Denis Courtney on stage in Oscar and Malvina, *Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London. Engraving by Barlow after Isaac Cruikshank. From* The Whim of the Day of 1793, *London, 1793 (courtesy Na Píobairí Uilleann)*

COURTNEY'S 'UNION PIPES' AND THE TERMINOLOGY OF IRISH BELLOWS-BLOWN BAGPIPES

Nicholas Carolan, Irish Traditional Music Archive, Dublin

Version 1.0 as at 14 May 2012[1]

Irish uilleann pipers and followers of the uilleann pipes generally know nowadays that their instrument was once often known as the 'union pipes'.[2] The term was one of those commonly used before 1900 to refer to variant forms of the bellows-blown bagpipe found in Britain and Ireland, the United States of America, Australia, and elsewhere. After 1900 it continued in use but gradually gave way in Ireland to 'uilleann pipes',[3] which term eventually spread to be used universally, or almost so, for the Irish form of the instrument.

There is nevertheless uncertainty about the term 'union pipes' – its origin, forerunners, meanings, spread and demise – and it is proposed

---

[1] Much of the information on which this essay on Irish music terminology is based has been newly discovered through ongoing international print and image digitisation programmes. Since other relevant information will doubtless emerge from these sources in the future, the essay will be updated here to include such information as it is found. For expansion of bibliographic etc. citations see Information Sources below. Corrections and earlier instances of terms cited can be sent to union.pipes@itma.ie, but because of other commitments it will not be possible for the writer to enter into correspondence. The essay should be cited by author, title, version and date on www.itma.ie as above.

[2] This form of the term is used throughout here for convenience, except in quotations, but the term also occurs in historical sources as 'union pipe(s)', 'union bag(-)pipe(s)', 'Irish union pipes', etc., and its elements are often given initial capitals. Original spellings and initial capitalisation (only) have been retained here in quotations. Primary sources quoted have been checked unless otherwise stated.

[3] This term also appears in variant spellings in older sources and often with initial capitals: 'ullann', 'uileann', 'uillinn', 'ullian (bag-)pipe(s)', etc. Introduced only in the twentieth century, it is the term now in standard use in Ireland to refer (ahistorically) to Irish bellows pipes of any period and in any place.

here to examine these aspects, and to establish an outline history of the term. Other terms for the uilleann pipes are also traced. As well as core questions of terminology, consideration of 'union pipes' also necessarily touches on the whole history and historiography of Irish bagpiping, and involves other dimensions of Irish musical culture: artistic processes and allegiances; national identity and self-representation, especially in relation to the Irish language; and the ongoing globalisation of Irish traditional music.

It must be emphasised that only the history of the *term* is being centrally addressed, not the history of the *instrument* itself. Although the two are of course related, they have led somewhat independent lives. Changes in terminology did not necessarily reflect developments in the physical nature of the instrument; such developments did not necessarily lead to the introduction of new terminology.

But to provide a context for the discussion of piping terminology, some brief consideration of the history of the instrument itself is unavoidable. Bagpipes are musical wind instruments consisting of a reeded melody-pipe or chanter with finger-holes by which the player produces melody, an attached skin bag acting as an air-reservoir, a blow-pipe attached to the bag by which the player inflates it, and, normally, reeded fixed-pitch melody-pipes attached to the bag which provide a droning accompaniment to the chanter. Known in classical times, they are immemorially old and of uncertain origins. By the Middle Ages they were a common instrument, existing in many different forms across Europe, and in Asia and north Africa. Played mainly out of doors, and usually by professional players of low status, they are thought to have reached the limits of their popularity in western Europe from the fourteenth century to the seventeenth.[4]

[4] Baines 1995: 100.

The late European innovation of using a bellows worked by the elbow to inflate the bag, instead of using a blow-pipe, probably derived from the medieval use of bellows in portative and other organs, although the principle was known in classical times. Adapted first, presumably, to various kinds of bagpipes which were originally mouth-blown, the use of bellows was crucial in the eventual development of indoor and socially genteel bagpipes. Even more important was the replacing of older chanters (which were loud and of a restricted melodic range) with newer chanters (which were quieter and of an extended range), and the concurrent refinement of reeds and drones compatible with these chanters. Bellows bagpipes are attested to in Europe from the sixteenth century, although it was the early seventeenth before they came into widespread use. They existed in a great variety of folk and aristocratic forms, large and small, in different countries, and their development was influenced and to some extent driven by the contemporary spread of new popular forms of instruments of extended musical range, such as the recorder, violin, transverse flute and oboe. The first publication on the bellows bagpipes – a treatise, instruction book and tune book for an instrument with a range just above an octave – was *Traité de la Musette* by Pierre Borjon de Scellery, published in Lyon in 1672, at a time when musical-instrument makers of the French court had produced a form of bellows bagpipe called a *musette du cour* (court bagpipe) to cater for a then current aristocratic taste for 'pastoral' music.[5]

In the course of the seventeenth century an awareness of bellows pipes clearly must have arisen in Britain and Ireland through the numerous channels of communication, travel and trade which various parts of both islands always had with the Continent. On each island the earliest

[5] For bellows pipes generally see Baines 1995: 12–23, 100–28; Kopp 2005: 9–19; Kopp 2011: 243–47.

forms of bellows pipes appear to have been in existence by the late seventeenth century,[6] and to have been subject to processes of development that continued through the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries. Distinct traditions of bellows-pipes manufacture and playing would survive in Scotland, northern England, and Ireland after bagpipes had fallen out of favour in most of Britain. No early insular makers are known, but the attachment of bellows to existing types of bagpipes, or the importation of a small number of Continental bellows pipes, probably of different kinds, would have been sufficient to set chain reactions in motion among innovative makers. Bellows pipes would always be peripheral instruments in these islands, and would never be played in any great numbers. They would never begin to rival the recorder, violin, German flute or keyboard instruments in popularity, and the major music publishers of Britain and Ireland would not publish music or tutors for them as they would for those instruments. But bellows pipes have often been accorded an elite status, specialist publishers have long produced tutors and tune books for them, and they have exerted a persistent, powerful and unique fascination on

[6] For Britain there is the evidence of the English playwright Thomas Shadwell who in his 1671 play *The Humorists* refers to 'a Scotch-Bag-Pipe that has got a flaw in the Bellows' (quoted in Stewart 2009: 53; from Keith Sanger) and that of the English organologist James Talbot who c. 1685–1700 listed 'Scotch' bellows bagpipes which he had seen (Cocks 1952: 44–5). In both instances 'Scotch' may mean 'north British'. By the 1720s there is further evidence of various kinds of Scottish and northern English bellows pipes (Sanger 1989: 11–13). The Irish evidence is less explicit, not mentioning bellows until the 1750s, but there are references from the 1680s to bagpipes being played in domestic settings with harp and fiddle and these must have been pipes of the new kind (Carolan 2010: 6–7). Larry Neal M'Elvanna, an 'Irish piper of note' who died in Co Down in 1746 in his 78th year, was reported as having learned to play the pipes from Piper Malone of Lurgan, 'who died in 1700 at the advanced age of 100' (*Walker's Courant*, Sept. 1746, quoted in *An Píobaire* vol. 3, no 35, Apr. 1998: 23). By 1746 a noted Irish piper was doubtless a bellows piper.

players and listeners here for over three centuries now. They currently enjoy an unprecedented worldwide level of popularity.

There is no reason to think that the different insular bellows-pipes traditions did not arise independently of one other, nor is there any evidence that they had an early influence on one other. But in 1743 the first English-language publication on the bellows pipe – *The Compleat Tutor for the Pastoral or New Bagpipe* – alludes to the existence of several contemporary makers of a developing bellows bagpipe.[7] The instrument was sold in his music shop by John Simpson, the London publisher of the *Tutor*, and is described in the *Tutor* by its Irish author John Geoghegan; but it is not known whether the makers referred to were British or Irish. Geoghegan's tutor is for a two-octave-plus chromatic bellows pipe with a lowest chanter note of middle C, the second octave achieved by over-blowing (exerting increased air-pressure on the chanter reed by squeezing the bag harder). It is not at all certain that the instrument described by Geoghegan is a brand new one, in spite of his title; possibly he had only coined a new marketing term for an established bellows bagpipe.[8] His book would be obscurely republished and sold into the early nineteenth century in England and Scotland, and possibly sold in Ireland[9] and the United States[10] – an indication of the continuing if low-level popularity of the instrument itself, which is now well represented in museum collections. The instrument must have had a general influence on the course of bellows-pipe development in both Britain and Ireland.

---

[7] 'This day is publish'd The Complete Tutor for the Pastoral or New Bagpipe... by Mr. John Geoghegan...', *Daily Advertiser*, London, 29 Sept. 1743 ff. See also Donnelly 2008a: 26–7 for the assignment of this publication to 1743.

[8] The instrument illustrated in the *Tutor* closely resembles one illustrated in a London publication of 1728 (see Note 14 below).

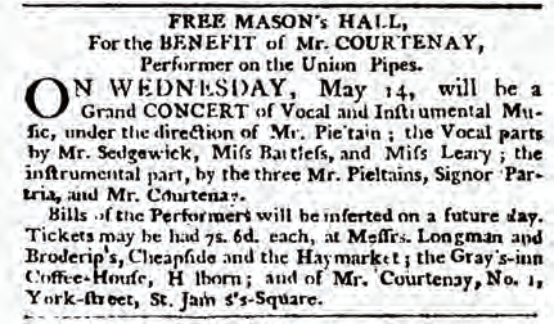
[9] Dennis Connor, a musical-instrument maker and seller of Little Christ-Church Yard, Dublin, is advertising either 'bagpipes' or a tutor for the bagpipes (the wording is ambiguous) in 1759 (*Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, Dublin, 17–21 July 1759, see Carolan 2006: 23).

[10] An anonymous tutor for bagpipes is advertised in Philadelphia in *Stephen's Catalogue of Books etc. for 1795*.

Introduction of 'Union Pipes'

Long processes of invention and experimentation normally leave no surviving trace before a musical instrument and its terminology emerge onto the public record. This is true of 'union pipes'. It is not now known for certain who invented the term.

But it is known when 'union pipes' first emerged onto the public record, and the piper with whom the term was first associated (and who may very well have coined it) is also known. The term is first found on 5 May 1788, in a front-page advertisement in the London newspaper *The World* for a general concert to be held in the Free Masons' Hall in the city on 14 May: 'For the Benefit of Mr. Courtenay, Performer on the Union Pipes'.[11]



FREE MASON's HALL,
For the BENEFIT of Mr. COURTENAY,
Performer on the Union Pipes.

ON WEDNESDAY, May 14, will be a Grand CONCERT of Vocal and Inſtrumental Muſic, under the direction of Mr. Pie'tain; the Vocal parts by Mr. Sedgewick, Miſs Battieſs, and Miſs Leary; the inſtrumental part, by the three Mr. Pieltains, Signor Partria, and Mr. Courtenay.

Bills of the Performers will be inſerted on a future day. Tickets may be had 7s. 6d. each, at Meſſrs. Longman and Broderip's, Cheapſide and the Haymarket; the Gray's-inn Coffee-Houſe, Holborn; and of Mr. Courtenay, No. 1, York-ſtreet, St. Jam s's-Square.

Although the venue and the occasion are English, as will be seen below the piper is Irish and his pipes are Irish pipes, and, insofar as it was introduced by him, the term is also Irish.

[11] Earlier instances of the term may yet be discovered.

'Mr. Courtenay' was the stage name of the professional bellows piper Denis Courtney, an 'itinerant Irish musician of great fame in the British provinces'.[12] He was about twenty-eight when he made his first London concert appearance on 14 May 1788, in the company of other very different but well known performers and in what was a leading London music venue. Courtney's piping quickly became famous in London and he had a somewhat meteoric career before he died there in 1794, in his mid-thirties, of an illness brought on by heavy drinking. Long after his death, he was remembered as an outstanding musician.

Before Courtney's debut, no bagpiper of any kind is known to have given a stage recital in London, as distinct from performances in the street and in taverns and ballrooms, from the accompanying of dancers on stage, and from private recitals. Bagpipes had long been generally spoken of in print in Britain, usually in unflattering terms, and in their Scottish forms used to make oblique criticisms of Scottish politicians at Westminster. They were bywords for riot,[13] drunkenness, low living and noise. Nor were Irish pipes exempt from this latter criticism. The Scottish novelist Tobias Smollet compared the piercing singing of a character in his 1751 London novel *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* to 'the joint issue of an Irish bag-pipe and a sow gelder's horn'; this quip was reproduced over and over in contemporary newspapers and magazines. Nevertheless there is occasional print evidence of a positive bagpipe subculture in the capital: the publication of the first image of a bellows bagpipe there in 1728[14] and of Lancashire bagpipe music in

[12] Highfill et al.: 4, 8.

[13] Scottish bagpipes had recently been used in London to lead mobs participating in the highly destructive anti-Catholic Gordon riots of the summer of 1780 (*Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, London, 5 Jan. 1781).

[14] This important image is part of a burlesque depiction of an ensemble of musicians playing for John Gay's famous 1728 ballad opera *The Beggar's Opera*. First

1730;[15] the sale (and probably the manufacture) of bellows bagpipes in 1743, as cited, and in the same year the publication of Geoghegan's tutor-tunebook for them, which includes English, Scottish and Irish tunes; the setting of stage jigs to Irish bagpipe tunes in 1751;[16] the advertising for ship's bagpipers in 1768;[17] the patronage of Scottish Highland and Irish bagpipers in the 1770s and 1780s,[18] and so forth.

As the performer who first brought the new term 'union pipes' to the public, it is significant that Denis Courtney, in the advertisements for his first London performance, also used an altered stage form of his own surname: 'Mr Courtenay'. It is not in doubt that his real name, in English, was Courtney.[19] Of the different forms of surname used for him in print, however, 'Courtenay' is not a form of the name found commonly in Ireland, although it was common in the Britain of his time and is of Norman-French origin. It was the family name of well known contemporary English aristocrats, Earls of Devon, and also the name of a prominent contemporary Westminster politician of Irish birth to whom

advertised as a commercial print in *The Daily Journal*, London, 4 May 1728 (Barlow 2005: 90), the scene was long tentatively believed to have been drawn by William Hogarth, and the image has been regarded as evidence of the existence of a bellows pipes in London by the 1720s. But expert opinion now holds the depiction to be the work of a French rather than a British artist; it may in fact therefore reflect a form of the instrument current in contemporary France rather than in Britain (for a discussion see Barlow 2005: 88–91). Nevertheless it is inconceivable that bellows-blown bagpipes were unknown in contemporary London after they had been in existence on the Continent for well over a hundred years.

[15] 'New Musick. This day publish'd, The Third Book of the Most Celebrated Jigs... with Hornpipes the Bagpipe Manner...', *Daily Journal*, London, 12 Aug. 1730.

[16] *London Daily Advertiser and Literary Gazette*, London, 12 Sept. 1751.

[17] *Gazeteer and New Daily Advertiser*, London, 29 June 1768.

[18] See below.

[19] Courtney's first name, age, and the correct form of his surname in English are found in the burial register of Old St Pancras Church, London, where he was interred on 5 Sept. 1794. The register is now in the London Metropolitan Archives. The entry is in accord with other evidence cited below, including notices of Courtney's death and his date and place of burial in contemporary print sources.

the piper was once compared.[20] 'Courtney' on the other hand is a surname common in Ireland, even to the present day, and, as well as also being a form of the Norman-French Courtenay there, is an anglicised version of more than one Gaelic surname.[21] Courtney the piper – or his media handler – may have made the change to an almost identical surname that was known and accepted in Britain, one with flatteringly topical and aristocratic overtones. His experiences in the British provinces may have suggested that a slight change in surname for his London launch would be advisable. He may likewise have felt that a name-change would render his Irish pipes more acceptable to the musical public of the metropolis.

To understand why Courtney or his promoters may have felt this, it is necessary to know something of the relative positions in 1788 London of Scottish and Irish music; it is mainly within the context of these ethnic musics that the union pipes would have their British future. It was Scottish music that had long been popular in London, in print and on the stage and in general musical culture, not Irish. There had been a certain fashion for Scottish culture in London since the accession of James VI and I to the English throne in 1603, and an increasing number of Scottish melodies were to be found in English publications from the mid-1600s. But in the last fifteen years of the seventeenth century there 'a liking for Scotch-style music became a positive craze'.[22] It was a craze that would last for over a hundred years. Chiefly this came about because of the innate attractiveness of Scottish (and faux-Scottish) melodies and songs to the

[20] John Courtenay, born 'Courtney' in Co Louth, see Thorne 2004. For the comparison see below.

[21] The surname Courtney is found in various parts of Ireland but principally clusters in Kerry and adjoining counties and in southern Ulster. In Gaelic it is Ó Curnáin, Mac Cuarta, etc. (MacLysaght 1996: 65).

[22] Fiske 1983: 5. See Fiske for a detailed discussion of Scottish music in eighteenth-century England.

English ear, and their exotic yet familiar character. But their acceptability must have been increased by the legislative union of England and Scotland which was brought into effect in 1707, and by the patronage of Scottish members of Parliament in London. Certainly there was a buying public in London for Scottish music throughout the century, and Scottish pieces featured prominently there in ballad operas and entr'acte performances. Many were published in London from the 1720s by the migrant Scottish music publishers William Thompson, James Oswald and Robert Bremner. Their popularity increased as Scottishness became less and less threatening in England after the defeat of the Stuart cause at Culloden in 1746, the subsequent absorption of Highland soldiers (and their military bagpipes) into the regular British army, and their emergence as British heroes in such engagements as the battle of Quebec in 1759. After the publication, beginning in 1760, of the poeticised 'translations' into English by James MacPherson from the supposedly original Gaelic poems of Ossian, a Scottish bard of the third century, and their extraordinary Europe-wide success, positive ideas of Scottishness were further established in contemporary London consciousness. This was aided by the founding there in 1778 of the Highland Society of London and by its high-profile aristocratic support for indigenous Scottish culture, including the publishing of 'ancient Scotch music' in the capital in 1784.[23]

Ireland on the other hand, from a London perspective, was a separate and somewhat distant landmass, culturally more alien and less understood than Scotland. The majority of its inhabitants were Catholics, adherents

[23] *A Collection of Highland Vocal Airs, Never Hitherto Published* by Patrick MacDonald: advertised in *The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, London, 11 Nov. 1784. The Society also encouraged the playing of the mouth-blown Highland bagpipes by offering prizes at annual competitions, but these competitions were held in Scotland only. Apart from one instance of a Highland piper playing in a ballroom, no Scottish pipers seem to have engaged in public performance in London before the May 1788 appearance of Courtney. As will

of a threatening Continental religion, and they spoke a barbarous tongue, Irish. The country had long been colonised and ruled by Britain but never completely subdued. Agrarian disturbances were widespread there in the 1780s, and even the Protestant ascendancy of its Dublin-based colonial parliament was showing disquieting signs of legislative independence during the decade. Those of its aristocrats who lived in London were largely absentee landlords of British origins, unsympathetic to Irish indigenous culture, and while they formed dining clubs in the city there is no evidence that they offered patronage to Irish musicians. Most of the city's Irish population belonged to its often troublesome underclass.

For these and other reasons, Irish music is poorly represented in London publications and in public performance before Courtney's time. No separate collection of Irish music had been published there, and when Irish melodies are published in London from the mid-seventeenth century they appear as stray items in anthologies or as afterthoughts in collections of 'English, Scottish and Irish' tunes. The few 'Irish' songs known are mainly comic stage pieces put into the mouths of Irish servants; few of the many Irish actors in London specialised in Irish song. As the British music historian Sir John Hawkins said in about 1785: 'I know of no Irish airs so much celebrated in England as the Scotch have been'.[24]

This situation began to change in London in the 1780s: the Dublin dramatist John O'Keefe introduced harp tunes by the famous Irish

be seen below, some of the Society's prizewinners were briefly introduced to the London stage in later 1788 and in 1791. The Society itself sometimes engaged Irish bellows pipers, including Murphy, Courtney, McDonnell and O'Farrell mentioned below, to play at their social occasions in London, and also (along with Murphy) a 'piper – Allan' who may have been the famous Northumbrian piper James Allan (see Sanger 2011: 21 and NLS MS Highland Society of London Dep. 268/34 from which a facsimile of extracts was supplied to the writer courtesy of Keith Sanger).

[24] Letter to Joseph Cooper Walker quoted in Walker 1786: 66. Hawkins excepted only 'The Black Joke', correctly regarding this as being an Irish tune of modern composition.

harper-composer Turlough Carolan (1670–1738) and other Irish melodies in his musical plays there from 1783;[25] Dubliner Joseph Cooper Walker's *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, the first book on Irish music, was published and seriously reviewed in London in 1786,[26] and *The Hibernian Muse*, the first British-published collection of Irish music, appeared there in 1790.[27] The performances of Courtney, who was widely recognised as an Irish piper, doubtless helped contribute to this change of climate. But in reference to the Irish bagpipe specifically, James Dungan, an Irish patron of traditional music, said in the 1780s: 'I consider my native country half a century behind Scotland in encouraging and rewarding their best performers on the bagpipe'.[28] Although Denis Courtney was part of a modernising trend in contemporary Irish life – entrepreneurial, outward-looking, technologically and musically innovative, functioning in urban settings, and English-speaking – he was prudent therefore not to draw attention to his Irishness or to his Irish pipes in making his London debut.

[25] Fiske 1986: 459–61.

[26] In *European Magazine and London Review* vol. 19 (1786): 369–72 and *Monthly Review; or, Literary Journal* vol. LXXVII (July–Dec. 1787): 425–39, for instance.

[27] 'Music lately published, and sold by Messrs. Thompson... The Caledonian Muse; a Collection of scarce and favourite Scots Tunes... The Hibernian Muse; a Collection of Irish Airs...', *The World*, London, 23 Oct. 1790. The volume carries no publication date and has been assigned to c. 1786 in some library catalogues.

[28] Quoted by Arthur O'Neill in O'Sullivan 1958: II, 163. James Dungan, an Irish merchant in Denmark inspired by the Highland Society of London, funded three competitive harp festivals in Granard, Co Longford, in the 1780s (see Donnelly 1993: 27–9).

Forerunners of 'Union Pipes'

As an Irish player of bellows-blown bagpipes, Denis Courtney would most likely have been described in Britain before May 1788 as an 'Irish piper' playing the 'Irish pipes'. This latter was the commonest of the terms used there before that date for bellows pipes played by Irish pipers.

In Ireland however the bagpipe in all its forms was earliest simply referred to in Irish as *píb, píob, píopaí, píb mhála* (from the medieval Latin loan-word *pipa*) or in English by the equivalent 'pipe', 'pipes' or 'bagpipe(s)'; there was normally no need there to characterise them as 'Irish'.[29] Confusingly, these shorthand terms in Irish and English were also used in Ireland into the eighteenth century to refer to mouth-blown bagpipes as well as to bellows-blown bagpipes. Early Irish terminology does not therefore help in distinguishing one kind of bagpipe from another. Instead, notice must be taken of the social context of playing: whether it takes place indoors or outdoors, for listening or dancing or marching to, with other domestic musical instruments, and so on. Notice must also be taken of the range of music played on it: whether it falls within the range of the Irish mouth-blown bagpipe – which is believed to have had the same nine-note (or smaller) compass typical of mouth-blown bagpipes internationally[30] – or is music of a two-octave-plus range such as was employed in contemporary Ireland in traditional and popular music by the harp, recorder, violin, German flute and oboe. The wider range

[29] 'Pipes' continues to be the everyday casual and conversational term used by uilleann pipers for their instrument in Ireland today; 'uilleann pipes' is used when speaking formally, or when distinguishing the instrument from Irish mouth-blown pipes (also still referred to casually by their players as 'pipes').
[30] Baines 1995: 20.

of the new bagpipe enabled it to play in ensemble with these instruments. On this basis, as already mentioned, bellows pipes are referred to in print in Ireland from the late 1600s. From then to 1788, references are found to Irish pipes that are or seem bellows-blown, some of them in British and north American sources. Visual illustrations of bellows-blown pipes begin to appear in Ireland from about 1750, and some instruments of the 1760s and 1770s survive in Irish museum collections and in private hands. They continued in these years before Courtney's debut to be called 'pipes' in Ireland, or, when referred to more formally in newspapers and especially in the travel accounts of tourists, 'Irish pipes'.

In Britain, the otherness of Irish pipes and pipers, when they began to be noticed in print from the 1730s,[31] leads to them being normally denoted as 'Irish pipes' and 'Irish pipers'. Again the terminology is confusing. Are they players of a familiar kind of mouth-blown or bellows-blown pipes who just happen to be Irish, or are they players of a distinct form of the instrument called 'Irish pipes'? In 1743, as already mentioned, an Irish piper in London, John Geoghegan, introduced to the public the terms 'Pastoral or New Bagpipe' for bellows pipes, and defined a particular form of these pipes in some detail. But his new terms failed to be adopted generally,[32] and later in the same decade reference is again found in London to an 'Irish bagpipes player'.[33]

---

[31] '… a noted Irish Bagpiper, and Midnight Bully.' *Daily Post*, London, 19 June 1732, for example (reference courtesy Seán Donnelly).

