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WILLIAM BATES AND HIS *CONCERTOS IN TEN PARTS*, OP. 2: AN ENTERPRISING EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY COMPOSER AND AN UNRECOGNIZED ORCHESTRAL SUBGENRE EMPLOYING HORNS

MICHAEL TALBOT

ABSTRACT

William Bates, who died in 1778, was a prolific and, in his day, successful composer of stage music and concert songs performed in London in the 1760s and 1770s; but a scarcity of biographical information and uncertainties over his position vis-à-vis the new style introduced in the early 1760s by J. C. Bach and others have tended to disadvantage him in modern commentary. New facts about his life and background together with a recently discovered sale catalogue reveal him to have been a cultivated man of wide interests, with a sympathy for the 'ancient' style. His most substantial musical contribution, as regards its potential for modern revival, is a remarkable set of six concertos for strings with oboes, bassoons and horns (plus, in two concertos, trumpets and timpani) published in 1762. These concertos, related in style to contemporary overtures to stage works but making much greater use of concertante writing, form a high point in a peculiarly British tradition of concertos employing French horns. The cult of the horn in Georgian Britain that nourished this tradition is the subject of extended discussion.

IN PURSUIT OF AN ELUSIVE FIGURE

After mentioning the catch for three voices *The Comical Fellows*, with which, in 1770, William Bates won the annual prize offered by the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club, William Alexander Barrett observed in 1886: 'It is strange that nothing is definitely known of the composer Bates beyond the fact that he composed music for several dramatic pieces'.[1] In one paraphrase or another this confession of ignorance has recurred, leitmotiv-like, in discussions of Bates right up to the present. His years of birth and death are never given even approximately, and any chronological anchorage points supplied commonly take the form of a *floruit* time-frame, typically 1750–1780. To add insult to injury, he has all too often been confused with either of two contemporaries with the same surname: the amateur keyboard player and composer from Halifax Joah Bates (1741–1799) and the actor William Bates (dates uncertain). The consequences of this scarcity of biographical data have been as plain as they are inevitable: critical interest in Bates's music has remained only meagre,

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The author is very grateful to Harry Johnstone for his comments on an early draft of this article.

1 William Alexander Barrett, *English Glees and Part-Songs: An Inquiry Into Their Historical Development* (London: Longman, Green & Co., 1886), 214. The catch in question was published in the second volume of John Arnold's anthology of catches and similar works entitled *The Essex Harmony* (London: Bigg and others, 1777).

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while the editing and performance of his music have barely taken off.[2] The sad truth seems to be that a lack of knowledge about the man has hindered appreciation of the music.

This is a situation that it is time to remedy. The priorities for this article have been to reconstruct as far as possible Bates's biography and family background, to discuss and analyse the content of the printed sale catalogue of his remarkable library (which hitherto appears to have gone unnoticed), and to provide a brief review of the contemporary and modern reception of his music. Bates's oeuvre is, unfortunately, too large and diverse to cover adequately in a single article. Since his dramatic music has already received some discussion, principally from Roger Fiske,[3] as have his concert songs and cantatas, from Stephen Charles Foster and a few others,[4] I focus on his published set of concertos (1762). These have so far been the subject of only a few remarks, notably from Owain Edwards and the contributors to the fourth volume of *The Blackwell History of Music in Britain*,[5] but the works have enough musical merit to deserve modern publication and performance, as well as holding considerable historical interest. In order to contextualize the concertos better, I interrupt their description and analysis in order to consider some sociological aspects of the employment of French horns in functional and art music of the Georgian era.

WILLIAM BATES THE TRADESMAN AND WILLIAM BATES THE MUSICIAN

We first encounter the man who was in all probability the composer's father in an advertisement placed in the *Daily Advertiser* of 9 May 1743. It offers a reward of five shillings for the return of a lost pistol and case to 'Mr. William Bates, in Great Audley-Street, Grosvenor-Square'. Great Audley Street, more commonly known as South Audley Street, leads south from the southwest corner of Grosvenor Square, Westminster. Then, as today, it was a very upmarket address. Clarification of the advertiser's calling arrives in an advertisement in the *Daily Gazette* of 1 May 1745 that lists, as one of two retail outlets for 'English Usquebaugh' (a type of whisky), 'Mr Bates's, a Turner, in South-Audley Street, near Grosvenor Square'. This notice establishes that the recognized trade practised by Bates – the one in which he had presumably served an apprenticeship – was that of turner. Almost the identical advertisement appears in the *London Evening Post* of 29 October 1745, but with one significant change: instead of 'a Turner', we read 'a Grocer'. This implies that the de facto occupation of Bates was as a trader rather than as an artisan. He is once again listed as a turner in the record of the famous contested poll (between Lord Trentham and Sir George Vandeput) for the parliamentary constituency of Westminster in 1749,[6] but this is just as one would expect, given the more official context. He describes himself once more as a grocer in a curious advertisement placed in the *London Evening Post* of 5 April 1753 that solicits a benefactor for a distressed elderly gentlewoman.

Ten years later, we encounter a very revealing advertisement (*Public Advertiser*, 2 April 1763). This is for a benefit performance on 26 April at Covent Garden organized for the actress and singer Ann Catley jointly

2 The only currently available modern editions appear to be desktop-style editions of all six trio sonatas in Bates's Op. 1 published by notAmos Performing Editions www.notamos.co.uk. A digital reproduction of the copy of Op. 1 in the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia (M312.4.B29 1750) is accessible with open access at http://search.lib.virginia.edu/catalog/uva-lib:1226509. This copy has two names added in ink to the list of subscribers: 'M:r Adams' and 'Peter Searle Esq:'.

3 Roger Fiske, *English Theatre Music in the Eighteenth Century*, second edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

4 Stephen Charles Foster, '"To Entertain the Fancy": The Orchestral Concert Song in England, 1740–1800' (PhD dissertation, Goldsmiths, University of London, 2013). There is also useful commentary in Richard Goodall, 'Eighteenth-Century English Secular Cantatas', two volumes (DPhil dissertation, University of Oxford, 1979), and Paul F. Rice, *The Solo Cantata in Eighteenth-Century Britain: A Thematic Catalog* (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park, 2003).

5 Owain Edwards, 'English String Concertos before 1800', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 95 (1968–1969), 1–3; Owain Tudor Edwards, *English Eighteenth-Century Concertos: An Inventory and Thematic Catalogue* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon, 2004); and H. Diack Johnstone and Roger Fiske, eds, *Music in Britain: The Eighteenth Century* (The Blackwell History of Music in Britain, volume 4) (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990).

6 *A Copy of the Poll for a Citizen for the City and Liberty of Westminster* (London: Osborn, 1749), 29.

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with the actor, man of letters and occasional theatre manager Thomas Hull, both of whom were closely associated with the musician William Bates. The programme opens with a revival of Colley Cibber's *Love Makes a Man* as mainpiece, continues with 'a new Ode call'd A Briton the Son of a Briton, set to Music by Mr. Bates' and ends with 'A FARCE and other Entertainments of Singing and Dancing'. Tickets are stated to be available from Hull and Catley at their respective addresses, and in addition from 'Mr. Bates's, Grocer, the Corner of the Little Savoy Gate in the Strand' (identifiable as a house originally standing at 106 Strand). The two men named Bates are clearly related, and the obvious inference – supported, as will be shown, by their common residence in South Audley Street during the 1750s and in the parish of St John Evangelist, Westminster during part of the 1760s – is that they are father and son, especially in the light of the widespread family custom in eighteenth-century Britain of assigning the same forename to eldest sons, generation after generation.[7]

From his subscription to three successive editions (1761, 1763, 1765) of John Wright's guide to New World currencies *The American Negotiator* one would guess that William Bates senior engaged in trade across the Atlantic.[8] However, at some point between 1765 and 1772 he switched professions once again, becoming a coal merchant, for which his residence close to the Thames ideally suited him. In 1772 or shortly thereafter his house and those of two neighbours were compulsorily demolished to make room for new thoroughfares leading down from the Strand to the riverside.[9] He evidently remained within the Savoy precinct, from where he continued somehow to conduct his coal business, but was eventually forced to file for bankruptcy, as reported in the *London Gazette* on 6 May 1777. He came to an agreement with his creditors and was granted his certificate of discharge on 22 October 1777, as stated in the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* of that date. His death must have occurred fairly soon afterwards, since on 28 February 1779 we find his widowed daughter-in-law Ann Bates leasing a parcel of land at the Savoy (inherited either directly from him or via her late husband) to John Burgess, an importer-cum-manufacturer of pastes and sauces (he is described as an 'oilman' in the counterpart of the contract) living at 107 Strand.[10]

We first catch sight of William Bates junior in the record of his indenture in 1747 to the organist Joshua Thompson, then living in the parish of St George, Hanover Square.[11] His father paid a premium of £50. There is no confirmation that, in line with normal practice, he was then aged around fourteen, or that the term of apprenticeship was seven years, although this would be a good working hypothesis. If one assumes a year of birth around 1733, there are too many possibilities to be certain of a correct identification, but the best prospect arising from a trawl through several genealogical databases is a William born to William and Mary Bates who was christened at St Bride, Fleet Street, London on 18 June 1732.[12]

The next sighting of the young musician comes in an advertisement placed in the *Daily Advertiser* of 17 February 1752. This announces a benefit concert for him the following day at the Crown and Anchor tavern at which 'Mr. Bates' himself is to play 'a Concerto on the Harpsichord'. Strangely, there appears to be no other

7 The greater than average frequency with which one encounters the surname Bates, the forename William (very popular at the time as an assertion of Protestantism) and, especially, their combination as a pair creates many obstacles towards establishing family relationships securely via parish records of baptism, marriage and burial.

8 This involvement in international trade is confirmed by an advertisement that Bates, still at his South Audley Street address, placed in the *Public Advertiser* of 23 February 1761, where he offered a reward of two guineas for the return of a lost pocket-book containing 'several Memorandums and ten Foreign printed Bills'.

9 See the news report in the *Public Advertiser* of 29 May 1772.

10 Westminster Archives Centre, 36/127/FB/0036/9/4.

11 Information from the record set *Britain, Country Apprentices 1710–1778*, accessed via www.findmypast.co.uk (17 August 2016). Thompson (died 1761) was not the organist of the church of St George, Hanover Square, who at the time was officially Thomas Roseingrave, for whom John Keeble had been deputizing since 1744. He was, however, a member of the King's Band, having succeeded Peter Randall in 1746. This apprenticeship record provides the strongest confirmation that the two Williams were father and son.

12 Information from the record set *English Births and Christenings 1538–1975*, accessed via www.familysearch.org (17 August 2016).

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surviving record of Bates as a performer. Perhaps some mishap early in his career, or adverse comparisons with other players, induced a permanent stage fright. As we shall see, he certainly continued to perform in public, discreetly, as a second harpsichordist in theatre bands, and his diverse pedagogical activities as a 'music master' doubtless kept him close to the keyboard.

