Chapter 3

George Bouchier Worgan: The owner of the first piano to be brought to Australia

During the 1770s and 1780s, Frederick Beck was one of the most prestigious piano makers in London. His clientele would have ranged from those who wished to buy an instrument simply because it was fashionable to do so, through those for whom playing the piano was an essential skill associated with the attainment of genteel accomplishment, to those who were musical connoisseurs. One such musical connoisseur took his newly purchased Beck piano to Botany Bay on board the flagship of the First Fleet, the *Sirius*. This musical connoisseur was George Bouchier Worgan.

George Bouchier Worgan was christened on Tuesday, 3 May 1757, at St Andrew’s, Holborn Hill, London.¹ His father, Dr John Worgan (1724–90), was an eminent virtuoso organist and composer.

On several occasions, George’s father moved his family to a new abode.² In 1823, the English journalist and musician Richard Mackenzie Bacon (1776–1844) elaborated: ‘Till a few years before his death’, Dr John Worgan (and his family) ‘enjoyed the alternation of town and country … [Dr Worgan’s] first residence in [London] … was at No. 7 in Milman [Millman, or Millmans]³ Street, [near] Bedford Row: his next, at No. 40, Rathbone Place.’⁴

Dr Worgan’s country house was in Richmond. Rate books dating from 1780 and 1790 reveal that the Worgan family occupied number 1 Maids of Honour Row, Richmond. This was one of four adjacent three-storey terrace houses, each of which was five windows wide.⁵ George Worgan referred to the family’s Richmond house when writing from Sydney Cove to his younger brother Richard: ‘when it is the Depth of Winter with Us, you are enjoying Richmond Hill.’⁶ This remark suggests that in summer, the Worgans occupied their country

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² See ‘Close Proximity’ in Appendix B, Volume 2 of this publication.
residence at Maids of Honour Row, Richmond. This was one of two dwellings that the Worgan family accessed as their country retreat. Dr Worgan’s ‘first and favourite country house was on Richmond Hill; his second was at No. 2, on Richmond Green’—approximately half a mile [approximately 0.8 kilometres] north-west of Richmond Hill.7 Dr Worgan named his abode at Richmond Green ‘Nightingale Lodge’.8

It is not surprising that Dr Worgan selected Richmond as the location of his country house; apart from the natural beauty and serenity of the place, access from London had been improved (in 1777) by the construction at Richmond of an ‘elegant stone bridge of five semicircular arches … built over the Thames’.9

From the late 1770s, however, George Bouchier Worgan would not have been able to enjoy the delights of Nightingale Lodge, nor the fine walnut tree, under the shade of which the family often took their tea, and gazed on the streamers that waved on the Thames beneath, while music swelled, and died away on the breathless air of a glowing evening, illuminated by golden gleams, darting through the dark foliage of the towering elms, and glimmering through the graceful poplars that … decorate the foot of Richmond Hill.10

This is because in 1775, at the age of 18, George Worgan joined the British Navy. In a letter dated Monday, 16 February 1807, written to Arthur Young (1741–1820), the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture,11 George confessed that although he had always been drawn towards agriculture, his father had determined that he should pursue a career in medicine: ‘My very earliest inclinations and propensities led me to the study and pursuit of agriculture … but I had a dear and honoured Father, whose wish was to bring me up to the defective Art of Physic, his will, was mine!’12

As a novice medic, George had little time to accustom himself to the realities of war. During the American War of Independence (1775–83), he served as a Surgeon’s Mate on board the hospital ship *Tiger*.13 This would have involved an

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11 Arthur Young was involved in the commissioning of George Worgan to carry out an agricultural survey of Cornwall. See ‘George Worgan, the Published Author’, in Chapter 11, this volume.
12 Arthur Young Papers, British Library, Ad. MSS 35129. I am indebted to Robert Clarke for this information, which comes from his preparatory research for his forthcoming PhD dissertation (Working the Forge. The Lives of William Dawes, Watkin Tench and George Worgan, The Australian National University).
13 See C. M. Pole, ‘No. 26. The Examination of Mr. George Bourchier Worgan, Surgeon in His Majesty’s Navy, and Late Surgeon’s Mate of His Majesty’s Hospital Ship Le Caton; Taken Upon Oath, 8th November 1803’, in The Seventh Report of the Commissioners of Naval Enquiry. Naval hospital at East Stonehouse. Le
apprenticeship-like context within which Worgan served under an established navy surgeon. From February 1778, George Worgan served as Surgeon’s Second Mate. In 1779, Worgan was certified as a Surgeon Fifth Rate. According to Rogers, this resulted in Worgan’s ‘gazetting’ as a naval surgeon in March 1780—that is, an announcement regarding his appointment and qualification was published in *The London Gazette*. Rogers provides no evidence for his assertion that in March 1780 *The London Gazette* announced George Worgan’s appointment as a naval surgeon, and unfortunately no issue of *The London Gazette* for March 1780 mentions George Worgan. The period between George Bouchier’s joining the navy in 1775 and his certification in 1779, however, represents the customary three to five-year apprenticeship served under a surgeon-apothecary.

Following his certification, George Worgan was assigned to the (moored) hospital ship *Pilote* for two years—that is, between 1780 and 1782. The *Pilote* was a two-masted (a foremast and a main mast) ‘brig-sloop’ of 218 tonnes, 14 guns, which had been captured from the French in 1779. A brig-sloop was smaller than a sailing frigate and was (by virtue of having too few guns) outside the rating system. In general, a sloop ... would be under the command of a master and commander rather than a post captain, although in day-to-day use at sea the commanding officer of any naval vessels would be addressed as 'captain'.

Surgeon Worgan is unaccounted for between 1783 and 1785. It is likely that he continued to work as a naval surgeon. On the other hand, he may, for a period, have been on some sort of detached list (naval surgeons did not enjoy retirement on half-pay at the time, so if George Worgan was not working, his income would have been severely restricted).

On Wednesday, 1 November 1786, at 29 years of age, he was discharged from the Ganges to the Sirius. Perhaps one of the motivating factors that led Worgan to pursue this post was a desire to widen his experience. In 1786, the excitement, peril and wonder associated with making the journey to Botany Bay would have been equivalent to that now associated with making a journey to the Moon. It is reasonable to assume that Worgan was eager to serve as a surgeon on board the Sirius.

Three surgeons were assigned to the Sirius:\footnote{21 See ‘Ships Crew, Officials’, in ‘H.M.S. Sirius’, in B. Chapman and M. Chapman, A List of Marine Officers, Marines, Ships Crews and Officials, with Families. Who Arrived January 26, 1788, as Part of the Fleet. Arranged by Ship (Ancestry.com, 2010).} George Bouchier Worgan was the senior surgeon; Thomas Jamison (ca 1753–1811) was the Surgeon’s First Mate\footnote{22 See ‘HMS Sirius 1788’, in Convict Stockade: A Wiki Site for Australian Convict Researchers (Ozgenie Research, Last modified 10 March 2010).} (Jamison, an honourable man with a strong personality, hailed from the Lake District and had qualified in London);\footnote{23 ‘The term ‘Mate’ was used as a formal Royal Navy rank, there being such formal positions as Boatswain’s Mate, Carpenter’s Mate and Surgeon’s Mate.’ J. Pearn, ‘Surgeon’s Mate Lowes of H.M.S. Sirius’, in Health and History (Sydney: Australian and New Zealand Society of the History of Medicine, 1998), Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 69.} and a Mr Lowes, ‘a very genteel young man’\footnote{24 See letter from Newton Digby Fowell (a midshipman on the Sirius) to his father, 4 March 1787. Quoted in N. Irvine, The Sirius Letters: The Complete Letters of Newton Fowell, Midshipman and Lieutenant Aboard the Sirius Flagship of the First Fleet on its Voyage to New South Wales (Sydney: Fairfax Library, 1988), Letter 6.} (albeit without a Christian name), was Surgeon’s Mate.\footnote{25 Pearn, ‘Surgeon’s Mate Lowes of H.M.S. Sirius’, p. 69.} Lowes carried with him some of the writings of the mystic, scientist and philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772): ‘Alternative religions were of some interest to men who saw the Church of England as little more than a ceremonial and suasive arm of government.’\footnote{26 T. Keneally, The Commonwealth of Thieves: The Sydney Experiment (Sydney: Random House Australia, 2006), p. 236.}

George Worgan was among the 12 surgeons whom the ‘[g]overnment had appointed at the public expense to go to Botany Bay’.\footnote{27 The Times, 21 December 1786. Quoted in D. Hill, 1788: The Brutal Truth of the First Fleet; The Biggest Single Overseas Migration the World Had Ever Seen (Sydney: William Heinemann, 2008), p. 75.}

The Life of a Surgeon

As a late eighteenth-century surgeon, Worgan’s life was laden with what now may appear to be peculiarities. At that time, a careful distinction was made between physicians and surgeons. The most significant difference lay in their education: physicians were university educated; surgeons were apprenticed.
Physicians were ‘only permitted to examine patients, diagnose disease, and prescribe medications’.\(^{28}\) In 1747, R. Campbell observed: ‘The physician, in the discharge of his profession, is frequently obliged to grope in the dark, to act by guess and bare conjecture, and depends (in many cases) more upon chance and the strength of the patient’s constitution, than upon any infallible rules in his art.’\(^ {29}\)

The archetypal physician was dignified and aloof, sagacious and capable of forming a diagnosis without actually touching the patient.\(^ {30}\) Even as late as 1850, physicians ‘were content to enquire about previous illness and present appetite: to feel the pulse, and to observe the appearance of the eyes, tongue, urine, and faeces, in that order of interest’.\(^ {31}\) Physicians were not permitted to act as surgeons.

Unlike physicians, surgeons performed operations, set broken bones, and treated accident cases and skin disorders. The nature of a surgeon’s work separated him from a physician in that a surgeon had to cut, manipulate, and treat disorders on the outside of the body. A surgeon was considered a skilled craftsman … his work ‘demanded speed, dexterity, and physical strength, as well as expertise’.\(^ {32}\)

The archetypal surgeon was muscular and practical, a man who did not mind blood and gore, and was handy with a saw, knife and stitching needle.\(^ {33}\) In 1747, R. Campbell remarked:

> To a solid judgement, quick apprehension, and a good memory … [a surgeon] must add a kind of courage, peculiar to himself. It is vulgarly said, that a surgeon should have a lion’s heart, a hawk’s eye, and a lady’s hand; by the lion’s heart is not meant savage ferocity, a cruel inhuman disposition, or want of sympathy for the sufferings of man-kind: he is not to have the heart to tear, lacerate, and mangle his patient wantonly; but he must have the courage to go through the most severe necessary operation, without being so much affected by the patient’s sufferings, as to shake his hand, or hinder him from performing the amputation with

\(^{28}\) See ‘Student Paper on 19th-Century Medicine’ (n.d.). See V. Sanborn, ‘Doctors and Medical Care in the Regency Era’, in UK/Irish History @ Suite 101 (5 June 2010).

\(^{29}\) Campbell, The London Tradesman, p. 47.


\(^{33}\) See Rosen, Australia’s Oldest House, p. 15.
ease and dexterity. Womanish tenderness is very improper for a surgeon; and it requires a strong command of temper, not to give way to pity and compassion, in some ... operations ... to preserve ... [a] soft sympathy of soul, without being outwardly affected by it, is expressed in having a lady’s hand, or finger; that is, to be able to touch the patient so gently, as he may scarce feel you; at least, no more than is necessary to perform the operation. A quick eye is necessary to a surgeon ... especially in amputation, to discern the arteries, and other minute blood vessels, that are to be sewed up, to prevent a too great effusion of blood: it requires like-wise a good and quick eye, to discern the several changes in a wound under cure; he must be able to observe the smallest alteration in the colour of the part and consistence of the matter, the degrees of suppuration, and the most distant approach of a mortification.34

Eighteenth-century surgery was done without anaesthetic or antiseptic. It was brutal, agonising and often fatal. It is reasonable to assume that post-traumatic stress disorder was, for those patients who survived, a corollary of undergoing surgery without anaesthesia. Usually, surgery was undertaken only to save a life that would clearly otherwise be lost. The general perception of physicians (compared with surgeons) was that they were much ‘cleaner’ and ‘nicer’, even though physicians were quite less effective.

