

## The Eighteenth-Century Musicians of Carlisle Cathedral

SIMON D. I. FLEMING

Throughout the eighteenth century, it has been suggested, there was a national deterioration in the quality of cathedral choirs. Durham, however, reversed this downward trend, and I set out to investigate whether the same was true of Carlisle. I piece together the lives of the eighteenth-century organists of Carlisle Cathedral, their roles in the musical life of the city, and investigate some of the more significant, and troublesome, lay-clerks and minor canons. It seems that the quality of music at Carlisle never rose particularly high, mainly because of the poor salaries that the Chapter paid. The main focus of my research was the cathedral records located at the Cumbria Record Office at Carlisle and the few remaining records held in the library of the cathedral itself. I have also examined the eighteenth and early nineteenth-century editions of the *Cumberland Pacquet*.

**T**HOUGH Carlisle has developed into a modern British city, it still possesses many relics from the time when its close proximity to the border with Scotland made it a prime target for Scottish raiders. This is particularly evident in the well-preserved castle and the remnants of the defensive walls that still encircle part of the city. After the unification of Britain in 1603 the Scottish raids came to an abrupt halt and Carlisle's strategic importance began to decline. A hundred years later, at the dawn of the eighteenth century, Carlisle had become a backwater. While other provincial cities, such as those located on the 'Great North Road', continued to develop (a notable example of which was Durham, whose cathedral had close ties with that at Carlisle) Carlisle remained in a much earlier age. Its roads were not maintained which made transport to the city difficult, particularly for heavy goods, and the majority of cargo from Newcastle was conveyed on pack-horses.<sup>1</sup>

In the early part of the eighteenth century, Carlisle was still confined within its city walls and there had been little building outside these fortifications. Its population retained its rural qualities and most of its two thousand inhabitants lived in simple houses of 'wood, clay and laths'. The streets, although paved with large stones, had deep gutters crossed by bridges that linked the opposite pavements. These gutters became reservoirs for filth which, in time of flooding, would inundate the street.<sup>2</sup>

At this time, Britain led the way in industrial development and urban centres such as Newcastle upon Tyne (whose prosperity was built on coal, shipping and ship-building) expanded rapidly.<sup>3</sup> Carlisle lagged behind important centres such as Newcastle and Manchester so that, before the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, there was no industry in the city. Other places, such as Bath, were able to attract large numbers of visitors through their position as important spa towns. Few affluent members of British society, however, saw cause to visit such a remote northerly place as Carlisle.<sup>4</sup> Since Carlisle was not a major source of natural resources, the prosperity that accompanied Britain's initial rise as a global power bypassed the city entirely.<sup>5</sup> Most regular commerce took place at the weekly market and the two annual fairs.<sup>6</sup> In the second half of the eighteenth

century the rate of development increased, and this resulted in the establishment of several new industries. From 1750 Carlisle became a centre for the production of textiles and, subsequently, the printing of calico (a coarse cotton fabric).<sup>7</sup> With the rise of Carlisle's prosperity, the quality of life began to improve. The roads that connected Carlisle to other major centres were repaired, and many old houses were replaced.<sup>8</sup> This, in turn, attracted more of the new middle-classes, who came both to live and visit.<sup>9</sup> Two of the most important occasions in Carlisle's calendar were race and assize weeks, both of which attracted large numbers of spectators.<sup>10</sup>

Despite Carlisle's bleak situation in the early part of the eighteenth century, there were several notable visitors to the city; they included Celia Fiennes (1662-1741) and Daniel Defoe (*c.*1660-1731). Neither of them showed any enthusiasm for the city itself and even its ancient cathedral deserved little comment. Fiennes described it as 'stately but nothing Curious' while Defoe said that the cathedral was 'a venerable old Pile'.<sup>11</sup> In common with other cathedral cities, senior members of the cathedral's hierarchy were paid exceedingly well for their services.<sup>12</sup> This was particularly evident at Durham, where its 'Prince Bishop' was one of the wealthiest in the country.<sup>13</sup> High levels of pay for those at the top might mean that cathedral employees of more lowly stature, such as musicians, were paid a pittance. As has been seen elsewhere, funds previously allocated for the production of music were diverted to other purposes and choirs were cut to an absolute minimum.<sup>14</sup> As pay dwindled, most musicians found far greater profit in the world of secular music, and there were few willing to perform sacred music at an acceptable standard.<sup>15</sup> This apathy for cathedral music was evident to Richard Eastcott (*c.*1740-1828), who attended prayers at an unidentified cathedral in the latter part of the eighteenth century. On this occasion, he heard a choir of three men, two of whom, on account of their low incomes, could not afford to purchase surplices.<sup>16</sup> In spite of this nationwide decline, from which the majority of cathedral establishments did not recover until well into the nineteenth century, there were some cathedrals, such as Durham, that chose to invest in the acquisition of good quality musicians from the south.<sup>17</sup>

Even taking secular music into account, native British music reached its lowest ebb at the start of the eighteenth century. There were no immediate successors to the genius of Henry Purcell (1659-95) and, after Purcell's death, domestic musicians were almost always out-performed by their continental revivals.<sup>18</sup> The most influential of all these musicians was Handel, whose oratorios came to dominate British concert programmes, and did much to stifle native talent.<sup>19</sup> Other foreign musicians such as Felice Giardini (1716-96), William Herschel (1738-1822), Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762), Leopold Mozart (1719-87) and Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), enjoyed considerable success in Britain and, particularly in the case of Haydn, made a small fortune from their British endeavours.<sup>20</sup> By the middle of the eighteenth century the quality of domestic musicians had significantly improved and there were several British composers of importance. Among the most notable of these were William Boyce (1711-79), Thomas Arne (1710-78), Thomas Linley jnr (1756-78), William Hayes (*c.*1708-77), and Charles Avison (1709-70).<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, their greatest successes lay in secular rather than cathedral music. Sacred music, for the most part, remained more antiquated in manner. Most of the anthems written during the

eighteenth century imitated the style of earlier Restoration musicians such as William Child (1606-97), a composer whose anthems are predominantly in four-part harmony with little contrapuntal writing and an emphasis on solo voices with little modulation between verses.<sup>22</sup>

