

HAYDN: THE LIBRETTO OF "THE CREATION", NEW SOURCES AND A POSSIBLE LIBRETTIST

1. INTRODUCTION

The success of Haydn's "Creation" has always depended to a large extent upon the language in which it was being performed, and what the audience thought of the quality of the text. Within a few years of its first performances in both Vienna and London this was being attacked as far inferior to the quality of the music that Haydn had provided for it. Both the original German and English versions suffered this early criticism:

*It is little wonder that the words translated from the German almost literally into English, should be neither sense nor grammar, nor that they should make wicked work with Milton.*ⁱ [Anna Seward 1802]

*Would he [Haydn] had been directed by you about the words to The Creation! It is lamentable to see such divine music joined with such miserable broken English.*ⁱⁱ [George Thomson 1804]

*First, a few words about the text, if it is not already lost effort to write anything at all about that concoction [Machwerk]. If one had wanted to set a trap for a composer and reveal him in all his nakedness, I cannot imagine anything more successful.*ⁱⁱⁱ [F.L.A. Kunzen 1801]

The Creation is a remarkable work in that it is the first oratorio to have been composed and published in a bilingual format. The libretto that Haydn took back with him to Vienna was in English. He subsequently obtained a German translation from his friend and colleague Baron van Swieten; and when the work was eventually published, it contained both sets of text. Haydn wanted it to be performed both in Austria and in London, where Johann Peter Salomon had provided the initial enthusiasm for the work. Salomon was the enterprising impresario, concert promoter and violinist who had persuaded Haydn to visit England. During his two visits Haydn composed his last series of symphonies, the so-called London Symphonies, for Salomon's orchestra.

One might suppose that the English text contained in this first publication of 1800 would represent the ur-libretto in its original state. Salomon handed it to Haydn in 1795. It is quite conceivable that he was expecting Haydn to compose the work in English, and not in German. Haydn had demonstrated a certain ability with the English language, which he did not speak well, in his recent settings of *12 English Canzonettas* by the amateur poetess Anne Hunter. The libretto was said to have been written for Handel. Salomon could have been forgiven for thinking that Haydn would appreciate its quality and set the material as received.

In fact, the English version contained in the first edition of *The Creation* can hardly represent the ur-text that had been handed to Haydn. It displays many signs of having been put together hurriedly by inexpert English speakers, with lines such as

“ ... *Their flaming looks express, what feels the grateful heart*”

and

“... *With thee is life incessant bliss, thine it whole shall be*”.

The original text was derived from the Book of Genesis in the King James Bible, and Milton's 'Paradise Lost'. The biblical passages are quoted word for word, but Milton's original voice is harder to detect. There are passages in Part 2, particularly Raphael's Aria (no. 22), where some phrases are quoted virtually as they appear in the source-book. But in many other places the true Miltonic voice has been overwhelmed by a two-way process of translation into, and out of, German.

In England the oratorio has suffered as a result of this less-than-ideal text. Many hands have had a go at turning the awkward passages into a text that can be sung convincingly in English-speaking parts of the world. Editors with a better understanding of Milton's style were not slow to begin their improvements. Muzio Clementi's 1801 vocal score already addressed some of the problems of the 1800 score, and was further improved in 1827. The awkward Swieten line “*By loads of fruits th'expanded boughs are pressed*” regained more of its original Miltonic text in an 1832 edition prepared by Haydn's pupil Sigismond Neukomm when it became “*With copious fruit th'expanded boughs are hung*”. Vincent Novello incorporated this and many other of Neukomm's improvements into his famous 1847 edition. It was this edition (revised 1888) which did most to set in stone a version of the text that was thought to be as good as it could get. Novello took over many other editors' changes and made improvements of his own. But he couldn't eliminate the pervasive Germanic word-order; the underlay of the text in the choruses was far from ideal; and the solos were couched in a language that, while appearing both naive and unsatisfactory to some, was considered to be acceptably quaint by others. This is the version in which the work came to be known and loved throughout the English-speaking world.

But the true English libretto failed to emerge from beneath the German syntax. Haydn obviously had the German text in front of him as he worked, and its word-order coloured his whole musical setting. Every new English edition has been reluctant to deal with this problem. Faced with such intractability, Vincent Novello and the 19th century English editors merely tidied up various glaring errors in the arias, such as the one mentioned above, and left the bigger problem of the choruses alone. Thus English choirs have been content to sing, for two hundred years,

“*The wonder of his works declares the firmament*”

“*The marv'lous work beholds amazed the glorious hierarchy of heav'n*”

“*Thy power adore the Heaven and Earth*”

without questioning their syntax or finding any ways to improve their meaning for either performers or audience.

Haydn was anxious that the 1800 publication should represent his work in as complete and accurate a way as possible. In an uncharacteristic move he supervised the entire publication process himself. In the announcement for the forthcoming, self-published, edition he stated:

The work is to appear... in full score, so that on the one hand, the public may have the work in its entirety, and so that the connoisseur may see it in toto and thus better judge it; while on the other, it will be easier to prepare the parts, should one wish to perform it anywhere.^{iv}

Nicholas Temperley, in his Cambridge Music Handbook on the work^v, puts forward the view that Haydn took great pains to ensure that the printed score “*accurately reflected his considered decisions on all details of his music and text*”. While this may well be true of the musical content, and even the German text, it is obvious that he left certain matters regarding the English text - for example the way that it fitted whenever musical phrases were repeated - to Swieten. For, as Temperley himself says in his introduction to the Peters Edition, “... *there are many places where the English text as underlaid by Swieten simply does not fit the music, or produces intolerable distortions of sense or stress; there are many more where he did not deal with the problem at all... He treated ‘eagle’ and ‘cattle’ as one syllable, ‘glides’, as two, and ‘stately’ as three*”.^{vi} Several editors have posited the theory that this represents the libretto that Haydn was originally given.^{vii} By so doing they are accepting that one of Handel’s librettists could write this sort of “*miserable broken English*” (in George Thomson’s words):

“*Utter thanks, ye all [sic] his works!*”

“*See flashing through the wet / In thronged swarms the fry / On thousand ways around.*”

Present-day scholars have grown so accustomed to the text that Haydn and Swieten sent back to England in the full-score that they have abandoned the accumulated improvements of the 19th century editors, and now expect English choirs to perform lyrics which were found unsatisfactory two hundred years ago:

“It is our belief that van Swieten’s underlay of the English text, as approved by the composer, is the only acceptable version.”^{viii} [A. Peter Brown & Julie Schnepel]

“The text presented here is that of the first edition... I have tried to provide solutions while still showing the Haydn and Swieten text...”^{ix} [Michael Pilkington]

But choirs are not so easily fobbed off. They are not looking for editions which create problems for them to solve: they require ‘performing’ editions that solve the problems for them. The 19th century editors had realised this. Some later English editions have dealt with the problem by rejecting the Swieten text entirely and replacing it with new poetic versions. Henry S. Drinker and Myfanwy Roberts are two who have rubbed the slate clean and started again from scratch.^x

Haydn’s great oratorio never entirely lost its appeal for choirs, even when his symphonies fell from favour in the early part of the 20th century. But it was evident that the text was once more becoming a significant issue when the work began to be performed more and more frequently in German in the post-war years. This was the period that saw a re-

evaluation of all pre-nineteenth century music. Bach and Handel were ‘rediscovered’, and the baroque revival put lesser-known composers from Monteverdi onwards back on the musical map. Haydn had his own revival, leading to a situation where choirs found his Masses as rewarding to perform as those of Mozart. The leading baroque performers were not slow to prepare ‘period’ performances and recordings of *The Creation*. But in nearly every case they chose to perform it in German, considering that to be the more ‘original’ version. The libretto written for Handel sometime in the 1740s had become a ghostly, shadowy presence: merely an unattainable and unrecoverable source.

And so the time had come, I felt, to subject the libretto of *The Creation* to a thorough investigation: to compare the existing original German and English texts of the 1800 full-score with the known sources; and to try and find further sources for those portions which, for lack of other evidence, have been attributed either to the ur-librettist or to Gottfried van Swieten himself.^{xi} If this could possibly lead to an identification of the original English librettist then, I felt, this would be of great service to the ongoing state of Haydn research, which has been silent on the subject for many years now. The last significant work to be done on the subject was Edward Olleson’s ‘The origin and Libretto of Haydn’s *Creation*’^{xii} and Nicholas Temperley’s ‘New Light on the Libretto of *The Creation*’.^{xiii}

2. ORIGINS OF THE LIBRETTO

Haydn visited England twice at Salomon’s invitation, in 1791-2 and 1794-5. He was immensely impressed by the Handel oratorios that he heard at the Handel Festival in the summer of 1791. One of his early biographers, Giuseppe Carpani, wrote:

“He confessed that when he heard the music of Hendl [sic] in London, he was struck as if he had been put back to the beginning of his studies and had known nothing up to that moment. He meditated on every note and drew from those most learned scores the essence of true musical grandeur...”^{xiv} [Le Haydine]

He heard *Israel in Egypt*, *Messiah*, and excerpts from *Esther*, *Saul*, *Judas Maccabaeus* and *Deborah*, as well as *Zadok the Priest*. Salomon endeavoured to secure a third visit from Haydn as he was about to leave for Vienna in the summer of 1795, and must have detected in the symphonic composer a desire to write a great oratorio in the Handelian manner. How he obtained the libretto is not clear. There are various stories, more or less agreeing with one another, in which one thing stands out: the libretto was an old one and had been prepared for Handel himself, but never used. Haydn recalled the name of ‘Lidley’ having been mentioned in connection with its authorship. This was probably a red herring: scholars are agreed that it is probably a case of Haydn misremembering the name ‘Linley’.^{xv} Thomas Linley, senior, (1733 – 93) had been in charge of the oratorio series at Drury Lane Theatre during Haydn’s visits. He was a composer, but not a librettist. Robbins Landon, Olleson and other Haydn scholars see this connection between Linley and the London oratorios as one possible route by which the libretto reached Salomon, and subsequently Haydn.^{xvi}

Haydn did not initially commit himself to using the libretto. Baron Gottfried van Swieten, writing in the “Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung” at the end of December 1798, explained some of the circumstances:

“At first sight the material seemed to him indeed well chosen, and well suited to musical effects, but he nevertheless did not accept the proposal immediately; he was just on the point of leaving for Vienna, and he reserved the right to announce his decision from there, where he wanted to take a look at the poem. He then showed it to me...”^{xvii}

Back in Vienna he passed it to Swieten, who offered to translate it into German. Swieten (1733 - 1803), besides being one of the city’s most important patrons of music^{xviii} and an admirer of both Handelian oratorio and Haydn’s music, had recently collaborated with him on the much-admired text for his previous oratorio, the “*Seven Last Words*” and on the German translation of his ‘madrigal’ “*The Storm*”. It is clear that, although Swieten endeavoured to keep the two texts similar in metre, Haydn composed to the German text and made rhythmic modifications to accommodate the English text at a later stage. It is hard to make a satisfactory case for any of the musical numbers having been composed initially to the English text, even in those parts - the Biblical quotations from Genesis - which have reached us unaltered^{xix}. In every case the German flows better, as is to be expected from a German-speaker whose English was admittedly poor.

Swieten’s letter to the “*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*” reveals the process by which he shaped and developed the ur-libretto (as I shall now call it) for Haydn. He also contradicts an earlier letter that had suggested that the original author was Dryden.

*“... My part in the work, which was originally in English, was certainly rather more than mere translation; but it was far from being such that I could regard it as my own. Neither is it by Dryden ... but by an unnamed author who had compiled it largely from Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and had intended it for Handel. What prevented the great man from making use of it is unknown; but when Haydn was in London it was looked out, and handed over to the latter with the request that he should set it to music”.*^{xx}

The Dryden connection must have been made by someone who had read his translations of Ovid’s “*Metamorphoses*” [1700] and had thought that lines like these sounded remarkably similar - as indeed they do - to the *Creation* text:

DRYDEN

*New herds of beasts he sends, the plains to share:
New colonies of birds, to people air:
And to their oozy beds, the finny fish repair.
A creature of a more exalted kind
Was wanting yet, and then was Man design’d:
Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
For empire form’d and fit to rule the rest...*

[Book the first, ll. 94 - 100]^{xxi}

UR-LIBRETTO

*The room of air with fowl is filled;
The water swell’d by shoals of fish;
By heavy beasts the ground is trod.
But all the work was not complete.
There wanted yet that wondrous being...
To Heaven erect and tall he stands
A man, the lord and king of Nature all...*

[Nos. 22 & 24, excerpts]

3. THE ORIGINAL LIBRETTIST

Edward Olleson discusses possible Handelian librettists who could have been responsible for the ur-libretto^{xxii}. But, having mentioned a couple, he retreats from further speculation by saying “*trying to identify the real author of Haydn’s model comes dangerously near to being pure guess-work*”.^{xxiii} However, the two that he discusses are

very well chosen. Both Charles Jennens and Newburgh Hamilton prepared libretti based on Milton's poems. Olleson notes that

"Jennens's text of 'L'Allegro ed il Penseroso' is remarkable for its faithfulness to the original poem, retaining as it does some 225 of Milton's 328 lines. This method of compiling a libretto is clearly different from that used by the author of the English model for the Creation".^{xxiv}

Olleson also draws attention to the fact that both Jennens' 'Messiah' and 'Israel in Egypt' libretti use the Psalms in a similar manner to the librettist of 'The Creation' text; but he ignores the libretti for 'Saul' and 'Belshazzar'. He ultimately dismisses Jennens as a contender in favour of Newburgh Hamilton (fl. 1712 – 1759) whose libretto for 'Samson' (based on Milton's *Samson Agonistes*) is, in his opinion, the Handel oratorio closest in spirit to "*The Creation*". 'Samson' was first performed in 1743, and was the first of a series of libretti that Hamilton wrote for Handel, including *Semele* (1744), *The Occasional Oratorio* (1746), *Susannah* and *Solomon* (both 1749). Hamilton was a close friend of Handel, and even benefitted from his will. As Handel touchingly put it, he left him a legacy of £100 in gratitude for "... having assisted me in adjusting words for some of my compositions".^{xxv}

The one similarity between the two libretti of which there is no doubt is the subject matter. Both are based on Milton. *Samson* incorporates lines from other Milton poems, including the *Psalms*, various *Sonnets* and *At a Solemn Music*, into its reworking of the Milton drama. So I searched the libretto of *Samson* for any similarities with "*The Creation*", thinking that there would be some moments in the text when the vocabulary or style would betray a common author. Although Hamilton clearly wrote certain arias himself, without deriving them from lines in Milton's drama, I did not find any key words in them that recurred in a similar way in the 'Creation' libretto. In addition, as Temperley points out, the prosody of the two works is very different: "...while *Samson* uses regular blank-verse pentameters for recitative and rhyming strophic verse for arias, *The Creation* has prose for most recitatives and free unrhymed verse for arias and the remaining recitatives".^{xxvi}

And so I turned to the librettist that had been dismissed by Olleson. Charles Jennens (1700 - 1773) had a known interest in Milton and had provided Handel with text in prose, blank verse and rhyming couplets, particularly in the libretti for 'Saul' and 'Belshazzar' which Olleson had not considered. We now know from Donald Burrows' and Rosemary Dunhill's work on the Harris family papers^{xxvii} that Jennens' role in the preparation of the *L'Allegro ed il Penseroso* libretto was largely one of improving the work of James Harris (senior). Jennens was first approached by Harris in a letter of 6th January 1740.^{xxviii} He subsequently revised the Harris libretto (which is printed by Burrows & Dunhill in its original state^{xxix}) and encouraged Handel to make use of it. The method of compiling a libretto that Olleson describes as "*clearly different from that used by the author of the English model for the Creation*"^{xxx} now turns out to be largely the work of someone else. For Handel's purposes a third part was required for this oratorio. Here then was an opportunity to hear the voice of Charles Jennens the poet, as it was he who was responsible for the entirely original third part, *Il Moderato*.

While Handel was using the talents of Hamilton and Jennens alternately, between 1737 and 1745, it is clear that a rivalry began to appear between the two librettists. Jennens developed and maintained a low opinion of Hamilton, whom he probably regarded as his social inferior, being a mere tutor to the young Lord Wentworth at this period. When Handel showed a preference for performing “Samson” in his London season instead of “Messiah” he castigated him to his friend Holdsworth as a heathen...

... yet a sensible heathen would not have preferred the nonsense foisted by one Hamilton into Milton's Samson Agonistes. [Letter to Edward Holdsworth 21st February 1743] ^{xxx}

In an ill-tempered review of the text for Hamilton's “Occasional Oratorio” it is intriguing to read the imagery that Jennens chose:

‘Tis an inconceivable jumble of Milton and Spencer, a Chaos extracted from order by the most absurd of all blockheads, who like the Devil takes delight in defacing the Beauties of Creation. [Letter to Edward Holdsworth 3rd February 1746]

Still venting his spleen on Hamilton and the “Occasional Oratorio” a month later, Jennens writes:

You are mistaken as to the Occasional Oratorio, which is most of it transcrib'd from Milton and Spencer, but chiefly from Milton, who in his version of some of the Psalms wrote so like Sternhold and Hopkins that there is not a pin to choose betwixt 'em. But there are people who fancy everything excellent which has Milton's name to it... [Letter to Edward Holdsworth 3rd March 1746]

It may seem a fanciful idea, but can one just detect in the lines of these letters, with their very relevant references (underlined), an indignant librettist whose latest collection of ‘sacred words’ had just been rejected by Handel; who had been supplanted by someone who used a similar construction method as himself (making use of Milton's major and minor poems, choosing lines from other poets as well as the Psalms) as he had done in his librettos; and whose nose, therefore, was seriously out of joint?

The libretti that Jennens provided for Handel divide into two sorts: original works, and collections of verses culled from the bible. In the first category there are the two full-length works in which he had provided the verse: *Saul* (1739) and *Belshazzar* (1745), and the reworking of Milton's *L'Allegro ed il Penseroso* with their Jennens appendage *Il Moderato* (1740). In the second category are the two collections of biblical verses that provided Handel with the libretti for his non-dramatic oratorios *Israel in Egypt* (1739) and *Messiah* (1741).

In these last two Jennens revealed himself as someone with a great interest in large-scale biblical topics that needed to be rigorously developed and shaped. I consulted them closely. I was intrigued to find that the shape of the *Creation* libretto had much in common with *Messiah*. As Donald Burrows explains in his handbook on *Messiah* ^{xxxii}, the oratorio was conceived as a group of scenes comprising “recitative - aria – chorus” sequences. Nicholas Temperley, writing of *The Creation*, says “strength of design was the best feature of the original English libretto” ^{xxxiii}, and describes its structure as being made up of similar “recitative - aria – chorus” sequences as *Messiah* in Table 2 of his article ‘New Light on the Libretto of The Creation’. ^{xxxiv}

Could Jennens have been applying a similar rigorous shape to a work more loosely strung together out of the Bible and ‘Paradise Lost’? He certainly knew his bible. Both *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt* show a confidence in handling and manipulating biblical texts. Both works depend on the unfolding of a dominant and progressive story that can be broken into individual sections. The Creation story falls into a similar category, and could have appealed to the same logical, organising, kind of mind.

