

Séamas de Barra

Aloys
Fleischmann

Aloys Fleischmann (1910–92) was a key figure in the musical life of twentieth-century Ireland. Séamas de Barra presents an authoritative and insightful account of Fleischmann's career as a composer, conductor, teacher and musicologist, situating his achievements in wider social and intellectual contexts, and paying particular attention to his lifelong engagement with Gaelic culture and his attempts to forge a distinctively Irish music.

Séamas de Barra is a composer and a musicologist.

Aloys Fleischmann

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Field Day Music 1

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Field Day Music

The lack of commentary on Irish art music has a number of unfortunate consequences. First, it allows a very incomplete and frequently distorted idea of musical composition and tradition in Ireland to prevail; that in turn has led to simplistic, un-nuanced appraisals of the work of individual figures. An obvious second consequence is that the music of many Irish composers remains largely unknown and unperformed. There is no established canon of major works known to the general public which would create a living context for the reception of new Irish composition. Yet much of this largely unknown repertoire, particularly the music composed since the 1920s, is of an excellence that would establish it firmly in the affections of the listening public, were it given a chance to do so.

This series of monographs was conceived in an attempt to improve this state of affairs. Its object is to provide a scholarly and readable account of the careers and creative achievements of some of the most significant figures in Irish composition. Each volume will provide the reader with some idea of the nature and extent of a composer's work and the context in which it was produced. The monographs are aimed at the general reader as well as at the specialist and will appear annually in pairs, one devoted to an historical figure and the other to a living composer. Forthcoming volumes will survey the careers of Michele Esposito, Ina Boyle, Seóirse Bodley, John Buckley and James Wilson, and it is envisaged that every major figure will be covered in due course.

Séamas de Barra and Patrick Zuk
Durham and St. Petersburg, September 2006

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Aloys Fleischmann, Cork, 1935.
Courtesy of the Fleischmann family.

1 The Fleischmanns and Cork

Aloys Fleischmann was a figure of preeminent significance in Irish musical life in the twentieth century and the varied achievements of his long and multifaceted career have exerted a profound and lasting influence. As a scholar, he produced several publications of landmark importance in the history of Irish musicology, in particular, his pioneering book *Music in Ireland: A Symposium* (1952) and the monumental compendium of the sources of Irish traditional music which he completed shortly before his death. He played a vital role in the development of musical education and the growth of indigenous musical infrastructures. As a conductor, he made a major contribution by introducing many new works by native composers to Irish audiences. But his most enduring legacy is his corpus of original compositions. As one of the first generation of composers to live and work in the country after independence, he consciously sought to fashion a distinctively Irish mode of musical utterance and to create a body of work that would lay the foundation for a native school of composition. Although his output is not extensive, many of these scores evince a refinement of craftsmanship and an imaginative distinction that place them among the finest achievements of the period.

Fleischmann came from a family whose connections with Cork date from 1879 when Hans Conrad Swertz, his maternal grandfather, first arrived in the city. The twenty-one-year-old Swertz had completed his training as a Catholic church musician the previous year, having studied in Rome and Ratisbon [Regensburg], and had come to Cork from Germany to look for suitable employment. His arrival was timely, as the Catholic hierarchy had recently turned its attention to improving the quality of church music. The public presence of the Catholic Church in Ireland had grown steadily throughout the nineteenth century, and its confident assertion of an increasingly dominant position in the political, social and cultural life of the country was conspicuously in evidence in the many new church buildings erected in this period. The repressive anti-Catholic penal laws, enacted from the 1690s and not fully repealed until 1829, had inhibited the development of any native tradition of Catholic church music. Now, however, music appropriate to the restored dignity of the Irish Church was required to enhance the services, particularly in the cathedrals. To this end the Irish hierarchy recruited professionally trained musicians from abroad, principally from Germany, who were to be engaged as organists and choirmasters.

Swertz was presumably aware of these developments and had known that there were prospects for employment in Ireland before he came. But his decision to leave Germany is likely to have been

for personal as much as for professional reasons. After his graduation, he had taken the position of organist in the Church of St. Jakob in Dachau, a market town about twelve miles north-west of Munich. Here he met and fell in love with Walpurga Maria Rössler, the daughter of a well-to-do local tanner. The girl's parents, however, were opposed to her marrying a man who was not only an impecunious musician, which was bad enough in their eyes, but also a Prussian, which was even worse. It is possible that Swertz came to Cork in the hope of finding better employment and so making himself more acceptable as a suitor, but it is also possible that the strong disapproval of the girl's family impressed upon him the advisability of removing her as far from Dachau as possible after their marriage. At any rate, not only did Swertz find that Cork could afford him a satisfactory living, but that it was also a sufficiently congenial place for him to consider settling there. On the strength of his obtaining a suitable appointment in one of the city churches he returned to Dachau the following year, married Walpurga and brought his bride to Ireland.¹

By 1880 Cork had developed into the city that, in many respects, is still recognizable today. Until the end of the seventeenth century it had remained a narrow walled town built on two islands created by the channels of the river Lee as they flowed through a large expanse of marshy ground. The old fortifications were gradually demolished after 1690, following Cork's capitulation in the Williamite War, and this allowed the city to spread beyond its ancient boundaries and to incorporate the various suburbs that had grown up outside the walls. Once begun, the expansion had continued rapidly and involved the large-scale reclamation of the surrounding marshland and the arching over of many small waterways. As the Lee is navigable right into the heart of the city, Cork's situation — only a few miles from the coast and yet close to the rich pastureland of Munster — made it eminently suitable for development as an important trading port. Its increasing wealth during the eighteenth century derived largely from the export of provisions, especially butter, for which it became famous. Commercial and civic life moved progressively eastwards from the old medieval quarter, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, the modern city centre had taken its present shape. The architecture and layout of the new streets, and the graciousness of the new residential districts reflected thriving business and comfortable affluence, and with its hills rising to the north and to the south and the city itself lying snugly in the valley, now watered by the two principal channels into which the Lee had been confined, nineteenth-century Cork presented a very favourable aspect and struck many visitors as a most attractive place.²

It appears that there was considerable musical activity in the city at the time of Swertz's arrival. Apart from recitals by visiting artists, performances by touring opera companies and concerts given by local professional musicians, there was also a thriving choral society — the Cork Musical Society — which presented the standard oratorio repertoire, as well as the Band of the Cork Orchestral Union, an orchestra of over forty players that gave a series of public concerts each season. But the most significant recent event, and the one with the furthest-reaching consequences for the development of music in the city, was the establishment of the Cork School of Music in 1878. In the previous year, Nicholas Murphy, Member of Parliament for Cork, had been instrumental in having the Public Libraries Amendment Act (Ireland) passed in the House of Commons. This Act permitted grants of public money to be made available for the provision of education in music under the same conditions provided in an earlier

1 The present chapter is indebted to Ruth Fleischmann's research into the history of the Fleischmann family. She has also generously made drafts of work in progress and translations of letters and other material available to me. Swertz was initially appointed assistant organist to Herr Thinnes at St. Vincent's Church in Sunday's Well, Cork, where, largely due to the enthusiastic efforts of Fr. Edward Gaynor, there was a flourishing choral tradition since the beginning of the 1870s. Swertz succeeded Thinnes in the post of principal organist at St. Vincent's upon the latter's return to Germany. See Regina Deacy, *Continental Organists and Catholic Church Music in Ireland, 1860–1960*, unpublished dissertation, National University of Ireland, Maynooth (2005), 39–40.

2 For a recent analysis of the economic development of Cork, see David Dickson, *Old World Colony: Cork and South Munster 1630–1830* (Cork, 2005).

Act of 1855 for education in science and art. Cork Corporation promptly availed of this opportunity, and within eighteen months the Cork School of Music was opened in temporary premises at 51 Grand Parade. This institution was the first municipal school of music in the United Kingdom to be established on this basis — the Guildhall School of Music in London followed in 1880, while Dublin had to wait until 1890.³

Swertz quickly established himself as a recitalist and teacher in Cork, and he was engaged to teach organ, singing, composition and harmony at the newly opened School of Music. A number of his compositions were published in England, which no doubt also added to his local prestige.⁴ He advanced in his profession. In 1890 he was appointed organist and choirmaster at the Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. Mary and St. Anne, and he was subsequently made diocesan inspector of church music. Nine children were born to Hans Conrad Swertz and his wife. The eldest, a girl, was born in 1881 and named Maria Walpurga. She had a distinguished academic career, becoming Lecturer in German in University College Cork in 1909, and in 1911, she was appointed the first Professor of German there.⁵ Matilda, or Tilly, the second child, was born in 1882, and appears to have been the only member of the family to inherit her father's musical gifts. She received her early training both as pianist and organist at home and she showed sufficient talent for her parents to send her to the Royal Academy of Music in Munich in 1901.⁶ Here she studied organ under Josef Becht and piano under Bernard Stavenhagen, then a director of the Academy and one of the most acclaimed pianists of his day. Stavenhagen had been one of Liszt's last students. The master had held him in exceptionally high regard and had taken particular care with his training. He enjoyed an eminent reputation as a virtuoso who combined a penetrating imagination with an incomparable technique, and he was widely regarded as one of the greatest exponents of the Lisztian tradition of pianism. When Stavenhagen left the Munich Academy in 1904, Tilly completed her studies under Berthold Kellermann, another distinguished pupil of Liszt.

