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| MacGreevy, Thomas (1950-1963) |
| Thomas McGreevy |
| Thomas MacGreevy was a poet, art and literary critic, and Director of the National Gallery of Ireland (1950-63). MacGreevy was born in 1893, during the closing decades of the British Empire, in Tarbert, County Kerry, one of the most westerly points of both the Empire and Europe. His childhood, pleasant and uneventful, provided him with the dual pillars of faith and nationalism that underpinned the vast majority of his writings. These pillars found their expression in writing in the early 1920s, after he returned to live in Ireland after working as a Civil Servant in London from 1912, and serving as a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery in the BEF in 1917-18.  MacGreevy is an extremely autobiographic poet. The poems in the single book of poetry to appear in his lifetime, *Poems*, (Heinemann, 1934) were ordered chronologically (as opposed to thematically or when they were written). War: the Great War, the Anglo-Irish War, and the Irish Civil War, are reoccurring themes. While much of MacGreevy’s poetry was about Ireland, exile provided the necessary geographic and psychic distance to write about it. MacGreevy, attuned to the new in both the written and visual arts, wrote what the Irish poet and critic Anthony Cronin described as ‘the most perfectly modulated free verse written in the period in English, Ireland, or America’. |
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| Further reading:  (Coughlan and Davis)  (Cronin)  (Schreibman)  (Schreibman, Collected Poems of Thomas MacGreevy: An Annotated Edition)  (Thomas MacGreevy Archive ) |