4. CHARLES JENNENS AS LIBRETTIST

I looked for similarities between Jennens’ work and the *Creation* libretto, having failed to find anything conclusive in the work of Newburgh Hamilton, apart from a similar ability to ‘precis’ and compress Milton’s iambic pentameters into octosyllabics. The *Creation* is very dependent on the Book of Psalms as a source. Nearly every chorus is based on words taken from the Psalms. Sometimes there is no more than a phrase or two cleverly selected to sum up the prevailing mood, such as ‘*The Lord is great and great his might*’; sometimes longer passages derived from several verses are used, as in ‘*The Heavens are telling*’. Psalms 19 & 104 are the ones most frequently chosen, and they also contribute to the text of arias and recitatives (nos. 12 and 25a for example). As Olleson had noted ^{xxxv}, Jennens used Psalm texts in this way. Hamilton used them sparingly. In *Samson* there is one aria (“Why does the God of Israel sleep?”) and one chorus (“Then shall they know”) which are formed out of Milton’s translation of the Psalms, principally Psalm LXXXIII; but he does not quote directly from the BCP or the King James Bible as Jennens does. This is the text, derived from Milton’s Psalm LXXXIII, that most closely resembles the Psalms that Jennens was inserting into ‘Saul’ and ‘Belshazzar’ as choruses:

Then shall they know, that He whose name

*Jehovah is alone, / O’er all the earth but One,
Was ever the Most High, and still the same.* ^{xxxvi} [No. 25 Chorus of Israelites]

Jennens’ *Messiah* libretto is full of choruses based on Psalms: e.g. no. 26 *He trusted in God*; no. 31 *Lift up your heads*; and no. 35 *The Lord gave the word*. Recitatives and Arias that are based on psalm-texts abound. Nearly the whole of Part 2, in which these choruses are found, is one long setting of the Psalter. Psalms also provide the texts for *All they that see him, Thy rebuke, But thou didst not leave, Thou art gone up on high, Why do the nations, He that dwelleth in heaven and Thou shalt break them*.

Jennens’ libretto for the oratorio *Saul* opens with a chorus freely based upon Psalm 8 :

*How excellent thy name, O Lord,
In all the world is known!
Above all heavens, O King adored,
How hast thou set thy glorious throne!* ^{xxxvii}

Jennens’ last libretto for Handel was *Belshazzar*. In this, too, there are obvious echoes of the Psalms, viz:

A *Thou God most high, and thou alone
Unchanged for ever dost remain:
Through boundless space extends thy throne,*

Through all eternity thy reign. [Air no. 3]

B *So shall this hand thy altars raise,
This tongue for ever sing thy praise.* [Air no. 16]

C *Sing, O ye Heavens, for the Lord hath done it!
Earth, from thy centre, shout!
Break forth, ye mountains, into songs of joy,
O forest, and each tree therein, for the Lord hath done it!* [Chorus no. 22]

D *I will magnify thee, O God my king!
And I will praise thy name for ever and ever.
My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord,
And let all flesh give thanks
Unto his holy name for ever and ever.* [Soli and Chorus no. 64]

Could the ur-libretto of *The Creation* have contained choruses with a similar versification? The answer must be an unequivocal yes. Despite being hidden under a defacing German word-order, and despite employing the language of 18th century England, with words like ‘celebrate’, ‘utter’ (in the sense of ‘speak’) and ‘resound’, which do not occur in the King James Bible or the Book of Common Prayer, we still find a remarkable affinity. The following extracts show similarities between the style of Jennens and the unknown ur-librettist:

These lines from choruses in the ur-libretto share many of the features of examples A, B, C & D, as well as with the opening chorus of *Saul*:

- *Glory to his name for ever! / He sole on high exalted reigns.*
- *In shout and joy your voices raise! / In triumph sing the mighty Lord.*
- *Sing the Lord, ye voices all. / Utter thanks, all ye his works.
Celebrate his power and glory. / Let his name resound on high.*
- *For ever blessed be his pow’r, / His name be ever magnified.
Resound the praise of God our Lord. / Great is his name, and great his might.*

Having established that both Jennens and the ur-librettist used their psalm-quotations in the same way, it would be instructive to see if there are any other areas of similarity. Perhaps there is evidence of a similar vocabulary or phraseology; or an interest in the same source material?

In fact, there is a Recitativo in *Saul* that reads like a sketch for the *Creation* libretto, despite being written in verse. Appearing in an anomalous position in that work, and entrusted to a minor character (the High Priest) it is often cut in performance. Its relevance to the ur-libretto has, therefore, not received the attention it merits. However, as will be shown, it is couched in language that harks back to many of Milton’s lines in *Paradise Lost*.

from SAUL (1739): no. 30 *Accompagnato*

1. *By thee this universal frame
From its Almighty Maker's hand
In primitive perfection came,
By thee produced, in thee contained:*
5. *No sooner did th'eternal word dispense
Thy vast mysterious influence,
Than chaos his old discord ceased.
Nature began, of labour eased,
Her latent beauties to disclose.*
10. *A fair harmonious world arose;
And though, by diabolic guile,
Disorder lord it for a while,
The time will come,
When nature shall her pristine form regain*
15. *And harmony for ever reign.*

By comparing this verse firstly with Milton, and then with the *Creation* libretto, it will be possible to see how closely the language and ideas are related to each other in all three. We will proceed line by line.

Lines 1 - 4 are related to the opening of Duet and Chorus no. 27 in *The Creation*, beginning as it does:

*By thee, with bliss, O bounteous Lord, / The Heaven and Earth are filled.
This world, so great, so wonderful, / Thy mighty hand has framed.*

Milton had written:

*These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair: thyself how wondrous then!* [P.L. Book V lines 153-5]

The underlined phrase this universal frame (occurring in the first line of the *Accompagnato* no. 30 in 'Saul') proves that Jennens was quoting Milton's 'Paradise Lost' in his libretti as early as 1739.

Lines 5 - 6 introduce the concept of 'the word', which is so integral to the idea of God's creation in both Testaments, appearing in many places in the Old Testament as well as, famously, at the opening of St. John's Gospel in the New Testament. Milton uses the expression throughout 'Paradise Lost' in a very similar way to its usage here.

*Heaven opened wide to let forth
The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
And Spirit coming to create new worlds.* [P. L. Book VII lines 205-9]

*"Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou Deep, peace"
Said the omnific Word.* [P. L. Book VII lines 216-7]

There are also two appearances of the phrase in the *Creation* libretto:

“...In all the lands resounds the Word ...” and “... the earth obeyed the Word and teemed creatures numberless...”

Line 7 reminds us particularly of Aria no. 2 in *The Creation*:

“... *Disorder yields to order fair the place*”

But it is also echoed in Jennens’ scathing criticism (in his letter of 3rd February 1746) of Newburgh Hamilton’s text for the “Occasional Oratorio” quoted earlier: “*a Chaos extracted from order*”.

Lines 8 and 9 have something of the flavour of the Psalms, particularly the verses from Psalm 104 used in no. 25a of the *Creation*:

“...and life with vigour fresh returns. Revived earth unfolds new force and new delights.”

Line 10, of course, is similar to the famous line for the chorus in Aria no. 2 of the *Creation*, which itself is a direct quote from *Paradise Lost* (appearing there in various versions 4 times):

“... *A new created world springs up at God’s command...*”

In the closing lines, 11 - 15, the one particular Miltonic conceit (apart from the veiled reference to Satan’s presence at “*by diabolic guile*”) is the idea that harmony reigned on earth before the Fall of Man. This is reiterated many times in *Paradise Lost*. Just one will suffice for the present purpose:

... the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tun’d
Angelic harmonies. The Earth, the Air
Resounded (thou remember’st, for thou heard’st),
The Heavens and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their stations listening stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant. [P. L. Book VII lines 558-564]

The idea is also present in other poems by Milton, and receives one of its best expositions in the *Hymn: On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity*:

... Such music (as ‘tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the Sons of Morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well balanced World on hinges hung,
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channels keep. [Verse XII]

The relation of these lines to the thematic content of *The Creation* is self-evident.

If the Recitativo in *Saul* casts such long shadows over the *Creation* libretto, picking up on so many of its themes and imagery, it will be instructive to find if there are other similarities of vocabulary and imagery in the rest of Jennens’ oeuvre.

In *Belshazzar* there occurs the following image:

*No more his Maker's image found:
But, self-degraded to a swine,
He fixes grov'ling on the ground
His portion of the breath divine.* [Air no. 14]

Note the highlighted text. It seems extraordinary for the librettist to be endowing Belshazzar, who worships the heathen god 'Sesach', with Judeo-Christian ideas and imagery unless he was a writer who could also have written such lines as these for Adam in the Garden of Eden:

*And in his eyes with brightness shines the soul,
The breath and image of his God.*

Other echoes (or pre-echoes) of *The Creation* in the *Belshazzar* libretto are:

- | | | |
|-------|---|---|
| no. 3 | Thy will is fate | (cf. Thy will is law to me) |
| no. 4 | Wisdom and goodness in his front serene
Conspicuous sit enthroned | (cf. The large and arched front sublime
Of wisdom deep declares the seat) |

N.B. Milton's original text is: "... His fair large **front** and eye **sublime**..." ^{xxxviii} thus proving it to be the original source for both versions.

- | | | |
|-------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| no. 4 | But you have done your duty, I mine | (cf. Our duty we have now performed) |
| no. 4 | God, only wise and just, ordains. | (cf. So God our Lord ordains) |

In Jennens' libretto for *Saul*, in addition to the long section already discussed, there are the following similarities with *The Creation* libretto:

- | | | |
|--------|---|--|
| no. 14 | Go on, illustrious pair | (cf. Behold the blissful pair) |
| no. 56 | Thy words and actions all declare
The wisdom by thy God inspired | (cf. The large and arched front sublime
Of wisdom deep declares the seat) |
| no. 80 | Descend refreshing rains or kindly dew | (cf. Now from the floods in steam ascend
reviving showers of rain) |

Il Moderato, also being the work of Jennens, was closely scrutinised to see if it could yield any similarities of vocabulary or expression. Within its modest length of just eight musical numbers occurred the significant use of several words common to both libretti, yet unusual enough to raise the question of a common authorship:

- | | | |
|--------|--|---|
| no. 41 | With her let rosy health appear | (cf. In rosy mantle appears.....) |
| no. 45 | The fumes that did the mind involve | (cf. Here vent their fumes the fragrant herbs) |
| no. 40 | Easy, cheerful , and sedate | (cf. the cheerful host of birds,
.... cheerful , roaring, stands the tawny lion) |

N.B. Although 'cheerful' is found twice in the *Creation* libretto it is not found in Milton. However, the 18th century poet who uses the word most frequently in the sense that it is

found in the *Creation* is James Thomson (1700 -1748). It is found regularly (no less than 14 times) in his famous poem *The Seasons*, where its meaning is something akin to ‘balanced’ or ‘normal’; i.e. neither unduly happy nor unduly sad – which is the mood that Jennens was describing in *Il Moderato*.

[In *Winter* he even has the line “...Here by dull fires and with unjoyous cheer / They waste the tedious gloom”.^{xxxix}]

I hope that the above, although by no means a comprehensive list of the similarities, has gone some way to demonstrate that the structure, vocabulary and phraseology of *The Creation* libretto all bear remarkable affinities with Jennens’ five libretti for Handel.

After 1745 their partnership ceased, although their friendship survived. Jennens commissioned the ‘Gopsall’ portrait of Handel from Thomas Hudson, and we learn of Handel dining with Jennens as late as 29th May 1756 from the letters of George Harris^{xi}. Handel left Jennens two paintings by Balthasar Denner in his will. But the relationship had often been a rocky one. Jennens was not an easy man to get on with. His “Vindication” of his edition of Shakespeare’s “King Lear” [1772] reveals that he possessed a very sharp tongue as well as an arrogant pride in his literary accomplishments^{xli}. Even the funeral oration given by Rev. Kelly on January 2nd 1774 shows that his chaplain felt it necessary to use the occasion to explain away Jennens’ legendary bad temper:

“...If any part of his conduct could be deemed exceptionable, it was in the effects which naturally flow from an impetuosity of Temper, by which I would be understood to mean some hasty expressions which escaped him. But, He who is not extreme to mark whatever is done amiss, will be graciously pleased to cast a veil over those imperfections, which in him...seemed to proceed from a delicate texture of the nervous system, too liable to irritation... But it is well known that he heartily bewailed this his infirmity, and was frequently angry with himself on this account.”^{xlii}

It is understandable that Handel would have had difficulty coping with such an overpowering personality, even if the wealthy Jennens (unlike his other collaborators) let him have his libretti free and gratis. The correspondence between Jennens and his friend Edward Holdsworth is well known for revealing all the worst points in Jennens’ character, including a remarkable inability to appreciate Handel’s setting of the Messiah text:

“... ‘Tis still in his power by retouching the weak parts to make it fit for a public performance; and I have said a great deal to him on the subject: but he is so lazy and obstinate, that I much doubt the effect”.^{xliii}

Elsewhere he writes: *“I don’t yet despair of making him retouch the Messiah, - at least he shall suffer for his negligence”.*^{xliiv} *“His Messiah has disappointed me, being set in great haste”.*^{xlv}

Perhaps Jennens made one criticism too many for the good of their relationship. At any rate, he wrote something very revealing further on in the same letter:

“I shall put no more Sacred Words into his hands, to be thus abused”.

Is it too fanciful to see, in this statement, the possibility that another set of "Sacred Words" had indeed been prepared? Could that have been the ur-libretto for *The Creation*, whose theme and imagery also informed Jennens criticism of Hamilton's text for the "Occasional Oratorio" in 1746?

Just when Jennens was most likely to have presented Handel with such a new text - round about the time of their collaboration on *Belshazzar* in 1744-5 - the mood of the public was not right for such a new non-dramatic work. Handel had a good feel for the prevailing mood, and at this moment it was full of the threat of Jacobite invasion. He even contributed a patriotic song for use on the London stage^{xlvi}. He may also have found it hard to deal with a librettist who persisted in giving him more text than he needed. During the composition process of *Belshazzar* he tried in vain to persuade Jennens to moderate the size of the libretto, writing to him eventually, as courteously as he could:

"I retrench'd already a great deal of the musick that I might preserve the Poetry as much as I could, yet still it may be shorten'd"^{xlvi}.

For his next oratorios he chose the uplifting and patriotic stories of Judas Maccabaeus, Alexander Balus and Joshua, and moved on to a new partnership with the more obliging poet Thomas Morell.

If there were to be any mention of Jennens working on 'Paradise Lost' or the ur-Creation libretto at this time, one might expect to find it in the correspondence of the Harris / Jennens circle. I had wondered whether it could have been the libretto mentioned in correspondence as early as 1735. But the reference in Handel's reply to Jennens of July 28th is usually thought to refer to the text of 'Israel in Egypt', which was eventually set to music three years later:

"I received your very agreeable letter with the enclosed Oratorio. I am just going to Tunbridge, yet what I could read of it in haste gave me a great deal of satisfaction. I shall have more leisure time there to read it with all the attention it deserves..."^{xlvi}

So I was delighted to find the following lines in a letter of 14th September 1744 from the 4th Earl of Shaftesbury to James Harris:

"Pray did you settle the oratorio of Paradise Lost &c whilst at Packington? Has Mr Jennens finished his, and sent it to Handel yet?"^{xlvi}

Handel's letters to Jennens show that he received Act 1 of *Belshazzar* by July 19th, Act 2 by August 21st and Act 3 by October 2nd. He composed the music between 23rd August and 23rd October. Whilst it is clear from the date that Jennens would have been putting the finishing touches to Act 3 of his libretto at the time of Shaftesbury's letter, it is still intriguing to see the reference to 'Paradise Lost'. Shaftesbury obviously knew that it was going to be discussed during Jennens' and Harris' joint holiday on Lord Guernsey's estate at Great Packington. Donald Burrows interprets Shaftesbury's comments as implying that he already knew of their plan to base a new oratorio text on 'Paradise Lost', much in the manner that they prepared the 'L'Allegro ed il Penseroso' from another Milton text¹. Two weeks after this letter Jennens writes to Edward Holdsworth about the current state of his relationship with Handel:

"I have been prevailed with once more to expose myself to the Criticks, to oblige the Man who made me but a scurvy return for former obligations; the truth is, I had a farther view in it; but if he does not mend his manners I am resolv'd to have no more to do with him".^{li}

The beginning of this extract deals with the *Belshazzar* libretto. But what can Jennens' "farther view" be? Is it too far-fetched to interpret it as a veiled reference to the new libretto which Harris and he were preparing? A letter also exists from Jennens to James Harris dated November 30th, a couple of months later, in which it appears that Harris may not have progressed very far with his part of the labour:

"I am sorry to hear (for I have heard) that you are no further advanced in your Miltonics. For shame, don't be so lazy. For want of them we might have had another Semele: but it happens, (luckily, I hope,) that Mr Broughton of the Temple has given Handel a 'Hercules'."^{lii}

The implication of this is that Jennens was expecting the Milton libretto to be accepted by Handel – who now had to look elsewhere for a librettist^{liii}. The worry was that he might have had to accept something on a secular theme. Jennens' aversion to the secular oratorio 'Semele' is evident from this letter (which goes on to be very critical of it) and from the marginalia to his copy of Mainwaring's "Life of Handel" where he describes it as "No Oratorio, but a bawdy Opera".^{liv} If Harris failed to contribute his share of the new 'sacred' work it seems as though Jennens may have had to proceed single-handedly. It certainly looks as though the question of authorship and date of the ur-libretto can now be established with some certainty; although it will be impossible to tell how much input Harris had, unless a manuscript were to emerge – as happened when the original version of 'L'Allegro ed il Penseroso' resurfaced in the Harris family papers.

One further letter may contain the last reference we can currently attribute to the ur-libretto. It has never been satisfactorily accounted for by Handel scholars. Writing to Edward Holdsworth on 30th August 1745 Jennens says:

"In your last letter but one you talked something of reading a foolish hasty performance of mine, but 'tis not fit for your perusal, therefore think no more of it..."

This is usually explained as referring to *Belshazzar*; but Jennens had already discussed that work with Holdsworth in extant letters of September 26th 1744 and February 21st 1745. It must therefore refer to another piece of work (sadly the intervening Holdsworth letter is missing). The logical assumption must be that this is the 'Miltonics' of late 1744 / early 1745. If Jennens felt so equivocal about it at this stage – only eleven months after the initial discussions at Packington – it might be that Handel had already rejected it. Intriguingly the letter goes on, in the very next line, to talk of the libretto of which he was most proud – and of which he had talked frequently to Holdsworth:

"...but I shall show you a collection I gave Handel, call'd Messiah, which I value highly, and he has made a fine entertainment of it..."

Perhaps this was written as a way of buttressing his self-esteem in the light of the critical comments contained in Holdsworth's missing letter.

[N.B. From several references by Johann Salomon to the work as 'The Creation of the World' when he premiered it in 1800^{lv}, it is possible that this was the original title of the ur-libretto.]

5. MILTON'S "PARADISE LOST" SET TO MUSIC

Jennens and Harris were not alone in thinking that 'Paradise Lost' could provide Handel with his next libretto. Burrows and Dunhill [op. cit.] also quote a letter from John Upton to James Harris in which the topic is once more proposed by yet another would-be librettist:

"When last I came from Handel's oratorio I was so charmed, that to work I went, & from Milton's Paradise Lost, drew out a plan of a new oratorio: I finished the first two acts, and wrote them out: & sent Handel an account of what I had prepared for him. But he has given me as yet no answer... I have religiously observed Milton's words, & though I have here and there varied the measure, yet I have strictly kept close to his words: the second act ends with a chorus of guardian angels, immediately after the hymn." ^{lvi}

This looks like being the second attempt in the 1740s to get Handel to write an oratorio on 'Paradise Lost'. But there is, in fact, a third – and it was the first to come to light. Robbins Landon,^{lvii} Temperley,^{lviii} Myers,^{lix} and others have drawn attention to some remarks of Handel's friend Mary Delany in a letter of 10 March 1744 to her sister Mrs Dewes that she had been amusing herself writing "*a drama for an oratorio out of Milton's 'Paradise Lost', to give Mr Handel to compose to*". For some scholars in the first half of the 20th century this discovery assumed enormous significance. E.J. Dent thought that it might refer to the ur-libretto given to Haydn^{lx}, and that the name 'Lidley', which Haydn had remembered in connection with it, was the nearest that he could get to 'Delany'. From the good lady's own description it is impossible to claim it as connected with the ur-libretto in anyway. She writes:

"I begin with Satan's threatening to seduce the woman, her being seduced follows, and it ends with the man's yielding to the temptation." ^{lxi}

Like John Upton (and unlike the ur-librettist) she is determined to keep strictly to Milton's text:

"I would not have a word or a thought of Milton's altered; and I hope to prevail with Handel to set it without having any of the lines put into verse, for that will take from its dignity."

