge, appreciation, and practice of, the Arts and, for these and other purposes, to establish an Arts Council, and to provide for other matters in connection with the matters aforesaid."[180] It was a weak response to the Bodkin report, in particular, for the failure to deal with the problems of the existing cultural institutions for which Bodkin had recommended a co-ordinating Department or sub-department. The Council which emerged could not hope to deal in any effective way with its wide ranging functions on a budget of £20,000. For Bodkin however, it was too late. The Inter Party Government fell on the 13th June, although for some months he had reason to hope that de Valera, the new Taoiseach might appoint him as Director to the Council. It was suggested by Frederick Boland and John Dulanty that he should go and see the Taoiseach about the position but by September he had heard

that Paddy Little was to be appointed.[181]Boland, who was Ambassador in London wrote to the Taoiseach in August, telling him that Bodkin had given him an account of what had happened and indicating that if the post of Director were offered to him he would be prepared to accept it.[182]In October Costello told Bodkin that he was writing to his successor[183]and in this personal letter Costello indicated to de Valera that he had not pressed his colleagues to carry out the provisions of the Act before the change of Government because he felt it would not have been proper to do so. He gave the history of the affair and pointed out that it had been his intention to appoint Bodkin as Director of the Arts Council and knew that he would be prepared to act. However, he also knew that it was entirely up to de Valera to decide, and he was in no way bound by what had been done.[184] Later that month he was informed that the matter had been referred to a sub-committee of the Cabinet and the Taoiseach would inform Costello of the outcome.[185] In November Bodkin again asked Costello if he had mentioned the matter to de Valera and if so, were "his thoughts turning in my direction?"[186]They were far from doing this however and in December Costello wrote to Bodkin again, in a "conscience-stricken frame of mind", with the news that he had had a long and confidential interview with de Valera and "all my plans and all my hopes were centred in you and they have all gone wrong."[187]De Valera had proposed that Bodkin might act as a consultant expert to the Council to which P.J.Little TD, had been appointed as honorary unpaid Director the previous month.[188] Bodkin, displaying some cognitive dissonance, wrote to Costello that he could not have worked happily under de Valera, had never been able to trust him and did not think he was remotely interested in the arts or realised their importance to good government.[189] The 'consultancy' offer never materialised.

It is not difficult to imagine how Bodkin, after all his efforts, felt about this outcome. The job that was so nearly his and for which he had a clear agenda, was taken from him at the last moment. Of course he wrote to congratulate Little, whom he regarded as "incompetent for the job",[190]and Little's reply was sympathetic but included the clear message that the Council would have a much wider brief than the visual arts, and enclosing a photograph of a picture on which he wanted Bodkin's view.[191] Perhaps Little would have been less sympathetic had he realised that within a relatively short time there would be another change of government and that with Costello back in power, Bodkin would once more have a role to play in the arts. On

24 April 1954 the *Fianna Fáil* government fell and Costello was Taoiseach once more in another coalition government. He took up office in June and quickly called on Bodkin for advice on the Arts Council.[192] In November of that year he appointed Bodkin as consultant to the Council[193], a job he undertook with active relish. Costello was clearly paying his dues now, and in January 1955 Bodkin was once more appointed a Governor of the National Gallery and was discussing a reprint of his book on the Lane pictures.[194] In the same month he was present at a meeting of the Arts Council with the Taoiseach and made his presence felt by querying a number of the Arts Council's schemes. He was critical of their support for an exhibition of Ravenna Mosaics, which he said were not original, of a Design Exhibition, and of the Council's financial support towards the publication of a book on Mainie Jellet.[195]The Taoiseach felt that too much emphasis was being put on music and drama and while it was proper that these should be encouraged, not enough was being done for the visual arts, design in industry or the encouragement of craft industries.

Bodkin's plan was to come to advise the Arts Council at least a couple of times a year and from time to time as necessary. During the early months of 1955 he provided informal advice on a number of proposals but in May reported to Costello that on only one occasion was he formally asked to advise, and this was in connection with Little's plan to persuade the Minister for Education that a percentage of the cost of new schools should be devoted to the provision of a work of sculpture in each of them.[196] This was a scheme based on one working in Italy but Bodkin, while professing sympathy for the idea, advised Little strongly against it on grounds that "the moment for its inauguration had not arrived."[197] He felt there would be considerable opposition from a great number of school managers and without their support they could hardly hope for success. This would seem to have been a missed opportunity for the kind of policy initiative that Bodkin might have been expected to support, given his belief in involving all departments of State in cultural policy. With such limited resources the Council could hardly hope to have an impact on Irish cultural life without persuading public bodies to direct elements of their budgets in this way. A similar scheme was to emerge much later through the Arts Council,[198]but it might well have been that Little's proposal would have found little sympathy in the Ireland of the mid 1950s. Unemployment and emigration figures were at their highest at that time, a balance of payments crisis occurred in 1955 and economic stagnation existed,

with the country not sharing in the economic recovery experienced by Western Europe in the 1950s.[199]It is unlikely that the scheme would have been acceptable at that time, and Little did not follow it up, but it represented the kind of progressive policy direction the Council was to take in the future.

The main difficulty with Bodkin's position as consultant to the Arts Council was his close relationship with Costello. Although Little initially felt he could use this to his advantage to influence policy outcomes,[200]this was not to occur. What developed cannot have been a happy or easy situation for the Arts Council, and is likely to have been counterproductive. In March 1955 Bodkin provided extensive critical comments for Costello on the Council's annual reports to date.[201] These ranged from the nature of the information provided, the choice of lecturers, the poor quality of their advice to Government departments and to Dublin Corporation on Nelson's Pillar. He also provided some constructive suggestions, for example that there was a need to co-ordinate the activities of the Council with that of other bodies such as the Cultural Relations Committee, and that the Council needed to take the initiative as often as possible to create for itself a proper prestige. He used the model of the Royal Commission on Fine Arts in England which was consulted both by Government Department and private institutions on projects with aesthetic considerations. While the Commission could not compel, it was widely respected and its judgements generally adopted, Bodkin said, although he was probably overestimating the importance of that body to make his point. The Commission has been described as a body hindered by "confusion of purpose"[202] but there is no doubt that its role was partly the one he envisaged for the Arts Council. However, the danger was that any positive suggestions by Bodkin would be ignored or lose their value because of the more substantial number of niggling criticisms he delivered, and frequently on relatively minor issues, or concerning areas where the Council had no brief.

In January 1956 Costello asked Bodkin to deal with policy issues at the Arts Council and it is clear that the relationship between the Taoiseach and his consultant was undermining the authority and autonomy of the Council. There is very little excuse for this, given that Costello had framed the legislation which put the Council at arms length from Government. He was using Bodkin as a watchdog on the Council and

matters referred by the Council to him were sent to Bodkin for approval. Bodkin also had an agenda, and this was based on the recommendations of his Report. For example he found it regrettable that the Council had not been able to deal with something he had strongly stressed in his Report and to which he frequently returned with the Council. This was the provision of adequate catalogues at the National Museum and National Gallery. However, he seemed to ignore the fact that the Council had no power or authority to deal with this issue, although they made some feeble attempts at it, given the failure by Costello to address the needs of the cultural institutions in his response to the Report.

Some of Bodkin's views are difficult to understand. For example he was against getting legislative powers to prohibit the export of pictures from Ireland because he felt there was very little which could be called of national importance in the country.[203]Whether Bodkin believed this or was unwilling to use his considerable influence in the matter is difficult to assess. He would have been very familiar with the Waverley Criteria established in Britain in 1950 to provide an export policy for single works of art. These criteria related to questions of the significance of the object for national life and history as well as aesthetic importance,[204] and had similar criteria existed in Ireland he may have had some difficulty in exporting the George 1 sculpture, the Bronze Age gold torque or the Reynolds portrait of the Primate of Ireland. He was still buying for the Barber Institute at this time and with his loyalties to his employers, he may have wanted to keep the market as free as possible. However, he was also a Governor of the National Gallery from the beginning of that year, and might have been expected to show some concern at the potential loss of works of art to Ireland, a prospect all the more serious if, as he indicated, little of national significance remained.

The relationship between the Bodkin and Costello allowed Bodkin access to discuss the affairs of the Arts Council with the Taoiseach and he used this extensively and frequently in a way that often reflected badly on the Council. In a note to Costello in September Bodkin queried the cost of an exhibition of Evie Hone's work being mounted by the Council. There is no doubt that Bodkin had little appreciation for Irish modernism of which Hone and Jellett are regarded as founders.[205] He rated Mainie Jellett as a "rather negligible artist"[206] and he did not see why an exhibition of

Hone's work should be held at all, on grounds that Harry Clark was a greater artist in glass and had not had an exhibition.[207] Involving the Taoiseach at this level of detail was clearly inappropriate and had he been Director of the Arts Council he would have been the first to object to political intervention on such matters of Council policy.

Little's term of office came to an end in 1956 and one assessment of the work of the Council was that "it would be very difficult to say just what the Arts Council has done – what positive contribution it has made to the cultivation of artistic taste in Ireland – during the first five years of its life."[208] However it was felt the Government was right to keep it in existence and Costello now invited Bodkin to take over as Director. [209] This time Bodkin declined on grounds not just of age – he was sixty nine – but because of his disappointment at what the Council had become. Far from being the kind of body he imagined it might be, "Paddy Little and his colleagues have quite obviously made the Arts Council a body which no-one takes seriously, except those who are trying to extract grants from it."[210] He praised two of the Council members, Richard Hayes of the National Library and Muriel Gahan as the only two practical realists and was suspicious of the activities of Chester Beatty, while finding him personally charming. He told Costello that "were I a dictator I should have little hesitation in sacking the lot, and appointing in their place scholars and practising artists as far as possible." And then, with some insight he said: "I have come to face the fact that I do not seem to be able to get things done in Ireland." He was nevertheless invited by Costello to advise on the new appointments to the Council and assisted in clearing the way for Sean O Faolain when he became Costello's choice for Director. Bodkin's strong connections with the clergy came into play and it seems that the Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid wanted him, a conservative Catholic, to take the position of Director. Costello had offered the position to O'Faolain but came under pressure from McQuaid to withdraw the offer and appoint Bodkin instead.[211] McQuaid had very good relations with Costello's Government, and Costello was himself "an excellent Catholic, in immediate sympathy with the Church and its teachings".[212] Bodkin had been present when O'Faolain was offered the job and even though McQuaid spent an hour trying to persuade Bodkin to take the position he resisted. He explained to McQuaid that he could not do the job and that O'Faolain's name had occurred to him as a possibility before he saw the Taoiseach. Bodkin professed himself to be impressed by O'Faolain's ability and force, although

he knew he had "gone off the tracks from a religious point of view."[213]He was now however, "safely back in the fold" and was working on a book on Newman. Furthermore, if he were not appointed there was a danger he might "run amok" and do damage by saying his appointment had been frustrated by "some extra-Governmental influence." It cannot have escaped Bodkin's notice that this was precisely what was going on, and his letter was typed at the Taoiseach's Department which indicates that Costello was using Bodkin's influence with the Archbishop to secure O'Faolain's appointment. This began on 21 December 1956.

