

THE MARTIN J. KELLY WRITING CONTEST OF THE IRISH CULTURAL SOCIETY (2019)

ELIGIBILITY: Open to all students in grades 9 to 12 in the schools in Nassau County.

PROJECT: An interior monologue presenting the thoughts of an Irish soldier fighting in the British army in World War I. The Irish artist William Orpen's painting "Thinker on the Butte," enclosed with these materials and available on the Web, provides a visual image of such an Irish soldier.

Contest entrants will "rent a space" in the head of an Irish soldier. What is he thinking about? Survival? Home? Comrades? The rising against the British in his native Ireland in 1916? The "Christmas Truce" and so on? The writers have free rein to create the thoughts of their soldiers. We ask the entrant to write a 300-400 word monologue.

USEFUL RESOURCES: The Web has very helpful articles for background on WWI and Irish participation in WWI. We list several subjects worth searching and we list more on our Web site: <http://www.irish-society.org> "Helpful Hints."

The National War Memorial Islandbridge

"Over the top"

The Easter Rising 1916

Poison gas

The Christmas Truce 1914

Trench warfare

There are excellent films and many books on World War I, including novels, plays and poetry, a sampling of which we list in "Helpful Hints." Interior monologues, such as William Shakespeare's soliloquies, "My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning and "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe, are commonly read in our high schools.

CRITERIA: The judge will rate most highly those entries which create a convincing character. The soldier has to be made to be Irish, and the reader has to be aware that the soldier's thoughts and reflections are made in the context of the violence of war.

ENTRY FORMAT: Typed; writer's name at end of entry; no school identification **DEADLINE:** March 17, 2019

COVER SHEET: Writer's name; email address; school; sponsoring teacher

PRIZES: 1st prize (3): \$200; 2nd prize (3): \$150; 3rd prize (3) \$125; 4th prize (35): \$35

A gift of a book will be awarded to the school libraries of all students who enter this contest.

All entrants will receive a Certificate of Merit.

Sponsor: **The H.W. Wilson Foundation**

MAIL ENTRIES TO:

**Irish Cultural Society
Box 247
Garden City, NY 11530**