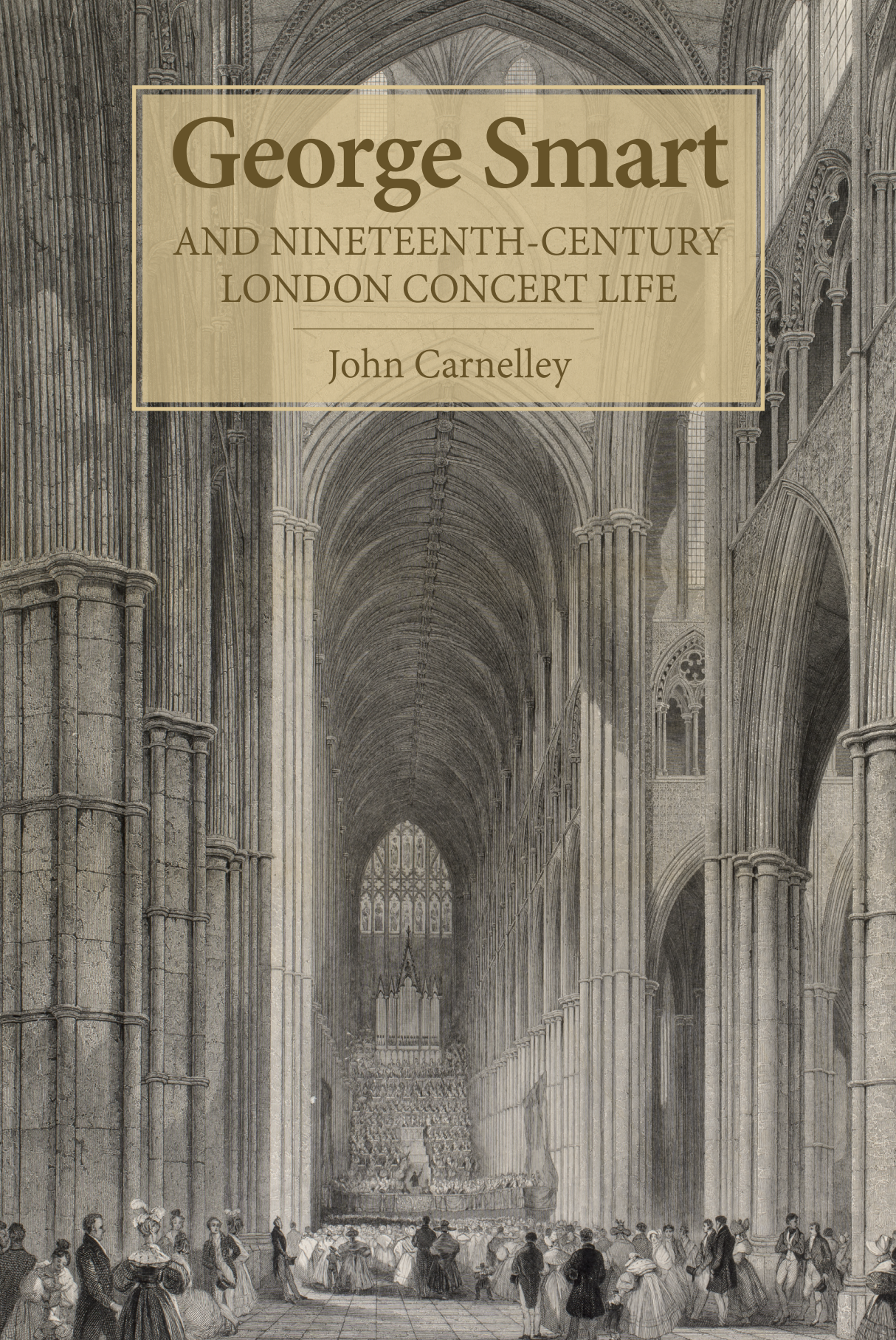


George Smart

AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY
LONDON CONCERT LIFE

John Carnelley



GEORGE SMART
AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY
LONDON CONCERT LIFE

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GEORGE SMART
AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY
LONDON CONCERT LIFE



John Carnelley

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To my father



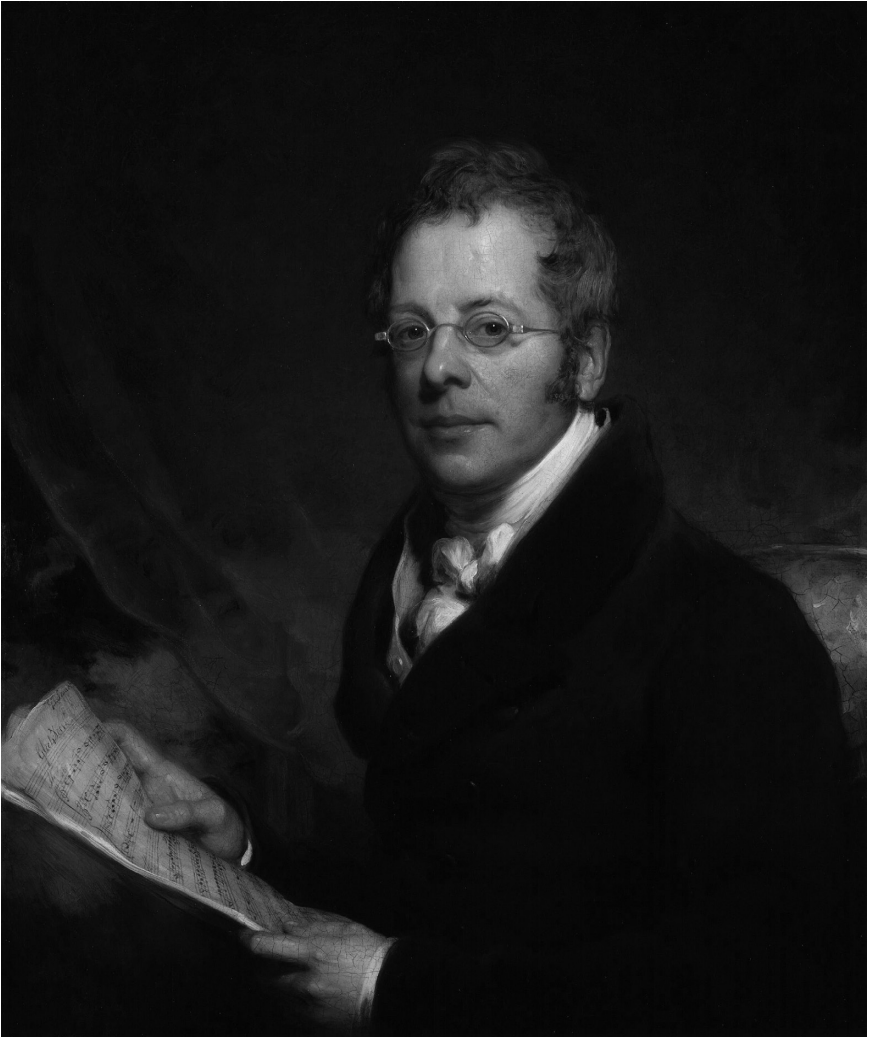


Figure 1. Sir George Thomas Smart (1829), William Bradley.

6

1776

I was born on May 10th 1776 - at a Music Shop, the
corner of Argyll Street - since taken down to widen Argyle St.

Being a sickly Child, I was sent to regain my health at
Shepton Mallet, Somersetshire - there I met with an accident, the
spine for which remains to this day on my forehead; I understood
that a piece of silver was inserted at the fracture in my head, if
this be true, my head is of some value - the accident arose, as I was
informed, by ~~my~~ following my Grandmother down a steep staircase
and heading upon her brow, which she pulled up, and thereby
I rolled past her to the bottom of the staircase.

When I returned to London, I was sent to M^r. Castleman's
School - in a boat near Dean St. Oxford St. - and I went to
M^r. Pike's School, at Ashford, Kent - M^r. Fagg, a Surgeon in that
town and his Family were very kind to me - I renewed my acquaintance
with his son M^r. C. Fagg in 1864 he was a Surgeon in H^{is} Majesty's
Service.

I have but little recollection of the years in which I resided in
my Father's house until I went into the Chapel Royal under D^r. Haynes
which was in the year 1778

Figure 2. Page from Smart's journal.

