

## Bremner, Robert (d 1789), Music Publisher

bremner.com

...was born in Scotland in the early part of the eighteenth century. He began life as a teacher of singing, but about 1748 set up in business in Edinburgh as a music printer and publisher, at the sign of the Harp and Hautboy, in High Street. Here he published, in 1756, a work entitled *'The Rudiments of Music; or, a Short and Easy Treatise on that Subject. To which is added. A Collection of the best Church tunes, Canons, and Anthems'*. This book, which is characterized by its sensible directions for church singing at a time when ecclesiastical music was in a very corrupt state, was reissued in a second edition, published in 1763 at London, whither **Bremner** had in the meantime removed. His shop in London was at the sign of the Harp and Hautboy, opposite Somerset House in the Strand. Here he continued his publishing business with great success, besides bringing out several collections of *'Scots Songs'*, the words of which were by **Allan Ramsay**, and instruction book for the guitar, *'Thoughts on the performance of Concert Music'*, *'The Harpsichord or Spinnet Miscellany. Being a Gradation of Proper Lessons form the Beginner to the tollerable (sic) Performer. Chiefly intended to save Masters the trouble of writing for their Pupils'*, and *'Select Concert Pieces fitted for the Harpsichord or Pianoforte, with an Accompaniment for the Violin'*. The last publication, of which several numbers appeared, contains a valuable collection of classical music. In the preface to it, Bremner mentions his having bought the celebrated manuscript wrongly known as *'Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book'* at the sale of **Dr. Pepusch's** library. For this he gave ten guineas: the manuscript passed from his hands into those of **Earl Fitzwilliam**, and is now preserved in the Fitzwilliam Library at Cambridge.. In the latter part of his life, **Bremner** lived at Kensington Gore, where he died 12 May 1789.

[Grove Dict. of Musicians, I. 273b, iv. 307b; Gent. Mag. 1789, I. 471; Bremner's works mentioned above]

[From The Dictionary of National Biography, edited by Leslie Stanton; Vol VI; Smith Elder & Co., London 1886]

The [Scottish Book Trade Index](#) adds the following:

**Bremner, Robert** Music Shop, Edinburgh

Edinburgh 1760

at the harp and hautboy 1761-1763

Near the cross 1762

Back of the Cross Well 1782

At the Cross 1784-1788

"**Mr. Bremner** begs leave to acquaint the public, that he has now opened a music shop in London [as well keeping that in Edinburgh], *Caledonian Mercury* 4 December 1762; Facing Somerset-house in the Strand, *London Caledonian Mercury* 21 January

1764, *Caledonian Mercury* 9 January 1760; 14 January 1761; 5 April 1762; 30 April 1763; moved to London in 1762 leaving the Edinburgh shop in the hands of a manager; he died London 12 May 1789. Will registered of **Margaret Bruce**, eldest daughter of the deceased **Charles Bruce** glazier in Edinburgh and spouse of the also deceased **Robert Bremner** late music seller in London 26 March 1790."

*NLS Impr Ind; edin Dir; Grove; EdinTest*

### **Additional Notes:**

From the Scottish OPR, it can be seen that **Robert** married **Margaret Bruce** on the 30 May, 1756 in Edinburgh, and had at least two children, **Charles Bremner**, born 11 Feb 1759 and **James Bremner**, christened 6 AUG 1760 (both in Edinburgh).

*Scottish Old Parish Record Index, Edinburgh Parish*