Surgeons did not enjoy the status afforded to physicians, being frequently satirised as ‘sawbones’.35 The ambition of naval surgeons was often blighted by the irksome status associated with their profession. Surgeon William Redfern (ca 1774–1833) acerbically noted that, during the 1790s and before,

it was not quite so fashionable to be dubbed M.D. from St. Andrew, where I might for the customary fee have procured one for my horse; nor to throw away the fees for a surgeons diploma, when a certain length of service in the army or navy entitled them all or nearly all the privileges external to the college or company.36

In order to assess the background, training and competency of would-be naval surgeons, the board in charge of the naval medical service would conduct viva voce examinations. No practical demonstration of surgical skills was required. If judged satisfactory, ‘candidates received a letter addressed to the’ Company of Surgeons (formerly the Company of Barbers and Surgeons), ‘requesting that they

be examined in their competence in surgery’.37 The Company of Surgeons ‘was the professional gatekeeper for naval surgical positions and apprenticeships’,38 and

had the right to license surgeons for the navy, army, and [British] East India Company ... Having passed the examination in surgery, the applicant had to take another in physic. Until 1799 this was conducted by the physician of Greenwich Hospital ...

The examiners’ ability to judge an applicant’s competence ... was not based on lengthy enquiry, for the oral examinations in physic and surgery, though testing, seldom lasted more than an hour ... the occasion was one of dignified informality ...

Once qualified, the new recruit received from the Board his certificate and warrant, then awaited his first posting.39

‘When transportation to Australia started, the supervision and management of ... medical arrangements and surgeons was in the hands of the quaintly named Commissioners of Sick and Wounded, a body noted neither for its energy nor its effectiveness.’40

As surgeon on board the Sirius, George Worgan’s duties would most likely have consisted of visiting the sick twice a day, presenting a daily sick list to the captain, organising a daily sick muster in order to treat minor injuries and ailments, and keeping a log of his activities. These duties were outlined in the Regulations and Instructions Relating to His Majesty’s Service at Sea.41

Naval pay ‘was around half that paid by merchantmen, and lower than that paid to a farm labourer. Astonishingly, it had been set in 1653 and was not to be increased until April 1797.’42 R. Campbell observed in 1747: ‘The salary of a surgeon of the navy is but inconsiderable, that is, the pay he immediately receives from the Crown is but small.’43

Compared with that of their army counterparts, the pay of naval surgeons was poor. Army surgeons were automatically employed as commissioned officers with the rank of Captain; they earned 10–12s a day (reckoned in today’s monetary values, approximately A$55–67),44 and were guaranteed retirement on half-pay.

38 Rosen, Australia’s Oldest House, p. 15.
40 Brooke and Brandon, Bound for Botany Bay, p. 190.
41 See Brockliss et al., Nelson’s Surgeon, p. 6.
43 Campbell, The London Tradesman, p. 56.
44 Currency conversion using the National Archives; Universal Currency Converter.
Contrastingly, naval surgeons were ranked as Warrant Officers; they were paid a flat salary of 3s a day (reckoned in today’s monetary values, approximately A$18). This represents one-third to one-quarter the salary of an army surgeon. Only the senior 320 surgeons were eligible for retirement on half-pay. To add insult to injury, ‘surgeons had to purchase their own’ medical equipment ‘and medicines, the latter supplied at high prices by the Navy Stock Company, an offshoot of the London Society of Apothecaries’.46

Service as a naval surgeon was not, however, without its financial enticements.

Even if the … pay … was poor, it was supplemented … by various ‘extras’. To begin with, every surgeon received a supplementary lump sum, known as Queen Anne’s Free Gift, which varied from £16 to £62 per annum dependent on the size of the ship and whether the country was at peace or war. In addition … the surgeon received 2d. a year from each man on board from his annual contribution to the Chatham Chest [a charitable foundation supported by a charge of 6d per month on the wages of every man in the navy], and a further £5 per annum for every 100 men treated for venereal disease. This was intended to cover the cost of medicines, but on large ships could be a serious boost to income. Moreover … medical officers lucky enough to be based on shore had the opportunity to moonlight by building up a civilian practice. Finally, as the officers and crew were entitled to share the sale value of any enemy vessels captured at sea, on a sliding scale according to rank, the surgeon … could look forward to a modest amount of prize money.51

Naval surgeons were usually well educated (at least according to the standards of the late eighteenth century).

Many recruits … enjoyed a sound introduction to modern and classical languages and literature. Otherwise so many could not have [written so articulately, as did surgeon George Worgan, or] gone on to publish their observations and experiences …

Most … [navy] surgeons … served the customary three-to-five year apprenticeship with a surgeon … in order to learn the medical ropes,

45 See Brockliss et al., *Nelson’s Surgeon*, p. 15.
46 Ibid., p. 15.
47 Reckoned in today’s monetary values, £16–62 is approximately £1000–3900 (approximately A$1800–6900).
48 Reckoned in today’s monetary values, 2d is approximately 52d (approximately A$0.89).
49 Reckoned in today’s monetary values, 6d is approximately £2 (approximately A$4).
50 Reckoned in today’s monetary values, £5 is approximately £314 (approximately A$560).
51 Brockliss et al., *Nelson’s Surgeon*, p. 24. See also Appendix F, Volume 2 of this publication.
a move that would easily have cost their parents the not-insignificant sum of £50 to £100,\textsuperscript{52} or even more if the practitioner was a fashionable London doctor.

[This] ... was not usually, however, the sum of their studies ... a large proportion of [army] ... surgeons spent a further one or more years at the burgeoning medical schools in London, Edinburgh, and Dublin ... Navy surgeons ... do not seem to have done so in such great numbers as their army counterparts.

... [T]he cost to the family of sending a son to medical school was again appreciable ... most six-month courses would cost 20 guineas.\textsuperscript{53} When account is taken of the cost of [medical] instruments, books, clothes, and entertainment, the average medical student could expect to spend £200 a year,\textsuperscript{54} much the same as a young gentleman at Oxford or Cambridge ... Their parents had clearly marked them out for a medical career, invested heavily in their training, and presumably sanctioned or even intended their entry into the service ...

The choice between the army and navy must have depended largely on family connections ... Where a surgeon had made the decision off his own bat, then his preference was probably determined by people whom he encountered during his education.\textsuperscript{55}

In 1747, R. Campbell wrote: ‘Thus I have said as much of surgery as is sufficient to give the parent a tolerable notion how to prepare his son for such a charge. It appears, that it requires a good genius and liberal education, which can be attained but by great expense.’\textsuperscript{56}

Of course, once literacy had been acquired, the possibility for self-education emerged (if so inclined, even a tradesman’s son would have had access to the world of novels, plays, history and foreign literary masterworks in translation).\textsuperscript{57}

There can be little doubt that surgeon George Worgan was well educated. The quality of prose in his letters and journal attests to this fact. His letters and journal give clear insights into his personality and professionalism, and show him to be an intelligent, articulate man with keen observational powers and a pleasant wit.

\textsuperscript{52} Reckoned in today’s monetary values, £50–100 is approximately £3100–6300 (approximately A$5600–11 100).

\textsuperscript{53} Reckoned in today’s monetary values, 20 guineas is approximately £1300 (approximately A$2300).

\textsuperscript{54} Reckoned in today’s monetary values, £200 is approximately £12 600 (approximately A$22 000).

\textsuperscript{55} Brockliss et al., \textit{Nelson’s Surgeon}, pp. 20–3.

\textsuperscript{56} Campbell, \textit{The London Tradesman}, p. 57.

\textsuperscript{57} See Jordan, \textit{The Convict Theatres of Early Australia 1788–1840}, p. 90.
What Did George Worgan Look Like?

No portrait of George Worgan exists. There is, however, a picture drawn in 1789—that is, two years before George Worgan returned from Sydney Cove to London—which appears as an engraved vignette on the title page of Captain John Hunter’s (1737–1821) *An Historical Journal of the Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island.* The vignette depicts Governor Phillip (1738–1814), John White (1756?–1832), the colony’s principal surgeon, and George Worgan (among others) visiting a young Aboriginal woman who is recovering from an illness (Plate 48). The event portrayed transpired during an expedition to the Hawkesbury River, in July 1789.

The vignette is based on a sketch drawn by John Hunter (Second Captain of the *Sirius*). Of Hunter’s artistic skills, John White wrote: ‘Captain Hunter has a pretty turn for drawing.’ (‘The experienced and respected captain Hunter was regarded as a “man devoid of stiff pride … most accomplish’d in his profession”.’)

It is reasonable to conclude that Hunter’s original sketch, and the vignette that was based on it, contains reasonable likenesses of the individuals represented—even though the original sketch was subsequently ‘copied and reworked by a professional artist in order to provide’ an improved and more suitable ‘basis for the engraver’.

Unfortunately, John Hunter does not specifically identify each of the men represented in the vignette. We know that the expedition comprised Governor Phillip, Captain David Collins, John Hunter, marine First Lieutenant George [John] Johnston, John White, George Worgan, Newton Digby Fowell (1768–90; a ‘gregarious, optimistic and well-connected’ midshipman on the *Sirius*, ‘destined for … a fatal encounter with the Batavia fever’), and marines. Captain Hunter described the expedition

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58 J. Hunter, *An Historical Journal of the Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island, with the Discoveries which Have Been Made in New South Wales and in the Southern Ocean, Since the Publication of Phillip’s Voyage, Compiled from the Official Papers; Including the Journals of Governors Phillip and King, and of Lieut. Ball; And the Voyages from the First Sailing of the Sirius in 1787, to the Return of that Ship’s Company to England in 1792* (London: John Stockdale, 1793).


63 Groom, *First Fleet Artist*, p. 11.

as comprising ‘the governor, Captain Collins (the judge-advocate), Captain Johnston, of the marines, Mr. White, principal surgeon of the settlement, Mr. Worgan, Mr. Fowell, and myself, from the Sirius, and two men, all armed with musquets’.65

Contemporaneous portraits reveal that Governor Phillip ‘had a high forehead, a long nose, dark eyes and an olive complexion. He had a slight figure with sloping shoulders’.66 In Plate 48, the long nose and sloping shoulders of the figure standing second from the right suggest that this may be Governor Phillip. The figure’s ‘appearance and bearing … suggest’ calm, dignity and authority; in short, ‘sensibility—a key feature of the Enlightenment period. It was an attitude reflected in moderation and rationality. Discussion was preferred to disputation, conversation to controversy and politeness to pedantry. In polite society at least, machismo was vulgar and unfashionable. It was certainly not Phillip’s style.’67

Surgeon John White (seated) ministers to the Aboriginal woman. White ‘was considered a conscientious and humane man, whose care … was attentive and as caring as was possible in the circumstances’.68 (White’s interest in the Aboriginal race extended to his adopting Nan-bar-ray, an Indigenous boy from Sydney.) 69

The figure standing between the tree and the back of the shelter—that is, the figure with the brimmed hat standing third from the right/third from the left—may be George Worgan. Like that of his seated medical colleague, surgeon John White, Worgan’s gaze is intently fixed on the Aboriginal woman. As far as can be seen, the build of Worgan’s shoulders and upper arms is similarly muscular to that of surgeon John White; for both surgeons, this masculinity not only appears to be greater than that of their colleagues, but is also consistent with the strength required by an eighteenth-century surgeon.70

The figure standing behind the shelter (second from the left) whose hat has no brim, and whose attention is fixed upon Governor Phillip, may be Captain David Collins. Collins’ hat resembles one that is depicted in an engraving of a similar, if not the same, event, published in 1793 in Michael Adams’ (fl. 1793) The New

66 Ibid., p. 6.
68 Parker, Arthur Phillip, p. 68.
70 See ‘The Life of a Surgeon’, above.
In the Adams engraving, not only is Collins specifically identified, he is also depicted as the only member of the party wearing a hat with no brim.

In the vignette (Plate 48), the person standing behind the shelter on the extreme left, looking into the distance and supporting his gun on his shoulder, may be John Hunter. In the foreground on the right, John Johnston, in marine uniform (presenting his back to us), looks on.

Plate 48 Unknown artist, engraved from a sketch by John Hunter (1737–1821): Governor Phillip, John White and George Worgan (?) Visiting an Aboriginal Woman, Who is Recovering from Illness.


John Hunter described the event depicted in the vignette; he records that near Pittwater:

[O]ur tents etc were no sooner up than we went to visit our young female friend, whom we now found in a little bark hut upon the beach …

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71 M. Adams, The New Royal System of Universal Geography. Containing a Complete, Full, Particular, and Accurate History and Description of all the Several Parts of the Whole World … Including Every Interesting Discovery and Circumstance in the Narratives of Captain Cook’s Voyages Round the World. Together with all the Recent Discoveries Made in the Pelew Islands, New Holland, New South Wales, Botany-Bay, Port-Jackson, Norfolk-Island … Carefully Written and Compiled from the Late Journals of the Voyages and Travels of Captain Phillip, King, Ball, Hunter, White … The Whole Forming a Complete, Authentic, Copious, and Real New Geographical Library (London: Alexander Hogg, 1793), Plate facing p. 19.
She had with her a female child about two years old and as tiny a creature of that age as I ever saw, but upon our approach, the night being cold and rainy and the child terrified exceedingly, she was laying with her elbows and knees on the ground covering the child from our sight with her body, probably to shelter it from the wet, but I rather think on account of its terrors.

