

Ireland (Irish Éire)

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Country in Europe. It is the second-largest island of the British Isles. It is divided into two sections, the Republic of Ireland, which comprises 26 southern counties, and Northern Ireland, which comprises six counties of Ulster and is part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I. Art music

Harry White

1. To 1700.

Although the distinction between ‘art’ music and ‘traditional’ music obtains with reasonable clarity in Ireland after the Battle of Kinsale (1601) and the defeat of the Gaelic aristocracy, it reflects an ethnic divergence and the pre-eminence of English norms over an oral Gaelic culture that thereafter was preserved and developed in severely polarized circumstances. The fragmented polity of modern Ireland, no more clearly expressed than in the counter-claims of Gaelic and Anglo-Irish perceptions of high culture, has determined the understanding of orally transmitted music as a corpus of ethnic melodies, with its roots in the culture of Gaelic Ireland. The concept of ‘art music’ incorporates the norms of European (English, German, Italian) musical patronage assimilated as part of the colonial status quo, especially after the Battle of the Boyne (1690). This is the music treated here; the history and development of Gaelic music is addressed in §II.

The sources for music in pre-Christian and early medieval Ireland are few: although later writings (e.g. the *Annals of the Four Masters* and Geoffrey Keating's *History of Ireland*) attest to the function of music in bardic culture, the absence of notation and technical information makes it difficult to determine the nature of secular chants to which Gaelic poetry was recited. Manuscripts from the 10th century to the 15th that record versions of Irish mythology frequently include references to the magical, incantatory powers of music, but little is known about this music, except that it was pre-eminently verbal. The modern phrase ‘abair amhráin’ (‘speak a song’) connotes the pervasive alliance of the musical and the verbal in Gaelic culture. The symbolic force of music in this culture (its magical and narrative-emotional significations in particular) is also an abiding theme in the later annals.

Iconographical evidence from shrines, stone crosses and statuary of the 9th century to the 14th confirms the use of harps, horns and pipes, all of which receive attention in the literature of this period. The social status of the harpist in early modern Ireland is further indication of the prominence of music as an adjunct to the tradition of bardic poetry.

The complete absence of notation from all Irish liturgical manuscripts before 1000 makes it extremely difficult to trace with exactitude the history and development of music in the Celtic rite. Synodal reforms in the 7th century strongly suggest the adoption of Roman liturgical practices in Ireland, alongside which older, Celtic-Gallic traditions survived until the enactment of decrees that followed the Anglo-Norman invasion of 1172 and the introduction of the Use of Sarum. Early sources of the Celtic rite, including the Stowe Missal (c800) and the Antiphony of Bangor (7th century) identify those parts of the liturgy that were chanted and confirm the distinctive use of hymns in mass and office. Traces of the rite persist in Irish 15th-century antiphonals which predominantly reflect the Sarum liturgy. Although earlier Irish sources, including the Book of Drummond (11th or 12th century), reflect Roman practices outright, it may be that Celtic rather than Roman chant was initially employed for the singing of the new liturgy. There is also evidence to suggest that the Celtic chants were accompanied by a small, eight-string harp (*ocht-tedach*).

Sporadic but instructive comments from visitors in the 12th century (including Giraldus Cambrensis) and from more settled residents in the 16th (Edmund Spenser) allow us to trace the perception of music in Gaelic culture prior to its decline in the 17th century. Giraldus's remarks are disinterested, insofar as he was concerned with the technical prowess and civilizing influence of musicians, but Spenser's famous antagonism towards bardic culture in *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (1596) exemplifies that reading of Irish music as an instrument of political resistance which was to endure in the minds of British and Irish commentators thereafter.

Sources for music in the cathedral foundations of Armagh, Cork, Dublin, Kilkenny and Waterford are scant until the beginning of the 17th century. It is clear that the immediate post-Reformation period saw a more continuous appointment of organists, vicars-choral and boy choristers, but not until the early 17th century did composers begin to contribute regularly to the cathedral repertory. Thomas Bateson, organist at Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin from about 1608 to 1630, was required 'to teach and instruct four choristers to sing sufficiently from time to time to serve the choir during his natural life'. Little of his sacred music survives. The music of other composers attached to the Dublin cathedrals, Christ Church and St Patrick's, around the end of the 17th century (including Ralph and Thomas Roseingrave) is more plentifully preserved.

2. Since 1700.

The development of art music in Ireland after the Restoration was strongly indebted to English models. In Dublin, before the building of Crow Street Musick Hall in 1731, the principal venues for concert music were the cathedrals and larger churches. Mr Neale's Great Musick Hall in Fishamble Street, built by the Charitable Musical Society in 1741 and the following year playing host to the first performance of Handel's *Messiah*, was converted into a theatre in 1777. The gardens in Great Britain Street, designed in 1749 by Bartholomew Mosse, Master of the Lying-in Hospital, were modelled on London's Vauxhall and were used for summer concerts until 1791. The Rotunda Room (1764) was another popular location for concerts.

Although the cultivation of opera in Ireland was slow to develop, the performance of *The Beggar's Opera* in March 1728 established a busy tradition of ballad opera. Works by Arne, Shield, Thomas Coffey and J.F. Lampe were among the most popular operatic mainpieces or afterpieces sung between the acts of spoken plays. From 1760, visiting companies from London and the continent presented serious operas in Italian and English at the Smock Alley and Crow Street theatres.

The stable conditions enjoyed by the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy after the Williamite wars produced a corresponding measure of musical continuity throughout the 18th century within the Pale, the region of Dublin and its hinterland. The 'Protestant Interest in Ireland' did not espouse a taste for serious opera in Italian, but it patronized other forms of high musical culture, and a number of gifted musicians – among them Matthew Dubourg, Johann Sigismund Kusser (or Cousser), Francesco Geminiani and Tommaso Giordani – settled for long periods in Dublin: Kusser and Dubourg were both Masters of the King's Musick in Ireland. The distinctive feature of Ascendancy musical life, apart from the popularity of ballad opera, was the promotion of major choral works (oratorios, odes and anthems) for charitable purposes, including the support of hospitals and the relief of prisoners in the city gaols. The choirs of St Patrick's Cathedral and Christ Church Cathedral provided the mainstay of these performances, with distinguished soloists from London.

