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NEW INSIGHTS INTO THE CHRONOLOGY OF HAYDN'S FOLKSONG
ARRANGEMENTS: READING BETWEEN THE LINES OF THE GEORGE THOMSON
CORRESPONDENCE

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The story of the 208 folksong arrangements (JHW 151–262 and 269–364) George Thomson commissioned from Haydn, and the six variation sets (JHW 263–268) Haydn supplied to Thomson, is told in a set of correspondence beginning in November 1799 and ending well after Haydn's death in 1809.¹ Thomson was meticulous in preserving the letters and musical materials he received from Haydn and his intermediaries. True, we have scarcely any of the original letters Thomson sent to Vienna, and none of his enclosures – the unadorned copies of Scottish, Welsh and Irish airs from which Haydn worked. However, Thomson was apt to endorse the letters he received with informative summaries of his responses to them. The total amount of documentation on hand is thus considerable, and – with a little reading between the lines – sufficient to permit a reasonably confident construction of the chronology of the songs. It is the sequence of arrangements in *JHW XXXII/3* with which the present article is chiefly concerned. However, in the process of assembling and scrutinizing the primary materials I became increasingly aware of Haydn's changing approach to the task, as well as intrigued by his reasons for undertaking it at all. I will touch on this point, and its significance for the evaluation of Haydn's folksong settings on their own terms, at the end of the article.

The late Irmgard Becker-Glauch was the first to realise what could be achieved through a wide-ranging study of the letters in conjunction with the fascicles containing the fair copies Haydn sent to Thomson, and with the much smaller quantity of surviving Haydn autographs.² Her proposed chronology informed the relevant work list in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 1980); and it forms the basis for the numbered sequence of

* I am grateful to G. Henle Verlag München for permission to reproduce this article here, following its original publication in *Haydn-Studien*, 8/4 (2004), pp. 325–40. Throughout the article references to “JHW” followed by a number identify items in Joseph Haydn Werke, Reihe XXXII, Bd. 3 (*JHW XXXII/3*), Volksliedbearbeitungen Nr. 151–268, Schottische Lieder für George Thomson, hrsg. von Marjorie Rycroft in Verbindung mit Warwick Edwards und Kirsteen McCue, München 2002; and Joseph Haydn Werke, Reihe XXXII, Bd. 4 (*JHW XXXII/4*), Volksliedbearbeitungen Nr. 269–364, Schottische und walisische Lieder für George Thomson, hrsg. v. Marjorie Rycroft in Verbindung mit Warwick Edwards und Kirsteen McCue, München 2004.

¹ London, The British Library, Add. 35263–35269.

² Irmgard Becker-Glauch: Some Remarks about the Dating of Haydn's Settings of Scottish Songs, in: *Haydn Studies. Proceedings of the International Haydn Conference, Washington, D.C., 1975*, ed. Jens Peter Larsen, Howard Serwer and James Webster, New York–London 1981, pp. 88–90; *ibid.*: Haydn's schottische Liedbearbeitungen für Thomson, in: *Joseph Haydn. Bericht über den Internationalen Joseph Haydn Kongreß, Wien, Hofburg, 5.–12. September 1982*, hrsg. v. Eva Badura-Skoda, München 1986, pp. 110–116.

songs in the two volumes of the complete edition *Joseph Haydn Werke XXXII/3–4* (Lieder für George Thomson). However, in the course of our researches for these volumes my co-editors Marjorie Rycroft, Kirsteen McCue (to whom I am heavily indebted throughout this article), and I myself, not only felt the need to make a few corrections, but also realised the scope for telling the story in more detail. To understand the sequence of events one needs to piece together information not just about the few surviving Haydn autographs, and the fascicle copies of his arrangements sent to Thomson in Edinburgh, but also about the several batches of airs Thomson sent to Vienna in the first place, even though they are no longer extant. As we shall see, the contents of these three categories of material are not necessarily always in step with each other. Moreover, we need to account for the manner in which Thomson re-numbered Haydn's settings after they came into his possession.

Most of the documentation for what follows appears in the substantial critical commentaries to our two volumes (*JHW XXXII/3–4*), especially in the *Quellenbeschreibung* and the annotated texts of all the relevant correspondence. These volumes also include tables setting out the songs in putative chronological sequence on the basis of the various fascicles of completed arrangements Haydn sent to Thomson. In the further table which forms the Appendix to the present article I have set out the additional information referred to above regarding the batches of airs Thomson sent Haydn and Thomson's numbering system for the completed settings he received back. This, I hope, will help clarify some of the more intricate sections of the argument that follows.

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The story begins with a letter Thomson sends on 30 November 1799 to Alexander Straton, secretary to the British legation in Vienna, instructing him on financial negotiations with Haydn, and indicating the enclosure of a first batch of sixteen airs out of a total of thirty, the balance to follow.³ The letter and its enclosure are delayed because of icing at the port of Cuxhaven, but eventually reach Vienna on Tuesday 4 February 1800. Straton replies to Thomson on 9 February indicating that he has passed Thomson's letter to Haydn, along with the airs, and is awaiting the composer's response. Thomson endorses Straton's letter with the summary comment "sent my letter with the 15 Airs to Haydn". The discrepancy regarding the number of airs sent is probably attributable to a mistake in Thomson's original letter to Straton (or in Thomson's summary transcript of it), for a week later Straton writes to Thomson again, informing him that Haydn has himself written to Thomson and that he has already begun work on the accompaniments to the airs, "15 in number".⁴ (This first

³ For this and all subsequent quotations from or references to letters or documents see *JHW XXXII/3, Dokumente*.

