Newly-discovered
Mainwaring Letters

Handel's first biographer, the Rev. John Mainwaring, has remained a shadowy figure. What is known of his life is outlined in Jamie Croy Kassler's article in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. He was born at Drayton Manor, Staffordshire in about the year 1724, studied at St. John's College, Cambridge, and was ordained in 1748. The following year he was appointed rector of Church Stretton, Shropshire. He was a fellow of St. John's from 1748 to 1788, and in the latter year he became Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University.

In 1760 Mainwaring published anonymously his *Memoirs of the Life of the Late George Frederic Handel*, which was based in part on material supplied by John Christopher Smith, Jr. (or, at least, "written under [his] inspection"), and included commentary on the music by Robert Price, an avid amateur musician and friend of Smith, and a list of Handel's compositions compiled by James Harris of Salisbury, friend and patron of the composer. No compelling explanation has been advanced as to why Mainwaring should have written such a biography, nor as to how he should have been acquainted with Smith, Price and Harris.

While investigating late-18th-century collectors of Handel's music I happened upon a series of letters by and concerning Mainwaring in the Staffordshire Record Office (MSS D1413/1 and D1413/2) which add a few details to his biography. They originated in the circle of Sir Edward Littleton (circa 1725–1812), of Pillaton Hall near Penkridge, longtime MP for Staffordshire. Littleton succeeded his uncle as 4th Baronet in January 1742 and enrolled at Cambridge in 1744. While there he formed a firm friendship with his tutor and future Bishop of Worcester, Richard Hurd, and others with the writers William Mason and Thomas Neville. During the 1745 Rebellion he left Cambridge to raise and captain a company in Lord Gower's Regiment, and apparently did not return to complete his degree.

There is no evidence in the correspondence I have read that Sir Edward was interested in music, although his wife, the former Frances Horton of Catton, Derby, was praised by Hurd for her harpsichord playing and he stayed with the Birmingham organist Barnabas Gunn in March 1746. His younger brother Fisher Littleton (died 1800), a student at Cambridge in 1749 and later a barrister, was however an avid harpsichordist and an ardent Handelian who was said to have known the composer in the 1750s and to have hosted him on visits to Teddesley Hall, Staffs. Fisher Littleton was undoubt-

Maryland Handel Festival:
November 9–12, 1989

The Maryland Handel Festival, held on the campus of the University of Maryland in College Park and sponsored by the University with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Maryland State Arts Council, and the Prince George's Arts Council, marked its ninth year in 1989 with a series of concerts and conference sessions focusing on Handel's use of language and texts. The featured work in the Festival's ongoing chronological survey of Handel's oratorios was *The Story of Semele*, and participants were also given a chance to hear Act I of John Eccles's setting of the same Congreve libretto. Because the Festival played host to a meeting of the editorial board of the Hallische-Händel-Ausgabe, there was a decidedly international flavor to the list of participants.

Under an arrangement inaugurated at the 1989 Festival, the American Handel Society has assumed responsibility for

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Gerald Coke (1907–1990)

On Tuesday, January 9, 1990 Gerald Coke, CBE died at his home, Jenkyn Place in Hampshire. As a student at New College, Oxford, he began collecting Handeliana including scores (both printed and manuscript), books, librettos, paintings, letters (including the Jennens-Holdsworth correspondence) and memorabilia, amassing the largest such collection in private hands. His Handel libretto collection is one of the most extensive anywhere. Over the years scholars have come to appreciate the quality and depth of the collection which ranged from the most current literature to one of the holograph copies of Handel’s will. An illustrated catalogue was issued in conjunction with an exhibition mounted during the Handel Tercentenary in 1985, and much of the collection is now available on microfilm (see Newsletter, April 1988, p.5).

Coke was marvelously generous in allowing scholars access to his collection. My own introduction to him was typical. Prof. Merrill Knapp told me that he believed that Coke owned a contemporary manuscript copy of Esther—one which I was trying to find. In a typically prompt response to a written inquiry about the copy, he told me that not only did he have the copy in question, but he had two others which he thought I might find interesting. In fact, one of the two turned out to be a rather important early copy that, up to that time, was unknown to scholars. Moreover, he arranged to have all three filmed for me, and suggested that when next I was in England, I should come out to examine them.

