Concert Life in Eighteenth Century England

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Source: *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 1958 - 1959, 85th Sess. (1958 - 1959), pp. 17-30

Published by: Taylor & Francis, Ltd. on behalf of the Royal Musical Association

Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/766224

9 DECEMBER 1958

Concert Life in Eighteenth Century England

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THE PERIOD following Purcell's death has long been looked upon as one of the Dark Ages of English music. It is unquestionably true that Britain took a long time to produce her next really great composer, but our readiness to accept a musical back seat and our refusal to make unjustifiable claims on behalf of British music have tended to blind us to the true facts of the musical life of eighteenth-century England. The fact that Handel prospered here, that Haydn wrote some of his finest music for London audiences, and that whole hosts of minor masters settled here—J. C. Bach and Geminiani, for example—surely tells us a good deal about the standards of taste pertaining among London audiences. In fact, concert life in eighteenth-century England as a whole had a variety and vitality to which it would be hard to find a parallel. Not only were concerts held in the fashionable London salons, but in the 'Great Rooms' of taverns in villages which today are barely large enough to find a place on a map.

There are a number of fundamental differences between concerts today and concerts two hundred years ago. I shall later touch on the kind of programmes one might have heard in the eighteenth century: for the moment I will only say that all concerts were orchestral, often with one or two solo singers, and occasionally with a chorus; there was no such thing as a harpsichord recital, a chamber-music concert or a song recital. The other main difference is that, outside London, concerts were predominantly amateur, and if when visiting a town one felt like going to a concert, one could as well take an instrument and join in as sit in the audience.

The outlines of London's musical activities have been discussed elsewhere,[1] and here I need only touch upon their variety and extent—from the opera and the fashionable subscription series (like the Concert of Ancient Music and the Bach-Abel concerts) through the less formal ones (at taverns like the Castle or the Crown and Anchor) down to what Hawkins described as 'the alehouse clubs, and places of vulgar resort . . .' where 'small proficients in harmony were used to recreate themselves'.[2]

The smaller populations of even the largest provincial cities precluded this much diversity. But the sheer quantity of activity is quite astonishing, and in this paper I can hope to give no more than a sketch of the main outlines. It is natural enough that we find the cathedral cities in many ways pre-eminent, for the cathedral choirs always provided a nucleus of singers and usually of players for the local musical societies. The manuscript memoirs of the amateur musician and composer John Marsh,[3] which have kindly been placed at my disposal by their present owner, Mr. Richard Gorer, tell us a good deal about music in some of the southern cathedral cities. Marsh lived successively at Romsey (not far from Winchester), Salisbury, Canterbury and Chichester, and was an extremely enthusiastic musician who himself played an active part in the musical life of these places. He tells us only a little about Winchester (we know from Dibdin's autobiography that weekly concerts took place there in the 1760s),[4] but he relates how he attended a subscription concert in 1769, paying, as a stranger to the city, an entrance fee of 2/6d. He and a friend were allowed to join in the orchestra, so as they left the hall after the concert their half-crowns were solemnly returned to them. The main event of Winchester's musical life was the annual festival, a three-day event generally held in September, for which distinguished performers would come from London. A similar festival was held each year at Salisbury from shortly before 1750. Marsh came to live there in 1776, to find a fortnightly series of subscription concerts organized by a

[1] Kathleen Dale, article 'London', *Grove's Dictionary*, 5th edn., London, 1954; R. S. Elkin, *The Old Concert-Rooms of London*, London, 1955.

[2] *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, London, 1776, v. 366.

[3] Fifteen notebooks now survive of a set which probably originally comprised twenty; in the hand of John Marsh and one of his sons, they cover from 1768 to Marsh's death in 1828, apart from 1794-1803, for which period two volumes are missing.

[4] *The Professional Life of Mr. Dibdin*, London, 1803, i. 14.

flourishing musical society. The city evidently had enough music-lovers to be able to support two series of concerts for a time, organised by rival factions, as well as a catch-club meeting fortnightly during the winter months. Marsh moved to Canterbury in 1783 and to Chichester in 1787. In both places there were fortnightly concerts and catch-club meetings in the winter, whose organisation I shall discuss later.

