

# Jackson's Oxford Journal and Musical Life in Nineteenth-century Oxford

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## SUMMARY

*For local historians, newspaper collections such as those in the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies represent a rich fund of information. Jackson's Oxford Journal (1753-1928) throughout its life regularly carried notices relating to a variety of musical happenings in and around the city and the university. This article looks at the ways in which the Journal reflected contemporary musical culture through its advertisements and notices, and at the development of its reporting on music as the 19th century progressed and the university and colleges expanded their musical activity. It thus examines the newspaper as a source for Oxford's musical history, and considers what it reveals about aspects of musical life in the city.*

It is an acknowledged fact that for local historians, newspaper collections represent a rich source of information. *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, from the earliest phase of its existence through to the closing years of its life,<sup>1</sup> regularly carried notices relating to a wide variety of musical happenings in and around the city and the university. Newspaper research is an easily distracting occupation; these musical announcements typically appeared embedded among a plethora of other items, ranging from the alarming reports of footpads on the highway<sup>2</sup> to the genteel descriptions of fashions and educational establishments for young ladies (Fig. 1).<sup>3</sup>

While writers on the social history of music have, rightly, urged caution in dealing with such sources, nevertheless the documentation they provide is of immense potential value. Rosamond McGuinness has issued the warning that printed source-material of this kind may not represent the complete picture, and that the information it gives may not be fully accurate.<sup>4</sup> It is thus undoubtedly wise to enlist the help of other sources as far as possible, alongside the newspaper materials, in order to reinforce or refine the information these offer. In the case of music, other categories of source-material include programme collections, letters and memoirs, and musical scores, especially where these bear inscriptions relating to the circumstances of their composition and performance. All these may complement valuably the newspaper material.

Customarily, and understandably, newspaper resources are drawn upon by music historians on an *ad hoc* basis mainly for the data they provide concerning particular occasions, or perhaps the careers of individual musicians; or, more systematically, for the collection of references relating to particular periods of musical history. But another, and an interesting, angle from which to view these sources is to examine the way in which the newspaper coverage of music was formed and developed over a period of time. The

<sup>1</sup> *Jackson's Oxford Journal* was founded in 1753 and lasted until 1928. Hereafter, *Jackson's Oxford Journal* will be referred to in the text as 'the Journal' and in the notes as *JOJ*.

<sup>2</sup> For footpads, see for example *JOJ*, 18 March 1775.

<sup>3</sup> See *JOJ*, 30 June 1810 (Fig. 1), which also carried J. Wickens's interesting advertisement for his 'music warehouse' near Lincoln College.

<sup>4</sup> R. McGuinness, review of *R.M.A. Research Chronicle*, 22 (1989), in *Music & Letters*, 71 (1990), 97.

**OXFORD**  
**Grand Musical Festival,**  
 For the Public Reception of the new CHANCELLOR,  
*The Right Hon. Lord GRENVILLE,*  
 Is fixed for the following days—JULY 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th.  
 PRINCIPAL VOCAL PERFORMERS,  
**Madame CATALANI,**  
 Mrs. ASHE, and Mrs. BIANCHI;  
**Mr. BRAHAM,**  
 Mr. W. KNYVETT, Mr. VAUGHAN, Mr. BELLAMY,  
 AND  
**Mr. BARTLEMAN.**  
*Instrumental Performers,*  
 Lender of the Band, Mr. GRAMER.  
 VIOLINS—Messrs. MARSHALL, MORALT, MAHON,  
 STORM, LYONS, HERSCHELL, GRIESBACH, jun.,  
 TOMLINS, TIBBET, JUNG, HARDY, WHITE, SIKES,  
 COLE, HATTON, &c. &c.  
 VIOLAS—Messrs. R. ASHLEY, C. LINDLEY, WOODCOCK,  
 and CHAPEL.  
 VIOLONCELLOS—Messrs. LINDLEY, REINAGLE, ASHLEY,  
 and J. MARSHALL.  
 DOUBLE BASSES—Messrs. BOYCE, SMART, ADDISON,  
 and HALDON.  
 FLUTES—Mr. JACKSON, &c.  
 OBOES—Messrs. GRIESBACH and OLIVER.  
 CLARIONETS—Messrs. HALDON and PHILLIPS.  
 BASSOONS—Messrs. HOLMES, FELDON, and WILKINS.  
 TRUMPETS—Messrs. SCHMIDT and DROVER.  
 TROMBONES—Messrs. DRESSLER, FLACK, & ZWINGMAN.  
 HORNS—Messrs. LEANDER.  
 SERPENT—Mr. HATTON.  
 DOUBLE DRUMS—Mr. JENKINSON.

**FIRST CONCERT, Tuesday, July 3.**

**ACT I.**

OVERTURE, *Sampson*. Handel.  
 RECIT.—Mr. VAUGHAN. "This day a solemn feast." Handel.  
 CHORUS. "Awake the trumpet's lofty sound." Handel.  
 SONG—Mrs. ASHE. "Pious orgies." *Jud. Macab.* Handel.  
 SONG—Mr. BARTLEMAN. *Tempest*. Purcell.  
 "Arise, ye subterranean winds."  
 QUARTETT and CHORUS. *Te Deum*. Graun.  
 "Te gloriosus apostolorum Chorus."  
 SONG—Mr. BRAHAM. "Quæsto & Toræ." Zingarelli.  
 CONCERTO, Oboe—Mr. GRIESBACH.  
 SCENA—Madame CATALANI. "Su Griselda." Paer.  
 The NIGHTINGALE CHORUS. *Solomon*. Handel.

**ACT II.**

Grand OVERTURE to Henry IV. Martini.  
 QUARTETT—Madame CATALANI, Mrs. BIANCHI, Mr.  
 BRAHAM, and Mr. BELLAMY. Guglielmi.  
 "Perfido a questo eccesso."  
 SONG—Mr. BRAHAM. Dr. Clark.  
 "The last words of Marmion."  
 CHORUS. *Jud. Macab.* "O-Father." Handel.  
 MOTETT. "Methinks I hear." Dr. Crotch.  
 OVERTURE and CHACONNE. Iomelli.  
 SONG—Mr. BARTLEMAN. "O Lord, have mercy." Pergolesi.  
 SONG—Madame CATALANI. "Ah ti muova." Mayer.  
 Grand CORONATION ANTHEM—Handel.  
 "Zadock the priest."

