**3 January 1854** Johannes Brahms (20) meets Hans von Bülow for the first time, in Hannover.

**4 January 1854** British Captain William McDonald discovers the islands that bear his name in the south Indian Ocean to the east of Heard Island.

**8 January 1854** British and French warships enter the Black Sea, charged with ensuring that Russian warships return to port.

**12 January 1854** Great Britain and France inform Russia that their navies are operating on the Black Sea.

**13 January 1854** Incidental music to *Romulus*, a comédie by Dumas, Feuillet and Bocage, by Jacques Offenbach (34) is performed for the first time, at the Comédie-Française.

**18 January 1854** Robert (43) and Clara (34) Schumann leave Düsseldorf for Hannover to give concerts and visit Johannes Brahms (20) and Joseph Joachim. It is their last trip together.

Having received minimal interference from Mexican authorities, William Walker expands his domains from Baja California to Sonora, although he has never been there.

**21 January 1854** Two days out of Liverpool, making for Australia on her maiden voyage, *RMS Tayleur* strikes ground on Lambay Island, northeast of Dublin. Of the 650 aboard, less than 300 survive.

*Phantasie* op.131 for violin and orchestra by Robert Schumann (43) is performed for the first time, in Hannover. Joseph Joachim is the soloist.

**22 January 1854** Russia demands that Britain withdraw its ships from the Black Sea and threatens a break in relations.

**31 January 1854** *Novellen* op.146, a waltz by Johann Strauss (28), is performed for the first time, in the Sophiensaal, Vienna.

**3 February 1854** Their ultimatum of 22 January unmet, Russia breaks relations with Great Britain.

**4 February 1854** Russians begin to strengthen Fort Verny in the foothills of the Zailiysky Alatau mountains (present Almaty, Kazakhstan).

**6 February 1854** Russia breaks diplomatic relations with France.

**7 February 1854** Marianne Marschner, third wife of Heinrich August Marschner (58), dies in Berlin, probably of pneumonia. She is 50 years old.

*Schallwellen* op.148, a waltz by Johann Strauss (28), is performed for the first time, in the Sophiensaal, Vienna.

**8 February 1854** The British cabinet decides to send 10,000 troops to Malta as an expeditionary force.

**9 February 1854** Because of tensions between France and Russia, Giacomo Meyerbeer (62) and Eugène Scribe are forced to make minor changes in the text of their upcoming opera, *L’étoile du nord*.

**12 February 1854** Robert Schumann (43) suffers constant hallucinations, hearing heavenly instruments and JS Bach’s (†103) *Ein feste Burg*.

**14 February 1854** *Bürger-Ball-Polka* op.145 and *Musen-Polka* op.147 by Johann Strauss (28) are performed for the first time, in the Redoutensaal, Vienna.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk (24) arrives in Havana for a concert tour.

**15 February 1854** Robert Schumann (43) tells Clara (34) that if the music he has been hearing for four days does not stop he will go mad. She summons a doctor.

**16 February 1854** On the birthday of the Dowager, Grand Duchess, Franz Liszt’s (42) symphonic poem *Orpheus* is performed for the first time, in Weimar, conducted by the composer, as an introduction to a production of Gluck’s (†66) *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

*L’étoile du nord*, an opéra comique by Giacomo Meyerbeer (62) to words of Scribe, is performed for the first time, at the Théâtre Favart, Paris, in the presence of the imperial family. It is a fantastic success and the opera will receive 100 performances in its first year at the Opéra-Comique.

**17 February 1854** Robert Schumann (43) composes a melody which, he tells his wife, has been sung to him by angels.

**18 February 1854** The angels heard by Robert Schumann (43) yesterday have been transformed into demons come to carry him off to hell. It takes two doctors to hold him down.

Stanislaw Moniuszko’s (34) opera *Halka* to words of Wolski after Wojcicki, is staged for the first time, in Vilnius. See 1 November 1848.

**20 February 1854** Robert Schumann (43) is well enough to finish proofs of his Cello Concerto.

**21 February 1854** *Carnevals-Specktakel-Quadrille* op.152 by Johann Strauss (28) is performed for the first time, in Schwender’s Colosseum, Vienna.

**22 February 1854** Track is laid to Rock Island, Illinois, thus making the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad the first rail link between the Mississippi River and the Great Lakes.