The next visible major event in Bates's life is the appearance of his *Six Sonata's for Two Violins with a Thorough Bass for the Harpsichord or Violoncello*, Op. 1. It was initially a private publication, elegantly engraved by the Welshman John Phillips under the imprint of the music seller John Cox and sold by Bates himself from his residence in South Audley Street.[13] After a few years the plates passed to John Johnson, who amended the imprint to add his own name. To make one's debut in print via a set of trio sonatas demonstrating ability as a contrapuntist was of course a hallowed tradition in Britain (where the genre remained in favour right up to the 1780s), as elsewhere. Bates secured a good number of subscribers (174), nine of whom signed up for multiple copies.[14] The subscribers, most of them identifiable, offer a typical mixture. There are members of the (mostly minor) nobility and representatives of the gentry, the church, the universities, the professions (including legal and medical), the liberal arts and the mercantile professions. The list includes thirteen married and unmarried women, a few of them titled: some of these were probably Bates's pupils. Around twenty subscribers, including the prominent Italian immigrants Joseph Agus, Giacob Cervetto and Felice de' Giardini, are instrumentalists and singers active in London or related theatre personnel. There are also many names from the musical establishments of the Chapel Royal, St Paul's and Westminster Abbey. The most interesting contingent, however, comprises organists, who number almost twenty. Some of these were in post at the time and proudly proclaim their appointments, but many others, including Bates himself, are 'organists in waiting', yet to obtain a salaried post. In 1759 Bates and two of the organists named in his own subscription list, Joseph Bryan and Jonathan Battishill, subscribed to the Exeter organist Richard Langdon's *Ten Songs and a Cantata*. What is interesting is that the three names (conveniently, all beginning with the letter B) appear adjacently and, very unusually, are united with a bracket and followed by the common description as 'Organists in London'. This entry both confirms Bates's aspirations as a keyboard player and suggests a bond of friendship between the three similarly aged men, given that when such subscriptions were recorded, the names were commonly entered (for the later use of the engraver) on pages headed by the appropriate surname initial – but thereafter in chronological rather than alphabetical sequence.[15] In general, the subscription list for Bates's Op. 1 bespeaks familiarity with, and acceptance among, an enviably broad cross-section of London's musical and music-loving community. On

13 Phillips, whose skill as a music engraver is lauded by Sir John Hawkins (*A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, five volumes (London: Payne, 1776), volume 5, 210), does not add his name to the Op. 1 edition, but its style of engraving is virtually identical with that of Bates's Op. 2 (the concertos), where he discreetly writes his name. Moreover, the appearance of a 'Mr. Phillips' among the subscribers to Op. 1 makes a personal connection appear all the likelier.

14 The purchase of multiple copies had many possible purposes. One was to act on behalf of friends and relatives; another was to acquire a stock for resale (this is the case here with the six copies ordered by John Cox himself, and perhaps also the six ordered by the violinist Thomas Pinto); another, common among theatres and music societies, was to enable many-to-a-part performance without recourse to copyists. The complete list of subscribers is readable online via the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia.

15 Very often, as in Bates's list, the names of persons of quality were moved to the head of the list out of respect, but otherwise the sequence of names for each initial letter is seen time and again to reflect the order in which subscriptions were made, one pointer to which is that relatives and colleagues most often appear adjacently. On the nature and significance of subscription lists see Michael Talbot, 'What Lists of Subscribers Can Tell Us: The Cases of Giacob Basevi Cervetto's Opp. 1 and 2', *De Musica Disserenda* 10/1 (2004), 121–139. It is noteworthy how many names are common to the subscription lists for Bates's Op. 1, Langdon's *Ten Songs* and, in 1757, Samuel Boyce's *Poems on Several Occasions* (where Bates's name also appears). Simple chronological proximity may well be the main reason, if one assumes that for every period in London life there was a relatively finite 'subscriber community' for music and *belles-lettres*, but one may also suspect in this instance the operation of a 'community of taste', which was perhaps cemented by geographical proximity, frequent social interaction and kinship.

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1 March 1761 Bates followed the majority of London's professional musicians by joining the association that was later to become known as the Royal Society of Musicians, although, like so many other members, he did not keep up his annual subscription and was later expelled.[16]

But when did Op. 1 come out? The British Library catalogue places the date of the first edition at around 1750, a year widely accepted in the literature. This is at least five years too early. Significantly, the publication is not listed in John Cox's *Catalogue of New Music* from the mid-1750s.[17] We can narrow down the date to a time-frame of three or four years by studying the names and appointments on the subscription list. Hugh Cox is named as 'one of the Gentlemen of his Majesty's Chapel': this was a title awarded to him on 30 April 1755. The other end of the time-frame coincides with 29 December 1758, when Samuel Jarvis was appointed organist at All Hallows, Barking by the Tower – a post not mentioned in the list. Whether this publication did much for Bates's reputation is hard to say. Owain Edwards is a little harsh to describe the sonatas in his article in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* as 'recht spröde' (very stiff):[18] they are fully competent, especially in their fugal writing, but would have benefited from greater concision.

In the early part of 1759 William Douglas, secretary of the Edinburgh Musical Society, wrote to the musician Robert Bremner in London (son of the homonymous Edinburgh music publisher, who was concurrently a violinist employed by the Society) to ask for his help in recruiting a harpsichordist. Bremner evidently passed on the request to the harpsichord maker Joseph Mahoon, who on 17 March 1759 wrote in reply to Douglas. This letter does not survive, but Douglas's response was copied into the Society's minutes:

> To M.r Joseph Mahoon — Edin.h 5:th April 1759
>
> Sir
>
> Your Letter to M.r Robert Bremner of the 17:th March is at present before me wherein you are so good as [to] recommend Mr Bates as a harpsicord player – I would have wrote you sooner as you desired but it was necessary to speak to different people of our musical Society which put of[f] the time, you'l[l] now accquaint Mr Bates that he can have very good encouragement here[;] there are young Gentlemen & Ladies every day wanting to be taught the Harpsicord & can[']t get masters, all the masters for that Instrument here have their hours wholly taken up. It[']s in vain to say what he can make[;] that depends on his own Industry & Descretion and Capacity. Some masters take a Guinea, pasquali had a guinea & a half for 12 Lessons & to his dying day had as many Schoalers as he could teach[.] He will have a Benefit, and he shall have Twenty pounds of Sallary yearly from the Concert, If Mr Bates is a Sober Industrious man he may depend on very good bread. Mr Bremner will write you along with this[;] meantime as you are an encourager of Musick I hope you'l[l] forgive this trouble from Sir your most humble Ser:t
>
> (Signed) Will.m Douglas[19]

16 Betty Matthews, *The Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain: List of Members, 1738–1984* (London: Royal Society of Musicians, 1985), 20.

17 *Catalogue of New Music Printed for and sold by John Cox at Simpson's Musick Shop* (London: Cox, c1755). Cox, who in 1751 married the widow of John Simpson and took over her late husband's business, did not normally advertise his new publications in the press, so this route to a more precise dating is, unfortunately, closed.

18 Owain Edwards, 'Bates, William (Pseud. Jack Catch)', in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik*, second edition, ed. Ludwig Finscher (Kassel and Stuttgart: Bärenreiter and Metzler, 1994–2008), Personenteil 2, column 469.

19 Edinburgh Public Libraries, ref. qYML 28 MS: Sederunt (Minute) Books, four volumes, 1727–1794, volume 2, 100. I am very grateful to Andrew Woolley for making a reproduction of this and the following page available to me.

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Douglas soon received a letter from William Bates himself, to which he replied:

> To M.r Will.m Bates musician Edin.h 19th April 1759
>
> Sir
>
> I was favour[']d with yours of the 14th Ins.t wherein you propose to sett out for this place in Eight or Ten days where we shall be very glad to see you, Our Consort here Consist of a very pretty little Band part Masters and part Gentlemen who perform for there [*sic*] pleasure[;] Some play some sing and one of the Cheiff Entertainments is Handells Oratorios[;] two or three are performed here in Winter & one in Summer[.] We want just now a Right Bread [*sic*] Chorister[,] a man with a good full Voice who can sing readily at Sight. his chief business in the Society is to teach the Chorus's & lead one of the parts & sing a Single Song himself Gentily[;] his Salary from the Musical Society wou[']d not be great[,] about Ten or twelve pounds but by their occommodation [accommodation?] & his knowledge in teaching Church musick for which there is great encouragement at present & a great spirit for learning he may with ease make above one hundred pounds a year[;] if you cou'd find such a person he might come down with you, If he play'd on any Instrument so much the Better, a good Industrious Sober man with these Qualifications would find every handsome Settlement for life here, be so good as [to] Inquire & Oblige your most humble Serv.t
>
> Signed Will.m Douglas[20]

Bates's connection with Mahoon is unclear: perhaps he occasionally worked for him as a demonstrator. At all events, Bates did not go to Edinburgh, and his personal contact with the Society seems to have ceased there and then, although it later purchased his Op. 2 concertos, which, with their parts for horns, trumpets and timpani, were especially well suited to its taste and requirements.[21] The probable reason for spurning the offer was that Bates was starting to make real headway in his career in London and had no need to relaunch it by relocating to distant Edinburgh, where, beyond what the Society and its members could offer, opportunities were rather limited.

The next landmarks in Bates's career arrived in a cluster in 1760–1761. On 4 February 1760 a revival of *The Jovial Crew or the Merry Beggars*, a ballad opera originally staged in 1731 for which Bates wrote a new overture plus new arrangements of many songs, opened to general approval at Covent Garden.[22] During the next eighteen years Bates went on to compose, or make major musical contributions to, nine further stage works: a full-length, all-sung English opera (*Pharnaces*, opening on 15 February 1765 at Drury Lane); revivals of two old ballad operas (*Flora or Hob in the Well*, opening at Covent Garden on 25 April 1770, and *The Ladies' Frolick*, a remake of *The Jovial Crew* with new music and arrangements shared between Bates and Thomas Arne, opening at Drury Lane on 7 May 1770); a burletta[23] (*The Gamester*, opening at Finch's Grotto Gardens in Southwark on 22 June 1771); a theatrical prelude (*The Theatrical Candidates*, opening at Drury Lane on 23 September 1771); and two afterpieces (*The Device or the Marriage Office*, opening at Covent Garden on 5 May 1777, and *Second Thought is Best*, opening at Drury Lane on 30 March 1778). In addition, Bates composed to order numerous overtures, songs and arrangements for a host of other works staged in London or Dublin during the same period: he was the very epitome of a jobbing musician.

20 Edinburgh Public Libraries: Sederunt (Minute) Books, volume 2, 101 (copy in Douglas's hand).

21 See Jennifer Macleod, 'The Edinburgh Musical Society: Its Membership and Repertoire 1728–1797' (PhD dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 2001), 279.

