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ABSTRACT

'The Musical Ode in Britain *c.*1670-1800'
by Tony Albert Trowles (Merton College, Oxford)
D.Phil., Michaelmas Term, 1991-2

The musical ode, which developed during the 1660s and 1670s as a means of celebrating occasions of particular significance (often by setting a specially written text), remained popular throughout the eighteenth century, and can be regarded as the earliest form of large-scale secular choral music to have developed in England. This dissertation discusses the nature of the genre (including its relationship with the poetical ode), and surveys the contexts in which odes were composed and performed. It is supplemented by a catalogue which lists some 270 examples of the genre.

Among the earliest odes were those written for performance at the court in London. These have already been the subject of musicological study, but although they were the biggest stylistic influence on the other odes written during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, they were not quite the earliest examples of the species. At the University of Oxford, the practice of performing specially composed odes to enhance academic ceremonial dates from at least 1669, and the custom continued throughout the following century. The odes on St Cecilia's Day also originate in the late seventeenth century, but although the works performed in London between 1683 and 1701 have received some scholarly attention, odes on the same theme written later in the century, along with works performed at a number of provincial centres, have not hitherto been discussed in the context of the wider ode genre. Also neglected have been the birthday odes performed at the Vice-regal court in Dublin during the eighteenth century. These complement the London court odes, but have not previously been listed or discussed in detail.

Other odes were written for charitable causes, and to commemorate a miscellaneous array of occasions, including military victories and the inauguration of new buildings. In addition, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, some composers responded to developments in the poetical ode by setting libretti which had no 'occasional' inspiration, but which were notable literary achievements in their own right.

THE MUSICAL ODE
IN BRITAIN
*c.*1670-1800

A dissertation submitted for the degree

of Doctor of Philosophy

in the University of Oxford

by
Tony Albert Trowles
Merton College

Vol 1

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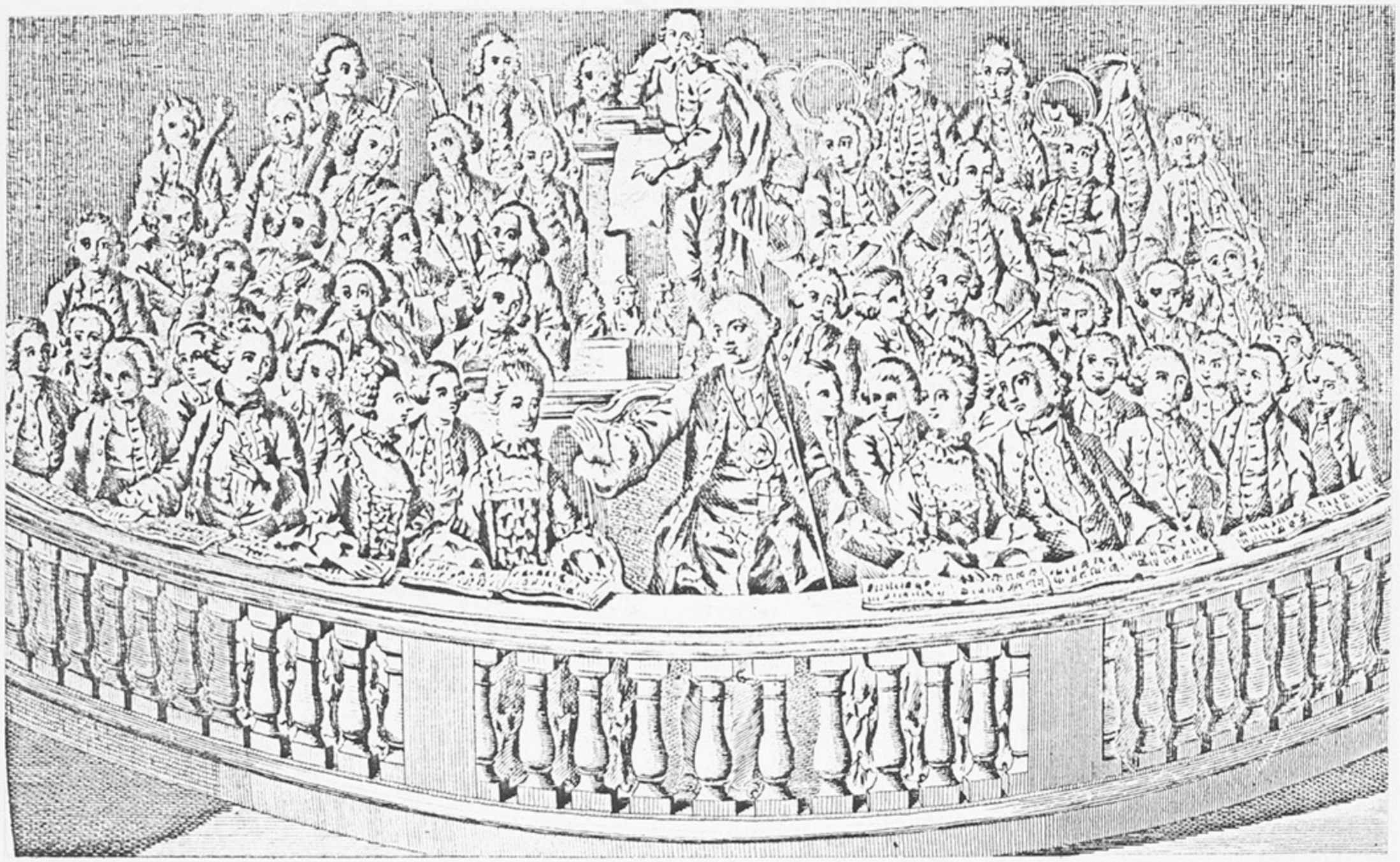

Mr. Garrick reciting the Ode, in honor of Shakespeare, at the Jubilee at Stratford; with the Musical Performance &c.

(Reproduced from *The Town and Country Magazine* of 1769)

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the course of researching and writing this dissertation I have become greatly indebted to the staff of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and especially to Peter Ward Jones and his colleagues in the the Music Reading Room. I am grateful also to the staff of the British Library, and to the librarians and archivists of the following institutions: Cambridge University Library; Christ Church, Oxford; Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum; Guildhall Library, London; the Institute of Historical Research, University of London; King's Inn, Dublin; Merton College, Oxford; Oxford University Archives; the National Library of Ireland; the Royal Academy of Arts; the Royal Academy of Music; the Royal College of Music; the Royal Irish Academy; Spalding Gentlemen's Society; Tower Hamlets Health Authority; Trinity College, Dublin; the Westgate Library, Oxford; Worcester College, Oxford; the Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers.

Dr Simon Heighes provided me with much information about Oxford music-making in general, and the Hayeses in particular. Robert Bruce gave me valuable advice about the sources for Boyce's odes. Among others who have assisted me I am bound to thank Dr Brian Boydell, Peter Holman, Dr Rosamond McGuinness, Barbara Small, Roger Spikes and Jonathan Wainwright. The responsibility for any errors of fact or judgment in the dissertation, however, is mine alone.

My colleague Heather Creaton at the Centre for Metropolitan History generously offered her services as a proof reader, and I am grateful to the director of the CMH, Dr Derek Keene, for allowing me to use the Centre's equipment in printing this dissertation.

My final thanks must be to my supervisor, Dr Harry Johnstone, who has been a constant source of inspiration and advice, and whose generosity in the giving of time, information, and hospitality, has gone far beyond the formal duties of a supervisor. My debt to him is considerable, and I gladly acknowledge it here.

ABBREVIATIONS

GSJ	*Galpin Society Journal*
Husk	William Henry Husk, *An Account of the Musical Celebrations on St. Cecilia's Day in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (1857)
JAMS	*Journal of the American Musicological Society*
London Stage	*The London Stage 1660-1800*, ed. William Van Lennep *et al.*, 11 vols. (Carbondale, 1960-79)
McGuinness	Rosamond McGuinness, *English Court Odes 1660-1820* (Oxford, 1971)
ML	*Music and Letters*
MQ	*The Musical Quarterly*
MR	*The Music Review*
MT	*The Musical Times*
New Grove	*The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 20 vols. (1980)
NQ	*Notes and Queries*
P[R]MA	*Proceedings of the [Royal] Musical Association*
RES	*Review of English Studies*

In all bibliographical citations place of publication is London unless otherwise stated.

Newspapers having 'inclusive' issue dates (for example, '30 October - 3 November') are identified by the first date only.

NOTE ON EDITORIAL PRACTICE

The musical and poetical sources for odes, both manuscript and printed, display a confusing variety of practice in matters of capitalization, spelling, and punctuation. Even within a single source there can be considerable diversity of usage, with more than one spelling or typographical version of the same word. In order to balance the need for accurate recording of sources on the one hand, with consistency of style and ease of reference for the user on the other, spelling and punctuation in all *poetical* quotations have been modernized. Contractions have been expanded, except when this would alter the metrical value of the word. Italics and initial capitals have been removed, but initial capitals have been retained (and, in a very few cases, added) for personified qualities. All other quotations are given in their original form.

Prior to 1752 England used the Julian calendar, by which the year began on 25 March rather than 1 January. In references to dates before 1752, days of the month are given in Old Style, and the year in New. All other dates appear in New Style.

Library *sigla* are those used in *New Grove*, with the exception that *Lbl* (British Library) has been substituted for *Lbm* (British Museum). All locations are in Great Britain except where a national prefix indicates otherwise.

1. INTRODUCTION

During the 1660s and 1670s in England a custom developed of performing vocal music (often setting a specially written text) to celebrate occasions of particular significance. These early works for vocal soloists, chorus and orchestra quickly developed into an established musical form, the ode, which was to remain popular with composers throughout the eighteenth century. It provided the opportunity to set to music a wide variety of texts written in honour of an equally diverse array of occasions. Between the time of the Restoration and the end of the eighteenth century over 500 odes are known to have been composed, and well over half this number has survived in some form. Nearly all composers of note (and many others too) turned to the ode at some point in their career, and the form flourished not only in London, but also in the provinces and in Ireland.[1] The ode was popular with audiences too, for it came to prominence at a time of increased opportunity for public music making of a secular kind, and was ideally suited to complement the elaborate rhetoric of much of the poetry of the time. Although the immediate inspiration for the ode can be traced to the sense of renewed confidence which followed the Restoration of 1660, it is possible to see in its genesis (and especially in the close relationship between text and music which characterizes the genre) the continuation of a much older tradition of occasional and ceremonial music.

This tradition had its most lavish expression in continental Europe during the Renaissance, when the use of music as an accompaniment for spectacle on a grand scale resulted in extravagant entertainments which not only celebrated a particular occasion, such as a royal marriage or a coronation, but also had the long-term benefit of enhancing the prestige of the organizer or patron. England had her own

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1 Although the encomiastic nature of the court odes has something in common with the prologues of Lully's *tragédies lyriques*, nothing exactly comparable was known on the continent at this time and the tradition was not, as is often supposed, borrowed from the court of Louis XIV. See *McGuinness*, 2.

tradition of 'aristocratic' entertainments in the form of the masque, many of which (though dating from a slightly later period) matched the splendour of their continental counterparts. At its most extravagant, the grand private masque combined music, poetry, drama, dance, art and costume, and in its heyday during the first half of the seventeenth century it involved many of the most notable musicians, authors and artists of the time. A small number of masques were even performed during the Commonwealth period, though often for the entertainment of visiting foreign dignitaries. Indeed, the form survived well into the eighteenth century, but with one significant change: the venue for masque performances shifted from the palace or stately home to the theatre, and in the process the masque became a 'popular' form, available to a wide public audience.[2]

In spite of this common tradition of musical spectacle, however, there were important differences between England and the rest of Europe with regard to the patronage of composers and performers. The social and political structures of England differed considerably from those of her continental neighbours. Europe abounded with principalities and city states which co-existed in an uneasy rivalry which led as easily to military conflict as to lavish spectacle. In comparison, England was a relatively unified nation, and although it possessed a great many noble families, their power and influence (and often their wealth) was invariably subordinate to that of the monarch. It is significant, for example, that with the exception of James Brydges, Duke of Chandos, during a brief period in the early eighteenth century, no member of the English aristocracy is known to have supported a substantial musical establishment. English nobles did not maintain private orchestras, and only a few of the great country houses were equipped with their own theatres.[3] Certainly England never knew anything on the scale of the

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2 Occasional performances of masques for private patrons were still to be found, most notably Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, performed at Cannons in 1718.

3 See Sybil Rosenfeld, *Temples of Thespis* (1978).

musical establishments at the princely European courts in which Bach, Haydn and Mozart were employed for various periods of their careers. Apart from the church, the sole source of large-scale continuous employment for musicians in England until the last few years of the seventeenth century was the court, and much of this patronage was itself directed to a religious establishment, the Chapel Royal. In the course of the eighteenth century there were significant changes in the disposition of patronage, but employment of musicians to any significant degree by an individual remained virtually unknown. Instead, it was the rapid development of a public market for musical performances, most notably by means of the opera house and the public concert, which provided professional musicians with an audience for their work.

As a musical form the ode draws much of its inspiration from the established tradition of occasional musical entertainments, of which the masque was the most sophisticated. In addition, however, and perhaps to a greater extent than any other genre during the period, the ode successfully spanned the change from a relatively limited private patronage to an increasing public demand for music. That the ode would survive this change was not necessarily to be expected; on the whole, odes were occasional works, and for this reason they could not easily be relied upon to become regular favourites with audiences. Nevertheless, the rise of the public concert, in its most general sense -- that is to say the appearance towards the end of the seventeenth century of a rapidly increasing number of musical performances open, on payment, to any member of the public -- made a significant contribution to the continued popularity of the ode and sustained its development into the eighteenth century.

As a result, the ode was largely responsible for introducing an entirely new concept into English musical life. Until the Restoration, performances of secular vocal music had tended to fall into one of two categories: they were either lavish and spectacular -- as in the masque, at which the audience were not only auditors but also spectators, appreciating the visual delights of the performance in addition to the

music; or they were informal and relatively intimate -- as in the performance of madrigals or consort songs. Within a short space of time, during the 1670s and 1680s, a small revolution was effected in ideas relating to musical performance. Through the virtually simultaneous development of the public concert and the ode, the concept of performing secular choral music for the appreciation of an audience, but without the additional attractions of scenery, costume or ballet, was introduced. The ode may therefore justly claim to be among the earliest forms of English concert music.

In one group of works, however, the pattern of court patronage for musicians was maintained. The court odes, performed before the monarch in celebration of New Year's Day and the royal birthday,[4] made their first appearance soon after the Restoration, and continued to be composed until the early years of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, the very regularity of their performance tended to mitigate against quality (though there are some notable exceptions). By the early years of the eighteenth century it was the accepted practice for the ode texts to be written by the Poet Laureate, and set by the Master of the King's Musick, though such a formalized arrangement did little to encourage either spontaneity or originality from the individuals concerned. Eighteenth-century Poets Laureate, even at their most inspired, were rarely writers of the first rank; faced with the task of producing a bi-annual panegyric praising the merits of its royal recipient, it is not surprising that most of the ode texts they produced are of poor poetic quality. Nor is it to be wondered at that the composers required to set the odes rarely gave of their best in these productions.

The court odes have been subjected to extensive study in Rosamond McGuinness's book *English Court Odes 1660-1820*, and in her doctoral thesis, on

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4 Among the earliest court odes were a number of 'welcome songs' to greet the return of the monarch to London after travels further afield. The tradition of writing such works continued well into the eighteenth century, but took on a religious aspect; Maurice Greene, for example, wrote anthems and other sacred settings for this purpose while Master of the King's Musick.

which the book is based.[5] In tracing their history and development Dr McGuinness compiled a chronology of all court odes known to have been composed between 1660 and 1810, along with details of their sources, both musical and poetical. This listing reveals that the court ode tradition alone resulted in the composition of over 250 works. There is, however, an almost equal number of odes composed for other purposes and performed at other venues, and many of which are largely unknown and undocumented. This study aims to trace the development of these odes in England and Ireland, to document the circumstances in which they were performed, and thus to complement Dr McGuinness's work on the court ode. A Catalogue of Odes, arranged according to composer, has been compiled to accompany the study and lists all odes known to have been composed (including those now lost) along with information on matters such as sources, libretti, orchestration and musical format.

The great variety of works involved in such a study is an important indication of the considerable proliferation and diversification of sources for musical patronage which occurred during the eighteenth century. At first sight, indeed, it might seem that the range of works is so great as to render a comprehensive survey of this type impracticable. In reality, however, this is not the case, for many so-called odes do not meet the requirements laid down for this study (and discussed in the following chapter). Those odes which do meet the required definition generally fall into one of five groups (briefly outlined below), according to the circumstances for which they were composed and performed. Three of these groups have well-defined parameters since they relate either to a very specific type of work or to odes performed in a particular location or environment. The other two are more general and therefore more comprehensive, but neverthless provide a useful division of those odes which do not fall into one of the more distinct categories. These groupings, which cut across considerations of chronology and style, allow each type

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5 'English Court Odes 1660-1800' (D.Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1964).

of ode to be considered in its social context, and have provided the themes for the five central chapters of this study.

Of primary importance with regard to the earliest development of the ode genre are a series of works composed as enhancements to academic ceremonial at the University of Oxford. Surviving sources suggest that these predate the sequence of court odes by several years, though exact comparative dates are not easily deduced. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the performance of the first 'Oxford ode' was merely a more elaborate development of a much older tradition of musical accompaniment for University occasions. The St Cecilia odes, which first appeared in London during the 1680s, have in some cases already received a good deal of musicological attention. These works exerted a considerable influence on the wider ode genre throughout the eighteenth century, and were among the most common types of ode to be composed and performed outside London. However, because the Cecilia works share a common preoccupation with a particular group of literary ideas and philosophical concepts, there has always been a tendency to regard this tradition in isolation rather than to relate the works which it produced to the genre as a whole.

The third group of works to be considered is a series of annual birthday odes performed in Dublin to celebrate the sovereign's birthday. The Irish works began to be performed in the early years of the eighteenth century, and although there are obvious parallels here with the London court ode tradition, they were not mere imitations of it. A completely different series of writers and composers was involved, and in the early years there were major differences in form and style between the Dublin odes and their more established London counterparts. Hitherto, these works have received little musicological study; indeed it is doubtful whether the full extent of the Dublin ode tradition is generally recognized. Although the music for some of the mid-century works has survived, along with a substantial number of libretti covering the whole period, there has been no listing of the Dublin

works comparable to that which Rosamond McGuinness provided for the English court odes.

The first of the two more general categories of odes covers works which, though not in any sense official court odes, neverthless have some royal or 'national' connexion. This distinction embraces both works composed in honour of royalty or other high-ranking individuals but performed at a public venue such as the theatre or the pleasure garden, and also odes designed to celebrate specific political events such as the peace treaties of the 1690s, or the successful military campaigns of the Duke of Marlborough in the early years of the eighteenth century. The second category is more obviously miscellaneous in its scope, though several distinct contexts for ode performance can again be recognised. Among works falling in this group are odes performed in aid of fund-raising ventures or charitable institutions, odes performed to mark the inauguration of a new building (sometimes also for charitable purposes), and odes composed for convivial gatherings, such as the annual dinners of professional societies and similar organizations.

Although these five groups provide convenient divisions for the discussion of individual works, the ode genre itself is not easily or concisely defined. As already suggested, the term 'ode' covers pieces of such diverse character and form that it would be neither practicable nor logical to attempt a survey of them all. Thus it must be clearly stated at the outset that by no means all works composed between 1660 and 1800 which include the word ode in their title will be considered here. Instead, this study and its accompanying catalogue attempt to identify and list what might be termed the mainstream ode genre during that period. This has not always been an easy task, for it has involved the consideration of a body of works much larger than that which has ultimately been catalogued and discussed, and inevitably there is a grey area occupied by works which merit inclusion on some counts and deserve exclusion on others.

The final definition of an ode which has been arrived at for the purpose of this study is, in fact, less a rigid definition than a set of criteria which any work must

more or less satisfy if it is to merit consideration. These criteria have evolved by studying the characteristics of the earliest odes and the factors which influenced their development, for those qualities which attracted to a work the name 'ode' during the 1670s and 1680s, for example, can generally be relied upon to define the genre during subsequent periods of vastly different musical styles and formal dimensions. Before proceeding to a study of the individual contexts for ode performance, therefore, some attention must first be given to the development of the ode genre in the wider sense, and to the question of how an ode may be defined.

2. THE ODE GENRE: DEFINITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Few eighteenth-century music critics or historians attempted to provide a precise definition of the ode. Indeed, so little attention is paid to the genre by writers of the period, and so vague are the descriptions which they do give, that it is tempting to suppose that the term 'ode' was used merely for convenience when other titles seemed inappropriate. Such a view would appear to be justified by the great variety of types of work to which the title 'ode' was applied, and by the fact that a number of important works which might reasonably be assumed to be odes were never publicly so described by their composers. Purcell's 1683 St Cecilia ode, for example, was published as 'A Musical Entertainment', while Dryden's great ode for 1687 is properly entitled 'A Song for St Cecilia's Day'. In neither instance, however, can there be any real question of the work not meriting consideration as an ode. Clearly, therefore, caution is required in judging a work by the title which its author or composer gave to it. The ode is a recognizable phenomenon during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but terminology alone cannot be relied upon to define it.

The true nature of the musical ode can only be satisfactorily determined by relating it to two factors: to the ode as a literary form, and to the other types of musical work from which it drew inspiration. In the ode, to a greater extent perhaps than in any other musical form of the eighteenth century, composers were preoccupied with the intimate relationship of words and music. This relationship is most clearly demonstrated in the St Cecilia odes, where the expressive power of music itself becomes the subject matter, so that poetical ideas *about* music are expressed *through* music. In many cases, a proper appreciation of the musical setting relies on an understanding of the intentions of the poet, not least in the many instances where a libretto was from the first conceived with a musical setting in mind. Any attempt to chronicle the history of the ode as a musical form must,

therefore, give due consideration to the immeasurably older tradition of the poetical ode, to the opinions which poets and their critics have formed over many centuries with regard to it, and to the influence which it brought to bear on the development of its musical counterpart. Such views have been found to be of considerable relevance in attempting to define the musical ode for the purposes of this study.

As a literary form the poetical ode has a long and complex history which reaches back to the works of the classical poets Pindar (*c*.522-440 B.C.) and Horace (65-8 B.C.), from whom succeeding generations of ode writers drew their inspiration. Those poets who encouraged the revival of the form in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (among them Spenser, Cowley, and Jonson), strayed considerably from these original models, so that as the eighteenth century progressed, the ode was increasingly seen to offer an escape from the 'mechanical universe and the metronome tick of the heroic couplet, from stoicism and rationalism, to the imagined emotional abandon and freedom of expression of a more primitive age'.[1] This corruption of the classical ideal was resisted by some early eighteenth-century poets, notably William Congreve, and led to an attempt to restore what was seen as a loss of poetic integrity in the form. With the rise of the Romantic Movement, however, towards the end of the century, a rich variety and freedom of expression once more dominated the ode, so that it became susceptible to much stylistic innovation and was 'a great snare to all persons of a pompous and bombastic habit'.[2] These developments are reflected, in varying degrees, in the texts which composers chose for their odes, while a further complication arises in the occasional choice of libretti which fall outside the boundaries of the poetic ode canon.

In the course of the eighteenth century, many critics joined Congreve in turning their attention to the ode. They considered the work of the classical poets in

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1 Carol Maddison, *Apollo and the Nine: A History of the Ode* (1960), 2.

2 Edmund W. Gosse, *English Odes* (1881), xx.

some detail and contrasted it with current poetical productions, usually to the detriment of the latter. John Ogilvie, for example, writing in 1762, argued that the true nature of the ode had 'only been changed in a few external circumstances', and that the qualities which made the classical odes so admirable were those which should be encouraged in contemporary ode-writing:

> The ode is characterised by a peculiar degree of vivacity and even vehemence both of sentiment and expression. It is impossible to preserve this distinguishing character unless the thoughts are diversified, and the diction is concise.[3]

In the following year, John Brown published his substantial *Dissertation* on the relationship between poetry and music, a controversial work putting forward ideas which were not universally approved. Nevertheless, Brown's comments on contemporary odes are important, for he asserted that (in common with dramatic tragedy) the ode had been debased since the days of its classical pre-eminence. Brown argued that the ode had originally been inseparable from music, but that the two had now become divorced:

> Even *Tragedy* and *Ode* whose End is to shake the Soul with Terror, Pity, or Joy, by a *theatrical* Exhibition, and the *Powers of Music*; -- even these, in many Instances and in different Periods, were *divorced* from their *Assistant Arts* so we have *Tragedies* that cannot be *acted*, and *Odes* that cannot be sung.
>
> This false Taste in *Ode-writing* hath so strongly established itself in ENGLAND, that an *Ode* of the true Character is stiled (by Way of Distinction) *An Ode for Music*'.[4]

Brown argued, as did many of his contemporaries, for a restoration of the ancient union between music and lyric poetry, an objective which was to be achieved by composers paying much greater attention to the musical implications of the words they were to set.

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3 John Ogilvie, *Poems on several subjects. To which is prefix'd An Essay on the Lyric Poetry of the Ancients* (1762), lv-lvi.

4 *A Dissertation on the Rise, Union, and Power, the Progressions, Separations, and Corruptions, of Poetry and Music* (1763), 197. For reaction to Brown's views see the anonymous *Some Observations on Dr. Brown's Dissertation* (1764).

Concern for the integrity of contemporary poetry, and of the ode in particular was also voiced by the poet William Collins in his ode *The Passions*. William Hayes, the Oxford Professor of Music who set the ode in 1750 considered that its final section was unsuited for musical setting (see page 63), yet it is in those last 24 lines that Collins provides the key to an understanding of the whole poem. In them he laments the decline of Music's art:

> Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
> Had more of strength, diviner rage,
> Than all which charms this laggard age,

and invokes its restoration towards a Classical ideal:

> O bid our vain endeavours cease,
> Revive the just designs of Greece,
> Return in all thy simple state!
> Confirm the tales her sons relate!

It has been suggested, however, that this musical imagery was intended as an aptly chosen metaphor to express the poet's feelings about the decline of poetry in his own day:

> Collins can be referring to nothing else than the true Pindaric Ode, a form of poetry which expresses emotion through the medium of Greek Music.... The musical nature of poetry is clearly fundamental; but musical poetry (whether actually accompanied by music or not) means lyrical poetry -- the very kind of poetry which Collins and Warton were striving to rehabilitate, as against the apparently artificial and rational poetry of their contemporaries.[5]

The importance which Warton and Collins placed on the musical qualities of poetry was doubtless a major reason why composers repeatedly selected their poems for musical setting.[6]

This critical insistence on the integral relationship between words and music was not without its detractors, however, and led to a small but significant outpouring

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5 S. Musgrove, 'The Theme of Collins's Odes', *NQ*, clxxxv (1943), 254.

6 Collins's *The Passions* was set by William Hayes and Benjamin Cooke, his *Ode to Evening* by John Wall Callcott. Warton's *Ode to Fancy* was the most frequently set of all ode texts, with settings by Callcott, William Crotch, William Jackson and Charles Rousseau Burney.

of burlesque poetry.[7] The writers of both poetical and musical odes were subjected to parody, a victim of the former being Thomas Gray, the opening lines of whose Cambridge installation ode ('Hence, avaunt, 'tis holy ground') inspired a succession of satirical imitations. The St Cecilia odes, and in particular Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, also attracted the satirists, and at least two parodies were set to music. The earliest of these was *An Ode on Saint Caecilia's Day, adapted to the ancient British musick* (1749), the words of which were attributed to 'Fustian Sackbut', a pseudonym of the poet Bonnell Thornton.[8] This was apparently performed at Ranelagh Gardens, probably in 1763 to a setting of Charles Burney.[9] The parody of the *encomium musicae* is obvious from the very first words: 'Be dumb, be dumb, ye inharmonious sounds', and was emphasized by the scoring of the work for salt-box, jew's harp, marrow bones, cleavers and hurdy-gurdy. In a long prose introduction the poet dismisses earlier attempts at ode writing by poets such as 'Johnny' Dryden and claims the approval of literary critics, John Brown among them, by asserting that he has 'strictly adher'd to the Rule of making the Sound echo to the Sense'. A much later parody is Thomas Arne's *Whittington's Feast*, performed at the Haymarket theatre in April 1776. The words, 'by a College Wag', were printed in a word book with the text of Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* alongside 'that the allusions may be traced throughout'. There was also an apology from Arne 'who hopes that the Literati will not be offended by this harmless banter, as nothing can lessen the supreme merit of Dryden's great Original'.[10] That parodies of this sort were

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7 For a detailed consideration see Richmond P. Bond, *English Burlesque Poetry 1700-1750* (Cambridge, Mass., 1932).

8 A later edition (1763) identifies Thornton as the author. The text was also published in Dodsley's *Annual Register* (1763), 243-6.

9 See Alan D. McKillop, 'Bonnell Thornton's Burlesque Ode', *NQ*, cxciv (1949), 321-4, and Roger Lonsdale, *Dr. Charles Burney: A Literary Biography* (Oxford, 1965), 485-90.

10 See *London Stage* pt.4, 1969. An apparently unique printed copy of the overture, songs and choruses survives in the Library of Congress.

published and performed indicates the extent to which eighteenth-century readers and audiences were familiar with the ode in its genuine form.

Literary critics of the twentieth century have acknowledged that, unlike a poetic form such as the sonnet, the ode cannot easily be defined in specific or technical terms:

> Elegy... is distinguishable from other poetical *genres* by its subject matter, satire is distinguishable by the view-point taken in writing it, and the sonnet may be recognised from its form. The ode is different from these, however, in that subject-matter, 'view-point', and form are in it susceptible of great variation'.[11]

Moreover, it can be argued that the existence of this variation is itself the result of the changing demands which have been made on the form:

> At different periods it has satisfied the Renaissance taste for the antique, the Baroque for the flamboyant, the Augustan for the classical, and the romantic and Victorian for the sublime.[12]

Formal definitions of the ode must, therefore, tend to emphasize intention and mood rather than poetical structure:

> It was basically a formal, public or social poem, usually occasional, celebrating something. It was of moderate length, stanzaic, eulogistic, and philosophic or learned, reflecting on life by means of highly wrought imagery, mythology, and aphorism. And it was, as a true child of the Renaissance, always conscious of its classical tradition'.[13]

Such definitions, though wide in their scope, may also be applied with advantage to musical odes, for they too were adapted stylistically to accommodate the varying tastes of different periods. More stringent definitions of poetical or musical structure would inevitably prohibit many items from consideration, and create a curious residue of works excluded from the ode 'canon'. But equally, too great a degree of qualification may seem to remove any possibility of common ground between the vastly different pieces which are then included. In practice, however, it is possible to detect in the musical ode what Robert Shafer had called in

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11 Robert Shafer, *The English Ode to 1660: An Essay in Literary History* (Princeton, 1918), 1.

12 Maddison, *op. cit.*, 1.

13 *Ibid.*, 3.

the poetical context 'a consistency of spirit and a common residuum of inner qualities' by which the genre can be distinguished from other forms.[14] Among these qualities, Shafer identifies the need for a personal voice expounding a single theme. Mere narrative or exposition is out of place; the tone must be enthusiastic, handled with 'sustained seriousness and sustained exaltation'.[15] Shafer's final definition, which recognizes the need to steer a course between adequate qualification and over-generalization, is almost equally applicable to the musical ode:

> We must require, then, that a true ode be a lyrical poem, serious in tone and stately in its structure; that it be cast in the form of an address; that it be rapid in style, treating its subject with 'brevity and variety'; and that its unity be emotional in character. Both in length and in metrical form odes may vary considerably; but it is safe to say that no very brief poem could well embody the characteristics already mentioned, and that neither could any poem whose metrical form was merely eccentric or capricious. By this definition we deliberately exclude from the register of English odes a great number of short poems, various in character -- some of them descriptive pieces, some song like in quality, some friendly addresses, some *vers de société* -- which by their authors have been styled odes. In point of fact English poets have on occasion used this word very loosely; and... a definition that would include all the English poems that have been called odes,... would be so vague and inclusive that it would not be useful for any purpose whatever.[16]

The odes of both Pindar and Horace exerted a considerable influence on the early seventeenth-century ode writers, but it was works modelled on the poetry of the former which provided libretti for most musical settings. The odes of Horace had never been intended for singing, and lacked the heroic spirit of the Pindaric. The latter was also much freer in its structure, allowing for that variety of mood and metre which was most conducive to musical setting. Pindar's odes represented the culmination of a long tradition of Greek poetry which was designed to be chanted or sung and, most importantly, to be danced to. And it was the requirement of the dance which provided the Pindaric ode with a characteristic which was of considerable significance to composers, namely a pattern of strong and regular

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14 Shafer, *op. cit.*, 3.

15 *Ibid.*, 2.

16 *Ibid.*, 3-4.

rhythms. Pindar's odes were occasional in intention, written as celebratory pieces to honour athletic victories in the Greek games. As Robert Shafer has pointed out, the poet was required in each case to fashion his poem to the particular event which he had been commissioned to commemorate,[17] a requirement which has obvious parallels with the panegyrical tradition (both musical and poetical) being considered here. The ode 'was concentrated and packed with allusion to all branches of human experience. It was the poem that glorified man, his experience and his works'.[18] Thus, Pindar mentions people and places associated with the games, just as later English writers in the Pindaric tradition were to scatter in their own poems the names of recent battlefields and the popular military leaders of the day.

The influence of the Greek poets on the later development of the ode was so great that it also dominated the writings of most of the eighteenth-century music critics and historians who theorized about vocal music. As a result, there is a curious lack of even the most general discussion of the ode as a specifically musical form in spite of its popularity. Thus, James Grassineau described the ode merely as 'a song or composition proper to be sung, and composed for that purpose, the singing is usually accompanied with some musical instrument,'[19] while Thomas Busby, writing at the very beginning of the nineteenth century, said that the ode 'forms an exalted species of song, and seems to rank between the sublime solemnity of oratorio, and the florid delicacy of the serious opera.'[20] These definitions merit closer scrutiny, however, for while they do not provide precise analysis of form or structure, they specifically describe the ode in relation to other genres, and thus go some way towards suggesting the particular characteristics by which the ode can be identified. Both Grassineau and Busby, for example, define the ode as a type of

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17 *Ibid.*, 19.

18 *Ibid*, 2.

19 *A Musical Dictionary* (1740), 167.

20 *A Complete Dictionary of Music* (*c.*1801).

song, and in so doing they bring sharply into focus the question of the ode's origins and early development.

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries a considerable degree of interchange was possible between the terms ode and song. *The St. James's Evening Post* of 1 January 1720 records the performance at court of 'a fine *song*', but there is no doubt that this New Year work would now be regarded as an ode. The earliest examples of odes -- those performed at court and at the University of Oxford -- developed from solo songs which originally had a minimum of instrumental support. To pieces of this type first a concluding chorus and then other contrasting solo sections were gradually added, along with more substantial accompaniments. Curiously, the major influence responsible for developing this essentially secular song form into a recognizably separate genre was a religious one. Anglican church music in the last quarter of the seventeenth century was dominated by the verse anthem, and this became, to a large degree, the formal and stylistic model for the early odes -- doubtless because most early composers of odes were also church musicians who were well acquainted with the popular sacred styles of the day.

Thomas Busby considered the ode to occupy a territory between oratorio and opera, and it is certainly true that while the multi-sectional form of the verse anthem was the single biggest influence on the odes composed before 1700 (and on many of those composed in the years immediately afterwards), its role as a stylistic model was overtaken in the course of the eighteenth century by the more secular influences of genres usually associated with the theatre. With the rise of oratorio in England from 1732 onwards, a new and powerful stylistic influence was brought to bear on the ode, which resulted in a general expansion of its scale and a tendency towards more substantial scoring. The size of the orchestral accompaniment for odes increased, choruses became longer and more dramatic, and the role of the vocal soloists acquired a new importance. Undoubtedly the most significant change in the ode genre at this time, however, was caused by the introduction of the da capo aria. This had the effect of destroying the sense of a continuous span of music which had

been a feature of most of the early odes, as for example, in Purcell's 'Welcome to all the pleasures' (1683). The contrasting sections of such a work were now replaced by clearly-defined movements which transformed the ode into a series of musical 'numbers'.

Thus, while there are difficulties in identifying the divergence of ode and song as separate genres at the turn of the eighteenth century, later in the century there is an apparent blending of characteristics between ode and oratorio. Both relied on the same forms of musical expression -- such as overture, da capo aria, through-composed song, fugal chorus -- and as the century progressed both began to show evidence of the stylistic influences of the galant style. Another obvious similarity derived from the question of scale, for while few oratorios of the period were exceeded either in duration or musical resources by the odes, a number of later odes are cast on such a large scale, and call for such substantial musical forces, that there can seem to be little formal distinction between the two. Many of these later odes -- for example, William Boyce's 'See famed Apollo and the Nine' (1739) and William Hayes's *Ode on the Passions* (1750) -- had so many movements that they were divided into two parts, akin to oratorio 'acts', and because of their length they began, like an oratorio, to occupy most, or all, of any programme in which they were to be performed.

In spite of these similarities, however, ode and oratorio remained independent forms, each preserving its own distinct conventions with regard to the context of performance and the character of the libretti which were set. Oratorio generally drew on scriptural and other religious themes, and though never intended to be staged in a fully theatrical way, it was a highly dramatic form which, more often than not, involved the unfolding and resolution of a plot in the course of the movements.[21] In many oratorios it was common for soloists to take on the part of a

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21 In this respect the last two parts of *Messiah* are to some extent an exception. Even there, however, an implicit story (the passion and resurrection of Christ) sets the tone of each movement.

single character for the duration of the work, and for the chorus (as in the manner of Greek drama) both to comment on the dramatic action and to take any necessary 'crowd' parts. In contrast, ode texts were (with very few exceptions) poems on secular themes, drawing their subject matter more often from allegory and classical mythology than from biblical sources.

John Hollander's suggestion that odes to be set to music were expected to be 'historical or narrative, rather than merely mythological' must, therefore, be accepted with caution.[22] Hollander was concerned with a narrowly defined group of texts (albeit an important one), namely odes which take as their theme the praise of music, and within that tradition the recounting of certain traditional legends was almost obligatory. Consideration of libretti across the chronological and contextual range of the ode genre as a whole, however, reveals a consistently prominent role for the symbolic and the allegorical, with much less importance given to narrative. This is not to say that ode texts were not, at times, dramatic in their language and their detail, and from time to time a movement, or a series of movements, is concerned with the telling of a story (*Alexander's Feast* being a case in point) but, unlike the vast majority of eighteenth-century oratorios, the ode was never a continuous narrative spanning the exposition and *dénouement* of a single plot. In addition, a poetic ode was a subjective piece of work, the reflective response of the writer to a particular occasion or theme. Unlike an oratorio libretto it was capable of being judged, for good or ill, as a poem in its own right, and its effectiveness as a vehicle for artistic expression did not necessarily depend on its being set to music.

Guided by these considerations a set of criteria has been developed by which a central body of odes has been selected for consideration in this study. Three aspects of a work have been identified as crucial in this process: the context (that is, the circumstances which surrounded its composition and first performance), the characteristics of the libretto, and the nature of the musical form in which that

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22 John Hollander, *The Untuning of the Sky: Ideas of Music in English Poetry 1500-1700* (Princeton, 1961), 400.

libretto was set. With regard to the first of these it can be asserted that the ode is an occasional work, designed for presentation in what would now be termed a concert performance, and is therefore predominantly secular in its context. The occasional nature of the ode is one of its most recognizable characteristics, especially during the early decades of its development, and one which links it closely to its poetical counterpart.[23] Robert Shafer asserted that the best poetic odes have an atmosphere appropriate to public performance, and although there are exceptions, the majority of musical odes were composed for specific occasions or particular groups of people. Those which were not are normally settings of well-known texts which are themselves indisputably poetical odes.

As already suggested, the ode was essentially a form of concert music, and the great variety of venues for ode performances bears witness to this fact. Concert rooms, pleasure gardens, the halls of the City of London livery companies, taverns and theatres, all played host to the performance of odes. Initially, theatres were only occasionally venues for ode performances, but they became increasingly popular during the latter half of the eighteenth century, when odes were frequently given there as interludes or afterpieces. The influence of the masque can often be traced in such works, and for a number, variously described as 'entertainments', 'interludes' or 'dialogues' there is some difficulty in establishing whether they can properly be considered as part of the ode genre.[24] There were also occasions on which shorter odes were interpolated into operas and other staged works,[25] but a theatrical venue did not alter the nature of the true ode as a concert piece, and therefore, with the exception of a small number of Dublin works, about which there may be speculation

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23 The fact that most odes were occasional works also distinguishes them from oratorio. The vast majority of the latter were 'commercial' productions, repeated as many times during a season as audience support would permit, and revived in succeeding years according to popularity or necessity.

24 John Eccles's *Europe's Revels for the Peace, and His Majesties Happy Return* (1697), for example, has been considered too theatrical for inclusion in this study.

25 William Shield's pantomime *Omai, or a Trip round the World* (1785), for example, ends with a two-verse 'ode' for solo voice and chorus in honour of Captain Cook.

and which occupy an important place in the sequence of Irish court odes, any work which seems to have had an element of staging in its performance has been excluded from this study. There are, however, a number of works in which (implicitly or otherwise) soloists take character parts, either briefly -- perhaps for a recitative and aria -- or for the duration of the piece. These works have not been excluded, providing that this characterization does not seem to have affected the manner in which the work was presented.

The essentially secular nature of the ode is another significant characteristic which results, albeit accidentally, from the genre's development as an occasional form. Almost without exception odes were designed to commemorate secular events, and many libretti make detailed reference to the occasion being observed. The secular tradition of the ode progressed, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, alongside an equally prolific tradition of the large-scale occasional anthem, a form which had developed at the Chapel Royal after the restoration of Charles II. It was natural that when additional music was required for religious observances the existing sacred forms should be used, although many important events -- such as coronations, victory in war, or the signing of treaties -- inspired the composition of both odes and anthems. For the most part, however, it was rare for the two forms to be incorporated into a single celebration of the same occasion, even though in purely stylistic terms the differences between the two types of work were quite negligible:

> The ringing anthems and Te Deums Handel heard [at St Paul's], and later composed, were not so much acts of worship as dynastic-national celebrations at which the Lord was informed about the Englishman's latest deeds and requested to ratify foregone conclusions. Although set to old Testament texts, there was no essential difference between one of these anthems and a birthday ode for the king; both were purely ceremonial music.[26]

The secular context in which most odes were performed, however, influenced the type of texts which were set. Occasionally a work which deals with religious

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26 Paul Henry Lang, 'The Composer', *Man Versus Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. James L. Clifford (Cambridge, 1968), 89.

subjects or themes contains elements which favour its consideration as an ode -- Philip Hayes's *The Song of Deborah* (1789), for example, is a setting of an undoubted poetical ode by William Hawkins -- but the number of such works is very small, and as a general rule, works setting biblical or other sacred texts are not considered here.

Beyond these stipulations there is no common pattern which can be identified in the texts which composers set, though Robert Shafer's definition of the poetical ode (quoted above, p.21) provides a useful guide, and in general two main types of libretto can be identified. In one category are works by poets such as Dryden, Gray, Collins and Warton which were clearly written with considerations of artistic imagination and literary craftsmanship predominant. Many of these poems were occasional offerings or commissioned pieces, but the libretti for odes which have no occasional inspiration are also invariably drawn from this group. In the other category are texts in which the demand for panegyric and occasional sentiment overwhelms, to a greater or lesser degree, any attempt to produce poetry which is satisfying for its own sake. It should also be noted that a distinction may be made between those texts which were selected by the composers themselves, and divided by them into units for musical setting, and those which were specifically written as libretti, with the needs of the composer more or less in mind.

Considerations of form in the ode must allow for much variety. The basic assertion must be that an ode is a multi-movement or multi-section work, with orchestral ensemble (the scale of which may vary considerably according to period and context), scored for at least one solo voice, and with at least one movement for chorus. It is impossible to generalize about the length of odes but, given the other criteria which have been outlined, one may echo Shafer's assertion that no very brief work could well embody the characteristics expected of an ode. Works consisting of only two or three movements are usually (though not always) more sensibly regarded as examples of other musical genres.

The application of these criteria has inevitably excluded from this study a substantial number of works designated as 'ode' but which do not fall within the mainstream ode genre.[27] Three main types of work have been affected in this way, drawing their stylistic inspiration respectively from the solo song, the cantata, and the glee. The close similarities between song and ode during the early years of the latter's development have already been mentioned, but within a relatively short time of the ode tradition becoming established the two forms diverged, and before the turn of the eighteenth century a distinction between the two can reasonably be made. Thus a work such as John Abell's *Song on Queen Ann's Coronation* (1702) has been excluded from this study because it is scored only for solo voice and continuo and is in no sense a true *pièce d'occasion.* Later in the eighteenth century song-odes were often featured in concert programmes and at the London pleasure gardens, but in this context the term ode was simply borrowed from the text, without thereby implying any distinctive musical form. A good example is Boyce's *Ode on the Death of Frederick Prince of Wales* (1751) which consists only of two vocal airs, with an accompaniment for violin and continuo.[28]

On a larger scale than works of this sort, but still of modest proportions, are several odes which would be more accurately described as cantatas. These may have several movements, and often include recitatives and da capo arias, but they are usually scored only for one or two solo voices. Instrumental accompaniments are occasionally extensive and ingenious, but are never truly orchestral. Most cantata-odes have no chorus, though an occasional concluding choral movement is sometimes found. As with the songs mentioned above, the term ode was often carried over to a musical setting from its text. Thus the last of William Hayes's noted set of *Six Cantatas* of 1748 is entitled 'An Ode to Echo', though formally it is far removed from Hayes' several exercises in the genuine ode genre.

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27 A list of such works forms Appendix II of the accompanying Catalogue of Odes.

28 *Ob* MS Mus.Sch. c.106 (ff.15-16).

The third group of works to which the title ode was sometimes misleadingly attached belongs to the genre of the glee, which became a popular form of 'convivial' vocal music in the latter half of the eighteenth century, largely as a result of the many catch clubs and glee clubs which were established from the 1760s onwards. Glee composers frequently set well-known texts -- Shakespeare was a great favourite -- but they also turned to more recent lyric poetry and, on occasions, set words which had been specially written, particularly when the music was intended for the meeting of a society or charitable institution. Many of these works were performed at dinners or feasts, and although often described as odes, most were in reality cantatas or extended glees, for there was rarely the space or resources to allow for a large-scale ode performance. Much of the music performed on these occasions has been lost, but a good example which has survived, and which shows the glee-influenced 'ode' at its most expansive, is Benjamin Cooke's *Ode on Handel* which was performed at a dinner held to celebrate the centenary of Handel's birth in 1785.[29] This consists of three substantial and contrasting movements scored for double choir (two altos, tenor and bass), but the lack of soloists, choral trebles, and instrumental accompaniment, clearly points to the glee (originally the preserve of male voices) as its stylistic model.

It should be stressed, however, that the means by which the ode genre has been identified for the purposes of this study have not been applied inflexibly. Not every ode which has been included here complies in every detail with the criteria discussed above, and there has inevitably been the occasional need for subjective decisions. Since the intention has been to provide as full an account as possible of ode composition, considerable latitude has been allowed where only the text of a work has survived, and also when neither words nor music are extant. In such cases it has seemed sensible to err on the side of caution, so that several lost works

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29 *An Ode on Handel Perform'd at the Commemoration dinner May 26th. 1785* (1785). An autograph score attributes the words to 'the Revd. Dr. Scott' (*Lcm* MS 807, ff.1-12).

considered here, and listed in the accompanying catalogue, might in fact be found to fall outside the mainstream ode genre if ever their music should come to light.

3. ODES FOR OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE

The Restoration court ode encouraged the development of the wider ode genre, and provided a formal model for other odes and similar pieces composed in the last three decades of the seventeenth century. Ode performances at court (alongside the development of the Restoration verse anthem and the re-opening of the theatres) are rightly regarded as indications of the revival of musical creativity during the Restoration, but these early panegyric offerings were not the first of their sort. At the University of Oxford, verses had long been set to music and performed to accompany academic ceremonial, and the origins of this tradition are somewhat earlier than its royal counterpart. At Cambridge, on the other hand, the ode made its appearance much later.

Rosamond McGuinness has shown that the court ode took some time to become established, developing originally from purely poetic origins. Although there are several musical works which may be regarded as progenitors of the species, the tradition of regular annual performances cannot be traced earlier than about 1680.[1] At Oxford (where large-scale ode performances were to become an important feature of musical life during the eighteenth century) the ode tradition dates from at least a decade earlier. While the court ode was still in its formative phase the Oxford ode was already established, though generally on a smaller and less-sophisticated scale than its developing London equivalent. The music performed at Oxford during the 1670s and 1680s must have been known to at least some of the composers of the early court odes -- indeed some of them had composed music for Oxford -- though ironically, by the turn of the century, it is the Oxford works which begin to show the influence of London styles, rather than the other way round.

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1 *McGuinness*, 10-11.

That a comparatively independent ode genre should have developed at Oxford is not surprising. The theoretical study of music within the University had always been complemented by a tradition of practical music making of which the several choral foundations were only a part. A large number of amateur musicians (and especially instrumentalists) were resident in the city during the Commonwealth and immediate post-Restoration periods, and many of these must have come into contact with the professional musicians who had arrived in Oxford with the court of Charles I during the last years of the Civil War. With so many musicians and music lovers at hand it was natural that the University, anxious to leave behind it the austere and difficult times of the Interregnum, should have found in music the perfect means of enhancing the splendour of its formal occasions.

Most of the Oxford music was composed for the annual University ceremony known as the Act (or for similar academic occasions), and it is important to emphasize that this chapter is concerned solely with the Act odes, not with the considerable quantity of other works which have survived under the general heading of 'Act music'. The instrumental suites, small-scale songs and other pieces which were performed in the Musick School at Act time, but which do not have ode-like qualities, fall outside the scope of this survey.[2] Only those works which are 'occasional' in text or mood and may thus lay some claim to being regarded as odes (however germinal their form) will be considered. A selective approach has also been adopted to the 'exercises' -- the works composed in fulfilment of statutory requirements, by those supplicating for degrees in music. The study of music as an academic discipline had always had a place in the ancient universities, but there was no formal teaching of the subject in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Oxford.[3]

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2 For example, Henry Bowman's 'English songe for Act Saturday' beginning 'Stay, shepherd stay' which consists of a short verse and chorus, preceded by a ritornello. This was published in Bowman's *Songs, for one, two & three voices to the thorow-bass* (Oxford, 1678) and also survives in manuscript (*Ob* MS Mus.Sch.e.452).

3 For an account of music in Oxford at this time (including the role of music as an academic subject) see Susan Wollenberg, 'Music in 18th-Century Oxford', *PRMA*, cviii (1981-2), 69-

Candidates for musical degrees were obliged to matriculate from one of the colleges, but there was no residential requirement and degrees were awarded on the evidence of testimonials and after performance of the exercises in the Musick School (and later, on occasion, in the Sheldonian Theatre). Candidates for the B.Mus. were required to compose a piece in five parts 'with voices and instruments' while for the D.Mus. a piece in six or eight parts was required.[4] Many supplicants were church organists who submitted as exercises sacred works which cannot be considered here. However, a number of ode settings or pieces approximating to ode form were also submitted (more so during the eighteenth century) and these fall within the scope of this chapter.

