

IRISH MUSIC IN LONDON PUBS

sung and played by
MARGARET BARRY
MICHAEL GORMAN
SEAMUS ENNIS
JOE HEANEY & friends

Edited by Peter Siegel



FOLKWAYS RECORDS FG3575

IRISH MUSIC IN LONDON PUBS

IF YOU EVER GO OVER TO IRELAND
RAKISH PADDY
TRALEE JANE and MAGGIE IN THE WOOD
THE ROCKS OF BAWN
CASADH AN t-SUGAIN
THE MOUNTAIN ROAD and THE HEATHER BREEZE
SHE MOVES THROUGH THE FAIR
SMASH THE WINDOWS, THE FROST IS ALL OVER, FLANNAGAN'S BALL
and OFF SHE GOES

MORRISSEY AND THE RUSSIAN SAILOR
THE MAID I NE'ER FORGOT
THE BOYS OF BLUE HILL
THE JOLLY TINKER
SPAILPIN FANAC
THE SWALLOW'S TAIL and THE SLIGO MAID
THE BUNCH OF KEYS
THE BLARNEY STONE
REEL

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
CENTER FOR FOLK LIFE PROGRAMS
RETURN TO ARCHIVE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FG 3575

© Copyright 1965 by Folkways Records and Service Corp.

IRISH MUSIC IN LONDON PUBS

Introduction

There's hardly a large city in the world in which you can't find a meeting place, a drinking place for the country folk come-to-town. Like as not, such a center of life will feature country music. I have visited such gatherings places in Istanbul, Dublin, London, of course, and the many American cities like Baltimore, Chicago, and Boston, to mention a few, where blue grass and country music are featured. The "clubs" all have in common a particular combination of characteristics which set them apart from other drinking houses in the town. There is often a varied clientele ranging from laborers, and/or sailors and soldiers to college students and well-dressed curiosity seekers who either stumble on the club unknowingly or who have heard of the spot's reputation for country culture.

During my years of graduate study in Paris, I had occasion to visit London innumerable times for extended weekends and vacation periods. The so called folk revival was in its infancy at the time (1957-59) and those young Londoners who had gotten beyond the American based "skiffle" rage were taking a strong interest in their own national musics. One of the London centers for Irish music at the time was a Camden Town pub, The Bedford Arms on Arlington Road. The very first time I walked into the Bedford it was a Friday night at about 9:30 P. M. There I encountered Margaret and Michael surrounded by a crowd of drinkers and talkers who included such noted musicians as Dominic Behan, Ewan MacColl, Seamus Ennis and Joe Heaney. The music and drink flowed so freely that a pauper could be effectively intoxicated with one or the other within a few minutes of his arrival on the scene. This was especially true if the pauper had friends in the crowd, for it was a standing tradition that one bought a drink for his friends, no matter how numerous, even if it took his last shilling to do so and he was forced to walk home for lack of underground fare.

In this atmosphere of largesse and conviviality, Margaret and Michael played and sang as they did in no other place. This recording, made with equipment provided by Ewan MacColl and with the assistance of Barry Murphy of Eltham, London, presents the only recorded performances of Margaret and Michael on the spot, as it were. A simple comparison of these with some of the excellent but totally different performances available from studio sessions will reveal more clearly than words can tell how essentially folk music is an adjunct to life. When it is removed from its habitual framework and exhibited apart from the whole, it loses that sense of urgency and direct communication which, along with style, improvisation and other such characteristics, set it happily apart from the world of art music.

The notes, aside from biographical sketches, were the result of several long evening sessions where the patience and humor of Mary Vernon combined with Seamus Ennis' visionary approach to folklore to pro-

duce a truly unique documentation of a music and the people who play it.

Of the few people for whom there are no biographical sketches I know little or nothing. Paddy Breen, flute and flageolet player, is a County Clare man who works in London. Tommy McGuire, originally from County Leitrim, was a regular on the melodeon at the Bedford and Pat Howley, from County Sligo, was a frequent visitor. A few of the recordings on this disk were made at The Kings Arms, Kentish Town, London where Margaret and Michael often played on Monday nights following the lively weekend ceilidhs at the Bedford.

