

# **Thomas Kernan and the fiddle traditions of the Connemara region: a critical analysis of selected fiddle sources 1844 to 1973**

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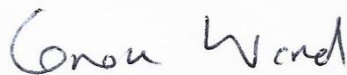
## Declaration

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation examines the evolution of fiddle music in the Connmhaicne region of Connacht and Leinster in the period between *c*1825 and *c*1975. The seminal figure in the development and transmission of fiddle music in this region is Thomas Kernan (*c*1807-1887). Kernan's music and his methods of teaching were passed down through successive generations of fiddle players, thereby creating a localised sub-culture of fiddle music.

The dissertation consists of two volumes. Volume I is divided into three parts providing historical and musicological context. Volume II presents a new critical edition of the source repertoire, increasing the accessibility and dissemination of the music sources.

Volume 1, Part 1 presents an historical overview of the ancient region of Connmhaicne where Kernan's music emerged. This is followed by a critical analysis of the major factors that contributed to the rise and decline of fiddle music in this region, including the influence of Kernan and a number of his students, who later became fiddle teachers. Conversely, the loss of these full-time teachers from the end of the nineteenth century onwards led to a decline in fiddle music between *c*1900 and *c*1975, a trend that was further compounded by other contributory factors such as emigration, the steady rise of the melodeon to the detriment of the fiddle, and growing social apathy towards Irish traditional music in general.

Part Two critically examines a number of written sources and audio sources compiled by musicians from the Connmhaicne region, all of whom were in one way or another connected to Kernan's teaching, in the period under review. Following an analysis of the tangible characteristics of each source, the repertoires were compared using a quantitative methodology in order to determine if fiddle music in Connmhaicne was constantly evolving in response to influences from the wider music community, particularly contemporary printed material.

Part Three considers the fiddle styles and repertoire that emerged among the musicians associated with Kernan's teaching legacy. The results establish that Kernan employed a number of specific methods in his teaching, and that these were later adopted by his successors. These include a bowing technique, termed locally as 'slur and cut', and also prescriptive exercises in preludes, used as a method of establishing good intonation. These learning techniques were consistently passed down from one generation to the next among the musicians of the Connmhaicne region between *c*1825-*c*1975 becoming the cornerstones in the formation of fiddle styles in this localised tradition of musicians.

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# Chapter One

## Introduction

# **1 Chapter One**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This dissertation presents a study of fiddle music evolution in the ancient territory of Connhaicne Maigh Réin (henceforth: *Connhaicne*), a region that covers much of south Leitrim and all of County Longford, from approximately 1825 to 1975. Specific methods of teaching and a body of repertoire were passed on through successive generations of fiddle players in the Connhaicne region. The study focuses on the Longford fiddle master, Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887), also known as ‘Blind’ Kernan, and his students. This localised network of fiddle players, who were connected to each other through Kernan’s teaching, established a homogenous sub-culture of fiddle music in Connhaicne. The tangible remnants of this period of fiddle music consist of several manuscripts and recordings compiled by fiddle players associated with the teaching legacy of Thomas Kernan. These manuscripts and recordings have been critically edited and typeset using Sibelius software to form a critical edition of each written and oral source in Volume II of the dissertation. The musical contents of these sources provide a snapshot of the prevailing music environment at the time of their compilation. In a chronological context, the compilation dates of these written and audio sources are positioned in progressive stages on a timeline between 1844 and 1973. Accordingly, this unbroken continuum of music forms a lens through which the evolution of fiddle music in the Connhaicne region may be studied in terms of style, technique, musical literacy and repertoire. Through the prism of this localised fiddle tradition, the results of this study may offer a model for understanding how fiddle music developed, not only within this sub-culture of musicians, but across the entire spectrum of Irish fiddle music between c1825 and c1975. The critical edition will also enable performers and the Irish traditional music community to access material hitherto unavailable.

## 1.2 Rationale

While the Connmaicne region of south Leitrim and County Longford was historically a vibrant region of Irish music, discourse on the regional varieties of Irish music, however, has tended to focus on the western seaboard of Ireland omitting in the process lesser known regions such as Connmaicne (Kearney, 2010, p. 154). This oversight is alluded to by Harry Bradshaw (Vice Voce, 1994) in the title of his compilation album, *Packie Dolan: The forgotten fiddle player of the 1920s*, which contains the re-mastered commercial recordings of Packie Dolan (1904-1932), who was a renowned fiddle player from north Longford. Continuing on from the research endeavours of Bradshaw, this study has arisen from a personal motivation, firstly to commemorate the past fiddle players of the Connmaicne region, secondly to promote and disseminate through a new critical edition the historical fiddle music that they played, and lastly to firmly place Thomas Kernan and the tradition of fiddle music of Connmaicne into the discourse on the history of Irish fiddle music.

I have a personal relationship with the subject area as I am a fiddle player from Annaduff, County Leitrim, who was reared within this greater musical region of Connmaicne. My interest emerged initially through my fiddle teacher Enda McNamara (b.1976) of Aughavas, County Leitrim and afterwards as a member of the Céilí band *Ceolus*, founded and trained by Fr John Quinn (b.1940), P.P., Gortletteragh, County Leitrim. The nucleus of this ensemble has for the most part been composed of musicians from within this region, thereby forging tight connections between the members and their musical heritage.

My immersion in this ensemble of regional music-making has provided me with another motivation in compiling this dissertation: to highlight the unheralded work of Fr John Quinn as an antiquarian and promoter of our local musical heritage. Several of the sources that will be examined in this dissertation have come to light as a consequent of his endeavours as a

regional collector. In this capacity he also brought recognition to the fiddle master Thomas Kernan and identified a lineage of Kernan's musical successors. Without his dedication, the fiddle music of Connhaicne may long have disappeared into the shadows of history.

*Ceolus* is one of many bands trained by Fr Quinn during his career, and the year 2016 marked the fiftieth anniversary of his mentoring activities with bands. In addition to his role as band master, Fr Quinn has also individually taught several students to play the fiddle, and indeed other instruments, such as the banjo, banjo-mandolin and button accordion. The central ethos of Fr Quinn's mentoring of both bands and individuals is to preserve, promote and revitalise the historical music of the region, which is stored in the vast amount of manuscripts and recordings compiled by regional musicians over the last two hundred years. On these fronts he has been very successful as several of his individual students, and members of his bands, continue to disseminate the music throughout Ireland and further afield.

Aware of the local musical heritage of the area, in this study I will engage with the concept of regionalisation in Irish traditional music with a particular focus on a network of musicians connected with Thomas Kernan across space and time. It is necessary to develop an understanding of a region in terms of networks and processes. The central network engaged with in this study is that of Kernan's musical lineage – his students and their subsequent generations of students. The principal processes are the notation and collection of music and the transmission of this music locally. To date, no attention has been paid to the musical traditions of this region or the life and legacy of Thomas Kernan beyond the work of Fr Quinn and other local musicians.

### **1.3 Aims of the research**

The main aims of this study are:

- The creation of a critical edition of the four manuscript collections and three audio catalogues compiled by fiddle players from the Connmhaicne region of south Leitrim and County Longford during the period 1844 to 1973 with extensive historical narrative and genealogical information.
- To deepen understanding of the fiddle master Thomas Kernan's life and character and establish the role he played in the development of fiddle music in Connmhaicne.
- To provide evidence of distinctive characteristics of musical style amongst the musicians and sources in this study.
- To document the evolution of fiddle music in this localised region of Connmhaicne through a critical analysis of the maintenance/changes in repertoire and musical practice.

### **1.4 Principal research questions**

In order to achieve these aims, the following questions were posed:

- What evidence exists in the sources of music from this region that provide information and historical context for a Connmhaicne fiddle tradition?

- Is there sufficient evidence in the examinable written and audio sources to demonstrate the evolution of Irish music in this region and, if so, does the results of this study provide an example or model of how fiddle music evolved across other music regions of Ireland?
- How influential is Thomas Kernan in the Connmhaicne fiddle tradition?

## 1.5 Chapter outline

This dissertation begins with an introductory chapter focusing on the rationale, aims, research questions, literature review and methodology of this study. The remainder of the dissertation, Chapter Two to Chapter Ten, is divided into three parts, followed by a Conclusion in Chapter Eleven. Part One, consisting of Chapter Two to Chapter Three, considers the factors of people, place and region which contributed to the emergence, expansion and eventual decline of fiddle music among the lineage of musicians connected to the teaching of Thomas Kernan. To study the effect of these factors on the repertoires of the musicians, Part Two, consisting of Chapter Four to Chapter Eight examines in detail a large number of manuscripts and audio recordings that have emerged from this localised fiddle tradition. Part Three, consisting of Chapter Nine and Chapter Ten, considers the teaching methods employed by Kernan and his successors, the consistent fiddle style portrayed in the manuscripts and recordings, and its mode of transmission from one generation to the next.

Beginning Part One, Chapter Two will initially investigate the ancient region of Connmhaicne, in which the music of this study is located, illustrating in this process the cultural and physical geography, coupled with an account of the literary works and writers that co-existed alongside a tradition of written Irish music. The historical music context that led to the introduction of fiddle music to Connmhaicne will be considered through a survey of the harp and piping music

traditions that had existed in this region prior to the introduction and subsequent expansion of fiddle music. The latter part of this chapter will establish the biographical background of Thomas Kernan and his role in the development of fiddle music in Connmhaicne. Genealogical research, through a survey of historical official documents, will be conducted in order to establish the identity of Kernan in a familial and regional context. In Chapter Three, the history and evolution of fiddle music in Connmhaicne will be examined. The principal social, economic and historical factors shaping the evolution of fiddle music practice in the Connmhaicne region in the period from the early 1700s to c1975 will inform much of this chapter. Attention will initially focus on a number of fiddle teachers associated with the teaching of Kernan, who were active in Connmhaicne over an extended period of time in the nineteenth century, and whose teaching activities may have precipitated the rise and subsequent rapid growth of fiddle music in this area. Focus will also be drawn towards examining the prevailing social and economic factors, such as cultural nationalism and the economic hardships of rural society, both of which supported the expansion of this fiddle music. Conversely, the same factors leading to the spread of fiddle music in the nineteenth century, may also have contributed to its downfall in this region from the start of the twentieth century onwards. In this regard, the last section in Chapter Three will examine themes such as emigration, the absence of fiddle teachers, the growth of social hostility towards Irish music and the rise of show bands, all of which are to be considered as contributory factors for the decline of Irish fiddle music in Connmhaicne in this later period.

Part Two of this dissertation focuses on examining the written and audio sources compiled by the fiddle players from the Connmhaicne region between 1844 and 1973. In the first four chapters of Part Two, ranging from Chapter Four to Chapter Seven, a collection of written fiddle music will be examined in each chapter. The methodology used to investigate the contents of each collection is informed by studies of historical Irish music manuscript collections including Moloney (2000), Buckley (2012) and Slattery (2012). In this

methodological approach, the tangible non-musical meta-data of the manuscripts will be investigated in combination with an analysis of the musical contents. While the same framework will be applied in the thematic structure of each of these chapters, the manuscripts will be treated as discrete bodies of music and, as such, the relative emphasis given to specific topics in each chapter will vary from one chapter to the next in response to the information established in each collection.

Applying this methodological approach, Chapter Four will examine the earliest manuscript in the collection of written sources, the Leonard-Kernan MS. Dates in this document from the 1840s, with the accompanying signatures of “Thomas Kernan” and “Michael Leonard”, suggest that its musical contents may provide details of the repertoire and fiddle techniques that Kernan was teaching and playing towards the beginning of his music career.

Chapter Five looks at the McBrien-Rogers MS, which appears from exploratory research to have been compiled in a later stage of the period under examination. The inscriptions of “B.R.” in the manuscript are signposts to the fiddle teacher, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), who was one of Kernan’s greatest fiddle students, and who went on to emulate his teacher and uncle, Kernan, and became a leading figure in the spread of fiddle music in Connmhaicne in the period leading up to, and including, the turn of the twentieth century.

Chapter Six will investigate the repertoire of the Larry Smyth MS in order to establish its chronology, to examine the type of music that was prevalent in the late-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries, and to determine if music had evolved since the time of Kernan’s earlier compilation of the Leonard-Kernan MS in the 1840s. Further demonstrating the crucial teaching role of Rogers during this period, Smyth’s consistent reference to “Kiernan’s music” throughout this document indicates that Rogers’ teaching was still highly influenced from his

own learning days with Kernan. This presents evidence of transmission of culture across two generations, indicating the development of a tradition.

The last written collection to be examined in Part Two is the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS, which is a collection of at least six manuscripts that appear to have been written by different members of one family of fiddle players across at least three generations. The theme of multi-generational fiddle music within the context of one collection of manuscripts will take a prominent role in the framing of Chapter Seven. Through analysis of the textual evidence and non-textual evidence attempts will be made to determine if the scribes of these manuscripts were taught directly by Kernan or by another teacher associated with Kernan's teaching. The musical contents of the manuscripts provide further evidence for documenting the evolution of fiddle music within this homogenous lineage of musicians related to the teaching of Kernan.

Chapter Eight, the final chapter in Part Two, will interrogate the audio sources of fiddle music recorded by musicians with verified links to Kernan's teaching. The audio sources of fiddle players will be chosen from three categories: (1) fiddle players who emigrated from the Connemara region and commercially recorded in America, (2) regional fiddle players who broadcasted on radio in Ireland, and (3) fiddle players who remained in Connemara throughout their lives, and of whom archival recordings of their playing exists. Of the fiddle players selected, their respective recordings will be converted into music notation in order to examine the repertoire that they were playing and to establish the sources of this repertoire.

The written and audio sources that will be examined in Part Two are representations of the fiddle styles of the respective musicians. Through a collective approach, Part Three will analyse these sources in order to identify and examine the common characteristics of fiddle style that emerged among several generations of fiddle players connected to Kernan's teaching. The individual fiddle styles of the musicians were formed initially at the learning stage of their

career and accordingly, Chapter Nine will investigate the prescriptive teaching methods that are apparent in the written sources of this dissertation. In regard to teaching scales and music theory, focus will be given to examining preludes, examples of which appear in several of the written sources (Keegan, 1992, p. 35). In one such source, the Larry Smyth MS, the title of one particular exercise ‘Preludes by Kiernan’ points towards the leading role of Thomas Kernan in initiating this type of technical exercise among his students, which was then followed by the later generations. This is not typical or widely documented in relation to Irish traditional music. While the large amount of written music surviving in the manuscripts discussed in this dissertation suggests that music was predominantly taught by the teachers through written transmission, Chapter Nine will also investigate the possibility that oral transmission had an equal, if not greater, role in the process of music transmission between the teachers and students. Arising from the transmission processes of teaching and learning, styles were formed among the musicians of this localised fiddle tradition in Connmhaicne.

The last chapter of Part Three, Chapter Ten, will examine the characteristics of style that are most prevalent in the fiddle playing of the musicians from this homogenous fiddle tradition, representations of which are evident in the written and audio sources examined in Part Two. Informed by methodological approaches by Lyth (1981), Smith (2008), Boullier (2012) and (Cranitch, 2006) to the study of fiddle style, the key characteristics of fiddle style evident in the playing of the Connmhaicne musicians will be examined. To establish objectively the prevalence of each element of style in the playing of the musicians connected to Kernan’s teaching, quantitative analysis will be initially conducted on the repertoires of each of the written and audio sources from Volume II. The statistical results of these individual exercises will then be combined to determine if there are particular characteristics of fiddle style commonly shared across the network of fiddle players connected to Kernan’s teaching. Through this process of quantitative analysis, the characteristics of fiddle style identified as

most prevalent among these musicians will be further examined through a qualitative approach, in order to establish the historical and musical contexts of their introduction into this localised tradition of fiddle music. Lastly, Chapter Eleven will provide a summary of the results and conclusions drawn from this study of fiddle music evolvement in the Connmaicne region.

## **1.6 Literature review**

This study is informed by a number of developments in the field of ethnomusicology, focused studies on Irish traditional music and key concepts including tradition, music regions and music revivals. The field of ethnomusicology has developed through the twentieth century and seeks to study music in its cultural context. Critical is the move from a study of the ‘other’ to the emergence of ‘ethnomusicology at home’ (Stock, 2008). While many ethnomusicologists privilege an ethnographic approach, the study of historical sources remains important to understanding the development of traditions (Bohlman, 1996; 2008; Bithell, 2006). One of the seminal figures in the development of ethnomusicology, Alan Merriam highlights an acceptance that “Most, if not all, of the music studied in comparative musicology is transmitted by oral tradition” (1977, p.219). However, as is evidenced in this dissertation, the main focus of chapters four to seven are extant manuscripts and the aim of the project is to produce a critical edition of these sources to provide further insights into a localised fiddle tradition.

The early growth of ethnomusicology engaged in comparative study at different scales. In this study, a comparative approach is largely avoided but, where useful, comparisons are drawn within the Irish music tradition. The value of such a study is underpinned by Bruno Nettl’s observation that “the comparative study of music provides central insights into the understanding of the world of music – how it exists in the present and how it came to be” (2007,

p.12). Taking Merriam's (1960) definition of ethnomusicology as the study of music in culture, this dissertation locates the sources within their historical and geographical contexts. However, as this study engages with a tradition over the course of 130 years, it is necessary to consider the processes of change in tradition, culture and society. Nettl (2010, p. 186) emphasises the need within ethnomusicology to focus on processes and address the changing world of music and societies today.

One of the key terms developed by Mantle Hood (1960) was the concept of bi-musicality. Initially presented as the learning of a foreign music, often by a researcher engaged in fieldwork, bi-musicality may be understood as being proficient in more than one music (Adkins, 2013). In the context of this dissertation, my role as researcher is informed by my prior knowledge of the tradition, as previously outlined. However, the concept of bi-musicality may be applied in a limited manner to Thomas Kernan, as evidence from the primary sources for this study indicate the presence of Western Art Music in his repertoire. The extent to which Irish traditional musicians drew from or included Western Art Music in their repertoire has not been researched, although evidence exists in the recordings of, for example, Tommie Potts (Ó Suilleabháin, 1987) and Con Cassidy (2007). However, the majority of the music in this study may be understood under the title of Irish traditional music.

### **1.6.1 Folk/dance/traditional music**

As Nicholas Carolan has pointed out, "modern Irish traditional music is to a great extent, music with its origins in the latter eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries" (1986, p.33). At this time in the history of this modern Irish traditional music, referred to by Carolan, newly imported dances had entered the repertoire of musicians on a significant level, and therefore the music being played was inextricably linked to the dance tradition (Brennan, 1999). This close

connection between music and dance gradually became evident in published music collections from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, beginning with Richard M. Levey's *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland* (London) published in 1858. Levey's second collection in 1873 also used "dance music" in its title and this term was subsequently adopted by later publishers of Irish music, such as O'Neill (1907), Giblin (1928) and Breathnach (1963-1999).

The written and audio sources to be examined in this dissertation were compiled by fiddle players from the Connmaicne region of south Leitrim and County Longford in the period between 1844 and 1973, and the musical contents of these sources are representative of this "modern Irish traditional music". While the written and audio sources provide evidence of the types of music being played at the particular time of compilation, there is no record of the descriptive term they used. It is quite possible the musicians of Connmaicne used any one of the terms highlighted in this section.

While "dance music" has been used to describe contemporary Irish music, discourse on the history of music in Ireland has tended to use the term "folk music" to describe the study of this body of historical music in its entirety, such as O'Neill (1910), O'Sullivan (1952), Breathnach (1971) and Carolan (1987). The term "folk music" came into the English language in the wake of the adoption into English in the 1840s of the terms "folk song" (Anon, 1843) and "folklore" (Thoms, 1846). The inspiration for the use of the word "folk" in this context came from the use of a cognate word, *Volk*, in German to describe the songs of the people. It was used in the title, *Volkslieder*, in a collection of German songs by Johann Gottfried Herder (1778-79), where it was seen, condescendingly, not so much as a "natural"/"irrational" alternative to "mannered"/"rational" art song, as naturally occurring material to be fashioned into "something greater" by the art song community (Reily, 2000; White, 2008-09). It is admitted, however, that the terms, "folk song", "folk music", etc., are "incapable of exact definition" (Westrup & Harrison, 1959a). Nevertheless, the International Folk Music Council (IFMC) in 1954, which

has since been updated to the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM), attempted the following definition: “the product of a musical tradition that has evolved through the process of oral transmission” (Farrington, 1998, p.6). To clarify their definition, they go on to describe what they mean by “tradition” in this context: “The factors shaping the tradition are: a) *continuity* which links the present with the past; b) *variation* which springs from the individual or the group; c) *selection* by the community, which determines the form or forms in which the music survives” (pp.6-7). In the context of this dissertation, it is critical to note how the word “tradition” is an essential part of their definition of “folk”.

Breathnach, uses the IFMC definition, and the criteria listed, for his decision on whether a piece of music should be included in the “body of Irish folk music” (1971, pp.119-20). It must be noted that in this chapter he uses “folk” and “traditional” interchangeably for the actual music and “traditional players” only for the musicians. For Breathnach, there is little or no distinction between “folk music” and “traditional music”. In recent decades, it is this latter term “traditional music” that has come to the fore in discourse on the history of Irish traditional music (Ó Canainn, 1978; Ó hAllmhuráin, 1998) and it is the one more commonly used to define and describe this genre of music.

The concept of ‘tradition’ is central to the development of this study. ‘Tradition’ may be defined as the transmission of culture from one generation to the next for more than two generations. This is not to suggest that traditions are unchanging. Irish traditional musician Fr Pat Ahern has noted “There is a sense in which we do not own our culture, we are only trustees. The treasure is only on loan and we must take it, refurbish it in the light of our experience and hand it on” (Ahern, 2018). In the study of extant sources from the Connemara region, beginning with those associated with Thomas Kernan, there is evidence of transmission over several generations of common aspects of musical culture, which are continuously added to but remain recognisable in the current musical environment of the place today.

### 1.6.2 Music transmission practices

Ten discrete collections of Irish traditional music transcribed by musicians from the Connmaicne region of south Leitrim and County Longford in the period from the 1840s to the 1960s have come to light in recent decades (see 2.5 *Historical collections of Connmaicne music*). Eight of these collections were transcribed by fiddle players, strongly suggesting that the transmission of fiddle music in this region was taught predominantly through written means, a theory that will be critically examined in this dissertation.

Bruno Nettl (1983) in his book, *The Study of Ethnomusicology*, deals in detail with the various methods in the transmission of folk music. Although the chapter dealing with transmission is entitled “Recorded, Printed, Written, Oral: Traditions”, it is primarily with the written and oral, and “the dichotomy between them”, that he concerns himself. This dichotomy is coupled with a related dichotomy, that between formal and informal learning, in his article ‘Folk Music’ in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2010). In it he seems to use a particularly restricted definition of the folk music genre, when he states that:

The central traditions of folk music are transmitted orally or aurally, that is, they are learned through hearing rather than the reading of words or music. In comparison with art music, which brings aesthetic enjoyment, and popular music, which (often along with social dancing) functions as entertainment, folk music is more often associated with other activities, such as calendric or life-cycle rituals, work, games, enculturation, and folk religion (2010).

The practice of Irish traditional musicians moves beyond the limited interpretation of folk music presented here by Nettl. It has much more in common with the art music and the popular music mentioned, in that it is used to bring aesthetic enjoyment and entertainment mainly, in addition to its undoubted functionality as a dance accompaniment.

The music and traditions under examination in this dissertation have been transmitted both formally and informally, both orally and written. Flood (1906) suggests that written transmission of music in Ireland has a long history, an example of which is printed by O'Neill (1910, p.265) with a translation printed below it in modern staff notation.<sup>2</sup> Many commentators, nevertheless, begin with the assumption that oral transmission was the norm. In discussing the transmission of the music of the harp, Ní Uallacháin (2003), for example, remarks on the difficulty arising from what she sees as the lesser level of music literacy as against that of language literacy at the period of the harpers, and the failure of some who were musically literate to use their skills, resulting in a paucity of music manuscript in an area that could boast of almost six hundred manuscripts devoted to literature in the period from 1650 to 1800.

In her seminal text on music education in Ireland, Marie McCarthy highlights the many and changing contexts for the transmission of musics. She notes:

The manner in which music was practised and transmitted varied according to the subculture in question. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, music education within Anglo-Irish families, communities and institutions was typically aimed at reproducing the middle-class values of colonial culture. Emphasis was placed on teaching music that was appropriate for cultivating those values and the accompanying social skills, and for developing knowledge of the science of music. This orientation to music learning was in many ways radically different to that of traditional communities where music served the social needs of lower-class communities and was 'eared down' to the young who experienced it as a natural part of the socialisation process. (1999, p.174).

Based on the research informing this dissertation on the evolution of fiddle music in Connhaicne region of County Longford and South Leitrim, McCarthy's description and

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<sup>2</sup> O'Neill takes this example and the accompanying modern staff translation from Joseph Cooper Walker, *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, (Dublin, 1818), page 145. Walker received it from William Beauford of Athy, who got it from an unnamed priest, who in turn found it in a generations old manuscript of one of the Cavanagh families. Beauford himself considered that this piece "can probably claim no higher antiquity than the fifteenth or sixteenth century", but Walker thinks that "perhaps Mr. Beauford brings the era of this notation a little too much forward" (*loc. cit.*, p.146 ).

contrast may be viewed as an over-simplification. The extant nineteenth century documents suggest closer ideologies between the Ascendancy and traditional music communities in relation to music education. The role of the dancing master in Irish society as detailed by Foley (2016), reinforces the desire for developing manners and customs.

The processes of education and traditional music was fore grounded in the second *Crossroads Conference* held in 2003, considering historical contexts, the growth of organisations, third level contexts, the role of print and technology, and the development of policy relating to music education. Of particular interest to this dissertation are the contributions of Tom Munnelly and Barry Taylor who highlighted the differences between the societies of the past were and how this shaped the transmission of traditional music and song practices. Writing about the song traditions, Munnelly notes the influence of the hedge schoolmaster and acknowledges: “in an age when most people did not read or write, oral/aural transmission of songs was, obviously, the norm [...] this method was considered the ideal unadulterated link with the past. The collectors and commentators on the tradition who held this point of view were by far the most numerous and they are not entirely extinct yet” (2013, p.43). However, Munnelly also notes the printing of broadsheets in the nineteenth century and the efforts to include traditional music and song in the education system of the twentieth century. Taylor, with a focus on County Clare, cites fiddle player Junior Crehan’s description of the country house dance as the “school where the traditions of music-making, story-telling and dancing were passed on from one generation to the next” (2013, p.52).

Changes in the twentieth century, as practice evolved from the independent masters to the increasing institutionalisation of transmission led to a *caighdeán oifigiúil* (McCarthy, 1999, p.136; Taylor, 2013, p.57). This impacted on content and criteria in traditional music education but also the nature of transmission, which was critiqued by Breandán Breathnach (1996) amongst others. Writing in 1985, Breathnach also stated that “musical literacy amongst

Traditional players was more frequent than one might expect” and while Taylor (2013) questions the legitimacy of this statement, writing, “his quoted evidence for such a claim is thin and, indeed, he cites only two examples of notation systems used for teaching, both of which are non-staff systems” (p. 57), the advancement in research in recent years, outlined herein and including the new research presented in subsequent chapters, provides further weight to Breathnach’s assertions and validates Taylor’s prediction that “more systematic research might reveal more examples of music-literate Traditional musicians and more evidence for the historical use of some kind of notation in teaching” (p. 58). Nevertheless, it is difficult to argue with Taylor’s statement that “the evidence suggests that the overwhelming majority of dance musicians up to fairly recent times professed little or no music literacy, which predicates an equally overwhelming dependence on aural transmission in teaching” (p.57).

In the context of the markings contained in the manuscripts examined in this dissertation, Matt Cranitch’s (2013) consideration of bowing in the context of learning to play the fiddle is noteworthy. Bowing is highlighted in the context of musical styles in Irish traditional music by a number of studies (Lyth, 1981; 2012; Ó Canainn, 1978; Kearney, 2009).

### **1.6.3 Orality and literacy**

On the question of orality and literacy in the music of more recent times, one can review treatments of that subject by authors such as Breathnach (1971) or Hamilton (1990). For Breathnach, the only correct way to learn to play Irish music “in an accepted traditional style” is “by ear, which is the way a child learns his first language” (p.122). Hamilton begins his treatment of this topic by making the assertion that “the Irish music tradition was initially an aural and unwritten one, where music was transmitted to the next generation by imitation

subject to subsequent criticism and correction” (p.47). He then portrays a romantic picture of a music-filled rural Ireland of the past, where “the aspiring musician...would have been constantly exposed to traditional music, song and dance, from an early age” (p.47). He is, however, realistic enough to admit that “with the radical changes that have come about in Irish society since the 1930s, transmission of music in this manner is becoming increasingly rare” (p.47).

These views of how music for the most part was transmitted orally, and that this was the only correct way to do so, are contradicted on the one hand by evidence for the existence of the aforementioned native Irish music notation, which predates the creation of modern staff notation, and on the other hand by the existence of vast collections of music manuscript containing Irish music, which itself is evidence for the high level of literacy Irish traditional musicians of the past had. This contradiction is noted by Breathnach who opines: “Literacy among traditional players, in Ireland at any rate, is, and always has been, much greater than many suppose, and literally thousands of pieces survive in manuscript collections written by traditional players” (1971, p.123).

Breathnach’s assertion is supported by the existence of nine collections of manuscripts transcribed by musicians in the Connmaicne region, four of which will be examined in this dissertation (Chapters Four-Seven). Initial research by Quinn (2008) suggests that literacy among musicians in this region, leading to the plethora of regional manuscript collections, was due initially to the teaching methods of the Longford fiddle master Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887), who primarily taught the fiddle through written means. Kernan’s practice of teaching through written music notation was carried on by his students, particularly Peter Kennedy (c1825-1902) of Ballinamore, County Leitrim and his nephew, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907) of Oghill, Killoe, County Longford, and in turn by some of their students, thereby leading to a vibrant written tradition of fiddle music in this region. While the extant collections of

manuscripts indicate that the musicians had a relatively high standard of music literacy, further examination of the repertoires of these collections and critical examination of local literature may reveal that the musicians also learned aurally. This theory of dual transmission through written and aural means will be further examined in the dissertation.

#### **1.6.4 Music change and adaptation**

The canon of Irish music has changed and been adapted dramatically at various times in its history, including the period under review in this dissertation and, while literature has noted this fact, very little of the specifics has been discussed. This particular subject has been covered by Farrington (1998) in her Introduction to *The Music, Songs, & Instruments of Ireland*. She isolates three vectors of change. First, she mentions assimilation with other music, either that of incomers to Ireland in the past, or that of people of other lands with whom the Irish who went abroad associated. Secondly, she mentions the effect of new dances imported at various times in the past. Thirdly, she refers to experimentation, and in particular that driven by the contemporary music group movement.

Farrington's first vector for change, "assimilation with other music, either that of incomers to Ireland in the past, or that of people of other lands with whom the Irish who went abroad associated" (pp.6-19), spans a long history. Evidence of music brought to Ireland by settlers and colonisers can be found in the traditions including fiddle tunes from Scotland and English language ballads. There is a very clear example of the export of music from Ireland, which demonstrates the assimilation mentioned by Farrington. Fiddle music arrived in the Carolina area of the United States of America with the Ulster Scots, who emigrated to that area from Ulster in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They brought with them fiddle music, based

on the music they had inherited from their Scottish ancestors, but modified by their contact with the Irish music of Ulster. This quite early fiddle tradition was further modified by other influences they encountered in America, and it has since developed into a music culture, which is called American Old Time Fiddle Music (Williams, 2010; Orr & Ritchie, 2014). And, of course, the movement of people is not always a one-way ticket: seasonal migration, especially from Ulster to the Lowlands of Scotland, has had an influence on the music, song and dance of both Ulster and the parts of Scotland where the seasonal migrants worked (Ó hAllmhuráin, 1998).

Farrington's second vector, "the effect of new dances imported at various times in the past" (1998, pp.6-19), is very relevant to the present dissertation, which deals largely with dance music introduced to Ireland in the last two centuries. This, however, was the second such set of importations, both of which must have caused profound change to the repertoire of the folk music in Ireland, and to the manner in which it was played. While Breathnach (1971) sees the evidence for religious and pre-battle dancing among the Celts in Britain and continental Europe as a strong suggestion that dancing must have been practiced by the Irish from the earliest times, nevertheless both he and O'Sullivan (1952) point to the linguistic evidence which suggests that all known Irish dances were once imported: the absence of any word in Old or Middle Irish for dancing; the fact that, when words for dance begin to be used in Early Modern Irish,<sup>3</sup> the words are borrowed, *rinnce* from English, *damhsa* from French; that when an Irish word is added to either of these, the dance often has a counterpart abroad, "in Scotland and Northern England, as well as in many parts of Europe" (O'Sullivan, 1952, p.50); and the fact

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<sup>3</sup> Helen Brennan in *The History of Irish Dance*, (Dingle, 1999), pp. 15-16, gives the first occurrence of these words as 1510 for *damhsa*, quoting Breandán Breathnach, *Dancing in Ireland*, (Miltown Malbay, 1983), p. 14, and 1588 for *rainge*, the earliest spelling of *rinnce*, quoting James D. Carney, ed., *Poems on the Butlers of Ormond, Cahir and Dunboyne*, (Dublin, 1945), p.79.

that otherwise the names used for individual dances are invariably of non-Irish origin. The introduction of the dances they list would seem to have occurred in two phases, the first occurring in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the second in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century (O'Sullivan, 1952), with the jig, which became almost synonymous with Irish music and dancing<sup>4</sup> arriving from Italy<sup>5</sup> between these two main phases.<sup>6</sup> The music used for many of these dances must also have been originally imported, and using these imported models the Irish then composed their own native tunes in the various imported genres. This must have occurred in the case of both the earlier and the later periods of dance importation. It is certainly attested in the later period. An "Irish" style of dance music would seem then to have already developed naturally from the first set of imports. When the second tranche of dance arrived, the earlier dances may not have entirely disappeared, though, and it is possible that they formed a substratum to the new.<sup>7</sup> Something of this nature is needed to explain why, for example, reels imported from Scotland in the later period of dance importation needed to be rewritten in an "Irish" style. The example of this is the conversion of Donald Dow's "The Bonny Lass of Fisherrow" to the Irish "Bonny Kate" (Breathnach, 1963, p.68), a conversion reputedly done by the fiddle master Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887) of Drumlish, Co. Longford (Quinn, 2008). Breathnach (1989), when listing tunes imported from Scotland to Ireland, mentions as changes acquired in Ireland, in the case of "Mrs. MacLeod of

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<sup>4</sup> As an example of this reputation it is interesting to note that, when the music used for the quadrille figures was modified in Cape Breton and jigs and reels came to be favoured, jigs were imported from the Irish tradition, the local repertoire of jigs being relatively small, according to Mats Melin (2012), 'Local, global and diasporic interaction in the Cape Breton dance tradition' in Ian Russell and Chris Goertzen, eds., *Routes and Roots*. Aberdeen, p.137.

<sup>5</sup> O'Sullivan (1952) notes the possibility that the jig was introduced by the harpers in emulation of Corelli's 6/8 codas, known as *gigas*.

<sup>6</sup> In Ireland, the jig is first mentioned in 1674 in the phrase, "giggs and countrey dances": Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin (1998), p. 45

<sup>7</sup> Some of the music for the older dances may well have been remodeled to suit newer dances, "mined and cannibalised", as suggested by Gary Hastings (1997), 'Ag Ciceáil leis an Dá Chos' in Thérèse Smith and Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, eds, *Blas: The Local Accent in Irish Traditional Music*. Limerick, pp.100-101.

Raasay”, the name change where “Mrs.” became “Miss”, and the reversal of the order of the two strands, but otherwise has little to say about the vast changes some tunes underwent over the course of their history. By and large, the literature is silent on the detail of such change and adaptation. How some Scottish tunes were adapted and made Irish, as reflected in the local manuscripts, will be a topic examined in this dissertation. “The Story of Greg’s Pipes” (Vol.II, Source B – O’Farrell MS: Scores and Histories, tune ref: PF.050 ‘Greg’s Pipes’), shows in detail the change and adaptation suffered by two Scottish tunes, first in Scotland, then later in Ireland, where they had arrived as one tune.

Together, these two vectors for change involve the import and export of music and dance, carried in or out of the country by people immigrating or emigrating in the past. In the twentieth century, the mass media of communication has facilitated the export and import of music without the movement of people (Malm, 1993). People on the move, however, can still bring change, and Kearney (2007) discusses music change from the point of view of the move from the rural to the urban in Ireland from the 1950s onwards, outlining the critical link between Irish traditional music and the socio-economic development of the state during this period.

Farrington’s third vector for change in folk music, “experimentation, and in particular that driven by the contemporary music group movement” (1998, pp.6-19), as far as Ireland is concerned at least, owes much of its impetus to the vision of one man, Seán Ó Riada. Inspired by his work on *sean nós* singing in Irish, which is much given to ornamentation and improvisation, and which he described very eloquently in his series of radio lectures and its accompanying book, *Our Musical Heritage*, Ó Riada introduced the idea of the “group”, as distinct from the by then traditional Céilí Band, and allowing for what he called “the most important principles of traditional music – the whole idea of variation, the whole idea of personal utterance” (1982, pp.73-74). *Ceoltóirí Chualann* was his answer to the problem of

matching group playing with those principles, and from that idea has sprung much of the experimentation that has ensued. In Ireland, he is the embodiment of the ethnomusicologist who becomes part of the tradition, as portrayed by (Shelemay, 1996). He, however, had none of her reticence in promoting change, from which what Shelemay calls the “anthropological tenets of non-interference” (p.50) would deter her. Apart from his spearheading of the instrumental group movement, his identification of the underlying principles of variation and ornamentation in sean nós singing has led to a widespread awareness of the value of similar variation and ornamentation in solo instrumental music. Ó Riada’s legacy occupies a number of studies on Irish traditional music (see Ó Laoire, 2008; Kearney, 2012) and music in Ireland (White, 1998). While there is a tendency to focus on musical change in the aftermath of Ó Riada, it is clear from the sources studied in this project that there is inherent change in the tradition over a much longer period of time (see Valley, 1997). Discourse on the broader change in Irish traditional music was further examined through the TV series *A River of Sound* (1995) and the subsequent *Crossroads Conference* (1997).

### **1.6.5 Collectors and collections of Irish music**

The written and audio sources of this dissertation (Volume II, Sources A-L), central to understanding the evolution of fiddle music in Connhaicne from c1825-c1975, are in effect ‘collections’ of musical repertoire relating to specific junctures in this progressive timeline of music development. Accordingly, to provide a musical and historical context for the sources to be examined in this study, this section will focus on examining collections and collectors of Irish music. Initially, collections will be reviewed based on the primary motivation for their assembly, namely: (1) professional antiquarianism, (2) amateur antiquarianism, and (3) music instruction. Following this survey, a literature review will be conducted on the types of approaches taken by various ethnomusicologists in the examination and compilation of Irish

music collections in both academic and literary sources under the following headings: (1) focus on region, (2) focus on dance, and (3) focus on manuscripts and metadata.

#### **1.6.5.1 Motivational factors**

##### **(1) Professional antiquarianism**

Through their antiquarian endeavours, collectors have consistently striven to preserve the music, songs and dances of folk traditions for future generations. In the field of folk music, the intrinsically assimilative, and therefore to some degree degenerative, nature of this genre has accentuated a desire among collectors to ensure that footprints remain of the major epochs in its historical development.

While the conservation of our musical heritage has been a common motivational factor for most musical antiquarians, a select number have sought to take this role further through the publication and dissemination of their collections, particularly those of a previously unpublished repertoire (O'Neill, 1910, p. 8). The renowned collector Patrick Weston Joyce (1827-1914), for example, makes this objective clear in the preface to his music collection *Ancient Irish Music*, where he states:

When I came to reside in Dublin, and became acquainted with the various published collections of Irish music, I was surprised to find that a great number of my tunes were unpublished, and quite unknown outside the district or province in which they have been learned. This discovery stimulated me to write down all the airs I could recollect; and when my own memory was exhausted, I went among the peasantry during vacations, for several successive years, noting down whatever I thought worthy of preserving, both music and words (1873, Preface, v)

It can be argued that it is the desire, or need, to publish and disseminate that separates the professional collectors from their amateur counterparts. The former category generally applies

to members of what Breathnach (1971, pp. 103-118) terms the ‘great collectors’ of Irish music, among whom he includes Edward Bunting (1773-1843), George Petrie (1790–1866), Patrick Weston Joyce (1827–1914) and Francis O’Neill (1848–1936). A notable absence from that list is the collector William Forde (1795-1850), whose music anthology contains approximately three thousand tunes, sourced in part from regions of Ireland, which had been until then ignored by previous collectors. Despite his original intentions, the collection was never published, a fact which, according to O’Sullivan (1958a, p. 130) is regrettable given that “it would have easily been the most remarkable contribution ever made to our knowledge of Irish music”. In response to the concerns of O’Sullivan and other antiquarians, Forde’s collection is currently the focus of scholarly research with further plans for publication.

## **(2) Amateur antiquarianism**

This category of antiquarians includes amateur collectors who sought to preserve the music of their people, but were not further motivated to publish or disseminate their collections. Notable nineteenth century collectors from this category include Stephen Grier (*c*1824-1894) of County Leitrim, James Goodman (1828-1896) of County Kerry and Philip Carolan (*c*1840-*c*1911) of County Mayo. Philip Carolan collected and transcribed into manuscript over four hundred and fifty tunes from his local area between *c*1863 and *c*1873. Angela Buckley, who has studied this collection, confirms in the following extract the underlying antiquarian impetus behind Carolan’s desire to collect music:

Philip [Carolan] was always anxious to learn and, apart from having a love of music and collecting tunes, his prime motivation for collecting music and documenting it was to preserve it for future generations (2012, p. 24)

In contrast to the majority of the ‘great collectors’, typically, these amateur collectors were musicians themselves from within the folk tradition and therefore had access to contemporary

repertoire. Accordingly, their collections represent in general the actual music that musicians were playing, in contrast to what Buckley points out as the “personal selectivity employed by other collectors” (p. 21).

Some of the ‘other collectors’, to whom Buckley alludes, were dismissive of the ability or desire of the folk community either to carry on or preserve their traditions of language, song and music: Francis O’Neill claimed that the traditional music of his homeland was being lost due to “the indifference of her people” (1910, p. 8), while Petrie was concerned that the deterioration in the use of the Irish language would be “accompanied by the loss of all that, as yet unsaved, portion of their ancient music which had been identified with it” (1855, Preface, xiii). Despite the concerns of O’Neill and Petrie, recent studies and literature have begun to highlight the unheralded conservation work carried out by amateur collectors throughout Ireland, particularly during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Their effort is evident in the abundance of collections that currently exist from all regions of Ireland. In the context of the Oriel region in Ulster, Ní Uallacháin (2003, p. 16) describes how the determination of these collectors, who “trudged the hills and valleys of south east Ulster”, to gather and record the repertoire of their own people was driven by the same concerns as the professional collectors: a fear of losing “the last living remnants of an ancient and once vital tradition”.

### **(3) Music instruction**

While the aforementioned collections, both professional and amateur, have resulted from efforts to preserve and disseminate music, another type of collection emerged through the process of music instruction: teacher-student collections. The inclusion in the manuscript of scales, exercises, written instructions and, in the case of fiddle instruction, bowing signs, in

addition to the actual notation of the tunes, provides strong evidence that music tutelage has taken place.

Of this category, one of the most comprehensive collections is a series of manuscripts belonging to students of the Sliabh Luachra fiddle master, Pádraig O'Keeffe (1887-1963).<sup>8</sup> His transcriptions are distinctive due to his unique and innovative method of notating music for both the fiddle and accordion. A visual representation of his teaching methods and repertoire can be viewed on the website of the Irish Traditional Music Archive, where four sets of facsimile manuscripts belonging to one of his pupils, Paud Collins of Knocknagoshel, Co. Kerry have recently been digitised (Carolan & Gebruers, 2013). The manuscripts associated with the teaching of Pádraig O'Keeffe form the basis of Matt Cranitch's doctoral dissertation entitled 'Pádraig O'Keeffe and The Sliabh Luachra Fiddle Tradition' (2006). The importance of notated music in the context of transmission is also considered by Jessica Cawley in her doctoral dissertation on enculturation in Irish traditional music (2013) while the earlier work of Kari Veblen (1991, 1994) critically considers the role of the teacher in the transmission of Irish traditional music.

As Boullier (2012, p. 73) points out, however, manuscripts written for the purposes of instruction do not necessarily represent the teacher's own playing repertoire: tunes are typically chosen to demonstrate specific learning outcomes in areas such as technique, rhythm and ornamentation. For this reason, manuscripts from within this category can provide valuable insights into the methods by which music was transmitted from one generation to another, but may not necessarily fully represent the typical local repertoire. This facet of music transmission

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<sup>8</sup> This collection is compiled from materials that O'Keeffe gave to his pupils rather than a complete individual collection in and of itself.

is particularly relevant to this dissertation as some of the manuscripts to be examined, such as, the Leonard-Kernan MS of the 1840s, were created in a teacher-student context (Quinn, 2008).

### **1.6.5.2 Approaches to Collections**

In response to the perceived absence of reference to the less recognised musical regions of Ireland in the widespread discourse on regionalism in Irish music and song, recent decades have witnessed a growth in the output of academic and literary works dealing with collections from such neglected regions. Such works have typically included hitherto unpublished collections of regional music and song, some of which have been left in their original form as facsimiles, while others have been processed and converted into printed musical notation. This section will examine the various approaches taken in regard to the analysis and publication of such music collections.

Expanding the concept of music instruction beyond notes, melodies and techniques, a number of collectors have returned to the extant artefacts of their predecessors to provide context for students and audiences of music today. Particularly influential in the context of this study has been Collette Moloney's work on the manuscripts of Edward Bunting (1995, 2000). Other studies that have taken alternative approaches include Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin's development of her father's work that develops a focus on the Oriel region (2003, 2008, 2018). Seán McElwain (2013) similarly gathers manuscripts and other source information, primarily audio sources from the radio to develop a narrative on the Sliabh Beagh region, focusing on some of the central musicians of the region. In this dissertation, I am indebted to the collecting work of Fr John Quinn, whose activities in Connhaicne have led to the collection of a significant quantity of artefacts that this study will critically examine and contextualise.

## **(1) Focus on region**

The centrality of the region and its interconnectedness with music and people has informed much recent discourse on Irish music studies. Kearney (2010, p. 20) states the need to understand “the role of place in the evolution of music and the role of music in the creation of identity for a place”. Building on this concept, McElwain (2013, p. 265) has examined a number of written sources from the Sliabh Beagh region of north Monaghan and east Fermanagh, focusing on this intangible relationship between music and place, as well as highlighting the “importance of individuals to an understanding of musical regions”. To demonstrate the relationship between the elements of this triad of repertoire, region and recorded musician, McElwain examines the connection that links particular tune titles with people and place names from this particular region. In this way he seeks to validate the regional authenticity of the collected repertoire.

The interplay between these interconnecting factors is further demonstrated in the many recently published regional collections such as, *Hidden Fermanagh* (Maguire, 2003), *Hidden Ulster* (Ní Uallacháin, 2003) and *Handed Down* (Boullier, 2012). *Hidden Fermanagh*, for example, uses a number of written and audio sources to present a musical ethnography of the region. Interpolated between music and songs notations, transcripts of interviews with local musicians are used to provide a background to the history of Irish music, song and dance in the region and an understanding of a musician’s perspective regarding the traditions handed down through successive generations. The music transcriptions are taken from both written and audio sources and represent a continuum of regional repertoire covering the period of more than a hundred years beginning from the middle of the nineteenth century.

The work of researchers such as Ní Uallachain and McElwain brings them into the field of applied ethnomusicology whereby their research becomes used amongst the community of

musical practice (Kenny, 2016), sometimes beyond the region in which it was first collected. This also brings in aspects of regionalisation (Kearney, 2013) and music revivals. In the Oxford Companion to Music Revivals (Hill and Bithell, 2014), Haines, Rosenberg and Jabbour engage with the understanding of scholars and collectors as revival agents. Rather than seeking to engage in a debate surrounding concepts of authenticity and efforts to achieve validity or legitimacy by evoking the past to ‘help disguise change and innovation’ (Hill and Bithell, 2014, p. 19), this study demonstrates evidence of change over time in the music, contexts for music making and transmission and the recognition of links to prior generation in the music. Hill and Bithell (2014, p. 7) note Hobsbawn’s concept of ‘invented traditions’. In the case of a perceived Kernan tradition, there are obvious and tangible links to the legacy and musical lineage of Thomas Kernan but the concept of a ‘Kernan tradition’ is a more recent response to the current situation in Irish traditional music that moves beyond the established canon of Irish traditional music, developing understanding of neglected figures and localised music making, and create context for the manuscripts and audio sources examined in this study. Hill and Bithell recognise person-oriented criteria for authenticity (2014, p. 21). Kernan is not viewed in the context of this study as a marker of the authentic but rather as a key historical figure and reference point, in a similar manner to Pádraig O’Keeffe in Sliabh Luachra (Cranitch, 2006).

## **(2) Focus on dance**

Historically, music and dance have been inextricably linked in the Irish countryside (Brennan, 1999, p. 90): dancers required musicians to supply them with a melodic beat, while musicians required dancers to provide them with a performance setting. Their relationship, however, was not always mutually beneficial: in the context of rural music-making in County Clare, Noel Hill puts it succinctly: “it was dancing and music next” (2012). In other words, dancing came first, and the music took second place.

During the nineteenth century the repertoire of musicians consisted predominantly of dance music. The compelling influence of dance on the repertoire of fiddle players is highlighted by Boullier (2012) in his examination and presentation of manuscripts relating to nineteenth century fiddle players from the regions of east and central County Down. As he points out: “Irish dance music has over the period of time naturally paralleled the development of dancing” (p. 17). This close relationship is apparent from a survey of the relevant manuscript collections that Boullier publishes. For example, music for quadrilles dominates the repertoire, indicating the corresponding popularity of these dances in the region he studied. By associating each tune with its respective dance, e.g. ‘Round Dance – One Step’, Boullier makes a very conspicuous effort to demonstrate the firm connection between the two disciplines of music and dance (p. 329).

The role of dance in shaping the repertoire Irish musicians is also highlighted by Dalton (2009) in his examination of the James O’Brien (c1800-c1900) fiddle manuscript from County Kerry. Dalton (p. 12) observes that this document contains predominantly dance music such as lancers, quadrilles and polkas, illustrating again the concordance between the musicians and dancers of that era. The earliest source to be examined in this dissertation, the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850), also contains a significant amount of the same dance music as the O’Brien MS, which suggests there was a strong link between the musicians who transcribed the Leonard-Kernan MS and local dancers. It is quite possible that Thomas Kernan, the predominant scribe in this manuscript, obtained his dance repertoire from a local dancing master he accompanied. This suggestion is supported by Arthur Young who observed in 1780: ‘Dancing Masters of their own rank travel throughout the country from cabin to cabin, with a piper or blind fiddler; and the pay is six pence a quarter’ (p.446).

### **(3) Focus on manuscripts and metadata**

A number of studies have focused specifically on examining the collections as to their musical content and physical attributes. This collection focussed approach is typified by Buckley (2012) in her analysis of the Philip Carolan MSS (*c*1863-*c*1873) of County Mayo where she gives significant attention to the tangible characteristics of the collection, such as its physical construction and layout. Furthermore, attention is paid by Buckley to the repertoire of the manuscript. In this regard, she considers the significant influence of contemporary printed sources on Carolan's transcriptions and examines the repertoire in terms of Irish and non-Irish content. Although Buckley (p. 21) demonstrates the considerable impact of sources from outside of the Irish music tradition, she concludes that the Carolan manuscripts as a whole have "preserved a wealth of local repertory from the mid-nineteenth century that is absent from other contemporary collections".

In an approach similar to that of Buckley, Alison Slattery (2012), in her analysis of the George Noble Plunkett (1851-1948) manuscripts, has focused predominantly on the physical artefacts of the collection. One of the challenges she faced was attempting to distinguish the various scribes that appear throughout the collection. In this regard, some of the difficulties that she encountered included: (1) different scribes who shared a uniform style of handwriting, and (2) transcriptions that initially appeared to have been made by two different scribes, but were in fact "the same person writing at different times of their life" (2012, p. 38).

Academic works, such as those of Buckley and Slattery, where the focus is primarily on the collection, frequently tend to have more of a discursive element, when compared with collections of music published by persons who have a family or regional connection with the music in question. This is exemplified in Noel McCarthy's (2013) publication of his grandfather's manuscript collection written at the turn of the twentieth century. While

McCarthy provides a brief treatise on the origins of the collection, its collector and the background of historical music-making in the Cappamore/Silvermines region of East Limerick/North Tipperary, the central aims of its publication are to share, promote and disseminate a collection of undiscovered regional music. The music is presented in its original unaltered form with a short history of each tune providing details such as its date of composition, if known, and matching counterparts in printed collections popular during the era of transcription. Indirectly, McCarthy highlights the significant influence of published music on the repertoire of rural musicians in the form of sheet music and printed collections.

While McCarthy offers some discussion on the background of his grandfather's collection, Hugh and Lisa Shields (1998; 2013) have taken a more minimalistic approach in their publication of the James Goodman (1828-1896) manuscripts in *Tunes from the Munster Pipers*, Vols. I & II, focusing almost entirely on the presentation of the original manuscripts in modern printed music notation. As the authors point out, they made an editorial decision to exclude tunes from the Goodman manuscripts "for which we found identical or very closely related versions in print" (Shields & Shields, 2013, Foreword, vii). Given that the written sources in this dissertation are comparable with the Goodman manuscripts in regard to chronology, composition and provenance, the Shields' approach will be considered in the presentation of the written sources in Volume II.

In the next section, *1.7 Methodology*, the three approaches outlined previously will be considered in the thematic framing and direction of this dissertation. For instance, using a collection focused strategy is highly advantageous where there is a stand-alone collection to be examined. However, where there are several sources to be examined, that sometimes include an interconnected triad of music, song and dance, it is preferable to incorporate a thematic approach, such as that taken by *Hidden Fermanagh* (Maguire, 2003) and by *Handed Down* (Boullier, 2012). In these works, the written and audio sources were used as aids to support and

examine specific themes such as regionalism, the role of dance and song, music transmission and the various influences that impacted on rural music-making.

## **1.7 Methodology**

### **1.7.1 Introduction**

Influenced by the different approaches outlined in the previous section, the methodology that will be used in this dissertation is based on Kearney's approach to examining localised regions and traditions of music, which incorporates the triad of interconnected factors of people, music and place (2010, pp. 393-399). Adapting this approach, focus will be given to: (1) the fiddle players who are connected with each other through the teaching of Thomas Kernan (people), (2) the sources of music that they compiled (music), and (3) the region of Connhaicne where they were most active (place).

In *1.6.5.2 Approaches to collections*, it was documented that studies of Irish music collections have tended to focus on specific aspects that are intrinsic to those collections. Generally speaking, these singular approaches are guided by the fact that the respective researchers are examining discrete bodies of music relating to specific regions or musicians, which in effect restricts the findings of their analysis to a narrow time frame. In this dissertation, however, the evolution of fiddle music may be analysed over an extended period of time and within a localised lineage of musicians for two primary reasons: firstly, the sources of written and audio fiddle music emanating from Connhaicne musicians in this study were compiled on a progressive timeline between 1844 and 1973; secondly, the fiddle players who compiled the music are all linked one to another through the teaching of Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887). Emerging from these facts, it may be established that there existed a sub-culture of fiddle music in the region of Connhaicne from c1825 to c1975, pioneered and influenced by the fiddle

master, Thomas Kernan (*c*1807-1887). For the purposes of this dissertation, this sub-culture of fiddle players and fiddle music will be termed as ‘connected to Kernan’s teaching’, or variants thereof. While many may have discussed non-specific music transmission within a region, such as Oriel (Ní Uallacháin, 2003; O’Connor, 2008), Sliabh Luachra (Kearney, 2010) and Sliabh Beagh (McElwain, 2013), there is at least one study of teacher-pupil music transmission within a region, ‘Pádraig O’Keeffe and the Sliabh Luachra Fiddle Tradition’ (Cranitch, 2006), where the enormous influence one person can exert is highlighted, and that is the approach to be adopted here, in order to provide a framework suitable for analysing the development of fiddle music within this specific sub-culture.

Guided by an evolutionary approach and Kearney’s framework, Volume I of this dissertation is divided into three parts. In Part One, emphasis is placed on people and place, factors which created a foundation for the emergence of a localised fiddle tradition connected to Kernan’s teaching in Connmaicne. Part Two is concerned predominantly with examining the collections of music that emanated from this tradition over the period of approximately 1825 to 1975 and the specific people who compiled them. The last section, Part Three, will focus almost exclusively on the music, examining the individual and collective traits of fiddle style that emerged among the musicians of this regional fiddle tradition through the processes of oral and written transmission.

### **1.7.2 Vol. I, Part One: Connmaicne - people, place and music**

The use of biography as a research methodology is integral to uncovering the underlying relationships between people, place and music in the evolution of fiddle music in the Connmaicne region during the period *c*1825-*c*1975. The role of music in the lives of the Connmaicne musicians examined in this dissertation differs from one musician to the next: for

those who performed and taught professionally in Connmhaicne, music provided a stable professional career, while for most musicians music was merely a recreational pursuit. Due to scant literature compiled on the majority of these regional musicians, in particular the latter group, termed “fireside fiddlers” by (Boullier, 2012, p. 68), the use of biography is a crucial research tool in this study. As Nettl (2005) states “A thorough biography of an individual who constitutes a sample of a society should provide some information about the role of music in the subject’s life” (p.173).

The methodology used in Part One of this dissertation, which includes Chapter Two and Chapter Three, is adapted from Donal O’Sullivan’s treatise of the harper Turlough Carolan in *Carolan: the life, times and music of an Irish harpist*, Vols. I & II, (1958a; 1958b). Adapting O’Sullivan’s approach, a biographical account of the pioneering figure in the rapid spread of fiddle music in Connmhaicne, Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887), also known as ‘Blind’ Kernan, will be initially conducted. Subjects considered will include Kernan’s upbringing, infirmity, family life and education, all of which influenced his move towards a career in fiddle music. Informing this discourse, the role of external forces in shaping Kernan’s music-making environment, such as political, economic and social factors, will be outlined, focusing in particular on their impact on the region of Connmhaicne, where Kernan’s music is located.

Genealogical research will be conducted to place Kernan in a chronological context and to uncover his biographical details. This background research will also be applied to all the fiddle players in this study. Given the relatively large scale of this study and the scant records that exist of the specific fiddle players, genealogical research will form a significant part of this study. Initially, through field research, interviews will be conducted with descendants and local people from Connmhaicne, which will provide preliminary information and leads on specific fiddle players. Following this exploratory investigation, desk research will be conducted through a survey of official documents. In the last decade, a significant amount of these

documents have been digitised by various institutions and made available to researchers through online archives, a list of which is included in Table 1. In addition to these online archives, local historical books containing information about specific musicians and their music-making activities will be examined, particularly *From the Well of St. Patrick: Dromard Parish, Co. Longford* (MacNerney, 2000) and *Killoe: History of a County Longford Parish*, (Devaney, 1981).

**Table 1: List of online archives used in genealogy research**

Type of records	Online archives
Birth, Death and Marriage Records: (a) and (b)	
(a) Church records	(1) principal records held by the individual ecclesiastical parishes; (2) <a href="http://registers.nli.ie/">http://registers.nli.ie/</a> ; (3) <a href="http://www.rootsireland.ie/">http://www.rootsireland.ie/</a> ; (4) <a href="https://familysearch.org/">https://familysearch.org/</a>
(b) Civil Records	(1) <a href="http://www.rootsireland.ie/">http://www.rootsireland.ie/</a> ; (2) <a href="https://familysearch.org/">https://familysearch.org/</a> <sup>9</sup> ; (3) <a href="https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/">https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/</a>
Census of Ireland 1901 and 1911	<a href="http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie/">http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie/</a>
The Tithe Applotments Books 1823-37	<a href="http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie/">http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie/</a>
Calendars of Wills and Administrations 1858-1922	<a href="http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie/">http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie/</a>
Griffith's Valuation 1853-1865	<a href="http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/">http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/</a>
The Schools' (Folklore) Collection 1937-1938	<a href="http://www.duchas.ie/en">http://www.duchas.ie/en</a>

The range of Kernan's musical influence stretched across the geographical boundary of County Longford into border regions of other counties, particularly that of south Leitrim. To understand the historical links between the people of this borderland area conducive to

<sup>9</sup> The Index to Civil Records, which began in 1865, can be viewed on [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org). For the underlying records they can be obtained from The General Register Office, Werburgh Street, Dublin 2, cf: <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/bdm/Certificates/>, [accessed 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014].

establishing a milieu of shared music-making, regional discourse will be examined in terms of topography, settlement and culture, based on approaches taken by Kearney (2010) and McElwain (2013). Consideration will be given to the interaction between music, place and people in the formation of a regional identity that supersedes artificial boundaries.

### **1.7.3 Vol. I, Part Two: written and oral sources of fiddle music in Connmhaicne**

Part Two of this dissertation will focus on examining the sources of written and audio fiddle music compiled by musicians connected to Kernan's teaching between 1844 and 1973. The written sources will be analysed initially as discrete bodies of music, using a singular approach of focusing on their individual attributes. The methodology used for this analysis will be adapted from Moloney's framework in *The Irish Music Manuscripts of Edward Bunting (1773-1843): An Introduction and Catalogue* (2000). Moloney's approach was later adapted by Buckley (2012) and Slattery (2012) in their analysis of nineteenth century Irish music manuscript collections. Studies that focus on the connection between the repertoire of a collection with its region and people also inform this methodological approach including McElwain (2013), (Maguire, 2003), (Ní Uallacháin, 2003) and (Boullier, 2012).

Informed by the methodological approaches outlined in the previous section, the general headings under which the written sources of this dissertation will be examined are: (1) provenance, (2) biographical background of the scribes, (3) physical attributes of the collection, (4) chronology, (5) identification of scribes, (6) motives of the scribes, (7) sources of repertoire. Given the non-physical nature of the audio sources, they will be examined under fewer headings than the written sources. Following the results of this analysis, in instances where the repertoires of particular sources support the process of studying the evolution of fiddle music

in Connmhaicne, the musical contents of such sources will be further examined. In these cases, the rhythmic composition of the repertoires will be initially analysed as individual works of music in order to investigate the types of tune types prevalent at the time of compilation. Subsequently, these repertoires will be compared to the repertoires of other sources in the dissertation in order to assess and document the specific changes occurring in the repertoire of the musicians connected to Kernan's teaching over the period between c1825 and c1975.

#### **1.7.4 Vol. I, Part Three: teaching practices and characteristics of Connmhaicne fiddle style**

The methodologies used to examine the written and audio sources in Part Two are, for the most part, guided by a singular approach whereby focus is given to the unique features of the individual sources. In Part Three, the sources will be examined through a collective approach in order to identify and examine the common aspects of fiddle style and methods of teaching prevalent among the fiddle players of this study. Consideration will be given to the methodologies concerned with the assessment of music styles, in particular fiddle styles, in the discourse of regionalism in Irish music.

The theme of regionalism in music styles was first investigated in a systematic process by Seán Ó Riada in his radio series *Our Musical Heritage* broadcast in 1962 (Kearney, 2010, p. 152). In his discussion of fiddle styles, O'Riada identified four principal regions in Ireland based on variances between the styles that he observed in these regions: Sligo, Donegal, Sliabh Luachra and Clare. Since then, further research on this subject has challenged the suitability of applying Ó Riada's geographical model for analysing fiddle styles. As Kearney pointed out, "the use of regional musical styles as the foundation for a geography of Irish traditional music is limited in its application" (p. 170). Kearney's assertion is supported by a study that was undertaken by Caoimhín MacAoidh on the history of Donegal fiddle music, which revealed that a single regional style did not exist in this area (1994, pp. 120-134). MacAoidh examined the styles of

fiddle players across this region and discovered that they varied greatly from one fiddle player to another and often from one generation of musical family to the next. For example, in a case study of the fiddle player, John Doherty (1895-1980), MacAoidh demonstrated that Doherty's staccato style of bowing, which was influenced by Scottish fiddlers such as James Scott Skinner (1843-1927), differed from that of his brother and father, Mickey and Mickey Mór respectively, who both played in the older traditional style of Donegal playing. Echoing the concerns expressed by Kearney and MacAoidh on using a regional framework to analyse fiddle styles, Fintan Vallely suggests that "some areas do not fit into the general classification [Sligo, Donegal, Sliabh Luachra and Clare], and there are also players whose music may not belong to a particular regional style" (1999, p. 125). He further argues that the expression "regional style" has become a literary term used to define styles based on the popularity of a musician or group of musicians that originate from a certain region. However, he adds that these styles are not necessarily the result of their geographical location, but could just have easily have been created from outside sources, such as the influence of Michael Coleman (1891-1945) and his recording contemporaries at the beginning of the twentieth century (p. 146).

As Kearney has identified, and critically discussed, there are a number of frameworks in addition to Ó Riada's that have been proposed in the discourse of musical styles in Irish music (2010, p. 152). In particular, he critically examines the five characteristics of musical style identified by Niall Keegan (1997, p. 117), which Keegan expands in his article 'The Parameters of Style in Irish Traditional Music' (2010). Kearney also gives consideration to alternative taxonomies offered by Matt Cranitch (2006) and Fintan Vallely (1999). In conclusion of this analysis, Kearney proposes a methodology for examining style based on four principal characteristics:

- (1) Instrumentation: a) solo performance, b) group playing
- (2) Repertoire: a) tune types, b) tune names
- (3) Way of playing: a) technique, b) ornamentation, c) variation
- (4) Use of music: a) listening, b) dancing, c) expression of identity

In response to the limitations outlined by Kearney, MacAoidh and Vallely in applying a geographical model for analysing fiddle styles, this dissertation will employ a collectivist approach to this subject, based on the traits of style that are most evident among all the fiddle players connected to the teaching of Thomas Kernan. Before the musicians are analysed collectively, each musician will be examined on an individual basis to collect relevant data for further analysis. This data will be collected from four written collections and three audio catalogues transcribed by this present writer from their original sources.

While there are a number of studies analysing fiddle style based on data collected from written collections such as Boullier (2012) and (Cranitch, 2006), there are a limited number of such studies using data collected from oral sources. One of the earliest studies in this area of research is David Lyth's book *Bowing Styles in Irish Fiddle Playing*, Vol.1, (1981). Lyth transcribed and analysed features of fiddle style, such as bowing and ornamentation, evident in a sample of early twentieth century commercial recordings released by fiddle players from Sligo, namely Michael Coleman, Paddy Killoran and James Morrison. Another study of fiddle style based on oral sources is Jesse Smith's dissertation (2008, p. 80) focusing on the aforementioned Sligo fiddler, Michael Coleman (1891-1945). Smith identified five characteristics of a fiddle style relevant to the playing of Coleman:

- (1) Bowing (rhythm),
- (2) Ornamentation,
- (3) Variation (melodic and rhythmic),
- (4) Tone
- (5) Repertoire.

In aligning Smith's model with the aims of this dissertation, and informed by Lyth's (1981) approach, a number of minor adaptations to Smith's approach will be undertaken in the study of fiddle style among the musicians connected to Kernan's teaching. Only three of Smith's characteristics of fiddle style, bowing, ornamentation and variation, will be used, but another characteristic will be added. Smith's category of 'Tone' will not be examined in this dissertation due to the fact that this feature is absent in the written sources. In light of the substantial repertoire that exists in all the sources of this dissertation, another of his five characteristics of style, 'Repertoire', will be examined under a separate section in the respective chapters in Part Two of this dissertation, chapters which examine the sources in an individual manner. The extra characteristic to be added will be 'Specific techniques'. Exploratory research on the written and audio sources to be examined in this study reveals that distinctive fiddle techniques such as *scordatura* and *pizzicato* were employed by a number of the musicians. In summary, therefore, the fiddle styles of the musicians to be examined in this study will be considered under the categories of the following four characteristics:

- (1) Bowing
- (2) Ornamentation
- (3) Variation
- (4) Specific techniques

Following an analysis of each fiddle player to be examined in this dissertation, the individual results will be combined under each of these four style characteristic headings. This collective process will establish the key characteristics of a fiddle style that are most commonly shared by these connected fiddle players. In addition, the results of this analysis will seek to validate the theory proposed by Fr John Quinn in his article ‘Fiddle Music in Longford and South Leitrim since Kiernan’ that the bowing style ‘slur and cut’ was a technique that was taught by Thomas Kernan and transmitted through several generations of musicians in this localised fiddle tradition in Connmaicne (2008, p. 75).

### **1.7.5 Vol. II: Digitisation and critical editing of the written and audio sources**

#### **1.7.5.1 Rationale**

In order to examine the repertoires of the written and audio sources of fiddle music in Part Two and Part Three, the repertoire of each source will be converted from their original source into standard music notation. The converted sources of music will be presented in Volume II of this dissertation. This process of music conversion and editing is necessary, firstly given that many of the music items in the written sources are difficult to decipher for the ordinary reader (O’Connor, 2008), and secondly to facilitate the examination of music items from the audio sources, which are ephemeral by nature (Smith, 2008). As Burn points out, an important role of the editor is to “facilitate communication between the musical text and the reader or performer” (2017, p.9), and therefore it is crucial that the original music in the written and audio sources be presented correctly for both the editor and the reader of this study.

The sources of repertoires collated in Volume II are integral to the study of music evolution in the Connmaicne region. Each source represents the prevalent music from a specific era in the

history of fiddle music in this region, ranging from *c*1825 to *c*1975. Comparative analysis of the sources in Volume II will provide documentary evidence of the changes in music that occurred gradually in the course of this period, highlighting both the consistency and variation in specific aspects of fiddle style, such as repertoire, bowing and ornamentation, among the musicians of the Connmaicne region. The manuscripts under investigation in this dissertation cover the period *c*1825-*c*1930 and are collated as follows: Vol.II, Source A: Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-*c*1850); Source B: O'Farrell MS (*c*1870); Source C: Reynolds MS3 (*c*1880); Source D: Reynolds MS1 (*c*1885); Source E: Reynolds MS2 (*c*1885); Source F: Meagher MS (*c*1890); Source G: Cole MS (*c*1930s), Source H: Larry Smyth MS (*c*1900) and Source I: McBrien-Rogers MS (*c*1900 & *c*1950). The oral sources represent a later period in the history of the fiddle tradition associated with Kernan, namely from the 1920s to 1975, a period during which the transmission of music appears to have moved from a written tradition to an oral tradition. These sources are collated in Volume II as follows: Source J: Packie Dolan 78s (1927-1929); Source K: Frank Quinn 78s (1921-1936) and Source L: Michael Francis McNerney Tape Recordings (1973).

#### **1.7.5.2 Critical editing - Written sources**

In dealing with the original manuscripts the unique structure and notation of the individual tunes in these sources will require a certain degree of modification when converted into their edited formats in Volume II. In order to present the tunes in as close a way as possible to that in which they were originally written by the musicians, different editorial approaches need to be considered. In recent decades, manuscript collections of regional Irish music have been presented in various formats as part of academic and literary endeavours (Moloney, 2000; Buckley, 2007; McCarthy, 2013). Several approaches have been conducted in the process of

converting repertoire from their original sources into printed music notation. Currently, the most common method of music conversion is to input the source music manually on to the computer software programme *Sibelius*, producing a typeset music score, which can be edited and converted further into other formats, such as PDF and PNG files (O'Connor, 2008; McElwain, 2013). This conversion process may cause a certain degree of intentional or unintentional modification of the original music. This concern has a historical parallel: a number of the 'great collectors', as termed by Breathnach (1971), such as Bunting, Petrie and Joyce, were accused of altering music when transcribed from an oral setting. In the case of Petrie, Boydell points out that his background in art music made him an unsuitable candidate for the task of collecting folk music and song, which were based on the traditional modal system of scales (Boydell, 2007). For instance, he explains that, when Petrie was collecting in the Aran Islands, he would play "the melody back to the islanders on his violin: the translation of the music from its original context, into that of the educated, classically trained musician, already accomplished before the very ears of those whose music it was" (p. 67). On the other hand, another collector, Francis O'Neill, was unapologetic for his music editing: "why should palpably inferior versions, or variants of traditional tunes, be exempt from correction or alteration?" (1910, p. 53).

The degree of editing between the original and new music score depends on the subjectivity and motives of the editor. As Seattle points out, editorial restraint is required in order to preserve the authenticity of the original source:

As for the general principle behind correcting someone's work, my view is that, while it is the editor's responsibility to agree or disagree with these corrections, there is often a fine judgement to be made between correcting an error and preserving a valid but non-standard version. (2008, Preface)

In textual criticism, a branch of literary criticism that endeavours to establish the original form of a written composition, Shields warns that the processes of editing and copying cause a progressive degeneration of the text, where the resemblance of the origin lessens with each successive copy (2007, p. 289). For the purposes of this dissertation, having regard to concerns of Shields and Seattle, minimal edits will be made during the process of converting tunes from their original sources. Edits to (1) incorrect key signatures, (2) specific notes that are obviously incorrect, and (3) bar lines that are displaced, will be made without comment in the edited versions. In instances where the given rhythm of a particular tune is deemed incorrect, it will be changed and a note to this effect will be added to inform the reader. The titles of the tunes will be presented as they appear in the original sources, but in cases where they are misspelt this will be highlighted and amended spellings will be suggested. Each music item will be given a unique code for the purposes of identifying, cross-referencing and categorising the repertoire across all the sources in the dissertation. For example, the first tune in the Leonard-Kernan MS is denoted as LK.001. The letters in this code, LK, are an abbreviation of the scribes' surnames, Leonard and Kernan. Where there is only one musician, the letters from forename and surname will be sufficient: e.g., LS.001 is the first tune in the Larry Smyth MS.

Following the methodology applied by Shields & Shields (2013, Foreword, vii) in their printed editions of the Goodman manuscripts, tunes in the written sources of this dissertation that exhibit characteristics of having been sourced directly by the scribes from printed material, such as published music collections and sheet music, will not be converted from their original source. Instead, a reference will be made to the original printed material from which the tune was transcribed. In order to identify tunes copied by the scribes from printed material, certain characteristics must be displayed. In the case of tunes derived from sheet music, characteristics such as the following must be present:

- (1) The arranger's or composer's name is written as an addendum to the tune title, e.g. 'Mars Polka – Jas. King' (MBR.030);
- (2) A type of dance, typically one from western art music, is written before the tune title, e.g. 'Galop: Prince Imperial – C. Coote Jr.' (MBR.001);
- (3) The piece of music is relatively long, covering six staves or more, and may include subtitles such as, an *introduction*, *trio* and *coda*.

Tunes copied from printed music collections may be identified as such, if they contain one or more of the following characteristics:

- (1) Notational pattern involving unusual notation: if the music notation of a tune is noticeably different from what is considered the usual style of the scribe then there is a possibility that the scribe may have copied this particular tune from printed music collection. For instance, if the usual style of the scribe is to transcribe reels with quavers in the time signature of 4/4, then any reels that are transcribed with semi-quavers in 2/4 may be regarded as unusual. In transcriptions of dance music in manuscripts, musicians generally phrase their tunes in quavers. However, some printed music collections from the nineteenth century such as, *Ryan's Mammoth Collection* (Boston, 1883), printed reels and hornpipes using a semi-quaver structure in 2/4 time, or alternatively for hornpipes, a dotted quaver/semi-quaver structure. Where the scribe has used these semi-quaver patterns it suggests that there may have been copying from such sources
- (2) Versions and titles identical to those found in printed sources: tunes consisting of a version identical, or almost identical, with that contained in a specific music collection have a relatively high probability that they were copied from that source. Matching bowing patterns, art music notation and ornamentation, in addition to notes and titles,

provide further evidence that a printed source may have been used. A weakness in this method occurs where publishers have themselves copied tunes from other collections (see also, MacAoidh, 2006). Consequently, it may not be possible to ascertain conclusively from which printed source a particular tune may have been copied. In general, tune titles across the various music collections are quite uniform in their presentation. However, where sources have a unique title, or contain a distinctive feature in addition to the title, then it is probable that tunes with these same attributes may have been copied from that source. For example, the tune title ‘The Cuckoo's Nest - The Mower’ (LS.101) from the Larry Smyth MS is only found written in that format in Francis Roche’s *Collection of Irish Airs, Marches and Dance Tunes etc.*, Vol.2, (1912b). Another distinguishing characteristic of tune titles is where specific numbers, obviously taken from a number sequence, are written beside the title, indicating that the tune may have been copied from a printed source which used the same numbering system e.g. the tune title ‘289: The Celebrated Esmeralda [sic] Polka’ (LK.051) from the Leonard-Kernan MS appears in same numerical format in the music collection from which it was copied: *A New Series of Alexander’s Scrap Book for the Flute, Violin, Flageolet, etc.* (n.d.; c.1830-45).

- (3) Clusters of tunes from the same written source: as music collections were for the most part difficult to obtain by musicians, the procurement of one typically occurred through borrowing from other musicians. This short term lending scheme often led to a concerted effort by the borrower to transcribe several tunes from that source before giving it back to the lender. Accordingly, if one tune has been successfully matched to a music collection, then it is likely that other tunes in close proximity, and usually in a cluster, were all copied from the same source.

(4) Duplicated tunes – different versions: If there are duplicates of a tune in the one manuscript and the versions differ from each other, this may indicate that one of the versions was transcribed from memory, while the other may have been copied from another source, most likely a published music collection. For example, in the Larry Smyth MS, the version of the tune ‘Favourite Sailor’s Hornpipe’ (LS.018) appears to be the scribe’s own version of this tune, whereas another version that he transcribed ‘Manchester Hornpipe’ (LS.096) appears to have copied from the printed version, ‘No.11: Manchester Hornpipe’ in *Kerr’s First Collection of Merry Melodies for the Violin* (n.d.; c1870-75).

(5) Use of markings from western art music: musicians were very likely to have been exposed for the first time through printed sources to western art music concepts, such as:

- (i) Clefs: Treble clef, bass clef etc.
- (ii) Articulation: Fermata, staccato etc.
- (iii) Dynamics: *ff*, *f*, *mf* etc.
- (iv) Tempo: Adagio, Andante, Allegro etc.
- (v) Repetition of strains: “1<sup>st</sup> time & 2<sup>nd</sup> time”, D.C., Segno, Finale etc.

Irish music in written format generally only contains a small amount of these western art music markings, if any, when notated by musicians into manuscript form (Vallely, 1999, p. 159). Therefore, when clusters of these markings appear in particular tunes, it suggests that the source of these tunes may be a printed, rather than an oral one.

Having concluded this process of identifying tunes in the manuscripts transcribed from printed sources, the next stage involves tracing the tunes so identified to their printed source of origin.

This onerous task is simplified through consultation with Fr John Quinn's comprehensive music archive, which is housed at present at his residence in the Parochial House, Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim. The archive comprises of approximately 50,000 tune excerpts, collated by Fr Quinn over the last fifty years (Quinn, 2016). It includes all of the major printed collections of Irish music that have been published in the last two centuries, and also the entire collection of manuscripts from the region of Connemara transcribed between c1840-c1960. His anthology of tunes arranged in alphabetical order of title, provides an immediate match between versions of tunes in this dissertation with that of their printed sources.

In recent times, Fr Quinn's paper-based collection has been complemented by the advent of the internet and advances in music software. Websites such as [www.tunearch.org](http://www.tunearch.org) and [www.thesession.org](http://www.thesession.org) provide comprehensive archives of tunes and a detailed analysis of their historical development. Other websites such as [www.tunepal.org](http://www.tunepal.org) and [www.folktunefinder.com](http://www.folktunefinder.com) provide an ancillary function by matching tunes with their relevant titles. These last two websites are integral to this study as a significant amount of tunes across all the sources contain either no title at all or a title that is not instantly recognisable. The former website, [www.tunepal.org](http://www.tunepal.org), requires the researcher to play the notes of the unknown tune, which it then automatically transcribes into ABC notation before conducting its search into the digital library of music scores. Its database of music is continuously growing, allowing researchers to cross-reference repertoire from numerous sources. A distinct advantage of the latter website, [www.folktunefinder.com](http://www.folktunefinder.com), for research purposes is that its database contains a significant amount of amateur folk music collections from Great Britain, written and collected in the nineteenth century, a time period that coincides with the compilation dates of several of the manuscripts in this study. Another such website, which is developing its own growing folk tune database, along with much western art music material, is [www.musipedia.org](http://www.musipedia.org).

### **1.7.5.3 Critical editing - Audio sources**

To convert tunes from audio sources of fiddle music, the methodology to be used for this process will be based on Smith's (2008) dissertation on the music recordings of the Sligo fiddle player, Michael Coleman. To analyse and dissect his individual fiddle style, Smith converted all known recordings of Coleman into music notation, focusing on facets such as bowing, ornamentation and use of variation. Due to the sheer quantity of tunes in the audio sources of this study, only those tunes which have specific attributes that support the process of evaluating the development of fiddle music in the Kernan tradition will be transcribed from audio sources. These attributes include:

- (1) for comparative purposes, tunes that have versions in at least one other source in the dissertation;
- (2) tunes that have titles referring to people and places in County Longford, and are therefore suggestive of a local provenance;
- (3) specific tune types, such as reels and jigs, which may provide examples of the bowing style, known locally as 'slur and cut', a method closely associated with the teaching of Thomas Kernan.

As outlined by Nixon in the context of Scottish fiddle music, one area of difficulty arising in the process of converting audio sources to music notation is the inherent subjectivity of defining and naming distinct ornaments (2012, p. 118). Interpretation of these stylistic facets depends on the judgement, perception, expertise and regional background of the researcher. For example, the terms 'turn' and 'roll' are sometimes used interchangeably for the same ornament. Another issue in this area is that subtle differences in the phrasing and timing of an ornament can give rise to varying definitions of specific embellishments. This problem is

apparent in the different textual presentations of the same tunes from the commercial recordings of Michael Coleman, when transcribed by Smith (2008) and by Lyth (1981). Based on the ambiguous nature of this subject area, the definition and naming of ornamentation in this dissertation will be based on both my own understanding of the topic as a fiddle player from within the region of Conmhaicne and also from consultation with relevant literary and academic discourse.

# Chapter Two

## Locating Kernan's music

## **2 Chapter Two**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This dissertation presents a critical analysis of the evolution of fiddle music in the region of Connmhaicne over the course of approximately one hundred and fifty years, from *c*1825 to *c*1975. Chapter Two focuses on the historical context of both people and place conducive to the evolution of fiddle music in this region during the period of examination.

A biographical account of Thomas Kernan is conducted through a survey of genealogical records, literature and folklore. While Kernan's music emanated outwards from his base in north Longford, an analysis of other factors such as people, topography and culture, suggests that north Longford may be more aptly viewed in the context of an ancient region known as 'Connmhaicne', which incorporates Longford and the adjoining borderlands of south Leitrim and south Cavan.

It is necessary, therefore, to discuss Connmhaicne as a region, with particular emphasis on its people and their culture in general. A study of historical human migrations into Connmhaicne will be examined, coupled with an analysis of relevant literary works and folklore emanating from the region.

The earlier harping and piping tradition of the region is scrutinised in detail. The demise of these harping and piping traditions is especially considered in order to understand the musical environment, which led to the emergence of a strong fiddle tradition in Connmhaicne. Emanating from the earlier harping and piping traditions, and the later fiddle tradition, are several collections of written music deriving from the Connmhaicne region. The last section of this chapter will provide an overview of these historical collections and examine themes of history, provenance, transmission and region.