[32] However, after being noticed again by organologists in the 1950s and 1960s, Geoghegan's 'pastoral pipes' term has come into currency within the last thirty years among an international subculture of makers and musicians interested in surviving instruments which resemble his, and in music which survives for them.

[33] 'Committed... to the Gatehouse... Thomas Martin the famous Irish bagpipes player, for playing many tunes commonly used among the rebels..., *Whitehall Evening Post or London Intelligencer*, London, 27–29 Dec. 1748.

In an English letter of 10 July 1751 the 'Irish Bag-pipes' are unambiguously defined as a distinct bellows-blown instrument by Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough (c. 1700–56), writing from Barrells Hall, Warwickshire, to the poet William Shenstone in London; the musician referred to was a trooper guarding horses on her estate:

> I sat last night agreeably... hearing one of the Grass-Guard Dragoons play on his German flute; which he does very well: he has also a pair of Irish Bag-pipes, with which he can play in concert; they having sixteen notes, and the Scotch but nine. He has no pipe to put to his mouth, and but very little motion with his arm; his fingers do the chief...[34]

In 1758 a 'pair of fine Irish bagpipes' was being raffled in Traquair on the Scottish borders;[35] they had belonged to a deceased piper James Smith: evidence possibly that local pipers were taking up Irish instruments. Certainly an 'Irish pipe' inflated by bellows was known in Lowland Scotland at the period, and was recognised by a Highland bagpipes player and knowledgeable critic Joseph MacDonald, writing in 1760, as an instrument distinct from the common run of Lowland bellows pipes. He speaks of the

> most variegated kind of Pipe, which is the Irish Pipe. This they have neither a regular Sett of Musick or Cuttings for, but they have diversified it into Surprising Imitations of other Musick.[36]

---

[34] [Luxborough] 1775: 277. This 1751 reference is the first known occurrence of a frequently published eighteenth-century distinction made between the Irish and Scottish pipes, by which the Irish are characterised as being powered by the bellows and having a range of two octaves while the Scottish are mouth-blown and have a range of nine notes. In fact bellows-blown pipes with a range of eight or nine notes were common in Scotland in the eighteenth century: see also Note 155 below.

[35] Eytan 1999: 26.

[36] Cannon 1994: 76. Lowland bellows-pipes chanters typically had a range of nine notes, which could be increased according to MacDonald by 'adding Pinching

In 1766 a blind professional musician Mr James Mullin had come from London to Derby to perform 'Several Extraordinary Pieces of Music on the Irish Bagpipes, German flute and Violin'.[37] The Scot James Tytler, editor in Edinburgh of the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, played on the 'Irish pipes' according to his friend the poet Robert Burns,[38] and Tytler would have been speaking from personal experience when he also applies this term to the instrument in 1778, and describes it in the Encyclopaedia as the 'softest, and in some respects the most melodious of any' bagpipes.[39]

From about 1765 to the end of the century London and other musical instrument sellers are regularly advertising two kinds of bagpipes – 'Bagpipes, Scotch or Irish' – for sale,[40] and some claim to be making them.[41] By 1779, less than a decade before Courtney appears in London,

---

Notes… By this, their Chanter has the most of the Flute Compass'. If the contemporary Irish pipes he refers to were more 'variegated' or varied than these, they would have had a range comparable to that of Geoghegan's 'new or pastoral' instrument, and probably, like it, have had a capability for producing various semitones by crossfingering. They may even have been Geoghegan's instrument; he was Irish, and it is an open question whether his pipes were seen as Irish in Scotland in 1760. By 'other Musick' MacDonald doubtless meant the kind of popular classical music he had just been writing about, by such composers as Corelli, Festing and Handel.

[37] *Derby Mercury*, Derby, 19 Sept. 1766.

[38] R.H. Cromeck, *Reliques of Robert Burns*, quoted in Stewart 2009: 79.

[39] [Tytler] 1778: 954.

[40] See Halfpenny 1964: 100–101 for a 1765 Robert Bremner advertisement; *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, Bath, 17 Aug. 1769, for a Thomas Underwood advertisement; *Gazeteer and New Daily Advertiser*, London, 13 June 1770, for a Henry Thorowgood advertisement; and *A Catalogue of Vocal and Instrumental Music*... for a John Welcker advertisement [c. 1775]; etc.

[41] John Welcker [c. 1775] for example: 'John Welcker... Manufactures and Sells the following Instruments... Bagpipes Scotch or Irish... Bagpipe [reeds]...' (in catalogue of Note 40). Welcker lists so many instruments of his manufacture that it might be suspected that he is factoring them for other manufacturers, but he also gives a separate list of instruments that he only imports (including 'Welch Harps' and 'Irish Harps').

at least one Irish-made bellows bagpipe by a recognised Irish maker is also being played there:

> Wants a Place, a young man, who is thoroughly acquainted with all the branches of servitude... The same person has a very handsome pair of Irish Bag-pipes, by the real old Egan in Dublin, made for a nobleman deceased. Any single gentleman wanting a servant, or a pair of Bag-pipes, or both... shall be immediately waited upon...[42]

This young man is doubtless the 'Murphy, Player of the Irish Pipes' who would advertise in Edinburgh for a place in service as a musical dresser or butler in 1787, the year before Courtney's London debut.[43] His full name was John Murphy,[44] and he also would become a well known professional recitalist from 1788.[45] An Irish 'bagpipes' player, unnamed but from Mullingar, Co Westmeath, was playing on stage for dancers in 1781 in a revival London production of Allan Ramsay's Scottish pastoral the *Gentle Shepherd*.[46] At this general period also the 'bagpipe' is the favoured instrument among the poor Irish of London celebrating St Patrick's Day in the ghetto of St Giles.[47]

---

[42] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, London, 20 Sept. 1779. For the 1760s Dublin pipe-maker Egan see Donnelly 1983: 7–11.

[43] *Caledonian Mercury*, Edinburgh, 26 July 1787.

[44] Murphy c. 1810: title page, quoted in Cannon 1980: 90–1.

[45] Murphy played for the Highland Society of London on seven documented occasions in 1788, beginning on 20 January, and twice during the year with Denis Courtney (NLS MS Highland Society of London Dep. 268/34). Although playing Irish bellows pipes in London earlier than Courtney, he was eclipsed by him.

[46] *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser*, London, 14 Dec. 1781: 'When his Majesty was to see the Gentle Shepherd, one of his officers, a Scotchman, being behind the scenes, and conceiving that no person but of his own country could play the bagpipes, went up to the man who performs on that instrument in the Highland reel, and said, "What part of the kirk, laddie?". The other answered, with a very broad provincial accent — "From *Mullingar*, by J—s honey!"'. Mullingar is in Co Westmeath. The John Geoghegan mentioned above was also of Co Westmeath connection, but was doubtless of a different social class from this piper.

[47] *General Advertiser*, London, 21 Mar. 1786.

Some other minor terms were used in the eighteenth century for Irish bellows pipes, or what seem to be such. Among the earliest of these was 'the Irish organ' (and variant forms) which first appears in 1733 in a Dublin reference to 'an *Organ* Piper',[48] and later and more explicitly in Cork in the 1770s and 1780s,[49] and in Scotland in the 1780s.[50] Also in the 1770s 'small pipes', which may or may not be bellows pipes, are referred to in a Co Kildare context.[51] A reported Cork printed advertisement, seemingly of the 1780s but possibly earlier or later, refers to 'common Large pipes Small pipes & and Dunn the pipers way of playing ye large Soft pipes whether the Scholer can read or write';[52] presumably some if not all of these are bellows pipes. 'Parlour pipes' was also used of the instrument.[53]

Irish antiquarians of the 1780s used a variety of terms. About 1784 the unreliable antiquarian speculator General Charles Vallancey observed to the twenty-four-year-old Joseph Cooper Walker, who was then researching in Dublin the first book on Irish music, that the Irish had pipes of two kinds, 'one filled by the mouth, the other

[48] Lawler 1733, quoted in Donnelly 1994a: 42–5.

[49] *Hibernian Chronicle*, Cork, 26 July 1773, 12 Sept. 1774, and 4 Apr. 1784. For details see Carolan 1984: 59–61.

[50] Cheape 2008b: 117.

[51] 'On the 25th ult. departed his life at Athy in the County of Kildare in the 80th year of his age... James Purcell, commonly known by the name of Baron Purcell of Loakman... his will... '... my body shall be preceded to the grave by twelve of the best performers on the small pipes which can be had, to whom I will one crown each for playing my favourite tune of Granuail... The pipers attended...' (*Hibernian Magazine*, Dublin, Dec. 1774).

[52] *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* vol. XLI (1936): 52 (reference courtesy Seán Donnelly). Dunn's instructions were presumably the pipes gamut in tablature.

[53] NLI Séamus Ó Casaide MS 8118(2). No date is given for this usage, but the term was a common one, often used in Britain as well as Ireland and over a wide period of time.

modern by the bellows at the elbow or Uilean',[54] the latter word a form of the Irish word for elbow. In referring to the old Irish word 'Cuislanagh, Pipers', Vallancey says

> 'I think Bagpipers; because they at this day call a piper by that name, and he names the bellows, bollog na Cuisli, the bellows of the Cuisli, or Veins of the Arm, at the first joint, and on the outside is Ullan or the Elbow – so that I take Ullan Pipes and Cuisli pipes to be the same...'.[55]

Vallancey's coinage of 'Ullan Pipes' was motivated by a wish to make a connection with the 'woollen pipes' of Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice*. When Walker came to print in 1786 he repeated Vallancey's observations and passed on his supposition:

> 'Vallency [sic] concludes that Ullan Pipes and Cuisle Pipes are one and the same'.[56]

In time, as will be seen, this first term, which has no ancestry before Vallancey but was coined by him, would give rise to the term 'uilleann pipes'.

---

[54] Charles Vallancey to Joseph Cooper Walker in undated questionnaire, TCD MS 1461 (I) T51, fols 182–6.

[55] Charles Vallancey, undated letter to Joseph Cooper Walker, in TCD MS 1461–7 T.66 fol. 242. 'Cuisli Pipes' were not bagpipes but mouth-blown Irish pipes of antiquity.

[56] Walker 1786: 76. This is the first appearance of these terms in print. For further details see Carolan 1981: 4–9. Another unreliable contemporary Irish antiquarian, William Beauford, incorrectly used the term *adharcaidh ciuil* for bagpipes (Beauford 1781: 244) but he meant mouth-blown bagpipes. Walker 1786: 76 followed Beauford in this.

Establishment of 'Union Pipes'

It is necessary to detail what is known of Denis Courtney's career in order to understand not only how he introduced the term 'union pipes', but how he established it so firmly in contemporary musical consciousness that it would outlive him as a standard term for more than a century. The explanation for this feat lies in the considerable public successes he enjoyed in the course of his brief musical career. Had he not been successful, the term would hardly be known today.

Courtney in London 1788–1792

Even before his first public appearance in London on 14 May 1788, Denis Courtney is seen as receiving an unusual measure of recognition there. On 10 April, as 'Courtney', he was brought by Sir Hector Munro to play privately for the Highland Society of London, along with his fellow Irish piper John Murphy. They shared a fee of two guineas.[57] Both played for the Society again for the same fee on 8 May, 'Courtney having come without being ordered'.[58] In the several advertisements taken for his stage debut a particular emphasis can be discerned in the promotion. The concert itself is introduced as a benefit for him, something which implies that the performer already has a following. The tickets are expensive – 7s. 6d. each. They are being sold by the leading music sellers, publishers and musical instrument makers Longman and Broderip of Cheapside who, as contemporary makers and sellers of 'Bagpipes, Scotch or Irish',[59] were possibly involved in the promotion of the concert. Courtney himself is to be found at the fashionable address of 1 York Street, St

[57] NLS MS Highland Society of London Dep. 268/34. General Sir Hector Munro, Bart., became president of the Highland Society of London in 1800 (*Highland Society of London* 1873: 23).
[58] NLS MS Highland Society of London Dep. 268/34.
[59] *Longman and Broderip* catalogue [c. 1780].

James's Square, where he would remain until the year of his death. His supporting artists, especially the musical director and violinist Dieudonné Pascal Pieltain,[60] are well established London favourites. On the eve of the concert a further burst of publicity is employed: the full programme for the night is given in an extended advertisement. It will be a performance for listeners, free of the vulgar associations of bagpipes, and presented in terms of contemporary classical music, but at the same time novel. It will be supported by members of the nobility, who are probably the members of the Highland Society of London for whom he had lately played. The first half will feature 'Concerto Union Pipes, Mr. Courtenay (being the first ever attempted on that instrument)'; the second 'Maggy Lawther, with new variations, by particular desire of some noble personages, on Mr. Courtenay's Union Pipes'. It is not explained what 'Union Pipes' are,[61] but Courtney had received a considerable build-up for his debut.

The promotion was highly successful. According to an anonymous reviewer in *The Times* of London on the morning after the concert:

> Last night Mr. Courtney introduced a new species of music to the public, called the Union Pipes, being the Scotch and Irish Bag-pipes united; and he performed Maggae Lawther, with its variations, on it with great success.'[62]

Not quite everyone in the audience however was impressed with the music of the pipes. John Marsh, an English composer, recorded that

[60] For Pieltain see Highfill et al.: 11, 306.

[61] I had formerly thought (Carolan 2004: 21–3) that the instrument was already familiar to British audiences since no mention was made of the novelty of the term (or of the instrument), and that earlier examples of it would be found in print. Although earlier examples of the term may yet be found, I now think that the absence of explanation was an advertising ploy.

[62] Issue of 15 May 1788 (reference courtesy Terry Moylan). The form of Courtney's name used here is interesting: the writer clearly knew that it was really 'Courtney' in spite of his newspaper's advertising.

having seen an advertisement 'for the benefit of one Courtney, performer on the union pipes, I went to it & sat in the gallery, but came away (finding myself rather tired) as soon as he had played his concerto, with w'ch I was not very well pleased, some parts of it being as I thought like a person singing & crying at the same time'.[63]

Courtney's success was quickly followed up on the same day as *The Times* review appeared, on 15 May, with a surprise appearance during a concert on the pre-opening night of the 1788 season at the fashionable London pleasure gardens at Vauxhall. Two thousand were in attendance at the gardens, and the musicians played in a newly enlarged and brilliantly lit promenade room.

> The concert was unexpectedly enriched by the introduction of Courtney, the bagpipe player, who performed the tune of Maggy Lauder with uncommon beauty. It is astonishing what tenderness of tone and variety he gives to the instrument.[64]

The gardens were open again two nights later, and Courtney was again on hand:

> After the concert was finished in the garden orchestra, Mr. Courtenay performed a concerto on the Union Pipes in the Grand Saloon, which was received with much applause, for the execution and skill he displayed on an instrument as single and novel for the audience, as for a regular concerto.[65]

Another newspaper review was in agreement with this assessment. The singers had disappointed – they were 'much agitated by their first appearance at this place' – but

> Mr. Courtnay afforded much pleasure to the general entertainment of the evening. His excellence on the Union Bag-pipes is universally admired,

[63] Robins 1998: 432.
[64] *London Chronicle*, London, 15–17 May 1788.
[65] Ibid.

> and he played *Maggee Lawther* with much effect. The instrument was particularly well adapted to the room.[66]

For a period Courtney now disappears from the prints, but he doubtless went on to capitalise on his successes, performing unreported at Vauxhall and elsewhere, and privately for the 'noble personages' who had patronised his first stage appearance. Within a few years it was said of him that 'The principal nobility of the three kingdoms are well acquainted with his excellence'.[67] A muck-raking publication, attacking the prominent nobleman Charles Howard, 11th Duke of Norfolk (1746–1815, also known as 'the dirty Duke' and 'the drunk Duke'), says of Howard:

> Although no person can be more tenacious of the dignity due to high birth, or more jealous of the privileges of Aristocracy, yet his appearance, manner, and habits, are strikingly plebian, and his companions are selected from the very dregs of democracy. The principal friends and attendants on his Grace, are a Mr. Se—ge—ck, a subaltern actor belonging to the Haymarket Theatre, Mr. C— n—y, the celebrated performer on that harmonious instrument the bagpipe, and the noted Captain M—r—s, whose excellent songs have acquired him such unbounded popularity.[68]

The reference to the 'dregs of democracy' is a reminder that the American War of Independence, which concluded in 1783, would have been fresh in the minds of Courtney's audiences, and that the events of the French Revolution formed a prominent part of the political background to almost all of his six years in the limelight in Britain, from

---

[66] *The Times*, London, 17 May 1788. This third spelling of Courtney's surname in as many notices, two of them in the same paper, is typical of the lack of uniformity found in print for his name.

[67] *Hibernian Journal*, Dublin, 4 Jan. 1793.

[68] [Pigott] 1792: pt 2, 10–11. Thomas Sedgwick (d. 1803) was a bass singer much in demand as well as an actor. Thomas Morris (1732–1818), a retired soldier who may have been Irish, was a well known bon viveur and a writer of both respectable and obscene songs. For both see Highfill et al. Howard famously

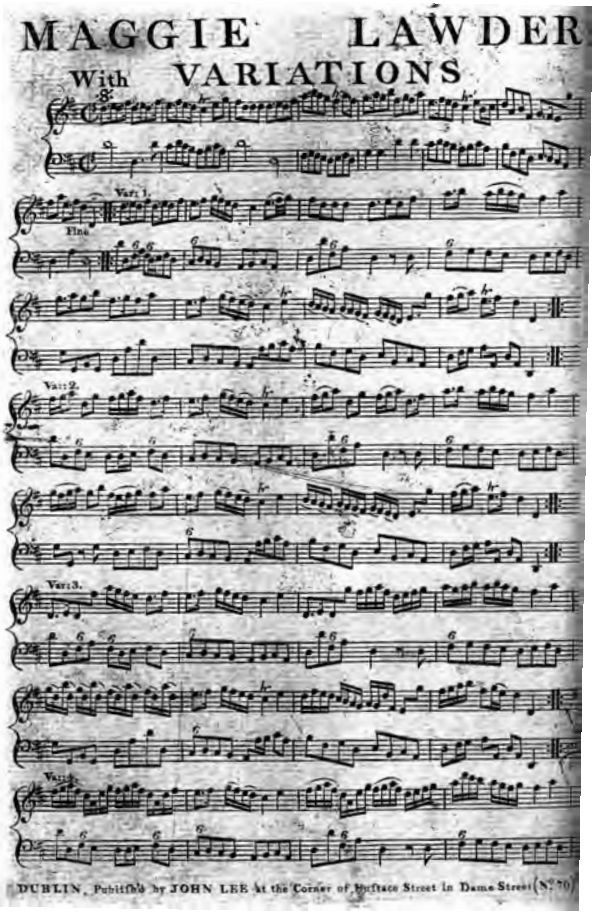
the fall of the Bastille in 1789, the year after his London debut, to the guillotining of Robespierre and the closure of the Jacobin Club about the time of his own death in 1794. All of his aristocratic patrons would have been greatly exercised by the Revolution, and those of a Whig outlook in politics, such as Charles Howard was, would generally have at first sympathised with the revolutionaries.

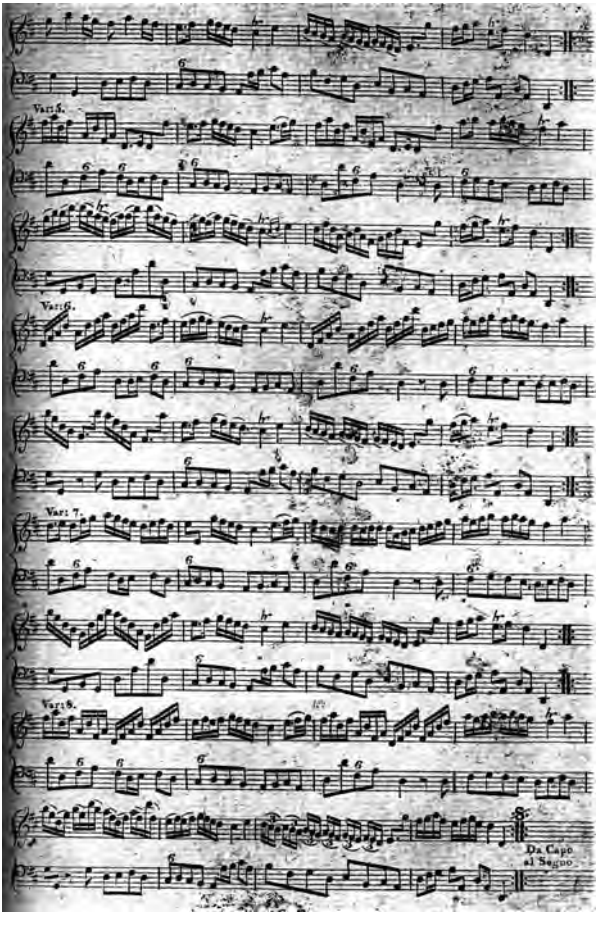
Illustration on following pages:

'Maggie Lawder with Variations' as published in Dublin, seemingly during Denis Courtney's visit there, January–July 1793

---

would only allow his servants to wash him when he was dead drunk. By coincidence another contemporary Irish piper named Denis was also taken up by a drunken English nobleman: 'Les Lords Lieutenants d'Irlande... ont le droit de créer chevalier qui il leur plait, ils en ont quelques fois fait une plaisanterie assez mal placée, à ce que je pense. Le duc de Rutland, après avoir un peu bù, fut si charmé d'un certain aveugle, joueur de cornemuse, qu'il lui ordonna dè se mettre à genoux et le créa Chevalier avec l'epée et l'accollade. Cet homme depuis ce temps se nomme Sir Denis * * *, il continue cependant son premier métier et va jouer dans les maisons pendant le diner, c'est un homme vraiment habile sur son instrument, dont j'avoue à ma honte que je ne fuis pas grand amateur'. [The Lords Lieutenant of Ireland... have the right to make whomsoever they please a knight, and as a result they have sometimes made, in my opinion, the odd pretty unfunny jest. The Duke of Rutland, after having had a drink or two, was so charmed with a certain blind bagpiper that he ordered him to go down on his knees and created him a knight by sword and by embracing him. This man since that time is called Sir Denis * * *. He continues however with his first way of life and goes to play in people's houses during dinner. He is a man really skilled on the instrument, of which I must admit to my shame that I am not very fond. – present writer's translation] (De Latocnaye 1797: 110–1; 1801: 120. A published English translation *Rambles through Ireland* 1798: 1, 165–6 identifies the piper as a 'Denis O'Grady', which seems confirmed by a later poetic reference to 'O'Grady, that fam'd piping Knight' (*The Overseer*, Cork, 5 July 1817). He was doubtless a bellows piper. Charles Manners, 4th Duke of Rutland, was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1784 until his death in 1787. He was popular in Dublin for his conviviality and hospitality, and drank himself to death in office.


MAGGIE LAWDER
With VARIATIONS
Var: 1.
Fine.
Var: 2.
Var: 3.
Var: 4.
DUBLIN, Published by JOHN LEE at the Corner of Britain Street in Dame Street (N.° 70)


Vari 5.
Vari 6.
Vari 7.
Vari 8.
Da Capo
al Segno

Howard was for a time a close companion of 'Prinny', the dissolute Prince of Wales and Prince Regent who would become King George IV. Courtney also was a favourite of the prince, and of his father George III. In 1792 at a meeting and dinner of some five hundred of the Free and Accepted Masons in their hall at Lincoln's Inn Fields the Prince of Wales, the Grand Master, was in the chair, and afterwards 'Courtney, on the Union Pipes, and Wiepert, on the Harp, added to the entertainment of the day...'.[69] In 1793 it was claimed that 'his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has often commanded him to attend his parties'.[70] In a 1794 Royal Command performance of a show in which he played, it was reported that 'Courtenay, with the charming music of the Union Pipes, seemed to afford uncommon satisfaction to the Royal Box'.[71]

Courtney did not however spend all his time in aristocratic service: 'Courtenay, the celebrated Union Piper... was a choice spirit, and would sooner play on his pipes to amuse his poor countrymen, than gratify the wishes of noblemen, although handsomely paid for it'.[72]

Courtney's establishing of the bagpipes as an instrument acceptable to fashionable London audiences may have contributed to the first stage appearance of a Scottish Highland piper there later in 1788. The Highland Society of London, as well as having the Scottish mouth-blown Highland bagpipes played privately at its own London functions, had

[69] *The Diary or Woodfall's Register*, London, 4 May 1792.
[70] *Hibernian Journal*, Dublin, 4 Jan. 1793.
[71] *The World*, London, 11 Feb. 1794.
[72] Egan 1820: 142–3. The implication that Courtney would have had a familiar Irish traditional repertory for this audience is borne out by his later introduction of such music into his stage performances as below. It is likely that Courtney also played for dancers on these occasions, that being then a primary function of an Irish piper. This and other references give the impression that Courtney was himself of humble birth.

been supporting the Highland pipes since 1781 by organising annual piping competitions and offering prizes. These had been held to date in Falkirk and Edinburgh,[73] but now Mr. Neal M'Lean, piper to the Society in London and a prizewinner in their 1783 competitions,[74] was advertised to appear for one night only at Sadler's Wells theatre on 10 September 1788. He would take part in an Ossian-inspired pantomime entertainment entitled *The Witch of the Lakes; or, Harlequin in the Hebrides*. There would be introduced 'A New Scotch Reel; accompanied on the Bagpipes, in character', and M'Lean would 'entertain the Audience with a Pibroch on the Prize Pipes, descriptive of a Highland Battle'.[75] In time Denis Courtney would have an outstanding success in a similar London-Scottish Ossianic pantomime entertainment.