Up to the present time, Margaret and Michael have made three visits to the U. S. where they have been enthusiastically received by audiences at numerous Irish dance halls in New York, Boston and Chicago as well as by a crowd of fifteen thousand at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival and in coffee houses in the larger cities. Unlike many traditional musicians, constant travel and exposure to many different styles of music, Irish and other, has not influenced the purity of their own brilliantly personal, subtle styles. "Fagamis siud mar ata se"... ("Leave well enough alone"- The refrain from the well-known Irish ballad- The Limerick Rake.)

Ralph Rinzler
New York City
September 1965

Fiddle, Tin Whistle, Pipes, Melodeon

1. It is said that the fiddle in all its forms, the guitar, the banjo, the mandolin, the clavicord and the modern day piano, in fact all stringed instruments originated "When Juban struck the chorded shell
And all his brethren awestruck stood around"

It is said that the fiddle came to Ireland from the south with the migration of the Milesians. Be this true or false it is one of the most indigenous musical instruments throughout the country. The horse hair of the bow, the cat gut of the string and the resin of the pine tree produce melody dear to the heart.

2. I remember at the bottom of our garden there was a Boor-Tree (known as the Elder). At a certain age the branches of this tree are suitably strong for the making of a wood wind instrument and their pith is soft so that a hollow pipe is easily made. An old man used to come to our house and he showed to me how easy it was to make it a musical instrument from the Boor-Tree. It seems that the gentry of the tin-meaning the tinsmiths-heard of this secret and instead of using the Boor-Tree they made the tin whistle, known at one time as the penny whistle but nowadays a good one may be called a dollar whistle.

3. The shepherd on the hill long ago carried a pipe to call his flock. A clever shepherd discovered that if he

attached a bag to his pipe he would be able further to sustain his calling. Whatever language he spoke his instrument was called the bag pipes. The migration of peoples from the east throughout the west developed this instrument in different ways. The Irish with their flair for decoration and embellishment developed the shepherd's pipe until it became one of the most complicated instruments in the world, having harmonies, drones and two octaves in melody range. An old saying has it in Gaelic "Nil clagar is binne na ceol an mhala" (There's no sound sweeter than the music of the bag) Many, many people believe it.

4. The melodeon is an importation to Ireland from Germanic and Scandinavian parts of the world. It became popular because it cost so much less than the pipes and fiddle did. Its ability to produce truly the music of Ireland is extremely limited and today the accordion which has replaced it is similarly incapable of giving us a true interpretation of the music of our ancestors. It lacks in taste and feeling but as the old saying has it "it will stop a gap." I would walk a long way to hear an old melodeon.

SIDE 1 BAND 1A

IF YOU EVER GO OVER TO IRELAND (THE TOWN OF ORANMORE):
Margaret Barry, Five-string banjo and vocal; Michael Gorman, fiddle.

Oranmore is a town at the extreme east of Galway Bay. The travelling people with their caravans found space in plenty to park and camp and dwell when they needed a rest from the road. The Galway races were within six miles of Oranmore so that it was a popular stopping place for the gentry of the road and the Races of Galway - horse racing - is one of the biggest events of the whole year in Ireland.

Apart from the race meeting, every business establishment in the city of Galway is closed for a week's holiday, save of course the restaurants, the hotels, and the public houses, some of which are extensively extended for the occasion. No wonder then that the travelling people with their music had this song with them for empty bags and caps to please.
Note: A favorite Irish music-hall song composed by Shaun O'Nolan

R. R.

If you ever go over to Ireland now then take a tip from
me
Close your mouth and open your eyes and don't you
make so free
You'll find the colleens over there are not so green
at all
For one of them made a fool of me way down in
Donegal.