Tilly did not find her first months in Munich easy. She had to contend with numerous frustrations, and the resolute manner in which she did so testifies to her strength of character. To her surprise and dismay, Stavenhagen informed her that her technique was fundamentally inadequate. 'This is the most miserable day I have had for years' — she wrote in her diary on 20 September 1901 — 'I have to commence five-finger exercises again. Scales I must practice with one hand as slowly as possible. He said my technique was utterly wrong, even the position of my hand. I must play for hours with one finger and have to chuck everything else.' In spite of this blow to her self-esteem, she found Stavenhagen an inspiring teacher and came to understand the reasons for his method as he impressed upon her the difference between the easy-going approach that satisfies the amateur and the discipline demanded by professionalism. She made up her mind 'to work hard and to overcome all difficulties', and she quickly

3 Bernard Curtis, *Centenary of the Cork School of Music: Progress of the School 1878–1978* (Cork, 1978), 9–17

4 Swertz's papers and MSS did not come into the possession of the Fleischmann family and are presumed lost. The eight published compositions by Swertz in the Fleischmann Papers, Archive of University College Cork, are also in the British Library. The scores themselves are undated, but the British Library Catalogue gives the dates of publication as listed below. Seven of these pieces are songs for voice and piano: *Evening Hymn* (T. H. Wright) and *Violets* (Louisa Henderson Williams) both published in London in 1893; *I Love Thee* (Thomas Hood), *Cradle Song* (A. Doyle), *Ruth* (Thomas Hood), *The Time of Roses* (Thomas Hood), *Troubadour Song* (Mrs. Hemans), all published in Liverpool in 1894. The eighth item is for SATB and organ: *Three Aves*, No. 1: 'Ave Maria' (only the first of the three appears to have been published), published in Liverpool in 1895. There is one further work by Swertz in the Fleischmann Papers, an undated pencil MS of *Flora's Bower* (Theodore S. Fay) for voice and piano.

5 In *The College: A History of Queen's/University College Cork* (Cork, 1995), John A. Murphy gives 1909 as the date of Walpurga Swertz's appointment as Professor of German, but Ruth Fleischmann gives 1911 (on information supplied to her by Catriona Mulcahy of the Archive of University College Cork). Wally Swertz was on holiday in Germany when war broke out in 1914 and she was unable to return to Ireland. She died of tuberculosis in Kempen in 1915.

6 The conservatoire in Munich was renamed the *Königlich Akademie der Tonkunst* [Royal Academy of Music] in 1892. In 1924, it became the *Staatliche Akademie der Tonkunst* [State Academy of Music].

established herself as a young pianist of promise.⁷ She performed annually at the Academy's public concerts and, while still a student, she was invited to play the Schumann Concerto with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra under Felix Mottl, and the Weber *Konzertstück* under Stavenhagen himself.⁸

Shortly after she first arrived in Germany, Tilly visited her mother's family in Dachau where she met and became friendly with Aloys Fleischmann, a young musician and composer and a native of the town. Fleischmann had recently been appointed organist and choirmaster to the Church of St. Jakob, the position Tilly's father had relinquished to come to Ireland over twenty years before, and he was just beginning to make a name for himself in the cultural life of the region. The friendship blossomed, and in 1904 Fleischmann travelled to Cork to ask Swertz for his daughter's hand in marriage. Ironically, given his own experience, Swertz felt that Fleischmann was an unsuitable match and disapproved. But Tilly, following her mother's example, ignored her father and the couple were married in Dachau in 1905, where they spent the first year of their life together.

In 1906 Swertz resigned his cathedral post in Cork. It seems that this decision was at least in part prompted by the *Motu proprio* of Pius X which had been issued three years previously in an attempt to regulate the use of music in the Church. In virtually limiting the music that was now permitted in the liturgy to plainchant and sixteenth-century polyphony, this spelled the end of the repertoire to which he, his choir and the cathedral congregations had been accustomed. Furthermore, in emphasizing that boys' voices were preferable to women's voices, the *Motu proprio*, strongly discouraged women from singing in church choirs, even if it did not actually prohibit them from doing so. This question of the role of female singers was a complex one and centred on the precise liturgical function of the choir, but whatever the subtleties of the argument, the Vatican had unambiguously indicated its wishes and this was sufficient for the Irish bishops.⁹ The practical result was that Swertz's carefully trained mixed-voice choir was now effectively redundant. Swertz was clearly not prepared to adapt his taste to Papal legislation and found it impossible to accept these unwelcome new developments. But there were also other reasons, it seems, behind his resignation. It appears he had lost a great deal of money on the stock market and believed he might more easily recoup his losses in the United States. It is possible, too, that he was anxious to escape from a marriage that was no longer happy. All that is known for certain is that he went to Philadelphia, where he was organist of the Church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin until his death in 1927.

Swertz never returned to Ireland. His wife and family, however, remained behind in Cork. While the nature of his subsequent relations with them is not clear, his departure undoubtedly left them in very straitened circumstances. He does not appear to have made any provision for their maintenance, and he may well have been unable to do so. In 1906, seven of the nine Swertz children were still either at school or university, and Tilly was the only one in a position to contribute to the family income. When Aloys Fleischmann applied for the post from which his father-in-law had just resigned, it was because of the urgent need to find some means of supporting the Swertz family.

When he arrived in Cork in 1906, Fleischmann never imagined he would spend the rest of his life there. He regarded the move as a necessary but strictly temporary arrangement. He fully intended to return to Germany at the first suitable opportunity, and there is a story in the Fleischmann family that he did not unpack his trunks for two years. 'I had no intention of spending my life abroad even if six times better conditions were to be found there', he wrote to a friend in Dachau towards the end of his life. 'However, before it became possible for me to return in comfortable circumstances, there came

7 Tilly Fleischmann, *Diary for the Year 1901*, unpublished MS, Fleischmann Papers, Archive of University College Cork, hereafter FP

8 See Michael O'Neill, 'Editor's Preface', in Tilly Fleischmann, *Aspects of the Liszt Tradition* (Cork, 1986).

9 It was not a simple matter of 'banning' women from singing in church choirs. See the entry for 'Music, Ecclesiastical' in *Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York, 1911) for a discussion of the subtleties of the question.

the frightful storm of war, revolution, inflation, misery, suffering and tears.¹⁰

While still a boy, Fleischmann had shown ability as a composer. Already, at the age of fifteen, he had been commissioned to write a choral work for the Dachau Journeymen's Association, which suggests that he had been given a thorough early musical training. The following year, he was admitted to the preliminary two-year course at the Royal Academy of Music in Munich. He passed the entrance examination for the Academy's full-time course in 1898 and, as well as taking the subjects necessary to equip him as a church musician, he studied counterpoint and composition under Josef Rheinberger. As he had been offered the position of organist in Dachau before the completion of his studies, he was allowed to sit his final examinations in September 1901 after three years instead of the normal four. He graduated with distinction, receiving the best possible grade in all subjects.

From the outset he showed himself to be an idealistic and enthusiastic young man of considerable energy and organizing talent. On taking up the post in Dachau, he immediately set himself the task of improving the standard of music in the town, and in January 1902 he founded a choir school to provide musical training for the local children. He broadened its scope the following autumn to provide tuition for adults. In October 1905 the town council approved his plan to establish a school of music, which was intended to complement the choir school and extend the range of tuition available to include instrumental lessons and instruction in music theory. He succeeded in arranging for musicians from the Munich Court Orchestra to travel to Dachau as teachers, and he even negotiated with a large Munich firm to provide instruments at low cost and to accept payment by instalment. In his initial submission to the town council outlining his plan, he emphasized that the school of music should not be regarded as a business venture, making it clear that his Munich colleagues had chosen to participate as a gesture of personal support to him in his efforts to make basic music education widely available, even to children of the poorest classes.

In all these activities he was following in the footsteps of his own father, a man who was deeply involved in the town's civic life and a major force behind the cultural renewal Dachau underwent during this period. He was a master shoemaker and, like other local craftsmen, experienced the adverse effect of the new manufacturing industries on his livelihood. To help counteract this, he founded a trade association for all the traditional crafts; this was very successful in restoring the craftsmen's self-respect and helping them to regain the esteem of the public. He was also the prime mover behind the highly successful craft exhibitions which were organized by the association in 1887, 1901 and 1908. He had a keen interest in music, too, and in 1879 became a founding member of the Dachau *Liedertafel*, a convivial choir, the members of which rehearsed in a tavern (*Liedertafel* means 'song-table'), where they enjoyed food, drink and good conversation after the musical business of the evening was completed. The ensemble also performed in public, especially on civic occasions when they sang to greet visiting dignitaries and to honour local citizens.