Another cathedral city from which a great deal of information is available is Norwich. Dr. A. H. Mann, who was organist of King's College, Cambridge, until 1929, took an intense interest in the history of East Anglian music and noted all musical references in contemporary newspapers in a series of notebooks, of which I have made extensive use.[5] For much of the eighteenth century Norwich was second in size only to London; the centre of a prosperous agricultural area, it was a rich city with a full musical life. Under a bye-law of 1714, the city waits had to give a monthly concert, and in the early 1720s a weekly 'musick meeting' was established. Another 'Musick Clubb' advertised in 1736 that 'all Lovers of Musick will meet with good wine and an hearty welcome'. Norwich must have been exceptionally well equipped with concert rooms, for more than a dozen were used during the century, as well as several theatres. There were probably two regular subscription series by 1770, and in the summer concerts were advertised in Norwich's pleasure gardens. During Assize Week—traditionally a time for music and other such jollity—public breakfasts and concerts were held in the open air.

There certainly existed musical societies at most of the other cathedral cities—York, Lincoln and Lichfield could boast two apiece, and Hereford possibly three[6]—and it seems reasonable to assume that their musical life was along broadly similar lines to that in the cities I have discussed, with annual series of subscription concerts and probably catch-clubs.

In Oxford and Cambridge, the presence of a leisured and relatively wealthy population ensured the existence of an

[5] There are thirty-one Mann notebooks; twenty-four are in Norwich Public Library and seven (concerning music in Cambridge and Cambridgeshire) are in the Library of King's College, Cambridge. These notebooks provide the principal source of information on music in East Anglia for this paper.

[6] The study of 18th-century subscription lists has provided most of the information presented in this paper regarding the existence of musical societies in provincial cities.

extremely active concert life. There appear to have been at least three distinct musical societies at Oxford in the 1730s, but from 1748 the musical life there centred around the Holywell Music Room, though the Sheldonian Theatre was used on special occasions and there were clubs meeting at certain of the taverns.[7] No doubt there were also private clubs in some of the colleges, as at Cambridge. Cambridge had no Music Room (a plan for one was mooted but finally rejected) and her concerts, apart from special events in the Senate House and college halls, mostly took place in the taverns—there were two such series current during the 1780s.[8]

When we come to the growing industrial and commercial cities of eighteenth-century England, we find a slightly different pattern. There is no record of musical societies in either Manchester or Birmingham until the 1740s; but Birmingham could boast two by 1766—the Musical and Amicable Society and the Musical Subscription Concert—and in 1768 the Birmingham Festivals were inaugurated.[9] The 'Gentlemen's Concerts' at Manchester started about 1770, when it was discovered with some consternation that all the gentlemen wishing to take part were flautists: however, a full orchestra was soon formed and the series had a long and distinguished history.[10] Nottingham was another city with several musical societies—no less than four are named on subscription lists of the 1760s, but it is likely that at least two of these are identical. William Gardiner's *Music and Friends*[11]—a garrulous and not very reliable book—discusses some attempts to start subscription concerts at Leicester in 1785; subscription lists, however, mention a musical society there thirty-five years earlier and two by this time.

The diary of Sir William Herschel, who was a professional musician for many years before turning to astronomy, is quite informative on concert life in Northern England.[12] He led the

7 J. H. Mee, *The Oldest Music-Room in Europe*, London, 1911.
8 O. E. Deutsch, various articles on music in Cambridge, *Cambridge Review*, lxii (1940-41), 312 and lxiii (1941-42), 133, 244, 260 and 372.
9 J. Sutcliffe Smith, *The Story of Music in Birmingham*, Birmingham, 1945.
10 J. Harland, 'Manchester Concerts in 1744' and 'The Earlier Days of the "Gentlemen's Concerts"', in *Collectanea relating to Manchester* (Chetham Society Publications, lxxii), Manchester, 1867, pp. 66 and 77.
11 Three volumes, 1838-53.
12 *The Scientific Papers of Sir William Herschel*, London, 1912, biographical introduction by J. L. E. Dreyer; C. A. Lubbock, *The Herschel Chronicle*, Cambridge, 1933.

concerts at Leeds for a time, from 1762, and was asked to do so at Wakefield and Halifax. He also led a weekly concert at Newcastle, 'in a garden after the style of Vauxhall'; here Charles Avison was organist, and as far back as 1736 had started fortnightly subscription concerts. His own concertos must often have been played there.