22 Since the dates for the first and subsequent performances of eighteenth-century theatre works in London are ascertainable from a multitude of contemporary and modern publications – most especially, the multi-authored ten-volume set *The London Stage, 1660–1800* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960–1968) – sources for them will be referred to here only selectively.

23 A burletta was, in British usage, a kind of singspiel in the vernacular that differed from a ballad opera in that its vocal numbers, when not newly composed, were based on airs and ensembles in the Italian or English art-music repertory rather than being arrangements of popular melodies.

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Table 1 William Bates's published collections of 'utility' music

Title	Publisher	Date of first advertisement	Place of first advertisement
Twelve Sets of Lessons for the Guittar	J. Johnson	9 January 1761	*Public Advertiser*
A New Set of Duets for 2 Flutes, Fourth Book	Longman, Lukey & Co.	18 August 1769	*Lloyd's Evening Post*
Duets for Two Violins	P. Welcker	31 July 1762	*Public Advertiser*
Easy Harpsichord Lessons	P. Welcker	31 July 1762	*Public Advertiser*
Eighteen Duettinos for Two Guittars, Two French Horns or Two Clarinets	W. Randall	24 November 1768	*Public Advertiser*
Twelve Duets for Two German Flutes or Violins Compos'd in a Familiar Stile, Book 3	Longman, Lukey & Co.	1770 (?)	—

In 1760 Bates inaugurated a highly successful parallel career as a composer engaged to write concert songs for a given season at a pleasure garden or similar venue. These songs, many of which had elaborate orchestral accompaniments, were commonly collected at the end of the season and issued in a published volume designed for domestic recreation. There survive from Bates's pen collections for Ranelagh Gardens (1760, 1777), Marylebone Gardens (1768), Vauxhall Gardens (1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1776), the Grotto Gardens (1771) and Sadler's Wells (1770).[24] Several of these songs were also published singly, and Bates was equally active as a composer of occasional or specially commissioned songs, plus a number of cantatas and odes.

Finally, Bates began in 1761 to send to the press a series of collections of simple 'utility' music suitable for teaching and amateur recreation. At least four of these collections contained duets, mostly single-movement pieces, for two like instruments – a type of scoring that for practical and later also aesthetic reasons had grown increasingly popular as the century progressed. To these may be added collections of pieces ('lessons') for harpsichord and 'guittar' (probably the so-called English guitar, or revived cittern). Details of the known collections of this type are shown in Table 1. To judge from descriptions such as 'Fourth Book' and 'Book 3', there must be several similar collections of the same kind by Bates that are today lost.

Around 1761 Bates took on a female apprentice who was to be the cause of some grief to him. Leaving aside Italian opera, the English stage was dominated by actors who needed to sing rather than singers who needed to act, so there was a perennial need for what one would today term vocal coaches. Having a gifted singer as an apprentice could be highly lucrative for a master, since he was entitled to receive the earnings from a pupil's public engagements. The pupil – whom we encountered earlier – was Ann Catley (1745–1789), a charismatic actress and singer so popular with audiences that her many amorous indiscretions, from adolescence onwards, were easily forgiven.[25] Bates was at the time unmarried, so Ann lodged with his father,

24 The hiatus between 1760 and 1768 is partly explained by Bates's absence in Ireland from the end of 1765 to mid-1767.

25 The literature on Ann Catley is so vast that one hardly knows where to start. The biography of her by Miss Ambross, *The Life and Memoirs of the Late Miss Ann Catley, The Celebrated Actress* (London: Bird[,1789–1790]), is rich in detail but very embroidered. For general purposes, the entry for her by Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* www.oxforddnb.com is recommendable. The best source of information on the trial of 1763, in which she was a star witness, is Sir James Burrow, *Reports of Cases Argued and Adjudged in the Court of King's Bench During the Time of Lord Mansfield's Presiding in That Court* [1756–1772], five volumes, third edition (London: Strahan and Woodfall, 1790), volume 3, 1434–1440.

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who was still living in South Audley Street.[26] In 1762 she made a successful debut at Vauxhall Gardens, and later that year graduated to the stage at Covent Garden. There she came to the attention of the Northumbrian gentleman and notorious womanizer Sir Francis-Drake Delaval, who made her his mistress. In order for the pair to be able to cohabit, Delaval, who offered financial inducements, persuaded Bates, allegedly without her father's assent or even knowledge, to transfer her indentures to him – an act not quite as utterly absurd as it might seem, since Delaval was a good amateur violinist and a supporter of Charles Avison. Discovering that his daughter was now a 'kept woman', Ann's father Robert, a gentleman's coachman, brought an action against Delaval, Bates and the lawyer, Fraine, who had assisted them, in the Court of King's Bench. The case, which opened on 22 June 1763, was complex, not least because Ann was so evidently satisfied with her new arrangement, but in the end Lord Mansfield ruled in favour of the prosecution on the grounds of an offence against public decency, fining all three defendants heavily (in the event, Delaval picked up the bill for all three men). In 1764 Robert Catley brought a separate case against Bates in the same court for a breach of the articles of indenture, but this time Lord Mansfield ruled in favour of the defendant.[27] Bates may be criticized for his part in the scandal, but in mitigation it would be fair to say that the wayward and impulsive Ann was a handful to manage, so that the transfer to Delaval could be regarded as a messy but opportune form of damage limitation. In any case, Delaval, as a titled person, was in a position to exert pressure on a social inferior such as Bates. After the trial Ann, who soon parted from Delaval, cleared the air by moving to Dublin, where she would shortly be joined by Bates and his new apprentice, Ann Slack.

At some time before 12 July 1763, perhaps around the same time that his father moved to the Strand (with which the move may be linked), Bates took up residence in a house in College Street, which lies close to the Thames southeast from St Paul's Cathedral. This date is that of an insurance policy taken out by Bates with the Sun Fire Office.[28] The value of goods insured was quite high: a total of £500 divided between 'Printed Books & Musical Instruments' (£350) and 'Wearing apparel' (£150). Bates was evidently already indulging his taste for collecting.

On 26 December 1764 Bates wrote a concise will in which he leaves all his worldly goods to his wife, yet another Ann – lately Ann Beere, a widow – who is named as sole executrix.[29] He gives his address as the parish of St John Evangelist, which implies that he had abandoned his College Street address and was by then lodging with his father in the Strand. It is likely that writing the will was motivated by a wish to secure his new wife's inheritance rather than by fear of imminent death. It so happens that a 'Mrs. Beere' was among the subscribers to Op. 1. So Ann Beere had evidently known William for some years, and could well have been his pupil and/or benefactor. No documents relating to the wedding have been found.[30]

Ann Slack, on whom biographical details are less abundant, came to Bates in 1764. By February 1765 she was well enough trained to take the role of Selinda in his opera *Pharnaces*, the libretto of which, by his friend Thomas Hull,[31] was based on the *Farnace* of Anton Maria Lucchini first set by Vivaldi in 1727. In November 1765 the pair arrived in Dublin, where Slack was engaged to sing, sometimes alongside Catley, at the Smock

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26 In Burrow's words (*Reports of Cases*, volume 3, 1438), 'she resided in the house of Bates's father, as Bates himself was a single man and no housekeeper'.

27 Reported in the *Public Advertiser* of 20 February 1764.

28 Lance Whitehead and Jenny Nex, 'The Insurance of Musical London and the Sun Fire Office', *The Galpin Society Journal* 67 (2014), 181–216, www.galpinsociety.org (10 August 2016). The original documents are held by London Metropolitan Archives.

29 The will is transcribed in the probate document (The National Archives, Prob 11/1043).

30 Ann outlived William, but it is uncertain for how long. An Ann Bates who was buried at St Dunstan's in Stepney, aged fifty-five, on 12 January 1793 could possibly have been her, but this is very speculative, given the commonness of both names.

31 Hull (1728–1808) and Bates appear to have been close. In 1762 Bates subscribed to Hull's *Genuine Letters from a Gentleman*, and the actor-playwright seems to have negotiated the contract over the music for *Pharnaces* directly with him. See Thomas Davies, *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick, Esq.*, two volumes (Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1818), volume 2, 70.

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Alley Theatre.[32] In January 1766 Bates had the opportunity to provide this theatre with some new songs and 'an entire set of accompaniments' for Isaac Bickerstaff's comic opera *The Maid of the Mill*. Then in April 1766 Bates and Slack transferred to the Crow Street Theatre, where Bates undertook further small compositional tasks such as providing music for Richard Steele's comedy *The Conscious Lovers* and an epilogue to Garrick's version of George Colman's comedy *The Clandestine Marriage*.[33] The 1767 season proceeded in similar fashion until crisis unexpectedly supervened. On 28 April 1767 Bates penned the following notice, which was inserted in *Faulkner's Journal*:[34]

> Anglesea-street, April 28, 1767.
>
> Whereas on Sunday evening last Ann Slack, my Apprentice, without any provocation given her, eloped from my service; this is to give notice, that if any person harbours the said Ann Slack, they will be prosecuted according to law, by me WILLIAM BATES
>
> N.B. The said William Bates will give a reward of two guineas to any person (and their name will be kept secret if required) who will discover where the said Ann Slack is concealed, so that she may be recovered by him. The said Ann Slack is rather tall, has light brown hair, dark eyes and eye-brows, her mouth is very much one side, long chin, large legs and feet, with a mole on the front of her neck.

The absconder was never recovered, and she later married and resumed her career. On 1 May, when the farce *The Citizen* was due to be staged at Crow Street, the audience rioted, with resulting injuries, on account of her absence, and refused to be placated by the theatre's manager, Spranger Barry. Bates must have returned soon afterwards to London. In November 1768 he brought a successful action against Barry in the Court of Common Pleas for payment of outstanding fees to him in respect of Slack's performances prior to her 'elopement'.[35]

Back in London, Bates moved to a house in St Martin's Street, Leicester Fields, where, in 1774, Charles Burney would become a neighbour through his purchase of Sir Isaac Newton's former house at No. 35. On 12 October 1768 Bates insured his property there with the Sun Fire Office.[36] This time, he asked for only £300 of cover, this amount divided equally between household goods, printed books (including music books) and clothes. He was not necessarily poorer than before: he may simply have been less willing to pay a large premium. In May 1769 his policy received an endorsement on account of a move to a different house in St Martin's Street.

During the next ten years Bates's life was seemingly quiet, industrious and reasonably successful, as he divided his attention between the two patent theatres and the many venues for concert songs. However, on 13 July 1778 his will was proved, showing that he must have died only a month or so after the publication of the text of his Scots song *Blithe Colin* in the *St James Chronicle or the British Evening Post* of 2 June, where there is no hint that he is no longer alive. The press appears to have ignored his death, and I have found no parish record of his burial.

