The collection of Handel's autograph scores at the British Library in London is the largest body of such material in the world and one of the richest collections of autographs of any major composer. Hitherto consulted mainly by specialists and on microfilm, these treasures are now accessible to all in digital form, thanks to a recently completed British Library project described below by Amelie Roper. David Vickers contributes an appreciation of the music critic Andrew Porter; the annual Handel festival in the composer's home town of Halle is reviewed by Terence Best, and the issue concludes with notices about Handel-related awards and conferences. It begins, however, with an article by Carole Taylor on some recently discovered documents recording payments in the 1730s to Handel and Italian singers in London.

Colin Timms

PAYING FOR THE OPERA IN 1730s LONDON*

‘There is a spirit got up against the dominion of Mr Handel …’ This provocative remark by Lord Delawarr in his well-known letter to the Duke of Richmond on 16 June 1733 describes a renewed commitment by subscriber-patrons to direct Italian opera in London. They had effectively passed the reins of management and a good deal of the direction to Handel and John James Heidegger five years earlier, when the 1720s Royal Academy of Music ran out of money, and subscriber interest and commitment to the opera had waned. Faction among the subscribers was kindled in 1733 with the breakdown in relations between Handel and his primo uomo, the alto castrato Senesino. On Saturday 9 June, the last night of the season, Senesino announced to the audience from the stage, ‘that he had now perform’d his last Part on that Stage, and was henceforward discharg’d from any Engagement. He ... assured [the Nobility] that whenever a Nation to whom he was so greatly obliged, should have any further Commands for him, he would endeavour to obey them’.1

If a picture is worth a thousand words, we can only imagine how Senesino, through emphasis and gesture, might have conveyed the full meaning of his ‘resignation’. On the following Wednesday (13 June), the Daily Post published notice of a meeting of ‘Subscribers to the Opera in which Signor Senesino and Signora Cuzzoni are to perform’, to be held on Friday the 15th ‘in order to settle proper Methods for carrying on the Subscription’. By the 16th, Lord Delawarr, one of thirteen ‘Directors chosen’, had penned the above letter to Richmond, seeking his name on the subscription list. (A substantial coterie of annual subscribers was vital to the opera’s financial management, and it was the ultimate responsibility of the opera’s patrons to pull in these names.)

Opera subscription lists for the 1730s – let alone complete financial records – are yet to be discovered, if they exist at all. An ‘Extract of accounts’ for the above season is, however, revealing of the critical role of royal and aristocratic support for the Italian opera from one season to the next.2 In this context, it is pleasing to be able to report some new, albeit fragmentary, pieces of evidence about financial support for Handel and a number of singers through the 1730s. My findings are based on research carried out in three of the banks whose records survive from this period: Drummonds (at the Royal Bank of Scotland, in Edinburgh), the Bank of England and Hoare’s (these two still extant in their own names, in London).

Intriguing accounts in the name of Henry Popple, at Drummond’s (between 1731 and 1738) and at the Bank of England (between 1732 and 1735), show three payments of £50 each made to Handel: one in July 1732 (from the Bank of England), and two in 1736 (from Drummond’s, in January and October).3 This is surely the ‘Mr Popple’,

* This article is based on the author’s paper of 14 July 2016 to the 17th Biennial International Conference on Baroque Music, at Christ Church University, Canterbury.

1 Delawarr’s letter, which is preserved in Chichester, West Sussex Record Office, Goodwood MS 103, f. 173, is widely cited; see, for example, Donald Burrows, Handel (Oxford, 1994), p. 176, and George Frideric Handel: Collected Documents, ed. D. Burrows, Helen Coffey, John Greenacomb and Anthony Hicks (Cambridge, 2013–), vol. 2, pp. 636–41, and passim. Senesino’s speech appeared in the Daily Advertiser on 11 June.

COTTON TÖPER

Never have we had such a large and competent group of cotton growers, who together have managed to control the market and price of cotton. The cotton market in 1775 is not as volatile as it was in 1770, but it is still subject to fluctuations. The cotton industry has grown significantly since 1770, and the market is now more consolidated.