Scholars who took the train to Bentley, the village where Jenkyn Place is located, were invariably met at the station, and because the house was more than walking distance from a pub, were always invited for lunch. No one who had had the privilege of lunching with the Cokes will forget their graciousness, and the exquisite pleasure of gazing at the beautiful porcelain collection in vitrines placed along the dining room walls. If there was time, one had the opportunity to take a turn through the gardens they had created—gardens so beautiful and so famous, that they are regular features of garden tours in the Southern Counties.

Coke was a very successful businessman, and in addition to his activities as a collector and his endless concern for his beloved gardens, he was one of the founders of the Glyndebourne Arts Trust and its chairman until 1975. He served as a director of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, a director of the Royal Academy of Music, a governor of BBC, Deputy Lieutenant for Hampshire, and Justice of the Peace. At the end of its obituary, the Daily Telegraph wrote “Why he was not made a life peer, given his achievements in trade and music, heaven and those empowered to bestow such an honour only know.” All who knew him will agree, but we also know that Gerald Coke, a truly modest man, would have been embarrassed by the suggestion.

Howard Serwer

Recent Handel Recordings

This list contains issues devoted wholly or mostly to Handel’s music that were released since David Edelberg’s list was printed in the April 1988 Newsletter or for which information is only now available. Rereleases in compact disc format of older recordings have been included only if they seem of particular interest.

Handel and Mozart Arias
— from Rinaldo (HWV 7), Giulio Cesare (HWV 17), Alcina (HWV 34), Giustino (HWV 57), Serse (HWV 40), and Rodelinda (HWV 19)

Jochen Rokalski, countertenor
Kammerorchester, “Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach”

Hartmut Haenchen, conductor
Capriccio 10213 (1 CD)

Robert White Sings Handel Arias
— from Rinaldo (HWV 7), Serse (HWV 40), Acis and Galatea (HWV 49), Messiah (HWV 56) and St. Cecilia Ode (HWV 76)

Robert White, tenor
City of London Baroque Sinfonia
Ivor Bolton, conductor
Virgin VC7-90796-2 (1 CD)

Bach/Handel Arias
— from Rinaldo (HWV 7), Giulio Cesare (HWV 17), Atalanta (HWV 35), Messiah (HWV 56), Samson (HWV 57) and Alexander’s Feast (HWV 75)

Aileen Auger, soprano
The Mostly Mozart Orchestra 1985
Gerard Schwartz, conductor
Delos DE-3026 (1 CD)

Il Pastor Fido (1754 version) (HWV 8c)

Paul Esswood, countertenor
Katalin Farkas, soprano
Marta Lukin, mezzo-soprano
Gábor Kállay, tenor
Mária Florh, mezzo-soprano
József Gregor, bass
Savaria Vocal Ensemble, Capella Savaria
Nicholas McGegan, conductor
Hungaroton Antiqua HCD 12912-13 (2 CDs)

Giulio Cesare (in German) (HWV 17)

Lucia Popp, soprano
Christa Ludwig, mezzo-soprano
Fritz Wunderlich, tenor
Walter Berry, baritone
Karl Christian Kohn, bass
Bavarian Radio Chorus
Munich Philharmonic Orchestra
Ferdinand Leitner, conductor
Melodram 37059 (3 CDs)

Alessandro (HWV 21)

Anita Terzian, mezzo-soprano
Phoebe Atkinson, soprano
Lola Watson, soprano
Perry Price, tenor
Thomas Poole, tenor
Betty Jean Rieders, alto
Norman Thomas, bass
Sinfonia Varsovia
Mieczyslaw Nowakowski, conductor
Studio Classique (Dist. Koch-Records Int.) SC100303 (5 CDs)

Alcina (HWV 34)

Joan Sutherland, soprano
Fritz Wunderlich, tenor
Jeanette Van Diijk, soprano
Norma Proctor, alto
Nicola Monti, tenor
Thomas Hemsley, baritone
Cologne Radio Chorus and Orchestra
Ferdinand Leitner, conductor
Verona 279011/13 (3 CDs)

Live recording of Cologne Radio, 1959.
Handel Calendar

The AHS welcomes news or leads about events of interest to Handelians. If possible, please include an address where readers may obtain details.


Joshua. C. Loverde, S. Rickards, F. Hofmeister, J. Weaver; Basically Bach Orch. & Chorus (period insts.); cond. D. Robinson May 18: Cathedral of St. James, Chicago, IL; May 19: 1st Cong. Church, Evanston, IL; May 20: 1st United Meth. Church, Oak Park, IL. Basically Bach, P.O. Box 479, Chicago, IL 60690. (312) 354-2800.