Attempts towards the end of the century to narrow the divide between Gaelic and Ascendancy musical cultures vividly illustrate the differences between them. While Joseph Cooper Walker in his *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (1786) sought to identify Turlough Carolan (1670–1738) as the true focus of Irish musical endeavour, Charles Burney contemptuously dismissed the role of the Irish bard as 'little better than that of piper to the *White Boys*, and other savage and lawless ruffians' (1787). A small number of collections of ethnic music had been published during the 18th century, beginning in 1724, but it was not until the appearance of Edward Bunting's *General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music* (in three volumes, 1797, 1809 and 1840) that the anglophone community attempted to absorb, or at least countenance, the native repertory. Thomas Moore's *Irish Melodies*, which appeared in ten volumes between 1808 and 1834, drew freely, but not exclusively, on Bunting's publications. Whereas Bunting (and the collectors who succeeded him) laboured to preserve the ethnic integrity of this repertory, Moore politicized it from within the folds of the colonial establishment; and though Bunting resented this projection of Irish music, its appeal gathered momentum throughout the 19th century. When Moore's interpretation of Irish melody was cross-blended with the ballad tradition (through the efforts of Young Ireland and the musical exhortations and compositions of Thomas Davis in particular), the polarized condition of ethnic music as the intelligencer of nationalism (as against the colonial status of art music) was complete. Charles Carter, Philip Cogan, John Stevenson and Thomas Cooke are among a number of important Anglo-Irish composers to have arranged Irish airs in the idiom of contemporary art music after the turn of the century. With the passing of the Act of Union in 1801, the cultivation of music within the art tradition notably decreased. Choral societies were established in Dublin from 1810 onwards and enjoyed considerable popularity in the Victorian period, while the dearth of professional orchestras was partly redeemed by the surge of amateur playing fostered by the Robinson family and by Robert Prescott Stewart, among others.

After the closure of the Crow Street Theatre in 1820, the Theatre Royal (opened in 1821) became the focus for presentations of grand opera in Italian as well as English grand opera, the latter represented by, for example, Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl* (1843), Wallace's *Maritana* (1845) and Benedict's *The Lily of Killarney* (1862). Balfe and Wallace were Irish, though their careers were made abroad. Meanwhile, the improved condition of Roman Catholics after emancipation (1829) was reflected in the music associated with the devotional reform in Ireland. Paul Cardinal Cullen's steady drive towards the romanization of the Catholic liturgy inspired a musical resurgence of striking conservatism: the restoration of plainchant, Roman polyphony and modal-polyphonic pastiche predominated. The strong ties between the Irish Society of St Cecilia (1878) and similar societies in Europe reflected religious and sometimes scholarly interests which were unaffected by the colonial-ethnic divide in Irish music. 'Cecilianism' strongly appealed to a largely urban Catholic middle class, which sought a musical idiom worthy of its strongly held beliefs. One of its chief proponents was Edward Martyn, better known as co-founder of the Irish Literary Theatre and sometime president of Sinn Féin.

The foundation of the Feis Ceoil and Oireachtas festivals in 1897 illustrates the division that continued to characterize music in Ireland at the close of the century. Although the Feis did nurture ethnic music to a degree, it quickly became apparent that two kinds of music – however nationalistic the motivation of the Feis – required two kinds of festival. Efforts to merge the resources of European art music and the indigenous repertory faltered, despite the prominence of Irish folk music as a symbol of the Celtic Revival. Music functioned in Irish poetry and drama as a powerful metaphor for the literary imagination (notably in Yeats), but the development of Irish music itself was negligible. John F. Larchet's incidental music for plays given at the Abbey (including Synge's *Deirdre of the Sorrows*, 1910) and Robert O'Dwyer's Irish opera *Eithne* (1909) reflect efforts at synthesis which only partly succeeded. Stanford's editions of Irish music (collected by George Petrie) and his somewhat superficial admixture of Irish melodies and symphonic texture compare uncomfortably with the literary productions of the Celtic Revival. The early compositions of Arnold Bax were directly inspired by Yeats and the Revival, but remained exceptionally free of the burdens of folk-music quotation. Esposito, like his pupil Larchet, continued to espouse the possibility of stylistic integration, but selfconsciously wrote two kinds of music which 'respectively' cultivated a late Romantic European demeanour and an ethnically imbued vocabulary.

After 1922 the cultural oppressiveness of the ethnic repertory worsened. While critics recognized that a cosmetic arrangement of Irish melodies was a poor substitute for a wholly developed, yet manifestly Irish, art music, the blatant politicization of Irish traditional music as a 'priceless' national resource continued to inhibit composers. As late as 1951 Brian Boydell could write that 'music in Ireland ... is in a shocking state'. Boydell's concern was with the striking lack of musical infrastructures throughout the country, a lack repaired in significant measure by Radio Telefís Éireann (RTÉ) and by the improvement in educational facilities and opportunities for performance which followed upon the economic growth of the 1960s. The postwar expansion of the Radio Éireann orchestras and the increased transmission of art music were vital steps forward. Festivals of choral music (Cork) and contemporary music (Dublin), and recital series fostered by the Royal Dublin Society, the Music Association of Ireland and several amateur organizations, contributed to a new climate of commitment

to art music which blossomed in the 1980s with a National Concert Hall and the RTÉ (radio channel for art music) FM3. The Dublin International Organ Festival (founded in 1981) and the GPA Dublin International Piano Competition (founded in 1988) are representative of later developments.

The presentation of regular seasons of opera did not begin until 1941, with the founding of the Dublin Grand Opera Society, based at the Gaiety Theatre. The Wexford Opera Festival, established in 1951 by T.J. Walsh, explores little-known works and has acquired an international reputation. Touring companies such as the Irish National Opera (1965) and Opera Theatre Company (1986) have significantly advanced both opportunities for young Irish singers and the dissemination of wide-ranging, if thinly spread, repertory. Dublin remains without an opera house. Perhaps as a result of the sporadic condition of operatic performance in Ireland, few Irish composers have succeeded with this genre. Stanford's *Shamus O'Brien* (1896) perpetuates a stage-Irishry which the literary revival finally repudiated. Since World War II a number of composers have written substantial operas to English texts, including Gerard Victory (*Chatterton*, 1967), A.J. Potter (*The Wedding*, 1981) and Gerald Barry (*The Intelligence Park*, 1988).

The 1960s witnessed the brilliant but unresolved career of Seán Ó Riada (1930–71). Ó Riada's crisis of artistic growth, in which he abandoned art music for a highly successful revival of the ethnic repertory (see also §II, 7), originated in that colonial-ethnic fissure that has been the signature of music in Ireland for three centuries. Although younger Irish composers, notably Gerald Barry, Raymond Deane and John Buckley, have escaped the anxiety of his influence, none has overcome the paradox of a vibrant ethnic musical tradition which appears to undermine the enterprise of original composition. The Contemporary Music Centre (Dublin) and the Irish Arts Council have in recent years done much to disseminate the work of Irish composers, not least by the circulation of scores and tapes, and the recording of works in collaboration with RTÉ.

