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Elizabeth Harris buys a ticket for a concert by the Mozarts (30 Apr 1765)

Dexter Edge

London account book of Elizabeth Harris
Hampshire Record Office, 27M56/1, fols. 12r, 13r, 14r

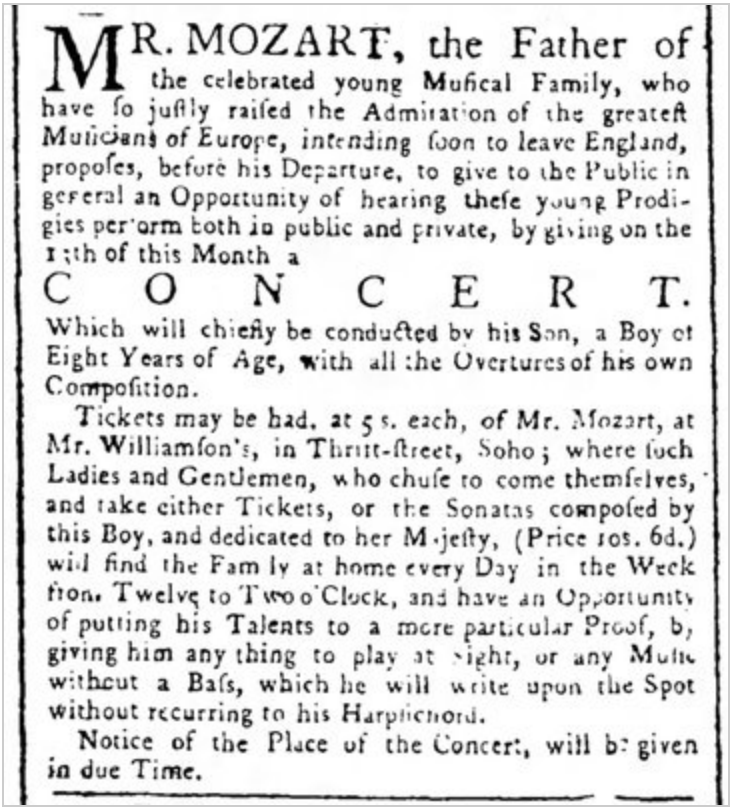
April 2nd	4 tickets to Tenducci’s benefitt	£2. 2s.0d
	a ticket for the Foundling Hospital	£0.10s.6d
April 30th	Tickets for Tendducci	£1. 0s.0d
	for Mozarts Concert	£0.10s.6d
May 16th	a ticket for Merifield’s benefitt	£0. 5s.0d

Commentary

Elizabeth Harris, née Clarke (1722–1781), was the wife of James Harris (1709–1780), a native of Salisbury and nephew of the eminent philosopher Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury. James himself was a scholar and writer, and throughout his life an ardent amateur musician and director of musical events, who attended concerts and operas as often as he could (see Burrows & Dunhill 2002, introduction). From 1761 he was Member of Parliament for Christchurch, and he and Elizabeth spent significant portions of each year in London. The lines above are entries in Elizabeth’s London account book, showing her purchases of tickets for musical and theatrical events in Apr and May 1765.

Among these are tickets for a benefit concert given by the Mozarts; this can only have been the concert that eventually took place in Hickford’s Great Room on 13 May 1765, their last such concert in England. Leopold had first announced the intended concert on 11 Mar 1765 in *The Public Advertiser*, without giving a location or an exact date (“at the End of this Month, or the Beginning of April next”). The concert was advertised again on 9 Apr 1765, now at “the End of this Month”, still without a location (*Dokumente*, 44). The earliest known advertisement to include the actual date, 13 May, was published in *The Public Advertiser* on 1 May, the day after Elizabeth Harris’s entry in her account book.

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MR. MOZART, the Father of the celebrated young Mufical Family, who have ſo juſtly raiſed the Admiration of the greateſt Muſicians of Europe, intending ſoon to leave England, propoſes, before his Departure, to give to the Public in general an Opportunity of hearing theſe young Prodigies perform both in public and private, by giving on the 15th of this Month a

CONCERT.

Which will chiefly be conducted by his Son, a Boy of Eight Years of Age, with all the Overtures of his own Compoſition.

Tickets may be had, at 5 s. each, of Mr. Mozart, at Mr. Williamſon's, in Thrift-ſtreet, Soho; where ſuch Ladies and Gentlemen, who chuſe to come themſelves, and take either Tickets, or the Sonatas compoſed by this Boy, and dedicated to her Majeſty, (Price 10s. 6d.) will find the Family at home every Day in the Week from Twelve to Two o'Clock, and have an Opportunity of putting his Talents to a more particular Proof, by giving him any thing to play at ſight, or any Muſic without a Baſs, which he will write upon the Spot without recurring to his Harpſichord.