⁴ The view (expressed in *JHW XXXII/3*, p. 322), that "16" is the correct figure seems doubtful to me on reflection, given the balance of available evidence. Nor does the correspondence lend any colour to the

consignment of airs is designated “Batch 1” in the table at the end of this article.) In the meantime Thomson seems to have sent a further consignment of airs (Batch 2), perhaps seventeen in number, since Straton can write on 18 June 1800 that, after some delay, attributable to Haydn’s poor health, he is sending 32 airs with accompaniments – two more than the thirty Thomson had at first envisaged – and that he has paid Haydn two ducats per setting, as agreed, 64 ducats in total. The enclosure comprises two fascicles, each made up from a pair of four-leaf gatherings, and each containing sixteen settings in the hand of Haydn’s amanuensis Johann Elßler (Fasc. 1–2). Initially Elßler had numbered the settings in two separate sequences, one for each fascicle. However, in the second fascicle he changed the plan, re-numbering these settings 17 to 32. He also paginated the first, but not the second fascicle.

Thomson, one suspects, does not immediately set about scrutinizing Haydn’s settings and preparing them for the engraver. His hands must be full at the time preparing a new two-volume edition of earlier Scottish settings by Pleyel and Koželuch for publication towards the end of 1801.⁵ Several of the latter’s keyboard accompaniments he considers to require simplification. Moreover, as Straton’s letter of 16 February shows, Koželuch is proving to be a truculent correspondent. Nevertheless, Thomson is evidently sufficiently impressed by Haydn’s first response to send him the further batch of six airs (Batch 3) to which Straton refers at the end of his letter to Thomson of 29 August 1800 (“Haydn has not as yet finished his six”). Presumably it is at this point that Thomson decides the next volume of his *Select Collection of Scottish Airs* (Vol. III) will be an all-Haydn venture, for Straton’s letter also reveals that Thomson had asked shortly afterwards if six further melodies he had sent for Koželuch’s attention could be diverted to Haydn, a request with which, in the event, Straton could not comply since he had already passed the airs in question to Koželuch.

In a letter dated 16 December, Straton informs Thomson that Haydn has had a number of deadlines to meet of late – notably in connection with his oratorio *Die Jahreszeiten* – and “has not hitherto had it in his power to attend to the Scotch airs”. This, taken in conjunction with Thomson’s reply of 10 January 1801, would seem to imply that, in the meantime, Thomson has forwarded a further nineteen melodies for Haydn (Batch 4), bringing the number outstanding to 25:

I shall be very happy to hear that Hayden [*sic*] has done the Ritornelles & Accompaniments to the 25 Songs now in his possession, & you will oblige me much by putting him in mind of them as you propose.

These airs include a few already set by Pleyel and Koželuch which Thomson had duly published in four sets between 1793 and 1799. Not content with planning a Haydn

idea that the contents of this first batch were necessarily the same as those of the first fascicle to be sent to Edinburgh, which did indeed comprise sixteen settings.

⁵ The forewords for Vols. I and II of Thomson’s *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs* are both dated September 1801. Apparently neither volume was registered at Stationers’ Hall.

Einzeldruck devoted to settings of melodies he has not previously published, Thomson now seems intent on replacing some of the settings he has commissioned from Haydn's predecessors in his forthcoming two-volume new edition of the airs in question.

Given Straton's warnings about Haydn's current commitments, Thomson seems to be pushing his luck at this time by enclosing with the same January letter yet five more melodies (Batch 5) – the names of which he records – and urging Haydn to prioritise the first three of them (all new airs) over and above everything else. The reason for this special urgency is unclear. Conceivably Thomson now wants to include in the 1801 volumes a few Haydn settings of airs he has not previously published. Maybe he has already had engraved the new title page which bears Haydn's name alongside the earlier composers and precedes the cover page in all the copies I have seen in spite of the fact that this volume does not actually contain any of Haydn's music when it is eventually published in or after September (the date of the foreword). If so, he seems to have abandoned the plan, for in the event Haydn's settings of four of the five Batch 5 airs would not appear until 1802 (in Vol. III of his *Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs*), while his setting of the first of them would be held back until 1805 (Vol. IV).

About this time Thomson must be formulating the idea of making Vol. IV of his series, a second all-Haydn affair. On 25 February he writes to Straton enclosing sixteen further airs (Batch 6), and Straton replies on 2 April promising to put them straight into Haydn's hands and urging him to finish them speedily, along with the melodies he has already. Haydn himself writes to Thomson the day after the first performance of his oratorio *Die Jahreszeiten* on 24 April,⁶ citing it as the reason for the delay in sending more arrangements. Straton amplifies this in his letter to Thomson of 30 April: "When I requested of Haydn to add Ritorzellen etc to the 16 airs last sent he refused to undertake the work". However, Haydn was easily bought off with the offer of some Indian handkerchiefs, although he warned he would not be able to deliver the airs before mid-June.

Straton encloses with this 30 April letter a package consisting of three fascicles containing songs which Thomson numbers 1 to 17, 18 to 22, and 23 to 25 (Fasc. 3–5). The five songs in Fasc. 4 are in fact those Thomson has sent on 10 January (Batch 5). Hence, of the six-plus-nineteen songs Thomson has sent earlier, five remain outstanding at this time. We shall come to them shortly.

