

*Monsieur mon très cher Ami!**Paris, le 8^{me} Decemb., 1763*

After we had given a grand *concert* in *Brussels*, where Prince Charles³ was present, and after we had left on my revered name-day at 9 o'clock with 4 post-horses and amidst the sad leaving-taking of many good friends, arriving at *Mons* in the evening in broad daylight, [5] on the 2nd day likewise so early in *Bon Avis*,⁴ the 3rd in *Gournay*, and on the 4th reaching *Paris* at 3:30 in the evening. I must tell you that one completes a post-stage every hour, first of all because the stages are short, and because it is full gallop all the time. The road from *Brussels* to *Paris* is astonishingly expensive. From *Brussels* to *Valenciennes*, [10] the post-stages are *Brabantian*, and each horse costs 3 *escalins* or 45 *kreuzers*⁵ in German money. On the other hand, the stages are all not much longer than 2 hours. As soon as one reaches *Valenciennes*, one has to take 6 horses, there is no way round it. On the other hand, one pays 25 *sols* per horse, that is, one *livre* and 5 *sols*, roughly 30 *kreuzers* in German money. For this, one is given 2 post-servants, [15] who look like peculiar characters, at each post-house, since each dresses as he feels inclined. At one moment I believed they were a couple of mouse-trap carriers⁶, the next a couple of scoundrels from a theatre afterpiece, then a couple of Italian donkey drivers, but then a couple of runaway wig-makers, or dismissed and ownerless lackeys or even valets, but sometimes a couple of discharged sergeants, [20] at the same time, however, nothing but tall, well-built persons who drove just as if we were the Imperial Army and pursued by a corps of Prussians. You have enough to worry about providing for the hired men, making sure they do not jump off, or seeing that the wheels come off. And the baggage must be tied down anew at every post stage if it is not tied absolutely tightly, [25] otherwise everything falls apart and everything is ruined. Here I include the list of post-stages so you can see how astonishingly many changes there are until *Paris*.

On the way, nothing in particular had happened, except that we visited the *auditor*⁷ of the *Deutschmeister Regiment*, von *Lidelsheim*, and his wife, [30] the so-called former *Mariandel Freysauf*,⁸ at *Mons*. They have a grown-up daughter and son, who are both old enough for monastery or marriage. These good people simply live as best a regimental *auditor* can. It could, bluntly, be better! She commends herself to her friends in *Salzburg* via me. The nearer one gets to *Paris*, the more beautiful the surroundings become, for one sees many castles and avenues, [35] and my wife had no little pleasure in seeing the peasants with plaits, the cowherds in white smocks and big muffs, the peasant women with bonnets with *Palatine* trimmings, a muff in the hand, and a stick under the arm with which they drive a donkey before them. — — — So we arrived on the 18th of *November* at the *hotel*⁹ of the *Comte*¹⁰ van *Eyck*, [40] and were fortunate enough to find the *Count*¹¹ and *Comtesse* at home; they gave us a most friendly reception and assigned us a room, where we live conveniently and

¹ BD: Original lost. Copyist A; NissenB.

² BD: Johann Lorenz Hagenauer (1712-1792), Salzburg merchant. Friend of the Mozarts and their landlord 1747-1773.

³ “Prinz Carl”. BD: Cf. No. 0067/169, 176. He had kept the Mozarts waiting for his decision on the concert.

⁴ BD: Bonavis, a crossroads south of Cambrai. The route was thus Brussels-Mons-Valenciennes-Cambrai-Bonavis-Péronne-Senlis-Paris.

⁵ 60 *kreuzers* = 1 *florin*.

⁶ Colloquial term for pedlars.

⁷ BD: An officer with duties at a military court and paid less than an officer serving in battle-readiness.

⁸ BD: Cf. Nos. 0067/191, 194; 0069/65 ff.

⁹ Townhouse

¹⁰ Count.

¹¹ “den Herrn Grafen”. Maximilian Emanuel Franz, Count [Graf] van *Eyck* (1711-1777), Bavarian ambassador in *Paris*; the Mozart family stayed in his palace there. He took advantage of the extraterritorial status of his house to set up a casino, to which Leopold Mozart seems to refer in Nos. 0081/7 ff. and 0109/109-10.