Bodkin and O'Faolain got on well and while O'Faolain wrote to the *Irish Times* in rather glowing terms about the achievements of the Arts Council on 29th December, saying that if people examined the annual reports of the Council they "would be astonished by the amount of practical encouragement given to the arts",[214]his letter to Bodkin on the same day paints a rather different picture. He had read the Council reports with "misgiving", and felt it had "dissipated a good deal of its energy" on activities which while laudable when taken in isolation, become questionable when considered in the policy context. Had he read the reports before accepting the position, he would have asked the Taoiseach for a whole new Council. O'Faolain's short term of office is one which is characterised by concentration on fewer first class activities so that the highest standards might be achieved, although he did not want to exclude the encouragement of local activity. His policy approach was much closer to Bodkin's ideas than Little's had been, and he invited Bodkin to draw attention to activities in Britain or the Continent which might be appropriate for Council support. In January 1957 Bodkin's consultancy appointment to the Council was extended for five years,[215]and this insulated him from yet another return to a *Fianna Fáil* Government in March of that year. He continued to advise O'Faolain, and the Department of Posts and Telegraphs on stamp design. In July 1958 O'Faolain was expressing his frustration to Bodkin at his inability to get action on catalogues for the National Museum, described in their response to Bodkin's report nine years earlier as 'with the printers'. The whole situation for O'Faolain was, 'Russian of the period just after the Emancipation of the Serfs.'[216] CEMA in Northern Ireland had a grant of £30,000 and this should equate with £130,000 in Ireland, he said. They had a staff of 10 while the Arts Council had two. By November he was even more discouraged about the Council's work and preparing a report for the Taoiseach which he would

send for comment to Bodkin.[217] He now questioned if the Arts Act was workable while being permanently endowed with inadequate funding to implement its terms of reference, and he felt it could only do some useful work by ignoring large parts of these, and lowering his own personal standards. His frustration is evident, and he felt no sense of achievement given the amount of personal time he had to dedicate to what was supposed to be a part-time job. Bodkin's reply gave no comfort to O'Faolain but indicated his own view, which was that 'nobody in Ireland, with the exception of John Costello and very few others, is prepared to pay more than lip service to the cause of the arts', and 'a cultivated class in the full sense of the term has ceased to exist, and the present methods of education are not likely to encourage the growth of one to serve us in the near future.'[218] O'Faolain resigned on 6 April 1959,[219]his main reason being the inadequate resources of the Council and the consequent demands on the energies of a part-time Director.

Bodkin continued to give advice to the Council under two new Directors[220], as well as to the Department of Posts and Telegraphs. The late 1950s were a time when economic planning was beginning in Ireland and the publication of T.K.Whittaker's *Economic Development* in 1958 marked a watershed between the traditional Department of Finance budgetary thinking, represented by J.J.McElligott and a new type of forward planning.[221] In September 1959 Bodkin drew the attention of Taoiseach, Sean Lemass, a former Minister for Industry and Commerce, to his Report, suggesting that he might consider the great importance of encouraging the production of good design for industry and good pictorial publicity for tourism development. These largely depended on Government support to museums, galleries and art schools.[222] Lemass took the matter up with his civil servants, asking what consideration had been given to the recommendation in the Bodkin report for the establishment of a Department or sub-Department of Fine Arts. He agreed with the desirability of co-ordination of State institutions concerned with the arts and favoured the establishment of a board which would have responsibility for the general direction and control of such institutions and which would be associated with the Taoiseach's Department.[223] When, in the following year, the matter was raised with the Department of Education, their opinion was that while a certain increase in efficiency might result if all the institutions were brought under the control of one Department, this would make very little difference unless financial provision for them was greatly

increased.[224] However, the Minister had no objection to transferring the three relevant institutions, the National Museum, National Gallery and the College of Art should a Department be established on the lines recommended by Bodkin. He proposed a distinct and self contained unit with its own Vote and its chief officer responsible to the appropriate Minister (the Taoiseach was preferable) on all matters of policy, administration and expenditure. A lengthy memorandum was subsequently produced in the Taoiseach's Department[225]which detailed the history of arts policy and concluded that there were many arguments against the assumption by the State of positive general functions in relation to fine arts. This conclusion was partly based on financial considerations: 'the arts are insatiable…' (for example, in twelve years the Arts Council of GB had increased tenfold its direct grants to orchestras), but more significantly, 'literature, drama, painting and sculpture are constantly associated with violent controversy.' The arts were dangerous, and given this kind of administrative advice only the most convinced or foolhardy politician would want to assume responsibility for what was potentially a troublesome brief. The outcome was rather safer – the setting up of an Inter-Departmental Committee to consider the existing arrangements and to make recommendations for the co-ordination and improvement of such services and to consider whether measures for greater co-ordination were necessary or desirable. It took another twenty two years before a Labour/*Fine Gael* coalition provided a sub-department at the Taoiseach's Department on the lines Bodkin proposed.[226] Bodkin died in Birmingham on 24th April 1961 and he never saw the final acceptance of his most important recommendation. This long overdue initiative began to put State cultural planning on the same footing with other policy areas in Ireland.

In Bodkin's later years in Birmingham he continued to review, broadcast and lecture on a variety of topics and to a variety of audiences. He was a popular and rather indiscriminate guest speaker at events ranging from the ICI Metals Division luncheon and the annual dinner of the local Newsvendors Benevolent and Provident Institution to the prize giving of the Leamington College for Girls. He took on more book reviewing for the *Birmingham Post*, sometimes reviewing as many as seven art books at a time, and from 1953 to 1955 contributed a series of twenty three articles of reminiscences to that paper. Following his retirement from the Barber Institute in 1952 he had replaced Cornelius Russell as art critic for the paper,[227]although he

continued to act as adviser on purchases for the Barber Institute. This consultancy, which lasted until 1959 on his full Director's salary, was as problematic as the previous one to the Arts Council had been. The situation was as difficult for the new Director, Ellis Waterhouse, previously Director of the National Gallery of Scotland, who took over from Bodkin, as it had been for P.J.Little. The years did little to mellow Bodkin and he had written to the *Burlington Magazine* in 1952, in the month before the appointment of Waterhouse, correcting an error in an article by Waterhouse on the Barber Institute's *Harvest Wagon*.[228] At the time, he was aware that Waterhouse was likely to be appointed so their alliance did not begin well. Bodkin regularly challenged other art experts in print but had managed to restrain himself some years earlier from correcting Kenneth Clark's "mistakes" because they were on friendly terms, although he did write to the *Listener* "exposing another series of his typical confident mis-statements of fact."[229] The public reprimand to Waterhouse was painful. There was jealousy between the two men and Bodkin must have been aware that his successor did not admire his scholarship.[230] One contemporary assessment of both is that Bodkin lacked the historian's instinct which Waterhouse had, but Bodkin's "flair" was absent in the more academic Waterhouse.[231]

Bodkin was well suited to the broadcasting career which also increased towards the end of his life and television programmes such as 'Animal, Vegetable and Mineral', 'What's my line' and 'Round Britain Quiz' brought him public recognition. He was the subject of 'This is your life' in 1960, honours were bestowed on him and the year before his death in 1961 was one of his busiest. Failing health did little to slow him up or curb his restlessness and impatience, and he died at the age of seventy three, on 24 April 1961, following a stroke. He finally returned to be buried in his parents' grave in Ireland. His wife recorded that during his last days he turned frequently to William Langland's *Vision of Piers Plowman* and made a version of his favourite lines from this which she found to be a "fitting valediction from himself":[232]

> That is truth said I and so I admit
> I have wasted my time and thrown it away.
> Yet I hope as he who had often chaffered
> With loss after loss till at length it happened
> He bought such a bargain that he never fell back

And at his last end set his loss at a leaf
Such a gain he got by the grace of God's words.
So I hope to have of Him the Almighty
A morsel of grace to make a beginning
That shall turn to profit all times of my time.

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[1] TB. 'The Importance of Painting: The necessity of pictorial Art'. *Irish Statesman*, 1 January 1927, 406.
[2] NA 1155/1/4/31 Thomas Bodkin: The Reluctant Exile, unpublished ms, 15.
[3] NA 1155/1-18 Arabella Bodkin to TB, undated.
[4] NA 1155/1-18 Mathias Bodkin to TB, 16 July 1929.
[5] NA 1155/1/4/15 various correspondence between 1924 and 1926.
[6] NA 1155/1/4/15 Statement of Trust affairs, 1919.
[7] NA 1155/1/4/25 Aileen Bodkin to Father Matthew Bodkin, 7 October 1934. The issue was the subject of disagreement in the family when Mathias Bodkin's Will was discussed. Father Bodkin had advised his father to leave money to Aileen on the basis that TB would be reasonably well off for his life, but in the event of anything happening to him, Aileen and the children would be in straitened circumstances. TB was technically disinherited by this and "thought the Will an unfair one…not representing his position as eldest son and 'heir'". Father Bodkin explained to Aileen that Mathias's view was based on his own treatment by his father which was that "a man has a security in his education and talents and should normally rely on his own exertions for his living." NA 1155/1/4/25 undated.
[8] His wife later wrote that "he belonged to an astonishing number of clubs and coteries throughout his life." NA1155/1/4/31 Thomas Bodkin: The reluctant Exile, unpublished ms. TB was a member of the Royal St. George Yacht Club, the Royal Irish Yacht Club, Portmarnock and Delgany Golf Clubs, the St. Stephens Green Club and the United Arts Club where he became President following the death of Dermod O'Brien, the Buckland Dining Club and a number of clubs in Britain.
[9] TCD Bodkin papers 6934/1-24 RE script, 30 September 1954.
[10] TCD Bodkin papers 6913/80-1 Undated verse.
[11] Bodkin's friends at this time included James O'Connor, later Lord Justice, stockbroker Jack McCann, Sir John Esmonde, Sam Brown K.C. (later Senator) and William Carrigan K.C, Chief Crown Prosecutor.
[12] Arnold Bennett to TB, 8 May 1928 quoted in Aileen Bodkin, My dear TB, 66.
[13] My dear TB, 70.
[14] NA 1155/1/4/22 Rose Bodkin (Sister Teresa Magdalen of the Holy Face) to TB, 19 July 1945.
[15] NA 1155/1/4/22 Rose Bodkin to TB undated.
[16] Emma Bodkin trained in Craig Gardner and among her audits was the Abbey Theatre. She is described as having "a formidable personality" and her professional career was limited because of the restrictions imposed on women in business in those