Courtney next appears in print – 'Concerto Union Pipes, Mr. Courtney' – at a benefit in March 1789 in the Free Masons' Hall for the singer Miss Leary, who had featured in his own initial benefit almost a year earlier.[76] Thereafter he again disappears from view until he has three engagements as 'Courtney piper' with the Highland Society of London in March, April and May 1790.[77] His relationship with the Society continued: he played for them again in January 1791 as 'D. Courtney Irish Piper', and in February of the same year as 'Dennis Courtney' in company with a 'Jms Macdonald',[78] who was doubtless James McDonnell, an Irish professional bellows piper famous in Cork since the 1770s, and also later active in Scotland and London.[79] In April 1791 Courtney publishes a preliminary notice of a concert and ball to be given for his benefit:

[73] Manson 1901: 389.
[74] Manson 1901: 388.
[75] *Gazeteer and New Daily Advertiser*, London, 8 Sept. 1788.
[76] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, London, 25 Mar. 1789.
[77] NLS MS Highland Society of London Dep. 268/34.
[78] Ibid.
[79] See below.

> Mr. Courtenay, Performer on the Union Pipes, begs leave to inform his Friends and the Public, that his Benefit is fixed for Thursday, the 12th of May, at the Great Room, the Crown and Anchor, in the Strand; where will be a grand concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music. After the concert will be a Ball.[80]

The Crown and Anchor was a popular London meeting and dining venue with one of the largest rooms in the city, capable of seating 2,000.[81] It was not as prestigious as the Free Mason's Hall of his debut, and the tickets were cheaper, but Longman and Broderip are still in support and he is still living at 1 York Street.[82] A report of a masquerade held the following month in the London pleasure gardens at Ranelagh suggests something of Courtney's current lifestyle. One of the masqueraders appears in the character of 'Courtnay and his bag-pipes, as tipsey as any piper need be'.[83] Another report of the same occasion however simply lists the character as 'Mr. Courtenay, the performer on the Union Pipes'.[84] Both reports furnish evidence that he had become a noted figure on the fashionable London scene.[85]

By this time Courtney had begun to make guest appearances in the intervals of theatrical presentations at leading London venues: at, for instance, a performance of *Love in a Village* starring the well known actor and singer Mr. Incledon at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden:

---

[80] *The World*, London, 27 Apr. 1791.
[81] See Parolin 2010: 112–3.
[82] *The World*, London, 27 Apr. 1791.
[83] *The World*, London, 4 May 1791.
[84] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, London, 4 May 1791.
[85] It would seem that the character of Courtney became a standard feature of masquerades: 'Courtenay, with his bag-pipes, attracted as usual much notice.' (*London Chronicle*, 14–16 Feb. 1792). From another report of this occasion, it seems that he was represented in his stage persona as a 'Highland piper' (*Morning Herald*, London, 16 Feb. 1792).

'With a variety of Entertainments. In which will be introduced the favourite air of "Moggy Lauder" on the Union Pipes, by the celebrated Mr. Courtney'.[86] This venue could also hold 2,000; it was owned and managed by the Irish playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan. In the same theatre two nights before Courtney's appearance on 20 May, a group of Scottish Highland pipers appeared in a

> ... new Divertisement, consisting of Dialogue, Singing and Dancing, The Union: Or, St. Andrew's Day. In the Divertisement will be introduced, The Highland Competition Prize, Exactly as represented annually in the City of Edinburgh, by M'Lane, M'Gregor, M'Tavish, and several other celebrated Pipers, who will perform several Strathspeys, Laments and Pebruchs.[87]

Ironically, given his opening up of the London stage for Scottish pipers, Courtney's own biggest stage success would be playing the union pipes in a Scottish role. James Byrn or Byrne, a dancing master, had choreographed a ballet pantomime 'taken from Ossian' entitled *Oscar and Malvina*, with 'the new Music composed, and the ancient Scots Music selected and adapted, by Mr. Shield. The Overture by Mr. Reeve'.[88] Courtney played in the new piece accompanied at first by a German harper Charles Meyer,[89] but thereafter and regularly by another German harper John Erhardt Weippert (1766–1823).[90] In this presentation he would reach the pinnacle of his career.

The spectacular production opened in Covent Garden on 20 October 1791. It had a resounding success, and had been performed over forty

[86] *The World*, London, 16 May 1791.
[87] *The Diary or Woodfall's Register*, London, 18 May 1791.
[88] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, London, 20 Oct. 1791.
[89] Hogan 1968: 1399. Byrn danced the role of Oscar.
[90] For Weippert see Highfill et al.: 15, 335–7.

times before the season ended on 31 May 1792.[91] The published libretto and score went into a third edition in 1791.[92] The piece would be revived at intervals over the next thirty years, in Ireland and Germany and in the United States as well as in London. Courtney was frequently singled out as one of the main attractions of the first and other early productions. He would play music from it in his general stage recitals until his death, and over the years several professional bellows pipers, following his lead, would feature music from it in their concert performances.

Music from William Reeve's score of *Oscar and Malvina* would frequently be published in sheet-music form and in anthologies of melodies: in London from 1791 and into the nineteenth century; in Dublin in 1793; and in the United States from the second half of the 1790s. These publications were aimed at the general body of musicians and arranged generally for instruments other than the union pipes, but among them a rondo marked for the 'Union Pipes' and harp in duet shows that a range of two octaves was required of the pipes.[93] The pipes stave also calls for several three-note chords, but these must have been supplied by the harp as they are not chords that could be played on the then-new keyed closed chanters or 'regulators' of the pipes, which only sound when their keys are depressed to add harmony notes to the chanter and drones. While a single regulator was in use on Irish bellows pipes by 1789[94] and three regulators have been standard on the instrument since the nineteenth century, there is no evidence that Courtney employed any. If however he did, it would explain further the success of his playing.

[91] Hogan 1968: 1384.
[92] *Airs, Duets, Choruses, and Argument, of… Oscar and Malvina…*
[93] [Reeve] n.d.: 4–5.
[94] 'A regulator' is mentioned by William Beauford in a description of the uilleann pipes written in August 1789 but not published until 1790. He made no mention of this feature in a similar description which he wrote in 1785 (see Carolan 1984: 61).

One newspaper correspondent, styling himself 'The Ghost of Carolan' and complaining about Courtney's stage costume in *Oscar and Malvina*, incidentally confirms his nationality and that of his pipes:

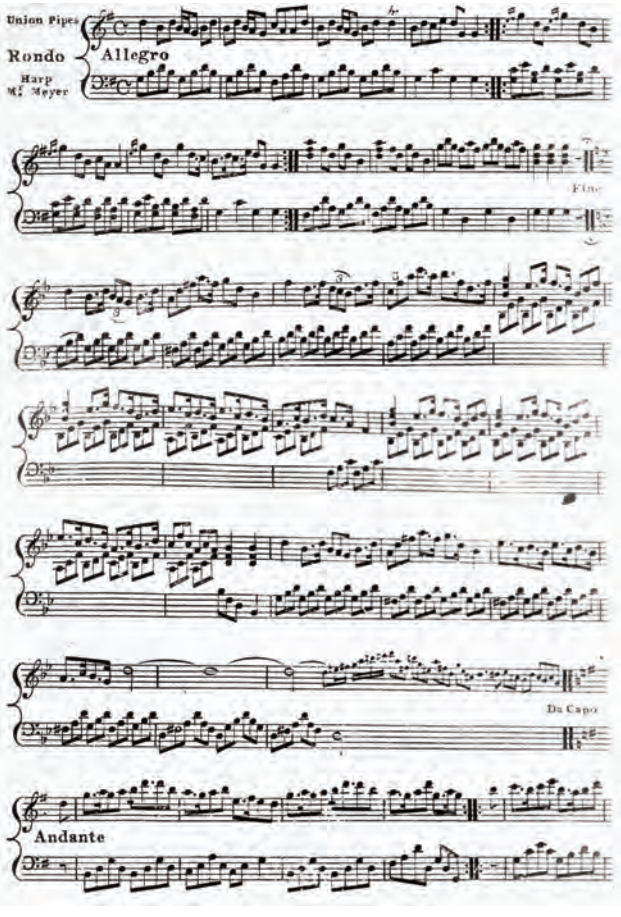
> As an Irishman, give me leave to observe, that in the representation of Oscar and Malvina the Irish pipes are introduced; but why the piper should be habited in a Highland dress, I cannot reconcile to my feelings... Now, by my shoul, I tink an Irishman playing so well upon the pipes as little C——y, should not be ashamed of his brogues, and let the music give his Scotch bonnet the lie.[95]

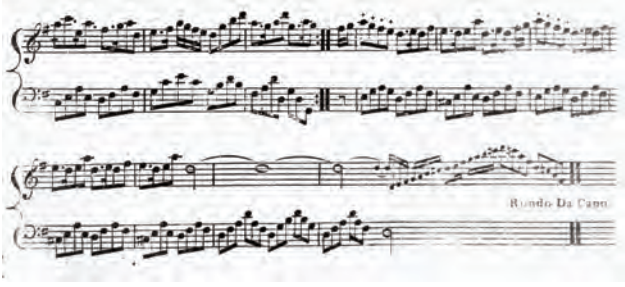
Now known for their duets in *Oscar and Malvina*, Courtney and Weippert had begun to perform together as entr'acte entertainment in variety productions, such as *Collin's Evening Brush* at the Lyceum in the Strand during March 1792.[96] In May 1792 Courtney is having another benefit in the Crown and Anchor and playing 'an entire New Concerto on the Union Pipes by Mr. Reeve, who Composed the

---

[95] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, London, 8 Nov. 1791. There must be a suspicion that the writer was the Irish actor and humorous dramatist John O'Keefe, who, as said, had been introducing Carolan tunes to London audiences since the early 1780s, sometimes in collaboration with Shield, the part-composer of *Oscar and Malvina* (see O'Keefe 1826: II, 49,70–1, 77; Fiske 1986: 274, 459, 600–12 and passim). O'Keefe was interested in the Irish pipes: he had introduced the piper James MacDonnell to Cork stage audiences in 1774 (Carolan 1984: 59–61) and had pipers as characters in his 1783 stage production *The Shamrock* (O'Keefe: II, 49; Fiske 1986: 459). The dilemma faced by the musical directors of *Oscar and Malvina* – of wanting to represent Scottish pipes on stage, but being unable to use Highland pipes because their confined melodic range and their unique temperament (those features which are the very basis of their character and attraction) prevented them playing melodies of extended range and playing in concert with other theatre instruments – is a familiar one. It is usually solved nowadays, from the television series *Kidnapped* to the film *Braveheart*, by using Irish uilleann pipes off-screen.

[96] *Morning Chronicle*, London, 29 Mar. 1792 etc. See also *Morning Herald*, London, 19 May 1792 (in *The Irishman in London*); and *Morning Herald*, London, 26 May 1792 (in *Kean's Evening Lounge*).


Union Pipes
Rondo
Allegro
Harp
M. Meyer
Fine
Da Capo
Andante



From William Reeve etc., The Overture, Favorite Songs, Duets and Choruses in the Grand Pantomime Ballet of Oscar & Malvina*, Longman & Broderip, London, n.d. [1791]*

Favourite Overture in Oscar and Malvina'. He is supported by Weippert, Mr Incledon, Mrs Mountain, Miss Leary, and other leading London entertainers.[97] Later in the month Courtney and Weippert are accompanying the singing of a Scottish duet by Incledon and Mountain in a theatrical evening in Covent Garden which featured as the afterpiece the popular comedy *The Irishman in London*.[98] For the first time in his London career, Courtney is billed as playing the 'Irish Pipes'; this was doubtless thought appropriate for the theme of the comedy, which also featured 'A Planxty' sung by the Irish specialist singer Mr Johnstone.[99] But ominously Courtney fails to appear for the last night of a run of *Oscar and Malvina* in the same venue: 'Mr. Weippart with his Harp, undertook the whole piece by himself, with wonderful execution and taste; the sweet tone which he brought from the Harp astonished the Company'.[100] By the beginning of November

[97] *Morning Herald*, London, 7 May 1792. The ticket price had increased from the 5s of his earlier benefit in the same venue to 7s 6d: his stock had obviously risen because of *Oscar and Malvina*.
[98] *Public Advertiser*, London, 28 May 1792.
[99] *Gazeteer and New Daily Advertiser*, London, 22 May 1792.
[100] *Morning Herald*, London, 2 June 1792.

1792 Courtney and Weippert are together again in *Oscar and Malvina* during the new theatrical season in Covent Garden.[101]

At this time Courtney was beginning to be noticed in books as well as in newspapers:

> ... in many passages she [a stage singer Miss Broadhurst] reminds us of Courtenay, on the Union Pipes, who certainly commands the greatest power, and produces the most bewitching and various sounds on that Instrument which possibly can be conceived. His ingenuity seems to have made a new discovery in Instrumental Music...[102]

Courtney in Ireland 1793

By early January 1793, a month in which France would declare war on Britain and Ireland, Courtney's successes in *Oscar and Malvina* had brought him across the Irish Sea to Dublin and he is noticed there as an arriving celebrity: 'Yesterday morning, Mr Courtney, so famous for playing on the pipes at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, arrived from Holyhead.'[103] He had been brought over by Richard Daly, manager of the Theatre Royal, Crow Street, 'at a very considerable sum'[104] to appear there in a roadshow version of the piece, one of two productions that had been running in Dublin from late 1792:

> Hitherto its success has been unprecedented, and the Manager... has, to encrease its attraction, brought over at a considerable expence, Courtney, whose performance on the bagpipes, at Covent Garden, has established

[101] *The Diary or Woodfall's Register*, London, 1 Nov. 1792.
[102] [Pigott] 1792: 261. The reference is also found in the 3rd ed. of 1793 and the 4th ed. of 1794.
[103] *Public Register, or, Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 1–3 Jan. 1793. He arrived on 2 January. Holyhead is a Welsh port of embarkation for Ireland.
[104] *Hibernian Journal*, Dublin, 4 Jan. 1793.

> his pre-eminence on that favourite instrument. —His first appearance will be tomorrow evening... when a very crowded audience is expected'.[105]

The country in which Courtney had arrived was in a state of increasing political and sectarian tension which would result before the end of the decade in armed rebellion and parliamentary union with Britain. Its Protestant ascendancy parliament was continuing its efforts to become a sovereign assembly free from Westminster control, at the same time as a Catholic Committee was in London suing for relief from legislative disabilities suffered by Catholics. Animated by the example of the French Revolution, radicals were secretly contemplating violent separation from Britain; Courtney's six months in Ireland would see a government crackdown on the United Irishmen movement in Dublin and Belfast. But native instrumental music and song had been providing one of several temporary cultural bridges between Protestants and Catholics since the 1780s; just six months earlier, in July 1792 (to coincide with the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille) the Belfast Harp Festival had been held in an effort to preserve the threatened harp tradition. As one classical instrument of Irish traditional music was slowly disappearing after being in use for the best part of a thousand years, another was finally coming into its own in the capital city with maximum publicity after a hundred years of obscure development.

A fanfare notice for Courtney's Dublin debut on 4 January, headed 'National Music', seems to imply that Irish rather than Scottish music will be heard, but without actually saying so:

---

[105] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 1 Jan. 1793. Courtney seems to have been the only one of the original London cast to have transferred to Dublin – a testament doubtless to his unique talent and to the attraction his art would have for Irish audiences. A well known Irish actor who was already part of the Dublin cast, as one of the 'Principal Bards and vocal Performers', was Robert MacOwen or Owenson, an Irish-speaking singer from Mayo and father of the future novelist and harpist Sidney Owenson, Lady Morgan.

> National Music. The celebrated Courtney, whose superior character, unrivalled abilities, and uncommon execution on the Union Pipes are so well known to every person of taste in the three kingdoms, makes his first appearance this evening in the dramatic Pantomime of Oscar and Malvina...[106]

Another notice of the same date was even more effusive and emphasised the national angle more strongly, while touching on the contemporary antiquarian interest in older music:

> The musical amateur, the man of refined taste, and the admirer of ancient music, will this evening gratify their feelings beyond their most sanguine expectations by the unrivalled performance of the celebrated Courtney on our favourite national instrument, the Union Pipes...[107]

A management advertisement speaks of 'The Bagpipes by Mr. Courtney from the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, his first Appointment'.[108] It is noticeable that his Irish management, unlike his London promoters, frequently advertise him as playing 'bagpipes'. Since it was, as said, 'our favourite national instrument', there was no need to camouflage it in Dublin as there had been in London, but rather it was a good business move to draw attention to its national familiarity. On the other hand the new and fashionable London term for the pipes is also employed, although not the piper's London stage name.

Courtney was once again an undoubted hit: a review speaks of 'the engaging novel[t]y of C's superior performance on the union pipes, a novelty sufficient of itself to fill a house, for he has to boast the admiration of all the best judges in London for his masterly execution, his delicacy yet power of tone, and for his affecting

[106] *Saunder's News-Letter*, Dublin, 4 Jan. 1793.
[107] *Hibernian Journal*, Dublin, 4 Jan. 1793.
[108] *Hibernian Journal*, Dublin, 7 Jan. 1793.

manner on that instrument.'[109] Another states that 'Courtney, the celebrate[d] performer on the Bagpipes... has brought full houses... nothing can exceed the fineness of his tones, and the extent and variety of them could not be surpassed... on any instrument'.[110] Yet another says

> Much as we had heard of him, the reality exceeds all expectations, indeed nothing but hearing him, and to that all listen with avidity, can convey any adequate idea of his extraordinary merit. His brilliancy of execution, the elegance of his shake, and his delicacy, yet truth, of tone, are the universal themes of applause; but his pathetic impression which melts every heart with sympathising feelings is not to be told...[111]

Even allowing for the hyperbole of these puff-pieces, which was probably management-inspired, it is clear that something out of the ordinary was being heard on stage in Dublin, and that Courtney had helped Daly fill his 2,000-seater venue. London was kept informed of the latest success: 'Courtney, the Irish Piper, is performing... in Ireland... and is as much followed as Haydn'.[112]

As early as 11 January 1793, while *Oscar and Malvina* continues its Dublin run, Courtney is also continuing his London practice of entr'acte theatrical performance, and is playing for dancers in an intermezzo: 'A favourite Pas de Deux and Reel by Mr. Lassells, Master Lassells and Mrs. Parker accompanied on the Bagpipes by Mr. Courtney'.[113] In February, after *Oscar and Malvina* had finished its

---

[109] *Hibernian Journal*, Dublin, 7 Jan. 1793.
[110] *Dublin Evening Post*, Dublin, 8 Jan. 1793.
[111] *Hibernian Journal*, Dublin, 11 Jan. 1793.
[112] *Morning Post*, London, 18 Jan. 1793. Joseph Haydn and his 'London' symphonies had caused a sensation there in 1791–2.
[113] *Hibernian Journal*, Dublin, 5 Jan. 1793.

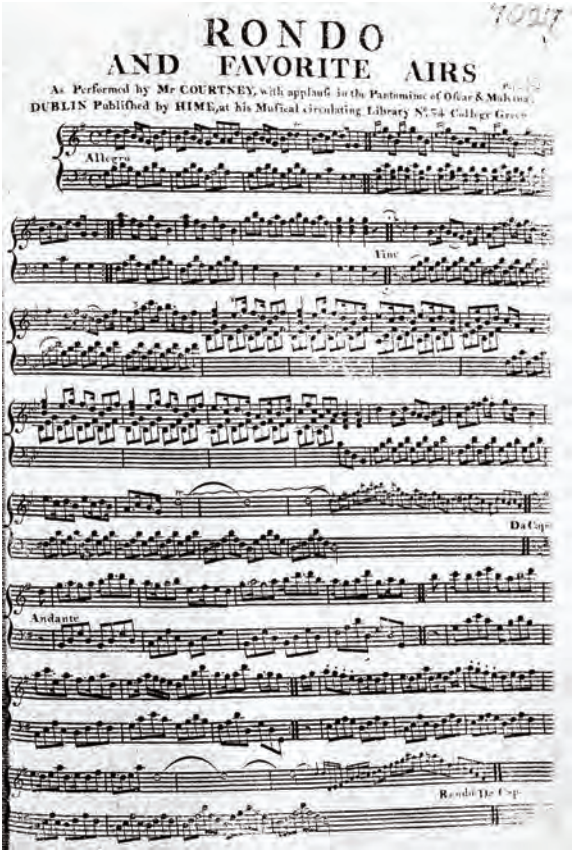
run on 31 January,[114] 'a Grand Concerto on the Union Pipes, by Mr. Courtney' is advertised for after the second act of *The Conscious Lovers*,[115] and in May 'a celebrated Rondeau on the Union Pipes, by Mr. Courtney' during the play *Wild Oats*.[116] He is also open to private engagements:

> Courtenay. Performer on the Union Pipes, most respectfully informs the Nobility and the Gentry, that his engagement with Mr. Daly is expired; and, for the short time he has to stay in this kingdom, will thankfully receive commands at No. 15, Trinity-street.[117]

He was probably successful in receiving private engagements: it is the end of April 1793 before he is back on the Dublin stage, and no evidence has been found that he performed publicly in Cork, Limerick or Kilkenny in the interim. In May the Dublin music publisher Hime is advertising among the 'New Music... Just published... The fashionable Songs and Airs as played by Mr. Courtney on the Union Pipes in Oscar and Malvina'.[118] Music from the show was also published in Dublin by John Lee.[119]

---

[114] *Saunder's News-Letter*, Dublin, 31 Jan. 1793.
[115] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 28 Feb. 1793.
[116] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 30 Apr. 1793.
[117] *Saunder's News-Letter*, Dublin, 9 Mar. 1793. Trinity Street is in south central Dublin, close to the then Irish parliament buildings and to the Theatre Royal in Crow St, and would have been a fashionable address. It is noticeable that Courtney's stage name and the new term for his instrument is being used here in an advertisement presumably inserted by himself rather than by Daly.
[118] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 4 May 1793. Undated copies of the Hime sheet music are in the NLI: *Rondo and Favorite Airs as Performed by Mr Courtney* (JM 2832, JM 2833, Add. Mus. 7027 with a song from *Oscar and Malvina* on the reverse of the single sheet). Hime similarly published *Three Favorite Marches in Oscar and Malvina* (JM 2832) and various songs from the show, and included tunes from it in *Hime's Pocket Book for the German Flute or Violin* (JM 5474)
[119] An undated single sheet was published by John Lee: *The Favourite Airs in Oscar & Malvina Performed by Mr. Courtney* (NLI Additional Music 12,401).



As published in Dublin, during Denis Courtney's visit there, January–July 1793 (courtesy National Library of Ireland)

Later in the same month, at a Dublin benefit for him, Courtney is extending his performance repertory in a more Irish direction: 'Mr Courtney will introduce several Airs on the Union Pipes, particularly The Munster Lilt, And Papa! Papa! Mama! Mama!'[120] By this time he is being billed as 'Performer on the Union Pipes to the Prince of Wales', and is also now performing 'Ellenaroon'[121] and 'the favourite Air of Coolun'.[122] These are among the 'Irish lilts' and 'Irish airs' he now regularly performs. By June 1793 Courtney's Irish visit only had a few weeks to run, and the publicity stops were being pulled out for another benefit for him:

> The performance of... Mr. Courtney... on the Union Pipes is justly admired here as well as in England, and this evening he is to give such further instances of his abilities, as never were known before. This... is a desirable treat; and as Mr. Courtney, who has had the honour of being countenanced for his singular merit on the Union Pipes, by his Majesty, and his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, is shortly to return to England, it is probable those who delight in that music, will never have such another opportunity of enjoyment.[123]

In the event Courtney stayed on in Dublin for another six weeks, and finished up the theatrical season in the Theatre Royal at the end of July in his by now usual style: 'Mr. Courtney will perform the celebrated Overture and Rondeau of Oscar and Malvina, with several favourite Irish Airs, on the Union Pipes'.[124]

---

[120] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 14 May 1793.
[121] Irish 'Eibhlín a Rún' (Eileen my love). *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 18 May 1793.
[122] Irish 'An Chúilfhionn' (The fair-haired girl). *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 18 May 1793.
[123] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 11 June 1793.
[124] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 30 July 1793. He appeared on the same bill as Robert Owenson, who was performing a 'Planxty in character'.

