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Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. (C. 1761-1810), A Forgotten Irish Bard: A Dissection of His Advertisement as a Map to His Melodies

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JOSEPH COOPER WALKER, ESQ. (C. 1761-1810), A FORGOTTEN IRISH BARD: A DISSECTION OF HIS ADVERTISEMENT AS A MAP TO HIS MELODIES.

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Abstract:

In conducting preliminary research for my undergraduate honors thesis, I discovered a two-volume publication in Mullins Library at the University of Arkansas, The Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards (1818) by Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. (c. 1761-1810). It held a variety of information on the music and poetry of ancient Ireland. What interested me most was the collection of melodies at the end of the first volume. Looking at overviews of Irish music collection, I saw little mention of Walker and his Irish Bards. Upon further investigation, I found that the first edition of his book (1786) contained only fifteen melodies. It was then that I based my thesis around Walker, his book, and the world in which he lived. This article features a segment of that thesis, focusing on Walker’s preface (which he calls an Advertisement) to his original fifteen melodies. This Advertisement described his motivations and methods. This preface constitutes a valuable primary document for those studying the birth of ethnography and ethnomusicology in Ireland (which began in the late eighteenth century), for it was written by a pioneer in the field. Though Walker’s Advertisement features as only a segment of my thesis on Walker and his book, I present it here as a valuable discovery in the field of historical Irish ethnomusicology.

Introduction:

Last year, while conducting preliminary research for an undergraduate honors thesis, I ran across a two-volume publication in Mullins Library at the University of Arkansas, 'Historical Memoirs of Irish Bards' by Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. (c 1761-1810). It held a variety of information on ancient Ireland, but the section that interested me most was a relatively small number of tunes, only forty-three, collected in an appendix to Volume One. This particular work was published as a second edition in 1818, but a first edition was dated 1786. I began my research from there, which included other resources of Mullins library and its very helpful Interlibrary Loan Department. I also spent a week at Boston College at the Irish Music Center, O'Neill Library, and the Burns Library of Rare and Collectable Books (which houses an impressive Irish music archive).

I found quickly that, ten years after the first edition was published, a man named Edward Bunting began collecting and publishing large amounts of Irish tunes and melodies. When one first glances at modern writings about ancient Irish collections, Bunting is usually one of the first names one sees. However, it still stands true that, although Walker was not the first person to collect Irish traditional music, he was earlier than Bunting and many others. However, Walker is rarely mentioned, if at all, in the overviews of Irish collections that I had seen in my preliminary research; it seemed to me then that he had been overshadowed by the ambitious collectors who followed him.

Delving deeper, I found that there were only fifteen melodies in Walker’s first edition, and that the second edition was published eight years after his death. Though there is no indication as to who added the additional twenty-eight melodies, or why, Walker at least wrote a preface to his original fifteen tunes, which he called an Advertisement. The Advertisement described his motivations and methods. This preface constitutes a valuable primary document for those studying the birth of ethnography and ethnomusicology in Ireland (which began in the late eighteenth century), for it was written by a pioneer in the field. Though Walker’s Advertisement features as only a segment of my thesis on Walker and his book, I present it here as a valuable discovery in the field of historical Irish ethnomusicology.

Eighteenth Century Ireland and the Birth of Irish Ethnography:

Many events of the eighteenth century contributed to creating an environment ripe for Irish ethnography. Though they are too numerous to give in detail here, there are a few that can not avoid being mentioned. The penal laws, which had oppressed Irish Catholics throughout the earlier half of the century, began to lax over time. In Dublin, several events occurred that
contributed to Irish pride: Handel’s Messiah premiered in Dublin in 1742; the Bartholomew Mosse of the Rotunda Hospital, the first maternity hospital in the world, was built in 1750 (as a reaction to the alarming number of still births in the population); and the Guinness Brewery at St. James’ Gate opened in 1759. Rebel secret societies, such as the White Boys (created in 1760), began an agrarian revolt throughout the Irish countryside, regulating the British landlords and fighting for justice for the common Irish person. The American Revolutionary War played a part as well. Not only did the American Revolution inspire the Irish, but it also required many British soldiers stationed in Ireland to go and fight, weakening Britain’s strong hold on Ireland. Groups such as the Irish Volunteers and the United Irishmen were created by Irishmen to protect the island from other foreign invaders in the absence of their current British ones. With Britain’s hold on Ireland weakened, the Irish took the opportunity to gain concessions from the Crown. Ireland gained her constitution in 1782. Although it affected a minority of the Irish population, it was still a step in the right direction. Walker, by this time, was around twenty-two years old.

It seems that, after 1782, the growing sense of Irish nationalism began to manifest itself in an intellectual manner. Previously, the Irish were forced to be concerned primarily with mere survival. Now that they had a little more freedom, they could portion that energy elsewhere. Irish intellectuals began to actively combat the view that their culture was a primitive bastardized version of British culture and held Irish culture up as a field worthy of study in its own right.

Throughout the eighteenth century secret societies in Ireland were used to defend those who could not help themselves. Philanthropic societies aided those who could not aid themselves. However, the founding of the Royal Irish Academy in 1785 marked the beginning of one of Ireland’s first lasting intellectual societies. The RIA’s aims (as stated in the charter) were the “promotion and investigation of the sciences, polite literature, and antiquities, as well as the encouragement of discussion and debate between scholars of diverse backgrounds and interests.” Walker, as well as many of his colleagues, was a member of the RIA.

Walker’s Historical Memoirs of Irish Bards:

Walker published his Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards in 1786, around the age of twenty-six, while working as a treasury clerk in Dublin Castle. The aim of his book was to outline the history of the poetry and music of the Irish from as far back in history as possible to the present, the eighteenth century. The preface of Walker’s Irish Bards tells the reader much about Walker’s intentions in writing this book. The opening lines state, “I trust I am offering to my Countrymen an acceptable present; the gift has novelty, at least, to recommend it. Though Ireland has been long famed for its Poetry and Music, these subjects have never yet been treated historically.” Walker understood that what he was writing, although done similarly in other countries, had not yet been fully addressed in Ireland.

