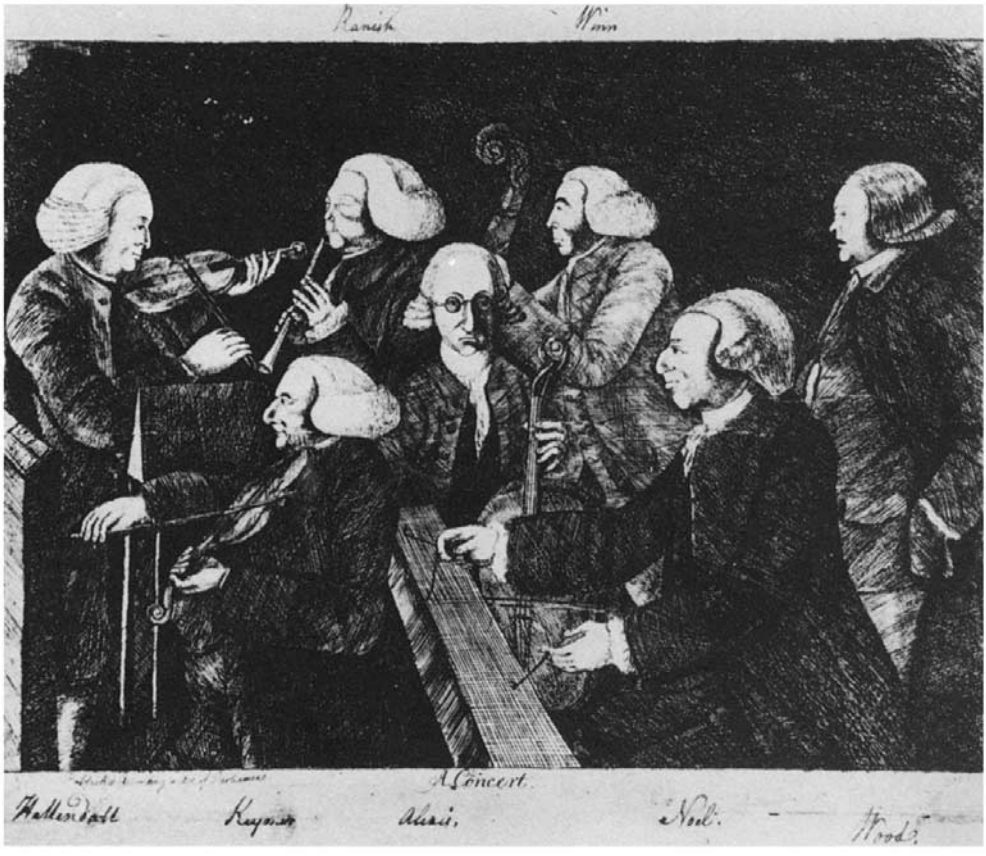
Music in Eighteenth-Century England

Essays in memory of Charles Cudworth



A Concert in Cambridge: etching by Sir Abraham Hume after Thomas Orde (*see the note on pp. xv–xviii*)

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Essays in memory of Charles Cudworth

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Cambridge University Press
Cambridge
London New York New Rochelle
Melbourne Sydney

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521235259

First published 1983
This digitally printed version 2008

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number: 81–21612

ISBN 978-0-521-23525-9 hardback
ISBN 978-0-521-09008-7 paperback

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Foreword

Charles Cudworth, to whose memory the essays in the present volume are dedicated, was a force in music studies in Cambridge and in a wider world over three decades. His background was unconventional. Charles (his full true name was Cyril Leonard Elwell Cudworth) was born near Cambridge on 30 October 1908, the son of a policeman. At the time when he might have opened up educational opportunities for himself by winning a scholarship to a secondary school, he was unable to do so as he had been ill and confined to bed for the preceding year. His eagerly inquiring mind and his intellectual interests led him to obtain jobs in bookshops; he later embarked on a novel (though he never finished it) calling, amusingly and observantly, on his experiences of those days. Working in a shop gave him a free afternoon each week, and he used those afternoons to copy into keyboard scores music of the kind that attracted him – at first in those Cambridge libraries to which he had access, later by taking a half-day return train ticket to London and working in the British Museum Reading Room. This way he built up a large collection of rough scores of eighteenth-century symphonies and concertos, and laid the foundation of his encyclopedic command of this repertoire. He was particularly encouraged by E. J. Dent. Later he took posts in university departments, and in 1943 became assistant in the music section of the University Library; three years later, with the option of a superior post there or the librarianship of the Pendlebury, the Music Faculty library, he chose the latter – because, he later said, he liked to be in daily contact with young people. In 1957 he was appointed Curator.