Courtney's Last Years 1793–1794

Courtney had not been forgotten in London during his Irish sojourn. In March 1793 an engraving of a portrait of him by the leading contemporary illustrator Isaac Cruikshank appeared as the frontispiece of a new publication, a confirmation of his five years of public celebrity:

> This day were published... The Whim of the Day of 1793: containing a selection of the choicest and most approved Songs; embellished with a beautiful representation of Mr. Courtenay playing on the union-pipes, in the favourite pantomime of Oscar and Malvina...[125]

But also in March 1793, during his absence in Ireland, Courtney's position as an Irish piper on the London stage would be briefly challenged in public, as would his by-now established new term for the pipes. James McDonnell, the Irish professional bellows piper from Cork already noticed as appearing with Courtney in London in 1791, was again in London. He had an unadvertised success there on 25 February 1793 in Mr. Willis's music rooms on King Street, St James's. On 14 March he took a newspaper advertisement for another performance by him at the same venue, describing himself as 'Mr. M'Donnell, (The Celebrated Performer on the Irish Pipes)'. He would perform 'a New Variety of the most-admired Scots and Irish Airs on the said Instrument... Together with a Selection of the Ancient Irish and Scots Music... Between the Acts, Mr. M'Donnell will play any favourite Tune that may be desired by the Company'.[126] McDonnell would not be heard of performing again in London.[127]

---

[125] *The Star*, London, 7 Mar. 1793. This is the portrait of Courtney reproduced as the frontispiece of this essay (for which click here) and discussed below.

[126] *True Briton*, London, 14 Mar. 1793. Antiquarianism was in the air. As cited, three harp festivals had been held in Granard, Co Longford, in the 1780s, and one in Belfast in 1792 (for which see Moloney 2000). Bunting would publish one dance tune taken down from McDonnell in 1797 (Bunting 1840: xi). It is of interest that McDonnell also gives primacy here to Scottish music and uses a Scottish M' in the spelling of his surname in London.

[127] This was probably not for musical reasons. McDonnell was a proud and irascible character, prepared to offend patrons and other employers, and in 1789 involved in legal difficulties in Scotland (see Sanger 2006).

In October 1793 Courtney, back in Britain, is appearing on stage in Bath[128] and in Bristol, but for once not meeting with a success, although the fault seems to be that of the Bristol audiences:

> The Theatre is but thinly attended... Courtenay, with his sweet and simple melodies upon the Union Pipes, is here; but he plays his ditties in vain, for there is scarce attendance enough to pay the piper... Trade had ever a dull ear for music![129]

In February 1794 Courtney is in London, playing in Covent Garden on the opening night of a new season of *Oscar and Malvina*, but this time advertised as performing on the 'Irish Pipes'[130] – the first time he uses the term in connection with this Scottish creation.[131] He continues with the new form for the remainder of this run. His name also appears in a new London publication *A Musical Directory for the Year 1794* as 'Courtney, Bag and Union Pipes, Cov Ga Th.—No. 1, York-Street, St. James's'.[132] From this, he may also have played a mouth-blown bagpipe or, more likely, he was giving a generally understood alternative name for his 'union pipes'.

For the run of a new variety entertainment *Mirth's Museum*, which begins at the Lyceum in the Strand in March 1794 with 'The Music entirely new, by Mr. Reeve', Courtney is back between the acts – as 'the celebrated Mr. Courtnay' – with 'several New Airs on the Union Pipes, Accompanied on the Harp, by Mr. Wieppart'.[133] Again Reeve had a hit on his hands and Courtney is uniquely singled out for notice:

---

[128] *The World*, London, 15 Oct. 1793.
[129] *The World*, London, 22 Oct. 1793.
[130] The World, London, 6 Feb. 1794.
[131] No explanation is given for the change from his usual terminology. It may have been influenced by compatriots like 'The Ghost of Carolan', by his Dublin trip, or by McDonnell's example.
[132] The only other piper in the *Directory* is the Highland Society of London's 'Macgregor, John, *Bag-Pipes*' (43).
[133] *The World*, London, 1 Mar. 1794. In later appearances of the advertisement he is 'Mr. Courtenay'.

'Courtnay, on the Union Pipes, as usual, was universally encored, in the favourite Overture to Oscar and Malvina...';[134] 'Courtnay, on the Union Pipes, received the most liberal applause last night in the Overture to Oscar and Malvina...'.[135] By the beginning of April, Courtney and Wieppert are billed there as also playing 'Edmund O'Hanlen's Gavot with the much-admired Air of "Eman Eknough,[136] or the Little House under the Hill"', and 'an entire New Overture, for the Union Pipes and Harp, composed by Mr. Reeve'.[137]

But while *Mirth's Museum* continues, Courtney himself seems to be in financial or other difficulties. In the same advertisement he announces

> Mr. Courtenay respectfully begs leave to inform his Friends, and the Public, that Mr. Lingham [the manager] has kindly given him a Benefit on the above-mentioned Evening, to extricate him from the difficulties he now labours under; and humbly flatters himself his Endeavours will secure him the Honour of their Patronage.

His domestic circumstances have altered: he has by now moved from 1 York Street, St James's Square, to 12 Danmark Street, Exeter Street.

By the end of May 1794 Courtney is again playing 'a Solo on the Union Pipes' and he and Weippert are playing 'a Duetto on the Union Pipes and Harp' in the newly rebuilt Covent Garden,[138] which can now hold audiences of 3,600. On 2 June they are performing 'several much admired Pieces on the Union Pipes and Pedal Harp' between theatrical

---

[134] *Morning Post*, London, 15 Mar. 1794.
[135] *Morning Post*, London, 18 Mar. 1794.
[136] Irish 'Éamonn an Chnoic' (Edward of the Hill).
[137] *The Oracle and Public Advertiser*, London, 1 Apr. 1794. By this date also 'The Music of the most favourite Airs are published, and may be had at Messrs. Longman and Broderip's...'.
[138] *Morning Post*, London, 26 May 1794.

performances at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket.[139] This is Courtney's last advertised stage appearance, although he may have finished out a run of *Oscar and Malvina* in Covent Garden on 11 June.[140]

It would seem that by this date Courtney was in the final chaotic stages of alcohol-induced illness. An associate in his last months was another notable character, Captain Patrick Leeson (1754–c.1810s), a somewhat older Irishman born in Nenagh, Co Tipperary. From a modest background and after military training in France, Leeson had become a British army officer and a famous gambler with a stable of horses at Newmarket. Enlisting Courtney and the 'sweet strains of his pipes, added to copious draughts of whiskey', he raised an independent regiment in such a short time that he won a great bet on it.[141] Some of the work of recruitment was carried out in April 1794 at a disorderly annual outdoor festival at Greenwich Hill. The place abounded in

> ... Recruiting Parties... Of these the most conspicuous were Captain Leeson and his party, with Courtney the *Piper* in a Highland dress, as *drunk* as any of his fraternity, and viewed with professional envy. They were attended by some gentlemen of the *fist*... Their efforts were so skilfully directed... that many a bold Pat—*rician* was induced to exchange his *bludgeon* for a *bayonet*; and decorate that shoulder with a *musket*, hitherto degraded by a *hod*.[142]

[139] *The World*, London, 28 May 1794.
[140] Hogan 1968: 1575.
[141] Egan 1820: 142–3.
[142] *The Oracle and Public Advertiser*, London, 24 Apr. 1794. Leeson's luck eventually deserted him. Turning to brandy, he shunned fashionable society and 'sought the most obscure places in the purlieus of St. Giles's, where he used pass whole nights in the company of his countrymen of the lowest, but industrious class, charmed with their songs and native humour... once the soul of whim and gaiety, [he] sunk into a state of stupor and insensibility... Having contracted a number of debts, he was constantly pursued by the terriers of the law...' (Egan 1820: 143). Courtney's end may not have been dissimilar.

The next notices of Courtney are of his death at the age of thirty-four on 2 September 1794 – 'Lately, in the Middlesex hospital, Mr. Courtenay, the celebrated player on the bag-pipes'[143] – and of his spectacular funeral three days later.

The funeral was 'in the true Irish style... preceded by two pipers' according to one Scottish report.[144] The fullest account of it suggests that he was at least as well known in the Irish slum area of St Giles as in the fashionable West End and confirms that, while he was unique as a piper on the London stage in his time, he was only one of a fraternity of Irish bellows pipers in London:

> Courtenay's Funeral. This celebrated performer died of a dropsy, which he was supposed to have contracted by hard drinking. The body was yesterday interred in the church-yard of St. Pancras.
>
> The procession that attended the body was exceedingly numerous, and extended from the *Hampshire Hog*, in Broad-street, St. Giles's, a considerable way into Tottenham-court-road. The number of those in mourning could not be less than eighty or ninety couples, who were preceded by two Irish Pipers, one of whom played on the Union Pipes used formerly with such wonderful effect by the deceased.
>
> The body was *waked* at the Hampshire Hog, and all the expences of the funeral and it, were defrayed by Captain Leeson. The motive that induced Capt. Leeson to order the wake to be held there, was his great success in recruiting by means of the deceased, who had some time since enlisted in his corps, and had, by that Gentleman, been appointed a Serjeant.
>
> Courtenay was a *wet* soul, and every thing about the body, to its interment, was entirely correspondent. During the continuance of the wake, the greatest profusion of liquors was distributed.

[143] *St James's Chronicle or The British Evening Post*, London, 4–6 Sept. 1794. As said, the date of his death and his age are recorded in the burial register of Old St Pancras Church, London, which is now in the London Metropolitan Archives.
[144] *Scots Magazine*, Edinburgh, Sept. 1794: 588.

> At the church-yard the same liberality in the distribution to every one who chose to drink, was observed; and the company happily parted *without any fighting*.[145]

Through his musicianship and general celebrity therefore Denis Courtney had won over the public, from the lowest to the highest social levels, to his 'union pipes' – a term unique to him during his lifetime – and had firmly established their name in contemporary musical consciousness by the time of his early death.

He was not immediately forgotten. In London in 1795

> *Oscar and Malvina* renewed its attraction on Thursday evening... with encreased effect. A new Performer, much resembling poor Courtney, both in figure and execution, enlivened the opening of the Piece with his Union Pipes, accompanied by the original harper Weippart. Their performance was universally encored...[146]

and in 1796 a reference there to a newly published satirical print showing John Courtenay or Courtney, a famously witty Irish-born Westminster parliamentarian, emphasises that it shows 'Mr. Courtney the Irish *Jester*, not the Irish *Piper*'.[147] A London novel of 1804 has an Irish character say

> Heaven is most like the lake of Killarney. There will be no want of music in Heaven... For myself, I think the choicest instrument is the Irish bag-pipe; and should Courtenay be gone there, we cannot have a better hand; I shall find him out, he is a sweet countryman of my own.[148]

---

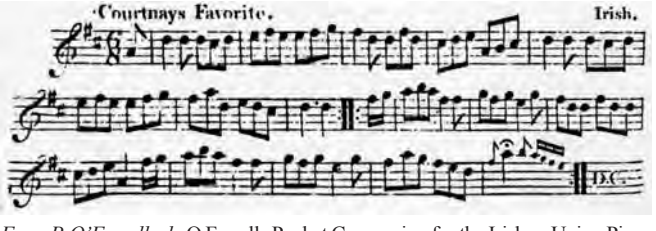
[145] *The Sun*, London, 6 Sept. 1794. This obituary notice is unusually long by contemporary standards; it was much copied by other publications.

[146] *Morning Post and Fashionable World*, London, 7 Mar. 1795. For the identity of this performer see below.

[147] *The Oracle*, London, 15 Oct. 1796.

[148] Bisset 1804: 33. This raises the possibility (but no more) that Courtney had his origins in Co Kerry, a county where his surname (and first name, as an anglicisation of the Irish *Donncha*) was common.

In 1811 he was being remembered in a Dublin article on the 'Irish Bagpipe': 'the... celebrated Courtney has fully established the captivating sweetness of those [notes] in alt... [of] our national pipe'.[149] In 1817, in a Cork poem in praise of another famous Irish bellows piper, Denis Courtney's name was still being linked with the term he had introduced: 'And Courtney, with his union reed,/ To enraptur'd Princes gave delight'.[150] And as late as 1838 his name is still being invoked, by a union piper in Leamington Spa boosting his instrument: 'His late Majesty, George IV, was a lover of the Union Pipes, and appointed the celebrated Courtney as his Pipist'.[151]



From P. O'Farrell ed., O Farrells Pocket Companion for the Irish or Union Pipes *vol. 3, London, n.d. [c. 1811]. Presumably taken from the oral tradition of union pipers in London*

[149] *Freeman's Journal*, 21 Mar. 1811, reprinted in *Evening Telegraph*, 1 Apr. 1911.
[150] 'On Mr. O'Connor, The celebrated Performer on the Union Pipes', *The Overseer*, Cork, 5 July 1817.
[151] Sic. *Leamington Spa Courier*, Leamington, 31 Mar. 1838.

Meanings of 'Union Pipes'

What then did Courtney's new term signify? Different meanings have been assigned to it by its users since 1788, and it is by now necessary to speak about the different, shifting and sometimes coexisting meanings of the term. It has had several, each with a certain validity in its own time.

Scotch and Irish Bagpipes United

The earliest explanation given for the term is Courtney's own. It appeared on the morning after his debut, published by an anonymous writer in *The Times* of London, as already seen:

> Last night Mr. Courtney introduced a new species of music to the public, called the Union Pipes, being the Scotch and Irish Bagpipes united...'[152]

This contemporary explanation for 'union pipes' is unique to this source at this time of writing,[153] and it is obscure in meaning. The explanation may have been a journalist's rationalisation, but given Courtney's continuing and conscious use of the term it is much more

[152] See Note 62 above. 'Courtenay' has become 'Courtney' overnight; this flipping occurs over and over during Courtney's career, as can be seen from the quotations reproduced here.

[153] A version of the explanation is found in a very uninformed publication of 1809: 'The *Bagpipe* is of two sorts; *viz*. the Scots and the Irish: the former is filled by means of a wind-bag, carried under the arm, and worked like a pair of bellows; the other plays with a reed, like a hautboy. These two species have, within these few years, been blended, under the designation of the union-pipes; both are fingered much the same as a flute, and have a drone, or open tube, through which the wind passes, causing a deep humming tone. The bagpipe, however ancient many assert it to be, nevertheless appears to be derived from the old Gallic musette (which it in every instance resembles); as the musette is from the ancient Hebrew sampunia. Happily all this genus are rapidly declining'. (Nicholson 1809: iv, article 'Musical Instruments).

likely to have been part of his own promotion.[154] The Scottish bagpipes in question are undoubtedly to be understood as the mouth-blown Highland bagpipes, and the Irish bagpipes as the bellows-blown instrument, both, as seen, recently known in contemporary London. Although Scottish and Irish bagpipes had long existed in both mouth- and bellows-blown forms, this fact was unknown or ignored by writers (as distinct from artists) in contemporary England. A plethora of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century statements in print there conveys this over-simple dichotomy of Scottish bagpipes being mouth-blown and Irish bellows-blown.[155] What elements of each bagpipe are being united? In organological terms, this explanation does not make sense. The Scottish pipes and Irish pipes, as we know them from documentary evidence and surviving sets, are each separate linear descendants of earlier Scottish and Irish pipes respectively, and each exhibit only separately localised forms of the elements of their continental ancestors. Each type of bagpipe had

[154] As has been seen, Courtney's 1793 Dublin management often advertised his instrument as 'bagpipes' but he himself, personally seeking engagements, refers to them as 'union pipes'.

[155] See for example Pennant 1772: 178: 'Bag-pipes... The oldest are played with the mouth, the loudest and most ear-piercing of any wind musick; the other, played with the fingers only, are of Irish origin...'; and Jones 1794: 116: 'we have reason to believe that the Britons blew it [the Bagpipes] with the mouth, instead of the bellows, like the Irish pipes'. This perceived distinction between the two kinds of bagpipes is also reflected in the advertisements of those English musical-instrument sellers of the second half of the eighteenth century who advertise 'Bagpipes, Scotch and Irish' (see Note 40 above), and must have been supported by the contemporary exploits of Highland pipers in the British army. Queen Victoria much later made the same distinction, and preferred the Scottish: 'Friday August 10 [1849]... The Irish pipe is very different from the Scotch; it is very weak and they don't blow into it, but merely have a small bellows which they move with the arm. – Queen Victoria, *Leaves from the Journal of Our Life*, London, 1868: 184, quoted in *An Píobaire* vol. 3, no 7 (July 1991, contributed by Seán Donnelly). The more significant difference at any rate is the extended musical range of the Irish chanter rather than its air source.

already reached a distinct stage of development prior to 1788, and no element of either was adopted from the other, then or subsequently.

But this meaning of 1788 is nevertheless a correct one, correct not in organological but in socio-political cultural terms. The union in question is the notional union of an Irish form of bellows pipe, played by an Irish performer, with the Scottish musical ethos prevailing in contemporary London, the English capital. An instrument associated with rebellion and war in Scotland and Ireland is now being used on stage in the capital to perform ethnically tinged but politically neutral and unthreatening music which is acceptable to the three kingdoms. It unites the kingdoms in musical taste; it is a new instrument for a new era of peaceful coexistence, one desired by Courtney's patrons. This common show-business tactic of accommodation to a local audience provides one convincing explanation for Courtney's introduction there of a new quasi-political term for his musical instrument.

There is support for this view in the little that we know of Courtney's repertory as performed publicly in London: it is not at first Irish but largely Scottish ('Maggie Lawther with variations' was his show-stopper throughout his career)[156] or newly composed in a Scottish

[156] 'Maggae Lawther', Courtney's main cited musical piece, had however long been associated with both Scotland and Ireland, and the idea of 'union' may also be in play here. The song 'Maggie/Maggy/Magie Lauder/Lawder/Lawther' ('Wha wadna be in love wi' bonnie Maggie Lauder') is of course Scottish, but the origins of its melody have been disputed between the two countries (for an early discussion see O'Neill 1910: 168–71). Its tune was printed many times in the eighteenth century, and sometimes with variations, but Courtney's set is not identified as such in any source. Since John Lee published music from *Oscar and Malvina* about the time Courtney was in Dublin, Lee's publication of 'Maggie Lawder with Variations' is reproduced above. It is undated but published from 70 Dame St, Dublin, where Lee was from c. 1778–1803 (Hogan

idiom for the Ossianic hit show *Oscar and Malvina* (for which he dresses in Scottish costume). On the other hand, when he goes to perform in Dublin in 1793 he certainly plays the expected music from his Covent Garden hit but (billed as 'Mr. Courtney' and often as playing 'bagpipes' rather than 'union pipes') he also for the first time, as has been seen, advertises specific Irish melodies. Only towards the end of his London career does he begin to call his instrument 'Irish pipes' and begin to introduce Irish melodies on stage there.

The only known illustration of Courtney and his pipes (for which click here) gives little help in understanding the explanation of *The Times* for 'union pipes'. Shown in an engraving of a 1790s sketch by Isaac Cruikshank, he is playing pipes on stage in *Oscar and Malvina*. Sitting, with one leg crossed over the other, he is certainly playing bellows pipes (an elbow-strap is visible and there is no blow-pipe in evidence). But it seems an oddly undeveloped and toy-like form of the instrument when compared with, say, the surviving contemporary two-octave Irish instruments made by Egan of Dublin and Kenna of Westmeath.[157] These were instruments of a type which already existed in the second half of the 1770s when Courtney, born in 1760, must have been learning the pipes. But the central elements of the pipes shown in the Courtney illustration stand in contrast with them. The chanter is short, with a noticeably conical exterior, and ends in a bell rather than being externally cylindrical and ending in a stoppable end-tenon. It is being played off the knee and could only therefore have produced music legato; it could not have varied

1966: 102). Among others, Courtney's successor O'Farrell published a set with variations (*O Farrell's National Collection* 1804: 42–3).

[157] Both are known to have been making Irish pipes in the 1760s, see Donnelly 1983: 7–11, Donnelly 2002: 2.14, 1–44.

melodies with staccato passages or staccato effects as the contemporary Irish instruments already could. Only two drones are apparent, in about a 3:2 length ratio, whereas Irish instruments already had three as early as about 1750.[158] Resting against the player's shoulder, they imply a small common stock, but it is doubtful whether the common stock shown is realistic. No regulator can be seen, and it is probable that he did not have one – given that there is no mention in the many surviving references to Courtney of what would have been such a noticeable and musically interesting feature. Whereas sitting was and is the normal posture for players of Irish bellows pipes,[159] the instrument shown here could as easily and more dramatically have been played standing, like a Scottish bagpipe. The second octave needed for playing the music that we know Courtney played would have been obtained on the contemporary Irish pipes by placing the end of the chanter on a knee-pad (not possible in a pipe of the type shown) while overblowing through exerting pressure on the bag, and probably uncovering a back hole on the chanter. In all, it is hard to understand how the instrument shown could have the emotional effect that Courtney's playing undoubtedly did on audiences, whereas it would be understandable had he played pipes with the rich sonic potential of a good instrument of the Egan or Kenna type.[160]

[158] Illustrated in a Joseph Tudor painting 'View of Dublin from the Phoenix Park (see Crookshank 2002: 73); and a Hugh Douglas Hamilton drawing 'Blind Daniel the Piper' (see Laffan 2003: 135).

[159] Street players did sometimes play standing, but they used a leg-crutch under one knee to enable the characteristic occasional silencing of the chanter on a knee-pad.

[160] Whatever about the exact form of the instrument used by Courtney, it is puzzling how he achieved sufficient volume to be heard by the large theatre audiences he played for, such as the 2,000 who filled his regular venue of the Theatre Royal on Drury Lane, or the 3,600 who filled the rebuilt theatre from 1794. The bore of his chanter may have been specially adapted for volume. At any rate singers

The instrument shown also seems undeveloped in the light of the earliest known physical description of the 'Irish pipes'. This was of a set that in 1774 belonged to the Cork piper James McDonnell, the same who, as already noticed, played with Courtney before the Highland Society of London in 1791 and played the 'Irish pipes' in recital in London in 1793 during Courtney's absence in Ireland. McDonnell also played seated. His pipes in 1774 were 'small and of ivory... tipped with silver and gold... [as well as 'the chanter or treble'] there are three other pipes which hang over the wrist. The longest of them is called the drone or bass.'[161] Again as seen, since Courtney played with John Murphy before the Highland Society of London in early 1788, and since Murphy played a set of 'Irish Bag-pipes, by the real old Egan in Dublin, made for a nobleman deceased', it is inconceivable that Courtney played on an instrument inferior to Murphy's, given that he would have a resounding London stage success within a week of their second performance. It also seems inconceivable that Courtney's Dublin successes of 1793 could have been achieved on an instrument as undeveloped as the one shown in Cruikshank's illustration, when played for Irish audiences who were used to more sophisticated instruments. Courtney had been absent from London from the beginning of the year in which the illustration was published: it is likely therefore that Cruikshank had been forced to draw from memory and had fallen back on a stock bagpipe image. The probability must be therefore that the drawing is not an accurate representation of the reality – in spite of the high reputation of the artist Cruikshank – as is so often the case with drawings of musical instruments, and especially the bagpipes,[162] by even the best artists.

---

and instrumentalists such as violinists, flute players, oboeists and harpers also played successfully in the same spaces; the venue acoustics must have been finely balanced.

[161] O'Keeffe 1826: I, 246–8, see Carolan 1984: 59–61.

[162] See Cannon 1989: 10–31. The accuracy of a c. 1828 drawing by one of the Cruikshank family of the Northumberland piper James Allan has been called

What seems from *The Times* of 15 May 1788 to be Courtney's understanding of his imprecise new term may not have been understood even by those pipers who used it immediately after his death. Certainly none of them, not even those who edited or published music books in the next ten or so years, give any explanation for it. But they continued to use it because for them also it was a usefully neutral term, and a prestigious term, one that had received approval at the highest social levels. It was a label associated with a hitherto unachieved level of public professional success for a bagpiper, and it would be strange if they were to discard it, especially since 'union' did not at first have the negative political connotations that it would later take on in Ireland. Even when it had, it was by then a well established term that had created its own tradition. As will be seen, pipers associated its use with their predecessors, and developed a loyalty to it that lasted well into the twentieth century. Nevertheless, it would appear that while it soon became an established term, it was one with no firm established meaning, and one that was ripe therefore for having further meanings assigned to it.

Act of Union 1800

It has occasionally been said that the union pipes derived their name from the Irish Act of Union of 1800, which abolished the Irish parliament in Dublin and provided Ireland instead with reduced political representation from Westminster.[163] The Act was brought into effect by bribery and corruption rather than by consent, and it led to more than a hundred years of economic, social and political decline in Ireland. The word 'union' shrank in meaning there to

into question (Proud & Butler 1983: 3). William Hogarth has also been criticised for the inaccuracy and carelessness of his eighteenth-century bagpipe depictions (Barlow 2005: 225).