On our speaking to her, she raised herself up and sit on the ground with her knees up to her chin and her heels under her, and was at that moment I think the most miserable spectacle in the human shape I ever beheld. The little infant could not be prevailed on to look up, it lay with its face upon the ground and its hand over its eyes. We supplied her … with birds, fish and fuel to keep her fire in with. We pulled a quantity of grass to make her a comfortable bed and covered her little miserable hut so as to keep out the weather.72

George Worgan makes no mention of this event in his journal. On Monday, 28 April 1788—a little more than 14 months prior to the event depicted in the vignette—Worgan expressed his hope that he might obtain Governor Phillip’s ‘[p]ermission to accompany him’ in a proposed future expedition.73 The intention of the proposed expedition was to investigate ‘very high mountainous land, which … the Governor means to visit’.74 Forty-five days later, on Thursday, 12 June 1788, Worgan writes: ‘The Governor intends to visit these mountains shortly, and i have his permission to accompany him in this excursion.’75 The proposed expedition never took place. Nevertheless, Worgan was a member of several expeditions, including to the Hawkesbury River, Broken Bay and the upper Nepean (where the Worgan River was named after him).76

Worgan does not mention his participation in any expedition comprising the personnel depicted in the engraved vignette. As the version of Worgan’s journal that has survived is not his ‘fuller & more accurate’77 version, we have no record written by Worgan that describes his involvement in the July 1789 expedition to the Hawkesbury River. It may be that Captain John Hunter’s 1789 sketch, subsequently transformed into the engraved vignette (Plate 48) on the title page of his An Historical Journal of the Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island, contains the only known representation of George Worgan. Of the seven men depicted in the engraving, however, Governor Phillip is the only person who can be identified with any certainty.

72 Quoted in Egan, Buried Alive, p. 124.
73 See Worgan, Journal of a First Fleet Surgeon by George B. Worgan, p. 43.
74 Ibid., p. 43.
75 Ibid., p. 10.
The subject matter of the vignette shown in Plate 48 is strikingly similar to that of an engraving found in Michael Adams’ (fl. 1793) *The New Royal System of Universal Geography*; this engraving is entitled ‘Captains Hunter, Collins & Johnston, with Governor Phillip, Surgeon White, etc Visiting a Distressed Female Native of New South Wales, at a Hut near Port Jackson’ (Plate 49).

![Plate 49](Image)

**Plate 49** Unknown artist: *Captains Hunter, Collins & Johnston, with Governor Phillip, Surgeon White, etc Visiting a Distressed Female Native of New South Wales, at a Hut Near Port Jackson.*

Using the order of personnel listed in the title as a means to identify those depicted, the engraving depicts (from right to left):

1. an unidentified person presenting his back to us, walking into the bushland; this person holds a gun in his left hand, and may be guarding the party
2. Captain Hunter (second on the right, the first whose face is visible) holding the barrel of a gun
3. Captain Collins (wearing a hat with no brim) wielding an axe

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4. Captain Johnston supporting a gun on his left shoulder

5. Governor Phillip standing in the foreground; his right hand is placed upon his left, and his gun leans against his torso

6. Surgeon White (on the left, standing behind the shelter) looking down upon the Aboriginal woman.

Perhaps George Worgan, who, when in the company of such colonial luminaries was not regarded as being of equivalent importance, is represented by the title ‘etc’.

**George Worgan’s Father, Dr John Worgan**

It is reasonable to assume that George gained a knowledge of (if not also a passion for) music from his father, Dr John Worgan. Dr Worgan, having sanctioned his son’s entry into the navy, enjoyed a reputation and abilities as a professional musician that would have enabled him to earn an income that was more than sufficient to pay for George’s medical training. Dr Worgan was organist and composer at Vauxhall Gardens between 1751 and 1761, and later, a composer there between 1770 and 1774. At Vauxhall Gardens, Dr Worgan had to compete ‘with fireworks, tightrope dancers, and parachuting balloonists for his audience’s attention’.

John Worgan was born on Monday, 29 May 1724. Approximately five months later, on Thursday, 2 November, he was baptised at the church of St Botolph, Bishopsgate. Following the death of both his parents, John (a musical child prodigy) was educated by, and learned the organ from, one of his older brothers, James (1713–53), who was a friend of Händel.

James was … organist at both St Botolph Aldgate and St Dunstan-in-the-East. He has been cited as the first organist at Vauxhall Gardens, but there is conflicting evidence: Charles Burney asserted that Thomas Gladwin was the first organist, from about 1737–38, when the organ was installed, to about 1745, when [James] Worgan was appointed.

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80 Isacoff, *A Natural History of the Piano*, p. 61.


82 See ibid., Grid Reference Go, Reference Number 29 (on the eastern side of Mincing Lane, off the southern side of Tower Street, near to the south-western side of the Tower of London).
James’s [musically gifted] sister Mary (bap. London, 23 April 1717—after 1768) succeeded James as organist at St Dunstan-in-the-East, being elected on 11 May 1753.\(^{84}\)

Mary Worgan was also a composer. During the mid-eighteenth century, her song ‘The Dying Nightingale’ (1740) was extremely popular. Its anonymous lyric, ‘Set to Musick by Miss Worgan’,\(^{85}\) includes a voice that purports to be that of the nightingale.\(^{86}\) In the last verse, following a farewell to Arcadia … the nightingale offers her mate the bittersweet reflection that although she is dying and he too may soon succumb to the ‘supream Decree of Fate’ … there is no delight in lingering where their lyrical gifts are no longer valued:

Yet let it not disturb our peace,
These times no more to see,
When hooting owls, & gabbling geese,
Are priz’d as much as we.

What has seemed a sedate neoclassical pastoral metamorphoses into … allegory. Musical pedants (‘hootings owls’) and those who flock to new musical trends (‘gabbling geese’) have mobbed the cultural field previously occupied by those musical artists (nightingales) with a refined, educated, and historical sense of music’s social purpose and its affective potential. The lyricist uses the ostensibly apolitical neoclassical pastoral to launch a subversive attack on the current direction of musical aesthetics.\(^{87}\)

On the strength of this song alone, it is reasonable to assume that Mary Worgan was not only a musician who knew her own mind, but also one who possessed unswerving integrity in relation to her philosophy of musical art.

Like his older brother James, another of John Worgan’s older brothers, Charles Worgan (bap. Thursday, 14 February 1726), was also a musician. Charles, a merchant, settled in Port Royal, Jamaica, where he was an organist.\(^{88}\)

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84 P. McGairl, ‘Worgan’ (n.d.).
87 Ibid., p. 146.
Following tuition by his brother James, John Worgan studied under the composer and organist Thomas Roseingrave (1688–1766), who was a passionate advocate of the scintillating keyboard music of Domenico Scarlatti. John Worgan also studied under the Italian composer and violin virtuoso Francesco Geminiani (1687–1762). Geminiani, who came to London in 1714, had studied under the famed violinist and composer Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713) and the celebrated composer Alessandro Scarlatti (1660–1725).  

John Worgan gained a Bachelor of Music degree from Cambridge University (at St John's College) in 1748. Five years later, on Saturday, 1 September 1753, he married Sarah Mackelcan at the Church of St Peter le Poor, London (Sarah was a music pupil of John Worgan's older brother James).

John Worgan was slightly less tall than 'the common standard, and somewhat squarely … framed'; he was 'dark, handsome and expressive'. In late April 1780, The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser described John Worgan as a 'gentleman of the most respectable character … and of the first rank in the profession of music'.

In 1755, John Worgan published his Trio for Three Voices. With Instruments. Sung by Miss Burchell, Miss Stevenson, and Mr. Lowe in Vaux Hall Gardens. The publication inscription contains details of Worgan's address at the time: 'Printed for the author and sold at his house in Millman Street, facing St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row, Holborn.'

Eight years later, Mortimer's London Directory of 1763 erroneously gives John Worgan's address as St John's Square, near Clerkenwell Green (in the then northern outskirts of the city). The Public Advertiser of Tuesday, 27 March 1764, however, provides (by not confusing the whereabouts of the relevant St John's) a correct address: 'Mr. Worgan’s House, facing St. John’s Chapel, Millman-street, Bedford Row, Holborn'.

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90 See Bacon, 'Memoir of the Life and Works of John Worgan', p. 114, fn. 1.
91 See 'Entry P2119', in Tom Hodgkinson's Ancestors. See also Bowles, Bowles’s Reduced New Pocket Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, Grid Reference Gn, Reference Number 69 (on the northern side of Broad Street, near the intersection of Throgmorton Street).
92 Bacon, 'Memoir of the Life and Works of John Worgan', p. 131. See also '16.—S. Andrew Undershaft', in C. W. Pearce, Notes on Old London City Churches. Their Organs, Organists & Musical Associations (London: The Vincent Music Company, 1907?), p. 82, fn.
96 The Public Advertiser, 27 March 1764. Quoted in Handel Reference Database 1764.
organist of St John’s Chapel, Millman Street, Bedford Row). Millman Street lay one block south-east from the Foundling Hospital (it seems that Millman Street was regarded as insignificant enough to warrant its exclusion from any London map until 1795). In Millman Street, John Worgan lived at number 7. The Public Advertiser describes John Worgan’s house as ‘facing St. John’s Chapel, Millman-street’. It is reasonable, therefore, to propose that the Worgan family lived in a house situated on the eastern side of Millman Street, at the southern end, presumably either near, or on the corner of, Chapel Street.

It seems that Dr John Worgan called 7 Millman Street home for approximately 20 years (in 1780, Dr Worgan’s son Joseph [1768–1825] enrolled at Eton College; as part of Joseph’s particulars, the Eton College Register records Dr John Worgan’s address as ‘Milman Street, London’).

There is a discrepancy between the address of the Worgan family as given in the 1780 Eton College Register and that published three years earlier in The Daily Advertiser of Monday, 13 January 1777. Announcing the death of Dr Worgan’s second wife, Eleanor, The Daily Advertiser remarks:

On Saturday [11 January 1777] at her house at Rathbone-Place, Mrs. Worgan, wife of Dr. Worgan, one of the most amiable of her sex. If the affectionate wife, the tender parent, the good Christian, the sincere friend, and agreeable companion, were ever united in one character, they most happily were in this lady’s; consequently her family sustain a real loss, and her friends must ever remember her with regret.

The mention of Rathbone Place in The Daily Advertiser suggests that the Worgan family had left their previous address at 7 Millman Street, Holborn, by late 1776 (at the very least). If The Daily Advertiser is correct, John Worgan and his family did not reside in Millman Street in 1780. For some unknown reason, the Eton College Register entry is incorrect.

99 See McGairl, ‘Worgan’.
100 See The Public Advertiser, 27 March 1764. Quoted in Handel Reference Database 1764.
101 On Cary’s map, St John’s Chapel is designated with the number 52.
103 The Daily Advertiser, 13 January 1777, No. 14375, p. 1.
The author is aware of three sources that associate Dr John Worgan with an address in Berners (Berner or Berner’s) Street (off the northern side of Oxford Street), London:

1. Mollie Gillen claims that Dr John Worgan ‘had lived in Berners Street, London, not far from the residence of James Bradley’ (1693–1762), astronomer royal from 1742 until his death), ‘a friend of Evan Nepean’ (1752–1822) and ‘later under-secretary at the India Board, whose brother Henry became superintendent of the Dunkirk hulk at Plymouth’ (unfortunately, Gillen does not cite her sources).

2. An assertion made by Alec Worgan (a descendant of one of George Bouchier Worgan’s brothers). Regrettably, Alec Worgan gives no evidence to substantiate his assertion.

3. A single-page printed document in Brian Jack Barrow’s possession, comprising a map (taken from Google Maps, dated Monday, 15 March 2010) showing ‘Berners St Westminster, London W1 UK’. The document contains the following handwritten statement at the bottom of the page: ‘The Worgan family lived in Berners St / within walking distance of the Haymarket / shop, Longman & Broderip, where the / piano may have been purchased.’ The statement is signed underneath with the initials ‘BB’—that is, Brian Barrow. No late eighteenth or early nineteenth-century evidence links Dr John Worgan with an address in Berners Street.