The state of music education in the Republic of Ireland leaves much to be desired, particularly in primary and secondary schools where less than one per cent take music as a subject in final state examinations. The provision for tertiary education is considerably better: there are undergraduate music courses in Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Maynooth and Waterford, many of which afford opportunities to specialize in performance, composition or musicology. The first international musicological conference in the history of the state took place in 1995 in celebration of the bicentenary of St Patrick's College, Maynooth, jointly organized by the music departments at Maynooth and University College Dublin. The performance faculties of the Cork School of Music, the Dublin College of Music and the Royal Irish Academy of Music have significantly raised the standard of instrumental tuition since 1970. Youth orchestras, including the National Youth Orchestra, have likewise cultivated a high standard of performance.

3. Northern Ireland.

The formation of Northern Ireland as a political entity in 1921 did not immediately affect the development of art music there, but the founding of the BBC Northern Ireland Orchestra in 1924 gave Ulster its first professional ensemble of orchestral musicians. Amateur music-making was mainly vocal

and choral, though in the postwar period interest in chamber music notably increased. The Ulster Orchestra was founded in 1966 and subsequently absorbed the BBC Northern Ireland orchestra, flourishing under a number of distinguished conductors (among them, Bryden Thomson and Yan Pascal Tortelier); it has also recorded works by Hamilton Harty.

Festivals of music in Belfast, including the Sonorities and Early Music festivals associated with Queen's University, and recital series throughout the province, attest to a vigorous professional calendar of art music supported by an impressive system of music education at all levels. Professional opera productions are limited to two short seasons per year, given by Opera Northern Ireland. The Education and Library Boards provide instrumental tuition to schools across Ulster; specialized instrumental tuition is also available in the Ulster College of Music, Belfast. The University of Ulster and Queen's University offer degrees in music which provide specializations in, among others, electronic music and analysis. An Irish Chapter of the Royal Musical Association was established at the University of Ulster in 1987: it has met annually since then in university and college campuses throughout Ireland.

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II. Traditional music

Nicholas Carolan

1. General.

The traditional music of the island of Ireland is an important part of Irish contemporary culture. Although its performers and audiences are in a minority compared to those of international popular music, most aspects of traditional music have enjoyed a revival in the second half of the 20th century, especially among younger people, which makes it unique in western Europe. It is also commonly performed and listened to in centres of Irish settlement abroad – chiefly Britain, the USA and Australia

– and from the 1970s has been growing in popularity in continental Europe and North America among people who are not of Irish descent. The reasons for the strength of Irish traditional music are partly historical and social: political conditions have fostered the oral arts of song, instrumental music, dance and storytelling rather than the visual and plastic arts; traditional rural society, non-industrial and conservative, survived longer in Ireland than in western Europe generally; and the relative smallness of the country and its population enables easy access to all varieties of live performance. There seems also to be a particular affinity to music in the Irish national character.

Traditional music is a central element of Irish identity, and the state symbol of the Republic of Ireland is the harp. However, while music of oral tradition is common to the whole of Ireland and to both of its two politico-religious groupings, the Nationalist-Catholic majority and the Unionist-Protestant minority, it has been falsely perceived in recent years of political disturbance within Northern Ireland as being associated only with the Nationalist minority there.

Reflecting the predominant social and cultural strains in modern Ireland, its traditional music is largely Celtic (Gaelic or Irish) and British (English and Scottish) in origin. Its main contemporary forms are songs in Irish and English and instrumental airs and dance tunes. Apart from its functional roles in dancing and marching, the music is now primarily recreational, whereas in the past it also had mythic, supernatural and seasonal ceremonial significance. It shares many of the characteristics of the traditional music of western Europe and is related to the music of other Celtic regions, especially Scotland. Musical ties are close also with other parts of Britain and with North America after centuries of invasion, settlement and emigration. Irish emigrants have also influenced the music of Australia. Direct relationships which have been claimed with the music of North Africa, India and the Middle East are, however, based on superficial resemblances.

Monophonic melody is predominant, although harmonic and percussive dimensions have developed in recent years with the introduction of instruments that allow for these dimensions. Most tunes, vocal and instrumental, are heptatonic, with pentatonic song airs common in the northern province of Ulster. It has been estimated that more than half are in the Ionian mode, followed in order of frequency by the Mixolydian, the Aeolian and the Dorian modes. Phrases are mostly even in number and equal in length. The tradition is often considered to be essentially one of solo performance, but small and large instrumental groups are common (see §6 below). Transcriptions of song texts and staff notation or a variety of alpha-numeric or tablature music notations have been increasingly used by performers over the last 200 years, but only as an aid to memory or for teaching and never in performance. Some level of literacy is now common.

Traditional Irish music is of rural more than urban origin, a reflection of an earlier population distribution, but many items and forms of the repertory have come from towns and cities, or through them from abroad. Much is now performed and commercially produced in urban areas. Local and regional performance traditions once existed, some of which favoured song and others instrumental music. While such styles can still be heard, especially in singing in the Irish language and fiddle playing, they are generally in decline or have disappeared because of factors such as the end of rural isolation and the growth of telecommunications.

2. History.

Information on early Irish music, which was entirely music of oral tradition, derives from speculation on the facts of archaeology and history, and on passing references to music in literary and other writings. Until the 20th century, when Ireland began to come under the influence of North American and Irish American culture, all Irish musical history concerned musical trends and ideas coming from the east, often through Britain, that combined with native creativity to produce new forms and new music. The first people came to Ireland over 9000 years ago, during the middle Stone Age or earlier. Their artefacts were generally stone, bone and wood, and later pottery, but no musical instruments survive. After millennia of human occupation about which little is known, but during which the technologies of farming and metalworking were introduced, the earliest musical instruments are found: side- and end-blown bronze horns, the earliest of which belong to the 2nd millennium BCE, and which may have been used for ritual purposes. The country was predominantly Celtic in culture from about the middle of the 1st millennium BCE to the 17th century CE. Continental Celtic musical practices such as the singing of war- and praise-songs and the playing of lyres may have existed also in Ireland at the beginning of the Christian era, and an aristocratic oral-music tradition performed by professional musicians of high status for wealthy patrons certainly co-existed with vernacular traditions.

During the 1st millennium CE Ireland was brought into contact with Christian religious music introduced by missionaries from the 5th century, and forms of Scandinavian music practised by Viking invaders and settlers from the 9th century, the only identifiable remains of which are bone whistles. When French-speaking Normans invaded the country from Wales in the 12th century they found a distinctive Irish harp which seems to have been a development of an earlier instrument. Used in instrumental music, song and recitation performance, and with a lively playing style in which melody was accompanied by the bass strings, the harp remained the chief instrument of Ireland until the 17th century. Other instruments played in Ireland in the Middle Ages include: the *tiompán*, a small string instrument whose exact nature is unknown; *fidlí*, early fiddles; *cuislí* or mouth-blown pipes; *píopaí* or mouth-blown bagpipes which were used in warfare as well as for recreation; and the *trumpa* or jew's harp. The Normans themselves introduced dance-songs and songs of *amour courtois*, traces of which survive in contemporary Irish-language song, influenced later by English songs and continental literature. 'Callino', an air preserved in Dublin in a lute book of the last quarter of the 16th century, is the earliest known notation of an Irish melody.

