



Stakelum, M. (2014) 'Boundaries and bridges: the influence of James Cooksey Culwick on the development of the teaching and learning of music in nineteenth century Ireland.' *International Journal of Music Education*, 32 (4): 409-421.

Link to official URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0255761413515805>

ResearchSPAce

<http://researchspace.bathspa.ac.uk/>

This version is made available in accordance with publisher policies.

Please cite only the published version using the reference above.

Your access and use of this document is based on your acceptance of the ResearchSPAce Metadata and Data Policies, as well as applicable law:-

<https://researchspace.bathspa.ac.uk/policies.html>

Unless you accept the terms of these Policies in full, you do not have permission to download this document.

This cover sheet may not be removed from the document.

Please scroll down to view the document.

TITLE PAGE Boundaries and Bridges: the influence of James Cooksey Culwick on the development of the teaching and learning of music in nineteenth century Ireland

Abstract

James Cooksey Culwick (1845-1907) was born in England. Trained as chorister and organist in Lichfield Cathedral, he moved to Ireland at twenty- one and remained until his death in 1907. Although his reputation as scholar, musician and teacher was acknowledged widely during his lifetime - he received an honorary doctorate from University of Dublin (1893) - little is known about the contribution he made to music education. This paper addresses this gap in the literature and argues that it was Culwick's singular achievement to pay attention to music pedagogy at secondary level, by recognizing that music could be seen as a serious career option for girls, and by providing resources for teachers which emphasised the development of an 'art-feeling' in pupils of all abilities. In addition, he considered Irish music as an art which had significance as *music* first, and *Irish* music second, and advocated a 'laudable tolerance' for opposing views on matters of cultural identity to Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century.

KEYWORDS art-feeling, examinations, Ireland, nineteenth century, second-level schooling

Mary Stakelum PhD lectures in music education at University of Reading, Institute of Education where she is also Director of Postgraduate Research Studies. Her research interests are music listening, music curriculum history, and cultural influences on teacher practice. Her recent publications include an analysis of responses to music of adult non-specialists and an investigation of the relationship between the formative musical experiences of primary teachers and their enactment of music curriculum in classroom practice.

Boundaries and Bridges: the influence of James Cooksey Culwick on the development of the teaching and learning of music in nineteenth century Ireland

Abstract

James Cooksey Culwick (1845-1907) was born in England. Trained as chorister and organist in Lichfield Cathedral, he moved to Ireland at twenty- one and remained until his death in 1907. Although his reputation as scholar, musician and teacher was acknowledged widely during his lifetime - he received an honorary doctorate from University of Dublin (1893) - little is known about the contribution he made to music education. This paper addresses this gap in the literature and argues that it was Culwick's singular achievement to pay attention to music pedagogy at secondary level, by recognizing that music could be seen as a serious career option for girls, and by providing resources for teachers which emphasised the development of an 'art-feeling' in pupils of all abilities. In addition, he considered Irish music as an art which had significance as *music* first, and *Irish* music second, and advocated a 'laudable tolerance' for opposing views on matters of cultural identity to Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century.

KEYWORDS art-feeling, examinations, Ireland, nineteenth century, second-level schooling

Introduction

Within the boundaries of a national system of education, music was introduced into schools in Ireland in the early part of the nineteenth century (1842). Initially this was structured to contribute to the provision of a foundation in education that promoted numeracy and literacy. Over time there have been a number of developments which have shaped the way in which music has evolved as a subject in school in present day Ireland. One such development occurred towards the end of the nineteenth century, at a period in Ireland's cultural history which has come to be known as the Celtic Revival. My purpose in this essay is to look at the growth of music education at this time against the backdrop of a growth in cultural nationalism, and doing so by drawing on the contribution of James Cooksey Culwick (1845-1907), a musician and educationalist living and working in Ireland at the time. Born in England, his arrival in Dublin coincided with moves to regulate music education through a system of examinations on the one hand, and a concern that those empowered with responsibility for music education were found increasingly to reflect an imperialist ideology, at the expense of a progressively more nationalist one, on the other. Following some biographical details, I present an account of Culwick's reservations about the examination system in place, together with evidence of his scholarship and understanding of Irish music as an art which had significance as *music* first and *Irish* music second. In doing so, I want to suggest that he is an unsung hero of this period in the story of music education.

In compiling this account, I have used a narrative interpretive approach throughout. In the study of his pedagogical activity, a key source has been his (1882/87) handbook 'The rudiments of music, an introductory textbook, with musical examples and numerous exercises'. Published under The Intermediate Education Series, this remains the only example of its kind published in Ireland at that time. Alongside this, material contained in a

pamphlet entitled 'The study of music, and its place in general education' has been used. Published in Dublin (E.Ponsonby 1882), no copy survives but a review appeared in Musical Times of June 1, 1882 (p.339) in which the reviewer provides a detailed account of the contents, as presented by Culwick over a course of two lectures read before the Literary Society, Alexandra College, Dublin in 1882, when he was teaching at the college. Sources which provided the basis for his scholarly research include a paper presented by him on 'Artistic Landmarks' to the Royal Musicological Association, and on 'Ancient Irish Melodies' to The National Literary Society, and each of these papers exists in published form.

