

Appendix N

Advertisements Published in British Newspapers between 1777 and 1831 for the Sale of Second-Hand Frederick Beck Pianos

The number of second-hand Frederick Beck pianos advertised for sale in British newspapers between 1777 and 1831 (inclusive) suggests not only that Beck's output was considerable, but also that his instruments were popular—in some instances, remaining so for many years after they were made. Several advertisements reveal that members of high society purchased Beck's pianos, which is testament both to his good reputation and to the quality of his instruments.

The earliest advertisement published in a British newspaper announcing the sale of a second-hand Frederick Beck piano appears in *The Daily Advertiser* of Monday, 25 August 1777.

During the nineteenth century, the last advertisement published in a British newspaper in which a second-hand Beck piano is offered for sale appears in *The Bury and Norwich Post* of Wednesday, 27 April 1831.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, there were only three piano makers with the surname of Beck in the world:

1. Carl Friedrich Beck (1790–1839),¹ who worked in Berlin between ca 1820 and 1839
2. Johannes Beck (1817–63),² who worked in Ebingen, Germany, between 1817 and 1863, making six-octave square pianos (no surviving instruments are known)
3. an unidentified Beck, possibly Joseph Beck (1777–1848) who worked in Paris between 1819 and 1822.³

As far as is known, these makers never worked or had a sales outlet either in London or anywhere in the British Empire. During the 1820s and 1830s there were more than 220 piano makers and dealers in London.⁴ Not one of these

1 See Henkel, *Lexicon Deutscher Klavierbauer*, p. 45.

2 See *ibid.*, p. 45.

3 See de Place, *Le Piano-forte à Paris entre 1760 et 1822*, p. 180.

4 See Appendix H, this volume.

London piano makers has the surname of Beck—or anything that resembles it. In fact, there had not been a piano maker named Beck in London since Frederick Beck established his workshop at 4 Broad Street, Golden Square, in ca 1771.

Late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century newspaper advertisements were consistently specific when identifying a grand piano for sale; when appropriate, the word 'grand' was always included. An advertisement published in *The Whitehall Evening Post* of 14–16 August 1794 describes 'a capital grand piano forte by Beck'. To the author's knowledge, this is the only known reference to a Beck grand piano. Sometimes a square piano was referred to as 'small'—or, more infrequently, as 'square'. Most commonly, however, a square piano was identified as a 'piano forte', 'piano-forte', 'forte piano' or 'forte-piano'.

Each advertisement identified below is the first published in relation to the sale of a particular second-hand Beck piano; it was customary to publish several advertisements leading up to the sale of an instrument.

1777

- *The Daily Advertiser*, [London], 25 August, No. 14587, p. 4. Owned by 'a gentleman, going abroad': 'a forte piano by Beck.'

1779

- *The Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* [London], 24 February, No. 1985, p. 3. Auction of Baron Olivier's estate: 'a forte piano by Beck.'
- *The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 15 March, No. 3063, p. 4. Offered for sale by 'Henry Thorowgood, No. 6, North-Piazza, Royal Exchange': 'an excellent second hand forte piano, by Beck, price ten guineas.'
- *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, [London], 19 April, No. 15657, p. 4. Owned by 'Mrs. Charlotte and Jane Backwell, retired to the country.'

1780

- *The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 29 January, No. 3338, p. 4. Auction of William Herbert's estate: 'a piano forte, by Beck.'

1784

- *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, [London], 21 June, No. 17324, p. 4. Owned by 'a merchant, leaving off housekeeping': 'a piano forte by Beck.'

1787

- *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, [London], 28 April, No. 18216, p. 3. Auction of William Lewis's estate: 'a piano forte, by Beck.'

1788

- *The Morning Herald*, [London], 30 June, No. 2399, p. 4. '[L]ate in the possession of His Excellency the Marquis del Campo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary from the Court of Madrid': 'a piano forte, by Beck.'

1791

- *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, [London], 19 February, No. 19408, p. 4. Auction of Thomas King's estate: 'a fine toned piano forte by Beck.'

1793

- *The Morning Herald*, [London], 15 February, No. 4343, p. 4. 'Taken by distress for rent', owned by an eminent professor in music, under misfortunes': 'a piano-forte by Beck.'
- *The Morning Herald*, [London], 18 July, No. 4476, p. 5. Owned by 'Mr. J. H. Wilkinson, upholder and cabinet-maker, removing into the wholesale line, to No. 25, Budge-row, Cannon street': 'a fine-toned piano-forte, by Beck.'

1794

- *The World*, [London], 22 January, No. 2206, p. 4. Owned by 'a gentleman, retiring from housekeeping, at his house, No. 56, Conduit-street, Hanover-square': 'a fine toned piano forte, by Beck.'
- *The Whitehall Evening Post*, [London], 14–16 August, No. 7449, p. 1. Owned by 'Mr. James Brown, upholder and cabinet maker, retiring from business': 'a capital grand piano forte by Beck.'

