

# Marie Lachenal: Concertinist<sup>1</sup>

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**I. Introduction:** Marie Lachenal (1848-1937) had three claims to fame and social prominence: one by birth, one by marriage, and one acquired as an accomplished performer of classical music on the English concertina. Born to the concertina by virtue of the family business—'Louis Lachenal, Concertina Manufacturer', the firm established by her father in 1858<sup>2</sup>—Marie learned to play the concertina and applied her talents to the promotion of Lachenal concertinas long after her father's death in 1861 and her mother's divestiture of the business in the early 1870s.

In 1868, Marie married Edwin A. Debenham (1844-1925), a member of a family of photographers who specialized in portraits of royalty, statesmen, and artists, as well as somewhat less illustrious clientele. Founded by Edwin's father near the very dawn of photography, the family photography business bridged the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and eventually produced three generations of Debenham photographers.

Edwin and Marie's family was large by modern standards, with nine children of whom eight survived infancy. And though Marie's maternal responsibilities took a toll on her career as performer and teacher, she still managed to maintain high standards of performance throughout her absence from the stage for maternity and child rearing. In fact, the advent of what might be called her 'second career' in the 1880s saw her garner the same high praise from the critics that she had received in 1865-1866, when The Mesdemoiselles Lachenal—the teenagers Marie, Eugenie, and Josephine—first took to the stage in London and Edinburgh.

**II. The Performer:** Marie Lachenal and sisters Eugenie and Josephine made their debut at Myddelton Hall, in Islington, on 14 June 1865,<sup>3</sup> at the ages of sixteen, fifteen, and thirteen, respectively, perhaps while still studying with Richard Blagrove (1826-1895), already a prominent concertina impresario by the 1860s and eventually the preeminent classical concertinist after the death of Giulio Regondi in 1872.<sup>4</sup>

The sisters' Islington performance drew a glowing review in the *Islington Times* of 17 June 1865:<sup>5</sup>

. . .the Mdlles. Lachenal's Concert is we believe the first entertainment available for the million[s] in which the Concertina has been in a position

fairly to challenge a verdict on its merits as an orchestral instrument of surpassing beauty and extensive capabilities. The Concert commenced with an operatic selection for five Concertinas (two trebles, tenor, baritone and bass), of which the united effect was magnificent, now resembling the tones of the organ, now more like a string band, preserving the spirit of the airs, yet gracing them with novel charm. . . Mdlle Marie Lachenal was deservedly encored after performing a splendid fantasia on the airs from [Gounod's] "Faust" on the Concertina with great taste and artistic effect; this one piece was sufficient to entitle the Concert to a success, but the enthusiasm of the audience rose higher still on hearing a trio of Scotch airs for treble, baritone and bass Concertinas by the Mdlles. Lachenal. . . the performance gave evidence of much talent and finished style and the Concert successfully demonstrated to the general public that which was known only to few enthusiastic amateurs—viz., the adaptability of the Concertina to first-class orchestral Music, where this elegant instrument shines with peculiar effect both in melody and harmony, and sustains the full score unaided by instruments of any other description.

And not only did Richard Blagrove attend the concert in order to lend support and enjoy the accomplishments of his students, but he was one of the concertinists who joined the sisters in the quintet that drew comment in the *Islington Times* review. The fifth member of the quintet was Blagrove's sister, Ellen Attwater.<sup>6</sup>

In a letter to the editor of the *South Hackney Correspondent* for 27 July 1865, an enthusiastic admirer of the English concertina paid the Lachenal sisters the ultimate compliment, placing them in the company of the finest concertinists of the day: Giulio Regondi, Richard Blagrove, and George Case.<sup>7</sup>

Following the Islington performance in the summer of 1865, the Lachenal sisters headed to Edinburgh for an October 1865 performance at The Saturday Evening Concerts at the George Street Music Hall.<sup>8</sup> Billed as 'The Celebrated Performers on the ENGLISH CONCERTINA', the 'act' consisted of Marie, Eugenie, Josephine, and their piano accompanist Frederick William Bridgman (1833-1892), an Edinburgh musician who also played the concertina and joined the sisters for a concertina quartet.<sup>9</sup> What appears to have begun as a limited engagement lengthened into an October-January stay, prompted by highly favorable reviews of their performance:

The great novelty in the programme was the concerted pieces, arranged for three and four concertinas—the first occasion, we believe, in which such a combination has been heard in Edinburgh. The effect was exceedingly good, more especially in the operatic selections and the national airs. The first quartett, on themes from [Rossini's] "Semiramide," [Bellini's] "Sonnambula," and [Donizetti's] "Lucrezia Borgia," played by the sisters Lachenal and Mr. Bridgman, was most satisfactory both as to its arrangement and performance. Mdlle. Marie Lachenal's solo on airs from [Gounod's] "Faust" was also worthy of all praise for the tasteful and artistic manner in which it was rendered. Not less effective was the duet on subjects taken from [Meyerbeer's] "Les Huguenots," played by Mdlles. Marie and Eugenie

on treble and tenor concertinas. The trio on national melodies, as might be expected met with an enthusiastic reception, and was re-demanded. Mdlles. Lachenal are unquestionably proficient on their respective instruments. .  
 .(*The Scotsman*, 22 October 1865).

