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# **The Role of Women in Music in Nineteenth-Century Dublin**

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## Abbreviations

### Institutions

NUIM	National University of Ireland, Maynooth
NLI	National Library of Ireland
RCM	Royal College of Music, London
RIAM	Royal Irish Academy of Music
RL	Russell Library, National University of Ireland, Maynooth
RUI	Royal University of Ireland

### Newspapers & Journals

<i>EP</i>	<i>Evening Packet</i>
<i>FJ</i>	<i>Freeman's Journal</i>
<i>IT</i>	<i>Irish Times</i>
<i>MT</i>	<i>Musical Times</i>
<i>WIT</i>	<i>Weekly Irish Times</i>

### Books

IMS	Irish Musical Studies
<i>NG2001</i>	<i>The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians</i> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> edn., Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell, eds., (London: Macmillan, 2001)

### Electronic Sources

<i>GMO</i>	<i>Grove Music Online</i>
<i>OMO</i>	<i>Oxford Music Online</i>
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>

## **Introduction**

Over the course of the nineteenth century women in Dublin managed to carve out a successful position for themselves in many areas of music making. They became active participants in the musical culture of the city through teaching, composing, writing and the promotion of music, so that by the beginning of the twentieth century, they were very much a driving force in musical life in Dublin. Despite the fact that throughout Europe at that time women musicians continually faced assumptions based on gender, in Ireland female musicians were given more opportunity and encouragement to develop their musical talents in all areas. While gender biases were still very much in evidence, women were nonetheless accepted into musical society by their male peers. Unfortunately, their efforts and relentless dedication to music were quickly forgotten as the twentieth century progressed. Modern research into the musical life of nineteenth-century Dublin has centred on the involvement of men – male musicians and composers – and their dedication to music. Despite the growth of feminist musicology and feminist research in other disciplines, particularly towards the end of the twentieth century, women in music in Dublin have remained unrecognised and unappreciated.

A continuing interest in researching female composers and musicians since the 1980s has meant that women have begun to be recognised in the music histories of Europe, and considered as part of the musical canon. Examples of this include the research into the lives and work of nineteenth century musicians such as Clara



Schumann and Fanny Hensel.<sup>1</sup> Several influential texts led the way in feminist musicology in the final decade of the twentieth century, notably Susan McClary's *Feminine Endings* (1991), Karin Pendle's *Women and Music* (1991), Marcia Citron's *Gender and the Musical Canon* (1993) and Ruth Solie's *Musicology and Difference* (1993).<sup>2</sup> Because of these texts and the many others that followed, music history textbooks and anthologies began to reflect the growing interest in women's involvement in music, with more attention given to them.<sup>3</sup> In short, the contribution of women to the history of music began to be considered in all its forms and in many cases their involvement led to a re-evaluation of their male peers and musical activity as a whole. The developments in research in the 1970s and 1980s, which began to uncover the histories and details of the lives of women in music, meant that feminist musicology, in the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, could begin to analyse the contributions of women and their compositions under the tenets of feminist theory which musical scholarship was beginning to embrace.<sup>4</sup> However, due to the general lack of interest in Irish music as a topic of musicological research before the final decades of the twentieth century, the earlier stages of feminist research or of research in 'women's studies' has not yet been undertaken in Irish musicology. Research into music in nineteenth-century Ireland is therefore incomplete to an extent: women made up almost half of the music teachers in Dublin by the beginning of the twentieth century and they constituted a large percentage of the performers within

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<sup>1</sup> For example: Nancy B. Reich, *Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985) and Marcia J. Citron, *The Letters of Fanny Hensel to Felix Mendelssohn* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Susan Mc Clary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender and Sexuality* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); Karin Pendle, ed., *Women and Music: A History* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991); Marcia J. Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Ruth Solie, ed., *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>3</sup> Marcia J. Citron, 'Women and the Western Canon: Where are we now?' p. 209, <<http://muse.jhu.edu/>>, [accessed 15 July 2008].

<sup>4</sup> Ruth A. Solie, 'Feminism', *GMO, OMO*, <[www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com)>, [accessed 17 August 2008].

the city, yet the amount of research and acknowledgement they have received to date is extremely limited.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, while detailed research has been undertaken into several of the important male figures in the city during this time, the important female figures in Dublin have at best earned little more than a passing reference.<sup>6</sup>

The rise of feminist musicology in the final decades of the twentieth century reflected a general development in research dedicated to the involvement of women in the past across disciplines such as history, sociology and anthropology. The role of women in Irish history was likewise largely ignored by historians before the final decades of the twentieth century, when the situation was improved through the work of historians such as Margaret Ward and Maria Luddy. They set about highlighting the importance of women in history, particularly in the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Margaret Ward described the treatment of women as being one of ‘collective amnesia’ both in Irish historiography and in the Irish mind.<sup>8</sup> During the nineteenth century women in all areas of Irish society became more independent and involved in society, and the work of historians such as Ward and Luddy has highlighted the importance of women in the development of the country’s culture, politics and education since the nineteenth century.

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<sup>5</sup> For more details on the number of female teachers active in Dublin see chapter two, below.

<sup>6</sup> For examples of detailed research into the important male musicians of the nineteenth century see the following theses: Lisa Parker, ‘Robert Prescott Stewart (1825–1894): A Victorian Musician in Dublin’ (unpublished PhD diss., NUIM, April 2009); Doran, Caitriona, ‘The Robinsons, a Nineteenth-Century Dublin Family of Musicians and Their Contribution towards the Musical Life in Dublin’ (unpublished MA diss., NUIM, 1998).

<sup>7</sup> Margaret Ward, ed., *In Their Own Voice: Women and Irish Nationalism* (Cork: Attic Press, 1995).

Maria Luddy, ed., *Women in Ireland, 1800-1918: A Documentary History* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1995).

Mary Cullen and Maria Luddy, eds., *Women, Power and Consciousness in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Ireland: Eight Biographical Studies* (Dublin: Attic Press, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> Kit & Cyril O’Céirín, *Women of Ireland: A Biographic Dictionary* (Galway: Tír Eolas, 1996), p. 5.

In the past few decades there has been a significant growth in publications on music in Ireland, women in music from the past three centuries are still awaiting due recognition and appreciation. Brian Boydell mentions a number of women musicians in his books on the musical life of Dublin in the eighteenth century, especially in the context of female performers at the Rotunda concerts.<sup>9</sup> There are also several books on individual figures, including Basil Walsh's biography of the Limerick-born soprano Catherine Hayes; Valerie Wallace's book on Mrs Alexander, the nineteenth-century hymn writer from Co. Wicklow; and Anne Chambers' book on Margaret Burke Sheridan.<sup>10</sup> However, these publications are very much the exception, not the rule. It is interesting to note that, with the exception of Mrs Alexander, the other two females who were researched in detail, along with nearly all those mentioned by Brian Boydell were performers and, more specifically, singers. The acceptance of female singers in concerts in Ireland and across Europe since the eighteenth century, has earned them a general acceptance as a part of music history. By contrast, the women who were involved in other areas such as teaching, composing and promotion have been largely neglected. The reason for this may be that these singers were prominent in contemporary sources because they came to the attention of the press and thus substantial records of their lives have survived. However, even the likes of Catherine Hayes and Mrs Alexander are scarcely mentioned in texts on the general musical history of the nineteenth century: the broader role of women in the

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<sup>9</sup> Brian Boydell, *Rotunda Music in Eighteenth-Century Dublin* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992). See also the same author's *A Dublin Musical Calendar, 1700-1760* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1988).

<sup>10</sup> Basil Walsh, *Catherine Hayes: The Hibernian Prima Donna* (Dublin: The Irish Academic Press, 2000). Catherine Hayes (1818- 1861) was born in Limerick and went on to become a soprano of international reputation; Valerie Wallace, *Mrs Alexander: A Life of the Hymn Writer* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1995). Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895) was the composer of such well-known hymns as *All Things Bright and Beautiful* and *Once in Royal David's City* and was known in her own time as the 'queen of Irish hymn-writers'. In 1848 she published a book, *Hymns for little Children*. She was married to William Alexander, Bishop of Derry and Raphoe; Anne Chambers, *Margaret Burke Sheridan, Irish Prima Donna, 1889-1958* (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1989).

development of nineteenth-century musical culture, particularly in Dublin where their work was perhaps most evident, has remained to a large extent unexamined. An example of this can be seen in the recent volume of the *Irish Musical Studies* series dedicated to the nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup> The volume features sections dedicated to nationality, education and society, and musical institutions, but there is no article dedicated to the involvement of women. The only woman who is significantly referenced, albeit briefly, is Annie Patterson.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps the greatest recognition given to female musicians in nineteenth-century Dublin to date has been in Richard Pine and Charles Acton's history of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, *To Talent Alone*.<sup>13</sup> Here the work of women is noted throughout and their involvement given due praise and acknowledgement. However, women are mentioned within the book in order to illustrate the work of the Royal Irish Academy of Music rather than to highlight the contribution of women in their own right. As will be demonstrated in the following chapters, the majority of women who enjoyed successful music careers in nineteenth-century Dublin were connected in some way to the Academy, whether as students, teachers or both. It would therefore have been difficult for Pine and Acton to illustrate the success of the Academy in the nineteenth century without mentioning the women involved, but they remain silent about the significance of these women's contribution to the music history of Ireland.

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<sup>11</sup> Michael Murphy and Jan Smaczny, eds., *Music in Nineteenth Century Ireland*, IMS 9 (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Ita Beausang, 'From National Sentiment to Nationalist Movement, 1850-1900', *Music in Nineteenth Century Ireland* IMS 9, eds. Michael Murphy and Jan Smaczny (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), pp. 47-48; Lisa Parker, 'For The Purpose of Public Music Education: The Lectures of Robert Prescott Stewart', *Music in Nineteenth Century Ireland* IMS 9, eds. Michael Murphy and Jan Smaczny (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), p. 205.

<sup>13</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton, *To Talent Alone: The Royal Irish Academy of Music 1848-1998* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1998).

A comparison with recent publications on music in Britain further highlights the neglect of the female musician in Ireland. Essays on women and their role in music have more frequently been included in publications such as the Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain series. For example, the most recent volume, *The Piano in Nineteenth-Century British Culture*, includes an essay on the Victorian pianist Arabella Goddard as well as references to female musicians throughout.<sup>14</sup> Several publications have been dedicated to the work of women in music in nineteenth-century Britain. These include Judith Barger's work on Elizabeth Stirling and female organists, and Paula Gillett's book on musical women from 1870 to 1914.<sup>15</sup> These publications draw on a tradition of research into the involvement of women in music in nineteenth-century Britain, which has been evident since Derek Hyde's book on the subject in 1984.<sup>16</sup> While the argument might be suggested that the role of women in Irish music was not comparable in quality to that of women in English music, this is far from true. For example, Sarah Glover began to improve music education in England, but it was an Irish woman, Annie Curwen, who helped to continue that work. Similarly, while Mary Wakefield helped develop the competition festival in England, Annie Patterson created Ireland's most notable music festival, the Feis Ceoil, which continues to this day. In terms of composers, Ireland may not have produced a talent as well-known as Clara Schumann or Ethel Smyth, but there were active female composers whose work was comparable in style and genres to those of their Irish male peers and which is certainly worthy of performance and discussion.

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<sup>14</sup> Therese Ellsworth, 'Victorian Pianists as Concert Artists: The Case of Arabella Goddard (1836-1922)', *The Piano in Nineteenth-Century British Culture: Instruments, Performers, and Repertoire*, eds. Therese Ellsworth and Susan Wollenberg (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 149-170.

<sup>15</sup> Judith Barger, *Elizabeth Stirling and the Musical Life of Female Organists in Nineteenth Century England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).  
Paula Gillett, *Musical Women in England, 1870-1914: "Encroaching on All Man's Privileges"* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

<sup>16</sup> Derek Hyde, *New Found Voices: Women in Nineteenth Century English Music* (Cornwall: Belvedere Press, 1984).

Finally, although not Irish-born, but active within Ireland, Fanny Robinson had a teaching and performance career that in many ways echoed those of Arabella Goddard and Clara Schumann.

The general lack in Irish musicology of research into women has resulted in significant gaps in many of the important contributions relating to the development of musical culture in nineteenth-century Dublin. For example, several published articles refer to the importance of the Feis Ceoil festival and its role in the development of cultural nationalism in the late nineteenth century, but they all refer to its founder Annie Patterson, and initial organisers such as Edith Oldham, in little if any detail.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, Patterson's contributions to the Feis, to music literature, to composition and to the development of music in Ireland have received little attention, whereas her male peers such as Robert Stewart have been the subject of several studies, biographies and commemorations.<sup>18</sup>

Annie Patterson's plight is unfortunately not unique. In his book on Catherine Hayes, Basil Walsh notes that Hayes had waited 140 years to have her story told and that 'despite her prominence at the time, it is tragic that she has virtually disappeared from the record books without a trace'.<sup>19</sup> This fate is shared by the majority of Irish women involved in music in the nineteenth century, whether they played a small role or a more extensive one such as that of Catherine Hayes or Annie Patterson. This is also in part because so many areas of Ireland's classical music history have been

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<sup>17</sup> W.H. Grattan Flood, *A History of Irish Music* (Dublin: Burn and Nolan 1906; reprint: Shannon: Irish University Press, 1970); Aloys Fleischmann, ed., *Music in Ireland: A Symposium* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1952). While the article on the Feis Ceoil within the latter book mentions Annie Patterson, it does not credit her with the founding of the competition.

<sup>18</sup> In her PhD dissertation Lisa Parker has commented that 'not a decade has passed since Stewart's death in 1894 that a book, journal or dictionary has not made at least passing reference to him'.

<sup>19</sup> Lisa Parker, 'Robert Prescott Stewart' p. x.  
Walsh, *Catherine Hayes*, p. xi.

forgotten; as Axel Klein comments: ‘there is scarcely any nation in the world whose music is so little discovered, documented or analysed to say nothing of performances or recordings, as the proverbial ‘Land of Song’’.<sup>20</sup>

This thesis aims to rectify the neglect of female musicians and to research the involvement of women in music in nineteenth-century Dublin. By uncovering details of their performances, concerts, teaching careers and compositions it is hoped that it will provide information that allows them to be compared to their European, and in particular, their British counterparts and that it will contribute towards a more accurate understanding of musical life and of Ireland’s musical canon. By drawing attention to their compositions it is hoped that further research will examine the techniques and forms used by female composers in Dublin and the parallels between their compositions and those of acknowledged figures such as Joseph Robinson, Robert Stewart, Charles Stanford and James Culwick.

The involvement of women in music is evident in Dublin throughout the nineteenth century as performers, teachers, organisers, composers and writers. Music became an acceptable profession for women at that time, although issues of gender and the role of women continued to be addressed by society, most notably by those who felt threatened by the growing involvement of women in areas such as music, art, literature and politics in particular. Women managed to ease themselves gently and almost subversively into other areas of the profession besides singing. Perhaps the most important element of the progression of women within the profession of teaching in Dublin is that they managed to forge a place for themselves

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<sup>20</sup> Axel Klein: ‘Stage Irish or the National in Irish Opera 1780 – 1925’, *Opera Quarterly*, 21.1 (February 2005), p. 27.

where they were granted equal pay and, more importantly, equal respect to their male musical peers. Their equal treatment was the most progressive element of their teaching, particularly in the late nineteenth century, where elsewhere in Europe women managed to 'secure appointments in national or local conservatoires, although often not on the same terms as men'.<sup>21</sup>

Over the course of the nineteenth century the role of women in music was continuously expanding. They continued to appear as performers, as they had done in the eighteenth century, but in addition to singers, female pianists and harpists also became evident in Dublin's concert life.<sup>22</sup> The rise in female performers reached a climax when it was a woman, Fanny Robinson, who gave the first solo piano recital in Ireland, in 1856.<sup>23</sup> Evidence of women working as music teachers, usually teaching the pianoforte, begins to appear from the 1820s onwards. They taught from their homes or travelled to those of their students, and many turned their success in pedagogy into a lucrative business by setting up musical 'academies'. Women had been performing and learning piano in Dublin for many years, but with the increase in the number of female teachers throughout the nineteenth century women created a position for themselves in society that was professional and well-respected. The ability to become involved in music professionally was aided by the ambiguity of women teaching piano privately within the context of the prevailing restrictions of the private and public spheres: nineteenth century ideologies were very much centred around the idea that the public sphere of work was that of the man, while the private sphere of taking care of the home and of children was the responsibility of the

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<sup>21</sup> Linda L. Clark, *Women and Achievements in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 99.

<sup>22</sup> Women appeared in concerts advertised at Mrs Allen's academy playing the piano and harp from 1825 onwards. For more on Mrs Allen see chapter two, below.

<sup>23</sup> *Saunders Newsletter*, 10 April 1856.



woman. While earning a living and being part of the work force, female teachers managed to do that in a way that kept them close to the traditional roles: they remained in their house or that of their students and they continued to deal primarily with students who were children. Their work, while being progressive because it brought them financial freedom, remained very close to the prescribed activities of a woman. By the mid-nineteenth century women were established as music teachers, so when new professional opportunities began to open up for them it was an acceptable progression. With the reorganisation of the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1856, Fanny Robinson, a pianist, composer and teacher, became the first female professor of the pianoforte and she was also in charge of all the female students.<sup>24</sup> Her treatment as a member of staff set a precedent for the generations of women such as Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell, Margaret O’Hea and Edith Oldham, who followed in her footsteps.

In many ways the treatment of women in Dublin grew out of the drive to improve musical standards and to establish an Irish centre for music that would be comparable to, rather than merely imitative of London. In the eighteenth century, much of Dublin’s concert life was a direct replica of London and in the nineteenth century, while London remained influential on Dublin, its musicians strove to develop their own practices and musical outlets that were diverse from the English capital. With improvements in transportation, London became more accessible to the nineteenth-century Irish musician. Many of Dublin’s leading musical figures such as Joseph Robinson, Fanny Robinson, Edith Oldham, Margaret O’Hea, Annie Patterson and Robert Stewart often visited London, be it to study, perform or to ‘soak up as

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<sup>24</sup> See chapter two, below.

much good music as possible'.<sup>25</sup> Their experiences there led to the desire to create a musical culture in Dublin that was reflective of Ireland's musical traditions and which celebrated Irish talent. Unlike their eighteenth-century predecessors, they did not want simply to imitate the fashions and concerts of London: they wanted to establish institutions and practices that would help them gain musical equality with the British capital.<sup>26</sup> Dublin's middle-class musicians shaped a musical culture in the nineteenth century that was unaffected by the poorer classes of society. The concert and related musical activities of the city, while no longer restricted to the upper classes as had been in the case in the eighteenth century, were still only relevant to the upper and middle classes. Although there is little formal documentation of the practice, the poorer majority of Dublin's population undoubtedly enjoyed music in a manner that related more closely to the rest of Ireland: through traditional music, ballads, singing and dancing in their houses. Dublin's growing concert life would still not have been accessible to all of the population. Unlike most cities in Britain that grew as a result of industrialisation in the nineteenth century, thus seeing an influx of a working class population, Dublin was largely unaffected by the industrial revolution, its only significant industry being the Guinness brewery. Thus there is an absence in Dublin of the emphasis on bringing music to the working classes that is such a feature of music in Victorian England through, for example, the establishment of working men's brass bands and musical societies. This left musicians to define a culture of art music that was indicative of middle class practices elsewhere in Europe, and the desire to establish a musical culture in Dublin outweighed any social limitations on the position of women in society in regards to music-making. For example, the men who hired and supported women musicians were more interested

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<sup>25</sup> Annie W. Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea', *WIT*, 10 November 1900, p. 4.

<sup>26</sup> On Dublin's imitation of London's musical culture in the eighteenth century see Brian Boydell, *Rotunda Music*, and Brian Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar*.

in their talents and what they could bring to the city's musical culture than they were in their gender, which is evident through the employment and high salary given to the aforementioned Fanny Robinson at the Royal Irish Academy of Music or by the willingness of musicians such as Joseph Robinson or Robert Stewart to be involved in performances of compositions by female composers.<sup>27</sup> Throughout the century, as musical culture continued to grow, so too did the level of female involvement and the number of female musicians active in the city.<sup>28</sup> The same could be said across Europe and throughout Britain, but the difference in the case of Dublin was that the female musicians did not have to strive so hard to gain success. They did not need to argue for equal pay, nor were they being prevented from publishing their own music or from having it performed. Women's involvement in music in Dublin was similar to the female involvement elsewhere in Europe: they taught piano and performed, usually as pianists or singers, but their experiences within these roles differed to Female musicians in other cities in Europe because in Dublin they were readily accepted. For the second half of the nineteenth century the Royal Irish Academy of Music was the principal national music organisation in Ireland. Therefore, the equal treatment of women in the Royal Irish Academy of Music was important because it the main venue for musical training in the country was willing to treat women employees and students similarly to men.

Women were also active in the improvement and promotion of higher musical standards through lectures and publications that encouraged the general public or amateur musician to cultivate their musical understanding and ability. Examples of this can be seen in the publications of Annie Curwen and Dr Annie

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<sup>27</sup> For more on Robinson's employment see chapter two, below. For more on the involvement of Stewart and Joseph Robinson in concerts of female works see chapter three, below.

<sup>28</sup> For more on the growth of the female musician see chapter two, below.

Patterson, and in the lectures of Margaret O’Hea and Edith Oldham. One of the most striking examples of female musicians working together to improve the position of music in Dublin’s culture was the founding of the Feis Ceoil by Annie Patterson in 1894, and its subsequent organisation and promotion with Annie Patterson and Edith Oldham at the helm. It became a forum within which musicians of all disciplines from around the country could come together to compete and perform. Unlike many musical festivals and competitions in Europe and America which further hindered the development of women in music by exclusively celebrating canonic male composers, the Feis Ceoil was open to the involvement and performance of music by both male and female composers. It continues to go from strength to strength and is in its 114<sup>th</sup> year as of 2010.<sup>29</sup>

Perhaps the most damaging consequence of the lack of research into the involvement in Ireland of women in music is that their active role in composition has been entirely ignored. Whilst the women active as pedagogues or organisers of music may at least be granted a passing reference, female composers have almost entirely disappeared from the record. Their works have been completely forgotten, and the typical response to a mention of female composers in nineteenth-century Dublin is one of doubt that any even existed. The standard of education in the area of composition and music theory available in Dublin did not compare to that in Europe; however, this did not prevent either men or women from composing. It also meant that composers active in Dublin composed in similar genres and the standards of their work was comparative due to the educational restrictions on both sexes. This is evident in the work, for example, of composers such as Fanny and Joseph Robinson:

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<sup>29</sup> For more information on the Feis Ceoil Competition and its sponsorship see <<http://www.feisceoil.ie>>

Fanny Robinson composed mainly short pieces of several minutes duration for the pianoforte, the instrument she herself played and was therefore most familiar with. Her compositions demonstrate her capabilities as a pianist and her knowledge of the instrument. Her husband, Joseph Robinson, primarily composed songs with relatively simple piano accompaniment. As a vocal teacher he, likewise, composed within the genre with which he was most familiar. The works of Fanny Robinson, Elena Norton and Annie Patterson illustrate the market that was open for compositions in Ireland. With their interest in composing operettas and operas, Annie Patterson and Elena Norton reflect an interest in musical forms that were popular in London and the rest of Europe, but not so widely performed in Ireland. This led to the accompaniment for these works often being for organ or piano because Ireland did not have its own resident orchestra. While Elena Norton seems to have composed orchestral accompaniments for most of her operettas, they were usually performed with just a piano accompaniment.<sup>30</sup> The compositions of Annie Patterson demonstrate how one's musical talents could be used to support a cause, in her case that of nationalism. She used her knowledge of traditional Irish music practices to compose works that were distinctly Irish in their subject matter, titles and melodic lines. Her work reflects the strong nationalistic influence that appeared in the work of many Irish composers at the beginning of the twentieth century, including Charlotte Milligan Fox, James Culwick and even Michèle Esposito.

In researching this thesis much of the information has come from the local press of the period, most notably all information concerning the life and work of Mrs Allen, concert and composition reviews, announcements for musical events and

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<sup>30</sup> For more on Norton's opera accompaniments see chapter three below and the discussion on the reviews of her opera, *The Rose and the Ring*.

meetings that involved women, and the reports and reprints of the lectures and papers presented by Margaret O’Hea and Edith Oldham.<sup>31</sup> The contemporary press thus makes up one of the principal sources for this research. Although the nineteenth-century press may have had its own agendas, as suggested by Michael Murphy,<sup>32</sup> contemporary newspapers remain a valuable source of information regarding what musical events women participated in, what they performed or composed, and how they and their work was received.

To my knowledge, no diaries are known to exist for any of the women included in this thesis. The articles of Annie Patterson for the *Weekly Irish Times* provide a valuable source of information on her contemporaries in music as well as illustrating the work and writing of Patterson herself. Although they too may have had an agenda, namely Patterson’s desire to promote Irish music and talents above all other considerations, her research and writing has proved an invaluable source. She would also have been friendly with many of the musicians she highlighted and would have been involved in many of the festivals and organisations; she used her articles to publicise her work and that of her fellow musicians and therefore, they often give a first hand account of music in Dublin at the close of the nineteenth century.

The letters of George Grove to Edith Oldham provide insight into Oldham’s education and experiences in London while she studied at the Royal College of Music and they also provide information on her early career after she returned to

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<sup>31</sup> I am grateful to Catherine Ferris for providing me with information on Mrs Allen from the *Evening Packet*.

<sup>32</sup> Michael Murphy, ‘The Musical Press in Nineteenth-Century Ireland’, *Music in Nineteenth Century Ireland* IMS 9, eds. Michael Murphy and Jan Smaczny (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), pp. 252-277.

Dublin. They are housed in the library of the Royal College of Music, London, along with transcriptions of all the letters, a task undertaken by Celia Clarke while she was a member of staff at the Royal College of Music library. Although all the correspondence from George Grove to Edith Oldham survives, none remains from Oldham to Grove and the correspondence therefore only illustrates one side of the relationship. A portion of the background information about Edith Oldham, including personal details concerning her marriage and the photos of Oldham, her family and her graduation collected in the appendices, originate from email correspondence with her great grandniece, Catherine Ferguson, who now lives in New Zealand and who has kindly granted permission for all of the above to be used.<sup>33</sup> Information on the early lives and family backgrounds of these women is often difficult to obtain and in many cases simply unavailable. Often their exact birth and death dates, along with dates of marriage, are not available due to the destruction of many such records in the early twentieth century.<sup>34</sup> Although many of the compositions of the female composers discussed below have not survived, there are sufficient examples to provide some insight into their compositional styles and abilities. The festival programmes of the Feis Ceoil provide an invaluable source of information on the involvement of women in its concerts, committees, panels of adjudicators and lists of subscribers.<sup>35</sup>

This thesis examines and evaluates the important roles that women played in the development of music in Ireland's capital throughout the nineteenth century and

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<sup>33</sup> Email correspondence with Catherine Ferguson: April/ May 2006.

<sup>34</sup> The Public Records Office in Dublin was destroyed in 1922. Among the records destroyed were the Census of Ireland returns between 1821 and 1851; more than half of all parish registers of the Anglican Church of Ireland which were deposited there after 1869; the majority of wills and testamentary records proved in Ireland to that date. For more information see <[www.eneclann.ie](http://www.eneclann.ie)> and R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* (London: Penguin Books, 1988).

<sup>35</sup> These are held in the NLI.

into the early years of the twentieth century. It explores their involvement in the foundations of the capital's musical culture, including the Royal Irish Academy of Music and the establishment of the Feis Ceoil, both of which are still in existence today. It also examines how their treatment and role in society compared with that of their British musical peers and their female counterparts in other areas of Irish society; the influence of their male peers on their lives and careers; and their treatment as professional women in nineteenth-century Dublin. Through an examination of their work and lives, it highlights their talents and their dedication to music which will hopefully earn them a permanent place in future histories of music in nineteenth-century Dublin.

^This thesis conforms to the house style of the Department of Music, National University of Ireland, Maynooth.



## Chapter One

### Music and Life in Nineteenth-Century Dublin

The nineteenth century brought about many changes in Ireland's population, politics and culture. Being relatively unaffected by the industrial revolution, the population of Dublin remained stable throughout the century.<sup>1</sup> In music, as in all other areas, the country began to find its own identity. Over the course of the century, musicians, both male and female, worked at developing and expanding music-making throughout the country and particularly in Dublin. While the Great Famine of 1845 to 1849 had devastating effects on the rural population and on Dublin's poorer classes, the middle- and upper-class inhabitants of Dublin survived it relatively unscathed. For example, the opening of the Irish Academy of Music in 1848, one of the most important musical events of the century, occurred at a time when many of the rest of the country's population were dying or emigrating.<sup>2</sup> It was also a time when traditional music across the country suffered its greatest decline due to the downturn in the population, while Ireland's art music culture was truly developing in the capital. This chapter examines the Dublin within which female musicians of the nineteenth century were active, and the events and developments that helped to shape the position that they carved for themselves in society.

#### 1.1 The Golden Age of Dublin: The Eighteenth Century

In the eighteenth century, Dublin was a city that was culturally distinct from the rest of the country. Dominated by a wealthy ruling class, it developed as a model of

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<sup>1</sup> For more on the population of Dublin at that time see Tony Corcoran, *The Goodness of Guinness: The Brewery, its People and the City of Dublin* (Dublin: Liberties Press, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> For more on the Great Famine see James S. Donnelly, *The Great Irish Potato Famine* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2002).

European and British cities – Ireland’s capital was more a reflection of the fashions of Europe than it was a true representation of Ireland. Over the course of the eighteenth century the population, area and wealth of Dublin grew continuously while the population of the rest of the country remained largely stationary.<sup>3</sup> Dublin’s population grew from approximately 60,000 in 1682 to 129,000 in 1752 to 300,000 in 1798.<sup>4</sup> The eighteenth century has been recognised by many as Dublin’s ‘golden age’ due to the fact that the wealthy and highly cultivated society that was resident in the city encouraged and patronised the arts, especially architecture, literature and music. Music was a sociable pastime for the upper class; however, Dublin’s musical life was strongly influenced by Europe and England, with little evidence of indigenous musical traditions beyond a fashion for using traditional tunes as a basis for concert pieces. Musical activities in the eighteenth century were centred on the theatres and several charitable organisations, such as Mercer’s hospital, that arranged fundraising concerts.<sup>5</sup> The role of women in music was mainly a domestic one, with many playing music in the home as a source of private entertainment. There were a number of females who performed professionally, mainly as vocalists, whose popularity with Dublin audiences meant that they often commanded a higher fee than men.<sup>6</sup> However, such success sat uncomfortably with women’s position in society, and in many cases they developed notorious reputations, with scandals developing around their romantic lives and relationships.<sup>7</sup> One of the most popular female singers in late eighteenth-century Dublin was Anne Catley who, despite her talents as a singer, is now remembered more for her colourful lifestyle. Born in London, the

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<sup>3</sup> Samuel A. Ossory Fitzpatrick, *Dublin: A Historical and Topographical Account of the City* (London: Methuen, 1907)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid* and Rev. James Whitelaw, *An Essay on the Population of Dublin* (Dublin: Graisberry and Campbell, 1805), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Brian Boydell, ‘Music in Eighteenth-Century Dublin’, *Four Centuries of Music in Ireland*, ed. Brian Boydell (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1979), pp. 31-34.

<sup>6</sup> See Boydell: *Rotunda Music*, pp. 48-64.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

daughter of a coachman and a washerwoman, she began her singing career in 1760 as an apprentice to William Bates and she made her stage debut at Covent Garden in October 1762.<sup>8</sup> Caught up in scandal in London, she fled to Dublin where she began working at Smock Alley Theatre. Her first important role was as Macheath in *The Beggar's Opera* in February 1765, this making her the first lady to play Macheath in Dublin.<sup>9</sup> A favourite with audiences across the city, her potential to draw a crowd was quickly recognised by concert organisers and she found herself able to demand a higher fee than the majority of her peers – ‘when she plays, the house overflows; on other nights it was a poverty smitten aspect indeed’.<sup>10</sup> Catley was influential on the ladies of Dublin despite the fact that she had such a poor reputation. She liked to wear her hair with a straight fringe to her eyebrows, a style that became popular with the fashionable ladies in Dublin and was referred to as ‘Catley-fied’.<sup>11</sup> While undoubtedly popular and able to demand fees similar to or even greater than those of her male peers, Catley did not receive the same kind of respect as male singers in Dublin.

Another example of a female singer who was associated with both success and scandal in the eighteenth century is Susanna Cibber, the sister of the composer Thomas Arne. In 1738 the scandal of a lawsuit in London drove her into hiding for three years. She reappeared in Dublin in the autumn of 1741 where she enjoyed considerable success as both an actress and a singer, with notable performances including her role as a soloist in the first performance of Handel’s *Messiah* in 1742.

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<sup>8</sup> Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson, ‘Catley, Ann (1745–1789)’, *ODNB*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4895>>, [accessed 15 August 2010].

<sup>9</sup> T.J. Walsh, *Opera in Dublin 1705-1797: The Social Scene* (Dublin: Allen Figgis, 1973), p. 128.

<sup>10</sup> Boydell, *Rotunda Music*, p. 53.

<sup>11</sup> Boydell, *Rotunda Music*, p. 50.

While Mrs Cibber had a successful career and received enthusiastic reviews for all her performances, she never gained the respect of the press.

## **1.2 The Development of Dublin in the Nineteenth Century**

With the Act of Union in 1800 and the abolition of parliament in Dublin, the city lost its wealthy patronage of the arts due to the fact that the majority of the upper-class moved to London.<sup>12</sup> Many of the opportunities for professional musicians decreased but although this had an effect on music, it did not destroy the cultural aspect that had become so popular in the eighteenth century: rather, it changed its dynamic. In the eighteenth century much of the concert life and the salaries of musicians were supported by the patronage of the upper classes. The development of music in the nineteenth century saw the beginning of the music professional as we know it today, where musicians were seen as having a career in music rather than being supported by individual patrons. In the eighteenth century there were three traditional professions: divinity, law and medicine. However, music shared many similarities with these elite professions, in that it had always been closely linked to the church and to educational institutions.<sup>13</sup> As well as the musicians who were well educated and connected with the church, there were those who were seen as belonging to a lower professional status – mainly the performers of the stage. However, with the emergence of the middle class and the developments in musical education in the nineteenth century, the role of the professional musician in Dublin was increasingly respected through the course of the century. The absence of the aristocratic class meant that the middle classes emerged as the new supporting class of music.

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<sup>12</sup> Brian Boydell, 'Dublin', *NG 2001*, p. 625.

<sup>13</sup> Deborah Rohr, *The Career of British Musicians 1750 – 1850: A Profession of Artisans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 9.

The Act of Union affected many other aspects of Dublin's culture besides music. The loss of Dublin's wealth meant that there was also a loss of jobs. The rich who had once inhabited the Georgian townhouses around the city moved to London, to the country suburbs of Dublin, or to their country estates. Many of the city's buildings and town houses went into a state of ruin or were subdivided into segments and used as tenements. The poverty of the city spread to many of the areas that had been affluent and well-kept in the previous century.<sup>14</sup> Improvements however were still made to the city and there continued to be a growing trade for the middle class and their businesses. The General Post Office on Sackville Street (now O'Connell Street) opened in 1818 and in 1825 the city was first lit by gas.<sup>15</sup> However, manufacturing continued to decline, particularly in the area of weaving which had been successful throughout the eighteenth century. The one manufacturing business that continued to grow was the Guinness brewery.

The Great Famine brought about more problems for the city of Dublin. Many of the poor from the rest of the country fled to the capital in the hope of finding work or as a means of escaping the inevitability of death that faced so many in rural Ireland. In the second part of the nineteenth century Dublin had the reputation of having the worst living conditions in Europe, mainly because such a large percentage of the population within the city lived in poverty. However, this poverty did not really touch any of the women involved in music who are the subject of this thesis. While the practice and support of art music was no longer confined to the wealthy, it was limited to the middle classes or above: even the poorest of the women examined,

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<sup>14</sup> Tenement Museum: History, <[http://www.tenement.org/encyclopedia/irish\\_century.htm](http://www.tenement.org/encyclopedia/irish_century.htm)>, [accessed 17 September 2009].

<sup>15</sup> Samuel A. Ossory Fitzpatrick, *Dublin*, <<http://www.chaptersofdublin.com/books/ossory/ossory5.htm>>, [accessed 29 October 2009].

such as Edith Oldham and Margaret O’Hea came from an educated, middle-class background and never faced the horrible conditions that were normal for the majority of the population.

### **1.3 The Developments in Music in the Nineteenth Century**

Throughout the nineteenth century Dublin continued to host a wide range of musical activity. The lack of aristocratic patronage did not have an immediate effect and Dublin maintained a strong concert life, at least until the depression of 1824, by which point the role of the amateur musician and private instrumental teacher had developed in Dublin to the extent that the contexts of music making had changed.<sup>16</sup> In truth, the nineteenth century saw many developments in musical life that improved and expanded musical activities throughout the city. As Aloys Fleischmann has suggested, by the middle of the century music activities and the profession had exceeded those of the previous century, not least because they now embraced a larger section of the community.<sup>17</sup> Over the course of one hundred years the seeds had been sown for many of the elements of musical life that remain in the city to this day. With the development of societies such as the Antient Concert Society and the Philharmonic Society, musical activity grew and there were opportunities for both the amateur musician and the professional musician to participate in music making and concert life.<sup>18</sup> The founding of the Irish Academy of Music in 1848, later the Royal Irish Academy of Music, gave Dublin an institution similar to those that had

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<sup>16</sup> Aloys Fleischmann, ‘Music and Society, 1850-1921’, *A New History of Ireland VI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 500.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> For more on the Antient Concert Society and the Philharmonic Society see Ita Beausang, ‘Dublin Musical Societies 1850-1900’, *The Maynooth International Musicological Conference 1995, Selected Proceedings: Part Two, IMS 5*, eds. Patrick F. Devine and Harry White, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), pp.169-178. Also Catherine Mary Pia Kiely-Ferris, ‘The Music of Three Dublin Musical Societies of the Late Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: The Anacreontic Society, The Antient Concerts Society and The Sons of Handel. A descriptive Catalogue’, (unpublished MLitt diss., NUIM, 2005).

developed across Europe, which was dedicated to music and the production of national talent. Although its early years were fraught with uncertainty and it took its reorganisation in 1856 to fully establish and perfect the structure of the Academy, it remains one of the principal learning centres for music in the country to this day, continuing to nurture national talent and to produce musicians of international standards.<sup>19</sup> Its reorganisation in 1856 opened doors for the female musician by providing a centre for learning accessible to the female student and also professional opportunities for the female teacher. The Royal Irish Academy of Music also employed many of the leading male figures in music, who in turn played an influential role on the careers of many of the prominent female musicians. Joseph Robinson, one of the founders of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, was one such figure in music in Dublin. A baritone, conductor, composer and singing teacher, he had founded the Antient Concerts Society in 1834 and he was influential in the careers of several of his students such as Mrs Scott Ffennell and Alice O’Hea and also in the career of his wife, Fanny Robinson.<sup>20</sup> Another leading musician associated with the Royal Irish Academy of Music was Sir Robert Prescott Stewart. A composer, conductor, professor, writer and music critic, he was an important element of music life in the city and through his ‘multi faceted’ musical career he was involved in all areas of music development.<sup>21</sup> As a teacher he was a strong influence on his students who included Annie Curwen, Annie Patterson and Ellen O’Hea.

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<sup>19</sup> For more on the early years of the RIAM see Pine and Acton: *To Talent Alone*, chapter three, pp. 33-95.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Pascall, ‘Joseph Robinson’, *GMO, OMO*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/23595pg2>>, [accessed 20 July 2008].

<sup>21</sup> Lisa Parker, ‘Robert Prescott Stewart’ and Parker, ‘For The Purpose of Public Music Education’ p. 187.

## 1.4 The Development of Education

In addition to the development of the Royal Irish Academy of Music and its important role in the progressive treatment of women in music in Dublin, developments were made in other areas of education which also enhanced the opportunities open to women. Formal qualifications in music became possible for both men and women with the founding of the Royal University of Ireland, as a result of The University Education Act of 1879.<sup>22</sup> Purely an examining and degree awarding body modelled on the University of London, the Royal University of Ireland had no constituent college. Those who wished to be examined through the system could attend lectures at other universities or schools. In the case of female students, it allowed the leading girls' schools, both Catholic and Protestant, to provide teaching for degree courses.<sup>23</sup> The establishment of the Royal University of Ireland was important because it was the first step towards equality in university education. It opened up access to third-level education to Catholics and it was the first university to grant degrees to women, conferring degrees in arts, science, music, engineering, medicine, surgery and law.<sup>24</sup> Music was offered at BMus and DMus level. The establishment of music as a discipline led to the first female recipient of a music degree and doctorate in the British Isles being an Irish woman, Dr. Annie Patterson, who was awarded the degrees in 1887 and 1889 respectively.<sup>25</sup> Annie Patterson went on to become one of the leading figures in Dublin's musical life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>26</sup> The development of institutions like the Royal Irish Academy of Music and the Royal University of Ireland opened up

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<sup>22</sup> Judith Harford, *The Opening of University Education to Women in Ireland* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2008), p. 47.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p. 89.

<sup>24</sup> Nicholas Hetherington, 'Getting a Word in Edgeways: Discourses on the Admission of Women to the Royal University of Ireland, 1884-1900'. Paper given at a NUIM history seminar on 7 February 2008.

<sup>25</sup> Barger, *Elizabeth Stirling*, p. 17.

<sup>26</sup> Her career will be discussed in more detail in the chapters below.



music as an avenue for education and employment for women and, more importantly, it made these acceptable for women in a society that was still firm in its opinions on their appropriate roles in society.

### **1.5 The Role of Women in Society**

The role of women in Irish society was determined by a patriarchal culture much like that pertaining across Europe in the nineteenth century. The prevailing ideology of the time was that women existed for the benefit of family and that their main role was to attend to the domestic sphere.<sup>27</sup> Women's role in society was generally seen as being one of submissive passivity, with prescriptive literature dictating their behaviour being particularly popular with the clergy and the Catholic Church. An example of this can be found in a lecture given by a well-known Church of Ireland cleric, Reverend John Gregg (who seems to have been related to Annie Curwen, the successful writer on piano pedagogy).<sup>28</sup> Gregg was one of the main ambassadors for the prescriptive writing for women that was so popular in the nineteenth century. In a lecture given at Trinity Church in 1856 entitled simply 'Women' he presented his main views on the position of women in society:

There are two things which you ought to desire - which it is your duty to desire - which it is your interest to desire and which it is the good of society - for the everlasting benefit of yourselves and others that you should desire and these are excellence and usefulness. Excellence has reference to yourselves and usefulness, to others. Society does best when each sex performs the duties for which it is especially ordained.<sup>29</sup>

The continued increase in such writing suggested unease about the way women were living their lives. In truth, while women were aware of what was expected of them, some went against those ideals. The central issue for women was one of autonomy

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<sup>27</sup> Luddy, *Women in Ireland*, p. 3.

<sup>28</sup> See chapter four below.

<sup>29</sup> Rev. John Gregg, 'A Clergyman Tells Women What is Expected of Them', cited in Luddy, *Women in Ireland*, p. 13.

and their ability to choose their own path in life. In music it appears that the leading female musicians all chose their own path and dedicated themselves to a pursuit in which they believed. This can also be seen in other areas of Irish society besides music. In terms of Irish politics, the nineteenth century saw many women emerge as supporters of nationalism and promoters of political ideals. Notable examples include Anna Parnell with the Land League, Maud Gonne with the nationalist movement, and Lady Augusta Gregory with the literary revival.<sup>30</sup> The difference between these women and those involved in music is that, because of the causes they supported and their significance to the wider history of Ireland, their names remain well known, while those involved in music were all but forgotten. Whether remembered or forgotten, all these women, no matter what their areas of interest, ‘challenged and contributed to change in accepted nineteenth-century gender roles’.<sup>31</sup> For some this was a conscious decision and they were pursuing feminist ideals, but others (including the majority of women involved in music) were merely following their desire to participate in something in which they believed, that challenged them, and that allowed them to contribute to society as more than a mother or a wife.

With regard to women’s involvement in music, there was a move away from the role of performer to that of teacher and promoter. The growth of amateur musicians in the nineteenth century and the continued interest in females learning music as an appropriate pastime meant that there was a continually growing market for female teachers. While the city’s concert life continued, its nature changed and solo concerts became more popular in the nineteenth century. When Ireland did

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<sup>30</sup> Jane Côté and Dana Hearne, ‘Anna Parnell’, *Women, Power and Consciousness in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Ireland*, eds. Mary Cullen and Maria Luddy (Dublin: Attic Press, 1995), pp. 263-294; Margaret Ward, *Maud Gonne: A Life* (London: Harper Collins, 1990); Judith Hill, *Lady Gregory: An Irish Life* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2005).

<sup>31</sup> Cullen and Luddy, eds., *Women, Power and Consciousness*, p. 14.

produce a successful singer, Catherine Hayes, she left to pursue an international career which would have been a great deal more lucrative and successful than if she had remained in Dublin or her native Limerick. However, during the course of the nineteenth century the perception of women in music advanced considerably from the previous century. This is evident through a comparison of Anne Catley with Catherine Hayes: as a result of the improvements in transport, Hayes could travel the world, becoming well known as ‘Ireland’s prima donna’, and has since been proclaimed by some to be ‘Ireland’s greatest superstar’.<sup>32</sup> Unlike Catley, Hayes was admired and praised wherever she went for her ambition and dedication to her career.<sup>33</sup>

The nineteenth century saw both men and women putting more of their time and energy into the promotion of music rather than simply becoming patrons of music through financial contributions, as had been popular in the previous century.<sup>34</sup> One of the few examples of female patronage of music in the nineteenth century was the Coulson Bequest for the Royal Irish Academy of Music. Elizabeth Coulson inherited a considerable estate from her father in 1859 and then moved to London. She never married and when she died in 1880 in Paris her sole trustee was given the task of realising her ambition to found an academy in Dublin. Although the Royal Irish Academy of Music was already in existence, it was only after many years of debate concerning her wishes, that the Royal Irish Academy of Music eventually benefited in the form of the Coulson Bequest from the legacy she left behind.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Information from a paper by Denis Leonard, ‘Limerick’s Catherine Hayes: The Irish Diva’, given at a seminar on ‘Music in Limerick’, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, 25 May 2007.

<sup>33</sup> Walsh, *Catherine Hayes*, p.158.

<sup>34</sup> For more on women’s involvement in the promotion of music see chapter five, below.

<sup>35</sup> For more on the Coulson Bequest see Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, pp. 77-78.

Overall, as the nineteenth century progressed, there were many changes in society in Dublin. The conditions in the city for the poorer classes of the population continually declined. This contrasted strongly with the conditions of the middle classes and therefore, of the majority of the musicians in the city. The middle classes lived comfortably and benefited from those developments that the century brought to the city. Music in Dublin began to move away from the practices of the eighteenth century where music had been centred on the concert life of the city. The nineteenth century saw the development of musical societies, music schools including the Royal Irish Academy of Music, and a growth towards the end of the century in cultural nationalism with a growing recognition of how music could be used to benefit this cause. It also saw music education become something that was accessible to a larger percentage of the population due to the growth in music teaching and the fact that musical instruments were becoming cheaper and more readily available. Music in general became a pastime of the middle classes instead of being confined to the upper classes. The first steps were taken towards establishing the musical institutions and practices that have continued in Dublin into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The nineteenth century also saw the development of a place in music for women that has continued since then, so that women are now an accepted part of all areas of music in Ireland in the present day.

## Chapter Two:

### **The Development of the Female Pedagogue: The Beginning of a New Musical Profession for Women**

The participation of women in music teaching over the course of the nineteenth century went from being non-existent to being almost equal to men. There are no listings of female music teachers in trade directories or newspapers at the beginning of the nineteenth century, suggesting that if they were working as music teachers it was most likely on an amateur level. Over the course of the century, music teaching became one of the few acceptable professions for women, and the majority of female music teachers taught piano.<sup>1</sup> Music was seen as an asset for young ladies, creating social acceptance and adding to their desirable attributes for possible suitors. It gave them an opportunity to demonstrate their education, grace and self-expression through their musical abilities as a singer or pianist.<sup>2</sup> Career opportunities in music were usually limited to those from a reasonably wealthy background because they would have to pay for lessons and a piano to practice on themselves. After that, a good standing in society was helpful in giving women the chance to illustrate their talents and gain students of their own. By the turn of the twentieth century the number of female music teachers in Dublin was nearly equal to that of men, and for many of them it was a successful and lucrative profession. Many factors contributed to this success: the growing popularity of the piano, the demand for teachers, and the development of the Royal Irish Academy of Music and its acceptance of women as both teachers and students. This chapter will examine the development and growth of

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<sup>1</sup> Reich, 'European Composers and Musicians', p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Phyllis Weliver, *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction, 1860-1900* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 1.

the position of women in pedagogy throughout the nineteenth century, with a focus on piano teaching, and on how their success as music teachers was influenced by the other elements of their musical careers and their profiles as musicians in Dublin.

## **2.1 The Role of the Pianoforte in the Lives of Nineteenth-Century Women**

At the beginning of the nineteenth century women were evident in public music making mainly as performers. However, with the many social changes that occurred after the Act of Union, music became a popular pastime for the middle class. There was a growing demand for music teachers throughout the century, and the increased availability of musical instruments in the capital was a contributory factor. Therefore, new professional opportunities began to open up for the female musician. They began to appear as music teachers in the 1820s, usually teaching the pianoforte or singing,<sup>3</sup> both of which were viewed as being suitably feminine musical activities because a woman could remain looking elegant and respectable while performing.<sup>4</sup> Music was seen as a pastime that was suitable for young ladies and one that often helped gain them a husband: it was considered the perfect hobby for the well-bred lady.<sup>5</sup> This is evident in literature from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, in which music, particularly playing the piano, illustrated a lady's ability to be dedicated to a task and it also provided her with the skills to be able to entertain and accompany her family and guests within her domain, that of the home. For example, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* when Charles Bingley is asked to

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<sup>3</sup> See the Merchant and Traders Listings in 'Wilson's Dublin Directory', *The Treble Directory for 1820* (Dublin: William Corbett, 1820), pp. 41-148.

<sup>4</sup> Una Henning, 'The Instrumentarium of Woman', *Musikfrauen-Women in Music*, Gertrude Degenhardt, (Mainz: Mittelrhein-Museum Koblenz, 1990), p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> Debra Brubaker Burns, Anita Jackson and Connie Arrau Sturm, 'Contributions of Selected British and American Women to Piano Pedagogy and Performance', *IAWM Journal*, 8, (Fall 2002), p. 3. <[http://www.iawm.org/iawm\\_article\\_archieve.htm](http://www.iawm.org/iawm_article_archieve.htm)>, [accessed 09 January 2007].

define the high standard of accomplishment that he would desire in a woman, he replies ‘A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing and the modern languages to deserve the word’.<sup>6</sup> Throughout Austen’s novels the first of these attributes, knowledge of music, is one that is displayed in many of her central female characters. They often use it as a means of impressing those present and displaying their talents or to entertain guests. Likewise in Charlotte Brontë’s novels, most particularly in *Jane Eyre*, the main character can play the piano but, as Jodi Lustig points out, only as well as ‘befits her role as a governess’; Jane’s ability should not outshine that of Blanche Ingram who is a lady and therefore seeking to impress a suitor with her skills.<sup>7</sup>

As a result of music being viewed as a desirable attribute for women, it became one of the few acceptable professions for them in the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Female teachers managed to maintain a good social standing while working because their’s was a discreet form of employment. They became increasingly important in the nineteenth century because many families preferred their younger children (and their daughters in particular) to be taught by women.<sup>9</sup> In the majority of cases, female teachers taught from their own homes, thus remaining within the domestic sphere while also earning a living.<sup>10</sup> Even for those who travelled to the homes of their students, it was usually seen as a social ritual rather than as anything too professional or unseemly, mainly because in many cases they found students through

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<sup>6</sup> Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813; R/London: Penguin Books, 1996), p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> Jodi Lustig, ‘The Piano’s Progress: The Piano in Play in the Victorian Novel’, *The Idea of Music in Victorian Fiction*, eds. Sophie Fuller and Nicky Losseff (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 90n.

<sup>8</sup> Evidence of this can be seen in the constant growth in the number of female piano teachers, as illustrated later in the chapter.

<sup>9</sup> Rohr, *The Careers of British Musicians*, p. 135.

<sup>10</sup> James Parakilas & others, *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001) p. 134.

family or friends, so that it was an extension of visiting the home of a friend.<sup>11</sup> Women began to build up their position within the profession in a discreet manner, so that when they did begin to move into more professional environments this did not attract as much notice. The increased interest in music taken by the prosperous middle class throughout Europe meant that more women were involved in musical activities, thus also lending an impetus to all music-related businesses.<sup>12</sup> In turn, this resulted in greater choices of sheet music, instruments and publications aimed specifically at women's musical interests.

## 2.2 The Growth of the Female Pedagogue in Dublin

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the pursuit of a musical career was still frowned upon and seen as undignified for women; however, as the century progressed, women increasingly used their musical abilities to earn an income and to gain greater independence.<sup>13</sup> A general overview of how the number of women grew within the profession of music teaching can be obtained from a study of the street directories for the century. In the 1800 edition of *Wilson's Dublin Directory* there were several entries for women listed under merchants and traders, but they were clearly in the minority and were often involved in businesses that would appeal to women, such as silk merchants, milliners or haberdashery.<sup>14</sup> There is one female entry related to music: Elizabeth Rhames is listed as a music seller and haberdasher

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 135.

<sup>12</sup> Reich, 'European Composers', p. 97.

<sup>13</sup> Burns, Jackson and Storm, 'Contributions', p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Merchants and Traders listings in 'Wilson's Dublin Directory for the year 1800', *The Treble Almanack* (Dublin: Thomas Stewart and John Watson booksellers and stationers, 1800), pp. 13-110.

See also: Jennifer O' Connor, 'The Growth of Female Piano Pedagogy in Nineteenth-century Dublin and Annie Curwen's Pianoforte Method', *Maynooth Musicology - Postgraduate Journal*, Vol. 1, Barbara Dignam, Paul Higgins and Lisa Parker, eds., (2008), pp. 59-77.



on 16 Exchange Street.<sup>15</sup> This was the family business, which she seems to have taken over after her husband's death; however, Elizabeth herself had died in 1795 and by 1800 it was her son Benjamin who was running the business, trading under his mother's name until 1806 and then under his own name until 1810. There are fourteen entries in 1800 for men involved in music, four of whom were professors of music and ten whom were music sellers or pianoforte makers. In the 1810 edition twenty-three entries are associated with music, nineteen of which were instrument makers or music sellers.<sup>16</sup> Four of those listed were professors or doctors of music,<sup>17</sup> but out of the twenty-three there is only one woman, Mary McCalley, a music seller at 33 Moore Street.<sup>18</sup> Much like Elizabeth Rhames, it is likely that she inherited this business from her husband or father, as the 1800 edition listings include a John McCalley, a music seller and professor at the same address.<sup>19</sup> By 1820 the directory has forty-five entries associated with music.<sup>20</sup> Twenty-five are music sellers or instrument makers, with one female entry, Eliza Atwood, who had a music and music instrument warehouse at 4 Nassau Street.<sup>21</sup> The other twenty are listed as professors of music, doctors of music or as having a school or academy. There are four entries for women under this heading: the Misses Fox who had an English, French, Italian and music academy; Mrs Laurier who had a French, English and music school; the Misses West who had a musical academy; and finally a Mrs

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<sup>15</sup> 'Wilson's Dublin Directory', 1800, p. 87.

<sup>16</sup> Merchant and Traders listings in 'Wilson's Dublin Directory for the year 1810', *The Treble Almanack* (Dublin: William Corbett, 1810) pp. 15-104.

<sup>17</sup> Those listed as professors of music are: Bowden, John: Professor of Music, 9 Aston Quay, Carter, Sampson: Professor and Doctor of Music, 16 Mecklenburgh Road, Coogan, Philip: Musical Doctor, 2 Clarendon Street and Doyle, Langrishe: Doctor of Music, 14 Cuffe Street.

<sup>18</sup> 'Wilson's Dublin Directory, 1810, p. 76.

<sup>19</sup> 'Wilson's Dublin Directory, 1800, pp. 13-110.

<sup>20</sup> Merchant and Traders Listings in 'Wilson's Dublin Directory for 1820', *The Treble Directory*, (Dublin: William Corbett, 1820), pp. 41-148.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

Mason, a ‘teacher of the pedal harp’.<sup>22</sup> This illustrates the beginnings of the growth of female music teachers in Dublin and, although in three of the cases they were offering other subjects as well as music, the importance of music and the demand for lessons was obviously becoming more evident. By 1830 there are sixty-six listings associated with music with eight of those now being women.<sup>23</sup> Of the females listed, one is the aforementioned Eliza Atwood, who was still running a music and musical instrument warehouse at 4 Nassau Street.<sup>24</sup> The other women listed were: Mrs Allen who was running a school for young ladies;<sup>25</sup> the Misses Fox who ran an English, French, Italian and music academy; Mrs J. Gregory who is listed as a professor of the harp and pianoforte; Mrs Kearney who ran a English, French and music academy; Mrs Leyden who was proprietor of a similar establishment, as was the next female entry, Miss O’ Connor; and finally there were the Misses West whose musical academy was still listed.<sup>26</sup> While these numbers give us an idea of the growth of music and of women involved in teaching it, they do not give a definitive picture. Some of the schools may have been owned by men but have had female teachers. For example the Allen Academy, which was run by both A.E. Allen and his wife from 1819, was listed only under his name until his death in 1833, at which point it became Mrs Allen’s academy in advertisements and listings.<sup>27</sup> Similar entries may account for the lack of female teachers listed, particularly in the early nineteenth century.

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Merchant and Traders Listings in ‘Wilson’s Dublin Directory for 1830’, *The Treble Almanac* (Dublin: William Corbett, 1830), pp. 40-139.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>25</sup> See later in the chapter for more on Mrs Allen.