In 1746, Berners Street was the short, first named street westward from Rathbone Place. On the northern side of Oxford Street, travelling westward from Rathbone Place, streets and entrances were:

104 See Bowles, Bowles’s Reduced New Pocket Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, Grid Reference Cm. See also Cary, Cary’s New and Accurate Plan of London and Westminster, Map Reference 27.
105 See A Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, Map Section: left-hand quadrant; northernmost extent Mary le Bon and southernmost extent Tothill Fields.
107 Evan Nepean was involved with arrangements made for the dispatch of the First Fleet, and the administration of the newly established penal colony in New South Wales during its early years. See V. Parsons, Nepean, Evan (1752–1822), in Australian Dictionary of Biography Online (Canberra: National Centre of Biography, The Australian National University) [First published in Australian Dictionary of Biography, Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 1967], Vol. 2.
109 See ‘Close Proximity’, in Appendix B, Volume 2 of this publication.
110 Brian Jack Barrow is an antiques restorer, fortepiano aficionado and current owner of the Longman & Broderip square piano dated 1785/86? discussed in Appendix B, Volume 2 of this publication.
1. Rathbone Place
2. a relatively long, narrow entrance to a stable yard
3. Marybone Pass (a narrow lane linking Oxford Street with uncultivated land)
4. a wide unnamed entrance to the same uncultivated land accessed by Marybone Pass
5. Berners Street.111

Twenty-one years later, in 1767, Berner Street was the first named street westward from (and running parallel with) Rathbone Place.112 Berner Street and Rathbone Place were linked (halfway down their length) by a relatively wide unnamed cross street,113 making it possible to describe Berner Street as being ‘off Rathbone Place’ (ca 20 years later, during the mid-1780s, Dr John Worgan resided at 40 Rathbone Place).

By 1775, Berners Street had become the second street westward from Rathbone Place. On the northern side of Oxford Street, travelling westward from Rathbone Place, named streets and entrances were

1. Rathbone Place
2. Newmans Street
3. Berners Street.114

In 1775, Berners Street and Rathbone Place were no longer connected by a cross street; consequently, Berners Street could not be described as being ‘off Rathbone Place’.

In 1795, Berners Street was the third street westward from Rathbone Place. On the northern side of Oxford Street, travelling westward from Rathbone Place, named streets and entrances were

1. Rathbone Place
2. Perrys Place
3. Newmans Street
4. Berners Street.115

111 See ‘Berners St.’, in Rocque, A Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, and Borough of Southwark, [B] (seq. 7), Map Reference I-12/B-7.
112 See ‘Berner Str.’, in A Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, Map Section: left-hand quadrant; northernmost extent Mary le Bon and southernmost extent Tothill Fields.
113 See ibid.
In 1795, no cross street connected Berners Street with Rathbone Place; Berners Street could not be regarded as being ‘off Rathbone Place’.

Between 1754 and 1768, nine children were born to John and Sarah at their home in Millman Street. Of these nine children, George Bouchier Worgan was the second son and third child.

In June 1768, ‘John divorced Sarah for adultery’ (committed with some of John’s music students: ‘Mr. Rowe, Mr. Langshaw, and others’). As a result of her infidelity, Sarah communicated ‘to her husband a disgraceful and disagreeable disease’). A few years later, John married Eleanor Baston(?), with whom he had two children, Thomas Danvers (1773–1832) and Michael (bur. Friday, 17 November 1775). Following the death of Eleanor in 1777, he married Martha Cooke (d. Monday, 11 May 1812), a widow, on Saturday, 12 June 1779.

After gaining his Doctorate in Music from Cambridge University in 1775, Dr Worgan ‘virtually retired from public life, apart from his [extensive] duties as an organist’.

In 1823, Richard Mackenzie Bacon, in his ‘Memoir of the Life and Works of John Worgan, Mus.D’, provided the following summary:

Dr. Worgan married three times. By his first wife he had nine children, of whom three sons [including George Bouchier] and two daughters are now living. By his second wife he had two sons, of whom one [Thomas Danvers] is living. By his third wife, who was a widow when he married her, he had no offspring.

Dr John Worgan died on Friday, 20 August 1790, aged 66, ‘at 22 (now 65) Gower Street’. Gower Street, off Bedford Square, is approximately four blocks to the north-east of Dr Worgan’s second-last address, Rathbone Place.

Plate 50 shows the house in Gower Street in which Dr Worgan died (the entrance is the door on the left). The house currently serves as the Ridgemount Hotel.

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116 See McGairl, ‘Worgan’.
118 Ibid.
119 McGairl, ‘Worgan’.
120 Ibid.
121 Bacon, ‘Memoir of the Life and Works of John Worgan’, p. 133.
Plate 50 Dr John Worgan’s house, in which he died on 20 August 1790.

Source: Photo by the author.

When ill, the middle class ‘did not go to the hospitals (which were for the poor) but were tended to at home and visited there by a physician’. Burney provides us with information concerning Dr John Worgan’s demise. He says that Dr Worgan

had the misfortune to labour under two dreadful calamities: a bad wife and the stone [that is, bladder stones]. He got rid of the former, after great mortifications and expense, by divorce; but in too early wishing to abridge his sufferings from the latter, he lost his life in the torture of an operation.124

123 Riding, Mid-Georgian Britain 1740–69, p. 73.
Techniques for the surgical treatment of bladder stones did not change from the 1500s through to the mid-nineteenth century. An anonymous sixteenth-century commentator remarked: ‘The cure itself is something horrible, grave, and perilous. The mind recoiled at the thought of so frightful a remedy.’ During the eighteenth century, 80 per cent of patients who endured the excruciating procedure for the removal of bladder stones died; a prayer often uttered was: ‘Lord, take me not through the bladder.’ Because the malady was so agonising, many people were willing to take a chance that the operation would be successful (such as Dr John Worgan), and this despite the high risk of death either during the operation itself or resulting from ensuing septicemia. Most surgeons hesitated to perform the operation because of the high mortality rate. Eleven people were required for the procedure: the surgeon, his assistant, plus nine people to immobilise the patient (two to hold the right leg, two to hold the left leg, two to hold the right arm, two to hold the left arm, and one to hold the head).

Dr Worgan was buried on Tuesday, 31 August 1790, 11 days after his death, in the church of St Andrew Undershaft (St Mary Axe) opposite the left side of the communion table. During the late sixteenth century, the church of St Mary Axe was demolished, and its parish merged with that of St Andrew Undershaft (Plate 51). At Dr John Worgan’s funeral service, one of his favourite pupils, the musical genius Charles Wesley, jr (1757–1834)—the eldest son of Charles Wesley (1707–88), who was the younger brother of the founder of Methodism, John Wesley (1703–91)—played the ‘Dead March’ from Händel’s oratorio ‘Saul’ on the organ. On the same day Dr Worgan’s body was interred, his will was proven.

On Saturday, 13 October 1906, the memory of Dr John Worgan was honoured by the unveiling of a brass plaque in the church of St Andrew Undershaft (Plate 52). Expenses associated with the plaque and its installation were met by

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126 This statistic, and ensuing information concerning bladder stones, comes from an engaging public lecture presented by Dr Alan Turner at the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons, London, on Friday, 15 April 2011.
the London section of the Incorporated Society of Musicians.\textsuperscript{130} The unveiling took place within the context of ‘a special choral service, in which several of Worgan’s compositions were sung’.\textsuperscript{131}

 Appropriately, the plaque is situated on a wall immediately next to the treble-side back of an organ made by that great genius of English organ builders Renatus Harris (ca 1652–1724) (the organ was opened on Thursday, 31 May 1696, when the Reverend Dr Towerson preached a sermon on vocal and instrumental music).\textsuperscript{132}

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\textbf{Plate 51 The Church of St Andrew Undershaft.}

Source: Photo by the author.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{130} See ‘Appendix: XVI. S. Andrew Undershaft’, in Pearce, \textit{Notes on Old London City Churches}, p. 237.
\item \textsuperscript{131} Ibid., p. 238.
\item \textsuperscript{132} See ‘16.—S. Andrew Undershaft’, in ibid., p. 80.
\end{itemize}
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Plate 52 Brass plaque commemorating Dr John Worgan in the Church of St Andrew Undershaft.

Source: Photo by the author.

The inscription on the plaque reads:

To the glory of God and in memory of
John Worgan Mus. D. Cantab.
Organist of this church from 1749 to 1790
Buried near this spot.
This brass is erected by the
Incorporated Society of Musicians London 1906

Of Dr John Worgan’s five surviving sons, three became professional musicians:

2. James Worgan (bap. London, Saturday, 27 November 1762 – d. after 1801)
3. Thomas Danvers Worgan (1774–1832).

Dr John Worgan appears to have paid heed to the advice provided by R. Campbell in 1747 concerning a parent’s response to the educative needs of a musically gifted child: ‘If a parent cannot make his son a gentle-man, and finds, that he has got an itch of music, it is much the best way to allot him entirely to that study.’ Unfortunately, not much is known about the lives of Richard, James and Thomas Danvers Worgan.

About 1795, James Worgan compiled three volumes of organ music by his illustrious father.

133 Campbell, The London Tradesman, p. 93.
Thomas Danvers Worgan called himself ‘Professor of Music’ and taught and lectured in London in addition to composing music and writing essays. His three collections Vocal Sonatinas forming a Coalition of Vocal and Instrumental Harmony (1816–1820) include arrangements as well as his own compositions (rounds, canons, glees etc.). He also composed a motet in ten vocal and 35 instrumental parts, The Heroes’ Welcome (1824), and published Rouge et noire de musique, or Harmonic Pastimes, described as ‘Games of Cards constructed on the Principles of Music’ (1807). He published three collections of ‘Essays in Poetry and Music’, as Monthly Minstrelsy (1807) and The Composer or Contrapuntist, with Explanatory Notes (1826). A further collection of essays, The Musical Reformer (1829), included a list of his own works (published and unpublished) and some of his father’s. (All of his printed works were published in London.)

George Worgan’s Father, Dr John Worgan, the Harpsichordist

Charles Burney mentions Dr John Worgan’s ‘reverence’ for the works of Domenico Scarlatti. ‘[H]e became a great collector of [Scarlatti’s] … pieces, some of which he had been honoured with from Madrid by the author himself … few have now perseverance sufficient to vanquish their peculiar difficulties of execution.’

In 1752, Dr Worgan obtained a licence, lasting 14 years, allowing him sole printing rights of several new keyboard sonatas by Scarlatti; a second licence was issued in 1771.

The keyboard sonatas of Scarlatti are consummately virtuosic works. In England, from 1738 through to the end of the eighteenth century, Scarlatti’s sonatas were not only immensely popular (to the extent of having a cult following), but also the most difficult keyboard works in print, representing the benchmark for skillful execution at the keyboard. (Oddly, in Italy, ‘Domenico Scarlatti

135 McGairl, ‘Worgan’.  
was hardly more than a name. Little enough of his music was circulating there in manuscript and nothing of his was published in Italy during the eighteenth century.)\textsuperscript{140} Charles Burney wrote of his admiration for ‘the original fancy, boldness, delicacy & fire of Domenico Scarlatti [sonatas], so different from all [keyboard music] … before & since!’\textsuperscript{141}

Dr John Worgan’s technique, musical intelligence and style of harpsichord playing must have suited the uncompromising technical and artistic demands made by Scarlatti’s keyboard music. It is reported that as a harpsichordist, Dr Worgan evidenced a ‘bold and full manner of playing’.\textsuperscript{142} The evaluation of Worgan’s playing as ‘bold’ may refer to any one or more of several performative issues, ranging from, for example, musico-rhetorical gesturalism, through improvised ornamental passagework, to harmonic adventurousness within the context of improvisation. Worgan’s ‘boldness’ may also be associated with his performances of Scarlatti’s unpredictable, evocative and astonishingly imaginative keyboard sonatas. That Dr Worgan revealed a ‘full manner’ of playing suggests that he used an Italian continuo style,\textsuperscript{143} which at the time was characteristically manifested by a preponderance of thick chordal textures and rhythmically prominent patterns. The remark also suggests that Worgan’s tone was inherently rich, indicating that he knew how to draw high-quality sounds from the instrument.