**23 February 1854** *Les Préludes*, a symphonic poem by Franz Liszt (42), is performed for the first time, in Wiemar, directed by the composer.

By the Convention of Bloemfontein, Great Britain agrees to vacate territory north of the Orange River, thus allowing for the creation of the Orange Free State.

*La Viennoise* op.144, a polka-mazurka by Johann Strauss (28), is performed for the first time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.

**24 February 1854** Robert Schumann (43) tells Ruppert Becker, concertmaster of the Düsseldorf orchestra, that Franz Schubert (†25) appeared to him and sent him a melody.

**26 February 1854** Fearful that he might be a threat to his wife, Robert Schumann (43) asks to be taken to a lunatic asylum but is persuaded by Clara (34) and a doctor to go to bed.

**27 February 1854** While making a copy of some variations on a theme in E flat, Robert Schumann (43) runs out of his Düsseldorf home to the Rhine bridge and throws himself headfirst into the river. He is pulled from the water by fishermen who manage to bring him home, despite his attempts to jump out of the boat. Doctors do not allow Clara (34) to see him. Unable to live in the same house under those conditions, she moves to a friend’s house.

Great Britain and France send an ultimatum to Russia demanding that it evacuate the Romanian principalities. “Refusal or silence” will be a “declaration of war.” (Royle, 115)

*Ballg’schichten* op.150, a waltz by Johann Strauss (28), is performed for the first time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.

**28 February 1854** The Republican Party of the United States is founded in Ripon, Wisconsin to oppose the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

Spanish authorities seize the US steamship *Black Warrior* in Havana claiming it has violated port regulations. After appeals and demands by US authorities as high as President Pierce, the ship will be returned.

**1 March 1854** The *SS City of Glasgow* departs Liverpool for New York carrying about 480 passengers and crew. It is never heard from again.

**3 March 1854** The first telegraph line in Australia goes into operation between Melbourne and Williamstown.

British and French warships enter the Black Sea to protect Turkey from Russia.

After hearing of Robert Schumann’s (43) condition, Johannes Brahms (20) moves to Düsseldorf to aid Clara (34).

Harriet Smithson dies at Montmartre attended only by her nurses. Since her first stroke in 1848, she suffered from progressive paralysis, irregular breathing, skin disease and her mobility and speech were limited. Her husband, Hector Berlioz (50), visits the apartment in Montmartre and kisses the body before it is taken away for burial, then fetches a protestant pastor for the interment in the cimitière St.-Vincent. Some important literary figures attend the burial but Berlioz is too distraught to go. He spends the time in her apartment even though they were estranged since the early 1840s.

**4 March 1854** Robert Schumann (43) is brought to Dr. Richarz’ asylum at Endenich, near Bonn. Clara (34) is prevented from seeing him off. She will not see him again until shortly before his death.

**5 March 1854** Sir George Hamilton Seymour, the British ambassador to Russia, departs St. Petersburg.

**12 March 1854** France and Great Britain conclude an alliance with the Ottoman Empire against Russia.

**13 March 1854** Louis Moreau Gottschalk (24) gives his first performance in Havana.

**14 March 1854** Anton Rubinstein (24) conducts the premiere of his Symphony in B flat in Lichtenthal Hall, St. Petersburg. The first movement of this will become his Concert Overture op.60 while the second and third will be appended to the Symphony no.2.

**19 March 1854** Tsar Nikolay I rules that all public concerts in St. Petersburg must be approved by the director of the Imperial Theatre, thereby restricting all public concerts to Lent when the Imperial Theatre is closed.

**20 March 1854** The Boston Public Library opens to the public.

**21 March 1854** Franz Liszt writes to a friend, “the learned critics have declared…that approving of my works, or even of listening to them without condemning them in advance is a crime, that of l’ese-art. In all probability this war against me will last several years.” (Quinn, 148)

**26 March 1854** Duke Carlo III ofParma is stabbed and mortally wounded as he walks towards his palace accompanied only by an orderly. The assassin presumably disagrees with the Duke’s support of a war against Russia.

**27 March 1854** Duke Carlo III of Parma dies of his wounds and is succeeded by his son Roberto.

Russia declares war on France.

