

SEI  
QUINTETTI  
Per due Violini Alto et due Violoncelli  
Concertanti.  
*Composti Dall. Sig.<sup>or</sup>*  
LUIGI BOCCHERINI  
*Virtuoso di Camera et Compositor di Musica.*  
DI  
*S. A. R. Don Luigi*  
*Infante di Spagna.*  
OPERA XX.  
Libro terzo di Quintetti.  
*Nuovamente Stampati a Spese di G. B. Venier.*  
PRIX 12<sup>5<sup>w</sup></sup>.  
*N.B. Les parties de Violoncelles sont facile pour l'exécution, et la seconde*  
*se pourra exécuter sur l'Alto ou un Basson.*  
A PARIS.  
*Chez M. Venier Editeur de plusieurs Ouvrages de musique rue S.<sup>t</sup> Thomas du*  
*Louvre vis-à-vis le Chateau d'eau, et aux Adresses ordinaires.*  
A LYON.  
*M. Castaud vis-à-vis la Comedie.*  
*en Province, chez tous les Marchands de musique.*  
A. P. D. R.

An example of the rare music material recently discovered on the open shelves: Luigi Boccherini, *Sei Quintetti per due Violini, Alto et due Violoncelli Concertanti, Opera XX, Libro terzo di Quintetti*, Paris, Venier, 1776. (Music Library collection.)

London Printed & Sold by LAVENU & MITCHELL, Music Sellers to His  
Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at their New Musical Circulating Library,  
N<sup>o</sup> 29, New Bond Street.

## CRAZY JANE,

A Favorite Song

The Words by M. Lewis Esq. & Set to Music

with an Accompaniment for the

HARP OR PIANO FORTE.

by  
Miss Abrams.

Ent at Sta. Hall

Pr. 1<sup>s</sup> 6

The musical score is presented in three systems. Each system consists of a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The lyrics are: 'Why fair Maid in ev-ry feature, are such signs of fear ex-press'd, can a wand'ring wretched creature, with such terror fill thy breast, do my frenzied looks a-larm thee, trust me sweet thy fears are vain.'

Harriet Abrams' most famous composition, *Crazy Jane, a Favorite Song*. Words by M. Lewis. London, Lavenu and Mitchell, [between 1802 and 1808]. The text reads, "Why fair Maid in ev'ry feature, are such signs of fear express'd, can a wand'ring wretched creature, with such terror fill thy breast, do my frenzied looks alarm thee, trust me sweet thy fears are vain". (All items illustrated in this article are held in the Music Library collection.)

# Musical Rarities

BY RICHARD EXCELL

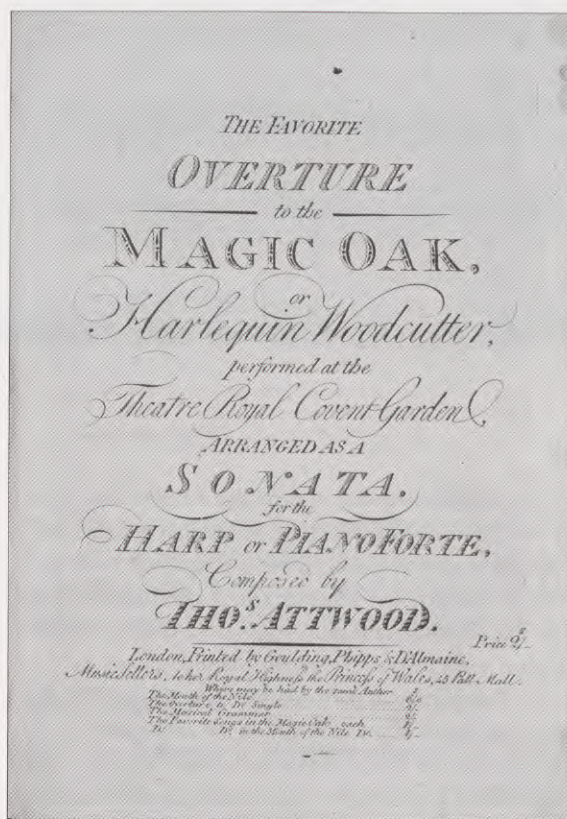
*A program is proceeding to complete the cataloguing of the University Library's rare music scores held in the Music Library.*

Any collection of "rare" material of uncertain age and provenance is bound to be something of a lucky dip. Even so, the University of Melbourne's Music Library holds a very mixed bag.