In 1772, the \textit{London Evening Post} of Saturday, 29 February – Tuesday, 3 March described Dr Worgan as a ‘most excellent original harpsichord-composer and performer’.\textsuperscript{144}

In 1823, Richard Mackenzie Bacon published the following anecdote related to Dr Worgan’s expertise as a harpsichordist:

\begin{itemize}
\item[143] Continuo (basso continuo, thoroughbass) is ‘a largely practical discipline of music … in which’ a keyboardist—or within some contexts, a player of a strummed instrument such as a guitar or theorbo, or a bowed string instrument such as a viola da gamba or violoncello—plays (or ‘realises’) ‘chords … encoded in figured-bass notation … One of the most salient features of thoroughbass is that it asks us to think of music in terms of a series of successive chords. These chords are encoded in a notation of Arabic numerals … that indicate their interval structure above a … continuo bass line.’ T. Christensen, ‘Thoroughbass as Music Theory’, in T. Christensen, R. Gjerdingen, G. Sanguinetti and R. Lutz, \textit{Partimento and Continuo Playing in Theory and in Practice} (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2010), pp. 9–10.
\item[144] ‘To all Harpsichord Performers’ [Advertisement], \textit{London Evening Post}, 29 February – 3 March 1772, No. 6889.
\end{itemize}
Soon after [Giovanni] Manzoli [1720–82], the [castrato] singer, had arrived in England [ca 1764–65], he was invited to a musical meeting, where several eminent performers displayed their powers at the harpsichord. Manzoli listened to them with polite attention, and complimented them on their exertions. It so happened that Dr. Worgan [then about 24 years old], who was present, was the last person requested to go to the harpsichord. He had scarcely touched the instrument when Manzoli, who sat by the fire at some distance, turned towards him with a look expressive of surprise and delight. As the Doctor proceeded in his performance, the Italian drew nearer and nearer the harpsichord; and at length, unable to repress his feelings, threw himself into the enchanter’s arms.

According to Richard Bacon, Dr Worgan’s ‘hands were delicately formed’ and ‘he deserved some credit for reaching octaves’. Dr Worgan’s small handspan, however, did not hinder the effectiveness of his playing, which was so overtly virtuosic that once, when Dr Worgan’s creative powers ‘stormed, an electrified listener exclaimed, “Zounds! the man has three hands”’. 

George Worgan’s Father, Dr John Worgan, the Organist

In London, between 1750 and 1850, of the 971 organists for whom documents survive, 71 percent were employed primarily as organists, although they usually had other employment, particularly as teachers ... the majority of organists worked for churches, cathedrals, or royal chapels.

Organists also performed in a few secular settings such as the ... [late eighteenth] century London pleasure gardens, Vauxhall and Ranelagh. Even London concerts sometimes employed organists. For example, Samuel Wesley [1766–1837] (the nephew of John Wesley ...) 

145 Charles Burney described Manzoli’s voice as ‘the most powerful and voluminous soprano that had been heard on our stage since the time of Farinelli’. Burney, A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period, Vol. 2, p. 868. During October and November 1771, Manzoli (aged 58) sang as primo uomo in W. A. Mozart’s ‘Ascanio in Alba’. See J. A. Rice, A Dispute Involving the Musico Giovanni Manzoli and Mozart’s Ascanio in Alba (n.d.).
146 Bacon, ‘Memoir of the Life and Works of John Worgan’, p. 121.
147 Ibid., p. 120.
148 Ibid., p. 120.
150 See ‘Ranelagh’, in ibid., Map Reference 50.
'received six guineas a night ... for playing the organ at the oratorio concerts at Covent Garden Theatre with an additional four guineas for playing a concerto 'between the Acts'.

Appointment to a position as a church organist had an implied tenure of office ... [Dismissal was usually] due to gross negligence of duties, never to musical inadequacy. [For example, in 1771 at Lincoln Cathedral] ... the organist was 'arraigned and reprovéd for playing one Anthem while Mr. Binns was singing another' and for 'insolence' ... in contrast to theatre musicians, whose association with the stage made them morally suspect, organists' association with religion enhanced their status and respectability, making them more eligible for private patronage as teachers.

Dr Worgan was something of a child prodigy. At the age of 11 (as an applicant for the post of organist at Christ Church Spitalfields), he was referred to as 'the ingenious Mr. Worgan'.

On Saturday, 8 April 1752 (almost a year and a half before his first marriage), Dr John Worgan was appointed as organist at the Church of St Andrew Undershaft (St Mary Axe). He remained the church’s organist until his death in 1790. (Church documents reveal that on Monday, 28 March 1785, Dr Worgan was censured because 'he very seldom attended, and ... the performance of his duties was very indifferent'.)

The organ in the Church of St Andrew Undershaft (Plate 53) is mentioned in the 12 questions forming Queries about St Paul’s Organ; this document was written by the organ builder Renatus Harris, or some of his friends, its aim being to disparage the knowledge and skill of a rival organ builder Bernard Smith (ca 1630–1708). The eighth and ninth queries read:
VIII. Whether there been’t organs in the City, lowder, sweeter, and of more variety than St Paul’s (which cost not more than one-third of the price) and particularly, whether Smith at the Temple has not outdone Smith of St Paul’s. And whether St Andrew Undershaft has not outdone them both?

IX. ‘Whether the open diapason of metal that speaks on the lower set of keys at St Andrew Undershaft be not a stop of extraordinary use and variety, and such as neither St Paul’s has or can have?’  

Plate 53 Organ by Renatus Harris in the Church of St Andrew Undershaft.

Source: Photo by the author.

On Monday, 14 May 1753 (only four months before his first marriage), the 29-year-old Dr Worgan was elected as the organist at the medieval Church of St

157 Quoted in ibid., p. 153.
Botolph, Aldgate\textsuperscript{158} (on the corner of Houndsditch and White Chapel Road),\textsuperscript{159} a job for which he was paid £25 a year.\textsuperscript{160} When Dr Worgan began his duties there, the organ at St Botolph’s would have been 48 years old. The organ was made by Renatus Harris, and dates from ca 1704–05 (Plate 54).

This instrument is now England’s oldest working church organ. Although older pipes and cases exist elsewhere, the organ of St Botolph’s contains the oldest collection of pipes in their original positions on their original wind chests.

The instrument was rebuilt in 1886, 1898 and 1966. Between 2005 and 2006, the organ was restored to its original ca 1704–05 condition, including the case (if he were alive today, Dr John Worgan would recognise the instrument immediately).

The pitch of the organ is $a^1 = 445.6$ Hz\textsuperscript{161} at 18$^\circ$C. Throughout the life of the instrument, this common seventeenth and eighteenth-century English church pitch has never been altered.

The organ is currently tuned according to Renatus Harris’s own tuning instructions, published as *Harris the Organ Makers Way of Tuning His Organs by Imperfect 5ths & True Octaves*, which appears as a postscript in Godfrey Keller’s (d. 1704) *A Compleat Method for Attaining to Play a Thorough Bass Upon Either Organ, Harpsichord, or Theorbo-Lute*\textsuperscript{162}.

Through Dr Worgan, the congregation at St Botolph’s ‘would have had the opportunity to hear some of the most up-to-date church music of the day’\textsuperscript{163}, played by one of England’s finest organists.


\textsuperscript{159} See Bowles, *Bowles’s Reduced New Pocket Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster*, Grid Reference Hn, Reference Number 22.


\textsuperscript{161} ‘Hz is the International Standard symbol for Hertz, the unit of frequency, defined as the number of cycles per second of a periodic phenomenon … Sound is a travelling wave which is an oscillation of pressure. Humans perceive frequency of sound waves as pitch.’ Each note (sounding pitch) in music ‘corresponds to a particular frequency which can be measured in Hertz’. ‘Hertz’, in *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia* (n.d.). See ‘Hz (Hertz)’ in Appendix Q, Volume 2 of this publication.

\textsuperscript{162} G. Keller, *A Compleat Method for Attaining to Play a Thorough Bass Upon Either Organ, Harpsichord, or Theorbo-Lute*, by the Late Famous Mr. Godfrey Keller. With a Variety of Proper Lessons and Fugues … and a Scale for Tuning the Harpsichord or Spinnet, All Taken from His Own Copies which He Did Design to Print (London: John Cullen, 1707).

\textsuperscript{163} Gwynn, *The Renatus Harris Organ at St Botolph Aldgate*, p. 6.
In 1760, Dr Worgan was appointed organist at St John’s Chapel, Millman Street, Bedford Row, Holborn. Dr Worgan held this position concurrently with the posts he occupied at St Andrew Undershaft and St Botolph’s.

In 1779, upon the death of the composer and organist William Boyce (1711–79), Dr Worgan may have applied for the position of ‘Master of the King’s Musick’. The organist John Langshaw (1725–98) ‘contemplated the unseemly spectacle of rival organists jockeying for the vacant post, and had written to’ Reverend Charles Wesley (the younger brother of the founder of Methodism, John Wesley): ‘Now for the whipping between Dr. Worgan & Dr. [Benjamin] Cooke [1734–93], for the King’s Plate.’ (Boyce's job as Master of the King’s Musick went to the blind organist Charles John Stanley [1712–86].)

Dr John Worgan's abilities as an organist were so finely developed that some of his contemporaries compared him with the then greatest organist in England,
Chapter 3

Georg Frederic Händel. The outstanding English composer of church music and organist Jonathan Battishill (1738–1801) went so far as to make the following remark: ‘In my opinion, Worgan was the greater performer of the two.’166 The English clergyman, writer and amateur musician Martin Madan (1726–90),167 in a satirical song entitled ‘The Organ Laid Open, or, the True Stop Discovered’, implies that as organists, John Worgan and Georg Händel were famous equals: ‘For let Handel or Worgan go thresh at the organ.’168

Charles Burney, having described Dr Worgan as one of England’s ‘great organists’,169 wrote that Worgan was ‘a very masterly fughist on the organ, and as a concerto player a rival of [Charles John] Stanley … His organ playing, though in the style of Handel than of any other school, is indeed masterly, in a way quite his own’.170

In his Recollections (1828/29?), the organist of St Michael’s, Cornhill,171 Richard John Samuel Stevens (1757–1837), described Dr John Worgan as being ‘unquestionably’ among ‘the greatest organists of the English School’.172 He also described him as ‘a musician of a most eccentric mind’, and ‘a man of the greatest genius, and a most admirable organ player’.173

Stevens recalls that in 1773, as a student, he was frequently sent ‘to the Church of St. Andrew Undershaft in Leadenhall Street, to hear Doctor Worgan (then Mr. Worgan,) play the organ: his voluntaries were always extempore; and they were in general the sublime efforts of a great genius.’174 (Voluntaries were used ‘to beguile and settle the congregation … before and after the service, and before or after the lesson at morning and evening prayer.’ On the other hand, ‘Psalm tunes … were … ornamented with preludes and interludes’.)175

It was reported that when Dr Worgan improvised at the organ, ‘his imagination was of that original and captivating kind, [so] that his audience often looked on each other with significant astonishment, and remained open-mouthed and breathless for several seconds after the organ had ceased’.176

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166 Bacon, ‘Memoir of the Life and Works of John Worgan’, p. 116. See also ‘16.—S. Andrew Undershaft’, in Pearce, Notes on Old London City Churches, p. 82, fn.
167 Martin Madan was godfather to Charles Wesley jr’s son, Samuel, as well as a drinking companion of Charles Wesley jr. Charles Wesley jr was the eldest son of Charles Wesley (who was the younger brother of the founder of Methodism, John Wesley). See D. Milton, ‘Charles Wesley’s Son was a Polygamist’, in Christian Marriage: Preaching and Teaching Biblical Marriage (2006).
168 Olleson, Samuel Wesley, p. 56. See also Edwards, ‘Worgan, John (DNB00)’, Vol. 63, p. 28.
170 Quoted in Gwynn, The Renatus Harris Organ at St Botolph Aldgate, p. 6.
171 See Cary, Cary’s New and Accurate Plan of London and Westminster, Map Reference 30. On Cary’s map, St Michael’s, Cornhill, is designated with the number 91.
173 Ibid., p. 57.
175 Gwynn, The Renatus Harris Organ at St Botolph Aldgate, pp. 5–6.
176 Charles Burney, quoted in Bacon, ‘Memoir of the Life and Works of John Worgan’, p. 120.
In 1790, Dr Worgan was described as ‘a celebrated performer on the organ’.177 ‘Whenever [Dr Worgan] ... played, crowds ... resorted to hear him.’178 As organist at London’s Vauxhall Gardens, Dr Worgan was ‘surrounded by professors, and the cognoscenti’ who afterwards ‘followed him in throngs’ to hear him play the organ in ‘his churches’.179 Many of the visitors to Vauxhall Gardens, however, were not sufficiently educated to appreciate the levels of sophistication inherent in Dr Worgan’s organ playing. A contemporaneous caricature appeared in which ‘Apollo was represented as kicking [Dr Worgan] ... out of heaven, for wasting celestial energies on the profane vulgar’.180

The leading evangelical Anglican clergyman Richard Cecil (1748–1810) confessed to experiencing a state of ravished bewilderment when he heard Dr Worgan play the organ during a church service. Reverend Cecil writes:

Admiration and feeling are very distinct from each another. Some music and oratory enchant and astonish, but they speak not to the heart ... Dr. Worgan has so touched the organ at St. John's [Chapel, near Bedford Row], that I have been turning backward and forward over the Prayer Book for the First Lesson in Isaiah, and wondered that I could not find Isaiah there!181

It was said that when John Worgan was ‘in the vein’—that is, inspired—his organ improvisations were ‘not a puerile show of single stops, nor a continuous ramble of Gargantuian chords; but a perpetual excitement of intense interest in the bosom of taste ... so that, as it was related of Handel, he was the worst organist in the world for playing a congregation out of church’.182

‘For most keyboardists in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, improvisation was an essential part of being a musician. As most auditions [for church organists] at that time consisted primarily of improvisation, organists in particular practiced improvisation as regularly as most professional musicians now practice repertoire.’183

John Worgan was often engaged to give the opening recital on newly built organs; these included the instruments at St Mary’s, Rotherhithe, on the southern bank of the Thames (29 September 1765); St Martin’s, Ludgate (26 January 1766); the chapel of the Asylum for Female Orphans (25 November 1766); St Mary’s, Islington (1772); and ‘the Collegiate Church of St. Catherine, near the Tower’ (27 September 1778).

