



Julia Clifford
Fiddle Recital and Tribute

World Fiddle Day in Scartaglin
21 April 2016

Julia Clifford Fiddle Recital & Tribute

presented by

Máire Ní Chaoimh & Aoife O'Keeffe

in Lyons's Bar, Scartaglin

as part of World Fiddle Day

21 April 2016

Tune notations by Paul de Grae.

1. Bill the Weaver's & Paddy Lyons's

Bill the Weaver's



Musical notation for the first jig, "Bill the Weaver's". It consists of four staves of music in G major and 6/8 time. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. The second staff begins at measure 5, the third at measure 9, and the fourth at measure 14. Each staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Paddy Lyons's



Musical notation for the second jig, "Paddy Lyons's". It consists of four staves of music in G major and 6/8 time. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. The second staff begins at measure 18 and includes first and second endings. The third staff begins at measure 22, and the fourth at measure 27. Each staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Two jigs, *Bill the Weaver's* and *Paddy Lyons's*, played by Julia & Billy Clifford on the album 1982 Gael-Linn album "Ceol as Sliabh Luachra".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/bill-the-weavers-and-paddy>

2. The Cullen Slides

no. 1



5

no. 2



13

The image shows two staves of musical notation for 'The Cullen Slides'. The first staff, labeled 'no. 1', begins at measure 1 and ends at measure 8. The second staff, labeled 'no. 2', begins at measure 9 and ends at measure 16. Both staves are in the key of D major (one sharp) and 12/8 time. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests, with repeat signs at the end of each staff.

The Cullen Slides, played by Julia & Billy Clifford on the 1982 Gael-Linn album "Ceol as Sliabh Luachra".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/cullen-slides>.

3. Humours of Lisheen & Art O'Keeffe's

Humours of Lisheen

5

10

14

Art O'Keeffe's

19

23

28

32

Julia accompanied on piano by Reg Hall, from the 1976 Topic album "The Humours of Lisheen". Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-3>

"Julia learned these as a girl and they both appear to be local Lisheen tunes [though the first is in O'Neill as 'The Woeful Widow' and in Petrie as 'Slán agus beanacht lé búadhraibh an t-saoghail': PdG]. She imagines she must be one of the only people to play the second one - it was one of Tom Billy's which Art O'Keeffe picked up and then gave to Julia, but Denis and the rest didn't bother to learn it." (Alan Ward in the booklet with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums)

4. The Blue Riband & Merry Girl

The Blue Riband

Musical notation for "The Blue Riband" in G major, 2/4 time. The piece consists of 14 measures. The first line contains measures 1-4. The second line contains measures 5-8, with a first ending (1.) and second ending (2.) over measures 7-8. The third line contains measures 9-12. The fourth line contains measures 13-14, ending with a double bar line and a sharp sign.

Merry Girl

Musical notation for "Merry Girl" in G major, 2/4 time. The piece consists of 30 measures. The first line contains measures 18-21. The second line contains measures 22-25. The third line contains measures 26-29. The fourth line contains measures 30-33, ending with a double bar line and a sharp sign.

"The Blue Riband" and "Merry Girl", played by Julia and John Clifford with Reg Hall on piano, from the 1976 Topic album "The Humours of Lisheen".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/4-1>

(continued over)

Alan Ward writes, in the booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"These are two of the few polkas which John has remembered over the years. He learned the first from Dan Leary, one of Tom Billy's pupils who now [*i.e.* 1976] plays regularly with one of the best-known 'modern' Sliabh Luachra accordionists, Jimmy Doyle. Dan got it from the recording by Mike Hanafin (of Callinafercy, near Killorglin, Co. Kerry). 'Merry Girl' almost certainly came from the recording by John McKenna and Michael Gaffney (Irish Decca W4188, 1934). The title 'Up and Away' appears on the record sleeve and label, but this is a deliberate mistake to confuse discographers of the future! McKenna and Gaffney recorded 'Up and Away' on the 1934 disc with 'Merry Girl' and Tony Engle and I had become familiar with the medley through its reissue on Folkways FW8821. We got the titles mixed and only noticed this at the last minute."

(facing page)

Two hornpipes, *Freddy Kimmel's* and *The Home Brew*, played by Julia and John Clifford with Reg Hall on piano, from the 1976 Topic album "The Humours of Lisheen".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-5>.

Alan Ward writes, in the booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"The Cliffords originally learned these from Padraig [*O'Keefe*]. The naming of the first one is curious: they say it must have come from a record by 'Freddy Kimmel', by whom they must mean John Kimmel (accordion) of Brooklyn who recorded prolifically in the early years of the [*20th*] century; but Reg Hall possesses or knows of virtually his whole output and this hornpipe does not appear in it. Sonny Riordan of Tureen Cahill (fiddle), another pupil of Padraig's, was recorded by John Coakley playing this same combination of tunes and he called the first 'Delahunty's' [*this may be a typo or misunderstanding, as that title is generally applied to the second tune. PdG*]. 'The Home Brew' is very common in and out of Sliabh Luachra and was first recorded by Frank Quinn (fiddle) on Columbia 33003F in about 1925. John and Julia still play it frequently."