<sup>26</sup> ‘Wilson’s Dublin Directory’, 1830, pp. 40-139.

<sup>27</sup> For example in *Watson’s or the Gentleman’s and Citizen’s Almanack 1840* (Dublin: John S. Folds, 1840), pp. 15-281.

The evidence for the growing numbers of women making music their profession continued to grow throughout the century. In the 1840 edition of *Wilson's Dublin Directory* there are six females listed as running music schools or teaching music.<sup>28</sup> In the 1851 edition of *Thom's Directory* there is a listing for 'Professors of Music', with twenty-seven names given, five of whom were women, thus making up eighteen percent of the music teachers.<sup>29</sup> In the listing for merchants and traders within this edition there are four women listed as music teachers or professors, but one of them also appears in the previous list. By 1860 there are fourteen women listed as 'Professors of Music'. By 1870 this number has grown to twenty-seven and by 1880 it drops a little to twenty-four.<sup>30</sup> At this stage in London twenty percent of all musicians were women, but sixty percent of all music teachers were women.<sup>31</sup> While Dublin was not as equal as this in its proportion of music teachers, there was a continuous growth evident as was also the case in London where the percentage of female music teachers had grown from twenty-nine percent in 1841 to sixty percent in 1861.<sup>32</sup> However, a comparison with the census figures for England and Wales illustrates how significant the growth of women in music teaching was in Dublin: the number of women teaching music in England and Wales tripled between 1852 and 1881.<sup>33</sup> In comparison, in Dublin the figures from 1851 and 1880 show that the number of female music teachers in 1880 was nearly five times as much as in 1851. So although female teachers in Dublin had not yet increased to greater numbers than the male teachers, and the number of music teachers active in Dublin overall was considerably lower than in London, the growth of women within the discipline was

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<sup>28</sup> Merchant and Traders Listings in 'Wilson's Dublin Directory for 1840', pp. 42-111.

<sup>29</sup> Merchant and Trader listings in *Thom's Irish Almanac and Official Directory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland 1851* (Dublin: Thom's, 1851).

<sup>30</sup> Merchant and Trader listings in *Thom's Irish Almanac and Official Directory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, 1860, 1870, 1880*.

<sup>31</sup> Burns, Jackson and Sturm, 'Contributions', p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> Rohr, *The Career of British Musicians*, p. 135.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, p. 1.

greater than in London. Furthermore, these figures need to be read against the background of a relatively small population increase in Dublin over the same period when compared with the dramatic increase in London's population. Thirty-seven of the ninety-nine Professors of Music and Singing listed in the 1890 edition of *Thom's Directory* are women, bringing the proportion of female teachers up to thirty seven percent.<sup>34</sup> At the turn of the twentieth century, in 1900, there were twenty-eight women listed out of sixty-six, bringing the percentage of women teaching privately in their homes to almost equal that of men. Women make up forty-two percent of the listed 'Professors of Music and Singing'.<sup>35</sup> However, these entries only provide an overview of the situation and not a complete picture because, as Derek Collins points out, it is difficult to estimate the volume of teachers through the press, since those who advertised through word of mouth cannot be accounted for.<sup>36</sup> The abolition of the advertisement duty in 1853 may also have influenced the growth for listings in the years that followed.<sup>37</sup> The lists do, however, provide a starting point for establishing the position female teachers held within society.

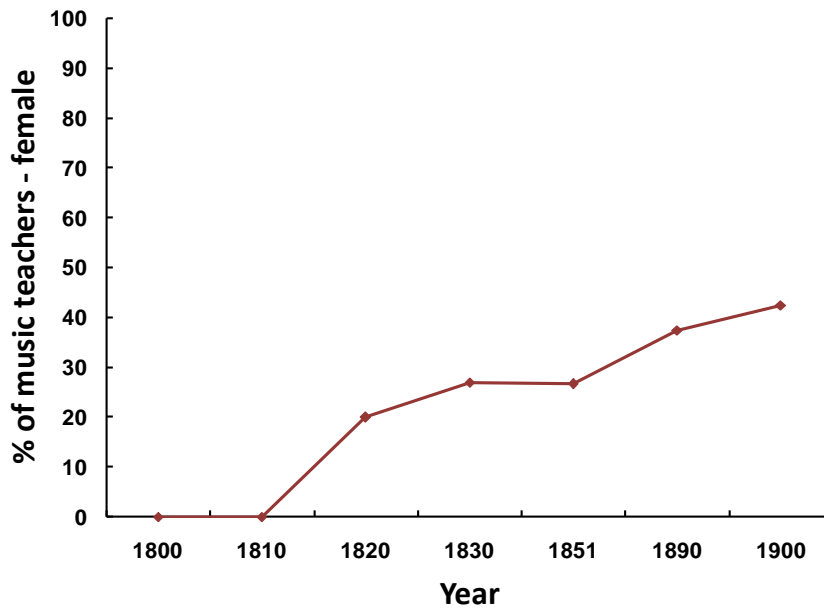
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<sup>34</sup> Merchant and Trader listings in *Thom's Irish Almanac and Official Directory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, 1890.*

<sup>35</sup> Merchant and Trader listings in *Thom's Irish Almanac and Official Directory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, 1900.*

<sup>36</sup> Derek Collins, 'Music in Dublin 1800-1848', *To Talent Alone*, p. 27.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*



**Figure 2.1:** The percentage of female music teachers in Dublin between 1800 and 1900 based on those listed in the city’s street directories.

A female figure who became a regular fixture in merchant and traders listings from 1825 is Miss Elizabeth Bennett. She causes some confusion because there was also a Miss Elizabeth Bennett, clearly not the same person, who taught in the Royal Irish Academy of Music in the later nineteenth century and who was still active there in 1902. However it is unclear if the two are related. The earlier Miss Bennett first began to advertise in the *Freeman’s Journal* where she announced her availability to teach piano, through-bass and composition. She regularly advertised in the years that followed and was listed each year in the merchant and traders listings as a ‘Professor of the Pianoforte living at 11 Lesson Street’.<sup>38</sup> She is notable as one of the first teachers to adopt an idea that was popular in London at that time, that of taking on an apprentice. The practice of apprenticeship had become popular in England in the eighteenth century and had begun with church music apprenticeships. She began in

<sup>38</sup> Merchant and Trader listings in *Thom’s Irish Almanac and Official Directory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1833, 1851, 1860, 1864.

1825, with others such as the Allen's academy and Haydn Corri soon following her lead.<sup>39</sup> These apprentices usually paid a fee and began when they were between the ages of twelve and fourteen. In some cases they took up residence with the teacher.<sup>40</sup> They were given responsibility for preparatory teaching and copying music and in return they received lessons in all the areas that the teacher was knowledgeable. For example, Miss Bennett's apprentice was offered lessons in pianoforte and composition. This system became an important element in the growth of professional music teachers in Dublin and it remained a popular practice with private music teachers throughout the century. However, it had its limitations as a means of musical education due to the fact that the student only got to study with the same teacher for several years and the amount of time spent helping their teacher often left little time for practice and performance opportunities.<sup>41</sup>

The active music teachers in Dublin in the first half of the nineteenth century can be divided into three main groups: part-time freelance teachers, with another job as their main source of income; visiting teachers who were usually in Dublin to perform for a season and who would teach a small number of students on the side; and finally, full-time professional teachers who taught as their main source of income. The majority of female teachers were in this latter category. Many of them operated 'academies' from their homes, while a small number travelled to the homes and schools of students. In several cases, whole families became involved in music. This was common throughout Europe: almost all professional women musicians on

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<sup>39</sup> Haydn Corri moved to Dublin from Edinburgh in 1821 and he taught piano, singing and composition. From 1827 to 1848 he was the director of the church of the Conception on Marlborough Street (now the Pro-Cathedral). For more see Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>40</sup> Collins, 'Music in Dublin' p. 24.

<sup>41</sup> Rohr, *The Careers of British Musicians*, p. 70.

the continent were born into families that were already involved in music.<sup>42</sup> Prime examples include Clara Schumann, Josephine Lang, Clara Novello and Pauline Viardot. All of these women were born into what Nancy Reich refers to as the artist-musician class, a class that included actors, artists, artisans, dancers, writers and musicians.<sup>43</sup> They had artistic output in common and they all depended on it for a living. Reich therefore describes female musicians as working women who were not working class and, because of their area of expertise, they seem to have been exempt from prevailing social restrictions in that they were acknowledged as simply following in their families' footsteps. This is, perhaps, comparable to Dublin's female music sellers who inherited their businesses after a husband's or father's death: they were not overstepping their social boundaries; they were simply carrying on the family business. While the women involved in music in Dublin later in the nineteenth century did not typically follow the European model of coming from an artisan-musician family, the women musicians and teachers active in the city in the first half of the century were often from musical families. Examples include the families of Johann Logier and Isaac Willis.

Isaac Willis owned one of the most profitable music businesses in the early nineteenth century. In 1815 he took over from Goulding and Co. of 7 Westmoreland Street and he is listed in merchant and trader listings from 1816 as a 'music and musical instrument seller'.<sup>44</sup> In addition to selling sheet music and instruments, Willis set up Dublin's first circulating library in 1820. He began with between seven

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<sup>42</sup> Reich, 'Women as Musicians: A Question of Class', *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*, Ruth Solie, ed., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 125-126.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>44</sup> 'Wilson's Dublin Directory' 1816.

and eight hundred volumes, which contained up to 40,000 pieces of music.<sup>45</sup> Both Willis and his wife also taught music in their home and their daughters followed in their footsteps. Mr Willis was a singer, flautist and composer and his wife was a pianist.<sup>46</sup> In the case of Johann Logier, both his son and daughter followed in his teaching footsteps and carried on his teaching practices in Dublin well into the nineteenth century. Logier is probably best remembered for his teaching method and for inventing the chiroplast, a wooden mechanism that was attached to the front of a piano in order to regulate hand movement. Logier patented it in 1814, and it was first advertised for sale in the *Freeman's Journal* in January 1815.<sup>47</sup> Logier had been involved in militia bands before opening a music shop at 76 Lower Sackville Street in July 1810.<sup>48</sup> He developed and published his teaching methods and made a notable contribution to piano teaching on an international level.<sup>49</sup> He was influential on the teaching of Frederick Weick, Clara Schumann's father, who is said to have used the best of several teaching systems in his own tuition, one of which was that of Logier.<sup>50</sup> Logier was the first teacher in Dublin to introduce examinations for all his students as well as public concerts. His methods were very successful and after his death his son, his daughter, and her husband E.C. Allen, became the chief exponents of his methods in Dublin.<sup>51</sup>

### **2.3 Mrs Allen and the Allen Academy**

It is probable that Logier's daughter taught in his music academy as a young woman. In April 1819 she married E.C. Allen, a distinguished Dublin pianist who was one of

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<sup>45</sup> Collins, 'Music in Dublin', p. 23.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *FJ*, 13 January 1815.

<sup>48</sup> *FJ*, 16 July 1810.

<sup>49</sup> Collins, 'Music in Dublin', p. 25.

<sup>50</sup> Reich, *Clara Schumann*, p. 280.

<sup>51</sup> Collins, 'Music in Dublin', p. 26.



the first to open a ‘Logier Academy’.<sup>52</sup> From 1819 onwards the couple ran a very successful academy of music at 5 Gardiner’s Row. Their students were taught and examined using Logier’s methods and also took part in regular public concerts at the premises. In 1830 the Allen Academy held ten public concerts, with their students performing a wide repertoire of works. The academy was one of the best equipped in the city with fourteen pianos at its disposal in 1829. In February 1833 Mrs Allen’s husband died. She continued to run the family business while also raising ten children and she was assisted by her brother, Henry Logier, who moved in with her shortly after her husband’s death to assist with the teaching in the academy. The school continued to go from strength to strength. Throughout the 1830s and 1840s there were regular advertisements for student concerts in the local press. Each time the reviews are positive and highly praising of Mrs Allen’s teaching methods. For example, in 1840 her teaching methods were described as being a ‘system of piano-forte instruction [which] has given such universal satisfaction’.<sup>53</sup> Her student concerts often went on all weekend with a variety of performances. On several occasions they began with Henry Logier questioning the students in harmony and theory before the performances.<sup>54</sup> At least three of her daughters followed in her footsteps: they appeared as regular performers in the concerts and later the eldest two took over the running of the academy in 1866.<sup>55</sup>

Mrs Allen’s academy provides an example of a woman using her skills as a musician to run a successful business in the first half of the nineteenth century. While it was started by her husband, she managed to oversee its continued success for over

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<sup>52</sup> *FJ*, 10 November 1818.

<sup>53</sup> *EP*, 11 April 1840, p. 4.

<sup>54</sup> *EP*, 11 April 1840, p. 4.

<sup>55</sup> *Thom’s Directory*, 1866. There is a listing under the Merchant and Traders for the Misses Allen running a music academy at Gardner’s Row.

thirty years after his death and it was clearly making sufficient profit to be able to afford fourteen pianos. It also received continuously positive reviews. Mrs Allen's methods of teaching were always praised, as were the skills of her students who appear to have been extremely well taught. At many of the public concerts all the students of the academy performed and the programmes often including performances on several pianos at once. The idea of student examinations and public concerts was one that proved extremely successful and it was later to be adopted by the Royal Irish Academy of Music to promote its students and teachers. This was also a relatively new practice for Dublin and the British Isles as a whole: in the early nineteenth century the practice of doing exams to gain certificates and diplomas in music had not yet developed. Such practices did not really become common place in England until the 1860s with examinations in the tonic solfa movement and later the Curwen methods becoming popular.<sup>56</sup> The Allen Academy's practice of public exams was therefore ahead of its time and, while the students did not receive certificates or diplomas, if they worked hard and did well in the exams it would have helped them with a future career in music in Dublin where their qualifications would have been recognised. Such features were later copied by the Royal Irish Academy of Music. It appears that when the Royal Irish Academy of Music first opened, its biggest rival for business in the capital was Mrs Allen's academy. The school was also most likely a source of inspiration for the founders of the Academy: they saw and wanted to emulate the success that it had achieved when they set about establishing a national institution of music.

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<sup>56</sup> Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain since the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 116. For more on the Curwen exams see chapter four, below.

The Allen's academy was probably Dublin's most successful school of music in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>57</sup> It made a major contribution to concert life in the city both through its student concerts but also because, after the death of her husband, Mrs Allen regularly allowed other musicians to hold their concerts in the Allen's Academy premises on Gardiner's Row, the academy becoming well known as a concert venue. The *Evening Packet* in August 1840 noted that it could not overly praise Mrs Allen 'for the liberality and kindness with which she granted the use of her spacious apartments'.<sup>58</sup> In 1840 Mrs Allen opened her premises to the Collins family who gave a concert in February, to a Mrs Gregory who gave a morning concert in August, and to Herr Sedlatzek who gave a 'Soirée Musicale' in November.<sup>59</sup>

Through her student concerts Mrs Allen demonstrated the standard of tuition available at her Academy, with the programmes often containing many of the popular and newly-published works of the time. For example in April 1841 Miss Allen, presumably the eldest of Mrs Allen's daughters, performed Thalberg's *Capriccio* on subjects from *La Donna del Lago*, the *Evening Packet* reporting that she was the first to have performed the piece in Ireland since the composer himself had.<sup>60</sup> Indeed the performances of the daughter referred to as Miss Allen won continuous praise in the 1840s in the local press. In January 1840 a review of a concert at the Allen Academy, again in the *Evening Packet*, informed the audience

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<sup>57</sup> Collins, 'Music in Dublin', p. 24.

<sup>58</sup> *EP*, 29 August 1840, p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> *EP*, 4 February 1840, p. 4, 29 August 1840, p. 4 and 26 November 1840, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 17. Together with Liszt, the German composer Sigismund Thalberg was regarded as one of the great virtuoso pianists of the mid-nineteenth century. He travelled a great deal and enjoyed enormous popularity throughout Europe. For more information see: Robert Wangermee, 'Sigismund Thalberg', *GMO*, *OMO*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27766>>, [accessed 15 February 2010]

that on a recent visit to Dublin Liszt had ‘evinced equal astonishment and delight at the variety, force and expression with which Miss Allen performed one of Thalberg’s most difficult compositions’.<sup>61</sup> In the 1850s Miss Allen seems to have taken over the running of the Allen Academy with her sisters, and unfortunately at that point her performance career appears to have declined as a result of her other responsibilities. However, her performances and the praise she received in the local press were testament to her ability and also to that of her mother and the other teachers at the Allen Academy to produce performers who were worthy of the praise of one of Europe’s leading pianists. As a result, when the Royal Irish Academy of Music opened its doors in 1848, its biggest rival for producing talented musicians was most likely the Allen’s academy. However, with the reorganisation of the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1856 the staff would include a female pianist who had established herself as a pianist of international standards.

In addition to the success of Mrs Allen’s Academy, private female music teachers continued to increase in activity as illustrated by the numbers and statistics cited above. Two such teachers were those of the Irish composer Charles Villiers Stanford, who began his lessons on the piano with his mother before being taught by his godmother, Miss Elizabeth Meeke.<sup>62</sup> This practice of a student taking lessons from a relative was common in England in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries due to the fact that the number of music teachers was still relatively small and music lessons were expensive.<sup>63</sup> Meeke had studied with Moscheles in London and she reportedly had ‘hands of exactly the same build and type as Madame

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<sup>61</sup> *EP*, 26 January 1841, p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, *Pages from an Unwritten Diary* (London: Edward Arnold, 1914), p. 56.

<sup>63</sup> Rohr, *The Careers of British Musicians*, p. 71.

Schumann's, whose style she closely resembled both in touch and in interpretation.'<sup>64</sup> She taught piano privately in Dublin as well as being an active performer, especially in the musical at-home gatherings that were popular in the city in the middle of the century.<sup>65</sup> She was also a subscriber and supporter of the early Irish Academy of Music. Stanford noted that in order to teach him to sight read well she used Chopin's fifty-two Mazurkas. She made him play one at the end of each lesson, pushing him always to keep going past the mistakes, the end result being a great proficiency at sight reading by the time he had reached the end of the fifty-two pieces at the age of ten.<sup>66</sup> In 1862, after a time in London with his family, Stanford returned to Dublin and began lessons with another female teacher whom he described as being a 'curious, clever and somewhat eccentrically clothed lady' – Miss Henrietta Flynn.<sup>67</sup> Flynn had been taught by Moscheles and by Mendelssohn in Leipzig, but she had not seen eye to eye with the latter due to his impatience with her.<sup>68</sup> In 1856 *Saunders Newsletter* reported her first public appearance which occurred in the form of a *matinee musicale* at her home on Harcourt Street.<sup>69</sup> As well as teaching Stanford she also taught Margaret O'Hea.<sup>70</sup> Stanford continued to attend lessons with Miss Flynn until she left Dublin in 1865 to go to London. Stanford's music education was then nurtured by Sir Robert Stewart. However, it is evidence of the quality of female teachers active in Dublin that two of the composer's early piano teachers were women, both of whom had a lasting impression on his playing and of whom he wrote with affection.

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<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 45.

<sup>66</sup> Stanford, *Unwritten Diary*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 498.

<sup>70</sup> See below in the chapter for more on the O'Hea sisters.

## 2.4 The Royal Irish Academy of Music: New Opportunities for Women

The establishment of the Royal Irish Academy of Music would eventually lead to more professional opportunities for women, but not from the beginning. It took eight years and the reorganisation of the institute before its benefits for female musicians in Ireland became evident. The first step towards creating an Irish Academy appeared in 1848 in the form of a prospectus which argued that a country that was ‘celebrated for its musical taste’ should have an institute through which it could provide training for its own musicians.<sup>71</sup> There was also a sense that it would help to establish Ireland as culturally separated from England and that it would help inspire a sense of ‘Irishness’ in Dublin’s musicians.<sup>72</sup> For a country that had a reputation for being musical, Ireland was lacking the educational institutes that would be required to improve the standards of musical performance and education so that they were comparable to London or the rest of Europe. While the many privately owned ‘music academies’ that had developed in the first half of the century were important for the growth of music, there needed to be an institution that would set the standards and provide tuition at a level that would reflect that of musical institutions in England and Europe. There were many teething problems for the new Irish Academy in its early years. These were finally addressed eight years after its establishment when in 1856 the Royal Irish Academy of Music was reorganised. As part of the changes that occurred, the directors appointed Fanny Robinson as supervisor to all the female students and as a professor of the piano second only to her husband, Joseph Robinson. This reorganisation saw the Royal Irish Academy of Music following the example of the Royal Academy of Music in London where women had been involved as students and teachers from its opening in 1823. However, in London the

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<sup>71</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 43.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

first female teachers were confined to singing, whereas Dublin went a step further by allowing a woman to become the second professor in their pianoforte faculty.

## 2.5 Fanny Robinson

Frances (Fanny) Arthur Robinson was a teacher, composer and pianist. She was born in Southampton in September 1831. Her parents, Alexander Arthur and Rebecca Edmund, were from East London.<sup>73</sup> Although little information remains about her siblings, the English 1861 census suggests that, like Fanny, her older sisters Mary and Rebecca both went on to teach, as they are both listed as schoolmistresses.<sup>74</sup> Fanny Arthur began her music education with Sir William Sterndale Bennett, who was a pianist, composer, teacher, conductor of the London Philharmonic Society from 1856 and the Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, London.<sup>75</sup> Arthur also studied briefly with Sigismund Thalberg, most likely during one of his stays in London in the 1840s. The standard of Fanny Arthur's musical education can be inferred from the stature of her teachers: one assumes her talents must have been evident from an early age as few would have had the opportunity to study with teachers of that calibre.

Fanny Arthur first came to Dublin in 1849 for her first professional performance, appearing at one of 'Mr. Gustave L. Geary's first full-dress subscription concerts' in the Antient Concert Rooms on the 19 February 1849.<sup>76</sup> She

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<sup>73</sup> <[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)>, [accessed on 06 May 2006].

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, accessed on 07 May 2006.

<sup>75</sup> The English composer Sir William Sterndale Bennett was ranked among the most distinguished composers of the romantic school in the country. The majority of his compositions date from the early part of his life and in his later years he dedicated himself to his career as a teacher and performer at the Royal Academy of Music in London. For more see: Nicholas Temperley and Rosemary Williamson, 'William Sterndale Bennett', *NG2001*, pp. 281-286 and Ellsworth, 'Victorian Pianists', pp. 149-170.

<sup>76</sup> *FJ*, 20 February 1849.

performed one of Mendelssohn's three *Capriccios*, which is listed as a 'Grand Caprice Shuloff by Mendelssohn', and a 'Grand concert Stück with full orchestral accompaniment' by Weber. In the *Freeman's Journal* the following day Arthur is the only woman who receives an individual mention in the review, despite there also being two female singers in the concert. The review praises her highly:

We cannot avoid once more advertising the extraordinary and exquisite performance of Miss Arthur on the pianoforte...She was encored with enthusiasm.<sup>77</sup>

This concert was significant on a personal as well as a professional level to Miss Arthur as it was the setting for her first meeting with her future husband, Joseph Robinson. Robinson was well known in the Dublin music scene and an important influence on music in Dublin throughout the nineteenth century. Born in 1816, he was a conductor, composer and baritone.<sup>78</sup> Instrumental in the establishment of the Royal Irish Academy of Music and one of its first professors of the pianoforte and singing, he was also involved in many of the city's musical societies and organisations.<sup>79</sup> Fanny Arthur and Joseph Robinson were married in June 1849, just four months after they had first met.

From 1849 Fanny Robinson became a regular performer in Dublin. She usually played in concerts that her husband was involved with, which suggests that he may have been an influencing factor in her career as a pianist. For example, in August 1849 she played for Queen Victoria in the Viceregal Lodge with other performers including her husband, and Charles Villiers Stanford's father, John

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<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Axel Klein, *Irish Classical Recordings: A Discography of Irish Art Music* (London: Greenwood Press, 2001), p. 141.

<sup>79</sup> Caitríona Doran, 'The Robinsons', *A Nineteenth-Century Dublin Family of Musicians and Their Contribution Towards the Musical Life in Dublin*, (unpublished MA diss, NUIM, 1998).



Stanford.<sup>80</sup> In 1852 she played at a concert of the Philharmonic Society and in the *Freeman's Journal* the following day the praise given to her is again noteworthy:

Mrs. Joseph Robinson played a Negro air, the topic rather commonplace, but worked out most musically and charmingly in a style which caused her to be recalled also; we regarded her playing as in a style only surpassed by Osborne.<sup>81</sup>

The Osborne she was compared to is the Limerick-born pianist composer, George Alexander Osborne.<sup>82</sup> A significant feature of the reviews of Fanny Robinson's performances which appeared in the local press in Dublin is the focus given to her playing. At a time when reviews of female performers were combinations of comments on their dress and musicianship, Robinson managed to earn reviews that only referenced her capabilities as a performer. In her essay on female pianists in Paris, Katherine Ellis points out that male critics were forced to re-evaluate their ideals of the nineteenth-century performer in Paris because female performers, pianists in particular, represented a new genre in concert life.<sup>83</sup> They were not virtuoso composers like many of their male counterparts such as Liszt or Thalberg, instead they were female vessels for the works of men. Similarly, Fanny Robinson, although she composed, was a performance vessel for the compositions of men. Yet, because most performers in Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries performed the compositions of others, the music critics accepted Robinson as they did all the other performers.

Fanny Robinson maintained an active performance career, particularly in the early 1850s before her appointment to the staff of the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

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<sup>80</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 47.

<sup>81</sup> *FJ*, 20 December 1851.

<sup>82</sup> For further information on Osborne see Una Hunt, 'George Alexander Osborne: A Nineteenth-Century Irish pianist-Composer', 2 vols (unpublished PhD diss, NUIM, 2006).

<sup>83</sup> Katherine Ellis, 'Female Pianists and their Male Critics in Nineteenth-Century Paris', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 50, (Summer /Fall 1997), p. 356.

She gave her first performance in London in June 1855 at a concert in the Musical Union at which she played Beethoven's Spring Sonata with the violinist Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst.<sup>84</sup> Her performance was praised by Meyerbeer.<sup>85</sup> Fanny Robinson's talents as a pianist resulted in her being the first woman, indeed the first person, to introduce in 1856 Liszt's idea of a solo recital to Ireland. However, she has only recently been credited with this achievement.<sup>86</sup> She may have decided to do this after a trip to London where the solo piano recital was already extremely popular in the 1850s. Fanny Robinson's recital was a huge achievement but somehow it got forgotten: it is almost as if it was that women were not expected to be capable of such an achievement and therefore were not even considered. Fanny gave her first solo recital in the Ancient Concert Rooms in April 1856.<sup>87</sup> Her programme was unprecedented for a single performer in Dublin at that time in that it contained a wide variety of music which included a suite by Bach; Mozart's sonata in C minor, K457; Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*; *The Lake* and *The Fountain* by Sterndale Bennett; a Berceuse by Chopin; and *Les Arpeges* by Kullak. *Saunders's Newsletter* the following day noted that never was a pianist subject to a more trying ordeal and that her audience illustrated their pleasure 'no less by their homage of silence, than by the frequent bursts of applause'.<sup>88</sup> She continued to perform in Dublin and occasionally in London, and in 1864 she gave her Paris debut in the Salle Érard.<sup>89</sup> However, by

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<sup>84</sup> Christina Bashford, *The Pursuit of High Culture: John Ella and Chamber Music in Victorian London* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007), p. 466.

<sup>85</sup> Aaron I. Cohen, *International Encyclopaedia of Women Composers, 1*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edn, London: Books and Music UK, 1987), p. 589.

<sup>86</sup> Janet Ritterman and William Weber, 'Origins of the Piano Recital in England, 1830-1870', *The Piano in Nineteenth-Century British Culture*, eds, Therese Ellsworth and Susan Wollenberg, (Adershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 181/182n. Aloys Fleischmann attributed Charles Hallé with being the first pianist to give a solo recital in Ireland in 1867, but Robinson had beaten him to this achievement by eleven years. Aloys Fleischmann, 'Music and Society, 1850-1921', *A New History of Ireland VI*, ed. W.E. Vaughan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 501.

<sup>87</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 500.

<sup>88</sup> *Saunders Newsletter*, 10 April 1856.

<sup>89</sup> Cohen, *International Encyclopaedia of Women Composers*, p. 589.

the late 1860s the depression from which she suffered began to impact more significantly on her life, preventing her from performing on a regular basis.

## **2.6 A Comparison of the Careers of Fanny Robinson and Arabella Goddard.**

Fanny Robinson had a very successful career as a performer by Irish standards but a comparison with her British contemporary, Arabella Goddard, highlights that there were many more opportunities in Britain for a pianist of her calibre if she had continued to perform. Born just six years after Fanny Robinson, Arabella Goddard had a career that was in many respects similar to hers. Although born in St Malo in the north of France, she was adopted by the English as their own, as was Fanny Robinson by the Irish.<sup>90</sup> Like Robinson's move to Ireland, Arabella Goddard moved to England in 1848 where she also studied with Sigismund Thalberg.<sup>91</sup> As well as her successful career as a pianist she also tried composition, and had two piano pieces published in the early 1850s.<sup>92</sup> Much like Robinson she married an educated man, the critic J.W. Davison, who supported her career and her talents as a musician.<sup>93</sup> However, although both women were successful as performers, Goddard's career outshone Robinson's, most likely because she continued to travel and perform widely before and after her marriage, whereas Robinson confined herself to performing mainly in Dublin and only gave a handful of performances elsewhere. Goddard's move in the 1880s to retire from performing and dedicate herself to teaching is probably closer to what Robinson chose to do after her marriage. Arabella Goddard was appointed to the RCM piano faculty by George Grove in 1883;

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<sup>90</sup> Frank Howes, 'Goddard, Arabella', *GMO, OMO*, <[www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com)>, [accessed 12 September 2008].

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> This also resembles Robinson's composing. For more see chapter three, below.

<sup>93</sup> She began to be tutored by him on music in 1851 upon the recommendation of Thalberg. They were married several years later in 1859.

however, it appears that she only remained there until 1885.<sup>94</sup> In her article on Goddard, Therese Ellsworth commented on the ‘powerful impact’ that Davison had on Goddard’s repertoire.<sup>95</sup> Although this was not necessarily the case for Robinson, it does appear that Joseph had a powerful impact on the direction of her career.

While Arabella Goddard was not taught by William Sterndale Bennett she was an admirer of his work and managed to gain herself attention in 1853 through a controversy concerning one of his piano concertos. Goddard was scheduled to play it as part of her debut with the Philharmonic Society Orchestra in 1853. The conductor, Michael Costa, told her to pick something else due to his dislike of Sterndale Bennett.<sup>96</sup> Goddard refused and instead performed the concerto with a rival society, the New Philharmonic.<sup>97</sup> She made her debut with the Philharmonic society three years later when Sterndale Bennett was the conductor for the season’s concerts.<sup>98</sup> Throughout her career she continued to include pieces by Bennett in her performances. This made her programmatic diversity particularly noteworthy because as well as being varied, they also supported and illustrated British talents where possible.<sup>99</sup> From 1851, the first year she was studying with her future husband, her concert programmes began to take on the format they would follow for the next thirty years of her career: they would include solo pieces from the classics, a fantasia (often by Thalberg) and ensemble works by composers of the developing canon.<sup>100</sup> Fanny Robinson’s performance programmes followed a similar format. She often included music by Sterndale Bennett and Thalberg, which in her case was

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<sup>94</sup> Howes, ‘Goddard, Arabella’.

<sup>95</sup> Ellsworth, ‘Victorian Pianists’ pp. 149-169.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> Hyde, *New Found Voices*, p. 29

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>100</sup> Ellsworth, ‘Victorian Pianists’ p. 153.

perhaps recognition of her early teachers. The one form of music of which there is no record of her performing is that of the ensemble work. Much as Goddard was regarded as England's leading pianist for much of the second half of the nineteenth century, Robinson was one of Dublin's leading pianists while she was active. She did not perform as frequently as Goddard and her absence from touring in Europe meant that she only touched on the surface potential of what her performance career could have been. However, she was praised and applauded wherever she performed. Ellsworth notes that one of the significant elements of Goddard's career was that the contemporary reviews of her performances did not assess her as being exceptional just for a woman: she was regularly compared with her contemporary artists both female and male. The same was true of Fanny Robinson. In her reviews there was never a mention of her being talented for a woman and when comparisons were made it was usually with her male contemporaries. This is evident in the quote cited above comparing her to Osborne. The treatment and careers of these two women share many similarities and although Robinson did not manage to make the impact that Goddard did on Europe, she gained success in her Dublin and briefly in London and Paris.

Like Goddard in the 1880s, Fanny Robinson turned to teaching as another element in her musical career, possibly upon her husband's suggestion considering his involvement with her place of employment. In 1856 Robinson became a member of the teaching staff of the Royal Irish Academy of Music shortly after it was reorganised. Although it had taken the Royal Irish Academy of Music eight years to employ a female teacher, when they did, their treatment of her was progressive for the time. She was in a position of importance and taught both male and female

students. This was unusual in comparison to the rest of Europe where there were very few female teachers and those that were employed were only allowed to teach female students. Her salary was also a clear illustration of the position she held. At a time when women could only hold certain forms of employment, and even then their salaries were usually a lot less than their male counterparts, Robinson was in a position of authority and earning an amount equal to her male colleagues. For example in 1869 when the Academy was eager to add Robert Stewart to the teaching staff he was offered a position as a second piano professor, alongside Fanny, with Joseph Robinson remaining the first primary piano professor. Stewart was offered £100 per annum, the same salary that both Joseph and Fanny were receiving.<sup>101</sup> While this figure is lower than what someone like Sterndale Bennett received for teaching at the Royal Academy of Music in London, it is significant because Fanny Robinson was getting the same rate as the two most prominent male teachers in Dublin.<sup>102</sup> Considering that this figure would have been supplemented by Robinson's earnings as a performer and a composer, she was most likely earning several hundred pounds a year. It was also progressive in comparison to female teachers in Britain and Europe because, as Nancy Reich has pointed out, 'except for superstars like Clara Schumann, women professors were generally not accorded the respect, rank and salaries of their male counterparts'.<sup>103</sup> In the late nineteenth century several women managed to gain employment in conservatoires across Europe but usually it was not on the same terms as the male employees.<sup>104</sup> One can only speculate as to why she was treated so well. It is probable that when first employed by the Academy

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<sup>101</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 85

<sup>102</sup> Peter Horton, 'They Earn Money from Morning Til Night': Issues of Finance and Status Among Professional Musicians in Mid-Nineteenth Century England', paper given at the *Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain* Conference, University of Bristol, 23-26 July 2009. See also Ehrlich, *The Music Profession*, pp. 44-49.

<sup>103</sup> Reich, 'European Composers and Musicians', p. 101.

<sup>104</sup> Clark, *Women and Achievement*, p. 99.

Fanny Arthur Robinson was to them what Clara Schumann had been to the Hoch conservatory in 1878: she was their superstar.<sup>105</sup> It is also similar to the employment of the previously mentioned Arabella Goddard by the piano faculty of the Royal College of Music in 1883: much like Robinson, and indeed Clara Schumann, Goddard's career as a pianist meant that she was already well known, respected and an attraction for prospective students. At the point of commencement of her employment, Fanny Robinson was likewise well known as a performer with both a local and an international reputation and she had received glowing reviews as a pianist. She was also active as a composer and several of her piano pieces had been published by 1856. It is therefore likely that the directors of the Royal Irish Academy of Music saw her as a means of attracting students, especially female ones, by adding a renowned female pianist and composer to their teaching staff. If this was their reasoning they were proved right. In 1900 Annie Patterson noted that the appointment of Fanny Robinson as professor of the pianoforte at the Royal Irish Academy of Music 'drew a large number of pupils to the Dublin School of Music'.<sup>106</sup> Annie Patterson also noted that this affected the clientele of private teachers such as Henrietta Flynn, who taught Margaret O'Hea and Charles Villiers Stanford. As a result of the decline in the numbers of her private students, Flynn moved to London and Margaret O'Hea consequently became a student of Robinson at the Academy. Fanny Robinson's ability as a teacher is evident in the success of some of her students, notably Margaret O'Hea and Annie Curwen.<sup>107</sup> In the aforementioned article Patterson describes her as 'a brilliantly-clever woman, with a charming personality'.<sup>108</sup> Also, when Miss O'Hea decided to begin teaching, Robinson was

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<sup>105</sup> Reich, *Clara Schumann*, p. 284.

<sup>106</sup> Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea' *WIT*, 10 November 1900, p. 3.

<sup>107</sup> For more on both women see later in the chapter.

<sup>108</sup> Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea', *WIT*.

‘most kind in getting her pupils’.<sup>109</sup> Fanny Robinson continued to teach in the Royal Irish Academy of Music until 1875, at which point her resignation seems to have been as a result of her husband who was unhappy with the decisions being made by the Royal Irish Academy of Music council. He informed them of his and his wife’s resignation at the end of the term.<sup>110</sup> This illustrates that, as successful as Fanny Robinson was, it was still her husband who was the dominant force within their marriage and it was he who made the major decisions. If he could decide she was going to resign, it poses the question how much of the rest of her career was controlled by him.

After Fanny Robinson, the Royal Irish Academy of Music continued to have female teachers on their staff. In 1887 it employed 27 teachers, ten of whom were female. These were Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell, Miss Elizabeth Bennett, Margaret O’Hea, Miss E Kelly, Miss Susan Wright, Edith Oldham, Lucy Hackett, Annie Irwin, Annie Scarff and Miss Adelaide Barnwell.<sup>111</sup> It is true that all of these women were still teaching only piano and singing, the two disciplines seen as being suitable for a young lady; however they were teaching in the country’s only major music academy and earning good salaries. Many of the female teachers at this point were also themselves students of the Royal Irish Academy of Music who returned to work there having completed their studies. Examples of this include Mrs Scott-Fennell, Margaret O’Hea and her sisters and Edith Oldham.

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<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 126.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 152/153.



## 2.7 Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell

Elizabeth Scott began her music education at the Royal Irish Academy of Music as a student of Joseph Robinson and his assistant Julie Cruise, a well-known singer in Dublin's concerts and who later married R.M. Levey.<sup>112</sup> Scott-Ffennell had a 'decided talent for singing from an early age' and is noted as having had a range of three octaves at the age of 14.<sup>113</sup> In Annie Patterson's article on Mrs Scott Ffennell the singer is reported to have said that her debut at the Royal Irish Academy of Music was 'the great event in her life' and that her voice was so even and skilled that she sang both a work for soprano and contralto at the concert.<sup>114</sup> After her time spent at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, she spent several seasons in London and often performed in concerts conducted by Sir Michael Costa.<sup>115</sup> She went on to become one of Dublin's most popular female singers and was involved in major performances in the city's musical life such as the concerts for the first Feis Ceoil. She began teaching in the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1868 and became a popular choice of teacher among its students. A few years later she married a local amateur baritone, John Scott, and together they had four children. When her husband died in 1882 she was left to care for her children and at this point she began to appear in the Dublin street directories as a professor of singing. She most likely found it necessary to subsidise her Royal Irish Academy of Music income with private teaching, for which she could probably demand higher fees. Annie Patterson notes that she had a great talent for teaching and she attributes this to her 'motherly interest in her pupils' and the fact that she took into consideration the individual temperament and characteristics of each.

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<sup>112</sup> R.M. Levey was a conductor, composer and violinist. He was involved in the foundations of the RIAM and several of Dublin's music societies. Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, pp. 46-47.

<sup>113</sup> Patterson, 'Mrs Scott-Ffennell' *WIT*, 3 November 1900, p. 4.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Like many other Dublin teachers and musicians in the nineteenth century she travelled to London every year to study her art and to attend concerts. On one such occasion she met Adelina Patti, the Italian soprano who was often referred to in England as the ‘Queen of Song’.<sup>116</sup> Miss Patti brought Mrs Scott Ffennell to the piano and ‘begged’ to be taught the traditional way that ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’ and ‘The minstrel boy’ should be sung.<sup>117</sup> Mrs Scott Ffennell obliged and several years later when she attended a concert of Adelina Patti’s in Dublin, Scott-Ffennell’s daughter commented on how the prima donna sang the songs just like her mother.<sup>118</sup> Her obituary in the *Irish Times* in 1911 mentions that her ‘special forte was the singing of Irish songs and ballads’.<sup>119</sup> As well as teaching, Scott-Ffennell also maintained a successful career as a singer and was popular with Dublin audiences ‘whose concert platforms she had so frequently adorned.’<sup>120</sup> She was also well recognised as a church singer and she was a member of the choir at St. Andrews Church, Westland Row. Her performances of sacred music were praised by Stewart, particularly her delivery of Gregorian chant.<sup>121</sup> However, unlike Catherine Hayes, Scott-Ffennell, although a talented singer, never fully embraced a performance career, choosing to remain in Dublin to teach and raise a family rather than to tour as a singer. Her reasoning could have been a wish to have a career while also having the family life that was seen as a normal desire for women in the nineteenth century; or perhaps, as was suggested of Robert Stewart and his hesitation to expand his career across the water, she preferred to be a ‘big fish in a little pond’.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Hyde, *New Found Voices*, p. 12.

<sup>117</sup> Patterson, ‘Mrs Scott-Ffennell’, *WIT*.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> *IT*, 1 September 1911, p. 3.

<sup>120</sup> *IT*, 29 January 1877, p. 4.

<sup>121</sup> Patterson, ‘Mrs Scott-Ffennell’, *WIT*.

<sup>122</sup> Lisa Parker ‘Robert Prescott Stewart’, p. 328.

It is impossible to say if Scott-Ffennell's singing was of a standard comparable to that of Catherine Hayes. However, her reviews suggest she was very talented and she was influential on other singers of her time such as Adelina Patti. Catherine Hayes became internationally recognised as a singer and was admired the world over. She sold out concerts around the globe and had objects and events named after her. Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell never received international fame but she did become a highly respected teacher and performer in Dublin and she balanced a very successful career with being a wife and a mother.

Although Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell started out as a soprano, by the 1870s she appears to have been best known as a contralto. In January 1877 she had a benefit concert in the Antient Concert Rooms where she was joined by the Dublin Glee and Madrigal Union of which she was a member. The concert was conducted by Joseph Robinson.<sup>123</sup> She also organised and performed in an annual benefit concert which, by 1889, was in its seventeenth year.<sup>124</sup> That year the concert was held in Leinster Hall and there was a large audience in attendance. The first half of the programme was mainly sacred music and in it Mrs Scott Ffennell performed works by Rossini, Gounod and Mendelssohn, while in the second half she favoured the works of Irish composers and performed a duet arranged by Stevenson and a song by Balfe. The *Irish Times* described Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell as being 'in excellent voice and it is needless to say that the purely technical elements in the selections allotted to her were interpreted with great artistic effect.'<sup>125</sup> She was a constant supporter of Irish composers; for example, in 1890 she appeared in the contralto role in a performance

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<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *IT*, 25 March 1889, p. 6.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

of James Culwick's dramatic cantata *The Legend of Stauffenberg* in the Antient Concert Rooms.<sup>126</sup>

Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell is illustrative of the genre of teacher-performer musicians that developed particularly in England and Dublin in the nineteenth century. Like those that Clara Schumann and Pauline Viardot referred to as 'making themselves stupid' because of their constant workload, Scott-Ffennell appears to have been constantly working since she was a teacher at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, a private professor of singing and also a recognised performer.<sup>127</sup> Her ability to do both well is, however, supported by the constant praise she received in the press. For example in 1890 *The Irish Times* opened a review of one of her concerts with the following:

There is perhaps no one of our Dublin artists more deserving of the annual tribute of public appreciation than Mrs Scott-Fennell, who as a teacher as well as an artist held a first place in our city. The audience assembled in the Antient Concert Rooms on Monday was a large one, and fully bore out the fact that Mrs Scott-Fennell has many friends capable of appreciating her qualifications.<sup>128</sup>

As a singer Annie Patterson described her as having a tone of voice which 'for richness, beauty and power of expression, has had few, if any equals in Old Ireland' also commenting that she maintained a dignity upon the concert platform which, 'coupled with the impressive power and exquisite quality of her vocalism, enchanted the attention of her audiences from start to close'.<sup>129</sup> Patterson's praise, as is usual for her treatment of all her female subjects, is evident throughout her article and she concluded with a recommendation of the talents of Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell by

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<sup>126</sup> *IT*, 4 March 1890, p. 4.

<sup>127</sup> Litzmann, Berthold, *Clara Schumann: An Artist's Life Based on Material Found in Diaries and Letters, II*, (London: Macmillan & Co., 1913)

<sup>128</sup> *IT*, 24 May 1890, p. 4.

<sup>129</sup> Patterson, 'Mrs Scott-Ffennell', *WIT*.

quoting a letter from Robert Stewart who had written: 'I do not often meet with any musical person so good and so gifted as you'.<sup>130</sup> Mrs Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell remained a member of the Royal Irish Academy of Music teaching staff on the Dublin stages until her retirement. She was one of the most popular singers and vocal teachers in Dublin in the nineteenth century and, like Fanny Robinson, she represents another example of a female musician juggling a successful career as a teacher with that of a performer, managing to impress and maintain a high standard at both professions while also in her case raising a family. She died on 31 August 1911 and her obituary in the *Irish Times* the following day mentioned that no lady had 'a more distinguished association with the musical annals of Dublin during the past half-century' and that she was 'extremely popular with all classes'.<sup>131</sup>

## **2.8 The O'Hea Sisters**

The previously mentioned tradition of whole families becoming involved in music was evident in the latter half of the nineteenth century in the Royal Irish Academy of Music in the form of the O'Hea sisters. Referred to in many publications as the 'remarkable O'Hea family', three of the sisters, Margaret, Mary and Alice, were teachers in the Royal Irish Academy of Music and together they gave the institution one hundred and thirty six years of service. They were not born into music like many of their European counterparts, but through their combined work they became known as a musical family. The O'Hea sisters were all born in Dublin. Their father, James, was a circuit court judge; however, as a result of an unspecified accident in the late 1850s he was forced to retire. While he maintained his position as crown prosecutor until his death, his accident resulted in a profound change in the financial

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<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *IT*, 1 September 1911, p. 7.

circumstances of the family. This may have been an influencing factor in the children seeking their own financial independence, much like the case of Arabella Goddard who claimed that her career as a professional pianist was the circumstance of her father's financial reversals which resulted from the political upheaval in France in the 1840s.<sup>132</sup> The O'Hea sisters' love of music came from their mother's side, her father and uncle having been active amateur musicians in the 1820s.<sup>133</sup> However, their own father was the main cultivator of their interest. Margaret O'Hea recalled that she and her sisters and brother attended many of the chief concerts in Dublin thanks to their father. To quote:

I remember quite well clinging to my father's coat tails when he had come in after a long day in the courts and beseeching him to take me to some concert I had heard was taking place. Though not a musician himself, he enjoyed listening to music and not liking to disappoint me, he usually acceded to my supplications.<sup>134</sup>

This early exposure led to all the children having a love and appreciation of music throughout their lives.

The eldest of the O'Hea family, Margaret, began piano lessons at the age of ten. Her first teacher thought highly of her talents and even though she was only twelve when he died, he left her his entire collection of music. Shortly thereafter she began private lessons with Henrietta Flynn. This was at the same time that Stanford was also a pupil of Miss Flynn.<sup>135</sup> O'Hea made her first solo performance in the

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<sup>132</sup> Ellsworth: 'Victorian Pianists', p. 153.

<sup>133</sup> Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea' *WIT*.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> In an interview with Annie Patterson she recounted an occasion where she was waiting for her lesson after Stanford. He became puzzled by a complicated time in a slow movement and told Miss Flynn that he felt there might be a misprint because there seemed to be too many notes in the bar. Miss Flynn called O'Hea over to see if she could figure it out. She saw that he had mistaken hemidemisemiquavers for demisemiquavers and that the bar was all correct. She said that when she pointed it out they all had a 'good laugh together'. Annie Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea', *WIT*.

Antient Concert Rooms under Miss Flynn's direction, playing Weber's *Invitation a la Valse*.

In 1865 Margaret O'Hea entered the Royal Irish Academy of Music where she was a student of Fanny Arthur Robinson. She also began to teach privately to support herself. However, because she was spending so much time teaching and travelling long distances from house to house it became increasingly difficult for her to keep up her own solo practicing. Her teaching became her priority because, as Annie Patterson put it, 'professional engagements of native solo instrumentalists are few and far between, and will not make the pot boil.'<sup>136</sup> After a year as a student in the Academy, Joseph Robinson suggested that O'Hea should go to London for a season to hear as much good music as possible. From that point on she returned to the city most years throughout her career. Through her trips she encountered such musical figures as Grove, Ella and Rubenstein: she met John Ella on one of her first trips and Patterson reports that she received 'great kindness from him' and was often presented with tickets to his concerts while in London. O'Hea told Patterson that he once told her at one of his concerts that 'there are a hundred and sixty-seven titled ladies in the room' which O'Hea initially thought as snobbery on his part but later realised was an expression of his pride in his concerts. O'Hea also commented on the fact that Ella wrote all his own programmes. It was through Ella that O'Hea was introduced to Rubinstein while she was attending a concert with her teacher, Fanny Robinson.

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<sup>136</sup> *Ibid*

In 1871 O’Hea was still teaching privately in Dublin. A position became available in the Academy piano faculty and it would have seemed that O’Hea was an ideal candidate for the job. However, the board of management was eager to engage a French woman, Madame Gayrard. Throughout the nineteenth century foreign teachers continued to have a great appeal in England and Ireland due to the fact that their differences in nationality and training often acted as an attraction for perspective students.<sup>137</sup> A campaign against this decision began in the *Freeman’s Journal* in May of 1871, the editor of which felt that an Irish Academy should support Irish teachers. The paper never stated what Irish candidate it had in mind but it was believed that the articles may have been written on behalf of O’Hea. The campaign continued for three days and featured such statements as ‘we are much mistaken in our estimation of the council if they be the men to echo the bitter taint that even in their own country, “no Irish need apply”.’<sup>138</sup> The whole campaign was unsuccessful and on the 18 May 1871 the board announced the appointment of Madame Gayrard to the piano faculty of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. Two years later however, in 1873, Gayrard resigned and was succeeded by O’Hea.

Margaret O’Hea remained on the teaching staff of the Academy for fifty-five years but a letter from George Grove to Edith Oldham suggests that she may not always have been content in her position because in 1883 she wrote to him asking if there was an available position for her at the Royal College of Music in London. Perhaps she longed to live in London to experience its musical culture to a fuller extent or to be closer to her sister Mary who was living there at that point. However,

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<sup>137</sup> Rohr, *The Careers of British Musicians*, p. 139.

<sup>138</sup> *FJ*, 10 May 1871.



the fact there was not an opening for Margaret O’Hea was a stroke of luck for the Royal Irish Academy of Music, her many students and music in Dublin.

During her time in the Academy there were two main streams of teaching, that of Edith Oldham and that of Margaret O’Hea. Both women worked under the umbrella of Michele Esposito, who was one of the leading musical figures in Dublin at the turn of the twentieth century after he became professor of pianoforte at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1882.<sup>139</sup> Both women had different approaches to the teaching of the piano, O’Hea firmly believing that the study of technique perfected the training of the pianist, while Oldham was concerned that the performers consider the music as well as technique.<sup>140</sup> Both women had great success as teachers in the Royal Irish Academy of Music but, although they worked together in the same faculty for many years, there seem to have been some problems between them. As well as the differences in their teaching, O’Hea seemed to have had at the very least, professional disagreements with Oldham. She was involved in the Feis Ceoil in the beginning, attending meetings and offering her support, until Edith Oldham became secretary at which point she withdrew her involvement. Also, when Oldham was to be promoted in the Academy in 1902, O’Hea, along with Elizabeth Bennett, made a strenuous but unsuccessful effort to prevent her promotion. Although Annie Patterson’s opening quote for O’Hea was that she had said ‘Bickering and jealousies among musicians are often spoken of-my experiences on the contrary are very pleasant;’ this may not always have been the case. One cannot help but wonder if she

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<sup>139</sup> Boydell, ‘Dublin’, *NG2001*, p. 625.

<sup>140</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, pp. 503/504.

was jealous of the opportunities that Oldham had received or of her friendship with George Grove.<sup>141</sup>

In general, O’Hea seems to have been extremely well respected and liked both by her students and her peers. Walter Starkie refers to his kindly memories of ‘little Miss O’Hea’, commenting ‘I used to call her the interceder, for she would protect the fluttering doves on the days when the hawks were swooping more fiercely than usual and was a good-natured shock absorber, preparing the way for the timid pupil’.<sup>142</sup> Margaret O’Hea’s students made up many of the next generation of teachers in the Academy and of performers in Dublin and included Annie Lord, Edith Boxwell, Madeleine Larchet, Maud Aiken, Dorothy Stokes and Dina Copeman. The latter had an extremely successful career as pianist and teacher and in 1926 was chosen to give a piano recital on the opening day of Irish radio.<sup>143</sup> Copeman said of O’Hea’s teaching that ‘like all great teachers she had the admirable qualities of patience and enthusiasm and took a deep personal interest in each of her pupils’.<sup>144</sup> The success of her students suggests that O’Hea was indeed an excellent teacher: while most of the piano faculty produced at least one or two leading musicians, O’Hea was the teacher of several.

As well as her career as a piano teacher, Margaret O’Hea became involved in the local centre examinations and by 1911 she was one of the main examiners within

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<sup>141</sup> Evidence of O’Hea’s desire to impress George Grove can be seen in a letter from Grove to Edith Oldham. He tells her that he had a visit from O’Hea and that she was in ‘a wonderfully glossy Sunday gown with a suspicion of rouge on her cheeks or was it naturally pink? ... We fraternized directly and laughed and carried on in a splendid style.’ This suggests that O’Hea had wanted to impress George Grove and was nervous around him probably because of her admiration for his career in music.

<sup>142</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 292.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid*, p. 503.

<sup>144</sup> T.S.C. Dagg, *A Centenary Souvenir*, p. 47.

the Academy along with Esposito. She seems to have been a great admirer of Michele Esposito, working alongside him in the Royal Irish Academy of Music throughout her career and often being connected with the same musical events, such as in 1899 she was on the provisional committee of the Dublin Orchestral Society which had arisen out of Esposito's desire to give Dublin its own orchestra so that the city could experience regular performances of orchestral music.<sup>145</sup> Margaret O'Hea finally resigned in 1928 at the age of 85, shortly after Esposito's resignation. The two together were a great loss to the piano faculty which was deprived of two of its leading piano professors in the same year. Three years later, in 1931, she was made a fellow of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. As a result of her work as both professor and examiner she shares, with Esposito, the honour of having two awards named after her in the Academy examinations, the O'Hea Memorial cup and the Margaret O'Hea memorial exhibition, both of which are still in existence today. Margaret O'Hea died in 1938, aged 95.

Alice O'Hea began her musical education with a private teacher before moving to the Royal Irish Academy of Music where she was a vocal student of Joseph Robinson. She became a student teacher in 1889 and, after Robinson's death, one of the main executors of his teaching methods. To quote Annie Patterson, 'she consequently helped to keep the traditions of his excellent system of vocal production alive in Dublin.'<sup>146</sup> In 1900 she wrote to the board of management with suggested solutions to the problems in the vocal faculty, mainly that of students leaving because they were not permitted to continue with the same teacher every year. Her suggestions included letting the student select the teacher and remain with

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<sup>145</sup> Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea, continued', *WIT*.  
Fleischmann, 'Music and Society, 1850-1921', p. 515.

<sup>146</sup> Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea, continued', *WIT*.

that teacher for as long as the student wished, and opening competitions within the Academy to all classes.<sup>147</sup> She concluded by adding that all the other teachers she had spoken to on the matter approved. Her advice was taken and the relevant changes were introduced shortly afterwards.<sup>148</sup> In 1926 she was made a professor of singing. In all, she taught at the Academy for forty-seven years and retired in 1936, aged 81. She died the following year. In addition to her teaching career she was also evident as a performer, particularly in the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>149</sup>

The next sister, Mary O’Hea, was well-known in Dublin as a professor and teacher of elocution. She moved to London in the early 1880s and began acting in the Lyceum theatre under the direction of Sir Henry Irving. In 1890 a position became available for a teacher of elocution at the training college on Marlborough Street in Dublin. Her sisters persuaded her to apply and to return home. Their powers of persuasion were obviously successful because, although she was in demand as an actress in London, she chose the ‘less brilliant but perhaps more restful profession’ and returned to Dublin.<sup>150</sup> She became well established as a teacher of elocution and in 1902 she left the training college in favour of a position at the Royal Irish Academy of Music where she was successor to Jeanie Quinton Rosse. She taught there for thirty years and retired in 1936, the same year as Alice. She also continued her stage career when she returned to Dublin, making several appearances in the Abbey theatre including in a production in 1910 of *Mary*, a play by Count Casimir Markiewicz, the estranged husband of Constance Markiewicz. She also gave several

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<sup>147</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, pp. 246-7.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> For more information on her performance career see chapter three, below.

<sup>150</sup> Patterson, ‘Mrs. Scott-Ffennell’ *WIT*.

declamation recitals both at her home and other venues, which usually included musical sections and performances by her sisters.<sup>151</sup>

The youngest sister Ellen O’Hea was also educated at the Royal Irish Academy of Music where she studied singing with Joseph Robinson and harmony with Sir Robert Stewart. She went on to compose and was also a regular performer in Dublin.<sup>152</sup> The sisters had one brother, John Fergus O’Hea, who was not directly involved in music. He was a political cartoonist and he worked in support of Charles Stewart Parnell. His cartoons appeared in papers such as *Young Ireland* and *Ireland’s Eye*, his work for the latter including a caricature of Sir Robert Stewart.

## **2.9 Edith Oldham**

Edith Oldham was another female musician who devoted much of her life to the Royal Irish Academy of Music with which she was connected for over fifty years through her time as both student and then teacher. Edith Oldham was born on the 11 July 1865, the eleventh child and the youngest surviving of twelve. Her father, Eldred Oldham, inherited the family drapery business, which his father Samuel had built up at 12 Westmoreland Street in Dublin. Her mother Anne was the daughter of George Alker, who ran a china and glassware business at 31 Westmoreland Street.<sup>153</sup> Her sister Alice was leader of the campaign for the admission of women to colleges in Ireland, in particular Trinity College.<sup>154</sup> In 1884 Alice was one of the first nine women graduates of the Royal University of Ireland, which was founded in 1879 as an examining body, graduating with a BA in logic metaphysics, the history of

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<sup>151</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 253.

