‘MY OWN ISLAND HARP’:
IRISH SENTIMENTAL BALLADS IN COLONIAL AUSTRALIA,
1854–1889

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This is to certify that to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis is my own work. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or other purposes.

I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

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'My own island harp': Irish sentimental ballads in colonial Australia, 1854–1889

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the role of Irish sentimental ballads, especially Thomas Moore’s *Irish Melodies*, in colonial New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria. First is a study of Irish soprano Catherine Hayes (1818–1861) and her tours to NSW and Victoria in 1854 and 1855. Hayes represented a Victorian-era feminine ideal and her concerts, which included both opera and Irish sentimental ballads, were seen to raise the musical standard in Australia. The second study examines a series of public lectures on the subject of ancient Irish music delivered by Irish lawyer John Hubert Plunkett (1802–1869), previously attorney general of NSW. The third is a study of *The Australian Album* for 1857. This musical album was published in Sydney and was designed to serve as a specimen of the high standard of music in Australia at the time. The album opens with a piano fantasia composed by visiting French pianist Edouard Boulanger (1829–1863) based on ‘The Last Rose of Summer,’ one of Moore’s *Irish Melodies*. Fourth and last is a study of the Thomas Moore statue erected in Ballarat, Victoria, in 1889. The design of the statue and its unveiling conveyed a notion of unity within the white community and feelings of Australian nationalism. Through these studies I argue that Irish ballads played an important role in creating a respectable cultural identity not just for the Irish community but for the developing Australian society as well.
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Irish sentimental ballads in colonial Australia, 1855-1889

Introduction

When the Austro-Hungarian violinist Miska Hauser toured the Australian colonies in 1854–55, he wrote about his experiences in a series of letters posted back to friends and relatives in Europe. The letters include several anecdotes concerning Irish people and music, two of which stand out for their portrayal of the Irish and Irish music in colonial Australia. Taken together, the excerpts show the dual role of Irish sentimental ballads in the colonies. On the one hand, the appetite for Irish music was strong, particularly amongst the Irish-born in the population. On the other hand, Irish sentimental ballads, such as Thomas Moore’s *Irish Melodies*, had meaning for mainstream audiences beyond the Irish population as symbols of cultural refinement. In the first excerpt below, Hauser speaks somewhat condescendingly about the Irish members of his audience. Yet, he shows their influence on him and popular culture at large given that he has composed a new Irish medley.

*Melbourne, 15th June 1855*

A new piece, “Irish Medley,” consisting of Irish folksongs with variations, was a great hit and awakened genuine nationalistic homage from the numerous easily-moving Irish population.¹

According to newspaper reports, the ‘Irish Medley’ included reference to Thomas Moore’s sentimental ballads ‘The last rose of summer’ and ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls.’

In this next excerpt, Hauser is writing about an evening soiree held at the New South Wales governor-general Sir Charles Fitzroy’s residence at which a young female described as ‘Indian,’ shows the ways in which she has achieved a cultural likeness to her European hosts.

Sydney, 1st January 1855

An Indian girl about fifteen years old, whose education the Governor had undertaken, and who had been trained in drawing, singing and the piano, was introduced. The girl, who had first been wrenched from the most savage conditions in her sixth year, has a phenomenally notable gift of comprehension and abundant talents … She sang a romantic Malaysian ballad with good execution and a wonderfully sweet voice. In addition, she accompanied all of the pieces I played almost faultlessly and recited a ballad by Thomas Moore with exceptional vivacity.

In this excerpt, Hauser gives the example of reciting a Thomas Moore ballad as one of the specific ways the young female is able to show her cultural refinement in nineteenth-century European terms.

This thesis sets out to examine the intersection between music and cultural identity and how this played out for the Irish, an ethnic minority group, in colonial Australia. In terms of scope, this thesis consists of four studies, each of which contributes to an understanding of the role of Irish sentimental ballads in colonial Australia over the years 1855–1889 and their contribution to both Irish and ‘Australian’ cultural and national identity. Through these studies I argue that Irish

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3 Miska Hauser, letter [recipient unknown], 1 January 1855, in Miska Hauser’s letters from Australia, 1854–1858, 10.
sentimental ballads were essential in creating a respectable cultural identity not just for the Irish community but for the developing Australian society as well.

In this thesis the term ‘Irish sentimental ballad’ refers to a published song with lyrics and piano accompaniment that is associated with Ireland or the Irish and is intended for performance in drawing rooms but frequently sung on the concert stage as well. The pinnacle of the genre is Thomas Moore’s *Irish Melodies* (1808–1834), but other Irish sentimental ballads, notably Frederick Crouch and Marian Crawford’s ‘Kathleen Mavourneen,’ are also part of the discussion. Given that traditional Irish music was performed in specific social settings, usually along with food and drink and in private rather than on the concert stage, Irish sentimental ballads filled an important gap in the market for respectable Irish music.

Irish-born people in colonial Australia made up roughly 23 per cent of the population from convict times to Federation. They were a heterogeneous group – convicts and free settlers, family groups and single people, educated and unskilled workers, Catholics and Protestants (Presbyterians and Methodists) – and given historical negative stereotypes, not all the Irish-born openly identified themselves as such. Therefore, in this thesis, discussion of the ‘Irish population’ refers to Irish-born migrants in the colonies who would have comfortably identified themselves as Irish. This includes persons born in the colonies to Irish parents who might also identify as Irish.

The bulk of primary source material consulted in this thesis is in the form of newspaper advertisements, reviews, and published music scores. Newspapers can give us a picture of colonial musical life, presuming that most concerts were

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advertised and often reviewed – at least by the 1850s. Meanwhile, printed music offers many clues as to the aspirations of the creators and their target audience. The printing, binding, iconography, level of difficulty, names of the composer and in some cases the performer come together to spin a web of connections that cross national and imperial borders, and includes both women and men as creators, consumers, and performers.

In terms of secondary sources on musical life in colonial Australia, this thesis builds on the work of Graeme Skinner, who argues that ‘both musical and non-musical sources indicate that notions of Australian nation, nationality, and identity were not only socially current, but aspirationally functional, at least fifty years before they became political facts in 1901.’5 Skinner’s thesis provides an exhaustive record of compositional activity in the colonies and suggests that a vibrant, cosmopolitan and sophisticated music scene was underway in the capital cities relatively soon after settlement.

Study of the Irish in Australia began in the colonial period,6 but since the 1980s has been dominated by the contributions of Patrick O’Farrell (1933–2003) who published several monographs on the Irish in Australia that laid the groundwork for successive researchers.7 Malcolm Campbell, a student of O’Farrell, has also published a comparative history of the Irish in Australia and the United States over the long nineteenth century.8

6 James Francis Hogan, The Irish in Australia (Melbourne, VIC: G. Robertson, 1888).
8 Malcolm Campbell, Ireland’s new worlds: Immigrants, politics, and society in the United States and Australia, 1815–1822 (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008).
The study of Irish music in Australia has received limited scholarly attention. In a 2013 article, Jennifer Gall argues that ‘Irish music in Australia has a strong tradition though it is less thoroughly documented and less frequently the subject of scholarly inquiry than in Ireland, the British Isles and North America.’

Despite the lack of a consistent tradition, various historians both scholarly and amateur have published papers on Irish performers and musical life in colonial times. Australian ethnomusicologist Graeme Smith has written on the influence of Irish folk music on the Australian bush ballad tradition. Hugh Anderson’s major study on the influence of English, Irish, and Scottish broadside ballads on the ballad tradition in colonial Australia from 1788–1868 has inspired more recent research on the broadsides. Yet the study of Irish music in Australia more broadly remains underdeveloped.

In many cases, studies incorporating Irish music in the nineteenth century have avoided in-depth study of the sentimental ballads. This is possibly due to the liminal nature of sentimental ballads – they are neither art song, and so out of the domain of classical music scholars, nor are they orally transmitted folk songs. Furthermore, the sentimental ballad genre, and Moore’s Melodies in particular, had gone out of fashion with Moore being ‘widely castigated for what many regard as his

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reductionist and even bastardised version of a noble heritage."13 Derek Scott’s 1989 book is an exception in that it began to unpack and analyse sentimental ballads – both musically and in a broader sense.14

Since the 1990s, Irish musicologist Harry White has led the scholarly debate on the relationship between music and nationalism in Ireland – including reassessing almost a century of negative appraisals of Moore’s Melodies.15 Scholars such as Leith Davis and Terence Hoagwood have continued this tradition by examining in detail the publication history, aesthetic achievements, meaning, and reception of Moore’s Melodies in nineteenth-century Europe.16 These studies provide a useful theoretical framework around the Irish sentimental ballads.

Patrick O’Sullivan’s monograph series The Irish world wide: History, heritage, identity offers one of the only studies of Thomas Moore’s influence in Australia. Frank Molloy’s study in Volume 3: The Creative Migrant is concerned with the influence of Moore on local Australian poetry and argues that ‘Thomas Moore, beloved by many throughout the civilised world, was in a sense providing a pathway for them [Irish migrants] towards full incorporation into colonial society.’17

The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland, published in 2013 is a momentous contribution. Beyond biographical entries, editors Harry White and Barra Boydell

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have opted to include many subject headings in order to give a fuller picture of musical life in Ireland. For example, an entry titled ‘Australia,’ written by musicologist Helen O’Shea, summarises Irish migration to Australia, notes the popularity of Irish music during the folk revival of the 1950s and 60s, the ongoing popularity of Irish-themed pubs and events such as St. Patrick’s Day into the present day, and lists a number of Irish musical and cultural institutions that have also been established in Australia.¹⁸

In 2013, as part of the Reimagining Ireland series, a multi-disciplinary book on Thomas Moore was published that includes three chapters on the Irish Melodies and two further chapters on Moore’s reception in Italy and Russia. The lack of an Australia-specific chapter in this book speaks to the feasibility of the present study. Emer Nolan’s chapter ‘The ghost of Thomas Moore’ retraces the press and popular reception of Moore’s Melodies and argues that despite negative reviews or critical opinions, in its time ‘Moore’s art had the capacity to transfix audiences, both in Ireland and elsewhere, who were untroubled about authenticity… They [the Melodies] also proved eminently adaptable to other cultural situations.’¹⁹ Emily Cullen’s chapter in the same book analyses Moore’s use of the harp as a symbol for Irish nationalism in his Melodies. She argues that ‘Moore is less interested in promoting the Irish harp for the purposes of revitalising a weakening musical tradition, than for its value as a signifier of a glorious Irish past.’²⁰ Additionally, Una Hunt’s chapter provides a detailed history of the genesis of the Melodies, analyses some of the poetry and the

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²⁰ Emily Cullen, ‘From the minstrel boy to the blameless bard: The play of the harp as a passive trope and icon in Moore’s Irish Melodies,’ Thomas Moore: Texts, contexts, hypertexts, ed. Eamon Maher, Vol. 24, Reimagining Ireland, ed. Francesca Benatti, Sean Ryder and Justin Tonra (Germany: Peter Lang, 2013), 55.
associated iconography in publications, and again covers aspects of their reception.\(^{21}\) Hunt, an Irish pianist, was also involved in a mass recording project of Moore’s *Melodies* released in 2008,\(^{22}\) and her forthcoming book *Sources and style in Moore’s Irish Melodies* promises to be an important contribution to the study of the ballads.\(^{23}\)

Another current publication is *Music and Identity in Ireland and Beyond*.\(^{24}\) Although much of the content in this book deals with the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, several issues addressed in the earlier chapters bear a resemblance to issues in Australia, for example the difficulty of deciphering primary sources. This publication’s lack of an ‘Australian’ or ‘Antipodes’ chapter speaks to the viability of a study situated in colonial Australia.

Irish music in the United States has received more consistent scholarly attention. Charles Hamm’s 1979 book on popular music in the United States addresses the popularity of Moore’s *Melodies* in the nineteenth century.\(^{25}\) More recently, William A. Williams’ study on the image of Ireland and the Irish in song publications in the United States argues that the Irish used the medium of song to take control of their public image and reverse negative stereotypes.\(^{26}\)

Of the four studies in this thesis, the first two concern specific Irish individuals and the latter concern material vestiges of the colonial era in Australia.

Chapter one is a study of Irish soprano Catherine Hayes (1818–1861) and her tours to

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\(^{23}\) Una Hunt, *Sources and style in Moore’s Irish Melodies* (Routledge, 2017).


NSW and Victoria in 1854 and 1855. Hayes represented a Victorian-era feminine ideal and her concerts, which included both opera and Irish sentimental ballads, were seen to raise the musical standard in Australia. Hayes’ public image was built on her apparent youth, piety, generosity, and musical talent. These attributes, some of which are emphasised in the ballads, helped to counter negative stereotypes of the ‘wild Irish’ and shaped the next generation of Irish-Catholic female singers in Australia. Hayes played an important role in legitimising the Irish sentimental ballad repertoire for a respectable audience.

Chapter two hones in on another public figure, John Hubert Plunkett (1802–1869). Plunkett served as attorney-general of New South Wales from the 1830s to 1860s and thus oversaw the transition from penal colony to free society. Following his retirement, Plunkett gave several public lectures on ‘ancient Irish music.’ During his lectures, Plunkett would play relevant Irish airs on violin and then have a pianist and singers perform selections from Moore’s Melodies at the close. Plunkett promoted the study of Irish music for both its historical interest and for its perceived role as a civilising force on the population.

Chapter three takes as its centrepiece The Australian Album for 1857, a musical album created and published in Sydney and targeted at the moneyed upper classes. The first piece in the album is a piano caprice on Thomas Moore’s ‘The last rose of summer’ that was composed by Edouard Boulanger (1829–1863), a French pianist-composer who was touring the Australian colonies at the time. This chapter shows how Boulanger’s piano caprice, based on an Irish melody, served as a potent symbol for high artistic and moral standards in the colony.

Chapter four moves ahead by roughly three decades to a study of the Thomas Moore statue erected in the Victorian goldmining town of Ballarat in 1889. Moore’s
likeness was the second in a planned trio of statues to British poets, starting with a Robert Burns statue in 1887 and to be succeeded by William Shakespeare (a plan that was quashed by the 1890s depression). Together, the Burns and Moore statues were physical evidence of the cultural achievement of the Scottish and Irish as Celtic minorities in the British Empire. This chapter focuses on the unveiling ceremony, which included a performance of Thomas Moore’s ‘Dear harp of my country.’

This thesis contributes new and in-depth research on the role of Irish sentimental ballads in colonial Australia through the four studies. Together, the studies provide a better understanding of how Irish sentimental ballads contributed to an Irish cultural identity in the colonies but also were significant as arbiters of respectability for the new ‘Australian’ mainstream that was emerging from the 1850s onwards. A narrative emerges over the four studies that begins with the Irish soprano Catherine Hayes, whose concerts cemented the popularity of Irish sentimental ballads in respectable colonial music circles. Just a few years later John Hubert Plunkett’s lectures positioned Irish music in a historically significant and positive light, spelling out a narrative of progress from primitive airs to refined Irish sentimental ballads. Meanwhile, the *Australian Album* for 1857 showed how Irish sentimental ballads could function as an ingredient in Australian nationalism. Lastly, the unveiling ceremony of Thomas Moore’s statue in Ballarat shows the role the Irish sentimental ballads could play for those imagining a new Australian nation.
Chapter One

Catherine Hayes in colonial Australia, 1854–1856

Catherine Hayes’ tours of the Australian colonies in the mid-1850s were significant not just for the Irish community but also for colonial society at large. As the first internationally-renowned Irish soprano, Hayes represented the pinnacle of cultural attainments while also preserving her Irish identity. In this chapter, I will argue that Hayes’ phenomenal success in the colonies was due not just to her vocal talent, but also to her success in portraying a public image of ideal femininity in Victorian era terms. She was able to embody this feminine ideal through her association with the Irish sentimental ballad ‘Kathleen Mavourneen.’ By examining Hayes’ public identity and reception through a feminist lens, this chapter will highlight the public’s idea of respectability as especially powerful in colonial New South Wales during the 1850s, a time when the difficult transition from penal colony to free society was underway. On another level, and especially for the Irish community in Australia, Hayes’ public identity was a counterpoint to some long-held negative stereotypes of Irish people.

This chapter is divided into eight broad sections. The literature review (Section I) and biography (Section II) give background on Hayes and her role as a prima donna in relation to broad trends in nineteenth-century feminism. Sections III and IV examine the position of women in colonial Australian society at the time of Hayes’ tours and then Hayes’ public image and reception in the colonies. Section V offers an analysis of three published images depicting Catherine Hayes

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on her tours of the colonies. Section VI and VII hone in on Hayes’ repertoire to explore the notions of femininity portrayed in the operatic arias and Irish sentimental ballads she sang. Finally, Section VIII describes Hayes’ philanthropy and ongoing legacy in Australia.

Section I: Literature
Catherine Hayes (1818–1861) was an early ‘celebrity’ figure whose death was mourned in the leading musical press around the globe. Yet, her memory soon faded and according to Basil Walsh, writing in 2000, ‘no new information about her activities or achievements [had been] published during the past one hundred and thirty years.’

Pre-dating Walsh’s biography by two years, theatre studies scholar Joseph Roach published an article examining the marketing machine behind Hayes’ success in New Orleans and offers intriguing insights into the psychology of Hayes’ marketing and reception. Roach argues that Hayes’ popularity in New Orleans can be attributed to the marketing strategy of her manager at the time, Phineas Taylor Barnum (1810–1891), which consisted of ‘stimulating a need among consumers – a need for inclusion based on a sense of deprivation, a fear of unworthiness, and a desire to rise above both.’

Several chapters and articles concerning Hayes were published in Australia in the late 1990s. Alison Gyger’s 1999 book Civilising the Colonies: Pioneering Opera in Australia also explores some of the marketing machine that was behind Hayes’ success, including Phineas Taylor Barnum and William Avery Bushnell

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3 Roach, 39-51.
4 Roach, 40.
(1820–1858), a representative of Barnum whom Hayes went on to marry after her
tour to the Australian colonies.\textsuperscript{5} Gyger offers a chronological survey of Hayes’
staged operas and examines the extent to which each might have met the
parameters of a complete opera performance. Also published in 1999, an article
by Australian scholar Deborah Crisp investigates the operatic performances of
Hayes and English soprano Anna Bishop (1810–1884) in mid-1850s Sydney and
shows how they popularised Italian opera over opera sung in English.\textsuperscript{6}

Walsh’s 2000 biography \textit{The Hibernian Prima Donna} is a thorough
chronological work, which places Hayes amongst her contemporaries and traces
her reception through newspaper reports across her entire career. This chapter
aims to build on some of Walsh’s work by expanding the focus beyond Hayes’
physical movements, relationships, and press reviews, to address her influence on
cultural and musical life in the Australian colonies.

More recent studies of nineteenth-century \textit{prima donnas} have examined
Hayes’ career through the prisms of feminism, celebrity, the psychology of
marketing and reception, and transnationalism. Michael Murphy’s 2007 chapter
‘The musical press in nineteenth-century Ireland’ in \textit{Irish Musical Studies},
explores the evolution of Catherine Hayes’ identity in Ireland and England.\textsuperscript{7}
Murphy argues that the conscious ‘branding of Hayes as “Irish” was
simultaneously a reaction to and an imitation of the English press who referred to

\textsuperscript{5} Alison Gyger, \textit{Civilising the colonies: Pioneering opera in Australia}, (Sydney, N.S.W.: Opera–Opera, 1999), 68–79.
her as an “English prima donna.””\(^8\) Echoing Roach’s conclusions, Murphy finds that ‘the concurrent disaster of the Great Famine added an urgency to the appropriation of Hayes as “Irish” both in her singing and her physical appearance.’\(^9\) Another scholar who has probed the public’s reception of Catherine Hayes is Alison McMonagle, whose 2011 dissertation on the writings of Jamaican-Creole-Scottish nurse Mary Seacole applies a feminist lens to the reception of Seacole alongside Hayes and another Irish performer, Lola Montez (known publicly as ‘The Spanish Dancer’).\(^10\) McMonagle argues that although Hayes, like Seacole and Montez, ‘achieve a great degree of fame in England they are denied complete access to Englishness.’\(^11\) Instead, ‘their subject position as members of a colonized and often ignored nation imbues their public images with a similar element of wondrousness, eccentricity or Otherness that fed their celebrity.’\(^12\) In this chapter, I will build on the work of Walsh, Roach and McMonagle but hone in on the Australian colonies as a new contextual backdrop.

**Section II: Biography**

Catherine Hayes was born in Limerick, Ireland, on 25 October 1818.\(^13\) Catherine’s father, Arthur William Hayes, was a bandmaster and Catherine’s mother, Mary Carroll, worked as a servant for the Earl of Limerick. Catherine was baptised in

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\(^8\) Michael Murphy, 272.
\(^9\) Michael Murphy, 272.
\(^10\) Alison McMonagle, ‘The wondrous body of Mary Seacole: Mobility, subjectivity and display in transatlantic life,’ (PhD diss, George Washington University, 2011).
\(^11\) McMonagle, v.
\(^12\) McMonagle, 160.
the local Protestant church. Catherine had an older sister Henrietta and two brothers who seem to have died in infancy – the second in 1823. In the same year, when Catherine was just five years old, her father left the family and was never heard from again. According to Basil Walsh, Catherine was born into ‘abject poverty,’ which only worsened after her father’s desertion.

Catherine’s singing career began when she was ‘discovered’ by the Protestant Bishop Knox of Limerick. Catherine received early instruction from a music teacher in Limerick before moving to Dublin in 1839 with her mother thanks to funding from her Limerick supporters. By pursuing a career as a prima donna, Hayes did what Patrick O’Sullivan argues many Irish women did in the nineteenth century, that is, ‘[renegotiated] her own individual role within child-bearing, child-raising patterns.’ Sophie Drinker argues that the link between domesticity and cultural attainments worked in some ways to legitimise the careers of singers like Hayes, because their role on the stage could be seen as a public expansion of their domestic drawing room role. The key to this expansion was focusing on the woman’s supposed civilising effect on her listeners, which could be carried over from the drawing room to a much larger audience on the public stage. Although public concerts had become acceptable for female singers in the nineteenth century, opera was still considered by some to be a ‘pernicious and wicked world’ of artifice rather than the bourgeois ideal of ‘naturalness.'

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14 Walsh, 2.
15 Walsh, 2.
History scholar Gunilla Budde has explored the sometimes awkward relationship between bourgeois values and female opera singers. She argues that while ‘appreciation, cultivation and support of the arts were among the essential ingredients of bourgeois culture,’ female opera singers were seen as ‘outside of respectable society’ thanks to their financial independence, freedom to travel, and the belief in Europe that singing opera was akin to prostitution.

Given the negative stereotypes, Hayes had to carefully negotiate her transition from the concert stage to opera. According to Roberta Montemorra Marvin, in nineteenth-century Britain ‘female singers did not “voluntarily,” or without familial objection, pursue theatrical careers.’ Rather, a variety of reasons, including ‘a desire to help one’s family in a time of need,’ might be deemed acceptable. Indeed, Hayes’ Limerick supporters, including Bishop Knox and his wife, were initially skeptical about her ambitions to sing opera. Walsh argues that ‘the delay in receiving the Bishop’s consent might have been related to funding needs; however, it is more likely it was caused by concern over Catherine’s choice of a theatrical life in opera, especially as the church was involved with the funding.’ By investing in Catherine, the Church was at risk of being portrayed as paying for a young girl to be trained to prostitute herself, especially given her family’s poor finances and the loss of her father. On the other hand, Bishop Knox was passionate about music and perhaps was influenced by the significant musical figures that supported her. The decision for Hayes to be accompanied by her mother probably eased concerns over the young singer’s moral development.