Historical Memoirs of Irish Bards is an account of Irish bards, including of their poetry and music. A brief look at the contents of this book will quickly reflect how and why this book was significant for Irish ethnography and musicology. The content of the book itself covers the traditions and practices, including musical practices, of the Irish bards from ancient times, and how they evolved through history. The book ends with Walker’s observations on the state of music in Ireland during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this closing, Walker made a significant statement that can be directly tied to the goals of some ethnomusicologists today. Walker noted that England was influenced by Italian music, and that this influence eventually made its way to Irish soil. As this music gained popularity among the Irish, Irish traditional music and the people who played it fell to the way side, because it wasn’t as refined. He lamented that:

... in proportion as our musical taste is rectified, the pleasure we derive from pure melody is lessened. This refinement may be said to remove the ear so far from the heart, that the essence of music (an appellation by which melody deserves to be distinguished) cannot reach it. Nor is it necessary in this age, that the ear and heart should be closely connected. For modern music is calculated only to display the brilliant execution of the performer, and to occasion a gentle titillation in the organ of hearing.

The manner in which he approached Irish culture, history, poetry and music in his book, as well as his final argument for the study of traditional music, would not have been written like this before his time, nor would it have been accepted earlier by the general public or even within intellectual circles.

As if Walker’s book were not enough to elevate interest in the rich history of Ireland’s ancient arts, he added nine appendices, which further explored the subject. The appendices consisted of short essays written by Walker and his colleagues. In the few twentieth century works that mention Walker, the “Memoirs of Cormac Common” and the “Life of Turlough O’Carolan” (both blind Irish harpers) tend to be noted as the most interesting and noteworthy of Walker’s appendices. However, while each of the appendices is a valuable contribution to the elevation of Irish studies, it is the “Select Irish Melodies” (the Ninth Appendix in Walker’s book) that marks Walker as a pioneer ethnomusicologist.

The fifteen tunes, which range from bagpipe laments to Gaelic song airs to harp tunes, make up one of the earliest sources of written Irish traditional music (see Table 1 for tune titles). When one looks at the tunes, their notation suggests that they were taken from performers who had learned them aurally. In addition, there is evidence that the transcriptions were written as close to the actual performance as possible. Furthermore, Walker’s Advertisement is an invaluable map to understanding these Irish
melodies. Without it, we would know little about some of the
tunes at all.

**Walker's Advertisement as a Map to His Melodies:**

In the period in which Walker’s book was written, the word
“advertisement” often referred to a statement, often written, used
to call attention to something, as a notice? Walker’s Advertisement
is written in four sections (see Figure 1.1 for original document,
Figure 1.2 for transcription of document), and will be addressed
here according to those four sections.

The first section of the Advertisement states the purpose of
the inclusion of the tunes in the book. Walker describes his
treatment of Irish music in his book as “occasional.” (Walker’s
mention of things musical throughout his book was hardly
occasional.) The stated purpose of the “few” melodies, few
being fifteen, is that they are specimens, used to illustrate the
parts of his book in which he deals with Irish melodies. That
being said, the only tunes about which he specifically refers
the reader from the Advertisement to a location in the text of the book
(see Table 1): nos. II-V, The Irish Cries; no. X, “Coulín;” no.
XIII, “Plough Tune;” no. XIV, “Carolan’s Devotion;” and no.
XV, “Lord Mayo.” The purposes of the inclusion of the other
tunes, which do not specifically support Walker’s text, are
explained as they appear in the Advertisement.

The second section of Walker’s Advertisement is devoted
to the first six tunes of the collection; it also gives a rationale for
the order in which the melodies are presented. The first six tunes
are presented together; the following nine tunes are, for the most
part, dealt with on an individual basis. Walker first presents the
four Provincial Cries (nos. II-V) enveloped by an introductory
phrase and a concluding phrase, stating that modern musicians had
given them collectively a “drastic form.”

The introductory phrase is “Cath Eachroma,” also known as
“The Battle of Aghrim.” Walker states that it is a “wild air of
their [modern musicians’] own days,” which the said musicians
used as an introduction to the Provincial Cries. The contrast of
a relatively modern tune set with the Cries, which Walker claims
come from “remote antiquity,” gives evidence that his tunes are
diachronically layered.

The Cries that follow this wild air represent each of the four
provinces in Ireland: no. II, “Gair Chonnachtach,” or “The
Lamentation of Connaught” (representing Connacht, the western
province); no. III, “Gair Mhuinneach,” or “The Lamentation of
Munster” (the southern province); no. IV, “Gair Olltach,” or
“The Lamentation of Ulster” (the northern province); and no. V,
“Gair Leigheach,” or “The Lamentation of Leinster” (eastern
province). Lamenting in Ireland is also known as “keening,”
and is a tradition that has been referred to as early as the seventh
century in a eulogy for St. Cumnain the Tall. The practice of
keening involved four hired keeners, who would situate
themselves around the deceased, who had been laid out at his or
her wake. They would sing lamentations back and forth,
throughout the night, as well as sing of the deceased’s family,
life, successes, etc.

The Provincial Cries in Walker’s collection differ little
from each other. They essentially follow the same patterns, both
melodically and in their phrase sections, thought they vary in
length at times and some sections are transposed. Their similarities
give the inexperienced eye the impression that they are variations
of each other, and therefore lend themselves to the pseudo-suite
form that the musicians of Walker’s time had given them. A
possible explanation as to why they are so similar will be
investigated momentarily.

Walker’s “suite” is completed with an Irish dump (tune no.
VI), the title of which is “Go! na mna ‘san ar.” Although
Walker’s 1818 edition gives the English version of this title as
“The Lamentation of the Aged Woman,” other sources translate
it as “The Lament of the Women in the Battle.”

Although

The Irish dump has also been defined
in Walker’s collection certainly
matches the description. The Irish dump has also been defined
as simply an Irish lament or sad tune. If, indeed, this dump
originated as the cry of women searching for their husbands,
this plaintive six-measure-long melody does aurally match the image
of such. Incidentally, this use of the word ‘dump’ shares its
origins with the use of the same word in the phrase “in the
dumps” or “down in the dumps, a phrase which has been seen in
written English as early as the sixteenth century.

