

## GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

The life and career of George Frideric Handel, one of the most frequently performed composers from the Baroque period, are copiously and intricately documented through a variety of contemporary sources. This multi-volume major publication is the most up-to-date and comprehensive collection of these documents. Presented chronologically in their original languages with English translations and with commentaries incorporating the results of recent research, the documents provide an essential and accessible resource for anyone interested in Handel and his music. Volume 4 begins with the re-establishment of Handel's career in London following his return from Dublin in 1742, and covers the period to 1750 during which he composed a succession of his greatest English works for his oratorio seasons, including *Samson*, *Semele*, *Belshazzar*, *Judas Maccabaeus* and *Solomon*. The end of this period saw his first involvement with the Foundling Hospital charity, and performances that changed the reputation of *Messiah*.

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GEORGE FRIDERIC  
HANDEL

COLLECTED DOCUMENTS

1609–1763

VOLUME 4

1742–1750

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

DONALD BURROWS

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## INTRODUCTION

### *Scope*

This book collects together texts dating from Handel's lifetime that contain references to him (directly, or by implication) and his music. Selected passages from later eighteenth-century publications (such as Mainwaring's 1760 biography of Handel, and books by Burney, Coxe and Hawkins), where they cover otherwise undocumented areas of Handel's life, are included at relevant periods in the main sequence; although these may be unreliable in various aspects, including chronology, they may have preserved first-hand information from earlier years which is not available from any other source. A few other texts are also incorporated near the dates to which their contents refer. Where a document has been the subject of previous attention (and was thus included by Deutsch), but is now regarded as doubtful, this is treated in a brief entry with a commentary.

The description 'Handel documents' covers several categories of materials. Manuscript sources include legal, institutional, financial and ecclesiastical records, as well as contemporary letters and diaries. Printed sources include London newspapers which, in addition to relevant news reports, carried routine advertisements for theatre and concert performances, and for music publications; there are also items in newspapers from European and provincial British cities. Handel's musical scores are in themselves 'Handel documents': their detailed history, as elucidated for example in books by Winton Dean about his operas and oratorios and in recent volumes of the *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe*, is beyond the present scope, but wordbooks, musical autographs and performing scores have been examined systematically to confirm or establish casts and content for Handel's performances. Documentary information concerning dates of composition is included, and musical revisions which relate to documented events are summarised. Documents relating to the circumstances of Handel's performances (such as orchestra lists, newspaper reports noting the arrival of his singers, and letters about their contracts) are included. Documents relating to the publication of Handel's music and to performances of his music, in London and elsewhere, are included, as are literary references to the composer. Sections of text beyond immediate references to Handel are included where they provide context, for example about the topic being treated or about the circumstances in which his music was performed.

During the period covered by this volume Handel's performances usually took place on different nights from those of the successive opera companies at the King's Theatre, and he gave no staged opera performances. The situation is therefore different from that of the direct competition between two parallel London opera companies in the seasons from 1733-1734 to 1736-1737; furthermore, oratorio-style performances

given by other musicians in the theatres were occasional events, without extended runs. Nevertheless, there was some rivalry between supporters of Handel and the 'Middlesex' opera company in 1742–5, and aspects of the opera companies' activity impinged on his career in various ways: his music was included in some seasons at the King's Theatre, the opera programme in 1743–1744 was probably affected by the nature of the repertory in his oratorio season, and some singers who had originally come to London to perform in the operas subsequently sang for Handel. Although full coverage is not given to the opera companies, summaries of the opera seasons are given in commentaries to advertisements for the first opera performance of each season. Handel-derived operas receive the same coverage as his own performances, and the parallel programmes are summarised with supplementary calendars at the relevant period in each season.