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19 Budde, 185–187.
21 Marvin, 35.
22 Walsh, 30.
To look again at the broader picture, during the nineteenth century a revolution in the public portrayal of female opera singers occurred as a reaction against the negative prima donna stereotypes. The revolution was pioneered by Hayes’ predecessor Jenny Lind who, according to Budde, ‘was stylised … as a counter-image to the immoral and disreputable female singers of her era.’\textsuperscript{23}

Characteristics that were celebrated in this newly minted prima donna mould included purity, morality, modesty, innocence, sensibility, and naturalness, as if to suggest that singing opera was their ‘calling’.\textsuperscript{24} The conception of the prima donna as following their calling was tied up with notions of pleasing the patriarchy rather than any independent agency on the part of a woman. But nevertheless, it was a loophole that allowed women to participate in the public sphere while simultaneously maintaining the approval of moral commentators.

In 1842, with support from her singing tutor Sapio and Luigi Lablache (1794–1858), an established Italian opera singer, Hayes and her mother travelled to Paris, France. There, Hayes took singing lessons with Manuel García (1805–1906), the renowned vocal pedagogue, for eighteen months.\textsuperscript{25} From Paris, Hayes went to Milan where she made her debut as Elvira in Bellini’s I Puritani in 1845. Hayes spent the next several years performing in opera, concerts, and oratorio in Italy, Germany, France, England, Scotland, and Ireland to great acclaim.

With her career well underway, Hayes set off for North America in September of 1851. Following a successful few years, Hayes made her way to the Australian colonies in 1854. She arrived in September and gave a series of concerts in Sydney and Melbourne before departing from Adelaide for Calcutta.

\textsuperscript{23} Budde, 189.
\textsuperscript{24} Budde, 189.
\textsuperscript{25} Walsh, 40.
India, at the end of the year. Following appearances in Calcutta in early 1855, mostly consisting of operatic arias, according to Walsh the city ‘did not offer her the financial or cultural rewards she had been expecting, so she had elected to return to Australia.’^26 Hayes returned to Australia with stops in Singapore, at the time a British colony, and Batavia, a Dutch colony (now Java). She arrived in Melbourne in June of 1855 and performed a few concerts before returning to Sydney in August, where she, her touring party, and local musicians embarked on a season of opera. A further expanded opera season was presented in Melbourne in October and November. Hayes took up her regular concerts again at the end of 1855, visiting the goldfields at Bendigo before Hobart and Launceston in Tasmania in January 1856.

The Tasmanian concerts marked the end of Hayes’ exploration of the globe. By this time she had performed throughout the British Empire and in the Americas, the Pacific Islands, Asia, and Australia. She returned to Melbourne in April 1856 for a series of farewell concerts before embarking on the homeward journey to England by the middle of the year. Hayes continued to perform in England and Ireland in both opera and stage concerts before she suffered a stroke and passed away while on a visit to friends in Kent, England, on 11 August, 1861, at 43 years of age. As with any celebrity figure, Hayes’ success in the colonies was as much to do with her own projected image as to do with the public’s reception of it. A brief outline of the public debate surrounding the role of women in colonial Australia will shed light on the public’s feelings towards Hayes.

Section III: Women in colonial Australia

^26 Walsh, 255.
As New South Wales began to transition from a penal colony to a free society in the 1850s, the role of women became a matter of public interest. Where convict women had been routinely downtrodden and treated as sex objects, an influx of migrant women brought British middle class values and in the words of some contemporary commentators, these ‘good and virtuous women’ were needed as ‘God’s Police,’ to make a positive impact on the moral tone of the colony.\(^{27}\) The feminine domesticating influence can be understood as a necessary counterpart to so-called masculine colonial activities such as exploring, settling, establishing law and order, finance and trade, and so forth. Victoria Olsen argues that women have a ‘central role’ in imperialist expansion: ‘they occupy a separate cultural sphere that parallels the Englishman’s industrial and commercial expansion.’\(^{28}\) In other words, the process of British colonisation is not considered complete until women have established domesticity, bourgeois family values, and ultimately the refined cultural practices of the drawing room.

Just a few years before Hayes’ arrival in Australia, the highly-publicised Irish female orphan immigration scheme caused outcry. The system saw more than 2000 orphan girls from Ireland’s workhouses arrive in Sydney between 1848 and 1850. Patrick O’Farrell argues that the government’s ‘rationale was that these [orphans] would both correct the sexual imbalance in the colonies and provide domestic servants.’\(^{29}\) However, the public felt that the Irish orphans were ‘highly unsatisfactory’ due to lack of education and polish.\(^ {30}\) Therefore, although the scheme might have had ‘family values’ and a means of expanding domesticity as its aim, this was


\(^{29}\) O’Farrell, 74.

\(^{30}\) O’Farrell, 74.
incompatible with its function of reducing overcrowding at poorhouses in Ireland. A Sydney Morning Herald report in 1850 titled ‘Immigration of Irish “Orphans”’ reviewed the scheme. The report found that,

Instead of a few hundreds, the girls are coming out by thousands. Instead of mere orphans, we are being inundated with Irish paupers. [...] It is not an immigration of mere labour, but of sex; of females, and of young females. The destiny of these girls is understood by everybody. Their ostensible vocation is domestic service; but in a community whose single adult females are in the proportion of two to five single adult males … it would be affectation to deny that domestic service is but a stepping stone to the higher and more influential position of wives and mothers.”

This report highlights the transition away from convict women serving as prostitutes to respectable women filling the family roles deemed important to the colony. It also reveals an anxiety amongst the local population that the colony’s wives and mothers needed to be respectable women. It was into this cultural and political climate, where women’s actions were in sharp focus, that Hayes arrived in Sydney in 1854.

Section IV: Hayes’ public image in colonial Australia

By the time Catherine Hayes arrived in Sydney, the production and dissemination of Western culture across many parts of the globe was taking place through British imperial expansion, subsequent migration, and commercial networks. Barnum and his associate Bushnell took advantage of a growing international audience through clever marketing. Barnum’s marketing strategy for both Hayes and Jenny Lind before her included presenting the singers as ‘a respectable high culture alternative to minstrelsy and melodrama.’ Furthermore, their inclusion of operatic repertoire and art song was marketed as ‘a means of raising the level of

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31 ‘Immigration of Irish “orphans,”’ Sydney Morning Herald, 13 March 1850, 2.
32 See also Anne Summers, 337–354.
33 Roach, 40.
public taste, showing the moral elevation of people who wanted to prove worthy of their adopted (and newly invented) home.'\(^{34}\)

In part thanks to Hayes’ marketing machine, but also because of the colonial hunger for up-to-date news from Britain and the United States, Hayes’ reputation in the colonies was well-established before her arrival.\(^{35}\) A stock version of Hayes’ biography, most likely provided by Bushnell, was printed in various newspapers roughly two weeks before her first performance in Sydney.\(^{36}\) The article lists several reasons for Hayes’ superiority as an artist. Firstly, Franz Liszt is quoted as saying ‘I do not know of any voice more expressive than that of Miss Hayes. I doubt if among the singers of the day, there is one equal in extent and volume to what her’s [sic] will be.’\(^{37}\) Such high praise from an internationally-renowned virtuoso would have been a significant tool in validating Hayes’ talent. Secondly, the article reports that Hayes was a student of Manuel Garcia, a significant nineteenth-century vocal teacher.\(^{38}\) The article also mentions that Garcia was Jenny Lind’s teacher, which serves to align Hayes with another well-known prima donna. The biography outlines Hayes’ success across Europe and London, where she performed in private concerts at Buckingham Palace. The biography emphasised the role of various men in discovering, cultivating, and employing Hayes’ vocal talents. This masculine mediation between Hayes and the outside world reinforces Hayes position as a passive figure in her own success.

\(^{34}\) Roach, 45.


\(^{38}\) Walsh, 40.
Hayes’ marketing machine was conspicuously silent on the issue of religion. Catherine Hayes was a Protestant, which meant she was aligned with the ruling elite in Ireland, yet it was rarely stated publicly. The reason for keeping Hayes’ Protestant faith out of the press was most likely to broaden her appeal with Irish Catholics. Within colonial Australian society, ‘by 1861 in country, town, and city they [Irish Catholics] formed anywhere from 15% to 48% of the population. Rightly or wrongly they were seen by many … as the major threat to the development in Australia of a liberal progressive society on the British protestant model.’39 In sum, Hayes benefited by avoiding aligning herself with either Catholics or Protestants.

Australian publications described Hayes with a range of terms, some of which will be discussed below. These titles include ‘prima donna,’ ‘high class,’ ‘songstress,’ ‘cantatrice,’ ‘Queen of Song,’ and ‘Child of Song.’ These were likely applied to Hayes considering her European reputation, training with Manuel Garcia, repertoire choices, and public identity. The vague term ‘high class,’ which is distinct from the connotations of wealth and superior bloodlines of the term ‘upper class,’ seems to have been applied thanks to Hayes’ distinguished opera career.40 The term ‘high classical’ was current in Britain in the early nineteenth century in reference to a ‘high classical’ education, which included Latin. In the Australian colonies in the 1850s, the term ‘high classical’ and variations such as ‘high and classical’ or ‘highest classical’ also came to refer to art music composed by Europeans.41 Therefore ‘high class’ might have been a derivation of ‘high

40 The first use of the term ‘high class’ in relation to Hayes in Australian newspapers occurred in 1854. See ‘Miss Catherine Hayes’ Concert,’ Empire [Sydney, NSW], 27 September 1854, 5: http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60198098
classical’ in reference to Hayes’ opera training and fluency in several languages (although there is no evidence she learnt Latin). Other titles emphasised her national identity including, ‘The Swan of Erin’ and ‘The Irish Nightingale,’ while The Freeman’s Journal dubbed Hayes ‘virtuous.’

Indeed, Hayes was unmarried and toured with her mother, facts which reinforced her status as ‘daughter’ – and therefore young and virtuous – in the narrative of a woman’s life. During her career Hayes seems to have intentionally brought forward her birthdate by up to seven years, knowing that youth was particularly valued in operatic singers.

As the first internationally renowned, so-called ‘high class’ Irish female to visit the colonies, Hayes became an important role model for the Irish. She set an example of how to achieve admiration and respect in the wider community while maintaining an Irish identity. Hayes’ proud nationalism was reported in the colonial press:

In Italy, being frequently solicited to Italianise her name she constantly refused, stating that if it could reflect any credit on Ireland she was determined to retain it.

From the perspective of Irish migrants in the colonies, Hayes arrival in 1854 might also have offered an ideological counterpoint to the Great Famine. The famine was likely one of the most important Irish events through which Hayes’ identity was viewed (although not outwardly). In her study of the Irish famine as represented in nineteenth-century literature, Kelleher argues that women form the bulk of famine victims depicted in the most horrific circumstances.

Kelleher notes a particular obsession amongst the predominantly male writers of the time for detailed

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42 ‘Miss Catherine Hayes,’ The Freeman’s Journal [Sydney, N.S.W.], 21 October 1854, 9.
descriptions of women’s bodies, especially when they are barely clothed.\textsuperscript{45} For example, this description of female famine victims was published in the \textit{Times} newspaper in England in 1849 and then compiled the next year into \textit{Gleanings in the West of Ireland}.

\begin{quote}
[T]he women in the red petticoat of the country, the said garment ever in tatters with the dark bodice only just sufficiently patched to make a bare covering of the bosom; their long dark parted hair; bare legs and feet.\textsuperscript{46}
\end{quote}

This is in stark contrast with the following published description of Catherine Hayes,

\begin{quote}
Miss Hayes was dressed with very great taste and splendour. The wavy masses of her beautiful auburn hair were entwined with a very elegant wreath of bright coloured artificial flowers. Her dress was of a rich pink watered silk, and both her neck and arms absolutely blazed with diamonds of great brilliancy, and evidently of considerable value.
\end{quote}

What these reports show is the colonising of women’s bodies by the male perspective. In each case, the woman is depicted as an exotic Other, not only from the perspective of the male gaze, but presumably also to middle class women, for whom poverty and great wealth was out of their experience. Similarly, in an article examining Hayes’ concert tour in New Orleans in 1852, just two years before she arrived on the shores of New South Wales, Joseph Roach argues that Hayes’s success was an opiate for the guilt felt by those outside Ireland over the treatment of the Irish.\textsuperscript{47}

In terms of national identity, an oddly parallel situation emerges in Australia where both Hayes as an Irish person and her colonial audiences are ‘British subjects’ and therefore in a peripheral relationship to England. In the Australian context in the 1850s – a time when the seeds of Australian nationalism were sprouting – those in the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[Kelleher, 24–26.]
\item[46]Sidney Godolphin Osborne, \textit{Gleanings}, 30. Quoted in Kelleher, 22. See also ‘Famine in Ireland,’ \textit{Argus} [Melbourne, VIC], 29 January 1850, 4: \url{http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4775356} ‘I have seen many […] clothed in rags; even grey-headed mothers, […] who could scarcely hide their nakedness.’
\item[47]Roach, 43.
\end{footnotes}
colonies were drawn to the peripheral perspective of Ireland, and to a lesser extent Scotland, who looked upon England from outside. The whole of Australia’s white population were emigrants, which meant that they could be counted on to feel homesick and therefore were more likely to be drawn to sentimental ballads on the topic of exile such as ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’ and ‘Home, Sweet Home.’ Although it was well understood that Hayes was Irish, in some cases newspapers published reports on Hayes singing songs from the ‘fatherland’ – but was that England, Ireland or Scotland? – for example,

She has shown that her powers as a singer of those beautiful ballads which always recall in this distant land the feelings, the poetry, and the music of the old country, are unrivalled and supreme.48

Hayes’s ‘Irishness’ gave her authenticity when performing Irish songs and an exotic flavour to English-born members of her audience. Whereas Hayes’ contemporary who also toured the Australian colonies in the 1850s, Anna Bishop (1810–1884), was an unequivocally English singer, Hayes’ hybrid Irish-British national position meant she was able to become a symbol for ‘home’ for a wider portion of the population.

Section V: Iconography

Several images of Catherine Hayes were published during her tours to the colonies, each of which sheds some light on Hayes’ public identity and reception. Figure 1 is an image of Catherine Hayes’ first concert in Sydney at the Victoria Theatre in September 1854. The image was published three years after the event, in 1857, as part of The Australian picture pleasure book, which consists of 200 illustrations of ‘scenery, architecture, historical events, natural history, public characters &c.’

Figure 1: Wood engraving, ‘The first appearance of Catherine Hayes at the Victoria Theatre, Sydney, on Tuesday September 25th, 1854.’

The image offers a tantalising snippet view of the event; part of the stage, part of the audience, the edge of the piano, and some of the band members are in the frame. The background of the image shows the intricate plasterwork in the theatre, especially on the box seats at the side of the stage. This creates an ambience of opulence. In the background we can also see members of the band who are standing, by modern standards, uncomfortably close to each other. (When performing in Melbourne, apparently on Bushnell’s request, the orchestra was moved to stand on the stage behind Hayes to make the most of the floor space for seating. This might have also

been the case in this Sydney performance). Visible musicians on the left of Hayes are playing a double bass, bassoon, and perhaps a flute, while the rest seem to be string players. Hayes is positioned in the centre of the image, alongside the bass-baritone singer, Monsieur Emile Coulon. Drawing on the program printed in the *Empire* newspaper on the day of the performance it is most likely the two were performing the opera buffa duet from Donizetti’s *Don Pasquale*, ‘Signora in tanta fretta’. In this duet, Don attempts to stop his wife Norina from going out alone, telling her that ‘a husband might not like that’. She responds ‘a husband should keep his mouth shut’. The defiance shown by Norina in the duet is at odds with Hayes’ public image as submissive, young (virginal), and obedient.

The image shows Hayes’ costume is in the fashionable style of the day, which reinforced the rigid and tightly controlled role of women in the nineteenth century. Regarding this type of dress, Kathleen M. Torrens argues that ‘the drop-shouldered styles of the 1840s and 1850s hindered a woman from raising her hands over her head, while the rigid corset prevented bending at the waist.’ These styles also aimed to exaggerate the size of a woman’s bust and hips – perhaps to accentuate a child-rearing physicality – by corseting the waist and adding many layers of fabric to the hips. Restrictive dress meant that women required assistance from arguably more comfortably-clad men in order to climb or descend stairs or enter a carriage. When Hayes arrived in Geelong, Victoria, *The Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer* reported that ‘she came on shore leaning on the arm of his Worship the Mayor, who

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50 Walsh, 250.
conducted her to a carriage, which conveyed her to Mack’s Hotel.’ 53 The next month in Sydney, it was reported that Hayes was ‘supported on the arm of Mr Justice Therry’ 54 on one occasion and ‘leaning on the arm of M. [John Hubert] Plunkett’ on another. 55 While it was customary at this time for women to take the arm of a man, these descriptions serve to reinforce Hayes’ meek femininity.

In the nineteenth century, one of the measures of a civilised society was the relative safety of and respect shown to women. A potent example of Australian society paying respect to Catherine Hayes comes in the form of another drawing published in The Australian picture pleasure book (see Figure 2).

55 ‘Miss Hayes’ last concert,’ The Argus [Melbourne, VIC], 28 October 1854, 6: http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4799520
Figure 2: ‘Departure of Miss Catherine Hayes from Sydney, October 18th, 1854.’

In this image of Catherine Hayes’ departure, the singer is standing at the end of a wharf accompanied by a gentleman in a top hat – Bushnell perhaps? – and another female figure, presumably her mother, standing behind. There is a large number of people crowding the wharf including women in full skirts and parasols, which suggests they are of the wealthier classes. In the foreground are several rowboats filled with men and women – the men with top hats raised and one wearing a monocle, again hinting at wealth and status or at least education. The women are dressed in bonnets and shawls and all are gazing up adoringly at the singer. In the background the land by the wharf is completely covered in well-wishers and in the distance hooded figures, perhaps monks or clergymen, can be seen observing from afar.

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(During Hayes’ tour it was not deemed appropriate for clergymen to attend her concerts and in one instance, a local priest took to the newspaper to vent his frustration at the implication Catholic clergymen were in attendance.) A boat with a group of presumably Indigenous Australian men is in the foreground. The men appear to be observing the celebrations and perhaps the implication is that they were learning from the white colonists about the respectable treatment of women. Despite the festive atmosphere, there is something unnerving about the image. That is, there is an impression that Hayes is positioned on a precipice, from which she could easily fall into the deep water. It is difficult to say with certainty whether the artist intended the precariousness to echo the position of women in colonial society – adored so long as they upheld a narrow conception of respectability. Indigenous women are written out of the scene entirely.

At the end of Hayes’ tours, her portrait was published in the *Australian Album* for 1857 (see Figure 3).

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Figure 3: Catherine Hayes, published in the *Australian Album* for 1857.\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{58} *Australian Album* (Sydney, NSW: J.R. Clarke, 1856), unnumbered page.
The *Australian Album* was part of a series of musical albums published in Sydney that contain pieces of music and illustrations demonstrating life in Sydney over that year. Hayes is one of three musical figures featured in the album for 1857, alongside the composer Edouard Boulanger (1829–1863) and English soprano Anna Bishop. The artist, Edmund Thomas (1827–1867), emphasised Hayes’ beauty, purity, and naturalness in this portrait. Hayes wears a garland of delicate flowers in her hair and holds a small posy of the same. She holds a white handkerchief, perhaps symbolising virginity. Her lack of jewellery – save for a single bracelet – signifies good taste and restraint, while her corseted dress with full skirt demonstrates wealth.

Hayes’ depiction in the portrait is reminiscent of nineteenth-century aesthetics of ideal beauty. The image of Venus de Medici in Figure 4 was published in an 1836 book covering the analysis and classification of female beauty. The image of Venus represents the ideal. Hayes’ face, expression, and hair mimic the statue. The resemblance of Hayes’ portrait to the Venus figure is further evidence of her reception in the colonies as a feminine ideal.

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Figure 4: The Venus de Medici.  

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60 Walker, viii.
Section VI: Repertoire

Hayes’ repertoire on the 1854–55 tours reflected popular taste in the colonies. Commenting on Hayes’ programs in Australia compared to those of America, Walsh says ‘her programme followed earlier patterns in America, except that she included more songs than arias.’\(^61\) This speaks to the popularity of the Irish songs on colonial soil, where homesickness and nostalgia ranked as high or higher than hearing up-to-date European repertoire like opera. Repertoire was just one of the ways in which *prima donnas* like Hayes could shape their perception by the public. In her study of women opera singers in the early-nineteenth century, Naomi André argues that the title roles in Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Linda di Chaminoux* embodied a ‘hapless type of Romantic heroine who loves unwisely and is ultimately sacrificed for her innocence.’\(^62\) By performing these dramatic and musical roles, Hayes was re-enacting her prescribed gender role. Another aria that Hayes frequently performed, ‘Ah, mon fils!’ (‘Ah, my son!’), from Giacomo Meyerbeer’s *Le Prophète*, conveys the primal love of a mother for the child. Sung by Fidès, the protagonist Jean de Leyde’s mother, she believes her son is dead then hears his voice and recognises him – ‘Ah, my son!’ The aria explores the power of a mother’s love and reinforces motherhood as a woman’s primary role.

Another celebrated aria from Hayes’ repertoire was ‘Casta Diva’ from Bellini’s *Norma*. As high-priestess of the Druids, it is Norma’s task to convince the Druids to remain at peace with the invading Romans (Norma is secretly in love with a Roman). In the aria, Norma prays for peace and the Druids acquiesce to her. This aria runs parallel to the role of women in the Australian colonies as ‘God’s police,’ according

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\(^61\) Walsh, 186.

to which women are expected to have a softening, morally uplifting affect on those around them.

When Hayes returned to Sydney in August 1855, her first performance was under Frank Howson’s management in a staging of Bellini’s opera *La Sonnambula*. *The Sydney Morning Herald* describes it as ‘the first occasion of the introduction of opera amongst us’ and goes on to say,

> In the arts that polish life and the accomplishments that adorn it, Australia is in its infancy, but it is an infancy that will soon put on, by quick and premature growth, the strength and vigour of an early manhood. Amongst the most delightful of these arts and accomplishments, the opera is a species of entertainment most enjoyed by cultivated and refined minds, and we hail its introduction as an auspicious era in the history of colonial improvement.63

This report goes some way to explaining the importance of Hayes’ role in giving colonists – Australians? – the feeling that they are part of a civilised society.

Perhaps just as important as what Hayes did sing was what she did not sing. The *South Australian Register* report after Hayes’s only concert in Adelaide stated ‘Miss Hayes was asked and wished to sing “God Save the Queen,” but having overtaxed her strength she was unable to do so.’64 There is no evidence that Hayes performed ‘God Save the Queen’ whilst in the Australian colonies, so it is possible this was a one-off request from a member of the Adelaide audience. Whether Hayes’ refusal to sing the anthem was intended is, predictably, left unclear, and yet it might have been important for Hayes to avoid singing the English national anthem as part of her package appeal to the Irish community.

