

[Vienna, 26th May, 1798]⁴

Copy
of my letter of 26th May, 1798, which
probably went astray.⁵ To Messrs.
[5] Breitkopf and Härtel
in Leipzig.

Most worthy gentlemen,

You remarked quite correctly in the letter I recently received from you⁶ that I must have been very bemused to read a public announcement of an enterprise [10] which, without my co-operation, it is bold to undertake and difficult to carry out. How numerous are the manuscripts I still own of which no-one can flatter themselves that they possess a copy (of whatever kind)? Who would not grant me, as Mozart's widow, utter credibility if I were to announce in a public newspaper that a complete edition of all Mozart's works is not possible except through me [15] or with my help? Who, then, would turn anywhere but to me, if I, under certain circumstances, were to publish all not yet known works of Mozart's,⁷ of which no-one except me possesses the originals (an idea which I have not yet given up)? Would a new printing of the other already known works not then be entirely superfluous? [20] In the meantime, if we could agree on our mutual interest, I should be grateful to see an acceptable plan from you; but I must confess that I am strongly inclined to arm myself with caution when entering into relations with you, gentlemen, since it is still very fresh in my memory how little

¹ BD: Publisher's remarks on the original: "1798 / 22 Octbr / 9 Novbr Vienna / Madam Mozart".

² BD: Nissen's handwriting. Nissen: At the end of 1797, the 35-year-old Constanze met the one year older Legation Secretary to the Danish Embassy in Vienna, Georg Nikolaus Nissen (Hadersleben, 1761 - Salzburg, 1826). He had been working there since 1793. At some point between 1st May, 1795 (No. 1214) and 1st September, 1798 (No. 1226), Constanze moved from the Krügerstrasse to the "Judengässl", probably after the concert tour 1795/96 (No. 1215/1). Here Nissen was either her landlord or cohabitant. They moved for a short time to Franziskanerplatz No. 967, then, on 10th October, 1799 (No. 1259), to a shared apartment at Michaelerplatz No. 5. In 1805, Nissen became *chargé d'affaires* at the Danish Embassy. On 23rd May, 1808, they changed address again, moving to less expensive accommodation in the suburb Landstrasse. During Napoleon's siege of Vienna in 1809, they left the town and were married in the cathedral in Pressburg (Bratislava) on 26th June, 1809. On returning to Vienna, they moved back into the centre of town (Unter den Tuchlauben), where they felt safer. Nissen retired from this post for health reasons in 1810 and became censor of the political newspapers in Copenhagen. In 1820 he was given a pension and in 1821 they moved to Salzburg to be near the spa at Gastein. Nissen was not ennobled by receiving the "Order of Dannebrog 3rd Class" in 1809, but Constanze referred to him and herself as "von Nissen". Nissen advised Constanze in all business matters from 1798 onwards, especially with the publishers Breitkopf & Härtel and André. The letters, often formulated by him and signed by Constanze, reveal an experienced, if cautious, businessman.

³ BD: The firm "Breitkopf" was founded in 1719. It later became Breitkopf & Härtel: On 1st November, 1795, Christoph Gottlob Breitkopf concluded a contract of partnership with Gottfried Christoph Härtel (1763-1827). This was followed in 1796 by a secret contract of sale in which the entire Breitkopf business was made over to Gottfried Christoph Härtel. The latter was also declared universal heir by Breitkopf shortly before his death in 1800. Christoph Gottlob Breitkopf (1750-1800). He composed and was an outstanding player of the glass harmonica. His father, Johann Gottlob Immanuel Breitkopf (1719-1794), made the acquaintance of Mozart, as well as of Haydn and Gluck, on a visit to Vienna in 1786. Constanze probably met Ch. G. Breitkopf and his wife during her stay in Leipzig (November, 1795). Leopold Mozart's correspondence with J. G. I. Breitkopf started in the year 1772 (cf. No. 0263). He repeatedly tried to interest the publisher in his son's music, but apparently without success during Mozart's lifetime.

⁴ BD: Date of the copy: 22nd October, 1798. Cf. also No. 1228/120-121.

⁵ BD: "Gone astray": According to a letter from Niemetschek to B & H (1799), a "rascally servant" was responsible for the loss.

⁶ BD: No. 1223.

⁷ BD: Probably more a negotiating manoeuvre than a genuine plan.

you kept your word regarding that certain Bandl Terzett.⁸ [25] If, then, you desire to make use of the still remaining treasures of my unforgettable husband, I expect from you such proposals, and accompanied by a guarantee, which are completely in keeping with my justified mistrust and the value of these works.

Although I will soon have a thematic catalogue⁹ of all known and not yet known works drawn up with the greatest accuracy, [30] this will remain in my hands only, as my own guideline, until the complete publication of all works. I remain with all respect your most obedient friend Const. Mozart.

P.S. Since you have incorporated the music business of Schmidt et Rau into your own,¹⁰ [35] and I waited until the Easter Fair, I would ask you to send me with the next reply an account of my still outstanding demand along with the payment.¹¹

⁸ BD: KV 441. Cf. No. 1216/3 ff.

⁹ BD: The idea for this catalogue was possibly prompted by the last letter from B & H (cf. No. 1223/77). For this work she called on Abbé Maximilian Stadler. Constanze did not let B & H have the catalogue, which later appeared in the appendix to Nissen's Mozart biography. Maximilian (his monastic name), baptised Johann Karl Dominik Stadler (1748-1833) entered the novitiate in Melk in 1766. He was ordained priest, became a prior and then a commendator abbot. He was consistory adviser in Linz. From 1796 he returned to Vienna and devoted himself entirely to his musical interests. He wrote that he heard Mozart playing the organ in Melk (in 1767: BD VI, p. 138). He must have known Mozart personally by 1781, when they went together to assess the results of Artaria's work with the *Sechs Sonaten für Klavier und Violine* (KV 376 (374d) etc.).

¹⁰ BD: The Leipzig publishing house Schmid & Rauh was incorporated into B & H at the beginning of 1798.

¹¹ BD: Probably referring to sales for 1796/97 of the keyboard reduction of *Idomeneo* (cf. No. 1214/19, 42), prepared by Johann Wenzel and sold for Constanze by Schmid & Rauh on commission. They also published the first edition of the Horn Quintet KV 407 (386c) in 1796.