Since he possessed no degree or other formal qualification, Charles's situation was in a sense anomalous. As librarian of the University Music School, he was constantly in demand for help at every level, and he gave such help unstintingly: to lecturers, to research students, to undergraduates, to performers of every sort, to numerous amateurs of music who needed guidance and knew where it could readily be found – for example, in looking out repertoire suited to the improbable

combinations of instruments and voices liable to crop up at college concerts. Circumstances, abetted by his own generosity and enthusiasms, were such that he was called upon too often to lend himself for these lesser chores; his kindliness, his friendliness and his unpretentiousness invited people to take advantage of him. He did no formal teaching until 1953 (when the present writer became the first research student to be supervised by him). In 1957 his scholarly distinction was belatedly recognized by the university and he was awarded the honorary MA degree.

The list of Charles Cudworth's publications (pp. 245–58) demonstrates his range, as man and scholar. This range was wide, in several directions. He could write plays, novels and verse on the one hand; on the other, he could amass accurate and painstaking bibliographical lists. He could investigate and illuminate remote corners of music, and he could throw light on familiar masterpieces. His interests began in the early seventeenth century, grew in intensity for the period between Purcell and Mozart, and continued through the Romantics to the English song writers of the early twentieth century. He could equally write a serious scholarly paper or a chatty magazine article.

One thing that ran through all his works, and permeated his teaching too, was a deep feeling for the quality of written English. His literary inclination shows in the fascination that connections between writers (Shakespeare, Gray, Dickens and Housman, for example) and music held for him. There was no self-conscious elegance about his own prose, but a constant concern for simplicity and directness and for saying precisely what he meant. He wrote much as he spoke. And that meant that his eagerness for what he had to say always came through. Only fairly late in his life was his talent as a broadcaster fully exploited; there his enthusiasm, along with his direct, kindly manner, and the hint of East Anglian in his voice, made him an ideal communicator because so natural a one. He often broadcast on non-musical topics, especially to do with his beloved East Anglia, its traditions and its architecture.

Among his favourite anecdotes was one about a meeting between Arne and Boyce: while Dr Arne pointed out the errors in a score, Dr Boyce was content to note its merits. Charles Cudworth belonged to the Boyce party. This possibly made him less than ideal as a critic, for he erred on the side of lenience or generosity. He hated to be unkind, and sought good even when it was hard to discover. Writing about performance in any case interested him much less than writing about music itself.

It is sad that Charles Cudworth never produced a substantial book. Much of his wisdom on the subject of eighteenth-century English music – always at the centre of his interests and affections – died with him, on Boxing Day 1977. But there are several important studies, including much pioneering work, remaining. Some of his energies were devoted to questions of authenticity, notably the Pergolesi articles, the Trumpet Voluntary ones, and above all the famous *Notes* article 'Ye Olde Spuriosity Shoppe; or, Put it in the Anhang' (1954–5), whose title not only typifies his wit but has added a new word to musical discourse. His concern with

terminological precision is demonstrated in his brief but pointed *Monthly Musical Record* article of 1953, 'Baroque, Rococo, Galant, Classic', which played a crucial role in establishing regularity and propriety in the use of those words. His most important original research is to be found in the articles on the English symphony and keyboard concerto in the eighteenth century, in the *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* (1951–2) and *Score* (1953) respectively; some of this work has of course been superseded, and indeed some of it is supplemented in this very volume, but its importance in opening up new fields cannot be overstated. He wrote countless dictionary articles, in different editions of *Grove*, in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, in the Belgian *Algemene Muziekencyclopedie*, in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and elsewhere, many of them embodying new research of his own, and all of them showing his characteristic concern not only with accurate fact but also with historical and stylistic placing – for Charles, values were central, and good writing about music necessarily contained an evaluative element. Possibly the most important of all his dictionary contributions, and certainly the one he himself reckoned the most widely used and appreciated, was the 'Libraries' entry in the fifth (1954) edition of *Grove*; it involved massive international correspondence with librarians at a time when the libraries and the scholarly world were still in a state of disarray after World War II, and it helped Charles build up friendships in many countries especially in the community of music librarians, where he was always an outstandingly popular figure.