Hayes’ performances resonated with colonial Australian audiences, and especially the Irish amongst them, in a variety of ways, some deeply emotional. What

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these emotional responses have in common is taking leave of the present moment and indulging feelings of nostalgia, homesickness, and perhaps also personal feelings of guilt tied to the Famine. Meanwhile, intimately tied with these emotions is the anticipation of fondly remembering Hayes’ performance after it is over. A citizen of Geelong, the regional centre in Victoria roughly 75km from Melbourne, wrote to the Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer newspaper that,

Such a treat as this [a Catherine Hayes concert in Geelong] would warm many a heart to absent friends, and bring back many an old association at present lying dormant in the heart.  

For this writer, a Hayes concert would offer the citizens of Geelong the chance to indulge their feelings of homesickness or nostalgia for their past lives. Indeed, that was the response of a poet who wrote to Bell’s Life with a poem dedication for Hayes titled ‘On her singing of “Home, Sweet Home.”’

Like words that breathe a charm that strain
Wakes memories sadly sweet;
Oh, let me hear thee once again
That simple song repeat.

…
To Memory’s vision it recalls
A dream of vanished hours,
And on my thirsting spirit falls
Like dew on drooping flowers.
Bright links in Friendship’s broken chain--
Hopes that lay faded long--
Seem twining round my heart again
While listening to that Song.

These lines emphasise the power of song to conjure up feelings of nostalgia and homesickness. Reacting on a seemingly deeper level, Bell’s Life reported that ‘the

65 Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer [VIC], 28 October 1854, 5: http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article91860796
versatility of talent and wondrous histrionic power so suddenly placed before us, completely, in the emphatic words of an enthusiastic friend, “disembodied us.”

These various responses to Hayes’ performances have in common that they involve an escape from reality. Similarly, reporting on Hayes’ Melbourne concerts, The Argus reviewer says,

Her power seems resistless, her triumph was complete. Political agitation, social disruption, commercial depression—the tyrants which have of late held sway over Victoria—are for the time humbled to the dust, and the fascinating spell of music reigns in their stead.

From this reviewer’s perspective, Hayes’ cultural power has overthrown masculine political and economic power, which reinforces the perceived separation between the cultural and economic-political spheres. The review demonstrates that Hayes’ artistic power is greater than political power, but its description as a ‘spell’ suggests that artistic power is short-lived.

Michael Murphy has identified a similar phenomenon in Irish reviews of Hayes’s performances, which he argues stemmed from the wish to forget about the Famine and focus on Hayes’s success.

It was through the press that the Irish learned how to overreact in the American style, and even allowing for exaggeration, it seems that Irish audiences exceeded all bounds of normalcy in encoring Hayes. … The Irish in Ireland distanced themselves from the surrounding disaster and shared in the euphoria of American prosperity through the newspapers, particularly through the activity of reading the reportage of their own behavior… The musical press thus recorded a poignant time when the Irish became disembodied in their own country and were transported to another imagined Ireland personified in Hayes and expressed in her singing.

67 Bell’s Life in Sydney and Sporting Reviewer, 14 October 1854, 2: http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article59759272
68 Argus [Melbourne, VIC], 30 October 1854, p. 5: http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4799612
Both Roach and Murphy argue that Hayes became a representative figure for Ireland itself. Indeed, the word *mavourneen* is derived from the Gaelic for ‘my sweetheart,’ *mo mhuirnín.*70 According to Roach, Hayes ‘impersonated the role … of Kathleen Mavourneen, physical embodiment of the only true paradise, the one that has been lost.’71 The song ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’, composed in the 1830s, trades in the same sentimentality and themes of lost love familiar from Thomas Moore’s *Irish Melodies.*

**Section VII: ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’**

‘Kathleen Mavourneen’ is an example of a Moore-like Irish sentimental ballad, the likes of which enjoyed great popularity in the Australian colonies in the second half of the nineteenth century. The song was composed by Englishman Frederick Crouch with words by Marian Crawford. The text is from an Irish emigrant’s perspective – presumably a male – who exhorts his love to waken and bid him farewell. ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’ shares with some of Moore’s songs the themes of exile and lost love, as well as the personification of Ireland as ‘silent.’ Whereas for Moore, the harp is a symbol for Ireland that has been silenced (as in ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls’), in this song it is the *Irish figure ‘Kathleen’ who is ‘silent’ and unmoving about the emigrant’s departure: ‘why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart? / Why art thou silent Kathleen Mavourneen.’ It is likely that many emigrants, especially those that left during the Famine, would have felt dissatisfied that Ireland had become both literally (to a degree) and figuratively a barren, silent landscape. The depiction of ‘Kathleen’ as silent and motionless also reinforces the trope that the Irish were lazy and apathetic (and thus could not be helped and relied on British rule).72 The silencing

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70 Roach, 43.
71 Roach, 51.
of ‘Kathleen’ simultaneously references the silencing of women, since she has no voice in the song. In the same way that the public’s interpretation of a static monument can change over time, the famine years had given both the song, and the motionless Kathleen, new meaning. Read anew after the famine, the song was more strongly associated with the emigrant’s guilt.

Derek Scott describes it as an in-quotation-marks “Irish song” saying

'[the song’s] contrast of major and minor tonality is very much in the European classical mould, and its suggestion of an Irish quality is only evident from two or three pentatonic turns of phrase, an occasional drone bass, and the typically Irish use of triple time for a love song … Apart from this, the modulations, chromaticism, and sobbing dissonances (implying the need for classical harmony) mark it down as a sentimental ballad for the middle-class home.'

Scott’s summary analysis is dismissive on the grounds that the song is not authentically Irish. Yet, it was publicly received as an Irish song and it was performed well beyond the ‘middle-class home’ – Catherine Hayes had sung it at Buckingham Palace in front of Queen Victoria. The following analysis attempts to shed light on the structural arc of the song and the ways in which it represented Irishness.

The structure and expressive markings found in ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’ are typical of contemporary ballads. The song is in ternary form (ABA\(^1\)) and repeated twice, beginning and ending in E-flat major with a middle section in the relative minor. There is a fifteen bar introduction, which establishes E-flat major and includes several phrases utilising chromatic passing notes and suspended fourth chords. The introduction aligns the song with up-to-date European music and is reminiscent of the introductory ‘symphonies’ found in Moore’s Melodies. The

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73 Derek Scott, *The Singing Bourgeois*, 100.
74 Walsh, 114–115.
performance indication at the outset is *Andante e Penseroso* and in the case of an Australian publication of ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’, bar 12 of the introduction is marked *ad lib.* These expression markings are similar to those found in Moore’s *Melodies.* Overall, the song structure and expression markings suggest that ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’ is a characteristic sentimental ballad.

The vocal line in the A section is metrically uneven and includes wide leaps in the melody (See Example 1).

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77 In the first book of Moore’s *Melodies*, various songs are marked with ‘*expressivo*’, ‘*express. lentando*’, and numerous fermata. See Thomas Moore, *Irish Melodies*, (Dublin: J. Power, 1807), 7–8, 13, 21, 23–24, 41.
Example 1: ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’, bars 16–31, vocal part only

Dale Cockrell argues that typically, Moore (and Stevenson’s) melodies consist of ‘generally conjunct motion with a characteristic leap to a climactic note’ and that ‘this style has come to signify much of that which is associated with the home and the private sphere: sentimentalism, nostalgia, femininity, leisure, emotionalism, and, one might argue, a certain confusion about place and purpose.’ In the case of an Irish song such as this, ‘sentimentalism’ and ‘emotionalism’ due to exile is the focus of the song and is expressed through the use of wide ascending leaps in the melody. The emotive climax of the first section occurs at bars 28–29, where Crouch uses even larger leaps to convey the protagonist’s passionate cries to their beloved (the minim-quaver-quaver pattern combined with higher pitches on each minim mimics the sound of sobbing). Then, in bars 30–31, the impassioned phrase reaches a calm resolution. The end of the phrase is marked as calmer than the preceding material for two reasons. First is the metrical arrangement of notes. Bar 30 offers the first example of a crotchet

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appearing on the third beat of a bar (previously, quavers and semiquavers would appear on the third beat of the bar). In this case, the crotchet (also found in the accompaniment) serves to slow the momentum of the phrase and contributes to a calming atmosphere. Second is the melody line that descends through $\frac{3}{2}$ to the tonic without ornament. This clichéd melody is familiar material often found at the end of a phrase or piece and therefore might be calming to a listener.

While it seems that there is a sharp contrast between the unpredictable, impassioned section and this closing phrase, another look at the opening phrase shows hidden simplicity. In the opening phrase (bars 16–25), the points of metrical stress – in most cases a minim on the first beat of the bar – usually fall on pitches from the tonic triad. Therefore, the impassioned cries of the melody that were, at best, unexpected and, at worst, haphazard can be seen to fall within European melodic conventions. The tension between familiar and unfamiliar melodic elements might account for the great appeal of the song. Similar to ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’ is Moore’s ‘The last rose of summer,’ in which a ‘characteristic leap’ occurs in the first bar and is followed by a descent to the tonic (see Example 2).

Example 2: ‘The last rose of summer,’ opening melody.

The piano accompaniment evolves over the course of ‘Kathleen Mavourneen.’ In the A section, the accompaniment has a compound-duple time feel (see Example 3). At the same time as the vocal part stresses beats 1 and 3 (in a pattern of 1, 3-1, 3-1 over the first three bars) the right hand part of the accompaniment is reminiscent of undulating compound-duple piano music (grouped as 1-2-3-4-5-6, 1-2-3- and so on).
The difference between evenly spaced quavers in the piano and the uneven metrical arrangement of the vocal part creates musical tension in this opening section.


During the opening stanza and before the climactic moment, any feeling of closure created in the melody at the $\frac{3}{2}$ descent over bars 22-23 is undermined by the accompaniment, which makes a dramatic change in the cadence bar (see Example 4).


The undulating quavers of the opening give way to repeated chords in a much heavier, more pompous style. This change in mood might have been intended to increase the sense of urgency in this next part of the A section, as the singer reaches for the first climax at bars 28–29.
The B section contrasts the A section harmonically and melodically. Harmonically, the B section is in the relative minor and the melody outlines a descending C harmonic minor scale. Compared with the A section, there is less emphasis on wide leaps and more stepwise motion. Rhythmically, there is some borrowing of, for example, the minim-quaver-quaver pattern (see Example 5).
Example 5: ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’, B section, bars 35–43.

In the B section, the accompaniment settles into a simple triple feel, which complements the rhythmic profile of the vocal part. The A\textsuperscript{1} section begins at bar 43 with the same vocal part as the A section but this time accompanied by the rocking piano motif from the B section (see Example 6).
The use of the new rocking accompaniment against the familiar melody in the A\textsuperscript{1} section suggests that a change or evolution has taken place for the protagonist over the course of the song. It might be that the rocking accompaniment represents the protagonist’s impending departure, which approaches as the song goes by. The whole ABA\textsuperscript{1} pattern is repeated with new text and slight variations to the melody, which gives audiences another chance to tread the musical arc of the song and allows time for reminiscing.

The A\textsuperscript{1} section of ‘Kathleen Mavourneen’ (the rocking accompaniment set to the A section melody) echoes another of Moore’s Melodies, ‘Rich and rare were the gems she wore’ (see Example 7). This Moore ballad, also in simple triple time, uses the minim-crotchet rhythmic profile and the rocking piano accompaniment (in this case the bass line emphasises the strong beats in the vocal part). ‘Rich and rare were the gems she wore’ tells the story of a beautiful woman who is wearing valuable jewellery and travelling in unfamiliar territory. The woman converses with a knight whom she meets on the road. He is alarmed that she is ‘so lone and lovely,’ but she proclaims,
Sir Knight! I feel not the least alarm;
No son of Erin will offer me harm;
For tho’ they love woman and golden store,
Sir Knight they love honour and virtue more!\(^{79}\)

Although there is no evidence that Crouch intended for his ballad to echo Moore’s, it is tempting to probe the crossover between a vulnerable yet beautiful and wealthy woman in Moore’s ballad and a silent yet fiercely loved ‘Kathleen Mavourneen.’

Example 7: Thomas Moore and John Stevenson ‘Rich and rare were the gems she wore,’ bars 11–18.

\(^{79}\) Thomas Moore, ‘Rich and rare were the gems she wore,’ *Irish melodies*, Vol. 1, (London: J Power’s, 1808), 50.
Section VII: Philanthropy and influence

One of the few ways that female artists could have a lasting impact on a public issue was through significant philanthropic donations. During her time in Sydney in 1854, Hayes donated the profits of one concert, amounting to £800, to the Destitute Children’s Asylum. Hayes had previously given a charity performance at an orphanage in Brooklyn, New York, in 1851. According to Derek Hyde, Jenny Lind had ‘provided money for hospitals in Liverpool, London and an Infirmary for children in Norwich’. In any case, philanthropy towards poverty-stricken children was another way prominent women could engage in metaphorical mothering and thus fulfill their prescribed gender roles. The opening of the hospital on 9 March 1870 was reported in The Sydney Morning Herald. The address by Chairman of the board, Deas Thomson, a longstanding public servant and parliamentarian, described Catherine Hayes’ initial donation:

At the instance of himself [Chairman of the Board, Deas Thomson], and some other gentlemen … Miss Catherine Hayes had kindly consented to give a concert, and that concert had been such a brilliant success that 800 pounds had thereby been realised. The committee had called upon Miss Hayes after the concert, and asked if she approved of the sum realised being set apart as a commencement of a fund for the building of a hospital for the Asylum. In that the lady had cordially concurred...

This report by the Chairman of the Board describes Catherine Hayes’ role in funding the hospital as passive and compliant. According to Anne Doggett, giving up remuneration was seen as an obligation for any respectable woman singer in the nineteenth century. Today, the Catherine Hayes building is part of the Prince of Wales Hospital in Randwick, an eastern suburb of Sydney. The Hospital is an

80 Hyde, 15.
example of the power an artist can bring to bear to affect change in the public sphere. At the time, the hospital served as a symbol of progress in the colonies towards a benevolent, equal, wealthy, and medically advanced society.

The influence of Catherine Hayes was felt for generations in Australian music. Catholic clergy in Australia frequently mentored young singers in line with Hayes’ example. Part of the motivation was to promote Catholic women as both gifted and morally pure. Local circumstances such as the international fame of Nellie Melba (1861–1931) – a Protestant – led Catholics to emphasise the piety of their singers. Amy Castles (1880–1951) is an example of a young, Catholic woman of Irish background who was mentored by Catholic clergymen and touted as the ‘new Melba.’ Another such singer mentored by Catholic clergy, Marie Narelle (born Mary Ryan, 1870–1941), built an international career styled as the ‘Queen of Irish song.’ Irish lineage proved important to these succeeding generations as it provided a measure of authenticity when singing Irish sentimental ballads, which remained staples of the repertoire for aspiring Australian singers. In the emphasis on Irishness and purity shown by Catholic singers in Australia, Hayes had made her mark.

Less of a direct influence and more of a general trend was the number of Australian singers in the generation after Catherine Hayes who were also trained in the Garcia method of singing. Sister Mary Ellen Christian (1848–1941) had studied with Manuel Garcia and had a moderately successful singing career before teaching Melba and others from St Vincent’s College in Sydney in the 1890s. Several Australian singers also went to Paris to study with another of Garcia’s pupils, Madame Mathilde Marchesi (1821–1913). This level of training and powerful

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mentorship ensured that the latter decades of the nineteenth century produced many Australian vocal exports in the mold of Catherine Hayes.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has offered a fresh perspective on Hayes’ tour of the Australian colonies. By integrating analysis of Hayes’ public image with feminist readings of colonial society, this chapter has shown how and why Hayes was able to achieve such a level of success with colonial Australian audiences. The impact of homesickness, nostalgia, and the Irish famine combined with the colonial anxiety to put forward an image of a civilised society was the perfect stage for Hayes. Through her public image and repertoire choices, Hayes ensured the ongoing popularity of the Irish sentimental ballad repertoire, while her image of youth, purity, poise, talent, education, and generosity was held up as an ideal during her tours and served as an example to succeeding generations of singers in Australia.
Chapter Two

John Hubert Plunkett:

‘The Ancient Bard of Ireland’ in colonial New South Wales

John Hubert Plunkett (1802–1869) is usually remembered for his contributions in the field of Australian law. As attorney-general of New South Wales from 1832 to 1856, Plunkett oversaw the transition of New South Wales from a penal colony to a free society. He authored the first law manual in the colonies, titled *The Australian Magistrate*, in 1835. Beyond his role as colonial lawmaker, Plunkett lived with a passion for music. Plunkett played and enjoyed music by Haydn and Mozart but equally important to him were Irish ballads. Plunkett promoted music in the Australian colonies and was an active participant in the first iteration of the Sydney Philharmonic Society. Later in life, Plunkett also gave public lectures on the subject of ‘ancient Irish music’ in Sydney, Wollongong, and Goulburn. Through these lectures he promoted the study of Irish music for both its historical interest and for music’s perceived role as a civilising force on the population. While Plunkett’s love of music has been acknowledged by his biographers, a study of his lectures on Irish music will shed light on the role of the ballads in forming a positive Irish cultural identity – separate from negative Irish stereotypes – in colonial Australia.

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1 A version of this chapter was presented at the Thirteenth Annual Plenary Conference of the Society for Musicology in Ireland at University College Cork in June 2015.
Section I: Background and literature

To date, Plunkett has been the subject of two biographies, both penned by Australian authors. Historian John Molony published the first monograph biography on Plunkett in 1973. Molony’s work, *An Architect of Freedom*, provides a detailed account of Plunkett’s political career in New South Wales. Almost forty years later, practicing lawyer and academic Tony Earls published *Plunkett’s Legacy: An Irishman’s contribution to the Rule of Law in New South Wales*. Earls’ work builds on Molony’s by filling in more details of Plunkett’s early life in Ireland, including his ancestral background, upbringing, and education. Regarding Plunkett’s musical life, Molony writes in the preface to Earls’ book, ‘it has not been possible to give enough attention to his love of music, which was a constant solace and inspiration to him throughout his life, and a civilising influence he sought to promote in New South Wales.’

The aim of this chapter is to address this lack of research on Plunkett’s musical life through an analysis of his public lectures given on the topic ‘ancient Irish music’ in New South Wales beginning in 1858. In this chapter I will argue that Plunkett’s approach to Irish music was informed by his broadly ‘Anglo-Irish’ identity and his role as a community leader. Plunkett’s lectures offered his audience an acceptable way to engage with Irish music in the context of a British colony. The lectures combined education – a desirable bourgeois goal – with nostalgia for home in a respectable concert setting. These ideals were also current in the ballads of Thomas Moore, which sought to portray the Irish as civilised, educated, and virtuous.

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4 Molony, quoted in Earls, xiv.
Section II: Biography

There were several factors in the life and heritage of the young John Hubert Plunkett that may have influenced his decision to undertake a career in law. John Hubert and his twin brother were born in 1802 in County Roscommon, Ireland. Plunkett’s ancestors have been traced back to the twelfth-century Norman invasion of Ireland and are usually referred to as ‘Old English’ within Ireland. Yet unlike most of the ‘Old English’ who converted to Anglicanism and became the Anglo-Irish elite in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ireland, John Hubert’s branch of the Plunkett family remained Catholic even in the face of discrimination. Tony Earls argues that ‘Plunkett’s Catholicism had a deep historical perspective,’ referring to John Hubert’s most prominent ancestor, the Irish Catholic martyr St Oliver Plunkett (1625-1681) who was canonised in 1975. Oliver Plunkett was hanged, drawn and quartered in London in 1681 for high treason – specifically for promoting the Roman faith – following a corrupt trial. John Hubert likely felt a strong connection to Oliver Plunkett, demonstrated by the fact that he kept a document with him his whole life that proved his lineage to the martyr. Alongside his Catholic faith, John Hubert was a liberal thinker who believed in religious equality – something that was also likely informed by his heritage. Oliver Plunkett had founded several non-denominational schools in Ireland in the late-1600s at a time when Catholic educators were often forbidden from teaching. John Hubert was keenly aware of the importance of education and espoused Oliver Plunkett’s ideal of non-denominational education during his time in New South Wales.

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5 Earls, 151.
6 Earls, 151.
From a twenty-first century perspective, it seems as though Plunkett held a dual identity that was both Irish Catholic and wealthy upper class. Yet it is unclear where Plunkett might have positioned himself on the spectrum of nineteenth-century Irish society, which ranged from typically poor, Gaelic-speaking Irish Catholics, to urban middle-class Catholics and the usually wealthy, English-speaking elite. John Hubert himself studied at Trinity College in Dublin shortly after Catholics were first admitted to the university. Tony Earls argues that Plunkett’s education at Trinity College and subsequently at law school in London were the most important experiences of his life because they set him on a course to become the first Catholic appointed to high office in New South Wales. Furthermore, his time attending Trinity College and training for the Bar likely gave him a new perspective on his Irish homeland and helped him to formulate a personal identity as a respectable Irish Catholic man in an English and Protestant-dominated profession. Earls writes that following his time in London, Plunkett ‘spent his early career in Ireland, campaigning for Catholics to be granted the same civil rights as Protestants as a matter of justice. He took from this a profound belief in “The Rule of Law” as a guiding principle for the advancement of a society of equal rights irrespective of class or creed.’\(^8\) Plunkett came to be appointed solicitor-general of New South Wales after successfully campaigning for Daniel O’Connell in Ireland.

As solicitor-general (1832–1836) and then attorney-general of New South Wales (1836–1856), Plunkett was liberal, even-handed, and tireless. Over the course of his career, he frequently demonstrated his moral tenacity and his commitment to religious equality. Throughout his time as solicitor-general he often performed the duties of the attorney-general, who was deaf. In 1836 Plunkett passed the Church Act,

\(^8\) Earls, xiii-xiv.
which is an example of his belief in religious equality. As a result of the Act, the Church of England in Australia was disestablished and equal government funding was offered to all Christian churches. An example of his moral tenacity came in 1838, when Plunkett endured a lengthy legal battle to successfully convict a group of mostly white, European killers for the murder of Aboriginal men, women, and children in the Myall Creek Massacre. In addition to his duties as attorney-general, Plunkett was committed to education and ‘improving’ the community at large. Plunkett was head of the first National Education Board in 1848 and a founding fellow at the University of Sydney’s Catholic residential college, St John’s in 1858. In his capacity as a founding fellow of St. John’s College in the University of Sydney, Plunkett gave an address on equality and education in 1857. Later in life he served as vice-chancellor of The University of Sydney.

Section III: Public lecturing in colonial Australia

Public lectures were a regular feature of the urban environment in nineteenth-century Europe, the United States and Australia. Public lecturing in colonial Australia is not an area that has received much scholarly attention. Ian Inkster argues that the lack of published research on public lecturing may be ‘explained partly in terms of the very great difficulty met in the excavation of raw material.’ While a full analysis of public lecturing either in colonial New South Wales or on the topic of Irish music is

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outside the scope of this study, an overview and some key examples can shed light on Plunkett’s position in the lecturing scene. The Australian dictionary of biography classes just 38 people (36 men and two women) under the occupation ‘public lecturer’ active between the 1830s and 1900. The various topics covered by these lecturers included economic and political matters, science (including botany, astronomy, and pre-historic man), literature, poetry, music, religion and sectarianism, Australian culture,13 Aboriginal affairs, and botanic gardens. Some lecturers also provided commentary on more esoteric subjects like ghosts, Turkish baths, and ‘the culture of tea in Victoria’.14 Lectures were usually delivered under the auspices of a community group, society or association (e.g., the Mechanics Institute). Typically, the host organisation provided a core audience who would attend the lecture as well as volunteers to help with the organisation of a venue and, if necessary, advertisements. Lectures were held in public buildings or theatres that could accommodate large crowds and advertisements were placed in local newspapers with information regarding the lecturer, their topic, and how to gain admission. Some lectures were free and others required the purchase of tickets either beforehand or at the door. Similarly, some lectures were ‘open to all’ while others required membership or an introduction to gain admission.