1795

- *The Times*, [London], 28 February, No. 950228, p. 4. Owned by T. Barron: 'a good piano forte, by Beck.'
- *The Morning Post and Fashionable World*, [London], 13 July, No. 7316, p. 4. '[T]he property of a gentleman': 'a fine-toned piano forte, by Beck.'

1796

- *The Morning Post and Fashionable World*, [London], 13 April, No. 7525, p. 4. The 'valuable effects of a gentleman, at his house, No. 1, Lisson-street, Paddington': 'a fine-toned piano forte, by Beck.'
- *The Morning Chronicle*, [London], 21 April, No. 8277, p. 4. Owned by 'a gentleman going to India': 'a handsome fine toned piano forte by Beck.'
- *The Daily Advertiser*, [London], 12 December, No. 21226, p. 4. '[T]he property of a lady': 'a piano-forte by Beck.'

1797

- *The Morning Chronicle*, [London], 5 May, No. 8600, p. 4. '[T]he stock and trade of an artist': 'capital piano-forte by Meck [Beck?].'

1798

- *The Times*, [London], 13 November, No. 4331, p. 5. 'Effects, High Wycombe, Bucks': 'a piano forte, by Beck.'
- *The Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, [London], 1 December, No. 21843, p. 4. The effects of 'No. 3, Adelphi Terrace', owned by 'a gentleman quitting that residence': 'a fine-toned piano forte, by Beck.'

1799

- *The Morning Herald*, [London], 2 September, No. 5914, p. 4. 'To be sold by private contract, or half their real value, (the property of a person of fashion, going abroad)': 'A fine-toned piano-forte, by Fredericus Beck, in a mahogany case, with French frame. Price [£]8 8s.'

1800

- *The Star*, [London], 5 July, No. 3628, p. 1. Auction of the estate of 'the Right Hon. the Countess of Strathmore': 'a piano-forte, by Beck.'
- *The Derby Mercury*, 13 November, No. 3582, p. 2. 'Effects of Colonel McCarthy, who is leaving the country': 'a beautiful inlaid fine ton'd piano forte, by Beck.'

1804

- *The Morning Chronicle*, [London], 27 April, No. 10901, p. 4. Auction of the estate of 'that ingenious artist, r. Thomas Malton': 'A piano forte, by Beck.'

1808

- *The Derby Mercury*, 24 March, No. 3957, p. 2. Sale of 'Kedleston Inn, three miles from Derby': 'a pleasant toned piano forte, (by Beck).'

1809

- *The Morning Post*, [London], 21 June, No. 11980, p. 4. The 'effects, of a lady quitting her house, 33, Surrey-street, Strand': 'a piano-forte, by Beck.'

1812

- *The Morning Post*, [London], 29 July, No. 12951, p. 4. Auction of Frederick Augustus Walter's estate: 'A fine-toned forte-piano, by Beck.'

1815

- *The Times*, [London], 15 July, No. 9574, p. 4. 'Genteel household furniture': 'piano-forte by Beck.'

1831

- *The Bury and Norwich Post: Or, Suffolk and Norfolk Telegraph, Essex, Cambridge, & Ely Intelligencer*, [Bury Saint Edmunds], 27 April, No. 2548, p. 3. 'Household furniture, &c.': 'piano-forte, by Beck.'

The list above contains advertisements for the sale of 30 second-hand Beck pianos. Of these, 29 are square pianos; one is a (now lost) grand piano.

An Advertisement Published by Christie's in 1786 Regarding the Sale of a Frederick Beck Piano

A catalogue of all the capital musical instruments, extensive and valuable collection of manuscript, and other music, by the most eminent composers, late the property of John Stanley, Esq; M. B. dec.:⁵ 'A fine-toned piano forte with a pedal, by Beck'.

5 J. Christie, *A Catalogue of all the Capital Musical Instruments, Extensive and Valuable Collection of Manuscript, and Other Music, by the Most Eminent Composers, Late the Property of John Stanley, Esq; M. B. dec. Consisting of a Fine-Ton'd Double-Key'd Harpsichord, by Kirckman; A Singular Full-Ton'd Ditto, Undoubted, by O. Rucker; A Piano Forte; A Clarichord; Several Capital Violins; Tenors; And a Variety of Musical Instruments, by Amati, and Other Eminent Makers; Three Remarkable Fine Busts of Milton, Shakespear, and Handel, Exquisitely Modell'd by Roubilliac, &c. &c. &c. which will be Sold by Auction, (by Order of the Executrix) by Mr. Christie, at His Great Room in Pall Mall, on Saturday the 24th of June, 1786. To be Viewed on Thursday and Friday Preceding the Sale, which will Begin at Twelve O'Clock. Catalogues May be Had as Above* (London: n.p., 1786), p. 4, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online: Gale Cengage Learning* (Canberra: National Library of Australia).

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