One of the best known sets of documents in British musical history is Harl. MSS. 7337–7342, the first volume of which is titled *A Collection of the Most Celebrated Services and Anthems used in the Church of England, from the Reformation to the Restauration of K. Charles II. Composed by the Best Masters, and Collected by Thomas Tudway, D. M. Musick–Professor to the University of Cambridge, A.D. MDCCXV*. This collection, made between 1715 and 1720, is one of the landmarks in the study of English church music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its scores, almost 3,000 pages long, became a key reference for music of that period, and its prefaces are in reality a miniature history of music that holds major significance in that genre. Its own history tells a great deal about Edward, Lord Harley, Tudway’s patron, and about Humfrey Wanley, the eminent scholar and head of the Harley library. Since there are major articles on the collection by Edward Turnbull and Christopher Hogwood, this paper will chiefly examine the political aspects of Tudway’s career and the collection in the light of previously little known sources in the Portland Papers.¹

Music was unusually late in developing a canon of great works from the past to serve as models for composition, study or ritual in the present – the classics, as we now call them. New works tended to replace the old in a regular process of stylistic renewal, and while a few works did occasionally become encapsulated within newer repertoires, they were not invested with the complete authority of a canon. Music was also on the margins of intellectual life. While the theory regarding the physics and metaphysics of sound was central to the medieval *quadrivium*, applied music, both composition and performance, played no part in that study. It was unusual for authors to write directly about specific pieces of music in print; the analysis and the criticism of music were for the most part an oral tradition whose principles musicologists are now reconstructing.²

England led the way in the earliest stages of the musical canon. It all began with the abolition of sung Latin texts at the Reformation, for that forced church musicians to construct an entirely new repertory, indeed a new musical tradition. As a result, from the end of the sixteenth century they began preserving the scores of English services and anthems with a care and a comprehensiveness that have almost no parallel anywhere else in Europe at the time.³ In 1641 John Barnard, a minor canon of St Paul’s Cathedral, published *The First Book of Selected Church Musick*. It was intended to be the start of
a series of volumes, but because no others were ever issued it preserved just the music of dead composers – an extraordinary phenomenon in light of the tradition of musical contemporaneity. Then, after the Restoration, church musicians, having little time to compose new music while rebuilding their entire trade, went back to the works of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that were the heart and soul of their tradition. Many of the cathedrals and the Chapel Royal proceeded to build libraries or even repertoires of old works.

Still, by the early eighteenth century a good deal of this older music had been discarded, and there was an increasing sense that much of it would be lost in perpetuity. English musicians were ready for another major collection. Few copies of Barnard were extant, since it had been published at the very outbreak of the Civil War, and there had been a great deal of new thinking about the problem since his time. Moreover, in the course of the previous century a strong esprit de corps had developed among the musicians of the Chapel Royal and the cathedrals, a kind of musical professionalism, that led them to honour their forebears in the trade. A number of them began gathering together old scores and talking about writing a history of music. The key figure in this endeavour was Henry Aldrich, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, who acted as a kind of ex officio choirmaster in the cathedral, where old scores from the library were regularly performed under his leadership. This, then, was the context within which the Harleian collection was made.

Tudway had a fairly conventional, if somewhat disappointing, career for his first fifty or so years. The date of his birth is a matter of some debate, estimated variously as 1646, circa 1650 and 1656, the last being the most likely. After leaving the Chapel Royal sometime before 1669, he went back to St George’s Chapel, Windsor, where his father had been a lay clerk in the choir, and in 1670 seems to have become organist of King’s College, Cambridge, and subsequently of Pembroke College as well. In 1681 he graduated as Bachelor of Music. In the Winter of 1704/05 he became the Professor of Music in the University, a relatively new position (he was the second to hold it) that had no part in the curriculum but amounted essentially to being the Kapellmeister at academic functions and in the community’s musical life generally. At that same time he received a Doctorate of Music, which was given fairly often as an honorary degree to learned or influential musicians upon their completion of a composition in an academic genre.

It was in preparing major musical celebrations that politics impinged upon his life. Since King’s College Chapel was the largest in Cambridge, and its choir of special note, leading dignitaries were most often honoured there. He had extensive responsibilities for the ceremonies held during visits of royalty that put him in the middle of the disputes and political machinations that sometimes arose over protocol. In April 1705 the Queen came to Cambridge, and, as he put it in a letter to Robert Harley eight years later, ‘I was appointed to do ev’ry thing that was requisite in my way, to entertain her Majesty in Kings Coll: Chappell’. Indeed, he received his Doctorate of Music in the course of the visit. It is not at all clear precisely what happened then, but in late 1706 he was accused
of uttering puns dishonouring the Queen and was stripped of his position and his living in the University for ‘speaking words highly reflecting upon her Majesty and her administration’.

A remark by Charles Burney in his *General History of Music* suggests that the words were directed not against the Queen, but against the Duke of Somerset, the Whig Chancellor of the University who enjoyed considerable influence with her after the election of 1705.

Tudway’s Tory politics shaped much of his role within the University. As one contemporary said the next January, ‘there was a little stir about one Tudway Master of Musick who having been accused by one Plumtree Dr of Physick of some scandalous and toriackall Reflections on ye Queen, was degraded and expelled ye University by ye Vice-Chancellor and ye Heads. Most of ye tory or rather Jacobite party blame their proceedings very much as too rigorous upon him, but ye whigs say just ye contrary, but in fine ye thing is done and irrevocable.’

There is no evidence, however, that he was in any way a Jacobite. As was true of most Cambridge Tories (and there were a lot of them), he was Hanoverian in his sympathies. While his supporters reversed the action brought against him eight months later and he was reinstated in his Professorship, by that time he had drained his and his wife’s financial resources.