[163] For example, 'The name of Union pipes probably originated from the instrument having appeared about the time of union of the Irish and English parliaments...'

become only a shorthand reference to the hated 'Union', and for many years in the mid-nineteenth century the leading Catholic politician Daniel O'Connell led a national movement for the repeal of the Union. It has never been explained what the connection of the Act to the musical instrument could have been, but at any rate, as has been seen, the term was in existence some dozen years before the Act was passed, and it was introduced in another country. The idea of political union was of course in public debate for some years before the passing of the Act, but it was not very actively promoted as early as 1788.[164] This proposed derivation of the term can therefore be dismissed as spurious. However, *after* the passing of the Act, this meaning was implied for political purposes at least once, in Scotland in 1806, and in connection with an Irish piper Richard Fitzmaurice:

(Day 1891: 55); and more influentially but also more tentatively: 'These [Irish Pipes] were called Union Pipes, either as immortalising the legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland in 1801, or more probably from a mistaken rendering of the native name *Uilleann* or "elbow" pipes' (Galpin 1911: 179).

[164] In fact the term 'union pipes' was so well established by the time of the Act of Union debate that it was used for political purposes in some satirical sheets published by the anti-Union side in Dublin in 1799: '*Sir Pertinax Platter*... though an hon. Gentleman had talked of *Union Pipes* in allusion to him, he was not sufficiently skilled in concert music to be able to understand...' (*Proceedings and Debate of the Parliament of Pimlico, in the Last Session of the Eighteenth Century*. No. 1); 'At the Royal Circus, near College-Green [the Irish parliament building]... January 15... After the Pantomime, a favourite Concerto on the Union Pipes, By Mr. Corelli...' (poster). Similarly an American newspaper of the period used the term to make a political point about Ireland: 'In the new pantomime at Covent Garden Theatre, the *Irish Harp* and the *Union Pipes* played in concert. We should be glad to find our *Hibernian brethren* inclined to such *National Harmony*.' (*Daily Advertiser*, New York, 25 June 1799). The term had an even wider political application: 'A transparency in a street in St. Ann's Parish [London], represented Mr. Pitt, the First Consul of France, Mr. Windham, and Joseph Bonaparte, dancing a Fandango, to a tune played on Union Bagpipes. *John Bull* appeared in a corner, with a purse in his hand, ready *to pay the piper*.' (*Morning Chronicle*, London, 16 Oct. 1801).

> The Scots Society, in honour of St Andrew, held... their anniversary meeting, in the London Tavern, Bishopsgate-street [Edinburgh]... Captain Skeene sung a song alluding to the union of the three kingdoms. Mr Fitzmaurice played several tunes on the Union pipes...[165]

The term must certainly have been used in this way by Unionists and other interested parties at other times, giving support and circulation to the spurious explanation, and leading with the passage of time to a belief in its validity. 'Union' was a bad brand-name in Ireland, and this undoubtedly had an influence on the eventual demise of the term in the twentieth century, and the vehemence with which it was rejected by some.

United Chanter, Drones, Regulators, or Concords of Sound

A plausible and therefore very widely accepted explanation for 'union pipes' has been that these pipes – unlike medieval bagpipes and the contemporary Scottish Highland mouth-blown bagpipes – unite their drones in a single cylindrical unit or 'common stock' in which the heads of the drone-pipes lie side by side and are fed with air by the bag through the stock. An expansion of this idea is that the union in question may have been that of the existing chanter and drones with a new keyed closed chanter or 'regulator'.[166] As said, a single regulator is first mentioned in the late 1780s, in Ireland; over the following decades more would be added.

Related to this explanation of the physical union of hardware is the idea that the unusually many pipes of the instrument provide a close sonic union – a balanced chorus. Some support for this explanation is found in a 1772 Dublin verse translation from the Latin of Horace

---

[165] *Caledonian Mercury*, Edinburgh, 8 Dec. 1806.

[166] This addition of the regulator is considered by Hall 1842: 412–3 to distinguish the Irish bagpipes in their 'primitive form' from the 'improved or union pipes'.

which says that 'the Bagpipe's Drone,/ May hum in drowsy Unison',[167] and in a Scots Gaelic dictionary of 1825 which translates 'the union-pipes' as *píob na comh-sheinm* (pipes sounding together).[168] When the Dublin Museum catalogued sets of Irish bellows pipes in the late nineteenth century, it called them 'Irish Bagpipes' but explained their other name 'union pipes' as being derived from the chanter playing in unison with the drones.[169]

These related explanations, based on ideas of physical or sonic bagpipe union, fit in neatly with the date of the introduction of Courtney's new term, when seen in retrospect. And they had a robustly rational basis to them, much more so than had Courtney's long-forgotten original explanation. They are the explanations that have been most commonly accepted in recent times.

The Workhouse

One further meaning for the term has been proffered, but only with tongue in cheek. A bitter joke circulated among the members of the Dublin Pipers' Club, founded in 1900 when uilleann piping seemed in great danger of disappearing with the few last elderly and poverty-stricken professional pipers who had survived the post-Famine years: that they were called union pipers because most of them were reduced to the 'Union' workhouse or poorhouse.[170]

[167] *Public Advertiser*, London, 24 Apr. 1772.
[168] Armstrong 1825: 443.
[169] NLI Séamus Ó Casaide MS 5452.
[170] Plain Piper 1912. From 1838 in Ireland parishes were amalgamated into Poor Law Unions, each of which had to have a workhouse.

Spread of 'Union Pipes'

Before Denis Courtney's death in September 1794, no other piper is known to have used his new term, but after his death it is seen to begin an independent existence: in January 1795 an Irish linen draper Mr O'Neil died at Whitehaven in Cumbria; he had been 'well known for his performances on the union bag-pipes'.[171]

The gap left by Courtney's death in *Oscar and Malvina* was soon filled – had to be filled – as it resumed its triumphant progress in March 1795 and as the 'new performer' noted above 'enlivened the opening of the Piece with his Union Pipes'.[172] Tantalisingly billed as 'The Union Pipes by an Eminent Performer (his first appearance in public)',[173] this player was an otherwise obscure piper named Shannon, known in Belfast and performing a heavily Irish repertory there in 1796, and therefore undoubtedly Irish.[174]

And the new term began to be used in Ireland; presumably some pipers there had been suitably impressed by their compatriot's successes and wished to be associated with them. In 1796, a Daniel Fitzpatrick, proprietor of a music shop in Cork, was praised in verse: 'There is a man in fair Cork town/ Fitzpatrick at the Harp/ For he can play the Union pipes,/ And nobly squeeze his *bags*...'[175]; and in

---

[171] *Gentleman's Magazine*, London, Dec. 1794 (but published after the year-end).
[172] *Morning Post and Fashionable World*, London, 7 Mar. 1795.
[173] *Morning Post and Fashionable World*, London, 9 Mar. 1795. He performed at least five times that month.
[174] *Belfast Newsletter*, 2–6 May 1796: 'At the Theatre Belfast on Mon. 9... Mr. Shannon who is engaged at Covent Garden Theatre to succeed the late Mr. Courtney will play the following airs on the Union pipes. The Rondeau in Oscar and Malvina. Carolin's Receipt. Lango Lee. So Vorreen Deelish. Moggy Lawder with variations. How oft Louisa. The Lake of Killarney'.
[175] *The Rover* no 25, Cork, 5 Mar. 1796, quoted in NLI Séamus Ó Casaide MS 8117 (3)

Dublin in the same year a 'Mr. Martin Carty, professor of the union pipes' died in St Mary's Lane.[176]

Back in London, in April 1796, a Mr Topham, otherwise unknown, was briefly playing 'Union Pipes' with Weippert on harp in a London production of John O'Keefe's *The Lad of the Hills, or The Wicklow Gold Mine*,[177] and in April 1797 a writer in *The True Briton* of London was complaining that the 'Union Pipes' had been left out of the overture to *Oscar and Malvina* in Covent Garden.[178]

But by May 1798 'Mr. Murphy', the piper-servant with Dublin connections noted earlier in Edinburgh and London, Courtney's fellow-piper before the Highland Society of London in 1788 but long since eclipsed by him, was filling the gap left by Courtney on a more permanent basis and finally coming into his own. He was performing in Covent Garden 'Solo on the Union Pipes', accompanied on the harp by Weippert in a musical interlude *The Starboard Watch*.[179] As seen, John Murphy had earlier described himself as a player of the 'Irish Pipes' but he was now always using Courtney's term, even when applying as before for a position in service or for playing for 'Ladies and Gentlemen at their houses, and Parties at taverns,[180] or advertising that he intends publishing his own compositions.[181] He seems also to have filled Courtney's place for a time as the regular

[176] *Hibernian Journal*, Dublin, 12 Dec. 1796.
[177] *The Times*, London, 9 Apr. 1796. Topham may have belonged to a London family of dancers and actors of the name who had been prominent in the early eighteenth century (see Highfill et al.: 15, 27–9). He is not heard of again. An Edward Topham wrote four plays that were produced at Covent Garden in the 1780s (Stephens 2004), but he is not known to have been a musician.
[178] 15 Apr. 1797.
[179] *The Oracle and Public Advertiser*, London, 23 May 1798.
[180] *The Times*, London, 9 June 1798.
[181] *Morning Chronicle*, London, 2 Jan. 1799.

musical partner with Weippert and they appear together (and sometimes with C. Jones, harp) at various periods in 1798 and early 1799 (including yet another performance of *Oscar and Malvina* in March 1799).[182] By May 1799 Murphy had moved to the New Royal Circus and was playing regularly there with another harper, G. Adams.[183] In 1801 he was ingeniously canvassing engagements by word-playing on the new term for his Irish pipes:

> Murphy, who performs on the Union Pipes at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden... would, if agreeable to the Noblemen and Gentlemen of the Union Club, be glad... to wait on them, when they dine at the Union Club House, and play on his Pipes...[184]

The Northumberland outlaw gypsy and performer on several kinds of bagpipe James Allan (c. 1734–1810), referred to in 1828, is recorded as having played the 'Union pipes'.[185] As said, he may be the 'Allan – Piper' who is recorded playing with John Murphy for the Highland Society of London in the early months of 1788, just before Murphy appears there with Courtney.[186] If so, he would first have known the instrument as 'Irish pipes'.

Nineteenth-century printed references to Irish bagpipes – which are found in Ireland, Britain, the United States of America, Canada and Australia – run into the high hundreds if not the low thousands of instances. But throughout the century the same assortment of terms is found as has been seen in use during the eighteenth-century. A difference is that 'union pipes' now features prominently among

[182] *The Times*, London, 14 Mar. 1799.
[183] *The Times*, London, 16 May 1799.
[184] Morning Chronicle, London, 20 Nov. 1801.
[185] Thompson 1828, quoted in Stewart 2009: 85.
[186] NLS MS Highland Society of London Dep. 268/34.

them. If a trend is to be seen, it is that this new term is particularly favoured by professional pipers, especially Irish pipers (and sometimes Scottish pipers) playing outside Ireland who may have regarded themselves as being in Courtney's modern public tradition of concert and stage performance.

This has already been seen in the cases of Shannon, Topham, and Murphy. By 1800 yet another prominent Irish piper has appeared to take Courtney's place on the British scene: a 'Mr. Farrell, Performer on the Union Pipes' is advertising a 'La Braugh Pleasurah'[187] at Cheltenham races in July 1800 and playing familiar Courtney fare at a public breakfast: 'favorite Scotch and Irish Airs, and Pieces of Music, with that favorite Rondow, in *Oscar and Malvina*, and *Magie Lawder*, with new Variations. After the Performance there will be an Irish Jig, Danced by Two Natives'.[188] Always using Courtney's term, O'Farrell (whose first-name initial was 'P.')[189] later appears in London, in 1803, in partnership with Weippert on the harp,[190] and with another harper 'Mr. Dizi'.[191]

[187] Irish *Lá Breá Pléisiúrtha*, a fine pleasurable day.

[188] O'Farrell also advertised as a 'Teacher and Maker of the Union Pipes' (*Morning Post*, London, 1 Apr. 1806), and later that 'All kinds of Pipes, Scotch, Irish, and Northumberland, are made and repaired, and may be had of him' (*Morning Post*, London, 30 June 1825). According to Highfill et al.: 11, 95, about 1795 a sonata was published by the English composer Thomas Costellow to which was added an air in a ballet *The True Lover's Knot* as it had been performed at Drury Lane theatre by Mr 'O'Farrol' and the harper Weippert. But in fact the sonata was published about 1802 (watermark date 1802: British Library online catalogue, 29 Aug. 2011) and 1800 is still the earliest definite known date for O'Farrell. For other details see Donnelly 2008: 23.

[189] Sanger 2011: 21.

[190] *E. Johnson's British Gazette and Sunday Monitor*, London, 19 June 1803.

[191] *Morning Chronicle*, London, 13 Aug. 1803. In 1806 O'Farrell was playing 'a favourite Irish Air and Rondo' in the German Theatre, Leicester Square, London, with another harper 'Mr. Duchatz' (*Morning Post*, London, 19 May 1806). In

By the following year P. O'Farrell had embarked on the seminal music-publishing work for which he is remembered today. From 1804 to about 1811 he edited collections of Irish and Scottish instrumental music in London, and in them gave precedence to the pipes and further authority to Courtney's term: *O Farrell's Collection of National Irish Music for the Union Pipes... Adapted Likewise for the German Flute, Violin, Flagelet [sic], Piano and Harp... Gentlemen may Likewise be Accommodated with Real Toned Irish Pipes*; and later *O Farrells Pocket Companion for the Irish or Union Pipes... Adapted for the Pipes, Flute, Flageolet and Violin vols 1–4*.[192] In these titles O'Farrell seems to be going out of his way to emphasise that the union pipes are Irish pipes, and throughout the publications he conscientiously attributes tunes to an Irish or Scottish origin when possible. In 1808 he is advertising a 'Union Pipe Concert and Ball' in London.[193]

The Courtney term was likewise used in print by the Irish professional piper Richard Fitzmaurice, who in April 1803 was advertised as playing the 'union pipes' in London.[194] He played frequently in Scotland, and published in Edinburgh about 1805 *Fitzmaurice's New Collection of Irish Tunes. Adapted for the Piano Forte, Union Pipe, Flute, & Violin*.[195] The new term was again used

1809 he appeared in *Oscar and Malvina* in Covent Garden with yet another harper 'Mr Nicholson' (*Caledonian Mercury*, Edinburgh, 28 Oct. 1809; Covent Garden handbill, 1 Nov. 1809, in Library of Congress, Washington DC) and again in 1811 in the same piece and venue with Nicholson (Covent Garden handbill, 6 June 1811, in Library of Congress).

[192] For details of editions etc. see Cannon 1980: 81–5.

[193] *Morning Post*, London, 14 Apr. 1808.

[194] *Morning Chronicle*, London, 11 Apr. 1803. In 1806 in London he was playing the 'Irish pipes' (*Morning Chronicle*, London, 18 Mar. 1806). For his first name see Sanger 2009: 20.

[195] See Cannon 1980: 87.

by John Murphy finally publishing in Paisley about 1810: *A Collection of Irish Airs and Jiggs with Variations, Adapted for the Pianoforte, Violin & Violoncello, by John Murphy, Performer on the Union Pipes; at Eglinton Castle.*[196]

With these new publications, intended for professional as well as for amateur musicians, the term 'union pipes' could be said to have achieved printed permanence after it had become firmly established in stage performance. The degree to which the term had become *de rigueur* in Britain is particularly evident in Liverpool in 1819 when a visiting piper from Ireland is seen in his advertisement in the very act of turning from his native term to the new one:

> Mr. Plunket, the celebrated Performer on the Irish pipes is arrived, and attends the Mystic Tavern, Hale-street... for the instruction of young Gentlemen on the Union Pipes...[197]

John Murphy had been performing in Scotland since the 1780s, as seen, and Richard Fitzmaurice there since about 1805, on the evidence of his book, and frequently thereafter, but it is 1807 before we find the earliest evidence of the term 'union pipes' linked to a Scottish piper: 'Monthly Obituary... At Port Dundas... in the 26th year of his age, Mr. James M'Kenzie, whose abilities as a performer on the Union Pipes stood unrivalled...'.[198] From his age, M'Kenzie could only have been using the term (if he did at all) after the death of

---

[196] Murphy c. 1810: title page, quoted in Cannon 1980: 90–1. The musical Earl of Eglinton had been president of the Highland Society of London in 1779 (*Highland Society of London* 1873: 22), and may have been instrumental in inviting Murphy to play for the Society in 1788, as above.

[197] *Liverpool Mercury*, Liverpool, 29 Jan. 1819.

[198] *Caledonian Mercury*, Edinburgh, 10 Oct. 1807; *European Magazine, and London Review*, London, Oct. 1807: 324.

Courtney. The following year 'Mr. Arbuckle, The Caledonian Conjuror' is presenting a show of 'Magical Deceptions' in Derby and varying the proceedings by playing a selection of the 'most ancient and beautiful Scotch Airs on the Grand Union Pipes'.[199] In 1811 a Philadelphia production of *Oscar and Malvina* featured 'union pipes to be played by Mr. Bunyie', who also played on the 'Scotch bagpipe' and was by his name a Scotsman;[200] the following year Bunyie was again appearing on the 'union pipes' in another production of the show in Baltimore.[201] He was the first of a number of Scottish players performing on the Highland pipes and the union pipes in the United States in the first half of the nineteenth century; they too referred to the latter instrument both as 'union pipes' and as 'Irish union pipes'.[202] In 1812 a Malcolm MacGregor of Glasgow (who had been a prizewinner at the Highland Society of London's competitions for the Highland bagpipe from 1802)[203] was awarded a premium by the Society for 'essential improvements made by him on the Great Highland Pipe, and the Union and Northumberland Pipes, on which last instruments he played several tunes in an excellent style'.[204] From 1818 MacGregor was appearing on the London stage playing airs from *Oscar and Malvina* on 'union pipes', as well as 'Highland pipes' and flute, in both Scottish and Irish contexts: in a *Caledonian Melange* in April 1818;[205] an Irish 'aqua-drama' *O'Donoghue and his White Horse* in June 1818;[206] and a Sons of Caledonia fundraising

[199] *Derby Mercury*, Derby, 11 Aug. 1808.
[200] *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 23 Feb. 1811; *Alexandria Gazette*, Alexandria, Virginia, 25 July 1811.
[201] *Federal Republican*, Baltimore, 1 June 1812.
[202] See below, and Carolan 2011: 22–5.
[203] Manson 1901: 389; Campbell 2011: 23–5.
[204] Minutes of the Highland Society of London, quoted by Campbell 2011: 24.
[205] *The Times*, London, 6 Apr. 1818.
[206] *The Times*, London, 17 June 1818. M'Gregor was accompanied on the harp by O'Farrell's former musical partner Nicholson.

concert in November 1820.[207] In 1815 in Sydney, Australia, a James Stewart, again presumably a Scottish professional player, published a newspaper notice about the attempted theft of his 'Set of Union Pipes'.[208] In 1820 an unnamed native of Edinburgh was playing 'National Airs on the Union Pipes' there in an entirely Scottish evening of entertainment,[209] and in 1821 John McGregor, piper to the Highland Society of London, was playing Highland pipes and 'Union pipe' in Perth.[210] A dancing and music master Mr Mackenzie, again by his name Scottish, had died in Derby by 1835 and the auction of his varied musical instrument collection included his Highland pipes and 'his celebrated Set of Union Pipes'.[211] Robert Millar (1789–1861), piper to the Aberdeen Highland Society, when referred to in 1836, was also in this multi-pipes playing tradition which included union pipes. Millar played a set made by Robert Reid of North Shields which was presented to him in 1830, and he compiled a manuscript of over 300 tunes begun by him in Montrose that year for the 'Union Bag-pipe, &'.[212] As late as 1842, a 'Mr. Donald, the celebrated player on the Union pipe' was entertaining the Operative Conservative Society of Ripon with 'many beautiful Scotch Airs'.[213] Even Scots in the New World, in Detroit, had a taste

[207] *The Times*, London, 8 Nov. 1820.
[208] *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, Sydney, 20 May 1815.
[209] *Caledonian Mercury*, Edinburgh, 9 Mar. 1820.
[210] Cannon 1980: 12; Campbell 2011: 22–3. On an undated item of sheet music 'A Favorite Waltz and March Composed for the Piano Forte…' by McGregor and published in London by J. Briggs, he describes himself as a 'teacher of the union pipes' (University of Cambridge online library catalogue, 1 May 2012, which dates it as [1815?]).
[211] *Derby Mercury*, Derby, 22 Apr. 1835.
[212] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, Edinburgh, 4 Feb. 1836, quoted in MacInnes 1986: 21; Cannon 1993: 30–6; Keith Sanger research notes, kindly communicated by him, Apr. 2012.
[213] *Leeds Intelligencer*, Leeds, 21 Mar. 1842.

for the union pipes and are spoken of in the 1870s as having patronised there 'Mike Gill, a Celebrated Player on the Union Pipes', who may have been Irish.[214]

There is some evidence too that Courtney's term was occasionally applied to the very different Northumbrian bellows pipes. Robert Eliot Bewick (1788–1849), son of the famous Northumbrian engraver Thomas Bewick and a Northumbrian piper, a pupil of John Peacock's, was described by an acquaintance as playing the 'union pipes' when it is clear from his description that Bewick was playing the Northumbrian pipes.[215] A Mr Walker of Newcastle was reported in 1866 as having played there at a function of the Newcastle and Northumberland Yeomanry Cavalry 'a variety of selections on the Northumberland union pipes'.[216]

At least some Scottish and English makers of the Highland pipes and Northumbrian pipes in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century also turned to making what secondary sources call 'union pipes'. Although it is usually known when these pipe-makers flourished, it does not seem possible to be certain when they individually added these bellows pipes to their manufacturing repertory, or indeed whether they themselves (as distinct from bagpipe studies and museum catalogues of a later date) called their instruments 'union pipes'. At least some of their instruments so labelled are of the Geoghegan 'pastoral pipes' type of 1743.[217] Hugh Robertson of

[214] Wanless 1872: 48–51: 'When Mike play'd up an Irish reel,/ We neither minded maut or meal'.
[215] William Scott Bell, *Autobiography* (1860), quoted by Bain 1982: 17 and Uglow 2006: 398–9 (reference courtesy Seán Donnelly).
[216] *Newcastle Courant*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 26 Oct. 1866.
[217] Cheape 2008: 96–100; McLeod 2002: 2.05/ 1–2; McCandless 1998: 19.

Edinburgh (c. 1733–1822) seems to be the earliest of these pipemakers, possibly producing bellows pipes in the 1780s.[218] There is also James Sharp of Aberdeen (*fl*. 1828–63),[219] John Dunn (1764–1820) of Newcastle-upon-Tyne,[220] Robert Reid (1784–1837) and James Reid (1813–74) of North Shields,[221] and a miscellany of others.[222] A J. Scorgie from Scotland was making 'Scotch military, flat and Irish union pipes' in New York in 1817,[223] and Donald MacDonald, a 'pipe maker' and publisher of Highland pipe music, advertised in Edinburgh about 1822 that he was teaching 'Highland, Northumberland & Irish bagpipes'; he may also have been manufacturing them.[224]

Irish professional players of the 'union pipes' began appearing in some numbers in the United States in the early nineteenth century, long after performers on the 'Irish pipes' had been recorded as appearing there in the eighteenth century. The first known is a 'Mr. Curran, a celebrated performer, lately from Ireland', who was playing 'national airs' on 'union pipes' in New York in February 1808.[225] He

[218] Cheape 2008: 17, 111, 118 refers to a 'Union Pipe by Hugh Robertson of Edinburgh of the 1780s', and to hallmarked bellows-blown bagpipes by Robertson from 1793–4 and 1808–9. For further information on Robertson see Sanger 2010: 44–6, who thinks that Robertson was making 'Irish pipes' about 1793. Proud & Butler 1983: 16 refer to a John Gibson of Jedburgh, died Sept. 1795, who 'made and played Irish pipes'.
[219] Campbell 2011: 29–30.
[220] Proud and Butler 1983: 14–5.
[221] Proud and Butler 1983: 29–30.
[222] Cheape 2008: 118 refers to undated 'part-sets and chanters for the Union Pipe' by makers Nicholas Kerr of Edinburgh, and 'Dunn, Bannon, Massie, Scott and Weldon' which were acquired by the National Museum of Scotland from an Edinburgh source. For Kerr (d. 1773 – Sanger, research notes) of Edinburgh & Massie of Aberdeen see Campbell 2011: 4 & 30. For other possible makers, see Walstrom 2002: 2.15/ 1–4.
[223] Carolan 2011: 2, 22–5.
[224] Cannon 1980: 12, 118–20.
[225] *Evening Post*, New York, 11 Feb. 1808.

was followed by, among others, a Mr Edward Reynolds, 'late from Dublin' who was performing on the 'Irish union pipes' in Boston in March 1812;[226] and a Charles P.F. O'Hara, a multi-instrumentalist who had 'resided many years in the west of Ireland', and who published *The Gentleman's Musical Repository; being a selection from the ancient and modern music of Erin, and several original pieces by the compiler; adapted to the violin, flute, flageolet, hautboy and union pipes* in New York in January 1813.[227] Among these pipers, the instrument was most commonly called the 'Irish union pipes';[228] they were, seemingly, signalling an ethnic connection to their audiences in a way that had not often happened in Britain. But these Irish players also simply used the term 'union pipes'. Both varieties of the term are also found used by professional pipers, both Scottish and Irish, in Australia (from 1815)[229] and in Canada (from 1835).[230]

But by the fourth decade of the century, with its virtual disappearance from the British stage, the instrument seems to have come to the end of its run of popularity in Britain. It had by no means however disappeared from more modest venues such as taverns and halls there. Outstanding new Irish players on the 'union pipes', such as the blind William Talbot from Roscrea, Co Tiperary, about 1822,[231] continued to find it worth their while to play in Britain and arrived there from

[226] *Columbian Centinel*, Boston, 22 Feb. 1812.
[227] *Columbian*, New York, 2 Jan. 1813.
[228] See Carolan 2011: 22–5.
[229] *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, Sydney, 20 May 1815; 2 Sept. 1815. The newspaper of the first date has already been cited for the notice inserted by a presumably Scottish piper James Stewart about his 'Set of Union Pipes'; the second has an advertisement from a shop selling musical instruments including 'Union Pipes'.
[230] *Quebec Gazette*, Quebec, 20 March 1835. The newspaper carries a notice of a St Patrick's Day dinner at which a Mr Macnally played on the 'Irish Union Pipes'. I am obliged to Patrick McSweeney, Quebec, for a copy of this reference.
[231] *Morning Chronicle*, London, 13 Dec. 1822.