<sup>152</sup> For more on Ellen O’Hea see chapter three, below.

<sup>153</sup> Catherine Ferguson, email correspondence, April/May 2006.

<sup>154</sup> Susan M. Parkes, *Alice Oldham and the Admission of Women to Trinity College, 1892-1904*. (Trinity Monday Discourse, May 2004).

philosophy and ethics. She received most of her education at Alexandra College in Dublin and joined the teaching staff there in 1886.<sup>155</sup> Edith's brother Charles Hubert Oldham was 'one of the leading young intellectuals' in Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>156</sup> He was an economist and principal of the Rathmines School of Commerce before going on to become professor of economics at UCD.<sup>157</sup> He was also very involved in politics and was asked to stand for parliament by Parnell in 1886 but declined due to lack of funding.<sup>158</sup> However he continued to support the Home Rule movement and to encourage the involvement of women in society. Maud Gonne described him as a 'great believer in women and their duty as well as their right to take a share in public life.'<sup>159</sup> He was also involved with the administration of Feis Ceoil in its early stages in 1895 and in 1899 he was on the committee for the Feis. The festival programme that year includes an article by Charles Oldham on the career and contribution to music of Sir Robert Stewart.<sup>160</sup> Of Oldham's other siblings, her brother Eldred ran the family business after her father's death in 1883 and was also a painter, and her sister Kate was a tutor.<sup>161</sup>

Edith Oldham began her tuition at the Royal Irish Academy of Music when she was in her early teens, with Margaret O'Hea as her teacher.<sup>162</sup> In 1883 she was one of three Royal Irish Academy of Music students who received a scholarship to study at the newly-opened Royal College of Music in London. There had been

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<sup>155</sup> A.V.O' Connor, 'Alice Oldham', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>>, [accessed 28 April 2006].

<sup>156</sup> Percy M. Young: *George Grove 1820-1900: A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 171.

<sup>157</sup> Pine and Acton: *To Talent Alone* p. 557.

<sup>158</sup> Peter Clarke, 'Charles Hubert Oldham: Scientist, Protestant Home Ruler, Barrister, Economist and the First Dean of the Commerce Faculty at UCD', unpublished article, (December 2008).

<sup>159</sup> Maud Gonne, *The Autobiography of Maud Gonne: A Servant of the Queen*, A.. Norman Jefares and Anna MacBride White, eds., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 295.

<sup>160</sup> *Feis Ceoil Programme 1899*, NLI, Ir 780941 p. 50.

<sup>161</sup> Catherine Ferguson, email correspondence, April/May 2006.

<sup>162</sup> Young, *George Grove*, p. 168.

considerable competition for the scholarships with 1588 people applying and 480 of those being auditioned. Fifty places were awarded and fifteen of them were also given maintenance grants. Six scholarships went to Ireland in total and from the three Royal Irish Academy of Music students, two of them, Oldham and Louisa Kellett, who was also a pianist, were awarded maintenance assistance. This scholarship and the subsequent move to London led to one of the most important friendships of Oldham's life, with George Grove. She studied at the Royal College of Music from 1883 until 1887.

It appears that George Grove thought highly of Edith Oldham and upon her arrival in London as a student of the Royal College of Music they became close friends, a relationship that continued until his death in 1900. This relationship, which is documented in letters from George Grove to Oldham from 1883 until 1899, has resulted in many assumptions about the nature of their involvement. It would be hard to prove the depth of their friendship, particularly as none of Oldham's letters exist, so we are left with only half the story. The letters do provide a valuable source of information on Oldham's time in London, even if it is from Grove's point of view. The correspondence began on the 6 October 1883 with Grove writing to sympathise with Oldham upon the death of her father. He addressed her formally as Miss Oldham but signed the letter as 'yours very truly, G. Grove'.<sup>163</sup> In April 1884 it seems that Oldham was at home in Dublin and had the opportunity to play for Sir Robert Stewart because Grove asked what Stewart thought of her playing. In many of the letters Grove offers advice to Oldham on her practice and how to approach it, which suggests that she regularly sought his opinion and guidance. His guidance includes

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<sup>163</sup> Grove Letters, 6 October 1883, RCM MS. 6864/1.

advice; for example, when she was getting disheartened with the work in December 1884 Grove wrote to her that if she was ‘content to look on her practice and lessons as drudgery for a little while’ she would ‘reap the benefit’.<sup>164</sup> Often when she was at home in Dublin he wrote to tell her when she should begin practicing before her return. The letters in the early years are very much orientated around her studies at the Royal College of Music and they provide us with evidence of the interest Grove took in Oldham’s education. His support and guidance was, no doubt, a contributing factor of Oldham’s success.

In September of 1884 Grove wrote to her concerning professional matters – her change of teacher from Ernst Pauer to Franklin Taylor and also a change he made to her schedule. Grove decided to stop Oldham’s singing lessons because ‘it was not likely to lead to anything and being without it will give you more time for piano and harmony’.<sup>165</sup> As the months progress the style of the letters becomes more informal and they contain information on Grove’s own life, including his work at the RCM. He often discusses other students with Oldham but regularly refers to having discussed her with other musicians and colleagues too. His letters reflect the interest he had in all his pupils with paragraphs often given over to his worries for the students at the Royal College of Music and his anxiety and hope that they would all do well.

The letters also provide information on the music that Oldham experienced while living in London. Considering that all of Dublin’s leading musicians in the second half of the nineteenth century regularly travelled to concerts in London so

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<sup>164</sup> Grove Letters, 26 December 1884, RCM MS. 6864/5.

<sup>165</sup> Grove Letters, 23 September 1884, RCM MS. 6864/4.



that they could benefit from experiencing the city's musical culture, Oldham had a fantastic opportunity to experience a wide range of performances during the years at the Royal College of Music. Grove was keen to get her to attend and experience as much music as possible and his letters often contained arrangements of plans to attend concerts or details of tickets he has secured for her and other students. On the 20 March 1886 he discussed the details of forthcoming events that she would have to attend. On the 25 March Oldham, Louise Kellett and Grove were to attend a Bach concert, on the 27 March they would attend a performance by Joachim at the Crystal Palace, and Grove also mentioned a performance of Beethoven's seventh symphony for which he promised to secure Mrs Taylor as a companion for Oldham.<sup>166</sup> In June 1886 he insisted that she go to a concert of Chopin and the letter suggests that he sent a ticket with it because he instructs Oldham that if she cannot use it she should pass it on to Louise.<sup>167</sup> Oldham's experiences in London, where she regularly attended several concerts such as those mentioned above in the space of just a month or two, illustrates the difference in her education at the Royal College of Music and that of her peers in Dublin. A student in the Royal Irish Academy of Music would not have enjoyed such access to a varied concert life, Dublin's being no match for London.

Often in his letters Grove's tone is that of a father figure. He obviously cared a lot for Oldham and was always asking after her health and wellbeing. He is also quick to take a tone of authority if he deemed it necessary. For example, in April 1885 Oldham seems to have written to him concerning her living arrangements, which were organised by Grove and the college for many of the students. In his letter he mentioned her reluctance to live with a fellow student in case it interfered with her

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<sup>166</sup> Grove Letters, 20 March 1886, RCM MS. 6864/16.

<sup>167</sup> Grove Letters, 3 June 1886, RCM MS. 6864/28.

study, and his response was that she was old enough to manage that sort of thing for herself. In several of his early letters he referred to Oldham as ‘dear child’, ‘my precious child’ or ‘my dear little friend’.<sup>168</sup> He continued to address her as such throughout his letters right up until 1899, this perhaps giving the clearest illustration of his feelings for Edith Oldham. He seems to have maintained connections to her family too, always sending his regards to her mother. In December 1885 when Oldham did not go home for Christmas (most likely due to the financial situation of the family) Grove wrote to her mother to inform her how pleased he and the professors at the RCM were with Oldham. He went on to tell her that Edith had made a great and permanent improvement and that she had played ‘beautifully’ at her examination.<sup>169</sup> The letter also informed Mrs Oldham that the board had unanimously recommended Edith Oldham for another year’s extension to her scholarship. This letter illustrates Grove responsibility in keeping Edith Oldham’s mother informed as a parent. It also shows the success of Oldham’s studies at the Royal College of Music, that she was impressing her teachers enough to be so highly recommended. He also mentioned visiting Oldham’s aunt in London so that he could read her letters from Dublin to her.<sup>170</sup>

In 1886 there was a problem with Edith Oldham’s family and their finances. Her brother, Charles Hubert, had lost his teaching position at Trinity College due to his strong support of the Home Rule movement and his advertisement of his political views. As a result he would no longer be able to contribute to Edith’s expenses in London. Her mother wanted her to return to Dublin straight away and to begin

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<sup>168</sup> Grove Letters, 22 April 1885, RCM MS. 6864/7; 1 May 1885, RCM MS. 6864/8; 10 August 1885, RCM MS. 6864/9; 17 June 1886, RCM MS. 6864/33; 8 April 1887, RCM MS. 6864/56; 7 February 1895, RCM MS. 6864/408.

<sup>169</sup> Grove Letters, 22 December 1885, RCM MS. 6864/10.

<sup>170</sup> Grove Letters, 22 April 1885, RCM MS. 6864/7.

looking for work there.<sup>171</sup> Edith Oldham must have contacted Grove as soon as she received the news, because her mother's letter is dated the 12 July 1886 and on the 13 July Grove wrote to her both to say he was sorry to hear her news and to offer his counsel: 'you shall have my counsel – tho' I fear it will not avail much'.<sup>172</sup> On the 17 July he wrote to her in more detail, referring to Edith's teacher, Franklin Taylor, and his arguments for her staying in London and to her own argument, namely that because her scholarship was extended for a year she could not 'in honour or fairness to the college go away before the end of that year'.<sup>173</sup> Grove promised to talk to Taylor further and to write to Edith's mother. He was not happy about Oldham returning to Dublin to make her start and offered to look for a position for her in England if it came to that. It appears that Oldham's family resolved the situation and Oldham returned to the Royal College of Music in September 1886 for another year. Grove also seems to have helped where possible to improve Oldham's financial situation. For example, in 1887 he referred to an index she had completed for him and what a nice and exact job she had done.<sup>174</sup> He offered to give her 5 shillings for the work and inquired if that was enough or if she was happy with that. Grove continued to take a great interest in Oldham's work and her piano practice, even at times when he was extremely busy with his own work, such as with the preparation of his 'dictionary'.<sup>175</sup> His words are always encouraging and he was always aware of what she was doing and what pieces she was learning or performing. For example, in November 1886 Edith Oldham performed Schumann's *Carnaval* at a student concert at the Royal College of Music. In a short note that is not dated Grove assured her that

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<sup>171</sup> Ann Oldham's letters to Edith Oldham, RCM MS. 6863/149. Edith's mother Ann also wrote to her when she was in London and the RCM library have 193 of her letters, all of which have also been transcribed by Celia Clarke.

<sup>172</sup> Grove Letters, 13 July 1886, RCM MS. 6864/41.

<sup>173</sup> Grove Letters, 17 July 1886, RCM MS. 6864/42.

<sup>174</sup> Grove Letters, 15 March 1887, RCM MS. 6864/55.

<sup>175</sup> Grove Letters, 6 November 1886, RCM MS. 6864/47.

she was 'sure to make a success' and that he predicted that she would play some movements 'specially well!'.<sup>176</sup> He did continue to share elements of his own life with Oldham, and also with Louise Kellett. The next two letters in the collection are from the time of Grove's daughter Millicent's death. He wrote to the two girls on the 15 December informing them of her condition. At that point, although she was very ill, Grove wrote that he was still hopeful because her condition had not worsened in a few days. However Millicent died at 3.00am on the morning on the 16 December 1886.<sup>177</sup> The fact that he mentions writing to Kellett suggests that Oldham was not the only one of his students to whom he wrote, but that it is her letters that have survived. At a time when her own father had passed away and she was in a strange city, George Grove's caring words were most likely a constant source of comfort and guidance, and it is possible that Oldham both recognised the importance of the letters from someone as influential as he was, and also that they meant a lot to her in the absence of her father.

In June 1887 Edith Oldham began to make plans to return to Dublin to work, a move that was strongly supported by her family. It caused George Grove distress and he did much to convince her and her family that her future would be a better one if she remained in London. His first letter documenting his disagreement was from 2 July 1887.<sup>178</sup> He wrote that he was distressed and disappointed but was quick to inform her that he did not blame her. Grove was worried that Oldham would not make good money in Dublin even though it seemed her brother had suggested the contrary, and he was also worried that she would live a hard life in the Irish capital

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<sup>176</sup> Grove Letters, RCM MS. 6864/48.

<sup>177</sup> Details of her death are included in Celia Clarke's transcriptions of the Grove letter, 15 December 1886, RCM MS. 6864/49.

<sup>178</sup> Grove Letters, RCM MS. 6864/69.

trying to succeed. He informed her that he had taken the liberty of writing to her brother about the situation in an attempt to convince him of the advantages of her remaining in London. It seems that Grove had found a position for Oldham teaching in Hagley, the seat of the Lyttelton family. In his letter to Eldred he informed him of the advantages of such a position for Edith: a good income, living like a lady and being well treated by Lord Lyttelton's people.<sup>179</sup> Edith's mother must have been a factor in the decision for her to move home to Dublin because in his letter to Eldred Grove suggested that Ann Oldham could go to live with Edith in Hagley. Grove argued that the position was one that would not likely come around again and that surely the College should have some say in the decision since they had 'maintained and taught her', and because if she took the position it would be a means of the college getting 'its teaching put into practice in so advantageous a way'. However, it seems that Grove's advice and wishes for Edith fell on deaf ears and Oldham returned to Ireland in July 1887. Grove continued to try and aid her career and mentioned in letters that he had written to various figures in music in Dublin such as Robert Stewart, J.P Mahaffy, and Henry Doyle in order to help find her work.<sup>180</sup> On 2 October 1887 he referred briefly to Oldham's good news which he claimed was 'good, though small': she had been appointed as assistant piano professor at the Royal Irish Academy of Music.<sup>181</sup>

Ironically, several years later, in 1895, Oldham seems to have been considering returning to London. Grove was looking out for positions for her and on the 13 October 1895 he wrote to her about a position as head of a new preparatory

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<sup>179</sup> Grove Letters, 2 July 1887, RCM MS. 6864/70. This was likely a position teaching the children of Lord Charles Lyttelton who was a liberal member of parliament.

<sup>180</sup> Grove Letters, 25 September 1887, RCM MS. 6864/77.

<sup>181</sup> Grove Letters, 2 October 1887, RCM MS. 6864/78.

school. In the letter he asked her if she would let him know if she was interested and what her income was. On the subject of the latter he assured her that ‘I may be trusted with the information’.<sup>182</sup> The following Friday, 18 October, after receipt of her letter with her income he advises her to stay - ‘as a teacher it would not be possible for you to earn anything like your present income’.<sup>183</sup> This suggests that she was extremely well paid at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, if her income could not be matched in London in a position as head of a school. This was a notable advantage for teachers in Dublin in the late nineteenth century because earlier in the century the rates of pay had still been much higher in London.<sup>184</sup> Although the number of professional female teachers grew throughout the world in the nineteenth century, in other countries the advances in the profession did not bring about professional respect in many cases and as a result the female teachers did not earn the same amount. However, in Ireland women managed to command fees that were equal or at the very least close to those of their male colleagues. This is illustrated by Grove’s advice to Oldham above. It was a blessing for the Royal Irish Academy of Music, and also later for the Feis Ceoil competition in particular, that Grove did not manage to procure a position for Edith Oldham in London. She remained on the Royal Irish Academy of Music teaching staff until her death in 1950 and was the first piano professor to be listed as having a diploma, the ARCM. Oldham remained loyal to the institute that had launched her career. She was honoured by the Board when in 1938 she received a FRIAM along with Annie Irwin.<sup>185</sup> Later in 1968, eighteen years

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<sup>182</sup> Grove Letters, 13 October 1895, RCM MS. 6864/437.

<sup>183</sup> Grove Letters, 18 October 1895, RCM MS. 6864/438.

<sup>184</sup> Horton, ‘Finance Among Professional Musicians’.

<sup>185</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, pp. 453-454.

after her death, the Royal Irish Academy of Music established the Edith Best Scholarship for the best young competitor under eight.<sup>186</sup>

### **2.10 The Salaries of Female Staff at the Royal Irish Academy of Music**

The treatment of women on the staff of the Royal Irish Academy of Music was progressive from the outset, particularly in terms of their salaries. In the case of Fanny Robinson, as well as being equal to her male peers in the Royal Irish Academy of Music, her salary per annum was above average for a woman in Ireland at that time. The occupation that was perhaps closest to that of the music teacher was that of the daily governess. These were educated women, often from the middle class, who made a living from teaching the disciplines in which they were skilled. In 1887 the standard rate of pay for such a position was sixty pounds per annum. This was for an average of six hours work per day, ten months of the year.<sup>187</sup> In comparison to this Fanny Robinson was earning forty pounds more per annum almost twenty years before that. Her rate of payment probably reflected her fame as a pianist and composer and, as previously mentioned, she was a valuable asset to the Royal Irish Academy of Music as a means of attracting students and was therefore worth the money: while her payment was definitely progressive for a woman working in Ireland, it can be justified by her reputation.

However, for the next generation of female teachers in the Royal Irish Academy of Music this progressive payment of women was continued and a comparison with their salaries and that of the daily governess, as mentioned in the

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<sup>186</sup> For more information on her marriage to Best and his contribution to the scholarship see chapter five below.

<sup>187</sup> Marianne Moffett, 'The Pay and Position of Teachers', *Annual Report of the Association of Irish Schoolmistresses and Other Ladies Interested in Education*, in *Women in Ireland 1800-1918*, Maria Luddy, ed., p. 149.

1887 report, further illustrates the position of the female music teacher in the Royal Irish Academy of Music. In the report on the ‘pay and position of teachers’ of the Association of Irish Schoolmistresses in 1887 it stated that a daily governess, one who taught several students per day either in her home or that of the student, could expect to earn a shilling per hour.<sup>188</sup> In 1889 the Royal Irish Academy of Music reorganised its methods of payment. Until that point there had been no set rates of pay and each teacher had been on a different rate based on how many students they had and whatever had been decided when they first joined the teaching staff, so a comparison of the rates of pay up until June 1889 will first be made.<sup>189</sup> The daily governess was on a salary of sixty pounds, as already mentioned, while in the Royal Irish Academy of Music one female teacher, Margaret O’Hea, was earning one hundred and thirty three pounds per annum, more than twice the salary of a governess.<sup>190</sup> The strong position of female music teachers is further illustrated through an examination of the new rates of pay that were established in the Royal Irish Academy of Music in June 1889. Teachers were now paid an hourly rate and those in the position of professor were also paid an additional annual salary. The hourly rate varied based on what the teachers taught and their popularity or ability to draw new students. However, in comparison to the shilling per hour of the governess even the lowest paid female in the Royal Irish Academy of Music was earning double that hourly rate. The hourly rates of the principal female teachers in the institution in June 1889 were: Mrs Scott Ffennell – six shillings, Margaret O’Hea – three shillings and six pence, and Edith Oldham who had just joined the Royal Irish Academy of Music teaching staff, two shillings and six pence.<sup>191</sup> In the report there

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<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>189</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 152.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.



is reference also to the resident governess, one who would live in with a family and teach the children of the house. These are described as ‘generally’ being from the ‘class of ladies who brought up in comfort and even luxury... are suddenly, through some financial catastrophe or through the death of the house, left almost penniless’.<sup>192</sup> These women became resident governesses in order to ease the financial situation and help their family. However, the salary for the position was often very low, as little as twenty pounds per annum.<sup>193</sup> Both Edith Oldham and Margaret O’Hea found themselves in precisely the position described above: Oldham’s father died while she was away studying at the Royal College of Music in London and the O’Hea family’s financial situation changed greatly as a result of an accident their father had. While they maintained their social standing in society as part of the middle class, their financial situations changed drastically. But because of their own talents as musicians and the dedication they gave to their work both of these women were in a much better position than that of the live-in governess and capable of helping their families financially and supporting themselves. In comparison to women in other areas of employment in Ireland, such as the governess, the female music teacher, particularly those employed by the Royal Irish Academy of Music, was extremely well treated and paid rates that were progressive in Irish society for a woman. Also, while not all of the female teachers in the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1889 were earning equal amounts to their male peers as Fanny Robinson had before them, several were. For example Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell was at that point earning as much as the violin teacher Carl Lauer and one shilling more per hour than T. R. G. Jozé. Therefore the treatment of women in the Royal Irish Academy of Music was clearly fair and also progressive by nineteenth

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<sup>192</sup> Moffett, ‘The Pay and Position of Teachers’, p. 148.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid*, p. 149.

century standards in Ireland. However, a comparison with musicians in London suggests that Irish musicians did not earn similar incomes to their English peers. Like the teachers in the Royal Irish Academy of Music, the rates of pay varied greatly according to rates charged, the number of students and the reputation of the teacher.<sup>194</sup> Those in well respected positions could earn as much as a guinea per lesson by the middle of the nineteenth century, which was significant higher than the rates for teachers in Dublin.<sup>195</sup> Private music teachers could expect to earn a great deal more if they were successful in attracting students. However, like in Dublin where many of the women examined taught privately but also maintained a career in the Royal Irish Academy of Music, a position in the Royal Academy of Music in London, or later the Royal College of Music, was favoured by music teachers, even if they could not command such high incomes as if they were teaching privately. The main reasons for this were the reliable income, which was paid by the school without the teachers having to request it from parents, and also the respectability of holding a recognised teaching position.<sup>196</sup>

## **2.12 The Development of Music Exams and Qualifications**

The desire for a good education and training in one's chosen field or career became of increasing importance to nineteenth century society, and this was a phenomenon common across many professions. As a result there was a growing demand for qualifications and proof of one's standards through the form of examinations and various forms of certification, such as diplomas. This was particularly true of music because the century saw such a huge influx in the numbers of people studying music. As greater numbers of music students themselves pursued teaching the subject,

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<sup>194</sup> Rohr, *The Careers of British Musicians*, p. 136.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid*, p. 135.

examinations and qualifications increasingly came to be seen as a means of distinguishing the competence and skill of musicians. In Ireland, informal music examinations were evident in the early decades of the nineteenth century, in academies such as that of Mrs Allen. However, music education in Ireland from the 1870s was greatly hampered by the Intermediate Education Act of 1878. The Act emphasised the role of education as a utility, with a focus on training for ones career. Teachers were rewarded for good student performance, with better rewards for subjects deemed to best prepare the student for work. This led to a reduction in interest in music education, because it was peripheral to most career-orientated training. It was within this context that figures such as Annie Patterson attempted to restore music to an appreciated position within education. In at least one sense, there was a benefit to this state of affairs; the relative dearth of well-qualified musicians led to a heightened regard for those who did hold good music qualifications, such as Annie Patterson and Edith Oldham.<sup>197</sup>

The practice of examining students was one that Cyril Ehrlich noted as being a ‘uniquely British enterprise’ in the nineteenth century, but it was evident in Ireland too, and decades before it became successful in Britain.<sup>198</sup> The earliest known evidence of music examinations in Ireland were those held by Mrs Allen in her academy. These seem to have been a regular event in the Allen’s academy from the 1830s, and there were regular mentions in contemporary advertisements of concerts that included public student examinations. The students were usually orally examined in front of an audience before they performed on the piano.<sup>199</sup> While the advertisements do not mention the students receiving certificates or qualifications

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<sup>197</sup> For more on Annie Patterson’s music education see chapter three, below.

<sup>198</sup> Ehrlich, *The Music Profession*, p.116.

<sup>199</sup> *EP*, 11 April 1840, p. 4.

through these examinations, they are notable as the first evidence of formal and public examinations in music in Ireland.

In England, several examining bodies had arisen by the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1866, the Society of Arts began to run local examinations in ‘theory and composition’ and later, practical examinations in a variety of instruments. However the Society of Arts examinations never really gained popularity, and they were soon made redundant by the work of Trinity College, London. The latter had begun as the Choral Society of London and College of Choral Music in 1872, and it was instrumental in raising choral standards in the 1870s.<sup>200</sup> The organisation became incorporated as Trinity College, London in 1875 and then began to explore the wider secular market of music training and education. The College started to run theory examinations for men in 1877 and a year later, it widened its market further by opening the exams to women, and including piano and singing exams. The exams of Trinity College, London, along with the qualifications that institutions such as the Royal College of Music, London put in place, meant that by the 1890s Ireland had been passed out in the field of music qualifications and examinations. This was would not be rectified until the Royal Irish Academy of Music began to run standardised examinations.

Although the Royal Irish Academy of Music did informally test their students in the early years of its existence, there was no structure in place for the awarding of diplomas or certificates until the early twentieth century.<sup>201</sup> In 1892 the board of

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<sup>200</sup> Erlich, *The Music Profession*, p. 116.

<sup>201</sup> In the RIAM annual report of 1913 it was noted that ‘Mr Larchet had succeeded in passing the very difficult examination prescribed .. and securing the Diploma of the RIAM’. Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 435.

Governors began to put a plan in place to examine external students around the country. This led to the development of the local centre examinations, the first series of which took place in 1894, in Belfast, Bray and Rathfarnham. The exams proved to be a success and the numbers of students examined grew steadily in the years that followed. They remain one of the most successful elements of the Royal Irish Academy of Music in the twenty-first century. The exams echoed the work of institutions like Trinity College, London, who had recognised an opening in the continually growing market of music teaching. The growth and development of the exams in the early decades of the twentieth century was aided in particular by Margaret O’Hea and Michele Esposito.

### **2.13 The Overall Growth in Female Pedagogy in Dublin**

Over the course of the century women created a place for themselves in a new profession in Ireland and managed to gain equality within the profession. They went from being non-existent as teachers to becoming respected and sought-after members of the city’s teaching profession either as part of the Royal Irish Academy of Music or in a private capacity. When compared with the situation in other countries theirs is most like that of female teachers in England. In particular, the fact that the Royal Irish Academy of Music employed women so early in its existence is similar to the practices of the Royal Academy of Music in London. In relation to much of the rest of the world the situation of women in Dublin was relatively progressive. In Europe, while there were many women teaching privately, they were generally not accepted into the professional sphere of music conservatories until later in the century. In comparison with America, the Irish women were extremely well treated as music teachers. For example, in the larger American cities such as Chicago and New York,

there was still a strong preference for male teachers in the nineteenth century and therefore women found it ‘almost impossible’ to get a good position in the fashionable schools in the city.<sup>202</sup> However, the continuous growth of women as teachers had its downfalls too. Teachers, particularly of the piano, were in great demand. As a result many attempted the profession who were not necessarily suited to it, thus creating the need for improving the standard. As Annie Patterson put it in her book, *Chats With Music Lovers*,

If the young girl fresh from school can stumble through a few stock pieces she sees no harm in adding to her pocket-money by taking pianoforte pupils at a few shillings a quarter- her fees barely keep her in boots and gloves.<sup>203</sup>

This situation began to be rectified in the work of Annie Curwen, who provided the private piano teacher a guide in developing their methods of teaching which covered all aspects of a student’s education.

By the beginning of the twentieth century piano teaching had become a respectable and well paid profession for women. Their ascent into the profession had been slow and discreet. Female teachers began in the early decades of the century by teaching in their homes, or the homes of their students, thus maintaining a level of domesticity to the work, which helped it to be accepted by their male peers. They then progressed to setting up musical academies, such as that of Mrs Allen, but such establishments were always founded either in the home of the teacher or with the aid and support of a male relative. The final step into the profession of music teaching for women in Dublin came with their progression into teaching positions in the Royal

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<sup>202</sup> Amy Fay, ‘The Woman Teacher in a Large City’, *Women in Music: An Anthology of Source Readings from the Middle Ages to the Present*, Carol Neuls-Bates, ed., (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986), pp. 109-121.

<sup>203</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *Chats with Music Lovers* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1907), p. 139.

Irish Academy of Music, the country's principal music academy. Through this progression throughout the century, women were able to work within the discipline while also remaining respected members of the community. Women's connection with the piano and music continued to appear in fiction but they had taken on a new professional role rather than simply using their talents to entertain others. In James Joyce's story 'The Dead' in *The Dubliners* we hear of the professions of Miss Kate, Miss Julia and Mary Jane: they were all involved in music, as teachers or performers, and we are told that 'although their life was modest, they believed in eating well'.<sup>204</sup> This was the lifestyle that music, and teaching in particular, gave them. The life of Joyce's characters shares many similarities with that of the O'Hea sisters in the early nineteenth century. Teaching music allowed women to work, to be financially independent and to remain respected members of society. The development of music pedagogy in Dublin was an important element in the progression of the role of women in society and it was the first steps towards women being independent and actively involved in all areas of music.

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<sup>204</sup> James Joyce, 'The Dead' in *The Dubliners* (1914; London: Penguin books, 1956), p. 200.

## Chapter Three

### Women Composing: A New Outlet for Female Creativity

Although the presence of female composers in nineteenth-century Dublin is rarely discussed, women were composing music and gaining success as composers throughout the century and into the twentieth century. In his 1903 book on *Woman's Work in Music*, Arthur Elson acknowledges the work of several female composers in Ireland. Despite the broad title of 'woman's work', the book is primarily concerned with female composers, and it refers to Alicia Needham and Lady Dufferin as 'exceptionally good',<sup>1</sup> and also lists Fanny Robinson as a composer of 'cantata and songs' and Annie Patterson as a composer of 'cantatas and songs'.<sup>2</sup> While the information on Robinson may be incorrect because there is no record today of Robinson having composed songs, the fact that their work was acknowledged in 1903 illustrates that they were recognised as composers, and not just in Ireland. However, the music composed by these women, including Alicia Needham and Lady Dufferin, has been forgotten in contemporary studies of Irish composers. Robinson and Patterson have received little recognition for their work as composers, except brief mentions in dictionaries of female composers, such as the *International Encyclopaedia of Women Composers*, and in the history of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, *To Talent Alone*.<sup>3</sup> In the case of Alicia Adelaide Needham, despite enjoying much success in her early life as a composer, her work has gone mainly unrecognised and unappreciated in the past seventy years until Axel Klein's research

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur Elson and Everett E. Truette, *Woman's Work in Music* (Boston: L.C. Page & Co, 1903), p. 152.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 278.

<sup>3</sup> Cohen, *International Encyclopaedia*, p. 534 and p. 589 and Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*.



on her life and career.<sup>4</sup> Lady Dufferin was not as popular as the others in her own life time: she had her music published but it was not performed as frequently as that of Robinson or Patterson. However, she has been remembered to a greater extent than the other women, mostly likely because of her position as a member of the upper class: her title brought her more to public notice and her compositions attracted interest as a feature of her life. This chapter will address the fact that female composers in nineteenth-century Dublin have been largely forgotten; it will explore the role of female composers in Dublin's musical culture and how their compositions were received by their peers; it provides a study of the circumstances in which the music was composed and the reception of the music of the aforementioned female composers in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Dublin.

### **3.1 Female Composers in Europe and Britain**

The nineteenth century brought women across Europe more opportunities in musical life. There was a growth in public concerts and in the establishment of music schools and also a greater interest in musical activities by the middle class, whose new-found prosperity allowed them to provide support for musical events through attendance. However, women in music in Europe were still restricted in the opportunities open to them. They had managed to gain acceptance as performers and, towards the end of the nineteenth century, as teachers. But in the discipline of composition they met with a lot of opposition from men. This may be attributed to the many male historians, philosophers and musicians who voiced their opinions on women's inability to be creative. For example, in the words of the conductor and pianist Hans Von Bülow:

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<sup>4</sup> Axel Klein, 'A Daughter of Music – Alicia Adelaide Needham's Anglo-Irish Life and Music', unpublished paper given at the SMI/ RMA joint conference, Royal Irish Academy of Music, 9 – 12 July 2009.

‘[r]eproductive genius can be admitted to the pretty sex, but productive genius unconditionally cannot... there will never be a woman composer, at best a misprinting copyist... I do not believe in the feminine form of the word creator’.<sup>5</sup>

Many of these opinions followed on from those of philosophers from the eighteenth century such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who stated that:

Women in general... have no genius...The celestial flame which warms and sets fire to the soul, that genius which consumes and devours, that burning eloquence, those sublime transports which carry their raptures to the depths of the hearts, will always lack in the writings of women; their works are cold and pretty as they are; they may contain as much wit as you please, never a soul; they are a hundred times more sensible than passionate.<sup>6</sup>

As a result of these opinions women composers were usually discouraged from pursuing composition as anything other than a pastime, and in many cases the negative social attitudes led them to doubt their ability. As Marcia Citron has noted, creativity for men was conceiving something mentally, while for women, it was the act of procreation, conceiving something physically.<sup>7</sup> This idea was one that took root in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was used by many men to discourage women from partaking in artistic creativity. Male creativity was considered to be worthy of celebration, whereas the process of female creativity was perceived as hidden and negative. Those women who attempted to transgress the boundaries and engage in mental creativity were often deemed mad by their male peers. Many scholars now argue that the high numbers of women who were declared insane or depressed in the nineteenth century was a direct result of the confines put on their artistic creativity.<sup>8</sup> These restrictions on women were so deeply engrained in society that even when women did venture into artistic genres such as writing, art or musical composition, they tended to restrict themselves to the smaller and lesser

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<sup>5</sup> Eugene Gates, ‘The Woman Composer Question: Philosophical and Historical Perspectives’, *The Kapralova Society Journal*, 4, (Fall 2006), p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, p. 45.

<sup>8</sup> The idea of women and madness in relation to artistic creativity will be discussed further in chapter six, below.

genres. For example, in music they composed mainly songs and piano music, rather than symphonies and operas. Citron suggests that the greater values placed on complex art forms which required formal education acted as a method of excluding women composers.<sup>9</sup> In nineteenth-century Europe, while there were female composers, they struggled to gain respect for their creative musical abilities.

### **3.2 The Role of the Female Composer in Dublin**

The treatment of women composers in Ireland, and especially Dublin, seems again to have been quite distinct from the rest of Europe. When they began to appear, their music was appreciated, performed and praised by men. They composed in similar styles and forms to their female European peers and their compositions were similar in standards and genres to those of Dublin's male composers, such as Joseph Robinson and Sir Robert Stewart. It is difficult to compare the Irish female composers with their British or European counterparts such as Ethel Smyth or Clara Schumann due to the fact that their musical experiences and education differed greatly. Instead, one can examine the difference in the reception of their compositions and evaluate the work of Irish composers in its own right, as an important aspect of musical activity in nineteenth-century Dublin, rather than as part of the wider musical scene of that time.

The role of the female composer in nineteenth-century Dublin was to contribute new music for Dublin's concert life, but it also represents an artistic breakthrough for women. It seems that, in the absence of any significant body of Irish classical music, the compositions of female composers were embraced because

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<sup>9</sup> Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, p. 132.

they were Irish and because they provided Dublin concert life with something that was original and unique to Ireland, rather than simply repeating productions that had been popular in London. The city was somewhat lacking in both male and female composers, and there was little training available to those interested in the discipline, which was problematic for the few who were, because it meant that there was little or no guidance available for them to nurture their talents. For example, the focus in the Royal Irish Academy of Music was not on composition, particularly in the early years, and the Academy's involvement in the subject was slow to develop. In the early years the only creative element of music that was available at the Royal Irish Academy of Music was in the form of harmony classes which were originally taught by Professor John Smith.<sup>10</sup> These were introduced as part of the Academy's reorganisation in 1856. In his inaugural lecture in October 1856, Professor Smith spoke of the 'simple need for education in harmony to supplement the Irish natural musical personality'.<sup>11</sup> Although these classes may have been lacking in the level of guidance required by a young composer, their one benefit over European classes was that female students of the piano at the Academy were allowed to attend, and in 1859 the classes were made compulsory for all students taking instrumental lessons.<sup>12</sup> This was unusual in comparison with European conservatoires, in many of which women were required to study the subjects of theory, harmony and composition but, since they were separated from boys, they most likely followed a different curriculum.<sup>13</sup> It is unclear if the harmony classes in the Royal Irish Academy of Music were mixed or not. However, it remained a discipline that did not become popular in the institute until the twentieth century, with Robert Prescott Stewart commenting that 'few know

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<sup>10</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, pp. 400 - 401.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 700 - 71 and *FJ*, 17 October 1856.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>13</sup> Reich, 'European Composers and Musicians', p. 100.

and less care anything about it'.<sup>14</sup> This gives us a context for the role of the composer in Dublin: they were few and far between, with only a handful making a lasting contribution to the wider European musical repertoire. There were even fewer female composers than there were men, but they were, nevertheless, successful in becoming 'professional composers' by Nancy Reich's definition: they had their music 'published and performed'.<sup>15</sup> They also managed to gain support and praise from their male peers who, rather than holding them back, were often instrumental in their success as composers. However, the one characteristic that was similar for female and male composers in Dublin as well as throughout Britain and Europe was the fact that their careers as composers were nearly always combined with another career as a teacher or performer in order to supplement their income.<sup>16</sup> When women did compose, they tended to avoid writing in larger forms such as the concerto or symphony, preferring to concentrate on compositional forms that were easier to manage and that were also more likely to be performed; but this was also true for the majority of Dublin's male composers: nineteenth-century Dublin did not have a professional orchestra in residence so the possibilities of having such large scale works performed would have been almost non-existent.

While the works of women composers in Ireland were popular in their own lifetimes, they were quickly forgotten, with no record of any of the previously mentioned compositions being performed in the past one hundred years. One can only guess at why this was so. Their works may have enjoyed popularity because of the support that they received from their peers but they were forgotten when those who believed in them died. Another explanation might be that, because there was a

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<sup>14</sup> Jeremy Dibble, 'The Composers in the Academy 1850-1940', *To Talent Alone*, p. 401.

<sup>15</sup> Reich, 'European Composers and Musicians', p. 101.

<sup>16</sup> Rohr, *The Careers of British Musicians*, p.139.

wealth of music that had not been performed in Ireland, the compositions of its female composers were quickly replaced. Finally, the reasoning behind their fall from grace could have been as trivial as that they were simply no longer in fashion. In the case of songs or solo piano pieces, or even Fanny Robinson's cantata which was a popular choice for performance in Dublin during her lifetime, their themes may have been rooted too firmly in Victorian ideals to cross into the twentieth century. However, it appears that the works of male composers were just as quickly forgotten. With the exception of Stewart, most of them faded into obscurity much as the female composers did. The loss of female composers from the pages of Irish history books is perhaps more to do with inequalities in the rediscovery of Irish composers and their works at the end of the twentieth century, than it has to do with inequalities in how easily they were discarded. Nonetheless, the compositions of these women nevertheless provide an example of what was popular in nineteenth-century Dublin, as well as giving an insight into the creative minds of the women who composed them.

### **3.3 The Compositions of Fanny Robinson**

In addition to her activities in music as a teacher and a performer, Fanny Arthur Robinson was also one of the first professional female composers active in Dublin, beginning to compose shortly after she moved to Ireland. Her knowledge and interest in composition is most likely to have arisen as a result of her early music education with Sir William Sterndale Bennett and Sigismund Thalberg, and later, her husband's work as a composer. Her compositional output consists of piano pieces and one sacred cantata, *God is Love*. The entry on her in *The New Grove Dictionary* mentions that she also composed 'some songs', but it has not been possible to find information

or a source to support this.<sup>17</sup> It is possible that some of her husband's vocal compositions were mistakenly attributed to her, because her compositions were published under the name Mrs. Joseph Robinson. The National Library of Ireland and the Royal Irish Academy of Music library have copies of ten of Fanny's compositions: her cantata and nine pieces for the piano. However, *The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980* contains thirteen entries for compositions by her, but does not include three of those held in the Royal Irish Academy of Music collection.<sup>18</sup> It is unclear from both archives precisely how many pieces she had published. Her work as a composer was defined by her cantata, which became her most popular work and the one for which she is usually remembered. Her piano pieces are usually dismissed as being too simple or 'ephemeral', and while they may be basic in their construction, they illustrate Robinson's talents as a composer of piano music and her understanding of the capabilities of the instrument, as well as providing an insight into the composer herself.<sup>19</sup> In all of her surviving published compositions Fanny Arthur Robinson names herself as either Mrs Joseph Robinson or Mrs J. Robinson. This was unusual by European standards and seems to put her somewhere in the middle between Clara Schumann, who was published under her own name, and Fanny Hensel, who had several compositions published under her brother's name. However, the use of their husband's name was a common practice for women in Ireland and England at this period; indeed, Annie Curwen also published her writings under the name of Mrs J. Spencer Curwen.

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<sup>17</sup> Grattan Flood/ Dr. Patrick Devine, 'Robinson, Fanny Arthur,' *NG2001*, p. 471.

<sup>18</sup> *The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980* xlvi (London: K.G. Saur, 1985), p. 250.

<sup>19</sup> Philip Shields, 'The Special Collections of the Academy Library', *To Talent Alone*, p. 484.

Fanny Robinson's piano pieces were all based on a theme which is represented in the title and then reaffirmed through the extracts of poetry that accompany each piece. There was always a dedication. While many of the professional composers in the nineteenth-century who were also concert artists composed to display their own talents, this was not the case for Fanny Robinson, there being no record of her ever having played any of her own compositions in concert.<sup>20</sup> However, reviews of her performances and the programmes she chose indicate that her repertoire was usually made up of complex solo piano pieces that illustrated a greater level of difficulty than her own compositions. It seems more likely that her piano music was composed to supplement her teaching materials and also to provide friends and students with simpler pieces to learn that would suit their ability. This view is supported by examination of the copies of her piano music held in the library of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, among which her composition *Laughing Water* has fingering and performance instructions that appear to be in the composer's own handwriting.<sup>21</sup>

Two of the ten pieces by Robinson in the Academy library are the same as two others, except that they have French titles: *Sentiments* also appears as *Pen sees*, and *The Song of the Mill Wheel* appears as *Le Chant du Moulin*. It is possible that the French titles were a result of her performances in Paris and an attempt to market her music abroad. In the case of the latter piece, the copy in the Academy library was published in Paris by E. Gerard & Co., music publishers at 12 Boulevard des Capuchins. However, the edition also lists Chappell & Co. of London, who published five of her other compositions, as well as several of her husband's. On one of the

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<sup>20</sup> Reich, 'European Composers and Musicians', p. 102.

<sup>21</sup> Mrs Joseph Robinson: *Laughing Water: Rondino for the Pianoforte*, (London: Chappell & Co., 1870 ).



editions of *Le Chant du Moulin* there is a note on the cover in the composer's hand which reads 'To dear Annette Hatton, with the Composer's love, Feb. 1879'. This illustrates that Fanny Arthur Robinson gave her music as gifts, perhaps to her students or friends.

Her dedications on her piano pieces also illustrate whom she admired or was inspired by, as well as identifying possible friends or people whom she knew through her work. For example, two of her pieces are dedicated to musicians whom she probably met through her performances in England and Paris. *Constancy*, a duet for violin and piano, is dedicated to Guido Panini, an Italian violinist and composer. Although Panini did end up as a teacher at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, this was fourteen years after Fanny Robinson's death and it is most likely that she met him in Paris. Her composition dedicated to him also attributes him with the transcription of the piece for violin and piano. The opening page has the anonymous quote:

To hearts that cannot vary,  
Absence is Presence, time doth tarry!<sup>22</sup>

Her composition *Evening Thoughts*, an impromptu in Eb major, carries an opening quote from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which appears as follows:

Now came still evening on, and twilight grey  
Had in her sober livery all things clad;  
.....  
.....  
.....the Moon  
Rising in clouded majesty, at length,  
Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light  
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Mrs Joseph Robinson, *Constancy: Melody* (London: J.B. Cramer & Co, 1864).

<sup>23</sup> Mrs Joseph Robinson, *Evening Thoughts*, (London: Chappell & Co, 1873).

It is dedicated to the German-born pianist and conductor Charles Hallé and is relatively slow piece in 3/4 time. *Evening Thoughts* is pretty and pleasant to listen to, and provides the player with practice in several different types of playing - from chords and melody, to arpeggiated chordal movement, to melody and arpeggio accompaniment, and finally, semiquaver legato movement in both hands. It would perhaps be put to best use as a piece to help a student develop different forms of playing all within the one work.

Several of her piano pieces are dedicated to ladies whom she possibly met through her work as a performer and teacher. *Stella*, a ‘*valse brillante*’ in Eb major, is dedicated to Lady Jenkinson.<sup>24</sup> Lady Emily Sophia Jenkinson was the eldest daughter of Anthony L. Lyster of Stillorgan Park in Dublin.<sup>25</sup> George Bernard Shaw mourned her death in his column on music in London, and mentions that she was ‘an Irishwoman, early famous for her pianoforte-playing and her personal beauty’, that she founded a scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music, London in memory of Thalberg, and that she gave an annual prize for piano playing at the Guildhall School.<sup>26</sup> *Infant Smiles* is dedicated to Miss Emily Augusta Brady, who was the daughter of John Maziere Brady, a barrister and granddaughter of Sir Maziere Brady, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.<sup>27</sup> The latter was also involved in the Royal Irish Academy of Music in its early years and he would have attended performances by Fanny Arthur Robinson. Another of his sons, Francis Brady, became involved in the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1856 and is described by Richard Pine as being ‘the most important figure in its entire history in the administrative side’. Perhaps

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<sup>24</sup> Mrs Joseph Robinson, *Stella* (London: Chappell & Co, 1864).

<sup>25</sup> Edmund Lodge Esq., *The Peerage and Baronetage of the British Empire*, (3<sup>rd</sup> edn., London: Sunders and Oatley, 1834) p. 726.

<sup>26</sup> Bernard Shaw, *Music in London 1890-1894* (Edinburgh: R and R Clarke, 1932)pp. 44-45.

<sup>27</sup> Mrs Joseph Robinson, *Infant Smiles* (London: Chappell & Co, 1868).

Fanny Arthur Robinson's composition was dedicated and composed as a present for the birth of Emily Augusta Brady. This could be supported by the title and the opening quote that accompanies the piece:

Hush, hush thee, my baby, hush, hush, thee to rest,  
Be still! And I'll sing thee the song thou lov'st best,  
For I'll sing of the mother whose blessing thou'lt be,  
And of hearts that are glad when they think upon thee,  
And of prayers which are rising that thou may'st be blest,  
Then hush thee, sweet baby, hush, hush, thee to rest.<sup>28</sup>

The quote is from J.S.B. Monsell, a minister and hymn writer from whom Robinson also uses texts in her cantata.

Another of Fanny Arthur Robinson's compositions which is dedicated to a supporter of the Academy is *The Haymakers*, a 'caprice pastorale'. This was composed and dedicated to the Countess of Dunraven.<sup>29</sup> Her husband, the honourable Wyndham Quinn, was an MP from Limerick and after their marriage in 1810 they divided their time between Ireland and the Dunraven estate in Glamorgan in Wales. Her husband was described as a 'stalwart supporter of the Academy', so it is probable that Fanny Arthur Robinson became acquainted with the countess through her husband.<sup>30</sup> *Sentiments*, which is made up of six individual pieces and which was also published under the title *Pensées*, was dedicated to Miss Maria C. Fitzgerald.<sup>31</sup> All of these pieces would have been relatively easy for the enthusiastic amateur to perform, so it is possible that they were composed for the women in question to play, if they were amateur pianists themselves. They also provide us with a picture of the people that Fanny Arthur Robinson was acquainted with. It is also interesting to note

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Mrs Joseph Robinson, *The Haymakers* (London: Cramer, Beale & Co, 1855).

<sup>30</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 44.

<sup>31</sup> Mrs Joseph Robinson, *Sentiments* (London: Cramer, Beale & Co, 1853).

that the majority of her compositions are dedicated to women and composed in styles and forms that would have been popular for female pianists to play in the nineteenth century.

*The Song of the Mill Wheel* seems to have been the most popular of Fanny Robinson's published piano music and the piece which gained her the most recognition as a composer for the instrument.<sup>32</sup> As already mentioned, it was published in Paris, possibly to coincide with her performance there, with the title in French. The front cover of the work describes it as a melody for the pianoforte and it is dedicated to Mrs William Gaskell. Mrs William Gaskell is better known by her own name than that of her husband. She was Elizabeth Gaskell, the English novelist and short story writer. There is no evidence or account of Fanny Robinson having ever met the author. However, her dedication of a piece entitled *The Song of the Mill Wheel* links it to Gaskell's novel, *Mary Barton*, which was published in 1848. The story is centred on the mills of Manchester and when it first appeared it was controversial and greatly criticised by many, not least the Manchester manufacturers who felt they had been unfairly represented.<sup>33</sup> Gaskell was outspoken in her literature, but as a woman was often torn between her responsibilities to her family and to her talents as a writer. She is noted as having said that she had several 'me's'. However, she resolved her guilt over being torn between family and self expression by seeing her writing as the proper use of a God-given talent.<sup>34</sup> This idea is echoed in the work of Fanny Robinson, particularly in her cantata, where she uses her talents to praise and thank God. Robinson must have been an admirer of Gaskell's writing, or

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<sup>32</sup> Mrs Joseph Robinson, *The Song of the Mill Wheel* (London: Chappell & Co, 1865). See appendix two below.

<sup>33</sup> Jenny Uglow, 'Gaskell, Elizabeth Cleghorn', *ODNB*, < [www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com)>, [accessed 17 June 2008], p. 6.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

have been inspired by her work ethics as a woman. Whatever the reason, her piano composition can be seen as paying homage to the mills that are so well described in Gaskell's novel and to the work of Gaskell herself.<sup>35</sup>

*The Song of the Mill Wheel* is in 2/4 time with a G major key signature. It has a tempo marking of *Allegro con Brio* and eighty-five of its eighty-eight bars maintain a continuous rhythmic pattern of semiquaver arpeggio triplets around which the melody develops. The triplet patterns could be seen as illustrative of the constant movement of the mill wheel, particularly at the opening and closing of the piece, where they move down and up the piano. The piece is ternary in structure. The first section has arpeggios in the semiquaver triplets in the centre of the keyboard while the left hand punctuates the harmony in quavers below and above the triplets. This leads into an ascending pattern in the triplets which brings the section to a close. The second section has the harmony clearly laid out in the arpeggio pattern that continues in the triplets with a new melody above the triplets in the treble clef which is also heard in the bass clef, just a tenth lower. The third section sees the triplets moving down the keyboard in the right hand while the left hand alternates between the treble and bass for four bars. The four bars are then repeated and this leads us into what is an exact repeat of all the sections that we have just heard. The piece is simple enough in both its structure and harmony, but it requires a certain amount of skill from the performer in order to deal with the constant triplet movement that alternates between the clefs.

Like other female composers such as Clara Schumann, Fanny Robinson

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<sup>35</sup> Elizabeth Gaskell, *Mary Barton* (1848; London: Vintage Random House, 2008).

seemed to lack confidence in her abilities as a composer. Clara Schumann commented that women always betray themselves in their compositions. And while this was not always true in her case nor that of composers such as Fanny Hensel, it could certainly be applied to the music of Fanny Robinson. In many ways her compositions seem to have been a means for personal expression. The first clear example of this is in her titles. Robinson always gave her compositions names, but she never titled them based on the form she used: for example, she never used titles as simple as rondo or waltz. Many of the titles and accompanying quotes seem confessional, a characteristic of female composers of the Victorian style. An example of this is her cantata, *God is Love*, and the proof that the title is expressing her view can be seen in the preface to the work. The second paragraph of it tells us that:

The authoress would allude to the occasion on which the cantata was composed. It was during the quiet moments of a long and painful illness, whilst meditating upon the Divine goodness that the psalms and hymns herein contained wedded themselves to music in her mind.<sup>36</sup>

The cantata is her expression of God's love, which she believed helped her through her illness.

It is interesting to note that all of Fanny's compositions for the piano are accompanied by a quote from literature or poetry. The quote ties in with the title and then both are illustrated in the music through her use of tonality, dynamics and rhythm. The quotes could be seen as an illustration of what inspired her in her work. All of her piano pieces in particular were composed to express an emotion or event and the quotes could be seen as a means for her to provide the performer with words that describe her inspiration. For example in *The Song of the Mill Wheel*, the music is clearly about the constant movement of the mill wheel, but in case this was not clear

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<sup>36</sup> Mrs Joseph Robinson, *God is Love* (London: Chappell & Co, 1882).

the accompanying quote is:

Mine be a cot beside the hill,  
A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;  
A willowy brook; that turns a mill,  
With many a fall shall linger near.<sup>37</sup>

The quote is from a poem called *A Wish* by Samuel Rogers, a Victorian banker and poet. These quotes provides the performer with a better understanding of what each piece of music is about or what the composer herself wants them to express or illustrate. As well as telling us about the inspiration for the music, the quotes also provide information on the composer: Fanny Robinson was clearly very well read and an avid reader of poetry and literature. Her compositions include quotes from Milton, Longfellow and Shakespeare.

Although Fanny Robinson had been composing piano music since her early twenties, it was her cantata *God is Love*, composed in 1868, that established her reputation as a composer in Dublin. From its first performance, at a benefit for St Patrick Dun's hospital in December 1868, it was extremely well received and quickly became a popular work for performance in the decades that followed. Her cantata earned her the compliment of being recognised as one of the few noteworthy composers in nineteenth-century Dublin in Fleischmann's article on music and society.<sup>38</sup> However, of the four composers he mentioned, Fanny Robinson is the one who has been most neglected in terms of research or references to her work. In an article in *The Irish Times* before the first performance, a description is given of the cantata for their readers so as to 'aid towards the understanding and appreciation of

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<sup>37</sup> See appendix two below.

<sup>38</sup> Fleischmann, 'Music and Society, 1850-1921', p. 502.

so graceful and elegant a work'.<sup>39</sup> The article goes on to comment that the 'gifted authoress conceived the idea of this cantata, arranged and selected the poetry and composed the music during the weary days and nights of a long and tedious illness'.<sup>40</sup> The illness in question seems to have been one of Fanny Robinson's early periods of depression. Over the years that followed, the cantata made regular appearances in Dublin concerts. In May 1870 it was performed as part of the Philharmonic Society's grand choral concert, where it was conducted by Joseph Robinson and the organ was played by Robert Stewart. In May 1872 it was also the first item performed by the Academy choral class.<sup>41</sup> In May 1873 it was the turn of the Harold's Cross Choral Society to perform the work and they were assisted by Fanny and Joseph Robinson.<sup>42</sup> In June 1874 the Rathmines Choral Union included the work in their programme.<sup>43</sup> In June 1875 the cantata made up the first half of the programme for the Christ Church Kingstown Choral Society.<sup>44</sup> Later, in March 1879 the cantata was again performed under the baton of Joseph Robinson at a concert in aid of the building fund for Adelaide medical and surgical hospital in Dublin.<sup>45</sup> Sections of the cantata also appear in the programmes for smaller concerts and Christ Church and St. Patrick's cathedrals took to performing sections of the work as anthems.<sup>46</sup> Despite the success of the cantata and Fanny Robinson's abilities as a pianist, there is no record of her ever performing the piano part of the cantata herself. Similarly, while the piano part seems to have been a piano reduction of an orchestral accompaniment, there is no record of an orchestral accompaniment and in all the

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<sup>39</sup> 'Mrs Joseph Robinson's Sacred Cantata', *IT*, 14 December 1868, p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 484.

<sup>42</sup> *IT*, 2 May 1873, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> *IT*, 23 June 1874, p.1.

<sup>44</sup> *IT*, 16 June 1875, p. 1.

<sup>45</sup> *IT*, 8 March 1879, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> W. H. Grindle: *Irish Cathedral Music: A History of Music at the Cathedrals of the Church of Ireland* (Antrim: W. & G. Baird, 1989), p. 198.



performances mentioned above the instrumental accompaniment was always piano or organ.

As previously mentioned, the cantata was composed while Fanny Arthur Robinson was recovering from a period of illness. She suffered from depression and it often affected every area of her work. From the beginning she decided that all proceeds from its publication would be given to charity to benefit others. In the preface to the work she explains:

In gratitude to the love of God, which was so great a solace to her in her sickness, she has devoted all the proceeds of the work to the relief of suffering humanity. If she can thus make it the means of benefiting others, the design of its publication will be accomplished.

Harry Grindle notes that performances of the work throughout Ireland raised a considerable amount of money for charity.<sup>47</sup> Grindle also commented that its subject and treatment would have appealed strongly to Victorian religious sensibility that of man's changing lot being contrasted with the everlasting joy available through the changeless love of God. In the preface Robinson describes it as an 'illustration of the words which express experiences of the Christian life: its double consciousness of joy and sadness, hope and fear and abiding sense, through all, of the changeless love of God.'<sup>48</sup>

The words for the cantata are derived from the poems of many sacred poets including Horatius Bonar, a nineteenth-century poet and minister, and John Keble, an English minister and a leader of the Oxford Movement. The cantata is scored for SATB choir with piano accompaniment. Although the piano accompaniment looks

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<sup>47</sup> Grindle: *Irish Cathedral Music*, p.198.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

like an orchestral reduction there are no references to an orchestral score. Robinson may have composed the accompaniment in that style, knowing that it was unlikely to be performed with an orchestra in Dublin. The prelude of the cantata, scored for solo piano, encapsulates and introduces the ideas of the complete work. Grindle comments that ‘in this Prelude, untrammelled by text, Mrs Robinson is at her best.’<sup>49</sup> In the prelude and the cantata in general Robinson illustrated her ability to compose music full of compassion and emotion, even if at times it almost reaches the melodramatic.

Joseph Robinson seems to have been supportive of Fanny Robinson’s compositional talents and the publication of her pieces. Her piano pieces were published by the same publishers as his vocal compositions, which is unlikely to have been a coincidence. It is doubtful that he would have allowed this if he did not think her compositional output good enough, particularly since her name appeared as Mrs Joseph Robinson on the majority of her compositions. It was also Joseph Robinson who chose Fanny Robinson’s cantata for the first public performance of the Royal Irish Academy of Music choral class in 1871: it is doubtful that Joseph Robinson would have chosen his wife’s work unless he thought it was good enough to illustrate the talents of his choir. His willingness to perform her music and have his name associated with it suggests that he was proud of her ability. As a result of her practice of giving her name on her compositions as Mrs Joseph Robinson, it appears that their compositions also got mixed up at times. For example, in the *International Encyclopaedia of Women Composers* Fanny Robinson is credited with a compositional output that included piano music, songs and a cantata. There are no

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, p. 199.

known compositions by her that are for voice other than the cantata, but Joseph Robinson composed many vocal works.