*The Whole to be conducted by Dr. CROTCH.*

The Orchestra will consist of more than a Hundred Performers.  
 Tickets, 10s. 6d. each, to be had of Messrs. Lock and Son,  
 High-street, and of Mr. Thorp, Broad-street; Mr. Cooke, Mr.  
 Parker, M. Bliss, and Robert Bliss, booksellers.  
 \* \* \* The doors will be opened at Four, and the perform-  
 ances will begin at Five o'clock.

**INSTALLATION.**

MRS. GRIFFITH begs leave to return her sincere thanks to the Ladies of Oxford and its vicinity for past favours, and informs them, she is returned from London, where she has been selecting a new and elegant assortment of

*Fashionable Millinery, Fancy Dresses, &c.*

with which her Rooms are now open; and she trusts, on inspection, the above articles will be found worthy of their patronage.—A great variety of Black and White Lace Dress Shawls, Mantles, Scarfs, &c.

*High-street, Oxford, June 30, 1810.*

**Mrs. ALLEN, CUTLER, &c.**  
**HIGH-STREET, ABINGDON,**

EMBRACES this opportunity of returning her sincere thanks to her Friends and the Public, for the favour and support which she has experienced, since the death of her husband, and respectfully informs them, that she has disposed of her STOCK IN TRADE to Mr. JOHN BAYNE, CUTLER, from OXFORD, whom she earnestly begs to recommend to their notice as her successor.

**JOHN BAYNE, CUTLER,**

*Successor to Mrs. ALLEN, High-street, Abingdon,*

RESPECTFULLY informs his Friends, the Friends of Mrs. ALLEN, and the Public, that he has taken to her shop, which he purposed to furnish immediately with every article in the CUTLERY LINE, procured from the first manufactories and best markets, and humbly solicits a continuance of their favour and support, which will be ever gratefully acknowledged.

Cutlery in all its branches executed in the best style.

The Stock of Mrs. ALLEN, consisting of Knives, Scissors, Buckles, Buttons, &c. &c. is selling off CONSIDERABLY UNDER PRIME COST.

*Abingdon, June 30, 1810.*

**ON THE THIRD OF JULY**

(Being the first day of the GRAND MUSICAL FESTIVAL, for the reception of the new CHANCELLOR)

**WILL BE PUBLISHED, BY TAYLOR,**

Drawing Master, Exhibitor in the Royal Academy, &c.

**ALL SAINTS', OXFORD,**

A GENERAL VIEW OF

**THE HIGH-STREET, OXFORD.**

HUMBLY DEDICATED TO

The Right Hon. Lord GRENVILLE, Chancellor;

The Right Hon. Lord ELDON, High Steward;

The DOCTORS; and other MEMBERS of the University of Oxford.

£ s. d. PRICE. £ s. d.

Prints... 0 15 0 each. Coloured ditto... 1 1 0

Proofs... 1 5 0 ditto.

The HIGH-STREET, of OXFORD, from its peculiar and characteristic beauties, cannot fail to excite universal admiration. Mr. T. flatters himself that, as it has been his aim to exhibit a correct representation of this magnificent Street in all its most prominent features, from a point generally allowed to be the best, this View will be found not unworthy of the attention of the public.

\* \* \* LIKENESSES taken in profile shade.

Prints lately published by TAYLOR.—The EAST VIEW of BRASENORSE COLLEGE—the magnificent WEST FRONT of CHRIST CHURCH—a VIEW of WINCHESTER COLLEGE—a PAIR, the CANDELABRA, in the Radcliffe Library—and the ACADEMIC COSTUME of the UNIVERSITY of OXFORD, twenty-five Plates.—A Pair of CABINET PICTURES to be disposed of;

Fig. 1. Jackson's Oxford Journal, 30 June 1810.

particularly extensive chronological range, together with the extent of the musical reporting and advertising contained in the pages of *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, make it the prime candidate among Oxford papers for such an enquiry. Both J.H. Mee, in his work on the Holywell Music Room, and George Thewlis in his unpublished survey of music in Oxford, were greatly indebted to the *Journal's* musical coverage.<sup>5</sup> The focus in the present article will be on concert life.

In the early years the *Journal* played an important part in supporting the endeavours of the Oxford Musical Society as it developed its activities in its new (and purpose-built) premises, the recently opened Holywell Music Room (1748). Readers of the *Journal* on the lookout for musical information in this category will soon have become accustomed to seeing the heading 'MUSIC ROOM, OXFORD' which regularly appeared in the *Journal's* pages as a cue for concert advertisements. Throughout the second half of the 18th century and the first few decades of the 19th century, the *Journal* advertised both the regular Monday evening subscription concerts put on by the Musical Society, and periodic choral performances also held under the Society's auspices at the Music Room. The effect of this – apart from its immediate and obvious purpose – was to convey to Oxford concert-goers a sense that musical life in the city was generally thriving, and that music had an established place in Oxford life.

From a typical advertisement for a particular event, the historian of concert life can glean details of the setting (time, venue, occasion), the structure (programme, ticket arrangements) and the content (repertoire, performers).<sup>6</sup> Besides this 'mainstream' information, the more tangential details add colour to the picture, for example in the hint of possible traffic congestion contained within the plea placed at the foot of the notice for Handel's *Messiah* at the Music Room in 1775: 'N.B. The Gentlemen and Ladies are requested to order their Carriages to take them up at the great Gate only'. But the *Journal's* coverage in relation to the Musical Society ranged beyond advertising the concerts. The stewards of the Musical Society periodically arranged for the Society's Articles of Subscription to be printed;<sup>7</sup> and their appeals for the support of the public during the difficult years after 1789 appeared also in the *Journal's* pages. Such items were typically given the luxury of far more column space than the normally brief advertisements for the regular concerts and choral performances.