On 18 July 1778 a notice in the *Public Advertiser* invited creditors of 'William Bates Esq'. (the belated elevation of status through the substitution of 'Esq'. for 'Mr'. is perhaps a mark of respect on which Ann Bates insisted) to settle any outstanding debts on pain of legal action. This was followed, on 15 August, by an announcement in the *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* of a forthcoming sale of Bates's property starting on 17 August and lasting four days. The announcement reads:

32 Slack's and Bates's activities in Dublin are chronicled in John C. Greene, *Theatre in Dublin, 1745–1820: A Calendar of Performances*, six volumes (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2011), volume 2.

33 Bates may in fact have written some of this music earlier for London productions of the same plays.

34 As reported verbatim in *Lloyd's Evening Post* of 15–18 May 1767.

35 *Lloyd's Evening Post* (25–28 November 1768).

36 Whitehead and Nex, 'The Insurance of Musical London', 21.

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> By Mess. CHRISTIE and ANSELL. On the premises, on Monday next, and three following days, by order of the ADMINISTRATRIX. THE HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, LIBRARY OF BOOKS, amongst which are upwards of 600 Single Plays by Brome, Chapman, Decker, d'Urfey, Goffe, Green, Heywood, Killigrew, Marlow, Massinger, Meronion, Middleton, Nabbes, Rowley, Stapleton, Shirley, &c. some of which are exceeding scarce; COLLECTION of MUSIC, CHINA, FINE TONED HARPSICHORD by SHUDI, two Spinets, and other valuable effects, of William Bates Esq., deceased. At his house in St. MARTIN's-STREET, LEICESTER-FIELDS. To be viewed to the sale (Sunday excepted) when catalogues may be had.

THE SALE CATALOGUE OF 1778

A catalogue of this sale exists, and is preserved, together with inked annotations recording the purchasers and prices paid, at Christie's Archives, London.[37] This catalogue is in effect two catalogues in one, since the twelve pages listing the 163 lots comprising household and personal effects sold on 17 and 18 August and the twenty-six pages listing the 207 lots comprising plays, music and books sold on 18 and 19 August have separate title-pages.[38] The four-day sale realized the quite handsome sum of £290 18s 6d, of which £34 5s is attributable to the items in the section containing music.

Regarding the items sold on the first two days, one need mention specifically only the musical instruments. Lot 7 in section VIII ('Front Parlor') was 'a spinnet by *Hancock*', sold to a certain Peart (the name is legible only with difficulty) for £1 6s; lot 11 in section IX ('Dining Room') was 'a spinnet by *Celestina*, 1627, in a painted case and a music desk', sold to the same Peart for £1 8s; the following lot was 'a violin, and bow in a wainscot case', sold to a certain Stewart for £1 4s; lot 4 in section X ('Back Room, One Pair [of stairs]') was 'a single key'd HARPSICHORD by Joshua Shudi in a neat inlaid mahogany case, and a music desk', sold to Stewart again for £12 12s. Otherwise, the household items are just what one would expect the moderately prosperous occupant of a compact three-storey house to possess.

The second title-page reads: 'A | CATALOGUE | OF THE | Genuine Library of BOOKS, | SCARCE OLD PLAYS, | AND | A valuable Collection of Music, | OF | WILLIAM BATES, Esq; | DECEASED | Which, by Order of the ADMINISTRATRIX, | will be sold by Auction, | By Mess. CHRISTIE and ANSELL, AT HIS LATE DWELLING HOUSE, | In St. Martin's Street, Leicester Fields, | On WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1778, and | following Day, precisely at 12 o'Clock. | To be viewed on Friday the 14th, and to the Time | of Sale, Sunday excepted. | Catalogues may be had as above [at Garraway's coffee-house], and of Mess. CHRISTIE and ANSELL, Pall Mall'.

No fewer than 141 numbered lots of books, all unconnected with music except for two inadvertently misplaced ones, were sold in the first part of the third day (1–65) and the fourth day (66–140).[39] Lots 1–65 are predominantly stage plays, grouped, as usual at the time, according to format: first, octavos and duodecimos (1–49), then quartos (50–65). Lots 66–140, with a similar division into octavos and duodecimos (66–123), quartos (124–*128) and folios (129–140), consist mainly of *belles-lettres* and works on biography, history, geography, travel and the like. The musical lots, numbered separately from 1 to 65 (with the late insertion of a lot numbered *34), appear in a continuous series organized in no particular fashion after a heading, 'MUSIC', that follows lot 65 of the non-musical items.

The great majority of the volumes, both musical and non-musical, are binder's collections that unite within two covers (or perhaps, in certain instances, loosely within a common folder) more than one item. The

37 My thanks to Christie's Archives for permitting me to inspect the catalogue.

38 The title-page for days 1 and 2 opens with the words 'A Catalogue of the Genuine Household Furniture'; that for days 3 and 4 with 'A Catalogue of the Genuine Library of Books'. The two components were evidently sold either separately or conjointly. A copy of the second component (the one listing music) in the Bodleian Library has been digitized and is accessible via that library's online catalogue and other websites.

39 The numbers end at 140, but between lots 128 and 129 an extra item numbered *128 was inserted at the last moment.

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number of items sharing a lot number is not infrequently huge (77 in the case of lot 3). So the number of items is many times that of lot numbers, making the statement in the announcement of the sale that there were 'upwards of 600 single plays' appear absolutely true. In most instances, the auctioneers name only the first item in a bound volume, appending merely a statement such as 'and 4 more'. So what we see named in the catalogue is only the tip of the iceberg: much of what Bates possessed will remain hidden from us forever. This practice of binding together works of similar kind, especially evident for the plays, bespeaks an educated collector, although a good part of the music constitutes what could be described as Bates's working collection of recent or still current music, within which is scattered the archive of his own compositions (much of which must have lain among the items not described by name), and here the works are more often presented singly or in smaller groups.

The chronological span of the named plays and other non-musical literature runs from a 1612 edition of Christopher Marlowe's *The Troublesome Raign* [sic] *and Lamentable Death of Edward the Second, King of England* (lot 31) to William Heard's poem *A Sentimental Journey to Bath, Bristol and their Environs* of 1778 (lot *128). Many of the items, particularly the impressive contingent of seventeenth-century English plays, may have been inherited or donated, but the impression is given of a connoisseur who sought out and purchased items to enrich his collection. It does indeed appear that Bates's attachment to the musical theatre was nourished by a love of theatre for its own sake rather than the reverse. For the music, the chronological spread is equally wide. We find canzonets by Morley (music lot 48) and motets by Palestrina (music lot 38) as well as a manuscript score and parts of Bates's own last stage work (1778), *Second Thought is Best* (music lot 10).

An outstanding and totally unexpected feature of the collection is its rich offering of works of music theory, some very early and rare. A complete list of the named works is shown as Table 2. This assortment, catholic in taste and stretching all the way back to 1492, seems to place Bates firmly in the camp of the partisans of 'ancient' music, whose numerical strength and wide social and musical base is no better illustrated than in the subscription list (including Bates's name) of the 1771 reprint of Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musick*. Like most of these partisans who were themselves composers, Bates generally wrote his music in as up-to-date a style as circumstances demanded, but now and again he lets slip his love of the old and the learned, as in the fugal movements of his Opp. 1 and 2. Indeed, for the entire duration of the eighteenth century the application of such devices as fugue, canon and invertible counterpoint continued to serve widely among composers in England as a demonstration of professional expertise, and even enjoyed something of an Indian summer in the reinvigorated genre of the catch.[40]

Some of the manuscript scores, commonly divided into three volumes (one for each act), shed light on Bates's own activity in the opera house. Such scores were commonly possessed by theatre managements, by their own composers (who had usually served as *maestro al cembalo* for at least the initial performance) and by those wealthier patrons or collectors who could pay for copies of the complete music. But they were also needed by the player of the customary second harpsichord reinforcing the first in fully scored numbers, which appears to have been the route by which Bates acquired them. The presence of a score of *Pharnaces* (music lot 27) is unsurprising. But lot 25 contains twelve volumes (presumably four sets of three) of a 'collection of operas, English and Italian', while music lot 28 contains the pasticcio *Vologeso*, compiled by George Berg for the King's Theatre in 1759, plus an unnamed opera – perhaps Davide Perez's *Farnace*, which preceded it.[41] Further operas staged at the King's Theatre are Piccinni's *La buona figliuola* (1776) and Giacomelli's *Lucio Papirio dittatore* (1732) in music lot 30, and Hasse's *Artaserse* (1772) and Vinci's *Siroe* (1764) in music lot 31.[42]

40 On the counterculture of 'ancient' music in Georgian Britain, which in some instances extended to actual hostility to modern trends, see especially Tim Eggington, *The Advancement of Music in Enlightenment England: Benjamin Cooke and the Academy of Ancient Music* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2014).

41 Berg's responsibility for *Vologeso* is not known from other sources. The Perez *Farnace* could perhaps have been the inspiration behind the *Pharnaces* of Hull and Bates.

42 A study of the seventeen purchasers of the music and of the prices paid must, regrettably, await another occasion.

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Table 2 Works of music theory in William Bates's sale catalogue (1778)

Lot	Author	Title	Place	Year	Comment
139*	Boethius	*Opera Boetii*	Venice	1492	
61	S. Heyden	*Musicæ, id est, Artis canendi*	Nuremberg	1537	or later edition
43	G. Zarlino	*Le istitutioni harmoniche*	Venice	1558–	or later edition
139*	R. Fludd	*Utriusque Cosmi Maioris scilicet. . . .*	Oppenheim	1617–1619	
47	E. Bevin	*A Brief and Short Introduction on the Art of Musicke*	London	1631	
65	M. Mersenne	*Harmonicorum libri*	Paris	1648	
40	A. Kircher	*Musurgia universalis*	Rome	1650	
44	M. Meibom	*Antiquæ musicæ scriptores*	Amsterdam	1652	or later edition
26	G. d'Avella	*Regole di musica*	Rome	1657	
41	T. Mace	*Musick's Monument*	London	1676	
43	G. A. A. Bontempi	*Historia musica*	Perugia	1695	
42	C. Simpson	*A Compendium*	London	1706	
54	A. Malcolm	*A Treatise of Music*	Edinburgh	1721	
58	J. C. Pepusch	*A Treatise on Harmony*	London	1731	
47	J. F. Lampe	*The Art of Music*	London	1740	
58	J. Grassineau	*A Musical Dictionary*	London	1740	or later edition
6	F. Geminiani	*Guida harmonica*	London	1742	
59	P. F. Tosi	*Observations on the Florid Song*	London	1742	or later edition
57	R. Smith	*Harmonics, or the Philosophy of Musical Sounds*	Cambridge	1749	or later edition
60	J.-P. Rameau	*Demonstration du principe de l'harmonie*	Paris	1750	
41	J.-P. Rameau	*A Treatise of Music*	London	1752	
63	G. Tartini	*Trattato di musica*	Padua	1754	
42	G. Antoniotti	*L'arte armonica*	London	1761	
56	J.-J. Rousseau	*Dictionnaire de musique*	London	1766	*recte*, Brussels
42	J. C. Heck	*The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*	London	1770–	
41	T. Morley	*A Plaine and Easie Introduction to the Art of Music*	London	1771	Bates a subscriber
48	J. Nares	*[Twelve Canzonets, with] A Treatise on Singing*	London	?1778	latest possible date

* Number in the list of non-musical items.
The names of authors and titles appearing in the table, many of which are found in incomplete or garbled state in the sale catalogue, are presented in normalized and, where necessary, corrected form.