The present tributes to Charles Cudworth come partly from his friends and pupils, partly from his colleagues and acquaintances, partly from those who have pursued lines of research that interested him. It is characteristic of the direction in which musical scholarship has moved since the middle of this century that several of them deal with detailed questions surrounding texts and editions, especially those contributed by the younger generation of Handel scholars. Handel's relations with English music were a topic that fascinated him; that he felt Handel to be more affected by his English surroundings than vice versa was typical of his readiness to challenge idly and uncritically received opinion, and of his feeling for the integrity of English traditions, before, during and after Handel's time. These lines of thought are in different ways picked up in several essays offered here, covering Purcell, Tudway and John Christopher Smith (an Englishman in musical regards even if German-born), and of course the next English generation, the early symphonists on whom he himself did the pioneer work. His literary side too is reflected in the studies of the relation of music to text and context; so is his enthusiasm for local history and social history as manifested in provincial concert life. Charles's interests ranged later, too – to the *galant* era, John Christian Bach especially, to his English contemporaries and successors (men like Stephen Storace, Samuel Arnold and in particular John Marsh, whose manuscript memoirs he helped bring to light and took delight in), and of course on to Mozart. This side is less fully pursued in the present volume, though here too Charles's enthusiasm and example have awakened scholarly activity. Charles Cudworth's

interests and influence are aptly commemorated here; but they were also more widely spread, and will continue, through his numerous and affectionate friends, pupils, and intellectual and musical debtors, to irrigate British musical scholarship and musical life for many years.

Stanley Sadie

Editorial Note

Charles Cudworth made a unique contribution to the study of music in eighteenth-century England, through his writings (both scholarly and popular), through his teaching, and through the enthusiasm that he inspired in others (particularly by his broadcasts). Indeed it can be said that to a large extent he created a new field for serious musicological study, and created a public to profit by such study. The object of this collection is to commemorate his work by extending it, and to provide a *point d'appui*, a volume that can be used both as a work of reference and as a stimulant for further enquiries.

Our procedure, therefore, has not been to assemble at random a distinguished group of Cudworth's friends and pupils, but to approach some of those scholars whose work we felt to be most likely to be substantial, even though they may have had no personal connection with Cudworth. The essays concern themselves with what seem at present the principal areas of both academic and practical interest: the Purcellian inheritance; Handel and the Handelian legacy; J. C. Bach and the English symphonists; Haydn in his English aspect. In each of these areas Cudworth had done pioneer work, whether through his infectious delight in the music in performance, or through his scrupulous scholarship – though the two things, in Cudworth's case, were scarcely separable.

This collection, then, is neither a Festschrift nor a commemorative tribute in the conventional sense: rather, it attempts a laying of bearings, or perhaps a highlighting of problems, at a moment when the study of eighteenth-century English music, largely as a result of the work of the man to whose memory it is dedicated, is unprecedentedly vigorous.

C.J.H.
R.L.

A note on the frontispiece: *A Concert in Cambridge*

Christopher Hogwood

The well-known caricature *A Concert* has been variously described as showing 'an amateur concert party', 'Gentleman players' and 'a University recital', and as featuring 'an unknown form of dulcimer' played by 'an English performer'. Since three and possibly four of the players were foreign, all were professionals, and the curious instrument has been proposed not only as the immediate predecessor of the piano[1] but also as 'the largest stringed instrument ever made',[2] a summary of the documentary evidence identifying the scene, the players and the instrument might not be out of place.

Two concerts were advertised in *The Cambridge Chronicle and Journal* during the summer of 1767 featuring Mr Noel, 'the celebrated Performer of the Panthaleon'. The first, to be given on 28 May in 'Trinity College-Hall', was announced on the 23rd, but without details of programme. For the second appearance, on 8 June, the paper was more specific:

> For Mr. NOEL / At CHRIST College-Hall, on Monday / next the 8th of this Instant June, will be per / formed, a CONCERT of / Vocal and Instrument MUSIC. / ACT I / Overture Samson. / Song composed by Mr. Jackson. / Concerto Panthaleone. / Solo Violino by Mr. Hellendaal. / Fourth Overture by Mr. Abel, Op. 1. / ACT II. / Overture Bach, Manuscript. / Solo Panthaleone. / Second Concerto Geminiani, Op. 2. / Cantata accompanied by the Panthaleone Obligato. / Overture Mr. Noel. / Tickets to be had at Mr. Wynn's Music Shop, at / the Union, Dorkell's, and the Rose Coffee-Houses, / and of Mr. Noel at Mr. Mackenzie's, at 2s 6d. each. / To begin precisely at Eight o'clock.