It is impossible to tell from Upton's letter what events from Milton's epic were contained in his text, although it seems likely that the 'Hymn' referred to is the Morning Hymn sung by Adam and Eve in Book 5. A version of this takes place in part 3 of the Swieten text and so is unlikely to be connected with it in any way. Mary Delany's letter also reveals that she took a completely different version of events from Milton, and concentrated on topics that are hardly touched upon in *The Creation*, where Satan never makes an appearance. Only twice is there a sidelong glance at the main thrust of Milton's epic theme: Satan's war and subsequent expulsion from Heaven, and the temptation of Eve which precipitates the fall of Man. Only two short portions of the Creation libretto deal with these important themes:

*Affrighted flee hell's spirits black in throngs;
Down they sink in the deep of abyss
To endless night.* [Aria and Chorus no. 2]

*O happy pair, and always happy yet,
If not, misled by false conceit
Ye strive at more as granted is,
And more to know as know ye should.* [Recit. no. 33]

Otherwise the libretto of *The Creation* simply raids Milton for his description of the actual act of God's Creation (described in Book VII) and Adam and Eve's appearance in the idyllic landscape of the Garden of Eden (principally Books IV, V, VII & VIII).

Another libretto to make use of 'Paradise Lost', but more in the manner of Mary Delany's attempt, was written by Benjamin Stillingfleet (1702-71). It was set to music by John Christopher Smith (1712-95), Handel's young protege and amanuensis. Perhaps Smith had noticed the potential in Mrs Delany's ideas, and then had them realised by a poet of more accomplishment. Smith's oratorio was composed in 1757-8 and performed at Covent Garden in 1760 & 1761.^{lxii} In those musically lean years following Handel's death it was not clear whether the Handelian idea of a Lent Season of oratorios would continue to draw an audience. As it turned out, the Handel oratorios remained the mainstay of the seasons and always proved a draw. The new works, of which this was the first, all failed after a handful of performances and are forgotten today.

Smith's oratorio is considered, however, in some detail by Howard Smither^{lxiii} in "A History of the Oratorio" and in an article by Andrew McCredie on J.C. Smith's dramatic compositions^{lxiv}. Its subject matter is Adam and Eve. The only mention of the six days of creation, which accounts for Parts 1 & 2 of *The Creation* libretto, is in the opening chorus of Angels:

*Works, which he pronounced good,
When he had finish'd all and view'd,
When returning to his throne,
On creation he look'd down.*

Named archangels sing arias, the principal ones being Gabriel, Michael and Uriel. But there the similarities end. It appears that this oratorio had no visible influence on the ur-libretto or vice versa. In the opening scene for Adam and Eve certain lines in Milton are used by both librettists; but they are employed so differently that there is no way that they can have been written by the same librettist, as some have thought^{lxv}. Here are examples of the two different approaches:

<u>Stillingfleet</u>	<u>ur-libretto</u>
Eve: Be it as thou hast said. Whate'er thou bidd'st Unargued I obey; so God ordains. God is thy law, thou mine. To know no more Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.	Eve: O thou, for whom I am! My help, my shield, my all! Thy will is law to me. And from obedience grows My pride and happiness.
Eve: Yes, Adam, yes; the sun I see Is set: but what is time to me? When my Lord, my spouse is nigh, Seasons pass unheeded by.	Eve: Spouse adored! At thy side Purest joys o'erflow the heart. Life and all I am is thine; My reward thy love shall be.

Adam & Eve: Duet

Parent of good! These glorious works are thine,
Lord,

Thine, mighty Lord, whatever eye can see;
When things created with such lustre shine
What must we, wond'rous beings, think of thee?

Adam & Eve: Duet

By thee with bliss, O bounteous

The heaven and earth are filled.
This world, so great, so wonderful,
Thy mighty hand has framed.

However, it is possible that there is a connection between this work and the libretto referred to by Mrs Delany. The story-line is remarkably similar in both. The poet and botanist Stillingfleet was famous for being the first 'blue stocking' and holding an informal women's literary club in 18th century London. Its members, educated ladies from the upper classes of society who had some literary pretensions, were referred to as 'blue stockings' after the cheap blue worsted stockings that he habitually wore at their meetings. A principal member of this group was Elizabeth Robinson Montagu (1720 - 1800), a powerful and rich figure in London society, to whom Stillingfleet dedicated his libretto. Another was Mary Delany, who kept a London house even after she removed to Ireland with her husband, the Rev. Patrick Delany, so that she could return in the spring to attend the oratorio season. She wrote letters from "Spring Gardens", the new home she bought in 1754, to her wide circle of friends, and in one of them described spending an evening with Elizabeth Montagu instead of going to hear Handel's *Israel in Egypt*^{lxvi}. It would be good to think that their mutual interest in 'Paradise Lost' led to them discussing the question of turning it into a libretto. Whether there was any collaboration between Mrs Delany and Stillingfleet is impossible to tell. Mary didn't return to London permanently until after her husband's death in 1768; and it was in this period, after the composition of Stillingfleet's libretto, that we learn of her regular visits to Mrs Montagu's 'blue stocking' soirees:

"... I went by invitation to Mrs M., the *witty* and the *lean* and found a formidable circle! I had a *whisper* with Mrs Boscawen, another with Lady Bute, and a *wink* from the Duchess of Portland - *poor diet* for one who loves a plentiful meal of social friendship..."^{lxvii}

Stillingfleet, like Delany and Upton, retained as much of Milton's verse as he could. In the "Dedication" he says that "Almost all the recitative is word for word taken out of my author; and as to the songs, they are in general so much his, that I have tried...as often as I was able, to preserve his very words"^{lxviii}. For the arias and choruses he changed Milton's blank verse into rhyming stanzas, as we can see from this Act 3 aria for the archangel Michael:

*Thou henceforth art doom'd to toil,
Thou and thy unhappy race,
Doom'd to till the stubborn soil,
Driven from this delightful place.*^{lxix}

[N.B. For a fuller description of Stillingfleet's scenes for Adam and Eve and his use of similar portions of Milton text as the ur-librettist, see Chapter 17.]

It is just possible that Charles Jennens, who lived until 1773, knew of - or attended - John Christopher Smith's new oratorio,^{lxx} and made one last attempt to interest a composer in setting Handel's rejected and unused text. He may have felt that, with the production of

this oratorio on a Miltonic theme currently holding the stage in London, his libretto would finally meet with a favourable reception. Jennens would have known both Smiths, father and son. He obtained manuscript copies of Handel's works from them on a regular basis - as the Aylesford collection bears out (now in the *Newman Flower Collection* of the Henry Watson Music Library, Manchester). Smith senior was Handel's closest confidante, chief amanuensis, and 'minded the shop' at Handel's house in Brook Street, where Jennens would have met him regularly. John Christopher Smith, his son, was not only in charge of the annual performances of *Messiah* at the Foundling Hospital in the post-Handel years 1759 - 68 (and had been the conductor during the year's of Handel's blindness), but he also ran the Lent oratorio series together with John Stanley. Who better, then, for Jennens to entrust his libretto to?

David Wyn Jones draws attention to an oratorio called "*The Creation*" composed by Thomas Busby in 1789 in his Oxford Composer Companions volume: "*Haydn*"^{lxxi}. Tantalising as this information is, he is unable to say if it has any connections with the ur-libretto handed to Haydn "... since very little of that work survives." A work entitled 'Hymn in Paradise Lost', with arias arranged from mid-century Italian composers, was performed at the Harris family's 'St Cecilia Festival' in Salisbury on 27th August 1761 and 1st October 1762. A similarly titled work by John Ernest Galliard, composed in 1728, had been frequently performed earlier in the century. The companion piece which James Harris wrote for the Salisbury programme was a pastoral entitled "Daphnis and Amaryllis".^{lxxii} In it there are two intriguing echoes of the *Creation* ur-text: "*and high the billows roll*" is reminiscent of "*Rolling in foaming billows*"; while "*See Discord sink to shades of Night*" recalls "*Down they sink ...to endless Night.*" Towards the end there is a duet formed out of the same lines of 'Paradise Lost' which was the inspiration for the ur-text of Adam and Eve's Duet no 32. Harris conflates the text from Book IV (shown on page 30) as follows:

*Sweet is the breath of Morn: her rising Sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; fragrant the Earth;
And bright the gems of Heav'n. But neither Stars,
Nor fragrant Earth; nor Charm of earliest Birds,
Nor Breath of Morning, without Thee is Sweet.*^{lxxiii}

Since Harris would have known that Jennens' and his joint efforts at turning 'Paradise Lost' into an oratorio text for Handel had never come to anything, it is just possible that this duet, and the two similar lines, could have been formed out of their rejected lyrics. In that case it looks as though this could have been a re-use of their "Miltonics" of 1744. If so, it gives an idea of how the duet might have first looked in the ur-text handed to Haydn, before the intervention of Swieten (see pp. 29-31).

Scholars have felt that the ur-libretto which Salomon received from 'Lidley' could have come from the Lenten Series archive. Edward Olleson proposes the theory that the manuscript was among the Handel scores in the possession of Smith the elder, which he then passed on to his son, who inherited all the Handel material according to the terms of his will. By this means it eventually reached Linley.

“What little we know of Thomas Linley makes it easier to believe that he passed on to Haydn a libretto from the library (or from the lumber room) of the Drury Lane oratorios, rather than that he wrote it himself.”^{lxxiv}

However, if it had come to the younger Smith directly from Jennens, it could have reached this archive at any time in the decade between 1760 (the year of J. C. Smith’s ‘Paradise Lost’ premiere) and his retirement in 1770. It seems much more likely that it arrived during the living memory of a later generation of musicians, rather than having lain unnoticed and forgotten since 1745 or thereabouts - the last known date at which Handel collaborated with his erstwhile librettist.

A further theory is that J.C. Smith, who lived until 3rd October 1795, could have met Haydn in Bath, to which he had retired in 1785. Haydn paid a visit to Bath between the 2nd and 6th of August 1794, and writes of meeting various local musicians there.^{lxxv} Perhaps this was the occasion on which Haydn spoke of wanting to write a Handelian type of oratorio; and it was the eighty-two-year-old Smith who remembered where the unused libretto was to be found.

6. OTHER SOURCES: FILLING THE GAPS IN THE LIBRETTO

The final section of this article (pp. 54 – 63) will deal with a line-by-line investigation of the *Creation* libretto, and search out its possible sources. On the whole, Milton, Genesis and the Psalms predominate, as has already been shown. But there are many sections for which no sources have hitherto been found, allowing scholars to assume that these were the invention of either the ur-librettist or of Baron Gottfried van Swieten.

Swieten’s comments, in the article for AMZ quoted above, seem to repudiate any claim to originality on his part:

“... My part in the work, which was originally in English, was certainly rather more than mere translation; but it was far from being such that I could regard it as my own..... It is true that I followed the plan of the original faithfully as a whole, but I diverged from it in details as often as musical progress and expression, of which I already had an ideal conception in my mind, seemed to demand. Guided by these sentiments, I often judged it necessary that much should be shortened or even omitted, on the one hand, and on the other that much should be made more prominent or brought into greater relief, and much placed more in the shade.”^{lxxvi}

However, the remarks towards the end of this extract imply that there was plenty of scope for originality on his part, if he did, indeed, expand some sections and completely delete others.

Georg Feder, in his line-by-line analysis of the *Creation* libretto in his book ‘Joseph Haydn Die Schöpfung’^{lxxvii}, is sometimes unable to offer any credible textual sources for certain lines, apart from generalised biblical quotes on related themes. He is occasionally completely defeated and gives no suggestions at all. Olleson is also aware of the problem:

“... an annotated copy of Haydn’s libretto will still show a considerable number of lines where no English derivation can be traced.”^{lxxviii}

There are several such lacunae, and I shall quote them in order.

1. No. 3 Accompagnato

Outrageous storms now dreadful arise;
 As chaff by the winds are impelled the clouds.
 By heav'ns fire the sky is enflamed,
 And awful roll the thunders on high.
 Now from the floods in steams ascend
 Reviving showers of rain,
 The dreary, wasteful hail,
 The light and flaky snow.

2. No. 6 Aria

Softly purling glideth on
 Through silent vales the limpid brook.

3. No. 15 Aria

His welcome bids to morn the merry lark,
 And cooing, calls the tender dove his mate.
 From every bush and grove resound
 The nightingale's delightful notes;
 No grief affected yet her breast,
 Nor to a mournful tale were tuned
 Her soft enchanting lays.

4. No. 18 Trio

Most beautiful appear,
 With verdure young adorned,
 The gently sloping hills.
 The narrow, sinuous, veins
 Distil in crystal drops
 The fountain fresh and bright.

In lofty circles plays
 And hovers through the sky
 The cheerful host of birds.
 And in the flying whirl
 The glitt'ring plumes are dyed
 As rainbows by the sun.

See flashing through the wet
 In thronged swarms the fry
 On thousand ways around.
 Upheaved from the deep
 The immense Leviathan
 Sports on the foaming wave.

5. No. 21 *Accompagnato*

With flying mane and fiery look / Impatient neighs the sprightly steed.

6. No. 24 *Aria*

With fondness leans upon his breast
The partner for him formed,
A woman, fair and graceful spouse.
Her softly smiling virgin looks,
Of flowery spring the mirror,
Bespeak him love, and joy, and bliss.

7. No. 29 *Recitative*

Behold the blissful pair / Where hand in hand they go.
Their flaming looks express / What feels the grateful heart.
A louder praise of God / Their lips shall utter soon.
Then let our voices ring / United with their song.

8. No. 31 *Recitative*

Now follow me, dear partner of my life! / Thy guide I'll be, and every step
Pours new delights into our breast, / Shows wonders everywhere.
Then mayst thou feel and know / The high degree of bliss
The Lord allotted us, / And with devoted heart
His bounty celebrate. / Come follow me! Thy guide I'll be.

One thing to note about these passages is that they are all highly descriptive. The mid-eighteenth century love affair with the descriptive adjective is present in all of them. In example 4, where they have been underlined, there is nearly one per line. In this way these lines differ from Milton, who used a more Latinate construction, and was not so reliant on adjectives to do his word-painting. There was one 18th century poet who did write like this, and he has been briefly mentioned above.

James Thomson (1700 -1748) wrote in the same unrhymed blank verse iambic pentameters as Milton. Milton was his idol, as he mentions frequently in his poetry:

*Is not each great, each amiable muse
Of classic ages in thy Milton met?
A genius universal as his theme,
Astonishing as chaos, as the bloom
Of blowing Eden fair, as heaven sublime?* [Summer, lines 1567-1571]

His famous poem 'The Seasons' was possibly the most influential poem of the century. Every respectable household would have possessed a copy, and every aspiring poet would have attempted Thomson's style. Single-handedly he reawakened an interest in Nature. The next generation of poets, Thomas Gray and William Collins, adopted his language and his imagery.

*In yonder grave a Druid lies
Where slowly winds the stealing wave.
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise
To deck its poet's sylvan grave!*

*In yon deep bed of whisp'ring reeds
His airy harp shall now be laid,
That he, whose heart in sorrow bleeds*

May love thro' life the soothing shade. [William Collins: 'Ode on the death of Mr Thomson',^{lxxxix}]

Dr Johnson is equally liberal with his praise in "The Lives of the Poets"^{lxxx}:

"... he looks round on Nature and on Life, with the eye which Nature bestows only on a poet: the eye that distinguishes, in every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute. The reader of the *Seasons* wonders that he never saw before what Thomson shews him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomson impresses."

William Wordsworth rated Thomson highly. At exactly the same time that Haydn was composing *The Creation* he was writing his pivotal "Preface to the Lyrical Ballads" (1798) which would herald the arrival of the Romantic period. In it he described "The Seasons" as "a work of inspiration" by an "inspired poet".^{lxxxi} Without Thomson, and more particularly without the emphasis on the beauty and grandeur of nature which Thomson's epic poem so impressed on Wordsworth's imagination, it is doubtful that the Romantic Age would have dawned as early as it did in English literature.

The complete poem of "The Seasons" was published in 1730, after three of the Seasons had been printed separately - *Winter* 1726, *Summer* 1727, and *Spring* 1728. *Autumn* made its first appearance in the completed poem. The work was frequently reprinted. On each occasion the poet took the opportunity to make changes, expanding a section here, and contracting one there, changing as little as one adjective or altering the whole mood of a section. Thus there was no definitive text until the revisions ceased in 1746, two years before Thomson's death. It became vastly popular and was translated into many European languages. The German translation was made by Barthold Heinrich Brockes - the amateur Hamburg poet who had provided Handel with the text for his *Brockes Passion* - and was published in an elegant edition that contained the German and English texts on facing pages.^{lxxxii} The poem was enjoying the height of its fame in England and Europe at the very time that the ur-librettist of *The Creation* was searching for poetic descriptions to elaborate on the beauties of the Garden of Eden.

My interest in the ur-libretto was stimulated whilst I was working on a new, singable English text for Haydn's other oratorio produced in collaboration with Swieten: *The Seasons*.^{lxxxiii} The more I researched the various editions of Thomson's poem to find those portions which had provided Swieten with his source-material, the more I realised that I was looking at a missing source for some of the lines in *The Creation*. Swieten never admitted this; though he must have been aware of the fact. How curious that he kept it a secret. Towards the end of his life, after Swieten's death, Haydn began to despise

his peasant-farmers in *The Seasons*, preferring the lofty tone he had given to the archangels:

“in quella i personaggi erano angeli, nelle ‘quattro stagioni’ sono contadini”.^{lxxxiv}

He told the Emperor Franz much the same thing when he compared the humble peasants to the protagonists of *The Creation* “where angels speak and tell of God”.^{lxxxv} He was never aware that his Archangels and his peasants were, in fact, singing “off the same hymn-sheet”.

7. THOMSON’S “THE SEASONS” - A MISSING SOURCE

If Jennens had been the ur-librettist it is likely that he was immensely conversant with this pivotal poem. With his ability to salt away phrases from the Bible, Shakespeare and Latin poets and later recall them, almost subliminally at times, this may explain how “The Seasons” comes to influence so many lines in the ur-libretto. I propose to show how Thomson’s poem serves to amplify those portions where Milton’s descriptions are found to be not complete enough. How Swieten came to realise that this was a major source is not clear. He may have already possessed a copy, since the Brockes translation had been published fifty years previously. As ‘Prefect of the Imperial Library’ in Vienna he would have had no difficulty in locating one. He may also have acquired a copy of the complete English poem on his brief visit to England in 1769, or through his friendship with the Harris family. Donald Burrows has recently shown how Swieten obtained copies of Handel scores and other music through his correspondence with James Harris junior.^{lxxxvi}

It is possible - though this has to be pure speculation - that the original libretto credited Thomson as a source. Jennens was a finicky man, with just such a precise love of detail. This is shown in his correspondence with Edward Holdsworth on Virgil^{lxxxvii}, in his nit-picking desire to have the *Messiah* wordbook free of misprints^{lxxxviii}, and in his life’s work of producing editions of Shakespeare which, unusually for the period, include every known variant reading.^{lxxxix}

Somehow or other Swieten learned of the Thomson influences, and – consulting the poem in either English or German translation – began to see that it contained possibilities for another kind of oratorio libretto. From this moment, therefore, he began to conceive of a successor to *The Creation*. His early ideas for a libretto based on Thomson’s poem *The Seasons* were, thus, born out of his labours on *The Creation* text. [For details of the process by which Swieten extracted the score of *The Seasons* from the aging Haydn see Landon ‘*Haydn, Chronicle and Works, The Late Years*’.