At the Church of St Mary Axe with St Andrew Undershaft, Dr Worgan consistently attracted a congregation of listeners into the middle aisle, who avidly listened to his improvising at the conclusion of the service.

On one occasion an admirer of Worgan’s, hastening to the church to be in time for the Doctor’s [improvisation] … found the doors open, and the place silent and deserted … with the exception of one stranger who stood ruminating by the fire. The hurry, the disappointed look of the new comer and his late arrival at church made his [intention] … easily understood. Without any introduction, therefore, the stranger accosted him, ‘The Doctor was very great, to-day, Sir.’

He, himself, had evidently been enjoying [Dr Worgan’s playing] … and the admirer, though vexed that he had arrived too late for the feast, could not help noticing the incident as a pleasant illustration of the … brotherhood of musical amateurs.

George Worgan’s Father, Dr John Worgan, the Teacher

Dr Worgan insisted that his children should have a thorough musical education regardless of the profession they intended to pursue. As a teacher, Dr Worgan did not apply his pedagogical insights and expertise only for the exclusive benefit of his own children. In 1780 (seven years before his son George Bouchier got married).
departed for Sydney Cove), Dr Worgan published his *Pieces for the Harpsichord, Composed Purposely for Forming the Hands of Young Pupils to that Instrument*¹⁹¹ (Plate 55).

Unusually for the time, ‘the works in this pedagogical collection contain many notated articulation markings (most commonly, slurs), as well as specific instructions for *cantabile*, *legato*, *tenuto*, and *marcato*’.¹⁹² (Dr Worgan’s use of the term ‘marcato’ is intriguing, as one would reasonably expect the term to occur in piano music rather than in repertoire specified for the harpsichord.) The influence of Domenico Scarlatti’s keyboard works is suggested by occurrences of hand crossing.

¹⁹¹ J. Worgan, *Pieces for the Harpsichord, Composed Purposely for Forming the Hands of Young Pupils to that Instrument, with the Help of a Proper Instructor* (London: W. Owen, 1780).

That works calculated for students were commercially viable is suggested by the title page of a harpsichord concerto composed by John Worgan and published two years prior to George Bouchier’s departure for Sydney Cove: *A New Concerto for the Harpsichord, with the Parts of Accompaniment, Consisting of Two Violins and a Violon-Cello Composed by Dr. Worgan Purposely for the Practice and Improvement of his Pupils, and Others Who are Attaining a Command of that Instrument.*  

As an organist, John Worgan’s association with religion would have enhanced his status and respectability, and made him more eligible for private patronage as a teacher. As one of London’s most fashionable and gifted teachers, Dr Worgan taught music to the prodigiously talented Charles Wesley, jr; Charles studied thorough-bass and composition under Dr Worgan. (Dr Worgan told Charles Wesley, sr, that his son ‘would become an “eminent master” … if he was not sidetracked by other studies’.) Like Dr John Worgan, Charles Wesley, jr, ‘became specially distinguished as a performer of Scarlatti’s [keyboard] sonatas’.

The following anecdote, published in 1827, suggests that Dr John Worgan was not only an uncompromising educator in relation both to his standards and to his expectations, but also that he could adapt to new and challenging teaching contexts. Dr Worgan taught Samuel Jarvis (1742–84), organist at the Foundling Hospital (an institution closely connected with Händel) and at the Churches of St Sepulchre and St Botolph. Jarvis was inducted as a member of the Royal Society of Musicians on 6 January 1765. Samuel Jarvis was blind.

‘The extraordinary playing of Dr. Worgan determined him *inter silvas avademi quaerere verum* (to seek truth among the woods—that is, to seek truth among the pipes of an organ).

The doctor had never before instructed the blind, and was naturally rather averse from the undertaking; but when he heard Jarvis play, he resolved to try the experiment; and said Mr. Jarvis, ‘I thought my performance not despicable, yet how great was my astonishment and mortification when the doctor said to me, ‘Sir, you do very well, but

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193 J. Worgan, *A New Concerto for the Harpsichord, with the Parts of Accompaniment, Consisting of Two Violins and a Violon-Cello Composed by Dr. Worgan Purposely for the Practice and Improvement of His Pupils, and Others Who Are Attaining a Command of that Instrument* (London: Published by the Author, 1785).
198 See ‘Snow Hill’, in Bowles, *Bowles’s Reduced New Pocket Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster*, Grid Reference Fn. On Bowles’s map, the Church of St Sepulchre is designated with the number 70.
you have been wrongly taught, and if you come to me, you must begin your practice all over again.’ Accordingly,’ added Jarvis, ‘he began with me as if I had been a child, making me play my five notes up and down and saying, ‘There, sir, you must work much in that way before we proceed any farther.” The master-pupil went away in dudgeon, but wisely determining not to lose the benefit of instruction by neglect, adhered strictly to the doctor’s injunctions. He had not done so long before he exclaimed, ‘The doctor’s right, and I have been practicing in a wrong way all my life.’ This conviction was followed by immediate reformation, the master and pupil were soon satisfied with each other, and Jarvis became a distinguished ornament to a school which no such pupil ever deserted.  

In 1823, Richard Mackenzie Bacon observed:

Provincial organists, during the vacations, flocked to hear … [Dr John Worgan], and astonished at his powers, frequently applied to him for instruction. ‘They come to me,’ said he, ‘for a few lessons, in which they require me to do for them what has cost me the labour of forty years’ … Yet many of these become fashionable masters. ‘These gentlemen,’ said the Doctor, ‘dress well, bow politely, pocket the money, and music is their very humble servant; but I am music’s very humble servant.’

George Worgan’s Father, Dr John Worgan, the Composer

Richard Mackenzie Bacon, in the Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review of 1823, wrote: ‘the bulk of Dr. Worgan’s compositions are neglected manuscripts; enriched with science, and illuminated with genius.’ Bacon, by way of summary, continues: ‘In a word’, Dr John Worgan ‘is a sound and original classic, a pillar of his art, an honour to his country, and the victim of unjust neglect.’

‘Very little of John Worgan’s music was published during his lifetime, and unfortunately most of his manuscripts have been lost.’ Some indication of the scope of Worgan’s compositional output can be gained from comments made by

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201 Ibid., p. 113.
202 Ibid., p. 128.
his son Thomas Danvers Worgan, who was a composer and music theorist. In his *The Musical Reformer*, Thomas states that his father composed ‘oratorios, anthems, organ concertos, and voluntaries, vocal harmony, sonatas’.204

In the main, Dr John Worgan’s compositions are written in what at the time was called the ‘ancient’ style.

**The ‘Ancient’ Style**

In London during the late eighteenth century, there were two prominent and warring musical factions. Conflict between these two factions was manifested in a public war of words. Each faction supported a particular style of music.

The first (conservative) faction supported the so-called ‘ancient’ style. In 1776, at the instigation of John Montagu, Fourth Earl of Sandwich (1718–92), this faction founded a musical institution called the ‘Concert of Ancient Music’ (also known as the ‘King’s Concert’). The Concert of Ancient Music was a socially exclusive organisation, whose members did not like any music that was ‘modern’, and consistently supported performances of repertoire composed more than 20 years earlier—that is, music including, and written before, Händel. For some members of the Concert of Ancient Music, ‘this involved reviving the works of’, for example, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (ca 1525–94) and William Byrd (ca 1540–1623); ‘for others it meant merely reasserting the virtues of Corelli and Geminiani and composers of their generation’.205 When the Concert of Ancient Music was first formed, it explained that ‘by ye Compositions of the Ancients is meant of such as lived before ye end of the sixteenth century’.206

The founders saw themselves not only as protectors of the national taste, but also as perpetuators of national values based on ‘a conservative political consensus, the Anglican church, the aesthetic doctrine of the sublime—and therefore, in the gender-coded world of British aesthetics … masculinity’ (and, by extension, an appeal to British patriotism).207 The Concert of Ancient Music also saw themselves as providers of a focal point for the cohesion of the aristocracy through ‘a deliberate and self-conscious closing of ranks. More subtly, the Concert of Ancient Music attempted to link taste for great music of the past with the social elite, creating the powerful social myth of the congruence of class and

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205 Southey et al., *The Ingenious Mr Avison*, p. 122.


taste.’ 208 By the final decade of the eighteenth century, having been faced with ‘threats to their authority posed by the American and French Revolutions … [the aristocracy] attempted to bolster their position by posing as the arbiters of good taste and the protectors of traditional values. In music this meant support for so-called “ancient” music.’ 209

The social and political conservatives inhabiting the ranks of the Concert of Ancient Music imagined that they were saving English music from a newly emergent and degenerate style ‘produced by an attempted musical insurrection carried out by foreigners who were determined to subvert the manly native music of England through the introduction of effeminate, Italian-inspired decadence’. 210

Italy had long been associated with effeminacy and male homosexuality—for example, a poem published in London in August 1708 links Henry Sidney, First Earl of Romney (1641–1704; a famous and handsome English libertine), effeminacy and male homosexuality with Italy:

Thus pretty S[i][d][n][y] reigns among the Fair.  
And passes for the bright Idalian star,  
The men are apt to take him for a she,  
And pay false homage to the deity.  
‘Tis pity Nature so mistook her way,  
To make at once both sexes go astray,  
That when she did the masculine create,  
He should turn tail, and prove effeminate.  
But this in camps may of more service prove,  
Where male with male are forc’d to kindle love. 211

Fear of the deleterious effects on English society of ‘effeminate’ Italian music (especially opera) had been present in England from the early 1700s. In 1732, for example, Händel received a letter from Aaron Hill (1685–1750), the manager of the Queen’s Theatre. In his letter, dated Tuesday, 5 December, Hill urges Händel to cast aside Italian opera (especially Italian castrati) in order to ‘deliver us from our Italian bondage’. 212 Hill writes:

209 Southey et al., *The Ingenious Mr Avison*, p. 122.  
210 Irving, ‘Haydn and the Consequences of Presumed Effeminacy’, p. 103.  
212 Quoted in van Til, *George Frideric Handel*, p. 98.
Male and female voices may be found in this kingdom, capable of every thing, that is requisite; and, I am sure, a species of dramatic opera might be invented, that, by reconciling reason and dignity, with musick and fine machinery, would charm the ear, and hold fast the heart, together.  

In 1747, R. Campbell wrote: ‘As Italian Music, and the Love of it, has prevailed in these Islands [that is, in England], Luxury, Cowardice, and Venality has advanced upon us in exact Proportion.’

[A] refinement of our taste into a love of soft Italian music, is debasing the martial genius of the nation; and may one day be a means to fiddle us out of our liberties. I would chuse, if we are to be improved in music, that the composers would keep to the old British key, and let us sing English as well as speak it.

Not only was Italian music suspect, but also Italian food; concerning a ‘macaroni’—that is, a fop or dandy—the Oxford Magazine stated:

There is indeed a kind of animal, neither male nor female, a thing of the neuter gender, lately started up amongst us. It is called a Macaroni. It talks without meaning, it smiles without pleasantry, it eats without appetite, it rides without exercise, it wenches without passion … Apparently, the condition was caused by too much of a liking for pasta.

Members of the Concert of Ancient Music believed that

the effeminate [Italian] opera threatened the masculine basis of British culture and ‘questioned and threatened the stability of those gender distinctions essential to maintaining stable social institutions.’

An aristocracy spending large sums of English money to import homosexuality, castrati, Catholicism, and [degenerate] music into London threatened masculine, Protestant ‘British sense, reason, wit, and virtue.’