Dachau had an unusually large population of artists at this time. The region had attracted landscape painters in ever greater numbers from all over Europe since the middle of the nineteenth century, so much so, that by 1900, it was said that every tenth person to be seen on the streets of the town was an artist. The attraction initially lay in the unique effects of light on the boglands around the town, but increasingly it was because the countryside remained unspoiled and the area retained a traditional way of life that was rapidly vanishing elsewhere. Not only painters, but writers, actors and musicians came as Dachau's fame spread, and while many of these were merely visitors, others settled in the town. Some of them developed a keen appreciation of Dachau's rich folk heritage, which was threatened with

10 'Heimweh nach dem Dachau von einst', *Dachauer Nachrichten*, 24–25 Oct. 1953, quoting Aloys Fleischmann Sr. to a friend in Dachau (trans. Ruth Fleischmann)

extinction due to the modernization of rural life. The artists entered into fruitful cooperation with the local craftsmen, working closely together to mount the craft exhibitions, to preserve the traditions of the region and to further the cultural life of the town.

The young organist of St. Jakob's made an important contribution to this movement in 1902 when he revived an old Dachau tradition of nativity plays in collaboration with a group of distinguished painters who produced the scenery and costumes. For the first two years, he made arrangements of suitable music, but in 1904, encouraged by the success of the previous productions, he composed a new score for a sixteenth-century play, *Ein Altes Weihnachtsspiel* [An Old Nativity Play]. By now the venture had attracted considerable attention, and for this third production the choir of St. Jakob's and the children's choir from the choir school were supported by the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra and the Munich Court Theatre Choir. In 1905, he provided another original score, this time for a play which he and the Munich poet Franz Langheinrich adapted from a Christmas tale by the Swedish writer Selma Lagerlöf, *Die Nacht der Wunder* [The Night of Wonders]. This was his greatest success in Dachau. As before, the performances were conducted by the composer before large and enthusiastic audiences. They were widely and favourably reviewed, with notices appearing in Munich, Berlin, Leipzig, Graz, and even in London and New York. The following notice appeared in the *Munich Theater- und Vergnügungs-Anzeiger* [Entertainment Gazette] in January 1905:

For a young musician lives in Dachau: Alois [sic] Fleischmann, who is not merely content to fulfil his duties as choirmaster, but in his free time does all sorts of fine things. And that is how he came upon the idea of putting on a nativity play at Christmas. This was by no means a figment of his imagination, but a re-creation of something which had been dormant for all too long. For in the middle of the 18th. century passion plays were put on in Dachau. There was also a theatre for the citizens, and we know of eight plays that were performed there, for the written texts are extant. But gradually both the theatre and the passion plays were forgotten, until Alois Fleischmann put on the first nativity play in 1902 with his choral school.

Writing specifically about *Die Nacht der Wunder*, the reviewer goes on to say:

[The] music which Fleischmann wrote for this text is excellent. It is definitely modern; the preludes and interludes are in a certain sense even 'programme music'; the choral parts, too, are proof of the greatest ability. ... The performances took place on the 6th. and 8th. of January to full houses. The last performance in particular ... was so well attended that hundreds of people had to be turned away as there were no tickets left.¹¹

There was one further production in January 1906 before Fleischmann left for Cork. Not surprisingly, given the extent of his contribution to the cultural life of the town, his departure was viewed with some dismay. One of the Dachau newspapers commented:

Though quite a young man, he has become known all over Germany for his nativity plays and has won unstinted applause in all the prominent papers and art journals, thus attaining a high reputation as an artist. ... He has also appeared with great success as composer. In all respects

11 *Theater- und Vergnügungs-Anzeiger: Konzert-Rundschau*, 15–21 Jan. 1905 (trans. Ruth Fleischmann)

we lose in Herr Fleischmann one of our most talented sons and his unexpected departure will be deeply regretted by all.¹²

Before he left Dachau Fleischmann arranged a number of folk melodies, old Christmas carols, for wind ensemble and organized for them to be played from the steeple of the parish church on Christmas Eve each year. This lovely custom, which gives a good insight into the nature and quality of his imagination, continued annually until 1945. It is said that the players of the *Turmmusik* [steeple music], as it was called, were asked to direct the music towards his mother's house as a special greeting from her son in Ireland.¹³ He undoubtedly found the move from his native place very difficult. 'Since then', he remarked towards the end of his life, 'I have been living in the past, dreaming of the old times, of the shadow play of youth, of the distant sun of home.'¹⁴ Exile created a permanent undercurrent of sadness in his life.

Despite his not speaking any English when he first arrived in Cork, he immediately set about the task of reorganizing music in the cathedral along the lines laid down by the *Motu proprio*. His attempts to implement these reforms initially met with resistance, and there was considerable opposition, both to the substitution of boys' for women's voices and to the abandonment of the colourful masses of Haydn, Mozart and Gounod that Swertz had apparently favoured, for plainchant and the austere polyphony of the sixteenth century.¹⁵ But he gradually overcame the difficulties. Within a year or two, the reputation of the cathedral choir was securely established, and he personally had won the highest praise for his achievements from both clergy and laity. By 1910, Fleischmann could look back with some satisfaction on what he had accomplished. 'A long period of intensive work now lies behind me, which for the first time here has brought me genuine, substantial success', he wrote to his wife in Munich in 1910:

It is a success which has derived from within and which has richly rewarded my efforts. I am even myself astonished at the ease with which both boys and men now approach new work which is unfamiliar to them. Yesterday for instance I rehearsed a new motet with them which demands the finest nuances and sensitivity both from boys and men. Just imagine trying to finish a new motet in one rehearsal two years ago — it would have been impossible. I have indeed learned an immense amount in recent times, and it is as though this were transmitted unconsciously to others. What a frightful dread I suffered when I had to face all those difficult tasks demanding diplomatic skills and the practical tricks of the trade! Now I have to laugh at myself ...¹⁶

Apart from his work in the cathedral he taught singing and piano in St. Finbarr's College, the Diocesan Seminary, and he became generally involved in the musical life of Cork. He joined the staff of the Cork School of Music in 1920 as a teacher of harmony and singing, and in 1921, he re-established the choir there. Tilly also joined the staff of the School of Music in 1920. The cathedral choir eventually numbered about a hundred singers — sixty men and forty boys — and it acquired considerable renown for the excellence of its performances.¹⁷ Apart from its regular functions, it performed in church services for

12 *Dachau Anzeiger*, 6 Aug. 1906 (trans. Ruth Fleischmann)

13 As recounted by Ruth Fleischmann, who heard the story from Tilly Fleischmann, her grandmother

14 'Heimweh nach dem Dachau von einst', *Dachauer Nachrichten*, 24–25 Oct. 1953, quoting a letter from Aloys Fleischmann Sr. to a friend in Dachau (trans. Ruth Fleischmann)

15 See Aloys Fleischmann, 'Music in Cork', in Aloys Fleischmann, ed., *Music in Ireland: A Symposium* (Cork and Oxford, 1952), 272.

16 Aloys Fleischmann Sr. to Tilly Fleischmann in Munich, n.d. (after Easter 1910) (trans. Ruth Fleischmann)

17 One of the most gratifying testimonials Fleischmann received was from Arnold Bax who wrote to the *Daily Telegraph* after hearing the cathedral choir perform at Feis Maitiu: '... but what I heard convinced me that that this choir could hold its own in competition with any organisation devoted to the rendering of similar music in any part of these islands'. See *Daily Telegraph*, 4 May 1929; Séamas de Barra, 'Arnold Bax, the Fleischmanns and Cork', *Journal of Music in Ireland*, 5, 1 (2005), 24–30.

the university twice a year and broadcast programmes of sacred polyphony both for Irish radio and, from time to time, for the BBC World Service.¹⁸ Fleischmann continued to compose after he came to Cork. There is a large corpus of music that includes many choral works, both sacred and secular; over one hundred songs mostly in the tradition of the German lied; and music for orchestra, organ and piano.¹⁹ His music has a direct and appealing lyricism and his creative imagination remained deeply indebted to the German romanticism of his youth.

