

1210.<sup>1</sup> JOHANN ANDREAS SCHACHTNER<sup>2</sup> TO MARIA ANNA,<sup>3</sup> IMPERIAL BARONESS<sup>4</sup> VON  
BERCHTOLD ZU SONNENBURG, ST. GILGEN

*A / Madame / Madame Marie Anne / De Sonnenburg. / St. Gilgen /*  
to be delivered / to the administrative office.<sup>5</sup> / No. 4.

[Salzburg, 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1792]

Most honourably and gently born, gracious Madam!

[5] The very pleasing letter<sup>6</sup> from your person reached me not in Salzburg, but in Hammerau,<sup>7</sup> where I was just paying a visit to my son, where he is one of the civil servants in the administration; from my general readiness to please everyone, and especially the Mozart family, you can conclude how very sorry I was not be able to fulfil your commission on the spot. [10] So to the matter in hand! To your first question:<sup>8</sup> What your esteemed brother of blessed memory had in the way of favourite games in his childhood *N.B.* leaving aside his musical activities.

No answer can be given to this question, for as soon as he began to involve himself in music, all his senses for all other pastimes were as good as dead, [15] and even children's diversions and inconsequential games had to be accompanied by music if they were to be interesting for him: when we – he and I – carried playthings from one room to another, whichever one of us was carrying nothing always had to sing or fiddle a march to it. [20] But before this time, before he began with music, [20] he was so receptive for any children's amusement which was spiced with a little wit that he could forget food and drink, and everything else, over it. Because, as you know, I took an active interest in him, I became so extremely dear to him and he often asked me ten times in one day if I was fond of him, and if

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<sup>1</sup> BD VI, p. 432: A change in the order, and in some cases of the titles, of Nos. 1208-1213 is necessary: the sequence is 1208 (from Mölk, not Breitkopf & Härtel) – 1211 – 1212 – 1212a – 1209 – 1210 – 1213 (not to B & H, but to Mölk). It turns out that Schichtegroll (Nos. 1211 and 1212) did not approach Nannerl via B & H, but via Albert von Mölk. He was the “friend of our family” mentioned in No. 1268/3-6. The sequence was therefore that Schichtegroll first sent his questions on Mozart's life (No. 1211) via Mölk (No. 1208, lost). Nannerl then prepared the answers (No. 1212) and sent them to Mölk along with various other writings (cf. No. 1250/30-31). Schichtegroll then sent more questions to Nannerl via Mölk (No. 1212a, lost). Nannerl's response was to ask Schachtner, an old friend of the family, to supply information, which Schachtner did in No. 1210. Nannerl then sent No. 1210 to Mölk along with her letter No. 1213 (cf. No. 1213/11), who passed it, or a copy of it, to Schichtegroll.

<sup>2</sup> BD: Johann Andreas Schachtner (1731-1795), son of the brewer Georg Schachtner. Studied at the University of Ingolstadt from 1750, where he was also musically active. Took trumpet lessons from the Köstler mentioned by Leopold in No. 0430/67. In 1774 became Court and Field Trumpeter to the Prince-Archbishop [Hochfürstlicher Hof- und Feldtrompeter] in Salzburg. Leopold was a witness at his wedding in 1774. Of the nine children born to him, only two survived their parents: Anna Katharina Franziska Aloisia (mentioned in No. 0533/132) and Franz Xaver Alois (mentioned in No. 1210/6). Schachtner also played the violin (cf. No. 1210/99) and violoncello. Besides publishing his own book of poetry in 1765, he was probably responsible for the following Mozart texts: *Grabmusik* KV 42 (35a); the recitatives in the new opening scenes of *Bastien und Bastienne* KV 50 (46b); the German translation of *La finta giardiniera* KV 196; final chorus of *Thamos* KV 345 (336a); *Zaide* KV 344 (336b); the German translation of *Idomeneo* KV 366. Schachtner was a frequent guest in the Mozart home and followed developments in the family carefully.

<sup>3</sup> BD: Maria Anna Walburga Ignatia (“Nannerl”), née Mozart, (1751-1829), Wolfgang's sister. After her marriage in 1784 her name was Maria Anna von Berchtold zu Sonnenburg. From July 1792 Imperial Baroness [Reichsfreiin].

<sup>4</sup> “Reichsfreiin”.

<sup>5</sup> BD: Where Nannerl's husband was in charge.