The more predictable part of the collection tends to be the music manuscripts. One expects them to be unique, naturally, and many are by people associated with the Faculty of Music or its predecessor, the Conservatorium, beginning with the founding Professor of Music, G.W.L. Marshall-Hall. There are holograph scores of several notable Australian composers, among them Louis Lavater, Dorian Le Gallienne, Margaret Sutherland and Esther Rofe. An impressive recent addition is the score of Richard Mills' opera *Batavia*, a highlight of Australia's Centenary of Federation celebrations in May 2001. This is one of several scores donated to the Music Library by the composer within a year or two of their composition.

## Boccherini

Over the years, many of the Library's rarer musical treasures had suffered from one of two fates, both unfortunate, but in opposite ways. Much material has been stored in back rooms and cardboard boxes for years, even decades, and has never been described or provided with any form of access. At the other extreme, there have been rare and valuable items left on the open shelves for many years. For instance a set of parts for 12 string quintets by Boccherini, recently removed from open access, turned out to be made up of two publications, one an early English edition published in London in 1775, the other a first edition published by Vénier in Paris in 1776. Sadly, if not surprisingly, there are now only four of the five parts remaining.



This item by Thomas Attwood is not recorded anywhere else. *The Favorite Overture to the Magic Oak, or, Harlequin Woodcutter, Performed at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, Arranged as a Sonata for the Harp or Pianoforte*, London, Goulding, Phipps and D'Almaine, c. 1799.



## Corelli

There are other incomplete sets of parts that seem to have been separated from their companions long before they reached the Library. The most notable among these is a partbook from the first edition of Corelli's *Trio Sonatas, Op. 2*, published in Rome in 1689. In this case we are fortunate to have anything at all of such a seminal work by one of the major composers of the Baroque era. This particular partbook has an attractive vellum binding that, by means of a watermark in the endpapers, can be tentatively dated to the 1690s (thanks to Julianne Simpson from Special Collections for her expert assistance with this binding).

## Handel

A rather less prepossessing binding from the following century houses another impressive Baroque collection, a complete set of the 65 overtures by Handel arranged for harpsichord. These were published by John Walsh, Handel's principal publisher, during the 1750s in 11 instalments of six overtures each. Evidently Walsh could find only 65 overtures, and so the final set is completed by an arrangement of the famous Coronation anthem *Zadok the Priest*.

This music is printed from moveable type (rather than engraved), giving the notes their almost square shape. Arcangelo Corelli, *Sonate a tre, doi Violini, e Violone, o Arcileuto col Basso per L'organo ...* Rome, Gio. Giacomo Komarek, 1689.

## Haydn

Also published in London, a few decades later, is a collection of some two dozen sets of parts for symphonies by Haydn and his minor contemporaries such as Pleyel, Filz and the Bohemian (in every sense!) Kotzwara. The earliest of the Haydn symphonies were published by Forster in 1782, 10 years before the first of his triumphant visits to London.

## Schwindl

Because pieces of "sheet-music" often have only a few pages, it has long been customary to bind them together in albums, which tend to have stamped on them some informative title such as "MUSIC", "PIANO" or "VOL 1". The Music Library has many such volumes, most apparently donations. Most contain an assortment of Victorian parlour music, opera potpourris and

popular ballads, but occasionally there are surprises: first editions of Liszt or Brahms, or a collection of 18th century violin duets. Among the latter are such rarities as *A Second Set of Twelve Duets for Two Violins: composed in an easy familiar style for the use of young performers* by Friedrich Schwindl (published in London by Preston and Son, c. 1785) — the only other recorded copy is in the British Library.

## Thomas Attwood

A particularly interesting collection is found in two plain albums that contain music for the London theatre from the years around 1800. Many of the “celebrated overtures” or “favorite” songs are quite rare, and some items are not recorded elsewhere at all. Among these are two overtures by Thomas Attwood for “musical entertainments” performed at Covent Garden: *The Escapes* of 1801 and *The Magic Oak, or, Harlequin Woodcutter* of 1799. During a stay in Vienna from 1785 to 1787 Attwood had had the rare privilege of being a composition pupil of Mozart, which may explain why he displays a somewhat more polished style than most of his English contemporaries.

