WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

'WE CALLED HIM BROTHER'

Andrew Pink

During a Lodge of Sorrows held in Vienna soon after Mozart's death in 1791 the orator movingly declared that

Mozart's death is an irreplaceable loss to art. His talent, which already showed itself when he was a boy, made him one of the wonders of our time. Half of Europe esteemed him, the great called him darling and we called him Brother¹.

Mozart's masonic career at just 7 years was relatively brief, as indeed was his life at just 35 years. While at the time of his death Mozart's musical reputation was already very well appreciated surely no-one who was present at Mozart's Lodge of Sorrows in 1791 could have guessed that by the 250th anniversary of his birth in 2006 he would arguably have become one of the world's most well-known freemasons. The biographical details of Mozart are well known and the literature surrounding The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte K.620²) and its alleged masonic inspiration is extensive, but what of Mozart's immediate masonic milieu in the capital city of the Habsburg empire?

The first masonic lodge in Vienna called The Three Cannons (Aux Trois Canons) was founded on 17 September 1742 by freemasons from Breslau³. Freemasonry flourished in the empire of the Habsburgs under the protection of Archduke Francis (Franz Stephan von Lothringen, 1708-1765) who, as Duke of Lorraine, had been made a freemason in England in 1731. He was the husband of the Habsburg Empress Maria-Theresa (1717-1780) with whom, on her succession in 1740, Francis was co-regnant. Although the Habsburgs were a catholic dynasty the 1738 edict by Pope Clement XII against freemasonry (In eminenti apostolatus) was suppressed in the Habsburg territories as an infringement of the monarch's privileges⁴.

Most Habsburg lodges adhered to English ritual until 26 March 1781 when the successor to Francis and Maria Theresa, the Emperor Joseph II (1741-1790), decreed that no order within the empire either religious or secular was to submit to a foreign authority or pay money or fees to any body beyond Habsburg control. So it was that eventually on 22 April 1784 the Grand Lodge of Austria (Grosse Landesloge von Österreich) came into being with seven provinces: Austria, Bohemia, Hungary, Lemberg (Galicia), Austrian Lombardy, Austrian Netherlands and Transylvania⁵. This grand lodge was short-lived because from 1795 until 1918 freemasonry was completely banned within Habsburg jurisdiction, and then banned again during the Nazi era. It is therefore remarkable that so many historic records relating to Mozart and his masonic contemporaries have survived⁶.
On 14 December 1784, and at the age of 27, Wolfgang Mozart was initiated into the Benificence lodge (Zur Wohlthätigkei) in Vienna. The Master of the lodge was the writer and Palatine Chancellor and Privy Councillor Baron Otto Heinrich von Gemmingen-Hornberg (1755-1836), himself only 29. On 7 January 1785 Mozart was passed to the Fellow Craft degree at another Viennese lodge True Concord (Zur wahren Eintracht) where the Master was the leading chemist and mineralogist Ignatz von Born (1742-1791). Both of these lodges shared the same premises and sometimes held meetings in common. Some commentators have seen in the figure of von Born the inspiration for the character of Sorastro in The Magic Flute.

Josef Haydn (1732-1809), then Europe's greatest living composer and a man greatly admired by Mozart, was due to be initiated into the same lodge (True Concord) three weeks after Mozart, on 28 January 1785, but Haydn failed to attend because the letters of invitation from Vienna were delayed in the post. When Haydn was finally initiated on 11 February 1785 it was Mozart's turn to be absent. On that day Mozart was not only performing as soloist for the premiere of his own piano concerto in D minor (K.466) but his father Leopold was also due to arrive from Salzburg for an extended visit. However, all was not lost for Mozart because the next evening Haydn was the principal guest at a music party held in his honour at Mozart's apartment. This was a party no doubt organised (at least in part) to celebrate the start of Mozart and Haydn's new lives as freemasons. Three of Mozart's so-called 'Haydn' string quartets K.458, 464, and 465 were dedicated to Haydn and performed for the first time at this musical party. Leopold proudly recorded Haydn's comments to him that evening in a letter to Mozart's sister:

I tell you before God and as an honest man, that your son is the greatest composer I know, either personally, or by reputation. He has taste, and apart from that, the greatest knowledge of composition.