The compositional output of Fanny Robinson is not comparable to that of her European peers such as Clara Schumann. Her writing for piano was all the same genre, short piano pieces based on a theme; she did not experiment with more complex genres or forms that became popular in the mid-nineteenth century. She is notable as one of the first woman who began to pave a place for herself among Ireland's composers. She produced a collection of piano pieces which are elegant and harmonically pleasing, while also being illustrative of the kind of music that would have been popular, particularly for women at that time. Her cantata, *God is Love*, was extremely successful and popular by Irish standards and was regularly performed and heard by Dublin audiences in the second half of the nineteenth century. She provided inspiration for her students and other female composers to try to have their music published or performed or even both. She was proof that a woman could now achieve that in Ireland.

#### **3.4 Lady Dufferin and Fanny Robinson: Class Distinctions between Composers**

Fanny Robinson's success as a composer is indisputable. Her music was performed and published and well received by contemporary reviews. However, she was not the only female composer active in the middle of the nineteenth century in Dublin. There were several other women who were composing music but they were members of the upper class society and their work as composers was seen as a suitable pastime for a lady, rather than as being worthy of wide scale performances or recognition. An example of this is the work of Lady Helen Dufferin.

Lady Helen Selina Dufferin was the eldest daughter of Thomas Sheridan, who was an actor and soldier, and she was born in Dublin in 1807. When Lady Helen was seven the family moved to the Cape of Good Hope, where her father took the position as colonial treasurer. After his death in 1817 the family moved to London. At the age of seventeen, she became engaged to Commander Price Blackwood, who was heir to the estate of Baron Dufferin and Clandeboye. Upon marrying Lord Dufferin, Lady Dufferin divided her time between her family and her composing and writing. She wrote several songs and verses, but the majority were published anonymously. Her first publication dated back to her childhood and was a collection of songs, *Set of ten Songs and two Duets*, which she wrote with her sister. They were paid one hundred pounds for their efforts. She often chose Irish themes and subjects for her songs, and her ballad *The Lament of the Irish Emigrant* was her most successful.<sup>50</sup> Alfred Perceval Graves notes that her ‘warm heart beats in such close sympathy with her peasant neighbours’.<sup>51</sup>

Lady Dufferin’s music was most likely only ever performed by herself or her friends at social gatherings in her house, and when it was published, she often did not gain recognition for it. The class distinction meant that her experiences as a composer were very different from those of Robinson. In spite of her talents, which are evident in such songs as *Katie’s Letter*, her music was only seen as a pastime for her. Like Robinson, she probably used writing and composing as a means of distracting herself from times of stress. Her use of motifs and melodic ideas that were

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<sup>50</sup> Alfred Perceval Graves: ‘Anglo Irish Literature’, *The Cambridge History of English and American Literature*, (New York, 1907), < <http://www.bartleby.com/cambridge/> [accessed 30 September 2006].

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

distinctly Irish is similar to the path that composers such as Annie Patterson and Charlotte Milligan Fox would take in their own work later in the nineteenth century.

In many ways the experiences of Lady Dufferin are similar to those of the aristocratic female artists in nineteenth-century Ireland. A close example would be Louisa Beresford, the Marchioness of Waterford. Like Dufferin and Robinson, Beresford was born in England and moved to an estate in Ireland after her marriage to Henry Beresford, the third Marquess of Waterford.<sup>52</sup> She was an extremely talented artist but she never received the recognition she deserved, her talents often being dismissed as something that she used to keep herself occupied. She painted in watercolour and her work was extremely colourful. She also painted murals in Curraghmore House on her husband's estate in Waterford. In spite of her talents, Louisa Beresford is relatively unknown and she has been written out of the history books, in part because of her Anglo-Irish class. Her work, and that of Lady Dufferin and other upper class women active in other areas of the arts was dismissed as a pastime and the contribution these women made to the cultural history of Ireland has been largely neglected. They are remembered for their position in society rather than for their artistic endeavours, although at most passing mention of their talents as artists or composers might be made.

### **3.5 The Compositions of Elena Norton (Ellen O'Hea)**

Fanny Robinson's successes as a composer were most likely a source of great pride for the Royal Irish Academy of Music which employed her, and of inspiration for the next generation of female composers in Dublin. One of Fanny Robinson's students

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<sup>52</sup> Information on Louisa Beresford is from a paper given at a Symposium on Irish Female Artists held at Trinity College, Dublin, October 2009. Myles Campbell, 'In a Class of her Own: Louisa, Marchioness of Waterford (1818 – 1891).

who could be seen to have followed in her footsteps was Ellen O’Hea. She was briefly a student of Robinson’s at the Royal Irish Academy of Music where she also attended harmony classes, which at that point had been taken over by Sir Robert Stewart.<sup>53</sup> His classes appear to have been more dynamic than those of his predecessor Professor John Smith, and his methods made a lasting impression on his students. He was also very supportive and encouraging to those who showed a particular interest in the subject of composition, whether they were male or female. This was notably progressive, especially in comparison to the views of many of his peers on the Continent. While he did still see women as the delicate sex in need of protection, his interest was stimulated by his students’ abilities and not defined by their gender. Ellen O’Hea showed a talent for composition which was nurtured by Sir Robert Stewart and he looked over her works, offering criticisms and advice.

Little is known about Ellen O’Hea, but she was a popular contributor to concert life in Dublin particularly in the 1870s, as both a composer and singer. The youngest sister of Margaret, Alice and Mary O’Hea, she died at a young age in 1880, although the cause of death and her exact age are unknown.<sup>54</sup> Ellen O’Hea composed and performed under the name Elena Norton, probably to distinguish herself from her sisters. Her compositional output included several songs and operettas. Her interest in composing operas and operettas was probably due to the fact that in nineteenth-century Dublin it was the genre that had the greatest following.<sup>55</sup> Opera that was staged in London quickly came across to Dublin and between 1850 and

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<sup>53</sup> Patterson, ‘Margaret O’Hea, continued’, *WIT*.

<sup>54</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 32; Patterson, ‘Margaret O’Hea, continued’, *WIT*.

<sup>55</sup> Aloys Fleischmann, ‘Music in Nineteenth-Century Ireland’, *Four Centuries of Music in Ireland*, ed. Brian Boydell, (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1979), p. 41.

1900 there were 150 operas staged in Dublin.<sup>56</sup> From the 1860s light opera was extremely popular throughout Europe, and to meet this demand in Ireland, the Gaiety Theatre was opened in 1871. The Gaiety specialised in staging operettas such as those of Offenbach and it was also the venue where both Elena Norton and Annie Patterson had their operettas staged.<sup>57</sup>

The most successful of Elena Norton's operettas and operas was a comic opera entitled *The Rose and the Ring* which was based on William Thackeray's fairytale of the same name. It was premiered on a small scale in the Royal Irish Academy of Music in November of 1876 and was so well received by the audience that a full production took place in the Antient Concert Rooms in February of the following year. At that point it was conducted by Robert Stewart. As well as offering advice and encouragement on her compositions and orchestration, he seems to have been actively involved in several performances of her works. The opera was well received by the contemporary press. In an article in the *Irish Times* in November 1876 it is praised and used as proof for the 'opponents of the women's rights question' that a woman is capable of 'the highest eminence in the science of music'.

The article goes on to state that:

No female foot has trodden in the ranks of the great composers and that it was not recorded that any lady had produced a successful opera but perhaps Miss Norton may break the spell and inscribe her name on the roll of fame... where it will be an example and encouragement to the musical sisterhood.<sup>58</sup>

The review of the opera that follows is similarly enthusiastic throughout, and it praises the composer and the librettist, also a woman, and it predicts a 'brilliant future for the gifted young composer'. The *Irish Times* music journalist, Faust, was

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *IT*, 11 November 1876, p. 2.

most certainly a fan of the work, as is evident from the above and also an article in January 1877 advertising the work. In it he noted that at its first performance the many ‘eminent musicians’ present were surprised to hear

[s]o original and attractive a composition from the pen of a lady who, though young in years, exhibits very great talent in the difficult art which she pursues with such earnestness and enthusiasm.<sup>59</sup>

In February of that year the work was performed with orchestral accompaniment in the Antient Concert Rooms. Following the performance, Faust notes that the opera had gained attention from the ‘correspondents of several English newspapers, musical and otherwise’.<sup>60</sup> It appeared in March of that year as the programme for the benefit concert of Mr. R.M. Levey, the violin teacher at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, and in April it was performed at the Gaiety Theatre. In the years that followed it continued to appear in concerts. Elena Norton also composed at least two other operettas. In September 1877 the first performance of a new comic opera was given at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, and in 1879 her operetta *The Lost Chord* was performed. The plot is centred on ‘an enthusiastic Wagnerian’ who was looking for the ‘typical chord’ to express the ‘highest effort of music’ and he gets caught up with the rest of the characters who are looking for the lost cord, at the end of which lies a jewelled case.<sup>61</sup> For all of these compositions Norton worked with the same librettist, Miss Hayes, who was a fellow student of hers at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. Together they managed to gain a successful reputation in Dublin and their works seemed always to enjoy popularity, as they reappear in benefits and concerts throughout the 1870s and into the 1880s.

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<sup>59</sup> *IT*, 29 January 1877, p. 6.

<sup>60</sup> *IT*, 5 March 1877, p. 4.

<sup>61</sup> *IT*, 3 March 1879, p. 6.



In his article on Irish opera, Axel Klein complained of the attention given to opera performed in Ireland rather than opera from Ireland – that history had ‘passed them by’.<sup>62</sup> His article goes on to identify many of the worthy and active composers of opera in Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The article is an important introduction to Ireland’s native opera, but while he sheds light on the male composers of opera, the work of the female opera composers is forgotten, most likely because so little information exists on their compositions. In the case of Ellen O’Hea and Annie Patterson, both composed operas, had their works performed and received positive reviews for their operatic works, at least in Dublin. While none of the scores of their operas survive, their popularity in the nineteenth century makes them deserving of a mention as contributors to Ireland’s operatic output in the nineteenth century.

Although Elena Norton appears to have made a significant contribution to Irish composition in her short lifetime, without the scores it is impossible to know the extent of her talents. All that survives of her compositional output are copies of two of her songs, *Gather ye Rosebuds* with words by Herrick, and *In a Valley Far Away*, which was also known as *Maurya Vawn Asthore*; both are in the British Library. The first, *Gather ye Rosebuds*, is a song with piano accompaniment which is dedicated to Sir Robert Prescott Stewart.<sup>63</sup> The words are by the seventeenth-century English poet Robert Herrick and they warn of the fleeting nature of time. The song uses repeated rhythmical patterns throughout and the repetition of the last line of each verse.

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<sup>62</sup> Klein, ‘Stage-Irish,’ p. 27.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> See appendix three, below.

There is no record of Elena Norton's operas having been published, and it is possible that they never were. It is regrettable that no evidence remains of works which were so popular at the time. However, she achieved what many composers of that era did not: she managed to have all her compositions performed and usually with reputable musicians involved, such as Robert Stewart. In many cases she also got to perform in her own works. In the majority of the productions of her comic opera *The Rose and the Ring*, including its premiere at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in November 1876, she performed the leading soprano role herself. The *Irish Times* reported of her performance in 1876 that 'her singing throughout was distinguished by rare grace and cultivation'.<sup>64</sup> She returned to the role in February of the following year when the opera was performed with orchestral accompaniment at the Antient Concert Rooms.<sup>65</sup> Later that year the same paper reported a new comic operetta by Elena Norton which again had her and her librettist, Miss Hayes, taking the leading role. Although the work is not named at this point, her performance was again warmly received.<sup>66</sup> This practice continued for the rest of her career. In 1879 she performed the lead role in her operetta *The Lost Chord* in a benefit concert at the Gaiety Theatre. The review of the concert credited her with having gained 'much distinction both as a vocalist and a composer.'<sup>67</sup> Norton's work was a further step forward for female composers in Dublin because she managed to gain recognition for all that she composed and she managed to perform several of her own leading roles, all within a relatively short lifetime.

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<sup>64</sup> *IT*, 11 November 1876, p. 2.

<sup>65</sup> *IT*, 1 February 1877, p. 4.

<sup>66</sup> *IT*, 17 September 1877, p. 4.

<sup>67</sup> *IT*, 26 March 1879, p. 7.

### 3.6 The Compositions of Annie Patterson

In the 1890s composition in Ireland became caught up in the growing desire for all things national. In the preceding decades, although there had been significant developments in music education, very little music that was distinctly Irish had been included in music lessons at the Royal Irish Academy of Music or elsewhere and there had been no real effort to bring compositional skills together with Irish themes and subjects. This began to change in the final decade of the century, with the Celtic revival and the developing interest in promoting all things Irish. The idea of Irishness in art became an important topic among composers, and Irish literature and folklore were used as a source of inspiration by many composers. One female composer who contributed to this development in Irish art music was Dr. Annie Patterson.

Annie Patterson was born in Lurgan in Co. Armagh on the 27 October 1868 and was of French Huguenot descent.<sup>68</sup> She became a student at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1875 at the age of seven and her first lessons were with Miss Kelly, for whom her first task was to work her way through Charles Hallé's *Practical Pianoforte School*.<sup>69</sup> She was also enrolled in one of Sir Robert Stewart's elementary harmony classes. In her article on the Royal Irish Academy of Music for the *Weekly Irish Times* in 1900 she recollects how her first memory of his class was that upon entering he picked her up and showed her to the other students, announcing that 'she was a very little girl with a very big notebook'. She goes on to note that the class was on the dominant seventh and how she was very impressed by the older girl beside her

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<sup>68</sup> Maggie Humphreys and Robert Evans, *Dictionary of Composers for the Church in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Mansell Publishing, 1997), p. 259.

<sup>69</sup> Annie Patterson: 'Intermezzo' in *To Talent Alone*, p. 286 taken from Patterson, 'The Royal Irish Academy of Music', *WIT*, 12 May 1900, p. 3.

who was able spell dominant.<sup>70</sup> She later went on to study the organ with Stewart and always spoke well of him. Her article states that one of her most precious possessions was six organ voluntaries in manuscript form that he originally composed for her. In 1887 she was awarded one of the Academy's first organ scholarships. During her time studying there she was also a member of the Academy Choir.

Annie Patterson's education began at Alexandra College in Dublin, which was one of the schools that helped herald new directions in education for middle class girls in the nineteenth century.<sup>71</sup> She went on to study for a BA and Doctorate in Music, sitting her exams with the Royal University of Dublin. She graduated with a BA in 1887 and a Mus Doc in 1889, making her the first woman to receive a doctorate of music in Ireland and, indeed, in all of the British Isles.<sup>72</sup> In England the vast majority of musicians who earned degrees in music were church musicians and male, particularly in the early nineteenth century.<sup>73</sup> Later in the century there were reforms in the standards and examinations associated with degrees in music and the numbers who achieved degrees increased. However, in Ireland, the number of musicians with degrees in music was still relatively low and Annie Patterson remained the only woman to hold a doctorate in music in the country until well into the twentieth century. This was a remarkable achievement, in particular when measured against the normal expectations for women in nineteenth-century Irish society. In fact, in the second half of the century as opportunities in education for women began to open, much of society was fearful of the changes this would bring about. For example, there was a fear that educated women would forsake their

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<sup>70</sup> Patterson, 'The Royal Irish academy of Music', *WIT*.

<sup>71</sup> Maria Luddy, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.17.

<sup>72</sup> Barger, *Elizabeth Stirling*, p. 17.

<sup>73</sup> Rohr, *the Careers of British Musicians*, p. 67.

‘natural’ role as mother and wife in favour of pursuing an education or, worse still, putting their education to use by working.<sup>74</sup> Members of the medical profession even ‘proved’ that higher education would do irreversible damage to a woman’s health:

Women’s brains were too small to carry all that knowledge, their reproductive organs would atrophy. Too much education, it was believed, would make them unable and unwilling to engage in marital or maternal responsibilities.<sup>75</sup>

However, with the creation of the Royal University of Ireland women such as Annie Patterson got the opportunity to pursue a higher education and put it to good use without it causing any damage to their health. Her education also helped her to develop a lucrative career in music which helped her to take care of her family. It put her in a position where she could independently maintain a household for herself and her family without any assistance from any of her other siblings.

Upon receiving her doctorate, the young and enthusiastic Annie Patterson held an education greatly superior to many of her peers, both male and female. She set about putting it to good use and became involved in several areas of music in Dublin. Between 1887 and 1897 she worked as an organist and an examiner for the Royal University of Ireland. In 1891 she founded the Dublin Choral Union and was conductor for that year. She saw it as a method for the ‘encouragement of Irish and local talent’.<sup>76</sup> Her position as conductor was unusual for women because, although they were evident in many areas of music, there were still (and there remained through much of the twentieth century) a few areas that remained male-dominated, for example musical positions that involved business enterprises, administration and

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<sup>74</sup> Luddy, *Women in History*, p. 91.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *IT*, 24 February, 1893, p. 4.

conducting.<sup>77</sup> The fact that Annie Patterson managed to cross this barrier is testimony to her education and experience, and also to her reputation in Dublin. In all the areas of music in which she was involved, Annie Patterson aimed to promote and increase interest in Irish music. She wanted to encourage others to create a new style of Irish music relevant to the musical scene of that time, while also increasing awareness and interest in the music of the past.

Annie Patterson composed a large number of works, ranging from oratorios and operas to piano music, all based on Irish themes and folklore. Unfortunately, only a small number were published and these were mainly the smaller works, such as her songs and piano arrangements of Irish airs. These included the *Six Original Gaelic Songs*, *Rallying Song of the Gaelic League*, and *King Cormac*. It seems that none of the scores of her larger works have survived. Her list of unpublished compositions includes an oratorio entitled *Meta Tauta*, two Irish operas, *Ardriugh's Daughter* and *Oisin*, a school cantata in Gaelic, an Irish cantata, Irish tone poems, six preludes and fugues for the piano based on Irish folk songs, piano trios which were based on traditional Irish tunes and original dances, and three sonatas called *Tradition* which were for the violin and piano, viola and piano and cello and piano.<sup>78</sup> It is unfortunate that none of the manuscripts of these works have survived. However, from just the list of titles it is evident that Annie Patterson's compositional output was entirely inspired by, and based on Irish themes. She experimented with many of the most popular compositional structures, and combined them with

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<sup>77</sup> Ellsworth, 'Victorian Pianists', p. 150.

<sup>78</sup> The information on Annie Patterson's publications is from a four-page flyer about her found in a box containing her compositions in the library of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. The librarian was unsure of its origins but the information seems to be taken from an edition of *Who's Who*. It is not dated but lists work up to 1922. It does not list her publication from 1927 so it is probable that it dates from that five year period. For more information see appendix nine, below.

traditional airs and harmonies. She also ventured into composing in forms that were not popular with female composers on the continent, such as operas and cantatas. Of course in Patterson's case these were forms that had already been experimented with by other female composers in Ireland before her.

Several of Patterson's works were performed and praised during her lifetime. In February 1893 the oratorio *Meta Tauta* was performed in the Antient Concert Rooms and received favourably by all the local press, with the *Irish Times* declaring that it showed 'much originality' and *The Freeman's Journal* reporting that Patterson was to be 'congratulated on the success of the performance'.<sup>79</sup> Handwritten copies of the scores were made for such performances since they were not published, and it seems that in the 1890s Patterson used the services of W.H. Trundle, who was a teacher of drums at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. In a handwritten note dated 23 April 1897 she asked him to copy several pages.<sup>80</sup>

The most popular of her published compositions were the *Six Original Gaelic Songs*.<sup>81</sup> She composed these in 1896 for solo voice and piano accompaniment and they were published by Boosey and Company in London. Dedicated to supporters of the Feis Ceoil, they were meant as a means of advertising the Feis and were performed several times in the lead-up to the competition. The first, *A Bird Song*, is dedicated to the Irish Literary Society and the Gaelic League; the second, *The Skylark*, is dedicated to Charles Villiers Stanford; the third song, *Take up the Harp*, is dedicated to Mr Charles Salaman; the fourth, dedicated to Sir J. Frederick Bridge, is called *The Poet's Death*; the dedication on the fifth song is simply *In Memoriam* and

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<sup>79</sup> *IT*, 27 February 1893; *FJ*, 27 February 1893.

<sup>80</sup> See appendix eight, below.

<sup>81</sup> See appendix four, below.

it is called *My Colleen Dear*; and the final song of the six, *At Parting*, is dedicated to the members of the Dublin Choral and Friendly Choral Unions. Each song also has its title in Irish and the words of each appear in Irish and English under the music. The lyrics are taken from various authors and the Irish words in most cases were put together by T.O'Neill-Russell. It was he who had first written to the *Evening Telegraph* in 1894 complaining of the neglect of Irish music and thus putting the idea into Patterson's head that led to the Feis Ceoil three years later.

In the preface to the songs she states that the volume can claim to be the first of its kind in three ways. Firstly, it is a collection of new Gaelic lyrics by living authors; secondly, the melodies are new and original, though 'it is to be hoped that a strong flavour of the composer's nationality will be found in them'; and finally, the accompaniments and general structure of the songs are intended to combine the 'characteristic traits of ancient Irish music with the requirements of modern song-form'.<sup>82</sup> Through these and through all of her compositions Patterson sought to bring the traditional traits of Irish music back into practice and to popularise the musical traditions that were part of Ireland's heritage. It is hard to judge if she achieved this, but her efforts illustrate her unwavering devotion to Irish music and its revival.

### **3.7 Annie Patterson, Charlotte Milligan Fox and Alicia Adelaide Needham: Promoting Irish Music through Composition**

In many ways the work of Annie Patterson is similar to that of her female peers active in the early twentieth century such as Charlotte Milligan Fox and Alicia Adelaide Needham. Like Patterson, both of these women chose to compose using

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<sup>82</sup> Annie W. Patterson, Preface', *Six Gaelic Songs* (Boosey & co, 1896), p. 3.



Irish melodies and Irish subjects as the foundation for their work. Charlotte Milligan Fox was involved in the Irish Folk Song Society. Her most popular work was a book on the Irish harp, *Annals of the Irish Harpers*, whose primary function was to promote and revive the music of Edward Bunting.<sup>83</sup> Her compositions were also concerned with the harp. In *Songs of the Irish Harpers*, which were arranged for harp and piano, Fox hoped that the music would contribute towards the ‘revival of that delightful instrument’.<sup>84</sup> The arrangements were of Irish melodies that Fox had found in the Bunting manuscripts that she later used for her book. Like Patterson, Charlotte Milligan Fox promoted Irish music and worked towards its revival by incorporating Irish melodies and harmonies into the music. . Her work *Songs of the Irish Harpers* was an attempt to revive the Irish harp and melodies associated with it. She also hoped that it would play a part in the movement towards educating the younger generations of the importance of the harp in Ireland’s musical history – ‘to teach the children of Ireland to recognise her as the national symbol of a Bardic Minstrely’.<sup>85</sup> Annie Patterson was involved in similar work when she moved to Cork: she produced piano accompaniments for four volumes of Irish songs selected by Rev. P.A. Walsh, published in 1924 and designed for use by students and teachers in primary schools in order to familiarise themselves with some of Ireland’s most popular songs. In his foreword Walsh stated that in choosing Patterson to write piano accompaniments for the songs he ‘entrusted the doing of it to someone whose name stands in the forefront among Irish musicians, and whose record is a guarantee the work will be well done’.<sup>86</sup> Both Patterson and Milligan Fox were involved in starting to make Irish music and melodies more accessible to children through these

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<sup>83</sup> Charlotte Milligan Fox, *Annals of the Irish Harpers* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1911). For more on Charlotte Milligan Fox’s writing see chapter four, below.

<sup>84</sup> Charlotte Milligan Fox, *Songs of the Irish Harpers* (London: Bayley & Ferguson, 1910), preface.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. viii.

<sup>86</sup> Rev. P.A. Walsh, ‘Foreword’, *Traditional Irish Airs, Part I*, (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1924).

compositions and thus in using their creative abilities to advance the rebirth of Irish music as a dominant part of the country's education.

Alicia Adelaide Needham was another composer who often favoured Irish themes for her compositions. Needham was recognised as one of Ireland's most successful Irish female composers in the early twentieth century.<sup>87</sup> Axel Klein has noted that at one point she was a household name on both sides of the Irish Sea.<sup>88</sup> Needham composed over 700 works, the majority of which were songs. Her ability to compose music that was distinctly Irish is reflected in her success for six years in a row at the Feis Ceoil composition competitions, at which stage she decided to give up entering so as to give someone else a chance.<sup>89</sup> Some of her most famous works were songs that became a popular part of the Irish repertoire in the early decades of the twentieth century, including *Acushla Machree* (1899) and *Husheen*, which was originally composed in 1897 but was made famous by Clara Butt when she recorded it in 1930.<sup>90</sup> Needham used her compositional abilities to support and promote other causes as well as the renaissance of interest in Irish music. In 1908 she composed *Four Songs for Women Suffragettes* with the titles 'Marching On', 'Daughters of England', 'Fighting On' and 'Clipped Wings'.<sup>91</sup> The titles of the songs in themselves illustrate Needham's political views and her support of the suffragette cause through her music was itself a brave stance to take: while other composers such as Annie Patterson and Ethel Smyth who were also supporters of the suffragettes never

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<sup>87</sup> Elson, *Woman's Work*, p.152.

<sup>88</sup> Klein, 'A Daughter of Music', SMI/RMA joint conference. For more on Alicia Adelaide Needham see chapter four, below.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Alicia Adelaide Needham, *Acushla Machree* (London & New York: Boosey & Co, 1899); Alicia Adelaide Needham, *Husheen* (London & New York: Boosey & Co, 1897); Klein, 'A Daughter of Music', SMI/ RMA joint conference.

<sup>91</sup> Alicia Adelaide Needham, *Four Songs for Women Suffragettes* (London: Houghton & Co, 1908).

supported the cause in such a public manner, Needham chose to publicly declare her support.

### 3.8 A Comparison of the Work of Ethel Smyth and Annie Patterson

Ethel Smyth's career was in two of the disciplines also approached by Annie Patterson: those of composing and writing. Their experiences were very different, mainly as a result of their education, but they both composed in similar genres. Ethel Smyth was born into an upper middle-class family in 1858. Her father was strongly opposed to a woman studying music professionally, but the strong-willed Smyth won out and in 1877 she began her compositional studies at the Leipzig Conservatory.<sup>92</sup> In comparison to Patterson, her compositional training would have been of a much higher standard. She remained in Europe for ten years and her early compositions, which were mainly piano pieces, songs and chamber music, were often included in private concerts in Germany. She returned to England and made her orchestral debut in 1890 with performances of her works *Serenade* and the *Anthony and Cleopatra* overture, both of which were performed at the Crystal Palace.<sup>93</sup> Smyth had always desired to compose opera. She began her first, *Fantasio*, in 1892 and several more followed, including *The Wreckers* in 1902-04, which was premiered in Leipzig and was one of her most popular works. It is interesting to note the similarities in the compositional career of Annie Patterson. Although she did not receive training that was comparable to that of Smyth, Patterson did compose in similar genres, and it was on opera that she concentrated in particular in the final decade of the nineteenth century. However, Smyth began with smaller works and then composed operas later

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<sup>92</sup> Sophie Fuller: 'Smyth, Dame Ethel' *GMO, OMO*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/26038>>, [accessed 12 September 2008].

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

in her career, whereas Patterson seems to have begun with the larger works such as cantatas and opera, while her later compositions were all songs and piano pieces. Patterson's compositions never received the level of praise or recognition accorded to Smyth, and yet she continued to compose throughout her lifetime. While Ethel Smyth struggled throughout her lifetime to gain recognition for her work and her music, it seems that because there was less competition for female composers in Ireland and because the standards of their compositions were comparable to those of their male peers, the Irish women composers were in many ways given equal treatment, and when they produced a new work it was performed and reviewed by the local press. It could be argued that in many ways the female composer in Ireland in the nineteenth century had an easier time than her counterpart in England in the twentieth century. However, in the twentieth century, with an increase in male composers who had formal training and who had often studied abroad (such as Frederick May, Brian Boydell and Seoirse Bodley), the position of the female composer became more difficult. The American-born Irish composer Jane O' Leary describes the position of the female composer in twentieth-century Ireland as 'swimming against the stream' and she cites the work of Ethel Smyth and her description of female composers as being 'outside the pale of musical civilisation'.<sup>94</sup> It is as if the female composers in Dublin in the second half of the nineteenth century were active before limitations were placed on them. There is no mention, in contemporary sources, of their works being of a lesser standard or unworthy of performances, and in the case of a composer such as Elena Norton it appears that every operetta that she was known to compose in her short life was accorded a performance. It is as though it took until the twentieth century before music in

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<sup>94</sup> Jane O'Leary: 'Women Composers', *Women Emerging: A decade of Irish Feminist Scholarship*, Alan Hayes and Rebecca Pelan eds.(Galway: Women's Studies Centre, 2005), p. 101.

Ireland caught up on the negative opinions relating to female composers that already prevailed in England and Europe. This would explain how quickly the compositions of the nineteenth-century female composers were forgotten. As Jane O’Leary argues, the music of female composers deserves an equal chance to be heard, as it was at least in the late nineteenth century in Dublin.<sup>95</sup>

### **3.9 Annie Patterson on the Subject of Composition**

Annie Patterson was also well known as a writer on music and in two of her later volumes, *Chats with Music Lovers* and *The Profession of Music*, she dedicates chapters to composing music and the hardships of the composer. In *Chats with Music Lovers*, published in 1907, chapter three is entitled ‘How to Compose’, and in it she points out that true genius in this field is born not made.<sup>96</sup> She discusses the grammar of music, drawing special attention to the study and practice of counterpoint. Throughout the chapter she points out the main forms that the composer needs to be familiar with and the delights of orchestration. The chapter concludes with her discussing the benefits of simple music and the patterns of the time. In a later publication, *The Profession of Music*, published in 1926, there is a chapter entitled ‘The Composer’s Department’.<sup>97</sup> This provides a very different outlook, illustrating the many problems facing the composer. She opens the chapter by stating that although the musical profession in general depends on the composer for new music for performance and discussion, so does the composer rely on the performers and teachers of the music profession in order to gain popularity and to create a market for his or her music. Patterson states that composers must make a name for themselves in

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, p. 103.

<sup>96</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *Chats With Music Lovers* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1907), p. 48.

<sup>97</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *The Profession of Music* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton & Co., 1926), pp. 148-162.

order to draw the interest of a publisher, or else cover the cost of publication themselves, which is only possible if they find other work to subsidise their careers as composers. On the whole, she paints the composer's life as one of reasonable hardship. She believed that what was needed was a free performance venue, where composers of all kinds and grades could have their works performed and receive feedback and criticisms. She concludes the chapter by saying that a composer's calling is one of the most blissful in the world and that it should be the world's care to safeguard the composers' geniuses in music against the tribulations that harass them in their attempts to have their music published or performed. It is likely that the hardships she describes in the life of the composer were ones that she experienced herself, since the rest of the book is also based on her own experiences in the profession of music. The interesting fact is that she makes no distinction between men and women. For Patterson there was no difference; it seems the gender of the composer did not change the circumstances.

### **3.10 The Contribution Made by Female Composers to Dublin's Musical History**

Although nineteenth-century female composers in Ireland have been forgotten by most, they did exist and their music was performed and praised, at least in their own lifetimes. Fanny Arthur Robinson had her compositions published and performed and with her cantata she established herself as a popular composer in Dublin. Her male peers not only accepted her interest in composition, but were happy to perform and listen to her work. Her cantata seemed to have become a fixture of musical life in the last few decades of the century, particularly in concerts in which her husband performed. Through the performances of her operettas Ellen O'Hea achieved what many female composers of the era, particularly in the rest of Europe, did not: public

performances of her compositions. With the work of Annie Patterson we see how one of the country's leading musicians used her knowledge of composition to promote and develop a cause which she strongly believed in: the revival of Ireland's native music.

The compositional output of these women was impressive considering that their education and experience of musical repertoire was not of a similar standard to their European peers. The situation of Irish female composers can be likened to that of women in England where, particularly in London, there was a surge of compositions by women. Derek Hyde believes that this occurred because through organisations like the Royal Academy of Music women gained experience and knowledge, which in turn 'encouraged and fed the creative urge'.<sup>98</sup> The same could be said of Dublin. Through their experiences at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and their involvement in the active concert life of the city, women were inspired to try composing music of their own. All of them were active as performers, so their knowledge of music in that area contributed to their compositions. Another similarity lies in the comparison of the compositions of active male and female musicians. Hyde states that in England the compositions of women when compared with those of their male peers were 'neither better nor worse, though often equally dull'.<sup>99</sup> This is true of the male peers in Dublin such as Joseph Robinson or Robert Stewart: in Joseph Robinson's case, for example, his output is comprised mainly of songs which are structurally and harmonically similar to the piano compositions of his wife.

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<sup>98</sup> Hyde, *New Found Voices*, p. 43.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

The fact that Fanny Robinson and Ellen O'Hea apparently faced no significant barriers to the development of their careers was unusual for the time. In the decades that followed, this progressive environment was further encouraged by the growing need for proponents of nationalism in the arts. Annie Patterson stands as a striking example of the extent to which a woman could progress in this open setting. It was after their deaths that the compositional output of these women was neglected, as was the case with so much Irish music from that period. As has been the case with many of their male contemporaries, such as Esposito and Stewart, their music has not been performed in decades and in many cases the scores are lost. The compositional work and achievements of these female composers have until now been forgotten – ‘history has passed them by’.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> O'Leary: ‘Women Composers’, p. 101.



## Chapter Four

### Women Writing on Music

The growth in music teachers and musical education in the nineteenth century fuelled a demand for higher musical standards and for more readily-available training for the aspiring teacher across Europe. In Dublin there was also a need to continue to encourage the support of the city's older generations of musicians and music lovers. Such was the growth in music teaching in the city, that there were a great many families in which the children were better educated in music than their parents. Furthermore, a significant section of the population remained largely unaware of the wealth of musical events that had emerged in the city. Two Irish women, active during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, set about rectifying these problems by seeking to enlighten piano teachers worldwide, and the music enthusiasts of Dublin city, through their publications on music.

#### 4.1 Annie Patterson's Articles on Music for the *Weekly Irish Times*

By the 1890s Annie Patterson had completed her education and was the first female recipient of a doctorate in music in the British Isles on record. Even at that early stage in her career, she was active in many areas of music: as an organist, music examiner and conductor. It was during this period that she also began what was to be a cornerstone of her career: writing about music. Her early articles, which were mainly published in England, allowed Patterson to hone her craft and led her, in the early twentieth century, to write books on music. Patterson began writing on music for *The Girl's Own Paper* in 1893, a publication founded in 1880 by the Religious

Tract Society in England and intended to be a guide for young women both morally and domestically.<sup>1</sup> It contained serial fiction, short stories, advice on household management and etiquette, articles on health, recreation, and on education and professions suitable for women. It also contained a section of readers' correspondence and questions. The *Girl's Own Newspaper* aimed to maintain a balance between keeping young women entertained and educated in the areas of interest to them, but it also aimed to set them on the path of social acceptance, that of a happy and productive life as a wife and mother. The reader failing to follow these ideals was destined, it was believed, to end up unhappy and alone.<sup>2</sup> These views were illustrated in an issue of the magazine in 1894 in a cartoon entitled 'The Child: How Will She Develop?'<sup>3</sup>

Annie Patterson wrote four articles on music for the publication in the final decades of the nineteenth century. The first, in May 1893, was on 'The Music of the Emerald Isle'. This was followed three years later by an article on Mendelssohn entitled 'Felix Mendelssohn: A Musically-Illustrated Recitation'. Two years later, in 1898, Patterson wrote an article on 'Musical Degrees for our Girls'; and finally in 1899 she published an article on 'How Music Speaks to Those Who Hear'.<sup>4</sup> When Patterson's other publications are considered, and in particular her encouragement to both men and women to participate and excel at music, *The Girl's Own Paper* and its ideals seem somewhat at odds with Patterson's larger body of work, and indeed the path she chose in life herself. Judith Barger has commented on the publication's

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<sup>1</sup> Terri Doughty, ed., *Selections from The Girls Own Paper, 1880-1907* (Plymouth: Broadview Press, 2004), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10-11.

<sup>4</sup> I am grateful to Judith Barger for bringing Annie Patterson's articles for the *Girls Own Paper* to my attention; the information given here is from her research into articles on music within *The Girl's Own Paper* from 1880-1908.

position on music: that it should not be a career, that marital bliss ought to come before music, and that one should not devote more than one and a half hours to piano practice per day. In short, music was, and should be, nothing more than a pastime.<sup>5</sup> The first thirty years of the publication's life perpetuated this message – that one's musical ambition should not become an annoyance to others.<sup>6</sup> However, much like the prescriptive writing often published in Ireland on the 'proper' place of women, the frequent repetition of the advice on music in the *Girls Own Paper* perhaps suggests a perception that it was not always being taken to heart. Patterson herself contradicted all these superstitions: she never married, instead devoting her life to an extremely successful career in music that encompassed all areas of the discipline. In fact, following the narrative of the cartoon from 1894 on how the young girl would develop, Patterson's life followed the path of the 'Bad Girl' far more closely than it did that of the ideal 'Good Girl'.<sup>7</sup> However, it is possible that Patterson got the idea for her weekly column in the *Weekly Irish Times* from her time writing for the *Girls Own Paper*, using some similar features such as the inclusion in the early articles of a section for correspondence and questions.

Annie Patterson began her series of articles for the *Weekly Irish Times* in October 1899 and they appeared weekly until 28 December 1901.<sup>8</sup> Patterson did however return in January 1904 with a review of the 'Annual Conference of Musicians at Glasgow' and in January 1905 with a review of the 'The Musicians

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<sup>5</sup> Information from an unpublished paper by Judith Barger entitled 'Music and Magazines for Victorian Girls', presented at the Music in Nineteenth Century Britain Sixth Biennial Conference, Birmingham, 6 July 2007.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Doughty, *Selections from The Girls Own Paper*, p. 10-11.

<sup>8</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Music in the Home', *WIT*, 14 October 1899, p. 4 and Patterson, 'Musical Entertainments for Winter Evenings', *WIT*, 28 December 1901, p. 4. See appendix five, below for a full list of Annie Patterson's articles for *WIT*.

Conference' held in Manchester by the Incorporated Society of Musicians.<sup>9</sup> The reasons for the termination of Patterson's regular articles is unknown, but it is possible that she stopped writing in order to research and work her books on the oratorio and on Schumann, which were published in 1902 and 1903 respectively.

At first, the articles appeared with the general heading of 'Music in the Home' followed by a title announcing the subject of the article for that week. However, on 14 April 1900 this overall title to Patterson's weekly contributions disappeared, perhaps because at that point they had established themselves as a feature of the newspaper. Over the course of two and a half years Patterson dedicated articles to all areas of music appreciation, both in the home and for the amateur musician, while showcasing the many musical events that took place in the city, as well as some of Dublin's and Ireland's talented musicians and composers. There was also a section for correspondence, and each week Patterson would print answers to the many music-related questions of her readers.

In her first article on 14 October 1899, Patterson commented on the opportunities open to the public to enjoy music in their homes and the advantages the public had in comparison to earlier generations, due to the improvements in the quality and availability of musical instruments. She wanted to help return music to its position as 'a marked feature in home life'.<sup>10</sup> The article went on to advise the reader on when to practice. She began by comparing the piano and its practice firstly to the new attractions on the bicycle and then to the neglect of the bible.

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<sup>9</sup> Annie Patterson, *WIT*, 9 January 1904 and 14 January 1905.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

In spite of the counter attractions of the bicycle, the fact remains that our old friend, the piano still finds a corner in the home. It may be that, like the family bible, it is not so often opened as it should be.<sup>11</sup>

It is almost as if Patterson was trying to connect with her reader through the comparison of music with everyday activities, whilst also trying to improve the habits of her reader, perhaps morally as well as musically. The article continued with points on when to practice, how to schedule practice and how best to go about it. The article also addressed what became a continuing theme in Annie Patterson's work, and which echoed her founding of the Feis Ceoil in 1897: that of establishing Ireland as a nation known for its music. Patterson reminded her reader of Ireland's history as the 'Land of Song' and of its past glories in music.<sup>12</sup> She expressed her worry that Ireland had lost this position and that, although the majority of the population was still musical, its interest in and support for local music had disintegrated. With that in mind, Patterson wrote that she hoped to help her reader in 'fostering "family music"' through her treatment of 'some practical musical topics each week'.<sup>13</sup> Patterson concluded her article on a practical note, with the following summary of her opinions on when to practice:

We should cultivate regularity and perseverance, choosing our time when we shall be most free from interruption, when we shall least interfere with the comfort and convenience of others and if possible when we are feeling bright and fresh ourselves, and can quite throw our minds with heart whole interest and enjoyment into our self-imposed task.<sup>14</sup>

This style of guidance became a regular feature of Patterson's articles and she was continually encouraging and directing her reader towards a greater understanding, skill and enjoyment of music. In this first article she also made reference to an

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Patterson, 'Music in the Home', *WIT*.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

enquiry column that would accompany her articles and answer questions on ‘all matters musical’.<sup>15</sup>

Patterson’s second article, dated 21 October 1899, continued on the topic of how to practice. It pointed out in its opening paragraphs that the reader should realise that there is no ‘royal road’ to proficiency in music.<sup>16</sup> Patterson then took the reader through the main elements necessary to make practice useful. Her first point highlighted the need for a good understanding of all the rudiments of music in order to excel at practicing any instrument. She went on to state that it was necessary to cultivate concentration, perseverance and a system of practice which incorporated scales and finger exercises, as well as the playing of the ‘more agreeable’ pieces and songs.<sup>17</sup> At the end of the article, the inquiry column appeared for the first time. The questions or letters were not themselves printed, but the answers addressed issues that referred to diverse musical topics. In the first week in which answers appeared, in the article on 21 October, there are replies to five questions or letters. The first explains what the Eisteddfod was, giving the literal meaning of the word as a ‘sitting of men’. It also explains what the function of the Eisteddfod was in ancient times and what it had come to represent in modern times. Patterson’s in-depth knowledge of the Welsh festival probably arose out of her interest in it as a model for the Feis Ceoil.<sup>18</sup> The next reply discussed the pianist Vladamir de Pachmann, giving details of his early career, his debut and his marriage. She also recommended that the reader should also hear the pianist Dohnányi, of whom she declared that ‘though young, [he] is a finished master of his art’. She commented on the ‘profound impression’ he

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Patterson, ‘How to Practice’, *WIT*, 21 October 1899, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> For more on the Eisteddfod and the Feis Ceoil see chapter six, below.

made on his first appearance in London the season before and she informed the reader that ‘as we write his advent is expected in Dublin’.<sup>19</sup> Not only was Patterson answering questions but she was also making recommendations based on her judgement of what else her reader might appreciate. The third answer in the ‘musical queries’ section gave information on musical examinations and the best book to buy, Patterson pointing her readers to a book that had sample questions and examination papers from many of the examining bodies in England. The next reader asked for information on acquiring a classical repertoire for a singer. Patterson suggested that they turn their attention to the ‘exquisite’ songs of Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn and Brahms; that they learn a few good arias, both sacred and secular. She informed the reader that the oratorios of Bach, Handel and Mendelssohn along with the operas of Mozart, Weber, Meyerbeer and Gounod ‘should furnish ample material’. Finally she gave advice on texts that would help in the learning of harmony and counterpoint, but began this advice by warning the reader that this would be a hard task to take on without a teacher. In the ‘musical queries’ sections of her articles Annie Patterson illustrated a knowledge of music that was clearly both broad and deep, as well as being practically-based. Her responses also provide invaluable hints on the interests and practices of Dublin’s musicians and music enthusiasts.

Over the course of the weeks that followed these inaugural articles, and until the end of the year, Patterson focused on topics ranging from what pieces to choose for the pianoforte, to advice for the young singer, as well as touching on opera, concert engagements, and the choice of music as a profession, alongside a wealth of

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<sup>19</sup> Patterson: ‘Music in the Home: How to Practice’ *WIT*.

other topics. In all of them she continued to guide her reader with suggestions on books and manuals that would help, or concerts that should be attended. In every topic that she addressed, her information was clearly laid out but also thorough in its content.

Patterson opened her November 1899 article on ‘The Choice of Music as a Profession’ by stating that ‘the profession of music is not open to all. Still less is ultimate success assured’.<sup>20</sup> It is clear that she had no intention of misleading her readers into false hope, but rather was honest from the beginning. She went on to warn against the other possible downfalls of a career in music, in particular that it was not lucrative. She commented that for many performers teaching was a necessary financial aid to their career. However, the area of teaching was something that seemed to concern Patterson greatly. She devoted two paragraphs to her criticism of the teaching profession and the flaws she saw in it, a point that she would later return to in her books *Chats with Music Lovers* and *The Profession of Music*.<sup>21</sup> In the article she suggested that the teaching department of the music profession was ‘very much invaded by unqualified, if pretentious usurpers’.<sup>22</sup> It was clearly something that angered her greatly, because the paragraphs that followed are an example of Patterson at her most critical. She compared music to other professions, such as those of medicine or law, and noted that to be able to practice either of those one had to be qualified and have obtained the relevant certificates or examinations. However, in music a person could begin to teach without needing to be in possession

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<sup>20</sup> Patterson, ‘The Choice of Music as a Profession’, *WIT*, 25 November 1899, p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> For more on her books see later in the chapter.

<sup>22</sup> Patterson, ‘The Choice of Music as a Profession’, *WIT*.



of ‘any public guarantee’ of their ability.<sup>23</sup> She went on to give examples in a tone that seems harsh by comparison to her usual writing:

So it happens that any young lady who can manage to jumble through a couple of pieces, holding, perhaps, the pedal down the whole time, may add to her pocket money by taking music pupils.....or any youth may apply for, and (if he can canvas the vestry properly) be appointed to the honourable and responsible position of church organist.<sup>24</sup>

Both of these circumstances are doubtless something that Patterson had come across in her own work as teacher and organist. Perhaps she was therefore particularly critical of those who managed to obtain such positions of importance, while she herself had worked hard to achieve her qualifications. She felt that the type of musicians criticised above were a ‘standing disgrace on the musical profession’.<sup>25</sup> For the remainder of the article she explained the many routes to achieving qualifications to her reader and made suggestions on the best of them. This article could be seen to illustrate Patterson’s desire to try to set right some of the injustices that she felt were occurring in the music profession. Perhaps she sought to shame those who were working without qualifications, encouraging those who were thinking about teaching to gain the appropriate qualifications. Certainly, for readers who were either students or parents of students, she was educating them in what to look for in a teacher.

Annie Patterson’s final article for the year 1899 is on the ‘Musical Prospects of Dublin for 1900’. It considers the educational and social aspects of music in Dublin and proceeds to list all the organisations that contribute to music in the city, such as the Royal Irish Academy of Music, the Dublin Musical Society, the Dublin

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

Orchestral Union and many more, as well as naming several important figures involved in music. In terms of the Royal Irish Academy of Music it is interesting to note that she gave 1856 as its year of foundation rather than 1848.<sup>26</sup> For someone who always seems to have her information exactly right, this was either an unfortunate slip or a reference to what many musicians, and most likely all female musicians, saw as the ‘real’ establishment of the Royal Irish Academy of Music as an institute that would benefit all musicians, male as well as female. She referred to the staff of the Royal Irish Academy of Music as ‘able’ and responsible for giving ‘from time to time, noteworthy musicians to Dublin....and the world.’<sup>27</sup> She particularly praised the instrumental students, comparing them to those she had heard from London’s musical institutions. She concluded the section on the Royal Irish Academy of Music by informing her readers that there was no longer a need to travel abroad for ‘certificates of merit’ since they could now achieve them at home through the Royal Irish Academy of Music if they met its ‘sufficiently high’ standards.<sup>28</sup> This was obviously something that was important for music in Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century, because throughout the century many of the best musicians that the country had produced, such as George Alexander Osborne, Catherine Hayes, Charles Villiers Stanford, Michael Balfe and Edith Oldham, had gone abroad to study or to launch their careers. Patterson was keen to emphasise the improvements in music education in Dublin and the continued high standards of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. This loss of home-grown talent to emigration seems likewise to have been a problem in England. As in Ireland, many English musicians in the nineteenth century had sought a music education in mainland Europe despite the development of institutions like the RAM and the RCM. Just as Annie Patterson

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<sup>26</sup> Patterson, ‘The Musical Prospects of Dublin for 1900’, *WIT*, 30 December 1899, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

pointed out that there was no need to leave Ireland for a good musical education anymore, the very same year Annie Curwen made the same point about England in her article for *Child Life* in October 1899, in which she referred to the opinion held by many that ‘only in Germany is there any musical education worth the name.’<sup>29</sup> Curwen’s argument was that in the ‘past half century England had been making strides while Germany had been living on her reputation’.<sup>30</sup> She believed that there was no longer a need for advanced students to leave London because they could find the standard of lessons they desired there. It is interesting to note how England and Ireland were still fighting similar battles in music - that of keeping their home-grown talents at home so that they could further develop and enrich music in their own countries.

After the discussion on the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Patterson’s last article of 1899 moved to the merits of the Feis Ceoil and its benefits for music in Dublin. She saw the Feis as combining ‘the social with the educational side of musical progress’.<sup>31</sup> Over the course of the rest of the article she praised the educational prospects available in Dublin through Trinity College and the Royal University of Ireland, the contribution to concert life made by the Dublin Musical Society, the work of the Dublin Orchestral Union and of several other active music societies within the city. In her final remarks, Patterson returned to the Feis, mentioning that several of the aforementioned societies had come into existence since the Feis, and that if the Feis could take credit for a part of their foundations or success, then it had not ‘been set a going or named in vain’.<sup>32</sup> Since one of the main

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<sup>29</sup> Curwen, ‘Should all Children be Taught Music or Only the Gifted?’, *Child Life*, p. 296.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Patterson, ‘The Musical Prospects of Dublin for 1900’, *WIT*.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

aims of the Feis was to revive music in Dublin, it is obvious why Patterson, as its founder, would be so proud of this.<sup>33</sup> She concluded by suggesting that Dublin was prepared for the new century as long as the public continue to support its musical activities. To close the article she comments that:

As New Year comes in next week, and with its advent most of us are full of new resolutions and increased activity for the undertaking of great things in the dawning future, I will have a few words to say about HOW TO STUDY MUSIC METHODICALLY.<sup>34</sup>

It seems that Patterson was determined to make sure that the New Year's resolutions of her readers included their music practice!

The first few months of 1900 saw Patterson continuing to approach subjects such as 'How to organise a musical evening' or 'Music in fiction'. As promised, the first article of the New Year discussed the methodical study of music and, as we might expect of someone who had achieved a doctorate at twenty-one and who had conquered the dominant seventh at the tender age of seven, she did not approach the subject lightly.<sup>35</sup> The article opened by telling the reader that:

If we would do anything really well, it is wise to set about it decently and in order; that is, we ought to approach the work undertaken in the right spirit of self-devotion and we should allot our time and energies to it in such a way that we may completely cover the field of thought or action which we purpose to explore.<sup>36</sup>

It is as if Patterson was trying to train the nation, thus hoping to create a country full of musical enthusiasts. At the very least she left no room for error, instructing her readership in all aspects of its musical training. She urged her readers that anyone with an interest in music should decide early what area they wanted to focus on,

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<sup>33</sup> For more on the Feis Ceoil and Annie Patterson's involvement in it see chapter six, below.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> In her article on the RIAM, Patterson described her first day in Robert Stewart's harmony class where upon her arrival, he picked her up, and showed her to the other students as a little girl with a big notebook. She noted that 'the subject treated in class that day was the dominant seventh' and Patterson recollected her admiration of a 'big girl' sitting next to her who could spell dominant. Patterson, 'The Royal Irish Academy of Music', *WIT*.

<sup>36</sup> Patterson, 'How to Study Music Methodically', *WIT*, 6 January 1900, p. 4.

warning of the dangers of failing to do so - 'very little is accomplished by the person who is "jack of all trades, and master of none"'.<sup>37</sup> However, she did suggest that it was necessary to be familiar with all areas of the 'musical science'. The article went on to guide the musician on how much time they should study each day, and to divide that time in order to get the best out of it. There was even a plan made out for what should be involved in each hour of the student's desired four hour practice, with different plans for different days. With some of Patterson's articles, particularly ones like this, it is difficult to evaluate who her readership was. In many cases her articles seem to alternate as to whom they are aimed at. For example, her treatment of her subject is sometimes informative but basic, such as in her general articles on music in Dublin or how to practice. However with an article like the one mentioned above, 'How to study music methodically', the article seems to have been aimed more at the budding musician who is going to devote his or herself to their art in order to progress. It would seem that Patterson was not satisfied with reaching just a portion of the musically-inclined population; she wanted to reach and inform all strata of musical society in Dublin.

Over the course of her articles Patterson managed to find the musical element within every event or occasion. For example, on 17 March 1900, St Patrick's Day her article is entitled 'Music and The Saints', while later in the summer of 1901 she dedicated articles to 'Seaside music', 'Holiday musical prospects for the amateur' and 'Summer pianoforte music', and the final article of 1901 addressed the subject of 'Musical entertainments for winter evenings'. In her article on music and the saints on St.Patrick's Day, 1900 Patterson wrote sections which discussed music and

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

Christianity, music associated with several saints, and lastly the music associated with St Patrick himself. She noted that she could find no indication ‘whether St Patrick himself was “musical” in our sense of the term, as many of his kind were not’. But she does acknowledge the music that honours him. Her articles for the rest of March and early April 1900 were all dedicated to music connected to Queen Victoria, the ‘Queen of Ireland’. These articles coincided with the visit of the Queen to Dublin in April 1900.<sup>38</sup>

On 14 April 1900 Patterson’s article was entitled ‘The Native Music of Ireland’ and in it she stated that there is ‘surely no Irish topic that should so deservedly be discussed ... and made fashionable ... as the matchless native music of Ireland’.<sup>39</sup> She discussed the exquisite beauty of the melodies and the joy to be achieved in performing them. She quoted from a book by Alfred Perceval Graves on Irish song, in which he himself quoted Parry who praised Irish folk music as being the most poetical in the world and ‘particularly rich in tunes which imply considerable sympathetic sensitiveness’.<sup>40</sup> In support of this comment Patterson went on to examine three of the Irish tunes from the two thousand that Parry referred to that made up the Bunting, Petrie, Holden, Joyce and Levy collections.<sup>41</sup> Patterson began with the *The Coulin* which she called the ‘queen of melodies’, because anything which would equal its ‘exquisite melodic beauty’ was hard to imagine.<sup>42</sup> She proceeded to give her readers a brief analysis of her three chosen tunes, drawing attention to the elements she felt were most important, such as the structure and melodic phrases. She also compared elements of the musical structure to that of

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<sup>38</sup> Patterson, ‘Music in Dublin at the Queen’s First Visit’, *WIT*, 7 April 1900, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> Patterson, ‘The Native Music of Ireland’, *WIT*, 14 April 1900, p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

sonata form.<sup>43</sup> Later in the article, in discussing instrumental improvisation based on Irish airs, her thoughts were that the best approach to displaying the charms of Irish melody through improvising on themes was by doing so in the most delicate and dainty manner possible, so as not to take away from what is important, the melody. She concluded the article with a paragraph under the heading ‘Irish music, an exhaustible subject’ and informed her readers that it would be impossible to do more than ‘touch’ on the subject in a single article, and that the following week she would dedicate the article to the ‘most prominent famous Irish composers’. The following week the article title had been adjusted to discuss just ‘Famous Irish opera composers’, Patterson informing her readers at the outset that it was impossible to cover the subject of composers in a single article. In this article she educated her reader on the lives and work of Michael William Balfe and William Vincent Wallace, and their contributions to music as Irish composers.<sup>44</sup>

Leading on from that, for the rest of the year her articles centred on music and musicians in Dublin. She wrote an article on the Royal Irish Academy of Music, the Feis Ceoil and its prize-winners and composers, as well as a series on eminent Dublin musicians, with a mixture of both male and female musicians. In her first articles on female musicians, Patterson continued to praise and be supportive of Irish talents, eager to illustrate the great work of Irish women in music. Her first article dedicated to a female musician was on Alicia Adelaide Needham.<sup>45</sup> In it, she began by stating that at that time the public heard ‘a great deal’ about Irish men. She then reminded her readers that centuries ago women in Ireland were as much to the front

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<sup>43</sup> Patterson had already spoken on the connections of sonata form to Irish music in a lecture in 1897; for more information on this see chapter five, below.