After 30 April 1801 we have no extant correspondence between Thomson and Haydn or his intermediaries until 20 September when Straton writes to Thomson referring to "several of your Letters", and makes particular reference to Thomson's "letter of 20th July, together with the packets that accompanied it". Reading between the lines of this, Haydn's ensuing letter to Thomson of 7 October, and the autographed bifolium (A₁)⁷ Haydn evidently enclosed with it, we may make some informed guesses about Thomson's activity at this time. With a total of

⁶ Although he writes that the performance took place "gestern" the letter is in fact dated 27 April.

⁷ London, The British Library, Add. 35272, fol. 21–22; see *JHW XXXII/3, Quellenbeschreibung*, p. 310.

57 Haydn settings now in his possession, and with preparation of the second editions of the one hundred Pleyel and Koželuch settings well advanced, Thomson has turned his full attention in May 1801 to the preparation of the Haydn volume which will eventually reach publication in a year's time. While his pleasure at Haydn's response to his commissions is palpable, Thomson is not uncritical of the master's submissions, some of which would be held back for publication later, and one of which, among those to hand so far, he would never publish at all (JHW 186).

The violin parts are perhaps the first element to come under detailed scrutiny. Thomson writes to Vienna requesting Haydn to alter eight of them (see Haydn's reply of 7 October). Next he examines the "symphonies", and asks for altered ritornellos for two songs (JHW 222, 223) and for added codas for four (JHW 184, 191, 206, 207). To clarify his requirements he encloses a bifolium containing musical cues and blank staves on to which Haydn can enter his revisions. The sheet also contains a postscript, addressed to Haydn in Thomson's hand, with the reminder, "Se voleste mandarmi il nuovo Accomp^o di Violino per gli 8 Arie; insieme con le piccole Sinfonie sopra questa [*sic*] foglio mi obligerete di molto" – then inserts the word "presto", after "foglio", as an afterthought. Next, Thomson begins work on the remaining arrangements so far to hand, marking them up with various corrections and engraver's instructions. As we shall see (from a reference in Straton's letter just mentioned), by 20 July he has thirty proofs for ready for dispatch to Haydn, presumably the voice and piano scores for JHW 151, 153–181, the thirty arrangements from Fascicles 1 and 2 that would appear in Vol. III.⁸

Haydn duly sends Thomson the altered violin accompaniments and the new ritornellos and codas on 7 October, accompanied by an autograph letter, this time in Italian, the first of many such direct communications Haydn would send Thomson in future. The first of these two musical documents, the violin manuscript, remains untraced but we can be reasonably certain of its content because precisely eight of the settings Thomson subsequently publishes in the 1802 volume contain violin parts at variance to a greater or lesser extent with those in the extant manuscript copies (JHW 151, 159, 160, 162, 164, 165, 179, 194). Happily the second document, the bifolium with Haydn's autograph revised ritornellos and added codas (A₁), survives as part of the British Library collection of Thomson's musical exemplars.

In the meantime Haydn has been as good as his word regarding the sixteen airs Thomson had sent him the previous February and which he had warned he could not deliver before mid-June. The completed settings form the contents of Fasc. 6, which Haydn must have had dispatched by the end of June at the latest, since not only are the last two items (JHW 222 and 223) among those Thomson requests to be altered, presumably in his letter to Haydn of 20 July, but the final leaf of the fascicle – containing "Muirland Willy" (JHW 223) – is detached and returned to Haydn with Thomson's specific instructions for the desired revision.

⁸ The violin and cello parts would presumably have been engraved and printed later, after Thomson received Haydn's revised violin parts sent on 7 October 1801.

Thomson must also have sent Batch 7 with this letter, a manuscript which will have contained airs which Haydn would set in his surviving autograph A₂ (nos. 1–13)⁹ and its now lost sequel (nos. 14–22). In our commentary to Haydn’s letter to Thomson of 27 October 1801 my co-editors and I infer from Haydn’s annotation in A₂, and from the numbering of the arrangements there, that this Batch 7 contained all twenty-two such airs.¹⁰ Yet on reflection it now seems to me that this exact correlation between batch and autograph cannot be taken for granted. In our note on Thomson’s letter of 10 January 1801 we call attention to a discrepancy between the total number of airs Thomson sent to Vienna and the number of settings he received back, suggesting that Thomson may have made an error in his numbering or that Haydn perhaps left five airs unset.¹¹ Perhaps a more likely explanation is that Thomson sent five fewer airs in this Batch 7 than we had previously assumed.

Thomson’s July letter and its enclosures take two months to reach Vienna. Straton replies to Thomson on 20 September confirming that the letter and its two accompanying packets “were yesterday delivered to me” and that they “are already in Haydn’s possession”. He also notes that “the packet (contain^s a dozen India handk[erchief]^s, a snuff box & proofs of 30 Scots songs) had been del[ivere]^d to Haydn”. The printers’ proofs I have alluded to already. The arrival of such documents is usually inspirational (although they can be daunting too). Taken in conjunction with the gifts Thomson had sent, they seem to have prompted Haydn to immediate creative action, for he encloses with his next letter of 27 October, “le Arie desiderate cominciando dal Numero 14 fin al N^o 22”. They must correspond with the songs so numbered in the now lost autograph sequel to A₂, which in turn correspond with those so numbered in Fasc. 7, copied by Elßler.

Meanwhile, some time after 20 September, Haydn must have received from Thomson yet another consignment of melodies, this time undoubtedly numbering seventeen (Batch 8). Among them are “The happy trio” and “Green sleeves” (which some may be surprised to see counted as a “Scottish air”, but that is another story), whose settings turn up as part of a fragmentary Haydn autograph (A₃),¹² numbered 15 and (by implication from its copy in Fasc. 10) 17, respectively (JHW, nos. 260, 262).