Refrain:

And he took me under his oxters, he was walking down
the lane
She says, "Now don't get funny, or if you do I'll scream"
He gives her a wink, and what do you think as she
right away got sore
And she scratched his nose and tore his clothes in the
town of Oranmore.

Oh, he then went over to Dublin to that city of great
fame
And walking down O'Connell Street he met a comely
dame
She says, "Hello there, Yankee, I never saw you
before
Are you far from home, your dear old home in dear
old Dublin town?"

And he took her under his oxters, he was walking
down the street
She says, "I'm awful hungry, now what are we
going to eat?"
He took her in to Cleary's, that great shop of renown
And upon me soul, she swiped his nose in dear old
Dublin town.

SIDE 1 BAND 1B

RAKISH PADDY: Michael Gorman, fiddle; Seamus Ennis, uilleann pipes; Margaret Barry, banjo; Tommy McGuire, melodeon.

There is an old ballad in praise of the boys of
Kilkenny which says:
The boys of Kilkenny are stout roving blades
And whenever they meet with the pretty fair maids
They will kiss them and court them
And spend their money free
And of all towns in Ireland Kilkenny for me

At Kilkenny there is one of the few places in Ireland where coal was mined and another line of the song says, "

Her eyes are as black as Kilkenny's famed coal
Which through my poor bosom have burnt a great
hole
Her cheeks are dewy rosebuds
Her lips are just the same
Like a dish of ripe strawberries
Smothered in cream

The pipes, fiddle and banjo play a tune possibly in praise of the same damsel and they follow it with "Rakish Paddy" and we all know who he is; the gay Irishman.

NOTE: Variants of this saucy Irish reel bear the picturesque titles: "My Love Is In America" and "The Collier's Reel" in addition to "Rakish Paddy" The last of these tunes was a favorite of Robert Thompson, Margaret's maternal grandfather, who was a champion uilleann piper and to whom this variant is attributed. R. R.

SIDE A BAND 2

TRALEE JANE AND MAGGIE IN THE WOOD: medley of polkas: Michael Gorman, fiddle; Margaret Barry, banjo; Paddy Breen, flageolet; Pat Howley, flute.

Of this pair of tunes, A. L. Lloyd writes: They're called polkas, but they're more in the nature of reels. Tralee Gaol is but one of a dozen names for an indeluctible old Gaelic tune that George Petrie collected more than a hundred years ago in Munster where they called it Barack Hill. It's known in Gaelic Scotland also, and Vaughan Williams included it in his composition called a running set. " Margaret and Michael

insist that "there is no jail in or about Tralee" and that they have never heard the tune called anything but Tralee Jane. Maggie In The Wood under the title Goody on A Saucer is sung by the Clancy children of Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary, on and L. P. entitled So Early In The Morning (Tradition, TLP 1034).
R. R.

SIDE A BAND 3

THE ROCKS OF BAWN: Joe Heaney, vocal

Many a discussion and argument has taken place as to where The Rocks of Bawn were or are. Some say that Bawn was out foreign. More say that it was a barren place in the north of Ireland. I, Seamus Ennis, think that the name applies to a rocky and barren district of northwest Cork and northeast Kerry which is called Claodach, because I heard an old woman in west Cork sing a line which she recalled in Gaelic

"Is eagal liom na feadfair-se leaca an bhain do threabhadh" which means I am afraid you'll never be able to plow the rocks of Bawn.

So it would seem that this song is a folk translation from some old Gaelic agricultural workman's theme.

Come all you loyal heros where ever that you be
Don't work for any master 'til you know what your
work will be
For you must rise up early from the clear daylight
'til dawn
And I'm afraid you'll never be able to plow the rocks
of Bawn.

Oh, rise up lovely Sweeney and give your horse some
hay
And give him a good feed of oats before you go away
Don't feed him on soft turnip; put him out on your
green lawn
Or I'm afraid he'll never be able to plow the rocks
of Bawn.

And my curse attend you Sweeney, you had me
nearly robbed
You're sitting by the fireside with a dudeen in your
gob
You're sitting by the fireside from the clear daylight
till dawn
And I'm afraid you'll never be able to plow the rocks
of Bawn.