In addition, during these early decades of the Musical Society's existence in its new Holywell setting, the *Journal's* advertising columns aided the efforts of numerous individual performers associated with the Holywell Band in supplementing their income, both by means of the occasional benefit events permitted to them under the Society's rules, and also by offering a variety of services, including teaching – not only music but also languages and dancing. The spotlight on the individual in these instances might draw on the public's sympathy:

R. WALL begs Leave to present his humble Respects to the Publick; and as the Vice-Chancellor, from a Motive of Humanity, has been pleased to permit him to have a BENEFIT, and the Performers have been so kind to promise him their Assistance, he thankfully embraces this Opportunity, having been confined by a long Illness, and humbly hopes for generous support.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> J.H. Mee, *The Oldest Music Room in Europe* (1911); G. Thewlis, unpubl. vols. in Bodl. Lib.

<sup>6</sup> For details of the 18th-century concerts, see S. Wollenberg, *Music at Oxford in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (2001), Ch. 4.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the *Journal* for 1775–6, *passim*. For the full text, see S. Wollenberg, *op. cit.*, 71 (Fig. 9: *JOJ*, 16 March 1776).

<sup>8</sup> Advertisement for Mr. Wall's Benefit Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music, *JOJ*, 6 August 1791.

L O N D O N, the 15th MAY, 1791.  
M U S I C K.

**W**HEREAS at the Request of Mr. JUNG, an Acquaintance of mine from Vienna, I faithfully promised to play the Harpsichord at Mr. HAYWARD'S Benefit Concert the 18th Instant, (~~which Day I had appointed myself~~) but ~~was~~ prevented from coming on Account of a Rehearsal at the Opera House, which lasted from Two till Half past Four on that Day, I take the Liberty by this Paper to express the greatest Sorrow for not having been able to stand to my Promise. As the University of Oxford, whose great Reputation I heard abroad, is too great an Object for me not to see before I leave England, I shall take the earliest Opportunity of paying it a Visit, and hope at the same Time to make a personal Apology to those Ladies and Gentlemen who were kind enough to honour Mr. Hayward with their Company.

JOSEPH HAYDN.

Fig. 2. *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 28 May 1791.

It is important to have established something of the 18th-century background here, so that in drawing attention subsequently to the enormous expansion represented by the 19th-century coverage of music in the *Journal*, this will not be taken to imply that the 18th-century coverage was negligible. By the end of the 18th century, a variety of advertising or marketing strategies had developed in connection with the Oxford concert scene, and in the use of the local press to promote and help sustain its activities. For example, a series of advertisements placed in the *Journal* over a period of time might serve not only to keep a forthcoming event in focus, but also to whet the readers' appetite by gradually releasing more detail of the event; although this could backfire, as happened with the advertised appearance at the Holywell of 'the celebrated Mr. HAYDN, from VIENNA' in May 1791, when a series of such notices in the *Journal* was followed by Haydn's non-appearance on the day.<sup>9</sup> Both Haydn and Mr. Hayward, whose benefit concert it was, printed an apology in the *Journal* (Fig. 2).<sup>10</sup>

Within one advertisement a range of marketing strategies might be brought into play, as with the notice in the *Journal* advertising the benefit in May 1799 for Mrs. Hindmarsh, a regular singer with the Holywell Band, in which the 'assistance' of 'several performers from London' was promised. Furthermore, Mrs. Hindmarsh was able to declare that 'Mr. Salomon' had 'kindly offered her for that Night a GRAND MILITARY SYMPHONY, and a NEW MARCH, composed by Dr. HAYDN'.<sup>11</sup> This announcement thus played on a number

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *JOJ*, 7 and 14 May 1791.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 28 May 1791 (see Fig. 2). Haydn's hope of visiting Oxford was realised triumphantly when he received the honorary D. Mus. and participated in the celebratory concerts in July 1791.

<sup>11</sup> *JOJ*, 18 May 1799. Johann Peter Salomon, violinist and impresario, had first brought Haydn over to England.

of advantages: visiting performers from London were a special attraction, while the mention of Salomon lent further distinction to the event. The Haydn items were announced as a coup 'for that Night specially'; military music was very much in fashion and Haydn's 'Military' symphony, no. 100, was to become established during the Napoleonic period as a favourite with Oxford audiences. And finally, that signal word 'new', relative though the newness might in reality be, the mainstay of product promotion through to the modern era of advertising, together with the mention of 'Dr.' Haydn, thus reminding the Oxford concert-goers of his special connection with the university, clinched the event's potential attractiveness to the *Journal's* readership.

The wording of the stewards' appeals to the public during the closing years of the 18th and early years of the 19th century also repays closer examination. The subscription concerts at Holywell were not the short-lived venture that tended to characterize London's more multifarious concert life.<sup>12</sup> Therefore the Holywell series carried with it, and was perceived as possessing, the distinctive significance of its long pedigree. It is clear from the notices of concerts that the public envisaged for these events was drawn from both town and gown; reference was constantly made in these advertisements to 'the Ladies and Gentlemen of the University and City, and of its vicinity', or some similar formula.<sup>13</sup> Thus in February 1800 the stewards of the Music Room found themselves 'under the necessity of representing to the Subscribers, and the University and City at large, that the present state of their fund is wholly inadequate to the necessary expences of the Concert'.<sup>14</sup>

It is noticeable throughout the text of their appeal in 1800 that the stewards place a responsibility directly on the public:

The Stewards ... take the liberty of submitting to the consideration of the public – whether after a commodious Room has been built and furnished at a great expence, and the Orchestra has been provided with a complete set of Musical Instruments and Books; and after a Band of Instrumental Performers, of acknowledged abilities in their profession, has been collected; they will suffer the Room and its Furniture to be rendered useless, and the Performers to be dispersed, by withdrawing their support from an Institution, which has been established upwards of fifty years, and which provides so much rational and elegant amusement, at an expence comparatively inconsiderable.<sup>15</sup>

Together with the vivid sense of all that would be lost, and wasted, if the Holywell concerts were to cease, the stewards evoked a strong sense of the weight of history attached to these concerts ('an Institution... established upwards of fifty years'), balanced by an appeal to reason ('so much rational and elegant amusement, at an expence comparatively inconsiderable').

Having put their case thus skilfully, and eloquently, and after outlining the dire consequences of the public's non-compliance with their appeal ('if the additional Subscriptions and Attendance should not be found sufficient... the Stewards must be compelled to shut up the Room'), they closed, wisely, on a more positive note, offering a carrot to their subscribers as a parting shot:

<sup>12</sup> For the background on London concerts see especially S. McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (1993).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *JOJ*, 28 October 1820.