The Public Act, at which many of the odes were performed, had its origins in the custom of medieval universities that those supplicating for degrees should prove their ability by engaging in disputations with senior scholars, in the presence of the assembled university. At Oxford these disputations were held several times a year in the University Church or in the Schools, according to faculty. In the course of the seventeenth century it became clear that the frequency of these events was inconvenient and new regulations were drawn up making them an annual event, to be held over several days early in July.[5] In 1669, prompted by the opening of the Sheldonian Theatre which had been purposely designed to house formal University events, it was decided that 'on every Friday before the Act begins, there should be Encaenia or Philological Exercises performed... in which exercises there should be two Inceptors of Arts... that should speak Orations'.[6] It is evident from the surviving sources that music was often performed on these occasions, and there was traditionally also a lecture in the Musick School (occasionally transferred to the

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99; also the same author's 'Music and Musicians' in *The History of the University of Oxford*, V: *The Eighteenth Century*, ed. L.S. Sutherland and L.G. Mitchell (Oxford, 1986), 865-87.

4 *Oxford University Statutes*, trans. G.R.M. Ward (1845), i, 49.

5 *Ibid.*, i, 57.

6 Anthony à Wood, *History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford*, ed. John Gutch (Oxford, 1792-6), ii, 798.

Sheldonian), given by a lecturer appointed annually, and interspersed with performances of music. The main proceedings, the *Comitia*, took place on the Monday afternoon, and when the philosophical disputations had ended, there was provision in the Statutes for a 'Musical Act':

> After the completion of the exercises of the artists at the Act, if there is any person to take a degree [D.Mus.] in music, it will be his duty to give a musical piece or two of six or eight parts, together with an accompaniment of voices and musical instruments, after the completion of which he is to receive solemn creation from the Savilian professors.[7]

The Act was a serious academic occasion, but its events took place amid some splendour and attracted many visitors, among them John Evelyn who records, in 1654, having 'tarried out the whole Act in St Maries'.[8] Further evidence of the Act's popularity is found in the fact that it was cancelled in 1665 and 1666 when the Plague was at its height in London, for it was feared 'that the extraordinary recourse of people which a public Act would bring to the University might expose it to much danger'.[9] Anthony Wood recorded on a number of occasions that the Act had been cancelled 'because there are not a sufficient number of proceeders in each faculty this yeare' although privately he held the view that 'laziness and covetousness' were the real reasons for putting off what was a time-consuming and expensive event.[10] The Act was often cancelled for other reasons; it had a tendency to provoke unrest by attracting undesirable elements to the town and was therefore not held at times of political instability, nor during periods of court mourning.

The Act was not, however, the only University ceremony at which music could be heard. Special convocations (for which the term 'Encaenia' was widely used) were held to celebrate notable events and to commemorate the visits of important personages. On these occasions the proceedings were rather more

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7 *Oxford University Statutes, op. cit.*, i, 65.

8 *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. E.S. de Beer (Oxford, 1955), iii, 105.

9 *The Life and Times of Anthony Wood*, ed. Andrew Clark (Oxford, 1891-1900), ii, 79.

10 *Ibid.*, iii, 332.

celebratory than academic, and consisted predominantly of orations in verse and prose. Music was also provided, and some of the surviving odes were undoubtedly performed then, rather than at the July Act. On 21 May 1683, for example, the Duke of York (later James II) visited the University with his wife and daughter (the future Queen Anne). The royal visitors attended a convocation in the Theatre which began with several speeches:

> Till at length they winded themselves into a delicat and smooth pastorall (composed by Dr. Henry Aldrige and Mr. James Allestry of Ch.Ch....), in the middle of which they bespoke the musitians to play from their gallery, which was accordingly done verie melodiously. Afterwards they proceeded and having continued some time in speaking alternately, the vocall musick from the said gallery dropt in to the great delight of the auditory.[11]

Wood's description is clarified by a rubric which interrupts the text halfway through: 'here they sate down, and Musick play'd; which being ended, they stood up again, and spoke by way of Pastoral [a Dialogue between Damon and Thyrsis]'.

In 1706 the University assembled to commemorate an academic anniversary:

> This being the day agreed upon by the Heads of Houses for Commemorating the Foundation of the University of Francfurt upon Oder by Joachim ye First, Marquess of Brandenburg, a Convocation was held in the Theatre beginning at two a Clock... ye Solemnity was ended... by... musick perform'd as usual upon such occasions.[12]

The music concerned was the ode *Carminum Praeses*, apparently by Aldrich, which survives in several versions and was probably a re-working of an earlier Act song. Some of the surviving 'Act odes' may not therefore really be Act odes at all in the strictest sense, while others are anonymous or of doubtful attribution, and many more are undated. Fortunately, the years in which the Act and other convocations took place can be established from official notices issued by the Vice-Chancellor. In addition some contemporary accounts of these occasions have survived, and

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11 *Ibid.*, iii, 51. The verses were later published in *Examen Poeticum; being the third part of Miscellany Poems* (1693), 181-187. The reciters are named in Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses*, ed. Philip Bliss (Oxford, 1820) iv, 202, which identifies Allestry as the author. If Aldrich was the composer, this is the only occasion on which he is known to have set English words for the Act.

12 Thomas Hearne, *Remarks and Collections*, ed. C.E. Doble *et al.* (Oxford, 1885-1921), i, 235.

occasionally libretti are recorded independently of the music in manuscript or printed collections. The verses recited in the Theatre were often subsequently published, though the texts of the musical settings tend not to be included, making the dating of some works still a matter of speculation.

The notices of the Act gave instructions regarding its conduct and outlined the seating arrangements for the Theatre. From these it emerges that regular provision was made for the accommodation of musicians in the gallery 'above the Ladies', that is in the upper gallery at the south end of the Theatre (now occupied by the organ).[13] Other documents listed the order and titles of the disputations and orations, along with the names of the participants. No official details were given of when or at what point music might be heard, but Anthony Wood's own collection of these papers, preserved in the Bodleian Library, includes handwritten annotations indicating the points at which music was performed. Some of the comments consist only of the word 'musick', but others are more informative: 'musick both vocal and instrumental for about half an houre, of Mr Aldriges comp[osing]', 'musick from the gallery', 'here followed instr[umental] and vocal musick'.[14]

The overall responsibility for the musical performances lay with the Heather Professor of music, though he does not seem himself to have been obliged to compose the music which was required. Thus, while there are no extant Act odes by Edward Lowe, who was professor from 1662 to 1682, he can be identified as the copyist for much of the music which was performed during the 1670s. Several Act

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13 In spite of the reference elsewhere to 'the Balustred Corridore' (see Evelyn, *op. cit.*, iii, 533) there is strong evidence that the musicians were in the upper of the two galleries: 'the aforesaid semicircle, will be the place of the Doctors, Noble men, and Inceptors in the Superior faculties. The Enclosure within the Rail, the place of inceptors in Arts. The Gallery beyond the Doctors in the Circular part of the Theater, will be the place of Masters. The side Gallery Westward is reserved for the Cambridge men: that Eastward for strangers. The Galleries in the Front for Ladies and Gentlewomen. The Upper Gallery above the Masters is appointed for the Gentlemen Commoners and Bachelors. Those above the Cambridge men and strangers, for Commoners. That above the Ladies for performances of Musick: The Area for Persons of promiscuous Quality' (*Ob* Wood 276a [384]).

14 See *Ob* Wood 276a (395), (399) and (400) respectively.

odes were provided by Henry Aldrich, Dean of Christ Church from 1689 to 1710, a keen amateur musician and an enthusiastic supporter of the Act, and others were composed by Sampson Estwick who was a minor canon at Christ Church during the 1680s. Both provided music during the professorship of the elder Richard Goodson, even though he himself was a fairly prolific composer of Act odes. In addition to this local involvement there were occasional contributions from composers not permanently resident in Oxford, notably Matthew Locke and John Blow.

The evidence suggests that the primary responsibility of the Professor at Act time was to ensure that suitable music was available, to engage the necessary performers, and to pay them for their services. Entries in the Vice-Chancellor's accounts confirm the involvement of the Professor in the provision of music at the Act, and also show how expenses increased as the role of music on these occasions developed.[15] In 1674, for example, Lowe's bill 'for Musick at the Act' was £2, the following year there was a payment of £1 13*s* 6*d* 'for gratifying the Musick', and in 1677 the same amount is entered again as 'Mr Lowe's bill for Musick at the Act'. Two years later the bill rose to £3 5*s*, and two years after that it was £3 6*s* 6*d*. In Richard Goodson's first year as Professor a payment of £4 6*d* is recorded, the largest payment for music, though the Act is not specifically mentioned. Thereafter there are two more records of payment to Goodson for organist's duties, including an entry in 1685 'for Expenses at the Coronation Ceremony'.

Although no detailed breakdown of expenditure is given, it is known that a group of wind musicians was employed at several early acts. For example, at the convocation which opened the Sheldonian Theatre on 11 July 1669, there were clearly two separate groups of musicians:

> The theatre was filled with strangers of all sorts, and with the several ranks of Graduats [*sic*] and Scholars. Soon after the Vicechancellor and Doctors coming in and taking their places, the University Musicians played on their wind music in the gallery dedicated to that Faculty.... The Auditors were frequently refreshed both with vocal and instrumental Music; for after the performances in Lyric poetry, from

15 Oxford University Archives, NEP/C/9-25.

> the Music gallery by Robotham and Crespyon, certain Masters and Teachers of the Musical Faculty in Oxon, with the public Professor of the Praxis (who attended all the time in the said gallery) fell into their instrumental and vocal Music, better then, than since performed. At length the Encaenia being closed, the University Musicians which stood by the former, played on their Wind Music till the Company was gone out of the Theatre, but since instead of that an Organ was set up in the said Music gallery in May an. 1671.[16]

Wood is careful to distinguish between the members of the 'faculty' and a separate group of 'University Musitians.' The latter, who seem only to have provided appropriate incidental music, were perhaps the town waits operating under a different name, while the former were performers drawn from the colleges and their choirs, probably supplemented with instrumentalists from the various amateur 'musick meetings' in the town. Wood records that the 'University Musicians' were in attendance again in December 1670, perhaps for the last time before the installation of the organ, when William Prince of Orange (later William III) visited the University and attended an Encaenia.[17]

The events of July 1669, as described above by Anthony Wood, were important for two reasons. First, they marked the beginning of an increased role for music on University occasions:

> That which much graced the Comitia were those excellent performances of vocal and instrumental Music, mostly composed by the curious fancy of a Doctor of that Faculty then proceeded. From which auspicious beginning, our Acts and other Solemnities have been with very great conveniences celebrated, and 'tis hoped that they will be so for ever after with as good success.[18]

Secondly, the opening ceremony for the Sheldonian included the conferring of a doctorate on the Professor of Music, Benjamin Rogers, whose ode for the occasion, now lost, was presumably among the music performed by 'the Masters and Teachers

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16 Wood, *History*, *op.cit.*, ii, 801-2.

17 Wood, *Life and Times*, *op. cit.*, ii, 208-9.

18 Wood, *History*, *op. cit.*, ii, 803. Rogers had been created Doctor of Music at the Comitia and his exercise, a setting of *Laudate Dominum*, was performed in the Theatre, as required by Statute (see Evelyn, *op. cit.*, iii, 533). A copy of the exercise was made by Philip Hayes in 1778 (*Ob* MS Mus.Sch. c.96).

of the Musical Faculty'.[19] It is in the context of this work that the term 'ode' first appears in Oxford with a specifically musical implication.

The words of the Oxford odes have little poetical merit, and the early ones, invariably in Latin, are similar in form and content to the other verses recited in the Theatre. Indeed a number of ode libretti consist of sequences of stanzas drawn from much longer poems, which were themselves recited in full on the same occasion. Thus in 1672 Henry Aldrich set twelve out of nineteen stanzas of a poem (*In Laudem Musices*) by John Fell, his immediate predecessor as Dean of Christ Church:

> The verses... were spoken from the Musick gallery by one John Penkherst (commonly called Penker) a common^{er} of Ch. Church: At w^{ch} time, so much of it y^{t} is in Italick characters, was sung by several masters of musick, scholars, & choristers in divers parts: All admirably well p[er]formed, & so consequently gave great content.[20]

Similarly at the Act of 1693 a poem entitled *Britannia* (apparently written by Anthony Alsop of Christ Church) was recited by Samuel Lennard, after which Aldrich's setting of selected portions from it was performed. During the 1680s English texts began occasionally to appear which share with their Latin counterparts an absence of any great literary merit. Both are dominated by classical imagery and topical allusion; royalty and public figures are compared to the deities of the ancient world and, along with Oxford herself, are the recipients of enthusiastic adulation. They show, almost without exception, 'the fulsome flattery, threadbare topical allusions and intolerable hack work' of congratulatory verse of the period, qualities which also characterized the court odes.[21] It is refreshing, therefore, to find John Blow setting words of Abraham Cowley for the University, and in doing so he may have supposed that at Oxford both words and music would receive a level of attention not always assured at court. Blow, however, composed for the University

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19 A manuscript copy of the words survive (*Ob* MS Wood F.34) and show the ode to have been an extended piece in up to five vocal parts.

20 *Ob* Wood 423 (48).

21 H. Watkins Shaw, 'The Autographs of John Blow (1649-1708)', *MR*, xxv (1964), 92.

only occasionally; for those who set official panegyric verses on a regular basis, the task was doubtless uninspiring. Given the technical weaknesses of many of the Oxford composers, it is hardly surprising perhaps that poor verse called forth music that was itself often no better.

Between the opening of the Sheldonian Theatre and the decline of the Act ceremony in the first decade of the eighteenth century, over twenty works which may be considered as odes were composed. Most of the composers responsible for them possessed only limited musical talent, and with the exception of Blow and Locke most worked solely within the comparatively narrow musical sphere of Oxford. Though they may themselves have travelled elsewhere to hear musical performances, few of them seem to have had their compositions performed beyond the University. Sampson Estwick was essentially a performer-composer and combined his musical activities with a clerical career, while Henry Aldrich was much given to arranging and adapting the music of Carissimi, so that it is difficult to assess what in his work may be considered as original. Richard Goodson, in spite of his position as Professor of Music, had only a slender compositional ability, and his music is characterized by unadventurousness in form and expression, compounded by frequent technical carelessness.

The stylistic origins of the Oxford odes, like those for the court, lie in the Restoration verse anthem. It is more likely that the Oxford works were influenced by music sung at the choral foundations in London than that composers for the act (with the possible exception of Sampson Estwick) had been acquainted with the early odes offered at court. The vocal and instrumental elements of the anthem were transferred to the ode in no consistent pattern, save that the works usually opened with at least one instrumental movement, and were concluded with a chorus. Within this framework the exact structure was flexible, as was the scoring. Over half the odes have a four-part chorus of either SATB or SSAB, some use only a three-part chorus (SAB), and in one of Goodson's late odes (*O qui potenti*) there is five-part choral writing (SSATB). The disposition of vocal solos ranges from a single bass

voice in Aldrich's *Iam satis somno* to six soloists (sssatb) in Goodson's *O qui potenti*, and instrumental scoring, with two exceptions, is for three- and four-part strings (the former scoring tending to be the earlier in date). The exceptions are Goodson's *Ormond's glory, Marlborough's arms* (*c*.1702) which uses two trumpets in the final chorus, and Aldrich's 'Frankfurt' ode, *Carminum praeses* (1706), which has two unidentified instrumental lines in one movement which may reasonably be assumed to be trumpets. With the exception of the choruses, which are almost invariably accompanied, the strings are used more for ritornelli sections than to accompany solos and ensembles, and especially so in the earlier works (*c*.1670-85). The various odes composed in London slowly moved away from their sacred roots to gain a formal identity of their own by expanding the short musical sections into distinct 'movements' that were more fully worked out. This development is reflected only slightly in the Oxford works, which retain their close affinity with the anthem form. Later odes (such as Goodson's two settings of English texts) do show some awareness of stylistic developments, but never with any real conviction. Vocal sections remain short and through-composed, with a reliance on word-painting and vocal ornament rather than on long-term melodic planning. Short phrases, with frequent tonic cadences and unadventurous harmony, reinforce the perfunctory nature of much of the music. The influence of the early Oxford odes is essentially a formative one, and only three works will be considered here in closer detail: the anonymous *Eia eruditam*, Matthew Locke's *Descende coelo* and John Blow's *Awake my lyre*.

The earliest extant dated ode, *Eia eruditam*, was performed at the Act in 1671, and is fairly typical of the works which were to follow it. The manuscript gives no details of the composer, but the musical style shows the influence of Carissimi so strongly that Aldrich must be the obvious contender. A copy of the anonymous words is bound up with the surviving parts (*Ob* MS Mus.Sch. c.123) and shows that only eight of the twelve stanzas were set, suggesting that the poem may also have been recited in full. The scoring is simple, and three soloists (stb) carry

the bulk of the music, in short contrasting sections (Ex.1). The setting shows the influence of some of the other early non-ode Act music, particularly in its use of dance movements as instrumental ritornelli.[22] Two of these are in binary form, and all are considerably longer than any of the vocal sections. They follow a common tonal pattern, with a central modulation to the relative major, and the simple part-writing has an easy confidence which is lacking in many of the later odes despite, or perhaps because of, their pretensions to contrapuntal intricacy. The vocal sections show the extent to which early odes drew on the English tradition of declamatory song, which itself owed its development to the influence of Italian monody. In the opening solo sections of *Eia eruditam*, for example, phrasing and melodic rhythm are governed entirely by the text (which is set without repetition of words or phrases), and the rate of harmonic change alters to suit the melodic mood.

The performance of Matthew Locke's *Descende coelo* went unrecorded by contemporary commentators on the Act, but a payment to Locke of £5 for composing an ode was recorded in the University accounts for 1672-3.[23] There seems little doubt that *Descende coelo* must have been the work in question, and that it was performed at the Act in 1673. Locke visited Oxford several times, and his music was well known there, especially his instrumental pieces, parts for many of which have survived. Bodleian Library MS Mus.Sch.c.124 contains parts for a number of dance movements, including some by Locke, used in the course of the performance of two Act songs, one Latin and one English. A group of three dances is labelled 'before y^{e} Latin Songe', but these do not correspond with either of the introductory movements of *Descende coelo*, which suggests that if the Latin song mentioned in the manuscript was also by Locke it was a different work, and no longer survives.

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22 A number of instrumental suites survive among the Act music, though it appears that they were often not performed in their entirety. Instead, one or two movements were used as a prelude to a song or similar piece, and others were played as interludes between the various vocal sections.

23 Wood, *Life and Times*, *op. cit.*, iv, 73.

Descende coelo begins with a prelude and a saraband (for Locke's preferred instrumental combination of two trebles and bass), the latter reappearing as a ritornello three more times. The prelude is typical of the composer's very individual string style, the surprising dissonances and harmonic shifts so characteristic of the composer being well represented and continuing, to a lesser degree, in the saraband. The three parts are independent and wide-ranging, particularly so in the last ten bars of the saraband, where they acquire a new rhythmic vigour, so that although there are no actual variations the effect is reminiscent of the English division suite in which the decoration becomes increasingly florid with each repetition. The score does not indicate whether the two vocal ensembles are for chorus or for a solo quartet, though it is likely that at least the second of them would have been performed chorally. Locke uses less declamatory melody than in *Eia eruditam*, and phrases of text are frequently repeated, particularly in the duet sections, where one voice will answer another with the same words. Only one section is scored for solo voice and continuo, and this is firmly in the tradition of Italian monody, though elsewhere Locke retains a traditional delight in word-painting and in vocal flourishes.

John Blow's *Awake, my lyre* was the most notable of the early Oxford odes and the only one to achieve popularity beyond the University. There has been some confusion about its date, because a wrapper from the parts of Blow's Latin Act song, *Diva quo tendis*, was misbound with the parts for *Awake, my lyre*, a note on the wrapper consequently giving misleading details about the work within it:

> The score and partes, Instrumentall & Vocall, of a piece of a Songe composed by Dr. Blow designed for the Act. 1678, but that Act beinge putt off, it was not finisht: the next yeare 1679 it was transcribd and performd as a 2^{d} songe in the Theatre. on fryday the 11 of July: with the addition onely of a prelude of Mr. Banisters in the same Key, to bringe the Songe in.[24]

Although *Awake, my lyre* had survived complete and with its own prelude intact the error was only brought to light comparatively recently by Watkins Shaw. The stray

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24 *Ob* MS Mus.Sch.c.144 (formerly bound with MS Mus.Sch.c.122).

wrapper has now been rebound with its correct parts, and *Awake, my lyre* has been left without a date, though Dr Shaw, writing in *New Grove*, has suggested *c.*1676.

There are marked differences between this work and the other Oxford odes, most obviously in the choice of text. It is not known whether Blow specifically declined the offer of a panegyrical libretto, or whether from the start he was free to choose his own text, but he seems to have relished the opportunity to escape from the drivel with which his court responsibilities had made him only too familiar. Blow selected four stanzas from the *Davideis* of Abraham Cowley, an unusual choice which was probably prompted by the musical subject matter of the text (more in the tradition of the *encomia musicae,* which inspired the St Cecilia odes, than of academic panegyric), though it has been suggested that the nature of Cowley's verse has particular affinities with Blow's music.[25] These stanzas are not, however, the most obvious candidates for musical setting, though Blow was by no means the only composer to turn to them.[26] Their irregular metrical structure is not easily translated into musical rhythms, and Blow's adept handling of this problem is one of the most admirable features of the work.

From the first chords of the prelude the superiority of this work to any of its Oxford predecessors is obvious. The formal structure has an ordered continuity in marked contrast to the haphazard alternations of solo, chorus and ritornello which made up most of the Act odes, and the parallels between the words of the first and last stanzas provide a textual unity that is reflected in the music. Each poetical stanza is treated as a unit, the first two being similar in structure, though not in material. A soloist sings the text through, a ritornello follows, and a complete choral reprise of the solo verse completes the musical unit. The third stanza provides a contrast to this pattern by introducing for the first time the solo bass voice, and

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25 Percy M. Young, *A History of British Music* (1967), 245.

26 Two other contemporaneous solo settings of these words are extant, one by William King (1668) and another by Pietro Reggio (1680). See Ian Spink, *English Song: Dowland to Purcell*, rev. edn. (1986), 206-7.

abandoning the choral reprise, though there is an instrumental ritornello based on the soloist's material. The tripartite structure returns for the setting of the final stanza, emphasizing the cyclic nature of the words.

The first stanza, tuneful and immediately appealing, makes great play with cross-beat *hemiolae* and is remarkable for its word-setting. Blow's concern was not so much, however, the sympathetic setting of individual words as the achievement of an overall coherence through phrasing and harmony. The central full close in G major divides the opening verse into two broad musical sentences, uneven in length, yet balanced in their content and effect. The first half itself divides into two phrases, the second of which sets out apparently to balance the first, but then acquires its own significance by continuing the text and drawing the melody to its central cadence. The second musical sentence presents the remainder of the text, again in two broad phrases but with a slightly more angular melodic line. The continuo bass occasionally echoes the rhythms of the melody, but generally maintains a more regular momentum coupled with firm harmonic support (Ex.2).

The instrumental ritornello which follows combines new material with short phrases drawn from the preceding verse, and so prepares the way for the choral reprise. This thematic continuity is complemented by the uninterrupted rhythmic momentum between all three sections. The setting of the whole first stanza of text is thus given an overall continuity and appears as a single span of music despite its three distinct parts. After a contrasting bass solo in 4/4 time Blow returns to triple time for the final poetical stanza (the words of which begin 'Sleep, sleep again my lyre'). The choice of metre, along with a similarly agile vocal line and a corresponding central cadence in G major, re-asserts the opening mood, even though there is no actual repetition of melodic material.

To turn from *Awake, my lyre* to the odes of Richard Goodson is to move from the assured techniques of one of the most accomplished composers of the day to the mediocrity of an undoubtedly second-rate practitioner. Indeed the frequent clumsiness in Goodson's music suggests a degree of technical incompetence which

is extraordinary for someone in his position. Yet these odes represent the largest single contribution to seventeenth-century ode repertoire in Oxford and, along with similiar works by Goodson's colleagues, they constituted the regular musical fare for audiences at the Act. The words are Latin panegyrics or, more rarely, second-rate English doggerel, and in most cases the soloists and chorus are accompanied by strings alone (the exceptional use of two trumpets in the final movement of *Ormond's glory, Marlborough's arms* has already been noted).

Only Goodson's *O cura divum* has no surviving overture, but it seems likely that some sort of prelude would have been used, if only because the first chorus would have made an unarresting opening on its own. Apart from *Sacra musarum*, the overture to which includes three dance movements, the odes all have two-movement overtures which reflect French influences rather than the more contemporary developments of the Italian style. Nowhere in these movements is there any trace of the influence of Corelli for instance, even though many of his sonatas were known in England (and had long since made a considerable impact on Purcell) by the time Goodson was writing his later pieces. Instrumental ritornelli within the odes mainly appear between rather than during movements, and while some contain independent thematic material, most are based on ideas drawn from other parts of the ode and are often little more than transcriptions of earlier material. Instrumental accompaniments frequently double the vocal parts, but are occasionally more adventurous as, for example, in *Janus, did ever to thy wond'ring eyes*, where two independent violin parts adds emphasis to the second half of a solo verse, while the bass voice largely doubles the continuo -- a technique also found in the music of Lully. Most vocal solos and ensembles, however, are accompanied solely by the continuo, and maintain the arioso-like elements of the declamatory style, even though the overall rhythmic structure is more rigidly metrical.

The unadventurousness which characterizes Goodson's odes, manifests itself in the lack of any truly memorable melody (though the Latin texts generally receive the more sympathetic response), and in the consistent lack of extended contrapuntal

textures. With rare exceptions Goodson produces clumsy vocal lines, phrased with monotonous regularity and devoid of any interest, while caution in the choice of key limits any tonal contrast to the simplest and most predictable kind. Even at his best Goodson cannot compare with the more pedestrian works of Blow and Purcell, and the few interesting examples of Goodson's slender talent which do survive are buried among much else that is mediocre or worse. Certainly no one section of Goodson's odes could ever stand in performance on its own in the way that so many of Purcell's do. In 1692, for example, when many of Goodson's odes still remained to be written, Purcell was producing *Come ye sons of art* and his finest ode for St Cecilia's Day, both of which have the sort of accomplished and well-defined movements which are sought in vain in Goodson's work.

During the first decade of the eighteenth century the Act ceremony fell into a decline which was to last almost uninterrupted for nearly thirty years. There were other formal occasions during that time when the University gathered together, but there is no reason to suppose that music was performed at them or to date any of Goodson's surviving odes later than about 1706. Nor is the younger Richard Goodson, who succeeded to the professorship on his father's death in 1718, known to have composed any odes or other occasional music for the University. One event stands out as an exception, however, in the course of this otherwise musically barren period, namely the Encaenia of 1713 at which both William Croft and John Christopher Pepusch supplicated for the degree of D.Mus. Each composer brought with him a band of musicians to perform his doctoral exercise, and two of those who accompanied Croft were themselves awarded the B.Mus. degree whilst in Oxford. This was the first Oxford ceremony to receive significant coverage in the London press, but unfortunately for Pepusch, Croft and his music (two odes, one each in English and Latin) attracted by far the greater attention.[27]

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27 See D.F. Cook, 'The Life and Works of Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667-1752), with special reference to his dramatic works and cantatas' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1982), i, 95-8.

Whether this preference was based purely on musical considerations remains a matter for speculation since Pepusch's ode has not survived, though an extant printed libretto reveals a certain amount about the work. The ode set a lengthy anonymous text (over 100 lines) in praise of Queen Anne and was entitled *Peace, Apollo, Britain*, these being the characters represented by the three soloists. It was certainly a large-scale piece and was probably longer than either of Croft's works since, excluding recitatives, there were eleven movements and presumably an overture too. Most of the sections labelled 'air' in the libretto end with a da capo instruction, and it may be inferred from the blank verse which precedes most of them that a recitative-aria structure predominated. Whatever the musical qualities of Pepusch's exercise, it must have been very different from the two odes offered by Croft. The latter was a church musician, both by training and experience, whose career had developed at the Chapel Royal and Westminster Abbey. While Pepusch may have looked to a doctorate to further his career, Croft was already well established in his posts and it was perhaps to be expected that the composer to the Queen would attract more attention than someone who, to Oxford audiences, may have been a relatively obscure London theatre musician.

The University at this time was declining into the indolence which characterized most aspects of its life, music being one of the few exceptions, for the remainder of the century. That an Act was held at all in 1713 (as all three odes make clear) was due more to a desire to celebrate the recent Peace of Utrecht, than to any attempt to revive the flagging academic life of the University:

> This Day [10 July] the publick Act began here with the utmost Pomp and Magnificence. The Celebration of Peace brought an innumerable Concourse of Persons of Distinction, and inspir'd all that were publickly concern'd, with uncommon Zeal and Emulation in their several Performances. It is likely to be very great; and what adds much to the Solemnity, is, that Mr. Croft, Organist and Composer to her Majesty, &c. and Mr. Nepusch, commence Doctors. The Act was open'd with a most surprizing Piece of Harmony compos'd by Dr. Croft, which lasted about an Hour. The Words were made by the Reverend Mr. Trap upon the Peace, by Direction of the University. The Performance in all its Parts was done with great Exactness and Applause: The Vocal by Mr. Elford, Mr. Hughs, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Gates, Mr. Weely, and several other the best Voices. The instrumental

> Parts by Mr. Goodson, Musick Professor here, Mr. Isham, and the best Hands of her Majesty's Musick, and in the Opera-House. The Harmony, Solemnity, and Variety of which Piece, has given all that are Judges an unspeakable Esteem for that exquisite and inimitable Master. We expect on Monday next to be very well entertain'd by Dr. Nepusch's Exercise'.[28]

Croft's odes were so well received that one of them was unexpectedly repeated, an occurrence which in the press at least (apart from a correction of the mis-spelling of his name) entirely eclipsed Pepusch's performance:

> *In our last, in the Article from* Oxford, *read Dr.* Croft's Musick-Exercise in *English* and *Latin*, took up near two Hours in the Performance; and that it was so extraordinary, that at the Request of the University, the *English* Part was perform'd again on Monday following.[29]

Both of Croft's odes were later published under the title *Musicus Apparatus Academicus*, with a preface by the composer acknowledging his obligations to the University and asserting that the odes were printed with some reluctance:

> They have lain by neglected, as having done their work and answered the end for which they were Compos'd; and had still done so, had not the Importunity of some Friends, (whose Good will to the Author made them set too great a Value upon his Compositions) prevailed with me to make them publick. If I find they give Satisfaction, I shall be Encouraged to Publish more of the same kind.

In fact Croft did not subsequently publish anything similar, but the odes seem to have been popular works, and a performance of at least one of them is known to have been given by the musical society at Wells in Somerset on 23 November 1719:

> It being the day of our Caecilia-Musick,.... we all went and perform'd Dr Croft's Song for his Degree, and a great Deal of other Musick. We advanc'd the Ticket to 2s, and had as much Company as last year.[30]

Croft's English ode, *With noise of cannon* is far removed from the slight works of Goodson and his Oxford contemporaries. The words are by Joseph Trapp (first Professor of Poetry at Oxford) and were divided by Croft into eight substantial movements, each complete in itself, and preceded by a large-scale overture in four

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28 *The British Mercury*, 15 July 1713.

29 *Ibid.*, 22 July 1713.

30 Edmund Hobhouse (ed.), *The Diary of a West Country Physician A.D. 1684-1726*, (1934), 74.

movements. The ode's role as a test piece is evident in the stylistic approach, with Croft taking every opportunity to display his command not only of the traditional musical language of the day, but also of the latest baroque techniques. Several of the movements have long fugal sections, there is a confident handling of obbligato accompaniments, and an evident ability to construct coherent movements over a relatively large span. Unlike Pepusch's *Peace, Apollo, Britain*, however, there are no recitatives or movements in da capo form, and in this respect Croft's ode continues to draw much of its inspiration from Restoration styles. The overture begins with a movement for trumpet and strings, followed by a brisk double fugue, handled with great assurance. An unremarkable slow movement follows, and then a triple-time finale, but instead of the throw-away minuet which might have been expected, this is another double fugue. By also bringing the ode to an end with a fugal chorus Croft demonstrated his equal ability in choral counterpoint on a large scale, and such confident handling of contrapuntal techniques must have made a favourable impression on the musically knowledgeable among the Oxford audience. It is perhaps unlikely that Pepusch would have been able to produce anything superior to it.

Six out of the eight vocal movements have material generated from some sort of melodic or rhythmic ostinato, though there are few ground basses in the strictest sense. In the alto air 'Nor will we e'en the martial trumpet spare', for example, a melodic ostinato, represented by the first three bars of the bass part, is combined with the more general use of a recurring rhythmic pattern (Ex.3). Croft tends to confine these devices to the bass part so that they provide a strong sense of rhythmic momentum to the movement as a whole. Unlike Blow and Purcell, however, who generally used ostinatos and grounds only in solo and ensemble movements, Croft also used them in choruses, most noticeably in the penultimate movement, 'Where Mighty Anna will thy glories end?'

Word-painting is an important feature of the vocal writing, and is encouraged by Trapp's verse which, though outwardly concerned with political

matters, also contains much musical imagery. Various instruments are referred to, and in the second stanza ideas relating to music itself are introduced:

> Peace is the song; in peace our airs conspire:
> Let all harsh notes, and jarring discords cease;
> And sure no theme can better fit the lyre,
> The soul of music is the soul of peace.
> Nor will we ev'n the martial trumpet spare,
> The martial trumpet shall our consort share,
> And sound the joys of peace with harmony of war.

References to the 'softly-breathing flute' and 'sprightly violin' provide obvious opportunities for obbligato accompaniments akin to those adopted by the early composers of St Cecilia odes, and Croft exploits these to the full. The melodic writing is often extremely vivid, as for example in the opening bass solo, where florid vocal phrases (supported by ostinato devices) depict the noise of the cannon, the 'rattle' of the drums and the roar of 'warlike thunder'. The underlying harmonic structure is fairly simple throughout, but although Croft uses only nearly-related keys the tonal relationships within movements, and in the ode as a whole, are handled with an assurance which is rarely found in any of the earlier Oxford music.

There is little stylistic distinction between Croft's two odes, but in choosing to set a Latin text in addition to *With noise of cannon* he was associating himself with the established tradition of academic panegyric. Trapp's *Laurus cruentas* is shorter than his English poem and the musical setting is correspondingly less expansive. Only three soloists are required, and of the six vocal movements the last alone is a chorus (though this includes some writing for double choir). The smaller scale of the Latin ode is also reflected in the overture, which is scored for strings alone and has only two movements, the second being fugal and with a subject which avoids the more usual passage-work and stock-phrases of the period. The Latin setting is also considerably less adventurous in its scoring; there are no parts for trumpet, and only the bass aria 'O quis ad arduos' has an obbligato accompaniment, in this instance for two oboes. Since larger forces were obviously available for the performance of the English ode, such restraints were perhaps intended to emphasize the composer's gift for thematic invention and his ability to write successfully on a

more intimate level as, for example, in the slow and expressive opening duet. In both works the instrumental accompaniments are in marked contrast to the elementary instrumental writing of the resident Oxford composers of the period. Croft invariably makes his continuo bass independent of the vocal bass part, sometimes making it relatively simple (as in the bass solo 'O quis ad arduos') but on other occasions, such as in the final chorus of the Latin ode, giving it a complexity which exceeds that of the choral part.

The use of ostinato devices continues in *Laurus cruentas*, though to a lesser extent, and also carried over from the English ode is the lively response to the words, as expressed both in the mood of whole movements and in individual instances of word-painting. Thus the trio 'Surge fama' is set in an appropriately vigorous manner, and the lack of instrumental accompaniment focusses the maximum of attention on the vocal lines. On a smaller scale there is some vivid passage work at the word 'ascendere' in the first alto solo, and in the bass solo the word 'sublimis' is set to delicately shaped vocal phrases. Though shorter than its English counterpart, *Laurus cruentas* has a more wide ranging tonal scheme; the predominant key is G major, but there are individual movements in the relative minor, and in the keys of C, F, and B flat majors. Surprisingly, however, neither of Croft's odes has a movement in the dominant key.

Among the performers who accompanied Croft to Oxford were the organist John Isham (who acted as Croft's deputy on a number of occasions), and William Morley (who had collaborated with Isham on a volume of songs published in 1710.[31]) Each received the B.Mus. degree while in Oxford in 1713, and composed an ode by way of an exercise. These were doubtless performed in the Musick School rather than the Theatre and, in comparison to Croft's odes, they are of little significance. Both set anonymous poems praising the virtues of Queen Anne as peacemaker, and reverted to the earlier sectional ode form rather than attempting to

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31 *A Collection of New Songs set to Musick By Mr Wm: Morley and Mr: John Isum with a Thorough-bass to each Song, All transpose'd for the Flute* (*c.*1710).

write extended separate movements in the manner of Croft. Isham's piece is the more accomplished of the two and shows an awareness of stylistic advances, even though he lacked the skill to implement them effectively. The bass air "Tis mighty Anna's fame commands my tongue', for example, has a demanding solo part with much fast semiquaver movement, and it is tonal conservatism rather than any lack of melodic inspiration which limits the movement's success.

The Ode in Cambridge, 1730-1769.

The year 1713 provides a convenient point at which to turn and consider the role which music played in the academic ceremonial of the University of Cambridge. Music had occupied a position in the academic curriculum at Cambridge similar to that which it enjoyed at Oxford, but the ode tradition in the former university developed later and much less prolifically than at Oxford. Cambridge has no source of occasional music for university occasions comparable to the Oxford Music School collection, nor does it seem to have enjoyed such a rich indigenous musical tradition in the latter half of the seventeenth century. A chair in music was not established until 1684 (almost sixty years after William Heather's endowment at Oxford) and the duties of the Cambridge Professor were even more negligible than those of his Oxford counterpart. He was not required to lecture, and his only significant responsibility seems to have been to examine the degree exercises.

The Cambridge equivalent of the Act or Encaenia was the Public Commencement, and this too was a theoretically annual event which, in practice, was held less frequently. Until well into the eighteenth century, the role of music in it was small, and there are only passing references to musical performances in the surviving accounts of the proceedings. This was partly due to the fact that Cambridge lacked a purpose-built venue for the Commencement. It has already been shown that the opening of the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford in 1669 had

provided an important impetus for the development of a tradition of ode writing. For as long as the Cambridge Commencement was confined to the University Church, the scale of musical performances was necessarily limited, and it was not until the opening of James Gibbs's Senate House in 1730 that the University adopted the practice of performing a large-scale ode on important occasions. There are, therefore, only three odes which demand consideration here, those performed in 1730, 1749 and 1769. Much documentary evidence survives relating to all three, but only the music of the first two is now extant.

The earliest of the three is Maurice Greene's fine setting of Alexander Pope's *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*, the words of which had been specially adapted for the occasion by the poet.[32] Greene was no stranger to Cambridge, having composed an orchestral anthem for performance there in 1728, and when the University decided to hold a Public Commencement two years later, it was resolved to confer the degree of Doctor of Music on Greene who, as both organist of St Paul's Cathedral and Organist and Composer to the Chapel Royal, was the foremost church musician of his day. Greene was admitted to the degree on 4 July, and five days later was elected to the Professorship, which had been vacant since the death of Thomas Tudway in 1726. The main purpose of the 1730 Commencement, however, was formally to open the new Senate House, and it was in the course of this ceremony that Greene's ode was performed, the composer having brought with him from London several prominent musicians. The expenses for the performance amounted to the considerable sum of £170, but since the costs were paid in full by the University, it would appear that the ode was in some way an official commission. John Taylor, a Cambridge don who took part in the proceedings, had himself written a long and derivative 'Ode for Music on the Opening of the new Regent House', a title which suggests that he had envisaged it being set to music and performed at the

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32 Greene's ode has been edited by H. Diack Johnstone as *Musica Britannica* lviii (1991), the introduction to which gives an account of the circumstances of its composition and performance. See also the same author's 'A Cambridge Musical Event: The Public Commencement of 1730', *Cambridge Review*, xcvi (1974), 51-3.

Commencement. That this did not happen is perhaps a further indication of the University's involvement in instigating Greene's setting.

The enthusiastic reception which Greene's ode received (it was given an additional performance the day following its first hearing) was well justified, for the work testifies to the composer's artistic inventiveness as well as to his technical skill. The overture is well crafted, and there are solo vocal movements in the best spirit of the English baroque (for example, the alto air 'Warriors she fires, by sprightly sounds'), but there are also passages which act as reminders that Greene's ode stood within a well-established tradition of Cecilian works (explored in more detail in the following chapter), notably the choral writing which describes Orpheus' descent into the underworld, with its use of divisi writing for the tenors and basses.

In spite of the success of Greene's ode, almost twenty years passed before anything similar was performed in Cambridge again, but in 1749 the election of the Duke of Newcastle as Chancellor of the University caused plans to be made for an installation ceremony. An ode was commissioned from William Boyce, who was provided with his text by the poet William Mason, a fellow of Pembroke Hall (later Pembroke College). An installation ode was an innovation, but so many years had elapsed since the last public installation of a Chancellor that the Vice-Chancellor was in any case 'obliged to conduct arduous antiquarian research in order to discover the traditional ceremonies'.[33] On 25 June Horace Walpole wrote sardonically to Sir Horace Mann that the Commencement promised to be a major social event:

> Saturday, Sunday and Monday next are the banquets at Cambridge for the instalment of the Duke of Newcastle as chancellor. The whole world goes to it: he has invited, summoned, pressed the entire body of nobility and gentry from all parts of England. His cooks have been there these ten days distilling essences of every living creature, and massacring and confounding all the species that Noah and Moses took such pains to preserve and distinguish.'[34]

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33 D.A. Winstanley, *Unreformed Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1935), 49.

34 *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. W.S. Lewis *et al.* (1937-83), xx, 71.

The proceedings themselves were similar to those at Oxford installations:

> A band of music having performed a short overture, the Vicechancellor made a congratulatory speech in English. Then he presented the Duke with the patent of office, which was read aloud by the Senior Proctor. The Vicechancellor then presented the book of statutes, and taking the Duke's right hand in his own, the Senior Proctor administered the oath of office. He was then seated by the Vicechancellor in the chair of state.
>
> Mr Yonge the Public Orator having made a Latin oration, the Duke returned his thanks to the University for the honour conferred on him. Then was performed the Installation Ode, written by William Mason M.A. fellow of Pembroke Hall, and set to music by Boyce.[35]

In comparison with Greene's earlier Cambridge ode, Boyce's work suffers to some extent from the weakness of its libretto, for what Mason's poem lacks in fawning panegyric of the court-ode variety, it makes up for in effusive praise of the University and its members. It is not known whether Mason himself divided the poetry into sections for settting, but there are no obvious attempts to dictate a particular mood from the composer, and Boyce appears to have made a conscious decision not to set Mason's ode on the grand scale, with dramatic arias and massive choruses for trumpets and drums. Instead, he chose a series of recitatives and solos, all apparently scored for soprano voice and owing less to the vocal style of oratorio or Italian opera than to that of the English cantata. Given the length of the libretto and the nature of the occasion the ode is relatively short -- the published full score runs to only 67 pages -- with just two choruses and a single solo ensemble. The intention seems to have been to charm the audience with the intimacy of the music (disguising in the process some of the weaknesses of Mason's verse) whilst reserving a more traditional finale to bring the ode to a rousing conclusion. This is achieved, however, at the expense of much of the sense of occasion which is normally expected in an ode of this sort. The scoring of the overture, for example, is modest (predominantly two oboes and strings) and of the four movements the last is a reprise of the fugal second, while the third is a short binary-form piece scored only for flute and unison violin. The sequence of solo numbers follows immediately, and

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35 Charles Henry Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1842-52), iv, 268-9.

it is not until half-way through the ode that the first chorus appears, and this is an unexceptional paean in which homophonic writing for the voice is contrasted with rapid passage work from the strings. The instrumental scoring is similarly restrained, with occasional use of flutes and oboes but never as a proper obbligato, while trumpets and timpani are reserved for the final trio and chorus, the latter movement having the only choral counterpoint in the ode. These last two movements were clearly designed to impress, but they do so by virtue of their contrast with the preceding music rather than as its consummation.

The third large-scale Cambridge ode was performed at the installation of the Duke of Grafton in 1769. The poet was Thomas Gray, who had recently become Professor of History at the University, and a surviving letter written to Thomas Wharton in April 1769 indicates that Gray felt little enthusiasm for the task:

> The worst employment I have has been to write something for musick against the D: of G: comes to Cambridge. I must comfort myself with the intention: for I know it will bring abuse enough on me.[36]

The Duke of Newcastle had originally agreed to a request from Charles Burney that he be allowed to set the ode, and Burney had apparently resolved to supplicate for the degree of Doctor of Music at the same Commencement.[37] He was, however, disturbed to learn from the author of the 1749 installation ode, William Mason (a mutual friend of both Gray and Burney), that the text was unlikely to come into his possession more than about ten days before the ceremony. In addition, Burney fell foul of the University authorities who were less willing than they had been in Greene's day to face a substantial bill for the performance, and insisted that his expenses for transporting musicians from London be cut by half. Burney promptly relinquished the undertaking, and decided soon afterwards to supplicate instead for an Oxford doctorate.

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36 *Correspondence of Thomas Gray*, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley (Oxford, 1935), iii, 1057.

37 For a full account of this episode in Burney's career see Roger Lonsdale, *Dr. Charles Burney: A Literary Biography* (Oxford, 1965), 77-9.

Cambridge therefore turned to its own Professor of Music, John Randall, to provide the installation ode. Contrary to Mason's prediction Gray's poem was completed in good time, and Randall's setting was ready for rehearsal at least a week before the performance:

> The pleasantest morning that I passed then at Cambridge, was in company with Mr. Gray and some critics, at the rehearsal of the musick for his own Ode, previous to its grand performance in the Senate-house; and I thought, that as he had so many directions to give, and such nice distinctions to make, it was well he had to deal with the pliant Dr. Randall, rather than with some of the very able Composers or Professors that I could have named in the Metropolis.[38]

Gray was less than enthusiastic about the completed work:

> I expect to see it torn to piece-meal in the North-Briton, before it is born. The musick is as good as the words: the former might be taken for mine, & the latter for Dr. Randal's.[39]

Outside Cambridge, however, the performance was awaited with some eagerness:

> We are going to be full of company and gaiety at Cambridge, where the oratorios and music begin on Thursday next, the new Chancellor installed on Saturday, and the noise and riot not over till Wednesday.... Mr Gray's ode on the occasion is to be performed on Saturday. I am told it is much liked both as to the poetry and music.[40]

Reactions to the ode after the performance were generally good, at least one member of the audience considering it 'well set and performed' though 'charged with obscurity'.[41] Gray's own reactions were apparently less favourable, but his friend James Beattie was warm in his judgment:

> I wonder You can bring Yourself to think so meanly of the Installation-ode; for You say it can only live a few days. I am quite certain this is a mistake; it will make the name of Grafton known as

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38 J. Cradock, *Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs* (1828), i, 107.

39 Letter to Norton Nichols, 24 June 1769, in *Correspondence of Thomas Gray*, *op. cit.*, iii, 1065. *The North Briton* was a journal of the day.

40 Letter to the Revd William Cole, 17 June 1769, *Correspondence of Horace Walpole*, *op. cit.*, i, 168.

41 Letter from Richard Gough to the Revd Benjamin Cole, see Cooper, *op. cit.*, iv, 359.

> long as the English language is understood.... I will not say that this Ode is equal to some of Your other poems; but I will venture to affirm that it is the finest panegyrical poem in the world.[42]

Since John Randall's setting has been lost, it is impossible to assess the relative merits of these comments, or to know whether his musical gifts were sufficiently versatile to cope with Gray's verse which, like that of William Collins, was in marked contrast to most of the poetical productions of the age. Much of Gray's poetical output is characterized by an enthusiasm for history, and by an awareness of, and a response to, beauty. The combination of these elements has often led to an oversimplified view of the poet as 'a romantic before his time';[43] in reality his concerns were the common ones of many of his generation, but expressed in an individual way:

> His three long odes are inspired by the historical and aesthetic strain in him. That on the Installation of the Duke of Grafton as Chancellor of Cambridge was, it is true, originally designed as an occasional piece. But in it Gray takes advantage of the occasion to show us in what particular way Cambridge did appeal to his own imagination. As might be expected, this is historical. For him the groves and courts of the University are haunted by the ghosts of its founders, Margaret of Anjou, Edward III, Henry VI, and Henry VIII; and of the great spirits, Milton and Newton, who had studied there.[44]

Unmoved perhaps by the nature of the task, Gray drew inspiration instead from the opportunity to pay tribute to the seat of learning which was his home. Written to order as this ode undoubtedly was, there is nevertheless no retreat into platitudinous panegyric:

> Ye brown o'er-arching groves,
> That contemplation loves,
> Where willowy Camus lingers with delight!
> Oft at the blush of dawn
> I trod your level lawn,
> Oft wooed the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright
> In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of Folly,
> With Freedom by my Side, and soft-eyed Melancholy.

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42 James Beattie to Gray, date unknown, *Correspondence of Thomas Gray, op. cit.*, iii, 1082-3.

43 Lord David Cecil, 'The Poetry of Thomas Gray' in *Eighteenth-Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. James L. Clifford (New York, 1959), 240. Cecil did not himself subscribe to this view.

44 *Ibid.*

It could be argued, in fact, that the infrequency of ode performances in Cambridge gave an advantage over the more regular Oxford tradition in terms of the quality of both words and music. The very absence of such a tradition of occasional music helped to ensure that the dangers of perfunctoriness which accompanied routine compositions were avoided, for Cambridge odes were performed only on the most important of occasions. All three works performed at the Senate House in the course of the eighteenth century were settings of poems which, in the case of William Mason's ode, were at least competent and, in the case of the contributions of Alexander Pope and Thomas Gray were notable literary achievements in their own right. Similarly, the choice of at least two of the composers was wisely made. Maurice Greene's ode is an important and impressive work, and the absence of trite occasional sentiment from the libretto ensures that it is as effective in performance today as it undoubtedly was at its première. Boyce's ode, though more intimate in mood, was nonetheless an effective occasional offering, and while there can be less certainty about the merits of John Randall's lost installation ode, even this least known of the three Cambridge composers could boast of a musical pedigree which included early training as a chorister at the Chapel Royal under Bernard Gates.[45] Very little other music of substance by Randall has survived to give an indication of his talents as a composer, but it may be speculated that with the advantage of a good quality libretto he produced a setting which was at least adequate for the occasion.

The Ode in Oxford, 1733-1800

After 1713 the Oxford Act ceased to be held and became a largely forgotten ceremony. Indeed when it was finally revived in July 1733, the famous occasion on which Handel was invited to Oxford, there was considerable uncertainty about the

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45 As a chorister Randall was involved in the first London performances of oratorio, having taken the title role in Handel's *Esther* at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in February 1732.

proper way in which it should be conducted. Handel's visit ensured the successful revival of the academic proceedings, but the popular acclaim with which the composer's concerts were received in fact did much to encourage significant changes in the nature of subsequent Acts. The traditional disputations disappeared and Encaenia became associated with the conferring of honorary degrees, accompanied by orations and the recitation of prize-winning compositions in verse and prose. At the same time there were changes in the use of music in the proceedings, so that later Oxford odes form a separate group, distinct from their predecessors.