And my shoes they are well worn now; my stockings
they are thin
My heart is always trembling, afraid I might give in
My heart is always trembling from the clear daylight
till the dawn
And I'm afraid I'll never be able to plow the rocks
of Bawn.

And I wish the Queen of England would send for me
in time
And place me in some regiment, all in my youth and
prime
I would fight for Ireland's glory from the clear
daylight till the dawn
And I never would return again to plow the rocks of
Bawn.

SIDE A BAND 4

CASADH AN t-SUGAIN (THE TWISTING OF THE HAY-ROPE): Seamus Ennis, uilleann pipes.

This is the tune of one of the finest songs of Ireland. A hay-rope is made of twisted dried hay and is used to secure haycocks against the danger of high winds.

It is told about this song that the bard was paying court to the daughter of a certain woman and his attentions were not welcome to the mother. She studied a plan for the occasion of his next visit and when he came she asked him was he able to twist a hay-rope. He said of course he was and she reached him the tra-hook and she brought in a bunch of hay and fed the hay to him whilst he twisted. The more he twisted the longer the rope became until he reached the door.

"Open the door" she said "and twist away on out, for I want to make a good long one because I fear a storm is blowing up." When she had him far enough outside the door, she slammed the door on him. He knew then that he was not welcome and on his sad journey home he composed his song to this beautiful tune. It is played here on the Irish Uilleann Pipes (by me).

SIDE A BAND 5

THE MOUNTAIN ROAD AND THE HEATHER BREEZE:
Michael Gorman, fiddle; Margaret Barry, banjo;
Tommy McGuire, melodeon.

Michael Gorman can play these old reels all night long and through the next day in any key you like. He composed one of the most popular reels of all himself and he called it The Mountain Road; here he couples it with one of the oldest and most dearly loved of all reels, namely The Heather Breeze.

Note: Michael composed The Mountain Road in 1925. This recording was made in 1958, and since that time he has added at least two new parts or variations to the tune. It is a favorite where ever Michael introduces it and was adopted as the unofficial theme of the Soho Fair in London in the mid-fifties. R. R.

SIDE A BAND 6

SHE MOVES THROUGH THE FAIR: Margaret Barry, vocal and five-string banjo; Michael Gorman, fiddle.

One of the finest voices in Ireland today is that of Margaret Barry and she was first recorded on a fair day in the town of Dundalk as she moved through the fair.

A fragment of this song was found in County Donegal by Herbert Hughes, an arranger of Irish songs, and the famous Irish poet Padraic Colum coupled his own thoughts with the fragment and produced with Herbert Hughes one of the most beautiful songs to be heard in Ireland nowadays. The original fragment was "Last night she came to me/ my dead love came in" which is a motif occurring throughout the folk songs of the world.

Note: This song was learned by Margaret from the phonograph recording by the famed Irish tenor John McCormack. R. R.

My young love said to me, "My mother won't mind
And my father won't slight you for your lack of kind"
As she stepped away from me and this she did say:
"It will not be long love till our wedding day."

As she stepped away from me and she moves through
the fair

And fondly I watched her move here and move there
And then she turned homeward with one star awake
Like the swan in the evening moves over the lake.

Last night she came to me; my dead love came in
So softly she came that her feet made no din
As she laid her hand on me and this she did say:
"It will not be long love till our wedding day."

SIDE A BAND 7

SMASH THE WINDOWS, THE FROST IS ALL OVER,
FLANNAGAN'S BALL and OFF SHE GOES: medley
of jigs: Michael Gorman, fiddle; Margaret Barry,
banjo; Pat Howley, flute; Tommy McGuire, melodeon.

Another dance measure is the jig and Michael Gorman's
fiddle is loud enough to "Smash The Windows" - this is
the first jig in his next selection and he finishes with
"Off She Goes"

SIDE B BAND 1

MORRISSEY AND THE RUSSIAN SAILOR: Joe Heaney,
vocal.

