

**JOHN BROADWOOD GRAND PIANO
c. 1874**

DESCRIPTION:

8 ft. 6in. (8'6") with Original Ivory Keys.

As an instrument, this piano is in excellent playing condition.

As a furniture piece, it is a one of a kind masterpiece of design and craftsmanship.

Woods from all over the world representing many colors decorate this piano.

Piano Lyre has the form of an actual lyre and the pedal rods represent the strings of the lyre. The lyre is also decorated with inlay and has 2 pedals with brass foot pads. From the original condition of the foot pads, one may note that the piano was played regularly.

Panels with Instrument Motifs (to be further detailed in this document): 1 Large Design on Lid, 2 Designs on each Side, 1 Design on Opposite End of the Keyboard, 1 Design top side of Fall Board, 1 Design underside of Fall Board. Total of 8 Instrument Motifs.

Panels with Floral Motifs: 2 Large Designs on the Lid Flap, 4 Designs on each of the three beautifully shaped Legs. Total of 14 Floral Motifs.

Piano is decorated with numerous: patterns, entwined scroll patterns, small scattered floral accents, ribbons, and banding. The 3 heavy ornate brass castors have a scallop pattern.

As with most John Broadwood pianos, many of the interior pieces are stamped with the names and initials of the piano craftsmen responsible for its construction. Also stamped with the initials is the serial number 21327.

HISTORY:

The piano, serial #21327, was built in 1874, without decoration, by John Broadwood & Co. and was purchased by a Mr. Bernheim, Esquire, of 15 Bolton Gardens, SW1, London. From 1875 till 1879 the Broadwood Co. ledger books show record of regular tunings and regulating. On May 15, 1879 the piano was sent to the cabinet-making firm of Messrs. Wright and Mansfield, of 104 New Bond Street, London, to be decorated with the finest inlay by skilled craftsmen. The following information was in the London offices of John Broadwood & Co and found in their records:

“In 1901, Mrs. Bernheim accepted delivery of her *now decorated piano*”.

According to the records and dates of delivery attained, 21 years passed from time the piano was sent out for decoration and the completed piano returned to the owner’s wife. We assume that with the type of craftsmanship displayed on the piano, it is very well possible that it took that length of time to fully decorate.

We also know that Messrs. Wright and Mansfield went out of business in the 1920’s after a Philadelphia, PA exhibition for the noted reason; “Their detailed work was so exceptional that very few could afford such craftsmanship”. The company could not stay afloat as patrons no longer commissioned such time consuming furniture to be made at great cost.

Archives in Surrey (outskirts of London) are the source of this information, obtained from a Dr. David B. Robinson, County Archivist. Since the records are in such bad need of repair, only he has current access to them. He copied the information by hand out of the records that were in good enough repair pertaining to this piano. There are other archives and records with regard to the John Broadwood Piano company which Dr. Robinson has not had a chance to review since they are being restored. It is doubtful that there would be any other mention of this piano in other Surrey records.

At present, there is a current search in progress as to who the owners “Bernheim” were and if they hosted notable events. Who were the invited musicians who would have played on such an instrument?