The modern era of Irish traditional music had its beginnings in the 17th century, a period of transition in Ireland during which aristocratic Gaelic society diminished and the middle and lower classes became the main performers and patrons of traditional music. It does not now seem possible to detail the influence which the aristocratic oral poetry, music and song traditions must have had on the vernacular traditions. The long-standing cultural unity which had existed between the north of Ireland and Gaelic-speaking Scotland came to an end during the century, and large-scale settlement by English and English-speaking Scottish colonists in Ulster aided the spread of English-language song, including the classical ballads. British culture and urban civilization generally began to gain ground in the

country, although the majority of the population was still Irish-speaking and lived on the land. The harp declined with court music, the mouth-blown bagpipe disappeared and the modern fiddle was introduced.

The bulk of the current repertory, including that of Irish-language song, originated in the 18th and 19th centuries. A large body of songs in English were composed on English and Gaelic models, and texts were circulated on ballad sheets as well as orally. The reel and the hornpipe were introduced from Britain and thousands of melodies were composed in these new forms, as well as in the older jig forms which had been in use since at least the 16th century. The bellows-blown uilleann pipes were developed and replaced the harp as the classical instrument of Irish traditional music; the baroque flute came into the hands of traditional players, and outside musical influences such as Italian instrumental music were felt as musicians catered to a new type of wealthy patron. A growing interest in traditional music among the educated urban classes led to the collection of older materials, their preservation and publication. By the early 1840s there was a population of over eight million people in the country which included the greatest-ever number of Irish composers, singers, instrumentalists and dancers. This situation was radically altered by the Great Famine of the 1840s and the subsequent emigration which reduced the population of Ireland by half within five years. Music was badly affected and only began to recover in the final decades of the 19th century when new instruments such as the accordion, concertina and metal whistles were taken up; it was at this time that social dances based on continental quadrilles spread throughout the country. Increasing population mobility led to the decline of local and regional style.

The Irish diaspora has developed its own music traditions abroad, especially in Britain and the United States, since the 19th century.

The work of preservation begun by the early collectors was greatly aided by the invention of sound recording, and since the 1890s tens of thousands of commercial and field recordings have been made. A national Gaelic revival beginning in the 1890s gave prominence to traditional music, especially to Irish-language song, and the establishment of uilleann piping clubs rescued the instrument from extinction. The harp was revived in a modified form which is still played, although it is not nearly as important as it once was. The revival influenced the cultural character of the new 26-county state established in 1922. Irish songs were included in school curricula, although traditional music was not generally taught in the schools, and the state helped fund publications of traditional-music collections. No such recognition or aid has been given to traditional music in the six-county state of Northern Ireland until recently. Traditional music was generally in decline between the World Wars, affected by heavy emigration from the countryside and economic recession, but this was countered by the spread of gramophones and radio, which made the music available to new audiences, especially in the towns and cities. These and later forms of telecommunication, such as tape recording, brought about a profound change in the transmission and nature of Irish traditional music.

Increased interest after World War II led, among other manifestations, to the establishment in 1951 of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (the Association of Irish Musicians), an organization for the promotion of traditional music through teaching, performance and competition. A song-focussed revival in the late 1950s and the 1960s preceded the revival of instrumental music in the 1970s. Playing has since

become widespread with a high level of virtuosity; instruments such as the concertina which had diminished to the local level became again national, and a cottage industry of instrument-making has grown up. The uilleann pipes, which were being played by only a few players such as Leo Rowsome of Dublin, experienced a revival. There are now hundreds of musicians who play the instrument to a high standard all over the world, and it is increasingly to be heard in international music. Influenced by technological advances such as LPs and CDs, tape recording and television, the revival and renewal of older traditions has continued strongly until the present day, and new and experimental performance styles and new instruments are found alongside older ones. Traditional instrumental music is to an extent now part of youth culture and is commonly played with great vigour and dash. General levels of virtuosity have hardly ever been as high, but a certain homogeneity of style is now found in a music that well into the 20th century showed a great degree of variety and local distinctiveness. Earlier local styles are preserved on recordings of performers such as the singers Elizabeth Cronin of Cork or Joe Heaney (*Seosamh Ó hÉanaí*) of Galway, or the fiddle player Pádraig O'Keeffe of Kerry.

3. Composition, performance and transmission.

Composers of Irish traditional music, always performers, share the conservative tastes of their own communities, but are usually forgotten as compositions spread and are altered by others. Far more men than women are known to be composers of melodies, although women are better represented among known composers of song. Instrumental music is composed on instruments, but little is understood of the traditional method of composition. In some cases it seems that a stray fragment of melody is developed in accordance with the norms of the tradition, as was the case with the 20th-century fiddle player and composer Ed Reavy of Cavan and Philadelphia; at other times the composer tries to evoke a mood or commemorate an event. There has been a recent decline in song composition, but instrumental melodies of individual character continue to be made, and there has been a considerable increase in tune composition since the 1980s. New pieces are often quickly recorded and thus fixed in form, and the accelerated rate of transmission made possible by mass communications has led to swift acceptance of some modern compositions into the body of the tradition. Some composers of the past received material reward from patrons, but in the last few centuries the rewards have been self-satisfaction and community respect. Even today, with increasing copyright registration on commercial recordings, there are few financial rewards from composition. Some professional arrangers of traditional pieces have, however, profited in the 1990s from a commercial boom in sales of the music.