We will divert our attention from Walker’s Advertisement
for a few moments in order to further investigate the origin of the
Irish Cry that Walker showcases. An entire essay by William
Beauford, devoted to the origins of the Irish lamentation, was
published in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, five
years after Walker’s 1786 edition. In his essay, Beauford
discusses the origin and methods of the Caoinan, and gives a
musical example of it in several cycles or recitations. The
Caoinan consists of choruses that are sung back and forth
between the keeners. As a new chorus always begins on the
ending note of the preceding chorus, several cycles of the
Caoinan result in transposed choruses, which sound the same but
are sung at different intervals from each other. Beauford then informs us, "Each province was supposed to have different Caoinan, and hence the Munster cry, the Ulster cry, etc. but they are only imitations of the different choruses of the same Caoinan independent of provincial distinctions." It is for this reason that Walker's Provincial Cries are so similar. Figure 2.1 is extracted from Beauford's musical example, and is the first stanza of the caoine, which would be sung by the head bard in a low and mournful tone. In order to facilitate comparison, this example is immediately followed by Figure 2.2, Walker's sixth tune, the Irish dump "Gol na mna'san ar."

Though not identical, these melodies bear a striking resemblance to each other, particularly in the manner in which they begin and end. Walker's melody is composed of two three-measure phrases that are almost identical to each other. Beauford's is constructed in two four-measure phrases: the first of which might be loosely viewed as a varied expansion of the first two measures of Walker's tune, with the second, again loosely viewed, as an expansion of Walker's complete three-measure phrase. Beauford's melody has a range of a major seventh, whereas Walker's has only a major sixth.

Walker had stated that the dump was said to be sung by women searching for their men in the fields after a battle with Cromwell's troops. Although this may be true, the similarities between "Gol na mna'san ar" and the opening lament of the Caoinan imply that the origins of this melody are much older.

Now that we have seen how the Irish dump corresponds to the opening cry of the Caoinan, we'll look at the bigger picture for a moment. The following graph (Table 2) is drawn up according to each of the four chorus repetitions of the Caoinan (provided by Beauford): the First and Second Semi-Choruses and the Full Chorus of Sighs and Groans (split into Part A and Part B in the graph). Beauford's account stated that each successive chorus began on the same note as the concluding note of the chorus before. As can be seen by this graph, this is almost always the case. Note three particular variations:

1. In the third repetition of the Full Chorus, the A section begins on "(C) B." This means that the chorus technically begins on a C, but it is a pick-up note, and the first note on a downbeat is B.

2. Also in all but one repetition of the Full Chorus, several measures are omitted from the Walker counterpart. This is due to variants on the melody in the Walker tunes, which do not resemble the Caoinan at these points closely enough to be associated.

3. None of the Provincial Cries correspond to Section B of the Full Chorus, and the fourth repetition of the Full Chorus does not even have a Section B.

From this diagram, we can see how each of Walker's Provincial Cries fits into the overarching Caoinan. Look at Figures 3.1 and 3.2 to see how the first recitation of the First Semi-Chorus matches up to the first four and a half measures of "Gair Chonnachtach." The First Semi-Chorus is also called the Ullaaloo because of the sounds that it carries (see Figure 3.1). These "words" do not have a specific meaning, in that they aren't translated (as other verses that are sung in Irish, but translated into English in Beauford). These "words" may be a form of wailing or lamenting. Note that both examples begin on D, the same note that ended the opening cry and the dump. The two examples above are almost identical. This pattern follows in a similar manner throughout the comparison of the Caoinan to Walker's Provincial Cries.

Now that we have investigated the possible origins of Walker's Provincial Cries, we will return to the second section of his Advertisement. Walker concludes this section by informing the reader that, in modern performance, the completion of the set is accompanied by shouts from the audience, supposedly because they are so moved by the sorrow of these lamentations. This section of the Advertisement provides at least one example of performance practice for its era. In speaking of these tunes, Walker also provides an insight into how it was performed as of 1786. Though it is implied that this suite, in his day, was performed instrumentally (based on the use of words such as "played" and "performed" instead of "sung"), his background information gives evidence that its origins lie in a vocal tradition, which is confirmed by Beauford's article in 1791.

The third section of Walker's Advertisement covers the remaining nine tunes in the collection. Section three being about the same length as Section two, less is said about each tune. Walker also uses this section to reinforce the authoritative quality of these tunes as representations of Irish music. Pertaining to some of the tunes, he discusses how and where they were collected from performance. With others, he attaches them to the geographical districts in Ireland with which they are associated.

Of nos. VII, VIII, and IX – "D'eala Mairi liomsa," "Abair a chumain ghil," and "Ailleacan Dubh O!," respectively – Walker says nothing more than that they are "from a period beyond the reach of memory." With these three, it seems including them for their antiquity is an adequate reason for Walker. While looking at various collections in Boston College, I noticed that these three tunes show up in considerably more collections of the surrounding era than do the Provincial Cries. Tunes no. VII – IX, about which Walker says so little, appear frequently in other collections of the time; "D'eala Mairi liomsa" appears as itself and under various similar titles in at least five different collections, "Abair a chumaigh ghill" appears in at least six, and "Ailleacan Dubh O!" in at least fifteen. Granted, most of the numerous collections in which they appeared came after
Walker’s edition. However, it is interesting to note that later collections chose more frequently these tunes, to which Walker had paid such brief attention, and less the Cries, to which Walker had devoted a good deal of space in his *Advertisement*.

In order to discuss the time period of No. X, “Coulin,” Walker refers us to the text of his book (p 134). In the text, he recounts the tune’s story, provided to him by William Beauford:

In the 28th year of this [King Henry VIII’s] reign, an act was made respecting the habits and dress in general of the Irish, whereby all persons were restrained from being shorn or shaven above the ears, and from wearing Glibbes or Coulins (long locks) on their heads, or hair on the upper lip called a Crommeal. On this occasion a song was written by one of our Bards, in which an Irish Virgin is made to give preference to her dear Coulin, (or the youth with the flowing locks), to all strangers, (by which the English were meant) or those who wore their habit. Of this song the air alone has reached us, and is universally admired.

Assuming that Walker was referring to the beginning of Henry’s reign in Ireland (as opposed to the beginning of his reign in England), which was in 1519, the Bard would have “composed” it in 1547. As Walker mentioned, however, the words which the air accompanied did not survive.