## 2.2 Conmhaicne: region, culture and people

The written and audio sources to be examined in this dissertation were compiled by fiddle players emanating from Conmhaicne Maigh Réin, an ancient tribal territory covering south Leitrim and most of County Longford (Quinn, 2008). The ecclesiastical diocese of Ardagh, which is made up mainly of parishes in Longford and south Leitrim, is practically coterminous with the boundaries of Conmhaicne Maigh Réin (see Plate 1). Bishop McNamee confirms this assertion in *History of the Diocese of Ardagh*, where he states “in the Middle Ages Ardagh was known as the diocese of the Conmhaicne” (1954, p. 6). This shortened version of the region’s name can be confusing, as there were historically six distinct areas with Conmhaicne in their titles. These are listed by John P. Dalton in discussing the ancient boundaries of the diocese of Ardagh (1926, pp. 11-13). Dalton traces the origins of the various areas known as Conmhaicne back into the mists of mythology and its pseudo-history. Conmhaicne means the descendants of Conmhac, who was reputedly the third son of Fergus and Medb. It would seem that for many generations they resided in the vicinity of Dunmore, Co. Galway, but in mediaeval times some twenty-seven generations after the time of Conmhac, when the tribal chief was Cumascrach, the Conmhaicne began to expand into the territories of other tribal peoples. These tribal migrations were led by descendants of the sons of Cumascrach. The descendants of the eldest son, Fraech, remained in the Dunmore area as Conmhaicne Dúna Móir. The descendants of the second son, Findfer, moved east into Longford and south Leitrim, and became Conmhaicne Maigh Réin. Those of the third son, Findcaemh, moved west into Connemara and neighbouring parts of Mayo, becoming Conmhaicne Mara and Conmhaicne Cuile Tolad. The descendants of the fourth son, Copchas, moved to Co. Westmeath, settling on the banks of Lough Ree as Conmhaicne Bec, or the small Conmhaicne. Cumascrach had a fifth son, Ciri, but where his descendants settled is not recounted.

These migrations naturally displaced or assimilated some of the previous inhabitants of the areas and, in the case of what he saw as the arrival of the Connmhaicne in Longford and south Leitrim, Dalton mentions the assimilation of the Calraighe in Longford (1926, p. 22). More recent study by O'Connor and Parker speaks of localised displacement within this region occurring during the tenth and eleventh centuries, where members of the Connmhaicne tribe expanded their territory from south Leitrim into Longford, driving the native Cenél Maine tribe south of the River Inny (O'Connor & Parker, 2010, p. 77).

The word Connmhaicne survives in the contracted form of Connmhaicne Mara, Connemara, and in the memory preserved in the diocese of Ardagh. For example, in the 1930s, Fr Peter Conefrey (1880-1939), the famous anti-jazz activist, trained a Céili Band in the south Leitrim area, which became known as *The Connmhaicne Céilí Band*, and again in the 1990s Fr John Quinn (b.1940) trained a Céilí Band named *Ceoltóirí Connmhaicne*, including musicians from both south Leitrim and Longford. Recently in 2016, a new society *Cumann Ceoil Chonmhaicne* was formed, with the core aims to preserve and promote the historical Irish music, song and dance deriving from this region (Ward, 2016). In this context, there is a new 'revival' (see Livingston, 1999; Hill and Bithell, 2014) in the region that engages in processes of regionalisation, but this is beyond the scope of the current study.

**Plate 1: Parish Map of Ardagh Diocese, formerly known as the Diocese of Conmhaicne**



Map legend	Original location of manuscript - written sources	Chapter in thesis
1	Leonard-Kernan MS	Chapter 4
2	McBrien-Rogers MS	Chapter 5
3	Larry Smyth MS	Chapter 6
4	O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS	Chapter 7
Map legend	Original home of recorded musician - audio sources	Chapter in thesis
5	Packie Dolan	Chapter 8
6	Frank Quinn	Chapter 8
7	Michael Francis McNerney	Chapter 8
Map legend	Home place of prominent fiddle teachers of the Kernan tradition	
A	Thomas Kiernan	
B	Bernard Rogers	
C	Francis McDonagh	

While north Longford is connected to south Longford within the official boundary of County Longford, the region is more closely connected to south Leitrim (and south Cavan) as regards topography, settlement and culture. For example, the topography of north Longford consists of poorer, drumlin country that is virtually indistinguishable from the adjoining borderlands of Leitrim and Cavan, in contrast with south Longford which is covered by fertile grassland with spots of raised bog (O'Connor & Parker, 2010, p. 76). In addition to the topographical similarity between the borderland region of south Leitrim and north Longford, its people are also connected through the aforementioned historical patterns of migration and settlement.

A sense of shared culture between the people of south Leitrim and Longford founded in the ancient settlement patterns of the Connhaicne tribe, are still widely felt in the recent history of this borderland region. This tribal connection is evident in the poetic works of Patrick 'Poet' Higgins (1832-1902), which have recently been collated from local sources and published by The 'Poet' Higgins Society (Duffy, 2011). Higgins lived on the north Longford border in Cloncoose, Co. Leitrim, and his poetry provides insightful observations and accounts of the traditions and customs practised in this region during the second half of the nineteenth century. Of relevance to this dissertation, and also to the study of regional ethnomusicology in Connhaicne, many of his poems, such as *Panegyric on Terence O'Rourke*, describe the musical exploits of musicians from his locality, while other poems, such as *McBroin's Ball* and *Tommy Colreavy's Spree*, depict vividly the constructs of rural music-making and dance during this era. For example, in his poem, *The Half Set*, he criticises the propagation of this "terrible dance", as he terms it, to the detriment of the more graceful and fleet-footed step dances that were historically performed in this region (Duffy, 2011, p. 51). In another poem, *Johnny McNamee's Spree*, he humorously points out that fiddle players, in contrast to flute players, were highly regarded at local social events during that era:

The boys who played the violin  
They were duly taken in  
Refreshments got of every kind  
As good they say as you could find.  
Those who played upon the flute  
Were treated as you'd treat a brute.  
They got a common drink of water

From Yellow Johnny's youngest daughter (p. 54)

Another important aspect of Higgins' poetry relating to regional ethnomusicology is that in the two poems, *Clinton's Dance* and *Panegyric on Terence O'Rourke*, he describes the popular dances of that era, and lists up to one hundred and twenty tunes that were part of the local music repertoire. This catalogue of repertoire is vital evidence for the process of mapping the evolution of repertoire in this greater region over the last two hundred years, albeit challenged by the unreliable nomenclature in Irish traditional music (Breathnach, 1996).

While north Longford has strong ties to south Leitrim, which may be traced in some measure to the migration of the Conmhaicne tribe there a thousand years ago, its people also has a discernible connection with Ulster, which stems from relatively more recent historical events. During the Ulster Plantation and later upheavals from the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards, refugees fled Ulster in large numbers and settled in safer regions that bordered their province including north Longford. As a result, much of the present-day north Longford population is descended from the people of this historical migration (Sheridan, 2010, p. 2). The embers of this migration are still burning brightly in the contemporary folklore, customs and traditions of north Longford. These cultural footprints became apparent to Jim Delaney when he was collecting folklore in this region during the 1950s:

I continued living and working in North Longford until the Easter of 1956, when I bought a small second hand car, and began to operate out of Longford town. I now had the whole of County Longford, part of east Leitrim between Drumlish and Mohill, part of Roscommon near the Longford-Leitrim border as my circuit, making an odd trip into North Longford to see old friends like Patrick Reilly, to whose family I had become very attached. All these places had a common tradition and dialect and belonged more to the province of Ulster than to Leinster and Connaught. South Longford had a lesser element of the Ulster dialect than its northern part. For example, in South Longford one never heard of a man going on his céilí, i.e. making a social call to a neighbour's house. 'Rambling' was the word used to denote this, a word that was common in Offaly and Roscommon, and in the southern part of Ireland generally (Delaney, 1990 cited in Ní Fhloinn, 2010, pp. 647-648)

Jim Delaney's anthology of folklore currently archived in The Irish Folklore Commission, University College Dublin, and the poetic works of Patrick 'Poet' Higgins are two of a number of regional works recording the history, traditions, customs and stories of the people from the region of Connmhaicne. Another literate of note from this region is the playwright, poet and novelist, Padraic Colum (1881-1972). Reared in Colmcille, a parish at the very tip of north Longford, Colum lived there until his family moved to Glasthule, Co. Dublin, in 1892. Although the author Kathy Sheridan (2010, p. 5) contends that Colum's book, *Treasury of Irish Folklore* (1954), contains very few references to his native county, one of his plays, *The Fiddlers' House* (1907), may be based on his personal observations of local music-making as a young boy growing up in Colmcille. Of relevance to this dissertation, the play depicts a day in the life of a fictional fiddle player, Conn Hourican, offering an insight into the activities of rural based fiddle players at the turn of the twentieth century.

### **2.3 The earlier harping and piping traditions**

Historically, there was a vibrant music tradition in the ancient territory of Connmhaicne. The earlier instruments played in this region were the harp and pipes. In the year 1369, the *Annals*

*of the Four Masters* reports the death of two prominent harpers in Connemara, John MacEgan and Gilbert O'Barden (Gilfillan, 1983). The repertoire of these harpers was most likely to have been in the form of music accompaniment to recitals of poetry (Breathnach, 1971, p.11; Ó hAllmhuráin, 1998, p.26; Moloney, 2000, p.7). Bards at that time held a high position in society, and the harpers by association shared their elevated status. Their services were highly sought after in the big houses of both the Irish chiefs and the Anglo-Irish landlords, and accordingly harp music flourished during this era.

From the sixteenth century onwards the harping tradition took a new direction in response to political unrest in Ireland (Moloney, 2000). During the sixteenth century tension increased between the aristocratic classes of Ireland and the English Crown, and this culminated during the seventeenth century in the native Gaels suffering greatly through a series of successive wars, conquests and plantations. This upheaval led to a breakdown in the order of society, where bards and harpers were no longer required, forcing the latter to seek employment as wandering minstrels. Turlough Carolan (1670-1738) epitomised this itinerant lifestyle and became Ireland's most famous harper from this era. Born in Nobber, Co. Meath and reared in Ballyfarnon, Co. Roscommon, he eventually settled and married near Mohill, Co. Leitrim, close to the Longford border (O'Sullivan, 1958a). He received patronage from a number of the big houses in the Connemara region and in return composed several airs, such as 'Miss Fetherston' (also known as 'Carolan's Devotion') and 'Mrs Farrell', in their honour (O'Sullivan, 1958b, pp. 30-31).<sup>10</sup> Accounts of other contemporary harpers from that era in this region were documented by the Tyrone harper, Arthur O'Neill (c1734-1818), in his memoirs, a transcript of which made by Donal O'Sullivan can be found in *Carolan: the life, times and music of an Irish harper Volume 2* (1958b). In one such account O'Neill recalls the story of

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<sup>10</sup> For a comprehensive note on the history of these two airs, see (O'Sullivan, 1958b, pp. 30-31).

how Jerome Duigenan (b.1710), a harper from Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim, was summoned to the House of Commons in Dublin to settle a bet between his patron Colonel Jones, County Leitrim's representative in the parliament, and an English nobleman, who had a Welsh harper with him. Duigenan, wearing his traditional attire of beaten rushes known as a *Cauthack*, was duly announced the winner, after both men performed before all the members of assembly (O'Sullivan, 1958b, pp. 158-159). Another harper from Connhaicne referred to in O'Neill's memoirs, is Andrew Victory of Mostrim, County Longford, whose surname O'Neill claims "gave rise to much banter and pleasantry" (1913, p. 79).

During the eighteenth century, the continued existence of the harping tradition was once again threatened. The Anglo-Irish ascendancy class dictated western musical taste to the detriment of the native harp music. Hogan (1966) argues that, in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, the lines between the two musical traditions became blurred with the Anglo-Irish ascendancy taking more of an interest in the folk music leading to the Belfast Harp Assembly in 1792 and the emergence of the antiquarian movement, which included the publication of Bunting's first collection of Irish music in 1796. The chromatic requirements of this new music genre posed grave problems for the modal harps and a demise in the tradition ensued. In order to preserve and revive the repertoire of the aging harpers that remained, a growth in antiquarianism was witnessed in Ireland at this time. Towards the end of the century an attempt to reverse the decline of the harp across Ireland was made in County Longford. John Dungan, a merchant living in Copenhagen, initiated a revival by organising harp festivals in his native Granard. These took place in the years 1781, 1782 and 1785. The winner of the first prize each year at these events was a local harper, Charles Fanning (1736-c1800), of Foxfield, Fenagh, Co. Leitrim (O'Sullivan, 1958a, pp. 177-178). Also hailing from Fanning's local area were two harpers, Charles Byrne and his nephew and namesake, Charles Byrne (c1712-c1810), the latter

of whom competed in the Belfast Harp Festival of 1792.<sup>11</sup> The elder of the two Byrnes was apparently detested by Turlough Carolan, “supposedly for his bad playing of some of the great man’s compositions” (Gilfillan, 1981, p. 38).

While the harping tradition had almost disappeared in the region of Connmhaicne around the beginning of the nineteenth century, and indeed across most parts of Ireland, the music of the pipers survived. One of the earliest references to a piper from Connmhaicne is Conor Magawley of Moher, Co. Longford, who appears in a register from 1577 in the papers of the *Irish Fians of the Tudor Sovereigns 1521-1603* (Ó Riain, 1998, p. 30). Another piper from that era was John O’Maloney of Pallas, Co. Longford, who according to Francis O’Neill in *Irish Minstrels and Musicians* (1913), was granted a pardon by Her Majesty in 1602 (p. 27). Prominent Longford pipers from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were Thomas F. Kerrigan (c1840-1901) of Granard, Co. Longford (Carolan, 1997, p. 30), John Gillan of Gillan’s Lane, Ardnacassa, Longford, and the “tramp piper”, Billy Clinton.<sup>12</sup> The poem ‘Clinton’s Dance’ by the ‘Poet’ Higgins, is thought to be named after him (Duffy, 2011, pp. 56-58). A story of his musical talents also appears in The Schools’ (Folklore) Collection 1937-39 from the Moyne region of north Longford (MacNerney, 2000, p.208).

Historically, one of the strongest piping areas in Connmhaicne is the border area of south Longford/west Westmeath. A prominent piper and pipe maker from this region was James McCrone (1868-1948), who lived on the canal banks near Abbeyshrule, but later moved to Dublin (Mulligan, 2000).<sup>13</sup> While living in Dublin, McCrone was interviewed by the collector Seamus Ennis in 1942. In this interview, McCrone recalled stories of musical lore about several

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<sup>11</sup> There is a sketch of the Fenagh harper, Charles Byrne (c1712-c1810) from 1804 when he was aged ninety-two in *Annals of the Irish harpers*. Charlotte Mulligan Fox. (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1911, p. 130).

<sup>12</sup> Clinton is described as a “tramp piper” in the Schools’ (Folklore) Collection 1937-39 (MacNerney, 2000, p.208); c.f.: 4.12.1 Public Taverns

<sup>13</sup> ‘McCrone’ and ‘Mulcrone’ are both used for this surname in literature.

pipers active in this borderland region in the nineteenth century including Paddy Fitzpatrick, a tramp piper, ‘Soldier’ Farrell and his son, Pat Farrell, and ‘Piper’ Heslin (Donnelly, 1988; Donnelly 1989).<sup>14</sup> Piping music continued into later generations of the extended McCrone family. McCrone’s nephew, James ‘Piper’ Dolan, of Colehill, Carrickedmond, Co. Longford, was a renowned piper from this region in the twentieth century. In turn, Dolan’s nephew-in-law, Joe Lennon, also of Carrickedmond, inherited and plays Dolan’s set of McCrone pipes.

From Kenagh, the Carberrys are arguably one of the best known families of pipers from this border region of south Longford/west Westmeath. One of the first musicians in the family was Peter Carberry (1924-2016), who originally played the tin-whistle and flute, but later learned the pipes, using a set he had bought from the aforementioned McCrone (Potts, 1999, p.14). Later generations of pipers in this family are presently carrying on the family tradition to the present day including Peter’s son, Noel Carberry, and his grandson, Kevin Carberry. Other notable twentieth century pipers from this border region were Joe Kilmurray (c1890-c1970) of Ballynacargy, Co. Westmeath, and Michael Keena (1891-*fl.*1957) of Ardanra, Lenamore, Legan, Co. Longford.

## **2.4 Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887)**

### **2.4.1 Introduction**

From the seventeenth century onwards, a decline witnessed across Ireland in both the harping and piping traditions, was due partly to the introduction of instruments from continental Europe, such as the violin, German flute and hautboy (Carolan, 1986). The violin (henceforth: *fiddle*) and flute gradually became the predominant instruments of choice among the musicians

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<sup>14</sup> Ennis interviewed McCrone while working for the Department of Irish Folklore, UCD, Belfield, Dublin. The original transcript of Ennis’ interview with McCrone is held in the archive in this institution; c.f. IFC, MS 853, pp.496-506.

in Connemara, up until the early twentieth century, when they too came under threat from newly introduced instruments, particularly the melodeon and button accordion. While there is documentary evidence that the fiddle was actively played in Connemara as early as 1735 (NLI, 2016), the rapid spread of this instrument among the rural class of the region occurred during the nineteenth century. An influential figure in this fiddle music expansion was Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887), a travelling fiddle master who performed and taught all over Connemara during his lifetime (Quinn, 2008).<sup>15</sup> The evolution of fiddle music in Connemara, and Kernan's important role in this development, will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Three.

#### **2.4.2 Family and settlement**

Kernan's lifetime spanned most of the nineteenth century and he witnessed a time in Ireland that underwent great change in its cultural, economic and political history. While Kernan is commonly associated nowadays with the region of Cartron, Drumlish, in numerous sources it is stated that he originally came from Cranley, Mostrim (aka: *Edgeworthstown*) (Devaney, 1981, p. 257; Glennon, 1993, p. 41).<sup>16</sup> According to a descendant of the Kernan family, John Kiernan, they left Cranley shortly after a calamitous weather event in 1839, known as "The Night of the Big Wind" (Devaney, 1981, p. 257).

The identity of Kernan's parents are stated as "Michael and Mary Tierney" in a biographical account of his brother, Rev. Michael McKernan, in *The Latin School* (Boylan & Gray, 1979, p. 282).<sup>17</sup> According to genealogy records compiled by Kernan's family in recent times, Thomas Kernan had at least six siblings: Rev. Michael (c1814-1862), Patrick (c1803-1877),

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<sup>15</sup> Although Thomas' surname is more commonly spelt nowadays as 'Kiernan', he transcribed his surname both as 'McKernan' and 'Kernan' in the Leonard-Kernan MS dated 1844-c1850 (Chapter Four). Henceforth, his name will be spelt as 'Kernan' throughout this dissertation.

<sup>16</sup> The distance between Kernan's first home in Cranley, Mostrim and his second home in Cartron, Drumlish is approximately twenty kilometres.

<sup>17</sup> A full account of the genealogy of Thomas Kernan and his family is detailed in Vol.II, Source A.

James (c1799-1874), Mary Anne (c1827-1911), Ann (?-c1890s) and Brigid. The socio-economic backgrounds of Kernan's siblings suggest that at that time in rural Ireland the Kernan family may have been considered relatively well-off. His brother, Rev. Michael, trained as a priest in Rome (Devaney, 1981, p. 60). Patrick was a blacksmith and proprietor of at least three forges located throughout the adjoining parishes of Drumlish and Killoe (Devaney, 1981, p.257; AAI, 2012b), while his other brother, James, had a substantial holding of land in Oghill, Killoe (AAI, 2012a).<sup>18</sup> Two of Kernan's sisters, Ann and Brigid, were married to two Carolan brothers. Brigid was married to Bernard Carolan and one of their sons is likely to have been Bernie 'fiddler' Carolan, who used to play with his uncle, Thomas Kernan at big functions in Lord Granard's house in Newtownforbes (Quinn, 1979).

**Plate 2 Commemorative headstone of Thomas Kernan and extended members of his family in Drumlish Graveyard, Co. Longford**



(Source: Aidan O'Hara)

<sup>18</sup> One of Patrick's forges was located in the townland of Killeenatruan, Killoe at the crossroads known today as 'Kiernan's Cross'. While the forge has long since gone, its memory has been persevered in the name, 'Kiernan's Forge', still used by his descendants as the name of a public house, shop and garage.

### 2.4.3 Music legacy

The legacy of Kernan's music career is the significant number of talented fiddle players he taught during his lifetime, some of whom went on to become proficient fiddle teachers, and also the fiddle music he disseminated in the region of Connmhaicne during the nineteenth century. References to his contribution to the evolution of fiddle music in Connmhaicne and further afield are found in several literary works. The most notable one is from the acclaimed author and collector, Capt. Francis O'Neill in *Irish Minstrels and Musicians*, in which he writes "Many a pleasant hour Mr. Gillan [John Gillan] spent listening to Kernan's music in 1850, when he played at the "Red Cow" tavern, a mile distant from the town of Longford" (1913, p. 369). Kernan's exploits are also acknowledged by Patrick 'Poet' Higgins (1832-1902), a poet who lived in the region of Connmhaicne during the same era as Kernan. Specifically, in his poem, *A Panegyric on Terence O'Rourke* he writes: "He [O'Rourke] exceeds all musicians from Orpheus down/ to brave Thomas Kiernan, that man of renown." (Duffy, 2011, p. 89).

For Kernan's pivotal role in initiating and promoting fiddle music in the region of Connmhaicne he was known locally by the title 'fiddle master'. This term has become a popular one in recent times to describe a musician who has influenced and contributed in a significant way to the development and spread of a musical tradition by both teaching and performing. Pádraig O'Keeffe (1887-1963) from Sliabh Luachra, regarded as "the last of the travelling fiddling masters", is an example of someone who has been given this recognition at national level (Lynch, 1994, p. 32). Rev. Owen Devaney, a historian from Co. Longford observed that Kernan, "the blind fiddle player of Cartron, had a very important influence on music in North Longford in the middle of the 1800s" (1981, p. 257). Through the work of a new society *Cumann Ceoil Chonmhaicne*, formed by this present writer in 2016, the promotion of Kernan's musical legacy is currently the focus of a number of projects within Co. Longford. One such project is the naming of a roundabout located beside the fiddle monument on the N5 bypass

road outside Longford town (Plate 3), while another project is the erection of a monument commemorating Kernan in his home place of Cartron, Drumlish, beside the proposed walkway leading to Cairn Hill.

**Plate 3 Fiddle monument located on the N5 bypass outside Longford town**



(Source: Mary Brady Hughes, Cullyfad, Killoe, Co. Longford)

## **2.5 Historical collections of Connhaicne music**

### **2.5.1 Introduction**

Promoting and nurturing a culture of teaching and transmitting music through written music notation was one of Kernan's most important contributions to the evolution of fiddle music in the Connhaicne region. The extant fossils of this written tradition are the collections of fiddle

manuscripts compiled by Kernan and successive generations of his students. Four of these collections will be critically examined in Chapters Four-Seven of this dissertation: Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-*c*1850), McBrien-Rogers MS (*c*1900 & *c*1950), Larry Smyth MS (*c*1900) and O'Farrell-Reynolds MSS (*c*1870-*c*1930).

The aforementioned collections of music connected to Kernan's teaching form part of a relatively large body of historical Irish music emanating from the Connmhaicne region, both in the form of written collections (manuscript and published) and oral collections (field, radio and commercial recordings).<sup>19</sup> Thus far, fifteen discrete written collections of Connmhaicne music, containing approximately three thousand tunes, have been identified. The written collections consist of four published collections and eleven manuscript collections, which are listed in Table 2 (published collections are presented in *italics*). Ten of the manuscript collections were compiled by musicians from the Connmhaicne region, while one manuscript collection, the William Forde MSS, contains music collected from Connmhaicne musicians by the antiquarian William Forde (*c*1795-1850) of County Cork.

**Table 2: Written collections of Connmhaicne music: 1796 – *c*1960**

<b>Collection containing Connmhaicne music</b>	<b>Connmhaicne musicians collected from</b>	<b>Instrument</b>
<i>A General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music</i> (1796)	Charles Fanning (1736- <i>c</i> 1800)	Harp
<i>A General Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland</i> (1809)	Charles Fanning (1736- <i>c</i> 1800), Charles Byrne (dates unknown), Charles Byrne ( <i>c</i> 1712- <i>c</i> 1810)	Harp
<i>The Ancient Music of Ireland</i> (1840)	Charles Fanning (1736- <i>c</i> 1800), Charles Byrne (dates unknown), Charles Byrne ( <i>c</i> 1712- <i>c</i> 1810)	Harp
Leonard-Kernan MS (1844- <i>c</i> 1850)	Michael Leonard ( <i>c</i> 1835-1886) & Thomas Kernan ( <i>c</i> 1807-1887)	Fiddle
William Forde MSS (1846)	Mostly from Hugh O'Beirne with a smaller amount from various other Connmhaicne musicians	O'Beirne, Pipes; other instruments

<sup>19</sup> Analysis of the latter oral collections will be discussed in Chapter Eight: *Selected audio sources of fiddle music from the Connmhaicne region (c1925-c1975)*.

O'Farrell-Reynolds MSS (c1870-c1930)	Patrick O'Farrell (1836-?); Francis Reynolds (1862-1946), Margaret Reynolds (1908-1995) and one unidentified scribe	Fiddle
Stephen Grier MSS (1840s & 1880s)	Stephen Grier (c1824-1894)	Unknown
Larry Smyth MS (c1900)	Larry Smyth (1866-1930)	Fiddle
McBrien-Rogers MSS (c1900 & c1950)	Bernard Rogers (1856-1907); James McBrien (1885-1970) & Jack McBrien (1920-2002)	Fiddle
<i>O'Neill's Music of Ireland</i> (1903)	James Kennedy (1861-1927), Ellen Kennedy (1867-?), John Gillan (dates unknown) & Sgt. James Early (c1840-1914)	Kennedys, fiddle; Gillan & Early, pipes
Alex Sutherland MSS (c1900-c1960)	Alex Sutherland (1873-1967)	Fiddle
Reilly Family MSS (c1900-c1960)	Reillys: Philip (1860-1932); Terence (c1868-1941); Michael (1919-1967); Hughie (1914-1987). Others: John Masterson; Johnny MaGoohan and other Connhaicne musicians	Fiddle
Gaffney-Sutherland MS (c1930s)	Mary Kate Gaffney (1919-1994) & Alex Sutherland (1873-1967)	Fiddle
McCabe-Sutherland MS (c1930s)	Joseph McCabe (c1909-?) & Alex Sutherland (1873-1967)	Fiddle
Duffy Family MSS (1925-1931)	Thomas Duffy (1907-?), other family members	Fiddle, flute and others?

### 2.5.2 Collections of the ancient Connhaicne harping and piping traditions

Historically, the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850) is the earliest known collection of music compiled directly by Connhaicne musicians. Following the decline of the harping and piping traditions, the repertoire of this collection represents the beginning of a new era of Irish music in this region, dominated initially by the fiddle with other instruments such as the flute and accordion later coming to the fore. Fortunately, music obtained from Connhaicne musicians in the preceding harping and piping traditions has also been preserved in a number of written sources.

Of the harping tradition, Edward Bunting (1773-1843) collected repertoire from a number of south Leitrim harpers including Charles Fanning (1736-c1800), Charles Byrne and his nephew and namesake, Charles Byrne (c1712-c1810). The music of these Leitrim harpers was subsequently published, alongside music of their harping contemporaries, in Bunting's collections, *A General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music* (1796), *A General Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland* (1809) and *The Ancient Music of Ireland* (1840). The music collected from these harpers is typical of that era, containing a significant amount of airs composed by the harpers, Turlough Carolan (1670-1738) and Thomas Connallon (? -c1700), and ancient song airs and marches popularly played in Ireland during that period.

The ancient Connmaicne piping tradition is represented by some repertoire in the Forde-Pigot Collection held in the Royal Irish Academy Dublin. In September 1846, the renowned collector William Forde (c1795-1850) travelled to county Leitrim to collect music from the piper Hugh O'Bierne of Costrea, Fenagh. His journey was perhaps ill-timed given that the Great Famine had gripped much of rural Ireland. In a letter to an acquaintance, John Windele (1801-1865), Forde outlined the deteriorating state of O'Bierne's health during this visit:

The piper Hugh Beirne has been dying for the last two or three years but while ensuring the life of the airs that would have perished with him I do believe I am the means of giving life also. Stirabout and bad potatoes were working fatally on a sinking frame – but a mutton chop, twice a day, had changed Hugh's face wonderfully (Letter from Forde to Windele; Royal Irish Academy, Windele Mss 4/B/6/85, cited in MacAtasney, 2014, p.90)

From this extract, Forde's motivation for this trip is quite apparent: he was of the opinion that O'Bierne's repertoire contained airs from an earlier epoch. This is corroborated by P.W. Joyce (1827-1914), another important collector of that era, who notes that "O'Beirne was a man of exceptional musical taste and culture, with a vast knowledge of Irish music, gleaned from the

purest and most authentic sources” (1909, p. 296).<sup>21</sup> It is quite possible that Joyce’s reference to the origins of O’Bierne’s music as being from the “purest and most authentic sources” may allude to a familial relationship between O’Bierne and the aforementioned Byrne harpers, who also hailed from O’Bierne’s parish of Fenagh in County Leitrim. There is very little biographical documentation on either O’Bierne or his quasi-namesakes, the Byrnes, but it is hoped that future research into their background and their music may corroborate the supposition of this family relationship.

Forde collected nearly two hundred tunes from O’Bierne most of which were song airs, predominantly ancient, but also including a small number referring to the recent rebellion of 1798. P.W. Joyce subsequently published eighty-seven of O’Bierne’s airs collected by Forde in his collection *Old Irish Folk Music and Song, Part III: The Forde Collection* (1909). One of the marches that Forde collected from O’Bierne, ‘Erin, My Country’ (1909, p.304, No.582), was played by the Conmhaicne céilí band ‘Ceolus’, trained by Fr John Quinn, and of which I was a member, at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in 2014. This rendition of an O’Bierne tune epitomises Fr Quinn’s lifetime dedication to teaching historical regional repertoire, and disseminating it among the current generation of musicians.

While Forde was in the vicinity he also collected a small number of tunes from other County Leitrim musicians. These included Mr. N. Kelly, Ballinamore, Mick O’Bierne, Leitrim, McCaffery, a fiddler, Mohill, Mr. Blair, Stipendiary Magistrate, Ballinamore (but who is given as a native of County Monaghan), The Rev. Mr. Strangeways, Ballinamore, Mrs. Nancy Ward

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<sup>21</sup> Although Forde himself states that O’Bierne was a piper, Joyce refers to O’Bierne as a “professional fiddler” (1909, p.296), while Francis O’Neill states that the Ballinamore fiddler Peter Kennedy (c1822-1902) was a “worthy successor to Hugh O’Bierne, the famous fiddler of Ballinamore” (1913, pp.367-368).

of Letterfine, and unnamed member of the 41<sup>st</sup> regiment of the British army stationed in Ballinamore at the time.

### **2.5.3 Collections of the fiddle music connected to the teaching of the fiddle master Peter Kennedy (c1822-1902)**

As stated in 2.5.1 *Introduction*, four of the ten manuscript collections compiled by Conmhaicne musicians will be examined in this dissertation. These collections were transcribed by musicians with evident links to the fiddle teaching of Thomas Kernan. There is also, however, another body of manuscript collections also linked to Kernan's teaching through another of his presumed students, Peter Kennedy (c1822-1902) of Lisnatullagh, Ballinamore, County Leitrim. Kennedy pioneered a strong fiddle tradition in the south Leitrim region of Conmhaicne in the second half of the nineteenth century that has survived to the present day. This sub-culture of Kennedy fiddle music will be discussed in greater detail in 3.6.1 *South Leitrim*. Kennedy, in a manner similar to that employed by Kernan, taught and transmitted fiddle music through written notation, and consequently there are four manuscript collections connected to his teaching: Alex Sutherland MSS (c1900-c1960), Reilly Family MSS (c1900-c1960), Gaffney-Sutherland MS (c1930s) and the McCabe-Sutherland MS (c1930s). Although the musical, documentary and circumstantial evidence strongly suggests that Thomas Kernan taught Kennedy, this supposition has not been definitively verified and therefore the body of music connected to Kennedy's teaching has to remain outside the scope of this study.

Among the students to whom Kennedy taught the fiddle were four of his own children, Francis (1860-1916), Thomas (1866-?), James (1861-1927) and Ellen (1872-?). James and Ellen emigrated to Chicago, America, and while there, they became acquainted with the author and collector, Captain Francis O'Neill (1848-1936). In O'Neill's landmark collection *Music of Ireland* (Chicago, 1903) twenty-four tunes are acknowledged by O'Neill as having come from

James and Ellen (Boullier, 2012, p.512).<sup>23</sup> One of these, ‘Peter Kennedy’s Fancy’, supplied by Miss Kennedy, was named after her father (see Plate 4).<sup>24</sup> O’Neill also published tunes in this collection sourced from two Connhaicne pipers, John Gillan and Sgt. James Early (c1840-1914). In addition to supplying O’Neill with tunes, the former piper, John Gillan, seems to have been a reliable informant for O’Neill’s extracts about various Connhaicne musicians such as Thomas Kernan and Peter Kennedy in his two publications *Irish Folk Music* (1910) and *Irish Minstrels and Musicians* (1913).

#### Plate 4 ‘Peter Kennedy’s Fancy’



(Source: *O’Neill’s Music of Ireland, Chicago, 1903*)

#### 2.5.4 Other collections of Connhaicne music

The previous sections established that of the ten manuscript collections compiled directly by Connhaicne musicians, eight are connected to the teaching of the two fiddle masters Thomas Kernan and Peter Kennedy. The other two manuscript collections of Connhaicne music are the Stephen Grier MSS (c1840s & c1880s) and the Duffy Family MSS (1925-1931).

<sup>23</sup> References to Ellen and James Kennedy appear under the names ‘J. Kennedy’, (five tunes) ‘Kennedy’ (fifteen tunes) and ‘Miss Kennedy’ (four tunes).

<sup>24</sup> cf. ‘Peter Kennedy’s Fancy’ No. 1275, Francis O’Neill, *O’Neill’s Music of Ireland*, (Chicago, 1903).

#### 2.5.4.1 Stephen Grier MSS

One of the most comprehensive collections of nineteenth-century Irish traditional music was compiled in the Connemara region by the collector Stephen Grier (c1824-1894). The collection consists of twelve manuscripts and eight loose fragments, containing one thousand, one hundred and sixty-three tunes (Ward, 2017a). During the second half of the twentieth century, the main body of the collection came to national attention through the work of the renowned collector Breandán Breathnach (1913-1985).<sup>25</sup> Breathnach enumerated ten of the twelve manuscripts as Books I-X. The remainder of the collection, unknown to Breathnach, has been consequently been enumerated by Fr John Quinn as “Book 1a” and “Book 1b”, while eight loose fragments have been dubbed “Book 1c” by Fr Quinn. Breathnach discovered much previously unpublished repertoire in the collection and of this sixty-four tunes have been published to date.<sup>26</sup> Jackie Small, the editor of that volume, stated in his introduction that: “His name [Grier] must surely merit a place among the most important collectors of Irish music” (p.xvii).

Despite Small’s recognition of Grier’s accomplishment in collecting and preserving a relatively large amount of nineteenth-century repertoire deriving from the Connemara region, there is scant documentation available concerning either his background or the collection itself. While it is known that Grier moved to Newpark, Bohey, Gortletteragh, County Leitrim when he married Rose McGivney in 1852, he was born and reared elsewhere. Given that his wife came from Ballybrien, Granard, County Longford, it is likely that he also originated from somewhere near Granard. An examination of the Griffiths Valuation land records from the 1850s suggests

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<sup>25</sup> The collection had been passed down through several generations of the Mulvey family and accordingly, Breathnach initially named it the “Mulvey Collection”. However, later research by Fr John Quinn revealed that the collection had been compiled in main by Stephen Grier before it was bequeathed to his neighbour, William Mulvey and therefore, nowadays it is known as the “Grier Collection”.

<sup>26</sup> Breandán Breathnach, *Ceol Rince na hÉireann 4*, (Dublin, 1996)

that Grier may have come from one of the following parishes: Granard, Abbeylara or Clonbroney, as Griffiths shows a high concentration of the Grier surname in those areas. One of the tunes transcribed by Grier ‘The Races of Granard’ in Book II may in fact allude to his birthplace. It is not known for certain which musical instrument he played. Some have speculated that he played the fiddle or the pipes, but there is no clear evidence in the collection to resolve this mystery.

Following Grier’s death in 1894, his collection was bequeathed to the piper, William Mulvey, from the neighbouring townland of Drumgilra, Gortletteragh, County Leitrim. Mulvey in turn passed the collection on to his grandson, a fiddle player, John Flynn, of Drumlish, County Longford. The current custodian is Hugh Maguire of Navan, County Meath. Hugh received the collection from his father, Liam Maguire, Bellewstown, County Meath, another fiddle player and also a grandson of Mulvey; he had obtained it from his cousin, Willie Flynn, following the death of his brother, the aforementioned John Flynn.

The repertoire of the Stephen Grier MSS appears to have been collected for the most part from musicians in the north Longford/south Leitrim region of Connachne. This repertoire contains a great variety of tune types and contemporary music from this period, which appears to have been sourced by the Connachne musicians from music, song and dance traditions across America and Europe during the period of the collection’s compilation in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The contemporary nature of the repertoire is representative of an earlier stage in the development of what Nicholas Carolan terms “modern Irish traditional music” (1986, p.33).

When Fr Quinn first studied this collection he realised that a great deal of its repertoire was no longer played by the current generation of Connachne musicians. Through his mentoring of students and Céilí bands, he has attempted to reintroduce this repertoire into the present-day

canon of regional music. The participation of Fr Quinn's bands in Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann competitions has also indirectly disseminated Grier's music on a national level. For example, the *Ennis Céili Band* played "The Fourth Dragoons' March" one year, and the unnamed "March No. 101" (from Book X from the Grier collection) another year, among the tunes they played, when they won the Senior Céili band competition at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann three times in a row in the years 2001, 2002 and 2003.<sup>28</sup>

#### **2.5.4.2 The Duffy Family MSS**

During the period of research for this dissertation between 2012 and 2018, three manuscript collections were newly-discovered in the Connmaicne region, emphasising the strong written music tradition that once existed in this region. One of collections discovered was the Duffy Family MSS, which came to light in April 2015 after I wrote an article earlier that month and published it in the local paper, *The Longford Leader*, appealing for the general public to come forward if they possessed manuscripts with music emanating from the region (Ward, 2015). I was subsequently contacted by Brigid Martin of Corrick, Columcille, County Longford, who informed me that she was the custodian of a music collection that had been left to her by her second cousin, Thomas Duffy (1907-?), who was one of the scribes from the collection. Knowing the importance of regional manuscripts in my research, Martin gifted the collection to me and in turn I placed it alongside the Leonard-Kernan MS in the custody of Fr John Quinn.

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<sup>28</sup> The *Ennis Céili Band* subsequently recorded these Grier marches on their album 'Traditional Dance Music from Co. Clare' (2003). However, unfortunately, the names of the two marches, as given in the album's tune index, are incorrect: "The Fourth Dragoons" is called "March No. 101", and "March No.101" is called "The Fourth Dragoons".

This collection was transcribed by members of the Duffy family born in the period ranging from 1907 and 1917<sup>30</sup>. Their signatures are written throughout the manuscripts with accompanying dates ranging from 1925 and 1931. This period coincides with the formative years of the Duffy scribes and therefore it may be surmised that the collection was written while they were learning music. The eighty-one tunes in the collection are primarily notated in ABC format. This collection provides one of the earliest examples of Irish traditional music written in this format and may aid future research into the evolution of written music transmission from a system of staff notation highly prevalent in nineteenth century teaching practices to a system of ABC notation that is more commonly used nowadays among teachers of Irish traditional music. ‘Slur and cut’ bowing patterns, synonymous with the bowing methods of fiddle teachers connected to the Connmaicne fiddle masters Thomas Kernan and Peter Kennedy, are marked on a number of the tunes written in staff notation, which suggests that at least one of the scribes was the learning the fiddle at the time of the manuscript’s compilation. A survey of the collection’s musical contents reveals that the repertoire is textually comparable to the other regional collections discussed in this dissertation. For example, ‘The Old Woman’s Cash’ in this collection is identical to a tune of the same title in the Larry Smyth MS (‘The Old Woman’s Cash’ LS.075). There is a strong dance-music element to the collection with tunes such as ‘The Four Hand Reel’, ‘The Stack of Barley’ and ‘Royal Charlie’, which were typically played at dance settings across north Longford at the turn of the twentieth century (NFC, 2013d).

In conclusion, discussion in this section on the historical collections of Irish traditional music emanating from the Connmaicne region indicates that a culture of transmitting, collecting and

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<sup>30</sup> The scribes in this family were born to parents John and Mary Duffy. As provided by Brigid Martin, their chronological details are: Thomas (b.1907), John Joe (b.1909), Michael (b.1912), Mary Ann (b.1915) and Patrick (b.1917). Their household return in the 1911 Census of Ireland is available at: <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Longford/Drumgort/Leggagh/586120/> ref: House 21, Leggagh, Drumgort, Co. Longford

learning music through written means was a core pillar of music transmission among the musicians of this region. In order to study the evolution of fiddle music among a sub-culture of musicians in Connmhaicne, of the ten extant manuscript collections compiled by Connmhaicne musicians, four collections with direct links to the teaching of Thomas Kernan will be examined in this dissertation.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Chapter Two examined the two factors of people and place conducive to the formation of a fiddle tradition in the Connmhaicne region between *c*1825 and *c*1975. As is evident in the discourse of regional literary works, the historical ties between the communities in the ancient region of Connmhaicne in regard to settlement, culture and topography have been conducive to the creation of a shared music-making environment that is not confined by official modern boundary lines. Within this region of Connmhaicne, fiddle music emerged in the mid-eighteenth century and rapidly spread during the second half of the nineteenth century through the efforts of Thomas Kernan (*c*1807-1887) and a number of his students, who in turn became fiddle teachers. This chapter established that the rising popularity of fiddle music during this time was aided by the demise of the existing harp and piping traditions in Connmhaicne.

A biographical account of Thomas Kernan reveals that he may have been born in Cranley, Mostrim, but later moved to Cartron, Drumlish, after the ‘Night of the Big Wind’ in 1839. Living among his siblings in this latter region, he began his career as a travelling fiddle teacher and went on to become one of the most renowned musicians in the region of Connmhaicne during the nineteenth century. In the course of a critical examination of the evolution of fiddle music in Connmhaicne, Chapter Three looks at Kernan’s important role in this development.

An examination of the historical written music emanating from the Connmhaicne region reveals that the transmission of music through written means was widespread among the Connmhaicne musicians. Evidence for this assertion is the existence of ten manuscript collections compiled by Connmhaicne musicians between the period 1844 and *c*1960. There is no other music region in Ireland containing this amount of historical written music. Given that eight of the ten collections were compiled by fiddle players with links to the teaching of two fiddle masters Thomas Kernan and Peter Kennedy, it suggests the transmission of fiddle music through written means was highly promoted among teachers connected to Kernan and Kennedy. Chapter Three will explore this theme, examining the historical context and factors leading to the rise, fall and revival of fiddle music in Connmhaicne from its first documentary appearance in the region in the early 1700s up to *c*1970, which coincides with the latest examinable source in this dissertation, McNerney recordings (1973).

# Chapter Three

## The evolution of fiddle music in Connmhaicne

## **3 Chapter Three**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Chapter Two revealed that Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887) lived in north Longford, which is part of the greater cultural region of Connemara. During his lifetime, Kernan was a leading figure in the expansion of fiddle music in this region (Quinn, 2008). Chapter Three will focus on the evolution of fiddle music within this region, documenting in the process Kernan's impact and lasting legacy in this process. According to Doherty, musical evolution occurs both at the "specifically musical, or core, level, and at the wider social, or super structural, level" (1996, p.41). This chapter focuses on the latter level, examining in the process the primary factors impacting on the evolution of fiddle music in Connemara through the stages of introduction, growth, decline and revival.

### **3.2 The arrival of the fiddle in Ireland**

By end of the eighteenth century, the harp tradition had virtually disappeared from rural Ireland and the piping tradition was struggling to survive. In this music vacuum other instruments, which had slowly been introduced to Ireland from continental Europe since the seventeenth century, were aptly placed to fill this void. These instruments included, for the main part, the violin and German flute, which were, according to Nicholas Carolan, "less expensive, less difficult to maintain and tune, more portable and more suited to public performance" than the traditional instruments of Ireland, the harp and pipes (1986, p. 6).

In particular, the violin (henceforth: *fiddle*) was popularly received by the ruling classes in eighteenth century Ireland, and fiddle players from this class of society became known as 'gentleman fiddlers', most of whom were living in the big houses dispersed among the rural communities of Ireland. The high concentration of gentleman fiddlers living in rural Ireland at

this time is exemplified by an account of a musical gathering from 1782, in the home of Jones Irwin in Streamstown, Co. Sligo, by the harper Arthur O'Neill (c1734-1818), where he observed that, of the forty-six musicians present, nearly twenty of these were, as he termed them, "gentleman fiddlers" (MacAoidh, 1994, p. 26).

Through the roles of these gentleman fiddlers as both patrons and teachers, fiddle music filtered down to the rural people living among them. This transfer of fiddle music from the higher classes to the lower classes occurred all over Ireland from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. In the context of the Sliabh Beagh region in north Monaghan/east Fermanagh, Seán McElwain has documented how this process occurred. Local boys from the area, such as Owen McCaffrey (1776-c1840), were patronised by a gentleman from the locality, who funded their music training with a renowned teacher in the area (2013, p. 106).

### **3.3 The arrival of fiddle music in Kernan's birthplace**

Although it is not known who specifically taught Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887) it is quite likely that his apprenticeship in fiddle music occurred in the same manner, through tuition with a local gentlemen fiddler. However, unlike the Sliabh Beagh fiddlers, he may have not needed the financial support of a patron, given that his parents appear to have been relatively wealthy, a fact which is evident from their ability to send his brother, Rev. Michael, to train for the priesthood in Rome. The person who taught Kernan may have been a fiddler who travelled throughout the region teaching and performing music for a living. Before settling in Drumlish, Kernan was born and reared in Cranley, near Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford (Devaney, 1981, p. 257; Glennon, 1993, p. 41). In the household accounts of the Anglo-Irish Edgeworth family of Edgeworthstown, though too early to have been Kernan's teacher, there is evidence that at

least two fiddlers were active in the Edgeworthstown area from the year 1735 onwards. In that specific year the first reference to an unnamed fiddler was recorded in the accounts by Richard Edgeworth (1701-1770) ‘To the fidler [sic]: £0.05.05’ (NLI, 2016). Further payments to unnamed fiddlers are recorded in these accounts in 1737, 1740, 1741, twice in 1742 and 1750 (NLI, 2016). These records also reference a harper (once) and a piper (twice) suggesting that musicians may have travelled and performed together during this period. The first named fiddler in the records is listed in 1756: ‘To Whaelan [sic] the fiddler for playing for Dick £0.03.03’ (NLI, 2016). While this statement may suggest that Whelan was teaching Richard’s son, Dick, to play the fiddle, the next reference in the accounts to fiddle music from 1758 suggests that Whelan was more than likely simply performing for Richard’s children rather than teaching them: ‘To a man who played on the Fiddle for my son and daughters for dancing’ (NLI, 2016). In 1759, Richard Edgeworth’s next reference to fiddle playing provides the name of a second fiddler ‘To Nannery the fidler [sic] £0.09.02’ (NLI, 2016). Hereafter, until the last reference in 1765, the records clearly reveal that these fiddlers, Nannery and Whelan, were performing at dances held in this home, both privately for Edgeworth’s children, and publically for organised dances (NLI, 2016). Given that Kernan was born c1807, Whelan and Nannery would have passed away by the time Kernan was learning the fiddle. However, it is possible that one of these fiddlers was teaching in the region of Connmaicne in the eighteenth century and that one of their students may have been Kernan’s teacher.

In tandem with the fiddle training provided by local travelling fiddlers and gentlemen fiddlers, the fiddle was also introduced to rural Ireland during this period by members of the military who had served in the army bands in Europe during the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815). These musicians included both returning soldiers from within the folk community, and those of a commanding rank who were positioned in military bases located in most of the big towns across Ireland. For instance, in the north Kerry region, the spread of fiddle music, and the method of

writing it down, was assisted by James O'Brien, who had learned standard notation from his time in the British army (Dalton, 2009, p. 14). Musicians with a military background were also active in the Conmhaicne region. In the year, 1782, Arthur O'Neill records meeting a violinist, Captain Boyers of Mount Pleasant, Co. Longford (O'Sullivan, 1958b, p. 164), while the renowned collector William Forde obtained a number of tunes from an unnamed member of the 41<sup>st</sup> regiment of the British army stationed in Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim in the year 1846.

### **3.4 Kernan's blindness**

Like the aforementioned Owen McCaffrey (1776-*c*1840) of Sliabh Beagh, Kernan was said to be blind, or at least of extremely poor eyesight, and this fact may have propelled him towards a career in music, and the teaching thereof. Mikie Carolan (1891-1981), a grand-nephew of Kernan, revealed in an interview with Fr John Quinn (1979) that a devastating disease, which was common in that era, smallpox, was the cause of his ailment. Another informant of Quinn's, Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975), recalled that Kernan was "blind as a child", suggesting that he contracted this disease at a relatively early age (Quinn, 1973a). In literary sources he is referred to as "Blind Kernan" by Francis O'Neill in *Irish Minstrels and Musicians* (p. 369) and also as "Tom Kiernan who was blind" by the historian Ernie O'Malley (2007, p. 19).

It is beyond doubt that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a significant amount of musicians in Ireland were blind. O'Neill alludes to this phenomenon when he notes that "the afflicted practically monopolised the profession" (1910, p. 10). It is unlikely that Kernan was fully blind though, as his ability to read and write music is evident from tunes he transcribed in the Leonard-Kernan MS (Chapter Four), which he has personally signed and dated several times between October 1844 and January 1846. That he travelled extensively throughout the region teaching music also suggests he had some modicum of vision. For example, it was nearly

thirty miles from his home to the home of one of his students, Michael Leonard of Abbeyshrule: if he was fully blind, it is unlikely that he could have navigated such long journeys, unless he was accompanied by another person.

Kernan's blindness may in fact have enhanced his reputation in the local community. Turlough Carolan (1670-1738), Ireland's most famous harper, epitomised the tradition of blind musicians. He developed his condition at the age of eighteen after a similar bout of smallpox. According to the fiddle player Pat McGrath (1890-1968) of Ballinalee, in the parish of Clonbroney, who was taught by Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935) of Kilshruly, in the same parish, and who in turn was taught by Kernan, according to local lore, it was held that Kernan was taught by the great Carolan himself (O'Malley, 2007, p. 20). This is a spurious claim, obviously, given that these musicians played different instruments and lived in different eras. Nonetheless, as Donal O'Sullivan remarked: "there is often a germ of truth in the old tradition" (1958a, p. 35). It is possible that the 'germ of truth' in this instance relates to a genealogical link between Kernan and a local Carolan family from the Killoe parish: two of his sisters were married to Carolan men and he also played regularly with his nephew Bernie 'fiddler' Carolan at functions in the area. Additionally, there is a geographical connection between the two musicians: Turlough Carolan married and settled near Mohill, Co. Leitrim, less than ten miles from Kernan's home in Drumlish, Co. Longford.

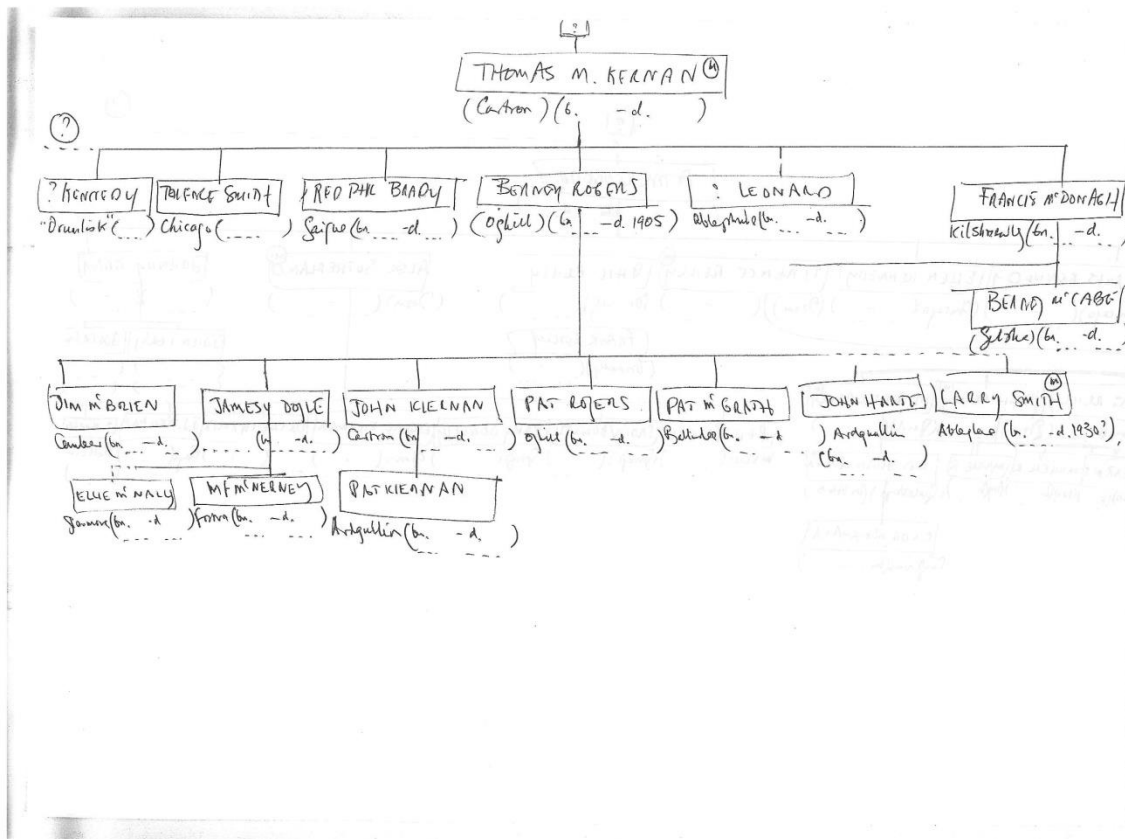
### **3.5 Kernan's first students**

While the fiddlers from the big houses and the military bases were largely responsible for introducing the fiddle to rural Ireland, it was their students in most instances who initiated the spread of fiddle music within their own communities. In the context of the Conmhaicne region, the dissemination of fiddle music was spear-headed by Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887). Given

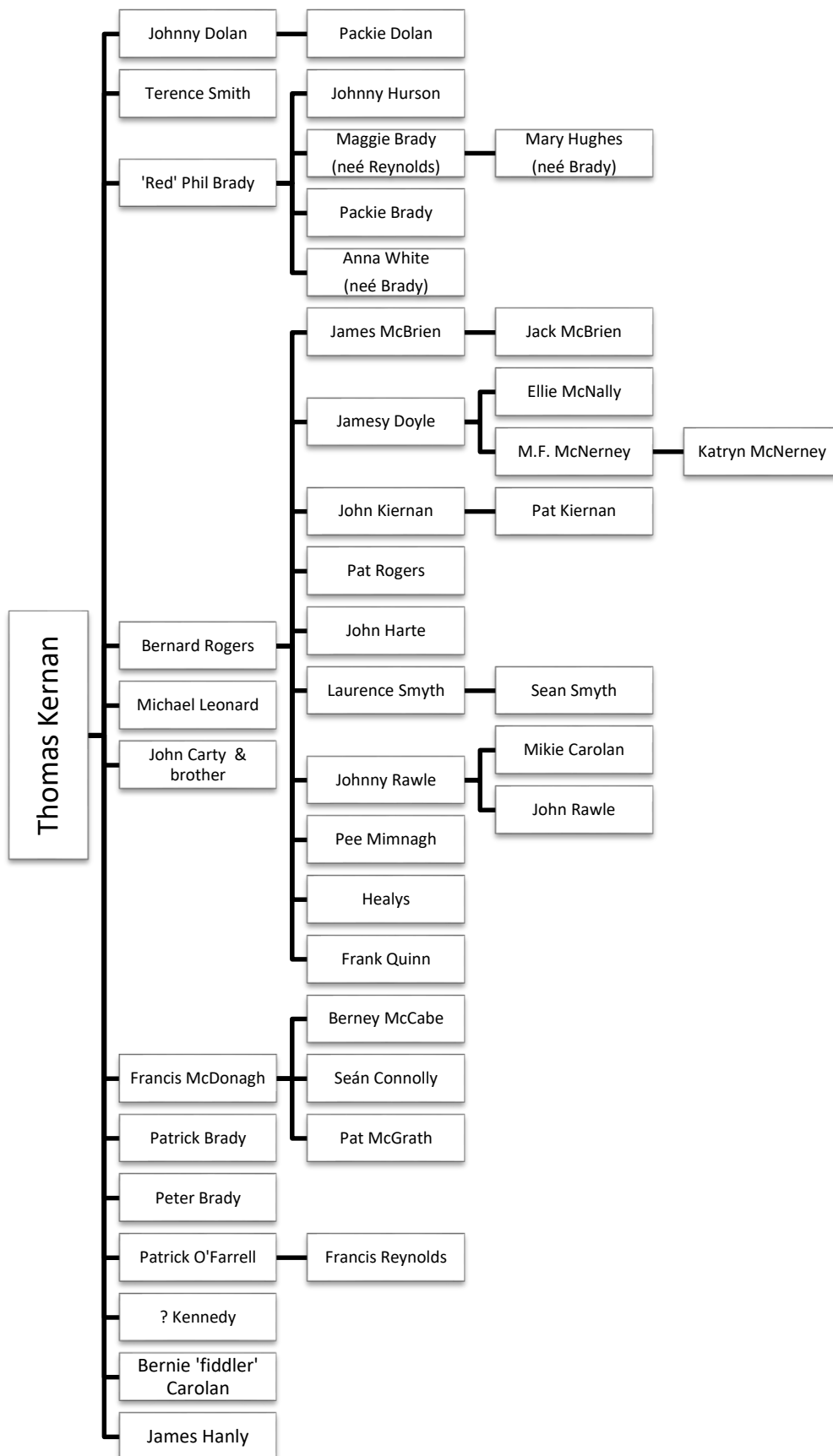
that he was born *c*1807, he most likely started teaching the fiddle in this region from *c*1835 onwards. From that date, until his death over fifty years later in 1887, Kernan was a full-time fiddle teacher in Connhaicne, and during this time it is likely that he taught a significant amount of fiddle students. In turn, some of his own students went on to become full-time teachers too, thereby creating a lineage of fiddle players in this region, connected to each other through his teaching.

This interconnected network of musicians from the Kernan fiddle tradition came to the attention of the aforementioned Fr John Quinn (b.1940), a fiddle player from Shroid, Co. Longford, towards the end of the 1960s. After completing his studies at Maynooth College, he served in a number of parishes throughout County Longford. As he moved throughout the region, he became acquainted with local musicians, who shared with him their knowledge of the music tradition in the area. During this time a number of manuscripts were also brought to his attention that had been transcribed by regional fiddle players, particularly the Larry Smyth MS (*c*1900) and the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-*c*1850). Through an examination of these manuscripts and conversations with local musicians, he discovered that the musical lineage of a significant number of fiddle players in the region could be traced directly back to the teaching of Kernan. Having gathered all available information together he compiled a chart, as illustrated in Figure 1, to demonstrate local fiddle heritage, which can be traced back to Thomas Kernan. Since the time that this original chart was compiled *c*1970 by Fr John Quinn, more fiddle players of the Kernan lineage have been identified and added to the chart, the revised results of which are demonstrated in Figure 2.

**Figure 1: Thomas Kernan fiddle lineage: original chart compiled c1970**



**Figure 2: Thomas Kernan fiddle lineage: revised chart compiled 2018**



Thus far, fourteen of Kernan's students have been identified, the details of whom are listed in Table 3.<sup>32</sup> This reveals that Kernan's students derived mostly from parishes within his own region of north Longford. However, there is evidence that he is responsible for spreading music to the other regions of Connhaicne too. As later examined in Chapter Four, Kernan was teaching the fiddle in the 1840s to Michael Leonard (c1835-1886) of Abbeyshrule, which is a village located at the southern end of County Longford close to its border with County Westmeath. He also taught another south Longford fiddler, James Hanly (c1810-1901) of Newtowncashel, a great-grandfather of the fiddler Seán Keane of *The Chieftains*. It has been argued by Quinn (2008) that there is significant evidence that Kernan also initiated fiddle music in the south Leitrim region of Connhaicne given that he is likely to have taught the fiddle master, Peter Kennedy (c1825-1902) of Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim.

**Table 3: List of identified students of Thomas Kernan**

Student's name	Townland	Parish	Era	Source of info.
Michael Leonard	Drumanure, Abbeyshrule	Carrickedmond	c1835-1886	Chapter Four
James Hanly	Corrool	Newtowncashel	c1810-1901	(NFC, 2017a) <sup>33</sup>
John Carty	Unknown	Clonbroney	Unknown	(Glennon, 1993, p. 41)
Brother of John Carty	Unknown	Clonbroney	Unknown	(Glennon, 1993, p. 41)
Francis McDonagh	Kilshrulley	Clonbroney	c1845-1935	(O'Malley, 2007, p. 19)
Bernard Rogers	Oghill	Killoe	1856-1907	(O'Malley, 2007, p. 19)
Terence Smith	Unknown	Drumlsh	Unknown	(O'Neill, 1913, p. 369)
(?) Kennedy	Unknown	Drumlsh	Unknown	(O'Neill, 1913, p. 369)
Bernie 'fiddler' Carolan	Unknown	Drumlsh	c1840-?	Speculation <sup>34</sup>
Johnny Dolan	Aughadowry, Ballinamuck	Drumlsh	c1868-1950	Chapter Eight

<sup>32</sup> However, as it has been stated, this data may be incomplete: it is likely that the total number of students he taught is much greater than has been thus far identified.

<sup>33</sup> This entry is written *as Gaeilge* in the School's (Folklore) Collection in 1935. The relevant passage is translated as: "An old fiddler by the name of Séamus Ó hAinlighe (James Hanley), Cor Ubhaill (Corrool), Cur na Dumhca (Newtowncashel), died 30 years ago in the Poor House, Ballymahon. He was an accomplished (oilte) musician. He had been a scholar of Máighistir Mac Tighearnan's (Master McKiernan or McTiernan). He also played fiddle playing to the youth of the area. He was comparable with the best musician that is heard on the radio today." (NFC, 2017a).

<sup>34</sup> Bernie 'fiddler' Carolan was Kernan's nephew, and they used to play together at Lord Granard's House during the mid-to-late 1800s. It is very likely that Kernan taught him based on this familial link.

Patrick O'Farrell	Aughadowry, Ballinamuck	Drumlish	c1835-1880	Chapter Seven
'Red' Phil Brady	Gaigue (upper), Ballinamuck	Drumlish	1864-1946	(Quinn, 1973a)
Patrick Brady	Gaigue (middle), Ballinamuck	Drumlish	1861-1952	(Quinn, 1973a)
Peter Brady	Gaigue (lower), Ballinamuck	Drumlish	1859-1939	Speculation <sup>35</sup>

The chronological details of the students listed in Table 3 confirm that Kernan was actively teaching from at least c1845 to c1880. Two of his students whom he taught at the start of his teaching career, Michael Leonard (see Chapter Four) and Patrick O'Farrell (see Chapter Seven), were born around 1835. Leonard came from a wealthy family who owned a successful business in Abbeyshrule, while O'Farrell's father was the lessee of a relatively large farm in Aughadowry, Ballinamuck. Leonard and O'Farrell represent the type of students that Kernan was teaching at the start of his career between c1835 and c1850, and accordingly an examination of their socio-economic profiles indicates that Kernan's teaching was highly sought after by the middle classes of rural society in Connmhaicne during that period. This also suggests that fiddle music in the earliest stage of its advancement into rural society was played initially by the more well-off families in these communities before it filtered down to the poorer classes.

### 3.6 Rapid growth: the creation of local fiddle clusters

In the first half of the nineteenth century, pioneering fiddle masters all over Ireland, like Thomas Kernan, were largely responsible for the transfer of fiddle music in the Irish countryside from the gentlemen fiddlers of the big houses to the fiddlers of the middle classes dwelling in rural areas. The students of these fiddle masters in turn became teachers and fiddle music expanded rapidly in localised regions and filtered its way down to the poorer classes. As

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<sup>35</sup> Peter was a first cousin of 'Red' Phil Brady and Patrick Brady, both of whom were taught by Kernan during the 1870s, and therefore it is very likely that Kernan taught him too.

Dalton pointed out, the presence of competent teachers in a given region over an extended period of time is a key factor in establishing a strong and stable fiddle region (2009, p. 12). For instance, the renowned Sligo recording artists of the 1920s and 1930s, Michael Coleman (1891-1945), James Morrison (1891-1947) and Paddy Killoran (1904-1965), were born into an area with a strong fiddle tradition in their locality, a tradition that had existed there for nearly a hundred years. They were taught by a number of fiddle players including Jamesy Gannon, Thomas Gilmartin, Pat Mannion and Kipeen Scanlon, who all in turn could trace their fiddle lineage to the blind fiddler, Tom Healy of Grayfort (Boullier, 2012, p. 15).

In a similar process to that which produced a strong localised fiddle tradition in Sligo, fiddle music expanded rapidly in Connhaicne due to the efforts of fiddle teachers in the region during the second half of the nineteenth century. While Kernan was responsible for promoting fiddle music in Connhaicne during the early stage of his career, it was through a number of his students that fiddle music began to flourish in various pockets of this region, creating in the process localised clusters of fiddle players in the north Longford, south Longford and south Leitrim regions of Connhaicne.

### **3.6.1 South Leitrim**

During the rapid growth of fiddle music in the nineteenth century one of the strongest localised fiddle clusters in Connhaicne and its Breifne hinterland was the south Leitrim area bordering north Longford. This borderland region of south Leitrim encompasses, for the most part, the civil parishes of Cloone, Mohill, Carrigallen, Drumreilly and Oughteragh. Central to the expansion of fiddle music in this region between *c*1860-*c*1900 was the teaching activities of Peter Kennedy (*c*1825-1902), who lived in the townland of Lisnatulla located beside the town of Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim. It has been argued by Quinn (2008) that there is sufficient musical and circumstantial evidence to conclude that Kennedy was taught by Thomas Kernan.

Two of Kennedy's fiddle students were his children James (1861-1927) and Ellen (1872-?), both of whom emigrated to Chicago. While based there they became acquainted the renowned collector Capt. Francis O'Neill (1848-1936), and supplied him with twenty-four tunes for his iconic collection *Music of Ireland* (Chicago, 1903), one of which they named in recognition of their father 'Peter Kennedy's Fancy' (No.1275). In addition to publishing his music, O'Neill is also very complimentary of Kennedy's fiddling prowess in several extracts in his books *Irish Folk Music* (Chicago, 1910) and *Irish Minstrels and Musicians* (Chicago, 1913). In one such extract from the latter book, O'Neill describes how Kennedy's music left a significant impression on the Longford piper, John Gillan:

In the year 1895, Mr. John Gillan of Chicago embarked for a European trip, accompanied by his wife and son, Rev. John Gillan. While visiting the old home in the adjacent county of Longford, Mr. Gillan heard of Mr. Kennedy's great reputation as a fiddler. Ever and always enthusiastic about the music of his native land, he made up his mind to call and not miss such an opportunity. So charmed was he by Mr. Kennedy's performance that he decided to remain in that vicinity instead of proceeding with his family to Rome, according to the original programme. Under their father's training, four of his children--Thomas, Frances, James and Ellen became fine fiddlers (p.368).

In addition to the tunes published by O'Neill (1903), Kennedy's music is also found in several fiddle manuscripts transcribed by three more of his students, the brothers Terence Reilly (c1868-1941) and Philip Reilly (1860-1932) and Alex Sutherland (1873-1967), all of whom lived in Toome, Drumreilly. When Kennedy died in 1902, this latter student of his, Sutherland, passed on his music to the next generation in south Leitrim and Sutherland is responsible for ensuring that fiddle music survived in this region during the first half of the twentieth century, a period in the history of Irish traditional music that witnessed a decline across most parts of Ireland (Quinn, 2008). One of Sutherland's students was Joseph McCabe (c1909-?) of Crickeen, Drumreilly,

and fortunately the manuscript that they were using during fiddle lessons in the 1920s is still in the possession of the McCabe family.

An analysis of the repertoire in the McCabe-Sutherland MS and the repertoire of the other aforementioned manuscripts transcribed by the Reillys and by Sutherland, reveals that Kennedy's students used the bowing technique 'slur and cut' profusely in their transcriptions and presumably in their fiddle playing. This specific bowing technique is synonymous with the fiddle region of Connmhaicne and, in particular, it was one of the key teaching methods used by Thomas Kernan (Quinn, 2008). While the fiddle manuscripts of south Leitrim connected to the teaching of Peter Kennedy are not in the scope of this dissertation, future research of these manuscripts may provide further insights into the evolution of fiddle music in Connmhaicne during the period c1850-c1950 and may also provide conclusive proof of the musical link between Kennedy and Kernan.

### **3.6.2 South Longford**

According to Vallely, another localised cluster of fiddle music in Connmhaicne is the Newtowncashel region of south Longford (1999, p. 126). In 3.5 *Kernan's first students*, it was revealed that Thomas Kernan was actively teaching in this region in the 1840s. One of his students was Michael Leonard (c1835-1886), who lived with his family in a tavern and guesthouse in Abbeyshrute village. The manuscript Kernan was using to teach to Leonard during these lessons between 1844 and 1846 has survived to the present day and its contents are the subject of examination in the next chapter. In addition to Leonard, it is very likely that Kernan was also teaching others students in the region at the same time. According to Pat McGrath (1890-1968), whose own teacher Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935) was taught by Kernan, it was common in those days for fiddle teachers to stay in the home of a student for a

month at a time teaching the fiddle to the local children of the area (O'Malley, 1952, p.63b). Evidence of this large scale teaching activity may be evident in the aforementioned Leonard-Kernan MS (Chapter Four), which contains tunes written by up to ten scribes including Kernan and Leonard (see Vol.II, Source A, Summary).

Another scribe in the Leonard-Kernan MS could be the fiddler, James Hanly (c1810-1901), who lived in Curroole, Newtowncashel, which is situated approximately twenty kilometres from Abbeyshrule, where Kernan was teaching Leonard. According to Patrick Casey of Ardoghill, Ballymahon, Co. Longford, in a submission to the National Schools Collection, written down by his teacher, Sr. Clement, on 14<sup>th</sup> of March, 1935, James Hanly was a student of Kernan's:

An old fiddler by the name of Séamus Ó hAinlighe (James Hanley), Cor Ubhall (Corrool), Cur na Dumhca (Newtowncashel), died 30 years ago in the Poor House, Ballymahon. He was an accomplished musician. He had been a scholar of Máighistir Mac Tighearnan's (Master McKiernan). He also taught fiddle playing to the youth of the area. He was comparable with the best musician that is heard on the radio today. (NFC, 2017a)<sup>36</sup>

In addition to confirming that Hanly was taught by Kernan, Casey also reveals that Hanly carried on Kernan's music and taught several students in the region. In the same extract in the Schools' (Folklore) Collection, Casey confirms that Hanly and another local musician, Patrick Donlon (d.1920), who was also a band master in the region, were very active teachers:

James Hanley and Patrick Donlon taught music to a lot of people. The informant [Patrick Casey] said he could find up to twelve people, all under sixty years of age, who were of their school (NFC, 2017b).

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<sup>36</sup> The original entry is written as *Gaeilge* in the School's (Folklore) Collection and has been translated here.

The names of the fiddle students Hanly taught were unfortunately not provided by the informant. However, it is likely he taught some of his own his children to play, as fiddle music flourished in the Hanly family for several generations. According to the Kenagh piper, Peter Carberry (1924-2016), the Hanly home was a vibrant place of music and dance during the mid-twentieth century (Potts, 1999, p.16). Fiddle music in the Hanly family has survived to the present day. Seán Keane (b.1946) of The Chieftains, was taught the fiddle by his mother Molly Keane (néé Hanly) of Newtowncashel, a granddaughter or great-granddaughter of the James Hanly (c1810-1901) who was taught by Kernan (Ward, 2011k). Molly's brother James was also a fiddle player, while another brother Peter played the uilleann pipes (Potts, 1999, p.16). In addition to the Hanly family of Newtowncashel, several fiddle players were active in the south Longford area during the first half of the twentieth century, many of whom it may be assumed can trace their fiddle heritage to James Hanly (c1810-1901). The Donlon family too have continued the fiddle tradition to the present day. Jim Donlon of Aughaloughan, Lanesborough, a grandson of Patrick Donlon, was a well-known fiddle player, and all his family continue the tradition, Pádraig on the uilleann pipes, Teresa on the tin whistle, and Nuala on the fiddle.

In the Kenagh region of south Longford some of most prominent fiddlers included Bill Rogers, Frank Yorke, Mike Gerety and Tom Malone (Flynn, 2007, p.29). Other notable fiddlers from that region were Larry Kelly (1927-1991) of Foigh Bridge (Hughes, 1991) and, from the Legan area, Kit Kelly, who was a member of the locally renowned band 'The Keena Orchestra' that broadcasted on Radio Éireann in 1937 (Flynn, 2006, p.60).

### 3.6.3 North Longford

While James Hanly was passing Kernan's music on to the next generation of fiddlers in the south Longford region of Connmhaicne, two more of Kernan's students, his nephew, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907) of Oghill, Killoe, and Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935) of Kilshruley, Clonbroney, became prolific teachers in the north Longford region during the period c1870-c1910. As the teaching activities of Rogers and McDonagh overlapped in much of the same areas of north Longford and in the same era, they competed with one another for prospective students. Such was the rivalry between the two musicians that in local folklore a story was often told about a fictional contest that took place between them. This following version of the story was recounted in 1973 by Fr John Quinn, who in turn had been told the story by Kernan's grand-nephew, Mikie Carolan (1891-1981) of Oghill, Killoe:

In Granard there was this festival, or some party or other, and McDonagh and Rogers: the two of them was pupils of Kiernan. The two of them set out to have a contest. And, I don't know but Kiernan may have been the adjudicator. But no matter what tune Rogers had, McDonagh had it, and no matter what tune McDonagh had, Rogers had it, you see! And they played 'til morning and nobody could outwit the other, you see. But anyway, they had to pack it up, daylight came and they had to put up the fiddles. And it was a draw. And just as they were going out the door – now this is what [Mikie] Carolan was telling me – just as they were going out the door didn't the lark rise up to sing in the morning. And Rogers thought to himself if he could make up a tune to the air of the lark's song, that he'd outwit McDonagh! So he took out the fiddle again and played what's now called 'The Lark in the Morning'. And that's supposed to be the way 'The Lark in the Morning' was composed (Quinn, 1973a)<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> The story of a music contest, whereby the winner is pushed to play his last tune and then wins with another one which he composes on the spot, is a standard folklore motif found throughout Ireland and abroad. For example, this story is also told in the music folklore of Donegal: c.f. (MacAoidh, 1994, p. 155).

### 3.6.3.1 Bernard Rogers (1856-1907)<sup>38</sup>

In Bernard Rogers' case, a move into full-time fiddle teaching resulted from the loss of his position as Principal Teacher in the local national school in Esker in 1894, a loss incurred, it would seem, by his overindulgence in alcohol and socialising (NAI, 2012e, f.36; Quinn, 1979). In the years between his departure from teaching in 1894 and his death in 1907, the surrounding areas of Drumlish and Killoe in County Longford witnessed an explosion in the number of new fiddle players who were taught by Rogers. The list of his students in Table 4 represents those that have been identified through either documentary references or strong circumstantial evidence. However, it is quite likely that the true number is much greater. In his book, *Killoe: History of a County Longford Parish* (1981), Rev. Owen Devaney lists approximately forty-seven fiddle players who were active in that parish, particularly during the period from c1870-c1980 (pp.257-265). Although "P. Mimmagh" is the only one specifically mentioned as "a student of Rogers" in that book, it is quite likely that Rogers taught a high proportion of these musicians in Devaney's list.

**Table 4: List of identified students of Bernard Rogers**

Student's name	Era	Townland	Parish	Source of info.
James McBrien	1885-1970	Rossan	Aughavas (Co. Leitrim)	(Ward, 2011b)
Jamesy Doyle	1887-1918	Glenmore	Dromard	(Quinn, 1973a)
John Kiernan	1891-?	Cartron	Drumlish	Figure 1
Healy family	?	Cloonaugh	Drumlish	(FMP, 2013c)
Frank Quinn	1893-1967	Greagh	Drumlish	Chapter Eight
John Harte	1887-1977	Tonywarden	Granard	Figure 1
Lawrence Smyth	1866-1930	Killasona	Granard	Figure 1
Pat Rogers	?	Oghill	Killoe	Figure 1
Johnny Rawle	1888-1961	Enybegs	Killoe	(Quinn, 1979)
Pee Mimmagh	?	Dernacross	Killoe	(Devaney, 1981, p. 258)

<sup>38</sup> A full autobiography of Bernard Rogers is documented in Vol.II, Source I: McBrien-Rogers MS

In addition to his teaching exploits, Rogers was also an accomplished performing musician. He was taught the fiddle by his uncle, Thomas Kernan, who lived in the neighbouring townland of Cartron. Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975), a third generation fiddle player in the Kernan fiddle lineage, recalls that it was commonly told in local lore that Kernan was stern with Rogers during lessons: “he [Kernan] used to cut the hands off him [Rogers] when he was learning him” (Quinn, 1973a). According to the historian, Rev. Owen Devaney, Kernan’s strict methods of teaching proved advantageous, as Rogers went on to become an accomplished musician: “in his day [Rogers] was considered as highly as Colman (sic)” (1981, p. 258). This assertion by Devaney is corroborated by The Schools’ Collection 1937-1939, where, in an extract from this collection, entitled ‘Local Heroes’, Lizzy Cassidy, a local girl from Fardromin, Ballinamuck, states: “Bernard Rogers was the greatest musician in the County Longford when he was alive” (NFC, 2013b, p.331). While Devaney and Cassidy lived in a different era from that of Rogers, a first-hand account of his musicianship was described to Fr Quinn in an interview with Mikie Carolan (1891-1981), of Oghill, Killoe, a contemporary and relative of Rogers:

“He [Rogers] came in here one Sunday, Lord have Mercy on him. There was a fiddle here - one that me father sent to me from England. It was hanging up there and he took it down. And at that time there used to be two row of porringers hanging on the wall. And when he started [to play] you could see the porringers shaking on the wall. A real genius!” (Quinn, 1979)

### **3.6.3.2 Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935)**

While Rogers worked in the National School teaching profession before commencing his fiddle teaching career, Francis McDonagh on the other hand, was a farmer’s son, and without a skilled profession he more than likely moved into full-time teaching at an early age to supplement his family’s meagre farming income. In local folklore, McDonagh was known to have travelled

with a pony and trap throughout Longford teaching the fiddle. Two of his pupils were Seán Connolly (1890-1921) and Pat McGrath (1890-1968), boys from the village of Ballinalee (O'Malley, 1952, p.66a). The McGraths owned a pub in this village and McGrath describes how McDonagh “would come in here (to this house) every week and he’d whack away” (O'Malley, 1952, p.66a).

### **3.6.3.3 Rogers’ and McDonagh’s teaching practices**

As in the case of their own teacher, Thomas Kernan, both Rogers and McDonagh typically travelled to the homes of their students to provide tutelage. The aforementioned Pat McGrath of Ballinalee describes how this process worked:

He went around the neighbourhood . . . the fiddler travelled around to the areas: and he stayed around here for over a month. Then he’d move off again, but he would be lodged free for his giving his training to the children of the houses (O'Malley, 1952, p.63b).

In this rural bartering system, in addition to accommodation, the teacher often received food, drink and other requested sundries as a substitute for monetary payment. For example, when Kernan was teaching ‘Red’ Phil Brady (1864-1946) of Upper Gaigue, Ballinamuck he received as payment “the run of his tooth” which consisted of “a noggin of whiskey for breakfast and plentiful supply of his favourite brand of tobacco” (Quinn, 2008, p. 74). While the teacher was stationed in the student’s house, neighbouring children from the area were also taught there. Rural people tended not to travel far in those days and, as O'Malley eloquently points out, the visiting teacher was a vital source of local news: “like a moving snowball he gathered the honey of local extravagant doings and sayings” (2007, p. 20).

### 3.7 Cultural Nationalism in Connhaicne

While the supply of proficient teachers was arguably the most important factor that led to the rapid increase in fiddle music participation across the north Longford, south Longford and south Leitrim regions of Connhaicne, there was also a strong demand for their services as performers among the people of their communities. Underlying this demand was the growth in Irish cultural nationalism around the turn of the twentieth century. The establishment of movements such as *Cumann Lúthchleas Gael* (Gaelic Athletic Association) in 1884 and *Conradh na Gaeilge* (Gaelic League) in 1893 encouraged rural people to return to the traditions and customs of their ancestors in areas such as sport, the Irish language, home industries, and Irish music, song and dance. In one such region, in the parish of Dromard in north Longford, Fr Peter Conefrey (1880-1939) was instrumental in this cultural revival. In order to establish self-sufficiency among his congregation, he set up classes and workshops that taught the traditional arts and crafts, such as making clothes, growing crops and processing raw food materials. Fr Conefrey was also an advocate of cultural arts and established a troupe of dancers and accompanying musicians who participated in local *feiseanna* and concerts (MacNerney, 2000, p. 181). He continued his revival efforts in south Leitrim, when he became Parish Priest of Cloone, and is perhaps most famously known for the public rally which he organised in Mohill, Co. Leitrim, on New Year's Day, 1934, where he voiced his strong objections to the playing of non-Irish music, in particular jazz, on the national airwaves. While Fr Conefrey's efforts in Dromard and Cloone parishes may be seen as an extreme example in the revival of Irish culture, it demonstrates the prevailing supportive environment during that period in the Connhaicne area, where Irish music was strongly promoted and encouraged by the community.

Through its local branches, *Conradh na Gaeilge* set up classes across Ireland to promote and revive the Irish language. It is quite possible that fiddle classes were also conducted by teachers, such as Rogers and McDonagh, in tandem with these language classes. There is evidence in the fiddle manuscript written by Larry Smyth (1866-1930) of Kilasonna, Granard (Chapter Six), that he may have attended one of these classes as he signed his name in Irish several times throughout the document both as ‘Lábhras Mac Gábhann’ and ‘Lorcan Mac Gábhann’.

### **3.8 Decline of the fiddle tradition in Connhaicne in the twentieth century**

The rapid growth of fiddle music witnessed in Connhaicne during the second half of the nineteenth century reached its peak around 1900. From then onwards, a gradual decline ensued across the region. According to James Kennedy (1861-1927), by 1912 this downward trend in fiddle music had already begun to take effect in his native Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim:

A trip to the old home in the winter of 1912 revealed a deplorable state of affairs as far as the music was concerned. There were neither fiddlers nor fiddles of any consequence. The spirit of emulation was dead, and not a fiddle of the Perry, or other valuable make, was left in the community. They had been quietly picked up for a few pounds each by speculators (O'Neill, 1913, p. 368).

The primary factors that led to the decline of fiddle music in the region of Connhaicne paralleled, but in reverse manner, the factors conducive to its growth in the earlier period. Abundance of teachers gave way to a shortage; encouragement gave way to apathy; the fiddle, which itself had replaced earlier instruments, was now being supplanted by new instruments. As the following sections will explore, these primary factors, combined with other secondary factors, contributed to a gradual decline of fiddle music in Connhaicne between approximately 1900 and 1975.

### **(i) Lack of fiddle teachers**

Between 1887 and 1967 all of the full-time fiddle teachers, and most of the part-time ones, who had been actively teaching in Connmhaicne passed away, namely, Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887); James Hanly (c1810-1901), Peter Kennedy (c1822-1902); Bernard Rogers (1856-1907); Jamesy Doyle (1887-1918); John ‘fiddler’ Masterson (c1840-1912); Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935); ‘Red’ Phil Brady (1864-1946); Johnny Rawle (1888-1961) and Alex Sutherland (1873-1967). During their lifetimes, these teachers taught fiddle music to students all over this region and ensured that there was a constant supply of new fiddle students entering the tradition. After their deaths, however, there were only a few part-time teachers left to pass on fiddle music on to the next generation. As a consequence, between approximately 1940 and 1975 the existing cohort of fiddle players in the region slowly disappeared and was replaced by only a handful of new musicians.