5. Freddy Kimmel's & The Home Brew

Freddy Kimmel's



The Home Brew

C notes marked with a natural and an arrow are played slightly sharper than C natural



6. Untitled Slide & The Worn Torn Petticoat

untitled slide

5

The Worn Torn Petticoat

9

13

17

Untitled slide and *The Worn Torn Petticoat*, played by Julia on the 1976 Topic album "The Humours of Lisheen".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-6>

Alan Ward writes, in the Topic booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"Julia says Pádraig [*O'Keefe*] took the second of what are called the 'Ballydesmond Polkas' on 'Star Above the Garter' and 'made a slide of it', producing the first of these two tunes – she is certainly right about the similarity between the polka (which Art O'Keefe calls 'Maurice Manley's', see CRE 2 [*Breathnach's 'Ceol Rince na hÉireann', vol. 2*] no. 117) and this slide. 'The Worn Torn Petticoat' is said to be a variant of the reel 'The Old Torn Petticoat; and is one of the most common slides heard in Sliabh Luachra today."

7. Julia Clifford's Polka & Bill the Weaver's

Julia Clifford's Polka



Musical notation for Julia Clifford's Polka, written in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 2/4 time. The piece consists of 14 measures. The first line contains measures 1-4. The second line contains measures 5-8, with first and second endings indicated by brackets and numbers 1 and 2. The third line contains measures 9-12. The fourth line contains measures 13-14, also with first and second endings indicated.

Bill the Weaver's



Musical notation for Bill the Weaver's, written in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 2/4 time. The piece consists of 32 measures. The first line contains measures 19-22. The second line contains measures 23-26. The third line contains measures 27-30. The fourth line contains measures 31-32.

Julia Clifford's Polka and Bill the Waiver's, played by Julia on the 1976 Topic album "The Humours of Lisheen".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-7>.

(continued over)

Alan Ward writes, in the Topic booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"Both of these came from Julia's father originally and the names were made up to go on the record. Denis used habitually to play 'Bill the Waiver's' after a different polka, recorded from him by Breandán Breathnach and printed in 'Ceol' vol. 2, no. 4, p.100 as 'A polka reel', and his version had quite a few minor differences from Julia's, perhaps under the influence of Johnny O'Leary. I have not heard or heard of anyone other than Julia playing 'Julia Clifford's' which seems to be quite a rarity now. She displays some very delicate and precise finger-work in this performance."

"Julia Clifford's" is no longer a rarity, having been popularised by Jackie Daly as the first of three "Millstreet Polkas". It's also track 1 on the CD, "resonance" by Amala (Reidun Schlesinger & Paul de Grae). ☺

*Tune no. 8, "Johnny Cope", is played as a duet
by Máire and Aoife.*

(facing page)

John Mahinney's No. 2 and The Ducks and the Oats, played by Julia on the 1976 Topic album "The Humours of Lisheen".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-9>

Alan Ward writes, in the Topic booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"The first of these is one of the many variants of 'Brian O'Lynn' but is sufficiently different from printed and recorded versions to convince one that it does not derive from them. The second seems to be quite a well-known tune too, but I have not so far traced an obvious source or more usual name. This name was invented by Johnny Darby, Bill the Waiver's neighbour in Lisheen. John Coakley recorded it from Jack Connell of Ballydesmond who calls it 'The Maid of the Mountains'."

9. John Mahinney's No. 2 & The Ducks and the Oats.

John Mahinney's No. 2

most of the C notes are played slightly sharp



The Ducks and the Oats



10. The Frisco Hornpipe.



The Frisco Hornpipe, played by Julia & John Clifford, with Reg Hall on piano, on the 1976 Topic album "The Humours of Lisheen".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-10>

Alan Ward writes, in the Topic booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"Like 'The Harlequin' on 'The Star of Munster Trio' [*Topic album of John, Julia & Billy Clifford*] this came from Pádraig [O'Keefe] and I have found no further information about it. Denis Murphy and Johnny Leary were also still playing it recently."

11. I Looked East and I Looked West



A polka, *I Looked east and I Looked West*, played by Julia on the 1976 Topic album "The Humours of Lisheen".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/11th-set-i-looked-east>.

Alan Ward writes, in the Topic booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"Julia learned this tune in Lisheen and had no name for it. Maurice O'Keeffe gave it this name when he played it for John Coakley in July 1976."