Tilly became pregnant in 1909. She had gone to Munich in the autumn of that year to give concerts and to have further lessons with Berthold Kellerman at the Royal Academy of Music. She decided to remain there until the baby arrived. This might seem a surprising decision, especially as her family lived in Cork. It appears, however, that she felt she would have greater peace of mind and be better cared for if she stayed with her relations in Munich than if she returned home to her own mother, even though it would mean a difficult separation from her husband. By all accounts, Frau Swertz was a somewhat volatile woman, given to temperamental outbursts, and Fleischmann (who described his mother-in-law as ‘the volcano’) fully supported his wife’s decision to stay.²⁰ ‘I myself now believe it is best for you to give birth in Munich, that this will bring you greater calm and security’, he wrote, ‘Because if you came back to [Cork] you couldn’t avoid scenes. ... But I’ll say it again. Go by your feelings, your instinct.’²¹ There appears to have been a considerable degree of tension, if not actual estrangement between Frau Swertz and the Fleischmann couple. ‘The old woman alas remains herself’, Fleischmann ruefully remarked in a letter to Tilly in April 1910 shortly before the birth.²² ‘But if you think it is good for you to remain’, he reiterated, ‘that the care is better, then stay! Your welfare, your health alone should speak the decisive word — no other consideration. ... Don’t worry about me, not for one moment!’²³

‘Rejoice, shout, jump, play and sing my joy — all that I can do after my own fashion’, he wrote in exuberant response to the telegram that brought him the news that Tilly had given birth to a son on 13 April:

But I can’t say anything, can’t write anything. Such miracles as these which are done unto us humans are too great for words. The feeling of happiness which has taken possession of me is so deep and so powerful that I have to remain silent, look upwards in silence and in spirit be with you, with you both, sharing your experience, your joy, your tenderness. That is all I am capable of at the moment.²⁴

Tilly and the baby remained in Munich until June when her husband travelled to bring them home.

By 1910, Fleischmann had adjusted fairly contentedly to his circumstances in Cork. He had become acclimatized to the different culture and had mastered English sufficiently. He had also earned wide respect as a musician, and now with his talented wife and his infant son safely restored to him, the future must have seemed bright, even if there was little immediate prospect of returning to Germany as he would have wished. In 1914, however, the outbreak of war brought this period of stability to an

18 Fleischmann also broadcast on Irish radio as an organist. See Maurice Gorham, *Forty Years of Irish Broadcasting* (Dublin, 1967), 75. In this connection it is worth noting in passing that Tilly Fleischmann was the first pianist from Ireland to broadcast on the BBC. See Fleischmann, ‘Music in Cork’, 272.

19 All of the MSS of Aloys Fleischmann Sr.’s compositions, together with published scores and other related material are preserved in FP.

20 Aloys Fleischmann Sr. to Tilly Fleischmann in Munich, n.d. (Oct. 1909) (trans. Ruth Fleischmann), FP

21 Aloys Fleischmann Sr. to Tilly Fleischmann in Munich, n.d. (probably late Jan. 1910) (trans. Ruth Fleischmann), FP

22 Aloys Fleischmann Sr. to Tilly Fleischmann in Munich, n.d. (Apr. 1910) (trans. Ruth Fleischmann), FP

23 Aloys Fleischmann Sr. to Tilly Fleischmann in Munich, n.d. (probably Jan. 1910) (trans. Ruth Fleischmann), FP

24 Aloys Fleischmann Sr. to Tilly Fleischmann in Munich, n.d. (14 Apr. 1910) (trans. Ruth Fleischmann), FP

abrupt end. Ireland was under British rule, and as an immigrant from what was now an enemy state, he found himself regarded as a potential threat to the realm. He was taken into custody on 18 August. The Fleischmanns had made many friends in Cork who immediately rallied to their assistance and John J. Horgan, solicitor and deputy-coroner for County Cork, and Rev. John Russell of the cathedral undertook to guarantee his good behaviour to the authorities.²⁵ He was released a few days later, but shortly afterwards the family was ordered to leave the city when Cork was declared a prohibited area for aliens.²⁶ They stayed with Colonel Kirkpatrick of Mallow, whose daughter Victoria was a pupil of Tilly's. The Colonel, who belonged to an influential Anglo-Irish family, intervened successfully on their behalf, as did Denis Kelly, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Cork, the Lord Mayor, the High Sheriff, John J. Horgan and others. On 15 September the Fleischmanns were allowed back to their home.²⁷

Fleischmann submitted a petition to the Home Office on 27 May 1915 seeking exemption from internment.²⁸ To the family's relief, this was granted, and for eight months they were able to lead a normal life. But official attitudes changed during 1915 partly as a result of the sinking of the British liner *Lusitania* off the coast of County Cork on 7 May by a German U-boat. In Fleischmann's case, the fact that he numbered many extreme nationalists amongst his friends may have further compromised him in the eyes of the authorities.²⁹ Furthermore, Frau Swertz was outspoken in her support of Germany.³⁰ Ultimately, Fleischmann's exemption was withdrawn at the beginning of 1916. 'There has evidently been some trouble in connection with Cork which has ... no doubt caused [the] stricter regulations which have now hit you so terribly', Mary Kirkpatrick, the Colonel's wife, wrote to Tilly.³¹ Fleischmann was arrested during the night of 4 January 1916 and sent to an internment camp in Oldcastle, County Meath. The reason given for his internment was that he had posted a letter to Germany in November 1915. This was a Christmas greeting to his mother in Dachau.³² There were twenty-two further charges of pro-German spying and sabotage including the allegation that he had a wireless telegraph in

25 On 18 August 1914, the day Fleischmann was taken into custody, Russell and Horgan signed a declaration (which is written in Horgan's handwriting) bearing witness to his good character and taking responsibility for his good behaviour. Fleischmann promised good conduct and compliance with all police instructions. On 20 August he received a Pass from the Commandant of the Cork Detention Barracks (now Collins Barracks) stating that he was deemed 'a person in no way dangerous to the safety of the realm'. On 22 August he was granted an Alien Permit of Residence, FP. Horgan was the son-in-law of Bertram Windle, who was appointed President of Queen's College Cork in 1904. He was a contributor to the *Leader* and author of *From Parnell to Pearse: Some Recollections and Reflections* (Dublin, 1948), and as coroner at the inquest following the sinking of the *Lusitania* off the coast of County Cork in 1915, he made world headlines when he brought in a verdict of 'wilful and wholesale murder' against the Kaiser and the German government. See Des Hickey and Gus Smith, *Seven Days to Disaster* (London, 1982), 280.

26 Under the Aliens Restriction Order, Section 19

27 See Fleischmann's Petition to the Home Office of 27 May 1915 in which he recounts what happened the previous year, and the letter of 12 September 1914 from the General Officer commanding the Queenstown Defences permitting Fleischmann's return to Cork, FP.

28 Petition, 27 May 1915, and John J. Horgan, 'Memorandum re Aloys Fleischmann', FP; Horgan drew up the memorandum in January 1916 when he was attempting to have Fleischmann released from Oldcastle.

29 Writing to Tilly from the internment camp at Oldcastle, County Meath, Fleischmann reflected on the implication of his friendships with republicans: 'Muriel [MacSwiney; Terence MacSwiney's wife] wrote to me on 18 March that even if I never wrote a line to her, she could understand; but she warned me not to neglect my friends if I didn't want to lose them! I have always held her in the highest regard, and entrusted her both with Bubi [his young son's pet name, meaning little boy or lad] and with music. Remember this: fanaticism can never rise above matter; it makes people blind, makes them act without scruple, it destroys ruthlessly and is almost impossible to cure.' Aloys Fleischmann to Tilly Fleischmann 23 Aug. 1916 (trans. Ruth Fleischmann), FP

30 See Tilly Fleischmann's niece Patricia Cox, née O'Malley-Williams, in Ruth Fleischmann, ed., *Aloys Fleischmann (1910–1992): A Life for Music in Ireland Remembered by Contemporaries* (Cork, 2000), 352: 'One reason why perhaps the Fleischmanns and the O'Malley-Williams didn't "gel" was my grandmother's and my mother's interest in German politics. Granny Swertz was awarded the Iron Cross, Third Class, for her continued support of all things German. Although she really was quite poor, she always managed to give a small donation to the *Winterhilfe* fund and I believe she never changed her nationality, retaining her German citizenship until her death in 1945.'

31 Mary Kirkpatrick, London, to Tilly Fleischmann, 5 Jan. 1916, FP

32 See Horgan, 'Memorandum re Aloys Fleischmann'.

his garden (it was in fact a bird house); that he frequented the coast with a telescope watching for submarines (he and John Horgan used to go bird-watching with field glasses in Oysterhaven); that he had been sighted pouring poison into the Lee near the Cork waterworks.³³ He remained in Oldcastle until 25 May 1918, when the German civilian internees were shipped to a camp on the Isle of Man. The Fleischmanns were not to see each other again for over two years. Even when the war was over, there was no immediate return to normality. Early in 1919, he was moved to London, and from there he was sent to Germany, where he was obliged to remain for another year. There was a real fear at this time that he and his family would not be permitted to resume their lives in Cork and that they would be deported back to Germany altogether. It was only in September 1920 that he was finally allowed to return home. He had been away for almost five years.