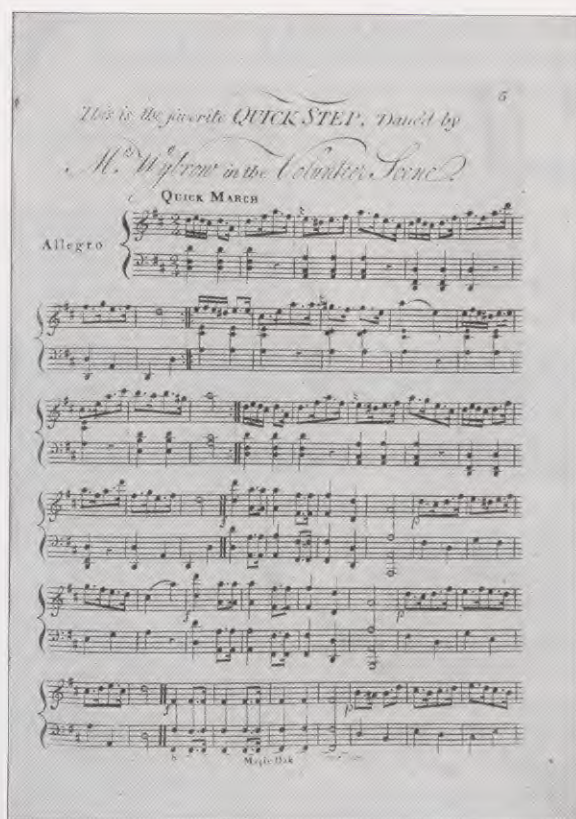
The same collection includes many songs, ranging from simple ballads like *Sally in Our Alley* to virtuosic display pieces for famous singers, such as *Lost in Anxious Doubts Tormenting*, *The Favorite Song Sung by Mrs Billington at the Theatres Royal Covent Garden & Drury Lane, Accompanied on the Violin by Mr Weichse, Composed (for Mrs Billington) by F. Bianchi*. Few singers could hope to emulate the soprano described by the *Gentleman's Magazine* as “the most celebrated vocal performer that England ever produced”, so the publisher provided simpler alternative versions with the note:

N.B. For the accomodation [sic] of the Public small notes are inserted where the Passages are too high: which renders it within the compass of Ladies in general.

## Harriet Abrams

Another notable soprano is represented as a composer in her own right. Harriet Abrams first made her name at the age of 15 as a soprano. She was a prize pupil of the composer Thomas Augustine Arne, who arranged for her to appear before the public under the sponsorship of the celebrated actor, manager and playwright David Garrick. He wrote a one-act play, *May Day, or, the Little Gipsy*, with songs by Arne, as a vehicle for Abrams' debut at Drury Lane in 1775. In a letter he remarked, “I am somewhat puzzled about introducing my little jew Girl — she is surprizing! I want to introduce her as the little Gipsy with 3 or 4 exquisite songs”.

After a few years she confined her attentions to the more respectable world of oratorios and private concerts. For the twelve concert season of the Academy of Ancient Music in 1787–1788 she and one of her sisters were paid the substantial fee of 60 guineas. Her own benefit concerts for herself and her sisters were a feature of the London music scene; in 1792, 1794



A page from Thomas Attwood's score, *The Favorite Overture to the Magic Oak, or, Harlequin Woodcutter, Performed at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, Arranged as a Sonata for the Harp or Pianoforte*, London, Goulding, Phipps and D'Almaine, c. 1799, p. 5.

and 1795 no less a figure than Joseph Haydn presided at the piano. Two of her songs appear in this album: *Crazy Jane*, her most famous work, and *Female Hardship*, with its rather startling opening line “When our tortured bosoms bleed”.

## J.B. Lascoretz

Many pieces of music in the Music Library's rare books collection are obscure, but some are more obscure than others. A case in point is a set of trios for the unusual combination of flute, horn and bassoon, *Trois Trios Faciles et Brillants Pour Flûte cor et Basson Composés par J.B. Lascoretz*. This composer seems to be unknown to encyclopedias or catalogues of music and musicians. Even the publishers, Marescot in Paris and Pillement in Boulogne sur Mer, are not listed in the very thorough *Dictionnaire des Éditeurs de Musique Français* by Devriès and Lesure. Marescot may be a Charles Marescot who was a guitar teacher in Paris, and Pillement was apparently a member of a family of makers of stringed instruments, active in Dunkirk and Boulogne sur Mer. While these trios are modest

enough pieces, it is not clear whether their obscurity is a result of simple lack of interest, or other factors operating in the turbulent environment of post-revolutionary France.

