

THE LIFE AND WORK OF THOMAS PERRY

by

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with the life and work of the eminent eighteenth-century Irish violin maker, Thomas Perry. It attempts both to eliminate certain commonly held misconceptions and to add something to the store of established knowledge regarding one of Ireland's greatest craftsmen.

Chapter One presents a brief outline of the history of violin making, with a view to situating Thomas Perry in his appropriate artistic context. It situates him firmly in the tradition of British violin making, which in turn was strongly influenced by the particular style and genius of Jacob Stainer, the great Swiss-German maker.

Chapter Two describes the world of Thomas Perry. It was the world of eighteenth-century Dublin, the second city of the Empire, with its cathedrals, its theatres, its Ascendancy and its House of Parliament. It was a world in which there was much music making, and it consequently supported a small but successful cohort of musical instrument makers and repairers.

Chapter Three is concerned with the early years of Thomas Perry. It attempts to discriminate between the chaff of legend and the wheat of fact by addressing the question of sources and by seeking to find documentary evidence for the main events of Perry's life. In this regard, primary source materials from the Registry of Deeds and from old Dublin newspapers has been of critical importance.

Chapter Four continues to use this source material to present an account of the business transactions of the mature Thomas Perry. We follow him from his early years in Christ Church Yard to a more prestigious address in Anglesea Street. Surprising new evidence emerges about his extensive involvement in financial and property transactions. At the height of his career as a Dublin violin maker, for example, we find him controlling over 250 acres of land in the Queen's County. In 1789, the year of the

French Revolution, he takes his son-in-law and nephew into partnership; the firm will henceforth be known as 'Perry and Wilkinson'. Twenty-nine years later, in 1818, he dies; one of the outcomes of the present research has been the identification of his burial place and of a copy of his will.

Chapter Five deals with the instrumental legacy of Thomas Perry. He emerges as a violin maker of extraordinary productivity and of consistently high standard. This was achieved through the combination of a long life and the systematic use of talented apprentices and assistants. Perry made violins in two styles. The earlier instruments all are of a typical British model; many of the later ones follow an Italian design. The firm produced almost 5000 instruments, all of which were systematically numbered and dated. Perry's contribution to violin making was also tutorial and inspirational: during his long working life he trained in his craft a number of younger men who went on to become important makers in their own right.

The five chapters are complemented by five appendices which present documentary and graphic material to complement the main text. These appendices are listed in detail in the Table of Contents; they include facsimiles and transcripts of certain key documents. The final Appendix is a pictorial iconography of the violins of Thomas Perry and of related makers.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE VIOLIN AND ITS MODELS - A BRIEF HISTORICAL SURVEY

1.1 The Emergence of the Violin.

The precise origins of the violin remain something of an enigma. Whereas we can identify the violin's predecessors - the Arabian rabab, the rebec, fidula, vielle, cruth and viol - all bowed instruments but otherwise very different to the violin - there remains a curious lack of information regarding the transition from these relatively primitive instruments to the highly sophisticated and advanced violin. In fact, some have argued that there was no 'development', that the violin simply 'emerged, almost at its beginning in its final perfect form'.¹

The violin is the soprano member of the family of string instruments that includes the viola, violoncello and double bass. Developed for early Renaissance polyphonic church music as the instrumental equivalent of the human soprano voice, the violin, by some mysterious freak of physics, is tonally the most brilliant member of the string family, capable of astonishing variations of tone and endowed with remarkable power and projection. And, in turn, the instruments of the violin family altogether outstripped in tone the older family of viols, which they relegated to obscurity.

Nowadays it is generally accepted that Andrea Amati, born in Cremona about 1510, was the creator of the violin. Three particular innovations that distinguished the violin from the earlier flat-topped viols are:

1. The curved top,
2. The f-holes and
3. The fretless fingerboard.

Whether Andrea Amati was the genius who was responsible for these three innovations or whether he simply was the one who brought them together we cannot be sure. In

any event the creation of the violin was a stroke of genius, and none could have been more surprised than Amati himself had he foreseen the extraordinary impact the beautiful and powerful instrument he created would have on the subsequent development of music.

1.2 Andrea Amati and his family

Andrea Amati was born between 1500 and 1510 at Cremona, in northern Italy. By 1526 he was established as a *liutaio* (instrument maker) in Cremona's parish of Santa Helena. In 1538 he leased, and later bought, the house in San Faustino where, for the next two hundred years, several generations of Amatis lived and created some of the greatest stringed instruments of all time.

Andrea Amati had two gifted sons, Antonio, born in 1538, and Girolamo, born probably in 1561. Known as 'Brothers Amati' they made and signed many of their instruments together. Girolamo, known by his Latinized name, Hieronymus, and generally considered to be the greater artist, had a son, Nicolo, who was to become the most celebrated member of the Amati family. Nicolo Amati was born in Cremona on December 3, 1596. He spent all his life there, and died aged eighty-eight on 12 April, 1684.

Andrea Amati and all subsequent Amatis made violins of two different sizes, small and large. All were characterised by a delicacy and gracefulness. They are perhaps among the most 'feminine' of all violins.² A typical Amati model has a rounded, graceful outline. The arching is pronounced though not exaggerated and the f-holes are long, slim and elegant. The Amati model is of particular interest to us, as Thomas Perry made some of his violins based on an Amati lent him by the Duke of Leinster. An Amati violin is illustrated in Appendix V.

1.3 The School of Brescia

Thirty-one miles from Cremona the small town of Brescia was home to a school of violin makers almost as important as that of Cremona; indeed, many have argued that the birthplace of the violin was Brescia rather than Cremona. The first important Brescian luthier was Gasparo Bartoletti. He was known as Gasparo da Salo, as he was born in 1542 at Salo, at the northern end of Lake Garda in northern Italy. Few of his violins survive, but those remaining testify to his genius. Gasparo da Salo's violins are well built, though perhaps on the sturdy side. The outline is often quite ungainly in appearance, the upper bouts seeming too large in proportion to the lower. The f-holes are long and sharply defined and the arching is quite low. This accounts for the sonorous, powerful tone, which contrasts sharply with the small, sweet and silvery sound of the violins of his contemporary, Andrea Amati.

Gasparo da Salo's most important assistant and successor was Giovanni Paolo Maggini, who was born in Botticini in 1580. Maggini's violins are also rather sturdy, well built, with masculine features, and with a powerful tone.³

1.4 Antonio Stradivari

Nicolo Amati's greatest apprentice and assistant was a man who would surpass him and all others to become the greatest violin maker of all time. His name was Antonio Stradivari. Little is known about Stradivari's birthplace. We do know that he lived and worked in Piazza San Dominico, Cremona, until he died in 1734.⁴

The earliest known Stradivari violin is dated 1666. It was made when he was about twenty-two and an assistant in Nicolo Amati's workshop. Stradivari's early violins show the influence of his master's 'small pattern' violins. It would be wrong to call them copies, as Stradivari's individuality was pronounced very early in his career. These early violins are perhaps more 'masculine' than the somewhat 'feminine' small

pattern violins made by Nicolo Amati. In tone, however, they are very similar.

Stradivari in the course of his career developed three different models. He began his career following the 'small pattern' violin, such as that made by his mentor Nicolo Amati; they are hence frequently referred to as 'Amatisé' Stradivari. About 1690 he developed what is known as the 'long pattern' Stradivari - influenced, possibly, by the Brescian School. Although these violins are very popular today, it seems that this was not the case in Stradivari's day. In 1698 he abandoned his 'long pattern' violins and reverted to the models of Nicolo Amati, this time, finding inspiration in his 'grand pattern' violins. It would appear that Stradivari was driven to improve the almost perfect Amati model and around 1700 he achieved that aim.

The early eighteenth century is the beginning of what is known as the 'golden period' in Stradivari's life. After 1700 Stradivari's designs are entirely his own. He had learned the secrets of creating instruments that had everything - an easy response, carrying power, and a velvety smoothness. In these violins he returns to more 'classic' proportions, such as those of the larger Amati model. The f-holes are masterfully cut and are generally in quite an upright position, while the arching is quite flat, reflecting perhaps the influence of Brescia. These violins have both beauty of appearance and beauty of tone. Incredibly, Stradivari created these instruments when the music of the day was far from exploiting the violin's possibilities. His prophetic genius created instruments that would fulfill increased tonal requirements almost three centuries later.

1.5 The Guarneri Family

The only serious challengers to the Stradivari supremacy are the violin makers of the Guarneri family. Andrea Guarneri, the founder of the Guarneri dynasty, was born in **Cremona** about 1626, one hundred and twenty years after the birth of Andrea Amati, the founder of the Cremonese school. There were five Guarneris in all. 'These five master-workers proved themselves to be well versed in their art', write the Hills, 'yet

not one of them showed that perfection of fitness for his calling which was made manifest in the more varied and skilled productions of their predecessors, the members of the Amati family'.⁵

Andrea Guarneri had seven children. Two of the sons, Pietro Giovanni and Giuseppe Giovanni Battista, followed their father's profession. Pietro began working in his father's shop in 1670. In 1677 he married and soon afterwards moved to Mantua - he is now known as 'Pietro of Mantua' Giuseppe, now generally known as 'Joseph Guarnerius, filius Andrea', started working with his father after 1676, as a teenager. Andrea had other apprentices, but Joseph became his main assistant. Joseph had two sons, Pietro, generally called 'Pietro of Venice' and another who was to become the greatest Guarneri of all - Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù.

Del Gesù was born on 21 August, 1698 - a few months before the death of his grandfather Andrea. He started working with his father as a teenager and in 1723 left his father's house. It seems that Del Gesù led an irregular life, and was fond of alcohol and other pleasures of the world; this lifestyle is perhaps reflected in the unequal quality of his craftsmanship. Just as the violins of Nicolo Amati and Antonio Stradivari reflect their artistic discipline and solid characters - responsible, hardworking, enormously gifted men always searching for improvements - the violins of Del Gesù reveal much genius but little self discipline. When he is at his best his violins are incredibly beautiful and original; the so-called 'prison violins' from the end of his life are extraordinarily crude.

Del Gesù tried to combine in a violin the dulcet and mellow sound of the Amatis and Stradivaris with the dark sonority of the Brescians - a beautifully sensuous tone that would be balanced on all strings. He succeeded so well that some of his violins may well become more valuable than Stradivari's most beautiful specimens.

There were of course other major Italian makers. In Cremona, J.B. Guadagnini made superb violins, as did his son Giuseppe. In Milan, the Testore family produced many fine instruments. In Naples the Gagliano family did likewise. However, the 'Golden Age' of Cremona lasted less than two hundred years: Andrea Amati's earliest surviving violins were made around 1550 and Del Gesu's last around 1744. The last of the great Italian makers, Giovanni Francesco Pressenda, of Turin, died in 1854.

1.6 The French School

Unlike the Italians, the French were not involved in the creation of the earliest violins, but nonetheless have made very important contributions to the art of violin making.⁶ The town of Nancy was home to the Medard family of luthiers. Claude Medard, the founder of the family, died in Nancy prior to 1597. Over a dozen members of his family were *menuisier-luthier* (woodworkers and viol-makers) in Nancy. Of these Francois Medard III was the best known. He probably spent some time in Cremona, studying perhaps with Nicolo Amati; he later went to Paris and became court luthier to Louis XIV. His violins, dated between 1690 and 1710, follow the small Amati pattern and have a small sweet tone.

Mirecourt on the Madan river was home to almost all important French luthiers : Lupot, Vuillaume, Pique, Chappuy, Chanot, Jacquot, Gand, Bernardel and others. Nicholas Lupot (1758-1824),Gustave Bernardel (1832-1904), and Jean Baptiste Vuillaume (1798-1875) made outstanding copies of Stradivari and Guarneri violins. Many of the best Mirecourt makers moved to Paris where the musical action was; they opened shops there and employed their relatives and friends to work for them.

The French school of violin making produced several first-rate masters. They were excellent copyists, working on the models of the great Cremonese makers, often adding touches of their own. The best makers, such as Nicolas Lupot, Francois-Louis Pique, Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume and Gustave Bernadel, had their own style and individuality

and a certain French elegance. Their instruments do not however measure up to the noble sonority of the greatest Cremonese, being sometimes better visually than tonally. Many of the French makers also favoured the use of quick-drying spirit varnish in place of the old oil varnish of Cremona. While this varnish may have had initial commercial advantages, with the passage of time it acquired a hard and brittle appearance very different from the soft depths of the varnish of Cremona. Some makers, such as Didier Nicholas L'Aine (1757-1833) made artificially large violins in an unsuccessful attempt to achieve a bigger tone. His instruments are regularly a quarter inch longer than the standard fourteen inches of the Cremonese model. Finally one should mention the relatively minor French maker, Claude Pierray, who worked in Paris from 1700 to 1740.⁷ He is sometimes alleged to be a relative of Thomas Perry. Pierray's violins, however have little in common with Perry's, being generally of large proportions, with a light red or deep orange-yellow spirit varnish.

To this day the main French contribution to the art of the violin remains the development of the bow, which was brought to perfection by Francois Tourte.

1.7 Jacob Stainer and the German School

The Swiss maker, Jacob Stainer (1621-1683), is a strange phenomenon within the violin making world. How a quiet man living in a small Tyrolean village could rise to the exalted company of the great Cremonese makers is a mystery. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries his violins were considered by many to be the greatest of all. His early life is surrounded in mystery, but it is likely that he studied in Italy, probably in Brescia, but returned to spend most of his life in Switzerland and Austria.⁸

Stainer's violins have a warm, luscious flute-like tone, never shrill but not powerful. The outline is long and elegant, the f-holes are very individual, quite closed and formal in appearance, while the arching is very pronounced. This accounts for the sweet tone and the lack of carrying power. In fact, so pronounced is the arching, that one can

often see through the f-holes when a Stainer is held horizontally.

Stainer's fame was at its zenith at the end of the eighteenth century when collectors valued a Stainer at four times the price of a Stradivari. Doubtless Stradivari himself was aware of the work of Stainer but appears not to have been influenced by his model. Many makers, however, all over Europe were. The Stainer model influenced many German and Austrian makers, such as Johann Georg Helmer (1687-1770) from Füssen, and Leopold Widhalm (1722-1776), two of the best Germanic makers of their time. In Hamburg there was the celebrated Joachim Tielta (1641-1719) whose violins were often compared with those from Italy.

Stainer's influence was most profoundly felt in England where his violins were almost universally revered and were copied by scores of makers. Stainer's sound, however, was not the sound of the future. Since the early nineteenth century, regard for Stainer, as reflected in prices paid for his violins, has plummeted. A typical instrument by Stainer is illustrated in Appendix V.

1.8 Violin Making in England

England cannot claim to have produced the same brilliance of violin making that many European countries did. This is somewhat surprising as the English excelled as makers of the lute and the viol. There are a number of reasons why English violin making never became an exalted art.

Firstly, the English makers chose to follow a model that was essentially limited in its potential. Here there was a distinct absence of originality, as virtually all English makers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Banks, Forster, Duke, Parker, Hill, Wamsley, Betts and Hart adopted the Stainer violin as their model. This seems incredible to us, knowing that they were familiar with Cremonese violins, but at that time Stainer was revered especially by the English. Many of the English makers copied

and exaggerated the high arching of the Stainer model.

Secondly, there was a lack of stimulus. In spite of certain significant achievements, the period from 1650 to 1720 was, in many respects, a cultural wasteland in England. The glories of the Elizabethan age were past and gone and social conditions were not favourable to the cultivation of art. There still remained a strong legacy of the Puritan age when many a precious viol shared the same fate of the stained glass and carved work of the cathedrals. 'Nearly a century elapsed before the muses ventured forth to fan art into a flame out of the embers of its dead self,' wrote the major historian of the English school, W. Meredith Morris.⁹

Thirdly, there was musical conservatism. The viol enjoyed a monopoly of public favour in England, and the violin, in its battle for possession of the British music world, had to contest every inch of ground. The viol held its ground until about 1650 or perhaps later; until then the violin was looked upon as a giddy and impudent intruder. Two great violinists who visited England helped to undo this conservatism; they were Thomas Balzar in 1656 and Nicola Matteis in 1672. However, by the time the strife had ended, the eighteenth century had dawned. By then, the art of violin making in Italy was at its zenith with the Golden Age of Cremona, whereas the English School was still in its infant state.

The major early English maker of note is Barak Norman (1688-1740). He based his violins on the Maggini model; his violins are highly ornamented with double purfling. They generally have a dark brown or amber varnish. His early violins are highly arched but in later years he reduced this to a medium arching. His violins are consistent in their neat workmanship.¹⁰

Two makers who epitomise the English school of the late eighteenth century are Benjamin Banks (1727-1795) and Richard Duke (1709-1780). The work of Benjamin Banks, often called 'the English Amati' falls into two categories, his Stainer copies and

his Amati copies. It appears that Banks was not at all enamoured with the idea of making Stainer copies as they are almost without exception of vastly poorer quality than his Amati copies. Banks apparently made Stainer copies merely to public demand. His instruments based on the grand pattern of Nicolo Amati, however, are another matter. Here we have a true labour of love, with every detail painstakingly perfected. Bank's Amati copies are considered among the finest ever made. He appears to have mastered not only the physical aspects of the Amati model but also the spirit and soul of the great Italian maker.¹¹

Richard Duke was an altogether more consistent maker. He, like all English makers, made violins on the Stainer model. Unlike Benjamin Banks, however, they were of a very high quality. Duke's Stainer copies are considered to be among the greatest of that genre and much of his great fame was based on them. Duke also made Amati and occasionally Stradivari copies - also of a very high standard.¹² Because a relationship between Duke and Thomas Perry is often asserted, one of his instruments is illustrated in Appendix V.

Notes and References to Chapter One

- ¹ Joseph Wechsberg, *The Violin* (London: Calder and Boyers, 1973), 13, 14.
- ² William Henley, *Universal Dictionary of Violin and Bow Makers* (Brighton: Amati Publishing, Ltd, 1973), 25-33.
- ³ Joseph Wechsberg (as n.1); William Henley, (as n.2), 440-444, 736-738.
- ⁴ The standard reference work on Antonio Stradivari is that of William Henry Hill, Arthur F. Hill and Alfred Ebsworth Hill, *Antonio Stradivari: His Life and Work, 1644-1737* (London: Hill & Sons, 1902). The quotation is from page 2.
- ⁵ The standard work on the Guarneri violin makers is by William Henry Hill, Arthur F. Hill and Alfred Ebsworth Hill, *The Violin-Makers of the Guarneri Family, 1626-1702* (London: Hill & Sons, 1931). This work was reprinted in 1980.
- ⁶ Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 31-35.
- ⁷ William Henley (as n.2), 900-901.
- ⁸ Stanley Sadie, ed.(as n.6), 25-27.
- ⁹ W. Meredith Morris, *British Violin Makers* (London: Robert Scott, 1920), 7.
- ¹⁰ W. Meredith Morris, (as n.9), 209; William Henley (as n.2), 834, 835.
- ¹¹ W. Meredith Morris, (as n.9), 96-102; William Henley (as n.2), .75-76.
- ¹² W. Meredith Morris, (as n.9), 136-139; William Henley (as n.2), 335, 336.