Being largely the music of non-professionals, traditional music is normally performed during leisure hours at night, weekends and during holiday periods. The domestic music occasions of the past, which often mixed singing, instrumental music and dancing, have largely been replaced since World War II by more specialized performances in venues open to the public, particularly public houses, where informal 'sessions', gatherings of musicians performing for their own enjoyment, take place. The seeds of session-playing can be seen in music-making on fair days in the past and among early congregations of emigrant musicians in the United States and Britain. More organized performances such as cabarets are held in tourist areas, and concerts are commonly held throughout the country. Live music can also

be heard at festivals, ranging from informal weekends to structured week-long summer schools. Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann has branches throughout Ireland and abroad, at which music is played regularly. It also organizes competitive regional *fleadhanna ceoil* (music festivals), which culminate in an annual all-Ireland *fleadh*. Session performers are people of all ages and social classes, and music sessions are generally a mixture of experienced players and learners, men and women, people of rural and urban backgrounds, playing instruments of all sorts. At the same time, friends and people of similar levels of ability will organize more private sessions. A good deal of performance now takes place at summer schools and at weekend festivals throughout the year, and there has been an explosion in the number of these since the 1970s. Best known is the Willie Clancy Summer School organized annually in memory of an influential Clare piper. Performers and their core audiences share a common experience of the music and by and large a common musical taste. In the past, public performance and competition were the domain of men, with women performing more in the home, but this changed in the later 20th century as women played an increasingly public role in Irish society. While musical competency was widespread in traditional culture, there were always performers who were recognized as having special abilities. Being able to convey the meaning of a song well, or having outstanding technique on an instrument, were admired qualities, and some performers have become legendary through a combination of musical abilities and strong personality. Examples of well-known figures are the 18th-century harpist-composer Turlough Carolan (Toirdhealbhadh Ó Cearbhalláin, 1670–1738), the first composer of Irish traditional music whose compositions survive in any number, and the 20th-century virtuoso uilleann piper Seamus Ennis (Séamus Mac Aonghusa, 1919–82), who formed a bridge between the older traditions and new enthusiasts in the 1950s, especially through his work on radio and television. Musicians of the travelling community – such as the Donegal fiddle-players John, Mickey and Simey Doherty, the Wicklow pipers Johnny and Felix Doran, or the Cork singer Margaret Barry – have played an important part in disseminating music, and Travellers have preserved older items abandoned by settled people, as well as developing styles of performance suitable for the open air.

Traditional transmission processes of absorption, imitation and tutoring continue, especially within families (for instance, the Potts family of Dublin, the Crehans of Clare, or Muintir Uí Bheaglaioich of Kerry) and have been greatly augmented in the second half of the 20th century by the mass communications media, especially sound recordings. Formal instrumental classes and festival workshops have been a response to increasing demand in the same period, but songs are still learnt by listening and imitation rather than formal instruction. A large number of instrument tutors as well as sound recordings have been published since the 1970s, and instructional videos began to be produced in the 1990s. The formal education system at the first and second levels makes almost no provision for the teaching of traditional music in Ireland, although university music departments are increasingly providing courses of study which include instrumental instruction.

4. Songs and singing.

The contemporary singing tradition is less vigorous than that of instrumental music. This is in part due to the invasion of the traditional singing venues of the home and the workplace by television and the transistor radio, the decline in neighbourly visiting and the recent transfer of traditional music to the crowded and noisy public house. It is also a result of the loss of some older functions. Traditional songs, particularly when performed unaccompanied, are increasingly heard only in specialized clubs and festivals.

Songs in the Irish language are still commonly performed on Irish-language radio and on commercial recordings, and in the shrinking *gaeltachtaí* (Irish-speaking districts), which are largely on the west coast and in the south. Decreasing numbers of older songs are sung, and modern compositions, although numerous, are in modern international idioms. Love songs predominate, and there are many songs on national and local themes as well as songs in praise of locality. Many older genres such as the heroic lay, the keen or death lament, the work song, the lullaby invoking magical powers and the *aisling* or political vision-song, are now obsolete. Almost all songs are lyric, expressing intense personal feelings in everyday but poetic language and imagery and sometimes using such European poetic conventions as the pastourelle. Although narrative songs are rare, narrative is often implied, and sometimes a prose preamble, *údar an amhráin* (the story of the song), supplies background material. Author attribution is more common than in English-language songs.

Narrative and lyric songs are both plentifully supplied in the English language. The oldest form of these, the imported British classical ballad, has almost disappeared, but there is a large surviving body of later songs created in Ireland with distinct Hiberno-English roots that incorporate Gaelic features such as internal assonance. Their concerns are generally those of Irish-language song, but they deal more with emigration and the events of the late 19th century and the 20th. Politically sectarian songs are still composed in the north of Ireland. Since the early 19th century, songs of literary origins have passed increasingly into oral circulation, and many national political songs are of this type.

The songs of both languages are strophic, metrically uniform and in accented metres, often with an alternating verse and chorus. The most common metres are 3/4, 4/4 and 6/8. Intonation sometimes varies at the third, fourth and seventh degrees. While most songs are sung within a range of one to one and a half octaves, Gaelic airs have a larger range and favour an *AABA* structure. English-language songs more often have an *ABBA* structure. Melodies cross the language divide, and more texts exist than melodies although some melodies exist in a large number of versions.

In performance both languages are sometimes heard on the same occasion, and there are a few macaronic songs that alternate between languages. Stylistic differences arise from regional and personal differences, not from languages or genres. Although there are suggestions in early literature of ancient instances of choral singing, the singing tradition has long been monophonic and is still normally unaccompanied. Verbal text is more important than music, but while the ability to convey the meaning of a song is more valued than a good voice, a musical voice is highly regarded in a singer, as is a good memory. The general singing style is understated and conversational. Song tempos are never very fast, but faster songs are performed in strict time. Slower songs are relaxed and more variable in

rhythm. Simple ornaments such as grace notes, turns and slurs, and other embellishments, such as producing a nasal tone or adding extra syllables may be added. Rubato singing in the Irish language, especially the highly decorated and high-pitched tense style of County Galway, is often called *sean-nós* or 'old-style' singing, a relatively recent term.

Until the mid-20th century, music for dancing was sometimes provided by lilters, men or women who vocalized dance tunes, solo or in unison duet, to standard vocables. Also known as dydeling, mouth-music or in Irish as *portaireacht bhéil*, lilting is sometimes still performed to entertain listeners.

5. Instrumental music.

Instrumental music may comprise a small number of pieces such as the older harp tunes which were composed to be listened to, or 'slow airs' which are song airs played instrumentally with rubato, but the vast bulk of instrumental music consists of fast dance music.

Almost all types of Irish dance music share a common symmetrical structure. Tunes usually consist of two parts, one lower in pitch (the 'tune') followed by a higher (the 'turn'). Each part is made up of an equal number of bars – eight in the case of all tune types except set dances – and each part is usually played twice, often with variation, before moving on. When a tune has been played two or three times, a second and usually a third tune is nowadays played in the same way, as a suite. Some tunes have three or more parts; the extra parts are usually variations of the first two. Most tunes comprise three or four distinct motifs in a variety of contrasting and repeated patterns. A certain degree of variation, from a single note to a whole part, can occur, but generally performers do not vary their own versions greatly once they have fixed them to their satisfaction. Ornaments common to all instruments are single cuts, double cuts, short rolls, long rolls and triplets.

