

# NEWSLETTER of the American Handel Society

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## “TWO ROADS DIVERGED IN A WOOD”: THE RANDALL AND ARNOLD EDITIONS OF HANDEL’S SAUL

Patrick J. Rogers

Thanks to the fine work of recent Hallische Händel-Ausgabe editors and published research by Handel scholars Winton Dean and J. Merrill Knapp, several manuscripts have been identified as Samuel Arnold’s chief sources, or copy-texts, for specific works in his Collected Edition of Handel. They include (some may have been identified more recently): *Agrippina* (B-Lc, MS no. 1042932), *Alceste* (GB-Lcm, MS 251), *Il Pastor Fido* (the revival portion Arnold issued as “Masque,” GB-Lbl, R.M.19.d.11), *Resurrezione* (likely GB-Lfom, acc. no. 540), *Teseo* (GB-Lfom, acc. no. 447), *Water Music* (GB-Lsm, MS), *Wedding Anthem* (likely R.M.19.g.1).

It is noteworthy that none of these are sources for his editions of the English oratorios. Arnold owned manuscript copies of *Messiah* (GB-Ge, MS Euing R.d.20) and *Samson* (GB-Lfom, acc. no. 708), but neither seems to have been used as his principal source. He also owned scribal copies of the following oratorios, but, to the best of my knowledge, no such determination has yet been made: *Athalia*, *Deborah*, *Esther* (an imperfect copy), *Occasional Oratorio*, *Solomon* (probably R.M.18.f.5), and *Il trionfo del Tempo*.<sup>1</sup>

The Julian Marshall Collection of manuscripts at the British Library contains a “hybrid score” of *Jephtha*,<sup>2</sup> in which John Walsh’s printed versions of songs and instrumental movements are combined with professional scribal copies of all the choruses and recitatives. The resulting complete score may or may not have been owned by Arnold, but it was certainly used by him for performance or study. Although Marshall’s own inscription in the score claims that it was used by Arnold for his edition, this seems questionable given major and minor differences that exist between the two in format as well as musical content. Also, we have no way of knowing how long the hybrid score was available to Arnold: it does not appear in the 1803 sale of his library following his death, although a similar hybrid score of *Susanna* does. On balance, if he relied on it at all, it seems more likely that Arnold consulted the manuscript pages of the Marshall score, which were probably copied from R.M.18.f.7 (“Smith” Collection, S5, 1767), rather than Walsh’s portions, issued some forty years before Arnold produced his edition. Perhaps Arnold as editor approached the oratorios differently from his usual practice with other genres. In any case, the precise nature and degree of his dependence on printed sources in the English oratorios has received no detailed treatment.

Too often Arnold’s debt to previously issued printed editions of the oratorios has been assumed or exaggerated by scholars, usually in vague terms and often without any explanatory rationale. This is frequently found, sometimes mitigated or qualified, in Winton Dean’s ground-breaking study of the oratorios. There it is understandable, since so little comprehensive source-critical research on the oratorios

<sup>1</sup> We know that Arnold owned copies of these works because they are listed in *A Catalogue of the . . . Musical Library of the Late Dr. Arnold*, (London, 1803). A digital copy was provided courtesy of Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music.

<sup>2</sup> GB-Lbl Add. MS 31570; this source is not mentioned in the HHA edition. The printed items that were part of Marshall’s Handel collection are now in the National Library of Scotland.

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## REPORT FROM HALLE

Graydon Beeks



*Amadigi di Gaula, Halle Opera © Anna Kolata*

The annual Handel Festival in Halle, Germany, took place this year from May 24 to June 9 with the theme “Oh Là Là! Handel? – French Inspirations.” It included numerous concerts, opera performances, lectures, guided tours, and special exhibitions, and at the center was the two-day scholarly conference sponsored by the Georg-Friedrich-Händel Gesellschaft. There were, as always, too many events for one person to attend them all, and what follows is a review of those I was able to take in during the first week. By the time I left it was clear that this year’s manifestation was a great success, aided by the weather which was on the cool side but only occasionally accompanied by heavy rain.

The festival began on Friday evening with a splendid performance of *Amadigi di Gaula*—an opera with impeccable French antecedents first performed in 1715—by the Halle Opera, which featured excellent singing by a young cast and supportive playing by the Handel Festival Orchestra under the direction of Dani Espasa. Because *Amadigi* requires a cast of only four protagonists, one of whom is killed in the second act and only returns briefly in the third act as a ghost, the demands on the singers are considerable. In the title role, the countertenor Rafal Tomkiewicz was up to the task, excelling in the virtuosic arias required of the hero. As the evil sorceress Melissa, the soprano Franziska Krötenheerdt was in full command of both the dramatic and musical aspects of the role, lacking only an edge to her sound in some of Melissa’s harsher pronouncements. The young soprano Serafina Starke, who portrayed the heroine Oriana, sang superbly. She will in time learn how to project more nuances of character with both

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