Two hornpipes, *Cronin's* and *The Stack of Barley*, played by Julia with Denis Murphy on the 1976 Topic album "Kerry Fiddles".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/cronins-and-the-stack-of>

Alan Ward writes, in the Topic booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"The recordings here [*for the album*] were originally made by Seamus Ennis while employed by the BBC. The session took place in Charlie Horan's Bar, Castleisland, on 9 September 1952. The party adjourned to Pdraig's house after the pub closed. The three had not been together over any length of time for several years: Denis was only recently back from the US and Julia was on a holiday visit.

[...]

[*Re "octave playing", when one of two or three fiddles plays the tune an octave lower than the others*] Julia says she normally took the low part, although 'they could all do it'.

[...]

[*'Cronin's'*] is usually associated with Edward Cronin of Tipperary via O'Neill, although the tune does not appear in O'Neill's well-known compilations. A similar version (in octaves) called 'Denis Murphy's' by Sean O'Shea and Bobby Casey appears on 'Paddy in the Smoke' (Topic 12T176).

'The (little) Stack of Barley' is common and Denis and Julia give a similar though slower rendition on 'The Star Above the Garter'."

For more on "octave playing", see the note to no. 19, *The Ballydesmond Polkas*.

12. Cronin's Hornpipe & The Stack of Barley

Cronin's Hornpipe



The Stack of Barley



Three reels, *The Humours of Galtymore* (a.k.a. *The Galtee Rangers*), *Callaghan's* and *The New-mown Meadows*, played by Julia with Denis Murphy on the 1976 Topic album "Kerry Fiddles"; Julia as usual playing the lower octave. Here's a link to the recording: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/humours-of-galtymore-and-o>.

Alan Ward writes, in the Topic booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"The first two are also performed, in different combinations, on 'The Star Above the Garter' where 'The Humours of Galtymore' is called 'The Galtee Rangers', under which name it is no. 201 in CRE2 [*vol. 2 of Breandán Breathnach's 'Ceol Rince na hÉireann' – a transcription from Denis's playing in 1966*]. The interesting thing is that here the tunes are in G, making it possible for the complete 'bass' part to be played an octave down, whereas on 'The Star Above the Garter' (and in CRE2) the tunes are in D and played in unison.

"The melodies are much the same in each case, but the ornamentation varies to suit the key and the G version of 'Callaghan's' is rather simpler all round than the highly developed D version, and alters the line of the tune in the fourth bar of the second part, sacrificing one of the distinctive features of the D version. Both the G and D performances are polished but it is most likely that the D was standard and G was only for octave playing, perhaps on Pádraig's suggestion.

"'Callaghan's' is one of three reels closely associated with Cal Callaghan of Doon. It is also known as 'The Doon Reel' (the name used in CRE2, no. 270, from Denis's playing), but this name may only date from the time when Paddy Cronin used it for his recording on the Copley label, when he coupled it with 'The Doon Reel No. 2', another of the three. The latter appears as 'Gleann Eoghain' in CRE2 (no. 154, from Denis) but it is better known as 'The Celebrated Opera' which was the name used by Pádraig. It can also be heard played by Julia with Con Curtin and Denis McMahan (both originally from Brosna) on 'Paddy in the Smoke' under the name 'Chorus Reel' [*the earliest printed setting I have found is as 'Chorus—Jig' in 'Ryan's Mammoth Collection', published in Boston in 1883, a copy of which seems to have made its way to Sliabh Luachra – perhaps via Cal Callaghan himself, who lived in Ohio for some time. PdG*]. Curtin and McMahan can also be heard on 'Paddy in the Smoke' playing the third of the Callaghan's reels which appears to have attracted no other name than 'Callaghan's' (as in CRE2 no 131, from Denis Murphy).

"'The New-mown Meadows' is better known as 'The Silver Spear' or 'Spire' and is common in many areas [*it is also known as 'The Old Silver Spear'; 'The Silver Spire' is generally applied to an unrelated tune, also known as 'Bennett's Favourite' or 'The Great Eastern'. PdG*]. It is still one of Julia's favourites which she plays regularly as a solo."

13. The Humours of Galtymore, Callaghan's
& The New-mown Meadows.

The Humours of Galtymore

5

9

13

Callaghan's

21

25

29

The New-mown Meadows

37

42

46

Three jigs, *Apples in Winter*, *The Maid on the Green* and *The Thrush in the Straw*, played by Julia with Denis Murphy and Pdraig O'Keeffe on the 1976 Topic album "Kerry Fiddles"; Julia as usual playing the lower octave.

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-14>

Alan Ward writes, in the Topic booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"All these are quite common. 'Apples in Winter' bears only a very general resemblance to the tune of that name in O'Neill (no. 300). It is more normally called 'The Geese in the Bog' but the tune of that name in O'Neill is different again. [*There is some confusion here. The jig called 'Apples in Winter' on the recording is in O'Neill's 'Dance Music of Ireland' as 'Delaney's Drummers' (no. 305), on the page facing 'Apples in Winter'. I have never heard it called 'The Geese in the Bog'; however that title is more associated with the third tune in this set, 'The Thrush in the Straw'. PdG.*] Our tune appeared on well-known 78s under such names as 'Paddy in London' (Ennis and Morrison, Vocalion 14354, 1922) and 'Ginger's Favourite' (Cashin and Doyle, HMV B3271, 1928).