The editor of *An Claidheamh Soluis* provided annual records of membership of Feis Ceoil and in the lists from 1897 to 1902, Dr James C. Culwick and his wife Alice are listed as members. It is noted here that Culwick served on the Central Executive Committee in 1898. His contribution to the work of societies and organisations is evidenced by reports provided on a regular basis by the Dublin correspondent to *The Musical Times*, and from this it has been possible to trace the progress made by him and fellow organisers of events such as the annual competition of Feis Ceoil, from the planning stage through to its inception in 1897 and beyond. A similar approach has been taken in gaining access to the programme of annual conferences of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, (ISM) including the part he played in bringing the tenth annual conference to Dublin in 1895, during his tenure as delegate of the Leinster Branch. Evidence that Culwick kept abreast of educational issues which were occurring further afield, most notably the debates around registration of teachers, is found in records of meetings he attended in England, in his capacity as Leinster delegate of the ISM. Reports of these meetings are published in *School Music Review* and record that his contribution to these debates was substantial, thoughtful and much valued.

James Cooksey Culwick (1845- 1907)

Born in England, James Cooksey Culwick trained as chorister and organist in Lichfield Cathedral, and moved to Ireland at twenty- one where he remained until his death in 1907. By moving from England to take up a music position within an Irish ecclesiastical setting, he was following a tradition whereby English Church musicians and composers were induced to come over from the English cathedrals and to make Ireland their home. In so doing, the 'correct traditions of Cathedral usage were thus perpetuated and the best species of church music introduced from time to time' (Bumpus, 1900, p.80). Culwick stayed as organist in St Ann', Dublin s until 1881, when he moved to the Chapel Royal as organist. In addition he taught for over twenty years at Alexandra College (founded in Dublin in 1866). The college and later the school (founded in 1873) were one of the educational establishments agitating for equality of opportunity and the reform of girls' education. They were particularly supportive of music as an area of study.

His contribution to musical life in Dublin was recognised during his lifetime, most notably through the granting of an honorary doctorate by University of Dublin (1893). Previous recipients included Oakely, Ouseley and McFarren in 1887, Mahaffy in 1891 and Parry in 1892. As a composer, his music for Church service was performed regularly and, alongside that of Parry and Stainer, appeared in the repertoire at Christ Church Cathedral (Boydell, 2004). He was active too as choral director, conducting the Dublin Harmonic Society from 1872-1892. He founded the Orpheus Choral Society in 1898, still in existence today, renamed the Culwick Choral Society by his daughter Florence in his honour after his death.

At this time in Dublin, musicians of influence included Joseph Robinson (1815-1898), John Stevenson (c.1761- 1833) and Robert Prescott Stewart (1825-1894). All native Irishmen, they were products of a music education which was strongly based on Anglican Church music and

western classical music. They held prestigious positions as organists in the major cathedrals in Dublin and each of them made a substantial contribution to music at the time. While Robinson had started a series of concerts in the antient rooms, which would become a precursor to the foundation of an Irish Academy of Music, and Stevenson worked to fuse Irish music with classical forms, it was Stewart who had most influence on Culwick. It had been Stewart's achievement to establish an arts test at Dublin University and in so doing, to have 'marked a fresh epoch in the history of our degrees in music and ... distinctly raised the social status of the profession' (Bumpus, 1900, p.158). Culwick recognised the importance of Stewart's work in providing a continuum between second level and university level music education. What set Culwick apart from his musical peers and contemporaries was his work to bridge the gap for those pupils who wanted to continue their studies beyond the national system, and the attention he paid to music pedagogy in the intermediate system.

James Culwick 's views on the value of examinations in education (see note 1)

Culwick considered there to be an undue emphasis placed on examination. It took up too much time and served neither teacher nor pupil.

'The solemn ceremony of pulling up the roots to see the growth, technically called examination, is performed with such useless, confusing frequency that the aim of the professional educator, whose character is made to depend upon the results, may not always be the best; and there is almost a certainty that he will not be able to judge or have the leisure to examine, in any exceptional case, what are the most worthy faculties of the scholar'. (The Musical Times, 1882, p.339)

This criticism of examinations was borne of his own experience in preparing pupils to sit the examinations set by the Intermediate Board of Education. At the time, Culwick had been a teacher in the Royal Irish Academy of Music and at Alexandra College, both of which were situated in Dublin and two of a handful of centres nationally which provided tuition for students in music.

Modelled on conservatoire training with a strong theoretical underpinning, the requirements for candidates sitting the examinations were set out for three grades as follows:

Junior grade

1. Elementary theory of music (Novello's primer, Rudiments of music).
2. First elements of harmony: the common chord and its inversions, the dominant seventh and its inversions. An easy exercise will be set in figured bass introducing these chords (Novello's primer, Harmony).