Thomson’s concept of a landscape which is the handiwork of an omnipotent and benevolent God fits well with the ur-librettist’s requirement to describe nature in a prelapsarian state of grace. These lines are found early in *Spring*, and will serve to make the point of how well his thinking fits with Milton’s:

1. The first fresh dawn then waked the gladdened race
Of uncorrupted man, nor blushed to see
The sluggard sleep beneath its sacred beam;
For their light slumbers gently fumed away,
5. And up they rose as vigorous as the sun,
Or to the culture of the willing glebe,

- Or to the cheerful tendance of the flock.
 Meantime the song went round; and dance and sport,
 Wisdom and friendly talk successive stole
10. Their hours away; while in the rosy vale
 Love breathed his infant sighs, from anguish free,
 And full replete with bliss - save the sweet pain
 That, inly thrilling, but exalts it more.
 Nor yet injurious act nor surly deed
15. Was known among these happy sons of heaven;
 For reason and benevolence were law.
 Harmonious Nature too looked smiling on.
 Clear shone the skies, cooled with eternal gales,
 And balmy spirit all. The youthful sun
20. Shot his best rays, and still the gracious clouds
 Dropped fatness down: as o'er the swelling mead
 The herds and flocks commixing played secure.
 This when, emergent from the gloomy wood,
 The glaring lion saw, his horrid heart
25. Was meekened, and he joined his sullen joy.
 For music held the whole in perfect peace;
 Soft sighed the flute; the tender voice was heard,
 Warbling the varied heart; the woodlands round
 Applied their choir; and winds and waters flowed
30. In consonance. Such were those prime of days. [Spring, lines 242 – 271]

Reading these lines the ur-librettist must have realised that he need look no further for a treasure trove of appropriate source material. Although this passage has not been chosen for any actual lines that it supplied to the final ur-libretto, but rather for its general prelapsarian mood and Miltonic atmosphere, yet it can be pointed out straight away that the entire Jennens vocabulary selected as being distinctive in *Il Moderato*, on page 12, ('rosy', 'fumes', 'cheerful') is present at lines 4, 7 & 10. In addition, the particularly Miltonic conceit of all nature being bound together by harmony (also mentioned above) is present in lines 17 and 26 - 30.

Although man has a prominent part to play in the idealised world that Thomson is describing, for long portions of the poem he is absent from it, leaving the poet free to describe the significant plant and vegetable life; the animal kingdom; and the wonders of the varied landscape. He probes with something of a scientist's eye, and endeavours to unravel the mysteries that natural philosophy (science) and astronomy were currently expounding. Galileo's celestial discoveries and Newton's philosophy are both mentioned^{xc}, and there are long passages in which their work, together with other natural phenomena, are celebrated in verse.

With this in mind let us return to the 8 passages of the ur-text which currently lack a source, to see how much can be supplied from Thomson.

1. No. 3 *Accompagnato*

**Outrageous storms now dreadful arise;
As chaff by the winds are impelled the clouds.
By heav'ns fire the sky is enflamed,
And awful roll the thunders on high.
Now from the floods in steams ascend
Reviving showers of rain,
The dreary, wasteful hail,
The light and flaky snow.**

The general shape of this passage owes something to Psalm 148: "Fire and hail, snow and vapour; wind and storm fulfilling his word". The image of "chaff before the wind" is also an image best known from its usage in the Psalms^{xci}. The adjective 'outrageous', however, is found twice in "The Seasons" (*...borne by th'outrageous flood, and ... this wild outrageous tumult ...*) At lines 5 & 6 the text is expanded with a particularly Thomsonian conceit: his scientific interest in condensation and vapour. Here are two treatments of the topic in his poem:

These vapours in continual current draw,
And send them o'er the fair-divided earth
In bounteous rivers, to the deep again... [Autumn, lines 831-3]

.... the yielding air
Admits their stream, incessant vapours roll,
Amazing clouds on clouds continual heaped:
Or whirled tempestuous by the gusty wind,
Or silent borne along, heavy and slow,
With the big stores of steaming oceans charged. [Summer, lines 789-94]

The expression 'wasteful' (presumably meaning 'an area appearing to be a wasteland') is not found in Thomson. This line has surely suffered from translation. Thomson uses the expression "the dreary waste"^{xcii}, which may have contributed to the choice of the phrase here. In describing a similar area of desolation, covered with snow, he refers to the "wild dazzling waste" [Winter, line 239].

2. No. 6 *Aria*

**Softly purling glideth on
Through silent vales the limpid brook.***

Milton can furnish the line "*if through plain, soft-ebbing*" [P. L. Book VII lines 299-300] but this can hardly be the entire source. Thomson talks of the "*brook that purls along / The vocal grove ... Gently diffused into a limpid plain*" [Summer lines 480-4]. The lines appear to compress both sources, with one adjective - 'soft' - taken from Milton and implanted into Thomson. On page 32 it will be shown that a minor poem of Thomson's provides further material, and supplies the crucial words "*glide*" and "*vales*", making this short couplet into a complicated three-way fusion of sources.

N.B. The original English wordbooks of 1800 have a variant text at this point:

* *“In silent vales soft gliding brooks / By gentle noise mark out their way”.*

The reasons for this are not entirely clear and will be discussed in chapter 16. THE 1800 EDITION AND THE LONDON WORD-BOOKS on pages 44-6.

3. No. 15 Aria

**His welcome bids to morn the merry lark,
And cooing, calls the tender dove his mate.
From every bush and grove resound
The nightingale’s delightful notes;
No grief affected yet her breast,
Nor to a mournful tale were tuned
Her soft enchanting lays.**

The lark and the dove are not found in Milton’s ‘Paradise Lost’. Nor is the nightingale described as once singing in a happier, prelapsarian, mood. But Thomson can provide both. Note the description of the nightingale as lamenting her ‘ruined’ care. This image may have reminded the ur-librettist that the scene is set in “the first fresh dawn of uncorrupted man”, where snakes were not feared, lions roared cheerfully, and nightingales had no cause to lament.

Up springs the lark,
Shrill voiced and loud, the messenger of morn.
.... Every copse
Deep-tangled, tree irregular, and bush ...
.... are prodigal of harmony...
.... while the stock-dove breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole. [Spring lines 590-612]

.... the cooing dove / Flies thick in amorous chase... [Spring lines 786-7]

But let not chief the nightingale lament
Her ruined care ...
Where, all abandoned to despair, she sings
Her sorrows through the night, and, on the bough
Sole-sitting, still at every dying fall
Takes up again her lamentable strain... [Spring lines 714-26]

Hamilton, in his libretto for “Samson”, creates an aria on the ‘turtledove’ theme. His lines, which appear not to come from Milton, are less impressive than the *Creation* ur-librettist’s, and give us an idea of what the *Creation* text might have looked like if he had penned it:

With plaintive notes and am’rous moan

Thus coos the turtle left alone.^{xciii}

4. No. 18 Trio

Verse 1 - Gabriel

**Most beautiful appear,
With verdure young adorned,
The gently sloping hills.
The narrow, sinuous, veins
Distil in crystal drops
The fountain fresh and bright.**

In *verse 1* we are back with Thomson's scientific interest in how water is drawn through the rock strata and emerges as springs of fresh water. A long passage in *Autumn* describes various theories, and even questions whether water is sucked in from the sea, losing its salinity on the way.^{xciv} The ur-librettist has used some of these ideas, heavily condensed from passages like:

... o'erflowing thence, the congregated stores,
The crystal treasures of the liquid world,
Through the stirred sands a bubbling passage burst,
And, welling out around the middle steep
Or from the bottoms of the bosomed hills
In pure effusion flow. [Autumn lines 823-8]

Milton had touched on this subject in his lines "...through veins / Of porous earth ... rose a fresh fountain" [P.L. Book IV, lines 227-8]. His image of "sloping hills" (... *meanwhile murmuring waters fall / Down the slope hills dispersed...* [P.L. Book IV, lines 260-1] is preferred to Thomson's "bosomed hills", rendering the verse a remarkable fusion of Thomson and Milton; which seems to be the way in which the ur-librettist built up his images.

Verse 2 - Uriel

**In lofty circles plays
And hovers through the sky
The cheerful host of birds.
And in the flying whirl
The glitt'ring plumes are dyed
As rainbows by the sun.**

This Verse, for which Georg Feder can provide no source^{xcv}, is drawn from Thomson's description of the mating rituals of birds:

First wide around... in airy rings they rove,
.... then, on a sudden struck,
Retire disordered; then again approach,
In fond rotation spread the spotted wing
And shiver every feather with desire. [Spring lines 620-30]
.... while the peacock spreads

His every-coloured glory to the sun.

[*Spring* lines 783-4]

One distinctive image is taken from Milton. Where Thomson has his peacock displaying a train of “*every-coloured glory to the sun*”, the ur-librettist has incorporated Milton’s image of the peacock’s “*gay train*” adorned with “*the florid hue of rainbows and starry eyes*”.^{xcvi} But the librettist does not make it clear that this is an image relating solely to the peacock: he appropriates it for his entire whirling flock of birds.

Verse 3 - Raphael

**See flashing through the wet
In thronged swarms the fry
On thousand ways around.
Upheaved from the deep
The immense Leviathan
Sports on the foaming wave.**

While sounding very Miltonic, this verse uses a description for Leviathan that is different from the one in ‘Paradise Lost’, where the monster is described as “*Leviathan, hugest of living creatures, on the deep / stretched like a promontory.*” Clearly this cannot be the source of the image “*sports on the foaming wave*” - an image that is not present in the Psalm texts either. Thomson has “*More to embroil the deep, Leviathan / And his unwieldy train in dreadful sport / Tempest the loosened brine.*”^{xcvii} While I think that this is clearly the source (n.b. *loosened brine* = *foaming wave*, possibly as a result of retranslation back into English) it is also instructive to look at Thomson’s poetic paraphrase of Psalm 104 - the one that is at the heart of so much of the ur-libretto. His line there is remarkably similar:

Tis there that Leviathan sports and plays...^{xcviii}

I shall return to this minor poem of Thomson’s in chapter 9. For the moment I wish to consider a minor poem of Milton’s, and its possible influence on the first line of this verse. “See flashing through the wet” is very unsatisfactory. ‘Wet’ appears to be being used as a noun, and not a noun that is commonly used to describe the deep sea. This could be one of Swieten’s errors of translation; or it could be an error that crept in for a different, and more complicated reason.

In Milton’s translation of *Psalm VIII* we find the lines:

.... Fowl of the heavens, and fish that through the wet
Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth.
O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy name through all the earth!^{xcix}

From the combination of the phrase (underlined) found in the *Creation* libretto and the acclamation to Jehovah (also underlined) which forms the ensuing chorus, no. 19 - “*The Lord is great and great his might. His glory lasts for evermore*” - it appears likely that the ur-libretto made use of this text. At some stage, which can only be connected with Swieten’s activities, the noun ‘*sea-paths*’ got detached from its adjective ‘*wet*’. In one

other respect this verse holds a clue to the evolution of the ur-text. The unidiomatic phrase “*On thousand ways around*” sounds like a poor re-translation. However, its origin may be found in ‘The Seasons’ where Thomson uses a similar phrase more idiomatically: “*Thick in yon stream of light, / A thousand ways, upward and downward, / Thwarting and convulsed...*”^c So the ur-librettist, choosing his phrases selectively, may have used these words, taken from a description of specks seen in a sunbeam, to describe the writhing of the sea-creatures.

A similar use of choice phrases remembered almost at random by the librettist, and re-used in another context, occurs at the description of the creation of insects. The ur-libretto has:

“ ... unnumbered as the sands
In whirls arise the host of insects”.^{ci}

The image, which seems ideal for the description, is actually used by Milton to describe the huge number of angels who fell to Hell with Satan, and has thus been taken out of its original context:

“ ... unnumbered as the sands
of Barca’s or Cyrene’s torrid soil.”^{cii}

5. No. 21 *Accompagnato*

**With flying mane and fiery look
Impatient neighs the sprightly steed.**

The horse is not present among the creatures described by Milton as teeming forth at the moment of Creation in Book VII of *Paradise Lost*. There is a long passage in Thomson that may be the source. But if so, the ur-librettist has, once again, made a good job of condensing the image:

.... The trembling steed,
With this hot impulse seized in every nerve,
..... tossing high his head,
And by the well-known joy to distant plains
Attracted strong, all wild he bursts away; ...
And, neighing, on the aerial summit takes
The exciting gale such is the force
With which his frantic heart and sinews swell. [*Spring*, lines 808-20]

I am indebted to Ruth Smith for directing me to another possible source, in a translation of Virgil’s *Aeneid* by Joseph Trapp, published in 1731. As this is closely related to the work that Jennens and Holdsworth were doing and discussing in connection with Virgil in the 1730s and 1740s^{ciii}, it is quite likely that Jennens knew the poem:

So, loose with broken reins, the sprightly Steed
Flies from his stall, and gains the open field;
Or to the pastures, and the Female-herd

He bends his course; or to the wonted stream,
 To bathe his limbs: he neighs, and bounds from Earth
 Luxuriant, prancing, with his chest erect,
 And head high toss'd in air: his waving mane
 Flows on his neck, and o'er his shoulder plays.^{civ}

6. No. 24 Aria

**With fondness leans upon his breast
 The partner for him formed,
 A woman, fair and graceful spouse.
 Her softly smiling virgin looks,
 Of flowery spring the mirror,
 Bespeak him love, and joy, and bliss.**

Georg Feder gives no source for these lines.^{cv} The description of Adam and Eve in 'Paradise Lost' is plundered heavily to provide the opening section of the aria "In native worth" which describes Adam alone. So the ur-librettist has to be more inventive when it comes to describing the loveliness of Eve. In fact, all of the images are extracted from Milton, but once again are highly condensed. Lines 1 & 2 are taken from Book IV where "half embracing" she "leaned on our first father."^{cvi} The adjectives 'fair' and 'graceful' derive from descriptions in Book VIII.^{cvi} She is described as 'spouse' in Book V line 129. At line 4 the image is derived from her 'virgin modesty' in Book VIII line 501. One piece of original input on the part of the ur-librettist is line 5: his source material gives him the image "what seemed fair in all the world seemed now in her summ'd up".^{cvi} But the spirit of Thomson has taken over and presented him with an image of Eve as lovely as the Spring in Thomson's poem.

The final line is a rather coy 18th century bowdlerisation of Milton's original much sexier image, where Eve inspires in Adam "*the spirit of love and amorous delight*".^{cix} An intriguing piece of vocabulary here is the use of the word '*bespeak*' which appears in neither Milton nor Thomson, although it was in current 18th century usage. Dr. Johnson has five definitions in his Dictionary of 1755, of which the one used here is the fifth: *to betoken; to shew*.^{cx} It must have been the choice of the ur-librettist, who possibly preferred it to the original '*inspired*' for metrical reasons, since the line "...*inspired in him love* ..." would have involved an extra syllable.

7. No. 29 Recitative

**Behold the blissful pair / Where hand in hand they go.
 Their flaming looks express / What feels the grateful heart.
 A louder praise of God / Their lips shall utter soon.
 Then let our voices ring / United with their song.**

The source for the first two lines of this passage can be found in Milton: "*So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair / That ever since in love's embraces met*" [Book IV, line 321-2]. The lacuna in the source material is in respect of the other lines, where the ur-librettist - or Swieten - contrives a link into the following Duet. I shall return to this

passage when considering how much original input the ur-librettist and Swieten had on the finished libretto. The lines may have suffered in translation, since the metaphor ‘flaming’ (“their flaming looks”) is not used by either Milton or Thomson in anything other than its literal sense. The nearest images in Milton are “*looks of cordial love*”^{cxⁱ} or “*glowing cheeks*”.^{cxⁱⁱ} The ur-librettist’s own voice may therefore be detectable here once again.

8. No. 31 Recitative

Now follow me, dear partner of my life!

Thy guide I’ll be, and every step

Pours new delights into our breast,

Shows wonders everywhere.

Then mayst thou feel and know

The high degree of bliss

The Lord allotted us,

And with devoted heart

His bounty celebrate.

Come follow me! Thy guide I’ll be.

The ur-librettist or Swieten have been at work here, too. The meter has been interfered with, resulting in lines of differing lengths. There is a reworking of the Miltonic phrases in such a way that no. 31 has been transformed into a mini-scena for Adam and Eve. It presents their dialogue in a more operatic form than is found in the long paragraphs of ‘Paradise Lost’. There are echoes of “*but follow me and I will bring thee where ...*”^{cxⁱⁱⁱ} as well as “*sole partner and sole part of all these joys ...*”^{cx^{iv}} But this is very much the work of the librettist. In the following Duet, no. 32, he transforms Eve’s speech:

With thee conversing, I forget all time,
All seasons, and their change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the Sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit and flower,
Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile Earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful Evening mild.....
..... But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising Sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glistening with dew; nor fragrance after showers:
Nor grateful Evening mild; nor silent night,

.... without thee is sweet. [P.L. Book IV, lines 639-656]

into a light, folksy duet that would not have been out of place in any Singspiel that had been currently playing in Haydn’s Vienna. In this final part of the oratorio the controlling hand of the librettist is much more obvious than in the first two parts, and his tastes more

evident. Duet no 32 retains the imagery of morn, ev'n, fruits and flowers, but has been debased, in his hands, into this much more formulaic version:

**The dew-dropping morn, / O how she quickens all!
 The coolness of ev'n, / O how she all restores!
 How grateful is / Of fruits the savour sweet!
 How pleasing is / Of fragrant bloom the smell!
 But without thee, what is to me
 The morning dew, / The breath of ev'n, /
 The sav'ry fruit, / The fragrant bloom?
 With thee is every joy enhanced;
 With thee delight is ever new.
 With thee is life incessant bliss.
 Thine it whole shall be.**

[N.B. Stillingfleet retained much of Milton's text here, as will be shown in Chapter 17. It is likely that other mid-century librettists would have left this poetry largely intact, and that it may have reached Swieten in a form nearer the original.]

Rather than use the rapturous phrases Milton has provided, the librettist falls back on the vocabulary of 'The Seasons'. "*Dew-dropping*" is a Thomsonian epithet^{cxv}; and he makes frequent use of '*incessant*' and '*bliss*' without actually using them paired together in this manner. The usage of '*grateful*' in the antiquated 17th century sense of 'gratifying' seems to have been taken from the Miltonic source ("*grateful Evening mild*"). It is hard to tell if this is the work of the ur-librettist or of Swieten. There is an example of it being used in this manner as late as 1725 in a play by Thomas Sheridan^{cxvi}; but it may also be the work of Swieten who is surely responsible for the awkwardly inverted word-order : *How grateful is / Of fruits the savour sweet!*

Swieten, in other places in the libretto, is clearly responsible for mistaking the precise meaning of an English word. For example, in *Accompagnato* no.3 (the first of the selected passages, above) he obviously equates 'wasteful' (*the dreary, wasteful hail*) with 'desolate', or "producing a wasteland" - a sense in which it is not used in Milton, Thomson, or indeed the King James Bible. His curious use of '*wet*' as a noun rather than an adjective has also been noted above. In the final line of the passage above "*thine it whole shall be*" the word 'whole' is either a mistake for 'all' or for 'wholly'. Both English wordbooks of 1800 had the alternative text "To thee be vow'd it whole".^{cxvii}

8. FURTHER INSTANCES OF "THE SEASONS" AS SOURCE MATERIAL

Georg Feder's book, referred to above, has identified the sources for two arias as coming from Milton. But his identification still leaves gaps. I propose to show that the ur-librettist has expanded the text with expressions found in "*The Seasons*".

EXAMPLE 1: Aria no. 6

Rolling in foaming billows
 Uplifted roars the boist'rous sea.
Mountains and rocks now *emerge*:
Their tops into the clouds ascend.