Three of the performers at that party were freemasons i.e. Mozart and the two Barons Anton and Bartholomeus Tinti, while the fourth, Mozart's father Leopold, was not; but not for long. On 6 April 1785 Leopold was initiated at the Benificence lodge and ten days later on 16 April at the True Concord lodge he passed to the Fellow Craft degree. Mozart's song for solo voice and organ Fellow Craft's Journey which opens "You, who are now approaching the next stage of knowledge" (Gesellenreise: Die ihr einem neuen Grade der Erkenntnis nun euch nährt K.468) is dated 26 March 1785 in the autograph and so it seems likely that it was composed by Mozart to honour his father.

We have no record of when Wolfgang was raised to the third degree but he clearly was already a Master Mason on 22 April 1785 when he was present in the True Concord lodge to see Leopold raised to that degree. The printed text of two songs for a Viennese Masters Lodge survive, dated 12 August 1785, naming Mozart as the composer of the music to which they were sung although the music itself is lost. Self-evidently the songs were composed before the date of the performance and so it is tempting to speculate that these two songs were, like the earlier Fellow Craft song, originally set to music for Leopold.

On 24 April 1786 Wolfgang and his father attended an extraordinary meeting of Viennese freemasons at the Crowned Hope lodge (Zur gekrönten Hoffnung). The meeting had been arranged to celebrate the ennoblement of Ignatz von Born by the Emperor, in recognition of a significant new ore-smelting process that von Born had devised. For these celebrations Mozart composed and conducted his masonic cantata The Freemason's Joy (Die Maurerfreude K.471) for tenor soloist, chorus of men's voices and orchestra. The opening of the text indicates the work's occasional purpose: "See how nature gradually reveals her countenance to the fixed, inquisitive eye of the scientist." The day after these celebrations Leopold left Vienna to return home to Salzburg following which Wolfgang never saw his father again. The score of The Freemason's Joy was published in Vienna on 17 August 1785 by the firm of Artaria, the principal Viennese publisher for both Haydn and Mozart. Pasquale Artaria, one of the firm's founders, was a member of the Crowned Hope lodge.
Proceeds from the sale of *The Freemason's Joy* were given to charity.

On 17 November 1785 Mozart directed his orchestral *Masonic Funeral Music* (*Maurerische Trauermusik* K.477/479a) scored for 2 oboes, clarinet, 3 basset-horns, double bassoon, 2 French horns and strings. The event was a Lodge of Sorrows held at the *Crowned Hope* lodge to mark the recent deaths in early November 1785 of two aristocratic Viennese freemasons: Georg August, Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz (the younger brother of Queen Charlotte of England) and Franz, Count Esterhazy of Galantha. In this commemorative music Mozart notably contrived to combine freemasonry with catholicism by weaving into the score the ancient liturgical melody known as the *tonus peregrinus*, a plainsong melody traditionally associated with the penitential season of Holy Week, and which Mozart was to use again in the 'decent' section of his Requiem K.626. The sober effect of Mozart's writing for the wind instruments in his *Masonic Funeral Music* is particularly impressive.

On 11 December 1785 the Emperor Joseph II decreed a reorganisation of all masonic lodges in his dominions. This was a move designed to break-up suspected political cliques and to assist in effective state surveillance of meetings of all kinds, with the effect of reducing the number and influence of masonic lodges. Now there were to be just two lodges in Vienna created by merging what had previously been eight lodges, with each new lodge limited to 180 members. Regular records of lodges and their membership were required by the state authorities and deposited in the files (Vertrautliche Akten) of the court archives (Haus- Hof- und Staatsarchiv) where they remain today. As a result of the Emperor's decision the overall lodge membership in Vienna was greatly reduced and even the great scientist von Boré drifted away from the Craft.