### *Presentation of the documents*

Entries for individual documents begin with a dated title line, followed by a transcription of the document text, an English translation (for foreign-language texts) and a commentary. Footnotes in original printed documents are transcribed at the end of the document text or relevant section and are not placed (unless by coincidence) at the bottom of a page. Editorial dates, whether in headings or annotations, use '7 September 1749' as the standard form; ordinal forms ('7th September', 'the 7th') are retained in quotations and used occasionally elsewhere if convenient and there is no possibility of ambiguity.

Texts from foreign-language documents are usually followed immediately by a complete English translation, printed in *italics*; translations of incidental foreign-language passages may alternatively be similarly included in the transcriptions as interpolations within square brackets.

Entries are generally presented in chronological sequence of the documents themselves, under the date of writing (for manuscript items) or publication (for printed items). Where a document refers directly to an event that occurred on a different date, an additional brief descriptive entry may be added under the relevant date, with a cross-reference. In some cases (for example, if a performance was advertised on preceding days but not on the day itself) the date of the event is given precedence and the date of the source is given at the beginning of the commentary.

As in previous volumes, documents are presented in chapters that follow the cross-year pattern of the London theatre seasons. The year-entries begin with a calendar of Handel's theatre performances in London; first performances of his works are indicated by bold type and dates in square brackets indicate performances that were planned or advertised, but subsequently postponed or abandoned. Apart from the exceptional season of 1744–1745, Handel's theatre performances were given during the period of Lent, so that (for example) the calendar for his 1742–1743 season refers to February and March 1743. The cross-year pattern remains relevant, however,

because Handel's activity relates to the wider context of London performances, and followed an annual pattern of composing major new scores in the summer or autumn ready for performance the following Lent. The year-breaks are therefore principally defined by the dates when Handel commenced new composition, and do not have a consistent calendar date.

In references to the programmes of the London opera companies, titles of Italian operas are generally given in their Italian forms, although English advertisements and music editions usually used equivalent English-language forms (e.g. 'Roxana' for 'Rossane'). In the commentaries to the first performance of each season the repertory is listed, with names of composers; for pasticcios (broadly defined as opera adaptations involving the music of more than one composer, even when a single-composer score formed the basis) only principal composers are identified, where known and relevant. It is to be understood that other operas which were based on scores by composers who were not resident in London were also given in adapted versions.

Items from diaries or registers are generally given individual entries under the relevant dates; however, where the items form a related sequence they are given as a single group covering a span of dates. Documents relating to recurring financial transactions, in Handel's accounts at the Bank of England and the payment of parish rates on his London residence, are covered by brief descriptive entries under the relevant dates, and an overview is provided by tabular Appendices in Volume 5. Surviving stock transfer documents are, however, transcribed.

Where several documents have the same date, the order of presentation is to some extent pragmatic, but newspaper announcements (presumed to appear at the start of a day except for the evening papers) are generally given before documents from letters or other manuscript sources, and documents defining past events are placed before those defining future events; in references from newspapers, news items are generally presented before advertisements. Advertisements and notices for first nights of performances or revivals of works with which Handel was involved are, however, placed last under the date, immediately before any documents deriving from the wordbooks, unless it is apparent that (for example) a letter was written after the evening's performance had been attended.

Transcriptions of advertisements and other documentary evidence are given for all identifiable productions and events in which Handel was involved. For individual works, the announcement on the day of the first performance (or the nearest to it if there is no document for the day itself) is given documentary status. If there is a run of performances, the dates are listed in the commentary, and these lists also indicate performances that were advertised as being by Royal Command. (Such 'command' notices are distinct from the routine formula 'By his Majesty's Command, No Persons whatever to be admitted behind the Scenes', which frequently occurs towards the end of advertisements.) Other significant variants in the notices of repeats (e.g. the indication of additional music) will usually also be described in commentaries, but a separate new document may be introduced if the variants are substantial, have accumulated

into a substantially different text, or require annotation in their own right. Within each season recurring elements in subsequent notices (such as ticket prices, starting times and the prohibition of persons ‘behind the Scenes’) are generally not repeated if they remain unchanged.