""The Maid on the Green' follows closely the setting in O'Neill (no. 114).

""The Thrush in the Straw' resembles closely the recording by The Lough Gill Quartet (HMV IM949, early 1930s) under the name 'Mist on the Meadow'." [*It is one of the many variants of 'The Geese in the Bog'; compare the setting under that title in CRE2, no. 53. PdG.*]

14. Apples in Winter, The Maid on the Green
& The Thrush in the Straw

Apples in Winter

Musical notation for 'Apples in Winter' in G major, 6/8 time. The piece consists of 14 measures. The first line contains measures 1-4. The second line contains measures 5-8, with first and second endings marked '1.' and '2.' respectively. The third line contains measures 9-12. The fourth line contains measures 13-14.

The Maid on the Green

Musical notation for 'The Maid on the Green' in G major, 6/8 time. The piece consists of 30 measures. The first line contains measures 18-21. The second line contains measures 22-25. The third line contains measures 26-29. The fourth line contains measures 30-33.

The Thrush in the Straw

Musical notation for 'The Thrush in the Straw' in G major, 6/8 time. The piece consists of 46 measures. The first line contains measures 34-37. The second line contains measures 38-41. The third line contains measures 42-45. The fourth line contains measures 46-49.

Two reels, *Kennedy's Favourite* and *The Woman of the House*, played by Denis Murphy on the 1976 Topic album "Kerry Fiddles".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-15>

Alan Ward writes, in the Topic booklet printed to go with the series of "Music from Sliabh Luachra" albums:

"'Kennedy's Favourite' was perhaps named after Kennedy, a travelling fiddler from whom Bill the Waiver [*Denis and Julia's father*] got some tunes. [*Not so: it's in O'Neill as 'Jim Kennedy's Favourite', named for his source, a fiddler from County Leitrim; that setting is an almost exact duplicate of an untitled reel in Levey's 'The Dance Music of Ireland. First Collection' (1858). PdG.*] Denis performs it in similar style on Gael-Linn CE 11 (78 rpm, now deleted).

"'The Woman of the House' is common (O'Neill no. 565). John McKenna (Leitrim, flute) recorded it in 1924 (Gennet 5549) but the really influential recording was Coleman's on Victor (reissued on IRC3327). Denis's version is probably based on this, since the basic treatment is the same. Denis, or maybe Pádraig before him, abstracted the more robust of the decorations, and retained some of the original bowing (e.g. in the second bar of the second part) where it suited his highly rhythmic style of playing. The more flowery and intrusive grace notes have been scrapped. The performance is interesting to compare with the more introspective rendition by Bobby Casey on 'Paddy in the Smoke' (Topic 12T176) which also seems to be based on Coleman's.

"On the recorded evidence, Denis played reels in this superbly controlled 'full steam ahead' style during the period in Kerry between his two trips to America, and this performance must be one of the very finest in the whole range of recorded Irish fiddle music. Another reel on 'The Lark in the Morning' (side 1, track 8), recorded in 1955, is hardly less impressive."

Needless to say, this transcription is a mere outline of what Denis gets up to on this track.

15. Kennedy's Favourite & The Woman of the House

Kennedy's Favourite



The Woman of the House



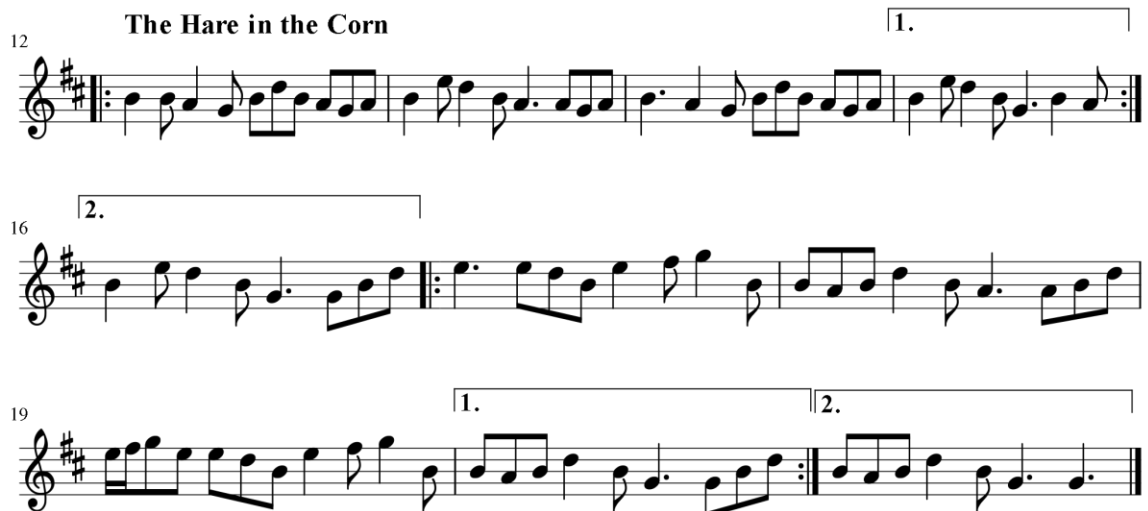
16. Rathawaun & The Hare in the Corn.