The centre of musical life at Carlisle, as in other cities, was unquestionably the cathedral. At the start of the eighteenth century most professional musicians were employed there and it provided a stable, if rather low, income for its organist, choir members and minor canons.<sup>23</sup> The organ that was used to accompany the singing had been given to the cathedral in 1684 by the Dean, and later Bishop of Carlisle, Thomas Smith (1615-1702).<sup>24</sup> This was replaced in 1784 by an organ given by Dean Jeffrey Ekins.<sup>25</sup> Ekins' organ appears to have been of rather poor quality as, in 1805, the *Cumberland Pacquet* recorded that 'We hear that the wretched instrument, which has so long disgraced the Cathedral Church of Carlisle, is speedily to be replaced by a proper organ'.<sup>26</sup>

In 1700 Carlisle Cathedral's organist was Timothy How (c.1667-1733), who had been appointed in 1693 after a period of interregnum.<sup>27</sup> His predecessor, and father, was John How. The elder How had been in trouble with the Chapter over the neglect of his duties, and had even failed to attend the cathedral when required. As a result of his poor attitude, the production of music at Carlisle reached a particularly low point. How was by no means unique in his irreverent attitude, as most of Carlisle Cathedral's organists were, at times, negligent in their duties and had to be disciplined by the cathedral's Chapter.<sup>28</sup> John How ultimately resigned the post on 27 September 1692, but the Chapter were not quick to appoint a successor and the organist position was still vacant in June 1693. Presumably Timothy How acted as organist during the interregnum but there appears to have been concern, either over his musical ability or his dedication to the job. He was finally admitted to the post in November 1693, perhaps as a last resort.

Timothy How appears to have been a diligent organist throughout the early years of his appointment given his absence from the Chapter Act Books (which largely focus on disciplinary matters). However, by 1719, the Chapter had concerns that he was neglecting his duties. In that year he received a formal admonishment, after a previous reprimand, as he had been 'shamefully Negligent & Slothfull in Discharging the Duty of his Office' as teacher of the choristers.<sup>29</sup> He was again in trouble for the same reason the following year, and in 1721 the Chapter minutes record that How had

w.<sup>th</sup> the greatest Undutifullness & Arrogance told me [Dean Thomas Tullie] twice he would take no farther care of the Boys, and Accordingly has totally neglected to teach them for three Months last past—and has neither taken any care to correct them for their absence from Prayers nor for their irreverent behav[i]our when p.<sup>t</sup> sent.<sup>30</sup>

By his act of defiance, How risked dismissal. The cathedral's statutes made it clear that if the Master of the Choristers 'shall be found negligent or idle in teaching, after a third warning, let him be deposed from office'.<sup>31</sup> How's lack of concern over his responsibilities is not much of a surprise as other cathedral organists – such as Thomas Ebdon (1738-1811) at Durham – also neglected the tuition of choristers.<sup>32</sup> In the case of Carlisle, however, it seems that the root cause of How's attitude was his low

salary. Although the treasurer's books for Carlisle have not survived, it seems that How received little more than £25 per annum, a paltry amount when compared with James Hesletine's (c.1692-1763) pay as organist at Durham Cathedral. Hesletine received £70 per annum in 1711, which was raised to £100 in 1750.<sup>33</sup> Given the poor level of pay at Carlisle, coupled with a reluctance to increase the organist's salary to attract a better musician, How may have felt secure in his post as the Dean and Chapter would have had difficulty procuring a replacement. How remained in position until he was succeeded by the lay-clerk Abraham Dobinson (1714-48) in November 1734.

If the Chapter thought that Dobinson's appointment would bring stability, then they were to be disappointed for, because of Dobinson's continual neglect of the boys, they were forced to delegate this task to others.

Whereas the Organist Notwithstanding repeated Admonsions [*sic*] has for sever.<sup>1</sup> year's past Neglected the Due teaching of the Boys so that we have not one boy, who can perform his part in the Choir, It is therefore order'd that the teaching of the Boys shall be Comitted to the Care of M.<sup>r</sup> Peters Allowing time out of the Minor Canons Salary Three pounds And for the same. And the he shall besides have the Twenty shillings for the Care of the Musick Books.<sup>35</sup>

It was during Dobinson's tenure that there was also some deliberate damage to the organ. The Chapter minutes record that someone accessed the organ loft 'where several Indecencies [... were] committed as well as hurt done to the [organ] works there'. Both Dobinson and the clerk were instructed not to let anyone into the organ loft unless leave to do so had been obtained, and warned that anyone who entered without permission would face a suspension of three months.<sup>36</sup>

After a series of organists drawn from the city's environs, Dobinson's successor, Charles Pick (1725-81), originated from York. Pick's father, another Charles (d.1754), was a town wait and came from a family of musicians.<sup>37</sup> Pick was appointed organist at Carlisle Cathedral on 12 January 1749 and admitted the following June.<sup>38</sup> Despite the prestige of the cathedral organist post, Pick's salary was still relatively poor, though the Dean and Chapter raised it by £7 per annum on his admission and by a further £8 in 1779. The low level of Pick's wages is particularly evident since, in 1751, he applied for the post of organist at the Holy Trinity Church Hull, a position that attracted a salary of £40 per annum. Unfortunately for Pick, he was eliminated in the first round and the post ultimately went to Matthias Hawdon (1732-89), a pupil of Avison.<sup>39</sup> Pick remained in post at Carlisle until his death in 1781. His obituary referred to him as 'a gentleman of considerable merit in his profession, of a lively social disposition, and respected by a numerous acquaintance.'<sup>40</sup>

Pick's successor was Thomas Greatorex (1758-1851) who also came from outside the city. He originated from Derbyshire and had begun to establish himself in London before poor health forced him to relocate to a northern climate.<sup>41</sup> He was subsequently appointed organist at Carlisle Cathedral in November 1781 at a salary of £40.<sup>42</sup> James Boswell (1740-95), who attended a service in the cathedral on 16 March 1783, commented that Greatorex 'was a very good organist.'<sup>43</sup> His tenure was largely unproblematic. He appears to have been diligent in his job and there were fewer problems with the choir during Greatorex's time at Carlisle.

