

[Vienna, 23rd December, 1809]

The undersigned has great pleasure in carrying out the commission of Frau von Nissen |: formerly Mozart's widow :| to answer on behalf of her son⁴ the letter which you recently wrote to him, [5] as this young artist is not here at the moment and is employed by a gentleman in Galicia as a clavier teacher and concertmaster. I submit to this little task all the more willingly inasmuch as I, as an old familiar friend of the Nissens, who are now a worthy married couple, had the honour of becoming acquainted with you personally during your stay here some years ago, and I would be heartily glad to satisfy your wish even partially. [10]

All that is remarkable about Haydn stands in nothing less than an inverse relation to his final end. The account of his last days does not amount to more than very little, and all that I can tell you about them is the following: All Viennese hearts will remember forever the bombardment of their magnificent capital city which took place on the 11th day of last May;⁵ [15] this was the Parca that cut the life-thread⁶ of this venerable Orpheus and exercised the most deleterious influence on his already extremely weak and irritable body. The power of the cannon-shot that landed on the city as well as on the suburbs shook the old man so violently, although his house was some distance away⁷ and untouched, [20] that his servants were most anxious about him on several occasions; yet from time to time he possessed such strength and presence of mind that he even comforted his servants himself. But in fact his whole organism had been deeply unsettled by these horrors of war and was gradually approaching its end. He fell asleep gently on the same day (: 31st May :) that deprived the French military of their great strategist, Marshal Lannes. [25] – Haydn was buried very quietly, undemonstratively, in the churchyard belonging to his parish,⁸ next to the deceased, famous, tragic actress Roosé,⁹ and will soon be transported to the crypt in Eisenstadt,¹⁰ as Esterhazy's concertmaster Herr Hummel¹¹ told me yesterday. [30]

For the Mozart *Requiem*, performed for him in the Schottenkirche,¹² I likewise received an *Entree Billet*,¹³ and found there, besides an enormous crowd of local inhabitants, also a very large number of the leading French administrators. The church was so full that one could hardly stand. [35] Some chose to remark that they had never heard this great work of art executed so well as on this very occasion, and I would concur; the only thing that would be

¹ Text in BD VI, p. 594-7.

² BD: Cf. No. 1388/12. Peter Lichtenthal (1780-1856); physician who also studied music, on which he published two books. Acquainted with Constanze and her two sons, becoming a particular friend of Carl Thomas. Franz Xaver Wolfgang dedicated his manuscript "Sonate pour le Pianoforte avec l'accompagnement d'un Violon oblige" to him, but also named him, in a letter of 22nd November, 1810, "the triplicate of boasting and vanity". In 1816 he published the first significant Mozart biography in Italian.

³ BD: Karl Bertuch (1777-1815), son of a Weimar bookseller. He left at least one entry in Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart's personal album; the latter wrote him on 8th February, 1810. In 1808 he published observations on a journey from Thuringia to Vienna in winter, 1805/6.

⁴ BD: Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart.

⁵ BD: Encouraged by the Spanish uprising against Napoleon, Austria declared war on France in April, 1809. Napoleon returned from Spain and forced the Austrian army to retreat. He entered Vienna on 13th May, 1809.

⁶ BD: Parca = one of the Fates. Cf. note on No. 1473/16 on the text of the 2nd movement of the festive choral work arranged by Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart for the unveiling of the Mozart Monument in Salzburg.

⁷ BD: The address today is Haydngasse 19. Here he wrote *The Creation* and *The Seasons*. Napoleon had a guard of honour placed in front of the house.

⁸ BD: Hundstürmer Friedhof.

⁹ BD: Betty Roose, née Koch (1778-1808).

¹⁰ BD: This happened in 1820, but without his skull. His skull followed in 1954.

¹¹ BD: Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837). In charge of Esterhazy's music 1804-1811.

¹² BD: "Church of the Scots".