Middle grade

1. In addition to the junior course, the chords of the added ninth and the minor ninth, with their inversions. An exercise will be set in figured bass introducing these chords (Novello's primer, Harmony).
2. Outline of the history of music (Ritter's History of Music, lectures i-v).

Senior grade

1. In addition to the middle course, the candidates will be expected to be familiar with the chords of the eleventh and the thirteenth, major and minor; also dissonances by suspension. An exercise will be set in figured bass introducing the above chords. (Novello's primer, Harmony).

2. Outlines of the history of music (Ritter's History of Music, lectures vi-x).⁷

Since there was no provision in the act for the Intermediate Board to devise a syllabus or programme of instruction, teachers had to find their own way to meet the requirements set down by the examiners. The Board published sample answers which were intended to act as a support to those preparing for the examinations: these had been 'prepared with the intention of showing students who presented themselves for examinations how far they reached the required standard, and in what they may have failed' (Intermediate Education Board, 1879, introduction). In the absence of a syllabus, these sample answers would become a benchmark for the standard of answer expected, not only in terms of the content but also in terms of the style in which the answers would be provided;

'...placing before intending candidates models not merely of the matter and scope necessary for their purposes, but, what is scarcely less important, the style and method of so grouping their replies as to give cohesion and clearness to their papers'.

(Intermediate Education Board, Sample answers 1879, introduction).

That the subject of music was synonymous with the theory of music and music history is further reinforced by the set answers provided, such as the following, which appeared as a sample answer at senior grade:

'octave, fifth and fourth are called perfect because they can be used in all kinds of consonant triads, without disturbing the harmoniousness by the combinational tones which they introduce. If I represent the vibrations of any note, the 2, $\frac{3}{2}$ and $\frac{4}{3}$ will represent the vibrations of its octave, fifth and fourth respectively'. ((Intermediate Education Board, Sample answers 1879)

By the third examination, it was becoming increasingly clear that candidates should be prepared to answer questions concerning the technical mechanics of how musical sound was produced. A sample answer provided by the Intermediate Education Board for candidates preparing for the junior grade examination serves to illustrate this:

'sound (using the word in its musical sense) means the effect produced by rapid vibrations of the air, which must also be periodic or regular. The 'sound' of a note includes under it questions of duration, tone or timbre and pitch. 'Pitch' means the position of a note on the great staff, which is determined by its acuteness - and this latter by the rapidity of its vibrations. The more rapid the vibrations the higher the pitch' (Intermediate Education Board, Sample answers 1882).

It is worth noting here that, at this time, music was taught in only a handful of schools and there were few opportunities for those wanting to work as music teachers within the intermediate system. Those who did teach music tended to do so in private schools where there was no fixed rate of pay or security of tenure. Nor was there any requirement for teachers to be accredited with qualified teacher status. The absence of regulation in teacher practice was to remain a contentious issue in Ireland until the Intermediate Education Act in 1900 when the Board was given greater flexibility in the allocation of funds and increased freedom to instigate inspection of intermediate schools.

During his time as a teacher, Culwick produced an introductory text book on music. It appeared as one in a series of works selected for examination by the Intermediate Education Commissioners under the Intermediate Education Act (Ireland), (The Intermediate Education Series (1881) and from this we get an insight into music teaching and learning under the Intermediate system. Although the handbook is no longer in print, and there is no reference to it in contemporary accounts of teaching or learning of the time, the appearance of a second

edition in 1887 would suggest that it was popular, and the endorsements included by the publishers add weight to an indication of its appeal. In one such review, for example, it is described as 'a judicious selection of hints relating to musical study, theoretical and practical'.

The reviewer continues:

'Considerable space has been devoted to the all-important subject of scales; intervals, too, have received careful attention...There are many indications in this little book of its author's intimate acquaintance with the practice and theory, as well as the history, of music, and the philology of musical terms. Where such occur, they cannot fail to give zest to the beginner's efforts, while they fasten the attention of more advanced students'. Musical Standard

In the context of developments in music teaching happening elsewhere, Culwick can be seen to follow a tradition which can be traced to Day's (1845) *Treatise on Harmony*, and which, as Scholes (1947) notes, was to exert considerable influence on the teaching of harmony for much of the remainder of the century. In focusing attention on the acoustical properties of music,

[Day]'based the practice of the art on certain facts of acoustics, finding the origin of the common chord and the chord of the seventh, ninth, eleventh and thirteenth in successively larger chunks of the 'harmonic series'"(Scholes, 1947, p.709).