well. We have the Countess'¹² *flügel*¹³ in our room, as she does not need it; it is good, and, like ours, has 2 manuals. If I had received your letter sooner in *Brussels*, [45] I would have saved 100 *livres*, which I had to pay on my arrival in *Paris* for the accommodation which, shortly before, I had arranged to have reserved for myself in *Paris*, for accommodation in *Paris* has become very scarce because of the many foreigners who will be here for the winter. In particular, because no Englishmen came here for 7 years, as long as the war was on, they are now all coming more often. [50] And such apartments cannot be rented except by the month. The apartment which I now have, however, makes it easy for me to get over the pain of the 100 *livres*. Soon after our arrival, I received your letter safely. I had already heard from the titled Countess *van Eyck*¹⁴ that the titled Count *Spaur*¹⁵ had become Bishop of Seckau, and furthermore that the titled Cathedral Dean had turned it down. [55] I am sorry about the ailing condition of Herr Hafner's factor,¹⁶ and of Frau Hafner, and wish, with my compliments, a complete recovery. I commend myself to the worthy dance-master,¹⁷ and would send to him my plea to make sure that he looks after himself and takes on a well-behaved young dancer who can relieve him; he can do nothing more sensible. [60] You may perhaps wish to know how I like *Paris*. – – – – – If I were to tell you in detail about it, neither the hide of a cow nor a *rhinoceros* would suffice. Buy yourself, for 45 kreuzers, the Johann Peter Willebrandt könig: dän: wirk: Justiz=Raths etc. Historische Berichte und Pracktsche Anmerkungen auf Reisen etc., Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1761.¹⁸ [65] You will have much pleasure from it. There is only one thing I want to say to you, and that is that *Paris* is an open place that has no gates, and on entry it looks completely like a village, but something different follows. The buildings are unbelievably comfortably built, but I must save the explanation of that for when we talk in person. The *hôtel* where we live is built so much for convenience that all corners, [70] even the smallest, are used for something. Nothing is cheap here apart from the wine. Every 10 days the food, without bread, costs me 2 *louis d'or*,¹⁹ without wine and bread, then daily 2 bottles of wine and 4 *sols* worth of bread, a bottle of wine à 10 *sols*. Our midday meal consequently comes to 48 kreuzers and the evening meal to 48 *sols*, or 6 *livres*. [75] The whole day with bread and wine, all together, 120 *sols*, or 6 *livres* that is: one crown or feather thaler. The *louis d'or* has 24 *livres*, consequently 4 crown thalers are one *louis d'or*, for each feather thaler is worth 6 *livres*. One *livre* has 20 *sols*. One *sol* has 4 *liards*. If you now allow the *liards* to be equivalent to pfennigs, one sol equals one kreuzer, consequently the *livre* 20 kr., a crown thaler 2 florins, but the *louis d'or* 8 fl. Now, there are no other coins apart from the six *liard* pieces, which are in my opinion 6 pfennigs, or the 2 *sol* pieces, or 2 kreuzers, the *douze sols* pieces, or 12 kr.; the *vingt-quatre sols*, or 24 *sol* piece. Now you know all the kinds of money, for there is no other kind in France. I am fully aware that the *louis d'or* is worth more than 8 fl., [85] but I can work better with this way of calculating, whether I reckon the

¹² "Gräfin".

¹³ "Flügel" [= "wing"] denotes any keyboard instrument with a flat wing shape, whether harpsichord, clavichord, or pianoforte. BD: Probably an instrument by Friederici in Gera, cf. line 44 and No. 0044/35.

¹⁴ "tit. der Gräfin van-Eyck". BD:

¹⁵ BD: Up to that point member of the cathedral chapter in Salzburg; cf. No. 0068/49.

¹⁶ BD: Siegmund Haffner the Elder (1699-1772), Salzburg merchant and public figure. Mozart's Haffner Symphony KV 385 was written for his son from his second marriage, Siegmund Haffner the Younger (1756-1787).

¹⁷ BD: Cf. No. 41/40. Franz Karl Gottlieb Speckner (Spoeckner) (1707-1767), son of the Salzburg Court and Parliamentary Dancing Master [Hof- und Landschaftstanzmeister] Johann Lorenz Speckner. In 1747 he was a witness at Leopold's wedding. His house was inherited by his cousin, Maria Anna Raab ("Mitzel", mentioned frequently in the letters); the Mozart family stayed there from 1773 until Leopold's death in 1787.

¹⁸ ≈ "Historical Accounts and Practical Observations on Journeys etc. by Johann Peter Willebrandt, Royal Danish Actual Judicial Counsellor etc., Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1761."