CHAPTER TWO: THE WORLD OF THOMAS PERRY

2.1 Ireland in the Eighteenth Century

In order to situate Thomas Perry in context, we must first examine the world in which he lived. That world was the world of eighteenth-century Ireland, and, more specifically, that of late eighteenth-century Dublin. It was a world of contrast - in language, religion, tradition, and privilege. On the one hand, there was the majority tradition within the island - Gaelic speaking, Catholic, disenfranchised, rural and impoverished; on the other hand, there was the minority tradition - English-speaking, Protestant, politicised, urban and successful. Thomas Perry belonged to the latter tradition.

The old Irish world had been finally broken by Oliver Cromwell and the Williamite Wars. Previously there had been a strong and varied Irish culture outside of the Pale: the old Bardic culture was rich in music and in literature. The flight of the Wild Geese after the Treaty of Limerick in 1691 left the country without a native aristocracy, and, as a consequence, the native poets and harpers were left without their traditional patrons and supporters. The situation was worsened in the first half of the eighteenth century by the systematic imposition of the Penal Code on the remaining Catholics; the Penal Laws were designed essentially to consolidate the political and financial ascendancy of the New English in Ireland. It was not until after the failure of the rebellion of Prince Charles Edward in 1745 that the Penal Laws began to be relaxed in their operation: the first formal legislative measure of relief had to await Grattan's Parliament in 1783; full equality for Catholics would finally be achieved only with O'Connell's Catholic Emancipation of 1829.

And so, in the eighteenth century, across the island, the old Gaelic culture began to disintegrate and die. The aristocratic Bardic culture was the first to go, and, in the process, the 'Amhrán' of the peasants took over from the 'Dán Díreach' of the

professional poets. The Irish language began to fall into a decline from which it has never recovered, and its loss, in turn, resulted in the loss of many of the songs. New dance rhythms, many of them imported from England and Scotland, began to dominate in the countryside. Country musicians, in imitation of practice in the big city, began to play on flutes and fiddles, and harp-playing increasingly became a thing of the past. The professional harpers, once the elite of the Irish musical world, were reduced to a handful, in the absence of the patronage of the old Gaelic lords. Were it not for the Belfast Harp Festival of 1792, when Edward Bunting collected many of their tunes, much of their music would have been lost. Many of these melodies would, within decades, be given new lyrics in the English language by Thomas Moore, and in their new existence would live on into our own time.

With that Gaelic world in decline, one must contrast the vigorous, prosperous world of the Anglo-Irish. The cities and towns had, for some time, been predominantly English in language and in sympathy. The upheavals of the seventeenth century, together with the massive confiscations and resettlement after Cromwell and the Boyne, put most of the land in the ownership of English and Protestant proprietors. By the middle of the eighteenth century they were secure and prosperous, and, like their fellow settlers in the New World, would, by the end of the century, have acquired their own sense of identity and the beginnings of an aspiration for independence. Throughout the century, the Irish parliament sat in Dublin, and that same parliament which had enacted the Penal Laws, was, in its closing twenty years, to be the focus of the independence movement.

The success of the American revolution in 1776 encouraged the mood for independence. The supply lines to Ireland, however, were much shorter. England was in no mood to tolerate between herself and the Atlantic an independent state which might enter into an alliance with her old enemy, France. And so an Act of Union was manipulated through the Dublin parliament in 1801, which reduced Dublin to the status of a provincial city and sowed the seeds of future of political unrest.

2.2 Thomas Perry's Dublin

Throughout most of Thomas Perry's life, Dublin was the second city of the British Empire. It was a capital city in its own right and the Irish Parliament sat in the great House of Parliament in College Green. Across the street was Trinity College, a university which ranked in status with Oxford and Cambridge. There were two mediaeval cathedrals, each with a strong tradition in music, St. Patrick's and Christ Church. The city had a mayor and corporation, a body of Freemen, and an array of guilds dating back to mediaeval times, which controlled the various crafts and trades. The city was predominantly English and Protestant in character; the Huguenot immigrants, following on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, helped to consolidate its Protestant ethos.

After 1783, with the new legislative independence of Grattan's Parliament, there was an upsurge of national pride and satisfaction, which manifested itself in many directions. An Irish Post Office, separate from that of Great Britain, was established on the site of the present Central Bank, behind Anglesea Street. The Bank of Ireland was founded; Gandon's great buildings for the Four Courts and the Customs House were erected. Rutland Square and Merrion Square were completed and the Wide Streets Commissioners began their work of transforming a mediaeval town into a city of broad and elegant thoroughfares. Both in attitude and in architecture, Dublin at this time was unquestionably a capital city.

2.3 Musical Life in Eighteenth-Century Dublin

The fine buildings and elegant squares housed a bustling and affluent society of country landowners, parliamentarians, government officials and professional people. This educated and discerning society demanded genteel and sophisticated entertainment, and it is clear from advertisements, criticisms and references in contemporary newspapers that concerts and theatrical performances were a prominent feature of life in the city. As

early as 1696 a new set of wind instruments was purchased by public funds for the 'City Music' for the sum of £20;¹ the ten players of this municipal band were required to provide music for all public occasions. Music making in the city was concentrated initially in the area adjacent to the two cathedrals, Dublin Castle and Fishamble Street, the nucleus of performing musicians being the choristers of the two cathedrals, the members of the City Music, and amateurs. In 1705 the Bull's Head Musical Society was formed by a group that met in the tavern of that name in Fishamble Street. They carried out 'catch singing, mutual friendship and harmony' and had an annual dinner in December.² A similar society had its origin in the Cross Keys Tavern in Christ Church Yard, an old precinct of the Cathedral.³ In 1723 these societies developed into the Charitable Musical Society which performed music to raise funds to release debtors from prison.⁴ The Dublin Academy of Music was founded in 1729 and its members built a music hall in Crow Street, 'for the practice of Italian music.'⁵ In 1711 the Opera of Nicolo Grimaldi Nicolini, with his company of Italian singers, played in the Smock Alley Theatre from April to June,⁶ and later the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church Cathedral would send Thomas Roseingrave, the son of their organist, to study in Venice under Domenico Scarlatti.⁷

Apart from private recitals in the houses of the chief families of the city, and concerts held by the musical societies, many public concerts were organised as commercial enterprises. The most famous Dublin concert hall was the Music Hall in Fishamble Street which was erected by the Bull's Head Musical Society and opened in 1741.⁸ It was here, on 13 April, 1742, that the first performance of Handel's *Messiah* was given.⁹

Handel was only one of many distinguished visiting musicians whose contact with Irish cultural life was extensive enough to have an influence of some significance. The position of 'Master of State Music in Ireland', created in 1703 and appointed from outside Ireland, was filled by some distinguished musicians. Not least among them was Matthew Dubourg who was appointed to the post in 1728. A fine violinist and

orchestral leader, he played a central role in Dublin music, and was in charge of the band at the first performance of *Messiah*, earning Handel's warm approval. Dubourg held the post of Master of State Music until he returned to London in 1765.¹⁰

Another important musical visitor to Dublin at this time was the English composer, Thomas Arne. He paid three extended visits to Dublin (1742-4, 1755-6, 1758-9), performing his *Masque, Comus*, and also producing eight other operas in the city.¹¹

The Italian composer, Francesco Geminiani, a pupil of Corelli, lived in Dublin from 1733 to 1740, when he had a property off Dame Street which included his 'Great Music Room' in which public recitals were held. He was again in Ireland from 1759 until his death in 1762. During this period he was violin master to the Coote family of Cootehill in County Cavan. Geminiani, a distinguished composer and violinist and author of one of the earliest important treatises on violin performance, must have had a considerable influence both directly, and through his student, Dubourg, on the state of instrumental performance in Ireland.

These distinguished musicians, along with their contemporaries, had a variety of well appointed venues in which to perform. Among the most popular were the Crow Street Music Hall, the Fishamble Street Hall, the Philharmonic Room in Fishamble Street, Geminiani's Great Musick Room in Spring Gardens off Dame Street, the Smock Alley Theatre (Theatre Royal), and, after 1765, The Rotunda. Apart from these commercial venues there were the cathedrals and churches in which many important celebrations and benefit concerts were held. These include, in particular, Christ Church, St Patrick's Cathedral, and St Andrew's Round Church, which would be the parish church of Thomas Perry for most of his life.

There is abundant evidence that these venues were in constant use for a wide variety of musical and theatrical purposes. This evidence has been documented by Dr Ita Beausang (nee Hogan) in *Anglo-Irish Music, 1780-1830* and by Dr Brian Boydell in

his books, *A Dublin Musical Calendar (1700 - 1760)*, and *Rotunda. Music in Eighteenth-Century Dublin*. They paint a picture of an eighteenth-century Dublin positively humming with musical activity.¹²

2.4 Violin Making and Repairing in Dublin before Thomas Perry

This vibrant musical life of the second city of the Empire was complemented by two other activities. The singers and instrumental players required music: accordingly eighteenth-century Dublin generated a wide range of music publishers and music sellers. One of the earliest of these was John Neale of Christ Church Yard, who traded as 'Musical Instrument Maker, Music Printer, Music Seller and Publisher of Engraved Music.'¹³ The Neale family helped to establish a tradition of music printing in Dublin which exploited the absence of copyright law in Ireland. Their work was carried on by many printers, among whom one of the better known was John Rice, Publisher and Music Seller, who traded at 13 and 53 Dame Street from 1775 to 1780.¹⁴ Equally, instrument players - both soloists and orchestra members - required both new instruments and on-going repairers to the ones they played on. Accordingly, the city numbered a range of makers, repairs and dealers of violins, wind instruments, harpsichords, pianofortes and organs.

The violin makers were members of the Carpenters' Guild. Unfortunately the records of that body were lost in the fire at the Public Records Office of May of 1922, and we must rely on entries in Dublin newspapers for information on the makers and dealers who preceded Thomas Perry. An advertisement of 1721 invites customers for 'a parcel of Barrett's violins', newly arrived from London, and selling at three guineas each.¹⁵ It is known, for example, that the London maker, Nathaniel Cross, made a sales visit to Dublin in 1729.¹⁶ In the year 1740 Thomas Dunne was established at the Sign of the Three Fiddles in Christ Church Lane;¹⁷ unfortunately, none of his violins can today be identified. In the same year Andrew Brown was established at Nicholas Street; he was still making and selling violins in 1768,¹⁸ but again, unfortunately, none can be

identified today. Another maker whose work cannot now be identified was Patrick Harford; he is known to have worked in the city from 1730 to 1752.¹⁹

The three major makers who preceded Thomas Perry and whose work is still well represented, are Thomas Molineux and the brothers, George and John Ward. Thomas Molineux may have been of Huguenot stock, though the name is found in sixteenth and seventeenth-century records of County Dublin. He was born before 1700 and died in 1757; he worked from 1740 to 1750 in Christ Church Lane. His obituary is to be found in *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, No. 3107, of 25 - 29 January, 1757: 'Died. In Christ Church Yard, Mr Thomas Molineux, Fiddle Maker.' Molineux was an assured and confident maker; his surviving instruments have a distinctly Italian character. One of his instruments is in the National Museum; another, from a private collection, is illustrated in photographic Appendix V. The brothers George and John Ward worked at Anglesea Street between 1740 and 1764. Their violins are in the English tradition and their work is remarkably similar to that of the early Thomas Perry with regard to outline and contour, shape of sound-holes, and colour of varnish. The National Museum has several Ward instruments; one of them is illustrated in Appendix V. The Irish version of the name 'Ward' is Mac an Bháird: one wonders if the brothers' involvement in instrument making reflects a more ancient family involvement with the old Irish bardic tradition.

Both Molineux and the Ward brothers have been advanced as tutors of Thomas Perry. A third possibility, however, has been put forward. According to Grattan Flood, *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* of 9-11 July, 1771, contains the enigmatic notice: 'Died, Mr Pierrie, on Temple Bar, fiddle-maker.'²⁰ Was this man a relative of Thomas Perry, and if so, was it from him that Perry learned his craft? Equally, was the unusual name 'Pierrie' in fact a reflection of the French name 'Pierray'? If this is so, it may corroborate the persistent tradition that Perry was of Huguenot stock and that he had some family connection with the French violin maker, Claude Pierray.

Notes and References to Chapter Two

¹ Brian Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar 1700-1760* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1988), 32.

² William G. Stuart, *The Education of Thomas Perry: A Study in Eighteenth Century Apprenticeship* (School of Education, Trinity College, Dublin: Unpublished H. Dip. Ed. Dissertation, 1975), 6.

³ William G. Stuart (as n.2), 6.

⁴ William G. Stuart (as n.2), 6.

⁵ William G. Stuart (as n.2), 6.

⁶ Brian Boydell, (as n.1), 34

⁷ Brian Boydell, (as n.1), 35.

⁸ Brian Boydell, (as n.1), 74.

⁹ Brian Boydell, (as n.1) 81.

¹⁰ Brian Boydell, (as n.1) 44.

¹¹ Brian Boydell, (as n.1) 270.

¹² Ita Margaret Hogan, *Anglo -Irish Music*, (Cork: Cork University Pres, 1966); Brian Boydell, (as n.1) and *Rotunda Music in Eighteenth Century Dublin* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992).

¹³ Brian Boydell, *The Music Trade in Ireland* (Dublin: Faulkner Grierson, 1972), 5.

¹⁴ Brian Boydell, (as n.13), 5.

¹⁵ William. G. Stuart, (as n.2), 11.

¹⁶ Brian Boydell, (as n.1), 46.

¹⁷ Brian Boydell, (as n.13), 4.

¹⁸ Brian Boydell, (as n.13), 4.

¹⁹ Brian Boydell, (as n.13), 4.

²⁰ W. Grattan Flood, 'A Famous Dublin Fiddle Maker', *Irish Independent*, 24 April, 1920.

CHAPTER THREE: BIOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVES

3.1 Sources

Though Thomas Perry was the greatest violin maker that Ireland produced, there is a dearth of accurate published information about his life and work. In terms of quality and volume of work he may be the Lupot of Ireland, but that very eminence has led many of his admirers to substitute hypothesis, rumour and wishful thinking for hard fact, in their wish to reconstruct the life and personality of one whom they admired. It is to be hoped that this present study will avoid such excess.

The source material on Thomas Perry is limited and frequently misleading. The tragic fire at the Public Record Office in May 1922 has deprived us of all of the Perry family wills which might have settled unambiguously the question of his origin and ancestry. Fortunately, the text of Thomas Perry's own will has survived. The range and quality of Perry's work as a violin maker suggest a man of orderly mind and habit; it would be reasonable to expect that such a man would have kept detailed and systematic records. Unfortunately, those records are no longer available to us. J. Tighe recounts a tradition that such records did indeed exist but that they were destroyed by a maid-servant in the house of his grandson Thomas William Wilkinson, a solicitor who succeeded to his house in Anglesea Street. Unfortunately she does not cite her authority for this statement.¹

Two accounts of Thomas Perry were published in 1911. The first of these was a booklet by Fr A.L. Greaven, *Irish Violin Makers*, which was published in Dublin.² Unfortunately, it contained several inaccuracies and many of these have been replicated by subsequent writers. In the same year Archibald McGoogan, Deputy Keeper at the National Museum of Ireland, published an article, 'Thomas Perry: an Eighteenth-century Musical Instrument Maker,' in the *Museum Bulletin*; though it is more scholarly than the contribution of Fr Greaven, it is unfortunately not free from error.³ The historian of Irish music, Dr W.S. Grattan Flood, devotes little space to Perry in his

history of Irish music; he attempts to compensate for this through an article, 'A Famous Dublin Fiddle Maker,' in the *Irish Independent* of 24 April, 1920. Unfortunately in this article his conjectures on Perry's Huguenot origins are given the status of virtual certainty on very flimsy evidence. J. Tighe published a useful article, 'Thomas Perry, of Anglesea Street, Dublin,' in *Dublin Historical Records* of 1962, and Jane Ryan published 'Thomas Perry and his Violins' in the *Irish Times* during the summer of 1978. There are articles on Thomas Perry in all of the standard dictionaries of violin making. The treatment is relatively brief in Karl Jalovec's *Encyclopaedia of Violin Makers* ⁴. The treatment is reasonably full in *British Violin Makers*, by W. Meredith Morris ;⁵ this work has the merit of reproducing much of the text of McGoogan's article of 1911. William Henley's account of Perry in his *Universal Dictionary of Violin and Bow Makers* is typically pungent.⁶

Mr William G. Stuart has kindly allowed me access to his unpublished research paper, 'The Education of Thomas Perry: a Study in Eighteenth Century Apprenticeship,' which was submitted to the School of Education at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1975, as part of the requirements for the award of the Higher Diploma in Education.⁷ The papers of the late H. S. Guinness of Burton Hall, Stillorgan, which have been lodged in the Public Record Office, contain invaluable material on Perry and his instruments, some of which was collected before the fire of 1922. The correspondence of Mr Guinness with Dr W. M. Graham of Kidlington, Oxfordshire, is particularly valuable and manifests the enthusiasm and passion for accuracy of two connoisseurs in their pursuit of Perry and his instruments. I have also been allowed access to the papers and records of my uncle, Professor J. V. Rice, of Trinity College, Dublin.

There are also occasional advertisements and notices in eighteenth-century Dublin newspapers: Perry's own advertisement in the *Dublin Evening Post* of 12 and 14 March, 1789, is particularly informative. Finally, one must mention the Registry of Deeds, that great repository of documentary evidence on Irish financial and property transactions since 1708. If, because of its cumbersome indexing system, that great

archive seems reluctant to reveal its secrets, it still provides the best immediate hope of fixing some of the milestones in the life of Thomas Perry.⁸ Indeed, systematic trolling in that repository has yielded certain significant new evidence with regard to Thomas Perry and those who were associated with him. That evidence will be presented below.

3.2 Thomas Perry's Life: Consensus and Disagreement

It may be useful to recapitulate first the main events and features of Thomas Perry's life on which there is agreement. As stated earlier, he was by any standards the most important violin maker that this country has produced. He was a member of the Church of Ireland and lived for most of his life in Dublin. He was born in the first half of the eighteenth century and was already making violins by 1760. He died in 1818. His first violins were made in Christ Church Yard, a mediaeval precinct adjacent to the Cathedral, which was removed by the Wide Streets Commissioners in 1821.⁹ He subsequently moved to Number 6, Anglesea Street which later became Number 4.¹⁰ In April of 1766 he married Elizabeth Smyth.¹¹ Of their four daughters, the eldest married one of his apprentices, William Wilkinson, who became his partner.¹² After Perry's death in 1818 Wilkinson carried on the business under the style of 'Perry and Wilkinson,' the name by which the firm had been known since 1789. It is generally agreed that Wilkinson instruments are inferior to those produced during Perry's lifetime. Finally, it is known that Perry employed several apprentices and that he was extraordinarily prolific: over four thousand instruments were made before the year of his death.

