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## Transatlantic Migrations of Irish Music in the Early Recording Age

Scott Spencer

In the early twentieth century, recordings of Irish musicians in America had a major impact on traditional musicians in both Irish America and Ireland. This idea has often been repeated in Irish music circles, and academic discourse surrounding the movement of these recordings generally includes a version of the same generic sentence: "These early 78-rpm records made their way to Ireland and had a profound effect upon the tradition." Publications on the subject employ a wide variety of verbs to describe the means by which these recordings moved through what is often described as a somewhat murky Atlantic trade route. In these statements agency has been left to question, and as a result myths of origin have developed. As London-based Irish musician and scholar Reg Hall has noted, "I've heard of 'Returned Yanks' coming home with a new dress or new suit, a wind-up gramophone and a few records, but the story eventually becomes a bit of a myth."<sup>1</sup>

Musicians and historians alike have hinted at the engines behind this murky Atlantic trade route, many times implying an innate and inexplicable tendency among Irish American 78-rpm records to migrate across the ocean toward their spiritual home: "The music they recorded in the United States during the three decades prior to the 1950s found its way back to Ireland on 78rpm records, and became enormously influential."<sup>2</sup> Some publications suggest a system of natural osmosis (or possibly reverse osmosis): "McKenna's discs made a tremendous impact when they filtered back home."<sup>3</sup>

Anecdotal evidence and the recollections of Irish musicians have pointed to their moving through the postal system. Harry Bradshaw's entry in *The Companion to Traditional Irish Music* on fiddler Michael Coleman mentions that "Coleman's records . . . were sent back to Ireland, where they gave inspiration to players."<sup>4</sup> However, many Irish Americans doubted the ability of the American or Irish postal systems to deliver the brittle 78-rpm records intact. As musician

Tommy Gilmartin has said, "They'd imagine if they posted them they'd be broken, which they would at the time."<sup>5</sup>

The following chapter should help to illuminate this elusive and undocumented migratory pattern through a study of the economic, technologic, and cultural facets of commercial and subcommercial recordings of Irish traditional music in the early twentieth century. The result will be a window onto the ways in which Irish traditional music became a cross-Atlantic phenomenon with the dawn of the recording age and will demonstrate how musicians both in the diaspora and in the geographic center of the tradition have engaged in debates on ideas of traditionality and authenticity—a dialogue that continues today.

At the dawn of the age of sound recording and in the early years of record companies, advertising and marketing was modeled on the mindset of the nineteenth-century furniture business. Companies were eager to sell phonograph players and lavish record cabinets to the general public, as these items represented large single-ticket expenses. The first decades of the industry were marked by a focus on marketing expensive gramophone cabinets over the relatively inexpensive records. In 1897 Edison Home Phonograph machines were selling for forty dollars, and the year 1899 saw 151,000 phonographs manufactured in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

Initially the industry focused on marketing these cabinets to the American middle class, but as the industry tapped out this early market demographic, companies began to introduce improved versions of the gramophone to cater to the middle-class market and fresh attention was focused on creating new markets. Just after the turn of the century, the most underdeveloped market in the United States for gramophone players was that of ethnic communities, and so in the early 1900s, the recording industry turned a good deal of attention toward immigrant communities:

By about 1905 the record companies had jumped into the new ethnic market with enthusiasm. Of the three major firms, Columbia, which usually ranked second in its sales performance and was generally interested in marketing innovations, seemed the most eager to sell directly to foreign newcomers. Columbia was probably the first national American firm to consciously aim an elaborate ethnic catalogue at its foreign customers. Its 1906 catalogue offered musical records in twelve languages, and within three years the company had issued two additional sets of catalogues for immigrant audiences.<sup>7</sup>

Marketing departments in the major record companies knew that if ethnic pride could be tapped, records would be sold and sales of record cabinets would follow. Trade journals began to reflect this mindset, encouraging record merchants to explore potential ethnic markets. It became obvious to the major companies that

immigrant communities were a potentially lucrative market, and considerable marketing efforts were devoted to instill interest in these potential customers:

By 1910, American record executives began to consider their immigrant customers more designedly. From then until about 1930, when the depression began to devastate the industry, the major companies adopted a new policy of marketing records consciously and specifically for ethnic groups. Record company executives were well aware that a buyer of a cylinder or disc, whether immigrant or native, was also a potential buyer of a record-playing machine, and ultimately of more records. Victor, Columbia and Edison all wanted a share of the immigrant trade. Businesspeople understood that foreigners wanted their own music; it would not take much effort to turn that craving into record-buying.<sup>8</sup>

Though Victor, Edison, and Columbia previously had offered only a select few commercial Irish vocal recordings, the stage was set. The ethnic markets had been proven in many of America's Eastern European communities, record companies were expanding into new ethnic enclaves, and the Irish community was clamoring for records of their own music. Ellen O Byrne, a native of county Leitrim, may have provided the final push to bring the recording companies to the Irish market.

O Byrne had opened a store in New York City in 1900 at 1398 Third Avenue.<sup>9</sup> She stocked the shelves with, among other things, musical instruments and recordings of Irish musicians such as singer John McCormack. Irish music was in great demand at the time, but there were very few records available. The store had stocked early Edison wax cylinders and Gennett 78-rpm records, yet they were always in short supply. In an interview with Mick Moloney, Ellen's son, Justus O'Byrne DeWitt, explained the situation, "The Gennett company was willing to make records for anybody at that time while some of the other companies weren't. . . . Now when Gennett stopped making Irish records, my family was at a loss for new Irish records."<sup>10</sup>

Most of the commercial Irish recordings to that point had been vocal pieces, and O Byrne perceived a demand for instrumental dance tunes. With her customary entrepreneurial spirit, she became the driving force behind the first major label recording of instrumental Irish musicians. Her son explains:

Irish people were always coming in and asking for old favorites like "The Stack of Barley." Well, she'd no records to give them because there weren't any. So she sent me up to Gaelic Park in the Bronx to find some musicians. There was always music there on Sundays. Well, I found Eddie Herborn and John [James] Wheeler playing banjo and accordion, and they sounded great. So my mother went to Columbia, and they said that if she would

agree to buy five hundred copies from them they would record Herborn and Wheeler. She agreed, and they both recorded "The Stack of Barley," and the five hundred records sold out in no time at all.<sup>11</sup>

Herborn and Wheeler were recorded on either September 15 or 18, 1916, in New York, and as agreed, Columbia pressed five hundred copies for Ellen O Byrne.<sup>12</sup> This first pressing marked the beginning of an era in which Irish musicians in America were being recorded and in which the resulting 78-rpm discs, and the more expensive cabinets and players, could be marketed to American Irish communities. The next few years produced a few very influential records, including those by Tom Ennis (Victor, 1917) and P. J. Conlon (Columbia, 1917). After a few dozen Irish pressings, the Okeh recording label was the first to dedicate a portion of their record numbering matrix to an Irish series, the Okeh 21000 series. Columbia followed in 1925 with the Columbia 33000-F series, Victor dedicated its V-29000 series to Irish music in 1929, and Decca later established its 12000 series.<sup>13</sup>