<sup>44</sup> Patterson, ‘Famous Irish Opera Composers’, 21 April 1900, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> Patterson, ‘Alicia Adelaide Needham’, *WIT*, 9 June 1900, p. 4.

as Irish men but that in recent times that had changed. Women were beginning to again assert their independence of thought and action:

Modern ideas of civilisation.... have, it may be, for a time had a repressive effect upon the development and evolution of the feminine Gaelic element but the daughters and sisters of heroes cannot be bound within the limits of conventionality.<sup>46</sup>

She continued to state that ‘women have not historically made names for themselves as creative musicians’, but she argued that the growth in music facilities available to them had led to this a change. As examples she listed European female composers such as Augusta Holmes and Cécile Chaminade, and English female composers such as Maude Valerie White. She then focused her article on Needham, ‘a gifted and charming Irish lady’.<sup>47</sup> Her treatment of Alice Adelaide Needham (née Montgomery) was both knowledgeable and complimentary. However, considering that Patterson became godmother in December 1900 to Needham’s only son, Joseph (later to become a well known scientist), it is likely that the two women knew each other well and were friends. Therefore, Patterson had an invested interest in promoting and complimenting the career of Needham. She discussed her early childhood and musical education and her marriage to Joseph Needham, from London, who ran a medical practice and was also an amateur musician and critic. Patterson credited her marriage as being ‘not the end but the beginning of the composer’s career’, which was unusual by nineteenth century standards, where marriage had often thwarted a female musician’s career rather than aiding in its development. Initially, Alicia Adelaide Needham had wanted to be a pianist; she cited Chopin as her favourite composer and reportedly told Patterson that ‘the underlying sadness of his Polish

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*



music appeal[s] deeply to my Irish nature, “half sunshine, half tears””.<sup>48</sup> However, her husband had several of her songs published shortly after they were married and their success led Needham to devote herself to composition. In describing her work, Patterson referred to her as the ‘Irish Schubert’, which is praise indeed for Needham.<sup>49</sup> Throughout her article Patterson complimented the composer and drew attention to her abilities as a composer and also to her admirable features as a wife and a friend. As with many of Patterson’s articles, this provides an important source on Needham for present day researchers. Although she had a successful career, little is known about Alice Needham, the only major source on her life being her unpublished autobiography *A Daughter of Music*.<sup>50</sup> Patterson’s article therefore provides some interesting insights into the woman herself and the way her career in composition came about. Annie Patterson was obviously an admirer of her work and sixteen years later, when Patterson was living in Cork, she wrote another article on her for *The Leader*.<sup>51</sup>

The opening of Patterson’s article on Alice Adelaide Needham offers the only glimpse of a possible feminist approach in all of Patterson’s writing. Overall in her books and articles she drew attention to the work of women and men, but she never draws attention to the particular position of women, the restrictions society put on them, nor comments on her own experiences as a woman in music. This approach to women in music at a time when, despite all their progress, they were still not equal to men, was an interesting choice on Patterson’s part. Unlike her English peer Ethel

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Alicia Adelaide Needham, *A Daughter of Music*, Cambridge University Library, Department of Manuscripts and University Archives, NCUACS 54.3.95/A.97.

<sup>51</sup> Eithne Ní Peadair [Annie Patterson], ‘Alice Adelaide Needham’, *The Leader*, vol. 23 no. 14 (April-May 1916), pp. 277-278

Smyth, an ardent supporter of the women's suffragette movement in England, Patterson chose to acknowledge women without demanding any special attention for them.<sup>52</sup> Both women were successful in music and they could have used their positions to offer support to other females, and to create a balance in music literature by illustrating the importance of women. However, they both avoided such an approach. While Patterson does refer to female musicians, it is never in any greater detail than what she gives their male peers, and although she dedicates several of her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times* to women, there is a greater number dedicated to men, most likely because there were simply more men active in music. While she sometimes referred throughout her books to the struggles of the professional musician or the hardships that the career involves, it is always in general terms with no direct reference to the particular case of female musicians. Perhaps she felt that she would earn more equality for women by giving them equal treatment to her male subjects. Likewise, while she documented her own struggles as woman and her efforts to build her career as a composer, Smyth never refers to the work of her English female contemporaries such as Rosalind Ellicott, Maude Valerie White or Adela Maddison. Smyth's approach seems to have been very self-orientated and, while she did campaign for women musicians who were fighting to work in large professional orchestras, her neglect of her fellow female composers perhaps suggests that she was threatened by their work. In an address on Smyth, Sophie Fuller comments that while it would be asking a great deal of Smyth to have challenged accepted views of British music beyond having herself included, through her writing which ignored other women composers, she has helped 'perpetuate a distortion of musical history, albeit one in which she herself has survived'. On the other-hand,

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<sup>52</sup> Fuller, "“If I could have stood in the sunlight...”: Ethel Smyth in context’.

Patterson never complained about her position nor that of women in general in music. With the sole exception of the Needham article she does not make reference to it. But her work has done a great deal for the nineteenth century female musician, particularly her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times*. Through these articles she has left us with a valuable source on several of the prominent female musicians of that period. In many cases without her work there would be little or no information available about them, and her articles have been invaluable in the course of researching this thesis in providing details about the early lives and careers of those to whom she dedicated articles. Ethel Smyth is known as a campaigner for the rights of women in music in Britain, but her work for the cause was always to benefit herself. While never expressing similar intentions, Patterson in fact improved the position of women by acknowledging their work and treating them as equal to men.

Patterson's next group of articles which had female musicians as their subject appeared towards the end of the year in November and December of 1900. The first three discussed the work of Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell and of Margaret O'Hea, to whom Patterson dedicated two weeks in order fully to document her career and work.<sup>53</sup> Her next subject was Madame Jeanie Quintan-Rosse, a singing teacher at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and a well-known contralto in Dublin and London. In reference to her teaching, Patterson stated that she had 'as all gifted women who have tact can do, developed a system of teaching of her own which is as effective as it is agreeably acceptable to her very wide circle of pupils'.<sup>54</sup> She praised her ability to dedicate herself to her art and, returning once again to her theme of the distraction of the bicycle in those days, she said 'the question is how many students, especially

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<sup>53</sup> These three articles were referred to in Chapter two above regarding the work of Mrs Scott-Ffennell and Margaret O'Hea at the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

<sup>54</sup> Patterson, 'Mme Jeanie Quinton-Rosse', *WIT*, 24 November 1900, p. 4.

in these days of bicycle riding, would be so self denying for the sake of their art?’<sup>55</sup> Although Quintan-Rosse was English and completed her education in London, where she also established herself as a singer, she became a regular fixture in Dublin’s musical life when she married Harry Quintan, a popular Dublin gentleman. The marriage led to her move to Dublin and to her career with the Royal Irish Academy of Music because after marriage, as she told Patterson, she gave herself ‘up entirely to teaching’ and was devoted to her art.<sup>56</sup> Patterson felt that Dublin should be ‘indebted’ to Harry Quintan for his involvement in bringing the contralto to Dublin. The description given of the teaching life of Madame Quinton-Rosse painted a picture of a successful but extremely busy career. She is recorded by Patterson as having had fifty to sixty private pupils, classes at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and classes in four ladies’ colleges, and she also trained a ladies’ choir. On top of all of this, following her arrival in Dublin and her work with female choirs, Quinton-Rosse found it difficult to find suitable material for young ladies to perform and so she began writing librettos. The most famous of these was entitled *Japanese Girl* and was set to music by Dr. Charles Vincent. As was usual for Patterson, she did not forget to inform the reader of Quinton-Rosse’s ‘bright heartedness’ and charm, qualities which seem to Patterson only to have heightened the worth of her subjects. As was the case with Alicia Adelaide Needham, very little information survives about her career; Patterson’s article therefore provides valuable information about Quinton-Rosse’s life and career both in England and Ireland.

The following week she devoted her article to Pauline Elsner, another regular performer in Dublin and one whom Patterson rated as ‘one of the best of our lady

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

pianists in the realm of concert music'.<sup>57</sup> At the beginning of the article Patterson noted that Elsner was gifted not merely as a solo pianist but also as an accompanist, a skill that Patterson believed involved more than just being a good solo executant. The article went on to give details of her father, Herr Wilhelm Elsner, who had taught cello at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and with whom Patterson had briefly taken lessons. The fact that a woman was allowed pursue lessons in a 'masculine' instrument such as the cello is testament once again to the Royal Irish Academy of Music and its fair treatment of women. Pauline Elsner also studied music at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, where she was a piano student of Fanny Robinson and Robert Stewart. The article provided not only a clear profile of Pauline Elsner but also an insight to life as part of a musical family in Dublin. It discussed musical gatherings at her house, the musicians she met through her father and her own training with her father. Patterson commented on her successful career as a teacher and praised her for her involvement with the executive committee of the Feis Ceoil. She also drew attention to Pauline Elsner's sisters, most notably Alex Elsner, who became the subject of Patterson's article several months later on the 13 April 1901. As usual, Patterson's article is very complementary of its subject. She concluded by informing the reader that Elsner took 'a very important position among the professional musicians of Dublin, and is very much esteemed for the thoroughness and earnestness with which she performs any task she may undertake to do'. As was the case with the women already mentioned, Patterson's article provides us with an invaluable insight into the life of one of Dublin's female musicians and it is one of the few available sources on her.

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<sup>57</sup> Patterson: 'Miss Pauline Elsner', *WIT*, 1 December 1900, p. 4.

Before the end of 1900 Annie Patterson also devoted an article to one half of the Moody-Manners Opera Company, and discussed the career of Fanny Moody under the title ‘A Charming Prima Donna – Madame Fanny Moody’.<sup>58</sup> In the following year, 1901, Patterson continued to draw attention to female musicians as well as to men with articles dedicated to women including Caroline Perceval and Madame Elsner-Stewart, the sister of the aforementioned Pauline Elsner.<sup>59</sup> In October she dedicated an article to the subject of ‘Our young Dublin lady musicians’ in which she paid especial attention to Miss Victoria Delany, a violinist and former student of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. Besides drawing attention to the careers of some of the female musicians active in Dublin, 1900 saw Patterson’s articles highlight the work of the Feis – through an examination of the events of Belfast Feis Ceoil that year and an illustration of several of the prize winners and their work many of the successful male musicians active in the city as teachers and performers, including T.R.G Jozé, James Culwick and Michele Esposito.

In 1901 the theme of promoting and advertising local active musicians continues with the articles from the 26 January to the 4 May. Later in the summer she offered advice on topics such as seaside music and summer pianoforte music, and for the last few months of the year the articles return to reviewing Dublin music and its musicians. The article of 21 September is entitled ‘The prospects of musical Dublin’ and is reminiscent of her final article of 1899. This article summarised all that Annie Patterson was trying to achieve through her work with Feis Ceoil, her articles, her compositions and her many publications. She described the Dublin audience as being the ones who predict what will be popular. She stated that London managers gauge

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<sup>58</sup> Patterson: ‘A Charming Prima Donna – Madame Fanny Moody’, *WIT*, 15 December 1900, p. 3.

<sup>59</sup> Annie Patterson: ‘Miss Caroline Perceval’ *WIT*, 30 March 1901 and ‘Madame Elsner–Stewart’, *WIT*, 13 April 1901.

the success of their ventures based on the reaction it gets in Dublin. However, Patterson believed that the same Dublin audience was not yet as generous with its attention to music and drama that was home-grown. At the end of the first paragraph she questioned whether Dublin audiences had yet overcome the ‘odious principle of honouring all prophets but those of our own country and city?’ When questioned if Dublin was a musical city she believed the answer would have to be ‘yes’ and ‘no’: ‘yes’ because the public has a keen sense and appreciation of a good thing, and ‘no’ because it does not persevere to keep alive what is worthy of support. As an example she cited the Dublin Musical Society, which had recently cancelled concerts due to lack of interest. She pointed out that there was not enough widespread support for music and that it was up to all classes of the community to become involved in the wealth of musical activities that were taking place. She praised the music societies, organisations and the Academy, the music of the cathedral services (protestant and catholic), the theatre bands and the many active professional teachers. She referred to the Ireland of the past where music literature and art were the most treasured possessions of an exceptionally gifted people. In this article Annie Patterson commented that she was doing her best to fan the spark of interest into a flame. This summarises what Patterson’s work was all about: she wanted to make music as important a part of Irish society as she believed it had been in the past. She herself had had an interest and appreciation for music from an early age and she wanted to pass this on to others. Her articles endeavoured to music back as an important element of people’s daily lives, be it as an amateur musician or an avid concertgoer. Over the course of her articles the only thing she ever criticises is the public’s lack of support for music, her articles always being enthusiastic and full of praise, be they on individual musicians or events. Through her writing she provided constant

encouragement for every level of music enthusiast, making every reader feel that they could contribute to Dublin's musical activities. While many of Dublin's musicians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century sought to improve the public interest in music and continue the growth in musical events and organisations, no one contributed as much as Patterson.

Patterson's articles constitute an invaluable source into music at the turn of the twentieth century in terms of what was going on and who was involved. They document all the major events and institutions within the city as well as providing reviews of all the leading musicians active in the city, both male and female. Patterson also provided studies of regular visitors to Dublin who contributed to the concert life and musical culture of the city, such as Madame Fanny Moody. Her articles provide invaluable portraits of her subjects which, in the cases of many of the musicians, seem to provide their only surviving account, notably in the cases of Margaret O'Hea and Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell.<sup>60</sup> It seems unlikely that every organisation or musician she mentioned was paying her or providing her with free tickets to concerts as may have been common practice for music critics in the nineteenth century:<sup>61</sup> Patterson was not a music critic so much as an informer or educator on music. Her concern was to make the general public more aware of the talent and accomplishments that surrounded them in the city and which was there for them to enjoy if they could be encouraged to take a greater interest in music. She also does her part to illustrate the musical talents in other Irish cities through her coverage of the Belfast Feis Ceoil in 1900 and in her articles on Theodore Gmur, which

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<sup>60</sup> See appendix five, below.

<sup>61</sup> The practice of music critics been given free tickets by theatre owners was discussed by Michael Murphy in a paper entitled 'From the sublime to the ridiculous: standards and influences in Irish musical press in the nineteenth century', given at the SMI annual conference, Waterford Institute of Technology, 10 May 2008.



highlighted music in Cork, as did the article which followed his entitled ‘More Cork Stories’.<sup>62</sup> In her informative articles on the profession of music or other topics referring to music in the home, her tone is always a little more direct and her comments are often a lot harsher, but the reasoning behind this was most likely that she wanted to encourage the amateur musicians reading her articles to be the very best that they could so that they would in turn be an asset to Dublin’s musical future. Patterson’s only agenda seems to have been to benefit music in Dublin. Overall, her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times* can be seen as an advertisement for the wealth of musical talents that Dublin and Ireland possessed as well as a source of guidance for those had an interest in music. She continued the latter idea in several of her later publications, the first of which was the book *Chats with Music Lovers*, and indeed many of the titles of the chapters within this book such as ‘How to Practice’, ‘How to Give a Concert’ or ‘How to Succeed as a Prima Donna’ are reminiscent of Patterson’s articles.<sup>63</sup>

#### **4.2 Annie Patterson’s Publications in the Twentieth Century**

Annie Patterson seemed to move away from writing articles in favour of writing books in the early twentieth century. However, her publications are not widely available and in case of the *Native Music of Ireland* which the *New Grove* article credits her with writing, the book itself seems to be no longer available.<sup>64</sup> In the first decade of the century she published four books: a volume in 1902 on the story of the oratorio as part of the Music Story Series edited by Frederick J. Crowest,<sup>65</sup> a volume

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<sup>62</sup> For details on the dates of these articles see appendix five, below.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> William H. Grattan Flood/Patrick F. Devine: ‘Patterson, Annie (Wilson)’, *NG2001*, p. 237.

<sup>65</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *The Story of the Oratorio*, The Music Stories Series, ed. Frederick J. Crowest (London: Walter Scott Publishing, 1902).

in 1903 on Schumann for The Master Musicians series,<sup>66</sup> a book entitled *Chats with Music Lovers* in 1907,<sup>67</sup> and in 1909 a book entitled *Beautiful Song and the Singer: An Appreciation of the Methods of Jenny Lind*.<sup>68</sup> After her move to Cork in 1909, Annie Patterson continued to publish books on music. In 1913 she produced a volume intended to guide her reader in understanding and enjoying Orchestral music, entitled *How to Listen to an Orchestra*.<sup>69</sup> This was followed by a volume on Irish music but unfortunately, this volume no longer seems to be available despite the fact it is one that is often mentioned in biographies of Patterson.<sup>70</sup> Her final book was *The Profession of Music* which was published in 1928 and it provides advice for those interested in a career in the many different disciplines of music.<sup>71</sup> In many ways these books were a continuation of her articles in that they were aimed at helping to educate the amateur musician or the student of music. She dealt with her subjects in a manner that was easy to understand and yet well researched and clearly laid out.

The first of her publications, *The Story of the Oratorio*, was an attempt to explain one of ‘the great art-forms’ to the ‘casual student, most amateurs and the large public of “listeners to music”’.<sup>72</sup> She believed that all of the above were lacking in their understanding of the musical form but unable or unwilling to dedicate time to understanding it or, indeed, any of the other ‘great art-forms’ due to the fact that people lived in ‘an age of rush and hurry, when mental digestion is taxed to its

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<sup>66</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *Schumann*, The Master Musicians Series, ed. Frederick J. Crowest (London: J. M. Dent and Co., 1903).

<sup>67</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *Chats With Music Lovers*, The Music Lover’s Library (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1907).

<sup>68</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *Beautiful Song and the Singer: An Aprreciation of Jenny Lind* (Dublin: Hely’s, 1909).

<sup>69</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *How to Listen to an Orchestra* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1913).

<sup>70</sup> Both the *New Grove* article on Patterson and the entry in Cohen’s *International Encyclopaedia* mention this book but I have been unable to find a copy of the book.

<sup>71</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *The Profession of Music* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton and Co., 1928).

<sup>72</sup> Annie W. Patterson: *The Story of the Oratorio* (London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., 1902), p. v.

utmost to assimilate all its mental pabulum.’<sup>73</sup> Patterson aimed to rectify this with her ‘story of the oratorio’, which she described as tracing the form from ‘its first dawn in the music of religious devotion to its climax in the masterpieces of Handel and Mendelssohn’.<sup>74</sup> She aimed to keep her reader interested by condensing the narrative and by keeping the ‘technicalities and “dry” statistics’ to a minimum except in the final two chapters.<sup>75</sup> The book has fourteen chapters which trace the foundations of the oratorio from the music of ancient Greece and Rome through Gregorian chant and into the eras of composers such as Handel, Beethoven and Mendelssohn. The last few chapters explore the compositions in the genre by English composers, the promotion of the oratorio in England through music festivals, and its future. The final two chapters were written exclusively for ‘music students (professional and amateur)’ and contained the information on the structure of the oratorio and the orchestra. In the penultimate chapter, entitled ‘The building of the cathedral’, Patterson opened with the following:

We venture to believe that many of our readers, having pursued our story of oratorio so far, may, being of an analytical and inquiring turn of mind, want further information as to the general structure of the Great Tone Cathedral - its architectural design, as also the nature of the mortar, bricks, stonework and adornments that go to make it s masonry.<sup>76</sup>

This was typical of Patterson’s style of writing in both her articles and her books: she used imagery and terms that would be more familiar to the amateur music reader in order to explain her point. For the more knowledgeable music reader such metaphors added entertainment to the discussion. It is similar to the writing of Annie Curwen, and both women reflect the approaches of one of their teachers at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Sir Robert Stewart. Both comment on Stewart’s methods of

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. vi.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.

making music more accessible to the beginner. For example, Curwen describes how Stewart helped his young students in a harmony class to understand the C clef. She noted that ‘the late Sir Robert Stewart... a very able and interesting teacher, has been known to vary his blackboard demonstration of this subject by making a collection of sticks and umbrellas, laying them on the floor to represent the staff, and placing his hat as a clef’. Stewart then moved the sticks to illustrate that the lines moved but the clef never did. Stewart would end his lesson by telling his students ‘now children, – take this away with you – ‘clefs never move’’,<sup>77</sup> and a chorus of children would be heard chanting that as they left the classroom. Likewise, in her article on the Royal Irish Academy of Music for the *Weekly Irish Times* Patterson mentioned her first day as a young girl in Stewart’s harmony class.<sup>78</sup> In order to give a pictorial demonstration during the class of the three kinds of part writing he got Patterson and another student to walk up and down the classroom, together, in different directions and with one stationary while the other moved. Patterson remarked on the lasting impression that the demonstration made on her. So the style of both these women, in particularly Patterson, in using metaphors to illustrate the more complex musical ideals is firmly rooted in their early education and the influence of their mentor, Sir Robert Stewart.

Overall, Patterson’s book is a knowledgeable and detailed evaluation of the history and development of the oratorio, put forth in a manner that was easily followed and understood. It is clear that Patterson was an intelligent and dedicated researcher, who left no stone unturned. The volume contains a wealth of information on the evolution of the oratorio, including appendices of principal oratorio

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<sup>77</sup> Curwen, *Pianoforte Method*, p. 360.

<sup>78</sup> Patterson, ‘The Royal Irish Academy of Music’, *WIT*.

composers and their works, first performances of important oratorios and in conclusion a bibliography of suggested further reading on the subject. The book illustrates Annie Patterson's abilities as a writer and her knowledge as a musician: she managed to make her subject easy to understand and interesting to read but also scholarly and accurate in its account. It was a progressive volume on an important musical form, and the book even managed to gain Patterson some royal approval: in 1903 the *Irish Times* ran a notice on the 'Royal Acceptance of Books', something it claimed was not usual for them but an exception was made for Annie Patterson.<sup>79</sup> The notice told of Queen Alexandra's acceptance of a copy of *Story of the Oratorio*, which the *Irish Times* deemed significant because Patterson and Queen Alexandra were at that point still the only two women in the British Isles who were 'wearing the hood and gown of a Doctor of Music'.<sup>80</sup> However, while Annie Patterson had worked hard to achieve her Doctorate of Music, Queen Alexandra's was an honorary title, presented to her by Trinity College, Dublin during her visit to Ireland in 1885.<sup>81</sup>

Patterson's next book came in quick succession to her volume on the oratorio. It was part of another successful series of books on music, *The Master Musicians Series*, and was a monograph on Robert Schumann. At that point Annie Patterson was the only female writer to contribute to the *Master Musicians Series*. The inside cover lists the other volumes available at the time, which were on Bach, Beethoven, Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Mozart and Wagner and were all by male writers. This indicates the respect in which Patterson was held, to be given the task of adding Schumann to the series. The book was dedicated 'with much esteem' to Schumann's youngest daughter, 'Fräulein Eugenie Schumann', and in the preface Patterson

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<sup>79</sup> *IT*, 17 January 1903, p. 6.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> Georgina Battiscombe, *Queen Alexandra* (London: Cardinal Books, 1972), p. 167.

mentioned that she met Eugenie Schumann and was grateful to her for her help and suggestions with the book.

Patterson wanted the book to be different from similar volumes on the composer; she wanted it to be more about exploring and portraying the character of the man himself rather than just being made up of ‘historical data and critical notices of his work’.<sup>82</sup> She believed that she was providing what had ‘hitherto been wanting in the way of an accurate character sketch’.<sup>83</sup> Patterson based her book on an analysis of Schumann’s writing in his essays and his letters because she stated that this was ‘the wish of his late distinguished wife that the man himself should be allowed speech through his writings, and especially his letters’.<sup>84</sup> She divided the chapters into sections which were entitled ‘Biographical’, ‘The Man’ and finally ‘The Musician and Writer’.<sup>85</sup> The book follows Schumann from his birth and parentage right through his life, looking at his compositions, his career, his family, his relationships and friends, and his ideas on music, with each section supported by information and extracts from his letters and writings. In relation to his wife Clara, Throughout, the book continuously praises the abilities of his wife Clara, her marriage to Robert Schumann and their mutual support of each other. Patterson described Clara Schumann as ‘a woman whose talents and many excellent qualifications of character entitle her to rank among the foremost musical artists of her sex.’<sup>86</sup> In reference to her ability as a performer she comments:

In a time of claptrapism and mere empty virtuosity, she invariably aimed at and maintained a high standard of purity in tone, perfect execution apart from mere

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<sup>82</sup> Annie W. Patterson, *Schumann* (London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1903), p. vii.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, p. viii.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, p. viii.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, p. xi-xiii.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*, p. 20.

display, and intelligent thorough rendition of the spirit as the letter of the music she undertook to perform.<sup>87</sup>

She praised her as a composer and performer and, in the context of her marriage to Robert Schumann, described Clara as his ‘great love’.<sup>88</sup> Patterson approved of their correspondence because it did not contain ‘sickly sentimentality, describing their letters as follows:

They are written in a straightforward, earnest spirit, and seem rather to be a colloquy of two kindred souls that beat as one than the fervid adoration of the lover who looks upon the woman of his choice as a beautiful toy.<sup>89</sup>

Clearly Patterson did not approve of over-sentimentality and was impressed by Schumann’s respect and encouragement for his wife rather than seeing her as his subordinate who was there for his amusement. She approved of his equal treatment of his wife whom Patterson described as being his ‘right hand’.<sup>90</sup> As a whole, the book is continuously praising and defensive of Schumann in all areas of his life. Much like her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times*, Patterson did not have a bad word to say about her subject and was keen to convince her reader of his greatness through illustrating details of the man himself and not just his talents as a musician.

Patterson’s book on Schumann was published in New York as well as London, and in September 1903 the *New York Times* ran a review of her contribution to the *Master Musicians Series*. While commenting that the book deserved its place in the series, the review is generally critical of Patterson’s approach and dismissive of her use of the information as being unoriginal and lacking in ‘high authority’.<sup>91</sup> However, it does refer to it as being ‘welcome as a better compilation of the existing

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, p. 124.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, p. 120 and p. 118.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*, p. 122.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, p. 124.

<sup>91</sup> *The New York Times*, 12 September 1903.

material than has hitherto existed in English'.<sup>92</sup> It refers to Patterson's style of writing as being agreeable and simple, and this perhaps best sums up the book. While the review is correct in its judgement of the book as lacking in any new revelations or research about the composer's work, it had its place as a more in-depth look at the character of the composer at a time when many who had known him were still alive, including his daughter. While the presentation of the material is simple in that the book is easy to understand without using complicated terms or confusing analysis, it provides an insight into an important nineteenth century composer that could be enjoyed by the amateur musician or music enthusiast. As in her other books, in her volume on Schumann Patterson was doing what she did best: taking a musical subject and educating her reader on it without confusion or complication.

Her next book, *Chats with Music Lovers*, continues that idea. Here she provided her reader with advice and information on different areas of music learning and appreciation which is reminiscent in style and content of many of her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times*. The book was again one of a series, *The Music Lovers Library*, with preceding volumes including *Chats on Violins* and *Stories from the Operas*. The opening pages contain a picture of the previously mentioned Queen Alexandra in her doctoral robes.<sup>93</sup> The chapters are each dedicated to instruction and guidance on all of the common areas of music practice and study, with chapters dedicated to each of the following: how to enjoy music, how to practice, how to sing, how to compose, how to read textbooks, how to prepare for examinations, how to get engagements, how to appear in public, how to conduct, how to be an organist, how to

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<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> Patterson, *Chats with Music Lovers*.



teach, how to organise musical entertainments and how to publish music.<sup>94</sup> The remarkable thing about the book was that the author herself had experience in every one of the topics she wrote on, so her knowledge was very much based on personal experience and success. Patterson wanted the book to be a guide on ‘how to enjoy music’ and argued that music should be a pastime or occupation that brought enjoyment.<sup>95</sup> She argued that music had become an art form with specific ideas attached that were a hindrance rather than a help because these made the amateur music lover worry if their understanding was worthy of great works of music, and they made professional musicians judgemental of those who enjoyed the more simple forms of music. Patterson suggested that what music needed was ‘broader intelligence on the part of audiences and greater tolerance and perspicuity on the part of those who musically cater for them’.<sup>96</sup> Patterson hoped to cater to both categories in some way. Each chapter contained guidance on the most common elements and concerns of the discipline of music she is discussing. For example, the chapter on singing included a discussion on areas such as the classification of voices, breathing and tone production, as well as giving advice on concert work, choral singing and part singing. The chapter on preparing for exams discussed the qualifications available and the best ways of preparing for them. It even contained a description of ‘cramming’, a practice that Patterson considered to be an ‘objectionable procedure’ and ‘an artistic crime’.<sup>97</sup>

Patterson is at her most critical and judgemental in this book and is quick to criticise and disregard any practice that she deems disrespectful of the music

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, p. v-viii.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, p. 84.

profession in general. In particular in the chapter on how to teach she is critical of those who have taken up the occupation as a means of a quick income or without being really qualified to do the job well simply because they can get away with it;

The quack, who professes to be anything that suits his purpose finds that, in teaching music he can impose upon the credulity of the public with less impunity than if he placed a brass plate on his door and declare himself a legal or medical practitioner.<sup>98</sup>

Her opinion on the standards of music teaching is reminiscent of her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times*. Her argument against such practices continues for several pages and it was a subject that Patterson clearly felt strongly about which, considering how well educated she was, is not surprising: she was obviously annoyed by those who were not educated in the field of music but willing to train young enthusiasts and possibly do them an injustice through their incompetence. Patterson felt that this was a problem that would continue: 'Until the teaching of music is properly licensed- and the problem of doing so is no easy one to solve- pretension must flourish more or less.'<sup>99</sup>

As a result of her own widespread experience in music, Patterson was able to provide her reader with guidance that was both realistic and practical. It is possible that she knew herself that this was a genre in which she excelled as a music writer since two of her later works follow similar patterns. In 1913 she published a book entitled *How to Listen to an Orchestra* which guides the reader in their enjoyment and appreciation of orchestral music by helping them to understand the basics of the orchestra and of the music they hear. Subsequently, in 1926, she published *The Profession of Music* which covers all the possible careers in music and discusses the

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<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 138-139.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, p. 140.

best way to train for them. Patterson's gift as a writer was her ability to take a topic and, no matter how complicated it was, to make it accessible to her reader.

### **4.3 Annie Patterson and Marion Scott: Professional Comparisons**

In many ways Annie Patterson's career can be compared to that of Marion Scott, another multi-dimensional musician who had a great influence on the development of music in London, particularly in the early twentieth century. Marion Scott was a writer, violinist, lecturer, teacher, poet and organiser who came from a progressive family, where she was introduced at an early age to the idea that women and men could work together to achieve common goals, and this became an ethos by which she lived throughout her life. She studied at the Royal College of Music where she was one of Charles Villiers Stanford's first female composition students,<sup>100</sup> and she composed songs and chamber music; however, as with much of Patterson's work, hers was not all published and the majority of her music has not been heard in the past fifty years. Her talents meant that she had many opportunities to develop as a musician and, like Patterson, she explored them all. Other similarities can be seen in her musical articles while she was critic for the *Christian Science Monitor* in London from 1919. Like Patterson's articles for the *Weekly Irish Times* they contained interviews with composers and performers, reviews of concerts and articles on the history of music.<sup>101</sup> Scott used this position to promote the work of her friends and to create awareness of their work, just as Patterson had before her. From this point in her career, she dedicated herself mainly to musicology which was still a discipline that, notwithstanding Annie Patterson's writings, was mainly considered off limits to women. Just as Patterson had written a volume on Schumann for the *Master*

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<sup>100</sup> Pamela Blevins, 'Marion Scott: Emerging from the Shadows', *Journal of the International Alliance of Women in Music*, 15, No.1, (Spring 2009), p. 1.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5.

*Musicians Series* in 1903, Marion Scott completed the task of writing a volume on Beethoven for the same series which was published in 1934. One difference between the volumes produced by Patterson and Scott for the *Master Musicians Series* was that Patterson's volume was more accessible to the general reader and music enthusiast while Scott's volume was more scholarly in its concept, a distinction that may in part be due to the fact that Patterson was writing several decades before Scott, decades during which musical scholarship made considerable advances. Marion Scott has begun to gain recognition in recent years through the dedicated work of Pamela Blevins to promote the notable career of this forgotten, multi-talented musician from the early twentieth century.<sup>102</sup> There is no doubt that Scott is indeed worthy of recognition for her work in so many different areas of music. However, an exploration of her career makes that of Annie Patterson all the more impressive: Patterson managed to do almost everything Scott did, but in most cases she was twenty years ahead of her and working in a country where music was not nearly as well established as it was in England. Yet, she excelled at everything she did.

Although there is immense value in the work of Annie Patterson, it is clear that in the majority of her publications she was not aiming it at a scholarly readership, and that her research involved an evaluation, or in the case of Schumann, a re-evaluation, of sources and research that already existed. It is likely that there was no need for her to aim to produce a more scholarly or academic text because there was as yet little or no market for this in Ireland, or even in England. With only one music department in Dublin at that point, in Trinity College, Dublin did not yet have an academic culture in music. Therefore Patterson aimed her work at the market that

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<sup>102</sup> Pamela Blevins, *Ivor Gurney and Marion Scott: Song of Pain and Beauty* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008).

was available – the general public, the amateur musician and the professional musician in Ireland and England. The books were obviously popular with all of them being reprinted. For example, *The Story of the Oratorio* was reprinted in 1908 and the *Master Musicians* volume on *Schumann* was reprinted three times before the revised edition was released in 1934.<sup>103</sup>

#### 4.4 A Comparison of the Work of Annie Patterson and W.H. Grattan Flood

Another popular and important Irish writer on music in the early twentieth century was Grattan Flood. A comparison of his work with that of Annie Patterson illustrates the similar approaches and what was most likely the common practice for that time, at least in Ireland. Born in Waterford in 1859, Grattan Flood was originally intended for the priesthood but he favoured antiquarian studies.<sup>104</sup> He worked as an organist and teacher throughout his life and was also active as a composer of church music. His writing on music centred upon two main themes, music in Ireland and Tudor composers. His most popular work is *A History of Irish Music* which was first published in part in *Irish Music Monthly* (1902-3) before its first edition appeared in 1905.<sup>105</sup> A number of subsequent editions appeared during Flood's lifetime, and it was revised in 1970 with an introduction by Seóirse Bodley.<sup>106</sup> The book is now regarded as unreliable due to its lack of sources, its often strongly biased opinions, and its propagation of unsupported hypotheses. The lack of sources is a fault that also applies to the work of Annie Patterson. Her books, while full of detailed information, make very little reference to sources: where she uses footnotes they are more often to

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<sup>103</sup> Patterson, *Schumann*.

<sup>104</sup> Axel Klein, 'Flood, W. H. Grattan', *GMO, OMO*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/09843>>, [accessed 19 February 2009].

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> W.H Grattan Flood, *A History of Irish Music*, revd. edn, (Dublin, 1905, <sup>2</sup>/1906, <sup>3</sup>/1913, <sup>4</sup>/1927; repr. Ed. Bodley, Shannon: Irish University Press, 1970).

give details on a person or event mentioned in the text than to provide information on the source of the information. Clearly this was still an acceptable style of writing in the early twentieth century. However, a difference between the work of Patterson and Flood is that she does not make any extraordinary claims that could not be supported: although she lacking source references, her book on Schumann does give a list in the preface of the primary texts she consulted. Likewise in the volume on the oratorio there is an appendix which lists the books she would recommend for further reading, so one can assume they were texts that she had studied herself. In later volumes such as *The Profession of Music* and *How to Listen to an Orchestra* a large proportion of the information given was based on Patterson's own experiences in music and therefore references were not relevant. In contrast, Grattan Flood made claims such as tracing Purcell's origin to Ireland without offering any sources to support this assertion. It is clear that both writers shared an enthusiasm for their work and their main aim to highlight music in Ireland. Their common aims would perhaps be clearer illustrated if a comparison of Flood's book with Patterson's *Native Music of Ireland* was possible. Even the fact that she attempted such a volume a short while after Flood suggests her desire to draw attention to the music of her native country. It may even be that she hoped to set about righting some of his wrongs. Overall the style of both writers is similar in their approaches and both would have been accessible to the amateur musician or music enthusiast as much as they would have been to the music scholar. The preface of Flood's volume on Irish music and Patterson's volume on the oratorio both adopt a simple style so as to be accessible to all audiences. Flood stated that he had 'avoided as far as possible all technicalities, and thus hope[d] to make

these pages more popular and within the scope of the average reader'.<sup>107</sup> Patterson claimed that:

All cannot appreciate a sermon or a learned lecture, but few fail to enjoy a story .... To the musical reader let us hope the following story of the oratorio ... may be read with tolerance and enjoyment, allowance being made for the fact that much in the narrative has been condensed or omitted, and that technicalities and 'dry' statistics are touched upon as lightly as possible.<sup>108</sup>

The fact that both writers make this point suggests that there was not an audience for anything too technical and that through making their work accessible and easier to understand they would reach more people with it. Much as Patterson's articles for the *Weekly Irish Times* drew attention to the active musicians in Dublin, Flood does the same in his conclusion. He gives a brief description of several nineteenth century composers and concludes with a paragraph listing those 'still living' at that point who gave proof that 'Ireland can still boast sons and daughters, inheritors of the tradition of past ages'.<sup>109</sup> It is interesting to note that some of the first names mentioned are those of Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell, Dr. Annie Patterson, Miss Oldham and Mrs Curwen.

#### **4.5 A Comparison of the Work of Annie Curwen with Annie Patterson**

Another female student of the Royal Irish Academy of Music who had a successful career in writing was Mrs Annie Curwen (née Gregg). However, while Patterson stayed in her native Ireland and concentrated on developing the public's interest and knowledge of music, Annie Curwen moved to England and set about rectifying the lack for pianoforte teachers around the world of instruction manuals on the profession of piano pedagogy. Born in 1845, Annie Gregg became a pianoforte

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, p. ix.

<sup>108</sup> Patterson, *Oratorio*, p. vi.

<sup>109</sup> Flood, *Irish Music*, p. 335.

student of Fanny Robinson and Joseph Robinson when she first attended the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1857. She also attended classes in harmony with Sir Robert Stewart, whose teaching methods she referred to in her teachers' manual, and she noted that he was 'a very able and interesting teacher'.<sup>110</sup> Upon completing her studies at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1865, Gregg, a native of Dublin, set about becoming involved in private teaching in the city. She was also a regular performer in musical evenings and concerts around the city.<sup>111</sup> In 1876 she moved to Scotland and continued to teach privately there. While the reasons for her move are not known, it is fair to say that this decision and the circumstances that followed led to the establishment of Annie Gregg as an important contributor to music education.

Through her teaching in Scotland she first encountered John Curwen who was a congregational minister and the main proponent of the tonic sol-fa system at that time.<sup>112</sup> While he did not invent the system, his great achievement lay in his methods of teaching and using it. A primary example of this is his use of tonic sol-fa hand signs.<sup>113</sup> These became a popular approach to teaching tonic sol-fa and were later used by Annie Curwen herself and, in the twentieth century, they were adapted by Zoltan Kodaly as an integral part of the Kodaly method of teaching.<sup>114</sup> In 1844 John Curwen had started printing his own publications and in 1863 he established his publishing firm, J. Curwen and Sons. In 1877 Annie Gregg married John Curwen's son, John Spencer Curwen, who was involved in the publishing firm and became the main exponent of John Curwen's methods. The union was greatly approved of by

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<sup>110</sup> Annie J. Curwen, *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method: The Teacher's Guide* (16 edn. London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1913), p. 460.

<sup>111</sup> She appears in advertisements in the *Irish Times* throughout this ten year period.

<sup>112</sup> H.C. Colles, et al, 'John Curwen' *GMO, OMO*, <[www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com)>, [accessed 06 May 2007].

<sup>113</sup> The handsigns appear in Annie Curwen's book, *Curwen's Pianoforte Method*, p. 446.

<sup>114</sup> Curwen, *Pianoforte Method*, p. 346.



John Curwen and his pleasure at the marriage was heightened ‘by the fact that the bride was herself a distinguished musician and had been trained at the Royal Irish Academy of Music’.<sup>115</sup> He was probably aware of the knowledge she brought to the table and it is possible that he later suggested her publications on music, since she does credit his influence in her work in the preface of her book.<sup>116</sup>

Up until the 1880s the one area that the Curwen Press was not targeting was the growing population of female musicians and teachers. The increase in female involvement in music in the nineteenth century gave an impetus to all the music related businesses. Many began to produce books and magazines aimed at the female musician, which were designed to meet the needs and interests of the ‘fairer sex’.<sup>117</sup> With the publications of Annie Curwen, the publishing firm began to rectify the lack of publications that the Curwen Press had which would appeal to women. John Curwen’s publications on music teaching and the tonic sol-fa method aimed to provide the student and teacher with a ‘cheap and accessible’ guide to understanding and learning music.<sup>118</sup> Annie Curwen felt that a similar guide that dealt with the pianoforte would be useful. Her preface notes that the guide was ‘an experiment’ and that she wanted to do for pianoforte teachers what her father-in-law had done for the teacher of singing classes.<sup>119</sup> In the appendix to the publication she stated that she was not dealing with technical training and was more concerned with providing a ‘better understanding of music, a better kind of teaching of the Elements’.<sup>120</sup> She also referred to her research in preparation to writing the book and the fact that so far as

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<sup>115</sup> Herbert, Simon, *Song and Words: A History of the Curwen Press* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1973), p. 54.

<sup>116</sup> *Curwen’s Pianoforte Method*, p. iii.

<sup>117</sup> Reich, ‘European Composers and Musicians’, p. 98.

<sup>118</sup> John Curwen: *Musical Theory* (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1879), p. ii.

<sup>119</sup> Curwen, *Pianoforte Method*, p. iii.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, p. 447.

she was able to ascertain by diligent search among publishers and at the British Museum, nobody had attempted to do anything on this principle for the guidance of the pianoforte teacher.<sup>121</sup>

Annie Curwen set about writing a book that would provide a new and better understanding of music and better methods for teaching the basics. Her aim was for the student to ‘gain knowledge of musical phenomena through ear observation and learning notation bit by bit as a means of recording what the ear had learnt to recognise.’<sup>122</sup> Much of the material in the lessons and exercises were originally sketched out from when she taught her own children.<sup>123</sup> Her connections to the Curwen family meant that she had no trouble finding a publisher and, as it turned out, the firm benefited greatly from her books, which remained popular well into the twentieth century.

Annie Curwen’s first publications appeared in 1886 under the series title of *The Child Pianist*, which was a series of work books for the student. There were also individual teacher’s guides for *The Child Pianist* for each section, grades one to four. The volume entitled *Mrs Curwen’s Pianoforte Method* was a later addition to the series compiling the individual steps from earlier additions combined with additional appendices. The teaching course was made up of graded sections with the student’s workbooks containing pieces and exercises while the teacher’s guides contained the instructions on how best to teach and approach each grade. Her reason for keeping all the instructions in the teacher’s guide is explained in the preface: she felt the student

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<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, p. 347.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, p. 347.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*, p. iii.

would think more of the teacher who could teach them ‘out of their own head’ rather than someone who just read instructions from the student’s book.<sup>124</sup>

When the teacher’s guide, Grade I, first appeared in 1886 it comprised four main teaching steps which comprised reading note values, reading rests, reading intervals and notes, and in the final step an introduction to syncopation and compound time. The whole series proved to be extremely popular with Curwen receiving so many letters from mothers and teachers who had used her methods to great success that she set about adding to them. By the time of the publication of *Mrs Curwen’s Pianoforte Method: The Teacher’s Manual* in 1900 and then again in 1913 with revisions, several additions had been made based on the feedback she had received. The preface to the 1913 edition notes that after the first editions and through talking to teachers, she felt she had over-condensed the early stages. It was teaching the staff and time signatures that many teachers found the most difficult. As a result she added a preliminary course on teaching the first notions of pitch, time and notation.<sup>125</sup> She also added two new steps with information on exercises, scales, chords, transposition and ear training. This edition concluded with six appendices on topics such as sight singing and class teaching. By 1913, when her methods were at the height of their popularity, the Curwen Press was also producing aids to the methods such as books of illustrative duets, C clef exercise books, illustrative tunes, music slates, staff cards, and certificate cards for the exams at the end of each step.<sup>126</sup> The book’s continued popularity resulted in the teacher’s guide reaching its thirty-first edition.

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<sup>124</sup> *Ibid*, p. iii.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*, p. vii.

<sup>126</sup> Herbert, *A History of the Curwen Press*, p. 71.

The publications of Annie Curwen provided the ever-growing population of female teachers in England, Ireland and indeed worldwide with a source of guidance in their profession. Her books are an example of women trying not only to become involved in the profession but also to improve it. For Annie Curwen this aim was supported by her husband and by her father-in-law: she had the means to get her teaching methods published and made available to a wide consumer audience. The books provided those interested in teaching with a manual which provided them with step-by-step guidance in all the necessary areas of teaching. As Curwen herself suggested in the preface to *Curwen's Pianoforte Methods*, the majority of her readers were mothers and female teachers.<sup>127</sup> The high regard in which her work came to be held can be ascertained by the work of Annie Patterson in Ireland. In an article for the *Weekly Irish Times* in 1899 on 'What to Practice', Patterson suggested Annie Curwen's books stating that 'Mrs Spencer Curwen's admirable "Child Pianist will also be found very helpful in training the young people'.<sup>128</sup> In her later publication *Chats with Music Lovers*, again on the subject of practice, Patterson recommends Mrs Curwen's *Child Pianist* to be of great assistance for teaching young pupils.<sup>129</sup> The fact that someone like Patterson, who was held in high esteem herself in music in Dublin, would recommend Curwen's books goes a little way towards illustrating their value for the piano teacher and also that Curwen's methods were worthy of the support of her musical peers.

As influential as the work of Annie Curwen was, it is important to acknowledge the roots of many of her ideas and those of John Curwen. While they both were exemplary figures in the improvement and progression of music education

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<sup>127</sup> Curwen, *Pianoforte Method*, p. v.

<sup>128</sup> Patterson, 'What to Practice', *WIT*, 28 October 1899, p. 4.

<sup>129</sup> Patterson, *Chats With Music Lovers*, p.19.

in the nineteenth century, many of their methods followed on from the work of Sarah Glover, the pioneer of the tonic sol-fa system. Sarah Glover had been interested in music from an early age and as a young woman she had become well known in her local Norwich as the director of the children's choir in her father's church.<sup>130</sup> This led to a lasting interest in music education and to improving the methods used in teaching music, particularly in teaching children. She was encouraged to publish her methods which she had first begun to develop as a choir director and which had been improved and adjusted through twenty years of teaching in local schools.<sup>131</sup> Her first publication appeared in 1835 and was entitled *Scheme for Rendering Psalmsody Congregational*. The second edition appeared in 1839 and a third edition was published in 1845. The main element of her work was based on new notation of sol-fa initials. It was also her belief that the most important aspect of teaching music was to set children singing from the beginning so that they could learn as they gained experience. Her method seems to have been a huge influence for John Curwen and by extension for Annie Curwen. However, while John Curwen did acknowledge the work of Sarah Glover, the latter seemed eager to keep her methods distinct from Curwen's. She did not put her name to her work until the 1850 edition appeared. In the preface she noted that she had resisted adding her name to her work previously as 'a female and private individual' but that she had done so at that point so as to reclaim the identity of the 'genuine system' of tonic sol-fa.<sup>132</sup> Her irritation was most likely as a result of John Curwen publishing his first version of her work in 1841 without receiving her permission.<sup>133</sup> Although Curwen remained grateful to her and eager to express his gratitude throughout his career, Glover continued to believe her

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<sup>130</sup> Bernarr Rainbow, 'Glover, Sarah Anna', *GMO, OMO*, <[www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com)>, [accessed 12 September 2008].

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> Hyde, *New Found Voices*, p. 73.

<sup>133</sup> Rainbow, 'Glover, Sarah Anna'.

own version was superior and to doubt his motivations. However, John Curwen shared the opinion of Glover that these methods should be used to simplify the process of music teaching and to make it more accessible to children and easier for teachers to explain and express. It is this principal in particular that is evident through the work of Annie Curwen. In her own manual the desires of Sarah Glover and of her father-in-law, John Curwen, are evident in her desire to simplify the basic elements of the pianoforte so as to allow greater understanding from an early stage. The work of Sarah Glover influenced Curwen as much as the work of her father-in-law. The work of Glover can be seen as the first steps towards improving music education in the nineteenth century, in which she was followed by John Curwen and later by Annie Curwen.

Annie Curwen's main aim was always to help the teacher and pupil improve their musical education as a whole, through her presentation of information concerning the theory of music as well as the playing of the pianoforte. As well as her publications she also helped in the education of music teachers through her many public lectures. In 1907 she was involved in the first training course for music teachers which was held in Manchester and organised by Walter Caroll.<sup>134</sup> At that point her work in the area of music education was well known and admired. She had produced several editions of her teaching manual and accompanying work books as well as having her views on music teaching published in two articles in *Child Life* in 1899.<sup>135</sup> Her opinions within the articles are extremely well expressed and argued with many of her main points echoing back to her predecessor Sarah Glover. For example, the statement that 'one should teach theory through practice' is reminiscent

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<sup>134</sup> Hyde, *New Found Voices*, p. 118.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

of Glover's methods and her initial desire to make the teaching of music and notation simpler.

Annie Curwen was in a good position to have her work published and distributed through her connection to the Curwen Press. When she saw a gap in the market for a manual that would help piano teachers and parents guide their children in piano practice she had thus the means to reach this market. Through her experiences as a music teacher in both Dublin and England and her studies into her father-in-law's work on teaching singing she had the knowledge to promote better standards in piano pedagogy. She set about doing this through the publication of a teaching manual and a series of workbooks for the student. Curwen's teaching manuals provided piano teachers, particularly female teachers, with an aid in teaching the instrument, while helping the students to develop a clear understanding of the workings and capabilities of the piano. They were popular in England and Ireland as well as in Canada, America and Australia, probably because they were the first of their kind to break down the elements of teaching the piano into easy-to-follow steps.<sup>136</sup> While there had been books on technique before hers, Mrs Curwen's publications were the first to deal with teaching the basics, and through them she 'anticipated twentieth century pedagogical trends by applying progressive educational principles'.<sup>137</sup> Upon closer examination, the reasons for the popularity of her books become evident. The *Teacher's Guide* is one of the most extensive music manuals of its time. It is a step by step guide to teaching the basics of music theory on the piano, with nothing left to the imagination. Each new lesson is laid out under the following headings: aim of the lesson, preparation, method, practice, and ear

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<sup>136</sup> Brubaker, Jackson and Sturm, 'Contributions', p. 4.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4

exercise. This final heading is of the utmost importance throughout the book because, as she mentions in the introduction, ‘Music theory and piano teaching should not be about just looking at the music, it should be about listening too’.<sup>138</sup> The style of Curwen’s writing is echoed in Annie Patterson’s work. Patterson also aimed to simplify everything so that it was easy to understand and accessible to a wide audience. An example of this is her volume on the oratorio. Like Curwen, she aimed to improve her reader’s understanding of her subject through breaking it down into sections and explaining it in a style of language that was easy to follow and understand.

In the early editions of Annie Curwen’s teaching manual this method of breaking her subject into easy to follow sections is evident through each grade being presented in an individual volume. The first, *The Teacher’s Guide to the Child Pianist Grade I*, was published in 1886 along with the first of the student workbooks. It covered all the basics of the early lessons at the piano, including note values, rests, intervals, pitch and time.<sup>139</sup> In the *Grade II* manual, first published in 1889, the same general approach was used, with the information being divided into lessons for the teacher.<sup>140</sup> The Grade two manual deals with the next stages of teaching, such as sight reading, reading intervals, scales, chord building, transposition, ear exercises and time signatures.<sup>141</sup> While the teacher’s manuals provided clear and complete explanations for the teacher on how to divide up the lesson and how to approach and teach each element, the student’s books were again simple and easy to follow. In

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<sup>138</sup> Curwen, *Pianoforte Method*, p. 8.

<sup>139</sup> Mrs J. Spencer Curwen, *Grade I: The Teacher’s Guide to the Lessons of the Child Pianist*, (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1886), Contents page.

<sup>140</sup> Mrs J. Spencer Curwen, *Grade II: The Teacher’s Guide to the lessons of the Child Pianist*, (London: J. Curwen and Sons, 1889) p. 1.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid*, Contents Page.



case anyone would purchase one manual without the other, the student's books all bear the following advice on their front cover - 'this method cannot be effectively used without the Teacher's Guide, price, complete, 18/6 net cash'.<sup>142</sup> Indeed, the publications provided assistance on all the elements of the student's musical education that could be needed. In the 'Step one' volume there was a list of pieces, all published by the Curwen Press, that were 'graded in order of increasing difficulty with helpful technical and artistic points' under the three headings 'very easy', 'easy' and 'moderately easy'.<sup>143</sup>

In the preface Annie Curwen explained the way her lessons for the pianoforte came about and the reason she published them: 'These lessons were written for my children and published with the hope that for other little ones they might help to smooth the road to musicland'.<sup>144</sup> The title page of the book has the following dedication in the top right hand corner: 'To three little children these lessons are dedicated by their mother'.<sup>145</sup> For the student's books Annie Curwen worked mainly with two composers, John Kinross and Felix Swinstead. The earlier editions all used the musical illustrations of Kinross, but in 1913 she wanted to provide new options for those who had been teaching and playing the Kinross musical examples for twenty-six years, since they had first appeared. The Curwen Press began publishing two versions of each step, one with the music of Kinross and the other with music by Swinstead.<sup>146</sup> At the bottom of the preface page Curwen even has a note for the pupil encouraging them to ask their teachers to be tested because 'if we do not test our

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<sup>142</sup> I am grateful to Diana Bickley for lending me her own personal copies of the Grade I and II books.

<sup>143</sup> Mrs J Spencer Curwen, *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method: A Practical Course of the Elements of Music by Mrs J. Spencer Curwen with Illustrative Duets for teacher & pupil by John Kinross, 1<sup>st</sup> Step (Kinross)* (London: J. Curwen and Sons, 1913).

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, Preface page.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

knowledge from time to time we can never be sure that we are really making progress'.<sup>147</sup> The note to pupils also promotes the grade examinations for Mrs Curwen's methods and informs the reader that information on them could be obtained from Messrs. Curwen.

The advantage of the student workbooks for the teacher was that the books provided material through which they could illustrate the elements that they were guided in throughout their own manual. They also provided material for them to get the student to play and practice which helped them advance in their understanding of the staff, time and notation as they progressed along. The student's publications were clearly laid out with all the exercises and duets numbered to make it easy for both student and teacher to find them or to know what was to be practiced. Through the especially composed duets, Annie Curwen's student books dealt with each new element as it arose and gave the student ample practice at the new material before they moved on, rather than their having to practice pieces that contained lots of new material at once, which would confuse the student and complicate the learning process. They also introduced the student to the difficult task of playing along with someone else and the skills that were required to successfully manage this. At the time of their publication this was a relatively new idea and one that seems to have been welcomed by piano teachers across the world, if their popularity is anything to go by. For students and teachers alike they removed any complications that could arise in the early lessons on learning the piano.

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<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

In 1900 Annie Curwen published a combined teacher's manual, *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method*, made up of the first four steps of her methods.<sup>148</sup> Then in 1913 the manual was revised and published as the sixteenth edition of the teacher's manuals. The book began with 'A Few Educational Maxims' which were Mrs Curwen's twelve steps to being a good teacher and getting the best from the students.<sup>149</sup> They were also the principles on which her methods were founded. They were:

1. Teach the easy before the difficult.
2. Teach the *thing* before the *sign*
3. Teach one fact at a time and the commonest fact first.
4. Leave out all exceptions and anomalies until the general rule is understood.
5. In training the mind, teach the concrete before the abstract.
6. In developing physical skill, teach the elemental before the compound, and do one thing at a time.
7. Proceed from the known to the related unknown.
8. Let each lesson, as far as possible, rise out of that which goes before, and lead up to that which follows.
9. Call in the understanding to held the skill at every step.
10. Let the first impression be a correct one; leave no room for misunderstanding.
11. Never tell a pupil anything that you can help him to discover for himself.
12. Let the pupil, as soon as possible, derive some pleasure from his knowledge.

Interest can only be kept up by a sense of growth in independent power.

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<sup>148</sup> Curwen, *Pianoforte method*, p. iii.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid*, p. viii.

These twelve ‘maxims’ are the key to the whole book and to all of Curwen’s teaching methods. Throughout each step she refers back to them to support her approaches. While they may seem elementary or almost common sense, put together they would require the patience and understanding of any teacher. They express the necessary elements required in a good teacher too, because to follow all of the above principles the teacher would need to proceed at a pace that suited each student and to be clear in their explanations and teaching manner. Mrs Curwen’s ‘educational maxims’ also provided the teacher of the piano with a quick reminder of all that they should aim to achieve within each lesson.

The preliminary course appeared for the first time in the sixteenth edition. After thirteen years of receiving feedback from teachers on mistakes and difficulties encountered in the first edition of the combined teaching manual , Curwen felt that the previous editions of the book had been over-condensed. She believed that the area teachers seemed to have had the most difficulty with was the teaching of the first lessons on the staff and time through an introduction to note values and time signatures. As a result, she provided a guide to those first lessons in the preliminary section. These preliminary lessons are all concerned with understanding the basics through aural work rather than through reading music straight away. The conclusion of the section has a proposed examination for the end of the introductory stage. Her approach to the exams presented what to many was a new idea. She believed that the object of the examinations throughout the book was not for the glorification of the student, but for the testing of the teacher’s work. As she puts it:

The mason tests his wall with a plumbline before he adds his next row of bricks. Surely a teacher should not be less careful in ascertaining, at every step, whether or not the ideas he has been presenting to his pupils mind have

been assimilated, seeing that on this depends the power to assimilate the ideas that are to follow.<sup>150</sup>

She also mentions later in the book that exams are not for every student and that whether they sit examinations or not is a ‘matter of small importance’. She suggests that the student’s knowledge and clarity are what is important, and that teachers should therefore still work towards exams, with the requirements providing the framework for the lessons.

Within each and every step Curwen’s approach aims to create better teachers as well as excellent students. She covers every aspect and presents it in a manner that ensures that her goal of improving piano pedagogy was possible if the teacher took heed of her words and worked through the books with their student. If one worked through the teacher’s manual step by step it meant that no element of a student’s early education would be glossed over. The student would gain a firm understanding of the basics upon which to develop and expand. Her reiteration of the importance of short examinations throughout meant that the teachers could gauge their own work as well as the success of the student and their understanding of the material throughout. In all, the manual provided a system that, if used correctly, could not but improve both the teacher and the student. This method of educating her reader was also evident in the work of Annie Patterson and her articles and books. Like Curwen, she continued to break everything down into easy steps and to reiterate the main points in the hopes of clearly expressing her message to her readers. It was most clearly evident in Patterson’s work when she was addressing the methods of learning music

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<sup>150</sup> *Ibid*, p. 78.

and study that her readers should follow, such as in her articles on how to practice and how to study music methodically.<sup>151</sup>

The six appendices that conclude the Annie Curwen's volume provide further guidance for the teacher. They provided Curwen with the opportunity to answer other questions and queries that she had encountered through the first twenty-seven years of her teaching manuals and that were not covered within the remit of the manual steps. In many ways these are comparable to Patterson's inclusion of a correspondence section at the end of her early articles where she could answer specific questions that had been asked by her readers. In the first appendix Annie Curwen refers to the question of technical training, which she had left entirely open in previous editions. In this edition and through the appendix she continues to leave it open because, as she saw it, 'many better qualified than her were at work in it'.<sup>152</sup> She does suggest to the reader the 1903 publication by Mr Tobias Matthay entitled the *Act of Touch*,<sup>153</sup> believing that he was revolutionising pianoforte teaching through his approach. This publication is also the volume that Patterson directs pianists to in her publication on the profession of music.<sup>154</sup> In appendix two Annie Curwen discussed the use of her book in class teaching since she had been informed that many teachers were using it as 'the basis of the class lessons which used to be called 'theory''.<sup>155</sup> The appendix discusses which parts of her book she deemed suitable for class teaching and which were not. The third appendix focuses on the clefs and primarily the teaching of the C clef. The fourth appendix is a discussion on

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<sup>151</sup> See Appendix five, below for a full list of Patterson's articles.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*, p. 447.