The successful performance on 21 October was followed by a Saturday Evening Concert at the Music Hall on 11 November; this performance received a round of accolades and an announcement of the sisters' extended stay in Edinburgh:

The concertina playing of the Mdlles Lachenal and Mr Bridgman formed a most important feature in the concert. The quartette on airs from [Donizetti's] *L'Elisir d'Amore* was exceedingly effective. It is cleverly arranged, and was most tastefully interpreted by Mr Bridgman and his fair co-executants. The duet on airs from [Auber's] *Le Domino Noir*, &c, for treble concertina and pianoforte, was also most charmingly given by Mdlle Marie Lachenal and Mr Bridgman. The trio on Scottish airs by the three sisters was equally satisfactory, and received an encore, which, however, was gracefully declined. Their concluding number was the quartette introducing "Rule Britannia," "Home, sweet home," and God save the Queen." During the performance of the National Anthem the audience remained seated—a phenomenon we never saw exhibited in any concert-room. We are glad to learn that these accomplished artistes intend to remain some time in Edinburgh, so that we may hope to have frequent opportunities of hearing them (*The Scotsman*, 13 November 1865).

The Lachenals' next performance at the Music Hall's Saturday Night Concerts took place on 16 December and, like the earlier ones, was loudly applauded:

Two concert solos, the one on national airs and the other on themes from [Rossini's] *William Tell*, were tastefully played by Mdlle Marie Lachenal, and met with immense applause. Not less satisfactory as performances were the trio, by the three sisters, and the quartett, [Weber's] "Invitation a la Danse," in which they were assisted by Mr Bridgman. . .[who] discharged his usual duties as accompanist most efficiently (*The Scotsman*, 18 December 1865).

Between their major performances, the sisters contributed their talents to charity events, including a 13 December concert for the benefit of the Edinburgh Lifeboat Fund. The concert organizers were disappointed by the low turnout, but certainly not by the quality of the sisters' performance:

The concertina, played by Mdlles. Lachenal and Mr Bridgman, was worthy of all praise, and loudly applauded, the quartette from [Donizetti's] *L'Elisir d'Amore* and the trio on Scotch and Irish airs being re-demanded (*The Scotsman*, 14 December 1865).

Between their engagements at the Music Hall, the sisters also appeared at a 'grand musical soirée' sponsored by the Total Abstinence Society and the Band of Hope and held at the Corn Exchange Hall, Dalkeith, on 25 December. The sisters shared the instrumental segment of the program with the Band of the Edinburgh Volunteers. It was, however, Christmas Night, and there were no more than eight hundred in attendance, half of whom were children. But the Lachenal sisters played to their full-house standards and, as usual, their talents and efforts were rewarded by the reviewer:

The most attractive feature in the evening's proceedings was the musical portion of the programme, which included a variety of excellent quartetts, trios, and solos for the concertina. . . admirably performed by Mdlles Marie, Eugenie, and Josephine Lachenal. . . Mr F.W. Bridgman. . . performed the duties of accompanist in his well-known superior style (*The Scotsman*, 27 December 1865).

The Lachenal sisters' last performance in Edinburgh took place on 20 January 1866, once again as part of The Saturday Evening Concerts. And though they treated the audience to at least some pieces not included in their earlier performances at the Music Hall, they went unnoticed by the press. It appears that their last performance was not reviewed, at least not by *The Scotsman*, possibly because they were leaving Edinburgh and were therefore less newsworthy than when future performances loomed.

Marie and her sisters had little opportunity to capitalize on their successes. In 1868, Marie left the Lachenal household to set up housekeeping of her own with husband Edwin, and the Lachenal sisters trio was disbanded. Not until around 1920, when the Fayre Four Sisters—Inga, Tina, Sylvia, and Lillian Webb—took to the stage,<sup>10</sup> would there be another all-sister concertina ensemble of the same high caliber as the Lachenal sisters.