Greatorrex did not remain in the city for long, and moved to Newcastle in 1785. He went on to become organist at Westminster Abbey in 1819 and professor of the organ and pianoforte at the Royal Academy of Music on its establishment in 1822.<sup>44</sup> On his departure from Carlisle he 'presented to the Carlisle Dispensary, a new electrical apparatus, of his own construction.'<sup>45</sup>

The last organist of Carlisle Cathedral during the eighteenth century was Thomas Hill (1762-1845), who had previously been organist at Sedgefield, County Durham.<sup>46</sup> Hill appears to have had good relations with the Durham musicians as large amounts of the repertory that he introduced at Carlisle originated from there. The choir's part-books contain music by the Durham Cathedral organists William Greggs and Thomas Ebdon, and music by the Durham lay-clerks James Radcliffe and Ralph Banks jnr. There is also a set of responses by the Durham precentor, P. Penson, and a fragment of a psalm tune by William Paxton.<sup>47</sup> Other pieces composed by Durham musicians survive in a book of chants that appears to have been compiled by Hill. The selection includes examples by James Hesletine, William Evance, George Ashton, Edward Gregory, John Mathews and William Henshaw. Surprisingly there are few surviving pieces by any of the Carlisle Cathedral organists. The chant book includes an example by Hill; another by him was published in 1829.<sup>48</sup> There also survives, in manuscript, a fragment of a psalm tune called 'Carlisle'.<sup>49</sup>

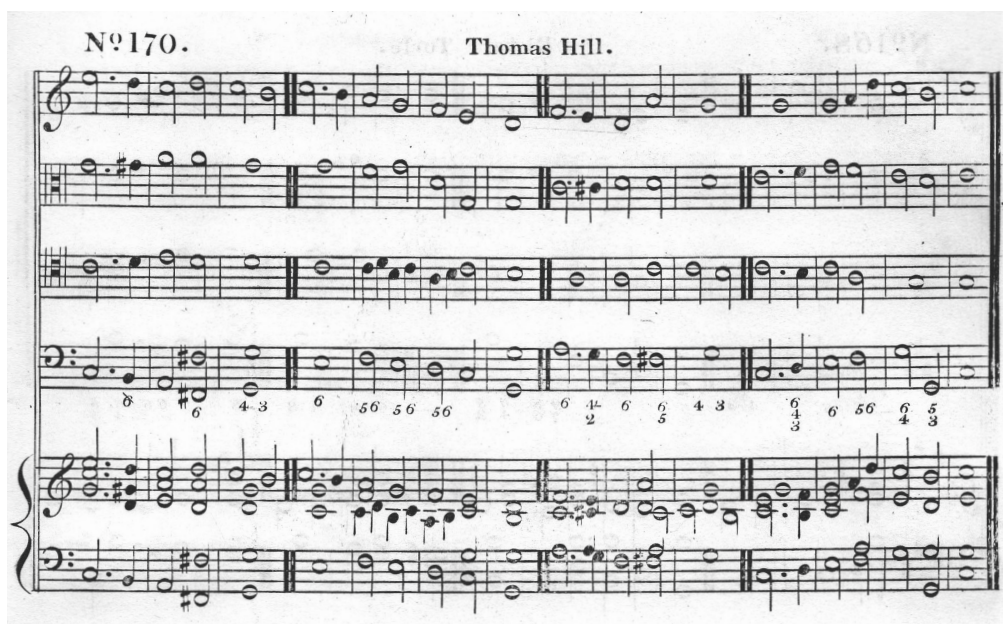


FIG. 1.

Despite Hill's interest in introducing new music into the choir's repertory, by the second decade of the nineteenth century his enthusiasm for his organist duties had begun to wane. In June 1815, after he had received several admonishments, Hill was warned that he faced dismissal unless he stopped neglecting his duty. This warning appears to have been ignored as on 23 June 1817, Hill was reprimanded and fined



five guineas 'for Tipling and frequenting the Cockpit' and was informed that if he would face dismissal if he was caught there again.<sup>50</sup> A few months later Hill fell ill, so a deputy from Durham was procured. According to the Durham Act Books only one choir member was allowed leave at this time, and that was the chorister Richard Ingham who was given six weeks leave on 13 September 1817.<sup>51</sup> Ingham was an interesting choice as he was only eleven at the time.<sup>52</sup> The reason for choosing Ingham over a more experienced organist could have been two-fold. Firstly, that Ingham was a capable organist even at this age and would have been able to do what was required. Secondly that Ingham, given his youth, would not have been as expensive to employ as a more experienced organist. Since Hill was expected to pay Ingham's salary himself, it would have made financial sense for him to employ a younger, cheaper organist. It is unlikely that Hill ever paid him £70 per annum (which was Hill's entire salary) as recommended by the Carlisle Chapter.<sup>53</sup>

From 1823 Hill was able to supplement his salary by £8 per annum for copying music, but this payment was stopped in 1825 when Hill had again become 'negligent and remiss in his duty'.<sup>54</sup> The payments for copying were reinstated the following year. He also received 10 shillings per annum for the use of his harpsichord, which would have been used for choir rehearsals.

Hill remained in post until 1833 when he was forced into retirement. The Chapter minutes for 23 November recommend that 'our Organist M.<sup>r</sup> Thomas Hill having become by age and Infirmities incompetent to the duties of the Office be removed'.<sup>55</sup> He was replaced by Ingham, who received £70 per annum.<sup>56</sup> Hill did receive a weekly pension of 20 shillings, a good amount. Despite the apparent poor state of Hill's health he lived for a further decade and died on the 6 January 1845. His obituary recorded that he was 'much respected by all who knew him'.<sup>57</sup>

The Carlisle cathedral's statutes set out that the cathedral musicians were to consist of eight minor canons (one of whom was the organist), four lay-clerks, a Deacon, a Sub-Deacon and six choristers.<sup>58</sup> Lay-clerks could also have the role of sacrist or subsacrist, while others were appointed as parish clerk at either St Mary's (the cathedral) or St Cuthbert's Church.<sup>59</sup> St Cuthbert's also had a singing school for children that may have been run by a lay-clerk.<sup>60</sup> Minor canons, such as George Braithwait, increased their pay by 4 shillings looking after the library,<sup>61</sup> while another became Chaplain to the Carlisle Corporation.<sup>62</sup>