As can be seen in concurrent issues of the trade journal *Talking Machine World*, by the close of 1926, ethnic recording was fully established and regional record distributors were being encouraged to market within immigrant communities:

Few people are more interested in music and entertainment than those hardy foreign-born Americans who constitute so large a portion of the population of the average town or city, and . . . although they may live thriftily in many ways, music plays an important part in their lives and they spend annually large sums of money for this entertainment. Ordinary sales methods do not always reach this class of population. They group together and keep to their own language. Their purchasing of an article is oft-times stimulated by the experience of friends.<sup>14</sup>

Columbia, in particular, was quick to tout successes in the Irish community, particularly in urban centers on the East Coast:

The company is quick to release hits and it has just issued a remarkable Irish and French catalogue. . . . It is no wonder that the company is adding new accounts each week to its list of Columbia dealers. New England's own Irish entertainer, Shaun O'Nolan, has just approved the test records of six of the recordings that he recently made at the New York laboratory. These records will shortly be released. Twenty-five new dealers now carry the complete Irish catalogue.<sup>15</sup>

The age of ethnic music recordings had arrived, just as Irish America was striving to throw off the stigma of recent immigration and plant itself firmly in the middle class.

Just before the dawn of the recording age, the context of Irish traditional music in Irish America was subtly diverging from that in Ireland. In the homeland the second half of the twentieth century saw traditional instrumentalists playing for informal social gatherings: crossroads dances, house parties, and community celebrations. A variety of influences, both political and social, pushed these dances into more established institutions, such as local parish halls.<sup>16</sup> Many other informal social gatherings took place in private homes, and dancing played a large part. As James Kelly has mentioned in a recent interview,

In the '30s, there was a bit of a switch and the clergy in Ireland at the time played a role in that. They started to discourage the crossroad dances and the country dances and encourage people to go to the bigger towns and villages into these halls. In a sense it kind of put a stop to all that stuff, you know. The music itself went through a period in the '40s and '50s where there wasn't much going on at all. In a lot of cases people just played in their own homes—you might invite people in, get together and play. It wasn't as if you'd go for a festival like you would these days.<sup>17</sup>

In the years before and immediately after the Irish Rising (1916) and the creation of the Free State (1921), social dancing in Ireland was somewhat redefined in an effort by the Gaelic League to discard British influence and return to what they considered more authentic forms of Irish social dances. With an emphasis on figure dancing, the Gaelic League promoted and presented what has come to be called *ceilidh* dancing.<sup>18</sup>

In America many of the waves of Irish immigrants had arrived with instrumental dance traditions and songs in both Irish and English. The dance music carried by the immigrants reflected a repertoire suited for set dances, solo step dances, and couple dances popular in Ireland at the time of emigration, prior to the influence of the Gaelic League. In America the decades before the recording age saw a huge demand for this style of Irish dancing in major urban centers such as New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. One scholar notes that “support for Irish music and dance was so strong that in 1892 the ‘Golden Age of Irish Music’ was formally ushered in with the completion of New York City’s Celtic Hall, a major venue for Irish music and dance located at 446 West 54th Street in Manhattan.”<sup>19</sup> As the various recording companies began to develop their ethnic markets, talent scouts would take an approach opposite to that of Ellen O Byrne, who had recruited musicians solely on talent. Instead record companies recruited instrumentalists with a proven popularity in the dance halls and on the concert stage. Fortunately the standard of musicianship in the dance halls was tremendously high, and the performers recorded were usually (but not always) at the higher levels of the tradition.

By the 1920s the recording companies had proven that Irish music would sell. By far the most popular recordings were songs on Irish themes sung in English.

John McCormack had become a household name for his recordings of “Mother Machree” and “Kathleen Mavourneen” and is often said to have been the first million-record seller. German American accordionist John Kimmel had recorded a number of Irish tunes for Zonophone in 1904 and 1905<sup>20</sup> and for Victor Talking Machine Company in 1907,<sup>21</sup> and O Byrne had persuaded Columbia to record Herborn and Wheeler in 1916. Aside from these first attempts and a few commercial wax cylinders, Victor Records was the first company to record a commercial record of instrumental Irish music played by an Irish-born musician. The artist was uilleann piper and vaudevillian Patsy Touhey, recorded in New York in 1919, and the 78-rpm record was released in 1920 and advertised in the February issue of the Victor Records supplement as “one of the historic performers” of the “old traditional Irish minstrel tunes.”<sup>22</sup>

After these initial pressings, a wide variety of labels began releasing Irish instrumental recordings. According to S. C. Hamilton’s dissertation on the Irish recording industry, “There were around 40 companies that released recordings of Irish music between 1899 and 1942. As the three major producers, around 40 percent of total releases were for Columbia, 18 percent for Decca, and 16 percent for Victor.”<sup>23</sup> Of these releases, 47.7 percent were songs and 53.3 percent were instrumental.<sup>24</sup> In the American market sales figures were increasing each year, especially in the postwar years, until the Depression. Roughly 3 million cylinders and discs were sold in 1900, a number that increased to 140 million in 1921.<sup>25</sup> Phonograph production also increased dramatically over these years. The year 1909 saw the production in America of 345,000 gramophones, 1914 saw the production of 514,000 gramophones, and 1919 saw 2,230,000!<sup>26</sup>

After the U.S. court system broke the Columbia-Edison-Victor monopoly on record production patents in 1920, smaller labels began to produce Irish recordings, including Bluebird (a subsidiary of Victor), Cameo, Cardinal, Crown, Emerald, Emerson, Gaelic, Keltic, Lyric, O’Byrne DeWitt, Odeon, Pathé, and Yorktown.<sup>27</sup> The larger labels included M. & C. New Republic, Edison, Brunswick, Vocalion, Parlophone, Gennett, and, of course, Victor, Columbia, and Decca.<sup>28</sup> During this time two of these companies sent engineers to Ireland to record material—Parlophone (1929, 1930) and Columbia (1931)—resulting in special catalogs and including the first commercial recording of Ireland’s Ballinakill Ceili Band.<sup>29</sup>

These companies, especially the smaller labels, were in constant flux. Many smaller outfits were purchased by larger companies, and with purchase came the label’s library—usually with the original metal masters from which the original 78-rpm records were literally pressed. Today a dedicated and meticulous subculture is devoted to untangling the intertwined histories of these early labels. Any attempt to find the source of Irish recordings issued on the smaller labels is liable to set abuzz a subset of these dedicated historians and record buffs. A perfect example of the intricate web of interconnected histories in Irish records (and

I will only bother the reader with one example, as this type of exploration (a slippery slope into the obsessive world of the record collector) is to be found in Irish records produced through the Regal imprint of Columbia Records.