Over the next few years, the cotton market will continue to grow, and the price of cotton will stabilize. The cotton industry will continue to be a major contributor to the economy, and the demand for cotton will continue to increase.

The cotton market is subject to fluctuations, and the price of cotton can vary significantly from year to year. However, with the growth of the cotton industry, the market is becoming more stable, and the price of cotton is expected to remain relatively constant.

The cotton industry is becoming more efficient, and the technology used in cotton production is improving. This is leading to a decrease in the cost of production, which is expected to further stabilize the cotton market.

The cotton industry is becoming more consolidated, and the number of cotton growers is decreasing. This is leading to a decrease in the number of cotton growers, which is expected to further stabilize the cotton market.

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In July 2016 the British Library completed a three-year project to digitise its substantial collection of autograph Handel manuscripts and make the content freely available via the British Library Digitised Manuscripts website (http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts). With just over one hundred volumes, the British Library holds the single largest autograph collection of Handel’s works in the world. The vast majority of these volumes form part of the Royal Music Library and are easily recognisable by their ‘R.M.’ shelfmarks: the most famous is Messiah (R.M.20.f.2). Almost all of these can be traced back to the collection of ‘musick books’ that Handel kept at his home in Brook Street and bequeathed to his copyist and amanuensis John Christopher Smith the Elder (1683–1763). However, in order to provide a more complete record of the available primary source material, autograph Handel manuscripts from other parts of the British Library’s collections were also included within the scope of the project.

Comprising a total number of images in excess of 16,500, this was one of the first large-scale digitisation projects to have been undertaken by the Music Department. Aside from Messiah, which had been made available via the British Library’s popular Turning the Pages web pages back in 2008 (see Fig. 1), no autograph Handel manuscripts had been made accessible digitally prior to the outset of the project. The content was released in phases over the three years of the project, and the digitisation was generously supported by the Derek Butler Trust.

Preservation of the originals and the resulting digital surrogates was a key consideration. The British Library has digitisation studios at both its London and Yorkshire sites. However, in order to minimise the risks associated with transportation, the manuscripts were digitised in London, where they are housed. Prior to photography, each volume was assessed by a conservator. Professional photographers then photographed each manuscript cover-to-cover, using the equipment and book supports recommended by the conservator. All photographers received training in handling material, and, in order to minimise wear and tear and streamline working practices, all rectos (fronts of folios) were captured, followed by all versos (backs).

Following image capture, the photographer deposited a set of master images for each manuscript in both TIFF and

Opening of the ‘Hallelujah’ chorus from Handel’s Messiah (British Library, R.M.20.f.2), as displayed on Turning the Pages. © The British Library Board.
Curator, Digital Muscle
Amelia Roper

from the corner of a home office PC.

http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/ (to promote easy access to the digital
version)

To explore archives and manuscripts catalogues

The British Library Digital Manuscripts website and in

search of a much larger audience. Free of charge, and

also opens up a wealth of where mock primary source

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The British Library Digital Manuscripts website makes

metadata. The availability of the handwritten manuscripts

permits was not granted. Access to the original was via

permission. In the past, in circumstances where

all of the British Library’s analog copy handwritten

manuscripts

The British Library, Search the Pieces (British Library R.M.20.1.5) on the British Library Digital Manuscripts Website

...
HÄNDELFESTSPIELE IN HALLE, 2016

Over many years this splendid festival has followed a regular pattern: a series of concerts and other events spread over a comparatively short time, beginning with an Editorial Board meeting of the Hallische Händel-Ausgabe (HHA) and the annual meeting of the management committee, followed by a ceremony at the Handel statue in the market place and an opening concert in the impressive surroundings of the G. F. Händelhalle, an event preceded by speeches and the award of the annual Handel prize. This was followed, usually the next day, by the annual meeting of the G. F. Händel-Gesellschaft in the Stadthalle (town hall), where the many local members could learn about the activities of the Society, hear some music and ask questions about the Society’s activities. By this time the concert series had begun in Halle and in the Goethe-Theater in the lovely surroundings of Bad Lauchstädt: over a couple of weeks hardly a day went by without a concert. In the middle of the festival, which concluded with an open-air concert accompanied by fireworks, two or three days were devoted to a scholarly conference. This arrangement meant that foreign visitors, including Handel scholars from Britain and the United States, could attend a packed series of events in a short space of time.

