

Confidential draft

CHOPIN and JENNY LIND

NEW RESEARCH



by

Cecilia and Jens Jorgensen

Brussels, 29 January 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. INFORMATION ON PEOPLE	4
2.1 Claudius Harris	4
2.2 Nassau W. Senior	5
2.3 Harriet Grote	6
2.4 Queen Victoria	7
2.5 Judge Munthe	9
2.6 Jane Stirling	10
2.7 Jenny Lind	15
2.8 Fryderyk Chopin	19
3. THE COVER-UP	25
3.1 Jenny Lind's memoir	25
3.2 Account of Jenny Lind	26
3.3 Marriage allegation	26
3.4 Friends and family	26
4. CONCLUSIONS	27
ATTACHMENTS	
A Sources of information	
B Consultations in Edinburgh and Warsaw	
C Annexes C1 – C24 with evidence	
D Jenny Lind's tour schedule 1848-1849	

Icons of Europe asbl

32 Rue Haute, B-1380 Lasne, Belgium
Tel. +32 2 633 3840, Fax +32 2 633 4445
icons@europe.com
<http://www.chopinlind.com>
<http://www.iconsofeurope.com>

The images of this draft are provided by sources listed in Attachments A and C.
Further details will be specified in the final version of the research paper.

All rights reserved. Copyright © 2003 Icons of Europe, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium.
Filed with the United States Copyright Office of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper recapitulates all the research findings developed in 2003-2004 on the final year of Fryderyk Chopin's life and his relationship with Jenny Lind in 1848-1849. Comments are invited by scholars in preparation for its intended publication as a *sequel* to the biography, *CHOPIN and The Swedish Nightingale* (Icons of Europe, Brussels, August 2003).

- 1.1 **Background.** The above biography was mainly based on Chopin's own letters. Towards the end of finalizing the book, the authors made unexpectedly a discovery of a 'codeword' in his letter of 28 July 1849, which pointed to Jenny Lind, the Swedish soprano as the donor of the anonymous gift of 25,000 francs in banknotes that Chopin (1810-1849) had just received with the involvement of the clairvoyant Alexis.

Jenny Lind (1820-1887) was at the time one of Europe's megastars and earned the highest fee ever paid to a soprano. Feted by royalty and the public in Europe, her enormous popularity was augmented by her reputation for philanthropy. Later, she triumphed in North America in 1850-1852. She was often called the Swedish Nightingale, because Hans Christian Andersen (1810-1875) wrote his famous story *The Nightingale* as a tribute to her in 1843.

As a result, the authors conducted a comparative analysis of Chopin's letters with her memoir, *Jenny Lind – The Artist: Memoir 1820-1851* (published in 1891), and decided to add three chapters to the biography to document their findings. They concluded in 2003 that "Jenny Lind probably came to Paris with the intention to marry Chopin", and that Jenny Lind seems to be "behind the anonymous donation of the 25,000 francs" that Chopin received in July 1849.

- 1.2 **Long-standing myths.** Jenny Lind scholars had always accepted a story that she in late 1848 met a "Mr Harris" whom she planned to marry early 1849, and that the marriage was aborted because his religious mother strongly disliked actresses and considered "the theatre a temple of Satan". Nobody seems ever to have questioned the absurdity of this story. Nor why Jenny Lind in May 1849 suddenly travelled to Paris, a city she was known to strongly dislike and where a cholera epidemic and civil unrest then made it an extremely dangerous place.

Independently, Chopin scholars had always assumed that Jane Wilhelmina Stirling (1804-1859), an earlier pupil of his, was the generous donor of the 25,000 francs. Some biographers even called her "Chopin's official widow". Few seem to have ever wondered, how the Jane Stirling and her sister could have invented the bizarre story about "Alexis" and raised such a large sum of cash. Nor how this six-year older, "boring" and apparently ailing Scottish spinster could possibly, as alleged, have aspired in 1848 to marry Chopin.

- 1.3 **Research I (August 2003).** In May 2003, the authors discussed an initial draft of *CHOPIN and The Swedish Nightingale* with representatives and scholars of the Polish Ministry of Culture, the Frederick Chopin Society in Warsaw, and other institutions. The biography was well received, but it was felt that additional evidence on Chopin and Jenny Lind's relationship would be desirable.¹

¹ *Chopin in the World* (2003 edition), the Polish press and other media also commented favourable on the biography.

- 1.4 **Research II (March 2004).** The authors conducted in the latter half of 2003 additional research Europe-wide in consultation with national archives in the United Kingdom, Sweden and France, and many other organizations (Attachment A), which eventually confirmed their earlier findings on Chopin and Jenny Lind.

The evidence of this work was discussed and endorsed at a roundtable of Chopin experts and a press conference, convened by the Fryderyk Chopin Institute on 1 March 2004 at the Warsaw Philharmonic (Attachment B).² In parallel, the authors posted the main research findings freely accessible at <http://www.iconsofeurope.com> and www.chopinlind.com. Specific issues were further examined in the latter half of 2004, which included a visit to Paris in December.

- 1.5 **Research III (January 2005).** Thus, the present research paper consolidates all the research findings of August 2003, March 2004 and January 2005. The large volume of information is organized under each of the eight key persons involved in order to facilitate the understanding of their roles and motives and the sequence of events. The information includes original letters, official government papers, civic records, and Jenny Lind's tour schedule, as well as selected and verified information obtained from a large number of biographies and other publications (Attachments C and D).

Compared with March 2004, this paper includes *new findings* on several subjects. For example, on Chopin and Jenny Lind's stay in Manchester; what the London press said about "Mr Harris"; the precise location of the former 74 Rue de Chaillot; Chopin's overall economy in 1848-1849; the meaning of several of Chopin's letters (e.g. "Lucrezia" and "March (the 8th)"); Meyerbeer's role at the funeral; the monuments for Bellini and Chopin at Père-Lachaise; the role of Jane Stirling and her elder sister in 1848-1851; and Liszt's views in 1851.

An initial draft of the consolidated paper, dated 20 December 2004, was reviewed on 11 January 2005 with three musicologists associated with the University of Edinburgh and the University of St Andrews. They found the evidence "persuasive" (Attachment B), including the findings on the Scottish sisters. They also made helpful suggestions on specific sections and the presentation format.

- 1.6 **Technology used.** The whole research and publication process has been greatly facilitated by the use of the Internet, online archives of many institutions in especially the United Kingdom and North America, and online networks of antiquarians.

Cecilia and Jens Jorgensen
29 January 2005

² The same research documentation was made available to the Royal Academy of Music, Stockholm in March 2004.

2. INFORMATION ON PEOPLE

This section provides information on Chopin and Jenny Lind and on people with a special role in their relationship. In this order: Claudius Harris, Nassau W. Senior, Harriet Grote, Queen Victoria, Judge Munthe, Jane Stirling, Jenny Lind and Fryderyk Chopin.

2.1 CLAUDIUS HARRIS

Early February 1849, the London press announced that Jenny Lind was going to marry a certain “Mr Harris”. Her biography, *Jenny Lind – The Artist: Memoir 1820-1851*, published in 1891, explains that she had met “Captain Harris” in Newcastle on 20 September 1848 and that the marriage was initially set for 7 March 1849 (vol. II, p. 342).

- (a) London press 1849. The identity of “Mr Harris” was never revealed to the public. The press was already in early 1849 highly suspicious about his existence. *Punch* writes sarcastically on 24 February: “F.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to MR. HARRIS, and will feel it the proudest moment of his life to give away this lovely bride.” The same issue also notes on a separate page, “she has been given away by nearly every editor in the kingdom”, and compares Mr Harris with a “long-talked-of-myth”. On 17 March, *Punch* accuses Jenny Lind of “refusing to sing on the stage of Her Majesty’s Theatre” and of being ungrateful to Queen Victoria, but it no longer mentions her planned marriage.

DEAR JENNY LIND has changed her mind,
And run away to Paris:
So Betsey Prigg was right we find—
There is NO Mrs. Harris!

The Morning Post speculates on 30 April: “Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, the hypothesis, the various and conflicting rumours, to have been based on the truth ... Granting the supposed projected marriage ...”. In its June edition, *Punch* writes: “Dear Jenny Lind has changed her mind, And run away to Paris: So Betsey Prigg was right we find – There is NO Mrs. Harris!”³

- (b) British Army. According to British Army records, there was a Claudius Richard William Frith Harris, who was born on 28 July 1826 in Paris, baptised at Bathwick and died at Nice in 1862. “He was chosen as a cadet in the East India Company Army, recruited for the 1843 / 44 season” ([Exhibit C1](#)). A loose page among his cadet papers *L / MIL 9 / 206 folios 385-389* notes the identity of Joseph Grote Esq, Newcastle-on-Thyne, Harriet Grote’s brother-in-law.

Cadet Claudius Harris was “promoted to lieutenant at Bombay on 1 November 1848”. To be in Newcastle in September, he would have had to sail from Bombay no later than in July 1848 ([Exhibit C2](#)). However, according to an army expert at the British Library, it would have been highly irregular for a young cadet (22) to take furlough some four months before his promotion in India.



³ *Betsey Prigg* is a character in Charles Dickens’ novel *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844). Dickens writes: « A fearful mystery surrounded this lady of the name of Harris, whom no one in the circle of Mrs Gamp’s acquaintance had ever seen; neither did any human being know her place of residence, though Mrs Gamp appeared on her own showing to be in constant communication with her. There were conflicting rumours on the subject; but the prevalent opinion was that she was a phantom of Mrs Gamp’s brain. » ... « “Bother Mrs Harris!” said Betsey Prigg ... “I don’t believe there’s no such a person!” » . – Among her many author friends, Jenny Lind knew Dickens since 1847. Given her keen sense for symbolism, it was no doubt a convenient coincidence that Chopin often signed his own letters with CH.

- (c) Letters to Munthe. On 27 April 1849, two weeks before her going to Paris, Jenny Lind writes to Judge Munthe, her legal guardian in Stockholm: “Mr Harris (*Claudius Harris*) [sic] will of course give up his position in the Indian [sic] army to follow me” (Exhibit C3). In reality this was hardly possible under British Army rules and would have made Harris an army deserter.⁴

She adds that 20 May 1849 is “the last day of his [Harris’] leave of absence”, which is inconsistent with the British Army recording: “Returned to duty, arrived Bombay on 14th January 1850”. The British Library found “no information about his whereabouts during 1848 and 1849, if he left India or whether he was contemplating marriage in 1849” (Exhibit C1).