This is the ballad of a boxing match between a
Russian Sailor and John Morrissey from Templemore
in County Tipperary. In the annals of boxing it is on
record that he fought and conquered Thompson, the
Yankee Clipper, and the Buffalo Boy among others,
but there is no record of Morrissey having boxed with
a Russian sailor. We have investigated history to no
avail, yet this song exists among the people of the
west of Ireland.

Just as others do on the same theme for instance
when Donnelly fought Cooper on the Curragh of Kildare
all notable events were sung by bards and ballad makers
in the years gone by giving down to us their detailed
history, yet the battle of John Morrissey and the
Russian Sailor cannot be confirmed in the official
records of the noble art.

Come all you gallant Irishmen
Where ever that you be
And Likewise pay attention
And listen unto me
I'll sing about a battle
That took place the other day
Between a Russian sailor
And gallant Morrissey.

'Twas in Tierra del Fuego
In South Amerikee
The Russian challenged Morrissey
Those words to him did say
"I hear you are a fighting man
And wear the belt, I see.
Indeed I wish you would consent
To have a round with me."

And up spoke brave Morrissey
With heart both brave and true
"I am a valiant Irishman
That never was subdued
For I will whale the Yankee,
The Saxon Bull I'll bear
In honor of old Paddy's land
The laurel I'll maintain."

To fight upon the tenth of March
Those heroes did agree
And thousands came from every place
This battle for to see
The Yankees and the Russians
Their hearts were filled with glee
They swore the Russian sailor
Would kill brave Morrissey.

They shook hands and walked around the ring
Commencing for to fight
It filled each Irish heart there
For to behold the sight
The Russian he fought Morrissey
Unto the eleventh round
With the Russian, Yankee, Saxon cheers
The valley did resound.

The Irish they laid four to one
That day upon the grass
No sooner done than taken up
And down they brought the cash
They parried away without delay
Till the twenty-second round
When Morrissey received a blow
Which brought him to the ground.

Up to the thirty-seventh round
'Twas fall and fall about
It made the Yankee tyrant
Keep a sharp lookout
When the Russian to his second
Called for a glass of wine
Our Irish hero smiled and said:
"This battle is surely mine."

This thirty-seventh decided on
The Russian felt a smart
And Morrissey with a terrible blow
Struck the Russian on the heart
A doctor he was called upon
To open up a vein
He said it was quite useless
He'd never fight again.

Our hero conquered Thompson
And the Yankee Clipper, too
The Buffalo Boy and Shepherd
He nobly did subdue
So drink ye off a flowing glass
And hear a _____
To noble Johnny Morrissey
And Paddy evermore.

SIDE B BAND 2

THE MAID I NE'ER FORGOT: reel: Michael Gorman,
fiddle; Margaret Barry, banjo; Tommy McGuire,
melodeon.

Note:

Unlike many a traditional fiddler, Michael Gorman is musically literate and has learned many a tune, including this one, from the famed book of Irish traditional dance tunes collected and published by Captain Francis O'Neill. R. R.

SIDE B BAND 3

THE BOYS OF BLUE HILL: hornpipe: Michael Gorman, fiddle; Margaret Barry, banjo; Tommy McGuire, melodeon.

One of the favourite dance rhythms throughout France, Britain and Ireland is the hornpipe, known in some places as the clog-dance and one of the favourites in Ireland is The Boys of Blue Hill.

Note: Learned from O'Neill's collection by Gorman.
R. R.

SIDE B BAND 4

THE JOLLY TINKER: reel: Michael Gorman, fiddle; Margaret Barry, banjo; Paddy Breen, flageolet.

One of the greatest travelling craftsmen in the old days was the tinker. He made our pots and kettles and pans and panekins. It seems he was always a jovial fellow because some bard composed a tune in his honour. It's known as the Jolly Tinker, The Jovial Tinman, and The Yellow Tinker, Michael Gorman knows it well. Paddy Breen didn't let it pass him either.