He explained the episode as one of faction in a letter to Robert Harley in 1714. His enemies, he said, ‘must defeat all my expectances at Court, & y^e best way of doing that, was to Stygmatize me, w^th being wanting in my duty, & respect to y^e Queen’.

It was clearly a nasty fight; he refers to it as ‘violence’ and as an ‘inquisition’. We must also presume that the affair bore upon University politics; as we shall see below, he became embroiled in the long dispute over Richard Bentley at least by 1716. While as Professor of Music he ranked low in the academic hierarchy, his ceremonial duties nonetheless involved him in University affairs. He probably also worked as secretary and agent for one or several of the leading figures in the University, as we shall see he did for Edward Harley a decade later.

His ambition was naturally to return to the Chapel Royal as a composer to the Queen, and his connection with the Harley family and the collection of church music resulted, ironically, from his failure to accomplish that. He had been composing actively since his youth – the Harleian collection includes one piece written when he was nineteen – and he clearly made efforts to join the Chapel Royal for many years. He seems to have made a special effort in 1702, and the compositions he wrote for her in 1705–06 allowed him, Charles Burney reports, to ‘style himself organist and composer extraordinary to that princess’. But she steadfastly refused to appoint Tudway to a post, probably because she was favouring Whigs at the time and because the episode in 1706 had prejudiced her against him. In any event, there were other musicians of greater talent also bidding for court posts, particularly William Croft, who took the position of John Blow upon his death in 1708.

Tudway tells the story best. ‘D^r Blow dying soon after; my freinds were in hopes to obtain one of his places for me, w^ch was all I beg’d; The Subdean D^r Battell, address’d y^e Queen in my behalf, Madam, D^r Tudway has been attending Severall years, D^r Blow
is dying, or dead, will your Majesty be pleas’d to bestow one of his places upon him, He is very sorry, for haveing inadvertently offended your Majesty, in other respects, He is ev’ry way qualified to deserve your Majestys favour; The Queen was pleas’d to reply, w^th wonderfull Goodnes & Compassion, That She forgave me w^th all her Heart, But She was not Poor Lady, able to bring me into her Service; As soon as y^ D” was dead [1 October 1708], both his places of Composer & Organist were giv’n to one that never before had any relation to y^ Chappell Royall, & had been a Domestick of y^ D– of S – ts [the Duke of Somerset], w^th in all probabillity was y^ reason of his violence against me’.

There was a report afoot that he got an appointment as a ‘supernumerary composer’ in the Chapel Royal in the Summer of 1712, a lesser rank than the one he bid for in 1708. Among the Oxford bibliographer Richard Rawlinson’s personal papers is a note to that effect, undated but seemingly written at that time. There is no evidence, however, that the appointment was ever made.

It is not entirely clear when Tudway first had contact with the Harley family. The Harleys, of course, had much closer links with Oxford than Cambridge, and it would seem that Tudway encountered Robert in his efforts to gain a position in the Chapel Royal. As he said in a letter to Robert shortly after the Queen died, ‘I was barbarously used by the late Ministry for several years for nothing, as ‘tis well known; all my sustenance taken from me, turned out of my house where I had lived with my family almost twenty years, a livelihood to seek at near threescore years of age. I came well recommended to your Lordship, and was favorably received, and her Majesty was not wanting in her accustomed goodness to say that my sufferings ought to be considered.’

This letter suggests that Tudway was introduced to Harley by those sympathetic to him after his temporary expulsion from the University. The crisis of 1706 may well have driven him to find other channels of support and thus to seek Harley out. He seems to have found himself welcome in their company, presumably for ideological reasons, and to have been quickly given political jobs to do. We can presume that he functioned in political capacities for members of the University or gentry families – writing letters, reporting on events, acting as an agent – before he began to work for the Harleys. He became quite useful to the family as a reliable Tory who knew Cambridge well, and from this time on he functioned as one of its agents in that town. He certainly had begun doing so by the Winter of 1713/14, for in a letter in January he stated that ‘The facts I gave your Lordship an Account of, were sufficiently evidenc’d, by y^ behaviour of the W – gs both here, & at London, on y^ News of the Queens illnes’.

In 1717 he informed Edward at Wimpole of his part in the manoeuvring in Cambridge by local political figures – ‘y^ Gentleman of y^ Club’ – to induce Sir George Downing to stand for parliament. He reported similar developments to Harley in 1722, again reporting that ‘y^ Clubb prevailed’.

In 1714 Tudway put strong pressure on Robert to influence the Queen on his behalf. Thus on 19 June of that year he wrote: ‘I’m Just come from waiting on my Lord Steward, who appointed me this day to Attend him; His Lordship tells me, He has spoken to her Majesty about my affairs, But could not get leave, to lay a warrant before
her, whither, on ye Account of any impression ye late Ministry may have made to my prejudice, as if I have bin wanting in my duty, w'th I call God to witnes, I never was in ye least thought... I cannot tell, whither I ought to request your Lordship to make further steps in this way, for an unhappy man; But I must Assure your Lordship, that my dependance is such, on your Lordships promise of doing Something for me, that w'thout it, I neither know how to stay, or go; my wives fortune, w'th serv'd to make a Subsistance for me, & my family, w'th ye little I have, in place, has been parted w'th, to support me, when I was in ye W-gs inquisition, & a great deal since, in Seeking redress.'