times, a situation that was not appreciated by her. Ciaran O hOgartaigh, 'A Man's Trousers on', *Accountancy Ireland*, 31, 5, October 1999.
[17] NA1155/1/4/22 Rose Bodkin to TB, 22 February 1948.
[18] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the family only', 37.
[19] NA1155/14/31 Mathias Bodkin to TB, 1 September 1926.
[20] Joseph Richard Cox, MP for East Clare, joined the Land League at its inception, spent some time in prison as a "suspect" in 1881/2 and went on a fundraising mission to Australia as MP for the Irish Party in 1891.
[21] Aileen Bodkin provides two accounts of how she heard. In 'For the family only', 44, she indicated that TB told her, "possibly to explain any lack of enthusiasm I might have felt on his family's side." Elsewhere (NA 1155/1/14) she said that a friend told her the truth which her husband had always known and kept from her.
[22] Arabella Bodkin died in 1931 and was nursed in her final illness by her daughter Emma. Mathias Bodkin died in 1933.
[23] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the family only', 44.
[24] NA 1155/1/14 St. John of God's Hospital to A.Parker, 2 July 1985 (note in Aileen Bodkin's hand).
[25] NA 1155/1/4/31 'For the Family only', 46.
[26] NA 1155/1/4/10 Mattie Bodkin to TB undated.
[27] ibid. Mattie Bodkin to TB 24 September 1937.
[28] TB to Arnold Bennett, 11 May 1926, quoted in Aileen Bodkin. 'My dear TB', unpublished ms., 61.
[29] The catalogue of the Sotheby and Co. sale of Old Master and Modern Drawings and Paintings from TB's collection in November 1959 indicates that all the drawings and paintings, i.e. 105 lots, with one exception, were acquired before 1927.
[30] My dear TB, 63.
[31] ibid., 6.
[32] ibid., 62.
[33] ibid., 21.
[34] ibid., 51.
[35] NGI TB to Barry Egan, 15 November 1932. John was a regular visitor to Coole and painted three portraits there, one of which was presented to the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge by George Bernard Shaw, also a regular guest of Lady Gregory's. She had considered selling a portrait of Yeats by John in 1921 when the level of rates and taxes meant that Coole might have to be sold. John had also sent Lady Gregory a pastel in June 1921. Lady Gregory, *The Journals 1,* 218, 457.
[36] NGI TB to H.Buttery, 9 August 1930. Buttery worked on a picture from TB's collection, by Pieter Molyn, estimated to cost 11 to 12 guineas. This was *River Landscape*' signed and dated 1655 and sold at the Sotheby's sale from TB's collection, 11 November 1959 for £260, lot no. 55. Buttery worked at the same time on the National Gallery's "little Teniers" at a cost of 9 guineas.
[37] NA 1155/1/4/31, 'For the family only', 37.
[38] ibid., 50.
[39] Conversation with Richard Robinson. "He (TB) didn't think that they were good enough for them, but it was good enough for them to go to school there. I used to hear people say that he wouldn't educate his daughters properly.....he certainly economised on the family."
[40] Helen Eden, *A String of Sapphires*, quoted in 'My dear AB', 48. Helen Parry Eden was wife of Denis Eden who produced the drawings for TB, *A Guide to Caper.*

[41] Conversation with Richard Robinson.
[42] ibid.
[43] NA1155/1/4/22 Rose Bodkin to TB, undated.
[44] Kelly, 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland', 176. The last great altarpiece of Perugino to remain in private hands, it was bought for £3,900 on 12 June 1931 with assistance of the Lane Fund. It came from the collection of Sir Christopher Sykes of Sledmere, Yorkshire, whose ancestor bought at the famous Orleans sale at the Lyceum in the Strand in 1798, after the execution of the notorious 'Philippe-Egalite'. NGI 942.
[45] ibid.
[46] NGI Committee on Economy in Government Expenditure to TB, 9 Aibreain, 1931.
[47] Kelly, 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland, 176.
[48] NGI undated list of capital and administration costs, with some purchase grants for a number of international galleries. The questionnaire was sent in September 1931.
[49] Estimates for Government Expenditure indicate that the National Gallery vote was £4,137 in 1931 and £4,298 in 1932.
[50] NGI P. O'Coclain to TB, 5 Aibreain 1933.
[51] NGI *Director's Report* 1933.
[52] NGI 'Report of the Committee deputed to wait on the Minister for Education concerning the proposed re-organisation of the Gallery', undated. Bodkin reported that the salary of the Director of the NGLondon was £1,500 compared with his own £500. The Director of the Ashmolean (Kenneth Clark) had a salary of £1,000 at this time.
[53] Kelly, 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland', 177.
[54] NGI TB to H.P.Boland, 10 November 1932.
[55] NGI *Director's Report*, 1919, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933.
[56] NGI *Director's Report,* 1934, 9,10.
[57] TCD McGreevy papers, 8132/40-52 TB to T.McGreevy, 28 February 1934. The pictures were Sisley's *The Loing Canal at St. Mammes*, NGI 966, Delacroix's *Demosthenes by the Sea Shore*, NGI 964 and Forain's *A Scene in the Law Courts*, NGI 965.
[58] NGI TB to Chief Justice, 17 December 1934.
[59] quoted in Kelly, 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland', 177.
[60] NGI TB to Alec Martin, 18 May 1933. This was *Portrait of a Musician Tuning a lira da braccio* attributed to Cosimo Tura (1420-1495) NGI 470 and now attributed to Filippino Lippi, NGI Illustrated Summary Catalogue of Paintings, 98.
[61] TB to H.P.Boland quoted in Kelly, 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland', 177.
[62] Hamish Miles. *Art in the University: The early history of the Barber Institute*. Inaugural Lecture, 13 March 1972.
[63] Aileen Bodkin did not travel to Birmingham with her husband and seems to have been unwell at this time. TB bought a house at Hagley Road and his wife and family then joined him.
[64] Paul Spencer-Longhurst ed. *Robert Atkinson 1883-1952*. London: Architectural Association, 1989, 67.
[65] Miles, 15-16.
[66] Spencer-Longhurst, 68.

[67] Medley had connections with Ireland and had been friendly with George Moore and was his solicitor and literary executor. TB proposed to write a book on Moore which did not materialise.
[68] By 1944 the Trust held stocks to the value of £689,555. BI Henry Barber Trust Minutes, 27 July 1944. TB's salary was £1,815 and increased to £2,035 in 1948.
[69] BI TB, Memorandum on the duties and functions of the Barber Institute of Fine Arts and Director of the Barber Institute, 13 March 1935; TB to V.W.Grosvenor, 1 December 1937.
[70] BI TB to V.W.Grosvenor, 2 April 1937.
[71] see Chapter 2, note 78.
[72] BI Memorandum on duties and functions of Barber Professor of Fine Art and Director of the Barber Institute, 13 March 1935. Even in 1960 there was no regular undergraduate teaching of art history the University of Birmingham. 'The Teaching of art history in British Universities, editorial,The Burlingrton Magazine, 698, CIII, May 1961, 164.
[73] Miles, *Art in the University*. Six or seven of the best pictures were bought while work on the building was in progress and others were added to the collection during the War.
[74] BI TB to C.D.Medley, 31 March 1942 and TB to V.W.Grosvenor, 10 April 1942. TB said that it had been in the collection of Sir Edmund Davis who bought it directly from Rodin. It is attributed 'after' Rodin, *Handbook of the Barber Institute*, 1983, 79
[75] TCD Bodkin papers 6963/345-59 TB to G.B.Shaw, 9 March 1944.
[76] BI TB to C.D.Medley, 14 July 1937. Clarke and Constable had expressed doubts about a Canaletto TB wanted for the BI.
[77] Anne Kelly. 'Van Nost's Equestrian Statue of George 1'. *Irish Arts Review Yearbook 1995*,103/107. The Van Nost attribution was questioned in 1987 by Sheila O'Connell who suggested that the work may be that of Andries Carpentiere who was Van Nost's principal assistant and who ran the business after his death in 1712.
[78] Kelly, 'Van Nost's Equestrian Statue of George 1',11. The city of Dublin had commissioned the statue in 1718 for £2,000. TB was authorised that the price should not exceed £1,000. BI Henry Barber Trust Minutes, 28 May 1936.
[79] The equestrian statue of William 111 in College Green had been blown up, and Van Nost, the Younger's statue of George 11 in St. Stephen's Green was destroyed in 1936. See Homan Potterton. 'Dublin's Vanishing Monuments'. *Country Life*, May 23, 1974.
[80] BI TB to C.D.Medley, 5 May 1942.
[81] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin,* 106. The themes were 'Renaissance and English Art' and 'Dismembered Art Works'. TB's *Dismembered Masterpieces: A Plea for their reconstruction by international action*, was published by William Collins, London, 1945.
[82] *Irish Times*, and *Irish Independent*, 22 September 1937.
[83] TCD Bodkin papers 7003 W.T.Cosgrave to TB, 11 October 1937.
[84] TCD Bodkin papers 7003 TB to W.T.Cosgrave, 17 October 1938.
[85] Kelly, 'Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland'.
[86] See for example 'The Grand Caperer and His Pegasus', editorial *The Catholic Bulletin*, 22ii, 1932, 850-852 in which TB is accused of 'absurd attitudinising' in his book *Hugh Lane*. He was referred to as 'that Pooh Bah of the Free State Civil Service' and a 'Mincing Malvolio'. For accepting an honorary professorship at