All the strength of character that Tilly had previously demonstrated was tested to the utmost during these years and she responded to difficult circumstances with determination and courage. Fortunately, she was a competent organist and Daniel Coholan, appointed Bishop of Cork in 1916, gave her permission to assume her husband's duties in the cathedral during his absence. She also continued her own teaching practice, gave recitals, and looked after their small son. She emerged from the war years as a forceful and dominant personality, whereas Fleischmann Sr.'s experiences served to emphasize to an even greater degree his already pronounced tendency to introspection. The couple came to occupy a central role in the musical and cultural life of Cork. They formed many varied and stimulating friendships with people who shared their interests and supported their efforts to further the cause of music in the city. Amongst these were colleagues such as Carl Hardebeck, who commenced his short-lived association with the Cork School of Music just before the Fleischmanns joined the staff, and Germaine Stockley, the singer, and her husband William, Professor of English at the university, a militant nationalist and a close friend of Douglas Hyde, the founder of the Gaelic League. Other friends were artists in different disciplines, such as Séamus Murphy, the sculptor, Patrick Hennessey, the painter, and Daniel Corkery, the writer. They were on very intimate terms with John J. Horgan who, together with his wife, was an actively loyal supporter of various Fleischmann enterprises for many years. This circle of friends also included a number of eminent English musicians such as Arnold Bax and E. J. Moeran. Bax first met the Fleischmanns when he came to Cork in 1929 to adjudicate at the recently established Feis Maitiu, and he returned as their guest almost every year thereafter until his death in their son's house in 1953. Bax introduced Moeran to the Fleischmanns. He also stayed with them regularly on his way to and from Kerry, and was very encouraging to young Aloys in his various undertakings. Life in a provincial, musically underdeveloped city like Cork was not without its attendant frustrations. These friendships were invaluable in keeping the Fleischmanns in touch with the wider world of music and the arts, and they offered some compensation for the narrow philistinism with which they frequently had to contend.

33 See Geraldine Neeson, *In My Mind's Eye: The Cork I Knew and Loved* (Dublin, 2001), 58: 'Aloys [Fleischmann Sr.] suffered greatly during the First World War. Cork, a British garrison town, was full of rumours about Germans — rumours that tormented him. One such was that he was seen pouring poison into the water supply system. This was told about a man so gentle that he would not allow anyone to interfere with a mouse that lived behind the wainscot in his study at the top of the house and emerged every night to gambol about and eat the crumbs that Aloys had set for him!'

2 University College Cork, 1927–32

Young Aloys, or Aloys Óg as he was called to distinguish him from his father, had a difficult childhood in some respects. His father's internment when he was six years old and his mother's arduous struggle to provide for the family were not conducive to a happy home environment, and outside the circle of family and friends he was aware of intense anti-German feeling which, as he recalled, made him feel 'a stranger in his own country'.

It was very strange growing up as a German boy. My parents were of German blood. Half the population was intensely pro-British and the other half was intensely anti-British. So with the pro-British people we were suspect. ... Sometimes I was called after in the street 'You little Hun'!¹

'I was rather solitary on the whole', he said of himself, 'and kept my own counsel.' And, as is often the case with children who spend a great deal of time in the company of adults, he could at times seem precociously mature for his age.² He enjoyed the usual energetic activities of childhood, however, usually in the company of John J. Horgan's two sons who were like brothers to him in these early years.³ He was certainly perfectly capable of mischief. According to his own account, mischief was the reason he was transferred from Scoil Ita, a private preparatory school run by the MacSwiney sisters, to Christian Brothers' College where the discipline was somewhat stricter.⁴ But underneath his sense of fun was a strong sense of dedication and the story is told how, even at this early age, an injury he sustained to his right hand failed to deflect him from his piano practice, which he diligently continued with his left hand alone.⁵ He was unusually idealistic as he grew up, which was not an altogether surprising trait in the only child of a high-minded and unworldly couple like the Fleischmanns. But he was a likeable boy with a winning way and, if a capacity for single-mindedness was evident in his character from the

¹ Daniel Murphy et al., 'Aloys Fleischmann', in *Education and the Arts: The Educational Autobiographies of Contemporary Poets, Novelists, Dramatists, Musicians, Painters and Sculptors. A Research Report* (Dublin, 1987), 198–206, 199

² Murphy et al., 'Aloys Fleischmann', 199

³ Fleischmann, *Aloys Fleischmann*, 356

⁴ 'Aloys Fleischmann in Conversation with Tomás Ó Canainn', in Tomás Ó Canainn, ed., *The Cork Review: Music in Cork* (Cork, 1992), 13–18, 14

⁵ Fleischmann, *Aloys Fleischmann*, 366

beginning, then so too the charm that tempered it.

Fleischmann completed his primary education in Christian Brothers' College, but as his father had connections with St. Finbarr's College, the Diocesan Seminary, his parents considered it more appropriate that he should continue his schooling there. It was during these years in secondary school that the fundamental seriousness of his character came increasingly to the fore. He showed little interest in the pursuits common to boys of his age: games, for instance, held no attraction for him. He had an amusing story about his one venture onto the playing field while a schoolboy. He was participating in a practice hurling match when 'by ill-luck', he said, 'what did I do but score a goal?' On the strength of this fluke, he was chosen to play in an important forthcoming match against St. Colman's College in Fermoy where he failed to hit a single ball — 'but I did hit the man I was supposed to be marking; so I was disgraced.' What attracted him above all was the life of the imagination, and his wide-ranging intellectual curiosity led him to explore extensively the worlds of literature and art as well as music. But he was ambitious too, describing himself as 'a devil for work', and when the results of the 1927 Leaving Certificate Examination were published, he found that he had achieved first place in the country in three subjects and second place in another. 'Even that "second" would have been a first', he said later, 'only that the fellow who got first had done the exam through Irish and, of course, had got a 10% bonus.'⁶ After this distinguished conclusion to his career as a schoolboy, he registered as an undergraduate in University College Cork in the autumn of 1927, at the age of seventeen, to read simultaneously for the degrees of BA and BMus.

Cork had a university since 1845 when the Colleges (Ireland) Act was passed by the British government. This legislation was enacted in response to pressure for reform in university education in the United Kingdom as a whole, but also in order to conciliate the Irish Catholic middle classes and meet their growing demands for higher education facilities. The Act made provision for three colleges — in Cork, Galway and Belfast — which were to become the constituent colleges of the Queen's University in Ireland. Sir Thomas Deane, a local architect, was commissioned to design Queen's College Cork, as it was called, and work commenced on the attractive neo-Gothic buildings in 1847. It was officially inaugurated two years later, on 7 November 1849. The non-denominational nature of the new institution failed to satisfy the demands for a state-funded Catholic university, however, and the growth of the colleges in Cork and Galway were seriously impeded in consequence. Eventually the National University of Ireland was created in 1908 in an attempt to find an acceptable settlement. This comprised the now renamed University College Cork and University College Galway, together with the old Catholic University, which, since 1882, had been known as University College Dublin. As the new arrangement was a compromise designed to placate Catholic hostility, Queen's College Belfast was not included.

When Fleischmann was an undergraduate, University College Cork was still quite small, with about 600 students. It is perhaps a little surprising that it should have had a Chair of Music before any of the other new colleges, and a knowledge of the background to what was at the time a fairly recent development is necessary for a proper understanding, not only of Fleischmann's formative years as a student, but also of his subsequent career. It was largely due to the efforts of Edith Windle, wife of Bertrand Windle, president of the college from 1904 until 1919, that provision was first made for the study of music. Her musical interests brought her into contact with Frederick St. John Lacy, a Cork musician who had studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London and who, apart from his activities as a composer, was well known both as a singer and as a teacher of singing. Mrs. Windle took singing lessons with him and was evidently impressed by his abilities. The exact circumstances are not known — perhaps Lacy had indicated his intention to leave Cork — but it appears that out of her desire to

6 'Aloys Fleischmann in Conversation with Tomás Ó Canainn', 14–15

ensure his continued availability as a teacher, she persuaded her husband to create a lectureship in music with a view to appointing him to the post. Windle himself had no interest in music, but he complied with his wife's suggestion and Lacy was duly appointed in 1906.⁷ The position, however, was virtually a sinecure. During his first session at the College, the new lecturer organized some talks to the students on 'The Growth of English Song', and the following year he was involved in the establishment of a short-lived Glee and Madrigal Society. Apart from this, he did little else, it seems, and although the lectureship was converted into a professorship in 1909, following the passing of the Irish Universities Act the previous year, the College appears to have made few demands on him.⁸ His lecturing duties were minimal, as only five music students took degrees during the entire period of his tenure: the first graduated in 1916, the second twelve years later in 1928, Aloys Fleischmann was the third in 1931, and there were two others before Lacy retired in 1934.