### **(ii) Social apathy**

While the lack of supply of new teachers in Connmhaicne affected the continued existence of fiddle music, there was a corresponding lack of demand. The decline in the music tradition was accentuated by a growing feeling of apathy towards Irish music by many sections of society, a sentiment that had been growing from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards. One of the reasons for this change in public perception was the fact that a small number of musicians had tarnished the image of Irish music through their unruly actions in public. Of the fiddle players in the Kernan tradition, one of the worst offenders appeared to be Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), who appeared in court several times in the 1880s on charges of being drunk and disorderly in public places. This behaviour affected his career as a national school teacher and eventually he was dismissed from his job in 1894. While Rogers is perhaps an extreme case, the portrayal of Irish musicians in a negative light is a consistent theme in local lore and

literature from the area of Connhaicne during this period. One example in literary form is Padraic Colum's play, *The Fiddlers' House* (1907), which is based on a day in the ordinary life of a fictional fiddle player, Conn Hourican. Colum (1881-1972), grew up in Colmcille, a parish in north Longford, and his negative depiction of Hourican as a musician who rejects family life, drinks too much and fights in local taverns, is probably a reflection of the prevailing image of Irish musicians at that time in the early twentieth century. By the 1940s, indifference was replaced by hostility among the public. An example of this negative attitude shown towards musicians was explicitly expressed by the renowned piper, Peter Carberry (1924-2016) of Kenagh, south Longford, in an account of his time spent playing with a local group, *The Rising of the Moon Céilí Band*, which was active in this region around the 1940s: "The band did not go down too well with some of the locals. They used jeer and hurl abuse at us" (Potts, 1999, p.14). In a national context, Carberry's views are reiterated by Paddy Murphy, a musician who was particularly active in County Clare during this same period:

traditional music and dancing enjoyed little or no respect . . . during the 1930s. The modern purists of the urban bourgeois . . . found little in common with traditional entertainment in their immediate hinterland (Ó hAllmhuráin, 1993, p.42).

### **(iii) Emigration**

Since the time of the Great Famine (1845-1852), Ireland's cultural history has been greatly affected by the constant outward flow of its people, particularly to the United States of America, and also to Great Britain. Paradoxically, as Bradshaw and Small have pointed out, Irish music was kept alive during the mid-twentieth century, due to the large amount of Irish musicians who were actively promoting and recording their native music while based in their new homes in America and Britain (1989, p.40). A number of these musicians became well known commercial artists, most notably the Sligo fiddlers, Michael Coleman (1891-1945),

James Morrison (1891-1947) and Paddy Killoran (1904-1965). Their commercial recordings had a phenomenal impact on musicians back home in Ireland. While less recognised, a number of fiddle players from the Kernan tradition also became commercial artists in America during the 1920s and 1930s, namely Frank ‘Patrolman’ Quinn (1893-1964), James Clarke (1887-1938) and Packie Dolan (1904-1932). Although these fiddle players from north Longford flourished in America, their loss to the area, and that of so many other local fiddle players who emigrated, was one of the factors that contributed to a decline in fiddle music activity in Connmhaicne from the 1900s onwards. This sense of loss is eloquently portrayed in a local song that was collected in 1937 from the region of Moyne in north Longford:

There’s no one to play the fiddle,  
There’s no one to dance with me.  
Naught but a distraught father  
And a mother on bended knee.  
We were all spared from the famine  
And oh tis hard to find  
Even one colleen or bauchaill  
Walking the road to Moyne (NFC, 2013a, p.394)

#### **(iv) Era of the dance halls**

Before the 1940s, music-making activities in Connmhaicne were mostly centred on social events in the community, typically house dances and cross-road dances. However, due to unrelenting pressure from the Catholic Church, house dances became outlawed after the Dance Hall Act (1935) was enacted. Social events were moved from private homes to public dance halls. This new way of socialising was not well received, however, in most communities in Ireland. In one account from north Longford in 1955, John Murtagh (77) of Clonelly, Dromard, describes the

negative reaction to these new dance halls by people in his area: “there is a general distrust and dislike by the old people of these dance-halls, which they think are menacing the older and better and more sociable way of life of their young days” (Murtagh, 1955 cited in Brennan, 1999, p. 114). Despite the misgivings of local people like Murtagh, eventually these new dance halls became the centre of socialising in the community. In contrast to the intimate performance setting of the house dances where musicians had been used to playing, they were now challenged by the acoustic requirements of the new dance halls. In response, local musicians came together and formed semi-professional groups who were commissioned to perform at these events in their locality. One such musician who performed in these early bands from the 1930s and 1940s was Frank Sullivan (1918-2018) an accordion player from Aughakine, Colmcille. In an interview with Frank recorded by his son, Seán, he explained that in his youth, around the late 1930s, he played in two bands, *Colmcille Band* and *Mullinalaghta Band*, bands that regularly performed in most of the dance halls in the local border region of north Longford/south Cavan (Ó Súilleabháin, 2002). According to Sullivan, these bands were comprised of local accordion and fiddle players, all of whom originated from the north Longford/south Cavan region.

Emerging from such small groups of musicians who initially played in the dance halls, much larger groups started to appear all over Ireland in the form of céilí bands. These bands provided fiddle players with an opportunity to perform in front of large audiences. This new phase in Irish music is explained by Gerry Feighan, who was a member of the *Johnny Pickering Céilí Band* from County Armagh: “new dance halls were built by the score and Céilí bands were, literally, being formed overnight” (1997, p.22). Locally, the first band to achieve success was the *Longford Céilí Band*, which broadcasted on Radio Éireann in 1936. They were followed by the *Tommy Donoghue Céilí Band* in the 1940s. As demand continued to increase in the 1950s, several bands were founded across Conmhaicne. Two of the most popular bands from

that period were the *St. Mel's Céilí Band* and the *Annaly Céilí Band*<sup>39</sup>, whose members often alternated between the two bands (Flynn, 2009a, p. 7). The former band was founded in 1958, the year the All Ireland Fleadh came to Longford, and the majority of its members were taken from the recently disbanded *Longford Céilí Band*. Noel Caslin, a member of the *Longford Céilí Band*, recalls that during that time their band was in huge demand: they played not only in Longford but as far afield as Galway, which he labelled as “great ‘céilí’ country” (Flynn, 2009b, p.11). Caslin also observed that Sinn Féin at that time were very active in organising ceilithe across the country. Another Longford band formed during the 1950s was *The Abbey Ceilidhe Band*. Its members were comprised of local musicians from Abbeyshrule, Co. Longford, including Pierce Butler (1910-2000), the fiddle player who discovered the Leonard-Kernan MS in the roof of Rooney’s pub, Abbeyshrule, in 1962 (see 4.2 *Provenance: ‘fiddler on the roof’*). The *Craobh Ruadh Céilí Band* was another band that enjoyed great success. It was founded in 1956 by the fiddle player Joe Callaghan (1921-1978) of Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford (Flynn, 2009c, p.21).

#### **(v) Era of the show bands**

Despite the initial success of céilí bands, during the 1950s and 1960s they were forced into new directions. The revival in ballad groups, such as the Clancy Brothers, which flourished in the newly developed lounge bars, and the growing popularity of show bands in the larger commercial dance halls, led to a decrease in the demand for Céilí bands (Taylor, 2007, p.336). Some retreated to their localities, where they became community based bands and entered competitions under the auspices of the newly formed Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ), while others became commercial bands that recorded and toured in Ireland and abroad. With a lack of commercial opportunities for fiddle players in céilí bands, they soon disappeared from

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<sup>39</sup> The latter band is a different one to the present day band of the same name.

the public arena. Some of these fiddle players, such as the renowned Larry Cunningham (1938-2012) of Clooneen, Mullinalaghta, Co. Longford, embarked on a different career path in country and western music. In other families where fiddle music had been traditionally strong, the next generation, born from 1950 onwards, either failed to learn the fiddle or became singers instead. An example of this latter trend is apparent from an examination of descendants of the Kernan family. While fiddle music was passed on through several members of this extended family from c1850 onwards, the last two fiddle players from this family, John Kiernan and Pat Rodgers were born in the first quarter of the twentieth century. In the next generation of this family, fiddle music was not handed down but music emerged through a different path, via the renowned country and western singer, Declan Nerney (b.1959) of Drumlish, who is a great-grandnephew of Thomas Kernan.

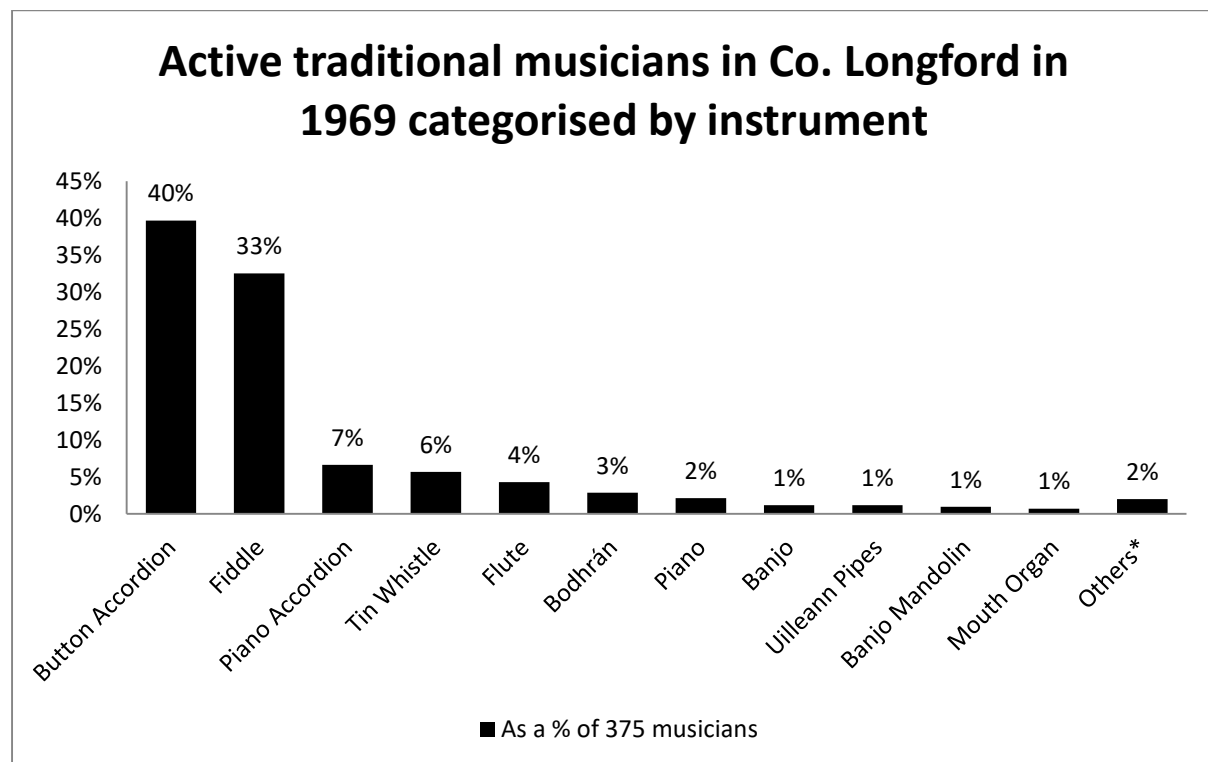
#### **(vi) Weakening popularity of the fiddle**

One glaring weakness of the fiddle is its lack of volume compared with other instruments popularly played in Irish music, such as the uilleann pipes and accordion. At house dances and cross-road dances, which were two of the more popular social events in Connmhaicne between c1875 and c1935, several fiddle players were often required to play in groups in order to produce sufficient volume. By contrast, accordions and concertinas, which had been recently introduced to Ireland from Europe, were capable of producing a larger volume. Therefore, slowly over time, these instruments started to replace the fiddle even at these social gatherings. This trend increased greatly when the dance-halls came into vogue post 1935. The accordion was much more suited than the fiddle to the acoustic requirements of these new buildings. Accordingly, over time the accordion became the instrument of choice among new musicians entering the music tradition. The accordion's rise in Irish music was paralleled in other folk music traditions. For instance, Doherty states that in Scotland in the mid-1900s "the accordion,

first introduced *c*1850, quickly gained a foothold, posing a serious threat to the reign on the fiddle, eventually superseding its importance” (1996, p35). Similar processes occurred in Sliabh Luachra (Kearney, 2009). Attitudes to the accordion and its increasing use in Irish traditional music are included in the work of Ó Riada (1962/1982) and Breathnach (1977), often with negative connotations attached.

Similarly, the rise of the accordion was one of the main reasons that fiddle music began to decline in Connmaicne during the mid-twentieth century. Evidence for this can be seen in the statistics of a survey conducted by Fr John Quinn in 1969. In that year he travelled through County Longford and documented all of the living traditional musicians in this region who were alive, excluding children who were in the learning stage. The results of this survey show that there were 375 active traditional musicians in County Longford in 1969. The survey also listed the instrument that each musician played and the resulting data from this exercise, graphically illustrated in Figure 3, reveals that of the 375 musicians who were playing music in 1969, 40% were playing the accordion, compared to only 33% who were playing the fiddle.

**Figure 3 Survey of active musicians in County Longford in 1969**



\* Others: this figure of 2% includes a combination of instruments with a frequency of less than 1% each

### 3.9 Fr John Quinn and revival efforts

In the 1960s, at the same time Fr Quinn conducted this survey of Longford musicians, he became aware that Irish music was in rapid decline in the Connmaicne region. To reverse this trend, he began to teach music, particularly the fiddle, to the younger generation in Connmaicne. In tandem with individual teaching, he also decided to mentor céilí bands in order to bring young musicians together in a group environment to forge a strong regional bond between the individual musicians. Upon his first official appointment as curate of Ballymahon parish in south Longford he trained his first junior céilí band in 1966. This band was named *St. Sinneach's Céilí Band* and they achieved instant success, winning first place in the 14-18 Céilí Band competition at the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil held that year in Boyle, County Roscommon (see Plate 5). In the subsequent decades, as Fr Quinn was appointed to various parishes in the

Connmhaicne region, he continued to teach music and mentor céilí bands throughout the region. It was through these activities that he became aware of the vast amount of old manuscript collections of Irish music transcribed by previous generations of musicians from this region. Determined to disseminate this music, much of it forgotten by the current generation of musicians, he concentrated on teaching music from those manuscripts to his students and céilí bands. Through this process, since he formed his first céilí band in 1966, Fr Quinn has successfully reconnected the past to the present, and the older music of Connmhaicne is now once again to the fore in the repertoire of this region.

**Plate 5: St. Sinneach's Céilí Band: winners of the All-Ireland 14-18 Céilí band competition in 1966**



**(Back row, left to right - Piano: Thomas Dillon (Ballymahon); Fiddles: Marie Reilly (Moatefarrell) and Frank McLynn (Tang); Drums: Séamus Leavy (Barry); Button accordion: Gerry O'Neill (Legan), Noel Keegan (Barry) and J. J. Keegan (Barry); Front row, left to right – Tinwhistle: Colm Butler (Abbeyshrute); Banjo-mandolin: John Barden (Knockmartin). Source: Fr John Quinn)**

### 3.10 Conclusion

Chapter Three established that fiddle music in the Connmhaicne region evolved in a similar pattern to fiddle development in other localised fiddle regions across Ireland. Coinciding with the demise of the harping tradition, and a parallel decline in the piping tradition, fiddle music was introduced to the rural communities of Connmhaicne, particularly by the fiddle master Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887), who in turn may have served his apprenticeship under the tutelage of either a gentleman fiddler based in one of the local big houses, a military officer serving in a barracks located in a nearby town, or a local travelling fiddle teacher. Subsequent to Kernan's own initial teaching efforts from c1835 to c1850, a rapid expansion of fiddle music was witnessed in Connmhaicne between c1850 and c1900. The main factor in this development was the relatively large number of new fiddle teachers who had started to teach alongside Kernan, in particular two of his students, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907) and Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935). Their entry into full-time fiddle teaching was seen to have been in response firstly to their own financial needs, and secondly to the strong demand for their services from within the community, a demand encouraged by the cultural nationalism of the period. From c1900 onwards, fiddle music started a gradual decline, which accelerated over the following decades. The main factors in the decline were the decrease in the availability of fiddle teachers, growing public hostility towards Irish music, and the fiddle's replacement by the accordion, an instrument acoustically much louder than the fiddle, and therefore more suited to the dance halls, where Irish music was mostly performed from the 1930s onwards. This new ballroom era led to many musicians defecting from Irish traditional music into the new show bands, which sprouted up all over Connmhaicne and further afield post 1950. This shift in music genres has led to the north Longford region of Connmhaicne producing some of the best known country and western singers in the last few decades, notably Larry Cunningham, Mick Flavin and a great-grandnephew of Thomas Kernan, Declan Nerney.

While the number of active fiddle players in Connhaicne had declined by *c*1975, the legacy of its prior golden era in fiddle music is preserved in the collections of manuscripts compiled, and in the audio recordings made, between 1844 and 1973 by musicians with links to the teaching of Thomas Kernan. Part Two of this dissertation will critically analyse these written and audio sources, and in doing so will further uncover the underlying factors that impacted on the evolution of fiddle music in Connhaicne during this period.

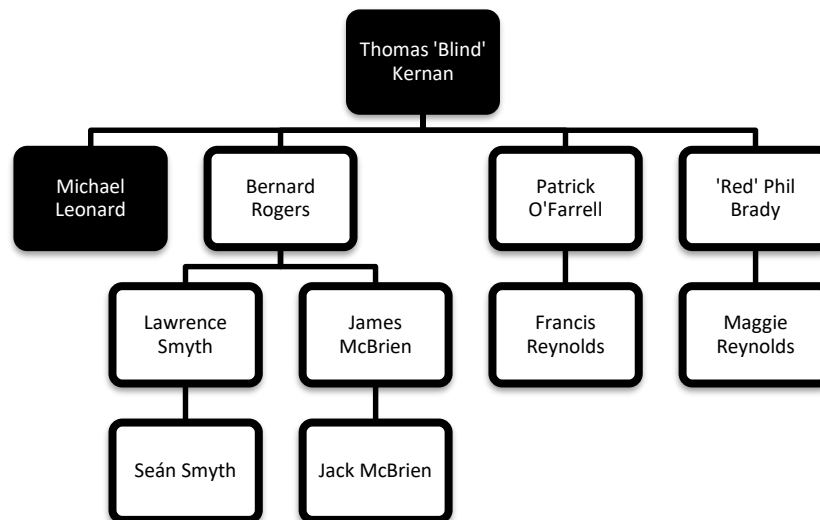
# Chapter Four

## The Leonard-Kernan MS

(1844-*c*1850)

## 4 Chapter Four

**Figure 4: An excerpt from the Thomas Kernan fiddle lineage highlighting the known scribes of the Leonard-Kernan MS**



### 4.1 Introduction

Part One of this dissertation established that a fiddle tradition emerged in the greater region of Connhaicne through the interconnected factors of place, people and music. Emanating from this golden era of regional fiddle music are a number of written and audio sources compiled by or derived from fiddle players connected to Kernan's teaching in the period spanning 1844 to 1973. In order to study the gradual development of fiddle music in the region throughout this period, Part Two, which consists of Chapters Four to Eight, will examine these sources in terms of both their musical and non-musical content. As outlined in *1.7 Methodology*, each of the sources will be analysed as a stand-alone collection in its respective chapter in Part Two. In this analysis, all features of each source will be examined, except for the elements of music transmission, teaching methods and fiddle style, which will be investigated in Part Three of this dissertation through a collective examination of all the written and audio sources.

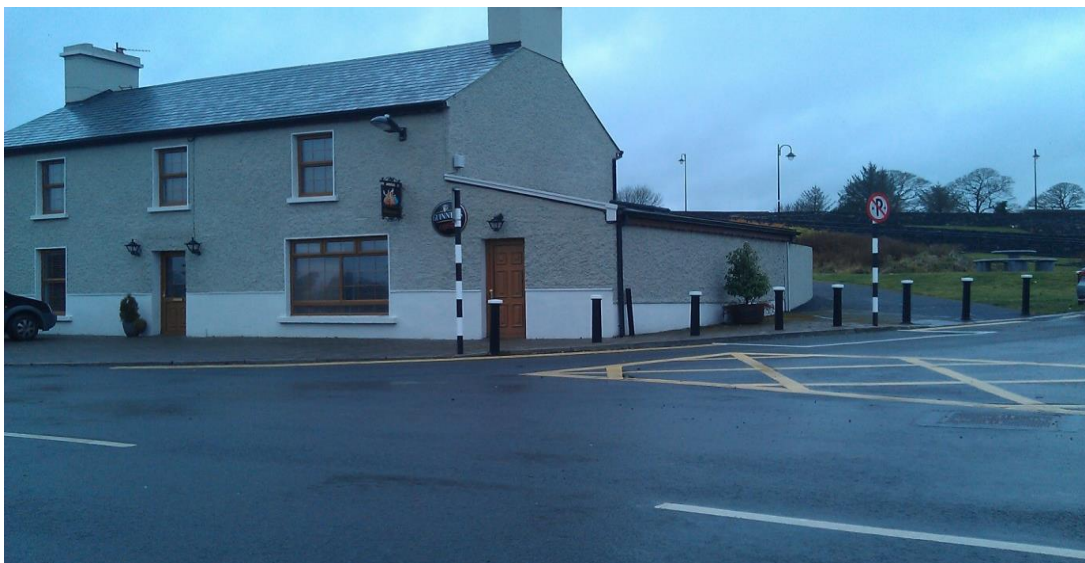
The Leonard-Kernan MS is the earliest written source of the four collections to be examined in this dissertation. Exploratory research by Fr John Quinn (2008, p. 76) indicates that this manuscript was transcribed in the mid-1840s, primarily by the scribes, Thomas Kernan, and his fiddle student, Michael Leonard. In the timeline of the fiddle tradition associated with Kernan, from 1825 to 1975, this manuscript is positioned towards the beginning, and therefore its repertoire offers an opportunity to study the characteristics of fiddle music and style at the earliest stage in the evolution of this fiddle tradition. This era of the 1840s coincides with the initial stage of Kernan's teaching career, and accordingly its musical contents open a window into his teaching methods and the type of repertoire he was playing and teaching at this time. Initial research of the manuscript's repertoire suggests that Kernan was experimenting at this early stage in his teaching career with the popular music of the time, such as quadrilles, song airs and waltzes, music which had originated in several different countries and incorporated a variety of musical genres.

## **4.2 Provenance: 'fiddler on the roof'**

According to Fr John Quinn (2008, p. 74), the Leonard-Kernan MS was discovered by Pierce Butler (1910-2000) of Abbeyshrule, Co. Longford, in 1962. At that time, Butler was working as a carpenter on the roof of Rooney's pub in his local village of Abbeyshrule, when he stumbled on the manuscript hidden underneath the roof. Fortunately, Butler was also a fiddle player and, given his musical knowledge, the owner of the pub, Mrs. Rooney, encouraged him to keep the manuscript. When he examined the contents of the document he discovered that the names "Michael Leonard" and "Thomas Kernan" were written throughout the first section of the manuscript with accompanying dates ranging from October 1844 to January 1846. He made a calculation of the age of the manuscript, which he wrote into the manuscript. The next time Butler heard the name "Thomas Kernan" was in February 1973, when he was sitting down one

Monday evening listening to a music broadcast on RTÉ radio. Proinnsias Ó Ceallaigh, the presenter of that programme was interviewing Fr John Quinn (b.1940), who was curate in Lanesborough at the time, about the music which was being played by a local Céilí youth band he was mentoring, and who were featured in the programme. On the show Fr Quinn explained to the listeners that his band was playing music he had taught them from a manuscript transcribed by Lawrence (Larry) Smyth (1866-1930) of Abbeylara, Co. Longford (see Chapter Six). Smyth, he added, had been taught the fiddle by Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), who in turn had been taught by his uncle, Thomas Kernan. Coincidentally, the week following this programme Fr Quinn happened to visit Butler, who showed him the manuscript he had found containing Kernan's signature. In a gesture similar to that made by Mrs. Rooney to him, Butler gave the manuscript to Fr Quinn, who to this day remains the custodian of the manuscript in his current parish of Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim. Since his acquisition of this manuscript, Fr Quinn has made available for research and for learning the repertoire of this document through his role as both a fiddle teacher and a céilí band mentor in the region of Conmhaicne.

**Plate 6: Leonard's public tavern, Abbeyshrule, Co. Longford (now Rooney's pub)**



**(Source: Author, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2013)**

### **4.3 Michael Leonard (c1835-1886)**

The original owner of the Leonard-Kernan MS was Michael Joseph Leonard of Drumanure, Abbeyshrule, Carrickedmond, Co. Longford, who was reared in the public tavern in the roof of which the manuscript was later found by Pierce Butler. The owners of the tavern during Michael's formative years were his parents, Michael (?-1837) and Maria (née Doonagan - c1818-1868). As far as can be ascertained, in addition to Michael, they had at least five other children, Rose Anne (1836-1908), Elizabeth (1837-?), Maria (?), Margaret (c1823-1908) and Jane (?).

May McCawley (née Rooney), a descendant through marriage of the Leonards, recalled that in local lore it was commonly held that during the 1800s the Leonards were a highly respected family in the community and that they had considerable financial means (Ward, 2011a). The Griffiths Valuation of 1854 (AAI, 2012e) provides evidence for this claim: it reveals that Michael's mother, Maria, was a large leaseholder of land, some of which she had sub-let. Additionally, a survey of the household returns in the 1901 Census of Ireland indicates that the Leonard house was the only one deemed first class in the local area (NAI, 2012d). Given that this document lists nine rooms in the building, and given the proximity of the Royal Canal, a major transport facility of the day, it is quite likely that in addition to the tavern facilities, the Leonards earned additional income renting accommodation to travelling patrons. Another indication of their reputable standing in the community is that they had a special entrance reserved for them at the old church in Abbeyshrule and their own pew in this building. These privileges were granted to the Leonards to acknowledge their donation of the original land on which the church was built.

## 4.4 Manuscript construction and layout

### 4.4.1 General assembly

As this section will confirm, the Leonard-Kernan MS contains the characteristics of an ‘assembled’ document. The compelling evidence for this assertion is that the manuscript is multi-layered, consisting of several discrete components. Using the side-sown method of stitching, these components were manually bound together, a task which was performed more than likely by the manuscript’s original owner, Michael Leonard, or by one of his family members. The predominant paper type of the manuscript is woven, with the exception of one leaf, 5-6, which exhibits the features of laid paper. Encompassing the internal music components of the manuscript is an outer cover, which contains a mixture of leather and cardboard. Given that leather was relatively more expensive than cardboard, this former material was used sparingly to protect the spine, an area of the manuscript most vulnerable to wear and tear. Accordingly, the remaining edges of the cover consisting of cardboard are partially worn. Inside the front cover is a small booklet of printed tunes, entitled *A New Series of Alexander’s Scrap Book for the Flute, Violin, Flageolet, etc.* (Alexander, (n.d.; c1830-45)). Two tunes were copied from this book into the manuscript, which indicates that the respective scribe was actively playing music from it.

Following this booklet, there are two separate folios of hand notated music. The first folio contains twenty-seven leaves with printed music staves. The appearance of signatures in this folio suggests that the manuscript may have emerged through the initial use of this folio as a training manual for Kernan to teach his student, Leonard. The second folio consists of twenty-two leaves, five of which are blank, while the seventeen remaining leaves contain hand-drawn staves on which music is written. These features indicate that the leaves of this folio were used at a later date, when the scribes had exhausted all of the printed music leaves in the previous folio. In the middle of the booklet, and in the middle of the two folios, there are clusters of

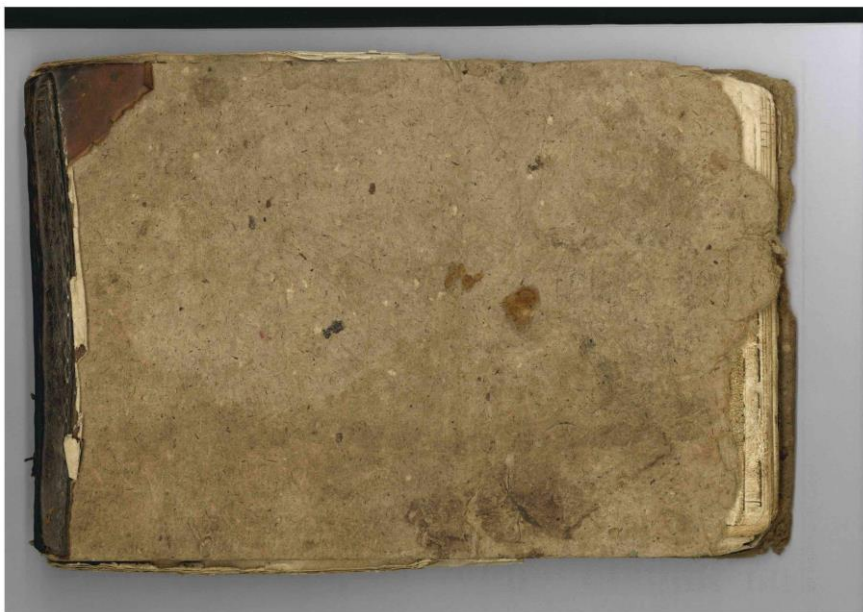
leaves that were stitched in during the binding process. Additionally, there are a small number of loose leaves that may be derived from a variety of sources.

When one includes all the components outlined in the previous section, there are a total of seventy leaves in the Leonard-Kernan MS. Table 5 at the end of this section demonstrates the sequential layout of the leaves in their order of appearance starting from the front of the manuscript. The leaves have been assigned a category relating to their associated component: CR - outer covers, BK - booklets, FO - folios, SD - stitched-in leaves and LE - loose leaves. In cases where they are more than one of each component, letters in alphabetical order have been added, e.g., the code for the first folio is FO-A, the second folio is FO-B, etc.

**Table 5: The sequential order of the leaves in the Leonard-Kernan MS categorised by component**

<b>Sequential Order of Leaves</b>	<b>Component</b>
1	CR-A
2-4	BK
5-6	SD-A
7-8	BK
9-22	FO-A
23	SD-B
24	SD-C
25	SD-D
26	SD-E
27	SD-B
28-40	FO-A
41-47	FO-B
48-51	SD-F
52-66	FO-B
67	LE-A
68	LE-B
69	SD-G
70	CR-B

**Plate 7: Front Cover (CR-A) of Leonard-Kernan MS: leaf 1r**



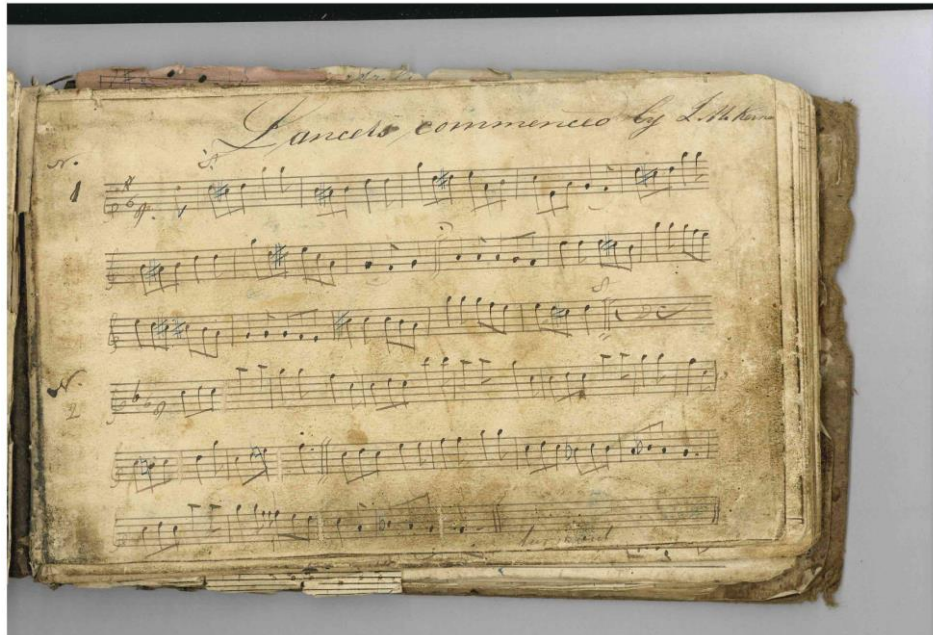
**Source: Fr John Quinn, P.P. Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim**

**Plate 8: Front cover of *A New Series of Alexander's Scrap Book* in the Leonard-Kernan MS (BK): leaf 2r**



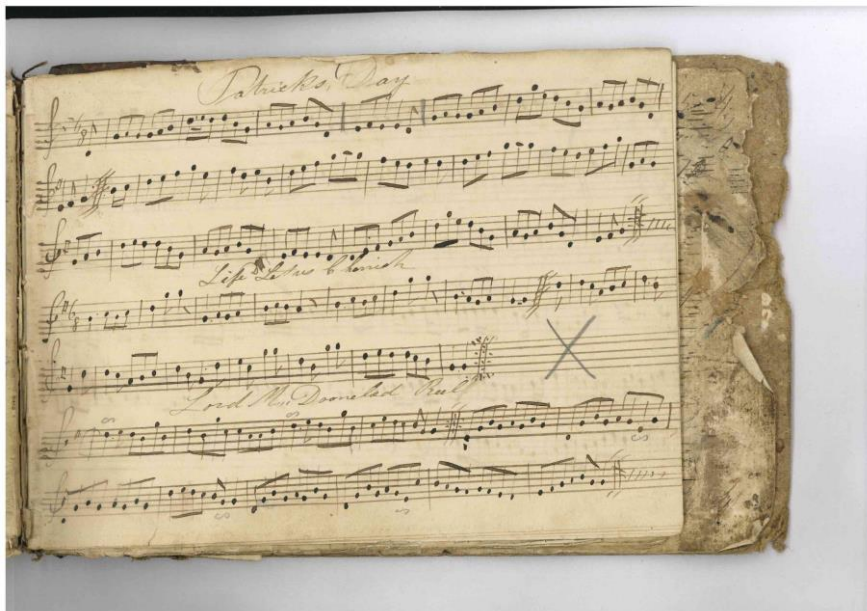
**Source: Fr John Quinn, P.P. Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim**

**Plate 9: The first leaf of Folio A (FO-A) in the Leonard-Kernan MS: leaf 9r**



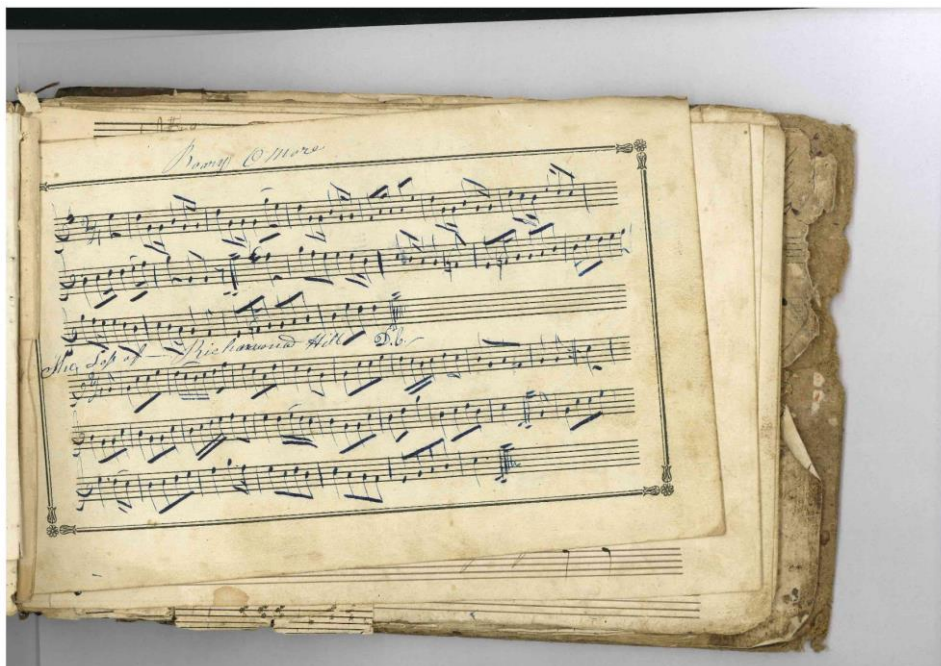
**Source: Fr John Quinn, P.P. Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim**

**Plate 10: The first leaf of Folio B (FO-B) in the Leonard-Kernan MS: leaf 41r**



**Source: Fr John Quinn, P.P. Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim**

**Plate 11: An example of a stitched-in leaf (SD-A) in the Leonard-Kernan MS: leaf 24r**



**Source: Fr John Quinn, P.P. Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim**

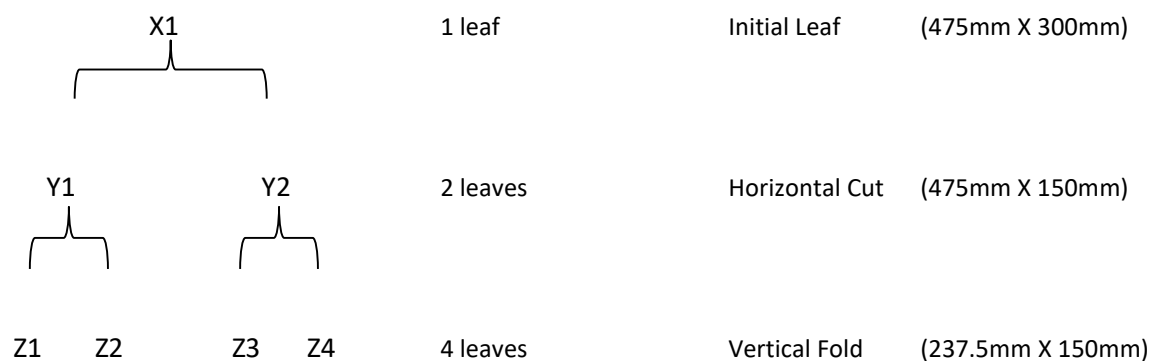
#### **4.4.2 Specific components**

Music notation was written by the scribes in three components of the manuscript, folios (FO), stitched-in leaves (SD) and loose leaves (LE). The first component contains two distinct folios, which have been labelled for the purposes of this chapter as Folio A and Folio B. There are twenty-seven leaves in Folio A (*henceforth* FO-A). Counting outwards from the centre point of this folio, there are fourteen leaves on the left hand side and thirteen leaves on the right hand side. Originally this latter side also contained fourteen leaves but the last one was cut out, presumably during the assembly of the manuscript. Each side of the leaves in this folio contains six printed staves. Some of the leaves contain extra hand-drawn staves that were added at the top or bottom of the printed staves by scribes at a later date.

As graphically demonstrated in Figure 5, the leaves in FO-A appear to have been fashioned from much larger ones through the two processes of cutting and folding. The original leaves

acquired by the scribes measured 475mm in length by 300mm in height, and they had a vertical line in the middle that separated the printed staves into two sides (a validation of this hypothesis is documented in Vol.II, Source A). Each leaf, labelled as X1 in the diagram, contained twelve printed staves on both sides. To create a manuscript of practical size these leaves were divided twice, thereby exponentially creating four individual leaves. Firstly, the leaves were cut horizontally to produce two leaves measuring 475mm in length and 150mm in height, which have been labelled in Figure 5 as Y1 and Y2. Secondly, these two severed leaves were folded vertically into the manuscript, thereby creating four leaves in the process, which are labelled from Z1 to Z4 in Figure 5. The last stage of this process is evident from an inspection of the dimensions of the existing leaves in manuscript, which on average measure 237.5mm in length by 150mm in height.

**Figure 5: A graphical demonstration of the processes leading to the creation of Folio-A (FO-A) in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



There are twenty-two leaves in Folio B (*henceforth*: FO-B). Counting outwards from the centre point of this folio, there are seven leaves on the left hand side and fifteen leaves on the right hand side. It appears that the left hand side originally had fifteen leaves too, but eight were cut

out afterwards. The stubs of these leaves are visible in the folio. Table 6 is a tabulated version of the physical and sequential layout of FO-B:

**Table 6: The sequential order of the leaves in Folio B (FO-B) in the Leonard-Kernan MS**

<b>Position of Leaves in FO-B</b>	41-43	N/A (cut out)	44-47	N/A (cut out)	52-66
<b>No. of Leaves: Left Hand Side</b>	3	1	4	7*	-
<b>No. of Leaves: Right Hand Side</b>	-	-	-	-	15

\*There are a large number of leaves cut out between leaves 47 and 48. To allow for a total of fifteen leaves on the left hand side to match the right hand side one can surmise that seven were cut out here.

Of the twenty-two leaves in this folio five are completely blank. The remaining seventeen leaves contain music staves that have been hand-drawn using a ruler or similar instrument. Resulting from this process, the numbers of staves range from three to seven and the stave spans range from 58mm to 134mm.

In the two other components in the manuscript containing music transcriptions, stitched-in leaves and loose leaves, there is a wide variation in the types of paper used, the dimensions of the leaves, the scribes who wrote the transcriptions, and the type of music staff used – some printed, others hand-drawn. The leaves of these components were most likely added to the manuscript during the assembly process.

## **4.5 Chronology of manuscript**

Using the chronological details of the manuscript's original owner, Michael Leonard, it can be inferred that the manuscript was transcribed and assembled during his lifetime, namely between approximately 1835 and 1886. It can also be assumed that Leonard placed the manuscript in

the roof of his house for safekeeping at some time before his death in 1886. However, it is also possible that this action was performed by one of his siblings at a later date.

A more precise timeline of the manuscript's chronology may be calculated from an examination of the textual and non-textual evidence in the various components of the manuscript. The first item of evidence in the manuscript is the printed booklet, *A New Series of Alexander's Scrap Book for the Flute, Violin, Flageolet, etc.* (n.d.; c1830-45), which is stitched inside the front cover of the manuscript. Best estimates for this booklet are that it was published between 1830 and 1845. The next item of evidence is found on the stitched-in leaf, 5-6.<sup>40</sup> This particular leaf consists of laid paper, and consequently it contains a watermark. The watermark includes the date '1844', which indicates that it was manufactured that year. The next component in the manuscript containing chronological evidence is FO-A. As summarised in Table 7, there is a series of dates ranging between October 1844 and January 1846 in this folio written by Thomas Kernan and Michael Leonard during fiddle lessons:

**Table 7: List of dates written by the scribes in Folio A (FO-A) of the Leonard-Kernan MS**

Leaf	Transcriptions by the scribes in FO-A that have accompanying dates
10r	Lancers Quadrilles this 16th October 1844
15r	finis January 8 <sup>th</sup> 1845 M <sup>r</sup> M <sup>l</sup> Ld [ <i>finished January 8th, 1845, Mr. Michael Leonard</i> ]
15v	Sporting Kate – January the 4 <sup>th</sup> 1845 T Kernan [ <i>Sporting Kate – January the 4th, 1845, Thomas Kernan</i> ]
17v	June 30th 45 [ <i>June 30th, 1845</i> ]
20v	August the 12th 45 [ <i>August the 12th, 1845</i> ]
21v	December 6th 1845
33v	End Jan the 3rd 46 [ <i>End, January the 3rd, 1846</i> ]

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<sup>40</sup> This leaf was originally a single document before it was folded into the manuscript, thereby creating two leaves in the process.

As the dates in Table 7 demonstrate, FO-A was written by Leonard and Kernan over the course of approximately fifteen months from October 1844 to January 1846. However, given that the first and last leaves in this folio, 9r and 40v, are more darkened and worn than the others, it is quite likely that prior to the assembly of the present manuscript, FO-A was originally a distinct manuscript in its own right and without an outer cover. This fact also indicates that the manuscript in its current state was assembled at some time after the last date in FO-A, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1846. The only other visible dates in FO-A appear on leaf 21v, where written at the bottom is “1962-1845=117”. It may be surmised that to determine the manuscript’s age, this calculation was written by Pierce Butler when he discovered the manuscript in 1962.

While the next component, FO-B, contains no visible dates, there is evidence that it was written subsequent to FO-A. There are a series of horizontal lines scattered on the right hand side of the stitched-in leaf, 69r, on the inside of the manuscript’s back cover, which are the remnants of staves that were overdrawn in FO-B by the scribe. These markings could not have occurred until after the manuscript was assembled. Based on the evidence that FO-B was a blank document when the manuscript was assembled, it can be inferred that the music items in this folio were written subsequent to the ones in FO-A, at a date later than January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1846.

An examination of the manuscript’s repertoire may provide additional information on its chronology. This textual evidence relates specially to tunes that have verifiable dates. Tunes that can be dated accurately typically have one or more of the following characteristics:

- (1) published - copied from collections with known dates of publication
- (2) composed - have a confirmed year of composition
- (3) performance - made their first significant performance in public
- (4) historical- are associated with a historical event or person

Applying this methodology, the results of Table 8 reveal that fifty tunes in the manuscript's repertoire have verifiable dates:

**Table 8: Number of tunes in the Leonard-Kernan MS that have verifiable dates**

	1600-1699	1700-1799	1800-1809	1810-1819	1820-1829	1830-1839	1840-1849
<b>Composed</b>	2	12	1	3	5	10	3
<b>Published</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
<b>Performed</b>	0	0	0	0	1	3	0
<b>Historical</b>	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total tunes</b>	2	12	2	3	6	13	12

An examination of the underlying data in Table 8 reveals that the latest date that can be confirmed is the year 1845, representing the date that '[Aurora Waltz]' (LK.177) was composed by Joseph Labitski (1802-1881). Of the 14 tunes that predate 1800, the majority are Scottish reels. However, as can be seen, these are well outnumbered by the 36 tunes that can be dated to the period 1800 to 1845, of which 25 are from the period 1830 to 1845. This demonstrates that the scribes in this manuscript were significantly influenced by the popular music of their era, and therefore, given that the latest verifiable date in the textual evidence is 1845, it suggests that the transcriptions in the manuscript were more than likely completed soon after that date, most likely by the year 1850 at the latest.

In conclusion, based on a combination of textual and non-textual evidence, it appears that the manuscript as a whole was written and assembled between the years 1844 and 1850. Initially, the manuscript started with Folio A, a distinct document in its own right, which was written by Leonard and Kernan during the period 1844 to 1846, approximately. Subsequently, this folio was bound together with a printed booklet, another folio of blank leaves, namely Folio B, and a series of stitched-in leaves placed in the middle of each component. Staves were then drawn on the blank pages of Folio B, on which music transcriptions were later added, the last of which is likely to have been completed by the year 1850.

## 4.6 Use of printed material

An examination of the textual evidence in the manuscript indicates that a number of tunes were sourced from printed material. This may have been either in the form of printed music collections or of sheet music. This type of printed material provided a rich source of contemporary repertoire for musicians during the nineteenth century. While other sources are likely to have been used, three music collections that the scribes copied from have been identified:

- (1) *A New Series of Alexander's Scrap Book for the Flute, Violin, Flageolet, etc.* (London, c1830-45)
- (2) [*First Set of*] *Weippert's National Country Dances* (Weippert, n.d.; c1840a)
- (3) *Second Set of Weippert's National Country Dances* (Weippert, n.d.; c1840b)

The first book, *Alexander's Scrap Book*, is positioned at the beginning of the manuscript, inside the front cover. It is a small booklet consisting of five leaves. The sixth leaf, which was originally the end leaf of the booklet, was presumably cut out as it was surplus to requirements. Numbered from 283 to 295, there are only thirteen tunes in this booklet. As was common during that era, music collections were sometimes released first in a series of small booklets. This particular one became part of the second volume of *A New Series of Alexander's Scrap Book for the Flute, Violin, Flageolet, etc.* In all, a thousand tunes were published over the course of six volumes. While there are no imprinted dates on any of the booklets or volumes, it is estimated that Volume 6, the last one, was published around 1845. Based on this date it can be surmised that the booklet in the manuscript, which was used in the issue of Volume 2, was printed at some time between 1830 and 1845. The repertoire in the booklet is predominantly newly-composed popular music, sourced from several different genres of music, and includes tune types such as quadrilles, polkas, waltzes and operatic airs. Two tunes in the manuscript

were copied directly by the scribe, Leonard, from this booklet into the manuscript. These are ‘284: The Drawing Room Polka’ (LK.049), and ‘289: The Celebrated Esmeralda [sic] Polka’ (LK.051).

The next identified printed material, from which Leonard transcribed, were two volumes of *Weippert’s National Country Dances*. Four tunes were copied from the first volume, *Weippert’s National Country Dances* (Weippert, n.d.; c1840a) and three from the second volume, *Second Set of Weippert’s National Country Dances* (Weippert, n.d.; c1840b) As the titles of the books suggest, the repertoire contained in these sources was, in the main, music for the popular country dances of that period. Table 9 is a summary of the tunes transcribed from these two Weippert volumes in the order of their appearance in the manuscript:

**Table 9: List of tunes in FO-B transcribed from *Weippert’s National Country Dances* (London, c1840), Vols. 1 & 2**

<b>Title of tune in Leonard-Kernan MS</b>	<b>Leaf in FO-B</b>	<b>Weippert’s NCD: volume</b>	<b>Weippert’s NCD: tune ref.</b>
The Campbells are Coming	55v	1	No.19
Geting [sic] Up Stairs	56r	1	No.28
Soldiers Joy	56r	1	No.18
Morgan Ratler	59v	2	No.7
Kinlock of Kinlock	59v	2	No.28
Ride a Mile	60r	1	No.27
The Dusty Miller	65v	2	No.4

Based on the criteria set out in *1.7 Methodology*, an examination of the remaining tunes in the manuscript indicates that other sources from printed material were used by the scribes, the identities of which have yet to be established. For instance, it is highly probable that a number of tunes at the end of the manuscript, ranging from tunes LK.148 to LK.181 were transcribed from printed material (see Vol.II, Source A).

## 4.7 Motives

A survey of the evidence outlined in this chapter thus far suggests that the manuscript served two purposes. Initially, FO-A functioned as a training manual used by Kernan to teach Leonard. Subsequently, when the manuscript was assembled, it developed into Leonard's personal collection of music. One of the prime clues which suggests FO-A was written for teaching purposes is the appearance of compliments such as, "great", "good" and "X", written by Kernan beside a number of tunes (for example, see Plate 12). The fact that these compliments are typically inserted beside tunes that Kernan wrote himself indicates that he was praising Leonard for his rendition of this tune rather than his musical literacy. Another clue that the folio was transcribed in a learning environment is the fact that in most instances the tunes were written in a series of clusters by the two scribes. This pattern of writing indicates that, while Kernan was stationed in Leonard's home for prolonged periods of time, he wrote out tunes to teach him, and then, after he left, Leonard transcribed other tunes that he had learned, tunes that were not already in the manuscript. The fact that the signatures of Kernan and Leonard typically are located at the end or beginning of each scribe's cluster of tunes supports this theory. The period of tuition can be deduced from the dates in this folio, which range from October 1844 to January 1846.

**Plate 12: An example of teaching instructions on leaf 15v in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



**(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Leaf 15v)**

Leonard's transcriptions may have arisen from learning tunes orally from Kernan, tunes which he was subsequently instructed to write out. Evidence for this conjecture is provided by the tune, 'Miss Jo[h]nston's Reel' (LK.029, [LK.033]), which appears first in the hand of Kernan, and then in the hand of Leonard (see Figures 6-7). Leonard's version is subtly different from Kernan's, and contains more bowing marks than his. Although there are several possible reasons for this anomaly, the most likely one is that, when Leonard wrote the tune out, he remembered it differently from the way he had learned it.

**Figure 6 ‘Miss Jonston’s [sic] Reel’ (LK.029): transcribed by Thomas Kernan**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Vol.II, Source A)

**Figure 7 ‘Miss Johnston’s Reel’ (LK.033): transcribed by Michael Leonard**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Vol.II, Source A)

The second, and later, purpose of the manuscript appears to have been Leonard’s attempt to collate a personal collection of his music, sourced firstly from his teacher Kernan, secondly from printed material, and thirdly from other musicians. While the first two categories of Leonard’s sources of music have been examined already in this chapter, the next section will examine the backgrounds of the various other scribes who appear throughout the manuscript.

## 4.8 Scribes

It is evident from an examination of the music notation styles in the manuscript that several other scribes in addition to Thomas Kernan and Michael Leonard were responsible for the music transcriptions. Some of these other scribes appear on the loose and stitched-in leaves, while others have used the available blank spaces on the folios in the manuscript for their notations. In all, ten different scribes have been identified: Michael Leonard, Thomas Kernan and another eight scribes, who have been labelled in the range, Scribe C to Scribe J. Table 10 is a summary of both the positioning of the scribes' transcriptions in the manuscript and the quantity of music items that have been assigned to each of them:

**Table 10: Music items in the Leonard-Kernan MS categorised by component and scribe**

Row: Scribe Column: Component in MS	FO- A	FO- B	SD- A	SD- B	SD- C	SD- D	SD- E	SD- F	LE- A	LE- B	Total Music Items
Michael Leonard	35	41	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	78
Thomas Kernan	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48
Scribe C	3	9	-	7	-	2	3	-	-	-	24
Scribe D	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	5
Scribe E	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	6
Scribe F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Scribe G	1	-	3	-	3	-	-	6	-	-	13
Scribe H	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Scribe I	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Scribe J	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Total music items	94	50	3	7	4	5	4	9	2	3	181

The majority of the tune transcriptions in the manuscript, representing 70% of the total repertoire of the manuscript, were written by Leonard and his teacher, Kernan. The next most significant presence in the manuscript is the work of Scribe C, which accounts for 13% of the total repertoire, and appears in most segments of the manuscript. In FO-A, Scribe C typically transcribed tunes where there was available space at the bottom of leaves (examples: 20v, 28v, 30r and 39r). In FO-B, however, Scribe C's transcriptions are predominantly at the beginning

of this folio, and here the full length of the leaves were utilised. After these transcriptions by Scribe C, ranging from leaf 41 to leaf 43 of FO-B, there are four blank leaves and the remnants of ten more blank leaves cut out, before one encounters Leonard's first appearance in what is, in effect, the second half of this folio. From this information one can assume that Scribe C was actively transcribing at the same time as Leonard, between 1846 and 1850, the period in which this folio was written. One theory that may explain the significant presence of Scribe C in the manuscript is that this scribe may have been a second teacher employed for a short time by the Leonards, replacing Kernan, for whatever reason. From an examination of the layout of FO-B, one can surmise that it might have been intended that Scribe C begin at the beginning of the folio, and that Leonard begin at the half way point, and that when it transpired that Scribe C failed to complete the first half as intended, the empty leaves were later cut out. There is no conclusive evidence as to the identity of Scribe C or of the other seven scribes, Scribe D – Scribe J, but there are a number of possible candidates:

- (1) The name "Matthew Nugent" is written on leaf 14v under the first melody line in blue ink or crayon. This is a different colour of ink from that used in the music notation on the same leaf, indicating that it was added in at a later date. Although the music notation on this leaf has been assigned to Thomas Kernan, Nugent may have transcribed tunes elsewhere in the manuscript.

This name has been linked to a Matthew Nugent of Ballymaglavy, Co. Westmeath, who resided only three kilometres from Leonard's home (Morris, personal correspondence, 2014). His sister was Mary Nugent, who married John Morris of Abbeyshrule in 1844. Matthew acted as godfather to their daughter Margaret, who was born in 1848. They had another daughter, Rose, born in 1857, whose godparents were Michael and Catherine Leonard. The former person may be the Michael Leonard at the focus of this

chapter. If so, it would prove that there was a close connection between the Nugent and Leonard families. Matthew's sister continued to have children until 1862, and so it can be estimated that she was born around 1820. Her brother Matthew, therefore, is likely to have been born close to that date also.

(2) Another candidate could be one of Michael Leonard's sisters. May McCawley, a relative of the Leonard's, and a former resident of the house, when interviewed recalled that there was a piano in Leonard's house, but she did not remember anyone playing it (Ward, 2011a). As Leonard had a number of sisters, it is possible that one or more of them played it. Music paper was relatively expensive during that era so it may be surmised that, if Leonard's sisters played the piano, it is likely they also used the manuscript for transcribing tunes. There are further clues that point to this conjecture:

- i. "accompaniment" (sic) is written twice throughout the tune on leaf 65r.
- ii. There are chord exercises on leaf 65v that cannot be performed on a fiddle.
- iii. The polka fragment '[Untitled]' (LK.114) on leaf 26r includes music notation for both the treble and bass clefs.

(3) Fiddle teachers of that era often stayed in a local region for up to a month at a time. They lived with a family and taught the children of the house to play in exchange for food and lodgings as part payment. It was common also for other students to be taught by these travelling teachers, while they resided in the area. Therefore, it is possible that, while Kernan was staying with Leonard's family, he may also have been teaching other pupils and that, during the course of his instruction, these pupils may have transcribed tunes directly into the manuscript and/or the loose sheets that were stitched-in afterwards.

- (4) Another possibility is that Kernan, or a second teacher after Kernan, may have given Leonard loose sheets of music obtained from another musician, perhaps one who could reach the higher registers. Such pieces may have been given as a challenge to improve one's range.

## **4.9 Cultural imprint**

Interpolated with the music, there is a significant amount of non-textual evidence throughout the manuscript, in the form of doodles and scribbles. A number of these markings provide an insight into Leonard's familial and cultural background in the mid- to late 1840s. For instance, there are numerous indications from the manuscript that Leonard had an interest in horses and hunting. On the inside of the back cover, leaf 69r, a picture is drawn of a person sitting on a horse wearing a rider's hat with "Michael Leonard" written overhead. The hat may signify that Leonard was involved in hunts, a popular pursuit of wealthy families. Supporting this surmise is textual evidence on leaf 39v, where there is an exercise entitled 'Scale of the Bugle: Open Notes' (LK.095), signifying that Leonard, or another member of the hunt, may have played this instrument during pursuits. Additionally, there is evidence that Leonard kept dogs for hunting purposes in the transcript of a Petty Court Session in his local Courthouse of Carrickboy, Co. Longford, in 1869, where it is stated that he was fined for being in possession of two unlicensed dogs (FMP, 2012d).

Evidence that a local match-maker visited the Leonard's is apparent on leaf 40v, where at the very end of Folio A there are a series of couples' names written e.g. "Mary Lennon" and "James MacCormick". 'A daughter' is written beside a number of these entries, except for one that has 'son'. Additionally, there are also two names of a couple crossed out on leaf 1r: "Maryanne Murphy" and "James Gaffney". According to local folklore, match-makers were active in

Leonard's parish during this era of the 1840s (O'Reilly, 1942, p.20). As marriages usually took place before Lent they were most active in the period before Shrove Tuesday. The fact that the maiden names of the women were used, suggests that a match-maker was attempting to match them to potential partners from the surrounding area.

## **4.10 Repertoire**

### **4.10.1 Introduction**

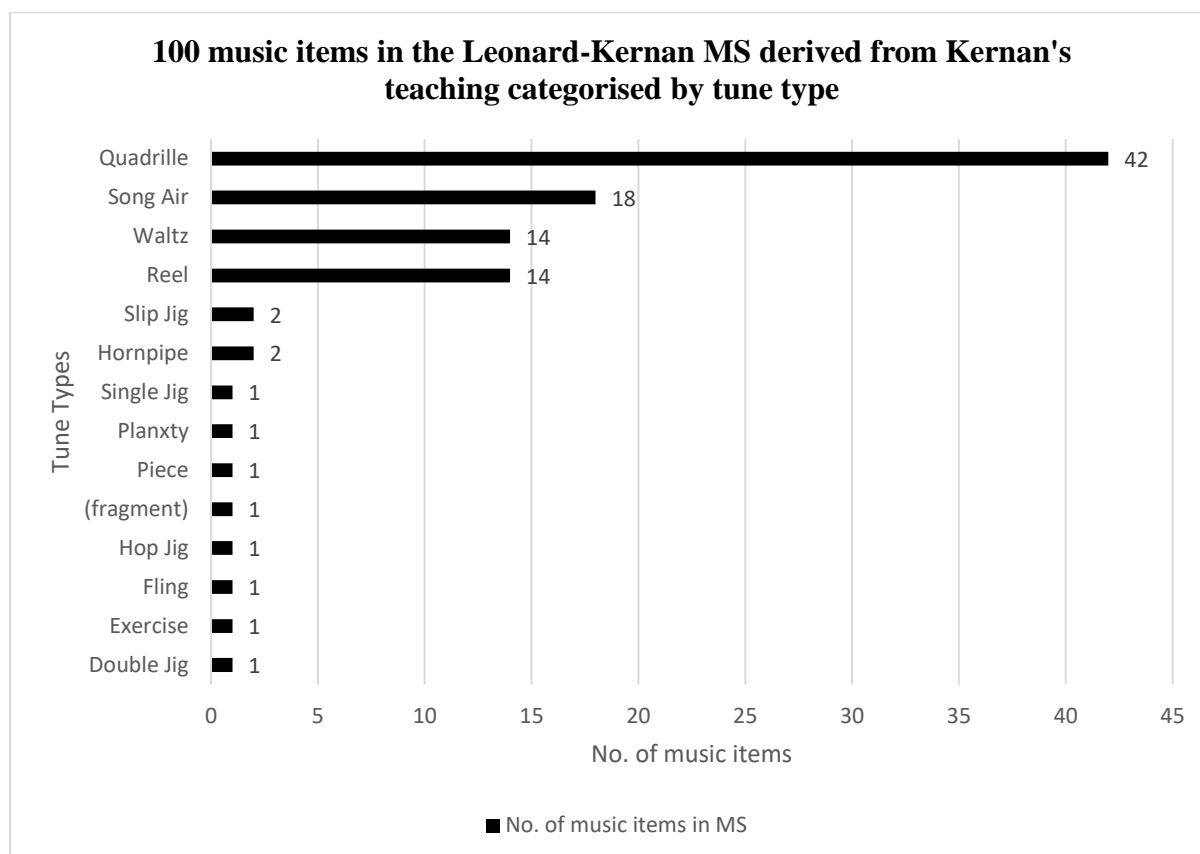
There are 181 music items in the Leonard-Kernan MS, which are categorised as 178 tunes and 3 exercises (see Vol.II, Source A).<sup>41</sup> As outlined in 4.7 *Motives*, the music items of the manuscript were transcribed for two purposes. Initially, Folio A was a stand-alone document that was used by Kernan as a manual to teach Leonard repertoire and aspects of fiddle technique. At a later date, Folio A was bound with other written material to create an assembled manuscript, which was then used by Leonard and the other scribes to transcribe repertoire that had been obtained from various sources, such as Kernan, other musicians and printed material. Accordingly, in order to align the analysis of the repertoire in the Leonard-Kernan MS with the aims of this dissertation, attention will be given in this section to the repertoire derived from the teaching of Kernan. This specific repertoire consists of music items that were transcribed by Kernan and Leonard throughout the entire manuscript, but it excludes items that were written by the other scribes and also items that were copied by Leonard from printed material. Using this methodology, 100 out of the total 181 music items in the manuscript are classified as items that had emerged through Kernan teaching Leonard in the period 1844 to 1846 (see

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<sup>41</sup> The tunes in the printed music booklet, *Alexander's Scrap Book*, attached to the front of the manuscript are excluded in this figure

Vol.II, Source A). These 100 music items were categorised by tune type, the results of which are graphically demonstrated in Figure 8:

**Figure 8: Music items derived from Kernan's teaching in the Leonard-Kernan MS categorised by tune type**



#### 4.10.2 Popular music

The results of Figure 8 demonstrate that the repertoire derived from Kernan's teaching (henceforth: *Kernan's repertoire*) is diverse, and consists predominantly of international popular music from the first half of the nineteenth century. Despite the variety of tune types evident in Figure 8, the composition of Kernan's repertoire is dominated by four specific types, music for quadrilles (42%), song airs (18%), waltzes (14%) and reels (14%). Leaving aside song airs for special analysis, it may be inferred that the distribution of the other three tune types in Kernan's repertoire, quadrilles, waltzes and reels, correlates somewhat with the

relative popularity of their respective dances in the region of Connhaicne and its environs in the period leading up to the mid-1840s. Of the three, the quadrille dance appears to have been exceptionally popular among Kernan's audience and it represents approximately 42% of his derived repertoire in the manuscript. This dance was introduced to Ireland around the 1810s, and over a short space of time it filtered down from the ballrooms of the Ascendancy classes to the modest homes of the poorer classes. As Brennan points out, subsequent to its debut in Ireland, the "resultant quadrille craze" led to its emergence as one of the leading dances in this country, and indeed several other countries like Ireland, during the nineteenth century (1999, p. 24). Given the significant prominence of music for quadrilles in the manuscript, the history of this dance and its accompanying music will be examined in greater detail in the next section.

An examination of the histories of the underlying 100 tunes in Figure 8 reveals that Kernan's repertoire is quite diverse in geographical terms (see Vol.II, Source A). This analysis illustrates, that at the time of the manuscript's transcription in the mid-nineteenth century, Kernan was playing popular music that originated from several countries, particularly those from Great Britain and from Europe, and to a lesser degree, from Ireland and from North America. The geographical diversity of Kernan's repertoire is particularly evident in his song airs, examples of which are included in Table 11:

**Table 11: Provenances of a sample of songs airs in the Leonard-Kernan MS**

<b>Tune Title in MS (Ref. No.)</b>	<b>Composer</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Genre of song air</b>
Planxty Drury (LK.045)	Turlough Carolan (1670-1738)	Irish	Carolan planxty: Irish
Exile of Erin (LK.064)	George Nugent Reynolds (1770-1802)	Irish	Song air: Irish
Long Ago (LK.068)	Thomas Haynes Bayly (1797-1839)	English	Song air: English
Burns' Farewell (LK.075)	Robert Burns (1759-1796)	Scottish	Song air: Scottish
Woodman Spare that Tree (LK.055)	George Pope Morris (1802-1864)	American	Song air: American
The Brides Maides [sic] Chorus (LK.094)	Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)	German	Operatic air: European
Gen-tle Zi-tel-la (LK.162)	Tom Cooke (1782-1848)	Irish	Operatic air: Irish

**Figure 9 ‘Planxty Drury’ (LK.045) – example of an Irish song air in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Vol.II, Source A)

**Figure 10 ‘Woodman Spare That Tree’ (LK.055) – example of an international song air in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Vol.II, Source A)

In addition to revealing the geographical diversity of Kernan's repertoire, as exemplified by the list of song airs in Table 11, the histories of the individual tunes reveal that a significant proportion of this repertoire was contemporary. These findings are supported by an examination of the dance tunes. For example, two waltzes, '[Untitled]' (LK.037) and 'Rose Waltz' (LK.054), were both written in 1835, just nine years before the first date in the manuscript, 1844, by the Austrian composer, Johann Strauss I (1804-1849), while the words of the song air 'Long Ago' (LK.068) were composed by the English songwriter, Thomas Haynes Bayly (1797-1839) in 1833. Kernan's repertoire in the manuscript is found to be derived from all the popular music genres of that era, waltzes and quadrilles from western art music, Scottish reels, song airs from the folk song traditions of Ireland, Great Britain, North America and Europe, a song air from American blackface minstrelsy, operatic arias, English marches and hornpipes, and Irish and Welsh dance tunes, while not forgetting to include a somewhat less recent Irish planxty by Turlough Carolan. This melting pot of mainly contemporary music in Kernan's repertoire is a snapshot of modern Irish music at its early stage in the mid-nineteenth century. Like Kernan, musicians throughout Ireland during this time, while giving the occasional example of it, were not musically bound by the older harp and pipe music that had preceded them. They were open to the wider influences of the global music community.

**Figure 11 ‘Rose Waltz’ (LK.054) – example of contemporary Western Art Music in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Vol.II, Source A)

The international character of Kernan’s repertoire is particularly evident in the fact that only a small proportion of his tunes appear to have originated in Ireland. These include ‘Tip it Off’ (LK.011), ‘Top the Candle’ (LK.034), ‘Planxty Drury,’<sup>42</sup> (LK.045), ‘Exile of Erin’ (LK.064) and ‘Tom Steel’ (LK.048).<sup>43</sup> Further demonstrating the lack of Irish content in Kernan’s repertoire is the fact that, of the fourteen reels in his repertoire, ‘Tom Steel’ (LK.048) is the only one that has associations with Ireland, while the other thirteen reels were either written by

<sup>42</sup> ‘Planxty Drury’, has the alternative title ‘Fáilte romhad go Kingsland’ in Bunting. See D. J. O’Sullivan, *The Bunting Collection of Irish Folk Music and Songs, edited from the original manuscripts, Parts I-III*, in *Journal of the Irish Folk Song Society*, Volumes XXII-XXV, (London, 1927-1930), page 10. These are opening words of the song in Irish by Carolan, entitled ‘Seán Mac Éadúirt’, in praise of John, son of Edward (Drury). See Tomás Ó Máille, *Amhráin Chearbhalláin*, (London, 1916), page 141. Ó Máille incorrectly translates the title as “John Edwards, Esqr.”, mistaking the patronymic for a surname.

<sup>43</sup> The setting here is the oldest known setting of this tune. The first published setting is a faulty setting, ‘Tom Steele’, in James S. Kerr, *Kerr’s Violin Instructor and Irish Folk-Song Album*, (Glasgow, n.d.; c1900), No. 83, page 22.

Scottish composers, or their titles suggest that they originated in Scotland. Examples of reels composed by Scottish musicians are ‘I Wish I Never Saw You’ (LK.036; LK.065) and ‘Monny Musk’ (LK.041). These were composed by Alexander McGlashan (1740-1797) and Daniel/Donald Dow (1732-1783) respectively. The presence in the manuscript of only one Irish reel, by comparison with the large amount of Scottish reels, suggests that the emergence of the Scottish reel in Irish music, and its dominance in the latter half of the nineteenth century, was precipitated by the influx of newly-composed reels from Scottish sources from the end of the eighteenth century onwards, particularly printed music collections, such as *A Collection of Strathspey Reels*, Vols. 1-5, (Gow, 1784-1809) and *A Complete Repository of Original Scots Tunes*, Vols. 1-4, (Gow & Sons, 1799-1817), both of which were published by the renowned Neil Gow (1727-1807) and family, fiddle players from Perthshire, Scotland.

**Figure 12 ‘I Wish I Never Saw You’ (LK.036) – example of a Scottish reel in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Vol.II, Source A)

### 4.10.3 Music for quadrilles

The results contained in Figure 8 reveal that music for quadrilles was the leading tune type in Kernan's repertoire at the time of the manuscript's transcription in the mid-1840s, representing approximately 42% of the total sample of repertoire. As alluded to by Brennan (1999, p 90), music and dance were inextricably linked to one another in the nineteenth century, and therefore it may be inferred that the quadrille, in its several variant forms, was the most popular dance in Kernan's local region at the time of writing. The rapid assimilation of the music for these quadrille dances into the repertoires of rural musicians, such as Kernan in north Longford, was due mostly to the efforts of local dancing masters, who facilitated their movement from the upper classes of London and Paris, to the ballrooms of Dublin and to the big houses of the wealthy Anglo-Irish, and from there to the musicians and dancers in rural Ireland. Before quadrilles came to Ireland the dancing masters were struggling to sustain their livelihood due to political and religious pressures, and therefore as Ó hAllmhuráin (1998, p.49) points out, the rise in popularity of this dance among the folk community helped to maintain continuity for their dancing classes.

According to Arthur Young (1780), dancing masters were active in Ireland from at least the end of the 1700s onwards. They were typically accompanied by musicians from the local area. For example, in the region of Wexford, Patrick Kennedy tells how a dancing master, Mr Tench, taught dancing in the early 1800s "in the company of a blind fiddler" (1863, p.430, cited in Brennan, 1999, p.47). Kennedy adds that payments to the dancing master and the accompanying musician consisted of "each pupil to pay 'a thirteen' to himself [Mr Tench] and a tester (six pence half-penny) to the fiddler" (p.430). In the context of County Longford, Capt. Francis O'Neill recounts having heard from his informant, John Gillan, a native of this region, that there was a famous dancing master from Clooncar, Co. Longford, named James Anthony Cox, who flourished there around the middle of the nineteenth century (1913, p. 423). While

there is no documentary evidence that Kernan played for Cox, or for any other local dancing master, it is quite likely that at some stage in his career Kernan may have provided his musical services in this manner, given the economic hardship endured by fiddle teachers during this era.

In addition to dancing classes, it is evident from the following account of a Galway piper, Paddy Coneely, from around 1840, that some of more renowned musicians from that era also performed quadrille music at ballroom functions to accompany dancers of the Ascendancy classes: “he [Coneely] has pestered us, in spite of our nationality, with a set of quadrilles or a galloppe, such as he is called on to play by the ladies and the gentlemen at the balls in Galway” (Petrie, 1840, p.3). In a manner similar to that of Coneely, Mikie Carolan (1891-1981) recalled, in an interview with Fr John Quinn (1979) that Kernan and his nephew, Bernie ‘fiddler’ Carolan, were often commissioned to play music at social events in the big house of Lord Granard, who was a local landlord based in Newtownforbes, Co. Longford. Carolan added that these functions were essential to the livelihood of the musicians and the resulting gratuities may have saved them from eviction during the *Drumlish Land War* of the early 1880s, which ironically was carried out under the orders of Lord Granard (Anon, 2001, p.21-23).

When quadrilles were first introduced to the Ascendancy classes in Ireland, the refined slow steps performed by the ballroom dancers were accompanied by specific tunes chosen from the western art music tradition. With regards to the music, this assertion is validated by the individual tunes of the music for quadrilles in the Leonard-Kernan MS, which, for the most part, were composed by musicians from this music tradition. For example, two tunes in the set of quadrilles ‘Lancers Quadrills’ (LK.004-LK.008) transcribed by Kernan, ‘[Lancers Quadrills:] No.2’ (LK.005) and ‘[Lancers Quadrills:] No.3’ (LK.006), were composed by Paolo Spagnoletti (1768-1834) and Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831), respectively.

As the quadrille was assimilated into the wider folk community, the music started to evolve in response to changes in the dance. The leisurely ballroom steps were gradually replaced by faster and livelier steps from the local dance traditions and, in concurrence, the elaborate western art tunes used originally, typically in 6/8 and 2/4 rhythms, were substituted with simpler melodies from the existing Irish music tradition in the same rhythms, such as 6/8 single jigs and 2/4 polkas (Boullier, 2012). There is evidence in the Leonard-Kernan MS that the evolution of music for quadrilles had started to happen by the time this manuscript was written in the 1840s. In the seven sets of quadrilles deriving from Kernan's teaching, all consist of tunes from western art music, except one set, 'Banjo Quadrills' (LK.070-LK.074), which contains excerpts from American folk tunes, such as 'Miss Lucy Long', 'The Arkansas Traveller' and 'Old Dan Tucker'. While none of the sets contain Irish tunes, titles such as 'Sligo Quadrills' (LK.016-LK.019; LK.021), and the 'Dublin Set of Quadrills' (LK.082-LK.085), give an indication of the trend towards a more local content, at least in the titles.

**Figure 13 'Quadrill' (LK.086) – example of quadrille tune in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Vol.II, Source A)

#### **4.11 Kernan's music: the early stage of modern Irish traditional music**

While the relatively high proportion of international popular music in the repertoire of the Leonard-Kernan MS may initially suggest that Kernan was bi-musical, playing both art music and traditional music, and that this further suggests he was not a traditional musician, the historical context of music in Ireland at the time of the manuscript's transcription in the 1840s needs to be considered first. According to Nicholas Carolan, "modern Irish traditional music is to a great extent, music with its origins in the latter eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries" (1986, p.33). The music that Kernan was teaching in the Leonard-Kernan MS at this particular time in the 1840s is reflective of this early stage in the development of the "modern Irish traditional music" of which Carolan writes. In the subsequent decades, the international element of the repertoire of the Leonard-Kernan MS, such as the quadrilles, the Scottish reels, the European waltzes and polkas, was naturalised and assimilated into their repertoire by the musicians in the folk communities across Ireland. For example, several of the Scottish reels in the Leonard-Kernan MS, such as 'Sporting Kate' (LK.030), 'Gang no more to yon town' (LK.031) and 'I wish I never saw you' (LK.036) were quickly assimilated into the Irish music tradition and are now core tunes within the present-day canon of Irish traditional music under the titles 'Bonny Kate', 'The High Reel' and 'Maud Millar' respectively. Some were eventually given Irish titles, such as 'The Cutcha Cutcha Waltz' (LK.028), commonly played nowadays as 'Patrick Kelly's Waltz'.<sup>44</sup>

The repertoire of the Leonard-Kernan MS is comparable with other manuscript collections transcribed by musicians within the Irish folk community at that time in the mid-nineteenth century. One such collection is the John O'Daly MSS, compiled in the 1840s in the south-east

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<sup>44</sup> cf: <https://thesession.org/tunes/2160>

region of Ireland, which is currently the focus of a dissertation by Christopher MacAuliffe in Waterford Institute of Technology.<sup>45</sup> The tune types represented in this collection, namely, national and international song airs, operatic arias, jigs, Scottish and Irish reels, military marches, quadrilles, waltzes, Carolan planxties and hornpipes are comparable with the repertoire of the Leonard-Kernan MS. Another such collection is the Philip Carolan MSS, transcribed by the musician Philip Carolan (c1839-1910) of Crossmolina, County Mayo, in the period c1863 to c1873 (Buckley, 2007). Although this collection was written twenty years after the Leonard-Kernan MS, and consequently its repertoire shows signs of a later stage in the evolution of modern Irish traditional music, its repertoire nevertheless is quite similar to that of the Leonard-Kernan MS in terms of both tune types and actual tunes. Of actual tunes, fifteen of the tunes in the Leonard-Kernan MS are found in the Carolan MS, representing 15% of the total repertoire in the former MS. Art music in the form of waltzes and music for quadrilles are still well represented by 13 and 34 tunes respectively in the Carolan MSS (Buckley, 2007, Vol.2), compared with 14 and 42 tunes in the Leonard-Kernan MS (see Figure 8). A comparison of song airs in the Leonard-Kernan MS and Carolan MSS also reveals a congruity between the two collections. Firstly, song airs are ranked number two in terms of the number of tunes in both collections. Secondly, this tune type in both collections contains a mixture of both international and national song airs (see Figure 8) (Buckley, 2007, Vol.2).

In conclusion, comparison of the repertoire in the Leonard-Kernan MS with that of contemporary, or almost contemporary, manuscripts, such as the Philip Carolan MSS and the John O'Daly MSS, establishes that the music Kernan was playing at the start of his teaching career, as represented in the Leonard-Kernan MS, is largely concordant with the repertoires of other music collections from that era. From this research it can be inferred that Kernan was

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<sup>45</sup> The original John O'Daly MSS are held in the National Library of Ireland, Kildare Street, Dublin 2. Ref: NLI MSS 3781 and NLI MSS 7348

typical of the musicians of that period in the mid-1800s in his playing of contemporary national and international music, the music which has since evolved into present day “modern Irish traditional music”, as described by Carolan (1986, p.33). Thus Kernan is representative of musicians from an early stage of this newly evolving music tradition, who then as now, as Hastings observes, are “rarely exclusivist...and are happily open to the influences around them” (1997, p. 101).

## **4.12 Music making in the 1800s: reception and audience**

### **4.12.1 Public taverns**

Throughout a career spanning *c*1820s-*c*1880s, Thomas Kernan played music in a variety of settings in the greater region of Connmhaicne. A public tavern is one music-making setting in which Kernan is known to have played. Quoting a Longford piper, John Gillan, O'Neill (1913) informs us of Kernan's activity in this setting: “Many a pleasant hour Mr. Gillan spent listening to Kernan's music in 1850, when he played at the “Red Cow” tavern, a mile distant from the town of Longford” (p. 369). It is likely that Kernan played in many other taverns throughout the Connmhaicne region. For example, the Leonard-Kernan MS was initially transcribed during the course of fiddle lessons provided by Kernan to Michael Leonard, the son of a tavern owner in Abbeyshrule village. This strongly suggests that Kernan may have been performing in this tavern at the time of the manuscript's inception in the 1840s, and while performing here, he may have been asked to provide lessons to the tavern owner's son, Michael Leonard. There is a clue in the manuscript that this tavern may have required the services of a musician, such as Kernan. Michael Leonard drew a crude architectural drawing of the internal layout of Leonard's public tavern on the inside of the front cover, leaf 1v (Plate 13). Written inside the rooms are titles indicating the segregation of patrons in this building as ‘Public’, ‘Ladies’ and ‘Members’. The title ‘Members’ suggests that this public house attracted wealthy patrons who

utilised the ‘Members’ room and may have been friends of the Leonard family. It is possible that Kernan’s services were rendered for the purposes of entertaining these affluent patrons.

**Plate 13: Sketch of the interior of Leonard’s public tavern c1845 in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Leaf 1v)

In addition to Kernan, it appears there were other musicians in Connmaicne who performed in taverns during the nineteenth century. For example, the following story collected from the north Longford region of Connmaicne in the Schools’ (Folklore) Collection 1937-39 documents the significant increase in business witnessed by Smyth’s tavern due to the performances of a local piper, Billy Clinton:

Billy Smyth was the owner of one of the public houses, and Tommy Kennedy was the owner of the other. There was great rivalry between them to see who would push the better trade. At last Smyth engaged the services of a tramp piper named Clinton, and during the time he remained, a period of about two years, Smyth's trade flourished (MacNerney, 2000, p. 208)

#### 4.12.2 Big Houses

As the section 4.10.3 *Music for quadrilles* established, there is documentary evidence that Kernan was actively performing at functions in Lord Granard's house in Newtownforbes in the mid- to late 1800s. These functions were attended by affluent friends and family of Lord Granard's. Ball-room dances that had filtered their way from Europe through London and Dublin, later reaching the big houses of the Irish countryside, were typically performed at these functions. Waltzes and quadrilles were two of the more popular ball-room dances from this era in the nineteenth century and it is quite likely that a significant amount of the music of waltzes and quadrilles, derived from Kernan's teaching in the Leonard-Kernan MS, was played to accompany these dances. It is quite likely that Kernan performed at functions in other big houses in the Conmhaicne region, details of which may come to light in future research in the family archives of these houses. The Conmhaicne region, particularly County Longford, had a relatively high number of big houses during the nineteenth century (Leahy, 1996, pp. xii-xiii; Nolan, 2010, p.472), providing Kernan with several different performance venues of this type. Supporting this theory is the documentation of musicians performing at other big houses in Conmhaicne. For example, there is evidence that two musicians "fiddler Whelan" and "fiddler Nannery" performed in the big house of the Edgeworth family in Edgeworthstown in the 1700s (see 3.2 *The arrival of the fiddle in Ireland*), while Pat McGrath (1890-1968), a fiddle player from Ballinalee, states that a local dance teacher and musician, by the name of Foley, performed in the big houses of the Wilson family of Currygrane, Clonbroney, and the More-O'Farrell family of Lissard, Edgeworthstown, in the 1800s:

There was a dancing teacher, Foley, before my time. He would be brought all over to dances; and he'd go to the Wilson's and O'Farrell's. For the servants' annual ball he would be brought there to play<sup>46</sup> for them and also he would be brought to the houses to play for the owners (O'Malley, 1952, p.66a).

#### 4.12.3 Cross-roads dance

While there is documentary evidence that Kernan performed in the Big Houses of the gentry and also in public taverns, it is likely he performed in other music-making settings in Connmhaicne, performances of which have not been documented. One such setting is the cross-roads dances, also known as a “week’s dance”. These dances were an important space for the informal transmission of music and served as a community gathering (see Brennan, 1999; O'Connor, 2013). The cross-roads dance was a popular social event in Connmhaicne during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Schools’ (Folklore) Collection, an important source of local history, documents the details of this activity in the Moyne region of north Longford at the turn of the twentieth century (NFC, 2013d):

Long ago it was a custom to hold a week’s dance on Moyne Cross Roads and on the Little Cross Roads in Ballyduffy. They used to start the week’s dance on Monday night and finish on Sunday night. It was free every night unless [sic] Sunday night. At the end of the week’s dance everyone had to pay threepence or sixpence. All the young boys and girls of the country attended these dances. The dance started about eight or nine o’clock on a summer’s evening. They danced for two or three hours. They usually held their dances when there was a new moon. Then they had good light for dancing. They danced a lot of difference dances namely, Eight Hand Reels, Four Hand Reels, Waltzes, Jenny Lin’s Polkas, Royal Charlie, The Lancers Dance, Half Sets and the Waves of Tory. John Masterson played a fiddle for them (NFC, 2013d).

The reference here to John Masterson (c1840-1912) demonstrates that fiddle players in Connmhaicne performed at cross-roads dances. It is quite possible therefore, that Kernan was also engaged to perform at these events. In a letter written by Maria Edgeworth (1768-1849),

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<sup>46</sup> Foley must have been a musician as well as a dancing teacher

there is evidence that cross-roads dances took place in Corboy, Killoe, County Longford, in the early 1800s. This period coincides with Kernan's formative years and coupled with the fact that Corboy is located relatively close to Cranley, Edgeworthstown, the townland where Kernan grew up before he moved to Drumlish, strongly indicates that Kernan may have performed at these events. The following extract from Maria's letter provides details of the performance context of a cross-roads dance:

In driving home at the cross-roads by Corbey<sup>47</sup> we had the good fortune to come in for an Irish dance, the audience or spectators seated on each side of the road on opposite benches; all picturesque in the sunshine of youth and age, with every variety of attitude and expression of enjoyment. The dancers, in all the vivacity and graces of an Irish jig, delighted our English friends; and we stood up in the landau for nearly twenty minutes looking at them (Edgeworth, 1819).