<sup>6</sup> BD: No. 1209.

<sup>7</sup> BD: West of Salzburg, between Freilassing and Piding.

<sup>8</sup> BD: These four questions by Schlichtegroll are in addition to those in No. 1211 (cf. No. 1213/5 ff.).



One more thing:

[80] Gracious Madam! You will remember that I have a very good *violin* which Wolfgang<sup>1</sup> always used to call the butter-*violin* because of its gentle and full tone. Once, soon after they came back from Vienna, he was playing on it and could not praise my violin enough. One or two days later I came to visit him again and encountered him just as he was entertaining himself with his own *violin*. [85] This is what he immediately said: How is your butter-*violin* doing? Then he continued playing according to his fantasy; finally he reflected a little and said to me, Herr Schachtner, your *violin* is tuned half a quartertone lower than mine here, if you have indeed left it tuned the way it was when I played on it the last time. [90] I laughed about it, but Papa, who knew the extraordinary feeling for notes and the memory this child possessed, asked me to fetch my *violin* and see whether he was right. I did so, and he was right.

Some time before that, in the first days after they came back from Vienna and Wolfgang brought with him a little *violin* which he received as a present in Vienna,<sup>10</sup> [95] that very good former *violinist* of ours, Herr Wenzl<sup>11</sup> of blessing memory, who was a beginner in *composition*, came round. He brought 6 *trios* with him which he had written during your esteemed Papa's absence and asked your esteemed Papa's thoughts on them. We played these *trios*, your Papa played the *bass* on the *viola*, Wenzl played the first *violin*, and I was to play the 2<sup>nd</sup>. [100] Wolfgang<sup>1</sup> asked if he might play the 2<sup>nd</sup> *violin*, but your Papa rebuked him for his foolish request because he had not yet had the least instruction on the *violin*, and your Papa thought he would not be capable of performing even the least part of it. Wolfgang said, One surely does not need to learn first before playing the 2<sup>nd</sup> *violin*, and when your Papa insisted that he leave at once and should stop troubling us, [105] Wolfgang began to weep bitterly and toddled off with his little *violin*. I requested that he should be allowed to play with me. Finally your Papa said, Play with Herr Schachtner, but so quietly that no-one hears you, otherwise you have to leave. This was done. Wolfgang played *violin* with me; soon I noticed to my astonishment that I was entirely superfluous. [110] I quietly laid my *violin* aside and looked at your esteemed Papa, who had tears of amazement and consolation rolling down his cheeks at this sight, and thus he played all 6 *trios*. Once we were finished, Wolfgang was so emboldened by our applause that he maintained that he could even play the 1<sup>st</sup> *violin*. For fun, we gave it a try, [115] and we had to laugh until we almost burst our sides when he did in fact play this as well, although with a multitude of incorrect and irregular fingerings, yet without ever getting stuck entirely.

In conclusion. About the delicacy and fineness of his hearing.

Until almost the age of 10, he had an insuperable fear of the trumpet [120] when it was played alone without other instruments.<sup>12</sup> If one even simply held a trumpet in front of him, this was tantamount to holding a loaded pistol to his breast. Your Papa wanted to free him of this childish fear and instructed me, despite his unwillingness, to blow it straight at him, but – my God! – I should not have allowed myself to be enticed into doing this. [125] Hardly had Wolfgang<sup>1</sup> heard the blaring sound, but he turned pale and began to sink to the ground, and if I had gone on longer he would certainly have suffered a seizure.

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<sup>10</sup> BD: Inaccurate. Wolfgang took the small violin to Vienna with him.

<sup>11</sup> BD: Wenzel Hebelt, violinist in the court music, occasionally substituted for Leopold as a teacher at the Kapellhaus.

<sup>12</sup> BD: The only concerto for trumpet (KV 47c), referred to No. 0142/21 as having been composed by Mozart, is lost. Cf. also No. 1212/213.

This is incidental to what I can offer you in response to the questions you put. Forgive my terrible scrawl, the fact that I cannot do better is punishment enough for me. [130] I am with all fitting and due

reverence

Salzburg

the 24<sup>th</sup> April

1792

Your Grace's

most obedient servant

Andre Schachtner

High Princely Court Trumpeter<sup>13</sup>

[135] My most obedient respects to His Grace your gracious esteemed spouse.

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<sup>13</sup> "Hochfürstl. Hoftrumpeter".