An article published in Cork in 1913 describes Lacy as having written 'operettas, cantatas, services, part-songs, madrigals, ballads, songs, and orchestral music, all characterised by rare beauty and originality'.⁹ He evidently enjoyed some success as a composer, and many of his works were published in London between 1881 and 1905, which seems to have been the period of his most intense creative activity. He became an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in 1888, and was active as a recitalist and teacher in London before he returned to Cork in 1900.¹⁰ He maintained his connection with the Royal Academy, becoming a Fellow in 1911, and his name appears among the list of guests at the centenary banquet on 21 July 1922.¹¹ Although we do not know who his teachers were, it is possible that he studied under either Sir George Macfarren who was Principal of the Academy until 1887, or Sir Alexander Mackenzie who succeeded him. Lacy's Op. 2, a setting of Poe's *Annabel Lee* for tenor, chorus and orchestra, is dedicated to Macfarren. And he dedicated the song *Who Knows?* to Mackenzie, in whose company, together with Stanford, Somerville, Norman O'Neill and others, he contributed to *An English Series of Original Songs*, which appeared around the turn of the century.

The greater part of Lacy's output consists of songs or, more precisely, of drawing-room songs and ballads, and as one might expect from what was generally produced in the genre, these tend to be conventional both in the range of their sentiments and in the style of their music. A few of them, such as the *Seven Songs of Ireland* and *Kate O'Hara*, are in the Victorian Irish vein as cultivated by Stanford, and with their full array of 'sheebreens', 'boreens' and 'potheen' display all the archness of the type. He was equally willing to produce a song in the hearty manner about the fearlessness of the British tar as in *Man Overboard*, while *The Beautiful Shore* and *The Road to Calvary* are examples of the fervent religious ballad replete with swelling refrain and throbbing chordal accompaniment. But, unsurprisingly, most are love songs. If not strikingly original, they are not without charm and there is a sureness of touch

7 Murphy, *The College*, 174. Murphy gives 1903 as the date of Lacy's appointment as lecturer, but this is incorrect as Bertram Windle did not become President of the College until 1904. Fleischmann in 'Music in U.C.C.', *Cork University Record*, 4 (1945), 38, gives the year as 1906.

8 Fleischmann, 'Music in U.C.C.', 38–39

9 John Gilbert, 'A Record of Authors, Artists, and Musical Composers Born in the County Cork', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 19 (1913), 180. See also Fleischmann, 'Music in Cork', 270, where a *Serenade* for orchestra by Lacy is mentioned as having been performed in Cork by the Cork Orchestral Union (1902–10). There are twenty-eight works by Lacy in the British Library, and five additional works in the present writer's collection. These are songs for the most part, although they include a few choral works and two short pieces for violin and piano. His compositions reach at least to Op. 22, although many of the published songs are without opus numbers. Not all of the works to which he gave opus numbers were published it seems and, unfortunately, in eight instances we do not now know even the titles of the corresponding works. Grattan Flood, in *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 1954), assigns Op. 21 to the *Serenade* for orchestra. In one other instance, Op. 8, which appears to have been published, but of which there is no copy in the British Library, we have a title only: 'Chastelar, Song Cycle from the Whyte Melville Tableaux Music'.

10 See Aloys Fleischmann, *The Music Department*, unpublished typescript, n.d. (probably 1987), FP.

11 *Times*, 22 July 1922

in their general organization that evinces a competent professionalism. Similar observations could be made about Lacy's part-songs, although on the whole they are less interesting than the songs for voice and piano, while the church music, like that of many of his contemporaries, is marred by an idiom more appropriate to the drawing room. The choral writing in all of these works is accomplished without being in any way distinguished, which is also true of *Annabel Lee*, apparently the only one of his more ambitious compositions to be published (although, as was common, only the vocal score was printed). The manuscripts of the more substantial works, such as the operettas and the orchestral music, appear not to have survived.

In 1918, the creation of a second university post in music was proposed — a somewhat surprising development as Lacy had not had a student for two years. Oddly, this came about because of circumstances in the Cork School of Music. The Cork County Borough Technical Committee, which was responsible for the School of Music, appointed a subcommittee in 1918 to manage the school's affairs. The complete absence of Irish folk music from the curriculum was a matter of some concern to the members of this subcommittee, and it was felt that, in preparing students solely for examination by English examining bodies, a crucially important dimension of Irish musical life was being ignored. There was an idealistic belief, too, that if the study of Irish folk music became an essential part of music education in Ireland, it would be the best possible preparation for the eventual emergence of a native school of composers.¹² The subcommittee resolved to tackle this problem and it approached Carl Hardebeck, whose work in collecting and arranging native folk music was widely admired, and offered him the combined positions of Headmaster and Professor of Irish Music.¹³ As a further inducement to come to Cork, a Chair of Irish Music funded by Cork Corporation was to be created for him in University College, following a precedent set by Dublin Corporation when it created a similar post at University College Dublin in 1913.¹⁴

Hardebeck accepted the offer and arrived in Cork in 1919. From the outset, his appointment was beset with difficulties. The subcommittee of the School of Music had rashly pledged itself to an annual salary of £300, which it was not in a position to pay, and it was consequently obliged to raise the money from independent sources. This irregular and unsatisfactory situation was never resolved, and the question of Hardebeck's salary remained uncertain for the duration of his stay in Cork.¹⁵ Cork Corporation agreed to provide an annual sum of £100 to finance the chair of Irish music, but there were difficulties here too. Two other candidates — Dr. Annie Patterson and, somewhat surprisingly, Lacy himself — applied for the post and there was a delay in making the appointment. As Annie Patterson had impressive qualifications — she is said to have been the first woman in the world to obtain a Doctorate in Music — she was recommended for the post by the Academic Council of the University College.¹⁶ This was an awkward development. But the appointment had a political dimension that

¹² J. J. O'Connor in 'Hardebeck', *Capuchin Annual* (1943), 236–38

¹³ It seems that the idea of approaching Hardebeck originated with Fr. James Christopher (Christy) O'Flynn, a devotee of Irish music and a member of the 1918 Cork School of Music subcommittee. See Richard O'Donoghue, '... like a tree planted ...' (Dublin 1967), 54–57, and Raymond Smith, *Father O'Flynn: The Well of Love* (Dublin 1964), 47–48. Other members of the subcommittee who supported him were Terence MacSwiney and Daniel Corkery. Fr. O'Flynn is best known now as the founder of the Cork Shakespearean Company, 'The Loft', in which capacity he directed many productions of Shakespeare's plays and coached many young actors, some of whom subsequently went on to have professional acting careers.

¹⁴ Robert O'Dwyer (1862–1949) held this Chair from 1914 until 1939, after which time it fell vacant.

¹⁵ The published accounts differ in details: Curtis, *Centenary of the Cork School of Music*, 71–76, gives £400 per annum as the salary offered by the School of Music subcommittee, and O'Connor, 'Hardebeck', 236–38, gives £300. They agree, however, that the University College salary was £100.

¹⁶ See Fleischmann, *Music Department*: 'Annie Patterson who on being awarded the degree of Mus. D. of the Royal University of Ireland in 1889 became the first woman in the world to obtain an official doctorate (as opposed to an honorary one) in music. (Princess, later Queen, Alexandra was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Royal University in 1885.)'

overrode the matter of academic suitability, and the governing body of the college, sensitive to the wishes of Cork Corporation, resolved the issue by disregarding the views of the Academic Council and recommending Hardebeck.

By the time his appointment was ratified by the Senate of the National University in 1922 Hardebeck had already resigned as headmaster of the Cork School of Music. The immediate reason was the Technical Committee's interference in his and the subcommittee's decision in the matter of an appointment to the staff, but it also seems that he was an inexperienced and ineffective administrator and it is possible that he came to find the position increasingly uncongenial.¹⁷ He agreed to remain on as professor of Irish music, however, which in any case was seen as his crucial role, but other disappointments, such as the failure of the subcommittee to provide the house they had apparently promised him, and the discontinuation of government funding for the publication of his music, eventually led to his complete resignation both from the School of Music and from University College and his return to Belfast in 1923.

