

dictionary prospectus; Pole's name appeared among its thirty-two contributors already signed up.¹³

Here is Spottiswoode's letter of invitation, making the case for an exploratory meeting:

50 Grosvenor Place
8th April, 1874

Dear Sir, – It has been suggested by several leading persons interested both in the theory and practice of Music, that the formation of a Society, similar in the main features of its organisation to existing Learned Societies, would be a great public benefit. Such a Musical Society might comprise among its members the foremost Musicians, theoretical as well as practical, of the day; the principal Patrons of Art [music and literary publishers, church and university representatives]; and also those Scientific men whose researches have been directed to the science of Acoustics and to kindred inquiries. Its periodical meetings might be devoted partly to the reading of Papers upon the history, the principles, and the criticism of Music; partly to the illustration of such Papers by actual performance; and partly to the exhibition and discussion of experiments relating to theory and construction of musical instruments, or to the principles and combination of musical sounds.

With a view to ascertain the opinions of persons interested in these subjects, and to attempt a more precise definition of the objects and constitution of such a Society, it is proposed to hold a meeting here, at which your presence is requested, on Thursday, April 16th, at 2.30 p.m.

I am, Dear Sir, yours faithfully,
W. Spottiswoode

The following Gentlemen have been invited to attend this meeting.

Dr. Pole	Professor H.S. Oakeley, Edinburgh
Sedley Taylor, Esq., M.A.	Sir R.P. Stewart, Dublin
Wm. Chappell, Esq., F.S.A.	The Astronomer Royal [Sir George Airy]
George Grove, Esq.	Sir C. Wheatstone
Rev. R. Haweis, M.A.	G.A. Macfarren, Esq.
Professor Tyndall	E.J. Hopkins, Esq.
Carl Engel, Esq.	John Bishop, Esq., Cheltenham
Arthur Sullivan, Esq.	Lord Rayleigh
Sir F. Ouseley, Bart.	W. Spottiswoode, Esq.
Sir W.S. Bennett	Dr. Stone
Dr. Stainer	J. Hullah, Esq. ¹⁴

¹³ 'Preparing for Publication: The Dictionary of Music (A.D. 1450–1874)', London: Macmillan & Co., Mar 1874; bound with 'General Directions for Contributors' and several headword lists (RCM Library XXII.E.24 (4), copy of A.J. Hipkins).

¹⁴ BL Add. MS 71010, fol. 8.

According to the Association's Minutes, nine people attended – Spottiswoode, Tyndall, Sedley Taylor (Trinity College, Cambridge; author of *Sound and Music*, 1873; grandson of the Norwich musical writer Richard Mackenzie Bacon), Chappell, Grove, Hullah, Pole, Macfarren and Stainer. Apologies for absence with messages of approval were received from Stone, Oakeley, John Bishop and Hopkins.¹⁵ Haweis agreed to join but never paid his subscription; Sterndale Bennett never responded. All the others did, Rayleigh belatedly, besides by 2 November 1874 another 122 people including eleven women. Their names are recorded in the front matter of the first *Proceedings* volume (1874–75), pages vii–ix, in a format that would reappear for each year's membership in succeeding years to volume 79 (1952–53), after which a streamlined list began to appear at the back of each volume (see Fig. 6).

At that very first meeting, Spottiswoode had been in the chair to begin the business but had to leave to attend a meeting of the Royal Society; Pole then took over for the discussion, which included mention of the Musical Institute and the Musical Society of London as precedents. Macfarren recalled that several times an important paper had been given to only a very small audience despite the large membership of those groups. Chappell pointed out that comparison with the present proposal wasn't fair since those earlier bodies had operated chiefly as concert societies, with the 'scientific element' not properly represented. Pole agreed (twice disappointed by scant attendance at his papers). Taylor suggested that two levels of participation might help, members and Associates, since some people would like to attend and ask questions but without the responsibility of reading a paper; Grove agreed but countered that learned society membership did not necessarily carry the obligation of reading a paper, with which Tyndall concurred. Hullah, who had once led the Musical Institute but never participated in the MSL, urged extreme care in selecting Original Members: he believed the first twenty or thirty names would stamp the character of the organization (perhaps revealing his frustration over the Musical Institute and New Philharmonic episode). Grove suggested that a small committee should form to consider possible rules and potential members; Tyndall then made that formal proposal. Those elected to the committee were Chappell, Pole, Spottiswoode, Hullah and Stainer, who met again a few days later with Stainer acting as secretary.

The ten rules they in turn proposed were approved at a second general meeting on 29 May, at the South Kensington Museum with Hullah in the chair. The nineteen people attending formed a first group of Original Members: W. Chappell, J. Barnby, M. Garcia, W.H. Stone, R.H.M. Bosanquet, A.J. Ellis, W.H. Monk, Salaman, T. Helmore, C.E. Stephens, E.J. Hopkins, S. Taylor, E. Dannreuther, J. Goss, E.H. Thorne, J.H. Griesbach (died January 1875),

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, fol. 9v. John Tyndall sent a brief note to Spottiswoode just after 2 pm on 16 April [1874], indicating that he could not attend the meeting but would be 'glad to belong to the Musical Society' (Royal Institution, MS JT/1/T/1351). Somehow, though, he changed his plan and went, arriving in time to participate and commenting in the discussion. I am grateful to Roland Jackson for alerting me to Tyndall's letter.