Dance music is usually notated and played in keys of one or two sharps. Occasionally three sharps are used, especially in fiddle music, and rarely one flat. Most tunes fall within a range of two octaves. Pitch is fixed only when instruments which are manufactured to a fixed pitch, such as the whistle or accordion, are played; instruments such as the fiddle are tuned at a level that sounds pleasant to the player. Intonation is like that of the modern scale, but the notes C and F especially fluctuate when played on instruments which are not fixed in pitch. Dynamics were little used in the past but have been gaining in popularity in recent years. While strong regional styles can still be heard in the case of the fiddle, most instrumental styles are now based on the influence of individual players and personal taste rather than on locality. The pace of playing began to increase in the 1980s partly to cater for dancers in a new revival.

The main types of dance music in order of popularity are the reel, jig and hornpipe, all of which can be played for solo dancers, groups of dancers or for listeners. Less common are the polka and slide, which are played for group dancing, and the set dance, played for solo dancing. There are some other minor types of dance tunes of localized currency such as the barn dance and the fling.

The reel (*ríl*) is performed in a fast forward-moving style, in 4/4 rhythm. The typical bar has eight quavers divided into two groups.

The jig (*port*), the oldest form of dance music now played, is usually performed at a more moderate speed and in a more relaxed manner. There are several types of jigs, each deriving its name from dance movements, and distinguished from one another by rhythm. The double jig is in 6/8 rhythm, the typical bar having six quavers in two groups. The single jig is also normally in 6/8 rhythm, but the typical bar has two crotchet-quaver figures. Single jigs in 12/8 are called slides. The slip jig or hop jig is in 9/8 rhythm and the typical bar has nine quavers in three groups. Some jigs were once ancient marches.

The hornpipe (*cornphíopa*), like the reel, is in 4/4 rhythm, but it is played more slowly and deliberately, and is more heavily stressed. The typical bar has eight quavers in two groups, and triplets are a common feature.

The polka is in 2/4 rhythm, with a fast infectious dance sound, and the typical bar contains two groups of two quavers. Many of the 'polkas' played in Ireland, especially in Counties Kerry and Cork, are not of the 19th-century European ballroom type but are simpler tunes, some of which were originally song airs.

A group of slow-paced dance tunes, about 30 in number, are used for special *solo* exhibition dances, called 'set dances' because fixed or 'set' steps accompany each tune. Set dances can be in 6/8 time like the double jig, or in 4/4 time like the hornpipe, and can be unusual in having parts of different lengths, from six to 12 bars. They should not be confused with a type of quadrille-based *group* dance called 'set dances' which are performed to 'sets' or groups of different tunes.

There is no musical connection between a tune and its title (or titles), if it is titled at all. Song airs are named from the title of the Irish or English song lyrics with which they are associated. Older instrumental melodies often took their titles from the name of a patron (for instance, *Ye Lord Mayo's Delight*), but dance-tune titles, which are most commonly in English, refer to the ordinary lives of people, such as their occupations, pastimes and locales (for instance, *Trim the Velvet*, *The Humours of Cloyne*, *The Dairy Maid's Wish*).

6. Instruments.

The primary musical instruments are international melody instruments, some of which have developed specifically Irish forms: wind instruments, such as the pipes, whistle and flute; string instruments, especially the fiddle, but also the banjo and mandolin; and free-reed instruments, such as the accordion, concertina and harmonica. Percussion instruments were not played much until recently. Even when harmony can be produced, as on the uilleann pipes and accordion, only simple harmonies are used, and often none at all. But the trend in the 20th century has been towards increased harmonization and the introduction of accompanying instruments such as the piano and guitar. Musicians also ignore many of the other potentialities of instruments: players of the fiddle, for instance, rarely move from the first position on the fingerboard.

The triangular, wooden Irish harp (*cruit* or *cláirseach*; see Irish harp) was, in its earliest known form, of medium size strongly constructed of willow, and with metal strings plucked with the finger nails. Its size and the number of strings have varied greatly over the centuries. Today it averages about 90 cm in height, and is strung with about 30 gut or nylon strings plucked by the fingertips. It normally rests on the player's right shoulder. Most harpists are now women, although formerly they were mostly men. Mostly song airs and moderately paced instrumental harp pieces are played, but fast dance tunes are becoming more popular. There are no old harp styles and little old traditional technique remains.

Two types of Bagpipe are in use: the mouth-blown 'warpipes' and the bellows-blown uilleann pipes. The former, particularly important in Northern Ireland but not widely played, is the outdoor Scottish Highlands bagpipe introduced in the late 19th century partly as an imitation of an obsolete medieval Irish type. It is learnt and played in clubs which organize marching bands and competitions, and solo performance is not the central feature of this music culture. The indoor uilleann pipes (*píob uilleann*) are a uniquely Irish form of the bagpipe, and are more widespread in the south and midlands area than in the north. They were originally known as the 'Irish pipes' or 'union pipes'; the present term was coined only at the turn of the 20th century and comes from the Irish word *uille* ('elbow'). Distinguishing features are a wooden chanter with a two-octave range (usually D–D[♯]), a bag blown by bellows held under the elbow, and three closed chanters called regulators which can provide harmony or counterpoint when their keys are pressed. The instrument also has three continuously sounding drones. The pipes are expensive and, with seven double or single reeds, difficult to keep in tune. They are played as a solo instrument more than any other instrument, and most pipers are male. There are two basic styles of piping on the chanter: open style (flowing and fast, with notes produced by putting down the fewest possible fingers); and tight or closed style (staccato and fast, with alternative fingerings that offer moments of silence between notes). Most players mix the two styles. Special techniques include 'cranning' (playing of multiple grace notes in quick succession) and sliding from one note to the next.

The Fiddle (*fidil* or *veidhlín*), with its bow, is identical to the modern violin. Traditional musicians prefer the term 'fiddle' to 'violin' to distinguish their music and their style of playing from other musics. Probably the most popular traditional instrument, the fiddle is played equally by men and women, and is felt to be particularly compatible with the flute, button accordion and uilleann pipes. It is played with a relaxed left-hand grip on the neck of the instrument. Bow strokes are generally short and light, producing a quiet mellow tone. Local styles range from the northern Donegal style (usually quick, with little ornamentation and a different bow stroke for most notes) to the more relaxed and ornamented southern styles such as those of Counties Sligo and Clare (where several notes can be sounded with each movement of the bow). Many contemporary players develop their own personal styles. Special techniques include double stopping and bowed triplets.

The Irish Tin whistle (*feadóg stáin*) is a short end-blown duct flute of metal alloy with six finger-holes, and a light, pure tone. Originally conical in shape with a wooden duct, it has been almost replaced since the 1960s by a cylindrical type with a moulded plastic mouthpiece. Two octaves are available; the higher octave is produced by blowing harder. Whistles come in several keys, from B to G; those in D

are the most popular. Relatively inexpensive and the common beginners' instrument, the tin whistle has a relatively low status, but is perfectly suited to the music, and some players have brought it to a virtuoso level. Special techniques include tonguing and sliding from one note to the next.