Mr Noel, or Nowell as some sources had him, was actually Georg Noëlli, a Portuguese Jew who had studied the pantaleon with its inventor, Pantaleon Hebenstreit. (Louis XIV, hearing this elaborate version of the dulcimer in Paris in

1. Christoph Gottlieb Schröter in *Neu-eröffnete Musikalische Bibliothek* (Leipzig 1736–54), vol. 3, pp. 474–6; and *Marpurg's Kritische Briefe* (Berlin 1764), vol. 3, p. 85.
2. *Guinness Book of Musical Facts and Figures* (London 1976), p. 47.

1705, had displayed his approval by decreeing that it take the Christian name of its inventor.) After studying with Geminiani, Padre Martini and Hasse, Noëlli began to tour as a virtuoso player and improviser: his contemporaries considered him the equal of W. F. Bach, and he was associated with Telemann, Handel and C. P. E. Bach. In 1752 and again in 1757 a 'Mr Noel' appears as composer and performer on the 'cymbalo' in London (New Haymarket Theatre); he may even have been heard earlier in Birmingham, where 'several pieces of musick on the Cymbal by Israel Nowell' were advertised in a concert on 16 July 1747.[3] In Norwich in 1753 we hear of 'several grand Concerto's on a foreign Instrument, call'd Cymballo, by Mr. Noel: Which Instrument has given general Satisfaction . . . in London, and . . . Cambridge: Also some favourite Airs on the said Instrument, with Mr. Noel's own Variations' (*Norwich Mercury*, 7 July 1753), from which we deduce that the 1767 concerts did not mark Mr Noel's Cambridge début.[4] Despite these appearances, the instrument could still be described in Worcester in 1767 as 'newly invented' when Noëlli played 'several Grand Overtures' there. Many contradictory descriptions of the pantaleon can be found;[5] the same Worcester paper claimed that 'The instrument is eleven feet in length and has 276 strings of different magnitudes', but Burney was able to report on the original instrument which he found in a ruinous state when he visited Dresden in 1772:

> it is more than nine feet long, and had, when in order, 186 strings of catgut. The tone was produced by two *baguettes*, or sticks, like the dulcimer; it must have been extremely difficult to the performer, but seems capable of great effects. The strings were now almost all broken, the present Elector will not be at the charge of furnishing new ones, though it had ever been thought a court instrument in former reigns, and was kept in order at the expence of the prince.[6]

Kuhnau, who owned a 'Pantaleonisches Cimbel', praised it for its powers of *forte* and *piano*, but admitted that the effort of striking the strings with small hammers was 'herculean' (in Mattheson, *Critica Musica*, 8 December 1717); in the same year Christoph Gottlieb Schröter, by mechanizing its hammer action, claimed to have invented the fortepiano.

Sadly, no description of the English performance has yet come to light, but a long and ecstatic account of the instrument's powers can be found in a letter of Diderot to Sophie Volland (17 November 1765) reporting on a recital in Paris:

> Imaginez un instrument immense pour la variété des tons, qui a toutes sortes de caractères, des petits sons faibles et fugitifs comme le luth lorsqu'il est pincé avec la dernière délicatesse; des basses les plus fortes et les plus harmonieuses, et une tête de musicien meublée de chants propres à toutes sortes d'affections d'âme; tantôt grand, noble et majestueux, un moment après doux, pathétique et tendre, faisant succéder avec un art incompréhensible la délicatesse à la force, la gaieté à la

3. See J. Sutcliffe Smith, *The Story of Music in Birmingham* (Birmingham 1945), p. 15.
4. See Trevor Fawcett, *Music in Eighteenth-Century Norwich and Norfolk* (Norwich 1979), p. 44.
5. For a summary, see Sibyl Marcuse, *A Survey of Musical Instruments* (Newton Abbot 1975), pp. 225–7.
6. Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, The Netherlands, and United Provinces*, 2nd edn (London 1775), vol. 2, p. 57.

> mélancholie, le sauvage, l'extraordinaire à la simplicité, à la finesse, à la grâce, et tous ces caractères rendus aussi piquants qu'ils peuvent l'être par leur contraste subit. Je ne scais comment cet homme réussissoit à lier tant d'idées disparates; mais il est certain qu'elles étoient liées, et que vingt fois, en l'écoutant, cette histoire ou ce conte du musicien de l'antiquité qui faisoit passer à discrétion ses auditeurs de la fureur à la joye, et de la joye à la fureur, me revint à l'esprit et me parut croyable. Je vous jure, mon amie, que je n'exagère point quand je vous dis que je me suis senti frémir et changer de visage; que j'ai vu les visages des autres changer comme le mien, et que je n'aurois pas douté qu'ils n'eussent éprouvé le même frémissement quand ils ne l'auroient pas avoué. Ajoutez à cela la main la plus légère, l'exécution la plus brillante et la plus précise, l'harmonie la plus pure et la plus sévère, et de la part de cet Osbruck une âme douce et sensible, une tête chaude, enthousiaste, qui s'allume, et qui se perd, et qui s'oublie si parfaitement qu'à la fin d'un morceau il a l'aire effaré d'un homme qui revient d'un rêve.