Trinity College he drew the title 'Don Whiskerando', Editorial, *Catholic Bulletin*, XX, 10 October 1930, 915-6.
[87] TCD Bodkin papers 7003 W.T.Cosgrave to TB, 27 June 1938.
[88] TCD Bodkin papers 7003 TB to W.T.Cosgrave, 20 May 1939.
[89] TB. *Eight Poems.* Birmingham: City of Birmingham School of Printing, 1939.
[90] TCD Bodkin papers 7003 TB to W.T.Cosgrave, 28 February 1941.
[91] TB. *My Uncle Frank* (with a frontispiece by Jack B. Yeats). London: Robert Hale, 1941. Bodkin paid Yeats the nominal sum of £5 for the drawing. Hilary Pyle records that Yeats said: "I dislike the idea of any author being out of pocket over a book so pay me £5 *or any part of it* that your terms with the publisher make a proper possibility." *The Different Worlds of Jack B. Yeats: His Cartoons and Illustrations.* Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1994, 45.
[92] TCD Bodkin papers 6967/1-59 TB to R.I.Best, 22 December 1939 asking for advice on a point relating to Col.William Cody, Buffalo Bill.
[93] TCD Bodkin papers 7004/182-269 TB to JWDulanty, 17 June 1943.
[94] BI TB to C.D.Medley, 4 August 1943.
[95] ibid. 17 February 1944.
[96] FNCI Archive, Minute Book 14 April 1944. He attended a Special Meeting of the Friends on 9 August 1949 where he strongly objected to the purchase of a Lurcat tapestry, *Coq Guerrier* on grounds that admiration of Lurcat's work was 'a mere passing fashion' which would be thought nothing of by future generations. Minute Book Special Meeting, 9 August 1949. This was purchased and is now at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art. *75 years of Giving: FNCI catalogue 75th Anniversary Exhibition, August 1999*, 107.
[97] TCD Bodkin papers 7004/182-269 J.W.Dulanty to TB, 18 July 1929.
[98] ibid. TB to J.W.Dulanty, 15 April 1940.
[99] ibid. TB to J.W.Dulanty, 30 July 1945.
[100] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103a-183 J.A.Costello to TB, 17 May 1948.
[101] *Irish Times,* 21 June 1948 reports the meeting.
[102] *Irish Times* and *Irish Independent,* 18 February 1948. In preparing his lectures Bodkin had communicated with the new Director of the National Museum looking for information on conditions and prospects at the Museum. TCD 6967/60-101 TB to M.Quane, 21 August 1947.
[103] *Dáil Debates* 1370-1373, 20 July 1949.
[104] Brian Kennedy, *Dreams and Responsibilities*, 63.
[105] NA S15073a Memorandum for Taoiseach by P.J.Little TD, 22 October 1951.
[106] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103A-183 J.A.Costello to TB, 20 August 1948.
[107] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103a-183 TB to J.A.Costello, 30 September 1948.
[108] Minihan, 216-227.
[109] TCD Bodkin papers 6954/128-202 Philip James to TB, 16 July 1942. Ditto, 16 October 1942. Bodkin lent a Turner from the Barber Institute and three works by Barrett, Wilson and James O'Connor from his own collection to the touring exhibition 'British Landscapes in Oils from George 11 to Queen Victoria'.
[110] TB 'A CEMA Exhibition' letter to the *Times,* 23 November 1944. This related to an exhibition of the collection of H.J.Bomford which Bodkin questioned for its quality and authenticity.
[111] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103a-183 TB to J.A.Costello, 30 September 1948.
[112] Maurice Manning. *James Dillon, a biography.* Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1999, 222-241.

[113] TCD Bodkin papers 7004/1-76 TB to Seán MacBride, 22 June 1948 sending him a copy of *Dismembered Masterpieces*. The two men dined in the Shelbourne on 1 August 1948. TCD6965/38-56 TB to P.McGilligan on conditions for the arts in Ireland,17 January 1931. TCD Bodkin papers 7004/360-407 various correspondence.
[114] Brian Kennedy, *Dreams and Responsibilities*, 77.
[115] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103a-183 J.A.Costello to TB, 18 December 1948.
[116] ibid.,TB to J.A.Costello, 18 January 1949.
[117] ibid.,TB to J.A.Costello, 22 February 1949.
[118] ibid., J.A.Costello to TB, 24 March 1949.
[119] *Irish Times*, 31 March 1949.
[120] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103a-183 TB to J.A.Costello, 29 March 1949.
[121] ibid.,TB to JACostello, 11 June 1949.
[122] NA E161/49 TB to J.Leydon, 29 July 1949.
[123] NA S14559A Memo J. Leydon to Department of Finance, 30 June 1949.
[124] Brian Kennedy, *Dreams and Responsibilities*, 77.
[125] *Dáil Debates* 117,1370-1373.
[126] Anne Kelly. 'Government and the Arts in Ireland'. MA thesis UCD,1983 .(unpublished). Haughey was speaking in the *Dáil* on the Arts Act 1973 and said it was no longer enough for governments to be concerned with the material needs of their people to the neglect of their cultural needs.
[127] NA S14559A Memo F200/22/49 N.Redmond to Dept. of Taoiseach, 7 July 1949.
[128] TCD Bodkin papers 7004/1-76 F.H.Boland to TB, 15 August 1949.
[129] TCD Bodkin papers 7004/360-407 TB to J.Leydon, 29 July 1949.
[130] TCD Bodkin papers 6967/1-59 TB to Richard J. Hayes, 22 July 1949.
[131] TCD Bodkin papers 6967/60-101 TB to M.Quane, 18 July 1949.
[132] TCD Bodkin papers 6965/21-37 TB to P.McGilligan, 17 January 1931.
[133] NA S14559A TB to J.A.Costello, 3 October 1949.
[134] ibid.
[135] TCD 7004/160-81 TB to F.T.Cremins, 31 October 1949.
[136] NA S14559A Internal memo to Taoiseach, 27 October 1949.
[137] NA S14559A J.A.Costello to TB, 11 November 1949. The *Pietà* had been presented to the Irish people by the Italian Government in 1948 in appreciation of relief supplies sent by Ireland to Italy. It was transferred to Marlborough Street Model Schools in 1951 (NA S14559B Memorandum for Government from Department of Education, 2 November 1951) TB had been asked to advise but felt Glasnevin or Mount Jerome cemetery more appropriate. TCD Bodkin papers 7003/184-253 TB to Patrick Lynch, 26 February 1951.
[138] NA S14559A TB to J.A.Costello, 16 November 1949.
[139] TB, *Report on the Arts in Ireland*, 12.
[140] ibid., 8.
[141] NA S14559A Comments on Report from Director, NCA April 1950.
[142] ibid.,1 April 1950.
[143] ibid.,31 March 1950.
[144] BI TB to Sir John Forsdyke, 7 January 1948.
[145] NA S14559A Comments on Report from L.S.Gogan, 28 March 1950.
[146] ibid., Memo Department of Agriculture to Taoiseach's Department, 13 February 1950.
[147] ibid., Memo Department of Finance to Taoiseach's Department 1 July 1950.

[148] NA S14922A F.200/42/50 Annex A. The Institute for Advanced Studies, a personal initiative of de Valera's, received the largest grant of £55,300.
[149] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103a-183 TB to J.A.Costello, 23 June 1950.
[150] NA S149224 TB Memorandum to J.A.Costello, 22 August 1950.
[151] *Irish Times*, 26 July 1950; *Irish Times*, 5 August 1950.
[152] NA S14559A Dept. of Posts and Telegraphs to Taoiseach's Department, 28 October 1950.
[153] TCD Bodkin papers 6965/1-9 TB to Leon O Broin, Department of Posts and Telegraphs, 4 January 1950. He proposed the reproduction with appropriate lettering of Corot's picture of Rome from the Pincio which he regarded as one of his outstanding masterpieces at the Municipal Gallery. It was selected by Hugh Lane and bought with subscriptions collected for the purpose by Rose Barton. TB suggested Waterlow should undertake the work and Stanley Morison, the greatest expert on typography of our age, he said, to deal with the design. TB to O'Broin, 6 January 1950 with two further suggestions for stamps. These were the Michael Angelo statue of Christ in the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome, and the fresco by Giotto of Boniface VIII. This had been placed by Leo the Great in the Old Basilica in 1445 and the veneration of pilgrims had resulted in the wearing away of its right foot through the intervening centuries.
[154] Manning, 264.
[155] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103a-183 TB to J.A.Costello, 30 November 1950.
[156] NA S14559A Memorandum for Government on Proposed Establishment of an Arts Council, 15 November 1950.
[157] NA S149224 Note on drafting proposals (undated), Paragraph 10-14.
[158] NA S149224 Memorandum to Taoiseach, 24 October 1950; TCD 7003/184-253 J.A.Costello to TB.
[159] T.K.Whitaker quoted in Fanning, 491.
[160] J.A.Costello quoted in ibid., 467.
[161] NA S14559A Department of the Taoiseach, note on Government decision, 28 November 1950.
[162] NA S15073A J.A.Costello to TB, 21 December 1950.
[163] Brian Kennedy, *Dreams and Responsibilities*, 79.
[164] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103a-183 J.A.Costello to TB, 22 December 1950. Bodkin recommended Leo Whelan, 28 December 1950.
[165] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/103a-183 TB to J.A.Costello, 16 December 1950.
[166] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/184-253 J.A.Costello to TB, 1 January 1951.
[167] NA S149224 Observation on Report from Department of Education, 13 November 1950.
[168] NA S15073A Note on file, Taoiseach's Department, 13 January 1951.
[169] NA S14922B TB to J.A.Costello, 19 January 1951.
[170] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/184-253 J.A.Costello to TB, 16 February 1951.
[171] John White. *Church and State in Modern Ireland 1923-1970.* Dublin: Macmillan 1974, 196-238.
[172] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/184-253 J.A.Costello to TB, 16 February 1951.
[173] ibid., TB to J.A.Costello, February 1951.
[174] ibid., TB to Patrick Lynch, 1 March 1951.
[175] ibid., J.A.Costello to TB, 5 March 1951.
[176] ibid., TB to J.A.Costello 18 April 1951.
[177] *Dáil Debates*, 125, 1283-1349, 24 April 1951.