There is no agreement on other matters. We do not know, for example, the exact year of Perry's birth. There has been speculation as to whether his family was Irish, English, or Huguenot. Various suggestions have been made with regard to the identity of the violin makers from whom he learned his craft. We do not know precisely when he moved to Anglesea Street, and, apart from the general impression mentioned above

that he was a systematic and methodical man, we know nothing of his method of work. Finally, we know little about his general finances or business affairs, though surprising evidence has emerged from the Registry of Deeds with regard to his involvement in farming in the neighbourhood of Mountrath, in the Queen's County, now known as County Laois. The documentary evidence will be addressed below, with a view to making some contribution to these issues, and with a view to bringing greater precision to the general account of Perry's life and work.

3.3 Thomas Perry's Family Name

A number of authors have suggested, either categorically or tentatively, that Thomas Perry was of Huguenot descent and that his name is a derivative of the French name 'Pierray'.¹³ Accordingly, a relationship is postulated with the French violin maker, Claude Pierray, and an explanation is thereby suggested for the Dublin man's involvement in the art of violin making. Grattan Flood is more emphatic than most on the subject. In his article of 1920 we are told that 'he was the son of Thomas Perry of Temple Bar, Dublin, a Huguenot settler.... My reason for this conjecture is based on the fact that Thomas Perry was the son of Thomas Perry of whom up to the present nothing was known. In a search through an old file of *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, dated July 9-11, 1771, I recently came across the obituary notice of Perry's father, whose name is spelled "Pierrie", thereby giving good grounds for believing the traditional account of the family being related to Claude Pierray of Paris. The brief notice runs as follows: "Died, Mr Pierrie, on Temple Bar, Fiddle Maker."¹⁴ Henley echoes this tradition and goes on to state that 'young Thomas most probably carried on his father's business at the same address until 1778 when he changed his name to Perry and established himself at No. 6, Anglesea Street.'¹⁵ No evidence is advanced for this statement. Morris repeats the tradition but is careful to advance it as one of two incompatible alternatives.¹⁶

In fact, the violins of Perry and Pierray are quite different in style and modelling. Pierray's instruments are typically French, rather large, and Italianate in model. Perry's early instruments are all quite English in character. Furthermore, reference to the original files of *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* reveals that the 'Pierrie' of the obituary notice from 1771 has been misread by Grattan Flood, and that the error has been reproduced by some who have followed him. The correct text among the death notices of 9-11 July, 1771, is: 'On Temple Bar, Mr Peetrie, Fiddle Maker.'¹⁷ This appears to be a misspelling of the English name 'Petrie' rather than any printer's approximation to a Huguenot surname.

In fact, the name Perry is of English origin and was borne by many settlers of English origin in Ireland; these may have been of Elizabethan, Cromwellian or Williamite origin. The documents in the Registry of Deeds indicate that it was quite common in eighteenth-century Dublin, and that it occurred also in the Queen's County (Laois) and elsewhere in the country. McLysaght states that the name was well known in Munster from the first part of the seventeenth century and that it is now found mainly in Ulster. As variant forms of the name in this country he gives 'Pirrie', 'Pery' and 'Peery'.¹⁸ Hawkes and Hodges, in their standard *Dictionary of Surnames*, state that the name is a topographic one which indicates one who lived beside a pear tree; they give as variants the forms 'Pery', 'Pierie' and 'Perrie'.¹⁹ Furthermore, contrary to the speculations of Grattan Flood, Memorials 296782 and 410063 in the Registry of Deeds establishes conclusively that the father of Thomas Perry was named John Perry, and that he was a resident of Dublin who leased a farm in Tinnekilly, Queen's County, from one Isaac Humphreys.²⁰ The same memorials establish that Thomas Perry had a brother, John, and significantly describe the elder John Perry as a musical instrument maker. In due course the two brothers inherited the land, and by arrangement between them it passed to Thomas.²¹ Though an anglicisation of a Huguenot surname cannot entirely be ruled out, on this evidence it would appear probable that we are dealing with an Irish family of English descent, some of whom were involved in both farming and violin making.

3.4 Thomas Perry's Date of Birth

We know that Thomas Perry was married in 1766 and that he died in 1818.²² We know also that he was making violins in Christ Church Yard in 1760; if we read his advertisement of 1789 literally he was in business as early as 1759; both of these dates are compatible with the data presented in Chapter 5 below on the dates and numbering of his instruments.²³ We must assume that he entered into independent practice only on the completion of his formal apprenticeship. As a member of the Carpenters' Guild he would have been obliged to spend seven years as an apprentice, and this period would have begun when he was 14 years of age. If we assume therefore that Thomas Perry was aged 21 at the time when he commenced making and selling violins in his own name, one must conclude that his date of birth was 1738 or 1739.

3.5 The Apprenticeship of Thomas Perry

The identity of the master-craftsman from whom Thomas Perry learned the art of violin making was contained in the records of the Carpenters' Guild. These records, which dated back to the year 1485, were destroyed in the fire at the Public Records Office in 1922. In their absence, we are dependent essentially on stylistic and other evidence.

Several names have been advanced as possible tutors of Thomas Perry. Among them are Claude Pierray, Richard Duke, Thomas Molineux, George Ward and the elusive Mr Peetrie. In the light of the evidence from the Registry of Deeds which was referred to in section 3.3 above, we must add his father, John Perry. The issue of Claude Pierray has been addressed earlier in this chapter and need not detain us here. There is no stylistic similarity between the violins of Pierray and Perry. In any case, Claude Pierray died in 1740, when Thomas Perry was only one or two years old.

The case for the English maker, Richard Duke, is more plausible, but it is based entirely on the similarity between his instruments and the early violins of Perry. Duke

worked in London between 1750 and 1780; one of his violins is illustrated in Appendix V. The similarity between his violins and the early violins of Thomas Perry is unmistakable: in both there is a longitudinal emphasis, coupled with prominent arching; in both there are small sound holes, and the circles of the upper curves are significantly smaller than the lower. Furthermore, both use a similar dark golden-brown varnish, and both brand their name below the button. This general similarity leads Morris to conclude that Perry was apprenticed to Duke before he commenced making violins in Ireland.²⁴ This postulates, however, either that Perry was English born, which is untrue, or that he spent a period in England, which is unproved. The similarity between the violins of Perry and Duke may be explained by their common participation in the tradition of British violin making and by the fact that there is documentary evidence that Duke's violins were imported to Dublin and sold there. Perry would therefore have had ample opportunity to examine and admire the work of one of the most eminent English makers of his time.

The case for Thomas Molineux must be taken seriously. He was an accomplished maker who worked in Christ Church Yard, and this was the first professional address of Thomas Perry. William Stuart refers to an instrument that Molineux made in 1739.²⁵ We know from *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, No.3107, of 25 to 29, January 1757, that Molineux died in January of that year; accordingly, since Perry's apprenticeship would have commenced in 1752 or 1753, it is entirely possible that he was the master to whom Perry was attached. This possibility becomes stronger in the light of evidence in the Registry of Deeds that the Molineux name occurs very frequently in eighteenth-century records from the Queen's County. It is therefore entirely plausible that the Perry and Molineux families were related or neighbours, or both, and, in accordance with what we know about eighteenth-century practice, it would be normal to make apprenticeship arrangements within such a circle of acquaintance. On the other hand, there is little similarity between the work of the two makers. The bulk of Perry's early work, when he might have been expected to adhere closely to his master, is decidedly English in character; that of Molineux, on the other

hand, is decidedly Italian in character. Referring to the Molineux violin in the National Museum, Henly refers to its 'capital design, rather refined workmanship, whole contour quite Italian in character'.²⁶ A violin by Molineux from a private collection is illustrated below.²⁷ Perry could certainly have been apprenticed to Molineux, but, because of Molineux' death in 1757, he could not have completed all of his apprenticeship with him. Both men certainly worked in Christ Church yard, so, at the very least, the young Perry would have had an opportunity of examining the violins of Molineux and of watching him at work; both families also had associations with the Queen's County. These circumstances led William Stuart to conclude in 1975 that Molineux was the likely tutor of Thomas Perry.²⁸

John and George Ward must also be considered. They are commonly assumed to be brothers, though I have found no evidence to establish this conclusively. Of John Ward we know very little. We know that he was a freeholder of the City of Dublin, that he had a daughter, Isabella, who married the celebrated Dublin guitar maker, William Gibson, and to whom he left a house on Aston Quay, which she set in tenements.²⁹ John Ward died in 1778 and was buried in St. Andrew's Church.³⁰

Of George Ward we know a little more. He was a maker of undoubted ability; indeed Henley considers that many of his violins are superior in quality to those of Thomas Perry; they involved handsome wood and beautiful varnish.³¹ Henley asserts that he made violins from 1710 to 1755; the latter date is clearly erroneous since it has been established that George Ward died in 1769 or 1770.³² Henley refers to a violin with an inscription 'Made by George Ward in Anglesea St. Dublin, 1719', but this may be a misreading of the label.³³ Jane Ryan asserts that he was in Christ Church Yard in 1740. A violin by George Ward in the National Museum indicated that it was made by him in Lees Lane, Aston Quay, in 1740.³⁴ H.S. Guinness refers to another that was made by George Ward in Anglesea Street, in 1764.³⁵ It would appear that George Ward made and signed most of his instruments from Anglesea Street. In view of the paucity of instruments which can definitely be attributed to John Ward it is not unlikely

that the Wards were brothers and that they worked in partnership; the connection of both of them with Aston Quay will be noticed. Dr Graham considered that they were certainly brothers and suggests that they both came from Queen's County;³⁶ research in the Registry of Deeds confirms that the name Ward was present in that county at the time, though it was not as widespread as that of Molineux; I have been able to identify dozens of deeds from that county relating to both families.

The chronology permits either the conclusion that George Ward could have been the tutor of Thomas Perry after the death of Molineux in 1757, or that he could have acted in that capacity for the whole of his apprenticeship. Examination of the instruments suggests that Ward had a major role to play in Perry's formation. Their violins are remarkably close in character. Ward's violins and Perry's early instruments are similar in model; both use the same brown varnish; the sound-holes are almost identical in shape and size; both makers brand their instruments under the button, as, indeed, of course, do Molineux and Duke. Dr Graham considered that George Ward taught Thomas Perry the art of violin making.³⁷

The matter of Perry's apprenticeship might well rest there, were it not that due regard must be given to two relevant pieces of documentary evidence. Firstly, the reference in *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* to the death in 1771 of 'Mr Peetrie' of Temple Bar, who is described as a fiddle-maker, points us to a Dublin violin maker of whom otherwise we know nothing. We cannot eliminate the possibility that he had a hand in Perry's training. Grattan Flood, as we have seen above, declared 'Mr Pierrie' to be both Perry's father and his tutor. This neat conclusion is falsified, of course, by the evidence of Memorial 410063 from the Registry of Deeds, which establishes conclusively that Thomas Perry's father was named John Perry, and that he died in 1787.³⁸ Memorial 296782, moreover, declares John Perry, the father of Thomas, to be a 'Musical Instrument maker'.³⁹ On the assumption that these Memorials in the Registry of Deeds were correctly transcribed we must therefore allow for the possibility that Thomas Perry served his apprenticeship in violin making to his own father.

What emerges therefore, despite its complexity, is a fascinating picture of eighteenth-century social history at a middle level of society. We have three closely knit families - Molineux, Ward and Perry - all with strong Dublin and Queen's County connections. They are all members of the Church of Ireland; they are in all likelihood related. We do not yet know whether they were Dublin families that took land in the country or whether they were country people who sent some of their sons to be apprenticed in the city; either way, the city-country connections were maintained. We know too that, in the case of the Wards and the Perrys, more than one member of the family went into violin making: in addition to the two Perrys already mentioned, John Perry, the brother of Thomas, became a violin maker who practiced for some time in Belfast, as did his cousin James Perry, who settled in Kilkenny and made violins there. And this pattern of urban-rural agri-violin making would continue. In due course Thomas Perry would recruit a kinsman, one of the Wilkinsons of Queen's County, to become an apprentice and later a partner, and it is not insignificant that one of his most famous apprentices, John Delaney, bears a name that was widely represented in that same county.

In summary, Thomas Perry may have received his training as a violin maker from Thomas Molineux, from George Ward, from his father, John Perry or from the obscure maker known to us as 'Mr Peetrie', or from some combination of these. In view of the likely close relationships between the three Queen's County families, it is entirely plausible that he had access to the experience and expertise of all three of them. In view, however, of the significant closeness between his early work and that of George Ward the writer wishes to hazard the conclusion that Perry's primary apprenticeship was to Ward, rather than to Molineux or to his father. It was common eighteenth-century practice that even a master craftsman would apprentice his son to someone other than himself.

Notes and References to Chapter Three

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- ¹ J. Tighe, 'Thomas Perry of Anglesea Street, Dublin', *Dublin Historical Record*, 1962, 24-31.
- ² Rev A.L. Greaven, *Irish Violin Makers: Some Brief Notes on* (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son, 1911)
- ³ Archibald McGoogan, 'Thomas Perry: an Eighteenth Century Musical Instrument Maker', *Museum Bulletin*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1911).
- ⁴ Karl Jalovec, *Encyclopedia of Violin Makers* (London: Hamlyn, 1968).
- ⁵ W. Meredith Morris, *British Violin Makers*, (London: Robert Scott, 1920).
- ⁶ William Henley, *Universal Dictionary of Violin and Bowmakers* (Brighton: Amati Publishing, 1973).
- ⁷ William G. Stuart, 'The Education of Thomas Perry', H.Dip.Ed.Dissertation, School of Education, Trinity College Dublin, 1975.
- ⁸ The Registry of Deeds in Henrietta Street, was established in 1708 primarily to enable the new English of the Cromwellian and Williamite settlements to establish public title to their properties by recording their transactions. A deed would be brought by a lawyer to the Registry; a Memorial of the deed was then made by official copyists and lodged in the vaults; an extract was entered in index books which were available to the public. These large vellum indexes list deeds by grantor's family name or by location; unfortunately they do not list transactions by grantee. It is thus relatively easy, though time-consuming, to identify the transactions whereby Thomas Perry transferred property; it is very difficult to identify the transactions in which he was the recipient of a benefit.
- ⁹ William G. Stuart (as n. 7), 14.
- ¹⁰ William G. Stuart (as n. 7), 29.
- ¹¹ St Werburgh's Parish Register, 6 April 1766; H.S. Guinness papers, National Archives.
- ¹² Dublin Grant Books, 24 June 1794; H.S. Guinness Papers, National Archives.
- ¹³ See, for example, A.L. Greaven (as n. 2) and A. McGoogan (as n. 3).
- ¹⁴ W. Grattan Flood, 'A Famous Dublin Fiddle Maker', *Irish Independent*, 24 April 1920.
- ¹⁵ William Henley (as n. 6), 888.
- ¹⁶ W. Meredith Morris (as n. 5), 218ff.
- ¹⁷ *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, Number 4786, Tuesday July the 9th to Thursday July the 11th, 1771, page 1.
- ¹⁸ Edward McLysaght, *Irish Family Names*, (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1991), 415.
- ¹⁹ Patrick Hawkes and Flavia Hodges, *Dictionary of Surnames*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 415.

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- ²⁰ Registry of Deeds, Memorial 410063, Volume 601, page 416. See Appendix III.
- ²¹ Registry of Deeds (as n. 20), 416.
- ²² His will was executed on 7 June, 1818, and was proved on 15 December of that year. See Documentary Appendix.
- ²³ His advertisement in the *Dublin Evening Post* of 12-14 March, 1789, thanks the Nobility, Gentry and professors of Music 'for the very liberal encouragement experienced by him these thirty years past.' The advertisement is reproduced in Appendix III.
- ²⁴ W. Meredith Morris (as n. 5), 217ff.
- ²⁵ William G. Stuart, (as n. 7), 11.
- ²⁶ William Henley (as n. 6), 801.
- ²⁷ This instrument is by far the finest sounding Irish violin that I have ever played. It possesses a rich sonority that is quite Guarnerian in character.
- ²⁸ William G. Stuart, (as n. 7), 32.
- ²⁹ National Archives; Guinness MSS. Letter from Dr W.M. Graham of 3 February, 1918.
- ³⁰ National Archives; Guinness MSS. Note by H.S. Guinness.
- ³¹ William Henley (as n. 6), 1215.
- ³² National Archives; Guinness MSS. Note by H.S. Guinness.
- ³³ William Henley (as n. 6), 1215, 1216.
- ³⁴ J. Ryan, 'Thomas Perry and His Violins,' *Irish Times* 18 August, 1978.
- ³⁵ National Archives; Guinness MSS.
- ³⁶ National Archives; Guinness MSS. Letter from Dr. W.M. Graham of 3 February, 1918, to H.S. Guinness.
- ³⁷ National Archives; Guinness MSS. Letter from Dr. W.M. Graham to H.S. Guinness, of 27 June, 1918.
- ³⁸ Registry of Deeds, Memorial 410063, Volume 601, Page 416.
- ³⁹ Registry of Deeds, Memorial 296782, Volume 475, Page 24.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE TRANSACTIONS OF THOMAS PERRY

4.1 The Early Years

We are now in a position to examine some of the surviving documentation relating to Thomas Perry. That documentation is primarily in the form of memorials from the Registry of Deeds, supplemented by newspaper extracts, church records, and notes by earlier researchers. This evidence helps to throw light on Perry the businessman and entrepreneur, and helps in the assembly of genealogical information on his family.

Thomas Perry was in business as a violin maker in Christ Church Yard by 1760.¹ Throughout his long working life he would systematically label, number, and date his instruments; he would also brand 'Perry, Dublin' on the button. These markings are of enormous help both in identifying his instruments and in following the movements of his career. The earliest identified surviving violin dates from 1764; it was made in Christ Church Yard. Another, numbered 309, dates from 1766. The latest identified violin from the Christ Church Yard period is No.408, dating from 1768. At the end of the decade he moved to Anglesea Street.²

The main event of his period in Christ Church Yard was undoubtedly his wedding. We read in the Dublin Grant Books for 3 April, 1766, that 'a Licence was granted to solemnise marriage between Thomas Perry, of the City of Dublin, Music Instrument Maker, and Elizabeth Smyth, of the Parish of St Werburgh, Dublin, spinster.' In St. Werburgh's Parish Register for 6 April 1766 we read: 'Mr Thomas Perry married to Miss Elizabeth Smith by the Rev. D. Dickinson.' His bride was from the Dublin Liberties; St Werburgh's Church was just around the corner from Christ Church Yard. They were to have four daughters - Elizabeth, Ann, Margaret and Sarah. We do not know where the young couple set up house: it is possible that they set up house above the shop.