<sup>153</sup> Tobias Matthay, *The Act of Touch In All It's Diversity: An Analysis and Synthesis of Pianoforte Tone Production* (London: Bosworth and Co., 1903).

<sup>154</sup> Patterson, *The Profession of Music*, p. 180.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid*, p. 453.

recreational music and the use of other publications in the series to further the student's knowledge. The fifth appendix is concerned with the duets, and the final appendix gives pointers for sight reading and playing.

As Curwen herself noted in her first appendix in the teacher's manual, 'as far as I was able to ascertain by diligent search among the publishers and at the British museum, nobody had attempted to do anything on this principle for the guidance of the pianoforte teacher'.<sup>156</sup> The principle in question was to provide a better understanding of music and better standards of teaching of the elements of music theory. To this end Curwen was right: there was no similar publication for the piano, although there were several volumes on the technical elements of teaching and playing the piano, most notably *The Act of Touch* by Tobias Matthay, which Curwen referred to in the appendix. Matthay was an English teacher, composer, writer and pianist. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London and went on to teach there from 1876 until 1925.<sup>157</sup> In 1903 he published *The Act of Touch* which illustrated his own teaching methods and 'attempted a full-scale analysis of the physical aspects of piano playing'.<sup>158</sup> Curwen's book stood alone because it covered the early steps of teaching the piano. It was no rival for the likes of Matthay's work, but on the other hand Matthay's methods would not have been possible to teach unless the teacher had already covered all the aspects of piano playing that were illustrated and explained in Curwen's works. A well respected pianist and teacher like Matthay recognised the need to produce a book that would revolutionise the physical approach to playing the piano, but he was not concerned in dealing with the

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<sup>156</sup> Curwen's *Pianoforte Method*, p. 347.

<sup>157</sup> Frank Dawes, 'Matthay, Tobias', *GMO, OMO*,  
<<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/18096>>, [accessed 22 February 2009]

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

basics which someone in his position might have believed anyone could do. It is notable that much of the fame and appreciation that Annie Curwen received came from female teachers or from parents, not from those involved in piano pedagogy in the major institutes in Britain or Ireland. However, her work was recommended and cited as being the best approach for younger people. In her appendix on technical training in the teacher's manual Curwen addresses the fact that, while there was no publication like hers that gave a step-by-step approach to the basics of piano playing, there were many publications on technique and technical exercises which reflected a strong belief that the repetition of such exercises was the only way to achieve 'mastery at the keyboard'.<sup>159</sup> However this did not lead to the development of good touch at the piano because that was believed to be a 'gift'. Curwen went through all the publications on technique that she could, learning something from each, even if it was just 'how not to do it'.<sup>160</sup> She went on to discuss Matthay's book and described her first encounter with it to be upsetting because it abandoned so many of the traditional elements upon which the majority of piano students spent a great deal of time in their early education. Upon trying his methods, Curwen did feel that they worked, believing that his book was only accessible to the teacher or to the advanced pianist. She explained that he did later set about rectifying this through his publication of a manual entitled *The Child's First Steps in Pianoforte Playing* in 1908.<sup>161</sup> Here he laid his methods out in 'steps' with the first fourteen of them being work that was preparatory to playing the piano, similar to the preparatory section of Curwen's book. Even before she alludes to the fact herself, it is obvious that Matthay's book for the child pianist followed a model that was known to be successful, that of Curwen herself. After the publication of his manual for the child

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<sup>159</sup> Curwen, *Pianoforte Method*, p. 347.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 349.



pianist Matthay even brought out a book of accompanying music which he composed together with the same composer Curwen had used for her second editions of her musical workbooks, Felix Swinstead. That Matthay used Curwen's work as a template for his own is fairly clear. The fact remains, however, that Matthay's work, even for the child pianist, was all centred on technique, and it was and is impossible to teach technique without first teaching a basic understanding of the piano and music theory such as that provided by Curwen's books. Curwen pointed out what she saw as the biggest problem with Matthay's publications, which he claimed were complete in themselves:<sup>162</sup> While they may have been complete for the child, they did not offer a guide to the teacher. The teaching of his methods to a child required that the teacher to be familiar with his earlier publication, *The Act of Touch*, and even then the teacher would have to work out how best to adapt that to suit the student. Curwen's argument against Matthay's lack of guidance for the teacher was that 'we can only teach our pupils to play as we play ourselves'.<sup>163</sup> With reference to the similarities between Matthay's work and her own, Curwen is ever graceful and polite, commenting only on the fact that it is 'remarkable how Mr. Matthay's counsels coincide with the *Child Pianist* principles; that we should attend one thing at a time and take the easiest thing first'.<sup>164</sup> Perhaps she was simply flattered by the influence her work had obviously had upon Matthay's.

Annie Curwen's teaching methods revolutionised teaching practice around the turn of the twentieth century, particularly in private teaching. They led to the development of a style of teaching that promoted aural observation alternated with actual music making. She was one of the first to emphasize psychology and

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<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 351.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

physiology with her publications including topics such as perception, creativity and language connotations and denotations.<sup>165</sup> From the first edition onwards she received letters of thanks for the aid she had provided to teachers and to mothers who were supervising their children's musical education.<sup>166</sup> From their first editions, her books were international best sellers in educational music.<sup>167</sup> Their success in England led to the establishment of official exams in the Curwen Method for both teachers and students which were held every February and July with the support of the Curwen Method Office in London.<sup>168</sup> As Herbert Simon comments in his book on the Curwen Press, it must have been 'a source of pleasure and probably some profit' for John Spencer Curwen to have a wife who was a distinguished musician both as a teacher and a writer.<sup>169</sup> After the First World War there were also many 'Mrs Curwen's Methods' specialists who advertised their experience in her teaching practices as a selling point.<sup>170</sup> Curwen herself also began teaching seminars and training classes on her methods all over England as well as in the Royal Academy of Music in London, and as her success grew she took to travelling and lecturing a great deal all over the country.<sup>171</sup> At this point her children would have been in early adulthood which left her free to travel and promote her work. Her husband died in August 1916 which probably also made travelling easier because it was a distraction from her loss and there was no one left behind at home.<sup>172</sup> Her books were the first of their kind for piano pedagogy. They provided the teacher with a guide to teaching the basics which they could stick to rigidly or use as an aid from time to time. She broke down elementary piano teaching into easy-to-follow steps which were clear and

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<sup>165</sup> Brubaker, Jackson and Sturm, 'Contributions', p. 4.

<sup>166</sup> Curwen, *Pianoforte Method*, p. v.

<sup>167</sup> Herbert, *A History of the Curwen Press*, p. 71.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>171</sup> 'Obituary, Mrs John Spencer Curwen', *MT*, Vol. 73, No. 1072, (1 June 1932), p. 560.

<sup>172</sup> 'Obituary, John Spencer Curwen', *MT*, Vol. 57, No. 883, (1 September 1916), p. 411.

concise, but which were also well researched and successful in their outcome. Her methods have been suggested as an influence on such educators as Kodaly, providing the foundations for the Hungarian method of teaching beginner pianists<sup>173</sup>.

Annie Patterson's early writing, in the form of her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times*, demonstrated to her the gap that such writing on music could fill and how her work provided encouragement and guidance for music enthusiasts and amateurs as well as a reference for those already on a path of musical learning. It is probable that these articles and the response she received to them gave her the idea for many of her latter publications, particularly the more general volumes such as *Chats with Music Lovers* and *The Profession of Music*. Likewise, through her travels and conversations with teachers Annie Curwen became more aware and more interested in the psychological science involved in music teaching. She began lecturing on aspects such as the teacher's need for psychology in understanding the student's mind as an important component in the teaching process. This led to her publication in 1920 of the book *Psychology Applied to Music Teaching*.<sup>174</sup> This was comprised of material that had appeared in her lectures at holiday courses and at the Royal Academy of Music, her obituary in the *Musical Times* noting that the 'whole subject is carefully and methodically explored, not without the element of humour that was always present in her writings'.<sup>175</sup> It was a subject that Curwen felt was too often neglected but vitally important in the understanding of teaching and the student. Within the book she suggests that teachers and parents usually lacked

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<sup>173</sup> M. Lucia Schulte, 'A study of the Piano Pedagogy of Annie Curwen: Its Correlation and Adaption with the Hungarian Method for the Instruction of Beginning Pianists and Its Implications for Modern Piano Teaching' (unpublished MA diss., Catholic University of America, 1971).

<sup>174</sup> Mrs J. Spencer Curwen, *Psychology Applied to Music Teaching* (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1920).

<sup>175</sup> 'Obituary', *MT*, p. 560.

knowledge of psychology and this often resulted in students not understanding or learning. Annie Curwen felt that every good teacher should be an unconscious psychologist, that they should take their career very seriously and always strive to improve their methods and techniques. In the book she stated that:

Teaching is not an easy thing and it is a very responsible thing. Like matrimony, 'not to be enterprised or taken in hand unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly and in the fear of God'.<sup>176</sup>

She believed that many teachers spent their time thinking about the subject and its development, but what they did not understand was that 'it is the pupil's point of view that counts, that it is by his mental activity that the work must be done.'<sup>177</sup> Her suggestions included that teachers should observe their students' words, looks and actions as a way of gauging their understanding and enjoyment. Within this volume it seems that Annie Curwen is trying to take her reader a step further: now that they have a correct method of teaching they need to learn to understand their students as much as possible so that they can appeal to their interests. As she put it in her chapter on the teacher's need for psychology, it is 'a very daring thing to profess to educate a human being – you are helping to form the finest, most complex, most subtle thing known to man, a mind'.<sup>178</sup> Annie Curwen believed this was a duty that was not to be taken lightly. While dealing with complex topics, the book is laid out in clear points with each subject thoroughly explained. For example in her chapter entitled 'The Human Telegraph' she gives a detailed account of the human brain.<sup>179</sup> She then explains the working of the nervous system through a comparison with the telegraph system in England at that time, with the brain being represented through

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<sup>176</sup> Curwen, *Psychology*, p. 280.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 52-64.

the main telegraph centre in London. She explained that each centre in towns across England could communicate with all of the others but that if a problem with this communication arose or if they needed to do something new then they would have to refer to the centre in London. Similarly to the human nervous system, the hands can play a well known piece of music without much conscious thought, but when something new is presented they must refer to the main centre that is the brain. While this may sound a little simplistic, her clever comparisons enable the reader to understand what is a complex subject. Her chapter on the brain and its workings also illustrated a good understanding of the neurobiology of that time and of its relation to psychology. Her use of basic simple metaphors to illustrate complex psychological ideas is again comparable to the approach that Patterson used regularly, particularly in her volume on the oratorio when she compares constructing an oratorio to constructing a cathedral.<sup>180</sup>

Annie Curwen's volume on the psychology of music also explored her advocacy for every child being allowed to explore their interest in music, something that Patterson had promoted in her *Weekly Irish Times* articles. In the appendix to her book on psychology Curwen included two articles she had published in *Child Life* in 1899. The first had appeared in April 1899 and dealt with the subject of 'music in the concrete'. It discussed the use of different apparatuses in the teaching of music, which Curwen believed were not necessary and contributed to 'the era of pedagogical catchwords'.<sup>181</sup> She believed that there was too much focus on new inventions and products to aid music and not enough attention given to simply teaching the basics. She felt that music teaching should be about listening and

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<sup>180</sup> This metaphor and the influence of Robert Stewart on both Annie Curwen and Annie Patterson's methods of simplifying a subject through metaphors is discussed earlier in the chapter.

<sup>181</sup> Curwen, *Psychology*, p. 282.

learning rather than using objects which often only complicated the matter. As an after note to Curwen added that the article had achieved some good since in the twenty years between its first publication and the book to which it was an appendix, the ‘apparatus’ methods of music teaching had nearly died out. However she does mention Dr. Maria Montessori who was providing ‘material’ for music teaching instead of just sticking to the keyboard. Curwen describes her and her assistant as being ‘like the inventors of those other apparatus methods, [they] are not musicians, but well meaning experimenters, wishful to help education. Musicians don’t do that sort of thing’.<sup>182</sup> Commenting on the article in his book on women in nineteenth century English music, Derek Hyde notes that, while Curwen’s ideas were ‘fairly novel in the nineteenth century’, they actually expressed arguments and lessons on music that had ‘a relevance to the late twentieth century’.<sup>183</sup>

The second appendix in the book is also from *Child Life*, from October 1899, and the topic of this article was ‘Should all children be taught music, or only the gifted?’<sup>184</sup> In it she contrasted the different views of the English and the Germans. Curwen felt that parents in England wanted every child to practice the piano daily, while in Germany parents only allowed those who showed a talent from an early age to pursue lessons. Curwen felt both approaches were flawed. She did allude to the amount of money that was wasted on lessons in England and to the fact that the German point of view was born out of economic necessity rather than a reverence for the art of music. In her opinion every child should be taught music up to about the age of fourteen, at which point the decision should be made whether or not they should continue. She believed that children should be offered musical knowledge

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<sup>182</sup> *Ibid*, p. 290.

<sup>183</sup> Hyde, *New Found Voices*, p. 118.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid*, p. 291.

because it would exercise the mind ‘in a different direction and upon a different kind of material from any other knowledge.’<sup>185</sup>

Curwen was progressive in all her teaching and ideas on music. After the nineteenth century which had focussed so much on virtuosity, she aimed to bring music back to the level where children enjoyed and appreciated it and became better listeners. This again was directly comparable to Patterson’s work in trying to make music an accessible pastime and pleasure for all members of the public, not just those for who were trained musicians. Curwen believed that music should be taught in an easy and approachable manner, allowing all children to experience the joys of music, and the piano in particular, so that they could make a decision on whether or not it was something they wanted to pursue. Curwen concluded her article with the following statement:

We want to examine our aims and ideals; to apply to music some of the principles which are revolutionizing other teaching; to study the child and his needs and leave the *virtuoso* to Providence.<sup>186</sup>

Curwen was revolutionary in her realistic approach to music. Her many publications all contributed to simplifying the process of learning and teaching music so that students and teachers alike had a better understanding and therefore a greater enjoyment of music. Curwen’s own love of the subject had been sparked by her early education at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, and she devoted the rest of her life to helping others to share in her love and understanding of music.

Over the course of the nineteenth century the increased number of female teachers and students meant there was a large market for a pedagogical manual such as Annie Curwen’s. Her books were attributed with doing much to ‘reform

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<sup>185</sup> *Ibid*, p. 293.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid*, p. 297

elementary pianoforte teaching'.<sup>187</sup> Her work as a music educator made a huge contribution to piano pedagogy, and to music pedagogy in general, in the final years of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century. She anticipated twentieth century pedagogical trends through her progressive methods and educational principles. Her books illustrate an impressive understanding of the elements of teaching on both a theoretical and psychological level. She did not just understand the music and the piano, but also the student she was teaching. Her main teaching objectives included making the learning music enjoyable, promoting intellectual, spiritual and physical growth, developing intelligent listeners and discovering talented musicians. Although Annie Curwen's contribution to piano pedagogy was made after she had left her native Dublin, it grew out of her early training in the Royal Irish Academy of Music and her experiences as a piano teacher and pianist in Dublin in the decade before she moved to Scotland. Her work was readily available in Dublin, Annie Patterson recommended it twice, once in her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times* and again in one of her books.<sup>188</sup> The fact that it was recommended by one of Dublin's leading and most respected musicians reflects the high esteem in which it was held by the musical profession in general. Even though Annie Curwen made Britain her home after her marriage to John Spencer Curwen, she did continue to maintain her involvement with Ireland and with the musical events of the city. She was involved in judging a competition of singing in 1893 in the place of her husband John Spencer Curwen, who at that point was deaf.<sup>189</sup> She was also a strong supporter of the Feis Ceoil, returning to Dublin to act as adjudicator, and her husband was a subscriber to the competition in its early

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<sup>187</sup> *MT*, 1 September 1916, p. 411.

<sup>188</sup> Patterson: 'What to Practice' *WIT*, 28 October 1899, p. 3; *Chats With Music Lovers*, p. 19.

<sup>189</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 265.



years.<sup>190</sup> Overall Annie Curwen made an important contribution to the development of piano pedagogy and its improvement. While there were others writing on teaching methods and approaches, they were mainly men like Tobias Matthay who were more concerned with the technical aspects of piano playing. Annie Curwen continued to lecture on her methods until her death on the 22 April 1932. In her eighty-seven years she achieved considerable success as a teacher, lecturer and writer on music who helped to improve piano pedagogy worldwide.

Annie Curwen's and Annie Patterson's publications, be they in the form of articles, books or workbooks, were an aid for music students and enthusiasts alike to appreciate and improve their musical knowledge. Curwen set about improving the standards of piano pedagogy by making available teaching aids that would guide the teacher and the student every step of the way, so that there would be no room for error or misunderstanding. Guided by her early education at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and her father-in-law's work for those pursuing singing, she produced teaching methods that were popular worldwide and which remained successful well into the twentieth century. She also gained the support of her peers with Annie Patterson and doubtless many others recommending her publications.<sup>191</sup> By contrast, Annie Patterson's objectives lay more in encouraging the involvement and interest of the general public, as well as in educating the more dedicated scholars of music. Through her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times* and books like *Chats with Music Lovers* or the later volumes on *How to Listen to an Orchestra* or *The Profession of Music*, she provided her readers with guidelines on how to better understand music, how to appreciate it and how to get involved with it. However, her books on the

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<sup>190</sup> *Feis Ceoil Programmes*, NLI, 1897, 1899, 1901.

<sup>191</sup> Patterson: *WIT*, 28 October 1899.

oratorio and on Schumann also illustrated her ability to write texts that were somewhat more scholarly in their subject and execution. Prior to Curwen's and Patterson's publications, the vast majority of works on music had been written by men. That these two women were not only having their work published, but also reaching considerable popularity, was thus hugely significant.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Women's Promotion of Music**

The second half of the nineteenth century saw progress in all areas of Dublin's musical culture. The musicians active in the city were well aware of the need to continue to increase public interest and involvement if they were to move these musical developments past their foundational stages. There was also a need for teachers and musicians to strive to be of a standard that was comparable to their British counterparts and, to a lesser degree, their European counterparts. As a result, musicians were eager to continue to promote higher standards of teaching and performance and to encourage the participation of the general public in musical life in the city. Women were involved with these promotional efforts just as much as their male peers, and their involvement was never hindered, but always greatly appreciated. This was unusual for women in Irish society in the nineteenth century, but comparable to the progressive treatment of women in music in Dublin throughout the century. Because women in Dublin were accepted in music, they were keen to continue to advance its development, improve music standards and to increase the interest of the general public in the capital's musical life. The growth in music in the city meant a growth in teaching and concert opportunities for all the active musicians. Women set about promoting the expansion and improvement of music in all areas of society through their involvement in several organisations and movements. The late nineteenth century also saw the emergence of an expanding interest in cultural nationalism which echoed similar nationalistic feeling that was common throughout Europe at that time. Maria Citron has noted that as nations tried to create unity and national pride, they often looked to the past for symbols of

heritage, and these were often musical.<sup>1</sup> This was evident in the work of Annie Patterson and the creation of the Feis Ceoil, modelled on the ancient Irish Feiseanna.

### **5.1 The Incorporated Society of Musicians in Dublin**

The growth in music teachers across Europe in the nineteenth century led to a desire for organisations and societies that brought teachers together to share ideas and to support one another in a career that was often lonesome, especially for the teachers who worked from their own homes or in the homes of their students, without any contact with their professional colleagues. Musicians looked for opportunities to share ideas and develop standards for their profession. One organisation in the final decades of the nineteenth century that worked to bring musicians together was the Incorporated Society of Musicians. This Society was founded in the north of England in 1882.<sup>2</sup> The initial steps leading towards its foundation were taken by James Dawber, a blind organist. He believed that the problems that faced musicians in Victorian England, such as inconsistent rates of pay or the absence of agreed standards that allowed any one to teach, could not be solved while there was no organisation to protect musicians' interests.<sup>3</sup> Dawber set about arranging a meeting in Manchester in 1882 to discuss the problem. Presided over by Dr. Henry Hiles, conductor, teacher and lecturer, the meeting took place on the 7 October 1882 and out of it was born the Society of Professional Musicians, which would later become the Incorporated Society of Musicians.<sup>4</sup> Its objectives were 'the union of the musical profession in a representative society; the improvement of musical education; the organisation of musicians in a manner similar to that in which allied professions were

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<sup>1</sup> Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Edmund Bohan, *The ISM: The First Hundred Years* (London: The Incorporated Society of Musicians, 1982), p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

organised; and the obtaining of legal recognition by means of a registration of qualified teachers of music as a distinctive body.<sup>5</sup> Women were not allowed to be members at first, but in 1883 Dr Hiles along with John Wrigley, another member of the council of the Society, proposed that ‘lady members of the profession be eligible as members of the Society’.<sup>6</sup> Their proposition was initially rejected in November 1883 but was later adopted in February of the following year.

From its foundations, one of the most important elements of the Incorporated Society of Musicians was the local meetings of each section through which musicians could listen to papers on musical topics, and elect members to the general council. The Society grew continuously in its early years and spread throughout England. In 1892 it became Incorporated, something that the council had wished for since 1883 in order to strengthen its position.<sup>7</sup> In 1893 branches were set up in Scotland and Ireland. There were three Irish divisions of the Society, in Leinster, Munster and Ulster. Fleischmann noted that it was the first time professional musicians were organised in this country.<sup>8</sup> In Ireland, particularly Leinster, the main aims of the Society were to provide an organisation representative of the music profession, to raise standards of teaching, to hold examinations and to confer a professional diploma.<sup>9</sup> In its early years it was very well supported by Irish musicians, especially in the capital, where nearly all the Academy staff were members as well as a large number of the city’s performers.

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<sup>5</sup> Henry Raynor & Neil Holy, ‘The Incorporated Society of Musicians’ *GMO, OMO*, <[www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com)>, [accessed 3 March 2008].

<sup>6</sup> Bohan, *The ISM*, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 16.

<sup>8</sup> Fleischmann, ‘Music and Society, 1850-1920’, p. 514.

<sup>9</sup> Bohan, *The ISM*, p. 8.

In the Society's early years in Dublin it held regular meetings for its members, with many of the well known Dublin musicians including James Culwick and T.R.G. Jozé, who was the secretary of the Society at the beginning of the twentieth century, giving regular lectures. It also supported Irish composers and their work. For example between 1895 and 1898 the 'Toy Symphony', a collaboration between Culwick, Jozé, Esposito and Smith, received at least one Dublin and one London performance a season because of the backing of the Incorporated Society of Musicians.<sup>10</sup> It welcomed and supported all aspects of music training, and although it received some criticism in Ireland as being a British organisation taking over Irish interests, it can better be understood as a branch of a British organisation that was managed by Irish musicians and used by them as a means of communicating their ideas with each other and supporting and developing music within the country.<sup>11</sup> For example, the society's meeting in January 1895 was attended by all the prominent Dublin teachers, with two thirds of those present being made up of Royal Irish Academy of Music personnel<sup>12</sup>. The Society as a whole may have been set up in England but the Irish branches were well supported by Irish musicians and the topics covered were often very nationalistic in their subjects, as will be seen later in the lecture of Edith Oldham.

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<sup>10</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 252. The score of the 'Toy symphony' seems to no longer exist.

<sup>11</sup> Marie McCarthy, 'The Transmission of Music and the Formation of National Identity in Early Twentieth-Century Ireland', *The Maynooth International Musicological Conference 1995* IMS 5, eds. Patrick F. Devine and Harry White (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), p. 153.

<sup>12</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 252.

## 5.2 Margaret O’Hea’s Lecture on the ‘Responsibilities of a Music Teacher’

Margaret O’Hea was the first female member of the council of the Leinster branch of the Incorporated Society of Musicians.<sup>13</sup> In 1895 the Society held its tenth annual conference in Dublin, which was attended by many of Dublin’s leading musicians as well as many recognised figures in music from England, Scotland and Wales, alongside a ‘goodly number’ from the ‘musical city by the Lee [Cork]’.<sup>14</sup> The proceedings were opened on the Tuesday evening, 1 January, with an ‘informal reception’ in the Antient Concert Rooms. The programme for that evening included a short musical performance featuring Edith Oldham playing two Chopin *Etudes* and vocal performances by Mr Melfort D’Alton and Miss Alexandra Elsner. The following day’s events included two papers, one of which was by Margaret O’Hea on the ‘Responsibilities of the Music Teacher’.

O’Hea’s paper was delivered to a large audience of Dublin’s finest music teacher and performers and it appears she was keen to encourage them to work harder to improve the standards of their craft. Her lecture is similar in its scope to the writings of Annie Curwen and Annie Patterson in that it aimed to improve standards of music education through suggesting changes that would benefit both student and teacher. O’Hea began by stating that she realised her subject may seem presumptuous given that her audience was made up of ‘distinguished professors’, but that when she was asked to give the paper the topic presented itself to her as one that would ‘provoke an interesting discussion’ and would result in eliciting from ‘some of the eminent musicians present opinions and views which would be valuable to the whole profession’. Although the title of the article covering the lecture in the *Irish*

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<sup>13</sup> Patterson, ‘O’Hea,’ *WIT*, 17 November 1900, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> *IT*, 2 January 1895, p. 5. All the following references to O’Hea’s lecture are taken from the *Irish Times* reproduction of the lecture.

*Times* alluded to her talking about all music teachers, in the opening paragraph she stated that she was ‘using it in its more ordinary and general acceptance, that of teaching pupils to play instruments’. Within the paper she aimed to sketch an abstract of a good teacher. However, she stated that she would ‘endeavour to sketch an abstract portrait of a good music teacher, without laying any personal claim to the topics’. O’Hea felt that ‘real teachers, like poets’ were born not made and that they had ‘a natural authority which is felt without having to be enforced’. Therefore she believed it was the responsibility of the teacher to influence their students for good ‘morally as well as artistically’ and that it was a task that held great responsibilities. In the opinion of O’Hea, gifted teachers were in the possession of strong ‘powers of observation and a true sense of sympathy’, both of which helped them in the correct guidance of each individual student. She stated that in some cases the teacher could have an important role in the development and growth of the student, and she commented that she had seen cases where the music teacher had been the first to notice physical defects in pupils such as with their sight or hearing, and that through the early detection of such disabilities the pupils in question had been saved from ‘irreparable injury [to] the organ affected’. Her audience was in such strong agreement with this comment that she received a round of applause.

In terms of teaching, Margaret O’Hea saw music as a language of expression with technique as the alphabet, and she believed that a teacher’s methods of teaching should be multifaceted so as to cover all areas of the discipline. She felt the teacher was directly responsible for accuracy, method and style, and believed that that the taste of the pupil had to be carefully cultivated even ‘while the solid foundation of technique is being laid’. O’Hea stated that sight reading was an activity that should



be pursued everyday because its worth and importance was 'impossible to overstate'. She suggested that as well as developing a student's skill on their instrument, their knowledge of theory, harmony and the history of music should be made 'to be regarded as a pleasure as well as a necessity'. O'Hea voiced her worry that many young students thought of the science of music as dry and the time spent on it more or less wasted. On the subject of the student's practice, O'Hea believed that full concentration was essential in order for anyone to progress and that every year many thousands of hours were wasted while students who were 'bodily present and seemingly engaged at their instruments let their thoughts wander off to every trivial distraction'. From the point of view of the teacher the importance of practice could not be too often or too seriously insisted on. She also felt that that all students should be encouraged to learn the music off by heart because 'without the printed copy so much more freedom and expression could be thrown into the performance'.

Through the course of her address, it became evident that O'Hea expected a lot from her students. In the next paragraph she said that as well as direct instructions, the musical tastes of the student should be cultivated. Her suggestion on how to achieve this would have been extremely time consuming and possibly expensive. She suggested that artistic benefits should be derived from the 'study of the great poets, of the best prose literature, by seeing fine pictures and sculpture and being present at high class dramatic performances.' But this was a comment that earned her another round of applause. O'Hea goes on to discuss the importance for the student of hearing good music performed; she believed, and was supported by her audience, that a true appreciation and understanding of music in the early years of study could only gained when practice and study of one's instrument was combined

with exposure to high quality performances of music from a variety of genres and periods.

O’Hea’s lecture also illustrated the width of her own intelligence and knowledge through the references that she draws upon to support the importance of music. She refers to its importance for the ancient Greeks and informed her audience that it was ‘connected with their system of ethics and intellectual training’. Her next reference is taken from Plato whom she quotes as having said that ‘as gymnastic exercise is necessary to keep the body healthy, musical exercise is necessary to keep the soul healthy’. Finally, quoting from one of her own near-contemporaries in England, she stated that Ruskin said that ‘music is an essential element in the education of mankind’.

While her expectations of the students were high, so were her expectations of the ideal teacher. Similarly to Annie Patterson’s comments on music teachers in her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times*, O’Hea is quick to stress the importance of the teacher and the need for qualifications and a good education as well as a love for the profession. She warned those present to avoid the career unless they had enthusiasm for it that was sparked by something other than its monetary values, because she believed the arts were not lucrative. She saw the role of the music teacher as being one of great importance in the life of any young student. She also saw the position of the music teacher as being one that held many moral responsibilities, a component she felt was often lacking. She listed the following as desirable qualities: to bear a high character, to have self control, a command of temper, to be reliable, patient and to possess courtesy of manner but also to be simple and unaffected, with any

approach for priggishness, personal glorification or airs of superiority being completely avoided. Overall she believed that ‘lessons carelessly given, time unnecessarily cut short, anything deceitful, underhand or untruthful, have an influence for evil on the young’. The address was brought to a close with O’Hea stressing the importance of enthusiasm as the final necessary characteristic. She concludes with a quote on the importance of enthusiasm from someone she simply refers to as ‘an eloquent fellow-countryman’. *The Irish Times* conveyed the enthusiasm that her paper was met with by mentioning that it received ‘loud applause’ upon its conclusion. O’Hea was thanked by Ebenezer Prout, who was chairing the meeting.<sup>15</sup> Prout rejoiced that so many of the Society’s members from across the Irish Sea had the pleasure of having heard ‘such an admirable and suggestive paper’ being read by a lady and one of the society’s Irish members. The main point that he agreed with was O’Hea’s suggestion on the need for sympathy and enthusiasm. His comments were then seconded by Annie Patterson. The discussion progressed with many members of the audience offering comments and opinions on the topic.

Margaret O’Hea’s address could be seen as an attempt to encourage higher standards of teaching in her audience through their approach to their work and their students. She was not trying so much to develop teaching methods as to guide and encourage all those present to cultivate a breed of students that would be above average. They would be diligent and well rounded, and constantly committed and enthusiastic. She was talking to some of the best teachers from Ireland and England

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<sup>15</sup> Ebenezer Prout was an English musical theorist, editor and teacher and in 1894 he was appointed Professor of Music at Trinity College, Dublin. For more information see Rosemary Williamson. "Prout, Ebenezer." *GMO, OMO*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/22446>>, [accessed 06 Spetember 2010].

at a time when music teaching had truly begun to develop and expand. O’Hea wanted them to think about all that was involved in their jobs, they were not there just to teach the notes, but to also help develop the next generation of teachers who would continue to move the growth of music forward. Drawing on the experience of her time spent in London, O’Hea was eager to see Dublin continue to improve as an Irish centre for music training, and one that could compete with its British neighbour. However, she realised that to do that the standard needed to improve. It is probable that she also wanted to impress the British members of the society and to illustrate to them that the Irish teachers were aware of what was expected of a good teacher.

The theme and aim of O’Hea’s lecture could be seen in many ways to echo the work of her late colleague at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Sir Robert Stewart. As Lisa Parker notes in her article on Stewart, public lectures on varying subjects were extremely popular in the nineteenth century and something that Stewart was a regular participant in.<sup>16</sup> Stewart followed the practices of Victorian educators in that he attempted to pass on information to his audience through his lectures that would enhance their interest in music: his lectures were not ‘merely to amuse the public, but to make them better’.<sup>17</sup> While O’Hea’s lecture was on a topic different to those approached by Stewart, who lectured on a wide variety of topics between 1862 and 1893, she was still trying to follow the approach of improving her audience.<sup>18</sup> Her aim to encourage a higher standard of piano teaching was one that had been suggested by Stewart fourteen years earlier in his lecture on music education for the Social Science Congress at Trinity College.<sup>19</sup> He had offered nine

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<sup>16</sup> Lisa Parker, ‘For the Purpose of Public Music Education’, *IMS* 9, p. 189.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 187/188.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 202/203.

possible reforms that would improve and promote music education in Ireland. As point number three of his reforms Stewart suggested ‘a better style of pianoforte teaching, embracing knowledge of musical form, and increased attention to playing at sight’.<sup>20</sup> In her lecture for the Incorporated Society of Musicians, Margaret O’Hea echoes this suggestion and through the course of her talk encourages her audience to improve all areas of their teaching and to form a generation of students that was better trained and that would go on to become teachers of a higher standards. O’Hea was always an admirer of Stewart and in her lecture she illustrates her support, if indirectly, of his opinions and ideas.

### **5.3 The Involvement of Women in the Founding and Organising of Feis Ceoil**

The Feis Ceoil, Dublin’s principal competitive music festival, has become an important musical event in Ireland every year with music students from across the country travelling to the capital to compete in its many competitions. From the beginning women have been evident in the Feis Ceoil competitions as organisers, adjudicators and performers in the concerts.<sup>21</sup> Annie Patterson is credited by most sources on the subject with having been involved in the founding of the Feis Ceoil competition in 1897, and it is for this that she is best remembered.<sup>22</sup> However, her important role in the Feis Ceoil has often been underestimated, with publications on the subject sometimes describing her as simply the honorary secretary.<sup>23</sup> This was a position that it seems she only maintained for the first few months, Edith Oldham being listed as the honorary secretary from 1895 in the Feis Ceoil programme of

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p. 203.

<sup>21</sup> *Feis Ceoil Programmes, 1897-1917*, NLI, IR 780941, f2.

<sup>22</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 289.

<sup>23</sup> Fleischmann; ‘Music and Society, 1850-1921’, p. 515 and Aloys Fleischmann: *Music in Ireland: A Symposium*, (Cork: Cork University Press, 1952), p. 212.

1897.<sup>24</sup> In many ways Edith Oldham became the backbone of the competition, particularly in the years that followed the first competition.<sup>25</sup> The hard work and dedication of Patterson and Oldham, along with that of many other women and men, helped the competition to grow and gain the position of importance that it still maintains in Ireland's musical culture today.

According to the Feis programme of 1897 the idea for the competition first developed as a result of a letter by Mr O' Neill Russell to the *Evening Telegraph* in 1894 in which he protested against the neglect of Irish music by the leading figures in Ireland at that time. A correspondence followed, in which Annie Patterson and several others became actively involved. As a result, Patterson approached the Gaelic League in 1894 with the idea of reviving the ancient Irish Feiseanna. This was just one year after the founding of the Gaelic League and two years after the founding of the National Literary Society, so the idea for Feis Ceoil tied in with the strong feelings of cultural nationalism that were developing at that time. The first general committee meeting took place in February 1895. The committee was made up mainly of the members of the Gaelic League and the National Literary Society. Annie Patterson shared the role of honorary secretary along with P.J. McCall. In the months that followed many of the Royal Irish Academy of Music staff became involved in supporting and promoting the Feis. This support continued and in its first year many of the female subscribers to the competition were Royal Irish Academy of Music staff including Edith Oldham, Jeanie Rosse and Mrs Scott Ffennell. Other subscribers included John Spencer Curwen, who remained a supporter of the competition into the twentieth century. His wife, Annie Curwen, was also an

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<sup>24</sup> *Feis Ceoil Programme*, 1897, NLI, IR 780941, f2.

<sup>25</sup> Through an examination of the *Irish Times* 1897 to 1905 she appeared at every meeting regarding the Feis that was held in the city.

adjudicator in 1897 when she presented the prize for the vocal quartets.<sup>26</sup> Clearly, although she was living in London, she still took an interest in and maintained ties with the musical culture of her native Dublin. Another subscriber was Sir George Grove who was aware of the workings of the Feis through his correspondence with Edith Oldham.<sup>27</sup> Oldham took a great interest in the competition from the beginning along with her brother Charles, who was also involved in the nationalist movement.<sup>28</sup> In 1895 Edith Oldham took on the role of honorary secretary along with Joseph Seymour. Between 1895 and the first competition in 1897 the Feis was promoted by meetings and lectures given by Annie Patterson, Edith Oldham and Alfred Perceval Graves.

#### **5.4 Annie Patterson's Promotion of Feis Ceoil**

An example of one of these lectures was that given by Annie Patterson to the Musical Association in London on 13 April 1897 on the 'Characteristic Traits of Irish Music'.<sup>29</sup> The promotion of Irish music was a popular cause at this stage due to the continuous growth in cultural nationalism and the promotion of all things Irish. For example, in the same year James Culwick produced an article entitled 'A Plea for Irish Melody', the tone of which was similar in many respects that of Annie Patterson's lecture.<sup>30</sup> As another of Dublin's leading musical figures at the turn of the twentieth century, Culwick's interest in Irish music and melody further illustrates the

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<sup>26</sup> '1<sup>st</sup> Feis Ceoil, Dublin 1897', *Feis Ceoil Programmes*, NLI, IR 780941, f2

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Charles Oldham was 'a protestant home ruler and trinity college lecturer'. He was the founder of the Contemporary club in 1885, which was a discussion group where those interested could debate 'issues of political and cultural importance'. Margaret Ward, *Maud Gonne: A Life* (London: Pandora, Harper Collins Publishers, 1990), pp. 18-19.

<sup>29</sup> Annie W. Patterson, 'The Characteristic Traits of Irish Music', *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 23<sup>rd</sup> Session (1896-1897), pp. 91-111.

<sup>30</sup> The information on James Culwick is from a paper given by Mary Staelum, 'James Culwick and the Development of an Aesthetic' presented at the SMI/RMA Joint Conference, the RIAM, 9-12 July 2009.

popularity of the genre. In the opening of her lecture Patterson suggested that several factors needed to be considered in examining the native music of any country. Firstly, how the music came to be claimed as distinctive to the country; and secondly, what the power of the influence of the music is.<sup>31</sup> The third element of the examination is an analysis of the music which will help to illustrate the ‘personality’ of a truly national music.<sup>32</sup> The opening paragraph concludes with Patterson illustrating a lack of confidence in her own ability and providing a disclaimer that would cover any misinterpretations or mistakes that she might present. She said that:

I can only indicate certain fields of thought, which in the hands of many more competent than the speaker might well repay being, figuratively, upturned by the mental plough. I would also be grateful to the many respected and learned members of my profession, whom I now have the honour of addressing, if they will exonerate me from wishing to air any personal theories with regard to my native music. My statements on such matters will, I trust, be taken throughout more in the way of suggestion than dogma.<sup>33</sup>

These statements suggest that, although Patterson was at that point probably one of the leading scholars of Ireland’s native music and had published articles on the subject, she was still nervous of her opinions and her ability to present the material. She concludes what she referred to as the ‘preface’ of her lecture by saying her work in bringing the subject to such a ‘distinguished body as “The Musical Association” will be more than rewarded’ if she manages to awaken and create an interest in the music of Ireland in her listeners.<sup>34</sup> The lecture took her listeners through the characteristics of Irish music, beginning with a description of the harp, its origins and its position as the emblem of music in Ireland. Patterson attributed the later to the fact that ‘the music of Ireland is essentially a harp music’.<sup>35</sup> The lecture analysed the

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<sup>31</sup> Patterson, ‘Characteristic Traits’, p. 91.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p. 91.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, p. 91.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p. 92.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, p. 92.



traits of Irish melodies and the influences of outside elements on Irish music. The principal point of the lecture was to illustrate that Ireland's native music was mainly home-grown and that, even though the national instrument and many of the features of music had their origins in other countries, the way in which they were combined and altered made them distinctly Irish. Her final trait to examine was the symmetry and regularity in the structure of the ancient melodies. Patterson argued that the ternary arrangement of many ancient Irish melodies could be seen as 'sonata form in embryo – the underlying scheme of the highest triumphs of the classical composer's art, an innate sense of which has existed for centuries among Irish native musicians'.<sup>36</sup> Patterson's paper as a whole seemed to defend music in Ireland by drawing attention to all the elements of the ancient tradition that she felt were worthwhile and to evidence for the musicality that had existed in Ireland in the past. In doing so, she illustrated those features of Irish music which she considered to be comparable to those of classical music in which her audience would have been trained. She was clearly trying to spark the attention and interest of her listeners in order to get them to believe in the importance of the revival of music in Ireland through the Feis Ceoil and to support and attend the event. In the discussion that followed her lecture, the chairman, organist and composer Charles W. Pearce, thanked Patterson for her 'admirable paper' on 'a very interesting subject'.<sup>37</sup> He commented further on the subject by blaming the church for some of the decline of Irish music because he felt that the 'ecclesiastical system of modes' had brought music away from the old Irish modes that Patterson described in her paper. He stated that 'The church had gained such a strong influence upon the habits and minds of the people, that insensibly, sooner or later, the melodies of the national songs would fall

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, p. 107.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, p. 108.

into the system of scale tonality which the people heard so frequently at church'.<sup>38</sup> It is interesting that the Church was attributed with partially causing the decline of the native music of Ireland and that no references were made to the outside influences of music from Europe and England.

As well as this lecture and similar ones by Patterson and A. P. Graves, public meetings on the Feis Ceoil were held on the 4 April 1895 and the 15 June 1896 at the Mansion House in Dublin. Joseph Robinson was one of the speakers at the first meeting when it was announced that they also hoped to have Charles Villiers Stanford involved.<sup>39</sup> At the second of these meetings the report of the honorary secretaries from the previous year was read out. This contained the history of the movement from its inception and noted the importance of Annie Patterson from the beginning. It also listed the five main aims of the competition which at that point were: to give careful attention to the ancient music of Ireland; to have orchestral concerts of music by Irish composers; to arrange a series of concerts to tie in with the Feis competitions; to encourage original composition; and to have the occasional lecture on musical subjects of interest. In short, its aims suggest that the competition would have something to appeal to all, and its main function was the promotion of music in all its forms. The report concludes by thanking the press, clergy of all denominations and the leading professional musicians for their co-operation and support. As to the involvement of Stanford, this seems to have been something that caused some problems for the competition and its organisers. Annie Patterson credited Stanford with being one of the main advisors to the Feis committee in the

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>39</sup> *Feis Ceoil Programme*, 1897, NLI, IR 780941, f. 2.

early days of its organisation.<sup>40</sup> He agreed to act as temporary president of the movement in its early stages, which he did in 1895/1896; however, he resigned from this position in 1896 when he suggested that the Feis import a professional orchestra from England for the performances in the Feis concerts and his idea was turned down.<sup>41</sup> For those on the committee this probably brought mixed reactions. Annie Patterson, who remained an admirer of Stanford and his work throughout her career, continued to praise him and acknowledge his contributions even after his resignations. On the other hand his resignation was probably a source of relief for Edith Oldham because it appears she did not get on well with him. In 1892 George Grove had written in a letter to Oldham:

I did not know how you felt towards Stanford, before. I am afraid the feeling is pretty general. Some one said to me the other day that he was the most disliked man in England - he can be very disagreeable; but I have not seen that side of him towards myself. As to his music, I cannot honestly say that I ever cared for any of it.<sup>42</sup>

The letter suggests that Oldham had been complaining at the time to Grove about Stanford and his music. Therefore his resignation from the Feis would have perhaps made Oldham's job as honorary secretary easier because she would no longer have had to deal with him. In his book *Music and Broadcasting in Ireland*, Richard Pine questions what the Feis may have been like if the 'original intention to have Stanford as its President had been realised'.<sup>43</sup> It appears it was realised, for a year anyway, and that Stanford failed to understand that the main aim of the Feis organisers, particularly of Annie Patterson, was that the Feis would be about Irish musicians playing and supporting Irish music as much as possible. Stanford's suggestion of bringing in an orchestra may have added to the performances of the Feis concerts but

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<sup>40</sup> Patterson, 'The Feis Ceoil Festival', *WIT*, 1 May 1901, p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> 'The Feis: local or international?', *Musical News*, 18 July 1896, p. 57.

<sup>42</sup> Grove Letters, Sunday, 21 February 1892.

<sup>43</sup> Pine, *Music and Broadcasting in Ireland*, p. 42.

it would have detracted from the nationalist approach of the Feis if it took an English orchestra to do justice to Irish compositions.

In the beginning Patterson had hoped that the Feis would be completely about the revival and rebirth of Irish music making. However, many of the other committee members, and in particular Edith Oldham, felt that the competition would do more for music if it was open to all genres of music making.<sup>44</sup> The main question that faced the Feis committee at the beginning was whether the competition should advance Irish music in terms of ethnic repertory or promote music making in general.<sup>45</sup> The summing up of its principal aims in three words: ‘promotion, preservation, collection’, illustrates the decision the committee came to. The Feis would both advance Irish music and promote other genres of music such as classical music. The approach of representing all genres of music was not one that Patterson was completely happy with, most likely because she saw the promotion of Irish music as being the most important element and felt that other genres would take away from that. As a result she became involved in the founding and organisation of another festival, devoted completely to the promotion of Irish culture. The Oireachtas was to be focused completely on the promotion of Irish culture through Irish music and the Irish Language. There were competitive competitions in solo singing, choral music and instrumental music and the first Oireachtas was held in conjunction with the first Feis Ceoil, with it beginning also on 17 May and the competitions for the two being combined. Annie Patterson acted as Irish musical advisor both the the Feis Ceoil and to the Oireachtas. However, by 1898 the two were separate events. The Gaelic League saw the Oireachtas as a way of promoting Irish culture and

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<sup>44</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 220.

<sup>45</sup> Helen Doyle, ‘From Feis to Fesitval: The Evolution of the Dublin Feis Ceoil, 1897-1922’, (unpublished MA diss., NUIM, 2004), p. 23.

encouraging higher standards in Irish literature, music and art. After 1898, while Patterson continued to be involved in the Feis she seems to have switched her interest to the Oireachtas, perhaps feeling that the specifically Irish event was more in need of her support. Whatever the reason, her initial work in the Feis Ceoil helped to make it an important element of musical life in Ireland. Although she was not as involved after the first year of the competition she continued to promote it with articles dedicated to the competitions and the winners in the *Weekly Irish Times* in both 1900 and 1901.

### **5.5 The First Feis Ceoil Competition: Dublin 1897**

The first Feis took place between the 18 and 21 May 1897. It consisted of concerts of Irish music, vocal and instrumental prize competitions, prize compositions for composers and an exhibition of ancient Irish musical instruments and manuscripts.<sup>46</sup> The executive committee was made up of thirty-eight people, ten of whom were women. The female members of the committee were nearly all active musicians in the city and included Edith Oldham, Annie Patterson, Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell, Jeanie Rosse, and Alex and Pauline Elsner.<sup>47</sup> The Feis also had representatives in Cork and Belfast along with two honorary secretaries and treasurers, all of whom were on the executive committee.<sup>48</sup> The conditions for entering the competitions stated that they were for amateurs only, with the exception of the composition competitions, and entrants had to be ‘bona fide residents’ of Ireland for three months previous to 1 May 1897.<sup>49</sup> Professional musicians, defined as anyone who earned their living from music, were only allowed to take part as conductors, accompanists,

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<sup>46</sup> ‘Feis Ceoil, Irish Musical Festival, Dublin. 18<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> May 1897’, *Feis Ceoil Pamphlet*, NLI, P.2289.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

official adjudicators or composers. Amateur musicians who earned a small occasional fee were allowed enter. The definition of an Irish composer was given as either someone of Irish birth or parentage whether resident in Ireland or not, or someone of foreign birth who had been a resident in Ireland for at least three years.<sup>50</sup> This meant that composers like Augusta Holmes, who was of Irish parentage, and Michele Esposito, who was born in Italy but a resident of Ireland, could enter and indeed win composition competitions within the Feis. The first year the Feis Ceoil was made up of thirty-two competition categories: nine vocal, twelve instrumental and eleven for composition. There were four hundred and seventeen entries from all over Ireland. The total prize money for the competitions was £415 pounds in 1897 and each prize winner also received a certificate signed by the secretaries, as did anyone else who ‘may distinguish them self, on recommendation of an adjudicator’.<sup>51</sup>

The Feis programme of 1897 set out what the competition aimed to achieve, drawing heavily on Celtic imagery to illustrate the nationalistic hopes of the festival. The introduction of the programme echoes prevailing contemporary perceptions of the history of music in Ireland, commenting on the decline of music since the perceived golden age of Tara, the bards and their privileges:

The fame of this country as the home of music dates far back into early ages, which, brightened by the halo of romance, have been described as the golden age of Erin.<sup>52</sup>

The programme goes on to record the attempts that had been made since the death of O’Carolan in 1738 to revive annual music congresses, but notes that they had been limited in their scope and therefore never really successful. Then it describes the

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> ‘1<sup>st</sup> Feis Ceoil, Dublin 1897’, NLI, IR780941, f2.

early foundations of the Feis Ceoil arising out of the letter of Mr. T. O' Neill, the debate that followed, and the support of the Gaelic League and Irish National Literary Society in founding the festival. It also details how the 'movement was brought prominently before the public in lectures by Dr. Annie Patterson and Alfred Perceval Graves' such as the aforementioned lecture by Annie Patterson on the 'Characteristics of Irish Music'. The introduction concludes by suggesting what was hoped for the future of the Feis;

It is hoped [the Feis] may become a permanent institution of paramount importance to the musical and artistic development of Ireland.<sup>53</sup>

That this hope became a reality is illustrated by the fact that the competition continues to run each year in Dublin and it has been the setting for the first steps to success of many of Ireland's leading performers in the last 112 years, including the tenor John McCormack, the Royal Irish Academy of Music's current director John O' Connor, and the pianist and composer Philip Martin.<sup>54</sup> In the programme for the second Feis, held in Belfast on 2–5 of May 1898, the introduction again alludes to the aims of the Feis and its association with practices of ancient Ireland, attributing the name to activities at Tara.

The word Feis is associated with the ancient gathering of Tara, described in the book of Leinster and surrounded by a halo of romantic traditions which date its origins back into prehistoric times.<sup>55</sup>

It also expressed, as one of the objectives of the competition, the hope that the Feis would advance musical activity and education throughout Ireland so as to 'regain for this country if possible its old eminence among nations'.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> <<http://www.feisceoil.ie>> [accessed 18 October 2008].

<sup>55</sup> '2nd Feis Ceoil Syllabus 1898', *Feis Programmes*, NLI, IR780941, f2.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

The concerts of Irish music for the first Feis Ceoil were held on the evenings of the 18–20 May at the Royal University Buildings at Earlsfort Terrace.<sup>57</sup> The first concert on Tuesday 18 May featured ‘Antient Irish Music’ in the first half, which included selections of songs performed by Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell, and the second half was comprised of ‘Modern Irish Music’. On the second night the concert included a full choir and orchestra. The programme included works by Robert Stewart, Joseph Robinson, and the symphonic poem by Augusta Holmes entitled *Irlande* was performed. On the third evening the first half of the concert was comprised of the performance of Esposito’s cantata *Deirdre*, which was the prize-winning cantata for the Feis that year. The second half included a performance of Stanford’s *Irish Symphony* and an overture by Wallace. The programmes for the concerts were compiled almost entirely from the works of Irish composers or with music based on Irish themes. They illustrated and promoted the talents of Irish musicians both as composers but also as performers by using local singers and musicians in the performances. The concerts successfully embodied one of the Feis Ceoil’s main objectives – they promoted the general cultivation of music in Ireland, with a direct focus on music from Ireland.<sup>58</sup>

While Irish traditional music may not have remained the focus of the Feis Ceoil, the competition helped to initiate the inclusion of traditional Irish music into mass schooling and competitive performance.<sup>59</sup> In general, Feis Ceoil became a festival of all music making in Ireland,<sup>60</sup> a point which Grove comments on in a

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<sup>57</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Feis Ceoil, Dublin 1897’, NLI, IR780941, f2.

<sup>58</sup> Fleischmann, ‘The Principal Feiseanna and Music Festivals’, *Music In Ireland: A Symposium*, p. 214.

<sup>59</sup> Marie McCarthy, *Passing it On: The Transmission of Music in Irish Culture* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1999), p. 74.

<sup>60</sup> Pine and Acton: *To Talent Alone*, p. 221.



letter to Oldham as not only being a help to Irish music but also a means of bringing people together. In the first Feis the composition competitions were very successful and the majority were based on Irish themes, for example, Esposito's cantata *Deirdre* and the symphonic poem *Irlande* by Augusta Holmes, which was based on Irish melodies. Holmes, whose parents were Irish, was an ardent Irish nationalist and decided to donate her Feis winnings to the Gaelic League.

### **5.6 A Comparison of the Work of Charlotte Milligan Fox and Annie Patterson in the Promotion of Irish Music**

The work of Charlotte Milligan Fox in the promotion specifically of Irish traditional music provides parallels to that of Annie Patterson, particularly through the Feis Ceoil. Charlotte Milligan Fox was influential in Dublin at the beginning of the twentieth century as a result of her founding the Irish Folk Song Society and the contribution she made to it. An application form from the society from 1911 describes her as 'a well-known lecturer and musician of artistic perception and aim'.<sup>61</sup> Her main interest was in promoting Irish melody and folk song, and in 1904 she founded with Alfred Perceval Graves the Irish Folk Song Society, which was based in London. Its aim was to collect and publish Irish airs and ballads, and it also produced a journal for society members, as well as having lectures and concerts on the subject from time to time. Both Herbert Hughes and Charlotte Milligan Fox edited the first few issues of the journal, after which Fox became the sole editor until her death. Her work in collecting Irish folk songs and music made an important contribution to the revival of Irish music at the turn of the twentieth century. She discovered Edward Bunting's manuscripts, which were in the possession of his

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<sup>61</sup> The Application form of the Irish Folk Song Society was found in a box containing copies of Milligan Fox's *Songs of the Irish Harpers* in the Library of the RIAM.

grandchildren. The entire collection was entrusted to her and she later donated it to the library at Queen's University in Belfast. She also drew upon the collection for her *Songs of the Irish Harpers*, a collection for harp and piano, and for her book *The Annals of the Irish Harpers*, which is mainly a narrative on the life and work of Arthur O' Neill and Edward Bunting.

Charlotte Milligan Fox was most often described as being energetic and enthusiastic. Her dedication to the Irish Folk Song Society meant that it was continually growing in its early years. Although there were some criticisms made on her editorial and writing styles, the value of her work is undeniable. Her approach to promoting and reviving Irish music was similar to that of Annie Patterson – she wanted to get more of the public involved in supporting and enjoying traditional Irish music. Patterson worked to achieve this through competitions and concerts while Fox concentrated on educating people on Irish folk songs through the publications of the society. She also used the society as an outlet for reprinting and reviving songs and melodies that she found through her work as a music collector.

### **5.7 A Comparison of the Work of Annie Patterson and Mary Wakefield**

In the *Musical Times* in 1900 there is an article on the Westmoreland Music Festival held in Kendal in April 1900 and the announcement by its founder, Mary Wakefield, that she was to retire. The article noted that 'it is not too much to say that no other of her sex in this country has done so much as Miss Wakefield to stimulate and foster popular musical study'.<sup>62</sup> Derek Hyde supports this statement and makes the claim that Mary Wakefield, through her example and influence, brought many people to an

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<sup>62</sup> W.G. McNaught, 'Miss Wakefield', *MT*, Vol. 41, No.690 (1 August 1900) p. 529. Also, Hyde, *New Found Voices*, p. 126.

active participation in music making. Between the years 1889 and 1900 Mary Wakefield successfully established and organised the regular competitive music festivals at Kendal in Westmoreland, where she had grown up. She believed that competition was a means through which musicians could be encouraged to practice and study, thus reaching a higher standard of musical capability. Her position as an important contributor to music was firmly established. Many similarities are evident between her work and that of Annie Patterson in Ireland. Both women were keen to figure out what was needed in their country's musical culture and to work to contribute to improving and developing it. While the competitions organised by Wakefield were choral and not originated by her, the aim was the same as that of the Feis Ceoil: to get more of the population involved in music making and to develop their appreciation of music. Wakefield was keen for the competitive festivals to provide a forum where those involved could progress and improve their abilities as singers and their understanding of music through guidance from the adjudicators and through the combining of all the choirs in each competition to perform a large scale work with a professional orchestra accompanying them.<sup>63</sup> Although this was different from the Feis, the idea of improving musicians and developing their knowledge and ability was an aim that was evident throughout Patterson's work. As with all her British contemporaries, it is unclear if Patterson ever met Wakefield, but the juxtaposition of the work of these women provides many similarities. It also raises the point that perhaps it would be true to say that in Ireland, 'no other of her sex.... has done so much as [Annie Patterson] to stimulate and foster popular musical study'. In this replacement of Patterson's name in the quote from the *Musical Times*, the most noticeable difference between the women becomes evident: Wakefield

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<sup>63</sup> Hyde, *New Found Voices*, p. 131.

gained immediate praise and recognition for her hard work and dedication, but Patterson has waited over one hundred years for similar acknowledgement.

### **5.8 Edith Oldham and the Feis Ceoil**

Edith Oldham was involved from the early stages with the Feis committee and its administration and she was the first honorary secretary of Feis. Throughout 1895 and 1896 she gave several lectures promoting it and in the first ten years of the competition she was one of the driving forces behind its success. She was a central member of the Irish Musical Feis Committee and was therefore involved in choosing the adjudicators, organising events such as the exhibition of instruments and music of Irish interest, and in organising the venues and concerts for the festival.<sup>64</sup> She was continuously working to encourage involvement and to insure that the festival ran smoothly.