The number and identity of the settings Haydn encloses with his next letter to Thomson of 5 December 1801, and with two further letters sent in the middle of and on the 29 January 1802, takes some working out. Becker-Glauch, apparently unaware of the last two of these letters, argued that Haydn sent Thomson *two* letters on 5 December, each accompanied by songs.¹³ This position seems untenable. It is based on two premises, first that when Haydn

⁹ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département de la musique (Fonds du Conservatoire de Musique), Ms 139; see *JHW XXXII/3, Quellenbeschreibung*, pp. 310 f.

¹⁰ *JHW XXXII/3*, p. 325.

¹¹ *JHW XXXII/3*, p. 323.

¹² Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, Mus. ms. 1524b; see *JHW XXXII/3, Quellenbeschreibung*, pp. 311 f.

¹³ See Becker-Glauch, *Haydns schottische Liedbearbeitungen*, p. 113.

writes subsequently on 2 January 1802, “Colla speranza, che fra questo tempo abbiate già ricevuto il resto delle Arie rinchiusa in due differenti lettere”, he is referring to a pair of communications sent on the same day. It is more likely that the reference is to the mailings of 27 October and 5 December. Second, that on receipt of the two sets of compositions, Thomson labels them respectively “11 Airts” and “2^d ... 9 Airts”. This is misleading. Thomson indeed makes pencil notes “11 Airts” and “9 Airts” down the right-hand margins of the first pages of Fasc. 11 and Fasc. 9, respectively, but only after extensive re-ordering – and in one case splitting up – of several different fascicles received. Moreover, he adds the inscription “2^d” in *ink*, and not to the label “9 Airts”, but immediately above and bracketed together with the copyist Rampl’s song numbering “N 11”.

To understand what is going on here, we need to view the 34 airts of Thomson’s Batches 7 and 8, together with the outstanding five from Batches 3 and 4, in three different ways:

1. as probably set out in the partially extant Haydn autographs A₂ and A₃ – this is the order adopted for the JHW;
2. as sent to Thomson on four different dates (27 October and 5 December 1801, mid- and 29 January 1802), in seven different fascicles (7–13);
3. as re-ordered by Thomson.

And how does Thomson order them? There are apparently five groupings:

1. Fasc. 7, headed “Haydn” and re-numbered 33 to 41 to follow on from Fascs. 1 and 2 (a sequence that was preserved when the fascicles were bound together after Thomson’s death to form the present MS British Library Add. 35272);
2. Fasc. 8, re-numbered 26 to 30 to follow on either from Fascs. 3 to 5, or perhaps more likely from the settings numbered 1–25 in Fasc. 15, which is placed just beforehand in Add. 35273 and headed “30 Airts”;
3. Fasc. 11 (five settings numbered in Vienna 1–5), together with numbers 6 to 11 of Fasc. 13, headed “Scottish Airts – Haydn”, and annotated in pencil down the right-hand margin “11 Airts”;
4. Fascs. 9 and 10 (seven settings in all, numbered in Vienna 11–14 and 15–17, respectively), together with two further settings, since the now re-ordered bundle is headed “Scottish Airts – Haydn”, and annotated, again in pencil down the right-hand margin, “9 Airts”. The appended songs would appear to be the two copied on to the last leaf of Fasc. 13, which appears to have become detached, and hence excluded from Thomson’s previous bundle. Conceivably Thomson may have read the copyist’s song numbers, “12” and “13”, as “18” and “19”.¹⁴
5. Fasc. 12 (five settings numbered in Vienna I–V), annotated in pencil down the right-hand margin “5 Airts”.

¹⁴ Cf. *JHW XXXII/3*, p. 315 n. To complicate matters further, Thomson may later have attached this leaf, with recto and verso pages reversed, to a different bundle since he also numbered the songs in pencil “12” and “11”, respectively.

By this time Thomson has finalised the Preface for his Vol. III. (It is largely the same as that dated September 1801 and used for the new edition of Vols. I and II – and in the same typesetting – but with a few revisions). There is still room for some late additions (or substitutions), though. One of them is “The auld gudeman” (JHW 233), which is among the settings Haydn sends on 5 December. Another latecomer arrives early in the New Year, apparently unsolicited; at least that seems to be the implication of what Haydn writes to Thomson on 2 January 1802:

[...] vi mando con questa l’Aria favorita the blue Bell of Scotland, e vorrei, che questa piccola Aria fosse stampata tutta sola, e dedicata in Nome mio come un piccolo piccolo Dono d’Accompagnamento alla rinomata M^{ris} Jordan, la quale senza avere l’onore di conoscerla stimo estremamente per la sua gran virtù e riputazione, io non volevo far un’accompagnamento più brillante per non scoprire l’espressione e la bella voce d’una virtuosa si garbata.

Thomson notes on the back of the letter “with Symph[onie]^s, Accomp[animen]^t & Variations to the Blue bell – And desiring Eng[lish] Verses to be sent him as proposed”. It is important to note that, although Haydn has had no knowledge of the words, he clearly sees this creation, the variations included, as a vocal work, and provides a structure which requires the performance of five stanzas of poetry. It comprises opening symphony; theme (stanza 1) with closing symphony; three variations (stanzas 2–4), each with closing ritornello; “da capo dal segno”, that is, repeat of theme (stanza 5) with closing symphony. Thomson must have had the music for the theme (voice and piano score, together with symphonies and accompaniments) engraved straight away for inclusion in Vol. III, which would be completed and published around 28 April 1802 when it was entered into Stationers’ Hall.¹⁵

What Thomson does *not* have engraved are Haydn’s variations. The novel construction has no part to play in Thomson’s publication plan, and in any case Haydn wants the variations to be published quite separately. However, by sending subsequently six variation sets (JHW 263–268) to Thomson, Haydn appears to have softened his original request for one-off publication, surely envisaging that the six be published together as a set. In any event, Thomson seems to have decided against future publication of the variations in the form received, for on 8 June 1802 he writes to his new intermediary in Vienna, Charles Stuart, “returning inclosed Haydn’s Manuscript of 6 Variations to Scots Songs to be altered”. Stuart replies on 18 July confirming he has “delivered the enclosed Packet to D^r Haydn to alter the variations he last sent you”.

