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## Editor's Note

Professor Stanford was able to revise some of the typescript of this book but not all. As an editor of ancient Greek texts he was meticulous. I hope that the editing which was done on his text would meet his exacting standards. The text is almost entirely unchanged from the version he had. Some unnecessary repetition has been removed in just a few cases, which I am confident he would have removed too. The use of capital letters is a matter of style; and his style was to use them sparingly. This has been respected.

Stanford's interest in poetry was lifelong. In 1980 he published a *cri de coeur* entitled *Enemies of Poetry*. Many of his own poems appeared in newspapers and other transient journals. A few were included in anthologies of Irish poetry. But they were never collected in a single volume. Indeed many were still in manuscript and had never been published at all as far as I know. A selection of these has been used to illustrate the text in a personal and vivid way. I hope Professor Stanford would have been pleased.

The photographs are from the family archives. The source is acknowledged where this is known.

Ross Hinds  
Brussels

March 2001

# Foreword

William Bedell Stanford was a dominant figure in Trinity College for almost half a century, and in many ways, epitomised the ideal of the teacher/scholar on which the enduring academic eminence of the College has chiefly rested down the centuries. For forty years he held the Regius Chair of Greek, and brought further lustre to the great tradition of Classical scholarship at the College, maintaining his department as one of the premier Schools of Classics in Europe.

He won international fame as a pre-eminent scholar who, in a series of books, articles and meticulously edited texts, extended our understanding of the creative genius of the Greek poets, especially the Masters of Epic, Tragedy and Comedy. He wrote with the precision and thoroughness of the scholar, but with the lucidity and insight of one who had himself considerable poetic powers and had thought deeply about the poet's craft.

As a teacher he had flair and enthusiasm and the eloquence to inspire and to communicate his belief in the unique merit of what he taught. In the best collegial tradition he knew his students personally, entertained them in his home and advised and encouraged them. Small wonder then that no less than 30 of his students have themselves gained distinction as classicists in leading universities around the world.

His collegial spirit also meant for him total immersion in the affairs of the College, in its social life, in the work of all its deliberative bodies, in the recording of its history, which led to splendid studies of memorable Trinity figures such as Mahaffy and Tyrrell.

But his spirit of service extended far beyond College. School and church benefited from his active involvement, and for 21 years he was a widely respected member of Seanad Éireann, an eloquent authoritative voice for the way of reason, tolerance and humanity.

His distinguished achievements and his life of dedication to the College were rewarded in 1983 with the honour that he valued most, his election as Chancellor of the University. It was a fitting climax to a career of such exceptional eminence.

One final work from Professor Stanford's pen is now about to appear, his *Memoirs*. There will be a widespread welcome for this book. It is fascinating not only because of the literary skills of its author, but because it deals with a pivotal era of adjustment and evolution in both Ireland and Trinity College. And Professor Stanford is a commentator of impeccable credentials. He had first-hand experience of the political and religious tensions affecting the country and the College; he was immersed in the affairs of both, and had the scholar's eye to observe and record with accuracy and insight. I welcome this work most heartily and am honoured to have the opportunity to write this foreword for it.

Thomas N. Mitchell  
Provost

February 2001



*W. B. Stanford outside the Four Courts in 1957 when giving evidence in defence of Alan Simpson and the Pike Theatre in the case concerning The Rose Tattoo by Tennessee Williams*