But perhaps the most intriguing item in the catalogue is the one that, as the second of two books making up lot 65, immediately precedes the list of musical items. It is identified simply as 'Dr. Bates's works 1700'. This is clearly the compendious volume entitled *The Works of the Late Reverend and Learned William Bates, D. D.* that the author's formidable widow Margaret (*c*1643–1721) dedicated to William III in that year. No other book dealing with theology is apparent within the catalogue, so the possibility arises that this is an heirloom passed down (via a succession of sons named William?) through the family or else a book acquired precisely on account of a family connection, true or believed. A link to this famous and much esteemed divine could explain not only the composer's own erudite leanings but also, more concretely, the presence of so much seventeenth-century material within his collection, for, Presbyterian dissenter though he was to the highest

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degree, the theologian Bates was known for his exceptional tolerance and openness towards secular culture.[43] The possibility is worth a brief digressive examination.

WILLIAM BATES THE CLERIC AND WILLIAM BATES THE MERCHANT

The famous cleric was born in 1625 to yet another William, a gentleman living in Bermondsey.[44] After a university education first at Oxford and then (in order to escape the Royalists) Cambridge and subsequent ordination he became, in 1652, vicar of St Dunstan-in-the-West, Stepney. His firm Puritan beliefs, laid down in a series of influential writings, led to his ejection from St Dunstan's in 1662 during a general purge of Dissenters from the Anglican clergy. He continued to preach and write, and a couple of years before his death in 1699 established an independent chapel in Mare Street, Hackney. He was married twice, and his second marriage, to the Margaret already mentioned, took place in July 1664, when she was aged twenty-one. In 1699 his collection of books was purchased for £500 from his widow by Dr Daniel Williams, whose library still exists today under the name of its founder in Gordon Square, London.[45]

With his first wife, Ann (died 1661), Dr Bates had a son, once again named William, who was baptized at St Dunstan's on 1 January 1653 (1654, New Style).[46] In 1670 this son was apprenticed to a merchant and member of the Mercers' Company, Henry Spurstowe (died 1676), who was the brother of one of his closest Puritan allies. The indenture, for eight years, is dated 13 December 1670.[47] However, this William must have died fairly young, since on 3 May 1697 another William with the same father was apprenticed to the prominent Quaker merchant Edward Haistwell of the Grocers' Company.[48] Records from the early eighteenth century show that the second William practised successfully as a merchant engaged in maritime trade. In his will, which was dictated on 23 April 1720 and proved on 19 May 1720, he omitted to name any executor or to specify who was to inherit his residual estate, sowing the seeds of later dissent and legal action. The probate court did its best to act equitably by appointing as co-executrices Margaret Bates, William's four unmarried sisters and the deceased's young wife Bridget (née Glover), whom he had married as recently as 1716.[49]

43 Dr Bates was fluent in Italian (as Alan Argent has kindly informed me), so the named work in lot 60 – the 1659 edition, revised by Giovanni Torriano, of John Florio's Italian and English dictionary – could be another inherited volume, seeing that it is similarly an outlier in the sale catalogue, which lists no other non-musical items with an Italian connection. Dr Bates also owned a copy of Shakespeare's *First Folio*, auctioned at Sotheby's in 2006, so his interest in theatre is a certainty.

44 There is an enormous amount written on the theologian Bates, to which it is impossible to do justice here. A good starting point is Stephen Wright, 'Bates, William (1625–1699)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* www.oxforddnb.com (10 April 2016).

45 An anonymous account of Dr Williams's library in *The Athenæum* 2461 (1874), 879–880, lists many major dramatic and poetic works in English, including the already mentioned Shakespeare volume, that probably came to Williams from Bates. It could well be that Williams chose not to purchase 'loose' single plays in Bates's possession, which might explain why binder's collections predominate among (and, significantly, only among) the pre-1700 stage works listed in the 1778 sale catalogue.

46 Theophilus Charles Noble, *Memorials of Temple Bar with Some Account of Fleet Street and the Parishes of St. Dunstan and St. Bride, London* (London: Diphose & Bateman[, 1869]), 80.

47 Information from the record set *Records of London's Livery Companies Online: Apprentices and Freemen 1400–1900* www.londonroll.org (16 August 2016).

48 Information from the record set *London Apprenticeships Abstracts 1442–1850* www.findmypast.co.uk (25 March 2016). This second William's mother was Margaret, as placed beyond doubt by the Latin phrase 'matre naturali et legitima' occurring in the probate document (see next footnote). On Haistwell see Jacob M. Price, 'Haistwell, Edward (*c*.1658–1709)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* www.oxforddnb.com (2 April 2016).

49 Details of William's marriage to Bridget and the pre-nuptial contract associated with it emerge from the case Glover vs Bates heard on 2 June 1739. See Martin John West, *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the High Court of Chancery from 1736 to July, 1739* (London: Butterworth, 1827), 667–668.

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We come now to the all-important matter of whether the merchant William Bates was the father of the tradesman William Bates, the composer's father. Certainty is impossible in this case, but one can at least say that the evidence is on balance positive rather than negative. If the merchant William Bates had a wife prior to Bridget, the future tradesman could have been born between 1700 and 1715, which would make him too young (as a minor) to be named as a co-executor of his father's will. Presumably, after the merchant's death in 1720 and Margaret's in 1721, he would have been left for a few years in the care of Bridget, who died in 1725. The possibility even exists that he was a child of Bridget herself, but this would not significantly alter the situation materially. In these financially and otherwise uncertain circumstances it would have been logical for whoever was his parent or guardian to put him out as an apprentice rather than think of sending him to university. One hopes that future research will be able to tie up this genealogical loose end.

CONTEMPORARY AND MODERN RECEPTION OF BATES'S MUSIC

The reception of the dominant part of Bates's oeuvre, his stage works, was a rather hit-or-miss affair during his lifetime, as is characteristic for that branch of music. When reading contemporary accounts in the press, private correspondence or memoirs, one can rarely make a neat separation between criticism of the music and views on the dramatic subject, the libretto, the production and the quality of the performance. Bates's low profile, resulting from the fact that he was not a front-line public performer, is inevitably reflected in the relative paucity of contemporary comment on his music. Of course, one can also gain an indirect impression of a work's success through the length of its run or the frequency of its revival, although in that case, too, the perceived quality of the music is far from the sole determinant.

Bates's debut work, *The Jovial Crew*, which must have ridden a little on the success of the original version of 1731, was by all accounts well received.[50] Roger Fiske finds some of its songs 'delightful'. Much the same was true of *Flora*, the follow-up ballad opera for which Bates took major responsibility.[51] In September 1775 the *Town and Country Magazine* described the overture to *The Theatrical Candidates* as 'at least pretty' and noted the approval given to 'several of the airs', while the *Westminster Magazine* for the same month characterized the music as a whole as 'sprightly and agreeable'.[52] In contrast, the much more ambitious English opera *Pharnaces* achieved only six performances, although it earned a kind of *succès d'estime*. The background to its creation is interesting. For the period of his absence on the continent (1763–1765) David Garrick gave instructions for the staging of English operas, with which he hoped, sadly in vain, to recapture at Drury Lane the recent success of Thomas Arne's *Artaxerxes* at Covent Garden (1762). The first two of these were George Rush's *The Royal Shepherd* (February 1764) and the *Almena* composed jointly by Thomas Battishill and Michael Arne (November 1764). Commenting on the three operas' lack of success, the actor and bookseller Thomas Davies magisterially pronounced in 1818:

> The Royal Shepherd, Almena and Pharnaces, three English operas, were played in succession, with little or no profit to the manager, the poet, or the musician. The author of Pharnaces probably succeeded best – He received 70 guineas from Mr. Tonson for his manuscript – besides what he gained by his agreement with the composer, Mr. Wm. Bates, whose compositions and assiduity deserve commendation and encouragement. But such serious and pompous entertainments in our own language, though accompanied by excellent musick, vocal and instrumental, with fine scenes, magnificent habits, and other beautiful decorations, will never become the favourite amusement of an English audience.[53]

50 John Johnson published its overture and (in simplified form) most of its closed numbers in 1760.

51 Fiske, *English Theatre Music*, 397–398.

52 See Harry William Pedicord and Frederick Louis Bergmann, eds, *The Plays of David Garrick*, six volumes (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980–1982), volume 2, 331.

53 Thomas Davies, *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick, Esq.*, volume 2, 70.

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Fiske writes about the music of *Pharnaces* with something approaching enthusiasm, finding it 'the most competently written and the most inventive of the three Drury Lane "English Operas"' and approvingly characterizing some of its arias as 'very long and very hard'.[54]

The contrasting critical reception of two stage works by Bates for which the scores do not survive illustrates the swings and roundabouts of theatrical life. The *Gamester*, written in 1771 for the short-lived Grotto Gardens and performed on a shoestring, received a dozen performances, the critic in the *Public Ledger* of 24 June 1771 observing: 'The Music, which was composed by Mr. Bates, was thought by the Connoisseurs to have uncommon merit'. Conversely, the critic in the *Monthly Review or Literary Journal* found Bates's last stage work, *Second Thought is Best*, 'a little piece, of very little merit', even if he did not single out the music for especial censure.[55]

Perhaps the most penetrating contemporary view of Bates the theatre composer, or even of Bates the composer *tout court*, came from that versatile man of the theatre Charles Dibdin, who, having first damned Michael Arne and George Rush with faint praise, wrote, not unaffectionately: 'Bates had bluster, and bustle, and could compose songs as fast as a blacksmith can make hobnails all of the same size and quality'.[56] The phrase that sticks in the mind is 'all of the same size and quality'. It is utterly true that Bates achieves consistency by adherence to tried and tested formulas, with both the positive and the negative consequences of this approach.