An undated letter from Tudway to Robert Harley, that seems to follow the one just cited, suggests that the musician had been asked to assume even fuller duties in the Harley household: 'I most Joyfully Congratulate your Lordships having brought to a happy conclusion, my Lord, and Lady Harlys affair, & hope your Lordship will Hon' our Country this Sumer again, w'th your presence... your Lordships promise to procure me her Majestys bounty, in compensation of my sufferings, & long attendance, & to provide for me some other way, is of great consolation to me; my dependance is therupon entirely on your Lordships goodnes, & Favour for me.' He thereupon asked whether a position, opened by the death of a surveyor in the Searchers Office, might be at his disposal.

Tudway's relationship with the Harleys thus sprang from adversity, and indeed was something of a second best for a fairly ambitious composer such as he. By this time court appointment involved an at least occasional income and a secure future; by contrast, working for the Harleys was not the most enviable situation to be in after the death of the Queen. But he was surely grateful to have established himself among them, since the arrival of George I and the rise of the Whig ministry made it even more difficult for him to get back into the Chapel Royal. He may have ventured outside the ranks of the Tories, however, since in the course of his entreaties he once claimed to have received some kind of unspecified support from the Duke of Marlborough.

The Harleys may have given Tudway their musical patronage because they had failed to obtain any court position for him. In any event, his entrance into the Harley household had coincided with a central chapter in the development of the family library. The Harleys had a long history of antiquarian interest; Sir Robert Harley, the statesman's grandfather, had been active prior to the Civil War, during which a large portion of his holdings had been lost. Robert began to rebuild the library after the turn of the century, influenced in part by his frequent political contact with literary figures such as Defoe and Pope, and made several major purchases during that decade.

The appointment of Humfrey Wanley as librarian in 1708 was an important step in the development of the Harleian collections. Though lacking any academic degrees, Wanley had played a central role both in the administration of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and in the growth of Anglo-Saxon studies; he was one of the most learned men of his time in a remarkable variety of fields. He was also a fervent churchman who had been Secretary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and gradually shifted
Fig. 1. Edward Harley, Lord Harley, 2nd Earl of Oxford, by Michael Dahl. By courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum
from there to the Harley household. Administrative skill, so apparent in his careful correspondence, was another of his talents.

The marriage of Edward Harley was yet another factor that came into play in the initiation of the music collection. Born in 1689 and at Christ Church between 1707 and 1711, he was married in 1713 to the daughter of the Duke of Newcastle, and from that union became the owner of Wimpole Hall near Cambridge. Edward settled himself down at Wimpole in a determined way in 1714, perhaps to counter the resistance of the Duchess of Newcastle to his marriage. The library became his consuming passion. Though actively engaged in his family’s political life, he took a largely social interest in politics that lacked initiative. His father had after all given him a hard act to follow, and he responded by channelling his energies into the development of the library far more than Robert ever did. It was not clear just who owned the collection, but Tudway suggested Edward’s sense of proprietorship in 1723 when he referred to ‘his library and his Museum, as y^ Master called it’.25 He indeed eventually bankrupted himself in large part by spending money on this enthusiasm in an unguarded way. As James Lees-Milne has described him, he became ‘utterly indifferent to society, in which he played little or no part, and by which he was in consequence looked upon as an eccentric, if harmless outsider. He found no time whatever to spare for balls and routs, and grew more and more of a recluse as the years advanced.’26

But these traits were yet to develop fully. In 1714 young Edward was one of the most visible members of his class both socially and politically, and anything he did was by definition significant. In his hands the library became a powerful means of patronage, a channel by which a wide variety of people offered gifts of their books or ancient objects and in return established important links to the great family. It was common for donors to use the word ‘noble’ in both of its meanings, as did Sir George Wheeler in helping to obtain copies of works by Henry Loosemore in Durham, saying ‘If we had any other his L^ Desires they should have bene at his Service, for I perceive it is to make a noble collection of our English church musick.’27

The library also provided a productive focus of his life during a rough political period. His father had fallen from power on 27 July 1714, even before the Queen’s death on 1 August. In July 1715 Oxford was committed to the Tower, where he spent the next two years. Throwing himself into expanding the library served as a dignified way for Harley to withdraw from politics while still exerting his family’s influence in a significant manner. It allowed him to engage with people of note without having to confront the problematic political situation in which he found himself.

The Harleys were not a strong musical family, but in Edward’s case musical activities or contacts flowed naturally from other social or literary circumstances. In April or May 1721 he copied down a couplet by John Gay about Handel’s opera Muzio Scevola, probably more because of Gay than Handel:

A motto for the Opera of Muzio Scevola
Who here blame Words or Verses, Songs or Singers
Like Muzio Scevola, will burn his Fingers.28
When he invited Handel to his daughter’s wedding at the family’s London house in Dover St in 1734, the composer was one among a large number of artistic luminaries. He likewise stimulated Tudway to include in the collection a large number of pieces by the recently deceased Henry Aldrich more for nostalgic than musical reasons. Edward had become devoted to Aldrich in Oxford, but there is no evidence that he engaged himself at all in the study of sixteenth century music for which the Dean was so famous. Tudway said in a letter to Wanley, ‘I have I’m told, receiv’d y e whole works of y e Dean of X Church, w ch I shall insert w thout excepting any’.