¹³ BD: = "entry ticket".

desirable would be for our well-loved music director, Herr Clement,¹⁴ who always leads the whole thing, to pay attention to the ensemble in the orchestra in exactly the same way as he does with the singing personnel. [40] Such delicate pieces lose enormously if even one single largely unaccustomed person is involved.

*Mad. Campi*¹⁵ and *Dlle. Marconi*,¹⁶ the well-known singers in this divine masterpiece, and Herr Pfeifer,¹⁷ bass, glorified these devotions with the beauty and precision of their singing; Herr Gottdank,¹⁸ tenor, [50] also made his contribution.

This, then, is all I am able to tell you with certainty on the matter. With the exception of around 40 canons, which one could see in his room under frame and glass even during his lifetime, Haydn did not leave any unknown compositions. The composer Hummel, mentioned above, [55] who expressly informed me of this, wrote a short outline of Haydn's life some time ago for General Andreossy,¹⁹ who was, as is well-known, governor general while the French were staying here. It was immediately translated into French, and will probably be published in France.

I close with the hope that I can be of service to you in other matters, an opportunity which will be very willingly seized by

your appreciative friend and servant
Dr. Lichtenthal

Address / Peter Lichtenthal, Doctor of
[60] Pharmacy, in the Nunciature at Court,
Vienna

CONSTANZE NISSEN'S POSTSCRIPT (IN NISSEN'S HAND):

My dear Bertuch,

I see from your letter that you did not know that my son, Wolfgang *Amadée* the Second, who was the intended recipient, has no longer been with me since 22nd October last year, [65] but has taken an engagement with Count von Bavorovski²⁰ in Podkamién beyond Strzeliska and Lemberg.²¹ But your letter did not go astray, since it still found me here. The enclosed letter shows you that I immediately turned to a friend regarding your wish, one who was able to draw on more knowledge than I, since neither I nor my dear husband, [70] who sends his choicest compliments to you, were here at that time. This friend forgot one fact, namely that Haydn put up a plaque on his house with the inscription "*Haydn, membre de l'institut*",²² which caused his house to be treated with respect. I have the pleasure of enclosing for you a letter²³ from Mozart and hope that it may please you. [75] If I had taken longer to choose, I would have had to keep you waiting, since my husband keeps such papers with his own. And now I hope that life may go well for you; address me again if I can in any way be useful and of service to you; commend me to the friendship of your spouse, although

¹⁴ BD: Presumably Franz Joseph Clement (1780-1842), violinist, who gave the first performance of the Beethoven violin concerto in 1806. The performance of the *Requiem* on 15th June, 1809, was conducted by Joseph Eybler.

¹⁵ BD: Antonie Campi, née Miclascewicz (1773-1822).

¹⁶ BD: "Demoiselle Marconi": Marianna Marconi (1785-1882).

¹⁷ BD: Leopold Pfeiffer (c. 1758-1831).

¹⁸ BD: Joseph Gottdank (1779-1849).

¹⁹ BD: Antoine François, Comte de Andréossy, diplomatic representative of France in Vienna 1806-1809. The "outline" mentioned has so far not been traced.

²⁰ BD: Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart was employed as tutor to the Count's [Graf's] son and as music teacher to his daughter.

²¹ BD: Lvov/Lviv.

²² = "member of the institute". Haydn was awarded the medal of the Institute de France on 20th June, 1804.

²³ BD: Probably No. 1135.

we have not yet met, and commend both of us to dear, [80] kind L. R. Griesinger²⁴ at the first opportunity.

Your friend and servant,
Constanze Nissen, formerly Mozart.

²⁴ BD: L[egations]R[at] Griesinger: Georg August Griesinger (1769-1845). Originally a private tutor, which brought him into contact with the Saxon Embassy in Vienna. He was then named Secretary to the Saxon Embassy in 1804. He was a close friend of Haydn and published *Biographische Notizen über Joseph Haydn* in Leipzig in 1810.