Contents

List of Figures x

Acknowledgements xi

Introduction 1

Chapter 1 George Smart and the Musical Profession: 1776–1825 15

Chapter 2 London Concert Life: 1805–25 66

Chapter 3 George Smart’s Concert Activities: 1800–25 98

Chapter 4 Interlude – London and the Continent in 1825 139

Chapter 5 New Musical Directions: 1826–30 174

Chapter 6 Change and Conflict: 1830–44 191

Chapter 7 Retirement and Old Age: 1844–67 225

Appendices

1 Concerts Conducted by G. T. Smart in 1825 255

2 Concert Licences Issued by the Lord Chamberlain: 1810, 1815, 1820,
and 1825 268

3 Records of Smart’s Concert Activity

3:1 Philharmonic Concerts Conducted by G. T. Smart: 1816–25 275

3:2 London Amateur (City) Concerts 278

3:3 London Subscription Concerts 281

3:4 Concerts Conducted by G. T. Smart: 1830–39 283

3:5 Concerts Conducted by G. T. Smart: 1840–58 286

4 Totals of Performances Conducted by G. T. Smart: 1798–1858 290

5 Church Music by G. T. Smart Knt. 291

Bibliography 293

Index 305

Figures

- 1 Sir George Thomas Smart (1829), William Bradley. © National Portrait Gallery, London. vi
- 2 Page from Smart's journal. © The British Library Board, Add. 41772 f. 4v. vii
- 3 George Smart, *attrib.* Benjamin van der Gucht (1753–94). By kind permission of www.artwarefineart.com. 24
- 4 Susan Euphemia, Duchess of Hamilton (1852), Willes Maddox. Beckford Collection, Broderick Castle, National Trust for Scotland. 28
- 5 Smart's account of Haydn's visit in 1794. Page from Smart's journal, © The British Library Board, Add. 41772 f. 7r. 31
- 6 'Quid'est? – why Brighton Dandies!!!' Anonymous, possibly Charles Williams (*fl.* 1797–1830), published by S. W. Foster, January 1819. Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton and Hove. 42
- 7 Carl Maria von Weber (c. 1825), by John Cawse. © Coram in the care of the Foundling Museum, London. 178
- 8 Sir George Thomas Smart (c. 1825), by John Cawse. © Coram in the care of the Foundling Museum, London. 179
- 9 The Royal Musical Festival, Westminster Abbey, 1834, by George Cattermole. By kind permission of the Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain. 195
- 10 Sir George Smart (c. 1840), artist unknown. By kind permission of the Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain. 226

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Introduction

THIS book presents a new critical biography of Sir George Thomas Smart (1776–1867), a significant musical *animateur* and, arguably, Britain's first professional conductor,¹ but it is also a contextual history of London concerts in the early decades of the nineteenth century, a subject that has largely escaped academic study until very recently. Smart earned his living as a conductor and musical director, not as an instrumental performer, composer, or writer about music: he established successful and pioneering concert series, was a prime mover in the setting up of the Philharmonic Society, and taught many of the leading singers of the day. He conducted opera at the Covent Garden Theatre and introduced significant new works to the public – most notably he was an early champion of the music of Beethoven. His journeys to Europe, and his contacts with the leading European musical figures of the day, were crucial to the direction music was to take during the nineteenth century in Britain. He was, in short, a strong-willed individual who influenced the course of art music in London during these years. What changed during his lifetime was the structuralisation of the musical profession, which began to assume a new integrity through the development of professional practice, and through the founding of institutions to protect and promote professional interests.² By the middle of the 1830s Smart was a pillar of the post-Reform establishment,³ at a time when Britain needed to prove its cultural credentials. This study provides a detailed commentary on the evolution of musical culture in London during the first forty years of the nineteenth century, seen through the example of his life, and set within the context of a wider European musical culture. It demonstrates that music in England was far from the cultural backwater that commentators in the early twentieth century suggested. During a long career, Smart witnessed at first hand the dying embers of the Baroque, the high points of the Classical, and the early achievements of the Romantic era of musical composition. He lived through the upheavals of the Napoleonic age and yet lived long enough to take an active part in the Great

¹ The term 'conductor' is used loosely here – attempts to try to define the meaning of this elusive term during Smart's lifetime, and to evaluate Smart's achievement, can be found at various points in this narrative (see especially Chapter 1, pp. 52–9).

² See Penelope J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain 1700–1850* (London: Routledge, 1995).

³ For an analysis of the impact of the Reform Act, see John A. Phillips and Charles Wetherall, 'The Great Reform Act of 1832 and the Political Modernization of England', *American Historical Review*, 100 (1995), 411–36; and, more generally, J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1688–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Exhibition of 1851 and to see Richard Wagner conducting a season of concerts at the Philharmonic Society in 1855.⁴

Almost all of the literature written to examine concert life in London during the early years of the nineteenth century makes use of the large quantity of account books, journals, letters, scores, and programmes that George Smart left to the British Library.⁵ Few, however, have attempted more than a thumbnail biographical sketch of Smart, usually depicting him as a worthy character who became involved with the leading figures of the day, and suggesting that whilst he held a high position in musical society, he epitomised the parochialism of British music during a 'dark age'. He has often been portrayed as a socially adept but limited figure whose main claim to our attention is his interaction with Beethoven, Weber, Mendelssohn, and Spohr.⁶ The purpose of this book, therefore, is twofold: to use Smart's extensive records as a lens through which to investigate the changes that took place, and to evaluate the full extent of his contribution to the evolution⁷ of concert life.

George Smart's long neglect stems chiefly from his lack of critical writing and limited compositional output: thus there are no essays on musical topics and few musical works of value, only the records of his everyday professional life. Musicologists of the past have frequently ignored such people, preferring to concentrate on composers and works. Only recently have musical commentators begun to take an interest in the impact of an individual professional musician. In order to build an accurate picture of Smart's activities it has been necessary to examine the concert life of London during the period from the beginning of the nineteenth century until the end of his working life as a conductor in the early 1840s. There are four distinct areas of interest that mark out his diverse career: firstly, his upbringing and rise to the top of an emerging musical profession; secondly, his innovatory contribution to concert life during those formative years; thirdly, his tour to Europe in 1825 when he commissioned Weber to write an opera in English, met with Beethoven and recorded the musical activity of several major cities; and fourthly, from 1826 to 1844, when Smart influenced the musical life of London through his executive skills and broad knowledge of European music. The final phase of his life, from 1844 to 1867, is no less interesting: Smart's support

⁴ Smart would almost certainly have heard Wagner conducting Beethoven's 'Choral' Symphony on 26 March and the first performance in England of the Overture to *Tannhäuser* on 14 May 1855.

⁵ Deposited in the British Library by his daughter Margaret Rose Smart. Most importantly Smart's 'Correspondence and Papers': *Lbl* Add. MS 41771–41779, and his 'Memoranda book': *Lbl* Add. MS 42225. In addition there is an extensive collection of annotated programmes of concerts in London, and from his extensive conducting engagements at musical festivals and concerts outside the capital.

⁶ Of contemporary writers, only Percy Young has been unashamedly enthusiastic about Smart. Others, such as Cyril Ehrlich and Nicholas Temperley, for example, have been much more circumspect (see later).

⁷ Throughout this book 'evolution' is used to mean gradual change and development, rather than a Darwinian concept of 'progressive' evolution.

for innovation and change was to continue unabated, and he took a significant part in the creation of the Mendelssohn Scholarship, the Great Exhibition of 1851, and the founding of the Royal College of Organists in 1864.

There have been surprisingly few attempts to assess how Smart engaged with the musical culture that surrounded him, save the flattering obituaries that were written for contemporary newspapers and journals. Subsequent entries in musical dictionaries have been, for the most part, culled directly from these obituaries. In the twentieth century, Alec Hyatt King wrote a short article describing the papers held in the British Library,⁸ and only Percy Young attempted a book-length biographical study, but this asks too few questions about Smart's agenda and assumes too much about his motives.⁹ Cyril Ehrlich attempted a more questioning analysis of Smart (which attributes much of Smart's motivation to a desire for upward social mobility), but this is merely a vignette, written in the context of a much larger work.¹⁰ Whatever conclusions may be drawn about Smart's contribution to the concert life of London in the early nineteenth century, an exhaustive account of his activities is long overdue.