<sup>14</sup> *JOJ*, 8 February 1800.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

Should the Concert be continued, a Female Performer of eminence will be engaged, as soon as it appears that the receipts are likely to answer the expence; and the Stewards cannot omit this opportunity of requesting the resident families to assist in promoting the subscription, and to countenance the Concert by their attendance.<sup>16</sup>

Undoubtedly, within the town and gown formula, the university played a major role and the Musical Society's stewards were drawn from the ranks of the colleges. From the early days, the *Journal's* coverage of musical events placed these in the context of the university calendar and ceremonial in which music in Oxford so often functioned. The regular columns devoted to university news, in the days before the *Gazette* existed, thus created a record of university music-making.<sup>17</sup> These columns generally give the impression that some trouble had been taken to provide information from reliable sources. A special focus was placed on the Commemorations, and, as with other aspects, the coverage of these annual events, so lavishly extended in the 19th-century issues of the *Journal* (which itself grew larger in format), was already established in the 18th century. Typically, an advertisement for the forthcoming ceremonies would range over the various components of the Commemoration week, evoking the grandeur of the occasion as a whole.<sup>18</sup>

Haydn's visit to Oxford at Commemoration-time in July 1791 represented a rare and special event; scarcely any honorary degrees in music were awarded by the university before the closing decades of the 19th century. But throughout the late 18th and early 19th century a stream of distinguished musical visitors (these neither expecting nor receiving honorary degrees) was attracted to Oxford, appearing both during the special events of Commemoration week and in the regular subscription series. These 'stars' may have been booked first for the subscription concerts and then, following their success in these, invited to return for the Commemoration.

What is particularly significant about the *Journal's* reporting of the presence of such stars, beyond the facts of their appearing locally, is the style in which these visitors were variously claimed for Oxford. Of Madame Catalani, for instance, at the Music Room in 1807, the *Journal's* critic enthused:

This elegant Syren seems to have poured forth all the treasures of her sweet sounds ... into the bosom of Isis; for never at the Opera, or in any of her Concerts, did she display more science, or warble with more native melody, than here ...<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. Subscriptions were invited at 'the Bank, by Messrs. FLETCHER and PARSONS; by Mr. JUNG, opposite the Music Room, Holywell; and on Concert Nights at the Music Room'. Fletcher and Parsons were in business as bankers from 1771; Philippe Jung was a violinist with the Holywell Band. The (happily much extended) list of subscribers was duly published.

<sup>17</sup> The *Oxford University Gazette* was launched in 1870, and the *Oxford Magazine* in 1883.

<sup>18</sup> For example, see *JOJ*, 29 May 1773 (full text of the Commemoration advertisement reproduced in S. Wollenberg, *Music at Oxford in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, 14 (Fig. 2)). The proceedings included the service for the Radcliffe Infirmary ('in the Service will be introduced a grand Te Deum, Anthems, &c.'), which was traditionally held at this time of year (Radcliffe's hospital was opened in 1770-1), as well as the 'annual Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors to the University' and the 'Academical Exercises in the [Sheldonian] Theatre', together with a variety of musical performances throughout the week.

<sup>19</sup> *JOJ*, 5 December 1807. Such effusions, going beyond the comparative simplicity of 18th-century reporting, heralded a new era of criticism in which the more detailed focus on the individual performers was developed.



With Eliza Salmon, *née* Munday (b. 1787, and a scion of the celebrated Mahon family of musicians), the *Journal* linked her local following with her local origins:

We learn with much satisfaction, that the Stewards of the Music Room have succeeded in engaging our towns-woman, Mrs. SALMON, for the Choral Concert ... on the 2d of February next ... As it is probable the public will not have another opportunity of hearing this inimitable singer before her departure for the Continent [but they did!], we have no doubt the room will be much crowded.<sup>20</sup>

Mrs. Salmon retained her Oxford following over a considerable period of time: she was booked to sing as early as 1807 for a special concert 'not included in the Terms of the present Subscription, to defray the Expences incurred in fitting up the [Music] Room'.<sup>21</sup>

Increasingly, writers in the *Journal* approached their subject from the point of view of their role as habitués of the Oxford concert scene. Even so, it is striking to find a *Journal* reporter in 1848 commenting, on the cellist Robert Lindley: 'He is well remembered by several lovers of music in this City, as occupying, nearly 50 years ago, the same position [leader of the cellos] as he did on the present occasion'.<sup>22</sup> Long service to Oxford concerts was characteristic among visiting performers, as in the case of the celebrated tenor John Braham, who was booked to sing in Oxford as early as 1803-4, and appeared throughout the following decades. The *Journal* in 1844 announced:

MR. BRAHAM HAS THE HONOUR TO ANNOUNCE A CONCERT at the above [Music] Room, on THURSDAY EVENING NEXT... , on which occasion he will introduce his SONS and PUPILS, MR. CHARLES BRAHAM AND MR. HAMILTON BRAHAM.<sup>23</sup>

Braham himself sang in this concert.

By the mid 19th century the comments on 'imported' performers had reached a peak of descriptive fervour, betraying some interesting, and not purely musical, preoccupations on the part of the reviewer. In this category is the description of the Italian tenor Luigi Salvi, who appeared in the Commemoration concerts of 1844:

In a *romanza* by Verdi, we could estimate the powers of Salvi as a concert singer. The person of Salvi is in his favour, and cannot fail to tell in a manner much to the advantage of the performer... Salvi is of a commanding stature, apparently with a broad chest, and possesses the advantage of a fine open forehead. His voice is a decided tenor, and of great power and flexibility...

The reviewer on this occasion felt, however, that the piece by Verdi was not sufficiently 'well adapted for the display of the finer parts of Salvi's voice'.<sup>24</sup>

Besides offering the chance to track the careers and fortunes of the individual performers (Mrs. Salmon, for example, was recorded in the *Journal* of 6 August 1842 as being sadly 'now a widow, in very indigent circumstances', and 'having for many years lost her voice') the regular reporting of concerts in the *Journal* enables the tracking of new ventures during the

<sup>20</sup> *JOJ*, 15 January 1820 (cf. *ibid.*, 26 February and 3 March 1820).