The years from 1869 to the early 1880s were devoted to the Debenham children, which left little time for the concertina even in the parlor. Yet the later resurgence of Marie's career suggests that she at least found time to maintain (possibly even add to) her technique with regular or occasional practice and through teaching both her own children and perhaps other pupils as well. If Marie performed outside the home at all, it was probably at small, fairly informal venues, somewhat akin to the charity concerts of the mid-1860s. Perhaps an exception to this was an occasional appearance at the series of concerts that Richard Blagrove liked to organize in connection with his Concertina Fund, these sometimes requiring forces of up to eight concertinas.<sup>11</sup>

We can catch a glimpse of the day-to-day stress of Marie's life from an extract drawn from a family diary (now in the possession of the Debenham family) and dating from 1876:

Marie, pregnant with her 5<sup>th</sup> child, had joined Edwin in Weymouth where he was establishing a new business. In February [1876]. . .he took time to visit his favourite brother Arthur, in Ryde, where he worked by lamplight each evening, painting an opal picture which would be sent as a specimen. About ten days after he left the Isle of Wight, Marie sent a note to her brother-in-law requesting he come immediately to visit his brother Edwin, who had been stricken with a condition known as erysipelas [known as 'St. Anthony's Fire', a viral infection]. Arthur left Ryde by train and within hours found his special brother in a delirious state with a fever ranging from gentleness in lucid intervals to raging at its height. This was an extremely anxious time for Marie as her sister Eugenie was in another room confined with scarlet fever. Finally Elizabeth Lachenal arrived from London with another brother of Edwin's to assist.

Edwin took months to regain his strength, and, within a few months, Marie gave birth to Frederick (Albert Debenham's father), in Weymouth, on 23 April 1876.<sup>12</sup>

In 1885, Marie reappeared among the ranks of leading concertinists. The occasion was the International Inventions Exhibition in London, which brought out the flock of high-profile concertinists from the 'stables' of both Wheatstone and Lachenal. The concertina activities at the Exhibition were recorded as follows:

At the Inventions Exhibition Messrs. Wheatstones' Recitals by Mr. G. [sic!] Blagrove, Mr. J.C. Ward, and the Messrs. Chidley, were greatly admired, and the Quartettes which were played on the Treble, Tenor, and Bass Concertinas showed the beautiful effect of concerted music, when performed on the Concertinas, and by competent musicians. The solos were also artistically rendered. Again, there were the Recitals by Mr. James Alsepti, Mr. Henry Roe, Mr. George Roe, and Madame Debenham, under the direction of Messrs. Lachenal and Co., and various solos (some of them comprising the most difficult music) being accomplished on this instrument in a manner that would take a good Violinist to excel.<sup>13</sup>

That Marie must have held her own in the midst of this all-star cast is evidenced by the following review:

A concert given to prove the pure and brilliant quality of the Lachenal concertina afforded much gratification to the large audiences in the music-room of the International Inventions Exhibition last Tuesday evening. . .Marie Lachenal . . .played fantasias from Gounod, Rossini, and Meyerbeer, with consummate [sic] ease, and was deservedly applauded.<sup>14</sup>

We can see what Marie looked like at this time from a full-length portrait showing her with concertina in hand; the portrait was made by husband Edwin at the Debenham studio just around the time of the Exhibition (Fig. 1).

The positive response to her performance just a few years after the birth of her last child, Elsie Linda, in 1882, must have provided a psychological boost. And Marie began to look forward to a 'second' full-fledged career as a concertinist. In the next two decades, she earned acclaim from audiences from Huddersfield and Leeds in the north to Southampton and Torquay in the south, all the while continuing to take on concertina pupils.

Around the turn of the century, Marie reinforced her efforts to promote her career by having an 'announcement' printed that advertised her availability as both performer and teacher (see Fig. 2), and followed that with a number of choice excerpts from reviews that she had clipped from the press, a selection from which follows.<sup>15</sup>

Mme. Marie Lachenal performed R. Blagrove's concertina solo 'Scottish Airs' in a manner which delighted the audience, who insisted on its repetition. (*Southampton Times*)

Winter Garden Concerts—Foremost amongst those on Monday evening was Mme. Lachenal, whose solos 'Les Huegenots' [sic], 'Le Prophète,' and 'Fantasia on airs from Faust,' again proved her thorough acquaintance with the concertina, and the applause with which she was greeted shewed that this lady has won her way to popular favor. (*Torquay Times*)<sup>16</sup>

Mme Lachenal again sustained the reputation she has gained on more than one occasion for the masterly way in which she handles the English concertina, and her 'Scotch Airs' were loudly applauded. (*Devon County Standard*)<sup>17</sup>

Mme. Lachenal showed herself to be a very facile and correct executant, and an accomplished artiste in her style of playing, her accent and phrasing being particularly good, and her ability in bringing out the dramatic side of the music was really remarkable. Indeed, she showed what a wonderful variety of tone and expressiveness can be obtained from the instrument by a good player. (*Huddersfield Examiner*)

Leeds Coliseum Saturday Concerts—The feature of the performance was the rendering of a couple of concertina solos by Mme. Lachenal, of Huddersfield, in such a manner as to win the hearty applause of the audience. Her fingering of the instrument was perfect. She is the best performer of the kind we have heard for some time. (*Leeds Daily News*)<sup>18</sup>

Leeds Coliseum Saturday Concerts—A novelty in the evening's entertainment, and one which will bear repeating was a concertina solo by Mme. Marie Lachenal, who succeeded in drawing music from the instrument which few would have given it credit for possessing. (*Leeds Mercury*)



Fig. 1. Marie Lachenal with concertina (photograph by Edwin A. Debenham, Debenham & Co., York, c. 1885; reproduced courtesy of the Debenham family).