Ireland at intervals until the 1850s, and Irish street players occasionally appear in court reports.[232] P. O'Farrell was continuing with his British career on the instrument as late as 1837.[233] But, with the advertisement in 1833 by a Mr Dixon in Newcastle-upon-Tyne of a 'Pair of Union Bag Pipes and a Pair of Highland Bag-Pipes, no worse than new, may be bought for Half their Value',[234] there begins a litany of 'union pipes' advertised for discounted disposal at auctions, pawnbroker clearances and rummage sales which would last, decade after decade, in England, Scotland and Ireland, for the rest of the century.[235] These advertisements do indicate however that a subterranean union-pipes culture continued at some strength in all three countries through the century. They show an appreciation of quality of manufacture: 'extra silver keys on chaunter',[236] 'black ebony, silver and ivory mounted, one note under concert pitch';[237] of cost: 'set of Union bagpipes which cost £20';[238] and of makers: 'Kenna',[239] 'M'Donald, Edinburgh',[240] 'first class Union Pipes, made by Coin'.[241] Swaps are contemplated: 'Wanted, a sharp Set of Union Pipes. Will give money or sweet low set (bass attached)'.[242]

---

[232] *Morning Post*, London, 14 Jan. 1830; Carolan 2005: 24–29; Matthews 2011: 15–23.
[233] O'Farrell was still advertising as a teacher in London in *Morning Post*, London, 15 Mar. 1837.
[234] *Newcastle Courant*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 17, 31 Aug. 1833.
[235] Pawnshop advertisements for unredeemed union pipes had been appearing at least as early as 1818 (*Caledonian Mercury*, Edinburgh, 18 June 1818) but there is no indication in them that the pipes were being then discounted.
[236] *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, Dublin, 4 July 1843.
[237] *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, Dublin, 23 June 1896.
[238] *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, Dublin, 7 Dec. 1887.
[239] *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, Dublin, 7, 8 May 1846.
[240] *Glasgow Herald*, Glasgow, 3 Apr. 1857.
[241] *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, Dublin, 25, 26 Aug. 1897.
[242] *Liverpool Mercury*, Liverpool, 29 Mar. 1887.

One English piper of Scottish origins, the noted travelling Newcastle-upon-Tyne comedian and self-declared player of the 'union pipes' Billy Purvis, kept the instrument before audiences in the north of England from about 1815 until his death in 1853.[243] Willy or Billy Bolton of Yorkshire was playing 'union-pipes' about 1845[244] and continued until 1870.[245] In the mid-nineteenth century there is said to have been an Irish piper in Britain for every day of the year,[246] but by 1896 Thomas Garoghan, born in Coventry in 1845 of Mayo parents, was able to advertise himself in Sheffield as 'the only Professor and last of the old bards on the Irish Union bagpipes'.[247] Remarkably, the term was found in oral tradition in Britain as late as 1960, used by an elderly Lancashire woman whose father had played the bagpipes. When asked by a folklore collector if he was Scottish, she replied, 'No, certainly not, he played the Union Pipes'.[248]

In the later nineteenth century visiting Irish professional pipers continued to use the term in Britain. The Cahir, Co Tipperary, piper Thomas O'Hannigan, for instance, later 'Royal Minstrel' to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, was advertised in Ireland in 1838 and 1839 as playing on the 'Irish Pipes' as well as the 'Irish union pipes'.[249] But in Liverpool in 1842[250] and in London in 1843 the newspapers universally describe him as an 'Irish Piper' simply playing on the 'union pipes'.[251] The famous Kerry piper James

[243] Proud & Butler 1983: 29; Moylan 2006: 28–9.
[244] J.H. Dixon 1846: 226, quoted in Cannon 1971: 142.
[245] Schofield 1975: 90.
[246] O'Neill 1913: 286.
[247] *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, Sheffield, 22 Aug. 1896.
[248] Schofield 1975: 90.
[249] *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, Dublin, 9, 13, 15 Jan. 1838; *Belfast News-Letter*, Belfast, 30 Mar. 1838; Carolan 1994: 46–52.
[250] *Liverpool Mercury*, Liverpool, 4 Mar. 1842.
[251] Carolan 1994: 46–52.

Gandsey, one of the sights of Killarney, was playing the 'Irish union pipes' to acclaim in Edinburgh in 1841.[252] In 1853 'Mr Thos. Mahon, Professor of the Irish Union Bagpipes' was even advertised in Scotland as 'Irish Piper to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen'.[253]

Courtney's term is also found, but to a lesser extent, throughout the nineteenth century in Ireland. There 'Irish pipes' is still more favoured, presumably for reasons of national feeling and in reaction to the term's imagined connection with the Act of Union. In addition, new Irish variant terms and some new terms are found. In 1802 in Mullingar, Co Westmeath, Timothy Kenna is advertising 'New Improved Irish Pipes';[254] but by 1812 after he has moved to Dublin he is advertising 'Grand Union Pipes' for 'the lovers of that ancient National Instrument'.[255] The professional Limerick piper Patrick O'Connor was advertised as playing these 'Grand Union pipes' by 1816;[256] and the Wexford piper S.T. Colclough was calling himself 'Professor of the Grand Union Pipes' by about the same period.[257] Edward Plunket is playing in Dublin on the 'National Union Pipes' in 1814.[258] In 1823 the professional William Talbot is playing on the 'improved Union Pipe',[259] which is likely to be also Kenna's

[252] Sanger 2001: 90.
[253] *Caledonian Mercury*, 26 Sept. 1853.
[254] *Dublin Evening Post*, Dublin, 12 Aug. 1802.
[255] *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 23 March 1812 (reference courtesy Seán Donnelly). A Scottish piper Arbuckle (see Note 199 above) was using the term earlier, but no connection with Kenna is apparent and the two may have coined the term independently.
[256] Donnelly 1994b: 81.
[257] Colclough c 1815: title page.
[258] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 30 July 1814 (reference courtesy Seán Donnelly).
[259] 'Pub. Augt. 1823, at the Artists Depository, 21 Charlotte St., Fitzroy Sq.' – print, reproduced in *An Píobaire* vol. 7, no 4 (Sept. 2011): 22.

instrument.[260] On the other hand Patrick O'Connor's only pupil, Griffin of Limerick, describes his instrument in 1819 and again in 1841 as the 'Chromatic Organ Pipes; being an improvement on the construction of the ancient Irish pipes'.[261] A Dublin Irish-English dictionary of 1817[262] refers to the 'píobshionnaich, a pipe blown with bellows' (which is further developed by a Scottish dictionary of 1911 as 'pìob-shionnaich, Irish bagpipe', deriving it from 'sionnach, valve of bellows, pipe-reed').[263] In 1833 in Sydney a set of 'Irish Union Chord Bagpipes' is advertised for sale.[264] All the foregoing can be considered trumped by the Scottish piper Mr Graham who is 1836 was performing in Hereford on the '"Royal Patent" improved Union Pipes'.[265] Thomas O'Hannigan, visiting Britain in 1844, is described as the 'celebrated Performer on the recently improved Chromatic and Diatonic Union Pipes'.[266] A late term for the instrument is also found: the Northumbrian bagpipes specialist William A. Cocks, writing in 1954, refers to 'hybrid union pipes';[267] this seems to be a term of his own devising which he applies ahistorically to bellows pipes with a foot-joint resembling the earlier Geoghegan 'pastoral' type of 1743.

---

[260] 'There was some years ago, playing in the taverns of Dublin, a blind piper named Talbot... His own pipes, which he called the "grand pipes"...' – William Carleton, *Tales and Sketches, Illustrating the Character, Usages, Traditions, Sports and Pastimes of the Irish Peasant*, James Duffy, Dublin, 1845, quoted in *An Píobaire* vol. 7, no 4 (Sept. 2011): 23–4

[261] Donnelly 1994b: 94; *Manchester Guardian*, Manchester, 10 Nov. 1841.

[262] O'Reilly 1817: 'píobshionnaich' [no pagination]. The term is also found in O'Reilly's 'new edition' of 1821, and in Armstrong 1825, a Scots Gaelic dictionary.

[263] MacBain 2nd ed 1911: 324 (these terms are not in his first edition of 1896) . Eamonn Ceannt, writing in *An Claidheamh Soluis*, Dublin, 29 July 1911, has 'valve, an sionnach' as an Irish term for a 'union pipe' valve.

[264] *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, Saturday 9 Nov. 1833 (reference courtesy Keith Sanger).

[265] *Hereford Journal*, Hereford, 24 Aug. 1836.

[266] Carolan 1994: 48.

[267] Cocks 1954: 345–6.

The disaster of the Great Famine of the 1840s and the continuing damage done to traditional social life by high consequent levels of emigration to Britain and to the United States had of course a catastrophic effect on Irish bellows piping, and the instrument came close to disappearing from Ireland by the end of the century. The terminology for it was not however affected. The popular terms continued to be used and 'union pipes' held its ground (although the pipes themselves are referred to less frequently, and even then usually in terms of their decline). In the Dublin directories Maurice Coyne appears from 1839 to 1861 as a 'Maker of Union and Scotch Bagpipes', and John Coyne similarly from 1855 to 1864.[268] In the early 1850s a 'most ingenious mechanic, Denis Harrington of Cork' (who later had to emigrate for lack of orders) was making and exhibiting 'Union pipes'.[269] The instrument and its traditional terminology seemed to limp on: in 1882 the pipe-maker Michael Doogan was exhibiting three sets of 'Irish Union Bagpipes' at an exhibition of Irish arts and manufacturers, in the Rotunda, Dublin,[270] and in 1888 he was still in business as a bagpipe dealer in Dublin.[271] It would seem that Courtney's term was by now hallowed by usage and by association with the older race of pipers and the vanished glory days of the instrument. Even in the Dublin periodical *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge*, dedicated to the promotion of the Irish language, a blind Galway piper Peter Kelly is reported in 1897 without any adverse comment as playing 'Union Pipes' at a Gaelic League meeting in Belfast.[272]

---

[268] Donnelly 2002: 2.14, 27, 29.
[269] Grainger 1986: 2. For his emigration to the United States or Australia see O'Neill 1913: 159, Donnelly 2002: 2.14, 38.
[270] *Exhibition of Irish Arts and Manufacturers, Rotunda, 1882*, catalogue in NLI Séamus Ó Casaide MS 8117 (3).
[271] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 14 June 1888 (reference courtesy Seán Donnelly).
[272] *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge. The Gaelic Journal*, Dublin, Oct. 1897.

The Cork Pipers' Club, the first Irish pipers' club, was founded in Cork city in March 1898 when the bellows instrument (as distinct from the recently revived mouth-blown pipes) seemed on the verge of disappearance.[273] For bellows pipes, the Club seems from newspaper reports of its early years to have favoured the term 'Irish pipes' but not infrequently used 'union pipes'. The term had survived the vicissitudes of the second half of the century and was being used naturally by a purposeful group of nationally minded piping revivalists and Gaelic League supporters. 'The piper with whom we are best acquainted', said *Fáinne an Lae*, a national Gaelic League newspaper, in the very last days of the century, 'is the player of the Union pipes... the Union piper'.[274]

In Irish America, to which many professional bellows pipers and even pipe-makers emigrated after the Famine, the instrument led a comparatively flourishing existence when compared to its condition in the homeland. The terms used for it reflected usage in Ireland: 'Irish pipes' was the most favoured term, but 'union pipes' was also widely used among professional and amateur players there. Charles Ferguson of Limerick, for example, was playing 'union pipes' in New York in 1860;[275] as was Thomas Kerrigan of Longford there in 1876;[276] 'six union pipers' at a concert there in 1890;[277] John Coleman and P.W. Mulqueeney in New Orleans in 1892;[278] and James C. McAuliffe of Limerick in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in 1899.[279] At the end of the

[273] Mitchell-Ingoldsby 1998: 6–12.
[274] *Fáinne an Lae*, 9 Dec. 1899.
[275] *New York Herald*, New York, 24 June 1860.
[276] *New York Herald*, New York, 2 Apr. 1876.
[277] *Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*, New York, 20 Dec. 1890.
[278] *Daily Picayune*, New Orleans, 1 Feb. 1892.
[279] *Wilkes-Barre Times*, Pennsylvania, 12 Oct. 1899.

century, in San Francisco in 1899, an Irish piper took possession of a set of the 'improved union bagpipes' made by the Taylor Brothers of Drogheda, Co Louth, and Philadelphia.[280] Irish bellows pipes sent for exhibition in the Irish section of the World's Fair in St Louis in 1904, and supplied by the Dublin musical-instrument firm Butler & Sons, were identified in the exhibition as 'Irish Union Pipes'.[281]

[280] *Irish Echo*, Boston, January 1899.
[281] *Irish Industrial Exhibition* 1904: 34. I am obliged to Seán Donnelly for a copy of this source.

Demise of 'Union Pipes'

In Ireland however, as a nationalist separatist political movement gathered momentum at the turn of the century and as the Irish-language revival spearheaded by the Gaelic League was enjoying considerable success, the term 'union pipes' must have stuck in the craw of many, in spite of the strong traditional attachment of others to it. Its perceived (though spurious) connection with the despised Act of Union would have made it anathema to many of a nationalist political mindset, as would its association with Ireland's nineteenth-century move towards the speaking of English and away from Irish. The fact that it was an English-language term with no parallel Irish-language equivalent made it alien (and awkward to use) for Irish speakers, and the available Irish-language terms *píob* and *píob mhála* made no helpful distinction between mouth-blown and bellows-blown bagpipes.

The time was auspicious for another turn of the terminological wheel, and for the introduction of a new term. When it came, it was again one with little history or logic behind it, but one which would eventually succeed, like 'union pipes' itself, for socio-political cultural reasons.

The new term was 'uilleann pipes'. Although he claimed that 'Union pipes' was a 'strange Anglicised corruption' which had been in decline since he had first pointed out the correctness of *uilleann* in 1890,[282] the idea of it was first publicly introduced, as far as is known, at a lecture given in Dublin in October 1903 by the Co Wexford professional church musician Dr W.H. Grattan Flood:

> Uillean or Cuish pipes are synonymous, insomuch as we have *Uille* or *Uillean*, elbow, whilst *cuish* is the forearm… The name "Union" pipes is an Anglicised corruption of Piobai Uileann, or elbow-pipes'.[283]

[282] *Grove's Dictionary* 1910: V, 194.
[283] Reported in *The United Irishman*, Dublin, 17 Oct. 1903 (for details see Carolan

Flood (1857–1928) was an industrious researcher and a prolific writer on Irish music from the late nineteenth century until his death. But he was criticised in his own time, even by his supporters, for his failure to cite sources and for chauvinistically going beyond his evidence, and his voluminous published writings are a confusing mixture of the reliable and the unreliable.[284] He had little or no Irish. In this introduction of the new term he is reported as recycling General Charles Vallancey's coinage 'Ullan pipes' as published by Joseph Cooper Walker in 1786, and as accepting its supposed connection with the Irish word for elbow as cited by Walker above. From the report of the lecture it is clear that Walker's book (rather than Vallancey directly) was Flood's source. Flood subsequently used a variety of spellings for his new term (all approximating to inflected forms of *uille*, the Irish word for elbow, which also has the alternative nominative form *uillinn*).[285] He does not however address the fact that this supposedly authentic Irish-language term is nowhere found before Vallancey or Walker (neither of them Irish speakers); on the contrary he implies that he is restoring an English-corrupted term to its Irish-original purity.

By 1905, in the first edition of his influential *History of Irish Music*, Flood was again bringing forward the new term, and again explicitly

1981: 4–9). 'Cuish pipes' are Vallancey's 'Cuisli Pipes' passed on by Walker as 'Cuisle Pipes' (see Notes 54–6 above).

[284] In the 1980s the present writer saw a library notebook of his in the possession of his son in Wexford, and found his writing close to illegible. Doubtless Flood himself had difficulty in subsequently reading his hastily scribbled notes, copied mostly from sources in Dublin and London libraries in intervals snatched from his work as a church organist.

[285] The now standard spelling 'uilleann' is the genitive singular of the nominative *uille*, although the word is actually pronounced more like the alternative nominative *uillinn*. It has often been spelled with one *l* or one *n*. The confusion is a symptom of the unhistorical origins of the term.

stating that '*Uilleann* was subsequently anglicised as "Union"'.[286] He repeated this in the 1906 second edition of his *History*,[287] in its 1913 third edition,[288] and in its 1927 fourth edition;[289] and in his 1911 *The Story of the Bagpipe*.[290] He persuaded the editors of the authoritative *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* that his term was the correct one, and he wrote for the 1910 volume of the *Dictionary* an article 'Uilleann Pipes' that survived until its fourth edition of 1948.[291] This constant propagation of the term over the last three decades of his life by a writer who was regarded as the chief Irish music historian of his day would eventually bear fruit, although not without opposition.

A constituency which might be expected to take up Flood's new term enthusiastically was the Dublin Pipers Club, Cumann na bPíobairí, founded in 1900. The Club, like its Cork forerunner, was made up to a great extent of young nationalist learners of warpipes and bellows pipes. Many of them were members of the Gaelic League and dedicated revivalist Irish speakers. It was in fact in a lecture to a meeting of Cumann na bPíobairí that Flood introduced his new term in 1903. In all its earlier publicity and concert programmes the Club had been employing 'union pipes' as its standard term in English for bellows pipes, and *píob* when it referred to them in Irish.[292] In casual usage 'pipes' and 'Irish pipes' were its common terms.[293] At its foundation

[286] Flood 1905: 29–30, 251.
[287] Flood 1906: 29–30, 251.
[288] Flood 1913: 29–30, 251.
[289] Flood 1927: 29–30, 251.
[290] Flood 1911: 146 ff.
[291] *Grove's Dictionary* 1910: V, 194.
[292] 'An Píobaire', the manuscript newsletter of the Club, 1900–1902 passim, NLI Séamus Ó Casaide MS 5453.
[293] Ibid.

in February 1900 the printed objectives of the Club included the 'popularisation of the various forms of Irish pipes... both the Union Pipes and the Píob Mór [sic] or old Irish War Pipes',[294] and as if in response a Dublin dealer in old musical instruments, in April of that year, placed an advertisement for the sale of 'Irish Bagpipes (union) by Colgan, Coyne, Kenna, etc.'.[295] Following the understanding of the older pipers that the term referred to a concord of sounds or a union of pipes, the Club continued to call the instrument 'union pipes' after Flood's lecture, and this remained its standard term. It was used until the Club came to an end more than a decade afterwards, by it and by its pipes teachers Nicholas Markey and William N. Andrews, and generally in newspaper reports of its activities at Gaelic League *feiseanna* and *oireachtaisí*. In a review of Flood's 1911 volume *The Story of the Bagpipe*,[296] the Club's scholarly piping historian Séamus Ó Casaide challenges his derivation of 'union' from 'uilleann' as 'a doubtful etymology'.[297] 'Union pipes' was the term used in a lecture in 1912 by Éamonn Ceannt, a leading member of the Club who would be executed for his part in the Easter Rebellion of 1916,[298] and in the same year its Secretary Micheál Ó Duibhginn was using the term in writing to the press about the forthcoming Oireachtas 'Union pipes competition'.[299] It is as late as January 1913 before Cumann na bPíobairí is first found to use 'Píobaí Uilleann' in a festival programme, and then it is only as the Irish-language equivalent of 'Union Pipes'.[300] In its festival programme of 1914, shortly before it came to an end, the Club follows the same practice, but also uses the

[294] Reproduced in *An Píobaire* vol. 3, no 37 (Sept. 1998): 20–2.
[295] *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, 30 Apr. 1900.
[296] Flood 1911.
[297] Ó Casaide 1912: 110–.2
[298] *Claidheamh Soluis*, Dublin, 29 July 1911.
[299] *Claidheamh Soluis*, Dublin, 25 May 1912.
[300] Programme of Cumann na bPíobairí Pipers' Festival, 10 Jan. 1913.

simple 'píobaí'.[301] Clearly the members of the Dublin Pipers' Club did not enthusiastically take up Flood's term when he presented it to them, but resisted it. As late as 1928 Séamus Ó Casaide was pointedly referring to the 'Irish Union Pipers of Dublin' being represented at the funeral of the bellows piper Pat Ward in Drogheda.[302]

The reaction of the Irish traditional-music collector and writer Francis O'Neill (1848–1936) of Chicago to Flood's new term is particularly interesting. Reared in Irish-speaking rural west Cork until 1865, and a good performer on bagpipes of several kinds, O'Neill had a keen life-long interest in the instrument, its music and history.[303] In his first major study of Irish music *Irish Folk Music: A Fascinating Hobby*, published in 1910, O'Neill throughout refers in normal Irish and Irish-American parlance to 'pipes', 'bagpipes', 'Irish pipes', and, commonly, 'Union pipes' (thus capitalised). His favourite formulation is 'Irish or Union pipes' and in this he seems to have been influenced by the London publications of P. O'Farrell. It is not until over three hundred pages into the book that '*Uilleann* or Union pipes' occurs for the first and only time. The term is not otherwise explained, and it might seem that he was postponing a decision on it. O'Neill was a correspondent and friend of Grattan Flood's, but not an uncritical one. In O'Neill's second study, the massive *Irish Minstrels and Musicians*, published in 1913, he refers a small number of times to '*Uilleann* pipes' (sometimes in reference to the Irish mouth-blown warpipes),[304] and gives the *uilleann* =

[301] Programme of Cumann na bPíobairí Pipers' Festival, 23 May 1914.
[302] *Drogheda Independent*, Drogheda, 14 April 1928, quoted in *An Píobaire* vol. 3, no 27 (July 1996): 20.
[303] See Carolan 1997.
[304] O'Neill 1913: 41. By applying the term to warpipes O'Neill again seems to be keeping his distance from it. All bagpipes are after all elbow-pipes. 'Uilleann pipes' was also used to denote warpipes by the well known Kerry-born uilleann piper Br Gildas O'Shea in a lecture he gave in 1922 (*Southern Star*, 10 June 1922).

elbow rationalisation. But it is evident that he is keeping a distance from the term. His preferred terms throughout are again 'Union pipes' or 'Irish pipes'.

In Ireland however Flood's term was creeping in, certainly in print. As early as 1904 the nationalist *Weekly Freeman* of Dublin in an obituary of the famous Galway piper Martin Reilly referred to him as a performer on the 'Uilleann (Union) pipes',[305] a term which would certainly have been unknown to Reilly. The Rev. Patrick S. Dinneen, a leading Irish lexicographer, included 'píoba uilleann' in the 1904 first edition of his famous *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla. An Irish-English Dictionary* and (an each-way bet) translated it as 'union pipes', although oddly it appears only under the head-word *uille* and not under *píob*.[306] A *Meath Chronicle* festival report of 1907 speaks of prizes being awarded for performances on the 'Union or Uillean pipes'.[307] The programme of the national Irish-language Oireachtas festival of 1912 uses the heading 'An Phíb Uilinn' for the bellows-pipes competition.[308] *An Claidheamh Soluis*, the national Gaelic League newspaper, in 1915 speaks of a good performer on the 'Uilleann pipes'.[309] The two terms then seem to coexist, on a more or less equal basis, during the years of national turmoil following the 1916 rebellion. When an unsuccessful attempt was made in 1921 to revive the Dublin Pipers' Club – in which William Rowsome was a leading spirit – it was as an 'Irish Union Pipers Club'.[310]

[305] *Weekly Freeman*, Dublin, 9 July 1904.
[306] Dinneen 1904: 775. The term is treated likewise in Dinneen's second edition of 1927, which is still a standard work (Dinneen 1927: 1292). Since Flood's term was being widely used in the 1920s, and might be thought to have warranted an entry under *píob*, it would seem that Dinneen also was keeping his distance from it. The term does not appear in his *A Smaller Irish-English Dictionary for the Use of Schools* (Irish Texts Society, Dublin, London, 1917).
[307] *Meath Chronicle*, Navan, 3 Aug. 1907.
[309] *Claidheamh Soluis*, 2 Jan. 1915.
[310] Moylan 2010: 14; Michael O'Connor, pers. comm., Dec. 2011.