The earliest entry in the first of Grove's dictionaries (written by William H. Husk) gives a clear and factual outline of Smart's life which, for the most part, echoes the sentiments of his obituaries. Husk writes:

[He] received his early education as a chorister of the Chapel Royal under Dr. Ayrton. He learned organ playing from Dr. Dupuis and composition from Dr. Arnold ... On quitting the choir he obtained the appointment of organist at St. James' Chapel, Hampstead Road, and was also engaged as a violinist at Salomon's concerts ... About the same time he commenced practice as a teacher of the harpsichord and singing. He soon showed aptitude for conducting musical performances. In 1811, having successfully conducted some concerts in Dublin, he was knighted by the Lord Lieutenant. In 1813 he was chosen one of the original members of the Philharmonic Society, and between that date and 1844 conducted 49 of its concerts. From 1813 to 1825 he conducted the Lenten oratorios at one or other of the patent theatres, at which in 1814 he introduced Beethoven's 'Mount of Olives' to the English public. In 1818 he directed the City concerts established by the late Baron (then Mr.) Heath. On April 1, 1822, he was appointed one of the organists of the Chapel Royal in the room of Charles Knyvett, deceased. In 1824, he accompanied Charles Kemble to Germany to engage Weber to compose an opera for Covent Garden, and when Weber came to England in 1826 to bring out his 'Oberon' he was the guest of Sir George Smart, in whose house he died on June 5. It was mainly through the exertions of Sir George Smart and Sir Julius Benedict that the statue of Weber at Dresden was erected ... In 1836 Sir George introduced Mendelssohn's 'St. Paul' to England at the Liverpool Festival. On the death of Attwood in 1838 he was appointed one of the composers to the Chapel Royal. To a careful musicianship he added an administra-

⁸ Alec Hyatt King, 'The Importance of Sir George Smart', *The Musical Times*, 91 (1950), 461–2.

⁹ Percy M. Young, *Beethoven: A Victorian Tribute* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1976).

¹⁰ Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain: A Social History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp. 37–42.

tive ability which eminently qualified him for the conductorship of musical festivals and other performances on a large scale, and his services were for many years in request on such occasions all over the country ... He was long resorted to by singers desirous of acquiring the traditional manner of singing Handel's songs, which he had been taught by his father, who had seen Handel conduct his oratorios: among the many he so instructed were Sontag and Jenny Lind. He gave lessons in singing until he was past 80. He edited Orlando Gibbons's Madrigals for the Musical Antiquarian Society, and the 'Dettingen Te Deum' for the Handel Society. He took an active part in procuring the foundation of the Mendelssohn Scholarship ... In 1863 he published a collection of his anthems and another of his glees and canons. Two of his glees, 'The Squirrel' and 'The Butterfly's Ball,' were very popular.¹¹

This summary of his life's achievements survived, largely unchanged, right through to Eric Blom's edition of 1954.¹² Nicholas Temperley's reworking for *New Grove I* (only slightly changed in *New Grove II*) blurs this image of positive achievement, however, by including some reservations about his ability and stature. He adds some useful additional information that had been omitted by Husk (his piano studies with J. B. Cramer, for example, are important, and Temperley wisely draws attention to Smart's performances of Beethoven's works and the journal of his tour to Europe in 1825), but whilst accurately charting his life, Temperley seems reluctant to credit Smart with any lasting contribution to musical history:

Smart was not a 'conductor' as the term is now understood. He directed the music by presiding at the piano or organ, not by wielding a baton; and the qualities that made him efficient in this office were his social position, administrative ability, punctilious accuracy and thorough knowledge of performing traditions.¹³

As this book will demonstrate, this impression is not really an acceptable account of the achievements of his life and his professional activities encompassed much more. Whilst he was not a conductor as Costa or Manns were (these men were positioned firmly at the front of their orchestra, facing their audience, and controlling every last detail of the performance), Smart allowed effective performances to take place and, in the words of the singer Henry Phillips, 'he was certainly a Duke of Wellington amongst us ... [and] under admirable discipline we were.'¹⁴ In short he stood above his contemporaries in the pre-Victorian age, and took a leading role in pioneering such important transitions as the use of the baton in British concerts and the introduction of disciplined rehearsals. Significantly, he looked beyond the musical culture of Britain and into Europe, promoting an inclusive canon of contemporary Austro-German symphonic works both in London and in the provinces. The implication that his efficiency masked a lack of musicality can hardly be true.

¹¹ W. H. Husk, 'Smart, Sir George Thomas', *Grove I*, 3 (1878), p. 537.

¹² Eric Blom (ed.), *Grove V* (1954).

¹³ W. H. Husk and Nicholas Temperley, 'Sir George (Thomas) Smart', *NG II*, 23 (London: Macmillan, 2002), pp. 533–4.

¹⁴ Henry Phillips, *Musical and Personal Recollections during Half a Century* (London: Skeet, 1864), pp. 213–4.

More damaging to his historical reputation, however, is another recent image of Smart, whereby he is portrayed as a social opportunist with no real talent save his manners and business acumen. Cyril Ehrlich gives a lucid, if rather damning, portrait of him in his study of the musical profession in Britain.¹⁵ In an extended synopsis of Smart's activities, he makes a number of points that aim to demythologise his role, and to undermine the position of respect that, from his obituaries, he clearly held in his lifetime:

Smart was probably not particularly skilled in any single branch of music ... one might question [his knowledge of the performing tradition of Handel] from his experience as Joah Bates' assistant, turning pages and correcting parts for that direct link with the master ... his [organ] playing excluded the use of the pedals, long after such abstention ceased to be professionally acceptable ... It was an extraordinary achievement for the son of a musician shopkeeper to become an eminent Victorian ... Much of Smart's success was directly attributable to commercial acumen ... Musicians remained below the salt, but Smart's example was significant, for what scope could there be in a profession whose ablest members sought approval by leaving it?¹⁶

Ehrlich makes the mistake of believing that his beginnings were 'obscure', which they were not, and intimates that his musical education was limited. Smart's father and other members of his family were professional musicians who were well known in London and worked at the highest level. His education at the Chapel Royal was at the highest level then possible and, even after this, Smart went out of his way to acquire further expertise. This must have placed him above his contemporaries in terms of all-round ability, but this does not satisfy Ehrlich. He mentions, for example, his lack of pedal technique on the organ, but as pedal keyboards remained a rarity on English organs until Smart was in his fifties, this is hardly surprising.¹⁷ Ehrlich sees commercial rather than musical acumen as the chief reason for Smart's successful career, and seems disappointed that he can find no evidence of entrepreneurial activity, something that he identifies as the sign of an emerging profession. Smart's own particular achievement, however, was that he was able to exploit the funds available from his aristocratic and business acquaintances for his own purposes, something that was necessary because he had no personal fortune. To suggest that all this was mere opportunism is to misunderstand the sophistication of Smart's professional activities. As regards his 'knowledge of performing traditions', Smart himself attributed this not only to Bates, but also to his father, who had known personally many of the musicians who had played under Handel and who could provide access to musical texts with performance markings that dated from Handel's time. Certainly, professional singers continued to consult him into his old age, and Mendelssohn took his

¹⁵ Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession*, pp. 37–42.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ See Chapter 6, p. 221.

advice when preparing an edition of Handel's *Solomon*.¹⁸ Ehrlich dismisses Smart as an 'eminent Victorian' and in doing so misses the point by seeing the huge volume of meticulously documented papers in the British Library as his achievement, rather than the evidence that it provides of the extensive musical activity of a lifetime. It should be noted that, by contrast, Smart's obituary writers knew nothing of his papers, but only what he had actually done. Ehrlich's book is a distinguished and authoritative study of the emergence of the musical profession in England, but he clearly did not have the opportunity fully to explore Smart's life.

There have been more positive assessments of Smart, notably a short article by Alec Hyatt King, 'The Importance of George Smart',¹⁹ and a book by Percy M. Young, *Beethoven: A Victorian Tribute Based on the Papers of Sir George Smart*. Unfortunately these writers only deal with certain aspects of his career. Hyatt King chiefly draws attention to Smart's activities as a collector:

He amassed a library, and though not so comprehensive [as Burney], the catalogue of its sale in June 1860 makes impressive reading, and bears witness to the catholicity of his tastes and interests.²⁰

This piece is, therefore, a bibliographic survey of the journals and other papers that Smart left to the British Library, and not an assessment of the achievements of his working life.