As in the case of the organist, an important factor in the standard of music produced at Carlisle Cathedral was the salaries offered and it appears that the wages of the choir also remained low. Although we do not know what the lay-clerk's salaries were throughout most of the century, it is known that in 1811 they received a mere £17 per annum. This is in stark contrast to the lay-clerks at Durham, who were paid £50.<sup>63</sup> Given the poor levels of pay it is little surprise that there were regular difficulties with getting some to fulfil their duties and, for this reason, it is unlikely that the quality of the cathedral choir ever rose particularly high.<sup>64</sup> Only a few reports on the choir's performances survive. William Nicholson, appointed Bishop of Carlisle in 1702, recorded that at his installation the choir sang several anthems. One of these anthems,

sung during the procession to the Deanery, was ‘lost by y<sup>e</sup> ringing of y<sup>e</sup> bells’.<sup>65</sup> On the 23 August 1778, Boswell attended service at the cathedral and thought that ‘the chanting here [was] more agreeable than usual’, and a review of a service held by the Freemasons in 1806 records that an anthem was performed ‘by Messrs. *Pattinson, Caldwell, and Nixon*, in an impressive manner’.<sup>66</sup>

The high level of absenteeism by lay-clerks and minor canons was a frequent issue at Carlisle. The problem was so severe that, in 1695, the Chapter was forced to order that ‘every Petty Canon and Singing man ... who shall be absent himselfe from prayers ... without a reasonable excuse’ would be fined.<sup>67</sup> That such problems arose at Carlisle is not a surprise as similar incidents occurred at other cathedrals, including Durham.<sup>68</sup> Given the poor rate of pay, it is obvious that opportunities to earn money outside the cathedral would appeal, and certainly a number of the lay-clerks were less than dedicated to their jobs and may well have been involved in other activities.<sup>69</sup> For example, in 1720 Richard Fenton was admonished for neglecting his duty, while John Young’s contempt for the Chapter was plainly evident in his unauthorised absence in 1737 that resulted in his place being declared vacant.<sup>70</sup> Another instance occurred in 1754 when John Peters was cautioned for ‘absenting from it [the cathedral] for several weeks to remote parts without being asked leave or acquainting any one of the Prebendaries with his intention’.<sup>71</sup> An additional example of a negligent lay-clerk can be found in John Shearwood (d.1731). He had been admitted in 1712, but three years later he was disciplined (after several reprimands) for having ‘been Notoriously guilty of Neglecting his Duty of Attending Divine Service’. He received a similar reprimand the following year and a further two admonishments, along with William Addison, in 1719. However, by 1728 Shearwood was, due to his poor health, granted a minor canons salary of £8, so possibly he may have become more reliable in later years.<sup>72</sup> Another lay-clerk, Robert Scott, was disciplined for neglect of duties in 1745. His contempt for Dean Robert Bolton is evident in that he went so far as to brazenly tell him that he did not require his lay-clerk’s position. As a result of his outburst, and subsequent lack of repentance, he was suspended from his duties:

Robert Scott Notwithstanding the Admonition lately given him Continuing to neglect his Duty as Deacon of this Church I told him about a fortnight ago privately of his Fault representing to him what would be the Consequence of persisting in it to which he in a very insolent manner answered that if he was turned out of his place he could live without it. I took no immediate Notice of his rude behaviour expecting that reflecting upon it he would make a proper Submission but finding him not in the least disposed to this I have now publicly admonished him and suspended him from the profits of his place for six Month from the date hereof.<sup>73</sup>

Intoxication was a problem for some lay-clerks, in particular Joseph Nixon who had several contretemps with the Cathedral Chapter. In 1711 he was admonished for being ‘excessively drunk’ and was ordered ‘to live soberly & temperately, as becometh a Christian’.<sup>74</sup> Two years later he was in trouble for being intoxicated, and for the attempted theft of money from the merchant Isaac Huntington. Nixon was subsequently suspended for two months.<sup>75</sup> In 1730 he was again found to be ‘Excessively Drunk’ having used ‘very Indecent Language And Abused and Threat[e]ned John Shearwood’. Yet again, in 1736, he was disciplined not only for being drunk but for ‘Cursing Bishop Dean and Canons’.<sup>76</sup> William Pattinson was another. He was suspended for six months in 1815 for drunkenness, with the threat of dismissal if he

was 'to be found drinking in an Alehouse.'<sup>77</sup> In the same year John Mullender was admonished for drunkenness and, in the following year, John Brown was expelled for 'gross Immorality'.<sup>78</sup> Although we do not know what Brown's crime was, it was serious enough to warrant his banishment from Carlisle for three years.

Some of the lay-clerks even brought their poor behaviour into the cathedral. In 1735 William Briggs was disciplined for his 'misbehaviour in the Time of Divine Service', and two years later Christopher Hall was expelled for his conduct.<sup>79</sup> Even some of the minor canons were disciplined for their unacceptable behaviour. A notable instance occurred in 1704 when the minor canons John Calvert and Thomas Bewley were both disciplined for 'having abus'd one another in the vestry both by words and actions'. Bewley was reported to have been 'Assaulting and Kicking' Calvert, while Calvert was 'Kicking, Boxing, and by words abuseing [*sic*] M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Bewley'.<sup>80</sup> They were both suspended for five months. Bewley had a long history of conflict with the Dean and Chapter. In 1702 he was admonished for his refusal to read prayers having disobeyed an earlier request. The Chapter did not take what appears to have been a minor act of rebellion lightly, for he was fined 6s. 8d., a substantial amount.<sup>81</sup> Other minor canons were even more negligent in fulfilling their duties. A notable example was John Scott who, in 1700, was dismissed from his post 'for his impudent absenting himselfe from ye Duties of his place (contrary to express orders of the Vice Dean and Canons Resident) [*sic*]'.<sup>82</sup>

With regard to the choristers, there appear to have been few incidents of poor behaviour, but there were problems in retaining boys in the choir. Male children from the local environs were encouraged to become choristers, and received a nominal salary for their efforts plus a free education. Given the impoverished circumstances in which most of Carlisle's inhabitants lived, particularly in the early part of the century, it is understandable that many families submitted their children for consideration. Nevertheless, it appears that once these children had reached an age when they could earn a larger salary outside the cathedral establishment, they were likely to be withdrawn. In order to alleviate this problem the Chapter announced in 1766 that

Whereas several complaints have been made by the Master of the Choristers, that many of them, after they have been sometime instructed, and when they are of the greatest service in the Choir, quit the Church, It is therefore Ordered that for the future upon every Chorister's Admission, [a] Bond shall be taken in the penalty of ten pounds, for their good behaviour, and continuance in the Church till dismissed by us.<sup>83</sup>