The United Kingdom branch of Columbia Records began Regal as a budget imprint in 1914. A merger of the British Gramophone Company and the U.K. branch of Columbia, called the Columbia Gramophone Company, produced the British label EMI. EMI went on to purchase Columbia and its library in 1932. In the next year Regal was paired with another of EMI's smaller labels, Zonophone, to create the label Regal Zonophone. During the 1930s and 1940s Regal Zonophone was used primarily to reissue recordings from the Columbia American library, though later it added reissues from Victor subsidiary Bluebird. Regal Zonophone continued to reissue classic Irish recordings until the 1970s. It is rumored that tracing matrix numbers for specific recordings throughout this period requires a specialized degree.<sup>30</sup>

Musicians recording for these companies during this era would receive a single payment for each recording session, without rights to royalties or mechanical reproductions. Musicians had little or no control over their recordings, which were considered the property of the recording company. Metal masters of these records would move with recording companies as they were bought and sold, and musicians would sometimes be surprised to find their recordings being reissued on other labels. Louis Quinn recorded with the Shamrock Minstrels for Columbia in the late 1930s and saw his recordings issued on a variety of labels. "They went out on Brunswick, they went out on Parlophone, they went out on Decca," he said.<sup>31</sup> The most influential label in the migration of traditional Irish dance music between America and Ireland was Decca Records. Decca was founded in 1929 by Sir Edward Lewis after his purchase of London's Decca Gramophone Company. In 1932 Decca purchased the U.K. branch of an American company, Brunswick Records (with its Vocalion library), and quickly added the libraries of the Melotone and Edison Bell companies. With ownership of these libraries, which included a vast quantity of both U.K. and American releases, Decca launched its American subsidiary in 1934. Decca's transatlantic nature and wide range of musical genres allowed great flexibility and access to multiple markets. With a number of savvy choices in the jazz realm, the company quickly came to rival EMI as the largest label in the United Kingdom and had the potential to reissue its previous recordings to opposite sides of the Atlantic for decades without saturating either market.

A number of major social and political movements collided in the first decades of the twentieth century to allow Irish recordings a chance to flourish and become essential to the dialogue surrounding traditional music on both sides of the Atlantic. Hibernian politics saw the formation in the late nineteenth century and subsequent influence of the Gaelic League, the 1916 Irish Rising, and the creation of the Free State in 1921. Post-Great Famine emigrants from Ireland

had prospered in the United States in the late nineteenth century. Economic success, ethnic pride, continuing immigration, and a strong sense of community spurred a boom in the early twentieth century (later called the golden age of Irish American music and dance) in Irish American dance halls. The advances in recording technology, the number of recording studios in the New York City area, and the push by recording companies to tap ethnic markets facilitated widespread recording of these musicians and a resurgence of interest in Irish folk music. Finally, with economic security, nationalist pride, and aspirations for middle-class status and its trappings, Irish Americans were hungry for records of their own music. The boom economy of the 1920s in America meant disposable income to purchase records and an increased interest in music. A new invention, the portable windup gramophone, became omnipresent in households in both America and Ireland. It seemed that every Irish household, no matter how poor, had a gramophone and a collection of 78-rpm records of Irish music, which was being recorded almost exclusively in America at the time.<sup>32</sup>

The first American recordings of Irish music to arrive in Ireland did so at the perfect time. With the creation of the Free State, nationalism was at a new high, both in Ireland and the Irish diaspora. The quest for and promotion of native culture by Ireland's Gaelic League had instilled a national desire for aspects of Gaelic culture thought to be lost or on the verge of vanishing. Through their writings and works, the authors and artists of the Gaelic Revival had brought about a national search for Irishness as well as a public dialogue on ideas of authenticity and purity in arts and culture. Finally, as Kenny Goldstein has argued, "each major technological advance in mass communications media helped to produce a folksong revival. . . . The invention of the sound recording machine, and later of the disc phonograph record, each produced major folksong revivals."<sup>33</sup>

The new leap in recording technology and the American commercialization of Irish ethnic recordings helped to spur simultaneous musical revivals in Irish communities on both sides of the Atlantic. The makers of Irish traditional music in America had the potential to have a great impact on the tradition precisely because supply and demand were strongly in their favor: Ireland was searching for authenticity and pre-Great Famine Gaelic culture, and the American Irish music was in a golden age—and American Irish musicians were the only musicians recording. As fiddler James Kelly has said, "The early recordings were coming into Ireland from the States and the musicians who were making those recordings were becoming influential *because* they were making recordings—no one had made them before."<sup>34</sup>

There are many accounts of musicians in Ireland listening to recordings of Irish traditional musicians from America. In an interview with Harry Bradshaw, Tommy Gilmartin recounted that the 78-rpm recordings of flute player John McKenna



made a tremendous impact when they filtered back home. Around his native area, no matter what the cost, if you were to sell the last cow, you'd buy one of his records at the time. If you were to be without a meal a day, you have got the record in preference to anything else. And then there might be a local gramophone about—and maybe not very many at the time either. That house would be full to capacity that night because John McKenna's record had arrived new that day. And there would be no work done that day in the area till it be heard, or there would get no contentment in it till it would be heard. That was the atmosphere that existed, that's what went on.<sup>35</sup>

James Kelly has described the excitement generated when a new recording would arrive in rural Ireland: "A family in the locality might have an old gramophone player, and when some of the 78 records would come from the States, it was like going to Disneyland! People would get together at whoever's house it would be and they'd listen to this record over and over and over again. It was a great time for excitement, you know. So that was going on when the early recordings were coming into Ireland from the States."<sup>36</sup> Some particular recordings had major impact, particularly in the regions from which the musician had originated. An early Columbia recording, credited as *Irish Bagpipes, Violin and Piano*,

hit the jackpot and captured the hearts of a whole generation, *Black Rogue / Saddle the Pony and Londonderry Hornpipe*, credited anonymously as *Trio: Irish Bagpipes, Violin and Piano*, is said, rather wildly, to have been in every country cottage in Ireland, and it is also said that so many people asked at the record shops, the company was forced to reverse its normal policy and name the artists: Ennis, Morrison and Muller. It soon got around that this was Jimmy Morrison, the schoolteacher from County Sligo, who had left for America only a short time before.<sup>37</sup>

As many musicians were highly experienced in a regional style and repertoire, these records also functioned as a window onto the riches of regional styles within Ireland. So how did these recordings of Irish American traditional musicians make their way to Ireland to make this great impact?