Percy Young, on the other hand, attempts to paint a much fuller picture, this time through the dimension of Smart's association with Beethoven, and his role in the canonisation of the 'great composers' in early nineteenth-century Britain. The main portion of his book concerns Smart's attendance as a guest at the unveiling of a statue to Beethoven in Bonn in 1845, and is drawn from his travel journal for that year. This was a significant event, and Young's account combines a careful adherence to Smart's original text together with admirable background detail. The Preface opens with an enthusiastic assessment of Smart's life:

Sir George Smart was the great architect of a popular musical culture. He was the essential link in Britain between the classical and the romantic eras, the one acknowledged interpreter of the tradition of Handel (which was entrusted to him by those who had lived in Handel's time), the authoritative exponent of the works of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and the champion of the music of Mendelssohn and Spohr when that was new and unknown. Smart lived at a time when the duties of musical direction changed into the separate art of the conductor, and more than anyone in Britain he established the authority of this function. He was not only a good musician (albeit no composer), but also a meticulous administrator, a strict but understanding disciplinarian, and a mass of nervous and physical energy.

¹⁸ Hugh Bertram Cox and Clara L. E. Cox (eds.), *Leaves from the Journals of George Smart* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), p. 290.

¹⁹ Alec Hyatt King, 'The Importance of Sir George Smart', *The Musical Times*, 461.

²⁰ *Ibid.* See also Alec Hyatt King, *Some British Collectors of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963).

Smart may have had his base in London but he was a familiar figure throughout the land. His enthusiasm, skills, and integrity, endeared him to the thousands of modest music-makers who formed the choruses at the provincial festivals with which he was intimately connected. On this front Smart prepared the way for Henry Wood and Malcolm Sargent.²¹

Young is clearly in no doubt of Smart's importance and he makes a number of striking claims about his achievements, particularly with regard to the establishment of the oratorio tradition. He was 'the undisputed festival conductor of his age',²² and was responsible for releasing 'the Handelian tradition from its middle class moorings'.²³ To do this he 'drew on the reserves of energy and imagination of the working class'.²⁴ This notion of an affinity with the working classes seems unlikely, and reflects Young's left-wing view of history. The evidence presented in this study suggests that Smart would much rather have had 'professors' under his baton and, for the most part, he concerned himself with trained singers and professional instrumental players. Nevertheless, the picture of Smart's missionary zeal is valid, and is amplified later on when he claims: 'Where people outside London knew the orchestral works of Beethoven they did so because of Smart's initiative'.²⁵ It is certainly true that Smart's performing repertoire of contemporary symphonic music (which also included the music of Weber, Mendelssohn and Spohr) was carried across Britain and Ireland through his work as a festival conductor. Young makes a strong case for Smart's championing of Beethoven's music, something that cannot be overestimated. He adds that:

He had great faith in the future as well as respect for the past and addressed himself to both in a truly pragmatic manner ... Smart covered the length and breadth of Britain in furtherance of the cause of the propagation of musical truth.²⁶

Whilst this statement is over-enthusiastic, his festival conducting was very extensive, and the programmes he chose in collaboration with his hosts were often close to those that he had conducted in London during the previous season and used many of the same players and singers.²⁷ Young is an enthusiastic advocate for Smart, but the main weakness of his book is the lack of firm supporting evidence, and the picturesque way in which the arguments are posed. Smart's journals are not narratives (in the sense that those of Samuel Pepys or Hector Berlioz are) and give little idea of what his underlying attitudes and opinions may have been. Doubts about Young's style should not, however, devalue his assessment of Smart's importance, for firm evidence certainly does exist of a remarkable life.

²¹ Percy M. Young, *Beethoven: A Victorian Tribute*, p. ix.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁷ See Appendix 3.4.

This book also provides an opportunity to explore the wider landscape of events that surrounded Smart's life and to fully examine his interaction with the professional musicians and musical structures that existed around him. Chapter 1 is a critical biographical study of his early life and gives a vivid illustration of a high-level musical education before the establishment of professional musical institutions in Britain. His career path was sure-footed, and facilitated by an ambitious father, who, as a professional musician himself, was familiar with the workings of patronage and concert life. Cyril Ehrlich and Deborah Rohr²⁸ have written important studies of the musical profession, which consider the economic, social, and artistic aims of musicians and the cultural conditions that prevailed during this period. Both these books give a broadly-based analysis of the profession at a time of change and development, and attempt to place musicians within the social history of their time and against a backdrop of industrialism and expansion. In addition they examine the supposed failure of musical creativity in Britain at a time of national success and burgeoning empire. Smart's journals are able to provide a unique insight into the interaction of musicians and society during this period, and can illustrate how the shortcomings of musical culture in London began to be addressed by both the musicians themselves and the ruling class. In a new introduction to his influential book, *Music and the Middle Class*, William Weber points out that in recent years social historians have become less concerned with musical works and great composers and more interested in 'the mundane side of it all'.²⁹ Smart's writings were essentially practical, and, if not altogether mundane, they nevertheless provide many of the prosaic details that are required to answer the more pertinent questions posed by the new generation of musicologists and social historians.

Many recent musicological studies have therefore concentrated on the lives of individual musicians.³⁰ These biographical works explore social and musical

²⁸ Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain*; Deborah Rohr, *The Careers of English Musicians, 1750–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). See also: A. V. Beedell, *The Decline of the English Musician 1788–1888* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992) and Theodore Fenner, *Opera in London, Views of the Press 1785–1830* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994).

²⁹ William Weber, in the preface to the new edition of his book *Music and the Middle Class, The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna between 1830 and 1848*, second edition (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. xxxv.

³⁰ As examples see: Christina Bashford, *The Pursuit of High Culture: John Ella and Chamber Music in Victorian London* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2007); Colin Timothy Eatock, *Mendelssohn and Victorian England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); Jane Girdham, *English Opera in Late Eighteenth-Century London: Stephen Storace at Drury Lane* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997); Peter Horton, *Samuel Sebastian Wesley: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Philip Olleson, *Samuel Wesley: The Man and his Music* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2003); Fiona M. Palmer, *Domenico Dragonetti in England (1794–1846): The Career of a Double Bass Virtuoso* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Leon Plantinga, *Clementi, His Life and Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

history through accounts of a particular life, and often centre upon the many professional frustrations and financial hardships of those seeking to earn a living by musical activity in early nineteenth-century London. Smart's life, by contrast, offers a case study of how much success and influence a British musician could achieve whilst working within those same musical parameters. Smart's astute musicianship and management of resources meant that he rarely seemed to suffer in the same way that many of his contemporaries did, and he remained financially secure throughout his life. Richard Stevens's diaries and Samuel Wesley's letters, for example, document a frenetic and precarious world of musical activity, and these are able to provide a useful counterpoint to Smart's autobiographical journals, by illustrating the colourful lives of those musicians that worked alongside him.³¹ Smart's life, therefore, provides a fascinating context from which to view these other musicological studies, and the issues they raise, precisely because he was the exception, and because his career encompassed so many different aspects of musical culture in London. Especially significant are the ways in which Smart was able to realise his own aspirations and to assimilate the different sources of financial support that were available to him (both from the aristocracy and in the City) and how he was able to make full use of an expanding commercial environment. Unusually, Smart interacted with people from a number of social levels: with businessmen, with fellow professionals at the Philharmonic Society, and with those at Court.

It has become increasingly apparent in recent years that it is necessary to construct a revisionist view of concert life in London during the early decades of the nineteenth century and that it was far from moribund. A recent book by Ian Taylor³² has demonstrated that in the interval between Haydn's visits to London in the 1790s³³ and the founding of the Philharmonic Society in 1813, concert life continued to flourish, and that strands of continuity can be found which link the two decades together. Chapters 2 and 3 explore the concert life that surrounded Smart during these same years and the two chapters together extend the horizon forward to 1825, a high point in Smart's life, and a watershed in the pattern of public concert-giving. By 1830 we discover that public concert series in London were temporarily diminished and Smart's focus had begun to move elsewhere.