Musicians in provincial centres were always on the look out for opportunities to boost their incomes outside the church and as a result many major towns and cities witnessed a burgeoning in their secular musical life.<sup>84</sup> In the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, there had been a genteel influx into most urban centres. Many of these newcomers were wealthy landowners, but there was also a growth in the number of secondary professionals, such as accountants, bankers, architects and dentists, and this was accompanied by an expansion of the retailing and manufacturing trades.<sup>85</sup> Many of these *Nouveaux Riches* had disposable incomes that they used to finance their interests and maintain a lifestyle in keeping with their new social standing. A large number used their new-found wealth to attend the numerous concerts, balls, assemblies, and other important social occasions that sprang up at this time. As music was viewed as an



important faculty of middle-class life, many also chose to patronise musical events and musical publications, and to develop their musical skills through instrumental or vocal lessons.<sup>86</sup> It is likely that each of Carlisle Cathedral's organists would have provided private tuition. Greatorex, for example, advertised in the *Pacquet* that he gave lessons on the harpsichord. He also tuned church and domestic organs, and procured musical instruments from London on behalf of local residents.<sup>87</sup> The organisation of public concerts was another way to create extra income, and it appears that most of Carlisle Cathedral's organists were involved with concert promotion. In other towns and cities also, the organist at the main church or cathedral acted as the chief concert promoter. Examples from the north of England include Avison at Newcastle, John Garth and Thomas Ebdon at Durham, James Nares (1715-83) at York, and William Howgill (1735-90) at Whitehaven.<sup>88</sup> Our knowledge of Carlisle's concert life is limited since the first locally produced newspaper, the Whitehaven-based *Cumberland Pacquet*, was not established until 1774.<sup>89</sup> Before that date, most of Carlisle's residents would have acquired the latest news from the Newcastle newspapers, which rarely included any news or advertisements from the north west, but it seems likely that concerts were established long before the first known example, held in 1777.<sup>90</sup>

The staging of public concerts had been an important way for a musician to earn a living since their establishment in London in 1672, but this form of musical entrepreneurship does not appear to have reached the north until much later.<sup>91</sup> The first recorded Newcastle concert was held in 1712 and the first at Durham in 1735.<sup>92</sup> There was also a series of subscription concerts held in both cities, the earliest of which was established by Avison at Newcastle in 1735.<sup>93</sup> Carlisle never appears to have had a subscription series, but presumably occasional concerts would have been held long before 1777, most probably during race and assize weeks. Dobinson may have been one of the first to organise a public concert, and he was presumably involved with the Carlisle Musical Society. This society subscribed to several of Avison's publications, and Dobinson was a subscriber to Avison's Op. 2 concertos from 1740.<sup>94</sup>

Pick was the first known organist to have been involved with concert organisation but advertisements for his concerts never appeared in the local newspaper. We would have been unaware of Pick's concerts if it were not for a single item that appeared in the *Cumberland Pacquet* in 1777:

Last week, at Mr. Pick's Concert in Carlisle, there was a very genteel audience; we insert this at the instance of several of the gentlemen who wish it to be considered as an acknowledgement of the favour received from the gentleman (a member of the Musical Society of Whitehaven) who so politely complied with their request, and obligingly formed a principal part of their entertainment.<sup>95</sup>

Unlike Pick, Greatorex regularly advertised his concerts in the *Cumberland Pacquet*, the first of which was held on 10 July 1782. This took the form of a benefit that was timed to coincide with Carlisle's race week in order to guarantee a good return.<sup>96</sup> From the review, the concert was a resounding success:

The company at the Public Concert on Wednesday morning was extremely brilliant, and the performance exceeded any thing of the kind heard there for many years past. There were upwards of twenty instrumental performers, and the vocal parts were executed by Mr. Greatorix, [*sic*] sen. and Miss Greatorix.<sup>97</sup>

Hill also held concerts at Carlisle, and was presumably involved with the concerts at Durham and Newcastle before his relocation. Hill's first concert at Carlisle was held in 1786, on which occasion he was assisted by the band from the 40th Regiment of Foot, who would have been stationed in Carlisle at that time. The use of visiting regimental bands for concerts was a regular occurrence, and they were utilised in such a way at Whitehaven, Newcastle, and Durham:<sup>98</sup>

We hear from Carlisle, that Mr. Hill's concert, on Tuesday evening, at the assembly room, was honoured with a very numerous and genteel company; all the principal people of the city and neighbourhood were present, and the officers of the 40th regiment. – The performance, which was assisted by the regimental band, was greatly applauded.<sup>99</sup>

The Cumberland Militia, Carlisle's own military outfit, were also involved in musical events in the city. For example, in 1776 they gave 'several genteel entertainments ... and an assembly'.<sup>100</sup>

Occasionally concert organisers would bring talent from further afield in order to increase ticket sales. This was a common occurrence, and singers from Durham Cathedral regularly went to perform at concerts and other important musical events at far-flung places. Individual Durham lay-clerk's are known to have travelled as far as Aberdeen, Manchester, and Louth in Lincolnshire.<sup>101</sup> Other cathedral choirs also pooled their resources, most notable being the choirs of Worcester, Hereford and Gloucester, whose 'Three Choirs Festival' was established in the early eighteenth-century.<sup>102</sup> At Carlisle, Hill took advantage of his close links with the choir at Durham when he brought the lay-clerk, John Friend, to perform at a 1787 assize concert:

ASSIZE CONCERT.  
At Mrs. ALKIN's Long-Room, CARLISLE  
On TUESDAY morning the 14th of *August*,  
1787, will be performed A

CONCERT of *Vocal* and *Instrumental* MUSIC,  
Under the Direction of Mr. HILL.

The Vocal Part by Mr. FRIEND, from the Cathedral, *Durham*.  
FIRST VIOLIN and SOLO CONCERTO,  
Mr BANKS, from *Edinburgh*.<sup>103</sup>

The concert, as the review indicates, was well received.