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Calendar from page 3


Recordings from page 3

Emma Kirkby, soprano
Emily van Evera, soprano
Margaret Cable, alto
James Bowman, countertenor
Joseph Cornwell, tenor
David Thomas, bass
Taverner Choir and Players
Andrew Parrott, conductor
EMI-Reflexe CDS7-49801 2 (2 CDs)

(Courtesy in English) (HWV 56)
Capella Istropolitana
Bratislava City Choir
Jaroslav Krich, conductor
Naxos 8.553017

Jephtha (HWV 70)
Nigel Robson, tenor
Lynne Dawson, soprano
Anne Sofie von Otter, alto
Michael Chance, countertenor
Stephen Varcoe, baritone
Ruth Holton, soprano
Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists
John Eliot Gardiner, conductor
Philips 422 351-2 (3 CDs)

Music for Ceremonial Occasions
—Birthday Ode for Queen Anne (HWV 74), “Caroline” Te Deum in D Major (HWV 280), Sing Unto God (HWV 263)

Gillian Fisher, soprano
James Bowman, countertenor
John Mark Ainsley, tenor
Michael George, bass
Choir of New College, Oxford
The King’s Consort
Robert King, conductor
Hyperion CDA 66315

Alexander’s Feast (1751 Version) (HWV 75)
Concerto Grosso in C (HWV 318)
Donna Brown, soprano
Nigel Robson, tenor
Carolyn Waterman, alto
Ashley Stafford, countertenor
Stephen Varcoe, bass
Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists
John Eliot Gardiner, conductor
Philips 422 053-2 (2 CDs)

Handel in Italty: Italian Solo Cantatas
—Dalla Guerra Amorosa (HWV 102a), Mi palpito il cor (HWV 132b), Spande ancor il mio dispetto (HWV 165), Pastorella vogha bella (attrib. Telemann), Trio Sonata in g minor (HWV 393)
Juliane Baird, soprano
John Ostendorf, bass-baritone
Lisa Sandow Lyons, violin
Virginia Brewer, oboe
Loretta O’Sullivan, cello
Eric Milnes, harpsichord
Newport Classic NCD 60043 (1 CD)

A Vauxhall Gardens Entertainment
—Armida abandonata (HWV 105), Sonata à 5 (HWV 288),
Organ Concerto in F, No. 13 (HWV 295)
Emma Kirkby, soprano
Charles Medlam, viola da gamba
Nicholas Parle, organ
London Baroque Orchestra
Charles Medlam, conductor
Also Boyce: Concerto Grosso in e minor, Arne: Delia, and
Abel: Frena le belle ingrime.
EMI CDC 7497992 (1 CD)

Dixit Dominus (HWV 232)
Nisi Dominus (HWV 238)
Salve Regina (HWV 241)
Arleen Augér, soprano
Lynne Dawson, soprano
Diane Montague, alto
Leigh Nixon, tenor
John Mark Ainsley, tenor
Simon Birchall, bass
Choir of Westminster Abbey and Orchestra
Simon Preston, director
DGG Archiv 423 594-2 (1 CD)

Carmelites Vespers
—Dixit Dominus (HWV 232), Hac est regina virginum (HWV 235), Laudate pueri (HWV 236), Nisi Dominus (HWV 238), Savoir tellus (HWV 240), Salve regina (HWV 241) and Te ducis virginum (HWV 243)
Mainwaring from page 1

duly responsible for the sets of performing parts to several of Handel's oratorios which were in the Littleton family possession in 1947 when Percy Young published the first edition of his Handel biography, and which are now divided between the Library of Congress and the Staffordshire Record Office. Young cites a family tradition that Handel performed on occasion with Fisher Littleton's amateur band in concerts given at Teddlesley Hall.

The Littleton correspondence shows that Mainwaring formed a friendship with Sir Edward while a student at Cambridge which lasted until at least January 12, 1797 when the last of his seven letters to Sir Edward is dated. He wrote to Sir Edward from St. John's on October 20, 1746 that he was studying French, and visited Sir Edward at Pipe-Ridgeware, Statts on at least one occasion in August 1748, at which time Fisher Littleton was one of the company. The tone of Mainwaring's letters may indicate that the friendship was warmer on his side than on Sir Edward's. Other letters from Hurd and Mason supply some details, but the picture remains unclear.

