WHAT’S IN A NAME?

I recently had occasion to look again at the Receipt Book for Wages at Cannons (Huntington Library MS ST 87), where Handel was active from 1717 to 1719 and probably again in 1720, and was struck by how the various musicians signed their names when they acknowledged receipt of their quarterly salaries. Some of the Italian musicians gave only their family names. The oboist Biancardi, for example, signed “Biancardi” (pp.7, 13, 30-31) and the violinist Gaetano Scarpettini signed his receipts as “Scarpettinj” (pp.6, 13). One of the other violinists signed his receipts as “Gerardo” at Midsummer 1720 and then “Ghirardo” at Michaelmas 1720 (both p. 145). The latter seems an odd spelling but it perhaps indicates that the Italian musician thought the “h” would function in English as it does after a “C” and soften the initial consonant to produce something resembling the Italian pronunciation. On January 30, 1721 the Duke of Chandos recommended him as a possible servant for his eldest son, John, Lord Carnarvon, who was about to undertake the Grand Tour under the tutelage of a Dr. Stuart. The Duke reports that “He was One of my

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK
WINTER 2013

The AHS Board of Directors, which met in Pittsburgh during the Annual Conference of the American Musicological Society in November, is pleased to announce that the next American Handel Society Conference will take place on 23-26 April 2015 at the University of Iowa. The conference will be held jointly with the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music and promises to be an event not to be missed. Iowa City has many attractions and the annual SSCM Conferences are known for their stimulating intellectual content, excellent organization and attention to good eating. The local arrangements will be handled by Rob Ketterer and Christine Getz and the program chair will be Wendy Heller, our host at Princeton and a prominent member of both societies. A call for papers and details of the conference, including musical offerings to be presented by the University’s excellent School of Music, will be forthcoming on the AHS website and in future issues of the Newsletter.

The AHS Board is also pleased to announce its decision to honor our third Founding Member, the late Paul Traver, with a series of concerts in his memory to which the society will contribute financial and organizational support. The goal is to present a concert at each AHS Conference and, if possible, to feature young performers in honor of Paul’s lifelong dedication to supporting them. The first such concert will be given at the upcoming Conference and will feature students from the University of Iowa School of Music. The Paul Traver Memorial Concert will join the Howard Serwer Memorial Lecture, which is given by a distinguished figure at each AHS Conference, and the J. Merrill Knapp Research Fellowship, which is awarded in the alternate years to support the work of younger scholars. The society is always happy to receive gifts designated to support any of these undertakings or simply to further the ongoing activities of the society.

Finally, as we are in a new calendar year, the Secretary/Treasurer would like to remind the members of the society that it is time to renew your membership in the AHS for the year 2014. This can be done online at
Musick, hath travelled with several Gentlemen abroad, & is well recommended [sic] by them as anyone I have seen. His Name is Ghiraldo, he shaves very well & hath an excellent hand on the Violin & speaks all necessary languages” (Huntington Library, MNS ST 57, vol. 17, p. 337). This last spelling was presumably that of the Duke’s private secretary who copied the outgoing letters into the surviving letter books.

The cellist and composer Nicola Francesco Haym signed his name “Nicolino Haym” in a receipt for quarterly wages of 12 pounds 10 shillings on July 4, 1718 (p.12), and again at Michaelmas 1718 (p.50). The use of the diminutive “Nicolino” presumably caused the editors of the Biographical Dictionary of ... The London Stage to suppose that Haym had a son by that name who also worked at Cannons. It is more likely that this was the name he commonly used among friends and colleagues, and it was the way he signed the Dedication to the volume of anthems he composed for Cannons (GB-Lbl Add. MS 621561) on 29 September 1716.

Other Italian musicians Anglicized their Christian names. The violinist Alessandro Bitti, for example, signed his receipts as “Alexander Bitti” (pp. 6, 13) while the cellist Pardini signed his as “Charles Pardinj” (p. 6, 75-76). Another violinist signed his name “John Ruggiero” (p.12) at Midsummer 1718, which presumably indicates that he was an Italian hoping to assimilate into English culture rather than an Englishman (perhaps named John Rogers) attempting to pass as an Italian who might be thought to have had better training in music. His last three receipts are each signed “J. Ruggiero.” (p. 90).