SIDE B BAND 5

SPAILPIN FANAC: Joe Heaney, vocal.

In olden times in Ireland there was the spring fair and the autumn fair - that is the hiring fair. Girls went to be hired for six months as dairy maids or kitchen maids and boys went to be hired as farmers servants. After six months the farmer paid them. The girls probably got married and the boys went to the next hiring fair or travelled through the country looking for employment which would not tie them for six months. They were known as spalpeens. Today they might be termed people of no fixed abode in court-houses.

It would seem they were gay and loved by the lasses wherever they went and this song is typical of their outlook on life.

I am an airy talented spalpeen
And let ye find a wife for me
For I would shake the seed twice in springtime
On clean plowed land
On clean plowed land
My hand on the plow behind the horses
And I'd score the hills sloping

My five hundred farewells to my father's country
And forever to the loving island
And the crowd of young men behind me at home
Who'd help me in time of striving
Dublin is burnt and Galway will be burnt
There will be flame and there'll be bonfires
Wine and punch will be on my father's table
And isn't that a help to the roaming spalpeen

A week would be longer for me in a house without a
friend

Than a big long year and a quarter
For I am a young athletic courageous man
Who would carry a keg in a bag
There were twelve women jealously contending for me
Seeking the fruits of my spade
And the old hags prayer when I'd come across the
threshold
Was behave you roaming spalpeen

The first day in Ireland that I listed
'Twas I was happy and pleased
And the second day that I listed
I would give the gold of the world to be free
But the third day that I listed
There were eighteen pence short in my pay
But if they charged me that and the same again
I could not get my pass

I was one day down in Galway
And the river was flowing downwards
The trout and the eel and the bundle of rods were
there

And everything else that could be nicer
The young girls were mannerly and honest
They were slim, gentle and friendly
But the devil a woman I would lie with til morning
But I'd tell her black was white

Whoever that young woman is going down the road
Her head of hair is beautiful
And whatever tailor took her measure
I am sure that he was in love with her
For he took her measure up from the ground
And high above her waist
And they tell me that that's the reason
That she is always laughing

SIDE B BAND 6

THE SWALLOW'S TAIL and THE SLIGO MAID: medley of reels: Michael Gorman, fiddle; Margaret Barry, banjo; Tommy McGuire, melodeon

Wherever our music comes from the swallows come from the south. There is a tune called The Swallows Tail, let it be his posterior feathers or the story he brings with him.

It is one of the most lively reels of all and Michael Gorman follows it with one just as lively which is paradoxically called by the name of a girl from his own home country "The Sligo Maid."

Note: Both reels learned by Michael from his teacher, James Gannon. R. R.

SIDE B BAND 7

THE BUNCH OF KEYS: reel: Michael Gorman, fiddle; Margaret Barry, banjo; Pat Howley, flute; Tommy McGuire, melodeon.

My father always suspected that Lady Elmer was a lady who always locked up every drawer and door in her residence and as she went round the house one could hear her keys rattling. It is one of the finest old tunes we have and we suspect that the piper composed it in her honour in order that she might open up the pantry or the sideboard for food and drink to please his appetite.

As originally known this tune had only two parts but it was so well liked that in recent years a third part has been added. They thought it too short.

Note: Learned by Michael from his teacher, James Gannon. R. R.

SIDE B BAND 8

THE BLARNEY STONE: Margaret Barry, vocal and banjo; Michael Gorman, fiddle.

There's a place in County Cork at Blarney. Whether it be fact or fantasy it is said that if one can stretch across a gap between two cliffs and kiss the rock across the gap then one has kissed the Blarney Stone and has acquired "the gift of the gab" which means the eloquence of flattery. It is said then that you have kissed the Blarney Stone

Margaret Barry points out in this ballad that everyone in Ireland has the gift of the gab whether he kissed the Blarney Stone or not and says there's a Blarney Stone to be found everywhere.