Handel's visit had shown that Oxford could support large-scale concerts, and an annual music festival, coinciding with Encaenia, began to develop. By the 1750s this had become well established, the formality of the convocations giving way, in the later afternoon and evening, to performances of oratorio and instrumental music. As a result there was less demand for large-scale musical performances during the Act itself. Incidental music was still used to enhance the ceremonial, usually in the form of movements from Handel's overtures, but the performance of odes was now usually confined to special occasions, the most notable of these being the Encaenia at which a new Chancellor was installed. The period from 1759 to 1810 saw five such occasions, and an ode composed by the Professor of Music (usually to a text by the Professor of Poetry), was performed as part of the proceedings at each of them.

Between 1742 and 1777 the music professorship was held by William Hayes, organist of Magdalen College and a well-known director of concerts both in Oxford and elsewhere.[46] A competent and at times ingenious composer, Hayes composed six ode settings for Oxford, the earliest being 'When the fair consort', which was published in the year of his election to the Professorship as part of his *Vocal and Instrumental Musick in Three Parts*, though it was in fact his B.Mus. exercise and

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46 For a detailed study of the career of William Hayes, and of his son Philip who succeeded him in the professorship, see Simon Heighes, 'The Life and Works of William and Philip Hayes (1708-1777 & 1738-1797)' (D.Phil dissertation, University of Oxford, 1990).

dates from 1735. The theme of the ode is the legend of Orpheus and Euridice, which suggests a familiarity on Hayes's part with the St Cecilia ode tradition (by then well-established), and allowed for some early experimentation with obbligato writing, which was to become a characteristic of his later works.

Of Hayes's five other odes, the most important is *The Passions*, a setting of the poem by William Collins, which was performed at the Commemoration of Benefactors in July 1750. The words date from 1747, and a letter from the poet to the composer expresses pleasure at the news of Hayes's setting:

> M[r] Blackstone of Winchester sometime since inform'd Me of the Honour you had done me at Oxford last Summer for which I return you my sincere thanks. I have another more perfect Copy of the Ode, which, had I known your obliging design, I *would* have communicated to You. Inform me by a Line, If You should think one of my better Judgment acceptable; In such Case I could send you one written on a Nobler Subject, and which, tho' I have been persuaded to bring it forth in London, I think more calculated for an Audience in the University. The Subject is the Music of the Graecian Theatre.[47]

Collins may have been less pleased to learn that Hayes did not set the complete text of the ode, but omitted the last twenty-five lines and replaced them with a new ending written by the Earl of Lichfield (then Chancellor of the University), on the grounds that the latter part of the poem was not 'calculated for musical expression'. This did not, however, prevent the ode from proving popular with audiences, and a full score was published towards the end of the century. Several performances were given outside Oxford, and a possible inference of Collins's letter (he goes on to request a copy of the score and some wordbooks) is that a performance was being planned in Winchester.

Collins's poetry received little acclaim during his own short lifetime -- there is a traditional story that the poet bought up and destroyed the unsold copies of his 1747 *Odes* after their unenthusiastic reception -- and this may explain his letter of gratitude to Hayes. Given the initial critical indifference to the poetry it is to

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47 Quoted in full in *The Works of William Collins*, ed. Richard Wendorf and Charles Ryskamp (Oxford, 1979), 89. It is not known if the ode on the Grecian theatre was ever finished, but only eighteen lines headed 'Recitative Accompanied' are now extant.

Hayes's credit that he chose to set *The Passions* so soon after its publication, though the structure and theme of the poem were well suited to his needs. A more positive recognition of Collins came in the 1760s, with John Langhorne's new edition of his poems, which included an enthusiastic commentary and the suggestion that 'there may be very little hazard in asserting that this [*The Passions*] is the finest ode in the English language.'[48] While such a statement is open to question (many eighteenth-century critics, at least, would have reserved this accolade for Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*), there can be no doubt of the poem's importance in relation to Collins's own output. It differs from his other odes in the clear intention of a musical setting - it was published with the sub-title 'an ode for music' - and is as much about music as about the Passions. The text has many of the qualities traditionally associated with the *encomium musicae* (the poem in praise of music), and while Collins's other odes invoke the personified subject of their title (for example, Fear, Simplicity, Mercy), *The Passions* is an invocation of Music, with the Passions portrayed in terms of their own musical reactions.

The ode is set in ancient Greece 'when Music, heav'nly maid, was young', and the first section describes how the Passions, having gathered to listen to Music, are 'filled with fury, rapt, inspired', and snatch her instruments so that each can 'prove his own expressive pow'r'. Nine verbal portraits follow, of varying length, in which the demeanour of each personified Passion and the music he or she produces are vividly described. The final section (which Hayes chose not to set), returns to the theme of ancient Greek music and, as already noted (see p.18), can be seen as a metaphor for Collins's concern at the decline of contemporary poetical standards. It is clear why such sentiments were considered unsuitable for musical setting, but the Earl of Litchfield's lines to which Hayes resorted remove all contemporary significance from the poem, and lack the vigour of the original. Collins's intended ending complements his descriptive opening, with the portrayal of the Passions

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48 *The Poetical Works of Mr. William Collins. With Memoirs of the Author; and Observations on His Genius and Writings* (1765), 181.

forming the central body of the ode. Litchfield's ending destroys this balance, and his final chorus merely parades well-worn sentiments common to almost any St Cecilia ode:

> Thy wide extended pow'r, harmonious maid,
> By ev'ry jarring passion is obeyed,
> Thy magic art on ev'ry breast must gain,
> The frantic humble, the depressed sustain
> Can check, incite, can animate, restrain
> By Nature's laws unbounded is thy sway
> Thee we all follow, thee we all obey.

Hayes's ode undoubtedly becomes musically less interesting in the last few movements, and the change of authorship may be responsible, though there were probably pressures of composition too, since the decline is also noticeable in the setting of the last few lines of Collins's verse. In spite of this, the setting remains among the more notable odes performed at Oxford during the eighteenth century and one of the most important pieces in the composer's output. Moreover, it was the first large-scale choral work by a composer other than Handel to receive a public performance in Oxford.

Collins did not himself indicate the division of *The Passions* into movements and Hayes was therefore at liberty to make his own decisions regarding the musical structure and the disposition of movements within it. He chose to divide the work into two parts, like the Acts into which an oratorio was often divided, though such a division was not demanded or justified by the text, and in making it a degree of dramatic continuity was sacrificed, probably for no other reason than to comply with the convention of the day. Hayes chose to end his first half with the episode relating to Revenge since this allowed him to introduce a climactic chorus. This interruption has at least the virtue of being well contrived: the lines describing Revenge are set as a robust bass aria and towards the end Collins introduces the figure of Pity. A short comparison of the two Passions follows:

> And though sometimes each dreary pause between,
> Dejected Pity at his side,
> Her soul-subduing voice applied,
> Yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien,
> While each strained ball of sight seemed bursting from his head.

This acts as a cue for a choral reprise of the original Revenge episode, and since the description of Revenge is the central and most dramatic of the depictions of the Passions, the insertion of a big dramatic chorus at this point is not inappropriate. However, the division of the work into two by the introduction of a two-movement symphony after the chorus, breaks the continuity of those depictions and destroys the nature of the poem which, even with its alternative ending, is essentially tripartite.

In spite of this structural weakness, the musical interest of Hayes's setting is considerable. After the opening 'scenario', set as a single recitative, the description of the Passions unfolds in a series of vocal solos, a few of which are themselves preceded by short recitatives. The arias show considerable sensitivity to the demands of the poem; most are through-composed, in response to the dramatic tone of the text, rather than in da capo form which is more suited to a reflective mood. There are no movements for solo ensemble (the characterized portrayals of the poetic sections would make these inappropriate) and the chorus is confined to the end of each part and to one short appearance in the middle of the second half. The keys chosen for the arias are often those traditionally associated with particular moods -- F minor for Despair, G major for Hope, C minor for Melancholy and D major (the traditional trumpet key) for Revenge -- and the tonal scheme as a whole reflects the division of the ode into two parts. Beginning in A major (firmly established in the three movements of the overture) the first half moves to D major, by means of alternating major and minor keys in the intervening airs - D minor, B flat major, F minor, G major. The second half begins in D minor and returns to A major, via B flat major, C minor, F, D and E majors.

Hayes takes full advantage of the opportunities for descriptive, atmospheric and unusual music provided by Collins's verse. The work abounds in descriptive word-painting and changes of mood, qualities which are all evident in the long opening recitative. This might easily have been sub-divided, or set for more than one voice, but by setting these first sixteen lines as a single recitative for tenor voice

Hayes highlights the dramatic contrasts and sets the scene for what is to follow. In addition, a wide variety of instrumental accompaniments are used to emphasize particular moods. This is a development of the obbligato writing already noted in his B.Mus. exercise, and in the first half of *The Passions* is used to particularly good effect. A notable example is the bass aria 'Next Anger rushed; his eyes on fire', which has a dramatic 'rushing' accompaniment for strings (Ex.3). In the tenor aria which depicts Despair, the otherwise quiet and melancholy introduction is suddenly interrupted by a passage of rapid *forte* tremolando, an interpolation which is only explained later in the movement when the same agitated mood returns at the words "twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild'. Hayes is known to have written a concerto for bassoon (now lost), and many of his works, including the odes, give particular attention to the instrument, by scoring it separately from the continuo or by giving it occasional prominence as a soloist. In *The Passions* there are examples of both these practices, the use of the solo bassoon being particularly effective in the tenor aria 'With eyes upraised', where it is used along with the horn. This fondness for obbligato accompaniment means that most of the arias are scored on a relatively small scale; only the aria depicting Revenge has a full orchestral accompaniment, partly in response to the text, and partly in order to support the chorus which grows out of it.

In the second half of the ode there are two lengthy movements in which Hayes uses more unusual formal structures. The first of these begins with the recitative 'But O how altered was its sprightlier tone!' which heralds the arrival of Cheerfulness. The setting of the ten lines which follow (in the course of which various other characters are introduced) occupies nearly two hundred bars of music and falls into four differently-scored sections -- aria/recitative/aria (reprise)/chorus -- which follow each other without a break. The description of Joy which immediately follows also divides into four sections, though in this instance the scoring remains unchanged throughout. The shifts of mood echo those in the text, while the final

recitative acts as a link between the end of Collins's curtailed text and Lord Lichfield's additional lines.

Two other large-scale odes followed *The Passions*, one in 1751 and another in 1773. In between were three other works, smaller in scale and less significant in their musical content. At Encaenia in 1759 Lord Westmorland was installed as Chancellor of the University amid great splendour:

> The vice-chancellor having taken his seat, open'd the business of the convocation in a short Latin speech, and then addressing himself to the Chancellor, who was placed upon his right hand, he administered to him the necessary oaths, and deliver'd into his hands, the insignia of his office, namely,the keys, the seal, and the book of statutes. His lordship, after receiving them, ascended the chair, amidst the general acclamations of the people, and concluded the ceremony of the installment by a short Latin speech to the university. Then was performed an ode suited to the occasion and set to music by Dr Hayes. After which several noblemen and gentlemen of distinction were admitted to the honorary degree of doctor of laws; and then, the noblemen of the university spoke their congratulatory verses; and the convocation concluded with a speech from the public orator.[49]

Hayes's ode sets anonymous words, no doubt provided from within the University, and though scored for tenor soloist, chorus and a large orchestra it has only five movements, and two of these (the single movement which constitutes its overture, and a chorus) are also found in Hayes's *Ode to the Memory of Handel*, which dates from the same year. Handel had died in April 1759, so Hayes's tribute to him may pre-date the installation ode, but there is no record of any performance in Oxford so the true order of composition cannot be ascertained. The Handel ode was popular with the public, however, and received performances at Gloucester (1760), Leicester (1762) and Nottingham (1763). The anonymous libretto compares Handel to the Greek poet Timotheus, 'snatched above... to join celestial symphonies and swell the chorus of the skies'. Though a longer work than the installation ode, the scoring is almost identical, and among the more notable movements are a semi-chorus, 'Hark, along the stream they languish', in which muted strings depict the 'sighing breezes',

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49 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, xxix (1759), 341.

and a soprano aria 'Mourn lovely vale' which makes use of echoing phrases between soloist and orchestra in response to the words.

The third small-scale ode, performed at the Installation of the Earl of Lichfield on 5 July 1763, contains no original work but is a compilation of four movements from previous odes. The first three were taken from the installation ode for the Earl of Westmorland (1759), and to these was added the chorus 'Blest prelate, hail!' from the 1751 ode *Where shall the Muse*. The latter, and another ode dating from 1773, deserve closer examination since they follow in the footsteps of *The Passions* and reveal noteworthy facets of Hayes's compositional technique, not least a tendency in the later work towards the musical language of the galant style.

The author of the 1751 ode was the Professor of Poetry, Thomas Warton, and in comparison to *The Passions* this libretto returns to the more traditional subject matter of an Oxford ode -- namely historical narrative and lofty panegyric, with an underlying vein of self-congratulation. Warton's text (nine irregular stanzas running to more than 150 lines) charts the history of Oxford from its mythological origins as the dwelling place of the Muse Clio. After sections devoted to Queen Bondicca (Boudicca) and King Alfred, the ode ends by praising Nathaniel, Lord Crewe, who as Bishop of Durham was a celebrated benefactor of the University:

> Blest prelate, hail!
> Most pious patron, most triumphant theme!
> From whose auspicious hand
> On Isis' towers new beauties beam,
> New praise her nursing fathers gain;
> Immortal Crew!
> Blest prelate,hail!

The 1773 ode, *Daughters of Beauty*, was composed for the 'reception' of Lord North as Chancellor (the formal ceremony of installation having taken place privately in London), and set words by Benjamin Wheeler, Warton's successor as Professor of Poetry. Like *Where shall the Muse*, Wheeler's ode is a fulsome panegyric in honour of the University and the mythological and historical figures associated with it. The 1773 ode is shorter than that for 1751, but the overall musical structure is similar. Though both are large-scale works there is relatively

little use of the chorus; *Where shall the Muse* has four choral movements (of which one is repeated) while *Daughters of Beauty* has only that which concludes it. The 1773 ode also lacks an overture, though almost certainly there would have been some sort of instrumental introduction (possibly one of Hayes's concertos). *Where shall the Muse*, on the other hand, has a three-movement overture, though only the first of these movements is original to 1751. The latter two were taken from an earlier instrumental concerto, and the first movement was perhaps composed to fit in with them, since it abandons the double-dotted rhythms of the traditional Handelian overture in favour of a triplet figure drawn from the movement which follows.

Reference has already been made to Hayes's predilection for varied instrumentation and obbligato accompaniments. In *The Passions* such effects were a response to the demands of the text, but in these later odes, where there are fewer dramatic changes of mood, the accompanimental devices become more subtle. The bass aria 'Where Isis' waters wind along' from the 1751 ode, for example, has an accompaniment for violas and 'cellos in unison, which suggests the meandering course of the river whilst complementing the virtuosic solo writing for the voice. In addition there is a new emphasis on the rhythmic vitality of the accompaniment, with much use of repeated passage-work figurations. The bulk of these obbligatos are increasingly allotted to the strings rather than to solo wind instruments, but the fondness for the bassoon remains evident, as for example in the 1773 bass aria 'I see the sovereign form descend' which begins with an entry for bass voice accompanied by bassoon alone, without continuo support. The writing for strings is also more imaginative than that of many of Hayes's contemporaries. The use of mutes in the semi-chorus of the *Ode to the Memory of Handel* has already been noted, and in the central section of the da capo aria 'Hail hour of triumph' from the 1751 setting pizzicato strings accompany the voice. Hayes had previously used pizzicato to great effect in the 'Ode to Echo' from his *Six Cantatas* of 1743, and he used it again in the bass aria of the 1773 ode, 'See the sovereign form descend'.

For the most part, *Where shall the Muse* stands firmly in the English baroque tradition, but the writing for the strings and the general approach to the accompanimental writing in the duet 'While as with equal state', suggests also a familiarity with the developing galant style. This interest in new stylistic developments can be traced in some of Hayes's other music too, and by the time he wrote *Daughters of Beauty*, towards the end of his life, the use of galant characteristics had become more frequent and more accomplished. In the first aria, 'From busy scenes', for example, the harmonic style is considerably more advanced than in most of the composer's other ode movements, with a slower rate of harmonic change, much use of reiterated quaver pedal notes, and a characteristically 'classical' use of quaver chords on the beat followed by quaver rests. Another obvious galant characteristic is the use throughout the aria of sudden changes of dynamic level.

After the death of William Hayes in 1777, the early classical style with which he had begun to experiment found more definite expression at Oxford in the odes composed by his son Philip. The younger Hayes was a prolific composer of odes and no fewer than fifteen have survived in manuscript, though none was ever published and their musical interest is variable. All of them were composed and performed at Oxford, but only two were specifically intended for formal University occasions; the remainder, written for a variety of other contexts, are considered elsewhere in this study (see pp.126 and 220-2). Those relevant here are the *Ode on the King's Visit to Oxford, on his Recovery* (1785), and the *Ode for the Installation of the Duke of Portland* (1793). The former marked George III's visit to the University on 12 September 1785. By University standards this was a relatively informal visit and there was no special Encaenia, but a loyal address was presented in the Sheldonian, and the young Fanny Burney, a member of the Queen's retinue, noted that 'a good organ, very well played, anthem-ed and voluntary-ed us for some time'.[50] Another source makes it clear that the Professor was responsible for this

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50 *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, ed. Charlotte Barrett (1891), ii, 241.

music: 'Dr. Hayes at their entrance into the Theatre and during the Ceremony entertained their Majesties with overtures on the Organ'.[51] Curiously, Hayes's ode was apparently not given on the occasion of the visit itself. It is a long work which, if it had been performed, could hardly have passed without comment, yet the surviving accounts of the occasion refer only to organ music. The autograph score of the ode bears the date 17 November 1785, suggesting that it was a commemorative work, written after the event.

Rather more is known about the performance of the installation ode for the Duke of Portland. The words were by the Professor of Poetry, Robert Holmes, and although they contain the customary compliments to the ode's recipient, the mood is more noticeably 'romantic':

> In wildering terror, hopeless of repose,
> Thy sons, O Science, fled their gothic foes;
> Fell Slander's curse profaned their blameless name,
> And bigot Hate his signal trumpet blew;
> Then Spoil, dire fiend, their simple domes o'erthrew,
> And hurled their treasures on the waiting flame.

The ode was intended for performance at Encaenia on 3 July and was scheduled to follow a Latin speech delivered by the Poetry Professor, but the immense crowds in the Theatre (estimated at 3,000 by the *The Gentleman's Magazine*) caused the proceedings to be brought to a premature end soon after the music had begun:

> The Chancellor, observing the Distress occasioned in some Parts of the Theatre by the vast Crowd, relieved many of the Company from their Embarrassment, by politely declining the Compliments which by the Recital of the Ode were intended to be paid to himself, and put a Stop to the Music, by dissolving the Convocation.[52]

There is no indication that the ode was ever heard in full and no record of the reaction of Dr Hayes (a man of volatile temperament) to the interruption, though he was certainly back presiding at the organ for the convocation held on the following day.

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51 Anonymous Oxford diary, *Ob* MS Top. Oxon. d.247, p.162.

52 *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 6 July 1793. Considerable confusion followed in connexion with the performance of "God save the King", see *The Gentleman's Magazine*, lxiii (1793), 664.

Neither of these odes is among Hayes's best, though the earlier one is perhaps the more interesting of the two. It begins with a long overture, the first two movements of which incline much more to the classical style than to the baroque. By contrast, however, the third movement is cast firmly in the baroque mould and is principally a duet for oboe and bassoon, accompanied by strings and with liberal use of suspensions. In the vocal movements, the relationship between voice and accompaniment is much more distinct than hitherto. In the accompanied recitatives, for instance, there is often very little accompaniment in the strictest sense, but instead a 'dialogue' between short instrumental sections and passages of vocal declamation. The same division is also noticeable in the arias; in 'She, foster-parent of the British soul' from the installation ode, for example, there are seven alternating sections of vocal and instrumental music which, in terms of bar length, create a symmetrical structure. The thematic material is almost identical in every section, and the key of G major is predominant throughout, though relieved somewhat by the slight harmonic colouring in the introduction and the coda.

Both works also contain examples of the type of extended movement occasionally found in the music of William Hayes. In the 1785 ode, for example, the first three vocal movements are linked together to form a continuous sequence of music. The opening tenor aria 'Shall Brunswick's eye' is followed by a short section, again for tenor, with a fuller orchestral accompaniment which is immediately followed by a full choral entry. Similarly, in the 1793 ode the second section of the libretto is set as an aria-recitative-aria sequence for tenor solo, each aria having different material, but the three movements proceeding without division. Another stylistic feature common to Philip Hayes's odes is the tendency towards an arioso-like style in passages of accompanied recitative. The frequent changes of mood are preserved, but the *secco* declamatory style is replaced by much stricter vocal rhythms which reduce the opportunities for *rubato* phrasing, and there is often a much stronger underlying metre than is found in pure recitative.

Encaenia odes continued to be written well into the nineteenth century. In 1810, William Crotch, Philip Hayes's successor as Professor, composed an ode (now lost) for the installation of Lord Grenville as Chancellor which was performed 'amidst frequent bursts of applause'.[53] Crotch also provided an ode for the installation of the Duke of Wellington as Chancellor in 1834, setting words by John Keble for the occasion, and the Oxford ode tradition did not end until 1852 with the performance of Henry Bishop's ode for the installation of the Earl of Derby. This was scored on a larger scale than any previous ode and displays strongly the influence of early romanticism, but the enthusiastic panegyric qualities which had been a feature of the Oxford odes from their modest beginnings and had remained present throughout the eighteenth century are no longer to be found.

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53 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, lxxx (1810), 71. Some sources indicate a copy of the ode in the library of the Oxford Faculty of Music, but no such copy is now to be found there.

4. ODES FOR SAINT CECILIA'S DAY AND OTHER ODES TO MUSIC

The last two decades of the seventeenth century witnessed a remarkable outpouring of musical odes which took as their theme the praise of music and the exaltation of its patron, St Cecilia. In London this tradition was fostered by a series of annual concerts given on St Cecilia's Day itself, and the odes performed on these occasions were the work of some of the most prominent writers and composers of the day. By the beginning of the eighteenth century odes of this sort were being performed in a number of towns and cities, and more general musical celebrations for St Cecilia's day had become widespread. Although the regular annual observance of 22 November was maintained for little more than twenty years, this was sufficiently long enough to establish the St Cecilia ode as a distinct genre to which composers would continue to turn. The music of many of these odes deserves attention, and the poems too are often of importance, both because of their literary merit and also because of the philosophical ideas about the nature of music embodied in them. The 'Cecilian' tradition also raises questions for the social historian of music about the circumstances which prompted such celebrations to be held, the details of their organization, and the personnel who were involved in them as performers and audience.

All recent commentators in this field have relied on the work of William Henry Husk, whose monograph on the Cecilian celebrations was, for over a century, the only substantial study of the subject.[1] Husk's work has long been in need of expansion, however, and later writers have sometimes relied too heavily on his conclusions. Writing in the 1930s, for example, Ernest Brennecke claimed that 'no Cecilian music is extant between 1697 and 1736',[2] but in recent years pieces written during that period by John Blow, John Eccles and Philip Hart have been identified.

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1 *An Account of the Musical Celebrations on St. Cecilia's Day in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (1857). Hereafter referred to as *Husk*.

2 Ernest Brennecke Jr, 'Dryden's Odes and Draghi's Music', *PMLA*, xlix (1934), 35.

Husk's account was supplemented by Richard Luckett's more recent history of the St Cecilia legend and the Cecilian 'cult' which developed from it,[3] and the subject was also considered in John Hollander's study of musical ideas in English poetry.[4] Both these works are primarily concerned with literary and philosophical matters, while *Husk* provides a documentary and historical account, which includes an appendix of libretti, but provides no technical discussion of the music. With the exception of several articles about the settings of Dryden's two odes, and the occasional discussion of individual works in relation to a particular composer's output, the lack of strictly musical discussion continued until Charles Biklé's doctoral dissertation of 1982.[5] This included editions of those odes not previously available in 'acceptable scholarly editions', along with an historical examination of the St Cecilia celebrations, and an analysis of each ode. Biklé's work has important omissions, however, for it makes little reference to the models from which the early Cecilian odes developed and does not attempt to relate them either to each other or to any wider stylistic context. In addition, anonymous and undated works which undoubtedly belong to his chosen period are ignored.

A number of important aspects of the London celebrations of St Cecilia's day and of the wider Cecilian tradition have, therefore, continued to receive little attention. They include the observance of the festival in the provinces, and the composition of St Cecilia odes and other odes 'to music' later in the eighteenth century. In addition there has been no systematic listing of the sources of these works such as that now provided in the accompanying catalogue. In order to put new information about the odes into context it has been necessary to cover some of the same ground as the previous accounts mentioned above, but duplication has been

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3 'The Legend of St Cecilia and English Literature: A Study', (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1971).

4 *The Untuning of the Sky: Ideas of Music in English Poetry 1500-1700* (Princeton, 1961).

5 Charles Henry Biklé, 'The Odes for St. Cecilia's Day in London (1683-1703)' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1982).

kept to the minimum necessary for this purpose. The intention of the early part of this chapter is to supplement rather than supersede the works already mentioned, and reference should be made to them, in particular, for a detailed account of the origins of the Cecilian cult and the organization of the London St Cecilia's Day celebrations.

Cecilia had been adopted as the patron saint of music and musicians from at least the fifteenth century.[6] Music naturally came to play a prominent part in the liturgical observance of her feast day, and on the continent the celebrations extended into the secular sphere in the form of music competitions and other festivities which may well have inspired the organizers of the later London performances. It might be expected, however, that the celebration of St Cecilia's day in late seventeenth-century England would have been frowned upon, for the Reformation had attempted to restrict devotion to the Saints, and 'there was little reason, at first sight, why she [St Cecilia] should not have been forgotten with a hundred other minor saints, whose only memorial was a church dedication and the occasional undesecrated image in stained glass or on a painted wall'.[7] Cecilia's name had been removed from the Calendars of both the Edwardian prayer books, and although it reappeared in the Book of Common Prayer of 1662 it remains surprising that semi-public celebrations should have been held in London on her feast day without any apparent opposition. It is likely that the early celebrations only escaped censure because of their secular intent. The most appropriate day for such a celebration was 22 November, but an account of the celebrations by Peter Motteux makes it clear that personal devotion to the Saint was never intended:

> The 22^{d} of *November*, being St. Cecilia's day, is observed through all *Europe* by the Lovers of Music.... On that day or the next when it falls on a *Sunday*, as it did last time, most of the Lovers of Music, whereof many are persons of the first Rank, meet at *Stationers-Hall*

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6 The fullest discussion of the St Cecilia legend is found in Richard Luckett's thesis, *op. cit.*, and in the same author's 'Saint Cecilia and Music', *PRMA*, xcix (1972-3), 15-30. See also G. McN. Rushworth, 'St. Cecilia', *Journal of the British Society of Master Glass-Painters*, vi (1935-7), 180-3, and Dom Gregory Murray, 'Saint Cecilia and Music', *Music and Liturgy*, vii (1938), 22-6.

7 Luckett thesis, *op. cit.*, 113.

> in *London*, not thro a Principle of Superstition, but to propagate the advancement of that divine Science. A splendid *Entertainment* is provided, and before it is always a performance of Music by the best Voices and Hands in Town; the Words, which are always in the Patronesses praise, are set by some of the greatest Masters in Town.[8]

The origins of the London feasts are unclear, though accounts of continental celebrations brought back by travellers returning from Europe were perhaps influential. John Evelyn, for example, who numbered among his acquaintance some of those involved in the early London festivals, had attended a rehearsal of St Cecilia's Day music in Paris in 1650.[9] But there was, in any case, increasing public musical activity in England at this time, and the Cecilian festivals allowed professional musicians and interested amateurs to gather in a convivial atmosphere, for the performance of music (on an increasingly ambitious scale) of a type which was not normally available in the usual musical outlets of church, court and theatre. Sir John Hawkins claimed that St Cecilia's Day had been celebrated in London by musicians since soon after the Great Fire of 1666,[10] and the title page of Henry Purcell's 1683 ode describes Cecilia as 'a great Patroness of Music; whose memory in Annually honour'd by a public Feast'.[11] The little musical and documentary evidence which survives about these early celebrations, however, points to the tradition of an annual 'musick feast' on a considerably less ambitious scale than those held from 1683 onwards.

Among the music for these early feasts was Pelham Humfrey's 'A Song sung at a Musick Feast', published in Playford's second book of *Choice Ayres and Songs* (1679). The song consists of a solo verse followed by a chorus for three voices, and it is certainly not on a sufficiently extended scale to be described as an ode. The text which Humfrey set was, however, only part of a longer song which had been

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8 *The Gentleman's Journal* (January 1692), 4.

9 *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. E.S. de Beer (Oxford, 1955), iii, 23.

10 *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, rev. edn., (1875), ii, 746.

11 Henry Purcell, *A Musical Entertainment Perform'd On November XXII. 1683* (1684).

published seven years earlier,[12] and the beginning of the second verse strongly suggests that the celebration was already a regular occurrence:

> So then this annual gladness was designed
> To keep us musical, and keep us kind.

a theme which is also taken up in the chorus:

> Come then, to the god of our art let us quaff
> For he once a year is reputed to laugh.

These sentiments seem to support Hawkins's assertions about the origins of the St Cecilia's Day celebrations. At this time there were many small societies meeting on a regular basis to perform music together, and it is perfectly plausible that one of them should have undertaken to hold an annual dinner. Without further evidence, however, the detailed history of the early feasts remains obscure. It seems certain that celebrations existed in at least the 1670s, but they were on a smaller scale and (in spite of Purcell's assertion) less public than what was to follow. For that reason 1683 may reasonably be taken as the date for the beginning of the St Cecilia observance proper in London.

The celebrations were organized by a group known variously as 'The Musical Society', or 'The Society of Gentlemen, Lovers of Musick'. The size of its membership is unknown (though it certainly included both professional and amateur musicians), no minute books or other records of the society have survived, and its activities seem to have been related solely to the November feasts. These were not advertised in the London newspapers until 1693, though significantly there is an occasional notice of a subsequent repeat performance of the ode at one or other of the concert rooms before this date. This suggests that what began as an annual semi-private gathering of 'a group of celebrating, self-congratulating connoisseurs',[13] became increasingly successful, grander in scale, and more open to public view. The feasts were held at Stationers' Hall, off Ludgate Hill, where the

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12 R[obert] V[eel], *New Court Songs and Poems* (1672), 120-1. Another setting of the poem by John Blundeville survives in Oxford, where it was probably used as Act music.

13 Hollander, *op. cit.*, 391.

large wood-panelled hall was well-suited to musical performances. City Livery Company halls were frequently hired out for banquets and other festivities at this period, and although no members of the Stationers' Company are known to have been connected with the St Cecilia celebrations, the close links between musicians and music publishers made it an appropriate venue.[14]

Payments made for the hiring of the Hall are recorded in the Stationers' Company account books,[15] but references to the Cecilian feasts in the Company's Court Minutes are found only on those occasions when a formal application was made for the use of the hall. Hirings were normally arranged through the Company's clerk who, since 1676, had been empowered to keep the keys of the hall and to let it 'as there shall be occasion'.[16] This arrangement was renewed in 1685 when it was 'ordered that henceforth the Clerke shall have the letting of the Hall for feast[s] and funeralls with the consent and approbation of the Mast[e]r and Wardens for this time being'.[17] As a rule the Court was clearly content to entrust such arrangements to the discretion of its Clerk, but the Musical Society customarily made the Hall more suitable for its performances 'by setting up and fast[e]ning to the floor and the wainscott scaffolds, tables and benches',[18] and fear of damage to the building sometimes led to the matter being formally considered by the Court:

> The Master also informed the court that it had been requested by Mr Glover the Vintner on the behalfe of the Stewards of the Cecilia Feast that they might have the use of the Hall for keeping the said Feast

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14 John and Henry Playford were both members of the Company, and Robert Carr, with whom they were involved as publishers, was a steward of the St Cecilia feast in 1691.

15 The records of the Stationers' Company (hereafter *SC*) are preserved at Stationer's Hall. Details of payments for use of the Hall (which ranged from £2 in 1684 to £5 in 1700) are from the Wardens' Accounts, 9 July 1663 - 6 July 1728 (VIII B279).

16 *SC*, Court Book E, 21 September 1676.

17 *SC*, Court Book F, 12 September 1685.

18 *Ibid.*, 6 November 1693.

> offering to pay £5 accordingly they making good all spoils and damage that may happen thereby to the hall or any the Roomes adjoyning.[19]

An increase in the hire fee in 1693 was a direct result of these considerations, and in 1700 the Court decided that letting should only be allowed on condition 'that noe scaffolding be nailed to the wainscott of the Hall'.[20]

Because no payment for hiring the Hall in 1683 was recorded in the Stationers' Company accounts, Husk assumed that the first feast was held elsewhere, though there is no evidence to support this speculation (given further currency by Walter Bergmann in the Eulenberg miniature score of Purcell's 1683 ode). Husk himself favoured York Buildings as the likely venue,[21] but there is no evidence that it had the facilities for providing a banquet. If Stationers' Hall (which had its own kitchens) was not the venue in 1683 it seems more likely that another Livery hall or a City tavern was used. Husk speculated that the move to Stationers' Hall was necessary because York Buildings was too small to accommodate 'the numerous assemblage which crowded to the performance in the year preceding',[22] but there is no evidence for this view, and well into the 1690s Villiers Street was regularly used as the venue for a second (and more definitely 'public') performance of the St Cecilia odes.

From 1693 onwards, advertisements for the feast began to appear in some of the London newspapers. These notices followed a regular pattern, and suggest an efficient organization:

> The Anniversary Feast of the Society of Gentlemen, Lovers of Musick, will be kept at Stationers-Hall on Wednesday the 22^{d} instant; Tickets are delivered at Mr. Richard Hoare's, Goldsmith, at the Golden-Bottle in Fleetstreet, and at Mr. Jer. Marlows, Goldsmith, at the Spread-Eagle in Lombard-Street.[23]

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19 *SC*, Court Book G, 7 November 1698.

20 *Ibid.*, 11 November 1700.

21 *Husk*, 13.

22 *Ibid.*, 18.

23 *The London Gazette*, 9 November 1693.

Since the Society's inception in 1683 four stewards had been elected annually to administer the celebrations, though by 1692 this number had been increased, doubtless an indication of the feasts' continuing popularity:

> 6 stewards are chosen for each ensuing year, four of which are either Persons of Quality or Gentlemen of Note, and the two last, either Gentlemen of their Majesties Music, or some of the chief Masters in Town.[24]

The number of stewards later rose to eight, and the surviving lists of those elected indicate considerable support from the lesser nobility, the gentry, and holders of public office. A ticket for the 1696 feast has survived which bears the signature of the stewards and gives details of the arrangements:

> Sir. You are desired to meet a Society of Gentlemen Lovers of MUSICK on Monday ye 23d. of this instant Novembr 1696, being the Sequel of S^{t}. Cecilia's day, at 9 of ye Clock exactly, at St. Brides Church in Fleet Street, where will be a Sermon & Anthem & afterwards to dine at Stationers Hall near Ludgate, where before Dinner there will be a Performance of MUSICK.[25]

The cost of the ticket was ten shillings, a considerable sum of money, even allowing for the expense of the banquet, yet it does not appear that the St Cecilia Feast was arranged as a charitable event along similar lines, for example, to the festival of the Sons of the Clergy, with the stewards responsible for the administration of the proceeds.

Indeed, the precise responsibilities of the stewards (apart from the two elected from the music profession) remain something of a mystery. The Mr Glover mentioned in the Stationers' Company minutes quoted above (probably Richard Glover of the Castle Tavern in Fleet Street) is not known to have been a steward, but he obviously acted as intermediary when an application to use the hall was made to the Stationers' Company. He also appears in the accounts on several occasions paying the hire fee, so the practical details of the arrangements for the feast were

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24 *The Gentleman's Journal*, January 1692, 5.

25 The ticket, from the Banks Collection in the Department of Prints at the British Museum, is reproduced in Franklin B. Zimmerman, *Henry Purcell, 1659-1695: His Life and Times*, 2nd edn. (Philadelphia, 1983), 205.

evidently not the stewards' concern. The only clue to their role is found in a letter from John Dryden to his sons (dated 3 September 1697) concerning his second poem for the St Cecilia celebrations, *Alexander's Feast*:

> 'In the meane time I am writeing a song for St Cecilia's feast, who you know is the Patroness of Musique. This is troublesome, & no way beneficiall: but I cou[l]d not deny the Stewards of the feast, who came in a body to me, to desire that kindness; one of them being Mr Bridgman, whose parents are your Mothers friends.[26]

Since no other author has recorded the way in which his poem was commissioned, it is not known if a personal approach from the stewards was customary, but some of those who contributed texts -- Dryden, Congreve and Shadwell among them -- were prominent figures in the literary and theatrical worlds of the day, and their services may have been more easily secured (especially if the commission was of no financial benefit) by a request from someone who might also be seen as a potential patron. Dryden, for example, had already received support from Sir Gilbert Dolben, who was a steward in 1683,[27] and it seems likely that the amateur stewards were expected to act as patrons in the widest sense, using their social position to lend prestige to the celebrations, and perhaps providing any additional financial support that became necessary. A number of items relating to the celebrations were subsequently published 'at the request of the stewards', and some preliminary assistance may perhaps have been required towards the printing costs.

The two 'professional' stewards were expected to obtain 'the best Voices and Hands in Town', and since those elected were invariably either court musicians or other well-known professionals they had easy access to the best performers in the capital. Singers could be drawn from the choirs of the Chapel Royal, St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, and instrumentalists came from the theatre or the royal band. As a result, over a period of nearly twenty years the Cecilian feasts brought together the most prominent poets, composers and performers in the capital.

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26 *The Letters of John Dryden*, ed. Charles E. Ward (Durham, N.C., 1942), 93.

27 Dryden acknowledged Dolben's assistance in the preface to his translation of *The Aeneid*, published in 1697 (the same year as *Alexander's Feast*).

A number of questions about the performances themselves, however, remain unanswered. It is not known, for example, whether the odes were performed only by the professionals or whether amateur members swelled the ranks, nor is it clear whether all the performers also partook of the feast.

Nevertheless, contemporary accounts of the feast give some idea of its atmosphere, and Motteux's description provides evidence of incidental music performed in addition to the ode itself:

> The Feast is one of the genteelest in the world; there are no formalities nor gatherings as at others, and the appearance there is always very splendid. Whilst the Company is at Table, the Hautboys and Trumpets play successively.[28]

Further evidence that the odes were not the only music performed on these occasions is found in a letter describing the feast written by one John Baynard to a friend in Hertford. After relating that the music 'was extrordinary good, & so was the Dinner, & great plenty of every thing',[29] Baynard goes on to describe how the publisher John Carr 'forced upon every body' a new collection of songs which he had brought out to coincide with the feast. In a second letter Baynard names some of those attending, and refers to a disturbance which apparently interrupted the proceedings:

> I heard not one word of any disorder at the Feast by any women of which you write; it must be after we came away. I saw there the Bishop of Rochester, & Doct[o]r Birch and some more Clergymen in the Hall. I cannot but admire the Musick as often as I think of it, and would be very glad to hear it again.'[30]

Although the earliest London celebrations were purely secular, in 1693 the feast was preceeded by a choral service at St Bride's church in Fleet Street, during which a sermon was preached in defence of church music. Thereafter, a church service became a regular part of the proceedings, and four of the sermons from these occasions were subsequently published, among them one preached in 1697 by

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28 *The Gentleman's Journal*, 5.

29 *Lbl* MS Sloane 1388, ff.134.

30 *Ibid.*, f.139v.

Nicholas Brady (author of *Hail! bright Cecilia,* set by Purcell in 1692).[31] Little of the music performed at the services can now be identified, however, apart from specially composed settings of the *Te Deum and Jubilate* by Purcell (1694) and Blow (1695),[32] and an anthem by William Turner (composer of the 1685 ode).

The libretti of the St Cecilia odes form a distinct poetical genre in their own right, and drew on a well-established body of philosophical ideas. Early seventeenth-century poets had become interested in classical theories of music, such as the concept of the music of the spheres, and by the end of the century there was a well-established tradition of the *encomium musicae*, the poem in praise of music. The St Cecilia odes which developed from this had two main themes: first, that music has powers (depending on the skill of the performer) to control human responses; secondly that human music (*musica humana*) is a 'fallen' reflection of a perfect universal harmony, out of which the Earth was created. The power of music was illustrated by reference to a number of legends, particularly those of Orpheus and Timotheus, and through these was introduced the idea that certain types of music, and particular instruments, could rouse specific emotions in the human soul. Composers saw an obvious dramatic potential in this idea, and most settings of St Cecilia odes include movements in which the qualities of individual instruments are extolled, to the accompaniment of the instrument in question.

According to the philosophy embodied in the *encomium musicae* the orbiting planets produced a perfect Harmony which, though once audible, could no longer be heard because of Man's fallen state. All human music-making fell short of that divine sound and was, in heavenly terms, discordant. The notion of Perfect

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31 *Church -Musick Vindicated* (1697). The other published sermons were by Ralph Battel (1693), Charles Hickman (1695) and William Sherlock (1699), the last preached at St Paul's Cathedral, not at St Bride's.

32 Purcell's setting of the *Te Deum and Jubilate* was also used at the Festival of the Sons of the Clergy (until replaced by Handel's 'Utrecht' *Te Deum* in 1713), but there are no grounds for Franklin B. Zimmerman's suggestion that the setting was specifically composed for that occasion (see *Henry Purcell 1659-1695: An Analytical Catalogue of his music* (1963), 232).

Harmony carried with it the idea that the Earth was created from chaos by the ordering power of music, and this is the main theme of Dryden's *Song for St. Cecilia's Day* (1687) in which 'heavenly harmony' becomes the beginning and the end of all things, 'the boundless eternal concord within and by which the circumscribed harmony of *musica mundana* is created'.[33] These ideas had been expounded in poetical form long before the first London celebrations of St Cecilia's day, but the introduction of the figure of Cecilia into the poetry offered the opportunity to resolve the conflict between Perfect Harmony and the fallen music of man This resolution could only be achieved by someone with sufficient skill to render the two types of music indistinguishable, and in Dryden's 1687 ode this is precisely Cecilia's achievement:

> But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher,
> When to her organ vocal breath was giv'n,
> And angels heard, and straight appeared,
> Mistaking Earth for Heaven.

The image of Cecilia calling down angels by the skill of her music, is complemented in some poems by an image of the Saint herself descending from Heaven, to impart her inspiration to the music of mortal men. In this way she becomes involved both in the inspiration of practical music and in the re-establishment of harmony on Earth. While these ideas may not have been comprehended by all who heard the early Cecilian odes, the image of the saint as a *deus ex machina*, descending from on high to resolve human conflicts would have been widely appreciated.

Such ideas, however, developed only gradually. The early 'Song sung at a Musick Feast', for example, is no more than a celebration of practical music-making, and many of the early St Cecilia poems also emphasized the conviviality of the occasion and gave much less attention to intellectual notions. The first odes were comparatively short, extolling the beauties of music, celebrating its social function, and making only brief laudatory mention of St Cecilia. Dryden's 1687 ode marked a major change by introducing stanzas that described the powers and qualities of

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33 Jay Arnold Levine, 'Dryden's *Song for St. Cecilia's Day, 1687*', *Philological Quarterly*, xliv (1965), 42.

individual instruments. This became an especially popular theme, and from 1687 onwards all the odes are to some extent derivative of Dryden's ideas, and most have a common structure too:

> First came an exhortation to begin the music-making, then a description of the various instruments and observations of their respective powers to move the affections. These grew into separate strophes, each with a different metrical scheme. Appended to these was usually some exposition of the general value of harmony, often with a citation of the *harmonia mundi*. The final section of the odes returned to a hortatory diction, with some reference to St. Cecilia as the patroness of music, and a closing celebration of the heavenly singing.[34]

Records have survived of sixteen celebrations organized by the the Musical Society between 1683 and the turn of the eighteenth century, and nine odes from them are extant. It is reasonable to suppose that the last work performed under the Society's auspices was John Eccles's setting of Congreve's *Hymn to Harmony* in 1701. There is then a gap of two years before the performance of Philip Hart's substantial *Ode in Praise of Musick*, which is most appropriately considered as the first of a later sequence of London works which continued the Cecilian tradition on a less organized basis.

Three works by Henry Purcell have traditionally been associated with the first celebration of 1683, foremost among them being *Welcome to all the pleasures*, which was published in the following year as *A Musical Entertainment*. The words, by the minor poet Christopher Fishburn, follow in embryonic form the pattern outlined by John Hollander. The opening stanza contains suggestions of conviviality coupled with compliments to the assembled musicians, and treatment of philosophical ideas and the powers of individual instruments play little part (only the human voice is specifically mentioned). St Cecilia appears at the end of the poem, but her introduction is purely conventional and serves no dramatic purpose. Purcell's second ode, *Raise, raise the voice* survives in several sources including two manuscripts formerly in the possession of W.H. Cummings, from which the

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34 Hollander, *op. cit.*, 396.

ascription of the ode to 1683 was apparently derived.[35] It is curious that if two odes were performed only one should have been published, or at least that there should have been no mention of the other in the preface to *Welcome to all the pleasures*. Given these considerations, and the difference in scoring between the two works (*Welcome to all the pleasures* includes parts for tenor violin and counter-tenor voice) it is possible that *Raise, raise the voice* was performed on some other occasion. Purcell's *Laudate Ceciliam* (which survives in an autograph score, entitled 'A Latin Song made upon St. Cecilia, whose day is commemerated [*sic*] yearly by all Musitians. Made in y^{e} year 1683') has not been considered as an ode for the purposes of this study, and there is nothing specifically to link its performance with the Musical Society's feasts.[36]

John Blow provided the ode for the second celebration in 1684, and his libretto must have been commissioned within days of the first feast for his librettist, John Oldham, died in the first week of December 1683. There seems little doubt, however, that Oldham's *Ode for an Anniversary of Musick on S. Cecilia's Day* was written specially for the Musical Society, a notion supported by the fact that in the 1684 edition of Oldham's poems the St Cecilia ode is printed among his 'Remains' -- presumably those works left in manuscript on his death. Oldham was not a poetic genius, but he was highly regarded in his day and was not without talent. His ode develops the traditional ideas of the *encomium musicae* and in some respects prefigures the great Cecilian ode which Dryden was to write three years later. The fourth stanza, beginning 'Music's the cordial of a troubled breast' drew from Blow an inspired setting for bass voice, which was included in many subsequent anthologies and was frequently performed as a solo song.[37] The whole ode setting, however,

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35 Franklin B. Zimmerman, *Henry Purcell 1659-1695: An Analytical Catalogue of his music* (1963), 158.

36 It has been suggested that this work was intended for the private Roman Catholic chapel maintained by Queen Catherine of Braganza (see Luckett thesis, *op. cit.*, 223).

37 See Watkins Shaw's comments on this movement in the preface to his edition of Blow's ode (Hinrichsen, 1949).

was considered of sufficient worth to be published soon after the performance, and its publication as *A Second Musical Entertainment Perform'd on St. Cecilia's day*, seems to confirm that the 1683 feast had, in some way, marked the establishment of a new venture.

The high standards which the Musical Society set in 1683 and 1684 were not always easy to maintain in subsequent years. Nahum Tate's poem for 1685, with its references to 'kids and lambkins' and 'nymphs and jolly swains', was uninspiring pastoral verse bearing little relation to traditional *encomia musicae*. It was set to music by William Turner, better known in his day as a fine countertenor, and still relatively inexperienced as a composer at the time. There seems little doubt that his ode was inferior to its predecessors, but since the work is not extant speculative assumptions have previously been made about its quality and the subsequent effect on the activities of the Musical Society. In particular, having found no notices of a St Cecilia feast in 1686, Husk attributed this to a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the members following the performance of Turner's ode, an assertion which has gone largely unchallenged, even though it is hard to imagine a society which had been so successful in its first two undertakings being deterred by a single piece of poor music. There can be little doubt, however, that a feast was held in 1686, for the words of *A Song for St. Caecilia's Day, Nov. 22. 1686. Written by Mr. Tho. Flatman: And Composed by Mr. Isaac Blackwell* survive at the University of Harvard, and were also subsequently published in *The Diverting Post* of January 1706. The poem has three stanzas, each of which links the traditional philosophy of music to the praise of St Cecilia, and a concluding chorus which emphasizes the convivial nature of the gathering. Though no mention is made of Stationers' Hall or the Musical Society, there can be little doubt that this work was performed at their feast. No provincial Cecilian celebrations are known to have been held at such an early date, and *The Diverting Post* would almost certainly have noted the fact if the work had been performed outside the capital.

Whatever the merits of the odes of Turner and Blackwell, the fortunes of the Musical Society were revived in 1687 by the performance of Giovanni Baptista Draghi's setting of John Dryden's *Song for St. Cecilia's Day*. As already noted, this key poem in the development of the Cecilian odes contains all the elements of the *encomium musicae*, but for the first time St Cecilia herself plays an active role. Early Cecilian poems had drawn on an established philosophical tradition, but there was a tendency to trivialize the *encomium musicae* and to produce 'airy-fairy praises of music... wholly and blandly "pagan" in tone, betraying no awareness of the awesome meanings and powers of heavenly harmony'.[38] Dryden, however, approached his subject with considerable seriousness, and presented themes which were to become the standard material for most subsequent works, including those written much later in the eighteenth century.[39] Draghi's setting is a notable achievement, but he was undoubtedly fortunate to be presented with a libretto that surpasses 'for smoothness of texture, diversity of mood, and variousness of measure any libretto written in English since that time'.[40]

Draghi was one of several foreign musicians employed at the English court during the latter half of the seventeenth century.[41] Charles II had encouraged French musicians to come to England after the Restoration, and the French style held sway in the Chapel Royal, but his consort, Catherine of Braganza, preferred to employ performers and composers from her native Portugal or, like Draghi, from Italy. Little is known about the music performed for the Queen, but it is likely that French influences were minimal. The three previous composers of St Cecilia odes --

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38 Levine, *op. cit.*, 48.

39 For detailed literary studies of the poem see Hollander, Brennecke, and Levine, *op. cit.*, and the following: Douglas Murray, 'The Musical Structure of Dryden's "Song for St. Cecilia's Day"', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, x (1977), 326-34; Alastair Fowler and Douglas Brooks, 'The Structure of Dryden's "Song for St. Cecilia's Day, 1687"', *Essays in Criticism*, xvii (1967), 434-47.