The double bass player in the Cannons Concert signed his name on eight occasions as “Georg Angel” and once as “Angel” (p. 15-16). Presumably he was a German. He was first paid “a fortnight’s wages to midsummer 1718” (p.14), which means he was most likely available to participate in the first performance(s) of Acis and Galatea. Another German, Johann Christoph Pepusch (also known as John Christopher Pepusch), the sometime Music Director at Cannons, always signed “J.C. Pepusch” (p. 78). Another possible German musician signed his name as “Mr Westenson” (p.149). This was presumably the “Olaus Westenson Linnert” referred to by Henry Carey in his Poems on Several Occasions (London, 1713, expanded 1720 and 1729); I have often wondered whether the first name should actually have been “Claus.”

The other known oboist in the ensemble signed his name as “Jean Christian Kytch” (p. 15), although the page was set up for “Mr. Munro.” On 17 April 1724 The Duke recommended him to the Bishop of London for the position of Organist to the Chapel In the Banqueting House, and noted that “He was at first my Page but finding in him an extraordinary Genius for Musick I made him apply himself to the Study and practice of it & he hath been so successful in his Improvement under Mr. Handell & Dr. Pepusch that he has become though Young a perfect Master both for Composition & performance on the Organ & Harpsichord” (US-SM MS ST 57 vol. 24, p.21).\(^2\) The Duke notes that “He is of a very good Family (the Monroes) in Scotland.” It seems likely that this spelling (whether the Duke’s own or that of his Secretary) indicates the plural, as in “tomatoes” and “potatoes,” rather than an eccentric spelling of the name.

Among the English musicians, many of whom were young singers, the signatures remain remarkably consistent. James Blackley always signed as “J. Blackley” (p. 17, 18). Thomas Burgess (as the page is labeled) signs as “Thomas Burgys” (p. 41). Thomas Gethin signed both his receipts as “Thos: Gethin” (p. 53) rather than “Getting” by which he is also sometimes known. The singer with whom he apparently shared a position, “Mr. Bell” (p.152), was paid £11 and 10 shillings for wages from June 1, 1720 to Michaelmas 1720 and signed his receipt “Tho: Bell.” The trumpetmer “Mr. Lemon” always signed “A.G. Lemon” (p. 143) and the bass singer William Perry always signed as “William Perry” (p. 77, 97).
The violinist Thomas Rawlings signed either “Thomas Rawlings” or “Tho: Rawlings” (p. 91), although Pepusch in an autograph note to Mr. Gray dated “February ye 5, 1719/20” says “According to his Grace’s Comands [with line over m] I have put the Bearer of this, Thomas Rawling [sic] into the Number of his Chapel Musicians in which service he has ben [sic] diligent and careful witness my hand J. C. Pepusch his Salary is 30. Pounds per Anu [with lines over the n and u] he has perform’d this Duty from Michaelmas last.” (on slip pasted to p. 91).

Unfortunately for us, Handel was not paid a salary for his work at Cannons and so his signature does not appear in the Receipt Book for Wages. He was referred to as both “Hendle” and “Handell” in the outgoing letter books, but unless new evidence surfaces, we can only guess at how he signed his own name during this period.

— Graydon Beeks


2 He was presumably also the unnamed subject of a recommendation dated 20 February 1722/3 to a Mr. Mitchell who desired an organist for his private chapel. The candidate is described as “an industrious sober Youth who hath liv’d with me some years & behave[s] himself always with great Sobriety & Dilligence [sic]” (US-MS ST 57, vol. 22, pp.175-176).

INVITATION TO ENTER FOR THE INTERNATIONAL HANDEL RESEARCH PRIZE 2014

In 2014 the Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft is to award an International Handel Research Prize to a young scholar (male or female) who has undertaken an outstanding research project into the life and work of George Frideric Handel, and has presented the results in a formal research document. Research teams may also apply.

The Handel Research prize is sponsored by the Foundation of the Saalesparkasse.
The prize is valued at €2000, and involves the presentation of a paper to be read by the prizewinner at the scholarly conference of the Handel Festival in Halle.
Applications may be made by graduates in musicology or related disciplines, who have completed their Master, Magister or Doctoral studies between 2012 and 2014, and also those with equivalent research studies. Excellent historical-critical editions may also be submitted for the prize.

Registration for the Handel Research Prize requires an application to the
Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft e.V.
Internationale Vereinigung
Geschäftsstelle
Grosse Nikolaistraße 5
D-06108 Halle (Saale)

by 10 April 2014 (postmark)

The informal application must include an account of the scholarly work undertaken (as a print-out and in electronic form), and accompanied by a brief curriculum vitae, and by an account of the applicant’s career.

The selection of the prizewinner will be made by a panel from the Foundation of the Saalesparkasse and the Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft.