Bates's songs seem to have attracted little direct contemporary comment, although they were evidently in constant demand. Stephen Foster devotes three pages of his study of the concert song to Bates.[57] He notes on the positive side the composer's fondness for extended orchestral introductions, but finds his orchestration in places 'clumsy' and his application of the galant style (which Foster does not define more closely) sometimes 'inept'. Like several other recent writers on the subject, Foster correctly identifies the 1760s as a decade of extraordinarily rapid stylistic evolution in the music of English composers (a period of 'catch-up', as it were), but he appears to exclude Bates from the mainstream of this advance, concluding with the words: 'His sporadic attempts at striking a balance between the older and newer styles, especially with orchestration, show that his sympathies lay with the former'.[58] I find this verdict unfair and misleading, partly because Foster does not bring to bear a clear enough vision of the chronology of the music. If one looks at the overture of *The Jovial Crew* (1760), one discovers, exactly as in the concertos published two years later, a fully formed style close to the 'Neapolitan' idiom of Hasse (a composer then extremely popular in England), but with a small admixture of more indigenous elements such as suggestions of the country dance or complex patterns of juxtaposed normal and inverted dotted rhythms.[59] If one then moves five years forward, by which time the impact of the recently arrived J. C. Bach was making itself felt, and examines the overture to *Pharnaces*, a step change in style is clearly evident. The first movement, the opening of which is shown (in its published keyboard reduction) as Example 1,[60] leads off with a 'Mannheim steamroller' featuring up-to-the-minute contrasts of *forte* and *piano* and follows this with a 'Mannheim crescendo' (not illustrated) of a very similar sort to the one that opens Haydn's first symphony, which similarly rises inexorably in the violins from d^1 to d^3. The most modern feature, however, is the preparation of the dominant key in the second-subject group (as one may now term it) in true sonata style, with a clearly audible tonal and syntactic disjunction between the two subject groups, rather than, as before, via the smoother but less stable tonicization of the dominant

54 Fiske, *English Theatre Music*, 314.

55 *The Monthly Review or Literary Journal* 58/1 (1771), 473.

56 Charles Dibdin, *A Complete History of the English Stage*, five volumes, second edition (London: author, 1800), volume 5, 226.

57 Foster, '"To Entertain the Fancy"', 261–263.

58 Foster, '"To Entertain the Fancy"', 263.

59 Fiske, *English Theatre Music*, 397, finds this overture 'very poor in quality', a surprisingly negative judgment that suggests to me a bias in favour of the later, 'J. C. Bach' style.

60 William Bates, *Pharnaces: An English Opera* (London: Welcker [, 1765]).

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Example 1 William Bates, Overture from *Pharnaces*, first movement, bars 1–8 (in two-stave reduction as published in 1765 by Peter Welcker). © The British Library Board, D.295.(1.). Used by permission

characteristic of binary form or ritornello form. The Op. 2 concertos of 1762 stand, in fact, just at the threshold of this great change, which, as Owain Edwards rightly states, was one that swept rapidly through English music as a whole in the years following Bach's arrival in late 1762.[61] It is a pity that Edwards and others have placed the estimated date of this collection (*c*1765) too late by three years, since this has evidently encouraged misunderstandings, such as that these works 'exhibit the on-the-fence characteristics of *galant* music which has not completely freed itself of the "Ancient" style',[62] or even that they are 'reactionary in style'.[63] In any case, simple binary oppositions, such as between 'galant' and 'ancient', always risk bringing a false clarity to the complexities of musical evolution.

BATES'S *CONCERTOS IN TEN PARTS*, OP. 2: GENERAL REMARKS

We first learn of Bates's Op. 2 from an advertisement placed in the *London Chronicle* of 9–11 November 1762 by John Johnson's widow Ruth in the name of her late husband (who had died the previous year). The first collection that is listed among a series of 'new Pieces of Music for Concerts' is 'Bates's Concertos for French Horns, &c. in ten Parts'. One could well imagine that Johnson himself had commissioned the set a year or more earlier. They represent the composer's only known free-standing orchestral works, with the exception of a lost 'New Medley Overture' (denoting a piece based on popular melodies) performed at Ranelagh House on 11 June 1760.[64]

The twelve partbooks have an identical title-page that reads: 'Six | CONCERTOS | In ten Parts | FOR | Two VIOLINS two HAUTBOYS obligated | Two FRENCH HORNS obligated | Two TRUMPETS one ALTO VIOLA, a | VIOLONCELLO and THOROUGH BASS | FOR THE | HARPSICHORD | Composed by | William Bates | Opera seconda. [engraved small] Phillips sculp | LONDON | Printed for John Johnson

61 Edwards, 'English String Concertos before 1800', 1.

62 Edwards, 'English String Concertos before 1800', 10.

63 Fiske, 'Concert Music II, in Johnstone and Fiske, eds, *Music in Britain: The Eighteenth Century*, 210.

64 *Public Advertiser* (11 June 1760).

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opposite Bow Church in Cheapside'.[65] The word 'for' (as distinct from 'by') in the imprint is significant, since it conveys the information that the publication was financed by the publisher, a detail that helps to explain why Bates had no need for a patron (to be thanked in a dedication) or for subscribers. The set shows every sign of having been assembled by the composer himself, since the works are fairly uniform in general conception but varied in their details, such as the choice of key: Concertos Nos 1 and 3 are in F major, Concertos Nos 2, 4 and 6 in D major, and Concerto No. 5 in E flat major. However, the engraver's copy texts appear to have been less uniform, consisting of scores and/or orchestral material produced at different times in different circumstances. This would explain, for example, why the horns are notated (at pitch, but with a void key signature) in the alto clef in Concertos Nos 2 and 4, but in the treble clef, a minor seventh above sounding pitch, in Concerto No. 6.[66] It could also explain why, in the fugue of Concerto No. 2, a vital, independently sounding bass part (variously for solo cello and bassoon?) is missing in certain concertante passages, perhaps because the engraver failed to notice that in this instance the text of the continuo part was not exactly reproduced for the other bass instruments. 'Obligated' is the same as 'obbligato', meaning that the instruments (unlike the oboes and horns used in many overtures) are not ad libitum.[67]

The twelve partbooks have the titles Violino primo, Violino secondo, Viola, Organo è Violoncello, Oboe primo, Oboe secondo, Bassoon, Corno primo, Corno secondo, Tromba primo [*sic*], Tromba secondo [*sic*] and Timpano. There is a small complication in that the bassoon part is composite: Concertos Nos 1, 2 and 4 have a semi-independent part with concertante passages that uses the running title 'Bassoon', whereas for the three remaining concertos the corresponding pages of the Organo è Violoncello part, with no alteration to their running titles and numbering, do service. The bassoon part very occasionally divides into two, showing that more than one player was expected to participate. Moreover, a cue in the continuo part in the ninth bar of the second movement of Concerto No. 3, 'Senza con.Basso [contrabasso] e Bassoon', confirms that where no separate, appropriately headed bassoon part exists, the instruments are nevertheless expected to be present to support the continuo line. A double bass is even more essential for the avoidance of unwelcome chord inversions. 'Organo' is the familiar generic term for any keyboard instrument, but here most likely in practice to denote a harpsichord, the instrument named on the title-page. The trumpet and timpani parts contain music only for the second and fourth concertos. In the central, Andante movement of Concerto No. 4 cues in the two oboe parts specify the use of flutes in place of the normal instruments. This switch, a very common option for slow movements at this time (but with a long history, as Vivaldi's concerto RV557 shows), presupposes what was still normal among wind players: that they 'doubled' on several instruments. In short, the make-up of the ensemble corresponds exactly to that of a large theatre orchestra, such as Bates had at his disposal at Covent Garden and Drury Lane, which was often replicated in public concerts and by music societies.

Bates notates his music with great attention to detail in such matters as dynamic variation, articulation and bass figuring. Interestingly, he uses here a special symbol appearing over the first note of the principal fugue subject on each of its entries in the first movement of Concerto No. 2. This resembles in shape a large tick, the longer (right-hand) stroke of which is elegantly outcurved. The symbol appears also – and in a greater variety of situations – in Bates's Op. 1. It is taken from Charles Avison, who introduced it in his *Six Concertos*

65 The two trumpet parts and the 'Timpano' (timpani) part have handwritten title-pages. Why this distinction should have been made is unclear, especially since these instruments are 'obligated' in the two concertos that include them (Nos 2 and 4).

66 There were two standard ways of notating horn parts in eighteenth-century Britain. The first was to write them in C major in the treble clef, at the requisite interval above the sounding pitch. The second was to write the notes as just described but then to substitute a C or an F clef that would enable the player to read the part 'as if' at sounding pitch (or an octave higher, in the case of the bass clef), with the necessary adjustment of accidentals.

67 The English translation 'obligated' is uncommon, but at least not quite a neologism: it appears, for instance, in the title of Daniel Wright's edition (*c*1730) of Geminiani's concerto arrangements of the first five sonatas of Corelli's Op. 5.

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in Seven Parts, Op. 3, of 1751, likewise published by Johnson.[68] As the opening of the preface to that collection explains, this symbol, called by Avison a 'Mostra or Index', serves to tell the player where a melodic line is 'principal': in other words, it serves a function similar to the 'H' used by Schoenberg as an abbreviation of 'Hauptstimme'. Bates does not appear to have persisted with this innovation after Op. 2.

There is a degree of uncertainty in musicological literature about how best to categorize concertos such as Bates's. Edwards, for example, writes: 'Bates's use of the large orchestra makes them [the concertos] more akin to the symphony and overture of the period, than to the *concerti grossi* that preceded them or the solo violin concertos which later *galant* composers were to write'.[69] Leaving aside possible objections on grounds of terminology and chronology, this statement fails to recognize that the concerto 'with/for French horns' (to apply a concise description already used during the period) was a distinctive subgenre that flourished in Britain from the 1720s to the 1770s. It is significant that, irrespective of what other wind instruments (oboes, bassoons, trumpets and so on) are added to the mix, it is always the horns that are singled out for mention.

The foundations for the subgenre, with its partly Germanic heritage, were laid in the two concerto-like structures embedded in Handel's *Water Music* of 1717. In the F major suite (HWV348) movements 3–5, although not so named, form an orthodox three-movement concerto (in which the first movement 'doubles' as a conclusion to the opening French overture). In the D major suite (HWV349) it is movements 1–2 (where the three-bar Adagio conclusion in B minor of the first movement stands in lieu of a slow movement) that constitute the concerto. The D major quasi-concerto sets another precedent in that paired horns are partnered by paired trumpets, a form of augmentation that is later encountered from time to time. Handel was later to present in public similar pieces with the title of concerto that recalled, and sometimes recycled, the ever-popular Water Music material, such as the two-movement HWV342, which is probably related to a concerto by Handel heard at Drury Lane in 1723, and the concertos 'a due cori' of 1747 (HWV332–334) that partnered oratorios. Also in 1723, a heavily scored concerto with oboes and horns by Vivaldi (possibly RV568, 569 or 571) was performed at the King's Theatre;[70] but this concerto is something of a red herring, since it will have employed a prominent principal violin part, a feature not characteristic of the British concerto with horns. Equally uncharacteristic of the subgenre is the division of the violins into concertino and ripieno (the dominant practice from the 1730s onwards in British concertos not employing wind instruments), although exceptions exist.[71] Standing equally apart from this tradition are the concertos for horns (usually paired) by such continental composers as Vivaldi and Telemann, which translate into a new medium formal schemata borrowed from the solo concerto.