Following this brief journey to the text of his book to understand “Coulin”, Walker redirects his attention in his *Advertisement* to the next two melodies: nos. XI and XII, “Speic Gailleanach” and “Speic Seoach.” His introduction to them is a bit confusing. Walker first states, “Several districts of this kingdom have certain appellations for airs which originated in them,” wherein the reader is informed of the naming of tunes based on their place of origin, which is not uncommon in traditional music in general. Walker gives the example of “Speic Seoach, the Speic, or ‘Humours of Joyce’s Country.’” This is the actual title of melody no. XII, but Walker gives the impression that the “Speic,” like the Cries, is a particular form. He then writes, “Of these I have given two specimens in Nos. XI. and XII.” Granted, these two indeed contain the word “Speic,” and their English version titles appear in the 1818 edition as “The Humours of Leinster” and “The Humours of Joyce’s Country,” the latter of which Walker mentioned in his preface.

Neither of the English titles in the 1818 edition is a very accurate translation. Firstly, the word *speic* does not mean ‘humours’. It can mean ‘peak’, as in a mountain. It is not clear as to whether there was an obsolete connection between the humour of place and the visual appearance of place. In *Sources of Traditional Irish Music*, these two melodies are the only ones that start with the word *speic*. Also, here it is translated as ‘salute’, not ‘humours’. In addition, tunes that are normally translated as “The Humours of O” use the word *pleársca*, a word associated with revelry. The English version of the word *Seoach* is misleading as well. In melody no. IV (“The Lamentation of Leinster”), we saw that *Uaitheamh* means ‘Leinster’. Yet here, it appears that *Seoach* is meant to refer to Leinster. A possible explanation is that the word *Seoach* is associated with the word *salute*, which refers to foreigners. As many of the foreign invaders over the years would have entered Ireland through Leinster (the province closest to England), there is a slight possibility that the word *Seoach*, at some time, may have been associated with Leinster.

Translation shortcomings aside, Walker does provide the reader with the name of the collector and method of collection, within which is a clue to performance practice, and he also sets an approximate date to the performance. We are told that the two melodies were “pricked from the voice by the Rev. Dr. Young, while on a visit last winter in the county of Roscommon.” In Walker’s time, the word “prick” was, at times, used to describe the writing down or setting of music by means of ‘pricks’ or notes. The melodies were “pricked from the voice;” therefore it can be known that the tunes were, at least at that particular performance, vocal pieces. Here Walker also refers to his source of collection, the Reverend Dr. Young. We also know that, depending on exactly when Walker wrote the *Advertisement*, Young was in Roscommon during either the winter of 1785 or 1784. It is worthwhile here to note that the area referred to as Joyce’s Country is a part of Connacht, the western Irish province, of which Roscommon is also part. Walker closes his discussion of these two melodies with the statement, “I will observe, en passant [in passing], that in no part of Ireland do our old melodies so much abound, as in Connaught; that province may be said to be vocal with them.” From this we may gather that Walker is making a statement about the frequency of vocal pieces which originated from or were performed in Connacht (as opposed to the other three provinces), two of which he chose to include in his collection.

For melody XIII, “Plough Tune,” Walker only refers us to page 132 of his text. Here, he relates that there existed several airs that were sung by the Irish during work. He describes it thus, “Ó Irish ploughman drives his team, and the female peasant milks her cow, they warble a succession of wild notes, which bid defiance to the rules of composition yet are inexpressibly sweet.”

Walker closes the third section by stating that nos. XIV and XV (“Carolan’s Devotion” and “Tiagharna Mhaighe-eo”) are modern, and refers the reader to Appendix No. VI, the “Life of Carolan,” specifically to pages 78 and 103. Turlough Carolan (CóRÉLÁLÉ Ó CaRAGhE, 1670-1738) was born near Nobber, Co. Meath, in eastern Ireland. He was a blind Irish harper who is often attributed as the last of the Irish bards. On page seventy-eight, Walker recounts the story of the origin of “Carolan’s Devotion”:

The incident which gave birth to Carolan’s Devotion, I had from Mr. [Charles] O’Conor: as it is amusing, I will relate it. A Miss Fetherston of the county of
Longford, on her way one Sunday to church in the town of Granard (w) [the (w) footnote states this happened in either 1720 or 1721], accidentally metour Bard [Carolan], and began, in the following manner, a conversation with him, which he supported with a "gay impertinence."

Walker then imparts two pages of dialogue between Carolan and Miss Fetherston, wherein he compliments her, and she responds with humility. As they are outside a church, Carolan comments that his devotion would be turned from the divine to herself, if he does not leave her quickly. As he departs, she responds with humility. As they are outside a church, Carolan observes, "is a humourously sentimental, but in bad English." In this song he complains, with more gallantry than piety, that the Mass is no longer his devotion, but that now his "devotion is she:" for, amorous from nature, his gallantry did not forsake him even after he had passed that season of life from which Voltaire calls "l'age des passions." The air of this song is pre-eminent amongst his musical compositions: it is, indeed, rich in melody.

On page 103, Walker discusses a controversy over the melody "Tiagharna Mhaighe-eo." The previous page consists of a rather long quotation from a letter written to Walker by Charles O’Conor. In this quotation, O’Conor disputes the previous writings of a Dr. Campbell, wherein Campbell had claimed that "Tiagharna Mhaighe-eo" was a composition of Carolan. O’Conor relates the "true" story as to how "Tiagharna Mhaighe-eo" came to be, long before Carolan’s time. A dependant of the former Lord Mayo apparently composed it in order to stay in his master’s favor. O’Conor and Walker both assert that this is the true story, for a descendant of the Mayo family imparted the story to O’Conor. He also imparts that the name of the composer was David Murphy. Walker then presents a translation of the ode, translated by "the elegant translator of Carolan’s Monody [...] translated by a lady." This anonymous lady was in fact Charlotte Brooke, a poet, translator, and close friend of Walker’s. Walker had originally intended to present the original ode in Irish, as well as an English translation, but in a footnote he explains that he could not obtain a copy accurate enough to satisfy him. Also in this footnote, Walker states that Thady Keenan, a friend of Mr. O’Conor, composed the air that accompanies the ode. Unfortunately, Walker does not specify whether or not the transcription of the air "Tiagharna Mhaighe-eo" in his collection of melodies was taken directly from Keenan.

