



## **The John McCarthy Collection**

**P17**

**The Special Collections and Archives Department  
Glucksman Library  
University of Limerick**

**The Special Collections and Archives Department  
Glucksman Library  
University of Limerick  
The John McCarthy Collection**

**Reference Code:** IE 2135 P17  
**Title:** The John McCarthy Collection  
**Dates of Creation:** 1905-1906, c. 2005  
**Level of Description:** Fonds  
**Extent and Medium:** 16 items (6 files)

## **CONTEXT**

**Name of Creator(s):** McCarthy, John (1885-1966).

**Biographical History:** John McCarthy was born in Cappamore, county Limerick in 1885 to William and Ellen McCarthy as the second of seven children. His parents owned a farm, a public house and a bakery and while his siblings all went to college, John remained at home to run the family businesses. When in his early teens, John began taking violin lessons from John Corbett, a highly respected but strict music teacher in Cappamore, who insisted that his pupils learnt to play from sheet music rather than by ear. Under Corbett's tutelage, John developed into an accomplished and note-perfect player. At the turn of the century, Irish traditional sheet music was rare and, to increase his repertoire, John began to collect popular tunes in the East Limerick and North Tipperary area. Some of the notations he wrote down himself, others were given to him by friends and fellow collectors, his sister Eily McCarthy, his cousin Justin McCarthy and his friend Cornelius Collins among others. Music notations were commonly circulated among players and some of the sheets collected by John appear to date from as early as 1876. He used the music to play with other musicians in pubs, dances and local houses. Having married in 1916 Hannah Lally of Knockshambo, county Mayo, he reared a family of twelve children. He died on 5 February 1966.

**Immediate Source of Acquisition:** Donated by the McCarthy family to the University of Limerick on 9 November 2005.

## **CONTENT AND STRUCTURE**

**Scope and Content:** This collection comprises musical notations of jigs, reels, hornpipes, mazurkas, flings, gallops, quadrilles, lancers, schottisches, mazurkas and waltzes popular in Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century.

**Appraisal, Destruction and Scheduling Information:** All records have been retained.

**Accruals:** No accruals are expected.

**System of Arrangement:** The bound volumes and accompanying photocopies have been arranged to match the arrangement of Noel McCarthy's book.

## CONDITIONS OF ACCESS AND USE

**Conditions Governing Access:** The bound volumes in this collection require conservation treatment and are too fragile to be safely handled. These documents have been identified in the finding aid and are not accessible until they have been conserved.

**Conditions Governing Reproduction:** Standard copyright regulations apply to all items. For photocopying or reproducing material, please consult with the staff.

**Language/ Scripts of Material:** English.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:** Bound volumes in fragile condition and paper documents in good condition.

**Finding Aids:** A hard copy of the descriptive catalogue is available at the Special Collections and Archives Department, Glucksman Library, University of Limerick.

## ALLIED MATERIALS

**Publication Note:** A detailed description of the three music books, their contents and their compiles is provided in Noel McCarthy's book *John McCarthy of Cappamore, Ireland. His Irish Traditional Music Manuscripts 1876-1912 Collected from the Cappamore/ Silvermines Area*. A copy of the book is available in the Leonard Collection (OS/694) in the Special Collections and Archives Department.

## DESCRIPTION CONTROL

**Archivist's Note:** Papers arranged and described by Anna-Maria Hajba.

**Rules or Conventions:** This description follows guidelines based on *ISAD(G)* 2nd edition, 2000, *Irish Guidelines for Archival Description*, 2009, *National Council on Archives: Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names*, 1997, and *EAP Guidance on Data Protection for Archive Services*, 2018.

**Date of Description:** June 2022.

The John McCarthy Collection

- 1            March-April 1905  
Commercially printed 12-stave score sheets, imprinted 'Acme P & W', bound into a hardback volume labelled 'Music' on the front cover. The sheets contains handwritten musical notations of jigs, reels, hornpipes and other popular traditional dances in several different hands. With a loose insert of a reel on a slip of paper, and several blank or semi-blank score sheets. *This item requires conservation treatment and is too fragile to be safely handled.*  
78 pp. and 5 loose inserts
- 2            [c. 2005]  
Photocopies of the pages of P17/1.  
81 pp.
- 3            March-September 1905  
Two manuscript score books bound into a single small hardback volume labelled 'Music' on the front cover and signed by Justin McCarthy, Cappamore on the inside of the front cover. The inside of the back cover contains the names of John McCarthy and Cornelius Collins of Cappamore, county Limerick. The book contains handwritten musical notations of jigs, reels, hornpipes and other traditional tunes in different hands. *This item requires conservation treatment and is too fragile to be safely handled.*  
72 pp.
- 4            [c. 2005]  
Photocopies of the pages of P17/3.  
74 pp.
- 5            March 1906  
Commercially printed 12-stave score sheets bound into a hardback volume. The book contains handwritten musical notations of jigs, reels, hornpipes and other traditional tunes in different hands, some possibly dating from the 1870s. With loose inserts of additional musical notations. *This item requires conservation treatment and is too fragile to be safely handled.*  
74 pp. and 5 loose inserts
- 6            [c. 2005]  
Photocopies of all but two pages of the contents of P17/5.  
91 pp.