Publications of books, pamphlets and music, and publications to which Handel subscribed, are documented as far as possible by the date of publication; significant preceding documents relating to the announcement of publication or subscription are also included, with notes on the progress of the subscriptions in the commentaries. Preference has been given to the most comprehensive advertisements, but there are often a number of variations in successive notices, and not all of these are recorded. ‘Published this Day’ was frequently retained in later repeats of advertisements, so it is possible that a quoted document had predecessors that have not been traced.

Documents for which precise dates have not been determined are placed at a position in the chronological sequence that is appropriate to the content; more difficult cases are allocated to a year in the most likely period, or the end of the relevant month. Quotations without specific dates from contemporary printed books are as far as possible entered under the date of first publication, usually determined from advertisements in the London newspapers; there are cases where publication preceded or followed the imprint year. Where the imprint date is the only evidence, preference is given to placing the documents at the end of the ‘season year’ (instead of the calendar year), so that they do not interrupt related sequences of texts around the change of calendar year: a document with a publication date ‘1743’ may thus be included at the end of the 1742–1743 season, though there is the possibility that it may have not appeared until the early months of 1744.

### *Title lines*

The chronological sequence takes into account different calendars that were current in the successive locations associated with Handel’s career, giving precedence to the calendar that was most relevant to him at the time. For the period covered by this volume, the Julian (Old Style) calendar is treated as primary. Britain adopted the New (Gregorian) Style in 1752, with the calendars coinciding from 14 September 1752. The New Style calendar was consistently eleven days ahead of Old Style. Where a document is not dated in the principal style for the period or clarification is needed, equivalent dates are given in brackets, e.g. ‘1(12) November 1742’, or ‘31 October (11 November) 1743’. The year is always considered to begin on 1 January, although the beginning of the legal year remained 25 March in Britain until 1752. In the document texts, dates are transcribed in the form they appear on the originals, which may be in New Style and thus may not appear to be identical to those in the title lines.

Following the date, the title will usually identify the source document, by (for example) the name of the newspaper (e.g. ‘*The Daily Advertiser*’) or the archive source (e.g. ‘Entry Book of Royal Warrants’); for letters, it will give the names of the writer

and recipient, with their locations where they can be identified (e.g. ‘Richard Warner, London, to James Harris, Salisbury’). Alternatively, there may be a descriptive title specifying the event concerned (e.g. ‘Handel completes the score of *Samson*’); this convention is also used in the case of summary entries for which fuller details are given in an appendix (e.g. ‘Handel’s Stock Account at the Bank of England’). In the case of Handel’s performances, title lines take the form ‘First performance of *Joseph and his Brethren*’ or ‘Revival of *L’Allegro ed il Penseroso*’ unless subsumed by a more general topic, such as ‘First night of Handel’s oratorio season at Covent Garden’. Where performances of Handel’s works by other people are not documented to a specific date but are recorded from a printed wordbook, the title takes the form ‘Production of *Berenice* at Brunswick’. Square brackets are used to indicate dates, names or places which are not immediately derived from the document, and which have been attributed by the editors: where the attribution is uncertain it may be preceded by ‘?’. Sometimes the description may specify the event and its date, where the date of the document itself is liable to cause confusion. Texts from literature that is later in date than the position in the chronological sequence have headings in the form ‘From Mainwaring’s *Memoirs* (1760)’.

For English and Dublin newspapers and journals that were published three times weekly under multiple dates (e.g. ‘18–21 September’), the last date is used to determine the placing of the document, and is given in the title line (as ‘21 September 1742 *The Dublin Journal*’): the date as found on the original is cited at the beginning of the commentary with the title in abbreviated form (as ‘*DJ* 18–21 September’). Where newspapers printed an anthology of items from sources contributed under different dates, the publication date defines the title line and any relevant subheading date is included as part of the transcribed text. Frequently news items were repeated in several newspapers, entries from daily or thrice-weekly papers were also gathered in the weekly papers (usually published on Saturdays), and items from London newspapers were often repeated later in provincial newspapers or the *Hamburger Relations Courier*. In these cases, one text, usually the best or earliest that we have been able to discover, is given documentary status, and other occurrences are not included or recorded unless they contain some significant variation.