This approach to teaching music provides the theoretical foundation for Culwick's handbook and can be seen to underpin others which were published at around this time, among them Macfarren's (1860) *'Rudiments of Harmony, with Progressive Exercises'*, Ouseley's(1868) *'Treatise on Harmony'* and Stainer's (1878) *'A Treatise on Harmony and the Classification of Chords; with Questions ad Exercises for the Use of Students'*. These texts would have been

used in preparing for the study of music at University and, following the University Education (Ireland) Act in 1879, and the granting of a charter for the Royal University of Ireland in 1880 (Parker, 2009, p.221) it was possible to study music at this level in Ireland. There was an expectation that students would gain some foundation in the study of the acoustics of music in first year of a music degree in 1889 under the Royal University where the following question was set:

‘Give arguments to show that the velocity of a sound in air is the same whatever be its pitch. Does the velocity depend on the pressure and temperature of the air, and how?’ (Parker, 2009, p.366)

This was found to be similar to the questions set at intermediate level. Likewise with the history of music, where Ritter's (1876) text appeared on the reading list for both the intermediate examination and the first examination in music at the Royal University of Ireland (Parker, 2009).

Whereas the texts mentioned above pitched their level suited to those wanting to make a career in music, Culwick addressed the needs of both beginner and advanced students. He aimed at making music accessible not just to those who were intent on the study of music to a high level, but also to those who were beginners. He makes this clear to the reader in the preface:

'It is hoped that the following pages, devoted to a practical explanation of the rudiments of music may have use. First, as a help to those who, knowing little or even nothing of Music, are desirous to learn its first principles and to understand its written signs; next, as a firm, first stepping-stone for those who wish to advance into the higher studies connected with the Art'. (Culwick, 1882, preface)

The handbook was organised in two parts, with the first part acting as an introduction to those who were new to the study of music and more detailed elaboration in part two which was intended as supplementary notes for teachers. Taken together, both parts provide a sequential approach to music education in late nineteenth century Ireland which was intended to be used with relative ease by the pupils and teachers. He included practical suggestions which were likely to have been tried out in schools. These were simple and illuminative. In describing the character of shape of the vibrations causing musical tone; he suggested the following practical activity:

'...attach a sharp point to one prong of the fork (a pin bent tightly round it will do). Strike the fork and pass the sharp point lightly over a sheet of smoked glass, while the fork is sounding. It will be seen that the trembling movement of the fork has made a thin zigzag line, very regularly waved. ... It will further be seen that when a fork is first brought to the glass, and its sound is strongest, the size of the zigzag is larger; and that as the sound dies away the line becomes less wave-like, until, the tone ceasing, the line becomes a straight line. From this we learn that the intensity of a sound depends on the extent of its vibrations' (Culwick, 1882, part 1, nos. 4-7).

The inclusion of practical activities such as these would serve as useful preparation for candidates taking the intermediate examination, and enable them to answer questions concerning the technical mechanics of how musical sound was produced.

Culwick's handbook can be seen also to contribute to the development of music education as a subject which had a practical component and was more than the rote learning of set answers for the purpose of passing a test. In addition to setting out a method by which teachers could prepare pupils for the intermediate examination, he used his observations from nature to explain the properties of sound. In illustrating how the movement of air causes vibrations

which in turn cause us to hear, for example, he noted the following: '[t]he shock of the lightning causes the roar of the thunder. The warblings of the canary bird come from its throat in rapid vibration' (Culwick, 1882, no.2). Elsewhere, when explaining the character of the tone of musical instruments, he drew on nature to suggest that, 'in pitch, there may be a great difference in the character of the sounds produced. Between a flute and a trumpet, for instance, we find as much dissimilarity as between a blue and crimson flower' (Culwick, 1882, no. 130),

and later:

'A ray of sunlight is composed of several variously-coloured rays; a musical sound is generally a combination of several sounds. ... all the beautiful music we have heard has resulted from a series of vibrations artfully controlled...The naked eye fails to detect many forms revealed by the microscope; and the unassisted ear is not always conscious of the presence of **overtones** or **harmonies**' (bold in original).(Culwick, 1882, no.130)

In distinguishing between noise and music, the author illustrates -

'Of course, there are sounds that are not musical. To be musical, a sound must be regular in its vibrations. The noisy vibration caused by a cart rolling over a gravel walk is caused by irregular shocks and is for that reason, unmusical. The tone of a tuning-fork is musical because its prongs are made of equal weight and length and vibrate with perfect regularity'. (Culwick, 1882, no.3)

An English translation of Helmholtz's treatise was published in 1875 and, in his analysis of the development of musical theory at the time, Scholes (1947) lauds Prout's (1889) assimilation of Helmholtz's ideas, arguing that he went some towards understanding

Helmholtz's 'that rules of harmony rest as much on a psychological basis as on a physical one, and, consequently, alter or develop indefinitely as the mentality of the musical community develops or alters' (Scholes, 1947 p.710). There is no mention of Culwick's handbook but, given the references he made to incidents from everyday life in his explanations of the acoustical properties of music, we could argue that he too had moved away from the application of a principle of unalterable natural laws to the study of music (as had been proposed in Day's (1845) theory) and towards a pedagogical approach which took into consideration aesthetic principles which are subject to change. While there is evidence that Culwick had a copy of the English translation of Helmholtz's treatise in his library, we can only speculate on whether he had read it prior to the publication of his own handbook. In noting that Culwick's handbook predates Prout's, however, we can make some claim for innovation in Culwick's approach to the teaching of music, not least because of his intention to bring the rudiments and rules to learners with different levels of understanding and experience, and to use examples which were likely to have a wide appeal.