<sup>21</sup> *JOJ*, 7 November 1807.

<sup>22</sup> *JOJ*, 8 July 1848. This type of 'knowing' reportage was to be developed further, in later 19th-century Oxford. It conveyed a strong sense that the visiting performers belonged here; the visitors were eagerly, although not uncritically, 'adopted' by their Oxford audiences.

<sup>23</sup> *JOJ*, 26 October 1844.

<sup>24</sup> *JOJ*, 22 June 1844.

19th century, as the Holywell subscription concerts receded and an increasing number of new institutions and entrepreneurs appeared on the Oxford concert scene. The cessation of the Holywell concerts – not, finally, until almost 100 years after their instigation – was documented obliquely in a series of notices including W.A. Dicks's announcement in May 1840 that he had 'taken a LEASE of the MUSIC ROOM' and intended selling there 'by Auction every description of Property' as well as holding 'such Exhibitions and Concerts as may be approved of by the Vice-Chancellor'.<sup>25</sup>

The *Journal* took upon itself the role of encouraging and supporting the new concert ventures that emerged during the 1830s and 1840s. For the historian its role in documenting these is especially important since, with the demise of the Holywell subscription concerts, the possibility of access to related collections of programmes is greatly reduced.<sup>26</sup> In continuing to serve, during the 1830s and 1840s, as an outlet for concert advertisements and reports, the *Journal* expressed its critic's approval of new enterprises which it hoped would 'lead to a revival of the declining musical taste' in Oxford.<sup>27</sup>

In fact, new areas of taste were developed, including the piano repertoire and chamber music, for example in the concerts organized by Mr. and Mrs. Reinagle during the 1840s; as the *Journal* declared in October 1846:

Mr. and Mrs. REINAGLE's first Quartet Concert, which is to take place on Thursday evening next, cannot fail to attract all lovers of good music. Their selection is excellent, and the talent of the artists engaged ensures a performance of the highest order... Miss Lincoln, whose success last season at the Leipzig concerts was so decided, is the vocalist; and Mrs. Reinagle (late Miss Orger), who is esteemed in London as the first English pianiste, will make her *début* in our city.<sup>28</sup>

To some extent the local entrepreneurs who put on series of concerts at this period, including William Marshall, 'Mr. Sharp', and later James Russell,<sup>29</sup> drew on the large circle of musicians already associated with Oxford and with the Holywell Music Room, including Lindley and Reinagle among the cellos, and Franz and Wilhelm Cramer, violinists.<sup>30</sup> But they also brought in new performers, establishing new favourites with the Oxford audiences

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 9 May 1840, together with an advertisement for Dicks's forthcoming auction, at the Holywell Music Room, of 'a quantity of GOODS' described as 'the property of a gentleman, late a Member of this University': catalogues were to be had from the auctioneer at 94 High Street, Oxford.

<sup>26</sup> The Bodleian Library's programme collection (chief source for Oxford concerts from the original Holywell period) stops at 1819; these programmes largely belonged to John Walker of New College, and in 1819 the *Journal* reported that 'Thursday last the Rev. John Walker, LL.B Fellow of New College, was presented, by the Warden and Fellows of that Society, to the Vicarage of Hornchurch, in the county of Essex' (*JOJ*, 3 July 1819). Greatly by way of compensation, however, the increasing number of complementary items published subsequently, including memoirs, and early histories such as those of university music clubs, together with an expanded range of newspapers and periodicals, provide rich material for the later 19th-century period of Oxford concerts. In addition, the Bodleian Library has a scattering of later concert programmes.

<sup>27</sup> *JOJ*, 23 February 1839.

<sup>28</sup> *JOJ*, 31 October 1846. Reinagle played cello in the quartet, and Sharp (see below) viola.

<sup>29</sup> William Marshall was leader of the Holywell Band in the early 19th century (and also opened a music shop in Oxford). 'Mr Sharp' was probably Benjamin Sharp, who ran a 'musical academy' in Broad Street in the 1820s and 1830s. James Russell was a forerunner of the amalgamated business of Russell Acott in the High Street.

<sup>30</sup> For biographical details of Robert Lindley (principal cellist in many major London musical ventures), Alexander Reinagle, the Cramer family, and various other musicians mentioned here, see particularly the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd rev. edn. 2001).



such as the singer Clara Novello, and also acknowledging the fashionable emphasis on instrumental virtuosity: at Marshall's concert at the Star Assembly Rooms in November 1841, the proprietor begged

respectfully to announce to the Nobility and Gentry of the University and City, and his Friends [that] Mr. HENRY C. COOPER, Violin [would] in the course of the Concert, perform a Grand Concerto, with full Orchestral Accompaniments, by De Bériot, and a Grand Sonata on One String only, the fourth, written expressly for him, and dedicated to Paganini.<sup>31</sup>

Oxford concerts followed the fashion for exotic new sounds, these including the efforts of 'THE DISTIN FAMILY, the original performers on their SILVER SAX HORNS', who were billed as giving 'TWO GRAND EVENING CONCERTS' on Monday and Tuesday, 26 and 27 May 1845, at the Music Room, 'being positively the *only* concerts they *can give in Oxford*' (their London engagements apparently precluded a longer stay in Oxford). The advertisement in the *Journal* proudly presented the performers' credentials: in a clear bid to impress their potential audiences, the Distin family were described as having '*again* had the honour of *performing before her Majesty* on Friday 16th inst. (*being the fourth time*)'. In the 19th century, as in the preceding century, Oxford's concert-goers were offered the opportunity to hear the latest in performing. They were also assured in the advertisements and critical notices of concerts that they were hearing the 'best' musical performers: '... the audience were delighted with some of the finest productions of Rossini, Mozart, &c. Mr. Harper likewise played, each night, a concerto on the trumpet, (in which instrument he stands unrivalled) and was highly applauded'.<sup>32</sup> At times the description of musical events almost takes on the aura of a circus act, as when Franz Liszt's demonstration of the new grand pianofortes was termed 'perfectly astonishing' by the *Journal's* critic in 1840.<sup>33</sup>

If an index were to be drawn up for the 19th-century issues of the *Journal*, listing all the references to individual performers, this would read for much of its length like a roll-call of many of the leading soloists and orchestral players of the time, both British and foreign.<sup>34</sup> Oxford's welcome was extended to a succession of fine singers – among them, as well as John Braham, were Jenny Lind, Pauline Viardot Garcia, and Sims Reeves; and among the instrumentalists, a series of virtuoso pianists included, besides Liszt, Thalberg, Arabella Goddard, and, later in the century, Leonard Borwick (pupil of Clara Schumann). The *Journal* also consistently documented the important contribution made by home-grown talent, much of it supplied by local musical dynasties such as the Mahon and Marshall families, as well as by those who successively filled university and college posts: the Heather Professorship, Choragus, and college organistships.<sup>35</sup> The Heather Professors were traditionally organists, and they and their colleagues played the organ at Encaenia, in accordance with ancient custom.