**28 March 1854** After the Requiem mass for the funeral of Michael Arneth, prior of St. Florian and friend of Anton Bruckner (29), Bruckner’s *Vor Arneths Grab* for chorus and three trombones and *Libera me, Domine (II)* for chorus, three trombones, cello, double bass and organ are heard for the first time.

Russia declares war on Great Britain.

Great Britain and France declare war on Russia.

Hector Berlioz (50) conducts in Hannover again, less successfully than last year. But he is a hit with King Georg and Queen Marie.

**29 March 1854** The Republic of the Orange Free State is created independent of Great Britain.

**31 March 1854** The Treaty of Kanagawa is signed between Japan and the United States. The treaty opens the ports of Hakodate and Shimoda to American ships.

**4 April 1854** A week after declaration of war, Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (49) leaves Paris for Russia.

**8 April 1854** Arthur Sullivan (11), accompanied by Mr. Plees, his schoolmaster, meets Sir George Smart in London, in an attempt to enter the Chapel Royal. Smart encourages the boy and sends him to see Thomas Helmore.

**9 April 1854** Austria, France, Great Britain and Prussia sign a protocol in Vienna pledging to preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

**11 April 1854** Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (49) arrives in Berlin on his way home from Paris.

**12 April 1854** Arthur Sullivan (11) is enrolled as a chorister in the Chapel Royal.

The legislature of the Province of Buenos Aires approves a constitution for a state independent of Argentina.

**16 April 1854** An earthquake flattens the city of San Salvador, El Salvador, causing an unknown number of deaths.

After striking ground off Beach Haven, New Jersey, the *Powhatan*, with hundreds of German immigrants aboard, goes down with the loss of all aboard. Reports put the number of the dead between 200 and 400.

*Mazeppa*, a symphonic poem by Franz Liszt (42), is performed for the first time, in Weimar, directed by the composer.

**19 April 1854** In a concert in Weimar, the phrase “symphonic poem” is used for the first time, to describe *Tasso* by Franz Liszt (42).

**20 April 1854** Austria and Prussia sign a defensive alliance in Berlin and remain neutral in the Crimean War.

**22 April 1854** British and French warships bombard Odessa.

*Le Figaro* is produced for the first time as a weekly publication.

Anton Bruckner’s (29) *Laßt Jubeltöne laut erklingen* for male chorus and brass to words of Weiss is performed for the first time, for the reception of the future Empress Elizabeth, in Linz.

Hector Berlioz (50) gives the first of four highly successful concerts in Dresden, conducting *La damnation de Faust.*

**26 April 1854** Russian forces begin the siege of Silistria.

**27 April 1854** *Myrthen-Kränze* op.154, a waltz by Johann Strauss (28), is performed for the first time, in the Hofburg, Vienna for the wedding of Emperor Franz Joseph II to Princess Elisabeth of Bavaria, directed by the composer.

**28 April 1854** Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (49) arrives in Warsaw on his way home from Paris.

The United States informs the British minister in Washington of its neutrality in the Crimean War.

**29 April 1854** The legislature of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania grants a charter to Ashmun Institute in Oxford, Chester County, the first college for African-Americans.

**2 May 1854** *Luc et Lucette*, an opéra-comique by Jacques Offenbach (34) to words of de Forges and Roche, is performed for the first time, at the Salle Herz, Paris.

**6 May 1854** Over a year after its disasterous premiere, *La Traviata* by Giuseppe Verdi (40) is produced once again in Venice, this time at Teatro San Benedetto. With different singers and a different theatre it is a complete success.

**7 May 1854** *Elisen-Polka française* op.151 by Johann Strauss (28) is performed for the first time, in the Sperl Ballroom, Vienna.

**8 May 1854** Six months after beginning his expedition to take over northern Mexico, William Walker and 33 followers cross into California and surrender to the US military.

**12 May 1854** Anton Rubinstein (24) departs St. Petersburg on a long concert tour of Europe.

**15 May 1854** The United States Inebriate Asylum is founded in Binghamton, New York. It is the first hospital organized for the treatment of alcoholism.

**20 May 1854** The British Navy bombards Hangö, Finland.

**25 May 1854** A copy of the Sonata in b minor for piano by Franz Liszt (42), dedicated to Robert Schumann (43) (now in an insane asylum), arrives in Düsseldorf at the home of Clara Schumann (34). She calls it “merely a blind noise--no healthy ideas anymore, everything confused, one cannot find a single, clear harmonic progression...It really is too awful.”