[178] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/184-253 TB to Patrick Lynch, 25 April 1951.
[179] *Seanad Debates*, 39, 1074, 2 May 1931.
[180] *Arts Act 1951*, 71-81.
[181] TCD Bodkin papers 6966/1-41 TB to Paddy Kiely, 11 September 1951.
[182] NA S15073A F.H.Boland to Taoiseach, 9 August 1951.
[183] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/184-253 J.A.Costello to TB, 16 October 1951.
[184] NA S15073A J.A.Costello to Taoiseach, 20 October 1951.
[185] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/184-253 J.A.Costello to TB, 24 October 1951.
[186] ibid.,TB to J.A.Costello, 14 November 1951.
[187] ibid., J.A.Costello to TB, 17 December 1951.
[188] NA S15073A File note, 27 November 1951.
[189] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/184-253 TB to J.A.Costello, 31 December 1951.
[190] ibid.,TB to J.A.Costello, 31 December 1951.
[191] ibid., 6966/1-41 P.J.Little to TB, 10 December 1951.
[192] ibid., 7003/184-253 J.A.Costello to TB, 8 July 1954.
[193] ibid., J.A.Costello to TB, 26 November 1954.
[194] ibid., J.A.Costello to TB, 15 January 1955.
[195] ibid., 6966/42-83 Note of meeting, 6 January 1955.
[196] ibid., 7003/184-253 TB to J.A.Costello, 29 May 1955.
[197] ibid., 6966/42-83 TB to P.J.Little, 8 March 1955.
[198] Anne Kelly. 'Irish Visual Culture: a policy review'. *Eire-Ireland, Journal of Irish Studies, Irish American Cultural Institute*, XXXIII 3 & 4, XXXIVI 1, 1998/99, 31.
[199] Terence Brown. *Ireland: A Social and Cultural History 1922-79.* London: Fontana 1981, 211-238; Bernadette Whelan. *Ireland and the Marshall Plan 1947-57.* Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000, 394; Fallon, 257; Joe Lee. *Ireland 1912-1985.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, 271-328.
[200] TCD Bodkin papers 6966/42-83 P.J.Little to TB, 10 January 1955.
[201] TCD Bodkin papers 6966/42-83 TB's comments on Arts Council Reports to 31 March 1955.
[202] Minihan, 174.
[203] TCD Bodkin papers 6966/42-83 Summary of discussion at Arts Council attended by TB, 5 May 1955.
[204] Fintan Cullen, ed., *Sources in Irish Art: a Reader*, Cork University Press, 2000, introduction, 18.
[205] Fallon, 238; McConkey, 73.
[206] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/184-253 TB to J.A.Costello, 21 August 1954.
[207] ibid.,7003/254-317 TB note for Taoiseach, 28 September 1956.
[208] Editorial, *Irish Times*, 22 December 1956.
[209] TCD Bodkin papers7003/254-317 J.A.Costello to TB, 16 November 1956.
[210] ibid., TB to J.A.Costello, 28 November 1956.
[211] John Cooney. *John Charles McQuaid: Ruler of Catholic Ireland.* Dublin: The O'Brien Press, 1999, 319.
[212] ibid., 301.
[213] TCD Bodkin papers 7003/254-317 TB to J.C.McQuaid, 20 December 1956; Anne Kelly. 'The Church, The State and Thomas Bodkin'. *Irish Times*, 28 December 1987.
[214] *Irish Times*, 29 December 1956.
[215] TCD Bodkin papers 6966/126-60 W.O'Sullivan to TB, 7 January 1957.
[216] ibid., S.O'Faolain to TB, 14 July 1958.
[217] ibid., 17 November 1958.

[218] ibid., TB to S. O'Faolain, 22 November 1958.
[219] NA S15073B S. O'Faolain to Taoiseach, 6 April 1959.
[220] Mons. Padraig de Brun, who died after six months in office, and Father Donal O'Sullivan.
[221] Fanning, 461-519.
[222] NA S14459B TB to Sean Lemass, 2 September 1959.
[223] ibid., Departmental note, 21 December 1959.
[224] ibid., Department of Education to Taoiseach's Department, 25 April 1960.
[225] ibid., Memorandum: Dr. Bodkin's proposal to establish a Department or sub-Department of Fine Arts, 18 July 1960.
[226] Ministry of State for Arts and Culture appointed in December 1982.
[227] Information from Cornelius Russell, 26 July 1991. Russell was Art Critic with the *Birmingham Post* and his contract was terminated when TB was appointed in 1952.
[228] TB 'Gainsborough's Harvest Wagon' letter in *Burlington Magazine*, May 1952 in response to article by Ellis Waterhouse in same magazine, February 1952.
[229] BI TB to Douglas Cooper, 17 April 1944. He may have been referring to his letter 'The Church and the Arts', *Listener*, 10 March 1940 commenting on report in *Listener*, 22 February 1940 of discussion on 'The Artist and the Patron' between Kenneth Clark and Eric Newton.
[230] Conversation with Dr. Ben Davis, 11 June 1991. Dr. Davis described Ellis Waterhouse as "totally academic" and a "very dull lecturer" who did not show the same passionate affection for artistic objects that Bodkin did.
[231] Interview with Dr. Kenneth Garlick, former curator at the Barber Institute, 16 September 1991. He worked with TB and with Ellis Waterhouse.
[232] NA 1155/1/4/31 Thomas Bodkin: The Reluctant Exile, ms Aileen Bodkin undated 1972.

CONCLUSION

This research has examined Thomas Bodkin's influence in the development of Irish cultural policy and practice in the context of his family, friends and cultural life. It aimed to evaluate his role, formal and informal on cultural development in Ireland from the early years of the new state to the establishment of the Arts Council in 1951. Four core areas were examined in detail. These are Bodkin's influence at the National Gallery, on currency design, on the return of the Lane pictures to Ireland, and his Report on the Arts in Ireland.

Chambers 20th century dictionary defines influence as '..... power of producing an effect, especially unobtrusively'. The New Oxford Dictionary defines it as 'the capacity to have an effect on the character, development or behaviour of someone or something, or the effect itself; the power to shape policy or ensure favourable treatment from someone, especially through status, contacts, or wealth.' Using these definitions Bodkin undoubtedly shaped policy results, both formally and informally or unobtrusively, as the research indicates. He used his political contacts to influence policy and his Report on the Arts in Ireland had a clear policy outcome in the establishment of the Arts Council in 1951. He played both a formal and an important unobtrusive policy role in the return of the Lane pictures to Ireland through influencing political decision-makers across the political divide.

The context in which the term 'cultural policy' is used reflects not just legislative/planned decisions or outcomes but also the record of what emerged in cultural practices. With the exception of the Lane affair, Bodkin's ability to influence decision makers depended on his political relationships as well as his location in the institutional structure. He was well placed in the Irish bourgeoisie and had a natural affiliation with the *Cumann na*

nGaedheal/Fine Gael party which accepted the Anglo-Irish Treaty, through his friendship with leaders W.T.Cosgrave and later, John A. Costello. While this party was in power he was more likely to be in a position to have an effect on the policy making process. The arrival of *Fianna Fáil*, the anti-Treaty party in government in February 1932 meant that his potential ability to influence government policy was severely curtailed. This was something he clearly recognised. However, under both administrations the economic situation and the attitude of the Department of Finance militated against even a limited investment in cultural provision and were ultimately more significant than political connection or affiliation. The bureaucracy represented continuity and Bodkin's advanced cultural policy objectives in relation to the cultural infrastructure and educational provision were unlikely to be supported in an economic and cultural climate which was conservative, protectionist and without dynamism. Another important factor which cannot be underestimated and which had an effect on Bodkin's ability to influence, was his own complex personality. His considerable intellectual ability was in constant battle with his difficult personality. A dichotomy existed between his private and public persona and he was capable of intense friendships and equally vehement hatreds. Ultimately his ability to influence was reduced by his own attitudes and actions as well as by the changing social and political environment.

At the level of formal influence at the National Gallery, Bodkin successfully promoted legislation to enable the Gallery to lend, both nationally and internationally from the collection, although moves in that direction had been made before he took up office. This allowed the National Gallery to lend to important exhibitions abroad and therefore to establish the status and prestige of the national collections. His acquisitions for the collection were important and the attributions of the works acquired have stood the test of time. His purchasing reflected his personal taste more than a clearly articulated collections policy although he later indicated a belief in the need to have representative schools of art and styles in the national collection. Bodkin was informally influential through recommending appointments to the Board and in drawing attention to the national collection through promoting Irish art, both in Ireland and abroad. He succeeded in giving papers at art historical conferences abroad in spite of the limited

resources available from government. He attended exhibitions abroad and wrote the foreword to the catalogue for the important Exhibition of Irish Art in Brussels in 1930. This contribution was remarkable because of its relatively optimistic tone for a foreign audience, in contrast to the didactic tone he used for Irish consumption. He had reason for negative feelings about the commitment of the Irish government to the cultural infrastructure because of their treatment of the National Gallery. Bodkin used his considerable administrative skills to make the case for investment in the Gallery but all his efforts met with resistance although he was less than diplomatic in his dealings with the bureaucracy. They responded by curtailing his activities as much as they could and the outcome was predictable.

The opportunity to influence the design of the Irish currency was important for Bodkin and his appointment to the coinage committee occurred before his appointment as Director of the National Gallery. It added to his prominence and the public nature of the appointment was likely to have been a factor in securing his National Gallery position. The appointment of Yeats as Chairman has been described as 'the ultimate compliment'[1]which the new post-colonial elite could pay to him, and while Yeats was the driving force on the committee, Bodkin's vision was also important. It is likely that he was prepared to stand up to the bureaucracy when the intervention on the designs emerged and the remarkable final results indicated the detail and care which he, the artist and the committee devoted to the task. As representations of post-colonial identity, the coins did not meet universal approval in Ireland, largely because they lacked religious reference[2], but they were significantly more successful than the stamps which emerged in the new state. These designs were predictable and 'heavily symbolic'[3], and predictable, incorporating motifs such as the harp, shamrock, the Celtic cross, the Celtic knot and the map of Ireland. The designs used until the declaration of the Republic in 1949 'promoted a strongly nationalist and religious picture of the Irish cultural identity, with an emphasis on the Irish language.'[4] Bodkin also had an advisory role from time to time in stamp design, both as Director of the National Gallery and later as advisor to the Arts Council. He was always critical of the general standard and influential in the selection of artists

such as George Atkinson and E.L.Laurenson, and in changing the printing process used. This ultimately led to a significant improvement in Irish stamp design.

The role played by Bodkin in the note design has been outlined in detail and is an example of both formal and informal influence, certainly in the selection of the artist and model and in the technical detail. It is clear that he was responsible for the selection of John Lavery, 'the chronicler of the emergence of the Free State,[5] as the artist and, most particularly of Hazel Lavery as the model for the notes. His friendship with Joseph Brennan of the Currency Commission was a factor in the almost complete freedom which Bodkin had in the selection process. The symbiotic nature of his relationship with Hazel Lavery has also emerged and his influence was more significant in the notes than for the coinage design because in this instance he was not overshadowed by Yeats. He had acquired his own national, if more limited status as Director of the National Gallery, and his views were accepted at every stage of the design process by the artist and the Commission. What emerged in the design had much more popular appeal than the coins because, unlike the coinage, the symbolism was in tune with national aspirations and Irish representational myths, not least those centred on the traditional symbol of Ireland as female.[6] The design achieved iconic status and the notes remained in circulation for fifty years.