#### **4.13 Conclusion**

Chapter Four has critically analysed the Leonard-Kernan MS, one of the earliest known extant documents of Irish music in the greater region of Connemara. The genesis of this manuscript occurred in 1844 when a young fiddle student, Michael Leonard (c1835-1886), and his teacher, Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887), used this document to transcribe repertoire and aspects of fiddle technique during lessons. In early 1846, just before the Great Famine gripped the country, the transcriptions of Leonard and Kernan in this tuition setting ended, and with this a new writing phase started. The original manuscript and other musical documents were bound together to create a newly assembled document, in which Leonard and other unidentified scribes continued to notate repertoire. An examination of provenance of the manuscript reveals that, at some time after 1850, the manuscript was placed for safekeeping in the roof of Leonard's home, now Rooney's pub, in Abbeyshrule, Co. Longford. It lay there until 1962, when it was rediscovered

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<sup>47</sup> Corboy, is a townland located roughly halfway between the towns of Longford and Edgeworthstown. Presently, the national route from Dublin to Sligo, known as the "N4", runs through this townland and it is likely the cross-roads dance that Maria observed was on this particular road.

by a local carpenter and fiddle player, Pierce Butler (1910-2000), who subsequently donated it to Fr John Quinn, then C.C. Lanesborough, Co. Longford. It was established that the original owner of the manuscript, Michael Leonard, came from a relatively wealthy family. By inference, combined with research into the background of Kernan's other known students from this period, the details of Leonard's socio-economic background suggest that, during the mid-nineteenth century, Kernan's fiddle services were in demand from the higher classes of rural society. This level of elevated support may have precipitated the expansion of Kernan's music during the early stages of his teaching career. It may also explain why the region of south Longford/west Westmeath, where the Leonard-Kernan MS is located, enjoyed a rich fiddle tradition in the following century.

An examination of the specific repertoire, deriving solely from Kernan's teaching, demonstrates that the music Kernan was teaching and playing in the mid-nineteenth century is extremely diverse, representing a variety of tune types pertaining to international popular music of that era, particularly quadrilles, waltzes, song airs and reels. The prevailing tune types found are somewhat different from those to be found in the present-day canon of Irish music, a fact which shows that the Irish music genre has evolved considerably in the period since the manuscript was written. It was determined that the relative concentration of the tune types in Kernan's repertoire is a signpost to the music-making settings in which Kernan was performing at this time. Hence, the high proportion of tunes in the various rhythms used for quadrilles and waltzes, combined with information from Kernan's family lore, strongly indicates that Kernan may have regularly performed the music of these ballroom dances in the big houses of the Ascendancy classes dispersed throughout his geographical area. The specific tunes used in these two types of dance, quadrilles and waltzes, come mainly from the western art music tradition, highlighting the influence of this tradition on Irish musicians, such as Kernan, at this time. In addition to western art music, Scottish reels also made a notable appearance in

Kernan's repertoire. Given that reels of an Irish idiom had not infiltrated Kernan's repertoire in the period before 1850, it may be inferred from the evidence in this manuscript, and from a survey of early-nineteenth century printed material, that the introduction of Scottish reels to Irish music may have precipitated an era of composition of reels in an Irish idiom. This becomes particularly evident in printed and manuscript sources which emerge from the turn of the twentieth century on. An example of this is O'Neill's *The Music of Ireland* (1903), which includes a significant amount of reels that appear in an Irish idiom and with titles linked to Ireland, both suggestive of Irish composition. The contemporary and international nature of Kernan's repertoire suggests that rural musicians in Ireland at the time of the manuscript's transcription in the mid-nineteenth century were quite receptive to and connected with the international music community. This conclusion challenges isolation theories, such as that of Hammond, who in 1979 opined that some localised music traditions, such as Irish music, "were products of environment and inheritance and the consequent poverty and isolation" and their practitioners as "excluded from education and even literacy" (p.56).

The next chapter will investigate the McBrien-Rogers MS, which was written at a later stage in the timeline of the fiddle tradition associated with Kernan. Initial research indicates that this manuscript was primarily written by Bernard Rogers, another of Kernan's students, while he was himself teaching a pupil, James McBrien. This musical link between Kernan and Rogers will facilitate a comparison of the teaching methods employed by these two related teachers, as seen in the content of the Leonard-Kernan MS and that of the McBrien-Rogers MS respectively. This comparison will make it possible to determine the impact of Kernan's teaching on later generations of the local fiddle tradition. As was established in Chapter Four in relation to the Leonard-Kernan MS, the contents of the McBrien-Rogers MS will also show that the musicians of this tradition were highly literate and susceptible to musical influences from outside of their immediate environment.

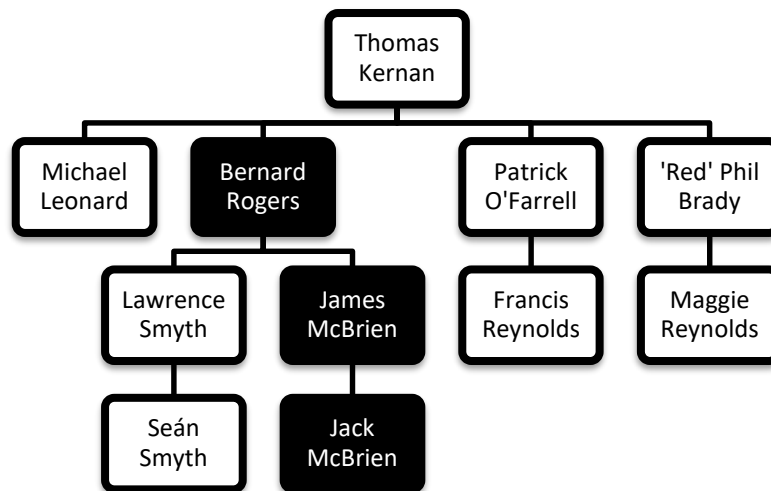
# Chapter Five

## The McBrien-Rogers MS

(*c*1900 & *c*1950)

## 5 Chapter Five

**Figure 14: An excerpt of the Thomas Kernan fiddle lineage highlighting the known scribes of the McBrien-Rogers MS**



### 5.1 Introduction

The Leonard-Kernan MS, which was examined in the previous chapter, was written predominantly by Thomas Kernan and Michael Leonard. While there is no evidence that Kernan's music was further disseminated by Leonard, two other students of Kernan's, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907) and Francis McDonagh (*c*1845-1935), were responsible for the dissemination of his music throughout the Connmaicne region in the period *c*1870-*c*1920. The McBrien-Rogers MS is a remnant from this epoch in fiddle music expansion. It was written primarily by the aforementioned Bernard Rogers while he was teaching one of his students, James McBrien (1885-1970), of Rossan, Aughavas, Co. Leitrim at the turn of the twentieth century. A small number of transcriptions were later added by Jack McBrien (1920-2002), who was James' son.

Building on this preliminary research, the provenance of the McBrien-Rogers MS and the biographical details of its associated scribes will be initially examined in this chapter. Following this background survey, an inspection of the manuscript will be undertaken in order to establish its physical layout and construction. The extent of printed material utilised by the scribes as a source of repertoire will be determined from an analysis of the tunes in the manuscript. While the manuscript appears to have been written for the most part by Bernard Rogers, there are a number of transcriptions in this document written by other scribes. Through initial conjecture, which will be corroborated by evidence in the manuscript, the identity of these scribes will be established and their respective music transcriptions will be assigned to them accordingly. Lastly, through a combination of textual and non-textual evidence, the manuscript will be examined to determine both the purpose of its transcription and the chronology of its compilation.

## **5.2 Provenance**

The McBrien-Rogers MS was first brought to the attention of Fr John Quinn by one of his fiddle students, Enda McNamara of Carrickavoher, Aughavas, Co. Leitrim, in the late 1990s (Ward, 2011b). McNamara had been lent the manuscript by Jack McBrien (1920-2002), a fiddle player, who was from the neighbouring townland of Camber. This manuscript had been handed down to Jack from his father, James McBrien (1885-1970). After Jack's death in 2002, the manuscript in turn was passed to his son, Vincent, who remains its custodian to this present day. Alongside the manuscript there are a number of printed music collections, the contents of which will also be examined in this chapter.

According to Jack, his father James, (*alias* Jim), was taught the fiddle by two teachers, both from north Longford: Bernard (*alias* Bernie) Rogers (1856-1907) of Killoe, and John 'the

fiddler' Masterson (c1840-1912) of Dromard (Ward, 2011b). The McBrien-Rogers MS was for the most part written while James was learning from his first teacher, Rogers, who was a renowned fiddle master from Oghill (also spelled *Ohill*), Killoe (see 3.6.3 *North Longford*). McBrien lived in south Leitrim close to the border of north Longford, a region where Irish music, particularly fiddle and flute music, was very vibrant during his formative years. A regular playing partner of his was Eddie Cunningham (1901-1989), a self-taught fiddler from the neighbouring townland of Killyveha. Eddie's children, John Tom and Patricia, recall that local musicians, including McBrien, regularly congregated in their home (Ward, 2011e). It was not uncommon, they added, to see up to six fiddlers at any one time playing together. They recalled the names of some of these fiddlers and other musicians, including John Gill, John Cassidy, Pee Lee, James Ward, Packie Higgins and Dominic Higgins. According to the Cunninghams, McBrien used to play his music on Ned Corrigan's fiddle. Corrigan, of Clonelly, was a renowned fiddler in the region and his name features in local folklore and literature (NFC, 2013c). Family members and neighbours recall that McBrien had a number of favourite tunes he liked to play. They included 'The Blue Danube Waltz',<sup>48</sup> 'The Old Grey Goose', 'The Peeler's Cap', 'Connaught Man's Rambles', 'Carolan's Concerto' and 'The Geese in the Bog'.

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<sup>48</sup> 'The Blue Danube Waltz' was composed in 1867 by Johann Strauss II.

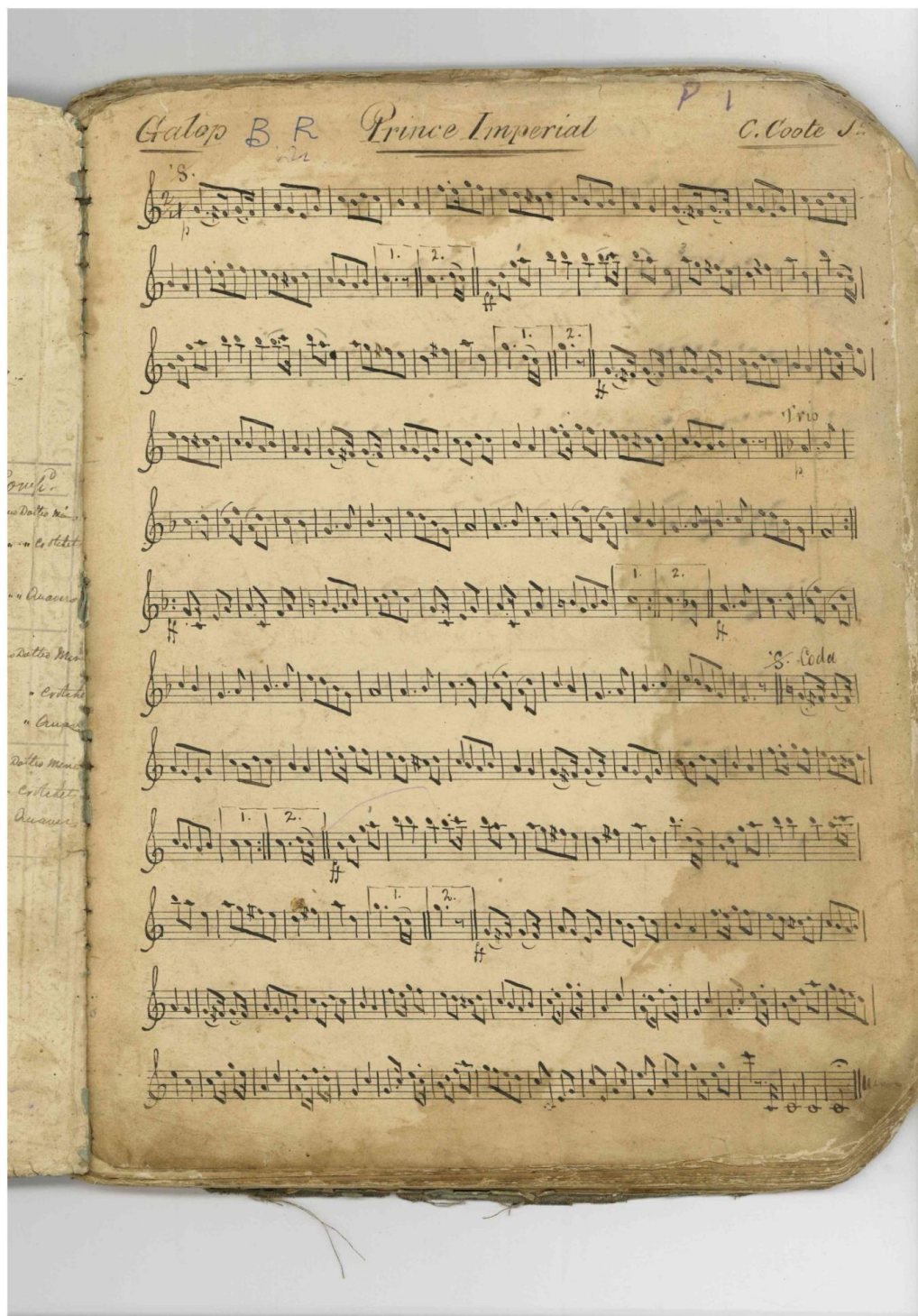
**Plate 14: Eddie Cunningham (1901-1989) and James McBrien (1885-1970),  
Cunningham's home in Killyveha, Aughavas, Co. Leitrim in 1963**



**(Source: Patricia Keegan (née Cunningham), Killyveha, Aughavas, Co. Leitrim)**

### 5.3 Manuscript construction and layout

Plate 15: The first music leaf in the McBrien-Rogers MS: 2r



(Source: Vincent McBrien of Camber, Aughavas, Co. Leitrim)

As the McBrien-Rogers MS was transferred from Bernard Rogers to James McBrien, and later to Jack McBrien, several additions and modifications to the manuscript were conducted by these musicians both in regard to its musical content and its physical layout.

With regards to physical layout, this section will examine the manuscript in its present structure in order to recover the original format of this document and to determine the methods used in the assembly of its current format. Dimensionally, the McBrien-Rogers MS has a portrait structure, measuring approximately 235mm in length by 297mm in height. It consists of forty-five music leaves bound together by an outer cover. An inspection of the stitching on the spine of the manuscript reveals that the side-sown method was used in the binding process.

For the purposes of enumeration, the forty-five music leaves have been numbered from 2 to 46, while the front and back covers have been numbered 1 and 47, respectively. During the binding process the leaves were not collated correctly: the three leaves, 29 to 31, should have been positioned at the very end of the manuscript. Supporting this assumption is the exercise tune ‘Ah Vous Dirai with Variations’ (MBR.300), the music of which is transcribed over a range of two leaves in the manuscript, beginning on leaf 46v and finishing on 29r. Additionally, given that the music on these leaves was copied from a printed tutor book, *Henry Farmer’s New Violin School, etc.* (Farmer, n.d.; c1847-1900), their original order can be established accurately from a comparison with the layout of that book.

The assembled nature of the manuscript is clearly evident by the several different types of printed staff paper that appear throughout this document. As Table 12 illustrates, an examination of the stave span measurements on each leaf reveals that five different types of printed staff paper were used, labelled here as Paper A, Paper B etc:

**Table 12: Types of printed paper evident in McBrien-Rogers MS**

	<b>Paper A</b>	<b>Paper B</b>	<b>Paper C</b>	<b>Paper D</b>	<b>Paper E</b>
<b>Position of leaves in MS</b>	2-22, 32, 35-36	23-24	25-31	33-34	37-46
<b>Total leaves (count)</b>	24	2	7	2	10
<b>Average span per stave (millimetres)</b>	7.5mm	8.5mm	8.5mm	7.5mm	8.5mm
<b>No. of staves per leaf</b>	12	12	14	14	12
<b>Average span of all staves (millimetres)</b>	248mm	295mm	250mm	254mm	212mm

As Table 12 demonstrates, Paper A and Paper E were the paper types most used in the manuscript. From an examination of the contents of the manuscript, it is quite likely that before the current manuscript was assembled, the leaves from Paper A and Paper E originated from two preformed manuscripts, which contained twenty-four and ten leaves respectively. Evidence for this theory is verified by the outer cover which has the pre-printed word “MUSIC” written on the front, indicating that it originated from a preformed manuscript, possibly one that contained either Paper A or Paper E. During the binding process, these two manuscripts may have been combined with loose leaves of paper types, Paper B, Paper C and Paper D, to form one assembled document.

The findings of this section demonstrate that the McBrien-Rogers MS is characteristic of an ‘assembled’ manuscript. Firstly, the use of stitching intimates that a number of discrete documents were bound together; secondly, the tune ‘Ah Vous Dirai with Variations’ (MBR.300) is transcribed over two leaves positioned at different locations in the manuscript; and lastly, there are five different types of printed staff paper evident in the manuscript.

## 5.4 Printed material in the collection

The McBrien-Rogers MS is part of a collection of music that includes also printed material. Table 13 lists several printed music collections which, in addition to the McBrien-Rogers MS, are also in the possession of the McBrien family, and which were likely to have been acquired by James McBrien and his son, Jack, throughout their lifetimes. “Miss Ellen Keegan, America” is written on the front of the book *The Violin Made Easy and Attractive* (Scanlon, 1923), which may provide a clue to the provenance of some of the printed material. James McBrien’s wife was Brigid Keegan, and it is probable that this person was a sister, or at least a relative, of hers. It is likely that Ellen sent this book home from America to the McBrien family, and she may also have been the donor of some of the other printed material in this collection.

**Table 13: List of printed material in the McBrien Collection**

Printed Music Collection	Publication Details	Editor
Kerr’s [First/Second/Third/Fourth] Collection of Merry Melodies	Glasgow, c1870s-80s	James S. Kerr
Kerr’s Popular Dance Music for the Violin, Composed and Arranged by Carl Volti	Glasgow, c1900-20	James S. Kerr
The Violin Made Easy and Attractive	San Francisco, 1923	Batt Scanlon
Allan’s ‘Irish Fiddler’, Containing 120 Reels & Jigs, Hornpipes & Set Dances	Glasgow, c1950	Hugh McDermott
O’Neill’s Irish Music, 400 Choice Selections Arranged for Piano and Violin	Dublin & Chicago, 1915	Francis O’Neill

The first two lines in Table 13 represent what is in fact an amalgamation of five individual books, all of which were published by James S. Kerr. Four of these books are from his series of *Kerr’s [First/Second/Third/Fourth] Collection of Merry Melodies* (Kerr, n.d.; c1870s-1885), while the fifth is entitled *Kerr’s Popular Dance Music for the Violin, Composed and Arranged by Carl Volti*, (Kerr, n.d.; c1900-1920). As they exist in the McBrien collection, they are bound together as one book. After the outer covers had been first removed, these five books were stitched together into a single anthology. James McBrien’s name is signed in several

places throughout, suggesting that he may have been responsible for the binding of this document. The signature of his daughter, Annie McBrien, also appears on numerous pages. She may have been learning the fiddle at the time from her father, James, or she may have simply been scribbling her name on the book. The second printed item in the collection is entitled: *The Violin Made Easy and Attractive* (1923), edited by Batt Scanlon. This book contains instructions for fiddle technique, and also a selection of tunes. Scanlon originally came from County Kerry, where he was taught the fiddle by the blind fiddle master, George Whelan. When he emigrated to San Francisco, where the book was published, he began teaching there and set up the 'Scanlon School of Music'. The third printed item is entitled *Allan's 'Irish Fiddler', Containing 120 Reels & Jigs, Hornpipes & Set Dances* (c1950), and is edited by Hugh McDermott. The fourth and last printed item in the collection is one of Francis O'Neill's publications, *O'Neill's Irish Music, 400 Choice Selections Arranged for Piano and Violin* (1915). The outer covering on this book is currently missing. As outlined in this section, the publication dates of the printed music collections range from c1870s to c1950, suggesting that the McBriens were actively acquiring music books to supplement their repertoire throughout their lifetimes.

## 5.5 Scribes

There are three distinct music notational styles evident in the manuscript. Before their identities are uncovered, they have been designated initially as Scribe A, Scribe B and Scribe C, based on the order of their first appearance in the manuscript, which are leaves 2r, 16r and 32v respectively. Using a combination of conjecture, handwriting analysis and music evidence, this section aims to uncover the identity of each scribe.

According to Fr John Quinn (Ward, 2011b), Jack McBrien informed him that his father had been taught by two teachers, Bernard Rogers and another man, whom he knew only as ‘Masterson’. This latter teacher is more than likely John ‘the fiddler’ Masterson (c1840-1912), a locally renowned fiddle player, who lived in Drumury, Dromard, only five miles away from McBrien’s home (Ward, 2015, p. 165). Masterson may have begun teaching McBrien after Rogers died in 1907. Over two hundred of Masterson’s transcriptions appear among the manuscript collection of the Reilly Family of Toome, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim.<sup>49</sup> An examination of Masterson’s music notations in this collection confirms that he is not one of the three scribes in the McBrien-Rogers MS. Therefore, it is more likely that the identity of Scribe A, who seems to be the person teaching the pupil, is Bernard Rogers, McBrien’s first fiddle teacher. Evidence to support this conjecture is provided by the two inscriptions: ‘B.R., Killmallock’ and ‘B.R.’, written on the leaves 1v and 2r respectively. These markings appear to have been written by Jack McBrien in later years, perhaps to indicate that the main scribe of the manuscript was ‘Bernard Rogers’. The writing style of these inscriptions is similar to that of the titles of those tunes throughout the manuscript that were written by Jack, whom we shall identify presently as Scribe B. On leaf 24r, for example, his style of notating a capital letter ‘B’ in the tune title ‘Liffey Banks Reel’ (MBR.154) is characterised by a distinctive loop that is also evident in the initials ‘B.R.’.

Although Scribe B makes his appearance in the manuscript before Scribe C, as Scribe C will be seen to be the pupil of Scribe A, it is better to take that identification first. Only six tunes in the manuscript are attributable to Scribe C, two of which suggest that this scribe and Rogers were transcribing in the manuscript at the same time. The first of these tunes, ‘The Fair-Haired

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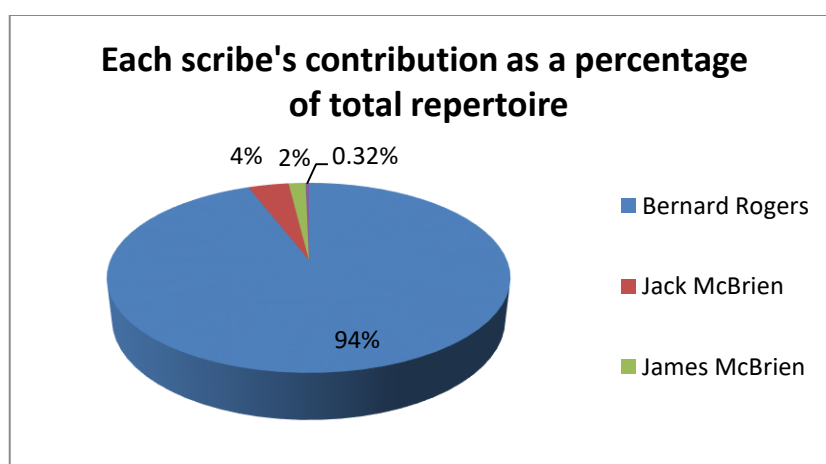
<sup>49</sup> As Masterson’s fiddle heritage appears to be connected to the Peter Kennedy fiddle tradition of south Leitrim rather than the Thomas ‘Blind’ Kiernan tradition of north Longford, these transcriptions are outside of scope of this dissertation.

Girl' (MBR.208), appears on leaf 32v, positioned between two tunes that were written by Rogers. This situation could only have arisen through two scribes writing concurrently. The second example of interaction between Rogers and Scribe C occurs in the tune on leaf 35r, entitled 'The Humours of Ballyconnell' (MBR.234). In this three part tune, Scribe C has transcribed the first two parts, while the third part has been transcribed by Rogers. This latter part, written by Rogers, appears to have been a slip of paper that was pasted or glued over the original one transcribed by McBrien. The second and third parts are in the wrong order, by comparison with the conventional setting of the tune, and this indicates either that Scribe C forgot the second part and that Rogers was adding it in at the bottom of the tune, or that Rogers was inserting a superior version of that part. Whatever the case, it strongly suggests that Rogers was correcting Scribe C by the manner in which the tune is transcribed. The conclusion must be that Scribe C was the student, i.e. James McBrien.

The last scribe to be identified is Scribe B. This scribe wrote twelve tunes on unmarked printed staves throughout the manuscript indicating that they were added at a later date than those transcribed by the other scribes. The later chronology of these transcriptions, coupled with the fact that Scribe A and Scribe C have been identified as Bernard Rogers and James McBrien respectively, strongly indicates that the identity of Scribe B is James' son, Jack.

Following the identification of the three scribes, the notational styles of the 315 items in the repertoire of the McBrien-Rogers MS were examined and subsequently assigned to the scribes Bernard Rogers, James McBrien and Jack McBrien, as illustrated in Figure 15

**Figure 15: Proportion of repertoire transcribed by each scribe in McBrien-Rogers MS**



\*The statistic 0.32 represents one tune 'The Humours of Ballyconnell' (MBR.234). It was co-written by Bernard Rogers and James McBrien on leaf 35r.

An examination of the data in Figure 15 confirms that Rogers was the dominant scribe in the manuscript with approximately 94% of the repertoire attributed to him. However, as the following section will investigate, the majority of the tunes that were transcribed by Rogers appear to have been derived from printed material, rather than from his own knowledge base.

## **5.6 Sources of repertoire**

The last section established that the repertoire in the manuscript was transcribed by three scribes, Bernard Rogers, James McBrien and Jack McBrien. The specific repertoire of each of the three scribes identified in the previous section was influenced for the greater part by their musical motives at the point of transcription. On one hand, Rogers and James McBrien transcribed their repertoire in the context of a tuition setting in the roles of teacher and student, respectively, while Jack McBrien on the other hand, used the manuscript as a medium for annotating tunes that he had learned orally from audio sources, such as 78rpm records. This disparity in motivation among the scribes is reflected by the rich diversity of repertoire apparent

in the manuscript. The various sources involved in the collating of this repertoire fall into three principal categories: (1) printed material, (2) local sources, and (3) audio sources. Using this taxonomy of sources, the repertoire was analysed through two processes: identification and classification. To identify the original sources of individual tunes in the first process, each music item in the manuscript was compared with alternative versions of the same music item located in various sources, such as printed music collections, regional manuscripts and 78 rpm records. When matches were made, music items were assigned to the relevant category of sources through the second process, that of classification. This method of identifying and classifying sources of repertoire was repeated for all of the 315 music items in the manuscript (see Vol.II, Source I). A statistical summary of this analysis is illustrated in Table 14. The results show that the three sources of repertoire, printed material, local sources and audio sources, account for 87%, 9% and 4% of the total repertoire, respectively.

**Table 14: Sources of repertoire in the McBrien-Rogers MS**

Sources of repertoire	Music items (count)	Percentage of total music items
Printed material	275	87%
Local sources	29	9%
Audio sources	11	4%
Total	315	100%

When these sources of repertoire were assigned to another variable, the individual scribes, it was apparent that there was a tangible correlation between these two variables. For instance, the first category of sources, printed material, was only attributed to one scribe, Bernard Rogers. Rogers wrote this repertoire around the turn of the twentieth century, which suggests that, in his capacity as a fiddle teacher at this time, the transmission of printed material was an important mechanism for teaching new repertoire and fiddle technique. As the twentieth century progressed, radical changes took place in the Irish music landscape, whereby musicians gradually moved towards sources of repertoire that were aural and more ephemeral in nature,

such as commercial records, radio broadcasts and informal music sessions. Jack McBrien's fiddle career coincided with this epoch in orally transmitted music and consequently, the entire repertoire in the manuscript classified under the second category 'audio sources' is derived solely from his transcriptions. Lastly, the third category of sources, local sources, is attributed to two scribes, Rogers and James McBrien. This repertoire was written while Rogers was teaching McBrien. Accordingly, James' repertoire was presumably learned directly from Rogers during these lessons, while Rogers' repertoire of local tunes, in turn, may have been sourced from his own teacher, Thomas Kernan, or from sources nearby, such as local musicians and music gatherings.

In conclusion, this section has outlined the three sources of repertoire that are apparent in the manuscript: (1) printed material, (2) local sources, and (3) audio sources. These categories of sources will now be explored in greater detail under each of those headings.

### **5.6.1 Printed material**

Representing 87% of the total repertoire, it is evident that printed material was a highly valuable source of contemporary repertoire for Irish musicians at the turn of the twentieth century. In the previous section it was determined that the entire amount of this specific repertoire was transcribed by one scribe, Bernard Rogers. Rogers was James McBrien's teacher, and therefore he probably transcribed this repertoire for McBrien from printed material that he personally owned. Printed material was not readily available at that time, and the fact that Rogers owned these written sources may have enhanced his reputation as a fiddle teacher in the local region.

A further analysis of the repertoire classified as 'printed material' reveals that there are four sub-categories of sources with this group: (i) sheet music, (ii) printed music collections, (iii)

song books, and (iv) tutor books. Consequently, the 275 music items in ‘printed material’ were assigned to these sub-categories, the results of which are contained in Table 15:

**Table 15: Types of printed material transcribed from in the McBrien-Rogers MS**

Type of printed material	Music items (count)	Percentage of 315 music items
(i) Sheet music	126	40%
(ii) Printed music collections	96	31%
(iii) Song books	11	3%
(iv) Tutor books	42	13%
Total	275	87%

### **(i) Sheet music**

As can be inferred from the data in Table 15, the two sub-categories, sheet music and printed music collections, together represent the greater part of the printed material from which Rogers transcribed. In percentage terms, these sub-categories account for 71% of the total repertoire in the manuscript, a fact which illustrates the significant role that these sources played in shaping the repertoire of Irish musicians during that era. The first sub-category of printed material to be examined in this section is sheet music. As outlined in *1.7 Methodology*, repertoire that has been transcribed from this source typically contains one or more of the following characteristics:

- (1) The insertion of the arranger/composer’s name beside the tune title
- (2) Medleys of two or more individual tunes, which together typically span more than six staves in the manuscript, and which may include terms such as: *introduction*, *trio* and *coda*

Based on this methodology, it was determined that sheet music was the largest single source of repertoire in the manuscript, representing 40% of the total repertoire. The tune types of this specific repertoire are predominantly quadrille sets and waltzes, and to a much lesser extent,

gallops, polkas, schottisches and song airs. In percentage terms, the two genres of music, Irish music and western art music are quite evenly represented by this source of repertoire. However, the presence of Irish music is, by and large, confined to sets of music for quadrilles. For example, 'The Royal Irish Quadrilles' (MBR.012-016), is a set of popular Irish tunes, which includes tunes such as 'A Sprig of Shillelah' (MBR.012) and 'The Irish Washerwoman' (MBR.015). These quadrille sets, made up of Irish music, were typically arranged by persons working in the field of western art music, a fact which demonstrates the overlap existing between the two music genres during the second half of the nineteenth century. For instance, the aforementioned set, 'The Royal Irish Quadrilles', was arranged by the renowned French conductor, Louis Antoine Jullien (1812-1860).

Excluding the arrangements of Irish tunes in sets of music for quadrilles, the remainder of the repertoire sourced from sheet music may be classified as western art music. Examples of such tunes are 'Mars Polka' (MBR.030) and 'The Rainbow Schottische' (MBR.080), composed by James King (1809-1888) and Henry Kleber (1816-1897), respectively (for latter tune, see Plate 16). A survey of the remaining repertoire in the manuscript from this genre reveals that other popular composers of that period appearing on sheet music were Charles Coote Jr. (1831-1916), Joseph Chadley Drane, Charles Handel Rand Marriott (1831-1899) and William Smallwood (1831-1897).

Plate 16: 'The Rainbow Schottische' (MBR.080); leaf 15v – example of tune in the  
McBrien-Rogers MS sourced from sheet music



(Source: Vincent McBrien of Camber, Aughavas, Co. Leitrim)

Over time, a number of these tunes from the western art music tradition were assimilated into the local Irish music tradition. As they were passed on from one musician to the next through the continuous cycle of transcribing and playing, these tunes were gradually simplified, reshaped and naturalized by the musicians, presumably in order to make them easier to play and to sound more like tunes from the existing Irish music tradition. This is corroborated by a comparison of a set of waltzes, ‘My Queen Waltz’, as they appear in two separate manuscripts transcribed by musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage.<sup>50</sup> In the earlier of the two manuscripts, the McBrien-Rogers MS, the scribe, Bernard Rogers, copied the full set of four waltzes entitled ‘Valse: My Queen’ (MBR.026-MBR.029), almost *verbatim*, from sheet music, including in the process typical notation from this genre such as dynamics, tempo and articulation. However, in a later manuscript, the Larry Smyth MS (Chapter Six), only the first of these four waltzes is transcribed by another fiddle student of Rogers’, Larry Smyth. Compared to Rogers’ own transcription, Smyth’s version of this waltz ‘My Queen Valse’ (LS.089) is more simplified, and the markings from western art music that Rogers included in his earlier version have been dispensed with by Smyth. The most likely explanation for the rapid simplification of this tune as between one scribe and the next is that, after Rogers obtained the tune from sheet music, he transcribed the complete version for one student, James McBrien, but then subsequently taught a more simplified version to another of his students, Larry Smyth.

Aside from the fact that this specific waltz demonstrates the process of simplification that occurred in tunes which were assimilated from western art music into Irish music, the very appearance of this tune in the Larry Smyth MS, a manuscript later than the McBrien-Rogers MS, demonstrates that tunes from the western art music tradition were being actively absorbed

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<sup>50</sup> ‘My Queen Waltz’ set of waltzes was composed in 1881 by Procida Bucalossi (1832-1918)

into the local Irish music tradition during the later latter half of the nineteenth century, and that sheet music facilitated this process to a significant degree.

## **(ii) Printed music collections**

In addition to sheet music, printed music collections were another rich source of repertoire for the scribe, Bernard Rogers, accounting for approximately 31% of the total repertoire. Before examining the specific collections that Rogers used, this section will first outline the methods that were employed to identify and classify repertoire sourced from printed music collections. Initially, a survey was completed of the manuscript's entire repertoire to identify tunes that showed characteristics of having been sourced from printed music collections (see *1.7 Methodology*). Tunes that displayed one or more of these characteristics were then compared with alternative versions of the same tunes in printed music collections. The alternative versions used for this cross-referencing exercise were obtained from the personal music archive of Fr John Quinn, P.P., Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim. Over the last fifty years he has collated all of the major printed music collections of Irish music into a single archive, categorised alphabetically by individual tune families. Consequently, this archive facilitates the rapid process of comparing different versions of tunes. For instance, a tune in the manuscript, 'Off She Goes' (MBR.159), was cross-referenced with the corresponding tune family in Fr Quinn's archive. This process revealed that the manuscript's version was identical to the version 'No.89 - Off She Goes' in R.M. Levey's *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland* (1858), indicating the likelihood that tune was copied from this source.

After applying these processes to the respective tunes, it is evident that three different printed music collections, and possibly a fourth, were used by Rogers to transcribe repertoire into the manuscript. However, the identity of only one of these collections has been definitively established thus far: *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland* (1858), compiled by Richard

Michael Levey (1811-1899). It is not surprising to find that this written source was used by Rogers because this collection and a later collection of Levey's, *The Second Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland* (1873), were popularly received by both musicians and professional collectors alike. As Capt. Francis O'Neill (1913, pp. 142-143) pointed out, one of the primary reasons for the appeal of the Levey collections across the wide spectrum of the music community is that they were the first collections dedicated exclusively to Irish dance music, the type of music that musicians were predominantly playing at that time. As a marker of the publishing success of the Levey collections, there is evidence that a number of the professional collectors such as Elias Howe, James Kerr and Francis O'Neill himself plagiarised these collections for their own publications. By contrast, musicians sourced repertoire from these collections both for their own personal use and as a method of teaching and learning new repertoire. Bernard Rogers is a prime example of a traditional musician who was influenced greatly by Levey. Out of a total 107 tunes in the first Levey collection, Rogers transcribed 68 tunes from it, two of which were copied twice (see Vol.II, Source I). This represents approximately 22% of the manuscript's total repertoire, the single largest contribution of any source to it. It is unknown, however, how many of these tunes were actually learned by Rogers' student, James McBrien, or were played by him later in live music-making activities. This collection, and the theme of its assimilation into the local Thomas Kernan fiddle heritage, will be explored in more detail in the next chapter, which deals with the Larry Smyth MS, a document written by another of Rogers' students, Larry Smyth (1866-1930). Exploratory research indicates that a certain proportion of the tunes in that manuscript also were derived from Levey's first collection, either directly or indirectly, a fact which indicates that Rogers used this collection profusely as a teaching aid among all his students.

Plate 17: Sample of tunes in the McBrien-Rogers MS copied by Bernard Rogers from R.M. Levey's *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland* (1858)



(Source: Vincent McBrien of Camber, Aughavas, Co. Leitrim)

As stated at the beginning of this section, there is evidence that, in addition to copying from Levey's first collection, Rogers copied from a number of other printed collections, none of which have been identified conclusively. Repertoire sourced from this category of 'unidentified printed music collections' represents 8% of the total repertoire. For the purposes of classification, three of these collections have been assigned the codes, Book A, Book B and Book C, while the remaining sources are classified under a general heading of 'unidentified music books'.

As for Book A, a copy of this music collection, unfortunately without cover or title page, is to be found among the manuscripts of the Reilly Family Collection of Toome, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim. An examination of this collection reveals that Rogers copied four tunes from it: 'The Devil Among the Tailors' (MBR.203), 'Yankee Doodle' (MBR.204), 'Sir Roger' (MBR.209) and 'Mrs McLeod' (MBR.239). As the front cover and title page are missing, the details of publication remain unknown. However, from correspondence with the ethnomusicologist, Paul Wells (2016, personal correspondence), it has been determined that this collection seems to be an amalgam of two broadsheets he has in his possession published by B. Williams in London, one of which is *Pop Goes the Weasel and 32 Popular Country Dances* (n.d.).

The second unidentified printed music collection has been designated as Book B. There are four tunes in this collection that have matching versions in both this manuscript and in the Dunn Family MSS of Milwaukee, America.<sup>51</sup> The uniqueness of their titles and of the music text suggest that both manuscripts copied their versions from this collection, which as of yet

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<sup>51</sup> These manuscripts form part of the Dunn Family Music Collection c.1908-35 of Milwaukee, USA. They were compiled and written by three generations of fiddle players in this family from around the year 1908 onwards. These manuscripts have been digitalised and can be viewed at the following website: <http://archives.irishfest.com/dunn-family-collection>

has not been identified. The following table is an outline of these four tunes as they appear in both manuscripts:

**Table 16: Identical versions of tunes in both the McBrien-Rogers MS and Dunn family MSS**

	<b>McBrien-Rogers MS</b>	<b>Dunn family MSS</b>
<b>Title</b>	The Waterford Polka (MBR.003 & MBR.250)	No 8th: The Waterford Polka
<b>Leaves</b>	Leaves 2v & 37r	MS 4: Leaf 16
<b>Title</b>	Green Grows the Rushes O (MBR.002)	Green Grows the Rushes O
<b>Leaves</b>	Leaf 2v	MS 4: Leaf 5
<b>Title</b>	Roll Her on the Mountain (MBR.249)	Roll Along the Mountain - a Reel
<b>Leaves</b>	Leaf 37r	MS 4: Leaf 7
<b>Title</b>	Haste to the Wedding (MBR.251)	Haste to the Wedding
<b>Leaves</b>	Leaf 37r	MS 4: Leaves 10 & 19 (duplicates)

There is evidence that Rogers also copied from another printed collection, labelled here as Book C. Evidence for this theory is provided by two tunes in the manuscript, ‘The Moonlight Polka’ (MBR.004) and ‘The First Love Waltz’ (MBR.005). These tunes have identical versions and titles to that of corresponding versions on loose leaves contained in the O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS (Chapter Seven): ‘The Moonlight Polka’ (LE.003) and ‘The First Love Waltz’ (LE.004). Supporting the supposition that both scribes were copying from the same collection is that fact that they appear in the same consecutive order in each manuscript.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> There is a possibility, however, that Book B and Book C may be one and the same book. This may be surmised from the fact that ‘The Moonlight Polka’ and ‘The First Love Waltz’, copied from Book C, are written directly after the two tunes that were copied from Book B, ‘Schottische: Green Grow the Rushes O’ (MBR.002) and ‘The Waterford Polka’ (MBR.003).

Finally, there a number of tunes that appear to have been copied from printed music collections that have not been identified thus far. Future research in the study of historical printed material may uncover their identities.

### (iii) Printed song books

While printed music collections were a dominant source of repertoire for the scribe Bernard Rogers, it is evident that he also absorbed music from printed song books into his repertoire. At least eleven tunes, representing 3% of the total repertoire, were sourced in this manner. With the assistance of the Irish Traditional Music Archive it was established that seven of these song airs were transcribed by Rogers from the song book: P. Goodman, *The School and Home Song-Book: A Collection of Songs for use in Irish Schools* (n.d.; c1885), the details of which are listed in Table 17:

**Table 17: List of tunes in the McBrien-Rogers MS transcribed from *The School and Home Song-Book* (Dublin, c1885)**

Title in McBrien-Rogers MS	Tune Ref. #	Title in Song-Book	Tune Ref. #
The Exile of Erin	MBR.018	The Exile of Erin	SHSB: No.32
Oh Native Music	MBR.020	Oh, Native Music	SHSB: No.43
The Return from Fingall	MBR.021	Tis, it is the Shannon's Stream	SHSB: No.62
The Dear Irish Boy	MBR.023	The Exile's Farewell	SHSB: No.71
The Blackbird	MBR.024	You're a Dear Land to me	SHSB: No.72
Oh Come to the Hedgerows	MBR.031	Oh, Come to the Hedgerows	SHSB: No.36
The Bells of Shandon	MBR.048	The Bells of Shandon	SHSB: No.38

The last phrase in the book's title, "*for use in Irish schools*", strongly intimates that this collection was written to facilitate the teaching of Irish songs in national schools across Ireland. The collection was published around 1885, a time which coincided with a period in Ireland's history when cultural nationalism was gathering momentum. Rogers was the principal of the national school in Esker, Killoe, from c1883 to 1894, and it is likely that he was encouraged by his superiors to revive the Irish song tradition in his school by teaching the songs found in

this book to his pupils. Documentary support for this supposition is provided by the collection's own publication details, which states that it was compiled by P. Goodman, who at that time was a Professor of Music in St. Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra, Dublin. This institution was responsible, and still is, for the training of national school teachers, and therefore this provided Goodman, the editor of the book, with direct access to new student graduates. However, while Rogers may have been teaching these songs to his school pupils, even perhaps using the two-part harmony provided in a choir setting, outside of the classroom it was a different matter. Here the clues in his transcriptions suggest that, for fiddle pupils such as McBrien, he may have only taught the main line of the melody of the songs, and not the harmony, nor indeed the words. Nowhere does he transcribe the counterpoint harmony line. The clues that he has no interest in teaching the words to his fiddle pupils are two. The first clue is in the titles of the songs, where in all instances, Rogers has transcribed the title of the *air* given in the song-book, rather than the title of the *song*. For instance, in the song-book, the title of one of the songs is 'The Exile's Farewell', and written underneath in much smaller print is 'Old Air – The Dear Irish Boy'. That Rogers copied this latter title and not the former one, confirms that he was more interested in the original melody than the actual words of the song. The second clue that supports this theory is that when he was transcribing the melody of the song, 'Oh, Native Music', he transposed it from the key of A flat major, which was used in the book, to the key of G major in the manuscript, a key which facilitates the needs of an inexperienced musician more readily than that of a singer.

#### **(iv) Tutor book**

The last source of printed material evident in the manuscript is in the form of a violin tutor book: *Henry Farmer's New Violin School, etc.* (Farmer, c1847-c1900). As this book was republished numerous times during the second half of the nineteenth century, it is not possible

to identify the specific edition from which Rogers copied. This book was aimed specifically at teachers and students of the violin/fiddle given that it only contains scales, exercises and exercise tunes. Rogers transcribed into the manuscript by far the greater part of this book, pages 7-25 and 29, representing almost 60% of its contents. Consequently, it represents a large part, approximately 13%, of the total repertoire of the manuscript. Coincidentally, this book was also used by Fr John Quinn when he was learning the fiddle himself, some fifty years after the manuscript under discussion was written, a detail which underlines the enduring qualities of this book and also the significant value that was placed on it by fiddle tutors as a tool for teaching the fundamentals of music theory and fiddle technique to their students (Ward, 2011b).

### **5.6.2 Local sources**

Although, it has been established that printed material was the predominant source of repertoire in this manuscript, there is evidence that some music derived from local sources is also present. Before examining these sources in detail, the following section will outline the methodology that was employed to identify and classify tunes pertaining to this specific source of repertoire. Tunes in this category typically contain one or more of the following characteristics: (1) tune titles and versions that are comparable with those found in other regional sources, and (2) bowing marks in a 'slur and cut' pattern, which is the preferred bowing style of the music region of Connmaicne. Using this process of identification, an examination of the repertoire determined that tunes with these characteristics were typically concentrated in clusters on leaves 22v, 32r and 35r-v in the manuscript. To confirm these initial results, the specific tunes were cross-referenced to the other local versions of the same tunes. This process was facilitated by Fr John Quinn's archive, which contains all of the known Irish music manuscripts of the Connmaicne region. An example of a tune identified as locally sourced is 'Handsome Sally'

(MBR.242) (see Figure 16). This tune had not as yet been published in the period during which the manuscripts under discussion were written, and yet, versions of it with the same title are located in no less than five regional manuscripts, four of which were written by fiddle players of the Thomas Kernan fiddle lineage.<sup>53</sup> A further examination of this specifically local repertoire established that it was most likely to have been written by the two scribes, Bernard Rogers and James McBrien, during a period of time when Rogers was teaching McBrien. For instance, the tune ‘The Humours of Ballyconnell’ (MBR.234) was co-written by Rogers and McBrien, suggesting that it was written through the processes of instruction and learning. In turn, this repertoire that Rogers taught to McBrien was probably obtained by him from sources within his immediate locality, such as his own teacher, Thomas Kernan, or other musicians in the region. In conclusion, through the processes of identification and classification, it was determined that in all, locally sourced repertoire accounts for approximately 9% of the total repertoire in the manuscript. Although this statistic is a relatively low figure, it demonstrates that manuscripts played a significant role in the transmission of fiddle repertoire and style from one generation to another.

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<sup>53</sup> see: ‘Handsome Sally’ – tune refs: LS.062; PF.058; FR3.025 and MBR.242. Only in recent times has this tune appeared in print, and that in a transcription from the Gunn MS, in Cyril Maguire, *Hidden Fermanagh*, (Monea, Co. Fermanagh, 2003), p. 102, where incidentally it is erroneously identified with an entirely different tune, also known as ‘Handsome Sally’, the tune published by O’Neill as ‘The New Potatoes’. [cf. Josephine Keegan, *A Drop in the Ocean*, (Dublin, 2004), p. 69; Francis O’Neill, *O’Neill’s Music of Ireland*, (Chicago, 1903), No.1505, p. 278.]

**Figure 16: ‘Handsome Sally’ (MBR.242) – example of locally sourced tune in the McBrien-Rogers MS**



(Source: McBrien-Rogers MS – Vol.II, Source I)

### 5.6.3 Audio sources

In addition to printed material and local sources, the third, and last, source of repertoire that has a discernible presence in the McBrien-Rogers manuscript is audio sources, predominantly in the form of commercial records and radio broadcasts. Unlike the other two categories, these audio sources are more difficult to identify and classify because their original form is ephemeral and aural by nature. Fortunately, in recent decades, this source of repertoire has become easier to identify through an examination of written collections of music converted from audio sources. For example, the entire recording catalogue of the Sligo fiddle player, Michael Coleman (1891-1945) has been transcribed into music notation by Jesse Smith in his master's thesis, *Realising the Music of Michael Coleman* (2008). This collection has created a written representation of Coleman's playing, which facilitates a comparison between versions of the same tunes in this collection and the McBrien-Rogers MS.

A significant amount of the tunes in the manuscript obtained from audio sources are identifiable by an examination of their titles. For example, the titles, ‘Dr. Gilbert’s Reel – Colman [sic]’ (MBR.283) (see Figure 17) and ‘Miss McLoud’s Reel – Colman’s [sic] way’ (MBR.309), strongly indicate that the scribe of these tunes, Jack McBrien, learned them from commercial records released by the aforementioned fiddle player, Michael Coleman. A cross-reference of these versions with their counterparts in the Jesse Smith collection of Coleman’s music substantiates this supposition. Through this process of cross-referencing it was determined that at least six tunes, the details of which are contained in Table 18, were sourced by Jack McBrien in this manner:<sup>54</sup>

**Table 18: Tunes sourced by Jack McBrien from Michael Coleman records**

<b>Tune title in McBrien-Rogers MS</b>	<b>Tune Ref. #</b>	<b>Leaf</b>	<b>Recording Date*</b>	<b>Released by</b>
O'Rourke's Reel	MBR.088	17r	Oct. 1936	Decca
Liffey Banks Reel	MBR.154	24r	Oct. 1936	Decca
Part of Medley of Jigs	MBR.264	39r	Nov. 1934	Decca
Up Sligo – Medley of Jigs	MBR.266	39r	c1924	New Republic
Dr. Gilbert's Reel - Colman (sic)	MBR.283	42v	1929	Columbia
Miss McLoud's Reel – Colman's (sic) way	MBR.309	30r	Oct. 1936	Decca

\* Dates are stated according to Coleman’s discography compiled by Harry Bradshaw in: *Michael Coleman (1891-1945): Ireland’s most influential traditional musician of the 20<sup>th</sup> century*, (Dublin, 1991), pp. 86-94

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<sup>54</sup> McBrien’s transcriptions were compared to transcriptions of Coleman’s commercial recordings in: Jesse Smith, ‘Realising the Music of Michael Coleman: analysis and visual and aural representation of the music of Irish music’s most influential stylist of the twentieth century’, (Master’s thesis, Dundalk Institute of Technology, 2008), Part 2, pp. 1-151.

**Figure 17: ‘Dr. Gilbert’s Reel – Colman [sic]’ (MBR.283) – example of a tune transcribed by Jack McBrien from a Michael Coleman record in the McBrien-Rogers MS**



**(Source: McBrien-Rogers MS – Vol.II, Source I)**

While Coleman had the greatest impact on Jack McBrien’s repertoire in the manuscript, there are indications that he was also influenced by other musicians. For instance, the tune ‘The Sligo Maid’ (MBR.111) appears to have been sourced from a recording released by another Sligo fiddler, Paddy Killoran (1904-1965), who recorded this tune twice in 1931 and 1936 (Irish Traditional Music Tune Index, 2016). Another artist who appears to have influenced Jack’s repertoire was the famous Scottish accordion player, Will Starr (1922-76). Starr recorded a medley of three hornpipes in 1945: ‘Johnson Hornpipe’, ‘High Level’ and ‘Harvest Home Hornpipe’ (Dean-Myatt, 2016). In the manuscript on leaf 17r, Jack has attempted to transcribe one of these tunes, the first three bars, and in the process has concatenated the first two titles of the medley as: ‘Johnston’s High Level Horn [sic]’ (MBR.089). An audio source is also likely to have inspired Jack’s transcription of the ‘Kinkora [sic] Reel’ (MBR.082). This is actually the reel, generally known as “The Skylark”, composed by James Morrison, and recorded by

him in 1935.<sup>55</sup> The title, “Kinkora Reel”, used by Jack in his transcription may refer to the Dublin based group, ‘Kincora Céilí Band’, who won the Senior Céilí Band competition at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in 1958, hosted that year by Longford town. While it is not recorded what reels the band played in that competition, the fact that the band was made up mostly of members of the Gardiner family of Sligo (Taylor 2013, page 291), Morrison’s home county, and Jack’s use of the title ‘The Kinkora Reel’, lead one to the conclusion that this may very well have been one of the reels played. Mrs. Kathleen Harrington, nee Gardiner, the leader of the band, was known for her love of a striking change from one tune to another (Quinn, 2017), and the high exciting start of “The Skylark Reel” would make it an excellent candidate for her choice of second reel. In total, approximately 4% of the manuscript’s repertoire is represented by audio sources of repertoire, and all of the tunes concerned were transcribed by Jack McBrien.

This section has established that during Jack’s music career from c1940s to 2002, audio sources of repertoire were beginning to make a significant impact on rural fiddle players in Ireland and exposed them to repertoire and fiddle styles from outside of their own local environment. These audio sources of repertoire not only precipitated a conformance in repertoires and styles among the fiddle players of the Connmaicne region, they also were greatly responsible for a decline in music literacy. With the advent of audio sources, the ability to read music notation was no longer a prerequisite for obtaining new repertoire, and consequently standards in music literacy dropped across the Irish music community as a whole. This deterioration in literacy is exemplified by several of Jack’s music transcriptions in the manuscript, which in these instances are poorly notated, incomplete and difficult to decipher, e.g. ‘Stirling Castle’ (MBR.090). Despite the negative effects of audio sources on musical literacy, many of the reels

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<sup>55</sup> Columbia: catalogue no. 33534; matrix no. 114012 (January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1935)

that Jack transcribed are marked with the regional bowing style ‘slur and cut’. This demonstrates that this technique is at least one feature of the local fiddle style that survived the intrusion of audio sources. The enduring qualities of this fiddle technique in the face of sweeping changes occurring both locally and nationally in Irish fiddle music confirms that it was instrumental in maintaining the traditional integrity of the playing and learning of fiddle music in this region.

## **5.7 Chronology of manuscript**

It has been established that the McBrien-Rogers MS served two different purposes over its lifetime: initially, Bernard Rogers used it as a medium for teaching aspects of fiddle style and repertoire to his student, James McBrien, while later, James’ son, Jack, adopted the manuscript as a tool for collecting his own personal repertoire learned from audio sources. Based on this evidence it is clear that the manuscript was compiled in two tranches that occurred in different time periods. The time scale of these individual contributions may be calculated using two methods. Firstly an initial broad time span will be estimated from an examination of the scribes’ biographical details, and secondly this timeline will be narrowed further through an analysis of the historical background of individual tunes that have verified dates of composition.

It can be estimated that based on the chronological records of two scribes Bernard Rogers (1856-1907) and James McBrien (1885-1970), the first tranche of transcriptions was written at some time between 1892 and 1906. The former date, 1892, represents the year he most realistically could have begun tuition, while the latter date, 1906, was the last year that Rogers was actively teaching. From an analysis of the textual evidence, in the form of tunes that have verifiable historical dates, there is an indication that the earliest year of transcription was actually later than 1892. For instance, the tune, ‘Sunshine of Paradise Alley’ (MBR.156), was

composed *c*1895, which suggests that Rogers would not have had access to this tune until at least 1896. Therefore, based on this evidence the transcriptions of Rogers and James McBrien most likely occurred between the years 1896 and 1906. The tranche of transcriptions added by Jack McBrien (1920-2002) are more difficult to date precisely. His use of the Will Starr record released in 1945 gives that year as the earliest possible date for that particular transcription. His transcriptions of Coleman records, issued between 1924 and 1936, could obviously have been done before 1945, but it is more likely that all the transcriptions were done in a shorter time frame at some time after 1945.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

In a manner similar to that established for the Leonard-Kernan MS, the purpose of the McBrien-Rogers MS appears to have changed over time. At the beginning it was transcribed by Bernard Rogers and James McBrien in a teacher-student context. To teach music theory and to provide his student with newly published repertoire, Rogers relied heavily on printed material as a primary source. In fact, 88% of the manuscript's repertoire was likely obtained in this manner. Rogers also taught a number of tunes from his own knowledge base and this is reflected in the repertoire transcribed by his student, McBrien, and in a small number of his own transcriptions. When the manuscript was later transferred to Jack McBrien, the latter transcribed repertoire that reflected the music environment of his own era, whereby musicians moved away from the use of written sources to sources that were audio based. The advent of audio technology in the twentieth century facilitated Jack's access to the music of famous artists, such as Michael Coleman and Willie Starr, which he seems to have sourced from 78 rpm records or radio broadcasts.

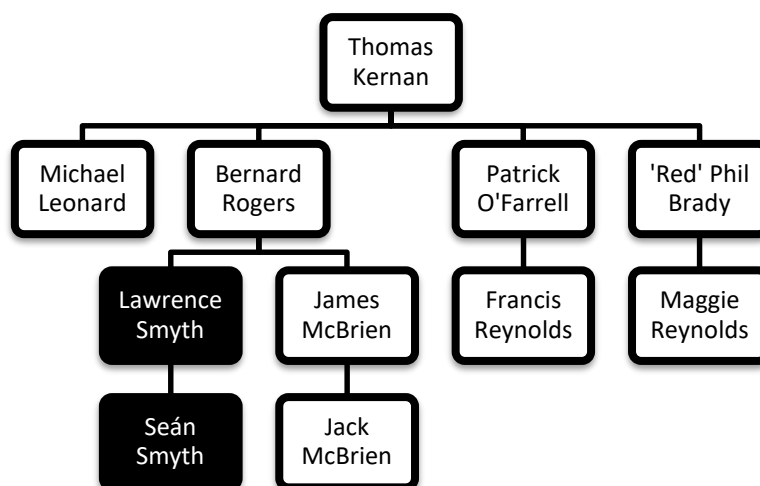
The impact of audio sources also had a detrimental effect on music literacy. The greater part of the McBrien-Rogers MS was written in the period *c*1897-*c*1906, when theory, techniques and repertoire were taught through written transmission, in tandem with the use of printed material as a significant source of repertoire, and consequently the transcriptions by Bernard Rogers and James McBrien display high levels of musical literacy. Although Jack McBrien had clearly learned to read and write music, when he was taught the fiddle by his father, James, his musical literacy was of a standard lower than that of either Rogers or his father. His father may not have been as meticulous in teaching musical literacy to him as Rogers had been in his own case, but Jack's manifest leaning towards audio sources may also have contributed to his relative incompetency. Examination of the manuscript shows that his transcriptions are in general poorly written, a significant number are incomplete, and ornamentation is not clearly articulated. In conclusion, the repertoire of the McBrien-Rogers MS offers an insight into the factors that led to the transition of a written tradition in fiddle music to an oral tradition through three generations of fiddle players of the Kernan fiddle lineage.

# Chapter Six

## The Larry Smyth Manuscript (*c*1900)

## 6 Chapter Six

**Figure 18: An excerpt of the Thomas Kernan fiddle lineage highlighting the known scribes of the Larry Smyth MS**



### 6.1 Introduction

The next written source to be examined in this dissertation is the Larry Smyth Manuscript. It was uncovered by the regional collector, Fr John Quinn (b.1940), in the late 1960s when a fiddle student of his, Lawrence Smyth (b.1950s), showed him this manuscript, and informed him that it had been compiled by his grandfather, Larry Smyth (1866-1930). Inscriptions throughout this document such as “Kiernan’s music” and “Music by Kiernan” suggested to Fr Quinn that its musical contents were derived from a local fiddle master, Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887). This material led Fr Quinn’s initial research into Kernan’s background and music career, which among other findings, revealed that Larry Smyth and several fiddle players from the Connmaicne region could trace their musical heritage back to Kernan’s teaching (see Figure 2). Illustrating further the central role of the Smyth MS in advancing regional ethnomusicological research, the unearthing of this manuscript triggered a chain of events that led to Fr Quinn’s discovery of the Leonard-Kernan MS (Chapter Four), and also to his field

recording (Chapter Eight) of a third generation fiddle player from the Kernan tradition, Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975).

Chapter Six will analyse the tangible and intangible facets of the Smyth MS in a similar process to that conducted in the examination of the Leonard-Kernan MS and the McBrien-Rogers MS. Following an account of the manuscript's provenance and a biography of its compiler, Larry Smyth, an inspection of the document will be conducted in order to establish its physical attributes in terms of layout, paper type and construction. In combination with the signatures that appear throughout the manuscript, the distinctive styles evident in the notation of the tunes will be examined in order to identify the scribes of the manuscript's repertoire. Following this analysis, the versions of individual tunes in the manuscript will be examined and compared with other versions in Fr John Quinn's paper-based archive in order to identify their musical source. Although the consistent references to "Kiernan's music" and "Music by Kiernan" may suggest that the music was predominantly sourced from Kernan's teaching, a certain number of tunes display characteristics suggesting that were obtained from printed material, and therefore these tunes will need to be further examined to ascertain their original printed source. To determine an accurate timeline of the chronology of the manuscript, an investigation of the scribes' biographical details and an examination of the histories of the individual tunes that are compiled in Source H will be conducted. Given that the manuscript does not contain any visible dates written by the scribes, this analysis will provide an estimated timeline of compilation. In order to discover the underlying motives leading to the transcription of the manuscript, an analysis of the music notations, in tandem with the use of circumstantial evidence and logic, will be conducted. The penultimate section of this chapter will focus on the repertoire of the manuscript. The Smyth MS was compiled by Lawrence Smyth (1866-1930), who was a member of the second generation of the Kernan fiddle lineage, having been taught by Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), who in turn was taught by Thomas Kernan. Thus Smyth's musical

heritage creates a tangible link between the Smyth MS and the two manuscripts previously examined in this dissertation, the Leonard-Kernan MS (Chapter Four) and the McBrien-Rogers MS (Chapter Five). By comparison with the Leonard-Kernan MS, whose contents are indicative of the music that Kernan was playing in the mid-1840s, the Smyth MS was transcribed at least sixty years later, and therefore its musical contents are representative of the tunes that were played in a later period of the Kernan fiddle lineage. This chronological gap provides an opportunity in this section to examine how the canon of repertoire in this homogenous fiddle tradition developed during this specific period of music-making. Lastly, the dissemination of the manuscript's repertoire in recent decades among the current generation of musicians from the region, and the central role of Fr Quinn in this process, will be explored through an examination of relevant printed material and commercial recordings.

## **6.2 Provenance of manuscript**

The Larry Smyth MS came to the attention of Fr John Quinn while he was a curate in the parish of Granard, Co. Longford, from 1968 to 1970 (Ward, 2011b). During this tenure, he taught Religion in the local Granard Vocational School, and these classes brought him into contact with teenagers from a wide area of north Longford and the neighbouring parishes of Cavan and Westmeath. He also taught music privately in the Parochial House, Granard, and many of his pupils were from among those he had in his religion classes. One of his fiddle students was Lawrence Smyth of Kilbride, Abbeylara, who came from a strong musical background. His father, Seán (c1918-1990), played the fiddle and accordion, while his grandfather, Lawrence (1866-1930), also referred to as 'Larry', played the fiddle. During this period of tuition, Lawrence informed Fr Quinn that there was a music manuscript at home written by his grandfather, Larry. Subsequently, in order to study its contents further, Fr Quinn borrowed this

document and made a copy of it. Lawrence remains the current custodian of the original manuscript in his home in Kilbride, Abbeylara.

Although this manuscript is a stand-alone document, Lawrence recalls that when he was young boy there was a “stack of music” in the house, indicating that there may have been more music in the form of printed material and/or manuscripts in the possession of his father and grandfather (Ward, 2011f). However, according to Lawrence, due to dampness and decay over a long period of time, a significant amount of these documents became illegible and were probably discarded. Alternatively, he is of the opinion that some of the music might have been taken by his aunt Julie (d. June 2013) back to Coventry, England, when she came home for Seán’s funeral in 1990.

### **6.3 Lawrence Smyth (1866-1930)**

The main scribe of the Smyth MS is Lawrence (*henceforth* Larry) Smyth. He was baptised on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1866 (CPR, 2015c, p.196), and reared in Killasonna, Granard, by his parents, Daniel Smyth and Julia (née Brady). According to baptismal records (Connerton, 1983), Daniel and Julia had three other children, John (b.1859), Bridget (b.1862) and Thomas (b.1868). A review of the 1901 Census of Ireland for inhabitants of County Longford fails to list anyone matching Larry Smyth’s biographical details. However, in the subsequent census in 1911, a ‘Laurence Smyth’ and a ‘Bridget Smyth’ (d.1964) are listed as living in Ranaghan, Abbeylara, in the house of Smyth’s aunt, also named Bridget Smyth (NAI, 2013a). Based on circumstantial evidence it is likely that this is the same Larry Smyth, the scribe at the focus of this chapter. Specifically, Smyth’s year of birth calculated from the census, 1866/67, matches the corresponding date on his birth certificate, 1866.<sup>56</sup> Given that Bridget’s place of birth is listed

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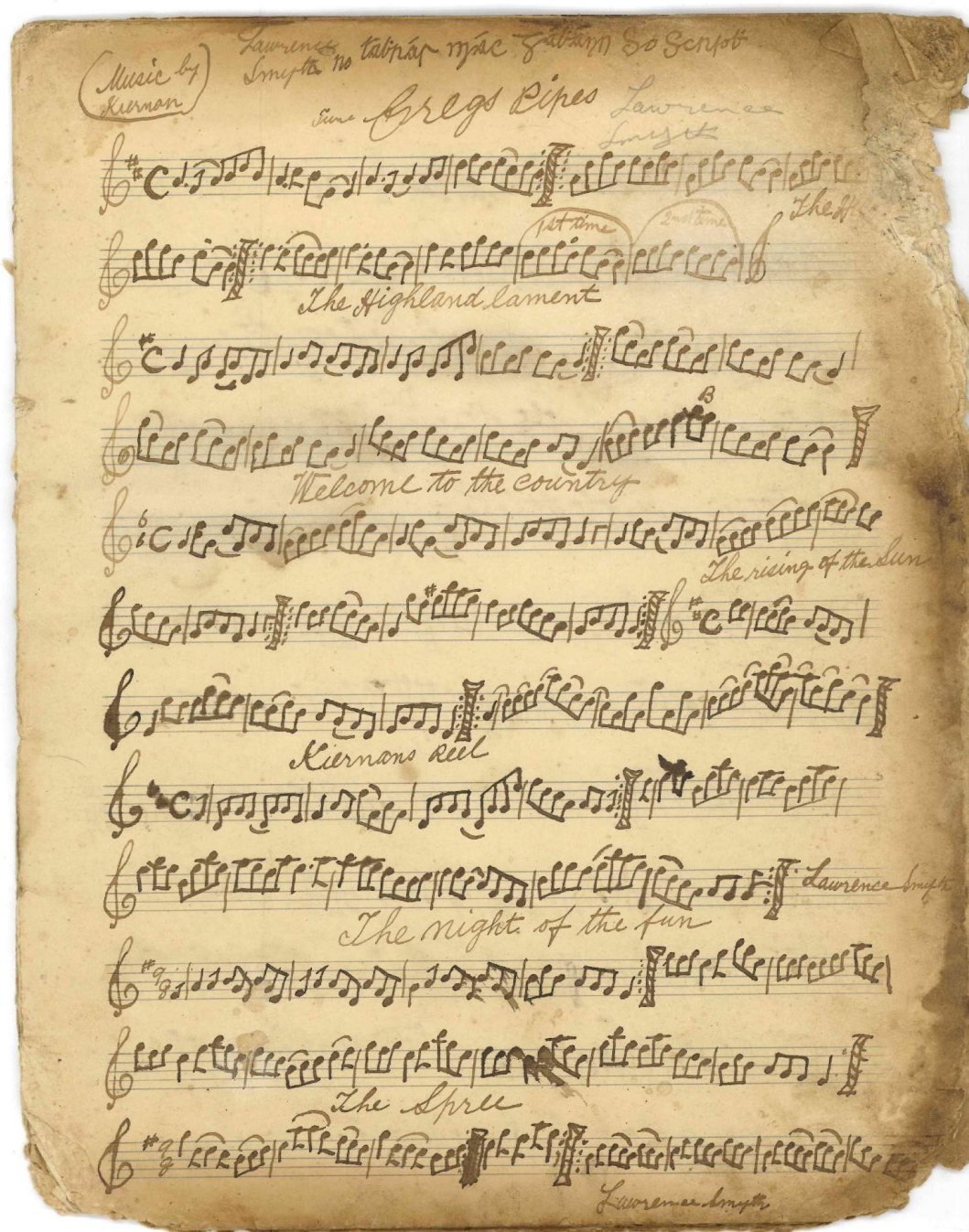
<sup>56</sup> 1911 (year of census) – 44 (his age on census) = 1866/7

as ‘Dublin’ on the census, and that they were married ‘under one year’ at that specific time, it is likely that Smyth met his future wife while working in Dublin. Based on this entry in the 1911 census, it can be assumed that, after their nuptials, they moved temporarily to Ranaghan, Abbeylara, before they eventually settled in the neighbouring townland of Kilbride, Abbeylara. Smyth’s death certificate states he was a labourer during his lifetime, and that he died of pneumonia on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1930, at the age of sixty-three (FMP, 2013e).

## **6.4 Manuscript construction and layout**

In contrast to the Leonard-Kernan MS and the McBrien-Rogers MS, both of which are categorised as ‘assembled’ manuscripts, the Smyth MS contains the characteristics of a ‘preformed’ manuscript (Moloney, 2000). These features include consistent gatherings of leaves, one paper-type, namely woven, uniform rastra measurements, and tunes which are continued from the last page of one gathering to the first page of the next. In total, there are twelve leaves in the manuscript, each with twelve music staves printed on both sides. By and large, the musical notation is clear and legible, but in some instances the ink has faded considerably. Additionally, decay on the top right hand side of the leaves has led to the loss of a small number of music bars and tune titles. Although there is at present a loose outer cover on the manuscript, Fr Quinn is of the opinion that for conservation reasons, he may have added it himself when he initially borrowed this document from the Smyth family (Ward, 2011b).

Plate 18: A sample leaf from the Larry Smyth MS: leaf 8r



(Source: Lawrence Smyth, of Kilbride, Abbeylara, Co. Longford)

## 6.5 Scribes

Based on an examination of the music notational styles in the manuscript it can be established that the music items were written by two scribes, who have initially been labelled as ‘Scribe A’ and ‘Scribe B’. As documented in Source H, of the 124 music items in the manuscript, Scribe A and Scribe B wrote 119 and 5 items respectively. Through an examination of inscriptions written throughout the manuscript, there is compelling evidence that the dominant scribe in this document, Scribe A, is Larry Smyth. He autographed his name twenty times in all, five of which are written in Irish, occurring as both ‘Lábhras Mac Gábhann’ and ‘Lorcan Mac Gábhann’.<sup>57</sup> In two instances he has added the phrase ‘do scriobh’ after his signature to confirm beyond doubt that he was the manuscript’s main scribe.

The likely candidate for Scribe B is Smyth’s son, Seán, to whom he taught the fiddle. It is possible, though less likely, that Scribe B was another musician, who was visiting Smyth in his home. Of the five music items attributed to Scribe B, only one is complete, ‘Sporting Paddy’ (LS.015). It appears at the top of leaf 2v. Another tune written by Scribe B, the ‘French March’ (LS.098), is nearly complete, the last two and a half bars of the tune being missing. This tune appears to have been copied from *Kerr’s First Collection of Merry Melodies* (n.d.; c1870-75).<sup>58</sup> The location of this tune in Kerr’s book, at the bottom of a page, suggests that the corner of the page may have been missing in the scribe’s copy of the book, and that this may explain why the transcription was not completed.

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<sup>57</sup> ‘Lábhras’ and ‘Lorcan’ are both Irish translations of the English forename ‘Lawrence’, while ‘Mac Gábhann’ is an attempt at writing the Irish form of the surname ‘Smyth’

<sup>58</sup> James S. Kerr, *Kerr’s First Collection of Merry Melodies*, (Glasgow, c.1870-75), ‘French March’ (No.30, p.30)

## 6.6 Sources of repertoire

There appears to be two main sources of repertoire in the Smyth MS. The first was Smyth's teacher, Bernard Rogers, the second printed material.

### 6.6.1 Bernard Rogers

According to his son, Seán (Ward, 2011b), Smyth was taught by Bernard Rogers (1856-1907). As there was only ten years between them in age, Smyth may have been one of Rogers' first students, or alternatively, he may have learned from Rogers when he an adult. Despite learning from Rogers, Smyth's consistent referral to Thomas Kernan throughout the manuscript leaves little doubt that the majority of the manuscript's repertoire taught to Smyth by Rogers was derived from the teaching of Kernan. The references to Kernan, ten in total, include the phrases 'Kiernan's music' and 'Music by Kiernan' (e.g.: see Plate 18, top left hand corner of leaf). A further connection is made by Smyth to Kernan in the titles of four music items, 'Kiernan's Jig' (LS.064), 'Kiernan's Hornpipe' (LS.071), 'Kiernan's Reel' (LS.082) and 'Preludes by Kiernan' (LS.094). The consistent use of "Kiernan" in these titles forged a tangible link for Smyth between his music and his fiddle predecessor, Kernan. As Steve Coleman states, references to people in this manner serve "like quotation [used in song] to carry images of persons along with the distinctive form" (1997, p.49). The fact that Smyth referred to Kernan throughout the document and not his own teacher, Rogers, reveals the musical respect in which Kernan was held at that time in local circles. Given Kernan's fame, Rogers was probably keen to exploit his uncle's reputation and may have constantly impressed upon Smyth that the music he taught him derived from Kernan.

An examination of the textual evidence reveals also a small proportion of the repertoire that Rogers subsequently taught to Smyth may have been learned independently of Kernan. This is

evidenced by a number of tunes in the manuscript that were newly composed quite close to the time of Kernan's death in 1887, making it very unlikely that Kernan taught these tunes to Rogers. For example, 'My Queen Valse' (LS.089) was composed by Procida Bucalossi (1832-1918) in 1881 and was written by Rogers as the first tune in the set of waltzes 'Valse: My Queen' (MBR.026-MBR.029) in the McBrien-Rogers MS (Chapter Five).

In the light of the evidence outlined in this section, in summary it can be said that of the 124 music items in the manuscript 109 items, representing 88% of the total, was sourced from Rogers.

### **6.6.2 Printed material**

An analysis of the manuscript's repertoire reveals that 15 tunes are characteristic of those sourced from printed material, accounting for the remaining 12% of the total repertoire in the manuscript. Within this category, the tunes may be classified into two sub-categories: firstly tunes sourced directly from printed material, and secondly tunes assimilated from printed material.

The first sub-category refers to tunes in the manuscript that are identical, or almost identical, with their counterparts in printed material, indicating that they were transcribed directly from these printed sources. As documented in Source H, the main printed music collections that the scribes appear to have copied from include: *The Second Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland*, ed. R.M. Levey (1873); *Kerr's First Collection of Merry Melodies* ed. James S. Kerr, (n.d.; c1870-1875) and *Collection of Irish Traditional Music*, Vol.2, ed. Francis Roche, (1912).

The second sub-category consists of tunes seen to contain minor differences in the music text when compared with their respective versions in printed material. This loss in accuracy may have occurred through assimilative processes, whereby the tune in question was either transcribed from another manuscript, or learned from another musician through oral transmission. In this latter process, it appears that through the teaching of Rogers at least five tunes may have been assimilated by Smyth from Richard Michael Levey's *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland* (1858). Documentary evidence for the likelihood of this conjecture becomes apparent when the repertoire of another manuscript, the McBrien-Rogers MS (Chapter Five), is examined. In this document Rogers transcribed a significant portion of his repertoire from the aforementioned printed music collection, *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland*. The fact that the music texts of the five tunes in this category from the Smyth MS are almost identical with their counterparts in the McBrien-Rogers MS, which in turn were copied from Levey's printed music collection, suggests that Rogers taught Smyth tunes he himself had learned from Levey's book. Further evidence for this supposition is provided by the fact that four of these five tunes appear in a cluster in the manuscript, namely numbers LS.090 to LS.093. In addition to printed music collections, there are also tunes in the manuscript that appear to have been assimilated from sheet music. Tunes from this category include waltzes and polkas that were composed in the western art music tradition during the nineteenth century. Examples of such tunes are 'Jenny Lind Polka' (LS.019) and 'Donaulieder Waltz' (LS.021), which were composed by Anton Wallerstein (1813-1892) and Louis Antoine Jullien (1812-1860) respectively, during the mid-nineteenth century (see Figure 19 below for former tune).

**Figure 19: ‘Jenny Lind Polka’ (LS.019) – example of Western Art Music in the Larry Smyth MS**



(Source: Larry Smyth MS – Source H)

## 6.7 Methods of transmission

It can be inferred that the tunes Smyth sourced from Rogers were more than likely transcribed by Smyth through oral transmission, either immediately from the playing of Rogers in a live performance during tuition or, as is more likely, from his memory of these performances at a later date. The main reason for this theory is that the melody and rhythm of several tunes in the manuscript appear to have been transcribed from their original source incorrectly. An example of a tune that has a faulty rhythm structure is ‘Drowsy Moggie’ (LS.110): at the beginning of both the first strain and the second strain in this tune, Smyth erroneously placed what should have been the first down-beat of each strain as the anacrusis.

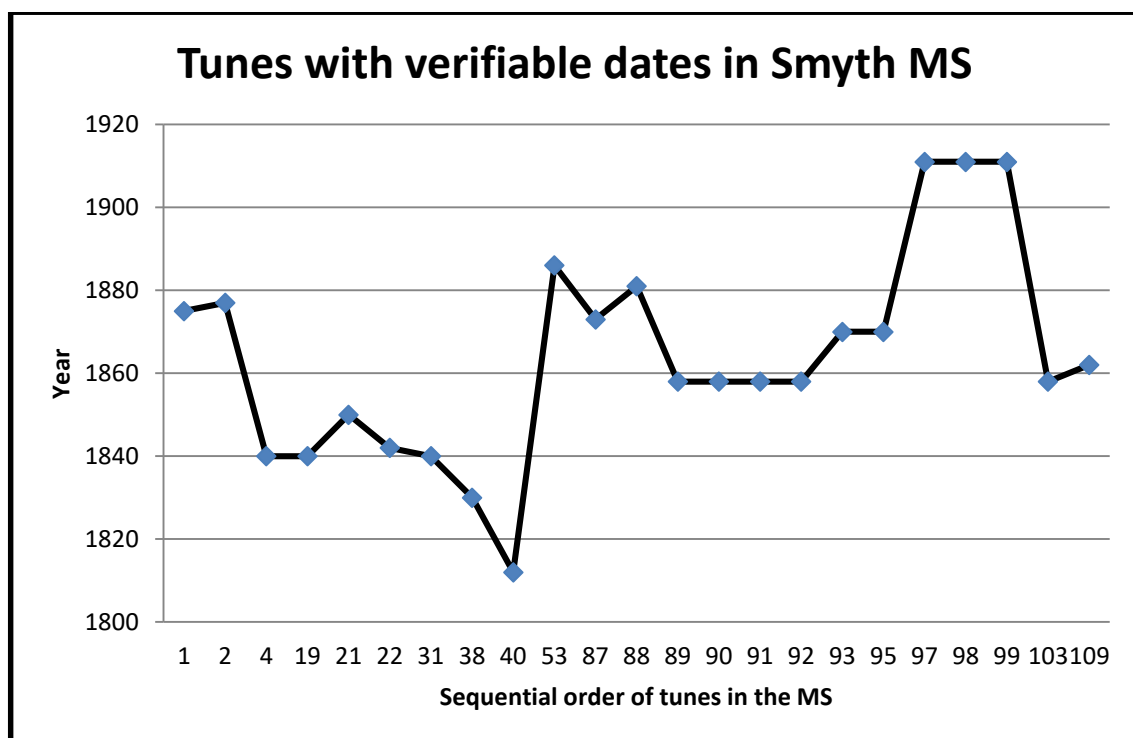
## 6.8 Chronology of manuscript

Leaving aside the transcriptions by Scribe B, thought to be Larry Smyth’s son, Seán, the broadest possible horizon for the transcriptions by Scribe A, Larry Smyth, into the manuscript can be taken as some time during his lifetime, namely between the years 1866 and 1930.

Another crucial date in establishing the manuscript's chronology is the death of his teacher, Bernard Rogers, in 1907. Smyth must already have known how to play the fiddle before this date. To establish a more precise timeline of his transcribing activities, textual evidence from the manuscript will be examined in this section.

As outlined in *4.5 Chronology of manuscript*, when dealing with the Leonard-Kernan MS, the chronology of a manuscript may be determined more accurately from an examination of the historical details of tunes in the manuscript. Tunes that have a verifiable year of composition, or were copied from printed material with a known date of publication, provide the earliest date that a tune could have been transcribed. For example, 'My Queen Valse' (LS.089) was composed by Procida Bucalossi (1832-1918) in 1881, and therefore Smyth could not have possibly transcribed it before that year. Using this methodology, the verifiable dates of all the tunes in the Smyth MS were identified, the results of which are presented in Figure 20:

**Figure 20: Tunes with verifiable dates in the Larry Smyth MS**



An analysis of the underlying data in Figure 20 reveals that the first two tunes of the manuscript, ‘Barney Take Me Home Again’ (LS.001) and ‘The Boys of Wexford’ (LS.002) were not composed until 1875 and c1877 respectively, and therefore, assuming that the manuscript was written in sequential order, the transcription of the manuscript was unlikely to have started before 1877. A link to the next decade, the 1880s, is established through the tune ‘My Queen Valse’ (LS.089), which was composed in 1881. The latest verifiable date in the manuscript, 1912, derives from three tunes that were transcribed by Smyth from Roche’s *Collection of Irish Airs, Marches and Dance Tunes*, Vol.2, (1912). However, these tunes are written in an ink different from that used for the other tunes in the manuscript and are located towards the end of the document on leaf 10r. It is possible, therefore, that they could have been transcribed at a later date than the preceding tunes.

Based on the textual evidence outlined, there are a number of possible dates that the manuscript may have been transcribed. If the Roche transcriptions are of a later date than the rest of the manuscript, the main content of the manuscript may have been transcribed at some time between 1881 and 1912, and the Roche transcriptions added after 1912. If, however, the Roche transcriptions were not later additions to the manuscript, then the manuscript must have been written at some time between the years 1912 and 1930.

In support of a date of transcription at the earliest end of these possibilities is the presumption that Smyth may have learned the fiddle from Rogers in his teenage years in the first half of the 1880s. In this scenario Smyth would have been one of the first of Rogers’ pupils. He could therefore have decided to write down his repertoire in the later 1880s or early 1890s. The majority of the dated tunes fit in with this timeline.

There are some clues, however, that support a later timeline for the transcription of the manuscript. An important clue is that Smyth transcribed his name and various phrases *as*

*Gaeilge* throughout the manuscript (see Plate 18). Smyth, having been born in 1866, would not have learned Irish in his school days.<sup>59</sup> It may be surmised therefore that Smyth was attending local classes promoted by *Conradh na Gaeilge*, an organisation particularly active in promoting cultural nationalism in the opening years of the twentieth century. It is possible that these language classes were held in conjunction with fiddle classes, which would explain Smyth's consistent desire to practise his Irish in the manuscript. For example, he incorrectly transcribed the Irish phrase 'an puirt' beside the slip jig, 'Tip it Off' (LS.026). He should have used the singular form 'an port', a grammatical error which suggests he was not fully conversant with the language. It is possible that Rogers was himself involved in the Irish classes<sup>60</sup>, and that Smyth may only have learned the fiddle at this stage, when he would already be in his thirties. In this scenario, he would have been one of the last of Rogers' pupils.<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, it is not impossible that Smyth may have learned the fiddle from Rogers in the 1880s, and only decided to write out his repertoire at this later age in his life.

Supporting the possibility of an even later date for the transcription of the manuscript, a date after 1912, which would allow for the Roche tunes to be included in the original work, and perhaps even a date in the 1920s, the decade preceding his death in 1930, is the fact that in 6.3 *Lawrence Smyth (1866-1930)* it was established that Smyth moved to Dublin at some stage in his youth, and only returned to his native area in Longford around 1910 after he had just married his wife, Bridget. Their children were born in the following decade. If the manuscript was

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<sup>59</sup> Irish was not included in the curriculum of National Schools until 1922.