Mme. MARIE LACHENAL,  
Professor of the  
English Concertina,  
*(Favourite Pupil of the late MR. RICHARD BLAGROVE)*

*Begs to announce that she is open to engagements  
for Recitals, Concerts, &c.*

Mme. MARIE LACHENAL  
*Can also receive a limited number of Pupils.*

*Appended are Extracts from Press Opinions.*

FOR TERMS, &c., ADDRESS:—

*Tomes, Typ., Leamington.*

Fig. 2. Marie's 'announcement, c. 1900  
(reproduced courtesy of the Debenham family).

Dating from the turn of the century is another portrait of Marie with her concertina (Fig. 3). Produced by husband Edwin, it roughly coincided with Marie's announcement of her continuing availability for performances and teaching.





Fig. 3. Marie Lachenal with concertina (photograph by Edwin A. Debenham, Debenham Studios, Gloucester, c. 1900; reproduced courtesy of the Debenham family).

**III. The Musical Repertory:** Thanks to the many references to specific pieces in the announcements and reviews of her concerts in the 1860s and in the 1880s through the

turn of the century, we can form a fairly good picture of Marie's repertory. The Appendix lists all the pieces culled from those announcements and reviews.

**IV. The Lachenal and Debenham Families:** Marie Lachenal was born on 13 August 1848 in the family home at 26 King Street (now part of Shaftesbury Avenue),<sup>19</sup> London, and was christened on 11 February 1849 at St. Anne's, Soho, London. She was the first of nine children born to Louis (1821-1861) and Elizabeth Lachenal (1825-1904), born Jeanne (or Françoise) Marie Elisabeth Irion.<sup>20</sup> Louis and Elizabeth married on 3 November 1847, probably in Elizabeth's hometown of Ferney Voltaire (France), but possibly across the border in Geneva (given that Louis was Swiss-born). They departed for London shortly thereafter, arriving there on 10 November 1847. (Louis had originally settled in England in December 1839.)

The Lachenals' eight other children were: Jane Elizabeth (23 July 1849 – 2 March 1883), who adopted the stage name Eugenie; Josephine (b. 28 January 1851), the third of the concertina-playing sisters; Louis Jules (b. 16 May 1853); Constance (b. 19 August 1855); François Edouard (b. 27 July 1856), Marie Louise (b. c. 25 October 1857); Alice (b. 27 November 1859); and Alexander (b. 17 October 1861). Louis Lachenal died on 18 December 1861, just three years after beginning to market concertinas under his own name (rather than wholesaling to Wheatstone) and moving his operations to 8, Little James Street, Bedford Row, London, WC, along which street Lachenal concertinas would be manufactured for the next seventy-some-odd years.<sup>21</sup>

After Louis' death, Elizabeth managed the firm until 1873, at which time she sold the business to a group of Lachenal employees, who changed the name to Lachenal & Co.<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth then spent three decades in retirement, and died on 10 September 1904 in the home of daughter Marie Louise Waddell in Stout Green, North London.

To return to Marie: by 1867 she had met and fallen in love with Edwin Alfred Debenham, who, having a fine voice, was also something of a performer, and often sang at public concerts. Marie and Edwin married on 7 April 1868 in St. Peter's Church, Regent Square, London. Edwin was born on 7 June 1844 in Bury St. Edmonds, Suffolk, where the Debenham family was long established and well known.<sup>23</sup> He was the seventh of eight children born to Samuel and Salome Debenham (born Warren). Recognizing the opportunities stemming from the recent advances in photography and with something of an artistic flair of his own, Samuel Debenham had moved his family to London in 1846 to pursue a career as a photographer. By 1860, he was well

established with his own studios, having learned much about the new art form, which he then taught to his sons.