Jenny Lind’s above letter of 27 April 1849 describes “Harris” as: “A person whose *life* I have in my hands ... – I am soon married!”. “We will marry ... 14-16 May – the day is not fully decided – and travel then to Paris, I believe, but from there home to Sweden.” She asks Munthe to find a “*quiet, peaceful*”⁵ country-house in Sweden for her and “Harris”, who “will soon learn Swedish”. She writes that her husband would also need to have four caring people “to be around, as often as possible” – all of which seem rather incompatible with the needs of a young officer in the British Army.

- (d) Mrs Senior’s diary. Mrs Nassau W. Senior kept in London a diary for her husband (see below) and writes on 6 May 1849: “... Jenny Lind and Mr Harris dined with us” (Exhibit C4).

THUS, the timing of events, British Army practice, and Jenny Lind’s own description of her future husband, rule out Lt Claudius Harris as her fiancé. At the time and based on the little information they had available, the press did not buy the story either. Someone must have been persuaded to act as “Mr Harris” at the dinner on 6 May 1849, because Jenny Lind was obviously under pressure to produce a live person now that her marriage was postponed from 7 March to 14-16 May 1849.⁶

2.2 NASSAU W. SENIOR



Nassau W. Senior (1790-1864), ‘the British economist, taught at Oxford, and worked on the marginal aspects of inputs to production. He argued that capital accumulation is a cost of production, and he drew careful distinctions between wealth and welfare. His contributions to the Whig party as an advisor included arguments about work hours and wages.’ Along with Edwin Chadwick, he wrote the revised *Poor Law Commissioners’ Report of 1834*, ‘presented by both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty’. Senior was an acquaintance of Harriet Grote, Jenny Lind’s trusted companion and protector (see section 2.3 below), and he became Jenny Lind’s personal marriage counsel in 1849.

- (a) Mystery. Mrs Senior writes in her husband’s diary on 18 April 1849: “There is a great deal of mystery about Jenny Lind & Mrs Grote, they spent a couple of hours with Mr Senior in the evening” (Exhibit C4).

⁴ It was army practice for a wife to join her husband at the duty station, as Harris’ wife Alicia Maria, daughter of Bishop Walter A. Shirley, indeed did in 1856. A memorial tablet at St Mary’s Church in Bathwick for “Claudius R.W.F. Harris, Esq.: Captain 8th Lt. Cavalry, Madras”, set in 1862 or later, says his wife “died at Madras” in 1858.

⁵ Chopin wrote to a friend on 30 January 1849: “They [the doctors] all agree about climate, peaceful life, rest”.

⁶ Without apparently being suspicious, Curt Munthe observed in 1960: “Claudius Harris, who now turns up in her life from nowhere, soon disappears as quickly from it” (*Jenny Lind och sängens Beateberg*, Stockholm, p. 61).

- (b) Tocqueville. A few days later, Senior tells Alexis de Tocqueville⁷ in a letter of 22 April that he is thinking about coming to Paris from 9 to 23 May 1849. He does not expect to see Tocqueville, and asks him “how things will be then” (Exhibit C5). – It would appear that Senior was planning a private visit to Paris.
- (c) Paris. Mrs Senior notes in the diary on 9 May, the day before Jenny Lind’s opera farewell at Her Majesty’s Theatre: “Mr Senior went off to Paris”. He was accompanied by Mrs Grote, and they awaited Jenny Lind’s arrival (on 16 May).
- (d) Riots. In Paris about to leave, Senior writes on Monday, 21 May to his daughter: “We are here on the brink of another fight ... Mrs Grote does not wish to stay over the emeute” [riot] – does not want to leave Jenny, does not dare bring her back to England” (Exhibit C6).
- (e) Jenny’s story. Back in London, Senior writes on 28 May 1849 to Mrs Grote at 63 Champs Elysées: « I had a long ride with Lord Liverpool, the day before yesterday & I told him Jenny’s story, authorizing him to tell the Queen about Mrs Stanley’s part in it,⁸ but not anyone else – To the rest of the world she is to be described “a Lady an acquaintance of **Harris**⁹ & a friend of hers.” » (Exhibit C7).



Senior adds that Jenny Lind « ought to write not direct to the Queen, but to G. Anson [her Privy Purse] – to say that as Her Majesty had done her the honour to express a wish to be informed when this marriage has to take place, she thought it wise to tell to him for Her Majesty’s information that it will never take place. »

THUS, Senior’s correspondence shows that there was a cover-up of “Jenny’s story” at the level of Queen Victoria. It also shows that he must have reached his understanding that the marriage would never take place, between Friday, 18 May (two days after Jenny Lind’s arrival in Paris – see section 2.5d below) and Tuesday, 22 May (the day of his departure from Paris).¹⁰

2.3 HARRIET GROTE

Harriet Grote (1794-1871), born Lewin and wife of the historian and parliamentarian George Grote, was Jenny Lind’s trusted companion and protector during her triumphal tour in Britain in 1847-1849. She introduced in early May 1848 Jenny Lind to Chopin, whom she knew from Paris, and she accompanied Jenny Lind on her tour in Britain.¹¹ Mrs Grote was a social phenomenon in London, a diligent keeper of diaries and notebooks as well as a good letter-writer. She authored a number of biographies and other publications including *Memoir of the Life of Ary Scheffer* and *The Case of the Poor Against the Rich Fairly Considered*.



⁷ Alexis de Toqueville, the French political thinker and historian who had written *Democracy in America*, became minister of foreign affairs of France in June 1849.

⁸ Mrs Stanley may have been the wife of the bishop in Norwich, whom Jenny Lind knew well (ref. 2.7e below).

⁹ In Senior’s original letter, the handwritten word ‘Harris’ appears to overwrite, in bold, another word, possibly ‘his’. Alternatively, as the National Library of Wales suggests, Senior may have paused and dipped the pen anew.

¹⁰ This timing corresponds with *The Morning Chronicle* of 21 May 1849: “We hear that Mademoiselle Lind remains in Paris for the present, and that her marriage is broken off.”

¹¹ Chopin writes on 19 August 1848 to his family: “Mrs Grote is a very kind woman, though eccentric and a good deal of a radical. She receives a great many interesting visitors; dukes, and lords, and scholars; in a word, the celebrities of the great world. She talks in a bass voice, and does not wrap the truth in cotton-wool.”

- (a) In Paris 1849. Mrs Grote's diary notes that she was in Paris in March 1849 for an unspecified purpose, and that she there met Mrs Simpson, N.W. Senior's daughter.¹² She returned to Paris on 9 May together with Senior. The envelope of Senior's letter of 28 May (Exhibit 7) shows that they stayed at "63 Maison Fenci, Champs Elysées", where Jenny Lind joined them on 16 May.
- (b) Void in 1848-1849. However, all of Mrs Grote's other notes and correspondence from the 1848-1849 period seem to have disappeared. There is no information about Jenny Lind and Chopin, whom she received several times at her home, or about any other persons in that period.¹³ Jenny Lind's *Memoir 1820-1851* (vol. II, 232) observes that Mrs Grote left behind an *incomplete* "Memoir of the Life of Jenny Lind" (written in 1855-1857), but it stops at the end of 1847.
- (c) Last contact. Mrs Grote writes on 5 September 1859 to Senior informing him of a visit by "my Swedish dragon". No other information was found to indicate that they saw each other again after the dramatic events in Paris in May-June 1849. However, they could have met, when Jenny Lind stayed eight days in England prior to her departure from Liverpool to New York on 20 August 1850.

THUS, Mrs Grote was together with N.W. Senior deeply involved in Jenny Lind's marriage plans, but no information of hers can be found on the 1848-1849 period.

2.4 QUEEN VICTORIA

Queen Victoria (1819-1901) knew Jenny Lind well and was fond of her. Accompanied by Prince Albert and Lord Liverpool, head of her Household, the Queen first met Jenny Lind on a State visit to Bonn in August 1845. Later, the Queen and Prince Albert were present at many of Jenny Lind's performances in London, including her last opera appearance on 10 May 1849 that heralded her much-rumoured imminent marriage.



- (a) Her Majesty's Theatre. According to The Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, Queen Victoria wrote often in her private Journal about Jenny Lind. On 10 May 1849 she notes: "We dined alone & went to the Opera to see dear Lind appear for the last time in 'Robert le Diable', the opera in which she made her 1st appearance. It made me sad to think of it. She sang exquisitely, but the rest of the Opera was badly given. The House was full to suffocation & the enthusiasm unbounded when Lind appeared at the end of the performance ...".¹⁴
- (b) Windsor Castle. Jenny Lind sang *Recueil de Mazourkas de F. Chopin*, an arrangement of four of Chopin's mazurkas at Windsor Castle on 28 December 1855 (*Mazurka in A flat, op. 24, n° 3* was last, "set to Italian words": "... fido amore mai non perirà / faithful love will never die"). The Royal Archives note that it was the first time that Queen Victoria had heard Jenny Lind sing since May 1849. The Queen writes in her Journal: Jenny Lind "sang more beautifully than ever & certainly there is no one at present, at all like her, but she is much altered in appearance" (Exhibit C8).

¹² Source: University College of London, "Grote Collection" Section B1.2, Paris diary March 1849.

¹³ The National Register of Archives explained in 2003 that this 1848-1849 void (Mrs Grote's diary note from March 1849 being the exception) applies to the University College of London, National Library of Wales, British Library, University of Cambridge, Durham University, Birmingham University, and Centre for Kentish Studies.

¹⁴ Jenny Lind never again performed in opera, only in concerts when she resumed her career in the United States (1850-1852). Henrietta Sontag (whom Chopin already had met in 1830) replaced her at Her Majesty's Theatre in July 1849. In 1852, she also went to America, where she died two years later.

(c) Buckingham Palace. Jenny Lind performed the same Chopin arrangement at Buckingham Palace on 30 May 1856, where she also sang Meyerbeer's duo *La mère grand*: "*Allons, rentrez voici l'orage*" with Pauline Viardot. The Queen did not seem to be pleased, and she records in her Journal that she found "poor Jenny Lind not in good voice", and that she did "not care for the choice of songs" (Exhibit C9).



(d) Later years. No information has been found on any later contact Jenny Lind may have had with Queen Victoria after 1856, except that Jenny Lind performed at the wedding of the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra of Denmark on 10 March 1863. She sang one of the Prince's own compositions.



It was not until seven years after Jenny Lind's death that a royal honour was bestowed upon her. In 1894, her memorial was set at Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey, immediately below that for Händel and not far from other Icons such as Shakespeare, Chaucer, Dickens and Kipling. A lyre, ancient symbol for music, is set below her head.

(e) Chopin / Liszt. Queen Victoria makes no reference in her Journal to meeting Chopin at Stafford House on 15 May 1848, although he says in his letter of 19 August: "The Duchess presented me to the Queen, who was amiable and talked with me twice. Prince Albert came up to my pianoforte. Everyone told me both these things are rare".