Two years later an interesting advertisement appeared in a Belfast newspaper. In the *Belfast News Letter* of 5 August, 1768, we read of 'John Perry from Dublin, regularly bred to the making of guitars and violins, High Street, Belfast.' This could be John Perry, the father of Thomas; it could equally be the Mr Peetrie who died in 1771³; it is most likely that it was John Perry, the brother of Thomas, and the son of the elder John Perry. There is a tradition, for which I have been unable to obtain any other documentary confirmation, that the brother of Thomas Perry was also a violin maker⁴. We know of his existence from Memorial 410063: 604/416 in the Registry of Deeds, which tells us that John Perry (the elder) was a musical instrument maker from the City of Dublin and that he had two sons, Thomas and John. We know, furthermore, from the same document, that John Perry the elder died in 1787, and that his two sons, Thomas and John, were alive at that date. Accordingly, the Mr Peetrie, fiddle maker, who died in 1771, cannot have been either the father or the brother of Thomas Perry. The wording of John Perry's Belfast advertisement may indeed be significant. What is the precise import of the statement that he was 'bred' to the making of guitars and violins? Is he hereby providing us with evidence that he came from a violin making family, that his father was a violin maker, and, in the light of Memorial 410063, that he was the brother of Thomas Perry of Dublin?

On 4 May, 1769, Thomas Perry of Dublin acted as witness to two deeds relating to land transactions in the Queen's County. The two deeds are in parallel. In the first, (Memorial 184140: 279, 530) James Perry the elder, of Ballymulrooney, Queen's Co., farmer, in consideration of the yearly profit rent of £6, demised to James Perry the younger, farmer, the undivided half part of the lands of Ballymulrooney which they held in conjunction with Henry Dawson on a lease of three lives, to hold to the said James from 1 May, 1769 during the continuance of the said lease. The other half was to be held by Edward Wilkinson. The second witness was Jacob Meares of Maryborough, Queen's Co. The companion deed, (Memorial 125237: 280/684) conveys the other half of the property, on the same terms to Edward Wilkinson, except that he had to pay an additional sum of £25 to James Perry the elder.

These deeds are interesting. They introduce us firstly to two other members of the Perry family, James the elder and James the younger. These are already established in farming in Ballymulrooney, a townland about five miles south of Mountrath. We know that a James Perry became an apprentice to Thomas Perry and that he set up independently as a violin maker in Kilkenny; he may be identical with James Perry the younger, of these deeds, although this seems unlikely, since James is already described as a farmer. Secondly, these two documents constitute the first formal introduction to the Wilkinson family. Half of a Perry farm is being conveyed to Edward Wilkinson 'in consideration of the yearly profit rent of £6 and £25 paid to him by said Wilkinson.' Why should this be done? A plausible answer, in country terms, is that it was related to a marriage settlement. We know, in fact that Edward Wilkinson married one Elizabeth Perry. The second son of this marriage was William Wilkinson, whom Thomas Perry acknowledged publicly as his 'nephew', whom he took into apprenticeship and later into partnership, and who would marry his daughter, Elizabeth. Why was Thomas Perry chosen as a witness? It is possible that he had already acquired a reputation for sound judgment and that he was close to James. I suspect that he was his brother and that Elizabeth Perry, who married Edward Wilkinson, was his sister.

4.2 The Years at Anglesea Street.

We know that Thomas Perry moved to Anglesea Street about 1770, after spending about ten years in Christ Church Yard. It is possible that he moved into George Ward's house; Ward had died in 1669-70, and it is possible that they were relatives. The houses on Anglesea Street had not yet been numbered; this would not happen until 1778 when his house was designated Number 6.⁵ The first of Perry's violins that can be definitely attributed to Anglesea Street is No.540, and is dated 1771. The Church Valuation for St Andrew's Parish for the year 1773 places a value of £10 on the house of Mr Thomas Perry, in Anglesea Street, for the purpose of ecclesiastical taxation. Since his name does not appear in the previous valuation of 1768, it is clear that he came there between 1768 and 1771. In the light of the complementary evidence from the instruments

the year 1770 seems plausible.

It seems clear that in Anglesea Street he took over an existing lease, possibly that of George Ward. That lease would be renewed formally in 1785. Meanwhile he became involved in two major land transactions, again involving farms in Queen's County. Both transactions were effected on 13 December, 1777. The first transaction (Memorial 296782: 475/24) involves a lease by 'Isaac Humphreys of the City of Dublin, Gentleman, to John Perry of the said city, Musical Instrument maker, of that part of the lands of Tinnekilly, part of the Manor of Villiers in the Barony of Ossory, Queen's Co., containing 94 acres, 2 roods, plantation measure, for the lives of James Stephens of Borris in Ossory, Esq., William Wilkinson and John Wilkinson, second and third sons of Edward Wilkinson, of Cappikeel in the said County, Gentleman, at the yearly rent of £61. 10. 7.' This John Perry is the father of Thomas and the deed is our evidence that he was a musical instrument maker. In the light of the possibility that an eighteenth-century clerk at the Registry of Deeds might have transcribed his occupation inaccurately, a facsimile of the original of the deed was requisitioned from the Registry. It is reproduced as Appendix III and clearly designates John Perry as a musical instrument maker.

The lives related to the term of the lease are also significant. Again we note the close Perry involvement with the Wilkinson family. The William Wilkinson named in the lease is the William who will become Perry's apprentice and son-in-law. The transaction is significant because in due course John Perry the elder left the property jointly to his sons, Thomas and John; by agreement between them, after 1787 it passed into the sole ownership of Thomas (410063: 601/416).

In the second deed of 13 December, 1777, we see Thomas Perry engaged in a major land transaction. Memorial 296781: 473/174 relates to a lease by 'Isaac Humphreys of the City of Dublin, gent., to Thomas Perry of the said city, Musical Instrument maker, of that part of the lands of Tinnekelly, part of the Manor of Villiers, in the Barony of

Ossory, Queen's Co., containing 165 acres 17 perches, plantation measure, from 1 May 1778, again for the lives of James Stephens, William Wilkinson and John Wilkinson, at a yearly rent of £93. 18. 3.' The townland of Tinnekilly is about five miles south of Portlaoise; it is adjacent to Ballymulrooney. A farm of 165 acres is a vary large farm; when Thomas Perry combined it with the adjoining 94 acres originally leased by his father he was managing almost 250 acres of land. It was a considerable responsibility for a Dublin violin maker.

The *Freeman's Journal* of 13-16 November, 1784, contains an interesting notice: 'Married, Mr Eyre to Miss Perry, both of Anglesea Street.' What is interesting about this notice is that it would seem to refer to one of Thomas Perry's daughters. However, since Perry was married in April, 1776, the girl can have been no more than 17 or 18 at the time. What is more curious is that we know the married names of Perry's daughters. None of them claims the name of Eyre: their married names were Wilkinson, Murphy, White and Mahon (366880: 554/209). We are therefore dealing either with a daughter of John Perry, the brother of Thomas, who may have returned from Belfast, or we are dealing with a daughter of Thomas who was widowed and remarried later. A search in *Wilson's Dublin Directory* discloses that Mr Joseph Eyre was a staymaker. His address is given as 6 Anglesea Street, the house of Thomas Perry, from 1789 to 1798. Thereafter he drops from sight. Was he, like John Delaney, a United Irishman, and did he perhaps lose his life in the rebellion of 1798?

On 20 June, 1785, Thomas Perry renewed the lease on his house in Anglesea Street. Memorial 296536: 462/511 refers to a lease by Joseph Hone of the City of Dublin, Esq., to Thomas Perry, Musical Instrument maker, of 'a dwellinghouse with the yard and back ground behind the same, also the large room called the auction room, as same are now held and enjoyed by the said Perry, situate on the west side of Anglesea Street, Dublin', from 1 June 1785 for 999 years. The deed was witnessed by William Ringwood, apprentice to Thomas Perry.

This document is of central significance. The large room, known as the auction room, in all likelihood became the workshop for himself and for his apprentices. One of the most talented of those apprentices, William Ringwood, actually signs the lease as a witness. Perry and his family would have lived above the shop. The house itself, which became Number 4 Anglesea Street, after the Wide Streets Commissioners broadened Dame Street, continued in the family after his death. William Wilkinson first carried on the violin business from there. After that, his son, Thomas William Wilkinson, the solicitor, lived in the house and carried out his legal practice from there. In 1880 the property was acquired by Jury's hotel and remained substantially unchanged until the early 1970s when it was restructured in a modernisation programme. It is now part of Bloom's Hotel.

In 1787 old John Perry, the father of Thomas Perry died. In his will, of 7 November, 1787, he bequeathed to his two sons, Thomas Perry and John Perry, his interest in the 94 acres in Tinnekilly. By a deed of agreement between the two brothers, Thomas acquired sole title to the property (Memorial 260764: 408/92). In 1789, the year of the French Revolution, Thomas Perry made two important arrangements. Firstly, by deed of 27 April 1789, he leased the larger Tinnekilly property of 165 acres to John Davis of Mary Mount, Queen's County, for 99 years, at an annual rent of £108.18.3 (Memorial 328460: 507/319). It is clear that, in the interval since 1777, he had been able to negotiate a long-term lease for himself; the rent agreed allowed him an annual profit of £15. It was probably not an insignificant sum in those days.

4.3 The Partnership Arrangement and the Years of Maturity

Perry's second decision of 1789 was to take William Wilkinson into partnership. In an advertisement in the *Dublin Evening Post*, of 12-14 March, 1789, we read: 'Violins, guitars, tenors, salters, violoncellos etc. made and repaired by Thomas Perry, No.6 Anglesea Street, Dublin, who returns his unfeigned thanks to the Nobility, Gentry, and Professors of Music in general for the very liberal encouragement experienced by him

these thirty years past, and to inform them that he has taken into partnership his nephew William Wilkinson (who served his apprenticeship to him) the better to enable him to carry on said business.⁶ If we interpret this advertisement literally, Thomas Perry set out in business thirty years previously in 1759. If we interpret the term 'nephew' in an equally literal way, then the mother of William Wilkinson must have been a sister to Thomas Perry.

There are two records of 1793 which help to fill out the story of his business transactions. On 22 February of that year, he leased to William Salmon of Anglesea Street, statuary, a piece of ground in Anglesea Street, bounded on the north by a holding of his own. The deed was witnessed by John Perry and Denis Murphy, both of Dublin, gentlemen. John Perry is presumably his brother; if so, he has clearly returned from Belfast and may be living and working with him. Denis Murphy, we learn from other sources, is a master tailor. He has a house in Anglesea Street and will marry Perry's daughter, Ann (Memorial 296592: 461/545).

In March of the same year, Perry has the sad duty of acting as witness to the will of his nephew, John Wilkinson, of Cappakeel, Queen's County. This John Wilkinson is brother to William, who became Perry's son in law. The testator makes reference to his wife, Elizabeth, to his only daughter, Mary, to his father, Edward, and to his brothers, James, William and Edward. Since he does not mention his mother, it is presumed that she is already deceased. (Probate in Prerogative Court, 26 July, 1793).

In 1794 William Wilkinson married his cousin Elizabeth Perry. An entry in the Dublin Grant Books for 24 June 1794 indicates that 'a Licence was granted to solemnise marriage between William Wilkinson of the City of Dublin, Musical Instrument maker, and Elizabeth Perry of the Parish of St Andrew, Dublin, Spinster.' At the time, Elizabeth would have been aged about 27; her husband was aged 26, on the assumption that he was 21 when he completed his apprenticeship and was taken into partnership.

The first year of the new century was the year of the Act of Union, when the Irish Parliament voted itself out of existence in the old House of Parliament in College Green, around the corner from Anglesea Street. It was also the year when a son was born to Elizabeth Perry and William Wilkinson. He was Thomas William Wilkinson, named, no doubt, after his maternal grandfather. Thomas Perry, who had no sons of his own, may have thought of this grandson as the likely heir to his life's work in violin making. It was not to be: Thomas William Wilkinson became a solicitor who practiced law from Perry's house. After the death of his father in 1838 he did, however, continue the music business as a sideline, from various addresses between Anglesea Street and the Liffey.⁷

In that same year, Thomas Perry effected two major and related property transactions. It is clear from Memorial 345631: 539/185 that Denis Murphy, the merchant tailor who lived in Anglesea Street and who had married Perry's daughter, Ann, had died and left her with young children. This possibly explains why Thomas Perry purchased his house, no doubt in order to maintain the roof over his daughter's head. The deed, dated 14 August, 1801, involves an assignment by Joseph Maxwell, attorney-at-law, and executor of Denis Murphy, late of Dublin, merchant tailor, to Thomas Perry of Anglesea Street, Dublin, Musical Instrument maker, of the lease of 'a new dwellinghouse with backyard, situate on the west side of Anglesea Street, held under a lease dated 15 August 1769 from Henry Darley of Dublin, stonecutter, to Thomas Cooley of the said city, Architect, and subsequently assigned to Denis Murphy, for 999 years, at a yearly rent of £30.' In consideration of the transfer of ownership the sum of £400 was paid by Thomas Perry to Joseph Maxwell.

Three days later, on 17 August, 1801, Thomas Perry effected a substantial mortgage in order to finance this transaction (Memorial 345293: 533/464). He borrowed the sum of £700 from the same Joseph Maxwell, significantly identified as 'trustee under the Will of Denis Murphy, late of Anglesea Street.' In consideration of the money advanced to him by Maxwell (whether on his own behalf or on behalf of the Murphy estate is not

clear) he mortgaged to him three major properties. These were:

(1) part of the lands of Tinnekilly, Queen's County, containing 165 acres 17 perches, held by him under lease dated 13 December 1777,

(2) his own house on the west side of Anglesea Street, together with the auction room, held by him under lease dated 20 June, 1785; and

(3) the new dwellinghouse on the west side of Anglesea Street, held by him under Assignment of Lease dated 14 August, 1801.

We do not know why Perry needed to borrow the additional sum of £300; we must assume that his own house was worth at least the equivalent of his daughter's; the total sum borrowed was therefore within the total value of the two houses and his surviving interest in the farm at Tinnekilly. Since the second farm at Tinnekilly is not mentioned, it seems likely that he had already disposed of it. It also seems clear that he was able to repay the mortgage in due course, since his house remained in the possession of his family after his death and in his will he disposed of his continuing interest in the larger Tinnekilly farm.

We have one more glimpse of his business dealings. Memorial 366880: 554/209, of 15 March 1803, involves the assignment by Thomas Perry to Thomas Bradburn, of Anglesea Street, Gentleman, of the lease of a new dwellinghouse on the north side of Chatham Street, for the residue of the original term of 60 years. It is possible that some or all of the money which he raised in 1801 was used to fund the acquisition of the house. The deed is of particular significance in that it identifies the names of the husbands of his two remaining daughters. Mention is made of Ann Murphy, the widow of Denis Murphy, of Margaret Mahon, the wife of John Mahon, and of Sarah White, the wife of Richard White.

4.4 The Death of Thomas Perry.

Thomas Perry died in November, 1818. His will was dated 7 June, 1818; it was proved on 15 December, 1818. Unfortunately, the original will was destroyed in the fire at the

Public Record Office in 1922 and until very recently it was thought that no full copy survived. My research, however, in the National Archives unearthed a full transcript of the will among the papers of the late H. S. Guinness.⁸ It recites Perry's ownership of a profit rent of £15 arising out of a part of the lands of Tinnekilly. This is the profit arising from his lease of the land to John Davis, of 27 April, 1789. The will also recites, 'a profit rent of £11.7.6 per annum arising to me out of a plot of ground at the rear of Salmon's house in Anglesea Street.' This is the outcome of his transaction with William Salmon, of 22 February, 1793. The will goes on to bequeath to his son-in-law, William Wilkinson, 'my household furniture, house linen, plate, china and all my stock in trade, musical instruments finished and unfinished, unwrought stuff and working implements.' It has been conventional to deny authenticity to any instruments from the firm which are dated later than 1818. The implication of the will is that some violins which are so dated are certainly genuine instruments from the hand of the master.

We do not know where Thomas Perry died and until recently we did not know where he was buried. The research for the present study may have solved this latter problem, beyond any reasonable doubt. Among the papers of the late Miss Gertrude Thrift in the National Archives is the record of a systematic search undertaken many years ago by her in the burial records of the Church of Ireland parishes of Dublin. There is no record of the burial of Thomas Perry in the records of his parish church of St Andrew's. Neither does it appear in the records of St Anne's, St Michan's, St Bridget's, St James', St Audeon's, St Peter's, St Catherine's, St Thomas', St Mark's or St Luke's. In the records of St Paul's Church, in the Markets area of Dublin, however, we find an entry for 22 November, 1818: 'Thomas Parry buried'. The absence of any burial record elsewhere, coupled with the time of the burial, between the signing and the proving of Thomas Perry's will, leaves no other reasonable conclusion than that we have here the burial record of our violin maker. It seems plausible that a parish clerk or rector might have misspelled in the record a stranger's name that was conveyed orally to him. But why should Thomas Perry have been buried in St Paul's

churchyard, when for most of his working life he had been a member of St Andrew's parish? Did one of his daughters live in the area and was he staying with her when he died? Or was there some ancestral Perry connection with St Paul's parish of which we know nothing but of which, in true Irish fashion, Thomas Perry was himself aware? A search in St Paul's churchyard has disclosed no headstone; the cemetery, however, has been both neglected and much disturbed.

If the calculations earlier in this study are correct, Thomas Perry was eighty years old when he died. His closing years were saddened by the death of his daughter, Ann, and by the departure to America of his daughter, Sarah. Since no mention is made of his wife in his will we must also assume that she predeceased him. This study has shown how he combined the activities of violin making with extensive involvement in property. His violin making activities will be the subject of the next chapter: they were carried out with a consistent concern for excellence, coupled with an extraordinary productivity, which involved the coordination and training of a range of apprentices, many of whom went on to become important makers in their own right. William Stuart quotes a tradition that Perry was a dapper little man, with white cuffs beneath black clothes.⁹ What emerges is an image of an extraordinarily well-organised man, judicious and methodical, the kind of man to be called on when a deal had to be made or a deed had to be signed. Above all, he seems to have been a kind and loving father.

Notes and References to Chapter Four

¹ cf. Section 3.4 above.

² cf. Section 3.2 above.

³ cf. Section 3.3 above.

⁴ cf. Personal communication from William G. Stuart, 17 August, 1992.

⁵ William G. Stuart, 'The Education of Thomas Perry', H.Dip.Ed. Dissertation, School of Education, Trinity College, Dublin, 1975, 29.

⁶ This advertisement is reproduced in Appendix III.

⁷ William G. Stuart, (as n. 5), 34.

⁸ A full transcript of Thomas Perry's will is reproduced in Appendix III.

⁹ William G. Stuart, (as n. 4).

CHAPTER FIVE: THE INSTRUMENTAL LEGACY OF THOMAS PERRY

5.1 The Maker and his Models.

It has been asserted more than once in this dissertation that Thomas Perry was Ireland's most outstanding violin maker. He began making instruments in Christ Church Yard about 1759; about 1770 he moved to Anglesea Street where he worked until his death in 1818; after his death his heir and son-in-law, William Wilkinson, carried on the business from the same house until 1828. We have noted above how his nephew and future son-in-law, William Wilkinson, became his partner in 1789; thereafter all violins produced by the firm were labelled 'Perry & Wilkinson'.