(*Here was played a recording of the first two movements of Avison's Concerto Grosso in E minor, Op. 6, No. 8.*)

Herschel moved from the North of England to Bath in the 1760s and found a thriving musical life at the great fashionable centre. He took an appointment as organist at the Octagon Chapel and became a member of the 'established band of musicians that played at the public subscription concerts, the Pump Room, the balls, the Play House &c.'. A few years later there were two series of weekly concerts; Dibdin, in his *Musical Tour*,[13] touches on the strong partisanship of the patrons of the rival groups. At the Pump Room early morning concerts were given, and in the summer concerts were held in the Spring Gardens. Oratorios were performed at Bath during Lent and Passion Week, and were often repeated at Bristol—another city with a large musical public, for as early as 1731 there appear to have existed two musical societies.

The Mann notebooks give us a great deal of information on music in the smaller East Anglian centres. The first attempt to start musical life in Bury St. Edmunds was in 1721, when a notice in *The Suffolk Mercury: or St. Edmund's-Bury Post* of 13 November suggested that meetings should be held 'weekly, monthly, or otherwise' to perform 'the newest Solos, Sonatas, Concertos and Extravaganzas extant'. It is not known whether the proposals were effected, but a subscription series was started late in 1734. In the 1730s musical activities started in Great Yarmouth, with a musical society and a more informal 'Musick Clubb', the latter meeting at the home of the local organist, Musgrave Heighington—an inveterate founder of such things who later helped to organise music in Spalding and Dundee. Ipswich had a musical society by the 1730s, which seems to have continued on an unusually even keel for about half a century, with fortnightly concerts throughout the year. Many benefit concerts were held there, especially at such

[13] *Musical Tour*, Sheffield, 1788, p. 29.

popular times as Race Week or Assize Week. Colchester was probably rather later in establishing regular concerts, but a notable musical event took place there in 1759, when John Stanley came from London to direct a performance of *Messiah* on the opening of a new organ at St. Peter's Church. A report in the local newspaper tells us that 'everything [was] conducted without accidents and the least disorder'. Joining in the general craze for festivals in the years following the Handel commemorations, Bury and Colchester founded annual festivals in the late 1780s.

The degree of musical activity which I have so far described need surprise no-one who has read any of the available authorities on musical conditions in the eighteenth century—such as Farmer on music-making in Aberdeen and on various other Scottish musical societies.[14] But it is the concert life of the smaller towns and even villages which today seems so surprising. At Swaffham, in Norfolk, for example, subscription concerts were established by 1745, held monthly and probably organised by the Philharmonic Society of Swaffham. At Fakenham the musical society, later known as the Harmonic Society, organised monthly concerts, and at least five other Norfolk towns or villages (East Dereham, Wymondham, Aylesham, Walsingham and Brook) saw some kind of regular subscription concerts during the century, while many more were periodically visited by musicians from Norwich and elsewhere.

A similar situation pertained in Suffolk. Beccles may have had a thriving musical life, for the *Norwich Mercury* of 24 July 1758 stated that 'The [Beccles] Concert days will be Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays' (though it is hard to credit that concerts could really have been held there thrice weekly). A group of small East Suffolk towns is particularly notable. At Debenham, a musical society announced that it met monthly 'to perform Handels oratorios &c.'; Saxmundham had monthly concerts by 1760; at Woodbridge, there was an organization called 'The Gentlemen's Concert at the Crown'; while at Framlingham an audience of over a thousand was attracted to a festival in the church in 1787. The organisations

[14] *Music Making in the Olden Days*, London, 1950, and 'Concerts in 18th-Century Scotland', *Proceedings of the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow*, lxix (1944-45), 99.

in these four towns coalesced in the 1790s—either, one presumes, through dwindling support, or simply due to the desire for larger-scale performances. Regular concerts could also be heard at Sudbury and Hadleigh—the former for more than forty years—while such small villages as Peasenhall and Sibton had musical societies, which can hardly have been more than handfuls of enthusiasts. In Essex, Brentwood and Great Warley had some kind of musical organisation, and regular concerts took place at Chelmsford in the latter half of the century. Dedham's musical society appears on a subscription list as early as 1739. It evidently ran into trouble in 1751, when it was announced that the musical society would continue to give concerts, but without subscribers; normal conditions were apparently soon restored, and subscription concerts were still in progress forty years later. The composer Joseph Gibbs was organist of Dedham during the 1730s and 40s and held benefit concerts there over a period of nearly forty years. He lived to the age of ninety, but only published two sets of works; his *chef d'œuvre* is undoubtedly the first of his eight violin sonatas, and one fancies that these strains must often have been heard at the Dedham musical society's meetings.