By 1862, Edwin and younger brother Arthur were working for their older brother, William Elliott Debenham (age twenty-three), who had already set up a successful studio at 158 Regent Street, London. In 1867, Edwin and Arthur formed a partnership and set up a studio of their own in Ryde, Island of Wight. Within a year, though, Arthur had married, and Edwin agreed to withdraw from the partnership, though not without a cash settlement. The Isle of Wight became the center of Arthur's business and an opportune site for advancing the Debenham slogan of 'Photographer to Royalty'. Indeed, Arthur was a favorite photographer of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra when they resided at Osborne House, their summer home, or went sailing on the royal yacht 'Victoria'.<sup>24</sup> In addition, Arthur produced a family portrait of Tsar Nicholas II and Tsarina Alexandria, taken during the Russian royal family's last visit to England in 1910.

Edwin's older brother, William Elliott, preferred to operate mainly from his Regent Street studio, which was an ideal location for attracting such high-profile clients as members of the royal family, prime ministers, poets, and artists. Edwin chose a decentralized approach, expanding his operation around England, especially (but not exclusively) along the southern coast. Among his locations: the early studio in Reigate, Surrey, as well as E. Debenham (later Debenham & Gould), Glen View Studios in Bournemouth,<sup>25</sup> E. Debenham (later Debenham & Smith) in Southampton, E. Debenham's 'Royal Portraits Studio' in Weymouth, Debenham & Co. in York, and the Debenham studios in Torquay and Gloucester. The Debenham studios also reached north to Edinburgh, where Edwin had a studio that would later belong to his son and namesake, Edwin Holford Debenham (c. 1872-1936).<sup>26</sup>

A number of calling cards and cabinet cards produced at the studios of Edwin, his brothers, and their sons may still be found among collectors.<sup>27</sup> A particular passion of Edwin Debenham was the pleasure of photographing Marie and his children. In addition to portraits of Marie with her concertina (see Figures 1 and 3), Edwin produced a cameo-mount portrait of her at age seventy. Shown in Figure 4, it dates from 1919.

In 1869, with Marie at his side, Edwin opened his studio in Reigate, Surrey. At the same time, the family began to grow with the arrival of their first child, Lucy Alice. Their first son, Arthur Jules, was born in late 1870, and seven more children arrived during the next twelve years: Edwin Holford (c. 1872-1936), Leonard (b. 1874),<sup>28</sup> Frederick William (1876-1956),<sup>29</sup> Philip Eugene (b. c. 1877), Leonard Coleman (b. c.

1879), Josephine (b. 1880), and Elsie Linda (1882-1967), their places of birth seemingly following the path of Debenham studios across England.



Fig. 4. Marie Lachenal  
(photograph by Edwin A. Debenham, Debenham Studios, 1919;  
reproduced courtesy of the Debenham family).

The 1871 census shows that Marie and Edwin's residence was in Reigate. A decade later, the family was located in Holford, Holdenhurst, near Bournemouth, whereas the 1891 census has the family at 24 Newton Lane, Castlegate District, York, and records Edwin and Marie as 'Photographer[s]'. The 1901 census places Marie, Edwin, and three of the children in Gloucester; by 1920, Marie and Edwin were residing in Nottingham.

Though Marie taught the concertina to some of the children, none of them followed her as a profession concertinist. Nonetheless, the 1901 census records both

Josephine (then age twenty) and Elsie Linda (age eighteen) as 'Musical student[s]', with Josephine eventually having a career as a music teacher.

Finally, retirement took Edwin and Marie to Darlington, in northern England (a few miles south of Durham). This was a time for Edwin, patriarch of a family with deep religious convictions, to direct his energies to the church, where he was a lay reader. Edwin died on 21 February 1925 at their home on Northgate Street; and after a widowhood of twelve years, Marie Lachenal died on 29 May 1937, at age 88. She was buried on 1 June in the Darlington East Cemetery, Geneva Road, Darlington.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Marie Lachenal's Repertory**

What follows is a list of pieces that constitute at least part of Marie Lachenal's repertory as these may be culled from the *Islington Times* review of her 1865 concert, the announcements and reviews of the 1865/66 Edinburgh concerts that appeared in *The Scotsman*, and the reviews that appeared in various newspapers of the concerts that Marie gave in the 1880s and later. The great majority of works—both for concertina with piano and for concertina ensembles—belong to the almost-proverbial 'Fantasia on. . .' genre, that is, settings of well-known songs and popular opera arias of the day that were intended to display the performer's virtuosity. In some instances, it is not possible to identify the composer with certainty, as more than one concertinist-composer/arranger drew on the same 'common stock' of materials. We have, therefore, attributed pieces as follows: (1) when the composer is named in either an announcement or a review, his name is indicated together with an asterisk; (2) when a title can be assigned to more than one composer (that is, more than one composer wrote a piece with the same title, based on the British Library's online catalogue or Wheatstone's *Catalogue of Music for the English Concertina or Aeola*, c. 1919), we have favored the piece by Blagrove (as long as it is known to date from before the concert in question) on the grounds of his close relationship with Marie Lachenal. Publication dates follow those in the British Library online catalogue <<http://catalogue.bl.uk>>. Finally, the list is organized by type of ensemble.