The collection came about from the convergence of interests of Edward Harley, Thomas Tudway, and Humfrey Wanley. It would seem that Tudway first began as a political agent for Robert in Cambridge, but at some point in 1714 was enlisted into Wanley’s service in the library. His main responsibility from that time on was assisting Wanley in negotiating for books and antiquities, most importantly of all with John Covell, Master of Christ’s College. Just who was principally responsible for initiating the collection of church music is not immediately apparent from the letters among the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Library, letters that have long been the central source of information on the genesis of the music collection. The first mention of it comes in the second letter from Tudway to Wanley, dated 24 November 1715, where the musician reports that he has just received from Ely Cathedral a service dating from 1532, w ch is before Tallis or Bird; I hope it will be valuable on many accounts. It is only with the next reference to the collection, in the fourth letter, 8 January 1715/16, that Tudway seems to have a broader notion of a collection, for he states that he is grateful to John Church of the Chapel Royal for helping ‘to compleat my volume of Ancient Church Musick’. But the Portland Papers contain thirty-seven further letters between Tudway and Wanley, seemingly not known by music historians, that suggest the origins of the collection rather more clearly, and date its inception somewhat earlier. The first letter is from Tudway to Wanley on 17 October 1715: ‘I have made a Collection of most of y e Chappell Tunes, us’d at y e Kings Chappell, S Pauls, Westminster, Windsor, here, & at Oxford, & in y e Cathedralls over England; I have also added y e responces to y e Suffrages in 4 p s sung to y e Organ Anciely on y e great festivals, By Bird; I’m now much busied, in making a Collection of Church Musick, of such Authors, as liv’d & compos’d, before y e Restauration of King Charles y e 2 d Beginning w th Tallis, Bird, Bull, Tye, Giles, Morly Amner, Orlando Gibbons, Laws, Mundey, Tomkins, Hooper, Farrant, Mole, Publick Orator to y e University of Cambridg &c, w ch will compleat the 1 st volume w ch I hope to finish, by Lady day; This Collection is from y e Reformation to y e Restauration.

The next letter in the series, from Tudway three weeks later, clarifies the initiation of the project, for there he opens by stating that ‘I have finish’d y e Little Collection of Chappell Tunes, w ch you desir’d, & have added y e Responces sung to y e Organ Anciely, on y e great festivals of y e year, Compos’d by M r Bird’. The phrase ‘Little Collection of Chappell Tunes’ most likely meant psalm settings to be used in the family chapel; they are not known to be extant, and the ‘Great Collection’ included only the
major genres of sacred music, services and anthems. The words ‘which you desired’ are of the utmost significance, for they indicate that Wanley, but probably also Edward Harley, asked Tudway to make the ‘Little Collection’. The letter also suggests that Tudway conceived the project by late 1715 in a much more comprehensive manner than has previously been thought.

After repeating several points made in the previous letter, Tudway proceeded to say: ‘I’m going on as fast as possible, w^th my great Collection of Church Musick... [which] will make a very Larg volume of 400 pages, in Royall paper, & w^th I hope I shall have finish’d to present to my Ld, by Lady day at furthiest, w^th an Epistle Dedicatory, to his L^ship; for w^th I hope to have your Assistance, at least your advices, before, I put it before my book; As I think I understood my L^ & you, of having a Generall Collection, I shall begin my 2^ Collection w^th Authors since ye Restauration, & first w^th D^ Childs famous Service, & so onward of all that's valuable of ye Compositions of Humfrey, D^ Aldrich, Blow, Creighton, Purcell, Wise, Hall, &c of w^th I have Compositions enough to make another very large volume; I shall have nothing of my own in this volume, But my exercise w^th I Made for ye publick Commencem^ in 1681 when I commenc’d Batchelor.’ Not only does the phrase ‘I think I understood my L^ & you’ suggest the involvement of Harley, but also a passage in the next letter that states that ‘L^ Harly does me frequently ye Hon^ of enquiring after me by Mr Jefferys, & I hope to do my self ye Hon^ to wait on him about X'mas’.

This evidence raises serious questions about whether, as both Edward Turnbull and Christopher Hogwood have argued from the letters known when they wrote on the subject, Harley only came into the matter in June 1716. Still, unquestionably it was Tudway who, recognizing a good opportunity to apply his musical skills in the library, made the collection the large undertaking it was to become. He suggested as much in a letter to Wanley in 1717 where he reported meeting Sir George Wheeler in the rooms of the Master of Christ’s College: ‘I coud not but smile, when he told me, of ye great & Noble designe my L^ Oxford, & Harley had, of makeing a Collection of all ye Church Musick, both Ancient & Modern, from Henry ye 8^ time, till now, & ye Search had been made in their Church at Durham, for what peices coud be found there of that kind; The Master told him, that I was ye person who had undertaken to do it, & how many volumes I had finish’d, & how many more, He believ’d it would take up; Upon w^th I receiv’d his compliments accordingly. The attribution of responsibility to Robert Harley here was certainly an exaggeration; the letters suggest that he had much less to do with the collection than Edward did.

And expand it he did. He went beyond the Psalms and responses to the services and anthems that were the art works of the English sacred music tradition as he collected manuscripts of pieces by a whole range of composers since the 1530s. This is not the place to analyse its contents in any detail. Note, however, that the collection was collegial in its focus upon a tradition in the Chapel Royal rather than simply upon a few great composers; it includes only one service and five anthems each by Thomas Tallis and William Byrd, by then generally acknowledged to have been the most eminent members
of the tradition. A wide range of composers in the Chapel Royal are represented, as had been conventional in the extensive copying of old anthems and services at cathedrals since the late sixteenth century. Some non-English music did, however, creep in; a number of the pieces by Aldrich are adaptations of works by Giovanni Palestrina and Giacomo Carissimi to English texts. Both Tudway’s selection of works and his accuracy of attribution and transcription have often been called into question, but we must not forget how primitive musical scholarship was compared with that in literature at this time. And Tudway worked in some haste, indeed confusion, in putting the collection together. Having seemingly begun in the Fall of 1715, while doing many other tasks assigned by Wanley and keeping up his duties at King’s and Pembroke, he was moving on to a second volume by January 1716, by May a third, and the following February the sixth. He was paid thirty guineas for each volume and was given ten for his expenses. The collection was completed in 1720 and immediately put in the family library.