Music education and cultural nationalism

Outside of the educational sphere, Culwick's handbook is remarkable as a record of music teaching and learning in that it was written in Ireland at a period which coincided with calls for cultural nationalism from the wider community.

Attention to the formal education setting as a site for the nurturing of cultural nationalism was not unique to Ireland. In England, for example John Stainer addressed the matter of choice of songs for use in schools and recommended to teachers that they choose repertoire on grounds of its level of musical challenge. The focus should be on the appropriateness of

the musical skills involved rather than the nationality of the composer; '[do not pause] to consider the nationality of a song or a composer out of regard to a false notion of patriotism' (as appeared in *Musical Times* 1894, p.586 and quoted in Rainbow 1989, p.240). In advocating the use of national songs, his successor as inspector, Arthur Somervell argued that by giving children the best, they learned to respond to beauty. Cecil Sharp saw the role of schools in preserving and popularising them in all branches of school. 'Good music purifies, just as bad music vulgarises' (quoted in Rainbow, 1989, p. 258).

What was unique to the Irish education context was that calls for music in school to reflect the national character of Ireland arising from this spirit of nationalistic fervour tended to spring from sources outside music. When introducing music instruction to Ireland earlier in the century, the National Board of Education implemented the Wilhem-Hullah method of song and solfa. Since it was already in use in England, the Board thought it would serve well the aims of a national system established at a time when Britain promoted administrative efficiency, economic growth and the physical and educational welfare of the Irish population. The method had arisen from the adaptation by John Hullah of the 'method of instruction in vocal music invented by M. Wilhem of Paris introduced by the Government into all the schools, of whatever description, in France '. Hullah had understood the potency of songs as 'one of the chief means of diffusing throughout the people's national sentiments (Hullah, 1841, p.i), and in adapting the material from the French to the English system, he had been careful to preserve the spirit of the method, noting that, 'while this was effected, it should acquire a national character' and he achieved this through the 'introduction of many of the best specimens of those old English melodies which deserve to be restored to popular use'. The National Board made no concessions in adjusting the content to reflect the national character of Ireland in music for use in schools and in the context of later nineteenth century

Ireland, the Board was found increasingly to marginalise oral (Irish) musical traditions. By the end of the century, the policy had succeeded in mirroring 'what is prescribed in the programmes of elementary schools throughout the whole civilised world', as reported by Inspector Goodman in 68th report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, 1901 (p.147) but in practice, singing was reported as being practically an unknown art, especially 'in remote areas that were outside the towns' with singing taught 'only in one school in every seven, and this in a country which has some of the best Celtic melodies in the world'. (Balfour, 1898, p. xxix).

A number of organisations were set up to address this issue, among them the most prominent was the Gaelic League, founded in 1893 by Douglas Hyde. It was Hyde's concept of de-anglicisation which underpinned the necessity to bring about the revival of the traditions and customs of Ireland. It was his hope to revive the Irish language and, through it to bring about the revival of Irish music since 'all these traditions are so inextricably bound up with the tongue in which they are preserved' (Hyde, 1986/1885, p. 72) . He accused the National Board of being out of touch, set up by a class of Irishmen 'steadily hostile to the natives' and 'activated by a false sense of imperialism and by an overmasterly desire to centralise' (Hyde, 1967/1899, p.630). The promotion of Western classical music under the Intermediate system came under criticism and the teachers in schools were accused of failing in their duty by not promoting Irish language songs in their practice. In the preface to his book, AP Graves asked:

'what are our Irish schools of music doing with this inestimable legacy? How many of their professors and teachers are even alive to its existence? If so, how is their knowledge of it influencing the studies of their pupils? (Graves 1894, p.xv).

It could be said that the teachers in the schools of music were focused on preparing future professional classical musicians rather than on preserving the past or on bringing the legacy of traditional Irish songs to new generations. The situation was compounded by the fact that, in accordance with the specifications laid down by the Board of Intermediate Education in 1878, no one teaching in intermediate schools was eligible to act as an assistant examiner. Consequently, music examiners were imported from England; many of these were teachers in universities and their knowledge of the Irish education landscape was restricted only to the directions of the Board.

For its part, the Gaelic League made its position clear:

'[It] was not opposed to the appreciation of the music of the great masters...but it insists upon our national treasures getting the due attention that would be paid to them were they possessed by any other nation of the world' (Moonan, n.d., p.7).