## A. Treble concertina and pianoforte

*Concertante Duet on Airs from 'Le Domino', 'Fra Diavolo', and 'Masaniello',* Blagrove and Sydney Smith\* (n.d.)

*Duet on Airs from Herold's 'Zampa',* Blagrove (1862)

*Fantasia on Airs from Donizetti's Opera 'Linda di Chamounix',* Blagrove (1848)

*Fantasia on Airs from Gounod's [Opera] 'Faust',* Blagrove\* (1863)

*Fantasia on Airs from Meyerbeer's Opera 'Le Prophète',* Blagrove (1851)

*Fantasia on Airs from Meyerbeer's Opera 'Les Huguenots',* Blagrove (1851)

*Fantasia on Airs from Rossini's Opera 'Guillaume Tell',* Blagrove (1855)

*Fantasia on Airs from Schira's Opera 'Niccolò di Lapi',* Blagrove (1863)

*Fantasia on Airs from Verdi's Opera 'Il Trovatore',* Blagrove (1856)

*Fantasia on English Airs,* Blagrove (no copy in the British Library)

*Fantasia on Scottish Airs,* Blagrove (1854)

*Fantasia on 'Souvenir de Donizetti',* Blagrove (1867)

*Serenade, Regondi\** (1859)<sup>30</sup>

## B. Concertina ensembles

*Invitation à la Danse,* probably based on the famous piece by Carl Maria von Weber (two trebles, tenor, and bass)

Mozart, Quartet in F major [K. 590] (two trebles, tenor, and bass)

*Quartet on Airs from [Donizetti's] 'L'Elisir d'Amore',* George Case\* (two trebles, tenor, and bass)

*Quartet on English Airs,* George Case\* (two trebles, tenor, and bass)

*Selections from Meyerbeer's Opera 'Les Huguenots',* Blagrove (treble and tenor)

*Selections from Rossini's Opera 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia',* (two trebles, tenor, and bass)

*Selections from Rossini's Opera 'Guillaume Tell',* Blagrove (treble and tenor)

*Themes from [Rossini's] 'Semiramide', [Bellini's] 'Sonnambula', and [Donizetti's] 'Lucrezia Borgia'* (two trebles, tenor, and bass)

*Trio on Scotch Airs,* George Case\* (treble, baritone, and bass; or two trebles and bass)

*Trio on Irish Airs,* George Case\* (two trebles and bass)

## C. Treble concertina and strings

Beethoven, *Serenade* (likely that in D major, Op. 8, 1797, with viola and cello)

*English Airs* (with violin, viola, and cello)

Mayseder, *Duet No. 1,* (with violin)

Mozart, *Quartet, No. 23* [in F major, K. 590] (with violin, viola, and cello)

## NOTES

1. We appreciate the comments of Chris Algar, Richard Carlin, Stephen Chambers, Geoffrey Crabb, Robert Gaskins, Douglas Rogers, Neil Wayne, Wes Williams, and the editor of *PICA*. Stephen Chambers's contribution to the documentation of Lachenal and Debenham genealogy deserves a special note of thanks.

2. On the firm of Lachenal, see the two important articles by Stephen Chambers: 'Louis Lachenal: "Engineer and Concertina Manufacturer", Part I', *The Free-Reed Journal*, 1 (1999), 7-18; 'Some Notes on Lachenal Concertina Production and Serial Numbers', *Papers of the International Concertina Association*, 1 (2004), 3-23.

3. Both venue and date are identified in a review printed in *The Musical Times*, xii/269 (1 July 1865), 101; the review goes on to say: 'The effect [of the concertina quintet] was exceedingly good; and the adaptability of the instruments to the execution of orchestral music was most successfully shown'.

4. On Blagrove's concertina-related activities (he was also a violist in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and taught that instrument at the Royal Academy of Music), see Allan W. Atlas, *The Wheatstone English Concertina in Victorian England*, especially Chapters 4-6; on the Blagrove family of musicians, see *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), iii, 670-71. In later years, Marie described herself as a 'favourite student of Richard Blagrove'. A Richard Blagrove photograph in the form of a calling card was produced by the studio of Debenham & Gabell, 158 Regent Street, London; see <<http://www.concertina.com/blagrove>>.