Rathawaun



Musical notation for the tune "Rathawaun". It consists of four staves of music in G major and 12/8 time. The first staff contains the first six measures. The second staff starts at measure 4 and includes first and second endings. The third staff continues from measure 7. The fourth staff starts at measure 9 and includes first and second endings, with the second ending labeled "last time".

The Hare in the Corn



Musical notation for the tune "The Hare in the Corn". It consists of three staves of music in G major and 12/8 time. The first staff starts at measure 12 and includes a first ending. The second staff starts at measure 16 and includes a second ending. The third staff starts at measure 19 and includes first and second endings.

Rathawaun and *The Hare in the Corn*, played by Julia and Denis on the 1968 Claddagh album "The Star Above the Garter".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-16-1>.

"Rathawaun" is a garbling of the placename Rathduane, which is near Rathmore. Even within Sliabh Luachra, there are quite a few tunes called "The Hare in the Corn", so confusion sometimes arises. This is normal. ☺

17. The Munster Jig & Munster Buttermilk.

The Munster Jig

Musical notation for 'The Munster Jig' in G major, 6/8 time. The piece consists of 15 measures. It begins with a repeat sign. The first ending (1.) spans measures 11-12, and the second ending (2.) spans measures 13-14. The piece concludes with the instruction 'last time' over the final measure (15).

Munster Buttermilk

Musical notation for 'Munster Buttermilk' in G major, 6/8 time. The piece consists of 17 measures. It begins with a repeat sign. The first ending (1.) spans measures 21-22, and the second ending (2.) spans measures 23-24. The piece concludes with a final measure (33).

(see over for commentary)

(previous page)

The Munster Jig and *Munster Buttermilk*, played by Denis Murphy on the 1968 Claddagh album "The Star Above the Garter". Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-17>

The title *The Munster Jig* suggests that it was coined by an outsider, because a local would not find that very helpful. A clear relative, and possible ancestor, is *Jackson's Bottle of Claret*, which O'Neill published in "Waifs & Strays of Gaelic Melody". O'Neill wrote: "The earliest printed setting of this melody which we have been able to discover is that found in 'A Pocket Volume of Airs, Duets, Songs, Marches, etc., Vol. I', published by Paul Alday in Dublin about 1800-1803. It is included among 'Six Favorite Original Airs never printed till now'."

My friend Tony Buffery discovered that *Jackson's Bottle of Claret* is found earlier in "Hime's 2nd Collection of Favourite Country Dances for this Present Year 1796 with Bases & Proper Figures for Dancing."

As with *The Hare in the Corn* earlier, we enter confusing territory with *Munster Buttermilk*. That title is also used for an unrelated jig, more widely known as *Behind the Haystack*; the *Munster Buttermilk* in Breathnach's CRE2 is that tune. Breathnach prints our *Munster Buttermilk* in CRE1 as *The Sports of Multyfarnham*, a title I have never heard used; it refers to a village in far-off County Westmeath.

(facing page)

The Lady on the Island and *Callaghan's*, two reels played by Julia and Denis on "The Star Above the Garter". Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-18>

The Lady on the Island is arguably a version of *Rolling on the Ryegrass*, though not a very close one. The earliest printed setting I can find is in "O'Neill's Irish Music" (1915). *Callaghan's* is played here in the usual D setting; see set no. 13 for the less common G setting, played in octaves. The title refers to Pádraig O'Keeffe's uncle, Cal O'Callaghan. At the end of this booklet I've included some stuff I wrote about him a few years ago.

18. The Lady on the Island & Callaghan's.

The Lady on the Island



Callaghan's



The Ballydesmond Polkas, played by Julia and Denis on the 1968 Claddagh album "The Star Above the Garter".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-19>.

As usual, Julia is playing the lower octave. Tony Buffery commented to me a few years ago:

The innovation of fiddlers playing in octaves ('bassing') was from POK, originally used for polkas to increase the volume of the music at a time when PA systems were not available. One fiddle would drop down an octave on the turn or at the change. As to where that innovation came from, recently I went to a concert of Southern Appalachian Old Time music by Ira Bernstein and Riley Baugus from North Carolina. When they played fiddle together, one dropped down an octave below the other. I enquired how that came about and was told it was an Old Time invention from way back to increase the volume of the music before PA systems were invented. I wonder now if POK got the idea from Cal Callaghan.

These three tunes came from Tom Billy Murphy; Paddy Cronin recorded the third one as *Tom Billy's Polka*.