It has sometimes been suggested that violins labelled 'Perry & Wilkinson' are inferior to those labelled 'Thomas Perry'. This is an oversimplification. All Thomas Perry violins produced between 1789 and 1818 bear a Perry & Wilkinson label. Equally, it is clear that some Perry & Wilkinson violins sold after 1818 were made by Thomas Perry. His will clearly indicates that at his death, as might be expected, there were in the workshop both finished and unfinished Thomas Perry violins: there is specific mention in the will of 'musical instruments finished and unfinished, unwrought stuff and working implements'.¹ Accordingly, some post-1818 instruments are, in every sense, attributable to Thomas Perry.

During the life of the firm which he established, almost 5000 instruments were produced; over 4300 of these were produced by the year of his death. The majority of these were violins. there were also violas, cellos and a limited number of an unusual instrument which he invented and which is known as a Cither-viol or a Sultana. One of *these instruments*, from the collection of the National Museum of Ireland, is illustrated in Appendix V. Other examples are in the Victoria and Albert Museum and in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The instrument is a hybrid between the plucked cittern

and the bowed viol. Effectively, it is a cittern which has been adapted to allow it to be bowed; the strings are adjusted by machine heads and there are no sympathetic strings.² William Stuart suggests that the name 'Sultana' may be derived from an Italian opera which was performed in Dublin. Unfortunately we do not know how the instrument was held or played. Early examples have six strings; later ones have ten. The machine heads which are used to tune the strings may have been the invention of William Gibson, the Dublin guitar maker.

Perry's output in instruments was extraordinarily high, and it is clear that it was achieved only with the help of apprentices. Section 5.5. below deals briefly with Perry's apprentices. At this stage the question arises whether violins produced with the assistance of apprentices can be regarded as genuine Perry violins. There seems no alternative to accepting them as such. The entire method of production of the time was based on a system of masters and apprentices. We accept violins from the workshops of Nicolo Amati and Antonio Stradivari as unquestionably violins by those masters, though it is quite certain that both of them employed apprentices in their workshops. Similarly, we accept the paintings of Raphael or Michelangelo as genuine though we know that frequently they were executed, in part at least, by assistants working under the direction of the master. Similarly, it seems reasonable to accept as genuine Thomas Perry's instruments all those that were produced either directly by him or under his direction. However, even allowing for the fact that under the rules for the Carpenter's Guild he would have been allowed only up to two apprentices at any one time, the output of the firm was extraordinarily high.

It was also an output of extraordinarily high quality. We have referred above to his eminence in the Irish context: what is frequently not recognised is that he was eminent also in the context of British and European violin making of the time. W. Meredith Morris refers to him as 'one of the best of the later eighteenth-century makers'. He goes on to state that Perry's violins 'are in the first rank of British violins of the old school.'³ William Henley states that Perry's work was variable but that he 'never

produced anything wholly bad.' Referring to his Amati copies he states that 'these examples are beautifully finished to the minutest detail inside and outside, perfectly symmetrical from North to South and from East to West.' Henley considered that Perry's best period was from 1778 to 1808.⁴

In design, the violins of Thomas Perry fall into two categories - those produced according to a Stainer - British model and those produced according to an Amati model. There is a strong tradition in Dublin that he began to make Amatisé instruments after the Duke of Leinster lent him an Amati violin. The British model instruments belong mainly to the earlier period of his life, though it is clear that they were produced until the time of his death. This continuity is understandable; there would be a limited number of wooden moulds in the workshop and several instruments would be in production at any one time. These instruments are typically English in appearance; frequently they are high shouldered with squareish upper bouts. The arching is high; frequently the arching on the table is higher than that on the back and the varnish is generally brown. These violins are very reminiscent of the work of Richard Duke and George Ward. Violins by these two makers are illustrated below for comparison purposes (Appendix V, Instruments 3 and 5).

The Amati model violins, on the other hand, are more classically Italian in shape. The curves are rounded; the shape is more feminine and the arching is conspicuously lower than in the British-style instruments, though it is never less than medium. The colour on those instruments is also more varied. Morris writes of their 'mysterious, rich, golden, amber varnish'.⁵ Sometimes this varnish assumes a reddish tint. Henley writes that in Perry's best instruments the varnish is 'really quite beautiful in appearance. of grand texture and magnificently applied.'⁶ The varnish is generally an oil varnish but there is a world of difference between the rather dull brown high shouldered British type instruments and the elegant gold or reddish gold instruments of his Amati style. Indeed there appear to be some transitional instruments which combine elements of both styles. A fine violin loaned to the National Museum of Ireland many

years ago and recently restored by William Hofmann (No 2505, 1800) is decidedly English in character but has the light golden varnish of his Amatisé violins. It is illustrated as Instrument 9 in Appendix V.

Thomas Perry always chose good wood for his violins, but inevitably the maple in some is of higher quality than in others. This probably reflects the varying prices that customers were able to afford. The tables of his instruments, however, are always of a high quality close or medium grained pine. Most of his better instruments are purfled but there are many unpurflled ones, again no doubt aimed at a less affluent section of the public. It is the opinion of the author that Thomas Perry was never quite comfortable in the laying down of purfling. Some of his most graceful instruments, including the very early example from his Christ Church Yard period (Appendix V, Instrument 6) are unpurflled; where instruments are purflled, as in the case of the Abbeydorney instrument (Appendix V, Instrument 12), the workmanship never has the fluency of French or Italian makers. The scrolls of Perry's violins are generally undistinguished but some are quite magnificent; these may be the product of his apprentice, Richard Tobin, who went on to become the greatest scroll cutter in the history of British violin making.

Perry's early sound holes are quite characteristic. They have a small aperture at the top with a very narrow commencement of the stem, which gradually widens almost to the lower turn, giving to the lower part a somewhat exaggerated proportion to the higher. This characteristic shape will be clear from the photographs in Appendix V. Occasionally Perry set the sound holes a little too far up on the table; this resulted in a shorter than usual stop on some instruments.

5.2 The Dates and Numbers on Perry's Instruments.

Thomas Perry was a systematic man. He dated and numbered every instrument that he or his firm made; William Wilkinson continued the practice after Perry's death. As a result, though many instruments have been lost, or have been reattributed to other

makers, we possess a detailed index of his production over a long working life.

The earliest recorded Perry violin that I have been able to examine is numbered 35 and is dated 1764. It was made in Christ Church Yard and is illustrated below. The last recorded violin from Christ Church Yard that I have been able to record is numbered 408 and is dated 1768. Thereafter, his instruments are labelled from Anglesea Street. Initially, before the houses on that street were numbered, the violins bear the simple address of Anglesea Street. The earliest recorded attribution to No. 6 Anglesea Street that I have been able to identify is a violin bearing the number 1680 and dated 1790. The earliest violin bearing the address of No. 4 Anglesea Street is numbered 2168 and dated 1796. As will be remembered from Chapter III, this was one and the same house which was re-numbered after the Wide Street Commissioners had broadened Dame Street. William Wilkinson was taken into partnership in 1789 and the earliest Perry & Wilkinson labels appear in 1790. The last recorded instrument from 1818, the year of Perry's death, is numbered 4292. The highest number recorded is 4838 and is from a violin dated 1828.

As part of the research for this study I have assembled a list of numbers, dates and addresses for Perry and Perry & Wilkinson violins. This information has been assembled from data collected by myself and by earlier researchers: it is presented in *tabular form* as Section 5.3. of this chapter. The numbers and dates from the table have also been plotted on a graph to produce an image of Perry's rate of production. This graph constitutes Appendix IV. It will be noted that the slope of the curve changes twice. There is initially a relatively low rate of production: this in all likelihood reflects the period when Perry was working on his own as a young violin maker. After 1775 the slope changes significantly and remains relatively constant throughout most of his working life. This reflects the period when Perry made systematic use of apprentices. After his death the slope of the curve again changes, presumably reflecting the loss to the firm of its major violin maker and inspiration.

The table and the graph also constitute a reference system for determining the approximate year of production for violins for which only the number is available. The reference system also affords a device for the detection of erroneous attributions in terms of date or number. Equally it affords a device for the detection of forged instruments since forgers rarely possess either the time or the inclination for the study of the chronology of Perry's instruments.

5.3 A Table of Perry Instruments.

Type	Number	Date	Summary of Label
Violin	35	1764	Thomas Perry, Christ Church Yard, Dublin
Violin	309	1766	do.
Violin	408	1768	do.
Violin	450	--	--
Violin	540	1771	Thomas Perry, Anglesea St, Dublin
Violin	588	--	--
Viol	677	--	--
Violin	761	--	--
Viola	779	1776	Thomas Perry, Anglesea St, Dublin
Violin	823	1777	do.
Violin	850	1778	do.
Viol	868	1778	do.
Violin	875	1778	do.
'Cello	--	1780	do.
Violin	975	1781	do.
Viola	1017	1780	do.
Viola	1034	1781	do.
Violin	1144	1782	do.
Viola	1185	1783	do.
Violin	--	1784	do.

Viola	--	1788	Thomas Perry, Anglesea St, Dublin
Violin	1553	--	--
Violin	1680	1790	Thos. Perry & Wm. Wilkinson, No. 6 Anglesea St., Dublin.
Violin	1705	1790	do.
'Cello	1726	1791	do.
Violin	1781	1791	do.
Violin	1881	1793	do.
Viol	2008	1794	do.
Violin	2010	1795	do.
Sultana	2025	1795	do.
Violin	2048	1794	do.
Viol	2050	--	do
Violin	2070	1795	do.
Violin	2115	--	--
Kit	2115	--	--
Violin	2165	1796	Thomas Perry & Wm. Wilkinson, No. 4 Anglesea St., Dublin
Violin	2305	1797	do.
Violin	2366	1798	do.
Violin	2416	--	--
Violin	2441	1799	Thomas Perry & Wm. Wilkinson, No. 4 Anglesea St., Dublin
Violin	2505	1800	do.
Violin	2509	1801	do.
Violin	2516	1800	do.
Violin	2539	1800	do.
Violin	2551	--	do.
Violin	2552	1800	do.
Violin	2559	1800	do.
Violin	2569	1801	do.
Sultana	2635	1801	do.
Sultana	2638	1801	do.

Thomas Perry & Wm. Wilkinson,
No. 4 Anglesea St., Dublin

Violin	2642	1799	
Violin	2852	1803	do.
Violin	2854	--	do.
Violin	2855	1803	do.
Violin	3000	1805	do.
Violin	3243	1807	do.
Violin	3285	1807	do.
Violin	--	1807	do.
Violin	3394	1808	do.
Violin	3443	1808	do.
Violin	3514	1809	do.
Violin	3530	1809	do.
Violin	3645	1810	do.
Violin	3680	--	do.
Violin	3796	1810	do.
Violin	3812	1810	do.
Violin	3915	--	do.
Violin	3943	1812	do.
Violin	3954	1812	do.
Violin	3957	1812	do.
Violin	3972	1812	do.
Violin	--	1812	do.
Violin	4059	1813	do.
Violin	4090	1814	do.
Violin	4202	1814	do.
Violin	4209	1814	do.
Violin	4260	--	do.
Violin	4265	1815	do.
Violin	4269	1815	do.
Violin	4292	1818	do.

			Thomas Perry & Wm. Wilkinson, No. 4 Anglesea St., Dublin
Violin	4435	1819	
Violin	4439	--	do.
Violin	4467	--	do.
Violin	4493	1819	do.
Violin	4518	1821	do.
Violin	4520	1823	do.
Violin	4534	1821	do.
Violin	4551	1821	do.
Violin	4634	1824	do.
Violin	4662	1825	do.
Violin	4762	--	do.
Violin	4772	1827	do.
Violin	4775	1827	do.
Violin	4796	1827	do.
Violin	4813	1828	do.
Violin	4848	1828	do.

5.4 The Tonal Qualities of Perry's Violins.

There is a continuity of tone from Perry's English-style instruments to his Amati models. The tone is never big or harsh as in many French violins; it has a baroque modesty that is particularly suitable for chamber music and the drawing room. Henley states that while Perry's tone is 'not so persuasively sweet as the Italians, nevertheless it has a distinctiveness which cannot entirely be likened to or associated with that of any other fiddles.' The tone of his violins, he continues, is 'one of a distinctly warm and round mellowness - very easily responsive.'⁷ Father Greaven writes that Perry's tone is 'wonderfully responsive, sweet and mellow.'

To a practising violinist, Perry's instruments reveal their true identities. Playing upon numerous Perry violins has revealed remarkable similarities and a few surprises. Perry

violins are generally not big-toned instruments. The better models have a clear sweet responsive tone which is especially attractive in the upper registers. They are ideally suited to intimate settings and chamber music performances. Every Perry violin that I have played upon, however, has a charm and attractiveness quite unique to Perry. The instruments have a responsiveness and tone that does not easily tire. It is a soundscape that seduces both listener and player alike, and it is little wonder that Perry owners are quite passionate about their instruments. The following instruments provide a tonal sampling across the range of Perry's violin making.

1. The Leixlip Perry, 1764, No. 35.

This violin, the earliest known Perry violin, dates from Perry's Christ Church Yard period, and is a fascinating example. An unaltered 'baroque' violin, it has a modest, sweet tone which is quite even across the strings. As with all Perry violins, it has the typical restrained feel that makes it more conducive towards introverted, understated playing rather than bold bravura performance (Appendix V, Instrument 6).

2.. The Longford Perry, c. 1770.

This fine 'English' model violin, though unpurpled and made of modest wood, is probably the finest sounding Perry I have played upon. It has a sweet tone, bordering on velvet, which although not outstandingly powerful, is even across all of the strings. (Appendix V, Instrument 7)

3. The Abbeydorney Perry, c. 1810.

This violin has been in my family for nearly 200 years and is based on the Amati model. Unfortunately it was seriously damaged in 1926. Nonetheless, it was beautifully restored in 1956 by the late William Hofmann, Senior, and retains much of the individuality of the maker. This violin has a beautifully clear and responsive upper register. The lower register, however, is disappointing, being quite dull and rather wooden (Appendix V, Instrument 12).



4. The Dublin Perry, 1814, No. 4209.

This violin, dating from very late in Perry's life, has a very mellow, vibrant tone. Like the majority of Perry instruments, it has a wonderfully resonant, sweet upper register. The G string is quite rich and sonorous on this violin but the D string however, is quite dull; this, however, might be remedied by adjustment (Appendix V, Instrument 13).

5. The Boston Perry, 1827, No. 4775.

This is another interesting violin which dates from nine years after Thomas Perry's death. This violin is clear proof of the importance of the reference to 'wrought and unwrought stuff' mentioned in Perry's will which allows us to consider it to be a genuine post-1818 Perry. The visual and tonal evidence, in any case, are enough to verify its authenticity. Tonally it follows a similar pattern to those violins discussed above, with a rich mellow sound singing sweetly in the higher registers but somewhat constrained in the lower regions (Appendix V, Instrument 14).

5.5 The Apprentices and Associate Makers of Thomas Perry.

Thomas Perry made a large number of fine violins and his creative output continues to enrich our lives. But he enriched Irish life and culture in another way: during the course of his long working life he trained in the art of violin making several apprentices who went on to become important figures in their own right. His achievement was therefore both material and spiritual, and both were significant. In order to complete this study on Thomas Perry there follows a brief account of his principal disciples and apprentices.

The most important of Thomas Perry's apprentices and the approximate years when they worked for the firm are listed below:

1. William Wilkinson	1781-1828
2. William Ringwood	1783-1818
3. James Perry	1773-1780
4. Richard Tobin	1783-1790
5. John Delaney	1796-1803
6. John Mackintosh	1808-1817

1. William Wilkinson.

Thomas Perry's nephew, apprentice, son-in-law, business partner and heir, William Wilkinson, has consistently been overshadowed by the great luthier. Conventional wisdom holds that he was more artisan than artist and that his business acumen was superior to his violin making skills. It is impossible, however, to assess William Wilkinson objectively as a violin maker because, as we have seen, we can never ascertain exactly his contribution to the firm, even after the death of Perry himself. There is, on average, however, a gradual falling off in the quality of workmanship after the death of Perry which is consistent with the argument that Wilkinson, although a competent luthier, was more suited to a role under the supervision and guiding hand of his more experienced and confident master, Thomas Perry.

William Wilkinson and Elizabeth Perry had five children. Four of these were daughters, who were given the same names as the daughters of Thomas Perry. They had one son, Thomas William Wilkinson, who was born in 1801 and who died in 1880. He became a solicitor and lived in Perry's house in Anglesea Street. He carried on the music business as a sideline at No. 4 Anglesea Street until 1838 and continued to live and practice there until 1880, when the building was taken over by Jury's Hotel. It is now a part of Bloom's Hotel. From 1838 to 1880 Thomas William Wilkinson ran a musical instrument shop in 35 Wellington Quay on the south bank of the Liffey. The business was then continued by William Cross, who died in 1905. This heralded the end of a firm which had provided violins for Dublin for some 150 years. The building

survives to the present day as the derelict premises of Goyer's antique shop, near the Halfpenny Bridge.

2. William Ringwood

William Ringwood joined the firm of Thomas Perry in 1783 as an apprentice and remained until Perry's death in 1818. As he spent much of his working life in the firm of Thomas Perry and Perry & Wilkinson, it is difficult to assess him individually, but there is evidence that his violins were of a very fine order indeed. A very fine red-varnished violin by William Ringwood was played for many years by Thérèse Timoney. After Perry's death, Ringwood set up in partnership with one Wheatley and developed a prosperous dealing business.

3. James Perry

The precise family relationship between James Perry and Thomas Perry is not known: it is likely they were cousins. James Perry may be the son of the James Perry (senior) of Ballyrooney who, according to Memorial 185237 of 1769 divided his farm between his son James and Edward Wilkinson, the father of William Wilkinson. He served his apprenticeship with Thomas Perry from 1783 to 1780, became a protégé of the Ormonde family and set up business in Kilkenny. He made a large number of instruments, some of which were not so well finished as those of Thomas Perry, but which are of good tone. His violins are generally of a dark brown colour, like that of Thomas Perry's earlier violins; sometimes they are of a lighter golden brown colour, again probably influenced by Thomas Perry's later 'golden amber' violins. A fine violin by James Perry from a private collection is illustrated below (Appendix V, Instrument 18).

4. **Richard Tobin.**

Henley and Morris both give 1777 as the date of Tobin's birth. Dr Graham, however, suggests that he served his apprenticeship with the firm of Thomas Perry from 1773 to 1780. This would yield 1760 as the more likely date of his birth. Tobin went to London about 1798 and worked for John Betts and others until 1841. He is remembered chiefly as a magnificent scroll-cutter and many of his violins are indeed fine specimens, following for the most part the Grand Stradavari model. An irregular life coupled with unsound financial sense ensured that Tobin never established his own practice. He disposed of many of his instruments to dealers who frequently re-labelled them, attributing them to Cremonese masters. Many other of his violins have no label at all. He consequently has never received the credit due to him. He died poverty stricken in a workhouse. The scroll of a fragmented Perry violin illustrated in Appendix V, Instrument 16, may be by Richard Tobin. It is by any standard the finest scroll that the author has found on any Perry instrument.