40 George N. Shuster, *The English Ode from Milton to Keats* (New York, 1940), 139.

41 See Jack Westrup, 'Foreign Musicians in Stuart England', *MQ*, xxvii (1941) 70-89.

Purcell, Blow and Turner -- were all professionally involved in the Chapel Royal and steeped in its musical conventions. Draghi's ode, a work of considerable originality and resourcefulness, represents an important departure from the established Cecilian style, and is more substantial than its predecessors both in terms of overall scale (dictated to some extent by the length of Dryden's poem) and of scoring (the string writing is predominantly five-part). It opens with a substantial sinfonia, the second movement of which is an Italianate five-voice fugue in a vigorous contrapuntal style. Accomplished counterpoint abounds too in the instrumental ritornelli which intersperse the vocal sections, and in the choral writing. A notable example of the latter is the long final chorus, which begins with an extended fugal section in the minor key and is far removed from the convivial, homophonic choruses with which the earlier odes of Purcell and Blow had ended. The success of Draghi's ode doubtless owed much to Dryden's libretto, but it was ironic that an Italian composer should have produced a work in which the English language was so skilfully treated, for Draghi's word setting -- particularly in the solo sections -- is among the most remarkable aspects of his ode. Draghi's setting emphasizes the close relationship between words and music implicit in the poem, and abounds not merely in the type of vivid individual word-painting already noted in the Oxford odes, but also in more subtle depictions of the poetical text.

The soloists at the 1687 feast were all performers of the first rank. The bass soloist, for example, was the celebrated John Gosling, who was famed for the extraordinary vocal range of his voice, and for whom parts of Draghi's ode must have been specifically intended. The first bass air, for example, covers a range of over two octaves and vividly expresses Dryden's words in the process. Draghi's handling of his text is at its most accomplished, however, in the alto solo 'What passion cannot music raise and quell!', which, like 'Music's the cordial of a troubled breast' in Blow's 1684 ode, provides an extended meditation on the power of music to move the soul. Blow's setting had been a *tour de force* for Gosling, but Draghi turned here to the alto voice, though it is nevertheless tempting to suppose that he

was influenced by Blow, not least in his choice of an accompaniment for two violins. Blow's solo was a slightly longer piece than Draghi's but was divided into two halves of different metre, the first extremely florid and expressive, the second much more regular in its melodic phrasing. Draghi, however, maintained the same time signature throughout the movement, producing nearly fifty bars of imaginative word-setting without the support of a ground bass or other formal device. There can be few other contemporary examples of such a prolonged and successful piece of declamatory vocal setting (Ex.5). Particular mention should be made of the setting of the phrase 'to worship that celestial sound', which comes in the very middle of the solo, and is set in a long vocal melisma with the simplest of string accompaniment. The effect is a broadening out of the musical texture (enhanced by a passing modulation to the major key) and a momentary sense of repose which perfectly colours the text and is in complete contrast with the surrounding music.

The 1687 celebrations marked an important stage in the development of the St Cecilia ode. Dryden's poem provided the model for nearly all the libretti which followed, so that by the turn of the eighteenth century most Cecilian poetry drew on a common stock of themes and imagery. Draghi's setting established what Purcell and Blow had only hinted at in their first Cecilian efforts -- namely that the St Cecilia ode should express the relationship between words and music at its most intimate, and that this should be done not only by the subtle nuances of musical imagery and vocal setting, but also in more obvious ways, such as the use of appropriate instrumental accompaniments. Thus, the whole range of music's expressive power was employed in depicting the themes of the libretto. Such principles did not originate solely in the St Cecilia odes; other types of Restoration music had used word painting and obbligato accompaniments to characterize individual movements or sections, and in the court odes trumpets were commonly used to give added grandeur to concluding choruses. Draghi, however, used such techniques more consistently than had hitherto been the case, and demonstrated their particular suitability in the Cecilian context. The introduction of obbligato

movements in which the accompaniment was provided by the instruments referred to in the text -- 'the soft complaining flute', for example -- and in a style which matched the effect which is attributed to them, was an inevitable response to a vivid libretto. This device too was not of Draghi's own devising, but he employed it on an unprecedented scale, and the resulting movements were notable for their length and formal unity.

The St Cecilia's day feasts were suspended during the politically unstable years of 1688 and 1689, and when the celebration was revived in 1690 the ode was provided by Robert King who, as a member of the King's band, a theatre musician and a promoter of concerts, came from the traditional background of the Musical Society's composers. His ode has not survived, but the libretto, by Thomas Shadwell, shows the influence of Dryden's *Song* of 1687.[42] The convivial sentiments of the early odes of Fishburn and Oldham have disappeared from Shadwell's text, which is addressed to Sacred Harmony and begins with five short stanzas of philosophical exposition. The remainder of the poem was calculated to inspire vivid musical setting, with a stanza on 'the clangour of the trumpet's sound', and a more reflective verse on 'Love's gentle passions' which includes references to the 'soft and tender flute' and 'the sprinkling and melodious lute'.

In 1691 John Blow again provided an ode for the Musical Society, his text (a work of small literary merit) being provided by Tom D'Urfey, best known for his collection of songs, *Pills to Purge Melancholy*. Blow's setting returned to the more traditional Restoration style, relying much on ground basses and other ostinato patterns, and the choral writing lacks the extensive contrapuntal interest which Draghi had introduced four years earlier. A two-movement overture is followed by thirteen vocal sections, some of which Blow links together by nothing more than a series of passing notes in the bass. This limits the number of definite breaks in the music, and effectively divides the ode into four larger units, which also correspond

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42 John Dryden (ed.), *The First Part of Miscellany Poems...*, 4th edn. (1716), iv, 93-5.

to its main tonal areas. The first of these divisions embraces the overture and the seven vocal sections which follow, and Blow uses the countersubject of the overture's fugal movement as the main vocal theme of the first section for solo and chorus, 'The glorious day is come'. This triple-time theme with its dotted-rhythm phrasing (set vocally as a long melisma) and 'walking' ground bass is a typical example of the Restoration style. A contrasting duet in the relative major follows the first chorus, but the original theme then returns as a reprise (with different words), before new choral material is introduced. D'Urfey's verse contains only the most facile of philosophical reflections, but towards the end of the ode Blow introduces a series of verses for the soloists in the spirit of 'Music's the cordial of a troubled breast' (1684), and these are among the most attractive movements in the work. The first is a duet for alto and tenor, 'Ah Heav'n! what is't I hear?', full of long melismatic phrases and imitative counterpoint, and cast in a rudimentary da capo form. An extended bass air follows, falling into two sections along similar lines to the bass solo in the 1684 ode, though rather less demanding on the soloist.

Undoubtedly the best known of the odes written for the London Cecilian celebrations was Henry Purcell's setting of Nicholas Brady's *Hail! bright Cecilia*, performed at the feast of 1692. Its success was such that the ode was performed twice over, and Peter Motteux records that it received 'universal applause, particularly the second Stanza, which was sung with incredible Graces by Mr. Purcell himself'.[43] *Hail! bright Cecilia* occupies a significant place within Purcell's wider output, for as Peter Dennison has pointed out the composer 'wrote no work of comparable length that is so richly scored for voices and instruments, so diverse in technique and texture, or so unfailingly imaginative in the wealth of its musical invention.'[44] It represented, in fact, the culmination of all the Cecilian odes to that

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43 *The Gentleman's Journal* (November 1692), 18. The movement in question was the alto solo 'Tis Nature's voice', and there seems no doubt that Purcell was indeed the executor, and not merely the author, of its elaborate vocal ornaments (see Peter Dennison's introduction to the revised Purcell Society edition of the ode (1978), ix).

44 Dennison, *op. cit.*

date, and epitomized the qualities that an ode in praise of music should display; indeed the ode is characterized by an air of restraint, and an apparent desire to treat the theme of Brady's libretto with some seriousness. In the vocal solos, such as 'Wondrous machine' and 'The fife and all the harmony of war', Purcell shows a spirited approach to the familiar sentiments of the *encomium musicae*, but in the choral writing, almost without exception, he spurns celebratory jauntiness in favour of a more reflective approach. This is evident from the very first choral entry, but is perhaps seen most clearly in the chorus 'Soul of the world', where the sonorous opening (quite unlike anything to be found in the earlier Cecilian odes) introduces a series of juxtaposed contrapuntal and homophonic passages, all carefully matched to the sentiments of the words. Even the final chorus, with its fanfare figurations for trumpets and drums, avoids any sense of deliberate display in the vocal writing and is interrupted by a slow solo quartet before trumpets and drums return.

Not all the odes performed during the 1690s can be identified,[45] but they included two works by foreign composers, the first being Gottfried (or 'Godfrey') Finger's 1693 setting (now lost) of words by Theophilus Parsons. This was not the first occasion on which Finger was involved with the Cecilian feast, for in 1691 he had provided incidental instrumental music which was favourably received:

> Whilst the Company is at Table, the Hautboys and Trumpets play successively. Mr. *Showers* hath taught the latter of late years to sound with all the softness imaginable, they played us some flat Tunes, made by Mr. *Finger*, with a general applause, it being a thing formerly thought impossible upon an Instrument designed for a sharp key.[46]

Finger's ode is unlikely to have been of the same stature as its Purcellian predecessor, but it was sufficiently popular to receive two subsequent performances

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45 For example, no ode can definitely be attributed to the feast of 1694, though a setting by Daniel Purcell seems the most likely candidate (see pp.110-11). Husk notes a song by 'Mr. Robart' sung 'at St. Celia's [*sic*] Feast' and printed in *Thesaurus Musicus* (1694), but there is no reason to link it to the 1694 celebrations.

46 *The Gentleman's Journal* (January 1692), 5. The only incidental music which can now be identified is 'Mr Le Ruch's Tunes on St Caecilias Day 1697' for which a single violin part survives in *Lbl* MS Add. 35043 (ff.105-6). The music consists of a two-movement French overture followed by nine other movements.

at York Buildings.[47] Three years later an ode was provided by Nicola Matteis, and in recent years it has been suggested that a manuscript score in the Bodleian Library is that of the work in question.[48] The anonymous libretto of the 1696 ode (which survives as a printed wordsheet) runs to over 70 lines of verse, and it should be noted that the Bodleian manuscript contains only four movements, setting just sixteen lines of verse from the first half of the ode. These lines do not, however, form a continuous section of the poem, so that if this is indeed Matteis's setting he had clearly made considerable alterations to his libretto.

Husk was unable to identify the 1695 ode, but it was undoubtedly John Blow's setting of Peter Motteux's 'Great quire of Heav'n'.[49] Although scored on a similar scale to his 1691 ode, Blow is more restrained here in the use of the relatively large forces. For example, there is no symphony as such, merely a short instrumental introduction leading into the opening chorus which, like the other choral movements, is predominantly homophonic in style with only limited use of imitative textures. A printed libretto for the performance describes the ode as 'perform'd by two choirs', but as there is no double-choir writing in the score this would seem only to indicate the use of larger choral forces than usual. Motteux had also divided the 55 lines of his verse into fifteen individual sections (some of these being no more than rhyming couplets) but Blow paid scant attention to these divisions, so that two choruses and an intervening solo verse are formed from the first four-line stanza alone. The ode is firmly in the Restoration style, with a long sequence of fairly short, declamatory, vocal sections and with elaborate word-

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47 *London Stage* pt.1, 431-2.

48 *Ob* MS Mus. c.16 (ff.3-21). See Michael Tilmouth, 'The beginnings of provincial concert life in England', *Music in Eighteenth-Century England: Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, ed. Christopher Hogwood and Richard Luckett (Cambridge, 1983), 9, which credits Alan Browning with identifying the score as Matteis's ode. The wordsheet for the ode survives in the Halliwell Collection of Broadsides at Chetham's Library, Manchester. Charles Biklé, apparently unaware of its existence, claimed that there was insufficient evidence to support the suggestion that Matteis had written an ode (*op. cit.*, 308-9, footnote).

49 *Words For an Entertainment at the Music-Feast, on St. Cecilia's Day, Being the 22d of November, 1695* [1695].

setting. These features provided sufficient interest to eliminate the need for tonal variety, so that the opening key of C major (along with its minor mode) dominates the ode, apart from a small central group of movements in closely related keys. The orchestral accompaniment is similarly restrained but with much use of paired obbligato instruments.

John Dryden's second St Cecilia ode, *Alexander's Feast; or the Power of Musique*, was set by Jeremiah Clarke in 1697. The poem was immediately recognized as a work of high quality, much to the gratification of Dryden himself, who considered it one of his best pieces.[50] *Alexander's Feast* has been described as both 'a fine example of the irregular "Pindarick", and 'a brilliant exercise in cantata libretto',[51] but as the first ode libretto to contain a more specifically dramatic element, it also departs from the established Cecilian conventions. Although the usual themes are found -- the power of music over the human emotions, and the 'role' of St Cecilia, for example -- they are discussed for the first time within the context of a dramatic scenario, namely the traditional legend of the musician Timotheus performing for Alexander the Great at a victory feast. Dryden's innovation was to make this story, which like those of Orpheus, Jubal and King David had often provided the material for individual episodes in earlier odes, the basis of the whole poem:

> Thus a stock *exemplum*, interpreted imaginatively in the light of the traditional doctrine of 'effect', is elaborated into a complete lyrical drama, in which music, poetry, fluctuating emotion, and violent action are brilliantly synthesized in praise of music.[52]

This dramatic element was subsequently to be of considerable importance, for it meant that when Handel composed his setting of the poem in 1736 the resulting work was one of the first in which the distinguishing features of ode and oratorio overlap.

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50 Letter of Dryden to Jacob Tonson, December 1697, *Letters of John Dryden, op. cit.*, 98.

51 James Kinsley, 'Dryden and the *Encomium Musicae*', *RES*, n.s. iv (1953), 263-7.

52 *Ibid.*, 267.

Dryden had learned much from his earlier Cecilian libretto about the requirements of a poem which was to be set to music. The opening stanza of the 1687 ode, for example, had a complex rhyming scheme which extended over distinct sections of verse which were ultimately to be set as different musical movements, thus losing the significance of the rhymes. Such problems were avoided in the 1697 ode:

> [Alexander's Feast] was designed purely as a musician's libretto. It exhibits no such awkward passages for the composer as were found in the opening and close of the 1687 ode. Dryden's experiences had given him a clear recognition of the distinction between recitative or solo declamation, air, and choral effects. Nearly the whole of the ode of 1687 could conceivably have been assigned to both solo and chorus, and Draghi's indecision was often rather apparent. In *Alexander's Feast*, however, this distinction is clearly shown, in two ways: first, in a contrast in idea and content, for the narrative or solo passages are explicitly set off from the commentary or choral sections; second, in a contrast in phrasing and verbal sound, for the narrative abounds in true dramatic declamation, unsuitable for chorus but grateful to the solo singer.[53]

Among the ways in which Dryden provides for the composer's needs are the division of the text into recitatives, airs and choruses, and the introduction of repeated phrases followed by a 'swift clinching conclusion after the repetition, just the device which is needed by the composer to round off a repetitive or sequential passage'.[54] Jeremiah Clarke's setting does not survive, but it was certainly popular and received at least two subsequent performances, the first being for the composer's benefit:

> The Song composed by Mr. Jeremiah Clarke, and Sung on St. Caecilia's Day, will be performed on Thursday next the 9th Instant, at Mr. Hickford's Dancing School in Panton-Street... and for the Benefit of the said Mr. Clark and Mr. Le Riche late steward of the said Feast.[55]

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53 Brennecke, *op. cit.*, 34.

54 *Ibid.*, 35;. for example: 'None but the brave, None but the brave, None but the brave deserves the fair'.

55 *The London Gazette*, 2 December 1697.

Eight days later there was the customary additional performance at York Buildings, and at the same concert another work by Clarke (probably the ode 'Pay your thanks to mighty Jove') was given its first performance (see pp.172-3).

The odes for 1698 and 1699 were by Daniel Purcell, the only composer to have works performed at two successive feasts. Husk asserted that the first of these was a setting of Thomas Bishop's 'Cecilia, charming saint!', but there is no evidence that this poem (published anonymously in 1708, and not attributed to Bishop until the 1780s)[56] was ever set to music. Daniel Purcell's 1698 ode was, in fact, a setting of words by Samuel Wesley, which were also set by the Lincoln organist William Norris (see pp.107-8). A contemporary copy of Purcell's score, labelled 'St Caecilias Song for the Yeare 1698 By Mr Dan: Purcell', survives in the Gresham Collection at Guildhall Library, and although no venue is named, an advertisement for a subsequent performance at York Buildings implies that it was written for the Musical Society's feast:

> On Wednesday next, will be performed at York-Buildings Mr. Daniel Purcell's Musick made for last St. Cecilia's Feast, for the Benefit of Mr. Howel and Mr. Shore, with an Addition of new Vocal and Instrumental Musick.[57]

In 1699 Purcell set Joseph Addison's ode 'Prepare the hallowed strain', a relatively short poem in praise of musical virtuosity. A printed wordsheet reveals that a small portion of verse towards the end of the poem was not set, and that eight additional lines reinforcing the instrumental imagery were added by Nahum Tate. The music of the ode is lost, however, and there is no record of its first performance, though an advertisment for a concert at York Buildings in December 1699 'for the Benefit of Mr. Pate and Mr. Purcell' which was to include 'the last St. Cecilia's Song' suggests that this ode too was given its first performance at Stationers' Hall.[58]

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56 'Ode to St Cecilia by Mr. Bishop', in John Nichols (ed.), *A Select Collection of Poems: with Notes Biographical and Historical* (1780-82), iv, 28-30.

57 *The London Gazette*, 2 January 1698-9.

58 *Ibid.*, 7 December 1699.

The last ode composed for the Musical Society seems to have been William Congreve's *Hymn to Harmony*, which dates from 1701. This is one of the longest ode libretti of the period, and the choice of title emphasises the philosophical preoccupations of the *encomium musicae* which dominate the poem. The theme of the power of music is treated in 'universal' terms, with no reference to the particular occasion which had inspired it and with discussion of the attributes of individual instruments (apart from a stanza dealing with martial music) kept to a minimum. Instead, Congreve provides a vision of Harmony which is both exalted and mystical, and in spite of a generally bombastic tone, there are occasional moments which are not without effect:

> Then didst thou, Harmony, give birth
> To this fair form of Heav'n and Earth;
> Then all those shining worlds above
> In mystick dance began to move
> Around the radiant sphere of central fire
> A never ceasing, never silent choir.

The *Hymn* also marks the first appearance in a Cecilian poem of Apollo and the nine Muses, who were to figure in many later odes 'to Music'.

The *Hymn to Harmony* was set by John Eccles, who had been runner-up in the celebrated competition to set Congreve's masque *The Judgment of Paris* two years before. By 1701 Eccles had been Master of the King's Band for three years, and although he was relatively new to the writing of odes, his Cecilian setting nevertheless shows many of the characteristics of the Restoration court odes and verse anthems. It lacks, however, the declamatory vocal style which had been a feature of some of its predecessors; only in the opening tenor air and in a later air beginning 'Thy voice, Oh Harmony, with awful sound' -- the latter continuing the well-established tradition of a florid bass solo -- is the vocal style significantly influenced by the meaning and the rhythmic inflections of the text. In spite of Congreve's colourful language, the majority of the movements have an immediate rhythmic and melodic appeal, and the result is at times curiously reminiscent of the 'convivial' mood of the very earliest St Cecilia odes. It should be noted that no

overture is extant for the ode, and there is no evidence to suggest that one was intended. The initial accompanied recitative seems to have been a deliberate choice, and is one of the earliest examples of this type of opening for an ode. Also noteworthy is Eccles's frequent use of rests, not only as a means of phrasing but also for dramatic effect in the choral movements, and his use of the same melodic theme in more than one movement. For example, the tenor theme 'Begin the pow'rful song', which appears halfway through the ode, reappears in a different key for a later tenor air , 'Till victory and peace', and also seems to have influenced the air which precedes the final chorus.

Eccles's *Hymn* concludes the known sequence of odes for the Stationers' Hall celebrations, but there remain a number of extant works, all setting anonymous words, which were probably performed for the Musical Society. They include two odes by John Blow, the shorter of which, 'Welcome, welcome every guest', may well be the earliest, for its opening line emphasizes the convivial nature of the occasion, and the small-scale scoring and relatively few musical sections also indicate an early date. A short two-movement symphony is followed by the first vocal section in which passages for bass voice (in a style which suggests Gosling as the intended soloist) alternate with the chorus. Two airs for tenor voice in major and minor modes follow, forming a single musical sequence based on the same ground bass, and the work ends with a full reprise of the opening solo-chorus dialogue. No definite date can be attributed to the ode, but if, as seems likely, it was given during the first few years of the London celebrations then it was either a second piece, performed along with one of those already discussed, or there must have been Cecilian feasts in 1688 and 1689, in spite of the politically charged situation, which have gone unrecorded. Blow's second ode, 'Triumphant Fame', sets a lengthy libretto, and circumstantial evidence points to its performance in November 1700, for in December of that year a 'Consort of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, Composed by Dr. John Blow for the late Anniversary Feast of St. Cecilia' was

advertised at Mr Reason's music room in York Buildings.[59] Since the dates of Blow's other odes are well established (and assuming an earlier date for 'Welcome, welcome every guest') 'Triumphant Fame' was probably the work in question.

Perhaps the most interesting of these undated odes is one by William Croft, who was not hitherto known to have composed a Cecilian work. His *Song on St Cecilia's Day* ('The heavenly warlike goddess now disarmed') survives in a volume of vocal and choral music compiled by the organist John Barker, an important copyist of early eighteenth-century English works.[60] The ode is undated, but since Barker was Croft's assistant his attribution of the work can presumably be relied upon. Two other odes by Croft are in the same volume, one for the birthday of Queen Anne in 1714 (also extant in manuscript at the British Library),[61] the other an untitled ode whose words indicate a performance in the reign of George I and which may, perhaps, have been the New Year ode for 1715 (the first of the new reign), for which the only surviving evidence is a newspaper report of 'a new song set to Musick'.[62] Both these works, therefore, date from the composer's maturity, and post-date his two Oxford doctoral odes of 1713. Assuming the St Cecilia ode to date from the same period, the circumstances of its performance remain a matter for speculation since the regular London Cecilian celebrations had ceased more than two decades earlier. On grounds of style and scale the ode may reasonably be considered a slightly earlier work than the two court odes, but hardly early enough to have been performed at Stationers' Hall before 1701. Its origins may lie instead in one or other of the provincial celebrations of St Cecilia's day which began to be held around the turn of the eighteenth century, and in which some London musicians

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59 *Ibid.*, 5 December 1700.

60 The score is now in the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, Los Angeles (f0235M4 [17--] Bound). I am indebted to Dr H. Diack Johnstone for drawing this manuscript to my attention.

61 *McGuinness*, 28.

62 *Ibid.*

were involved. Such a view is supported by the ode itself which is cast on a small scale and is relatively undemanding on the performers, with none of the extended contrapuntal writing for chorus, for example, which Croft used in his two Oxford odes. Similarly, the two-movement symphony is short and conventional in its material, though the use of three-part violins (the first doubled by oboe) as a contrast to the trumpets enriches the texture not only of the symphony but also of the bass verse which follows. The effective but unchallenging solo writing, with simple obbligato accompaniments, might well have suited a provincial musical society able to offer a variety of singers and instrumentalists, but not necessarily a high level of virtuosity.

The London St Cecilia's day feasts disappear from public view following the performance of Eccles's *Hymn to Harmony* in 1701 as suddenly as they had appeared in 1683. After 1700 there are no references to them in the London newspapers, nor in the records of the Stationers' Company. Both Husk and Biklé speculate that increased expenses and the outbreak of war may have been responsible for this cessation.[63] The *Ode to Harmony* or *Ode in Praise of Musick* composed by Philip Hart and given at Stationers' Hall in 1703 was regarded by Husk as the last of the regular London celebrations, but there is no reason to associate it with the Musical Society, for it was performed on 3 March rather than on or near St Cecilia's Day, and the Stationers' accounts record the receipt of £8 12*s* 'of Mr Hart for the use of the Hall for his Musick', suggesting that the composer himself made the arrangements for the performance.[64] Hart's ode is therefore better regarded as the first of a series of 'odes to Music' which appeared at intervals throughout the eighteenth century from the hands of some of the most talented composers of the day. Relatively little attention has been paid to celebrations held outside the capital (and doubtless inspired by the London feasts), yet there was undoubtedly a

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63 *Husk*, 54; Biklé, *op. cit.*, 18.

64 *SC* Wardens' Accounts, 3 March 1702.

widespread enthusiasm beyond London during the first two decades of the eighteenth century for such activities. At Norwich in 1714, for example, the City waits gave monthly concerts to raise money for a Cecilian feast,[65] while in many other towns and cities St Cecilia's day concerts were held, and a number of odes, often by local composers, were performed.[66] Betty Matthews has argued that St Cecilia's day concerts were being held in Salisbury almost contemporaneously with the London feasts.[67] By 1700 the city boasted a Society of Lovers of Music, whose members gathered in the cathedral on St Cecilia's day to hear a sermon in defence of church music, and the celebrations became known as 'St Cecilia at Sarum', though there is no evidence that specially-composed odes ever formed part of the proceedings.

Among those who attended at Salisbury was Claver Morris, the physician from Wells in Somerset whose involvement in an amateur performance of a Croft ode has already been mentioned (see p.50). Morris's diary provides the most detailed account of provincial celebrations to have survived, and shows that St Cecilia's Day was also regularly observed in Wells in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. In 1709 the celebration there took the form of a concert presented by amateur gentlemen and atttended by an audience of about 100 people:

> It being the Anniversary of St. Cecilia, I was the greatest part of the day at Close-Hall with the Lovers of Musick, Mr Harrington, Mr Naish, Colonel Bessley, Col: Prowse, Col: Horner, Major Prater & many other Lovers of Musick performing Purcel's Cecilia Song & much other musick.[68]

The song by Purcell was probably 'Welcome to all the pleasures', which was available in print and was on a sufficiently modest scale for a small provincial

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65 Tilmouth, *op. cit.*, 12.

66 Influences of the Cecilian tradition, in the form both of odes and of miscellaneous concerts can also be found in Dublin for much of the eighteenth century, but it has seemed sensible to defer examination of this to Chapter 5.

67 'The influence of the organists of Salisbury Cathedral', *The Organ*, lxi (1982), 115-16.

68 Edmund Hobhouse (ed.), *The Diary of a West Country Physician A.D. 1684-1726* (1934), 58.

society to have attempted its performance. A decade later, more ambitious undertakings seem to have been attempted, for on the eve of St Cecilia's day 1718 Morris recorded a rehearsal of the 'Caecilia-Song, for tomorrow' and the arrival from Bristol of 'Mr Duglass the Blackmoor Trumpeter (who is one of the best in England on that Instrument) and he Sounded Two Sonatas very finely'.[69] Similarly, at the rehearsal of the 'Cecilia Song' in 1720 'Mr Dingleton came in with us I having sent for him to Bristow [*sic*] to assist our Consort with his Bassoons, Trumpet, or Hautboy'.[70] The performance of an ode (or at least an occasional song) was clearly a regular feature of the music meeting in Wells, and references to odes by Purcell and Croft show that works originally performed in London and other major cities enjoyed a wider circulation. Morris's entry for 23 November 1724 also makes it clear that on at least one occasion an ode was provided from a pen closer to home:

> It being the Day on which we celebrated St. Cecilia's Memory, Mr Brodrip desired, for compensating the Pains he took in setting Dryden's Ode on Alexander's Feast, to Musick.... We had a Consort, & a good one, at Close-Hall.[71]

The reference here must be to William Broderip who was a vicar choral at Wells Cathedral from 1701, and cathedral organist from 1713. Morris's diary provides the only record of this setting of *Alexander's Feast*, though Broderip is known to have composed a number of sacred works, including an anthem on the Peace of Utrecht.[72]

Much less is known about the Cecilian celebrations in Hereford and in Winchester, but in both cities odes by resident composers were performed. The Song on St. Cecilia's Day, composed by Henry Hall and performed at Hereford (where he had been the cathedral organist since 1688) in 1704, escaped the notice of Husk, and is not mentioned in the composer's *New Grove* entry. The words,

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69 *Ibid.*, 65.

70 *Ibid.*, 82.

71 *Ibid.*, 113.

72 See *New Grove*, iii, 328.

however, were published in *The Diverting Post* prior to the work's performance (along with a comment that they were 'admirably set')[73] and a fortnight later the same newspaper included a detailed account of a St Cecilia's day concert held in Winchester:

> Last Wednesday the *22d* Instant, being St. Cecilia's Day, at Winchester, was performed a Consort of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, composed by Mr. Valentine Richardson, Organist there. Mr. John Shore, the Famous Trumpeter, and Mr. Elford, were sent for down [*sic*] by the Gentlemen of the Country. The whole Performance was very satisfactory, and received with the general Applause of the Audience.[74]

Valentine (or Vaughan) Richardson had been a chorister at the Chapel Royal under Blow, and was appointed organist at Winchester in 1692. Among his published works was *A Collection of New Songs, for One, Two, and Three Voices, Accompany'd with Instruments* (1701), and this included 'A Song in Praise of St. Cecilia' which is sufficiently substantial to be considered as an ode. No performances of it can now be definitely traced, but it may well have been the consort of vocal and instrumental musick to which the report above had referred. The 'Song' is a straightforward setting of an anonymous encomium musicae containing most of the usual Cecilian themes. The movements are very short, with minimal vocal ornamentation and melodic development, and the key of C major is retained throughout. An incomplete score (consisting of the first two vocal movements) survives and includes a number of variations from the published edition.[75]

No accounts of St Cecilia's Day activities in Lincoln have survived, but extant odes by two musicians employed at the cathedral, neither of whom is known to have had connections with the London feasts, suggests that some form of celebration, albeit irregular, was held there around the turn of the eighteenth century.

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73 4 November 1704.

74 *The Diverting Post*, 18 November 1704.

75 *Lcm* MS 812, ff.199-204.

The earlier of these odes is by William Norris, who was appointed master of the choristers at Lincoln in 1690, and sets a text by Samuel Wesley senior, father of the founder of Methodism, and grandfather of the composer Samuel who, several decades later, also set the poem to music. Husk was aware both of the Norris manuscript and of Wesley's text, but he discussed the latter only in connection with its later setting by the author's grandson, ignoring the fact that the same text had been set not only by Norris but also, shortly afterwards, by Daniel Purcell. A letter published in *The Harmonicon* of 1831 recalled that the words of the ode implied a time of war,[76] and on this basis, and assuming that the ode was intended for London, Husk suggested 1702 as a likely date, pointing out that a day of general thanksgiving for the progress of the war had been observed early in November.[77] This supposition was challenged by Frank Dawes on the reasonable grounds of practicality, for England entered the War of the Spanish Succession on 4 May 1702 and Norris was dead and buried in Lincoln by 15 July.[78]

Dawes suggested 1694 or 1695 as the more likely dates, but the performance of Blow's 'Great quire of Heaven' in 1695 effectively rules out this possibility, unless both odes were performed. Wesley's poem had been printed in *The Gentleman's Journal* for April 1694, but this does not necessarily imply that it was set for that year. The references to the war are, however, little more than the usual description of martial music and are hardly a reliable means of dating the work. There is also no evidence to suggest that Norris's setting was intended for performance in London, for he is not known to have been involved with the celebrations there, nor was he an active participant in the capital's musical life. Daniel Purcell's setting of Wesley's text was unquestionably performed at Stationer's Hall in 1698 (see p.99), and it seems unlikely that two settings of the same poem would be performed there in a

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76 'Odes on St. Cecilia's Day', *The Harmonicon* (1831), 289-90.

77 *Husk*, 51-2.

78 Frank Dawes, 'Philip Hart and William Norris', *MT*, cx (1969), 1076.

space of four years. It seems more likely that Norris's ode was performed on some unrecorded occasion at Lincoln, a possibility reinforced by the fact that his librettist was rector of Epworth, a village only a few miles outside the city.

The other ode with a Lincoln connection, 'Down from the fixed serene on high', was composed by George Holmes, and was mentioned by Husk (who printed its words without identifying their source) and a number of subsequent writers. The survival of its music has not been noticed hitherto, but a score is extant in the same volume which contains William Croft's St Cecilia ode.[79] The anonymous words are unexceptional, combining traditional aspects of the *encomium musicae* with topical comment on affairs of state, but the setting is a competent one and merits comment. Holmes became organist of Lincoln in 1704, two years after Norris's death, and may have composed his ode at any time between then and the death of Queen Anne (1714), who is referred to in the text. A date towards the end of this period is the most likely, however, for the ode shows a preference for the developing baroque practices rather than the more traditional Restoration style. This stylistic shift is seen most clearly in the neglect of the declamatory vocal style, which is only really found in the opening vocal movement (a favourite point for recitative throughout the ode's later history), and the use of the da capo in two solos. Holmes continued to favour ground basses, making use of them in two movements (one of which is in da capo form with the bass shifting to the relative minor for the middle section), but elsewhere there is much use of sequences and passing modulations as a means of extending the melodic material. Another important feature of the work is the move towards clearly defined movements which, in the case of the solo numbers, have proper instrumental introductions and codas drawing on the vocal material. Most of these developments are embodied in the simple siciliano movement 'See how thy votarys prepare' (Ex.6).

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79 Holmes also composed 'A verse on St Cecilia's Day' for voice, continuo and flute, a printed copy of which survives, without date or publisher's imprint, in the British Library. There is no reason to suppose that this song was from a larger work, but it serves further to support the notion that Lincoln was a venue for St Cecilia celebrations.

Husk maintained that Oxford provided the nearest equivalent of the London feasts outside the capital.[80] Little evidence of any substance survives to support this notion, however, and there is no reason to suppose that Oxford was ever the venue for celebrations of a similar scale or regularity to those held in London. The theory of an annual Oxford observance is founded on a single well-documented service held at Christ Church on 27 November 1696 at which a sermon in defence of church music 'Upon Occasion of the Anniversary-Meeting of the Lovers of Musick, On St. Caecilia's Day' was preached by Samson Estwick, then Chaplain of Christ Church, but also much involved with the musical activities of both the Chapel Royal and the Oxford Act. Estwick's sermon was printed in London soon afterwards, and is dedicated to the stewards of 'St. Caecilia's Feast', all of whom are named.[81] Significantly the number of stewards is identical to that for the London feasts, and there is nothing to connect the names particularly with Oxford. Since it is not apparent why an independent local celebration should have needed to delay its activities until 27 November, it may be that the names are those of the London stewards for 1696, and that Estwick's sermon was part of an extended observance of the London celebrations, rather than part of a separate Oxford tradition. Such a view is supported by two factors: first, two professional London musicians are listed among the stewards, namely Moses Snow, a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, and Nicola Matteis, himself the composer of the ode performed at Stationers' Hall only five days prior to the Oxford service.[82] Secondly, Estwick states in his dedication that it was the stewards themselves who 'desir'd me first to Preach, and then to Print this Sermon', and the involvement of the London stewards in the publishing of material relating to their feast has already been noted.

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80 *Husk*, 83-4.

81 *The Usefulness of Church-Musick* (1696).

82 There is no evidence to support the suggestion (*Husk*, 87) that Matteis's ode was repeated in Oxford.

Although there is no evidence for any repetition of the Christ Church gathering, or for any musical activities beyond the service held on that occasion, Husk interpreted Estwick's sermon as proof of an organized series of Oxford celebrations, and attributed to them any extant Cecilian words or music which might claim an Oxford connection. Most of these associations are supported by little more than circumstantial evidence. For example, Husk is doubtless correct that the earliest manifestation of Cecilian sentiment in Oxford dates from 1686, when Thomas Fletcher of New College, wrote an extended *encomium musicae* 'On the Feast of Cecilia' which, some years later, appeared in print.[83] Apart from a final ten-line stanza headed 'chorus', however, there is nothing to suggest that the poem was ever set to music. Similarly, there is no indication that Joseph Addison's early poem 'For St Cecilia's Day at Oxford', written when he was a student at Magdalen College, was ever intended for musical performance at the University,[84] though it was to be set to music much later in the eighteenth century. Nor is there any reason to suppose that Addison's second Cecilian ode, 'Prepare the hallowed strain' which was set by Daniel Purcell, was performed in Oxford, even though Husk mentions it in that context. The only Cecilian performance at Oxford during the first decade of the eighteenth century for which firm documentary evidence survives is that of Henry Purcell's *Hail! bright Cecilia*, given at St Mary's Hall on 22 November 1707.[85] A printed wordsheet is the only record which can now be found of the performance, but Husk seems to have known a different source, for although he states (in common with the printed libretto) that the performers were 'Mr Saunders and Mr Court, assisted by the best voices and hands', he also claimed that the ode

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83 Thomas Fletcher, *Poems on Several Occasions* (1692), 20-5.

84 'A Song. For St. Cecilia's Day at Oxford', in *The Annual Miscellany: For The Year 1694. Being the fourth part of Miscellany Poems* (1694), 134-8. Also in *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison* (1721), i, 33-7. The poem probably dates from 1692, see Peter Smithers, *The Life of Joseph Addison*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1968), 24.

85 *A Song Compos'd by Mr. Henry Purcell; And to be Performed at St. Mary-Hall, in Oxon., on St. Cecilia's-Day, 1707* [Oxford, 1707]. The copy in the Bodleian Library appears to be unique.

was by Daniel Purcell, and that neither words nor music had survived.[86] Further evidence for a lost documentary source is provided by John Nichols's statement that an ode by Blow was performed at the same venue in 1708.[87]

An Oxford link has also been claimed for 'Begin and strike th'harmonious lyre', which was written by Thomas Yalden for St Cecilia's day 1693, and set to music by Daniel Purcell, apparently while both poet and composer were students at Magdalen College. Husk stated that the ode was performed at Oxford in 1693,[88] a view based on evidence of doubtful reliability from the earliest printed edition of the poem. When Yalden's ode was published in 1694, it appeared in an anthology of poetry by various authors, and with the title 'An Ode, for St. Cecilia's Day, 1693. Written by Mr. Tho. Yalden. And Composed by Mr. Daniel Purcell'.[89] Oxford is not mentioned, but Yalden's poem was followed in the volume by Joseph Addison's song 'For St. Cecilia's Day, at Oxford'. The source for Husk's statement was apparently the contents page of this anthology where Yalden's ode is this time described as 'An Ode for St. Cecilia's Day at Oxford, 1693'. Given the lack of any other documentary evidence (and if works of this sort were performed in Oxford it is surprising that no contemporary reference to them has survived) it is likely that this was a printer's error, the words 'at Oxford' being mistakenly repeated in the second entry. This view is supported by the fact that the page reference for the Yalden ode is also incorrect: the poem begins on page 128, but the page number given on the contents page is 124, and since Addison's ode begins on page 134 the evidence for an unintentional transposition on the part of the printer is reinforced.

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86 *Husk*, 89.

87 *A Select Collection of Poems*, iv, 65n.

88 *Husk*, 86.

89 *The Annual Miscellany: For The Year 1694. Being the fourth part of Miscellany Poems* (1694), 128-33.

A more reliable attribution of date and venue for Purcell's ode comes from the surviving manuscript score which states that the work was 'perform[e]d upon St. Caecilia's Day att Stationers Hall'.[90] Though it is now clear that this was not, as Husk supposed, a second performance, it is equally unlikely that Daniel Purcell's ode was the major work at the 1693 celebrations since an ode by Gottfried Finger was undoubtedly performed on this occasion. It is therefore most probable that Purcell's ode was given in 1694 (for which year no other London ode is recorded), and that the date in the poem's title refers to the composition of the words. Such a view is supported by the fact that the text set is somewhat shorter than, and in places different from, that of the published poem. This was Daniel Purcell's earliest ode (his first court ode dates from 1697) and ranks among the less elaborate of the Stationers' Hall works. The individual sections are barely long enough to be considered as movements in their own right, and the limited scoring means that there is surprisingly little use of instrumental colour in comparison with what had become customary for a St Cecilia ode by this date. Only in the alto air 'Then let the louder trumpet's voice' is any real attempt made to provide an appropriately expressive mood for the words of the poem. The melodic and rhythmic motifs of the French style predominate, and in the alto solo 'Great Jubal author of our lays' it is difficult not to suppose that Daniel Purcell has been influenced by his brother's 'Wondrous machine' of 1692.

The demise of the London Cecilian feasts at Stationers' Hall led to a more diverse approach to the *encomium musicae*, so that while important St Cecilia odes continued to be written, odes 'to Music' and 'to Harmony' also became common, and the convivial sentiment which had been an important feature of the early odes largely disappeared. These developments are highlighted by the text which Philip Hart set in 1703, for although in most respects John Hughes' words have the traditional characteristics of the *encomium musicae*, it marked a return to poems

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90 *Lbl* MS Add. 30934, f.58.

which contain no specific reference to St Cecilia. This was an important change, and the beginning of a tendency to move away from works specifically orientated towards the celebration of St Cecilia's day. Frank Dawes, who has written in some detail about Philip Hart's ode, recognizes it as a work of considerable ability and 'one of the most ambitious large-scale English works of the time'.[91] The decline of the music feast as a social gathering, combined with the change in poetic emphasis noted above, ended the traditional role of the St Cecilia ode as part of a much larger entertainment, so that Hart's ode also marks the establishment of the 'ode to Music' as a true concert piece. The regular second performances of odes in the 1680s and 1690s had, to some extent, prefigured this development and ensured the continued popularity of Cecilian works in the eighteenth century. Through the annual performance of each year's ode at York Buildings the genre had become more widely known, and composers could expect audiences to remain receptive to 'Cecilian' works even though their original inspiration had now disappeared.

York Buildings itself continued to be a regular venue for the performance of odes of various types including Thomas Clayton's *The Feast of Alexander*, which was a version of Dryden's poem made by John Hughes at the request of the playwright and essayist Richard Steele in 1711. The latter was collaborating with Clayton at this time in promoting a series of concerts in the composer's house at York Buildings, and the new work was performed there, along with a piece entitled *The Passion of Sappho*, on 24 June and 16 August, with a later performance at Hickford's Room on 13 December. After the failure of his attempt to introduce Italian opera to the London stage, Clayton turned to the ode in an attempt to revive the fortunes of English music, and for this reason the dates of the performances were carefully chosen:

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91 'Philip Hart', *MT*, cvi (1965), 510. Frank Dawes also discusses Hart's ode in 'The Music of Philip Hart (*c*.1676-1749)', *PRMA*, xciv (1967-8), 63-75.

> I have purposely chosen this backward time of the Year, that I might not have the Opera to contend with; there will be always Company enough in Town to fill my small House, and answer my moderate Expectations. I beg the Patience and Attention of my Audience, and that they would please to make Allowances, that some of my Performers are unacquainted with publick Assemblies; if they give me but thus much, I do not doubt but in some time our Musick will be no more below any other Nation than our Poetry.[92]

The music of neither work has survived, but the composer's own admission of the inexperience of some of his performers could hardly have inspired confidence in his audience, and the wordbook suggests that *Alexander's Feast* had little in common with other, more lavish, settings of Dryden's poem. The sole choral movement concludes the work, and the bulk of the verse is manipulated into a series of recitatives and arias. Further evidence of the unsatisfactory nature of the whole undertaking is provided by a letter from Hughes to Steele in which, at the latter's request, he gives his opinion of the work:

> The overture of Alexander ought to be great and noble; instead of which, I find only a hurry of the instruments, not proper (in my poor opinion) and without any design, or fugue, and, I am afraid, perplexed and irregular in the composition, as far as I have any ideas or experience.
>
> I think the words in general naturally enough expressed, and, in some places, pathetically: but, because you seem to think this the whole mystery of setting, I take this opportunity to assure you that it is possible to express words naturally and pathetically in very faulty composition as it is to hit a likeness in a bad picture.[93]

Hughes is anxious that his comments 'may not prejudice me with Mr. Clayton or yourself, and that you will not let him know of this', but his final paragraph appears to question the wisdom of Steele's involvement with Clayton: 'I should not, you may be sure, give you or myself this trouble, but that I do not know how far it may concern your interest to be rightly informed'.[94]

Around the turn of the eighteenth century, odes began to be performed at the London theatres, and although St Cecilia odes and other 'odes to music' were not the

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92 *The Passion of Sappho, and Feast of Alexander. Set to Music by Mr. Thomas Clayton. As it is Perform'd at his House in York-Buildings* (1711), preface.

93 *The Correspondence of John Hughes*, (Dublin, 1773), i, 41-2.

94 *Ibid.*, 42-3.

first representatives of the genre to be performed in this context -- Jeremiah Clarke's ode for the Peace of Ryswick, for example, had been given at Drury Lane as early as 1697 -- they were to become one of the most familiar forms of the genre to London audiences. The earliest example of a Cecilian work being performed in a theatrical venue is an ode by William Babell (well-known in his day as a theatre musician), which was performed at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields on St Cecilia's Day 1717. Although the music has not survived, an extant wordbook shows it to have been a straightforward 'concert' piece, setting an anonymous poem of the traditional kind.[95] An opening invocation to St Cecilia leads to a consideration of the powers of music and the qualities of the instruments. The scoring was for three soloists, and the wordbook implies a series of six recitatives and da capo arias, with a single through-composed air for the bass voice providing the almost obligatory 'military' movement.

Other notable works from this early eighteenth-century period are two pieces by John Christopher Pepusch, both of which are extant, though little is known of the circumstances in which the earlier of the two, 'Great Phoebus, who in thy unwearied race', was performed. The surviving manuscript score is a copy headed 'Upon St. Cecilia's Day' with no details of date or venue. In comparison with many of the St Cecilia odes already discussed it is a short work consisting of a soprano air, a tenor duet and a trio, sandwiched between opening and closing choruses with linking *secco* recitatives between the movements. Although a performance in the theatre cannot be ruled out, Donald Cook has speculated that it was intended for the Duke of Chandos at Cannons, for the scoring is identical to that of another ode recorded in a catalogue of the Cannons library.[96] Pepusch's other St Cecilia piece hardly

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95 *An Ode, Perform'd on St. Cecilia's Day, 1717* (1718).

96 Donald F. Cook, 'The Life and Works of Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667-1752), with special reference to his dramatic works and cantatas' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1982), i, 204.

qualifies to be considered as an ode at all, since it is closely akin to the occasional staged 'entertainments' already mentioned (see p.26).[97] *An Entertainment of Musick Call'd the Union of the Three Sister Arts* was performed at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields on St Cecilia's Day 1723 and marked Pepusch's return to that venue after an absence of nearly four years. Among the performers were Leveridge and Barbier, who had performed Babell's ode on the same stage six year earlier. Although the figure of St Cecilia plays a part in the work, its libretto has little in common with the traditional *encomium musicae*, and Donald Cook considers that *The Union of the Three Sister Arts* comes closer in form to an 'interpolated masque' than do any of the works specifically intended as masques which Pepusch had composed earlier in his career. There are named parts (Cecilia, Homer and Apelles) for each of the three soloists, and the resulting libretto has much in common with the birthday serenatas by Johann Sigismond Cousser which were being performed at the vice-regal court in Dublin at this time (see Chapter 5). The theatrical nature of the work is emphasized by a predominantly homophonic musical style which was perhaps better suited to a playhouse audience than the elaborate counterpoint which might be favoured in a piece intended for the concert room. The work was subsequently published by John Walsh, thus becoming only the third Cecilian work to be published since the inception of the London celebrations 40 years before.

The middle years of the eighteenth century witnessed the continued production of odes to music, including settings by John Alcock and Michael Festing of Joseph Addison's poem 'Cecilia, whose exalted hymns'. This poem was highly regarded in its day, one commentator describing it as 'extremely fine, well adapted to the day, and exactly fitted to Musick',[98] but modern critics have pointed out that it draws heavily on the 'platitudinous sentiments, and well-worn jargon' of the body of

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97 *Ibid.*, 282.

98 [Giles Jacob], *An Historical Account of the Lives and Writings of Our most Considerable English Poets* (1720), ii, 247. This is the second volume of Jacob's *Poetical Register* (see Bibliography for full details).

Cecilian poetry.[99] Alcock's setting was performed as his B.Mus. exercise at Oxford in 1755 and sets less than half of the poem. The date and circumstances of the first performance of Festing's ode are unknown, but the work as a whole does not live up to the promise of the three-movement overture for oboe and strings with which it opens.

The most important odes from this period are by three of the leading composers of the day. The earliest, Maurice Greene's setting of Pope's St Cecilia ode, has already been mentioned in connexion with its first performance at Cambridge in 1730 (see pp.55-6), but in the following decade (during which Greene's ode also received a number of London performances) four other important Cecilian odes, two each by Boyce and Handel, received their first performance. Handel's earliest venture in the ode genre had come relatively soon after his arrival in England, with the composition of a birthday ode for Queen Anne in 1713.[100] Preoccupied thereafter with Italian opera, and then with the shift to oratorio, Handel did not return to the ode form until the mid 1730s when, within the space of four years, he set both of Dryden's odes. *Alexander's Feast* received its first performance at Covent Garden on 19 February 1736, and three years later came the *Song on St Cecilia's Day* (to which Handel gave the title *Ode for St Cecilia's Day*). The *Ode*, being too short to occupy the whole of the standard three-act concert programme, was originally intended as a companion piece for *Alexander's Feast*, and was first performed in this way at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields on St Cecilia's day 1739. For reasons which are not clear, however, the combination was never repeated by the composer in any subsequent concert.

Handel scholars have devoted much study to *Alexander's Feast*, and no attempt will be made here to discuss in detail either the complicated history of its

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99 Smithers, *op. cit.*, 24.

100 See Stoddard Lincoln, 'Handel's Music for Queen Anne', *MQ*, xlv (1959), 191-207.

composition, or its music.[101] Although both works are rooted in the tradition of the *encomium musicae*, there are important musical differences between *Alexander's Feast* and its companion ode, and it is important to consider the position which they occupy in relation to the wider ode genre. *Alexander's Feast* represents the point at which the narrative and dramatic elements of oratorio merge with the occasional and celebratory nature of the ode, to produce a work which, for all its accomplishment, does not sit happily in either category. This fact is emphasized by, and may well be a result of, the position which the work occupies in Handel's output, for it comes immediately after his earliest oratorios -- *Deborah* and *Athalia* (both 1733) and *Il Parnasso in festa* (1734) -- and not long before *Saul* and *Israel in Egypt* (both 1739). There is certainly little indication that Handel considered himself to be writing a work at all comparable to his much earlier birthday ode. Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* was an unusual Cecilian libretto in that it presented its ideas within an overtly narrative scenario, though it was probably precisely this quality, with its potential for musical setting, which initially attracted Handel to the poem. The relationship of Handel's *Alexander's Feast* to the wider ode genre is, therefore, closely linked to the poetical text of what many would regard as the finest of all Cecilian poems:

> The authority with which the ode celebrates its epoch's dominant myth of music is unimpeachable, and its brilliance as a poetic text completely apart from its musical setting has always been dazzling.[102]

Handel's portrayal of this evocative text owed as much to oratorio as to ode. The enhanced sense of drama is undeniable, and the contrasting moods are appropriately depicted, but there is little of the sense of occasion associated with the earlier

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101 For detailed studies see Donald Burrows, 'Handel and "Alexander's Feast"', *MT*, cxxxii (1982), 252-5 (in which three distinct versions of the work are identified) and the same author's 'The Composition and First Performance of Handel's "Alexander's Feast"', *ML*, lxiv (1983), 206-11 (which discusses revisions made by Handel prior to the first performance). See also Barry Cooper, 'The Organ Parts to Handel's "Alexander's Feast"', *ML*, lix (1978), 159-79. The settings of the fourth and sixth stanzas of Dryden's poem are discussed in some detail in Winton Dean, *Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques* (1959), 271-3. A useful commentary on the sources is found in the preface to Donald Burrows's Novello edition (1982).

