

THREE  
*SONATS*  
FOR THE  
PIANOFORTE

*Composed & Dedicated,  
by Permission, to*  
M<sup>R</sup>. HAYDN

BY  
*C. C. Crotch.*

Op. III.

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*Crotch*

Tompson and Ballou

# The La Trobes' Music: La Trobe's Cottage

Sunday 1 December 2019

Music was an important part in the life of the La Trobe family at *Jolimont*. All the family could play the piano, although Sophie spent time trying to find a suitable piano teacher for her children. In a letter to Susan Meade (Mrs Norton) on 15 September 1848 she wrote:

*'There are a great number at Mrs Conolly's and I do not think that is at all fit for Eleanor, she improved more in three months with you than in 6 at Mrs Conolly's'.*

And to daughter Agnes she wrote in January 1848:

*'Eleanor seems to be very earnest in her wish of learning & is very zealous in practising the premier exercise, which she does very well with both hands'.*

Charles wrote to Agnes, 12 November 1852:

*... I write this early before breakfast, I hear Nelly at her music lesson in the little drawing room.*

According to Fanny Moore, daughter of Georgiana McCrae, Mr La Trobe *'was a frequent visitor, and, often, stretching his long legs under the keyboard, played away in a right masterful fashion, while his wife sang French and Swiss chansonnettes very sweetly.'*<sup>1</sup>

The La Trobes enjoyed musical evenings: Sophie would accompany the family singing. La Trobe himself had a *'fine bass voice'*.<sup>2</sup>

The La Trobes' piano, still here in the Cottage, was manufactured by John Broadwood and Sons, 'Manufacturers to Her Majesty, at Pulteney Street, Golden Square London'. The six-octave piano dates from 1837. Sadly, it is now no longer playable. Agnes later wrote to the granddaughter of the family's beloved housekeeper, Charlotte Pellet:

*'We are sure that our Father never would have had a piano that was not a Broadwood'.<sup>3</sup>*

La Trobe's father, Christian Ignatius La Trobe (1758-1836), was a musical genius, playing not only the organ and piano, but in his youth a total of ten other instruments (violin, viola, cello, double-bass, oboe, clarinet, French horn, trumpet, trombone and bassoon). He possessed a deep knowledge of European composers' music and is credited as influencing English tastes in sacred music. He is painted with organ pipes in the background, signifying his profound influence on church music. A prolific composer of hymns, in addition to a small amount of secular music, he felt constrained in the latter field by the 'checks and regulations' of the Moravian Church and destroyed a number of those compositions.

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<sup>1</sup> Frances Octavia McCrae [Mrs Fanny Moore], *The Old Piano's Story*, ed. Bruce Steele (Mornington Peninsula Branch, NTA (Vic), 2006) in Rosemary Jean Richards, 'Georgiana McCrae's Manuscript Music Collections: a life in music', Thesis (PhD), University of Melbourne, Conservatorium of Music, 2017, p.181.

<sup>2</sup> George Cavenagh, early settler and editor of *The Port Phillip Herald*, to George Belcher, 13 December 1901.

<sup>3</sup> Agnes de Salis to Charlotte McCallum, 17 August 1912.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Edgar Stevens, 'The Musical Works of Christian Ignatius Latrobe', Thesis (PhD), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1971.

<sup>5</sup> Georgiana McCrae, 'Chaplin Music Book', RB 1164.9, p. 102, McCrae Papers, Harry F. Chaplin Collection, Rare Books and Special Collections, the University of Sydney Library, Sydney; in Richards, 2017, p. 223.

# Program

Pianists: Bruce Macrae, Elizabeth Woods

Singer: Mia Chenea Robinson, Victorian College of the Arts  
Secondary School singing student

Violinists: David Woods, Rebecca Collins

## **Piano Sonatas, Opus 111, Christian Ignatius La Trobe**

These piano sonatas were composed by Christian Ignatius La Trobe around 1791 and were dedicated to Franz Joseph Haydn, of whom he was a fervent admirer. Haydn heard these sonatas on a visit to London, when C I La Trobe requested his permission to dedicate them to him. Haydn agreed to this and encouraged La Trobe to arrange for their publication. Characteristics of Haydn's style are heard in these works.<sup>4</sup>

## **Drawing Room songs**

Das Gewitter (The Thunderstorm) transcribed by Georgiana McCrae while staying at *Jolimont* in November 1850.<sup>5</sup>

Dans un bois solitaire (In the Forest), Mozart

Va tacito e nascosto (Silently and Stealthily), Handel

Auf dem wasser zu singen (To Sing on the Water), Schubert

Selve amiche (Friendly Woods), Caldara

## **Traditional British Folk Songs**

All through the night

The Ashgrove

Loch Lomond

My bonnie lies over the ocean

The noble Duke of York

Rule Britannia

We thank Dr Rosemary Richards for her advice and help, and Giles Adams for the loan of his keyboard.