¹⁵ The string parts were sent later, being forwarded to Thomson from London by Charles Broughton on 26 May 1802 along with the rest of the scores and parts for the six variation sets referred to in the next paragraph. In his accompanying letter Broughton thanks Thomson for two copies of the volume. Thomson, however, is not so punctilious forwarding copies to Haydn himself. It is not until more than a year later (on 6 July 1803) that Haydn writes to him, “expressing his admiration of the manner in which the 3.^d volume is printed – & requesting the other volumes” (the words are taken from the summary note with which Thomson endorses the letter).

What kind of alterations had Thomson requested? Whatever they were, Haydn showed no enthusiasm. Almost a year later, in a letter to Stuart dated 18 June 1803, Thomson indicates that he has written to Haydn directly within the past month requesting him, *inter alia*, “to send back the 6 Airs with Variations as they stand, in case he finds it disagreeable to retouch” them. Thomson’s letters appear to have had the desired effect; on 6 August Stuart reports from Vienna that “the 6 [variations] to be altered were also returned” along with other specified airs. What he does not say is whether Haydn actually undertook the alterations. The surviving *Abschriften* include just two small changes in pencil, both apparently in Thomson’s rather than in Haydn’s hand.¹⁶ These revisions, along with several more, are incorporated in the versions of the six variations Thomson’s London associate Preston published in 1805. Their principal purpose seems to be the adaptation of the variations from vocal to instrumental works. Hence on each occasion that Haydn originally assigns the air to the voice alone, undoubled by an instrument, the arranger has re-deployed it, either to an adapted piano part¹⁷ or to a revised violin/flute part.¹⁸ There is little reason to suppose Haydn had anything to do with these revisions which embody some stylistic features uncharacteristic of him.¹⁹ This could simply reflect the truism that composers, when adapting first thoughts reluctantly at the behest of third parties, not infrequently produce anomalous work. However, a more likely explanation is that the changes were made either in Scotland by Thomson, or in London by Preston, on newly prepared engraver’s copies now untraced.

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We have reached the end of the sequence of events surrounding the contents of our first volume of Haydn’s Thomson settings. And much of the sequel is told by Marjorie Rycroft in her article about Haydn and Neukomm (this volume) and in the Introduction to *JHW XXXII/4*. But the story is not quite over yet. I want to conclude with some observation about Haydn’s motives in taking on such an enormous workload – over 400 songs, when those he sent to Napier²⁰ and Whyte²¹ are added in – in what some might judge to be an unrewarding field for an internationally acclaimed composer in full maturity. And also a suggestion about how we might evaluate the settings.

With the initial accompaniments he undertook for Napier (1792 and 1795) Haydn would seem to have been motivated by a fascination with the exotic and, in the case of the first

¹⁶ See, *JHW XXXII/3, Lesarten*: JHW 264, bar 88; JHW 265, bar 83.

¹⁷ See, for example, the differences in JHW 264, bars 31–38, between the manuscript copy’s text (*JHW XXXII/3*, main text) and that of the published version (*JHW XXXII/3*, appendix I).

¹⁸ See the differences in JHW 265, bars 31–42, between the manuscript copy’s text (*JHW XXXII/3*, main text) and that of the published version (*JHW XXXII/3*, appendix I).

¹⁹ See *JHW XXXII/3*, p. XV.

²⁰ See *JHW XXXII/1* and 2.

²¹ See *JHW XXXII/5*.

volume, possibly an element of charity.²² Subsequently, in meeting Thomson's requirements for symphonies as well as accompaniments, Haydn yielded nothing to altruism. Yet I find it hard to believe that his repeated compliance with Thomson's insatiable requests, against a backdrop of failing health and energy, was motivated simply by the lure of money, at least initially. Rather, my sense is that Haydn, as he undertook more and more of these arrangements, was developing something of the mentality of the obsessive collector. In this both he and Thomson were, in their quite different ways, children of their own time. Following the general lead of the encyclopaedists as collectors and disseminators of knowledge, Haydn became to some extent caught up in a growing European fascination with melodies and other cultural artefacts from areas perceived to lie at geographical extremities,²³ Thomson with a quest, cultivated with some intensity in Scotland, for the scientific collection and dissemination of so-called "native airs".

From this standpoint we can begin to understand how Haydn, consciously or otherwise, came to view his task for Thomson – and latterly Whyte – as somewhat distinct from his central compositional one, sufficiently so to warrant putting his name to later arrangements he had asked his pupil Neukomm, and probably others, to undertake. It is inconceivable he would have contemplated such action, even in old age, in respect of the symphonies, quartets and oratorios, on the inimitable excellence of which his reputation, success and livelihood depended. One can see such practice as no more underhand than that of a master craftsman taking credit for a series of artefacts produced by one or more apprentices. However, it is perhaps also permissible to take a more cynical view of Haydn's actions as time progressed. Who cared about folksongs published beyond the Channel? If Thomson was prepared to take any number with Haydn's name attached, why not take the fee and do a deal with Neukomm and others?²⁴

Viewed from the above various angles, Thomson's enterprise – and Haydn's attraction to it – begins to emerge as much more understandable. It has evoked considerable adverse criticism, much of it founded, however, on assumptions which reflect epistemologies post-dating the period concerned. One such is the notion that a composer must meet an alien

²² It is not certain, whether Haydn received money for this volume or not. See the discussion of Albert Christoph Dies's and Georg August Griesinger's early, but conflicting accounts in Cecil Hopkinson and C. B. Oldman: Haydn's Settings of Scottish Songs in the Collections of Napier and Whyte, in: Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions, III/2 (1954), pp. 87–120, on pp. 88 f.