¹⁹ BD: Leopold's accounts here use the following conversion rates: 1 *louis d'or* = 4 crown or feather thalers = 24 *livres* = 480 *sols* = 1920 *liards* = 480 *keuzers* = 8 florins.

loss of the 3 fl. on each *louis d'or*²⁰ in the spending or as income. Enough, you see from this that everything is more expensive. Once I am better informed about everything, I will tell you more about it. The most abominable thing here is the drinking water, which they fetch from the Seine |: which looks so abominable:|. There are some water carriers who have the privilege, [90] and must pay something to the King; consequently, all water must be paid for. We have it in the house. They call it out loud in the street: *de l'eau*. We boil all our drinking water, and let it stand for a while, then it becomes better. Almost every stranger initially gets diarrhoea from the water; each one of us had it too, but not badly. [95] A not insignificant *commodité*²¹ here is the so-called Little Post in *Paris*, with which I can send letters to all streets in *Paris* throughout the day and receive a reply back. This is all more necessary because one has to drive a full hour and more to some places, since one has to pay 25 *sols* for the first hour and then 20 *sols* for each additional hour, [100] so one could spend a lot of money and yet not find anyone there. The custom is therefore to inform each other in advance by the *petite post*. The carriages of which I have just spoken are the *fiacres*,²² a miserable carriage, each of which has its number, so I know who has driven me. Another kind is the *carosse de remise*,²³ which is very expensive. But I have had to take these 3 times [105] in order to be allowed to drive into the courtyards of great princes, where no *fiacres* are allowed in and have to stop outside. One has to take them for the whole day, and must pay 12 *livres* or 2 crown thalers and give a tip in addition to that. I would have written to you a long time ago, except that I thought I should wait until we had played at court. [110] But now the grieving for the *Infanta*²⁴ hinders this until it is over. Did His Excellency Count Daun²⁵ then die of apoplexy? – another canonicate vacant. *À propos!* Tell me, has *Msr. Woditska*,²⁶ the son of the worthy orchestra leader in Munich, perhaps joined the *Collegium Rupertinum*²⁷ in Salzburg? He is a very well behaved, well brought up person, and I advised him, [115] if he wished to live outside the *Collegium*, to order a room at *Madame von Wohlhaupt's* in our building. His esteemed mother is a *Brentano*, and on friendly terms with Herr *Calligari*.²⁸ I wrote down your name for her so that, in such a case, she can correspond with you. Concerning the kindness you showed me, sir, in corresponding with Herr *Calligari*²⁹ on my behalf,³⁰ obedient thanks. [120] I have neither seen nor heard anything yet. I would prefer if it happened soon, for one simply does not know what can be waiting for us poor human creatures. So far we are |: praise God :| all in good health. My wife, my *Wolfgängerl* and *Nannerl* commend themselves, along with me, to you, your dearest wife, your whole household and all our friends, and I am as always [125]

P.S. the correct address for me must therefore be:

Chez Msr. le Comte de Van Eyck, Envoyé de Baviere. Rue S^{te}. Antoine à l'Hôtel de Beauvais.

It remains to be remarked that you should use fine paper, for all letters are weighed [130] and astonishingly expensive charges made. Ask Master³¹ Johannes to write down, bit by bit as convenient, what news there is, in small writing on a sheet of paper. Then, additionally, write what you have to write to me at the end of that. I do not require any titles; the letter can look

²⁰ BD: The usual conversion is actually 1 louis d'or = 11 florins.

²¹ = "Convenience".

²² BD: Simple carriages for hire.

²³ BD: A finer carriage for hire.

²⁴ BD VII: Isabella di Parma, granddaughter of Louis XV and first wife of Archduke [Erzherzog] Joseph, later Emperor [Kaiser] Joseph II.

²⁵ "Graf Daun". BD: Karl Joseph, Graf Daun, cathedral canon (* 1728).

²⁶ BD: Cf. No. 0051/2, 3.

²⁷ BD: Accommodation for grammar school pupils.

²⁸ BD: Cf. No. 0053/9.

²⁹ BD VII: Cf. No. 0068/2 ff.

³⁰ BD: In order to provide Leopold with new letters of credit.

³¹ "Herrn Johannes". BD: Cf. No. 0041/8.

like a newspaper. A letter from me will soon reach Salzburg again. [135] Two days ago, a German banker, *Msr.* Hummel,³² who knows Herr Hafner,³³ entertained us. Only Germans were invited, but they were mostly Lutheran Swiss. Tomorrow we have to go to *Marquis Villeroy* and to the *Comtesse de Lillebonne*.³⁴ — — —

³² BD: Cf. Nos. 0074/11; 0084/24. It was with him that the Mozarts left most of their baggage before leaving for England, cf. No. 0088/141.

³³ BD: Siegmund Haffner the Elder (1699-1772), Salzburg merchant and public figure. Mozart's Haffner Symphony KV 385 was written for his son from his second marriage, Siegmund Haffner the Younger (1756-1787).

³⁴ Countess of Lillebonne.