³¹ Mark Argent (ed.), *Recollections of R. J. S. Stevens*, (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1992) and Philip Olleson (ed.), *The Letters of Samuel Wesley: Professional and Social Correspondence, 1797–1837* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). See also Brian Robins (ed.), *The John Marsh Journals* (Stuyvesant NY: Pendragon Press, 1998).

³² Ian Taylor, *Music in London and the Myth of Decline: from Haydn to the Philharmonic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). See also Ian Taylor, '“A period of orchestral starvation”? Concert Life in London, 1795–1813' (Oxford: D. Phil. Thesis, 2004).

³³ The concert life of late eighteenth-century London has been extensively explored in Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

This account takes the form of a 'slice' history,³⁴ taken at five-yearly intervals, and provides a rich context within which to examine the many musical initiatives that took place during the years that Smart was building his career. His conducting activities embraced a wide variety of concert types, and utilised a diverse performing repertoire. Of particular interest is Smart's role in the evolution of taste: he was intimately involved in the attempts to bring contemporary symphonic music before the public both in his own concert series and through the Philharmonic Society. His advocacy of Beethoven's works is particularly significant, and his frequent performances of the symphonies gave him unique authority as a conductor. Two of the most influential writers about this period, William Weber and Cyril Ehrlich,³⁵ have concerned themselves with the social fabric of audiences: the type of people who went to concerts and their influence upon taste within society. Here it is important to emphasise the role that a strong-willed individual could have, alongside these other cultural groups, in the forming of taste. Smart's advocacy of the Austro-German symphonic repertoire (here and elsewhere referred to as 'serious' music³⁶) had a profound influence in a much wider context than just the Philharmonic Society. He frequently created the opportunity to perform and promote this repertoire in the City of London, at his oratorio series, in private concerts (for those individuals who shared his enthusiasms), at regional musical festivals, and through the opera productions with which he was associated at Covent Garden.

A further strand to emerge from this complex picture is the dawning realisation amongst musicians in London that there was a need to address the institutional shortcomings within British musical culture, and to support the growth of the musical profession. Smart and other like-minded musicians made strenuous efforts to address some important issues: specifically, the lack of professional institutions, the predominance of foreign (especially Italian) instrumental performers, the want of opportunities for the performance of 'serious' symphonic music, and the dearth of British composers. Much of the recognition of the need for change

³⁴ 'Slice' history, in this context, means a series of 'snapshots' of concert activity in London, taken at five-yearly intervals from 1800 to 1825. This approach stems from a technique developed by a group of Australian social historians and involves 'the deepest possible investigation of one-year slices of history a generation apart' (see Alan Atkinson and Marian Aveling [eds.], *Australians: A Historical Library*, Vol. 2 (Broadway, New South Wales: Fairfax, Syme and Weldon Associates, 1987). This technique was used for musicological purposes by Christina Bashford, Rachel Cowgill, and Simon McVeigh to construct a concert database in the late 1990s (see 'The Concert Life in Nineteenth-Century London Database', *Nineteenth Century British Music Studies*, eds. Jeremy Dibble and Bennett Zon, Vol. 2 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 1–12.

³⁵ William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class*; Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic: A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) and *The Music Profession in Britain*.

³⁶ This term is used by Ehrlich and others to define the instrumental and orchestral repertoire promoted by the Philharmonic Society and other concerts of high artistic intent. See Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic*, p. 1.

appeared first in the musical press, an important innovation of the time, and a rich source of primary information. Leanne Langley³⁷ has done pioneering work to further our knowledge of musical journalism and of the emergence of the 'cultural programme' (in which Smart played a prominent part) that resulted in the foundation of the Philharmonic Society, the Regent's Harmonic Institution, and the Royal Academy of Music. These initiatives prompted Smart, in collaboration with City businessmen, to embark upon initiatives of his own, and using their financial resources he was able to promote two important concert series that pushed the boundaries of concert life outside the West End, and extended the established concert season. Chapter 3 explores Smart's particular contribution to concert life, especially during 1825, a very significant year for him, when he became, arguably, the leading musician in the capital – a position he was able to maintain for almost twenty years.

Chapter 4 considers Smart's tour to Europe in 1825, which he undertook in order to gather information on musical practices, to explore the state of opera, to engage performers and composers, and, most importantly for him, to visit Weber and Beethoven. This episode in his life creates the opportunity to compare concert life in London with that of other European centres, particularly those cities that rivalled London – Vienna, Leipzig, Berlin, and Paris.³⁸ These comparisons are of crucial importance because they enable us to contrast the institutions, systems of financial support, and performing practices that formed the musical culture of those cities. Smart's writing makes it clear that different sources of funding support for concert life resulted in performing and listening environments that were substantially different from that of London. Whereas previous studies have concentrated largely on the cultures of individual centres,³⁹ it has been possible to make use of Smart's findings to create a pan-European study of

³⁷ See Leanne Langley, 'A Place for Music: John Nash, Regent Street and the Philharmonic Society of London', *eBLJ*, 2013, Article 12; 'Sainsbury's Dictionary, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Rhetoric of Patriotism', *Music and British Culture, 1785–1914: Essays in Honour of Cyril Ehrlich*, eds. Christina Bashford and Leanne Langley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 65–97; and 'The English Musical Journal in the Early Nineteenth Century' (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill: PhD Thesis, 1983).

³⁸ That musical life in London was by no means 'moribund', and that other European cities admired its concert life, will become increasingly clear in succeeding chapters.

³⁹ As examples see: Mary Sue Morrow, *Concert Life in Haydn's Vienna* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1989); Alice M. Hanson, *Musical Life in Biedermeier Vienna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Sieghart Döhring, 'Dresden and Leipzig: Two Bourgeois Centres', *The Early Romantic Era*, ed. Alexander Ringer (London: Prentice Hall/Macmillan, 1990), pp. 141–59; Christoph-Hellmut Mahling, 'Berlin: Music in the Air', *The Early Romantic Era*, ed. Alexander Ringer (London: Prentice Hall/Macmillan, 1990), pp. 109–140; James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1995); and Jean Mongrédien, *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism 1789–1830*, trans. Sylvain Frémaux (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1996).

concert life, in order to determine why London was unique in Europe as a centre of musical culture.

Chapter 5 investigates the state of music in London during the period from 1826 to 1830. Smart's experiences illustrate some of the challenges that musicians encountered as they tried to influence the tastes of the concert public. After returning from his European tour he made a determined attempt to influence concert life through the introduction of Weber. At this moment, however, society was resistant to change and as a consequence his success was limited. In an attempt to answer the questions raised by the study of Smart's concert initiatives in this period of his life, part of this chapter makes use of a perceptive survey of music in London by François-Joseph Fétis. His analysis of 1828 revealed a culture still dominated by members of fashionable aristocratic society, who determined much of the direction of musical culture in London, and whose motivations were complex.

Chapter 6 examines the 1830s, when a new monarchy coincided with a new artistic climate, and a desire for public statement and patriotic expression provided many opportunities for change. Smart was able to take advantage of this new environment and to influence the evolution of British musical culture more successfully than hitherto, notably by his conducting and programming at the Royal Music Festival in 1834 and at the first performance of Mendelssohn's oratorio *St Paul* in 1836. At these events, the tastes of the ruling class and the rest of society were combined skilfully to create a new, more assertive nationalist musical agenda, one which, in the absence of native composers, Smart was able to manipulate by the introduction of new European repertoire. In doing so he appealed to all sections of musical society, and was able to reinforce and enhance an emerging canon of musical works. In 1983, Joseph Kerman's influential and provocative article 'A Few Canonic Variations' set out many of the parameters that William Weber and others were to develop in a long sequence of writings on canonicity.⁴⁰ Smart regularly conducted canonic eighteenth-century music,

⁴⁰ See Joseph Kerman, 'A Few Canonic Variations', *Critical Inquiry*, 10:1 (1983), 107–25; and William Weber, 'The History of Musical Canon', *Rethinking Music*, eds. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 336–55; *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth Century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual & Ideology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); and 'The Intellectual Origins of Musical Canon in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. 47:3 (1994) 488–520. Other recent writing dealing with canon formation in Britain includes: Christina Bashford, 'Public Chamber-Music Concerts in London, 1835–50: Aspects of History, Repertory, and Reception' (London: PhD Thesis, 1996); 'Learning to Listen: Audiences for Chamber Music in Early-Victorian London', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 4 (1999), 25–51; and 'The Late Beethoven Quartets and the London Press, 1836–ca. 1850', *The Musical Quarterly*, 84:1 (2000), 84–122; and T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Rachel Cowgill, 'Mozart Productions and the Emergence of *Werktreue* at London's Italian Opera House, 1780–1830', *Operatic Migrations: Transforming Works and Crossing Boundaries*, eds. Roberta Montemorra Marvin and Downing

but introduced new works to concert audiences and oversaw their publication by Vincent Novello and others. Smart's relationship with canonicity, therefore, is a fascinating one and during the 1830s he was closely involved in the creation of the foundations of Victorian musical culture.⁴¹ It is all the more surprising then, that at the close of this decade, Smart's conducting and organisation of the music at Queen Victoria's Coronation in 1838 was deemed an embarrassment. The resulting harsh criticism by the press led him to retire from the concert platform.