He is right to equate this^{cxviii} with the lines

.... The *mountains* huge appear
Emergent, and their broad backs upheave
Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky. [P.L. Book VII, lines 285-7]

Eight of the words in the libretto are taken virtually word for word from Milton. But the opening two lines are unaccounted for. Thomson, in "*The Seasons*" has this image:

Lashed into foam, the fierce-conflicting brine
 Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn.
 Meantime the mountain billows, to the clouds
 In dreadful tumult swelled, surge above surge,
 Burst into chaos with tremendous roar. [Winter, lines 159-163]

There are another eight words (underlined) that seem to have found their way into the ur-libretto from Thomson. Using both passages together the librettist has built his final text. Some phrases may have been altered in translation or for metrical reasons, whereby '*fierce-conflicting brine*' can become '*boist'rous sea*'. It will also be noted that each passage contains an actively upward descriptive verb: viz: uplifted / upheave / swelled.

EXAMPLE 2: Aria no. 15

On mighty pens uplifted soars
 The eagle aloft, and cleaves the sky
 In swiftest flight to the blazing sun.

Georg Feder draws our attention^{cxix} to the following passage in Milton:

They summ'd their pens, and soaring th'air sublime,
With clang despised the ground... [P.L. Book VII, lines 421-3]

Actually, this is not a description of the eagle, but a rather more generalised description of the emergence of the first birds at the moment of Creation. Since he was searching for appropriately avian text-words (in this case '*pens*') he could have found, a few lines later:

... and rising on stiff pennons, tower / The mid-aerial sky. [P.L. Book VII, line 441-2]

However, neither of these quite satisfy the requirements of being the original source. Thomson, more convincingly, writes of the eagle in "*The Seasons*" thus:

..... the steep-ascending eagle soars
 With upward pinions through the flood of day,
 And, giving full his bosom to the *blaze*,
 Gains on the *sun*... [Summer, lines 608-11]

The particular significance of Thomson's lines (apart from the identical words which have been put in italics, or which have been underlined if they are sufficiently similar) is the image of the eagle flying up to the sun. I feel sure that this is conclusive proof that the Thomson poem inspired the ur-librettist.

Having dealt with two striking passages where Thomson's voice is noticeably present in the libretto, let me turn now to Thomson's distinctive vocabulary. It has been explained above that 'cheerful' is a particularly favourite word, being found no less than 14 times in "*The Seasons*". Jennens' use of a Thomson-like vocabulary in *Il Moderato* ('rosy', 'fumes', 'cheerful') has also been mentioned. If Jennens, as an avid admirer of Thomson as well as of Milton, was the ur-librettist then the libretto might be expected to show even more examples of Thomsonian vocabulary. Indeed it does. Attention has been drawn to the expression '*dew-dropping*' already. Other words found in Thomson and *The Creation*, but not in Milton, are:

'tribes' (15), 'ethereal' (9), 'dreary' (7), 'ravished' (4), 'unperceived' (3),
'limpid' (2), 'purls' (2), 'outrageous' (2), 'sated' (2)

[N.B. figures in brackets are the number of times the word appears in Thomson's "*The Seasons*".]

9. THE MINOR POEMS AS SOURCES

It has been mentioned several times that the ur-librettist used minor poems by Milton and Thomson as additional sources. Milton's 'Psalm VIII' and 'Hymn: on the Morning of Christ's Nativity' have already been discussed. Thomson's youthful 'Paraphrase on Psalm CIV' is of particular significance. Lines that appear to have had some influence on the ur-libretto are:

1) *How many are thy wondrous works, O Lord!* - which seems more likely to be the source for *How many are thy works, O God!* in the Trio no. 18, than the equivalent line in the Book of Common Prayer: "*O Lord, how manifold are thy works*".

2) *... which sweetly through the verdant vales doth glide ...* This is very much the language of Aria no. 6, and, as explained earlier, contributes the verb '*glide*' and the noun '*vales*' to the lines discussed in chapter 7: - "*Softly purling glideth on / Through silent vales the limpid brook*".

3) *... the dreary waste...* This has been proposed (on page 24 above) as a possible source for the expression in no. 3 "*the dreary wasteful hail*".

4) *'Tis there that Leviathan sports and plays.* This has already been mentioned in connection with Trio no. 18.

5) *Thy vital Spirit makes all things live below, / The face of Nature with new beauties glow.*^{cxx} Psalm 104 is the source for Trio no. 27. The version in the Book of Common Prayer corresponds with the version translated back into English in the libretto fairly accurately^{cxxi} until the final lines:

And life with vigour fresh returns.
Revived earth unfolds

New force and new delights.

which elaborate on the BCP's more economical version "... they shall be made: and thou shalt renew the face of the earth." The 'new delights' of the libretto could, just possibly, derive from Thomson's 'new beauties', bearing in mind the alterations that the libretto went through in translation and retranslation.

10. A FURTHER IMPORTANT SOURCE IDENTIFIED

It is hard to separate the ur-librettist from Swieten. How much did the Austrian amateur man-of-letters expand and enlarge? What did he use for sources if he felt the need to write an entirely original text? On the whole, I think that Swieten was unlikely to have known the minor poems referred to above, and that they were introduced into the text only by the ur-librettist. I also feel that the general quality of the libretto and its vocabulary reflects the period when it was put together in mid-18th century England. The voices of Milton, Thomson and the Bible are strong; but there is also a further, unidentified, voice using a rather archaic vocabulary. Originally I had assumed this to be the voice of the ur-librettist himself. But whilst studying the list of words that are not found in the sources I realised that they all sounded very Jacobean, even though they are not to be found in the King James Bible of 1611. I was also aware that Jennens had cribbed lines from Shakespeare before. In his libretto for *Il Moderato* he boldly inserts some lines from 'The Tempest' into the duet for soprano and tenor:

<i>And as the morning steals upon the night,</i>	As steals the morn upon the night,
<i>Melting the darkness, so their rising senses</i>	And melts the shades away:
<i>Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle</i>	So truth does fancy's charm dissolve,
<i>Their clearer reason.</i>	And melts the shades away:
[The Tempest, Act 5, scene 1]	The fumes that did the mind involve,
	Restoring intellectual day. [Il Moderato]

This set me thinking. If Jennens had the magpie kind of mind that could store choice phrases from Milton and Thomson, it seemed certain that he could do the same thing with Shakespeare. Further research into Jennens' career revealed that he knew Shakespeare's plays well enough to indulge in some 'vanity' publishing by producing his own 'collated' versions of several of them,^{cxxii} with the intention of working his way through the entire canon. It was this that brought him into conflict with the rival Shakespearean editors George Steevens and Dr. Johnson. An anecdote by William Bowyer transcribed by John Nichols, Jennens' publishers, penned only nine years after his death, gives us a vivid picture of him at a time when they would have known him well:

"In his youth he was so remarkable for the number of his servants, the splendor of his equipages, and the profusion of his table, that from this excess of pomp he acquired the title of Solyman the Magnificent..... He wrote, or caused to be written by some of his numerous parasites, a pamphlet against Dr. Johnson and Mr Steevens, the editors of Shakespeare, whom he suspected (perhaps justly enough) of having turned his commentatorial talents into ridicule. This doughty performance he is said to have had

read aloud to him every day for at least a month after its publication, while he himself kept a constant eye on the newspapers, that he might receive the earliest intelligence of the moment at which these gentlemen should have hanged or drowned themselves in consequence of his attack on their abilities and characters.” ^{cxxiii}

This account reappeared in Sir Newman Flower’s 1923 biography of Handel slightly altered, and with Dr Johnson pronouncing Jennens to be “...*a vain fool crazed by his wealth, who, were he in Heaven, would criticise the Lord Almighty; who lives surrounded by all the luxuries of an Eastern Potentate - verily an English ‘Solyman the Magnificent.’*” ^{cxxiv}

Jennens’ riposte came in the pamphlet mentioned above. Entitled “*The Tragedy of King Lear as lately published, Vindicated from the abuse of the Critical Reviewers*” it contains this apostrophe to Dr. Johnson and George Steevens: “... And now farewell, thou great and wondrous Brobdingnagian, Dr. Samuel Lexiphanes, whose mighty pen can make fritters of English, and nonsense of sense. Farewell, thou co-partner of his learned labours, most diminutive native of Lilliput, little George, who peepest out of his pocket.” ^{cxxv}

Knowing of Jennens interest in Shakespearean scholarship (he had a huge collection of folio and quarto editions, as well as early 18th century editions in his library) I searched for evidence of phrases from the plays that might have been inserted into the *Creation* libretto. There is a striking image of ‘Dawn’ at the beginning of Part 3:

In rosy mantle appears ... the morning young and fair.

This might have been thought to be by Milton. But Milton’s description is markedly different:

*Now Morn, her rosy steps in the Eastern clime / Advancing, sowed the earth with orient
pearl* ^{cxxvi}

The librettist substituted Milton’s ‘*rosy steps*’ with ‘*rosy mantle*’ in a move that has long thought to have been his own original input. But Shakespeare has this image in the opening scene of *Hamlet*:

*But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad, / Walks o’er the dew of yon high eastward
hill.* ^{cxxvii}

It appears that the ur-librettist chose to expand Milton’s text with the poetic image remembered from Shakespeare. Jennens’ own edition of ‘*Hamlet*’ was published in the year of his death, 1773, by the same William Bowyer and John Nichols who recorded the above unkind anecdotes.

Words from the *Creation* libretto that are not found in Milton, Thomson, or the King James Bible are all now revealed as being part of the Shakespearean vocabulary. They are:

‘bespeak’ (6), ‘achieved’ (14), ‘flaming’ [in a metaphorical sense] (4), ‘celebrate’ (6), ‘utter’ [as in ‘speak’] (36), ‘might’ [as in ‘power’] (on average 3 per play), and ‘flexible’ (2).

[N.B. The figures in brackets refer to the number of times the words appear in the Shakespearean canon.]

The last is an interesting one. Thomson has ‘flexile’, which he uses in *Summer* to describe the movement of the sea - “whose every flexile wave / Obeys the blast”.^{cxxviii} But he never uses it to mean ‘lithe’ as in the libretto. There is often a laugh in performance when the Bass soloist has to sing: “... In sudden leap the flexible tiger appears”. Thomson has the description of the tiger “darting fierce”; and this could well be presumed to be the ur-version, altered in re-translation. But Shakespeare uses the word on two occasions. In *Henry VI Part 3* it occurs in the line:

Women are soft, mild, pitiful and flexible.^{cxxix}

But its second usage is the more significant one. Appearing in *Troilus and Cressida*, it is worth quoting it fully in context:

... for in her ray and brightness
The herd hath more annoyance by the breeze
Than by the tiger; but when the splitting wind
Makes flexible the knees of knotted oaks ...^{cxxx}

Could there have been a subconscious memory coming into play here? The chance of finding these two underlined words so close together must be a very remote one. Instead of using Milton’s line:

... The ounce, / The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole / Rising ... [P.L. Book VII, lines 466-8]

or Thomson’s:

... The tiger, darting fierce / Impetuous on the prey ... [*Summer*, line 916-7]

he has dragged the Shakespearean ‘tiger – flexible’ conjunction out of some deep recess of his brain.

The other Shakespearean words in the list above all go to confirm the ur-librettist as a well-read man able to draw on a large reservoir of exotic vocabulary. Even the usage of the phrase:

Achievéed is the glorious work

seems likely to have been the work of the original librettist, rather than having been a bad re-translation back into English, as was long thought.^{cxxx1}

11. THE ORIGINAL INPUT OF THE UR-LIBRETTIST AND SWIETEN

The ur-librettist’s voice can be heard most clearly in those portions of the text where he is obliged to control and shape his material. In an effort to preserve the "recitative - aria - chorus" scheme that was clearly the way he wanted to deal with each day’s act of creation, he was forced to herald the Angelic chorus of praise with some text of his own. Chunks of text from Milton are inserted by the ur-librettist whenever they can be made to fit, as will be shown:

- No. 9 And the heavenly host proclaimed the third day, praising God and saying
[cf. "... *all the heavenly host of spirits...*" P. L. Book II, line 824]
- No. 12 And the Sons of God announced the fourth day in song divine, proclaiming thus
his power
[cf. "*But when of old the Sons of Morning sung*" ('Hymn: on the Morning of Christ's Nativity')
"*Then had the Sons of God excuse to have been enamoured*" P. L. Book V, line 447]
- No. 17 And the angels struck their immortal harps, and the wonders of the fifth day
sung
[cf. "*And the cherubic host in thousand choirs / Touch their immortal harps of golden wires*" ('At a Solemn Music')]
- No. 25 And the heavenly choir in song divine thus closed the sixth day
[cf. "*So even / And morning chorus sung the second day*" P. L. Book VII, lines 274-5]

To this list must be added Aria no. 4 which serves the same purpose, and was probably a Recitative in the ur-libretto^{cxxxii}, having been cleverly turned into an Aria by Swieten in one of his tidying-up exercises:

- No. 4 The marv'lous work beholds amazed / The glorious hierarchy of heav'n,
And to th'ethereal vaults **resounds** / The praise of God, and of the second day.
(cf. "*So sang the hierarchies*" Book VII line 192; "*For which both heaven and earth shall high extol / Thy praises wherewith thy throne / .. shall resound*" Book III lines 146-9; "*resound his praise*" Book V line 178-9)

N.B. The word-book produced by Salomon for his 1800 performance has the variant text:

And to th'ethereal vaults **proclaim** / The praise of God, and of the second day

which Temperley is inclined to think represents the original text before Swieten's abbreviation took place.^{cxxxiii} By some accident the word '*proclaim*' has survived, and thus demonstrates that this would have originally served as a recitative heralding a chorus of praise as happens in nos. 9, 12, 17 & 25.

The ur-librettist also inserted one original line at the very end of Recitative no. 16. The accompagnato section follows Milton and the Bible closely until the very end, where comes the line:

"... *and in your God and Lord rejoice*".

The idea for all creation to rejoice 'in the Lord' is omnipresent in the Psalms, with the very phrase "rejoice in the Lord" appearing in Psalms 33 & 97, and being developed further in Psalm 148^{cxxxiv}. The very final line in the Book of Psalms is "let everything that hath breath praise the Lord".^{cxxxv}

12. SWIETEN'S RE-TRANSLATION BACK INTO ENGLISH: A) THE PSALMS

One of the things that casts doubt upon Swieten's ability as a linguist is his re-translation of the choruses back into English. It is extraordinary that his knowledge of the language had deteriorated this much since his frequent correspondence with the Harris family in the 1770s and 1780s. Donald Burrows reports that, in this correspondence "Although he sometimes uses the wrong (or unusual) spelling, word or grammatical construction, his idiomatic use of the English language is fluent, and certainly of better quality than we would expect from the short period of his residence in Britain [1769]. If he did not lose his linguistic skills over the following twenty years, we may assume that van Swieten had a good understanding of the English libretto for *The Creation* and of Thomson's poem *The Seasons*." ^{cxxxvi}

Here, for example, is an extract from a letter of 1777, which shows how proficient Swieten was in the day-to-day language of commerce:

"You may contribute essentially to procure me some delightful hours in my present exile, if you will give yourself the trouble to take out of the shop of Robert Bremner opposite Somersethouse Strand the musical works noted in the adjoined list, and send them over by the first occasion. The money laid out I shall reimburse ... with great thankfulness." ^{cxxvii}

That the choruses of *The Creation* ur-libretto began as versions of English psalms is not in doubt. They could have appeared there in their familiar biblical versions from the KJB or the BCP; in well-known versions from the Metrical Psalters of Sternhold and Hopkins (the old version) or Tate and Brady (the new version); or in poetic versions such as we have seen Jennens employing in the opening chorus of *Saul* (see page 8).

All English singers will have been perplexed by the version of Psalm 19 that presents itself in no.13, the Chorus "The Heavens are telling". For the first two lines the BCP seems to be the original source:

The heavens declare the glory of God : and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

But this is followed by the notorious line

To day that is coming speaks it the day: the night that is gone to following night.

We are a long way from

one day telleth another : and one night certifieth another.

As Swieten obviously found out for himself, the original English psalm cannot be made to fit back in here. It is a matter for much regret that he foisted such "*miserable broken English*" on to Haydn's meticulously prepared score. The origin for his subsequent German line "In alle Welt ergeht das Wort, / Jedem ohre klingend, keiner Zunge fremd" should be easy to identify. Its literal translation is "The word goes out into all the world, / sounding in every ear, foreign to no tongue". There is a choice of text in the BCP as there appears to be a conflation of "Their sound is gone out into all lands" with a previous line:

“there is neither speech nor language : but their voices are heard among them”. The KJB is similar, with “there is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard”. These lines, then, appear not to be Swieten’s original source at this point, since they lack the imagery of *ears* and *tongues*. His English version doesn’t correspond very closely to any of the biblical verses, being “In all the lands resounds the word, / Never unperceivéd, ever understood”.

However, Sternhold and Hopkins have, at least, a ‘tongue’ in their metrical version:

There is no language, tongue or speech, / Where their sound is not heard.

Tate and Brady have the word ‘understood’ which is present in Swieten’s translation:

*Their powerful language to no realm / or region is confined:
Tis Nature’s voice, and understood / alike by all mankind.*

From this we can surmise that the ur-librettist may have used versions of Psalm-texts drawn from other models that were current in 18th century England, including the metrical ones sung in church. If the librettist were Jennens, then these lines would have been salted away like the choice phrases from Shakespeare and Latin poets which have been shown as re-emerging in the ur-libretto. The lines in this chorus which were less than ideal were improved in Neukomm’s 1832 edition as :

*How day unto day is speaking his praise; while night unto night his glory proclaims.
Through all the earth their voice resounds, never unperceivéd, ever understood.*

It is a matter of much regret that Vincent Novello did not include this improvement in his edition of 1847. Other psalm-texts that can be identified with some precision are;

- No. 10 *Awake the harp, the lyre awake* - from Psalm 57: "Awake lute and harp"
- No. 19 *The Lord is great and great his might* - from Psalm 147: "Great is our Lord, and great is his power"
- No. 19 *His glory lasts for ever and for evermore* - from Psalm 104: "The Glory of the Lord shall endure for ever"

Many others are harder to place, and have either suffered because of the translation process or because they were not exact quotations in the first place. Into this category must come the following:

- No. 26 *Achievéd is the glorious work: / The Lord beholds it, and is pleased,
In lofty strains let us rejoice; / Our song must be the praise of God.*

The Shakespearean associations with ‘achievéd’ have been discussed above on page 35. It is a curious use of the word, and in its three syllable form must have sounded antiquated by the middle of the eighteenth century. Milton used the two-syllable version ‘achiev’d’ in ‘Paradise Lost’ in 1667.^{cxxxviii} It is spelled ‘Atchievéd’ (with an additional ‘t’) in the 1800 full score and English word-books.^{cxxxix} That this spelling can be traced back to Jennens himself is proved by his use of it in his correspondence, and the existence

of the following printed line in his “*Vindication*” of ‘King Lear’ of 1772: “... and to the atchievement of his publication it is allowed, that patience and industry ... were required”.^{cxl} It appears that this was Jennens’ favoured spelling for the whole of his life, even though it had fallen out of usage at the end of the 17th century, and is not given in Dr Johnson’s Dictionary.^{cxli}

The more obvious English words that Jennens could have chosen instead of his antiquated “atchiévé” are “completed” or “finished”; and indeed Milton has the line:

“Here finished he, and all that he had made / Viewed, and behold all was entirely good”.^{cxlii}

- No. 28 *Glory to his name for ever! / He sole on high exalted reigns.*

There is no obvious equivalent for this in the Psalms. The first phrase has a familiar ring to it and is found in various versions. But it is also similar to the line “*How excellent thy name, O Lord*” from Handel’s *Saul*. The second phrase is not unlike “*Above all heavens / how hast thou set thy glorious throne*” from the same libretto. The author of that text was, of course, Charles Jennens, showing - for one more time - just how likely it is that he can now be identified as the original author of the *Creation* libretto.