The chair of Irish music in University College Cork ceased to exist with Hardebeck's departure and a lectureship was created to replace it, to which Annie Patterson was appointed in 1924. This post was also funded by Cork Corporation.¹⁸ Patterson, who had studied with Sir Robert Prescott Stewart, enjoyed a national reputation not only as an indefatigable propagandist on behalf of Irish music, but also as the principal influence behind the founding of Feis Ceoil in Dublin in 1897. It is not known why she chose to settle in Cork, but she accepted the post of organist at St. Mary's Church, Shandon in 1904 and remained in the city until her death in 1934.¹⁹ She was the author of several popular books, including a study of Schumann first published in 1903 and reprinted in a revised edition in the Master Musicians series the year she died. She also composed a considerable amount of music but, as in Lacy's case, it is possible that the compositions that remained in manuscript — among which were operas, cantatas and symphonic poems — have not survived.²⁰ As might be expected, her published music shows a heavy reliance on folk material, either directly or by derivation. Most of these pieces are straightforward arrangements for voice and piano, while *Ivernia* — a more extended piece for piano — is little more than a chain of linked folk songs, and the rather oddly conceived *Six Irish Musical Monographs*, Op. 35, also for piano, presents various folk melodies in 'Prelude and Fugue Form'. Like Lacy, Patterson's teaching duties in University College were light. Apart from giving lectures to the very occasional music student, she held weekly classes for external students who were interested in Irish music and she gave a public lecture-recital in the Aula Maxima of the college at the end of each term.²¹

17 Curtis, *Centenary of the Cork School of Music*, 74

18 After Dr. Patterson's death in 1934 the post was filled by Seán Neeson. The subsequent history of the Cork Corporation lectureship is outlined by Fleischmann in *Music Department*: 'In 1959 a member of Cork Corporation queried the granting of a salary of £200 p.a. for a Corporation Lectureship in Music, and suggested that the original intention was to subsidise public lectures such as those given by Dr. Patterson, which were not in fact now being given. A lengthy public controversy followed, in the course of which members of the Corporation suggested that they should not spend ratepayers' money subventing a university curriculum, the cost of which was covered by the Department of Education's annual grant. To placate the Corporation a number of public lectures on Irish traditional music were organised by Seán Neeson, but the Corporation's criticism, much of it inaccurate and unfair, was resented by the College, and when Seán Neeson retired in 1963 the Corporation lectureship was abolished and an assistantship in music with special responsibility for Irish music was substituted instead. This post was filled by Seán Ó Riada'.

19 Grattan Flood in *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* gives 1904 as the year she settled in Cork, but Baker's *Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* (New York, 1971) gives 1909.

20 In Baker's *Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, Annie Patterson is credited with the composition of '2 Irish operas, *The High Kings Daughter* and *Oisín*; cantatas; symph; poems; etc.' Joseph Ryan in *Irish Musical Studies 7: Irish Music in the Twentieth Century* (Dublin, 2003), 54, reports his failure to locate the MSS of the operas.

21 Fleischmann, 'Music in U.C.C.', 39

Fleischmann had already received a fairly comprehensive musical education before he came under the tutelage of Lacy and Patterson in 1927. His earliest training was from his parents, his father teaching him the organ and his mother the piano. He also studied the violin at the Cork School of Music with W. E. Brady until the age of fourteen or so. But equally decisive in his development was his good fortune in being brought up in a home where music was of central importance. From infancy he had the opportunity of hearing his mother play the standard piano repertoire, as well as music by modern composers such as Debussy and Bax. He also became thoroughly familiar with the plainchant and sixteenth-century polyphony sung by his father's choir, and as a boy he was often called upon to play the organ for rehearsals. He considered his mother to have been a good but extremely severe teacher:

As a small boy, I cried a great deal. She had no mercy on me, especially because I was her son. The piano lessons were unhappy — I was not a good pianist. But with really good students she was excellent, but a little too severe on people who were less brilliant.²²

His father, who had a gentler personality, instructed him in harmony and counterpoint as well as teaching him the organ, and before he entered university he had already acquired a very good grounding in the fundamentals of composition.

The courses he took under Lacy were thorough. As was usual at the time, the emphasis was on the disciplined acquisition of technical fluency in composition, which in practice largely meant the study of harmony and counterpoint. Lacy clearly attached the greatest importance to the mastery of strict counterpoint, which presumably reflected his own training at the Royal Academy. Examination papers from his period as professor of music show that it was set for all three years of the degree examinations, progressing from counterpoint in two and three parts in the first year to five parts. In addition, the third-year candidate was expected to tackle questions on double counterpoint and canon, and to compose a fugal exposition in four parts on a given subject. The full range of standard chromatic harmony was also taught, and examination questions ranged from realizing a figured bass and harmonizing a melody to the composition of variations over a ground bass in five parts in the third year. These technical studies were supplemented by courses in music history, analysis and basic orchestration.

In Patterson's Irish music course the emphasis was on the harmonization and arrangement of folk melodies both for voices and for instruments. The provision of tuition in playing folk instruments and the study of the performing practice of traditional musicians were developments of a later era. Like most of her contemporaries, Patterson was primarily concerned with finding ways in which folk music could be assimilated to the classical manner, as exemplified in her own compositions. But the technical aspects of folk music, the various categories into which Irish folk music may be divided, the work of the collectors and so on, were also covered. Patterson's course was undoubtedly beneficial to Fleischmann in that it familiarized him with a wide range of folk material and gave him the opportunity to explore the resources of modal harmony.

Lacy, it seems, was somewhat rigid in his approach to teaching. He had a tendency simply to pronounce on what was or was not permitted, and he did not appreciate it if his dicta were challenged. Fleischmann's sense of diplomacy allowed him to negotiate these difficulties successfully, however, and he got on well with his professor. If in his later years he allowed himself to describe Lacy as pedantic, he had good reason to be grateful for the training he received at his hands, the full benefits of which only became apparent to him after he went to study in Germany.²³ As his own music demonstrates, there

²² Murphy et al., 'Aloys Fleischmann', 198–99

²³ See 'Aloys Fleischmann in Conversation with Tomás Ó Canainn', 15.

can be no doubt about Lacy's command of the compositional resources he sought to impart, and what survives of Fleischmann's undergraduate work testifies not only to Lacy's competence as a teacher but also to the care with which he guided his talented student's progress. The consistently high standard of this work is, of course, also a testimony to Fleischmann's dedication as a student, and the degree of fluency he attained during his years as an undergraduate laid the only possible foundation for the success of his subsequent studies in Munich, and ultimately for his impressive technical assurance as a composer.²⁴

Fleischmann may have appreciated their teaching skills, but he remained unimpressed and uninfluenced by Lacy and Patterson as composers. Although he would undoubtedly have sympathized with her advocacy of Irish folk music as the basis for a national school of composition, he considered Annie Patterson's own music to have little vitality, and Lacy's conventional drawing-room manner he viewed as belonging to a vanished world of Victorian gentility that was as remote from the Ireland of the late 1920s as it was from his own creative aspirations. Ultimately, it was Hardebeck's work that was to prove the greatest source of imaginative stimulus for him.

Fleischmann seems to have attempted very little original composition while at university. But given the fact that as an undergraduate he was reading for two degrees, and considering how anxious he was to excel, his studies left him little time for creative work. From his earliest years, of course, he was accustomed to putting pen to music paper under the guidance of his father, and he grew up in a household where writing music was an everyday occurrence. But he never seems to have been seriously distracted from the systematic acquisition of standard compositional techniques by any overwhelmingly insistent creative impulse, until, at some point while he was an undergraduate, the desire to compose was definitely awakened. It is not clear just how much music he actually composed during this period. Two songs and a Movement for String Quartet survive, and it seems unlikely that very much more was written. Not surprisingly, Fleischmann's parents welcomed these early efforts and his mother persuaded him to show his work to Bax. 'Bax, of course, was very shy and wouldn't hurt anybody: you can imagine what he thought of my compositions, but he was very encouraging', he recalled. And when the family visited Munich in 1932 in order to make arrangements prior to his enrolling at the State Academy of Music, his father engaged a group of professional musicians to play through the Movement for String Quartet for him.²⁵

The songs are settings of *Prelude*, by John Millington Synge, and *Cradle Song*, by Edward Sheehy, who was a friend and fellow student at University College. Although *Prelude* is not a fully realized piece, both the choice of poem and the nature of Fleischmann's compositional response to Synge's words are of interest in the light of his subsequent development. The poet moves 'far from cities, and the sites of men', and 'did but half remember human words, / In converse with the mountains, moors, and fens.' To write thus of seeking spiritual refreshment in nature may be, in Corkery's words, a 'Wordsworthian echo', but it is an Irish landscape that Synge evokes, and Fleischmann attempts to capture the mood with a vocal line that is obviously indebted to the contours of Irish folk song.²⁶ This is supported by a harmonic idiom firmly rooted in a diatonic modality that already clearly reflects Hardebeck's influence. *Cradle Song* is a somewhat more accomplished piece. The Ireland of Sheehy's poem is the Ireland of the Celtic Twilight where

24 Axel Klein, 'Irish Composers and Foreign Education: A Study of Influences', in *Irish Musical Studies 4: The Maynooth International Musicological Conference 1995. Selected Proceedings: Part 1* (Dublin, 1996), 274, refers to Fleischmann's 'provincial background in Cork, which offered no composition-teaching at all apart from comments on his work from his parents'. Clearly, this is incorrect.

25 'Aloys Fleischmann in Conversation with Tomás Ó Canainn', 13, 16

26 Daniel Corkery, *Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature* (Cork, 1947 [1931]), 229

The white-maned horses of Lir from the deep
 Roll on to the long lonely shore, by the steep
 Side of Caherconroi in the mist ...

It is a neat piece of pastiche in the early Yeats manner, and it suggested to Fleischmann a more chromatic setting that, interestingly, echoes Bax's responses to the same kind of Celtic Twilight imagery.