Regarding lectures on music in the colonies, newspapers reveal that these were taking place as early as the 1830s.15 In April 1850, Mr. P. Buchanan gave a lecture on

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'national music' with a focus on Scottish music that was 'illustrated by selections from the songs of [Robert] Burns.' In Adelaide, South Australia, the Mechanics Institute hosted a lecture on music by George Pitman (a solicitor), ‘after which the usual musical performance will take place.’ Once again under the auspices of a Mechanics Institute, this time in Melbourne, Victoria, F. L. Clay gave a lecture on ‘sacred music.’ Residents of Perth, in Western Australia, and Hobart and Launceston, in Van Dieman’s Land (now Tasmania), were also witness to lectures on music. The above examples demonstrate that on the one hand, Plunkett’s lecturing on music was not a one-off event, while on the other hand, a lecture dedicated to *Irish* music was unusual.

Generally, it was upper class, educated, English-speaking migrants or visitors to the colony who spoke publicly. To give a specific example, an Anglo-Irish contemporary of Plunkett who also gave a number of lectures in Melbourne on music and other cultural matters was Redmond Barry (1813-1880), best known for his role as the judge at Ned Kelly’s trial. Redmond Barry, along with John Plunkett, may have identified as Anglo-Irish. In setting parameters for the ‘Anglo-Irish’ category, Patrick O’Farrell argues that,

> To define these Anglo-Irish, the terms must be broad and flexible: English-speaking and usually but not always of English descent; not always of Anglican religion, sometimes Presbyterian, often Methodist,

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Redmond Barry was a Protestant with both English and Irish heritage. He was wealthy and received an elite education in England. Historian Ann Galbally argues of the Anglo-Irish in colonial Australia that ‘their strength lay in the high value they placed on education, their sense of authority, their tough intellectual calibre and ferocious energy.’ These attributes can be applied to Barry, who in 1851, was made the first Solicitor-General of the state of Victoria. Galbally notes that soon after his arrival in Victoria, Barry ‘delivered a lecture “On the Art of Agriculture” to the Mechanics Institute in 1840 and followed this with others on “Architecture, Sculpture and Painting” in 1847 and “Music and Poetry” in 1849.’ In his 1847 lecture, Barry emphasised that music, when compared with all other facets of the arts, had the best prospect of improving the taste and morals of the colonial population. The noted benefits of music, as argued by Barry, were that it can be performed at home and enjoyed free of charge. Barry eventually published a short book titled *Music and Poetry* in 1872 in which the music of Ireland is completely absent.

Regarding an Anglo-Irish disdain for all things Irish, Galbally argues that the Anglo-Irish ‘never identified with Ireland, recognised no such thing as Irish culture … and idealised all things English.’ To illustrate the seeming lack of acknowledgement of Irish culture, Galbally quotes a letter to Barry that was penned by his ‘doting’ Aunt Arabella. In her letter, Barry’s Aunt Arabella writes ‘you have too much good sense and good taste to sing Irish songs in English company they don’t understand the wit

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23 Galbally, 85.
25 Galbally, 84.
and are disgusted with the vulgarity.’ In sum, Barry – at least in his Aunt’s eyes – was familiar enough with Irish music to sing it and identify it as Irish. However, colonial Australia was a British system, and if the Irish songs were not intelligible to a British audience Barry might have elected to ignore them altogether. O’Farrell makes a similar point, arguing ‘it suited the Anglo-Irish to move towards the Anglo side of their duality’ in order to prosper in the colony. While Barry chose to remain silent on Irish music, Plunkett was not the first to deliver a lecture on the topic of Irish music.

Frederick Horncastle gave a number of presentations entitled ‘Entertainment on the National Music of Ireland with Vocal and Instrumental Illuminations’ in London during the early 1840s. According to Martin Dowling, ‘Horncastle articulated a cohesive and consumable package of ‘Irish music’ with repertoire built around the Moore mainstream. Horncastle blended vignettes of history and folklore with songs and performances on both uilleann pipes and harp.’ According to Davis, ‘Horncastle’s “Entertainment” strung together performances of Irish songs (many of which were Moore’s versions) with lectures on the structure and history of Irish music and Irish legends and anecdotes.’ Davis argues that

On the one hand, it represented Irish music in a positive way, suggesting its historical interest … the “Entertainment” reinforced an opposition between Irish music as a primitive tradition and English taste as an indication of modernity … The audience at Horncastle’s “Entertainment” could indulge their taste for the “primitive” while inside the theatrical venue and re-emerge into the modern city once the evening was over.

26 27 November 1840, Barry papers, Box 601/1(g) La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria, quoted in Galbally, 84.
27 O’Farrell, The Irish in Australia, 94.
Frederick Horncastle visited New South Wales in 1847. It seems that he came via the Pacific circuit and, unexpectedly, his life ended in a ‘sudden death’ at his hotel in Botany, NSW. Given what can be pieced together from newspaper reports of his time in Australia, Horncastle seems to have been a somewhat untrustworthy figure. He gave lectures on ‘ancient Irish music,’ presumably in a similar fashion to those he had delivered in London; however, they were the subject of several minor controversies including one author of a ‘letter to the editor’ accusing Horncastle of speaking ‘gibberish’ when he was purportedly speaking in Irish, to which Horncastle penned an adamant reply that his listener was mistaken. It is not known if Plunkett attended these lectures, but given his love of Irish music it seems likely he was at least aware of Horncastle. If any proof emerges of Plunkett’s attendance, then it might be argued that Plunkett was inspired by Horncastle’s populist lectures to give his own more academic account of the history of Irish music.

**Section IV: Plunkett’s ideology**

Plunkett believed that music could promote improvement and equality in society. Following Plunkett’s first ‘ancient Irish music’ lecture, *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported that Plunkett ‘proceeded to speak of the advantages to a community that were to be derived from the cultivation of music, recommending it as a part of education, not only essential to the well being and happiness of the domestic circle,

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31 Elise Crean notes that Horncastle was dismissed from his post as organist at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Armagh, for ‘turbulence, contention, insolence and contumacy.’ See Elise Crean, ‘Frederick Horncastle,’ in *The encyclopaedia of music in Ireland*, ed. Harry White, Barra Boydell (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2013), vol. 1, 497.

but calculated-to-improve the morals and habits of a whole people.’\(^{33}\) These sentiments echo Redmond Barry’s approach to music as a tool of moral improvement for the community.

Plunkett’s belief in the importance of education, and particularly music appreciation, had been further inspired on a visit back to Ireland and England in 1843, during his tenure as attorney-general. As a preface to his first lecture on Irish music, Plunkett described witnessing groups of up to 500 mostly working class pupils taking part in singing classes in London. Plunkett emphasised the moral improvement gained by those taking part in the lessons. For example, during his remarks Plunkett quoted from a local newspaper in England,

> Wherever the working-classes are taught to prefer the pleasures of intellect, and even of taste … a great and favourable change takes place in their character and manners. They are no longer driven by mere vacuity of mind to the beer-shop … their wages are not squandered in intemperance, and they become happier as well as better.\(^{34}\)

Plunkett had a special fondness for Irish music for the purposes of improvement.

When Plunkett spoke in Goulburn in September 1861, the *Goulburn Herald* paraphrased his comments. They wrote,

> The lecturer then proceeded to point out the importance of directing our youth to the study of music. The more the native music was kept before them, the more would its beauties be appreciated and the more would their tastes become refined.\(^{35}\)

In terms of his classical tastes, Plunkett was the chairman of the Sydney Philharmonic Society from 1857 to 1863. Plunkett’s association with music extended

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to touring musicians who visited the colonies while he was attorney-general. For example, Plunkett met Irish soprano Catherine Hayes, violinist Miska Hauser, composer and pianist Édouard Bourgarelle, and others. One of Plunkett’s well-known musical acquaintances was William S. Lyster, the opera impresario. Lyster, also an Irishman, had arrived in Melbourne with his troupe in 1861. Upon Lyster’s departure from the colonies, a farewell benefit was organised at the Prince of Wales Theatre in Sydney. On the night, Plunkett delivered the farewell address in which he expressed his sincere thanks to the entrepreneur. The *Empire* quoted Plunkett as saying that Lyster had presented ‘musical entertainments of the highest order – entertainments calculated to improve and elevate the musical taste of the people in this very distant colony (Cheers).’

Lyster’s company had performed European operatic repertory including *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *The Huguenots*, *the Bohemian Girl*, *Lohengrin*, *Maritana*, *Il Trovatore*, and others. Plunkett’s comments on this occasion demonstrate the close relationship between three central ideas that were current in the Australian colonies. First was the notion of great distance from the European cultural centres, second was the idea that the colonial population required ‘improving,’ and third, that engaging in cultural activities such as music would achieve this goal.

**Section V: Plunkett’s lectures on ‘ancient Irish music’**

Plunkett began lecturing on Irish music two years after he retired from the position of attorney-general. According to newspaper reports, Plunkett gave a total of four of these lectures between 1858 and 1866. The first was delivered in October 1858 at the

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Lyceum Theatre in York Street, Sydney. Then in 1861, Plunkett gave two lectures. The first took place in March at St. Patrick’s Hall in Sydney and the second was in the regional town of Goulburn, NSW. The last newspaper reference to a lecture on Irish music given by Plunkett was published in 1866, when he spoke at the School of Arts hall in Wollongong. The lectures took the form of spoken word interspersed with Irish tunes played by Plunkett himself on the violin. In Sydney and Wollongong, Plunkett had assistance from a variety of singers and pianists who would perform several songs at the close.

Given there is no evidence Plunkett published his lectures on Irish music, the most comprehensive resource available for analysis is newspaper reports. The lectures were advertised and reviewed in a variety of both Catholic and secular press, which offers the advantage of several perspectives. One of the drawbacks of relying on newspaper reviews is that it is often unclear whether the author is paraphrasing, quoting, or offering their own perspective. The approach taken in this study has been to cross-reference a variety of newspaper reports in coming to conclusions Plunkett’s views on Irish music.

The first notice of Plunkett giving a lecture on Irish music was published in Sydney’s Freeman’s Journal on 24 July 1858, two months before the first lecture. Plunkett’s lecture was supported by the Australian Celtic Association, which had been founded in Sydney in 1856 and was modeled on Ireland’s Ossianic Society. Although it was short-lived (1856–1862), the Australian Celtic Association had lofty aims.

According to a pamphlet produced at the founding of the Association, its primary objectives were,

1. To enable persons desirous of being the possessors of books relating to Irish Historic and General Literature – ancient and modern, to procure them at the cheapest possible terms.
2. To assist Societies originated, and in active operation, in Ireland, for the purpose of promoting the publication and diffusion of such Literary Works.\(^{41}\)

The Association was strictly ecumenical – one of its rules was ‘at all meetings of the members and of the Committee, discussions respecting religious topics or Colonial politics, shall be strictly prohibited.’\(^{42}\) Nevertheless, members of the society were mostly Catholic and included high-profile clergy, such as Plunkett’s good friend Archdeacon John McEncroe.\(^{43}\) Certainly the Australian Celtic Association aimed to make Plunkett’s lecture open to as many members of the public as possible, with the list of ticket vendors for Plunkett’s first lecture on ancient Irish music numbering more than twenty.\(^{44}\)

Rather than giving his lectures on music purely on their own terms, most of Plunkett’s lectures were given in aid of charitable causes. His first lecture was for the ‘Donegal Relief Fund’, which was established by the Australian Catholic Association in 1858 in response to a call from local priests in Donegal, Ireland, to help their

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\(^{42}\) ‘Australian Celtic Association pamphlet.’

\(^{43}\) ‘Correspondence,’ Freeman’s Journal [Sydney, NSW], 12 September 1857, 2: \[http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article115564773\].

\(^{44}\) ‘Advertising,’ Freeman’s Journal [Sydney, NSW], 2 October 1858, 1: \[http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article115563728\]. Vendors include a perfumer, draper, confectioner, tobacconist, bootmaker and publican.
constituents who were starving and suffering under greedy landlords. Richard Reid argues that

Perhaps the most pleasant way of helping [the Donegal Relief Fund] was to purchase a ticket to the lecture/concert on the “Ancient Music of Ireland” given by the committee’s treasurer … John Hubert Plunkett. Here the sufferings of Ireland, and implicitly those of the Donegal peasants, emerged from Plunkett’s exposition with musical accompaniment … Plunkett’s lecture was a comparatively oblique method of appealing to the local Irish emigrant community’s willingness to identify with the plight of their Donegal compatriots.

Further to Reid’s argument, perhaps Plunkett was also attempting to place ‘ancient Irish music’ and the plight of Donegal peasants in parallel. He presented the loss of Irish music as being ‘saved’ by Bunting and Thomas Moore and, similarly, Plunkett’s audience could be the saviours of the Donegal peasants. As with the political overtones of his message, he wished for his audience to sympathise rather than be galvanised into political action.

Several Irish political and musical sources provided inspiration for Plunkett’s lectures including Edward Bunting’s collection of Irish harp music transcriptions, The ancient music of Ireland. According to Leith Davis, Bunting’s publication also drew inspiration from Irish political group The United Irishmen, whose aim was to ‘unite various divergent factors under the single cause of promoting Ireland.’ In his lectures, Plunkett discussed the plight of the leader of the United Irishmen in Dublin, Robert Emmet, who lived part of his life in hiding due to his role in attempting to overthrow British rule in Ireland. Despite this highly charged political topic,

44 Reid, 190.
45 Edward Bunting, The ancient music of Ireland (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1840).
46 Davis, 100.
Plunkett seems to have been able to direct the sympathies of his audience towards donating to the Donegal Relief Fund, rather than rousing them into a revolutionary zeal.

Davis argues that Bunting’s ‘choice of the word ancient in his title for the collection (even though many of the songs were composed by Irish harpist Carolan, who had died only sixty years before) suggests a separation between the music and the present era.’ Plunkett similarly placed Irish music – except that of Thomas Moore – in the distant past. A newspaper review of Plunkett’s 1861 lecture at St. Patrick’s Hall describes his account of ancient Irish music stopping after Carolan.

He then gave a history of the national music until the time of Carolan: after whose death the old airs were in danger of being lost altogether, until Mr. Bunting, in 1796, made a collection of them and published them. It was from the airs in Bunting’s collection that Moore learned to appreciate the music of his country.

This example shows the sharp line drawn by Plunkett behind Carolan as the last practitioner of truly ‘ancient’ Irish music. In the context of the lectures, ‘ancient’ music was represented by Plunkett’s own playing on the violin. Plunkett’s monophony created a sharp contrast with Moore’s ballads, performed by vocalists with piano accompaniment. The separation of past and present can be linked to a broader philosophical trend. Harry White has argued that the development of ‘self’ was a central tenet of European romantic poetry, and that this would manifest in polarities such as ‘present and past, natural and supernatural, west and east, good and evil, civilization and nature, England and Ireland.’

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50 Davis, 97.
In the case of Plunkett’s lectures, firmly placing the bardic tradition in the past had three main outcomes. One was to mute any political questions to do with the British treatment of bards. According to a Sydney Morning Herald review of the first lecture, Plunkett argued that the bards,

were the most faithful and patriotic of the people, and … their influence inspired their countrymen to oppose at every opportunity the incursions of their invaders, so that the whole wrath of Edward the Second fell upon them, so in Ireland it was the policy of the English to extirpate and destroy the bards.53

It seems that by firmly situating the music and accompanying issues in the past, Plunkett avoids drawing attention to the possibility of contemporary discontent with British control in Ireland. The second outcome of situating the Irish tunes in the distant past is that it creates a narrative trajectory beginning with primitive airs and culminating in Thomas Moore’s ballads. If the Irish airs are representative of a ‘wild,’ ‘primitive’ people, arguing that the music is ‘ancient’ suggests that Irish people have progressed since that time. This is reinforced with the focus on the music of Thomas Moore, the ‘modern bard of Ireland,’ which shows audiences the contemporary civilised state of the Irish people.

Thirdly, although Plunkett is intrinsically Irish, his categorisation of Irish music as ‘ancient’ (via Bunting) positions him as an extrinsic observer. Matthew Gelbart has explored the development of the separation between intrinsic and extrinsic creation, beginning with Schiller, ‘who drew a line between “naïve” poetry (poetry in which the speaker acts as a part of nature), and “sentimental” poetry (in which the poet looks upon nature as something he has lost.)’54 This evolution was also seen to parallel a child’s development from naïvety to a sentimental, or self-conscious, state. Musically,

53 ‘Ancient music of Ireland,’ The Sydney Morning Herald, 6 October 1858, 5: http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13020666
the primitive oral tradition can be seen to be ‘ naïve ’ while the composed tradition is ‘ sentimental . ’ While it is difficult to gauge the response of Plunkett ’ s audience to his lectures, it seems as though he was trying to foster a ‘ sentimental ’ appreciation of Irish music by objectively analysing the ancient ‘ naïve ’ airs and then emphasising Moore ’ s ‘ sentimental ’ compositions. An audience-member ’ s possible transition from a ‘ naïve ’ to a ‘ sentimental ’ view of Irish music was made easier by the emotional and physical dimension of Plunkett ’ s lectures, which took place in a land far distant from Ireland and to an audience presumably of migrants who were looking upon Ireland from outside. Plunkett ’ s audiences were, therefore, primed to take a ‘ sentimental ’ view of Ireland.

Regarding the use of folk song by serious composers in the eighteenth century, Gelbart argues that Schiller adjusted his two categories ‘ naïve ’ and ‘ sentimental ’ so that ‘ rather than pitting the sentimental directly against the naïve, Schiller claimed that naïve nature was opposed to reflective artifice ’ and therefore ‘ he proposed that the “ sentimental ” was actually a reconciliation of these two in a perfected form of poetry, rather than a simple opposite of the naïve . ’ 55 In the case of Thomas Moore and other serious composers who utilised folk songs, Gelbart finds that ‘ the new “ art ” itself parallels Schiller ’ s “ sentimental ” – becoming a bridge between naïve universal nature and individual artifice or intellect . ’ 56 Plunkett ’ s choice to end his lectures with Irish sentimental ballads suggests that he was attempting to construct a narrative of ancient Irish music – performed solo on the violin – that developed into the contemporary ballads – performed in a contemporary ensemble arrangement with piano accompaniment.

55 Gelbart, 201. Emphasis in original.
56 Gelbart, 201.
In the spoken portion of his lectures, Plunkett echoed Bunting’s views on the superiority of Irish music. According to the *Freeman’s Journal*, Plunkett stated ‘the Welsh acknowledged that they were indebted to the Irish for their national music, and the Italians derived their knowledge of the harp from Ireland.’ Bunting had argued for the supremacy of Irish music in the second edition of *The ancient music of Ireland*. Specifically along these lines, Bunting wrote that that ‘the Welsh bards … condescended to seek for and receive instructions from those of Ireland.’ Furthermore, in his preface to the 1796 edition, Bunting includes a long quotation from Giraldus Cambrensis, a Welshman who visited Ireland in the twelfth century. Leith Davis points out that Cambrensis ‘became the most widely cited authority on Irish music in the eighteenth century.’ Cambrensis writes,

> The attention of this people [the Irish] to Musical Instruments I find worthy of commendation; in which their skill is, beyond all comparison superior to any Nation I have ever seen.

Plunkett’s lectures seem to have been rigorously researched. The *Freeman’s Journal* review of the March 1861 lecture describe Plunkett’s ‘scrupulous minuteness as to date and fact which showed the loving fondness with which the lecturer had dwelt upon and appropriated to his own mind each detail of these bardic annals.’ Indeed, Plunkett borrowed from a significant Irish bardic text published at the end of the eighteenth century – Joseph Cooper Walker’s *Historical memoirs of the Irish bards*. Plunkett’s assertion in his March 1861 lecture that music had been

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59 Davis, 1.
introduced to Ireland by the Milesians echoes Walker’s statement ‘the Milesian race … landed in Ireland with an hostile intent. Their arms having prevailed … they set themselves to cultivate the arts of peace… This was probably the true era of the orders of Druids and Bards in this kingdom.’63 Furthermore, Plunkett argues that ‘the Bardic order attained their highest distinction in the days [of] Ollam Fodla.’ This is also an argument put forward by Walker, who describes Ollam Fodla as ‘the brightest luminary that appeared in those dark ages’ and his reign as ‘a remarkable epoch in the history of Ireland.’64

It is possible that given Plunkett’s aristocratic background, education at Trinity and the English Bar, his own talent and passion for music, combined with his role in high office meant that Plunkett thought of himself as a bard of sorts. Echoing Bunting and Walker, Plunkett claimed that some bards had ‘[occupied] the places of ministers and persons of distinction about the Court.’65 One newspaper reporter subscribed to this view of Plunkett as a bard, writing, ‘the honourable and learned John Hubert Plunkett made his first bow on the stage last Tuesday evening as “The Ancient Bard of Ireland.”’66 The tone of this Bell’s Life in Sydney review is warm yet patronising. The word ‘bow’ is emphasised presumably because it is a pun on bowing the violin and bowing on the stage, which adds to the light-hearted tone. Given that this is the only reference to Plunkett as ‘the Ancient Bard of Ireland,’ it seems likely that the reviewer came up with the nickname as a play on Plunkett’s lecture title and one of his subjects, Thomas Moore ‘the national bard of Ireland.’ Even if the nickname was not one Plunkett openly subscribed to, his aristocratic

63 Walker, 2-3.
64 Walker, 22.
background, education, high status in the colony, and musical aptitude make it seem likely he had at least considered the similarities between himself and the Irish bards.

The evidence we have for the repertoire Plunkett performed on violin at his lectures indicates that he consulted a range of sources. In 1861, the Goulburn Herald’s reporter gave a complete list of airs Plunkett performed during a lecture in the Catholic schoolroom in Goulburn, 200km south of Sydney.

In the course of his lecture Mr. Plunkett played the following airs on the violin: – The Coolin, O blame not the Bard, the Pretty Girl milking her Cow, Drimindhu [sic], Erin go Bragh, Aileen Aroon, Paddy O’Rafferty, Carolan’s Receipt for Drinking Whisky, Gramachree [sic] is a cup of good Drink, One Bottle More, Money in both Pockets, and the Nurse’s, Mason’s, Carpenter’s, Jolly Ploughman’s, and Spinner’s songs, ending with God Save the Queen and Patrick’s Day.67

A number of airs in the above list are contained across the three volumes of Bunting’s The ancient music of Ireland, including ‘The coolun’, ‘Drimindhu’, ‘Paddy O’Rafferty’ and ‘Carolan’s receipt for drinking whisky.’ Another likely source is John P. Lynch’s The melodies of Ireland, which includes ‘Coolun’, ‘Carolan’s receipt’, ‘St. Patrick’s day’, ‘Aileen Aroon’, ‘The jolly ploughman’, ‘Paddy O’Rafferty’ and ‘The pretty girl milking her cow.’68 Plunkett might also have drawn on S. Holden’s A collection of old established Irish slow and quick tunes.69 Holden’s publication includes a version of ‘Aileen Aroon’, ‘The Coolun’, ‘Gramnehree is a sup of good drink’, ‘One Bottle More’, ‘Money in both pockets’ and some of the working songs. Meanwhile, Moore’s Irish Melodies holds ‘O blame not the Bard’ (Volume Nos. 3 and 4, London, 1810, 1811) and ‘The Pretty Girl milking her Cow’ (Nos. 5 and 6, London, 1813, 1815). It is also possible that Plunkett had seen Horncastle’s

68 John P. Lynch, The melodies of Ireland, (Dublin, 1845-46).
publication, *The Music of Ireland as performed in Mr. Horncastle’s Irish Entertainments*, because these were for sale directly from Horncastle himself in 1847 while he was in Australia.\(^7\) Given the variety of melodies, from well-known numbers such as ‘The Coolun’ and ‘Aileen Aroon’ to lesser known working songs suggests that Plunkett was most likely playing from these publications rather than from memories of actual musical experiences he had in Ireland.