Mozart joined one of the three newly merged lodges called *New Crowned Hope* (*Zur neugekrönten Hoffnung*) and for the inauguration of this new lodge on 14 January 1786 Mozart composed a pair of songs to open and close the lodge, namely "Dissolve today, dear brothers, in joy and songs of celebration, for Joseph's benefaction has for us, in whose hearts a threefold fire burns, crowned our hope anew" (Zerfließet Heut, Geliebte Bruder K.483) and "You, our new leaders we thank you now for your loyalty, lead us always further on the path of virtue" (Ihr Unsere Neuen Leiter K.484) both written for tenor voice, with chorus of men's voices and keyboard (probably organ).

In 1788 Mozart was beginning to experience considerable financial problems, although these were problems of the 'cash-flow' variety and not the 'crippling debt' sort portrayed in the more florid accounts of Mozart's final years. To overcome his difficulties Mozart turned to his masonic brethren to solicit their discrete financial assistance in order to survive. Their names reveal the wide social mix of Viennese lodges since they include Prince Karl Lichnowsky (later a patron of Beethoven), Franz Hofedemel (a chancery clerk), and Michael Puchberg (a businessman). Of all his brethren it was the support that Mozart received from Michael Puchberg, a member of the *Truth* lodge (Zur Wahlheit) that proved to be the most regular and unconditional. Puchberg also took on the role of Mozart's agent and raised ready cash for Mozart by commissioning and selling manuscript copies of Mozart's music. In the 18th century hand-copied music provided a quicker return than the lengthy and costly processes involved in having music engraved and printed.

Mozart's last masonic work written in early November 1791 was *A Little Masonic Cantata* (*Eine kleine Freimaurer Kantate* K.623) scored for soloists, chorus of men's voices and orchestra. The work was written for the ceremonial opening of a new meeting place for the *New Crowned Hope* lodge on 17 November 1791. The work opens with the words "May the joyful sound of instruments loudly announce our joy, may every brother's heart feel the echo of these walls." Mozart conducted the work himself and was very pleased with this performance, telling his wife Constanza "If I did not know that I have written better, I should think this my best work." Sadly this was to be not only his last completed work but also his last public appearance; he died soon afterwards on 5 December 1791.

In 1991 the eminent musicologist H. C.
Robbins Landon, in his book *Mozart and the Masons*, was able to prove that an untitled picture of a Viennese masonic lodge once in the possession of Baron Rudolph von Tinti (whose forebears we have already met) and which is now in the care of the History Museum of Vienna (*Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien*) is in fact a depiction of the Crowned Hope lodge of which Mozart was a member and it is Mozart himself, properly dressed, who sits in the bottom right hand corner of the painting deep in conversation; a remarkable souvenir of the man they called Brother.

©Andrew Pink September 2006

Andrew Pink is a Research Fellow at UCL, completing a doctoral thesis entitled *The Musical Culture of Freemasonry in Early 18th-century London* under the supervision of Professor Simon McVeigh at Goldsmiths, University of London. Andrew’s doctoral research is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. This article is the result of a request by the Grand Stewards of the United Grand Lodge of England and it first appeared in the programme for the Grand Festival, 2006.

References

2 The numbers preceding a K are known as Küchel numbers and are used uniquely to identify Mozart’s works in system devised in the 19th century by Ludwig von Köchel.
5 Ibid p.8
6 Ibid p.8
8 Robbins Landon op cit p.8
9 Ibid p.14
10 Gutman op cit p.646
13 Gutman op cit p.646
14 Robbins Landon op cit p.18
15 Gutman op cit p.645
16 Ibid p.655
17 Ibid p.666

Library and Museum News is published by the Library and Museum of Freemasonry (Charity No. 1058497) three times a year.