102 Hollander, *op. cit.*, 412.

Cecilian odes. What sets *Alexander's Feast* clearly within the ode genre is the vigorous portrayal of the libretto, which relies not on the vivid word painting and instrumental accompaniments of its Cecilian predecessors, but on a combination of skilful scoring and the use of formal structures such as accompanied recitative and through-composed arias which allowed for dramatic expression and momentum.

Handel's was at least the third setting of *Alexander's Feast* since Jeremiah Clarke's in 1697. Like Thomas Clayton, Handel chose to set a slightly altered text, and turned for this to the poet Newburgh Hamilton who had already himself written an ode for St Cecilia's day entitled *The Power of Musick*, which was set by the composer Robert Woodcock, and apparently performed in London in 1720.[103] Hamilton's adjustments were relatively minor (and certainly far fewer than those which John Hughes had made for Clayton), but included the addition of a recitative and chorus taken from his own poem. It is ironic, therefore, that eighteenth-century critics should have seen the combination of Handel and Dryden in *Alexander's Feast* as 'the union of poetry and music at its highest peak of attainment',[104] but Hamilton's tinkering seems to have escaped criticism in the general pleasure that Dryden's words had at last found a worthy companion in Handel's music. Some critics had evidently despaired of ever hearing the poem set in the manner it deserved:

> Alas! tho' it has been twice set to musick by men of considerable reputation in that art [Clarke and Clayton?], yet the notes of the musician have generally destroy'd, not only the sense, but the very harmony of the poet. I hear there is a third has undertaken it, a man of no mean fame in musical compositions, but I am afraid with not

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103 The music of this work is probably lost, but an extant wordbook shows it to have consisted of a series of five recitatives and arias with a concluding chorus. Among the lots sold by Sotheby's during a sale at Hornby Castle (home of the Duke of Leeds) on 2-4 June 1736 was 'The Power of Music. An Ode on St Cecilia's Day' (Lot 463), but it is not clear whether this was a musical score or a copy of the wordbook. I am indebted to Peter Holman for drawing my attention to the details of this sale.

104 Robert Manson Myers, 'Neo-Classical Criticism of the Ode for Music', *PMLA*, lxii (1947), 409.

> much more success than his predecessors; because it seems absolutely necessary for a just and great composition of this kind, that the composer should have a poetical as well as a musical *genius*.[105]

Winton Dean has written that Hamilton 'showed considerable dexterity in shaping distinguished poetry for musical setting',[106] and has also argued that the adjustment of Dryden's original musical divisions (which may have been the work of either Hamilton or Handel) did much to improve the overall structure of the work, 'for it identifies the chorus with Alexander's court as actors in a drama, while minstrel and King are interpreted by soloists'.[107] Such comments serve further to emphasize the overlapping of ode and oratorio which is found in the work. *Alexander's Feast* was enthusiastically received, with Handel giving 25 performances of the work (in three main versions) between 1736 and 1755. In addition there were numerous other performances throughout the century, not only in London but also much further afield. The British Library alone has in its collections nearly twenty wordbooks, including those for performances in Winchester, Bath and Newcastle. In Dublin, *Alexander's Feast* was one of the most regularly performed choral works in the musical calendar and, translated into Italian as *Il Convito di Alessandro Magno*, it was one of the earliest English works of Handel to be performed abroad. A performance was given at the Italian villa of Lord Cowper, near Florence, on 21 April 1768, and was repeated at the Pitti Palace, by the same performers, two days later.[108]

Handel's *Ode on St Cecilia's Day* is a very different work, and much of the reason for this lies in the differences between the poems, for the *Ode* 'sings the

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105 [Charles Gildon], *The Laws of Poetry, As laid down by the Duke of Buckinghamshire in his Essay on Poetry, by the Earl of Roscommon in his Essay on Translated Verse, and by the Lord Lansdowne on Unnatural Flights in Poetry, Explain'd and Illustrated* (1721), 84.

106 *New Grove*, viii, 73.

107 Dean, *op. cit.*, 271.

108 John A. Rice, 'An early Handel revival in Florence', *Early Music*, xviii (1990), 64. For reference to a second performance at Lord Cowper's villa in October 1768 see Walpole, *Correspondence*, xxiii, 64. Rice notes two further Italian performances in April 1769.

praise of music directly instead of illustrating it in action, and therefore presented a less inspiring challenge'.[109] Ironically, however, the result is a work which stands much more easily than *Alexander's Feast* within the mainstream of the Cecilian tradition, for this 'direct' praise of music stems, as has already been seen, from the conventions of the *encomium musicae*. Therefore, though there may be less first-rate Handel in the setting as a whole than in *Alexander's Feast*, there is a feeling in the *Ode* of a return to more familiar forms of expression. A comparison of the opening vocal movement of each work demonstrates this. In *Alexander's Feast*, the overture is followed by a 16-bar *secco* recitative which, in an utterly conventional way, sets the scene ('Twas at the royal feast, for Persia won') for the air and chorus that follow. By contrast the equivalent position in the *Ode* is occupied by an extended accompanied recitative (preceded by three bars *secco*) in which the ideas of the first stanza are vividly portrayed. It is not known whether Handel knew of Draghi's original setting of Dryden's *Song*, but there are similarities between the two works in the setting of this opening invocation and in the stanza which follows (set as a choral movement in both works). The depiction of phrases such as 'underneath a heap of jarring atoms' and 'through all the compass of the notes its ran' produces a similarly descriptive response (albeit stylistically different) in both works. The extent to which Handel returned to the traditional Cecilian model in the *Ode on St Cecilia's Day* is underlined by the use of obbligato accompaniments. Five of the six movements for vocal solo in the *Ode* have instrumental accompaniments in which the instrument named in the text is given a prominent role. In contrast, *Alexander's Feast* omits the customary recital of the qualities of individual instruments, for the whole poem is concerned with the ability of a single performer -- the lyrist Timotheus -- to rouse particular emotions through his instrumental skill. The orchestral accompaniments only express the mood which the musician's skill has provoked, and do not depict specific details of the text.

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109 Dean, *op. cit.*, 319.

Another significant difference between the two works is the relative importance of the orchestra compared to that of the soloists and the chorus. The *Ode* begins with a French overture, and although the three movements are all relatively short their confident style provides the first indication of the dominant role which the orchestra occupies in the work. Unlike *Alexander's Feast*, in which there are several lengthy oratorio-like choral movements, the chorus has a relatively limited, and largely conventional, role to play in the *Ode*. There are choruses at the beginning (with, as already noted, some descriptive word setting), in the middle, and at the end, but it is the solo movements that predominate (there are no solo ensembles), and within them it is the orchestra which, by virtue of the obbligato accompaniments already mentioned, holds sway. That it was the composer's intention to make the correspondence between words and music in the ode as vivid as possible is evident from the substantial instrumental introductions and codas to many of the solo movements, and by the virtual abandonment of da capo arias in favour of through-composed movements which do not interrupt the flow of poetical ideas.

It has been suggested that the success of Handel's *Alexander's Feast* prompted William Boyce to consider the composition of a Cecilian work.[110] But whereas Handel had chosen to re-set classic poems (perhaps to profit by their existing popularity), Boyce chose two contemporary odes, turning first to 'The charms of Harmony display' by 'the Reverend Mr Vidal'. This setting probably dates from 1737 or 1738, but certainly from before 1740 in which year the words appeared in *A Miscellany of Lyric Poems* which contained the libretti of works performed at Greene's Apollo Academy.[111] The music has an easy grace, though the formal structure is conventional enough, with choral movements (as in Handel's *Ode*) at the beginning, the middle and the end, and a flamboyant solo for bass voice.

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110 See Ian Bartlett, 'Boyce's Homage to St Cecilia', *MT*, cxxiii (1982), 759.

111 *Ibid.*

Of much greater significance is Boyce's second Cecilian ode, a setting of John Lockman's 'See famed Apollo and the Nine', also performed at the Apollo Academy in 1739. This large and important work has been discussed by Ian Bartlett, who points out that the appearance of Handel's *Alexander's Feast* at about the same time probably accounts for the lack of public performances of Boyce's ode in London, even though its music is of a quality to compare with Handel's *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*.[112] The premiere of Boyce's ode at the Apollo Academy was quickly followed, however, by a performance in Dublin (for the Philharmonic Society in Fishamble Street) where it was an immediate success and received several additional performances in successive seasons.

Like Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, though for different reasons, Lockman's text differs from the mainstream tradition of the *encomium musicae* as interpreted for Cecilian celebrations. Dryden had inclined towards a specifically narrative mode, but Lockman was concerned with mood and emotion in a much more general sense than most of his predecessors. The poem is in two parts, the second longer than the first, with a marked distinction of subject matter between them. The first part begins with expansive references to Apollo and the Muses, but love, not music, is the predominant theme. In the opening chorus of the second half, however, the traditional arguments of the *encomium musicae* are rehearsed:

> Hail, Harmony, hail! Amazing source
> Of blessings gods and men enjoy.
> Inspired we sing thy awful course
> Which ceasing would the world destroy.

Soon afterwards St Cecilia descends to earth, an event depicted by Boyce in an effective *scena* reminiscent of the orchestral opening to *Zadok the Priest*. But if there are occasional moments in the ode which hint at Handelian influence, there are also movements in which Boyce's own musical personality comes to the fore. Notable among these is the accompanied recitative in the second half, into which Lockman compresses the traditional exposition of the qualities of individual

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112 *Ibid.*

instruments, and the stirring introduction to the aria 'The captive bound in rankling chains'. (Ex.7) As a large-scale setting of a pindaric ode text, Boyce's ode ranks as one of the most important of the 'odes to Music', and must be counted among the handful of major eighteenth-century odes which deserve to be properly known, performed and appreciated.

One other ode deserves mention here, not least because it was one of the few eighteenth-century Cecilian odes to have been published.[113] In 1759 the Oxford composer William Walond published by subscription a setting of Alexander Pope's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*. Most of Walond's career seems to have been spent as a church musician in Oxford, and the ode was probably his B.Mus. exercise, but its performance in the Oxford Music School was not the only occasion on which it was heard in full. It was performed in the Holywell Music Room in February 1758, and the fine French overture with which the work opens was also subsequently included in concerts there.[114] As already noted Pope had himself made alterations to the ode when Maurice Greene set it for performance in Cambridge, and Walond's ode is the earliest setting of the poem in its original form.

Pope's ode, in both its versions, divides into two main sections. The first half (stanzas 1-3 in the original, stanzas 1-4 in the version set by Greene) opens with an invocation of the Muses, and a series of reflections on the power of music over the human spirit, while the second half is more overtly narrative and recounts the legend of Orpheus in vivid detail. In Greene's version Orpheus succeeds in rescuing Euridice and the ode ends in triumph that 'music and love were victorious.' In the original version, however, there is a more traditional final stanza in which Orpheus himself gives way to St Cecilia:

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113 Handel's *Alexander's Feast* was published in 1738, but the *Ode for St Cecilia's Day* did not appear in print until 1771. The two Boyce odes, with the exception of the overture to the Lockman setting, remain unpublished.

114 For information regarding the publication and performance of Walond's ode I am indebted to Andrew Robinson's B.A. dissertation (University of Oxford, 1991), and to Dr Simon Heighes who brought it to my attention.

His numbers raised a shade from hell
Hers lift the soul to heaven.

In Greene's setting the central choral movement marks the point at which the philosophical discourse ends and the more narrative section begins. It is unlikely that Walond would have seen a copy of Greene's setting, but it is perhaps not fanciful to suggest that he may have been influenced by William Hayes's *The Passions*, the libretto of which has much in common with Cecilian works. Walond may well have been present at the first performance of Hayes's ode in Oxford in 1750; indeed it is possible that he may have been among the performers. As Hayes had done in *The Passions*, Walond divides his setting into two parts (albeit relatively short), and the contrast resulting from this division is one of the most attractive features of the work.

The first part, celebrating the powers of music, is predominantly in D major, and only a brooding bass air dims the prevailing brightness. The original mood is restored however by the final air and chorus, the latter being repeated, after an instrumental march, to bring the first part to a rousing conclusion. In Part Two the contrast of moods is more emphatic. The opening bass air is in the relative minor, and is the first of several movements with ingenious accompaniments which add considerably to the sense of drama. Central among these is the tenor air depicting Orpheus' despair and subsequent death at the loss of Euridice. Here the furioso string writing converges at one point, with dramatic effect, into several bars of unison accompaniment, but it is at the end of the air and in the moving juxtaposition of the plaintive treble solo 'Yet ev'n in death Eurydice he sung', then taken up by the chorus, that Walond's expressive skill is seen at its best (Ex.8).

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the popularity of the ode to music began to decline, so that in London, between 1770 and 1800, only three new odes of this type are known to have been performed. Samuel Arnold's *The Power of Music* (probably a setting of the version of *Alexander's Feast* produced by John Hughes in 1711) written in 1773, and Thomas Busby's setting of Pope's ode dating from 1799 are both lost, but the single extant work from this period is a substantial one, namely

Samuel Wesley's setting of the poem written over a century before by his own grandfather, and previously set to music by both William Norris and Daniel Purcell. Wesley's ode was given at Covent Garden on 22 February 1799, at the end of the first part of Handel's *Acis and Galatea*.[115] Two autograph scores have survived, separated in date by thirty years, a fact explained by a note in the later of the two (*Lcm* MS 4017):

> This ode was composed more than 30 years ago, and was lost in a chest with divers other MSS and written out again by me memoriter, and completed this Day Friday July 14. 1837. It was performed at Covent Garden Theatre with great Applause.

At some stage, however, the manuscript was retrieved, for an autograph dated 21 October 1794 is now in the British Library, along with a copy of the later score made by the composer's daughter. Assuming that Wesley had no surviving sketches on which to base his reconstruction of the work, the two autograph scores show his feat of memory to have been an extraordinary achievement. The two versions are remarkably similar, and although there are some variations, they are mainly in details of orchestration and, given the overall level of accuracy, may even represent second thoughts rather than inaccurate recall. Wesley's ode is also musically interesting in its own right, and the libretto is set in a series of lengthy movements. Two substantial choruses conclude the work, and in the middle a semichorus and an instrumental march, each of which is reprised, respectively enclose two accompanied recitatives ('With what a natural art inspired' and 'To arms, to arms'). The writing for solo voice provides some of the most appealing music in the work, and the soprano duet 'Music and thou fair saint' is particularly effective in its integration of voices and accompaniment (Ex.9).

Outside London, the only substantial odes in praise of music to be written in the last quarter of the eighteenth century were four works from the hand of Philip Hayes. All were written and performed in Oxford within a space of five years, and they show very well the way in which the original concept of the Cecilian ode had

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115 *London Stage* pt.5, 2148.

expanded. The earliest of the four, an *Ode for St Cecilia's Day*, sets an adapted version of John Oldham's poem, first set by Blow in 1684, and was performed as a 'professorial lecture' on 22 November 1779. This was followed in the autumn of 1783 by an *Ode on Music*, and in the following spring by an *Ode to Harmony*. Finally, in January 1784, came the *Ode to British Harmony*. All four are lengthy settings but, like so many of Hayes's odes, their prolixity is their downfall. There are, however, some charming individual movements, such as the boisterous setting of 'Music can ev'ry joy refine' in the *Ode for St Cecilia's Day*.

Samuel Wesley's ode appears to have been the last Cecilian work composed during the eighteenth century, but odes to music continued to be occasionally written well beyond 1800, and a brief consideration of a work composed at the very beginning of the nineteenth century, provides a useful conclusion to this survey of the Cecilian tradition. William Russell's *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*, which survives in an autograph keyboard score, is a setting of Christopher Smart's *Ode for Musick on Saint Cecilia's Day*, written over half a century before.[116] In the preface to his ode Smart rejects accusations of 'presumption' in competing with the works of Dryden and Pope and claims that the idea for the poem was not his own:

> This subject was not his choice, but imposed upon him by a Gentleman very eminent in the science of Musick, for whom he has a great friendship, and who is, by his good sense and humanity, as much elevated above the generality of mankind, as by his exquisite art he is above most of his profession.[117]

Smart implies that the anonymous 'Gentleman' was a composer, but his identity is unknown and there is no evidence that the poem was set during the poet's lifetime. Russell's setting was written for the Cecilian Society in December 1803 and runs to over thirty movements. It is impossible to assess the exact scale of the work in the absence of a full score, but it is undoubtedly an impressive achievement for a

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116 *Lcm* MS 552. The life and work of William Russell is the subject of a doctoral dissertation by Gillian Ward Russell (Leicester University, in progress).

117 *Carmen Cl. Alexandri Pope... To which is added Ode for Music on Saint Cecilia's Day* (Cambridge, 1746).

composer who was barely twenty-six years old. There are few stylistic surprises, but the solo voice is handled with confidence, and the choral writing ranges from robust counterpoint to the simple glee-like style adopted in 'Hence waft me, fair Goddess'. Four instrumental movements appear in keyboard arrangements,[118] but little can be determined about the orchestral writing apart from occasional clues to individual scorings, such as the use of a cello obbligato in the air 'Music's a celestial art', and the inference of a trumpet part in the air 'The gallant warriors engage'. Russell's use of a single-movement 'introduction' is worthy of note, however, for although in the last thirty years of the eighteenth century composers such as Benjamin Cooke and John Wall Callcott increasingly set large-scale poetical odes which had no occasional inspiration (see Chapter 7), they continued to introduce their settings with three- or four-movement overtures in the traditional manner, most of which had little musical relationship with the remainder of the work. Russell was one of the very few composers to abandon this traditional view of the ode as a production requiring a substantial 'set piece' overture, and to write instead an instrumental prelude more genuinely related to the music which follows.

The *encomium musicae*, and the Cecilian tradition which it inspired during the 1680s, represented one of the most fruitful and abiding inspirations for the composition of odes in eighteenth-century England. Because the early odes performed on St Cecilia's Day had been grounded in a group of poetical and philosophical ideas, the Cecilian works were able subsequently to develop much more fully than, for example, the court odes or other occasional works in which there could be little flexibility in poetical subject matter or in musical approach. It was precisely for this reason that, under the guise of the more general ode 'to Music', the Cecilian odes were able to continue long after the initial social inspiration for

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118 Among other Russell manuscripts at the Royal College of Music is an autograph full score of a two-movement overture with the title 'Ode to Music' (*Lcm* MS 553). This bears no relation to the 'introduction' of the St Cecilia ode, but as it is the only evidence for Russell having composed a separate 'Ode to Music' it may, in fact, have been an alternative opening for the Cecilian ode.

their composition had disappeared. It is doubtless also the reason why this particular group of works contains some of the most accomplished music to be found in the ode genre as a whole.

5. THE ODE IN DUBLIN

Travellers to Dublin from England during the eighteenth century who recorded their impressions of the city, were generally surprised at its attractiveness and its cultured atmosphere. The elegance of the streets and buildings excited favourable comment,[1] as did the city's social and artistic life, though some visitors were quick to point out that activities in this respect were merely scaled-down imitations of what was to be found in London:

> The inhabitants of this city, and indeed throughout the kingdom, those of them that are people of any fortune, are genteel, sprightly, sensible, and sociable, and, in general, well affected to the English. Their dress, fashions and diversions are taken from them; and whoever shall carry over any species of popular entertainment from London, will be sure to meet with encouragement, if he has but the good fortune to be singular in his profession.[2]

Underlying this apparent social confidence, however, was the less satisfactory reality of Ireland's political position in a period of which Basil Williams has written that 'England can look back only with shame'.[3] From the Irish point of view, it was a time of disappointment and growing frustration, which the lavish and self-confident activities of the resident English 'establishment' were never able fully to disguise. By 1700 Ireland was largely at peace after decades of political and military turbulence, but the potential which this created for encouraging a closer relationship with England was largely ignored by successive administrations, who maintained severe penal laws against the Roman Catholic majority, and undermined any Irish industry which threatened to put at risk the prosperity of similar concerns in England.

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1 See, for example, *A Description of the City of Dublin in Ireland... By a Citizen of London* (1732); P. Luckombe, *A Tour through Ireland* (1780); the anonymous *Hibernia Curiosa* (1769), and works by R. Twiss and E.D. Clarke listed in the Bibliography.

2 *Hibernia Curiosa*, 18.

3 *Oxford History of England*, XI: *The Whig Supremacy 1714-1760*, 2nd edn. rev. C.H. Stuart (Oxford, 1962), 287.

Ireland continued to have its own parliament, but the most important of the civil and ecclesiastical offices were reserved almost exclusively for English nominees. As a result, Dublin acquired the atmosphere of a colonial capital, with the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland -- the monarch's personal representative -- acting as viceroy. The holders of this post were invariably drawn from the ranks of the English aristocracy, and were rarely chosen for their interest in Irish affairs; indeed governments were not above using the post as a means of removing individuals from political positions at home. Tenure of the lieutenancy was normally for five years, but few of those appointed spent their full term of office in Ireland. Most preferred to be in residence only for the annual period when the Irish parliament was in session, the role of sovereign's representative being taken in their absence by 'lords justices'.

For much of the eighteenth century, however, in spite of the undoubted political tensions, the Irish capital boasted of a cultural life which, if smaller in scale than that to be found in London, nevertheless displayed a similarly keen desire for variety, novelty and star performers. In the early years of the century musical activity was focussed on Dublin Castle (the official residence of the Lord Lieutenant), on the two cathedrals of Christ Church and St Patrick (whose choral foundations were an important resource for providing vocal performers), and on the theatre in Smock Alley.[4] From the 1730s onwards the number of popular venues for musical performance increased, the most notable additions being the Crow Street room, opened in 1731, and the Fishamble Street room, opened a decade later (and now best known as the venue for the first performance of Handel's *Messiah* in April 1742). In recent years it has become apparent that the musical repertoire in Dublin was diverse, and that although imitation of London fashions remained customary, a

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4 See Brian Boydell, 'Music, 1700-1750', *A New History of Ireland* IV: *Eighteenth-Century Ireland 1691-1800*, ed. T.W. Moody and W.E. Vaughan (Oxford, 1986), 574-5.

significant amount of new music was also performed.[5] This repertoire included the performances of odes (most of which were the work of composers resident in Dublin), and although they were never given with the same regularity as in London, some of the same types can be identified, among them two works for academic occasions, a lengthy and largely forgotten series of official 'court' odes to celebrate royal birthdays, and a number of odes performed (though not always specifically composed) in support of charitable undertakings.

The reasons why the ode genre did not enjoy the same degree of popularity in Ireland as in England are not entirely clear, but one important factor was a lack, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, of an indigenous Irish tradition of occasional songs and small-scale choral pieces such as those which, at the University of Oxford, and at the court in London, were to develop into fully-fledged odes. This difference is well-demonstrated by the first recorded ode given in Dublin which, as with the earliest English performances, was in the context of an academic occasion. Early in 1694 Trinity College celebrated the centenary of its foundation by Elizabeth I:

> At 2 p.m., after a musical instrumental performance, an oration was made by Peter Browne, Fellow of Trinity College, in honour of Queen Elizabeth. This was followed by a Latin ode and oration in praise of James I, Charles I and Charles II. Then followed the recitation of some pastoral verses bearing upon the revival of the University by William and Mary. A Thanksgiving ode was then sung, accompanied by instrumental music.... A skilled band of musicians followed the procession as they left the building.[6]

This ceremony, held not at the College itself but at Christ Church cathedral about three-quarters of a mile away, bore a close resemblance to the musical practices already described at Oxford. Here was another academic foundation, albeit a less ancient one, using a specially-composed choral work to enhance the splendour of its

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5 For the most recent assessment of musical life in Dublin at this period see Brian Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar 1700-1760* (Dublin, 1989), and the same author's chapter in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, *op. cit.* The two histories by W.H. Grattan Flood, *Introductory Sketch of Irish Musical History* [1922], and *A History of Irish Music*, 4th edn. (Dublin, 1927), are completely lacking in source references, and should be used with caution.

6 John William Stubbs, *The History of the University of Dublin* (Dublin, 1889), 137.

ceremonial. The similarities between Oxford and Dublin are only superficial, however, for the musical tradition at Trinity up to this point seems to have been minimal; there was no professor of music, and although an organist was employed in the college chapel, there is no other evidence for the performance of music at formal college ceremonies.

In commissioning a centenary ode, therefore, the college authorities did not turn to poets and composers resident in Dublin, for at this early date there were probably few who were equal to the task. Instead they looked to London, selecting Nahum Tate and Henry Purcell. The latter appears to have had no Irish links, and there is no evidence that he travelled to Dublin for the performance. Tate, on the other hand, whatever the literary merits of his occasional poetry, was an *alumnus* of the college, and to that extent an appropriate choice. The use of an English text for an academic ode at this period is surprising, however, and sets the ode apart from the Oxford works of the same period. Tate's libretto demonstrates that the centenary was as much a celebration of the College's English founder and her successors as an occasion for academic self-congratulation, and this is reflected in Purcell's setting, which contains little to distinguish it from his other works in the same genre. The ode is undoubtedly effective, but it has closer affinities with the composer's court odes than with the often more imaginative writing of the St Cecilia odes or the Yorkshire Feast Song. Purcell must have seen little difference, in fact, between the Trinity libretto and some of the birthday odes by Tate which he had already set to music, though as with so many of his occasional works, he was able to do much to redeem the trite panegyric.

Tate's poetry gave little opportunity for expressive word painting, so Purcell made the most of a reference to the College's turbulent political past (Ex.10), but the appeal of much of the music is found in the forthright melodies, in the use of the dotted rhythms and triple-time metres of the Restoration style, and in the characteristically Purcellian use of rests and verbal repetition. The result must undoubtedly have conveyed the desired sense of celebration in a venue which was

far more spacious than those in which most odes of the period were performed, and in spite of the fact that Purcell did not use trumpets, presumably an indication that he could not rely on suitable players being available in Dublin for the performance. Indeed, while there is no reason to suppose that the ode was not well received by its audience, its impact must have been reduced by the lack of an established concert life in the city at that time. There was no impetus to encourage a second, more public, performance (such as the ode might have received in London), and given the absence of Irish newspapers at this time, a large number of music-loving Dubliners were probably unaware that a new work by the most celebrated English composer then living was being performed in their city.

Nor does Purcell's ode seem to have inspired Trinity College to continue the practice of musical performances on such occasions, for no other odes are known to have been performed for it until the installation of the Duke of Bedford as Chancellor some 70 years later, on 9 September 1768. The Duke had been Lord Lieutenant between 1756 and 1761, and had been well-liked and relatively successful in the office, a fact which probably contributed to his subsequent election to the Chancellorship at Trinity. It doubtless also explains why his arrival at Dublin in 1768 was greeted by bell ringing and other marks of 'the highest honour and respect', and may account for the provision of such a lavish academic ceremony. Certainly the lengthy newspaper account of the installation, while revealing obvious parallels with similar gatherings at Oxford and Cambridge, shows the extent to which, in Dublin, the attendance list alone was capable of turning academic proceedings into a semi-state occasion:

> Yesterday his Grace the Duke of Bedford was installed Chancellor of our University in the grandest Manner, in the College Old Hall, at which were present the Lord Lieutenant, Lady Viscountess Townshend, and their two eldest Sons, the Lord Primate of all Ireland, the Lord High Chancellor, the Duke and Duchess of Leinster, Lady Louisa Conolly, many other Ladies of Distinction, and several Lords Spiritual and Temporal. When the Installment began, the Provost addressed his Grace in a very elegant Latin Oration, to which the Duke returned a most polite Answer. All the Fellows, Students, &c. appeared in their proper Habits. On this Occasion some Degrees were granted to different Gentlemen, particularly to Mr. Murphy,

> Master of the Song to the Choirs of Christ Church and St. Patrick's Cathedrals, Dublin, who had the Degree of Doctor of Music, and Mr. Woodward, the younger, that of a Batchelor of Music conferred on them, for their great Genius in composition, as well as Performances. After this the Duke went to other Parts of the College, where he was complimented by the different Professors of Languages and Sciences in eloquent Speeches, and returned polite Answers. The Music for this Occasion was composed by the Earl of Mornington and Performed by a masterly Band, both Vocal and Instrumental, to the universal Satisfaction of all the Audience.[7]

The Earl of Mornington was the first Professor of Music at Trinity, and another account of the proceedings at the installation records that his music included a 'solemn march' played at the beginning and the end of the ceremony as the dignitaries moved in procession.[8] More importantly, Mornington had also composed an installation ode (the only other ode associated with a Trinity College ceremony), the performance of which was carefully integrated into the ceremony:

> The Provost arose and addressed the Chancellor and University in a most elegant Lation oration, in the close of which he addressed himself particularly to the Professor of Music, who thereupon gave the signal to the musicians, and gave copies of the Ode to the Lord Lieutenant and the Chancellor. The Ode was written on the occasion by Mr. Richard Archdale, an Undergraduate, and was set to music by the Professor.[9]

Archdale's libretto was an uninspired panegyric, combining references to the college's royal founder with laudatory compliments aimed at its new Chancellor. The poem was subsequently published, but without any indications of the musical structure,[10] and Mornington's music is now lost.

The performance of Purcell's ode in 1694 was an exceptional occurrence in a city whose concert life had hardly begun to develop at the time, and no other odes were performed in Dublin for some time. In the early years of the eighteenth century, however, the custom of performing birthday odes at court spread to Ireland, where musical performances were given at Dublin Castle before the Lord Lieutenant

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7 *The Dublin Journal*, 8 September 1768.

8 Stubbs, *op. cit.*, 218.

9 *Ibid.*.

10 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, xxxviii (1768), 535-6.

or his representatives. As in London, two ode performances each year were customary, but there was no musical celebration in Dublin of New Year's day. Instead, and in addition to the celebration of the sovereign's birthday, there was (when appropriate) an ode to mark the birthday of the consort. Whenever possible the odes were given on the birthday itself, but when this fell on a Saturday or Sunday the next convenient day was appointed. Some native Dubliners undoubtedly demurred at such celebrations, but attempts were made to encourage an atmosphere of public holiday in the city, and there were effusive demonstrations of loyalty to the British crown from at least some sections of the population.

The development of a distinctive tradition of ode writing in Ireland, and the decision to celebrate the birthdays of both sovereign and consort, is perhaps indicative of the desire of the English community not only to demonstrate its loyalty, but also to imitate, or even to surpass, the activities of the court in London. At Dublin Castle the Lord Lieutenant presided over an annual round of assemblies, balls and more formal state ceremonies, which were attended by members of the governing class and their immediate circles, and in which music often played an important part:

> [On State Days] the Lieutenant treats the Nobility after an elegant Manner; during the same the noble Company are regaled by a Consort of Musick, perform'd by the greatest Masters, as also in turns by the State-Trumpets and Kettle-Drums, clad in Crimson Velvet, richly laced and trimm'd with Gold, which Musick and Trumpets have good Salaries, large Perquisites and plentiful Table on state and publick Days.[11]

It is clear from some of the more detailed reporting in the press, however, that the birthdays were observed on a particularly lavish scale:

> Yesterday being kept for the Celebration of his Majesty's Birth-Day, his Grace the Duke of Dorset received the Compliments of the Nobility and Gentry at the Castle upon that happy Occasion, where the Appearance of Persons of the greatest Distinction were very numerous, all dressed in very fine Cloaths, and had grander Equipages than have been known. The Ode was performed in the Ball Room, to the entire Satisfaction of all present. The out and insides of the Castle were decorated and illuminated in the most

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11 *A Description of the City of Dublin, op. cit.*, 12.

> grand and superb Manner; and the following fine Pieces of Machinery and Paintings, designed and painted by the celebrated Mr. Tudor, were exhibited.[12]

These included a series of heraldic and allegorical tableaux in the castle yard, their effect being enhanced by grand illuminations, and the opulence continued within the State Rooms:

> The Supper Room was decorated in a beautiful Manner, with fine Paintings, Illuminations and Statues, the Arms of his Majesty and the Duke of Dorset, the Scepter [*sic*] and other Emblems of Royalty, resting on a pyramidical Pillar, and other magnificent Representations, which seemed all of one Blaze, from the Number of Wax Tapers that illuminated them; and over the Side Board, at a proper Height quite round, were several beautiful Statues and Fountains, from which flowed the choicest Wines of all Sorts, into rich Basons, from whence the Liquor was conveyed by private Pipes into the Lower Castle Yard, to give the Populace an Opportunity to drink his Majesty's Health, which they did with many repeated Vollies of loud Huzzas. The Whole seemed a Sort of Paradise, and the Number and Beauty of the Ladies made it appear an imaginary Inchantment.[13]

The birthdays are not known to have been observed at the English court with such splendour, but the establishment of ode performances at Dublin Castle must have been in direct imitation of the London practice. The earliest Dublin ode which can now be traced was for the birthday of Queen Anne in February 1707, several decades after the inception of the English odes, and it is unlikely that the origins of the Dublin tradition are much earlier since it could not have begun until the London series was reasonably well established.[14] In addition, Ireland's political state was probably not sufficiently stable to allow for the distraction of such musical luxuries until the early years of the eighteenth century. After 1707, however, one or two odes were performed in most years until almost the very end of the century, so that well over sixty birthday offerings are known to have been composed and performed. The Irish celebrations were maintained with a minimum of interruption for the

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12 *The Dublin Journal*, 10 November 1753.

13 *Ibid.*

14 That those who heard the odes at Dublin Castle were aware of similar performances at the London court is confirmed by the wordbook for J.S. Cousser's 1716 serenata, in which the words of Nicholas Rowe's London birthday ode for that year (set by John Eccles) are also included.

remainder of the eighteenth century, the last recorded ode performance being for the birthday of Queen Charlotte in 1794. These works are, therefore, the most important manifestation of the ode genre in Ireland, and the only 'series' of odes to have been composed there on a regular basis.

A relatively small proportion of the music from these birthday works now survives (less than that which is extant for the London equivalents), and this may perhaps account for the lack of notice which the odes have attracted hitherto. Most discussions of the London court odes, including Professor McGuinness's monograph, make no mention of any parallel tradition in Ireland, and the extent and regularity of the performances has not been widely recognized. The lack of extant musical sources is compensated for, however, by significant amounts of source material of other kinds, notably printed wordbooks produced for distribution among the castle audience at nearly all ode performances. They contain the full libretto of the ode (often with indications of the musical divisions), and are a valuable source not only of information about both textual and musical authorship, but also for throwing more general light on the nature of the performances.

From the 1730s onwards, accounts of many of the birthday celebrations appeared in the Dublin newspapers, although the level of detail varied considerably from year to year, according to the demands on space of political or foreign news. In some years the royal birthdays are hardly mentioned, but this does not necessarily mean that they were not observed in the usual way, or that odes were not performed. On other occasions it is not uncommon to find the text of the ode printed in full, along with details of its authorship and a brief account of its performance (usually described in stock phrases which vary little from year to year). A third source, relating specifically to the ode texts, is found in the published poetical works of those authors who contributed libretti for the birthday celebrations. Many 'castle odes' were included in such collections, though often some years after their original appearance, and with considerable alterations and revisions. A comparison of those surviving musical sources for which the text was subsequently published in this way

suggests that such printed texts may not be an entirely reliable record of the original libretto. Nevertheless, the information provided by these three groups of sources, and by such music as survives, makes it possible to catalogue for the first time most of the odes sung at Dublin Castle during the eighteenth century.

Provision had been made for court musicians in Ireland several decades before the commencement of the ode performances. Soon after the Restoration a band of musicians known as 'the State Musick' had been formed along similar lines to the King's Musick at the court in London, and it is reasonable to suppose that provision was made at the same time for someone to assume overall responsiblity for its activities. There is, however, no surviving evidence to confirm this, for official records relating to the administration of the musical establishment have not survived,[15] and the earliest record of an appointment to the post of Master of the State Musick in Ireland is that of William Viner in 1704. Since the State Musick consisted only of instrumentalists, the chorus for the odes was provided by the men and boys from one or both of the choral foundations. In 1712, for example, the sum of £1 3*s* was paid 'For Mr Sword's five boys', presumably a reference to Henry Swords, installed as a lay vicar at St Patrick's Cathedral in 1698. In the early years of the ode performances the cathedral singers may well also have acted as soloists, though later in the eighteenth century a number of celebrated singers from the Dublin theatres took on this role. Links between the birthday celebrations and the Dublin theatre world may have existed from a much earlier date, for it is clear that many of the court musicians were regularly involved in musical activities outside the royal circle. The extent of this involvement in Dublin by the middle of the eighteenth century is shown by the postponement of a charity concert 'on Account of

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15 Vast quantities of archival material were destroyed by fire when the Irish Public Record Office was bombed in 1922. It is not clear whether records relating to the State Musick were among those destroyed, though W.H. Grattan Flood made reference to sources which he claimed to have found there.

the Hands being obliged to attend the Castle' to take part in the performance of the birthday ode.[16]

Although a musical establishment on similar lines to that at the court in London was maintained at Dublin Castle, there was no Irish equivalent (except for a brief period in the middle of the eighteenth century) of the post of Poet Laureate. There are, therefore, no obvious candidates to whom otherwise anonymous texts can be tentatively attributed, and the authorship of many of these works, including all but a handful of those composed before 1730, remains unknown. It is clear, however, that at least in the latter half of the eighteenth century there was a small number of regular poetical contributors, who are probably also responsible for the remaining unattributed texts. Unlike their London counterparts, such as Nahum Tate and Colley Cibber, who were all primarily men of letters, the Dublin poets come from slightly more varied backgrounds. The author of the 1707 ode, Mr Griffith, is described on the wordsheet merely as 'servant to Her Majesty', a polite turn of phrase which need not imply employment in the royal service. Later ode poets came from the theatrical world and from among the clergy, but they shared with most of their fellow court librettists in England a lack of any significant literary talent and, as a result, an inability to accommodate with any degree of subtlety, the inflated compliments to the sovereign and the national *psyche* which were obligatory in all such productions.

As already noted, little is known about the occupants (if any) of the post of Master of the State Musick until the appointment of William Viner in 1704. It seems, however, that no formal link existed between that post and the composition of the birthday ode during the first decade of the century. Grattan Flood recorded that Viner drew an annual salary of £100 until his death in 1716,[17] yet none of the six odes known to have been composed by that date were his work. The earliest of

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16 *The Dublin Journal*, 22 October 1751.

17 *Introductory Sketch*, *op. cit.*, 30.

these, for example, composed two years after Viner's appointment, was the work of another member of the State Musick, Charles Ximenes. Given this apparent lack of clearly-defined responsibilities among the Dublin state musicians, it is perhaps debatable whether the ode tradition there would ever have become established in the way that it did, had there not been a significant injection of new blood into their ranks, with the arrival in Dublin in 1707 of the Bratislavian composer Johann Sigismond Cousser. A former pupil of Lully, Cousser was in his mid-forties by the time of his visit to Ireland, and had previously worked in Stuttgart, where several of his operas had been performed. He then spent some time in Hamburg, before travelling to London and then finally to Dublin, where he became the first of a series of foreign musicians who were to work in the city during the eighteenth century. That he chose to try his luck there rather than remain in London is evidence of Dublin's growing potential as a musical centre, though the limited nature of Cousser's Irish activities in comparison to his earlier work in Germany indicates the extent to which Dublin musical life still ranked behind that of its European rivals (including London) at this period.[18]

Cousser was almost immediately received into the ranks of the State Music. Within only a few months of his arrival he had composed his first ode, for the birthday of Queen Anne in February 1708, and in the course of the next 20 years, at least another twelve birthday offerings flowed from his pen. The ease and rapidity with which he took on this task suggests that William Viner was primarily an instrumentalist, and was happy to confine his activities as Master of the Musick to the organization of performances, leaving the provision of the works themselves to others. If this was indeed the case, Viner may even have welcomed the arrival of a competent composer who would relieve him of some of his responsibilities without in any way undermining his status, though one may speculate that Cousser's rapid rise to prominence was less well received by other members of the State Musick.

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18 Boydell, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, *op. cit.*, 576.

Cousser was evidently undaunted, however, and continued to strengthen his position within the musical establishment. From 1711 onwards he is referred to in the surviving libretti as 'chapel-master' of Trinity College (though no evidence survives in the college archives to suggest that he was ever employed on a formal basis),[19] and by the time of Viner's death in 1716 it was probably a foregone conclusion that Cousser would succeed him as 'Master of the Musick attending His Majesty's State in Ireland'.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the works which Cousser composed for performance at Dublin Castle, is that 'odes' is not really an accurate term to describe them. Although they were undoubtedly occasional pieces, and were part of a much larger tradition of genuine odes, Cousser's Dublin works seem to have been very different in form, style, and manner of performance from later Irish works. Indeed only the very earliest of his birthday contributions is described as an ode in its printed libretto, the rest being entitled serenade, *serenata da camera*, or *serenata theatrale*. Given the ambiguity of much musical terminology in this period, at least the first two of these titles need not imply a significantly different style of work. Nevertheless, the surviving libretti of Cousser's works differ from the contemporaneous London court odes, and from the type of odes which were to follow in Dublin later in the century. Furthermore, it can be argued that they represent a significant divergence from the criteria which have guided the definition of the term 'ode' elsewhere in this study.

In spite of these differences, there are a number of reasons why Cousser's serenatas need to be discussed within the context of the Dublin ode performances. First, while differing greatly in style from their successors, they undoubtedly form part of a continuous musical tradition devoted to the celebration of the royal birthdays, and in which odes or ode-related works provide a continuous and conspicuous thread. Cousser's works displayed the influence of his cosmopolitan

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19 See Harold E. Samuel, 'John Sigismond Cousser in London and Dublin', *ML*, lxi (1980), 163.

European career, and to a degree which, judging from the speed of his promotion in the Irish musical establishment, seems to have enchanted his artistocratic audiences (doubtless sensitive to accusations of being culturally at least one step behind London). Although strong parallels can be drawn between the serenatas and the English traditions of the courtly masque and the dramatic pastoral, no such works are known to have been performed in Dublin and, as will be seen, the small number of Irish odes which pre-date the serenatas were closely modelled on the style established by their London counterparts. Thus, the serenatas presented Dublin audiences with a completely new type of work, and this must partly account for their success, though the fact that they probably also contained good music was a bonus which could not always be taken for granted in such occasional pieces. Secondly, it would be wrong to underestimate the extent to which Cousser may have been personally responsible for ensuring the consolidation and establishment of the Irish court ode tradition. Even allowing for a formidable personality and the attractiveness of the latest foreign styles to an audience anxious not to appear *démodé*, the ease with which Cousser first entered, and then rapidly dominated, musical life at Dublin Castle suggests that the number of native composers able or willing to take up the mantle of an official musical eulogist was small. One may speculate that a continental composer, used to princely patronage and the ways of aristocratic or civic employment, may have had fewer inhibitions (or even an inbred talent) for producing the required panegyric offerings on a regular basis.[20] At Cousser's death, in 1727, the very extent of his musical legacy must have been an important factor in ensuring its continuation, albeit in a different form, and may explain why attempts were made to secure a notable successor.

Cousser's first ode -- which, with its text by Mr Griffith, is the only one for which the name of the author has survived -- set a conventional court ode text.

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20 Harold E. Samuel has pointed out that for many foreign musicians the normal English practices of negotiating with impresarios, arranging venues and hiring musicians were new and potentially baffling ones. See 'A German Musician comes to London in 1704', *MT*, cxxii (1981), 591.

There are several sections, in a variety of metres, and the tone is rhetorical and adulatory, with the usual references to contemporary events, in this instance the recent Act of Union between England and Scotland (and with a passing swipe at the old enemy, France!):

> The haughty Gaul, knew Fortune would decline,
> If Caledonia should with Britain join,
>
> Intestine broils he laboured to maintain,
> 'Till Heaven at length, this Union did ordain
> To Crown with blessings glorious Anna's reign.[21]

This text has little in common with its successors, all of which imply a very different type of musical performance. All Cousser's birthday works from 1710 onwards, whether called serenade, serenata or simply 'musical entertainment', are described on the title page of the libretto by the phrase 'to be represented', rather than, as was the case later in the eighteenth century, 'to be performed'. The use of this phrase raises questions about the very nature of Cousser's works, and whether it is possible that they were in any sense staged productions. This issue was first discussed by T.J. Walsh, and although he was apparently unaware of the full number of extant Cousser wordbooks, he concluded from those which he had seen that the birthday serenatas were semi-staged performances, probably given in costume, but without real dramatic action.[22]

The characteristics which led to this conclusion are well represented by the *serenata theatrale* produced in May 1716 for the birthday of George I.[23] The libretto lists the four mythical characters represented by the vocal soloists, and gives for each a brief but detailed description:

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21 *An Ode on Her Majesty's Birth-Day* (Dublin, 1707).

22 T.J. Walsh, *Opera in Dublin 1705-1797: The Social Scene* (Dublin, 1973), 25.

23 *A Serenata Theatrale, To be Represented On the Birth-Day of His Most Serene Majesty* (Dublin, 1716).

> JUPITER, Sitting on an Imperial Throne; holding in his Right hand, Thunder, attended by the Eagle and Ganimede.
>
> BRITANNIA, Plac'd on a Royal Throne, encompass'd by Nereids and Flood-Nymphs.
>
> APOLLO, Leading the Nine Muses; and holding in his Hand a golden Lyre.
>
> ASTREA, Blindfold, holding in her Right-hand a naked Sword and in her Left an even Balance.

What is not apparent is whether these descriptions were intended merely to set the scene in the minds of the audience, or whether they were specific instructions for how each character was to appear 'on stage'. Descriptive scenarios of this sort are more reminiscent of the grand masques at the Stuart court than of the later London birthday odes, and the similarity is strengthened by the use of allegorical or mythical characters whose names occasionally appear in the works' titles.[24] Such devices also provided a useful, and marginally more subtle way of conveying the necessary compliments to the monarch.

The most conclusive evidence that these works were presented dramatically is provided by the wordbook for what is probably Cousser's last serenata, written for the birthday of George II in 1727. Here too there is a cast of four characters, but instead of a preliminary synopsis, the libretto is interspersed with a number of detailed and descriptive directions. As in most of the serenatas, there is an underlying dramatic scenario: in this instance, the slumbers of Peace are disturbed by Discord, who emerges from the ground bearing a blazing flambeau to rouse 'all the Pomp and Horrours [*sic*] of the Battle'. Justice descends in a cloud from Heaven to mediate in the dispute, which is finally settled by the arrival of Apollo. The latter enters 'in a triumphant Chariot drawn by four Steeds', into which Peace and Justice are received, while Discord is lashed with olive branches by 'several Cupids'. Finally, 'A Dart falls from Heaven, and plunges Discord immediately into the Earth' as a punishment, apparently, for attempting to mar the festivities of the royal

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24 See in Appendix I of the Catalogue of Odes the titles of Cousser's birthday offerings in May 1721, 1723 and 1727. Other serenatas have classically-inspired descriptive titles.

birthday. This colourful, but by no means untypical scenario, should not be allowed to obscure the extremely lavish production which a literal reading of these 'stage directions' implies. Horse-drawn chariots, characters rising out of the earth, and all the high baroque paraphernalia of a *deus ex machina* amply confirm Walsh's view that in Cousser's serenatas 'the materials for a fully staged opera are here available'.[25] The 1727 libretto is unique in its inclusion of these comments, and their very extravagance might tend to confirm the idea that they were merely intended as an explanatory guide to a purely musical presentation were it not for the instruction with which the wordbook concludes:

> The Chariot of Apollo ascends to Heaven, with Peace and Justice in it; and the Cupids separate, and go off the Stage on each side.

It is difficult to find a convincing explanation why such explicit directions should be included in a dramatic synopsis intended purely for the benefit of an audience.

Walsh also suggested that these works may have included dancing, with some of the nobility participating, rather as is known to have been the case at the French court (where Cousser had already spent some time). Walsh supports his case by quoting from the libretto of a 'serenata theatrale' given in 1712, in which a character representing the river Thames urges her companions to 'dance along my banks'! Given the general tone and imagery which was adopted in these libretti, this is likely to have been no more than a picturesque poetic conceit on the part of the anonymous author, but Walsh pointed to an item of documentary evidence in support of a more literal interpretation. In *The Musical Antiquary* for July 1911, Grattan Flood published an account for expenses incurred at this 1712 performance, transcribed from a document which he had seen at the Public Record Office at the Four Courts but which is now lost. If Grattan Flood's transcription was accurate, one of the highest paid performers was a Mr Delamain, who received 11*s* 6*d*. No record can be found of any musician by that name working in Dublin in 1712, but Walsh made the suggestion that this was William Delamain who, twenty years later,

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25 *Walsh, op. cit.*, 29.

was the principal dancer at the Smock Alley theatre. Although this seems unlikely, given the intervening space of two decades, the possibility cannot be altogether discounted, since there is other evidence which supports the idea of a balletic element within the serenatas.

Taking these considerations as a whole, there seems little doubt that Cousser's earlier career was an important influence on the music which he wrote in Dublin, and there is evidence to show that he re-used not only music he had himself composed before his arrival in Ireland, but also music of at least one other composer. This is revealed by the 1723 serenata for George I, *A Contest between Marsyas and Apollo*, which was undoubtedly one of the most elaborate works to be produced at the Castle during Cousser's term of office. In addition to the principal title roles, there are additional small parts for a satyr, a muse, and the god Mercury, and the libretto is preceded by a summary of the 'plot' in which reference is made to the re-working of existing material:

> This Subject was some Years ago exhibited in the *Italian* Tongue in a Foreign-Court, where it afforded a general Satisfaction; and in hopes that it may have the same good Fortune here; I have procured it to be translated into *English*, yet so as the *Italian* Method in this kind of Performance has been duly observed. The Character of *Apollo* is represented by a soft and sweet Musick, and that of *Marsyas* by a noisy and rural one. The whole Serenade is set anew, except the first and last Chorus, which being made with incomparable Skill, and happily adapted to both the above-mention'd Characters, by the Famous Mr. *Wilderer*, I have presumed to keep, being of Opinion, they will be heard with pleasure, and procure honour to their Author.

Mr Wilderer was almost certainly Johann Hugo Wilderer (1670/1-1724), a friend and contemporary of Cousser's, who composed at least a dozen operas during a lifetime of service as court kapellmeister in Düsseldorf.[26]

The surviving wordbooks also provide important information about the overall musical structure of the serenatas, most notably the fact that they were dominated by pairs of recitatives and arias in the traditional style of the Italian opera seria. This is perhaps what was meant by the assertion, quoted above, that 'the

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26 See *New Grove*, xx, 46.

Italian Method in this kind of Performance has been duly observed'. In most cases the formal nature of the movements can be inferred from the structure of the poetry: typically, a section in blank verse, clearly a recitative, is followed by a more rigidly metrical stanza for the same character, as an aria, and with a da capo apparently indicated by a cue of the opening words. The division is often further emphasized by printing the aria text in italics. In addition to conventional formal divisions of this sort, however, Cousser occasionally introduced sections of a more unusual nature as, for example, that in *Heaven Invaded or, A Contest between Jupiter and the Giants*, written for George I's birthday in 1727 and containing two poetical sequences labelled 'Attack' in which a chorus of giants disputes with a chorus supporting Jupiter (a poorly disguised George I) and the other gods. Exceptionally, the 1723 wordbook gives detailed indications about the scoring of each aria, for example, 'aria col' violino e tamburino' and 'aria col' flauto allemano', but this information is not found in any other of the surviving libretti.