One of the ways in which this would be achieved was by the instigation of two festivals, the Feis Ceoil (Festival of Music) and the Oireachtas, both held for the first time during the same week in May 1897. The Feis Ceoil aimed to promote the study and cultivation of Irish music, to promote the general cultivation of music in Ireland, to hold an annual music festival and to collect and preserve by publication the old airs of Ireland. The Oireachtas acted as the nucleus around which the language movement with all its phases and developments collected itself and included among its aims the maintenance of their social tradition; the folktale, the folksong, the old traditional style of singing, the fine old dances, the harper, the piper - all those elements which go to make up the cultured social life of Irish speaking Ireland' (as stated by the editor in 'The Oireachtas: work for the branches' , *An Claidheamh Soluis* 24, 2, (1900), p.792).

Culwick's call for integrity in restoring ancient melodies

Ireland was that access to the Irish songs was denied to those without the Irish language and while both music festivals succeeded in bringing the tradition to the attention of a wider population, it soon became apparent that the Oireachtas committee were uncompromising in an insistence on the exclusive use of Irish language songs, and directed that all set pieces in the singing competitions be Irish language songs. This presented a barrier to non-Irish speaking musicians such as Culwick and he turned his attention to writing music for competitions at the Feis Ceoil. He had success in a number of competitions, winning a prize for orchestral overture and best original song with Irish words. His piece 'War Dance' with a text by Thomas Moore was a set piece for choral societies of choirs of 25-50 voices, unaccompanied. Culwick continued to support the ideals of the Feis Ceoil, principally because he believed in its potential 'to make the music itself ...better known, better understood and still better loved, as it ought to be' Culwick, 1897, p.8).

Culwick's concern was more with the preservation of the integrity of melody in Irish music than with the language in which it was to be preserved. He was critical of the work done in arrangements of tunes in which the harmony was no attention was given to preserve their character. Nor was he complacent to allow the integrity of music to suffer at the hands of modernists whose efforts in composing Irish music came in for some criticism, drawing the following comment: 'wonderful things in the nature of sugary hotchpotch have been put together in the name of 'Irish music!''(Culwick, 1897, p.17).

He studied in considerable detail the collections and melodies available, including those in the Petrie and Bunting collections, and had in his library an autographed copy of Joyce's 'Ancient Irish Music' (Joyce, 1873). This knowledge of Irish music underpins the paper he

delivered to the National Literary Society in 1897. Founded in 1892 by W.B. Yeats, the National Literary Society concerned itself with 'deliberating on the history and practice of the ethnic repertory' (White, 1998, p.112). In his paper, Culwick set forward an explanation of the modes in Irish music, describing three periods in the history of scales, tracing their origin back to times before the Greek modes. This was not new- indeed it was a rehearsal of the point made by F St John Lacy (1891) previously - but it reinforced for him the danger of neglecting the integrity of the melody; 'let there be no further tampering with the true traditions: let us not wantonly 'improve' these sacred relics of antiquity until they become non-existent' (Culwick, 1897, p.7). He made an impassioned plea for restoration rather than revisionism:

'...let us raise our voices and use our influence towards the restoration and purification of ancient melodies from the strangely distorted and cankering effects wrought by modern tampering...are not these songs the voices of your dead forefathers? Let us cherish and protect them' (Culwick, 1897, p.31).

This 'modern tampering' was characterised by a groundswell of interest in reviving Irish language songs, and collections of Irish language songs appeared in print, among them collections by AP Graves (1894, above), Goodman, (c.1886; 1907) and others.

Culwick's contribution to the improvement of teaching

At the turn of the century, moves to introduce registration of teachers was a hot topic of debate in England. In the case of music, the forum for discussion was the meetings held by the Incorporated Society of Musicians. Some, like Hubert Parry were critical of the 'craving for registration' and took the view that, while some subjects such as spelling and arithmetic could be presented in a fixed manner, art

'is a thing that is always in progress, always shifting, always growing, always passing before you with wonderful subtle changes, and to subject it to fixed ordinances is simply to tie it up and choke it'(reported in the School Music Review, April 1 1905, p.204-5).

Others saw it as a way 'to purge the country of incapable and incompetent musical teachers and to raise the standard of teaching and practice of music In Great Britain (reported in School Music Review, May 1, 1901).

Culwick was in favour of the registration of teachers. He was a founding member of the Leinster branch of the Incorporated Society of Musicians and had attended meeting in London as the Leinster delegate for eight years, taking part in the debates held by the society. The Leinster branch was acknowledged as an important assembly of professional musicians, including professors and examiners of the Universities, Royal Irish Academy of Music, Board of Education, the University colleges and the leading vocal and instrumental teachers and performers of Dublin (Musical Times, 1894, p.479). Ultimately, the calls for the introduction of registration of teachers and for conditions to be improved at the secondary phase culminated in the bill for registration of teachers which became law in 1903.