Much later, the Queen gave Franz Liszt (1811-1886) an audience at Windsor Castle on 7 April 1886, a few months before he died. Francis Hueffer writes: "... after a long conversation", she asked him to play three specific pieces – "Chopin's *Nocturne No. 1, in B flat minor* closed the performance."¹⁵ However, the Queen's Journal notes that Liszt only played his own compositions.

THUS, Queen Victoria obviously liked Chopin's music. It is strange that she never mentioned his name in her Journal – perhaps out of some discretion related to the cover-up of "Jenny's story" (ref. section 2.2e above).



¹⁵ From *Half a Century of Music in England 1837-1887* (1889, p. 144) by Francis Hueffer. Hueffer credits Queen Victoria's reign with "the revival of Music as a national art in England", and acknowledges that "the greatest portion of musical work in England during the last half-century has been done by foreigners" (p. vii-viii). Hueffer's reflection matches Chopin's own experience from England (21 October 1848): "Music is not an art and is not called art; and if I say an artist, an Englishman understands that as meaning a painter, architect or sculptor. Music is a profession, not an art". – *Nocturne in B flat minor, op. 9, n° 1* is dedicated to pianist, Madame Camille Pleyel. For Jean Kleczynski, it exhibits "a moving sadness together with an elegance handled in an unheard-of style" (Paris 1880, p. 32).

2.5 JUDGE MUNTHE

Henrik Matthias Munthe (1798-1880), Judge of the Court of Second Instance, Sweden and a cultivated musician, became Jenny Lind's legal guardian and trusted financial adviser in 1838. He maintained this role through frequent correspondence, when she left Sweden in 1841.



- (a) Legal powers. Munthe's legal powers were confirmed in Jenny Lind's letter to Mr Bunn, opera manager in London, on 22 February 1845: "On this account my legal guardian in Stockholm – without whose consent, and signature, none of my engagements are legal – has quite forbidden me to undertake the fatiguing enterprise in London" (*Memoir*, 1891, vol. II, p. 248).
- (b) 14 August 1848. Munthe was informed by Jenny Lind's letter of 14 August 1848 that she had given an 18-24 month loan of £ 1,000 [about 22,000 francs] to friends in financial difficulty: "... once I mention the names of these persons and my relations with them, you will completely agree with what I have done. ... It is all a result of the political problems of our times ... For reasons of discretion, I will not confide the names on paper". – The names of the friends must have been so well known that even Munthe, in Sweden, would have recognised them (Exhibit C10).¹⁶
- (c) 27 April 1849. Munthe was informed that Jenny Lind planned to get married on 14-16 May, and that she then would travel to Sweden via Paris (ref. section 2.1c above). It sounds as if it is the first time she tells him about "Harris". She also informs him that, when married, she would retain all rights to her fortune "under British law".
- (d) 14 May 1849. In London on [Monday] 14 May 1849, four days after her opera farewell, Jenny Lind writes to Munthe in Stockholm: "I am not yet married. It is difficult to arrange things so quickly ... I am now leaving for Paris, while Mrs Grote is still there". She asks him to hold back on the house in Sweden (Exhibit C11).
- (e) 18 May 1849. Munthe received from Jenny Lind a strongly worded letter dated Paris, [Friday] 18 May 1849. She implores him to come to Paris and then join her and Mrs Grote on a three-month trip to "Switzerland or Tyrol ...!"¹⁷. She furiously refers to "unworthy laws" imposed upon "myself and the splendid art for which I sacrificed everything ...!". She asks Munthe to "bring sufficient money ... come here! Come here!" (Exhibit C12).¹⁸ – No other letter has been found in which Jenny Lind has conveyed such desperation.
- (f) 10-13 June 1849. Referring to "a matter concerning ... my ward Jenny Lind", Munthe applied to the King of Sweden for permission to "travel to Paris and several foreign places in June-July" (Exhibit C13). Munthe arrived in Paris around 10 June (ref. Jenny Lind's letter of 13 June in section 2.7f below), where he was confronted with cholera and riots in the street. Chopin's acquaintance since 1820, the Italian soprano Angelica Catalani, whom Jenny Lind had just met, died of cholera on 12 June. Munthe and Jenny Lind fled Paris on 13 June.



¹⁶ Chopin, at this time, had fled Paris in April 1848 because of the unfavourable political climate. His poor health and financial situation further deteriorated in London. His own letters describes his many private encounters with Jenny Lind in 1848. Some of Chopin's letters from this period were not available to biographers until published by Opieński and Voynich in 1932. No letter has been found in which Jenny Lind explains that she even met Chopin.

¹⁷ The healing effect of climate change in chronic diseases was well known at the time (section 2.8i below).

¹⁸ Marriage law in France was more stringent than in Britain (banns, medical certificate, marriage authority, etc.).

- (g) Correspondence destroyed. Munthe asked his son Carl to return several of Jenny Lind's letters in a sealed envelope after his death (on 4 April 1880). His accompanying note says that these were letters, "which I do not consider should come to the knowledge of other people". Otto Goldschmidt, who married Jenny Lind in 1852, later confirms in a letter to Carl that she never opened the envelope, and that it was burned after her death. Jenny Lind says in a letter to Carl Munthe dated 15 June 1880: "I rarely confided on paper what I did not want the whole world to know".¹⁹

THUS, oddly enough, Jenny Lind does not seem to have told her legal guardian earlier than 27 April 1849 about her plans to get married (on 14-16 May). On 14 May, she seemed less hopeful and may have had discouraging news from Mrs Grote and Senior in Paris. The early departure of Senior and Mrs Grote on 9 May suggests that they were supposed to "arrange things" in preparation for Jenny Lind's arrival.

In Paris, "unworthy laws" became a major obstacle, and she sent immediately for Judge Munthe who obviously realized that she faced a major crisis. Then, seeing how unsafe Paris was, they left on 13 June 1849 – he probably forced her to do so.

2.6 JANE STIRLING

Jane Wilhelmina Stirling (1804-1859), a Scottish spinster, and her elder sister Katherine Erskine, started in 1826 to visit Paris where they joined the Protestant movement. Jane Stirling became a pupil of Chopin sometime in 1841. In April 1848, the two sisters helped Chopin find an apartment in London, and later their relatives invited him to Scotland ("they make their folk invite them constantly" – Chopin, 1 October 1848).²⁰



- (a) Their relationship. Fr. Niecks' biography of Chopin (1888) states: « To her the composer dedicated his *Deux Nocturnes*, Op. 55 [a gesture he often afforded his pupils], which he published in August, 1844. It was thought that she was in love with Chopin, and there were rumours of their going to be married. Gutmann informed me that Chopin said to him one day when he was ill: "They have married me to Miss Stirling; she might as well marry death." » (II, 291-292).

Gutmann's recollection so many years after the event seems questionable. In 1844, Chopin appeared to live happily with George Sand and did then in his own letters not complain about his health. Niecks may not have understood that Gutmann could have had the conversation much later, as there apparently had been marriage rumours in 1848 about Chopin (see section 2.6c below).

Before going to London in April 1848, Chopin mentioned Jane Stirling's name only once or twice. He tells his sister Ludwika at Christmas 1847: "I send you ... a tiny Lady's Companion from my kind Scottish lady". In his letters from Britain,

¹⁹ Sources: *Jenny Lind och sånges Beateberg* by Curt Munthe (Stockholm 1960) p. 140 and 177-178; Jenny Lind's *Memoir 1820-1851* (1891), vol. I, p. 163; and *Jenny Lind outside the stage, confidential letters to H.M. Munthe* (1928) by Lotten Dahlberg, p. 13 and 15. – The remaining collection of 135 letters were donated to The Royal Library, Stockholm in 1920, which may explain why the *Memoir* (1891) only includes excerpts of four letters. Lotten Dahlberg remarks that any secret contained in the letters Munthe returned to Jenny Lind could not have had anything to do with her engagements [to Julius Günther and Claudius Harris], since the circumstances of these engagements were common knowledge.

²⁰ Thomas Tellefsen, the Norwegian pianist explains in a letter early August 1848 that he was invited "to stay a month with Lord Thorfichen [sic], a brother-in-law of Miss Stirling. Chopin is also coming here in eight days from now".

Chopin constantly refers to the two Scottish sisters as kind and boring: “My Scottish ladies are kind ... but they bore me so I don’t know what to do (17 July 1848); “... my Scottish ladies give me no peace; either they come to fetch me, or take me the round of their families ... They are stifling me out of courtesy” (1 October); “... they torment me to play” (20 October); and “... so boring that the Lord preserve them!” (30 October).

Jane Stirling no doubt admired Chopin as a composer and was proud of showing him off to her family (“I am utterly out of the running, and make on myself the impression of an ass at a masquerade” – Chopin, Calder House, 6 August 1848). Niecks explains in 1888: “Miss Stirling was much about Chopin. I may mention by the way that Mrs Lyschinski told me that Miss Stirling’s ... love for him, although passionate, [was] purely Platonic” (II, 293-294).

- (b) Financial situation. Often staying with relatives in Scotland, Jane Stirling lived relatively comfortably on an annuity that allowed her to travel to the continent.²¹ The original will of her father John Stirling of Kippendavie, a wealthy landowner, confirmed in 1816 the Victorian practice of passing wealth down the male line. It was written for “For the Benefit of my sons and their Heirs” (Exhibit C14).



Jane Stirling was the youngest of 13 brothers and sisters (Exhibit C15). As shown in Exhibit C16, she inherited an annuity of £ 300-400 per annum (equivalent to about 8,000 French francs). In comparison, Jenny Lind was paid £ 5,600 for the four-month London season in 1848, then £ 10,000 for her regional tour. In addition, Jenny Lind raised more than £ 10,000 for charitable purposes between July 1848 and February 1849.

Her sister Katherine Erskine, a widow and Jane Stirling’s constant companion, may also have been living on a small annuity. James Erskine died in 1816, and his estate went to Thomas Erskine, his brother. Jane Stirling’s modest means and unassuming social life are also indicated by her newly found original death certificate.²² It states that she died of a “Disease of the Ovary”, 54-years old, in the presence of a nephew and is buried at Dunblane Cathedral (Exhibit C17). No stone or inscription is set for her there. Niecks quotes Thomas Erskine as writing about Jane Stirling after her death in 1859: “I never saw anything in her but what was loveable from the beginning to the end of her course”. Audrey Evelyne Bone notes in 1960: “Jane’s death passed unnoticed” (p. iii).