Wanley may have suggested the original ‘little collection’ of psalm settings, for he was a deeply religious man and a former officer of the S.P.C.K. But he became annoyed when he was asked to do some of Tudway’s work in collecting manuscripts in London, and before long had serious doubts about the project, or at least about the drastic expansion of its scale. Some notes he made in the Winter of 1718 on the back of a letter from his musician colleague are enlightening as to the relations between Tudway, Wanley, and Harley:

‘That this Letter may be better understood; observe
  1. When the Doctor undertook to make the Collection of Services, &c. The Principal Pieces only were to be transcribed, & the whole to be contained in one Volume.
  2. He himself was to be at the Charge of Collecting.
  3. It was my Lords Goodness, to allow the Service to continue, & to take off Six such Volumes.
  4. Nevertheless, my Lord Gave him Ten Guineas for his Charges, with which he was so Contented, as to promise that he would never open his mouth, upon that Subject again.
  5. It doth not appear that he hath spent Money upon the Persons within mentioned.

These notes confirm the earlier indications that Edward was not simply a passive bystander in the development of the collection, and may perhaps have been involved directly in its origins. He permitted, indeed encouraged, Tudway to expand it so drastically, as is evident in Wanley’s impatience with ‘my Lord’s goodness’. Edward was warm and solicitous towards Tudway in his correspondence throughout these years. In March 1716 he closed a letter to Wanley with the request that he pass on his regards to the musician (‘Pray give my service to Dr. Tudway’) and repeated that often through his correspondence. By 1720 Tudway’s letters to him lost the forward tone evident in them during the mid-1710s, and became downright affectionate towards him.

Edward’s enthusiasm for the collection appears to have arisen less through musical than religious and antiquarian interests. In the course of the Civil War and Interregnum, psalm tunes had become associated with Puritans and their rejection of the polyphonic
church music tradition, so that, after the Restoration, they fell into disuse. While a
movement back to the Psalms developed among some Anglicans at the end of the
seventeenth century, Edward’s original interest in them rather than the more art-like
anthems is suggestive of his family’s Puritan past. He was also clearly interested in the
collection for historical reasons. He took several long trips with George Vertue to visit
churches and famous places, and his commonplace books are filled with jottings on local
antiquities and stories about historical figures. An early book with notes from the 1690s
and 1706–11 includes a critique of Clarendon’s History of the Rebellion and stories about
Charles I; others less easily dated contain an account of Westminster Abbey, a story from
1674 about the Earl of Rochester, and Harley family genealogies. These little books are
filled with fascinating jottings on a great range of disconnected and often unusual
subjects. They suggest that Edward, though not terribly learned, had a quirky kind of
inquisitiveness that manifested itself powerfully in the library.

What about political motivations? The timing of the project is certainly suggestive. It
came about in the midst of the critical time after the death of Queen Anne, the succession
of the House of Hanover, the suppression of the Jacobite uprising, and the impeachment
and jailing of Robert Harley. The correspondence of Tudway, Wanley and Edward
Harley regarding it went on in counterpoint with their comments on public matters;
politics, music and antiquarianism seem to blend together in their letters. Yet we must
not presume that the musical collection sprang from conscious political motivations. Its
most immediate causes were Tudway’s and Edward Harley’s personal situations and the
development of the library; political considerations came in more indirectly, but not
insignificantly.

A strand of partisanship, sometimes even extremism, can be found in the cathedral
music tradition of which the Harleian collection formed a part. Byrd was a recusant;
Barnard’s book was issued by a publisher who was linked to Catholics and Arminians;
and after the Restoration volumes of church music emphasized the martyrdom of
Charles I and the glories of Charles II. Given what had happened to cathedral music
during the Civil War, the burning of organs and abolition of sung services, it was by
definition Tory. Most of the leading amateurs involved in church music – the so deeply
musical Dolbens of Northamptonshire and Durham, for example – were of that
persuasion. Yet, by 1714, this tendency had softened a great deal; for all the
disputatious atmosphere over religion in that period, there was little active conflict left
over music in the liturgy. If anything, cathedral music had begun to rise above party.
The Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, a non-diocesan charity that put on a
prominent annual music festival at St Paul’s, had in the 1690s been controlled by
extreme Tories and some non-jurors but now had leaders from many parts of the
political spectrum, from the Jacobite Francis Atterbury to the moderate Thomas
Tenison, among its highest officers. The central role that Henry Purcell’s Te Deum and
Jubilate came to play in establishing the tradition of performing Handel’s oratorios
suggests how great works in music were becoming a national political ritual.

The collection might be seen as commensurate with Robert Harley’s attempt, despite
his flirtation with the Jacobites, to build a political base broader than the Tory party. The idea of a national musical tradition in church music provided Tories such as Harley with a means of exerting a broad sort of leadership with national themes. Even if we must not think that either he or Edward saw Tudway's project consciously in these terms, they at least found it sympathetic to his political needs.

Tudway could be as vicious as anyone in using partisan language. In writing about the problems of extracting antiquities from a gentleman in Trumpington named Thompson, he concluded, 'I can't think him so much a W-g, as not to be punctuall to his word, after so many professions, of esteem for my good L^... He'el put me in mind of y^ Song... As Y'^ Round headed Cuckolds, come dig, come dig; there being not much difference, betwixt a W-g, & a Round head'.\textsuperscript{52} He was equally partisan, though more restrained in tone, in some comments on acquiring a copy of Handel's *Utrecht Te Deum,* 'w^ch he made by y^ Queens order for y^ Thanksgiving for y^ peace'. That and a work by Dr Arbuthnot, he said, 'will Serve to illustrate Some of those great & glorious events, of w^ch her reigne was full'.\textsuperscript{53} It was, of course, a very Tory peace in most people's minds, and Handel is thus here portrayed in Tory terms.