One special tradition of university music-making given regular critical notice in the *Journal* was the public performance of musical degree exercises in the Sheldonian or (by permission) in alternative locations. Here again, the 18th-century reportage had set the

<sup>31</sup> *JOJ*, 13 November 1841. The concept of 'grandeur' (the adjective 'grand' was frequently applied to various aspects of musical happenings) is worth consideration, and will be discussed further below.

<sup>32</sup> *JOJ*, 8 November 1823.

<sup>33</sup> *JOJ*, 28 November 1840.

<sup>34</sup> Perhaps someone will take up the challenge of producing such an index (if any such item exists I should be glad to hear of it!).

<sup>35</sup> The Choragus (a post dating back to Heather's original endowment) served as chief assistant, in the 19th century, to the Professor.

precedent;<sup>36</sup> but the 19th-century reports engaged more closely and at greater length with the performances on these occasions, thus helping to mark their significance, often at a crucial stage in a composer's career:

Mr. S. Wesley, whose admission to his Degree of Doctor of Music appears in the academical news, performed his exercise (by the Permission of the President and Fellows, and a dispensation from the Vice-Chancellor for that purpose) in Magdalen College Chapel on Thursday last. The chapel was very numerously attended. The exercise, selected from various passages of holy writ, is written in the true cathedral manner ... abounding in the solemn melodies and harmonies which produce so deep an impression when peeling [*sic*] down the long aisles of our sacred edifices. It is written with all the science of the musician; with that deep feeling which is so indispensable [*sic*] in sacred music, and which pervades all the works of our great composers, and, above all, of Mozart. Among the passages most worthy of note was a bass solo, very ably sung by Mr. William Marshall, whom we were delighted to see assisting at the academic honours of his brother musician.<sup>37</sup>

The reference to Mozart rather than Handel, previously Oxford's unchallenged model of sacred writing, is interesting here. In an era characterized by wide consideration of music's aesthetic effect and the value of differing styles, a movement in which William Crotch, Heather Professor 1797–1847, played a leading role, this kind of criticism in the local press chimes in with the more universal intellectual and musical concerns of the time. At the same time it strikes a more intimate note in its remarking on the contribution of local musicians to the particular performance. It is evident from the remainder of the *Journal's* report that this performance was enthusiastically received by the 'numerous' audience.

The detail included in the *Journal's* reports illuminates the context of the musical performances as well as their content; for example, the extended notice of Jenny Lind's first appearance in Oxford, in 1848, sketched vividly the eager anticipation of this event, and the hectic preparations, as well as giving detailed critical attention to the concert itself:

As soon as it was announced that Jenny Lind would appear in Oxford, and sing in the Theatre, the most lively interest was manifested throughout the University and City, and the concert has been, during the week, the topic of conversation in all circles. It was announced in the advertisement which appeared in our last paper, that the tickets would be sold at the Theatre on Monday and on the three following days, between two and four o'clock. Long before the former hour on the first mentioned day a large crowd had collected round the east door of the Theatre, and the rush to get to that part of the passage appropriated for the sale of tickets was tremendous; the old displayed as much earnestness as the young in their anxiety to become the early possessors of tickets, but good humour, notwithstanding, characterized all... The result of all this anxiety, however, was, that *eleven hundred* tickets were sold between two and four o'clock, and by Wednesday morning scarcely one remained out of the whole number, which was limited to what the Theatre would comfortably hold, viz., about 1800.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Cf. S. Wollenberg, 'The Oxford Exercises in the Eighteenth Century', *Early Music*, 28 (2000), 546–54.

<sup>37</sup> *JOJ*, 22 June 1839.

<sup>38</sup> *JOJ*, 2 December 1848.

The critic was equally informative about the arrangements for the performance itself:

The doors were opened yesterday at twelve o'clock, but long before that hour they were besieged by a dense mass of human beings, who, however, upon their entrance, were not long in seating themselves. We may attribute this fact to the excellence of the arrangements... Every seat in the Theatre was marked off and legibly numbered, and every facility was afforded by those in attendance to direct each person to the seat corresponding with the number on his ticket [the impression given here is that this was a novelty]. When all were seated, the Theatre wore a most brilliant appearance, heightened in no slight degree by the hundreds of fair forms who were present. We recognized a large array of the neighbouring nobility and gentry, Heads of Houses, University authorities, and their families, together with the leading residents of Oxford, and a considerable portion of our fellow townsmen.<sup>39</sup>

And as for Jenny Lind's singing, that was described (at length) in rapturous terms, conveying not only its quality but also its effect on her listeners: 'she threw the whole audience into extacies [*sic*] by her astonishing execution, and her charming simplicity of manner...'. The critic's closing words lift this report beyond the ephemeral, endowing the occasion with a lasting value: 'the day was beautifully fine, and it will, we are sure, long dwell in the remembrance of all who were assembled in the Theatre'.