Mr. Hill's assize concert at Carlisle gave very great satisfaction to a numerous and polite audience. The vocal part by Mr. Friend, from Durham, and a solo concerto on the violin, by Mr. Banks, from Edinburgh, were highly applauded: as was the whole of the performance, which, by desire, was repeated the next evening, to a very genteel company.<sup>104</sup>

It appears to have been a coincidence that Friend was in Carlisle on the day of the funeral of Bishop Edmund Law (1703-87). Given the reputation of the choir at Durham it is little surprise that Friend, one of their most able lay-clerks, took part in this ceremony. It was clearly a special occasion as a review of the performance appeared in the *Pacquet*.

The remains of this respectable prelate were interred in the cathedral Church of Carlisle on Saturday, when Dr. Nares's anthem, *The souls of the righteous*, &c. was performed to a very numerous congregation, by Messrs. *Friend* and *Banks* from DURHAM, accompanied on the organ by

Mr. *Hill*. The performance was solemn and affecting, and particularly the solo by Mr. *Friend*, which was executed with great taste and judgement.<sup>105</sup>

Friend returned to Carlisle the following year to perform at another concert, at which a Philippe La Glace from Paris played first violin and performed a solo concerto.<sup>106</sup> La Glace subsequently set himself up as a dancing teacher in Carlisle.<sup>107</sup> Occasionally musicians would make the journey to Carlisle on their own initiative, although they were few in number. One of the only known London musicians to perform at Carlisle was Charles Dibdin (1745-1814), who came in 1800 as part of his tour of the north west.<sup>108</sup>

As well as concerts, Hill may have been involved in other Carlisle musical activities. He was certainly a freemason and, in all likelihood, organist at the Carlisle Masonic lodge, the 'Lodge of Harmony'. Furthermore, he may have been involved with other musical events that took place at the lodge, particularly those associated with St John's Day.<sup>109</sup> Hill also played the organ for the Masonic service held at the cathedral in 1806.<sup>110</sup> Other regular events with which he, and other cathedral organists, might have been involved include assemblies, most notably those organised to coincide with the meeting of the Cumberland Hunt.<sup>111</sup> Hill also travelled to Whitehaven in 1819 to perform at a public concert, but appears to have had no involvement with the Carlisle Musical Festival, held in September 1807.<sup>112</sup>

During the eighteenth century Carlisle Cathedral was undoubtedly a centre of musical production in the city, but in spite of its significance as a place of worship it appears that the quality of the choir never rose particularly high. Many of the musicians employed at the cathedral had an indifferent attitude towards their cathedral duties, and a number of them were admonished for their lack of dedication. Others were disciplined for their involvement in activities that the Cathedral Chapter considered unsuitable. As a result of these problems, most of which appear to have been caused by low levels of pay, the deterioration in cathedral music was keenly felt at Carlisle. The link with Durham Cathedral was of importance but, even though Durham maintained the quality of its own cathedral music, Carlisle's Dean and Chapter made no attempt to emulate Durham's success.

Most of the musicians employed at Carlisle Cathedral would have been involved with musical events outside the cathedral establishment, whether in concerts, assemblies, balls, Masonic meetings, or other important social events that involved music. Most concerts were organised by the cathedral organist and, as the wealth of the city's inhabitants grew, such public events became more common.

Despite the problems, Carlisle's musicians played an important role in the musical life of the cathedral. Moreover, they made a significant contribution to the wider secular musical and social life of Carlisle, which reflected Carlisle's growth from a small rural backwater into an important provincial city.

*s.d.i.fleming@durham.ac.uk*

## Notes and references

1. W. Hutchinson, *The History and Antiquities of Cumberland*, 2 vols (Carlisle, 1794), II, 661
2. *Ibid*, II, 659
3. S. Fleming, 'A Century of Music Production in Durham City 1711-1811: A Documentary Study', (PhD dissertation, Durham, 2009), 4
4. J. Burchell, *Polite of Commercial Concerts? Concert Management and Orchestra Repertoire in Edinburgh, Bath, Oxford, Manchester, and Newcastle, 1730-1799* (London, 1996), 3
5. The town of Whitehaven, which lies on the west coast of Cumbria (then Cumberland), grew into an important port due to the need for mined resources, particularly coal. As such, it was a more important socio-economic centre than Carlisle, even though it was not easily accessible by land. D. Hay, *Whitehaven An Illustrated History* (Whitehaven, 1987), 27-30
6. Hutchinson, *Antiquities of Cumberland*, II, 660
7. *Ibid*, II, 662-63
8. *Ibid*, II, 662
9. P. Clark and R. Houston, 'Culture and Leisure 1700-1840' in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain Volume II 1540-1840* P. Clark, (ed). (Cambridge, 2000), 594
10. These weeks were also important occasions in the calendar of other provincial towns and cities, such as Newcastle, Durham, and York
11. C. Fiennes, *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, C. Morris, (ed) (London, 1949), 202; D. Defoe, *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, P. Rogers, (ed) 3 vols (London, 1983), III, 157
12. Fleming, 'A Century of Music', 5
13. M. Roberts, *Durham. 1000 Years of History* (Tempus, 1994, 2003), 185 The Prince Bishop originates from the Anglo-Saxon community of St Cuthbert. The bishop's powers were greatly reduced by Henry VIII and abolished in 1836
14. N. Temperley, 'Music in Church' Concert Life in England I in *The Blackwell History of Music in Britain, IV: The Eighteenth Century*, H. Diack Johnston, and R. Fiske (eds) (Oxford, 1990), 358
15. *Ibid*, 359
16. R. Eastcott, *Sketches of the Origin, Progress and Effects of Music* (Bath, 1793), 276
17. Fleming (2009), 23-25.
18. R. Fiske, 'Music and Society' in H. Diack Johnstone and R. Fiske, (eds) *The Blackwell History of Music in Britain, IV: The Eighteenth Century*, (Oxford, 1990), 3
19. Fleming, 'A Century of Music', 122
20. J. Webster and G. Feder, 'Haydn, Joseph' *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/44593pg4> (accessed 21 April 2010)
21. Avison had contacts in Carlisle and occasionally visited the city to attend the gatherings of a group of Carlisle gentlemen who met to perform music and debate 'learned' matters. James Farish (1712/3-93) was a member of this group. He was a minor canon at Carlisle Cathedral between 1740 and 1793, and held the posts of Vicar at Stanwix and Rector at Aspatria. Another member was Dr John Brown (1715-66), who was an able musician and vicar of St Nicholas' Church, Newcastle. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 5 February 1793; W. Gilpin, *Memoirs of Dr. Richard Gilpin of Scaleby Castle in Cumberland* W. Jackson, (ed) (London, 1879), 74-82
22. N. Temperley, 'Anglican and Episcopalian church music' *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. Macy, L. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed 19 January 2008)
23. Temperley, 'Music in Church', 361-62. Carlisle had two town waits who were employed to provide music for important civic occasions, such as those that accompanied 'Lady's Day' and 'St Matthew's Day'. One of the longest serving waits was John Peascod, who was appointed by 1756 and remained in post until his death in 1775. Another wait was Joseph Strong who was given a cloak by the Carlisle Corporation in 1762. Strong, who had been blind since infancy, built at least two organs and walked to London to hear the organist John Stanley play. GB-CAS(C): CA/2/2-8, CA/4/4-8; *Cumberland Pacquet*, 6 March 1798; Hutchinson, *Antiquities of Cumberland*, II, 666
24. The earlier organ, which the 1684 instrument replaced, was donated to the Parish Church in Appleby where it survives
25. This organ had cost 'about two hundred pounds'. Ekins was also the rector at Sedgefield. E. Mackenzie, *A Historical, Topographical, and Descriptive View of the County of Northumberland* 2nd edn. (Newcastle, 1825), 179
26. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 17 December 1805. The new organ, built by John Avery for £585, was opened