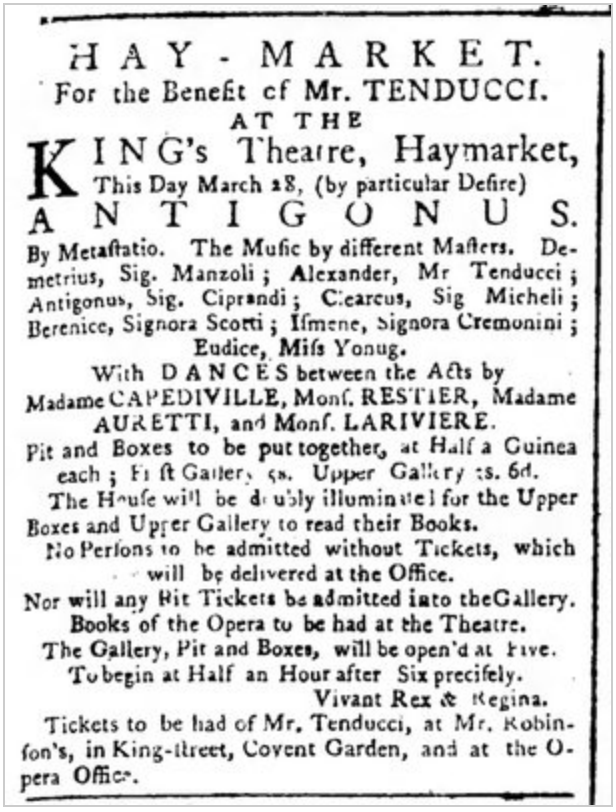
Notice of the Place of the Concert, will be given in due Time.

Advertisement for the Mozarts' concert on 13 May 1765
The Public Advertiser, Wed, 1 May 1765, [1]
(newspapers.com)

The location of the concert is not yet specified; it was finally announced on 10 May that it would take place in Hickford's Great Room (*Dokumente*, 44). Thus Elizabeth Harris purchased tickets for the Mozarts' concert of 13 May before the date and location had been advertised. However, she may have been able to learn at least the date from some other source.

The advertised price for a single ticket to the Mozarts' concert was 5 shillings, but the amount recorded in Elizabeth Harris's account book is 10s 6d, equivalent to half a guinea, sixpence in excess of the price of two tickets. The reason for the discrepancy is unknown, but the Mozarts' advertisement gives 10s 6d as the price of Wolfgang's sonatas dedicated to Queen Charlotte (op. 3, K. 10–15), so perhaps this has something to do with it. Or perhaps she simply paid with a half guinea coin, and did not take change.

In other entries from around this time, she records buying tickets for two benefits given by the castrato Giusto Fernando Tenducci. On 28 Mar 1765, five days before the first entry transcribed above, Tenducci had given a performance for his own benefit of the pasticcio *Antigono*, and this is probably the performance her entry refers to.