Following the first festival she gave a lecture in 1898 to a meeting of the Incorporated Society of Musicians on the Feis Ceoil and its similarities with the Eisteddfod in Wales. She began by telling her audience that when first asked to give the paper she thought it would be an easy task, but upon returning from the Eisteddfod in August and beginning the task she realised that it was a difficult one, more fit for a statesman than a professional musician, because to adequately address the subject required her to touch on ‘great and solemn questions’.<sup>65</sup> She saw the Eisteddfod as:

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<sup>64</sup> *IT*, 27 February 1896, 6 February 1899.

<sup>65</sup> Edith Oldham, ‘Eisteddfod and the Feis Ceoil’ *The New Ireland Review*, VIII (February 1898), pp. 349-361.

The expression of ideals of a nation ... it has grown up with the people ... and to take the Eisteddfod from Wales would be to deprive a nation of its speech.<sup>66</sup>

In short, she saw it as an event that brought the people together, an expression of their culture and their artistic ideals. In comparison, Oldham saw Ireland as a country that had been severely lacking in anything similar for a long time. She suggested that those few who had tried to unite the people through music in Ireland had been merely imitating English standards and that 'Irish men and women can never be English'. The Ireland that Oldham portrays is dismal in many respects and her suggesting this would most likely have been a bold statement at that time. She believed that the nation had been deprived of legitimate outlets for its idealism and imagination. To quote,

Ireland, once the home of a living art, still possessed of traditions of greatness in the higher things, still endowed with a spirituality and imagination which centuries of misgovernment and misunderstanding on the part of the ruling race has not eradicated. Yet, Ireland, the land of Song, sings no more. The happiness if her people are gone and discontent ... eats out the heart of her people.<sup>67</sup>

She goes on to suggest that there is rather a difference in kind than in degree in the civilisations and cultures of English and Irish people and that it is 'hopeless to imagine that legislation can make the sum of different entities the same or alike.' She then suggested that what the nation needed was an outlet for its artistic and musical endeavours to flourish, a means for members of the public to express themselves while meeting and supporting others, so that the population can grow together culturally and become happier and more content as a result. Oldham believed that the Feis Ceoil festival was one such outlet. She commented on the influence the Eisteddfod had on the founding and organisation of the Feis, but in giving a history

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

of the Eisteddfod she pointed out that the Irish could not hope to adopt the programme straight off, as the Welsh festival had existed for hundreds of years while the Feis was only coming into its second year. The best they could hope for was that someday it would grow to the strengths that the Eisteddfod enjoyed. To compare the Feis with it at that point might 'almost be as reasonable as comparing our small cathedral of Christchurch to St. Peter's in Rome'. In Oldham's words, 'we in the Feis have enough to do at present in getting the festival well established and a popular institution in the country'. Edith Oldham went on to describe how the Feis compared musically to the Eisteddfod, and on this subject she commented that though we compared poorly, our standards were higher, particularly in regards to instrumental solos. For example, the Feis had thirteen choirs entered in 1897, the Eisteddfod had sixty-six but in Wales only one choir sang without accompaniment, in Ireland it was compulsory. However the largest area of difference was within the treatment of composers and their music. Only half the concerts in the Eisteddfod were given to Welsh composers and their music, whereas all of the concerts in the Feis had music composed by Irish composers. Oldham also claimed the Feis to be far superior with regard to the compositional competitions because it performed the winning work, Esposito's cantata, *Deirdre*. On the topic of this work Oldham goes so far as to credit the Feis with sparking Esposito's compositional output in this genre:

We all know the talent of the composer of *Deirdre* in a purely instrumental music but I think it was a revelation to most of us that we had a composer with us in the person of Signor Esposito who could favourably compare with any of the large orchestral and choral works of the day. I say 'revelation' advisedly because had it not been for the Feis it might have been many years before that talent had been revealed to us.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

In her discussion of the Feis Ceoil within her address Edith Oldham takes a very nationalistic stance: she believed that Ireland as a whole had suffered and needed something to bring happiness and self respect back to the people, and she saw the competition as a means of doing this. It brought together ideas, interests and talents to create an annual event that would illustrate the creativity and talents of its musicians while also bringing people together in support of this cultural development. She saw one of its main aims as being that of teaching the people to stand firmly on its own merits, ‘not to imitate the fashions and ideas of another race, but to lift its head among nations as a self respecting and self reliant entity in civilisation of the world.’ She saw this as being more important than material prosperity or military greatness. She recognised that Ireland could not hope to progress beyond other nations in either of those latter areas, but that in its own way through the musical talents that were beginning to develop, the country could perhaps position itself as worthy of recognition for its musical endeavours. Oldham brought her address to a close by stating that ‘I have within me a conviction that the Feis will ultimately do more for the art of music in Ireland than anything that has yet been attempted.’ In this aspect Oldham was arguably right: the Feis continues to bring musicians from all over the country together, providing a forum through which the nation’s talents can be expressed. Oldham envisaged this event long ago, and in many ways her lecture on the Feis may have been an inspiration for many of the teachers and musicians present to become involved and attend the 1898 Feis, thus helping to promote the competition and allowing it to grow in its early years.

Oldham’s address was clearly designed to inspire her listeners. She painted Ireland as a country that had suffered in many ways but that was finding its feet

musically and at that point was already reaching higher standards than its Welsh neighbour. She encouraged others to attend or become involved with the Feis by presenting it in a positive manner, and by equating it and the growth of music it encouraged to happiness within the nation. She describes the Feis as not just being a musical event but the ‘expression of the ideals and culture of a nation’.<sup>69</sup> In her article in the *New Ireland Review* in 1897 she had suggested that music might help achieve the ‘mental and spiritual happiness of a people’<sup>70</sup> Oldham’s address is appealing and one cannot help but get caught up in her enthusiasm for the Feis Ceoil as a means of bringing music into the lives of the public.

In January 1901 Oldham read another paper on the Feis Ceoil at a ‘drawing room meeting’ at the home of Sir John and Lady Arnott of Merrion Square, Dublin.<sup>71</sup> In it she set out to explain the ‘objects of the Feis Ceoil’ and to give some ‘details of the festival’.<sup>72</sup> In this paper she was quick to state that the Feis was not ‘a secret society nor a political organisation, and it was not a branch of the Gaelic League, as so many supposed’.<sup>73</sup> She went on to describe how it was exactly as its Irish title suggested, a festival of music and that each day of the festival was filled with music and competitions. In short it was a ‘variable feast of music, and one which ought to possess extraordinary interest for everyone concerned for either musical or national progress’.<sup>74</sup> She discussed the different competitions which she again broke down into three main categories: composition, performance and competitions with a national as well as a musical interest. Oldham pointed out that as well as its many

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<sup>69</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 220.

<sup>70</sup> Oldham, ‘Eisteddfod and the Feis Ceoil’, p. 352.

<sup>71</sup> *IT*, 12 January 1901.

<sup>72</sup> *IT*, 9 January 1901, p. 9.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*



musical benefits to the nation, the Feis Ceoil also brought about ‘spiritual gain and glory’ through its cultivation of the ‘faculty of working together in a common cause, raising a spirit above politics and sectarianism’.<sup>75</sup> She concluded her talk by summing up the meaning of Feis in one word - civilisation. She believed that ‘even the man who, in his own words, “cannot tell one note from the other”, must appreciate the civilising element in our work’.<sup>76</sup> Oldham was keen to stress to all those present the importance of the Feis Ceoil, not just to musical culture but to Irish culture in general. She saw the festival as a means of bringing people together and uniting them through common interests. Her expression of the belief that the Feis would benefit the whole population echoes the comments of George Grove on the subject in a letter to Oldham in 1896. In it he had stated that the Feis would ‘bring people together and get them into the habit of co-operating’.<sup>77</sup> In the discussion that followed Oldham’s paper the importance of the Feis and its benefits were reiterated by Dr James Culwick who stated that ‘it was to develop and encourage the art amongst all classes of the people that the Feis Ceoil had been established’ and that it could ‘already count its triumphs’.<sup>78</sup> Through this paper and her earlier paper on the comparisons between the Feis Ceoil and the Eisteddfod it seems that Oldham’s views of the Feis Ceoil and what it could achieve were different to those of Annie Patterson. The latter was eager to see the revival of Irish music and the ancient musical traditions that she believed Ireland was famous for and, while the Feis was her idea and she was involved in all the initial organisation and the competition in its early years, her focus in the years following 1897 seems to have been more on the Oireachtas. While Patterson saw the Feis as a means of reviving past musical glories,

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Grove Letters, 20 April 1896.

<sup>78</sup> *IT*, 9 January 1901, p. 9.

for Oldham it provided the basis for the development of a better culture and the means through which the population could be brought together. She saw the Feis as giving something to the community whether they were musical or not: it was a way of uniting the people through the enjoyment and appreciation of music. She became the honorary secretary in 1895 and she continued to be involved in the organisation and promotion of the Feis Ceoil competitions into the twentieth century.

### **5.9 The Importance of the Feis Ceoil to Music in Ireland**

Through the development and continued success of the Feis Ceoil, music in Ireland had a forum through which new compositions could be evaluated and performed; performers from all over the country could compete and strive to gain higher standards. It provided the musical community throughout Ireland with an outlet through which their knowledge and musical ability could be expanded. Although it was not confined to Irish music it brought about a new interest and a rebirth of Irish music in a trained and formal setting. As Marie McCarthy has put it, ‘the contest may be regarded as the initiation of traditional music into the arena of mass schooling and competitive performance’.<sup>79</sup> The Feis brought Irish music back to the attention of the country’s leading musicians, who had previously focused on European classical music. The composition competitions led to the production of music that included or interpreted elements of the characteristics of Irish music that Patterson had lectured on. Although the early split in the Feis competition is one that has often been acknowledged as being typical of Irish music, in retrospect it is possible that it led to a greater growth in Irish music. Through the fact that Irish music and elements of it were included in the competitions and the rules for entry, but also that the

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<sup>79</sup> McCarthy, *Passing it On*, p. 74.

competition was not confined to Irish music, it reached a wider audience. It was successful in reviving an interest in Irish music because it brought it to the attention of musicians from all over the country, many of whom up until that point had been trained purely in classical styles and were unaware of the wealth of music and melodies that were available to be performed or incorporated into compositions. As Harry White has commented, the Feis Ceoil ‘examined afresh the possibilities of reconciliation between the ethnic repertory and the European aesthetic’.<sup>80</sup> The fact that the Feis, which provided a source through which Ireland’s musical culture could develop, was primarily founded by women again emphasises the important contribution they made to growth of music in Dublin, and Ireland. Through the hard work and continued support of Annie Patterson and Edith Oldham the idea for reviving the ancient Feiseanna became a reality and an extremely successful one at that.

Their contribution to music, particularly that of Annie Patterson, can be compared with the work of another Irish woman in a different area of the arts, namely in the revival of Irish literature. Lady Augusta Gregory was born in Loughrea, Co. Galway, to a family of protestant landed gentry who were prominent unionists.<sup>81</sup> Later in life Lady Gregory became an ardent supporter of Home Rule and she developed an interest in the Irish language.<sup>82</sup> In 1899 she founded the Irish Literary theatre with W. B. Yeats, this later becoming the Abbey theatre. The establishment of the theatre marked the beginning of the Irish Literary revival. The juxtaposition of the work of Lady Gregory with Annie Patterson reveals many

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<sup>80</sup> Harry White: *The Keepers Recital: Music and Cultural History in Ireland, 1770-1970* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1998), p. 113.

<sup>81</sup> Kit and Cyril Ó Céirín, *Women of Ireland*, p. 94.

<sup>82</sup> Hill, *Lady Gregory*, p. 73.

similarities between the two women. Both were eager to promote the native language of their country, be it spoken or musical, both were influenced by Irish folklore and continuously used Irish themes in their compositions, again be they plays or music, and both women set in motion the revival in their own disciplines. The big difference lies in the fact that Lady Gregory has become a familiar figure in the history of the cultural movement that occurred in the final years of the nineteenth century and also that, as a result of her position as a member of the land-owning gentry in the west of Ireland, Lady Gregory had the financial means to provide support to her cause in many different ways. Patterson, who came from Dublin's middle class, had to work hard to be in a position to develop her ideas and devote her time to the establishment of the Feis. Because Gregory was involved in the support of Home Rule and in an aspect of Irish culture that has long been recognised and documented, her name appears in history books and is synonymous with the Irish Literary revival. As already discussed in reference to Mary Wakefield, Patterson and others such as Edith Oldham involved in the Feis Ceoil have earned no such recognition.

The work of women to promote music making and higher standards of education at the end of the nineteenth century was an important element of the growth of music in Dublin at that time. Richard Pine attributes the work of Annie Patterson and Edith Oldham with the Feis Ceoil, and of Margaret O'Hea with the local centre examinations, to 'the Academy's growing awareness to take part in, and where necessary, lead new initiative that would bring Dublin and Ireland from a provincial to a self-determining and self defining status'.<sup>83</sup> While Pine is correct in his evaluation of the ramifications of the work of these women, he implies that their

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<sup>83</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 194.

hard work and dedication, and thus their influence, were the result of an Academy education, rather than being traits innate to them and which ensured their success. Patterson's love of Irish music was unusual in Dublin music circles in the nineteenth century, but rather than being shy about this she set about trying to share her love and appreciation for native music with the public through her lectures, her articles and her involvement in the Feis Ceoil and the Oireachtas. Her work helped create a renaissance for Irish music, and through the Feis Ceoil many composers began to experiment with Irish melodies, as Patterson had done herself in her compositions. There was also a new found interest in the history of music in Ireland with the development of societies such as the Irish Folk Song Society. Overall, Patterson and her colleagues made a contribution to music in Ireland that remains evident today and which was a huge achievement for any person to have made, and especially impressive for a woman at a time when Irish society in general would still have preferred her to be at home.

## **Chapter Six**

### **The Role of Men in the Lives and Careers of Musical Women**

Women in the nineteenth century came to assume important roles in many areas of musical culture in Europe, but their decision to go against what was perceived as the proper role of women often met with opposition. However, despite the fact that Dublin was similar to European cities in many other aspects, the treatment there of women in music was a great deal more progressive than was evident in other countries. This was most likely due in part to the fact that Dublin's musical culture experienced a renaissance through much of the nineteenth century as it began to develop as a city with a distinct musical identity, with reputable teachers, a developing musical academy and a concert life that was continually evolving. This growth drove a need for new blood and women were strongly influential in the many changes that occurred, but the influences of men were evident in the professional decisions of many of Dublin's female musicians. The difference between the input of these men and that of their European peers was that the male musicians and patrons in Dublin were most often encouraging and supportive of the women's work as professional musicians. In contrast, many European women faced obstacles from men in their musical careers, particularly those women who pursued careers in composition. This chapter will examine the involvement of men in the careers of the women examined in the previous chapters, and it will evaluate the importance of men in the success of women.

## 6.1 Mrs Allen and the Influences of her Father, Brother and Husband

Mrs Allen's academy was well-established as a music school and concert venue, and her position as director was a step forward for women, especially those involved in music because she garnered much respect and praise for her abilities as a teacher and an administrator. However, much of her success was as a result of the support and guidance she received from the men in her life. As the daughter of Johann Logier, Mrs Allen was provided with a good musical education from a young age and she also taught her father's methods of teaching which were becoming popular throughout Europe in the 1820s.<sup>1</sup> Upon her marriage to E.C Allen in 1819, who at that point was running a 'Logerian' music academy himself, Logier's daughter became involved in the business as a teacher and organiser and quickly put her father's teaching to good use. By the 1830s, Allen and her husband had become the chief exponents of her father's methods in Dublin.

Upon the death of E.C. Allen in 1833 Mrs Allen took over as the director of their academy. However, she was still not without significant male influence and guidance. In 1834 her brother, Henry Logier, began helping with the teaching within the academy. It appears that Mrs Allen was still the main director of the school but that Henry was involved in teaching classes, particularly in the more male orientated subjects of harmony and musicianship. In the first half of the nineteenth century, while women were allowed to study music in the form of instrumental or vocal tuition, most conservatoires and music schools across Europe did not allow female students to study music theory or composition, or where they were allowed, they followed a very different curriculum to that of their male peers.<sup>2</sup> Considering that

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<sup>1</sup> Collins, 'Music in Dublin', p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Clark, *Women and Achievement*, p. 99.

Johann Logier had taught his methods in Europe before coming to Ireland, it is possible that he followed this example and restricted his daughter to piano lessons and the methods involved in teaching it, while teaching his son Henry other aspects of music such as harmony and musicianship, thus giving Henry a firmer grounding in these topics than Mrs Allen. Whatever the reason, Henry Logier began to appear in advertisements and reviews for class concerts within the Allen Academy from 1834. At the beginning of the student concerts he would examine the students on theory questions in front of the audience before they performed.

It is interesting that Henry Logier was content to work with his sister in a music school that she was running and that he did not set up his own academy. This decision suggests that the Allen Academy had a strong reputation and was a prestigious position for Henry Logier to hold. At this point, the academy was running on the well-established name and reputation of Mrs Allen, not on that of any of the men in her life. The local press of the time described the woman herself as being an ‘accomplished and justly-esteemed lady’.<sup>3</sup> That her success was aided by her father, husband and brother cannot be denied; but it was her own hard work and persistence that allowed her to become one of Dublin’s leading piano teachers. She was exemplary both in the level of success she achieved as a woman in the early nineteenth century, and also because she managed to gain respect and admiration from her critics and peers. Much like the female singers of the eighteenth century she made good use of the talents and attributes of the men close to her own career. Building on the teachings of her father and the support first of her husband and then later of her brother, Allen worked hard to develop her family business, which in turn

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<sup>3</sup> *EP*, 11 April 1840, p. 3 and 26 January 1841, p. 2.



also provided her daughters and the many female students of the school with a successful role model and provided for her daughters' future by leaving them a thriving business.

## **6.2 Fanny and Joseph Robinson: Their Professional Relationship and Their Marriage**

Fanny Arthur Robinson met her husband at her first professional performance in Dublin in February 1849. There is no doubt that Joseph Robinson was influential in his wife's career and that their professional relationship was a successful one, something which is clear from their continuous collaborations in concerts throughout Fanny's lifetime. However, their marriage was believed to have been an unhappy one from its inception and is attributed as one of the main causes of Fanny Robinson's death.<sup>4</sup> Joseph Robinson's support of Fanny's career is evident in his endorsement of her employment as professor of pianoforte at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. It is doubtful that he would have supported her employment if he did not believe that she was capable of the job, because any failure on her part would have reflected badly upon him. What is more probable is that he was aware of his wife's abilities and knew that she would in fact add to his own reputation through her success as a teacher, just as she had been doing as a performer.

From the beginning of their marriage Fanny Robinson worked under her husband's name as Mrs Joseph Robinson, which seems unusual by European comparisons but was common practice in Ireland. It was the middle ground between the practices of Clara Schumann publishing under her married name and Fanny

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<sup>4</sup> Andrew Marsh (John O' Donovan): 'Here's to you Mr. Robinson: Lovers and Sons' *The Evening Press*, 29 September 1978.

Hensel having several of her compositions published under her brother's name. While Robinson's husband was well-known throughout Dublin, in London and Paris his name became synonymous with his wife's talents, as can be seen in references by Clara Schumann to the couple.<sup>5</sup> It therefore seems reasonable to suggest that Joseph Robinson was encouraging of his wife's career as a pianist and it does not appear that he made any attempt to prevent her from pursuing it. Whatever his flaws may have been, Joseph Robinson appears as a hard-working and dedicated musician throughout his lifetime and it seems his wife shared his dedication to the profession. While criticising the teachers throughout the cities in England and also in Dublin for 'making themselves stupid' by working so much in order to gain wealth 'as though art itself were not sufficient for an artist', Clara Schumann also defends them by saying they were 'the best in the world'.<sup>6</sup> As an example she cites the Robinsons, whom she refers to as 'setting the musical tone in the Irish Capital, he as singing-master, and she as pianist'.<sup>7</sup> She goes on to describe their marriage noting the following:

They two live very happily together, though one looks in vain for the comfort of home life...they earn money from morning til night and each of them snatches a mouthful of food whenever they can find time for it...not til late at night do they meet, when they are half dead, worn out by the burden of the day.<sup>8</sup>

This description provides us with an insight into their marriage that contradicts the more speculative reports of the likes of John O'Donovan.<sup>9</sup> It also paints a picture of

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<sup>5</sup> Litzmann, *Clara Schuman*, p.132

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p.133.

<sup>9</sup> John O'Donovan referred to Joseph Robinson in articles such as the previously mentioned one under the pseudonym Andrew Marsh, and in his play *The Shaw's of Synge Street*. Joseph Robinson and his alleged affair are the central topics of the play and the events take place before and after Fanny Robinson's suicide. However, the treatment of the subject is severely lacking in factual evidence and most likely largely fictitious.

the lifestyle of the Robinsons and their musical peers as being one of tireless dedication to their art, whether it was for the sake of wealth or the art itself.

Fanny Robinson's marriage to Joseph made her part of one of Dublin's most active musical families. Joseph's father, Francis, had been a baritone and the founder of the Sons of Handel musical society in 1810.<sup>10</sup> Joseph Robinson's oldest brother, Francis James, was an organist in both Christ Church and St. Patrick's cathedrals, chorister and composer of church music; his brother William was a bass who sang in the choirs of Christ Church, St. Patrick's cathedral and Trinity College; and the third brother, John, was also a chorister and an organist in Christ Church, St. Patrick's and Trinity College.<sup>11</sup> Joseph himself was a baritone, conductor and composer.<sup>12</sup> He was active in several of Dublin's musical societies such as the Antient Concerts Society, the University Choral Society and the Dublin Musical Society.<sup>13</sup> In marrying into one of the city's most musical families, Fanny Robinson's experiences were comparable to those of Clara Schumann or Pauline Viradot in that her musical talents were encouraged and guided by her husband because to be involved in music was something that he himself had grown up with and which was thus taken as a given. She married into an environment that was highly conducive to her pursuing her talents as a performer, composer and teacher.

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<sup>10</sup> For more information on the Sons of Handel see Catherine Mary Pia Kiely-Ferris, 'The Music of Three Dublin Musical Societies: The Anacreontic Society, The Ancient Concerts Society and The Sons of Handel. A Descriptive Catalogue', (unpublished MLitt diss., NUI M, July 2005).

<sup>11</sup> Robert Pascall. "Robinson (ii) (1)." *GMO, OMO*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/23595pg1>>, [accessed 29 August 2010].

<sup>12</sup> Robert Pascall. "Robinson (ii) (2)." *GMO, OMO*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/23595pg2>>, [accessed 29 August 2010].

<sup>13</sup> For more on the musical societies see Ita Beausang, 'Dublin Musical Societies 1850-1900', *IMS 5*, eds. Devine and White, pp. 169-178.

Many women active in music across Europe at the time found it difficult to achieve the support of the men in their lives. Clara Schumann's desire to continue to perform and compose music after her marriage to Robert Schumann often led to unhappiness within their marriage. Nancy Reich comments that Robert would have been content with Clara living quietly with him, performing for friends and family and creating a comfortable home with him.<sup>14</sup> However, Clara longed for the 'full participation in the musical world' that she had enjoyed before her marriage.<sup>15</sup> This aspect of their marriage was evident only through their letters and diaries. While she did continue to perform, during much of their marriage Clara Schumann's practice and composition was relegated to times that would not disturb her husband's composing. When she did perform it was often as a means of promoting her husband's work. Over the space of thirteen years Clara Schumann gave birth to thirteen children and Reich suggests that while Robert had perhaps hoped the children would put a halt to her performances, he had underestimated Clara's determination. She continued to compose, tour and perform. In comparison to Clara Schumann, Fanny Robinson's treatment by her husband seems to have been more supportive of her work. There are no diaries to confirm this, but she did perform and compose a great deal in the early years of her marriage, with the majority of her piano compositions coming from the first fifteen years of marriage. The major performances of her career also took place within that ten year period, namely in Paris London and her solo recital in Dublin.

While Robinson was an encouraging and supportive husband professionally, his behaviour outside the musical sphere was seemingly less supportive, with certain

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<sup>14</sup> Reich, *Clara Schumann*, p. 83.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

sources suggesting that he was unfaithful. It was also widely known that Fanny Robinson suffered from depression from the early 1860s. She was a patient of Dr. Eustace's Private Asylum in Glasnevin on several occasions in the 1860s and again just before her death in 1879.<sup>16</sup> Depression was common in the nineteenth century in both England and Ireland: mental disorders among Irish women may, in many cases, have been a result of their social situation or due to their living under the constraints of a very narrow definition of femininity.<sup>17</sup> It has been suggested that the growth in the numbers of females suffering from mental disorders in the nineteenth century was in part a product of their social situation, both through their confining domestic roles and their 'mistreatment by a male-dominated and possibly misogynistic psychiatric profession'.<sup>18</sup> If a woman was to stand up to her husband or disagree with the constraints placed upon her, she was often quite conveniently deemed to be suffering from a mental disorder which had caused her to rebel against her subordination. It may be that, despite her successful career as a performer, teacher and composer, Fanny Robinson felt that she was capable of more if society had allowed it, and she may have found herself facing similar resistance, not to mention the vagaries of the nascent field of psychiatry. It was during one period of suffering that she composed her cantata because she refers to her illness in the preface to the work.<sup>19</sup>

Fanny Robinson's life ended tragically on the morning of 31 October 1879 when she took her own life. The *Freeman's Journal* the following day stated that she

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<sup>16</sup> Joanne Parry, 'Women and Madness in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', (unpublished MA diss., NUIM, 1997), p. and 'Melancholy Death of Mrs. Joseph Robinson', *IT*, 1 November 1879, p. 5.

<sup>17</sup> Joanne Parry, 'Women and Madness', p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English culture, 1830-1980* (London: Virago Press, 1987), p. 117 and p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Doran, *The Robinsons*, p. 39.

had been in 'Dr Eustace's Asylum' for the two months previous to her death. It was speculated by many that Joseph Robinson's infidelity was directly related to Fanny's suicide. Whatever the personal and romantic circumstances of their relationship or the exact cause of her suicide, Joseph Robinson does nevertheless seem to have been supportive of Fanny Arthur Robinson's musical career, and it appears from their many joint performances that they worked well together as musicians. It seems that Fanny Robinson tried hard as a wife in the early years of her marriage to Joseph, for example Clara Schumann said the following of Fanny Robinson: 'her whole personality had a remarkable grace....And as a wife too, I learned to love her. I could not but admire the freshness which [she]...manages to preserve'.<sup>20</sup> Her tragic death resulted in Dublin losing one of its most talented musicians.

### **6.3 Ellen O'Hea and her Mentor Sir Robert Prescott Stewart**

Ellen O'Hea was well known as a performer and a composer in Dublin's concert life, in particular in the 1870s. From her time as a student of the Royal Irish Academy of Music she had become acquainted with Sir Robert Stewart. Her sister, Margaret O'Hea, attributed him with providing Ellen with guidance, support and encouragement throughout her career. The involvement of Stewart in performances of Ellen O'Hea compositions was evidence of his belief in her ability and his willingness to support her career as a composer.<sup>21</sup> Margaret O'Hea attributed him with overlooking, correcting and criticising Ellen O'Hea's scores.<sup>22</sup> His encouragement and willingness to be involved in her career suggests that Stewart believed in Ellen O'Hea's abilities, and also that he did not seem to treat her differently or with any less respect just because she was a woman. He conducted

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<sup>20</sup> Litzmann, *Clara Schumann*, p. 133.

<sup>21</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea, continued' *WIT*.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

several performances of her comic opera *The Rose and the Ring*, in the Antient Concert Rooms in 1877 and in the Theatre Royal in 1878.<sup>23</sup> Stewart also used Ellen O’Hea’s talents as a singer, often allowing or inviting her to perform the leading roles in her own compositions when he conducted. In May 1878, when he was giving a series of lectures to raise funds for the Balfe memorial, she was one of five soloists he used for the musical illustrations.<sup>24</sup> Stewart’s support of Ellen O’Hea as a performer and composer seems to have been an invaluable asset to her short lived career.<sup>25</sup> For her earlier performances, such as the first performance of *The Rose and the Ring*, the involvement of Stewart probably attracted attention to the work and drew in an audience for the performance. It is also likely that the Dublin press was guided in its reviews by his presence and involvement: if Stewart as one of the leading figures in music in the city was willing to be involved, the work must be considered worthy of performance and recognition. O’Hea managed to do what many female composers of her time, particularly in Europe, could not: she had her large scale compositions performed and she gained success and recognition for her work with Stewart once stating that ‘she had her foot on the ladder of fame’.<sup>26</sup>

#### **6.4 Annie Curwen and her Marriage to John Spencer Curwen**

Annie Curwen was another female musician from the nineteenth century with an exemplary career in music. However, her success was in many ways related to her connections with the Curwen family. When she married John Spencer Curwen, the eldest son of the musician and publisher John Curwen, in 1877 the significance of the union did not go unnoticed by John Curwen who was delighted by his son’s marriage

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<sup>23</sup> *The Irish Times*, 1 February 1877, p. 4 and 16 March 1878, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> *The Irish Times*, 27 May 1878.

<sup>25</sup> Annie Patterson’s article on Margaret O’Hea on the 17 November 1900 stated that her ‘early death cut of a most promising career’.

<sup>26</sup> Annie Patterson, ‘Margaret O’Hea, continued’ *WIT*.

to a woman who was a distinguished musician and who had been trained at the Royal Irish Academy of Music.<sup>27</sup> He saw the benefits in it for his family and the potential to utilise her knowledge, and it is possible that this was something that Annie Curwen was aware of herself. His enthusiasm for the union turned out to be well deserved since his new daughter-in-law became an important asset to the Curwen's publishers.

While Annie Curwen became an important contributor to piano pedagogy, her success benefited the Curwen publishing house just as much as her connection to them benefited her work. When she decided to produce a teaching manual for the pianoforte in the style of her father-in-law's publication for the teacher of singing, she was already a step ahead of other writers in her position: as the wife of John Spencer Curwen she had the benefit of a publisher and promoter for her works from the very beginning. Throughout her career the Curwen Press produced books as well as a variety of supplementary material to aid in the teaching of her methods. Her teaching manual was successful from its first publication throughout England as well as in Ireland and as far away as America and Australia, *Mrs Curwen's Pianoforte Method* continuing into its thirty-first edition.<sup>28</sup> As well as the books the publishing firm produced illustrative duets and workbooks, C clef exercise books, illustrative tunes, music slates and staff cards.<sup>29</sup> It continued to issue new aids to the teaching manuals up until the 1920s, and the manual was still in print and selling steadily in 1973 when Simon Herbert published his history of the Curwen Press.<sup>30</sup> Annie Curwen's marriage, as well as being a happy union, was of financial and professional benefit to both parties. Although the original material grew out of her own ideas and

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<sup>27</sup> Simon Herbert, *Song and Words*, p. 54.

<sup>28</sup> Burns, Jackson and Strum, 'Contributions'.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Simon Herbert, *Songs and Words*, p. 71.



hard work, her marriage provided her with the means of getting these published, thereby reforming and improving piano pedagogy around the world. John Spencer Curwen's support of her work illustrates the respect and admiration he must have had for his wife and his belief in her ability and the worth of her music manuals.

### **6.5 Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell: Singer, Teacher and Mother**

The nineteenth century saw the continued popularity of the female singer in music. For many, fame, wealth and travel came hand in hand with their success. However, in the case of Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell, one of Dublin's leading female vocalists in the second half of the century, her success as a singer provided a living for her and her family. When her husband died in 1882 she became the head of her household and used her talents to provide for her children. At this stage she was teaching both in the Royal Irish Academy of Music and privately in her home, was a member of the choir at St. Andrew's church on Westland Row, and was performing at numerous concerts around Dublin.<sup>31</sup> Her life was very different from that of someone like Clara Schumann because, while she was one of those teachers who worked so much that she was, in Schumann's words, making herself stupid, she obviously did not enjoy Schumann's comparative level of wealth that would have allowed her to hire wet-nurses and additional maids.<sup>32</sup> Scott-Ffennell had chosen a very different life to that of female vocalists such as Adelina Patti or Catherine Hayes. For example, although Catherine Hayes also married, this was extremely short-lived since her husband, William Bushnell, died just nine months after their wedding. Although this was a heartbreaking event in Hayes' life, it meant that she remained single and free to dedicate her life to her career. Adelina Patti did marry twice, but she never had

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<sup>31</sup> For more on Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell's career see chapter two, above.

<sup>32</sup> Litzmann, *Clara Schumann*, p. 132; Reich, *Clara Schumann*, p. 88.

children and continued to tour the world performing because she was not tied down by a family.<sup>33</sup> Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell abandoned any ambition she might have had to travel or to work in London, as many had believed she had the ability to do, in order to settle in her native city. Upon doing so, by marrying and having children she conformed in many ways to the domestic ideals for women, while nevertheless continuing to work as a teacher and performer, something which turned out to be of great benefit to her after her husband's death.

Scott-Ffennell provides an example of how the progress women had made in music earlier in the nineteenth century benefited later generations of female musicians. Like Fanny Robinson, she married a fellow musician (John Scott was an amateur tenor), which probably made him more accepting of her musical career. After John's death, Scott-Ffennell 'never relaxed her numerous and devoted professional duties, to the intense admiration of an ever-widening circle of friends and the public' and her career provided her with a means of successfully supporting her four children.<sup>34</sup> Her reputation as one of Dublin's finest singers meant that she was always in demand both as a performer and as a teacher. The advanced position of women in music in Dublin meant that it was acceptable for her to work at both and earn a substantial income which saved her from needing the support of other members of her family after her husband's death.

Scott-Ffennell's career was also encouraged and aided by Joseph Robinson and Robert Stewart. Robinson was her first singing teacher and it was his guidance

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<sup>33</sup> Elizabeth Forbes. "Patti." *GMO, OMO*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/21091pg4>> , [accessed 30 August 2009]

<sup>34</sup> Patterson, 'Mrs Scott-Ffennell', *WIT*, 3 November 1900, p. 3.

that shaped her first solo performances in the Royal Irish Academy of Music, her subsequent trips and performances in London and her role in a production of *The Messiah* in Liverpool.<sup>35</sup> He was the first to acknowledge her potential to be a successful singer and he encouraged her to pursue a vocal career. Like Ellen O’Hea, Scott-Ffennell also benefited from the encouragement and support of Sir Robert Stewart. He first came in contact with her when she joined Dublin’s Glee and Madrigal Union where she was the only female voice in the quintet. Stewart arranged several songs especially for the union and his admiration of Scott-Ffennell’s voice led to her regularly performing under the Stewart’s baton in the 1880s.<sup>36</sup> Shortly before his death, Stewart wrote to Scott-Ffennell telling her that he had seldom met a musician so ‘good and gifted’ as her and that he wished that he had composed a piece especially for her voice.<sup>37</sup> Along with the many occasions on which Stewart chose to work with Scott-Ffennell, this letter illustrates his encouragement and how he promoted the careers of those women active in music in Dublin whom he admired.

## **6.6 Margaret O’Hea and her Family**

Margaret O’Hea was another female musician active in Dublin whose tireless dedication to her career was admired and praised by many. She continued to work into her eighties and maintained a successful career as performer, examiner, teacher and organiser. Like Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell, it is possible that O’Hea’s dedication and strong work ethic was in part due to her role as the head of her household. In 1901 she was living with her elderly aunt Julia White and her sisters Mary and Alice

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

at 23 Leeson Street and Margaret was listed as the head of the family.<sup>38</sup> Both Margaret and her aunt are listed as professors of the pianoforte. Although the family had suffered tough times earlier in the girls' lives, at this stage they were obviously doing reasonably well financially since they could afford a live-in servant. Their living arrangements were the same ten years later, with Margaret still listed as the head of the family and the household still keeping a maid.<sup>39</sup> The fact that the O'Hea ladies were reasonably well-off, maintaining a house without the support of any men, resulted from their successful musical careers. It appears that none of the O'Hea sisters ever got married, choosing instead to dedicate their lives to their careers, something that would not have been possible for them to do a century before that without losing respect and good social standing within society. As for Margaret O'Hea, while she never married she did maintain close friendships with many of Dublin's leading male musicians, all of whom held her in high esteem. She worked closely with Michèle Esposito in the Royal Irish Academy of Music and obviously found in him someone who respected her abilities and with whom she worked well, as for example when they worked closely together on the local centre examinations set up by the Academy in 1911. The parallels between the lives of the O'Hea sisters and those of the leading protagonists in James Joyce's 'The Dead' is quite striking and one cannot help but wonder if he had been acquainted with the O'Hea's sisters and if they provided some inspiration for the story.

### **6.7 Edith Oldham and the Grove Problem**

As previously mentioned, George Grove was very much Edith Oldham's mentor in her early musical career. His letters to her during her time in London and her early

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<sup>38</sup> 1901 Dublin Census, < <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/> >, [accessed 10 May 2010].

<sup>39</sup> 1911 Dublin Census, < <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/> >, [accessed 10 May 2010].

years working as a teacher at the Royal Irish Academy of Music provide an insight into her life and the struggles and successes of someone studying at the Royal College of Music or embarking on a music career in Dublin. Extracts from the letters and an evaluation of their content were included in Percy Young's 1980 biography of George Grove and in an 'Intermezzo' in the 1998 publication on the Royal Irish Academy of Music, *To Talent Alone*. At the end of the 'Intermezzo' the suggestion is made that task of recording the friendship of George Grove and Edith Oldham had been completed. However this is not necessarily correct. Both books offer a very restricted insight into the relationship, focusing on similar letters seeming to believe that their relationship was a love affair of sorts. Through correspondence with Catherine Ferguson, a relative of Edith Oldham, it seems the suggestion of a liaison between Grove and Oldham is one that continues to cause great upset to the Oldham family.<sup>40</sup> While George Grove definitely held Oldham in high esteem, the suggestion that their relationship was a love affair appears to be unsupported. The letters are often affectionate, particularly in the way they were signed off, but this reflects more a style of nineteenth century letter writing than being proof of anything more intimate. Celia Clarke, who transcribed the letters, believes that their relationship was nothing more than that of mentor and student. She suggests that Oldham felt lost and alone in London and that Grove was a father figure to all his students, especially in the early days of the Royal College of Music. Oldham simply responded to the interest he took in her life and their friendship grew out of that.

The letters offer an insight into a side of George Grove that was perhaps not evident to the public: his love of poetry and literature, his caring nature and the

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<sup>40</sup> Email correspondence with Catherine Ferguson, April/May 2006.

interest he took in his students as well as his desire to help them all to achieve the best they could, his love and appreciation for music and also his fears and worries both professional and personal. In Edith he seems to have found someone who saw the best in him and appreciated his intelligence and kindness, while George Grove could be seen as being her mentor in many ways. He advised her on her studies and encouraged her to attend all the best concerts and musical events that London had to offer while she was a student there. In the years when she was in Dublin she continued to turn to him for advice, and in 1895 she seems to have shared with him her plans for the Feis Ceoil since he mentions it in several letters. Their relationship was more that of a doting father to his daughter than anything else. Oldham lost her own father shortly after she began at the Royal College of Music and Grove subsequently lost his daughter Millicent several years later, leaving a gap in both their lives that the other could fill. However, Oldham was also not afraid to ignore his advice, which she often did, especially in relation to her career. Grove seemed to believe that her talents would be wasted in Dublin and that she would have done better to establish herself in London, but Oldham wanted to be in Dublin where she would be close to her family. She was also keen to put her impressive education from the Royal College of Music to good use in her native country where it would benefit others so much more than in London where so many would have enjoyed similar educations. She became involved in the Royal Academy of Music and the Feis Ceoil as well as regularly performing around Dublin. However, there is no doubt of Grove's influence on Oldham and the musician she turned out to be. His mentoring of her early years taught her to be dedicated and to persevere no matter how hard the task, enduring qualities which remained evident throughout her career.

## 6.8 Edith Oldham and her Marriage to Richard Irvine Best

The other lasting male influence on Oldham's life was her husband, Richard Irvine Best, in whom she found someone who was encouraging and supportive of her career and talents. Edith's great-grand-niece Catherine Ferguson was keen to stress the account of Edith and Richard Irvine Best's marriage in private correspondence.<sup>41</sup> They met through the Feis Ceoil where Best was the competition's first registrar. A philologist and bibliographer, he spent his early years in Paris, where he was associated with writers including John Millington Synge. On his return to Ireland he helped set up the School of Irish Learning in 1903. In 1904 he joined the staff of the National Library of Ireland and went on to become its director from 1924 to 1940. Edith Oldham and Richard Best were married in April 1906 in the Registrar's Office, Wellington Quay. One unusual aspect of their marriage certificate and of the census records from 1901 and 1911 is the religious denomination of both. In 1901 Edith Oldham lived with her sister Kate, a teacher, at Upper Leeson Street and their religion is listed as Episcopalian Irish Church.<sup>42</sup> In 1911 Edith was married and living with Richard Best at 35 Percy Place in Dublin; the entry in the census under religion states that both Best and his wife refused to provide this information.<sup>43</sup> In their marriage announcement it states that 'Not usually attending a place of worship, [the] building in which the marriage is to be solemnised [is to be the] Registrar's Office, Dublin 23 Wellington Quay'.<sup>44</sup> This would have been unusual for the early twentieth century, especially in Ireland where religion remained an important aspect of society, and it may be that Oldham moved away from her religion through the influence of Best.

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<sup>41</sup> Email correspondence with Catherine Ferguson, April/May 2006.

<sup>42</sup> 1901 Census, <<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie>>, [accessed 10 May 2010].

<sup>43</sup> 1911 Census, <<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie>>, [accessed 10 May 2010].

<sup>44</sup> Email correspondence with Catherine Ferguson, April/May 2006.

Oldham's family believes them to have been a devoted couple and this would seem to be supported by the fact that Best seemed adamant to have her remembered after her death. In his will he provided an endowment to set up the Edith Best scholarship which would allow an Irish female student to study piano at the Royal College of Music and to be competed for at Feis Ceoil. Her music collection was donated to the library of the Royal Irish Academy of Music creating the Edith Best Collection. He also left instructions for her letters from George Grove to be sent to a publisher in the hopes that she would be forever immortalized. This also suggests there was nothing scandalous about Oldham's relationship with George Grove since it is unlikely her husband would have wanted them made public if there was anything to hide. A letter of Best's to Edith's grandniece after her death illustrates his love for his wife.

The terrible and sudden stroke, which deprived me of my dear one from whom I was scarcely ever separated for four and forty years has bewildered me. Everyone is most kind and keeps rushing to my aid .....but I want Edith and my tears flow.

### **6.9 Annie Patterson and her Role as the Head of her Household**

As with Margaret O'Hea, Annie Patterson's musical career seems to have been the most important thing in her life. Neither of these women got married, choosing instead to dedicate themselves completely to their work, something that was also true to an extent of Oldham in that she was forty-one before she got married. Instead, she had dedicated her early life to pursuing her musical education in London and subsequently to establishing herself as a musician and teacher in Dublin.

Women turning their backs on marriage and what was deemed to be the ideal life for women, that of 'domestic bliss', became more popular in nineteenth-century



Ireland as the position of women began to change and new professional opportunities became available to them. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century there was a continuing decrease in the numbers of women getting married. After the famine there were high levels of permanent celibacy in Ireland. For example, in 1871 forty-three percent of women aged between fifteen and forty-five were married but by 1911 this percentage had dropped to thirty-six percent.<sup>45</sup> This pattern continued so that by the beginning of the First World War about a quarter of the Irish population was not married. While society deemed marriage to be the best option for a woman, some women chose to hold onto their single status and the freedom that it allowed them. For example, the writer and social reformer Frances Power Cobbe commented in her autobiography that she had gone through life without the interest which was seen as ‘woman’s whole existence’ – the desire to be a mother and a wife.<sup>46</sup> Instead she chose to dedicate her time free from the distractions of men to her study, this her ‘a real leisure of mind’.

Patterson likewise chose to dedicate herself to her career but she also had the responsibility of providing for her family. In the 1901 census she was living in Dublin with her father, who was a partner of Carson Brothers Book Sellers on Grafton Street, and her three sisters who did not work but stayed at home and took care of the house.<sup>47</sup> By 1911 Annie Patterson had moved to Cork to take up the position of organist at St. Anne’s Church in Shandon and her two youngest sisters had moved with her.<sup>48</sup> She was therefore the head of the family and the sole earner,

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<sup>45</sup> Luddy, ed, *Women in Ireland*, p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, p. 46.

<sup>47</sup> 1901 Census, <<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie>>, [accessed 10 May 2010].

<sup>48</sup> 1911 Census, <<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie>>, [accessed 10 May 2010].

her success as a musician and her hard work as part of her multi-faceted career most likely being necessary to maintain the household.

Like O’Hea there were male influences in Patterson’s life even though she chose to remain unmarried. She had studied under Robert Stewart in her early years at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and it would seem that his career as a musician involved in many different aspects of music was an inspiration for Patterson’s own career which, as Lisa Parker points out, mirrored that of Stewart in many ways.<sup>49</sup> Patterson was an admirer of Stewart throughout her life, proof of which can be seen in her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times*, where she references him and his opinions on different Irish musicians and events more than she mentions anyone else. However, Patterson does not seem to have experienced any difficulties being a strong independent woman, despite the social opinions that still surrounded professional women.

For many of the women involved in music in Dublin in the nineteenth century the presence of men in their lives was a source of encouragement and guidance. Unlike some of their European peers, they do not seem ever to have been held back or discouraged from pursuing their musical careers; on the contrary, they were given guidance, tuition and encouragement. Perhaps the difference is that these women were not trying to advance feminist issues or to go against society, but were simply trying to promote and improve the discipline that they loved and were talented in. In many cases they were also using their talents and experience as musicians to maintain a career that supported their families and provided for their households.

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<sup>49</sup> Lisa Parker, *Robert Prescott Stewart*, p. 53.

They were willing to accept the help of the men in their lives if it meant that they could progress their careers and the development of music in their city. In comparison to the likes of Amy Fay in America, who was trying to further the position of women in music in the country, the women in Ireland were more concerned with progressing music itself.<sup>50</sup> Therefore their dedication was not seen as being defiant or feminist but as support for the growth of music in Dublin and the improvement of standards. The men in their lives recognised their talents and often helped to nurture them, allowing the women to become important contributors to music in Dublin.

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<sup>50</sup> Fay, 'The Woman Teacher in a Large City', pp. 109-121

## Conclusion

The history of women in the nineteenth-century is the story of many different classes, opportunities and expectations.<sup>1</sup> The nineteenth century laid the ground work for the independence that women would eventually achieve in the twentieth century, and it saw the move of women into the workplace, in several different professions. While many of these women, particularly those involved in politics, have been celebrated and researched, those women involved in music in nineteenth-century Dublin have been largely forgotten and neglected by many. This thesis has attempted to provide a compensatory history, uncovering the facts and details of their lives that allow their work to be further evaluated in the wider context of their time. While women in music in nineteenth-century Dublin have been referred to by other musicologists, they were often overshadowed by more focused research on their male peers. These women immersed themselves in their musical careers with determination and dedication. Through continued hard-work they developed impressive musical careers and carved out a position for professional women in music. However, their neglect has resulted in an understanding of music in Dublin that calls for re-evaluation. The history of music in nineteenth-century Dublin, in as much as it has been revealed, has been formed around the main male figures and the idea that the musical activities in the city were not comparable to those of London or the rest of Europe, as had been the case in the eighteenth century. If the involvement of women is taken into consideration, the overall experiences of musicians in Dublin become more comparable to those of the rest of Europe. The consideration of female

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<sup>1</sup> Luddy, *Women and Philanthropy*, p. 9.

musicians illustrates the possibility that, in certain respects, Dublin did not lag as far behind its neighbours as may have been suggested.

It has likewise been the assumption that the careers of musicians in nineteenth-century Ireland did not compare to those of their European peers. Those considered to have been musicians of European standards, such as John Field, George Osborne and Catherine Hayes, left the country to establish their careers. However, what if this is a misrepresentation of the circumstances of music in Ireland? If one includes women in the evaluation of musicians active in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Dublin, examples emerge of careers that are indeed comparable to those of musicians active throughout Europe. Although British-born, the work of Fanny Robinson as a pianist and composer in Ireland bears comparison to that of many of her female peers. She composed in a style that was indicative of Victorian piano music trends, but also of a standard that illustrates her understanding of musical forms and techniques, and her command of the piano. Her talents as a pianist can be evoked from the repertoire that she performed, as well as from her international reputation and popularity as a performer, albeit based on a very small number of performances. Literature on the development of music in Dublin in the nineteenth century almost invariably includes accounts of the work of the Robinson family, particularly of Joseph Robinson, but Fanny Robinson is typically notable by her exclusion or by receiving at best only a passing mention. The lack of attention given to her has surely arisen out of the fact that the city's musical history has been written by men about men. Because research into Ireland's musical history is a relatively new area for musicological activity, the work of female musicians in Ireland has yet fully to establish its place against a traditional background of light

being shed on their male peers. Many of the principal writings on nineteenth-century Dublin, such as the work of Brian Boydell and Aloys Fleischmann, were written at a time when the idea of gender and of women's studies in music was only beginning to be discussed, and when the achievements of male musicians and composers was the traditional focus of musicology. The resulting imbalance had simply not been addressed. However, in spite of the lack of interest in gender studies in musicology in Ireland at that time, it is interesting to note that Fanny Robinson's cantata was still seen as being worthy of recognition by Harry Grindle in his book on Irish cathedral music.<sup>2</sup> Women involved in music in the nineteenth century deserve recognition, but musicological studies into Irish music history have largely continued to evaluate music in the traditional spheres and these, unfortunately, have not generally included women.

While it is easy to pin the blame on contemporary musicologists, the root of the neglect lies with the female musicians and the social constrictions and ideals that prevailed in society at the beginning of the twentieth century. The nineteenth century and early decades of the twentieth century was a period of turmoil and insecurity for women in many ways. They struggled to gain equality and a place for themselves in professional spheres and within society, but there were also strong constrictions on these developments, particularly from the church. The fear of allowing women to break from the conventional roles within the domestic setting generated literature and studies that tried to suggest the dangers these developments would evoke for women's health and mental stability. Therefore, if a woman went against the normal conventions this was often done discreetly. In this way women began to develop

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<sup>2</sup> Grindle, *Irish Cathedral Music*, pp. 198-199.

their roles in music: They responded to the needs of society by becoming music teachers and performers and by accepting the support and guidance of their male peers. This can be seen in the careers of Fanny Robinson, Edith Oldham and Elena Norton, who were content to allow the men in their lives to have a say in their careers and education, as was normal for the period, but they also carved out successful careers for themselves, something which was still unprecedented at that time. In the cases of Annie Patterson and Margaret O’Hea, while they never got married, they did work well with their male peers and they never used their position to highlight the work of women. Instead, their work allowed them the independence to earn a living without getting married, while their professional careers in music allowed them both to contribute to the care of their families.

As a result of her successful music career, especially as a writer and lecturer, Annie Patterson was in a position which would have allowed her to become a voice for the female musician. Although she was involved in the suffragette movement and clearly supported the need for women’s equality, she never used her work as a platform for women’s rights.<sup>3</sup> While she did write on women musicians, which was itself significant for the nineteenth century, she did so discreetly. Her articles and books treat male and female musicians equally; they discuss the struggles and triumphs of a music career from the point of view of a musician, not from a gender-related position. It would seem that Annie Patterson felt her talents as a musician and a writer could be put to better use as a means of educating others on music, than as a means of helping progress the broader rights of women in society. The approach of Patterson is similar to that of Virginia Wolff in literature: she was not so much

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<sup>3</sup> Gillett, *Musical Women in England*, p. 221.

concerned with fighting for women's political rights, as with concentrating instead on what she felt was more important, namely securing educational and cultural equality for women.<sup>4</sup> In Wolff's case the best way of achieving this was to lead by example. She was a successful author who made a living from her writing; she believed that the intellectual freedom of women depended on material independence, on having 'a room of one's own'.<sup>5</sup> The financial independence that she suggested was a necessity for women was exactly what Annie Patterson achieved. Patterson's life must have been a busy one between writing, examining and performing, but she succeeded. As a result of her multi-faceted career she would appear also to have been a reasonably well-off woman: she was able to support herself, her two sisters and a servant, with the only income coming into the house being her own.<sup>6</sup> The same could be said of earlier generations of women in the nineteenth century: Mrs Allen, Elizabeth Scott-Fennell, Margaret O'Hea, all appear to have managed to earn a living and gain financial independence through their careers. In the cases of Mrs Allen and Elizabeth Scott-Fennell this became a necessity after the death of their husbands; Margaret O'Hea's case however was similar to that of Patterson: she never married and instead worked hard to achieve her own financial independence. The common factor with all these women is that they were able to maintain a household and provide for their families as a result of their musical talents and their successful careers that were a result of those talents. This was a significant development for women in music in the nineteenth century, most particularly for the likes of Mrs Allen in the early decades of the century. They could survive without assistance from relatives or any other forms of charity. They managed to maintain their respectable position in what was still a strict and conservative society for women.

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<sup>4</sup> David Daches, *Virginia Wolff* (New York: New Directions Publishing, 1942), p. 47.

<sup>5</sup> Virginia Wolff, *A Room of One's Own* (London: Penguin Books, 1945, R/2004), p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> 1911 Cork Census, <<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>>, [accessed 10 May 2010].



For the women highlighted above, the presence of men in their lives was a source of encouragement and guidance. Unlike some of their European peers they do not seem ever to have been held back or discouraged from pursuing their musical careers; on the contrary, they were given guidance, tuition and encouragement. Perhaps the difference is that these women were not trying to be political activists or to go against the social norms: they were simply trying to promote and improve the subject that they loved, music. They were willing to accept the help of the men in their lives if it meant that they could progress their cause. Unlike Fanny Hensel, there is no evidence of their doubting their own work, probably because the men did not doubt it. Also, in comparison to those like Amy Fay in America who tried to further the *position* of women in music in their country, the women in Ireland were more concerned with progressing music than their own position.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, their dedication was not seen as being defiant or feminist, but as support for the growth of music in Dublin and the improvement of standards. The men in their lives recognised their talents and often helped to nurture them, allowing these women to become important contributors to music in Dublin.

While these women all managed to carve out successful careers for themselves while also developing music in the capital, it could be argued that female musicians such as Patterson let themselves down through their neglect of their female peers. By never highlighting or specifically promoting the progressive work of women in music they may unwittingly have undermined women's involvement, thus allowing the female musician to remain invisible in future generations. Important female figures such as Annie Patterson, or Ethel Smyth in England, did not

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<sup>7</sup> Fay, 'The Woman Teacher in a Large City', pp. 109-121

establish the precedent of celebrating their fellow female musicians for fear of drawing attention to their own involvement in music. In her articles for the *Weekly Irish Times* Annie Patterson provides a useful source of information for researching women, but she did not highlight how remarkable these women were for their time, or how wonderful it was for women to progress in music. The most obvious agenda in her articles is simply the promotion of music in Ireland, rather than an obvious devotion to women's rights. And thus each successive generation of female musicians became forgotten and neglected. While musicians such as Robert Stewart were celebrated after their death by their male peers, women did not attempt anything similar. It would not have been customary to celebrate the professional achievements of a woman in the early years of the twentieth century, not just in music but in any area of society. For example, in the cultural and political fields it took decades before the work of such visionary women as Anna Parnell, Maud Gonne, Constance Markievicz and Lady Gregory was fully acknowledged, although this acknowledgement did come in due course.<sup>8</sup>

The experiences of women in Ireland across the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries provide a microcosm of music in the capital. In the eighteenth century Dublin experienced its Golden Age of music. However, much of its concert life imitated that of London. Rich though Dublin's concert life was, there was little original about it and Irish musicians were popular as long as they continued to imitate the practices of the British capital. The musicians did not elevate themselves to a level where they were respected in their own right, nor was Dublin seen as a

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<sup>8</sup> On the life and works of these women see: Patricia Groves, *Petticoat Rebellion; the Anna Parnell Story* (Cork: Mercier Press, 2009); Margaret Ward, *Maud Gonne: A Life* (London: Pandora Press, 1990); Diana Norman, *Terrible Beauty: A Life of Constance Markievicz* (Dublin: Poolbeg Press, 1988); Judith Hill, *Lady Gregory: An Irish Life* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2005).

music centre with an independent identity distinct from that of London. However, in the nineteenth century, due to the Act of Union, Dublin lost much of its wealthy concert patronage and, therefore, the direct influence of London. Although Dublin continued to be closely linked to London, its cultural activities were no longer such close imitations of those taking in place in London. Irish musicians developed new schools, concert practices and events that, while influenced by what was happening in the rest of Europe, were also trying to be more original in their concept by celebrating Irish musicians, performing Irish music, and developing music education. In the twentieth century women continued to work to develop music education in the country and musical activity in Dublin.

This thesis sheds light on the involvement of women in music in Dublin at a time when the city's musical culture was beginning to develop into that which is still evident today. The identities and efforts of many of these women who worked so hard for the advancement of musical activity in Dublin have been examined and evaluated. This thesis has demonstrated that women were actively involved in music as teachers, performers, composers and organisers in the nineteenth century. With the changes that occurred as a result of the Act of Union, women began to develop a place for themselves within the musical profession that no longer held the dubious reputations associated with eighteenth-century female performers. The work of women in Dublin highlights similarities between Dublin and the rest of Europe not immediately apparent from existing research into male musicians alone. Women in Dublin became readily accepted into the music profession, gaining respect through their professional status as musicians. While these women would still have had to conform to the traditional expectations for polite society, such as dressing

appropriately and demonstrating good manners to their students, they maintained their position in middle class society while also maintaining a paid position.

An evaluation of women in music in Dublin also casts a new light on the men who were active in the city at the same time. Joseph Robinson, for example, has been recognised as an important musical contributor to the period due to his involvement in the many musical societies and his work as a performer, composer and teacher. However, his wife, Fanny Robinson, established a career that received greater recognition in Europe and Britain. Her compositions, when compared to those of her husband, illustrate her superior musical education. Similarly, a study of Edith Oldham's education and early career in music in Dublin highlights the fact that her education and qualifications far outweighed those of many of her male peers in Dublin. It also illustrates that there were possibilities available to a musician of suitable quality and dedication, irrespective of gender.