- No. 34 *Sing the Lord, ye voices all! Utter thanks, ye all [sic] his works!
Celebrate his power and glory! Let his name resound on high!*

It was shown in an earlier chapter that Jennens wrote many verses like this in his *Saul* libretto. Phrases redolent of the Psalms fell easily from the end of his pen. The use of words like *celebrate*, *utter* and *resound* has been shown to be a likely intervention on the part of the author, as they are unknown in Milton, Thomson or the Psalter, but are found in Shakespeare. Regarding the opening line *Sing the Lord, ye voices all* it is worth remarking that Jennens’ libretto for “Israel in Egypt” contains a similar text for chorus: “*Sing ye to the Lord*”^{cxliii}, and his libretto for *Belshazzar* has the line: “*Sing, O ye Heavens Earth from thy centre, shout!*”^{cxliv} Whether the ur-libretto contained the line in exactly the form we know it now is impossible to tell. It would make clearer sense as *Sing to the Lord*. Many of Handel’s choruses in the Chandos Anthems and Wedding Anthems have texts like this, beginning ‘*Sing unto God*’, which is metrically similar.^{cxlv} Neukomm’s 1832 edition replaces the whole text of the chorus with the following:

Praise the Lord of earth and sky! / Utter songs of adoration!
Heav’n and earth and all creation / Sound Jehovah’s praise on high.
The Lord is great; his praise shall last for aye. Amen.

Vincent Novello retained some of the original text, but incorporated Neukomm’s use of the appellation ‘Jehovah’ – which we can trace back to Milton’s Psalm VIII (see page 27):

Sing the Lord, ye voices all! / Magnify his name thro’ all creation.
Celebrate his pow’r and glory. / Let his name resound on high.
Jehovah’s praise for ever shall endure. Amen.

No. 22

Milton

No. 8

Milton

With copious fruit th'expanded boughs are hung;
In leafy arches twine the shady groves;
O'er lofty hills majestic forests wave.

Neil Jenkins – www.neiljenkins.info

ideal conception in my mind, seemed to demand. Guided by these sentiments, I often judged it necessary that much should be shortened or even omitted, on the one hand, and on the other that much should be made more prominent or brought into greater relief, and much placed more in the shade.”^{cxlix}

The results are obvious in Aria no. 2 where he brings in the chorus at “*Despairing, cursing rage*”, (which was probably the B section of this Aria), and eliminates the anticipated angelic Chorus of praise at the end of Day One. I am indebted to Temperley for making this process so clear in his article ‘New Light on the Libretto of The Creation’.^{cl} Swieten does something similar with Aria no. 4, transforming it (as we have already seen) from a recitative heralding the Chorus of praise for Day Two into a Solo and Chorus. Days Three and Four still contain strong evidence of their original “Recit - Aria – Chorus” structure, as does most of Part 2. Days Three, Five and Six are enlarged to a double Aria format that is also found in places in Jennens’ layout of the *Messiah*.^{cli} However, one wonders whether the recitative no. 17 at the close of Day Five did not originally lead directly into Chorus of praise no. 19. The Trio no.18 throws up all sorts of textual problems, as we have seen earlier (particularly in Chapter 7, pages 25-7). It is the first point at which the forward momentum of the narrative is halted to reconsider things that have already been dealt with. Gabriel’s verse retraces the creation of hills and rivers sung about in Arias no. 6 & 8; Uriel’s verse deals once more with the birdlife of Aria no.15; and Raphael enlarges on the fish who were created recently in no.16. It is quite likely that no.18 was originally intended to simply be a solo Aria enlarging on the creation of Fish, using Raphael’s text. Thus Swieten looks like being the author of those problematic verses for Gabriel and Uriel which precede it, and which hold up the unfolding of the narrative.

There are more problems evident in the structure of Part 3. It has been suggested that Swieten is to some extent responsible for reshaping Recitative no. 31 and Duet no. 32. If his purpose was to make this area “*more prominent*” by developing an operatic scene in which Adam and Eve could sing like a couple of Biedermeier figures, then we must consider what was there beforehand in the ur-libretto.

I feel that the weakness in the opening recitative to Part 3, no. 29, reveals that this was not always how it was structured, and that Swieten may have moved some of the text around at this point.

Let us consider no. 29 in depth. It begins with a text eminently suited to the evocation of morning. By a happy accident the orchestral introduction features the sound of the flute (three of them in fact), which is present in Thomson’s perfect Eden landscape:

For music held the whole in perfect peace;
Soft sighed the flute; the tender voice was heard,
Warbling the varied heart; the woodlands round
Applied their choir; and winds and waters flowed
In consonance. Such were those prime of days. [Spring, lines 267 – 271]

In rosy mantle appears / By tunes sweet awaked / The morning young and fair.

Both Milton and Thomson use the ‘mantle’ image, although in neither case is their colour ‘rosy’. Milton’s “Lycidas” finishes famously with: “At last he rose and twitched his

mantle blue...”; and in ‘Paradise Lost’ he describes the moon who “o’er the dark her silver mantle threw”.^{clii} Thomson, in “The Seasons”, has mantles of ‘dun’ and ‘fleece’. The colour ‘rosy’ is suggested, presumably, by Milton’s actual image of “Morn, her rosy steps in the Eastern clime advancing...” at the opening of Book V of “Paradise Lost”. The librettist has expanded this with the poetical metaphor remembered from Shakespeare’s ‘Hamlet’ as discussed above (on page 34).

The next text seems to herald a chorus of angels:

From the celestial vaults / pure harmony descends / On ravished earth.

It would seem that such a chorus has been deleted. Since the presence of angelic voices being all around is a theme that permeates Milton’s concept of Eden, it would not have been inappropriate at this point. [Compare Stillingfleet’s treatment of this scene in Chapter 17 where guardian angels sing in chorus at the end of his Act 1.]

Then comes a badly expressed verse that has been considered earlier:

*Behold the blissful pair / Where hand in hand they go.
Their flaming looks express / What feels the grateful heart.[sic]
A louder praise of God / Their lips shall utter soon.
Then let our voices ring / United with their song.*

The first four lines sound as though they should follow, rather than precede, Adam and Eve’s “Hymn of Thanks” (no. 30). But the biggest problem is thrown up by the final four lines. They are very unsatisfactory. What precisely is the information being conveyed? Why will their lips be uttering ‘soon’? Why will their praise be ‘louder’? Is it simply Swieten’s mistake in re-translating the German text ‘*in laudem Ton*’? Who are ‘we’ in the line “*Then let our voices ring*”? Why, for the first time in the libretto, is there a sense of ‘them’ and ‘us’? Up until this point the Chorus of angels have been ever-present without addressing anyone in other than reported speech. If Uriel is being their spokesperson, then it is the first and only time when this happens. It feels odd. The German text is remarkably similar:

*Bald singt in laudem Ton / ihr Mund des Schöpfers Lob.
Lasst uns’re Stimme dann / sich mengen in ihr Lied...*

So we must assume that Swieten has made changes here. It is just possible - an idea and no more - that the line ‘*Then let our voices ring / United with their song*’ was originally given to Adam to sing before the Hymn of Thanks. The Chorus of Angels certainly sing along with Adam and Eve in Haydn’s no. 30, and may have been required to do so in the text of the ur-libretto also.

Neukomm’s 1832 edition provides a completely new text for this problem area, which is considerably indebted to ‘Paradise Lost’ as can be seen. Regrettably, Vincent Novello did not make use of these improvements in his 1847 edition:

Neukomm

Lowly they bowed adoring,
And began their orisons,

Milton [Book V lines 144-5]

Lowly they bowed, adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid...

While heav'n's seraphic hosts
United with their song.

Milton [Book V line 535]
...all the angelick host, that stand
In sight of God...

15. POSSIBLE STRUCTURE OF PART 3 IN THE UR-LIBRETTO

A new order for Part 3 will have to be purely speculative, but - taking Jennens' other libretti into consideration - it could be possible to arrive at a shape that would make more sense of the existing material. He tends to place his Duet towards the end of the third part of the work, and begins with a quiet Aria, or Arias, confronting doubts or certainties:

Saul Scene with the Witch of Endor / *Belshazzar* anxious arias for Nitocris and Daniel / *Messiah*
I know that my redeemer liveth

There is then an active moment featuring a martial theme, and sometimes including trumpets;

Saul - recitative announcing the battle and death of Saul / *Belshazzar* - Sesach Aria, symphony & recitative announcing the battle and death of Belshazzar / *Messiah* - The trumpet shall sound

Then comes the Duet or Ensemble, or Aria of resolution: [n.b. this is where the Duet comes in *Il Moderato*].

Saul "Tell it not in Gath" Aria & Ensemble / *Belshazzar* arias of rejoicing / *Messiah* "O Death where is thy sting" and Aria "If God be for us"

At the conclusion there is a Chorus of Praise. The shape of a typical Jennens Part 3 is, therefore, built on the following pattern:

Reflection - Action - Resolution - Conclusion

With this shape in mind, an ur-libretto of Part 3 of *The Creation* from the pen of Charles Jennens could have been quite long, (bearing in mind Handel's problems with *Belshazzar*^{cliii}), and comprised these – purely speculative - movements:

Orchestral Symphony, depicting dawn

Recit (Uriel) *In rosy mantle appears / By tunes sweet awaked / The morning young and fair.
From the celestial vaults / pure harmony descends / On ravished earth.*

Chorus of Angels (text unknown. Milton says that the Angels "*sang their great Creator*".^{cliv})

Recitative for Adam and Eve upon awakening, possibly derived from portions of no. 31

Short Aria / Arioso (Adam)

possibly derived from the opening of no. 32 "*Graceful consort, at thy side / softly fly the golden hours*"

Short Aria / Arioso (Eve)

possibly derived from the continuation of 32 "*The dew-dropping morn, / O how she quickens all!*"

[N.B. Stillingfleet does something similar – see Chapter 17.]

Recitative (Adam), possibly using the existing lines for Uriel:

*A louder praise of God / [our] lips shall utter soon.
Then let our voices ring / United with their song.*

Hymn no. 30 Adam, Eve, Chorus of Angels

Recitative no. 31 (Adam and Eve)

*Now follow me, dear partner of my life! / Thy guide I'll be, and every step
Pours new delights into our breast, / Shows wonders everywhere.
Then mayst thou feel and know / The high degree of bliss
The Lord allotted us, / And with devoted heart
His bounty celebrate. / Come follow me! Thy guide I'll be.*

- leading directly to

Recitative (Uriel)

*Behold the blissful pair / Where hand in hand they go.
Their flaming looks express / What feels the grateful heart.*

- immediately followed by

Recitative 33 (Uriel)

*O happy pair, and always happy yet, / If not, misled by false conceit
Ye strive at more as granted is, / And more to know as know ye should.*

Final Chorus no. 34

It is interesting to note that when Anne Hunter responded to George Thomson's letter of 1804^{clv} she set about improving the English text in a manuscript which only came to light in the archives of The Royal College of Surgeons in 1990.^{clvi} Initially causing a minor excitement in case it had proved to be the ur-libretto, it was quickly discovered, by the watermarks in the paper, to postdate Haydn's composition. In it she wrote one section of verse for Part 3 for which there is no music. This is the text of an aria for Eve - "*the song intended for Eve*". But why Anne Hunter should have provided these extra verses is a mystery. Perhaps it is not fanciful to surmise that she knew that Eve should have had an aria in Part 3. Perhaps she had caught sight of the ur-libretto before Haydn left England, or perhaps he had told her about it.

The aria she wrote is based on lines from *Paradise Lost* Book IV, and has certain affinities with her parting gift to Haydn - the poem "*O Tuneful voice*" - which he subsequently set to music in 1802. Robbins Landon calls that song "a great masterpiece in miniature, and a tribute to Anne Hunter, whose verse could unlock such a vein of poetic feeling in the old Haydn"^{clvii}. They both seem to speak of an intensely intimate relationship between man and woman, and share at least one identical line (highlighted below). The texts of both poems seem to tell us that, in addition to Rebecca Schroeter, whose letters we know that he kept,^{clviii} Haydn seems to have left yet another attractive English widow behind in London regretting his departure^{clix}:

'The song intended for Eve'

The happy hour I call to mind
 When on a mossy bank reclin'd
 I first awoke to life, and light;
 And Nature struck my ravish'd sight.

From thee, of all her gifts most dear,
 From thee I shrunk with doubt and fear,
 And would have fled; fled far away
 But thy kind accents bade me stay.

Thy words **still vibrate on my heart**,
 "Stay lovely Eve, not so we part":
 "Stay lovely Eve", the echo's round
 Returned the soft persuasive sound.

'O Tuneful Voice'

O Tuneful voice, I still deplore
 Thy accents, which I hear no more,
Still vibrate on my heart!

In Echo's cave I long to dwell,
 And still to hear that sad farewell,
 When we were forced to part!
 Bright eyes! O that the task were mine,
 To guard the liquid fires, that shine,
 And round your orbits play,

To watch them with a vestal's care!
 To feed with smiles a light so fair,
 That it may ne'er decay.

It is doubtful that Haydn ever saw Anne's work on the English libretto or this poem for Eve. Two versions of it in manuscript remained entombed in the archives of The Royal College of Surgeons amongst the books and writings of Anne's husband John Hunter, one of the fathers of modern scientific surgery. It has been printed for the first time in the introduction to the edition of *The Creation* (containing her text) which was published by King's Music in September 1993^{clx}.

16. THE 1800 EDITION AND THE LONDON WORD-BOOKS

The English premiere of *The Creation* turned into a race between John Ashley, manager of the Covent Garden oratorio series, and J.P. Salomon whose concerts took place at the King's Theatre.^{clxi} Salomon had been assured that he would be granted the premiere, and would reap the reward he so richly deserved for having found the old libretto for Haydn and having encouraged him to compose the work in homage to Handel. Haydn sent him his 12 copies of the score as soon as it was published on 28th February 1800. They arrived in London on 23rd March, and the postage cost him £30 16s.^{clxii} But fate – or the postal system – took a hand by letting John Ashley's copy, which had been sent later, arrive a day earlier, on 22nd March. His postage was only £2 12s 6d because his package had come from Vienna by King's messenger.^{clxiii} He grabbed this advantage by announcing a performance later that week, on Friday 28th March. Salomon couldn't compete as he had resolved to perform it on 21st April, and his announcement appeared in the press before he was aware of Ashley's move. So he used his newspaper advertisements to declare that his would be the more authentic performance, as he had been "favoured exclusively by Dr Haydn with particular directions on the style and manner in which it ought to be executed".^{clxiv}

Despite mounting hurried performances within days of receiving their scores from Vienna, these two impresarios were still able to produce printed word-books for sale at the door. It is remarkable to find how closely they compare with each other. The lay-out is very similar, and their text is almost identical, apart from a few obvious typographical errors. These can be consulted in Temperley [op. cit] and Robbins Landon 'The Creation

& The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks'.^{clxv} But in one place they both have a variant text from the scores that they had received from Vienna. Instead of the printed:

".... Softly purling glides on / Through silent vales the limpid brook"^{clxvi}

the word-books for both performances contain:

"... In silent vales soft gliding brooks / By gentle noise mark out their way"^{clxvii}

Temperley believes that the explanation for this is that both Ashley and Salomon must have had access to a copy of the original word-book that Haydn took back to Vienna.^{clxviii} The English text that they print is very close to earlier versions of Swieten's German text. Haydn himself altered "Sanft rauschend fließt und windet sich" to "Leise rauschend gleitet fort" in the manuscript. "Bahnet seinen Weg" which is found in Swieten's autograph^{clxix} is equally close in meaning to "mark out their way", implying that it was the ur-text for this passage. Temperley says "Van Swieten had to fit a new English version of the first line, 'Softly purling glides on', to these new rhythms, with 'softly' to correspond with 'leise'; and changes in the second line were necessary to complete the sense."^{clxx} However, it has been shown earlier, on pages 24 & 32, that the printed line is derived from Milton and Thomson. The line that it replaced, and which is found in the English word-books, has no known source in either Milton or Thomson. My suggestion is that both lines were present in the ur-libretto. They are too good to have been a hurried emendation on the part of Swieten. Perhaps the Aria originally had more lines, and described 'rivers' as well as 'brooks'. Perhaps the 'softly purling' line was originally used in conjunction with the waters Milton is describing in the lines "If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain, / Soft-ebbing",^{clxxi} while the other describes Thomson's brook, "now scarcely moving through a reedy pool".^{clxxii} Although the earlier line has no Milton or Thomson source, it is a beautiful expression, and quite like the work of Thomas Gray (1716-71). One is reminded of these lines from his 'Elegy' (published in 1751):

Along the cool sequestered vale of life / They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.^{clxxiii}

The replacement text, if we are to accept Temperley's theory, would not have been present in the ur-libretto. Confusingly, this is the line which derives from the Milton and Thomson sources.

It is most unlikely that both Ashley and Salomon prepared their word-books in advance of the receipt of their scores by consulting a copy of the ur-text to which they both had somehow gained access, as is proposed by Temperley. Salomon might have kept a copy after handing it to Haydn. Alternatively Haydn might have sent him a manuscript copy of the score. His amanuensis Elssler did prepare several of these in 1798-9.^{clxxiv} But if he had received one it is more than likely that he would have used it to mount his performance, rather than wait for the published scores to arrive from Vienna. Whatever document he may have had, Salomon would not have allowed Ashley sight of it. As Temperley says, "the last thing he would have done is to show it to his rival".^{clxxv}

If we assume that both versions of the variant lines in Aria no. 6 were present in some form or another in the ur-libretto, and that the alteration had been a late one (Temperley reproduces the page of the m/s showing Haydn's alteration^{clxxvi}) then it is possible to

suppose that Swieten and Haydn had prepared an English word-book to send out with the scores to those recipients who were going to mount a performance. This word-book would not have contained the late alteration. It is the only explanation that I can come up with to explain how both Ashley and Salomon printed the same variant text. They were working at speed. Certainly Ashley was. He had only 5 days in which to rehearse and mount his performance. He also managed to have a word-book ready for sale in the theatre. He could have used up valuable time extracting the text from the score; but I doubt that he would have laid it out so exactly as it is in his printed wordbook. Both wordbooks are reproduced in facsimile in ‘The Creation & The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks’^{clxxvii} where the identical page layouts of the two different printers, E. Macleish (of No. 2 Bow Street) and H. Reynell (of No. 21 Piccadilly), can be observed. It is much more likely that Ashley’s text was printed from a word-book that had been prepared in Vienna and that had accompanied his copy of the full-score.

Temperley proposes that Salomon must have copied the exact layout of Ashley’s book, mistakes and all. Once again, it is much more likely that he had received the identical document from Vienna. In confirmation of this it can be shown that Ashley prints one line in a version which could have been a mistake originating in Vienna. The line ‘Here vent their fumes the fragrant herbs’ [Aria no. 8] appears in his wordbook as ‘Here went their fumes the fragrant herbs’^{clxxviii}. Such a mistake could conceivably be made by a German speaker who muddled his ‘v’s and his ‘w’s. Salomon had longer to prepare his wordbook. Besides using a more elegant typeface than Ashley, his printer tried to address the problem of this line. But his nonsensical solution shows that he did not consult the full score where it is given correctly. His version is^{clxxix}: ‘*Here what their fumes the fragrant herbs*’.^{clxxx}

Another variant which is present in both English word-books is the last line of Duet no. 32.^{clxxxi} Instead of the printed “Thine it whole shall be” we find “To thee be vow’d it whole”. Perhaps this came about for the same reasons as the other variant line “*In silent vales soft gliding brooks / By gentle noise mark out their way*”, and was given as such in the supposed word-book emanating from Vienna.