**26 May 1854** Great Britain and France occupy Piraeus after declaring a blockade of Greece for attempting to attack Turkey. Greece quickly agrees to neutrality.

Pièce pour Grand Orgue in A by César Franck (31) is performed for the first time, in the Church of Saint-Eustache, Paris by the composer, at the inauguration of a new Ducroquet organ.

**28 May 1854** After a siege of a month, a major Russian assault on the Turkish defenders of Silistria, just over the Danube 100 km southeast of Bucharest, is repelled with heavy cost.

Alexandros Nikolaou Mavrokordatos replaces Antonios Georgiou Kriezis as Prime Minister of Greece.

Seven weeks after leaving Paris, Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (49) reaches Tsarskoye Selo where he plans to spend the summer.

*Erzherzog Wilhelm Genesungs-Marsch* op.149 by Johann Strauss (28) is performed for the first time, in Ungers Casino, Vienna.

**30 May 1854** Kibrisli Mehmed Pasha replaces Mustafa Naili Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act is passed by the United States Congress. It leaves the question of slavery in these territories open to popular vote. Those opposed to slavery see this as a dangerous incursion of slavery into the north.

**31 May 1854** A very ill David Livingstone reaches St. Paul de Loanda (Luanda) having traveled 1,300 km from Linyanti.

**2 June 1854** The Austrian government demands that Russian troops be withdrawn from Moldavia and Wallachia.

After a three-day trial in Boston, runaway slave Anthony Burns is ordered returned to slavery. It takes several battalions of federal troops to escort Burns through an angry crowd to the waterfront to be placed on a ship south.

**3 June 1854** A new organ is inaugurated in Winchester Cathedral by its organist, Samuel Sebastian Wesley (43) before a large crowd. His virtuosic display is followed by a service consisting of his music, including the first performance of an anthem written for the occasion, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made*.

**4 June 1854** 20,000 nativists invade the Irish districts of Brooklyn, injuring scores before troops arrive.

**5 June 1854** *Jeanie With the Light Brown Hair*, a song by Stephen Foster (27), is copyrighted.

**10 June 1854**  The new Crystal Palace opens in Sydenham, London, having been moved from its 1851 Hyde Park location and enlarged. It now contains 150,000 sq. meters of glass. The gardens cover over 80 hectares. Queen Victoria oversees the ceremonies.

**11 June 1854** While her husband Robert (44) resides in an asylum, Clara Schumann (34) gives birth to their eighth and last child, a boy, whom she names Felix after Mendelssohn (†6).

When two Irishmen throw rocks at a nativist speaker in Brooklyn, a mob of 10,000 riots in the city. Troops are deployed.

**12 June 1854** Incidental music to Plouvier’s comédie *Le Songe d’une nuit d’hiver* by Jacques Offenbach (34) is performed for the first time, at the Comédie-Française, Paris.

**13 June 1854** Anthony Foss of Philadelphia receives a US patent for an accordion.

**14 June 1854** By a convention between Turkey and Austria, Wallachia will be occupied by the troops of the two countries, Moldavia by the Austrians alone.

**15 June 1854** Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (50) begins writing his memoirs, at Tsarskoye Selo.

**19 June 1854** Russians explode 8,600 kg of explosives beneath the Turkish defenses at Silistria. They follow it up with an artillery bombardment.

**21 June 1854** Three Royal Navy ships bombard the Russian fortress of Bomarsund in the Åland Islands (now Finnish territory). The Russians return fire. For his heroism during the engagement, Mate Charles Lucas will become the first recipient of the Victoria Cross.

**22 June 1854** Russian forces raise the siege of Silistria and retreat north across the Danube.

Henry R. Bishop (67) is awarded the degree of Mus. Doc. Oxon. by Magdelen College, Oxford.

**24 June 1854** *Alfonso und Estrella* D.732, an opera by Franz Schubert (†25) to words of Schober, is performed for the first time, in Weimar conducted by Franz Liszt (42) on the birthday of Grand Duke Carl Alexander. Also premiered by Liszt is the *Solemn Overture* for chorus, organ, and orchestra by Anton Rubinstein (24). The composer received the commission six days ago.

**28 June 1854** Generals Domingo Dulce and Leopoldo O’Donnell pronounce a right-wing revolt against the Spanish crown and the liberal ministry.