But Tudway's partisanship was also outward looking. In his prefaces to the six volumes of the collection he expressed the idea, not at all unknown among independent Whigs, that the church and church music no longer played the roles in society that was their due. In the preface to the final volume, he put clerical ideology to the service of musical taste: 'How it comes to pass, that Church music only should be so little regarded, in an Age, when Music in generall, is come to such a heighth of improvement as, I appeal to all y^ musical world, is incomparably beyond what ever was before, must proceed, from y^ same reason, as that of religion, viz: that in this Age also, when there was never so learned a Clergy, nor learning at so great a heighth, Religion itself should be so attack'd & Orthodoxy in beleif, & worship, so impudently oppugn'd'.\textsuperscript{54} His major complaint was that secular music, specifically the newly arrived Italian opera, was corrupting church music by enticing the cathedrals and more prominent parish churches into performing in ways inappropriate to worship. Part of the problem, he suggested, was that they did not have good enough singers to do that. 'And therfore it had been much better for them, to have kept closs to y^ old, Grave & Solemn way; w^ch, such voices as they had, were more capable of performing; But y^ Composers of those, and later times, being Charm'd w^h what they heard at White Hall, never consider'd how improper such Theatricall performances are, in religious worship;... The Fanaticks, & other enemies of our constitution, seeing y^ bungling work, that many, if not most of our Cathedrals made of the Service, by following a Style, w^ch was neither suitable to devotion, nor capable of being perform'd by Ordinary voices, have had y^ confidence, to preferr their own heavy, & indeed shocking way, of Psalm Singing, to y^ best of our performances'.\textsuperscript{55} He went so far as to argue that the great settings of the Te Deum by Purcell and Handel 'are only proper in the Church, for great Occasions of Publick Thanksgivings, etc., These Compositions therefore, are not strictly call'd Church Musick...\textsuperscript{56} The focus upon musical issues in the prefaces broadens Tudway's politics beyond
narrow partisan terms. His stress upon the Church of England in the title and in the very conception of the collection likewise had a national rather than a factional appeal. The canon of great works from the cathedral tradition, that were to be performed often during the next century, were at the core of a widely appreciated tradition of musical classics – indeed, the strongest such tradition anywhere in Europe.

Both national and university politics entered directly upon Tudway’s antiquarian labours in the disputes caused by the notorious Richard Bentley, Master of Trinity College. In 1710 a set of fellows of the College petitioned John Moore, the Bishop of Ely and the Visitor of the College, to bring redress against Bentley for a wide range of charges regarding funds and appointments, a struggle that was to continue in one way or another until the late 1730s. Bentley was controversial also as one of the most outspoken Whigs among the faculty. The dispute nonetheless crossed party lines, and during the early 1710s he actively courted Robert Harley in his efforts to have the Sovereign recognized as the Visitor rather than the Bishop. The affair was complicated in the first years of the new reign by the jockeying for influence with the House of Hanover, led by Bentley, and then in 1717 by his trying to charge men receiving doctorates for his services in the ceremony.  

Part of Tudway’s duties as Cambridge correspondent for the Harleys was to keep them informed on the Bentley affair, about which a number of letters survive. Moreover, his position as organist at King’s College Chapel may have led to difficulties with Bentley over celebrations for distinguished visitors, especially royalty. Tudway is mentioned prominently in a curious way in a two-page single sheet, dated 5 November 1716, that attacks Bentley regarding the library of the deceased Bishop Moore, which the King had donated to the University and whose disposition Bentley, the Royal Librarian, seems to have delayed. The books, said the single sheet, were still in boxes, thanks to the machinations of ‘our late V–C’ and ‘B–y’, a reference to the former Vice-Chancellor, Daniel Waterland, Master of Magdalene, and Bentley, who had been in league in the writing of the Address to the King the year before. In the context of the library, the single sheet continued, ‘This, but a few days before, was thought a sufficient Reason why the University could not settle a small Sallary of Twenty Pounds per Annum upon our Professor of Musick, tho’ allowed to deserve it…such a Tyranny, as the Histories of both Universities cannot parallel: He knows that nothing less than the Power of a Ministry can save him from Expulsion’.  

Just how Tudway was involved in this episode is obscure. However, the single sheet is clearly recalling his struggle in 1706, and Tudway may have been asked to take care of the books for the University Library. One factor possibly involved is that the body of Assessors Bishop Moore had convened in 1713 to evaluate the petition concerning Bentley included the Whig John Covell. We must recall that negotiations for the purchase of his collection of Greek antiquities for the Harley Library was one of Tudway’s biggest responsibilities during the 1710s. It is evident that certain of Bentley’s leading opponents, Covell possibly among them, sympathized with Tudway, and may even have been involved in the previous episode. Tudway clearly could put up
A Collection of the most celebrated
Services and Anthems
both Ancient and Modern used
in the CHURCH of
ENGLAND beginning at the
Restauration of K. CHARLES.
II Compos'd by the best Masters And
Collected by Mr. Tudway D.M.
and Musick Professor to the University
of Cambridge A.D. MDCCXVI.
with Whigs when he wanted to. It is indicative of his standing in the University that in 1718 he was asked to present the degrees in Music at the Acts: ‘because there was none to be found, who cou’d present ’em, the Vice-Chancell’ & heads came to a resolution, that I should be Created, that I might do it in form, w”\'I was on thursday in y’ Comencem’ week, & y’ next day I presented ’em in y’ Professor of Physicks Robes, pro haec vice, as Professor of Music’.