The first cross-Atlantic transfer of recorded Irish music most probably originated with Francis O'Neill, chief of the Chicago Police Department and Irish music enthusiast. O'Neill was born in Tralibane, county Cork, in 1848.<sup>38</sup> After years of adventure as a sailor, schoolteacher, and shepherd, he settled in Chicago in 1870 and joined the Chicago police force in 1873. O'Neill demonstrated himself a worthy police officer and was promoted through the ranks until 1901, the year he attained the rank of chief of police. O'Neill had come from a musical family and was known to play flute, though he was not fluent in musical notes.

As chief of police O'Neill was known to employ Irish musicians as they passed through town, and his circle of friends and musical associates would send word to him of newly arrived Irish musicians. O'Neill began to collect traditional Irish tunes in the late 1880s, and with the help of his friend and musical transcriptionist, James O'Neill (no relation), he quickly gathered hundreds upon hundreds of tunes from a wide variety of sources.<sup>39</sup> His collected transcriptions met with great approval, and in 1903 he published his first tune collection, *O'Neill's Music of Ireland*. This publication was followed by eight additional books of tunes and biographies of musicians, each of which have become standard resources for Irish musicians around the world.

O'Neill was at the epicenter of Irish musical life in Chicago. He hosted many evenings of music in his home and at local clubs and helped organize a great number of concerts of Irish music. As Irish or Irish American musicians passed through Chicago, many would visit O'Neill, and if they had an unusual repertoire, Captain O'Neill would send for Sergeant O'Neill to transcribe the tunes or would memorize them himself for later transcription. O'Neill also made use of a wax-cylinder recorder in his residence, and it must be assumed that many visitors to his house must have been recorded.<sup>40</sup> After the tragic death of his last and oldest son, Rogers, in 1904, O'Neill gave his cylinder recorder and collection of wax-cylinder recordings to friends.

At roughly the same time an uilleann piper also was pioneering the use of the wax-cylinder recorder for his music. Patrick J. "Patsy" Touhey was born in Cahertinna, county Galway, in 1865 and emigrated from there to America with his family at the age of three.<sup>41</sup> After having learned the uilleann pipes from his father and from a variety of pipers on the U.S. East Coast, Touhey began his performing career on the road with piper John Egan. After a number of years on the stages of New York and other cities, Touhey was invited to play as a part of an Irish cultural display in the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.<sup>42</sup> Touhey was extremely well received, garnering high praise in the local press from Irish musicians.

Touhey most probably ran into an Edison phonograph machine at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.<sup>43</sup> Edison had received patents for his wax-cylinder machine in 1878 and had immediately gone into production, marketing the machine for dictation purposes, though the mass-produced machines did not gain widespread use until the 1890s. In any event, before the turn of the century Touhey was approached by the Edison recording company to enter a recording contract. However, as Francis O'Neill wrote in a 1911 letter to a friend in Ireland, Touhey "could not get enough for his time from the record people. His theatrical business is more profitable. . . . They found a cheaper man McAuliffe and cheaper work of course."<sup>44</sup>

Patsy Touhey must have taken notice of the potential market for recordings of his performances, as on April 20, 1901, the following advertisement began appearing in the *Irish World*:

IRISH BAGPIPES ON THE PHONOGRAPH  
 ORIGINAL Phonograph Records of the Irish  
 Pipes made to order by the BEST IRISH  
 PIPER IN AMERICA.

ONE DOLLAR EACH. TEN DOLLARS per DOZEN.

Send for catalogue of 150 Irish airs,  
 Jigs, reels, hornpipes, etc.

P. TOUHEY  
 1388 Bristow Street,  
 New York City.<sup>45</sup>

It is not known how many wax-cylinder recordings were made by Touhey, but it is assumed that he made them in his home, on a private machine purchased just for this purpose. At the publication of *The Piping of Patsy Touhey*, by Pat Mitchell and Jackie Small (1986), fewer than fifty of these cylinders were in the hands of archives and private collectors. Since the publication another two dozen have recently been located in private collections and donated to public archives.<sup>46</sup> (It is interesting to note that three weeks after this advertisement was published, members of Cumann na bPíobairí, the short-lived Dublin Pipers' Club, discussed and later took contributions toward the purchase of a phonograph machine. In minutes dated Friday May 14, 1901, the secretary notes, "discussion took place upon Phonographs, with the idea of recording pipe music."<sup>47</sup> Later entries record donations toward the purchase of such a machine but record neither a purchase nor the use of a wax-cylinder recorder.)

It is unlikely that Touhey used his mail-order business to send wax-cylinder recordings to Ireland, but there is ample evidence that Capt. Francis O'Neill, a devoted fan of Touhey's, sent a large number of his recordings to his own colleagues in Ireland. In a letter to a friend, William Halpin of county Clare, Ireland, O'Neill wrote about one of his first musical parcels sent to Dr. Reverend Henebry in Waterford, Ireland, and the recipient's response:

As a Christmas present which was sure to be appreciated, I forwarded in 1907 to Rev. Dr. Henebry, at Waterford, Ireland, a box of Edison phonograph records which Sergeant Early generously permitted me to select from his treasures. Among them was *The Shaskeen Reel* played by Patrick Touhey. The clergyman's comment is best expressed in his own words:

"The five by Touhey are the superior limit of Irish piperling. One of his, 'The Shaskeen Reel,' is so supreme that I am utterly without words to express my opinion of it. . . . Why, there is no Irish Musician alive at all now at all in his class! If things were as they ought to be, he should be installed as professor of music in a national university in Dublin. And that is what I think of Patsy Touhey and his piperling."<sup>48</sup>

Henebry and O'Neill were musical friends and maintained an ongoing correspondence throughout O'Neill's life. In other letters to Halpin, O'Neill mentions a number of cylinders he had posted to his colleague in Waterford. In a letter dated March 9, 1912, O'Neill writes of a number of cylinders he had posted to Henebry in a shipment that included music by three musicians. In the letter he refers to the cantankerous piper Bernard Delaney: "Although pulled out of obscurity and befriended for more than a fourth of a century by yours truly proved an ingrate, and I have none of his records though I sent some years ago to Dr. Henebry I think. And that reminds me that I sent a dozen from Touhey and a dozen from John McFadden our best traditional fiddler to his Reverence January 1911. . . . From Mr. Wayland I know they arrived safely."<sup>49</sup>

In O'Neill's letter to Halpin, dated November 15, 1911, he mentions, "I sent a dozen fiddle records from John McFadden to Rev. Dr. Henebry of Queens College, Cork (a branch of the Catholic University) 8 months ago. They arrived safely."<sup>50</sup> This statement allows us to date the McFadden recordings, or at least their shipment, to roughly March 1911. In the same letter, O'Neill notes that "lately Patsy Touhey made me two dozen [cylinders] but not for money just a compliment."<sup>51</sup> Furthering his prior statement about sending on some Touhey recordings (and continuing his digs at Barney Delaney), he writes, "I may succeed in getting Patsy Touhey to make a few records. If I do you can have them at cost. Delaney now a rich man won't do anything for anyone."<sup>52</sup>