Although much can be deduced about the nature of these serenatas from their texts, they also raise many questions which only musical evidence could satisfactorily answer. Very little of Cousser's music has survived, and it has been generally supposed hitherto that the music for all the Dublin serenatas has been lost. This is not the case, however, for the music of a single serenata has survived complete, confirming that Cousser was a composer of some talent, and suggesting that his rapid rise to prominence in the ranks of the Irish musical establishment was probably deserved. The score in question is MS 765 from the collection of St Michael's College, Tenbury (now deposited in the Bodleian Library, Oxford), and long held to be -- but with no real justification -- a London ode by John Eccles for the birthday of Queen Anne. Rosamond McGuinness, writing on the musical 'entertainments' performed at the court in London during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, reattributed the ode to the lutenist and countertenor John Abell, arguing that it was part of his 'Consort of Musick' performed at Chelsea College in

April 1702 to celebrate the Queen's coronation.[27] This attribution, too, must be rejected, for MS 765 is undoubtedly the score of Cousser's 'serenata da camera' entitled *The Universal Applause of Mount Parnassus*, which was peformed at Dublin Castle 'by their Excellencies the Lords Justices Command', on 6 February 1711, in celebration of the birthday of Queen Anne. There is no reason to suppose that the manuscript (which contains only this one work) is not Cousser's autograph, although the reason for its unique survival and its assimilation into the Tenbury collection remains a mystery.

The serenata takes its title from the mountain held sacred in classical legend to Apollo and the nine Muses, all of whom are represented in the work. The tone of the work is set by the opening recitative and aria in which Apollo (who thereafter plays only a minor role) exhorts the Muses, each of whom is allotted a recitative and aria, to employ their 'utmost skill' and 'noblest airs' in celebration of the Queen's natal day. This scenario gives a good indication of the scale of the Dublin birthday celebrations, for if each character part were taken by a different singer, there must have been ten soprano soloists (Apollo alone is an alto, and there are no solo parts for tenor or bass). By contrast, the relatively restrained orchestral scoring is for strings, two flutes, and two oboes, with the addition of a lute in a single movement. There is no evidence of trumpets and drums, even in the final D major chorus, and the two-movement overture in the French style is scored, on paper at least, for strings alone.

The recitatives and arias are arranged in three groups, separated from each other by four large-scale ensembles in which a five-part chorus (SSATB) and a variety of the solo forces are combined. However, it becomes clear from the score that the favourite typographical device of re-printing the opening word of a stanza at its conclusion (for example, 'Anna's &c.' at the end of a stanza beginning 'Anna's

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27 'An Eighteenth-Century Entertainment', *Soundings*, iii (1973) 66-84. I am indebted to Dr H. Diack Johnstone for bringing to my attention the true identity of this manuscript, of which he intends to publish an account in due course.

deathless acts rehearsing') need not imply a full da capo aria. Of the eleven solo vocal movements in *The Universal Applause*, the wordbook for which follows the usual typographical pattern, only one is in true da capo form. The remainder are simply short ternary form movements with middle sections often no more than one or two phrases in length, and with no contrasting change of mood or key before the speedy return of the opening idea. There are close parallels here with the operatic arias of Wilderer (the use of whose music in a Cousser serenata has already been noted) which 'are predominantly with continuo accompaniment and display the same form of *ABA* design, with a written-out *A* section'.[28]

In this respect the serenata confirms the influence of Cousser's early career on his later musical style by displaying some of the economy of expression which might be expected from a composer of operatic works. Unlike his English contemporaries, for whom the ode, more than any other genre perhaps, was a vehicle for exploiting a close relationship between words and music, Cousser's concern seems to have been to convey the overall sense of compliment on the royal birthday, rather than to produce an elaborately crafted piece of wordsetting in which every nuance of the poetic text was reflected. He clearly had no doubts about the potential effectiveness of short movements which, in an operatic context, would have been given additional weight by staging and costume (as may even have been the case at Dublin Castle). In *The Universal Applause*, whether staged or not, a scenario in which nine different characters come forward in turn to sing their piece would doubtless have benefited from the tightness of construction and sense of overall planning which experience in the opera house must have given.

Assuming *The Universal Applause* to be typical of Cousser's Dublin output, the contrast between its celebratory but rather unelaborate tone and the more imaginatively vivid, if often less successful, birthday offerings of many of his

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28 George J. Buelow in *New Grove*, xx, 416. Buelow further strengthens the links between Cousser and his European contemporaries by comparing Wilderer's 'coloristic' use of instrumental accompaniments to those found in the Hamburg operas of Reinhard Keiser, Cousser's immediate successor at Stuttgart.

contemporaries needs emphasis. The anonymous texts of the Dublin serenatas display a common form, and apart from a rather greater tendency towards mythological references, differ very little from similar London texts in terms of their panegyrical tone and the exaggerated imagery by which it is conveyed. From the days of the very earliest vernacular odes English composers had exploited the potential of their texts for word painting, a practice from which Cousser apparently derived no satisfaction. The contrast is clearly demonstrated by reference to the text of Apollo's opening aria in *The Universal Applause*:

> Wake the lute from gentle slumbers,
> Charge the flute with sounding air,
> Join the pow'r of mystic numbers:
> To the hautbois and the lyre,
> Joy and transport all inspire.

Words such as these would have drawn a fairly predictable response from English ode composers. In the previous generation, even allowing for a difference of style, Purcell or Blow would have found material here either for a number of separate verses, or for an extended arioso-like passage; in either case, an appropriate instrumental accompaniment would have been employed. Among Cousser's own contemporaries too, it is difficult to suppose that Pepusch or Eccles faced with such a text would not have incorporated some aural imagery into their accompaniment. Cousser, however, gives these lines no special treatment, so that lute, flute, hautbois and lyre are all referred to without emphasis, and with only a string accompaniment, the use of the lute (in company with pizzicato strings) being reserved for a later movement which has no instrumental references in its text.

This difference in approach may partly be due to Cousser's foreign nationality, but if he did not respond to all the nuances of his text, there is certainly no evidence, judging from the 1711 serenata, that he experienced any significant problems in setting the English language. Nevertheless, his vocal style is characterized by a simplicity of melodic expression, so that the amount of florid or virtuosic writing for the voice is quite small. There are no vocal *tours de force*, nor any indications of movements intended to display the skills of a particularly talented

soloist. Even greater vocal simplicity is found in the choruses, which are predominantly homophonic, relying for effect on simple, even jaunty, melodies which are often no more than harmonized repetitions of material initially presented by a soloist. The result is a slightly perfunctory though by no means unsuccessful choral style, the origins of which are again probably to be found in Cousser's continental background and especially in the French operatic tradition in which the chorus, along with dancing, was regarded as a means of providing lavish interludes. These were regarded as crucial to the overall effect of the work but were often disconnected from the main thrust of the dramatic action. Whether or not Cousser's 1711 serenata included dancing, he adopted a similar choral style, favouring a strong regular beat and well-shaped rhythmic phrases, and placed as they are between groups of vocal solos, the four choruses provide sonorous punctuations to the overall progress of the work. The only choral movement of a rather more complicated nature is the chaconne 'No other than immortal lays', in which the chorus and all ten soloists participate. This is by far the longest movement in the work and is probably fairly typical of those instances in which the serenata libretti abandon the conventional divisions of recitative, aria, or chorus, in favour of a more unusual formal structure (Ex.11).[29]

Considerable uncertainty still surrounds the exact circumstances in which these serenatas were performed. The textual evidence strongly suggests, as T.J. Walsh maintained, a degree of visual representation. In some cases the evidence points to virtually a fully-staged performance, but at the very least there must have been an attempt to 'set the scene' with a painted backdrop or the use of costume.[30] The limited musical evidence available does little to illuminate these issues.

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29 For a detailed outline of the structure of this movement see Rosamond McGuinness's article in *Soundings*, *op. cit.*, 74.

30 Parts of Thomas Clayton's *Rosamond* and *Arsinoe* may have been performed at Dublin Castle *c.*1709, while he was 'director of court festivities' to the Earl of Warton, then Lord Lieutenant. If this was the case it would increase the likelihood that Cousser's works were also staged. See Boydell, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, *op. cit.*, 575.

However, it should also be remembered that if these serenatas were presented in dramatic form, they would have represented a type of entertainment much more lavish than was to be found at the London court's celebrations of the sovereign's birthday and New Year's day. The Dublin performances ought therefore to have excited some degree of comment in contemporary letters and journals, so it may be significant that no such evidence has yet come to light.

There is little doubt, however, that the particular style of birthday work performed at Dublin Castle during the first quarter of the eighteenth century sprang from Cousser's own initiative. The ode tradition hardly existed in Dublin prior to his arrival there in 1707 for, as already mentioned, political preoccupations had not permitted the encouragement of such performances. The serenata form was itself new to Ireland, and although there is no direct evidence that Cousser had previously composed works of a similar type on the continent, the serenata was well known to composers there, and at least two were composed by Cousser's immediate successor at Stuttgart, Reinhard Keiser. There is no reason to suppose that Cousser had any sort of reputation in Ireland before his arrival, and Dublin audiences are unlikely to have been familiar with any of his earlier works. His influence on the State Musick as demonstrated by the establishment of the ode tradition seems to have derived from a combination of superior musical skill and a strong, perhaps even domineering, personality. The indications from the libretto of Cousser's last serenata, performed in October 1727, are that it had all the characteristics which had come to be associated with his work in that genre. It is significant, therefore, that when the first ode by Cousser's successor, Matthew Dubourg, was performed two years later, it marked an immediate return to the traditional choral ode, a form which John Eccles had been using at the London court ever since his appointment as Master of the King's Musick in 1700, and which had made such a brief early appearance at Dublin Castle in 1707 in the form of the now lost ode by Ximenes.

Cousser's serenatas were crucial in establishing the custom of a regular birthday celebration at the vice-regal court, and in ensuring the maintenance of the

State Musick in Ireland. It may be significant that the first choice of someone to replace Cousser as Master of the State Musick was another prominent foreign musician -- Francesco Geminiani -- who was apparently offered the post through the influence of his former pupil, the Earl of Essex. In the event Geminiani's Roman Catholicism barred him from the office, and since he would not agree to renounce his faith 'for the sake of worldly advantage' the post passed to Matthew Dubourg, another of Geminiani's pupils.[31] Judging by the number of his compositions, Dubourg seems to have carried out his official duties conscientiously and efficiently.[32] He made regular trips to London where he was much in demand as a violinist, but only on one occasion do his visits to England seem to have interfered with his responsibilities in Dublin. In September 1749 Dubourg and the popular soprano Miss Oldmixon were waiting for a fair wind in order to make the crossing to Ireland, though they arrived in time for the birthday ode to be performed with Oldmixon as soloist on 31 October.[33]

In the absence of an official court poet, Dubourg was required to set libretti from a number of hands, most of whom were not primarily poets. Among them were William Chaigneau (1709-81) and Gorges [*sic*] Edmond Howard (1715-86), both of whom began their careers as soldiers, and the Reverend Thomas Sheridan, whose interest in music also found expression in sermons preached at St Cecilia's day services in St Patrick's Cathedral. Among the other poets who occasionally provided libretti was Matthew Pilkington, a member of Jonathan Swift's circle, and the author also of a lengthy poem entitled 'The progress of Musick in Ireland' in

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31 Sir John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, rev. edn. (1875), ii, 847-8.

32 According to Grattan Flood, from 1738 onwards Dubourg also held the post of kettle-drummer in the State Musick, thus acquiring an addition to his salary of £70 (see *Introductory Sketch*, *op. cit.*, 31). If this information is correct, the composer must obviously have employed a deputy to carry out his duties.

33 *The Dublin Journal*, 16 September 1749.

which many of the city's musicians, including Viner and Dubourg, are mentioned.[34] Undoubtedly the most prolific of the ode librettists, however, was Benjamin Victor, a Londoner who moved to Dublin in 1746 and became treasurer of the Smock Alley Theatre. Fifteen libretti by Victor still survive, and although he was probably the least gifted of the castle poets he successfully petitioned the Duke of Dorset, on his resignation as Lord Lieutenant, for permission to be officially recognized as Poet Laureate, though the post was not continued after Victor's death in 1778.

In the course of the 39 years during which Dubourg held office in Dublin there were some 54 occasions on which birthday odes may have been performed. At least some record of 46 odes has survived, a considerable quantity which exceeds individual outputs of court odes in London,[35] and suggests that after allowing for a few occasions on which no ode was given, very few of Dubourg's odes have gone unrecorded. A considerable amount of his music has survived in four manuscript volumes in the library of the Royal College of Music (MSS 847-850), though no single work is now extant in its entirety. These manuscripts appear to have been the composer's working scores, which were then passed on to the copyist, for there are a number of notes and instructions scribbled on the manuscript, telling the copyist to arrange movements in a different order, or to make allowance for particular performers. On f.78 of MS 849, for example, is the request 'Write Mr Colgan's part this Night and let me have it as soon as you have done it, write the Words very plain for Him.' These vocal and instrumental parts doubtless remained in Ireland, and are now lost, but Dubourg must have brought his original scores back to London, either

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34 Published in Matthew Pilkington, *Poems on Several Occasions* (Dublin, 1730). Swift himself revised the second edition of Pilkington's poems, though he was later to disown their author.

35 There were three successive English Masters of the King's Musick while Dubourg held the equivalent Irish office. They were John Eccles (37 odes), Maurice Greene (35 odes) and William Boyce (44 odes). William Parsons, who held office in London from 1787 to 1810 'composed' at least 47 odes, but many of these were acknowledged arrangements of the music of Handel and others. Totals for odes are taken from the chronology in *McGuinness*, 12-61. The ode by Richard Goodson misattributed to Eccles (see the Catalogue of Odes p.78) has been discounted.

during his many temporary visits or when he returned to England permanently in the 1760s. The subsequent history of the scores is not known, but at some stage the loose sheets of manuscript score fell into disorder. Later they were acquired by the Sacred Harmonic Society (whose library now forms part of the collections at the Royal College) and it was probably at this stage that the leaves were divided up and bound into four volumes. Unfortunately, this was done haphazardly without any serious attempt to re-order the contents.

The result is a total of nearly 400 folios of ode movements, a great many of which bear no chronological or musical relationship to the movements, or in some cases even the folios, that immediately precede and follow them. Thus, movements from the 1742 birthday ode for George II are scattered between three of the volumes, whilst of the nineteen movements contained in the last twenty or so folios of MS 847, thirteen come from six different odes written over a period of ten years; the provenance of the other six remains unknown. A further complication is provided by Dubourg sketching new ideas on spare staves of existing scores. In spite of the indications given by the study of the paper and such pagination as exists, it would be almost impossible to re-order this mass of musical material with any certainty were it not for the large number of libretti from Dubourg's period of office which have survived as wordbooks and in newspaper reports. Even so, considerable problems can arise in identifying the music, since it seems that stanzas from poems by Benjamin Victor and others, which Dubourg had already set, were often used in later odes by the same poets, and in some cases lines were even borrowed from the earlier poems of other authors. Very few dates or titles appear in the manuscripts, but by comparison with textual sources already mentioned it has been possible to attribute a date to many of the 250 movements which survive. Two odes, for the birthdays of George II in 1751 and 1753, can be reconstructed in full (with the exception of their overtures), and several others lack only one or two movements.

Dubourg's works are scored for fairly modest resources, normally two or three vocal soloists and an orchestra of strings augmented by one or two wind

instruments. Occasionally there is a final chorus with parts for trumpets and drums, but on the whole, choral movements are used sparingly and opening choruses are particularly rare; only four of the recorded odes began with a purely choral movement, though one or two others had a solo opening which also involved the chorus. The opening stanzas of most of the Dublin court odes, like those in London (and many more besides), were either poetical invocations -- of a classical or allegorical figure -- or an address to the assembled audience, and there was a common preference among composers to set these as an introductory recitative, either *secco* or with instrumental accompaniment. What follows, in most of the odes, is a series of recitatives and solo arias, with only an occasional duet or trio for contrast. The 1751 birthday ode for George II, for example, consists of six pairs of recitatives and arias shared between soprano, alto and bass soloists, with a penultimate duet and a final chorus. One implication of this pattern is that the Dublin odes were judged less for their overall musical effect than for the opportunities they gave of displaying the vocal abilities of popular soloists of the day. The cathedral choirs continued to provide the choral forces and some of the male soloists (such as James Colgan), but while some of Dubourg's scores specifically designate movements for 'a boy', it is clear that by at least the middle of the century, prominent female singers who had made their reputations in theatres and concert rooms were regularly taking part in the Castle odes (and even, in the case of Miss Oldmixon, crossing the Irish Sea in order to do so). Curiously, there is no evidence that any of the popular London sopranos took part in the English birthday performances.

The frequency with which recitatives provide the opening movement of Dubourg's odes raises the question of whether any of these works originally possessed overtures. A small number unquestionably did so, for there are a few references to 'the overture' among the manuscripts, but no trace of them has survived apart, perhaps, from a single brief minuet on f.65 of MS 847. The seven vocal numbers which follow this (ff.66-72v) are without doubt a sequence of movements

from a single ode, and though the minuet is not labelled in any way, it is not impossible that it was the last movement of the overture. Handel's birthday ode for Queen Anne, 'Eternal source of light divine', shows that in skilled hands, and with a suitably evocative text, a recitative could provide a perfectly adequate opening for a celebratory ode. Nevertheless, it seems likely that many of Dubourg's odes would have been introduced by some sort of overture (as were most of their London counterparts) though it may have been his normal practice to use concertos or other instrumental pieces composed independently of the odes themselves. Their loss is matter for regret, not least because the evidence from the accompaniments to the surviving odes suggest that he was at his most assured as a composer in the writing of instrumental music.

The instrumental accompaniments are often the most successful aspects of these works, and many movements have impressive obbligato parts for cello, flute, oboe and bassoon. Not surprisingly, however, given Dubourg's acknowledged skill as a violinist, it is in writing for the strings that his compositional talents are seen at their best, and many of the more demanding solo violin parts must have been written with himself in mind. Unfortunately, Dubourg's vocal writing generally lacks the idiomatic assurance of his accompaniments, with the result that movements which show considerable promise at the outset tend to lose much of their incisiveness as soon as the soloist enters and rarely regain their initial momentum. It could certainly not be claimed that Dubourg's odes represent a vast store of undeservedly neglected music; a similar collection of Cousser's serenatas would almost certainly yield greater treasures in this respect. Nevertheless, given the pedestrian nature of Dubourg's task and the often execrable poetry he was required to set -- burdens which had taken their toll on better men than Dubourg at the court in London-- his achievements as Master of the State Musick were by no means negligible. His instrumental writing at least stands comparison with that of many of the London odes, and the level of virtuosity demanded of the soloists at times belies the routine nature of the works (Ex.12).

On his death in 1767, Dubourg was succeeded as Master of the State Musick by Richard Hay, another violinist and reputedly a pupil of Tartini. Hay's first ode seems to have been for the birthday of Queen Charlotte in February 1768, and when the text of that work was published in *The Annual Register* he was described not only as 'chief composer and master of the music attending his Majesty's State in Ireland', but also as 'master of the Royal Family's chamber concert' which suggests that, like Dubourg (who, according to Hawkins, had managed to be tutor to both the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cumberland whilst Master of the State Musick)[36] he was something of a commuter. Benjamin Victor wrote the words for all but one of the eight odes by Hay for which records survive, but the music for all of them has been lost. The divisions of the texts as given in the published edition of Victor's poems suggest that Hay's odes were structured along traditional lines,[37] but there are grounds for supposing that the birthday ode tradition lost some of its popularity at this time, for no printed wordbooks for Hay's odes can now be found, although the practice had been maintained during Dubourg's term of office, and was revived under Hay's successor.

John Crosdill, one of the most celebrated cellists of his day, became Master of the Musick on Hay's death in 1785, and presided over the last days of the Dublin odes. Only three odes can now be attributed to him (although he probably wrote more), and all three set anonymous words. The first was performed on the birthday of George III in 1785, while the other two, for the birthdays of the King and Queen in 1787, and 1794 respectively, are the last Castle odes for which sources survive. In the case of these last two works, wordbooks reveal that the performance was conducted by John Parkinson, who is described as Deputy Master and Director. This suggests either that Crosdill was inclined to fulfil his duties from a distance (most probably from London), or that he was playing cello in the orchestra. The

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36 *Hawkins, op. cit.*, 892.

37 *Original Letters, Dramatic Pieces, and Poems* (1776).

latter possibility should not be ruled out, especially given the flexible division of responsibilities among members of the state band which is known to have existed in the early part of the century.

The birthday odes are undoubtedly of prime importance to the history of the genre in Dublin, but they were inevitably always a vehicle for political as well as musical expression. In their libretti they made effusive declarations of loyalty to monarchs who remained distant and unattractive figures to large parts of the population, and in the very circumstances of their performance, they emphasized the Anglo-Irish élitism which was the cause of many of Ireland's problems. For the first three or four decades in which they were composed, the birthday works were enjoyed exclusively by the privileged members of the aristocratic governing class and their immediate circle, but by the middle years of the eighteenth century these odes, along with a number of others, began to reach a much wider audience as a result of performances given in the Dublin concert rooms.

The relatively late emergence of Irish newspapers makes it difficult to assess the exact extent of musical activity in Dublin in the early years of the eighteenth century, but concert-giving seems to have become a significant activity by the end of the 1720s. Attendance at concerts, as in London, was prompted as much by social motives as by cultural ones, and for the relatively isolated ruling class in Ireland this social aspect acquired a particular importance which those involved in the promotion of concerts were able to turn to their advantage:

> The sure way of having a capacity audience was to advertise a performance as being by command of the lord lieutenant, at which the presence of persons of quality would act as a powerful social magnet. Another most important motive for going to concerts was to support a 'grand and noble charity', for this lay behind the organisation of most of the more notable musical occasions.[38]

A great many charitable ventures began in Dublin during the course of the eighteenth century, and in this area at least the city could claim to be on an equal footing with London. Among the most notable foundations of the period were the

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38 Boydell, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, *op. cit.*, 570-71.

Mercer's Hospital and the Lying-in Hospital. The latter was opened in 1745 and was unusual in that its founder, Dr Mosse, not only succeeded in establishing an important medical institution, but also arranged the means for future fundraising by providing a public pleasure garden in the grounds:

> Behind the hospital are the gardens, with a large circular room called the Rotunda, built in imitation of that at Ranelagh near London, about a third as large, but without any pillar in the centre. Here they have an organ and orchestra for concerts, in the wet evenings of summer, and for balls in winter: so that upon the whole, this is the Vauxhall, Ranelagh, and Pantheon of Dublin. Nay, it is something more than all these, it is a polite place of public resort on Sunday evenings.[39]

In such surroundings, more so even than in the concert room, the social nature of the occasion was paramount, and this was as much the case in Mosse's Dublin garden as at Ranelagh, Vauxhall or Marylebone. Orchestral music, and songs with instrumental accompaniment, were therefore better suited to the atmosphere than substantial choral works requiring prolonged attention, and as a result only three ode performances at the Rotunda can be traced. The earliest of these is 'An Ode on the Hospital for poor Lying-in Women, written by Mr. Jones the Bricklayer, and set to Musick by Mr. Pasquali'. This was performed at a concert of vocal and instrumental music given in aid of the hospital on 27 June 1749, before the Rotunda gardens had been laid out and while they were still known as the Great Britain Street Gardens. Neither words nor music has survived, but given the nature of the venue, and the fact that only two male vocalists are named in the newspaper advertisement, it is unlikely to have been a work of great substance. The other two odes performed at the Rotunda (both by Tommaso Giordani) date from the latter half of the century and are discussed below.

Taking Dublin's public concert life as a whole, two main groups of works can be identified. First, there were occasional observances of St Cecilia's Day, along with performances of a very small number of Cecilian works brought in from London. It is known that a Musical Society existed in Dublin which in 1730 and

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39 Luckombe, *op. cit.*, 13.

1731 organized celebrations for St Cecilia's day. These were very different from the early music feasts held at Stationers' Hall, and had much more in common with the services for St Cecilia's Day held at St Bride's, Fleet Street, or with later London charity festivals, not least because the whole of the Dublin proceedings took place in church:

> Yesterday being St. Cecilia's Day, the Musical Society observed the Celebration of it, against which time they gave out Tickets to a great Number of Gentlemen, who went to the Cathedral Church of St. Patrick's, Dublin, where they celebrated Mr. Purcell's Trumpet *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* with Dr. Blow's Anthem, *Behold and Lo, &c.* Also, the *First*, *Fifth* and *Eighth Concertos* of Corelli were performed in an excellent Manner on all sorts of Instruments by the Members of the said Society, and the Gentlemen of the Choir.[40]

As in London in the mid-eighteenth century, the observance of St Cecilia's Day was an irregular occurrence. From time to time Cecilian concerts would be arranged, but they were not maintained on a regular annual basis, and they did not give rise to any serious attempt at the composition of Cecilian odes, or more general odes to music.

Only two St Cecilia odes were written specifically for performance in Dublin; a period of several decades separates their composition, and the music for neither is extant. The earlier of the two is known through a printed libretto which identifies it as *An Ode for St. Caecilia's Day, Sett by Mr. Roseingrave*.[41] Although the wordsheet is undated, references in the poetry to Queen Anne confirm that the ode was almost certainly the work of Daniel Roseingrave, who was organist of both Dublin cathedrals from 1698 to 1719. The possibility cannot be entirely ruled out, however, that the ode was composed by Roseingrave's son, also Daniel, who was appointed organist of Trinity College in 1705. The ode's anonymous and lengthy text is entirely derivative of earlier *encomia musicae* (notably John Dryden's 1687 poem) suggesting that the poet, though untalented, was familiar with some at least of

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40 *The Flying Post; or Post-Master*, 9 December 1731 (report dated 23 November). For a similar report of the preceding year's concert see *The Flying Post*, 8 December 1730. Thomas Sheridan, who provided ode libretti for Dubourg in 1729 and 1730, preached the sermon on both occasions.

41 An apparently unique copy of this libretto survives in the Gilbert Collection at Dublin Public Library.

the London Cecilian libretti. The wordsheet also reveals that Roseingrave set only about two-thirds of the poem (groups of stanzas are linked together by long brackets labelled with the word 'sett') and chose to disregard some sections dealing with traditional Cecilian ideas such as the harmony of the spheres. The other lost Dublin Cecilian work was performed at Fishamble Street on 10 April 1768:

> To-morrow being Wednesday, at the Musick-Hall, Fishamble-street, will be performed Mr. Pope's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, (which was deferred on account of the charity Play for distressed Free-Masons) set to Music by Mr. S. Murphy, Vicar Choral and Master of the Children of both Cathedrals. Between the 1st and 2nd Acts of the Ode, there will be an Interlude of Canon, Glee and Catch, preceded by a Medley Overture, in the Manner they have been performed at Ranelagh House, London.[42]

The composer of this ode was the same Samuel Murphy who only a few months later was to receive the degree of D.Mus. from Trinity College (see pp.134-5). This in itself suggests that he must have possessed some talent as a composer, and the fact that the ode was split between two Acts, with catches and other light vocal music performed between them, implies that it was a substantial piece.

On the whole, however, the Cecilian tradition does not seem to have captured the imagination of composers in Ireland in the same way as it did in England, and only three St Cecilia odes (all of which have been discussed in Chapter 4) were imported from London for performance in Dublin. Handel's *Alexander's Feast* was given at Smock Alley on 1 December 1739 and remained a favourite work with Dublin audiences, receiving numerous subsequent performances. The same composer's *Ode for St Cecilia's Day* was given at Fishamble Street by command of the Lord Lieutenant on 20 January 1742, in a programme which also included *Acis and Galatea*, but it does not seem to have been as popular as *Alexander's Feast*, or as Boyce's setting of Lockman's 'See famed Apollo and the Nine'. The latter received its first ever performance at a meeting of the

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42 *The Dublin Journal*, 6 April, 1768. Grattan Flood records a performance of the ode on 20 April (*Introductory Sketch*, *op. cit.*, 56), but this may have been an error of dating. He also suggests that there was a performance in aid of the 'Lock Hospital' at Fishamble Street on 31 January 1769 (*A History of Irish Music*, *op. cit.*, 301-2), but no institution by this name is known to have existed in Dublin.

Philharmonic Society at the Fishamble Street room in December 1740, where 'it was allowed by several of the best Judges here, to be one of the grandest performances that hath been heard'.[43] Lockman's poem was published in a collection of libretti issued by the Philharmonic Society in 1741, and the ode was given a number of subsequent performances in Dublin.[44]

Of much greater frequency and importance in Dublin's concert life, however, was the practice of arranging additional performances of the birthday odes given at the Castle. These performances date from Matthew Dubourg's period as Master of the State Musick, and the initial impetus for them appears to have come from those involved with some of the city's philanthropic organizations. The earliest public performance of a Dublin birthday ode which can now be traced was on 4 November 1743, when Dubourg's ode for the birthday of George II (which had been given its official hearing at the Castle on 30 October) was performed at the Fishamble Street room at the request of the Charitable Musical Society for the Support for the Hospital for Incurables.[45] The ode was repeated for the benefit of the same society on 16 November, and for a number of years afterwards this charity was responsible for arranging concerts at which the most recent birthday *encomium* was given a more public hearing. In 1744 the birthday ode was given for the charity's benefit at Fishamble Street on 9 November, with a second performance on 23 November for a different cause, 'the Charitable Musical Society of Crow Street'.[46] In 1746 and 1747 Dubourg's birthday ode for the King was again given two additional performances for charitable purposes within a few weeks of its Castle hearing, as was his ode for the Queen's birthday in January 1748. In 1745 the King's birthday ode was given in public three times, once at Crow Street and twice at Fishamble Street. By the

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43 *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 16 December 1740.

44 Bartlett, *op. cit.*, 760.

45 Boydell, *Calendar*, *op. cit.*, 95.

46 *Ibid.*, 101.

middle of the century, occasional rehearsals of the Castle odes were also being held. The earliest recorded instance of this practice was in 1753 when *The Dublin Journal* announced that Dubourg's birthday ode would be rehearsed on 9 November 'immediately after the Levee, in the Great Ballroom'.[47] More obviously public rehearsals of the ode date from 1755 when Dubourg's ode for the birthday of George II was performed at Fishamble Street on 13 September in the presence of 'a great Number of Lovers of Musick' who 'allowed it to be the best Performance of that kind they had ever heard'.[48] These rehearsals were not advertised with the same regularity as the subsequent performances of the odes, but they were probably held with a similar frequency and were obviously popular events, for in 1759 two public rehearsals of Dubourg's ode were held, the first on 29 October, the second on 9 November, both well in advance of the actual birthday performance.

The increasing familiarity of Dublin audiences with the ode genre in general, and with the Castle odes in particular, encouraged the composition of other occasional works designed to promote loyalty to the English crown, though ironically enough these all came from the pens of foreign composers! François-Hippolyte Barthélemon and John Frederick Lampe, for example, both composed additional odes in celebrations of the king's birthday. Lampe (probably best known for his burlesque opera *The Dragon of Wantley*) wrote his ode for performance in 1748 as part of an unusually lavish public celebration of the birthday of George II, the preparations for which were reported in the press:

> We hear the large room in Aungier-Street (formerly the Theatre-Royal) is now fitting up in a most elegant Manner, with the utmost Expedition, in order to have it ready for the Reception of Company on his Majesty's Birth Day; on which Occasion there are to be some extraordinary Entertainments there.[49]

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47 6 November 1753.

48 *The Dublin Journal*, 13 September 1755.

49 *Ibid.*, 24 September 1748.

Later it was reported that 'Mr. Lampe is now employ'd in setting to Musick an Ode in Honour of His Majesty's Birth Day, which is to be performed at the Great Room in Aungier-Street (lately the Theatre) on the 30th of this month, as Part of the Entertainment of that Night', and the same issue noted elsewhere that a 'Grand Festino in The Great Room in Aungier St. in the Italian Manner' was to be given on 30 October.[50] It seems that in both cases the date given was a misprint, for the birthday fell on a Sunday in this year and the celebrations were therefore deferred to the Monday following. Subsequent advertisements for the celebrations gave the correct date of 31 October.

Lampe's ode was clearly not a substitute for, but an addition to, the customary birthday observance at the Castle, which was held in the usual way:

> Last Sunday being the Anniversary of His Majesty's Birthday, when he entered into the Year 66th of his Age, the same was observed yesterday with the greatest demonstrations of Joy; their Excellencies the Lords Justices received the compliments of the Nobility and Gentry at the Castle upon this occasion, where there was a very fine Ode set to Musick by Mr. Dubourg. In the Evening there was a play given to the Ladies and after that, the Nobility and Gentry went to the Festino in Aungier-street (formerly the Theatre-Royal) which was fitted up in the most elegant and Grand Manner where there was a polite Entertainment and a fine Band of Musick, which consisted of fifty players, and gave universal satisfaction to all the Company.[51]

Although Lampe is not specifically mentioned as the composer of the music performed at Aungier Street in this report, there is no doubt from earlier advertisements that the ode whose preparation was reported a month before formed part of the proceedings at the Festino, and *The Dublin Journal* account goes on to record that the vocal parts were 'by Mrs Lampe, being the first time of her Appearance here in Publick'. The music for Lampe's ode has not survived, but the libretto shows that it was divided into twenty movements, including six solo airs and the same number of choruses.[52] The libretto lists four other soloists in addition to

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50 *Ibid.*, 11 October 1748.

51 *Ibid.*, 29 October 1748.

52 *An Ode, In Honour of his Majesty's Birth-Day. Performed at the Grand Festino Room in Aungier-Street* (Dublin, 1748).

Mrs Lampe, and given the reference in the account of the Festino to 'fifty players' -- possibly a generalization which included chorus singers -- it seems likely that this was a substantial work. It evidently enjoyed sufficient popularity at the first performance for it to be brought out again a year later.[53]

Barthélemon's ode, a setting of a customarily effusive panegyric by Gorges Edmond Howard, was performed at the Rotunda on 4 June 1771 in honour of George III's birthday. The music once again is lost, but there were three choral movements, and three solo parts which were taken by Mr[s] Passerini, Miss Shewcroft and Signora Gervasio.[54] The Rotunda was also the venue for three celebratory odes by the Italian composer Tommaso Giordani, all expressing sentiments of national loyalty. Giordani, who had settled in London in 1753, moved permanently to Dublin in 1782, though it is likely that he had made an earlier visit to the Irish capital, for his *Ode on the First of August*, which also set words by Howard (in this instance celebrating the anniversary of the Hanoverian succession in 1714), was performed at the Rotunda in 1769.[55] The words of the ode were published in a collection of Howard's poems some years later with the addition of a note recording that 'The Music of this was esteemed very fine, and is in the Lying-in Hospital'.[56] No copy of the score can now be found, but the printed poem shows that the ode consisted of three groups of recitative, air and chorus, with the final chorus including individual sections for three solo voices. Knowledge of another work by Giordani on a similarly loyal theme -- his *Ode to the Prince of Wales* -- has survived only through the publication of its overture, which the composer arranged for

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53 *The Dublin Journal*, 28 October 1749.

54 *An Ode on His Majesty's Birth-Day. By Mr. Howard. The Musick composed by Mr. Barthelemon* (Dublin, 1771); see also Gorges Edmond Howard, *The Miscellaneous Works, in Verse and Prose* (Dublin, 1782), i, 55-7.

55 Music was probably regularly used to celebrate this anniversary. In 1743, for example, in an excursion reminiscent of that which prompted Handel's Water Music, the Lord Mayor and his entourage 'went down the River in a Wherry, with Kettle Drums and Trumpets, to celebrate the glorious first of August' (quoted in Boydell, *Calendar*, *op. cit.*, 94).

56 Howard, *op. cit.*, i, 43-5.

harpsichord.[57] This ode too was performed at the Rotunda, on 1 September 1783, but the words have not survived, though they were apparently the work of one Dr. Houlton.[58] Giordani also composed an ode in honour of the marriage of Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, to Princess Frederica of Prussia, the wedding being celebrated by a double ceremony held in Berlin on 29 September 1791 and in London on 23 November. Giordani was living in Dublin at the time, so it seems likely that the ode would have received its first performance in that city. The only performance which can now be traced, however, was at Ranelagh Gardens in London on 14 February 1792, nearly three months after the marriage itself had taken place.[59]

By the end of the eighteenth century the ode genre had ceased to have any regular place in Dublin's musical life. Such prominence as it had enjoyed in the course of the century had been largely due to the odes given at the viceregal court, but there is no evidence that they were continued beyond the performance of John Crosdill's ode for the birthday of George III in February 1794, though whether their demise was due to Crosdill's own lack of compositional talent, or to some other reason, is not clear. Crosdill held office as Master of the Musick until his death in 1825, when he was succeeded by Dr John Smith, and the State Musick continued in existence until 1861 when it was replaced by a viceregal band. It is not impossible, therefore, that subsequent ode performances have gone unrecorded, but it seems more likely that the Irish tradition had come to an end some time before the long series of London court odes finally ceased in 1818. Beyond the confines of Dublin Castle, the position of the ode in the concert repertoire had never been a prominent or particularly popular one. Additional performances of the birthday odes had been

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57 *The favourite Overture To the Prince of Wales Ode as performed at the Rotunda in Dublin Composed and adapted for the Harpsichord by Sigr. Giordani* (Dublin, 1787).

58 W.J. Lawrence, 'Tommaso Giordani: an Italian Composer in Ireland', *The Musical Antiquary*, ii (1910-11), 103.

59 See *The Public Advertiser*, 14 February 1792.

useful vehicles for charitable fundraising, and Giordani's odes had brought similar patriotic sentiments (though probably cast on a smaller scale) into the less formal atmosphere of the pleasure gardens. Outside these spheres, however, the number of odes composed and performed in Dublin was small.

Two factors in particular seem to have combined to ensure that only at Dublin Castle were odes to be heard with any regularity. First, although Dublin could boast a number of competent resident composers, none of them seems to have been tempted to try to produce large-scale settings of truly noteworthy libretti. In spite of the success enjoyed by works such as Handel's *Alexander's Feast* and Boyce's setting of Lockman's *St Cecilia Ode*, and the regular provision of choral concerts in the city, no settings of the great eighteenth-century poetic odes of, for example, Gray and Collins, which proved so popular with English composers were ever produced for Dublin audiences. The only settings (both now lost) of important poetical texts which can be identified are Giordani's setting of Collins's *The Passions*, and Murphy's setting of Pope's *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*, and at least in the former case the musical setting was probably much less substantial than the nature of the libretto would initially suggest. Of much greater importance, however, in effectively limiting the success of the ode genre was the apparent lack of any regularly accepted link in the public mind between occasions of note and musical performance. Purcell's ode for the centenary of Trinity College, which might so easily have been the catalyst for a tradition of musical performances akin to those at Oxford, in reality led to the composition of only one other 'academic' ode, and that separated from Purcell's by so many years that it is difficult to suppose the later work was in any sense prompted by the earlier. Most curious of all, however, is the fact that in spite of the established birthday ode tradition, other notable public events -- both regular anniversaries and more literally occasional happenings -- were celebrated without any specially composed musical contribution. A number of political anniversaries were observed in Dublin in other ways -- with, for example, levées, gun salutes and firework displays -- but on all such occasions the use of

music, if any, was no more than incidental. Beyond these observances, military exploits of national importance, the achievements of notable personalities and the inauguration of new buildings, all passed without any musical commemoration. Even the use of small-scale odes in the context of the convivial celebrations of institutions and organizations was apparently unknown. In this respect, at least, the efforts of Dublin society to emulate the social and cultural life of the English capital were less than successful, for throughout the century in London, odes were written and performed for an extraordinary variety of purposes, not least among which was the public celebration of notable political events and other occasions of national significance.

6. ODES FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE AND OCCASIONS OF NATIONAL CELEBRATION

The musical performances at court were by no means the only occasions on which odes expressing 'national' sentiment of one sort or another were to be heard. Numerous other works intended for performance in theatres, concert rooms or pleasure gardens were composed in honour of notable individuals or in celebration of events of national significance. At least thirty works of this sort were composed during the period covered by this study, and the music for about half that number has survived.[1] They range from the odes composed by Jeremiah Clarke to mark the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, through to François-Hippolyte Barthélemon's ode in honour of Admiral Keppel, and Thomas Busby's *Ode on British Genius*, both dating from 1799. Works which fall into this category were mostly composed and performed in London; of those originating outside the capital, three (all from the latest period) were performed in Oxford, two (from the middle period) in Great Yarmouth, and two (both early works) in Windsor and Winchester respectively. Odes of this type normally received a fully public performance; the only works known to have been performed for exclusive or aristocratic audiences were Robert King's ode for the birthday of the Earl of Exeter (1693), Daniel Purcell's ode for the Duke of Gloucester (1696), and William Boyce's birthday ode for George III (1763).

Of the odes composed in honour of individuals, royalty were by far the most frequent recipients and, perhaps because of the existing court ode tradition, birthday odes were common. In addition to those of the sovereign and the consort, several other royal birthdays were celebrated by odes from a variety of hands. Other royal events which inspired musical settings were the marriage of George III to Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz in 1761, and the same monarch's recovery from

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1 Many other semi-staged 'entertainments' and cantata-like odes were also composed on such themes, but these are beyond the scope of this study.

bouts of mental illness in the 1780s. None of these works, however, was in any sense an 'official' composition; many of the composers concerned had no connection with the musical establishment of the court, and these works were rarely performed in the presence of their honorands. Odes not composed in honour of royalty were generally concerned either with military successes or with the establishment of peace, but in both instances there was the opportunity for elaborate panegyric eulogizing the merits of Britain as warrior or peacemaker (according to context), whilst stressing the infamy of her enemies. Sometimes these sentiments were contained within an ode addressed to an individual (such as in Philip Hayes's *Ode to General Eliott*) but they could also occur in an ode of a more general character praising the 'genius' of Britain. The intention, however, was invariably the same: to celebrate the nation's power by relating the fall of its enemies and asserting, in elaborate *encomia*, the near-divine attributes of its rulers.

The earliest extant works of this sort are three odes by Jeremiah Clarke dating from the reign of William III. The *Ode on His Majesty's Happy Deliverance* was doubtless prompted by one of the several unsuccessful assassination attempts on the king, and although undated, the absence of any reference to Queen Mary suggests a date after her death, in which case the Jacobite plot of February 1696 would be the most likely inspiration for its composition. Clarke's other odes celebrate the Peace of Ryswick, signed in September 1697, which brought to an end the war with Louis XIV and secured French recognition of William III's claims to the British throne. 'Pay your thanks to mighty Jove' was performed on 29 November 1697 at York Buildings, but the exact date of the other ode 'Tell the world great Caesar's come' is unknown, though according to the score it was performed at the Drury Lane theatre. One of these two odes was probably also the work performed as a companion piece to Clarke's *Alexander's Feast* when that work was given its second performance in December 1697:

> The song which was sung on St. Cecilia's Day will be performed in York-Buildings, on Thursday next being the 16th Instant, with an Addition of a new Pastoral on the Peace, Composed by Jeremiah Clarke, and for the benefit of Mr. Le Riche only.[2]

Thomas F. Taylor has suggested that the pastoral in question was 'Pay your thanks',[3] though his argument is based solely on Henry Davey's statement that setting the pastoral 'was a task probably more adapted to his tender expressive style than setting the spirit-stirring ode [*Alexander's Feast*]'.[4] Taylor draws the conclusion that since 'Tell the world' is also a 'stirring' piece, with trumpet and drums, Davey must have meant that 'Pay your thanks' was performed with *Alexander's Feast*, but there is no evidence for this other than the advertisement from *The London Gazette* already quoted.[5] Taylor's basic assumption may be correct, however, for the words of 'Pay your thanks' differ in character from those of the other two odes; the mood is more meditative, lacking the exuberance of the other works, and given the flexible musical terminology of the day, 'pastoral' would not be an inappropriate description.

By contrast, the *Ode on His Majesty's Happy Deliverance* and the other Ryswick ode display the fervent enthusiasm of the traditional panyegyric. In both works King William is likened to Caesar, and the emphasis is on celebration and rejoicing. 'Tell the world' even has a stanza (fully exploited by Clarke's setting) echoing the sentiments of the *encomium musicae*:

> Let us rejoice with instruments of war
> The kettle drum and shriller trumpet voice
> Sounds louder than the stretching checks of fame.

There is a similar contrast in scale and in musical form, both of the more exuberant odes beginning with overtures and ending with choruses, the latter scored in both

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2 *The London Gazette*, 9 December 1697.

3 *Thematic Catalog of the Works of Jeremiah Clarke*, (Detroit, 1977), 38.

4 *History of English Music*, 2nd edn. (1921), 341

5 Taylor also rejects 'Tell the World' as a candidate for the December performance on the curious grounds that the St Cecilia odes were performed at Stationers' Hall, whereas the newspaper advertisements make it quite clear that York Buildings was the venue for this repeat performance of *Alexander's Feast*.

instances for trumpets and drums. In between come a series of solo verses, and in the case of the *Ode on His Majesty's Happy Deliverance*, an instrumental march. 'Pay your thanks' is shorter and less elaborate, has no overture and is scored for strings and continuo alone. A short opening verse is followed by a chorus (setting the same words) and a bass solo with a lengthy instrumental introduction. The final movement is for two vocal soloists and chorus, the latter providing a refrain after each of three solo sections.

The military successes achieved by the Duke of Marlborough in the early years of the eighteenth century were the cause of widespread celebration and prompted a number of musical works including two by Clarke, though the music of neither has survived. The earlier of the two was advertised in general terms in *The Diverting Post* of 18 November 1704, following a report of preparations for the reception of Prince William Frederick of Prussia and the Duke of Marlborough, whose arrival in England was shortly expected:

> There is now setting to Musick an Ode upon the Great Success of her Majesty's Forces by Land and Sea, by two Eminent Masters. This Entertainment will be ready about the time that the Prince Royal of *Prussia*, and his Grace the Duke of *Marlborough*, arrive here from Holland.

Doubtless this was the same work referred to in more detail two months later:

> There is prepared for the Entertainment of the Publick, a Consort of Musick, Vocal and Instrumental, in Praise of the Success of her Majesty's Forces the last Campaign. The Words set to Musick by Mr. *Jeremiah Clark* and Mr. *William Crofts*, Organists to the Chappel Royal, and performed by the best Voices and Hands now in *England*. Notice will be given of the time in the News Papers on Tuesday next, and Tickets will be then ready to be delivered by Mr. *Clark* and Mr. *Crofts*, and also by Mr. *Playford*, at his Shop in the *Temple Change*, *Fleet-Street*.[6]

No other record has survived of this joint effort, which was doubtless a response to Marlborough's victory at the Battle of Blenheim in August 1704. These celebrations, like the military successes themselves, were sustained over a period of

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6 *The Diverting Post*, 13 January 1704 [i.e., 1705.]

years rather than months, with Clarke's other ode in this context, 'Hail happy queen', being performed at York Buildings in December 1706.[7]

There is no evidence that Clarke's odes were performed at any 'official' occasion, but John Weldon and Thomas D'Urfey, on the other hand, collaborated on a work which, unusually for such pieces, was given in the Duke's presence:

> A new ode. Or, dialogue between *Mars*, the God of War, and *Plutus*, or *Mammon* God of Riches. Performed in an Entertainment made for his Grace the Duke of *Marlborough*, the Nobility, and General Officers, by the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, and the Honourable Court of Aldermen, at *Vintners-Hall*, in the City. The Words by Mr. D'Urfey, Set to Musick by Mr. *Weldon*, and sung by Mr. *Elford* and Mr. *Leveridge*, December, the 19th, 1706.

This is one of a small number of works composed around the turn of the eighteenth century in which characteristics associated with the ode are combined, in varying degrees, with overtly theatrical elements. The contemporary wordbook gives no indication of any vocal performers other than Elford and Leveridge, each of whom consistently represents one of the deities mentioned in the title. A later reprint of the text, however, suggests that a chorus was introduced in the middle and at the end of the piece (a fact not indicated in the original wordbook).[8] By its use of named characters Weldon's *Dialogue* almost merits consideration as a theatrical 'entertainment' and bears a passing resemblance to Cousser's Dublin serenatas, but it seems unlikely that the performance included any element of staging.

In the library at Christ Church, Oxford, are preserved the scores of two odes in honour of Queen Anne, one by Henry Hall beginning 'While he in triumph leads the haughty Gaul', the other an anonymous and incomplete setting beginning 'Bless, Albion, bless thy stars above'. Both works are on a fairly small scale, with words reminiscent of the court odes of the period, not least in the absence of any literary merit. Both are also undated, but there are topical references in the last two sections

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7 *A New Ode, being A Congratulatory Poem on The Glorious Successes of Her Majesty's Arms, under the Command of the Auspicious General his Grace the Duke of Marlborough* (1706).

8 *Wit and Mirth; or, Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1719), i, 50-3.

to Prince Eugene of Savoy, one of England's allies in the war of the Spanish Succession, who successfully besieged the French army at Cremona in 1701. Since Queen Anne is specifically mentioned in the poem the ode must post-date March 1702, but the events at Cremona would still have been topical in the early days of Anne's reign, and the words of the third stanza seem to imply that the accession was a comparatively recent event:

> Anna by choice and nature queen,
> With George, our ancient genius, smile.
> Bright halcyon days again are seen
> There, happy, happy isle.

The ode may have been intended for Oxford's celebration of the Queen's coronation in April 1702, or for performance on the occasion of her visit to the University later that same year. Another possibility is that it was prompted by the destruction of the Spanish fleet at Vigo in November 1702, since the Oxford celebrations on that occasion were sufficiently lavish to be reported in the London press:

> They write from *Oxford*, that they have made extraordinary rejoycings there upon account of the Glorious success of her Majesties Arms, and especially for the late Action at *Vigo*, in which his Grace the Duke of *Ormond*, Chancellor of the University, gained so much Honour. Those rejoycings have lasted a whole week, and were concluded on *Saturday* night by a magnificent Consort of Vocal and Instrumental Musick performed by Mr *Abel*.[9]

Although the music of 'Bless Albion, bless thy stars above', is of limited musical interest, it has none of the clumsiness which characterizes many of the occasional odes turned out for University occasions by resident Oxford composers. It may, therefore, have been the work of a musician from the capital, in which case it is more likely to have been intended for the November celebrations in which traditional academic ceremonial does not seem to have played a great part. Abell himself is an obvious contender, for he was familiar with the court ode style, and had already composed a song for the Coronation, 'Aloud proclaim the cheerful sound'.[10] In the absence of firm evidence, however, the identity of the composer

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9 *The Post Man*, 10 November, 1702.

10 *A Song on Queen Ann's Coronation* (London, 1702).

remains a matter for speculation, as does the precise date of Hall's ode, though it too may well have been intended for one or other of these Oxford celebrations.