Plunkett played the violin using a particularly impressive instrument. His was a Cremona violin allegedly made in 1616 by ‘Galpard Duippo.’ Graeme Skinner has posited that the makers name might refer to Gasparo Duiffopruggar (1514-c.1570), in which case Plunkett’s violin was likely a copy.\(^7\) A report in *The Brisbane Courier* described the violin as bearing a Latin inscription on the side, which translates to English as ‘When I was alive I was silent – now I am dead I speak.’\(^7\) Furthermore, according to the newspaper report ‘the back of the violin is beautifully inlaid with choice woods, representing a township in Italy; and a carved head surmounts the scroll.’\(^7\) Plunkett gifted Joseph Heine, a touring violinist, with the violin in 1865.\(^7\) It is known that Plunkett would perform Mozart or Haydn’s music as well as Irish melodies on his violin.\(^7\) This may indicate that he believed composed music and national tunes were of equal artistic merit – as both could be performed on this special


instrument. Plunkett’s violin playing also gave him an air of authority as it showed that he was a trained musician.

As well as performing airs on the violin, Plunkett usually called on vocalists and a piano accompanist to perform Moore’s songs such as ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls’ during his lectures.76 Regarding Irish sentimental ballad repertoire at the 1861 lecture, one review lists numerous Moore songs including ‘Rich and rare were the gems she wore’, ‘Erin! The tear and smile in thine eye’ for four voices, and ‘She is far from the land’ in a trio arrangement.77 It is possible that those in trio and quartet arrangements were chosen to highlight the journey of the tunes from their ‘ancient’ beginnings as monophonic airs to their flowering in literate polyphonic music.

According to the 1861 lecture repertoire list, Plunkett played several airs that were also performed at the lectures in their ballad form. ‘Gramachree is a good sup of drink’ was heard again as ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls,’ sung by a Mrs Bridson at the lecture. Plunkett played ‘Aileen Aroon’ on violin, which was the tune for ‘Erin! The tear and the smile in thine eyes’ heard in a version harmonised for four voices at the lecture. ‘Aileen Aroon’ is a tune that had been in circulation since the early 1700s.78 Examples 1 and 2 below show the first bars of the tune and the corresponding section from Moore’s song. Sydney’s Empire newspaper reviewer commented on the musical gulf between the solo airs and the harmonised songs performed at Plunkett’s 1861 lecture. They wrote that, ‘although very nicely sung, we could not help feeling that the harmonies were generally out of character with the

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original airs’. The same reviewer argued that ‘the great beauty in these national airs was their simplicity.’ Indeed, Moore and Stevenson’s ‘Erin! The tear and smile in thine eyes’ is harmonically dense. Just the opening $\hat{5} \hat{6} \hat{7} \hat{8}$ melodic gesture is accompanied by a full I-IV-V-I chord progression. The use of tonal harmonies brought the melody into a new context and gave it new life as a drawing room or concert hall song. Yet, in line with the Empire reviewer’s comments, the harmonies might be said to bring a different atmosphere to the tune. In any case, Plunkett’s audiences were witness to this dramatic change in musical style through the performance of both ‘Aileen Aroon’ and ‘Erin! The tear and smile in thine eyes.’

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Conclusion  

This chapter has examined the role of Plunkett’s lectures in providing his audience with a teleological narrative of the history of Irish music. Further, this chapter has shown how Plunkett aimed to demonstrate that modern Irish people could carry on a positive relationship with Irish music in colonial New South Wales. Plunkett’s motivation in giving the lectures was traced to his lifelong passion for Irish music  

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and education, combined with a paternal instinct derived from spending decades in the position of attorney general of New South Wales. Plunkett’s life as a public lecturer has been compared and contrasted with two of his contemporaries, Redmond Barry and Frederick Horncastle, in order to show the uniqueness of Plunkett’s contribution. Like Redmond Barry, Plunkett was a respectable, authoritative figure in colonial Australian society. Yet, unlike Barry, Plunkett publicly embraced his Irish heritage and shared his love of Irish music. Meanwhile, Horncastle’s populist contribution to the debate on Irish music might have inspired Plunkett’s more rigorous academic approach. This chapter has shown that Plunkett emphasised a positive image of Ireland and Irish music, which echoed the discourse of antiquarians and folk-song collectors, in Ireland. Plunkett also subscribed to a narrative of progress in the history of Irish music beginning with primitive airs and culminating in Thomas Moore’s respectable sentimental ballads.
Chapter Three

Introductory comments

The following chapter was published in the form of an article for Melbourne University’s peer-reviewed journal, *Context: A journal of music research*, in 2016. The article is accessible online at [http://contextjournal.music.unimelb.edu.au/no-40/](http://contextjournal.music.unimelb.edu.au/no-40/). The focus of the article is a piano fantasia based on the melody from Thomas Moore’s ‘The last rose of summer,’ which was composed by French pianist Edouard Boulanger and published as the opening number in the *Australian Album* for 1857. In the article, I argue that the creators aimed for the album to symbolise progress towards civilised society in the colonies and that referencing an Irish sentimental ballad in the opening number was an important part of formulating that message.
The Australian Album for 1857 and Edouard Boulanger’s ‘The Last Rose of Summer’

Jillian Twigger

We can send the work home as a specimen of what we can do out here at Botany Bay … it vindicates our connexion with the old-world genius and skill; and proves that we are not destitute of some of the haughty lineaments of European civilization.¹

These lines, written by English journalist and author Frank Fowler, were published in the Preface to the Australian Album for 1857. This Album is one of several musical annuals that were published in Sydney in the mid-nineteenth century with ‘Australian’ themes.² They consist of bound volumes of sheet music alongside illustrations of landscapes in the colonies and portraits of virtuosi and opera singers who had recently toured. The publication of these Australian Albums fits into a broader climate of progress in musical and theatrical activities in the colonies that existed during the 1850s. This cultural setting, partly the product of an influx of money from the gold rushes and partly the result of a rapidly increasing population, came soon after New South Wales’s transition from penal colony to free society.³ A consequence of this flourishing artistic scene in the early stages of a free society was the active forging of an ‘Australian’ identity by colonists.

¹ Frank Fowler, ‘Preface,’ Australian Album (Sydney, NSW: J.R. Clarke, 1856), unnumbered page.
³ The last convict ship arrived in NSW in October 1850, but transportation had slowed significantly since the 1840s. See Alan Atkinson, Europeans in Australia: A History, 3rd ed. (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2014), xii, 226.
Mass-produced musical albums first appeared in the United Kingdom in the 1820s. In his pioneering study, ‘Julia’s Gift: The Social Life of Scores, c.1830,’ James Davies argues that musical albums—also known as annuals or musical keepsakes—served as ‘documentary accounts of the musical year.’ Davies argues that the target market for the albums of the 1820s and 1830s in England was young females who were ‘coming of age,’ yet finds that it is not clear ‘whether these albums were principally to play, look at or keep.’ Despite this ambiguity, the content and marketing of musical albums can reveal much about personal, social and national identity in the nineteenth century. This study contributes a new perspective on the production and reception of these artefacts by transplanting the debate to the Australian colonies in the 1850s. From an Australian perspective, this article builds on the work of Graeme Skinner, who argues that ‘both musical and non-musical sources indicate that notions of Australian nation, nationality, and identity were not only socially current, but aspirationally functional, at least fifty years before they became political facts in 1901.’

The target audience for the Album for 1857 was the upper classes. The Album itself is a quarto-sized bound volume of eight pieces of music and ten illustrations totalling seventy-seven pages. The paper is off-white wove with gilt edges and was bound in Sydney by Mr. N. Sapsford, a bookbinder who had migrated from England in 1854. The music was engraved locally, which, while a costly method, allowed for a satisfactory level of detail and precision. The pieces are mostly for solo piano but also include a ballad for contralto with piano accompaniment and a vocal polka for high voice and piano. The illustrations and celebrity portraits, which were each paired with a musical item in the Album, were drawn by Edmund Thomas (1827–1867) and lithographed by Allan & Wigley, also in Sydney. The portraits include musicians who had recently toured the colonies including the Austro-Hungarian violinist Miska Hauser (1822–1887), English soprano Anna Bishop (1810–1884) and Irish soprano Catherine Hayes (1818–1861). The cover is emblazoned with the words ‘Australian Album’ in gold lettering surrounded by an ornate border design, also in gold. Extant copies in Australian libraries are bound in a variety of materials including cloth on board—in crimson or royal blue—and leather, in brown or cream. At a price of 30 shillings, the Album for 1857 would have been too expensive for the working classes, and even skilled workers such as cabinetmakers earning roughly £2–3 (40–60s.) per week would likely not have been able to afford this type of luxury item. Indeed, an 1857 advertisement for the Australian Picture Pleasure Book, which included two hundred illustrations of ‘Australian life’ and cost 16s. 6d., claimed ‘the moderate price of the [Australian Picture Pleasure] book places it within the reach of all classes.’

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5 Davies, ‘Julia’s Gift,’ 298.
7 ‘Mr. Newman Sapsford,’ Brisbane Courier, 4 July 1923, 11.
11 ‘Just Published,’ Sydney Morning Herald, 21 Mar. 1857, 5.
claim of ‘all classes’ might be an exaggeration, it reinforces the 30s. price tag as exclusive to the upper class. The hypothetical ‘Australia’ posed by the *Album* for 1857 was both confident in its artistic merit and self-conscious about its reception. It seems that regardless of whether it was reviewed or taken up for publication in London, which it seems it was not, what mattered was that local products were deemed comparable to contemporary examples from Europe.

The music in the *Album* for 1857 is a reflection of the contemporary concert scene in the colonies and current trends in music from Europe. The opening piece is a piano fantasia based on ‘The Last Rose of Summer,’ one of Thomas Moore’s *Irish Melodies*, composed by visiting French piano virtuoso Édouard Desiree Boulanger (1829–1863). Other works in the *Album* bear titles with a local flavour, such as Miska Hauser’s Impromptu ‘Australian Flowers’ and William Stanley’s ‘The Rose Bay Quadrilles,’ while Stephen Marsh’s ballad ‘Far O’er the Sea’ might represent a colonist’s point of view (‘Where doth my birthplace lie, Far O’er the Sea!’). Then there is Miska Hauser’s virtuoso piece ‘The Bird on the Tree,’ which was extremely popular with local audiences during his tour, and Frederic Ellard’s fantasia on themes from the opera *Lucrezia Borgia* with an accompanying tinted lithograph of Anna Bishop as Lucrezia. The only piece that was imported is ‘The Singing Polka,’ by Georges Alary, which was performed in the colonies by Catherine Hayes.

In this article I discuss how the *Album* for 1857 functioned as a ‘specimen’ of colonial advancement, with particular focus on the role of Boulanger and his fantasia on ‘The Last Rose of Summer.’ This work is described in advertisements and on the contents page of the *Album* as a ‘Fantasia,’ on the illustrated title page as ‘The Last Rose of Summer with Brilliant Variations’ and at the head of the music as ‘The Last Rose of Summer, “Caprice” for the piano.’ The music reveals that the piece falls within the parameters of a typical operatic fantasia: ‘a theme and variations, with a freer introductory section and an extended finale.’12 In this article I argue that each element of Boulanger’s fantasia—Boulanger’s status as a European virtuoso, Thomas Moore’s sentimental ballad ‘The Last Rose of Summer,’ and the perception of the fantasia as ‘the highest form of musical art’—came together to serve as an ideal example of artistic and moral progress in colonial Australia.13

Davies argues that musical albums are ‘period pieces’ that ‘invite a certain style of hermeneutic engagement, one mindful of local interests and contexts.’14 In keeping with Davies’s suggestion, this article first investigates the publication history and reception of the first two and final *Australian Albums* (1854, 1855 and 1863) before examining Boulanger’s career in the colonies and his own 1856 publication, *Boulanger’s Musical Keepsake*, followed by an analysis of the *Album* for 1857 and Boulanger’s fantasia.

The *Album* for 1857 can be viewed as one link in a long chain of ‘Australian’ music published in the colonies. A huge variety of music published locally was labelled ‘Australian,’ including transcriptions by Europeans of Indigenous melodies, as well as marches, ballads, quadrilles and other dance music composed by Europeans in the colonies.15 The *Albums* of the 1850s

stand out as the first concerted effort within the colonies to produce an ‘Australian’-themed collection of music with the specific purpose of presenting it to an overseas audience. The Album for 1857 was the third published in the series, following two Australian Presentation Albums in 1854 and 1855. The first two Albums were published by Sydney-based music sellers Woolcott & Clarke, the third by Clarke alone. Jacob Richard Clarke (1822–1893) and his partner W.P. Woolcott (1821–1905) were both British-born immigrants who established a music publishing business at 555 George Street in 1853. The first Australian Presentation Album was advertised in April 1854 for one guinea (21 shillings). Only two musical numbers in this Album were composed locally. In the case of the Album for 1854, popularity was the most important factor in publication. For example, the opening number, ‘Shells of Ocean’ by J.W. Cherry (1824–1869), is labelled ‘the most popular song of the day!’ On the whole, the music in the Album for 1854—for piano or piano and medium voice—is aimed at amateurs. In the case of ‘The Australian Bird Waltz’ by Frederick Ellard, a note indicates that the following concession can be made: ‘the octaves are for those who can play them.’

Nine months later, Woolcott & Clarke published the Australian Presentation Album for 1855. The price had increased from the previous year by four shillings to 25s. The Album for 1855 was bound in board and was the first to include a contents page. The first illustration, a tinted lithograph accompanying Charles D’Albert’s ‘Regatta Waltzes,’ is a patriotic affair. The image is made up of three small vignettes, including a ‘bush scene’ with a family of Indigenous people gathered around a campfire and two maritime scenes in Sydney. The central image of Sydney cove during the ‘anniversary regatta’ is flanked by a kangaroo and an emu, under which a banner reads ‘Advance Australia.’ Skinner points out that the music in the Album for 1855 ‘was more substantially local … there was only one imported song (by Stephen Glover).’ Thus the contents of the Australian Presentation Album for 1855 came closer to embodying its name. This Album also contains several pieces of dance music that were popular in the colony at the time. In her pioneering study Entertaining Australia, Katharine Brisbane argues that fashionable dances in England were quickly adopted in Sydney. Waltzes and quadrilles, for example, were established in Sydney by the 1820s, with the gallop first danced in Perth in 1829. Therefore, their publication in this ‘specimen’ album would reveal that the Australian colonies were aware of contemporary trends in dance music. The music in the Album for 1855 is mostly at an amateur level, although in general there are more active bass lines than in the previous edition and there are some large leaps and parallel octaves. The final number, Miska Hauser’s impromptu ‘Rain Drops in Australia’ stands out as the most technically demanding thanks to the inclusion of brilliant arpeggios, repeated chords in semiquavers, chromatic

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17 ‘Just Published,’ Illustrated Sydney News, 15 Apr. 1854, 7.  
18 Skinner, Toward a General History, 364.  
21 Since 26 January 1837, the ‘anniversary regatta’ has been an annual commemoration of the founding of the New South Wales. ‘Sixty-Eighth Anniversary Regatta,’ Empire, 27 Jan. 1855, supplement, 1.  
22 Skinner, Toward a General History, 364.  
melodic lines, and a short cadenza. Indeed, reviews emphasise the high standard of the music but also attempt to describe in some detail its decorative and illustrative content, including the artists, engravers, and lithographers responsible for each illustration.\textsuperscript{24} This reinforces the hybrid role of the \textit{Album} for 1855 as both a music publication and an ornament. Indeed, one of its intended roles was advertised in \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald}: ‘This work is intended to be forwarded to the Paris Exhibition as a specimen of colonial publications. It will form an elegant present to friends at home or in the colony.’\textsuperscript{25}

The \textit{Album} for 1855 might have been entered into some class of the ‘Printing & Photography’ category, under which lithography and bookbinding were exhibited. While it is unclear whether the \textit{Album} for 1855 was included in the Paris Exhibition, according to Peter H. Hoffenberg, ‘participating in overseas exhibitions … fundamentally helped colonists in Melbourne, New South Wales and South Australia imagine, envision and reconstruct their identities as overseas settlers within colonial borders.’\textsuperscript{26} This speaks to the role of the \textit{Album} for 1855 in forming a cultural identity that was seen to meet European standards.

There was no album for 1856; however, in February of that year another Sydney-based firm, F. Mader, published \textit{Boulanger’s Musical Keepsake}. According to Skinner, \textit{Boulanger’s Musical Keepsake} ‘was the first single-composer collection of piano music produced in Australia.’\textsuperscript{27} Furthermore, it was advertised as ‘Australian Music’ by its publisher.\textsuperscript{28} Given that some of the first published music designated as ‘Australian’ but written by foreign-born composers appeared as early as the 1820s, the application of the term to Boulanger’s music does not seem premature.\textsuperscript{29}

Boulanger was born in Paris in 1829 and, following successful tours of the United Kingdom and North America, arrived in Australia in his mid-twenties in 1855.\textsuperscript{30} Although Boulanger’s successful performing and composing career across three different continents suggests he possessed an entrepreneurial streak, eventually his luck ran out. By 1856 Boulanger was in trouble financially and an appearance at the insolvency courts in 1863 seems to have prompted him to leave the colony.\textsuperscript{31} Later that same year he died in a cholera epidemic in Shanghai.\textsuperscript{32} Boulanger’s success with audiences and critics in Sydney was partly the result of his fine playing but was also tied to his status as a high-class European artist. In anticipation of his first performance, \textit{The Sydney Morning Herald} reported that:

He was a pupil of the distinguished and lamented Chopin, whose early death was deeply regretted and widely mourned in France … The performances of M. Boulanger

\textsuperscript{24} See ‘Australian Presentation Album,’ \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, 10 Jan. 1855, 5; ‘Australian Presentation Album,’ \textit{Empire}, 13 Jan. 1855, 4.

\textsuperscript{25} ‘Advertisement,’ \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, 9 Jan. 1855, 2. Quoted in Skinner, Toward a General History of Colonial Australian Composition, 266.

\textsuperscript{26} Peter H. Hoffenberg, ‘“Nothing Very New or Very Showy to Exhibit”?: Australia at the Great Exhibition and After,’ in \textit{Britain, the Empire, and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851}, ed. Jeffrey A. Auerbach and Peter H. Hoffenberg (Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2008), 120.

\textsuperscript{27} Skinner, Toward a General History, 337.

\textsuperscript{28} Skinner, Toward a General History, 337.

\textsuperscript{29} See Skinner, Toward a General History, 434.

\textsuperscript{30} Skinner, Toward a General History, 337.

\textsuperscript{31} ‘Insolvency,’ \textit{Freeman’s Journal}, 11 Mar. 1863, 3.

\textsuperscript{32} Skinner, Toward a General History, 338.
before Queen Victoria, and Her Majesty’s flattering approval of them are recorded in
the leading English journals.\textsuperscript{33}

These biographical details provide key markers of Boulanger’s authenticity. His tutelage under
Fryderyk Chopin validated his status as a virtuoso and hinted at aristocratic connections,
while compliments from Queen Victoria ensured continued endorsement throughout the
British Empire.\textsuperscript{34}

Boulanger’s concerts and published compositions were regarded as symbols of progress
in the colonies. There are no extant copies of \textit{Boulanger’s Musical Keepsake} but according to
newspaper reports it contained six pieces, each dedicated to a lady in Sydney. The price was
30s. The \textit{Sydney Morning Herald} reviewer describes the \textit{Keepsake} as ‘beyond all question the most
admirable production to which our country has given birth.’ This review, and especially the
term ‘our country,’ is evidence that even publications without a nationalist agenda were drawn
into the nation-building debate. The reviewer finds that the collection is ‘an album so elegant,
that to give or receive it is equally complimentary; to possess, equally desirable and gratifying
… This most beautiful “Musical Present,”’ [is] an offering worthy of any accomplished and
intellectual lady.’\textsuperscript{35} These statements suggest that the value of the collection is in the exchange
of cultural capital between the buyer who flatters their recipient with the implication that they
are an ‘intellectual’ while reinforcing their own good taste.\textsuperscript{36} This echoes Davies’s suggestion
that musical albums played an important role in the ‘coming of age’ of eligible females.\textsuperscript{37}
Indeed, the \textit{Herald} reviewer reinforces the value of the \textit{Keepsake} for ‘our children, our sons
and daughters, reared upon these shores.’\textsuperscript{38} It is as if the colony—or perhaps ‘nation’—itself
is coming of age through the publication of \textit{Boulanger’s Musical Keepsake}.

Boulanger was one of several travelling musicians who visited the Australian colonies via
the ‘Pacific circuit’ in the 1850s. Catherine Hayes and Miska Hauser arrived in 1854, followed
by Anna Bishop in December 1855.\textsuperscript{39} They were each acquainted with one another and in this
way resemble patterns of chain migration to the colonies, but on an artistic and commercial
level.\textsuperscript{40} Matthew W. Wittman argues that the Pacific circuit constitutes an ‘Empire of culture’ and
observes that ‘touring entertainers … served as a kind of imperial thread connecting together
disparate colonial publics to their metropolitan roots.’\textsuperscript{41} At a local level, Skinner has observed
that by performing similar music in the major cities—and in some cases regional towns as

\begin{footnotes}
\item[33] \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, 21 Feb. 1855, 4.
\item[34] Regarding evidence of Boulanger’s claim that he was Chopin’s pupil, see Graeme Skinner, ‘Edward and
Kate Boulanger,’ \textit{Australharmony}, accessed 10 Nov. 2015, <sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony/
boulanger-edward.php>.
\item[37] Davies, ‘Julia’s Gift,’ 299.
\item[40] Anna Bishop’s tour followed Catherine Hayes to California and San Francisco in 1854 and then to
Sydney, New South Wales, in 1855. See Richard Davis, \textit{Anna Bishop: The Adventures of an Intrepid Prima
Donna} (Sydney, NSW: Currency Press, 1997), 167, 171. Boulanger had also accompanied Hayes in the
United States. See Basil Walsh, \textit{Catherine Hayes, 1818–1861: The Hibernian Prima Donna} (Dublin, Ireland:,
\item[41] Matthew W. Wittmann, Empire of Culture: U.S. Entertainers and the Making of the Pacific Circuit (PhD
thesis, University of Michigan, 2010), 129.
\end{footnotes}
well—these touring artists offered colonists shared experiences, an essential ingredient in the ‘imagined community’ of the nation.\(^{42}\) Although operatic excerpts and virtuosic pieces were an indispensable part of programming for these artists, one of the most potent ways of fostering the connection to one’s ‘roots’ identified by Wittman was through ballads and the incorporation of folk melodies into virtuosic improvisations (either extempore or pre-composed). Both Hayes and Bishop sang popular ballads with themes of exile such as Henry Bishop’s ‘Home, Sweet Home’ and Moore’s ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ and Hauser frequently performed variations on Irish and Scottish melodies in the colonies. Unlike his contemporaries, Boulanger initially spurned folksong arrangements in favour of his own compositions, variations on operatic themes, and works by established European composers such as Sigismond Thalberg and his teacher, Chopin.\(^{43}\) The first advertised performance of Boulanger’s fantasia on ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ was to take place on Friday 15 August 1856.\(^{44}\) This was eighteen months after his arrival in Sydney and just four months before the fantasia’s publication in the *Album* for 1857, which seems to validate the claim in advertisements and the Preface that it was composed in the colony.