(*Here was played a recording of the first movement of Gibbs' Violin Sonata in D minor, Op. 1, No. 1.*)

It would not, perhaps, be right to assume that a similar degree of musical activity to that in East Anglia could necessarily be found elsewhere in England. A great deal, no doubt, depended on the general prosperity of the area, and East Anglia was undoubtedly one of the richest parts of England at this time. But villages with musical societies could be found in at least one other area. Gardiner's *Music and Friends* tells us of the Valentine family, five professional musicians who earned their living by giving help to musical societies in the Leicester area. About 1785 John Valentine published a set of symphonies,[15] with a title-page which reads as follows:

> *Eight Easy Symphonies for two Violins, two Hautboys or German Flutes, two French Horns, a Tenor and Thorough Bass; With Solos for the Different Instruments Interspersed through the Whole; being an Introduction to playing in Concert, Designed*

[15] British Museum, press-mark g. 212.(10.).

for, and Dedicated to, all Junior Performers and Musical Societies.

NB The Solos for the Hautboys and Horns are put into the Violin Parts, and marked so that these Pieces may be played as Trios or Quartetts, when a greater Number of Instruments is not to be had.

On the subscription list of these are to be found musical societies at many very small villages—Bingham, Rempstone, Rothley, Sapcoate and Sheepshead—as well as at Derby, Matlock, Mansfield and many larger Midland centres.

One other kind of musical activity should be mentioned here—the large-scale festival in a small village. I have already mentioned one at Framlingham, and there were several others of a similar kind—at Church Langton, in Leicestershire, for a few years;[16] at a large room in Oakley Wood, near Cirencester, where an annual music-meeting (to which 'all the country came') was held during race week for many years[17]; and what seems to be an isolated event at Painswick, Gloucestershire, reported as

> a grand meeting of the parishes of Painswick, Stroud and Chalford, where were performed Mr. Handel's Te Deum and the Jubilate, with two Anthems. The Parts, both Vocal and Instrumental, were executed in a masterly Manner, and gave great Satisfaction to, at a moderate Computation, near 5000 People.[18]

Anyone who has seen Painswick Church will realize that a considerable journalistic licence was exercised in this 'moderate computation'.

The basis of organisation of concerts varied greatly. Most musical societies met only during a season from (at longest) October to June, though a few continued all the year while others, notably at a group of East Anglian towns, were from April to December. (The explanation here, no doubt, is that road conditions were too bad in winter for subscribers to get

[16] W. Hanbury, *The History of the Rise and Progress of the Charitable Foundations at Church-Langton*, London, 1767; William Hayes, *Anecdotes of the Five Music-Meetings at Church-Langton*, Oxford, 1768; M. Sands, 'Troubles of an Eighteenth-Century Festival Organizer', *Monthly Musical Record*, lxxix (1949), 211, 236, 260.

[17] Torrington, 5th Viscount, *The Torrington Diaries, 1781-94*, ed. C. Bruyn Andrews, London, 1934, i. 259; Mee, *ibid.*, 82-83.

[18] *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 12 August 1758.

to concerts; this is borne out by the more normal span of the seasons by the 1790s, when many roads had been improved.) The frequency of concerts likewise varied. Occasionally they were only quarterly, as at Wymondham in Norfolk, or were monthly with four each year followed by an assembly and ball. Except at the largest centres, where weekly concerts were the rule, monthly or fortnightly meetings were most common. Often alternate meetings were 'private concerts'—though the distinction between a private concert and a public one varied a good deal. At Cambridge, for example, the Black Bear Music Club's season comprised eight monthly concerts, of which one was a benefit concert for the leader and one a 'town concert' open to non-members. These eight were called 'public nights', implying that there were such things as 'private nights', which probably were held alternately with public ones. But at the other Cambridge concert series, four 'public nights' were held in the year, and since members could bring guests to the ordinary concerts it is likely that these public nights were open to the general public.

John Marsh gives a full account in his memoirs of the organization of the musical societies at Canterbury and Chichester.

> The subscription concerts at Canterbury [he writes] had for some years been upon the following plan, subscribers paying a guinea for twelve concerts once a fortnight throughout the winter, alternately public and private, the former, for which every subscriber had two tickets to give to ladies, being always on moonlight nights, the subscribers only being admitted to the private concerts, except nonresident gentlemen, who were admitted at two and sixpence to the public, and one and sixpence to the private concerts, no resident gentleman being at any time admitted without subscribing for the season.