There is a January 1747 reference to Mainwaring having been appointed Deputy Steward of Tamworth by an unnamed patron, but there is no further mention of this position. At some point in early 1749 Mainwaring experienced a crisis which undermined his health, but just what that crisis was is unexplained. In April 1750 he intended travelling to Aix-la-Chapelle in hopes of restoring his constitution, and in July 1750 he writes from there describing to Sir Edward his journey via Paris, Cambray, Valenciennes, Mons, Brussels and Liège. On August 11, 1750 he reports that he has made a miraculous recovery, and in several letters from September 1750 he anticipates a journey to Italy and hopes that Sir Edward will be able to join him. The only remaining letter is from 1797, and in it Mainwaring thanks Sir Edward for his continuing friendship.

We learn little of Mainwaring the man from these letters beyond his devotion to Sir Edward, his indifferent state of health, and his resentment of his ties to an unnamed party (who may be the patron mentioned above). We hear that he attended an opera in Paris and disliked the music intensely; that he was enthusiastic about seeing Shakespeare on the stage; and that he visited Sussex with Hurd in June 1756 for a brief vacation. The name of Handel is never mentioned, nor those of Smith, Price or Harris.

What are we to make of this new information? Was there some connection between the Edward Littleton-Richard Hurd circle and the Price-Stillingfleet-Smith circle? Was Fisher Littleton the source of Mainwaring's interest in Handel and his connection with the composer's circle? Donald Burrows has pointed out much of the material on Handel's early life found in the Memoirs must have derived directly from Handel, himself, perhaps in interviews conducted during the 1750s. He also suggests that these interviews might have been conducted by someone other than one of the John Christopher Smiths (see "Handel and Hanover" in Peter Williams, ed., Bach, Handel, Scarlatti. Tercentenary Essays, Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 31–38). Could the interviews have been conducted by Fisher Littleton? Was there a group of Cambridge Handelians, perhaps centering on John Randall (1717–1799) active there from at least 1744 and Professor of Music in the University from 1755, who as a Chapel Royal chorister had sung in the 1732 performances of Esther? Perhaps further investigation in these areas will finally bring the Rev. Mr. Mainwaring out of the shadows.

Graydon Beeks
Maryland from page 1

the planning of the conference sessions. The program began with the third annual American Handel Society Lecture given by Prof. Dr. Bernd Baselt of the Martin Luther University, Halle/Wittenberg, and entitled "The War of the Spanish Succession, Italy, and Handel." This detailed survey of first decade of the 18th century provided the background for the first conference session, entitled "Handel and His Texts" and moderated by Andrew Porter, which included papers by Terence Best, "Handel and the Italian Language;" J. Merrill Knapp, "Aaron Hill and the London Theatre of his Time;" and Donald Burrows, "Reading the Metre: Literary Aspects of the Handel Libretti of Jennens and Morell." Best presented convincing arguments, based on his recent work with the libretto to Tamerlano, for not assuming that grammatical peculiarities in Handel's texts are necessary the result of mistakes by the composer. Knapp surveyed the theatrical scene during Handel's first years in London, while Burrows whose paper drew the most spirited response—contrasted the styles of two of Handel's later librettists, Charles Jennens and Thomas Morell, and the composer's responses to their texts.

The second conference session, also chaired by Porter, included papers by William D. Gudger, "The Birth of Handel's 'Twin' Oratorios of 1741: Aspects of his Compositional Process in Messiah and Samson;" David Ross Hurley, "The Summer of '43," C. Steven LaRue, "Metric Reorganization as an Aspect of Handel's Compositional Procedures;" and George Buelow, "The Concept of Melodic Modules in Handel's Compositional Procedures." Gudger discussed ways in which Jennens and Newburgh Hamilton created their librettos from the Bible (using the lectionary to the Book of Common Prayer) and Milton's Samson agonistes and other poems respectively. He also suggested additional sources of musical borrowings in both oratorios, most notably from Porta's Numitore. Hurley and LaRue, who are both completing dissertations at the University of Chicago on Handel's compositional processes, presented detailed and extremely interesting analyses of changes the composer made in a number of works (including especially Semele and Joseph in Hurley's paper) during the course of composition and suggested reasons for those changes. Buelow advanced a possible theoretical background for Handel's compositional techniques, based on Johann Mattheusson's discussion of forming melodies from small melodic cells in his Der vollkommene Capellmeister of 1789.