- (c) 30 October 1848. In his letter of 30 October 1848 from Edinburgh to Grzymała, Chopin strenuously denies any suggestion that he was planning to get married (“... to read in this that I am going to get married”). Chopin does not reveal the name of the woman, who apparently wants to marry him. Scholars have always assumed that it was Jane Stirling, although Chopin’s letter implies that the “unmarried one” was “rich”, “young” and “too much like” himself. This description does not fit the “boring”, six-year older Jane Stirling who lived on a relatively modest annuity.

²¹ In her biography *Jane Wilhelmina Stirling* (1960), Audrey Evelyne Bone quotes a description of Jane Stirling in 1850 by Thomas Carlyle, the Scottish historian and sociological writer (a friend of Thomas Erskine): “A hoarse-voiced, restless, invalid Scotch lady of some rank, mostly wandering about on the Continent” (p. 100).

²² No scholar seems previously to have referred to the will of Jane Stirling’s father and to her own death certificate.

This assumption has over time been reinforced by several factors. First, Niecks' above citations have been quoted too assertively by other scholars. An often-used image of Jane Stirling as a young girl may have given the false impression of her being younger than Chopin and possibly an audacious woman.



Second, Jane Stirling may have been seen by many as the only unmarried woman Chopin knew in Scotland, not realizing that Jenny Lind stayed in Edinburgh from 21 September to 1 or 2 October 1848, and in nearby Glasgow till 6 October – the period in which Chopin frequently made use of Dr Lyschinski's townhouse at 10 Warriston Crescent (ref. this photo from 2005 and section 2.7d below). His upbeat letters about his earlier meetings in public and private with Jenny Lind appear some times also to have been ignored.

Third, when Chopin's letter of 30 October 1848 resurfaced much later, inaccuracies in English and French translations have given the false impression that Chopin referred to Jane Stirling as the "unmarried one". Voynich (1932) made simply a footnote to say it was her, without any further explanation. A French translation in *Correspondance de Frédéric Chopin*, III, letter 271, reads: "Elles m'écrivent tous les jours ..."; i.e. "The Scottish ladies write to me every day, and I answer none of them, and wherever I go, they come after me if they can". However, it was verified with the Frederick Chopin Society, Warsaw in 2003 that a correct translation is: "Every day I get letters, and answer none of them; etc. ...".²³ That is, the letters came after Chopin, not the two sisters! He explains in several of his own letters that correspondence was being forwarded from his address at Dr Lychinski's ("... he will know where to send my letters" – Chopin, 4 September 1848).

Finally, at Chopin's funeral, Jane Stirling was apparently walking right after his coffin together with Ludwika, who knew her from a previous visit to Paris and who may not have been well acquainted with anyone else she saw at the funeral.

Chopin's own description of 30 October 1848 fits Jenny Lind. She was a "rich woman"; 10 years younger than Chopin; and "much like me", i.e. a renowned artist living abroad, uncomfortable with large crowds, liked Bellini, good at doing imitations, superstitious with a keen sense for symbolism, and "vain"; and they were "nearer to each other than the Italian to the Spaniard". Jenny Lind could have written to him from Dublin, where she stayed from 8 to 25 October 1848, and where she broke the engagement to her Swedish fiancé on the first day.



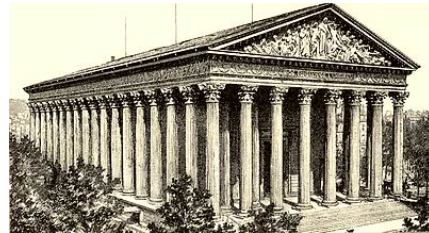
- (d) Anonymous gift. In 1849 and later, Jane Stirling was thought to be the donor of the 25,000 francs that Chopin received anonymously in July 1849. However, given her character and limited financial means, she could not possibly have conceived the "Alexis Somnambul" story, nor have afforded to raise such a large sum in cash. Even if she and her sister had had the money, they could more easily

²³ This observation was initially made in *Chopin and The Swedish Nightingale* (2003). Chopin writes in Polish: "Co dzień listy odbieram, na żaden nie odpisuje i jak tylko gdzie pojade, tak za mna przyciagna, jesli moga." (listy = letters). In her biography of Jane Stirling, A.E. Bone retranslates the incorrect French version of Chopin's 30 October 1848 letter into English to compound erroneously the impression that the marriage rumours refer to Jane Stirling. A well-known Polish biographer used in 1979 this translation: "Every day I get letters from them", i.e. from "My Scottish ladies". – Another example of biographical misrepresentation is again made by A.E. Bone, who in 1960 misquotes Chopin's letter. She replaces "young and handsome" / "jeunes hommes bien tournés" with "well groomed" (p. 87), which obscures Chopin's implied reference to a young woman.

have helped Chopin day-to-day and paid his bills without burdening him with the administration of so much cash. They stayed at St. Germain-en-Laye, near Paris.

Chopin's letter of 28 July 1849 from Rue de Chaillot describes the bizarre and apparently unnecessary involvement of the clairvoyant "Alexis Somnambul", (whose real name was Alexis Didier, and who was known only as 'Alexis'). The biography *CHOPIN and The Swedish Nightingale* explained in 2003 (p. 77) that "Somnambul" was the clue that led the authors to Bellini's opera *La Sonnambula* and therefore to Jenny Lind as the anonymous donor (ref. section 2.81 below). The Scottish sisters could only have been intermediaries for Jenny Lind (who had left Paris in mid June), and according to Chopin's own letter of 3 August 1849, they were clearly uncomfortable with their role as messengers.

- (e) Chopin's funeral. Fr. Niecks (1888), A.E. Bone (1960), and other sources do not provide any evidence on Jane Stirling's whereabouts in the final months of Chopin's life. A last reference by Chopin on 3 August: "... the lying or hallucinations (Miss St.)". However, she



was apparently present at his funeral on 30 October 1849 at the historical and imposing Eglise de la Madeleine.²⁴ Niecks says Jane Stirling later purchased some items of Chopin's estate. As an example of bibliographical misrepresentation, she has been portrayed as "Chopin's official widow" by Bone, which later was cited by the *New York Times* journalist and biographer Tad Szulc (1999) and other sources.

Niecks was told that, the father of a pupil, "Gavard père made the arrangements" for Chopin's lavish funeral, attended by over 3,000 people (II, 323). Writing to Auguste Léo in October 1849, Grzymała deplored that "the artists had asked to be paid 2,000 francs" to sing at the funeral.²⁵ There were apparently rumours that Jane Stirling and her sister paid for it all. If they made a financial contribution, it must have been with the balance of the anonymous donation. Chopin wrote on 28 July: "You may take notice that I did not accept the *donation*. ... Some day I will tell you more." According to Grzymała, Chopin's financial situation was "zero" at his death.

- (f) Jane Stirling's letters. A.E. Bone's biography (1960) contains a collection of letters that Jane Stirling wrote to Ludwika soon after Chopin's death (p. 95-107):
- 3 January 1850: "We are revisiting Clesinger's studio where he is working fervently."
 - 21 January 1850: "We have been to see Clesinger several times. ... *She* [Madame Clesinger] *wanted to raise the price* [of the mould]."

²⁴ The entire façade of Madeleine was draped in swags of black velvet embroidered with initials FC in silver. Chopin appears to have had one of the most costly, memorable and well-attended funeral of any 19th century artist.

²⁵ Pauline Viardot told George Sand around the same time that "foreigners" came to ask her to sing at Chopin's funeral (letter 288, *Correspondance de Frédéric Chopin*, III). It may explain, why "the artists" including the bass baritone Frederick Lablache and Viardot asked to be paid 2,000 francs to sing at Chopin's funeral. Lablache had earlier recommended Jenny Lind to Benjamin Lumley, director of Her Majesty's Theatre, and performed with her at her triumphal tours of Britain in 1847-1849.

- 9 February 1850: “I have placed a dozen wreaths for his dearly-loved mother, sister and her husband, you, your husband, and your children his aunt Suzanne and us two. My sister thanks you for all you have asked her to do.”
- March 1850: “Thanks God, it’s all finished” [the plan for Clésinger’s monument].²⁶
- 25 May 1850: “Herbeault is transporting the piano by sea to Poland. ... With the piano is being sent a small chair.”²⁷
- 17 October 1850: “Yesterday, we were at the tomb at 9 o’clock, and I left the mementos there. We fixed the medallion and planted the little garden. ... We arrived early at Père Lachaise ... The Comtesse Lanne and our friend from the country had arrived before us. ... At the Chapel, during the Mass, Madame N. was near to us and told me ‘I have come along way for *him*’. A little after mid-day we were all in front of the tomb. The statue was uncovered as was spoken ‘Rest in Peace and rise in Glory’” Jane Stirling adds: “... we accompanied Madame N. home”.²⁸
- 23 July 1851: “Mrs Erskine is tired and broken-hearted [about her elder sister’s death], but she has written the letters and arranged everything; she isn’t useless like me” [sic]
- 22 Nov. 1851: “My doctor has given me permission to go for two months to ...”.

THUS, Jane Stirling and her elder sister and companion were no doubt well-meaning and certainly “boring” admirers of Chopin. She may well have been smitten by him, but she was clearly not the “unmarried one” in Chopin’s letter of 30 October 1848. Moreover, the apparently ailing Jane Stirling and her sister could not have been the source of the 25,000 francs Chopin received in July 1849, but they were obviously intermediaries for the real donor. After Chopin’s death, the Scottish sisters assisted Ludwika in handling his estate and looking after the tomb. Jane Stirling’s own letters show that Katherine Erskine rather than she was in charge, and that she was a somewhat docile person.

It is a big question, how the huge sums involved (for funeral, monument, travel, estate handling, etc.) could have been raised. Few of Chopin’s friends, pupils and acquaintances in Paris, including the Scottish sisters, would have been able or willing to finance all this. Some of his friends even got paid for services connected with his funeral and monument, and Ludwika had no money of her own.

Jane Stirling’s role in 1848 and later has over time been misstated. Scholars have sometimes quoted Niecks too assertively, and important letters of Chopin surfaced only at a late stage. Some writers have also used incorrect translations and made their own assumptions, which over the past 155 years have become groundless myths.

²⁶ A.E. Bone notes herself (p. 98-99): “Jane expresses horror at the haggling amongst the Committee and those who are to make the monument. ... The monument was to cost over 4,500 francs, an enormous price for those days.”