One of the weaknesses found by the Commissioners of Intermediate Education in their Report on Intermediate Education in 1899 was the lack of a rigorous inspection system and, while they held the subject of registration of teachers to be outside their mandate, they continued to focus on the examination of music as a subject. There were suggestions made to include the addition of instrumental music and to introduce a practical component to the examination. These were not taken on board by the Commissioners and plans were put in place to eliminate music as a subject for examination from January 1902. Culwick presided over a campaign to have this decision overturned and, in due course this was successful.

Conclusion

Culwick stands out from his contemporaries in a number of respects. For one thing, his interest in Irish music was borne 'from a sincere and well-established love and admiration' (Culwick, 1897, p.4). While he recognised that there may be opposing views of the nature, purpose and value of art, he saw potential for 'the perfect adjustment of the opposing influences' (Culwick, 1893, p.100) He underlined the importance of tolerance in respect of artistic conviction:

'for even those whose views differ most widely from our own may deserve our respect, and we may quite disregard only such as are colourless and devoid of all individuality' (Culwick, 1893, p.100) .

At a time when claims for the inclusion of music in education were made on grounds of nationalism, the interest in promoting the Irish language became a priority in the education policy under the Irish Free State with the statement that the newly formed government

'would work with all its might for the strengthening of the national fibre by giving the language, history, music and tradition of Ireland their natural place in the life of Irish schools' (Minutes of the Proceedings of the Commissioners of National Education, 1922, p.2-3).

This policy was to continue to have a polarising effect on music in the years ahead and has been shown to be contentious for scholars and educationalists who have looked to find a place within the education system for the study of music for its own sake. What is less known is that efforts were made to ensure that artistic merit was not neglected in the education system prior to the setting up of the Free State and this is evidenced in Culwick's output.

Secondly, his expertise as a teacher was characterised by his ability and interest in connecting with and influencing people of all levels of ability in music, and this legacy can be seen in the achievement of his students. Among them perhaps the most successful was Annie Patterson who became a central figure in the Gaelic League and later took up an appointment in University College Cork. She remained very involved in the promotion of classes in music notation for traditional musicians. Given her background - Patterson herself was a product of the classical repertoire and a pupil of Culwick - it is not surprising that she would borrow from the classical tradition to use notation in the teaching of the Irish traditional repertoire. While this would attract criticism, nonetheless it showed that she understood fully that an introduction to Irish music and song deserved proper and extensive preparation and held that,

'only after a thorough grilling in theoretical and technical work, and exposure to 'all that is best in the literature of music ' should the young musician be trained in the proper emotional rendering of Irish music and song' (McCarthy, 1999, p78).

In addition, she had the distinction of being the first female to be awarded a doctorate in music in the British Isles and while it is impossible to state with certainty that this was down to Culwick, it is nonetheless worth considering that his expertise in teaching would have had some positive impact on her achievement.

A memorial tablet was erected in his honour by members of his choir and this stands as a record of his impact on a generation of singers.

James Cooksey Culwick, Mus Doc Trinity College, Dublin, Born 28th April 1845.

Died 5th October 1907. A learned musician. A true artist. A good man.

This tablet was unveiled by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland at a memorial service at St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin in 1909 in recognition of Culwick's services to music (reported in *Periodical Report No.3 of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, 1909*). It might also serve as a tribute to an Englishman who had a considerable impact on key issues of musical, educational and cultural significance to Ireland in the late nineteenth century, and transcended boundaries of political and cultural nationalism at a time when Britain's role in the affairs of Ireland were found to interfere with the aims of an emerging nation state, he transcended boundaries of political and cultural nationalism to make a considerable impact on issues of musical, educational and cultural significance.

Finally, in matters of policy and practice of music education in Ireland, his contribution has been shown to serve as an important landmark in approaches to music pedagogy at intermediate level and has ensured that it would be taken seriously as a subject, by both policy makers and practitioners.

Notes

¹ His views were published in a pamphlet read out to The Literary Society, Alexandra College, Dublin. It was one of two guest lectures he presented to that group. The pamphlet has been destroyed and the quotations here are taken from the Review which appeared in The Musical Times (June 1, 1882, p.339).

² Music examiners engaged by the Intermediate Board included:

1879 Leo Kerbusch Mus. Doc. TCD

1880 First paper George Garrett M.A. Mus. D.

1880 Second paper John Dunne Mus. D.

1881 John Dunne Mus. D., Dublin and George Garrett MA Mus. D. Cambridge

1882 Francis Quin, T.R.G. Jozé Mus. D. and Joseph Smith, Mus. D.

1883 T.R.G. Jozé Mus. D. and Joseph Smith, Mus. D.

1887 Hamilton Croft and T.Osborne Marks, Mus. D.

1888 J.Chr. Marks, Mus.D. and Joseph Smith, Mus. D.

1889 J.Chr. Marks, Mus.D. and Joseph Smith, Mus. D.

1890 Brendan J.Rogers (girls only)

1891 Brendan J.Rogers (girls only)

1892 T.R.G. Jozé Mus. D. (girls only)

References

An Claidheamh Soluis 27, 4 (1899), p.166.