Correspondence to:
The Editor, Library and Museum News
The Library and Museum of Freemasonry
Freemasons’ Hall
60 Great Queen Street
London WC2B 5AZ

www.freemasonry.london.museum

Recent additions to the Library and Museum website include the addition of “lodge family trees” to the Resources page. These show which lodges have sponsored the formation of others and often illustrate interesting links between them.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, a number of documents relating to freemasonry in North America and the West Indies are now being catalogued and details can be found on the Catalogue pages.

You may notice that the site has been slightly redesigned to improve its accessibility for those with disabilities and blindness.

**GRAND LODGE ORGANS AND ORGANISTS**

In November 2006, the British Institute of Organ Studies held its Annual Meeting at Freemasons’ Hall. The Grand Organist, Dr Andrew Parmley, gave a short recital and the Director of the Library and Museum gave an illustrated talk on the history of the Grand Lodge organ and its organists on which the following article is based.

Music was an important part of masonic meetings from the earliest days in the eighteenth century but this tended to be vocal music with only what one might call portable instruments used. Lodges met in the back rooms of taverns, they had no fixed premises until the nineteenth century so the use of a pipe organ to provide music is a later tradition.

The first Freemasons’ Hall, designed by Thomas Sandby, was built in Great Queen Street and opened in 1776. The Hall was built in the garden behind a seventeenth century
house. It was actually on the first floor level with a staircase leading up to it and cellars below. The costs of the site and building were such that, initially, the interior of the Hall was unfurnished. However in order to help cover the costs of financing and maintaining the Hall, Grand Lodge agreed that the Hall could be hired out for external, non-masonic use and the relative size of the Hall made it popular for musical performances.

In 1784 the Academy of Ancient Music began a series of public concerts in the Hall. The musical directors of the Academy during this period, Benjamin Cooke and Samuel Arnold, were both freemasons. It was in response to a request from this organisation rather than any internal impulse that Grand Lodge installed an organ at one end of the Hall in March 1786 at a cost of 200 guineas. It was the work of the organ maker Samuel Green. The organ can be seen in a number of engravings of events held at the Hall including the fundraising event for Girls' School shown above.

The position of Grand Organist was introduced in 1812 when Samuel Wesley was appointed. Wesley had first joined a masonic lodge in 1788 when he joined a London lodge with a long musical tradition, the Lodge of Antiquity. His membership of that lodge soon lapsed due to non payment of annual dues but he later joined Somerset House Lodge in 1808.

On 27th December 1813 at the ceremony marking the Union of the two Grand Lodges, Wesley composed a three part anthem, "Behold how good a thing it is...in Unity to dwell", words by another freemason, Waller Rodwell Wright, and he played the organ at the elaborate ceremony marking the Union which was held in Sandby's Hall.

It was agreed that the existing Freemasons' Hall would be retained after the Union (as the Antients had never had a hall of their own) and we find regular annual payments of 10 guineas to W Gray for "keeping the organ in repair". Sir John Soane, Professor of Architecture at the Royal Academy, who had been initiated as a freemason in November 1813 was appointed Grand Superintendent of Works by the Duke of Sussex as Grand Master and thus responsible for the upkeep of the Hall. In 1821 the staircase leading to the Hall was deemed to be in a dangerous state and Soane suggested that this be demolished and replaced. As part of the consequent changes the organ was placed in the gallery over the entrance door. These moves and repairs, which were undertaken by Gray, cost £906 in 1822. However it was also clear that the existing accommodation in Great Queen Street would not be large enough for meetings of the new entity nor to cope with administering the business of over 1,500 lodges worldwide. In 1815 Grand Lodge had acquired use of the freeholds of the two houses to the east of the existing building, 62 and 63 Great Queen Street and Soane designed new buildings in the yards behind these two houses. Building began in 1828 and took three years to complete. Soane's Hall came to be known first as the New Hall and, from 1837, as the Temple and was only used for Masonic ceremonies. It was not intended to replace Sandby's Hall, which continued to admit the public. It contained a small organ (shown on the left hand side of the drawing below) with a Gothic style case which is probably the organ purchased from John Gray in June 1830 for £341 10 shillings described as "an Organ and case fitted to the New Room". Gray's annual fee went up to 15 guineas for tuning both organs throughout the 1840s with the successor firm of Gray and Davison mentioned in the 1850s.