The invitation will be published on the web-sites of the Saalesparkasse and the Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft, and of musicology departments in universities in Germany and abroad.

The award of the Handel Research Prize will be made during the Handel Festival, at the Wissenschaftliche Konferenz.


WINTON DEAN (1916-2013)
The story in I Samuel 16 of David playing the lyre to alleviate King Saul’s melancholy has long been a standard piece of evidence for the healing power of music. Saul was tormented by an evil spirit from God, and his advisors recommended finding a person skilled in playing the lyre to help cure him. The shepherd David was brought into Saul’s service, and whenever David played the lyre for the king, Saul felt better, and the evil spirit departed from him.

Theologians of the 16th through 18th-centuries analyzed the various aspects of this story. Was Saul’s illness natural or spiritual? Was the healing power of music intrinsic to the music or dependent on divine presence? If the latter, was David’s personal spiritual strength crucial, or did God simply use both David and the music to effect the healing result? Did it matter whether David sang psalms to Saul or simply played his instrument?

Whether or not Georg Friedrich Händel knew of the theological dissertation by Heinrich Pipping, De Saul occurato per musican (1688), or the medical treatise of Martin Pohle, Dissertationem medicam de Curatione Morborum per Carmina et Cantus Musicos (1706), he surely knew of Johann Kuhnau’s Six Biblical Sonatas (1700), where the story of Saul’s cure through the music of David is depicted in a keyboard setting. Händel’s oratorio Saul, however, with its text by Charles Jennens, does not fit the tradition. Although Saul’s daughter Michal sings that the “healing sounds dispel his cares,” and David sings a psalm-like air and plays a harp solo, these are followed by Jonathan’s recitative, “Tis all in vain, his fury still continues.” At the end of Saul’s ensuing angry aria, he throws his javelin at David. This is indeed true to the second biblical episode of David playing for Saul, but those who sought to elevate music’s power preferred the first episode.

When music is praised in Händel’s Saul, it happens through the recitative and air sung by the High Priest. In poetry reminiscent of John Dryden’s St. Cecilia’s Day ode, the High Priest speaks of the Eternal Word creating harmony out of the discord of original chaos. Raising the focus from the power of music on an individual disordered soul to the universal struggle between order and disorder, the air ends with the eschatological promise of a return to the pristine state of nature and harmony.

Händel’s presentation of this story did not meet with approval by John Brown, who in 1763 prepared an oratorio pointedly entitled The Cure of Saul. This was published along with his Dissertation on the Rise, Union and Power, the Progressions, Separations and Corruptions, of Poetry and Music, which is a critique of the oratorio tradition. My approach will be to contrast Brown’s treatment of the Saul/David story with that of Händel in a manner that will shed light on their differing approaches to these theoretical issues.

Todd Jones (University of Kentucky): “Handel in Early America and the Politics of Reception”

Händel’s music has always played an important part in American concert life. Scholars of American music have highlighted Händel’s importance ever since Oscar Sonneck’s 1907 Concert Life in Early America documented eighteenth-century American concerts. Händel’s elevation from operatic composer to musical icon of British nationalism coincided with the rise of the American middle class. As American newspapers followed news from Britain both before and after independence, Händel’s music and reputation, especially as related to the royal family, played an important role in their coverage. In the early American republic, many musicians considered Händel’s oratorios especially as models important enough to warrant naming musical societies after the long-dead composer. Several American cities held concerts imitating the commemorative celebrations held in London for Handel’s centennial and in the following years. The 1815 founding of the Boston Handel and Haydn Society, in fact, may mark the musical birth of the American genteel tradition.

can answer the question, “Who was Handel to Americans before 1815?”

This paper sketches a broad national outline of Handel’s reception before 1815 in the English-speaking American colonies and early republic. Using American and British newspapers’ reports both of American concerts and of Handel-related British activities, it attempts consider Handel’s performances and reputation within the holistic context of America’s developing national society. Agreeing largely with Handel’s nationalized status in Britain, newspapers presented what can only be called a “gentrified” Handel, one which all but ignored his operas and chamber music and focused almost exclusively on his oratorios and on his music for the British royal family. American performers, too (often English or German émigrés), presented a similarly gentrified Handel, performing from his oratorios and from hardly any of his other works. Many of these performers shared important aesthetic, theological, and even political commitments that contributed to their repertoire choices. Several were, for example, Anglican/Episcopalian organists who were far more urbane, far more tolerant of formal liturgy, and generally far less populist than the average American citizen of their day. Commitments similar to these played crucial roles in developing America’s nascent tradition of genteel music, a tradition still deeply influencing much of Americans’ relationship to art music in general—and their relationship to Handel’s music especially.