One of Bodkin's continuously influential roles was in relation to the return of the Lane pictures and his interest in this from his nomination in the codicil to Lane's Will to the temporary solution agreed in 1959 was consistent. His book on the Lane pictures commissioned by the Government was a formal policy intervention in the fight to return of the pictures to Dublin. The book makes the case from an Irish perspective and it is largely a homage to Lane and a useful exposition of the Irish case. It was included in the London National Gallery's chronology of the affair and it, and the later reprint, were an annoyance to the Trustees who were ever watchful of events that put the matter on the political agenda in London. The book was later described by MacColl as a 'suppression and distortion of facts'[7] but he does not elaborate on this and his position seems to have been contradictory as he got older. For example he wrote that the London Gallery to

exhibit the Lane pictures 'was secured' before Lane left for America. The record indicates that this was not the case.

This research has examined Bodkin's role and the key issues covered by him from the London perspective, drawing on British archive material and other published accounts, including Lady Gregory's important journals. It is clear that a most significant role was played by her up to her death in 1932. However her immense efforts and her single-handed interventions with the British Government produced few results in her lifetime and the level of resistance of the National Gallery to returning the pictures was underestimated by her and by Bodkin. She kept Bodkin at a distance, and seems to have distrusted him although she used his legal skills in the drafting of documents from time to time, and paid more attention to his point of view following his appointment as Director of the National Gallery. Bodkin's political influence increased after her death and he was also active through the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland in highlighting the need for the provision of a gallery to house the pictures. The evidence from this research is that the Irish case for the return of the pictures was substantially stronger than Bodkin, Lady Gregory or the Irish Government ever appreciated. A number of factors have been outlined in support of this, and in particular the formal decision by the Trustees of the National Gallery in London to return the entire collection to Lane, a decision he was unaware of before he left for the United States, and the last one by the Trustees on the matter in his lifetime. Another issue was the confusion about dates of conversations between Aitken and Lane, identified by Sir Denis Mahon when he did an intensive review of the material following his appointment as a Trustee in 1957. This discrepancy was particularly damaging because an incorrect date had been included in the National Gallery's Memorandum to Cabinet in 1919 and carried forward in National Gallery documentation for the Parliamentary Committee established in 1926. Bodkin was extremely critical of this Committee which found that in signing the codicil Lane thought he was making a legal disposition but which nevertheless advised against giving effect to the codicil. It is clear also that the full facts of the affair were not provided by the National Gallery to the Committee. Had this been done, the Irish claim to the pictures on moral grounds would undoubtedly have been strengthened.

Bodkin's role was an active one of keeping President Cosgrave, John A. Costello, de Valera and Lemass up to date with information from his London sources and advising them on the action to take. He also kept the matter on the political agenda through writing and lecturing and he clearly annoyed the British bureaucracy whose judgement of his role was that he was seeking publicity for himself. This may have been a factor but Bodkin was dedicated to the memory of Lane and the codicil gave him a right to be involved. He was an effective propagandist and used every opportunity to draw attention to the issue in Ireland and Britain. He was strongly opposed to accepting a loan of the pictures and his opposition would certainly have influenced Cosgrave, Costello, and Lemass. Robert O'Byrne's conclusion that the dispute had been protracted because of the refusal by Lady Gregory to accept an alternate loan solution proposed by MacColl in 1917 must be rejected on grounds of MacColl's lack of knowledge of the degree of resistance to lending by the Trustees but, more importantly, because the Trustees had no power to lend until fifteen years after the pictures came into their possession. Furthermore, although the British Government was willing to introduce legislation to enable the Trustees to lend in 1926, this was rejected by them, and the agreement to alternate loans which emerged in 1958 did not have the full support of the Trustees. Bodkin played a vital role in this affair as a representative of the Irish government to the negotiations. The solution which emerged was not a final one and the issue might well be revisited so that a more satisfactory conclusion could now emerge. This would undoubtedly have Bodkin's approval in the light of the evidence which has emerged here.

While Bodkin was actively involved in the Lane affair he was also developing one of his most important policy interventions. This concerned the Report on the Arts in Ireland 1948 which drew together in one document many of the themes that Bodkin had been articulating throughout his career. These revolved around the neglect of the arts in Ireland and the need to develop educational and other policies to improve the cultural infrastructure. Bodkin had kept up his political contacts in Ireland following his appointment as Director of the Barber Institute in Birmingham, and his commission from John A. Costello to report on the arts clearly indicated that he would be the director of

any arts initiative which emerged. The institutional model of CEMA informed Bodkin's thinking, the 'arms-length' from government principle being attractive to him in view of his previous experience in Ireland. An important proposal in the report was for the establishment of a department or sub-department of Fine Arts, preferably reporting to the Taoiseach's Department, and also a council to stimulate arts activities. However, the response, which followed a lengthy period in which the report was circulated to institutions and departments, was fundamentally weaker than Bodkin anticipated. No department was to be formed but an arts commission or council was to be created, the Arts Bill having been redrafted to take account of Bodkin's objections to certain clauses. The Department of Finance in particular worked against a more significant policy intervention and this effectively disabled Bodkin's ability to influence at this time. A change of government and Bodkin's delay in accepting the position of Director of the Arts Council meant that the appointment went to a *Fianna Fáil* TD, P.J.Little. However his report is acknowledged in the Council's own chronology of its early years as the forerunner of the legislation which established the Council. Bodkin continued to make policy interventions as consultant to the Council, following the return to office of *Fine Gael* and some of these resulted in the involvement of the Taoiseach in the detail of the Council's work, something that was in breach of the 'arms-length' principle he had himself envisaged. He did not live long enough to see the emergence of a sub-Department at the Taoiseach's Department on the lines he proposed and ultimately a full cabinet position, and he never returned to work in Ireland. What emerged from his Report was an Arts Council which, unlike CEMA had no popular support base, and which was poorly resourced for the first twenty years of its existence.

Bodkin's influence on art and artists in Ireland has also been discussed and needs to be evaluated. Although progressive in policy and administration terms – he used the term "art-administration" in 1945[8] - he was not a modern man and described himself as 'bound fast in ideas of great antiquity'. However, he believed that art was a literacy, or system of communication, and this view has contemporary relevance. In art, his chosen field, his anti-modernist position has been suggested, but as it is not a core element of this study, it needs further art historical exploration. Some issues can be suggested however.

The values of modernism reflected a break with tradition in a rapidly changing society and much of the modernist development in Britain was in response to the dramatic social changes associated with the industrial revolution. This left Ireland relatively untouched, with the exception of the extreme north east of the country. Ireland was undoubtedly undergoing a dramatic political change in the early years of the 20th century which led to the foundation of a new state. However, the fundamentally conservative nature of society and its institutions remained remarkably unchanged. The cultural nationalism of the Celtic revival in literature was not matched by a similar modern movement in visual art, although the limited movement that began can also be dated to the beginning of the literary revival.[9] Bodkin articulated egalitarian themes of access for all and the social function of art, and while pluralism was central to modernist philosophy, Bodkin was at heart an autocrat with a strong authoritarian outlook.

Certain conflicts between the traditional and the modern in Bodkin have been indicated here, although the scales are tipped heavily in the direction of Bodkin as a traditionalist. In the early years he was supportive of some of the post-impressionist artists and he later enthusiastically supported the work of Jack Yeats and Harry Clarke, and was instrumental in developing the career of the latter. Yeats was influenced by modernism[10]and Clarke has been described as 'Ireland's major Symbolist artist',[11]and in these artists Bodkin saw some tendencies towards the distinctive Irish art he hoped could emerge, given adequate policy intervention by the new State. However for him this distinctiveness would link back to, and bridge the gap with the golden age of Irish art, and his position was therefore a traditionalist rather than a modernist one. His writings are consistent in their reference to the significance for visual art of the fracture with the art of the past and the break with artistic tradition which had occurred under British rule. In this sense therefore Bodkin was looking backwards to the roots of Irish art, just as Yeats and Lady Gregory looked to ancient Irish myths and legends and 'contact with the soil' for inspiration.[12]

Bodkin's commitment to Clarke and Jack Yeats can be contrasted with his conservative influence on art as a Haverty Trustee.[13] However, in Britain, his obituary of Jacob

Epstein referred to 'a sculptor of towering genius.[14] Epstein's career as a whole has been described as embodying 'the sensibility of Radical Modernism more dramatically than any other sculptor, English or continental, then or since.' And while Bodkin persisted in his intense dislike of Picasso, whose work was described by Lane as 'rubbish'[15] but "definitely evil"[16] by Bodkin, he must have eventually changed his mind on Matisse because he sold a drawing by that artist in 1959,[17] and tried to buy a Matisse for the National Gallery before he left Ireland in 1935. He also wrote an obituary of Matisse in the *Birmingham Post*[18]although this was relatively grudging in nature. He had purchased pictures by Sisley, Delacroix and Forain for the National Gallery in 1934 and these struck "a modern note"[19] for him. The Sisley was a particular success for him because the artist had been greatly admired by Hugh Lane who had not been able to secure a work for Dublin before his death.[20] Bodkin's own collection contained the work of a number of contemporary artists, including drawings by Augustus John and John Singer Sargent,[21]both of whom were also greatly admired by Lane[22]. But contemporary works were far outnumbered by representation of the art of other ages in his own collection.[23] He was painted, sketched and drawn frequently and in 1919 commissioned Sean Keating to paint *Homage to Hugh Lane*[24] which was presented by him to the Municipal Gallery. Lane's influence was an abiding one and Bodkin's Will included a bequest of 38 pictures (one less than Lane's own historic bequest) to Irish collections through the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland.[25]

Bodkin's wife of forty-four years described him as 'a reluctant exile'. This was in the context of his departure to Birmingham but the concepts of 'outsider' and 'exile' are useful in assessing the man and his contribution. Bodkin appears to have been a natural outsider and was both internally and externally an exile. This began from his earliest days. He was different to the rest of his family. He was studious and delicate; they were active and robust and he stood apart from them and was treated differently, although with love. His family did not share his interests and he was isolated but respected and his early precociousness allowed him to adopt a tyrannical, or at least an autocratic attitude towards his younger siblings. He adopted the same attitude to his marriage which was not happy. He was an outsider to his children whom he regarded as his wife's

responsibility.[26] To his daughters he was 'the ancestor', and the sad consequences are indicated in the following lines by one of them:

To the Ancestor[27]

So, after all your roles, this is the last
King Lear abandoned by his blackheart brood
In base ingratitude
For all the love and favours of the past!
I think you really believe it, I think you forget
How all our barren childhood we were lost
In the hatred of the starved root for the frost
The terror of the trapped hare in the net
Now I must love you! I hate you to the bone
You at whose hands our lives were torn and shattered
No land bears wheat where only tears were scattered
No heart bears love where only hate was sown.