<sup>60</sup> Irish was still spoken, at least by the older generation, in the Corn Hill area of County Longford, where Rogers lived during his lifetime, the last native speakers surviving until the 1940s in this area (Ward, 2011b).

<sup>61</sup> Fr John Quinn recalls that Seán Smyth mentioned John Harte as a person who had also learned the fiddle from Rogers as well as his father. Harte was twenty one years younger than Larry Smyth and so, if both had been learning at the same time, this would imply that Smyth was in his thirties at the time. However, Fr Quinn cannot be certain that Seán made any suggestion that they were learning from Rogers at the same time.

written at a time when he was preparing to teach the fiddle to his own children, a date in the 1920s can be seen as a credible possibility.

Of these three timelines, the middle one is the most probable, giving a date for the transcription of the manuscript in the first decade of the twentieth century, if one assumes the Roche tunes were added later, or soon after 1912, if they were in the original work. As the Smyth manuscript shows no signs of being a teaching instrument, as did the earlier Leonard-Kernan and McBrien-Rogers manuscripts, it is not necessary to place the period of Smyth's learning of the fiddle from Rogers later than his teenage years in the 1880s.

If the transcriptions by Scribe B are written by Smyth's son, Sean, they must have been added during his lifetime, between c1930, when he became a teenager, and 1990, the year of his death.

## **6.9 Repertoire**

### **6.9.1 Introduction**

In total, there are 124 music items in the manuscript, of which 123 are tunes. The one other item is a set of preludes entitled 'Preludes by Kiernan' (LS.094) (see Figure 21). These are a type of exercise, typically played before one commences playing a tune. Preludes were, more than likely, a key method used by Kernan and his successors in teaching the fundamentals of scales, and therefore they will be explored in Chapter Nine, which deals specifically with this subject, as it pertains collectively to all the written sources in this dissertation (see *9.2 Methods of teaching fiddle style*).

**Figure 21: ‘Preludes by Kiernan’ (LS.094) – prelude exercises in the Larry Smyth MS**

No.1 [G Major]

5 No.2 [D Major]

9 No.3 [A Major]

13 No.4 [F Major]

17 No.5 [C Major]

21 No.6 - B Major

25 No.7 - G Minor

31 No.8 - E Minor

37 No.9 - A Minor

43 No.10 - D Minor

The image displays ten musical exercises, each on a single staff. Each exercise is a prelude in a specific key signature and time signature. The exercises are numbered 1 through 10, with their starting measure numbers (5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 31, 37, 43) indicated on the left. The keys are: No.1 [G Major], No.2 [D Major], No.3 [A Major], No.4 [F Major], No.5 [C Major], No.6 - B Major, No.7 - G Minor, No.8 - E Minor, No.9 - A Minor, and No.10 - D Minor. The time signatures are 6/8 for No.1, 2/4 for No.2 through No.10. The notation includes treble clefs, key signatures, and various note values (quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes) and rests.

(Source: Larry Smyth MS – Source H)

With regards to the 123 tunes in the Smyth MS, it was previously established in 6.6 *Sources of repertoire* that 109 of these tunes were taught to Smyth by his teacher, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), and, in turn, a large percentage of Rogers' repertoire was taught to him by Kernan. Based on this information, coupled with a survey of the chronological details of Rogers' formative years, it may be deduced that the repertoire of the Smyth MS represents, by and large, the tunes that Kernan himself was playing between approximately 1865 and 1875, the period during which Rogers would have been learning from Kernan.

From this deduction two themes emerge: (1) the rate of success in the process of transmitting fiddle music from one generation to another within the Kernan fiddle lineage, and (2) the development of repertoire and style during a specific period of time. To examine these themes critically, one source that may be compared with the Kernan derived repertoire in the Smyth MS, and which may represent the repertoire Rogers himself had acquired from Kernan during his years of learning the fiddle, and therefore the tunes Kernan himself was playing at that time, is the repertoire contained in the Leonard-Kernan MS (Chapter Four), which for the most part, was written by Kernan and his student, Michael Leonard (c1835-1886), during music lessons in the period approximately 1844 to 1846. Therefore, to examine accurately these two themes, transmission and development of fiddle music, 100 tunes in the Leonard-Kernan MS were compared with 109 tunes in the Smyth MS.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> A total of 100 tunes were chosen for this exercise from the Leonard-Kernan MS. These tunes included those that were written by Thomas Kernan and Michael Leonard in both Folio A and Folio B of the manuscript. Tunes transcribed from printed material were excluded.

### 6.9.2 Transmission of fiddle music in the Kernan fiddle lineage: c1845-c1875

In order to determine the relative consistency of Kernan's repertoire in the specific period c1845 to c1875, a search was conducted to identify the tunes found in common in the repertoires of the Leonard-Kernan MS and the Larry Smyth MS. This analysis reveals that only six tunes were found in common between the repertoire samples, namely: '[Weel May the] Keel Row' (LK.012; [LS.025]); 'Tip it Off' (LK.011; LS.026); 'Monny/[Money] Musk' (LK.041; [LS.034]); 'I Wish I Never Saw You' (LK.036 & LK.065; LS.037); 'Lady Carbry's Fancy Reel/[Lady Carbrey]' (LK.035 & LK.059; [LS.056]) and 'The Woman of the House/[The Cup of Tea]' (LK.125; [LS.067]). An example of one of these tunes 'Tip it Off' found in common to the two manuscripts is demonstrated here:

**Figure 22: 'Tip it Off' (LK.011) – in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS – Vol.II, Source A)

**Figure 23: ‘Tip it Off’ (LS.026) – in the Larry Smyth MS**

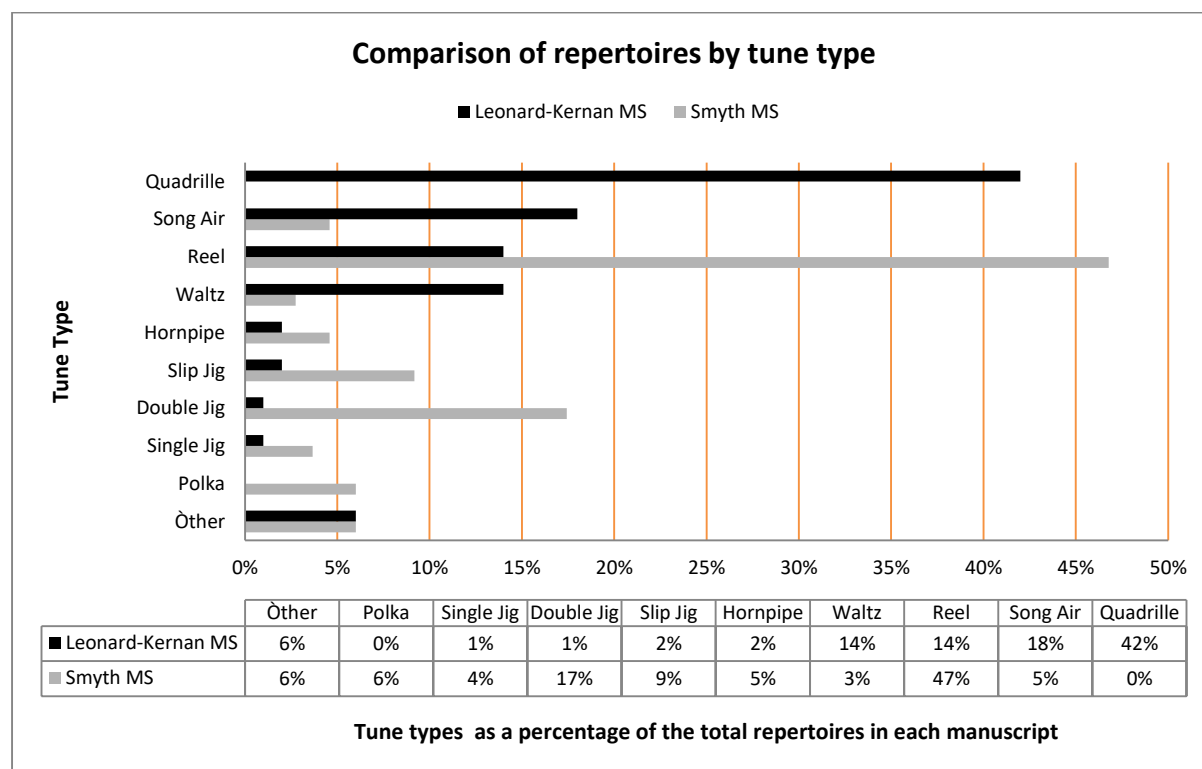


**(Source: Larry Smyth MS – Vol.II, Source H)**

In statistical terms, it demonstrates that only 6% of the 100 tunes taught by Kernan to a first generation student in the Kernan fiddle tradition, Michael Leonard, in the mid-1840s, were successively transmitted to a second generation fiddle player, Larry Smyth, in the 1880s. While neither of the repertoires in the two manuscripts, Leonard-Kernan MS and Smyth MS, can claim to represent Kernan’s entire repertoire at those points in time, it is evident from the lack of congruity between the repertoires of the two manuscripts that the make-up of Kernan’s repertoire evolved dramatically in the period *c*1845-*c*1875, most likely in response to changes that were occurring at this time in local music and dance traditions. To test this supposition further, the tune types of 100 tunes in the Leonard-Kernan MS were compared to 109 tunes in the Smyth MS, the results of which are illustrated in Figure 24:

### 6.9.3 Evolution of Kernan's repertoire

**Figure 24: A comparison of repertoires by tune type between the Leonard-Kernan MS and the Larry Smyth MS**



Due to the relative popularity of dancing among rural communities during the nineteenth century, dance music had arguably the largest impact on the repertoires of Irish musicians at this time. The repertoires of the two manuscripts, Leonard-Kernan MS and the Smyth MS, derive from two periods thirty years apart, approximately 1845 and 1875, and therefore their combined music content is generally indicative of the prevailing dances from the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, the results of Figure 24 show that dance music evolved dramatically in this specific timeframe. In particular, music for quadrilles and waltzes from the ballroom era pre-1850, were later replaced by reels, jigs, hornpipes and polkas as the dominant tune types post-1850. To uncover the factors leading to this trend, the following sections will

analyse the evolution of two of the more prominent tune types in Figure 24, music specifically for quadrilles on the one hand, and reels and double jigs on the other.

### **(i) Music for Quadrilles**

The results of Figure 24 reveal that music for quadrilles suffered a sharp drop during the period under investigation, *c*1845-*c*1875. This tune type shifted from a dominant position in the Leonard-Kernan MS, representing 42% of the total repertoire, to the lowest position in the Smyth MS by failing to register a single tune in this latter document. The main factor for this downward pattern is that the music for quadrilles evolved in response to changes that occurred to its respective dance form during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Specific tunes that were originally used as music for quadrilles were slowly replaced by existing Irish tunes from local repertoires in order to keep abreast of the gradual changes in its dance form. Originally the music used for quadrilles derived solely from Western art music. For example, the ‘Lancers Quadrills’ (LK.004-LK.008) in the Leonard-Kernan MS is a set of five tunes from the Western art music tradition as arranged by Jean Duval in the 1810s, e.g. ‘[Lancers Quadrills:] No.2’ (LK.005), composed by Paolo Spagnoletti (1768-1834). Over time the original Western art tunes used in this manner, normally in rhythms of 2/4 and 6/8, were gradually replaced by tunes in the same rhythms, typically polkas and single jigs, which already existed in the Irish music tradition (Boullier, 2012). This changeover from the use of Western art music to Irish music in music for quadrilles was already heralded by the appearance of Irish tunes in several sets of quadrilles arranged from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. One example is ‘The Royal Irish Set of Quadrilles’ famously arranged by the French composer Louis-Antoine Jullien (1812-1860) for the visit of Queen Victoria to Ireland in 1849 (ITMA, 2015a).<sup>63</sup> In addition to Jullien, several other arrangers from a western art music background started to employ folk tunes in

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<sup>63</sup> A version of this set appears in the O’Farrell MS-A entitled ‘The Royal Irish Quadrilles’ (PF.005-PF.009).

their arrangements. For instance, Charles D'Albert (1809-1886), produced quadrille sets based on Scottish folk tunes, such as 'Bonnie Dundee: The Third Quadrille on Scottish airs' (NLA, 2014a).

During the second half of the nineteenth century, sets of quadrilles were typically published on sheet music, or in printed music collections such as the *Musician's Omnibus*, Vols. 1-4, (Boston, 1862-1869), edited by Elias Howe. In tandem with this printed material, the evolution of music for quadrilles can be seen in the Irish music manuscripts, which were compiled in this period in various regions of Ireland. For instance, the music for quadrilles in the Philip Carolan MSS of Co. Mayo, which were written in the 1860s, consists of a mixture of Irish and non-Irish repertoire. As Buckley points out, this intermediary stage in the development of quadrille music "indicates that the assimilation of the dance type into the Irish repertoire was an on-going process" (2007, p.97). In the context of the local Kernan fiddle lineage, the repertoires of the Leonard-Kernan MS and the Smyth MS also demonstrate the evolution of music for quadrilles in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The specific tunes from Western art music that dominate the repertoire of the music for quadrilles in the Leonard-Kernan MS have been replaced in the Smyth MS by reels, double jigs, polkas and single jigs from Irish music, which may have been played at that time for variants of the most popular quadrille dances in the locality.

## **(ii) Reels and Double Jigs**

Another observable trend in the results of Figure 24 is the emergence of reels and double jigs as the prevailing tune types in the local Kernan fiddle tradition during the period c1845-c1875. In the Leonard-Kernan MS these tune types represent 14% and 1% of the total repertoire respectively, whereas the corresponding figures in the Smyth MS show a significant increase to 47% and 17% respectively. The emerging dominance of these two tune types in this period

is indicative of a trend that was occurring in Irish dance at that time, whereby reels and double jigs had become the staple requirement for dance performances, particularly set dancing and figure dancing, which by the end of the nineteenth century had become two of the more popular dances that were performed in local settings all over Ireland, such as house dances and cross-road dances. The culmination of this development in dance performance is evident in the Capt. Francis O'Neill's iconic publication from 1907, *The Dance Music of Ireland: 1001 Gems* (1907), in which reels and double jigs are the two leading tune types. The national popularity of these tune types, as demonstrated by O'Neill's book, was also true of the Connemara region. This is illustrated in the following account of the typical dances that were performed at cross-road dances at the turn of twentieth century in Moyne, Co. Longford: "Eight Hand Reels, Four Hand Reels, Waltzes, Jenny Lin's Polkas, Royal Charlie, The Lancers Dance, Half Sets and the Waves of Tory" (NFC, 2013d). For several of these local dances, reels, and double jigs to a lesser degree, would have been required from the accompanying musicians.

While double jigs were traditionally part of Irish music from at least the seventeenth century onwards, reels were introduced at a much later date through the assimilation of newly-composed Scottish fiddle music at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This was substantiated in *4.10 Repertoire*, where it was established that the majority of the reels in Folio A (c1844-c1846) of the Leonard-Kernan MS had originated from Scotland. Of the 14 reels in that manuscript that are included in the results of Figure 24, the only one that appears to have a connection to Ireland is 'Tom Steel' (LK.048), the title of which commemorates Thomas Ennis Steele (1788-1848) of Co. Clare, a Protestant landlord, who was a close friend of Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847).

From a survey of printed music collections published in the first half of the nineteenth century, it is clear that the lack of Irish reels in the Leonard-Kernan MS is indicative of the situation in Irish music as a whole in the first half of the nineteenth century. For instance, in *O'Farrell's*

*Pocket Companion for the Irish or Union Pipes*, Vols. 1-4, (c1805-1810) there are only a few reels that have associations with Ireland in their titles, such as ‘The Humours of Castlecomber’.<sup>64</sup> In a trend similar to that in O’Farrell’s collection, a survey of the tunes in a later collection, *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland*, (1858), edited by R.M. Levey, reveals that a relatively small proportion, approximately 10% of the tunes in this collection, are reels, and only a handful of these have titles implying an Irish origin. Thus, it may be deduced from an examination of the reels in the Leonard-Kernan MS, and the aforementioned printed music collections, that reels of implied Irish origin were only beginning to appear in Irish music from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Even tunes, such as these, however, of seeming Irish provenance, may still be of Scottish origin: a claim that, for example, ‘The Humours of Castlecomber’ is Scottish occurs in the John Burks MS of 1821, where it is simply called “A Scotch Reel”.<sup>65</sup>

In the subsequent third quarter of that century, a rapid growth of Irish reels, or at least of reels with Irish references in their titles, was witnessed across Ireland. This trend is most apparent in two collections of Irish music manuscripts from the 1860s, the James Goodman MSS of Munster (Vol.1: Shields & Shields, 1998; Vol.2: Shields & Shields, 2013) and the Philip Carolan MSS of Co. Mayo, both of which contain a significant amount of reels with Irish titles, e.g. ‘The Humours of Strokestown’ (No.57)<sup>66</sup> in the latter manuscript (Buckley, 2007, Part 2, p.22). In the context of the developing Kernan fiddle tradition in Connmhaicne, the prominence of reels with Irish titles is also evident in the Smyth MS. Examples include: ‘The Old Torn Petticoat I Got in M[ullingar]’ (LS.014) (see Figure 25); ‘Miss Bolton: Star of Munster’ (LS.024); ‘The Drogheda [*recte*: Drogheda] Reel’ (LS.027) and ‘Longford Beggarwoman’

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<sup>64</sup> O’Farrell. (c1805). *O’Farrell’s Pocket Companion for the Irish or Union Pipes*, Vol.1. London. ‘The Humours of Castlecomber’, p. 26

<sup>65</sup> Andrew Kuntz: [http://tuneearch.org/wiki/Belfast\\_Lasses](http://tuneearch.org/wiki/Belfast_Lasses)

<sup>66</sup> A variant of “The Woman of the House”

(LS.123). That these titles are not exclusive to Longford and Leitrim manuscript sources, but are used widely throughout Ireland, and that they have no known Scottish counterparts, suggests that they may have been composed by Irish musicians.

**Figure 25: ‘Old Torn Petticoat I Got in M[ullingar]’ (LS.014) – in the Larry Smyth MS**



(Source: Larry Smyth MS – Source H)

#### 6.9.4 Previously unpublished repertoire

Another observable feature of the underlying data in Figure 24 is that it has not been possible to match a relatively high proportion of reels and jigs in the repertoire of the Smyth MS with tunes in printed music collections published before the date the manuscript is thought to have been transcribed. These include: ‘Miss Murray’ (LS.029); ‘Ladies Step up to Tea’ (LS.030); ‘The Maiden Magpie’ (LS.061); ‘Handsome Sally’ (LS.062); ‘Pin Her Against the Gate’ (LS.068); ‘Thresh the Protestants’ (LS.076) and ‘The Road to Mirth’ (LS.085) (see Figure

26).<sup>67</sup> There is no evidence that these tunes were composed by a fiddle player from the Kernan fiddle lineage or by another local musician. Nevertheless, their absence in the major printed music collections of Irish music highlights the importance of the Smyth MS as body of music from a localised region of Connhaicne, and also as a valuable source of regional music that has otherwise been neglected.

**Figure 26: ‘The Road to Mirth’ (LS.085) – in the Larry Smyth MS**



(Source: Larry Smyth MS – Source H)

## 6.10 Dissemination

Since 1966, Fr John Quinn has tutored céilí bands in the Connhaicne region. His musical ethos in this role is to promote and disseminate the forgotten repertoire of this region. While stationed as a curate in Lanesborough, Co. Longford between 1971 and 1979, he formed céilí bands there

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<sup>67</sup> Two of these tunes, ‘Ladies Step up to Tea’ (LS.030) and ‘Pin Her Against the Gate’ (LS.068), were published by Breandán Breathnach and Jackie Small in *Ceol Rince na hÉireann*, Vols.1-5, (Dublin, 1963-1999), while ‘Miss Murray’ (LS.029) was published by Josephine Keegan in *A Drop in the Ocean* (Keegan, 2004). However, all of these tunes were sourced by the editors, either directly and indirectly, from manuscripts within the region of Connhaicne.

and taught the members repertoire from local sources, one of which was the Larry Smyth MS. Two members of those bands were the McGivney brothers, Éamon and Seán, formerly of Granard, Co. Longford, now living in Co. Clare and London respectively. The McGivneys have become well-known musicians and in numerous ways have further aided the process of disseminating the music from the Larry Smyth MS. For example, six tunes that were published by Josephine Keegan in her music collection *A Drop in the Ocean* were obtained by her from Seán McGivney when they met in the 1970s (2004, p.14): ‘The Drogheda [*recte*: Drogheda] Reel’ (LS.027); ‘Miss Murray’ (LS.029); ‘The Tap Room’ (LS.040); ‘The Hen and the Clutch’ (LS.045); ‘Welcome to the Country’ (LS.080) and ‘O’Neill’s Jigg’ (LS.088).

Éamon McGivney has also disseminated music from the Smyth MS. The tune commonly known as ‘McGibbney’s Hornpipe/Fancy’ (his surname is often misspelt) is in fact a version of ‘The Cuckoo’s Nest - The Mower’ (LS.101), derived from the manuscript, which Éamon had learnt during his time in Fr Quinn’s céilí band. In October 2013, Éamon released the album *An Drôle* (Draoinscath: 2013), in collaboration with Peadar Ó Riada and John Kelly. One tune he recorded on this album was the slip jig, ‘Tip it Off’ (LS.026), which he also learnt during his days in that band.<sup>68</sup> Recently, he also recorded a solo album, *Éamon McGivney* (Draoinscath: 2014), which contains several tunes from his formative years in the céilí band, several of which were derived from the Smyth MS: ‘The Hen and the Clutch’ (LS.045); ‘Kiernan’s Jig’ (LS.064); ‘The Night of the Fun’ (LS.083); ‘The Spree’ (LS.084) and ‘Longford Beggarwoman’ (LS.123).

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<sup>68</sup> In the sleeve notes of the album McGivney gives the provenance of the tune as the Kernan MS. However, as Fr Quinn taught tunes from both the Kernan MS and the Smyth MS in the 1970s, and given that the same version is in both manuscripts, it can be attributed to either manuscript.

## 6.11 Conclusion

Chapter Six has examined the Larry Smyth MS, a document that was compiled *c*1900. An analysis of the provenance of the manuscript revealed that this document was originally owned and compiled by the fiddle player, Larry Smyth (1866-1930) of Abbeylara, Co. Longford, before it was passed down through two generations of his family. An examination of the physical attributes of the manuscript demonstrated that this document was acquired by Smyth as a ‘preformed’ document, which contained printed music staves, which he used for the purpose of transcribing his music notations. Based on specific signatures that appear throughout the manuscript such as, ‘Lábhras Mac Gábhann - do scriobh’ (Lawrence Smyth – who wrote), it was deduced that Larry Smyth was the main scribe of the music items in this document. There were also a small number of items written by another scribe, who was not identified conclusively. Other phrases written by Smyth like “Kiernan’s music” and “Music by Kiernan” were evidence that a large proportion of the repertoire in this manuscript had derived from the fiddle master, Thomas Kernan (*c*1807-1887), through one of his students, Bernard Rogers, who was Smyth’s teacher. This unbroken continuum of music transmission through two generations of musicians following on from Kernan, demonstrates the effectiveness of Kernan’s teaching methods and repertoire among the fiddle players of this localised tradition. While the prevailing influence on this group of musicians remained Kernan’s teaching, it was established that the scribes of the Smyth MS were also interested in acquiring additional repertoire from printed music collections published during their lifetimes. At least four different collections were identified from which the scribes had transcribed a small number of tunes. This demonstrates that, in combination with the previously examined manuscripts, Leonard-Kernan MS and McBrien-Rogers MS, the absorption of printed material into the local fiddle tradition was an on-going process.

Based on textual evidence and personal judgment, it was surmised that the manuscript was written in the opening years of the twentieth century, possibly while Smyth was learning the fiddle from Bernard Rogers as an adult learner, perhaps in fiddle classes held in conjunction with Irish language classes, but more probably at a time much later than his learning years, which were more likely to have been in his teenage years in the 1880s. Through an analysis of Smyth's music notations, it was determined that he wrote the majority of the repertoire from an oral source, from either his own knowledge base, or from the live playing of a musician, most likely his teacher, Bernard Rogers. The next section of this chapter examined the repertoire of the Smyth MS obtained by Smyth from Rogers. Specifically, this particular repertoire was compared with the repertoire of the Leonard-Kernan MS, which was a manuscript that contained Kernan's music from an earlier epoch in the same fiddle tradition. The results of this analysis produced a number of findings. One of the main conclusions was that two tune types, music for quadrilles and waltzes, which had dominated the earlier repertoire of the Leonard-Kernan MS, had experienced a sharp decline in the intervening period up to the compilation of the Smyth MS. It was determined that the primary factor for this trend was that the music had evolved in a trajectory parallel to that of its dance counterpart, the main effect of which was the emergence of reels and double jigs as the prevalent rhythms in the local repertoire.

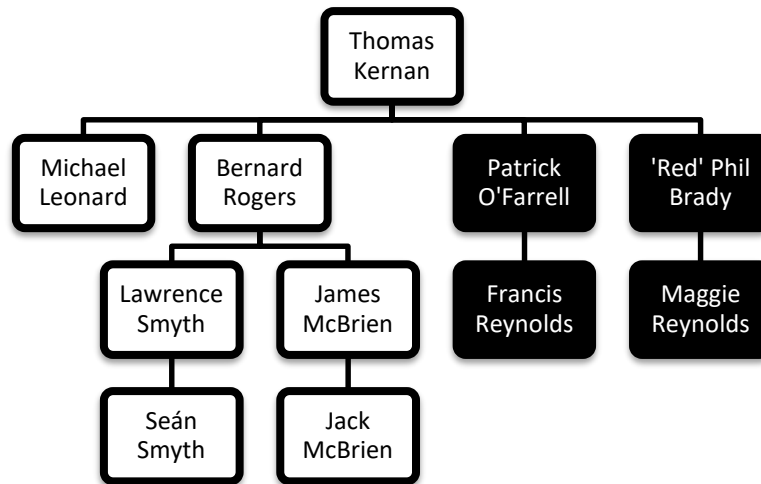
Although the majority of the tunes in the manuscript eventually disappeared from the repertoire of Conmhaicne musicians throughout the ensuing twentieth century, the Larry Smyth MS has played a crucial role in the revival of this forgotten music. In the last section of this chapter, it was established that through the work of Fr John Quinn, repertoire from this manuscript has been re-taught to several generations of musicians from the region of Conmhaicne and its surrounding hinterland from the 1960s onwards. As a result of this process, Kernan's music is gradually forming part of the local canon of Irish music once again.

# Chapter Seven

## The O'Farrell-Reynolds- Brady MMS (*c*1870- *c*1940)

## 7 Chapter Seven

**Figure 27: An excerpt of the Thomas Kernan fiddle lineage highlighting the known scribes of the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS**



### 7.1 Introduction

The last written source to be examined in this dissertation is the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS. This collection of manuscripts was compiled by successive generations of fiddle players from a single family lineage, who originated from the adjoining townlands of Gaigue and Aughadowry in the parish of Drumlish. This specific geographical area was arguably one of the strongest music regions in Conmhaicne throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During this period, it consistently produced a relatively high quantity of musicians, particularly fiddle players. The principal reason for this trend is that it was centred in an area containing several full-time fiddle teachers such as Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887), Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935) and John 'fiddler' Masterson (c1840-1912). These teachers taught primarily through means of written music and therefore, the repertoire and elements of their fiddle style from this bygone era are preserved permanently in the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection.

The first section of this chapter will critically investigate the provenance of this multi-generational collection through two methods. Firstly, at each stage in its physical transference from one generation to another, the tangible elements of the collection will be examined in terms of its size and layout. Through this process the individual contributions of the scribes during their period of ownership will be documented. Secondly, the familial link between these scribes, which appears to have been a significant factor in the expansion of the collection, and indeed in its survival to the present day, will be explored through a survey of the family backgrounds and the interconnected music-making activities of the associated fiddle players. Genealogical research will be conducted on the individual musicians through the use of official state documents, family lore and local historical literature. These findings will offer evidence of the relevant factors leading to the inception, survival and durability of the music collection during the course of its existence from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day.

The second section of this chapter will analyse each individual manuscript in the collection as a discrete document. Initially, a physical inspection of each one will be undertaken to establish the tangible characteristics of its contents such as layout, paper types, watermarks and the specific manuscript type as either ‘preformed’ or ‘assembled’. Following this physical examination of the manuscripts, the associated scribes will be identified through a survey of signatures in the documents and circumstantial evidence gathered from present-day family members. These signatures will be matched to the musical notations in the manuscript in order to classify the tunes according to the scribes who wrote them. In the next process of examination, the chronology of the manuscripts will be estimated using the biographical details of the scribes, inscriptions in the manuscripts and the historical details of individual tunes, which will provide in some instances their date of composition or the printed source from which they were copied.

In order to align this music collection with the other manuscripts examined in this dissertation, the last feature of this latter section will be to examine the scribes' original source of each tune where possible. The outcome of this analysis may validate the hypothesis that a significant proportion of the music in this collection was derived from the teaching of Thomas Kernan or from fiddle descendants of his, such as Bernard Rogers and Francis McDonagh. Circumstantial evidence points towards this, given firstly that Kernan hailed from the same parish, Drumlish, as did the scribes of this collection, and secondly that he was actively teaching in this region from the 1840s to the 1870s, a period that coincides with the formative years of the first scribes in the collection, Patrick O'Farrell and Francis Reynolds. To verify the influence of Kernan's teaching on these scribes, their repertoires in this collection will be compared textually to the following manuscripts previously examined, the Leonard-Kernan MS (Chapter Four), the McBrien-Rogers MS (Chapter Five) and the Larry Smyth MS (Chapter Six), all three of which contain repertoires with verifiable links to Kernan's teaching. The individual elements of a fiddle style portrayed in the manuscripts, examples of which are ornamentation and bowing patterns, will be briefly examined in this section. They will be investigated in more detail in Chapter Ten – *Fiddle Style: characteristics*, a chapter which deals specifically with this subject area across all sources in the dissertation.

## **7.2 Provenance of the manuscript collection**

### **7.2.1 First ownership – Patrick O’Farrell**

The origins of the O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady Family MSS collection can be traced back to its earliest manuscript (Patrick O’Farrell MS), a document that is signed in numerous places by ‘Patrick O Ferrall’ and ‘Mr. P. Farrell, Aughadowry’.<sup>69</sup> The person referred to is Patrick O’Farrell (1836-?), who hailed from the townland of Aughadowry in the parish of Drumlish, Co. Longford. According to the Griffith’s Valuation of 1854, his father Francis was a substantial farmer with a lease-hold of ninety-nine acres in Aughadowry. A farm of this size suggests that the O’Farrells were a relatively well-off family at that time and could afford the tuition fees for Patrick’s fiddle training with Thomas Kernan. Aside from this manuscript and details of Patrick’s birth in the church baptismal records of 1836 (CPR, 2016a), there is no evidence of Patrick’s life and times, neither in official records, nor in family lore (Ward, 2016a).

### **7.2.2 Second ownership – Francis Reynolds**

The Patrick O’Farrell MS was passed on to O’Farrell’s nephew, Francis Reynolds (1862-1946), who lived in the adjoining townland of Gaigue.<sup>70</sup> An examination of Reynolds’ professional career suggests that he led a very unsettled life. For periods of time he lived in numerous locations in Ireland working both as a national school teacher and as a business proprietor, before eventually moving to America, where he worked as a sales representative. His first career as a National School teacher began at the early age of ten, when he became a monitor in

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<sup>69</sup> For an extended biography of Patrick O’Farrell, c.f. Vol.II, Source B

<sup>70</sup> For an extended biography of Francis Reynolds, c.f. Vol.II, Source C

1872, in the local Gaique N.S. (Cahill, Casey & Carty, 2000, p.262). It is likely that it was in the 1870s, while Reynolds was in his formative years, that he acquired the Patrick O'Farrell MS from his uncle, Patrick. During the period of Reynolds' ownership the collection increased five-fold with the addition of four more manuscripts. Three of these were written by Reynolds, Francis Reynolds MS1-MS3, while a fourth one, the Meagher MS, was written by an unidentified scribe. Reynolds typically signed his name throughout the collection as, 'Francis O'Farrell Reynolds', which indicates that he was very proud of his O'Farrell heritage. From a further examination of his signatures in the manuscripts, it appears that, when he left Gaique N.S. in 1883, he moved to County Fermanagh, presumably for another teaching position. It was while he was living there that he wrote the three manuscripts, Reynolds MS1-MS3. His address at this time is written in the Reynolds MS3 on leaf 7v: 'Francis Reynolds, Castle Caldwell, Leggs P.O., Co. Fermanagh', while in Reynolds MS1 on leaf 19v, he provided his specific location in Castle Caldwell, along with the date he was living there: 'F. O'Farrell Reynolds, Muleek H., 30.5.85'.<sup>71</sup>

### **7.2.3 Third ownership – Margaret Reynolds**

When Francis Reynolds emigrated to Des Moines, Iowa, United States, around 1915 to live with his siblings Peter and Philomena, he did not bring the music collection with him. It is more than likely it was left with his brother, John (1863-1914), and John's wife, Mary (1876-1953), in the ancestral family home in Gaique (Ward, 2016a). Their daughter, Margaret (Maggie) Reynolds (1908-1995), who was also a fiddle player, became the next custodian of the collection. Given the short timeframe between Maggie's birth in 1908, and Francis'

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<sup>71</sup> It can be inferred that this reads as "Francis O'Farrell Reynolds, Muleek House, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1885".

emigration to America *c*1915, it is unlikely that Francis taught Maggie the fiddle before he left Ireland. As will be discussed later in this chapter, it is more likely that Maggie was taught by another relative of hers, ‘Red’ Phil Brady (1864-1946) of Upper Gaigue.

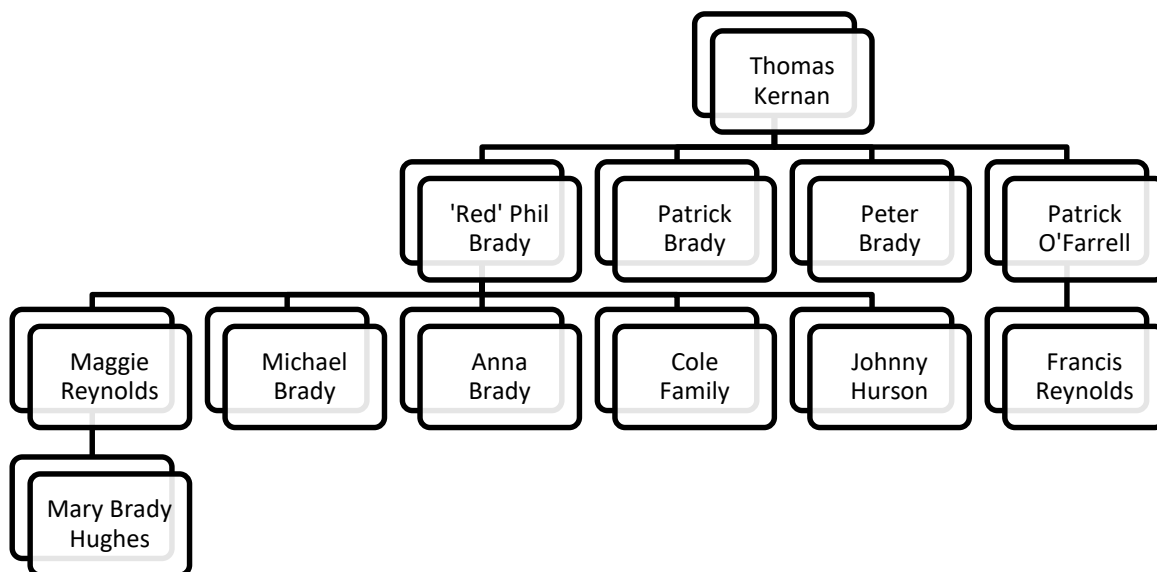
The collection changed in both size and appearance during Maggie’s period of ownership. Due to the deteriorating state of the collection when Maggie acquired it, she re-stitched some of the manuscripts and bound them with new covers. During the re-binding of the O’Farrell MS, she added loose leaves to the end of this document, on which she transcribed some of her own music repertoire. She also transcribed music into the Francis Reynolds MS2, but in contrast to her additions to the Patrick O’Farrell MS, these tunes were written on pre-existing blank leaves in this particular manuscript. Additionally, she also added a new manuscript in her own hand to the collection, the Cole MS. Finally, there are a small number of loose leaves transcribed by Maggie, which may have fallen out of the Cole MS at some stage.

Most of her contributions to the collection were made between *c*1920 and *c*1940, in the period before she married her husband Packie Brady (1903-1985) in 1939, and moved from Gaigue, Drumlish to Aughafin, Edgeworthstown (Ward, 2016a). Maggie’s husband, Packie, who was also a fiddle player, was a neighbour of hers when they were growing up in Gaigue. Unlike Maggie, who appears to have been taught by a neighbour ‘Red’ Phil Brady, Packie may have been a self-taught fiddle player, and he was renowned in family lore for his ability to play multiple instruments.

#### 7.2.4 Fourth ownership – Mary Brady-Hughes

After Maggie’s death in 1995, the music collection was passed on to her daughter, Mary Brady Hughes (b.1948), who is the current custodian of the collection (Ward, 2016a). Mary has not made any additions or modifications to the collection in the time since she acquired it from her mother. Mary was reared in Aughafin, Edgeworthstown, but is currently living with her family in Farragh, Cullyfad, Killoe. She is also a fiddle player and recalls that her mother taught her to play this instrument when she was in primary school (Ward, 2016a). In particular, she remembers her mother teaching her ‘The Connaught Man’s Rambles’ from a manuscript in the collection.

**Figure 28: The fiddle players connected to the O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS**



The first section of this chapter has established the provenance of the O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection through a survey of genealogical records, lore and local historical literature. It was ascertained there are perceptible familial links among the scribes of the manuscripts and with other musicians who lived in the vicinity. It was also determined that the

heritage of these musicians could be traced back to the teaching of Thomas Kernan. Figure 28 is a visual representation and summary of the teacher-student relationships identified in this chapter and traceable to Kernan, focusing on fiddle players who had a musical connection to the O'Farrell, Reynolds and Brady families of Gaique and Aughadowry. A number of these fiddle players transcribed music in the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection, and the musical teacher-pupil relationships, construed in Figure 28, will be verified through an analysis of the textual and non-textual evidence in the collection.

## **7.3 Manuscript Collection**

### **7.3.1 Introduction**

As the previous section has documented, the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady Family MSS collection is a tangible, present-day remnant, of a fiddle tradition that has survived through four generations of the one family, spanning a period of approximately one-hundred and fifty years. In total, this collection is comprised of six individual manuscripts and three loose leaves. Four of the manuscripts, Reynolds MS1, Reynolds MS3, Meagher MS and the Cole MS, exist almost in their original form, the exceptions being some instances where leaves have been misplaced, while two manuscripts, the O'Farrell MS and the Reynolds MS2, were rebound by Maggie Reynolds during her lifetime, and consequently, the current structures of these particular manuscripts do not reflect their original physical layout. Table 19 provides a summary of the manuscripts in this collection, categorised according to their physical attributes. In order to facilitate identification of the individual manuscripts, names have been assigned to each one based on signatures found within the documents. These names, however, do not correspond in some instances to the actual scribes of the music in the manuscripts:

**Table 19: Layout and construction of the individual manuscripts in the O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS**

Manuscript name	No. of music leaves*	Leaf dimensions (length by height) in millimetres	Span of staves (top to bottom)
Patrick O’Farrell MS:			
Folio A	20	185mm x 155mm	N/A: Hand-Drawn
Folio B	3	168mm x 205mm	N/A: Hand-Drawn
Francis Reynolds MS1	19	225mm x 145mm	112mm
Francis Reynolds MS2	13	223mm x 145mm	112mm
Francis Reynolds MS3	30	163mm x 223mm	N/A: Hand-Drawn
Cole MS	10	243mm x 177mm	N/A: Hand-Drawn
Meagher MS	15	230mm x 145mm	111mm
Loose Leaves:			
LE-A	1	160mm x 203mm	N/A: Hand-Drawn
LE-B	1	175mm x 221mm	N/A: Hand-Drawn
LE-C	1	200mm x 230mm	N/A: Hand-Drawn

\*excludes the outer covers

## 7.3.2 Patrick O’Farrell MS

### 7.3.2.1 Manuscript construction and layout

The first manuscript to be examined in this section is the Patrick O’Farrell MS. Based on the chronological details of its original scribe, Patrick O’Farrell (1836-?), it can be assumed that this manuscript is the oldest one in the collection. Physically, the document is landscape in structure, measuring approximately 180mm in length by 160mm in height. There are twenty-five leaves in the manuscript, the sequential layout of which is illustrated in Table 20. Two of these leaves, 1 and 25, represent the outer covers of the manuscript, front and back respectively.

Inside these covers there are twenty-three leaves, on which the music is written. An examination of the physical texture of the leaves reveals that there are two types of paper evident in the manuscript, both of which are characteristic of ‘woven’ paper, and therefore they do not contain any watermarks or other tangible features that may aid the process of dating the document. Neither the first paper type nor the second contains printed music staff, the scribes having in both cases ruled their handwritten staves individually on to blank leaves, and consequently there is a wide variance in the number of staves per leaf, ranging from three to eight.

**Table 20: Layout of the Patrick O’Farrell MS**

<b>Sequential Order of Leaves</b>	<b>Component</b>
1	Front Cover
2-20	Folio A (O’Farrell MS-A)
21-23	Folio B (O’Farrell MS-B)
24	Folio A (O’Farrell MS-A)
25	Back Cover

When categorised by paper type, the leaves of the manuscript fall into two distinct folios, Folio A and Folio B. Folio A consists of twenty leaves, the first nineteen of which are located from leaf 2 to leaf 20, while the remaining one, the twentieth, has been stitched to the inside of the back cover, located at leaf 24. In the original form of the manuscript, before this leaf was stitched here, it was the first leaf in Folio A. As a result of this anomaly, the tune ‘The Highland Bonnet’ (PF.001) starts on leaf 24r, at the end of the manuscript and finishes on leaf 2r, at the front of the manuscript. Folio B consists of three leaves only, leaves 21 to 23, located towards the back of the manuscript. For the purposes of identification, Folio A and Folio B will be referred to henceforth as O’Farrell MS-A and O’Farrell MS-B respectively. The physical features of the manuscript outlined thus far have established that the document is characteristic

of an ‘assembled’ one (Moloney, 2000, p. 21). The existence of different paper types and the irregular gatherings of leaves are strong evidence for this assertion.

**Plate 19: The first music leaf of O’Farrell MS-A: leaf 2r**



(Source: O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection in the custody of Mary Brady-Hughes of Farragh, Cullyfad, Killoe)

O’Farrell MS-A appears to have been the original folio of this manuscript. At a later stage Maggie Reynolds assembled O’Farrell MS-A and O’Farrell MS-B as one manuscript, with an outer cover binding them together. From an examination of the textual evidence, there are indications that many of the original leaves in O’Farrell MS-A may have been lost before

Maggie acquired it. For instance, the very last tune in this folio is, ‘No. 1 The Lancers Set of Quadrilles’ (PF.086), on leaf 20v, suggesting that the remaining four tunes in this set are most likely to have been written on the subsequent leaves, which are now missing.<sup>72</sup> The extent to which the material now missing from this manuscript will become evident when the Reynolds MSS 1-3, all of which either directly or indirectly seem to have been copied from this O’Farrell MS, or perhaps from other O’Farrell now lost manuscript material, are examined in the following sections.

The cover used by Maggie to bind the folio together, is entitled ‘Vere Foster’s Ruled Exercise Books’<sup>73</sup>. The owner of this exercise copy-book, before its cover was taken off, appears to have been ‘Áine Ní Ragnaill’, who has signed her name on the front.<sup>74</sup> According to Mary Brady-Hughes, Áine is her first cousin, and therefore, based on her chronological details, the binding of the current manuscript was probably performed by Mary’s mother, Maggie, at some time during the 1960s when Áine was in primary school (Ward, 2016a).

### **7.3.2.2 Transcriptions: scribes, purpose and chronology**

Patrick O’Farrell signed his name three times in O’Farrell MS-A, on leaves 8r, 10r and 11v. It can be surmised therefore that O’Farrell is the scribe of the repertoire in this folio. In relation to the other folio in the manuscript, O’Farrell MS-B, Mary Brady-Hughes has identified the music notational style in this folio as that of her mother, Maggie Reynolds. In total, there are

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<sup>72</sup> Further proof for this theory is supported by the Francis Reynolds MS3 which includes the complete set of five tunes of the Lancers. The first tune in the set is identical with its counterpart in the O’Farrell MS, indicating that this tune and the remaining four tunes from the set were copied from this source at a time before the pages concerned were lost.

<sup>73</sup> The Vere Foster’s copy books were typically used in schools across Ireland at that time in the early to mid-twentieth century.

<sup>74</sup> Other names on the front cover include “Mary Brady” and “Margaret Brady, Aughafin, Mosttrim”. These refer to Mary Brady-Hughes, the current owner of the collection, and her sister Margaret.

ninety-seven music items in the manuscript: eighty-nine items in O'Farrell MS-A, transcribed by O'Farrell, and eight items in O'Farrell MS-B, transcribed by Maggie Reynolds. The remainder of this section will focus on the repertoire in the original manuscript, O'Farrell MS-A, while Maggie's transcriptions in O'Farrell MS-B will be examined in a later section, 7.3.7 *Cole MS*.

The purpose of O'Farrell's transcription of the original folio, O'Farrell MS-A, is ambiguous. On the one hand, it may have been written by O'Farrell during the course of music tuition, in the role of either a student or teacher. For example, on leaves 14v and 19r, he has transcribed, '[G major scale]' (PF.061) and, 'Prelude on 3 flats' (PF.078), respectively, both of which can be used in teaching of scales. On the other hand, O'Farrell may have written out his repertoire of tunes, either in the guise of a personal collection for his own use, or as a gift to his nephew, Francis Reynolds, when the latter started to learn the fiddle.

Based on an examination of textual and non-textual evidence, it may be ascertained that O'Farrell transcribed the O'Farrell MS-A at some stage between c1854 and c1885. The earliest date in this timeframe, 1854, represents the year when Stephen Foster (1826-1864), the "father of American music", composed the song 'Willie, We Have Missed You', of which O'Farrell has transcribed a version entitled, 'Willy Is It You Dear' (PF.020). At the opposite end of this timeframe, 1885, O'Farrell could not have transcribed the O'Farrell MS-A later than this date. This assertion is based on the fact that the Reynolds MS1, which is dated 30<sup>th</sup> May 1885, contains repertoire that was indirectly sourced by its scribe, Francis Reynolds, from the O'Farrell MS-A.

### 7.3.2.3 Patrick O’Farrell’s links to Kernan’s teaching

From an examination of O’Farrell’s biographical background, it is surmised that he was a fiddle student of Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887). Supporting this theory is the fact that O’Farrell and Kernan lived in the townlands of Aughadowry and Cartron, respectively, both of which are located in the same parish, Drumlish, and therefore, given that Kernan was the leading fiddle teacher in the area in the mid-1800s during O’Farrell’s formative years, it is very likely that he taught him. To validate this circumstantial evidence further, the repertoire of the O’Farrell MS-A, consisting of eighty-nine items, was compared with the following manuscripts: Leonard-Kernan MS (Chapter Four), McBrien-Rogers MS (Chapter Five) and the Larry Smyth MS (Chapter Six), all three of which have been established as containing repertoires derived from Kernan’s teaching. Initially, the tunes in the O’Farrell MS-A that were found in common with these three other manuscripts were identified and quantified, the results of which are illustrated in Table 21:

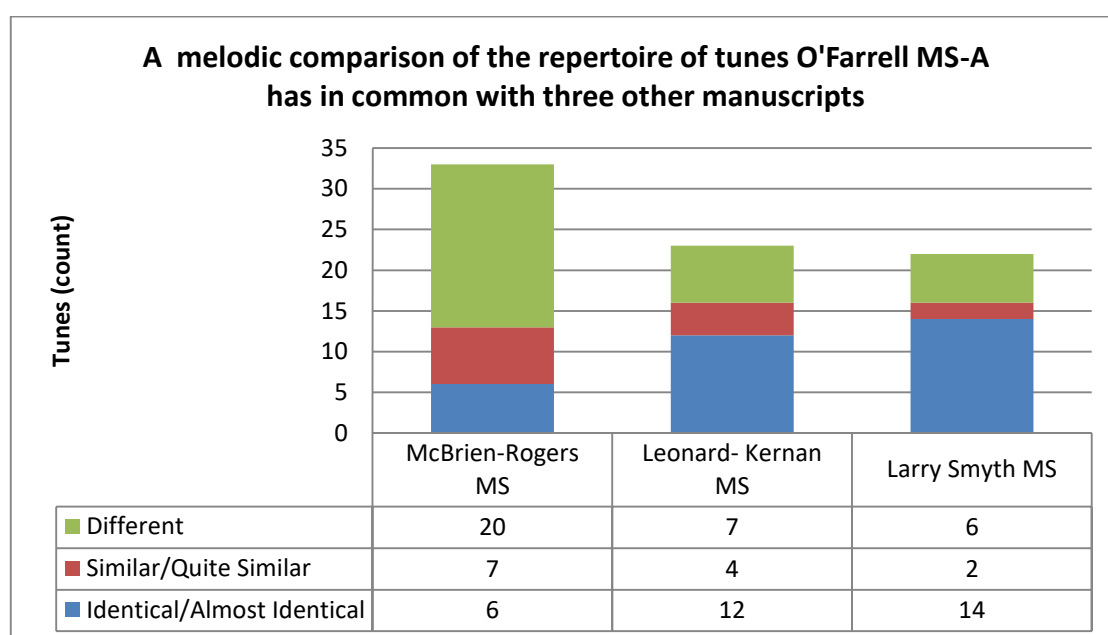
**Table 21: The repertoire of tunes which O’Farrell MS-A has in common with three other manuscripts derived from Kernan’s teaching**

Other manuscripts derived from Kernan’s teaching	Total tunes (count)	Total tunes (as a percentage of the repertoire in O’Farrell MS-A)
McBrien-Rogers MS	33	37%
Leonard- Kernan MS	23	26%
Larry Smyth MS	22	25%

This exercise illustrates that, in percentage terms, between 25%-37% of the repertoire in the O’Farrell MS-A was found in common with the three other manuscripts with which it was compared. This quantitative analysis demonstrates that, based on these initial statistics, there is a discernible correlation between the repertoires of the O’Farrell MS-A and that of the other manuscripts. To corroborate these initial findings, the tunes found in common between the

O'Farrell MS-A and each of the other manuscripts were examined further. The melodic structure of each common tune was compared and graded into three categories: (1) Identical/Almost Identical, (2) Similar/Quite Similar, and (3) Different. The results of this analysis are summarised in Figure 29:

**Figure 29: A melodic comparison of the repertoire of tunes O'Farrell MS-A has in common with three other manuscripts**



From a survey of the data compiled in Figure 29, it may be observed that there is a melodic consistency in a significant amount of the tunes found in common between the O'Farrell MS-A and each of the other three manuscripts examined. In particular, the statistics in the row, 'Identical/Almost Identical', reveal that a large percentage of the common tunes in two of the manuscripts, Leonard-Kernan MS and the Larry Smyth MS, share the same melodic structure as the corresponding versions in the O'Farrell MS-A.<sup>75</sup> For example, the 14 tunes in the Larry Smyth MS that are graded as 'Identical/Almost Identical' represent 16% of the total repertoire

<sup>75</sup> The common tunes classified as 'Identical/Almost Identical' are those that have a difference of less than ten notes.

in the O'Farrell MS-A. An example of a tune classified as 'Identical/Almost Identical', is the slip jig, 'Ladies Step to Tea' (PF.029), which is found under that title in the O'Farrell MS-A. As the following illustrations demonstrate, the corresponding version of this tune in the Larry Smyth MS entitled, 'Ladies Step Up To Tea' (LS.030), is almost identical with O'Farrell's, particularly in terms of melodic structure and bowing signs:

**Figure 30: 'Ladies Step to Tea' (PF.029) – in the Patrick O'Farrell MS**



(Source: Patrick O'Farrell MS, Vol.II, Source B)

**Figure 31: 'Ladies Step Up to Tea' (LS.030) – in the Larry Smyth MS**



(Source: Larry Smyth MS, Vol II, Source H)

There is one apparent anomaly discernible in the results of Table 21: the statistics in the column, ‘Different’, reveal that the settings of a relatively high number of the tunes, twenty in fact, which were common to both the O’Farrell MS-A and the McBrien-Rogers MS, were found to be melodically different in the two manuscripts. However, this statistic can be explained by the fact that 88% of the repertoire in the McBrien-Rogers MS was sourced by the scribe, Bernard Rogers, from printed material, rather than from his own teacher, Thomas Kernan.

All three manuscripts in this analysis which were compared to the O’Farrell MS-A have links to the teaching of Thomas Kernan: the Leonard-Kernan MS was transcribed directly by Kernan and his student, Michael Leonard, the McBrien-Rogers was transcribed by another of Kernan’s students, Bernard Rogers, while the Larry Smyth MS was transcribed by Rogers’ student, Larry Smyth. Therefore, given that this section has verified that the repertoire of the O’Farrell MS-A is closely related to the repertoire of these three manuscripts, it may further verify the theory that Patrick O’Farrell was either taught directly by Kernan or by one of Kernan’s students, and, in the latter case it was most likely to have been Bernard Rogers.

Aside from this statistical analysis, there are other textual clues in the O’Farrell MS-A pointing towards Kernan’s influence on O’Farrell’s repertoire. Firstly, several reels in this folio such as ‘The Swallow’s Tail’ (PF.044) (see Figure 32), ‘The New Bridge Edinburgh – Key B Minor’ (PF.024) and ‘Lady Carbery’s Reel’ (PF.017), are marked with ‘slur and cut’ bowing, a technique that is basic to Kernan’s teaching methods. Secondly, O’Farrell’s transcription of the scale exercise entitled, ‘Prelude on 3 flats [E flat Major]’ (PF.078), is a distinct feature of Kernan’s method of teaching scales, as confirmed by the title of similar exercise in the Smyth MS, ‘Preludes by Kiernan’ (LS.094).

**Figure 32: ‘The Swallow’s Tail’ (PF.044) – example of tune with ‘slur and cut’ bowing in the Patrick O’Farrell MS**



(Source: Patrick O’Farrell MS, Vol.II, Source B)

#### 7.3.2.4 Use of printed material

While there is little doubt that a significant proportion of O’Farrell’s repertoire was learned from Kernan, there are indications that he may have sourced a small number of tunes from printed material as well. Items from this category include ‘The Royal Irish Quadrilles’ (PF.005-PF.009), ‘Old Woman Rocking the Cradle - A Piece’ (PF.062), ‘The Cuckoo’s Concert’ (PF.063) and ‘The Spirit of the Ball’ (PF.079). The existence of repertoire sourced from printed material is consistent with similar findings from all of the other studied manuscripts in this dissertation. It demonstrates that at that time printed material was much used in the transmission of repertoire to musicians living in rural environments such as north Longford.

### **7.3.3 Francis Reynolds MS3**

An examination of the provenance of this manuscript collection in an earlier section revealed that, subsequent to his receiving the Patrick O’Farrell MS, Reynolds contributed four more manuscripts to the collection. Three of these were written predominantly by Reynolds himself: Francis Reynolds MS1, Francis Reynolds MS2 and Francis Reynolds MS3. The fourth manuscript contributed by Reynolds to the collection is the Meagher MS, which will be discussed at 7.3.6 *Meagher MS*.

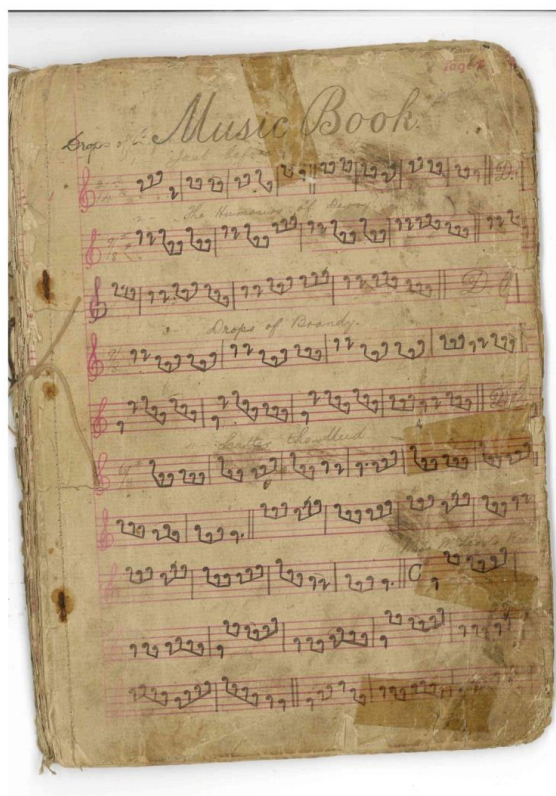
#### **7.3.3.1 Manuscript construction and layout**

Although Reynolds MS3 is numbered sequentially as the third of the three manuscripts in this dissertation, it appears to be the oldest of the three, and therefore, it will be examined first.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Reynolds MS3 was discovered at a much later date towards the end of this research by its custodian Mary Brady-Hughes than the Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2.

**Plate 20: The first leaf of Francis Reynolds MS3: leaf 1r**



(Source: O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection in the custody of Mary Brady-Hughes of Farragh, Cullyfad, Killoe)

In contrast to the other manuscripts in the collection, the Reynolds MS3 is physically much smaller. It has a portrait structure measuring 223mm in height by 163mm in width, and appears to have been originally a type of journal or notebook. There are thirty leaves in this document with no outer cover. Before it was transformed into a music manuscript, each leaf of the original notebook consisted of a recto side that was blank, and a verso side that was pre-ruled for handwriting purposes. While there are some instances of tunes transcribed on the verso sides, Reynolds used these sides predominantly to write down supplementary information. For example, he wrote his name and address on leaf 7v: 'Francis Reynolds, Castle Caldwell, Leggs P.O., Co. Fermanagh'. This inscription indicates that he may have written this particular manuscript while living in County Fermanagh, a short time after 1883, when he left his teaching

post in Gigue N.S. His transcription of the manuscript is more than likely to have been completed before 1885. This date is based on the fact that another manuscript, Reynolds MS1, which was written after Reynolds MS3, is dated 30<sup>th</sup> May 1885 (see 7.3.4 *Reynolds MS1*).

In Reynolds MS3, Reynolds ruled the music staves by hand on the blank recto sides of each leaf. He ruled eleven staves on every leaf, except in the case of two leaves, where there are only ten on each. For the first half of the manuscript, from leaves 1r to 17r, Reynolds used a sequential tune numbering system ranging from 1 to 79. '79. Prelude' (FR3.079) is the last numbered item, after which he discontinued this system. This suggests that the subsequent unnumbered tunes may have been added at a later date. In addition to numbering the tunes, he also numbered the leaves sequentially, the last of which is numbered '44'. The fact that there are currently only thirty leaves in the manuscript implies that fourteen leaves have been lost since Reynolds first wrote the manuscript. These leaves must have been misplaced while he still owned the manuscript, because Reynolds himself has noted the numbers of at least ten of the fourteen missing leaves: 7, 15, 16, 30, 33-37 and 42.

### **7.3.3.2 Repertoire**

There are 106 music items in the manuscript, all of which were transcribed by Francis Reynolds. He copied a considerable amount of these items, 41, from the Patrick O'Farrell MS, which represents 39% of the total repertoire in the Reynolds MS3. A further analysis of the manuscript repertoire suggests that a significant proportion, if not all, of the remaining 61% may have also been sourced in this manner, most likely from leaves in the O'Farrell MS that are currently missing, or from other manuscripts he received from O'Farrell no longer extant. For instance, an examination of the textual evidence reveals that a number of items in Reynolds MS3 were gleaned from popular culture, having being newly-composed or arranged in the 1850s and 1860s, a period which corresponds to the formative years of O'Farrell rather than

those of Reynolds. As the results of Table 22 demonstrate, this assertion is supported by the fact that there is gap of almost twenty years between the latest verifiable date of an item contained in the manuscript, 1866, which is the year that Charlotte Alington Barnard (1830-1869) composed the song air, ‘Come Back to Erin Mavoureen, Mavoureen’ (FR3.101), and the period 1883-1885, when Reynolds transcribed the manuscript:

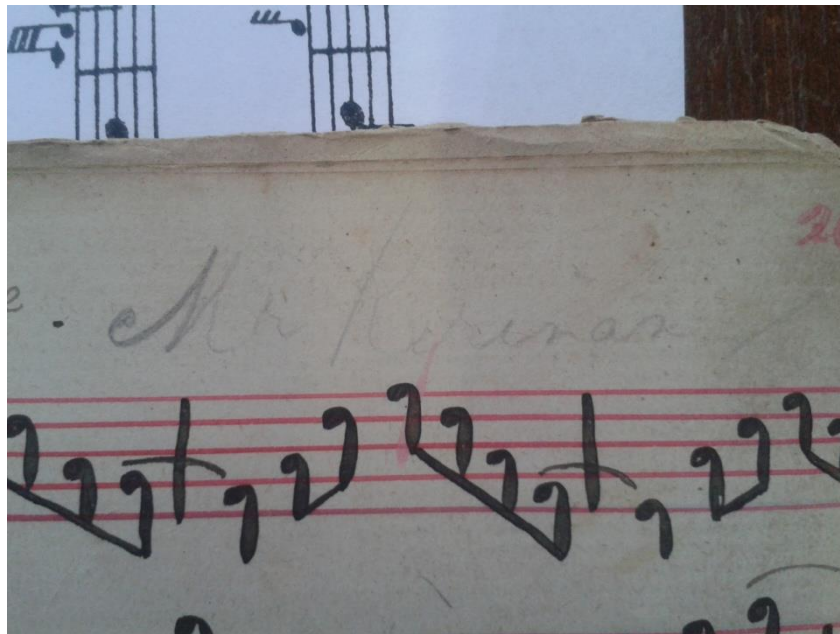
**Table 22: Sample of tunes in Francis Reynolds MS3 with verifiable dates**

Tune Title	Tune #	Composer	Year of Composition
Come Back to Erin Mavoureen, Mavoureen	FR3.101	Charlotte Alington Barnard - aka 'Claribel' (1830-1869) - English	1866
Maggie	FR3.110	(Words by) George Washington Johnston (d.1917) - Canadian. (Music by) James Austin Butterfield (1837-91) - American	c1864
Killarney	FR3.071a	(Music by) Michael William Balfe (1808-1870) - Irish	1862
1. Just Before the Battle	FR3.001	George F. Root (1820-1895) - American	c1860
72. Nelly Grey	FR3.072	Benjamin Russell Hanby (1833-1867) - American	c1856
Cheer Boys, Cheer	FR3.087	(Words by) Charles Mackay (1814-1889), (Music by) Henry Russell (1812-1900) - American	c1850
66. The Spirit of the Ball	FR3.066	Lord Otho Fitzgerald (1827-1882) - English	c1840s
69. The Rose Waltz	FR3.069	Johann Strauss I (1804-1849) - Austrian	1835
The Marseillaise Hymn	FR3.111	(Words and music by) Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle - French	1792
63. An American Schottische	FR3.063	George Leybourne (1842-1884) - English	Unknown
The Heart of the Holy Child	FR3.098	Andrew Young (1807–1889) - Scottish	Unknown
Fill the Bumper Fair (Bobbin Jones)	FR3.099	(Words by) Thomas Moore (1779-1852) - Irish	Unknown

The influence of O’Farrell’s repertoire on Reynolds’ transcriptions suggests that O’Farrell may have been Reynolds’ fiddle teacher. On the other hand, Reynolds could also have been taught by O’Farrell’s own teacher, Thomas Kernan, given that he was born in 1862, around the same time as three neighbours and contemporaries of his were also born, ‘Red’ Phil Brady (b.1864), Peter Brady (b.1859) and Patrick Brady (b.1861), all of whom have been identified as fiddle students of Kernan (see *Brady fiddlers of Gaigue* – Vol.II, Source F). As the following

manuscript excerpt demonstrates, this conjecture is corroborated by the name, ‘Mr. Kerinan’ (sic), written in pencil on the top of leaf 19r, which may be a signal by Reynolds that Kernan taught him:

**Plate 21: “Mr. Kerinan (sic)” written on top of leaf 19r in Francis Reynolds MS3**



(Source: O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection in the custody of Mary Brady-Hughes of Farragh, Cullyfad, Killoe)

In addition to using the O’Farrell MS as a source, Reynolds may have transcribed a small number of tunes, approximately 4%, from printed material. Only one of these, however, has been definitively matched to a printed source, ‘The Teetotaller’s Reel’ (FR3.116), which is identical to the corresponding version in R.M. Levey’s collection, *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland*, (1858).<sup>77</sup> If Reynolds had access to that book, it seems peculiar that he only copied one tune from it. However, given that fourteen leaves are missing in Reynolds MS3, it is possible that, if other tunes were copied from this printed source, they may have been on

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<sup>77</sup> ‘The Teetotallers’ Reel’ in R.M. Levey, *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland*, (London, 1858), p. 16.

some of the missing leaves. Other tunes with indications that they were obtained from as yet unidentified printed material include 'Paudeen O'Rafferty with Variations' (FR3.117), 'Lady Mary Ramsay' (FR3.121) and 'Killarney' (FR3.071a).

There is a substantial amount of non-textual evidence interpolated among the tunes in this manuscript, which is particularly useful in determining the provenance of the manuscript. Reynolds has written his name several times throughout the document in various forms, confirming that he is the scribe of the manuscript: 'FR', 'Francis Reynolds MacRaign', 'Francis Reynolds, Castle Caldwell, Leggs P.O., Co. Fermanagh', 'Fras O'F Reynolds' and 'F. O'F.R'. He has also included observations on a number of tunes such as: 'Plansty Quareman - modelled on Paudeen O'Rafferty' and 'Judy's Reel - A first class reel & very commonly played on the flute'. On two leaves, 9v and 11v, Reynolds has written instructions on the playing order for the tunes 'Jenny's Lind's Polka' (the musical text of which is presumably on a missing leaf) and '66. The Spirit of the Ball' (FR3.066).<sup>78</sup> Additionally, there are two prayers on leaves 18v and 29v, written by Maggie Reynolds when she acquired the collection at a later date.

### **7.3.4 Francis Reynolds MS1**

After Reynolds compiled Reynolds MS3, he transcribed two more manuscripts, Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2. These two manuscripts are physically similar to each other, and therefore both appear to have been written around the same period. The former, Reynolds MS1, will be examined in this section.

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<sup>78</sup> Although, 'Patrick Brady', who was Mary Brady Hughes' father, is signed at the bottom of leaf 9v, the instructions for 'Jenny's Lind's Polka' were written by Francis Reynolds.

#### 7.3.4.1 Manuscript construction and layout

**Plate 22: The first music leaf of Francis Reynolds MS1: leaf 3r**



(Source: O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection in the custody of Mary Brady-Hughes of Farragh, Cullyfad, Killoe)

Reynolds MS1 is landscape in structure measuring 225mm in width by 145mm in height. In contrast to Reynolds MS3, which was modified from a notebook into a manuscript, Reynolds MS1 is characteristic of a 'preformed' manuscript. It contains one type of printed staff paper, and the six staves as a whole on each side have a uniform span measurement of 112mm.

There are two outer covers on this manuscript. The first one, on the inside of the two covers, appears to have been the original cover of the manuscript, on which the word 'MUSIC' was already printed. This cover became dislodged from the manuscript at some stage, and was

subsequently stitched on again, presumably by Maggie Reynolds. During this process she is likely to have added the manuscript's second cover, which consists of a light brown material wrapped loosely around the first cover. For the purposes of enumeration, these two covers constitute four leaves in the manuscript: 1, 2, 20 and 21. Reynolds transcribed his repertoire on the seventeen music leaves inside the covers, from leaf 3 to leaf 19. Additionally, there is an extra diminutive leaf in the manuscript taped on to the front of leaf 9r, containing the song air 'Home, Sweet Home' (FR1.029a).

#### **7.3.4.2 Repertoire**

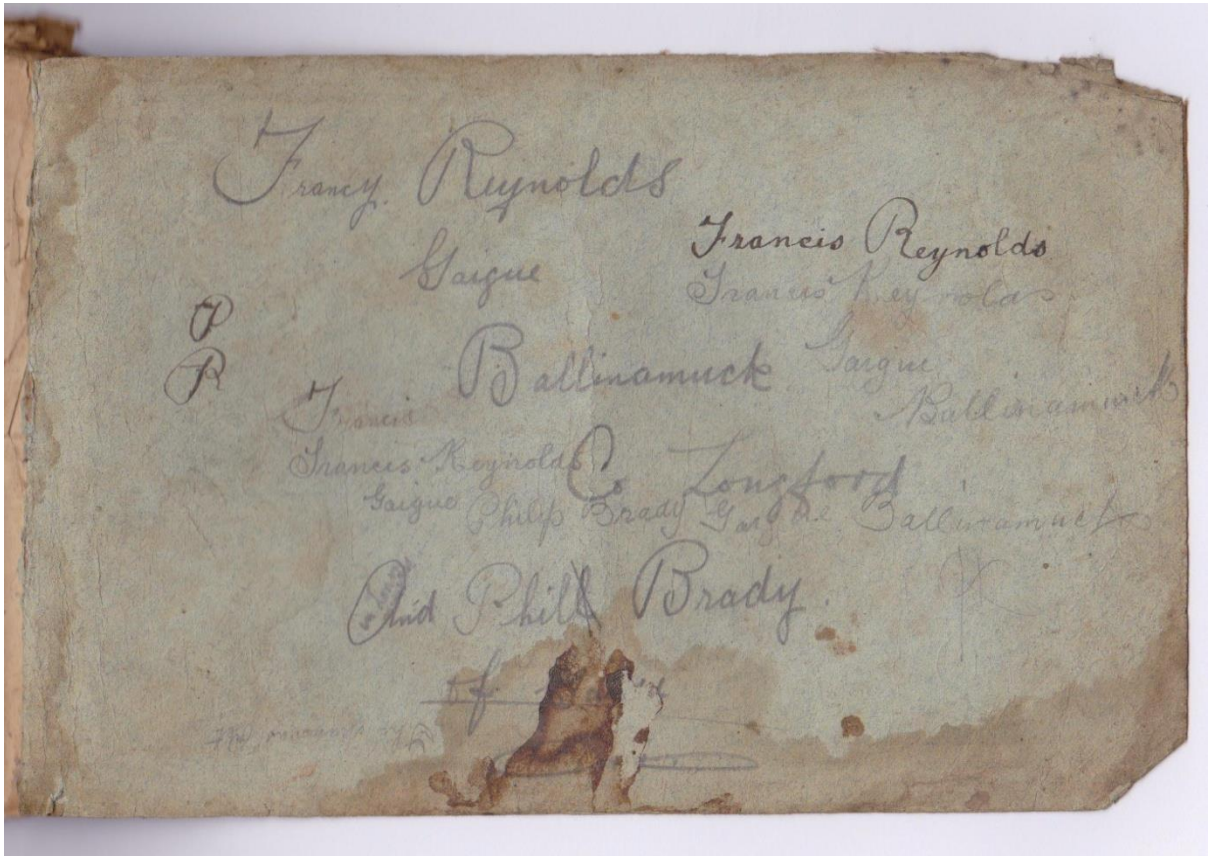
In total, there are ninety music items in this manuscript consisting of eighty-nine tunes and one exercise. The items, which were all transcribed by Reynolds, are numbered sequentially from 1-88, except for the taped-on tune, 'Home, Sweet Home' (FR1.029a), and the exercise, 'Prelude on Two Sharps [D Major]' (FR1.019a). Reynolds' use of a numbering system, in tandem with his categorisation of the repertoire by tune type, primarily reels, hornpipes and jigs, indicates that the purpose in compiling the manuscript appears to have been an attempt to collate his sources of repertoire, such as the O'Farrell MS-A and Reynolds MS3, into an organised anthology of music for personal use.

It is evident from a comparison of the repertoires of Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS3 that Reynolds sourced a significant amount of his repertoire in the former manuscript from the latter one. In some instances, tunes containing textual errors in Reynolds MS3 were corrected by him when he copied them to Reynolds MS1. An example of this editing process is evident in the tunes 'Bush in Bloom' (FR3.080) and '88. The Bush in Bloom' (FR1.088). Further validating the assertion that Reynolds sourced repertoire for Reynolds MS1 from Reynolds MS3, which itself was probably in its entirety copied from manuscripts received from his uncle, Patrick O'Farrell, is the fact that the Reynolds MS1 does not contain any popular music relating to

Reynolds' own era: the latest verifiable date of the repertoire in this manuscript is 1823, representing the year that Sir Henry Bishop composed, 'Home, Sweet Home' (FR1.029a). Lastly, the consistent appearance of the word 'cpd', presumably an abbreviation for 'copied', beside several tune titles in Reynolds MS3, suggests that these tunes were copied into later documents such as Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2. Given that Reynolds MS2 may also contain repertoire sourced from Reynolds MS3, a statistical analysis of the specific amount of tunes sourced from Reynolds MS3 in both manuscripts, Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2, will be conducted in the next section. One tune, '82. Bonaparte's March Over the Rhine' (FR1.082), is textually identical with 'Buonaparte's March Over the Rhine' in Elias Howe's collection, *Musician's Companion*, Vol.1, (1843), and therefore, it may have been copied from this source. Aside from this tune, none of the repertoire in Reynolds MS1 appears to have been sourced from printed material.

In addition to the textual evidence, the Reynolds MS1 also contains a significant amount of non-textual evidence that aids the process of dating the manuscript and establishing its provenance. Reynolds signed his name several times in this document. The most significant signature occurs on the very last music leaf, 19v, where he has written 'F. O'Farrell Reynolds, Muleek H., 30.5.85.'. This inscription signifies that he finished writing Reynolds MS1 on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1885, while he was living in Muleek House. This building is located near Castle Caldwell in County Fermanagh. Several other names are written on the inside of both outer covers: 'Mrs. Peg Reynolds, Gaigue, Ballinamuck, Co. Longford', 'Patrick Brady, Gaigue' and 'Philip Brady, Gaigue'. The first of these names may refer to Reynolds' sister, Margaret Catherine (b.1865). The identity of two Brady men is less certain given that 'Patrick' and 'Philip' were common forenames used in several of the extended Brady families of Gaigue. The additional signatures on these covers, 'Francis Reynolds, Gaigue, Ballinamuck' and 'Francis Reynolds',

**Plate 23: Signatures transcribed on leaf 2v in Francis Reynolds MS1**

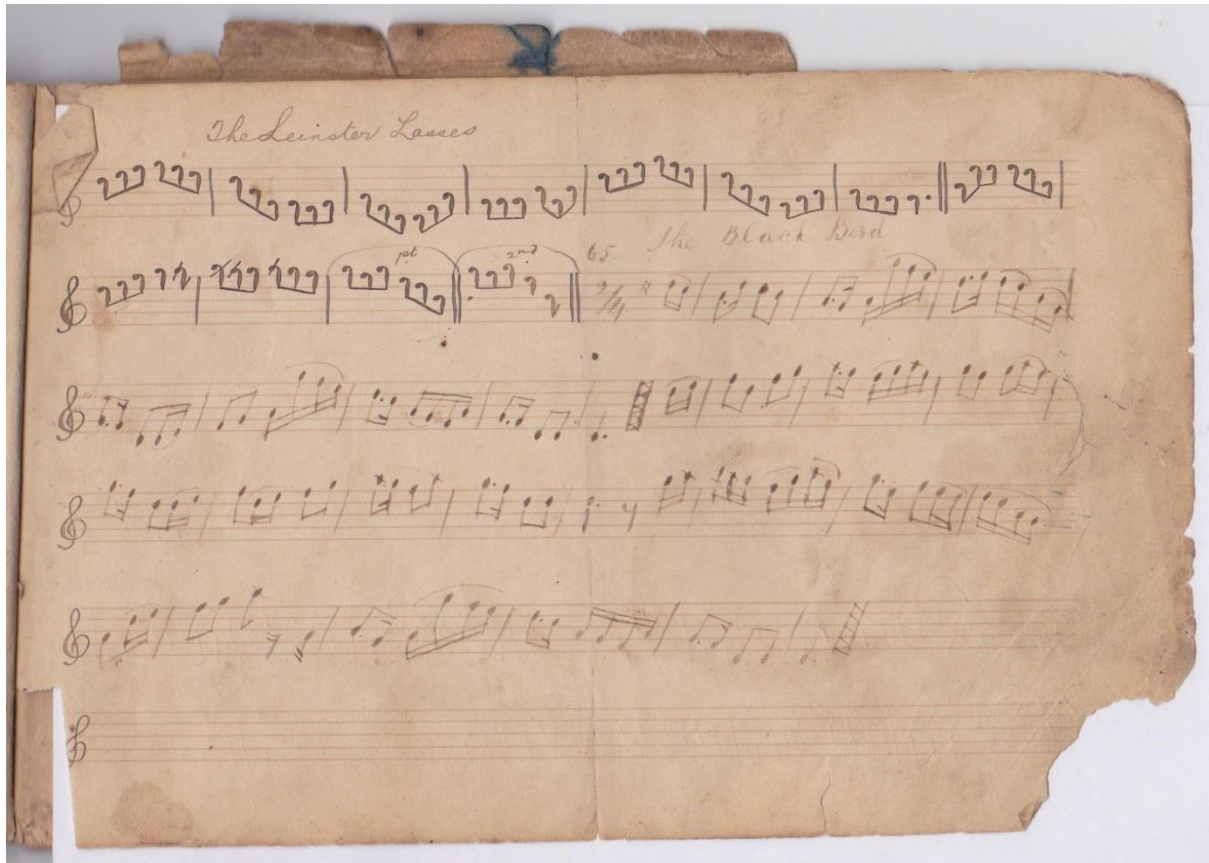


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### 7.3.5 Francis Reynolds MS2

#### 7.3.5.1 Manuscript construction and layout

**Plate 24: Music notation written by two scribes on leaf 8r in Francis Reynolds MS2**



(Source: O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection in the custody of Mary Brady-Hughes)

The third manuscript written by Francis Reynolds in the collection is the Reynolds MS2. This manuscript is characteristic of an 'assembled' document given the presence of irregular gatherings of leaves (Moloney, 2000, p. 21). The manuscript contains fourteen leaves in total: two leaves, leaf 1 and leaf 14, which consist of the front and back cover, respectively; and twelve leaves, leaf 2 to leaf 13, on which the music is transcribed. Since it was added, the outer cover has disintegrated significantly due to its light cardboard texture. The corners of the music leaves also display signs of deterioration, which indicates that the manuscript may have been

without a cover for a significant period of time. The music leaves consist of the same type of printed staff paper as is used in the Reynolds MS1. The dimensions of these leaves measure on average, 223mm in width by 145mm in height, and contain six printed staves on each side, which span 112mm from the top of the first staff to the bottom of the sixth. The outer cover and inner music leaves were stitched together, an act that was presumably performed by Maggie Reynolds. From an examination of the sequential numbering system of the repertoire, 1-64, employed originally by Francis Reynolds, it appears that the leaves were collated incorrectly by Maggie when she rebound the manuscript. The following table demonstrates the layout of the manuscript before and after it was rebound:

**Table 23: Physical layout of Francis Reynolds MS2: original versus current**

Original layout of the manuscript's leaves	Current position of each original leaf
1	1
2	2
3 – ( <i>Missing</i> )	( <i>Missing</i> )
4	3
5 – ( <i>Moved</i> )	11
6 – ( <i>Moved</i> )	12
7 – ( <i>Moved</i> )	13
8	4
9	5
10	6
11	7
12	8
13	9
14	10
15	14

As Table 23 illustrates, during the binding process, leaves 5-7 of the original manuscript were erroneously inserted at the back, becoming leaves 11-13 of the current manuscript. In addition, tunes numbered sequentially from 9 to 13 are missing in the manuscript indicating that leaf 3 of the original manuscript has been mislaid.

As in the other manuscripts in this collection, there is a significant amount of non-textual evidence throughout Reynolds MS2. There are several signatures on the inside and outside of the cover that were written by Maggie Reynolds' relatives, friends and neighbours: 'Francis Reynolds, Gague, Ballinamuck, Longford', 'Brigid Cole', 'Patrick Brady', 'Miss Margaret Brady', 'Maggy Reynolds', 'Nellie Reynolds'. The names 'Margaret Brady' and 'Nellie Reynolds' refer to Maggie Reynolds' daughter and sister respectively. Maggie is likely to have written her own maiden name 'Maggy Reynolds' on this manuscript at some time before 1939, the year of her marriage to Packie Brady. 'Brigid Cole' (b.1901) was Maggie Reynolds' neighbour, and became a teacher in the local Gague National School. Her name also appears in the Cole MS, a document that will be examined in the next section, *7.3.6 Meagher MS*.

### **7.3.5.2 Repertoire**

In total, there are seventy-seven music items in Reynolds MS2, of which seventy-five are tunes, and two are exercises. On examination the textual evidence reveals that these items were written by three scribes. The dominant scribe is Francis Reynolds, who transcribed sixty-one items in the manuscript. He used Reynolds MS2 to transcribe from Reynolds MS3 the remainder of his repertoire not included in Reynolds MS1, primarily song airs, polkas and waltzes, with an additional array of miscellaneous tune types such as galops, flings, marches and hymns. As in the case of Reynolds MS1, he numbered his transcriptions sequentially, 1-64, with the exception of the exercise, 'Prelude [D Major]' (FR2.015a), which he left unnumbered. Reynolds' last transcription in the manuscript is '64. The Leinster Lasses' (FR2.064), and immediately under it another scribe, who has been designated as 'Scribe E', wrote the next tune '65. The Blackbird' (FR2.065). This is the only tune written by this scribe. The remaining items in the manuscript, fifteen in total, were written by Maggie Reynolds on residual music leaves in the manuscript. She did not continue with the sequential numbering

system used by the other scribes. Maggie’s repertoire in this manuscript will be examined in more detail in a later section, 7.3.7 *Cole MS*.

An examination of the textual evidence in Reynolds MS2 reveals that, as in the case of Reynolds MS1, Reynolds sourced a significant amount of repertoire in this manuscript from Reynolds MS3, which itself seems to have been sourced entirely from O’Farrell manuscript material. For example, two tunes in Reynolds MS2, ‘47. Litany’ (FR2.047) and ‘48. The Heart of a Holy Child’ (FR2.048), are identical to their counterparts, ‘Litany’ (FR3.097) and ‘The Heart of a Holy Child’ (FR3.098), in Reynolds MS3, and appear in the same sequential order in both manuscripts. As in the case of Reynolds MS1, the absence of popular music in Reynolds MS2 pertaining to Francis Reynolds’ own era supports this assertion: the latest verifiable date is 1867, the year that T.D Sullivan composed the words of the song, ‘God Save Ireland’, the music of which Reynolds has transcribed in Reynolds MS2 entitled ‘30. God Save Ireland’ (FR2.030). Table 24 at the end of this section quantifies the exact proportion of tunes sourced by Reynolds MS2 and Reynolds MS1 from Reynolds MS3. In some instances there are tunes in Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2 that are identical to their counterparts in the O’Farrell MS, but are not found in Reynolds MS3. It can be assumed that these particular tunes were copied from this latter manuscript on leaves that are currently missing, or from other O’Farrell manuscript material no longer extant.

**Table 24: Tunes in Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2 sourced from Reynolds MS3**

	<b>Total number of tunes transcribed by Francis Reynolds</b>	<b>No. of tunes sourced from Reynolds MS3 (%)</b>
<b>Reynolds MS1</b>	90	27 (30%)
<b>Reynolds MS2</b>	61	15 (25%)

The results of Table 24 demonstrate that 30% and 25% of the total repertoires transcribed by Francis Reynolds in Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2 respectively, were sourced from the

Reynolds MS3. In turn, it was previously established that 39% of the repertoire in Reynolds MS3 was sourced from the O'Farrell MS-A. However, given that there are leaves missing from the O'Farrell MS-A, the total number of which has not been quantified, it is quite likely that the majority of the remaining repertoires in the three manuscripts, Reynolds MS1, Reynolds MS2 and Reynolds MS3, were also sourced from the original O'Farrell MS-A, or from another O'Farrell manuscript no longer extant.