Regrettably, it is unlikely that anything more definite will be discovered about the origins of the ur-libretto. If it had been hidden anywhere, it – or at least a copy of it - might have been found amongst the collection of Harris papers that Donald Burrows and Rosemary Dunhill sifted through. Sadly it wasn’t. Haydn’s autograph score disappeared in 1803.^{clxxxii} The original libretto that Swieten worked from is also lost, and only his autograph German text is extant.^{clxxxiii} All we can do now is speculate...

17. STILLINGFLEET’S ADAM AND EVE SCENES

Although Benjamin Stillingfleet produced a libretto based on ‘Paradise Lost’ in the 1750s it seems clear that this was never intended for Handel’s use. Handel’s protégé Smith was working on it in 1757-8 when his master was blind and no longer composing.^{clxxxiv} Handel had completed his last oratorio, *Jephtha*, as long ago as 1751, and since then had only tinkered with earlier compositions – such as turning “Il trionfo del Tempo” into *The*

Triumph of Time and Truth in 1757. As shown in earlier chapters there are sections of overlap between Stillingfleet's libretto and the English *Creation* text printed in Haydn's 1800 edition. But it is interesting to compare what Stillingfleet did with his scenes for Adam and Eve, in the light of the alterations almost certainly made to the Third Part of the *Creation* ur-text by Swieten.

It will be seen from the text below which lines of Stillingfleet's libretto^{clxxxv} echo lines in the ur-text [given below in square brackets]. There are not many. In fact, Stillingfleet keeps very closely to the Milton text in his long recitative sections. The events that he describes also follow the action in Milton closely. In the ur-text of the *Creation*, Part Three, there is no sense that the humans are waking, discussing their responsibilities in tending the garden, or planning to go to work separately; a situation which allows the serpent to find Eve alone and begin the temptation. The only residual piece of Miltonic action is their Morning Hymn, derived from Book 5, lines 153-208. Stillingfleet has a shortened version of this too, and places it – in accordance with Milton – after Eve has recounted her dream of being tempted to eat the forbidden fruit. By rights the ur-libretto should have indicated that this drama was already unfolding prior to Adam and Eve singing their Morning Hymn [no. 30]. But we hear nothing of it, and only see Adam and Eve in a state of grace, blissfully in love, in an idealised landscape. The version Swieten has provided, through his acknowledged 'cuts', has completely sanitised Milton's garden of Eden. It is instructive, therefore, to see what incidents a librettist, putting his text together c. 1744-5, might have felt that it was important to include.

Stillingfleet is our only other model. Although he was writing a decade later he moved in the same circles as Handel's friends and colleagues. We know from Mary Delany, James Upton, James Harris and Charles Jennens that they all admired and respected Milton's work. It is unlikely that they would have made seriously major changes to the structure of the scenes in Milton's *Paradise*. Stillingfleet commences his 1st Act well after the end of the *Creation*; but refers to it in the opening chorus (see page 16). Then comes a scene for the Angels in which Uriel announces that Satan is trying to gain access to *Paradise*.

The scene then changes to Eden, where Adam and Eve are discovered:

Adam:	Sole partner and sole part of all these joys,	[cf. Now follow me, dear partner of my life]
	Dearer thy self than all; needs must the Power	
	That fram'd this world, be infinitely good,	[cf. This world ... thy mighty hand has fram'd]
	That raised us from dust and placed us here	
	In all this happiness, yet he requires	
	From us no other service, than to keep	
	This one, this easy charge; of all the trees	
	In paradise, that bear delicious fruit	
	So various, not to taste that only tree	
	Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life:	
	The only sign of our obedience left	
	Among so many signs of power and rule	
	Conferr'd upon us.	

SONG

*Would we hold domain given,
We must keep the laws of heaven:
Wisdom thus has all thing plann'd;
Who submits shall have command.*

Eve: My author, my disposer, thou for whom [cf. O thou for whom I am]
And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide,
And head, what thou hast said is just and right;
For we to him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights:
But let us ever praise him and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune those growing plants and tend these flowers,
Which, were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet. [cf. With thee is life
incessant bliss]

SONG

Bounteous Providence divine! [cf. Hail bounteous Lord!
Almighty, hail!]
*Oh! How gracious is thy sway?
Duty and delight combine,
Truest bliss is to obey.* [cf. From obedience grows my pride
and happiness]
Thy commands well understood [cf. Thy will is law to me]
Leads us to our greatest good.

[Adam says that night is approaching and that they must take their rest]

SONG

*Sweet partaker of my toil!
Partner of each pleasing care!
We have duly till'd the soil,
Sleep shall now our strength repair.*

Eve: Be it as thou hast said. Whate'er thou bidd'st
Unargued I obey; so God ordains. [cf. So God our Lord
ordains]
God is thy law, thou mine. To know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.

SONG

*Yes, Adam, yes; the sun I see
Is set: but what is time to me?
When my Lord, my spouse is nigh,* [cf. With thee is life incessant bliss]

Seasons pass unheeded by.

[cf. Softly fly the golden hours]

Eve: Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet [cf. Duet no. 32]
 With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun
 When first on this delightful land he spreads
 His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit and flower
 Glittering with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
 After soft showers, and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful evening mild; the silent night
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
 And these gems of heaven, her starry train.
 But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
 With charm of earliest bird, nor rising sun
 On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flower
 Glistering with dew, nor fragrance after showers
 With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon
 Or glittering star-light without thee is sweet.

SONG

*Glittering stars, resplendent moon,
 To what purpose are your rays?
 Sleep will close our eyelids soon;
 None will then upon you gaze.
 Why, oh! Adam, tell me why,
 All this glory in the sky?*

[Adam reassures Eve that it is all part of God's purpose, and tells her that millions of unseen spiritual creatures walk the earth and adore the works of God when they wake and when they sleep.]

DUET

<i>Thou didst also make the night,</i>	[cf. ...And thou that rul'st the silent night...]
<i>Glorious being! Thou the day,</i>	[cf. ...How brighten'st thou the day, O sun...]
<i>Which we have finished with delight,</i>	[cf. ...every step pours new delights into our breasts...]
<i>Pleas'd thy precepts to obey.</i>	

*Bless'd in this delicious place,
 Tho' our toil it overpowers,
 But thou hast promis'd us a race
 That shall join their toil with ours.*

[Angels sing a chorus, after which they go to guard the garden and find the interloper. End of Act 1. Act 2. Adam and Eve wake up. Eve recounts the dream in which she was tempted 'by a seeming angel' to eat 'of the fruit forbidden'. Adam consoles her and suggests that they go to their labours.]

DUET [MORNING HYMN]

<i>Parent of good! These glorious works are thine,</i>	[cf. Hymn no. 30]
<i>Thine, mighty Lord, whatever eye can see;</i>	

*When things created with such lustre shine
 What must we, wond'rous being, think of thee?
 But thou! involv'd as in a veil of light,
 Art hid for ever from created sight.*

[Adam and Eve go their separate ways to work. The angels sense that Sin has entered into the garden. On rejoining Adam, Eve recounts how the serpent persuaded her to eat the fruit. Adam, shocked, does the same – for love of Eve – even if it means death. The angels agree that Man is ruined and that the subtle rebel has prevailed. End of Act 2. In Act 3 the archangel Michael banishes Adam and Eve from Paradise.]

CONCLUSION

My investigation into the origins of the “Creation” libretto were born out of a desire to improve the English singing-version for the 21st century. I had previously done the same with all of Bach’s major choral works,¹ and was approached by various musicians and conductors who felt that Haydn’s works needed the same reappraisal. During my earlier work on Haydn’s other choral masterpiece “The Seasons”² I had discovered, to my surprise, that “*The Creation*” also employed lines of text taken from the Thomson poem. With this as my starting point I began to search out the other sources for the text. As this has only come down to us in the version inserted by Swieten into the 1800 score it was clear that I needed to do a lot of detective work.

So I decided to learn all that I could about the libretto and its origins before beginning work on my new English text. I hoped to retain the eighteenth century ‘feel’ by using as much as possible of the original sources. These were sometimes clearly identifiable in the Swieten re-translation, even though the Germanic word-order, and his limited knowledge of English grammar, periodically masked them.

In the process of investigation I became convinced that some of the remarks about the work related by Haydn and Swieten probably contained a good kernel of truth. I was most intrigued by Swieten’s statement that the libretto was an old one, originally intended for Handel. From the use of Thomson’s poem, as well as other textual indications, it seemed likely that the date of composition could well have been c. 1745. My exhaustive research into Charles Jennens’ other libretti for Handel revealed remarkable similarities of language, style and content with “The Creation” text. Among these I would suggest that the “*Saul*” extract (“*By thee this universal frame*”), the discovery of Jennens’ preferred spelling of the word ‘atchieved’, and the correspondence between the 4th Earl of Shaftesbury, James Harris and Jennens are the most significant.

Once I began to concentrate on Jennens it seemed more and more likely that the libretto was his, rather than one of the other three others, by Mrs Delany, John Upton, and Benjamin Stillingfleet, that have at various times been proposed as the original. His love of Shakespeare (which he went on to edit) could be the reason that some of the language appears so old-fashioned. His eclectic knowledge of the Scriptures and of Virgil’s poetry

¹ For the ‘New Novello Choral Edition’

² published by King’s Music

makes sense of other passages. Thomson's poetry was enjoying enormous fame in the 1740s, and would have been well-known to Jennens' circle of dilettanti friends. The fact that Jennens' libretti were always too long for Handel makes sense of Haydn's remark that the text that he was given on leaving London in 1795 was too long and needed pruning. How much it was altered by Swieten is not clear; but I have made some conjectural suggestions, based on Jennens' literary structures in "Messiah" and elsewhere.

The only thing on which it is impossible to make a pronouncement is what happened to the ur-libretto after its presumed rejection by Handel. Handel's music, scores and papers can be traced through to John Christopher Smith via his father who inherited them in 1759 and subsequently passed them on to his son. Haydn visited Bath in 1794, where the elderly Smith was living. Although there is no record of them meeting, it is likely that Haydn would have wanted to meet the one living person who had a first-hand knowledge of the composer he so revered. He mentions some of the musicians he met in Bath in his notebooks,³ but there is no mention of J. C. Smith.

However, his desire to write an oratorio in the style of Handel must have become known to his circle of musical friends. Smith would have been one of the few people who would have known of the old libretto, in view of the fact that it was he who – in 1760 – performed an oratorio of his own on the Miltonic theme of "*Paradise Lost*". The libretto for this is the one by Benjamin Stillingfleet; which implies that, at the time of composition in 1757-8, Smith would have been either unaware of the ur-libretto until he inherited it, or that he had deliberately rejected it in favour of a new one. If Salomon – in an endeavour to get Haydn to return to England for a third visit - had been enquiring after an unused Handelian libretto in 1795, it is likely that J. C. Smith would have been the one man to know where to find it.

Salomon did get his oratorio from Haydn, and gave very nearly the first performance of it in English on 21st April 1800. But then the problems with the text began. It has been to address this that I finally committed myself to producing a new, singable, English translation.⁴ This is based on all the available sources, taking careful note of the ur-libretto contained in the 1800 edition, but incorporating improvements from the 1800 London Wordbooks, and later editions by Clementi and Neukomm. I have also consulted the Biblical text and the poems of Milton and Thomson in order to try and incorporate more authentic versions of the lines that derive from their works. In the choruses there are moments when Swieten's text has been rearranged into something more idiomatically English.

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³ Landon, H.C Robbins, 'The Collected Correspondence and London Notebooks of Joseph Haydn'

⁴ published by King's Music

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1. INTRODUCTION

- ⁱ Anna Seward, letter of September 27th 1802, [Anna Seward *Letters*, ed. A. Constable, Edinburgh, 1811] quoted in Robert Manson Myers *Handel, Dryden and Milton*, London 1956, p. 47
- ⁱⁱ Scottish music publisher George Thomson to Anne Hunter, 1804 quoted in Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, p. 343
- ⁱⁱⁱ F.L.A. Kunzen, “Zeitung fur die elegante Welt” December 1801 quoted in Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, p. 600
- ^{iv} Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, p. 471
- ^v Haydn *The Creation* C.U.Press 1991, p. 38
- ^{vi} *The Creation*, Peters Edition No. 7333 1988, ed. Temperley, Introduction p. vi
- ^{vii} as Olleson states in *Haydn Yearbook 4*, 1968, pp. 159 – 160, although he is aware of the corrupting influence of Swieten’s intervention: “It seems safe to assume that those parts of the ‘Lidley’ libretto which were used in Haydn’s oratorio have by and large survived – not dimly visible through a translation and re-translation, but in their original form.” Olleson op.cit. p.160.
- ^{viii} *The Creation*, O.U.P edition 1991, ed. A. Peter Brown & Julie Schnepel, Preface p. v; & ‘Preface’ to Brown, A.P., ‘*Performing Haydn’s The Creation: Reconstructing the earliest Renditions*’, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986
- ^{ix} *The Creation*, Novello Edition 1999, ed. Michael Pilkington, Preface p. vii
- ^x in the Eulenburg Miniature Score of 1925, and Breitkopf Edition no. 118. Robert Shaw and Alice Parker also translated the German text for Lawson-Gould’s edition, New York 1957.
- ^{xi} Professor Martin Stern’s monograph *on The Creation* [‘Haydn’s “Schöpfung”: Geist und Herkunft des van Swietenschen Librettos’, *Haydn-Studien 1*, 1966] posited the theory that Swieten’s work on the libretto was much more than he or anyone else has ever admitted., which “makes it possible that van Swieten, using Protestant models of religious poetry from the period of the Enlightenment ... put together his text from the Bible and Milton’s epic poem.” Quoted in *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, p. 346
- ^{xii} *Haydn Yearbook 4*, 1968, pp. 148 – 168
- ^{xiii} *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, pp. 189 – 211

2. ORIGINS OF THE LIBRETTO

- ^{xiv} *Le Haydine*, Milan 1812 quoted in Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works III*, p. 84
- ^{xv} Temperley *Haydn The Creation* pp. 19-20, Olleson *The Origin & Libretto of Haydn’s Creation* pp. 154-5, Tovey ‘Haydn: The Creation’, *Essays in Musical Analysis* vol. V p.119
- ^{xvi} *Haydn Yearbook 4*, 1968, p. 163
- ^{xvii} quoted in Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, p. 116.
- ^{xviii} see: Olleson, E., ‘Gottfried van Swieten: Patron of Haydn and Mozart’, *Proceedings of the RMA*, 89

^{xix} Temperley, *op. cit.* pp. 204 – 208, makes a case for some moments in “The marv’lous work” (no. 4) fitting the music better in English than in German, although he later admits that “there are many more at which the music fits the German better than the English – in some cases enormously better. No one doubts that Haydn had the German in mind; it was, certainly, his main text.”

^{xx} quoted in Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, p. 116

^{xxi} Dryden, John, ‘*Fables ancient and modern*’ London 1700; Ovid ‘*Metamorphoses*’, Book the First

3. THE ORIGINAL LIBRETTIST

^{xxii} Olleson *op. cit.* pp. 163 –5

^{xxiii} Olleson *op. cit.* p. 165

^{xxiv} Olleson *op. cit.* p. 164

^{xxv} quoted in Deutsch, *Handel: a Documentary Biography*, ‘the first codicil to Handel’s Will’ p. 776

^{xxvi} Temperley, *Haydn The Creation*, p. 20

^{xxvii} *Music and Theatre in Handel’s world*, Oxford 2002

^{xxviii} *Music and Theatre in Handel’s world*, p. 82-9

^{xxix} *Music and Theatre in Handel’s world*, p.1075-85

^{xxx} Olleson *op. cit.* pp. 164

^{xxxi} N.B. Handel / Jennens correspondence is taken from O. E. Deutsch *Handel: a Documentary Biography*. Handel / Holdsworth correspondence is taken from personal consultation of the originals in the Gerald Coke Collection, the Foundling Museum, London.

^{xxxii} *Handel Messiah* C.U.Press 1991, pp. 57 - 60

^{xxxiii} Temperley *Haydn The Creation* p. 47

^{xxxiv} *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 197

4. CHARLES JENNENS AS LIBRETTIST

^{xxxv} *Haydn Yearbook* 4, 1968, p. 164

^{xxxvi} Milton, Psalm LXXXIII v. 18:

“Then shall they know that thou, whose name Jehovah is, alone / Art the Most High, and thou the same / O’er all the earth art One.”

^{xxxvii} The Book of Common Prayer has:

O Lord our Governor, how excellent is thy name in all the world : thou that hast set thy glory above the heavens!

^{xxxviii} ‘*Paradise Lost*’ Book IV line 300

^{xxxix} *Winter*, lines 942-3

^{xi} see *Music and Theatre in Handel's world*, p.314

^{xli} Jennens, C., *'The Tragedy of King Lear vindicated from the abuse of the Critical Reviewers'* London 1772
[copy in the British Library]

^{xlii} 'The blessedness of those who die in the Lord': A Sermon preached on the death of the late Charles Jennens of Gopsal; by the Rev. George Kelly, jun. BA, late of Balliol College, Oxford [copy in the British Library]

^{xliii} letter of February 21st 1743

^{xliv} letter of September 15th 1743

^{xlv} letter of January 17th 1743

^{xlvi} *'Stand round, my brave boys!'* - first performed at Drury Lane Theatre on 14th November 1745

^{xlvii} Handel to Jennens October 2nd 1744

^{xlviii} Handel to Jennens July 28th 1735; also in Deutsch *'Handel: a Documentary Biography'* p.394

^{xliv} *Music and Theatre in Handel's World* p. 198

¹ "... Apparently Jennens (or more likely JH and Jennens jointly – see Jennens letter of 30 November) planned an oratorio based on Milton's *Paradise Lost*". *Music and Theatre in Handel's World* p.198

^{li} letter of September 26th 1744

^{lii} Jennens to James Harris, 30th November 1744,
Music and Theatre in Handel's World p.208

^{liii} The Rev. Thomas Broughton, (1704-1774) Prebendary of Salisbury, provided Handel with the libretto for 'Hercules', which he composed between 19th July and 21st August 1744. See: Winton Dean, *'Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques'* London 1959, p. 429

^{liv} see: Winton Dean *'Charles Jennens's marginalia to Mainwaring's life of Handel'* *Music & Letters* vol. LIII, 1972, pp. 160-4

^{lv} see: Haydn *Chronicle & Works IV*, pp. 573-7 & Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 191 for Salomon's newspaper advertisement in *The Times* of 27th March 1800

5. MILTON'S "PARADISE LOST" SET TO MUSIC

^{lvi} John Upton to James Harris 22nd March 1746,
Music and Theatre in Handel's World p. 225-6

^{lvii} Haydn *Chronicle & Works IV*, pp. 118-9

^{lviii} Temperley *Haydn The Creation* p. 20

^{lix} Myers, Robert Manson, *'Handel, Dryden and Milton'* London 1956, p. 46

^{lx} ‘Edward Dent tentatively suggested that [Delaney’s text] furnished the original of Haydn’s *Creation*, and that Lidley was the nearest that German scholarship could approximate to Delany’. Percy Young, *Handel*, London 1947 p.74, & Deutsch, ‘*Handel: a Documentary Biography*’ p.588

^{lxi} Llanover, A. (ed.) ‘Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany’, London 1861-2, vol. 2, p. 280

^{lxii} see: McCredie, Andrew, ‘John Christopher Smith as a dramatic composer’, *Music & Letters* January 1964

^{lxiii} “A History of the Oratorio” vol. 3, Univ. of N. Carolina 1987, pp. 245-257

^{lxiv} *Music and Letters*, January 1964, pp. 22-38

^{lxv} see: Barbara Mitchell Small, ‘A proposed librettist for Haydn’s *Creation*: Benjamin Stillingfleet’, University of Nevada, 1979

^{lxvi} letter of 27th March 1756, in Deutsch, p.771

^{lxvii} quoted in Hayden, R. ‘*Mrs Delany, her life and her flowers*’ British Museum London 1980, p. 125

^{lxviii} *Dedication*, ‘Literary life and select works of Benjamin Stillingfleet’, 1811

^{lxix} Libretto of ‘*Paradise Lost*’, ‘Literary life and select works of Benjamin Stillingfleet’, 1811

^{lxx} J.C.Smith’s ‘*Paradise Lost*’ was performed on 29th February & 5th March 1760, 18th February 1761, and 2nd March 1774.