In 1784, the Reverend William Jones of Nayland (1726–1800), in a book dedicated ‘[t]o the Right Honourable, &c. the Directors of the Concerts of Antient Music’, complains that modern composers

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213 Quoted in ibid., p. 98.
215 Ibid., p. 92.
216 Paxman, *Empire*, p. 47.
have introduced many improvements into melody, and some into harmony; but by no means such as will compensate for their corruptions. Novelty and custom, two overbearing tyrants, have given a sanction to degenerate harmony, wildness of air, effeminacy, tautology and affected difficulties, inconsistent with the powers of expression …219

Had it not been for the Concerts of Antient Music, some of the finest compositions, and the manly entertainment arising from the superior manner in which they have been performed, would probably have been lost to this country. The stream of fashion would have carried on its surface what is light and frothy; while that which is more solid and valuable would have sunk to the bottom.220

The Concert of Ancient Music’s links with

social and political conservatism, and … with an evangelical piety [ultimately] … led to the mighty Handel commemoration celebrations of 1784, held over five days in Westminster Abbey with a choir and orchestra of over five hundred, an unprecedented number for England. These celebrations were so successful that they were repeated in 1785–87, 1790, and in 1791, the last with over one thousand performers, and in the presence of George III.221

The aristocratic directors of the Concert often planned programs in conjunction with King George III; the Concert’s programming often reflected a capitulation to the King’s predilection for Händel. Young provides the following pertinent observation:

The King was no passive patron. He was ready to express his views and to exert his influence. Thus he sent a memorandum to Lord Carmarthen regarding a programme submitted to him from the Ancient Concerts: ‘Lord Carmarthen’s List of Musick for next Wednesday is very excellent and meets with the approbation of those whose opinion on the subject he wished to know.’222

219 William Jones, A Treatise on the Art of Music; In which the Elements of Harmony and Air are Practically Considered, and Illustrated by an Hundred and Fifty Examples in Notes Many of them Taken from the Best Authors: The Whole being Intended as a Course of Lectures, Preparatory to the Practice of Thorough-Bass and Musical Composition (Colchester, UK: W. Keymer, 1784), ‘Introduction’, p. iv.
220 Ibid., ‘Dedication’, p. i.
The concert’s blatant conservatism does, however, represent one expression of an evolving musical canon, reflecting the ‘remarkable breadth of thinking [that] … existed in England concerning the very new idea that music from the past might be preserved as a corpus of great works’.

The ‘Scientific’ Style

The second of the two dominant musical factions in late eighteenth-century London supported music that was written in the so-called ‘scientific’ style. This style of music comprised anything that was contemporary. According to the English composer and organist William Crotch (1775–1847), the musical aesthetic of the scientific style allowed for the inclusion of ‘eccentric passages, varied rhythm, wild melody & violent contrasts’. Music written in the scientific style was also characterised by the inclusion of abrupt structural and/or harmonic transitions, orchestral crescendi (modelled on the Mannheim device) as well as an overt sense of playfulness. The minuet commonly featured in works composed in the scientific style.

The eighteenth-century English music theorist Sir John Hawkins was not enamoured of the scientific style. In his An Account of the Institution and Progress of the Academy of Ancient Music (published in 1770), he passes harsh judgment:

> For reasons, which no one is willing to avow, adagio music is exploded, and we are content to forego the majesty and dignity of the largo and andante movements, with all the variety arising from the interchange of various airs and measures, for the noise and rattle of an unisonous allegro, to which no name can be given, or the intoxicating softness of that too-often iterated air, the minuet.

Hawkins ‘dismissed’ music written in the scientific style as ‘noise without harmony … the frittering of passages into notes … trash’. Other censorious voices echoed Hawkins’ sentiments: ‘it becomes a mechanical art, it dazzles, but cannot affect the mind.’ Even as late as 1823, Richard Mackenzie Bacon remarked: ‘All insects are attracted by the brilliancy of modern composition; but

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225 W. Crotch, Manuscript lecture notes (Norfolk Record Office, n.d.), MS Col/7/43.
226 Quoted in Hogwood, Liner notes for Johann Christian Bach, p. 2.
227 Goold, Mr. Langshaw’s Square Piano, p. 183.
the rainbow of today is but a transient offspring of the ancient sun; and should a taste for ancient music become totally extinct, the rest would be “but leather and prunella”.229

Scientific composers were musicians such as Carl Friedrich Abel, Johann Christian Bach, Christian Ernst Graf (1723–1804), Joseph Haydn, Ignaz Jacob Holzbauer (1711–83), Josef Mysliveček (1737–81) and Ignaz Joseph Pleyel (1757–1831). As with the performances of the ‘degenerate’ Italian Opera in London, which were so disparaged by members of the Concert of Ancient Music, ‘concerts comprising scientific music were often attended by aristocratic and middle-class elites jockeying for social status’.230

The organist and composer Richard John Samuel Stevens describes the scientific style as ‘the modern German style’.231 In 1791, Stevens

regularly attended the professional concert, at which Pleyel presided; and Haydn’s twelve concerts, at which he presided; in order to hear the modern German style of music, and the method of conducting it, by two of its most eminent composers. Haydn had his benefit [concert on] … May the 17th 1792, when I was astonished at the amazing effects of some of his instrumental compositions, and particularly of those written for a full orchestra.232

Haydn’s symphonies were jointly directed by Johann Peter Salomon (the first violinist) and Haydn (at the keyboard). In London, such joint direction was a commonly encountered performance convention in relation to symphonies. That Stevens attended ‘Haydn’s twelve concerts … in order to hear … the method of conducting’ attests not only to his curiosity concerning the distribution of joint direction (first violin and keyboard), but also to his interest in interpretative aspects (such as accentuation, articulation and tempi).

The flourishing in London of concerts given by the two warring musical factions does not, however, indicate the emergence of a large and musically inquisitive middle-class audience.

The aristocracy controlled taste, and ensured that subscription tickets (rather than individual tickets) were sold, prices for tickets were kept high and subscription lists were carefully controlled—all purely to maintain aristocratic

232 Ibid., p. 79.
exclusivity. The aristocracy cultivated concert-giving not so much for its commercial potential as for its role in defining a less tangible cultural status and leadership.233

**Compositional Output**

Dr John Worgan was composer and organist at Vauxhall Gardens234 (on and off) between 1751 and 1773. During this time, he wrote at least 13 published volumes of ‘Vauxhall Songs’,235 as well as numerous other songs that were published singly or in anthologies.236 The emphasis at the Vauxhall Gardens was on

entertainment, with the music tending to be a mere background to strolls, chatting with friends and partaking of supper. As a result, much of the music performed in the gardens was vocal music—songs, short cantatas and other slight pieces often performed by attractive and engaging young actresses … [The music often represented] a pandering to popular taste with little regard for … quality.237

When compared with repertoire performed at aristocratic subscription concerts, music heard at the Vauxhall Gardens was decidedly popularist.

In 1823, Richard Mackenzie Bacon wrote:

> [A]t a late period of Dr. Worgan’s life, a friend told him that he had just bought a complete collection of his Vauxhall Songs. ‘Then’ replied the Doctor, ‘you have bought a great deal of trash, for many of them were penned either when I was fatigued with business or straitened for time, or from some cause or other not at all in the humour for composition’.238

‘Vauxhall Gardens programmes for the 1786 and 1787 seasons identify some orchestral works by John Worgan. These works however, may have been in the Vauxhall repertory for some years, and cannot be accurately dated from these performances.’239

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235 See ‘Close proximity’, in Appendix B, Volume 2 of this publication.
236 See ibid.
237 Southey et al., *The Ingenious Mr Avison*, p. 92.
Sadly, many of Worgan’s manuscripts were lost after his death. ‘[A]ll that survive of his sacred works are those that were published during his lifetime, namely the anthem *We Shall Rejoice in Thy Salvation* from 1759 (at least five anthems were part of John Worgan’s sacred music output), and the oratorio *Hannah*.’

‘Dr. John Worgan’s oratorio *Hannah* (published in 1764 as his opus 1) was given its premiere performance at the King’s theatre, Haymarket, on 3 April 1764.’ It failed miserably. ‘A second oratorio, *Manasseh* (now lost) was first performed at the chapel of the Lock Hospital on 30 April 1766.’

A third oratorio is also lost.

In 1811, not long after Dr Worgan’s death, the English composer, musician and writer Thomas Busby summarised the history of the oratorio in England. He judged Dr Worgan as being the equal of several of England’s finest composers:

> The first *Oratorios* performed in England were those produced by Mr. Handel, with the excellence of which the English public are well acquainted. Since that great master, Mr. [John Christopher] Smith [1712–95], Mr. [Charles John] Stanley, Dr. [Thomas Augustine] Arne [1710–78], Dr. Worgan, and Dr. [Samuel] Arnold [1740–1802], have tried their powers in this higher walk of composition: but though some of their respective productions possessed a degree of merit highly honourable to British talent, yet so inadequately were they encouraged, that from about the year 1771, no new work of the kind appeared for nearly thirty years, i.e. till the spring of 1799.

During his lifetime, Dr Worgan’s compositions were not widely appreciated, attracting only ‘a little circle of intelligent admirers’. Forty-four years after Dr Worgan ‘descended to the grave to await the tardy and barren retribution of posthumous justice’, Clarke remarked that Dr Worgan’s compositions abounded in ‘taste, learning, and genius’.
Three books of psalms and hymns composed by Dr John Worgan were published between 1767 and 1769. ‘Worgan is persistently credited with having composed the Easter hymn. As a matter of fact the tune appeared (anonymously) in “Lyra Davidica” (1708) sixteen years before Worgan was born.’

A moment of conspicuous opportunism (and an indication of a predilection for compositional conservatism) is revealed by a concert held in 1787 at Dr John Worgan’s home. At this concert, a selection of Worgan’s own sacred compositions was performed. The concert was attended by ‘most of the directors of the Concert of Ancient Music’.

Members of the Concert of Ancient Music felt that the incursion of the scientific style into church music threatened to destroy its traditional and characteristically English beauty. In the face of what was regarded as a particularly heinous threat, Bishop George Horne (1730–92), as one of several contemporaneous irate clerics, inveighed from the pulpit against ‘the light movements of the theatre, with the effeminate and frittered music of modern Italy’, which ought to be banned from the church in favour of ‘our English classics in this sacred science’.

That Italian music and musicians were regarded as a threat to the English character for much of the eighteenth century is evidenced in 1743, when the entrepreneur responsible for a series of outdoor concerts in Clerkenwell let it be known that he would only engage English instrumentalists because their ‘manly vigour [is] … more suitable to the ear and heart of a Briton than the effeminate softness of the Italian’.

The style of the sacred works composed by Dr Worgan that were performed at the concert held in his home in 1787 would doubtless have reflected the musical biases of the attending Directors of the Concert of Ancient Music. The concert itself appears to have been Dr Worgan’s attempt to exploit (and/or to strengthen) social connections with members of that particular and exclusive faction. According to the organist and composer Richard John Samuel Stevens, who was ‘taken by [his] … friend John Dyne, to Doctor Worgan’s concert, to

247 Edwards, ‘Worgan, John (DNB00)’.
lead the tenor chorus’,251 the Directors of the Concert of Ancient Music ‘seemed exceedingly gratified with the doctor’s compositions, and the manner in which they were performed’.252

Twenty-seven years earlier, on Saturday, 31 May 1760, The London Chronicle described Dr John Worgan’s conservative compositional style as an outgrowth of Händel’s:

*Handel* may be said as justly as any man ... to have founded a new school of music. When he first came into England, his music was entirely Italian: he composed for the opera; and though, even then, his pieces were liked, yet did they not meet with universal approbation ... in his Oratorios he is perfectly an original genius. In these, by steering between the manners of Italy and England, he has struck out new harmonies, and formed a species of music different from all others. He has left some excellent and eminent scholars, particularly Worgan and Smith, who compose nearly in his manner; a manner as different from Purcel’s as from that of modern Italy.253

In 1823, Richard Mackenzie Bacon defended Dr John Worgan’s ‘established predilection, or prejudice, as many would have it, in favour of the antients’:254

As Dr. Worgan was decidedly a composer of the old school, it may not be amiss here to animadvert on an expression commonly applied to the antients, by those oracles whose mouths are filled with ‘wise saws and modern instances.’ It is usual with these hypercritics to ‘damn with faint praise’ an antient composer, by saying, ‘Aye, it was very well for the time when it was composed, but it would not do now ... O shame! where is thy blush?’ Will the philharmonist, will the professor, graze with the vulgar herd, and speak profanely of Corelli, the father of harmonists, and of Purcell and Handel, the Shakspeare and Milton of music? Did they dishonour their art? A homogeneous question.—Handel they revered. Had they not, never would they have risen above the level of their foolish admirers.255

Charles Burney was of the opinion that John Worgan’s compositional style had been wrecked through his studying with the virtuoso Italian violinist Francesco Geminiani, who ‘taught him that originality was the only virtue’.256 Burney’s