## Wagner

Pieces of printed music may become rare for a variety of reasons: small print runs of works which never achieved popularity, changing fashions, natural wear and tear and so forth. One curious item in the collection, however, appears to owe its rarity to the intervention of the composer or the publisher. This is the *Potpourri für das Pianoforte aus der Oper: Der Fliegende Holländer von Richard Wagner*, published in Dresden by the royal court publisher C.F. Meser in 1844. Wagner had trouble getting his early operas published, and Meser only agreed to publish them on commission at Wagner's expense. Typically, despite borrowing heavily from friends, Wagner remained heavily in debt to Meser (as well as to his friends) for years. The *Wagner Werk-Verzeichnis* and the recent edition of *Der Fliegende Holländer* in Wagner's *Sämtliche Werke* list several manifestations of the work published by Meser: orchestral score, vocal score and piano reductions of the overture and selected numbers. But there is no mention whatever of this *Potpourri*; it is almost as if it never existed. Only in the *Wagner-Catalog* of Emerich Kastner, first published in 1878, does something emerge. In a section devoted to piano arrangements from *The Flying Dutchman* a later *Potpourri* (published no earlier than 1872) is cited, with a parenthetical note that "Das 1. Potpourri ist angekündigt im Jahre 1845", indicating that it was cancelled or withdrawn from sale within a year of its appearance. This was presumably at the instigation of either publisher or composer. In the absence of any discernible motive on Meser's part, it would seem more likely that Wagner himself found this *Potpourri* in some way inappropriate or embarrassing.

## Martin Simonsen

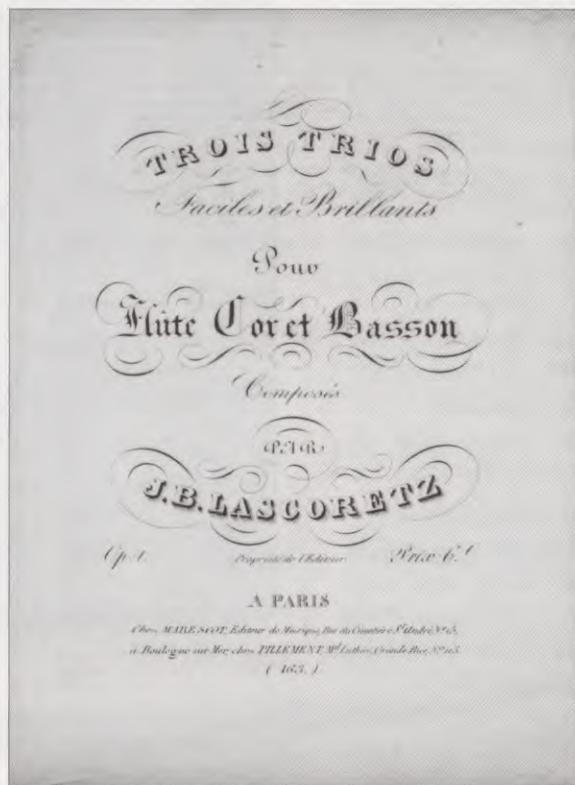
Most of the printed music discussed so far has no obvious connection to Melbourne, except that it arrived here some time ago. This would seem at first sight to be the case with a bound

collection of violin and piano music published in Hamburg and composed by one Martin Simonsen, described on the title pages as "*Violon Solo de Sa Majesté le Roi de Danemark*". There is no evidence to corroborate his claimed position at the Danish court, but his later life in the "Antipodes" is well documented. Before and after his marriage in 1857 to the Belgian/French soprano Françoise (Fanny) Dehaes, he travelled to such diverse places as India, Hong Kong, San Francisco, Venezuela and the Caribbean. Most of his later years were spent in Australia and New Zealand, where he was a major player in the extraordinarily rich operatic scene of the second half of the 19th century, first with William Saurin Lyster, and then increasingly as the impresario himself of many tours. He often performed his violin solos as interludes in opera performances and in benefit concerts, and was

widely described as "the finest violinist in the colonies".

Simonsen's final years in Melbourne were marred by the death of his wife and growing problems with his sight, hearing and finances, and he committed suicide in his rented rooms in Elizabeth Street in 1899. The music in these volumes reflects happier times with its mixture of operatic fantasies and character pieces based on various national airs and dances. Among the more exotic specimens are *Souvenir de Caracas et Puerto Rico: Rondo aguinaldo* and *Sega: danse créole de l'Isle de la Réunion*. ♦

Richard Excell is the rare music cataloguer, University of Melbourne Library.



*Trois Trios Faciles et Brillants, Pour Flute Cor et Basson*, by the obscure composer, J.B. Lascoretz, Paris, Marescot, early 1800s.