5. **John Delaney.**

John Delaney was apprentice to Thomas Perry from 1796 to 1803; evidence from the Registry of Deeds suggests that his family, like those of Perry and Wilkinson, may have had land in the Queen's County. His violins follow the Amati model as do most of Perry's violins of this time. He is known to have been erratic in his work, his worst productions have been harshly criticised by many experts. Two of these unfortunate examples are in the National Museum, Dublin. They are in the English style, are unpurpled and have a dull brown varnish. However, Delaney deserves to be recognised equally for his more careful and conscientious work. He was a staunch republican and supporter of Wolfe Tone and many of his violins carry the curious hand-written inscription: 'Made by John Delaney in order to perpetuate his memory in future ages. Liberty to all the world, black and white.'

6. John Mackintosh.

Perry's last apprentice was John Mackintosh, a Scotsman. He worked with Perry from 1808 to 1817. Mackintosh based his violins broadly on Italian models, Amati, Stradavari and Guarneri. Consequently, his violins (which vary in quality of workmanship) have an Italian rather than English appearance. The arching on his instruments was always quite flat while his scrolls were boldly poised, though not consistently well finished. Some of his instruments, like those of Perry, were unpurpled. Mackintosh almost invariably used fine wood with a varnish of golden orange or yellow brown. His violins produce a sweet but not strong tone. Mackintosh spent considerable time and energy experimenting with baking and chemicalising the wood, but ultimately came to believe that the only way of getting a ripe tone was to build without resorting to artificial means and to trust to age to bring along mellowness. In 1837 he published a work, *Remarks on the construction and material employed in the making of violins*, of which, unfortunately, no copy survives. This is much to be regretted since the work must undoubtedly have encapsulated much of the violin making wisdom of his master, Thomas Perry. A typical violin by John Mackintosh is illustrated below (Appendix V, Instrument 19)

.Notes and References to Chapter Five

- ¹ A transcript of Thomas Perry's will is reproduced in Appendix III.
- ² Reference to pages 190-199 of *Musical Instruments of the World*, ed Ruth Midgley et al. (London: Paddington Press Ltd., 1976) illustrates very clearly the hybrid nature of the sultana.
- ³ W. Meredith Morris, *British Violin Makers* (London: Robert Scott, 1920), 217-219.
- ⁴ William Henley, *Universal Dictionary of Violin and Bowmakers* (Brighton: Amati Publishing, 1973), 888.
- ⁵ W. Meredith Morris (as n. 3), 219.
- ⁶ William Henley (as n. 4), 889.
- ⁷ Rev. A.L. Greaven, *Irish Violin Makers: Some Brief notes on* (Dublin: M.H. Gill & Son, 1911).

EPILOGUE

It is to be hoped that this dissertation has both eliminated certain misapprehensions concerning Thomas Perry and made some contribution to a fuller knowledge of his life and work.

It has hopefully laid the ghost of the mysterious Mr Pierrie who was fathered in error by the eminent Grattan Flood. Equally, it has hopefully rendered implausible the alleged Pierray and Huguenot connections. Instead, Thomas Perry and his family emerge as solid Church of Ireland farming stock from near Portlaoise, in what was formerly the Queen's County.

The study has identified the main events of Perry's life, from his early years in Christ Church Yard, to the acquisition of the large house in Anglesea Street and the judicious partnership with his nephew and son-in-law, William Wilkinson. It has established that his father, John Perry, was also a violin maker, a fact which has hitherto not been recognised. The work has also thrown new light on Perry's extraordinarily complex business affairs. At the time when he was Ireland's most skilled and productive violin maker he was engaged extensively in land and property transactions. The study has documented his remarkable instrumental output, and the data in Section 5 and in Appendix IV constitute both an index of his productivity and a calculus for dating Perry instruments and for the detection of forgeries. Finally, the research has identified the burial place of Thomas Perry and has uncovered a long-forgotten copy of his last will and testament.

What emerges is a portrait of an attractive and highly disciplined man who, over the span of a long working life, produced an extraordinary number of fine instruments which are still loved and treasured by those who are fortunate enough to possess them.

APPENDICES

**APPENDIX 1: THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP OF THE PERRY AND
WILKINSON FAMILIES OF DUBLIN AND QUEEN'S
COUNTY.**

This table is based on information abstracted from documents in the National Archives and the Registry of Deeds.

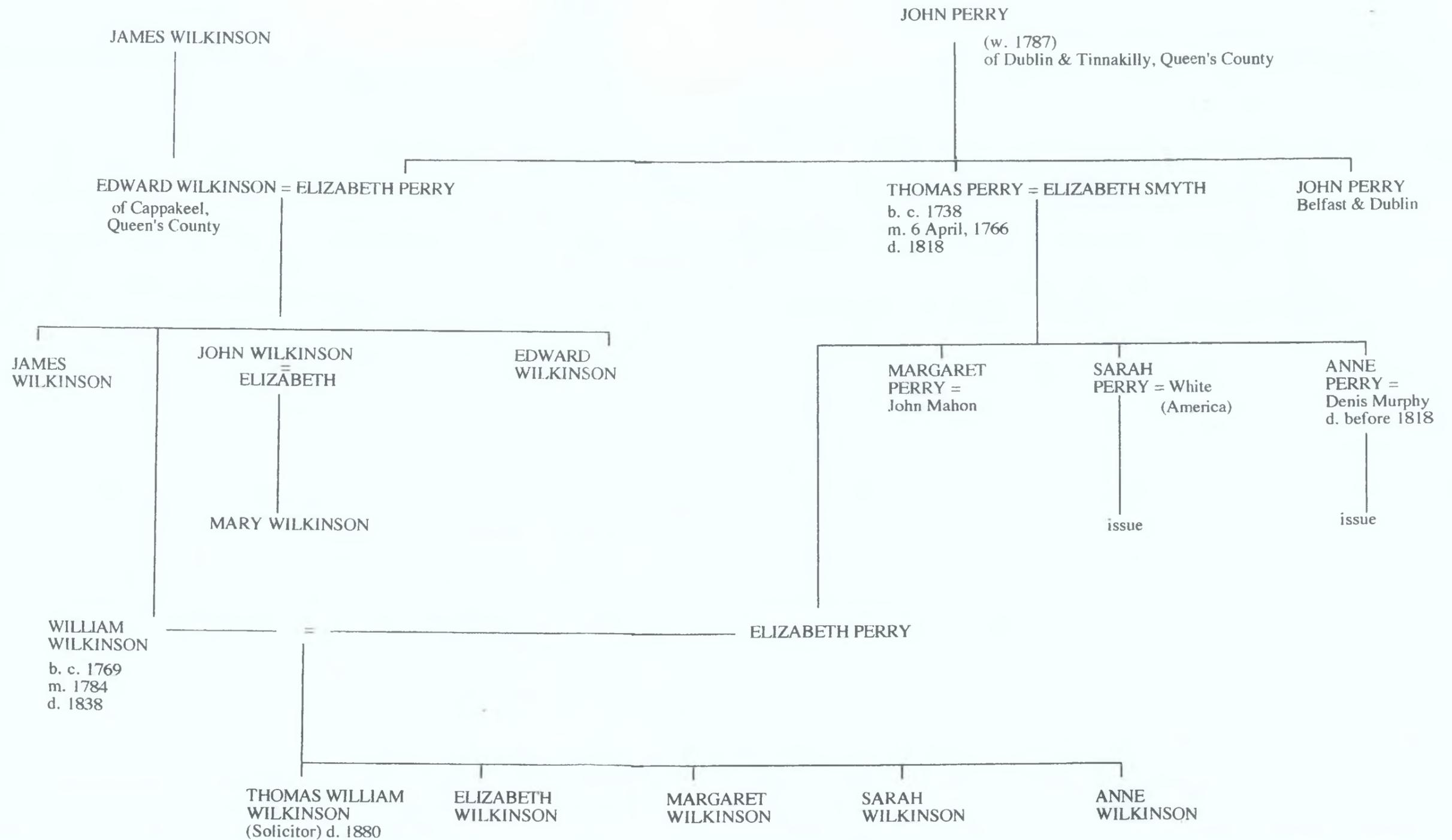
APPENDIX II: TOPOGRAPHY

APPENDIX II (1): THOMAS PERRY'S DUBLIN

An extract from Roque's Map of Dublin (1756) showing the locations associated with Thomas Perry and his work before the widening of Dame Street and the loss of Christ Church Yard.

1. Christ Church Yard
2. St Werburgh's Church
3. Fishamble Street Musick Hall
4. Dublin Castle
5. Crow Street Theatre
6. Anglesea Street
7. The House of Parliament
8. St Andrew's Church

The Interrelationships of the Perry and Wilkinson Families
of Dublin and Queen's County





MARYS ABBY
LITTLE
GREAT STRAND
SWIFTS
BACHELORS
STONES QUAY
ORMOND
LITTLE
STRAND STREET
LOWER ORMOND QUAY
UPPER ORMOND QUAY
CUSTOM HOUSE QUAY
TEMPLE BARR
FLEET STREET
COLLEGE
GREEN
DAME STREET
SUFFOLK STREET
THE CASTLE UPPER YARD
DUKE STREET
ANN STREET

1

2

3

4

5

6

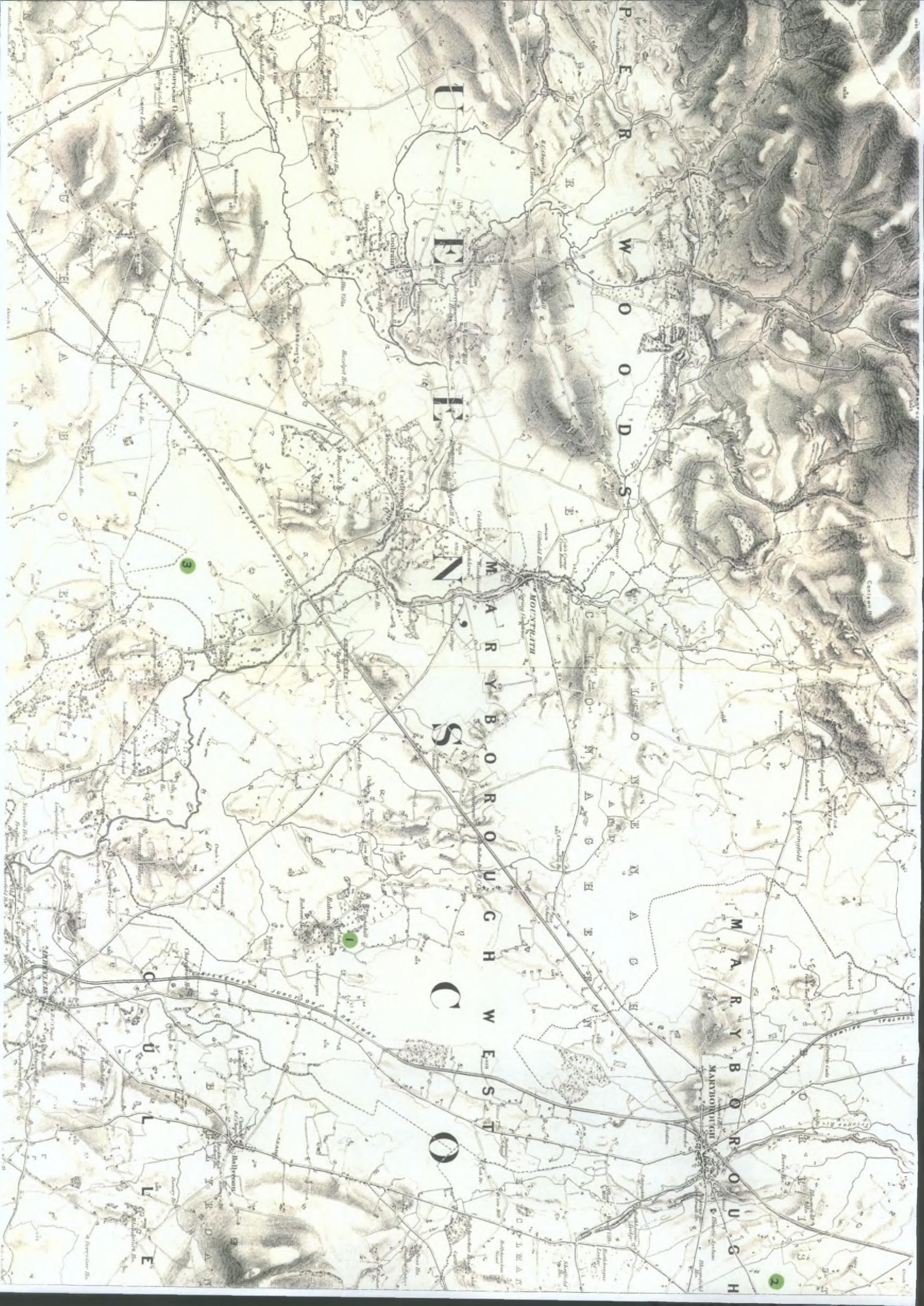
7

APPENDIX II (2): CHRIST CHURCH YARD.

A map of the tenements in Christ Church Yard supplied by Mr Andrew Halpin, the Dublin City Archaeologist, in October of 1992. The building identified as the Exchange was the original Chapter House of the monastic community attached to the Cathedral; its foundations survive to the present day. The Four Courts (i.e. King's Bench, Common Pleas, Exchequer and Chancery) were transferred to Gandon's great building on the North Quays in 1793. The dark passage leading to them was known as "Hell". It is not possible at this stage to identify the particular tenements adjoining Christ Church Yard in which Thomas Molineux and the young Thomas Perry made violins.

**APPENDIX II (3): PERRY AND WILKINSON LOCATIONS IN THE
QUEEN'S COUNTY.**

- 1. Tinnakilly**
- 2. Cappakeel**
- 3. Ballymulrooney**



U.S.

WOODS

M.A.R.Y.B.O.R.O.U.S.H.

M.A.R.Y.B.O.R.O.U.S.H.

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APPENDIX III. DOCUMENTS.

This appendix contains transcripts and reproductions of selected documents relating to Thomas Perry. The originals are in the Registry of Deeds, the National Archives and the National Library.

APPENDIX III (1): Transcript of Memorial 296782 (Volume 475, page 24) from the Registry of Deeds concerning the lease by Isaac Humphreys to John Perry, the father of Thomas Perry, in 1777 of 94 acres and 2 roods at Tinnekilly, in the Queen's County. This document identifies John Perry as a musical instrument maker.

HUMPHREYS to PERRY

To the Registrar appointed by act of Parliament for the registering (sic) all deeds.

A Memorial of a Deed bearing date the thirteenth of December one thousand seven hundred and seventy seven made between Isaac Humphreys of the city of Dublin Gentleman and John Perry of said city Musical Instrument Maker whereby the said Isaac Humphreys did Demise unto said John Perry in his actual possession then being by virtue of a bargain and sale to him thereof made by the said Isaac for one year by Indenture bearing date the day next before the day of the date of said Deed in consideration of five shillings sterling and by force of the statute for transferring uses unto possessions to his heirs and assigns that part of the lands of Tinnekilly then in the possession of said Perry containing ninety four acres and two roods profitable land plantation measure being part of the Manor of Villiers situate in the Barony of Ossory and Queen's County for the lives of James Stephens of Boris in Ossory in said County Esquire William Wilkinson and John Wilkinson second and third sons of Edward Wilkinson of Cappikeel in said Co. Gentleman the survivors and survivor of them and for the life and lives of such other person and persons as should from time to time for ever thereafter be added to said Demise pursuant to a covenant for renewal for ever therein contained on payment of thirty pounds fifteen shillings and three pence halfpenny sterling as a fine for each renewal in six months after the failure of each life at and under the yearly rent of sixty one pounds ten shillings and seven pence sterling to be paid by two equal half yearly payments in every year during said demise on every first of November and first of May above Taxes and Crown rent excepted as by said lease relation being thereunto had may more fully appear (sic) and which lease was duly executed by the said Isaac Humphreys and John Perry in the presence of Joseph Higginson of the City of Dublin Carpenter and William Humphreys of the said City Gentleman and this Memorial is also executed by the said Isaac Humphreys in the presence of the said William Humphreys and John Humphreys of said City Gentleman.

The above named William Humphreys maketh oath and saith that he this deponent saw

the above mentioned Isaac Humphreys and John Perry duly execute a lease of which the above writing is a memorial and also saw the said Isaac Humphreys Sign and seal the above memorial and saith that the name William Humphreys subscribed as a witness to said lease and a memorial is this Deponent's proper name and handwriting and that the same was delivered to John Moore Esq. Deputy registrar on Tuesday the fifth of March Instant at or near a after Eleven O'Clock in the forenoon Wm. Humphreys.

Sworn the fifth of March 1793.

Signed, John Moore, Registrar.

APPENDIX III (2): Facsimile of Memorial 296782 from the Registry of Deeds concerning the lease by John Perry of 94 acres and 2 roods at Tinnekilly. This document is the primary evidence that the father of Thomas Perry was a maker of musical instruments.

1758
What power appointed by Act of Parliament for Registering all Deeds &c

296782

MEMORIAL

made between Isaac Humphreys of the City of Dublin Gentleman and John Berry in his actual Regt. then being by virtue of Bargain and sale to him the said Isaac Humphreys did demise unto the said John Berry in his actual Regt. then being by virtue of Bargain and sale to him thereof made by said Isaac for one year by indenture bearing date the day next before the day of the date of the Deed in Commission of Sir Philip Stirling and by force of the Statute for transferring the said Regt. and to his heirs and assigns that part of the Deed of Demise to them in Regt. of W. Berry containing four acres and two Roods profitable and plantation measure being part of the Manor of Wilton situated in the Parsonage of Sperry and Ducans County for the Lives of James Stephens of Bonis in Sperry in 1750 by Leg. William Wilkinson and John Wilkinson second and third Sons of Edward Wilkinson of Doyphalee in W. Co. Gentlemen & the survivors and survivors of them and for the Life and Lives of such other Persons and Persons as should from time to time for ever hereafter be named to the said demise pursuant to a. or for them for ever therein contained on payment of thirty Pounds Sterling to the said three persons hereinafter mentioned as Expens for each Person. in and within the space of one year after the failure of each Life to be and under the yearly Rent of one Pound six Shillings and seven pence sterling to be paid by two equal half yearly payments in every year during said demise on every Feast of St. Michael and St. Martin next after the said demise as by said Lease relation being hereunto had may more fully appear and which said Lease was made by the said Isaac Humphreys and John Berry in the presence of Joseph Dignison of the City of Dublin Carpenter and William Humphreys of said City Gent. and this Memorial is also executed by the said Isaac Humphreys in the presence of the said William Humphreys and John Stephens of said City Gent. in presence of

In presence of
 Wm Humphreys
 J. Stephens

Humphreys
 Berry

Wm Humphreys

The above named William Humphreys made Oath and saith that he the Regt. saw the above mentioned Isaac Humphreys and Berry duly execute a Lease of which the above Writing is a Memorial and also saw the said Isaac Humphreys sign and seal the above Memorial and saith that the Name William Humphreys subscribed as a Witness to said Lease and Memorial is his Regt. proper Name and Sanctioning and that the same was allowed to John Moore Esq. Deputy Register on Tuesday the fifth of March instant at or near a Quarts after Hours of Clock in the presence of

Wm Humphreys

1750

Signed the fifth of March 1753

John Moore Esq.