The etching of the Cambridge concert, presumably made *c.* 1767, is attributed to Sir Abraham Hume, based on a drawing by the young Thomas Orde, later Lord Bolton, who was an undergraduate at King's College.[7] Two states of the print are known, several of them carrying later inscriptions added in pencil or ink; in examples of the first impression in the British Museum and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, the inscription is completed in pencil to read 'A Concert at Cambridge'. 'Publish'd According to Act of Parliament' is added bottom left, and the presumed engraver 'Bretherton' bottom right (spelt 'Bretherston' on the Fitzwilliam copy).[8] The second impression (British Museum and Rowe Library, Cambridge) has the Parliamentary privilege engraved, with a pencilled 'Bretherton' on the Rowe copy.

Also inscribed on both impressions are identifications of the musicians; in the spelling of the Fitzwilliam copy, these are, from left to right:

HELLENDALE / NEWELL SEN^{R} / RENNISH / WEST / WYNNE / NEWELL JUN^{R} / WOOD

The Dutch violinist and composer Pieter Hellendaal, after succeeding Charles Burney as organist at St Margaret's Church, King's Lynn, lived in Cambridge from 1762 until his death in 1799, and was responsible for the promotion of many of the professional concerts in East Anglia.

John Frederick Ranish (originally Wranisch?) had been flautist with the Covent Garden orchestra, but was much associated with East Anglia. He can be seen in the painting by Heins of the 1734 concert party at Melton Constable,[9] and on his death in 1777 the *Cambridge Chronicle* described him as 'an eminent teacher and performer on the German flute in this town. He always supported the character of a gentleman . . .'. This etching shows that he, like many eighteenth-century wind-players, doubled on oboe and flute.

John Wynne, playing the double-bass, was a music publisher and kept his

7. F. G. Stephens and E. Hawkins, *Catalogue of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum. Division I. Political and Personal Satires*, vol. 4 (London 1883), p. 698, no. 4479.
8. See *Gainsborough, English Music and the Fitzwilliam* (Cambridge 1977), pp. 26–7.
9. See Fawcett, *op. cit.*, p. 43, and Prince F. Duleep Singh, *Portraits in Norfolk Houses*, ed. E. Farrer (Norwich n.d.), vol. 2, p. 20.

'Music Shop, at the sign of the Harp and Hautboy [also the device of John Walsh], near the Senate House' (advertisement in the *Cambridge Chronicle*, 7 April 1764).

Both 'West' and 'Newell Senr', present difficulties; no mention of a West is to be found in Cambridge documentation, and no report suggests that Noëlli travelled with his father. (We know that family groups, such as the clarinettist 'Mr. Charles' and his wife and son, received good publicity.) Alternative identifications of these players, however, have recently come to light inked in the margin of a newly discovered copy of the second impression of the etching (reproduced as the frontispiece of this volume), where the second violinist is 'Keymur' and the bespectacled cellist 'Alexis'.

John Keymer (also spelt Kymer and Keymour) was a chorister at Norwich Cathedral, and for many years a Lay Clerk at King's College. According to his obituary (*Norwich Mercury*, 8 September 1770) he also sang in the choirs of St John's and Trinity Colleges.[10]

'Mr. Alexis' appears regularly in the Cambridge concert scene of 1767, but without surname; a benefit on 21 February 'For Mr. Alexis', a concert with 'violoncello Mr. Alexis' on 28 March and, more conclusively, a benefit concert in Trinity on 6 July involving 'Messrs. Hellendaal, Alexis, and Ranish' (*Cambridge Chronicle*, 27 June). An undated publication from about this period solves the mystery: 'Six Sonate for the Violoncello e Basso, composed by Alexis Magito, Opera Prima' issued by 'John Wynne, for the Author: Cambridge' (copies in the Rowe Library and the British Library).[11] It seems likely from the limited number of appearances in Cambridge and the hybrid Italian–English of his title that Magito was a visiting Italian, probably invited by Hellendaal for the 1767 season.

10. More biographical details are to be found in A. H. Mann's MS Notebooks in the Rowe Library, King's College, Vol. I.
11. See Charles Humphries and William C. Smith, *Music Publishing in the British Isles*, 2nd edn (Oxford 1970), p. 344.