

Student Life - An Irish Perspective

By Geraldine Mulkerins

My first reaction to the idea of character analysis through handwriting was open mouth and eyes popping. How in the world could a few 'scribbles' on a page done in a hurry (usually) and not very neatly (definitely!) express my temperament, attitude and even my potential? How could someone who had never even met me know me so well?

I had gone to the local library to search for a good book on Psychology. As I was perusing the shelves, I spotted a modest sized hardback with the strange title "*A Manual of Graphology*" by Eric Singer. I thumbed through it and was instantly struck by the author's practical approach – letter shapes and writing samples followed by concise explanations and conclusions. I wanted to learn this skill. I was hooked.

The next step was to find out about a course in Graphology, so it was on to the computer and I typed in: "Graphology + Galway" in to the various search engines. No result. Next: "Handwriting Courses + Ireland". No joy there. A bit miffed, I dropped my homeland from the search and the *British Institute of Graphologists* appeared on the screen. The B.I.G. homepage referred to "brain training" and deviation from the 'copymodel' style to express one's own individuality and personal growth. I decided to dip my toe into this river of knowledge and attended an introductory course in Missenden Abbey conducted by Elaine Quigley. It was an excellent insight into the importance of "first impressions" of the handwriting sample, and it was very satisfying to attempt an analysis from the point of view of size and slant of the script. I went back home thinking I was almost qualified. These days I know better – oh, how the mighty have fallen!

I started studying for the B.I.G. Diploma in 2011. The course material was well laid out and I could manage the assignments in assessing the various aspects of the handwriting samples and delivering short reports on the type of personalities of the writers. The home exam went well and it was a good rehearsal for the supervised exam in London three months later. I was originally surprised at the long interval between the exams, but quickly learned that doing one exam over a number of weeks was definitely not the same as delivering an analysis in a three hour test of skill. I needed to time myself over and over until I could successfully complete an analysis in the time required. Reference material can give a false sense of security in an exam – you have to practice the steps involved to beat the clock.

These days I am working my way through Part 2 Psychology of the B.I.G. syllabus and it is hugely interesting, revealing many of the reasons *why* a person's script is so unique. It has also given me many personal insights and that is one of the benefits of this whole course of study.

There is another aspect of Graphology that I hadn't considered before but has become a major aspect of my studies. My travels to the UK seminars have brought me into direct contact with the key members of the Institute and also fellow students with whom I can share my experiences. But more than that is the warm welcome I receive when I walk through the doors of 63 Bayswater Road and, earlier this year, to the wonderful weekend in Doncaster. I would heartily encourage every student to attend at least one seminar to meet the people who are truly giants in this field.