The bibliography on Regondi (1822/23-1872) has grown rapidly in recent years: to cite only those items that are entirely or mainly concertina-related (he was also a virtuoso guitarist): Douglas Rogers, 'Giulio Regondi: Guitarist, Concertinist, or Melaphonist? A Reconnaissance', *The Guitar Review*, 91 (Fall 1992), 1-9; 92 (Winter 1993), 14-21; 97 (Spring 1994), 11-17; Tom Lawrence, 'Giulio Regondi and the Concertina in Ireland', *Concertina World: International Concertina Association Newsletter*, 411 (July 1998), 21-25 (online at <<http://www.ucd.ie/pages/99/articles/Lawrence.pdf>>); Atlas, *The Wheatstone English Concertina*, 48-54; 'Collins, Count Fosco, and the Concertina', *Wilkie Collins Society Journal*, new ser., 2 (1999), 56-60; 'Giulio Regondi: Two Newly Discovered Letters', *The Free-Reed Journal*, 4 (2002), 70-84 (the latter two articles online at <<http://www.concertina.com/atlas>>); Helmut C. Jacobs, *Der junge Gitarren- und Concertinavirtuose Giulio Regondi: Eine kritische Dokumentation seiner Konzertreise durch Europa, 1840 und 1841* (Bochum: Augemus, 2001); two forthcoming articles: Atlas, 'A 41-Cent Emendation: A Textual Problem in Wheatstone's Publication of Giulio Regondi's *Serenade* for English Concertina and Pianoforte', to appear in the journal *Early Music* (2005), 33/4; Alessandro Boris Amisich, 'Where was Regondi Born?', to appear in *Papers of the International Concertina Association*, 3 (2006).

5. Our attempts to find a copy of this newspaper have come up short. We therefore quote the review as it appears in William Cawdell, *A Short Account of the English Concertina by an Amateur: Its Uses and Capabilities, Faculty of Acquirement, and Other Advantages* (London: W. Cawdell, 1865; reprinted with new title page, 1866), 15 (both versions online at <<http://www.concertina.com/cawdell>>).

6. Already a widow, Ellen (born c. 1816) is listed as living in Richard Blagrove's household along with her three sons in the 1861 census.

7. See Cawdell, *A Short Account*, 22. The letter, signed 'TREMELLO-NON-TROPPO', was almost certainly written by Cawdell himself. George Tinkler Case (1823-1892) was a violinist (in the Covent Garden Opera Orchestra), pianist, and concertinist, who turned out a voluminous amount of music for the concertina; see Atlas, *The Wheatstone English Concertina*, Chapters 4-5.

8. On the George Street Music Hall and the performances held there, see Robert Gaskins, 'The Lachenal Sisters Visit Edinburgh, 1865-1866', at <<http://www.concertina.com/lachenal-sisters>>, which includes all the notices from *The Scotsman* cited below (and more).

9. On the day of the concert, *The Scotsman* focused on the following highlight: 'The programme for to-night contains a novelty—viz., the performance of a movement from Mozart's Quartett in F major, played on four concertinas. The artistes are the Mdlls. Lachenal, of London celebrity, and Mr. Bridgman'. There are three possibilities for the quartet in question: K. 138 (1772), which Mozart called a Divertimento, the equally early K. 168 (1772/73) or, most likely, the late K. 590 (1790), one of the so-called 'Prussian' quartets (our thanks to Allan Atlas for this information). On Bridgman, who was noted as a child prodigy and enjoyed a successful career as a teacher in

Edinburgh, see James D. Brown and Stephen S. Stratton, *British Musical Biography: A Dictionary of Musical Artists, Authors and Composers Born in Britain and Its Colonies* (London: Reeves, 1897; reprint: New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), 61.

10. On the Webbs, see Richard Carlin, 'The Fayre Four Sisters', *The Free-Reed Journal*, 3 (2001), 79-88.

11. See Atlas, *The Wheatstone English Concertina*, 67-68; it was for one of these concerts that the Dutch-born composer Edouard Silas wrote his now-lost *Adagio in E* for eight concertinas.

12. The late Albert Debenham was the husband of Faye Debenham, co-author of this article.

13. John Hill Maccann, *The Concertinist's Guide* (London: Howard, 1888), 3-4 (online at <<http://www.concertina.com/maccann-duet>>). The initial 'G.' before Blagrove's name should probably be 'R.' Maccann likely refers to Marie as 'Madame Debenham' because of the lengthy period that had elapsed since Marie had performed under her own name. On John Charles Ward, see Atlas, *The Wheatstone English Concertina, passim*; Alsepti is treated in some detail in Atlas, 'Signor Alsepti and "Regondi's Golden Exercise"', *Concertina World: Newsletter of the International Concertina Association*, No. 426, supplement (July 2003); on the brothers Roe, see Atlas, 'The Victorian Concertina: Some Issues of Performance Practice', forthcoming in *The Nineteenth-Century Music Review*; finally, the Chidleys took over the firm of Wheatstone & Co. c. 1870 (see Chambers, 'Some Notes on Lachenal Concertina Production', 20, n. 18).

14. *Illustrated London News*, 1885. (We have not been able to determine the exact date of this review, which was preserved as a press clipping by Marie herself.)