Marsh took over the arrangement of the Society, which soon began to thrive, and many new members (some living a considerable distance from the city) were attracted.

At Chichester the situation was more complicated. Marsh tells first how the concerts had formerly been managed:

> This concert was from the account I have heard originally a kind of musical club for the amateurs of Chichester, who

> used to meet together every Friday evening. to amuse themselves with Corelli, Geminiani, and Handel's concertoes, Bach and Abel's overtures . . . To these little concerts none, but subscribers, were usually admitted, except on their public nights, which were once a month during the winter, when a leader was engaged from Portsmouth with a couple of horns from the Sussex band, and each subscriber had two tickets, to give to ladies, which with officers, quartered there, and strangers, who always were admitted gratis, used pretty well to fill up their room . . .

The concerts declined in 1786, owing to 'a schism [which] had happened among the musical gentlemen', and none was held until the end of the year, when a half-series was arranged for the rest of the winter. Marsh settled in Chichester a few months later and, as at Canterbury, took over the management; in his own words:

> It was . . . settled, that there should be twelve concerts once a fortnight during the winter season, alternately public and private, the former to be always on moonlight nights, for which every gentleman should have one ticket only, to give to ladies, instead of two, that they used to have. This alteration by making subscribers' tickets more scarce than before was an inducement for more ladies to subscribe.
> (A gentleman's subscription was one guinea, a lady's half a guinea.)

We find something about concert management on a smaller scale from Romsey. In 1770, an informal Music Club, meeting weekly, was founded by five amateurs. Two years later, when some better players settled in the town, a public concert was given at the Town Hall; an audience of about a hundred was present, and a monthly subscription series was organised at five shillings per quarter. But in so small a town the survival of such an enterprise was closely dependent on the presence of of one or two enthusiasts; Marsh left Romsey the next year, and visiting the town a few years later he found the local musicians reduced to playing nothing more complex than marches.

Marsh is no less informative on catch-club organization. At Chichester, he wrote, the plan was

> to meet together for twelve nights on every other Friday . . . and amuse ourselves with instrumental music from half past six till half past eight, at which time we were to sit down to a supper, consisting only of oysters and Welch rabbits, to be provided for us at tenpence per head . . . , and afterwards sing catches, glees, etc. . . . members were . . . to be confined to such gentlemen as were capable either of assisting in the instrumental part, or of joining in at least one catch or glee . . .

The Canterbury club was on a similar plan, though the instrumental part of the concert was interspersed with glees and catches, and single songs were sung as called for by the president during the later part of the evening. The atmosphere here was less intimate than at Chichester, apparently:

> The price of admission to this club was only sixpence, for which besides the music an unlimited quantity of pipes and tobacco and beer was allowed, in consequence of which many of the members amongst the lower kinds of tradesmen used by way of having a full pennyworth for their penny to go at six, and smoke away till eleven or twelve.

It will be seen that a catch-club by no means confined itself to catches; and in fact all eighteenth-century concert programmes are notable for their carefully balanced mixture of styles and media. We have little information on programmes from the earlier part of the century; few musical societies printed their programmes, the main reason being, no doubt, that they could not always be fixed until it was seen what forces were available. On the Edinburgh programme of 21 November 1783, for example, we find a footnote: 'Haydns Overture in E flat if the bassoon is there if not the Overture in D'. Newspaper announcements are extremely vague; mostly they said no more than 'A Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music', or something like the following, from the *Norwich Gazette* of 10 May 1740:

> A Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Musick; where will be performed several Concertos, Solos and Sonatas

> of the best Masters, on the Violin, Violoncello and Bassoon, by the Gentlemen of Suffolk, Norfolk and Norwich; and several pieces on the Harpsichord by Miss Reeve of Ipswich, being the Wonder of her Age.

Unusual instruments were a special attraction: a Norwich concert in 1739 had music for the Viola d'Amore, the Viol De Venere and the Viol Volubile, while the 'Seven-stringed Bass and Paridon, the only Instrument of the Kind in England' appeared there in 1745, and Nowell toured extensively twenty years later with his 'Pantaleon, 11 feet long, with 276 Roman strings'.