Chapter 7 outlines Smart's later years, a time of comfortable semi-retirement, but one in which he remained vigorous and active. Even though his position as the pre-eminent conductor and musical *animateur* had been severely compromised by the events surrounding the Coronation, Smart retained the stature and influence that, in this era, came with old age. At this time he assumed the role of an elder statesman, and was still a strong supporter and promoter of innovative initiatives. He continued to entertain prominent visiting continental musicians, such as Mendelssohn and Spohr, and to travel abroad. He was still a Composer and Organist to the Chapel Royal and as such had regular contact with members of the royal family. He wrote small-scale church music and organised domestic concerts for the royal palaces. Smart's aristocratic and court connections, coupled with his affability and good business sense, meant that he continued to be listened to by those in positions of authority. A postscript to this account examines the ways in which he was viewed by his contemporaries both before and after his death in 1867 and a conclusion then draws together the many disparate aspects of Smart's life, suggesting a reappraisal of his position in the history of music in Britain.

This analysis of Smart's life and career places him at the forefront of the evolution of concert life in London and is thus crucial to our understanding of the period 1800–1867. The most striking feature of Smart's life remains that it lies

A. Thomas (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 145–86; ‘“Wise men from the East”: Mozart's Operas and their Advocates in Early Nineteenth-Century London’, *Music and British Culture, 1785–1914*, eds. Christina Bashford and Leanne Langley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 39–64; ‘The London Apollonicon Recitals, 1817–32: A Case-Study in Bach, Mozart and Haydn Reception’, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 123 (1998), 190–228; Jennifer Hall-Witt, *Fashionable Acts: Opera and Elite Culture in London 1780–1880* (New York/London/Hanover: University of New Hampshire Press, 2007); Howard Irving, *Ancients and Moderns: William Crotch and the Development of Classical Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999).

⁴¹ It has become increasingly clear to me that that not only has much of Smart's immense contribution to the musical culture of London been overlooked, but, such was the extent of his activities, there is still much more that could be explored: there remains to be written a study of his conducting commitments outside the capital, notably at musical festivals all over the country. The most comprehensive account of musical festivals in Britain is Brian W. Pritchard, ‘The Musical Festival and the Choral Society in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Social History’ (Birmingham: PhD Thesis, 1968). See also, however, an excellent, pithy, and more recent account by Pippa Drummond: *The Provincial Music Festival in England, 1784–1914* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011).

across ninety-one years, from the end of the 'long' eighteenth century to the formative years of the nineteenth; in Britain, from the reign of George III to the mid-Victorian period. What happened to musical culture during these years is the story of his life.

CHAPTER 1

George Smart and the Musical Profession: 1776–1825

Early Life

SIR George Thomas Smart's early life and education are clearly laid out in an autobiographical journal which was written up towards the end of his life and based upon meticulously kept and very detailed records and accounts.¹ Reading the opening pages in Smart's original text, which deal with his upbringing in the late eighteenth century, one senses the enthusiasm, innocence, and simplicity that endeared him to his friends and colleagues throughout his life. It is important to realise that only the accounts of his tours abroad are contemporary narratives;² the journal is a much more factual document, that mostly records day-to-day transactions, and with relatively few narrative passages.³ The journal does feature a number of reminiscences, however, many of which bear the signs of much re-telling. In his later life Smart was noted as a raconteur and these set-piece stories reappear in other musical autobiographies, books of anecdotes, and newspaper articles.⁴

Cyril Ehrlich has said that 'Smart's career was exemplary: escape from a family background in trade, and a dextrous climb, with assiduous book keeping and a modicum of purely musical skills.'⁵ From Smart's journal it is possible to chart his early career and to question Ehrlich's view: to ask if his life was merely one

¹ *Lbl Add. MS 41772*, Vol. 1–3, 1776 to c. 1861. See also a large ledger, *Lbl Add. MS 42225*.

² The Paris Journal, *Lbl Add. MS 47113*, the 'Tour in Germany 1825', *Lbl Add. MS 41774*, and the 'Tour to Bonn', *Lbl Add. MS 41776*.

³ The heavy Victorian prose of the published version is very misleading in that it presents a more cultured literary personality than was actually the case. See Hugh Bertram Cox and Clara L. E. Cox (eds.), *Leaves from the Journals of Sir George Smart* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907).

⁴ See, for example, the 'humorous' Smart anecdotes that appear in Frederick J. Crowest, *Musicians' Wit, Humour, and Anecdote* (London and Newcastle-upon-Tyne: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd, 1902), pp. 154, 226, and 290–1, and Henry Phillips' account of 'Sir George Smart and the Young Singer', which appears in his *Musical and Personal Recollections during Half a Century* (London, 1864) and was subsequently published by various newspapers.

⁵ Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic: A History of the Philharmonic Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 15.

of adroit social climbing. In these early years, the issues that shaped his life were those that faced every musician working in London, but Smart pursued his career with a particular flair and success that eluded most of his contemporaries, and thus his life deserves critical exploration. Whilst the factual approach of the journal reveals little of his underlying motives and intentions, the apparent lack of conscious myth-making (a pertinent contrast to the memoirs of his friend and contemporary Spohr⁶) makes this document all the more useful to us. His cultivation of patrons, acquisition of skills, both musical and social, and vigorous pursuit of a high-level career contrast markedly with other contemporaries such as Richard Stevens or Samuel Wesley. By the time he embarked upon his German tour in 1825, he had reached the top of the profession and the rewards were significant and long-lasting. Whilst Smart was very much a product of the 'long' eighteenth century, he was to become the archetypal Englishman of the nineteenth century, being the son of a shopkeeper (albeit a music shop owned by a professional double bass player), at ease with commerce and with an eye for business opportunities. His contemporaries observed a man endowed with immense energy, foresight, and shrewd business acumen – a rare combination in a musician.

The journal provides a wealth of information regarding Smart's early family background and his circumstances place him firmly within the middle class of society. The opening page tells us that his grandfather, Frances Smart, was 'a clothier in a large way at Trowbridge, Wilts', but that his father, George Smart Senior, 'Disliking his father's business – he came to a music shop at Bath – being passionately fond of music – from Bath he came to London.'⁷ According to David Golby, Smart's father 'was employed from the early 1770s at James Bremner's music shop in New-bond Street before assisting William Napier, a viola player whose music shop was at 474 Strand. He set up his own business as a musical instrument maker and music seller and publisher at the corner of Conduit Street, near Savile Row, in 1773 or 1774. In December 1774, he relocated to the corner of Argyll Street at 331 Oxford Street',⁸ a prime location that was eventually adjacent to the Philharmonic Society.⁹ John Marsh recalled a concert held at George Smart Senior's shop in 1784:

From hence Will'm & I went to ... a weekly concert mostly of amateurs at Smart's the music seller's in Oxford Road, where I had my 2 Symphonies in Bb (No's 30 & 31) perform'd, the 1st. of which Smart agreed to print & give me 25. copies of it.¹⁰

⁶ See Louis Spohr, *Louis Spohr's Autobiography* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1878).

⁷ Journal, f. 1.

⁸ David J. Golby, 'Smart, George (1750/51?–1818?)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com> (accessed 5 October 2004).

⁹ See Chapter 2.

¹⁰ Brian Robins (ed.), *The John Marsh Journals*, (Stuyvesant NY: Pendragon Press, 1998), p. 310.