**30 June 1854** Spanish government troops engage conservative rebels at Vicálvaro withoutstrategic result.

Emperor Napoléon III decrees that the Paris Opéra be placed under the Minister of State.

**3 July 1854** Leos Janácek is born in the schoolhouse in Hukvaldy, Margraviate of Moravia, the tenth of 14 children born to Jirí Janácek, a schoolteacher, organist and pianist, and Amálie Grulichová, daughter of a tavern owner. Five of the 14 will not survive more than their first year. The child is christened Leo Eugen.

**6 July 1854** In the Manzanares Proclamation, an obvious appeal for leftist support, General O’Donnell promises to restore the militia once he gains control of the Spanish government.

**8 July 1854** The first railroad line in Portugal opens between Sacavém and Vila Franca de Xira.

**11 July 1854** US Commodore Matthew Perry signs an agreement with the “King of the Lew Chew (Ryukyu) Islands.” It recognizes the islands as independent of Japan and China and opens them to western trade.

An armed nativist mob attacks the Irish district of Lawrence, Massachusetts.

**13 July 1854** Abbas I, Turkish Viceroy of Egypt, is murdered by two of his slaves. He is succeeded by Mohammed Said.

Having been sent by President Franklin Pierce to demand reparations from the town of San Juan del Norte, Nicaragua for an alleged slight of the US Minister to that country, the *USS Cyane* begins bombarding the town. Over the course of seven hours they fire over 200 rounds into San Juan, which consists of about 50-60 thatched huts. At the end of the bombardment, Marines are sent ashore. They loot what they can find, including a large cache of liquor, and burn the rest. Merchants of six countries demand $2,000,000 compensation for their destroyed goods, which will never be paid.

Mexican forces defeat the French filibuster Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon at Guaymas.

**14 July 1854** Sultan Said ibn Sultan of Muscat cedes the Kuria Muria Islands to Great Britain.

**15 July 1854** Russian forces defeat the Turks on the Cholok River and force them back to Batum (Batumi).

**17 July 1854** As Madrid rises in revolt, Queen Isabella dismisses the liberal prime minister Luis José Sartorius Tapia, conde de San Luis and appoints Fernando Fernández de Córdoba y Valcárcel. By this date, Barcelona, Valencia, St. Sebastian and Valladolid have declared against the government.

**18 July 1854** Ángel de Saavedra y Ramírez de Baquedano, duque de Rivas replaces Fernando Fernández de Córdoba y Valcárcel as Prime Minister of Spain.

**19 July 1854** Joaquín Baldomero Fernández Espartero, duque de la Victoria replaces Ángel de Saavedra y Ramírez de Baquedano, duque de Rivas as Prime Minister of Spain.

Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control for the East India Company, sends a dispatch to Governor General Lord Dalhousie outlining improvements which will essentially found the English-language education system in India.

**29 July 1854** Fromental Halévy (55) is elected Life Secretary of the Academy of Fine Arts of the French Institute. This opens up a chair which, once again, Hector Berlioz (50) applies for.

**30 July 1854** *Nordstern-Quadrille* op.153 by Johann Strauss (28) is performed for the first time, in Ungers Casino, Vienna.

**31 July 1854** Russian troops capture Bayazit (Beyazit) from the Turks.

**2 August 1854** Under threat of Austrian troops on his border, Russian Tsar Nikolai I withdraws his forces the Romanian prinicpalities.

**6 August 1854** Today begins two days of anti-Catholic rioting by nativists in Louisville, Kentucky. They use small arms and cannon to attack the Irish district.

**7 August 1854** Russian forces devastate the main Turkish army of the Caucasus at Kurekdere and force them to retreat to Kars. The battle leaves 11,000 total casualties.

The Barony of Knyphausen is annexed by Oldenburg.

Today begins two days of anti-Catholic rioting in St. Louis, Missouri, which leaves ten people dead and 30 injured.

**8 August 1854** British and French forces land in the Åland Islands north and south of the fortress of Bomarsund.

Austria, France and Great Britain issue their Four Points for peace with Russia, in Vienna. Russia must give up its claim of protection over Christians in Ottoman lands, a revision of the Straits Settlement, free passage of the mouth of the Danube, and guaranteed integrity of Moldavia, Wallachia and Serbia.