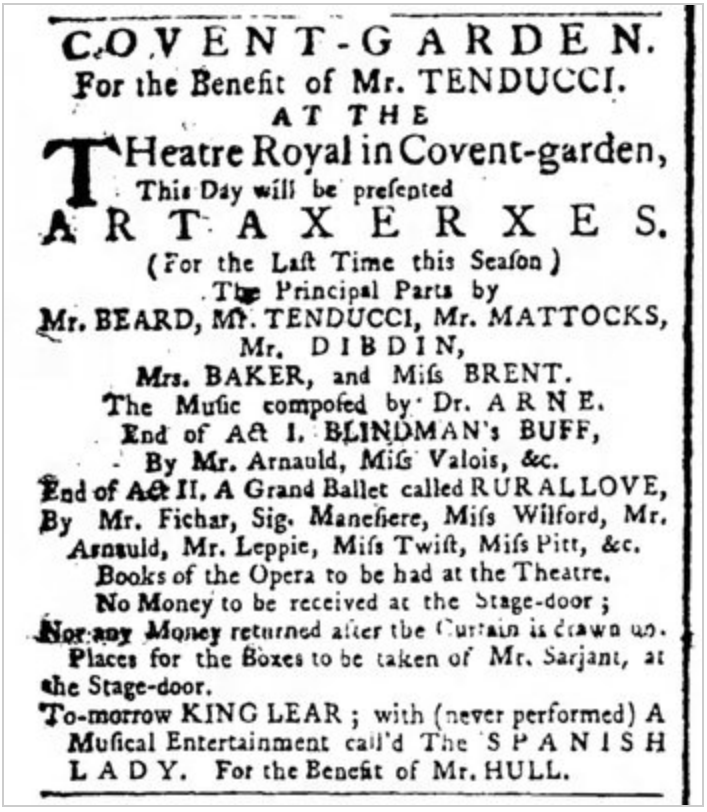


HAY-MARKET.
For the Benefit of Mr. TENDUCCI.
AT THE
KING's Theatre, Haymarket,
This Day March 28, (by particular Desire)
ANTIGONUS.
By Metastatio. The Music by different Masters. Demetrius, Sig. Manzoli; Alexander, Mr Tenducci; Antigonus, Sig. Ciprandi; Clearcus, Sig Micheli; Berenice, Signora Scotti; Ismene, Signora Cremonini; Eudice, Miss Young.
With DANCES between the Acts by Madame CAPEDIVILLE, Monsr. RESTIER, Madame AURETTI, and Monsr. LARIVIERE.
Pit and Boxes to be put together, at Half a Guinea each; First Gallery 5s. Upper Gallery 3s. 6d.
The House will be doubly illuminated for the Upper Boxes and Upper Gallery to read their Books.
No Persons to be admitted without Tickets, which will be delivered at the Office.
Nor will any Pit Tickets be admitted into the Gallery.
Books of the Opera to be had at the Theatre.
The Gallery, Pit and Boxes, will be open'd at Five.
To begin at Half an Hour after Six precisely.
Vivant Rex & Regina.
Tickets to be had of Mr. Tenducci, at Mr. Robinson's, in King-street, Covent Garden, and at the Opera Office.

Advertisement for Tenducci's benefit performance of *Antigono*
The Public Advertiser, Thu, 28 Mar 1765, [1]
(newspapers.com)

The entry in Harris's account book shows that she paid £2 2s for four tickets to the benefit. The amount, 42 shillings, was exactly two guineas; this is consistent with Tenducci's advertisement, which states that tickets for the pit and boxes cost half a guinea each.

Under the date 30 Apr, Harris records spending one pound on "Tickets for Tendduci". These tickets would have been for the castrato's benefit performance at Covent Garden the following day of Thomas Arne's *Artaxerxes*.



COVENT-GARDEN.
For the Benefit of Mr. TENDUCCI.
AT THE
THeatre Royal in Covent-garden,
This Day will be preſented
ARTAXERXES.
(For the Laſt Time this Seaſon)
The Principal Parts by
Mr. BEARD, Mr. TENDUCCI, Mr. MATTOCKS,
Mr. DIBDIN,
Mrs. BAKER, and Miſs BRENT.
The Muſic compoſed by Dr. ARNE.
End of Act I. BLINDMAN's BUFF,
By Mr. Arnauld, Miſs Valois, &c.
End of Act II. A Grand Ballet called RURAL LOVE,
By Mr. Fichar, Sig. Maneſiere, Miſs Wilford, Mr.
Arnauld, Mr. Leppie, Miſs Twiſt, Miſs Pitt, &c.
Books of the Opera to be had at the Theatre.
No Money to be received at the Stage-door;
Nor any Money returned after the Curtain is drawn up.
Places for the Boxes to be taken of Mr. Sarjant, at
the Stage-door.
To-morrow KING LEAR; with (never performed) A
Muſical Entertainment call'd The SPANISH
LADY. For the Benefit of Mr. HULL.

Advertisement for Tenducci's benefit performance of *Artaxerxes*
The Public Advertiser, Wed, 1 May 1765, [1]
(newspapers.com)

The ticket price is not given in this advertisement or in previous ones for the same event, but one pound would have purchased four box tickets at 5s each (Burrows & Dunhill 2002, 443).



Tenducci (1770), mezzotint by John Finlayson after an original by J. Bruscett.
Tenducci is holding a vocal part for "Water Parted from the Sea," from Thomas Arne's *Artaxerxes*.
(British Museum)

Harris's entry for the "Foundling Hospital" refers to the annual performance of Handel's *Messiah* on 2 Apr 1765 to raise money for that institution. Harris purchased one ticket for a half guinea (10s 6d).

HOSPITAL for the Maintenance and Education of Expoſed and Deſerted Young Children.