Among the odes composed in honour of specific individuals before the turn of the century, were Robert King's ode for the birthday of the Earl of Exeter, Giovanni Baptista Draghi's ode for the birthday of Princess (later Queen) Anne, and Daniel Purcell's ode for the Duke of Gloucester (also 1696). Purcell's is the only one of the three for which the music has survived,[11] though some confusion has surrounded the precise occasion for which it was intended. On the first page of the score the ode is described as 'Birth day Musick' for the Duke of Gloucester by Henry Purcell, but a later note by E.H. Fellowes describes the work as an ode on the Duke's installation as a Knight of the Garter on 22 February 1696, and claims Daniel Purcell as the composer (Henry having died three months before). Prince William Henry of Gloucester, the son of the future Queen Anne, was born in 1689 and died in 1700, making him the youngest ever recipient of an ode. He was *invested* with the Garter in January 1696 (not February, as stated by Fellowes), but was not *installed* until a separate ceremony at Windsor Castle on 27 July, which was also his birthday.[12] Purcell's ode was not specifically related to the ceremony of installation as Fellowes had suggested, but formed part of celebrations held later in the day:

> In the evening, the same noble personages, with many of the nobility besides, were magnificently entertained by the Prince and Princess of Denmark. There was also a ball, and a new ode, performed in honour of the Duke's birth-day.[13]

Musically, the ode is an unremarkable piece, with little to distinguish it from the official court odes. On paper it appears to be a substantial work, but the numerous vocal sections are all comparatively short and the orchestral accompaniment is used modestly. All but three of the fourteen movements are in D major or minor, and the exceptions, two successive airs in A minor and a penultimate air in A major, are

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11 *T* MS 1175, pp.1-21.

12 Jenkin Lewis, *Memoirs of Prince William Henry, Duke of Glocester* (1789), 80-1.

13 *Ibid.*, 93.

hardly sufficient to provide a desirable tonal contrast, in spite of the relative brevity of the individual movements.

Robert King's lost ode for John Cecil, Earl of Exeter, dates from October 1693 and was a setting of words by Peter Motteux, who also provided the only known account of the work:

> My friend Mr. *Robert King* being lately at the right Honourable the Earl of *Exeter's* at *Burleigh*, I resolv'd to give him an Opportunity to exercise his happy Talent in Musical Composition, on the Subject of his Lordship's Birth-day then at hand; so I sent him the following Verses, which, not being now adorn'd with the Notes, will indeed rather display my Weakness, than his Lordship's Praise; yet will however show that I have the same sense of his Lordship's great Worth with you and all other good Men.[14]

If a performance of the ode was actually given at Burghley House (which is by no means certain), it would have been one of the very few instances of an ode of this sort being performed in a private, aristocratic, environment. Draghi's 1696 ode for Princess Anne, on the other hand, was undoubtedly intended for public consumption:

> On Wednesday next, being the 24th instant, will be performed at York-Buildings, a New Song Set by Signior Baptist, for the Birth Day of Her Royal Highness the Princess and by Her Royal Highness's command.[15]

The ode was evidently successful since it was given a second performance at York Buildings a week later with additional works by Blow and Purcell,[16] and its loss is particularly to be regretted in view of the quality of the St Cecilia ode which he was to write the following year.

In the mid-eighteenth century period, many so-called odes were in reality extended cantatas with instrumental accompaniment. This is certainly the case with William Boyce's three odes for the Prince of Wales (one for Frederick who died

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14 *The Gentleman's Journal*, (October 1693), 346.

15 *The London Gazette*, 18 February 1696-7.

16 *Ibid.*, 25 February 1696-7.

young in 1751, and two for his successor, the future George III),[17] all of which were written before he took up his official duties as Master of the King's Musick in 1756. These works have little in common with his court offerings, the most important difference being the absence of choral writing. Each 'ode' is scored for only two vocal soloists (who join in duet at the end of each work), and the similarities with the cantata are further emphasized by the reliance on pairs of recitatives and airs.

There are, however, two substantial royal odes dating from this mid-century period which merit particular attention, the earlier of the two being by John Travers for the birthday of Augusta, Princess of Wales in 1743. The venue and exact date of its performance have not been recorded -- the birthday itself was on 19 November-- but an autograph full score has survived,[18] and the work's grand scale suggests that it may have been intended for some formal occasion, though whether at a private function or in more public surroundings such as the theatre is unclear. Travers's ode is an impressive piece containing much interesting music, and succeeds in avoiding the weary formality which so often characterizes the vocal writing of the official court odes. It opens with a three-movement French overture which, along with the first chorus, establishes the predominance of C major, though later movements in a variety of related keys provide welcome tonal contrast in what is one of the longest works of its sort composed by this date. Movements for solo voice predominate (there are no duets or other solo ensembles) and include an atmospheric bass aria, 'Every fiend and sullen form', with tremolando string accompaniment in *furioso* style. There are also four choruses, including the fugal 'Behold this great and glorious day' which provides an important central climax to the ode, but the most striking movement in the work demonstrates Travers's resourceful use of his modest orchestral forces of two oboes, strings and continuo. The soprano da capo aria 'Bliss

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17 Facsimiles of the autograph scores of these works have been published in the series *Music for London Entertainment*, Ser.F, iv (1989). An account of the odes appears in Robert Bruce, 'William Boyce: some Manuscript Recoveries', *ML*, lv (1974), 437-43.

18 *Lcm* MS 1031.

and beauty grace thy train' has a remarkable continuo accompaniment for pizzicato cello with a fully written-out cembalo part (Ex.13), and although in the *B* section of the aria short passages of recitative are introduced and the keyboard reverts to its traditional continuo role, the arpeggio figurations of the *A* section are maintained in the cello part.

The other important work from this period, though less substantial than Travers's and much later in date, is Boyce's setting of an ode by David Mallet, 'See white-robed Peace'.[19] This was performed in June 1763 in the gardens of the Queen's House (on the site of the present Buckingham Palace), which George III and Queen Charlotte had decided to use as a private residence whilst retaining nearby St James's Palace for official functions. The ode was intended as a celebration for the King's birthday, but its performance came two days later (an official ode having been given at court in the usual way) and was part of an outdoor entertainment secretly arranged by the Queen, to celebrate not only the birthday itself, but also the completion of the palace's refurbishment. This is the only occasion, apart from performances at the pleasure gardens, on which an ode is known to have been given in the open (or semi-open) air. Indeed the context in which it was performed has distinct undertones of the elaborate ridottos and masquerades which were so popular at Ranelagh and Vauxhall. Few royal occasions of such lavishness have been recorded in eighteenth-century England:

> A most magnificent temple and bridge, finely illuminated with about 4000 glass lamps was erected in the garden. The painting on the front of the temple represented the king giving peace to all parts of the earth, and at his majesty's feet were the trophies of the numerous conquests made by *Britain*, and beneath them were a groupe of figures representing Envy, Malice, Detraction [*sic*], &c. tumbling headlong like the fallen angels in *Milton*. In the front of the temple was a magnificent orchestra with above fifty of the most eminent performers; but what is still more extraordinary is, that all this machinery, paintings, lights, &c. were designed and fixed by her majesty's direction in so private a manner, that the first intimation his majesty had of this most elegant and affectionate mark of so amiable a princess, was the suddenly throwing back the window-shutters of

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19 *Ob* MS Mus.Sch. c.118a.

> her majesty's palace, when his majesty entered the apartments between nine and ten o'clock....
>
> Most of the Royal Family were present, and a cold supper of upwards of 100 dishes, with an illuminated des[s]ert, also was provided.
>
> An ode suitable to the happy occasion was written and set to musick by Dr *Boyce*, who conducted the orchestra. The voices were Mrs *Scott*, Miss *Brent*, and Mr *Beard*. A select band performed during the supper, assisted by some suitable vocal music.[20]

The architectural and artistic effects designed for this occasion are reminiscent of the allegorical decorations erected at Dublin Castle for the celebration of the King's birthday in 1753 (see p.137), and the musical performance was on a similarly grand scale, for an orchestra of 50 players was far in excess of what was normally provided for the official court odes. The lavishness of the occasion is reflected too in the formal structure of the ode, which is in marked contrast to the regular recitative-air pattern found in Boyce's three cantata-odes mentioned above. In place of the concluding vocal duets of the latter there are three choral movements, including a large scale final movement with trumpets and drums. All the airs are through-composed, and in one instance two solo movements follow in succession without an intervening recitative. As if to balance this, the final soprano aria is preceded by an extensive accompanied recitative for tenor, which falls into three clearly defined sections, each of which describes a different aspect of the monarch's concern for his people.

Several other odes for royal personages composed in the mid-eighteenth century have been lost. Among them were Thomas Arne's *Ode on His Majesty's Happy Arrival*, marking the hasty return of George II from Hanover in August 1745 (in response to the landing of the Young Pretender in Scotland), and John Worgan's *Ode on the Rebellion*, dating from the same year. Ode performances outside London at this time were rare, and the only recorded examples are birthday odes for George II and Queen Caroline composed by Musgrave Heighington and performed at Great Yarmouth in 1733 and 1734 respectively. Heighington began his career as organist of Hull, and after spending some time in Dublin where he composed his

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20 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, xxxiii (1763), 300.

setting of *Alexander's Feast*, he moved to Yarmouth in 1733, being elected town organist soon afterwards. He produced a number of occasional compositions, including an ode for the Gentleman's Society at Spalding (see p.190-1), and while there is no reason to suppose that he possessed any great talent, his enthusiasm left a permanent mark in the form of the musical societies which he founded both at Yarmouth and at Dundee (where he became organist of the English Episcopal church in about 1756).

Odes in which national sentiment was the predominant theme maintained their popularity well into the last decades of the eighteenth century. The recovery of George III from periodic bouts of mental illness, for example, was occasionally the inspiration for musical works. Philip Hayes's *Ode on the King's Visit to Oxford, on his Recovery* (1785), has already been discussed (see p.71), but Benjamin Cooke's short *Ode on the King's Recovery*, which dates from 1789, and was probably given at the Academy of Ancient Music, commemorates a later restoration to health. Among the lost odes performed in London at this time were an *Ode to Peace* (*c.*1776) and an *Ode on British Genius* (*c.*1779) by Thomas Busby, and two works by François-Hippolyte Barthélemon inspired by naval victories. *Victory, an Ode Inscribed to Admiral Keppel*, performed at the Haymarket Theatre in March 1779, was probably a setting of William Tasker's *A Congratulatory Ode to Admiral Keppel*, but since Barthélemon is not noted as a composer of large-scale choral pieces, and since the ode was merely one work in a 'miscellaneous act', it is likely that he set only a selection of the poem's 22 stanzas. Barthélemon's second ode seems to have gone unnoticed, hitherto, but is recorded in a collection of newspaper cuttings relating to the history of Vauxhall Gardens.[21] An unidentified cutting, with a date of 1782 added by hand, gives the words of the composer's *Naval Ode on Sir George Rodney's complete Victory over the French Fleet in the West Indies*. 'Grand choruses' begin and end the ode, but they were probably not elaborate movements,

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21 *Ob* G.A. Surrey, c.21.

and in between come four four-line stanzas in identical metre and with a two-line chorus, suggesting that the same music may have been used each time. These factors imply a fairly small-scale work in which the chorus may have been merely an ensemble of all the soloists. In the absence of the music, however, it is impossible to know whether this work falls within the parameters of this study.

Apart from the official court offerings very few odes in honour of royal personages were performed during the last thirty years of the eighteenth century. One of the few exceptions is Samuel Arnold's ode celebrating the birthday of the Prince of Wales, which was given a number of performances at Marylebone Gardens in August and September 1772, the soloists being Messrs Reinhold and Bannister (the former replaced by Culver at the second performance), and Mesdames Forbes, Cartwright and Thompson. An advertisement for the second performance, which was given 'by the Desire of Several Persons of Quality' describes the work as 'in the manner of an Oratorio', while the use of a large number of soloists and 'a Number of the best Chorus Singers' further suggests that it was on a larger scale than the song-like odes which formed much of the standard fare of pleasure garden programmes.[22]

The performance of odes of this type beyond London continued to be the exception rather than the rule, but two large scale odes performed in Oxford towards the end of the century merit consideration here by way of conclusion. The first was Philip Hayes's *Ode to General Eliott* which was performed in the Music School on 22 May 1784, just two days after the work's completion. The anonymous libretto celebrates the achievements of General George Eliott, who successfully defended Gibraltar from a three-year Spanish blockade which began in 1779. It is likely that the poem was written with music in mind, for the varied metrical patterns of the text

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22 *The Public Advertiser*, 29 August and 4 September 1772 advertises performances of the ode on 1 and 7 September. An earlier advertisement (25 August) for a performance of an ode by Arnold 'sung in the Manner of an Oratorio' and employing most of the same soloists must also have been the birthday ode. Since the Prince of Wales's birthday was on 12 August it is possible that an even earlier performance has gone unrecorded.

provide convenient sections for musical setting, and the often vivid imagery within them was doubtless influential in determining the musical moods. The text of the first chorus, for example, proceeds in short rhyming couplets, and the central group of lines, in particular, seem calculated by their brevity to produce a dramatic and antiphonal style of choral writing:

> Tritons scourge
> The roaring surge,
> Billows dashing,
> Lightnings flashing.
> Tempest bolts his quiv'ring thunder,
> Elements are torn assunder.
> Boreas crowds
> The swelling shrouds,
> Vessels firing,
> Shrieks expiring.

Hayes responds with a movement which is arguably the most notable, and certainly the most dramatic, of the entire ode. Elsewhere the text provides a complete contrast to the frenetic activity of the first chorus. Towards the end of the ode, for example, is a long strophic air, 'When the Sun in the Evening sinks down in the west' which bears the heading 'Pastoral Ball[a]d address'd to the Soldiers, after Battle, receiving the rewards of their toil'. The rewards in question -- the delights of 'domestic felicity' and 'sweet content' -- are contemplated in five long stanzas of identical metre, the first four of which are set for soprano solo with an accompaniment of flute and strings. The fifth verse is set for the chorus (and an additional flute) but uses the same musical material as the preceding solo.

The other Oxford work is the *Ode to the Genius of Britain* by Thomas Sanders Dupuis, submitted as the composer's exercise for the 'accumulated' degrees of Bachelor and Doctor of Music, and performed on 25 June 1790, though the work apparently dates from September 1788.[23] Dupuis was 56 years old at the time of the performance and was thus considerably more experienced as a composer than many of those who normally submitted degree exercises. Although he was never a composer of the first rank, his ode is a competent and at times impressive piece of

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23 This is the date given in *Lbl* Add. MS 27756, one of two surviving autograph scores.

music, and with its scoring for four soloists, double chorus, and large orchestra (including two horns) it surpassed in scale virtually all the other exercises performed at Oxford in the course of the eighteenth century. A wordbook printed for the performance records that the tenor part, to which the majority of the solo movements are allotted, was divided between three singers, Harrison, Knyvett and Norris. The bass was sung by Gore, and the two trebles were Masters Hobbs and Barron, who doubtless came either from the choir of one of the Oxford college chapels, or were brought by Dupuis from London where he was organist and composer at the Chapel Royal. There are slight variations between the printed libretto and the autograph score, the latter including three movements which do not appear in the wordbook and were probably cut from the first performance to reduce the work's length. The librettist was Thomas Skelton Dupuis, a precocious relative of the composer, who had previously provided the libretto for the latter's Chapel Feast ode of 1784, and whose volume of *Miscellaneous Poetry* (published in 1789 while he still an undergraduate) boasted Arnold, Barthélemon, Burney, Philip Hayes and Parsons among its subscribers.[24] The *Ode* does not seem to have been inspired by any specific event but is a panegyrical commentary on various aspects of British achievement, notably her success in war, her prosperity in peace, and her cultivation of commerce and the arts.

Dupuis's ode demonstrates the changes which the large-scale musical ode had undergone in the course of the eighteenth century. In spirit the work still has much in common with oratorio, but with the role of the chorus greatly reduced. In the fullest version of the work only six of the twenty-nine numbers are choruses, and the cuts imposed at the first performance highlighted this shift of emphasis still further by reducing the number of choral movements to four. There are also fewer recitatives than in many earlier odes; most are merely brief introductions to the solo numbers which follow, and only one of the ode's seven recitatives sets more than

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24 The collection included the libretto of an oratorio, *Elijah*, later set to music by John Wall Callcott.

four lines of verse. All but two are in the *secco* style, and the concept of the recitative as a vehicle for narrative or colourful word-painting (so important in early odes) has virtually disappeared. Dupuis's ode is dominated by the movements for solo voice which are all through-composed with the exception of the first tenor aria. This single example of a da capo form in the ode is, however, a notable movement, with attractive writing for the tenor voice complemented by an orchestral accompaniment in which a slow-moving part for horns is contrasted with much more vigorous string writing.

There are indications in the *Ode to the Genius of Britain* that Dupuis wished to emphasize his familiarity with the latest stylistic developments.[25] The tenor airs 'Record if thy sacred scroll' and 'Genius of Albion', for example, portray a bombastic *pomposo* mood which owes more to the classical style than to the Baroque, while the opening of the aria 'With refinement, grace and ease' and the air 'Her wide affections can embrace' show the transition to the new style at its most complete (Ex.14). Such developments were evident earlier in Philip Hayes's Oxford installation ode of 1793, and their appearance in many of the movements of Dupuis's ode provides a further reminder that by the 1790s English audiences were becoming well acquainted with various classical idioms, and that these were being adopted with ease by some native composers.

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25 In this respect Dupuis differed significantly from many of his predecessors whose degree exercises tended to be composed in a conservative style, emphasizing their familiarity with well-established musical conventions (see Susan Wollenberg, 'Music in 18th-Century Oxford', *PRMA*, cviii (1981-2), 72-6).

7. MISCELLANEOUS ODES.

Most of the works discussed hitherto were composed within contexts which allowed for the development of a tradition of regular ode performances, often over a period of many years. A substantial number of works, however, had no connection with these established traditions, and were performed at occasions which, by their very nature, were often unique. Among them were works intended for social or convivial gatherings, and those performed for the benefit of charitable organizations. In addition to these, there remains also a miscellaneous assortment of works, which span the whole period of the genre's history and do not fit easily into any single category.

The performance of occasional works in a convivial context has already been considered in relation to the St Cecilia's Day feasts. Although the Cecilian odes quickly developed into extended choral pieces, they continued to be performed within the context of a banquet, and even after they had become an established tradition, their performance went unmentioned in the London newspaper advertisements for the feast. The St Cecilia's Day celebrations were not, however, the only such festivities held in the halls of the City Livery Companies. Similar banquets were organized by branches of the military, and by those who had been educated at particular schools, but the most frequent occasions of this sort were feasts which brought together the natives of an individual county who were then residing in London. Such feasts provided both an enjoyable social gathering and also an occasion for making and maintaining influential contacts. It is likely that most would have included musical entertainment of some sort, and although this may often have been only in the form of background music, there are two occasions on which works of more substance are known to have been performed.

Among the most lavish of the county feasts were those of Kent and Yorkshire. By 1686, for example, the latter had become an occasion of considerable prestige:

> [9 February] was the annuall feast of Yorkshiremen at Marchant Tailers' Hall, wher[e] the archbishop dined, and most of the principall gentlemen of that county then in town, and wher[e] my Lord Latimor, Sir John Kay, and myselfe were chosen three of the stewards for the ensuing year.[1]

Henry Purcell was asked to compose an ode for a feast which was due to be held on 14 February 1690, but county feasts, like St Cecilia's Day celebrations, were liable to disruption from external events, and in the wake of the turmoil which had brought William and Mary to the throne only months before, the feast was postponed. The deferred feast, including the performance of Purcell's ode, was eventually held on 27 March. The words of the ode were by Tom D'Urfey, and acclaim the city of York as 'famed Brigantium', the birthplace of Constantine, comparing it favourably with the 'puny town' of London. D'Urfey also incorporates a topical commentary on recent events: 'None were more ready' than the citizens of York to support 'princes that hate Rome's slavery' he asserts, and attributes to York the major credit for the success of the 'Glorious Revolution':

> To him that our mighty defender has been,
> Sound all,
> And to all the heroes invited him in,
> Sound all,
> And as the chief agents of this royal work,
> Long flourish the City and County of York.

D'Urfey described Purcell's setting as 'One of the finest Compositions he ever made' and it is clear that the feast was lavish too, for although the ode is scored on a fairly modest scale D'Urfey records that the performance cost £100.

The 'Yorkshire Feast Song', as it has become known, is among Purcell's most accomplished odes, not least because of its skilful word setting, for few of his contemporaries could have set lines such as 'Brigantium honoured with a race divine; / Gave birth to the victorious Constantine' with anything like the same ease

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1 *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, ed. Andrew Browning (Glasgow, 1936), 411.

and success. Indeed a characteristic of this ode (as of so much of the composer's occasional music) is that its masterful phrasing and word painting lend the poem a degree of gravity far greater than its empty compliments actually possess. The choral writing also deserves some mention, though none of the choruses constitutes an independent choral movement. In every case the chorus is either in dialogue with a soloist, or takes up the solo theme in a choral reprise, the latter being the case with the tenor solo 'The bashful Thames', and the duet for tenor and bass 'And in each tract of glory since'. Both the choral parts of these verses have a substantial contrapuntal element, and although the original air is always to the fore, the reprises are never merely harmonized versions of the preceding melody.

The Kent Feast followed the Cecilian pattern of a church service with sermon, then a banquet at which substantial musical performances appear to have been given. In 1701 it was announced that the feast would include 'An Entertainment of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, performed by the best Masters',[2] and the procession of Kentish men was accompanied on this occasion by trumpets, oboes and kettle drums.[3] At least one of these feasts also included the performance of 'An Ode in Praise of Kent' written by Peter Motteux, the text of which appeared as a preface to John Harris's *History of Kent* in 1719, with an introductory note that part of it 'was formerly Sung at a Feast of the Gentlemen of that County' and had been 'Introduc'd with Instrumental Musick'. No indication is given of which parts of the lengthy poem were set, but the composer may perhaps have been John Barrett (a pupil of Blow and later music master at Christ's Hospital), who evidently wrote an ode performed at Merchant Taylors' Hall in 1700.[4]

Much later in the eighteenth century, convivial odes became popular forms of entertainment at the annual dinners held by charitable institutions and

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2 *The London Post*, 17 November 1701.

3 Henry R. Plomer, *The Kentish Feast: being notes on the annual meetings of the Honourable Society of Natives of the County of Kent, 1657-1701* (Canterbury, 1916), 19.

4 John Harley, *Music in Purcell's London: The Social Background* (1968), 114.

professional organizations, though not all the odes composed for these occasions were odes in the sense understood by this study. Benjamin Cooke's *Ode on Handel*, for example, performed at the Handel Commemoration dinner in 1785 was, as already noted (see p.00), little more than a large-scale glee. Of slightly more substance was the ode 'Hail festive day' set in 1784 by Thomas Sanders Dupuis for the annual feast attended by the musicians of the Chapel Royal (of which Dupuis was then organist), and held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern. The words were by the composer's nephew, Thomas Skelton Dupuis, and were set as a short ode with no overture and an accompaniment for violin and continuo. A series of recitatives and solo numbers conclude with a chorus which Dupuis indicated could be sung separately as a glee. Apart from a vigorous bass air, the movements are simple and unexceptional, though the frequent contrasts of key between movements are unusual for a relatively small-scale ode.[5]

The performance of convivial odes was generally confined to London, but an exception is found in the activities of the Gentleman's Society at Spalding in Lincolnshire which, founded in 1710, was the oldest of several learned societies intended as provincial equivalents of the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries of London. By 1726 a 'consort of musick' was included among its activities, and in the following year a harpsichord was placed in its premises and arrangements made for the acquisition of music (including that of Corelli and Vivaldi) for performance at a weekly music meeting.[6] On the last Thursday in August the society celebrated its anniversary 'with music and a polite audience',[7] and in 1730 the society's founder, Maurice Johnson, wrote the words of an ode ('To love and social joys') which may well have been set to music.

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5 The only other ode known to have been associated with the Chapel Feast was Edmund Ayrton's glee-like *Ode to Harmony*, performed on 13 June 1799.

6 Dorothy M. Owen (ed.), *The Minute-Books of The Spalding Gentlemen's Society 1712-1755*, Lincoln Record Society vol.73 (Lincoln, 1981), xii-xiii.

7 [Richard Gough], *An Account of the Gentlemen's Society at Spalding* (1784), viii.

The composer Musgrave Heighington had been elected to honorary membership of the Spalding society in 1736 while he was resident in Great Yarmouth, and in August 1738 he presented, with his wife and son, a miscellaneous anniversary concert. Details of the programme have not survived, but in the course of corresponding over the arrangements Heighington noted 'I have got a new Performance, w[hi]ch is very entertaining & some fine Italian music'.[8] The following year an ode by Heighington for the anniversary was performed at the house of one of the society's members by the composer 'and gentlemen of the concert there'.[9] It consisted of an overture, a chorus 'for three voices', and three solo movements sung by Heighington, his wife, and his son, suggesting that the opening 'chorus' may only have been a solo ensemble. The music is lost and probably had little merit, but it was apparently popular with the Society and was performed again in October 1739 along with much other music, including Heighington's earlier setting of *Alexander's Feast*.[10]

From about 1700 onwards, musical performances became an increasingly important means of fund raising, both for individual artists (in the form of the benefit concert), and also for the many philanthropic undertakings which were a feature of eighteenth-century society. Many of the latter raised money by means of elaborate church services at which much sacred music was performed, the annual festival of the Sons of the Clergy being the best known example. Numerous other charities and institutions, however, benefited by services of a similar nature, and by concert performances of secular works, notably oratorios. For most of the century the ode had little role to play in such undertakings, but from the 1770s onwards odes began to be performed at the banquets and annual dinners organized by charitable

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8 Letter to Robert Butter, 7 August 1738, preserved among the papers of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society (drawer 2, no.81). I am grateful to Mr Norman Leveritt, Honorary Curator of the Spalding Museum, for providing me with this information.

9 The anonymous words are printed in Gough, *op. cit.*, ix.

10 Owen, *op. cit.*, xiii.

and philanthropic societies. A report of a charity-school festival in the City of London in 1775 describes a pattern of proceeding which was probably broadly typical of such festivities:

> According to annual custom, Mr. Alderman Harley, president, with the trustees and subscribers to the charity schools, preceded by upwards of 5000 charity-children, forming two processions, one from the Royal Exchange, the other from Covent-garden Piazza, went to Christ-church, Newgate-street, where, after a sermon... an anthem was sung by some select children, in which the whole joined four times in chorus. The president, stewards, trustees, &c. dined at the London Tavern, where an ode was sung in honour of those laudable institutions.[11]

Such odes may have been more common than surviving evidence now suggests, for they were normally only a peripheral part of more important activities, and may often have passed unmentioned. They were rarely large-scale pieces, and some were merely dinner-table works, simple glee-like odes akin to those which have already been mentioned. This was almost certainly the case with the two odes performed at the anniversary dinner of the Marine Society, held at the London Tavern in March 1780, one of which was directed to be 'sung at table'.[12]

Among the most significant manifestations of the eighteenth-century growth in public charitable undertakings was the foundation of hospitals and infirmaries, notably in London, Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin, but also in many other towns and cities. The initial capital for such projects normally came from public subscription (often with the incentive of a role in the hospital's government in return for a suitably generous donation), but once the institutions were functioning, music provided an important means of fund raising. In general, miscellaneous concerts of vocal and instrumental music with, occasionally, a more ambitious performance of a Handel oratorio, was the standard fare of such undertakings. There are, however, one or two instances of specially-composed odes being produced to mark significant occasions in the life of such institutions.

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11 *The Annual Register* (1775), 115-16. It has not been possible to identify the ode in question.

12 The words appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, l (1780), 143.

In the capital, odes were composed for two of the most important medical foundations of the century. Thomas Arne's ode for the Middlesex Hospital was performed on 5 May 1775, to mark the laying by the Duke of Northumberland of the foundation stone for a new east wing of the hospital, which stood to the north of Oxford Street. Later in the day, the hospital's governors and others connected with the charity met at Carlisle House in Soho Square for a dinner, in the course of which a musical performance was given:

> Those Gentlemen who cannot favour the Charity with their Presence, are desired to return their Tickets to the Hospital as soon as possible, that proper Provision may be made. Dinner to be on Table at Four o'Clock. A Band of Music is provided; and an Ode, composed by Dr. Arne will be performed on the Occasion.[13]

Unfortunately, neither the words nor the music for Arne's ode have survived.

A decade later, on 27 October 1785, a new teaching block -- the first regular medical school to be attached to an English hospital -- was opened at the London Hospital in Whitechapel. As part of the celebrations (which began with divine service followed by a series of orations from various medical scholars), Samuel Arnold set to music the words of an ode by William Blizard, a leading surgeon who had played a major role in initiating the new building. The hospital's governors were already in the habit of observing the anniversary of its foundation, and music already played some part on those occasions.[14] Indeed the governors had recently noted the 'very great services' which Arnold had provided with 'his Band of Musick at the late Anniversary', and resolved that he be made a life governor in recognition of them.[15] These early musical activities were probably quite modest, but the opening ceremony for the new building was planned on a large scale, and the

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13 *The Public Advertiser*, 5 May 1775.

14 An example of the type of work performed is the *Song, Sung by Mr Beard at the Annual Meeting of the President, Vice-President, Governors, &c. of the London Hospital* (1781), which includes additional stanzas for the festivals of the Sons of the Clergy and the Magdalen Hospital.

15 London Hospital Archives, General Court Minute Book (LH/A/2/4), 1 June 1785. A subsequent Annual Governor was Robert Hudson, master of the children at St Paul's Cathedral, who took part in the performance of Arnold's ode in 1785.

musical performance constituted a separate part of the proceedings due to the limited amount of available space:

> The Medical Theatre being judged too small for the Accommodation of the respectable Company expected, it is determined to have the Musical Part of the Ceremony in the Great Room at the London Tavern. To prevent, therefore, any Inconvenience, the Subscribers, and other Friends of the Design, are requested to observe that the Orations will commence, at the Hospital, at Twelve precisely; and that the Company will adjourn from thence to the Tavern, where the Musical Performance will begin at Two o'Clock.[16]

A number of published histories of the Hospital state that the London Tavern was only the venue for an earlier rehearsal of the ode, and that the performance itself was given during a banquet at the Albion Tavern in Aldersgate Street.[17] The Hospital's archives throw no light on this confusion, but in those newspapers which reported the occasion the London Tavern is consistently named as the venue for both the dinner and the musical performance (though one paper incorrectly stated that the words were by Jonas Hanway).[18] The complete text of Blizard's ode, described by an early biographer as 'expressive of humane and correct sentiment',[19] cannot now be traced, but the opening recitative and air are extant, inspiring the observation from a more recent commentator that Blizard's poetry 'lacked the sure swift touch that characterized his surgery'![20] Nevertheless, the musical performance (directed by Arnold) was a success, the governors resolved soon afterwards to allow a second

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16 *The Public Advertiser*, 24 October 1785.

17 This assertion appears in A.E. Clark-Kennedy's, *The London: A Study in the Voluntary Hospital System* (1962), i, 167, and was repeated in the same author's *London Pride: The story of a voluntary hospital* (1979), 85. It has been perpetuated most recently in John Ellis, *LHMC 1785-1985: The story of the London Hospital Medical College* (1986), 10. In addition to the quoted report in *The Public Advertiser*, detailed accounts of the occasion giving the London Tavern as venue were carried in *The Morning Chronicle* (28 October) and the *London Chronicle* (27 October).

18 *The Public Advertiser*, 28 October 1785. The same report records that the ode performance was supplemented by a harpsichord concerto, 'well executed by Miss Hudson'.

19 William Cooke, *A Brief Memoir of Sir William Blizard* (1835), 7.

20 Ellis, *op. cit.*, 10

performance specifically 'for the Benefit of the Theatre,'[21] and plans to publish the ode, though ultimately abandoned, appear to have reached an advanced stage:

> Mr. Hanway this day delivered 70 Metal Plates & the frontice piece in Copper of the Ode performed at the Feast 1785 the same having been set to Music by Dr. Arnold & presented as the property of the Hospital by the Stewards of that year.[22]

The only 'hospital ode' for which the music is now extant is William Boyce's *Ode to Charity*, given its first performance at Leicester Castle in September 1774 for the benefit of the city's Infirmary, which had been founded three years earlier. It was the custom here, as at the London Hospital, to mark the anniversary of the hospital's foundation, and the 1774 celebration was among the most lavish ever held, with the festivities extending over two days, and including a performance of Handel's *Jephtha* at St Martin's church in addition to the concert in which Boyce's ode was performed. It is an indication of the overall profitability of the venture that the hospital governors allowed £150 to cover the cost of the concert, with an additional £22 set aside on this occasion to pay for setting up the castle hall.[23]

The words of the *Ode to Charity* were by Joseph Cradock, who had been involved in most of the earlier musical performances in aid of the Infirmary. The substantial cost of the concert was partly due to the fact that Cradock paid Boyce 100 guineas for composing the ode,[24] though the fact that Cradock also arranged for some of the leading London musicians of the day to take part in the concert suggests that he may well have borne some of the costs personally. The orchestra was led by Felice Giardini, and the singers included Mr Norris and Miss Davies, though the latter was unwell at the performance of the ode and 'retired to her carriage' after

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21 London Hospital Archives, Committee Transactions, (LH/A/5/11), 1 November 1785.

22 *Ibid.*, 21 March 1786.

23 Ernest R. Frizelle and Janet D. Martin, *The Leicester Royal Infirmary 1771-1971* (Leicester, 1971), 74.

24 There is a note to this effect at the end of *Lcm* MS 784.

singing her first air 'with difficulty.'[25] In spite of this setback, the ode was a success and received a number of subsequent performances, among them a repeat at the following year's anniversary celebrations, and a performance at Covent Garden on 19 March 1779, alongside Handel's *Alexander's Feast*, under the direction of Linley.[26]

Cradock's short libretto begins with a lament for those who suffer 'on the thorny bed of care'. Next the practice of charity is encouraged ('Man to man must bring relief'), and in the final lines a sacred theme is introduced to bring the poem to a fitting conclusion. Boyce echoes this poetical pattern in his setting, which is not a lengthy work like his earlier St Cecilia odes, or the Cambridge installation ode, but instead reflects the brevity of the libretto and echoes its themes with considerable effectiveness. The first stanza of the poem, for example, is set as an arioso-like tenor solo in G minor with accompaniment for oboe and strings, and aptly depicts the sufferings of the 'trembling victim'. The same melancholy mood is maintained in the succeeding chorus (also in G minor) with its insistent cries of 'Deplore his fate'. At the heart of the ode, however, is the lyrical duet for tenor and bass 'Here shall soft Charity repair', which represents the turning point of the ode away from its reflections on the misery of human suffering to the relief which charity brings. This movement was considered the highlight of the ode and achieved an enormous popularity, being given performances at numerous concerts, and even in a liturgical context:

> The duet of "Here shall soft Charity repair", has been repeated at St. Paul's, and indeed is now admitted after an introductory line of recitative from Scripture, into almost all the cathedrals.[27]

Boyce's intention, however, was clearly to mirror the scheme of Cradock's libretto and bring the work to a rousing conclusion, for he follows the duet with a soprano

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25 James Thompson, *The History of Leicester in the Eighteenth Century* (1871), 157.

26 Joseph Cradock, *Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs* (1828), i, 123. See also *London Stage* pt.5, 241.

27 Cradock, *op. cit.*, i, xxvi.

air and a substantial chorus, both of which are scored for a full orchestra which includes trumpets and drums. That the ode's life was ultimately prolonged by the popularity of one of its more intimate movements is a reminder that eighteenth-century audiences were capable of discerning criticism, and did not necessarily judge a work by its grander effects. The duet's success also suggests that the degree to which composers sympathetically matched music to words continued to influence the popular response to such works.

In addition to his involvement with the London Hospital, Samuel Arnold was responsible for two other 'charitable' odes towards the end of the century. The first, performed at the Haymarket Theatre in January 1799, was the cantata-like *Ode for the Choral Fund*,[28] the second an ode for the Sons of the Clergy, performed in May 1799. Although the music for the latter has not survived, the words -- a curious combination of the secular and sacred by 'Mr Tew' -- were printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, and show that the ode had at least seven movements including three choruses. The main body of the ode considers the relief which charity and religion bring to those afflicted with misfortune, and the sacred aspect is increasingly stressed towards the end of the ode, which ends with a chorus of 'Hallelujah -- Amen'. The ode was not, however, performed at the service for the Sons of the Clergy in St Paul's Cathedral, but at a feast which was held on the same day and which, like that for the Middlesex Hospital, was attended by those most closely connected with the organization of the charity.

Annual dinners were also held by many of the philanthropical societies founded in London during the eighteenth century. The Medical Society, for example, held its first dinner in 1775, two year's after the society's formation, and in March 1790 *The Gentleman's Magazine* printed the words of an ode for their anniversary, written by one of its members, George Wallis, and set to music by 'Mr. Percy'. The latter was probably the organist and singer John Percy (1755-97),

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28 *T* MS 989. The words were by William Fitzgerald.

known in his day as the composer of a popular ballad, 'Wapping Old Stairs'.[29] The music of his ode has not survived, but it was probably a glee-like work of little substance, for there is no indication of any instrumental accompaniment, and the opening chorus returns as a refrain after each of the other three movements. The Humane Society, founded in 1774 to promote artificial resuscitation (a practice dismissed by contemporary medical opinion), raised funds by an annual dinner for which the prominent and wealthy were invited to act as stewards. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, over three hundred subscribers would attend these occasions, which ended with a bizarre spectacle:

> A procession of persons rescued from drowning walked round the dinner table in silent and solemn pace, while Dr. Cogan [one of the Society's founders] sang songs of his own composition, calculated to draw money from the company, who were invited to join in the chorus:-
>
> And a begging we will go, will go,
> And a begging we will go![30]

A lengthy ode in honour of the Society was written by the poet Edward Burnaby Green and set to music by John Wall Callcott in 1786 (see pp.219-20.). It was performed on 13 February, not at one of the society's annual dinners but at Freemasons' Hall and was given by an impressive array of performers which included Samuel Arnold, Philip Hayes, Thomas Sanders Dupuis, William Parsons, John Worgan, Benjamin Cooke, Theodore Aylward and Robert Hudson.

In addition to these convivial and charity odes a large number of other works were composed between 1680 and 1800 for a miscellaneous assortment of occasions and venues. Chief among the composers of such odes in the late seventeenth century were Henry Purcell and Jeremiah Clarke. In 1689, for example, Purcell composed an ode for performance at a school in Chelsea run by Louis Maidwell. Little is known of this educational establishment, but the ode is extant, and sets

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29 James D. Brown and Stephen S. Stratton, *British Musical Biography* (Birmingham, 1897), 317.

30 Henry Julian Hunter, *Old Age in Bath: Recollections of two Retired Physicians* (Bath, 1873), 35-6.

words provided by one of Maidwell's students. It is not known whether, as with *Dido and Aeneas* (composed in the same year for another Chelsea school), the pupils were involved in the performance.

Jeremiah Clarke produced several odes in addition to those discussed elsewhere, among them *An Ode Pindarick on Barbadoes*, also known as the 'Barbadoes Song'. A printed libretto, of unknown authorship, and a copy of the score are extant, and although neither of these sources is dated the background to the work's composition has now been established. A note in the score reports that the piece was composed 'for ye Gentlemen of Barbadoes and p[e]rformed to them at Stationers' Hall'. These 'gentlemen' were London merchants who traded with Barbadoes, though it appears that the ode actually commemorates a gale which hit London in November 1703.[31]

Two themes dominate the ode's text. The first is the storm itself, referred to in the opening stanza:

> No more, great rulers of the sky, ye awful
> Pow'rs, no more
> With pestilential blasts, or dire disease,
> Infest the natives on our sunny shore;
> Nor check the kind embrace of our surrounding seas
> With blust'ring elements that rage and roar.

The second stanza -- beginning 'Behold Apollo, and the tuneful Nine' -- introduces the traditional ideas of the *encomium musicae*, and these become an integral part of the remainder of the poem. Thus, in spite of the unusual circumstances which inspired the ode's composition, the sentiments of much of the libretto are indistinguishable from the odes to music composed during the same period. In this instance, however, the power of music is invoked not to inspire the human soul, but as a means of imploring the 'Great rulers of the sky' to prevent a repetition of the fatal hurricane, the characteristics of which are vividly depicted in the first solo air (Ex.15).

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31 See H. Diack Johnstone's review of Taylor, *Thematic Catalog of the Works of Jeremiah Clarke*, in *ML*, lix (1978), 58.

More mystery, in this instance still unsolved, surrounds Clarke's ode or 'song' 'on the Assumption'. This is a setting of a fine poem by Richard Crawshaw (first published in 1646), but it has not, so far, been possible to ascertain either the circumstances which led to its being set by Clarke, or the date of composition. The overtly Catholic sentiments of Crashaw's poem could have found no place in any act of worship of the Church of England in Clarke's day, nor would they have been likely to find favour in a public concert. It would appear that the work was either written as a personal response to the words, or that it was the result of a private commission. Whatever the truth about the inspiration for its composition, however, it undoubtedly ranks with the *Barbadoes Song* as one of Clarke's most accomplished and appealing odes.

Among other miscellaneous works to survive are three wedding odes, though references in their libretti to Hymen and other pagan deities make it clear that all three were intended for performance at post-nuptial celebrations rather than at the marriage service itself. None of the occasions for which they were intended can be identified, but the earliest is undoubtedly John Blow's, 'Bring, shepherds, bring the Kids', a modest but effective work scored for alto and tenor soloists with an accompaniment for strings and trumpets. There are only four movements -- a duet (with instrumental introduction), an alto solo, a reprise of the first duet, and a final chorus. This last movement is a lengthy piece incorporating several different thematic ideas and a short contrasting passage for solo voices. In the preface to their edition of the ode,[32] Watkins Shaw and Walter Bergmann have speculated on stylistic grounds that the work dates from the 1690s, and was probably intended for a private patron rather than for the marriage of a member of the royal family. Three manuscript scores have survived, two apparently in the hand of William Croft, and these would seem to imply that the ode was performed on more than one occasion. Only two of them contain the complete work, however, while the third omits the

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32 Schott, 1954.

final chorus and is headed '2d song', suggesting that it was a deliberately shortened version intended for another occasion. The ode must certainly have been composed prior to 1700, for most of it was published that year in *Amphion Anglicus*. The duet and solo appeared in a version with continuo accompaniment, and the final chorus provided an epilogue to the whole volume being there described as 'A Song for Four Voices and Two Violins, at an Entertainment of Musick in York Buildings'. Had the entire wedding ode been performed on that occasion, it might be expected that the fact would have been noted in *Amphion Anglicus* and that the movements would have appeared together. Since the words of the chorus contain little which is specifically nuptial, it is possible that Blow did not put the solo movements and chorus together as a single work until after 1700. It is just conceivable, however, that he did not combine them at all, and that they were assembled by William Croft, after Blow's death, for an occasion when a wedding ode was required.

Johann Christoph Pepusch's wedding ode, 'Hymen source of human bliss', probably dates from the 1720s and has formal similarities with his Cecilian work *The Union of the Three Sister Arts* (1723). Choruses begin and end the ode, and in between come four da capo arias (preceded by *secco* recitatives) for soloists personifying Harmony, Virtue, Wisdom and Hymen. In spite of this characterization, and the use of da capo arias, the textual references are too specific to suggest a work intended for general theatrical use, unless it were as a nuptial entertainment within a specific play. The line 'With joy I fill this spacious dome' from Hymen's aria, however, hints at a grand setting such as Cannons at Edgware, and it has been suggested that this work was the 'serenata' known to have been performed there for the eldest son of the Duke of Chandos on 1 September 1724.[33]

The third wedding ode to have survived is John Alcock's 'Two constant hearts'. Like the nuptial odes of Blow and Pepusch, this sets an anonymous text

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33 D.F. Cook, 'The Life and Works of Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667-1752), with special reference to his dramatic works and cantatas' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1982), i, 203-4.

with no indication of the date or the occasion for which it was intended, though one may suppose that it was performed in or near Lichfield where Alcock had gone as cathedral organist in 1750 and remained (though not continuously in that post) for over fifty years. The work is on a relatively small scale and consists of a series of airs, arias and simple recitatives for three soloists. There is no overture, and the final chorus is an arrangement of the first aria with the instrumental introduction omitted, but the most effective movement is the alto solo 'Hear ye this my just command', a *spiritoso* air in triple time constructed on a vigorous ground bass -- a surprising device to find in a work of this date.

A rather different, but no less genuinely 'occasional' ode was that composed by James Hook for the Society of Artists, which was performed at the opening of the Society's new exhibition room in the Strand in 1772. The libretto, by the minor poet Evan Lloyd (a friend of the Society's vice-president, John Hamilton),[34] runs to over a hundred lines and was printed as a wordbook for the occasion, as well as appearing in *The Gentleman's Magazine* and *The Annual Register*. Its theme is the triumph of the liberal arts, but since Lloyd was also a friend and supporter of the radical politician John Wilkes, there are also some political overtones. Sadly, none of Hook's music has survived, but the archives of the Society of Artists record its preparation in considerable detail, making this perhaps the best-documented of any ode performances.[35] The foundation stone for the new exhibition room had been laid in June 1771, and in the early spring of the following year the Society began to plan the opening ceremony. It is evident that the arrangements for the ode did not always proceed smoothly. A draft notice in the archives, for example, probably intended as a newspaper advertisement, announces the intention of opening the new

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34 See Cecil J.L. Price, '*A Man of Genius, and a Welch Man*' (Swansea, 1963), 23-4.

35 The Society's archives are preserved at the Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, Piccadilly. For a calendar of the papers see National Register of Archives report no.14837, compiled by Brenda Weeden and Jean Agnew (1971).

room with the performance of an ode on 1 May,[36] but a meeting of the Directors on 30 March resolved to place a notice in the press to the following effect:

> The President and directors give notice that their Exhibition for this year being the 13th will open some time the beginning of May next; They are under a necessity of thus postponing it as the Ode &c with which they intend to open their new rooms will not be ready for performance before that time.[37]

Curiously another two weeks were to pass before a formal resolution 'that the Ode written by Mr. Lloyd, and now setting to musick by Mr. Hook be performed at the opening of the new room at the Expence of the Society.'[38] The phrase 'and now setting to music' indicates that the work was already in hand, suggesting that an informal arrangement with author and composer, perhaps through John Hamilton, may have led to a delay in communication at an official level.

After this initial setback preparations went well, and on 18 April the Directors agreed the wording for the tickets. A rehearsal of the ode was arranged for Saturday 9 May, two days before the opening ceremony, and it was agreed that members of the Society 'and their friends, not exceeding three each' might attend.[39] Finally, acting on a resolution of an earlier meeting, the Society approved the text of a letter to be sent to the Dukes of Richmond and Northumberland inviting them to act as Stewards at the opening ceremony. Four days later the Directors agreed that a 'summons' be sent to members informing them that the rehearsal would begin in the new room at noon, and requesting that 'as this performance is no more than a practice the members will please to observe that dress in the audience is not necessary.' At the same meeting a letter was approved inviting Felice de Giardini to lead the orchestra:

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36 SA/15/221.

37 Minutes of Directors' Meetings (SA/10).

38 Minutes of General Meetings (SA/4), 16 April 1772. The resolution confirmed a decision of the Directors made two days before.

39 Minutes of Directors' Meetings, 18 April 1772.

> Sir
>
> I am ordered... by the Society of Artists of Great Britain to acquaint you that as they intend to open their new room on the 11 May next with an Ode by the Revd. Mr. Lloyd and sett to Musick by Mr. Hook, they wish to joyn your acknowledged superiority to the merits of those very ingenious Gentlemen and request the honour of your Leading the Band on that occasion which will be acknowledged as the highest obligation.[40]

Giardini evidently accepted the invitation, though no written reply has survived.

Between 1 May and the opening ceremony six Directors' meetings were held, all predominantly concerned with arrangements for the distribution of tickets. Fifty were sent to the two dukes, and allocations were made to the more prominent musicians taking parts. Lloyd and Hook were given twenty tickets between them, Giardini was allocated six, and William Savage, who was to provide the boys for the treble line was given three. Two tickets each were given to the four vocal soloists (Vernon, Reinhold, Mrs Weichsell and Mrs Mattocks) to Crosdale ([Crosdill?] principal cellist) and to Parke (principal oboe).[41] On 4 May, the text of a new advertisement for the press was agreed:

> We are assured the incorporated Society of Artists of Great Britain will open their new room near Exeter Exchange in the Strand under the auspices of their Graces the Dukes of Richmond and Northumberland, for the entertainment of the Nobility and people of fashion Gratis with an Ode in honour of the fine Arts wrote by the Revd. Mr. Lloyd and set to Musick by Mr. Hook, and perform[e]d under the direction of Sigr. Giardini.

At a meeting on 4 May the Directors had decided that rails should be erected to divide 'the several Classes of the audience', but on 7 May -- at the last meeting before the rehearsal and performance -- they changed their minds and resolved 'that there be no rail nor divisions to separate the audience in hearing the Ode.'

For reasons which are not explained in the archives, the opening ceremony was apparently brought forward to Friday 8 May, and this may explain why no detailed account of the occasion survives. *The Gentleman's Magazine* does not refer to it, while *The London Chronicle* records the proceedings in a sentence, with no

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40 *Ibid.*, 22 April 1772.

41 *Ibid.*, 1 and 4 May 1772.

any musical performance, though a reference to 'a most polite audience' would appear to vindicate the decision to dispense with rails or other divisions among the auditors. Some years after its performance, however, Hook's ode was the subject of a scurrilous anecdote:

> When the performance was over, some of the conoscenti, discussing its merits, appealed to Giardini, (who had conducted) for his decision; he asserted, with peculiar gravity, that it was the best music he had heard. "Why," says one, "It is *not all his own*". "True," replied the keen Signor, "*that is the reason it is so good.*"[42]

The Society was far from prompt in paying the performers, and Hook was himself obliged to raise the matter:

> Mr. Hook presents his Comp[limen]ts to Mr. Thompson have taken the Liberty of sending the Bill of the Expences attending the Ode to him -- not knowing who was the proper Person to send them too [*sic*] -- the performers having been very pressing for their Money, it being the Custom to pay them on the day of performance. Should Esteem a favor if Mr. Thompson wou[l]d send them to the person who is to settle them.[43]

The most interesting of the Society's papers relating to Hook's ode is the bill of expenses which recorded the eventual payments. This lists, with the exception of the vocal soloists, each individual who took part in the performance and (except for three principal instrumentalists) the fee which he or she received. Few eighteenth-century performances, in any genre, are documented in such detail, and there is certainly no other ode for which such a full account of performers and expenses has survived. Thus it is possible to deduce the orchestration of Hook's ode, and other details about its performance -- facts which could not otherwise have been determined. The chorus (which cost a total of £7 17*s* 6*d*) consisted of four altos, four tenors, eight basses and 'Mr. Savages Boys', the last providing the treble line at no expense to the Society. Each of the altos and tenors was paid 10*s* 6*d*, with the exception of a single alto who received a guinea (possibly an indication that he had a small solo part at some point). Of the basses, only six received payment -- again 10*s*

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42 *A.B.C. Dario Musico* (Bath, 1780), 27.