Folk song is also the primary influence on the thematic material of the Movement for String Quartet. This is a far more ambitious work than either of the songs and Fleischmann seeks to ensure structural unity by deriving the textures from a handful of salient motifs, although the successful creation of a substantially longer span of music is as yet beyond his organizational powers. The immaturity of these pieces is not surprising. But while they may have little intrinsic interest, they reveal that, from the very beginning, Fleischmann's impulse to compose was intimately bound up with the desire to express his sense of Irishness. This is something he may have only dimly realized at first, but it is surprising how quickly he came to grasp the nature of his own creative imagination and to appreciate the context it needed in order to function. Before he left the university, he had elaborated this realization into a fully articulated position.

In 1931, Fleischmann made an important contribution to the general cultural life of the college when he founded the University Art Society, the object of which was the promotion of interest in the arts in general by the organization of musical recitals, exhibitions, lectures and debates as well as occasional excursions to places of related interest.²⁷ This was seen as an extremely innovative enterprise, and it brought him a good deal of favourable attention. As the founding auditor, it was his responsibility to address the inaugural meeting of the society on 2 November. The paper he presented is an eloquent and spirited defence of regionalism in the arts as the only guarantee of creative authenticity. As such, it is also an explicit formulation of the constellation of values and attitudes that lay behind his earliest efforts at composition.

The title of the paper, *Medea*, refers to a play by Grillparzer, whose treatment of the story of Medea and Jason Fleischmann reads as a parable of the dangers of being uprooted from one's proper environment: '[Medea's] tragedy is that of the plant removed from its own soil. It may or may not live anew, but it must lose in great part its vigour and vitality.'²⁸ The reader is immediately struck by the range of references on which the young Fleischmann draws to support his case. There are surprisingly few allusions to music, possibly out of consideration for his non-specialist audience. It is to European literature, painting and architecture that he most frequently turns, and he displays an easy familiarity with the work of Yeats, George Moore, Sean O'Casey, Lennox Robinson, T. C. Murray, Pádraic Ó Conaire and other contemporary Irish writers. In discussing the possibilities of adapting modern techniques, styles and media to local conditions and environments, he passes smoothly from Cubism to a consideration of the recently built Church of Christ the King at Turner's Cross in Cork which, as an early example of the

27 The University Art Society introduced many distinguished musicians and speakers to Cork audiences, among them Elizabeth Schumann, Benno Moiseiwitsch, Maria Korchinska, the Kutcher String Quarter, the Budapest Trio, Hilaire Belloc, Lord Longford, Micheál MacLiammóir, Daniel Corkery and Seán Keating. It continued until 1976, when its principal function of organizing recitals was taken over by the music department of the college.

28 Aloys Fleischmann, *Medea*, unpublished typescript (1931), FP: this and all subsequent references. In Act II of Grillparzer's *Medea*, for example, Medea attempts to sing a Grecian song known to Jason in his youth. But she fails to do so as it is alien to her and she has not been able to master it. 'You see', Jason says, 'as I well knew, she cannot sing. / Her hand is used to other play than this.' In anger and frustration Medea breaks the lyre. Franz Grillparzer, *Medea*, trans. Arthur Burkhard (Massachusetts, 1956), 48

use of concrete in ecclesiastical architecture, was the focus of considerable interest at the time.²⁹

Fleischmann views regionalism in a wholly positive light as arising out of ‘the intimacy that forms between the growing being and the air he breathes, and ... growing with his growing life, vivifying and intensifying anything he utters so that one can feel that as surely as he, writer or artist, has grown from his cradle, his art has grown just as assuredly.’ Without this, he says, ‘there will be no easy flow of creative thought’. Naturally, the artist will at first come under outside influence and turn to the masters of the past. But this is not because he wants to be an imitator; it is because he wishes to learn his trade, to study ‘form, construction, balance’, and ‘in the end to learn how to be as original as they’. But he will not look to them for subjects for treatment or to imitate their style. These he will find at home, ‘because an artist draws his vitality from the men and women, the rocks, stones and rivers of his own country. ... Out of these he will build his art’, he told his audience, and he declared that ‘the art of a nation must flow out of itself as naturally as a river flows out of its own source’. He is careful to distinguish this authenticity of utterance from meretricious and superficial local colour, which he describes as ‘a fake’.

It is used by people of small ability who wish to show with a flourish that they are home made. ... It isn’t necessary for [the artist] to make frequent references to the legendary names of his people’s literature, or to introduce their folk tunes if it be music, or show a great deal of the permanent local hue, if it be painting. Very often a good man will do these things. But on the whole the essence of what is racial in him will be buried, and perhaps not even felt until one is quite familiar with his work or has studied it closely.

But there can also be a meretricious and superficial cosmopolitanism, and Fleischmann is emphatic that to be ‘international’ means first and foremost to be ‘national’.

Every great man is international, but that should really mean that he is a man who has written so well about his own people, dealing with their elemental sorrows and joys, that the people of other nations read and feel their own sorrows and joys through his eyes and the eyes of his people. Then he is international but in the sense that his art and its ways and mannerisms become known and accepted everywhere. ... But such internationalism is merely an overflowing nationalism ...

He concludes his paper with a criticism of ‘the Wild Geese of literature’, George Moore, James Stephens, James Joyce and others, who chose to leave Ireland and live abroad, often with little more than a sneer for the people from whom they have sprung. He acknowledges their stature as writers, but wonders how much more they might have contributed to the spiritual and imaginative well-being of the nation if instead they had remained at home: ‘They are like the elder son of a family who goes away and becomes great and lets his father and mother and his younger brothers and sisters starve’, he says. ‘If he had kept his greatness at home, and nourished his family with it, there would be a more permanent result because he would be at the same time nourishing the younger fry to be his successors.’

Medea does not present a completely coherent position on these questions. It is a young man’s attempt to get to grips with complex matters that have acquired a vital and profound significance for him. It is a fascinating document in the context of his overall career because it confirms beyond any doubt what his earliest efforts at composition already indicate: that, for him, the necessary condition

29 The Church of Christ the King at Turner’s Cross was consecrated on 25 October 1931 by Dr. Daniel Cohalan, Bishop of Cork. Built in reinforced concrete, it was of a most unusual design for its time and it occasioned considerable controversy. It caused consternation among stonemasons in Cork, much of whose employment traditionally came from the building of churches. See Séamus Murphy, *Stone Mad* (London, 1977 [1966]), 87–92.

for any authentic artistic utterance is rootedness in the culture of one's own country. Anything else, he felt, must necessarily be second-hand. And although of undiluted German extraction, there is not the slightest indication that Fleischmann ever considered any country other than Ireland as his own. Ironic though it may be given his naïve appeal to 'the essence of what is racial', it is clear that from the beginning, he identified himself solely as an Irishman. Furthermore, *Medea* shows that he had begun to think not only about what his native country could give him by way of sustenance for the imagination, but also about the nature of his responsibilities to give something back. By the time he was twenty-one, Fleischmann had identified the central themes that were to inform his life's work. Not only does this inaugural paper make clear why he chose the direction he did as a composer, it also gives us an insight into what inspired the practical idealism that was the propelling force behind his many and varied activities.

Apart from the Art Society, Fleischmann was also involved in a practical way in the general musical life of the college. In 1928, The Glee Club was founded, and this was the first organized musical activity among the students since the demise of Lacy's Glee and Madrigal Society some twenty years earlier. Under its auspices, concerts of a particularly heterogeneous nature were arranged at which performances by the student dance band were juxtaposed with those given by a small orchestra that Fleischmann had assembled. These concerts provided him with the opportunity to gain some practical experience as a conductor, and with the cooperation of members of the No. 2 Army Band, he was in a position to present the *Andante* and the *Minuet and Trio* from Symphony No. 101 by Haydn and, in 1931, the complete Symphony No. 100 by the same composer, as well as various other short pieces.³⁰ This experience gave him a taste for conducting and led him to realize that there was potential in the college for the development of orchestral music.

Fleischmann graduated with a first class honours BA in English and German in 1930 and a first class honours BMus in 1931, and throughout the greater part of 1932, his principal energies were taken up with the completion of a thesis, *The Neumes and Irish Liturgical MSS*, which he presented for the degree of Master of Arts in September of that year. In examining the claims for the existence of a distinctly Irish form of neume notation, he concludes that what had hitherto been accepted as evidence cannot withstand close scrutiny, and that continental scholars have mistakenly been prey to the unsupportable assertions of unreliable nineteenth-century Irish writers on the subject. It is impressive work, both as original research and as a conspicuously mature piece of writing, and it was to form the basis of his first published musicological article in the *Leipzig Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* in 1934. But before the examiners had considered the thesis, Fleischmann had left Ireland for the State Academy of Music in Munich where he was to spend the next two years.

30 This is actually referred to as Symphony No. 11 in the programme, a number often assigned in catalogues of the period to what is now designated Symphony No. 100.