This final line implies that Delaney may have had the same Edison cylinder setup as Touhey. O'Neill verifies this in two of his 1912 letters, in which he mentions that "yesterday [March 8, 1912] Bernard Delaney the smoothest and most rhythmic piper 'twas ever my lot to hear left Chicago to reside permanently at Ocean Springs on the Gulf of Mexico, 900 miles away."<sup>53</sup> In a letter later that year he bitterly mentions that Delaney "sold his machine and records to a stranger although planting himself and his wife on my hospitality for a few days before his departure."<sup>54</sup>

O'Neill also mentions the means by which these early recordings made their way to Ireland. In his March 9, 1912, letter to Halpin, he writes, "Your consignment of Touhey tunes were shipped just a week ago via United States Express Prepaid. Patsy announced the names himself so you have a record of his voice as well. They were made in Sergt. Early's residence and now they are yours and I wish you luck with them."<sup>55</sup>

The dates of the above correspondences suggest a number of things about O'Neill's use of technology and his distribution of recordings. O'Neill had vowed to remove music from his household after the death of the last of his five sons. As he mentioned in a 1912 letter, "I buried my last son in 1904 of spinal meningitis. . . . Since his death I have not sounded a note of music in my own house, out of respect to his mother's feelings. . . . The Edison cylinder phonograph which I purchased to hear Touhey's tunes on is at a friend's house."<sup>56</sup> From the above

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correspondence, we can infer that after 1904, O'Neill may either have continued his recording of Irish music on his Edison cylinder recorder at Early's house or, more probably, continued to solicit recordings by mail from Touhey and post them to Ireland along with other previously recorded cylinders from his collection housed at Early's residence. In either case O'Neill's cylinders are the first documented recordings of Irish music to be sent across the Atlantic to Ireland, and they were sent, at least in part, by "United States Express Prepaid."

One of the most interesting bits of information gleaned from the O'Neill/Halpin letters of 1911 and 1912 is an offhand mention of recordings of a piper named Mr. Andrews being sent to O'Neill in Chicago from Halpin in county Clare, Ireland, on 78-rpm record. In his March 9, 1912, letter, O'Neill mentions, "Yours came to hand less than two weeks ago. I could not find a Victor or Columbia phonograph among my friends, they all had the Edison cylinder machine, so I was obliged to go to Lyon and Healy music house to test them this very day!"<sup>57</sup> The music store of George W. Lyon and Patrick J. Healy—the publishers of O'Neill's books—was located at the corner of State and Monroe streets in downtown Chicago and was known for sheet music, though by 1912 the store was also selling 78-rpm phonograph machines.<sup>58</sup> O'Neill had received a package from Ireland with a recording in a format he couldn't play at home. The Irish musician had proven the Chicago musician behind the technologic times.

By 1907, as can be seen by O'Neill's letter, early recordings of Irish music certainly were sent between Ireland and America by post. From O'Neill's letters to Halpin we know that between 1907 and 1911, Francis O'Neill sent to Reverend Henebry at least a dozen recordings of Patsy Touhey, a dozen recordings of the fiddler John McFadden, and an unknown number of recordings of Bernard Delaney. We also know that by 1912, an unknown number of Touhey cylinders were sent to Halpin in Clare.

These are the first documents with descriptions of recordings migrating to Ireland, and it is very telling that within one of these accounts there is already a description of a reverse migration—from Ireland to America. As these letters only document one side of the correspondence between O'Neill and just one of his colleagues, we can assume that the more than two dozen recordings mentioned are only a portion of those sent to Ireland by O'Neill. As O'Neill mentions having sent the cylinders by "United States Express Prepaid," we can also assume that most, if not all, of his packages were sent in this way.

Nicholas Carolan, director of the Irish Traditional Music Archives (*Taisce Cheol Dúchais Éireann*) in Dublin, suggests that, even with misgivings about the postal systems on either side of the Atlantic, many Irish Americans sent recordings by post or other forms of parcel delivery.<sup>59</sup> It seems that this was one of the only means by which records were brought to Ireland in the early years of recording, as the cost of purchasing records in Ireland was too dear for most people. John Vesey, in an interview with Rich Nevins, discussed the prohibitive cost of

following his father's advice to copy the styles of the early Irish American records: "Of course, my dad hadn't heard Coleman or Paddy Killoran. Now, the reason why . . . I don't believe they could afford to buy the recordings over there, back in those days. It was very hard to buy the recordings; [you had] to pay two shillings or whatever it was, when I was about 13, 14, 15 years old."<sup>60</sup>

Philadelphia musician Eddie Cahill, in an interview with Mick Moloney in 1978, mentioned his experience with records in the early days, mainly posted from America:

MM: Were there many gramophones around home?

EC: Oh there were.

MM: Was it hard to get the records?

EC: No. Most of the records were sent from this country here—you knew, sent home. Somebody would get them.

MM: They just sent them as presents home?

EC: As presents. Like the poitin [a traditional Irish alcoholic beverage].<sup>61</sup>

Early Irish American records were also brought back from Ireland both as gifts by Americans returning for visits and by "returned Yanks"—Irish Americans who had returned to Ireland to find their roots or to settle in their homeland for their retirement.

Tommy Gilmartin, in a 1987 interview by Harry Bradshaw, remembers the way in which records returned to his community when he was growing up, and the excitement surrounding the arrival of new records:

Well, they used to come by emigrants coming home on holidays, mostly, because they'd imagine if they posted them they'd be broken, which they would at the time, and it was all returned Americans coming home to see their own native place again that brought both the gramophones and the records. And there was as much lookout for an emigrant returning home that time as there would be for—I don't know what now, to see an aeroplane going into orbit or something off the ground. Because there was an awful lookout for John McKenna's records, an awful lookout.<sup>62</sup>

Nicholas Carolan has mentioned that despite the assumptions that exorbitant costs would prohibit the shipping of large or heavy objects such as a gramophone or record collections, in fact, it was quite feasible:

Well, [early recordings] were physically brought back by visitors, people who visited, and they were sent back in the post . . . or parcel delivery. Sometimes retirees, when they came back from the States after maybe 20 or 30 years, brought those things they most valued, you know—furniture, clothes, and some of them included the phonograph, which was quite portable, you know. The weight of the material wasn't as significant if you

were transporting by shipping rather than by air. So, the 20s and 30s, it wouldn't have been a major problem and even the odd person brought back an American car!<sup>63</sup>