'The Oireachtas: work for the branches' *An Claidheamh Soluis* 24, 2 (1900), p.792

Balfour, G. (1898). *Educational systems in Great Britain and Ireland*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Board of Commissioners of National Education. (1901). *68th Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland*.

Boydell, B. (2004). *A History of Music at Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press.

Bumpus, J. (1900). *Irish Church Composers and the Irish Cathedrals. Proceedings of the Musical Association for the investigation and discussion of subjects connected with the art and science of music. twenty-sixth session, 1899- 1900*. London: Novello.

Commissioners of Intermediate Education (Palles Commission) 1899

Commissioners of National Education (1922). *Minutes of the proceedings of the commissioners of national education at their special meeting on Tuesday, the 31st January 1922*

Coolahan, J. (1981). *Irish Education, History and Structure*. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

Culwick, J. (1882). *The study of music and its place in general education*. Dublin: Ponsonby

Culwick, J. (1882). *The Rudiments of Music, an Introductory Textbook, with Musical Examples and Numerous Exercises*. Dublin: Ponsonby.

Culwick, J. (1897). *The Distinctive Characteristics of Ancient Irish Melody: the Scales. A Plea for Restoration and Preservation, being a lecture read on Monday evening 15th February 1897 before the National Literary Society*. Dublin: Ponsonby.

Culwick, J. 'Artistic landmarks', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 1471-6933, 19(1), pp. 95-117.

Day, A.H. (1845). *A Treatise on Harmony*. London: Cramer, Beale and Co.

Goodman, P. (c.1886). *The School and Home Song Book*. Dublin: J. Duffy and Sons.

Goodman, P. (1907). *The Irish Minstrel*. Dublin: Browne and Nolan.

Graves, A.P. (ed.) (1894). *The Irish Song Book with Original Irish Airs*. London: Fisher Unwin.

Hullah, J. (1841). *Wilhem's Method of Teaching Singing, adapted to English use*. London: Parker.

Hyde, D. (1967/1899). *A Literary History of Ireland from Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London: Ernst Benn, new edition 1967, originally published 1899).

Hyde, D. (1986/1885). 'The Unpublished Songs of Ireland' in Breandán Ó Conaire (ed), *Language, Lore and Lyrics*. Dublin: Irish Academic Press.p.72.

Incorporated Society of Musicians (1909) *Periodical Report No.3 of the Incorporated Society of Musicians. August 1909*

Intermediate Education Board. (1879). *Answers and Solutions to the Examination Papers Issued at the First Examinations under the Above Act held in June and July 1879*. Dublin: Browne and Nolan.

Joyce, P. (1873). *Ancient Irish Music*. 4to cl. Dublin: McClashan & Gill. [Presentation copy from the author].

Macfarren, G. (1860). *Rudiments of Harmony, with Progressive Exercises*. London: Cramer, Beale and Chappell.

McCarthy, M. (1999). *Passing it on. The transmission of music in Irish Culture*. Cork: Cork University Press.

McElligott, T.J. (1966). *Education in Ireland*. Dublin: Institute of Publication Administration.

O'Connor, A. and Parkes, S. (1984). *Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach. Alexandra College and School 1866-1966*. Dublin: Blackwater.

Moonan, D. (n.d.) *'The spirit of the Gaelic League', Gaelic League pamphlets, no.33*. Dublin: Gaelic League.

Ouseley, F. (1868). *A Treatise on Harmony*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Prout, E. (1889). *Harmony, its Theory and Practice*. London: Augener and Co.

Rainbow, B. (1989). *Music in Educational Thought and Practice. A Survey from 800 BC.*

Aberystwyth: The Boethius Press.

Ritter, F. (1876). *History of Music, from the Christian Era to the Present Time*. 8vo. cl.

London: Wm Reeves.

Report of the Vice-Regal Committee on the Conditions of Service and Remuneration of Teachers in Intermediate Schools and the Distribution of Grants from Public Funds for Intermediate Education in Ireland, p.7.

Royal University of Ireland. (1890). *The Royal University of Ireland Examination Papers, Supplement to the University Calendar 1889*. Dublin: Alex. Thom.

Scholes, P. (1947). *The mirror of music, 1844-1944. A century of musical life in Britain as reflected in the pages of the Musical Times*. Novello & Company Ltd and Oxford University Press.

St John Lacy, F. (1891). *Notes on Irish Music published in Proceeding of the Musical Association for the Investigation and Discussion of Subjects Connected with the Art and Science of Music. Seventeenth session, 1890-91*. London: Novello, Ewer & Co. Berners Street. pp171-98.

Stainer's (1878). *A Treatise on Harmony and the Classification of Chords; with Questions and Exercises for the Use of Students*. London: Novello, Ewer.

The School Music Review April 1 1905

White, H. (1998). *The Keeper's Recital: Music and Cultural History in Ireland 1770-1970*.

Cork: University Press.