But there was evidently contemporary contention about the two terms, and it occasionally surfaces. 'Cork Piper', the pseudonymous writer of a letter to the editor of *The Gael* of Dublin in 1921, in reference to the 'Feis Ceoil Union Pipes Competition' and the playing there of the 'Rowsome Family on the Union Pipes', says

> You will note, Mr. Editor, that I hold to the adjective 'Union' throughout, and in doing so I beg to state that I think it to be the one and only title, for the obvious reason that the word implies what these pipes convey, viz., union, concord or alliance of the various sounds emitted from its various sections.

The editor of *The Gael* however was having none of it:

> We are sorry to disagree with the final paragraph in the above letter. "Uilean" is the proper name of these Pipes, and not "Union" – literally "Elbow" Pipes.[311]

It would seem that the tide began to turn in favour of 'uilleann pipes' as the new Irish Free State began to define itself in the course of the 1920s and to make decisions about its future. For the first time in Irish history there was a perceived need for 'official' national terms for administrative and cultural activities, and the development of this terminology was heavily influenced, on all political sides, by the philosophy of the Gaelic League. Some felt that the Irish-English hybrid 'uilleann pipes' was an acceptable national term, incorporating as it did a word in Irish. The new term held the field in 1924 at the state-sponsored national Tailteann Games, a revival of ancient Irish athletic and cultural contests:

> ... let us hear no more of the detestable name "Union" pipes; the proper designation, which has been rightly adopted by the Tailteann Games Committee, is "Uilleann" pipes, i.e. played by the elbow'.[312]

[311] Issue of 12 Dec. 1921.
[312] Letter from W.H. Grattan Flood in *The Irish Independent*, Dublin, 23 May 1924.

The newspapers duly reported on the 'Uileann Pipes competition' and the seven 'Uileann Pipes' entrants.[313]

More neutrally, the long-running Father Matthew Feis in Dublin, also a competitive cultural festival, referred to the instrument in its competitions of the following year as the 'Irish pipes'.[314] It hardly mattered. In the aftermath of the Civil War of 1922–23 all nationally minded cultural activities had suffered a drastic loss of support and in 1925 the Irish bellows pipes were again in danger of disappearing:

> Pipes and Harp Dying?... for two or three years back there has been a distinct falling off in enthusiasm for things Gaelic... A sadly noticeable feature of the Feis in recent years is the absence of the Uillean pipes'.[315]

But of course the pipes didn't die out, although it was a near-run thing for a time, and the terminological contest continued.

An influential player was Radio Éireann or 2RN, the new national public-service radio station. Two Dublin bellows pipers, James Ennis (Séamus Mac Aonghusa) and William N. 'Billy' Andrews, played on its first night of broadcasting on 1 January 1926, and were listed as playing the 'Irish pipes'.[316] But thereafter, through the 1920s and the early 1930s, the term almost invariably employed in newspaper programme listings was 'uilleann pipes' and not 'union pipes'. The more recent term was used during those years of Máire McCarthy, Leo Rowsome, Risteárd Ó Briain, Séamus Mac Aonghusa (James Ennis), Liam Breathnach (Liam Walsh), R.L. O'Mealy, Philip Martin and Sean O'Leary in publicity for their occasional 10- or 15-minute radio recitals. The term was doubtless

[313] *Irish Independent*, Dublin, 5 Aug. 1924.
[314] *Irish Times*, Dublin, 22 Apr. 1925.
[315] *Irish Independent*, Dublin, 7 Sept. 1925.
[316] *Irish Independent*, Dublin, 1 Jan. 1926.

promoted by Seamus Clandillon of Galway, the first director of the station and an Irish-language enthusiast,[317] and it was firmly established in a radio context by the time he retired in 1934.

In 1928, the year of his death, Grattan Flood was still actively engaged in his campaign to have his term accepted: 'Uilleann pipes [are] incorrectly called the "union" pipes'.[318] This was his last known word on the matter, although his opinions would live on influentially in print.

But among Irish bellows pipers usage still continued to vary. When they began to record commercial 78s for the Irish market, in London from the 1910s, '(Irish) union pipe' was the term commonly used on their record labels by such nationally known players as William N. Andrews of Dublin and later Leo Rowsome of Dublin and Liam Walsh of Waterford.[319] But in the course of the 1920s this was replaced first on labels by 'Irish (bag)pipes', and joined in the second half of the decade by '(Irish) uilleann pipes'. From his frequent newspaper concert reports and radio listings, and from record labels, Leo Rowsome seems to have made the change-over in this latter period. In letters published in *The Evening Herald* of Dublin in May 1930, he and Seamus Mac Aonghusa were in agreement in using the new term, referring respectively to 'Irish pipes' and 'uilleann pipes', while Rowsome came back to refer to the 'Irish (or uilleann) pipes'

[317] He is reported as having used the term himself in 1931 when being interviewed by a journalist for an article on 'The Passing of the Irish Piper' (*Irish Independent*, 13 Feb. 1931).

[318] W.H. Grattan Flood, *Cork Examiner*, Cork, 14 July 1928, quoted in *An Píobaire* vol. 2, no 2 (Sept. 1978): 4.

[319] The very earliest Irish bellows players to record commercially were Coventry-born Thomas Garoghan in Britain (who used the term 'Irish bagpipes' on Berliner discs of c. 1898) and Limerick-born James C. McAuliffe in the United States (who used 'bagpipe' on Edison cylinders of 1899).

which had also the title of the 'Irish Organ'.[320] William N. Andrews was billed as late as 1935 as playing the 'union pipes' on the radio, but this happened in Belfast, on BBC Northern Ireland, where the political neutrality of Courtney's term was evidently still useful. In his Dublin advertising of the same time Andrews had succumbed to 'Irish uillean pipes'.[321] Kildare piper Sean Dempsey, recording commercially for the Regal Zonophone label in London and Dublin in 1936 and 1937, muddied the waters still further. In 1936 and 1937 respectively he is playing the 'Irish union pipes' and the 'Irish pipes' in London, according to his record labels,[322] while in 1937 he is also recording in Dublin on 'Irish uilleann pipes'.[323]

In 1936 however a significant die was cast in the entire matter with the publication of the first Irish bellows pipes tutors to appear since those of the early nineteenth century: Tadhg Crowley's *How to Play the Uillean Pipes*, published in Cork by Crowley himself, and later *Leo Rowsome's Tutor for the Uileann Pipes*, published in Dublin by the Dublin College of Music. In a move reminiscent of those of O'Farrell, Fitzmaurice and Murphy over a hundred years earlier in relation to 'union pipes', Flood's new term was finally established in printed music-book form and by authors who were themselves pipers. Since he was a prize-winning performer, teacher, recording artist, broadcaster, pipe-maker and repairer, and inheritor of a family piping tradition, the example of Leo Rowsome must have been highly influential, and by the mid-1920s, as said, he was commonly using some form of the term 'uilleann pipes'. Decisive in the terminological struggle was the informal foundation in 1936 by

[320] *Evening Herald*, Dublin, 15, 20 & 21 May 1930.
[321] Campbell 2011: 185.
[322] Regal Zonophone IZ 603, Regal Zonophone IZ 656.
[323] Regal Zonophone IZ 705.

Rowsome and associates in Dublin of 'Cumann na bPíobairí Uilleann' or the 'Uilleann Pipers' Club', a social musical club in Thomas Street which acted as a focus for the traditional musicians of the city and beyond.[324] This was formally established in 1940,[325] during the years of the Second World War, and continued into the 1970s, chaired by Rowsome until his death in 1970.

By the 1940s, the term 'union pipes' was obsolete, and *feiseanna* and *oireachtaisí* were awarding certificates for participation in competitions for *an phíob uilleann*.[326] The older term was still known and used in speech and print of course (as it still sometimes is today), but instead of being a vigorous living term, it now had an antiquarian flavour. It now had to be explained as being the same as the uilleann pipes, and it is referred to as a term formerly in use. Séamus Ó Casaide, the last champion of the Dublin Pipers' Club's understanding of the term, died in 1943. A whole generation of Irish bellows pipers and followers of the instrument had grown up with 'uilleann pipes' as a term of choice, and a decisive shift in usage had taken place. A consequence was that the recent term would now be used ahistorically to refer to all Irish bellows pipes, including those belonging to the period before 'uilleann pipes' was coined.

When invitations were sent by Cumann na bPíobairí Uilleann to a *fleadh* or festival in Athlone in May 1951 – an invitation that would lead later in the year to the setting up in Dublin of a national (and eventually international) traditional-music organisation Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ) – 'Uilleann Pipes' was the term used.[327] From its earliest competitive *fleadhanna ceoil* festivals, modelled

[324] Rowsome 1968: 58.
[325] NPU Seán Reid Collection, items SRF2D1-2.
[326] See for instance a 1940 Feis Átha Cliath certificate for participation in the competition for 'An Phíb-Uilleann' (NPU Seán Reid Collection, item SRF2D1).
[327] NPU Seán Reid Collection, item SRF5D26.

on the Gaelic League *feiseanna*, CCÉ also consistently used *píob uilleann*, 'uilleann pipes' to designate its bellows piping competitions,[328] and among its early printed Aims and Objects was 'to restore the playing of the Harp and Uilleann Pipes in the National life of Ireland'.[329] Under the influence doubtless of Seamus Ennis, son of James and also a leading Irish bellows piper, who went to work as a music collector for the station in Britain in 1951, the BBC in London also called the instrument 'uilleann pipes',[330] and this doubtless spread the term in Britain in the 1950s through the highly popular BBC folk programmes that Ennis was involved in.

Occasional rear-guard actions in support of the older term took place, notably in 1954 by William A. Cocks in the 5th edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* – '*Irish Union Pipes*. This is the correct name, the mock-Gaelic term "Uilleann pipe" is now discredited.'[331] – and as late as 1958 in the periodical *Céilidhe Record*, 'the organ of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann'. This short-lived publication consistently talked about 'union pipes' in editorial text, to an extent that a puzzled reader wrote in to ask why it was referring to uilleann pipes in this way.[332]

But when in 1968 a new Dublin-based international organisation dedicated to the promotion of the Irish bellows pipes, and with full membership confined to pipers, was set up with the title of Na Píobairí Uilleann,[333] the twentieth-century term could be said to have finally triumphed after more than sixty years of existence.

---

[328] See various early fleadh programmes in NPU Seán Reid Collection, passim.
[329] NPU Seán Reid Collection, item SRF49D21.
[330] BBC internal documentation, accessed Oct. 1996.
[331] Vol. I, 346.
[332] *Céilidhe Record*, Longford, May 1958.
[333] The name was put forward by Seamus Ennis at the first meeting, according to participants, and agreed by acclaim.

The Irish shift from 'union' to 'uilleann' was not however paralleled by an equivalent contemporary shift of usage in Irish America, which had not been influenced to the extent that Ireland had by either the ideology of the Gaelic League or of the emergent Free State. Although 'uilleann pipes' had appeared in print there as early as 1904,[334] copied from Irish newspaper sources, and was known to at least some pipers there, older habits continued and oral tradition was followed rather than print-introduced innovation. The instrument continued to be commonly known in the United States in the early twentieth century as 'Irish' or 'union' pipes. This was the practice followed by prominent piper associates of Francis O'Neill such as Bernard Delaney of Offaly and Chicago[335] Patsy Touhey of Galway and New York,[336] and Tom Ennis of Chicago.[337] However when Irish pipers began to record in some numbers on commercial 78s from the 1920s, issued on the ethnic series of generalist record companies or on small Irish-American labels, 'union pipes' became a casualty of the commercial need for a term that would be instantly understood by record buyers. In almost every case the performers were described as playing 'Irish (bag)pipes' or as playing Irish reels and jigs on simply '(bag)pipes'. This usage continued through to about 1960, when a shift to the term 'uilleann pipes' began to occur under the influence of uilleann pipers such as Seamus Ennis and Leo Rowsome coming to America on commercial recordings or in person, and the foundation of branches of CCÉ

[334] *Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*, New York, 23 July 1904.
[335] See *The Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Ohio, 18 June 1909, for example.
[336] Mitchell & Small 1986: passim. Jackie Small points out (pers. comm., Apr. 2012) that in his spoken introductions to his cylinder recordings Touhey refers to the instrument as 'pipes' and 'Irish pipes'.
[337] *New Victor Records* catalogue, July 1917. Confusingly, while this source says that 'Union Pipes' is the correct name for the instrument, it goes on to say that the term is 'a corruption of the old Irish name, Uillean Pipes'. This information presumably came from Tom Ennis. His father Thomas senior spoke only of

which generally used the new term. This influence was greatly re-inforced later in the decade by the commercial recordings of the group The Chieftains (led by uilleann piper Paddy Moloney), by Americans who became members of the organisation Na Píobairí Uilleann from 1968 and adopted its terminology, and from the 1970s by touring solo uilleann pipers such as Liam O'Flynn of the group Planxty and Paddy Keenan of the Bothy Band. As part of this trend, the first newsletter for American players of Irish bellows pipes was *The Uilleann Piper*, a short-lived circular edited in 1974 by Rev. James MacKenzie of North Carolina. Remaining to an extent with the older usage however has been the society of Irish bellows pipers which began life in 1979 as The Irish Pipers' Club of San Francisco, and which still flourishes as The Irish Pipers' Club, based in Seattle with connections to other North American Irish pipers clubs. Its 1979 constitution stated that it was formed to 'preserve and promote the playing of the Irish Union (Uilleann) Pipes', and in its journal *Iris na bPíobairí – The Pipers' Review*, it has continued to actively employ the term 'union pipes' as well as 'uilleann pipes'.[338]

However, in the wider world of globalised Irish bellows piping, now found on four continents, modern Irish usage has been almost universally adapted and the instrument is formally known as the 'uilleann pipes', both in its contemporary forms and as an ahistorical term of convenience for referring to its older forms. Breandán Breathnach, founding chairman of Na Píobairí Uilleann in 1968,

'union pipes' and 'The Soft Irish Pipes' when writing in 1902 (An Gaodhal, New York (Feb. 1902): 33

[338] It was influenced at first in this by Denis Brooks, a founding member of the club and the first editor of its journal. I am obliged to him for the information that he favoured the Courtney term as it was what he had heard from older players in the United States in the 1960s (pers. comm., 2 Oct. 2011). His 1985 manual for the instrument is entitled *The Tutor: Irish Union Pipes. A Workbook*.

knew well by family tradition and by scholarship that 'uilleann pipes' was a recent coinage, but he had, as often, the definitive attitude to the matter: his friends and colleagues remember that he regarded it as 'pedantic' to oppose the choice of practitioners in their decisive adoption of 'uilleann pipes'.

Some Considerations Arising

Were Denis Courtney's 'union pipes' Irish pipes, or were they something else? On the present evidence, it would have to be said that they did belong to the range of bellows pipes known to his contemporaries by the catch-all term 'Irish pipes'.[339] As has been seen, this piper who introduced and established the term was Irish, explicitly described as such in contemporary sources; he played 'Irish pipes' and in Ireland his 'union pipes' were called 'our favourite national instrument'; he played in recitals with the Irish bellows pipers Murphy and McDonnell, both of whom at that time called their instrument 'Irish pipes'; his 'union pipes' were highly acceptable to his Irish audiences who were familiar with the native form of the instrument; he played Irish melodies, some with titles in Irish; his earliest successors as performers on the union pipes (some of them music editors and publishers) were mostly Irish; and the union pipes were frequently labeled 'Irish' after his death, even by Scottish players who used the term. Later again, in the United States, Australia and Canada, the union pipes were more often than not also characterised as 'Irish', and in Ireland even Irish-speaking and nationally minded pipers clung to the term 'union pipes' as late as the mid-twentieth century.

Did Courtney introduce a 'new species of music', as was said by the Times writer the morning after his 1788 London debut? Only as far as his fashionable London audience in the Free Mason's Hall was

[339] Both 'Irish pipes' and 'union pipes' have been used to cover a range of variant forms of Irish bellows pipes, and the term may also sometimes have been later applied in Britain to bellows pipes that were not Irish. 'Irish pipes' and 'union pipes' have been applied also to 'pastoral pipes' of the type described in 1743 by John Geoghegan and which survived into the next century, but to what degree these were Irish is a question for another time.

concerned, although not otherwise. As said, his audience in Vauxhall Gardens a few days later found his music 'single and novel', and a contemporary writer considered that 'His ingenuity seems to have made a new discovery in Instrumental Music'. The pipes that these Londoners heard however would not have been new to his Irish audiences, to the poor compatriots in London whose company he frequented, or to the provincial audiences among whom he had first made a reputation in Britain. They are unlikely to have been particularly new to those in Britain who had been hearing Irish pipes played informally and in private for some decades, such as Lady Luxborough in 1751, the British king George II before 1760,[340] the Scottish Highland piper Joseph MacDonald writing in 1760, blind James Mullin's audiences in the George Inn in Derby in 1766, the employers of the young servant piper with the 'real old Egan in Dublin' set of pipes in 1779, the British music historian Charles Burney studying the instrument about 1785,[341] the artist and musician John Baptist Malchair sketching a 'blind Irish piper' and writing tunes from him in Oxford in 1785,[342] or the Irish slum celebrants of St Patrick's Day in London in 1786.

What was really new was the term 'union pipes', and under this term the audacious introduction to an elite audience, in classical music terms, of an improved form of an alien instrument often associated with the lower classes. There is nowadays a consensus, highly plausible but based seemingly on deduction rather than on any precise evidence, that an early eighteenth-century low-pitched and

[340] Walker 1786: 81: 'I have been informed that George II was so much delighted with the performance of an Irish gentleman on the Bagpipes, that he ordered a medal to be struck for him'. King George II died in 1760.
[341] Letter to Joseph Cooper Walker, quoted in Walker 1786: 78–9.
[342] Wollenberg 2007: 151–61.

continuously sounding bellows pipes with a bell-like foot-piece (resembling but not identical to John Geoghegan's 'pastoral or new bagpipe' one-piece chanter of 1743) was improved about the 1750s or 1760s by having its foot-piece removed.[343] The chanter tenon thus exposed could then be held against a knee-pad *ad lib* to create moments of silence on the higher-pitched chanter and introduce staccato playing with new kinds of ornamentation. These developments, with new high standards of wood-turning and manufacturing finish and reliability, the hypothesis holds, had been taking place in Ireland.[344] Courtney's influential patrons, his new emollient marketing term, and above all his musical abilities, enabled him, it seems, to introduce these novel developments to the British capital, at the highest social levels, and to enjoy continuous success there by means of them for the rest of his short life. As far as his London concert audiences were concerned, he *had* introduced a new species of music, one which would live after him. But the term does not imply a new organological development, merely a highly visible introduction into London, by the first Irish piper to make a public name for performance in Britain, of a development which had seemingly taken place in Ireland some decades earlier. In this, Courtney can be seen an important figure in the history of the globalisation of Irish music. This process had been underway with regard to the Irish harp in Britain and Europe since Elizabethan times, and with regard to the Irish bellows pipes in Britain and north America (and even as far as British India) from the earlier eighteenth century. But Courtney clearly brought these pipes to a new level of international attention in the late eighteenth century – and subsequently through his continuing influence.

[343] For a statement of this hypothesis see Brooks 1985a.

[344] For pre-Courtney Irish-made bellows pipes, see Donnelly 1983, Donnelly 2002, and Carolan 2006.

If Denis Courtney's 'union pipes' were not then in fact a new instrument, but a new name for an existing instrument, there is a need for some revision of bellows-bagpipe terminology as used hitherto in bagpipe studies and museum catalogues. In such sources 'union pipes' has often been used as a convenient term to distinguish the earlier eighteenth-century bellows legato bagpipes with a foot-joint, of the 1740s 'pastoral' type, from the later bellows pipes with a stoppable end-tenon and a staccato capability, supposedly of the 'union' type. Without doubt players and makers after Courtney's time did use his term to refer to bellows pipes of this latter type, but it cannot be accurately used to label all such bellows pipes, and certainly not those that pre-date his death in 1794, unless there is future agreement among organologists to employ it deliberately as an ahistorical but convenient diagnostic term, much as Irish writers now use 'uilleann pipes' for forms of the instrument in existence before 1903.

Discussions of bellows pipes in Britain and Ireland have frequently been bedeviled by the lack of a clear chronology for the history of the various forms of the instruments. It is hoped that the unrolling above of a chronology for terms used for the Irish bellows pipes, indicating as it does both exact moments of change and of less exactly datable trends in terminology, will provide a scaffolding for greater projects: for the building of an accurate chronology for the physical development of the instrument itself, and the compiling of a history of its performance practice. Here the best hope still remains a programme of detailed organological description of older surviving sets, newly contextualised by contemporary information about the instrument which continues to emerge from ongoing print digitisation projects and also by the surprising number of visual illustrations of early instruments and piping practice that have recently come to light. This programme will be animated by the large body of sound and video recordings of

Irish piping that now exist, by the insights of the many contemporary uilleann pipes makers who are now at work, and by the instrument's vigorous and international playing tradition.

With thanks especially to Seán Donnelly, Terry Moylan, Keith Sanger, Lisa Shields, and Jackie Small who read and commented on earlier drafts of this essay, and to Treasa Harkin and Jackie Small who prepared it for the ITMA website. Thanks also to the staffs of the Irish Traditional Music Archive, Dublin; Na Píobairí Uilleann, Dublin; the New York Public Library at Lincoln Centre; the Library of Trinity College Dublin; the National Library of Ireland, Dublin; the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin; the National Folklore Collection, University College Dublin; the Library of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin; and the Dublin City Library and Archive; and for information and help of various kinds to Denis Brooks, Faith and Ellen Carney, Patrick McSweeney, Michael O'Connor, Susan O'Regan, and Philip Shields.

A version of this essay – 'The Union Pipes: Their Birth and Death' – was given by the author as the 2011 Breandán Breathnach Memorial Lecture of Na Píobairí Uilleann in 15 Henrietta St, Dublin, on 3 December 2011, and transmitted as a simultaneous webcast by NPU. Musical illustrations were played by Michael O'Brien, Dublin, uilleann pipes.