This idea of "returning Yanks" bringing with them records and phonographs was so present in the popular consciousness that it was even promoted by early radio advertisements in America. Johnny O'Leary, who had made a name for himself on the dance band stages of New York and Boston as the lead player of O'Leary's Irish Minstrels, had recorded a number of 78-rpm records and had become a fixture in the Irish American music scene. In the 1940s he had an Irish music radio show on Boston's WEEI on which he brought into the studio musicians to play with him live on air. In between sets he would promote local dances, and eventually he began selling advertisements. Ellen O Byrne DeWitt, who was responsible for the Columbia recording of Herborn and Wheeler mentioned above, in typical entrepreneurial fashion had started a travel company—DeWitt Travel. Her son, Justus O'Byrne DeWitt, became one of the first and most reliable advertisers on O'Leary's radio show. His spots combined the family's two businesses—advertising travel to Ireland and encouraging those who went to bring with them a phonograph and records of Irish music.<sup>64</sup> This trend was also seen in Chicago, with the Bowen Travel Agency contracting Columbia Records to make recordings of Patrick Doran (flute) and Joe Owens (fiddle), presumably with intent to sell records to those returning to Ireland through their agency.<sup>65</sup>

Records were also purchasable in Ireland, but their availability seems to have been severely limited until a few years after the 1921 creation of the Irish Free State. London-based musician and scholar Reg Hall has mentioned that in his long life of searching for early and rare recordings of Irish music, he has "never seen an American pressing in Ireland or Britain, apart from some Kimmel Emersons I bought in Dublin (new from stock) in 1971. They'd been on the shelf since the early 1920s! I reckon they were imported from the States by that shop keeper in the gramophone shop off Grafton Street."<sup>66</sup> Hall mentions that in his experience, Irish American records were available in Ireland in the early years, but mostly through mail order catalogs issued by London-based record companies:

Irish records were issued in the British catalogues and were thus available all over the United Kingdom (Ireland being then part of the UK), and continued to be sold in the Free State after Independence. There were some early Kimmels on cylinder, but from the early 1920s there were recordings by Coleman, Morrison, Peter Conlon, Tom Ennis, O'Leary's Irish Minstrels, Four Provinces, Dan Sullivan, The Flanagan Brothers, Frank Quinn and others . . . mostly from American Columbia issued on Regal, and there were a few Vocalions issued on Beltona, and some other odd ones. <sup>67</sup>

As mentioned above, through a complex set of mergers, EMI's Regal imprint began reissuing recordings in 1931 from the American Columbia Records library. Irish records from the Regal imprint must have been some of the first to be marketed in Ireland. In 1932, with EMI's merger of the Regal label with the Zonophone label, new Regal Zonophone records were issued and a new era of Irish American reissues began. Nicholas Carolan of the Irish Traditional Music Archive in Dublin agrees: "Well, in the 20s and in particular the 30s . . . I think that American recordings heard in Ireland were heard on reissues. It was entirely through London until the second half of the 1930s in Ireland. There was no industry here [in Ireland] before then, it was merely a regional distribution center."<sup>68</sup>

Fiddler John Vesey, in an interview with Mick Moloney in 1977, mentioned that he learned a sizable portion of his early repertoire from these reissues of early Irish American 78-rpm records, which he purchased on business trips to Tubercurry as a child, beginning in 1936:

I used to go to Tubercurry, Co. Sligo; my father used to sell turf there. And I would be allowed to buy a record every day I'd go down to load . . . two loads of turf I'd bring to Tubercurry. He would tell me that I was allowed to buy a record, so I would buy a record in Tubercurry and bring it home. Then the point was there; we had to have a wind-up gramophone. That's all we had, was a wind-up. My father paid four or five pounds for it at that time and bought it for me so I could learn from the gramophone. Along with Gorman's teaching, I bought Coleman's records, I bought Killoran's records, James Morrison, I bought one of two of his records, and I bought Paddy Sweeney's recordings. He had one or two at that time; all he made was one or two.<sup>69</sup>

Finally, with Decca's 1929 incorporation of an American Irish recording matrix, its 1932 purchase of Brunswick Records, and its 1938 incorporation of an Irish subsidiary in Dublin, Decca records made the final push into the Irish popular consciousness. With its massive library of American Irish recordings and its global reach, Decca became the main resource in Ireland for traditional Irish records. In the early 1930s virtually all of the records came through London as reissues of American records from the 1920s and 1930s. After 1938 Decca opened a subsidiary in Dublin, and the reissues began to be produced within Ireland.

Reg Hall has noted that the mid-1930s saw the waning of the availability of the smaller labels and the start of the Decca empire in Ireland:

Decca was a British company dating from about 1934, so it's not surprising that discs made by their American subsidiary were issued over here. By 1938, British issues stopped being retailed in the Free State, and Irish

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Decca re-issued them. They were by Coleman, Killoran, Gillespie, Sweeney, Pat Roche, McKenna, the McNulty Family, Dan Sullivan, Joe Maguire, etc., and a few singers. Columbias from the Depression years (eg. McGettigan, Morrison & Quinn) sold poorly in America; some were issued on (British) Regal-Zonophone but were not re-issued after 1938 in the Free State.<sup>70</sup>

With tastes changing in America and Ireland, and with the effects of the American Depression on international record sales and American recording companies, the late 1930s saw a major decline in traditional Irish instrumental recording, and with the advent of radio in Ireland, a substantial drop in Irish record sales.

As put forth in many publications on Irish music, these early records had a major impact on Irish traditional music. Musicians in Ireland were profoundly influenced by the recordings issuing from the American Irish. The artists with the greatest impact—Coleman, Killoran, Morrison, McKenna, Ennis, and Touhey—may have had such influence precisely because they were the first to record and their records were among the first to arrive in Ireland.<sup>71</sup> This is not to say that their music was not of top quality. As Harry Bradshaw has written about the records made by Michael Coleman,

Coleman's records are now regarded as classics of their kind and are among the finest examples of recorded folk music in the early twentieth Century. They were sent back to Ireland, where they gave inspiration to players; his style and repertoire were learnt and reproduced credibly by better players. Listened to all over the country, his articulation, phrasing, bowing and dynamics became a "standard" style. Through his prowess he exercised direction on repertoire too; the effects of this can be heard today in that some of his particular combinations in tune sets are still being played. Indeed, his . . . medium of the 78 rpm record itself has determined the duration of sets of tunes to this day: players still stick to the three-tune "track" which would fill one "side" on a standard 78.<sup>72</sup>

The records were also prevalent in Ireland, even in the rural areas:

I was told by one musician who would have been 80+ now that Ennis Morrison and Muller's *Saddle the Pony / Black Rogue* and *Liverpool Hornpipe* on Regal from American Columbia was in every cottage around his home in Co. Offaly, which is, of course, a gross exaggeration as few people had gramophones. However, it was issued here anonymously as "Irish Pipes, Violin & Piano," though later pressings gave the artists' names.<sup>73</sup>

Seamus Connolly, renowned fiddle player and Sullivan Artist in Residence at Boston College, mentioned in an interview with Mick Moloney in 2004 that he

first heard the Irish American fiddle players who had recorded on the early 78s from his father, a bargeman on the river Shannon. He recalled the impact those recordings had on his playing:

