

Doctorate

James Owen Hannay was awarded an honorary doctorate of literature during 1946 from Trinity College Dublin. [\[vii\]](#)

Ministry

When James O. Hannay graduated during 1888 he was ordained as an Anglican minister. He began his ministry work as a curate in Delgany, Co. Wicklow. He served as chaplain to the Viceroy. He served as chaplain in France & Flanders during W. W. 2. He opened a small chapel at St. Lunain. He also ministered in Budapest to the British legation. Following this he published an essay titled *Man to Man* in a collection of essays with Anglican chaplains that had served with a titled *The Church in the Furnace*. He was rector of Carnelway in Co. Kildare from 1918-1920. [\[viii\]](#)

Clergyman James O. Hannay ministered in Westport at Holy Trinity Church also outlying churches from 1892. [\[ix\]](#)

James O. Hannay was ordained deacon during 1888. He was appointed curate of Delgany, Co. Wicklow. In 1889 he received priest's orders. He accepted the position of rector of Westport, Co. Mayo: a small ministering occasion to five small & remote congregations. During 1935 James O. Hannay moved to the parish of Holy Trinity, Kensington, England. There he remained for life as he continued to perform his parochial duties throughout the Blitz. [\[x\]](#)

Rev. James O. Hannay was appointed canon of St. Patrick's for the period of 1912-22. He was appointed rector of Kildare Parish from 1918-20. He acted as chaplain to the Viceroy also to the British Ambassadorial Legation in Budapest during 1922. He then moved to the Anglican House in Mells, Somerset, for the years 1924-34. James O. Hannay was appointed vicar to the Holy Trinity Church in Kensington for the last years of his ministry 1934-50. [\[xi\]](#)

J. O. Hannay was appointed rector of Kildare parish from 1918-1920. He served as chaplain to the Viceroy of Ireland. He joined the British ambassadorial team during 1922 in Budapest. James Hannay returned to Mells Somerset in South West England. He officiated there from 1924 to 1934 as canon of the Holy Trinity Church in South Kensington, London where he served until his demise. He was appointed vicar of Holy Trinity Church in the London suburb of Kensington where he served from 1934. [\[xii\]](#)

Historic Events

Rev. J. O Hannay made history as he celebrated the first holy communion service in the Irish language on St. Patrick's Day at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. He administered holy communion at three locations from 1914-1916 on each consecutive Easter Sunday at Bealieu, aboard the Lusitania also in a Y. M C.A. hut! [\[xiii\]](#)

Marriage

During 1889 J. O. Hannay married Adelaide Wynne daughter of Frederick Richards Wynne (1827-1896) a Church of Ireland clergyman who was later ordained a Bishop. This site has an image of Ada & J. O. Hannay (*Birmingham*) at Westport. [\[xiv\]](#)

During 1889 he married his third cousin Adelaide Susan Wynne (*d. 1933*) (*for whom he claimed literally to have conceived 'love at first sight'*) They had two sons also two daughters. [\[xv\]](#)

Joint Effort

On his wife's advice once he gave up writing fiction. He committed himself to the study of Christian theology with her. They produced two publications; *The Spirit and Origin of Christian Monasticism* in 1903 also *The Wisdom of the Desert* during 1904:

<http://www.nd.edu/Departments/Maritain/etext/wd.htm> [xvi]

J/ O'Hannay studied church theology with his wife. They published two books listed at <http://geobirmin.com/en/profil01.html>

Lecturer

James O. Hannay was appointment Donnellan lecturer for 1901 at Trinity College. [xvii]

He lectured in Ireland at the following venues: Trinity College Dublin, the Limerick Young Protestants Society, Sinn Féin also the National Union of Women's Suffragette Societies. He toured in the U. S. also as a lecturer. [xviii]

Final Visit

During 1946 James O. Hannay paid his final visit to Ireland to accept an Honorary Litt. D. from Trinity College Dublin. [xix]

Westport

He was instrumental in founding a literary circle with most of its members Anglo - Irish Protestants like himself. His wife Ada spoke of the literary merits of poems by the Young Irelanders at one such event. Several of his novels were written during both the Hannay's time in Westport. He founded a Temperance Society, a Literary Society: he was chairman of the Protestants Orphan Society. He acted as chaplain also board member of the Westport workhouse. (*Unfortunately for him the Catholic Clergy in the town objected to several of his writings*). [xx]