It was on the road to Bandon one morning in July
Sure I met a lovely colleen and she smiled as she
passed by

She said "I am a stranger and I'm lonely all alone
Would you kindly tell me where I'd find that little
Blarney stone"

Refrain:

There's a Blarney stone in Kerry There's a Blarney
stone in Clare

There's a Blarney stone in Wicklow and there's
plenty in Kildare

There's a Blarney stone in Sligo and another in Mayo
So the devil a town in Ireland but you find a Blarney
stone

For I know he comes from Galway I can tell it by
his brogue

Sure there never was a Galway man but was an
awful rogue

And since you are a stranger where the river Shannon
flows

And the only Blarney stone I know is underneath my
nose

And her eyes they smiled with gladness as she
winked a roguish eye

And she set my heart a thumping til I thought I'd
surely die

He rolled me in his arms where I never had been
before

Sure he kissed the blooming roses on my Bandon
Blarney stone

Refrain:

There's a Blarney stone in Kerry'

SIDE B BAND 9 REEL.

Biographical Notes

MARGARET BARRY

Born in Cork City, Ireland, on New Year's Day, 1917. She has music in the family. Her father was a banjo-player and her maternal grandfather was, in Margaret's own description, "the king of Irish pipers." Traveling is likewise in the family, and at an early age Margaret was doing as her parents had done before, stravaiging the roads of Ireland doing a little general trade combined with singing in the streets, at country fairs, or outside football grounds.

Peter Kennedy and Alan Lomax helped to make her thrilling war-whoop voice known to English city audiences, and before long she was appearing in front of an audience of more than 3,000 persons in London's resplendent Festival Hall. The experience ruffled her no more than if she were singing in the gutter outside the Woolworth store in Armagh. In the early 1950's she came to London and eventually teamed up with Michael Gorman, playing and singing in various Irish pubs in the northern suburbs.

In England she is recorded by Topic, while in the United States the Columbia, Riverside, Prestige and Folkway's companies introduced her to American listeners even before she arrived in person. On previous visits to the States she has been received with wild delight, especially by her compatriots in exile, who recognize her for what she is--a fine, rare and authentic exponent of the extrovert Irish street-singer style.

A. L. Lloyd
Newport Program 1965

MICHAEL GORMAN

Born at Doocastle, County Sligo, Ireland, in 1902. His mother, Donegal-born, was a singer, and his father, a small-farmer, played the flute and accordion. Michael was orphaned while still a schoolboy. It was while he was living with foster-parents that he took fiddle lessons from James Gannon, who taught the famous Michael Coleman, greatest of Sligo jig and reel players. Coleman emigrated to America, but Michael Gorman remained in Ireland to become a champion exponent of the handsome Sligo fiddle style.

Eventually he arrived in London with an array of championship medals and a big reputation among the lovers of Irish country music. For several years he worked as a porter at one of the big London railway stations, playing at nights for Irish dances or in pubs frequented by Irish laborers. For a considerable time he was the chief musical ornament of the famous Bedford Arms (it was Michael who made it famous), where, night after night, in company with other Irish musicians, he produced his marvelous, unassertive, yet ever-varied and always delightful melodies, hour after hour, world without end, amen. Without end, that is, until through some towering indiscretion, the management of the Bedford introduced a jukebox, and the glory departed. So, too, did many of the Irish customers who found the beer didn't taste the same when it wasn't sweetened by the music of the champion fiddler of Sligo.

A. L. Lloyd
Newport Program 1965

SEAMUS ENNIS

Seamus is a virtual repository of the aesthetic and fast-dying techniques which Irish musicians have developed and passed on for centuries; thus his piping and singing are characterized by the keening, soulful, straining sound which speak of a way of life and art that are all but lost to us.

Generally conceded to be the outstanding figure in Irish folk-lore today, Seamus Ennis, both as scholar and performer, is a veritable titan. Of noble features and bearing, Seamus stands a full six feet three, and his stature is one of his greatest assets, for the uilleann pipes which he plays pose some particular problems which a smaller man cannot solve.

R. R.