Prior to the publication of the *Album* for 1857, it seems that Woolcott separated from the publishing partnership and, according to Skinner, ‘left Jacob Clarke, anyway the more musical of the pair, to issue alone … his Australian Album 1857.’\(^{45}\) Six years later, Clarke released what seems to have been the last in the series, the *Australian Musical Album* for 1863. This *Album* contained fourteen pieces of music and was still priced at 30 shillings.\(^{46}\) The continued demand for Boulanger’s compositions is evidenced by his three compositions featured in the *Album* for 1863, including ‘The Columbian Mazurka,’ ‘The European March,’ and a ‘Caprice de Salon’ on themes from William Vincent Wallace’s opera *Lurline*. While the ‘Caprice de Salon’ is difficult, virtuosic music in keeping with his fantasia on ‘The Last Rose of Summer,’ the Mazurka and March in the *Album* for 1863 are pitched at amateur performers. While it is unclear to what extent Boulanger’s more difficult music was performed by amateurs, the inclusion of these simpler pieces suggests that Clarke requested some more accessible works for the 1863 edition. This *Album* also included lithographic illustrations printed by Allan & Wigley. A review printed in the *Goulburn Herald* reinforces that the target audience for this *Album* was young females, stating that ‘the music is dedicated to the “belles of Australia.”’ The reviewer also positions the *Album* for 1863 as equal to foreign examples, arguing that it ‘will compare, in illustration and printing, with many similar works which are usually imported from Europe.’\(^{47}\) This being the final *Album* published by Clarke, it seems likely sales diminished as the novelty of Australian-themed musical albums wore off.

Returning to the penultimate edition, the *Album* for 1857 is in several ways a more substantial artefact than the rest of its cohort. The 1857 edition was the first bound in high-quality cloth or leather with gold lettering and decoration. Extant copies in Australian libraries bear three

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\(^{43}\) See *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 Feb. 1855, 4. For programming of Chopin works, see ‘Advertisement,’ *Empire*, 3 July 1855, 1.

\(^{44}\) ‘Advertisement,’ *Empire*, 15 Aug. 1856, 1.

\(^{45}\) Skinner, Toward a General History, 365.

\(^{46}\) *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 Jan. 1863, 9.

different lettering and border designs manifest in different combinations, which suggests that some were custom-made (or perhaps the availability of materials changed over time). The *Album for 1857* also stands out thanks to the inclusion of an illustrated title page, a full-page dedication to Miss Denison (a daughter of Governor William Denison) of Government House, Sydney, and the Preface by Frank Fowler. Where the *Albums* for 1854, 1855 and 1863 contained mostly amateur music, the majority of pieces in the *Album* for 1857 are at a much higher level, requiring virtuosity from both the pianist, and in the case of Hayes’s ‘Vocal Polka’ for high voice, the vocalist as well. This difficulty is manifest in widely spaced broken chords in the left hand (Hauser’s ‘Impromptu’), octave tremolos, rapid chromatic runs, extremes of register (Hauser’s ‘Bird on the Tree’), and demisemiquaver passages including octave leaps (Ellard’s fantasia on themes from *Lucrezia Borgia*). The sense of this music as ‘high art’ is enhanced by the profusion of performance instructions and Italian terms, written-out ornaments, and meticulously placed pedal markings. While ‘The Picnic Polka’ and ‘Rose Bay Quadrilles’ are more accessible, the ballad ‘Far O’er the Sea’ emerges as the only decidedly amateur inclusion, thanks to a vocal melody restricted to the contralto range and an accompaniment of mostly block chords.

As with previous editions, Clarke marketed the *Album for 1857* as a gift to be sent overseas. Advertisements for this *Album* in newspapers, which first appeared on 27 December 1856, market it as a Christmas or New Year present and offer a price of 30 shillings or 32s. with postage (see Fig. 1). The travelling nature of the *Album for 1857* reinforces its primary function as an example of not only the cultural scene in the Australian colonies but also what the colony—primarily Sydney—actually looked like. Skinner finds that ‘colonial sheet music was frequently specifically advertised as suitable for giving as a gift, or, as postal charges fell during the 1850s, sending as a memento to friends and relatives abroad.’ During the 1850s, the postal service between the colonies, England and North America was first operated by steamship and in 1857 it took roughly eight weeks for mail to reach England. Therefore, it was possible that copies were purchased as Christmas gifts soon after the December advertisement for relatives and friends in England. More broadly, since their inception, musical albums had been advertised as gifts and thus they functioned as symbols of generosity (as well as good taste and wealth) on the part of the giver. Davies argues that in the 1830s, ‘music publishers would hide the commercial intent of their endeavours by disguising their products as gifts.’ Woolcott & Clarke also ran advertisements for their range of ‘colonial publications’ targeting ‘passengers for England,’ another method by which the *Album for 1857* could have left the colonies. Viewed another way, Davies argues that the first waves of music annuals found their place in the market as a form of souvenir during ‘the heyday of the “I’ve been there” boasts of the Grand Tour.’ For those who did receive copies in England, the *Album for 1857* would represent a connection to the distant and exotic Australian colonies. For those within the colonies, it would reinforce their new reality through depictions of local landscapes, as well as recalling memories of touring performers.

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49 Skinner, Toward a General History, 15.
52 Davies, ‘Julia’s Gift,’ 294.
Without knowing how many copies of the _Album_ for 1857 were produced and the precise purchaser/dedicatee of each copy, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which they were bought as gifts for relatives or friends in England. Most extant copies are held in Australian libraries, but their provenance is not always clear. One _Album_ for 1857 that does retain its dedication was given to ‘Rachael’ by ‘her affectionate uncle’ Moses Moses. This is most likely the Moses Moses (1795–1858) who was originally transported to the colonies as a convict in 1813, but who was serving as alderman of the Bourke Ward in Sydney by 1857.\(^{54}\) In other cases where the dedication has been removed by cutting out a portion of the first page, it is a fair hypothesis that these were given as gifts. Another copy found its way into the library of British anthropologist James Edge-Partington (1854–1930)—although he was most likely not the first owner—before being donated to the Mitchell Library upon his death.\(^{55}\) In short, until more copies are located and their provenance investigated, the important point is that those in the colony viewed the _Album_ for 1857 as equal to European examples.

\(^{54}\) The Mitchell Library copy (Q85/30) is inscribed ‘Rachael from her affectionate Uncle Moses February 23rd, 1857.’

\(^{55}\) The National Library of Australia copy (5715788, MUS Musica Australis N 256) bears a James Edge-Partington stamp on the inside front cover. This copy does not show evidence of a personalised inscription having been removed or covered.
The illustrated title page of the *Album for 1857* says in bold text ‘Australian Album 1857’ above a drawing of a garden scene (see Fig. 2). The vegetation, a combination of profuse flowers, ferns, and distant palms in the background, is subject to the civilising force of a birdbath. This plays into a trope of colonial imagery noted by David Day, which includes the naming of ‘Botany Bay’ to emphasise the colony’s natural diversity and potential for supporting life. The lyrebird, with its magnificent harp-like tail feathers, occupies the centre of the illustration and conveys the idea that music is part of the natural world in ‘Australia.’

**Figure 2.** Title page, *Australian Album 1857* (Sydney: J.R. Clarke, 1856). Image courtesy of Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Sydney.

The contents page in the *Album for 1857* is reproduced in the advertisement in Figure 1. It contains a list of the genre, title and respective composer of each piece, underneath which is a list of the illustrations and a note connecting each illustration to its accompanying music, for example ‘1. A View in the Botanical Gardens, Sydney ... For the fantasia “The Last Rose of Summer.”’ The order of these illustrations follows a logical progression beginning with four inner-Sydney landscapes including three of the Botanical Gardens. The location of the landscapes then moves further afield, offering views of the greater Sydney area such as Rose Bay for the ‘Rose Bay Quadrilles.’ Portraits of Anna Bishop and Catherine Hayes are placed

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in close proximity as the sixth and eighth illustrations respectively. Anna Bishop is portrayed as Donizetti’s Lucrezia Borgia in a Queen-like costume in a lithograph tinted burgundy and gold, reinforcing the regal image of the British singer. Catherine Hayes’s portrait is simple and unaffected, perhaps reflecting Hayes’s chaste public image (she was unmarried and toured the colonies with her mother) and Irish background.

Fowler’s Preface to the Album for 1857 is a dense web of topical allusions that aims to describe the role of the ‘purely Musical Album’ in colonial society and explains its function and significance as a ‘specimen.’ Initially, Fowler reflects with a tone of nostalgia on ‘the cheerful period in the history of literature’ when there was ‘quite an album mania.’ However, at the time of writing, apparently musical albums ‘are no longer sought for.’ Fowler sees the rise of education as the reason for the decline in demand of albums: ‘pleasant enough were the days of Albums—when our sons had not grown too solemn for gilt-edged volumes and our daughters preferred a little music at home to Professor Leydenjars’ lectures and the Theory of Matter.’ But he also argues that the albums played an important role in this education. During the ‘Album mania,’ Fowler writes, ‘our good friend Pendennis picked up his first five-pound note in the “Row.”’ The story of Pendennis is one of striving for acceptance in London’s civilised society and learning moral lessons along the way. Fowler also mentions Harriet Martineau, a leading Victorian intellectual who wrote extensively on the British Empire. According to Patrick Brantlinger, ‘Martineau expresses “liberal imperialism” at its best: conscientious, free of racism … and with progress in civilisation throughout the world as the ultimate goal.’ Taken together, these references indicate the kind of ‘Australia’ Fowler envisaged: educated, civilised and morally sound.

In the Preface, Fowler attempts to extend the concept of generosity usually associated with the buyer of albums onto the publisher himself. He writes, ‘the publisher of this book knows that Albums in the old sense will not pay … At the same time, however, he sees in this community a healthy and growing taste for Music, and, in taking advantage of this, he does a wise thing for himself and a good thing for the public.’ Clarke’s entrepreneurial business decision is thus re-cast as an act of benevolence, which was previously associated solely with the buyer, their purchase, and the giving of a gift to a loved one. When writing about the music, Fowler redeems the concept of the musical album on the basis of its function as a ‘specimen,’ or marker of taste in the colony.

The idea of a purely Musical Album—that is, a book filled with the original productions of our own artistes—is, I think, peculiarly happy, and one which the Australian public will readily appreciate … They [the pieces of music] are all new—all colonial. Here—in this city—they were played, printed, and published. True, some of the composers are foreigners; but still this book is as much an Australian production as a cluster of grapes from the German vineyards at Kissing Point. We can send the work home as a specimen of what we can do out here at Botany Bay—as an index of our education, refinement, art-feeling.

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57 Fowler, ‘Preface.’ Unless indicated, quotations in this paragraph are drawn from this source.
58 The Leyden Jar was an eighteenth-century invention that paved the way for the development of electricity.
60 Fowler, ‘Preface.’
61 Fowler, ‘Preface.’
These paragraphs, which echo the advertisement for the 1855 Album in calling it a ‘specimen’ for analysis by those at ‘home,’ combined with the literary allusions, are evidence that the ultimate goal of the Album for 1857 was to achieve recognition that the colony was a refined, civilised society. In line with the publisher’s aspirations for this Album, the Sydney Morning Herald review describes it as ‘the best drawing room annual ever published in the colony.’

Fowler’s Preface also echoes Davies’s observation that the threat of loss was central to the Album aesthetic. Fowler suggests that Miska Hauser had ‘enraptured us all … and yet had not the publisher of this book obtained the composition from Miska it must have been entirely lost and forgotten.’ Reinforcing the point, Fowler argues that the ‘spirit’ of Miska Hauser’s playing ‘would have hopped off with the maestro had we not trapped it in this Album.’ Furthermore, the aesthetic of loss was intimately tied to the fantasia genre itself thanks to its fleeting, and improvisatory style. By the end of the Preface, Fowler fully resurrects the concept of the musical album in light of its role as a measure of refined taste in the colony. He argues that ‘we should attest our social progress by some annual publication of this character’ precisely because it ‘proves that we are not destitute of some of the haughty lineaments of European civilization.

On the one hand, the ordering of the materials in the Album might have been affected by external factors such as the order of receipt of music or the length of time taken to engrave each piece. On the other hand, the contents page, progression of illustrations and the balancing of fantasia works with music from other genres suggests the ordering was planned. Furthermore, it was typical for the Albums to open with a popular song, presumably with a view to capturing the imagination of the broadest possible audience. ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ was extremely popular in the colonies at this time and not only in ballad form. Skinner argues that ‘into the 1850s, even while music sellers like Henry Marsh were beginning to import the first good selections of Beethoven sonatas and other “Classical Music,” it was still salon gems like Henry Herz’s variations on The Last Rose of Summer … music sellers chose to reissue in Australian prints as better representing the European fashions of the day.’ Matthew Gelbart argues that in the decades around 1800, when the debate over defining the concepts of ‘folk’ music and ‘art’ music was underway, ‘genius, authenticity and purity’ were first attributed to ‘folk’ music but then the same aesthetic values came to define ‘art’ music as well. Thus, ‘to be an [individual] artistic genius … meant to grow organically out of the national and universal genius.’ This places Boulanger’s fantasia on ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ at the vanguard of colonial tastes, combining a universally popular melody with the artistic genius associated with the fantasia genre.

While a comprehensive analysis of Moore’s ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ is outside the scope of this article, a brief overview of the song is necessary due to its role in Boulanger’s fantasia.

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64 See Richards, The Free Fantasia and the Musical Picturesque, 76.
65 Fowler, ‘Preface.’
‘The Last Rose of Summer’ appeared in the fifth volume of Moore’s *Irish Melodies*, published in 1813. Moore authored the text, which he set to a known melody, and John Stevenson (1761–1833), an Irish composer, wrote the piano accompaniments. The melody (see Fig. 3) is borrowed from Alfred Milliken’s ‘The Groves of Blarney,’ which itself might be a variation on ‘Young Man’s Dream,’ first published in Irish folk-song collector Edward Bunting’s *A General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music* in 1796.69

**Figure 3.** Melody and verses of ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ by Thomas Moore and John Stevenson, transcribed from *Moore’s Selection of Irish Melodies with Symphonies and Accompaniments by Sir John Stevenson* (Sydney: Charles T. Samsoon, c. 1870)

While the melodic shape and structure is similar across the corresponding melodies published by Bunting, Milliken and Moore/Stevenson, some aspects, such as the characteristic minor sixth leap in the opening, are absent from Bunting’s version. Nevertheless, each version avoids stressing the fourth scale degree, which aligns the melodies with traditional Irish music. Moore’s *Irish Melodies* became so overwhelmingly popular in the early nineteenth century that by the 1850s they were surely part of the cultural baggage of most immigrants from the British Isles. In his study of popular song in the United States, Charles Hamm argues that during the nineteenth century, Moore’s melodies were ‘the most popular, widely sung, best-loved, and most durable songs in the English language of the entire nineteenth century. The songs became, quite simply, a cornerstone of English life and culture.’70 Their appeal to colonists both in Australia and the United States might be found in the melancholic nostalgia for a lost home. For example, the opening lines of ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ can be read as

a metaphor for exile, where the ‘last rose’ is the lone friend left behind. As well as the theme of homesickness, Derek Scott argues that the narrative of lost love and friends in the poem ‘promoted the important “Victorian values” of friendship and family.’ Recent scholarship on Moore’s ballads reveals that their appeal to the mainstream British market and their political role in Irish nation building are two sides of the same coin. Leith Davis argues that in the face of negative stereotypes and oppression of the Irish by the British government, Moore chose to represent Irish culture as refined and homogeneous, its people as virtuous and sentimental. This resonated with Moore’s contemporaries in the nationalist group the United Irishmen, whose slogan ‘It is New Strung and Shall be Heard’ is acutely aware of the connection between music and Irish nationhood. In the colonial Australian setting, Patrick O’Farrell argues that Moore’s songs functioned for the Irish as a ‘bid for respectability in an English setting.’ The role of Moore’s Melodies in nation-building, albeit in an indirect way in the ballads, runs parallel to the nationalist function of the Album for 1857. Read in this way, it is clear why the fantasia on ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ proved so ideal in the context of the Album for 1857, which was itself a ‘bid for respectability in an English setting.’

The illustration on the title page of ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ in the Album for 1857 engages with the centuries-old ‘pastoral’ topic and embodies Victorian values of civilised society (see Fig. 4). An idyllic scene described as ‘A View in the Botanical Gardens, Sydney’ features a well-dressed lady and an inquisitive young girl walking along a wide, flat path under the shade of an established tree. Several well-dressed figures are in the background and in the distance two ships can be seen on water that is completely calm. There is not an identifiably Indigenous person nor convict in the scene. Together these visual elements convey the sense that all aspects of society in the colony are ordered and under control. Even Boulanger’s name undergoes a type of assimilation on this page, with his first name anglicised to Edward, presumably to enhance his familiarity to an English (or at least English-speaking) audience. In a letter dated 1 December 1854 Miska Hauser writes, ‘the main meeting-place of the Sydney world is the botanical garden,’ which he says is ‘filled with Sydney’s well-groomed haute volée.’ In his letters from the Australian colonies, Hauser often uses sarcasm to highlight what he sees as a disparity between the aspirations of the local population and reality. Nevertheless, in the case of the Botanical Garden, Hauser encapsulates the site as a venue with upper-class associations.

Boulanger’s fantasia on ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ is dedicated to ‘his friend’ Miska Hauser. Hauser and Boulanger had first performed together at a series of farewell concerts for Hauser in Sydney in 1855, which were well-attended and possibly a good earner for Boulanger. Hauser also often improvised on Irish melodies. The dedication to a male composer-performer colleague rather than a female dilettante subtly references the

73 See Davis, Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender, 140–64. See also Harry White, Music and the Irish Literary Imagination (Oxford: OUP, 2008), 38.
74 Davis, Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender, 147.
76 Miska Hauser, letter, 1 Dec. 1854, Miska Hauser’s Letters from Australia, 3.
masculine domain of musical genius and virtuoso achievement exhibited in the fantasia genre. Meanwhile, the dedication to a ‘friend’ simultaneously reinforces the importance of friendship in the Victorian value system.

Boulanger’s ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ embodies various tropes of the fantasia genre including unexpected turns of harmony, sudden changes in mood, brilliant figuration, and virtuosic displays. Although the original publication of ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ in Thomas Moore’s *Irish Melodies* with accompaniment by John Stevenson was written in E major, Boulanger’s fantasia is written in A♭ major. This choice might be traced to Boulanger’s teacher, Chopin, who was very fond of A♭ major; in fact, it is his most-used key for piano music. The twelve-bar introduction before the full statement of the theme is typical of the

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78 The masculine overtones of the *Album* are reinforced by Miska Hauser’s portrait being placed in the frontispiece.


80 Two examples confirm the original key of E major, but there are examples of settings in other keys. See ‘The Last Rose of Summer with Symphonies and Accompaniments by Sir John Stevenson’ (Sydney: Charles T. Samsoon, c.1870), and Scott, *The Singing Bourgeois*, 27.

81 Reeves argues that this was an idiomatic consideration to allow for a comfortable positioning of the hand on the piano. See Alan Brent Reeves, *Key Characteristics in Chopin’s Piano Music* (PhD thesis, University of Alabama, 1994), 19, 34.
fantasia genre and echoes Stevenson’s arrangement of the song (see Fig. 5). The function of the introduction in a fantasia was to establish key and build anticipation for the theme. The harmonies in the introduction to Boulanger’s ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ are an example of the way the composer imaginatively toys with listeners’ expectations through unpredictable harmonic progressions. The most recognisable aspect of the ballad melody is the minor-sixth leap on the words ‘last rose.’ Boulanger avoids using this ascending interval until the first statement proper (bar 13). The opening gesture draws in the listener by what initially sounds like the first three notes of the ballad melody but is harmonised in an unexpected way. In place of the expected minor sixth ascent to E♭, Boulanger sounds the E♭ in the bass, a full octave below the first note. Expectations are also disrupted by Boulanger harmonising the third note of the melody with a dominant seventh chord in A♭ (lacking the fifth) as part of a perfect cadence with a 6/4, 5/3 suspension in A♭ major. At this point listeners would realise, in retrospect, that the opening three notes had not been 1 2 3 as in the ballad but instead were 4 5 6. The next phrase once again opens with what sounds like the ballad melody, this time followed by a perfect cadence in C minor (with the dominant chord in first inversion). This second interruption to the expected key (either E♭ major in line with the melody or A♭ given the previous cadence) would be a novel listening experience. Following the cadence into G minor, an emphatic cycle of fifths progression leads to a resolution into A♭ major at bar 9. But Boulanger immediately switches back to the dominant harmony, this time with even more chromatic tension. A dominant ninth chord appears in bars 10–11 in which the suspended ninth falls chromatically (F–F♭–E♭) to the root note, which then cadences into A♭ major at the end of the introduction in bar 13. In sum, the numerous harmonic turns of the introduction would be aurally stimulating thanks to subverting the ballad melody and their basis in the cycle of fifths. The harmonies would also uphold the fantasia convention of unexpected yet technically correct modulations.

The first statement of the ballad melody (bars 13–30) is marked poco piu lento. The melody itself is marked il canto ben marcato and con espressione. The ballad melody is divided into groups of between one and three notes, each adorned with a harp-like ascending arpeggio figure. The harmony in the first phrase remains for the most part within the tonic-subdominant-dominant realm, with the exception of added suspensions at the emotional high point of the melody (bars 23–4). A tonic pedal point over the first phrase of the melody borrows from the pastoral topic and alludes to the Irish folk origins of the melody. The first statement culminates in a chromatic run that facilitates a modulation to B major—the relative major of the tonic minor—for the first variation.