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252 Ibid., p. 57.
255 Ibid., p. 125.
remark, however, does not support the general lack of originality evidenced in the majority of Worgan’s compositions, let alone the musical conservatism of Geminiani’s works. Burney writes:

At length [Dr John Worgan] … got acquainted with Geminiani, swore by no other divinity, and on consulting him on the subject of composition, he was told he would never be acquainted with all the arcana of the science without reading El porqué della Musica, a book written in Spanish by Andres Lorente [1624–1703], in Alcalá [de Henares], 1672.257

The value of Lorente’s music treatise is described ‘by Sir John Hawkins … This book, of which … Mr. Geminiani said it had not its fellow in any of the modern languages, is questionless a very learned work: it is in truth a musical institute, and may be said to contain all that is necessary for a practical composer to know’.258

Although Burney disparaged Geminiani for (supposedly) teaching Worgan that ‘originality was the only virtue’,259 the English composer Charles Avison (1709–70) regarded Geminiani in a much more favourable light:

In later life … [Avison] paid a poignant and unstinting tribute to his teacher [Geminiani] in a letter written to the Newcastle Courant in September 1768. Geminiani, he said, ‘spoke all the European languages, and his conversation was lively and entertaining … He had seen many courts, many men, many customs … He loved the arts, and assisted many artists.’ This cosmopolitan man, according to Avison, loved music, painting and sculpture and advised his pupil not to accept praise if he knew it to be undeserved, nor to get down-hearted if his merits were neglected. Above all, he recommended truth and simplicity as being of paramount importance, in music and in life.260

There can be little doubt that part of Geminiani’s notion of ‘truth in music’ involved a large degree of performative spontaneity. When Geminiani first worked in Naples,

he was placed at the head of the orchestra; but … he was soon discovered to be so wild and unsteady a timist, that instead of

257 Charles Burney, in Rees, The Cyclopaedia. Quoted in ibid., p. 106. See Andrés Lorente, El porqué de la música: en que se contiene los cuatro artes de ella, canto llano, canto de organo, contrapunto y composición: y en cada uno de ellos nuevas reglas, razón abreviada, en utiles preceptos, aun en las cosas mas difíciles, tocantes a la harmonia musica: numerosos exemplos con clara inteligencia, en estilo breve, que al maestro deleitan, y al discípulo ensenan, cuya direccionse verá sucintamente anorada antes del prologo [The Precepts of Music] (Alcalá de Henares: Nicolás de Xamares, 1672).


260 Southey et al., The Ingenious Mr Avison, p. 31. Southey et al.’s quotation is taken from the Newcastle Courant, 17 September 1768.
regulating and conducting the band, he threw it into confusion; as none of the performers were able to follow him in his *tempo rubato*, and other unexpected accelerations and relaxations of measure. After this discovery … he was never trusted with a better part than the tenor [that is, the viola], during his residence in that city.\(^{261}\)

If Burney’s account is to be believed, it reveals the limitations of the Neapolitan orchestra as much as Geminiani’s unconventional and imaginative ideas concerning musical gesturalism and meaning. Unfortunately, Burney ‘is a far from impartial source about Geminiani, not so much because he did not rate the man or his music, as because Sir John Hawkins, his arch music-historiographical rival, did’.\(^{262}\) Similar reports of the effect of Geminiani’s directorial unpredictabilities arise during his later years in London. There is, for example, the instance of a concert ‘that included song passages to be conducted by Geminiani’ as first violinist: ‘it ended in a disaster and was interrupted.’\(^{263}\)

As a solo violinist, however, Geminiani was highly esteemed. Geminiani’s performing style reflected his Italian temperament and training. His contemporaries described him as ‘the furious one’.\(^{264}\) The French author and priest François Raguenet (ca 1660–1722), in his *Paralèle des italiens et des francois, en ce qui regarde la musique et les opéra* [*Comparison of the music and opera of Italy and France*],\(^{265}\) compared French with Italian music: the dissertation ‘caused a lively controversy because of its author’s manifest preference for Italian music’.\(^{266}\) Raguenet’s words are well suited to what must have been Geminiani’s performing style:

> Since Italians are more vivacious than the French, they are also more sensitive than the French to passion and besides this they express passion with more vigour in all of their works … Everything … is so vivacious, so intense, so penetrating, so impetuous and so touching that the imagination, the senses, the mind and the … body are dragged by

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\(^{264}\) See G. Nasillo, Liner notes for *Sonatas Pour le Violoncello a Basso Continuo Par Monsieur Geminiani* (Symphonia, 2000), CD, SY 00182, p. 8.


a common impetus … the violinist … cannot fail to be swept away … to torment his violin, his body; he has lost all self control, he gets as excited as a mad person, he is powerless to do otherwise.267

Given the likelihood that Geminiani’s violin playing was compelling, capricious and passionate, it is odd that his works frequently lack the equivalent in compositional terms. As a composer, Geminiani appears not to have been able (or willing?) to constantly exercise the full extent of his stated aesthetic beliefs: ‘The intention of musick is not only to please the ear, but to express sentiments, strike the imagination, affect the mind, and command the passions.’268

Geminiani, as a composer, and (one assumes) as a teacher of composition, upheld the conservative musical ideals of the Concert of Ancient Music—so much so, that in 1746, he dedicated his last set of concerti grossi, Opus 7, ‘alla celebre Accademia della buona ed antica musica [to the celebrated Academy of good and ancient music]’. The influence of the scientific (modern) style on the musical life of London led Geminiani to complain that ‘the hand was more considered than the head; the performance than the composition … instead of labouring to cultivate a taste—the publick was content to nourish insipidity’.269 Somewhat unenthusiastically, Sir John Hawkins summed up Geminiani’s traditionalist compositional style (in the process, dammingly linking Geminiani’s music with the public’s lack of musical discernment):

Notwithstanding the fine talents which as a musician Geminiani possessed, it must be remarked that the powers of his fancy seem to have been limited. His melodies were to the last degree elegant, his modulation original and multiformious, and in their general cast his compositions were tender and pathetic; and it is to the want of an active and teeming imagination that we are to attribute the publication of his works in various forms.270

Geminiani taught composition to Dr John Worgan. It is reasonable to assume that Geminiani’s preference for the ancient style—along with a cultural context in London that was defined, for the most part, by a musically unsophisticated public—was responsible for Worgan’s compositional conservatism.

267 Quoted in Nasillo, Liner notes for Sonatas Pour le Violoncello a Basso Continuo Par Monsieur Geminiani, p. 8.
268 F. Geminiani, The Art of Playing on the Violin Containing All the Rules Necessary to Attain to a Perfection on that Instrument, with Great Variety of Compositions, which will also be Very Useful to those who Study the Violoncello, Harpsichord &c … Opera. IX. (London, 1751; facsimile edn London: Travis & Emery Music Bookshop, 2009), p. 1.
Keyboard Music

Although Dr John Worgan's organ improvisations were startlingly original, his published keyboard music does not reflect the same spirit of adventurousness.

Much of John Worgan's music presents a somewhat learned style and looks backwards to the Baroque,\textsuperscript{271} the [three volumes of] organ pieces selected and published after John Worgan's death by his son James … capture the typical 18th century character of English voluntaries, with [conventional] echo effects and ‘trumpet tune’ melodic lines.\textsuperscript{272}

In their lack of daring and innovation, Worgan’s ‘Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord’\textsuperscript{273} (Plate 56) are similarly disappointing. ‘Figural clichés and the simplicity of harmonic schemes invite modern musicians (whose sensibilities are formed by the mature works of Haydn and Mozart) to approach these works with a certain amount of disdain.’\textsuperscript{274} Worgan’s ‘Six Sonatas’ border on the vacuous: fast movements tend to be emotionally empty and noisy;\textsuperscript{275} slow movements often begin with beautiful and pleasingly tuneful ideas, but these are ultimately not developed and, as a result, movements become all too often predictable and directionless. This critique flies in the face of pronouncements made, in 1823, by Richard Mackenzie Bacon, who remarks that Dr Worgan’s ‘sonatas … are happy blendings of the “utile dulci”’, excellently qualified to steady the finger, and prominently characteristical of an original style\textsuperscript{276} (Bacon’s recurrent hagiolatrous attitude in relation to the works of Dr Worgan is reflected in his typically favourable comments). Regrettably, Worgan’s rather pallid ‘Six Sonatas’ reveal a surprising absence of sophistication and ingenuity.

\textsuperscript{271} In a widely accepted and commonly encountered periodisation schema of Western civilisation's music history, the ‘Baroque’ era is defined as the period between ca 1600 and ca 1750.
\textsuperscript{272} McGairl, ‘Worgan: (3) John Worgan’, p. 566.
\textsuperscript{273} J. Worgan, \textit{Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord} (London: Mrs Johnson, 1769).
\textsuperscript{275} Especially, for example, ‘Sonata No. 2’ in C major, movements 1 and 3. See also the ‘Sonata No. 3’ in F major, movement 3.
\textsuperscript{276} Bacon, ‘Memoir of the Life and Works of John Worgan’, p. 118.
Plate 56 Dr John Worgan: title page from *Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord* (London: Mrs Johnson, 1769).

Source: Geoffrey Lancaster Collection, Perth. Photo by the author.

One ray of light, however, pierces the bleakness. Redemption for Dr Worgan is offered in what may be described as a healthy disdain for compositional propriety: the first full bar of the opening *Larghetto* from the Sonata No. 5 in E-flat major contains a series of descending, ‘prohibited’ consecutive fifths!\(^{277}\) These would have scandalised the players and listeners in polite musical circles; knowing this, Worgan (somewhat cheekily) writes at the top of the first page of the sonata: ‘Lest the consecutive fifths at the beginning of the theme of this movement should escape the critic, the author here apprises him of them’ (Plate 57).\(^{278}\)

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\(^{277}\) A ‘consecutive fifth’ is the ‘simultaneous duplication of the melodic line … by another at the interval of a perfect fifth’, the resultant interval (comprising two musical parts) being immediately followed, within the same two musical parts, by another simultaneous duplication of the melodic line at the interval of a perfect fifth. W. Drabkin, ‘Consecutive Fifths, Consecutive Octaves’, in S. Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan, 1980), Vol. 4, p. 666. During the eighteenth century, consecutive fifths were strongly discouraged. See ‘Consecutive Fifths’, in Appendix Q, Volume 2 of this publication.

\(^{278}\) J. Worgan, *Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord*, p. 22.
Worgan’s textures and accompanimental figurations are reminiscent of those found in the (far superior) late harpsichord music of the French composer Jacques Duphly (1715–89). In Worgan’s ‘Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord’, however, ‘there is certainly no need to make room for Dr. John Worgan on Parnassus if the qualifications are grandeur of musical thought and technical virtuosity’.279

Worgan’s single harpsichord concerto was composed when he was aged 63, and is his last published work. According to Richard Mackenzie Bacon, it is ‘replete with spirit, unblemished by senility or infirmity. The name of Haydn would have given this composition that celebrity which the worshippers of a name conspire to establish.’280

In his published keyboard works, Worgan appears to have been careful never to offend or to ‘tax’ the tastes of the London public.281 The melodic lines of his keyboard music sometimes have an almost folksong quality about them. In some instances, Dr Worgan’s melodies contain a ‘shaping’ derived from ‘melodic peaks’, where ‘the melody, after soaring to what sounds like the highest [note] … or peak, then soars still higher’.282 Perhaps this is what the eighteenth-century German organist and music theorist Georg Joseph Vogler (1749–1814) perceived as being the ‘bracing’ quality of some English melodic lines.283 Contemporaneous English ears would have been charmed by the inclusion of such a compositional device within Dr Worgan’s musical landscape.

282 Heartz, Music in European Capitals, p. 918. See, for example, the third movement of the ‘Sonata No. 1’ in G major. See also the first movement of the ‘Sonata No. 2’ in C major.
283 Quoted in ibid., pp. 918–19.
The nineteenth-century Romantic view of the tormented composer does not fit either Dr John Worgan or eighteenth-century musical reality. Rather than being a suffering, autobiographically motivated artist, struggling in isolation against the world, seeking to express the deepest personal feelings, a typical eighteenth-century English composer worried ‘less about the meaning of art’ and ‘strove [only] to touch’ a listener’s ‘sentiments’.  

The notion that a sad piece … was about the composer’s sadness would have seemed just as strange as the idea that a tart sauce prepared by [a] … chef was about the chef’s tartness … [Eighteenth-century] composers lived the life of a musical craftsman … [producing] music for immediate consumption … with a view toward keeping up with [musical] fashion.285

As a composer, Dr Worgan was simply a man of his time.

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285 Ibid., p. 7.