²⁷ Bone explains in 1960: “The research is continuing: gradually a more complex picture of the Chopin souvenirs is forming. There is no mention in Jane’s will of any souvenir being sent to Poland. It means therefore that Mrs Erskine herself distributed the Chopin effects remaining with Jane on Jane’s death in 1859.” (p. 106)

²⁸ On 17 October 1850, Jenny Lind was performing in the United States, where she earned the incredible sum of some USD 400,000 in 18 months. Madame N. could have been a friend of hers, perhaps from Germany or England (Mrs Grote?). Jenny Lind’s *Memoir 1820-1851* says she spent one month in Germany and eight days in England, before she on 20 August 1850 sailed from Liverpool to New York.

2.7 JENNY LIND

Jenny Lind returned to London on 21 April 1848 after a highly successful season there the year before. She was one of Europe's megastars and earned the highest fee ever paid to a soprano. Jenny Lind's enormous popularity at all levels of society was augmented by her reputation for philanthropy. Her gruelling 1848-1849 tour schedule is shown in [Attachment D](#).



- (a) Met another man. Jenny Lind became engaged to Julius Günther, a Swedish tenor, in early March 1848. Soon after her arrival in London on 21 April 1848, however, her letters show signs that she had met another man. On 10 July, she writes to Frau Kaulbach: "If anything important should happen, I will be sure to tell you; but till then, believe nothing – and, before all things, do not believe that I have a bad heart. I hope I have grown better; for, since I saw you, I have passed through many things, and have not been without temptations. What reason have I to be vain now that I had not before?" – Chopin knew about Julius Günther: "... her betrothed is waiting for her in Sweden" (to his family, 19 August 1848).

Lind's relationship with Julius Günther soon started to deteriorate. In June, she writes to him: "I am angry with you ... God knows how this will end ...". Referring to "Julius", she tells Munthe on 14 August: "... in case I remain unmarried ..."; and on 26 September it was over: "Please do not touch further on the subject of G, and me". Her *Memoir 1820-1851* says that she broke finally with Günther upon her arrival in Dublin on 8 October 1848 (perhaps to make the "Harris" story more believable).



Jenny Lind never mentions in any letter that she had met Chopin in private, whereas he writes frequently to his family and friends about their encounters, e.g. "J. Lind ... afterwards sang me Swedish things till midnight", and "we did not leave the piano from nine till one in the night".²⁹ – Martial Douël is the only writer found, who earlier has noted the intensity of their "few intimate meetings" in London and believed that Chopin "found her more interesting than he admits". His article in *The Monthly Quarterly* (N° 18, 1932) concludes: "These two were born to understand each other." Unfortunately he stops in 1848, when he mistakenly thought she returned to Sweden.

- (b) Financial assistance. Jenny Lind gave a charity concert at the Great Concert Room of Her Majesty's Theatre for the Brompton Hospital of Consumption and Diseases of the Chest on 31 July 1848.³⁰ She informed Munthe on 14 August that she had given a loan of £ 1,000 to persons who had run into financial difficulties (ref. section 2.5b above).



²⁹ In one of the few but guarded quotes by Jenny Lind, Fr. Niecks recalls her saying that Chopin impressed her "not only as an artist, but also as a man", ... that "he could not but have been right in the Sand affair", and that she "visited him" in Paris (II, 284).

³⁰ Medical literature has concluded that Chopin suffered from pulmonary consumption, i.e. tuberculosis.

- (c) Many plans. Dated Clairville, 4 September 1848, she writes to her friend Amalia Wichman: “My head is full of plans ... I wish, in conjunction with one of Mendelssohn’s most intimate friends, to contribute something to a Music School in Germany in his memory”.³¹ She concludes: “... write to me soon ... and then I shall be able to tell you something for certain”.



- (d) Opportunities to meet. After the London season, Jenny Lind and Chopin had many opportunities to meet in Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Her tour schedule shows that she had no engagements between 27 August and 4 September 1848. Chopin gave a concert in Manchester on 28 August and stayed with her “great friends”, the Schwabe family. He left on or before 4 September. Given the good railway connections in Britain, Jenny Lind may well have been there most of that time, *together with Chopin*, because she had concerts in nearby Birmingham and Liverpool on 5-7 September (and in Manchester on 9 and 11 September).



Jenny Lind had three performances in Edinburgh in the period of 23-28 September 1848, and three performances in nearby Glasgow in the 2-6 October period. That obviously gave her and Chopin several opportunities to meet.

Indeed, in that whole period Chopin often used Dr Adam Lychinki’s townhouse in Edinburgh as a pied-à-terre. The drawing room is located on the first floor (photos from 2005): “... he never stayed long, and generally came unexpectedly” (Niecks, II, p. 294). On 25 September, Chopin saw Jenny Lind perform in Edinburgh with Roger, the French tenor in *La Sonnambula* (ref. his letter of 3 October 1848 to Grzymała).



Chopin could, despite his concert in Glasgow on the 27 September and spending the following day with Prince Alexander and his family there,³² have been together with Jenny Lind on 22-27 September and from the 29th till her leaving Glasgow on 7 or 8 October (he was also in Keir for a few days after the 29th). He says on 3 October: “Jenny Lind and Mrs Grote, whom I met at the [Edinburgh] station have been here and have gone on to Glasgow for a performance. Jenny Lind goes from here to Dublin.”

After three weeks in Dublin, Jenny Lind went via Birmingham to Brighton. A single date in her original calendar is highlighted in bold and underscored: “Brighton 3 November !!!!!!!”. The day after, she went to London, where Chopin had arrived two days earlier from Scotland. He writes on 17 November about his “fever of indecision”, and on 22 November 1848: “The doctors are driving me away from here.” ... “I have promised to come back here next season!!!!” [opera season?].

- (e) Spring 1849. Jenny Lind spent Christmas with the Schwabe family in Manchester. She writes to Munthe on 7 January that she is “settling down in England and want to give up everything at home.” According to the *Memoir*, she tells Mrs Stanley, wife of the bishop in Norwich, in January 1849 that she will get married on 7 March 1849³³, without saying to whom. Already on 14 August 1848, she had planned to leave Her Majesty’s Theatre after finishing her regional tour: “Lumley has decided to leave his post as Director, while he cannot be persuaded to continue because of my resignation”.

³¹ Chopin knew Mendelssohn since 1831. Shortly after having fled Paris, Jenny Lind met with Cecilia Mendelssohn and told her that, “... she hoped still to work on behalf of the Mendelssohn scholarships” (*Memoir*, II, p. 353).

³² “Tired as I was, I took the train and found them still in Edinburgh” (Chopin on his travelling from Glasgow to meet Prince Alexander and his family on 22 or 23 September, about the same time as Jenny Lind arrived there).

³³ Jenny Lind made her debut in Sweden on 7 March 1838. She considered this date to be her “birthday” as an artist and often reminded her friends about it (*Jenny Lind* by Jenny Maud, Stockholm 1927).

Provoking or as a result of the postponement of her marriage in March, Benjamin Lumley as well as the press pressurized her to make six more opera performances to save the Theatre from financial ruin. The public saw Jenny Lind for the last time in an opera on 10 May 1849. She left for Paris on 15 May (ref. section 2.5d above).

- (f) In Paris. Jenny Lind stayed in Paris from 16 May to 13 June 1849, where a rampant and deadly cholera epidemic and political unrest made it extremely unsafe. It was also well known that, although she spoke French, she disliked Paris intensely as a result of her miserable stay there in 1841-1842 and had vowed never to return.³⁴



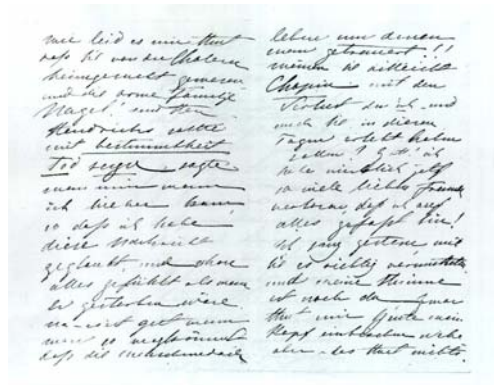
Her letter of 18 May 1849 to Judge Munthe conveys the desperation she felt upon her arrival about “unworthy laws”, and the need for Munthe to “get leave for 3 months” and “bring sufficient money ... come here!” (Exhibit C12).

Jenny Lind writes in German to Frau Schwabe in Manchester on the day she flees Paris, 13 June: “The old, the same Jenny / Lind! / is writing to you. You know everything and probably more than *everything*. I think it is better like this. ... I have now been 4 weeks in Paris, and leave today. My dear guardian has been here a few days, and we are going to Sweden together.”³⁵

- (g) Mourning her loss. In the July 1849 – April 1850 period, Jenny Lind’s letters to friends show how much she mourned her failure to get married and the death of Chopin, who died in Paris on 17 October 1849:

- To Amalia Wickmann on 11 July: “I have lately gone through much ... but not to put it all down on paper ... a mother’s love is forbidden – nay! denied me! ... I love a person like that immensely! ... I was very near to marrying”.
- To Amalia Wickmann on 29 October: “... but I knit myself too closely to people whom I love, and cannot, then, believe that I must lose them again!”

- The very first letter in which Jenny Lind mentions Chopin by name (Hamburg, 9 November 1849) was found in 2003. She responds in German to her friend Charlotte Birch-Pfeiffer, who had deplored the death of someone (no name given). Jenny Lind starts off her letter by naming some people who have recently died, and then suddenly she says: “Perhaps you mean *Chopin* by the loss that *I myself* - and also you have lived through these days? God! I have lost so many dear friends that I have become completely numb” (Exhibit C18).



³⁴ Jenny Lind confirmed her dislike in 1847: “I, going to Paris! Never as long as I live” (letter of 13 February 1847 to Amalia Wickmann).

³⁵ Chopin writes on 18 June 1849: “... she has already left for Sweden by way of Hamb[urg].”

- To Baroness French on 6 December: “I am happy with my music, my little dog – my books – my study – and the great number of sublime remembrances”.
- To Augusta von Jäger on 10 April 1850: “Much – very much – should I like to tell, in quiet, to you ... a lively desire to share all its [my life’s] memories!”

(h) Never forgot. Jenny Lind sang her own arrangement of Chopin’s mazurkas twice for Queen Victoria, in 1855 and 1956, and on other occasions; and on a new tour of Europe, she performed in former Poland (Wrocław, Gdansk and Poznan). Her daughter Jenny Maude recalls in *Jenny Lind* (Stockholm, 1927) that Chopin’s music was often played at home, and she even thought that her father had been a pupil of Chopin.