Two aspects of the performance of simple recitative in Handel’s operas and oratorios have received much scholarly attention: the proper performance of appoggiaturas, cadences, and “short” notes in the bass in opera; and the distinct roles of the harpsichord and organ in the performance of oratorios. In this paper, I explore two different and rarely addressed questions concerning the performance of Handel’s recitative: Did the violoncello occasionally realize the chords senza cembalo? And was the double bass, which has been banished from modern performances of Handel’s recitative, actually a regular part of his continuo ensemble when it accompanied recitative?

In the first act of Handel’s opera Alessandro, there is a scene in recitative in which Alexander the Great hurls his general Cleitus to the ground, angry that the latter has refused to worship him as a god (HG, vol. 72, p. 52). At the point when Alexander does this, Handel wrote a cadence in B-flat Major. Beneath that cadence, he spelled out the two chords in his autograph manuscript with letters, from the bottom up: \( f - c - a \) and \( f - d - b \). The cadence comes at the end of a passage where the continuo line consists of a series of arpeggios doubled by the violins—the letters must mean something other than a continuation of those arpeggios (the composer would have written them out had he desired them). Handel presumably intended these letters to indicate a cadence played in triple stops by the violoncello, which would need to be accompanied by a contrabass (to provide the root of the final chord), but would surely be performed senza cembalo.

The use of a violoncello to realize the figured bass of recitative in opera, with or without the support of a double bass, is well documented in the last quarter of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth, but no evidence has surfaced for it in Handel’s time. Nevertheless, it was common then to use a solo cello to realize the figured bass in Italian sonatas, an option given in the publications of Handel’s own chamber music by John Walsh. The title pages of Handel’s op. 1 and op. 5, for example, have “with a Thorough Bass for the Harpsichord or Violoncello” (emphasis added). Further, it was common to use the cello to realize recitative chords in later traditions of Handelian performance. In the first part of this paper, I will explore these sonata and oratorio traditions and how they connect with Handel’s own practices.

In the second part of the paper, I turn to the double bass. In the performance of Handel’s operas, it is conventional wisdom that simple recitative was accompanied by harpsichord (one, or two in alternation), and violoncello, possibly with the assistance of a theorbo. Although it is clear from a broad range of contemporary German, Italian, and English sources that the instruments widely used to accompany recitative in opera were the harpsichord, cello, and double bass, we have chosen to eliminate the bass, relying on two pieces of evidence. The first is the eyewitness testimony of Pierre-Jacques Fougeroux, who reported in 1728 that the Royal Academy used one cello, two harpsichords, and an archlute to accompany recitative. The second is contemporary orchestral pay rosters, which sometimes show cellists being paid at a higher rate than bassists—this has been interpreted as indicating that they played more (i.e., recitatives and rehearsals), and thus were paid more. Fougeroux has been shown to be unreliable. A fresh analysis of the pay rosters and an exploration of substantial written and iconographical evidence suggests that we, too, may have it wrong. The double bass may have been an essential part of the continuo group that accompanied Handel’s recitatives in both opera and oratorio.


One of the most fascinating items from the Hall Handel Collection in the Department of Manuscripts at Princeton University’s Firestone Library is a manuscript bearing the name “Miss Baring”. The volume itself is a collection of keyboard solos, duets, and transcriptions of vocal and instrumental pieces, copied by multiple scribes. While the identity of a few of the pieces, such as the two embellished movements from Handel’s organ concertos Op. 4, has long been known, the identity of the rest of the pieces, and that of the presumed original owner, has remained unsolved. Our investigation allows us to finally identify several of these mystery pieces, thereby yielding new insights on the range of dates over which the manuscript was compiled. Furthermore, inscriptions on an eighteenth century printed edition allow us to further reconstruct the musical library of Miss Baring and provide new clues as to her identity. Taken together, this information reveals the manuscript to be a mirror of the diverse and relatively progressive tastes of its original owner/owners. The
presentation also includes a performance of selected works from the manuscript by an ensemble of voice, recorder, and harpsichord. The performance will highlight the variety of repertoire included in the manuscript and serve as an evocation of the spirit of Miss Baring through the music she collected for private use and the pursuit of social harmony.