On the one hand, Boulanger’s chromatic exploration is at odds with the simple diatonic harmonies of Stevenson’s ‘The Last Rose of Summer.’ On the other hand, a chromatic modulation would have placed Boulanger at the vanguard of colonial Australian composition, or at least reinforced his status as a talented European composer. The B major section in the fantasia is made up of two succeeding variations on the main theme. Each variation is extremely technically difficult, as is expected in the genre. The first variation begins abruptly at brillante and forte and consists of arpeggio figures in both hands in demi-semiquaver triplets, with the

notes of the ballad melody marked with accents. The second B major section, a scherzo, is once
again extremely technically demanding with the embellished ballad melody played on some of the
highest notes of the piano with acciaccaturas and trills, accompanied by rapid ascending chordal
passages in quavers and semiquavers. These sections would present extreme difficulties for amateur
performers, especially those with small hands (or females wearing the fashionable yet restrictive
clothing of the time), thanks to big hand stretches and rapid arpeggios reaching from low to high
notes. Studying the difficulties of the piece, however, might have reinforced Boulanger’s virtuoso
status for those playing along at home. The finale (bars 66–75) is filled with repeated semiquaver
chords marked *risoluto* and *fortissimo* in the right hand, perhaps drawing on the *Sturm und Drang*
style, however, at the highest regions of the keyboard it might also have conveyed transcendence.
This is underscored with rapid chords and chromatic runs in parallel octaves in the left hand. The
final cadence in the closing bars is marked *precipitamente*, directing the performer to rush to the close (bars 74–5). As a result, the fantasia comes to an abrupt end, which, in performance, would emphasise the transitory
nature of fantasias.
According to Dahlhaus’s definition of salon music, Boulanger’s ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ would be best termed ‘pseudo-salon music.’ Pseudo-salon music was composed ‘in imitation of the Parisian salons of the grand bourgeois’ and served to ‘delude provincial middle-class audiences into a musical daydream of salons they were not allowed to enter.’ The same negative assessment could be applied to Boulanger’s fantasia, especially if the cycle of fifths harmonic progression in the introduction is taken to be unimaginative. There was, however, more at stake in the *Album* for 1857 than concocting an imaginary Parisian salon in the colonies. Charles Rosen argues that the marrying of folk and popular elements with ‘high art’ was brought on by ‘rising aspirations of the commercial class throughout the eighteenth century and their growing interest in music as an element of aristocratic culture and a proof of social distinction.’ This in turn justified ‘the creation of a popular style which abandons none of the pretensions of high art.’ Just by engraving and printing the fantasia, for example, Clarke was able to show off the ‘virtuosity’ of his music-publishing house. The detailed pedal markings throughout the fantasia and the forty-five different trill markings needed on page seven of the score alone are just two examples of the incredible detail required. This in itself was an important marker of progress in the colony. The *Album* was also a celebration of the internationally renowned musicians who had visited and fashionable English-style botanical gardens that had been established in the colony. Lavish binding and gilt-engraving on the cover, as well as the high quality of the printing, signified wealth. The great technical difficulty of the music was also a symbol of cultural advancement.

In sum, the publication of Boulanger’s fantasia on ‘The Last Rose of Summer’ in the *Album* for 1857 was an early marker of progress towards the Victorian ideal of cultural refinement in the Australian colonies. The publication of the *Album* was symptomatic of a music community striving to establish a national identity that upheld contemporary standards of a civilised society. More broadly, the emotional content of Moore’s ballad, and its longing for an imagined ‘Ireland,’ combined with the high artistic achievement of Boulanger’s fantasia, can be mapped onto the aspirations of colonial Australians who envisaged a future ‘Australia’ complete with refined tastes, high moral standards, and the best of contemporary European culture.

About the Author
Jillian Twigger is currently completing a Master of Music (Musicology) at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Her thesis investigates the role of published Irish music in colonial Australia with a particular focus on gender and nationalism. Jillian has presented on her research both locally and in Ireland.

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Chapter Four

A monument to Thomas Moore in Ballarat

In 1889 the residents of Ballarat, a gold mining town in Victoria, unveiled a statue of Thomas Moore. The statue had been imagined, funded, and designed by local residents. It was carved in Italy out of Carrara marble before being shipped to Ballarat where it was set on a plinth composed of specially-imported Irish and Italian marbles and concrete. The erection of the Thomas Moore statue was viewed by the local population at the time as a fitting contribution to the town’s already noteworthy European statuary collection. As well as adding to the local collection, Moore’s statue was intended to be one of a series of great artistic figures installed in Sturt Street, the main street of Ballarat, which began with the erection of a statue of Scotland’s national poet, Robert Burns (erected 1887), and was to be succeeded by a statue of the English poet and playwright William Shakespeare (this plan was quashed by the 1890s depression and only came to fruition in 1960). For both Scottish and Irish members of the population, the Burns and Moore statues respectively were physical evidence of their cultural achievement as Celtic minorities in the British Empire. While for the local population, the statues were symbols of the town’s political modernity, specifically through the demonstration of unity between the Scottish, Irish and English populations. Furthermore, the statues were symbolic of the townsfolk’s cultural refinement and artistic interests. Lastly, these impressive material objects represented the abundant wealth of the place – a key factor in nineteenth-century upper class identity.

In this chapter I will show how the Moore statue symbolised these political, cultural, and financial ideals at the time of its unveiling and within the late-
nineteenth-century cultural milieu of colonial Ballarat. I will argue that the Moore statue project helped colonists with Irish heritage celebrate their cultural difference while also creating unity amongst the broader British population in Ballarat. Just a decade after the Moore statue was unveiled, the vote for Federation in colonial Australia took place and Ballarat produced an overwhelming 97 per cent ‘yes’ vote.\footnote{Anne Beggs Sunter, ‘Engendering public debate on federation: The role of the Australian natives’ association,’ in \textit{Becoming Australians: The movement towards federation in Ballarat and the nation}, ed. Kevin T. Livingston, Richard Jordan, and Gay Sweely, (Kent Town, SA: Wakefield Press, 2001), 47.} While it is not my contention that the Moore statue directly and independently provoked nationalism in Ballarat, the tone of the unveiling ceremony can be read along nationalistic lines. As shown by the results of the Federation vote, the Ballarat community was optimistic about nationhood. This optimism was exemplified in the Moore ballad chosen for performance at the unveiling ceremony, ‘Dear harp of my country.’ In closing, a musical analysis of ‘Dear harp of my country’ shows how the ballad conveys optimism and confidence and suggests that those listening in Ballarat at the Moore statue’s unveiling might have felt the ballad’s optimistic nationalism ran parallel to their own situation.

**Section I: Background and literature**

At first, the differences between music and public statuary seem stark. On the one hand, statuary is a visual art that is physically manifest while music is a performing art that is produced aurally over time. As a result, statues are (ideally) ever-present on the landscape, while music is ephemeral. And yet, both statues and music are art forms subject to processes of inspiration and creation, unveiling or premiere, and each can undergo interpretation over long periods of time during which their essential content remains unchanged. Furthermore, as art forms, they are both intrinsic to...
human expression and, in the nineteenth century, were considered to serve the ideal of aesthetic beauty. The parallels between statuary and music in printed form are clearer still. Music scores create a lasting record of a composer’s creation. In this way a piece of music can touch many more people – across the globe and through time – than if it were only enjoyed by those witness to the composer’s performance of it. The score captures something of the composer’s genius and allows for its dissemination through a material object. Meanwhile a statue can freeze the likeness of a person, for example that of a poet’s genius (or perhaps a wild lion, arguably an equally exotic being to nineteenth-century Europeans), in a steadfast material. In the case of a statue of a person, the subject is literally objectified and displayed for the general public to consume. In the nineteenth century, it was common for statues to be larger-than-life or at least elevated above the general population so that one could literally ‘look up to’ their artistic or political hero. Both music scores and statues have another thing in common, that is cultural identity, and their ability to signify wealth – because of the monetary cost of purchase. The case with music scores was demonstrated by the Australian Album of 1857 in Chapter Three.

Monumental status in an object might be defined as firstly, that it is easily identifiable to a majority of the population, secondly, it has significant meaning or is symbolic of something beyond itself, and lastly, that its relevance endures over time. If music scores have the capacity to achieve monumental status, the ten volumes of Moore’s Irish Melodies are a likely candidate. Over the course of the nineteenth century, Moore’s Melodies came to be widely recognised throughout Europe and the British empire. Over time they became symbolic of Victorian values, drawing room culture, sentimentality and, covertly, the yearning for independent nationhood. Later,

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over the course of the twentieth century, the same *Irish Melodies* came to be regarded by some as embarrassing expressions of faux-Irishness pandering only to a British audience.\(^3\) The *Melodies*’ monumental status was usurped by new and different expressions of Irishness that also became global phenomena, such as musician Enya in the late twentieth century.

The Moore statue in Ballarat is one of several around the world. The first was erected in Dublin in 1857 and occupies an important place in the history of Irish statuary. Prior to the unveiling of Dublin’s Moore statue, classical statues had been erected in Ireland through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of figures from the British aristocracy and military. During the nineteenth century, the political climate in Ireland meant that the population grew tired of commemorating Englishmen and became intent on memorialising Irish-born figures. The choice of Moore, the ‘bard of Erin,’ was politically neutral and symbolised Ireland’s ‘soft power.’ The apolitical choice of a Moore statue was followed by another monument to a creative writer, Oliver Goldsmith (1864) and then politician and philosopher Edmund Burke (1868), both of which were erected in the grounds of Trinity College. These cultural figures eventually paved the way for more politically contentious men to be memorialised, such as Daniel O’Connell (unveiled in 1882).\(^4\) In short, the Moore statue served as a politically neutral national figure for the Irish and did not provoke opposition from the British due to his popularity on both sides of the Irish Sea. Moore monuments can also be found in County Wicklow in Ireland, Central Park in New York, St. Georges in Bermuda, and St. Petersburg in Russia, to name a few.

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\(^3\) See Leith Davis, 140–144.

\(^4\) The role of women in Irish statuary has typically been restricted to mythical representations such as many of ‘Erin’ (who appears on gravestones and Celtic crosses around Ireland, often depicted with a harp), Molly Malone (most likely a fictional character), Anna Livia (a female personification of Dublin’s River Liffey), and ‘Ladies shopping’ (a bronze statue of two women sitting on a bench erected in 1988 and dedicated to the regular women of Dublin).
In recent decades, scholars like Charles Hamm have put forward the idea that Moore’s *Melodies* were part of many migrants’ cultural baggage, transplanted to all parts of the British empire during the nineteenth century.\(^5\) Ronan Kelly’s chapter on Moore’s commemoration around the globe briefly mentions the Ballarat statue. He argues that ‘crucially, the event was not all about Ireland or the Irish. The oration day was deliberately inclusive, speaking of Irishmen, Englishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen, and Australians.’\(^6\) Frank Molloy references the Moore statue in Ballarat at the outset of his chapter on the influence of Thomas Moore in Australia. As is typical of Moore scholars discussing his legacy, Molloy quotes a passage from James Joyce’s *Ulysses* in which Leopold Bloom ponders the setting for Dublin’s Moore statue: ‘He crossed under Tommy Moore’s rogueish finger. They did right to put him up over a urinal: meeting of the waters.’\(^7\)

In a small but revelatory paper, Karen Tongson argues that Moore’s *Melodies* transcend Irish nationalism and embody what she calls ‘cultural transnationalism.’\(^8\) Tongson argues that ‘by carefully balancing a seductive Otherness with signs of “civility,” if not scientific innovation, cultural transnationalism strives for a victory comprised of widespread acceptance and affective affiliation, rather than of violent overthrow.’\(^9\) In other words, Moore’s aesthetic itself appeals to a transnational audience with the aim of peaceful assimilation rather than divisiveness. This

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\(^9\) Tongson, 9.
understanding of the *Melodies* is particularly useful when considering the feeling of unity created within the white population of Ballarat at time of the erection of the Moore statue and the strong nationalistic feeling evident at the Federation vote just a decade later. Arguably, it was the spread of Victorian values across the globe with British colonisation that allowed for the transnational appeal of Moore’s *Melodies*.

The colonial Australian press published news of developments in statuary around the world. When the Moore statue was unveiled in Dublin in 1857, a modest report of the event was published in several colonial Australian newspapers.\(^\text{10}\) Again, more than twenty years later, when the Thomas Moore bust was unveiled in Central Park, New York, colonial newspapers reported on the ceremony and monument.\(^\text{11}\) This awareness of Moore celebrations in the international community likely provided impetus and direction for colonial Australian communities wishing to commemorate figures from ‘home.’

Section II: Politics and society in colonial Ballarat

The importance of politics on the Ballarat goldfields has been enshrined in the national political narrative through the story of the Eureka stockade. Eureka saw angry, over-governed miners engage in a violent riot with government officials.\(^\text{12}\) Weston Bate argues that

Eureka released radical energies previously held in check by the basic loyalty and work-centredness of the goldfields community … many people felt socially and politically reborn. The release of pent-


\(^{12}\) See Weston Bate, *The lucky city: The first generation at Ballarat, 1851–1901* (Melbourne: Melbourne UP, 2003), 55–73.
up radical energies gave a whole generation at Ballarat a sense of national purpose and a hatred of English stuffiness. More broadly, politics between diggers at a macro level over plots or mining partnerships meant that most of them were well-versed in negotiating and defending their rights. The prominence of political debate on the goldfields was also motivated by an overzealous and misdirected police force – ‘English stuffiness’ – that caused unrest and encouraged the unification of mostly law-abiding diggers in opposition to authority. This strong sense of group achievement arguably stayed with the diggers and might have inspired a strong sense of community in Ballarat.

While Ballarat’s colonial beginnings were turbulent, the decades leading up to 1900 were marked by more stability within the community. Two important factors in the human geography of late-1800s Ballarat shaped the social climate. Firstly, the population remained stable at roughly 40,000 people from the 1870s to 1901, and secondly, during this time the number of women was roughly on par with men. According to Weston Bate, ‘the coincidence of further economic and social development with zero population growth meant that the majority was much more likely to achieve a high standard of living and fulfil migrant hopes.’ Indeed, by the final decades of the nineteenth century Ballarat was world-famous thanks to the gold rushes. The population was self-aware and proud of the growth and success they had achieved. A variety of cultural and artistic groups were active including music ensembles (for example a brass band and male choir) and a music eisteddfod was first held in 1855. The town also supported several theatres, while the Mechanics

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13 Bate, 73.
14 See Weston Bate, 56, 60.
15 Bate, 188.
16 Bate, 188.
Institute was a forum for educational lectures. An equal division of the sexes might also have produced a more well-rounded community.  

Added to this, or perhaps in some way because of it, in the second half of the nineteenth century Ballarat was gripped by ‘statuo-mania.’ The term ‘statuo-mania’ was coined by Maurice Agulhon and refers to the public’s obsession with commemoration, typically that of nineteenth-century France. While the process of erecting monuments was typically convoluted, the ability for a monument to immediately speak volumes about its community group or ‘nation’ – if executed correctly – meant that they became an extremely popular tool in shaping colonial landscapes. Citizens of Ballarat first understood the impact of statuary when, in 1884, a local citizen donated a dozen white marble statues to the Ballarat botanical gardens. Thomas Stoddart’s gift immediately and markedly improved the recently established Ballarat botanical gardens and, arguably, demonstrated a material way to instantly achieve respectability and show off wealth. According to local newspapers, such as the *Geelong Advertiser*,

> Mr Thomas Stoddart (1828–1905) is the originator of the statue movement in Ballarat, and his splendid gifts, now in the Botanical Gardens, led to the erection of the statue of Robert Burns, in Sturt street, to be followed shortly by that of Tom Moore.

This newspaper excerpt, written at the unveiling of the William Wallace statue in 1889 (also located in the Ballarat botanical gardens) is evidence that the community was aware of the impact of Stoddart’s gift and how it had brought statuo-mania to

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18 Bate, 188.  
Ballarat. Stoddart also gifted the town with a statue of himself in 1884, an act that shows his appreciation of the medium. Acknowledging the nineteenth-century trend of statuo-mania that gripped France, another colonial newspaper commented that ‘if Thomas Moore were a Frenchman every city and town in the Republic would have a statue reared to his memory.’

The meaning of the Moore statue is affected by its relationship to the Burns statue. According to Benjamin Wilkie, the Burns statue at Ballarat was symbolic of the Protestant work ethic. He also argues,

> While monuments in Australia reflected the romanticising tendency in the global diaspora, interpretations of both Burns and Wallace in Ballarat displayed, in contrast to the transatlantic tendency, a promotion of universalism and individualism present in Australian colonial politics at the time.

The Moore statue fund was started immediately after the Burns statue was erected. Stoddart, who had donated the twelve classical statues to the Ballarat botanical garden was also a major donor in the Moore statue fund. Within a week, £500 was raised, which shows the huge amount of disposable income available in Ballarat.

**Section III: The Moore statue**

The statue itself began with designs produced by Ballarat locals, the commissioning of an Italian sculptor, and the sourcing of Irish marble for the base. The statue and

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21 Aldrich, 9.
24 Wilkie, ‘Scottish identity in stone,’ 281.
pedestal were designed by George Grant and Andrew Lorimer, respectively. Both men were described as ‘Ballarat natives’ in the newspapers.\(^{27}\) The pedestal incorporated various types of Irish marble. This hybrid of ‘native’ design and Irish raw materials taking place in the British colony is symbolic of the complex imperial webs at play in the nineteenth century. It is as though these two peripheral colonies – Victoria and Ireland – were cementing each other’s position in the Empire by this mutual exchange. Lastly, the statue was sculpted by an Italian in Carrara, utilising trade connections across Europe. Dixon and Hoorn argue that in the Australian colonies, ‘cosmopolitanism ruled as artists interpreted local subject matter through a range of influences, themselves contributing to the international culture of which they were a part in national and international exhibitions appearing the world over.’\(^{28}\)

Therefore, the urge to replicate Dublin and New York’s honouring of Thomas Moore through monuments sees the residents of Ballarat consciously placing themselves within the global cultural network of modern civilisation.

The Moore statue committee was peopled by a selection of Ballarat’s richest, mostly Irish-born, men.\(^{29}\) Together they had a strong sense of Irish nationalism which, when combined with great wealth from goldmining, created a benevolent and community-driven spirit amongst them. Several of the committee members had also come to the Australian colonies via the United States. To imagine making such enormous journeys as those from Ireland to America and then to Australia – both mentally and physically in the nineteenth century – gives some idea of the personal drive these men possessed. The Tom Moore statue committee was chaired by Martin

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Loughlin (1833–1894) of County Kilkenny, Ireland. As a youth, Loughlin had travelled to America before returning home and then making his way to the Australian colonies. After major successes in goldmining, Loughlin became a celebrity figure in the horseracing world, owning several Melbourne Cup winners. According to his obituary he was also a ‘great friend of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Ballarat.’

The joint vice-president of the committee was Daniel Brophy (1832–1895) also from County Kilkenny, Ireland. He had come to Ballarat after first migrating with his parents to Quebec on a fever-ridden ship. Writing in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, S. A. Fraser argues that Brophy was a ‘sincere Roman Catholic and Irish nationalist.’

Perhaps Brophy was informed by his own father’s experience when his land was confiscated during the Irish rebellion of 1798, because he exhibited, through his involvement in politics in Ballarat, that he was ‘liberal’ and had a ‘strong belief in democratic institutions.’ Brophy is an example of an Irish person able to express Irish patriotism through his involvement with the Thomas Moore statue on the one hand, and hold a belief in democratic institutions in colonial Australia on the other, which reinforces the suggestion that Thomas Moore was a pivot point through which Irish nationalism could translate into colonial patriotism. The joint vice-president of the committee with Brophy was Mr. M Butterly (1828–1893) who was born in Dublin and, similar to Brophy, had initially migrated to California at the age of 19 before travelling to Sydney in 1852 and then on to Ballarat. According to his obituary published in *The Ballarat Star*, Butterly was ‘a thorough public-spirited man’ and one

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32 Fraser, ‘Brophy, Daniel (1832–1895).’
33 Fraser, ‘Brophy, Daniel (1832–1895).’
of the founders of the Mechanics’ Institute in Ballarat. Other members of the committee included William Morrin Acheson (1837–1919) from Londonderry in the north of Ireland who came to Ballarat in 1856. Acheson was described in his obituary as ‘an ardent Home Ruler’ who donated to various Irish causes in his lifetime. The fact that this information appears in an obituary suggests that Acheson held these beliefs throughout his life and therefore – along with his Irish colleagues on the committee who were also staunch Irish nationalists – was able to hold these seemingly distinct affiliations simultaneously. J. M. Bickett (1826–1917) was born in Scotland, which made him the only non-Irish-born member of the committee. He had migrated to Melbourne in 1849 and also made his fortune on the Ballarat goldfields. Before his involvement with the Moore statue, Bickett had served on the Robert Burns statue committee, a fact which reinforces the suggestion that the Moore statue was not solely erected for the Irish community but was supported by the broader white community.

Section IV: The unveiling

The Moore statue unveiling ceremony, public address, and music selection encapsulated the political leanings of Ballarat’s white citizens, with a particular focus on recent Irish history and the future of Ballarat and ‘Australia.’ This mix of local politics, including mention of the Eureka stockade, combined with a retelling of recent Irish history can also be seen to reflect the motivations of the men on the statue committee.

‘He [Thomas Moore] never swerved from his fidelity to the Irish cause, and the same cause is the cause of the people all over the world.’\textsuperscript{37}

This statement, delivered by Sir Bryan O’Loghlen (1828–1905) at the unveiling ceremony on 7 December 1889, encapsulates both the Irish perspective on Moore – that he was loyal to his national cause – and the transplanting of these values into a colonial environment. O’Loghlen was an Irish-Catholic politician who served in both British and colonial Victorian parliament.\textsuperscript{38} During his career in colonial Victoria he served as attorney-general (1878–1880) and Premier (1881–1883), at which time his party’s slogan was ‘peace, progress, and prosperity.’\textsuperscript{39} O’Loghlen added a local political flavour to the event by acknowledging that the ceremony was taking place on the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Eureka stockade. The significance of Eureka to this audience was, in O’Loghlen’s words, that it was ‘the precursor of free institutions.’\textsuperscript{40} According to \textit{The Ballarat Star} report on the unveiling, O’Loghlen spoke evocatively about the involvement of Ballarat’s white community.

Irishmen, Englishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen, and Australians, all had joined in meeting the cost of labor of the erection of that enduring monument to Moore’s memory … This he believed was an evidence of the present, and he hoped might be a happy omen of the future – unity of all our races in one nation in this happy and blessed Australian land of ours.\textsuperscript{41}

The tone of the ceremony, therefore, was celebrating local political achievements through the lens of Moore’s genius and aesthetic with an eye to the future Australian

\textsuperscript{37} ‘The Moore statue at Ballarat,’ \textit{Australasian} (Melbourne, VIC), 7 December 1889, 33-34: \url{http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/139145130/11405883}


\textsuperscript{39} ‘Sir Bryan O’Loghlen,’ \textit{The Australasian} [Melbourne, VIC], 28 January 1888, 36: \url{http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article143306211}.

\textsuperscript{40} ‘The Moore statue at Ballarat,’ \textit{The Australasian} [Melbourne, VIC], 7 December 1889, 33: \url{http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article139145130}.

\textsuperscript{41} ‘The Moore statue at Ballarat,’ \textit{The Australasian} [Melbourne, VIC], 7 December 1889, 33: \url{http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article139145130}. 
nation. If we take the reporter’s transcription of O’Loghlen’s speech as correct, it is pertinent that he specifically acknowledges ‘the present.’ Lindsay Proudfoot and Dianne Hall have touched on the importance of the ‘presentist’ aesthetic in colonial writing and the actions of communities in colonial Australia. They find that in several colonial communities peopled by Irish and Scots, ‘ethnic memory elided with presentist colonial experience to inscribe frequently hybrid social, political, cultural and religious meanings in the shared spaces of each town.’ According to the Moore statue unveiling, the present colonial experience for residents of Ballarat was that they were a wealthy, organised, integrated and cultured community poised for Federation. Indeed, according to The Ballarat Star at the banquet following the unveiling of the statue, ‘the speaker referred incidentally to the question of Australian federation, and said he believed it was the destiny of Australia to form a great federal dominion. (Applause).’ This shows that the idea of Australian nationalism was current in Ballarat and was part of the discussion centred on the Moore statue. The extent to which Moore’s own metaphor of harp music as nationalism was part of the public consciousness was on show at the banquet through the words of Rev. Father Rogers. He said, ‘Moore was a consistent patriot, and in circumstances where other men had allowed their patriotism to run cold he allowed his harp to strike no other note but the note of freedom.’