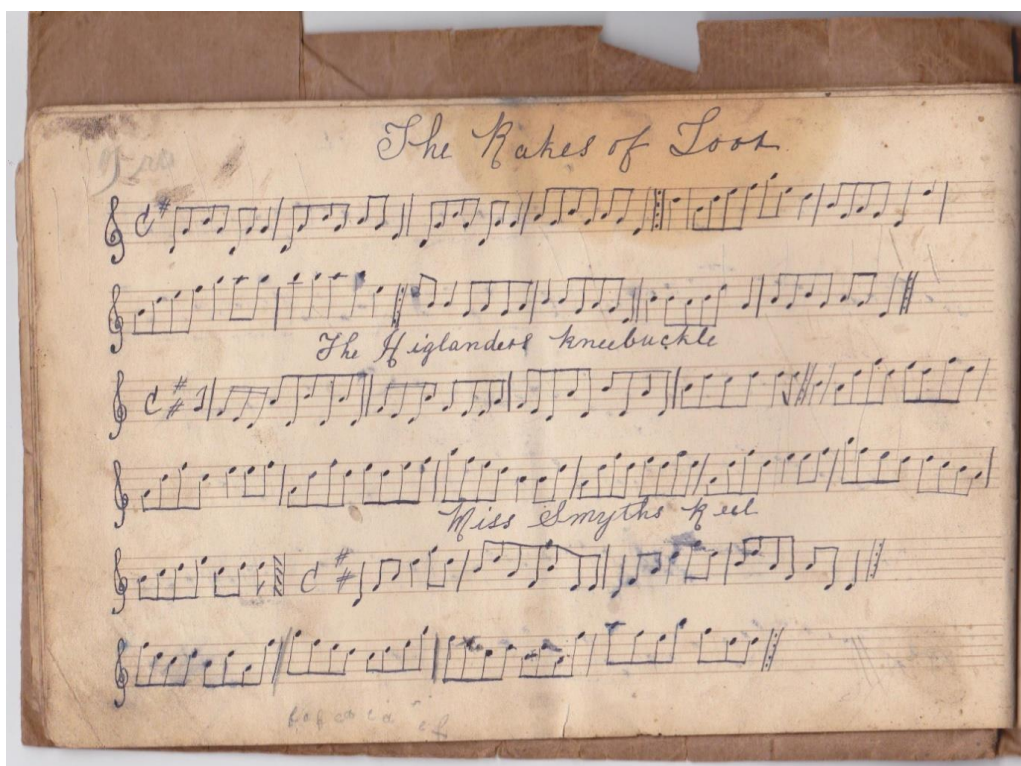
There are a small number of tunes in Reynolds MS2 textually comparable to their counterparts in identifiable printed material later than the time of O'Farrell. It is tempting to think that they might be copied by Reynolds directly from these printed sources, but given the early date of the other material in the collection, it is more likely that this is simply a coincidence arising from the inherent consistency of their melodic structures, and that they too come from the earlier period. At least two of these tunes display characteristics of having been copied, whether by Reynolds, or more likely earlier by O'Farrell, from unidentified printed material. These tunes and their associated possible printed sources include:

- (1) '59. Sleepy Maggie' (FR2.059) – James S. Kerr, *Kerr's Fourth Collection of Merry Melodies for the Violin*, (c1880s): 'Sleepy Maggy' (No.164)
- (2) 'When You Go Home You'll Get it' (FR2.066) – Francis Roche, *Collection of Irish Traditional Music*, Vol.2, (1912): 'Untitled' (No.314)
- (3) '24. Little, Low Log Cabin Down a Lane' (FR2.024) – Unidentified printed material
- (4) '25. Ring the Bell, Watchmen' (FR2.025) - Unidentified printed material

### 7.3.6 Meagher MS

The next manuscript to be examined in the collection is the Meagher MS. For the purpose of identifying this manuscript, its name is derived from the surnames of “Eamon Meagher” and “Arnold Meagher”, both of which are signed at the bottom of leaf 2r. These brothers, Eamon and Arnold, were not musicians, and they did not write any of the music in this manuscript and they were, in fact, Maggie Reynolds’ nephews. When they were young boys they often stayed during the summer months with Maggie’s family. The signature of Maggie’s daughter is also visible on the outside of the cover ‘Mary Brady, Convent of Mercy, Longford’. However, in a recorded discussion (Ward, 2016a), Mary stated that the music notation in the manuscript was not written by her.

**Plate 25: A sample music leaf in Meagher MS: leaf 8v**



(Source: O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection in the custody of Mary Brady-Hughes of Farragh, Cullyfad, Killoe)

Although the manuscript was not transcribed by Francis Reynolds, the music leaves consist of the same type of printed staff paper as Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2. This physical characteristic suggests that firstly, the Meagher MS was likely to have been compiled during the period Reynolds owned the collection c1885-c1915, and secondly, that it was written by a musician with whom he was acquainted.

#### **7.3.6.1 Manuscript construction and layout**

In total, there are sixteen leaves in the manuscript, which consists of an outer cover, 1 and 16, and music leaves, 2-15. On average, the fourteen music leaves measure 230mm in width and 145mm in height. There are six staves on each side of the music leaves, recto and verso, and they have an average span of 111mm from the top of the first one to the bottom of the sixth one.<sup>79</sup> Binding the music leaves together is an outer cover, which consists of same physical texture as one of the covers on the Reynolds MS1. This implies that the binding process was performed by Maggie Reynolds, at some time after she acquired the collection.

#### **7.3.6.2 Repertoire**

There are sixty-six music items in the manuscript, all of which can be categorised as tunes. These items were written by the one scribe, who has been designated as ‘Scribe D’. A significant portion of the repertoire transcribed by Scribe D contains bowing marks, a feature that is indicative of a fiddle player. A comparison of the repertoire of the Meagher MS with the repertoires of the previously examined manuscripts in this collection, O’Farrell MS-A and Reynolds MSS1-3, reveals that the repertoire of the Meagher MS is not copied from any of

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<sup>79</sup> The length of the leaves in the Meagher MS differs slightly from those in the Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2 due to the different binding methods employed on three manuscripts.

these manuscripts. However, a further analysis of this evidence reveals that there is a textual correlation between the repertoires of the Meagher MS and these manuscripts, a fact which points towards the presumption that Scribe D in the Meagher MS was taught the fiddle by a musician from the Kernan fiddle lineage, possibly Patrick O'Farrell, Bernard Rogers, or even Kernan himself. Given that Francis Reynolds was in possession of this manuscript, together with the fact that it contains the same paper-type as that of his own manuscripts, Reynolds MS1 and Reynolds MS2, it suggests that Scribe D was possibly either a sibling of Reynolds', who was learning to play the fiddle the same time as him, or his own teacher, who has not been positively identified.

Aside from Reynolds' family and his teacher, there are a number of other fiddle players who may have written this manuscript. Reynolds was married to Mary Brady (1863-1914) of Gaigue, and as with the Reynolds family, the Brady family was steeped in fiddle music. Therefore, it is possible that the scribe of the Meagher MS may be one of the following Brady fiddlers. The first candidate is Mary's brother, Patrick Brady (1861-1952), who lived in the same townland of Gaigue as Reynolds and was only two months older than him. In a recorded discussion (Quinn, 1973a), the fiddle player, Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975), stated that Patrick Brady, who was his uncle-in-law, was taught the fiddle by Thomas Kernan. McNerney stated that Patrick often sent him written copies of tunes, which demonstrates Patrick was able to write to music (Quinn, 1973a). Given that Reynolds and Patrick Brady were of the same age, lived in the same townland, that both may have been taught by 'Blind' Kernan, and that Reynolds lived for a period of time around 1911 with Patrick and his wife Mary (NAI, 2015c), it is quite possible that the Meagher MS may have been written by Patrick Brady. Other fiddle players from the Brady family and possible candidates for the scribe of the Meagher MS are Patrick's first cousins, 'Red' Phil Brady (1864-1946) and Peter Brady (1859-1939), both also of Gaigue. According to the aforementioned McNerney, 'Red' Phil was also taught the

fiddle by ‘Blind’ Kernan (Quinn, 1973a). Given that Peter was born in the same era as Patrick and ‘Red’ Phil, it may be surmised that he was taught by Kernan too (see *Brady fiddlers of Gaigue* – Vol.II, Source F).

**Plate 26: The fiddler, ‘Red’ Phil Brady (1864-1946), of Upper Gaigue, Ballinamuck, Co. Longford**



**Left to right: Margaret Creedon, nee Brady and ‘Red’ Phil Brady (1864-1946). Source: Maire Flynn, nee White, of Killashee, Co. Longford**

While the identity of Scribe D may never be uncovered, to validate the theory that this scribe was a fiddle player of the Kernan fiddle lineage, the repertoire of the Meagher MS was compared to the repertoires of the manuscripts previously examined in this dissertation. In the first process, the tunes found in common between the Meagher MS and the other manuscripts were quantified, the results of which are summarised in Table 25:

**Table 25: The repertoire of tunes Meagher MS has in common with the other studied manuscripts of the Kernan fiddle lineage**

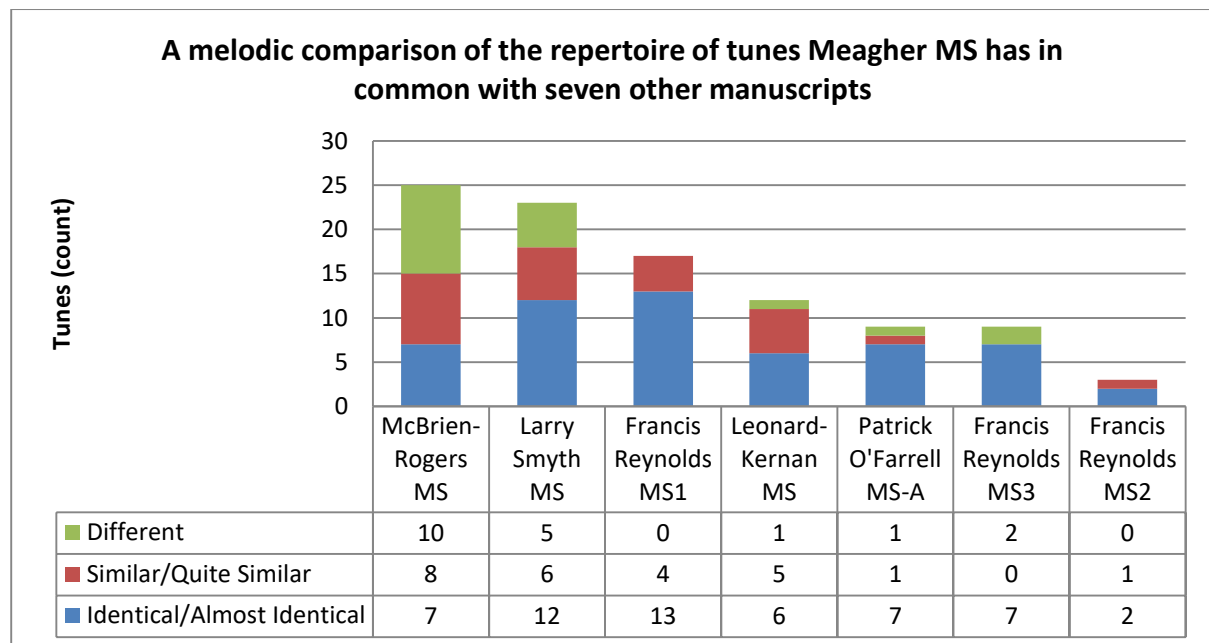
<b>Manuscripts</b>	<b>Total tunes (count)</b>	<b>Total tunes (as a percentage of the repertoire in the Meagher MS)</b>
McBrien-Rogers MS	25	38%
Larry Smyth MS	23	35%
Francis Reynolds MS1	17	26%
Leonard- Kernan MS	12	19%
Patrick O'Farrell MS-A*	9	15%
Francis Reynolds MS3	9	14%
Francis Reynolds MS2**	3	5%

\* Includes Patrick O'Farrell's transcriptions only

\*\* Includes Francis Reynolds' transcriptions only

An examination of the results in Table 25 reveals that, by and large, a significant proportion of the tunes in the Meagher MS, ranging from 5% to 38% of its total repertoire, appear also in the other manuscripts. These statistics provide the first indication that Scribe D in the Meagher MS may have been taught the fiddle by a member of the Kernan fiddle lineage. To validate this theory further a more in-depth analysis was conducted, whereby the melodic structures of these matching tunes were compared, and graded according to three categories: (1) 'Identical/Almost Identical', (2) 'Similar/Quite Similar', and (3) 'Different'. The results of this analysis are summarised in Figure 33:

**Figure 33: A melodic comparison of the repertoire of tunes Meagher MS has in common with seven other manuscripts**



The resulting data from this exercise in Figure 33 can be seen to reveal that a high proportion of these matching tunes were either ‘identical’ or ‘almost identical’, while a low proportion of these tunes were categorised as ‘different’, facts which indicate an obvious textual correlation between the matching tunes in the Meagher MS and in the other manuscripts. This pattern was particularly evident in the data relating to the manuscripts of the O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady collection. For example, when one examines the data of the Reynolds MS1, of the seventeen tunes found to be common to both this manuscript and the Meagher MS, none of the tunes were categorised as ‘different’, while thirteen of them were categorised as ‘Identical/Almost Identical’. These statistics suggest that Scribe D in the Meagher MS may have had the same fiddle teacher as either Francis Reynolds or Patrick O’Farrell. The identity of this teacher is possibly Thomas Kernan, given the fact that 18% of the repertoire in the Meagher MS had melodic counterparts in the Leonard-Kernan MS, half of which were categorised as ‘Identical/Almost Identical’. An example of a tune that was categorised as ‘Identical/Almost

Identical' in both the Meagher MS and the Leonard-Kernan MS is the tune entitled 'Miss Johnston's Reel' (MR.003) in the former manuscript, and entitled 'Miss Jonston's [sic] Reel' (LK.029) in the latter manuscript, where it was transcribed by Thomas Kernan:

**Figure 34: 'Miss Jonston's [sic] Reel' (LK.029) - in the Leonard-Kernan MS**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, Vol.II, Source A)

**Figure 35: 'Miss Johnston's Reel' (MR.003) – in the Meagher MS**



(Source: Meagher MS, Vol.II, Source F)

The purpose of the Meagher MS appears to be a collection of music written by Scribe D for personal use. Supporting this proposition is that fact that the scribe has, by and large, subdivided the layout of the manuscript's repertoire sequentially into three tune types: reels, jigs and hornpipes. The repertoire appears to have been gleaned by the manuscript's scribe from his own knowledge base, given that a significant proportion of the tunes, 45%, are categorised as 'draft' copies (Vol.II, Source F), a statistic which implies that the scribe had difficulty converting tunes from memory on to the page. Additionally, none of the repertoire was derived from popular culture or was newly-composed, and therefore, the repertoire represents, more than likely, the tunes that Scribe D knew from his/her own local music environment. Nonetheless, there is one tune, 'A Reel' (MR.057), which is textually identical to its counterpart in P.J. Hughes' collection, *Gems from the Emerald Isle*, (c1842-c1881, p.16), suggesting that the scribe may have had access to this particular printed music collection.

A discernible feature of the repertoire is the significant proportion of tunes, 8%, in the manuscript that are attributed to the Irish composer, Walker 'Piper' Jackson (d.1798), of Ballingarry, Co. Limerick. All of these tunes have been verified as Jackson's compositions in other sources, with the exception of one, 'Jackson's Cook in the Kitchen' (MR.055). Currently, the Meagher MS is the earliest known source of this particular tune, and coupled with the fact that the scribe correctly attributed all the other tunes to Jackson, this supports the scribe's recognition of Jackson as the original composer in this instance.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> 'Cook in the Kitchen (1)'; [www.tunearch.org](http://www.tunearch.org).

**Figure 36: ‘Jackson’s Cook in the Kitchen’ (MR.055) – example of a Jackson jig in the Meagher MS**



(Source: Meagher MS – Vol.II, Source F)

### 7.3.7 Cole MS

The last manuscript to be examined from this collection is the Cole MS. As in the case of the Meagher MS, its name is not derived from the scribe of the repertoire, but is in fact obtained from signatures within the document: ‘Annie Cole, Gaigue, Ballinamuck’, ‘Brigid Cole, Gaigue’, and ‘Kathleen [?] Cole, XXX [illegible]’. These names were written by three sisters of the Cole family, who lived beside Maggie Reynolds in Gaigue. In the 1911 Census of Ireland (NAI, 2016a), the ages of these girls are given as: Anne (18), Bridget (10) and Kathleen (6). A further signature in the manuscript, ‘Mr. James Cole, Gaigue, Ballinamuck’, refers to a relative of the Cole sisters, who lived next door to them.<sup>81</sup> The existence of the Cole signatures in this manuscript suggests that the members of this family may also have been taught by Maggie’s fiddle teacher, ‘Red’ Phil Brady (1864-1946) of Upper Gaigue. This theory was examined in

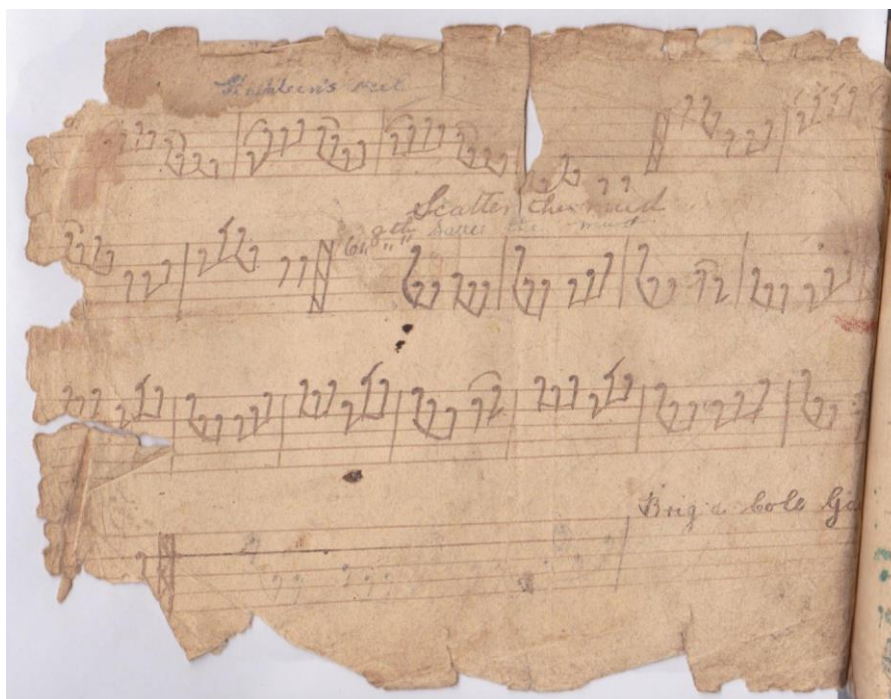
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<sup>81</sup> The three Cole sisters also had an uncle, James Cole, who lived with them. However, given the fact that he died in 1917 and that Maggie Reynolds, the manuscript’s scribe, was born in 1908, it is more likely that it was their neighbour James Cole (NAI, 2016b) who signed the manuscript, and not their uncle.

(see *The Brady fiddlers of Gaigue*: Vol.II, Source F) where it was verified by Ellie Joe Murphy (b.1930s), that her grand-uncle, ‘Red’ Phil, taught the fiddle to the Cole family (Ward, 2016b).

### 7.3.7.1 Manuscript construction and layout

**Plate 27: A sample music leaf in Cole MS: leaf 6v**



(Source: O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection in the custody of Mary Brady-Hughes)

The Cole MS is landscape in structure, consisting of ten leaves that have been stapled together. The manuscript does not have an outer cover. Consequently, the leaves have deteriorated significantly, and a number of them have become detached from the manuscript. The average dimensions of the leaves are 243mm in width and 177mm in height. In general, four staves per side were hand-drawn on pre-existing blank leaves. Aside from the signatures of the Cole sisters, there is some other non-textual evidence in the manuscript. On leaf 10v, there are arithmetic sums and an aphorism, based on the words of a popular song, ‘Love Many, Trust

Few, Always Paddle Your Own Canoe’,<sup>82</sup> while a number of prayers are written on leaf 7v. Underneath the tune, ‘The One Horn Buck’ (CE.008), on leaf 3r, the name ‘Patrick Brady, Gaigue, Ball...’ is visible.

### **7.3.7.2 Repertoire**

There are twenty-six music items in this manuscript, all of which may be categorised as tunes. Maggie Reynolds has been identified by her daughter, Mary, as the scribe of this repertoire. As outlined in previous sections, Maggie also has transcriptions that appear in other manuscripts in the collection: she has transcribed eight tunes in the O’Farrell MS-B on leaves 21-23, while in the Reynolds MS2 on leaves 8-10, she has transcribed fourteen tunes and one exercise. In the O’Farrell MS-B, the three leaves onto which Maggie transcribed contain the same paper-type as the Cole MS, indicating that these leaves probably belonged originally to the latter manuscript. While the repertoires of both these manuscripts were transcribed on what were originally blank leaves, Maggie’s transcriptions in the Reynolds MS2 were written on unused printed staff leaves. Maggie’s remaining six transcriptions in the collection appear on five loose leaves. These particular leaves, which will be examined in the next section, did not physically derive from any of the other manuscripts in the collection.

Across all of the written sources in the collection, Maggie transcribed fifty-eight music items. Eight of her transcriptions in the Reynolds MS2 are identical to their counterparts in the Cole MS. An examination of the textual evidence suggests that Maggie copied these tunes from the Cole MS into the Reynolds MS2. Additionally, there is one tune which she transcribed into the O’Farrell MS-B that is identical to its counterpart in the Cole MS. Taking these duplicate tunes into account, Maggie has written forty-nine distinct items across all written sources. In order

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<sup>82</sup> A quotation from *Selections for Autograph and Writing Albums* (New York: Charles A. Lilley, 1879), p. 92.

to establish the sources of Maggie’s repertoire and her possible link to the Kernan fiddle lineage, these tunes were compared to their counterparts in the other manuscripts examined in this dissertation, the results of which are outlined in Table 26:

**Table 26: The repertoire of tunes which Maggie Reynolds has in common with the other studied manuscripts of the Kernan fiddle lineage**

Other manuscripts	Total tunes in common (count)	Total tunes in common (percentage of Maggie’s total repertoire)	Identical/ Almost Identical	Similar/ Quite Similar	Different
McBrien-Rogers MS	18	36%	5	4	9
Larry Smyth MS	15	30%	7	5	3
Reynolds MS3	12	24%	7	3	2
O’Farrell MS	7	14%	2	3	2
Meagher MS	7	14%	3	2	2
Reynolds MS1	6	12%	4	1	1
Leonard- Kernan MS	4	8%	0	2	2
Reynolds MS2	2	4%	1	1	0

From a survey of the data in Table 26, it is observable that, in general, the percentage of Maggie’s transcriptions deemed melodically ‘identical’, or ‘almost identical’, to their counterparts in the other manuscripts was much higher than the corresponding figure for repertoire categorised as ‘different’. This indicates that Maggie may have been taught the fiddle by a member of the Kernan fiddle lineage. Further evidence for this is provided, firstly by Maggie’s transcription of a scale exercise ‘Prelude [A Minor]’ (FR2.077), and secondly by her consistent use of the bowing style ‘slur and cut’ in reels, both of which are characteristic of fiddle techniques employed by musicians from the Kernan tradition. Another clue that points towards this musical influence is Maggie’s transcription of a tune with strong connections with the Kernan tradition, ‘The First Rose in Summer’ (CE.001) (see Figure 37). Her version of this tune is identical to the same version, [Untitled] (MN.042), which was played by Michael

Francis McNerney (1898-1975) for Fr John Quinn in 1973 (see 8.7.2 *The recordings*). McNerney claimed in the recorded discussion with Fr Quinn (1973a) that he had learned his version from Patrick Brady (1861-1952), who was a fiddle student of Kernan's and lived quite close to Maggie Reynolds in Gaigue.

**Figure 37: 'The First Rose in Summer' (CE.001) – tune in the Cole MS connected to Kernan's teaching**

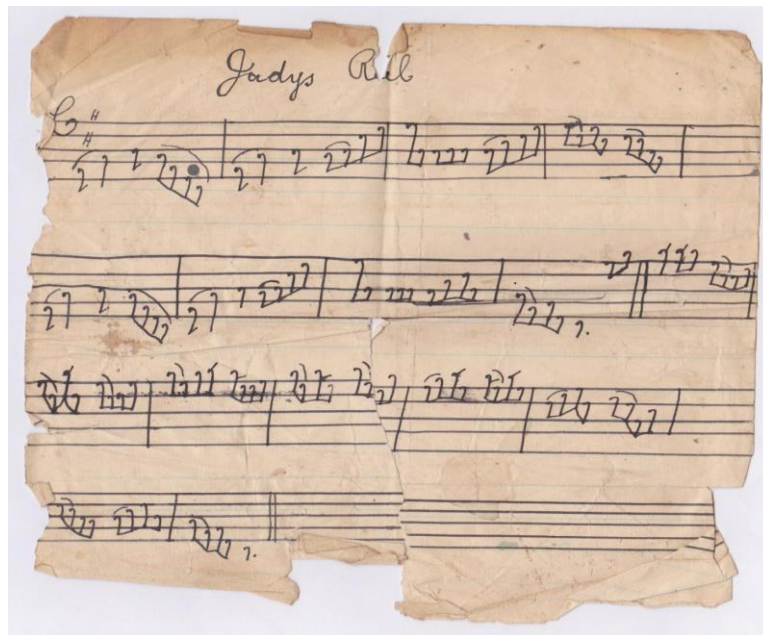


(Source: Cole MS – Vol.II, Source G)

### 7.3.8 Loose sheets

The last written source in the collection is a gathering of three loose leaves, all of which were written by Maggie Reynolds. The first leaf, labelled LE-A, is dimensionally smaller than the others, measuring 160mm wide by 203mm high, and appears to have been obtained from a notebook or journal. There is only one music item on this leaf. The second leaf, labelled LE-B, measures 175mm wide by 221mm high, and contains four music items spread over the two sides. The final and third leaf, labelled LE-C, measures 200mm wide by 230mm high and contains one music item.

**Plate 28: A sample loose leaf among the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS: LE-A; 1r**



(Source: O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection in the custody of Mary Brady-Hughes of Farragh, Cullyfad, Killoe)

### 7.3.9 Scribes and distribution of repertoire

In the entire collection of manuscripts in the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS there are 471 music items. Of these items, ten can be termed 'exercises', while the remaining 461 can be termed 'tunes'. The results of Table 27 represent all of these items categorised by scribe and manuscript:

**Table 27: Distribution of repertoire in the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS**

Row (Scribe) Column (Manuscript)	O'Farrell 1 MS	Reynolds MS1	Reynolds MS2	Reynolds MS3	Cole MS	Meagher MS	Loose Leaves	Total Items (Count)	Total Items (% of total)
Francis Reynolds	-	90	61	106	-	-	-	257	55%
Patrick O'Farrell	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	89	19%
Scribe D	-	-	-	-	-	66	-	66	14%
Maggie Reynolds	8	-	15	-	29	-	6	58	12%
Scribe E	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	0.2%
<b>Total tunes</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>100%</b>

As the results of Table 27 illustrate, over half of the items (55%) were written by Francis Reynolds, confirming that he was the dominant scribe in the collection. Patrick O'Farrell (19%), Scribe D (14%) and Maggie Reynolds (12%) also made significant contributions. Leaving aside the loose leaves, the collections range in repertoire size from the Cole MS, the smallest at 29 items, to the Reynolds MS3, the largest at 106 items.

## **7.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has established that the O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection was compiled by three successive generations of fiddle players from a single family lineage, Patrick O'Farrell, Francis Reynolds and Maggie Reynolds-Brady between the years *c*1870 to *c*1940, while it is currently owned by a fourth generation fiddle player, Mary Brady-Hughes. According to Doherty in her study of the evolution of fiddle music in Cape Breton, this "home environment" (1996, p.93) is key to the transmission process of music in a given region. In the context of this chapter, the familial link between these manuscript custodians has been a significant factor in the continued existence and preservation of the collection over this extended period of time. With each physical transfer from one generation to the next, additions, displacements and modifications were made by the new owners, and consequently the collection has changed, both in size and appearance, throughout this time.

An examination of the repertoire in the collection reveals that the scribes lived in a localised music environment, where their musical influences were primarily dictated by musicians in their own immediate family and community. In this case the main instigator was the fiddle master, Thomas Kernan. Through a textual comparison of the repertoire in the collection to the repertoires of the other written sources in this dissertation, it was determined that Kernan had a significant impact on the fiddle players who transcribed the collection. Both his methods of

teaching, and the tunes that he typically taught, are detectable throughout. For instance, two key facets of Kernan's teaching, the bowing technique, 'slur and cut', and *arpeggio* based 'Preludes', are evident in the repertoire transcribed by each generation of fiddle player in the collection. The fact that Kernan taught music through written means was a key factor in ensuring that there was unbroken continuum in the transmission of his teaching methods from one generation to another. While Kernan's teaching was the prime influence on the scribes in this collection, there is also evidence of outside influences in their musical transcriptions. The use of printed material in the form of music collections and sheet music as a source of contemporary repertoire is evident in most of the manuscripts examined in this chapter. These printed sources facilitated the transmission of newly-composed and popular folk music from across the world to regions like north Longford, which were geographically isolated and where musicians were otherwise largely dependent on local musicians and teachers as sources for their repertoire.

The O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection is the last written source to be examined in this dissertation. The next chapters will focus on audio sources compiled by fiddle players from the Kernan fiddle lineage between c1925 and c1975, a period in which music literacy and the written transmission of music witnessed a rapid decline. There is a natural chronological bridge in the timeline between the transcription of the last written source in this dissertation, the Cole MS, and the first audio source, the commercial recordings of Packie Dolan, both of which came into existence during the period between c1920 and c1930. The significance of this shift from written sources to audio sources of fiddle music in the Kernan tradition, among other themes, will be explored in Chapter Eight.

# Chapter Eight

Selected audio sources of  
fiddle music from the  
Connmhaicne region  
(*c1925-c1975*)

## 8 Chapter Eight

### 8.1 Introduction

Chapters Four to Seven have examined written sources of repertoire transcribed by musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage over a period of approximately hundred years from 1844 onwards. These literary artefacts are documentary evidence of a stage in the history of this fiddle tradition whereby the transmission of repertoire and style from one generation to the next occurred primarily through written means. These documents also provide the researcher with important metadata, providing insights into the social and cultural environment in which the documents were created and the lives of the people who created them. However, in response to advances that took place in audio technology from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards, a gradual decline in written transmission ensued. The commercial production of affordable audio devices, such as the gramophone and radio, provided musicians for the first time with access to on-demand sources of newly released Irish music. Chapter Eight will analyse this shift in music transmission from written to oral through an examination of the relevant audio sources produced by musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage in the period between *c*1925 and *c*1975. These audio sources, in the form of field recordings, commercial recordings and radio broadcasts, are integral to the study of this fiddle tradition, as they include aspects of fiddle style that are typically absent in their written counterparts. They capture, as Boyes puts it, “subtleties of tune and rhythm which defy notation” (1993, p.212). The audio sources complement the written in that tales from oral tradition can help the historian reconstruct historical events accurately in a way that literary sources alone cannot achieve: only this combination of sources, Maureen Murphy points out (2010, p. 297), provides a true account of what really happened. Together the written and audio music sources discussed in this dissertation will give a fully rounded view of the Kernan fiddle legacy.

Chapter Eight is divided into two sections. The first section of the chapter, 8.2 to 8.4, will outline the extant audio sources of Irish music produced by musicians who originated from the Connmaicne region. These sources encompass field recordings, commercial recordings and radio broadcasts. From an examination of all available sources, initial consideration will be given to audio sources of fiddle music derived from musicians with verifiable links to the Thomas Kernan fiddle heritage. In the final process of selection, the audio sources which support the aims and objectives of this dissertation will be chosen for further analysis. The sources selected in this process will be critically assessed under a number of headings in the second section of the chapter, sections 8.5 to 8.7. Initially, a biographical profile of the individual musicians will be conducted through a survey of family and music lore, genealogical research, and local historical literature. Emphasis will then turn to an analysis of the contents of the audio sources, focusing particularly on the sources of repertoire that influenced the individual musicians. This analysis will provide evidence of how fiddle music evolved and developed among the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage during the twentieth century, a period which coincided with a sharp decline locally in Irish music activity.

## **8.2 Field recordings**

In 1904, Capt. Francis O'Neill made the earliest known field recording of a musician who was born in the region of Connmaicne. That year, he recorded the renowned piper, Sergt. James Early (c1840-1914) of Cloone, Co. Leitrim.<sup>83</sup> O'Neill's recording was made on the cylinder phonograph, a device invented by Thomas Edison in 1877, and first used for ethnographical

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<sup>83</sup> Early recorded solo performances of the tunes: 'Bold Jack Donohue', 'Dan Curley' and 'Saddle the Pony', while he recorded the tune 'Scotch Mary' with Patsy Touhey and John McFadden. O'Neill's collection has recently been re-mastered and released in a compilation album entitled: *The Francis O'Neill Cylinders: Thirty-two recordings of Irish Traditional Music in America circa 1904* (Ward Irish Music Archives, Milwaukee, 2010).

field recordings in the United States around 1890 (Ziegler, 2012, p.4). This device had a monumental effect on the activity of collecting Irish music and song. Before its invention, collectors were restricted to the use of manuscripts as a means for permanently recording repertoire that they had collected from the folk community, and, as has been evidenced in this dissertation, the Connemara region contains a relatively large archive of manuscripts from the period before audio recording became possible. While there is no evidence that the cylinder phonograph was used by collectors in the Connemara region, several amateur collectors in other parts of Ireland did use this device, from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards, as a means of preserving the songs and music of their native regions before they were lost to future generations. Two of the most prominent collectors from this era who used the cylinder phonograph were Lorcán Ó Muirí and Luke Donnellan, who were most active in the Oriel region of Ulster (Ní Uallacháin, 2003, p. 17).

Although its immediate successor, the gramophone, remained popular for playing commercially produced recordings, for amateur field recording the cylinder phonograph was soon rendered obsolete, being gradually replaced by the reel-to-reel tape recorder, a device which provided a degree of high fidelity not achievable by its predecessor. Commercial production of the reel-to-reel tape recorder from the end of the 1950s onwards saw that it became more generally used by amateur collectors. In the region of Connemara, one such collector was the aforementioned Fr John Quinn (b.1940) of Shrovid, Co. Longford. During the 1960s and 1970s he recorded extensively in this region, and also further afield in other counties, such as Galway, Laois and Tipperary (Ward, 2011b). While he recorded musicians of many different instruments, he favoured those who played his own instrument, the fiddle. As a result, his personal collection contains several recordings of fiddle players from the Connemara region, all of which are outlined in Table 28:

**Table 28: Field recordings from the region of Connhaicne: 1904-1973**

<b>Musicians</b>	<b>Date of Recording</b>	<b>Collector</b>
Sergt. James Early (pipes)	1904	Capt. Francis O'Neill
Michael McNally (fiddle)	?	Michael McNally (Junior)
Michael Reilly (fiddle); Tom Greene (flute)	August, 1962	Fr John Quinn
Michael Reilly (fiddle), Jimmy Kearney (accordion), Tom Greene (flute)	June, 1963	Fr John Quinn
Michael Reilly (fiddle), Jimmy Kearney (accordion), Tom Greene (flute)	August, 1965	Fr John Quinn
Joe Callaghan (fiddle), Jimmy Kearney (accordion), Seán Marshall (flute)	January, 1966	Fr John Quinn
Pierce Butler (fiddle), Jimmy Dolan (pipes)	November, 1966	Fr John Quinn
Marie Reilly (fiddle)	November, 1966	Fr John Quinn
Paddy Reynolds (fiddle), Jim Mahon (piano)	05/09/1969	Fr John Quinn (copy)
Paddy Reynolds (fiddle), Hughie Reilly (fiddle), Cormac McGill (piano)	22/06/1972	Fr John Quinn
Jimmy Joe Reynolds (fiddle)	13/02/1972	Fr John Quinn
Michael Francis McNerney (fiddle)	5/2/1973 & 8/11/1973	Fr John Quinn
Séamus Thompson (fiddle) in Seisiún	12/7/1973 & 16/8/1973	Fr John Quinn
Pierce Butler (fiddle), Jimmy Dolan (pipes), Pat Maguire (tin whistle)	20/11/1973	Fr John Quinn

Of the Fr Quinn recordings, the sources meeting the initial criteria for examination in this dissertation are the field recordings of the following fiddle players: Michael McNally, Jimmy Joe Reynolds, Paddy Reynolds and Michael Francis McNerney. Of these, the recordings of the latter musician, Michael Francis McNerney, are the most suitable for further analysis in this chapter for a number of reasons. Firstly, McNerney (1898-1975) of Fostra, Dromard, Co. Longford, spent the major part of his life in his locality, and therefore his musical influences are likely to have been those derived predominantly from music-making activities in this region. In contrast, Paddy Reynolds emigrated to America and his style and repertoire was heavily influenced by the fiddle players that he encountered while living there, particularly Lad O'Beirne of County Sligo (Meade, 2005, p.22). Secondly, McNerney is demonstrably a third generation fiddle player of the Kernan fiddle lineage. This direct musical link to Kernan's teaching will facilitate the examination of fiddle music in this tradition during a later stage in its development. While the other three fiddle players outlined at the beginning of this section

are likely to be linked to Kernan's teaching, there is currently no evidence to verify this connection. Thirdly, of all the field recordings of local artists, the McNerney recordings are the most extensive ones in Fr Quinn's archive. McNerney was recorded by Fr Quinn over the course of two visits to his home in 1973, and during these recordings he played a relatively large number of tunes for him. Lastly, the recordings contain the verbal exchanges that took place between the collector, Fr John Quinn, and the recording artist, Michael Francis McNerney, and these conversations contain information about McNerney's fiddle heritage, about music-making in his locality, and he also described the means by which he learned the repertoire which he was recording from his teacher and from other local musicians. This type of metadata is a crucial source of information regarding the social and cultural factors of that era as they impacted on the musicians within the region of Connmhaicne.

### **8.3 Commercial recordings**

The type of cylinder phonograph that Capt. Francis O'Neill used in 1904 to record the Leitrim piper, Sergt. James Early, was subject to many improvements and modifications over the following decades. A play-only model of the phonograph, commonly known by the name of its most popular brand the 'gramophone', became very popular in Ireland. As Ó Súilleabháin points out though, it was met with a mixed reaction by musicians in Ireland: "some musicians welcomed an opportunity to hear new tunes, whereas others felt threatened by the virtuosity of the performances that they heard on the recordings" (2003, p.92). At this time in the history of audio technology, the major record companies were largely based in New York and Chicago, cities in America that contained large immigrant communities from Ireland. Feeding on sentiments of Irish nostalgia, the record companies sensed there was a market for the cultural arts among the diaspora scattered worldwide, and also for those who remained at home in Ireland. With demand for an authentic Irish product, musicians among the immigrant community in America were highly sought after for recording purposes.

From the region of Connhaicne the earliest known recording artist was the piper, Patrick Fitzpatrick (c1860-?), of Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim, who recorded eight sides in America between 1917 and 1919.<sup>84</sup> In the period immediate following this, commercial recordings were made by several fiddle players from the north Longford region of Connhaicne, who were based in New York at that time, namely Packie Dolan (1904-1932), Frank ‘Patrolman’ Quinn (1893-1964) and Jim Clarke (1887-1938).

Almost fifty years later, in 1976, another fiddle player from the region, Paddy Reynolds (1920-2005), recorded a fiddle duet with Andy McGann (1928-2004). By this time, the gramophone, which played commercial recordings at the speed of 78rpm, and was operated by a wind-up spring mechanism, had been supplanted by electrically operated ‘record players’ with the ability to produce audio output at three different speeds, 78rpm, 45rpm and 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm. While the gramophone typically had two tracks only, one on each side of the disc, the slower speeds now available allowed for more tracks to be recorded on the one disc. The 45rpm record typically had three or four tracks on each side, and was called ‘an extended play record’, generally abbreviated to EP. Those that played at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm contained six or seven tracks on each side. This type became known as a ‘long playing record’, abbreviated to LP. Such was the recording by Reynolds and McGann, an LP with fourteen tracks, as against the earlier gramophone records, which could play only two tracks, and became known by contrast as ‘78s’, because of the faster speed of the gramophone turntable.

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<sup>84</sup> According to O’Neill (1913, p. 320), Fitzpatrick built the Celtic Hall, New York in 1892. He also appears in a group photograph from this period.

**Table 29: List of musicians from the Connmaicne region who made commercial recordings: 1917-1976**

Musician	Date of Recording	Location of Recording
Patrick Fitzpatrick (uilleann pipes)	1917-1919	New York, America
Frank Quinn (fiddle & melodeon)	1921-1936	New York, America
Packie Dolan (fiddle)	1927-1929	New York, America
James Clarke (fiddle)	1928-1935	New York, America
Paddy Reynolds (fiddle) - in a duet with Andy McGann (fiddle)	1976	New York, America

Based on the required criteria for selection, the recordings of Dolan and Quinn have been chosen for further analysis in this chapter. These two fiddle players were born in north Longford and remained there until they emigrated to America while still in their teenage years. An additional factor in selecting these particular recordings for further examination is that they create a chronological bridge between the written and audio sources in this dissertation. The last of the written sources, the Cole MS (Chapter Seven), was compiled c1930s, while the Dolan and Quinn recordings began in the 1920s.<sup>85</sup> This chronological overlapping between the types of sources, written and audio, provides a natural continuum in assessing the development of the music in the Kernan fiddle tradition over the course of two centuries.

Of the two categories of sources outlined thus far in this chapter, field recordings and commercial recordings there is one distinctive difference between the musicians in these groups: the musicians who made commercial recordings, Dolan and Quinn, emigrated to America and recorded there, while the musician in the field recording, McNerney, was recorded in his home in north Longford, where he had lived all his life. While these two categories of recording were produced in different countries, all three of these musicians had the same starting point in their fiddle careers: they learned to play in the same place, north

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<sup>85</sup> There is one exception: Jack McBrien transcribed some tunes in the McBrien-Rogers MS at some time after 1930 (see 5.6.3 *Audio sources*).

Longford, and during the same period of time, c1900-c1915. Therefore, this dissertation will also examine the repertoire of each audio source to determine which of the two factors, their fiddle upbringing or their immediate musical environment, had the more influence on their recorded repertoire.

## 8.4 Radio recordings

For the musicians who remained in Ireland, the radio offered the only realistic opportunity to reach a wider audience outside the confines of their local community. According to the historian James MacNerney, one such fiddle player from north Longford was Ellen (*aka* Ellie) McNally (1903-1975) of Glenmore, Dromard, who broadcasted on 2RN around 1926 (2000, p. 181). As revealed by Fr Quinn's prior research on this subject (see Figure 1), McNally was taught by Jamesy Doyle (1887-1918), also of Glenmore, which makes her a third generation fiddle player of the Kernan fiddle lineage. There are no extant recordings of McNally's radio performances from c1926, as the facility for preserving broadcasts was not made available in Radio Éireann until 1936 (McElwain, 2013, p. 129). Few musicians appeared on the national airwaves during this period, and therefore McNally's broadcasts would have increased her profile in the local community. This assertion is acknowledged by MacAoidh who states that "to broadcast . . . was to effectively confer superstar status on a musician" (MacAoidh, 1994, p. 129). In later decades, members of the Reilly family from south Leitrim, particularly Mickey and Frank, also recorded on RTÉ radio, where Frank performed selections that included his playing of 'Greg's Pipes' in the *scordatura* tuning of AEAE, a technique characteristic of the region.<sup>86</sup> However, given that the music of the Reilly fiddle players is traced back to the fiddle

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<sup>86</sup> These recordings were broadcast by Ciarán Mac Mathúna on RTÉ radio on his programme "The Job of Journey Work".

master, Peter Kennedy (*c*1825-1902), whose musical link to Kernan is probable but not certain, the available content of their radio broadcasts will not be studied in this chapter. Therefore, this category of sources, radio recordings, has in fact no available source for the purposes of further examination in this study, but it may in the future provide research opportunities for a wider examination of music from the region.

**Table 30: List of radio recordings made by musicians from the Connmaicne region: *c*1926-1965**

<b>Musicians</b>	<b>Date of Recording</b>	<b>Radio broadcast</b>
Ellie McNally (fiddle)	<i>c</i> 1926	2RN Radio
Michael Reilly (fiddle), Jimmy Kearney (accordion), Fr John Quinn (fiddle)	14/12/1965	Radio Éireann Recording – Ciarán Mac Mathúna
Frank Reilly (fiddle) & other Leitrim musicians	14/12/1965	Radio Éireann Recording – Ciarán Mac Mathúna

In summary, there are three audio sources of fiddle players that will be examined in this chapter: commercial recordings of Packie Dolan and Frank Quinn, and a field recording of Michael Francis McNerney. The following sections will focus predominantly on the sources that influenced the repertoire recorded by the musicians and also the historical background of this repertoire. Aspects of individual and group fiddle styles, such as bowing technique and use of ornamentation will be analysed in Chapter Ten.

## 8.5 Packie Dolan (1904-1932)

One of the most renowned fiddle players who originated from north Longford is Packie Dolan (1904-1932). His fame, particularly in local circles, is due to the fact that he was one of the first fiddle players from this region commercially recorded in America. His recording career extended over a short period of approximately twenty months in the years from 1927 to 1929. Arguably, the highlight of Dolan's recording career was his duet in 1927 with the Sligo fiddle maestro, Michael Coleman (1891-1945). Dolan remains one of only two fiddle players with whom Coleman ever recorded. From this it could be inferred that Coleman regarded him highly, and his association with Coleman was bound to ensure his high regard both among his peers in America and in his home area in Ireland. It may have been this association with Coleman that led to his being invited to continue with a successful, if short, recording career. Before examining the details of Dolan's music career and the individual tunes that he recorded, this section will initially look at his family background in Ireland and consider the economic factors that led to his emigration to America.

### Plate 29: Packie Dolan (1904-1932)



(Source: [http://tunearch.org/wiki/Biography:Packie Dolan](http://tunearch.org/wiki/Biography:Packie_Dolan))

### **8.5.1 Family background**

Packie Dolan was born in 1904 in Aughadowry, a townland which is located near the village of Ballinamuck in the parish of Drumlish, Co. Longford (Bradshaw, 1994). His parents John (c1868-1950) and Catherine (c1876-1952) had nine children, of which he was the eldest (NAI, 2016c). Due to the economic pressures posed by this large family, in the year 1919 Dolan and his sister, Veronica Rose, were sent to live with their aunt in New York. At that time in Irish social history, the Dolans emigrating to America was a familiar narrative in many rural homes in the north Longford region. Small farmers like Dolan's father struggled to meet the financial burden of everyday life, and consequently many of their children had no other option but to move abroad to reside with more affluent relatives. While at first New York may have seemed a strange and large metropolis to a young man like Dolan, his artistic abilities in music and song most likely endeared him to other Irish émigrés based there, and helped him to meet people and settle into his new way of life. Although Packie had a relatively successful, if short, career in music in New York, his personal life while living there was marred by tragedy. His first wife, Bridget Gaffney, of Rathmore, Aughnacliffe, Co. Longford, died in 1925, less than twelve months after their marriage (Anon, 1995, p.18). In 1932, a few years later, his own life was ended prematurely when he drowned in a boating accident shortly before he was due to settle back home in Ireland with his second wife Margaret Finneran, who was pregnant at that time with their daughter Marjorie (Bradshaw, 1994).

**Plate 30: Gravestone of Packie Dolan's family in Ballinamuck Cemetery, Ballinamuck, Co. Longford**



(Source: Author, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

### **8.5.2 Music career**

According to Harry Bradshaw (2006, p.44), Dolan was taught the fiddle by his father, Johnny before he emigrated to America. It is not known who in turn taught Johnny to play the fiddle. Thomas Kernan was the leading fiddle teacher during Johnny's formative years in the 1870s and 1880s and both musicians lived in the same parish of Drumlish. Three Brady fiddlers, Phil, Patrick and Peter (see *The Brady fiddlers of Gaigue: Vol.II*, Source F), who lived beside Johnny in the neighbouring townland of Gaigue, were all taught by Kernan in this period of the mid-to-late 1800s.

It is likely that Dolan's fiddle style and repertoire, which he brought with him to New York in 1919, was influenced both by the teaching he received from Johnny and also from his

immersion in the local Ballinamuck music scene. However, his recording career started nine years after he left Ireland, and the repertoire he recorded between 1927 and 1929 was influenced by his time already spent in New York. Bradshaw, who has studied Dolan's music, concurs with this theory and is of the opinion that there are stylistic traits of other musicians evident in his playing:

His [Packie Dolan] style shows influence of Sligo men Michael Coleman and James Morrison in the highly developed and exciting fiddle sound produced by a driving bow, full rounded tone with double-stopped and ringing open strings (2006, p.44)

Dolan's musical legacy is the twenty-four sides he released between March 1927 and January 1929. His full discography is documented by Richard K. Spottswood in *Ethnic Music on Records: A Discography of Ethnic Recordings Produced in the United States, 1893-1942*, Vol. 5, (1990), a summary of which is included in Vol.II, Source J. According to Spottswood (pp.2750-2751), Dolan's recording career began with an initial session on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1927, conducted purely for testing purposes. His next recording session on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1927 was unsuccessful, as all of the four sides recorded were rejected by the record company. However, his commercial breakthrough arrived in this same month, when he released two sides in a duet with Michael Coleman. Subsequent to this, he recorded the remainder of his sides over the course of four sessions in April 1927, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1928, 5<sup>th</sup> September 1928 and 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1929. In the first of these recording sessions he released the sides under his own name, 'James P. Dolan', on the subsequent two as 'Packie Dolan's Melody Boys', and on the last one as 'Packie Dolan and his Boys'. As these latter two names suggest, Dolan was accompanied by other musicians on these particular sides. One of these musicians was Ned Smith from Cavan, who played the bones and tambourine. The flute and tin whistle are also audible on these sides, but the associated musicians have not been identified thus far.

In recent decades, all but one of the twenty-four sides that Dolan recorded have been digitised and commercially reissued. Twenty two of these sides were re-mastered by Harry Bradshaw and released on one compilation album entitled *Packie Dolan: The forgotten fiddle player of the 1920s* (Viva Voce, 1994). Another side was included on the album: *The Wheels of the World Volume 1: Early Irish-American Music* (Track 8: The Irish Girl, Shanachie Entertainment, 2005). The only record that has not been re-mastered since its original release in 1929 is ‘The Ships Are Sailing - Reel’.<sup>87</sup>

### 8.5.3 Sources of repertoire

In all, Dolan recorded forty tunes and four songs during his career. For the purposes of this fiddle music study, the songs will be excluded from analysis. Of the forty tunes that he recorded, nine were rejected by the record company, and therefore only his renditions of the remaining thirty-one tunes can be examined further. Using all available audio sources of Dolan’s music, his entire instrumental repertoire was converted into music notation using the software programme *Sibelius*. These written representations of Dolan’s music are collated in Vol.II, Source J.

From an analysis of both the titles and music text of the recorded tunes in Vol.II, Source J, it is quite apparent that for the most part, Dolan recorded tunes obtained from sources outside of his upbringing in north Longford (*see* 8.5.2. Music career). The most compelling evidence for this conjecture is the fact that his recorded repertoire is not comparable with the canon of fiddle music from the Connmaicne region as established by the extant manuscripts examined earlier in this dissertation. For example, of the thirty-one tunes released, nineteen of these are not

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<sup>87</sup> This particular record was obtained from the collector, Alan Morrisroe, of Drumcondra, Dublin 3.

found the aforementioned fiddle manuscripts. This accounts for over 60% of Dolan’s released repertoire, a statistic which implies that he may have obtained this specific repertoire from sources that he encountered while living in New York. There are only two sides that have tangible links to his home place in north Longford. The first one is entitled ‘The Fair at Drumlish - Jig’ (PD.015), which commemorates a regular event that took place in Drumlish, a village close to Dolan’s home in Ballinamuck, and consists of a medley of well-known jigs. The second side that has suggestions of a local provenance is ‘Royal Charley – Old Time Set Tune’ (PD.032) (see Figure 38). As the subtitle implies, this tune was commonly played by musicians to accompany the half sets at local social events. ‘Royal Charley’ may also have been a dance in itself, as it was named specifically in the following list of dances taken from a witness’ account of a local crossroads dance that typically took place in the north Longford region around the turn of the twentieth century: “Eight Hand Reels, Four Hand Reels, Waltzes, Jenny Lin’s Polkas, Royal Charlie, The Lancers Dance, Half Sets and the Waves of Tory” (NFC, 2013d).

**Figure 38: ‘Royal Charley – Old Time Set Tune’ (PD.032) – example of a tune with Connhaicne provenance in the Packie Dolan recordings**



(Source: Packie Dolan recordings – Vol.II, Source J)

Aside from these two examples, the majority of Dolan's repertoire appears to have been sourced from musicians he encountered in New York and from printed music collections. Recording tunes obtained from other musicians was commonly practised among recording artists during that era. For example, according to Smith (2008, p. 54), the Sligo fiddler, Michael Coleman, recorded at least two tunes, 'The Tarbolton' and 'Dr. Gilbert', which he had learned from Canadian acquaintances. A survey of Dolan's repertoire reveals that he used surnames in a significant portion of the tune titles, of which examples include 'Walsh's Jigs', 'Tynan's Polkas' and 'McFadden's Reels'. Of the forty tunes that he recorded, eight are named in this manner. These tunes may be named after musicians who played them, or from whom he obtained them. For instance, 'McFadden's Reels' are more than likely to be tunes associated with the famous fiddle player, John McFadden (1847-1913), who contributed several tunes to the Capt. Francis O'Neill's collection *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903). There is also strong evidence that Dolan sourced at least three tunes from that printed music collection: 'The Blackhaired Lass [1/2]' (PD.009), 'Steampacket Reel [1/2]' (PD.029) and 'The Killarney Wonder' (PD.040) (see Figure 39). All this suggests that the greater part of Dolan's recording output was influenced by music he heard after he came to live in New York. Although there are some recorded tunes which appear to have been learned from his upbringing in north Longford, for the main part his style and repertoire were moulded by his experiences after he left home for America.

**Figure 39: ‘The Killarney Wonder’ (PD.040) – example of a tune obtained from printed sources in the Packie Dolan recordings**



(Source: Packie Dolan recordings – Vol.II, Source J)

## 8.6 Francis Quinn (1893-1964)

While Packie Dolan is arguably one of north Longford's best known musicians, another fiddle player from the region, Frank 'Patrolman' Quinn (1893-1964), also started his recording career in America during the 1920s. As well as a parallel career in commercial recording, both men share a similar biographical and musical background, and therefore the influences on Quinn's fiddle playing are likely to be comparable with those on Dolan's. In light of these analogies, this section on Frank Quinn will examine his family history and recording career, using the same approach taken in the analysis of Packie Dolan's life and times.

### 8.6.1 Family background

Frank Quinn was born on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1893 (FS, 2015b) in Greagh, Drumlish, which is less than ten kilometres from Packie Dolan's home in Ballinamuck. He is listed as "Francis Quinn" in the National Census of Ireland for 1901 (NAI, 2016d). He was then aged eight, and living with him at that time were his parents, Patrick (35) and Mary Anne (34), and his siblings, Lizzie (14), Mary Anne (12), Maggie (6) and John (2). In a life story similar to Dolan's, Quinn emigrated to America at the relatively young age of seventeen. According to the passenger ship records (LEF, 2016a) in Ellis Island, New York, Quinn arrived there on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1910. Accompanying him on this trip was Patrick Devine, also of Drumlish. The passenger record states that he intended to stay initially with his sister, Mary A. Quinn, who was based in Highland Falls, New York.<sup>88</sup> Upon arriving there, Quinn soon settled into his new environment, and like many of his fellow Irish immigrants, he became a patrolman in the local police force. According to the United States Census of 1940 (FS, 2015c), Quinn was then married to Mary,

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<sup>88</sup> In the 1911 Census of Ireland (NAI, 2016e), Francis and his two sisters Mary Anne and Lizzie are crossed out on this form suggesting that their father made an initial mistake in including children of his who had emigrated.

aged forty-two. They lived in the Bronx, New York with their two children, Frank Jr. (11) and Grace (10). Other than this documentation, little is known of Quinn's personal life and times. The death records show that he died in January, 1964, aged seventy-one years of age (FS, 2015d).

### **8.6.2 Music career**

Quinn played the melodeon as well as the fiddle, and it is quite likely that he learned to play these instruments from teachers in his locality of Drumlish before he emigrated to America in 1910. With regards to the fiddle, it is very likely he was taught by the local fiddle master, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), who in turn was taught by 'Blind' Kernan. The following circumstantial evidence supports this theory: (1) Rogers lived less than three kilometres from Quinn's home in a neighbouring townland of Oghill, (2) Quinn's formative years in Greagh from 1893 to 1910 coincided with a period in Rogers' life when he was working as a full-time fiddle teacher from 1894 to 1906, and (3) Quinn named one of his records as 'Master Rogers – Reel Medley' (Spottswood, 1990, p.2852), which suggests that he was giving recognition to Rogers and the influential role that he had played at the beginning of his music career back home.<sup>89</sup>

As in the case of Packie Dolan, Quinn was a multi-talented artist: he made commercial records on two instruments, the melodeon and fiddle, and he was also a renowned singer. According to Nan Fitzpatrick (1909-2002) of Aughavas, Co. Leitrim, who recorded singing duets with Quinn in the 1930s, he also played the clarinet in the New York Police Band (Kelly, 1991). His aptitude in this instrument is likely to have been nurtured in one of the several marching bands that existed in the Drumlish region when he was growing up. Mikie Carolan (1891-1981), who

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<sup>89</sup> Rogers was the former principal of Esker National School, Killoe, Co. Longford up until his dismissal in 1894 and therefore, would have been known locally as "Master Rogers".

was a contemporary of Quinn's, before the latter's departure for America, played the cornet in one of these bands in Drumlish, and acknowledged that "everyone that played music had to play in the band" (Quinn, 1979). Frank Quinn's competence across the two disciplines of music and song was advantageous to him in securing recording contracts. Coupled with this factor, he was fortunate in that he lived during an era in America when the commercial recording of ethnic music was witnessing a steady growth. During his recording career of the 1920s and 1930s, nostalgia for Ireland and its culture was intensifying among the generations of Irish emigrants who had settled in America since the times of the Great Famine. With his diverse range of artistic talents, Quinn was suitably placed to make commercial recording releases in this growing market. In an effort to boost his popularity, he portrayed himself in the role of the stage Irishman in a significant amount of his recordings. Such was his success in this ploy that he became the most recorded Irish traditional musician of that era. Unfortunately, the stage Irishman persona has remained with him to this day and has overshadowed his credibility as a musician to a certain degree. Hence, one of the aims of this chapter is to challenge this opinion by highlighting his proficiency in the art of fiddle playing.

Quinn had a substantial recording career spanning over fifteen years from approximately 1921 to 1936. At the beginning of this career, from May 1921 to February 1924, he recorded approximately thirty-one tunes, all of which were on the melodeon. This suggests that the melodeon may have been his instrument of choice at that time. From this period onwards, however, his instrumental recording output was split evenly between the fiddle and melodeon. A small number of these recordings were duets with other musicians, such as Joe Maguire (fiddle), Jim Clarke (fiddle), Eddie Dunn Jr. (banjo) and P. Crowley (melodeon). As the years progressed, Quinn recorded less and less instrumental tracks and focused more on recording songs, both individually, and in collaboration with other singers, including some with the aforementioned Nan Fitzpatrick (1909-2002). His full discography is documented by Richard

K. Spottswood in *Ethnic Music on Records: A Discography of Ethnic Recordings Produced in the United States, 1893-1942*, Vol. 5, (1990, pp.2846-2852), a summary of which is included in Vol.II, Source K.

Since the initial release of Quinn's records, only a small portion have been digitised and re-mastered for commercial release. The most substantial of these releases is the album *Frank Quinn: If You Are Irish* (Arhoolie, 1997), which contains a mixture of instrumental and singing tracks. According to the record collector, Alan Morrisroe, a significant number of Quinn's records were sold in small amounts, and therefore are very difficult to locate (2015, personal correspondence). Morrisroe, however, through a lifetime of dedication has obtained nearly all of Quinn's original records. For the purposes of this dissertation he digitised each one individually and made them available to this writer for further examination. The remainder of Quinn's recordings were obtained from various compilation albums and from another collector, and author, Barry Taylor (2015, personal correspondence) (see: Vol.II, Source K).

Subsequent to securing all available sources of Quinn's records, the tunes he played were converted into music notation using *Sibelius*. In all, Quinn recorded approximately 130 tunes on both the melodeon and fiddle. Of this total, 105 tunes were notated from the digitised music sources. When this figure is subdivided by instrument, it represents 43 tunes on the fiddle and 62 tunes on the melodeon. The recordings on the latter instrument were included in this exercise because it is very likely that he played this repertoire on the fiddle as well. This supposition is substantiated by an examination of two recordings of the same tune, 'The Swallow's Tail - Reel' (FQ.007) and 'The Old Swallow Reel' (FQ.081), which were played on the melodeon and fiddle respectively. When the two versions of this tune were analysed, it revealed that they were almost identical melodically.

## Plate 31: Frank Quinn (1893-1964)



(Source: The Voice of the People, Vol.10, Topic Records TSCD660, 1998, Compact Disc)

## Plate 32: Frank Quinn's passport application in 1924

The original and each copy of an application for a passport must have attached to it a copy of the applicant's photograph. The photograph must be on this page, should have a light background, and be not over three inches in size.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
COUNTY OF NEW YORK  
I, Frank Quinn, a Naturalized Citizen of the United States, hereby apply for the Department of State, at Washington, for a passport.

I solemnly swear that I was born at Co Longford, Ireland on October 11, 1893 that my father, Patrick Quinn, was born at Co Longford, Ireland that I migrated to the United States, sailing from Queenstown, Ireland on 6/28/1910 that I resided 13 years, uninterruptedly, in the United States, from 1910 to 1924 at New York City that I was introduced by the United States Bureau of Customs to the Supreme Court of the State of N.Y. at New York City on 28th April 1924 as shown by the Certificate of Naturalization presented herewith that I am the son of Patrick Quinn and Elizabeth Quinn and that I was domiciled in the United States since my naturalization at the following place for the following period:

from Albany to Albany and that I was domiciled in the United States, my present residence being 2420 10th St in the State of New York at Albany My last passport was issued from Albany and was None I am about to go abroad temporarily, and intend to return to the United States within Six months with the purpose of residing and performing the duties of citizenship therein; and I desire a passport for use in visiting the countries hereinafter named for the following purpose:

Ireland to see my Father & Mother

I intend to leave the United States from the port of New York sailing on board the Adriatic on July 5 1924

Further, I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion. So help me God.

Frank Quinn

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th day of May 1924 at Albany New York

My Commission Expires May 28 1926

Clerk of the Court at Albany

Source: "United States Passport Applications, 1795-1925," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QKDX-WW1G> : 13 October 2015), Francis Quinn, 1924; citing Passport Application, New York, United States, source certificate #429827, Passport Applications, January 2, 1906 - March 31, 1925, 2544, NARA microfilm publications M1490 and M1372 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,750,612.

### 8.6.3 James Clarke (1887-1938)

Between 1934 and 1935, Frank Quinn recorded a number of tracks with James Clarke, a fiddle player who grew up in Bawn, Drumlish, which is approximately five kilometres from Quinn's home in Greagh. According to Michael Kelly, Clarke emigrated to America around 1910 and married Mary Nolan in 1917 (Clarke & Gill, 2016, p.15). In a similar manner to his other north Longford fiddle contemporaries, such as Packie Dolan and Frank Quinn, he immersed himself into the local Irish music scene in New York eventually becoming the director of the "Smiles and Tears of Erin" orchestra. According to newspaper records, this ensemble of Irish musicians regularly broadcasted on WLWL station in the early 1930s (Anon., 1934). One of the very few non-documentary references to Clarke is from an interview with a contemporary of his in New York, Louis Quinn Snr. (1904-1991), who remarked in 1977 that "Jim Clarke . . . he was from Longford, a very good fiddle player too" (New York University, 2016).

Clarke's debut as a recording artist began in 1928, when he recorded two tunes 'Mother's Delight – Reel' and 'The Old Thatched House – Hornpipe'. Subsequently, there was a gap of six years until his next recording in November, 1934, when he collaborated with Frank Quinn and other musicians on a number of tracks with his "Smiles and Tears of Erin" orchestra (see Vol.II, Source K, FQ.119-FQ.128). The 78rpm records released by this group had an impact on Irish musicians back in Ireland, which is evident in the title of the tune 'The Smiles and Tears of Erin' (No.101), a version of 'The Crooked Road to Dublin', which Breandán Breathnach obtained from the Dublin accordion player, Sonny Brogan (1906-1965), for his first volume of *Ceol Rince na hÉireann* (1963). In December, 1935, Clarke made a final recording session in collaboration with Frank Quinn. In this session, he accompanied Quinn on the song 'Pat and Mike', and, as a fiddle duet, they recorded the tunes 'Pretty Peggy Ann – Reels', 'Dowd's Favourite' and 'The Seaman's Hornpipe'.

An analysis of the tunes Clarke recorded reveals that none of them are found in the repertoires of the other written and audio sources of this dissertation, indicating that they may have been learned by him after he emigrated to New York. While Clarke appears to have not recorded any tunes from his time growing up in north Longford, nonetheless, it is quite likely that before he emigrated to New York he was taught the fiddle by Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), who in turn was taught by his uncle, 'Blind' Kernan. As in the case of Frank Quinn, he lived only a few kilometres from Rogers in his youth and his recording of the track 'Master Rogers – Reel Medley' (Spottswood, 1990, p.2852) in 1934 strongly suggests he was acknowledging the impact Rogers had on his fiddle career during his formative years.

#### **8.6.4 Sources of repertoire**

An analysis of Quinn's recording output reveals that his sources of repertoire are for the most part very similar to those identified for Packie Dolan's recorded repertoire in the previous section: (1) other musicians in New York, (2) printed music collections, and (3) some older repertoire from younger days in north Longford. Of the first category, other musicians, a survey of the repertoire's titles reveals that a certain portion of the tunes were probably sourced from the musicians whose surnames are in the titles. Examples of such titles include: 'Margaret Collins' Reel' (FQ.017) and 'Dick Sheridan's Reel' (FQ.023).

**Figure 40: ‘Margaret Collins’ Reel’ (FQ.017) – example of a tune sourced from New York musicians in the Frank Quinn recordings**



**(Source: Francis Quinn recordings – Vol.II, Source K)**

Overall, there are eleven tunes of this type in the recordings. There is also strong evidence that Quinn sourced tunes from the printed music collection *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903). In some instances his renditions of these tunes are almost identical to their counterparts in this collection. Tunes from this category include ‘The Westport Chorus [1/2]’ (FQ.076) and ‘The Tenpenny Bit [2/2]’ (FQ.103). Eight tunes have been matched to versions in printed material, while there are strong suggestions that at least ten other tunes may have been sourced from O'Neill's collection at some point in his music career. Lastly, an examination of both the tune titles and musical text demonstrates that a certain portion of the repertoire Quinn recorded was learned at home before he emigrated. Examples of tune titles which include both his own surname and place names in County Longford are ‘Quinn's Irish Polka’ (FQ.018), ‘The Longford Jig’ (FQ.015), ‘Rakes of Drumlish’ (FQ.044) and ‘The Ballinamuck Jig’ (FQ.066 & FQ.067). A comparison of notated music from Quinn's recorded repertoire with the repertoire of the fiddle manuscripts in this dissertation verifies that a sizeable proportion of Quinn's

repertoire is of a local provenance. Tunes such as ‘The Sailor’s Hornpipe’ (FQ.001), ‘The Varsouvianna’ (FQ.020) and ‘The Leg of the Duck – Jig’ (FQ.061) are melodically almost identical to their counterparts in the fiddle manuscripts. However, in cases where particular tunes have a consistent melodic structure across all sources of printed, recorded and manuscript forms, both local and from further afield, it is not possible to authenticate the original source of the tune.

**Figure 41: ‘The Longford Jig’ (FQ.015) – example of a tune with Connhaicne provenance in the Frank Quinn recordings**



(Source: Francis Quinn recordings – Vol.II, Source K)

In summary, the music Quinn recorded was heavily influenced by sources he encountered outside his native area in north Longford. While he recorded a small portion of music he had learned at home in Drumlish, for the most part his sources of repertoire were predominantly other musicians with whom he played in New York and also the printed music collection, *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903). This demonstrates that Quinn, in a similar fashion to Packie Dolan, was more receptive to the prevailing trends in his musical environment in New York than to his music heritage from his formative years growing up in north Longford.

## 8.7 Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975)

The fourth and last audio source to be examined in this chapter is a field recording of the north Longford fiddle player, Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975). This recording was made by the collector, Fr John Quinn, over the course of two visits to McNerney's home in 1973. In contrast to the two previous fiddle players examined, Packie Dolan and Frank Quinn, McNerney neither emigrated from Ireland, nor recorded commercially, and therefore his fiddle style was shaped for the most part by musical influences from within the region of north Longford and its environs. To verify this conjecture, the repertoire from McNerney's field recordings will be analysed in this section to determine which musical influences had the most effect on him throughout his lifetime. Before this analysis is conducted, an initial exploration of McNerney's life and times will be conducted, followed by an examination of the background that led to the inception of the field recordings in 1973 and the integral role of the collector Fr John Quinn in this process.

### 8.7.1 Family background

Michael Francis McNerney was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1898, in Fostra, Dromard, Co. Longford, a place which is located close to the village of Aughnacliffe (Ward, 2011i). His parents were Charles McNerney (c1853-1940) and Annie Higgins (c1856-1923), who came from the townlands of Fostra and Rathmore respectively. McNerney had no siblings and he later married a local girl, Katie Smith (1897-1979), also of Fostra. Katie's father, Bernard Smith, owned a shop in Edenmore and according to family lore he was a fiddle player too (Ward, 2011i).<sup>90</sup> Michael Francis and Katie had eleven children: Anna Catherine Daly (b.1923), Charles

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<sup>90</sup> As Smith lived beside Jamesy Doyle, who was taught by Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), it's possible that he may have been taught by Rogers too.

(b.1925), Maura Maloney (b.1926), Brian (b.1928), Michael Francis Jr. (b.1930), James Patrick (b.1932), Helen Smith (b.1934), Cecelia Ryan (b.1936), Liam (b.1938), Ita Murtagh (b.1939) and Colm (b.1941). McNerney inherited his parent's farm and worked there throughout his lifetime. He died on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1975 (Ward, 2011i), at the age of seventy-seven, an event which occurred approximately eighteen months after his last field recording with Fr Quinn in November, 1973. Although he made occasional trips to places around Ireland and once to America in 1964, he was based for the most part of his life in Fostra. This constant attachment to his native region ensured that his musical repertoire was influenced for the greater part by sources emanating from within this localised setting.

**Plate 33: Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975), far left, and other musicians aboard a passenger ship sailing from America to Ireland in 1964**

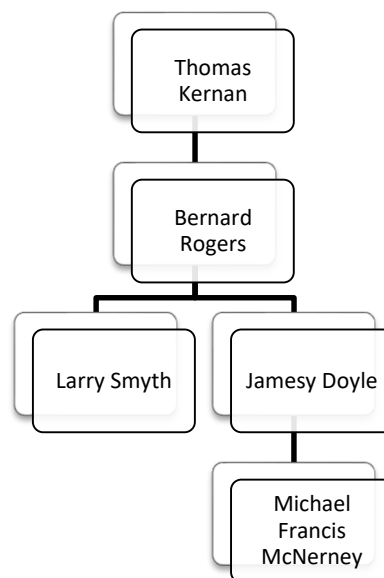


(Source: McNerney family, Fostra, Aughnacliffe, Dromard, Co. Longford)

### 8.7.2 The recordings

The field recordings examined in the following sections were made by the collector, Fr John Quinn (b.1940), during two separate visits to McNerney's home in 1973, specifically on the dates, 5<sup>th</sup> February (Quinn, 1973a) and 8<sup>th</sup> November (Quinn, 1973b). In an interview with Fr Quinn (Ward, 2011b), he explained that the origin of these recordings is actually indirectly linked to the discovery of the Larry Smyth MS, a document examined in Chapter Six. When this manuscript was first brought to the attention of Fr Quinn in 1969 by the scribe's grandson, Lawrence (b.1950s), he subsequently made a number of visits to the Smyth household in Abbeylara to enquire with Lawrence's father, Seán (c1918-1990), about its provenance. Seán disclosed to Fr Quinn that the manuscript was written by his father, Larry (1866-1930). Larry, he added, was taught by the fiddle master, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), whom Fr Quinn knew to have been taught by Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887). As the conversation deepened, Seán expanded on the subject and he informed Fr Quinn of fiddle players, in addition to his father, who shared a musical lineage that could be traced back to Kernan. One of the fiddle players he named was Michael Francis McNerney. As Seán explained, the musical link between McNerney and his father, Larry, was the aforementioned Bernard Rogers. Both Larry and McNerney's fiddle teacher, Jamesy Doyle (1887-1918), had been taught by him (see Figure 42). Having obtained this information, Fr Quinn decided to explore this topic further and he visited McNerney twice in 1973, firstly to query him about his fiddle heritage, and secondly to make field recordings of his repertoire.

**Figure 42: The connected fiddle heritage of Michael Francis McNerney and Larry Smyth to Thomas Kernan**



### 8.7.3 Fr Quinn’s role as a collector

Given that these visits by Fr Quinn to McNerney’s home in 1973 were pre-arranged, McNerney was aware on some level that Fr Quinn intended to make a field recording. In both of Fr Quinn’s roles as a priest and musician in the area of north Longford, his familiarity with local musicians facilitated his ability to elicit a recording from McNerney, who at the time was relatively old and out of practice. McNerney was quite familiarly known to Fr Quinn, as he used to frequent music sessions in Moxham St. Hall, Granard, in the years 1969 and 1970 (Ward, 2011b). These sessions were organised by Fr Quinn, using a list of invited musicians, gleaned from a survey of the traditional musicians in Co. Longford, which he had recently conducted. McNerney had in fact been one of the informants in the composition of the survey list. According to Caldwell, a familiarity between a collector and the recorded musician is a crucial element in successful field recordings of rural musicians such as McNerney (2010, p.13). For example, he noted that the Donegal fiddle player, Johnny Doherty (1900-1980), “was more pre-disposed to open up musically in recording sessions with those whom he knew well” (p.13). In a similar context, Fr

Quinn's intimate knowledge of Irish music, particularly of the music scene in Connmhaicne, was conducive to gaining McNerney's trust.

Fr Quinn was supportive of McNerney's playing throughout the recording, particularly during frustrating times for McNerney when he struggled to remember tunes, or felt that he was not playing them sufficiently well. Additionally, the convivial environment of McNerney's home provided an ideal recording setting: McNerney's wife, Katie, was present throughout, while members of their extended family were constantly moving in and out of the recording setting, an area which was based in either the kitchen or the living room. These unscripted interjections created a natural social setting that was spontaneous and free flowing, allowing McNerney to feel relaxed and open to sharing his repertoire with Fr Quinn. To preserve this intimate and social atmosphere on his first visit to McNerney's home, Fr Quinn refrained from turning the recorder off during the verbal exchanges that took place in between tunes. An examination of the resulting recorded discussions reveal that they conversed about several topics of interest to this dissertation, such as the provenance of McNerney's tunes, his musical background, links to the Kernan fiddle tradition, details of local musicians with whom he played, and tales of music lore that might since have been lost to modern generations. This dialogue is an important source of metadata, allowing a greater understanding of how McNerney sourced his repertoire and also the factors that influenced changes within the Kernan fiddle lineage and the greater musical region of Connmhaicne during that era.

#### **8.7.4 Digitisation of the recordings**

Fr Quinn recorded McNerney on tape cassettes that had a time capacity of 120 minutes: 60 minutes each side. He used one tape for each of the visits on 5<sup>th</sup> February and 8<sup>th</sup> November. The total recording time of the two visits was approximately 195 minutes: the first visit used

the full capacity of the tape, 120 minutes, while the second visit recorded approximately 75 minutes.<sup>91</sup> In order to analyse these recordings for purposes of this dissertation, the cassettes were digitally converted into MP3 files, from which the tunes and dialogue were then transcribed into *Sibelius* and *Microsoft Word*, respectively. For the purposes of this dissertation only the musical scores have been included in this source (see Vol.II, Source L): the dialogue script is the possession of this writer.

### 8.7.5 Triggers

An examination of the recordings, both the music and the dialogue, reveals that McNerney's repertoire consisted of least 88 distinct tunes at that point in time. There were also 21 tunes in the recordings he played more than once and these duplicates have been categorised as "Repeated Tunes" in Table 31. Of these 88 distinct tunes referred to by McNerney, only 69 of them were recorded by Fr John Quinn, the remaining 19 tunes were unrecorded, but were mentioned by McNerney as tunes he knew how to play. This specific category of 'Unrecorded' repertoire indicates that McNerney's repertoire over his musical career was in fact much greater than was captured in the field recordings.

**Table 31: Analysis of tunes referred to by Michael Francis McNerney in 1973**

Status	Distinct tunes	Repeated tunes	Total tunes
Recorded	69	21	90
Mentioned but not recorded	19	-	19
Total Tunes	88	21	109

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<sup>91</sup> A few years later Fr Quinn was concerned about the quality of these cassettes and decided to convert them onto more reliable ones that had a reduced capacity of sixty minutes: thirty minutes each side. As a result of this process, the number of cassettes was doubled from two to four. Subsequently, they were catalogued from A4 to A7 in Fr Quinn's archive: A4-A5 refers to the first recording, while A6-A7 refers to the second one.

It is apparent from an examination of the dialogue in the recordings that McNerney's recorded repertoire was prompted or triggered, for the most part, by the interviewer, Fr Quinn. As stated previously, Fr Quinn knew that McNerney's fiddle heritage was linked to the teaching of 'Blind' Kernan, and therefore he consistently encouraged McNerney to play repertoire that was connected to this fiddle tradition. As well as ensuring that McNerney was aware of his musical connection to Kernan, Fr Quinn also brought his copy of the Larry Smyth MS with him during his first visit, and used it as a tool to compare the repertoires of McNerney and Smyth. When on occasions that McNerney did not recognise the titles of tunes from this manuscript, Fr Quinn pursued him further by playing and lilted the related music. This was a successful tactic as McNerney was sometimes more familiar with the music of the tunes rather than their titles. As a result of this trigger, the Smyth MS was responsible for prompting nearly 18% of McNerney's total recorded repertoire.

Aside from Fr Quinn and the Smyth MS, the other less significant triggers that prompted McNerney's repertoire during the recording were mostly uncontrived and occurred in a spontaneous manner. For example, the title of one tune sometimes prompted McNerney to play another tune with a similar title, e.g., the mention of the tune 'Sleepy Moggie' led to McNerney playing the tune, 'Drowsy Moggie' (MN.045). Other triggers that inspired McNerney's recorded repertoire were tunes connected with his local music-making environment. For instance, conversations about local musicians, such as Jamesy Doyle, Patrick Brady and Jimmy Connolly, directed his playing towards tunes he associated with them, while reference to local musical activities, such as set dancing and marching bands, prompted McNerney to remember tunes he played in these performance settings.

### 8.7.6 Sources of Repertoire

McNerney's life and times were centred in Dromard, a parish that is located at the very tip of north Longford and which borders the regions of south Leitrim and south Cavan. His musical activities took place, by and large, in music-making settings within this border region and accordingly, a significant proportion of his repertoire is likely to have been influenced by sources derived from this localised musical environment. As McNerney's career progressed, he became more susceptible to influences outside of this localised setting. The publication of printed music collections such as *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903), in tandem with the commercial production of audio devices such as the radio and gramophone, provided musicians, like McNerney, with access to contemporary sources of repertoire that were affordable and accessible. According to the ethnomusicologist, Caoimhín MacAoidh, who has examined the history of the Donegal fiddle tradition, the range of sources outlined here, which may have influenced McNerney's repertoire, is typical of the music era in which McNerney lived (1994, p. 187). Expanding on this theme, MacAoidh identified four primary sources of repertoire that influenced the Donegal fiddle player, Pat Mulhearn (b.1900), a contemporary musician of McNerney's:

- (1) Tunes acquired from participation in music gatherings
- (2) The old house dance repertoire
- (3) Printed collections
- (4) Audio sources<sup>92</sup>

Using MacAoidh's taxonomy of sources, this section will endeavour, having identified McNerney's original source for each tune he played, to classify these tunes into their respective categories of sources of repertoire. In the process of identification, initially the script of the

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<sup>92</sup> MacAoidh labelled this category "Commercial Recordings". It has been modified here to include all audio sources of repertoires such as the radio and television.

field recordings was examined to discover instances in which McNerney himself stated his exact source for a particular tune. For the remaining repertoire not identified directly by McNerney, the music transcriptions notated from the recordings were compared to their counterparts in written sources, such as printed music collections, and in audio sources, such as commercial records.

Through these processes, it was established that for a high proportion of McNerney's total repertoire the source was not determinable. Accordingly, his total repertoire was separated into sources of repertoire that were (A) identified and (B) unidentified. The repertoire classified as "unidentified" accounts for 77 tunes, which is 71% of the total repertoire. The sources for the remaining repertoire of 32 tunes, representing 29% of the total repertoire, were classified as "identified" and subsequently subdivided into the four categories of sources outlined at the beginning of this section: (1) music gatherings, (2) house dance music (3) printed collection, and (4) audio sources. The results illustrated in Table 32 are a statistical breakdown of this analysis:

**Table 32: Identification of Michael Francis McNerney's sources of repertoire**

McNerney's Source	No. of Tunes	Percentage of Identified Repertoire
Identified:		
(1) Music gatherings	12	37%
(2) House dance music	7	22%
(3) Printed collections	8	25%
(4) Audio sources	5	16%
(A) Subtotal: Identified	32	100%
(B) Unidentified	77	N/A
Total (A + B)	109	N/A

## **(1) Music gatherings**

As is demonstrated by the data in Table 32, the largest identifiable source of McNerney's repertoire is music gatherings in which he typically participated or by which he was indirectly influenced during his music career. This source represents 37% of his identified sources of repertoire. Within this category, there are at least three discernible sources of repertoire: (i) his fiddle teacher, Jamesy Doyle, (ii) local musicians, and (iii) marching bands active in his area.

### **(i) Jamesy Doyle (1887-1918)**

The first of these sources is his teacher, Jamesy Doyle of Glenmore, Dromard, who arguably had the most significant influence on shaping McNerney's fiddle style and repertoire during the early stages of his music career.<sup>93</sup> In the recorded discussions, McNerney's wife, Katie, recounts that "he [Doyle] was a lovely young fellow, dark hair, pale in complexion" (Quinn, 1973a). She added that in addition to playing and teaching the fiddle he was also a proficient dancer. McNerney was also very complimentary stating that Doyle was "a brilliant, nice, bright young fellow; he was crazy about music too" (Quinn, 1973a). Doyle was a national school teacher and lived in the neighbouring townland of Glenmore. This geographical proximity to McNerney was more than likely the reason he was chosen to be his fiddle teacher. Although McNerney is the only student of Doyle's who has been verified, it is reputed that he may also have taught the aforementioned, Ellen (*aka* Ellie) McNally (1903-1975), who came from Glenmore, the same townland as Doyle (see Figure 1). She had two brothers, Tommy and Francie, who also played the fiddle, and therefore, it is possible that Doyle may have taught them to play too.

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<sup>93</sup> For a full biography of James Doyle see Vol.II, Source L – Michael F. McNerney tape recordings.