²³ Cf. Sophie Plowden's Indian song arrangements made at Lucknow in 1786/7 (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 380, discussed in Ian Woodfield: English Musicians in the Age of Exploration, Stuyvesant, NY, 1995, pp. 287–293), Patrick McDonald's collection of *Highland Vocal Airs*, published in 1784. There is perhaps even something of a more modern parallel here with a composer such as Bartók, for whom the collecting of folksong from eastern Europe and Asia Minor was a life-long pre-occupation, arguably more important to him ultimately than his activities as composer and pianist.

²⁴ I am grateful to Oliver W. Neighbour for his knowing observations on this topic, communicated to me informally.

culture on its own terms. Haydn was not, of course, the first or last creative artist to tint or taint (according to one's point of view) a specific regional style by projecting it through the lens of another quite different. But to some Thomson's action in commissioning Continental composers steeped in musical traditions quite different from those surrounding native Scottish airs seems nothing if not misguided. The venture was, admittedly, not without controversy in its own time. Yet today it makes little sense to take sides. We should do better to come to terms with the underlying assumption, well nigh universal at this time, that national airs and their verses needed not only to be collected, but also to be "presented" in some way. To simply lay them out in their raw state, without any accompaniment at all, was not an option. Similarly, for Haydn's contemporary Robert Burns, who supplied the lyrics for many of the tunes Thomson later commissioned Haydn to set, and was himself an obsessive "collector" as well as creative artist of the highest order, it was not enough to simply reproduce folk poetry; it needed to be re-fashioned.

Another assumption on which much present-day criticism has been founded is the notion that one cannot successfully arrange a song melody without knowing its associated words. To what extent is the stature of Haydn's folksong settings fatally undermined by his ignorance of the texts that were to be published with them? The question cannot be answered definitively in the absence of the copies of the airs and associated instructions Thomson sent Haydn. However, we can glean some idea of Thomson's approach from his correspondence with others who contributed to his publications. In the copy of a secretarial letter, dated 18 September 1797, addressed to Straton, he wrote:²⁵

I have mark'd over each air the number of couplets belonging to it, as M^r K desired: & I have put a small red point under the note where each line or half couplet of the poetry begins, by which means the airs I think are presented to M^r K in the most intelligible form possible.

Whether Thomson thought it necessary to continue to mark up the phrase structure of the airs in such pedantic detail for Haydn is not known. However, it is surely likely that he sent him instructions of some kind regarding the nature of the airs. From the opening to the next paragraph of the above letter we learn that Thomson had already sent Koželuch vital instructions:

M^r K will no doubt glance at the remarks I annexed to the former copy of the airs, before writing his own manuscript.

Such remarks were perhaps comparable with those Thomson sent to the poets from whom he requested verses for the airs. In the draft of a letter to Joanna Baillie, dated 30 January 1804, he wrote:²⁶

I shall point by an example the measure of the lines, as well as the rhythm which each air requires – and I shall also mention what strikes me to be the general character of each air; that is, whether it is

²⁵ London, The British Library, Add. 35263, ff. 32–33.

²⁶ London, The British Library, Add. 35266, ff. 31–33, fol. 32^{r/v}.

tranquil, lively or pathetic: this I conceive is all which the poet needs to know, in order to produce suitable Verses: for I have many songs which suits the airs charmingly, writ[t]en merely upon a general description of the character and measure of the Airs, without seeing or hearing the Airs themselves; a circumstance no way surprising, because instrumental sounds suggest only a general & vague idea, and do not affect our imagination, at least a bare Melody does not in any precise & striking manner, till associated with words: till then we ~~cannot~~ do no more than associate the idea of liveliness with a quick tune; and sadness (in a greater or less degree) with a slow one. I send the Airs however, that you may if you read music, have an opportunity of forming your own judgement as to the character of each air, & of the theme which would best accord with it: and I shall be quite pleased you chuse the subject of your Songs from your own idea of the Airs, without regarding mine.

In evaluating Haydn's folksong arrangements for Thomson, then, it is essential to appreciate that neither party abrogated responsibility regarding the aptitude of the musical setting for the words in question. It was simply that Thomson saw the task as *his* responsibility, rather than Haydn's, and Haydn was apparently happy with that. Beethoven was not, but that's another age, another story.