^{lxxi} Oxford Composer Companions “*Haydn*” ed. David Wyn Jones, 2002. Eva Zöllner is currently working on this topic.

^{lxxii} *Music and Theatre in Handel’s world*, p.360

^{lxxiii} *Music and Theatre in Handel’s world*, pp.1086-91

^{lxxiv} *Haydn Yearbook* 4, 1968, p. 163

^{lxxv} see: Landon, H.C. Robbins, ‘The Collected Correspondence and London Notebooks of Joseph Haydn’ London 1959, & *Haydn Chronicle & Works III*, pp.266-8

6. OTHER SOURCES: FILLING THE GAPS IN THE LIBRETTO

^{lxxvi} translated by E. Olleson, and quoted in *Haydn Yearbook* 4, 1968, p. 149-150

^{lxxvii} Feder, G., ‘*Joseph Haydn: Die Schöpfung*’, Bärenreiter Kassel 1999, pp. 196-235

^{lxxviii} *Haydn Yearbook* 4, 1968, pp. 58-9

^{lxxix} ‘An Ode occasion’d by the death of Mr. Thomson’, London 1749, stanzas I. & II.

^{lxxx} Dr Johnson, ‘The lives of the Poets: *James Thomson*’ London 1781

^{lxxxi} Essay, Supplementary to the Preface [of ‘The Lyrical Ballads’] 1815; see: Wordsworth, William, ‘*The Poetical Works of Wordsworth*’ O.U.P. 1904 p. 747

^{lxxxii} Thomson, James, *The Seasons* translated by Barthold Heinrich Brockes, Hamburg, 1745

^{lxxxiii} Haydn “*The Seasons*”, published by King’s Music 2001

^{lxxxiv} from Giuseppe Carpani, quoted in Landon, Haydn *Chronicle & Works V*, p. 183

^{lxxxv} from Dies’s biography: “The Emperor Franz asked him, on the occasion of a performance of *The Seasons*, which product of his art he preferred, *The Creation* or *The Seasons*. ‘*The Creation*’, replied Haydn. ‘And why?’ – ‘In *The Creation*, angels speak and tell of God, but in *The Seasons* only Simon talks.’ Quoted in Landon, Haydn *Chronicle & Works V*, p. 183

7. THOMSON’S “THE SEASONS” - A MISSING SOURCE

^{lxxxvi} Handel Jahrbuch 2001, Bärenreiter, pp. 189-202

^{lxxxvii} There is more about Virgil in Jennens’ correspondence with Holdsworth (in the Gerald Coke Collection, the Foundling Museum, London) than there is about Handel. On 19th February 1746 Jennens writes; ‘... if I understood Virgil as well as you do, or you Handel as well as I, we should both have a much larger field for admiration than we have at present.’

^{lxxxviii} ‘I have a copy, as it was printed in Ireland, full of Bulls [misprints]; & if he does not print a correct one here, I shall do it my Self, and perhaps tell him a piece of my mind by way of Preface.’ Letter of 21st February 1743

^{lxxxix} ‘Jennens was, as Steven Urkowitz has noted, “the first attempt to provide readers with a complete collation, on the page, of all the variants between the early editions, and with a full record of the editorial decisions of his 18th century predecessors”. His work has received high praise from a number of modern commentators, with John Velz styling him “the most careful and intelligent collator in the century”. Velz has also observed that Jennens’ commentary is “pithy, reasonable, and sometimes brilliant”’ *Shakespeare in Print*, Andrew Murphy, Cambridge, 2003, p. 66

^{xc} ‘Let Newton, pure intelligence, whom God / To mortals lent to trace his boundless works / From laws sublimely simple...’ *Summer*, lines 1560-3. For Galileo’s discoveries see *Summer*, lines 1696-1729

^{xcⁱ} Ps. 1 v. 4 ‘The ungodly are not so : but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.’ Ps. 35 v. 5 ‘Let them be as chaff before the wind.’ *King James Bible*

^{xcⁱⁱ} Thomson: A Paraphrase on Psalm CIV, line 35

^{xcⁱⁱⁱ} ‘Samson’, Part the Second, Air no. 36 for Philistine Woman / Dalila

^{xc^{iv}} *Autumn*, lines 736-835

^{xc^v} Feder, G., ‘*Joseph Haydn: Die Schöpfung*’, Bärenreiter Kassel 1999, p. 214

^{xc^{vi}} ‘Paradise Lost’ Book VII, lines 444-6

^{xc^{vii}} *Winter*, lines 1014-16

^{xc^{viii}} Thomson: A Paraphrase on Psalm CIV, line 97

^{xc^{ix}} Milton: Psalm VIII, lines 21 – 24

^c *Summer*, lines 342-3

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- ^{ci} 'The Creation' No. 21, Accompanied Recitative
- ^{cii} 'Paradise Lost', Book II, lines 903-4
- ^{ciii} see: the Jennens / Holdsworth correspondence in the Gerald Coke Collection, Foundling Museum, London.
- ^{civ} Joseph Trapp, Virgil's 'Aeneis' [from The Works of Virgil, 1731] Book the Eleventh
- ^{cv} Feder, G., 'Joseph Haydn: Die Schöpfung', Bärenreiter Kassel 1999, p. 220
- ^{cvi} 'Paradise Lost' Book IV, lines 494-5
- ^{cvi} 'Paradise Lost' Book VIII, at lines 471 and 488
- ^{cvi} 'Paradise Lost' Book VIII line 472
- ^{cix} 'Paradise Lost' Book VIII line 477
- ^{cx} from Dr Johnson's Dictionary, London 1755:
 "To BESPEAK: 5. To betoken; to shew.
 When the abbot of St. Martin was born, he had so little of the figure of a man, that it *bespoke* him rather a monster. *Locke*."
- ^{cx} 'He, on his side / Leaning half raised, with looks of cordial love' 'Paradise Lost' Book V, lines 11-12
- ^{cxii} 'Eve / With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek' 'Paradise Lost' Book V, lines 9-10
- ^{cxiii} 'Paradise Lost' Book IV, lines 469-70
- ^{cxiv} 'Paradise Lost' Book IV, line 412
- ^{cxv} cf. 'dew-dropping coolness' in *Summer*, line 206
- ^{cxvi} 'The Philoctetes of Sophocles' (1725) by Thomas Sheridan, 1687-1738, scene IV:
Phil. How say you! Sure I'm not deceiv'd again.
Neop. No. By the pow'r of sacred Jove you're not.
Phil. How grateful is thy speech, if this be true!
- ^{cxvii} see: Landon, H.C. Robbins, 'The Creation & The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks' Cardiff 1985, pp. 42 & 58

8. FURTHER INSTANCES OF "THE SEASONS" AS SOURCE MATERIAL

- ^{cxviii} Feder, G., 'Joseph Haydn: Die Schöpfung', Bärenreiter Kassel 1999, p. 202
- ^{cxix} Feder, G., 'Joseph Haydn: Die Schöpfung', Bärenreiter Kassel 1999, p. 210

9. THE MINOR POEMS AS SOURCES

- ^{cxx} Thomson: A Paraphrase on Psalm CIV, lines 103-4
- ^{cxxi} Ps. 104 vv. 27-29 These wait all upon thee: that thou mayest give them meat in due season. When thou openest thy hand they are filled with good. When thou hidest thy face they are troubled: when thou takest away their breath they die, and are turned

again to their dust. When thou lettest thy breath go forth they shall be made: and thou shalt renew the face of the earth. [BCP]

10. A FURTHER IMPORTANT SOURCE IDENTIFIED

^{cxxii} King Lear, London 1770; Macbeth, Hamlet, Othello, London 1773; Julius Caesar, London 1774

^{cxxiii} ‘Biographical & Literary Anecdotes of William Bowyer’ by John Nichols, London, 1782

^{cxxiv} Flower, Sir N., ‘Handel, his personality and times’, London 1923, p. 253 & 271

^{cxxv} Jennens, C., ‘*The Tragedy of King Lear vindicated from the abuse of the Critical Reviewers*’ London 1772

^{cxxvi} ‘Paradise Lost’ Book V lines 1-2

^{cxxvii} ‘Hamlet’, Act 1 scene 1, lines 166-7

^{cxxviii} *Summer*, line 980

^{cxxix} Act 1, Scene 4, line 141

^{cxix} Act 1, Scene 3, lines 47-50

^{cxixi} ‘achieved’ appears in the Shakespeare canon 14 times. Jennens used the word in his correspondence with the antiquated spelling ‘atchieved’ – see p. 38

11. THE ORIGINAL INPUT OF THE UR-LIBRETTIST AND SWIETEN

^{cxixii} see: Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 197

^{cxixiii} Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 198

^{cxixiv} Ps. 33 v.1: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous;

Ps. 97 v.12: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous;

Ps. 148 v.12: Praise the name of the Lord [BCP]

^{cxixv} Ps. 150 v.6: Let everything that hath breath: praise the Lord [BCP]

12. SWIETEN’S RE-TRANSLATION BACK INTO ENGLISH: A) THE PSALMS

^{cxixvi} Handel Jahr-Buch 2001, p.193

^{cxixvii} *Music and Theatre in Handel’s World* p. 918, Swieten to James Harris junior, 28th January 1777

^{cxixviii} ‘Paradise Lost’ Book X, line 368

^{cxixix} see: Landon, H.C. Robbins, ‘*The Creation & The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks*’ Cardiff 1985, pp. 37/38 & 53/54

^{cxli} Jennens, C., ‘*The Tragedy of King Lear vindicated from the abuse of the Critical Reviewers*’ London 1772

^{cxlii} Dr Johnson has two definitions of ‘achieve’, of which the appropriate one in this context is no. 1: “To perform, to finish a design prosperously”.

cxlii 'Paradise Lost' Book VII lines 548-9

cxliii 'Israel in Egypt' Chorus no. 30:

'Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously'

cxliv 'Belshazzar', Chorus no. 22:

'Sing, O ye Heav'ns, for the Lord hath done it!'

cxlv for example: the Wedding Anthem for Frederick, Prince of Wales, 1736, 'Sing unto God'; and Chandos Anthem XI 'Let God arise': Chorus 'O sing unto God'.

13. SWIETEN'S RE-TRANSLATION BACK INTO ENGLISH: B) MILTON TEXTS

cxlvi 'Paradise Lost' Book VII, lines 499-504

cxlvii 'Paradise Lost' Book VII, lines 324-7

cxlviii The nearest that I can find to it is "*Gradual sinks the breeze / Into a perfect calm; that not a breath / Is heard to quiver through the closing woods*" in *Spring*, lines 155-7.

14. POSSIBLE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE OF THE UR-LIBRETTO

cxlix translated by E. Olleson, and quoted in Haydn Yearbook 4, 1968, pp. 49-50

cl Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 196-8

cli see: Handel *Messiah* C.U.Press 1991, pp. 57 – 60

clii 'Paradise Lost' Book IV, line 609

15. POSSIBLE STRUCTURE OF PART 3 IN THE UR-LIBRETTO

cliii see: Handel's letter to Jennens of October 2nd 1744

cliv for example: 'Paradise Lost' Book IV, lines 675-688, Book VII, lines 557-575 & 594-633

clv "It is not the first time that your muse and Haydn's have met, as we see from the beautiful canzonets. Would he had been directed by you about the words to The Creation! It is lamentable to see such divine music joined with such miserable broken English." Quoted in Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, p. 343

clvi 'Introduction' to Haydn, J., *The Creation*, King's Music ed. C. Bartlett 1993; "One evening towards the end of 1990 I received a call from Dr. Aileen Adams ... She told me that the Royal College of Surgeons of England had in its library a libretto of *The Creation* by Anne Hunter; this had been described in the College's *Annals* but was unknown to musical scholarship. My immediate reaction was to wonder whether the Lidley story was wrong and that Haydn's friend had written the text herself." Clifford Bartlett, May 1993

clvii Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works III*, p.400

clviii Landon, H.C. Robbins, 'The Collected Correspondence and London Notebooks of Joseph Haydn' London 1959, pp.279-286

clix see also: Hogwood, C., '*Haydn's Visits to England*' London 1980, pp. 97-100

^{clx} in the 'Introduction' to Haydn, J., *The Creation*, King's Music ed. Clifford Bartlett 1993

16. THE 1800 EDITION AND THE LONDON WORD-BOOKS

^{clxi} see: Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 191-3

^{clxii} Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 191 footnote 13:
C.F. Pohl, *Haydn in London*, Vienna 1867, repr. New York 1970, pp. 315-6

^{clxiii} Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 191 footnote 13:
"... on Saturday, 22nd March, ... at nine o'clock in the evening, by a King's messenger from Vienna".

^{clxiv} Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, pp.572-7 &
Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 191-2

^{clxv} Landon, H.C. Robbins, *The Creation & The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks* Cardiff 1985 pp. 29-59 & Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 200

^{clxvi} Aria no. 6, 'Rolling in foaming billows'

^{clxvii} Landon, H.C. Robbins, *The Creation & The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks* Cardiff 1985 pp. 32 & 48

^{clxviii} Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 194: "It seems clear, then, that the *original* English libretto was still available in London and was used as a source for the London librettos. Ashley must have had access to it: the timetable shows that he could not have copied from Salomon. Salomon must have had access to it..."

^{clxix} Budapest, National Library, Ha.I.12

^{clxx} Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p.203

^{clxxi} 'Paradise Lost' Book VII, lines 299-300

^{clxxii} *Summer*, line 482

^{clxxiii} Gray, Thomas, *The Poems of Gray and Collins* O.U.P. 1919, 'Elegy written in a country churchyard', p. 95, lines 75-6

^{clxxiv} Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, p. 392, subsection C: "... No doubt there are more of these scores, which were probably prepared in the Summer of 1798 and the Spring of 1799, in other libraries in Europe".

^{clxxv} Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p.194

^{clxxvi} Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p.195

^{clxxvii} Landon, H.C. Robbins, *The Creation & The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks* Cardiff 1985 pp. 29-59

^{clxxviii} Landon, H.C. Robbins, *The Creation & The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks* Cardiff 1985 p. 32

^{clxxxix} Landon, H.C. Robbins, *'The Creation & The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks'* Cardiff 1985 p. 48

^{clxxx} Temperley thinks that Salomon prepared his Wordbook from Ashley's and cites this case: "One misprint in Ashley's libretto is compounded in Salomon's, suggesting that Salomon had Ashley's libretto in front of him when he prepared the copy for his own." *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 193

^{clxxxix} Landon, H.C. Robbins, *'The Creation & The Seasons: the complete authentic sources for the Wordbooks'* Cardiff 1985 pp. 42 & 58, & Temperley, *Essays in Memory of Charles Cudworth*, Cambridge, 1983, p.200

^{clxxxii} Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works V*, p. 255

^{clxxxiii} in the Esterhazy Archives of the Budapest, National Library, Ha.I.12, described in Landon, *Haydn Chronicle & Works IV*, pp. 350-2

17. STILLINGFLEET'S ADAM AND EVE SCENES

^{clxxxiv} see: McCredie, Andrew D., 'John Christopher Smith as a dramatic composer', *Music & Letters* January 1964, particularly pp. 34-6

^{clxxxv} 'Literary life and select works of Benjamin Stillingfleet', 1811, 'Paradise Lost, an oratorio altered and adapted to the stage from Milton' MDCCLX

Baron Gottfried van Swieten's letter to the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, Jan. 1799

"Wien zu Ende Decembers 1798

... nun auch ein paar Worte von dem Gedichte, welches Sie *meine* Schöpfung zu nennen belieben. Der Antheil, den ich an dem ursprünglich englischen Werke habe, ist zwar etwas mehr als bloße Übersetzung, doch bey weiten nicht so beschaffen, daß ich es als *mein* ansehen könnte. Auch ist es nicht von *Dryden*, wie es in einem aus Wien geschriebenen, und dem 6ten Stücke des deutschen Merkurs vom laufenden Jahre eingerückten Briefe irrig angegeben wird, sondern von einem Ungenannten, der es größtentheils aus *Milton's* verlornem Paradiese zusammen getragen, und für *Händel* bestimmt hatte.

Was den großen Mann abhielt, davon Gebrauch zu machen, ist unbekannt; als aber *Haydn* in London war, wurde es hervorgesucht und demselben mit dem Wunsche, es von ihm in Musik gesetzt zu erhalten, zugestellt. Ihm schien beym ersten Anblicke der Stoff zwar gut gewählt, und zu musikalischen Wirkungen wohl geeignet; doch nahm er den Antrag nicht gleich an, und behielt sich vor, von Wien aus, wohin er zurück zu kehren eben im Begriff stand, und wo er das Gedicht genauer betrachten wollte, seinen Entschluß zu melden.

Hier zeigte er es dann mir, und was er davon geurtheilt hatte, fand ich auch. Indem ich aber zugleich erkannte, daß der so erhabene Gegenstand *Haydn* die von mir längst erwünschte Gelegenheit verschaffen würde, den ganzen Umfang seiner tiefen Kenntnisse zu zeigen, und die volle Kraft seines unerschöpflichen Genies zu äußern; so ermunterte ich ihn, die Hand an das Werk zu legen, und um den ersten Genuß davon unserm Vaterlande zu verschaffen, beschloß ich, dem englischen Gedichte ein deutsches Gewand umzuhängen.

So entstand meine Übersetzung, bey welcher ich der Hauptanlage des Originals zwar im Ganzen treulich gefolgt, im Einzelnen aber davon so oft abgewichen bin, als musikalischer Gang und Ausdruck, wovon das Ideal meinem Geiste schon gegenwärtig war, es zu fordern, mir geschienen hat, und durch diese Empfindung geleitet, habe ich einer Seits manches zu verkürzen, oder gar wegzulassen, anderer Seits

manches zu erheben, oder in ein helleres Licht zu stellen, und manches mehr in Schatten zurück zu ziehen, für nöthig erachtet...”

Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung, i (1798/9), 254-5.

English translation:

“Vienna, end of December 1798

... and now a few words on the poem which you choose to call *my* Creation. My part in the work, which was originally in English, was certainly rather more than mere translation; but it was far from being such that I could regard [the libretto] as *my own*. Neither is it by *Dryden*, as is erroneously stated in a letter from Vienna which appeared in the 6th number of the *Deutscher Merkur* for the current year, but by an unnamed author who had compiled it largely from *Milton’s Paradise Lost*, and had intended it for *Handel*.

What prevented the great man from making use of it is unknown; but when *Haydn* was in London it was looked out, and handed over to the latter with the request that he should set it to music. At first sight the material seemed to him indeed well chosen, and well suited to musical effects, but he nevertheless did not accept the proposal immediately; he was just on the point of leaving for Vienna, and he reserved the right to announce his decision from there, where he wanted to take a closer look at the poem.

[On his return] he then showed it to me, and I found myself in agreement with the verdict he had given. But I recognised at once that such an exalted subject would give *Haydn* the opportunity I had long desired, to show the whole compass of his profound accomplishments and to express the full power of his inexhaustible genius; I therefore encouraged him to take the work in hand, and in order that our Fatherland might be the first to enjoy it, I resolved to clothe the English poem in German garb.

In this way my translation came about. It is true that I followed the plan of the original faithfully as a whole, but I diverged from it in details as often as musical progress and expression, of which I already had an ideal conception in my mind, seemed to demand. Guided by these sentiments, I often judged it necessary that much should be shortened or even omitted, on the one hand, and on the other that much should be made more prominent or brought into greater relief, and much placed more in the shade...”

Translation by Edward Olleson, ‘The origin and Libretto of Haydn’s Creation’, *Haydn Yearbook* 4, 1968, 149-50