Tudway continued to work with Wanley until not long before he died on 23 November 1726. In 1721 William Stratford, Humfrey Wanley’s mentor at the Bodleian, wrote to Edward Harley that ‘I had another sweet letter on Friday last from Dr. Tudway. But the old man is so gay and so full of his compliments, that I am not able to keep pace with him’. As late as January 1725 Wanley wrote to him about problems in the disposition of Covell’s estate. Tudway’s great hope was to become music master for Harley in the new chapel built at Wimpole, but while he wrote a Te Deum for its consecration, his lord did not progress in his musical interests as in his literary ones.

The significance of Tudway’s extensive prefaces within the evolution of music history is too big a problem to discuss in any detail here. One point will suffice: his central use of the word ‘ancient’. ‘Ancient music’ was the first and the most important term for the musical canon. It arose originally within book catalogues (‘ancient and modern music’) in the 1690s and among musical circles by about 1710 as a way to refer to music from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (the term was also used to refer to the music and musical theories of antiquity). The Academy of Vocal Music founded in 1726 was five years later renamed the Academy of Ancient Music; in 1776 the Concerts of Ancient Music, a separate series, redefined the term, applying it to any music more than about two decades old. By 1800 ‘classical music’ had begun appearing as a synonym.

Tudway was one of the first persons to use the term in an important written context. The title of the second volume of his collection was slightly different from the first, cited above: ‘A Collection of the most celebrated Services and Anthems both Ancient and Modern used in the Church of England…’ (fig. 2). ‘Ancient’ appears in all the remaining volumes (‘Ancient and Modern Church Musick’ in Vol. III). While it had occurred occasionally in musical writings about that time, Tudway gave it a powerful new formal role and in effect made it a central factor in defining the musical canon at a critical point in its development. Since the Harley library was open to the public (or at least to serious scholars), we can presume that leaders of the Academy of Ancient Music examined the music collection during the 1720s, since they numbered among the musically most learned men in their profession. Because most of them were from the Chapel Royal, they would certainly have been eager to see a collection that honoured their tradition.

The collection proceeded to become a key source in the writing of music history. While its manuscript form limited its use in cathedrals and parish churches, it provided a reference point – as much for its errors as for its contents – for all subsequent musical scholarship, most of all for Cathedral Music, the first published collection of old church music since Barnard, a project undertaken by a variety of musicians and issued under the
name of William Boyce in 1760–73. John Hawkins and Charles Burney also drew upon the Harleian collection extensively, showing close knowledge of its contents.

The process by which the collection developed has cast interesting light upon both Edward Harley and Humfrey Wanley. It has shown both Wanley’s role in delegating responsibilities to Tudway, but also his discipline and professionalism in expressing doubts about expanding the musical project. His criticisms, indeed, presaged Harley’s eventual bankruptcy. Despite this fate, Edward himself can be seen as a vigorous and creative patron in his support of Tudway. His motivation appears much more than simply a desire to amass a great library; his encouragement of Tudway relates closely to his other efforts to explore new areas of collecting beyond the traditional focus on relics from antiquity.

His comprehensive curiosity in new areas was part of an opening-up of English literary life to new subjects. It was at this time that the whole framework of the classical tradition was coming into crisis in England in the wake of the quarrel over the Ancients and Moderns. His focus was historical not only in the music collection, but also in a remarkable effort to obtain the Civil War pamphlets that were eventually published by Thomas Osborne. Two very interesting works of critical scholarship written by literary members of the Harley household grew out of the same historical concern, William Oldys’s 1731 *A Dissertation upon Pamphlets* and Zachary Grey’s 1725 *A Defence of our Ancient and Modern Historians against the Frivolous Cavils of a late Pretender to Critical History*.

All of which bears in interesting ways upon the origins of the British Museum. The founding of a national institution under the aegis of the state rather than the Court may seem obvious and unavoidable to us now, but in its time – even considering the precedent of the Cotton Library – it was a major innovation. Historians need to look much more closely, both in its specifics and its underlying *mentalité*, into what lay behind the decision of the House of Commons in 1753 to vote £10,000 to buy the Harleian Manuscripts for public use. The history of the music collection has suggested aspects of the intellectual context within which the idea of a museum developed – the national cultural orientation and the inquisitiveness that lay behind Edward Harley’s library. Politics were another context too, for, if this history tells us anything, it is that we cannot ignore how closely Thomas Tudway’s work was related to the struggles of the 1710s.

I am indebted to David Hayton, Graydon Beeks, Robert Bucholz, Valerie Rumbold and D. J. Burrows for their help, and to California State University, Long Beach, for its support.


4 W. G. Hiscock, Henry Aldrich of Christ Church (Oxford, 1960). It has recently been established (see a forthcoming article in the Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle by David Pinto) that the collection of sixteenth century music manuscripts so long attributed to Aldrich's labours was in reality brought to the cathedral along with the King's retinue during the Civil War, and Aldrich then made extensive use of it.


Music historian A. H. Mann cites the father's marriage, 3 Dec. 1625, between the son of a 'gent' in Berkshire and a 'yeoman' in Nottinghamshire; see 'Cambridge Musicians'; Mann Papers, Rowe Music Library, King's College, Cambridge.


8 Ibid.; Burney, vol. ii, p. 361n. The pun was probably 'the chancellor rides us all, and without a bit in our mouths'.


10 Letter of Tudway to Robert Harley, 10 June 1714, Loan 29/159.


14 Tudway to Robert Harley, 16 Jan. 1713/14, Loan 29/159. The statement that 'Dr Tudway has been attending for several years' probably refers to his occasional works written for the Queen.