Walker uses the fourth section to close his Advertisment with acknowledgements to one of his sources. He states:

I cannot close this advertisement without acknowledging my obligations to Mr. Gore Ousley, second son of my friend R. Ousley, Esq; of Limerick. This young Gentleman exercised his musical skill in committing to notation for my purpose, several of our old melodies; to him I am indebted for the Provincial Cries.

In the second section of the Advertisement, Walker makes it clear that the Provincial Cries are performed as a set. If Mr. Gore Ousley notated the Cries, and if the Cries had been performed according to the current trend at that time, would he not also have notated the two tunes which envelop them? Though Walker does not specify this, it is highly possible that Ousley did transcribe the two enveloping tunes, for Gore was a piper himself and would have been privy to current performance practices as a whole. Also, from the third section, we know that Reverend Dr. Young recorded "Speic Gailleanach" and "Speic Seach." Within the text of the "Life of Carolan," Walker makes reference to where he obtained information about "Carolan’s Receipt" and "Tiagharna Mhaighe-eo," but he never specifically cites who wrote down the melody for him. Of the other tunes, Walker does not indicate from whom he received them. It appears that Walker himself did not have any aptitude for transcribing melodies; therefore it is reasonable to believe that someone else did. His lack of full annotation and acknowledgement of his sources for the melodies starkly contrasts the heavily annotated text of the book itself, and there is no explanation.

What can be gathered from the Advertisement to the Irish melodies is that most of them are old, some of them ancient. The largest question at this time is: why did Walker write so much more about some melodies than others? He states that the Cries are worthy of precedence due to their antiquity. One would speculate, however, that if Walker knew about the overarching Caonain of which Beauford wrote, he would have mentioned it. It may even be possible that Beauford was inspired by Walker to elaborate on the Provincial Cries, and to set the record straight. It seems that Walker, who would not have read Beauford’s article for another five years, found the Cries to be important due to their current performance practice. However, Walker also states that "D’eala Mairi liomsa," “Abair a chumain ghil,” and "Ailleacan Dubh O!," are from time immemorial. While they are so old that Walker cannot provide information about their origin, it is surprising that he did not at least state from where he got them. Great attention is paid to the performance practice of the first six as a set; however, Walker gives us little to no information as to the context wherein the other tunes would be performed, although he does acknowledge that some were vocal pieces. One may assume that he only provided information about performance practices of which he knew. It may also be considered that the first six tunes, on which he spends the most time, possibly took away from the time he could have spent discussing the other nine. It is evident in other places in his writing that he simply ran out
of time. Perhaps this was the case with the Advertisement, as well. Despite its brevity, we can see that Walker is presenting these tunes as something worth appraising by his readers, some for their historical value, and some for their importance in their day.

**Walker’s Reception:**

If we keep in mind that Walker was a pioneer in his field, it may be possible for us, in hindsight, to forgive him of his shortcomings. However, the literary critics of his day spared him no such mercy. Perhaps the most astounding critique that has survived is the review of Walker’s book, by Charles Burney, written for the Monthly Review (a British periodical) in December, 1787.

The legacy of Charles Burney (1726-1814) lies in his writings about music. At the time of his review of Walker’s Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards, he was sixty-one years old, and was already established in Europe as a definitive authority on Western art-music. This was unfortunate for Walker, as Burney, being British and very knowledgeable in classical music, showed no mercy to an amateur Irishman writing about his native music. Although some of Burney’s criticisms are particular and accurate, much of his fourteen-page review consists of generalized, sarcastic, and debasing comments that read now as below the belt. In many of his comments, it seems that Burney is not only criticizing the book, but Walker himself, and even the Irish people in general. Burney does slightly acknowledge his bias by stating:

Mr. W. says, ‘it is the fashion of the day to question the antiquity of Irish MSS.;’ and we see plainly, in England, that it is the fashion of the day to give them an antiquity and a credence, in Ireland, that we are unable to allow. If the Irish ask too much respect and reverence for these fables, the English will certainly give them too little.  

He is essentially prefacing the review by stating that Walker’s work is asking too much of the reader.

Burney also criticizes Walker’s sources of information or lack thereof. Walker’s work is heavily footnoted, with ample information as to where he obtained information (there are 549 references to 188 authors, one of whom was Burney himself). He may have done this in order to establish some credibility. However, Burney does not see it this way. He criticizes Walker for citing books which would have already been common knowledge to the educated reader, writing:

[... ] not withstanding these innumerable proofs of the Author’s acquaintance with books in all the living as well as dead languages, they only remind us that he is a young book-maker, and has not yet read enough to know what has been already often quoted, and what is still worthy of a place in a new book written with taste and elegance.

Walker himself had stated in his book that, as he was delving into the shadows of antiquity, it was sometimes difficult to establish some information as fact. In the cases where Walker does not have substantial evidence for his ideas, and can’t cite them, we see that he carefully proposes the ideas, acknowledging that, due to their antiquity, they may or may not be valid, but there was no way to know. Burney quickly criticizes Walker’s use of words such as perhaps, probably, and we may suppose, writing:

[... ] the Author [Walker] is to be pitied, for he has nothing better to offer on this occasion, except a poor perhaps, which in these incredulous times is not current coin. ‘Perhaps the Irish Readan, Fideog, or Lonloingean, were flutes; or rather Recorders, which are still more simple in the construction, but extremely soft and sweet.’ And perhaps they were not – who knows? – or, indeed, who cares?

It is important to note that Burney points out that speculation is not “current coin.” This may be true for studies of British antiquity, where they had not centuries of occupation inhibiting them from properly recording their native history, and therefore having more solid evidence and ample records. This was not the case with Irish antiquity, as many hindrances, British occupation being one of them, rendered the creation and preservation of writings throughout the ages more difficult.

Burney goes on from there to nitpick at anything and everything that he can find wrong with Walker’s book, and Walker himself. He even uses typos of words, both in English and in French, within the Walker’s text to belittle Walker and question his understanding of French, in which Walker was fluent.