Music shops such as Smart's were important to the fabric of musical society, providing a centre for musical networking and for the dissemination of new music. Smart's father was a much respected figure and his standing was certainly above that of a jobbing musician. As a performer on the double bass, he took part in some of the most important concerts of the 1780s and '90s: for Joah Bates at the Handel Commemoration of 1784, in Salomon's concert series under Haydn, as part of the band of the King's Theatre, and for the Antient Concerts. Smart Senior was also well connected through his position as Librarian to the Antient Concerts and as a successful instrument maker and music publisher.¹¹ All of this serves to demonstrate that the younger Smart's professional and financial background was always secure. The first pages of the journal also outline Smart's entire family tree, from his grandparents through to the children of his three brothers and two sisters.¹²

He continues the journal with an account of his earliest years:

I was born on May 10th 1776 – at a Music Shop, the corner of Argyle Street – since taken down to widen Argyll St.

Being a sickly child, I was sent to regain my health at Shepton Mallet, Somersetshire – there I met with an accident, the scar from which remains to this day on my forehead; I understood that a piece of silver was inserted at the fracture in my head, if this be true, my head is of some value – the accident arose, as I was informed, by following my Grandmother down a steep staircase and treading upon her Gown, which she pulled up and thereby I rolled past her to the bottom of the Staircase.

When I returned to London I was sent to M^r. Casteneau's School – in a Court near Dean S^t. Oxford S^t. – and I went to M^r. Pike's School at Ashford, Kent – M^r. Fagg a Surgeon in that town and his Family were very kind to me – I renewed my acquaintance with his son M^r. C. Fagg in 1844 he was a surgeon in Hythe, Kent. I have but little recollection of the years in which I resided in My Father's house until I went into the Chapel Royal under D^r. Ayrton which was in the year 17 [blank].¹³

Smart's early life is fascinating because it is clearly evident that, from the start, his father oversaw a high-level musical education for his eldest son and most notably, a privileged education at the Chapel Royal. This contrasts directly with the upbringing of his younger brother Henry, who, whilst a respected and successful professional violinist, had a career that was launched at a lower level.¹⁴

¹¹ According to Golby, 'Smart was proficient on violin, double bass and clarinet ... [he] published and edited collections of popular music, mainly songs and dances, and he is the only known maker of the 'sticcado-pastorale', a percussion idiophone made of glass ... there is an example signed by Smart ... dated 1775': David J. Golby, 'Smart, George', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹² Journal, f. 1–2.

¹³ Journal, f. 5.

¹⁴ Henry Smart was an orchestral leader, whose career was summarised at his death by the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*: '[he] began his musical education, and studied the violin under the late celebrated Cramer; and in the early part of his life played in the orchestras of the Italian Opera, the Haymarket Theatre, and the Concert of Ancient Music, where we believe he occupied the

Deborah Rohr states that purely instrumental players ‘were not accorded the status or remuneration attainable by many singers, teachers and organists,’¹⁵ and it is important to acknowledge that Smart’s father did not intend instrumental playing to form the basis of his eldest son’s career.

In return Smart was later expected to act as the head of the family, managing family affairs and providing financial support for other family members. Given his long life, it is something of a surprise to find that he was considered a ‘sickly child’, and remarkable that he survived a head wound requiring invasive surgery. His education at Mr. Casteneau’s and Mr. Pike’s schools must have represented a significant outlay for George Smart Senior and suggests that his father enjoyed a comfortable income. These careful preparations paid off and his son was successful in gaining entry to the choir of the Chapel Royal, St. James’s Palace. The effectiveness of Smart’s education may be demonstrated by contrasting his career with those of his near contemporaries Samuel Wesley (1766–1837) and Richard Stevens (1757–1837). Wesley was a gifted composer and child prodigy, who was taught largely at home and by professional musicians employed by his father; Stevens, like Smart, received a high-level education within the cathedral tradition at a choir school. Neither was able to start at the same level within the profession, however, or had the same level of professional, financial and social success. Wesley was to lead a colourful life as a composer and performer, but remained largely frustrated in his ambitions, and he was often a victim of his own temperament – in the words of Philip Olleson – ‘his outspoken manner, disrespect for authority and scandalous private life’. Stevens’s apprenticeship to William Savage, Master of the Children at St Paul’s, led ultimately to a limited career of teaching, private parties, the composing of glees, and little else.¹⁶ This, of course, is an oversimplification as these men were differently skilled, and yet the parallel is valid simply because all three musicians lived and worked within the same musical environment and arguably had the same potential for advancement and success within the profession.

Smart’s early grounding as a chorister at the Chapel Royal gave him an élite musical training, and enabled him to build a network of friendships that were later to shape his professional life. Smart received a high level of instrumental tuition,

stand of principal viola ... He was employed with his brother, Sir George Smart, in teaching, and assisted in several schools, where his ability and attention were highly esteemed. His character as a violinist, however, induced Mr. Arnold to engage Mr. Smart at the opening of the English Opera House as leader of the band, where he remained for many seasons. He was then retained at Drury-lane, in a similar capacity ... till 1821. He also led the oratorios, since the management was undertaken by his brother in 1813. It was his peculiar pride to have formed the Drury-lane band entirely of English professors ... He was a member of the Philharmonic Concert, which he led in turn.’ *QMMR*, 5 (1823), 561.

¹⁵ Deborah Rohr, *The Careers of British Musicians, 1750–1850: A Profession of Artisans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 133.

¹⁶ Philip Olleson, *Samuel Wesley: The Man and his Music* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2003); Mark Argent (ed.), *Musical Recollections of R. J. S. Stevens* (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1992).

a general education, and an intimate knowledge of repertoire, both 'ancient' and 'modern'.¹⁷ John Edmund Cox, in his *Musical Recollections* of 1872, paints a vivid portrait of Smart and gives a revealing account of their friendship, clearly venerating him as 'one of the few links between the musical celebrities of the past and present times'.¹⁸ He says of Smart's early years:

Manifesting at a very early age a taste for music, and giving a most promising indication of correctness of ear, his father, himself connected with the musical profession, unlike other parents, such as those of Handel and J. B. Cramer, determined to encourage his inclination. Of the three chief metropolitan schools of music then existing – St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, and the Chapel Royal, St. James's – the last was selected as the best for the training of its future composer and organist.¹⁹

The description of these religious foundations as 'schools of music' underlines the importance of the metropolitan choir schools as providers of professional musical education before the relatively late establishment of conservatoires in London, and explains why these choristers often went on to dominate the musical life of the capital.²⁰ Church music was very much at the highest level in terms of social acceptance, and Smart grew up with the nearest equivalent in England to a professional training.²¹ Significantly, he would have gained a clear idea of how to

¹⁷ As well as learning the 'cathedral' repertoire Chapel Royal boys also sang regularly in public concerts and at the London theatres.

¹⁸ Rev. Dr. John Edmund Cox was a musical enthusiast whose published *Musical Recollections* encompass most of the period of Smart's life; he includes a lengthy assessment of Smart's activities, and his son and daughter were eventually to edit Smart's journals for publication in 1907. Cox was Vicar of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, in the City, Grand Chaplain of Freemasons, and a member of the Athenæum Club: See J. E. Cox, *Musical Recollections of the Last Half-Century* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1872), p. 80; *Alphabetical List of the Clergy* (London: C. Cox, 1859), p. 73.

¹⁹ J. E. Cox, *Musical Recollections*, pp. 80–1. Cox's suggestion that J. B. Cramer's father discouraged him from a career in music is curious and almost certainly not true. See Jerald C. Graue and Thomas B. Milligan, 'Johann [John] Baptist Cramer', *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed 12 September 2005).

²⁰ London largely followed in the wake of other European capitals in the provision of institutions for musical education. The Royal Academy of Music opened its doors in 1823, followed by Trinity College of Music in 1872 (originally the Church Choral Society and College of Church Music), and the National Training School of Music in 1876 (to become the Royal College of Music in 1883).