APPENDIX III (3): Transcript of Memorial 296781 from the Registry of Deeds (Volume 463, page 174) concerning the lease in 1777 by Isaac Humphreys to Thomas Perry, musical instrument maker of the City of Dublin, of 165 acres and 17 perches at Tinnekilly in the Queen's County.

HUMPHREYS to PERRY

To the registrar appointed by Act of Parliament for Registering Deeds Leases Etc.

A memorial of a lease bearing date the thirteenth of December one thousand seven hundred and seventy seven made between Isaac Humphreys of the city of Dublin Gentleman and Thomas Perry of said city Musical Instrument Maker which the said Isaac Humphreys did for the consideration therein mentioned demise unto the said Thomas Perry in his actual possession then being by virtue of a bargain and sale to him thereof made by the said Isaac Humphreys for one whole year by indenture bearing date the day next before the day of the date of said lease in consideration of five shillings sterling and by force of the statute for transferring uses into possession and to his heirs and assigns that part of Tinnekilly then in the possession of said Thomas Perry containing one hundred and sixty five acres and seventeen perches profitable land plantation measure be the same more or less being part of the Manor of Villiers situate in the Barony of Ossory and Queen's County with the appurtenances from the first day of May then next for the lives of James Stephens of Boris in Ossory in said county esquire William Wilkinson and John Wilkinson second and third sons of Edward Wilkinson of Cappikeel in said county and the survivors and survivor of them and for and during the life and lives of such other person and persons as should from time to time for ever thereafter be added to said demise pursuant to a covenant for renewal forever therein contained on payment of forty six pounds nineteen shillings and one penny three farthings sterling as a fine for each renewal in six months after the failure of each life at and under the yearly rent of ninety three pounds eighteen shillings and three pence halfpenny sterling to be paid by two equal half yearly payments in every year during said demise on every first of November and first of May above taxes quit and crown rent excepted as by said lease containing several other usual covenants and clauses between landlord and tenant relation being thereunto had may more fully appear (sic) which lease was duly executed by the said parties in the presence of Joseph Higginson of the said city Carpenter and William Humphreys of the said city Gent. and

this memorial is also executed by the said Thomas Perry in the presence of the said William Humphreys and John Humphreys of said city Gentlemen.

Signed and sealed in the presence of William Humphreys and John Humphreys.

Signed, Thomas Perry

The above mentioned William Humphreys maketh oath that he this deponent saw the above mentioned Isaac Humphreys and Thomas Perry duly execute a lease of which the above writing is a memorial and also saw the said Thomas Perry sign and seal the above memorial and saith that the Name William Humphreys subscribed as a witness to said lease and memorial is this deponent's proper name and handwriting and that the same was delivered to John Moore esquire deputy register on Tuesday the fifth of March instant at or near a quarter of an hour after eleven O'Clock in the forenoon.

Sworn the fifth of March 1793.

Signed, John Moore, Deputy Register

APPENDIX III (4): Facsimile of Memorial 296781 from the Registry of Deeds concerning Thomas Perry's lease of 165 acres at Tinnekilly. The signature of Thomas Perry on the document should be noted.

APPENDIX III (5): Transcript of Memorial 296536 from the Registry of Deeds (Volume 462, page 511) relating to Thomas Perry's acquisition of his house at Anglesea Street, Dublin.

HONE to PERRY

A Memorial of an Indenture of Lease bearing Date the Twentieth Day of June one thousand seven hundred and eighty five made between Joseph Hone of the City of Dublin Esq. of the one part and Thomas Perry of the same City Musical Instrument Maker of the other part witnesseth that the said Joseph Hone for the Consideration therein mentioned demised and set unto the said Thomas Perry All that Dwelling house situate on the west side of Anglesea Street in the City of Dublin together with the Yard or Back Ground behind the same as fully and amply as the same are now held and enjoyed by the said Thomas Perry which said Yard or Back Ground contains sixteen feet in Breadth and Eleven feet in Depth be the same more or less and which said demised premises contains in Depth from front to rere Seventy two feet be the same more or less and are Bounded on the North by a house now in the possession of Thomas Blanchfield and on the South by a House now in the possession of William Salmon and on the West by a Back Ground belonging to Joseph Hone now in the possession of said Salmon Excepting and reserving unto the said Joseph Hone his Executors, Administrators and Assigns for the first Eight years of the Term thereby demised liberty of a passage to the said Back Ground by the passage or Entry of said house being four feet ten Inches in the breadth in the clear or thereabouts be it more or less To hold said premises with the appurtenances into the said Thomas Perry his Executors, Administrators and Assigns from the first day of June then instant for the term of nine hundred and ninety nine years and all that and those the large Room called the Auction Room with the two little yards adjoining and belonging thereto then in the possession of the said William Salmon together also with the aforesaid passage leading thereto which said last mentioned premises contain in length in the Clear Forty One feet three Inches and in the Breadth in the Clear Twenty Fve feet three Inches be the same as measurements more or less To hold said last mentioned premises unto said Thomas Perry his Executors Administrators and Assigns from the first day of June one thousand seven hundred and ninety three for nine hundred and ninety one years he and they yielding and paying for the first eight years of the said term unto the said Joseph Hone his Executors, Administrators or Assigns the yearly rent of Thirty four pounds and for the remainder of the said Term the yearly Rent of forty pounds by two even and equal portions in the year in which said Deed are contained other Clauses and Covenants and said Deed or Indenture of Lease is witnessed by James Crosthwaite of the City of Dublin Carpenter and Nicholas Fitton of the same city Attorney and this Memorial is witnessed by the said James Crosthwaite and William Ringwood apprentice to the said Thomas Perry.

Signed before me this 22 Day of February, 1793

J. Moore, Dep. Reg.

APPENDIX III (5): Facsimile (enlarged) of Thomas Perry's advertisement in the *Dublin Evening Post* of 14 March, 1789, announcing his partnership with his nephew and son-in-law-, William Wilkinson.

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Welbore Agar, now Lord Viscount Clifden.

Now I, the said Sheriff, in obedience to the said recited writ do hereby give notice, that I will proceed to hold said Election on Monday, the 23d day of March, instant, in my County Court House, at Grace's Old Castle, in said county.

Dated March 2, 1789.

SAMUEL BOYSE, Sheriff.

**VIO LINS, GUITARS, TENORS, SALTERS,
VIOLINCELLOS, &c.**

MADE and repaired by THOMAS PERRY, No. 6, Anglesea-street, Dublin; who returns his unfeigned thanks to the Nobility, Gentry, and Professors of Music in general, for the very liberal encouragement experienced by him these thirty years past, and to inform them that he has taken into Partnership his Nephew,

WILLIAM WILKINSON,

(Who served his apprenticeship to him) the better to enable him to carry on said business. They are at present assorted with the above Instruments, at various prices; all which are engaged to be of the best quality and workmanship.

Also, Strings, Bows, Bridges, Pins, Tailpieces, all sorts of covered and half-covered Strings for Piano Fortes, French Harps, common and Spanish Guitars, &c. by wholesale and retail. — Superfine French Rosin for Bows.

NEW LINEN - DRAPERY.

HENRY EAGLE, No. 39, College-green, who served a regular Apprenticeship, and lived in one of the first Houses in this kingdom for improvement, has laid in a fashionable assortment of **GOODS**, and from his unremitting attention hopes for the protection of the public.

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APPENDIX III (7): Transcript of Memorial 410063 from the Registry of Deeds (Volume 601, page 416), indicating that John Perry the elder, by his will of 7 November 1787 transferred his interest in 94 acres and 2 roods in Tinnekilly to his sons Thomas and John Perry, and that Thomas Perry, by a deed dated 8 June, 1808, in due course acquired his brother's interest in the land. The document reiterates the information that Thomas Perry's father was a musical instrument maker.

PERRY to WATSON

To the registrar appointed for registering deeds wills conveyances and so forth. A memorial of an indented deed dated the sixteenth day of June in the year one thousand eight hundred and eight made between Thomas Perry of Tinekilly in the Queen's County farmer, on the one part and Thomas Watson of Der..... in said county farmer, on the other part reciting that by Indenture dated the thirteenth day of December on thousand seven hundred and seventy seven Isaac Humphreys then of the City of Dublin Gent, did demise unto John Perry then of the said City Musical Instrument maker all that part of the lands of Tinekilly aforesaid then in the possession of said John Perry containing ninety four acres two roods part of the Manor of Villiers in the Barony of Ossory and the said Queen's County for the term of three lives with a covenant for renewal for ever at the yearly rent of sixty one pounds ten shillings and seven pence sterling and thirty pounds fifteen shillings and three pence halfpenny sterling as a renewal fine on the fall of each life, and reciting that said John Perry is since dead and by his will dated the seventh day of November one thousand seven hundred and eighty seven bequeathed unto his two sons the said Thomas Perry and John Perry his interest in said lands of Tinekilly and reciting that by deed of partition dated the eighth day of June one thousand eight hundred and eight made between the said Thomas Perry and John Perry the said Thomas Perry became entitled to that part of the said premises in the occupation of Isaac Humphreys esquire and that part in the occupation of John Perry and that part in the occupation of John Whitford and also that part in the possession of the said Thomas Perry containing in the entire about fifty acres be the same more or less with the appurtenances during the remainder of said demise and also the sum of two pounds three shillings sterling yearly being a moiety of rent issuing out of that part of said premises in the possession of John Simpson and also one half of such renewal fine as should become due therefrom by which said deed the said Thomas Perry for the consideration of the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds sterling did assign and make over unto the said Thomas Watson all the hereinbefore mentioned part of said lands of Tinekilly that is to say that part in the occupation of Isaac Humphreys

that part in the occupation of John Kelly that part in the occupation of John Whitford and also that part in the possession of Thomas Perry containing in the entire about fifty acres be the same more or less and also the sum of two pounds three shillings yearly issuing out of that part of said premises in the possession of John Simpson and one half of such renewal fine should become due therefrom to hold said premises with appurtenances unto the said Thomas Watson his heirs and assigns from the first day of May last for and during all the rest residue and remainder of the said recited demise together with the rents issues and profits thereof and all benefit of renewal and all deeds and writings related thereto in as full and ample manner as said Thomas Perry held and enjoyed or might have held and enjoyed same by virtue of said several recited deeds discharged from all encumbrances save one moiety of said reserved rent and one moiety of said renewal fine which said deed and this memorial are witnessed by William Dawson Roberts of Kilbricken in the Queen's County and by Honora Phelan of Kilbricken aforesaid spinster signed and sealed in the presence of W.D. Roberts.

(There is a signature of Thomas Perry in which his hand seems to have deteriorated.)

The above named Honora Phelan this day made oath before me that she is a subscribing witness to the deed whereof the foregoing writing is a memorial and that she saw the said Thomas Perry and the said Thomas Watson the parties thereto duly sign seal and execute the same and that she also saw the said Thomas Perry duly sign and seal the said Memorial and that the name Honora Phelan subscribed as a witness to said deed and memorial respectively is deponents proper name and handwriting.

Sworn before me at Kilbricken in the Queen's County the eighteenth day of June 1808 by virtue of a commission to me directed for receiving affidavits in said county and I know the deponent.

William Dawson Roberts commissioner.

APPENDIX III (8): The Last Will and Testament of Thomas Perry

In the name of God Amen, I, Thomas Perry of Anglesea St. in the city of Dublin Musical Instrument Maker being of sound mind and and memory disposing understanding thanks be to Almighty God do make this my last will and Testament in manner following hereby revoking all other wills or will by me heretofore made. Whereas I am possessed of a profit rent of £15 per annum arising out of part of the lands of Tinnekilly in the Queen's County by lease of lives thereof renewable for ever and also to a profit rent of £11-7-6 per annum arising to me out of a plot of ground at the rear of Salmon's House in Anglesea St. aforesaid demised to him for the residue of 999 years from the 22 February, 1793 being part of the concerns which I lately held in Anglesea St. aforesaid making together the sum of £26-7-6 clear profit rent. My will is that all my just debts and funeral expenses may be paid off and discharged with all convenient speed after my decease. I leave and bequeath to my son-in-law Wm. Wilkinson my household furniture, house linen, plate, China, and all my stock in trade, Musical Instruments finished and unfinished, unwrought stuff and working implements. And to the uses and Trusts hereinafter mentioned and expressed I also leave and bequeath to my son-in-law Wm. Wilkinson all my Estate both real and personal, the said profit rent of £26-7-6 and all lands, houses and premises of every nature and kind so ever, and all the Rents, Issues and profits thereof, all the ready money and every other property whatsoever which I may be possessed of or Entitled to at the time of my decease (save and except the property herein bequeathed to my said son-in-law Wm. Wilkinson) as follows, that is to say to pay unto my daughter Elizabeth Wilkinson and to her heirs and assigns, annually by two equal payments £13-3-9 sterling. The like sum in like manner annually to my daughter, Margaret Mahon, and to her heirs and assigns, and to my daughter Sarah White who resides in America the sum of £20 sterling to be paid out of my profit rents. And it gives me great ease to my mind to reflect that the children of my late daughter Anne Murphy are otherwise provided for, not having in my power to leave them anything that could be of service to them, but in token of my affection for the said children of my said daughter Anne Murphy my will is that my said son-in-law Wm. Wilkinson shall immediately after my

decease pay them over £20 sterling to buy mourning also to be paid out of my said profit rents. I do hereby appoint Mr George Mulvany of Richmond St and Mr Thomas Bradbury of the Bank of Ireland both of the City of Dublin, Gentlemen, Executors of this my last will. In witness thereof I have to this my last will and testament and to a counterpart thereof, of the same date, tenor and import set my hand and seal this and issue in the year of our Lord 1818.

Signed sealed published and declared by the said Thomas Perry the Testator as and for his last will and Testament in the presence of us who at his request and in his presence and in the presence of each other have hereunto set our names as witnesses.

William Ringwood

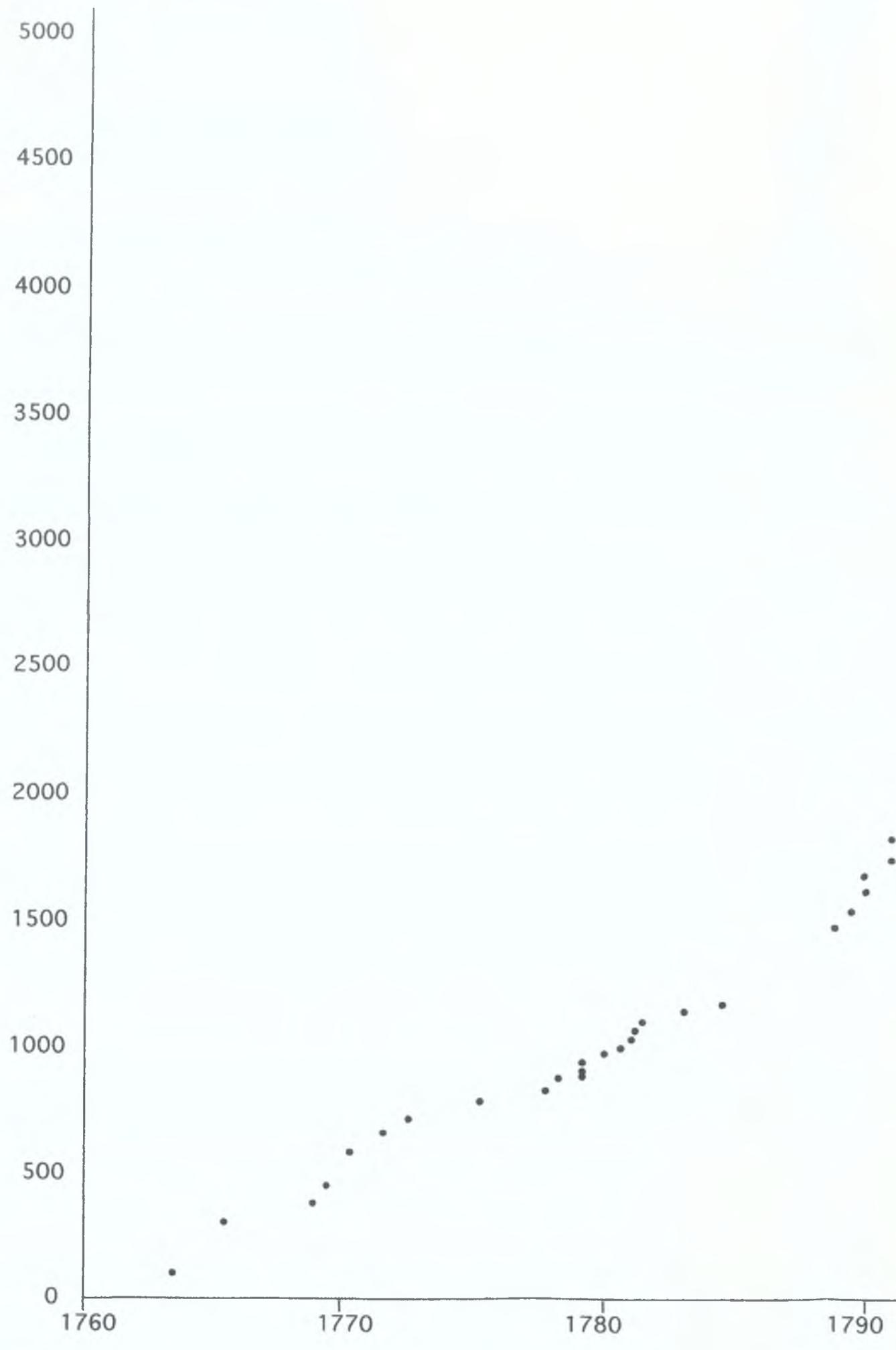
William Wilkinson

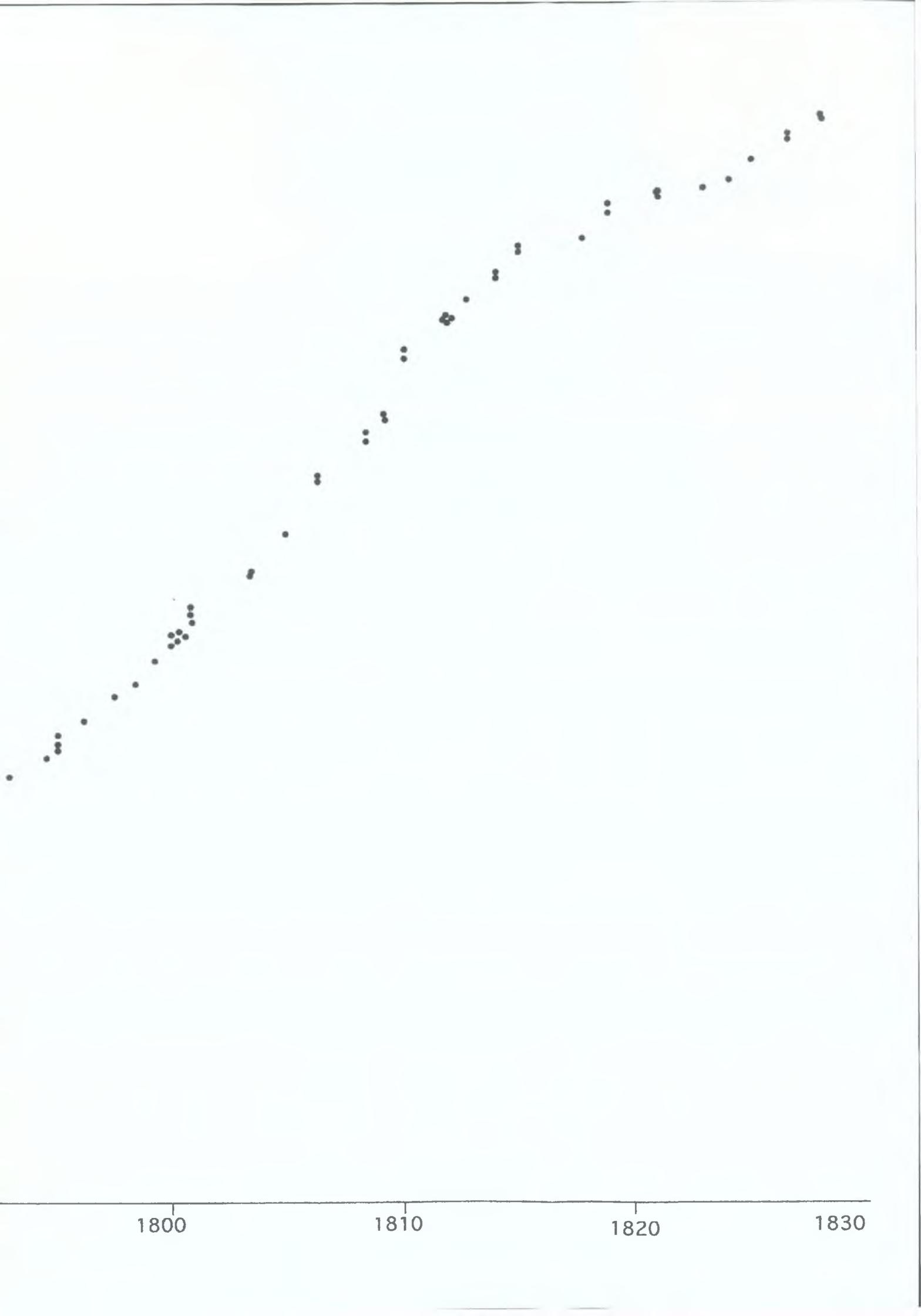
Hugh Galbraith.