Near the end of Burney’s review, he devotes half a page to the “Select Irish Melodies.” Among other criticisms, he writes, “... the first five [“Cath Eachroma” and the Provincial Cries] are so rude and similar, that they afforded us little amusement.” Of course, Burney would have had to wait four more years to read Beauford’s article, in order to understand the reason why they were so similar. Nonetheless, if he had read Walker’s Advertisement more carefully, he might at least have gathered that they were called Cries for a reason; the Cries were not for amusement, they were originally for funerals! Burney also claims that several of the melodies sounded more Scottish than Irish. Due to the close proximity of Scotland to Ireland, it is natural that they would have melodies that were the same or similar. These tunes were later collected by other Irish collectors, and still considered “Irish,” despite Burney’s accusations. Finally, Burney states of Walker and his tunes, “... it is to be feared, [...] that the national melody of our neighbouring island will not be adopted at the opera, so soon as he thinks it ought.” Ironically, one of Walker’s tunes had already been adopted at the opera, a British opera which had premiered five years previously. Walker’s melody no. IX, “Ailleacan Dubh!” was first published as the melody for the song “Sleep on, sleep on” in the British.
comic opera, *Poor Soldier*, by John O’Keefe and William Shield. Overall, it appears that Burney’s goal was not to review Walker’s book, but to demolish any credibility that Walker might have had.

Walker’s colleagues were on his side, however. In a letter from Charles O’Conor, we see O’Conor attempting to console Walker:

Be by no means concerned [with] the critique of the critical reviewers on your book. They are n[ot] just in censuring your quotations from ancient and modern writers. Without such authorities how could you support many of your facts? Would they not censure you for omitting them? Why did I not commend you for the lights you have cast on a subject never att[empted] before you by an antiquary of our island? In many instances it [should] be shown that the reviewers of France, England, and Germany have been hurtful to true knowledge by giving but too often a wrong direction to the public judgments.35

This letter was dated in 1786, and therefore preceded Burney’s review. It seems that Burney was not the first to criticize Walker harshly. Oddly, it seems that Walker’s reception was friendlier in Rome than his own country, for two other letters from O’Conor state:

My grandson in Rome assures me that your *Memoirs on our Irish Bards* is much approved of. The literate of that capital do you justice, and they will do more on the next edition of your book. [O] your book has had a good reception from such Roman readers as understand our language, and one gentleman in particular wants a copy of your *Bards*, which I could wish that you forwarded to Rome by the first opportunity.36

It is possible that those in England and Ireland who criticized Walker were too close to the trees to see the forest, and it was only at a cultural distance that one could appreciate the steps Walker was taking to forge a path in Irish ethnography.

As was mentioned earlier, despite its unfriendly reception, there was a second edition. Enlarged to two volumes, the first volume consisted of the original book and its appendices; the second volume consisted of a preface written by Walker, several of his essays, and twenty-two appendices written by himself and his colleagues on matters of Irish interest. It was published eight years after Walker’s death, with no indication as to who put forth the effort to publish it. There is some evidence that whoever got Walker’s book published tampered with at least one point in the text. Walker cites O’Conor’s *Dissertations on the History of Ireland* several times within his essays. The footnote cites the “3rd Ed.,” and edition which was not published until 1812 (two years past Walker’s death). However, he also cites Ledwich’s *Antiques of Ireland*, a book which was in second edition by 1804, but no one changed that citation to make it more up to date. It is feasible that Walker was working on it at some point during his life. However, as some of the essays are in the form of a letter to Walker from the author, it appears that not much was done to the manuscript that would become the 1818 edition past 1788, as there are no dates on letters or in the text indicating that anything was being written after that year. If Walker had intended a second edition, which is likely, for O’Conor referred to a second edition in his letter, Walker certainly had most if not all of the materials compiled by 1790. Currently, the most likely explanation for his lack of publishing at that time was his downfall due to Burney and other critics, and the overshadowing by the likes of Edward Bunting, whose renowned collections of Irish were mentioned in the introduction to this essay.

Edward Bunting (1773-1843) was an Irish music collector who published three large collections in his lifetime: *A General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music* (1796), *A General Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland* (1809), and *The Ancient Music of Ireland* (1840). The fault of Bunting is that he altered the music he recorded so that it could be played on a piano, therefore making it more profitable. Bunting’s collections may give us the notes that were played by harpers of the day, but were transposed from their original key to keys that harpers couldn’t play. Whereas a proper ethnomusicologist would have made careful note of the technique of the melody being played by both hands of the harper, Bunting loses any indication of this by rearranging the music so that the melody is in the right hand and the accompaniment is in the left hand. Though we owe Bunting credit for the sheer quantity of melodies he collected, we may now wish that he had also published the original versions of his tunes.37 Walker’s aim was to publish the music just as it was; Bunting’s aim was to publish the music so that it was accessible to the classical ear, and playable in the parlor.

**Conclusion:**

Between the likes of criticisms of Burney and the quantity of Bunting, Walker seems to have been kept from receiving the credit he was due as a pioneer ethnomusicologist. Over the last two centuries, critics of Walker have dismissed him as an amateur, and therefore not worthy of attention. Finally, in 1965, the Irish historian R. A. Breathnach, though admitting Walker’s dilettantism, granted Walker this much, writing, “The author of *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* deserves to be remembered for his enthusiastic advocacy of Irish learning when perhaps such advocacy was of greater importance than scholarly competence.”38

Joseph Cooper Walker himself admitted that he was an amateur, in the sense that there could not be, at this time, such a thing as a professional in this field. In the preface to his book he wrote:

I do not pretend to have done completely, what has lain so long undone: no doubt many sources of information still remain unopened, and many
documents unconsulted. However, I have marked out a path which may facilitate the pursuit of those who shall hereafter follow me.

Walker, influenced by the love of his culture and his country, wrote of its bardic past, its poetry, and its music. He provided one of the earliest written records of Irish music. Several of the melodies in his 1786 collection had never been previously published anywhere else. In fact, two of the melodies, “Gair Mhuimhneach” and “Gair Olltach,” do not appear in any other collections at all, before or after Walker.39 The rest of the Provincial Cries appear in two other collections. For this alone they should be remembered. What makes Walker such an important figure in Irish ethnography and ethnomusicology is not that he forged for them by those who walked it previously, including Joseph Cooper Walker.

