

Introduction

Joseph Reinagle was born in Portsmouth in 1752 and died in Oxford in 1825. After being taught to play the horn and trumpet by his father, he studied the violoncello with Johann Georg Christoph Schetky in Edinburgh. But because he thought his brother Hugh was the better cellist, he later switched to violin and viola and became concertmaster of the orchestra at St. Caecilia's Hall in Edinburgh. After his brother's death, he resumed playing the cello and went to London in 1784, where he became a close friend of Haydn, and played in several orchestras, mostly as principal cellist. Soon after 1800 he made Oxford his permanent home.¹

Numerous instrumental works by Joseph Reinagle have survived in which the violoncello is the predominant instrument. The pedagogical aspect is always clearly noticeable. Very well-known are his *Twelve Progressive Duets for Two Violoncellos, Expressly Composed for the Use of Beginners*, which almost every cello student today gets to know. Reinagle was also one of the first British cellists to publish a violoncello school.²

The source for the three sonatas for violoncello and basso published here is a print by Lavenu & Mitchell, London ca. 1805, entitled *Three Solos, | for the | Violoncello, | In which are Introduced | Favorite Airs, | Composed | and respectfully Dedicated | to | G. Grant Esq. | by | Jos.^p Reinagle . . .* Our edition is based on the copy of the British Library with RISM siglum and shelfmark **GB-Lbl g.509.b.(3.)**. Apart from the title page, it contains 19 pages set to score.

Our edition follows the original very closely, right down to the bar setting. It is striking that many

phrases which occur more than once are quite obviously bowed differently. This inconsistency makes the music interesting and certainly also has pedagogical reasons. We have adopted it unchanged, as well as the dynamics, which are perhaps incomplete by modern standards. Only where we thought it necessary for a practical edition we have carefully supplemented the articulation with dotted slurs and staccato signs in brackets, and added accidentals in brackets. Our other amendments are recorded in the Critical Report. The original contains bold double strokes only instead of repetition marks, so that the repetitions that are in our edition also can be questioned.

As indicated in the title, Reinagle has incorporated 'Favorite Airs' into his themes. Two of these could be identified: *The Bluebells of Scotland*³ is on page 6 in the *Andante* of Sonata I, and the Welsh folk song *All through the night*⁴ is on page 17 in the *Slow* of Sonata II. Both tunes are very well known in the UK, not only in Scotland or Wales. We thank Peter Holman and Jeremy Barlow for their assistance in the search.

In addition to the cello part, also the bass part contains numerous chords, so that we assume that the sonatas are designed for the performance on two violoncellos. They are very suitable as duets for lessons and stimulate the joy of playing with their catchy melodies.

Günter and Leonore von Zadow
Heidelberg, May 2022

¹ See also: Introduction by Margaret Doris in Joseph Reinagle, *Six Easy Duets for two Violoncellos* (Heidelberg: Güntersberg, 2017), G315 and G316.

² Joseph Reinagle, *A Concise Introduction to the Art of Playing the Violoncello including a short and easy Treatise on Music, to which*

is added Forty Six Progressive an ten lessons on all the positions and Six Duets, 5th edition (London about 1835).

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bluebells_of_Scotland .

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ar_Hyd_y_Nos .