Bodkin was also an outsider in terms of his time and place in Ireland. Not for him the glory of the Gael which was part of the nationalist cultural revival, in language, literature, drama and politics. Although brought up in a political household, he had little interest in politics, and professed an 'intense dislike' for the hero of the revolution, Padraic Pearse.[28] He was not imbued with the national ideal as his father had been, at a time when Ireland was alive with politics. Yet, he had a keenly felt sense of his Irish identity, loved his country passionately, and would have described himself as a nationalist, which indicates the many strands and complexities of such a term. Artists stood outside politics but Bodkin was not part of this world either. Being a protégé of Lane's and Director of the National Gallery he belonged initially to the artistic elite. He intrigued with Sarah Purser and advised the clergy on art matters, but having lost the friendship of Harry Clarke, James Stephens and AE this was no longer a haven for him. And even among the artistic elite, his most natural home, one gets the sense that he was respected and feared, but not

liked and he was eventually caught between this world and that of Waldron and legal and business people. In the world of law and business he could entertain with his knowledge of art and his wit and repartee, his card playing and conversational skills, but he was not a business man or a practising lawyer, so was at least to some extent, an outsider in this world also.

For Bodkin, the new Ireland was a failure. He had been forced into exile and he never realised his full potential to bring about major institutional change. It was common for artists and writers to leave but fewer administrators left. They adapted instead to the new institutional climate, as is more characteristic of that class. But Bodkin was more than an administrator, and thought of his abilities as 'primarily those of an expert in works of art'. [29]. His friendships, mostly with men, but also with Hazel Lavery, were passionate and loyal and his hatreds equally vehement. Monk Gibbon, who loved him and to whom he was generous, felt in retrospect that "he could be a very relentless enemy to those whom he disapproved"[30], because he felt certain he was right. His friendship with Hugh Lane was a defining one and he modelled himself on Lane, even physically, with his beard, and a signet ring bearing his own crest on the small finger of his right hand. Lane wore a similar ring on the same finger of his left hand. Lane enjoyed fancy dress occasions and Bodkin appeared as the same character on at least one occasion. He cultivated the image of a dandy, as Lane had been.[31] Physically the older Bodkin was described as a man 'who might have stepped straight from almost any canvas of Diego Rodriguez Velasquez or any of the more conventional canvasses of Theotocopoulos El Greco.[32] The loss of Lane was perhaps a turning point for Bodkin and had this not occurred his life may have taken a very different course and been more content.

The concept of reluctant 'exile' was uppermost in his mind when he accepted the appointment at the Barber Institute, but when actual physical 'exile' to Birmingham finally came it was little more than an intensification of all his other isolations. Bodkin suffered from spiritual restlessness also. His appointment as Director of the National Gallery would seem to have been the fulfilment of all his hopes and dreams and he had indicated to Stephens how much he wanted the job. Yet within a matter of

months Hazel Lavery was working to have him appointed as Irish High Commissioner in London, a diplomatic position for which he had no obvious qualifications. Diplomacy was not one of his more recognisable characteristics but Bodkin would not have thought that going to London at that time was going into exile because his position would have been recognised as a senior Irish government posting abroad. The reality of his working life at the National Gallery was that in spite of the social prestige associated with the job, as a civil servant he was in a reporting relationship to the bureaucracy, something he could never accept. He was cleverer than most of them, arrogant and outspoken by nature, and found it difficult to curb his outspokenness with those in authority. This situation eventually became so intolerable that he was forced to resign. He made enemies rather too easily and his legitimate policy ambitions for the arts and his own self-interest were therefore compromised. When he returned to report on the arts his reputation was already damaged and he had few friends in the power structure who were anxious to respond to his policy proposals. His intellectual abilities were in no doubt but few could have worked with him if he had been appointed as Director of the Arts Council. He had sufficient self awareness to recognise that his " Irish insubordinate temperament'[33] had given him problems in the past and it is difficult to imagine him tolerating once more the constraints of working in the public service. In the policy process even the best initiatives must be considered in the context of working relationships and the ability to negotiate. Bodkin's conviction and certainty would have made compromise and perhaps even constructive debate impossible because being vindicated was more important than getting the right result. Returning to Dublin from his success in Britain did not encourage modesty and he wrote to Thomas McGreevy in 1960 that he felt his colleagues would agree that he had "a greater experience in buying pictures for important galleries than perhaps any other man alive...".[34]

What remains on the vast written record, conveyed only partially here as it refers to Bodkin's role in Irish cultural life and policy, does not give us the sound of his voice, with its Dublin accent, or 'rich Irish brogue which could be both caressing and scathing',[35] his flashes of wit, his lively conversational style, the warmth of his smile, or the 'stimulating sparkle of his Irish eye'.[36] Neither can the text convey his powerful

ability to lecture. Ben Davis who as a medical student at the University of Birmingham attended Bodkin's lectures, modelled by him on the Slade lectures, remembered how enthralled he was by these. He vividly recollected Bodkin's ability to hold an audience and convey his love and knowledge of pictures. This packed the lecture theatre so that there was standing room only whenever Bodkin lectured. He was a populariser, a born performer, a role player, as his daughter sadly identified, with a touch of the 'stage Irishman'[37] conveyed by his ease with radio and television. He was a natural communicator and never wanted to use a radio script, and did so only when forced. In the same way he rarely used a written lecture and relied instead on the briefest list of topics or themes for his lectures. The role-playing masked the real Bodkin eventually, and particularly after his success on British radio and television. In Monk Gibbon's view he 'did not reveal himself intimately even to his closest friends,'[38] perhaps because beneath the confidence was a deeply troubled man. In spite of public recognition in Britain, he still hankered for Ireland, and was caught between two worlds once more. Increasing recognition in Britain may have helped to ease his sense of isolation but it did not remove it altogether. It is hard to avoid concluding that in spite of his success – and he had a successful career and achieved recognition and awards – he was not a happy man and that his was a disappointed life. His diverse activities had dissipated his energies and he never produced a major work of art history and in a sense was an outsider also to this community of interest. He was described as having "a dogmatic approach to art"[39] and as Monk Gibbon indicated, his certainty was "rather dangerous". When applied to his artistic judgements it was not conducive to scholarship. Recognition in Ireland eluded him to the end although his name appears in the footnotes of most Irish art historical publications relating to his period. His cultural policy contributions were significant however, as this research indicates and it for these that he deserves to be remembered. He said that "every man has a lurking desire to be well considered in his native place,[40]and for his influence on Irish cultural policy Bodkin finally achieved his aim.

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[1] Kiberd, 491.

[2] TB. Postscript to 'Coinage of Saorstat Eireann'. Cleeve, *W.B.Yeats and the Designing of Ireland's Coinage*, 55-60.
[3] David Scott. *European Stamp Design: a semiotic approach to designing messages.* London: Academy Editions, 1995, 87.
[4] ibid.
[5] Sheehy, 179.
[6] For a contemporary analysis of this see Catherine Nash. 'Gender and Landscape in Ireland'. Cullen, *Sources in Irish Art,* 302-308.
[7] MacColl, 'A Last Word on the Hugh Lane Affair', 13.
[8]BI TB to C.D.Medley, 1 November 1945.
[9] S.B.Kennedy, 1.
[10] ibid., 28.
[11] Gordon Bowe, *Harry Clarke*, 1.
[12] Yeats in his mature work used the poetic act of ***prolepsis***, described by Joseph Hassett, paraphrasing Robert Graves, as a technique which draws the future into the present. Joscph Hassett, 'The Echo at Coole', Sean Tobin, ed., *Reflections at Coole, Galway, Lady Gregory Autumn Gatherings*, 2000. This indicates that Yeats cannot easily be categorised in traditional terms; symbolism was his method and his biographer, Richard Ellmann refers to him as 'a modern man'. *Yeats: the Man and the Masks*, 298.
[13] S.B.Kennedy, 85-6. One exception was the first purchase by the Trust, 'The Liffey Swim' by Jack Yeats, bought from the artist's studio in December 1930 and presented to the National Gallery, although it did not precisely fulfil the terms of Haverty's will. Hilary Pyle, 'The National Gallery of Ireland's collection of Paintings by Jack B. Yeats', Brian P. Kennedy ed., *Art is my life: a Tribute to James White*, Dublin, NGI, 155.
[14] TB. 'A Sculptor of Towering Genius'. *Birmingham Post*, 22 August 1959. Epstein was commissioned by Lane to do a bronze bust of Lady Gregory, much admired by TB and now at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art.
[15] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*, 146.
[16] TCD Bodkin papers 6941 TB to Hon. Mrs. Carruthers, 18 February 1946: 'Picasso has become a dangerous portent who ought to be attacked.'
[17] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 180, reports the sale in Sothebys of drawings by Matisse and Gaudier-Brzeska, lots 134,135, 25 November 1959.
[18] 'Henri Matisse: Doyen of Modern French Painters", Birmingham Post, 5 November 1954. This is unsigned but the tone is that of TB who was then art critic for the newspaper. While admiring the "child-like charm and spontaneity of the artist's work, he felt that the impermanence of the material of the collages acquired by many foreign museums "will undoubtedly prevent them from contributing to the lasting fame of their maker."
[19] TCD McGreevy papers, 8132/40-52 TB to T.McGreevy, 28 February 1934 .
[20] NGI Copy of TB's speech at the reception introducing recent acquisitions, 1934
[21] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 180 reports the sale in Sothebys of drawings by John and Sargent, lots 32-36, 4 November 1959.
[22] O'Byrne, *Hugh Lane*. In 1913 Lane described John as 'the painter of most genius that England has produced for a hundred years.' 121.