INFORMATION SOURCES

Manuscripts

Na Píobairí Uilleann Archive, Dublin:
Seán Reid Collection (including ephemera)

National Folklore Collection (NFC), University College Dublin:
Francis Carroll papers

National Library of Ireland (NLI), Dublin:
Séamus Ó/Ua Casaide papers (including ephemera): MSS 4233, 4234, 4235, 5451, 5452, 5453, 8117 (1–4), 8118 (1–7)

National Library of Scotland (NLS), Edinburgh:
MS Highland Society of London Dep. 268/34

Trinity College Dublin (TCD):
MS 1461, 2: Letters 1785–90 from William Beauford to Joseph Cooper Walker
MS 1461–7 T.66 fol. 242: Letter undated [c. 1785] from Charles Vallancey to Joseph Cooper Walker
MS 1461 (I) T51, ff.182–6: Questionnaire undated [c. 1785] from Joseph Cooper Walker to Charles Vallancey

Newspapers

Alexandria Gazette, Alexandria, Virginia
The Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette, Bath
The Belfast News-Letter, Belfast
The Boston Gazette, Massachusetts
The Caledonian Mercury, Edinburgh
The Carisle Journal, Cumbria
An Claidheamh Soluis, Dublin
Columbian, New York
Columbian Centinel, Boston
The Cork Examiner, Cork

The Daily Advertiser, London
The Daily Advertiser, New York
The Daily Journal, London
The Derby Mercury, Derby
The Daily Picayune, New Orleans
Daily Post, London
The Diary or Woodfall's Register, London
The Drogheda Independent, Drogheda
The Dublin Evening Post, Dublin
Edinburgh Evening Courant, Edinburgh
E. Johnson's British Gazette and Sunday Monitor, London
The Evening Herald, Dublin
Evening Post, New York
Fáinne an Lae, Dublin
Faulkner's Dublin Journal, Dublin
Federal Republican, Baltimore
(The) Freeman's Journal, Dublin
The Gazeteer and New Daily Advertiser, London
The General Advertiser, London
Glasgow Herald, Glasgow
The Hereford Journal, Hereford
The Hibernian Chronicle, Cork
The Hibernian Journal, Dublin
The Hibernian Magazine, Dublin
The Irish Echo, Boston
The Irish Independent, Dublin
The Irish Times, Dublin
The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator, New York
The Leamington Spa Courier, Leamington
The Leeds Intelligencer, Leeds
The Liverpool Mercury, Liverpool

The London Chronicle, London
The London Daily Advertiser and Literary Gazette, London
The Manchester Guardian, Manchester
Meath Chronicle, Navan
The Morning Chronicle, London
The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser, London
The Morning Herald, London
The Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser, London
The Morning Post, London
The Morning Post and Daily Advertiser, London
The Morning Post and Fashionable World, London
The Newcastle Courant, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
The New York Herald, New York
The Oracle, London
The Oracle and Public Advertiser, London
The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, Ohio
Poulson's American Daily Advertiser, Philadelphia
The Public Advertiser, London
The Public Register, or, Freeman's Journal, Dublin
The Quebec Gazette, Quebec
The Rover, Cork
Saunder's News-Letter, Dublin
The Sheffield Daily Telegraph, Sheffield
The Southern Star, Skibbereen
The Star, London
St James's Chronicle or The British Evening Post, London
The Sun, London
The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, Sydney
The Times, London
The True Briton, London
The United Irishman, Dublin

The Weekly Freeman, Dublin
The Whitehall Evening Post or London Intelligencer, London
The World, London
Wilkes-Barre Times, Pennsylvania

Other periodicals

The Hibernian Magazine, Dublin, 1774
The European Magazine and London Review, London, 1786
The Monthly Review; or, Literary Journal, London, 1787
The Scots Magazine, Edinburgh, 1794
The Gentleman's Magazine, London, 1794
The Overseer, Cork, 1817
Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge. The Gaelic Journal, Dublin, 1897
An Gaodhal (The Gael), New York, 1902
The Gael, Dublin 1921
Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, Cork, 1936
Céilidh Record, Longford, 1958
Galpin Society Journal, London, 1948–
An Píobaire. The Newsletter of Na Píobairí Uilleann, Dublin, 1969–
The Uilleann Piper, North Carolina, 1974
Iris na bPíobairí: The Pipers' Review. Newsletter of the San Francisco Pipers' Club, San Francisco, 1979–
Northumbrian Pipers' Magazine, Cramlington, Northumberland, 1980–
Common Stock, The Journal of the Lowland and Border Pipers' Society, Glasgow, 1983–
Chanter. The Journal of the Bagpipe Society, Oxford, 1986–
Journal of the North American Association of Lowland and Border Pipers, Elkton, Maryland, 1990–
Ceol na hÉireann: Irish Music, Dublin, 1993–
The Seán Reid Society Journal, online at www.seanreidsociety.org, 1999–

Electronic sources

Online library catalogues (various)
British Library Newspaper Archive
Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (ECCO)
Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (TCP)
Google Books
Irish Newspaper Archives
JSTOR
Nineteenth-Century British Library Newspapers
Proquest Historical Newspapers: *The Irish Times*
Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Burney Collection

Books & articles

Airs, Duets, Choruses, and Argument, of the New Ballet Pantomime, (Taken from Ossian) Called Oscar and Malvina; or, The Hall of Fingal. As Performed at the Theatre-Royal, Covent-Garden. 3rd ed., T. Cadel, London, 1791

Armstrong, R.A., *A Gaelic Dictionary, in Two Parts: I. Gaelic and English. II. English and Gaelic*, James Duncan etc., London, 1825

Bain, Iain, 'Thomas and Robert Bewick and their Connections with Northumbrian Piping', *Northumbrian Pipers' Magazine* vol. 3 (1982): 11–17

Baines, Anthony, *Bagpipes (Occasional Papers on Technology 9)*, 3rd ed., Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, 1995

Barlow, Jeremy, *The Enraged Musician: Hogarth's Musical Imagery*, Ashgate, Aldershot & Burlington VT, 2005

Bartley, J.O., *Teague, Shenkin and Sawney, being a Historical Study of the Earliest Irish, Welsh and Scottish Characters in English Plays*, Cork University Press, Cork, 1954

Beauford, William, *I. Druidism Revived: or, a Dissertation on the Characters and Modes of Writing used by the Irish in their pagan state and after their conversion to Christianity II. Of the Origin and Language of the Irish; and of the Learning of the Druids,* in *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, Charles Vallancey ed., Antiquarian Society, Dublin, 1781: 161–249

Bisset, Robert, *Modern Literature: A Novel* vols 1–3, T.N. Longman & O. Rees, London, 1804

Brooks, Dennis, 'The Early Pipes', *Iris na bPíobairí: The Pipers' Review* vol. V, no 2 (Dec. 1985): 20–1 [1985a]

—, *"The Tutor": Irish Union Pipes. A Workbook*, Brooks, Seattle, 1985 [1985b]

Bunting, Edward, ed., *The Ancient Music of Ireland, Arranged for the Piano Forte*, Hodges & Smith, Dublin, 1840

Campbell, Jeannie, *Highland Bagpipe Makers* 2nd ed., Campbell, Glasgow, 2011

Cannon, R[oderick] D., 'The Bagpipe in Northern England', *Folk Music Journal* vol. 2, no 2 (1971): 127–47

—, *A Bibliography of Bagpipe Music*, John Donald Publishers, Edinburgh, 1980

—, *The Highland Bagpipe and its Music*, John Donald Publishers, Edinburgh, 1988

—, 'Bagpipes in English Works of Art', *The Galpin Society Journal*, London, vol. XLII (Aug. 1989): 10–31

—, 'Robert Millar – Lowland Piper?', *Common Stock. Journal of the Lowland and Border Pipers' Society* vol. 8, no 1 (June 1993): 30–6

—, ed., Joseph MacDonald's *Compleat Theory of the Scots Highland Bagpipe*, The Piobaireachd Society, Glasgow, 1994

Carolan, Nicholas, 'Shakespeares's Uilleann Pipes', *Ceol* vol. V, no 1 (July 1981): 4–9; reprinted *An Píobaire* vol. 6, no 3 (July 2010): 24–8

—, 'Uilleann Piping on Commercial Cylinders and 78s: A Preliminary Listing, *An Píobaire* vol. 2, no 16 (Mar. 1983): Supplement A–D; 'More Piping 78s', *An Píobaire* vol. 2, no 17 (June 1983): 3; 'A Few More Piping 78s', *An Píobaire* vol. 2, nos 18–19 (Nov. 1983): 6

—, 'McDonnell's Uilleann Pipes', *Ceol* vol. VI, no 2 (Apr. 1984): 59–61

—, 'A Nineteenth-Century Uilleann Piping Poster', *Ceol na hÉireann: Irish Music* no 2 (1994): 46–52

—, *A Harvest Saved: Francis O'Neill and Irish Music in Chicago*, Ossian Publications, Cork, 1997

—, 'Courtenay's Union Pipes, 1788', *An Píobaire* vol. 4, no 25 (Apr. 2004): 21–3

—, 'Uilleann Pipers at the Old Bailey 1802–1831', *An Píobaire* vol. 4, no 30 (Apr. 2005): 24–9

—, 'Cutting a Dash: Uilleann Pipes in the 1760s and 1770s', *An Píobaire* vol. 4, no 35 (May 2006): 18–23

—, ed., *A Collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes Proper for the Violin, German Flute or Hautboy, John & William Neal, Dublin 1724*, Irish Traditional Music Archive & Folk Music Society of Ireland, Dublin, 2010

—, 'Some Irish Pipers in America 1800–1850', pt 1, *An Píobaire* vol. 7, no 2 (April 2011): 20–3; pt 2, *An Píobaire* vol. 7, no 3 (July 2011): 22–5

Catalogue of Vocal & Instrumental Music Engraved, Printed and Sold Wholesale and Retail by John Welcker No 9 Haymarket Facing the Opera House London, A, London, n.d. [c. 1775]

Cheape, Hugh, *A Check-List of Bagpipes in the Edinburgh University Collection of Historical Musical Instruments,* Reid School of Music, Edinburgh, 1983 [1983a]

—, 'The Making of Bagpipes in Scotland', in *From the Stone Age to the 'Forty-Five: Studies Presented to R.B.K. Stevenson*, eds Anne O'Connor & D.V. Clarke, John Donald, Edinburgh, 1983: 596–615 [1983b]

—, 'The Pastoral or New Bagpipe: Piping and the Neo-Baroque', *Galpin Society Journal* vol. LXI (Apr. 2008): 285–304 [2008a]

—, *Bagpipes: A National Collection of a National Instrument*, National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh, 2008 [2008b]

Cocks, William A., 'James Talbot's Manuscript (Christ Church Library Music MS 1187)', *Galpin Society Journal* vol. V (Mar. 1952): 44–7

—, 'Bagpipe', *Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 5th ed., Macmillan, London & New York: vol. 1, 1954, pp. 344–54

— & J.F. Bryan, *The Northumbrian Bagpipes*, revised ed., Northumbrian Pipers' Society, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1975

Colclough, S.T., *New and Complete Instructions for the Union Pipes, (as Newly Constructed and Improved.) with a Selection of Favorite Irish & Scotch Airs*, Wm. Power for the author, Dublin, n.d. [c. 1815?]

Crookshank, Anne, and the Knight of Glin, *Ireland's Painters 1600–1940*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 2002

Crowley, Tadhg, *How to Play the Irish Uillean Pipes*, Cork, 1936

Day, C.R., comp., *Descriptive Catalogue of the Musical Instruments Recently Exhibited at the Royal Military Exhibition, London 1890*, Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1891

De Latocnaye, *Promenade d'un Français dans l'Irlande*, Dublin, 1797; 2nd ed., Brunswick, 1801

Dinneen, Rev. Patrick S., *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla: An Irish-English Dictionary*, Irish Texts Society, London, Dublin, 1st ed. 1904, 2nd ed. 1927

Dixon, J.H., *Ancient Poems, Ballads, and Songs of the Peasantry of England*, The Percy Society, London, 1846

Donnelly, Seán, 'Lord Edward Fitzgerald's Pipes', *Ceol* vol. VI, no 1 (Apr. 1983): 7–11

—, 'An Eighteenth-Century Harp Medley', *Ceol na hÉireann: Irish Music* no 1 (1993): 17–31

—, 'An Apology for Pipes and Pipers. By Mr. Taady Lawlor…', *Ceol na hÉireann: Irish Music* no 2 (1994): 42–5 [1994a]

—, 'A Piper and the Press, 1816–18: Patrick O'Connor of Limerick', *Ceol na hÉireann: Irish Music* no 2 (1994): 79–98 [1994b]

—, 'A Century of Pipemaking, 1770–1870: New Light on the Kennas and the Coynes, *The Seán Reid Society Journal* vol. 2 (Mar. 2002, online at www.seanreidsociety.org): 2.14, 1–44

—, 'A Publication Date for John Geoghegan's *Compleat Tutor', An Píobaire*, Dublin, vol. 4, no 47 (Sept. 2008): 26–7 [2008a]

—, 'Racegoers, Royalty, and Welshmen: Mr O'Farrell, Performer on the Union Pipes, Entertains', *An Píobaire*, Dublin, vol. 4, no 48 (Dec. 2008): 20–4 [2008b]

Egan, Pierce, *Sporting Anecdotes: Original and Selected; Including Numerous Characteristic Portraits of Persons in Every Walk of Life, Who have Acquired Notoriety from Their Achievements on the Turf, at the Table, and in the Diversions of the Field...*, Sherwood, Neely & Jones, London, 1820

Ennis, Thomas, 'Irish Pipes and Pipers', *An Gaodhal (The Gael)*, New York (Feb. 1902): 33–8

Exhibition of Irish Arts and Manufacturers, Rotunda, 1882, Dublin, 1882

Eytan, Ephraim, 'A Fine Pair of Irish Bagpipes', *An Píobaire*, Dublin, vol. 3, no 40 (Apr. 1999): 26

Favourite Airs in Oscar & Malvina Performed by Mr. Courtney, The, John Lee, No. 70 Dame Street the corner of Eustace Street, Dublin, n.d. [1793]

Fiske, Roger, *Scotland in Music: A European Enthusiasm*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge etc., 1983

—, *English Theatre Music in the Eighteenth Century* 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford & New York, 1986

Flood, Wm. H. Grattan, *A History of Irish Music*, Browne and Nolan, Dublin, 1905; 2nd ed. 1906; 3rd ed. 1913; 4th ed. 1927

—, *The Story of the Bagpipe*, Walter Scott Publishing Company, London; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1911

—, *Introductory Sketch of Irish Musical History*, William Reeves, London, n.d. [1922]

Galpin, Francis W., *Old English Instruments of Music: Their History and Character* 2nd ed., Methuen & Co, London, 1911

Geoghegan, Mr. Jno., *The Compleat Tutor for the Pastoral or New Bagpipe*, John Simpson, London, n.d. [1743]

Grainger, Michael, 'Denis Harrington of Cork', *An Píobaire* ser. 2, no 30 (May 1986): 2

Grove, Sir George, ed., *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (A.D. 1450–1889) vols 1–4, Macmillan & Co, London, 1896–1900; 2nd ed.: J.A. Fuller Maitland ed., *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* vols 1–5, Macmillan, London etc., 1902–10; 3rd ed.: H.C. Colles ed., *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* vols 1–5, Macmillan, London etc., 1927–8; 4th ed.: H.C. Colles ed., *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* vols 1–5 (& supplement), Macmillan, London etc., 1948; 5th ed.: Eric Blom ed., *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* vols 1–8 (& supplement), Macmillan, London etc., 1954

Halfpenny, Eric, 'An Eighteenth-Century Trade List of Musical Instruments', *Galpin Society Journal* no xvii (Feb. 1964): 100–101.

Hall, Mr & Mrs S.C., *Ireland: Its Scenery, Characters, &c.* vols 1–3, How & Parsons, London, 1841, 1842, 1843

Highfill Jnr, Philip H., Kalman A. Burnim & Edward A. Langhans eds, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians etc. in London 1660–1800* vols 1–16, South Illinois University Press, Carbondale & Edwardsville, 1973–93

Highland Society of London and Branch Societies, The; with a List of the Members, Highland Society of London, London, 1873

Hime's Pocket Book for the German Flute or Violin, Dublin, n.d.

Hogan, Charles Beecher, ed., *The London Stage 1660–1800. A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments and Afterpieces, Together with Casts, Box-Receipts and Contemporary Comment. Part 5: 1776–1800*, Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale, Illinois, 1968

Hogan, Ita Margaret, *Anglo-Irish Music 1780–1830*, Cork University Press, Cork, 1966

Irish Industrial Exhibition World's Fair, St. Louis 1904: Handbook and Catalogue of Exhibits, Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, Dublin, 1904

Jones, Edward, *Musical and Poetic Relicks of the Welsh Bards: Preserved, by Tradition and Authentic Manuscripts, from Very Remote Antiquity; Never before Published*, new ed., printed for the author, London, 1794

Kopp, James B., 'Before Borjon: The French Court Musette to 1672', *Galpin Society Journal* vol. LVIII (May 2005): 3–37

—, 'The French Court Musette to 1672: Further Notes', *Galpin Society Journal* vol. LXIV (Mar. 2011): 243–47

Laffan, William, ed., *The Cries of Dublin &c Drawn from the Life by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, 1760*, Irish Georgian Society, Dublin, 2003

Lawler, Taady, *An Apology for Pipes and Pipers*, [Lawler], Dublin, 1733, see Donnelly 1994a

Longman and Broderip, at Their Music Warehouse, No. 26, Cheapside, London, Manufacture and Sell the Following Instruments, with Every Other Article in the Musical Way..., London, n.d. [c. 1980]

[Luxborough] *Letters Written by the Late Right Honourable Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone, Esq*., Dodsley, London, 1775

MacBain, Alexander, *An Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language* 2nd ed., Eneas Mackay, Sterling, 1911

McCandless, Brian E., 'The Pastoral Bagpipe', *Iris na bPíobairí: The Pipers' Review*, Seattle (spring 1998): 19–28

MacInnes, Iain, 'Who Paid the Pipers', *Common Stock. Journal of the Lowland and Border Pipers' Society* vol. III, no 1 (Aug. 1986): 18–27

McLeod, Ken, 'A Hugh Robertson Pastoral Set c. 1775', *Seán Reid Society Journal* vol. 2 (Mar. 2002, online at www.seanreidsociety.org): 2.05, 1–2

MacLysaght, Edward, *More Irish Families*, new revised and enlarged ed., 1st pb. ed., Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 1996

Malcolm, C.A., *The Piper in Peace and War*, John Murray, London, 1927

Manson, W.L., *The Highland Bagpipe: Its History, Literature and Music*, Alexander Gardner, Paisley & London, 1901

Matthews, Clive, 'Bagpipers in the Dock', *Chanter: The Journal of the Bagpipe Society* (summer 2011): 15–23

Mitchell, Pat, & Jackie Small, *The Piping of Patsy Touhey*, Na Píobairí Uilleann, Dublin, 1986

Mitchell-Ingoldsby, Mary, 'History of the Cork Pipers Club (1898–1980)', in *The Cork Pipers Club: A Hundred Years of Piping 1898–1998*, Cork Pipers Club, Cork, 1998

Moloney, Colette, *The Irish Music Manuscripts of Edward Bunting (1773–1843): An Introduction and Catalogue*, Irish Traditional Music Archive, Dublin, 2000

Moylan, Terry, 'Billy Purvis', *An Píobaire* vol. 4, no 35 (May 2006): 28–9

—, 'Cumann na bPíobairí Uilleann', *An Píobaire* vol. 6, no 2 (Apr. 2010): 14–18

Murphy, John, *A Collection of Irish Airs and Jiggs with Variations, Adapted for the Pianoforte, Violin & Violoncello, by John Murphy, Performer on the Union Pipes; at Eglinton Castle*, Paisley, n.d. [c. 1810]

Musical Directory for the Year 1794, A. To be Continued Annually. Containing the Names and Address [sic] *of the Composers & Professors of Music, with a Number of Amateurs, Vocal and Instrumental*, R.H. Westley, London, 1794

Nicholson, William, *The British Encyclopedia, or Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* vol. IV, Longman, Hurst, Rees & Orme, London, 1809

Ó/Ua Casaide, Séamus, [review of] 'The Story of the Bagpipe. By Wm. H. Grattan-Flood', *The Irish Review* vol. 2, no 14 (Apr. 1912): 110–12

[O'Farrell, P., ed.] *O Farrell's Collection of National Irish Music for the Union Pipes... Adapted Likewise for the German Flute, Violin, Flagelet* [sic], *Piano and Harp*..., O'Farrell/Gow, London, n.d. [1804]

—, *O Farrells Pocket Companion for the Irish or Union Pipes… Adapted for the Pipes, Flute, Flageolet and Violin* vols 1–4, O'Farrell, London, n.d. [c. 1805–10]

O'Keefe, John, *Recollections of the Life of John O'Keefe, Written by Himself* vols 1–2, Henry Coburn, London, 1826

O'Neill, Francis, *Irish Folk Music: A Fascinating Hobby*, The Regan Printing House, Chicago, 1910

—, *Irish Minstrels and Musicians*, The Regan Printing House, Chicago, 1913

O'Reilly, Edward, *Sanas Gaoidhilge-Sagsbhearla, an Irish-English Dictionary*, printed by John Barlow, Dublin, 1817; new ed. 1821

O'Sullivan, Donal, *Carolan: The Life, Times and Music of an Irish Harper* vols 1–2, Routledge and Keegan Paul, London, 1958

Parolin, Christina, *Radical Spaces: Venues of Popular Politics in London 1790–c. 1845*, ANU E Press, Canberra, 2010

Pennant, Thomas, *A Tour in Scotland MDCCLXIX* 2nd ed., B. White, London, 1772

[Pigott, Charles], *The Jockey Club; or a Sketch of the Manners of the Age, Part the Second. The Third Edition*, H.D. Symonds, London, 1792

Pittock, Murray, *Scottish and Irish Romanticism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford etc., 2008

Plain Piper, A, 'Encouraging Irish Music. The Union Pipes', *The Kerryman*, Tralee, 1 June 1912

Proceedings and Debate of the Parliament of Pimlico, in the Last Session of the Eighteenth Century. No. 1, Dublin, 1799

Proud, Keith, & Richard Butler, *The Northumbrian Small Pipes: An Alphabetical History. Volume One: Early Times – 1850*, Border Keep, Durham & Northumberland, 1983

Rambles through Ireland. By a French Emigrant… Translated from the French of Monsieur De Latocnaye by an Irishman, vols 1–2, printed by M. Harris, Cork, Dublin, 1798

[Reeve, William, etc.,] *The Overture, Favorite Songs, Duets and Choruses in the Grand Pantomime Ballet of Oscar & Malvina*, Longman & Broderip, London, n.d. [1791]

Robins, Brian, ed., *The John Marsh Journals: The Life and Times of a Gentleman Composer (1752–1828)*, Pendragon Press, Hillsdale, New York, 1998

Rondo and Favorite Airs as Performed by Mr Courtney, with Applause in the Pantomime of Oscar and Malvina, Published by Hime at his Musical Circulating Library No. 34 College Green. Price 2s 2d, Dublin, n.d. [1793]

Rowsome, Leo, *Tutor for the Uileann Pipes*, Dublin College of Music Publications, Dublin, 1936

—, 'The Origin of our Ceilidhe Bands', *Comhaltas 1968: Bliain-Iris Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, Dublin, 1968: 57–9.

Sanger, Keith, 'Travels of a Gentleman Piper', *Common Stock. Journal of the Lowland and Border Pipers' Society* vol. 4, no 9 (Jan. 1989): 11–13

—, 'Irish Pipers and Scotland', *Ceol na hÉireann: Irish Music* no 3 (2001): 83–91

—, 'Mr McDonnell', *An Píobaire* vol. 4, no 37 (Sept. 2006): 22–4

—, 'Who were the 18th-Century Highland Pipe Makers?: Evidence from the Contemporary Sources', typescript of talk given at Piobaireachd Society conference, 15 Mar. 2008

—, 'The Last Days of Fitzmaurice and Geoghegan', *An Píobaire* vol. 5, no 4 (Sept. 2009): 20–2

—, 'Two Edinburgh Bagpipe Makers: Adam Barclay and Hugh Robertson', *Piping Today*, no 48 (2010): 44–6

—, 'The Highland Society of London Meetings', *An Píobaire* vol. 7, no 4 (Sept. 2011): 20–1

Schofield, R.A.. 'Billy Bolton, Piper of the Dales', *English Dance and Song*, London, vol. xxxvii, no 3 (autumn 1975): 90–1

Secret History of the Green Room, The: Containing Authentic and Entertaining Memoirs of the Actors and Actresses in the Theatre Royal. Vol. II Covent Garden and Haymarket 2nd ed., H.D. Symmonds [sic], London, 1792

Simms, J.G., 'The Irish on the Continent, 1691–1800', in T.W. Moody & W.E. Vaughan eds, *A New History of Ireland IV. Eighteenth-Century Ireland 1691–1800*, Oxford University Press, Oxford etc., 1986, pp. 629–56

Smith, William C., & Charles Humphries, *A Bibliography of the Musical Works Published by the Firm of John Walsh during the Years 1695–1720* (reprint of 1948), The Bibliographical Society, London, 1968

—, *A Bibliography of the Musical Works Published by the Firm of John Walsh during the Years 1721–1766*, The Bibliographical Society, London, 1968

Stephens, John Russell, 'Topham, Edward (1751–1820)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* vol. 55, Oxford University Press, Oxford etc., 2004: 30–2

Stephens's Catalogue of Books etc. for 1795, Thomas Stephens, Philadelphia, n.d. [1795]

Stewart, Pete, *The Day it Daws: The Lowland Scots Bagpipe and its Music 1400 to 1715*, White House Tune Books, Ashby parva, Leicestershire, 2005

—, *Welcome Home, My Dearie: Piping in the Scottish Lowlands 1690–1900* 2nd ed. of 2008, Hornpipe Music, Pencaitland, Scotland, 2009

Thompson, James, *A New, Improved and Authentic Life of James Allan the Celebrated Northumberland Piper*, Mackenzie and Dent, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1828

Thorne, Roland, 'Courtenay, John (1738–1816), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* vol. 13, Oxford University Press, 2004: 681–3

Three Favorite Marches in Oscar and Malvina, Hime, Dublin, n.d. [1793]

[Tytler, James, ed.] *Encyclopaedia Britannica; or A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, &c. On a Plan Entirely New* 2nd ed., vol. 2, Printed for J. Balfour et al., Edinburgh, 1778, pp. 954–5: article 'Bag-Pipe'

New Victor Records July 1917 [catalogue], Victor Talking Machine Company, Camden, New Jersey, 1917

Uglow, Jenny, *Nature's Engraver: A Life of Thomas Bewick*, Faber and Faber, London, 2006

Walker, Joseph C[ooper], *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, printed for the author by Luke White, Dublin, 1786; printed for T. Payne and Son, and G.G.J. and J. Robinson, London, 1786

Walstrom, Mark, 'List of Pipe-Makers Updated', *Seán Reid Society Journal* vol. 2 (Mar. 2002, online at www.seanreidsociety.org): 2.15, 1–4

Wanless, Andrew, *Poems and Songs*, Wanless, Detroit, 1782

Wollenberg, Susan, 'John Baptist Malchair of Oxford and his Collection of "National Music"', *Music in the British Provinces, 1690–1914*, Rachel Cowgill & Peter Holman eds, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2007: 151–61