For letters where a correspondent is usually identified by a landed title (e.g. Earl of Shaftesbury), this form is used; however, other titles (e.g. Mr, Signora, Dr, Rev.) are not generally included with personal names, except in those cases where no forename is identified.

### *Document texts*

Where the ‘document’ is an extract from a longer text, sections of the text additional to those referring directly to Handel may be included in order to establish a context for the reference; otherwise, an indication of context is given in the commentary. Where a text is presented in a shortened form, internal elisions are shown by ... ; if the quoted text is free-standing (i.e. the content does not depend on surrounding material) the existence of preceding or succeeding text is not indicated.

Dates not immediately obvious as stated within a document text are glossed with an explanatory date in square brackets, e.g. 'on Thursday next [25 June]'. In texts from correspondence, if the document itself includes a date of origin, a place of origin, or the address of the intended recipient, these features are included as part of the transcription, and the general layout of such features is reproduced. Greetings and relevant parts of subscriptions, where available, are included as establishing the identity and relationship of correspondents, even where the relevant extract from the letter is brief. The original line-arrangement of subscriptions and address panels is shown by oblique strokes except where the layout has some significance, and in the case of Handel's autograph letters, where the original arrangement is transcribed.

Conventions for the transcription of documents are described in the Introduction to Volume 1. Abbreviated formulaic subscriptions (e.g. 'yr most obedt and affte humble servt') are expanded editorially to full texts unless some unusual or ambiguous element is involved, as are matching greetings such as 'Dear Br' (for 'Dear Brother'). Adjustments have been made in document texts from some writers who indiscriminately used capital forms of some letters to begin words. Abbreviated forms in diaries (e.g. for days of the week in George Harris's diary) are not expanded in places where the meaning is clear. Short words with simple scribal abbreviations are transcribed in their full forms, and superscripts are lowered. Original abbreviations and superscripts are, however, retained for text written by Handel himself. Longer recurring abbreviations such as 'Ma[jes]ty' are shown thus at the first occurrence in a text but not expanded at repetitions.

From printed librettos (wordbooks) for Handel's performances, prefaces and dedications are included, but the 'Arguments' and scene-descriptions are not; the source is identified by the title page as listed at the beginning of the commentary. Where the wordbooks include singers' names, as is usually the case for the Italian operas, pages with the lists are transcribed, including any specific references to composer, librettist or scene-designer. For Handel's performances which are not covered by such documentation, editorial reconstructions of the cast lists, mainly derived from evidence in the performing scores and contemporary printed music editions, are included in the commentaries. Where a wordbook is the principal or only surviving document for a performance of Handel's music without his own involvement, the title page may be given in abbreviated form, and cast lists or prefaces are not reproduced unless they have some further relevance.

In date-annotations on Handel's musical autographs from September 1739 onwards the composer often added astrological symbols for the days of the week:

- ☉ Monday
- ♂ Tuesday
- ♀ Wednesday
- ♃ Thursday
- ♀ Friday
- ♄ Saturday
- ☉ Sunday

### *Commentaries*

The source that has been used for the transcribed text is given as the first element of the annotation, except where that source has already been fully identified in the title line. As far as possible, archive locations are identified by abbreviated geographical codes (see below). Identification of the source may be followed by a reference to published facsimiles (of all or part of the original). One or two other references to relevant literature, such as the earliest or most complete previous publication of the text, or a survey of documents of the same type, may be included. No attempt is made to cover all previous references to a document, but particular publications which have led to the inclusion of that item during the preparation of this collection, or include explanatory commentaries, may be noted. Titles of newspapers may be given in the commentaries in the shortest form which identifies the publication without ambiguity, such as *The London Daily Post* for *The London Daily Post, and General Advertiser*.