Mercer’s Hospital opened on Stephen Street, Dublin in 1734. It was the first Irish voluntary hospital to initiate a series of annual and bi-annual benefit concerts, the first of which took place on 8 April 1736 in St Andrew’s Round Church, Suffolk Street, Dublin. The benefit concerts consisted of a church service which included a charity sermon and the performance of sacred musical works. Sermons were preached by some of Ireland’s most eminent bishops and the works of Handel dominated the repertoire from the earliest years. The contents of the Mercer’s Hospital Music Collection, specifically the manuscript sources, are representative of the type of repertoire performed at the hospital’s benefit concerts, which continued until 1780 at least and attracted a wide range of Dublin-based performers, both singers and instrumentalists.

This paper will examine the Mercer’s Hospital manuscript sources for works by Handel, focusing on identified adaptations which include the substitution of parts and changes in scoring. Such adaptations are indicative of the constraints experienced in eighteenth-century Dublin performance practice, particularly in relation to the performance of service settings and orchestral anthems. Handel’s ‘Utrecht’ Te Deum-Jubilate HWV 278–9 was performed at the Mercer’s benefit concerts up to 1745 at least. The coronation anthems HWV 258–61 and two Chapel Royal anthems, namely HWV 250b and 256b, were also regularly performed. Handel’s Overture to Esther HWV 50 may have been performed as a prelude, as was customary at the benefit concerts in support of the English charity “The Festival of the Sons of the Clergy.” Vocal and instrumental manuscript parts for all eight works survive in the Mercer’s Hospital Music Collection currently housed at the Manuscripts and Archives Research Library at Trinity College, Dublin.

This paper will also discuss the provenance of the Mercer’s Handelian sources. Manuscript works extant in the collection were copied from early printed editions and from early manuscript copies thus revealing significant information about the origins of the Mercer’s Collection and about how Handel’s music was transmitted to Dublin during the eighteenth-century. Mercer’s Hospital was one of three charities to benefit from the première of Handel’s Messiah HWV 56. Even though no sources for Messiah are contained in the Mercer’s Collection, this paper will also discuss Handel’s contribution to Mercer’s Hospital, both directly through the Messiah première, and indirectly, through the regular performance of his works in the Mercer’s programme.

A PUBLICATION OF NOTE

*The Politics of Opera in Handel’s Britain* (Cambridge University Press, 2013)
By Thomas McGeary

THE J. MERRILL KNAPP RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

The Board of Directors of The American Handel Society invites applications for the J. Merrill Knapp Research Fellowship to support scholarly projects related to Handel and his world. One or more fellowships may be awarded in a calendar year up to a total of $2,000. Requests for funding may include, but are not limited to, purchase of microfilms, travel for research, and production expenses for publication. This fellowship may be used on its own or to augment other grants or fellowships.

In awarding the Knapp Fellowship, preference will be given to graduate students, scholars in the early stages of their careers, and independent scholars with no source of institutional support.

The deadline for the 2014 award will be March 1, 2014. There is no application form. Each applicant should submit an outline of the project, a budget showing how and when the funds will be used, and a description of other funding for the same project applied for and/or received. In addition, applicants should have two letters of recommendation sent directly to the Knapp Fellowship Committee. Electronic submissions are preferred; letters of recommendation as well as the application itself can be emailed to Richard King (rgking@umd.edu). Paper submissions can also be mailed to Professor Richard King, University of Maryland School of Music, College Park, MD 20742.
The American Handel Society – Membership Form

Please mail the completed form and appropriate membership dues as instructed below:

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I agree to have the following listed in a printed Directory of AHS Members (check as appropriate):

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TOTAL REMITTANCE

* - This organization does not have a reduced rate for retirees.

Those paying in dollars or sterling should make their checks payable to THE AMERICAN HANDEL SOCIETY and mail them to Marjorie Pomeroy Kelly, Secretary/Treasurer, THE AMERICAN HANDEL SOCIETY, 49 Christopher Hollow Road, Sandwich, MA 02563. Those wishing to pay in Euros should remit to Stephan Blaut, Treasurer, Georg-Friedrich-Händel-Gesellschaft, Gr. Nikolaistraße 5, 06108 Halle (Saale), Federal Republic of Germany, and indicate that the payment is for the account of the AHS. Friends of the London Handel Institute may also pay their AHS dues in sterling by making their checks payable to The Handel Institute and mailing them to Ms. Sylvia Levi, Hon. Treasurer, The Handel Institute, 254A Kew Road, Richmond TW9 3EG, with the appropriate annotation. Please do not send checks in Euros or sterling directly to the AHS as we are no longer able to process them.

Online payment options are available at [http://americanhandelsociety.org/Join.html](http://americanhandelsociety.org/Join.html).

Payments in dollars for GFH or HI memberships must be received before 1 June.
The American Handel Society
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