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ÉAMONN CÉANNT is perhaps one of the least well-known leaders of the 1916 Rising. Described variously as a reserved, quiet, somewhat taciturn and private figure, he has been easily eclipsed by the better-known personalities amongst the other signatories. In fact an Irish Times article published on the fiftieth anniversary of the Rising, summarises this position stating that there are only three things for which Ceannt is...
My thanks to Gerard Manning for providing a copy of a letter from Éamonn Ceannt to Nally’s widow (dated 15 October, 1911).

NLI, MS 13,069/4/5.

16 August 1906, no first or second prize was awarded. The third prize consisted of a ‘third class Western People

An Píobaire

1(3) November, 1969.
An Píobaire


26 September, 2015, an article by Denise McNamara outlining the 1916

Connacht Tribune

14

Daly, Martin (1916)

Memories of the Dead: Some Impressions

p6.

Breathnach's unintentional ranking is revealing.

1906, describes Ceannt as a 'good piper' who 'had a larger repertoire of dance tunes, and also played some airs. On one occasion I heard him play part of the "Fox Chase" though I never heard him play the whole of it' .

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1. Ceannt was at least eighteen years old when he started learning the pipes and his friend Stephen McKenna (using the pseudonym Martin Daly) writes that Ceannt 'lamented humorously the tragedy it was in one's life to take up the crustiest and most personally un-

2. However, McKenna is equally unconvincing. Describing a performance of his piping at the Ancient Concert Rooms, shortly before the Rising he says 'I do not know whether Eamunn [sic] piped well that night or whether he ever could pipe well' .

3. However, Ceannt clearly under-

4. In a brief recollection of Ceannt in 1900, that Ceannt and Nally amongst others, set up the Dublin Pipers' Club (DPC). Clear precedents in a revival-ist...

5. In a brief recollection of Ceannt in 1900, that Ceannt and Nally amongst others, set up the Dublin Pipers' Club (DPC). Clear precedents in a revival-ist...

6. Voluntary Harry

7. Ceannt applied

8. He also makes an appearance as Gearróid de Barra (another 'Píobaire Dall') in Thomas Hayes’s

9. While

10. However, there are no accounts of

11. According to the

12. Personal communication.

13. In a brief recollection of Ceannt in 1900, that Ceannt and Nally amongst others, set up the Dublin Pipers' Club (DPC). Clear precedents in a revival-ist...

14. However, the lifetime of dedication to practising advo-

15. Determined and fastidious, Ceannt possesses, in

16. Breathnach's unintentional ranking is revealing.

17. However, there are no accounts of

18. Breathnach's unintentional ranking is revealing.


20. Breathnach's unintentional ranking is revealing.

21. Breathnach's unintentional ranking is revealing.
Éamonn Ceannt

SEANCHAS

Rome to partake in the competition along with a contingent from the Dublin Corporation sanctioned to impart a message of congratulations to the Pope on behalf of the Irish people. Indeed two pipers travel to Rome, Pádraig Breathnach, father of Breandán Breathnach accompanies Ceannt.

During the visit, the Irish pilgrims obtain an audience with the Pope. Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh makes an address to the Pope in Irish, while Ceannt and the rest of the pilgrims line the floor in respect and play "the Pope of course got a full blast of the war pipes. He was a little bit pained by it, but very charmed all the same".

The entire trip was given daily coverage in the Irish press, not least because the Irish athletes were so successful, and particularly when, during the opening ceremony, Ceannt himself, however, receives considerable individual attention. After he has piped the athletes into the stadium, the Evening Telegraph states that "the notes of the pipes, echoing and re-echoing through the halls of the Vatican buildings could be heard distinctly over the whole stadium".

It reports that the Pope stops and questions Ceannt about the pipes. Even Il Giornale d'Italia tells its readers that the Pope "prays for the realisation of the aspiration of the Irish people and wishes to see "the beautiful Isle of the sea" resounding with the notes of the strange instrument that has been such an attraction away under the walls of the Eternal City".

Following 1908 and in the years preceding 1916, the war pipes and war pipe bands take on an increasing political and social significance, quite literally, mobilising national identity. Such bands become integral to the "national" movement playing at political gatherings such as the Manchester Martyrs anniversary procession to Glasnevin in November 1913 and the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa (1915). By... Band is founded by Thomas Ashe and the St Lawrence O'Toole Pipe Band is established with Tom Clarke as its president.

For Ceannt, both the war and uilleann pipes were instruments on which the ideological movement of cultural nationalism, that had crystallised in organisations such as the Proclamation of Independence, could find expression. As he said himself: "Táceol thar phíobaireacht ann, ach níl aon cheol chomhmaith leis, chun Gaeil Éireann a ghríosú".

1. The Union Pipes

THE UNION PIPES – sometimes called, by what authority I do not know, Na Píopaí Uilinn – are too well known to need description. The essential parts are the chanter on which the tune is played, a bag to keep wind to the chanter, and a bellows to fill the drone. The purpose of the latter is to supply an accompaniment to the chanter, and they are very pleasant when used effectively.

"Close fingering" is the chief mark of a good player of dance music. This means that the fingers which have been lifted to produce any given note must be replaced before the succeeding note is made. The opposite of "close fingering" is the loose, open style found nowadays amongst self-taught amateurs. To further emphasise the effect of close fingering, the player usually... and to the many other devices used by pipers for varying and beautifying the tune or melody.

Many people regard the tuning of the pipes as a hazardous effort impossible to be brought to perfection. This is not so. The chanter should be first "true" in itself by being properly fitted with a suitable reed. The drones can then be tuned. When that has been done the regulators can be similarly treated. All that is then needed is a skilful performer.

Are the pipes difficult to learn is a question often asked. The answer is decidedly in the affirmative. An Irish proverb states that there never was a good piper "gan blath ban air," who was not old and grey. The beginner must first learn the blowing of the chanter. He must then learn the scale. After that he can try simple tunes or airs. The training of the ear to detect when the pipes are out of tune, and to correct any... for which is that the regulators being fairly loud are capable of covering up the player's deficiencies on the chanter.

Éamonn Ceannt in Casadh an tSúgáin 11 Bealtaine, 1912, p198.