7th June 1818

**APPENDIX IV: AN INDEX OF THOMAS PERRY'S INSTRUMENTAL
PRODUCTION.**

This diagram is based on the numerical information contained in Section 5.3. above.





APPENDIX V: AN ICONOGRAPHY OF THOMAS PERRY.

This appendix contains photographs and descriptions of selected instruments by Thomas Perry and related makers.

Instrument 1: A violin by Nicolo Amati, Cremona, 1683.

Length:	13.94"
Back:	Two piece back of medium curl, descending slightly from the joint.
Ribs:	Medium to narrow curl.
Head:	Medium curl.
Table:	Medium grain with knot-holes on the lower treble bout.
Varnish:	Golden brown oil varnish.
Purfling:	Inlaid.
Model:	Italian.
Label:	Nicolaus Amatus Cremonen. Hieronymi Fil., ac Antonij Nepos Fecit, 1683.
Illustrations:	Page 88.



Instrument 2: A violin by Jacob Stainer, c. 1660.

Length:	13.94"
Back:	Two-piece back of medium to narrow curl, descending slightly from the joint.
Ribs:	Faint medium curl.
Head:	Later head of Mittenwald school.
Table:	Medium to fine grained pine.
Varnish:	Golden brown oil varnish.
Purfling:	Inlaid.
Model:	Stainer.
Label:	Jacobus Stainer in Absam prope Oenipontum, 1661
Observations:	Note the elongated profile, particularly visible in the view of the table, which influenced the British tradition of violin making in which the early work of Thomas Perry is grounded.
Illustrations:	Page 90.



Instrument 3: A violin by Richard Duke, 1754.

Length:	13.94"
Upper bout:	6.38"
Middle bout:	4.88"
Lower bout	8.25"
Back:	One piece back of horizontal medium curled maple, branded under the button 'Duke, London'.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Matching back.
Table:	Medium to broad-grained pine.
Arching:	Medium to high on table; medium on back.
F-holes:	Short: 2.63" in length.
Varnish:	Chestnut brown oil varnish.
Purfling:	Inlaid; neatly laid down.
Model:	English.
Label:	Manuscript label: 'Rich. Duke Londini fecit 1754'.
Observations:	This violin, from a private collection, is an elegant Baroque instrument in its original condition.
Illustrations:	Pages 92 and 92a.



92a



Instrument 4: A violin by Thomas Molineux of Dublin (d 1757).

Length:	13.88"
Upper bout:	6.88"
Middle bout:	4.94"
Lower bout:	8"
Back:	One-piece back of finely curled maple, ascending slightly from left to right. Branded 'Molineux. Dublin' below the button.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Matching back.
Table:	Medium-grained pine.
Arching:	Medium: slightly higher on table than on back.
F-holes:	2.75"; rather large upper curl.
Varnish:	Golden brown oil varnish.
Purfling:	Painted.
Model:	Quite Italian in feel.
Label:	Missing.
Observations:	There is a pronounced channel inside the edge of this instrument which is particularly noticeable on the back. The violin has a superbly rich tone, particularly in the lower register. The violin is part of a private collection; it was in India for several years.
Illustrations:	Pages 94 and 95.





Instrument 5: A violin by George Ward of Dublin.

Length:	13.94"
Upper bout:	6.38"
Middle bout:	4.38"
Lower bout:	8"
Back:	Two-piece back of rather plain medium to narrow curled maple. Branded on the button with a crowned harp; branded below the button 'Ward, Dublin'.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Head and neck of plain maple; ungrafted. The scroll is graceful, with an Italian-type throw. It is higher in character than those generally found on Perry instruments. Its transverse measurement is 1.56".
Table:	Medium grained pine.
Arching:	Medium high on table; medium in back. Distinctly channelled inside middle bouts but channelling merges gracefully into general contours.
F-holes:	2.75".
Varnish:	Dark brown.
Purfling:	Inlaid purfling; rather wide, but competently laid down. There is an error in the channel for purfling at the upper left corner of the middle bout on the back.
Model:	English.
Label:	Missing.
Observations:	This is, in general, a very competent instrument. It was acquired in 1891 by the National Museum of Ireland and is catalogued as Number 427.
Illustrations:	Pages 97 and 98.





Instrument 6: The Leixlip Perry, 1764.

Length:	13.94"
Upper bout:	6.56"
Middle bout:	4.25"
Lower bout:	8.00"
Back:	One-piece back of attractive medium curled maple, descending from left.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Matching back.
Table:	One-piece table of pine, closely grained at right, broadly grained at left.
Arching:	Medium on back; slightly higher on table.
F-holes:	2.81". Typically early Perry, with smaller upper volute.
Varnish:	Attractive chestnut brown oil varnish.
Purfling:	Painted.
Model:	English / Italian.
Label:	Handwritten label: 'Made by Thomas Perry in Christ Church Yard, Dublin 1764'.
Observations:	This is a very beautiful Baroque instrument. The left f-hole is marginally higher than the right. The ribs of the lower bouts are made of one piece of maple. This is the earliest known Perry violin. It is a young man's instrument, made with great care and with careful selection of fine-quality wood. The violin is reminiscent of Richard Duke; the shoulders are more round than in Perry's other 18th Century instruments.
Illustrations:	Pages 100 and 101.





Instrument 7: The Longford Perry (c. 1770)

Length:	13.88"
Upper bout:	6.25"
Middle bout:	4.38"
Lower bout:	8.06"
Back:	One-piece back of plain, horizontal, medium curled maple. Branded 'Perry. Dublin' below the button.
Ribs:	Plain wood.
Head:	Plain wood.
Table:	Table of medium grained pine.
Arching:	Medium high arching, more pronounced on table than on back.
F-holes:	2.75". Typically Perry with smaller upper volute.
Varnish:	Golden brown oil varnish, darker on table.
Purfling:	Painted.
Model:	English.
Label:	Missing.
Observations:	The neck and scroll of this violin are not original.
Illustrations:	Pages 103 and 104.





Instrument 8: A violin by Thomas Perry (1782, No. 1144).

Length:	14.00"
Upper bout:	6.25"
Middle bout:	4.50"
Lower bout:	8.06"
Back:	One-piece back of plain to medium curled maple. Branded 'Perry. Dublin' under the button.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Matching back.
Table:	Medium grained pine with repair patch under bridge.
Arching:	Medium high arching on back and table.
F-holes:	2.69". Typically Perry.
Varnish:	Golden brown oil varnish. Attractive on back but darker and unattractive on table due to repairs and wear.
Purfling:	Painted.
Model:	English.
Label:	Manuscript: 'Made by T. Perry, Anglesea Street, Dublin. No. 1144, 1782.'
Observations:	This is a rather ugly violin which is marred by many repairs. The scroll is competent but uninspired.
Illustrations:	Pages 106 and 107.





Instrument 9: A violin by Thomas Perry (1800, No. 2505).

Length:	14.00"
Upper bout:	6.38"
Middle bout:	4.50"
Lower bout:	8.00"
Back:	One-piece back of plain, broadly curled maple. Branded on the button 'No. 2505'. Branded below the button, 'Perry. Dublin'.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Matching back.
Table:	Medium grained pine.
Arching:	Medium; slightly higher on table than on back.
F-holes:	2.75." Attractive; traditional Perry shape.
Varnish:	Soft oil varnish of golden hue.
Purfling:	Inlaid purfling, elegantly laid down. The cuts do not extend to the corners.
Model:	English.
Label:	Made by Thomas Perry & William Wilkinson, Musical Instrument Makers, No. 4 Anglesea St., Dublin. No. 2505, 1800.
Observations:	This beautiful instrument is currently on loan to the National Museum. It has repairs to the lower ribs on the right of the lower button. It has been recently restored by W. Hofmann.
Illustrations:	Pages 109 and 110.





Instrument 10: A violin by Thomas Perry.

Length:	13.88"
Upper bout:	6.63"
Middle bout:	4.38"
Lower bout:	8.13"
Back:	Two-piece back of broadly curled maple, descending from the centre. Branded under the button 'Perry, Dublin'.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Matching back. The scroll is scalloped and is beautifully carved, though rather tight in character. Its transverse measurement is 1.50"
Table:	Medium grained pine.
Arching:	Medium in height; approximately equal on table and back.
F-holes:	2.88". Italian in character
Varnish:	Golden amber oil varnish.
Purfling:	Inlaid narrow purfling; slightly irregular on back; more competent on table.
Model:	Amatisé
Label:	Missing.
Observations:	Overall, this is a very pleasant and beautiful instrument. It is quite Italian in character. It was acquired by the National Museum of Ireland in 1908 as part of the Cruise Collection and is catalogued as Number 114. It is very close in character to Number 115.
Illustrations:	Pages 112 and 113.





Instrument 11: A violin by Thomas Perry.

Length:	13.94"
Upper bout:	6.88"
Middle bout:	4.88"
Lower bout:	8.00"
Back:	Two-piece back of medium to wide curled maple.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Plain wood, with restored peg-holes; grafted. The scroll is attractive but rather tight in character; its lateral measurement is 1.50".
Table:	Medium to narrow grained pine.
Arching:	Medium in height; approximately equal on table and back. There is fairly pronounced channelling on both table and back but it is gently graduated into the general contours.
F-holes:	2.88". Italian in character.
Varnish:	Lustrous golden oil varnish.
Purfling:	Inlaid purfling, generally well laid down. There are slight irregularities in the rear upper bout, near the button.
Model:	Amatisé.
Label:	Missing.
Observations:	This is, in general, a very beautiful violin, which justifies Perry's reputation as a maker. It is part of the Cruise Collection in the National Museum of Ireland and is catalogued as Number 115.
Illustrations:	Pages 115 and 116.





Instrument 12: The Abbeydorney Perry

Length	13.81"
Upper bout:	6.38"
Middle bout:	4.25"
Lower bout:	8.00"
Back:	Two-piece back of medium curled pine. Branded under the button 'Perry. Dublin'
Ribs:	Medium to plain maple.
Head:	Matching back.
Table:	Medium fine grained pine.
Arching:	Medium.
F-holes:	3.00". Very elegant; almost Guarnerian.
Varnish:	Red-brown oil varnish.
Purfling:	Inlaid purfling, well laid down.
Model:	Amatisé.
Label:	Made by Thos. Perry and Wm. Wilkinson, Musical Instrument Makers, No 4, Anglesea Street, Dublin. Number and date illegible.
Observations:	This mellow violin with its outstanding f-holes is weakened by its undistinguished scroll. It was restored in 1956 by Wm Hofmann (Senior). The violin has been in my family for almost two hundred years.
Illustrations:	Pages 118 and 119.





Instrument 13: A violin by Perry and Wilkinson (1810, No. 2403)

Length:	13.94"
Upper bout:	6.44"
Middle bout:	4.63"
Lower bout:	8.13"
Back:	One-piece back of broadly curled maple, descending gradually from right to left. Branded 'Perry. Dublin' below the button.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	New neck and scroll in matching maple by David McGrath, Dublin.
Table:	Medium grained pine.
Arching:	Medium on both table and back.
F-holes:	2.88". Quite Italian.
Varnish:	Golden amber varnish.
Purfling:	Painted.
Model:	Amatisé.
Label:	Thomas Perry & William Wilkinson, Musucal Instrument Makers No. 4, Anglesea St, Dublin. No 2403, 1810.
Observations:	A very attractive instrument. The number is somewhat unclear on both the button and label.
Illustrations:	Pages 121 and 122.







Instrument 14: The Dublin Perry (1814, No 4209).

Length:	13.88"
Upper bout:	6.38"
Middle bout:	4.53"
Lower bout:	8.13"
Back:	Two-piece back of horizontal medium curled maple. Branded under the button 'Perry, Dublin'.
Ribs:	Matching back
Head:	Plain wood: grafted neck.
Table:	Medium grained pine.
Arching:	Medium to low.
F-holes:	2.81". Italian in character.
Varnish:	Attractive golden brown oil varnish.
Purfling:	Inlaid purfling, competently laid down.
Model:	Amatisé.
Label:	Made by Thos Perry and Wm Wilkinson, Musical Instrument Makers, No. 4 Anglesea Street, Dublin. No. 4209, 1814.
Observations:	A very good example of Perry's Amatisé instruments, made four years before his death. The peg holes have been rebored. The scroll is competent.
Illustrations:	Pages 124 and 125.





Instrument 15: The Boston Perry (1827, No. 4775).

Length:	13.94"
Upper bout:	6.44"
Middle bout:	4.63"
Lower bout:	8.06"
Back:	Two-piece back of broadly curled maple. Branded under the button 'Perry. Dublin'
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Plain wood.
Table:	Medium grained pine.
Arching:	Medium.
F-holes:	2.81". Italian in character.
Varnish:	Rich golden brown varnish.
Purfling:	Painted.
Model:	Amatisé.
Label:	Made by Thos. Perry and Wm. Wilkinson, Musical Instrument Makers, No. 4 Anglesea Street, Dublin. No. 4775, 1827.
Observations:	This violin, which has been repatriated from the United States, is one of many Perry instruments which were brought to the New World by emigrants from Ireland.
Illustrations:	Pages 127 and 128.





Instrument 16: A scroll from a fragmented Perry violin.

Observations: This scroll, the finest which the author has seen on any Perry instrument, is probably by Richard Tobin. Its transverse measurement is 1.75".

Illustrations: Page 130.



Instrument 17: A Cither Viol or Sultana by Thomas Perry (1801).

Length of back:	14.75"
Overall length	28.50"
Upper bout:	7.38"
Middle bout:	5.00"
Lower bout:	9.00"
Back:	One piece, of faint medium curled maple, branded on the button 'Perry, Dublin. No. 2638'.
Ribs:	Matching medium curled maple, 1.44" in height.
Head:	Elegantly carved, of plain maple, with square tortoise shell inlay. Finely fashioned, machined brass keys,
Table:	One piece, of medium to medium-wide grained pine.
Arching:	Back: medium low. Table: medium high.
Sound-holes:	3.31". Squiggle shaped.
Varnish:	Golden brown oil varnish.
Purfling:	Painted.
Fingerboard & tailpiece:	Ivory inlay on ebony.
Label:	Made by Thomas Perry and William Wilkinson, Musical Instrument Makers, No. 4 Anglesea St., Dublin: No. 2638, 1801.
Observations:	This instrument is in a fine state of preservation, but it is clear that, even for Perry, there was some indecision about the number of strings that it should carry. The machine-tooled head movement is designed for ten strings, five on each side, yet the tailpiece, which appears to be original, can accommodate only nine. The instrument was acquired by the National Museum in 1919; prior to that it appears to have been played with seven strings. A bridge by McNeill of Capel Street has been fitted, with space for seven strings; equally a seven-notched ivory saddle has been substituted for the original at the end of the fingerboard.
Illustrations:	Pages 132 and 133.





Instrument 18: A violin by James Perry (1799, No. 1020).

Length:	14.00"
Upper bout:	6.44"
Middle bout:	4.63"
Lower bout:	8.13"
Back:	One piece back of horizontal medium curled maple.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Matching back.
Table:	Medium grained pine.
Arching:	Medium.
F-holes:	Exaggerated Perry styling with very small upper volute.
Varnish:	Golden brown varnish.
Purfling:	Inlaid purfling, well laid down.
Model:	Similar to early Perry English-styled instruments but with more graceful shoulders.
Label:	Manuscript label: 'Made by James Perry, Kilkenny, No. 1020 = 1799'.
Observations:	A very attractive and elegant instrument.
Illustrations:	Pages 135 and 136.





Instrument 19: A violin by John Mackintosh.

Length:	14.00"
Upper bout:	6.63"
Middle bout:	4.25"
Lower bout:	7.13"
Back:	Two-piece back of medium curled maple, descending from the joint.
Ribs:	Matching back.
Head:	Matching back.
Table:	Medium grained pine.
Arching:	Quite low.
F-holes:	2.75". Italianate.
Varnish:	Golden amber varnish.
Purfling:	Painted.
Model:	Amatisé.
Label:	Made by John Mackintosh, No. 1 Essex Quay, Dublin.
Observations:	An attractive instrument with rather thick plates. The competent scroll is cut rather low.
Illustrations:	Pages 138 and 139.





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- Use has also been made of the manuscript collections in the National Archives and the Registry of Deeds and of the files of *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* and the *Dublin Evening Post* in the National Library.