

## *Introduction*

BIBLIOGRAPHERS AND BOOK HISTORIANS have tended to separate out the trade in printed music from the book trade in general, treating it as a self-contained area of research, partly at least because the means of production (reproducing notation rather than letter forms) and of distribution (from an early stage associated with the specialist sellers of musical instruments and equipment) were themselves distinct. On the other hand, musicologists have, until recently, paid less attention to the commercial aspects of printed music, concentrating more on the technicalities of composition and performance. This volume aims to map some of the common ground in the broad area of book history between music and other forms of print, exploring the ways in which the organization of production and the process of publication have developed over time. All the contributors are musicologists who have devoted particular attention to books and manuscripts, while the audience they addressed at the 2007 conference on book trade history came from both sides of the book history/music divide.

The original papers published in this volume, loosely linked thematically, form a chronological sequence spanning more than three and a half centuries of the music trade in London, Spain and Vienna. They show the emergence of an organized publishing and distribution network, while the traditional methods of production, mainly from engraved plates, continued to be used. During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, music production and publication was in many places — and particularly at the level of the court and the Catholic church — a pan-European activity, though informed by national traditions. In Iberia, as Iain Fenlon explains, there was substantial foreign influence and many immigrants were employed as printers and in selling their wares on the road. In post-Reformation England, on the other hand, the music trade was more indigenous, and music itself was sometimes closely aligned with national politics and religious controversy. By the end of the seventeenth century, the production and sale of secular music was more firmly established, as exemplified by the activities of the Playfords and the Purcells. An increasingly sophisticated commercial organization, which can be seen in the Walsh-Handel association in the mid-eighteenth century, was reflected in the networks of publication and distribution which extended across Europe. The Artaria ledgers cast much light on the mechanics of music printing,

warehousing and selling at the end of the eighteenth century and show clearly how the internal business systems adopted by the major Viennese music publishers were ushering in a new phase in the output of printed music.

In ‘Music Printing and the Book Trade in Late-Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth-Century Iberia’, Iain Fenlon concludes that the vast majority of liturgical books, largely polyphonic choirbooks, was imported from Italy, France and the Low Countries and that native production, in so far as it existed, was on a small scale and for a local market. Music produced for export went mainly not to Europe, but to the colonies of Latin America. Even choirbooks printed in Spain were often works by foreign composers, particularly Italians, and many of the printers and some of the booksellers were immigrants working in Spain. This, he argues, owed more to lack of technical expertise, underinvestment and a general economic recession than (as used to be thought) to ecclesiastical repression.

Jeremy Smith looks at the relationship between William Byrd, Catholic composer, royal patentee and *persona grata* in court circles, and Thomas East, stationer and music publisher. Byrd needed the use of a neutral press as a safe haven for the printing and publishing of his controversial Catholic music, while East needed the protection of Byrd’s royal privilege to edge his way into the right to print a version of the Protestant best-selling *Whole Booke of Psalmes*. Smith argues his case in the context of the politico-religious background, building on his recent book on *Thomas East and music publishing in Renaissance England* (Oxford, 2003).

From the time of the Restoration the story of music publishing is increasingly free from religious contention and political danger and becomes a question of fashion, taste, personal relationships and economics. Richard Luckett’s paper traces the relationship between the Playfords, father and son, and the Purcells — with John Purcell and his sons, Henry and Daniel, and finally with Henry Purcell’s widow, Frances, who became her husband’s distributor and posthumous publisher. Luckett moves skilfully through the bibliographical pitfalls of early printed music, with a plethora of variant titlepages, all seemingly first printings. His analysis of the composer-publisher relationships shows the Playfords, particularly Henry Playford (whose importance has been much overlooked), to have been shrewd men of business, with an unflinching grasp of their market and what it would reap, who knew how to publicize their wares and use dedications not only as an advertising technique but also for self-promotion.

The pinnacle of the Playford music publishing years was *Orpheus Britannicus*, which Lockett likens to Shakespeare's First Folio in posthumous and iconic magnificence, although in the case of *Orpheus* what we see is not quite what we seem to see. Booke 1 (1698) was Playford's swan-song as a music publisher: his interest was waning and his remaining few years were given over to more mainstream literary publication. Booke 2 (1702), ostensibly published by Playford, was directed by Purcell's widow, who in gratitude dedicated it to Annabella Howard, who had been one of Purcell's star pupils and, after his death, was the protector and benefactor of his widow.

As we move into the eighteenth century, and to an account of the relations between Handel and his publishers, John Walsh, senior and junior, the personalities of the protagonists become more clearly delineated. By assiduous searching in libraries and repositories in London, Hamburg and elsewhere, Donald Burrows has been able to assemble a formidable mass of evidence about a relationship which seemed to develop falteringly at first and gradually, and which divides into two distinct parts. For the first fifteen years, from about 1720 to 1735, the Walshes seem either to have taken over previously published editions, or to have published without Handel's specific permission, with several clearly unauthorized editions — in one case, with a clumsily forged titlepage. Thereafter the position was regularized and in 1739 Walsh was able to renew Handel's royal privilege of 1730, making it clear that Walsh was his official publisher.

