

SPECIAL FEATURE on GUILLAUME PAQUE

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GUILLAUME PAQUE was a once very well-known violoncellist, born in Brussels on 24th July, 1825, sadly half-forgotten today. He entered the Conservatoire of his native city at a young age as a Demunck pupil, gaining the first prize of the Conservatory aged just 15.

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He went to Paris and was solo cello at Musard's Concerts. Then he went to Madrid as cellist to the Queen of Spain. In Catalonia he was Principal cellist in the Italian Opera at Barcelona, and a professor in the Music School of Barcelona.

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In 1851 he made the bold decision to transfer his career to Britain, first becoming employed by Jullien for his English Concerts, and from that point onwards London became his home. He played as principal cello in the Royal Italian Opera orchestra, and also was leader of the cellos at the new Philharmonic Orchestra, and a member of the Queen's Private Band. He even occasionally replaced Piatti at the Monday Popular Concerts.

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In the teaching world he was Professor of his instrument at Dr. Wylde's London Academy. His biggest teaching success was as the mentor of the London-based cellist and theatre producer Auguste van Biene.

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As a player he was said to have every qualityexcept a good tone (which apparently was rather poor!). However, as a man Paque was deservedly beloved and esteemed. Sadly he lived only to 51 years, passing away on 2nd March 1876 in London, and was buried in Brompton Cemetery.

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He left numerous works; remember that most 19th first-class (and second-class!) cellists were also composers. Perhaps his most known composition is "Souvenir de Curis" for FOUR CELLOS - a beautiful piece. The sheet music is available for free in 'Johnstone-Music' subject to a small overall minimum order here - and worth it because I have just seen the very same thing advertised on another (I won't name who) site for €17.50, arghh!:

<https://johnstone-music.com/product/paque-souvenir-de-curis-four-cellos/?lang=en>

Of you'd like to hear how it sounds try this on You Tube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNVHoBS3KuA>

And this is who play it:

The Four "Evang Cellists" - www.evangelcellisten.de Recommended! I am sorry that I haven't been able to trace a photo of Paque himself; therefore I post one of this nice sounding cello ensemble!

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By the way, his brother, PHILIPPE J. PAQUE, was a professional trumpeter also based in London - trumpeter to the Queen from 1864 onwards, and was a member of Her Majesty's Private Band.



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‘documenting the cello’

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