**9 August 1854** King Friedrich August II of Saxony dies in the Tirol and is succeeded by his brother, Johann.

*Walden, or Life in the Woods* by Henry David Thoreau is published in Boston at the author’s expense.

**12 August 1854** British and French artillery begin a bombardment of the Russian fortress of Bomarsund.

**13 August 1854** French filibuster Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon is executed by firing squad by Mexican authorities in La Mole Square in Guaymas.

**16 August 1854** French and British forces accept the surrender of the Russian garrison at Bomarsund (Sund) in the Åland (Ahvenanmaa) Islands. Among the French fleet is the young volontaire aspirant Louis Berlioz, son of the composer (50).

**17 August 1854** *Haute-volée-Polka* op.155 by Johann Strauss (28) is performed for the first time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.

**22 August 1854** Austria occupies the Danubian principalities following the withdrawal of Russian troops.

**23 August 1854** British ships destroy Kola on the Russian Arctic coast.

**26 August 1854** The open chair at the Institute is granted to Antoine Clapisson, over Hector Berlioz (50).

**28 August 1854** *Nachtfalter* op.157, a waltz by Johann Strauss (28), is performed for the first time, in Ungers Casino, Vienna.

**29 August 1854** Louis Moreau Gottschalk (25) gives the first of four concerts in Santiago de Cuba.

**1 September 1854** Engelbert Humperdinck is born in a house on the Marktplatz (presently Markt 46, the city museum) in Siegburg in the Kingdom of Prussia.

British and French troops assault the Russian defenders of Petropavlovsk on Kamchatka Island.

**8 September 1854** After an assault lasting a week, Russian defenders of Petropavlovsk on Kamchatka repulse a combined Anglo-French attack.

In the midst of a cholera epidemic in London, local officials remove the handle of a water pump on Broad Street. They have been convinced to do so by Dr. John Snow, whose epidemiological study concluded this was the source of the disease. Snow has been an advocate of the “bad water” theory as opposed to the prevailing “bad air” theory for the cause of cholera. The outbreak subsides.

**14 September 1854** *Missa solemnis* in b flat minor for soloists, chorus, orchestra and organ by Anton Bruckner (30) is performed for the first time, for the installation of Friedrich Theophil Mayr as new prior at St. Florian.

An army of 80,000 British, French and Turkish troops land near Eupatoria (Yevpatoriya) in the Crimea, 60 km northwest of Simferopol.

**17 September 1854** The Manifesto of the Liberal Union, a group of moderate liberals led by Leopoldo O’Donnell, is issued in Spain.

**20 September 1854** In the first engagement in the Crimea, British and French forces drive the Russians from their positions on the Alma River leaving 9,000 total casualties.

After recuperating for three months, David Livingstone begins the return journey from St. Paul de Loanda (Luanda) to Linyanti, some 1,300 km to the southeast.

**26 September 1854** Richard Wagner (41) completes the full score of *Das Rheingold* in Zürich.

**27 September 1854** The American *SS Arctic* goes down off Newfoundland after a collision in fog with the French *SS Vesta*. Of the over 500 passengers and crew, some 350-400 are lost. The fact that none of the women or children passengers survives will spark public outrage and indignation towards the surviving crew.

Giacomo Meyerbeer (62) conducts a gala performance of his opera *Der Nordstern* *(L’Etoile du nord)* before the court of Württemberg in Stuttgart.

**30 September 1854** Giacomo Meyerbeer (63) is invested with the Order of the Württemberg Crown in Stuttgart, which allows him nobility. He will not take advantage of this.

**2 October 1854** The Academy of Music in New York opens at 14th street and Irving Place with a season of opera.

**9 October 1854** Anton Bruckner (30) passes an organ examination in Vienna at which he improvises a double fugue.

**6 October 1854** After a huge explosion in a warehouse, a great fire engulfs Gateshead and Newcastle. 53 people are killed and up to 500 injured. Damage is estimated at £500,000.

**12 October 1854** The first reports of the appalling conditions in British military hospitals at Scutari (Üsküdar, Turkey) are published in *The Times*.

The upper house (Herrenhaus) of the Prussian Parliament is reorganized to give more power to large landowners and create a permanently conservative majority.

*Napoleon-Marsch* op.156 by Johann Strauss (28) is performed for the first time, in Schwender’s Collosseum, Vienna.