The first annual meeting of the members of The American Handel Society, Inc., took place on Saturday, November 11, at 2:00 p.m. The Treasurer presented a report on the finances of the organization, and noted that the number of individual members stood at 105 with an additional 18 institutional members. He reminded the members that when the number of members rises above 200, the officers of the society and the members of the Board of Directors will be elected by the membership. Other issues discussed included future plans for publications, the new relationship between the society and the Maryland Handel Festival alluded to above, and efforts to make life easier for prospective members who have limited access to United States currency. Copies of the minutes and information concerning the society's subsequently-established account at Barclay's Bank, London, which will allow payments to the society by means of Eurocheques, may be obtained from the Secretary/Treasurer of the Society, Howard Serwer.

The musical activities of the Festival were reviewed by Andrew Porter in the December 4, 1989 issue of The New Yorker. It only remains to commend the Festival organizers for assembling the distinguished panel consisting of Howard Mayer Brown, Shirley Strum Kenny, Mary Ann Parker, and Calhoun Winton to discuss the topic of "Semele: Opera or Oratorio?" immediately before the performance of Handel's Semele, and for their continued policy of presenting each featured work in the form in which it was first given by Handel, and of providing the members of the audience with facsimiles of the original libretto. Once again Handel's judgment was vindicated and Semele, which might paradoxically have seemed shorter with two intermissions rather than a single one after Part I, came across as a masterfully proportioned as well as a very moving work. Several Handelians commented that they have never before heard Semele's first aria, "The Morning Lark to mine accords his Note," performed in context since it is habitually cut, presumably because it seems on paper to be an excessively long and not especially interesting duet aria. Yet as sung by Gillian Fisher and conducted by Paul Traver it provided a necessary piece of the complete musical portrait of Semele and focused Part I firmly on her rather than on the subsidiary characters of Ino and Athamas. Together with the Ouverture it establishes from the outset that Handel's Semele is an English Opera of a far greater scope than either Congreve or Eccles could have imagined.

The Editor

Recordings from page 5

---Op. 7 nos. 5, 6 (HWV 310, 311), and nos. 13–15 (HWV 295, 296, 304)
Josef Bucher, organ
Warsaw Chamber Orchestra
Karol Teutsch, director
Vivace G-518

Concerti Grossi, Op. 3 (HWV 312-317)
David Stepner, violin
Stanley Ritchie, violin
James David Christie, organ
Handel & Haydn Society Orchestra
Christopher Hogwood, conductor
L'Oiseau Lyre 421-729-2 (1 CD)

Concerti Grossi, Op. 6 nos. 1–4 (HWV 319-322)
Paul Nicholson, harpsichord
Guildhall String Ensemble
RCA 7895-2-RC (1 CD)
---nos. 5–8 (HWV 323-326)
Paul Nicholson, harpsichord
Guildhall String Ensemble
RCA 7907-2-RC (1 CD)
---nos. 9–12 (HWV 327-330)
Paul Nicholson, harpsichord
Guildhall String Ensemble
RCA 7921-2-RC (1 CD)

Water Music (complete) (HWV 348-350)
Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra
Nicholas McGegan, director
Harmonia Mundi France HMA 1907010 (1 CD)

Trio Sonata in G Major, Op. 5 no. 4 (HWV 399)
Tafelmusik Baroque Soliosts
CBC Enterprises MVD 1031 (1 CD)
Also Music of Bach, Rosenmüller, Biber

Harpsichord Suites (1720) nos.1–8 (HWV 426-433)
Scott Ross, harpsichord
Erato/WEA 2292-45452-2

Gregory Wynn
Book Discounts—A Reminder

Because of changes in shipping costs and rates of exchange, the prices of printed items discounted to members of the Society have been revised and the new amounts are given on the order form found on page 6 of the Newsletter. The Society has recently received several copies of Cecil Hill’s pre-edition study of Imeneo which it offers to members for $18.00. Please remember that orders for this book and for all items marked by an asterisk on the order form must be accompanied by a check in the amount of the purchase price. There is no additional shipping charge for these items.

Performance Materials Wanted

Society member Bruce Wetmore is in search of performing parts and singing translations to the cantatas Aminta e Filide: Arresta il passo (HWV 83) and Apollo e Dafne: La terra è liberata (HWV 122).

Bruce Wetmore
2447 Washington Street 2
San Francisco, CA 94115-1852
(415) 346-5258

Call for Contributions

The Editor renews his call for contributions to the Newsletter as there is far too much from his pen in this issue. Contributions are especially encouraged in fields complementary to Handelian music studies, particularly theatre, literature and the visual arts. Reviews of publications and performances will also be considered, as will conference reports. Editorial correspondence should be directed to him at the following address:

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The American Handel Society

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