Works Cited:


Campbell, Thomas. A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland: In a Series of Letters to John Watkinson, M.D. Dublin: Printed for W. Whitestone, W. Sleater, etc., 1778.


Endnotes:


2 A General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music (1796), A General Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland (1809), and The Ancient Music of Ireland (1840).

3 See Figure 1.1 (p 7) for facsimile of the Advertisement, and Figure 1.2 (p 8) for a transcription of the Advertisement.


5 There did previously exist, founded in 1731, the Dublin Society for the Improvement of Husbandry, Manufacturing, and Other Useful Arts. However, its only tangible contribution up to the 1780s consisted solely of a school of art in 1740. The Dublin Society later came under the patronage of George IV in 1820, and became the Royal Dublin Society. Brian Lalor, ed. The Encyclopedia of Ireland, s.v. “Royal Dublin Society,” by Dervilla Donnelly (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

6 Encyclopedia of Ireland, s.v. “Royal Irish Academy,” by Peter Harbison.


8 Walker, Irish Bards (1786), 158-159.


10 For scanning purposes, the 1971 facsimile of Walker’s Irish bards was used for Figures 1.1, 2.2 and 3.2.

11 The actual Battle of Aghrim took place on 12 July 1691, in which Godard van Reede, a Dutch soldier who had previously been appointed lieutenant general of the English cavalry in Ireland by King William III, defeated Irish Jacobites after recently capturing the town of Athlone. Athlone is located on the eastern edge of Roscommon, a county located in the northeast.


13 Such as: Thomas O’Canain, Traditional Music of Ireland (Cork: Ossian Publications, 1993), 12.


15 Cromwell first became Governor of Ireland in August 1649.


17 O’Canain, Traditional Music, 12.


19 Beauford was a friend and colleague of Walker, and a member of the RIA.


21 Beauford “Caoinan” Transactions, 43-44.

22 For those with little to no musical background: A capital letter (note) by itself refers to that note within the range of middle C to the octave above that. Forexample, G’ is called “G prime” and is the G above middle C. A letter with a prime mark represents the note in the octave above that. For example, G is simply called “G,” and is the G above middle C. G’ is called “G prime” and is the G an octave above G above middle C.


27 Rev. Dr. Young was a fellow of Trinity College Dublin, a member of the RIA, and a friend of Walker’s.

28 Charles O’Conor, a Catholic historian and friend of Walker, was a senior figure and learned member of the RIA; he was a highly respected and valuable resource of information to Walker and his colleagues.

29 Thomas Campbell, A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland: in a series of letters to John Watkinson, M.D. (Dublin: Printed for W. Whitestone, W. Sleater, etc., 1778), Letter 44.

30 Ralph Ousley, Esq., was also a member of the RIA.

Table 1: Titles of Walker's Irish Melodies, 1786 Edition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Cath Eachroma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Gair Chonnachntach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Gair Mhuimhneach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Gair Olltach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Gair Laighneach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Gol na mna'san ar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>D'ela Mairi liomsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>Abair a chumain ghil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>Ailleacan Dubh O!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Coulin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>Speic Gailleanach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>Speic Seoach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII</td>
<td>Plough Tune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV</td>
<td>Carolan's Devotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV</td>
<td>Tiagharna Mhaighe-eo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The Segmented Caoinan, with the corresponding sections in Walker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caoinan Section</th>
<th>Opening Cry</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Last</th>
<th>Walker Titles</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Last</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>First Semi-Chorus</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Gol na mna'san ar</td>
<td>Pick-up measure to m4 b3</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Semi-Chorus</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Gair Chonnachntach</td>
<td>m4 b4 - m8 b2</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Chorus A</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>m8 b3 - m15; m22 - 26 (end)</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Chorus B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>D'</td>
<td>not present</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>First Semi-Chorus</td>
<td>D'</td>
<td>E'</td>
<td>Gair Mhuimhneach</td>
<td>Pick-up measure to m4 b3</td>
<td>D'</td>
<td>E'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Semi-Chorus</td>
<td>E'</td>
<td>E'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>m4 b4 - m8</td>
<td>E'</td>
<td>E'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Chorus A</td>
<td>G'</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>m9 - 17; m28 - 32 (end)</td>
<td>G'</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Chorus B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>not present</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>First Semi-Chorus</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Gair Olltach</td>
<td>Pick-up measure to m4 b3</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Semi-Chorus</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>m4 b4 - m6 b3</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Chorus A</td>
<td>(C') B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>m6 b3.5 - m14; m19 - 24 (end)</td>
<td>(C') B</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Chorus B</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>not present</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>First Semi-Chorus</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Gair Laighneach</td>
<td>Pick-up measure to m4 b3</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Semi-Chorus</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>D'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>m4 b4 - m9 b3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>D'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Chorus A (end)</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>m9 b4 - m19 (end)</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Chorus B</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>not present</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HAVING occasionally treated of Irish Music in the Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards, I will here subjoin a few specimens of it, for the purpose of illustrating that part of my subject.

The remote antiquity of na Gúil (a), or Irish Cries, entitle them to precedence; but modern Musicians having determined to give this extraordinary piece of Music a dramatic form, united it with a wild air of their own days called Cath Eachroma, or Battle of Aghrim, which serves as a kind of prologue to The Cries. I have therefore given the Cath Eachroma the first place in this little collection. After this air is played, the Provincial Cries (Nos. II, III, IV, and V.) are performed in succession; then (No. VI.) a melancholy tune, or dump (which is said to have been sung by the Irish women, while searching for their slaughtered husbands, after a bloody engagement between the Irish and Cromwell’s troops) follows; and the whole is supposed to conclude with a loud shout of the auditor, mollerated by afflition.