43 SA/39/66.

6*d* in each case -- which suggests that the two unpaid performers (Johnston and Simpkinston) may have been members of the Society of Artists and took part at their own request.

The orchestra is divided in the account into three groups, the first being the violins, of which there were fourteen. The bill amounted to £14 2*s*, twelve violinists receiving a guinea each and two receiving 15*s*. Giardini's name appears at the head of the list, but with no recorded payment; he was doubtless paid by a separate arrangement, perhaps on the day of the performance, but it is curious that no record of this has survived, especially in view of the formal manner in which he had originally been invited to lead the band. The payments to the other strings -- four violas, four cellos, three double basses -- and to the two bassoons again vary, presumably according to the amount of music which was required to be played. Most received a guinea, but one cellist and one bassoonist received only 15*s* each. Finally the other instruments are listed: kettle drums and two each of oboes, flutes (doubling clarinets), French horns and trumpets. The cost for this group of performers was £7 10*s* and each player was paid a guinea, apart from the trumpeters and the drummer who each received 15*s*. As in the case of Giardini (and perhaps for the same reason), the principal cellist and the principal oboist are named in the bill but without any payment being recorded.

A number of illuminating additional expenses are also listed: a porter was paid two guineas for carrying instruments to and from both Hook's house and the Exhibition Room; the cost of copying 375½ sheets of music (charged at one shilling per sheet) amounted to £18 15*s* 6*d*; carriage of a pianoforte to and from the exhibition room cost 4*s*, and tuning it 5*s*. The bill for the entire musical performance, excluding payments to the four vocal soloists and the three principal instrumentalists amounted to £62 16*s*.[44] The total cost of the opening ceremony must therefore have been much higher, a substantial sum of money, and one which

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44 The main account of expenses is SA/40/7. The bill relating to music copying and carriage of the piano is SA/40/8.

the Society could hardly have hoped to recoup given that no charge was made for admission.

Hook's ode received one other performance on 28 August 1772 at Marylebone Gardens:

> Between the Acts [of Hook's burletta *Il Dilettante*], Concerto on *Piano Forte* by Hook (by Particular Desire); and *The Ode* composed by Hook for the opening of the New Exhibition Room of the Royal Incorporated Artists of Great Britain. Chorusses will be supported by a number of Capital singers and young gentlemen of St. Paul's Choir. The principal vocal parts by Reinhold, Bannister, Mrs Cartwright, and Mrs Thompson.[45]

It was noted that the programme 'seems adapted to all Tastes on account of the great Variety it affords, the *Ode* being rather serious, and the Burletta is wrote on a Subject of Ridicule'.[46] The pleasure gardens were also the venue for performances of two other odes by Hook, both now lost. The words of 'The Return of the Peace', described as 'a new ode', appear in a collection of newspaper cuttings relating to Vauxhall Gardens,[47] but it seems unlikely that this was a work of any substance. Hook's *Occasional Ode*, however, was probably more significant and was apparently performed for the first time at the annual Vauxhall Gardens regatta on 2 July 1790, and again at the same event the following year.[48] No libretto has survived, but an unidentified newspaper account refers to the work as 'a grand occasional ode',[49] and the fact that it seems to have been performed only on the occasion of the regatta suggests that it may have been on a larger scale than was common for vocal works at the pleasure gardens. The Vauxhall regattas had been started in 1786 as a means of increasing patronage of the gardens, but the idea was by no means a new one, for the poetry section of *The Annual Register* for 1775

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45 *London Stage* pt.4, 1650.

46 *Ibid.*

47 *Ob* G.A. Surrey c.21.

48 Charles Cudworth, 'The Vauxhall "Lists"', *GSJ*, xx (1967), 30, 37.

49 *Ob* G.A. Surrey c.22.

includes the words of 'ode for the regatta, or water-jubilee' performed at Ranelagh on 23 June 1775. There is no reason to suppose that this was set to music, however, or that it was the libretto for Hook's much later *Occasional Ode*.

Among the criteria by which the ode was defined for the purposes of this study, was the 'occasional' nature of the genre. Most odes composed before about 1750, were intended for a specific occasion, or prompted by a particular circumstance or happening, and this is invariably reflected in the words. As the eighteenth century progressed, however, composers began increasingly to respond to developments which were affecting the poetical ode, and which are seen most noticeably in the poetry of William Collins, Thomas Gray, and Joseph Warton. One very specific example of the way in which the ode came to reflect general developments in literary and poetical taste is found in the group of substantial works which grew out of the revived enthusiasm for Shakespeare during the 1740s. Shakespeare's plays had been popular with composers at various periods since his death, notably at the end of the seventeenth century, and enthusiasm revived again in the middle of the eighteenth. The earliest example of an 'ode' on a Shakespearean theme is William Boyce's *Ode in Commemoration of Shakespeare*, which set words by William Havard and was given its first performance at Drury Lane theatre on 1 April 1756.[50] This small-scale work hardly merits consideration here, however, for like some of Boyce's odes for royal birthdays mentioned briefly in the preceding chapter, its most obvious formal influence was the solo cantata (though in this instance there are two soloists), and it has little in common with the composer's large-scale odes. Although the final movement has parts for four-part chorus, these merely repeat in harmony verses sung initially by the soloists, so that the ode could be performed with equal effect without the chorus, and may even perhaps have been given in this way on later occasions.

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50 See Michael Tavinor, '"Titles and ermine fall behind", an Ode to Shakespeare by William Boyce: a critical study and performing edition' (M.Mus. dissertation, University of London, 1977).

The acting of David Garrick was an important factor in encouraging the popularity of Shakespeare with mid-eighteenth-century audiences, and it was Garrick's plans for an elaborate three-day festival or 'jubilee' at Stratford-on-Avon in 1769 which marked that town's establishment as the national Shakespearean shrine.[51] A statue of the playwright was unveiled at the town hall, and to commemorate the occasion Garrick himself wrote a lengthy poetical ode which he asked Thomas Arne to set to music.[52] On 14 July 1769 Garrick wrote to his friend William Hunt that he had finished the poem and that 'Dr Arne works like a dragon at it -- he is all fire and flame about it'.[53] The musical setting was complete by the middle of August, allowing two rehearsals to be held at Arne's apartments at Covent Garden.[54] The first performance was on the second day of the Jubilee (7 September) under the composer's direction, in a large and specially-built rotunda similar to that at the Ranelagh pleasure gardens.[55] Although always referred to as an ode, Arne's setting was unusual in that it was interspersed by portions of verse recited by Garrick himself, whose performance (aided by Arne's music) captivated the audience to such a degree that the poor quality of his verse passed unnoticed:

> The recitative parts were spoken by Mr. Garrick, [who] perhaps, in all the characters in which he ever appeared, never shewed more powers, more judgement, or ever caused a greater emotion, or made a stronger impression on the minds of his auditors. In fact, though he was frequently disturbed by the turbulence of applause, it was

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51 See Maximillian E. Novak, *Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (1983), 137-9. For contemporary accounts of the Stratford Jubilee see *The Town and Country Magazine*, i (1769), 473-5, and *The Gentleman's Magazine*, xxxix (1769), 421-3. A detailed account is also found in R.B. Wheler, *History and Antiquities of Stratford-upon-Avon* (Stratford, 1806) 164-209. For recent studies of the occasion, see Christian Deelman, *The Great Shakespeare Jubilee* (1964); Johanne M. Stochholm, *Garrick's Folly: The Shakespeare Jubilee of 1769 at Stratford and Drury Lane* (1964); and John A. Parkinson, 'Garrick's Folly: or, The Great Stratford Jubilee', *MT*, cx (1969), 922-6.

52 *An Ode Upon Dedicating a Building, and Erecting a Statue, to Shakespeare, at Stratford upon Avon* (1769). Garrick's poem was also printed in *The Annual Register* (1769), 245-52.

53 *The Letters of David Garrick*, ed. David M. Little and George M. Kahrl (1963), ii, 651.

54 *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 18 August 1769.

55 A contemporary illustration of the performance forms the frontispiece to this dissertation.

> generally allowed that the ode, in point of poetical merit, no less than the speaker in point of elocution, was justly entitled to universal admiration.[56]

Arne's setting, (publicly acknowledged by Garrick as the work of 'the first musical genius of this country') consisted of nine movements -- seven solo songs, a fugal semi-chorus and a final duet -- and was published soon after the performance, Garrick having bought the copyright from Arne for 60*s*.[57] The published edition provides an accompaniment for two violins and continuo, but this was a simplification doubtless intended to make the work appeal to a wide range of buyers since it is known that about 100 musicians took part at Stratford.

The published ode appeared without an overture, though it is likely that an instrumental introduction -- perhaps one of Arne's *Four new Overtures or Symphonies in Eight and Ten Parts* (1767) -- was included at the original performance.[58] The ode's vocal movements show considerable charm, but 'Thou soft flowing Avon', a larghetto air sung at the first performance by Mrs Baddeley was undoubtedly the musical highlight of the occasion, though its effect was dramatically enhanced by the side doors of the rotunda being suddenly opened to reveal the river itself:

> The effect was irresistible, electrical... every soul present felt it, cherished it, delighted in it, and considered that moment as the most endearing to sensibility that could possibly be experienced.[59]

'Thou soft flowing Avon' became a favourite with concert audiences and was widely performed as a solo piece. The whole ode, however, enjoyed considerable popularity too; its first London performance was at Drury Lane Theatre on 30

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56 *The Town and Country Magazine*, i (1769), 474.

57 Letter of Garrick to James Clutterbuck, 14 September 1769, preserved in 'Collections made by George Daniel, relating to the Stratford Shakespeare Jubilee of 1769' (*Lbl* C.61.e.2., f.59.).

58 The first overture, in C major, would seem to be the most likely candidate.

59 Charles Dibdin, *The Professional Life of Mr. Dibdin, written by himself* (1803), i, 77. Dibdin's comment is particularly revealing since in other respects he was by no means uncritical of Garrick. Of the ode's performance in general he wrote that 'there was never enthusiasm so ardently conveyed, nor so worthily felt; that it was magic; that it was fairyland' (p.76).

September 1769, and seven further performances in the capital followed (including one by royal command on 12 October).[60]

The Stratford Jubilee was doubtless also the inspiration for Samuel Arnold's *Ode to Shakespeare* performed at Marylebone Gardens on 22 September 1769. This has not survived, but it appears to have been similar in form to Arne's *Ode*, the words being by Francis Gentleman 'who spoke the recitatives, with vocal parts sung by the usual singers'.[61] The most important Shakespearean ode, however, was undoubtedly Thomas Linley's *Ode on the Spirits of Shakespeare*, first performed (again at Drury Lane) on 20 March 1776. This substantial work is a setting of *A Lyric Ode on the Fairies, Aerial Beings, and Witches of Shakespeare* by French Laurence (later to become Professor of Civil Law at Oxford), and although the poem itself is undistinguished, its subject matter is indicative of the increasing influence on composers at this period of the 'gothic' and supernatural imagery of early romantic poetry:

> Whither ye beldames do ye roam?
> Love ye wild Lapland's gothic night?
> None now shall tread the cavern's gloom,
> Nor spy your dreadful mystic rite.

Linley responded with a large-scale work in two parts, the whole preceded by a fine French overture which in itself testifies to the tragedy of the composer's early death. As Gwilym Beechey has pointed out, the movements which follow show a definite contrast of style, the choruses tending towards the baroque manner (with an assured handling of contrapuntal textures) while the solo numbers incline more to the galant style 'where graceful melodic ideas are matched by imaginative orchestral colour (oboes and horns) and idiomatic string textures'.[62]

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60 Deelman, *op. cit.*, 187.

61 Mollie Sands, *The Eighteenth-Century Pleasure Gardens of Marylebone 1737-1777* (1987), 79.

62 See the introduction to Gwilym Beechey's edition of the ode, published as *Musica Britannica*, xxx (1970), xix-xx.

The airs are undoubtedly the most appealing movements, and two soprano solos should be particularly mentioned. 'There in old Arden's inmost shade' seems almost deliberately to echo Arne's 'Thou soft flowing Avon' in its lyrical serenity, while the sprightly 'Ariel, who sees thee now?' demonstrates Linley's skilful handling of form and modulation, and has the confident bravura spirit of an operatic air. Much of Linley's short career was spent in the theatre, and a sense of large-scale dramatic form is evident in the *Shakespeare Ode*, most notably in the decision to use only the soprano soloist during Part One. The first half of the libretto is essentially lyrical in tone, emphasizing the pastoral aspects of Shakespeare's work, and ending with a triumphant D major chorus and references to 'Oberon's nutshell car'. Darker Shakespearean creations appear in the second half, and this contrast is emphasized by beginning it with an atmospheric accompanied recitative in C minor (rather than with a separate orchestral movement), the bass soloist entering for the first time with the words 'But oh! what sudden gloom, what horror overcasts the lowering day'. This sombre mood pervades the next six or seven movements, but gradually declines with the realization that there is none 'who can wield like Shakespeare's skilful hand that magic wand', and the ode ends with a return to D major as the chorus invoke Fancy to smile once more on Britain and 'give another Shakespeare to our isle'. Linley's *Shakespeare Ode* is undoubtedly one of the handful of really fine odes composed during the latter half of the eighteenth century, yet in spite of an enthusiastic reception from both the Drury Lane audience and the London critics, it appears to have received only a single performance.[63]

Although libretti commemorating specific events continued to be required -- the court odes, for example, ensured this -- poets from the middle of the eighteenth-century onwards increasingly produced lengthy odes on a variety of subjects, which were prompted by no particular event yet retained most of the other qualities associated with the ode genre, notably the richness of language and imagery in the

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63 See the detailed critical account of the ode published in *The Morning Chronicle*, 21 March 1776, and quoted in the introduction to the *Musica Britannica* edition.

libretti. The selection by composers of poems with no specifically topical content was not a new phenomenon; Blow's setting of Cowley's *Awake my lyre* and Clarke's *Song on the Assumption* were among the earliest examples, and the former, at least, is known to have been intended for performance at the Oxford Act. The earliest examples of large-scale odes of this type, however, were William Hayes's much later setting of Collins's *The Passions* (1750) and William Boyce's undated setting of part of Pindar's first *Pythian Ode*. The latter is the only example of an ode which took as its libretto (albeit in translation) a genuine classical ode. Like Hayes's *The Passions* it is a large-scale work, with a substantial four-movement overture, and although the music is at times vividly descriptive (as in the recitative 'In fires of Hell'), elsewhere the vocal style has a more refined vigour (Ex.16). Later still, poetical odes with no occasional inspiration provided composers such as Benjamin Cooke, Philip Hayes and William Jackson with an important supply of new libretti (often of good quality), and if few of the large-scale odes which resulted can be considered *in toto* as outstanding works, this is partly explained by a tendency on the part of these composers to see the ode almost as an experimental genre in which new stylistic techniques, or unusual orchestrations, could be tried. Nevertheless, many of the works include music of considerable effectiveness, and it is appropriate to end with a consideration of the characteristics of the settings of these 'literary' odes in general, and a discussion of some of the more noteworthy examples in particular.

Among the most interesting of these later odes is another setting of Collins's *The Passions*, by Benjamin Cooke, and this work makes an interesting contrast to Hayes's setting with its two parts akin to oratorio and its outwardly conventional sequence of recitatives, arias and choruses.[64] Cooke's setting responds to the poem with considerable flexibility, choosing through-composed airs and ariosos for all the solo movements and allowing not only the melodic invention but also the formal

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64 *Collins's Ode on the Passions Set to Music by Benjamin Cooke* (1784). It is unlikely that Cooke was directly inspired by Hayes's earlier setting since the latter had still not been published at this point.

structures to be governed entirely by the spirit of the verse. The effectiveness of the ode also depends, however, on a careful formal and tonal scheme which binds together what might otherwise have become merely a string of choruses and loosely structured solo numbers. The ode falls into three large divisions, the first consisting of the substantial four-movement overture, three movements of which are in C major while the third (a minuet) is in the relative minor. This opening body of music is balanced at the end of the ode by a series of three choruses (which also incorporate a short tenor recitative) beginning in B flat major, but moving quickly back to C major after an opening largo. These choruses set the last 24 lines of Collins's poem in which, as has been noted elsewhere, he turns away from the descriptions of the Passions themselves to reflect on the decline of poetry in his own day.

Sandwiched between these two substantial portions of music, both of which are fairly traditional in their formal and stylistic approach, comes the main sequence of vocal movements depicting the various Passions. This contains much more ingenious and dramatic music. In the air which introduces the figures of Hope and Echo, for example, an additional soprano voice echoes the main soloist, and bass voices from the chorus sing 'at a distance'. A number of unusual instruments are introduced into the orchestral accompaniments in this central section, most notably in the exuberant air for Joy, in which there are parts for carillon, harp, triangle and *tibiae pares* (the double flutes of classical Greece). Here Cooke moves away from the tonality established by the overture and passes through G and E majors to arrive at E flat major for the 'larghetto andante' air which depicts Melancholy. This is not only the central movement of the ode but also the only slow air in the whole work, and its effect as a pivotal point of repose is enhanced by an accompaniment for muted strings and organ, and by the attractive vocal writing (Ex.17). From this point onwards the tonality turns back towards D major, and the depiction of the Passions reaches its climax with the air for Joy before the final choral sequence brings the work to an end.

Cooke's setting was one of the very small number of odes to be printed, being published by subscription in 1784. The subscribers included the Academy of Ancient Music (three copies), the Anacreontic Society (two copies), Charles Burney, and a number of composers of odes -- Callcott, Dupuis, Stanley and Philip Hayes. It was the publication of the score, rather than the ode's performance, which seems to have prompted a lengthy review in *The European Magazine*, in which various aspects of the composer's word setting are subjected to detailed criticism, though the reviewer concluded that the ode was 'an excellent work', and the air for Joy received unqualified admiration:

> Here Dr. Cooke seems, in imitation of the poet, to have reserved his greater powers for the latter exertions. It is no flattery to say, that all which the finest description of Joy could inspire, he has performed. The melody teems with brilliant ideas, and the accompanyments add their lustre in every bar.[65]

The *Ode on the Passions* was one of the most frequently set of all poems, for in addition to the works of Hayes and Cooke, and the lost setting by Giordani performed in Dublin, Charles Dibdin claimed to have 'composed' a setting:

> When Linley and Stanley managed the oratorios, they were anxious to have something from me. I told Linley that I had composed *Collins's Ode on the Passions*. He seemed greatly pleased with the circumstance, and was very desirous to have it. I told him it was composed, but not written, which he could not understand; nor, do I believe, could any other musician. I made him comprehend me by playing part of it, which I assured him had never been on paper. He expressed still more astonishment and seemed more anxious to perform it than before; but, knowing, of course, the quantity of paper it would cover, he saw there would not be time to get it ready for the oratorio.[66]

A setting of *The Passions* was also heard at Stamford in Lincolnshire, as part of a

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65 *The European Magazine*, vii (1785), 15. A further quotation from the review is given in the concluding chapter (pp.231-2) in the context of a discussion of critical attitudes towards the ode genre.

66 Dibdin, *op. cit.*, i, 104-5. For a reference to instrumental interludes to *The Passions* written by James Sanderson for performance at a public recitation of the poem in 1789 see Frank Kidson's account of Sanderson in *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 5th edn. (1954), vii, 401.

concert at the town hall on 17 December 1790.[67] Unfortunately the composer is not known, and the local newspapers provide no further information, though there is no doubt that the citizens of eighteenth-century Stamford enjoyed a flourishing concert life. Two other subscription concerts of vocal and instrumental music were held at the town hall on 15 and 20 December, and a similar concert in Grantham enjoyed the patronage of a number of local aristocratic ladies.[68] There is no suggestion that odes were performed on these occasions, but the regularity of such concerts, and their prominence in the social life of the town suggests that the *Ode on the Passions* given in December 1790 need not have been the work of a local amateur composer, but might have been the setting by either William Hayes or Benjamin Cooke.

Even more popular with composers was Joseph Warton's *Ode to Fancy*, probably set first by Charles Rousseau Burney around 1766, then by William Jackson of Exeter in about 1767, again by John Wall Callcott in 1785 and finally by William Crotch in 1799. Warton's poem, first published in 1746 and twice revised in the following two years, typifies the development of 'romantic' imagery in the genre, the most important aspects of which were a delight for the beauties of nature on the one hand:

> Tell me the path, sweet wand'rer, tell,
> To thy unknown sequestered cell,
> Where woodbines cluster round the door,
> Where shells and moss o'erlay the floor.

and an enthusiasm for '"gothic gloom" and picturesque decay' on the other:[69]

> Let us with silent footsteps go
> To charnels and the house of woe,
> To gothic churches, vaults, and tombs,
> Where each sad night some virgin comes,
> With throbbing breast, and faded cheek,
> Her promised bridegroom's urn to seek.

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67 The performance is advertised on a ticket in the Banks Collection of Admission Tickets at the British Museum's Department of Prints and Drawings (J.9. 524).

68 *The Lincoln, Rutland, and Stamford Mercury*, 10, 17 and 31 December 1790.

69 George N. Shuster, *The English Ode from Milton to Keats* (New York, 1940), 228.

Jackson's setting made considerable alterations to the Ode, apparently because he was anxious to keep the attention of his audience:

> When a composer feels himself equal to works of length and consequence, an oratorio is the thing which naturally occurs. "In respect of it consisting of Recitative, Songs, and Choruses (as Touchstone would say), I like it well, but because it is too long I like it not at all!" The length of one Part (improperly termed an Act) is sufficient to engage without fatiguing the attention. Conceiving this principle to be just, I fixed on Warton's "Ode to Fancy" as a proper piece for my purpose.[70]

Jackson's view that conciseness was the important factor in both ode and oratorio is reflected in his setting, the eight solo and choral numbers being matched by an equal number of recitatives (both *secco* and accompanied), many of which set extensive portions of the poem. The sequence of three recitatives which begins with 'Yet not these flowery fields', for example, sets twenty lines of Warton's verse -- more than a sixth of the total libretto -- and one later critic suggested that this 'chasteness of conception' was not suited to the writing of an ode, which required 'dignity of expression, majesty of motion, grand construction, and bold contrivance... and these qualifications were not among the characteristics of Mr. Jackson's music'.[71]

'Bold contrivance' is, in fact, far from lacking in Jackson's setting, which confirms William Bingley's assessment that, in spite of a predilection for melodies of 'mechanical quaintness', the composer possessed considerable expressive talent.[72] This is certainly true of the first chorus, 'Till suddenly awaked', with its effective use of dynamic contrast, and of the recitative 'Goddess of the tearful eye' in which the depiction of the 'whistling tempests' and the trembling virgin show an audacious sense of drama (Ex.18). Contrasts of mood are characteristic of the *Ode* as a whole and, along with much use of pedal notes and repeated-quaver string accompaniments, suggest a familiarity with the galant style. If such dramatic

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70 'William Jackson, of Exeter, Musician. An Autobiography', *The Leisure Hour* (1882), 360.

71 Thomas Busby, 'Life of the late William Jackson, Esq. -- Organist of Exeter Cathedral', *West of England Magazine*, i (1813), 370.

72 *Musical Biography; or, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of the most eminent Musical Composers and Writers* (1814), ii, 228.

expression seems at times overdone, it can at least be said that the music faithfully reflects the ethos of Warton's poem. Jackson directed the first performance of the *Ode to Fancy* at Gyde's Rooms in Bath, on 26 November 1767.[73] Several of the Linley family were involved in the performance, and Jackson later recorded that the ode was 'never well performed but once at Bath, when Miss Linley sang the principal solo part'.[74] A London performance followed in December, but no others have been recorded, suggesting that the publication of the ode as the composer's Opus 8 in about 1773 was more the result of personal initiative than a response to the work's popularity.

Crotch's *Ode to Fancy* was his Oxford doctoral exercise, and probably for this reason lacks the interest of both Jackson's setting and also that of Callcott (see below). Clearly designed to impress, with a substantial orchestra and a double chorus -- the autograph score has the largest physical dimensions of any ode manuscript! -- the work nevertheless has undoubted failings. The melodic writing shows little feeling for the rhythm of the words, and the writing for double chorus is more impressive on paper than in reality. Crotch shows skill in blending his instrumental forces into a genuinely orchestral texture, but here too the musical ideas lack freshness and originality, and in spite of many changes of mood, he never succeeds in conjuring up the atmosphere of Warton's poem.

The odes of John Wall Callcott are not works of consistent quality either, but the genre played a prominent part in his output, and his ode for the Humane Society (mentioned above) was only one of four substantial odes, the other three of which set libretti by the most important ode writers of the mid-eighteenth century, Collins, Warton and Gray. Dated manuscripts survive for all four works, making it possible to record the history of their composition with considerable accuracy. All were written within an eighteenth-month period between January 1785 and June 1786, the

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73 *The Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 26 November 1767.

74 Jackson 'Autobiography', *op. cit.*

earliest (and also the shortest) being the setting of Collins's *Ode to Evening*, begun on 1 January 1785 and completed on 29 March. Its first performance was 'by request of Mr. Butler', at a meeting of the Academy of Ancient Music at Freemasons' Hall on 14 April. Callcott next set Warton's *Ode to Fancy*, and although this is almost twice the length of the *Ode to Evening* the dates in the score suggest that it was completed in just six days, between 5 and 10 June. This was the composer's B.Mus. exercise and was performed at the Music School in Oxford on 24 June, Thomas Sanders Dupuis and Edmund Ayrton being in attendance. The ode for the Humane Society, the longest of the four, came next, and was written between 11 August and 10 September 1785, although it was apparently not performed until 13 February of the following year. Finally came a setting of Gray's *The Bard*, another very long work, and one for which only a completion date, 17 June 1786, is recorded. Nothing is known of its first performance.

Callcott's odes are all scored for several soloists, chorus and large orchestra, but the *Ode to Evening* and the *Ode to Fancy* are relatively smaller in scale, with solo movements predominating. The former, for example, has only one (final) choral movement, and the rather longer *Ode to Fancy* still has only central and concluding choruses. The *Ode to Evening* is undoubtedly the more effective of the two works, and Callcott successfully anticipates the lyrical, pastoral mood of Collins's verse with an unusual five-movement overture that opens 'larghetto e pianissimo' in 3/4 time (Ex.19). He also makes good use of horns and oboes for atmospheric effect, the latter being introduced with particular success in the second movement. In the vocal movements the selection of voices is closely related to the words, with a bright tenor air for lines beginning 'For when thy folding star arising shows his paley circlet', and a suitably rumbustious bass solo for 'But when chill blust'ring winds or driving rain'.

By contrast, *The Bard* and the *Ode to the Humane Society*, are sprawling, lengthy works. Both were settings of long and colourful libretti which, at least in the case of Gray's *The Bard*, could not easily be abbreviated, with the result that the

ode for the Humane Society runs to little short of 50 movements, while *The Bard* has nearly 30. Callcott lacked the genius to sustain such large-scale compositions with conviction, and these odes are less effective than their two predecessors. Nevertheless, they contain some music of interest, and show the continuing juxtaposition of baroque and early classical styles which has already been noted in other odes from the latter half of the century. The first movements of the two overtures provide a telling contrast in this respect, that for the Humane Society ode being in the double-dotted French style, while that for *The Bard* begins with a short slow introduction followed by an allegro in which all traces of the baroque have been abandoned. A similar contrast characterizes the vocal writing, with the choruses inclining towards the older style -- as in *The Bard*'s 'Now brothers bending o'er th'accursed loom' which uses a four-bar ground bass -- while the solo airs are more progressive.

Leaving aside the composers of official court odes in London and Dublin, the Oxford composer Philip Hayes was the most prolific of all ode writers, producing fifteen such works between 1763 and 1793, with well over half this number dating from the 1780s. Some of these have already been mentioned, but there remains a number of large-scale odes apparently composed for no specific intention other than as contributions to the regular concert life of Oxford. They set a variety of libretti, including Mark Akenside's *Ode on Lyric Poetry* and William Collins's *Elfrida*, the latter providing the words for two odes composed in 1780 and 1785 respectively. Like Callcott's odes (which were composed at the same period), Hayes's music is of variable quality and interest though, as befitted a professor of music, always technically proficient. None of the odes is as lengthy as Callcott's, but there is nevertheless a similiar tendency to prolixity for which the more enlightened passages do not always fully compensate.

The odes are not, however, without merit -- the overtures, for example, are invariably solid pieces of work -- and they demonstrate once again the tendency of composers in the latter part of the eighteenth century to regard the ode as a vehicle

for musical experimentation (even, perhaps, as a test of their resourcefulness) rather than as a model of formal balance and economy of construction. Hayes is at his best, therefore, in those movements which show an imaginative response to the poetical text. In many cases this occurs within the context of arioso-like movements, such as that from the *Ode to the Creator* (1780) which imitates the 'frost scene' from Purcell's *King Arthur*, but the more formal airs and arias, whether lyrical or turbulent in mood, also at times show a similar talent for colourful orchestration.

Although ode settings in any case tended towards the large scale, Hayes may also have felt that his position in the University required him to write showpieces demonstrating technical skill and ingenuity. It is ironic, therefore, that his shortest ode, a setting of Christopher Smart's *Ode to the Haymakers*, is in many ways his most successful.[75] This is all the more surprising since it is also a youthful work, written in February 1763 at the age of 25 (when Hayes's musical studies were presumably still under the supervision of his father), and some months before he took his B.Mus. degree. Yet while it lacks the more elaborate approach of the later works, it is undoubtedly the most consistently effective of his odes. In consequence of its early date the prevailing stylistic mood is less advanced, but since Hayes revised *The Haymakers* in 1781 (at the start of his most prolific decade of ode-writing), it is impossible to know whether the surviving score is an accurate record of his original ideas. The ode is scored for a modest orchestra, and opens with a three-movement overture, the third movement of which is in da capo form and has a slow 'B' section in the form of a minuet to contrast with the surrounding allegro in 2/4 time. There are eight vocal movements in all, scored for three soloists and a four-part chorus, with the two choral movements each following on immediately from a solo air. Smart's poem is much shorter than Hayes's later libretti, and some movements set little more than a single line of verse. Consequently, there is little of

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75 A later setting of Smart's poem by Samuel Arnold, performed at Marylebone Gardens in July 1769, has not survived.

the descriptive arioso style which was to figure in the subsequent odes, although the sole accompanied recitative features a novel depiction of church bells. Elsewhere Hayes exploits the contrasts between soli and tutti in both the orchestral and vocal writing. The bass air 'All nature wakes', for example, has distinct elements of *concertato* style in its string accompaniment, while in the concluding choral movement the contrast is between the vocal soloists and the full chorus.

The contrast between Hayes's appealing *Ode to the Haymakers* and the more pedestrian music of his later odes highlights the degree to which the works studied in this chapter constitute a microcosm of the ode's history. The range of contexts for performance, and the variety of scale and musical approach, is an accurate reflection of the ode genre as a whole. Moreover, there is much neglected music of interest in this last group of works, albeit that these 'miscellaneous' odes have been grouped together here precisely because they lack any common link. The two odes by Jeremiah Clarke, for example, are conspicuous by their unusual subject matter and by the quality of their music, and deserve to be known at least as well as, for example, the minor St Cecilia odes of Henry Purcell. It is perhaps unreasonable to expect the large-scale works by composers such as Callcott, Dupuis and Philip Hayes to be revived except as items of curiosity, for in the main they would probably seem dull to modern ears. Nevertheless, they are settings of substantial, and often important, literary texts, and the considerable imagination and technical skill which the composers brought to them deserves to be acknowledged.

8. CONCLUSION

In the course of tracing the development of the musical ode from its beginnings soon after the Restoration of Charles II until the turn of the nineteenth century, a number of separate strands of the genre's development have been isolated, and three groups of works in particular -- the St Cecilia odes, the Dublin birthday odes, and the Oxford Act pieces -- are seen to have developed into distinctive traditions displaying their own characteristics and conventions, and having their own significance within the genre as a whole. Although the welcome and birthday songs performed at court in the years immediately following the Restoration have traditionally been regarded as the earliest examples of ode writing, it is now clear that they were pre-dated by the songs and other pieces performed at the University of Oxford. These maintained a distinctive (if generally unsophisticated) style, and showed little of the influence of their better-known London counterparts until the turn of the eighteenth century. The series of odes for St Cecilia's day, and other related works in praise of music, have already received considerable scholarly attention. They have, however, been documented here in greater detail than hitherto, some of the questions raised by earlier commentators have been addressed, and attention has been given to the neglected later history of the Cecilian tradition both in London and beyond. Outside England it has been shown that Dublin boasted its own tradition of ode writing, which included a substantial series of court odes which has not hitherto been systematically documented.

Concentration on these individual contexts for ode performances, and on groups of related works of a more miscellaneous character, has been inevitable given that so much of the ode output was not only 'occasional' but also repetitive (in the sense that odes were written for the same sort of occasions on a regular basis). But these subdivisions can easily obscure the significance of the ode genre as a whole and the extent to which each of these individual strands was firmly rooted

within the larger tradition. Overall, the stylistic differences between individual types of ode composed during the same period were relatively minor, and by way of conclusion the ode genre must therefore be considered in its wider perspective, particularly in relation to the broader spectrum of eighteenth-century musical activities and the other genres of the day with which it had formal or stylistic links, most notably oratorio.

Since the ode has generally received less attention than the operas and oratorios performed in England during the eighteenth century, it is important to bear in mind the sheer quantity of musical works to which the appellation 'ode' was attached. In the main sequence of the catalogue which accompanies this study some 270 works are listed; when the London court odes and the large number of ode-related works which are beyond the purlieu of this dissertation are added to them, the total output of odes is seen to constitute a considerable body of music. It is impossible to identify any period at which the ode's popularity was at its peak, for the annual recurrence of events for which odes were normally required, most notably the prolonged series of court celebrations in London and Dublin, ensured that the genre's popularity was sustained throughout the eighteenth century. Consequently, virtually every decade can boast of at least one notable work.

It is important to note that the ode genre was never the preserve of any one group of musicians (those who worked predominantly in the church or in the theatre, for example). As noted at the beginning of this study, there were very few composers who did not write an ode of one type or another at some stage during their careers. A large number of minor composers inevitably turned to it, but a comprehensive survey of most other genres in the same period would produce its own equivalents of Richard Goodson, Musgrave Heighington, Thomas Busby and the like. Of greater significance is the sheer number of composers whose works are listed in the accompanying catalogue (over 75 in all), and the fact that in company with the undoubtedly third-rate are virtually all of the major native English

composers of the day, including Arne, Boyce, Clarke, Croft, Greene, and Purcell, and most of what might be regarded as the second division too.

It is also significant that a number of foreign composers experimented with the genre. The post-Restoration delight in the French style (officially encouraged by Charles II) and the enthusiasm for Italian music which followed it, suggest that the writing of odes by foreign composers resident in England should not be taken for granted. In spite of its links with French musical style through the influence of the restoration verse anthem, the ode was wholly English, both in invention and in spirit, its characteristics being derived in large measure from the influence of a much older tradition of panegyrical poetry which itself depended on ideas drawn from classical literature. This poetical tradition produced libretti which contained a great richness of language and imagery, sometimes at the expense of literary quality, but offering by way of compensation enormous potential for the composer to show his skill by ingenious and apt settings of the words.

These characteristics seem to have appealed to foreigners as much as to native composers, though the contexts within which the former worked tended to be limited. The task of writing the official court odes was always confined to English composers (though given the attempt to put Geminiani in charge of the State Musick in Ireland in 1727 this may not have been a deliberate policy), and the writing of additional odes for royal birthdays and similar occasions continued to be a native preserve at least until the beginning of the eighteenth century. Similarly, no odes by foreign composers were given in Oxford until the performance of Pepusch's *Peace, Apollo, Britain* in 1713. It was in the context of the celebrations for St Cecilia's day that foreign composers first turned to the genre; indeed Giovanni Draghi's 1687 setting of Dryden's *Song for St Cecilia's Day* represents the first really accomplished Cecilian ode, and the earliest which consistently attempts to maintain a close relationship between words and music. Subsequent odes by Matteis and Finger maintained the involvement of foreign composers in the Cecilian tradition, and much later Barthélemon and Giordani were to attempt odes in other contexts. With

the exception of Giordani, however, who wrote a setting (though probably an insubstantial one) of Collins's *The Passions*, foreign composers in the eighteenth century confined themselves to fairly insignificant and often small-scale libretti, and did not set any of the more substantial poems favoured by their English contemporaries.

The development of the ode was also undoubtedly influenced by the expansion and diversification of English musical life in the years immediately following the Restoration. The creation of a public domain for musical performance, first in the form of the private music meeting and then with the subsequent development of the paying concert, brought an extraordinary range of new opportunities. In the past composers had written for domestic consumption, or to the order of a wealthy patron, but now music had become a commodity which depended for its popularity on the favourable reactions of a wide and impersonal audience. The degree of popularity which the ode enjoyed in this new environment is therefore a matter of some importance, and the volume of works composed is the most obvious, if somewhat crude, indication of it. There are, however, other ways in which critical and public awareness of the ode can be gauged. Among the literate classes, for example, awareness of the ode must certainly have been high; the libretti of the court odes were often published in the London newspapers, and almost invariably in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, *The London Magazine* and *The Annual Register*. These three periodicals all contained poetry sections in which the libretti for many other musical odes also appeared, and they frequently provided accounts of the performances too. From them readers would have gained detailed descriptions of academic ceremonies at Oxford and Cambridge, of the most recent entertainments at Ranelagh and Vauxhall Gardens, and of the inauguration of new buildings such as those at the London hospitals.

The more immediate popularity of the ode, however, can be measured by assessing the degree to which odes entered the regular repertoire and received additional performances (not only in their original location, but also elsewhere) and,

to a lesser degree, by considering the question of which works were made available in published editions. The great diversity of occasions at which odes were performed is itself an indication of the essentially transitory nature of at least the earliest works. Virtually all the odes composed between 1680 and 1740 (over half the period covered by this study) were occasional in the strictest sense and, it might be supposed, would not bear repetition as abstract music divorced from their intended occasion, especially given the appetite for novelty of eighteenth-century audiences. But the inherent limitation which the occasional nature of the genre seemed to impose could also be turned to advantage, for although very few odes were performed in entirely private surroundings, access to the first performance was often restricted in some way. Such works therefore had a 'curiosity value' and, if advertised to take advantage of this, could profitably be repeated in more public surroundings. Consequently, as the preceding chapters have shown, from very early in the genre's history, audiences heard odes in concert surroundings, completely divorced from the context in which they were originally intended to be heard.

Odes composed for the Stationers' Hall celebrations of St Cecilia's day from 1683 onwards were the earliest works to receive additional performances in this way. The Cecilian feasts were prestigious social occasions, and many of those who could afford to hear the ode repeated at one of the fashionable London concert venues two or three weeks later would have found it as impossible to gain access to the original performance of these works as to the odes performed before the monarch at court. Most of the Stationers' Hall odes were given at least one additional performance, sometimes for the benefit of the composer, and occasionally for some other purpose. Thus Henry Purcell's *Hail! bright Cecilia* was performed at York Buildings in January 1694 'for the entertainment of his Highness Prince Lewis of Baden',[1] while in February of the same year, Finger's 1693 St Cecilia ode was

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1 *London Stage* pt.1, 431.

given two additional performances at York Buildings.[2] Similarly, Clarke's *Alexander's Feast*, first performed in November 1697, was performed both at Hickford's Dancing School in Panton Street and at York Buildings in December of the same year.[3] These Cecilian works had an important role to play, albeit a seasonal one, in the London concert repertoire in the last years of the seventeenth century, just as much later on the public performance of the birthday odes originally performed at the viceregal court in Dublin was to make an important contribution not only to the concert life of the Irish capital, but also to the activities of its philanthropic organizations.

The reliability of additional performances as an indication of an ode's popularity is fairly assured, for works which failed to rouse the enthusiasm of their audience were rarely permitted to survive by those whose business was the promotion of concerts for profit. Another potential measure of popularity is the publication of odes, but this is a less reliable indicator, and conclusions can only be drawn from it with caution. The proportion of odes published in relation to the overall output is small; fifteen works appeared in score between 1680 and 1800 and a small number of individual movements from odes were included in late seventeenth-century song anthologies -- most notably pieces by Henry Purcell and John Blow in *Orpheus Brittanicus* (1698) and *Amphion Anglicus* (1700) respectively. During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, publishers had generally been prepared to issue only such works as could be performed by those who bought them. Music of occasional intent which may have held a brief fascination for concert audiences was not necessarily considered a suitable publishing investment, and the concept of producing scores for collection or for study developed only gradually.

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2 *Ibid.*, 432.

3 *Ibid.*, 489.

None of the early Oxford Act music was published, and the only later works to appear in print were William Croft's two D.Mus. odes published as *Musicus Apparatus Academicus* around 1720, and William Hayes's *The Passions* (*c.*1797) which, though given its first performance at Encaenia, was obviously intended for more widespread use. Croft's odes represent the first published examples of the genre intended primarily for collectors rather than performers. In the case of both Croft and Hayes, however, there was a long delay -- nearly fifty years in the case of *The Passions* --between the works' first performance and their appearance in print. At Cambridge, only one of the three Commencement odes was published, that by William Boyce for the installation of the Duke of Newcastle as Chancellor in 1749.

St Cecilia odes began to appear in print much earlier; indeed, Purcell's *Welcome to all the pleasures* (1683) was the earliest ode of any sort (including the court odes and welcome songs, none of which was printed contemporaneously) to be published in its entirety. It was closely followed by John Blow's 1684 piece, but thereafter the Stationers' Hall odes remained unpublished in spite of the popularity which their regular appearance in the concert room implies. Thus neither of the original settings of Dryden's two Cecilian odes appeared in print despite the frequency with which literary critics discussed their libretti as the culmination of the *encomium musicae* tradition. Similarly, while one or two movements from Purcell's *Hail! bright Cecilia* were included in vocal collections, the full score remained in manuscript until Edward Rimbault's edition of 1847 for the Musical Antiquarian Society.

Purcell's other works fared only slightly better, the Yorkshire Feast Song and the centenary ode for Trinity College, Dublin, being among the first works to appear in the abortive complete edition of Purcell's works begun by Benjamin Goodison in the early 1790s. No other odes originating in Dublin, however, -- either at the Castle or at any other musical venue -- were published, and this is also the case with the whole series of 'national' works discussed in Chapter 6. Likewise, most of the miscellaneous odes considered in the last chapter remained in manuscript, including

a number of substantial works such as Hook's ode for the Society of Artists and most of the large-scale 'literary' settings by composers such as Cooke, Callcott, and Philip Hayes. The only exceptions were Arne's *Ode upon dedicating a Building to Shakespeare* [1769], Jackson's *Ode to Fancy* [1773], and Cooke's *Ode on the Passions* (1784).

Yet another factor was the subscription system, which financed the publication of a number of important odes, including Boyce's Cambridge installation ode and Hayes's *The Passions*. Publishing by subscription allowed relatively unknown composers such as Jackson and Walond to have their odes printed, and although in both these cases the works were of above-average quality, they were also the only published odes written by composers with careers based outside London. In spite of the popularity of this form of publication, however, several of the most notable odes remained unpublished, among them Travers's birthday ode for the Princess of Wales, Linley's *Ode on the Spirits of Shakespeare* and Cecilian works by Hart, Greene and Boyce. This list of notable omissions strongly suggests that ultimately there was little significant pattern to the publication of odes beyond that of opportunity and the financial circumstances of the individual composer.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the ode continued to bear a close relationship to other distinct genres, notably oratorio and cantata. An important stylistic development which has been repeatedly traced in the preceding chapters is that from seventeenth-century works adhering closely to the form and style of the ode's sacred progenitor, the restoration verse anthem, towards odes which are increasingly oratorio-like in their outlook. In the latter half of the eighteenth century the ode can often appear as a less significant companion genre to the oratorio, and it is important, therefore, to emphasize the considerable debt which all later secular choral music owes to the ode. As Percy M. Young has pointed out, the ode 'may be seen as the effective starting-point for the British chorus-with-orchestra popular

tradition and also as the foundation of the English works of this nature by Handel',[4] and if Handel had not abandoned Italian opera in favour of oratorio, the ode would probably now stand as the major choral genre of the eighteenth century in England.

The literary tradition of the ode continued to flourish throughout the period of the musical ode's development, but poetical odes became increasingly complex in their structure and had less and less in common with the sort of libretti required for oratorio. In consequence the musical ode lost some of its potential as a rival to oratorio, but substantial odes continued to be written, largely because a group of composers in the latter half of the century, most notably Philip Hayes, Benjamin Cooke, and John Wall Callcott, seem to have enjoyed the freedom of expression which the genre offered. Many of Cooke's odes were performed at meetings of the Academy of Ancient Music where he could expect that they would be judged not only on their overall attractiveness as music, but also on the originality and technical skill with which the words were set. Similarly, a number of Philip Hayes's odes which also show this sense of experimentation were performed as 'lectures' at Oxford, and while this does not mean that they were used for teaching in the modern sense, it does suggest that they were intended to demonstrate the potential of contemporary musical styles.

It is important to note, however, that despite the inevitable changes of style which affected the ode between 1670 and 1800 the critical response to the genre remained largely unchanged. In the previous chapter, reference was made to the detailed review of Benjamin Cooke's *Ode on the Passions* which appeared in *The European Magazine*. The comments on the air depicting Revenge are fairly representative of the review as a whole:

> The following recitative we cannot entirely approve: it opens properly, but certainly should not have been continued without variation beyond "And longer had she sung"; instead of which we find it applied to "And longer had she sung -- But with a frown", and the words "Revenge impatient rose", marked *largo* or slow, and then

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4 *A History of British Music* (1967), 253.

repeated as the first line of a bold and rapid air. We have consequently two objections to substantiate:

> First, then, the recitative should not have proceeded unchanged farther than "And longer had she sung", because "but with a frown Revenge impatient rose" is the commencement and part of the description of Revenge; and if any part of that description is proper for air, this must be so too, and should form a part of that air. Secondly, if "Revenge impatient rose" must be given in recitative before it is heard in the air, why is it done in slow notes? Surely, a passage in *largo* is not very illustrative of the impatience of Revenge, which, indeed, the Doctor seems to confess, by afterwards repeating the same words to very different music.[5]

These remarks show that the critical attitude which had prevailed early on in the ode's development still held sway at the end of the eighteenth century. Bonnell Thornton had introduced his burlesque *Ode on Saint Cecilia's Day* with the assurance that he had 'strictly adhered to the Rule of making the *Sound echo to the Sense*', but a principle which had become ripe for satire by 1749 nevertheless continued to be seriously observed by composers in the following decades. The relationship between words and music remained paramount; sensitive and appropriate word-setting -- such as that so vividly demonstrated in the Cecilian odes of the 1680s and 1690s, for example -- continued to be the most significant test of a successful large-scale ode:

> The unceasing experimentation with music as the medium through which lyric feeling could be most satisfactorily expressed was another event of great importance in eighteenth-century ode history.... The century strove manfully to cope with the problem of right relationship between the poet and the composer.[6]

At the other end of the formal scale, a relationship had developed between the ode and the more intimate choral and vocal genres, notably the cantata, which had developed as independent vocal forms in the early years of the eighteenth century. The use of the London pleasure gardens as venues for the performance of occasional music, and the tendency to use increasingly substantial orchestral accompaniments in such works, encouraged an exchange of stylistic characteristics between the two genres. A further diversification was provided later in the century

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5 *The European Magazine*, vii (1785), 14. The original punctuation has been modernized here for the sake of clarity.

6 George N. Shuster, *The English Ode from Milton to Keats* (New York, 1940), 223.

by the development of the glee, which revived the use of the ode in a convivial context. The works which resulted were much less significant than those which accompanied late seventeenth-century feasting, and most represented a definite shift away from the main characteristics of the ode. More importantly, however, glee and part-song also brought their influence to bear on individual movements in more substantial works, including Cooke's *Ode on the Passions* and Russell's *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*.

The decline of the ode around the turn of the nineteenth century was due to a number of factors, most of which stemmed from the changing role of music in the social environment. The demise of the court odes, first in Dublin and then in London, is symptomatic of the way in which music was no longer seen as a necessary adjunct to the celebration of notable events. The earliest odes had appeared at a time when musical performances on a large scale were virtually unknown outside the church and exclusive aristocratic circles. An important function of the early odes was, therefore, that in celebrating particular occasions they brought to them an experience which was in many ways out of the ordinary. Even at court in the years immediately following the Restoration, the idea of listening to a lengthy work unadorned by scenery, costume, or dramatic action was a new one, and beyond the court the impact was even greater. The early popularity of the ode, and the extent to which it became a chronicler of political and domestic events must in a large degree be due to this element of novelty. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, such considerations no longer applied. Public musical performances had been part of the fabric of daily life for so long that music *per se* no longer made an occasion 'special'. This was doubtless one reason why some composers increasingly saw the ode as an abstract genre, unconnected with any specific occasion. Another factor was undoubtedly changes in poetical taste which meant that in the last quarter of the eighteenth century effusive panegyric of the sort which had been the life blood of earlier musical settings was increasingly rejected

by librettists. This too must obviously have encouraged composers to set other sorts of poetical odes.

Nevertheless, the ode genre did not entirely die out after 1800, and the tradition of performing odes at Oxford and Cambridge, in particular, continued to be observed. Crotch's odes for the Oxford installations of 1810 and 1834 have already been referred to, and the last major work of Henry Bishop (who succeeded Crotch as professor) was an ode for the installation of the Earl of Derby in 1853, which also served as a doctoral exercise. Bishop had composed an ode for the anniversary of the accession of George IV in 1821, and his output also included a number of masques and pageants which, by virtue of their eulogistic themes -- for example, *The Fortunate Isles, or the Triumph of Britannia* (1840) -- call to mind the staged panegyrical entertainments which had existed over a century earlier. At Cambridge no fewer than three installation odes were composed by Thomas Attwood Walmisley, the first in 1835 when, owing to the illness of John Clarke-Whitfeld (whom Walmisley was to succeed as professor the following year), he set an ode for Lord Camden. Odes for the installations of the Duke of Northumberland and for Prince Albert followed in 1842 and 1847 respectively, the latter to a libretto by Wordsworth. Walmisley's successor, William Sterndale Bennett, composed a Cambridge installation ode in 1862, and in the same year set Tennyson's *Ode for the Opening of the International Exhibition.* Nearer still to the present century there was another revival of interest in the ode genre. Stanford wrote at least three large-scale odes, including one for a Cambridge installation in 1892, and Parry wrote nine, among them another setting of Pope's *Ode on St Cecilia's Day* (1889) and an *Ode to Music* (1901) with words by A.C. Benson. Three odes came from the pen of Charles Wood, whose setting of Swinburne's *Ode on Music* inaugurated the new building of the Royal College of Music in 1894, and the ode as a vehicle for patriotic sentiment was notably revived by Elgar in his *Coronation Ode* of 1901.

Distant though these works are from the earliest manifestations of the ode in the years following the Restoration, they demonstrate the essential truth of Percy

Young's assessment of the significance of the genre in the subsequent development of the English choral tradition. The ideas which encouraged the development of the ode genre as the earliest form of secular choral music continued to exert an influence on composers, and even though these ideas were later dispersed and diluted through oratorio, cantata, and a host of less easily defined works for solo voices, chorus and orchestra, they nevertheless continued to provide the inspiration for the composition of works cast in the traditional mould of the occasional ode.

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