Concert venues diversified increasingly in the mid 19th century, with assembly rooms and college halls (and gardens) now regularly in use for performances, as well as the Holywell Music Room (still used for occasional concerts), the Sheldonian Theatre, and the churches and chapels. In particular, the events scheduled for the Commemoration week typically took place in a variety of locations.<sup>40</sup> Together with the diversification of concert types, venues and repertoire, went a process of expansion in various directions. For instance, the 'numerous Band' promised by many of the 18th-century advertisements is replaced in the 19th century by the specific, and impressive, citing of numbers of musicians involved: for the 'Oxford University Grand Musical Festival' in 1823, the 'Band' was to 'consist of 150 Performers' (see Fig. 3).<sup>41</sup>

The 'grandeur' explicitly or implicitly recognized in the 19th century – people constantly published and performed 'grand' sonatas, concertos, and symphonies – was particularly a facet of the new package consisting of the more impressively virtuosic style, the scale on which the music was conceived, the mood it might seek to convey, and the sheer volume of sound involved in its performance. In terms, however, of the musical event itself, ideas of grandeur went back to the earlier period: in June 1856, a notice in the *Journal* concerning the forthcoming Commemoration, made a point of this specific quality:

On Tuesday the 6th of July (being the Day appointed for commemorating the Benefactors to the University) will be performed in The Theatre, the Oratorio of Judas Maccabaeus; on Wednesday the 7th, Joshua; and on Thursday the 8th, the Messiah. The principal parts to be sung by Signora Frasi, Miss Young, Mr. Beard, Mr. Thomas Hayes, and Others. The Choruses will be supported by a great Number of Voices and Instruments of every Kind requisite, and no Expence will be spared to make the whole as grand as possible.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., also source of the remaining quotations in this paragraph.

<sup>40</sup> For a detailed survey of the Commemoration events, see S. Wollenberg, 'The Oxford Commemorations and 19th-century British Festival Culture', in B. Zon and P. Horton (eds.), *Nineteenth-century British Music Studies*, 3 (forthcoming).

<sup>41</sup> *JOJ*, 7 June 1823.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 19 June 1756.

**Oxford University  
GRAND  
MUSICAL FESTIVAL.**

THE Public are respectfully informed, that a GRAND MUSICAL FESTIVAL will be held this year, in the THEATRE, OXFORD, during the COMMEMORATION WEEK.

**THREE CONCERTS**

WILL BE GIVEN ON  
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, and THURSDAY,  
NEXT, the 10th, 11th, and 12th of June.

The First will consist of a Selection from

**Palestine,**

THE SEASONS OF HAYDN,  
And MOZART's Requiem.

The Two last will be Miscellaneous.

Principal Vocal Performers:

**Miss STEPHENS,**

**MISS TRAVIS,**

**Madame RONZI DE BEGNIS,**

**Signora CARADORI,**

**And Signor DE BEGNIS.**

**Messrs. WM. KNYVETT, VAUGHAN,**  
and **BELLAMY.**

PRINCIPAL INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS:

**Mr. CRAMER, Leader,**

**Mr. MARSHALL, Principal Second,**

**Messrs. LINDLEY, R. ASHLEY, WILLMAN,**

**MACKINTOSH, ANFOSSI, ERSKINE,**

**MONZANI, MARIOTTI, the PETRIDES,**

**HARPER, and JENKINSON.**

The whole to be conducted by

**WALTER VICARY, Mus. Bac.**

The Band will consist of 150 Performers.

**FIRST CONCERT—TUESDAY, June 10.**

**ACT I.**

Selection from **Dr. CROTCH's Oratorio,**  
"PALESTINE."

Overture.

Song—**Mr. BELLAMY.** "Ye guardian saints."

Chorus. "O happy once."—Chorus. "Let Sinai."

Air—**Miss STEPHENS.** "Yet s'en the works."

Air and Semi-Chorus. "In frantic converse."

Air—**Miss TRAVIS.** "E'en they who dragged."

Chorus. "Nor vain their hope."

Quartet. "Lo! star-led chiefs."

**Miss TRAVIS, and Messrs. WM. KNYVETT,**

**VAUGHAN, and BELLAMY.**

Chorus. "Daughter of Sion." Chorus. "He comes."

Quartet. "Be peace on earth."

**Miss TRAVIS, and Messrs. WM. KNYVETT,**

**VAUGHAN, and BELLAMY.**

Air, **Miss STEPHENS.** "No more your thirsty rocks"

Sestet. "Lo! cherub bands."

**Miss STEPHENS, Miss TRAVIS, and Messrs. WM.**

**KNYVETT, VAUGHAN, WILKINS, & BELLAMY.**

Recit. accomp.—**Miss STEPHENS.**

"And shall not Israel's sons."

Solo, **Miss STEPHENS, and Chorus.**

"Hark! white-rob'd crowds."

Chorus. "Worthy the Lamb."

**ACT II.**

Coronation Anthem. ——— Attwood.

(As performed at the Coronation of his present

Majesty in Westminster Abbey.)

Song—**Miss TRAVIS.** (*Israel in Egypt.*) Handel.

"Thou didst blow."

(Bassoon obligato—**Mr. MACKINTOSH.**)

Selection from **MOZART's "Requiem."**

Chorus. "Rex tremendæ Majestatis."

Quartet. "Recordare Jesu pie."

**Miss TRAVIS, and Messrs. WM. KNYVETT,**

**VAUGHAN, and BELLAMY.**

Chorus. "Confutatis maledictis."

Chorus. "Sanctus! Sanctus!"

Chorus. "Hosanna in excelsis!"

Quartet. "Benedictus qui venit."

**Miss STEPHENS, and Messrs. WM. KNYVETT,**

**VAUGHAN, and BELLAMY.**

Chorus. "Hosanna in excelsis."

Song—**Miss STEPHENS.** (*Acis & Galatea.*) Handel.

"Heart, the seat of soft delight."

**CONCLUDING WITH**

A Selection from **HAYDN's Oratorio,**

"THE SEASONS."

N. B. The doors will be opened at half past Three, and the Concert will begin PUNCTUALLY at half past Four.

The particulars of the Miscellaneous Concerts appear in the books of the Performances, 1s. each.

The Performers are particularly requested to attend a General Rehearsal, at the Theatre, at Twelve o'clock on Monday.

**TWO BALLS**

Will be given in the TOWN HALL; one on TUESDAY Evening, the other on THURSDAY.

N. B. Tickets of Admission to the Concerts and Balls, Half a Guinea each.

Together with 'grand', the adjective 'miscellaneous' (carrying a whole host of implications for taste and repertoire) characteristically appeared in the billing of Oxford concerts. Thus the *Journal* advertised, in 1798:

ADMIRAL NELSON.