**14 October 1854** Japan concludes a friendship treaty with Great Britain in Nagasaki.

**17 October 1854** British and French troops begin a two-day bombardment of Sevastopol.

**18 October 1854** After a week of meetings in Belgium, the American ambassadors to Great Britain, France and Spain issue the Ostend Manifesto urging their government to annex Cuba if Spain will not cede it.

Hector Berlioz (50) writes Chapter 59 of his *Mémoires* which includes a description of Harriet Smithson’s death and funeral.

*La nonne sanglante*, an opéra by Charles Gounod (36) to words of Scribe and Delavigne after Lewis, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra. It will ultimately fail.

**19 October 1854** Hector Berlioz (50) marries the singer Marie-Geneviève Recio in L’Eglise de la Trinité and then in a civil ceremony with a notary, in the Mairie of the 2me arondissement, Paris. Among the guests is Giacomo Meyerbeer (63).

The *Revue et gazette musicale* publishes a letter from Olympe Pélissier denying persistent rumors that her husband, Gioachino Rossini (62), has gone insane.

**23 October 1854** The second and third movements of the Piano Sonata no.3 op.5 of Johannes Brahms (21) are performed for the first time, in Leipzig.

**24 October 1854** Traveling from London to his post in Madrid, US ambassador to Spain Pierre Soulé is refused entry into France at Calais. He returns to London. France is believed to be angry over the Ostend Manifesto of 18 October.

**25 October 1854** Russian forces defeat the Allies at Balaklava just south of Sevastopol. The fighting features the famous Charge of the Light Brigade, which causes the needless death of over 100 of the brigade’s 670 members.

**26 October 1854** Russians attack the British siege lines at Sevastopol but are forced back.

**27 October 1854** Robert Schumann’s (44) Piano Concerto in a minor is performed in Weimar, Clara Schumann (35) at the piano and Franz Liszt (43) conducting.

**2 November 1854** Felix Mendelssohn’s incomplete oratorio *Christus* to words of von Bunsen after the Bible is performed for the first time, in Leipzig two days before the seventh anniversary of the composer’s death.

**3 November 1854** The Catholic University of Ireland (University College Dublin) opens its doors to students.

**4 November 1854** Florence Nightingale and 38 nurses arrive at the Barrack Hospital in Scutari (Üsküdar, Turkey), near Constantinople. They begin to introduce sanitary conditions.

**5 November 1854** The Russian army surprises the British by attacking east of Sevastopol on the Inkerman heights. A combined British and French defense manages to stave off the assault but the fighting leaves 15,000 total casualties. Both sides now settle in for a long siege.

**6 November 1854** John Philip Sousa is born in Washington, third of ten children (only six surviving infancy) born to John Antonio Sousa, a Portuguese immigrant and trombonist in the US Marine Band, and Marie Elisabeth Trinkaus, an immigrant from Bavaria where her father was a small town mayor.

**8 November 1854** The Constituent Cortes is opened by Queen Isabella in Madrid.

**9 November 1854** Franz Liszt (43) conducts his symphonic poem *Festklänge* in its first performance, with Schiller’s play *Huldigung der Künste* in Weimar.

**10 November 1854** At the urging of Great Britain, desperate to hold together the alliance against Russia, France allows Pierre Soulé, the US ambassador to Spain, to travel through its lands to reach his post.

**11 November 1854** *The Siberian Hunters*, a romantic opera by Anton Rubinstein (24) to words of Zherebtsov, is performed for the first time, in the Weimar Hoftheater, directed by Franz Liszt (43).

**13 November 1854** George Whitefield Chadwick is born on Fifth Street in Lowell, Massachusetts, the youngest of two children born to Alonzo Calvin Chadwick, a carpenter in the Massachusetts Mills, and Hannah Godrey Fitts who comes from a family of musicians. Mrs. Chadwick will die within a week of puerperal fever.

The American *New Era*, out of Bremen, goes down in a storm off New Jersey (what is now Asbury Park). About 240, mostly German immigrants, are lost with 132 saved.

**14 November 1854** A violent storm strikes the allied armies at Sevastopol. 21 ships carrying food, medical, and military supplies are sunk. The supply ship *HMS Prince* is destroyed. Six of the crew of 150 are rescued.