TOWARDS the Support of this Charity, the Sacred Oratorio,

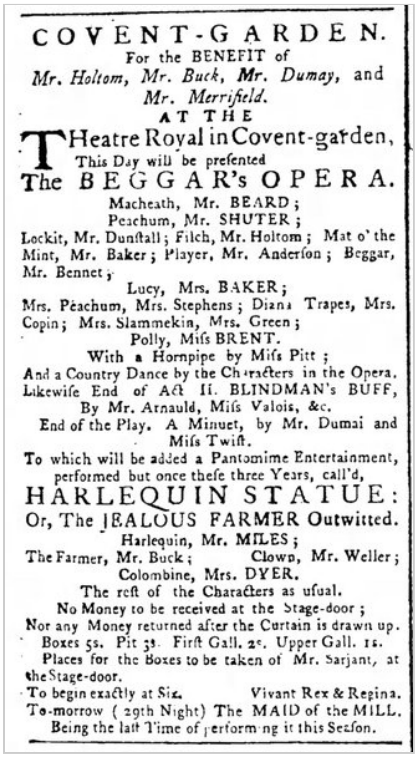
MESSIAH,

will be performed in the Chapel of this Hoſpital on This Day, the 2d of April, at Twelve o'Clock at Noon preciſely; with a Concerto on the Organ by Mr. STANLEY.

Tickets to be had, at Half a Guinea each, of the Steward of the Hoſpital; at Arthur's, in St. James's-Street; Batſon's Coffee Houſe, Cornhill; Tom's Coffee Houſe, Devereux Court; and at Will's Coffee Houſe in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Advertisement for the benefit performance of *Messiah* for the Foundling Hospital
The Public Advertiser, Tue, 2 Apr 1765, [3]
(newspapers.com)

Her entry for "Merifield" refers to John Merrifield, a dancer at Covent Garden. The event was a benefit performance at Covent Garden on 20 May of *Beggar's Opera* (Burrows & Dunhill 2002, 443).



COVENT-GARDEN.
For the BENEFIT of
Mr. Holtom, Mr. Buck, Mr. Dumay, and
Mr. Merrifield.
AT THE
THeatre Royal in Covent-garden,
This Day will be presented
The BEGGAR's OPERA.
Macheath, Mr. BEARD;
Peachum, Mr. SHUTER;
Lockit, Mr. Dunstall; Filch, Mr. Holtom; Mat o' the Mint, Mr. Baker; Player, Mr. Anderson; Beggar, Mr. Bennet;
Lucy, Mrs. BAKER;
Mrs. Peachum, Mrs. Stephens; Diana Trapes, Mrs. Copin; Mrs. Slammekin, Mrs. Green;
Polly, Miss BRENT.
With a Hornpipe by Miss Pitt;
And a Country Dance by the Characters in the Opera.
Likewise End of Act II. BLINDMAN's BUFF,
By Mr. Arnauld, Miss Valois, &c.
End of the Play. A Minuet, by Mr. Dumai and Miss Twist.
To which will be added a Pantomime Entertainment, performed but once these three Years, call'd,
HARLEQUIN STATUE:
Or, The JEALOUS FARMER Outwitted.
Harlequin, Mr. MILES;
The Farmer, Mr. Buck; Clown, Mr. Weller;
Colombine, Mrs. DYER.
The rest of the Characters as usual.
No Money to be received at the Stage-door;
Nor any Money returned after the Curtain is drawn up.
Boxes 5s. Pit 3s. First Gall. 2s. Upper Gall. 1s.
Places for the Boxes to be taken of Mr. Sarjant, at the Stage-door.
To begin exactly at Six. Vivant Rex & Regina.
To-morrow (29th Night) The MAID of the MILL.
Being the last Time of performing it this Season.

Advertisement for the benefit performance of *Beggar's Opera* at Covent Garden
The Public Advertiser, Mon, 20 May 1765, [1]
(newspapers.com)

Elizabeth Harris's ticket for the Mozarts' benefit concert is the only known reference to them in the papers of the Harris family, and we have no verification that she or her husband actually attended the concert. It may be that for all their love of music, they had relatively little interest in the prodigies from Salzburg.

Notes (⇧)

The Mozarts' advertisement in *The Public Advertiser* on 1 May 1765 is not in *Dokumente* or its supplements. For more on James and Elizabeth Harris and their connections with others in the networks of people the Mozarts met in London, see Templeton (2016), 75–76.

We are grateful to Bruce Brown for providing information about the portrait of Tenducci.

Bibliography (⇧)

Burrows, Donald, and Rosemary Dunhill. 2002. *Music and Theatre in Handel's World: The Family Papers of James Harris, 1732–1780*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Templeton, Hannah Margaret. 2016. "The Mozarts in London: Exploring the Family's Professional, Social and Intellectual Networks in 1764–1765. Ph. D. diss., King's College London.

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