Breathnach has a transcription of the second one from the playing of Denis & Julia's neighbour Art O'Keeffe, titled *Maurice Manley's Polka* (CRE1 117). The untitled slide in set no. 6 is Julia's adaptation of it. There are many variants of it in different rhythms, and it's hard to say which is the oldest – not this relatively modern polka version anyway. PW Joyce has it as a song air, *The Wedding Ring*, in his "Old Irish Folk Music and Songs" (1909), collected in 1852 in Coolfree, County Limerick; and there are numerous reel variants, including Petrie's *The Gooseberry Blossom* and O'Neill's *The Old Grey Gander*.

19. The Ballydesmond Polkas.

no. 1

5
9
13
17
21

no. 2

25
29
34
38
last time

no. 3

44
48
53
57

Two reels, *Sean-Bhean na gCartaí* and *Tom Billy's*, played by Julia and Denis on the 1968 Claddagh album "The Star Above the Garter".

Here's a link to the recording:

<https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/no-20-seanbhean-na-g>.

The repeats on these tunes are often a source of confusion. This transcription shows how Julia & Denis play them on the recording: first tune ABB, second tune AB.

Sean-Bhean na gCartaí ("Old Woman of the Cards" – a fortune-teller??) was Willie Clancy's name for the first tune. It's in O'Neill as a hornpipe, *The Banks of the Ilen* (the Ilen is a river near O'Neill's west Cork birthplace), in a setting almost identical to *Six Mile Bridge* in Levey's second collection (1873). It's also played as a jig, *The Humours of Drinagh*.

The second tune is related to *Captain Kelly's Reel*; the resemblance is clearer in the D setting in *Allan's Irish Fiddler* than in the G setting in O'Neill. Since *Tom Billy's* is such a common title in Sliabh Luachra, for tunes of various types, it may be useful to note some other titles for it. There's a 1949 recording of Denis playing it solo on the RTE CD "Denis Murphy: Music from Sliabh Luachra", under the title *The New Post Office*, with an extra part closely resembling the first part of *The Boy in the Gap*; that setting is transcribed in CRE5, no. 146. The tune is also called *The Gleanntán Reel* (after Pádraig O'Keefe's birthplace) and *The Humours of Scartaglin* – an appropriate name on World Fiddle day in Scart!

