

Wednesday, July 16, 1958

Novelist Moves To Santa Cruz



Michael Leigh

Santa Cruz received another link in its growing chain of cultural residents recently with the arrival of Michael Leigh, Irish-born novelist with nine published books behind him and a new one coming out through G. P. Putnam and Son next year.

Mr. and Mrs. Leigh, of 40 Washington street, came from Pensacola where Leigh (pronounced Lee) worked as editorial writer and foreign correspondent for the News-Journal, for nine years.

His novels all have an English theme, usually on World War I or II. He listed three of his favorites as "Men Die Along," "Comrade Forest," and "Rogue Errant."

"Rogue Errant" sold 12,000 hardbacks and 100,000 paperbacks.

The work he has recently finished, "The Green Englishman," deals with Sir John Moore's retreat to Coruna during the peninsula war in Spain between Wellington and Napoleon.

Leigh has had his close associations with war. As a child in Ireland, he was injured in the eye by flying splinters from bullets being flung about during the Irish rebellion in 1917.

During the last war he again received eye injuries while leading a patrol on the English coast during the Battle of Briton.

"I was a member of the King's regiment in coastal defense. We were bombed by a Stukas. I was the only survivor," he said.

The Leighs came to the United States in 1947. During his employment in Pensacola he covered the news events in Central America for the Perry newspaper chain during 1957.

He has also reported in the middle east and Europe under the auspices of an American-Christian Palestine fellowship.

Leigh's present writing schedule is about 4000 words a day working in the mornings and evenings. During the day he works with the Stoller Research company, 1200 Fair avenue.

The Leighs were tipped off on Santa Cruz while in Florida.

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