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RECORDED history of the Dresdner Kreuzchor begins in the year 1200. During three centuries the artistic quality of the choir of the Holy Cross Church was developed and maintained through the patronage of the wealthy citizens of Dresden. After the Reformation the Holy Cross School was re-established on a broader educational basis, with Philip Melanchton as patron. From 1715 to 1815 the choir formed the chorus of the Dresden Royal Opera, under the direction of Antonio Lotti and others. I. A. Hiller, father of the "singspiele" which led to the development of the classic German "lied," was a member of the choir during the period of its association with Italian opera.