20. Seanbhean na gCartaí & Tom Billy's.

Seanbhean na gCartaí

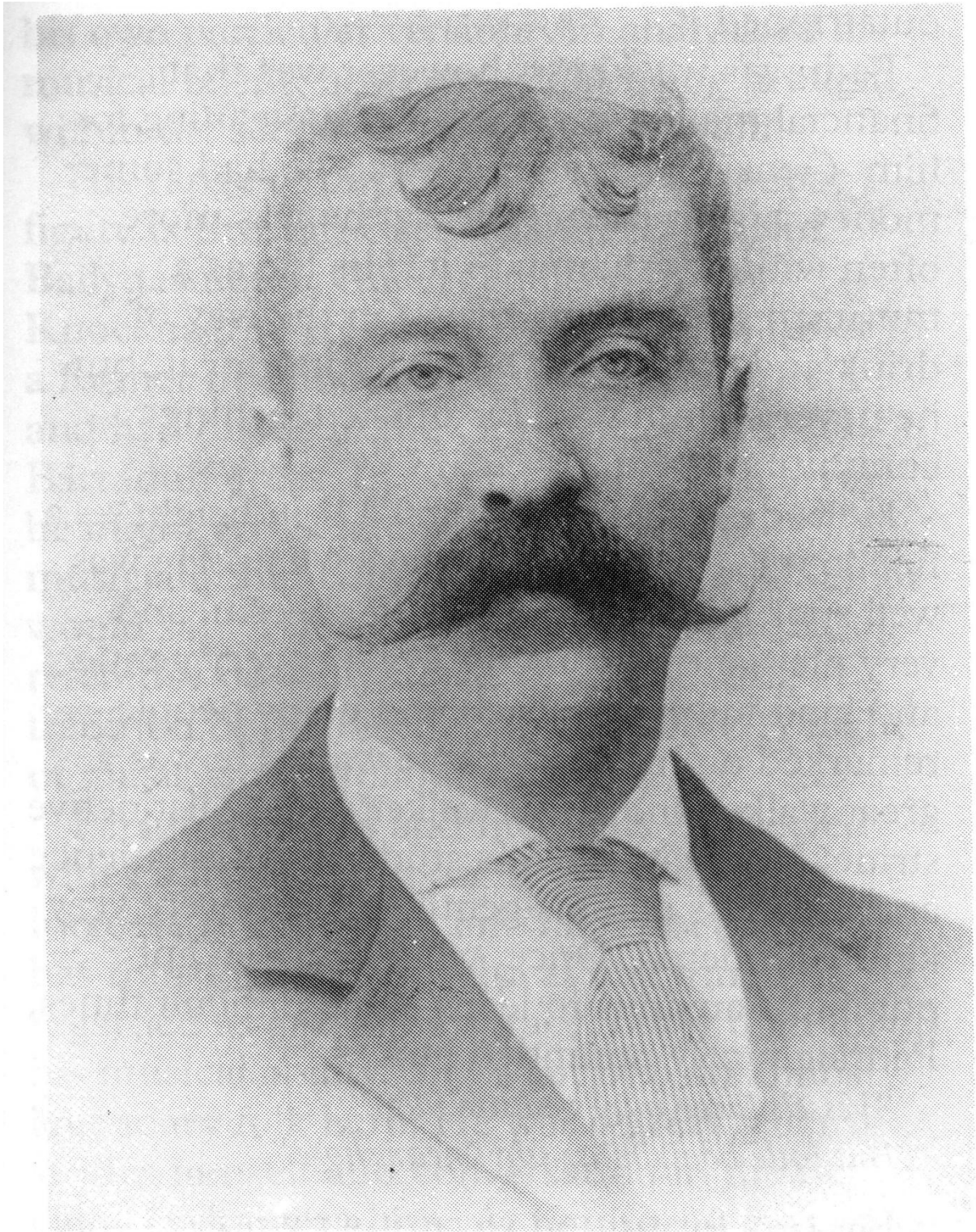


Musical notation for the first piece, 'Seanbhean na gCartaí'. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B. The second staff starts at measure 5. The third staff starts at measure 9 and includes a repeat sign at the beginning. The fourth staff starts at measure 13 and ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Tom Billy's



Musical notation for the second piece, 'Tom Billy's'. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff starts at measure 17 and includes a repeat sign at the beginning. The second staff starts at measure 21. The third staff starts at measure 25. The fourth staff starts at measure 29 and ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The word 'end' is written below the staff at measure 29.



Cal O'Callaghan an uncle of Padraig O'Keeffe.

This is Pádraig O'Keeffe's uncle, Cal O'Callaghan. Here's some stuff I wrote about him a few years ago:

Around the middle of the 19th century a journeyman carpenter from Kenmare by the name of O'Callaghan settled in Doon, near Kiskeam, County Cork, and married a widow called Mrs. O'Connor. They had five children, four girls and a boy. One of the girls, Margaret, married school teacher John O'Keeffe about the 1880s, and they had a daughter and four sons, one of whom was Pádraig O'Keeffe (1887-1963). Margaret's only brother was called Callaghan O'Callaghan, or Cal for short, and he was young Pádraig's music teacher.

Earlier, around about 1860, Cal had disagreed with his own father and gone to America, settling in Ohio in a largely Scottish community (Paddy O'Brien knows a great deal more about this than I do). Cal stayed away for over twenty years, returning home around the same time as Margaret got married.

"Home" was, as mentioned above, a place called Doon; the several *Doon Reels* in the Sliabh Luachra repertoire, as well as the several *Callaghan's* reels and hornpipes, are all associated with either Cal or Margaret. These tunes are the only real clues that I'm aware of as to what tunes Cal actually passed on. I've speculated (and I think Paddy O'Brien agrees) that Cal might have been the source - via the Ohio Scots - for *Johnny Cope*, either in its original Scottish form, or in the elaborated setting which is generally attributed to Padraig O'Keeffe.

On the basis of Cal's influence, it has occasionally been suggested that the Sliabh Luachra style "really" comes from Ohio, and I've heard the late Dan O'Connell of Knocknagree cited as the authority for that idea (which I must say sounds unlikely). But Sliabh Luachra music is more than just Padraig O'Keeffe, outstanding genius though he was; there were several other key figures. And anyway Cal's (and thus Padraig's) musical lineage is not dependent on the Ohio Scots. In Ireland, Cal and his siblings learned from the famous Corney Drew (b.1832, a tenant farmer and music teacher from Kiskeam), who in turn was taught by a blind itinerant fiddler named Timothy O'Grady, from Tipperary. Young Pádraig was fostered out, as was the common custom, to his mother's family home in Doon, where he was taught music by Cal; Pádraig said on many occasions that his music came from his mother's family, by which he mainly meant Cal, though his mother also played concertina and sang.

It's no secret that a great many Sliabh Luachra polkas and slides turn out to be Scottish tunes originally (with all due reservations about the word "originally"); while Cal almost certainly introduced some Scottish tunes, there are other likely sources also, such as fife-and-drum bands, printed collections, and so on.

So, if Dan O'Connell did indeed attribute the Sliabh Luachra style to Cal Callaghan's Ohio Scots neighbours (and I never heard him say so), he was not entirely incorrect, but he was being jovially extravagant. In Ireland, as no doubt elsewhere, verbal inventiveness is not the same as telling lies, but neither should it be confused with hard fact.