Recently, however, the municipal authorities have started spreading these events over a longer period. This has caused inconvenience to those who come from abroad: this year the festival occupied seventeen days, and many visitors with limited time had to miss much of the proceedings. There was no opening ceremony at the Händelhalle, and the Handel prize was not awarded. Instead there was a brief meeting in the concert hall of the Händel-Haus, which some people had to leave early in order to get to the opera house for the première of Sosarme in the new HHA edition by Michael Pacholke.

The opera was unfamiliar to most of the audience but proved to be a fine piece, with some first-rate music. The production was in the usual contemporary style, with much busy activity on stage in the manner often seen in recent years ... but enough of complaining about that evergreen problem! For this reviewer the production did not interfere with the music: the orchestral playing was excellent, but the excessive use of an organ as part of the continuo group was irritating. (Why do they do this? It is quite wrong historically.) The singing was excellent, and there was a nice touch in an aria with a violin obbligato, for which the violinist stepped up from the pit and on to the stage.

This year’s offering at Bad Lauchstädt was Didone abbandonata, a pasticcio with music by Vinci and others that Handel produced in 1737 at Covent Garden (there seems to be a fashion for pasticci these days). The music is very good, and the production was quite acceptable. The singing was excellent, and the instrumental playing was first-rate – a rare compliment from me, since the orchestra was Wolfgang Katchner’s Lauten Compagnie Berlin, which usually irritates me (and some of my colleagues) with its pretentiousness.

I attended two performances in the Festsaal of Leopoldina, a sumptuous palace near the Dom, founded in the nineteenth century for scientific research. The first was a rather strange affair called ‘Dido – a Lover between the Orient and the Occident’, a description that baffled me. The programme included instrumental items, some with a vaguely oriental flavour, from a group called Cosi facciamo (‘this is how we do it!’), and arias by Purcell, Cavalli and Hasse, sung by the soprano Stephanie King, whose English diction in the Purcell numbers – Dido’s lament among them – was dreadful. The second concert at Leopoldina was of a quite different order: this was the superb soprano Romelia Lichtenstein, who was excellent in the first half and wonderful in the second. The latter was devoted mostly to Aletina but also included the final aria in Act II of Silla and ‘Lascia ch’io pianga’ from Rinaldo: an unforgettable evening.

The academic conference was on the theme ‘Handel and the Enlightenment’. The standard of the papers was high, with fine contributions from the Anglo-American team: Donald Burrows on James Harris’s philosophy and Handel’s music, John Roberts on Handel’s recomposition of the cantata Tu fedel, tu costante, now in production for the HHA, Graydon Beeks on the performance tradition of L’Allegro after Handel’s death, Tim Egginton on Handel and the idea of universal harmony in Enlightenment England and David Wyn Jones on Handel’s reputation in Beethoven’s Vienna.

Old friends La Risonanza, directed by the amiable Fabio Bonizzoni, gave a concert performance of Dido and Aeneas in the Konzerthalle. Musically it was up to their usual standard, though as at the first Leopoldina concert, the singers had problems with English diction: strange, when so many British artists can manage perfect German and Italian.

Finally, before rushing to catch my plane, there was a fine performance of the 1718 Acis and Galatea by the Dunedin Concert and Players, directed by John Butt. It sent me happy on my way, despite a long wait in the vast spaces of Leipzig airport.

Terence Best
ANDREW PORTER (1928-2015)
**HANDEL INSTITUTE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Conference Awards**
Handel Institute Conference Awards are intended to help individuals who wish to attend an overseas conference to read a paper on Handel (or on a Handel-related subject) that has already been accepted by the conference organisers. They are available to UK residents who wish to attend a conference elsewhere and to overseas residents who wish to attend one in the UK. Awards will relate to the cost of travel and/or accommodation. There is no deadline, but applications must be submitted before expenditure is incurred. Preference will be given to postgraduate students and early-career academics. For further details see [http://www.gfhandel.org/handelinstitute/hi-grants.html](http://www.gfhandel.org/handelinstitute/hi-grants.html)