²¹ The Chapel Royal had the security and status of royal patronage and, like the other metropolitan choir schools at St Paul's and Westminster Abbey, provided musicians with 'a high status career track': Deborah Rohr, *The Careers of British Musicians*, p. 9. On leaving the Chapel Royal in 1825, S. S. Wesley took with him a testimonial stating 'Mr. Samuel Sebastian Wesley, was formerly a Chorister of His Majesty's Chapel, St. James's, and ... has received his musical education amongst the gentleman of that establishment, and ... is fully competent to

behave in Court circles, something many a rank-and-file musician found difficult to cultivate and which many never learnt.

Smart's father did more than merely ensure a place at the Chapel Royal, however, for in addition he engaged one of the finest piano teachers then available to supplement this education. This represents a substantial investment in his son's career: ten shillings and sixpence was a premium rate for piano lessons and Cramer was one of the leading players in Europe. Here Smart outlines his instrumental education:

D^f. Dupuis gave me some lessons on the Organ in the Chapel Royal, soon after I left it as a Boy – rather a sharp Master – sometimes a wrap on the Fingers with his Watch Chain – holding the Watch in his hand; from him I learned my organ playing. The knowledge of Sacred Music I obtained in the Chapel Royal and of the works of Handel & the Antient Masters, when I turned over for Joah Bates Esq.; who conducted at the organ at The Antient Concerts, then held in Tottenham Street – but most fortunately for me; my father with most excellent judgment, engaged the justly celebrated Pianist J. B. Cramer to give me P.F. lessons at 10/6 each, to him I am indebted for my Knowledge of Modern Music and the style of performing it.²²

Smart's public début, aged eighteen, was as a solo pianist, and perhaps this was the career his father had envisaged for him:

My 1st. Public Performance at 'The New Musical Fund Concert' at the Italian Opera House (the orchestra was erected on the stage).
'Concert, March 6th 1794 – Concerto Grand Pianoforte, Mr Smart J^{nr}. (Pupil of Mr. J. B. Cramer) being his 1st Performance in Public ... Dussek.²³

This is the only record of Smart as a concert pianist, and on no other occasion does he record performing as a soloist with an orchestra. This performance was easy for George Smart Senior to arrange, for he himself had founded the New Musical Fund charity in 1786 for those musicians who did not qualify for membership of the Royal Society of Musicians.²⁴ Their annual benefit concert was an important source of income for the Fund and a significant event in the musical calendar. Smart conducted their annual concert from 1815 to 1841 and it remained a prestigious occasion, featuring the leading artists of the day and attracting a large and fashionable audience.²⁵

undertake the musical duties of any Cathedral': Peter Horton, *Samuel Sebastian Wesley: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 13.

²² Journal, f. 46.

²³ Journal, f. 7.

²⁴ The Royal Society of Musicians rejected all those who resided outside London, or who were not exclusively musicians. George Smart Senior and Edward Miller had founded their rival charity on 16 April 1786 specifically to address this situation. See Michael Kassler, 'New Musical Fund', *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed 21 February 2005).

²⁵ Ian Taylor, in a major study of the period, has said that 'these annual performances ... assumed a position of notable significance within London's musical calendar'

Smart was well provided with the professional skills and opportunities that would enable him to take full advantage of the opportunities for musical employment in London. He had good schooling, an entrée into the top level of the music profession, instrumental lessons from prominent teachers, and tuition in both the ‘antient’ (Baroque) and ‘modern’ (Classical) styles of performance. In addition, he was able to make his *début* at one of the most fashionable musical events of the season.

Earning a Living

GEORGE Smart’s grounding and education at the Chapel Royal was very firmly (although not exclusively) one of church music, and his first professional post was as organist of St. James’s Chapel, Hampstead Road, a proprietary chapel of the sort then fashionable in the new suburbs of rapidly expanding Georgian London.²⁶ His first printed publication was of music for St. James’s Chapel, drawn from a number of sources and including some modest original compositions of his own.²⁷ Smart retained links with the chapel and his parents were subsequently buried there. His journal notes that he took up the post in 1796, and his account of the appointment underlines the importance of patronage when securing a post in London:

I was Organist of St. James’s Chapel, Hampstead Road in this year. I have no date when I was appointed Organist, but I know it was at the opening of the Chapel (in [blank]) I had but half the Salary £10 giving up the other half £10 to Mr. Wafer a Blind Man, until his death; my Salary was increased to £30 per Ann, upon my threatening to resign in consequence of my applying for the place of Organist at St. James’s Church, Piccadilly (upon the death of M^r. Buckley) but M^r. Burrows was elected – I believe at the wish of the Prince Regent (thro’ M^r. Latour) upon which The Rev^d. G. Andrews (I taught his daughter) wrote me a civil letter and caused my Salary to be raised to £30.

I know not in what year I left this Chapel.²⁸

and furthermore that these concerts had a particular role ‘in introducing the star attractions for the forthcoming season’. See Ian Taylor, ‘“A period of orchestral starvation”? Concert Life in London, 1795–1813’ (Oxford: D. Phil. Thesis, 2004), pp. 98–105.

²⁶ St James’s Church, Hampstead Road, eventually became part of the Parish of St. Pancras and was demolished in the 1960s. For a description of this church and a transcription of the memorial to Smart’s parents see London County Council, *Survey of London*, Vol. XXI (London: London County Council, 1949), pp. 123 and 133. The Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street, is an extant example of this type of church, built for the Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair.

²⁷ Again his father’s guiding hand is evident, enabling the publication of his son’s work using the family press: George Thomas Smart, ‘Divine Amusement, Being a Selection of the most admired Psalms, Hymns and Anthems used at St. James’s Chapel’ (‘Printed at G. Smart’s Musical Instrument Warehouse’, London, c. 1795).

²⁸ Journal, f. 8.

Although he continued to record in his journal: 'I was organist of St. James's Chapel, Hampstead Road' each year until 1823,²⁹ he employed a deputy from 1808 (and possibly earlier). It was not at all unusual for organists to hold more than one post and to pay a deputy, the deputy system being well established in all aspects of the music profession. From further journal entries we discover that Smart's assistant from 1811 was James Stiles,³⁰ and another later entry records:

I was Organist at St. James's Chapel this year and on May 3. 1822 I paid Mr. Greatorex Jun^r. £5.2.- for doing my Organ duty there for Nine Sundays during my absence in France in 1821.³¹

In 1798 he had added a further organist's post to his portfolio:

June 4 Received £10.10 – part of my Salary as Organist of Brunswick Chapel. The Organ there was formerly in the Tottenham St. Rooms for the Antient Concerts.³²

Earning a living was Smart's first priority as a young man. He had no private income and it was important to pursue every form of musical employment. Throughout his life he continued to keep meticulously detailed records of income and expenditure, and his capacity to manage money was undoubtedly a key component of his professional success. His connection with the Chapel Royal was important and by custom Chapel Royal boys were placed into their first posts. As Smart records, much of his early professional employment was the result of the influence of his mentor Samuel Arnold:

After leaving the Chapel Royal [in 1792] I was appointed Deputy there by D^f. Arnold, Organist & Composer – and also for him at Westminster Abbey where he was the Organist, and I did the duty occasionally at the Chapel Royal for D^f. Dupuis, who was also Organist & Composer there – D^f. D. Gave me lessons on the organ in the Chapel Royal which was then placed in a Gallery above the left hand side of the Communion table ... The Organ Loft was crowded on a Sunday with talented Professors, and many Visitors, to see their Majesties George 3rd & Queen Charlotte ... I had some Pianoforte Scholars, during my residence at my Father's House; among them My Sister and my Brother Henry for which my Father paid me 2/6 per lesson, but I gave up to him my payments from other Scholars in return for my Board, Lodging and Clothes.³³

²⁹ Samuel Sebastian Wesley's first post after leaving the Chapel Royal was also that of organist at St. James's Church, Hampstead Road. He was appointed in 1826, aged sixteen: Peter Horton, *Samuel Sebastian Wesley: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 13.

³⁰ 'March 16 – I paid Mr Stiles, my Deputy at St. James's Chapel, Hampsd Road £3.3.- – Quarter of a year Salary from Octo: 28. 1810 – to Jany: 28. 1811': Journal, f. 29.

³¹ Journal, f. 46.

³² Journal, f. 10. Brunswick Chapel was a proprietary chapel in the Marylebone area, also now demolished: Elizabeth and Wayland Young, *Old London Churches* (London: Faber and Faber, 1955), pp. 248 and 256.

³³ Journal, f. 5.