Diligent reading of the London press for the next few decades brings to light a steady stream of concertos performed in theatres or independent venues employing horns (nearly always in pairs), often by very minor or unnamed composers. The first important collection of such concertos to be published was a set of six by Johann Adolf Hasse brought out by John Walsh in 1741.[72] Significantly, at least two of the concertos in this set are 'rebranded' sinfonias taken from dramatic works.[73] This case poses us a problem: how, morphologically speaking, to tell apart concertos with horns and sinfonias (or overtures) with horns. Any answer must first concede that there is a very high degree of overlap, not least in the preference for a fast–slow–fast movement cycle. But only the concertos contain lengthy passages of display writing requiring conspicuous virtuosity,

68 Avison discusses the 'Mostra' again in his *Essay on Musical Expression* (London: Davis, 1752), 130–131. I am very grateful to Harry Johnstone for pointing me towards Avison.

69 Edwards, 'English String Concertos before 1800', 10.

70 Advertised in the *Daily Courant* of 22, 23 and 24 May 1723.

71 One instance is the *Medley Concerto* (1757) of Richard Mudge, based on Scottish country dances.

72 *Six Concertos for Violins, French Horns or Hoboys, &c. . . . in Eight Parts*, Op. 4, numbered 799 in William C. Smith and Charles Humphries, *A Bibliography of the Musical Works Published by the Firm of John Walsh during the Years 1721–1766* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1968), 180–181.

73 See Michael Talbot, 'A Leaving Present for Princess Louisa? Handel, Barsanti and Bodmer Ms. 11461–7', *Händel-Jahrbuch* 61 (2015), 358.

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make occasional use of fugal textures or moderate the extreme front-weighting normal in operatic sinfonias, where the finale is often no longer than the brief concluding chorus or ensemble that it prefigures.

Another landmark in this tradition is Francesco Barsanti's set of ten *Concerti grossi* published in Edinburgh in 1742 and probably performed originally by members of the Edinburgh Musical Society, in whose service he was at the time. The five concertos for two horns and strings that are found among them are interesting for including a part for timpani, an instrument played by Barsanti himself. An anonymous critique of opera published in London in 1768 comments that

> the French horn and the hautbois, . . . by . . . combining the representations of hunting, in as analogous a manner as possible, with the rejoicings of war, have been made to accede to the drum and the tympanum, two instruments originally invented for military music.[74]

The addition of trumpet-like figures (fanfares in all but name) to the traditional stylistic repertory of French horns, epitomized by passages in which horns either echo trumpets or double them in the sub-octave (as occurs repeatedly in HWV349), is a recurrent feature of the subgenre. The co-option of timpani merely makes the martial-cum-ceremonial allusions more overt.

If one is strict in distinguishing concertos from overtures (which in the mid-eighteenth century constitute a clear majority of the British publications of orchestral music that include horns), Bates's Op. 2 becomes the third such publication. It represents a *summa* of the indigenous tradition of concertos for horns, so far as the treatment of these instruments is concerned. But this is to run ahead of ourselves: we need now to explore why such an unusual kind of concerto took root so firmly in Britain.

THE CULT OF THE FRENCH HORN IN GEORGIAN BRITAIN

The popularity of the French horn (the coiled instrument that rapidly supplanted the straight 'English' horn after 1700) brought it from the hunting fields of rural England to the homes, streets and waterways of urban areas, and especially of London. Horn-playing servants, usually acting in pairs or even in larger bands, became status symbols ceremonializing the lives of their employers. They announced arrivals and departures, acted as escorts in the manner of modern motorcycle outriders when their masters and mistresses progressed along streets, canals or rivers, provided background music for banquets and similar social occasions, and made themselves generally ubiquitous. Horn playing, and to a certain extent also trumpet playing, was notable for being a recognized 'niche' occupation for London's few thousand partly free, partly de facto enslaved, black male inhabitants.[75] An humorous essay entitled 'Character of a Fiddling Footman', attributed to a pseudonymous 'Anthony Scratch' and published in 1761, includes the telling observation:

> in every kitchen, at the polite end of the town, you are sure to hear either a French-horn or a fiddle. Every Black servant thinks himself qualified, by his complexion, to be an excellent performer on the former; and every White one, whose ear can distinguish between Bumper Squire Jones and the Hundredth Psalm, has no doubt of excelling on the latter.[76]

74 *The Lyric Muse Revived in Europe or A Critical Display of the Opera in all its Revolutions* (London: Davis and Reymers, 1768), 35.

75 Lord Mansfield's landmark ruling in the case of Somerset v Stewart (1772) established that under common law slavery could not exist on British soil, irrespective of its status elsewhere, but in practice black domestic servants who had been house slaves prior to their arrival in Britain were commonly still treated in some respects as chattels, transferable without their consent from master to master.

76 *The Yearly Chronicle for M,DCC,LXI* (London: Becket and others, 1761), 6. In this light the depiction of a solitary black French horn player among a group of otherwise white musicians in John June's well-known etching 'A view of Cheapside, as it appeard on Lord Mayor's Day last' (1761) must be seen as a wholly realistic element. The appearance on the advertised programme for a concert at Drury Lane Theatre on 3 March 1738 of 'Mr Handel's Water-Piece, with the Chorus in Atalanta, to be perform'd on the French-Horns by two little Negro-Boys, Scholars to Mr. Charles, who

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The more expert horn-playing servants, of any hue, could find themselves co-opted to play in art music alongside professionals and even become full-time professionals themselves.[77] Two black horn players active just before the middle of the century stand out. One is Charles Cato, who as a horn-playing footman began by serving Sir Robert Walpole, before being passed by him to Lord Chesterfield, from whom he was later acquired by Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales. *The London Evening Post* of 11–13 July 1738 reported on the second transaction thus: 'The Right Hon. the Earl of Chesterfield has made a Present to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, of Cato (his Black) who is reckon'd to blow the best French Horn and Trumpet in England'.[78] Sadly but revealingly, this musical pre-eminence was not remembered in the notice of Cato's death in the *London Post* of 12–14 October 1748, where he is identified merely as 'a Black Servant belonging to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales'. Even the register recording Cato's burial on 13 October 1748 at St James, Piccadilly has nothing more interesting to say about him than 'M[an] (Black)'.[79]

More fortunate, except in the manner of his death, was John Anthony, a free black who was a pupil of the trumpeter John Grano.[80] Anthony rose to the top echelon of professional horn players in London, taking one of the solo parts in a concerto with two horns by Giovanni Stefano Carbonelli performed at a subscription concert on 20 April 1733. On 27 May 1737 Anthony and his partner Mr Cook were playing music in a boat following a barge containing a party of ladies when, passing under a bridge, they accidently rammed the leading boat and as a consequence both drowned. Happily, the ladies behaved with compassion and made a collection for their families.[81] This unfortunate incident provides a background for the multitude of unaccompanied horn duets from this period entitled simply 'Water Music'.

So popular and evocative was the sound of the horn that it also became a favourite recreational instrument for those from higher social strata than the servant class. In his famous autobiography the ex-slave Olaudah Equiano describes how, while training to become a hairdresser, he became so enamoured of the sound of the French horn, which a neighbour played, that he persuaded the latter to teach him the instrument. 'I soon learned all the three parts', he writes (the reference is to the three different registers cultivated by horn players, which sometimes sounded together in trios to which the name 'club pieces' was given). And further: 'I took great delight in blowing on this instrument, the evenings being long; and besides that I was fond of it, I did not like to be idle, and it filled up my vacant hours innocently'.[82]

A large literature of horn duets and trios and instruction books for the instrument soon came into being. Like so much published music of the time, this repertory straddles the boundaries between what we would now term popular music and art music, and between the didactic and the recreational. Many collections of horn duets, including the earliest known specimens (published in Amsterdam by Estienne Roger in 1715, with catalogue numbers 348 and 349), make the option of two horns only one among several named choices of paired instruments, although the strenuous avoidance of the seventh harmonic (which turns the dominant below into a kind of *ersatz* leading note) nearly always betrays when horns are the original inspiration.

never perform'd before' (*London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 28 February 1738) offers confirmation of the same close association and suggests, further, that training in horn playing was a far from uncommon experience for pairs of black boys being prepared for service to the same master.

77 One example of a servant who played in an orchestra of professionals is the unnamed servant of Lord Mountjoy who played the solo horn part in a (so-called) overture performed as an interlude in Handel's *Acis and Galatea* in Dublin in 1735. See Jennifer Beakes, 'The Horn Parts in Handel's Operas and Oratorios and the Horn Players Who Performed in These Works' (DMA dissertation, City University of New York, 2007), 280.

78 The incorrect statement found in some modern sources that Charles Cato was promoted to become a gamekeeper to the Prince of Wales probably goes back to an error in the *London Evening Post* of 18–20 September 1740, which misprints the name 'William Cater' as 'William Cato'.

79 London, City of Westminster Archives Centre, microfilm 1,042,313.

80 Grano, as Harry Johnstone reminds me, was also the teacher of the black trumpeter William Douglas, known humorously as 'The Black Prince'.

81 *Weekly Miscellany* (2 June 1737).

82 *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, ninth edition (London: author, 1794), 241.

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Perhaps surprisingly, the repertory of traditional hunting calls, which seems to have lost some of its former coherence in England after the introduction of the French horn, contributes little to this new medium, except, intermittently and briefly, where the instrument hammers out a rhythmicized monotone.[83] Most of the time, horn parts are relatively cantabile or, if more animated, rely heavily on the largely diatonic notes of the fourth octave. This means that their lines are not necessarily very different from those of violins or oboes in the upper octave, except where the practically unusable seventh harmonic forces a change. Many of the harmonic licences permitted to horn parts in duets and ensemble music alike – in particular, the acceptance as a quasi-consonant interval of the perfect fourth between the third and fourth harmonics – stem from a need to 'work around' this enforced melodic gap.

I have dwelt on the horn duet since its spirit and aesthetic – as well as concrete reminders in the shape of short enclaves actually scored as simple duets – permeate the ensemble music with horns written during the eighteenth century, including the two almost exactly coeval works that through their well-deserved familiarity may be regarded as exemplary: Handel's *Water Music* and J. S. Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 (1721 in its final form). In Handel's F and D major quasi-concertos there are plenty of short, exposed passages for the horns alone (often in dialogue with trumpets or strings) – one of which, significantly, is closely related to a duet attributed to Handel in the series of short pieces with which *The Compleat Tutor for the French Horn* (London: Simpson, *c*1746) concludes. But there are also numerous three-strand passages in which the horns are supported only by a functional bass, and these are only slightly less atmospheric. The same kind of texture is adopted by Bach (with unison oboes supplying the harmonic bass) in the second Trio of his last movement.