FOR THE RELIEF

Of the WIDOWS and ORPHANS

Of those who fell in the late glorious VICTORY,

By Permission of the Reverend the VICE-CHANCELLOR,

And the Worshipful the MAYOR,

A Grand MISCELLANEOUS CONCERT

to be performed at the town hall by the Music Room and military bands.<sup>43</sup> And in the notices of the 1813 Commemoration,<sup>44</sup> 'grand' and 'miscellaneous' were scattered profusely. It is also obvious, from the comparative size of the capital letters, who was considered the outstanding attraction among the soloists in these festival performances (see Fig. 4).

'Miscellaneous', in the 19th century, could have a very specific, as well as more general meaning; this is made explicit in the advertisement for the Commemoration Festival of 1823, referred to earlier for its numbers of performers (Fig. 3). The first of the 'THREE CONCERTS' to be held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 10th, 11th and 12th of June that year, 'in the THEATRE, OXFORD, during the COMMEMORATION WEEK' was to 'consist of a Selection from *Palestine*, THE SEASONS OF HAYDN, And MOZART's Requiem', and, it was added, 'The Two last will be Miscellaneous'.<sup>45</sup> What exactly this was intended to mean can be deduced from the details included in the *Journal*, showing, for the Requiem, a 'Selection' of choral and vocal quartet movements gathered in clusters from within the work; by this stage, more detailed notices of the programmes valuably appeared in these advertisements. Their scope had already by the 1820s expanded greatly in terms of column space and was to expand further.

The fashion for selections notwithstanding, performances of complete oratorios continued in Oxford at this period. *Messiah* (memorably described by the *Journal's* critic in 1818 as a 'wonderful composition... without parallel in... that sacred pathos which goes immediately to the feelings and electrifies the heart')<sup>46</sup> retained its special place in Oxford's affections, featuring in a variety of contexts including the Commemoration festivals, and performances for charity.<sup>47</sup> New oratorios by successive Heather Professors received their premières in Oxford.<sup>48</sup> Choral music generally flourished, with a distinct access of new energy in the middle decade of the 19th century, when numerous societies were formed for the promotion of the choral repertoire. Prominent among these was the University Amateur Musical Society, whose efforts extended from concerts for the Working Men's Association<sup>49</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *JOJ*, 6 October 1798.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* 19 June 1813.

<sup>45</sup> *JOJ*, 7 June 1823.

<sup>46</sup> *JOJ*, 6 June 1818.

<sup>47</sup> For *Messiah* at Commemoration, see for example *JOJ*, 30 May 1818 (advertisement for the 'Oxford Grand Musical Festival', 2-4 June). For a charitable performance, see *JOJ*, 6 March 1847 ('for the benefit of the distressed poor in Ireland and Scotland').

<sup>48</sup> These included, besides Crotch's *Palestine*, the oratorios by Ouseley (Heather Professor 1855-89) later in the century.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *JOJ*, 5 December 1857.

*By Permission of the Rev. the Vice-Chancellor.*  
 THEATRE, OXFORD, 1813.  
**Grand Musical Festival.**

On MONDAY the 28th of JUNE,  
 AND TWO FOLLOWING DAYS,  
 Will be performed

**THREE GRAND CONCERTS**

VIZ.

On MONDAY the 28th,  
 A GRAND MISCELLANEOUS CONCERT;

On TUESDAY the 29th,  
 THE SACRED ORATORIO OF  
**THE MESSIAH;**

On WEDNESDAY the 30th,  
 A GRAND MISCELLANEOUS CONCERT.

\* \* In the course of the Concerts will be introduced  
 CONCERTOS by the principal Instrumental Performers;  
 and the most celebrated GLEES, DUETTS, TRIOS, &c.  
 as performed at the Ancient and Vocal Concerts, London.  
 CHORUSES from Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Pergolesi, &c.

VOCAL PERFORMERS:

**MADAME CATALANI,**

Mrs. Vaughan, Miss Darby,

MASTER HOBBS,

Messrs. GOSS, VAUGHAN, and BELLAMY.

INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS.

Leader of the Band, Mr. CRAMER.

Principal Second Violin, Mr. MARSHALL.

Principal Tenor, Mr. R. ASHLEY.

Violoncellos—Messrs. LINDLEY, REINAGLE, C.  
 ASHLEY, and J. MARSHALL.

Double Basses—Signor ANFOSSI, and Messrs. SMART,  
 REEVES, HALDON, &c.

Basoons—Messrs. HOLMES, HATTON, &c.

Oboes—Messrs. GRIESBACH and OLIVER.

Flutes—Messrs. JACKSON.

Clarionets—Messrs. HALDON.

Horns—Messrs. PETRIDES.

Principal Trumpet—Mr. SCHMIDT.

Double Trombone—Signor MARIOTTI.

Double Drums—Mr. JENKINSON.

CONDUCTOR—WALTER VICARY, Mus. Bac.

*In addition to the above, the following Instrumental  
 Performers are engaged;*

Messrs. WATTS, NICKS, HENRY, WOODCOCK,  
 MAHON, MORI, HOLMES, PILOTTI, TEBBETT,  
 HOBBS, HARDY, TULLY, STRATTON, FELDON,  
 HATTON, COLMAN, M'KENZIE, HARRIS, &c. &c.

*The BAND will consist of 120 performers.*

Fig. 4. Jackson's Oxford Journal, 12 June 1813.



to participation in the university's Commemoration festival: the *Journal*, reporting on the events of Commemoration week in July 1840, noted that 'the University Amateurs gave a concert at the Star Assembly Rooms' on the Monday evening, when 'a large and fashionable audience attended, and expressed their entire approbation of the performances' – to which the *Journal's* reporter also gave warm approval.<sup>50</sup>

By such means, the various institutions, enterprises and individuals involved in Oxford's musical life were constantly brought to the attention of the *Journal's* readership, and were encouraged in their efforts to sustain the rich culture that developed during the 19th century in the university and city. For a remarkably long period, the *Journal* gave its support – and plentiful column space – to Oxford's musical endeavours, providing the modern historian with an unrivalled source of detailed and thought-provoking information and ideas.

<sup>50</sup> *JOJ*, 4 July 1840.