In the second half of the century, we find in the provinces programmes striking an extremely nice balance between the so-called 'ancient' and 'modern' styles—that is, the late baroque, chiefly represented by Corelli, Geminiani and Handel, and the galant, of which the leading representatives were J. C. Bach, Abel and, later, Haydn. Each of a concert's two or three 'Acts' would generally include one vocal item, and usually a violin solo, a trio or quartet would provide relief from orchestral music. In London, where the public was large enough to be able to afford partisanship between the ancient and modern styles, programmes were less varied stylistically. British music was none too popular: the concertos of Avison and Stanley were sometimes heard, and Arne's *Artaxerxes* overture; the principal native representative of the modern style was Lord Kelly (T. A. Erskine) whose symphonies were naturally particularly popular in Scotland.

> (*Here was played the first movement of Lord Kelly's Periodical Overture in 8 parts, Sinfonia XXVIII, Overture to 'The Maid of the Mill'.*)

The size of audiences at provincial concerts was subject to a good deal of variation. Herschel wrote of the Leeds concerts, in a letter to his brother, that though there were 'usually only 20 to 30 listeners in the audience, the news that I was to be there that evening brought over a hundred'. Manchester's concerts in 1744-5 were on a quarterly basis, and as many as 181 subscribed in the winter. Audiences were not always ideally attentive, and on one occasion in 1779 at Salisbury the 'chatteration' was only silenced by the temporary withdrawal from the orchestra of the amateur players. The size of the

audience was quite unpredictable at Chichester: 250 attended a benefit concert for the principal singer in 1787, despite deep snow, but after another concert Marsh wrote that the orchestra of eleven players was 'fully sufficient for the company that was there, which consisted of only two ladies'. Orchestras generally numbered between ten and twenty-five: Marsh writes with some enthusiasm of joining in one at Portsmouth consisting of sixteen players, which he evidently considered was on a big enough scale to justify the use of that rather delightful eighteenth-century term 'a grand crash'. At Canterbury twenty players were available—8 violins, 2 violas, 3 cellos, double-bass and harpsichord, with 2 clarinets, 2 horns and bassoon from the East Kent militia band—with a solo singer and a choir of 10 boys and 10 men when required.

It is hard to deduce anything about standards of performance. One rehearsal for each concert seems to have been normal, but sometimes private concerts were used as rehearsals for the public ones. Jackson wrote in 1791 of the 'great perfection' of the professional performances in London, but provincial standards must have been a good deal lower. There was no real press criticism and few other comments on performance have come to light. Sylas Neville wrote in his diary of the 'indifferent' performers at Chichester in 1781 (before Marsh's time), but at Norwich standards were evidently higher, the oboist even being comparable to the great J. C. Fischer.[19] No doubt the playing at most of the very small musical societies was none too good, but we should not necessarily assume that Marsh's account of the Romsey concerts in 1772 was typical:

> At these concerts, it being my lot to regulate the time, I was not only obliged constantly to keep my foot going, but to put it down pretty hard, to keep the whole band together, as some of them, particularly old Mr May [the bassoonist], could not play three bars together in any kind of time without such mechanical help, on which account, just as we were going to strike off the first overture, Mr May had always something laconic to say to me aside, such as—'Up high, and down hard'. Mr May was not more famous for playing in tune than in time . . .

[19] *The Diary of Sylas Neville, 1767-88*, ed. B. Cozens-Hardy, London, 1950, p. 315 (26 March 1784).

I hope that I have been able to convey this evening something of the general atmosphere of music-making in eighteenth-century England. When we admit so readily that England was an unmusical country, I think we should remember that throughout the land there were these small musical societies meeting regularly, run by ordinary middle-class people. There was no such thriving musical life in France, nor probably anywhere else in Europe; only in the American colonies, where English musical life was taken as a model, can a similar pattern be found. Particularly interesting is the prodigious enthusiasm of the music-lovers; admittedly, they had no radio sets or gramophones, but they had no cars to take them through the snow at Chichester, nor to bring those new members at Canterbury many miles through the bitter Kentish winds. Should anyone believe that eighteenth-century England was a '*Land ohne Musik*', let me end by quoting a correspondent to the *London Magazine:*

> Musick . . . never was intended by the great Author of Wisdom to need any perfection from the impious destruction of the virility of the human species; or, in itself, to become the labour, principal attention, or great business of a people. Yet, how far, how scandalously it has of late prevailed, as such, in our country, let the shameful number of concerts now subscribed for in this kingdom, declare . . .[20]

[20] 'Musick, Dancing and Concerts', *London Magazine*, xxiii (1754), 484.