Nos. VII, VIII, and IX. are melodies of a period beyond the reach of memory.—The era of No. X. I have already determined. (b)——Several districts of this kingdom have certain appellations for airs which originated in them, as Speci Scoach, the Speci, or Humours of Joyce’s Country. Of these I have given two specimens in Nos. XI. and XII. which were pricked from the voice by the Rev. Dr. Young, while on a visit last winter in the county of Roscommon. I will here observe, en passant, that in no part of Ireland do our old melodies so much abound, as in Connaught; that province may be said to be vocal with them.—No. XIII. is noticed in page 132 of the Hift. Mem. of the Irish Bards.—Nos. XIV. and XV. are modern, and mentioned in the Life of Carolan; see pag. 78 and 103.

I cannot close this advertisement without acknowledging my obligations to Mr. Gore Ousley, second son of my friend R. Ousley, Esq. of Limerick. This young Gentleman exercised his musical skill in committing to notation for my purpose, several of our old melodies ;—to him I am indebted for the Provincial Cries.

(b) Ibid. p. 134.

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10 For scanning purposes, the 1971 Facsimile of Walker’s Irish Bards was used for this Figures 1.1, 2.2, and 3.2.
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The remote antiquity of Na Guil (a), or Irish Cries, entitle them to precedency; but modern Musicians having determined to give this extraordinary piece of Music a dramatic form, united it with a wild air of their own days called Cath Eachroma, or Battle of Aghrim, which serves as a kind of prologue to The Cries. I have therefore given the Cath Eachroma the first place in this little collection. After this air is played, the Provincial Cries (Nos. II, III, IV, and V.) are performed in succession: then (No. VI.) a melancholy tune, or dump (which is said to have been sung by the Irish women, while searching for their slaughtered husbands, after a bloody engagement between the Irish and Cromwel’s troops) follows; and the whole is supposed to conclude with a loud shout of the auditors, meliorated by affliction.

Nos. VII, VIII, and IX. are melodies of a period beyond the reach of memory. — The era of No. X I have already determined. (b) —— Several districts of this kingdom have certain appellations for airs which originated in them, as Speic Seoach, the Speic, or Humours of Joyce’s Country. Of these I have given two specimens in Nos. XI and XII. which were pricked from the voice by the Rev. Dr. Young, while on a visit last winter in the county of Roscommon. I will here observe, en passant, that in no part of Ireland do our old melodies so much about, as in Connaught; that province may be said to be vocal with them. — Nos. XIV and XV. are modern, and mentioned in the Life of Carolan; see pag. 78 and 103.

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Figure 2.1: Opening cry in the Irish Caoinan, from Beauford

Figure 2.2 “Gol na mna’san ar” from Walker’s 1786 Edition

Figure 3.1: First Semi-Chorus, or Ullaloo in Beauford.

Figure 3.2: Opening Measures of “Gair Chonnachntach” from Walker’s 1786 Edition.
Faculty Comment:

Dr. Rembrandt Wolpert, Ms. Morris's mentor made very interesting observations about his student's work in his letter nominating this study for publication. He said:

Hilary's love of and deep commitment to things Irish found an outlet here when she discovered on the open shelves in Mullins Library a copy of what turned out to be the second edition of Joseph Cooper Walker's two-volume *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, published in Dublin in 1818. She set her heart on finding out about the forty-three "Select Irish Melodies" included as an Appendix to Volume One: a task in historical ethnomusicology which she knew from the outset would have to be conducted primarily via inter-library loan and a well prepared research visit to the Irish Music Archives of Boston College.

Walker soon emerged as Hilary's "Forgotten Irish Bard". The first edition of his work was published in 1786, included only fifteen tunes, but pre-dates by ten years the first of the large, well-known collections of Edward Bunting, *A General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music* (1796). Indeed, Walker's pre-dating Bunting places his fifteen initial tunes right at the beginning of systematic collecting of traditional Irish melody. The deeper Hilary delved into writings of the time and since, however, the clearer it became to her that Walker is at best strangely under-represented, at worst maligned for dilettantism in the bulk of his work, and belittled for the tunes he chose to offer. And this right up until recent scholarship, despite the evidence from her painstaking combing through catalogs and tune indices that the six tunes classed together as a "Suite of Cries" and placed first in Walker's tune-sets (in the first and the second edition) appear to be remnants of an archaic lamentation ritual that, thanks to her recognition then of their "remote antiquity", make their first — and for two of the "Cries", only — appearance on the vast terrain of Irish Music Collections.

Hilary's research into Walker's early reception threw up an extensive and destructive review of *The Historical Memoirs*, published in 1787, the year immediately following Walker's work, by none other than the English music-scholar Charles Burney himself, perhaps the leading figure in Music criticism of the day. (Here Hilary highlights the political context for Walker's book and the age old English-Irish rivalry.) Letters to Walker from scholarly friends in the Irish Academy reveal the extent of his personal devastation, but also their unshaken faith in the importance of what he had achieved for the elevation of Irish antiquities. Indeed, presumably sparked off by Walker's study, one of his colleagues in the Academy, William Beauford, published five years later, in 1791, a musical study of the practice of lamenting, or Caoine, that, as Hilary argues, supports and adds to what Walker had provided by publishing "The Cries" and documenting his tune-collection.

This last aspect, Walker's documentation, is Hilary's reason for placing him as a pioneer "ethnomusicologist" among the early Irish ethnomusicologists. Walker prefaces his fifteen "Select Irish Melodies" with a short *Advertisement*, providing the rationale for his presenting the tunes, invaluable information on current performance practice, data about by whom, how, and where some of the tunes were committed to paper, and so on. Hilary treats this *Advertisement* as the primary document it is, minutely dissecting it, and follows the threads out into the body of Walker's book and beyond to the collections held at Boston College to build her argument for re-evaluating Walker's contribution. She argues that some of his circumspection on the one hand and daring speculation on the other, both so irritating to Burney, necessarily belong to the special risks that must be taken by the pioneer in a field. She also lays bare the poignancy of the scholar devastated by the more influential reviewer, hinting that this initial reception may have more than temporarily sidelined his contribution to the history of Irish Music.

This has been a fun venture from start to finish. With her Irish background, as a double-major in French and Music, and having already begun study of Irish language and music, Hilary is particularly suited to this sort research. Her love of words and where they come from, coupled with her historical interests translate easily into the sort of nitty-gritty but contextualised work required for working through tune-indices and archival collections, and bodies very well indeed for her planned graduate work also on living traditions in Ireland.