Appendix: Table of Airs and Settings

Ts I–III	A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice. With Introductory & Concluding Symphonies & Accompaniments for the Piano Forte, Violin & Violoncello by Pleyel, Kozeluch & Haydn, Vol. I/II (George Thomson 1803) Vol. III (George Thomson 1802)
Ts IV	A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice. With Introductory & Concluding Symphonies & Accompaniments for the Piano Forte, Violin & Violoncello by Haydn, Vol. IV (George Thomson 1805)
Ts V	A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs With Introductory & Concluding Symphonies & Accompaniments for the Piano Forte, Violin & Violoncello by Haydn & Beethoven, Vol. V (George Thomson 1818)
Tm I	The Select Melodies of Scotland Interspersed with those of Ireland and Wales [...] With Symphonies & Accompaniments for the Piano Forte by Pleyel, Kozeluch, Haydn & Beethoven. The whole Composed for & Collected by George Thomson, Vol. I (George Thomson 1822)

Tt Twenty Scottish Melodies added in 1838–9, to George Thomson’s new edition of the melodies, with symphonies and accompaniments by Haydn, Beethoven, &c. (George Thomson 1839)

Pr Six Admired Scotch Airs, Arranged as Rondos, for the Piano Forte with an Accompaniment for the Violin & Flute By Dr. Haydn (Thomas Preston 1805)

JHW	Title of Air	Batch of Airs sent to Vienna	Aut./ No.	Fasc./No. sent to Thomson	Publication Vol./No. (Year)
151	Wae’s my heart that we should sunder	1 (?15 airs) sent 30/11/1799 and 2 (?17 airs) sent after 30/11/1799 (32 airs in total)		1/1–16 sent 18/6/1800 ²⁷	Ts III/9 (1802)
152	The lea-rig				Ts IV/195 (1805)
153	Galashiels				Ts III/41 (1802)
154	Down the burn, Davie				Ts III/3 (1802)
155	Ettrick banks				Ts III/1 (1802)
156	Thro’ the wood, laddie				Ts III/43 (1802)
157	The broom of Cowdenknows				Ts III/28 (1802)
158	I wish my Love were in a myre				Ts III/37 (1802)
159	William and Margaret				Ts III/5 (1802)
160	Saw ye my father				Ts III/2 (1802)
161	Auld Robin Gray				Ts III/26 (1802)
162	The ewie wi’ the crooked horn				Ts III/6 (1802)
163	Ay waking, O!				Ts III/11 (1802)
164	Maggie Lauder				Ts III/25 (1802)
165	The blathrie o’t				Ts III/19 (1802)
166	Barbara Allan				Ts III/30 (1802)
167	An thou wert mine ain thing				2/17–32 sent 18/6/1800 ²⁸
168	Logan water			Ts III/16 (1802)	
169	Queen Mary’s lamentation			Ts III/18 (1802)	
170	Highland Mary			Ts III/14 (1802)	
171	Fee him, father			Ts III/10 (1802)	
172	The lass of Patie’s mill			Ts III/17 (1802)	
173	Tak your auld cloak about ye			Ts III/42 (1802)	
174	Rothiemurcus rant			Ts III/21 (1802)	
175	Scornfu’ Nansy			Ts III/48 (1802)	
176	Bessy Bell and Mary Gray			Ts III/38 (1802)	
177	Johnie’s grey breeks			Ts III/8 (1802)	
178	Pinkie House			Ts III/46 (1802)	
179	My deary an thou die	Ts III/22 (1802)			
180	Bonny Jean	Ts III/31 (1802)			
181	Sensibility	Ts III/32 (1802)			
182	My mither’s ay glowrin o’er me	Ts IV/194b (1805)			

²⁷ Revised violin parts of JHW 151, 159, 160, 162, 164, 165, 174 were sent to Thomson 7/10/1801.

²⁸ Revised violin part of JHW 174 was sent to Thomson 7/10/1801.

JHW	Title of Air	Batch of Airs sent to Vienna	Aut. ²⁹ /No.	Fasc./No. sent to Thomson	Publication Vol./No. (Year)			
183	The birks of Invermay	Part of 3 (6 airs) sent before 29/8/1800 and Part of 4 (19 airs) sent before 16/12/1800	A ₁ /2	3/1–17 sent 30/4/1801 ³⁰	Ts I/1 (1803)			
184	Auld Rob Morris				Ts I/17 (1803)			
185	Waly waly				Ts I/19b (1822)			
186	She rose, and let me in				–			
187	The ewe-bughts				Ts I/8 (1803)			
188	The braes of Ballenden				Ts II/84 (1803)			
189	John o’ Badenyon				Ts IV/184 (1805)			
190	O’er bogie				Ts III/40 (1802)			
191	Woo’d and married and a’				A ₁ /9	Ts III/50 (1802)		
192	Edinburgh Kate				Ts IV/194a (1805)			
193	What can a young lassie do				Ts III/45 (1802)			
194	Bannocks o’ barleymeal				Ts III/29 (1802)			
195	If a body meet a body				Ts III/23 (1802)			
196	Tears that must ever fall				Ts III/49 (1802)			
197	The shepherd’s wife				Ts III/12 (1802)			
198	The wee, wee man				Ts III/15 (1802)			
199	My Nanie, O				Ts I/4 (1822)			
200	The brisk young lad				5 (5 airs) sent 10/1/1801		4/18–22 sent 30/4/1801	Ts IV/191 (1805)
201	Mary’s dream							Ts III/7 (1802)
202	The weary pund o’ tow	Ts III/4 (1802)						
203	Macpherson’s farewell	Ts III/44 (1802)						
204	The looking glass	Ts III/13 (1802)						
205	Polwarth on the green	Part of 3 and 4 (3 of 6 +19 airs), see JHW 183–199	A ₁ /24	5/23–25 sent 30/4/1801	Ts V/218 (1818)			
206	Peggy, I must love thee				Ts III/24 (1802)			
207	The death of the linnet				A ₁ /25	Ts III/39 (1802)		
208	Young Jockey was the blythest lad	6 (16 airs) sent 25/2/1801		6/1–16 sent mid-June 1801?	Tt “5 th 50” (1839)			
209	Let me in this ae night				Ts IV/156 (1805)			
210	O’er the hills and far awa				Ts IV/161 (1805)			
211	The maid that tends the goats				Ts IV/166 (1805)			
212	Fy let’s a’ to the bridal				Ts IV/187 (1805)			
213	Deil tak’ the wars				Ts IV/157 (1805)			
214	Gramachree				Ts I/18 (1803)			
215	The mucking o’ Geordie’s byre				Ts II/66 (1803)			
216	Willy was a wanton wag				Ts IV/152 (1805)			
217	Oran gaoil				Ts IV/154 (1805)			
218	Green grow the rashes				Ts IV/155 (1805)			
219	The Poet’s ain Jean				Ts IV/159 (1805)			
220	Oonagh				Ts IV/190 (1805)			
221	Strathallan’s lament				Ts IV/178 (1805)			
222	Fy gar rub her o’er wi’ strae				A ₁ /15	Ts II/53 (1803)		
223	Muirland Willie	A ₁ /16	Ts IV/177 (1805)					