Between them, Handel and Bach provide a complete lexicon of effective ways in which to use a pair of horns, ways that we will find fully exploited by Bates:

1. Horn calls, genuine or skilfully simulated, are superimposed on the texture. The *locus classicus* for this is bars 1–3 (and several places further on) in Bach's first movement, where the effect is deliberately disruptive (especially on account of the rhythmic contrast), as if a real hunt were being heard *in lontano*. Less radically, but much more frequently, both Bach and Handel use insistently repeated monotones to similar effect.
2. The horns play fanfare-like phrases. These are particularly apposite when horns, appearing alongside trumpets, effectively function as their lower-pitch cousins.
3. The horns engage in dialogue (using similar melodic material, but usually in the lower octave) with treble instruments such as violins, oboes or trumpets.
4. The horns double another line either literally or heterophonically (generally with some simplification through omission).
5. The horns play inconspicuous 'filling' notes similar to those provided by violas.
6. The horns play sustained notes, often pedal notes, which can lend the texture added warmth and richness (see for example, bars 36–37 of Bach's first movement).
7. The horns play in duet fashion, alone or with minimal accompaniment.

The great virtue of natural horns in orchestral writing is that despite limitations in their agility and store of available notes, they are able to slip in and out of radically different roles quickly and unobtrusively, as Figure 1, showing the complete first horn part for Bates's Concerto No. 6, illustrates. Their handling is a great test of a composer's inventiveness.

83 Twelve specimen horn calls of a simple but multi-pitched kind are presented on pages 5–8 of *The Compleat Tutor for the French Horn* (London: Simpson, c1746), believed to be the work of Christopher Winch (Winsch), a foreign-born horn player who was also a vintner.

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Figure 1 (Colour online) William Bates, Concerto in D major Op. 2 No. 6, page 6 of the Corno Primo part of the edition by John Johnson. © The British Library Board, g.406.a. Used by permission

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BATES'S *CONCERTOS IN TEN PARTS*, OP. 2: ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

The macrostructure of Bates's concertos is orthodox. All except Concerto No. 2 have three movements configured fast–slow–fast, while the four movements making up the second concerto, the second being a fugue that is almost a homage to Corelli, revert to the older slow–fast–slow–fast model preferred by Geminiani and Handel. In conformity with the taste of the time and their chosen instrumentation, all are in major keys (F, D, F, D, E flat, D).[84]

The form of the first (and longer) quick movement varies. Concerto No. 1 employs something akin to Vivaldian ritornello form, Concerto No. 3 has a fugue, while Concerto No. 2 cleverly embeds fugue within ritornello form: the two very long episodes separating the three ritornello statements are segments that if placed side by side would make up an orthodox, indeed, elaborately worked, fugal movement. The remaining three concertos employ the asymmetrical (rounded) kind of binary form that Bates always prefers: one with a tonic reprise of the opening theme mid-way through the second repeated section. In fact, one should not make too much of these distinctions, for whatever the formal label, these movements follow an identical tonal trajectory, passing first to the dominant and then to the submediant and/or the mediant minor, before returning to the tonic, usually without any retransition. Moreover, the binary movements follow a common practice in more developed movements of this kind whereby each repeated section ends with a modified restatement, in the appropriate key, of the opening idea, in that respect coming close to ritornello form. The concertos' energetic style, which echoes the bustle of Bates's opening movements in his overtures, unfolds over a long time-span that provides ample scope for concertante passages both long and short. A flavour of Bates at his most Vivaldian – or, perhaps more accurately, Hasse-like – is provided by the opening of Concerto No. 1, shown as Example 2.[85] The opening of the accompanied fugue in the third concerto follows as Example 3. One has the initial impression that the subject itself is borrowed from Corelli, although this proves not to be true. Bates, with his 'ancient music' sympathies that were shared by a large segment of contemporary players and audiences, obviously relishes the opportunity for such a movement and introduces a few discreet touches of learnedness *en route*, such as the inversion of the subject's opening in bars 61–62.

A peculiarity of Bates's style is that although the visit to one or two peripheral keys in the minor mode is a given in his movements of almost any type, he rarely introduces the main material there. Instead, he prefers to mark this point of maximum emotional intensity with a circular harmonic progression (sequentially descending by diatonic fifths from the tonic chord until that chord is regained) characterized by textural and contrapuntal complexity: this type of progression (shown in Example 4, where, exceptionally, the progression is followed by a brief snatch of ritornello material) lends itself naturally to imitative interplay between pairs of parts à la Vivaldi).[86] Clearly, this device was among the standardized 'hobnails' to which Dibdin referred.

The internal slow movements – a majority of which, exactly as in Bates's surviving overtures, adopt slowish minuet rhythm and are marked 'Andante' – simplify and reduce the scoring in some way for the sake of contrast per se or in order to confer greater weight on the melody. This paring-down of the texture of slow movements by stripping out parts or doubling instruments had been fairly widespread in concertos and sinfonias from the second decade of the century onwards. The slow movement of Concerto No. 1, its first repeated section shown as Example 5, is typical of them, except for its being in common time. There is some subtlety in the phrase-lengths, and its rhythmic variety and *faux-naïf* artlessness lend the music an undeniable charm.[87] Perhaps this was the kind of writing that led Peter Ward Jones to chide Bates (in his entry for the composer in *Grove Music Online*) for 'much facile writing in parallel 3rds', but if Bates errs

84 A complete set of movement incipits can be found in Edwards, *English Eighteenth-Century Concertos*, 53–56.

85 In this music example, and all those following, bass figures have been omitted. All examples are based on the John Johnson edition of 1762.

86 Exactly the same feature appears in the first movements of Bates's overtures: for example, those of *The Jovial Crew*, *Flora* and *The Ladies' Frolick*.

87 The striking opening gambit comprising two balancing phrases, each of one and a half bars, which are then answered by a three-bar consequent, reminds one of a favourite device of Vivaldi (see, for instance, the opening movements of his

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Example 2 William Bates, Concerto in F major Op. 2 No. 1/i, bars 1–6. © The British Library Board, g.406.a. Used by permission

here, so, too, do most of his contemporaries. Like half the internal slow movements in Op. 2, this Andante retains the original home key. Homotonality is a fairly general feature of eighteenth-century English music in several movements or sections – there are countless multipartite songs in which the music stubbornly refuses to cut the apron-strings of the home key – so its presence here does not surprise. The introductory Largo of Concerto No. 3, in 3/2 time, has the character of a stately *intrada*, which, with its *saccadé* rhythms and fierce

violin concertos RV197 and 222) that effectively disguises the metre before fully revealing it. This is a further instance of how Vivaldi's music casts a long shadow over music in eighteenth-century England.

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Example 3 William Bates, Concerto in F major Op. 2 No. 3/ii, bars 1–6. © The British Library Board, g.406.a. Used by permission

tirate, recalls the slow opening section of a French overture despite the difference of metre. It is perhaps a little bland, but its rhythmic sophistication adds interest.

Concertos Nos 1–3 and 6 all end with concise binary movements. That in Concerto No. 2, with the title of 'March', is exceptionally short, providing an inadequate counterweight to the massive first movement. Best among them is the 'Gavot' (a country dance in all but name) closing the last concerto. The finale of Concerto No. 5 is more ambitious, offering a pair of minuets. Most interesting is the rondo ending the fourth concerto. Typically for English rondos in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, this movement uses repeats in the manner of binary form to create a more extended structure, which can be represented schematically as: AB:/:CADA:. The long D section is in the tonic minor, a favoured option for final couplets at this time. All three formal types (binary, paired minuets, elaborated rondo) occur in Bates's overtures as well, and only the presence of concertante passages for the wind instruments points unambiguously here to the concerto genre.

It is in the scoring of these concertos that Bates shows himself most forward-looking and resourceful. Put simply, he orchestrates in the flexible, late eighteenth-century manner, abandoning the formulaic dichotomy of doubling versus independent part-writing still prevalent in the middle of the century. Like railway lines at a major junction, the musical lines bifurcate and reunite at the composer's will. Gone is the sense, weakened but not yet fully abandoned in mid-century composers such as Hasse, that integrity and independence of part-writing are essential fundaments of musical composition. Symptomatic is the fact that scoring patterns are by no means coextensive with the main structural divisions. So in a ritornello-form movement, for instance, passages exposing one or more solo instruments are almost as likely to appear in the ritornellos themselves as in the episodes connecting them. Conversely, tutti writing is often found within the episodes. And there are unexpected subtleties, some of which are illustrated in Example 6: dovetailing is applied to produce seamless joins, and little pointillistic 'dabs' are used to add a conversational touch or bridge over gaps in

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ob 1 + 2
bn
hn 1 + 2
tpt 1 + 2
timp
vn 1 + 2
va
vc + org
unis.
tutti

Example 4 William Bates, Concerto in D major Op. 2 No. 4/i, bars 33–38. © The British Library Board, g.406.a. Used by permission

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Andante

vn 1

vn 2

va

vc + bn + org

Example 5 William Bates, Concerto in F major, Op. 2 No. 1/ii, bars 1–12. © The British Library Board, g.406.a. Used by permission

texture; abundant pedal notes add to the complexity of timbre; antiphony between the violins and/or the wind instruments is skilfully exploited. Above all, Bates revels in the *frisson* produced by a kaleidoscopic variety of scoring, in doing which he simultaneously looks back to the Vivaldian *concerto con molti instrumenti* and forward to the classical *sinfonia concertante*. Very often, he repeats material (even a complete section in binary form) with radically changed scoring. His application of instrumental doubling at the octave shows a

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Example 6 William Bates, Concerto in D major Op. 2 No. 4/i, bars 52–59. © The British Library Board, g.406.a. Used by permission

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keen ear for effect, nowhere more so than in the Andante of Concerto No. 4, where the bassoons are made to double in the lower octave the melody-bearing unison oboes.

IN CONCLUSION

For all his merits, Bates offers no challenge to the primacy of the very best English composers who surrounded him, such as William Boyce and Thomas Arne. He was certainly disadvantaged in his own day by the fact that, like Francesco Barsanti, with whose career path his own has some similarities, he remained in the public perception, and perhaps even in his own self-image, at the humble level of a music master rather than a musician in the fullest sense – as a 'useful drudge', to borrow Samuel Johnson's definition of lexicographers. But this does not mean that his best music should not enjoy revival today. Several of his songs are attractive enough for modern-day performance and publication, even if his stage works, where they survive, sadly no longer exist in a complete enough state to make resurrection advisable. The 'utility' works certainly merit publication in facsimile, and even the early trio sonatas, though apprentice works, are worth exploration.

But it is his Op. 2 concertos that most successfully bring together the ingredients needed to secure him a place at the table. They are highly original in the sense that nothing quite like them can be found in contemporary sources, and they exhibit both technical acumen and many attractive flashes of invention. At the same time, they constitute an important testimony – perhaps the supreme one – to the unique and still insufficiently appreciated subculture of the French horn in Georgian London.

As for Bates the man, his life was not so uneventful or obscure as dictionary entries have hitherto suggested. His collection of plays and music, as revealed by the sale catalogue of 1778, would certainly deserve an article-length study in its own right. And if a link backwards to William Bates D. D. could be elevated from a hypothesis to a fact, a very interesting terrain for investigation might open up.

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