in April 1806. The cathedral possessed a set of bells in the tower that were rung to celebrate special occasions such as the end of war. In 1789 a carillon was temporarily fitted that enabled a melody to be played on the bells. It was such a novel event that it deserved comment in the local newspaper: 'The inhabitants of Carlisle were entertained two or three days in the last week by a person who has a most adroit method of ringing a peal of bells without any assistance and in as quick time as the tunes are generally played in. By fastening cords to the tongues of the bells, and fixing them in a square of about two feet, he chimes with great dexterity all the popular airs. –It was curious to hear from the steeple of the cathedral church of that city, *Mrs. Casey, Malbrooke, There's nae luck about the house*, and a great variety of country-dances, song-tunes, &c. ginging with a rapidity and spirit which at once surprized and delighted.' *Cumberland Pacquet*, 15 April 1806; 27 May 1789

27. Most of the source material comes from the cathedral's Act Books which are located at the Cumbria Record Office at Carlisle (GB-CAS (C): D&C1/9-12). There was another Timothy How, who does not appear to have been a close relation of the organist. He was a member of the Carlisle Corporation and mayor between 1722-23 and 1731-22. GB-CAS (C): Corporation Minutes CA/2/2-8
28. Such a situation appears far from unusual. For example, the organist at Lincoln Minster, Charles Murgetroyd, survived suspension, admonishments for negligence, and debt, to die in office. There were similar issues with the organists at both Exeter and Rochester cathedrals. N. Shaw Thistlethwaite, 'Music and Worship, 1660-1980' in D. Owen (ed), *A History of Lincoln Minster* (Cambridge, 1994), 89; W. Shaw, *The Succession of Organists of the Chapel Royal and the Cathedrals of England and Wales from c. 1538* (Oxford, 1991), 112-14, 237-38
29. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/10
30. Ibid
31. J. Prescott, *The Statutes of the Cathedral Church of Carlisle* (London, 1903), 63. Despite the issues with How, in 1720 the Chapter paid Thomas Hollister £60 to repair the organ
32. Fleming, 'A Century of Music', 15
33. Ibid, 9
34. Dobinson was baptised on 5 June 1714 at the cathedral
35. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/10. Little else is known about Dobinson's life. He married a Mary Simpson at the cathedral on 9 January 1741, and his will records that he owned a spinet and a virginal, valued together at £3 10s. Despite the inclusion of mundane articles such as sheets, tablecloths and blankets, his will makes no mention of any printed or manuscript music. GB-CAS (C): P1748
36. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/10
37. Pick was baptised at the church of St Michael le Belfrey, York, on 17 July 1725. He was appointed organist of the same church in 1742. D. Griffiths, *A Musical Place of the First Quality* (York, 1994), 61
38. On Pick's appointment, Ambrose Brownless was contracted to repair the organ. He received £45 for his services
39. *Newcastle Journal*, 22 June 1751
40. Ibid, 24 April 1781. Pick had married an Elizabeth Robinson on 26 June 1750 at Holme Cultram Abbey. She died in 1763
41. N. Salwey, 'Greateorex, Thomas (1758-1831)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11366> (accessed 1 October 2009)
42. At the same time as Thomas' appointment, his father, Anthony Greateorex (1730-1814), was appointed precentor, minor canon, and subsacrist at Carlisle Cathedral. Anthony was a self-taught musician and an organist. Salwey, 'Greateorex'
43. I. Lustig, (ed): *Boswell: The Applause of the Jury 1782-1785* (London, 1982), 70
44. Salwey, 'Greateorex'
45. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 7 June 1785. The dispensary was opened in 1782
46. Hill may in fact have been sub-organist to John Garth (1721-1810), the organist at Sedgfield, and may have been encouraged to come to Carlisle by Jeffrey Ekins. Hill's father, Thomas Hill snr, followed his son to Carlisle, where he died in 1812. *Cumberland Pacquet* 4 February 1812
47. GB-CAS (C): D&C/Music 4/1/1-5; GB-CL (Carlisle Cathedral Library): Uncatalogued manuscript books
48. GB-CAS (C): D&C/Music 4/1/9; J. West, *Cathedral Organists Past and Present* (London, 1899), 11; A. Bennett and W. Marshall, *Cathedral Chants* 2nd edn. (London, c. 1830), 79. In 1827, Hill appears to have purchased some music for the choir without getting permission from the Chapter. As a result, it was decreed that 'in future no new music [was] to be procured for the Cathedral without the express order in writing'