The flute (*fliúit* or *feadóg mhór*) used for the playing of Irish traditional music, known as the concert or wooden flute, is the simple-system cross-blown wooden flute developed in France in the late 1600s. Most flutes played in late 20th-century Ireland were English or German 19th-century instruments, but modern Irish-made flutes are also now played. Normally in the key of D, it can also have one or more padded metal keys to produce flat or sharp notes, and it usually consists of three sections that are fitted together. Traditional playing styles range from a hurried, puffing choppy northern style, found mostly in Counties Sligo and Roscommon, to one that is smooth and rolling, centred on Counties Clare and Limerick, but the flute is now widely played throughout the country, and the styles are generally mixed. Special techniques include tonguing and sliding from one note to the next. Flute and drum marching bands playing flutes in different keys and in harmony, a tradition derived from 18th-century British military bands, are found in Northern Ireland.

The Accordion (*cairdín* or *bosca ceoil*) that is normally played is the double-action button accordion with two rows of melody keys. Often known as the 'box', it comes in different basic keys. Instruments with rows tuned to B and C are currently the most popular, though some prominent players favour C# and D instruments. An earlier form of the instrument, the diatonic ten-key melodeon, has been popular in Ireland since the late 19th century, and has been revived in recent years. Most accordions were made in the 20th century and imported from Germany, Italy and Britain, but French accordions have been gaining in popularity recently. The accordion's loud rhythmic sounds are particularly suited to dance music. Special techniques include the production of long notes by pulling the bellows and use of the left-hand basses to add colour to the melody. Piano accordions enjoyed a vogue for about 30 years beginning in the mid-1930s.

The Concertina (*consairtín*) popular in Ireland is the double-action Anglo-German concertina with about 30 buttons, which has undergone a revival in recent years. Traditionally, the instrument has been associated with women more than men. Its relatively small, delicate, rhythmic sound is well-suited to dance music. Some special effects such as 'droning' and 'chording' are employed.

The Bodhrán (from *bodhar*: 'dull-sounding' or 'having a deafening sound'), a circular hand-held drum, is the principal Irish percussion instrument and is sometimes referred to as a tambourine. The instrument, which may at one time have been a winnowing tray, was used for centuries as a drum by men taking part in seasonal rituals, and it has only become widespread for music accompaniment since the 1950s. The most common size is approximately 46 cm in diameter. It is shallow, with a single skin attached to the wooden frame or rim. The skin may be of goat or other animal, and it is struck with a short wooden beater or with the fingers. Held by the rim or a crossbar with the left hand and struck with the right, when played sitting it is rested upright on the knee. The rhythms played by the *bodhrán* sometimes double or triple the beats of the music. Apart from the different sounds produced by the stick and the hand, the sound can be changed by striking the rim occasionally with the stick. A new

bodhrán tradition has come into existence in the late 20th century, and modern techniques include altering the skin tension with left-hand pressure to produce different pitches, damping the skin with the palm of the left hand and playing cross-rhythms.

Several instruments are less widely accepted. Some are not felt to be fully in character with the nature of the music, while others are not portable or are hard to obtain. The four-string plectrum tenor Banjo was taken up as a melodic instrument by Irish musicians in the USA early in the 20th century, especially as a band instrument, and spread in Ireland beginning in the 1930s. It has a strong, driving sound. The eight-string Mandolin had a brief vogue in the 1960s and 70s for accompanying singing and for the playing of slow airs. The guitar was introduced into traditional music during the 20th century, at first among Irish musicians in North America to accompany melodic instruments, then in the song revival of the 1950s to accompany singing. It is now commonly used to accompany dance music, and is played fairly percussively using a pick. Keyboard instruments, chiefly the piano, but also the harpsichord and electronic keyboards, have been adapted to Irish music since the 1700s. In the 1960s the Greek Bouzouki was introduced into Irish traditional music and has been generally accepted. A playing style has evolved which is a mixture of chords and melodic runs, and flat-backed Irish forms of the instrument and different tunings are found. The free-reed mouth organ (*orgán béil*) has been played in Ireland since the 19th century. It requires considerable physical effort to play, but it is very suitable for dance music. The fife and piccolo are played in a variety of keys. They are used with drums in marching bands in Northern Ireland, and occasionally in dance bands. Lesser-played percussion instruments include: the giant ritual Lambeg drum, beaten with canes and played in parades across the north of Ireland; the bones, two sections of cowbone held in the hand and clacked against each other; and the domestic spoons, held with backs together in one hand and played against the other hand and the knees. The bones and spoons are used to accompany dance music.

7. Groups and bands.

In spite of the respect accorded the solo player, Irish traditional music is primarily a social music, and traditional musicians frequently play together in different combinations, in unison. The earliest groups were small, playing in small venues such as farmhouses or taverns for small numbers of dancers and using whatever instruments were available locally. But as the music began to be played in larger venues such as dance halls, from the end of the 19th century in Irish North America and from the beginning of the 20th century in Ireland, the groups became increasingly larger and rhythm instruments were introduced so that dancers could hear the beat more distinctly. Tenor banjos, double basses, pianos and drum kits formed part of the line-up together with the older fiddles, flutes and accordions. Sound recordings of these groups influenced the structure of groups in Ireland. By the early 1930s these dance ensembles, which remained popular until the 1960s, were known as *ceili* bands because they played for *ceili* dances (from *céilithe* or social occasions of the Gaelic League). They went into decline in the 1960s with changes in dancing fashions, although they underwent a small revival in the 1990s; their playing is especially in demand for social set dances.

Session playing – large and small informal groups of musicians playing for their own enjoyment for hours on end, often in a pub – spread in popularity during the 1950s. It continues strongly to the present and has become a standard social setting for the performance of music. The instruments used depend on the musicians present. The composer Seán Ó Riada introduced a new style of group playing in the early 1960s when he formed Ceoltóirí Cualann, a ‘folk orchestra’, with traditional melody instruments paralleling the strings-woodwind arrangement of an orchestra, and using the *bodhrán*. Also in the early 1960s three- or four-member ‘ballad groups’ developed. Under the influence of the North American folk revival, these singing groups specialized in English-language songs and accompanied themselves on guitars, mandolins, whistles and banjos. The Clancy Brothers, Tommy Makem and the Dubliners were among the most famous groups of this type. As instrumental playing gained ground again in the 1970s, most ballad groups faded away, but some added traditional melodic instruments such as fiddle and uilleann pipes and became mixed vocal and instrumental groups. Electronic instruments such as electric guitars and keyboards were increasingly introduced into traditional group playing from the 1970s onwards, and acoustic instruments were amplified. Among groups using this instrumentation, Planxty and later the Bothy Band enjoyed great popularity, especially in continental Europe and North America. Although both groups have disbanded, they continue to have an influence through their recordings. Some professional groups, for example Clannad and Altan, have moved from playing traditional music to playing popular music with traditional roots.