**Handel Opera Production Grants**
The Handel Institute is offering a grant of up to £5,000 for a production of an opera by Handel that is planned to take place by the end of 2019. The closing date for applications is **31 March 2017**. For further particulars see [http://gfhandel.org/handelinstitute/hi-grants.html](http://gfhandel.org/handelinstitute/hi-grants.html)

**Research Awards**
Applications are invited for Handel Institute Awards to assist in the furtherance of research projects involving the music or life of George Frideric Handel or his associates or contemporaries. One or more awards may be offered, up to a total of £1,000. Awards will not be made for the payment of university or college fees.

There is no application form. Applicants should submit an outline of their project, a breakdown of their estimated expenditure, and a note of any other funding (for the same project) applied for or received; they should also ask two referees to write on their behalf (references will not be solicited). The deadline is **30 November 2016**.

Applications and references may be sent by email or by post to Dr Helen Coffey, Department of Music, Open University, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, UK; email helen.coffey@open.ac.uk.

All applicants will be contacted as soon as possible thereafter. Any materials bought with an award will become the property of The Handel Institute when the applicant has finished using them.

**FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES**

**American Handel Society Festival 2017**
The biennial Festival of the American Handel Society will take place at Princeton University on 6–9 April. Academic paper sessions will be complemented by performances. The advertised deadline for the submission of abstracts is 1 October 2016 (see [http://americanhandelsociety.org/Festival.html](http://americanhandelsociety.org/Festival.html)); the Program Chair is Robert Ketterer (robert-ketterer@uiowa.edu). Enquiries may be sent to Ireri Chávez-Bárcenas (PhD Candidate, Musicology), Princeton University (ichavez@princeton.edu).

**Music in 18th-Century Britain**
The 32nd annual conference on Music in 18th-Century Britain will take place on Friday 25 November at the Foundling Museum in London.

**Programme**
10.00 **Coffee and Registration**
10.15 **Alan Howard** (Cambridge) – Samuel Howard and the music for the installation of the Duke of Grafton as Chancellor of Cambridge University, 1769
10.45 **David Shuker** (Kent) – John Marsh’s house organ ‘rediscovered’
11.15 **Coffee and (from 11.30) Reports**
11.45 **Catherine Ferris** (Research Foundation for Music in Ireland) – The Dublin Music Trade project: A work in progress
12.15 **Jonathan Bardon** (Dublin) – ‘The finest Composition of Musick that was ever heard’: The role Ireland played in securing Handel’s Messiah for posterity
12.45 **Peter Holman** (Leeds) – Worth 1000 words: Edward Francis Burney at Drury Lane, 11 March 1779
13.15 **Lunch**
14.00 **Graham Cummings** (Huddersfield) – Handel under attack: The London opera seasons, 1733–37
14.30 **Carole Taylor** (Huddersfield) – Just how collegial were the Nobility Opera directors in 1730s London?
15.00 **Rebecca Gribble** (Royal Holloway) – The Old Bailey: Tales of theft involving musicians and their instruments
15.30 **Tea**
15.50 **Penelope Cave** (W. Sussex) – Musical mothers and the Mother Church: Lessons from the Jermynham letters
16.20 **Move to Picture Gallery**
16.30 **Nancy Hadden** (London) – London’s flautists: The earliest English flute music, ca 1700–1730
17.00 **Conference ends**

**Registration**
*Fee*, including lunch (with wine) and admission to The Foundling Museum (10 am to 5 pm): £16 in advance; £21 on the day.
*Either* register online: [http://foundlingmuseum.org.uk/events/music-eighteenth-century-britain](http://foundlingmuseum.org.uk/events/music-eighteenth-century-britain)
*Or* send a cheque (payable to ‘The Foundling Museum’) to:
GCHC, The Foundling Museum, 40 Brunswick Square, London, WC1N 1AZ
*Enquiries*: telephone: 020 7841 3606 or email: handel@foundlingmuseum.org.uk

Organised by Claire Sharpe, Katharine Hogg and Colin Coleman, the conference will be chaired by Andrew Pink and Helen Coffey.