The most outstanding example of the work of women in music is provided by the wide ranging career of Annie Patterson. She was not a woman who was not bound by the limitations of her gender nor by the period was she born into. Her dedication to music in Ireland and her desire to develop the musical knowledge of the general public led to a career that is multi-faceted and impressive by the standards of any period. There was no area of music in which she did not excel: she performed as an organist, composed music and used her talents in this area to experiment with and promote traditional melodies, she wrote books and articles that were both promotional and educational, and her dedication to a cause is evident from her work with the Feis Ceoil. Her career outshines that of so many of her male peers

and provides a clear example of the opportunities that were available to musicians in Dublin at the beginning of the twentieth century if they were willing to work hard and dedicate themselves to their desire for success. This thesis only discusses the earlier part of Patterson's life, that which is directly relevant to Dublin, but after she moved to Cork in 1909 she continued to write on music, both in the form of books and articles for newspapers such as the *Cork Leader*. She continued to work as an organist and was the resident organist at St. Anne's Church in Shandon, Co. Cork, in 1924 becoming a lecturer on Irish Music at University College, Cork, a position she held until her death in 1934.<sup>9</sup>

Highlighting the work and involvement in music of female musicians in nineteenth century Dublin is of considerably greater value than complaining about their neglect. It is hoped that this will in turn lead to future musicological research into the history of music in Ireland being more aware of the necessity to consider gender and the representation of women. If 'history's representations of the past help construct gender for the present',<sup>10</sup> it is hoped that this introductory history of women in nineteenth-century Dublin will contribute towards a greater appreciation of gender and women in musicological research of the future and that it will evoke new perceptions and understandings of the role of music and musicians in nineteenth-century society in Ireland's capital.

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<sup>9</sup> Devine / Flood, 'Patterson, Annie (Wilson)', p. 237,

<sup>10</sup> Susan C. Cook and Judy S. Tsou, 'Introduction: "Bright Cecilia"', *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), p. 2.

## Appendix 1

### A List of All Women Mentioned, Their Birth and Death Dates and Their Professions

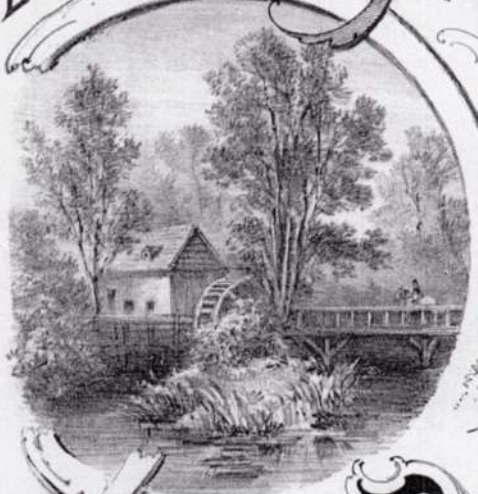
Name		Profession
Mrs Susannah Cibber	(1714-1766)	English Soprano
Anne Catley	(1745-1789)	English Soprano
Fanny Mendelssohn/Hensel	(1779-1826)	German Composer, Singer, Teacher
Sarah Glover	(1786-1867)	English Teacher
Mrs Allen		Irish Teacher
Clara Schumann	(1819-1896)	German Pianist, Composer, Teacher
Mrs Scott-Ffennell	(1830-1911)	Irish Singer, Teacher
Fanny Robinson	(1831-1879)	English Teacher, Pianist, Composer
Arabella Goddard	(1836-1922)	English Teacher, Pianist, Composer
Margaret O'Hea	(1843-1938)	Irish Teacher, Pianist, Lecturer, Examiner
Adelina Patti	(1843-1919)	Italian Soprano
Annie Curwen	(1845-1932)	Irish Writer, Teacher, Lecturer
Charlotte Milligan Fox	(1850-1916)	Irish Writer, Composer
Mary Wakefield	(1853-1910)	English Organiser, Promoter
Ethel Smyth	(1858-1944)	English Composer, Writer
Ellen O'Hea		Irish Composer, Soprano
Edith Oldham	(1865-1950)	English Teacher, Pianist, Organiser, Promoter
Dr Annie Patterson	(1868-1934)	Irish Writer, Organiser, Composer, Violinist, Organist, Examiner
Marion Scott	(1877-1953)	English Writer, Composer, Violinist, Editor, Poet

Appendix 2

Fanny Robinson: *Le Chant du Moulin* (The Song of the Mill-Wheel)

*To Near Annika Weston  
with the Composer's Love  
A Madame WILLIAM GASKELL  
Feb. 1879.*

# LE CHANT DU MOULIN



Mélodie  
POUR  
PIANO  
par M<sup>me</sup>

## Fos. ROBINSON

Prix: 5<sup>f</sup>

Paris, Rue de Valenciennes  
E. CÉRARD, & C<sup>ie</sup>, Editeurs, 12, Boul<sup>g</sup> des Capucines, et 2, Rue Scribe, (Maison du G<sup>o</sup> Hôtel)  
Propriété pour tous Pays

Londres, CHAPPELL & C<sup>o</sup>, New Bond Street

AN ALICE MEYERSONER  
E. CÉRARD & C<sup>ie</sup>  
12, Boul<sup>g</sup> des Capucines  
MON DU 12 HOTEL

DEDICATED TO  
M<sup>RS</sup> William Gaskell.

The  
SONG OF THE MILL-WHEEL,  
MELODY,

FOR THE  
PIANO FORTE.

Composed by  
M<sup>RS</sup> JOSEPH ROBINSON.

*Bnt. Stey. Hall.*

*Price 3/-*

London,  
CHAPPELL & C<sup>O</sup> 50, NEW BOND STREET.

*Also by the same Composer*  
EVENING THOUGHTS 3/8 | INFANT SMILES 3/4  
LAUGHING WATER 3/4 | ELF LAND 4/4  
THE HUNT 3/4



# LE CHANT DU MOULIN

MÉLODIE.

pour le Piano

par M<sup>me</sup> J. ROBINSON.

*Allegro con brio. m. g.*

*PIANO.*

Ped

Ped

Ped

Ped

Ped

Di - mi - ut - en - do.

*p*

Paris, E. GERARD et C<sup>ie</sup>, Éditeurs.

C. N. 11622.

19, Boulevard des Capucines.

2

*mf*

*p*

Ped ◊

Pea ◊

Ped ◊

C. M. H. 622.

The musical score consists of five systems of piano accompaniment and one system with a vocal line. The piano part features intricate textures with frequent use of the sustain pedal, indicated by 'Ped' markings with diamond symbols. The vocal line includes the lyrics 'eres cen do.' and 'Di - mi - nu - en - do.' with dynamic markings such as *Dim.*, *m.g.*, *p*, and *f*.

C. M. H. 622

Musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with lyrics "cres - cen - do." and "Dim." below it. The bass staff contains a rhythmic accompaniment. Pedal markings "Ped" are placed below the bass staff.

Musical notation for the second system, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with lyrics "m. g." below it. The bass staff contains a rhythmic accompaniment.

Musical notation for the third system, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with lyrics "m. g." below it. The bass staff contains a rhythmic accompaniment.

Musical notation for the fourth system, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line. The bass staff contains a rhythmic accompaniment. Pedal markings "Ped" are placed below the bass staff.

Musical notation for the fifth system, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with lyrics "Di - mi - nu - en - do." and "p" below it. The bass staff contains a rhythmic accompaniment. Pedal markings "Ped" are placed below the bass staff.

Mil. - Brandt, Grav. au N° 50000, 72, Paris.

C. M. H. 622

Imp. Thibaut, au N° 10000, 276.



Appendix Three  
Elena Norton, *Gather Ye Rosebuds*

15

DEDICATED TO  
SIR ROBERT STEWART. MUS. DOC.

GATHER YE ROSEBUDS,  
Song.

WORDS BY HERRICK

Music by

ELENA NORTON.

Ent. Sta. Hall.

Price 1<sup>s</sup>/-

London,

DUNCAN DAVISON & CO. 244, REGENTS' CORNER OF LITTLE ARGYLL ST.

Where may be obtained, by the same Composer,  
IN A VALLEY FAR AWAY — (HAURVA VAWM ASTHORE) — A/

And this same flow'r that smiles to day, To - mor - row will be

dy - - ing. The glo - rious lamp of Heav'n the sun, The

*cres.*  
high - er he's a - get.ting, The high - er he's a -

- get.ting, The high - er he's a - - getting, The

NORTON (E) Gather ye Rosebuds.

( D N° 1931 )

*dim.* 3

soon - er will his race be run, And near - er he's to

- set - ting, And near - er he's to setting.

*p* *p* *colla parte.*

*tempo.*

The

MORTON ( E ) Gather ye Rosebuds .

( D N° 1931 )



while ye may, go mar-ry; For hav-ing lost but

once your prime, You may for ev-er tar-ry; You

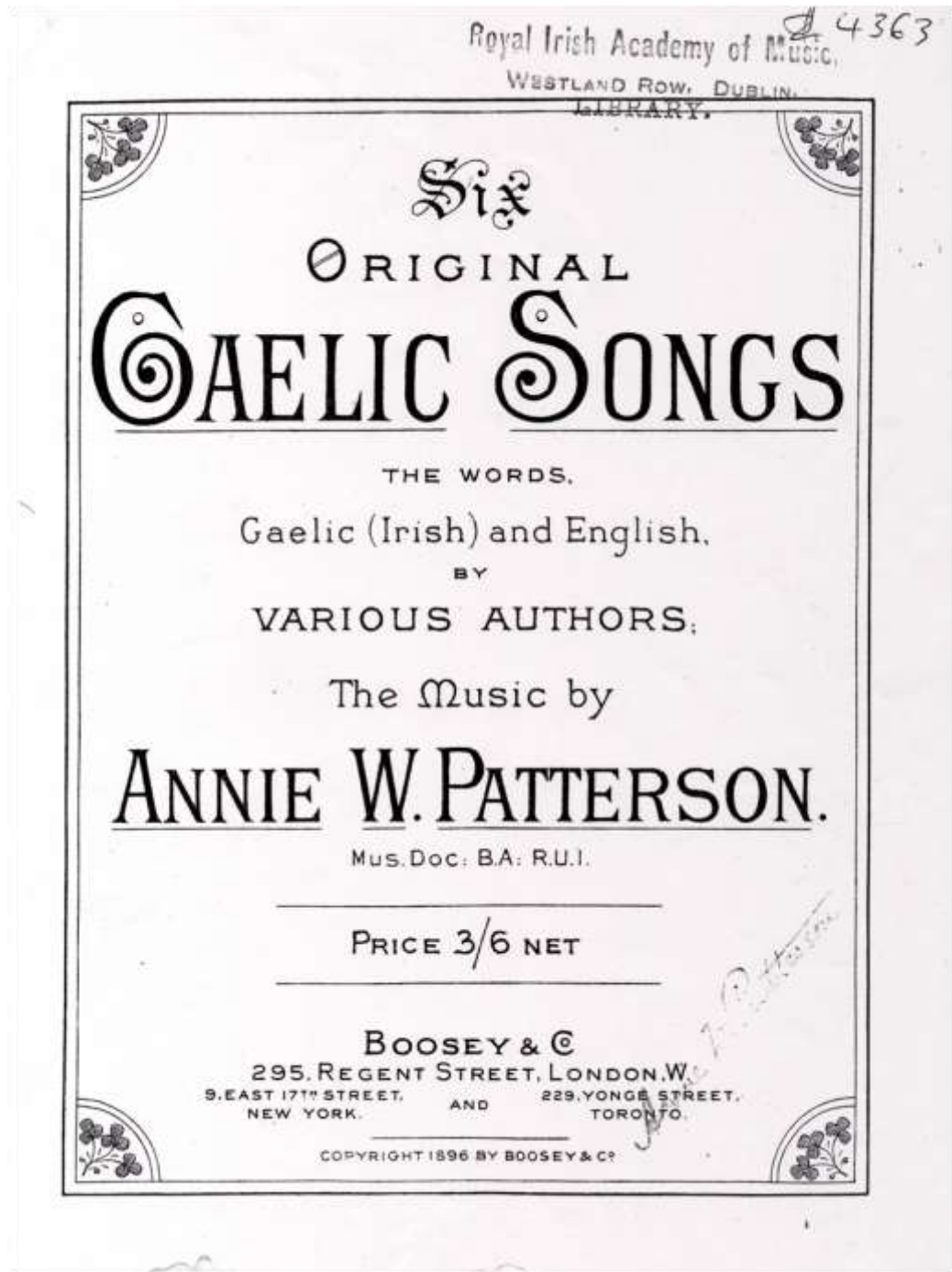
*p* *rall:*

may for ev-er tar-ry.

*colla parte.* *tempo.*



Appendix Four  
Annie Patterson, *Six Original Gaelic Songs*



# SIX GAELIC SONGS.



	PAGE
A BIRD SONG ( <i>ABHRÁN AN EARRAIGH</i> )	1
THE SKYLARK ( <i>DO'N FHUISEÓIG</i> )	7
TAKE UP THE HARP ( <i>TÓG SUAS AN CHLÁIRSEACH</i> )	13
THE POET'S DEATH ( <i>BÁS AN FHILIDH</i> )	19
MY COLLEEN DEAR ( <i>MO CHAILÍN OG</i> )	25
AT PARTING ( <i>CÁRAIM AM CHRIDHE</i> )	28



*Copyright 1896 by Boosey & C<sup>o</sup>*

## PREFACE.

THESE "Six Original Gaelic Songs," being unique in their way, call for a few brief introductory remarks.

In 1888 Dr. P. W. JORCE, M.R.I.A., whose untiring labours in the field of Irish Literature and Art are too well known to need comment, edited, for the "Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language," an interesting volume, entitled: "Irish Music and Song," in which many well-known songs in the Irish language were arranged to appropriate Irish tunes, the latter being given without accompaniment. With this sole exception, the present little volume may claim to be the first of its kind ever published, especially on the following grounds:—first, it is a collection of *new* Gaelic lyrics by living authors, written in that dialect of the Gaelic tongue which has been looked upon as "classic" for over four hundred years in Scotland as well as in Ireland, and which is the language of the Gaelic Press in America. Secondly, the melodies are *new* in that they are all *original*, though it is to be hoped that a strong flavour of the composer's nationality will be found in them. Thirdly, the accompaniments and general structure of the songs are intended to combine the characteristic traits of ancient Irish music with the requirements of modern song-form.

The "Feis" movement, an undertaking for the revival of interest in Irish music, is, at present, directing public attention to the minstrel lore of a Land that was, in ages gone by, famed for the skill of its Bards or Poet-musicians. The Gaelic tongue is not only understood and spoken by a large section of the Irish people, but Irish Gaelic is also fully intelligible to the Scottish Gael. German critical scholarship has drawn attention to the rich and too long neglected native poetical and prose literature of Ireland, and most praiseworthy have been the efforts of the various Societies (formed, during the latter half of the present century, for the Preservation and Culture of the Irish Language), to awaken an interest in a language which, older than the Grecian or Roman tongue, is yet a *living* channel of speech in the country. Nor is the study confined to Ireland; for, to the writer's own personal knowledge, Irish classes have been organised in connection with the London Irish Literary Society, and the publication of periodical literature in classic Gaelic is daily increasing both in the British Isles and America. These considerations, combined with the urgings of a disposition deeply imbued with Irish sympathies, have induced the composer of the following songs to venture into print, with the hope that such an undertaking may meet with tolerance and favour, not only from those whom it may most nearly concern, but also from Ireland's many true friends among her Saxon neighbours. It will be seen that English versions of the Irish poems have been provided. It may be mentioned that the Irish text has been carefully revised, in proof, by Mr. T. O'NEILL RUSSELL, one of the most accomplished Irish scholars of the day, to whom the composer is deeply indebted for the use of most of the lyrics in the collection. How far this effort to revive the art of the Poet-minstrel in Erin will be successful must be left to the decision of the public, from whom a kind indulgence is asked for such shortcomings as an initial work of this description may possess.

DUBLIN, August, 1896.

A. W. P.

NEW (REVISED) EDITION. The best thanks of the Composer are due to Mr. EAMON O'DONOGHUE, Professor of Irish at University College, Cork, for generous and valuable assistance given in more accurately adapting the Gaelic text (as supplied by the late Mr. T. O'N. RUSSELL) to the musical accents.

CORK, March, 1912.

EITHNE NÍ PHEADAIR (A.W.P.).

# I. A Bird Song.

## Abhrán an Earraigh.

English Words by "Oreian."

Irish Words by T. O. Russell.

Allegretto giocoso. (♩ = 104)

VOICE. 

PIANO. *sempre leggiero*



*poco rit.*

*mp*  
Soft - ly, o'er the budding hedge - row Comes the bal - my breath of Spring:  
*p*  
*ciuin - tig a - nal dil an Earraigh, Thar magh' raibh mí - ne sgoth as bláth, O*



From her slum-ber Na-ture wa-kens, Win-ter cold is on the wing—  
 chod - la trom tá'n domhan ag eir-ghe, 'Stioc-faidh 'ris an samhradh sámh—

Win-ter cold is on the wing— Win-ter cold is on the wing.  
 'Stioc-faidh 'ris an samhradh sámh— 'Stioc-faidh 'ris an samh-radh sámh. As

What tho long dark days of tem-pest Si-lenc'd have the fea-ther'd throng,  
 feadh dubh laeth-eadh . céo a's an-fa Ni cua-ladh go-tha binn' na n-eun, A -

Gloom that's past must be for-got-ten When I hear the Blackbird's song- the  
 - ris beidh gleann as coill-te ceol-mhar, A's sein-fidh lon-dubh laoi gar leun-an

*molto rit.* Black-bird's song. *a tempo* Ah... tra... la, la; Ah tra... la, ...  
 laoi gan leun. Ah... tra... la, la; Ah tra... la, ...

*colla voce* *p a tempo*

la, la; Ah, tra... la, la; Tra, la, la, la, la; Tra, la, la, la:  
 Ah... tra... la, la; Ah... tra... la, la;

*f rull. poco a poco* Tra, la, la, la; Gloom that's past must be for-got-ten When I hear the  
 A - ris beidh gleann a's coil-te ceolmhor, A's sein - fidh lon - duibh

*f sempre colla voce*

Black-bird's song.  
 laoi gan leun.

*a tempo*

First system of musical notation, featuring a vocal line and piano accompaniment in G major.

Second system of musical notation, including lyrics in English and Gaelic. The piano accompaniment includes markings for *rall.* and *mp*.

Seel the sun - light, pure and gold - en,  
 Feuch ar so - lus glan na gréine Ag

Third system of musical notation, including lyrics in English and Gaelic. The piano accompaniment includes markings for *rall.* and *mp*.

Gilds the world with glo - ry bright, While the cur - rent,  
 deal - rug' sliabh ás mágh le hór, 'San mín shruth gá - reach

Fourth system of musical notation, including lyrics in English and Gaelic. The piano accompaniment includes markings for *p* and *pp*.

smil.ing. rip.ples. Shed-ding back the glow-ing light, shed-ding back the  
 glór - ach greannmhar, Ag rin - ceadh síos tré bhruachaibh feoir - rin - ceadh síos tré



glow - ing light, — shed - ding back the glow - ing light.  
 bhruach - aibh feoir, — rin - ceadh síos tré bhruach - aibh feoir. Do

*mf*  
 Once to me a tune - ful black-bird Ca - roll'd in a  
 chán - an lon - dubh dí - lis dómh - sa A lae - thibh Ear - raigh

*p*

joy - ous Spring, So I al - ways think the blos - soms  
 min fad ó, Smeas - aim nuair a chuidh - im blá - tha, Go

*mf*

Back that bird to me will bring, — My bird will bring.  
 dtíoc - faidh rís an lon - dubh leo, — an lon - dubh leo.

*molto rit.*

*colla voce*



*a tempo*

Ah, tra, la, la; Ah tra la. la, la; Ah, Ah

*a tempo*

tra, . . . . . la, la; Tra, la, la, la, la; Tra, la, la; la

*a tempo*

*f rall. poco a poco*

Tra, la, la, la. So I al ways think the blos.soms Eack that  
Smeas . aim nuair a chidh . im bla . tha, Go dtioc . faidh

*f sempre colla voce*

bird to me will bring!  
'ris an lon . dubb leo!

# II. The Skylark.

Do'n Fhuisseóig.

English and Irish Words by  
T. O. Russell.

Allegretto. (♩, 2)

VOICE.

PIANO.

*p* *frem.* *cresc.* *f*

*dolce*

Thou sweetest of sing-ers 'neath Heav'n, . . . Thou warbler of music on  
*A éin . in is bin . ne ar talamb . . . A chú . nas su . as san*

*p* *mf*

*cresc.*

high, Say, art thou a spir - it sent earth - ward From  
*ues. An tu . . sa spio . rad b fhlait . . eas, Ní*

re-gions a-bove in the sky? I've heard the harp notes of  
*teach-tai-re thàì-nic 'ò Dhè?* *Do chua-la mè clàir-sìghe na*

*mf*

E-rin And church choirs chant-ing loud, . . . . . But  
*A.Ei-reann A's ceòl-ta na d-team-pull mòr, . . . . . Ba*

*mf*

sweet-er to me was thy sing-ing, Far up in the sun-lit  
*mhil-se liom dìnn guth do bhèi-lìn, A's luath-ghàì-re làn do*

*f* *poco rall.*

cloud! 'Tis praise of thy Ma-ker thou sing-est, . . . And  
*ghlòir! 'Sé mo-ladh do Dhi-a a chà-nais, . . . Gan*

*tempo* *dolce*



that not in tem-ple nor dome, . . . The Heav'n on high is thy  
*leabh-air, gan ceal-la, gan cléir, . . . 'Sé do theam-pull doimh-neacht na*

*con tutta la forza*

*trem.*

tem-ple, Thine al-tar-thy sky-ey home! Thou  
*bhflai-theas 'Sí d'ál-tóir fair sing'na spéir?* *Ní*

*poco rall.* *mp*

*colla voce*

wor-ship-est not as men wor-ship, With knees bow'd  
*adh-rair mar adh-raid na daoine, Le glún-aibh*

*Meno mosso. (♩ = 96)*

*mp*

hum-bly down, With eye-lids clos'd, as if fear-ing The  
*crom-tha síos, Le súilibh dún-ta ar ea-gla, Ní*

*f* *p sostenuto*

dread of the God-head's frown. They say that He loves the  
 thuig-cann an drong so Dia. 'Se deir-id gur mi-an leis

*cresc.* *f*

tear-ful, And ha-teth the joy-ous tune, . . . . . But  
 deó-raidhe, 'Sgo gca-rann sé iruagh ús brón, . . . . . Is

*Più mosso.*

ah! this is not what thou think-est, When  
 soil-léir nach e siúd do shaoi-lir, Nuair

*molto rall.*

mount-ing a-loft at noon; . . . . . For  
 éir-gheann tú su-as um nóin; . . . . . Óir

Tempo I.

OF MUSIC.

11

soar - ing, thou ris - est to cloudland, . . . With me - lo - dy pure and  
 téidh - eann tú su - as s'a neul - taibh, . . . Go seun - mhar léid mho - ladh

*dolce* *mf* *p*

clear, Un - ming - led with dread or sor - row, Un - taint - ed by hu - man  
 réidh, Dú chán - ain a meá - dhán neimh - e, Go dá - na i súi - libh

*cresc.* *rit.* *p* *rit.*

fear. O hap - py the land where thou sing - est, . . . Tho'  
 Dé. Is aoi - bhín don chrich ann a geán - nír, . . . Gedh

*a tempo* *a tempo* *mf*

low - ly its power and sway; . . . A - las, for the land that  
 is - iol a ria - ghail 'sa róim; . . . Is ma - irg don tír ann nach

*con duolo e lentamente* *colla voce*

(H. 1694)



knows not The sweetness and joy of thy lay! A  
*gcluinn . . . fear, An fhuaim bhínn lán do bhéil! Ní*

*molto rall.*

*sempre*

*più lento al fine*

ban may be put on our music . . . And sor-row may cloud it  
*thig linn ar gceól ta do chántain . . . Tár n-oil-eán faoi bhruid a'í*

*ad lib e con tutta a forza*

long, . . . . . But . . . ne-ver hath mor-tal the  
*céol, . . . . . Acht ní féidir le riogh-aibh na*

*f sempre colla voce*

*molto rall.*

pow-er . . . . . To si-lence the Sky-lark's song!  
*tal-mhan . . . . . Ceól Fuis-eoi-ge chosg go deól!*

*colla voce* *f* *p*

### III.

## Take up the Harp.

English Words by T. O. Russell. Tóg suas an Chláirseach.  
Irish Words by "Pátraic."

Andante con moto. (♩. = 88)

PIANO.

Musical notation for the piano introduction, featuring a treble and bass clef with a key signature of two flats and a common time signature. The music consists of two staves with various chords and melodic lines, including triplets and slurs.

Musical notation for the piano accompaniment, consisting of two staves. It continues the harmonic and melodic themes from the introduction, with some triplet figures and a 'rit.' (ritardando) marking.

Musical notation for the first vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a soprano clef with lyrics in English and Irish. The piano accompaniment is in a bass clef. Dynamics include *mf* and *p tempo*. Performance instructions include *sempre legato*.

Take up a gain the sweet harp that's bro - en,  
Tóg suas a-rís an chláir seach bhris - te. A

Musical notation for the second vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a soprano clef with lyrics in English and Irish. The piano accompaniment is in a bass clef.

String - less and si - lent for a - ges long;  
tá le . . . bliadhan - taibh 'na luidhe gan ceól;



Let its praise no more re-main un-spok- en  
*Teann, teann a teu - da le meun - raibh chlis - te, Má*

While yet there lives but one Son of Song.  
*mhai reann bárd in ár measg go fóil. Ro -*

Too long a las, were its sor-row-ing slum-bers,  
*fha - da . . . a'fhan sí faoi thosd . . . an tua - ma, Ná*

Quiv-'ring neath fin-ger of Bard no more,  
*fag i . . . díonh - aoin mar sin nios mó; Go*

Let its praise no more re-main un-spok- en  
*Teann, teann a tou - da le men - raibh chlis - te, Má*

The first system of music consists of a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line begins with a long note on 'Let' and continues with a melodic line. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a similar pattern in the left hand.

While yet there lives but one Son of Song.  
*mhai - reann bárd in ár measg go fóil. Ro -*

The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a melodic phrase for 'While yet there lives but one Son of Song'. The piano accompaniment maintains the eighth-note accompaniment.

Too long a-las, were its sor-row-ing slum-bers,  
*fha - da . . . d'fhan si faoi thosd . . . an tua - ma, Ná*

The third system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a melodic phrase for 'Too long a-las, were its sor-row-ing slum-bers'. The piano accompaniment features triplets in both hands, indicated by a '3' below the notes. Dynamics markings 'cres' and 'cen' are present.

Quiv-'ring neath fin-ger of Bard no more,—  
*fag i . . . diomh - aoin mar sin níos mó; Go*

The fourth system concludes the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a melodic phrase for 'Quiv-'ring neath fin-ger of Bard no more,—'. The piano accompaniment features triplets in both hands. Dynamics markings 'cres' and 'cen' are present. The system ends with a fermata over the final note.

*f* *sempre cresc.*

O. let it sound forth a - gain the num - bers  
*grádh mhar. . . más - gail chum clú, na fua - ma, Do*

*f* *sempre cresc.*

That once a wak - end the souls of yore!  
*bhros - duigh. . . cróth - acht na bh-fear fad - ó!*

*ff*

*v*

*poco rit.*



Sound it a - gain; let ho song of sad - ness  
 Tóg suas a - fis ár n.dóth - chas saoir - se, Tá

The first system of music consists of a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The vocal line begins with a fermata over the first note. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a similar pattern in the left hand, with some chords and rests.

Come from that harp in all fu - ture time;  
 saidh - bhreas fós in a teu - daibh binn;

The second system continues the musical piece. The vocal line has a fermata over the first note. The piano accompaniment maintains the eighth-note accompaniment pattern.

Ev - er its strings vi - brate notes of glad - ness;  
 Tré fhu - lang fha - da ár m.bróin sár... n-daoir - se, Bhin'

The third system continues the musical piece. The vocal line has a fermata over the first note. The piano accompaniment maintains the eighth-note accompaniment pattern.

Light now is break - ing on race and clime.  
 tír gan só - lás a nó - taibh grinn. Acht

The fourth system concludes the musical piece. The vocal line has a fermata over the first note. The piano accompaniment maintains the eighth-note accompaniment pattern.

*cresc.*

Raise it at last from long night un-bro-ken,  
 saor a - - nois i us su - an a h - oidh - che, 'Smar

And as . . . sun - shine scat - ters clouds a - way,  
 ghrian ag . . . bri - seadh tre dhoimh - ne sgáth, Le

*con tutta la forza*

***f*** Then shall its glad chords serve as a to - ken,  
 ceól . . . . . na cláir - sighe las gruaim ár . . g.croidh - theadh, 'Scuir

*rall.*

Her - aid - ing glo - ry with com - ing day . . . . .  
 á - - - nam úr . . . in ár sliocht go . . . bráth . . . . . Le

*colla voce*

Then shall its glad chords  
*ceól na . . . clair sighe las*

serve . . . as a to - ken, Glo - ry is  
*gruaim . . . ár . . . g.croidh - theath, S cuir á - nam*

com - ing with the com - ing day! . . .  
*ár . . . in ár sliocht go bráth! . . .*

*colla voce* ***ff***



# IV. The Poet's Death. Bás an Fhílidh.

WESTLAND ROW, DUBLIN  
LIBRARY.

English Words by Michael Cavanagh.  
Irish Words by "Pittraic"

Adagio. In tempo di lamentazione. (♩ = 66.)

PIANO.

First system of piano introduction. Treble clef, bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and ties. The left hand has a chordal accompaniment with triplets in the bass line.

Second system of piano introduction. The right hand continues the melodic line. The left hand accompaniment features a 'rit.' (ritardando) marking towards the end of the system.

First system of the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with the lyrics: "Will she lament when I am calmly sleeping, gcaoin . fídh . sí nuair a tá mé sin - te, 'San". The piano accompaniment is marked *mf* and consists of a steady chordal accompaniment.

Second system of the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "In still . church - yard, in e - ter - nal rest; roi . lig . shuaimh - nigh go bráth . . . a choidhí". The piano accompaniment continues with the same chordal accompaniment.

Will her bright eyes . . . then be dimm'd with weep - ing  
*m-béidh a . . . súile le deó - - raibh lion - ta, Ag*

The well - ing tears from a grief - wrung breast?  
*deal - ru - ghadh buaidh - ear - tha 'gus bróin a croidhe? A*

*più f e poco agitato.*

Will she la - ment . . . when, in Spring time ear - ly, The  
*gcaoin - fídh . . . sí nuair i d.tús . . . na . . . bliadh - na Tá*

*più f e poco agitato*

buds are sprout - ing on bush and tree:  
*bea - gáin bri - seadh air chraoibh a's crann; Nuair tá*

*cresc.*

*cresc.*



And . . . blithe . some bird notes are ring - ing clear - ly  
 nó . . . taídh bin - ne nan - eun . . ag . . lion - adh Már

*ad lib. et fine*  
 In vale se - quest.erd and up - land lee?  
 uai - gnis . . uamh naighe gach cluain d's gleann?  
*colla voce*

*Più mosso. (♩ = 112.)*  
 Will she la - ment, when the summer flow - ers,  
 A gcaoin fídh sí nuair tãh samh - radh blãth mhar, Ag

In bril - liant ves - ture, deck Na - ture fair;  
 cùmh - dach . . na - dúir le . . cu - laidh òir; A

(H. 1694)

Will she re-call . . . then those lov-ing hours  
*smuain - fidh sí air na lae - thibh gradh - mhar; Nuair*

When wreaths I twined for my dar-ling's hair?  
*d'fhigh mé . . . ró - sa i n-gruaig mo stóir? A*

Will she la-ment . . . when, in ripe Septem-ber, The ver-dant val-leys are  
*gcoain-fidh . . . sí nuair tá a-nál . . . fíogh-mhair, Ag cri-onadh glai-se an.*

*p trem.* *poco a poco cresc.*

ting'd with gold; Those hap-py times will she then remem-ber  
*domhain go buidhe; A smuain-fidh sí air an aim - sir shogh-mhair, Nuair*

*poco rall.* *f* *Agitato.*

When sun sets glo-ries we watch'd un - fold? Will she la-ment 'me  
 dhearc sinn glóir na gréin' dul faoi? A gcáoin-fidh. . sí nuair tá'n

*colla voce* *f* *Agitato.*

when gales per - sist - ent, Wild - ly ca - reer - ing,  
 geimgh - readh fíoch - mhar, Go síor ag. . . síi - deadh tré

throthe branches sweep: Will she then think. . that, in grave far dis - tant,  
 gheu - gaibh lom; A smuain-fidh sí gur i bhfád i. . . gcéin, A

*p* *poco rall:*

Her love is ly - ing in slum - ber deep?  
 gradh ag. . . suan - adh i suaimh - neas trom? A!

*p* *colla voce*



Tempo I

O! l'd go down . . . to my grave brave heart - ed, (The  
 rach - - fainn . . . síos ins an uaigh go . . . dá - na (Ná

wish, in mer - cy, just Heav'n for - - give!)  
 glac aon fhearg liom, a Dhi - a fhír!)

*p*

8 *Da*

If she but whis - per'd, ere I de - part - ed,  
 gcluin - finn . . . i . . . in mo chlu - ais ag cán - adh, "Beidh

*pp*

8

*molto rall. al fine*  
*dolce*

"I'll wail thee, dear - est, while e'er I live!" . . . . .  
 mé ag . . . caoin - eadh do bháis go síor!" . . . . .

*p* *colla voce*

*pp*

*ad lib.*

# V.

## My Colleen Dear.

### Mo Chailín Og.

English and Irish Words by  
T. O. Russell.

Andantino. (♩ = 52)

VOICE. 

PIANO. 

*Ad.* \* *Ad.* \* *Ad.* \*

*mp*

My Col - leen dear, my lovd, my own, There's  
Mo chai - lín óg deas dí - lis féin, Níl

8

*poco rall*

*p*

*Ad.* \*



not on king - ly brow A dí - a - dem that ev - er shone So  
seod a gcor - ó - in righ Do ghlac - fainn a - gus mé faoi leun An -

8



dear to me as thou. Than all the treasures earth can hold, All  
 a'it seirc fir do chridhe. Dà lion fàidhe domh-sa 'cis-te òir, Do

gems of glitt'ring sheen, To me more dear a thousand fold Art  
 thrèi-gean blas do phòg, B'fheàrr lion do ghrùdh, mo rùn 'sno stòr, Mo

thou, my fair Colleen! My  
 rioghan 'sno chai-lìn òg! Mo

Colleen dear, my lov'd, my own, Un-mark'd and poor is he That.  
 chai-lìn òg deas dì-lis féin, Is bocht gan maoin an té A-

*cresc.*  
*f*  
*mp*  
*colla voce*  
*pp*  
*sempre dolce*  
*p*

(H. 1894)



in his sor - row sore and lone, His day star makes of  
*bheirfeas ghrúdh faoi lochd a's péin, Do reult geal caoimh a*

thee; But with thee ev - er by his side. He'd fear nor pain nor  
*lae; Act tú do bheith lámh leis go deò, Budh threi - ne é 'na*

*cresc.*

woe; So fond - ly would he love his bride, All tears would  
*leomhan; Ní ai - reú chadh sé aon gabhadá níos mó, Ná bochtan - as*

*f.* *ab lib.*

cease to flow. . . . .  
*ná . . . brón . . . . .*

*colla voce* *p* *pp molto rall.*

# VI.

## At Parting

### O, Cáraim am Chridhe.

English Words by Emile J. Van Noorden L.D.S. F.R.S.G.  
Irish version by T. O. Russell.

Con Amore. (♩ = 96)

VOICE.

PIANO.

*p*

*poco rall. a tempo*

*p*

dar-ling,                      A love that is hope-less for me,  
stói-rín,                      'Sé grádh é gan dóch-as, acht fíor,

*cres - - - cen - - - do*                      *f*

In se-cret I cher-ish, my  
O, cá raim am chridhe stigh mo



Like the mate of the dove and the star-ling, I ev-er am  
 'Smar chéi-le an cho-luim nó'n smói-lín, Smuain-ím-se

*rall.*  
 thinking of thee, of thee... Like the mate of the  
 ort-sa go síor - go síor... 'Smar chéi-le an

*colla voce* *rit. molto* *a tempo*

*poco rall.*  
 dove and the star-ling, I ev-er am think-ing of thee.  
 chól-uim nó'n smói-lín, Smuain-ím-se ort-sa-go síor.

*colla voce* *pp poco rall.*

*Più mosso. ♩ = 120*  
*mf*  
 O, couldst thou but know all, my dear-est, Per-  
 Dà bh-faic-feadh tu mi-se am bhuaidh-readh, Mhus-  
*Più mosso.*

Più mosso e con passione.

canst thou not see my heart break - - ing At thought of the  
 feu - dann tú fheic. sin mo chúmh . . a 'Nuair smuain. im bheith

*mf più mosso*

*poco rall.* part - ing from thee? . . . . . One last fond fare -  
 sgar - tha go deó . . . . . *stringendo* Uait fein - ig a

*colla voce* *sempre colla voce*

. well I am ta - king, And then . . . and then, . . . and  
 grádh ghil nu su - adh? Is beidh mi . . se, beidh mi . . . se, beidh

*molto rall.* then all is dark - ness for me!  
 mi - se ag - còmh. nuidhe faoi chéó!

*molto rall.* *p* *pp*

## **Appendix Five**

### **Annie Patterson's Articles and Books**

#### **Articles for the Weekly Irish Times, 1899-1901**

##### **1899:**

- 14 Oct: Music in the Home (Introductory article)
- 21 Oct: How to Practice
- 28 Oct: What to Practice- The Choice of Pianoforte Pieces
- 4 Nov: Advice to a Young Singer
- 11 Nov: How Orchestral Music Speaks to the Listener
- 18 Nov: The Rise and Progress of the Opera
- 25 Nov: The Choice of Music as a Profession
- 2 Dec: What it Means to be a Public Singer
- 9 Dec: Concert Engagements
- 16 Dec: The Choice of a Concert Repertoire
- 23 Dec: Organ Playing and Choir Training
- 30 Dec: The Musical Prospects of Dublin for 1900

##### **1900**

- 6 Jan: How to Study Music Methodically
- 13 Jan: How to Organise a Musical Evening
- 20 Jan: How to Give a Concert
- 27 Jan: The Comic Element in Music
- 3 Feb: Military Music
- 10 Feb: Musical Societies
- 17 Feb: How to form a Choral Union
- 24 Feb: Oratorio Music
- 3 Mar: Part Music and Song
- 10 Mar: Music in Fiction
- 17 Mar: Music and the Saints
- 24 Mar: The Queen and Music
- 31 Mar: The Story of *God Save the Queen*
- 7 Apr: Music in Dublin at the Queen's First Visit
- 14 Apr: The Native Music of Ireland
- 21 Apr: Famous Irish Composers
- 28 Apr: A Plea for British Opera
- 5 May: Some Famous Operas
- 12 May: The Royal Irish Academy of Music
- 19 May: the Feis Cantata Prize Winner- The Rev. Dr. Collison
- 26 May: Belfast Feis Ceoil
- 2 June: Creative Musical Genius
- 9 June: Alice Adelaide Needham
- 16 June: Feis Prize Winners for 1900- Mr Robert Dwyer
- 23 June: Feis Composers of 1900- Carl Gilbert Hardebeck
- 30 June: Feis Composers of 1900- Herr Henry Bast
- 7 July: Feis Composers of 1900- Mr Herbert Harty
- 14 July: Eminent Dublin Musicians-Dr T.R.G. Joze
- 21 July: Dr. T.R.G Joze, continued
- 28 July: Dr Joseph Smith

4 Aug: Dr James Culwick  
 11 Aug: Dr William Gater  
 18 Aug: Mt Charles Marchant  
 25 Aug: Mr Charles Marchant Continued  
 1 Sept: Joseph Seymour  
 8 Sept: Signor Michele Esposito  
 15 Sept: Signor Michele Esposito, continued  
 22 Sept: Mr Brendan Rogers  
 29 Sept: The Royal Carl Rosa Opera Company  
 6 Oct: English Grand Opera in Dublin  
 13 Oct: The Prospects of Native Opera  
 20 Oct: How to Aid British Music  
 27 Oct: The Renaissance of British Music  
 3 Nov: Mrs Scott-Ffennell  
 10 Nov: Miss Margaret O'Hea  
 17 Nov: Miss Margaret O'Hea, Continued  
 24 Nov: Mme Jeanie Quintan-Rosse  
 1 Dec: Pauline Elsner  
 8 Dec: The Chevalier Palmieri  
 15 Dec: A Charming Prima Donna- Madame Fanny Moody  
 22 Dec: The work of the Musical Association  
 29 Dec: The Story of Handel's *Messiah*

### **1901**

5 Jan: The New Organ at the Chapel Royal  
 12 Jan: The Musician's Conference at Llandudno  
 19 Jan: The Musician's Conference at Llandudno, Continued  
 26 Jan: Mr Walter Bapty  
 2 Feb: Miss Lucy Aston Hackett  
 9 Feb: Mr Melfort C. D'Alton  
 16 Feb: Miss Harriet Rose Byrne  
 23 Feb: Mr Charles Kelly  
 2 Mar: Madame Alice Barnby  
 9 Mar: Gordon Cleather  
 16 Mar: Madame Adelaide Mullen & Mr Henry Beaumont  
 23 Mar: Herr Adolph Wilhelmj  
 30 Mar: Miss Caroline Perceval  
 6 Apr: Mr Vipond Barry  
 13 Apr: Madame Elsner-Stewart  
 20 Apr: The Musical Season in Dublin  
 27 Apr: Musicians of the Day: Herr Theodore Gmur  
 4 May: Musicians of the Day: Herr Theodore Gmur, continued  
 11 May: More Cork Music Stories  
 19 May: Feis Ceoil Festival  
 25 May: Some Feis Ceoil Competitions  
 1 June: Irish Minstrelsy of Today  
 8 June: Irish Composers of the Day- Mr Charles Craddock and Mr Patrick Delany  
 15 June: Music in London  
 22 June: The London Musical Scene  
 29 June: The London Musical Scene: Some Great Pianists of the Day

6 July: London Musical Doings: Musical Festival at the Crystal Palace  
 13 July: London Musical Doings: Verdi's Othello at Covent Garden  
 20 July: Curiosities of the Keyboard: Alfred Rhodes  
 27 July: Mrs Clara Edwardes  
 3 Aug: Seaside Music  
 10 Aug: "The Harp of Life", A Musical Novel  
 17 Aug: Holiday Musical Prospects for the Amateur  
 24 Aug: Summer Pianoforte Music  
 31 Aug: The Musical Doings of the Pan Celtic  
 7 Sept: A Plea for Art Progress in Keltia  
 14 Sept: Companionship in Musical Performance  
 21 Sept: The Prospects of Musical Dublin  
 28 Sept: A Winter of Musical Romance  
 5 Oct: Musical Dublin Through a Critic's Spectacles  
 12 Oct: How to Succeed as a Prima Donna  
 19 Oct: Irish Drama at the Gaiety Theatre  
 26 Oct: Our Young Dublin Lady Musicians  
 9 Nov: Sir Arthur Sullivan and his Works  
 16 Nov: Music and the Drama  
 23 Nov: Music and the Drama, Continued  
 30 Nov: Music and the Drama, continued  
 7 Dec: How Wagner Won his Public  
 14 Dec: How Music Influences Life  
 21 Dec: The Art of Teaching as Applied to Music  
 28 Dec: Musical Entertainment for Winter Evenings

**Books:**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Publisher</b>
1902	<i>The Story of the Oratorio</i>	Walter Scott Publishing, London
1903	<i>Schumann</i>	J.M. Dent and Co., London
1907	<i>Chats with Music Lovers</i>	T. Werner Laurie, London
1909	<i>Beautiful Song and Singer: An Appreciation of the Methods of Jenny Lind</i>	Hely's, Dublin
1913	<i>How to Listen to an Orchestra</i>	Hutchinson and Co., London
1926	<i>The Native Music of Ireland</i>	Not Available
1928	<i>The Profession of Music</i>	Wells Gardner, Darton and Co., London

**Appendix Six**  
**Images of Margaret O’Hea, Elizabeth Scott Ffennell and Edith Oldham**



Margaret O’Hea<sup>1</sup>



Mrs. Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell<sup>2</sup>



Edith Oldham



Edith Oldham<sup>3</sup>

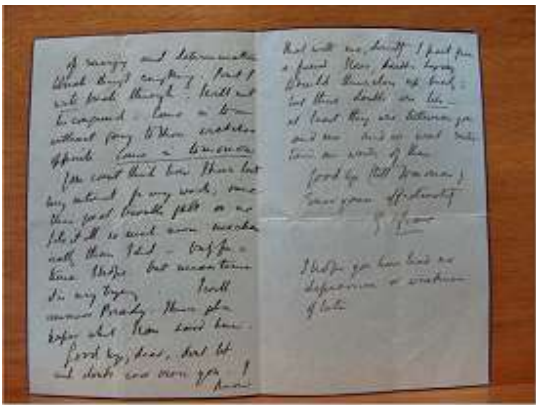
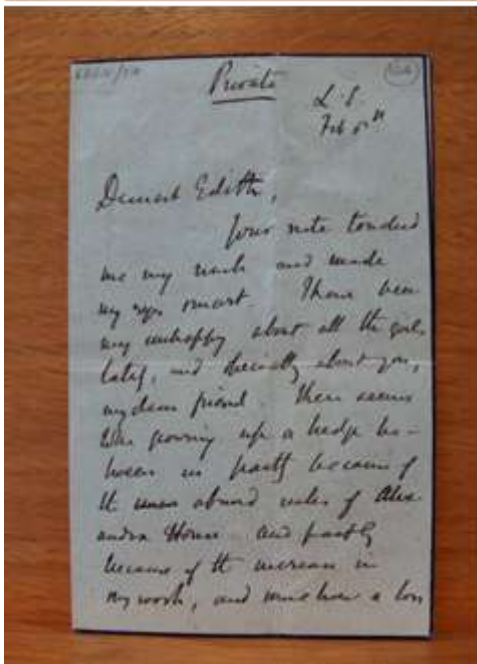
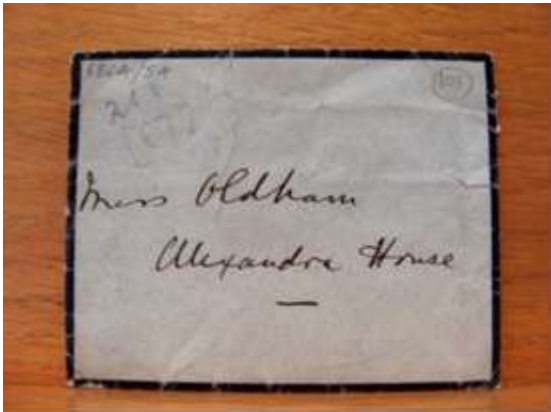
<sup>1</sup> Annie Patterson: ‘Margaret O’ Hea’, *WIT*, 10 November 1900, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Annie Patterson: ‘Mrs Elizabeth Scott-Ffennell’, *WIT*, 3 November 1900, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> From the Oldham family records, courtesy of Catherine Ferguson



## Appendix Seven Photographs of the Original Grove Letters



Appendix Eight  
Handwritten note by Annie Patterson

1 Clare St  
23. 4. 97

Dear Mr. Trundle  
Can you possibly  
do a little music copying  
for me - not more than 4 to  
6 pages Miss. - I wd be  
infinite obliged. You could  
see me here this morning  
between 1 & 2, or indeed,  
any time ~~between~~ before 2 oc.  
Yrs in great haste  
A. W. Patterson



## Appendix Nine Pamphlet on Annie Patterson <sup>4</sup>



Eithne Ní Pheadair Ollamh Ceóil.

Extract from this year's "Who's Who."

**PATTERSON, DR. ANNIE W.**

Mus. Doc., B.A.,

National University of Ireland ;

Scholar and Organ Gold Medalist, R.I.A.M. ; Professor of Music, journalist, lecturer, and composer ; born Lurgan, Co. Armagh, Ireland. Educ. : Alexandra Coll. ; Royal Irish Acad. of Music, Dublin. Examiner in Music at Royal Univ. of Ireland, 1892-95 ; re-elected 1900 ; Examiner in Music to Irish Intermediate Board of Education, 1900-1901 ; re-elected 1920 ; Examiner in Music to Cork Municipal School of Music, 1914-1919 ; to Leinster School of Music, 1919-1922 ; Conductor Dublin Choral Union ; Organist at several Dublin churches, 1887-1897 ; Originator of "Feis Ceoil" (Irish Musical Festival) Movement ; Conductor

Hampstead Harmonic Society, 1898 ; Organist, St. Anne Shandon, Cork, since 1909. Publications : The Story of Oratorio ; Schumann (Master Musician Series) ; Chats with Music-Lovers ; Great Minds in Music ; How to Listen to an Orchestra ; Beautiful Song and the Singer ; Native Music of Ireland ; Irish Music in the Home, with harmonised folk-song illustrations (serially : "Cork Weekly Examiner") ; Our National Musical Heritage ("Banba") ; Ceól na nGaedheal ("The Gael") ; poems, essays, short stories ; Six Original Gaelic Songs, Ivernia Series of Irish music arrangements, etc.

Other Published Compositions include "Rallying Song of the Gaelic League" ; "The Bells of Shandon" (S.A.T.B., Boosey) ; "Erin Og" (for Violin and Piano, Bayley and Ferguson) ; "Ireland for Ever" (March-Song, S.A.T.B., Novello) ; "Once in Olden Time" (Carol) and "A Lay of Spring" (Novello)

Unpublished Compositions : an Oratorio, "Meta Tauta" (The Hereafter) ; Two Irish Operas, "Ardrigh's Daughter" and "Oisin" ; a School Cantata in Gaelic, "An Bábán" ; Irish Cantata, "The Soul of Eire" ; Irish Tone Poems (orchestral and for piano) ; Six Preludes and Fugues for Piano (on Irish Folk-Song) ; Piano Trios (on traditional Irish tunes and original dances) ; Three "Tradition" Sonatas for Violin and Piano, Viola and Piano, and 'Cello and Piano ; six "Ivernia" sets, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Pamphlet found in the RIAM library in a copy of the score of Annie Patterson's *King Cormac*.

## EXTRACTS FROM PRESS NOTICES.

### BOOKS ON MUSIC.

- "*Story of Oratorio.*" (Scott)—  
" Popularly instructive."—(*Times*).  
" Should find favour with the musical public."—(*Queen*).  
" Dr. Annie W. Patterson has a fascinating style."—(*Lloyd's Weekly*).
- "*Schumann.*" (Dent, "*Master Musician*" Series)—  
" A really valuable contribution to Schumann literature."—(*Daily Telegraph*).  
" The book is excellent."—(*Daily News*).  
" One of the best written of a series."—(*Birmingham Gazette*).
- "*Chats with Music Lovers.*" (Werner Laurie)—  
" A compendium of really practical hints in almost every branch of music ; expressed with great shrewdness, and in a way that carries weight."—(*Times*).  
" Her skill and judgment are indisputable."—(*Globe*).  
" Her range of knowledge is encyclopaedic."—(*Sunday Times*).
- "*How to Listen to an Orchestra.*" (Hutchinson)—  
" Dr. Annie W. Patterson, in this extraordinarily interesting volume, has scored an unequivocal success."—(*Globe*).  
" Dr. Annie W. Patterson has a genius for writing about musical matters."—(*Great Thoughts*).

### MUSIC.

- "*Six Original Gaelic Songs.*" (Boosey)—  
" Another sign of the progress of Nationality in music . . . the distinguishing features lie in the close connection between the music and the word, and the subtle flavour of Irish melody which the Composer has deftly infused."—(The late Mr. Joseph Bennett in *Daily Telegraph*).  
" These charming songs should be popular at our local concerts, and we hope ere long to hear more work by the same gifted Irishwoman."—(*Irish Daily Independent*).  
" The songs just published are the embodiment of the most beautiful melodies—full of tenderness and inspiration."—(*Sunday World*).  
" The airs are very beautiful, and deserve to become popular."—(*American Irish World*).  
" The Composer has produced a number of original airs, distinct in every particular from any preceding ones, yet possessing all the sweet peculiarities of the work of the ancient bards."—(*American Catholic Review*).
- "*Ivernian*" (Novello) *An Arrangement of Irish Airs (No. 1)*—  
" A very timely publication, and very acceptable to the public."—(*Ivernian Journal*).
- "*Erin Og.*" (Bayley and Ferguson), for *Violin and Piano*—  
" Sure of a cordial welcome and genuine appreciation."—(*Irish Daily Independent*).  
" Should find favour in Irish schools and on concert platforms."—(*Freeman's Journal*).
- "*Ireland for Ever*" (Novello) *Choral March Song (S.A.T.B.)*, words by Rev. E. M. Fitzgerald.—  
" A spirited composition."—(*Freeman's Journal*).  
" A magnificent Rallying Song."—(*Cork Examiner*).
- (a) "*Once in Olden Time*" (Carol) } Words by A. P. Webb, (Novello)—  
(b) "*A Lay of Spring*" (Song) }  
(a) " With just that right old-world simple touch that is so loved in our Carols."—(*Croydon Times*).  
(b) " Strikes an exultant note of naive joy and rejuvenescence on the eve of our Country's hoped for return to peace and prosperity."—(*Cork Examiner*).
- General Press Comments.*—  
" Dr. Annie W. Patterson's music manifests feeling and scholarship of no common order."—(*Queen*).  
" Thoroughly racy of the soil."—(*Cork Herald*).  
" The orchestration throughout is masterly and suggestive."—(*Dublin Evening Mail*).  
" The cause of Irish Music has, in these compositions, received fresh life from the gifted lady who originated the Feis movement."—(*Irish Society*).



## PRESS NOTICES—Continued.

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### PERFORMANCE OF COMPOSITIONS.

"*Meta Tauta*"—(Dublin, Antient Concert Rooms, February, 1893)—

"Ambitious as is the subject chosen, there is a unity between the theme and its interpretation which commands admiration for the Composer's powers . . . as a 'Tone Scene' it possesses many attractions."—(*Daily Express*).

"Dr. Annie W. Patterson displays much originality in this composition, and her arrangement of the quartette, with harp solo (Miss Sullivan), 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' is deserving of the highest praise."—(*Irish Times*).

"The whole composition is good, and Dr. Patterson is to be congratulated on the success of its performance."—(*Freeman's Journal*).

"The Hereafter is treated in a graceful and descriptive style, which is not deficient in intensity and power. The poetic picture is grand and impressive, and the musical colouring delicate, ingenious and effective."—(*Irish Daily Independent*).

"*Finola*"—

"In the scene from her cantata 'Finola' Dr. Patterson introduces an imitation of the ancient Irish minstrelsy which provides some pretty numbers for the harp."—(*Irish Daily Independent*).

"A charming Irish cantata."—(*Freeman's Journal*).

"*Interlude*"—

"The Dream of Grainne, from 'The Ardrigh's Daughter,' and the Tone Poem 'Tara,' reflected the idiom of Irish strains, and were listened to with much enjoyment."—(*Freeman*, on "La Scala" Concert of April, 1921).

"Rarely have we heard stirring music more beautifully interpreted—(The Dream of Grainne). The Tone Poem, 'Tara,' followed, in which the music of the Gaelic League's 'Rallying Song' roused the crowded theatre to enthusiasm."—(*Irish Daily Independent*).

"Dr. Annie W. Patterson conducted extracts from her own works, 'The Dream of Grainne' and the Tone Poem, 'Tara.' The orchestra (Dublin Symphony) gave the colour and mystic sense of the one and the flowing melodic modulations of the other with many delicate side-lights."—(*Irish Times*).

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### IRISH MUSIC LECTURE-RECITALS.

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#### LONDON.

"The Lecture Hall of the Society of Arts (Adelphi) was by no means large enough to contain the enthusiastic audience which came to hear Dr. Annie W. Patterson lecture on 'The Harp and Irish Music.'"—(*Ladies' Pictorial*).

"A fluent and most entertaining Lecturer."—(*Institute*).

"Dr. Annie W. Patterson, B.A., delivered a most interesting lecture in the Albert Hall, South London, and was most enthusiastically received."—(*Catholic Times*).

#### NORTH ENGLAND.

Workington Festival—"The lecture and music were highly instructive and thoroughly appreciated by the audience—a treat the like of which they seldom have the opportunity of enjoying."—(*Workington Star*).



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## **Abstract**

During the nineteenth century the position of women in music grew throughout Europe, and Ireland was no exception. In Dublin, women went from participating in the city's musical culture as performers to participating as teachers, composers, organisers, performers and writers.

In the first half of the century, private music teachers such as Mrs Allen represented women's first steps into promoting Irish music. With the re-organisation of the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1856, women were given a new outlet for their talents as students and teachers. The employment and fair treatment of Fanny Robinson, as the Royal Irish Academy of Music's first female teacher, set a precedent for equal treatment of women in the music profession. The Royal Irish Academy of Music continued to employ women as teachers, such as Mrs Scott-Ffennell, Margaret O'Hea and Edith Oldham. The nineteenth century saw Dublin's first female composers, Fanny Robinson, Elena Norton and Annie Patterson, publishing and performing their music. Women began writing about music as a means of improving music education and public understanding. One of the greatest outcomes of the promotion of music by women was the founding of the Feis Ceoil by Annie Patterson and its organisation and promotion by Patterson and Oldham. The musical culture of Dublin was given a means through which it could develop while reviving native Irish music.

This thesis evaluates the contribution made by women to music in nineteenth century Dublin and examines the areas they were involved in, how they were perceived and how their important work has been neglected and often forgotten in

accounts of music from that period. It argues their worthiness of an important place in Ireland's music history.