My father, he was a great collector of the old 78 records. We still have a lot of them back in Killaloe. The first time, I suppose, that I heard the music, would be my father playing the old 78 records, and he told me about Leo Rowsome and some of the great musicians up and down the Shannon. He talked a lot about Michael Coleman because he had heard records of Coleman on his visits to different houses. So he brought me home a recording of Coleman. I was probably about ten years old when I heard that [1954], and I actually cried when I heard Coleman playing. I thought it was . . . to me, it didn't sound like a fiddle, or a violin as I thought a violin should sound. It had that lonesome sound to it.<sup>74</sup>

Mick Moloney, in a piece on Irish music recordings in America, has mentioned the tangible results of these recordings in the playing of diasporic musicians in Chicago: “The influence of the recordings in America can be illustrated by an afternoon of music I recorded in Chicago in 1977, by fiddler Johnny McGreevy and uilleann piper Joe Shannon. At the end of the session I asked both men where they learned the tunes they had been playing. No fewer than 75 percent of the tunes, it turned out, had been learned from 78-rpm recordings. In addition, their playing style was very closely modeled on that of the musicians whose recordings they had listened to.”<sup>75</sup> So Irish American recordings indeed made their way back to Ireland and had a profound impact, echoes of which can still be heard today in both Ireland and the diaspora.

A number of social movements converged in a way that made the success and subsequent impact of early Irish American recordings almost inevitable. The anticolonial movement in Ireland, its resulting quest for authenticity, and the golden age of Irish music in America coincided perfectly with the arrival of the recording age. Prior to this musical exchanges by Capt. Francis O'Neill with his colleagues in Ireland had established a migratory route for recordings between America and Ireland in the early 1900s, relying almost exclusively on individual agency for transportation.

Recordings of Irish Americans did not just “make their way” to Ireland. The mythic cross-Atlantic trade route can be viewed in defined periods—each of which were influenced by advances in technology, social movements, and changes within the corporate structures of the major recording companies. Early musical migrations (roughly 1895–1926) involved individual agency: American enthusiasts posting cylinders or records to friends and family in Ireland and visitors to America returning with records and phonograph players. During this time some records were also available, in a limited capacity, through recording

companies in London. The mid-1920s saw an increase in the availability of records being produced in the United Kingdom (though creation of the Irish Free State restricted importation of U.K. records) and a resurgence in diasporic nationalism that spurred more people to send or bring records of Irish music to Ireland. In the early 1930s, with the mergers of a number of American subsidiaries of U.K. record labels, reissues of these early Irish American records became available from U.K. sources. By the time of the creation of Irish Decca in 1938, Irish reissues of American records were readily available. These reissues, along with those by Regal and Regal Zonophone, remained the most available and influential recordings in Irish music until the global sales slump surrounding the American Depression and subsequent dominance of radio as popular musical medium.

The commonly repeated phrase “These early 78-rpm records made their way to Ireland and had a profound effect upon the tradition” simplifies a very detailed and intricate musical exchange route during a formative time in Irish traditional music, the Irish Free State, and the global diaspora. These early systems of commercial and subcommercial musical exchange and the dialogues surrounding these exchanges seem to be the start of the system we still see in operation today in Irish and other folk musics. That is, an underground network of musicians and enthusiasts trading audio recordings through lines of friendship and familial ties, usually surrounding patterns of regional musical interest or common instrument.

This type of an underground music-sharing system would strike most as a modern phenomenon, yet the earliest manifestation of this system in Irish traditional music appeared in the first decade of the twentieth century. Even then it functioned as a means by which musicians could learn repertoire and through which musicians both at the geographic core of the tradition and in the diaspora were able to negotiate ideas of authenticity and traditionality. Younger generations of traditional musicians still freely circulate copies of these early recordings, and recent decades have seen the incorporation of a wide variety of recording technologies to capture and carry music back and forth across the Atlantic. The dialogue surrounding ideas of authenticity in Irish traditional music is much the same today as it was in the first decades of the anticolonialist movement in Ireland, and enthusiasts still rely upon these cross-Atlantic lines of dialogue in their search for the traditional and authentic in Irish music.

#### NOTES

I would like to thank Dr. Mick Moloney for his lifelong dedication to Irish music, especially Irish music in America. After arriving in America, Moloney took it upon himself to interview the oldest generations of Irish musicians, catching many of them years after their recording and performing careers had ended. His relentless effort to track down and record oral histories and his willingness to help interested scholars and students have allowed countless researchers access to an era that has otherwise vanished.

Much of this study is based on the information in his personal recordings or on work that has relied upon his interviews. In much the same way, Harry Bradshaw has steadily worked a second career tying up musical loose ends in Ireland. Irish music and the study of it are all the better for the efforts of these two gentlemen.

1. Reg Hall, correspondence with the author, December 20, 2006.
2. Kenny Mathieson, ed., *Celtic Music* (London: Outline Press, 2001), 21.
3. Harry Bradshaw and Jackie Small, "Leitrim's Master of the Concert Flute," *Musical Traditions Magazine* 7 (1987); available online at <http://www.iol.ie/~jfflynn/kenna.htm> (accessed November 30, 2009).
4. Harry Bradshaw, "Michael Coleman," in *The Companion to Traditional Irish Music*, ed. Fintan Vallely (Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 1999), 75.
5. Bradshaw and Small, "Leitrim's Master of the Concert Flute."
6. Pekka Gronow, "The Record Industry: The Growth of a Mass Medium," *Popular Music* 3 (1983): 53–75, 54–55.
7. Victor Greene, *A Passion for Polka: Old-Time Ethnic Music in America* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 73.
8. *Ibid.*, 71.
9. Méabh Ní Fuartháin, "O'Byrne DeWitt and Copley Records: A Window on Irish Music Recording in the U.S.A., 1900 to 1965" (master's thesis, University College Cork, National University of Ireland, 1993), 56; Harry Bradshaw, personal communication with the author, September 2, 2007.
10. Mick Moloney, "Irish Music in America: Continuity and Change" (Ph.D. diss., University of Indiana, 1992), 522.
11. Justus O'Byrne DeWitt, taped interview with Mick Moloney, April 4, 1977, Dedham, Mass., Mick Moloney Archive of Irish-American Music and Popular Culture, Archives of Irish America, Bobst Library, New York University, New York (hereafter cited as MMIAM). See also Ní Fuartháin, "O'Byrne DeWitt and Copley Records," 57–58; and Greene, *Passion for Polka*.
12. Ní Fuartháin, "O'Byrne DeWitt and Copley Records," 58; Bradshaw personal communication.
13. Richard Spottswood and Philippe Varlet, liner notes to album *From Galway to Dublin: Early Recordings of Traditional Irish Music*, Rounder Records 1087, 1993.
14. *Talking Machine World* 22 (1926): 78, courtesy of the Library of Congress Archives American Memory Collection, Washington, D.C.
15. *Ibid.*, 96.
16. The Gaelic League had worked very hard to canonize certain dance forms as Irish—that is, without British influence—and the Catholic priesthood were decrying the informal dances as bastions of drinking, fornication, and other such lascivious behavior. See Terry Moylan's wonderful treatment of social dancing in Ireland, *Irish Dances* (Dublin: Na Píobairí Uilleann, 1985); and Brendan Breathnach, *Dancing in Ireland* (Miltown Malbay, Ireland: Dal gCais Publications with the Folklore and Folk Music Society of Clare, 1983).
17. Hollis Payer, "Irish Fiddler James Kelly: A Matter of Tradition," *Fiddler Magazine* (Winter 1997/1998).

