

1388. GEORGE NIKOLAUS NISSEN AND CONSTANZE NISSEN¹ TO THEIR SON CARL THOMAS,²
MILAN

EXCERPT:

Vienna, 13th *June*, 1810

. . . You know that your great father did not leave a fortune, but debts and unimportant movable property,³ with the latter falling short by a long way of the amount promised to your mother in the marriage contract⁴. . .

[5] . . . By her journeys, by putting on concerts, and also by selling your blessedly departed father's original scores (in whose handwriting she has only a heap of valuable fragments and drafts), your mother has had the good fortune not only to pay the debts, but also to gather together a small capital⁵ . . .

[10] . . . Your blessedly departed father's *clavier*⁶ has been given to Wolf,⁷ and is now waiting at his disposal in the chemical printing works. A small spinet, which was or is said to have been Mozart's, has been entrusted to Doctor Lichtenthal⁸ in return for a written assurance that he will part with it again on demand . . .

¹ BD: Nissen's handwriting, both signatures.

² BD: Mozart's second child, Carl Thomas, was born on 21st September, 1784. He was the longest-lived member of the family, dying in Milan on 31st October, 1858. Grammar school in Vienna; mercantile employment in Livorno approx. 1800-1805, after which he moved to Milan. Started musical studies, but ultimately kept music as a hobby and became a civil servant.

³ BD: It should be noted that on 1st October, 1790, Mozart pledged his "entire movable property" for a loan of 1000 florins.

⁴ BD: In the marriage contract of 3rd August, 1782, Mozart had promised a "reserve" of 1000 florins.

⁵ BD: Constanze had put this into bonds. From the very beginning of her widowhood, she has succeeded in depicting herself as extremely needy. Her resources as a widow cannot have been so very limited, as she was able to lend the married couple Duschek in Prague 3500 at 6% p.a. in 1797.

⁶ BD: The clavichord (Deutsch Bild No. 566) went to Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart (cf. No. 1471/3).

⁷ BD: Franz Xaver Wolfgang (1791-1844), Mozart's youngest and second surviving son, virtuoso and composer. 1808-1811 private music teacher in Podkarnia, Galicia.

⁸ BD: Cf. No. 1388/12. Peter Lichtenthal (1780-1856); physician who also studied music, on which he published two books. Acquainted with Constanze and her two sons, becoming a particular friend of Carl Thomas. Franz Xaver Wolfgang dedicated his manuscript "*Sonate pour le Pianoforte avec l'accompagnement d'un Violon oblige*" to him, but also named him, in a letter of 22nd November, 1810, "the threefold measure ["*Triplicatum*"] of boasting and vanity". In 1816 he published the first significant Mozart biography in Italian.