As a side note, if the Irish-born citizens of Ballarat were so nationalistic, why not commemorate Ireland’s political leader Daniel O’Connell? Indeed, the Scottish population had erected a statue of their political saviour, William Wallace, in the

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Ballarat botanical gardens in 1889, the same year as the Moore statue was unveiled. Furthermore, a lecture was given at the Mechanics’ Institute in Ballarat in 1887 in which the speaker, the Rev. Mr. Kildahl, described the city of Dublin and its monuments. The lecture was politically charged and echoed O’Connell’s ideology.\footnote{‘Mr. Kildahl’s Lecture at Ballan,’ \textit{The Ballarat Star}, 19 November 1887, 4.}

So why not an O’Connell statue? First and foremost, it seems as though unity within the white population was more important than dredging up past political divisions. Secondly, Wallace was a historical figure who lived in the twelfth century, whereas Daniel O’Connell had only died in 1847 and his ideas, viewed as radical by many, were still current and therefore potentially politically divisive. Thirdly, at the time of the statue’s unveiling, Scotland was in a more comfortable relationship to England (as part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland) than was Ireland, which meant that the Wallace statue was symbolic of vague nationalistic overtones rather than specific present-day political agitation. It is also possible that the notion of an ‘apolitical’ statue appealed to the Ballarat Irish in the same way that Moore had in Ireland back in 1857.

As an impressive material object, the Moore statue at Ballarat was a symbol of wealth and civility. Given Ballarat’s background of self-awareness – shown through the early publication of a history of the town and their world-famous goldfields\footnote{W. B. Withers, \textit{History of Ballarat} (Ballarat, VIC: Ballarat Star, 1870).} – it is likely that the Moore statue was in part strategically employed to counter suggestions that the citizens were greedy or lacking culture (consciously or not). The emphasis on cultural activities is emphasised in the statue, which depicts Moore with a music stand, as if he is about to sing. The focus on Moore’s musical output arguably accentuates his feminine side as a drawing-room performer. Put another way, perhaps...
the Moore statue was intended to show another side to Ballarat beyond the environmentally brutal act of goldmining.

According to Penny Russell, a colonial fixation on class distinction was deeply embedded in feminine culture. Writing about a small group of women in nineteenth-century Melbourne, Russell says:

Women’s diaries revealed deep anxieties over status and authority… and constant efforts to set in place the material trappings of an elegant domestic life.\(^{47}\)

In erecting statues, the people of Ballarat were engaged in a hybrid process of both the typically masculine act of public works and typically feminine act of beautification. While it is difficult to gauge the role of women in statuary, given that they were rarely permitted to join public groups such as committees and so on, there is some fragmentary evidence that suggests at least one woman might have been involved. According to the newspapers, Frances Macpherson (née Morton, 1856–1915) performed the actual unveiling of the Moore statue. Choosing a woman to perform this ceremonious act is one of the ways a patriarchal society can involve women and give them a role in public life; however, Macpherson was restricted to a non-verbal contribution. When Macpherson’s husband passed away in 1891 – just two years after the Moore statue was unveiled – his obituary mentioned a statue for Australian poet Adam Gordon Lindsay and reported, ‘it is stated that the suggestion for the [Lindsay] statue came originally from Mrs Macpherson.’\(^ {48}\) This is not to say that she might have also spearheaded the Moore statue because the origins for that idea can easily be traced to the Robert Burns statue that preceded it. Yet, the involvement of women simply hasn’t been reported publicly and given that erecting

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\(^{47}\) Penny Russell, ‘Cultures of distinction,’ H. M. Teo, R. White (eds), *Cultural history in Australia*, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2003), 164.

statues such as Moore is an act of beautification and domestication – traditionally a woman’s domain – it is worth remembering Penny Russell’s description of women and their ‘constant efforts to set in place the material trappings of an elegant domestic life.’ Beyond actual female involvement in the statue, given its role as beautification, the planning and execution of public statuary parallels the prescribed female role of creating a cosy domestic life for their husband and families. To inject the typical features of ‘home’ into the public landscape was a sign of domesticating urges overflowing out of the home and being taken on by men. Especially in colonial Australia, their new home came with virtually no physical trappings of the old world. Therefore statuary became especially important in such a harsh landscape and furthermore, a necessary counterpoint to the extreme and negative impacts on the environment wreaked by mining practises in Ballarat.

A variety of music was temporarily inscribed on the landscape at the unveiling of the Moore statue. Instrumental music was provided by Prout’s brass band, who performed, according to The Ballarat Star report, ‘a number of suitable selections.’ According to Robert Pattie, writing in A brief history of Prout’s Ballarat brass band, 1858–1924, the typical repertoire for the band in the late-1800s included ‘God save the Queen,’ national tunes (including Irish airs), religious pieces, dances, Italian opera transcriptions, Christmas carols, and popular song arrangements. While the exact repertoire is difficult to ascertain, it seems likely that they performed some Irish airs on this occasion. According to a newspaper report, following three cheers immediately after the statue was unveiled, a choir consisting of ‘the gentlemen of the Tom Moore statue choir sang expressively, “Dear Harp of My Country,” … under the

49 Russell, ‘Cultures of distinction,’ 164.
51 Robert Pattie (compiler), C. Ducardus (producer), A brief history of Prout’s Ballarat brass band 1858–1924 (City of Ballarat Municipal brass band Inc., c. 2010).
able leadership of Herr Carl Hartmann.’ It is difficult to imagine the impact a live vocal performance might have had on the audience of several thousand in Ballarat that day. However, in a time when recorded music was yet to be heard and when the sound of music was not a ubiquitous part of daily life, this performance likely had a profound effect on listeners. Furthermore, the novelty of such an event and its subsequent reporting in the newspapers would likely cement its place in cultural memory.

Section IV: ‘Dear harp of my country’
The selection of ‘Dear harp of my country,’ from the sixth volume of Moore’s *Irish Melodies*, for performance at the unveiling ceremony is significant primarily for its strident nationalistic message. In contrast to the bulk of Moore’s *Irish Melodies*, ‘Dear harp of my country’ conveys a self-assured, confident future nation through the metaphor of the sounding harp. Moore frequently refers to the harp in his ballads, sometimes in passing and other times in some detail (see Table 1). When Moore elaborates on the harp it is typically described as being silent or perhaps giving a ‘sigh,’ a ‘throb,’ or a ‘dreary tone.’ These examples can be read as conveying a mere trickle of national feeling. There is also some examples that emphasise the possibility of the harp sounding again in the future. The table below shows some of the more substantial descriptions of the harp across the ten volumes of Moore’s *Irish Melodies*.

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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| ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls’ | Vol. 1 | ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls, the soul of music shed now hangs as mute on Tara’s walls as if that soul were fled’ |
| ‘The origin of the harp’ | Vol. 3 | ‘Tis believed that this Harp, which I wake now for thee / Was a Siren of old, who sung under the sea’ |
| ‘Oh! Blame not the bard’ | Vol. 3 | ‘The sigh of thy harp shall be sent o’er the deep’ |
| ‘Avenging and bright’ | Vol. 4 | ‘The harp shall be silent, the maiden unwed’ |
| ‘The minstrel boy’ | Vol. 5 | ‘The harp he lov’d ne’er spoke again’ |
| ‘Dear harp of my country’ | Vol. 6 | ‘When proudly, my own Island Harp, I unbound thee, / And gave all thy chords to light, freedom, and song.’ |
| ‘My gentle harp’ | Vol. 7 | ‘My gentle harp, once more I waken / The sweetness of thy slumbering strain’ |
| ‘They may rail at this life’ | Vol. 7 | ‘And, as long as this harp can be waken’d to love’ |
| ‘Yes, sad one of Sion, if closely resembling’ | Vol. 8 | ‘And the harps of her minstrels, when gayest they waken’ |
| ‘Shall the harp then be silent?’ | Vol. 8 | ‘Though his Harp, like his soul, may with shadows be crost, / Yet, yet shall it sound, ’mid a nation’s eclipse…’ |
| ‘Sing, sweet harp, oh sing to me’ | Vol. 10 | ‘Sing, sweet Harp, oh sing to me / Some song of ancient days, … Hush, hush, sad Harp, that dreary tone, / That knell of Freedom’s day; / Or, listening to its death-like moan, / Let me, too, die away.’ |

‘Dear harp of my country’ (henceforth ‘Dear harp’) carries a subtitle, ‘The farewell to my harp,’ which suggests that it marks the resolution of a narrative arc. The beginning of this narrative can be traced back to the first volume of *Irish Melodies*, which features Moore’s first ballad dedicated to the harp, ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls’ (henceforth ‘The harp that once’). Indeed, this early ballad offers a starkly different view of Ireland and Irish nationalism than ‘Dear harp.’ The poetry in ‘The harp that once’ describes the harp variously as ‘mute,’ or sounding a ‘chord alone’ or a single ‘throb.’ Moore’s portrayal of the harp, and in turn Irish nationalism, as ‘silent’ and submissive was just one way his ballads appealed to the British psyche (who preferred the idea of the Irish as obedient than wild). In the case of ‘The harp that once,’ Hoagwood argues that the ‘poem offers no call to action or hope, but melancholy resignation.’

And yet in ‘Dear harp of my country,’ the harp is depicted as sounding, no longer silent. And not just a single chord, but ‘all thy chords’ are

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ringing. In the poem, Moore obliquely credits himself with the revival of the harp and, metaphorically, Irish nationalism. On the day of the unveiling, after the choral performance, Bryan O’Loghlen recited the poetry in its entirety (the full text is included in Example 1).  

The ballad is set to the country-dance tune ‘New Langolee,’ which had previously been used in a ‘comic song which celebrates a ribald contrast between Handel’s music and the “Irish music” of phallic prowess.’ The song also had associations with Ireland’s manhood as the word ‘Langolee’ apparently refers to a stiff Irish penis. The song was first performed and published as early as the 1770s in London. While most of Moore’s ballads were drawn from already existing tunes, the virile associations of this dance melody and the confident lyric suggests that ‘Dear harp’ inhabits a different rhetorical realm to the bulk of Moore’s ballads. Emily Cullen echoes the masculine overtones in her analysis of the ballad text. She argues that in ‘Dear harp,’ ‘the harp represents a feminised Ireland who is released from a captivity of silence by her male lover.’ In short, ‘Dear harp’ exudes masculine confidence and fulfilment. The way this is conveyed in the music can be made particularly clear with a comparative analysis of ‘Dear harp’ and the earlier ballad, ‘The harp that once.’

56 Harry White, Music and the Irish Literary Imagination, 74.
57 White, 74.
58 Emily Cullen, ‘From the minstrel boy to the blameless bard: The play of the harp as a passive trope and icon in Moore’s Irish Melodies,’ in Thomas Moore: Texts, contexts, hypertexts, ed. Eamonn Maher, Vol. 24, Reimagining Ireland, ed. Francesca Benatti, Sean Ryder and Justin Tonra, (Germany: Peter Lang, 2013), 53.
Example 1: ‘Dear Harp of My Country,’ vocal part
Example 2: ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls,’ vocal part

Analysis of the melody and text-setting of each song reveals that ‘Dear harp’ is a more musically stable composition and set to more uplifting poetry than ‘The harp that once.’ The melody for ‘Dear harp’ (reproduced in Example 1) is active throughout, most likely thanks to its origin as a dance tune. The characteristic two-note anacrusis can be found in several of Moore’s ballads and in published versions of Irish traditional dance tunes.\(^{59}\) While the original tune is active, when set to a text with one word per note it becomes significantly slower, which departs from the traditional performance parameters (instrumental and fast) to better fit the style of a

\(^{59}\) See Moore and Stevenson’s ‘When daylight was yet sleeping,’ ‘The last rose of summer,’ ‘The pretty girl milking her cow.’
sentimental ballad (vocal and at a moderate pace). Despite this augmentation of the original tune, ‘Dear harp’ remains one of Moore’s more upbeat ballads. ‘Dear harp’ is set in 6/8 time – one of the more uncommon time signatures in Moore’s *Melodies*, which are predominantly in 3/4 and 4/4 time. The use of a compound meter in ‘Dear harp’ gives a sense of propulsion to the music that is comparatively less apparent in the duple time of ‘The harp that once.’ The dotted rhythms in ‘The harp that once,’ when combined with the duple meter, serve to slow down and give a sense of reticence to the lyrics (as if the performer doesn’t want to speak the sombre words). In contrast, the triple meter of ‘Dear harp’ serves to sweep away or gloss over the negative lines, such as ‘The cold chain of silence had hung o’er thee long,’ and propels the performer towards the more uplifting sentiments like, ‘When proudly my own island harp! I unbound thee.’ Furthermore, ‘Dear harp’ fits twenty words into the first four-bar phrase, while ‘The harp that once’ fits only twelve. In this way, Moore has accurately conveyed the comparative ‘silence’ of the harp in the earlier ballad and its ‘sounding’ in the later one.

Both ballads employ a musical trope that occurs frequently in different guises in Moore’s *Melodies*, namely an element of ‘wildness’ either in the melody or piano accompaniment. By the 1800s, the stereotyping of Irish people as ‘wild’ was well-established. In Tongson’s words, the English perspective was that Irish music suffered from ‘formal weaknesses resulting from an overabundance of emotionality in the “Celtic spirit.”’ But, as W. H. Williams notes, one of the ways the Irish took control of their popular stereotype was through music. Usually, this process involved recognising a negative stereotype and then altering the perspective so that it might be

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60 Tongson, fn 5, 11.  
viewed as a positive trait. An important aspect of the ‘wild Irish’ stereotype was not just that Irish people were passionate, but that this had a direct negative effect on their ability to self-govern. In some Irish sentimental ballads, the ‘wild’ or ‘passionate’ aspect of the Irish stereotype can be found in harsh dissonances between the vocal and piano part or unexpected large leaps in the melody. And yet, in line with goal-oriented harmonic procedures these ‘wild’ leaps are usually found to resolve satisfactorily by the end of the ballad. The melody of both ‘The harp that once’ and ‘Dear harp of my country’ offer this Irish ‘wildness’ through sudden leaps. In the case of ‘The harp that once,’ an unexpected leap comes in bar 7, where what might otherwise be a simple descending scalar figure is interrupted by a leap of a perfect fourth up to the tonic note before the descending pattern continues. (See Example 3, where the ‘leap’ note is encircled in blue and the red notehead represents the proposed alternate descending pattern). The leap is bittersweet because at once it harks back to the beginning of the phrase, which began on the same E-flat, while also interrupting the listener’s expectation of a clichéd descending pattern. In both verses, this leap is set to an emotive word. In the first verse, the poem reads, ‘as if that soul were fled’ and in the second verse, ‘it’s tale of ruin tells.’ Through the emotive text and bittersweet melody, Moore has created a highly expressive moment. This example shows Moore’s profound understanding of the emotional substance of the tunes.

Example 3: ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls,’ bars 7–8, melody only.

‘Dear harp’ consists of a more stable melody overall, with an emphasis on triadic and scalar movement. An exception to the stable melody is the two wide leaps across bars 18–20. First is a descending octave jump into bar 19 and then an ascending minor seventh leap into bar 20 (see Example 4). These leaps can be understood as less jarring when the wider context is taken into consideration. In Example 4, the black noteheads denote the actual composition while the red noteheads show an imagined continuation of the ascending melody. Consequently, it is clear that in bar 19 the melody has been lowered by an octave. This octave displacement of the melody is found in many versions of the original dance tune and might be traced back to an idiomatic consideration regarding the melodic range of a performing instrument.

Example 4: ‘Dear harp of my country,’ bars 18–20, vocal part only

If the melody had followed the proposed alternative in bar 19 (the red noteheads), it would have been a moment of musical climax thanks to the high pitch and rising-falling contour. And yet, despite the octave displacement, Moore’s lyrics at this moment in both verses of the text suggest he understood this was a climactic moment. In the first verse, the line is ‘awaken thy fondest, thy liveliest thrill, But so oft hast thou’ and in the second verse, the line at bar 18–20 is ‘throbbed at our lay, ‘tis thy glory alone; I was but as the wind.’ In both cases, the most emotive phrases – ‘liveliest thrill’ and ‘glory alone’ – are the words set to the G-A-G climax in the melody. Given that Moore understood this aspect of the melody, I suggest that the
octave displacement is able to simultaneously express Irish ‘wildness’ while maintaining the overall stable melodic idea of the song.

The poem ‘Dear harp of my country’ can be read as a celebration of the successful awakening of Irish patriotism, which can then be mapped onto the political aspirations of colonial Australians. The poem celebrates the present moment, in which the protagonist – the bard himself – is able to resign from duty, having granted the harp ‘freedom.’ When transplanted to Ballarat in 1889, an interesting spin on the poetry emerges. Whereas from a patriotic Irish perspective, the poem speaks of the transition from oppression to freedom, from the colonial perspective in Ballarat, the poetry might instead speak to the evolution of the colonial city itself where the protagonist is the colonist and the sounding of the harp is the sign that civilisation has been established or perhaps the civic pride felt by Ballarat’s citizens. Lines such as ‘the cold chain of silence had hung o’er thee long’ might speak to the presumed status of the Australian continent as a terra nullius and especially to British attitudes towards Aboriginal culture as barbaric. Then, following invasion, the protagonist – colonist – delivers ‘light, freedom and song.’ By the final stanza, the focus shifts from the role of the protagonist to heaping praise upon the landscape itself: ‘all the wild sweetness I wak’d was thy own.’ This line most likely resonated with residents of Ballarat, a town made rich by naturally-occurring gold. It is as though the place had been in ‘silence’ and ‘darkness’ until British invasion, whereupon ‘I [the colonist] unbound thee,’ bringing British culture and civilisation, including the advanced mining techniques used to extract precious metals from the earth. Whether or not this protagonist-as-colonist metaphor occurred to those witnessing the unveiling of the Moore statue on Sturt Street, the surface-level parallels between the revivification of Irish patriotism as signified by the sounding harp and the feeling of nationalism
developing in Ballarat towards the end of the century are sure to have given weight to the performance of ‘Dear harp of my country’ on this occasion.

This chapter has examined Ballarat’s physical and socio-cultural landscape through the erection of the Moore statue. The Moore statue project has been shown to be a vessel for both Irish nationalism and, through the depiction of unity amongst British members of the population, the nationalist feelings in the population. Through analysis of Moore’s statue and its unveiling ceremony, this chapter has also shown how Irish sentimental ballads, once transplanted to Ballarat, were deployed in a situation of local pride and Australian nationalism. This chapter has contributed music analysis of two of Moore’s Irish Melodies, ‘Dear harp of my country’ and ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls,’ in order to show some of the ways these Irish sentimental ballads resonated for Moore’s listeners in colonial Australia.
Conclusion

Through the four studies, this thesis has shed new light on aspects of the role of Irish sentimental ballads, including Thomas Moore’s *Irish Melodies*, in the musical life of colonial Australia. The first three studies were focused on New South Wales during the 1850s and 1860s. In the case of Catherine Hayes and John Hubert Plunkett, two well-respected figures in colonial society, Irish sentimental ballads were representative of Irish cultural identity. For Clarke, publisher of the *Australian Album* for 1857, Boulanger’s fantasia on ‘The last rose of summer’ signified aspirational Victorian values as part of a broader message about modern society in ‘Australia.’ The fourth study moved forward thirty years to examine a continuation of the Moore phenomenon that was in service of both Irish and Australian nationalism in the pre-Federation era.

Chapter One offered a close reading of Catherine Hayes’ public image and press reception in colonial Australia in the mid 1850s. Irish sentimental ballads were a regular feature of the colonial music scene, but Hayes’ renditions cemented their popularity for decades to come and fostered a connection between sentimental ballads and high art. Furthermore, her immaculate public image was an example to women in the colonies and inspired the next generation of aspiring Irish-Catholic singers.

Chapter Two examined John Hubert Plunkett’s public lectures on Irish music, which began just two years after Hayes’ departure from the colonies in 1858. Although his lectures did not have the same powerful cultural impact as Hayes’ performances, Plunkett’s academic approach to the topic conveyed Irish music as historically significant. For Plunkett, Moore’s *Melodies* represented the highpoint of Irish musical output thanks to the marrying of ancient airs with English lyrics and European harmonies. This study suggested that Plunkett’s lectures emphasised the notion of a musical evolution in Ireland beginning with ancient airs
and ending with Moore’s modern *Irish Melodies*, possibly in the hope that his colonial audience might make the same journey towards refined tastes.

Chapter Three examined an early instance of Australian nationalism in the *Australian Album* for 1857. The album stands out from other colonial music publications in its luxurious binding, high quality lithography, and the difficulty of music found in its pages. The album also offers a portal back to musical life in Sydney in 1856 through the inclusion of portraits of touring artists and popular items from concert programs that year. This study suggested that Boulanger’s use of a folk song in his fantasia exemplified an aesthetic ideal – the marrying of folk and individual genius. Meanwhile, the use of Moore’s ‘The last rose of summer’ supplied pre-packaged cultural meaning to the fantasia, creating a work that had the power to signify high art, good taste, and high moral standards. The album offers an early example of one of Moore’s *Melodies* being deployed in the service of Australian nationalism.

Chapter Four skipped forward in time three decades and continued the theme of Moore and Australian nationalism through a study of the Thomas Moore statue unveiled at Ballarat in 1889. Ballarat’s goldmining beginnings, in which diggers eventually united against authority at Eureka in 1854, matured into a unified (at least in terms of the British population), liberal, wealthy, and artistic city. ‘Dear harp of my country,’ which had such a prominent place in the unveiling ceremony – both sung by a choir and then recited by the speaker – was shown to convey confidence and nationalism through both the text and music. The comparative musical analysis of ‘Dear harp of my country’ and ‘The harp that once thro’ Tara’s halls’ paid close attention to melody, harmony, and text in order to show the evolution of Moore’s message over the course of the *Melodies*.

This thesis contributes to a rapidly expanding area of study as Thomas Moore’s legacy is reassessed and scholars begin to delve into a variety of issues surrounding the *Irish Melodies* including their inception and publication, reception, and life outside of Ireland from
the nineteenth century to the present day. The next steps in a study like this might be to continue to explore the National Library of Australia’s Trove search engine. Frequent mention of Irish music and Thomas Moore can be found in colonial newspapers, which means it would be possible to trace Moore’s reception in great detail. Another approach might be to examine more of the Irish sentimental ballads composed locally, such as ‘Molly Asthore’ by Louis Lavenu (1818–1859), to trace their style and influences. This thesis has honed in on a period of time acknowledged as one of great change in the colonies and a focus either earlier or later in the nineteenth century – or beyond it – will provide new perspectives on Irish sentimental ballads and their role in colonial life. Meanwhile, our understanding of Hayes’ impact in the colonies might evolve through more feminist readings of the Irish-Catholic singers who came after her.

Ultimately, this thesis has shown that when transplanted to colonial Australia, the Irish sentimental ballads fell on fertile ground. During the 1850s they were nurtured by Catherine Hayes, John Hubert Plunkett, and Edouard Boulanger. The ballads, which carried a version of Ireland’s cultural identity and nationalist message around the world, eventually came to serve another nationalist cause. ‘My own island harp’ was sounding in Ballarat – a precursor to Federation in Australia.
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