Jag är nu vid bättre hälsa, än jag var, då jag stod för publikum; mina nerver voro alldeles förstörda, och pianan i hufvudet hotade att förstöra all min lefnads-kraft, och minnet var nästan borta för flera år. Men jag är nu vida bättre, och min ofantliga elasticitet har hjälpt mig igenom den mörka dalen. Ja, jag gaf mig sjelf för mycket i min konst; den kostade mig helt nära lifvet, men med glädje hade jag dött för denna min första och sista, djupaste, re-

Without mentioning Chopin’s name among “dear friends in England” including Mendelssohn, Jenny Lind writes in Swedish from Florence to Hans Christian Andersen on 23 November 1871 about “my art”: “I would have been happy to die for this my first and last, deepest, purest love”.

Jenny Lind is named a “chief source of information” in the preface of Niecks of biography of Chopin (Novello, London & New York, 1888).³⁶ In 1887, her coffin was carried to the grave to the music of Chopin’s *Funeral March*.



THUS, Jenny Lind had many intimate meetings with Chopin during her tour of Britain, but dropped only veiled hints about it to her friends. She had already in August 1848 plans to change her career in 1849 and settle in England with her future husband. She was all along assisted by high-level advisers and acted with the blessing of Queen Victoria. However, her much rumored marriage did not take place on 7 March 1849, but was postponed.

Letters and other information above provide the following timeline of what actually must have happened. Late November 1848 and after some hesitation, Chopin returned to Paris to get medical treatment, but “promised to come back here next season!!!”. Early March 1849, Mrs Grote visted Paris and learned that Chopin was too ill to travel to London. Meanwhile, Jenny Lind agreed to six additional performances to save Her Majesty’s Theatre from ruin. On 18 April, at Nassau W. Senior’s house, Jenny Lind decided to go Paris on 14-16 May and attempt to get married there, which she told Judge Munthe on 27 April. Mrs Grote and Senior went to Paris on 9 May to “arrange things” before Jenny Lind’s arrival on the 16th. In Paris on 18 May, “unworthy laws” and Chopin’s ill health ruled out any marriage, which lead Senior to conclude on 20-21 May that “it will never take place”.

Munthe no doubt forced Jenny Lind to flee Paris on 13 June. Before leaving, she made arrangements for her anonymous gift of 25,000 francs to Chopin. On 9 November 1849, she mentioned for the first time *Chopin*. She continued to pay tribute to his music till she died in 1887.

³⁶ The authors of the present research paper submitted in December 2004 an essay to *Chopin in the World*, which provides evidence that “Jenny Lind could well have gone further and *commissioned* Niecks’ biography of Chopin.” The biography was published both in London and New York in 1888, 1890, 1902, and also in Leipzig in 1890.

2.8 FRYDERYK CHOPIN

Having fled the French revolution and the hard times in France like many of his friends and acquaintances, Chopin arrived in London on 20 April 1848, in poor health.



- (a) Chopin's letters. In the May-October 1848 period, Chopin refers in most of his letters explicitly and often upbeat to his public and private meetings with Jenny Lind in London and Scotland. He has never written so much and so positively about any single lady acquaintance.³⁷ “She is enormously effective in Sonnambula”; “J’ai fais la connaissance de Mlle Lind – Elle est charmante et chanteuse de génie”; “Miss Lind came to my concert!!!!”; “J. Lind ... afterwards sang me Swedish things till midnight”; and “we did not leave the piano from nine till one in the night”.

Other letters also indicate a hectic life “in society every night” and for him atypically strong emotions in writing: “I am not strong enough for such a life” (2 June 1848); “... if I could have a few days without blood-spitting, if I were younger, if I were not prostrate under my affections, as I am, I might be able start life again” (2 June); “My nerves are all on the jump (15 July); “I have worn out all feeling” (July); and “I dream now of home, now of Rome; now of joy, now of grief” (18 August 1848).

- (b) Little success. Contrary to Jenny Lind, Chopin was not particularly well received in London. On 2 June 1848 he writes: “... to have any success you must play Mendelssohn”; “they consider me some sort of amateur”; “here and there I am beginning to get a reputation”; and “old lady Rothschild ... advises me to take less” [teaching fees]. On 15 July: “I could gradually get known after my fashion”.
- (c) Queen Victoria. Given such lack of appreciation, it is remarkable that Chopin was invited shortly after his arrival, on 15 May 1848, to perform at Stafford House in the presence of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Jenny Lind’s colleagues and good friends Julius Benedict and Signor Lablache were there. According to Fr. Niecks, Benedict also played a duet with Chopin (II, 281).

However, Chopin was never invited to play at Windsor Castle or Buckingham Palace, an honour normally bestowed on every foreign musician of distinction. “Perhaps the Queen’s director has dug a pit for me because I did not return his call, or because I would not play at the Philharmonic” (15 July 1848).

- (d) Thomas Tellefsen. Unpublished letters in Danish from Thomas D.A. Tellefsen (1823-1874), the Norwegian pianist and a pupil of Chopin, to his parents reveal that they spent some time together in London: “Well! I made the journey with Chopin, stayed 3 months in London, 2 months in Scotland, gave no concerts” (26 November 1848). “Chopin is and will remain my best friend; our joint stay in London where we both were foreigners, have brought us together in a strange way and got us to know each other. I visited him every day and had lunch with him all the time” (early August 1848). Chopin introduced Tellefsen to Camille Pleyel (11 September 1848).

³⁷ In his biography of Chopin (1851), Liszt recalls that Chopin “never gave the least praise to any thing, which he did not believe to be a real conquest for art or which did not evince a serious conception of the task of an artist” (p. 125).

- (e) Financial situation. In London, Chopin wrote about his financial problems. “I have not much saving in my pocket, and don’t know what I shall do” (8 July 1848). “One lady pupil of mine has gone into the country without paying for nine lessons; and others, who are supposed to take two lessons a week usually miss both” (15 July); “I had to reject the newspaper, that you sent me, for the post demanded me one pound and fifteen shilling for them” (17 July). In contradiction, however, Chopin writes to his family on 19 August: “... if I had not had home lessons at a guinea, and several daily, I don’t know what would have become of me”. And on 4 September, he tells Grzymała he had given instructions to pay the tax collector and the rent in Paris. The apparent improvement in Chopin’s economy coincided with Jenny Lind’s loan of £ 1,000 to ‘friends in financial difficulty’.
- (f) Thoughtful gifts. In August 1848, Chopin received a new “spring mattress and pillows”, the free use of an assistant on his trip to Scotland (Mr Wood), two first-class seats to Edinburgh (“the second opposite so that no one should crowd me”), and a seat in the same couch for Daniel, his valet. “Broadwood ... has been the kindest and most generous of friends” (Chopin, 19 August).

However, an analysis of Broadwood’s original wholesale ledger account for “Mr Chopin, 48 Dover Street” shows that Chopin had a normal supplier-client relationship, as other foreign pianists, with Broadwood Piano (Exhibit C19). Chopin may have believed in Broadwood’s generosity, because this ledger records



that a van from Broadwood Piano delivered the spring mattress on 4 August. Two Broadwood grand pianos were also delivered free of charge to his *St. James’s Place* apartment early November. Another grand piano was delivered free to *Guildhall*, where he played on 16 November. – It is documented that Jenny Lind knew Broadwood well.³⁸

- (g) At Schwabes. Chopin’s letters suggest he hides that he and Jenny Lind stayed at Schwabe’s house from 27 August to 4 September 1848 (ref. section 2.7d above). While he normally found the Scottish sisters “boring”, he suddenly writes that the expected visit of “Miss Rich, that kind old English lady ... and Miss Stirling” will make his stay at Schwabes “less dull” (19 August). On 4 September, he makes a specific point to explain that he could not stay to await the arrival of Jenny Lind [i.e. her *return* on 8 September in time for the operas in Manchester].³⁹ – Chopin seemed to be in good form at his Manchester concert on 28 August: “Appears to be about thirty years of age ... Brilliance of touch” (Niecks, II, 294).
- (h) Cryptic letters. After Jenny Lind left Glasgow on 7 October 1848, Chopin’s letters become cryptic. He writes on 16 October that he walked the corridors of Calder House “with my doubts”. He concludes his letter of 30 October about “the unmarried one” (ref. section 2.6c above) by saying: “And my heart, where have I wasted it?” On 17 November:



³⁸ Henry Broadwood together with Jenny Lind later became patrons of Arthur Sullivan, the first recipient of the Mendelssohn scholarship that Jenny Lind established (ref. www.sullivan-forschung.de/fink.htm).

³⁹ This apparent cover-up is reinforced by Jenny Lind’s letter of 22 August 1848 in German to Frau Schwabe. She announces her arrival on 8 or 9 September and refers flippantly to “Liszt with his long long hair!”. She adds, “You must think that I am a naughty girl [‘böse Person!’]”

“... it would give me relief if I could curse Lucrezia. – But no doubt, she also suffers, – suffers all the more because she will doubtless grow old in anger”⁴⁰; and he also curses his own “fever of indecision”.

- (i) Several doctors. Chopin writes on 22 November: “I have promised to come back here next season!!!. Sir J. Clark, the queen’s doctor came once to see me and to give me his *benediction*”. Records show that Dr Clark had published papers on *The Influence of Climate in Chronic Diseases* (1829) and on *Pulmonary Consumption* (1835). He became the Queen’s Physician in 1834. Although he also had a private clientele, it must have required some good contacts to get access to this prominent doctor.



Liszt questions, why Chopin did not return sooner to Paris: “Who can read the feelings which caused this delay! ... He played again at a concert given for the Poles.” Liszt adds: “What thoughts must have filled his sad soul as he crossed the sea to return to Paris!” (1851 biography, p. 187).

Having returned to Paris end November 1848, Chopin learned that his Dr Molin had died, and instead he consulted several other doctors.⁴¹ He continued to express some hope: “I hope the *spring sunshine* will be my best doctor“ (an “axiom”, 13 April); “I am stronger, for I have been eating and have dropped the medicaments” (18 June)⁴²; and “Perhaps God will allow things to come right” (25 June to Ludwika).

- (j) Rue de Chaillot. Around the time of Jenny Lind’s arrival in Paris on 16 May 1849, Chopin moved to a second-floor large and expensive apartment with a beautiful view at 74 Rue de Chaillot, where he only stayed till sometime in August. Scholars have assumed that Princess Obrekow paid secretly for part of the rent.



Official documents obtained in January 2005 from the Mairie de Paris reveal that the space of Chopin’s apartment building, torn down in 1928, was set in the body of what today is one the world’s most prestigious hotels, near the Arc de Triomphe.⁴³ It was not located in the former Chaillot village or at Trocadéro as cited by some sources today (Exhibit C20). During her incognito visit to Paris from 16 May to 13 June 1849, Jenny Lind stayed only 400 meters away at 63 Champs Elysées.