**20 November 1854** The first meeting of the Neu-Weimar-Verein takes place at the Russischer Hof. Charter members include Franz Liszt (43) and Peter Cornelius (29), as well as out-of-town members Hector Berlioz (50), Hans von Bülow, Joseph Joachim and Richard Wagner (41). The purpose of the association is to further the music of the more radical Romantics: Berlioz, Wagner, Liszt and others.

**24 November 1854** Mustafa Resid Pasha replaces Kibrisli Mehmed Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

**27 November 1854** *Schnellpost-Polka* op.159 by Johann Strauss (29) is performed for the first time, in Schwender’s Collosseum, Vienna.

**30 November 1854** Mohammed Sa’id Pasha, Govenor of Egypt, grants a concession to build a canal across Suez to Ferdinand de Lesseps and the Suez Canal Company. He sends the document to Constantinople for approval by the Sultan.

**1 December 1854** A lenghty aritcle in praise of Clara Schumann (35) is published in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* by Franz Liszt (43).

**2 December 1854** An alliance is concluded in Vienna between Austria, France, and Great Britain against Russia.

**3 December 1854** Rebel gold miners in a makeshift stockade, demanding democracy and an end to taxation without representation, are attacked by police and military at Bakery Hill in Ballarat, Victoria, Australia. 22 miners are killed, many after the outcome is decided.

**6 December 1854** French land and naval forces attack Shanghai, held for over a year by members of the Small Sword Society.

**8 December 1854** The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception is made an article of faith by Pope Pius.

**9 December 1854** “The Charge of the Light Brigade” by Alfred Lord Tennyson is published in *The Examiner*.

**10 December 1854** *L’enfance du Christ*, a trilogie sacrée for vocal soloists, chorus and orchestra by Hector Berlioz to his own words, is performed for the first time, in the Salle Herz, Paris directed by the composer on the eve of his 51st birthday. It is a great success.

**12 December 1854** Peter Georg Bang replaces Anders Sandøe Orsted as Prime Minister of Denmark.

On a voyage from Liverpool to Melbourne, the clipper ship *Champion of the Seas* travels 465 nautical miles in one 24-hour period.

**14 December 1854** All slaves belonging to the Portuguese state are freed.

Anton Rubinstein (25) gives a solo concert at the Leipzig Gewandhaus. The press is largely positive.

**15 December 1854** King Kamehameha III of Hawaii dies in Honolulu and is succeeded by his nephew, Kamehameha IV.

**16 December 1854** In a letter to Franz Liszt (43), Richard Wagner (41) first mentions the idea of *Tristan und Isolde*.

**16 December 1854** *Le muletier de Tolède*, an opera by Adolphe Adam (51) to words of d’Ennery and Clairville, is performed for the first time, at the Théâtre-Lyrique, Paris.

**19 December 1854** Emperor Napoléon III enters into a secret agreement with Britain which calls for the destruction of Sevastopol and the limiting of Russian naval forces on the Black Sea, if Russia will not agree to revise the Straits Convention.

**21 December 1854** Stephen Foster (28) signs a new publishing contract with Firth, Pond & Co. which denies them the exclusivity they previously enjoyed.

**23 December 1854** 09:00 An earthquake centered off Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan, and the subsequent tsunami destroys up to 1,000 structures and kills over 100 people.

**24 December 1854** 16:00 A second earthquake strikes Japan, centered off Shikoku. The tremors, along with the subsequent fire and tsunami, kill 3,000 people and damage or destroy up to 50,000 structures.

Joseph Joachim visits Robert Schumann (44) at the insane asylum near Bonn. He is heartened by what he finds and rushes to Düsseldorf to tell the good news to Clara Schumann (35) and Johannes Brahms (21).

Jules Massenet (12) is awarded a *troisième accessit* in piano at the Paris Conservatoire.

At the second performance of Hector Berlioz’ (51) *L’enfance du Christ* in the Salle Herz, the audience includes Giuseppe Verdi (41), Heinrich Heine, and Cosima and Blandine Liszt.

*A Clichy*, an opera by Adolphe Adam (51) to words of d’Ennery and Grangé, is performed for the first time, at the Théâtre-Lyrique, Paris.

**26 December 1854** *Alliance-Marsch* op.158 by Johann Strauss (29) is performed for the first time, in the Volksgarten, Vienna.

**29 December 1854** Rebels defeat Imperial forces at Whampoa near Canton.

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