49. GB-CL: Uncatalogued manuscript books
50. GB-CAS(C): D&C1/12
51. GB-DRca (Durham Cathedral Archives): B/AA/11
52. Ingham was born on 31 October 1805 and baptised at St Margaret's Church, Durham, on 26 June 1808. He was a chorister at Durham Cathedral between 1812 and 1823
53. In 1822 John Routledge, one of the choristers, was apprenticed to Hill
54. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/12
55. Ibid
56. Ingham had been the organist of St Mary's, Gateshead before his relocation to Carlisle. West, *Cathedral Organists*, 11
57. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 14 January 1845. Hill had married a Mary Stalker at the cathedral on 15 May 1792. She was baptised at Castle Sowerby in 1775, and died in 1831
58. Prescott, *Statutes of the Cathedral Church*, 52-53, 62-63. The minor canons were expected to sing with the choir
59. For example, in 1755 Matthew Nixon was appointed parish clerk at St Cuthbert's. He remained in post until 1773
60. GB-CAS (C): PR79/33
61. Braithwait was a minor canon from 1675 until 1754
62. In 1755 the minor canon, James Farish, was appointed Chaplain at an annual salary of £10. Farish's predecessor as chaplain, John Brown, was appointed Chamberlain to the Carlisle Corporation in 1755 and Bailiff in 1760. Brown was a minor canon from 1738 until 1750
63. Fleming, 'A Century of Music', 24
64. Temperley, 'Music in Church', 359
65. W. Collingwood (ed): 'Bishop Nicholson's Diaries Part II' CW2, ii, 171
66. J. Reed (ed), *Boswell Laird of Auchinleck 1778-1782* (London, 1977), 10; *Cumberland Pacquet*, 1 July 1806
67. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/9
68. Fleming, 'A Century of Music', 27-30
69. Ibid, 8. For example, the Durham lay-clerk, Richard Elford, was disciplined in 1699 for 'neglecting y<sup>e</sup> Quire, & Singing in y<sup>e</sup> Playhouse'
70. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/9
71. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/11. Peters was a lay-clerk between 1747 and 1770
72. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/10
73. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/10
74. Ibid Nixon was a lay-clerk from 1690 until 1737
75. GB-CAS (C): D&C/Choir 1 4/2/1. Despite his poor behaviour, Nixon was admitted as an almsman in 1714
76. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/10
77. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/12
78. Mullender was also suspended for three months in 1817 for his improper behaviour in the cathedral
79. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/10. Such issues were by no means limited to the musicians. Robert Harrison, the late seventeenth-century schoolmaster, was in trouble several times over his poor behaviour. In 1689 it was reported that he was 'frequently drunk, and uttering & maintaining very ill Principles', and in 1690 he was reprimanded for his 'scandalously loose and debauch'd Behaviour'. He was further admonished in 1692 for being rude but remained in post until 1698. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/9
80. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/10
81. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/9
82. Ibid
83. GB-CAS (C): D&C1/11
84. Clark, *Cambridge Urban History*, 573
85. Ibid, 592-94
86. P. Borsay, 'Concert Topography and Provincial Towns in Eighteenth-Century England' in S. Wollenberg and S. McVeigh, (eds) *Concert Life in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Aldershot, 2004), 19
87. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 2 July 1782
88. *Newcastle Courant*, 7 August 1736, 5 July 1746; *Newcastle Advertiser*, 29 September 1792; *York Courant*, 30 March 1756; *Cumberland Pacquet*, 23 March 1788
89. Hutchinson, *Antiquities of Cumberland*, II, 83
90. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 14 April 1777

- <sup>91</sup>. S. McVeigh, 'Introduction' in *Concert Life* in Wollenberg and McVeigh, (eds) *Concert Life*, 1
- <sup>92</sup>. M. Tilmouth, 'A Calendar of References to Music in Newspapers published in London and the Provinces (1660-1719)' *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* (London, 1961), 82; *North County Journal*, 21 June 1735
- <sup>93</sup>. *Newcastle Courant*, 20 September 1735, 20 September 1740
- <sup>94</sup>. The musical society subscribed to Avison's 1742 *Two Concertos*, his 1744 concertos based on the lessons of Domenico Scarlatti, and his 1751 Op.3 concertos, presumably for performance in private. It seems likely that, at a minimum, the musical society consisted of string players and a harpsichordist. C. Avison, *Twelve Concertos in Seven Parts ... done from two Books of Lessons for the Harpsicord. Composed by Domenico Scarlatti* (London, 1744)
- <sup>95</sup>. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 14 April 1777
- <sup>96</sup>. *Ibid*, 2 July 1782
- <sup>97</sup>. *Ibid*, 16 July 1782. 'Miss Greateorix' presumably refers to Thomas' eldest daughter, Martha, who became a successful organist. Salwey, 'Greateorex'
- <sup>98</sup>. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 28 August 1783; *Newcastle Courant*, 6 May 1769; *Newcastle Journal*, 8 April 1769
- <sup>99</sup>. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 7 June 1786
- <sup>100</sup>. *Ibid*, 28 November 1776
- <sup>101</sup>. H. Farmer, *Music Making in the Olden Days* (London, 1950), 71; *York Courant*, 6 September 1785; *Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury*, 9 June 1786
- <sup>102</sup>. Fiske, 'Music and Society', 20
- <sup>103</sup>. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 22 August 1787
- <sup>104</sup>. *Ibid*, 29 August 1787
- <sup>105</sup>. *Ibid*, 22 August 1787. The Banks referred to in the report may have been Ralph Banks jnr, a lay-clerk from Durham. Banks went on to become the organist at Rochester Cathedral in 1792. Fleming, 'A Century of Music', 27
- <sup>106</sup>. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 12 November 1788
- <sup>107</sup>. *Ibid*, 19 November 1793. At any one time, several dancing tutors worked in Carlisle. Most did not work solely in the city but taught in other large towns in the area. For example, one of the instructors during the 1770s was a Mr Cowen who also taught at Whitehaven and Workington. *Cumberland Pacquet* 11 November 1777, 5 August 1777, 7 March 1776
- <sup>108</sup>. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 6 May 1800
- <sup>109</sup>. *Ibid*, 1 July 1806, 8 July 1788, 8 July 1789. In 1806 'Many excellent Masonic, constitutional, and humorous [*sic*] songs were sung' at the Masonic meeting that marked St John's Day. This event was followed by ball
- <sup>110</sup>. *Cumberland Pacquet*, 1 July 1806
- <sup>111</sup>. *Ibid*, 4 November 1788, 11 November 1788
- <sup>112</sup>. *Ibid*, 2 February 1819, 1 September 1807. The Musical Festival was held between 9 and 11 September at Carlisle Cathedral and at the Assembly Rooms. The works performed included Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *Creation*, and the oratorio *Redemption* by Samuel Arnold. Samuel Webbe played the cathedral organ for these performances