Chopin writes on 18 June: “Miss Lind came, she sang one evening at my place”.⁴⁴ He also writes: “I shall leave the lodging at the end of the month and return to the Square.” ... “It is a long way to town; only those who love me very much, as, for inst. Franch[omme] ... occasionally call.” Chopin moved to the apparently even more expensive Place Vendôme in August (section 2.8m below).

⁴⁰ Until today, scholars have assumed Chopin alluded to George Sand, who wrote the book *Lucrezia Floriani* in 1847. However, research in late 2004 by the authors of this paper shows it is much more likely that Jenny Lind provoked this sudden emotional outburst. Carl Czerny composed *Souvenir de Jenny Lind sur des Airs chantés par Jenny Lind pour le Pianoforte: Thème de Lucrezia Borgia* [i.e. a theme from Donizetti’s opera *Lucrezia Borgia*].

⁴¹ Liszt notes that Chopin took it very hard, when he learned that Dr Molin had died: “He felt this loss painfully, nay, it brought a profound discouragement with it, at a time when the mind exercises so much influence over the progress of the disease, he persuaded himself that no one could replace his trusted physician, and he had no confidence in any other” (p. 187).

⁴² While dropping the “medicaments” may have contributed to making Chopin feel better in the very short term, did it worsen his health in the following months? Did Chopin follow somebody’s advice in doing so?

⁴³ It matches the observation of Kamil Norwid (1821-1883), the Polish poet, who says in *Black Flowers*: “Chopin was living in Rue Chaillot which, when you walk up from the Champs Elysées, in the left-hand row of houses...”.

⁴⁴ In his section on Chopin’s short stay at Rue de Chaillot (II, p. 314-315), Niecks does not mention Jenny Lind visiting him there, nor that she stayed for as much as 29 days just around the corner. This omission is rather telling, because the preface of Niecks’ biography of Chopin names Jenny Lind as a “chief source of information”.

- (k) Missing her. Chopin writes on 2 July 1849, possibly poorly translated in 1932, that he “hopes that she [his “garde malade / sick nurse”] will call again before she leaves for Brittany”. He could not understand her “visiting card”. He did not want to “cause her unintentional unpleasantness”, because her “guardian / or some such person / the Deput [sic] knows nothing about me”. – Jenny Lind and Judge Munthe, her legal guardian had fled Paris on 13 June 1849.

Delfina Potocka writes to Chopin on 16 July 1849: “Je souffre de vous sentir tellement abandonné dans la maladie et le chagrin”. B.E. Sydow added this note in *Correspondance de Frédéric Chopin*, III: “Allusion à la peine causée à Chopin par la rupture avec George Sand.” – However, Chopin had in his letters since 1847 only referred occasionally to George Sand (“the just mother”, London 8 July 1848).

Ludwika, who stayed with Chopin from 9 August 1849 till he died, is said to have written: “He liked to talk at night to tell me his sorrows and to pour into my loving and understanding heart all his personal thoughts ... I swallowed my tears so that he should not know that his suffering was hurting me too” (Zamoyski, p. 277).

- (l) Anonymous donation. Chopin tells in his letter of 28 July 1849 that he had received an anonymous “donation” of 25,000 francs with the bizarre involvement of “Alexis Somnambul”. Chopin had been told that Alexis had said that on “a Thursday in March (the 8th) ... some very important papers ... never arrived *à sa destination*”.



Much evidence points to Jenny Lind as the source. She had wanted to marry him and initially set the marriage for Wednesday the 7th of March 1849.⁴⁵ She asked Munthe on 18 May to bring “money”, and a document dated 29 December 1849 refers to her having spent £ 1,500 (35,000 francs) on a “marriage licence” (ref. section 3.3 below). She could easily afford it, unlike other friends of Chopin. And she probably planted the codeword “Somnambul” to trigger Chopin’s thought of Bellini’s *La Sonnambula*, in which he had seen her perform several times since her premiere on 4 May 1848.⁴⁶ Chopin appears to show he got the point: “There is kindheartedness there – but what showing off!” (3 August 1849).⁴⁷

- (m) Chopin’s economy. From having to “reject the newspapers you sent me” on 17 July 1848, Chopin’s financial situation suddenly improved a month later. The next year, in Paris, Chopin incurred even higher expenses. That is: his care by many doctors in the beginning of 1849; his moves to the large and elegant apartment at Rue de Chaillot (according to Kamil Norwid with “a French maid”), and soon after to the highly prestigious and particularly expensive Place Vendôme (image), where he acquired new furniture; and the travel and stay of his sister Ludwika and her family.



⁴⁵ “Chopin was ... very superstitious. He had a dislike to the numbers seven and thirteen; he would never undertake anything on a Monday or Friday, sharing a belief almost universal in Poland that these were unlucky days” (M. Karasowski, p. 383).

⁴⁶ In his biography of Chopin (1888) of which Niecks states that Jenny Lind was a “chief source of information”, Niecks says only, “The story [about the money] is told in various ways”, and it is “one more like romance than reality”. One version refers to a “Scottish gentleman, a novelist ... [who] proposed to consult the clairvoyant Alexandre” (II, 311-313). Today it seems that this gentleman could have been Thomas Erskine, because he stayed at St. Germain-en-Laye in the spring and summer of 1849 [ref. *Letters of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen* (1877), p. 69].

⁴⁷ Bertrand Méheust, author of the biography *Un Voyant prodigieux: Alexis Didier 1826-1886* (Paris, 2003), concludes that he [like Chopin on 3 August 1849: “I could have had it just as well without as with a clairvoyant”] saw no particular need to involve Alexis in a simple case concerning a “forgetful concierge” (p. 407).



It must also have taken huge sums of money to finance Chopin's spectacular funeral at the Eglise de la Madeleine, redesigned in 1806 as a "Temple to the Glory of the Great Army", and now elaborately decorated attended by 3,000+ people with a choir and paid soloists performing;⁴⁸ the commissioning of artworks by Clésinger and Kwiatkowski; the purchase of items of Chopin's estate; and later the research and publication of his posthumous works and related events.⁴⁹

Jenny Lind's outlays of at least the £ 1,000 in August 1848 (ref. section 2.5b above) and the 25,000 francs in July 1849 must have covered some of all these expenses that *by far* exceeded the relatively modest means of the Scottish sisters, and probably also the financial resources of most of Chopin's friends and pupils in Paris.

- (n) Giacomo Meyerbeer. Among the 3,000+ people attending Chopin's funeral at Eglise de la Madeleine, Meyerbeer (1791-1864) played a particularly important ceremonial role – although sources disagree on whether "Meyerbeer and Prince Adam Czartoryski conducted the funeral procession" [Liszt according to Niecks p. II, 325], or whether Meyerbeer only was one of the four pallbearers.



In either case, Meyerbeer was apparently not a particularly close friend of Chopin, whose letters from the 1831-1845 period include only three scant references to the German composer. Chopin does not even mention his name on 13 April 1849, when he talks about the premiere of his opera *Le Prophète*. Nor does any of Meyerbeer's letters in the monograph *A Life in Letters* (1989) refer to Chopin.

In contrast, Meyerbeer had known Jenny Lind since 1842, when he initiated her international career. He continued to act as her mentor and promoter. There are 12 substantive references to Jenny Lind in *A Life in Letters*, including two highly complimentary letters he wrote to her in 1845 and 1847. She sang *Robert le Diable* at her final opera performance on 10 May 1849, and "She called on Meyerbeer" during her May-June 1849 visit to Paris (her *Memoir 1820-1851*, II, p. 348). His duo *La Mère Grand* was on her Buckingham Palace programme on 30 May 1856 (ref. section 2.4c above).

- (o) Bellini symbolism. Niecks tells that Chopin, at his deathbed, asked Delfina Potocka to sing an air from Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* "... and that only once, and nothing else" (1888, II, 317). The Appendix of Music of Jenny Lind's *Memoir 1820-1851* (1891, and a separate edition of 1894), lists *Beatrice di Tenda, N° 6 Cavatina*,



⁴⁸ Several sources note that the funeral was delayed for some time, because a special dispensation had to be obtained from the Archbishop of Paris to allow women to sing at the Madeleine as required for *Mozart's Requiem*. About the people attending the funeral, Niecks writes in 1888 (II, 323-324): "Members of the Institute, celebrated artists, notable writers, tried in vain to elude the watch-word [consigne] and penetrate into the church, where women were in very great majority. Some had come from London, Vienna, and Berlin."

⁴⁹ Julian Fontana, who became a U.S. citizen in 1850, arranged for the research and publication of *Oeuvres Posthumes pour Piano de Fréd. Chopin*, Op. 66-73 in 1855, and of *17 Polnische Lieder für eine Singstimme*, Op. 74 in 1859. To do this, he returned from New York to France in 1852 with his large family. Jenny Lind toured USA in 1850-1852.

with score, as n° 1 among the 12 songs she favoured most.⁵⁰ Franz Liszt (1851) and Moritz Karasowski (1879) cite that Chopin requested to be buried close to his friend Bellini (1801-1835). Niecks was later told that Franchomme (1808-1884) found this request to be a “baseless invention” (Niecks, II, 323).⁵¹ Chopin had in 1835 deeply mourned Bellini’s sudden and premature death, but later Chopin made no reference to him in any letter.



The nearly three-meter tall monument for Bellini is situated less than 20 meters from Chopin’s tomb at the Père-Lachaise cemetery. Towering over Chopin’s grave, its top is engraved with the names of nine operas, including “Sonnambula” and “Beatrice di Tenda” (photo).⁵²

- (p) Two hundred letters. Niecks reproduces in 1888 what he calls himself “a somewhat improbable story” told by the Paris correspondent of the *World* of December 14, 1887. It was about Ludwika finding among Chopin’s papers, in 1849, some 200 letters of Madame Sand that later were seized by Russian customs, eventually retrieved by Alexandre Dumas fils, and burned by George Sand [II, 191-192]. Indeed, it seems strange that George Sand could have written so many letters to Chopin before or after 1847, and that he would have saved them. Since 1847, they did not appear to have had any particular contact or feelings for each other.⁵³

Assuming that Ludwika had found 200 letters, they could have included the many letters Chopin received in October 1848 (“Every day I get letters ...” – ref. section 2.6b above). Chopin also received letters in 1849, e.g. he writes on 25 June to Ludwika: “I heard today from two persons, one from the north, the other from the south ...”.

- (q) Clésinger’s monument. A sculpture portraying a Muse holding a broken lyre and placed on top of the base of Chopin’s monument, was created by Clésinger in 1850.⁵⁴ Liszt explains in 1851 that Camille Pleyel conceived the project and that the subscriptions “conformably to the general expectations rapidly amounted to a considerable sum” (p. 201). With hindsight, this success was remarkable. Chopin’s friends in France, many living as artists on erratic income, were pressed for money during the continuing hard times (ref. A.E. Bone’s information in 1960 that “The monument was to cost over 4,500 francs, an enormous price for those days”).