McNerney played four tunes in the recordings he claimed he had learned from Doyle: ‘The Boyne Hunt’ (MN.004); ‘[Untitled]’ (MN.024); ‘The Humours of Ballyconnell’ (MN.031) and ‘[Untitled]’ (MN.037). This latter of the two tunes for which McNerney had no title has a tangible link to the teaching of Thomas Kernan. It appears in the Leonard-Kernan MS (Chapter Four) entitled ‘Caty O’Money [sic]’ (LK.047), and was transcribed there by Kernan himself. This provides evidence of at least one tune transmitted successively through four generations of teachers and students in the Kernan fiddle tradition: Kernan > Rogers > Doyle > McNerney. A comparison of this tune between the two sources, Kernan and McNerney, reveals that, although there are some minor differences, by and large the basic melodic structure of the tune survived through the successive stages of transmission. Nonetheless, there is a discernible rhythmic difference between the two versions in that the first version transcribed by Kernan has a time signature of 6/8 indicating the rhythm of a single jig, but when McNerney’s version was examined from the recording it was apparent that he played it much faster, more akin to a 12/8 slide. For the purpose of comparing versions, in the following tune excerpts McNerney’s version, ‘[Untitled]’ ‘MN.037’, has been edited into 6/8 time to highlight its similarity to Kernan’s version, ‘Caty O’Money [sic]’ (LK.047):

**Figure 43: Melodic comparison of ‘Caty O’Money (sic)’ (LK.047) in the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850) to ‘[Untitled]’ (MN.037) in the McNerney recordings (1973)**

Although McNerney only intimated that four of the tunes he played in the recording were learned from his teacher, Jamesy Doyle, a further analysis of his recorded repertoire suggests that a great deal more of it was learned in this manner. To verify this conjecture, the 69 distinct tunes (see Table 31) that McNerney recorded were compared to their counterparts in the manuscripts that have been examined thus far in this dissertation. These documents were written by musicians from the Thomas Kernan fiddle lineage, a fact which supports the process of authenticating McNerney’s repertoire. In the first process, tunes found in common between McNerney’s repertoire of 69 distinct tunes and the repertoires of the manuscripts were quantified and tabulated in Table 33:

**Table 33: The repertoire of tunes McNerney's recording has in common with the written sources of the Kernan fiddle lineage**

<b>Manuscripts</b>	<b>Total tunes in common (count)</b>	<b>Total tunes in common (as a percentage of the 69 distinct tunes)</b>
Larry Smyth MS	29	42%
McBrien-Rogers MS	21	30%
Francis Reynolds MS1	19	28%
Meagher MS	14	20%
Francis Reynolds MS3	10	14%
Francis Reynolds MS2**	6	9%
Cole MS	6	9%
Leonard-Kernan MS	5	7%
Patrick O'Farrell MS-A*	5	7%

\* Includes Patrick O'Farrell's transcriptions only

\*\* Includes Francis Reynolds' transcriptions only

It can be deduced from a survey of the data in this table that McNerney's repertoire reflects a later stage in the development of fiddle music in the Kernan tradition. Verifying this assertion is the fact that only 7% of his repertoire is found in common with both the repertoires of the Leonard-Kernan MS and the Patrick O'Farrell MS-A. These two manuscripts were transcribed at the earlier stage of the Kernan fiddle tradition by Kernan and his students, all of whom were born in the period *c*1807-*c*1836. In comparison, the manuscripts transcribed by the next generation of musicians in the Kernan fiddle lineage are more closely aligned to McNerney's repertoire. For example, two other manuscripts with which McNerney's repertoire was compared, Larry Smyth MS and the Francis Reynolds MS1, were transcribed by Larry Smyth (1866-1930) and Francis Reynolds (1862-1946) respectively, both of whom were fiddle players born in the 1860s. Accordingly, a relatively high proportion of McNerney's repertoire, 42% and 19%, was found in common with the repertoires of these scribes. These statistics demonstrate the organic evolution of repertoire over an extended period of time within the prism of a homogenous lineage of fiddle players, whereby older repertoire was gradually forgotten and newer repertoire came to the fore. An example of a tune that is melodically

similar in the three sources, McNerney recordings, Smyth MS and Reynolds MS1 is the following tune ‘The White Leaf’:

**Figure 44: ‘The White Leaf’ (MN.014) – in the McNerney recordings**

[Scordatura tuning: ADAE]

A1

A4

5

9

B2

B3

13

(Source: McNerney recordings – Vol.II, Source L) – played on the recording in the order  
A1-B2-B3-A4

**Figure 45: ‘The Green Leaf or White Leaf’ - in the Larry Smyth MS**



(Source: Larry Smyth MS – Vol II, Source H)

**Figure 46: ‘The White Leaf’ – in the Francis Reynolds MS1**

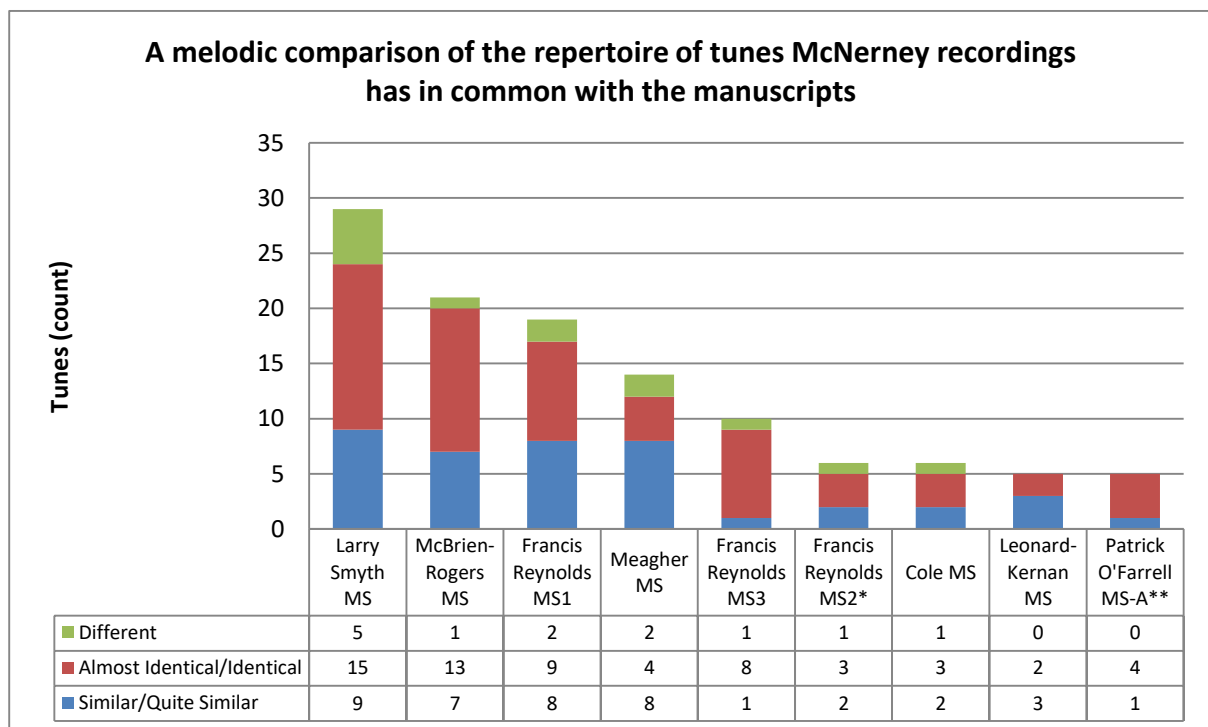


(Source: Reynolds MS1 – Vol.II, Source D)

In the case of the Larry Smyth MS, the scribe, Larry Smyth, is musically linked to McNerney through the teaching of Bernard Rogers: Larry Smyth was taught by Rogers, while McNerney’s teacher, Doyle, was also taught by Rogers. Therefore, this musical connection verifies that the

29 tunes McNerney recorded, which were found in common with the Larry Smyth MS, were more than likely taught to him by Doyle, who in turn probably learned them from Rogers. The high percentage of tunes in common with, and almost identical to, those in the Smyth MS is due, no doubt, in large measure to the fact that Fr Quinn was actually quoting from that manuscript on the occasion of at least one of the recordings. Therefore, to verify these initial findings, in the second process, the tunes found in common between the repertoires of McNerney's recordings and the manuscripts were compared melodically, and graded in the following categories: (1) identical/almost identical, (2) similar/quite similar, and (3) different. The results of this exercise are illustrated in Figure 47:

**Figure 47: A melodic comparison of the repertoire of tunes McNerney recordings has in common with the manuscripts**



\* Includes Francis Reynolds' transcriptions only

\*\* Includes Patrick O'Farrell's transcriptions only

An examination of the data in Figure 47, particularly in the category ‘almost identical/ identical’, reveals that a high portion of McNerney’s repertoire correlates in melodic structure to the repertoires of the manuscripts with which it was compared. For example, of the 29 tunes found in common between the Smyth MS and McNerney recordings, 52% (15/29) of these are classified as ‘almost identical/ identical’. This statistic from the Smyth MS is consistent with the corresponding statistics of the other manuscripts in this specific category. The relatively small number of tunes that are classified as ‘different’ across all of the manuscripts examined also confirms that, by and large, McNerney’s recorded repertoire is representative of the fiddle music transmitted through several generations of the Kernan fiddle lineage. The over-all close affinity between McNerney’s repertoire and that of the manuscripts as a whole, particularly taking into account the level of similarity of the tune versions, leads one to the conclusion that, allowing for the natural accretions one would expect to find in a living tradition, the style and content of a particular repertoire of tunes, as taught by Kernan, was faithfully transmitted through the generations, from Kernan to Rogers, and through Doyle to McNerney.

## **(ii) Local musicians**

Upon the completion of his fiddle apprenticeship with Doyle, McNerney began to be influenced by the wider music community in which he lived. From a survey of evidence garnered from local literature and lore, it is apparent that McNerney participated in music gatherings that were both formally and informally convened. For instance, according to Anna Gormley O’Reilly, her father’s workshop in the local village of Aughnacliffe was typically frequented by musicians from the area including McNerney:

Almost every day Michael Gormley, the ‘steward’, would pay us a visit. My father [Matt Gormley] had a violin in the house and Michael would always play a few tunes. Another welcome visitor was Michael Francis MacNerney, who would always play Dad’s favourite tune, ‘The White Leaf’ (2010, p.20)

In addition to communal environments such as Gormley’s shop, the individual homes of musicians were also popular scenes of local music-making. McNerney’s home in Fostra was one such venue, and he was regularly visited there by musicians from the locality, particularly, the fiddle player, Michael McNally (1914-c1980) of Clonback, Dromard,<sup>94</sup> and a local whistler, Jimmy Connolly. In this intimate and homely environment, repertoire was exchanged freely among the participating musicians. In the field recordings, the McNerneys, Katie and Michael Francis, explain the processes by which new repertoire was introduced to the musicians at these gatherings. For instance, Katie implies in the following extract that the radio was a typical source of new repertoire for the aforementioned Jimmy Connolly, who in turn passed this repertoire onto McNerney:

Jimmy [Connolly] used to take up tunes that he’d hear playing on the radio and he was that fond of them that he’d be able to whistle them here...on many a night here (Quinn, 1973b)

McNerney played in the recording one of the tunes learned in this manner, ‘McCoy’s Measure’ (MN.076). He claimed that Connolly had first learned this tune from a radio broadcast before teaching it to him (Quinn, 1973b). Given that Connolly was a whistler, it may be assumed that McNerney learned these particular tunes from him by ear.

In addition to the radio, Connolly sourced new repertoire from musicians he visited in the locality. For instance, the tune, ‘[Untitled]’ (MN.078), which McNerney claimed he learned from Connolly, was in turn learned by Connolly from another musician in the area, whom

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<sup>94</sup> McNally was born and reared in Shanmullagh, Ballinamuck before he settled in Clonback.

McNerney referred to as “Joe ‘the Rocks’ father” (Quinn, 1973b).<sup>95</sup> From the examples outlined here, it appears that Connolly played a key role in the dissemination of repertoire in the Dromard region of north Longford. Tunes were passed by him from one musician to the next as he swiftly moved among the homes of the musicians in the locality. The foundation for this process of rapid music transmission was built on the close social and musical ties that Connolly had forged with these musicians.

Aside from Connolly, another musician who had a significant influence on McNerney’s repertoire was his uncle-in-law, Patrick Brady (1861-1952), (see *The Brady fiddlers of Gaigue*: Vol.II, Source F). Brady was taught the fiddle by ‘Blind’ Kernan, and therefore the tunes that McNerney sourced from him are another tangible link back to Kernan and his teaching. The tunes sourced from Brady include ‘Greg’s Pipes’ (MN.001), ‘Pin Her Against the Gate’ (MN.005) (see Figure 48) and ‘[Untitled]’ (MN.042). For the first of these three tunes, “Brady”, he states, “gave me the music, written and all” (Quinn, 1973a). This assertion by McNerney demonstrates that, while he may have learned tunes from the whistler, Jimmy Connolly, by ear, he also learned tunes through written transmission. Another example of a tune learned by McNerney through written means is ‘Carolan’s Farewell to Music’ (MN.109). He claimed that he had received a written copy of this tune from the fiddle player, Frank Reilly (1893-c1966), of Drumeela, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim (Quinn, 1973b). These two examples of notated tunes taught to McNerney indicate that a tradition of written transmission played a significant role in the dissemination of repertoire among musicians of that era.

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<sup>95</sup> According to McNerney’s sons, James and Michael Francis Jr., the musician referred to here is the fiddle player Joe O’Reilly from Annaghdaniel, Colmcille, whose family was known as the ‘Rock’ O’Reilly’s (Ward, 2011i).

**Figure 48: ‘Pin Her Against the Gate’ (MN.005) – an example of a tune connected to Kernan’s teaching in the McNerney recordings**

**(Source: McNerney recordings – Vol.II, Source L): played in the order A1-B2-A3-B4 on the recording**

The local musicians mentioned thus far in this section are those from whom McNerney claimed he learned tunes directly. However, on examination, the script of the recordings reveals the names of several other fiddle players in his locality with whom he came into contact, including Paddy Reynolds (1920-2005) of Garvary, Dromard, the travelling Smyth brothers, and “Ould” Masterson of Drumury, Dromard (Quinn, 1973a; Quinn, 1973b). The ‘Ould’ Masterson referred to is John ‘fiddler’ Masterson (c1840-1912), who was one of the most influential fiddle teachers in the north Longford region at the turn of the twentieth century (Ward, 2015, pp.165-

67). Johnny Smith (1893-1969), of Glenmore Lower, Dromard, was another local fiddle player mentioned by McNerney in the recording. McNerney's son, Michael Jr., recounted that Smith's favourite tune was 'The Geese in the Bog' (Quinn, 1973a). This is corroborated by McNerney himself, when after playing this tune 'The Swaggering Jig [incorrect title – *recte*: 'The Geese in the Bog']' (MN.043), he states "Johnny Smith used to play that" (Quinn, 1973a). In an interview (Ward, 2011j), Smith's son, John Francis (b.1929), recalled that musicians used to frequent the Smith household, particularly a popular fiddle player from the region, Phil Reilly, of Carrickadorish, Colmcille.

### **(iii) Marching bands**

The last source of repertoire to be examined in the category of 'music gatherings' is music McNerney learned from the marching bands in his locality. As outlined earlier in this chapter, marching bands had a significant presence in the north Longford region, particularly during the period c1830 to c1930. In McNerney's parish alone, there were at least five active marching bands during his formative years (MacNerney, 2000, p. 182).<sup>96</sup> According to McNerney, one of the bands in his locality was trained in the National School close to his home (Quinn, 1973b). He stated that they were taught several marches "by a Cavan bandmaster", who has since been identified as Dick O'Connell of Kilnaleck, Co. Cavan (MacNerney, 2000, p. 181). While McNerney stated in the recording that he did not participate himself in this marching band, he knew most of their repertoire when he was younger, and was known as a "loyal supporter" of their activities (p. 182). He played two of their marches in the recording, 'Marching Through Georgia' (MN.073) and 'Bonaparte's Grand March' (MN.074). He also played a third march,

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<sup>96</sup> The names of some of these bands included: 'Edenmore Fife and Drum Band', 'Lr. Dromard Band', 'Dromard War Piper's Band', 'Fyhore Fife and Drum Band'.

‘La Marseillaise’ (MN.075), but he did not clarify if this tune was one of those played by the marching bands.

**Figure 49: ‘Marching Through Georgia’ (MN.073) – an example of a marching band tune in the McNerney recordings**

The musical score for 'Marching Through Georgia' is presented in four parts: B1, C2, A3, and B4. Each part is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score is divided into two systems, each containing two staves. The first system starts at measure 1, and the second system starts at measure 9. The music includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and features trills (tr) and triplets (3). The parts are arranged in the order B1-C2-A3-B4 on the recording.

(Source: McNerney recordings – Vol.II, Source L): played in the order B1-C2-A3-B4 on the recording

## **(2) The old house dance repertoire**

The second category of sources of repertoire to be examined in this section is McNerney's house dance repertoire. This source represents at least 22% of his identified repertoire (see Table 32). Most of this specific repertoire was played by McNerney during the second recording session of 1973. At several intervals in this session, Fr Quinn interrogated McNerney about the popular dances that were typically performed in his younger days and consequently, McNerney played several tunes he regularly played to accompany these dances. According to him, the most popular dances from that era were the step dances and the half sets. 'Step dances' were solo dances, while 'the half sets' were danced by groups of four, as distinct from 'the set', or 'full set', a quadrille set danced by eight, of which 'the half set' was a simplification. In many parishes, only this simplified version of the quadrille, the 'half set', was known. At that time, at least in Co. Longford, there was no variety of quadrille sets danced. Each area had its own local version of a quadrille set, just called 'the set' or, in its reduced form, 'the half set', and this and no other quadrille set would be danced. The only exception to this was 'The Lancers Set', which was known by name and danced in some areas of the county. But McNerney clarified that 'The Lancers' were not danced in his own area, as they were perceived as too difficult for the local dancers: "There would be too much into it, yeah. And proletariat couldn't catch up with them, you know, ignored them altogether!" (Quinn, 1973b) He added that a reel was typically danced at the end of the half sets by the entire troupe.

From an examination of the script from the field recordings, it is likely that the majority of the tunes numbered from MN.080 to MN.089 in Vol.II, Source L are tunes that were played by McNerney in this dancing context. However, as the recording was turned off at intermittent stages by Fr Quinn, not all of these can be verified conclusively. With respect to the repertoire that he played for the half set, McNerney confirmed that the tunes which he played in this

performance setting included ‘Jackson’s Morning Brush’ (MN.080), ‘The New Rigged Ship’ (MN.084) and ‘The Barren Rocks of Aden’ (MN.085). A further examination of McNerney’s house dance repertoire confirms that a high proportion of these tunes are polkas and single jigs, indicating that these rhythms were the ones most popularly played for the half sets. An example is a tune that McNerney had no title for, but is entitled ‘King Pepin’s Polka’ (FR3.096) in the Reynolds MS3.

**Figure 50: ‘Untitled’ (MN.087) – example of a tune from the old house dance repertoire in the McNerney recordings**



**(Source: McNerney recordings – Vol.II, Source L): played in the order A1-B2 on the recording**

Up to about the end of the 1940s, dances typically took place in north Longford in informal settings, such as house dances, barn dances and cross-roads dances. However, according to McNerney’s son, James, dances were also convened in a more structured manner. He points out in his book, *From the Well of St. Patrick* (2000), that during the 1920s and 1930s there was a troupe of local dancers and musicians in the area who regularly practised in the McNerney homestead prior to performing at formal events, such as *feiseanna* competitions and concerts (p. 181). He adds that one of the highlights from their career was a performance at the famous Round Room in Rotunda, Dublin. This troupe was under the auspices of the parish curate, Fr Peter Conefrey (1880-1939), and were trained by the dancing master, Joe ‘the Dandy’ Reilly.

In addition to McNerney, the musicians who accompanied the dancers included Johnny Smith, Pee Masterson, Kate Masterson (Pee's wife) and the four McNally siblings Tommy, Francie, Ellie and Maggie. The success of this troupe was mostly due to the efforts of Fr Conefrey, and when he moved to another parish, Cloone in Co. Leitrim, the group did not remain active in the community.

### **(3) Printed collections**

An examination of the two previous categories of sources of repertoire, music gatherings and house dance music, established that McNerney's repertoire was significantly influenced by music-making activities that took place within his local region. However, McNerney had a relatively long music career spanning approximately sixty-five years from c1910-1975, and as this timeline progressed, he became open to influences outside of this local environment. Examples of these external influences include written sources in the form of printed music collections, and audio sources in the form of commercial records and radio broadcasts. This section and the following section will examine these sources and critically assess the impact they had on McNerney's repertoire.

From an analysis of the field recordings, both the dialogue and repertoire, it is evident that Francis O'Neill's landmark collection, *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903) had a measurable influence on McNerney's repertoire. In the script of the field recordings, McNerney referred to his copy of O'Neill's collection as simply "the book", and he stated consistently that he knew several tunes from it. This colloquial term appears to have been in widespread use among the Irish music community during that era, and is alluded to by Paddy Murphy in the following extract on the teaching methods of his teacher, Hughdie Doohan, of Co. Clare: "The book would be taken down and Hughdie's fiddle tuned to perfection. He would read the music then

from O'Neill's book and according as Hughdie read them we learnt them off" (Ó hAllmhuráin, 1993, p.41). However, as the following excerpt from the script reveals, Fr John Quinn was more interested in eliciting locally sourced tunes from McNerney rather than ones obtained from printed material (Quinn, 1973a):

**McNerney:** 'Miss Ramsay' - did you ever hear of that one?

**Quinn:** Who?

**McNerney:** 'Miss Ramsay'.

**Quinn:** No.

**McNerney:** Oh, it's a great jig.

**Quinn:** And can you play it?

**McNerney:** Ah I could one time but I'd want to go back to the book now to play it. Oh it was....

**Quinn:** What book was it in?

**McNerney:** It was *O'Neill's*.<sup>97</sup>

**Quinn:** Oh was it, aye.

**McNerney:** Yeah, it was.

**Quinn:** Aye, but I have that, you know, but I don't have the jig like. [*Fr Quinn had just asked McNerney to play another tune, 'Miss Smyth's', from the Larry Smyth MS*]

Despite Fr Quinn's objections, McNerney managed to play at least two tunes in the recording that he had learned from O'Neill's collection, abbreviated here as *OMOI*:

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<sup>97</sup> There is no jig in any of O'Neill's collections called 'Miss Ramsay'. O'Neill's 1903 collection has "Lady Mary Ramsey", a reel, but in the 1907 and later collections its entitled "The Queen's Shilling".

(1) ‘The Banks of Lough Gowna’ (MN.044) – OMOI: No.1060

(2) ‘The Limerick Lasses’ (MN.052) – OMOI: No.1451

In addition to these recorded tunes, McNerney named four more tunes he knew from O’Neill’s collection: ‘The Old Grey Goose’ (MN.091); ‘The Frieze Breeches’ (MN.092); ‘Miss Ramsay’ (MN.103) and; ‘Wallop the Potlid’ (MN.108). It is quite likely he knew many more from this printed source, but due to the wishes of Fr Quinn he did not play or mention them in the recording. In spite of this, the tunes that can be listed as sourced by McNerney from O’Neill’s collection account for approximately 20% of his identified repertoire, a statistic which demonstrates the significant impact of this collection on his repertoire (see Table 32).

There is also evidence that McNerney’s renditions of the tune ‘The Green Groves of Erin’ (MN.013; MN.028) were indirectly derived from a printed source. Two different and distinct settings of this tune exist in the local manuscripts of Connmhaicne, both of which appear in the Meagher MS entitled ‘The Green Groves of Erin’ (MR.042) and ‘The Green Fields of Ame[rica]’ (MR.065). The first setting seems to be of local origin, as it is a setting not seen in published collections, and appears in almost identical form in five local manuscripts. The second setting only appears in two local manuscripts, McBrien-Rogers MS and Meagher MS. With regards to the setting in the McBrien-Rogers MS, ‘Green Fields of Erin’ (MBR.164), it was established in 5.6.1 *Printed Material* that this version was copied by the scribe, Bernard Rogers, from its counterpart, ‘Green Fields of Erin’ (No. 74), in R.M. Levey’s *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland* (1858).<sup>98</sup> Rogers taught McNerney’s teacher, Jamesy Doyle, and therefore, given that McNerney’s setting is very close to the Levey/Rogers one, it demonstrates

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<sup>98</sup> Identical versions to Levey’s are also found in two later collections: *Kerr’s First Collection of Merry Melodies for the Violin* (c1875), ‘Green Fields of Erin’ p. 35, No. 13 and *Kerr’s Second Collection of Merry Melodies for the Violin* (c1875), ‘Green Fields of Erin’ No. 222. Therefore, the setting in the Meagher MS ‘The Green Fields of Ame[ica]’ (MR.065) may have been sourced from either Levey’s collection or one of these Kerr collections.

that this specific setting was more than likely introduced from Levey's collection into this lineage of fiddle players by Rogers.

#### **(4) Audio sources**

The fourth, and last, category of sources of repertoire to be examined in this section is audio sources, examples of which include commercial recordings, radio broadcasts and television programmes. In tandem with gradual advances in technology during the twentieth century, these audio sources became available to McNerney at different stages throughout his music career. The gramophone and radio were produced for commercial purposes from approximately the 1920s onwards, while the first broadcast of RTÉ television in 1961 precipitated a demand for this medium of communication in homes across Ireland. These audio sources introduced McNerney to fiddle styles from some of the greatest artists in the Irish music community at that time and granted him access to contemporary repertoire derived from outside the confines of his local music-making environment. The musician, Paddy Murphy, of Co. Clare illustrates in the following extract the importance of 78 rpm records as a source of new repertoire for musicians living in isolated communities: "they were very important because they were one of the only sources we had in those days of learning something new. I remember Coleman's 'Lord Gordon' came out around that time and we thought it was the greatest thing ever" (Ó hAllmhuráin, 1993, p.41).

From an analysis of McNerney's field recordings, both the repertoire and script, it is apparent that of the three audio sources outlined, commercial recordings in the form of 78 rpm records had the most significant impact on his music. The functionality of these records was a major reason for their popularity with musicians such as McNerney. They could be played on the gramophone *ad infinitum*, and on demand, in contrast to the ephemeral nature of radio and television transmissions. Accordingly, an examination of McNerney's recorded repertoire has

identified a number of tunes that were more than likely learned from 78 rpm records, either directly or indirectly. An example of a commercial recording that appears to have influenced McNerney's playing is 'The Royal Stack of Barley', a hornpipe medley recorded in a fiddle duet by Michael Coleman (1891-1945) and Packie Dolan (1904-1932) in 1927 (Bradshaw, 1994). McNerney plays versions of these hornpipes almost identical to the versions on this commercial recording by Coleman and Dolan, and arranges the medley in the same order, i.e. 'The Stack of Barley' (MN.058) followed by 'The Union Hornpipe' (MN.059) finished again with 'The Stack of Barley' (MN.060). Another example of a commercially sourced tune played by McNerney is 'Bonny Kate' (MN.071). This tune was recorded by several artists in America during the 1920s and 1930s, including the influential Sligo fiddlers, James Morrison and Michael Coleman. It was also popularly played by musicians of the Thomas Kernan fiddle lineage, appearing in six different manuscripts written by fiddle players from this tradition.<sup>99</sup> An examination of McNerney's rendition of this tune, as seen in Figure 51, reveals that his version is melodically closer to the versions recorded by Coleman (Smith, 2008, p. 103) and Morrison (Lyth, 1981, p.85) than to a version taken from a local written source, the McBrien-Rogers MS (Vol.II, Source I, 'Bonny Kate' (MBR.144)).

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<sup>99</sup> The tune references in the respective sources in Volume II are: LK.030; PF.091; FR1.003; FR2.058; MR.020 and MBR.144.

**Figure 51: Melodic comparison of ‘Bonny Kate’ (MN.071) in the McNerney recordings to three other sources**

### Bonny Kate

The image displays a musical score for the tune 'Bonny Kate' (MN.071). It compares four different versions of the melody across two systems of four staves each. The versions are: Morrison 78rpm, Coleman 78rpm, McNerney field recording, and McBrien-Rogers manuscript. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. Red dots are placed under specific notes in the second phrase of each version to facilitate comparison. In the first system, the red dots are under the notes in measures 2 and 6. In the second system, they are under the notes in measures 5, 6, and 7. A measure number '5' is written above the first staff of the second system.

In Figure 51, an examination of the second phrase in bars 2 and 6 across all four versions of this tune provides the most compelling evidence that McNerney’s version is textually closer to the commercially recorded versions than the local manuscript versions. In the recorded versions by Morrison and Coleman, the notes of this phrase are *e’ a c’ sharp e’*, while in local manuscript version written by Bernard Rogers, the corresponding notes are *e’ d’ e’ f’ sharp*. When these notes are compared with McNerney’s rendition, it reveals that he played this phrase in the same manner as Morrison and Coleman. In fact, a further comparison of this phrase to thirty-eight

other versions of this tune in Fr John Quinn's archive, demonstrates that this phrase, *e' a c' sharp e'*, is unique to the playing of Morrison and Coleman, which further verifies that McNerney's version was influenced by these recording artists. Nonetheless, it is clear from the recorded discussions that McNerney was unaware that his version derived from a commercial record. When Fr Quinn queried him about the provenance of his version he replied "that's the real ould [sic] way" (Quinn, 1973a). This assertion implies that he may have learned it indirectly from another local musician, rather than directly himself from a commercial recording.

It is evident in the script of the field recordings that audio sources in the form of radio broadcasts and television programmes also had an influence on McNerney's playing. One particular broadcaster that McNerney stated he regularly listened to was Proinsias Ó Ceallaigh (1909-1976), who presented Irish music programmes on RTÉ Radio, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s (Quinn, 1973b). As the following verbal exchange between McNerney and his wife, Katie, reveals, they both could actively recall tunes that were played on radio programmes:

**Katie McNerney:** Remember yon hornpipe that was on one day?

**M.F. McNerney:** 'The High Level'.

**K. McNerney:** Aye, could you play that?

**M.F. McNerney:** Can you play that?

**Fr Quinn:** I know that, aye. Ah well that's well known one.

**K. McNerney:** It was on the radio here Sunday week (Quinn, 1973b).

Although McNerney did not clarify which of his recorded tunes, if any, were learned by him from the radio, it is likely that a certain proportion of his repertoire was sourced in this manner.

For instance, the tune ‘Reavy’s’ (MN.032), alternatively known as ‘Fisherman’s Island’, was composed during McNerney’s lifetime by the renowned fiddler, Ed Reavy (1897-1988). This tune was a very popular one in the second half of the twentieth century. It was regularly played on radio broadcasts, and therefore it is likely that McNerney learned it through this medium.

**Figure 52: ‘Reavy’s’ (MN.032) – example of an Ed Reavy tune in the McNerney recordings**

The musical score for 'Reavy's' (MN.032) is presented in four systems, each consisting of two staves. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The notation includes various fiddle techniques: triplets (marked with a '3'), trills (marked with 'tr'), and grace notes (marked with a small 'x'). The systems are labeled with their starting measure numbers: A2, A4, 5, B3, B5, 9, 13. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fourth system.

(Source: McNerney recordings – Vol.II, Source L): played in the order A2-B3-A4-B5

In addition to listening to music programmes on the radio, the McNerneys stated in the recording that they followed programmes on television of a musical and dance nature. However, Katie lamented the negative impact of this passive activity on her husband’s playing,

as he became more inclined in later life to watching these programmes rather than practising (Quinn, 1973b).

In conclusion, it is evident from an analysis of McNerney's recordings that the repertoire he played was influenced by both local sources and sources external to his local environment. While he played a significant amount of tunes he had learned in his formative years from sources such as his teacher, Jamesy Doyle, and local marching bands, it is clear, from an examination of his recorded discussions with Fr Quinn, that only a certain portion of this specific repertoire remained part of his active repertoire in later years. For instance, after playing the tune '[Untitled]' (MN.024), which he had learned from Doyle, he claimed that it had been nearly forty years since he last played it. It appears that, in general, McNerney was significantly influenced by other musicians in the locality, such as Jimmy Connolly, Michael McNally and Patrick Brady, who taught him tunes on a regular basis. This transmission occurred through both oral and written means indicating that McNerney's method of learning new tunes depended on the musician from whom he was learning. It was also established that McNerney relied on the printed music collection, *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903), as a source of new repertoire. He played and listed several tunes that he had learned from this collection. McNerney was also susceptible to influences from a variety of audio sources that were introduced to him during this lifetime. He listened to commercial recordings, radio broadcasts and television programmes of a musical content, and it was determined that he learned a number of tunes from these media throughout his music career. Although, McNerney may not have been aware of it himself, his repertoire was indirectly influenced by some of the biggest recording artists of his era, such as Michael Coleman and James Morrison. In summary, McNerney is typical of a traditional musician who was highly receptive to his musical environment. His repertoire was constantly adapting to changes occurring both inside and

outside of his immediate local music-making setting. His style of playing and repertoire will be examined in more detail in Chapter Ten.

## **8.8 Conclusion**

Chapter Eight has examined an era in the history of fiddle playing in Connmhaicne, the first three quarters of the twentieth century, when the collecting and transmission of music was profoundly influenced by inventions and developments in audio technology. It was established that these technological advances led to a transformation in the method of collecting Irish music. Manuscripts, which were the prominent means for collecting music in the nineteenth century, were slowly replaced in the following century by audio devices, such as the cylinder phonograph and the reel-to-reel and cassette tape recorders. Across Ireland, and in the Connmhaicne region, these devices facilitated the collecting of Irish music by amateur collectors. One such collector was Fr John Quinn, who during the 1960s and 1970s, recorded several musicians, including fiddle players, from this localised music region of Connmhaicne. The legacy of Fr Quinn's collecting activities is the personal archive of field recordings that he has amassed over this period of time. For the purposes of this chapter, the field recordings of one fiddle player, Michael Francis McNerney, were selected for analysis. An examination of these recordings, both the repertoire and the dialogue, revealed that McNerney's musical background was clearly linked to the legacy of Thomas Kernan. In the Kernan fiddle lineage, McNerney was a third generation musician in this fiddle tradition, having been taught by Jamesy Doyle, whose own teacher, Bernard Rogers, was taught by Kernan. This close connection between McNerney and earlier players and teachers of the fiddle in this area since Kernan is reflected in the recordings, given that a significant amount of the repertoire he played has so much in common with the repertoire of the manuscripts examined earlier in this dissertation.

In tandem with this older repertoire passed down through the generations, McNerney also displayed signs that his music was open to musical influences that emerged over his lifetime. For instance, an examination of his repertoire revealed that he was influenced by the major recording artists from the 1920s onwards, such as Michael Coleman and James Morrison, through the medium of 78rpm records and radio broadcasts. Repertoire learned from his formative years was supplemented with this newly released music. The impact of these artists on McNerney's repertoire illustrates the detrimental impact that these audio sources had in fostering conformity in the Irish music repertoire nationally and in particular across the region of Connhaicne. This is true, even though, according to McNerney, he may not have learned all of this intrusive repertoire directly from the audio sources: some he appears to have obtained indirectly from other musicians in the locality with whom he played regularly. These musicians were a rich source of contemporary music for McNerney and it illustrates the important role that they played in spreading repertoire from one musician to another in this region of Connhaicne. In addition to providing samples of McNerney's repertoire and fiddle style, the field recordings are also a valuable resource in collecting general information on rural music-making from that era. Intertwined with the music, the dialogue between McNerney and Fr Quinn offers a commentary on the socio-cultural environment that nurtured a rich musical tradition in border region of north Longford. The two men shared stories of folklore and humour, many of them linked to the various musicians and characters they had encountered during their lives. These tales help to preserve an oral tradition that has witnessed a sharp decline in the intervening period.

While McNerney was the epitome of a traditional musician whose music-making activities were centred in his local music region of north Longford, a number of his contemporaries were forced to pursue their music careers in America due to the harsh economic climate in Ireland at that time. Fiddle players such as Packie Dolan and Frank Quinn emigrated to New York

around the 1910s. Yet they were fortunate to live in America during the 1920s and 1930s, a period when the recording of ethnic music, such as Irish music, was reaching its peak. Accordingly, these musicians recorded extensively throughout this period, and so became household names both at home and abroad. While a survey of their musical backgrounds established that they were taught by fiddle players of the Kernan lineage, an examination of their commercial catalogues reveal that they recorded only a small portion of repertoire they had learned at home before they emigrated. The consistent use of surnames in the titles of their repertoire indicates that a significant amount of their recorded material was sourced from other musicians with whom they played in New York. However, attempts were also made by the musicians, particularly Dolan and Quinn, to give recognition to their upbringing in north Longford by including local place names in the titles of their tunes, such as ‘The Fair at Drumlish’ (PD.015-PD.016) and ‘The Ballinamuck Jig’ (FQ.066-FQ.067). One source of repertoire found to be in common with both the musicians who emigrated and those who remained at home was the printed music collection *O’Neill’s Music of Ireland* (1903). O’Neill’s collection was consistently used by the musicians as a source of new repertoire, which indicates that it had a measureable impact on musicians in both Ireland and abroad, particularly during the first half of the twentieth century.

Chapter Eight concludes Part Two of this dissertation, in which each of the written and audio sources were examined individually in order to establish the distinct characteristics attributable to it. In Part Three of this dissertation analysis of the sources will shift from an individual to a collective approach. The methods of forming a fiddle style, and the resulting characteristics emanating from this process, will be examined through a combined investigation of all the sources. This analysis will attempt to establish the prescriptive and non-prescriptive approaches employed by the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage in the transmission of fiddle style and repertoire from one generation to the next.

# Chapter Nine

## Fiddle style: methods and transmission

## 9 Chapter Nine

### 9.1 Introduction

Part Two of this dissertation, consisting of Chapters Four to Eight, examined written and audio sources of Irish music written or played by fiddle players with links to the teaching of Thomas Kernan. The principal approach of those chapters was to examine the sources as individual musical works, illustrating in the process the impact of the interconnecting factors of people and place on their repertoires. Part Three of this dissertation, which consists of Chapters Nine and Ten, will examine all of the written and audio sources of this dissertation collectively, in order firstly to establish the common methods of instruction employed by the teachers of the Kernan fiddle lineage (Chapter Nine), and secondly to analyse the resulting styles emanating from this learning process (Chapter Ten).

Section 9.2 *Methods of teaching fiddle style*, will examine the teaching practices commonly used by the teachers for the instruction of music theory and standard technique to their students. In their teaching of music theory, in several of the written sources examined, there are transcriptions of preludes and scales, suggesting that these types of exercises were typically used to teach this foundational aspect of fiddle style. While a number of these exercises appear to have been transmitted successively through several generations of musicians in the Kernan tradition, this chapter will examine the additional use of printed tutor books by teachers and students to supplement their understanding of these musical concepts. To identify the methods employed in the teaching of standard fiddle technique, interviews with musicians and people from the region of Connemara, both alive and deceased, conducted by this writer and also by the collector, Fr John Quinn, will be examined. Exploratory research of these recorded discussions indicates that a number of specific techniques were taught in this region, particularly by the fiddle teacher, 'Red' Phil Brady.

The next section of this chapter, *9.3 Transmission of repertoire*, will analyse the methods by which music was transmitted to the musicians in the Connmaicne region. While the existence of four discrete manuscript collections in this dissertation may point towards the dominant role of written music in the process of music transmission, there is evidence that oral transmission had an equal, if not greater, impact on the musicians. The transmission of printed material, which is another form of written transmission, will also be considered in this section. It is apparent from an examination of all the sources in this dissertation that printed material influenced almost all of the musicians in this study to varying degrees. In particular, analysis will focus on the organic process of naturalisation, whereby tunes obtained from printed material were gradually simplified and assimilated into the local canon of Irish music.

## **9.2 Methods of teaching fiddle style**

### **9.2.1 Music theory**

The characteristics defining the individual style of a musician, such as bowing technique, intonation and use of ornamentation, are generally formed in the learning stage of their music career. In this process, the teacher plays an integral role in the formation of a student's style through their methods of instructing music theory and standard technique. To uncover the specific methods of music instruction employed by the various teachers of the Kernan fiddle lineage, this section will analyse the written sources of the dissertation, the majority of which were either transcribed in a teacher-student context or contain exercises in music theory. Additionally, an examination of non-textual evidence in the form of pictures and family lore will be used to examine other teaching methods employed by the teachers, which are absent in the written sources.

Given that the canon of Irish music at any point in time consists of tunes arranged in an array of different keys and rhythms, a basic understanding of music theory is beneficial to playing this genre of music. An examination of the repertoire in the written sources reveals that several musicians with links to the teaching of Thomas Kernan had a good knowledge of this subject. For instance, in the McBrien-Rogers MS the scribe, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), who was teaching his student, James McBrien (1885-1970), at the time of transcription, wrote a significant amount of explanatory scale and rhythm theory on the inside of the front cover, leaf 1v. As can be viewed in Plate 34, firstly he listed the degrees of a diatonic scale, and secondly beside this list Rogers summarised the fundamentals of rhythm theory through the use of a table. The time signatures in this table are classified by type, simple and compound, and also by sub-beat, duple, triple and quadruple:

**Plate 34: Music theory transcribed in the McBrien-Rogers MS: excerpt of leaf 1v**

*B. R. Killmallock.*

*Diatonic degrees of scale and names*

1. Tonic or Key-note
2. Supertonic
3. Mediant
4. Sub-dominant
5. Dominant
6. Sub-mediant
7. Sub-dominant
8. Octave

	Simple	Compound
	$\frac{2}{4}$ (alla Breve) or $\frac{4}{4}$ Two Beats Measure	
Duple	$\frac{3}{4}$ Two Minims	$\frac{6}{8}$ " " Crotchet
	$\frac{2}{4}$ " Crotchet	
	$\frac{2}{4}$ " Quavers	$\frac{6}{8}$ " " Quavers
Triple	$\frac{3}{2}$ Three Minims	$\frac{9}{8}$ Three Beats Measure
	$\frac{3}{4}$ " Crotchet	$\frac{9}{8}$ " " Crotchet
	$\frac{3}{8}$ " Quavers	$\frac{9}{16}$ " " Quavers
Quadruple	$\frac{4}{4}$ Four Minims	$\frac{12}{8}$ Four Beats Measure
	$\frac{4}{4}$ or $\frac{4}{2}$ " Crotchet	$\frac{12}{8}$ " " Crotchet
	$\frac{4}{8}$ Four Quavers	$\frac{12}{16}$ " " Quavers

(Source: Vincent McBrien of Camber, Aughavas, Co. Leitrim, custodian of the McBrien-Rogers MS)

### 9.2.1.1 Printed material

These examples of scale and rhythm theory are relatively complex, and in some instances are outside the usual scope of an Irish music repertoire. This suggests that printed tutor books may have been the original source of Rogers' transcriptions in the McBrien-Rogers MS, rather than his teacher, Thomas Kernan. There is strong evidence in the manuscript to support this conjecture. For example, in 5.6.1 *Printed material*, it was established that Rogers copied a significant amount of scale exercises and exercise tunes from a fiddle tutor book, *Henry Farmer's New Violin School, etc.* (c1847-c1900). While the specific examples of theory he wrote in the McBrien-Rogers MS do not appear in this particular book, Rogers may have sourced them from another manual that has yet to be identified. In later years, Rogers' student, James McBrien, acquired another tutor manual, *The Violin Made Easy and Attractive* (1923), edited by Batt Scanlon. The use of these printed tutor books by Rogers and McBrien illustrates that books of this type served an important role in the teaching and learning of scales and standard technique among these particular musicians.

### 9.2.1.2 Marching bands

Aside from that taught by their teachers or gleaned from printed tutor books, it is likely that some of the fiddle players examined in this dissertation may have also learned music theory during their participation in the marching bands that flourished in the Conmhaicne region from c1830 to c1930. The band masters who were responsible for their training typically came from a background in Western art music, and therefore would have had a strong foundation in music theory. Several fiddle players of the Kernan fiddle lineage were involved in these bands, and more than likely they would have received structured lessons in music theory from these experienced band masters. Ó Súilleabháin notes that the music tuition musicians received in

this setting had a significant effect on the development of Irish music, and was “responsible for the changeover from the oral tradition of musical conveyance to musical literacy” (2003, p.69). While this assertion does not readily apply itself to the fiddle players of the Kernan tradition, who were taught by written transmission through manuscripts and printed material, it does demonstrate the significant impact of marching bands on local music-making in folk communities during that era.

The musicians of the marching bands would have been taught to play one of the woodwind, brass or percussion instruments typically used in these ensembles. There is evidence from an examination of literature and lore derived from local sources that a variety of instruments were played by musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage. For example, the fiddle players, Pat McGrath (1890-1968) and Seán Connolly (1890-1921), of Ballinalee Co. Longford, who were both taught the fiddle by a student of Kernan’s, Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935), played the ‘F’ flute in their local marching band in the years preceding 1916 (O’Malley, 1952, p.63). It was also established in 8.6.2: *Music career* that two musicians from the Kernan tradition, Frank Quinn (1893-1964) and Mikie Carolan (1891-1981) played the clarinet and cornet, respectively, in the marching bands that existed in their local region of Drumlish around 1900. It is notable that the four fiddle players outlined here who played in the marching bands were all born within three years of each other in the period 1890-1893. This fact confirms that marching bands were particularly active in the region of Connmhaicne during the formative years of these musicians from c1900-c1916. There is also evidence that another brass instrument, the bugle, was played by the fiddle player, Michael Leonard. In the Leonard-Kernan MS he transcribed the exercise ‘Scale of the Bugle: Open Notes’ (LK.095). In 4.9 *Cultural imprint*, an analysis of Leonard’s biographical background, and the non-textual evidence in the manuscript, revealed that Leonard participated in hunting events and may have used the bugle for this purpose also.

### 9.2.1.3 Preludes

From an examination of the repertoire in the written sources, it is evident that preludes were consistently taught by teachers of the Kernan fiddle school to their students. As the results in Table 34 demonstrate, they were notated by four different scribes in two of the collections, Larry Smyth MS and O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS.

Despite the regular appearance of preludes in these documents, the purpose of their use is ambiguous. On one hand, preludes may have been used by the fiddle teachers to teach scales, or on the other hand, they were possibly simply employed by the musicians as practice pieces in order to check intonation before playing tunes in particular keys, or simply to define the key to be played.

In the ancient harping tradition, preceding the rise of fiddle music in regions such as Connhaicne, preludes were employed by musicians and again their purpose is not entirely clear. In 1792, Edward Bunting (1773-1843) collected the piece 'Feaghan Geleash'<sup>100</sup> from the Derry harper, Denis Hempson (1695-1807), and in this tune he added the footnote: "An ancient Prelude for the Harp" (1840, p.88-1).<sup>101</sup> In addition to this information, he also provided, as an English translation of the title 'Feaghan Geleash', the words 'Try if it is in Tune', although it is in fact more accurately translated as 'Find the Key'. These facts demonstrate that Hempson played this specific prelude, either as a method of rehearsing the notes of a particular scale before playing a tune that was arranged in that key or to check if the harp was in perfect tune for that particular key.<sup>102</sup> Heymann (2016) links this piece to "the pan-European prelude

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<sup>100</sup> *recte*: 'Faigh an Gléas'

<sup>101</sup> NB: between the pages 88 and 89 in this publication, there are four pages numbered from 1-4 that contain music pieces, which for purposes of this study have been classified as 88-1, 88-2, 88-3 and 88-4 respectively.

<sup>102</sup> Preludes were also used simply to check the tuning of the fiddle over the four strings. For example, Fr. John Quinn's teacher, Michael Reilly, invariably played a prelude based on a G major *arpeggio* before he played, irrespective of the key the following tune might be using.

tradition”, and states that it is no surprise “that an old element of Continental music should still appear in late eighteenth-century Gaelic harp tradition” (pp.196-197). She questions the purpose of the preludes as the check on tuning suggested by the phrase “Try if it is in tune” by referring to “the use of preludes by keyboard instruments such as organs and harpsichords”, which, she says “implies that ‘tuning’ in the title refers to the establishing of the mode and/or scale of the upcoming piece as opposed to the tuning of its pitches” (pp.196-197). This is to ignore the fact, whatever about organs, harpsichords always require fine tuning before playing. Heymann (2016) cites an interesting example in the preludes of Adam Ileborgh, a German organist of the mid fifteenth century, whose five preludes for organ are the first such notated preludes known to European art music, the third of which somewhat resembles Kernan’s ‘Prelude in D minor’.

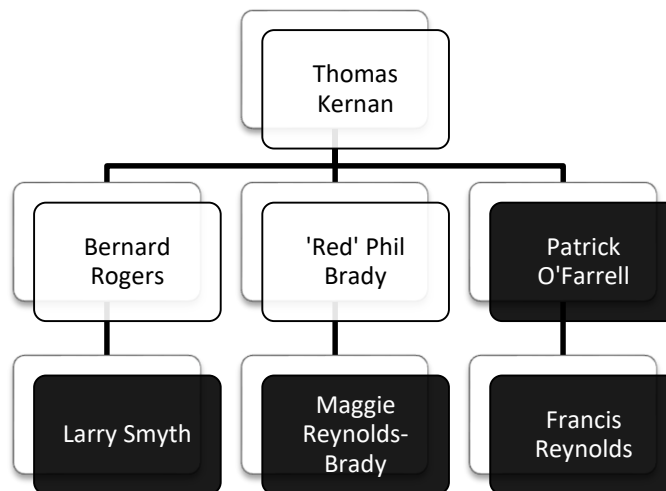
Therefore, although the preludes transcribed by the musicians of the Kernan tradition differ from the type of prelude that Hempson played, it is likely that they also used preludes as preliminary practice pieces in the same manner. Their purpose remains ambiguous however. They may have been an exercise in checking the tuning, or in establishing the key or mode to be used in the upcoming piece. They may have been used as exercises in the teaching of the various scales. Regardless of their underlying purpose, however, the regular playing of preludes by the fiddle players would have improved the pupils’ intonation and their knowledge and understanding of major and minor scales. Furthermore, if, as Heymann says, it is no surprise that Continental style preludes were still being used at least by one harper of the Gaelic harp tradition in the late eighteenth century, it may still come as a surprise that the teachers of the Kernan fiddle school were using such musical devices in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

**Table 34: Prelude exercises transcribed in the written sources of the Kernan fiddle lineage**

Manuscript (Source No.)	Scribe	Reference	Title
Larry Smyth MS (App. H)	Larry Smyth (1866-1930)	LS.094	Preludes by Kiernan
Patrick O'Farrell MS (App. B)	Patrick O'Farrell (1836-?)	PF.078	Prelude on 3 flats [E flat Major]
Francis Reynolds MS 3 (App. C)	Francis Reynolds (1862-1946)	FR3.030	30. Prelude [B Major]
Francis Reynolds MS 3 (App. C)	Francis Reynolds (1862-1946)	FR3.079	79. Prelude [E Major]
Francis Reynolds MS 3 (App. C)	Francis Reynolds (1862-1946)	FR3.092	Prelude on 2 1 sharps [G Major]
Francis Reynolds MS 3 (App. C)	Francis Reynolds (1862-1946)	FR3.108	Prelude on Natural Key [C Major]
Francis Reynolds MS 3 (App. C)	Francis Reynolds (1862-1946)	FR3.122	Preludes [G Major, D Major, A Major, A Minor, E Minor]
Francis Reynolds MS 1 (App. D)	Francis Reynolds (1862-1946)	FR1.019a	Prelude on Two Sharps [D Major]
Francis Reynolds MS 2 (App. E)	Francis Reynolds (1862-1946)	FR2.015a	Prelude [D Major]
Francis Reynolds MS 2 (App. E)	Maggie Reynolds (1908-1995)	FR2.077	Prelude [A Minor]

In the Larry Smyth MS, the title of the exercise, ‘Preludes by Kiernan’ (LS.094) (see Figure 21 for full list), explicitly informs the reader that the use of preludes in this manuscript derived from the teaching of Thomas Kernan. The scribe of this specific exercise, Larry Smyth, was taught by Bernard Rogers, who in turn was taught by Kernan. This demonstrates that in this instance, preludes were successively transmitted through two generations of musicians in the Kernan fiddle lineage. An example of preludes in another written source is the exercise, ‘Prelude [A Minor]’ (FR2.077), which was transcribed by Maggie Reynolds-Brady (1908-1995) in the Francis Reynolds MS2. Maggie’s transcription provides another link between preludes and Kernan’s teaching, given that her teacher, ‘Red’ Phil Brady, was taught by Kernan. Other examples of preludes in the written sources are a series transcribed by Patrick O’Farrell (1836-?) and Francis Reynolds (1862-1946) in manuscripts from the O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS collection. These preludes are also linked to the teaching of Kernan, given that it was established in Chapter Seven that both of these scribes were taught either by Kernan directly, or by one of his students.

**Figure 53: Teachers and students from the Kernan fiddle lineage who transcribed preludes in the written sources highlighted**



As this section has outlined, and is graphically demonstrated in Figure 53, the appearance of preludes in at least three different branches in the Kernan tradition confirms that preludes were one of the leading methods used by teachers in this tradition. While it has been established that the original source of preludes among these musicians was Thomas Kernan, it has not been determined where in turn Kernan learned them. The two most likely sources are either his own teacher, who remains unknown, or a printed tutor book yet to be identified.

In all of the prelude exercises outlined in the previous section, twelve different key signatures are evident in both major and minor modes derived from Western art music. The key signatures written in the major mode are arpeggiated, while the key signatures in the minor mode are scalar. Examples of preludes from each of these modes in the Larry Smyth MS are:

**Figure 54: ‘Preludes by Kiernan’ (LS.094) - sample of prelude exercises in major and minor modes in the Larry Smyth MS**

"No.6 - B Major"



"No.7 - G Minor"



(Source: Larry Smyth MS, Source H)

For the most part, the preludes found in common between the O’Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS and the Larry Smyth MS are melodically identical and contain bowing signs marked in the same places. This indicates that the preludes were taught in a prescriptive and systematic manner by all of the teachers. This methodical approach to teaching scales and arpeggios appears to have been a major factor in the successful transmission of preludes through numerous branches of the Kernan fiddle lineage. Another factor in the consistent use of preludes among several different musicians in this fiddle tradition is the fact that they were preserved in written form through the medium of music manuscripts. A permanent record of the preludes in these documents ensured that, if the musicians forgot how to play them, or wished to pass them on to future generations, they could refer back to their transcriptions in the manuscripts.

### 9.2.2 Technique

While music theory was an integral part of music instruction, this section will examine a number of specific methods employed in the teaching of standard technique. In particular, techniques taught by the fiddle teacher ‘Red’ Phil Brady (1864-1946) of Gaigue, Drumlish will

be examined. Some of these teaching methods used by Brady may in turn have been learned from his own teacher, Thomas Kernan, and if so, it is likely that they were commonly used by several other students of Kernan's who went on to become teachers, such as Bernard Rogers and Francis McDonagh. One such teaching method of Brady's identified was the use of the mantra "finger tight and bow light". According to Mary Brady-Hughes (b.1948), her mother, Maggie Reynolds-Brady (1908-1995) often quoted this mantra when she was teaching her to play the fiddle as a young girl, and informed her that she in turn had learned it from her own teacher (Ward, 2016a).

From a further survey of documentation relating to 'Red' Phil Brady, it appears that he may have taught his students to hold the bow in a specific manner. For example, a visual comparison of the fiddle postures between Brady and another of his students, Johnny Hurson (1922-1999), reveals that they both held the bow in a distinctive manner. As Plate 35 demonstrates, both of them placed their three fingers, index, middle and ring, on top of the bow, but unusually, they tucked their fifth finger underneath, between the hair of the bow and the stick. This is a feature that is not commonly seen in standard technique. Typically, the fifth finger is placed on top of the stick, beside the ring finger, stretched out at full length in order to provide adequate balance when using the lower half of the bow (Cranitch, 1988, p.27). When the top half of the bow is being used, a common practice in traditional fiddle playing, the fifth finger hovers freely over the bow stick.

**Plate 35: Visual comparison of bow grip between ‘Red’ Phil Brady and his student Johnny Hurson**



**(Source: (1) ‘Red’ Phil Brady: Maire Flynn, neé White, of Killashee, Co. Longford; (2) Johnny Hurson: John Daly, Annaduff Glebe, Drumsna, Co. Leitrim)**

Due to an absence of any additional evidence, the fiddle techniques outlined here that were employed by ‘Red’ Phil Brady in his teaching methods have not been verified in the methods of other teachers of the Kernan fiddle lineage, and therefore it is not clear whether these techniques were peculiar to the method employed by Brady, or if they were initially taught to him by his teacher, Thomas Kernan. However, it is quite likely that Brady was passing down these techniques from Kernan, given that other prescriptive techniques, such as preludes and ‘slur and cut’ bowing, were prevalent among the teachers of the Kernan tradition.

### 9.2.3 Music as a gift

While it is apparent that the fiddle players of the Kernan fiddle lineage were taught through music instruction, there were other musicians in their locality who were self-taught. According to John Francis Smith (b.1929), one such fiddle player was his father, Johnny Smith (1893-1969), of Glenmore Lower, Dromard (Ward, 2011j). On further enquiry, he asserted that his father's musical talent "came as a gift". This claim by John Francis that his father's musical ability was the result of a gift, rather than through a system of progressive learning, is not an isolated case. In several interviews with the older generation of Connmaicne over the course of this research, the belief that musicians were gifted their talents is a common theme. The origins of this belief may have derived from local music lore, in which a popular story was told about how a musician was gifted his abilities from a chance encounter with the fairies (O'Neill, 1910, p. 13). In this story, the musician had to choose between becoming either a proficient musician or a famous one. Versions of this story appear through the oral tradition of Ireland and it demonstrates the important role that music folklore played in shaping the narrative of regional music-making. In the north Longford region of Connmaicne, a more simplistic version of this story, entitled 'A Fiddler', appears in The [National] Schools' Collection 1937-39:

Once upon a time there lived a boy who was very blind. His father had a very small farm and he had in one field both potatoes and pasture. When he had the potatoes dug he had to let the cows in on the pasture and if he let them in they would eat the potatoes and might choke. He thought of a plan and this is what it was:

There was a big tree growing in the middle of the field between the potato crop and the pasture. He left the blind boy sitting at the butt of the tree so that when the cattle would see the boy, they would not go by him into the part of the field where the heaps of potatoes were.

On a certain day the boy heard a noise coming down through the branches. When it reached the ground, the boy stretched over his hand and lifted up a

fiddle and a bow. And from that day ‘til he died he was the best fiddler in the country (NFC, 2015d)

### **9.3 Transmission of repertoire**

Vallely defines the transmission of music as “the process of passing on music style and repertoire, within a player’s peers and lifetime, and/or to another generation” (1999, p.403).<sup>106</sup> He lists four forms of transmission: (1) oral: by way of mouth/ear, (2) graphic: musical notation, (3) mechanical: cylinder recorder and gramophone, and (4) electronic: records, tape and CD. Adapting Vallely’s taxonomy of transmission types, this section will examine the transmission of music among the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage that are apparent from an examination of the written and audio sources of this dissertation.

#### **9.3.1 Teaching repertoire**

As outlined in the first section of this chapter, the instruction of the foundational aspects of fiddle style employed by the teachers typically occurred at the initial stage of a student’s career. The culmination of this elementary phase was the transference of these learned skills and techniques into the performance of tunes. In current day fiddle tuition, students are typically introduced to the repertoire of Irish music on a gradual basis, starting off with easier rhythms, such as slow airs, polkas and songs airs, before eventually moving on to more difficult rhythms, such as jigs, reels and hornpipes. An example of this progressive learning is demonstrated in contemporary printed tutor books such as *The Irish Fiddle Book*, (1988), edited by Matt Cranitch. In a similar way, the manuscripts in this dissertation transcribed in a teacher-student

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<sup>106</sup> For a discussion on the historical context of transmission relating to notation, literacy and education, see 1.6.2 *Music transmission practices*

context provide an understanding of how repertoire was introduced at progressive stages by the teachers of the Kernan fiddle tradition.

Of all the written sources in this dissertation, the most appropriate manuscript for analysing this feature of learning is the Leonard-Kernan MS. The majority of Folio A in this document was transcribed by Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887) when he was teaching his student Michael Leonard (c1835-1886) during the period approximately October 1844 to January 1846.<sup>107</sup> The first cluster of tunes in this folio was transcribed entirely by Kernan, and the tune types of this cluster are for the most part relatively easy to play, consisting predominantly of music for quadrilles, song airs and jigs. In these particular tunes two features of fiddle style, bowing and ornamentation, are notated at a minimal level. This suggests that these techniques were being gradually introduced to the student in tandem with the melody of the tunes. As it will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Ten, the sporadic appearance of these techniques in the tunes may also indicate that they were transmitted to the students primarily through oral, rather than written, means.

### **9.3.2 Written and oral transmission**

From an investigation of the tunes and metadata in the written sources of this dissertation, the evidence suggests that the scribes of these documents may have learned repertoire through both written and oral transmission. This dual method of transmission is most apparent in Folio A of the Leonard-Kernan MS, which was transcribed by Thomas Kernan while he was teaching his student, Michael Leonard. Evidence that a written process of music instruction took place between Kernan and Leonard is based on the following facts: (1) Kernan, in the role of a

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<sup>107</sup> These specific tunes are numbered sequentially LK.004-LK.027 for the purposes of this dissertation, see Vol.II, Source A

teacher, transcribed several clusters of tunes in this folio, which suggests that he was teaching these particular tunes to Leonard at that time, and (2) Kernan wrote compliments such as “great” and “good” beside several tunes that he transcribed, which indicates that Leonard was playing these tunes for him directly from the manuscript.

In the specific repertoire that Leonard himself transcribed, there are two primary clues that indicate he was also taught through oral transmission: (1) a small number of tunes that he wrote, such as, ‘The Cutcha Cutcha Waltz’ (LK.028) and ‘Lucy Long’ (LK.052), are melodically incomplete and poorly structured, implying that they were transcribed from memory rather than from a written copy given him by Kernan; and (2) Kernan and Leonard transcribed slightly different versions of the same tune, ‘Miss Jo[h]nston’s Reel’ (LK.029 [LK.033]), indicating that Leonard was again transcribing his version of this tune from memory, rather than referring back to Kernan’s written version that appears on the previous leaf. The fact that Leonard failed to recall the exact version of this tune that Kernan had taught him highlights the importance of written transmission in preserving standardised versions of tunes. The benefit of the written method, as Hugh Shields said, is that “writing in fact simplifies the transmission” of tunes as they pass from one source to the next (2007, p.289).

The process of dual transmission, through both written and oral means, is also apparent in the McBrien-Rogers MS. In a manner similar to that employed in Folio A of the Leonard-Kernan MS, this manuscript was written in a teacher-student context. In this document, an examination of the tune, ‘The Humours of Ballyconnell’ (MBR.234), shows that corrections were made by the teacher, Bernard Rogers, to the original version transcribed by the student, James McBrien. This demonstrates that McBrien may have incorrectly notated from memory a tune which was learned initially through oral transmission from Rogers.

The fact that the teachers persisted with instructing their students through oral transmission, despite the availability of manuscripts, highlights the significant importance that they placed on the oral method of teaching. According to Vallely, the transmission of music through oral means is arguably the most fundamental element in the transmission of music, which may be one of the main reasons why the teachers of Kernan fiddle lineage consistently reverted to this type of transmission (1999, p.403). As Vallely further points out, the disadvantage of using written transmission as the only means of music instruction is that “it cannot accommodate rhythmic subtlety” (p.403).

The complementarity of written and oral transmission methods is evident, not only at the initial learning stage, but also as musicians increased their repertoires in adult life. In the recorded discussions of another fiddle player, Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975), there is clear evidence that both written transmission and oral transmission of repertoire were equally prevalent at a later epoch in the Kernan fiddle tradition. In 8.7.6 *Sources of repertoire*, it was established that McNerney learned tunes orally from a whistler, Jimmy Connolly, who regularly visited him, while he also obtained written versions of tunes from other local musicians, Patrick Brady and Frank Reilly. In one story from the recordings, where McNerney was describing the powerful playing of a local fiddle player ‘Big’ James Donoghue, he unknowingly revealed that a system of written transmission and oral transmission co-existed at that time among his peers:

“they [the musicians] were asking one another one night: ‘how do you play?’. [one replied]: ‘I play by ear’. [another replied]: ‘I play by note’. “How do you play, James?” ‘By *main* strength’ he says!!” (Quinn, 1973b)

During the formative years of McNerney’s career at the beginning of the twentieth century, the advent of audio technology in the form of gramophones and radios precipitated an increase in oral transmission to the detriment of written transmission. Musicians who wished to obtain

contemporary Irish music were directed towards audio sources, such as 78 rpm records and radio broadcasts. This oral impact is evident in the recorded repertoire of McNerney, and also in the transcriptions of another fiddle player from his era, Jack McBrien (1920-2002), the third of the three scribes of the McBrien-Rogers MS. The repertoires of both McNerney and McBrien contain varying proportions of tunes obtained either directly or indirectly from audio sources of contemporary Irish music. A side-effect of this shift from written transmission to oral transmission was that the musicians gradually stopped using manuscripts to transcribe repertoire. The consequences of this decline in written transmission can be clearly seen from a survey of the chronological details of the sources that were examined in this dissertation: the last of the written manuscripts, the Cole MS, was compiled in the 1930s, while the first of the audio sources recorded, Frank Quinn's 78 rpm records, were made from the beginning of the 1920s onwards.

### 9.3.3 Printed material

In addition to manuscripts, repertoire learned from printed material is another form of written transmission evident in the sources of this dissertation. In Part Two, it was established that the majority of the musicians represented by the written and audio sources, obtained repertoire in varying degrees from printed material. For example, 29% of the repertoire transcribed by Michael Leonard in the Leonard-Kernan MS was transcribed from printed material, whereas the corresponding figure for Bernard Rogers in the McBrien-Rogers MS is 93%.<sup>108</sup> The printed material chosen by the musicians was in most instances published within their lifetime. For example, Bernard Rogers transcribed most of R.M. Levey's *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland* (1858) in the McBrien-Rogers MS for his student, James McBrien, and there is

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<sup>108</sup> Out a total 78 tunes that Leonard transcribed, 23 tunes were copied from printed material. Rogers transcribed 275 tunes from printed material out of a total of 296 tunes that he wrote.

evidence in the Larry Smyth MS that he also taught another of his students, Larry Smyth, some repertoire from this collection. In a later generation of musicians that included Michael Francis McNerney, Packie Dolan and Frank Quinn, their repertoire contained tunes obtained from *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903). Another collection that represents a significant presence in the sources of this dissertation is *Kerr's Collection of Merry Melodies* (n.d.; c1870-1885), which was published by James S. Kerr in a series of four volumes.

While the written sources of this dissertation reveal that a significant amount of tunes were transcribed directly from printed material, only a small portion of these tunes appears to have been assimilated and embedded permanently into the repertoire of the Kernan tradition. For example, Bernard Rogers transcribed 126 tunes in the McBrien-Rogers MS from sheet music, but only one of these tunes, 'Valse: My Queen' (MBR.026), appears in another source, Larry Smyth MS, as 'My Queen Valse' (LS.089). This latter version transcribed by Roger's student, Larry Smyth, is slightly different from Rogers' former version, suggesting that Smyth may have learned it from Rogers through oral transmission.

A significant portion of the tunes copied from sheet music were relatively complicated to play, often appearing in difficult key signatures and in the higher positions on the fiddle, which may explain why the majority of these printed tunes failed to establish a root in the repertoire of this local fiddle tradition. However, some of the more popular tunes, initially published on sheet music, were made accessible to musicians through naturalisation, a process whereby a tune was edited to simplify it for the reader. This task was often performed by the editors of printed music collections, who transposed these difficult tunes into more manageable keys, removed the bass clef line and, in some instances, omitted extra strains from the original tune, such as a *trio* or *coda*. Two of the prominent editors from the mid- to late nineteenth century who carried out this process of naturalisation were Elias Howe and James S. Kerr, whose landmark printed music collections, *Musician's Omnibus*, Vols. 1-4, (c1863-1869), *Kerr's Collection of Merry*

*Melodies*, Vols. 1-4, (c1870-1885), respectively, facilitated the assimilation of sheet music into the repertoire of amateur musicians.

An example of a tune in the written sources of this dissertation subjected to this process of naturalisation is ‘Beliebte Annen-Polka, Op.137’, which was composed by Johann Strauss I (1804-1849) in 1842. The earliest sighting of this tune in the written sources under examination is ‘No.1 Annen Polka by Strauss’ (LK.168) in the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850). A comparison of this manuscript version to one from the original sheet music, reveals that the scribe in the manuscript copied all of the melodic structure of the tune, which consists of two parts, a *trio* and a fourth part in the form of a *coda* (IMSLP, 2016a). However, in the first step of naturalisation, the scribe omitted the bass clef line of the original printed version. A further step in the naturalisation of this tune is observable in ‘Annan Polka’, No.436, in *Kerr’s Third Collection of Merry Melodies*, (Kerr, c1870-1885), which is the earliest known appearance of this tune in a printed music collection. This printed tune contains a curtailed version of the *trio* and has omitted the *coda*. Demonstrating one of the final steps of naturalisation, an examination of the two-strain version of this tune in the Larry Smyth MS (c1900) entitled ‘Annen Polka’ (LS.022), reveals that the *trio* in Kerr’s printed version was dispensed with by the scribe.

This example of the ‘Annen Polka’ offers a model for how tunes originally published on sheet music underwent several stages of the naturalisation process before they were finally embedded into the repertoire of musicians. Examples of other tunes from this category evident in the written sources of this dissertation, particularly the Larry Smyth MS, include ‘Jenny Lind Polka’ (LS.019), which was composed by the German, Anton Wallerstein (1813-1892), in 1846, and ‘The Cracovien Polka’ (LS.020), which is attributed to the French composer, Robert Nicolas-Charles Bochsá (1789-1856).

In the field recording of Michael Francis McNerney in 1973, his rendition of another polka, the tune '[Untitled]' (MN.087), also hints at the assimilation of tunes from sheet music into the local fiddle tradition. This tune is attributed to the French composer, Charles D'Albert (1809-1886), who named it 'King Pippin Polka'. In one version examined from original sheet music, this three-strain tune is spread across three pages containing an *introduction*, several variations of the strains which appear throughout, and requiring use of the higher positions (IMSLP, 2016b). The gradual process of naturalisation of this tune can be seen in the progressive simplification from its original sheet music form, through the quite difficult three-strain setting in Howe, which still requires the higher positions on the fiddle, to the very simple two-strain setting published by Kerr.<sup>109</sup> Another simple two-strain setting, quite different from Kerr's, appears in the Francis Reynolds MS3, entitled 'King Pepin's Polka' (FR3.096). It is not known whether this specific version was naturalised by one of the scribes of Kernan fiddle lineage, or if it derived from one of the simplified versions in an as yet unidentified printed music collection. McNerney's setting, though differing slightly from those two manuscript versions, is closer to them than to any of the known published settings, illustrating again the consistency of the Kernan fiddle tradition.

In addition to using sheet music, there is also evidence in the written sources that the musicians naturalised tunes they transcribed from printed music collections, particularly tunes written in the rhythms with which they were more familiar, reels and jigs. In these printed sources the tunes were typically notated in a format that was easier to read than that of the original sheet music. Despite the efforts of the publishers to provide accessible music, there are numerous clear examples in the written sources of tunes naturalised by the musicians. For example, the scribe, Bernard Rogers, transposed the song air, 'Oh, Native Music' (MBR.020), from its

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<sup>109</sup> Elias Howe, *Musician's Omnibus* (Boston, c1869), Vol. 4, p. 367: 'King Pippin Polka (D'Albert)'; James S. Kerr, *Kerr's Fourth Collection of Merry Melodies*, (Glasgow, c1870-1875): 'King Pippin Polka' (No.408).

original key of A flat major in the book *The School and Home Song-Book: A Collection of Songs for use in Irish Schools* (Goodman, c1885), to G major when he transcribed it in the McBrien-Rogers MS, presumably in order to facilitate its playing on the fiddle.

An example of melodic naturalisation in the written sources is apparent from an examination of two versions of the tune 'The Teetotaller's Reel' (FR3.116; FR1.005) written by Francis Reynolds in the Francis Reynolds MS1 and Francis Reynolds MS3. In the first version in Reynolds MS3, Reynolds copied the tune verbatim from R.M. Levey's *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland*, (1858), 'The Teetotaller's Reel' (No.41). However, when he subsequently transcribed this copied version into the Francis Reynolds MS1, the tune was modified substantially from the printed version: Reynolds converted the tune's original rhythm from 2/4 to 4/4, the grace notes were eliminated, and some of the bowing signs were omitted. In this conversion process from book to manuscript the basic melody notes were all that remained unchanged.

## **9.4 Conclusion**

The first section of this chapter examined the methods used by the teachers of the Kernan fiddle lineage to instruct two fundamental aspects of fiddle playing, music theory and technique. With regards to music theory, an analysis of the written sources revealed that the use of preludes was the predominant method employed by the teachers to teach scales, arpeggios and key signatures. The title of an exercise in the Larry Smyth MS, 'Preludes by Kiernan' (LS.094), illustrated that this form of theoretical instruction appears to have been introduced into the Kernan fiddle tradition by Thomas Kernan himself. The fact that the exercises in preludes are evident in the writings of at least three different branches of teachers and students in this homogenous fiddle tradition, demonstrates that preludes were fundamental to the instruction

of the rudiments of music theory among these musicians. Despite the primacy of preludes in teaching music theory, a survey of the written sources established that a number of the scribes also supplemented their education in this subject area through printed tutor books, such as *Henry Farmer's New Violin School, etc.* (c1847-c1900). The results of this section also determined that one of the fiddle teachers, 'Red' Phil Brady, who in turn was taught by Kernan, employed a number of methods to teach his students elements of fiddle technique, such as the mantra "finger tight and bow light", and a specific way of placing the fifth finger between the hair and stick of the bow.

The second section of this chapter investigated the various forms of transmission prevalent among the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage. This analysis determined that, in most cases, the students were taught by their teachers through both written and oral transmission. The evidence that supported this theory of dual transmission was contained in particular tunes from the repertoires of two of the manuscripts, Leonard-Kernan MS and the McBrien-Rogers MS. For example, in a number of tunes transcribed by Thomas Kernan in the former manuscript, he wrote compliments such as "great" beside them, which demonstrates that they were notated for the purpose of tuition and later checked by the teacher. Confirmation that oral transmission was also employed by the teachers to instruct repertoire to their students is evident in a number of tunes written by the students in the aforementioned manuscripts. One tune that exemplifies this process of oral transmission is 'The Humours of Ballyconnell' (MBR.234) in the McBrien-Rogers MS. It was originally written by the student, McBrien, but was later edited by the teacher, Rogers. This indicates that McBrien was attempting to notate a tune from memory that he had learned orally from Rogers. The last part of this section examined the role of printed material in the transmission process. The results of this analysis revealed that, although the majority of the musicians in the written sources transcribed a significant amount of tunes from printed material, a very small amount of this repertoire was absorbed fully into the local canon

of music. When sheet music was transcribed, it was found that, in most cases, the tunes from this printed source were too difficult for the musicians to play. However, through the process of naturalisation, which was often facilitated by printed music collections, a number of tunes from sheet music were assimilated into the local music tradition, several of which are particularly evident in the Larry Smyth MS.

In conclusion, the results of this chapter demonstrate that the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage were proficient in several aspects of fiddle music including basic theory, technique, transmission and literacy. Many of these attributes were derived from the teaching of Thomas Kernan and became embedded into the local fiddle tradition as they were passed on from one generation to the next within this lineage of musicians. The fiddle styles of the individual musicians emanating from this process of music instruction and transmission will be examined in the next chapter of this dissertation.

# Chapter Ten

## Fiddle style: characteristics

## **10 Chapter Ten**

### **10.1 Introduction**

Chapter Nine examined the techniques most commonly used by the teachers of the Kernan fiddle lineage to instruct their students. Emerging from this learning phase, initial fiddle styles were formed by the individual musicians. Accordingly, the music of the fiddle players will be first examined in Chapter Ten on an individual basis to determine the characteristics of style attributable to each one. These results will then be analysed collectively to determine the prevailing characteristics of style among the entire group of musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage.

The methods for the individual analysis of each musician are based predominantly on the framework devised by Smith (2008), which identified and defined the key characteristics of style applicable to the Sligo fiddler, Michael Coleman (1891-1945). Given that Smith was examining only one musician, his methodology in this subject was primarily qualitative. However, the sample size of musicians in this dissertation is much greater and therefore, a quantitative approach will also be undertaken in this section in order to identify and measure in statistical terms the characteristics of fiddle style and repertoire that were most prevalent among the musicians of the Kernan lineage. Representative examples of their style will be obtained from Volume II, Sources A-L, which include all of the written and audio sources in this dissertation converted into music notation from their original source. For example, a high percentage of tunes in the manuscripts contain bowing signs. These markings will be examined, defined and quantified to identify the most common patterns of bowing style used by the associated musicians and to investigate if they were transmitted through successive generations of players of the Kernan fiddle lineage.

## 10.2 Characteristics of a fiddle style

### 10.2.1 Introduction

Chapter Nine investigated the methods of learning fiddle technique employed by the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage. For each individual musician, these processes of learning led to the formation of an initial fiddle style. For musicians who remained at home in the Conmhaicne region, this style was for the most part preserved throughout their music career. In contrast to these home-bound musicians, it was established in Chapter Eight, that a number of fiddle players who left this region and emigrated to America, such as Packie Dolan (1904-1932) and Paddy Reynolds (1920-2005), changed their style of playing when they came into contact with highly regarded musicians of their era, particularly fiddle players from County Sligo. For example, according to Meade (2005, p.22), Lad O’Beirne had a significant musical influence on Reynolds and taught him the technical and bowing nuances of his own Sligo style. Bradshaw notes (2006, p.44) that similarly Packie Dolan’s style was influenced in the 1920s by the great Sligo fiddlers of that era, Michael Coleman and James Morrison. In addition to these Longford musicians, but at a later period, another fiddle player influenced by this Sligo style was the Sliabh Luachra musician, Paddy Cronin (1925-2014), who recorded in America in the 1950s and 1970s: according to Cranitch, his style reflected a mixture of both the Sliabh Luachra style he had learned at home, and the Sligo style prevalent in America at that time (2001, p.120). These examples highlight the cautionary approach necessary when analysing the fiddle styles of the north Longford fiddle players who recorded commercially. It is likely that some characteristics of their fiddle style evident in their playing were acquired to some degree from contact with musicians with other styles, whom they encountered while living in America.

This chapter will critically investigate the characteristics of fiddle style prevalent among the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage. As outlined in *1.7 Methodology*, an adaptation of the model devised by Smith (2008) to analyse fiddle style will be used in this approach.

Accordingly, the characteristics of fiddle style evident in the written and audio sources relating to the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage, which are collated in Volume II, Source A-L, will be examined under the following headings:

- (1) Bowing
- (2) Ornamentation
- (3) Variation
- (4) Specific techniques

### **10.2.2 Methodology**

The analysis of the characteristics of fiddle style will be undertaken across both the written and audio sources of this dissertation. However, some features of fiddle style are typically absent in written sources for two reasons. Firstly, it is very difficult, and in some cases impossible, for written sources to portray certain characteristics of style, such as tone and variation, and even in the case of rhythm, which might seem easily portrayed, Vallely points out that “it [music notation] cannot accommodate rhythmic subtlety” (1999, p.403). Secondly, in regard to the text of the tune, transcriptions are often incomplete: certain details may be omitted, which, if they were included, would give a fuller picture of the tune, as it was intended to be played. For instance, Nixon (2012, p.113) observed that, although ornamentation was commonly employed in Scottish fiddle playing from its earliest beginnings, printed material originating from this region during that era rarely contained this feature of style in the music notations. Nixon surmises that this is indicative of a non-prescriptive approach taken by teachers who relied on oral transmission rather than written transmission to teach the specifics of ornamentation. For the reasons outlined in this section, the audio sources of this dissertation are integral to forming a more complete picture of the key characteristics of fiddle style most commonly employed by musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage.

Across the entire repertoire of sources examined in this dissertation, there are at least thirty-five tune types represented. The most common one is the reel, which is represented in all of the sources. In addition to its dominant presence, the reel is the most suitable tune type to study the characteristics of bowing and ornamentation prevalent among the fiddle players of the Kernan tradition. In terms of bowing, the notes of this tune type are generally grouped in fours, which facilitate the processes of identifying and examining instances of the locally used bowing technique, ‘slur and cut’. In terms of ornamentation, from a survey of all the tunes in the written and audio sources, it is apparent that, in contrast to the other tune types, ornamentation is consistently employed in reels by the musicians.

Within the category of reels, tunes will be excluded from examination if they were copied from other sources, such as printed material and other manuscripts. Tunes sourced in this manner generally reflect the style of the original source rather than that of the musician who transcribed them. Tunes obtained by musicians from audio sources will be included in the analysis in order to determine their effect on the fiddle styles of the respective scribes. Using this methodology, the initial data sample consists of 305 reels from the written and audio sources.

### **10.3 Bowing**

The first characteristic of fiddle style examined in this section is bowing style. This feature of style is one of the fundamental elements of fiddle playing. The primacy of its role in this regard is acknowledged by Smith, who states that “bowing is the most critical element of style within fiddle playing”, given that it “dictates phrasing and tone” (2008, p.83). In contrast with Western art violin music, where the bowing of tunes is often marked and played in a standard format, the bowing patterns of specific tunes played by traditional fiddle players normally vary from one musician to the next. This leads to a wide variety of bowing styles among musicians in

Irish fiddle music. Based on a regional framework, Seán Ó Riada identified a number of specific bowing styles concentrated in various regions across Ireland (Ó Riada, 1982, pp.53-60). For example, he says that fiddle players in Donegal predominantly used single bowing in their playing in contrast to their contemporaries in Sligo, who relied more on slurred bowing, although later scholars such as Caoimhín MacAoidh (1994) highlight a more complex reality and diversity of musical styles in Donegal.

While Ó Riada focused on examining bowing styles in a broad sense, other authors have examined this feature of style using a more detailed approach. One such author was David Lyth, who transcribed in his book, *Bowing Styles in Irish Fiddle Playing*, Vol.1, (1981), exact bowing patterns from a sample of early twentieth century commercial recordings released by fiddle players from Sligo, namely Michael Coleman, Paddy Killoran and James Morrison. In doing so, Lyth was able to demonstrate graphically the patterns of bowing most commonly used by each of these musicians in the audio sources he examined. With the purpose of constructing a profile of Michael Coleman's bowing style, Jesse Smith (2008), also used this method of graphically mapping bowing patterns.

In order to analyse the collective bowing style attributable to the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage, a sample from the 305 reels identified for further analysis in *10.2.2 Methodology* will be initially selected. Of the total 305 reels, 231 reels were obtained from written sources, while 74 reels were obtained from audio sources. The reels from audio sources will be excluded from the examination of bowing styles. The main reason for this exclusion is that in order effectively to analyse the bowing styles of each musician from the audio sources, a relatively large sample of reels from each one is required. However, it is beyond the scope of this research to notate the bowing patterns of all 74 reels from their original audio source and therefore, only the reels from the written sources will be included for examination.

In contrast to the audio sources, the bowing styles of the fiddle players who transcribed repertoire in the written sources can only be assessed based on the bowing patterns they notated. Accordingly, this category of 231 reels was subdivided by the presence or non-presence of bowing signs. The results of this analysis, which are contained in Table 35, reveal that bowing signs are present in 175 reels, which is approximately 76% of the 231 reels in this category of written sources. This statistic implies that the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage, who transcribed music in the written sources, viewed bowing as an important feature of their fiddle playing.

**Table 35: Presence/Non-Presence of bowing signs in reels in the written sources**

<b>Tune type</b>	<b>No. of reels bowing signs are <i>present</i></b>	<b>No. of reels bowing signs are <i>not present</i></b>	<b>Total reels</b>
Reel	175	56	231

### **10.3.1 Bowing patterns**

Having established in the previous section the sample of tunes that will be examined in the written sources, this section will analyse the bowing patterns that most commonly appear in the reels. First the bowing patterns will be identified, and then their rate of occurrence in each tune will be quantified and tabulated, and finally, a qualitative analysis of this data will be conducted.

A bowing pattern can be defined as the typical method employed by a musician in the bowing of individual and groups of notes. Where each individual note is given a single bow this is referred to as a ‘cut’, and where two or more notes are played together on the same bow this is referred to as a ‘slur’. According to Lyth, bowing patterns form two functions in fiddle playing, firstly to define the phrasing of a tune and secondly to avoid running out of bow (2012, p.15).

As outlined in the last section, approximately 76% of the reels in the sample data of the written sources contain bowing signs. This suggests that the musicians were proficient in bowing, and that they recognised the primacy of its use in fiddle playing. Across the 175 reels containing bowing signs, the three bowing patterns that are most prevalent are ‘Slur and cut’, ‘Forephrasing’ and ‘Off-beat bowing’. The following sections will analyse these bowing patterns, considering firstly their definitions, and the terminology used in their definitions, across folk fiddle traditions, secondly the possible sources of their origin, and lastly their use among the fiddle players of the Kernan fiddle lineage.

