

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

A Critical Biography of Maurice Duggan, 1922-1974.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree
of PhD in English at
Massey University

Ian Murray Richards
1995.

Abstract

'A Critical Biography of Maurice Duggan, 1922-1974' aims to provide a detailed and fully researched picture of Maurice Duggan's life and its inter-relationship with his literary output. It describes Duggan's personal history, and intersperses these chapters with sections giving New Critical 'close readings' of his stories. The thesis also goes some way towards providing a portrait of a literary generation, of the remarkable, 'larger than life' writers who lived on the North Shore of Auckland in the middle of this century, during a crucial period of New Zealand's literary history.

Duggan died tragically young at the age of fifty two, and much of his life was dogged by ill health. Osteomyelitis led to the amputation of a leg at seventeen. He contracted tuberculosis while travelling in Spain and suffered a severe relapse after his return to New Zealand. Later he became an alcoholic, and it was only a short time after going into recovery that the cancer which ended his life was diagnosed. Duggan was one of the most talented writers New Zealand has produced. James K. Baxter shrewdly described him as 'our finest poet writing in prose'.

Duggan's output was small, and his *oeuvre* is considered difficult to read. Most of Duggan's troubled inner world remained hidden, both in his public and private life, despite the evidence that much of the material in his stories is based on self-analysis of aspects of his history and psychology. Thus his stories become clearer, and more satisfying for the prospective reader, when approached with a knowledge of the writer's life.

Contents

Introduction.

Acknowledgements.

1. Growing Up and Down.
2. Some Place Names and a Boy.
3. The Views From the North Shore.
4. Back and Back Again.
5. Life in the Putty-Knife Factory.

Immanuel's Land.

6. Nines into Sevens.

Summer in the Gravel Pit.

7. The Life of Riley.

O'Leary's Orchard.

8. Why Doesn't Somebody Wave?

The Magsman Miscellany.

Appendix One. 'Towards a Bibliography of Maurice Duggan.'

Appendix Two. 'Buster's and Fanny's Parting in "Along Rideout Road that
'Summer".'

Appendix Three. 'Duggan's Notes Towards an Essay on James K. Baxter.'

Appendix Four. 'Duggan's Notes Towards an Essay on the Later Works of
Frank Sargeson.'

Bibliography.