[23] Mulready was represented most, with 14 of his works shown at Bodkin Irish Collection exhibition at Municipal Gallery, June/July 1962.
[24] This painting shows with TB, W.B.Yeats, AE, William Hutcheson Poe, Richard Caulfield Orpen, Dermod O'Brien and Thomas Kelly. Denson, *Tomas Bodkin*, 233, indicates that it was commissioned by TB in 1919. It was presented to the HLMGMA through the Irish Government in 1960.
[25] Nicola Gordon Bowe. 'Art and the Public: the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland'. 75 Years of giving: *FNCI, catalogue 75th Anniversary Exhibition*, August 1999; FNCI Report for the Year 1963 provides a list of the works and their destination. See Appendix 2.
[26] NGI TB to Sir Hutchison Poe, February 1931 saying that his wife had "added another daughter to her family."
[27] Poem by Ann Bodkin Parker, unpublished.
[28] 'Dr. Bodkin Replies' letter to *National Observer*, November 1958.
[29] BI, TB, Memorandum on the duties and functions of the Barber Professor Fine Arts and Director of the Barber Institute, 13 March 1935.
[30] NA 1155/1/6/3 Monk Gibbon to Anne Bodkin Parker, 11 September 1974.
[31] A list of the contents of his suitcase, lost in 1946 indicates that his suits were from Savile Row, he carried a pigskin jewelcase which includes a variety of studs, links and tie pins in pearl, turquoise, and coral and his moonstone dress stud was claw mounted with 'a good-sized emerald'. His gloves were yellow doeskin and his dressing gown was silk.
[32] TCD Bodkin papers, 6934 Broadcast archive, H.L.Morrow, 7 February 1954.
[33] NA 1155/1/4/27 TB's diary entry, 1 April 1935.
[34] TCD McGreevy papers 8132/40-52 TB to T.McGreevy, 2 April 1960.
[35] NA1155/1/6/3 Monk Gibbon, Outline of biography of TB, ms.
[36] Denson, *Thomas Bodkin*, 201 quoting Sir Patrick Hannon, a Conservative MP and friend of TBs.
[37] NA 1155/1/6/3 Monk Gibbon 'Outline of biography of Thomas Bodkin', 1.
[38] ibid.
[39] Michael Swan. 'Mr Berenson and Modern Art'. Book review, *Times Literary Supplement,* 27 November 1953, 756.
[40] TCD Bodkin papers, Broadcast archive, Radio Eireann, 7 August 1946.

APPENDIX 1

The following is a list of works acquired by purchase during the directorship of Thomas Bodkin at the National Gallery of Ireland from 1927 to 1935. It does not include works received through presentation or bequest during that period.

Paintings

NGI 971	Barry, James	*A Self-portrait as Timanthes*	1934
954	Bassano, Leandro	*The building of the Ark*	1932
912	Belle, Alexis	*Sir Charles Haggerston*	1928
943	Biondo, Giovanni del	*The Virgin and Child with Angels*	1931
911	Brueghel, Pieter (Y)	*A Peasant Wedding*	1928
950	Corot with Daubigny	*A Landscape*	1931
973	Cranach, Lucas (E)	*St. Christopher*	1934
959	Dance, Nathaniel	*Arthur Murphy Actor and Author*	1933
964	Delacroix, Eugene	*Demosthenes on the Seashore*	1934
969	Fisher, Jonathan	*A Landscape*	1934
965	Forain, Jean	*A Scene in the Law Courts*	1934
974	German School 16th century	*A Portrait of a young lady*	1934
896	Hasselt, Izaak van	*A Beggar before a doorway*	1927
951	Hayes, Edwin	*A Coast Scene*	1932
904	Hecke, Claesz v. der	*A Landscape*	1928
895	Irish School	*George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne*	1927
933	Kessel, Joannes van	*The Dam at Amsterdam*	1930
890	Lastman, Pieter	*Joseph selling corn in Egypt*	1927
952	Longhi, Pietro	*Portrait of the artist painting a lady*	1932
903	Master of Tired Eyes	*A Portrait of an old lady*	1928
963	Mulready, William	*A Gypsy Encampment*	1933
928*	Mulvany, George	*Portrait of Rev. Thomas Burke, OP*	1930
955	Orpen, William	*The Portugese Lady*	1932
956	do.	*Looking at the Sea*	1932
957	do.	*Sunlight*	1932
970	do.	*The Knacker's Yard*	1934
891	Osborne, Walter	*Portrait of J.B.S.McIlwaine*	1927
920	Perronneau, J-B	*A Portrait of a gentleman*	1929
942	Perugino	*The Pietà*	1931
939	Pillement, Jean	*A Landscape with muleteers and peasants*	1930
940	do.	*A Landscape with weavers and peasants*	1930
896	Robert, Hubert	*Apotheosis of J.J.Rousseau*	1927
935	Roberts, Thomas	*A Landscape with a horse and donkeys*	1930
916	Ruisdael, Jacob van	*A Stormy Sea*	1929
893	Russell, Charles	*The O'Connell Centenary Celebrations*	1927
944	Sadler, William	*A Revenue Raid*	1931
902	Seisenegger, Jacob	*Portrait of a Lady*	1928

900	Siberechts, Jan	*A Landscape with figures*	1928
966	Sisley, Alfred	*The Canal du Loing at St. Mammes*	1934
913	Smith, Stephen (Y)	*John Dwyer Gray, Journalist and Patriot*	1928
967	Whelan, Leo	*Rory O'Connor, Revolutionary & Soldier*	1934
894	Wyck, Thomas	*A Portrait of a Lady*	1927
914	Zeitblom, Bartholome	*The Descent of the Holy Spirit*	1928
962	Zurbaran, Francesco	*St. Justa (now St. Rufina)*	1933

Drawings and other works on paper

2923	Buck, Adam	*Young girl walking by a river*	1930
10552	Frye, Thomas	*Self-portrait* (mezzotint)	1930
2939	Gregory, Robert	*Padraic Colum*	1932
2940	Gregory, Robert	*John Synge*	1932
2938	Gregory, Robert (attributed to)	*Sarah Allgood*	1932
2925	Hamilton, Hugh D.	*Walter Hussey Burgh MP* (pastel)	1931
2917-22	Holiday, Henry	*6 pencil drawings*	1930
2934	Irish School 20th cent.	*Douglas Hyde*	1932
2935	Kernoff, Harry	*Portrait of Sean O'Casey*	1932
2913	Mulready, William	*The Bathers surprised* (for oil 611)	1930
2950	Mulready, William	*The Sonnet*	1933
2949	Mulvany, John S. (attributed to)	*Portrait of Sir John Gilbert*	1932
2929	Orpen, William	*Job*	1931
3778	Orpen, William	*The Play Scene from Hamlet*	1935
2931	Orpen, William	*Portrait of Michael Davitt*	1934
2932	Orpen, William	*Portrait of William O'Brien*	1934
2948	Orpen, William	*Study for the 'Irish Wedding' picture* (now *The Western Wedding*)	1933
2842	Poussin, Nicholas	*The Marriage of Thetis and Peleus* (now *Acis and Galatea* (for oil 814)	1928
2933	Russell, George	*Portrait of W.B.Yeats*	1932
2930	Wheatley, Francis	*Entry of Speaker into the Irish House of Commons*	1934
2941-7 3936-7	Yeats, John B.	9 drawings of Irish personalities	1932

Sculpture

8108	Moore, Christopher	*Bust of Mr. Justice Perrin*	1930

*NGI Director's Report 1930 indicates that this was purchased. NGI catalogue indicates that it was presented.

Note: NGI Director's Report 1931 records the purchase of a miniature by Adam Buck of his sister, *Mrs. Williams*. This has not been located in NGI catalogues. The Report of 1932 records the acquisition of seven aquatint views of 18th century Dublin which have not been identified.

Sources: National Gallery of Ireland, *Register 2, Pictures 729-1829.*
National Gallery of Ireland, *Director's Reports* 1927-1935.
National Gallery of Ireland: Illustrated Summary Catalogue of Paintings. Dublin: NGI, 1981.
National Gallery of Ireland Illustrated Summary Catalogue of Drawings, Watercolours and Miniatures. Dublin: NGI, 1983
National Gallery of Ireland Illustrated Summary Catalogue of Prints and Sculpture. Dublin: NGI, 1988.

APPENDIX 2

The following is a list of 38 works which formed the Bodkin bequest to the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland in 1963. They were distributed by the FNCI to galleries throughout the country and are currently been researched for location and provenance. (No. 3 is not in the NGI collection and may be the same picture as No. 30).

Destination	Title of Work
National Gallery of Ireland	1 *Stormy Landscape* by George Barret NGI 1760
	2 *Jacomo and Imogen (from Cymbeline)* by James Barry NGI 1759
	3 *Life Study, Man leaning on left knee* by Mulready (not currently attributed to him at NGI)
Ulster Museum	4 *Birth of Venus* by James Barry
	5 Proof engravings in colour of *Birth of Venus*
	6 *Study of a Girl* by Orpen
Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery	7 *Portrait of a Young Mandarin* by G. Chinnery
	8 *Rousseau's Tomb* by Daubigny
	9 *Marsh's Library* by Walter Osborne
	10 *Drawing of a Girl* by Orpen
Sligo County Library and Museum	11 *Stephen and Marie Mackenna* by Mary Duncan
	12 *Plaster Head of James Stevens* by Albert Power
	13 *The Basket Weavers* by R. Mannix
	14 *Portrait of Michael Davitt* by Orpen
	15 *Portrait of Thomas Bodkin* by Estella Solomons
	16 *Portrait Drawing of Mancini* by J.B.Yeats
	17 *A Dublin Model* by Orpen
Drogheda Art Gallery	18 *Affectionate Couple* by Beatrice Elvery RHA
	19 *Miniature on Ivory of Artist's Hand* by Mulready
Dublin Civic Museum	20 *Ruins of Howth Abbey* by Hugh Frazer
	21 *Portrait of an Officer* by R. Gibbs
Kirwan House, Dublin	22 *Rev. Walter Blake Kirwan* by Hugh Hamilton
	23 Mezzotint engraving of painting by W.Ward
Art Gallery, Castlebar	24 *Portrait of old man in green coat and gold Buttons* by Nathaniel Hone RA
	25 *Portrait of a Clergyman* by Thomas Lawrence

	26 *Life Study Male Nude* by Mulready
Art Gallery, Kilkenny	27 *Pastel Portrait of Joseph Kelly* – Irish School 28 *Wife of a Provost of Trinity, in Mop-Cap*- Irish School
Art Gallery, Waterford	29 *Coloured Woman* – Irish School 30 *Life Study, Man leaning on left knee* by Mulready (see No. 3 above)
Art Gallery, Galway	31 *Landscape with Figures* – Irish School 32 *Portrait of the artist in his studio* by R.T.Moynan
Crawford Gallery, Cork	33 *Female Life study*, by Mulready 34 *Landscape with Farmhouse* by Mulready 35 *Study of Man with Rosary* by George Sharp
Art Gallery Limerick	36 *Life Study of Woman*, by William Mulready 37 *Portrait Drawing, Man in Grey Coat and White Stock* by William Mulready 38 *The Young Hairdresser* by William Mulready

Source: Friends of the National Collections archive, Report for the Year 1963, Hon. Secretary's Report, 12-13; *National Gallery of Ireland Illustrated Summary Catalogue of Paintings*, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1981

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