### 10.3.2 Slur and Cut

The first bowing pattern, ‘slur and cut’, is a local term used by musicians from the region of Connhaicne to describe a specific pattern of bowing, particularly when it is used in reels. In American fiddle music the equivalent term used is either ‘single/simple shuffle’ or ‘Nashville shuffle’ (Phillips, 1994, p.9). In a group of four notes this technique employs a bowing pattern of ‘two notes slurred, two notes cut’.<sup>110</sup>

According to (Quinn, 2008, p.75), ‘slur and cut’ was introduced to the region of Connhaicne by the fiddle masters, Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887) and Peter Kennedy (c1825-1902), and was later disseminated to the wider community by several of their respective students, who became renowned fiddle teachers in their own right, particularly, Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935) and Bernard Rogers (1856-1907) of the Kernan school, and Alex Sutherland (1873-1967), a pupil of Kennedy’s. Accordingly, this pattern of bowing had a significant presence in

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<sup>110</sup> When there is continuous ‘slur and cut’ bowing employed, the pattern will be ‘slur two on a down bow, then bow one up, bow one down singly, slur two on an up bow, then bow one down, bow one up singly’ and continue repeating the pattern.

the majority of nineteenth and twentieth century manuscripts from the local region, which were transcribed by fiddle players with links to the teaching of Kernan and Kennedy. Given that these two fiddle masters both employed this technique profusely in their teaching, it may be inferred that they were taught by the same teacher, or that, in fact, as (Quinn, 2008, p.75) has argued, it may help to substantiate the theory that Kernan taught Kennedy.

It is probable that ‘slur and cut’ was taught to Kernan by his own teacher, possibly a ‘gentleman fiddler’ from one of the local big houses (see Chapter Three). Based on Kernan’s biographical details, he would probably have received lessons in the 1820s, and at this time, Irish traditional fiddle music was in the relatively early stages of its development, by comparison with the two longer established traditions of the fiddle/violin in Western art music and in Scottish folk music. The violin had risen to prominence in eighteenth century Ireland, given the demand in Dublin for Italian composer violinists such as Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762) and Tommaso Giordani (1730-1806), many of whom were played a vital role in developing violin technique in Ireland. Therefore, it may be hypothesised that the technique ‘slur and cut’ originated from either of these music traditions.

One of the most popular eighteenth century publications containing this technique is *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing* (1756), which was written by the composer and violinist, Leopold Mozart (1719-1787). In this book, the ‘slur and cut’ technique is included, without any specific title, as the fourth of sixteen variations of bowing used to play common time phrases (p.116).<sup>111</sup> Mozart points out that this specific technique “is mostly used in quick tempo”, which illustrates its suitability for the playing of fast rhythms in folk music such as reels and strathspeys (p.116).

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<sup>111</sup> In the chapter entitled, ‘Of the many varieties of Bowing’, Mozart gives a completely unslurred passage of single bows as the basic pattern, and then follows this with the sixteen variations of bowing, the fourth of which corresponds to what is called locally ‘slur and cut’.

While ‘slur and cut’ bowing is included in Mozart’s publication, an examination of its use by Thomas Kernan and his student, Michael Leonard, in the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850), suggests that this technique may have been assimilated into the local fiddle tradition from Scottish fiddle music rather than Western art music. The initial evidence for this conjecture is that ‘slur and cut’ appears predominantly in the reels of this manuscript, nearly all of which originated in Scotland. William C. Honeyman, who studied the fiddle styles of nineteenth century Scottish musicians, confirmed in his book *The Violin: How to Master it* (1883), that, without giving it a specific title this type of bowing was the dominant one in Scottish fiddle playing during the period leading up to the end of nineteenth century:

Yet in the latter music [strathpeys] it is no uncommon thing for quite a string of notes to be linked on to one bow, while in reels it is an exceptional case where the notes are not played two slurred and two bowed alternatively (p.61)

While Honeyman may have observed that ‘slur and cut’ was prevalent in the fiddle playing of the musicians he examined, a survey of two major Scottish fiddle music collections published by James Aird and Neil Gow & Sons at the end of the eighteenth century, reveal that ‘slur and cut’ was only one of several bowing techniques employed in this fiddle tradition. In the Aird collection, *A Selection of Scotch, English, Irish and Foreign Airs etc.*, Vols. 1-6, (1782-c1810), the most common bowing pattern appearing in groups of four notes is ‘slur & slur’. With regards to ‘slur and cut’, this bowing technique first appears in the third volume of Aird’s collection (c1795, p.160), in the tune, ‘No. 415: To Rodney We Will Go’. Thereafter, it appears sporadically throughout the remaining tunes in the collection. Despite this infrequency, in some instances where it is employed by Aird in reels, the bowing signs are comparable to some used in the Leonard-Kernan MS. For example, the tune ‘No. 33: Miss Jean Robertson’s Reel’ in the fifth volume of the Aird collection (c1801, p.13), employs a bowing pattern exclusively of ‘slur and cut’ throughout the second strain. Specifically, in a typical group of four notes, the bowing

is notated using slur and *staccatissimo* signs to demonstrate the exact method of playing the notes. In a similar manner, Thomas Kernan uses the same type of bowing signs in a number of bars of the tune ‘Monny Musk’ (LK.041), which was composed by the Scottish fiddle player, Daniel Dow (1732-1783) in 1776 (Johnson, 1984, p.233). To demonstrate this point graphically, excerpts of these bowing patterns from the two respective tunes ‘No. 33: Miss Jean Robertson’s Reel’ and ‘Monny Musk’ (LK.041) in the Aird collection and the Leonard-Kernan MS respectively, are illustrated in Figure 55:

**Figure 55: Comparison of the bowing technique ‘slur and cut’ between printed and manuscript sources in excerpts of the tunes ‘Miss Jean Robertson’s Reel’ and ‘Monny Musk’ (LK.041)**



Source: James Aird, *Selection of Scotch etc*, Vol.5, 'Miss Jean Robertson's Reel' (No.33): second strain



Source: Leonard-Kernan MS, 'Monny Musk' (LK.041): first strain

To corroborate these findings from the Aird collection, another significant Scottish fiddle collection from that era, *Complete Repository of Original Scots Tunes*, Vols. 1-4, (Gow & Sons, 1799-1817), was also examined. This collection was published by Neil Gow & Sons, who were one of the most famous fiddle dynasties in Scottish fiddle music during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A survey of the tunes in this collection, which are heavily

represented by reels and strathspeys, demonstrates that ‘slur and cut’ was even more frequently employed in this collection than in Aird’s collection. A significant amount of the tunes contain this bowing pattern. Crucially, there is also evidence that the *staccatissimo* signs, as seen in previous tune excerpts from the Aird collection and the Leonard-Kernan MS, are marked throughout the Gow collection.<sup>112</sup> Tunes in the first volume of the Gow collection which exemplify this use of ‘slur and bowing’ include ‘Watson’s Scot Measure’ (1799, p.5) and ‘Lord Kelly’s Strathspey’ (1799, p.8). In conclusion, an examination in this section of the ‘slur and cut’ bowing pattern as seen in the Leonard-Kernan MS, particularly in reels of Scottish origin, combined with a survey of literature relating to Scottish fiddle music and bowing styles, strongly intimates that this technique is likely to have come into the Kernan tradition from Scottish fiddle music.

Emerging from its roots in Scottish fiddle playing, ‘slur and cut’ became the keystone of bowing technique among the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage. To verify this supposition, the bowing patterns of the 175 reels in the written sources containing bowing signs were analysed quantitatively. Specific instances of ‘slur and cut’ patterns in each tune were recorded and counted. This figure was then divided by the number of strains in the individual tunes to calculate the rate of occurrence per strain. Lastly, an average figure for each scribe was derived. The results of this analysis are summarised in Table 36:

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<sup>112</sup> There is one slight discrepancy between Gow and Aird: to indicate the mode of bowing the cut notes the Gow collection uses the standard *staccato* signs, whereas the Aird collection uses the alternative *staccatissimo* signs.

**Table 36: Statistical analysis of the bowing technique ‘slur and cut’ in the written sources**

<b>Scribe</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Date of Inscription</b>	<b>No. of reels containing bowing patterns</b>	<b>No. of reels with ‘slur and cut’ (percentage)</b>	<b>Rate of occurrence per strain (average)</b>
Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887)	Leonard-Kernan MS	1844-c1850	4	4 (100%)	8.5
Michael Leonard (c1835-1886)	Leonard-Kernan MS	1844-c1850	9	9 (100%)	9.6
Scribe C	Leonard-Kernan MS	1844-c1850	1	1 (100%)	14.5
Patrick O’Farrell (1836-?)	Patrick O’Farrell MS	c1855-1885	22	21 (95%)	5.6
Francis Reynolds (1862-1946)	Francis Reynolds MSS 1-3	c1885	42	37 (88%)	8.6
Scribe D	Meagher MS	c1885	23	22 (96%)	3.3
Larry Smyth (1866-1930)	Larry Smyth MS	c1890-1930	41	30 (73%)	3.5
Scribe B	Larry Smyth MS	c1890-1930	4	0 (0%)	0
Bernard Rogers (1856-1907)	McBrien-Rogers MS	c1900	7	6 (86%)	7.7
Maggie Reynolds (1908-1995)	Cole MS, Patrick O’Farrell MS & Francis Reynolds MS 2	c1930s	18	18 (100%)	15.3
Jack McBrien (1920-2002)	McBrien-Rogers MS	c1950	4	3 (75%)	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>151 (86%)</b>	<b>7.1</b>

The results of Table 36 reveal that at least one bowing pattern of ‘slur and cut’ is evident in 151 reels, representing 86% of the total 175 reels. In terms of frequency, the data information in the column, ‘Rate of occurrence per strain (average.)’, demonstrates that this technique was employed profusely by the majority of the scribes in the manuscripts of this dissertation. This can be inferred from the fact that, on average, ‘slur and cut’ was notated approximately 7.1 times per strain per scribe.

When the statistics in the category of ‘Scribe’ are inspected further, it is evident that ‘slur and cut’ was successively transmitted through several different teacher-student branches of the Kernan fiddle lineage. For example, this bowing technique was transcribed by at least three musicians from the second generation of fiddle players in this tradition, Maggie Reynolds, Francis Reynolds and Larry Smyth. At least two of these, Maggie Reynolds and Smyth, were

taught by two different students of Kernan's, 'Red' Phil Brady and Bernard Rogers respectively. There is also evidence that 'slur and cut' was passed even further in the line to a third generation musician, Jack McBrien. These facts verify the primacy of 'slur and cut' as a foundation for instructing bowing technique among the teachers of the Kernan fiddle lineage.

The bowing technique 'slur and cut' may have served one or more purposes for the teachers who taught it to their students. Its primary purpose was to teach the fundamentals of bowing to their students at the learning stage. A reconstruction of how this may have occurred in real time is described by Hazel Fairbairn in the context of its use in present-day American fiddle music workshops under its alternative name 'shuffle':

The basic 'shuffle' rhythm (one long and two short bow strokes) is often introduced as a foundation, and then stripped-down versions of tunes are introduced in short phrases, at first repeated individually and then combined in sequence, gradually building up the tune (1994, p.586)

While this example from American fiddle playing shows that 'slur and cut' ('shuffle') was introduced to the students in a gradual process, a survey of the manuscripts of this dissertation suggests that in individual tunes 'slur and cut' and the melody were taught at the same stage of learning. Given that exercises, such as preludes, were used profusely by the teachers to teach scales, conversely the absence of bowing exercises may verify the presumption that 'slur and cut' was taught in tandem with the melody.

In addition to its primary function as a technique for learning bowing style, 'slur and cut' was also employed as a corrective action. For instance, Fr John Quinn stated that his fiddle teacher, Mickey Reilly (1919-1967) of Toome, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim instructed him: "whenever you're tightened, always go back to the 'slur and cut'" (Ward, 2011b). It is not known if this mantra was passed down to Reilly from his father and fiddle teacher, Terence (c1868-1941), who in turn was taught by the aforementioned fiddle master, Peter Kennedy, of Ballinamore,

Co. Leitrim. According to Phillips (1994, p.9), ‘slur and cut’ can also be used as corrective action in order to get back to down-bows on the first beat of a measure.

While ‘slur and cut’ bowing refers primarily to that described here for common time tunes, reels, hornpipes, etc., a variant of ‘slur and cut’ bowing for triple time tunes, jigs, waltzes, etc., can be seen in the earlier of the manuscripts and in early printed sources.<sup>113</sup> Where ‘slur and cut’ in common time can be summarised as ‘slur two, cut two’, in triple time it becomes ‘slur two, cut one’,<sup>114</sup> and there is an interesting further variant, in the case of a passage in 3/4 time, where groups of six quavers are bowed ‘slur two, cut four’.<sup>115</sup>

**Figure 56: ‘Sporting Kate’ (LK.030) – example of ‘slur and cut’ bowing transcribed by Thomas Kernan in 1845**



(Source: Leonard-Kernan MS – Vol.II, Source A)

<sup>113</sup> Boullier also gives an example of this bowing in the jig, ‘Happy to Meet’ (2012, p. 179).

<sup>114</sup> Examples of this can be seen in ‘Patties are no more’ (LK.009), ‘Scotch Quadrille’ (LK.044) and ‘[Untitled]’ (LK.112).

<sup>115</sup> ‘The One Hour Waltz’ (LK.091).

**Figure 57: ‘Pin Her Against the Gate’ (CE.012) – example of ‘slur and cut’ bowing transcribed by Maggie Reynolds c1930**



(Source: Cole MS – Vol.II, Source G)

### 10.3.3 Forephrasing

Another bowing pattern widely used in the written sources is ‘forephrasing’ and, in particular, one specific form of forephrasing known in American fiddle music as ‘Georgia bow’ (Phillips, 1994, p.9). A slur is normally confined within the group of notes which make up half of a bar, for example, three quavers in jig time, or four quavers in reel or hornpipe time. Where the slur includes notes from two consecutive groups, and especially when those groups fall on either side of a bar line, this has been termed ‘forephrasing’ by Hardie, who says of it that this technique “recognises the primacy of the phrase as opposed to the bar line” (Hardie, 1992, p.33). Liz Doherty calls this type of bowing ‘swing bowing’ (2015, p.30). The most common form of this used in common time is what is known as ‘Georgia bow’, a bowing pattern related to ‘slur and cut’, where the second of the ‘cut’ quavers in a group of four is no longer bowed singly, but linked up with the ‘slur two’ of the following four quavers to form a three quaver slur, the first quaver of which belongs to the previous group of four. In Donegal fiddle music, it appears to be used widely, as most of the examples Liz Doherty gives of ‘swing bowing’

would qualify as ‘Georgia bow’ (pp.30-31). It is also found in the fiddle playing of Shetland.<sup>116</sup> Cranitch (1988) uses this type of bowing profusely throughout his tutor book, *The Irish Fiddle Book*, without giving it any specific title. He does say of it that, when the three note slur occurs on an up-bow, the resulting down-bows either side of the slur “have the effect of placing a slight emphasis on the off-beats (beats 2 and 4), thus imparting ‘lift’ to the melody” (1988, p.82). In private correspondence with Fr John Quinn, Cranitch said he got this bowing pattern from Gerry O’Connor, who however when asked by Fr Quinn could not recall from whom he himself had learned it (Ward, 2011b). Without giving it any specific title, Mickey Reilly, Fr Quinn’s teacher, used ‘Georgia bow’ as a corrective method of changing bow direction in a ‘slur and cut’ passage, so as to be on the right bow for an upcoming treble, which had to be bowed down-up-down (Ward, 2011b).

An analysis of the use of ‘forephrasing’, including ‘Georgia bow’, in the written sources, demonstrates that this technique appears in 76 reels, which represent approximately 43% of the 175 reels containing bowing signs. Within these 76 reels its rate of occurrence is relatively low at an average of 1.8 times per strain. These statistics demonstrate that ‘forephrasing’ was used with much less frequency by the scribes than ‘slur and cut’. When the statistics are further examined by scribe, it reveals that there were huge variances from one scribe to the next. Two scribes, Thomas Kernan and Michael Leonard, did not use it in any of their transcriptions, three scribes, Jack McBrien, Maggie Reynolds and Bernard Rogers only used it once or twice, while the remaining scribes, Patrick O’Farrell, Francis Reynolds, Larry Smyth and Scribe D in the Meagher MS employed it in moderation. This technique may have been used by the scribes as a corrective measure where ‘slur and cut’ was deemed not suitable.

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<sup>116</sup> See ‘Mak a Kishie Needle, Dye’ and ‘Shelder Geö’ in Jane Griffiths, ed., *A Practical Introduction to Styles from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales*, (Oxford: OUP, 2015), p.6.

The following tune in Figure 58, transcribed in the Smyth MS, ‘The Boy in the Gap’ (LS.065), provides a good example of the use of forephrasing in the written sources. In particular, the use of ‘Georgia bow’ is evident in bars 1, 5, 9, 13 and 14. The scribe of this tune, Larry Smyth, also employs ‘slur and cut’ profusely in the tune in bars 4, 10, 11, 12 and 15, demonstrating that he was actively using different types of bowing techniques in response to the requirements of individual tunes. Smyth’s bowing pattern in this tune is replicated in another version written by Patrick O’Farrell in the O’Farrell MS also entitled ‘The Boy in the Gap’ (PF.034). This consistency in bowing patterns between the two versions strongly indicates that Smyth and O’Farrell, and by association the other fiddle players of the Kernan fiddle lineage, were taught bowing techniques in a prescriptive manner.

**Figure 58: A sample of forephrasing in ‘The Boy in the Gap’ (LS.065) in the Larry Smyth MS**



(Source: Larry Smyth MS, Vol.II, Source H)

### 10.3.4 Off-beat bowing (syncopation)

The third bowing pattern that is evident in the reels of the written sources is ‘off-beat bowing’, also known as syncopation. This typically occurs in a group of four notes divided into the following rhythm: quaver, crochet, quaver. This has the effect of shifting the emphasis of the beat from the first note to the second note. This technique is illustrated in Figure 59 in bars 3 and 6 of the following tune ‘Miss Bolton: Star of Munster’ (LS.024) in the Larry Smyth MS:

**Figure 59: A sample of off-beat bowing in ‘Miss Bolton: Star of Munster’ (LS.024) in the Larry Smyth MS**



(Source: Larry Smyth MS, Vol.II, Source H)

This off-beat technique was used in only 17 reels, which represents approximately 10% of the 175 reels in the sample. However, it was employed by six different scribes, from which it can be inferred that it had a measureable impact in the fiddle playing of musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage. It is apparent that in some instances this technique was used for specific reels. For example, under varying titles of the reel ‘The Star of Munster’ (LS.024; FR1.038; MR.022), it appears in versions of this tune notated by three different scribes. While this technique is apparent in a number of the manuscripts written by musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage, from a survey of the major collections of Irish, Scottish and American folk music

compiled from c1750 to c2000, with the exception of one example in Giblin's *Collection of Irish Traditional Dance Music*, 'No. 54, Scotch Hornpipe' (p.22), this technique has thus far only been identified in any substantial numbers in one collection, *The Phillips Collection of Traditional American Fiddle Tunes*, Vol.1, (1994).<sup>117</sup> This suggests that the technique was either not widely used or, if it were, typically it was excluded from the written notations.

This bowing technique, although not found in the printed Scottish sources, most probably originated in Scotland. Many of the tunes that feature it in the local manuscripts are of Scottish origin, e.g. 'Gang No More to Yon Town' (LK.031), 'I Wish I Never Saw You' (LK.036) and 'Monny Musk' (LK.041). The Giblin example, although entitled "Scotch Hornpipe", cannot be used to support this probability, as in fact it is neither "Scotch" nor a hornpipe: it is in fact "The Mountain Sprite", a sand jig composed by the American, Frank Livingston, as noted in *Ryan's Mammoth Collection* (1883, p. 83). It is widely recognised, however, that American fiddle music owes much of its origin to Scots Irish who colonised the Appalachian area, where now it flourishes, and this bowing technique may have crossed the Atlantic with them (Orr & Ritchie, 2014).

## 10.4 Ornamentation

Applying the same methodology as used in last section to examine the bowing styles of the fiddle players in the written sources, this section will analyse another important characteristic of a fiddle style, ornamentation. While bowing is an essential element of fiddle playing, the use of ornamentation by individual fiddle players is usually regarded as optional. For this reason,

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<sup>117</sup> See example: 'Sail Away Ladies (B)' (Phillips, 1994, p. 207).

it is often used as a key indicator of fiddle style and is used to compare styles between different musicians.

Nixon defines ornamentation as the “embellishment or decoration of a tune, such that the pitch and rhythm of that tune are generally not distorted or interrupted” (2012, p.113). There are two categories of ornamentation utilised in fiddle playing: fingering techniques (left-hand) and bowing techniques (right-hand). Fingering techniques consist of pitched embellishments and include turns/rolls, trills, unisons, chords, grace notes and cuts. Bowing techniques consist of dynamic and/or rhythmic embellishments and include Scotch snap and birls/trebles. Another type of ornamentation, triplets, is more difficult to classify. If the notes of the triplet are slurred it may be classified as a fingering technique, whereas if single bows are used for each note it may be classified as a mixture of both fingering and bowing techniques.

To determine the individual and collective use of ornamentation by the fiddle players of the Kernan fiddle lineage, a quantitative approach was undertaken initially. Firstly, each of the 305 reels in the written and audio sources identified for examination in *10.2. Characteristics of a fiddle style* were examined to establish the presence or non-presence of ornamentation. The results of this exercise are presented in Table 37:

**Table 37: Presence/Non-Presence of ornamentation in reels in the written and audio sources**

	Ornamentation: <u>present</u>	Ornamentation: <u>not present</u>	Total reels
<b>Written sources</b>	119	112	231
<b>Audio sources</b>	74	0	74
<b>Total reels</b>	193	112	305

Table 37 reveals an inconsistency between the data results of the written and audio sources. While ornamentation is present in 100% of the reels examined from the audio sources, the

corresponding figure from the written sources is only 51%. The absence of ornamentation in nearly half of the reels examined in the written sources is also apparent in a number of nineteenth century publications of Irish music such as *Ryan's Mammoth Collection* (1883), and R.M. Levey's *A Collection of the Dance Music of Ireland*, Vols. 1 & 2, (1858; 1873). In these collections, the majority of the reels contain little, if any, ornamentation. Nixon (2012, p.113) suggests that fiddle teachers may have copied this non-prescriptive approach to their own teaching and taught ornamentation to their students through oral transmission. In a similar manner, it is likely that the scribes of the written sources in this dissertation did not transfer all of the ornamentation from their playing to the pages of the manuscripts.

Excluding the 112 reels where ornamentation is not present, the remaining 193 reels were analysed further. The ornaments present in these 193 reels were quantified and categorised by two variables: musician and type of ornament. The results of this statistical analysis are summarised in Table 38:

**Table 38: Statistical analysis of ornamentation in the written and audio sources**

<b>Scribes - Written Sources</b>	<b>Total no. of reels in sample</b>	<b>Triplets (count)</b>	<b>Trebles (count)</b>	<b>Trills (count)</b>	<b>Cuts (count)</b>	<b>Chords (count)</b>	<b>Rolls (count)</b>	<b>Grace Notes (Count)</b>
Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887)	2	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Michael Leonard (c1835-1886)	2	6	2	0	0	0	0	0
Scribe C – Leonard-Kernan MS	1	0	0	0	0	0	7	0
Patrick O'Farrell (1836-?)	17	90	31	0	0	0	0	0
Francis Reynolds (1862-1946)	28	70	81	0	0	0	0	0
Scribe D - Meagher MS	16	58	15	0	0	0	0	0
Larry Smyth (1866-1930)	25	63	44	0	1	0	0	2
Scribe B - Smyth MS	2	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bernard Rogers (1856-1907)	8	6	29	0	0	0	1	0
James McBrien (1885-1970)	4	13	7	0	0	0	0	0
Maggie Reynolds (1908-1995)	7	5	32	0	0	0	0	0
Jack McBrien (1920-2002)	7	14	10	0	2	0	2	0
(A) Subtotal – All Scribes	119	341	251	0	3	0	10	2
<i>Avg. per reel</i>		<i>2.87</i>	<i>2.11</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.03</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.08</i>	<i>0.02</i>
<b>Artists - Audio Sources</b>								
Frank Quinn (1893-1964)	16	100	47	6	32	0	3	12
Packie Dolan (1904-1932)	17	61	36	16	39	45	48	6
Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975)	41	161	143	227	92	104	19	55
(B) Subtotal – All Artists	74	322	226	249	163	149	70	73
<i>Avg. per reel</i>		<i>4.35</i>	<i>3.05</i>	<i>3.36</i>	<i>2.20</i>	<i>2.01</i>	<i>0.95</i>	<i>0.99</i>
(A+B) Total	193	663	477	249	166	149	80	75
<i>Total avg. per reel</i>		<i>3.44</i>	<i>2.47</i>	<i>1.29</i>	<i>0.86</i>	<i>0.77</i>	<i>0.41</i>	<i>0.39</i>

In Table 38, the statistical analysis of the ornaments present in 193 reels, across both written and audio sources, reveal that seven principal types of ornaments were employed by the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage: triplets, trebles, trills, cuts, chords, rolls and grace notes. However, in a pattern similar to that contained in the data of Table 37, the presence of these ornaments varies substantially between the written and audio sources. In the written

sources, there are only two types of ornaments with a significant presence, namely triplets and trebles, which account for approximately 98% of total ornamentation in these sources. In two categories, trills and chords, the scribes failed to notate any such ornamentation. In contrast, the results from the audio sources demonstrate that all seven ornaments had a noteworthy presence in the playing of the respective fiddle players. Despite this incongruity of results between the categories of written and audio sources, it is evident from a survey of the data that two types of ornament, namely triplets and trebles, are ranked number 1 and 2 in both categories. This strongly intimates that these two ornaments were most frequently employed by the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage.

#### **10.4.1 Triplets**

As the results of Table 38 show, the most frequently employed ornament in all the written and audio sources is the triplet. This ornament involves playing a group of three notes in the time of two (Westrup & Harrison, 1959b). As outlined in the introduction to this section *10.4. Ornamentation*, triplets can be played in two ways: the three notes are either slurred or bowed individually. In both the written and audio sources it is clear that the former method is what is normally used, namely the notes are slurred on a single bow. The following tune, ‘Miss Mulligan’s Reel’ (FR3.019), in the Francis Reynolds MS3, exemplifies the use of this slurred ornament in a written source:

**Figure 60: A sample of slurred triplets in ‘Miss Mulligan’s Reel’ (FR3.019) in the Francis Reynolds MS3**



(Source: Francis Reynolds MS3, Vol.II, Source C)

#### 10.4.2 Trebles

In addition to triplets, trebles were employed frequently by the majority of the fiddle players in the sources examined. Trebles are also known as “birls”. Both of these terms are derived from Scottish piping technique, and used by analogy as fiddle terminology (Robinson, 1985, p.43; p.734). In his study of Scottish fiddle playing, Hardie describes this ornament as “birlin’-notes” (1992, p.75). He explains that in cut common time this technique involves playing three notes in the time of a crochet: semiquaver- semiquaver-quaver. These notes are specifically bowed IIVII (down-up-down).<sup>118</sup> Typically, the three notes are of the same pitch and occur mostly in reels. According to Fr John Quinn, a variation of this technique, termed as “in-between trebles” was employed by the fiddle players and brothers, Mickey Reilly (1919-1967) and Hughie Reilly (1914-1987), of Toome, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim (Ward, 2011b). On the

<sup>118</sup> While down-up-down was the norm for trebling, some musicians were known to use up-down-up bowing also. According to Fr John Quinn, it was said by Mickey Reilly of Seán McGuire, for example, that “he could treble up and treble down”.

down beat the first of the notes in a group of four in a reel or hornpipe, or in a group of three in a jig, were played as semiquavers IIV (down-up), followed by the next quaver note down, giving a treble effect IIVII (down-up-down), but with the third note a different pitch from the preceding two. A finger ornamentation of the same duration was known as an “in-between trill”.

In the following tune, ‘Gladstone’s Bill’ (MN.022), notated from the playing of Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975), his proficiency in the use of trebles is evident in bars 1, 3, 5, 7, 11 and 13:

**Figure 61: A sample of trebles in ‘Gladstone’s Bill’ (MN.022) in the McNerney recordings**



(Source: Michael Francis McNerney field recording, Vol.II, Source L)

### 10.4.3 Trills

In the audio sources, another type of ornament, trills, is evident in the fiddle playing of the musicians. In particular, it was used profusely by the aforementioned Michael Francis McNerney. In the 44 reels examined of his playing, he used this ornament 227 times, which is an average of approximately 5.2 times per reel. Examples of his use of trills can be seen in the

previous tune example in Figure 61, ‘Gladstone’s Bill’ (MN.022), in which they are marked with the symbol “tr”.

While most of the ornaments outlined in this section have a clear definition in music literature, the trill, however, is often ambiguous in both its performance and classification. For instance, Lisa Morrissey, who examined the late nineteenth-century manuscripts of the renowned collector, Patrick Weston Joyce (1827-1914), was unsure whether the trills marked in these documents were “the standard trill of Western Art music tradition” or if another ornament “was implied by the “tr” sign” (2012, p.15). In western art music a trill involves several cycles of rapid alternation between the indicated note and the one above. However, from an analysis of the use of this ornament by the fiddle players in the audio sources, it is clear that they mostly played in one cycle i.e. main note, above note, main note. This may imply that their use of this ornament was more akin to “backstitch triplet”. According to Smith (2008, p.93), this latter type of ornament was typically employed by the Sligo fiddle player, Michael Coleman, and that a similar effect is found on pipes. While the recording artists, Frank Quinn and Packie Dolan, only used this ornament on crochets, McNerney also employed its use on quavers, usually on the first note of a group, the “in-between trill” spoken of by the Reillys. While the trill is evident in all of the audio sources, in a survey of the reels in the written sources, there is no evidence present of this ornament. However, given that many of the reels in the written sources, such as the Larry Smyth MS, contain a significant amount of unembellished crochets, it is possible that trills of some description were employed by the scribes in their playing.

#### **10.4.4 Grace notes and cuts**

The next ornaments to be examined in this section are grace notes and cuts, the latter not to be confused with the use of this term in bowing technique. A grace note in Western art music has

two main forms, *appoggiatura* and *acciaccatura*. Of the two, the latter grace note is more commonly employed in Irish fiddle music. It involves playing a note of a higher pitch just before the principal note in a rapid movement. The grace note is notated in small character with an oblique stroke through the stem. A “cut” is similar to a grace note except that it is used to separate two notes of equal pitch (Nixon, 2012, p.114).

As with many of the other ornaments, grace notes and cuts appear predominantly in the audio sources. Cuts were used nearly twice as often as grace notes by the three recorded musicians, Quinn, Dolan and McNerney. However, their sporadic appearance in the Larry Smyth MS and the McBrien-Rogers MS, demonstrate that they were employed by at least some of the scribes in their fiddle playing.

#### **10.4.5 Rolls**

Rolls, also referred to as “turns”, are perhaps one of the most commonly used ornaments in present day Irish fiddle playing (Cranitch, 1988, p.54). A long roll involves slurring five notes in the order: main note, upper note, main note, bottom note, main note. Despite its current popularity, an analysis of its use in the written and audio sources of this dissertation reveal that, in general, it was not favoured among the scribes or recorded musicians of the sources in this dissertation. Its earliest appearance occurs in the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850). In this document, Scribe C has notated the roll sign five times in the tune ‘Lord McDoonelad [sic] Reel’ (LK.120). In two instances it is employed on an unembellished dotted crochet but in the other three instances it has been marked in the middle of notes in a group which suggests it may have used as a variation. This scribe, however, has not been identified, so therefore it is not clear whether this ornament was taught to him/her by Thomas Kernan or if it was sourced elsewhere. Its first verified use by a musician of the Kernan fiddle lineage is by Bernard Rogers

in the McBrien-Rogers MS, in which it also occurs as a variation. Rogers, who was using this document to teach his student, James McBrien, around the year 1900, wrote the term “roll” over a group of notes in the second bar of the tune ‘Judy’s Reel’ (MBR.152). This inscription has two inferences: firstly, the roll was employed by musicians as a variation, and secondly it was known by name to at least two fiddle players of the Kernan fiddle lineage at the turn of the twentieth century, namely Rogers and his student, James McBrien.

In the audio sources, Packie Dolan was the only musician who employed the roll frequently in his playing. As outlined earlier, his playing was influenced to some degree by the Sligo style prevalent in New York at that time, and therefore it is possible that he became proficient in playing rolls through his exposure to Sligo musicians, such as Michael Coleman, with whom he recorded in 1927. In comparison, Frank Quinn and Michael Francis McNerney only used the roll in a small number of their recorded reels. Interestingly, the tune in which McNerney plays most of his rolls is ‘Reavy’s’ (MN.032). This tune was composed by Ed Reavy (1897-1988), and it is likely that McNerney only learned this tune at a later stage in his music career. This may indicate that he was introduced to this ornament through learning tunes from sources other than his teacher, Jamesy Doyle.

#### **10.4.6 Chords**

The last ornament to be examined in this section is chords. In fiddle playing, this ornament typically involves playing two notes at the same time on different strings. There are only two fiddle players who use chords, Packie Dolan and Michael Francis McNerney, both of which are from the audio sources. While McNerney commonly used this ornament as a variation in his playing, Dolan incorporated this aspect into his general playing, often giving the effect that two musicians were playing at the same time. Given that chords are absent in the written

sources and their use varies greatly between the three recorded musicians, it is not clear if this feature of ornamentation was regularly employed among the fiddle players of the Kernan tradition.

## 10.5 Variation

Following bowing and ornamentation, the third characteristic of fiddle style to be examined in this section is variation. Breathnach defines this feature as “changing or varying groups of notes in the course of the tune” (1971, p.98). As in the case of ornamentation, the application of variations is at the discretion of individual musicians. The relative stature of a musician among their peers is often judged on their ability to improvise variations in both a spontaneous and contrived manner.

Two different approaches to this topic have been taken by Sean Ó Riada and Breandán Breathnach. Ó Riada is mostly concerned with variations as they pertain to *sean nós* singing, while Breathnach is concerned mainly with piping. As this section will explore, both of these approaches may be adapted to the use of variation within fiddle playing.

Breathnach (1971, p.94), in his treatment of this theme initially includes ‘variation’ as one of three elements of ornamentation: the other two are described as ‘embellishment’ and ‘rhythm’. At the end of this discussion he clarifies that ‘variation’ refers to ‘melodic variation’, while ‘rhythm’ refers to ‘rhythmical variation’ (p.100). With regard to melodic variation, he describes two forms of this feature. The basic form, he says, involves simply changing a note in a group. The second form is more complex requiring a musician to use, as Breathnach states, “a degree of instant composition”, whereby a whole group of notes or a complete phrase is varied. Rhythmical variation involves changing the rhythm within a group of notes. For

example, in a 6/8 double jig, a group of three quavers could be modified to the rhythm of a crochet and a quaver.

By contrast with Breathnach's approach, Ó Riada (1982, pp.30-31) focuses on variation as a discrete subject. With regard to *sean nós* singing, he identified three types of variations:

- (1) melismatic variation: where the notes of the variation are close in pitch to the original notes, including pre-eminently variation of ornament in a small group;
- (2) intervallic variation: where a note such as an interval of a third or more away from the melody line is introduced;
- (3) rhythmic variation: where there is, for example, a glottal stop used, or there is a triplet put in, or four notes in the time of three, etc.

Having considered the approaches to this subject by Breathnach and Ó Riada, this section will use an adapted model of their frameworks to analyse the variations employed by the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage, who are represented by the written and audio sources of this dissertation. The three types of variations that have been identified across all the sources are:

- (1) Subtle variation
- (2) Phrase variation
- (3) Strain variation

In the first category, 'subtle variation', Ó Riada's three types of variations, melismatic, intervallic and rhythmic, have been combined under one umbrella. This category refers to variations based closely on the original phrase. To an untrained listener, the subtle melodic and rhythmic changes would not be very noticeable. In contrast to this understated type of variation, the second category, 'phrase variation', incorporates Breathnach's second form of melodic

variation, whereby a variation changes the complete structure of the original phrase. This form of variation was popularised by the playing of the Sligo fiddle player, Michael Coleman (1891-1945), whose unique variations in tunes such as ‘Bonny Kate’ are still played to this present day. Finally, a third type of variation will be examined, ‘strain variation’. This refers to tunes that include complete variations of whole strains. Breathnach did not include this category under his discussion of this topic stating that “a variation on the theme or strain itself would be regarded as an attempt at composing a new part” (1971, p.98). However, this form of variation is very old and appears in several published and unpublished collections of Irish music from the nineteenth century. For example, in *O’Farrell’s Collection of National Irish Music for the Union Pipes* (1804), there are at least nine tunes containing ‘strain variations’ e.g. ‘Jack Latten with Variations’ (p.18). This type of variation also appears in several of the manuscripts compiled in the Connemara region during the nineteenth century e.g. ‘The Protestant Boys with Variations’ in the Stephen Grier MS (c1883) of Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim.

### **10.5.1 Subtle variation**

The most popular type of variation in the written and audio sources of this dissertation is ‘subtle variation’. Across all of the sources, its earliest verified appearance is in the McBrien-Rogers MS, a document that was transcribed c1900. There are four tunes demonstrating the use of subtle variation. In the tune ‘Judy’s Reel’ (MBR.152), there are two suggestions of variation transcribed by Bernard Rogers (1856-1907). As can be seen in Figure 62, in the first instance, Rogers has instructed in Bar 2 that a roll may be played instead of the original notes. In the second instance, another ornament, a B treble, is provided as an alternative way of playing the notes *d''e''d''* in Bar 4. In the manuscript, Rogers transcribed the latter variation in Bar 5, and wrote the word “or” beside it. In another tune, ‘Sally Kelly’ (MBR.142), Rogers used the word

“or” again to notate a variation: after the last bar of the tune, using the word “or”, he added in two alternative bars to be played in place of the final two bars of the tune. At the end of Rogers’ transcription of this reel, Rogers provides a series of optional variations. Beginning with the words “or thus”, he used a new line of staff to write out variations that could be used for the opening four bars of the tune, and then followed it with suggested variations for the last four bars of the tune. Another method for notating variations, whereby the alternative notes were simply written above the original notes in the staves, was used by Rogers in Bars 3, 4 and 7 of the tune ‘The 9 O’C Train’ (MBR.207). Lastly, in a fourth tune ‘The Humours of Ballyconnell’ (MBR.234), Rogers used a subtle variation in the last bar of the second strain.

**Figure 62: A sample of subtle variation in ‘Judy’s Reel’ (MBR.152) in the McBrien-Rogers MS**



(Source: McBrien-Rogers MS, Vol.II, Source I)

As Chapter Five established, all of these aforementioned tunes are classified as ‘locally sourced’ and were written in the context of Rogers teaching his student, James McBrien (1885-1970). Therefore, it may be surmised, based on the evidence outlined in this section, that variations formed a significant part of Rogers’ teaching methods. The only other written source containing subtle variations is the Francis Reynolds MS3 (c1885). In this document, a scribe has notated alternative notes in Bar 4 of the tune ‘The Protestant Boys’ (FR3.100), with the accompanying instruction “variation”. However, this variation was written by a different pen or pencil from the one used for the notes of the original tune, which suggests that it could have been added by another scribe, possibly Maggie Reynolds, at a much later date. Nonetheless, it confirms that another musician of the Kernan fiddle lineage, in addition to Bernard Rogers, was actively using subtle variations in their playing.

In the audio sources, all three of the musicians, Frank Quinn, Packie Dolan, and Michael Francis McNerney used subtle variations to some degree. However, the two commercially recorded musicians, Quinn and Dolan, applied subtle variations at a minimal level. In tunes where this type of variation was present, they typically played the same variation constantly, from which it can be inferred that they were rehearsed and not added spontaneously. This can be seen in Dolan’s rendition of the tune, ‘McFadden’s Reels [1/2]’ (PD.013), wherein he consistently uses the same variation in Bar 2 of the first strain. In contrast to the contrived variations of Quinn and Dolan, McNerney who was recorded in a field setting, displayed a much greater ability to apply subtle variations at will to the majority of the tunes he played. However, it must be noted that the performance settings were quite different between the field and commercial artists: McNerney was recorded in the relaxed environment of his home, which was conducive to experimenting with variations, in comparison to Quinn and Dolan, who performed their music in a pressurised setting of recording studio in which mistakes were not readily acceptable.

Nevertheless, in the 28 reels that McNerney recorded, he used subtle variations on average 3.2 times per strain.<sup>119</sup> In Figure 63, an example of his ability in this feature of fiddle style can be clearly seen in his rendition of bars 13-16 in the second strain of the tune ‘Sally Kelly’ (MN.053):

**Figure 63: A sample of subtle variation in ‘Sally Kelly’ (MN.053) in the McNerney recordings**



(Source: Michael Francis McNerney field recording, Vol.II, Source L)

In this tune, ‘Sally Kelly’ (MN.053), McNerney played this strain four times, graphically represented in Figure 63. An example of McNerney’s ability to perform subtle variations is particularly evident in Bar 14 of this tune, the second bar in the figure above. After playing this bar the first time, he uses different subtle variations on each subsequent performance. When they were analysed further it was apparent that he used both melismatic variation and rhythmic variation, as defined by Ó Riada, as his preferred methods of variation. These specific variations are quite subtle and are barely noticeable in the live recording of his playing. In

<sup>119</sup> In the 28 reels that were recorded, there were a total of 80.5 strains, which excludes the original strains of McNerney’s first rendition of each one. In total he performed 258 subtle variations.  $258/80.5 = 3.2$  subtle variations per strain.

general, the example provided in Figure 63 is representative of McNerney's use of subtle variations throughout all of his performances.

### **10.5.2 Phrase variation**

The second form of variation, 'phrase variation', occurs where the phrase as varied bears little, if any, resemblance to its original form. As outlined previously, Michael Coleman was one of the first players to introduce this method of variation to Irish fiddle music through his iconic recordings of tunes such as 'Bonny Kate', 'Jenny's Chickens' and 'Miss McLeod's'. The impact of Coleman's distinctive variations on the interpretations of the fiddle players of this dissertation is apparent in a version of the last tune, 'Miss McLoud's Reel: Colman's [sic] way' (MBR.309), in the McBrien-Rogers MS. It was notated by the scribe, Jack McBrien (1920-2002), presumably from a 78rpm record released at some time after it was recorded by Coleman in 1936. As Figure 64 reveals, McBrien transcribed the second strain twice in order to graphically demonstrate the variations employed by Coleman in this tune.

**Figure 64: A sample of phrase variation in ‘Miss McLoud’s Reel: Colman’s [sic] way’ (MBR.309) in the McBrien-Rogers MS**



**(Source: McBrien-Rogers MS, Vol.II, Source I)**

As examined in 8.7.6: *Sources of repertoire*, another example of Coleman’s influence on phrase variations is evident in the tune ‘Bonny Kate’ (MN.071), which was recorded by Michael Francis McNerney (see Figure 51). In this tune the variation employed by Coleman in Bar 2 of first strain, and repeated in Bar 6, has been permanently embedded into McNerney’s version of this tune, to the extent that the original phrase is no longer played. Aside from these two tunes, there are no other examples of phrase variations in either the written or audio sources, and therefore, from the fact that both of these tunes derived from Coleman’s playing it can be inferred that this type of variation was only introduced to the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage through exposure to 78rpm records from at least the 1920s onwards.

### 10.5.3 Strain variation

The last category of variation that is evident in the written and audio sources of this dissertation is ‘strain variation’. This variation type involves the complete variation of a whole strain. As outlined earlier, tunes containing ‘strain variation’ appeared in Irish music publications from at least the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards in collections such as *O’Farrell’s Collection of National Irish Music for the Union Pipes* (1804) and *A Collection of Favourite Irish Airs: Arranged for the Harp or Pianoforte by S. Holden* (1805).

In the written sources of this dissertation, there are two examples of ‘strain variation’ in the Francis Reynolds MS3. The first one, ‘Paudeen O Rafferty with Variations’ (FR3.117), appears to have been derived from printed material. In total there are nine strains in this tune. In the Stephen Grier MS (c1883) of south Leitrim, which is not part of this study, there is another version of this tune which also contains nine strain variations, ‘Poitheen [sic] O Rafferty with variations – in slow time’ (SG3.036 & SG4.006), though the nine strains in Grier are quite different from those Reynolds gives, only one of them in any way closely matching those in the Reynolds manuscript.

The second example of a tune in the written sources containing this type of strain variations is ‘The Blackberry Blossom’. Unlike the previous tune, ‘Paudeen O Rafferty with Variations’ (FR3.117), that was more than likely sourced from printed material, this tune shows signs of organic development through different musicians of the Kernan tradition. In its simplest form, a two-strain version of the reel appears in the Larry Smyth MS entitled, ‘The Strawberry Blossom or Blackberry’ (LS.059), in the format AB. An almost identical version of this reel, also in a two strain format AB, was transcribed by Smyth’s teacher, Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), in the McBrien-Rogers MS entitled, ‘The Blackberry Blossom’ (MBR.202). Rogers transcribed a second version of the tune in the same manuscript with an extra third part, entitled,

‘The Blackberry Blossom’ (MBR.145), in the order ABC. Lastly, as can be seen in Figure 65, the version of this reel in the Francis Reynolds MS3 entitled, ‘The Blackberry Blossom with Variations’ (FR3.113), is a five-part tune in the order ABCDE. In addition to Rogers’ extra third part, C, it also contains two more parts, DE. The versions outlined in this section of ‘The Blackberry Blossom’ show how this tune gradually developed from two strains to three strains and finally to five strains. While it is not clear if these strain variations were actually composed by the individual musicians, it demonstrates that they were actively playing variations of this type.

**Figure 65: A sample of strain variation in ‘The Blackberry Blossoms with Variations’ (FR3.113) in the Francis Reynolds MS3**



(Source: Francis Reynolds MS3, Vol.II, Source C)

## 10.6 Specific techniques

The fourth, and last, characteristic of fiddle style explored in this chapter is the application of specific techniques by the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage rarely employed in present day fiddle playing. The principal techniques in question are *scordatura*, *pizzicato* and the use of octaves.

### 10.6.1 Scordatura

*Scordatura*, or ‘cross-tuning’ as it is alternatively named, can be described as “any tuning of the violin other than its established tuning”. In contrast to other international fiddle traditions, *scordatura* is less prevalent in the Irish fiddle tradition. While fiddle players such as Pádraig O’Keeffe, Johnny Doherty and Patrick Kelly were renowned for their rendition of particular tunes that employed this technique, it appears that, in general, tunes from this category formed an insignificant part of their repertoire. One of the most famous exponents of this technique in contemporary times is Seán Keane of the Chieftains, who is renowned for his playing of ‘The Foxhunter’s Reel’ in the *scordatura* tuning of GDGD. He learned this tune from Patrick Kelly of Cree, Co. Clare. In an interview with Keane (Ward, 2011k), he gave the opinion that one reason for the infrequent use of *scordatura* nowadays is that the chore of re-tuning the fiddle, a prerequisite of *scordatura*, is too laborious and not conducive to group playing, particularly in modern pub sessions. Although some younger Irish fiddle players, such as Zoë Conway and Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh, have recorded tunes using *scordatura*, their influence has come principally through their experimentation with the Norwegian Hardanger fiddle. Conway confirms this influence in the sleeve notes accompanying the tune ‘Pizzicato Waltz’: “This is a Hardinger (sic) tuning from Norway which was adopted by the settlers in the Appalachian Mountains in America” (2002, p.6).

While there are limited sources of tunes written in *scordatura* in other parts of Ireland, there is a relatively high concentration of such tunes in the manuscripts of fiddle players from the region of Conmhaicne as researched by the present writer (Ward, 2013, pp. 109-129) in an article ‘Scordatura in the Irish traditional fiddle music of Longford and south Leitrim’. While the focus in this article is solely on tunes transcribed by musicians of the Kennedy fiddle tradition of south Leitrim, there is also evidence that at least two musicians of the Kernan fiddle tradition employed his technique, Patrick O’Farrell and Michael Francis McNerney. The earliest example of a tune in *scordatura* is a five part version of ‘Greg’s Pipes’ (PF.072), in the Patrick O’Farrell MS-A. Although there is no indication by the scribe that this tune requires special tuning, it will be discovered that it can only be played in the *scordatura* tuning of AEAE. A version of this tune similar to O’Farrell’s appears in *Kerr’s Fourth Collection of Merry Melodies for the Violin* (n.d.; c1880s).<sup>120</sup> It was not copied from this printed source, however: firstly O’Farrell’s version contains an extra fifth part, and secondly there are noticeable melodic differences between the two versions in the parts they have in common.

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<sup>120</sup> See ‘Gregg’s Pipes’ (KMM4: No.136). [Another Irish example of ‘Greg’s Pipes’ in *scordatura* appears in ‘The Gunn Book’ (c1865) of County Fermanagh, see (Maguire, 2003, p. 112).]

**Figure 66: An example of the technique *scordatura* employed in ‘Greg’s Pipes’ (PF.072) in the Patrick O’Farrell MS**



(Source: Patrick O’Farrell MS, Vol.II, Source B)

O’Farrell’s version of ‘Greg’s Pipes’ is the only tune in the written sources transcribed in a *scordatura* tuning. However, it is likely that several more tunes were played with this technique, but were simply not so marked in the written sources by the scribes. This theory is validated by a comparison of two tunes, ‘The White Leaf’ and the ‘The Devil’s Dream’, between the written sources and the audio sources. In the written sources these two tunes are transcribed in standard tuning, but when they were recorded by Michael Francis McNerney in 1973, he played both of them in the *scordatura* tuning of ADAE. This suggests that the scribes in the written sources may also have played these particular tunes in this tuning, but failed to indicate it in their transcriptions.

When McNerney initially re-tuned the fiddle to play ‘The White Leaf’ (MN.014; MN.077), Fr John Quinn, who was recording him at the time, was unaware that he intended to use this

technique, and simply thought that he was having difficulty with tuning. After an enquiry, McNerney informed Fr Quinn that the bottom string had purposely been re-tuned from G up to A. In his first recording of the tune on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1973, McNerney stated the purpose of using this specific tuning: “it brings out the tone [of the fiddle]” and “it raises the whole tone of the fiddle” (Quinn, 1973a). However, in the second recording of this tune on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1973, he intimated that he used this technique for the purpose of droning on the last note of the tune (Quinn, 1973b). These seemingly conflicting statements may show that McNerney was not fully sure why he employed this technique in the tune, and that this may be because that he learned the tune and the technique through oral transmission, rather than through prescriptive lessons. On the other hand, they may be seen as complementary statements, both of which are true, as *scordatura* may have more than one purpose.

### 10.6.2 Pizzicato

In addition to *scordatura*, another rare technique of fiddle playing, *pizzicato*, is also evident in the field recordings of Michael Francis McNerney. He appears to have used his left hand to perform this technique, which is the main hand generally used for this technique in folk fiddle playing. In art music *pizzicato* the strings are normally plucked with the right hand. However, left and right hand *pizzicato* can be used, as the following extract from a nineteenth century violin tutor book states:

They are executed with the fourth, or any other convenient finger of the left hand, and sometimes, when in chords of four notes, by twitching the strings with the second finger of the right hand, the bow being held the while between the first and thumb, or with the thumb resting on the front edge of the finger-board near the top, the bow resting in the fork, and the notes sounded by being twitched neatly with the first finger of the right hand (Honeyman, 1883, p.79)

In the history of Irish fiddle music *pizzicato* was not commonly used by musicians. However, there is evidence that it was employed by the renowned Donegal brothers, John Doherty (1900-1980) and Mickey Doherty (1891-1967), in their rendition of certain tunes. According to Caldwell (2010, p.14), they may have learned this technique from tunes that originated in the Scottish fiddle tradition. In turn, Scottish fiddling was closely interconnected with Western art music during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Johnson, 1984, p.2), whereby it adapted many of its techniques such as *pizzicato*. The Scottish fiddle player, James Scott Skinner (1843-1927), played both folk and Western art music, exemplifying this connectedness between the two traditions. The absorption of the technique, *pizzicato*, from Western art music into his repertoire is apparent in one of his compositions, ‘The Parrot – Humorous Pizzicato’ (Skinner, 2002, Track 11). Another important feature of this tune by Skinner is his use of the word ‘humorous’ in the tune’s title, which suggests that *pizzicato* at that time was regarded as a frivolous technique. Skinner’s sentiment is echoed by another contemporary Scottish musician, William Honeyman (1845-1919), in the following extract:

Pizzicatos are in solos generally condemned as mere trick playing . . . pizzicatos excite the wonder of the listener, but never move the feelings; therefore to them must be relegated the very lowest position in the subtle arts of solo playing (1883, p.79)

That one of the main purposes of *pizzicato* is light entertainment is validated by two descriptive pieces from the Irish fiddle tradition, ‘The Four Posts of the Bed’ and ‘Drunken Kelly’ (Ceolus, 2014). *Pizzicato* functions in the former piece as an alternating device between percussive taps of the bow frog on the fiddle (Caldwell, p.14), while in the latter piece it simulates the effect of knocking on a door or bar counter (Ward, 2013, pp.115-118). ‘Drunken Kelly’ was a popular piece played by fiddle players of the Reilly family, who originated from Drumeela, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim. Although the piece appears to have derived from the Scottish tune ‘Drunk at Night

and Dry in the Morning’ the descriptive elements such as narrative, *pizzicato* and *scordatura* only appear in versions sourced from the Reilly family. It is unclear therefore, whether *pizzicato* was introduced to these musicians via a Scottish link, or if they themselves or their teachers added it.

While McNerney stated in the recorded discussions that he did not play the descriptive piece ‘Drunken Kelly’, an analysis of his recordings in this dissertation shows that he employed *pizzicato* in five different tunes: ‘Jackson’s Morning Brush’ (MN.007; MN.080), ‘O’Connell’s Trip to Parliament’ (MN.018; MN.068), ‘The Butcher’s Jig’ (MN.019 MN.069), ‘Pop Goes the Weasel’ (MN.089), and ‘McCoy’s Measure’ (MN.076). These five tunes represent approximately 7% of the total amount of distinct tunes recorded by McNerney (see Table 31). Given that *pizzicato* is not often heard in Irish fiddle playing, this is a relatively high statistic. Apart from the Reillys’ fiddle rendition of ‘Drunken Kelly’, *pizzicato* does not appear either to have been a technique that was practised widely by the fiddle players from the region of Connhaicne. Of the written and audio sources in this dissertation, McNerney’s recordings are the only evidence of its use in the Kernan tradition. This may suggest that McNerney learned it in isolation from a source outside of his local region, perhaps a printed music collection or a commercial recording.

From an examination of McNerney’s recorded tunes containing *pizzicato*, it is apparent that he employed this technique in tunes where specific patterns of notes occur:

(1) where the notes consist of the open strings E and A in consecutive order, e.g. Figure 67: Bar 5 of ‘O’Connell’s Trip to Parliament’ (MN.018);

(2) where there are long phrases leading down from the first finger to the open string i.e. *b' a'* or *b' a' a' a'*, he typically plucks the *a'* string, e.g. Figure 68: Bar 4 of ‘McCoy’s Measure’ (MN.076).

**Figure 67: An example of the technique *pizzicato* employed in ‘O’Connell’s Trip to Parliament’ (MN.018) in the McNerney recordings**



(Source: Michael Francis McNerney field recordings, Vol.II, Source L)

**Figure 68: An example of the technique *pizzicato* employed in ‘McCoy’s Measure’ (MN.076) in the McNerney recordings**



(Source: Michael Francis McNerney field recordings, Vol.II, Source L)

These tune excerpts represent a relatively simplistic use of *pizzicato* by McNerney. Although it is not mentioned in the recording where or how he learned this technique, it can be inferred by his playing of ‘McCoy’s Measure’ that he more than likely transferred *pizzicato* from existing tunes into new ones that contained identical or similar phrases. The argument for this

is based on the fact that he learned ‘McCoy’s Measure’, not from a fiddle player, but from a local whistler Jimmy Connolly, who in turn had learned it from the radio. This implies that McNerney may have added the *pizzicato* himself. In a similar process, he may have copied the *pizzicato* from ‘Pop Goes the Weasel’ into the double jig ‘O’Connell’s Trip to Parliament’, which has an identical phrase. The former tune has a long tradition of *pizzicato* in the same place as McNerney played it. According to Andrew Kuntz (2016) in American fiddle playing “it was customary to begin with the violin held in a normal position, then, upon reaching the word 'Pop' in the song to pluck a string and shift the instrument to a radically different position, swiftly and smoothly, without losing a beat of the music”.

### **10.6.3 Octave playing**

The last technique to be examined in this section is the use of octave playing. This technique is typically applied in duo fiddling where one fiddle player plays in the normal octave of the specific tune and the second fiddle player plays the same tune in a different octave. According to Robinson, in the Donegal fiddle tradition there are two terms used to describe this technique, “reversing” or “bassing” (1995, p.5). In the audio sources of this dissertation, octave playing is evident in the recordings of Packie Dolan and Michael Francis McNerney. In Dolan’s case, it can be heard in numerous tunes he recorded with Michael Coleman, such as ‘Miss Ramsay [2/2]’ (PD.012), ‘The Blackhaired Lass [2/2]’ (PD.010) and ‘The Duke of Leinster [1/2]’ (PD.025). It is not known, however, for certain which one of the two musicians was in and out of the lower octave. In the field recording, the use of this technique by McNerney is evident in the tune ‘The Butcher’s Jig’ (MN.019), in which he plays the first strain in a lower octave on the second repeat of the tune. It may be assumed that he employed this technique when playing

with other fiddle players from the locality, such as Michael McNally (1914-*c*1980), who regularly visited him for music sessions.

## **10.7 Conclusion**

Aspects of technique and ornamentation are integral to understanding musical style and are an elemental component of the study of both solo style (Lyth, 1996) and regional traditions (Keegan, 1997; Kearney, 2010) in Irish traditional music. The use of techniques and ornaments as outlined in this chapter, coupled with consistency in repertoire outlined in previous chapters, and insight into the processes of transmission, give weight to the concept of a local or regional tradition in the area defined or recognised as *Connmhaicne*. Following a convention in Irish traditional music, and mindful of local parlance, this tradition may be termed as the ‘Kernan school’, in recognition of the existence of a network or lineage of musicians which Thomas Kernan is an identified patriarchal figure. While the musical repertoire and style of this tradition evolves and incorporates other influences, the use of Kernan as a figurehead is important to the understanding of identity in this tradition, based on historical evidence and narrative, similar to the discussion of other regions, notably Sligo, Donegal and Sliabh Luachra with reference to Michael Coleman, Johnny Doherty and Pádraig O’Keeffe respectively. This does not reject the need to examine the development of the tradition beyond Kernan but the ongoing use of this narrative provides ethnographic support, further exemplified in the recordings of regional artists in recent years

# Chapter Eleven

## Conclusions

## 11 Conclusions

This dissertation examines the evolution of fiddle music in the Connmhaicne region of County Longford and the south of County Leitrim between the period *c*1825 and *c*1975. Central to this study of regional fiddle evolution are manuscripts and recordings compiled between 1844 and 1973 connected to Connmhaicne fiddle players through the teaching of the fiddle master, Thomas Kernan (*c*1807-1887). This connected triad of Kernan, successive generations of Kernan's fiddle students and the sources of their music, facilitates the identification and subsequent study of the main factors leading to fiddle music evolution among a localised lineage of fiddle players.

The thesis is divided into two volumes. Volume One presents a study of music evolution in the Connmhaicne region between *c*1825 and *c*1975. Integral to this critical analysis of fiddle music evolution are written and oral sources of music compiled by fiddle players linked to Kernan's teaching. Presented in Volume Two as a critical edition, in total there were seven sources of fiddle music examined in this dissertation. The written sources consist of four manuscript collections compiled between 1844 and *c*1940: (1) Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-*c*1850), (2) O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS (*c*1870-*c*1940), (3) McBrien-Rogers MS (*c*1900-*c*1950) and (4) Larry Smyth MS (*c*1900). The oral sources consist of three catalogues of recordings: (1) Frank Quinn 78s (1921-1936), (2) Packie Dolan 78s (1927-1929) and (3) Michael Francis McNerney Tape Recordings (1973). These oral sources represent a later period in the history of the fiddle tradition associated with Kernan, namely from the 1920s to 1975, a period in which the transmission of music appears to have moved from a written tradition to an oral tradition.

Based on a methodological approach outlined in Chapter One, Volume One has been divided into three parts. Part One, which consists of Chapter Two and Chapter Three, considers the

ancient region of Connmhaicne, where Kernan's music is located, and investigates the interconnecting factors of culture, tradition and geography that led to the creation of this greater music region. The tangible remnants of the Kernan fiddle legacy from c1825 to c1975 are a series of written sources and audio sources, compiled by musicians from this lineage of musicians. Part Two, which consists of Chapter Four to Chapter Eight, critically analyses these sources in regard both to their musical and non-musical content. Using the musical content of the written and audio sources, Part Three, which consists of Chapter Nine and Chapter Ten, examines the sources of fiddle music in a collective approach in order to identify and analyse the specific methods of teaching and the types of music transmission employed by the fiddle players. Through quantitative and qualitative methodologies, this section also interrogates the sources under a number of key characteristics that define a fiddle style, namely: (1) bowing, (2) ornamentation, (3) variation, and (4) specific techniques.

## **11.1 Main research outcomes**

### **11.1.1 Original written and oral sources**

The written and oral sources of music examined in this dissertation are tangible fossils of Connmhaicne fiddle music at specific points on a timeline continuum between 1844 and 1973. An examination of the musical content, metadata and individual sources confirms that the music therein was either compiled in a teacher-student context, e.g. Leonard-Kernan MS, or as a collection of the musician's personal repertoire at the specific time of compilation, e.g. Larry Smyth MS. For example, to test this hypothesis in the earliest source, the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850) a number of methods were used. Firstly, an examination of the metadata in this manuscript reveals that a series of dates between October 1844 and January 1846 were written beside the names of the scribes "Thomas Kernan" and "Michael Leonard" in Folio A of the

manuscript (Chapter Four). Secondly, genealogical research uncovers that at the time of the manuscript's initial compilation, the latter scribe, Michael Leonard (c1835-1886) was approximately ten years old, while the former scribe, Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887) was approximately thirty-eight years old. The ages of these scribes suggests that Kernan was the fiddle teacher and that Leonard was his student. Thirdly, an analysis of the underlying music in the manuscript reveals that Kernan appears to have been transcribing his tunes from memory, which implies he was actively playing those particular tunes at the time of transcription. Lastly, further analysis of the musical content reveals that Leonard copied a small number of tunes from *Alexander's Scrapbook*, which is a printed music collection published approximately ten years earlier in the 1830s, a copy of which is stitched into the manuscript. The unbiased and non-selective writing motives of Kernan and Leonard in this particular manuscript confirm that they were transcribing the prevailing music at the time of the manuscript's transcription. This methodology was equally applied to all the sources to be examined in the dissertation to ascertain if their musical content reflected contemporary music. The results of this exercise confirm that, by and large, the written and audio sources contain the prevailing music of their period at the time of their transcription. This important finding confirms that the sources in this study can facilitate a critical study of fiddle music evolution during the period under examination between c1825 and c1975.

### **11.1.2 Evidence of music evolution in the sources**

Having established that the manuscripts and recordings to be examined in this dissertation are reliable sources of prevailing music in Connmhaicne between c1825 and c1975, an examination of their musical content reveals the significant factors conducive to the evolution of fiddle music during this period among a localised lineage of fiddle players connected to the teaching of Thomas Kernan. The primary result of this study reveals that the musicians were playing

and actively sourcing contemporary music. These musicians were neither antiquarians, nor were they motivated to preserve the historical music of their locality. They were mostly interested and influenced by trends occurring in the greater musical, dance and song environment, both at home and abroad. Therefore, the sources in this dissertation are an accurate guide of the stages in the evolution of Irish music between *c*1825 and *c*1975 in Connhaicne and arguably, the results of this study also provides a model for how Irish music may have evolved across other regions of Ireland during the same period.

### **11.1.3 Connhaicne fiddle music *c*1845**

The results demonstrate that the contemporary music played by the Connhaicne fiddle players gradually moved from international influences to national influences between *c*1825 and *c*1975. This hypothesis is validated from an analysis of the repertoire in the seven sources examined in this dissertation compiled by the Connhaicne musicians between 1844 and 1973. In the earliest source examined, the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-*c*1850), the repertoire transcribed by Thomas Kernan and Michael Leonard is predominantly international contemporary music, with a small amount of tunes sourced from the existing canon of Irish music. The range of tune types in this manuscript includes: waltzes and quadrilles from western art music, Scottish reels, song airs from the folk song traditions of Ireland, Great Britain, North America and Europe, a song air from American blackface minstrelsy, operatic arias, English marches and hornpipes, Irish and Welsh dance tunes and an Irish planxty by Turlough Carolan. The contemporary nature of this repertoire is validated by an examination of the composition dates of the manuscript's repertoire, which indicates that a significant amount of repertoire was newly composed music at the time of the manuscript's compilation. For example, two waltzes, '[Untitled]' (LK.037) and 'Rose Waltz' (LK.054), were both written in 1835, just nine years

before the first date in the manuscript, 1844, by the Austrian composer, Johann Strauss I (1804-1849).

#### **11.1.4 Connhaicne fiddle music c1845-c1870**

Chronologically, the next source examined in the dissertation is the Patrick O'Farrell MS (c1870), which was compiled by another of Kernan's students Patrick O'Farrell (c1835-?). While the tune types in the O'Farrell's repertoire is largely congruent with the earlier Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850), there are clear signs that the music had evolved within that period of approximately twenty-five years. For example, there is evidence that reels were evolving in this period. Of the 14 reels in the earlier Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850), all had originated from Scotland, except one tune 'Tom Steel' (LK.048), which appears to have a connection to Ireland (Chapter Four). However, in the O'Farrell MS (Chapter Seven), a greater presence of reels of an Irish idiom are evident in this manuscript, which may suggest that Irish musicians were starting to compose reels in the period leading up to the manuscript's compilation c1870. Despite the increase of Irish content, such as Irish reels, in the O'Farrell MS, the repertoire of this manuscript is mostly international contemporary music and contains much of the same tune types as the Leonard-Kernan MS, which are outlined in the previous section. The contemporary nature of O'Farrell's repertoire is evident by his transcriptions of newly composed song airs and art music and also by his transcription of a schottische "An American Shottishe [sic]" (PF.041). The respective dance of this particular music was introduced to Ireland c1850, which explains its absence in the Leonard-Kernan MS. O'Farrell's inclusion of this schottische is an example of how the Connhaicne musicians were actively assimilating contemporary European dance music into their repertoire during this period c1845-c1870.

### 11.1.5 Connmhaicne fiddle music c1870-c1930

In the next period of evolution of fiddle music in Connmhaicne between c1870 and c1930, there are seven manuscripts from three different collections available for examination: McBrien-Rogers MS (Chapter Five), Larry Smyth MS (Chapter Six) and O'Farrell-Reynolds-Brady MSS (Chapter Seven). The abundance of repertoire in these three collections, containing approximately 800 tunes, provides sufficient data to analyse fiddle music evolution during this specific period. The repertoire of these sources were compared to one another in terms of tunes types and actual tunes. The results establish that, by and large, there is a strong congruity between the sources. Therefore, to study the evolution of fiddle music in the period 1844 to c1930, the Larry Smyth MS (c1900) was chosen as the examinable source (see 6.9.3 *Evolution of Kernan's repertoire*). The results of this study reveal that music in Connmhaicne had evolved rapidly in this period. Most notably, reels and double jigs, had for the first time become the most popular tune types in the repertoires of these musicians, a trend that has continued to the present day. For example, as a percentage of the total repertoire in the manuscripts, reels and double jigs are 14% and 1% respectively in the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850), compared to 47% and 17% in the Larry Smyth MS (c1900) respectively. Analysis of the reels in the Smyth MS also show further signs that reels introduced to the repertoires of these musicians may have originated from Irish composers, in contrast to the predominantly Scottish reels in the Leonard-Kernan MS.

A survey of the repertoire in the Smyth MS also demonstrates that the repertoire of the Connmhaicne fiddle players was evolving largely in response to the changes occurring in dance music in Ireland during that era. The complete absence of music for quadrilles in the Larry Smyth MS (c1900), which are 42% of the total repertoire in the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850) and 13% in the O'Farrell MS (c1870), demonstrates that the specific tunes from western art music, originally used as music for quadrilles, were slowly replaced by existing Irish tunes

from local repertoires. This may explain the rising popularity of the reel and double jig across all the sources in the period between *c*1870 and *c*1930.

An examination of the repertoire in the Larry Smyth MS (*c*1900) and the other written sources transcribed in the period *c*1870 to *c*1930 also demonstrates that the assimilation of new European dance music was an ongoing process in the repertoires of Connmhaicne musicians. Specifically, music for new dances, the Mazurka and Varsoviana, which are absent in the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-*c*1850) and O'Farrell MS (*c*1870), appear in these Connmhaicne sources for the first time. The contemporary nature of this dance music is also evident in other tune types in these sources. For example, newly composed international song airs and European western art music feature prominently in the sources' repertoires. Popular composers that most regularly feature in the contemporary music of this era include: Samuel Lover (1797-1868), Thomas Moore (1779-1852), Charles Coote Jr. (1831-1916) and Charles D'Albert (1809-1886).

#### **11.1.6 Connmhaicne fiddle music *c*1930-*c*1975**

With the advent of audio technology from the end of the 1800s onwards, the context of Connmhaicne music gradually changed from a written tradition to an oral tradition, both in terms of recording and learning music. Prior to the introduction of audio technology such as radios and gramophones, musicians relied heavily on printed material to obtain contemporary music. This written method of learning maintained a relatively high level of music literacy among the Connmhaicne musicians in the nineteenth century, which is evident in a survey of the manuscripts transcribed by these musicians. However, from the 1900s onwards Connmhaicne musicians were gradually introduced to Irish music through audio sources. One of the earliest audio sources for these musicians were 78rpm records, which were mainly released in America

by Irish emigrants based there. A number of these Irish recording artists during the 1920s and 1930s were fiddle players from Connmhaicne (Chapter Nine), most notably Frank Quinn (1893-1964), Packie Dolan (1904-32) and James Clarke (1887-1938). The records of these Connmhaicne artists and also other Irish artists based in America made their way home to Ireland and they had a significant effect on musicians in Ireland. In terms of the fiddle, the three Sligo maestros, Michael Coleman (1891-1945), James Morrison (1891-1947) and Paddy Killoran (1904-1965) had arguably the greatest impact on Irish fiddle players. There is direct evidence of their influence, and of other recording artists from the 78rpm era, in the sources examined in this dissertation. For example, in the McBrien-Rogers MS (*c*1900 & *c*1950), the scribe Jack McBrien (1920-2002) transcribed several tunes that appear to have been learned from 78rpm records, the majority of which are Coleman records (see 5.6.3 *Audio sources*). Two examples include ‘Dr. Gilbert’s Reel – Colman [sic]’ (MBR.283) and ‘Miss McLoud’s Reel – Colman’s [sic] way’ (MBR.309). Similarly in another source, McNerney recordings (1973), there is evidence that the Connmhaicne fiddle player Michael Francis McNerney (1898-1975) had learned repertoire from 78rpm records, including ‘The Royal Stack of Barley’ (MN.058-MN.060), a hornpipe medley recorded in a fiddle duet by Michael Coleman (1891-1945) and Packie Dolan (1904-1932) in 1927, and also ‘Bonny Kate’ (MN.071), which appears to have been learned from either a Coleman or Morrison recording of this tune (see 8.7.6 *Sources of repertoire*). There is also evidence in the McNerney recordings (1973) that McNerney was actively sourcing music from other audio sources such as the radio and later the television throughout his music career.

The sources of repertoire compiled in the latter period *c*1930-*c*1975 reveal that the contemporary music which these Connmhaicne musicians were playing was mostly derived from Irish sources. A significant amount of these Irish sources were Irish musicians who had emigrated to America. These include the aforementioned recording artists of the 78rpm era, the

publisher Captain Francis O'Neill of County Cork and Chicago, whose iconic printed music collection *Music of Ireland* (1903) became one of the most significant influences on Irish music in the first half of the twentieth century, and also living composers of Irish music such as Ed Reavy (1897-1988) of County Cavan and Philadelphia. All three of these Irish emigrant sources, 78rpm records, O'Neill's *Music of Ireland* and Reavy's compositions, are evident in the McNerney recordings (1973). The McNerney recordings also demonstrate Irish-based sources of music from within his locality of north Longford, such as marching bands, house dances and other local gatherings. There is little or no music in McNerney's contemporary repertoire deriving from international sources. This finding is in complete contrast with the earliest source in the dissertation, Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850), and also with the other sources deriving from the nineteenth century, all of which are significantly influenced by international newly composed music.

#### **11.1.7 The influence of Thomas Kernan on the fiddle traditions of the Connmaicne region**

When I began my preliminary inquiry on research compiled by Fr John Quinn, the intention was to use the manuscripts and recordings from the Connmaicne region to study the evolution of fiddle music in this region from c1825-c1975. However, my initial findings from Fr Quinn's research revealed that the majority of the written and oral sources in this region were compiled by fiddle players connected to one another through a series of fiddle teachers, and that at the very head of this teacher-student tree was Thomas Kernan (c1807-1887), a fiddle master from north Longford. The interconnectedness between these musicians and their respective sources of manuscripts and recordings provided an opportunity to study the evolution of fiddle music within a homogenous group of musicians, which in effect is a sub-culture of musicians within the greater music region of Connmaicne. The purity of this lineage facilitated the identification

and examination of the leading factors that impacted on the evolution of fiddle music among this group of connected musicians.

The results of this study reveal a dichotomy in Kernan's influence and legacy over the course of nearly 150 years in terms of his repertoire and his teaching methods. While specific teaching methods employed by Kernan were successfully passed from one generation to another, the repertoire he taught was gradually replaced by what was then contemporary music. An examination of the written sources in this dissertation reveals that the repertoire of Kernan's students was initially influenced by the tunes he taught them. For example, in the Larry Smyth MS (*c*1900) there is evidence that Kernan's music was highly regarded among the first generation of his students and formed a core part of their repertoire (Chapter Six). The scribe of this manuscript, Larry Smyth (1866-1930) was taught by Bernard Rogers (1856-1907), who in turn was taught by his uncle, Thomas Kernan. The importance of Kernan's music to Rogers' teaching is highlighted by the fact that the phrases "Kiernan's music" and "Music by Kiernan" are transcribed ten times throughout the document and that several tunes and exercises includes his name in the titles e.g. 'Kiernan's Hornpipe' (LS.071). The inferred connection between Kernan and the repertoire in this manuscript demonstrates that Smyth's teacher, Rogers, was highly influenced by Kernan's music and impressed this influence onto the next generation of students.

However, while Kernan's music may have formed a core part of the repertoires of the first and second generations of his students, the fiddle players of Connmhaicne were also highly influenced by the prevailing music of their era. Over time, Kernan's music was slowly replaced by the then contemporary music in the repertoires of these students. An examination of the musical content of the McBrien-Rogers MS, which is the second source of Bernard Roger's repertoire in the written sources of this dissertation, strongly validates this conjecture. In all, 87% of the manuscript's total repertoire was copied by Roger's from printed material, which

included an array of sheet music, four music collections, three song collections and one tutor book. This confirms that although it can be demonstrated from the Larry Smyth MS that Kernan's music was important to Rogers, he was constantly updating his repertoire with contemporary music from printed material.

As in the case of Rogers, the use of printed material to obtain contemporary music is a consistent finding among the sources examined in this study. The printed material uncovered as sources of repertoire for these musicians include: sheet music, at least fifteen printed music and song collections and two tutor books. The influence of printed material, to the detriment of Kernan's influence, on the repertoires of the Connhaicne musicians is evident from a comparison of all the sources' repertoires in this dissertation to the earliest source of Kernan's repertoire, the Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850). For example, in Chapter Seven a comparison of the repertoires between Kernan's music in Leonard-Kernan MS (1844-c1850) to the next chronological source, Patrick O'Farrell MS (c1870), reveals that only 26% of the total repertoire in the O'Farrell MS was found in common to the Leonard-Kernan MS. One of the contributory factors in this statistic is that O'Farrell appears to have sourced some of his repertoire directly from printed material (see 7.3.2.4 *Use of printed material*). When the repertoire of the Leonard-Kernan MS was further compared to later written and oral sources of Connhaicne fiddle music such as the Meagher MS (c1885 +/-10 years), Larry Smyth MS (c1900) and McNerney recordings (1973), there are further signs that the musicians were slowly replacing Kernan's repertoire with contemporary music, and that much of this contemporary music was sourced from printed material. While 19% of the total repertoire in the Meagher MS is also found in the Leonard-Kernan MS this figure has declined to 6% and 7% when compared to the repertoires of the Smyth MS and the McNerney recordings respectively. These statistics demonstrate that Kernan's influence on these musicians slowly

declined over the course of their music careers as they became exposed to contemporary music from external sources, particularly printed material.

While Kernan's influence on the repertoires of the Connmhaicne fiddle players waned over time, a number of his teaching methods endured. In particular, two methods of Kernan's teaching are consistently evident in the written sources of this dissertation. The first method was his use of preludes to teach intonation to his students. The title, 'Preludes by Kiernan' (LS.094), of a set of exercises in the Larry Smyth MS (see 6.9 *Repertoire*) establishes that these preludes were inextricably linked to Kernan's teaching practices. The same preludes in the Smyth MS were also discovered in several manuscripts in the O'Farrell-Reynolds MSS (Chapter Seven). The fact that they appear in manuscripts written by three different scribes, Patrick O'Farrell, Francis Reynolds and Maggie Reynolds, who cover three generations of fiddle players from c1870 to c1930, demonstrates that preludes had a lasting legacy among the fiddle players of Connmhaicne. The second method of Kernan's teaching evident in the written sources is a bowing technique, termed locally as 'slur and cut'. In Chapter Ten (see 10.3.2 *Slur and cut*) it was established that this bowing pattern was detected in 151 of the 175 reels examined across all the written source from 1844 to c1930, representing 86% of the total reels in the sample. In frequency terms, this bowing pattern was employed on average 7.1 times per strain per scribe in the 151 reels scrutinized. These statistics confirm that this particular bowing technique, 'slur and cut', was the cornerstone of fiddle style among the musicians of the Kernan fiddle lineage.

In addition to Kernan's varying degrees of influence on the type of repertoire and teaching practices employed by the Connmhaicne fiddle players, the results of this study show that Kernan was the pioneering figure in the rapid growth of fiddle music in the Connmhaicne region in the latter half of the nineteenth century (Chapter Three). During his teaching career, Kernan travelled all over the greater region of Connmhaicne and possibly even further into other bordering regions. He introduced the fiddle to pockets of this region where little or no fiddle

music had previously existed. Towards the end of Kernan's teaching career from c1830s to c1880s, a number of his students also started to teach the fiddle, the most active of which were Bernard Rogers (1856-1907) and Francis McDonagh (c1845-1935) in north Longford, James Hanly (c1810-1901) in south Longford and Peter Kennedy (c1825-1902) in south Leitrim. Resulting from the combined efforts of these teachers, vibrant sub-regions of fiddle music were created throughout Connhaicne, which continued to produce fiddle players in large numbers up until 1900 when a decline ensued across the region and Ireland. The results of this study demonstrate that the key factor in all the stages of introduction, growth, decline and revival in the evolution of fiddle music in Connhaicne was the relevant supply of fiddle teachers at any given time. When fiddle music flourished during the nineteenth century there was an abundance of active full-time and part-time fiddle teachers in Connhaicne. However, by the turn of the twentieth century, most of these teachers had either passed or became inactive and were not sufficiently replaced. From c1900 onwards, a slow decline in fiddle music was witnessed across the region of Connhaicne.

#### **11.1.8 Critical edition**

One of the important research outcomes of this study is the development of the critical edition of the manuscripts and audio sources which have been typeset, edited and presented in a format accessible to performers, ethnomusicologists and historians. This critical edition is not created as a definitive version due to subjective editorial decisions required for this study, which are outlined in *1.7.5 Vol. II: Digitisation and critical editing of the written and audio sources*. Nonetheless, the critical edition accurately represents, by and large, the music as transcribed and played by the respective musicians of the sources and therefore, it may be used as a reference point for future researchers and performers of this historical body of regional music. Access to a legible critical edition may also encourage Connhaicne musicians to explore and

study the music of their ancestors and to pass this music onto the next generation of musicians. As a fiddle teacher, sharing this critical edition among my students and other teachers and musicians in Connmhaicne is integral to promoting this historical music, both locally and afar. For example, I provided a critical edition of the O'Farrell-Reynolds MSS (Chapter Seven) to the fiddle players, Geraldine McLynn and Antón MacGabhann, and together with our students and other local fiddle players, we performed various selections of tunes from this collection to the public at a concert in Granard, County Longford in August 2018.

#### **11.1.9 Fr John Quinn**

This research has also highlighted the vital role of Fr John Quinn as a collector, music teacher and band mentor in the survival, transmission and promotion of the historical music of the Connmhaicne region. For the last fifty years, Fr Quinn has ensured that the teaching legacy of Thomas Kernan has been kept alive and reintroduced to the present generation of musicians. Many of the sources examined in this dissertation are linked either directly or indirectly to Fr Quinn's efforts. Through his participation in performing and teaching music at a local level throughout the region he earned the trust of the musicians and learned from them the history of the local music. Due to his unrivalled knowledge of this local musical history, he has become a musical conduit for all newly discovered collections of historical Connmhaicne music. For example, it was revealed in 4.2 *Provenance: "fiddler on the roof"* that Fr Quinn became the current custodian of the Leonard-Kernan MS in 1973 through his friendship with the fiddler Pierce Butler, who had previously uncovered this particular manuscript hidden under the roof of a tavern in south Longford some years earlier in 1962. In a similar manner, he was provided with copies of two other manuscript collections examined in this study, McBrien-Rogers MS (Chapter Five) and Larry Smyth MS (Chapter Six) by fiddle students of his, namely Enda McNamara and Laurence Smyth respectively.

## 11.2 Final remarks

In conclusion, the study of the evolution of fiddle music in the Connmhaicne region between *c*1825 and *c*1975 presented in this dissertation, offers a model of how fiddle music developed across Ireland within localised lineages of fiddle players interconnected with each other through the factors of people, place and music. This dissertation has provided a framework for understanding and measuring the underlying processes leading to the creation of a viable fiddle tradition within a given region. It is intended that the research findings will open up avenues for further discourse in this important area of research into the evolution of Irish traditional music. It has also produced a critically edited volume of music which can now be widely disseminated and performed. With regard to the music region of Connmhaicne, this research has also highlighted a number of important regional collections outside the scope of this dissertation requiring further examination, such as the Stephen Grier Manuscript (*c*1883) of Gortletteragh, Co. Leitrim, and several fiddle manuscripts from south Leitrim connected to the fiddle master, Peter Kennedy (*c*1825-1902). Results from these studies may further aid the process of mapping the evolution of Irish music in Connmhaicne over the last two centuries.

The study of Connmhaicne forms part of a wider development of research on regional musical traditions. These regional traditions are not necessarily determined by style but rather networks over space and time. The musicians considered herein are part of a network in which Kernan is an important node. As demonstrated throughout the study, the recent interest in Kernan is not new but is a recurring aspect of the narrative of Connmhaicne that has continued through generations. The focus on Kernan does not overlook the role of other figures, but rather engages with the concept of ‘tradition’ and acknowledges the processes involved in the establishment or invention of tradition, the development of a regional narrative, and the network of people across time and space who share a common musical repertoire and style.

Further studies may engage with concepts of authenticity and revival in the transmission, dissemination, promotion, marketing and institutionalisation of this music. As a fiddle player and teacher, I have incorporated both the repertoire and technique into my performance practice. There is potential for future ethnographic studies that give greater consideration to contemporary music practice and concepts of revival and regionalisation. The work of Fr Quinn is continued herein and is linked to a rejuvenation of regional identity in Connmhaicne. Future research could explore the processes of regionalisation taking a more ethnographic and contemporary approach beyond the scope of this largely historical study.

# Bibliography

## Bibliography

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