The Walshes began as instrument makers, like so many dealers in printed music of this period, although as 'Musical Instrument Maker in Ordinary to his Majesty' in 1692, John Walsh senior seems to have mended and strung instruments and supplied new ones, rather than actually making them himself. The sale of printed music gradually became more important to him until, after he set up in the newly fashionable West End, music engraving and publishing became his main, and then sole, business. He also acted as agent for concerts and performances, but some aspects of his business remain unknown. Was Handel's own performance copy used to engrave and print from? Did Walsh keep a staff of engravers on his premises at Catherine Street? Rupert Ridgewell's paper, later in this volume, shows the advantage of detailed archival information which we simply do not have in the case of the Walshes — underlining our almost total ignorance of the print runs, number of printings, identity of engravers and printers, capacity of printing houses, cost of paper, and distribution networks of English firms of the period.

The sale catalogue of the possessions of Carl Friedrich Abel (b.1723), who died intestate and a bachelor in 1787, shows that the rich musical life of Handel's London continued long into the eighteenth century. The only known copy of the catalogue, printed here in facsimile for the first time, is in the library of the Frick Collection, New York. It lists printed and manuscript music, musical instruments, paintings and the contents of Abel's house, including china, trinkets, plate and jewels, a snuff box, and much else. Stephen Roe's study of the sale catalogue reveals almost every facet, private and professional, of Abel's career and life-style, from which a detailed picture of the man can be pieced together — not only his musical activities, but also his love of wine, snuff and tobacco.

Abel came of a musical family, long-standing friends of the Bach family — he may have been a pupil of J. S. Bach, and Bach's son Johann Christian (known as 'the London Bach') was Abel's greatest friend from the time he arrived from Milan in 1762. Both men were Freemasons in the same lodge and were dominant in London musical life of the 1760s and 1770s, founding the Bach-Abel concerts from 1765 onwards. Although London was their base, they held concerts in the provinces and each travelled extensively on the Continent. Their cultural interests extended to art circles: Abel, who was an enchanting player of the viola da gamba (an instrument that died with him), may have given lessons to his friend and fellow gamba enthusiast and music lover, the painter Thomas Gainsborough. There are several works by Gainsborough in Abel's sale catalogue.

The Viennese firm of Artaria (1768–1920s) was the leading music publisher in eighteenth-century Vienna, with retail shops in the city's Kohlmarkt and in Mainz, the most important publisher of Mozart during his lifetime and beyond. Rupert Ridgewell's paper extends our knowledge not only of the firm of Artaria, but also of the entire eighteenth-century music trade, making extensive use of the vast archive of ledgers, account books, contracts, catalogues, letter books, press cuttings and incoming letters which survives in Vienna. Above all he has scrutinized the evidence relating to Artaria plate numbers, unique identifiers which were generally engraved in a central position at the base of each plate. One important question was when the plate number was assigned — whether when a work was accepted for publication, when the manuscript was received, when the agreement was finalized, at the point of engraving, or after preliminary work on the plate was done. Was the decision that of the engraver himself? The example of an early Mozart edition first printed without a plate number prompts a

reassessment of the role of the numbering system at the heart of Artaria's business administration, from the point of engraving to the storage of engraving plates and unsold copies. After a minute investigation of multiple copies of 48 Artaria editions (1778–84), Ridgewell concludes that the numbers were usually assigned by the publisher on receipt of a manuscript and he discusses the implications of this for our knowledge of working practices and of the dating of editions.

Vienna continued to be an important centre of music publishing in the next century. Unravelling the complexities of Gustav Mahler's publications and copyrights became much more feasible once the *Musikalisch-literarischer Monatsbericht neuer Musikalien, musikalischer Schriften und Abbildungen*, a monthly list of music publications which had begun in 1829, but which survived only in incomplete runs in various libraries, was made available online in a searchable form. Paul Banks has traced the progress of Mahler in print from his first publisher, Theodor Rättig, a bank official turned aspiring publisher, who offered to issue Mahler's Third Symphony (a failure at first performance in 1877) at his own expense. Rättig's business expanded, but when Mahler moved to conduct orchestras in Leipzig, Budapest and Hamburg in 1888, seeking fame and financial security, he moved also to Leipzig publishers. As his reputation grew, Mahler changed allegiance from one publisher to another. He returned to Vienna in 1897 as conductor of the Vienna State Opera. At this time, the business of Joseph Weinberger, who played a leading role in securing performance fees for publishers and composers following the new Austrian copyright law of 1895, was expanding rapidly. For the next five years Mahler was published by Weinberger, but in 1903, when his fame had spread throughout Europe and America, he left Weinberger for the firm of Eberle, which had a wide international music publishing business.

The Foundling Museum, off Brunswick Square in London, provided a perfect setting for this conference, the twenty-ninth in the annual Book Trade History series. Katharine Hogg, Librarian of the Gerald Coke Handel Collection housed in the Museum, put on a special exhibition for the participants and gave a talk on the origin of the Foundling Hospital as London's first home for abandoned children, founded by Thomas Coram in 1739. The close links between G. F. Handel and the Hospital, commemorated in many parts of the Museum, had a particular resonance for the subject of the conference.

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