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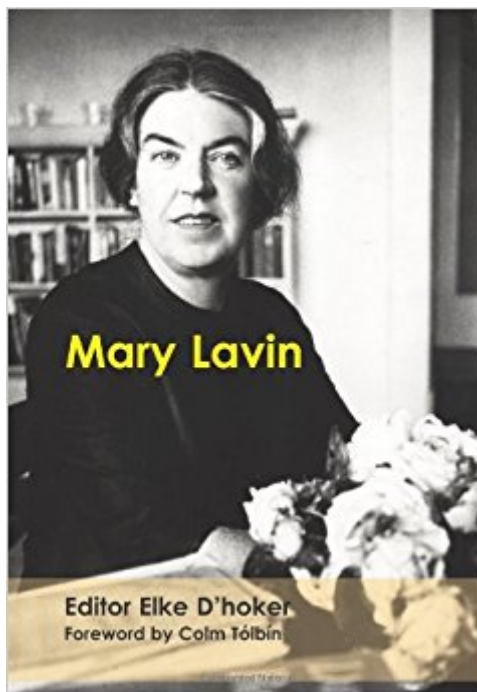
Mary Lavin

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Editor Elke D'hoker
Foreword by Colm Tóibín

Synopsis

Ever since the publication of her first collection, Tales from Bective Bridge, in 1942, Mary Lavin has been praised for admirably capturing, in intense and lucid stories, the social and psychological reality of mid-20th-century Ireland. Yet, Lavin's sharp insight into the quiet tragedies and joys of human life easily transcends its immediate context, and her work continues to appeal to contemporary readers, both in Ireland and abroad. To celebrate the recent centenary of Mary Lavin's birth, this collection honors one of the leading figures of the Irish short story tradition. Leading critics examine the main themes and stylistic features of Mary Lavin's novels and short stories from a variety of perspectives, including gender, sexuality, family, and community. Lavin's work is presented here in its literary, historical, and biographical context, drawing attention to Lavin's indebtedness to modernism, her engagement with popular culture, and the influence of her early American experience. While some contributors offer new insights into such famous stories as In a Cafe or The Becker Wives, others bring to light largely neglected gems, such as The Yellow Beret or The Small Bequest. There is also engagement with new archival material, including Lavin's correspondence with her New Yorker editors and private letters. *** "...an important and timely volume that spells out Lavin's centrality to twentieth-century Irish writing, to the short story form, and to a number of contemporary critical discourses. It paves the way for further work on, for example, Lavin's intertextual relationship to other writers such as Woolf, Mansfield, and Sarah Orne Jewett. Above all, it provides compelling evidence that critical templates can blind us to a writer's work." - Irish Literary Supplement, Vol.34, No.1, Fall 2014 --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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