

FOR IRELAND I'D NOT TELL HER NAME

(Ar Eirinn Ni Neosfainn Cé Hí)

traditional melody

mm ~ 96

mf

3

6

9

12

15

18

21

1 2

This musical score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. The key signature consists of two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked as 'mm ~ 96'. The dynamics begin with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) instruction. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 21 indicated at the start of their respective lines. A repeat sign with first and second endings is present at measure 15. The melody features various note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and ties. The piece concludes with a final cadence in measure 24.

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo and dynamics markings are as follows:

- Measure 24: *slower* (above the staff), *p* (below the staff).
- Measure 27: *slower* (above the staff).
- Measure 30: *tempo 1* (above the staff), *mf* (below the staff).
- Measure 33: *tempo 1* (above the staff), *mf* (below the staff).

The score includes first and second endings. The first ending (marked '1') leads to a repeat sign at the end of the piece. The second ending (marked '2') leads to a final cadence.

This is one of the best-known "slow airs" in the traditional repertoire. The melody has many relatives throughout Ireland and Western Europe (a variant has been heard as far "east" as Romania!)

Speaking about this air a few years back, an Irish native speaker told a radio interviewer " [It's] a story about a priest who fell in love with his brother's wife. He said, 'For the whole of Ireland I wouldn't tell her name.' "

Well, maybe, but the version of the song that appears in the *Ceolta Gael* collection is clearly of the type referred to as an "aisling" or "vision", in which Ireland is personified as a beautiful young damsel in distress - often referred to as a "spéir-bhean" or "heavenly woman" - who calls on the poet/singer for assistance: "Roisin Dubh" - "The Little Black Rose" - is a better-known song of the same type. The allegorical nature of "aisling" songs and their relationship to the Irish political situation in the days when open discussion of the topic - in English - was unwise at best has been well documented, although as Donal O Sullivan points out, the poets writing in Irish "placed no restraint whatever on the expression of their views about the English."