8. Dancing.

Traditional dance has always been intimately connected with traditional music in Ireland, but there is no information on the nature of Irish dancing (*damhsa* or *rinne*) until recent centuries, although it seems to have resembled European dance in general. Some Irish country dances of the 1600s were performed at a rapid pace and employed sticks and swords. Jigs were also danced from as early as the 1600s, as were open-air long dances or dances involving lines of people, and open-air ring dances with large groups. From the 1700s to the present the main traditional solo dances have been step-dances: jigs of various kinds, reels, hornpipes and special solo set or exhibition dances. Old open-air group dances were generally replaced by indoor European group dances such as minuets and cotillions in the late 1700s and quadrilles in the 1800s. There developed Irish forms which were also danced to the music of the jig, reel and hornpipe and other measures. Quadrilles evolved into the present-day set-dances, danced in squares by four couples. Versions of these survive and have had a huge revival since the 1970s.

Group dances called ceili dances were developed along traditional line-dance models from the 1890s to the 1930s during the Gaelic Revival, but are no longer as popular as formerly. Traditionally, dancing took place outdoors in fields and at crossroads during the summer, and indoors in the larger farm houses during winter. In 1935 a national Public Dance Halls Act required all public dances to be licensed, and effectively ended the small country-house dances which had already begun to decline.

Competition has always been a feature of traditional step-dancing. It has been highly regulated since 1931 when An Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha (the Commission for Gaelic Dances), a division of the Gaelic League, was founded to establish rules and standards and to organize competitions. This movement gave rise to a large number of professional Irish dancing schools in Ireland and abroad and led to an elaborate formal development of steps, dances, costumes and competitions. World championships attract thousands of competitors. The majority of teachers and pupils in these schools are female, a contrast with the dancers of the past who were both male and female. Ballet and tap dance techniques have increasingly been incorporated into competition step-dancing in recent decades which has caused controversy. In the late 1990s, the stage shows *Riverdance* and *Lord of the Dance*, based on this type of dancing with newly composed music based on traditional idioms, have achieved an extraordinary degree of international popularity. Unregulated traditional step-dancing survives in pockets, especially in the west of Ireland, and lively upper body and arm movements are often part of this tradition which began to experience a revival during the 1990s.

9. Collecting and publishing.

The first collection of Irish music was *A Complete Collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes*, published in Dublin in 1724. Several other commercial collections appeared during the same century. The earliest surviving manuscripts of Irish traditional music belong to the late 1700s, when they were compiled by musicians for their own use. The first person to collect Irish traditional music systematically for preservation was Edward Bunting (1773–1843), an Armagh organist who notated and published the music of the last of the traditional harpists. Other collectors followed Bunting's example during the 1800s, among them George Petrie of Dublin (1789–1866) and Patrick Weston Joyce (1827–1914) of Limerick. Large manuscript collections such as those by the Cork musician William Forde (c1795–1850) and Dublin dental surgeon Henry Hudson (1798–1889) have not yet been published; the collection of the Kerry clergyman James Goodman (1828–96) was published in 1998. A great deal of Irish music was also published commercially during the 19th century in Ireland, Britain and the USA. Captain Francis O'Neill of Cork (1848–1936) gathered thousands of tunes from his fellow emigrant musicians in Chicago and from rare books and manuscripts, and published these during the early years of the 20th century. He was followed later in the century by Francis Roche (1866–1961) of Limerick and Breandán Breathnach (1912–85) of Dublin. Large-scale institutional collecting has been undertaken from the 1930s to the present time by such bodies as the Irish Folklore Commission (now the Department of Irish Folklore, University College Dublin) and Radió Éireann, the national radio station. In the second half of the 20th century there was an explosion of book publications of songs and tunes.

10. Sound recording, radio and television.

The recording of Irish traditional music began on cylinders and discs in the 1890s, but little was recorded until the 1920s when hundreds of musicians and a few traditional singers were recorded on 78 r.p.m. discs in the USA. As these recordings filtered back to Ireland, notably those of the Sligo fiddle player Michael Coleman, they profoundly influenced the course of traditional music. Little was

recorded in Ireland until the 1930s, and even then it was material largely in non-traditional arrangements. In the late 1950s, many commercial recordings were issued on LP by new, small companies, and some authentic styles of traditional performance such as *sean-nós* singing in Irish were heard on disc for the first time. Interest in this material grew and has continued to the present time, along with an interest in new styles of performance and record production. In the 1990s audio cassettes and CDs became the standard formats. Reel-to-reel magnetic tape, in use since the 1950s, has been almost entirely confined to use in radio and in archival field recording. Large collections of these recordings survive and they represent the nature of traditional performance more accurately than commercial recordings. Hundreds of thousands of private performances have been recorded on audio cassette tape since the 1970s. Cassettes are extensively used for learning music, and they have been important in the modern transmission of the music.

In the USA and Canada, commercial 'Irish Hours' with popular and traditional performers have been a regular radio feature since the 1920s in most cities along the East Coast. In Ireland, where radio was completely state controlled until the 1980s, broadcasting began in Belfast in 1924 and in Dublin in 1926. The Belfast station, part of the BBC network, rarely broadcasted traditional music until the 1950s, but the Dublin station, 2RN, later Radió Éireann, featured it every second or third night from its inception as policy. All radio performances were broadcast live from the studio until the introduction of field recording, on discs in the 1940s and on tape in the 1950s, for both stations. In the 1970s the establishment in the Republic of *gaeltacht*-based national Irish-language radio widened the availability of Irish-language song, and some local commercial and community stations set up in the 1980s feature traditional music prominently. Field recordings have had a powerful educational influence in reviving interest in traditional music and have closely documented the music in the second half of the 20th century.

Although Irish television programmes were first produced in Belfast in the late 1950s, traditional music was not a regular feature of the medium until Raidió Teilifís Éireann, the state television of the Republic, began broadcasting in Dublin in 1962. Typically, programmes were filmed in a studio and had a recital format with a presenter and an invited audience. Location filming, more expensive, has been far rarer. Production and direction was the preserve of RTÉ employees until the 1990s when independent production companies became involved.

11. Research.

Irish traditional music research has been confined mostly to a small group of interested individuals. An increasing number of third-level graduate and postgraduate studies are being carried out, especially in University College, Cork, and in the Irish World Music Centre of the University of Limerick. The larger libraries in Ireland, and also in Britain and the USA, hold important collections of printed traditional music. Public multimedia archives in Dublin include those of the Department of Irish Folklore of University College Dublin, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and the Irish Traditional Music Archive.

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