After Wesley's resignation as Grand Organist in
1817, he was replaced by Sir George Smart who held office for 25 years. Smart received his early musical education as a chorister of the Chapel Royal where he later became organist and composer. He was very much an establishment figure with an international reputation who conducted music on a number of royal occasions including the coronations of George IV and Victoria.

The duties of Grand Organist were relatively limited unless there was a special occasion. The Grand Lodge met four times a year and he would be required to play processional music at the beginning and end and the National Anthem. In addition once a year there was a Grand Feast and here the documents do actually record the organ being played although we have scant information about the musical programme. Some of the Grand Organists composed music for Masonic occasions and our collections of music are currently being catalogued so you can check our online catalogue for references to individual names.

Another appointment of an established name in the musical world in the middle of the century was Sir Michael Costa (above). He had been in England for nearly twenty years before he joined a Masonic lodge in 1848 but thereafter his Masonic promotion was rapid. His fellow lodge members were well connected and Costa was appointed Grand Organist only three years after initiation in 1851. He held the post for two years. In 1851 Costa also joined Royal Alpha Lodge No 16. Since 1814 this lodge had held a unique position, with its membership limited in number, generally granted only to those who had high office in Grand Lodge and all candidates for admission either proposed or approved by the Grand Master. Costa continued as a member of this lodge until his death in 1884.

Costa composed a simple grace for the Bank of England Lodge, his first lodge. At the installation of the Prince of Wales as Grand Master, which was held at the Royal Albert Hall on 28th April 1875, Costa played a specially composed processional march as the Prince and his sponsors entered the Hall.

In September 1859 it was reported to Grand Lodge that the organ in Sandby's Hall and that in Soane's Temple had both been examined by Mr Bates (described as "a skilful organ builder" and later identified as TC Bates) and that they required £70 worth of repairs. John Havers, the President of the Board of General Purposes noted "the true reason they had got out of order was that they were used too little". The then Grand Organist, Charles Horsley said that he had examined the organs three years previously when he had first been appointed and found them to be "in a state of rack and ruin". The repairs were agreed but Gray and Davison lost the annual tuning contract for about 5 years and were replaced by Bates.

Following the work of Soane and his successor, Philip Hardwick, the Great Queen Street site had become a conglomeration of buildings surrounding Sandby's Hall. In 1859 John Havers, in what we might see as indicative of Victorian respectability, began to lobby for a distinction to be made between those areas used for Masonic meetings and the eating and drinking facilities of the tavern.

Havers was appointed chairman of the 1862 Building Committee which embarked on a comprehensive rebuilding of the site. The work of this Committee was aided by further purchases of property in Great Queen Street. In the rebuilding Soane's Temple was demolished but Sandby's Hall retained to be used solely for Masonic purposes. Recognising
the growth in the number of lodges and in the administrative arrangements required, four lodge meeting rooms were built for the increasing number of lodges meeting in the area and administrative accommodation was provided as well as what was known as a Subsidiary Hall, capable of holding reasonably large masonic meetings. The masonic buildings and the Tavern were made architecturally distinct. As shown in the engraving below with the Tavern on the left.

Building work started in 1863 and took several years. However little thought seems to have been given to the organ. The Building Committee were actually of the view that it was impossible to keep any instrument in good order because it was "only used for a few minutes five or six times a year" and that it would be cheaper to hire an instrument. The counter argument was that an organ should be provided so that Grand Lodge could maintain "the dignities of its assemblies". In the end, Gray and Davison were paid £216 to rebuild the organ in Sandby's Hall.

There was also an organ in the Subsidiary Hall and this may have been relocated from Soane's Temple but I have not been able to get further information on this.

The bad news for Gray and Davison was that their annual fee for tuning the organ fell to 5 guineas, a level that was maintained for the rest of the century.