²⁹ A₁ contains only the codas of the arrangements; it was sent on 7/10/1801.

³⁰ Revised violin part of JHW 194 was sent to Thomson 7/10/1801.

JHW	Title of Air	Batch of Airs sent to Vienna	Aut.³¹/No.	Fasc./No. sent to Thomson	Publication Vol./No. (Year)		
224	Craigieburn Wood	Part of 7 (5 of ?17 airs, sent 20/7/1801?)	A ₂ /1–13	11/1–5 sent mid-Jan 1802	Ts I/32 (1803)		
225	The auld wife ayont the fire				Ts I/39 (1803)		
226	Cauld kail in Aberdeen				Ts I/31 (1803)		
227	The sutor's daughter				Ts II/77 (1803)		
228	The last time I came o'er the muir				Ts II/80 (1803)		
229	Rattling roaring Willy	Part of 3 and 4 (5 of 6 +19 airs), see JHW 183–199)		8/6–10 (Th.: 26–30) sent 5/12/1801	Ts IV/153 (1805)		
230	The boatman				Ts IV/183 (1805)		
231	Whistle o'er the lave o't				Ts IV/169 (1805)		
232	Jenny's bawbee				Ts IV/197 (1805)		
233	The auld gudeman				Ts III/47 (1802)		
234	My apron deary	Part of 7 (12 of ?17 airs), see JHW 224–228		13/11–13 sent 29/1/1802	Ts I/9 (1803)		
235	Robin Adair				Ts II/92 (1803)		
236	My Love she's but a lassie yet				Ts I/35 (1803)		
237	The birks of Abergeldie				Ts III/36 (1802)		
238	Gil Morris				Ts I/45 (1803)		
239	The minstrel	[A ₂ /14–22?]	7/14–22 (Th.: 33–41) sent 27/10/1801	Ts IV/186 (1805)			
240	Kellyburn braes			Ts IV/182 (1805)			
241	Hooly and fairly			Ts IV/170 (1805)			
242	I canna come ilka day to woo			Ts V/227 (1818)			
243	Hey tutti taiti			Ts III/33 (1802)			
244	Killiecrankie			Ts III/27 (1802)			
245	Highland Air. The lone vale			Ts III/34 (1802)			
246	A Jacobite Air			8 (17 airs) sent after 20/7/1801	[A ₃ /1–14?]	12/I–V sent mid-Jan 1802	Ts IV/160 (1805)
247	Up and war them a' Willy						Ts IV/163 (1805)
248	The old highland laddie						Ts IV/189 (1805)
249	The wish						Ts IV/181 (1805)
250	Bonnie wee thing	Tm I/22 (1822)					
251	The tears of Caledonia	13/6–10 sent 29/1/1802					Ts II/87 (1803)
252	Up in the morning early						–
253	The flowers of Edinburgh						–
254	Morag						–
255	Roslin Castle						Ts I/14 (1803)
256	The soldier laddie	9/11–14 sent 5/12/1801					Ts IV/172 (1805)
257	Langolee			Ts IV/167 (1805)			
258	The East neuk o' Fife			Ts IV/165 (1805)			
259	Jingling Johnie			Ts II/79 (1817)			
260	The happy trio			A ₃ /15	10/	Ts IV/179 (1805)	
261	The bonny grey-ey'd morn		15–17 sent	Ts V/224 (1818)			
262	Green sleeves		5/12/1801	Tt "5 th 150" (1839)			
			A ₃ /[17]				

³¹ A₃ is a fragment, containing only the beginning of No. 15 and the end of No. 17.

JHW	Title of Air for Variations	Batch of Airs sent to Vienna	Aut.^{32/} No.	Fasc./No. sent to Thomson	Publication Vol./No. (Year)
263	The blue bell of Scotland	–	A ₄	14/1 sent 2/1/1802 (voice, pf) ³³ and 26/5/1802 (vn, vc)	Ts III/35 (1802) ³⁴ Pr 1 (1805)
264	My Love she's but a lassie yet	See JHW 236		14/2–6 sent	Pr 3 (1805)
265	Bannocks o' barleymeal	See JHW 194		26/5/1802	Pr 5 (1805)
266	Saw ye my father	See JHW 160			Pr 2 (1805)
267	Maggie Lauder	See JHW 164			Pr 4 (1805)
268	Killiecrankie	See JHW 244			Pr 6 (1805)

³² A₄ is the original autograph, postdated and sent to Thomson 5/2/1805.

³³ Now untraced.

³⁴ Ts lacks variations; Pr adapted for piano forte and violin.