15. Though Marie identified the newspapers from which the clippings were cut, she did not provide dates, which have yet to be determined.

16. The Winter Garden in Torquay, an iron and glass structure located behind the post office on Brandons Hill, was built in 1881 with about a 3,000-seat capacity. The structure was relocated to Wellington Pier in Great Yarmouth in 1904.

17. The *Devon County Standard*, founded on 1 April 1882, changed its name to the *Torquay Observer and District News* after 29 April 1898, which is therefore the *terminus ante quem* for the review; see 'Devon Newspaper Bibliography' at <<http://www.devon.gov.uk/library/locstudy/newsbib.html>>.

18. Opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales in July 1885, the 3,000-seat Coliseum Theatre became Leeds' first full-time cinema in 1905.

19. This was a busy year for the Lachenal family, as it was in 1848 that Louis began large-scale production of concertinas to be sold by Wheatstone's.

20. She changed her name from Jeanne to Françoise on the birth certificates of her children. In his last will and testament, dated 8 May 1856, Louis referred to his 'dear wife Françoise Marie Elizabeth Lachenal' (Chambers, 'Some Notes on Lachenal Concertina Production', n. 12). After her husband's death (or even possibly before it), she became known as 'Elizabeth' (altering the French 'Elisabeth').

21. See Chambers, 'Louis Lachenal', 16.

22. See Chambers, 'Some Notes on Lachenal Concertina Production', 8-9.

23. In fact, there is a town called Debenham in Suffolk.

24. Arthur's studios on the Isle of Wight included those at Arcade and 28 Union Street in Ryde and a studio in Cowes. Arthur (later Debenham & Sons) also had studios in Brighton, Newport, Sandown, and Seaview.



25. The most famous client of Debenham & Gould at the Glen View Studios may have been Oscar Wilde, who posed for the photographers in 1887. Two photographs from that session are owned by the Clark Library at the University of California, Los Angeles.

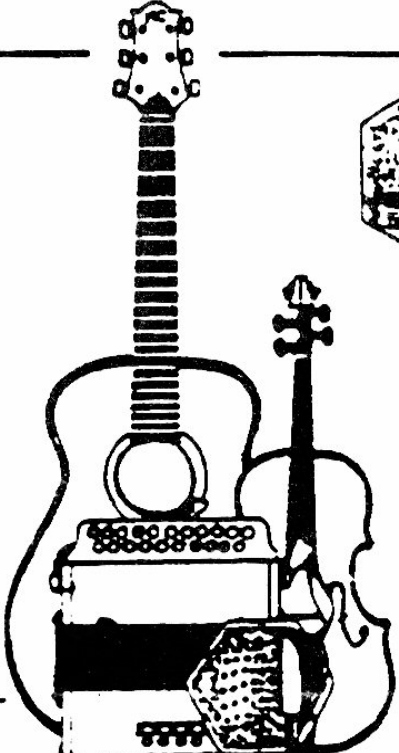
26. The Debenham studios had various ownership and operating structures: sole ownership and management by a Debenham brother or nephew; partnership with a brother, son, or unrelated party; and studio sub-contracting under a lease or franchise-type arrangement. Competition was strong, but the demand for portrait photography kept pace with—and even outpaced—the proliferation of studios. During the period of Edwin and his brothers, the popularity and affordability of studio photography filtered down from royalty and celebrities to the upper and middle classes, and finally to the more prosperous members of the working class. Most upscale Victorian parlors had wedding and other large portraits, and collecting small cardboard-backed portraits—calling cards (2½" x 3½ prints) and cabinet cards (about 4" x 5")—was all the rage from the royals on down. The popularity of the studios would only wane with the rise of amateur photography and the advent of George Eastman and the Kodak.


27. The Roger Vaughan Collection of images of calling cards, some made at the Debenham studios and some two thousand others produced at several hundred other Victorian studios, appears online at <<http://victorian.fortunecity.com/carroll/642/pixs/carte.htm>>. Many original photographs by the Debenhams are preserved in museum collections in England and elsewhere.

28. He died on 15 July 1874, just fifteen days old.

29. Frederick William, father of Faye Debenham's late husband, was born on 23 April 1876 in Weymouth, Dorset. He and Margaret Pottar Guthrie-Russell were married in Alberta, Canada, on 19 April 1916. He died 16 May 1956 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

30. There is a recording of the piece by Douglas Rogers, English concertina, and Julie Lustman, piano, on *The Great Regondi: Original Compositions by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century's Unparalleled Guitarist and Concertinist*, The Regondi Guild, Bridge Records BCB 9039 (1993). For a discussion of a textual problem in the *Serenade*, see Atlas, 'A 41-Cent Emendation' (see note 4).





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