Gaelic League

He longed for an Independent Ireland. His conflict regarding nationalism & unionism was represented most vividly in *Benedict Kavanagh* also *The Northern Iron* which were published during 1907. [xxi]

James O. Hannay defended also he explained that he tried to persuade Irish Protestants of its importance & value to them. He was elected to the Coiste Gnólha Executive of the League. He penned several articles in defence of the Gaelic League in the Church of Ireland *Gazette*. At the General Synod of the Church of Ireland during 1912 he was the sole member to support home rule. In *The Mayo News* 19th May 1906 a joint statement was published of several Catholic priests who denounced Hannay: they also demanded an apology. At a meeting of the Gaelic League with twenty-two members present that same year on 27th September the chairman (*a Catholic priest*) made a motion to expel him: the motion carried as J. O. Hannay withdrew from his position. [xxii]

Pseudonym

James O. Hannay initially used the pseudonym *George A. Birmingham* for reasons of confidentiality He maintained it after the revelation of his true identity also eventually used it even for serious theological works. He used the pseudonym *Eoghan* when he wrote for the Irish Protestant of Lindsay Crawford (*qv*) & Sinn Féin edited by Arthur Griffith (*qv*). The revelation during 1906 that James O. Hannay was Birmingham aroused considerable local & national controversy. [xxiii]

Publications

As a young curate James O. Hannay had collaborated with his wife Ada to make up deficiencies in their living standards by writing articles. He forwarded his first work to a London publisher. When it was accepted he received a cheque for ten pounds. He penned books on Christian theology *Spirit and Origin of Christian Monasticism* during 1903. [xxiv]

He produced periodicals in the Irish, British also American press. His first work was a biography of his father-in-law Frederick R. Wynne D. D. Bishop of Killaloe. [xxv]

He published in 1904 *Wisdom of the Desert (Scriptoria Books)* under his own name. [xxvi].

While living in Co. Mayo Hannay used the pseudonym G. A. Birmingham to publish a large volume of fiction that included: *The Lighter Side of Life, Spanish Gold* to name but two. His *From Connacht to Chicago* was also published as *From Dublin to Chicago*. The novel *Over the Border* was a humorous one that portrayed his sincere wish for reconciliation between every humour. During 1939 his *Appeasement* was published. Further publications included *The Seething Pot, Hyacinth* also *General John Regan (those three volumes antagonized the clergy in Westport.)* [xxvii]

His lectures were subsequently published as *The spirit and origin of Christian Monasticism* in 1903. [xxviii].

He described in *A wayfarer in Hungary* 1925 his years from 1922-1924 when he was chaplain to the British legation in Budapest. [xxix]

Biographies

J. O. Hannay penned two biographies *Isaiah* during 1937 then *Jeremiah* in 1939 with a political essay. [xxx]

Footnotes

[vii] <http://geo-birmin.com/en/profil01.html>

[viii] Ibid

[ix] www.eprintsmaynoothuniversity.ie

[x] <https://www.dib.ie/biography/hannay-james-owen-george-a-birmingham-a3791>

[xi] http://www.ricorso.net/rx/az-data/authors//b/Birmingham_GA/life.htm

[xii] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_A._Birmingham

[xiii] www.eprintsmaynoothuniversity.ie

[xiv] <http://geo-birmin.com/en/profil01.html>

[xv] <https://www.dib.ie/biography/hannay-james-owen-george-a-birmingham-a3791>

[xvi] <http://geo-birmin.com/en/profil01.html>

- [xvii] <https://www.dib.ie/biography/hannay-james-owen-george-a-birmingham-a3791>
- [xviii] www.eprintsmannoothuniversity.ie
- [xix] <https://www.dib.ie/biography/hannay-james-owen-george-a-birmingham-a3791>
- [xx] www.eprintsmannoothuniversity.ie
- [xxi] <http://geo-birmin.com/en/profil01.html>
- [xxii] www.eprintsmannoothuniversity.ie
- [xxiii] <https://www.dib.ie/biography/hannay-james-owen-george-a-birmingham-a3791>
- [xxiv] www.hathitrust.org
- [xxv] <http://geo-birmin.com/en/profil01.html>
- [xxvi] www.scriptoriabooks.com
- [xxvii] http://www.ricorso.net/rx/az-data/authors//b/Birmingham_GA/life.htm
- [xxviii] <https://www.dib.ie/biography/hannay-james-owen-george-a-birmingham-a3791>
- [xxix] Ibid
- [xxx] http://www.ricorso.net/rx/az-data/authors//b/Birmingham_GA/life.htm