15 Robert Bucholz has kindly passed on the statement in the London Evening Post in 1712 (10-12 Apr., no. 417) that 'A Warrant is passing, whereby her Majesty is graciously pleased to appoint Dr. Thomas Tudway, of Cambridge, a Supernumerary Compositer to the Chapel-Royal.' See as well Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawl. MS. 268, f. 274: 'On Thos. Tudway, we hear a warrant is passing, Whereby her majesty is graciously pleased to appoint T.T. of Cambridge, a Supernumerary compositer to the Chappell Royall. NB What may not an honest man expect from the justice of this administration? who have been pleased to consider this gentleman as barbarously used by a vile information, and crushed by order of the late ministry, whom this [...] have generously redressed in regards as well to his merits, as his sufferings.' We must remember that Rawlinson was a non-juror. There are two incomplete draft warrants for his appointment. One, in his hand, is undated but appears to be from 1714 (Loan 29/159); it is on the second folio of a draft petition, opening 'That Dr. Tudway after having paid an at-
The other, not in his hand, is dated 1714 but has the month and day left blank: Loan 29/162, misc. 40; I am indebted to Graydon Beeks for this reference. There is an interesting reference to 'Mr Hendals Gratuity, as I presume, coming from y'' Privy Purse' in Loan 29/159, undated, beginning 'My Good Lord, I need no other Assurances...'.

M. Tudway to Robert Harley, 9 Aug. 1714, H.M.C. Portland, vol. iii, p. 485. Tudway must have been introduced to Robert Harley by 1711, since his letter to him on 19 June 1714 (Loan 29/159) states that he was recommended 'to your Lordships fav'' by the late Master of St John's. That was evidently Humphrey Gower, who served in the office, openly protecting non-jurors, from 1680 until his death in 1711; see D.N.B., vol. viii, p. 298.

M. Tudway to Wanley, 23 Feb. 1716/17, Harl. MS. 3782, f. 70.; information supplied by Dr. D. W. Hayton from a draft biography of Sir George Downing for the 1690-1715 volumes of the History of Parliament (in preparation).


Edward Harley to Wanley, 19 and 23 March 1716/17, Loan 29/249 ('I am glad you sent the good Doctor the 30. I [hope] that it will be of service to him at this time'); see also Edward Harley's note of paying Tudway for the last volume in his Commonplace Book, 31 March 1721, Loan 29/346.

Marginalia, Tudway to Wanley, 17 Feb. 1717/18, Harl MS. 3782, f. 89.

See also Nicholas Temperley, The Music of the English Parish Church, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1979), vol. i, chs. 5-7. For the movement back to the Psalms, see Arthur Bedford, The Great Abuse of Musick (London, 1711). Bedford was a Bristol clergyman whose Temple parish was in an area of the city with many Dissenters; his prose reflects that influence to a degree.

Loan 29/345, 341. 343.

Joseph Kerman, The Masses and Motets of William Byrd (Berkeley, 1981); Morehen, pp. 290-1; Thomas Tomkins, Musica Sacra, or Musick, Dedicated to the Honour and Service of God, and To the Use of Cathedral and other Churches of England, and Especially of the Chappell Royall of King Charles the First (London, 1668).

D. J. Burrows, 'John Dolben's Music Collection', Musical Times, cx (1979), pp. 65-7, 149-51; A letter written by Mr. J. Dolbin to Dr.
H. Sacheverell (London, 1710), attributed to John Dolben, the younger, the black sheep Whig member of the family.

One of the few places where direct attacks on church music, including the singing of the litany, are found is in The Modern Fanatik, With a large and true Account of the Life, Actions, Endowments, etc. of the Famous Dr. Sacheverell (London, 1710), pp. 49–50.

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52 Tudway to Wanley, 25 Aug. 1716, Harl. MS. 3782, f. 64.

53 Tudway to Wanley, 23 Feb. 1716/17, Ibid., f. 70.

54 Harl. MS. 7342, f. 12; Hogwood, p. 44.


56 Ibid., p. 45. Hogwood nonetheless points out the many contradictions in Tudway’s point of view on this problem.


60 Single sheet dated 5 Nov. 1716, Loan 29/257.


62 Tudway to Wanley, 18 July 1718, Harl. MS. 3782, f. 100.


65 In building the chapel, Harley may have been trying to rival James Brydges, the new Duke of Chandos, who at that time was developing an unusually large musical programme at Canons. See Turnbull, p. 407, and Graydon Beeks, "A Club of Composers": Handel, Pepusch and Arbuthnot at Cannons' in Anthony Hicks and Stanley Sadie (eds.), The Handel Tercentenary (Ann Arbor, 1987), pp. 209–21.

66 I cannot agree more with Hogwood’s opening point, that the writing of music history emanated from the shelving of antiquity as a central historical reference point; see Hogwood, pp. 19–20.


68 For further discussion of use of the term, see my forthcoming volume, Canon of Musical Classics, chs. 3 and 4.

69 Harl. MS. 7338, f. 1.


73 Interestingly enough, the Bodleian Library was vying with Wanley in acquiring these pamphlets. See Arthur Charlett to Wanley, 21 Dec. 1717, 13 and 20 Nov., 5 Dec. 1719, 7 and 17 Dec. 1720, Harl. MS. 3778, ff. 20, 51–6, 63–5. They appeared in Thomas Osborne, A Catalogue of Some Tracts and Pamphlets collected by the late Earl of Oxford (London, 1747) and [Thomas Osborne], The Harleian Miscellany; or, a Collection of scarce, curious and entertaining Pamphlets and Tracts found in the late Earl of Oxford’s Library (London, 1744–6).