Where the content of a document text relates to other comparable references or events, the connections are indicated by (for example) 'see 9 April 1743', or 'cf. 16 November'. A number of documents may be entered under the same date, but the appropriate item that is directed from a cross-reference should generally be easy to find. For cross-references to documents that are 'double-dated' in Old and New Styles, only the filing date in the chronological sequence is given: a reference to '1(12) November 1742' will therefore appear as 'see 1 November 1742'. Similarly, cross-references to entries with a span of dates (e.g. '15 February – 5 April 1743') will give only the first date ('see 15 February 1743'). Inevitably, some cross-references will refer to entries in other volumes of this book.

The commentaries are intended to elucidate the content of the transcribed texts, including (for example) identification of the principal persons or musical works that are mentioned, and explanations of words and references that occur within the quoted passages.

### *Abbreviations in commentaries, and bibliographical references*

See Libraries and Archives (p. 875) for the codes which are used in the commentaries to identify source locations. Locations are identified in abbreviated form, employing *RISM* sigla as far as possible but omitting the national code for British references: the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Carl von Ossietzky in Hamburg thus appears as 'D-Hs', but the Bodleian Library in Oxford appears as 'Ob'.

Bibliographical references are given in 'author/date' form (e.g. Burrows and Dunhill 2002) with reference to the full citations in the Bibliography, which are arranged alphabetically by author and chronologically within author entries; music editions are entered under the name of the composer. Exceptionally, the following frequently cited sources have short forms without the year-date:



- 'Burney, *History*' refers to Burney, Charles. *A General History of Music, from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period*, 4 vols. (London, 1776–89)
- 'Deutsch' refers to Deutsch, Otto Erich. *Handel: A Documentary Biography* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1955).
- 'Harris' refers to Harris, Ellen (ed.). *The Librettos of Handel's Operas* (New York and London: Garland, 1989), for facsimiles of opera wordbooks.
- 'Hawkins, *History*' refers to Hawkins, John. *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 5 vols. (London, 1776)
- 'HHb' refers to volume IV of the *Händel-Handbuch*, a revised version of 'Deutsch', for which see the Bibliography under 'Eisen and Eisen'.
- The London Stage* refers to *The London Stage 1660–1800, A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments & Afterpieces* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960–8); parts 2–4 cover the period of Handel's career in London.
- 'Smith' refers to Smith, William C. *Handel: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Early Editions* (2nd edition, Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), for printed editions of Handel's works, with references to page numbers and edition sequence numbers, as for example 'Smith p. 78 no. 1'.

Where an entry is taken from a later source which is identified by author, title and date in the title line, the source reference in the commentary may have a short form without date: thus if the title says 'From Mainwaring's *Memoirs* (1760)', the reference will be '*Memoirs*'.

'os' and 'ns' refer to dates in the Old Style and New Style calendars, respectively. Where there is a sequence of references to performances in London theatres, the abbreviations from *The London Stage* may be used: CG = Covent Garden, DL = Drury Lane, HAY = the Haymarket Theatre (sometimes called the 'Little Theatre, Haymarket'), KT = The King's Theatre, LIF = Lincoln's Inn Fields, QT = The Queen's Theatre.

Eighteenth-century currency in Britain, entered as two or three columns (for £ s or £ s d) in financial ledgers, had 12 pence (d) to the shilling (s); 20 shillings to the pound (£). A guinea was 21 shillings or £1 1s.

Acts and scenes in operas and oratorios are identified by upper- and lower-case roman numerals: 'Act III/ii' refers to Act Three, Scene Two. Music volumes from the *Hallsche Händel-Ausgabe* have references by series and volume numbers: HHA II/41 refers to Serie II Band 41; references to the *Händelgesellschaft* ('Chrysander') music edition are by volume number, as for example 'HG 48'.

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