On the night of 3rd May 1883, Sandby's Temple was badly damaged by fire. After some debate, it was decided to reinstate what had been there- a scheme which could be covered by the proceeds from the insurance claim. The organ was valued at £100 and Gray and Davison were paid to install a replacement although no details of its specification have yet been found.

From this point, the mid 1880s, we see Walker and Son undertaking the tuning of the organ in the Subsidiary Hall (later known as the Zetland Room) for 2 guineas whilst Gray and Davison continue with tuning the Grand Lodge organ at a fee of 5 guineas per annum.

Another well known name from the list of Grand Organists is that of Sir Arthur Sullivan. He became a freemason at the Lodge of Harmony No 255 meeting in Richmond, Surrey in 1865. Although his death was marked by a lavish obituary in Masonic Illustrated in January 1901, his Masonic work was limited. The only major event in which he participated was the Masonic celebrations to mark the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria at the Albert Hall in June 1887. His general fame was such that a Masonic lodge in Manchester was named after him in 1886, the founders being well known in local musical and literary circles. The first Secretary of the lodge was the Lancashire writer and publisher, Ben Brierley, the first Master Nathaniel Dumville had links with Manchester Cathedral and a later Master Henry Watson, bequeathed his music library to the City. For the first meeting of the lodge, a Doctor Henry Bentley composed a cantata which was performed by a group of musicians augmented by several members of the Halle orchestra.

Meanwhile back in London, continued growth in membership exacerbated the accommodation problem. Grand Lodge built a further extension in 1900 and was building again just as the First World War broke out although none of this building work affected Sandby's Hall.

In 1919 the Grand Master announced major plans to build a new building as a memorial to those members who had died in the First
World War, it was to cost a million pounds funded entirely from the membership. Although the Victorian and early twentieth century buildings would be demolished, it was originally intended that Sandby's original Hall would be retained. However major structural defects were identified and it was demolished in 1932.

It might seem surprising, given the relative lack of interest in the organs in the previous halls, that it was always part of the architects' plans for the new Grand Temple to have an organ as in the picture above of the architects' model showing the organ pipes. The architects, HV Ashley and F Winton Newman, commissioned a report on the organs from Henry Goss Custard, a previous Grand Organist and the organist at Liverpool Cathedral. His report, dated January 1930, recommended that only the Grand Temple and the two largest lodge rooms should be fitted with pipe organs. The other 20 or so smaller rooms should be fitted with "good American organs" each costing about £80. With regard to the Grand Temple Goss Custard wrote "I feel very strongly that the Grand Lodge of England should be furnished with a really high class instrument... (which) should possess sufficient body and depth of tone to effectively lead and control the singing of large bodies of brethren without being noisy and would contain great variety and delicate beauty for ceremonial purposes".

Goss Custard estimated a cost of about £5,000 (the final cost was about £1,000 more). He noted that the proposed organ chambers in the Grand Temple "were not ideal from a musical point of view" but couldn't be changed without spoiling the architectural effect. He suggested bringing in an organ builder at an early stage and suggested either Henry Willis & Sons (whose recent work at Liverpool Cathedral had encountered some criticism) or Harrison and Harrison of Durham. The specifications prepared by Goss Custard were sent to the nominated organ builder Henry Willis.

The other two organs were in Lodge Room 10 which had a two manual Willis organ, and Lodge Room 1, a large rectangular room seating over 500 people, where another two manual Willis was installed. According to an article in The Organ (October 1935), in Lodge Room 1 Willis used "what was available of the old Gray and Davison organ from the old Grand Temple". Unfortunately the room never worked effectively as a lodge room and its fittings, including the organ, were removed in 2004.

Despite the involvement of a leading organist, the instruments in Freemasons' Hall remained a challenge because, as the article in The Organ pointed out, each of the temples was lined with acoustic tiling to reduce speech reverberation and this had a deadening effect on the music.

Today the Grand Temple organ continues to be used for masonic occasions and, increasingly, for other musical events. It is also a welcome development that specialist groups are also once again interested in seeing and hearing it.