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18. See Breathnach, *Dancing in Ireland*; and Moylan, *Irish Dances*.
19. Mary P. Corcoran, "Emigrants, *Eirepreneurs*, and Opportunists: A Social Profile of Recent Irish Immigration in New York City," in *The New York Irish*, ed. Ronald Bayor and Timothy Meagher (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 484.
20. Varlet personal communication.
21. Ní Fuartháin, "O'Byrne DeWitt and Copley Records," 56.
22. Pat Mitchell and Jackie Small, *The Piping of Patsy Touhey* (Dublin: Na Píobairí Uilleann, 1986), 10.
23. Johanne Trew, "Treasures from the Attic: Viva Voce Records," *Journal of American Folklore*, 113, no. 449 (Summer 2000): 305-14, 305.
24. *Ibid.*, 306.
25. Gronow, "Record Industry," 59. The first figure is quoted by Gronow from the article by Tim Brooks, "Review of Murrells' *The Book of Golden Discs*," *Antique Phonograph Monthly* 5, no. 2 (1977): 8-13.
26. Gronow, "Record Industry," 59.
27. Varlet personal communication.
28. Moloney, "Irish Music in America," 527.
29. Varlet personal communication.
30. Please refer to the undisputed masters of American and ethnic record labels, Pekka Gronow, Richard Spottswood, and Philippe Varlet.
31. Louis Quinn, taped interview with Mick Moloney, n.d., MMIAM.
32. Susan Gedutis, *See You at the Hall: Boston's Golden Era of Irish Music and Dance* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004), 20.
33. Kenneth S. Goldstein, "The Impact of Recording Technology on the British Folk-song Revival," in *Folk Music and Modern Sound*, ed. William Ferris and Mary L. Hart (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1982), 3-14.
34. Payer, "Irish Fiddler James Kelly."
35. Bradshaw and Small, "Leitrim's Master of the Concert Flute."
36. Payer, "Irish Fiddler James Kelly."
37. Tony Engle and Reg Hall, liner notes to the album *James Morrison and Tom Ennis* (London: Topic Records, no. 127390, 1980). Thank you to Philippe Varlet for the original label information (Columbia Records, 1923).
38. Nicholas Carolan, *A Harvest Saved: Francis O'Neill and Irish Music in Chicago* (Cork, Ireland: Ossian Publications, 1997). Carolan's wonderful work on O'Neill is (as always) meticulous and thorough, and it is the default resource for information on O'Neill.
39. *Ibid.*, 34.
40. *Ibid.*, 24.
41. Mitchell and Small, *Piping of Patsy Touhey*, 1.
42. *Ibid.*, 3-4.
43. *Ibid.*, 9.
44. *Ibid.* O'Neill's letter was published in *An Píobaire* 16/17 (1974): 4. James C. McAuliffe was the American-born replacement piper and recorded a few wax cylinders for Edison to lackluster reviews.

45. Mitchell and Small, *Piping of Patsy Touhey*, 9.

46. Roughly three dozen O'Neill cylinders were donated to the Ward Archives of Irish Music in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, at the close of 2006. Of these, twenty-three were solo or ensemble wax-cylinder recordings of Patsy Touhey, though it is not known if they were recorded by Touhey or O'Neill. Barry Stapleton, personal communication with the author, January 11, 2007. Many of these can be heard on their Web site, and on the Web site of the Irish Traditional Music Archives ([www.itma.ie](http://www.itma.ie)).

47. Minutes from the record book of the first Dublin Pipers' Club, from a meeting dated Friday, May 14, 1901. This manuscript is held at the Allen Library, Christian Brothers, Edmund Rice Centre, Dublin, and is electronically available through the Archive of Na Píobairí Uilleann, Dublin.

48. Mitchell and Small, *Piping of Patsy Touhey*, 10, republished in *An Píobaire* 16/17 (1974): 5–6. It should be noted that the name of the recipient of the letter is taken from Mitchell and Small (1986), as it is not noted in *An Píobaire*. The letter is not dated in either publication, but it was probably written in late 1911 or early 1912.

49. *An Píobaire* 18 (1974): 5.

50. *An Píobaire* 16/17 (1974): 3.

51. *An Píobaire* 16/17 (1974): 3.

52. *An Píobaire* 16/17 (1974): 3.

53. *An Píobaire* 18 (1974): 4.

54. *An Píobaire* 20/21 (1975): 2.

55. *An Píobaire* 18 (1974): 4.

56. *An Píobaire* 20/21 (1975): 2.

57. *An Píobaire* 18 (1974): 4.

58. Evan M. Klock, "Music Merchandising Moves into a House of Many Mansions," *Notes*, 1, no.2 (March 1944): 16–26, 18–19.

59. Nicholas Carolan, recorded interview with the author by phone, January 4, 2007.

60. John Vesey, interviewed by Rich Nevins, n.d., MMIAM.

61. Eddie Cahill, recorded interview by Mick Moloney, January 1, 1978, MMIAM.

62. Bradshaw and Small, "Leitrim's Master of the Concert Flute."

63. Carolan interview.

64. Ní Fuartháin, "O'Byrne DeWitt and Copley Records," 56.

65. Varlet personal communication.

66. Hall correspondence.

67. *Ibid.*

68. Carolan interview.

69. John Vesey, interviewed by Mick Moloney, January 8, 1977, MMIAM.

70. Hall correspondence.

71. Many would argue that the major recording figures were predominantly from Sligo and that as a result, a Sligo fiddling style became dominant in Ireland and America. Even today in New York City, most native New York fiddle players still carry aspects of a Sligo style introduced in these early recordings.

72. Bradshaw, "Michael Coleman," 75.

73. Hall correspondence.

74. Seamus Connelly, recorded interview by Mick Moloney, December 7, 2004, MMIAM.

75. Mick Moloney, "Irish Ethnic Recordings and the Irish-American Imagination," in *Ethnic Recordings in America: A Neglected Heritage* (Washington, D.C.: American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, 1982), 92.

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