Liszt hints at a deeper meaning of the sculpture, by saying that such monuments “may have the power to awaken in future ages the feelings which gave birth to such a creation, the emotions of the cotemporaries which called it into being.”

⁵⁰ The list also includes Bellini’s *I Puritani* and *La Sonnambula*; Donizetti’s Lucia di Lammermoor; as n° 7, Chopin’s *Mazurka in A flat, Op. 24, N° 3*; and Rossini (*Une Voce poco fà*). Jenny Lind was a “chief source of information” for Niecks, and she had therefore the opportunity to see a draft of his biography of Chopin before she died in 1887.

⁵¹ Grzymała in October 1849: “Il a demandé Mme Potocka trois mélodie de Bellini et de Rossini qu’elle a chantée au piano toute en sanglotant, il les a écouté en sanglotant, il les a écouté religieusement comme le dernier son de ce monde.”

⁵² Father Aleksander Jelowiecki tells in a letter of 21 October 1849 to Mme Xavier Grocholska in Warsaw that Chopin, shortly before he died and “because of their friendship”, had given him a non-religious confession (“without Sacrament”): “It wrung my heart to hear these and other words of the same kind that Chopin told me, and I started to cry.” Source: letter 787 translated from Polish into French by Bronislas Édouard Sydow and retranslated into English by the authors of this research paper.

⁵³ The whole explanation itself is rather farfetched, e.g. Dumas fils (1824-1895) learning about the loss of the letters, and much later being able to find them with the complicity of Russian customs officials.

⁵⁴ Chopin told Solange Clésinger on 5 April 1849: “Your husband expects to go to London, and I think he is right . . . I shall not fail to be of as much use as I can in the matter of information and letter for London. Have no doubts.” [Clésinger did not go to London]. Solange wrote on 14 May: “... s’il pouvait vendre une statue, ce serait bon”.

THUS, Chopin is the first to confirm that he often saw Jenny Lind intimately in London. Later, they also had many opportunities to meet in Manchester and Scotland. He clearly admired her as an artist and liked her. He wrote more about Jenny Lind than any other woman in the past. He was frustrated by his own deteriorating health and uncertain future, which in 1848-1849 caused emotional outbursts of an intensity that he never seemed to have expressed before. There is evidence to show that Chopin missed Jenny Lind after her departure from Paris in June 1849, and that the Bellini symbolism gave him much comfort in his final days.

While Chopin's letter of 30 October 1848 shows no interest in getting married, he must have given Jenny Lind some hope in November or later that marriage was conceivable, since she told friends in January the date was set for 7 March 1849, which in turn started the press rumours.

Few of Chopin's friends and pupils could have afforded to support the expenses he incurred for his suddenly improved living standard since August 1848, and to provide the enormous sums of cash needed for his upkeep in Paris, the spectacular funeral, and many of the commemoration initiatives in the post-1849 period. Some friends even got paid to sing at Eglise de la Madeleine and to create the Père-Lachaise monument.

The evidence points to Jenny Lind as having financed a large portion if not the bulk of the requirements in at least 1848-1849 including the funeral – through the £ 1,000 loan in August 1848 and the anonymous gift of 25,000 francs in July 1849, and perhaps through other yet undiscovered outlays that she could easily have afforded.

3. THE COVER-UP

Jenny Lind did everything to cover up her relationship with Chopin from the very beginning. Initially, she was engaged in Sweden. She broke this engagement without any clear commitment from Chopin. Any premature announcement would obviously have embarrassed her and had an adverse media impact. Meanwhile, his declining health started to put any marriage plans at risk. Later, Jenny Lind was caught in her own web of lies, and she was perhaps also ashamed of having been forced to leave him to die in Paris. Then it was too late. She managed to devise a series of schemes that hid the truth for more than 150 years. It was no doubt a result of her highly creative mind. Judge Munthe noted in 1870: “Jenny, with her incredibly lively imagination ...” (Curt Munthe, Stockholm, 1960, p. 140).

As documented in section 2 above, elements of the cover-up included: the “Mr Harris” story; Nassau W. Senior advising Queen Victoria and her entourage to stick with “Jenny’s story”; and the disappearance of information and the destruction of sensitive correspondence by Mrs Grote, Judge Munthe, and Jenny Lind herself. Jenny Lind made an effort never to mention Chopin by name in any of her letters, but she could not help herself on 9 November 1849: “Meinen Sie vielleicht Chopin ...”. Chopin, upbeat in May – August 1848 about his encounters with Jenny Lind in London, became later more discreet if not cryptic in his letters.

Three significant documents served to reinforce her cover-up:

- 3.1 **Jenny Lind’s memoir.** *Jenny Lind – The Artist: Memoir 1820-1851* (London, New York and Leipzig, 1891) is written by Henry Scott Holland and H.S. Rockstro and edited by her German husband Otto Goldschmidt. It stops the year before she got married in 1852. H.S. Holland was preceptor and canon of St Paul’s, and it was his first book.



The 930-page two-volume book explains in detail her failed engagement to “Harris” and “the anxious episode in the spring of 1849”, but it provides only scant information about her meetings with Chopin. There is no reference to her visiting Chopin in Paris in 1849, although Fr. Niecks quotes her as saying so (II, 284). Possibly suspicious about his brief, H.S. Holland corresponded later with Josephine Åhmansson, Jenny Lind’s personal maid who had retired in Sweden on a small pension Jenny Lind had funded. She responded on 12 March 1889: “With Mr Claudius Harris she never was formally engaged as far as I know” ([Exhibit C21](#)). Holland eventually wrote that Jenny Lind and Mr Harris were engaged to marry.

Jenny Lind’s role as a “chief source of information” for Niecks' biography of Chopin, gave her an opportunity to ensure that this biography and her own would match each other on sensitive points (ref. section 2.7h above).

- 3.2 **Account of Jenny Lind.** The preface of her *Memoir* explains that its section on the “anxious episode in the spring of 1849” was based on an *Account of Jenny Lind* prepared by Nassau W. Senior at the time. His daughter Mrs Simpson made this account available to Holland and Rockstro. Never published, the original “Account” was found at the National Archives of Wales in 2003 ([Exhibit C22](#)).

This 57-page handwritten manuscript, signed Nassau W. Senior and dated December 29th 1849, bears all the signs of fabrication. As shown in [Exhibit C23](#), the flowering, pious phrasing of many paragraphs, often repetitive and with significant inconsistencies as well as factual errors and omissions, certainly does not match Senior’s style as a distinguished economist and government advisor. It is highly unlikely that he would have put his name to such a document. It is not the handwriting he used earlier in 1849, and his signature appears to be falsified.

- 3.3 **Marriage allegation.** The *Memoir* and the *Account of Jenny Lind* refer to a “special marriage licence” issued by “the Archbishop of Canterbury”. In 2003, a marriage allegation in the name of “Claudius R.W.F. Harris” and “Jenny Maria Lind” was found in the Faculty Office of the Archbishop General at Lambeth Palace. It is stamped “London 28.9.48” and dated “4th May 1849”. It shows how far Jenny Lind went in her cover-up of “the anxious episode” ([Exhibit C24](#)).



- 3.4 **Friends and family.** There is much information to show that many of Jenny Lind’s friends as well as Chopin’s friends and family knew about their relationship, but were discreet enough or probably even told to keep it secret. It is already documented in section 2 above that Queen Victoria, Nassau W. Senior, Harriet Grote, Julia Schwabe, the Scottish sisters and Otto Goldschmidt were confidants and participated to varying degrees in her marriage plans and related schemes. Jenny Lind no doubt also confided her plans and certainly her disappointment to her friends in Germany.

Friends of Chopin met Jenny Lind, who visited him at Rue de Chaillot. They could not have been unaware that she stayed just around the corner at Champs-Élysées. They must also have noticed Chopin had moved to n° 74 in the days around Jenny Lind’s arrival, but wanted to move back to Square d’Orléans shortly after her leaving Paris. Quotations in section 2 above by at least Delfina Potocka, Ludwika and Franz Liszt suggest that many persons were indeed in the know.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Overturing several historical assumptions of the past 155 years, the above reconstruction of important events in 1848-1849 and later years lead to the following major conclusions on the final year of Chopin's life, his relationship with Jenny Lind, and his legacy.



- 4.1 **Jenny Lind.** A few days after her opera farewell in London, Jenny Lind travelled in May 1849, with the knowledge of Queen Victoria, incognito to Paris in an unsuccessful attempt to marry the ailing Chopin. His letters show that he from the outset, in London in May 1848, admired Jenny Lind as an artist and liked her. Chopin's letters expressed no interest in getting married. However, he must have given her some hope in November 1848 or later that marriage was conceivable. Her story about a "Mr Harris" was a smokescreen for Chopin.

Indeed, Jenny Lind made a gigantic cover-up of her whole relationship with Chopin. Mourning her failure to marry him and then his death, Jenny Lind also continued for the rest of her life to honour the life and music of the composer.

- 4.2 **Chopin's economy.** Few of Chopin's friends and pupils, many living as artists on erratic income, could have afforded to support the expenses he incurred for his suddenly improved living standard since August 1848, and to provide the huge sums of cash needed for his upkeep in Paris, the spectacular funeral, and many of the commemoration initiatives in the post-1849 period. Some friends even got paid to sing at Eglise de la Madeleine and to create the Père-Lachaise monument.



The evidence points to Jenny Lind as having financed a large portion if not the bulk of these expenses and cash needs in at least the 1848-1849 period – through the £ 1,000 loan in 1848 and the anonymous gift of 25,000 francs in July 1849, and perhaps through other yet undiscovered outlays that she could easily have afforded.

- 4.3 **Scottish sisters.** The Scottish sisters were no doubt well-meaning and certainly "boring" admirers of Chopin, but they could not have supported Chopin financially as alleged by various sources in the past. While their role in 1848-1851 has been misstated, they apparently served as intermediaries for Jenny Lind's financial assistance on several occasions before and after his death. They also helped Ludwika in handling Chopin's estate. Jane Stirling's own letters show that her elder sister Katherine Erskine rather than she was in charge.
- 4.4 **Further research.** It should therefore come as no surprise, if further research will provide new information to illustrate how Jenny Lind supported Chopin in the final stage of his life, and to uncover how she indeed was behind many initiatives to commemorate his life and music in many years thereafter.

These conclusions are based on a multitude of elements and pieces of information from many different sources, which put together in a coherent body of evidence apparently leaves few if any significant questions unanswered for the 1848-1849 period.