The Sliabh Luachra setting of *Johnny Cope* neatly illustrates the difficulty of assigning origins to tunes in our shared repertoire. What "nationality" is a tune learned by Cal O'Callaghan from a Scottish musician in America, as played today by a young Sliabh Luachra musician who learned it from a recording of Pádraig O'Keefe? Irish? Scottish? American? And what is it when Paddy O'Brien plays it in Ohio: a local tune? It's arguable that a tune's real identity is in the way it's played at any given moment, whatever its previous known history might be – bearing in mind that its previous history is likely to be incomplete, because based mainly on a paper trail which inevitably can tell little about the "folk process" by which a tune is naturalised in a community.

Very little is known of Cal's time in Ohio, so I can't say whether or not he also picked up tunes from vaudeville players there, as has been suggested; but if he was like his nephew, he picked up tunes from everywhere. There certainly seems to have been a copy of "Ryan's Mammoth Collection" in circulation in Sliabh Luachra, and it may well have been brought back by Cal: a clue is the *Chorus Jig* (actually a reel), the last tune in "Ryan's", which passed into the Sliabh Luachra repertoire, via Cal and Pádraig, as one of the aforementioned *Doon Reels* (recorded by Paddy Cronin on a 78 as *Doon Reel No.2*).

Another American collection in use in Sliabh Luachra, and possibly brought by Cal, was "New and Scientific Self-instructing School for the Violin" by George Saunders, published Boston in 1847. Dan Herlihy has this book, or a copy of it.

As well as these American influences on Sliabh Luachra, it would be interesting to pursue the Tipperary connection. Tipperary, as the heartland of B/C accordion style in modern times, might be considered the musical antithesis of Sliabh Luachra, but as noted above, there is a musical lineage stretching back from Pádraig O'Keefe through Cal O'Callaghan and Corney Drew to Timothy O'Grady, who left Tipperary under a cloud and moved to Rockchapel in the early 19th century. O'Grady had been a big house retainer, a fiddle master and a dancing master, and may have been one of the people involved in the adaptation of the formal quadrille to local taste, i.e., the very beginnings of the polka sets which are central to Sliabh Luachra music and dance.

Another tantalising glimpse of a connection between Sliabh Luachra and Tipperary is the fiddle style of Edward Cronin (c.1838-c.1918), a near-contemporary of Corney Drew (b.1832). Cronin was from Limerick Junction, County Tipperary, but emigrated to America, eventually settling in Chicago where he became one of Francis O'Neill's most important sources. O'Neill's cylinder recording of Cronin playing the jig *Banish Misfortune* clearly shows Cronin's use of the "four notes in the time of three" figure

which is a characteristic feature of Sliabh Luachra jig playing (the recording is now available on the double CD, "The Francis O'Neill Cylinders", issued by The Ward Irish Music Archives in 2010).

Matt Cranitch commented:

In Paul's extensive contribution he refers to the book by George Saunders, "New and Scientific Self-instructing School for the Violin". In fact the full description given on the cover of this publication reads as follows: "New and Scientific Self-instructing School for the Violin, on an entirely different method from any work of the kind heretofore offered to the public in this country, intended for Beginners, Amateurs, Business Players, and Teachers. In three parts, complete in one. By George Saunders, Professor of Music and Dancing."

A point to note in relation to the Sliabh Luachra repertoire is that this book includes *Durang's Hornpipe*, a tune played as a reel by Denis Murphy, but also to be heard as a hornpipe. In addition, the book includes *The Chorus Jig*, to which Paul made reference as being featured in Ryan's Mammoth Collection. This tune is also to be found in Howe's Diamond School for the Violin (Boston, 1861).

With further regard to the crossover from reel to hornpipe and vice versa, the Saunders book has a tune called *Smith's Reel*, which Saunders claims as his own. It is written in 2/4 time, and is melodically identical to the well-known hornpipe of the present era *Kitty's Wedding*. To add to any possible confusion(!), various versions of *Smith's Reel* are to be found in the Appalachian tune repertoire.

Paul Wells commented:

A couple of picky additions to Paul and Matt's excellent notes...*Chorus Jig* has a long history as a staple of the New England contradance repertoire. It turns up (as a 4-part reel) in New England tune manuscripts from the 1820s, and one that's possibly as early as 1807. The earliest publication of it that I'm aware of is in Howe's School for the Violin, from 1843. This 4-part reel apparently derives from a Scottish jig (i.e. in 6/8) that is at least as old as James Aird's 2nd collection from Glasgow, c. 1782. So, a complicated set of vectors by which it may have gotten to Sliabh Luachra. See also the Donegal tune, *The Glen Road to Carrick*.

Durang's Hornpipe traces to the New York stage in the late 18th century, and was widely-published in the US in the early 19th C (and later) prior to Saunders' book. There are also numerous manuscript versions, so the tune was clearly circulating in oral tradition, at least in the U.S. Whether or not any of this had an influence in Ireland is unknown.