

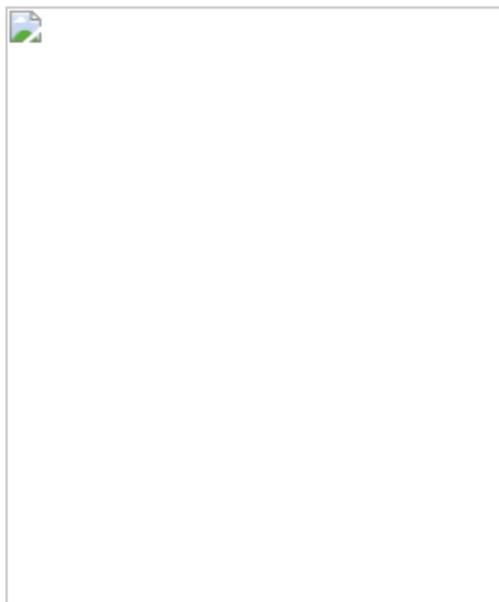
From: Karyna Shuliak <[REDACTED]>
To: Jeffrey <jeevacation@gmail.com>
Subject: Ludwig van Beethoven - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
Date: Sun, 11 Jan 2015 15:51:41 +0000

It looks like Beethoven had brown eyes on his portraits..

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludwig_van_Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven

"Beethoven" redirects here. For other uses, see [Beethoven \(disambiguation\)](#).



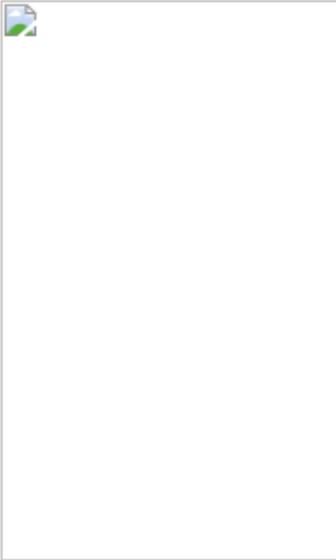
Ludwig van Beethoven (ⁱ/ˈlʊdviɡ væn ˈbeɪ toʊvən/; German: [ˈluːtvɪç fan ˈbeːt hɔːfn̩] (listen); baptised 17 December 1770^[1] – 26 March 1827) was a German [composer](#) and [pianist](#). A crucial figure in the transition between the [Classical](#) and [Romantic](#) eras in [Western art music](#), he remains one of the most famous and influential of all composers. His best-known compositions include 9 [symphonies](#), 5 [concertos for piano](#), 32 [piano sonatas](#), and 16 [string quartets](#). He also composed other chamber music, choral works (including the celebrated [Missa solemnis](#)), and songs.

Born in [Bonn](#), then the capital of the [Electorate of Cologne](#) and part of the [Holy Roman Empire](#), Beethoven displayed his musical talents at an early age and was taught by his father [Johann van Beethoven](#) and by [Christian Gottlob Neefe](#). During his first 22 years in Bonn, Beethoven intended to study with [Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart](#) and befriended [Joseph Haydn](#). Beethoven moved to [Vienna](#) in 1792 and began studying with Haydn, quickly gaining a reputation as a virtuoso pianist. He lived in Vienna until his death. In about 1800

his hearing began to deteriorate, and by the last decade of his life he was almost totally deaf. He gave up conducting and performing in public but continued to compose; many of his most admired works come from this period.

Biography

Background and early life



Beethoven was the grandson of Lodewijk van Beethoven (1712–73), a musician from [Mechelen](#) in the [Southern Netherlands](#) (now part of [Belgium](#)) who at the age of twenty moved to Bonn.^{[2][3]} Lodewijk (*Ludwig* is the German [cognate](#) of [Dutch](#) *Lodewijk*) was employed as a [bass](#) singer at the court of the [Elector of Cologne](#), eventually rising to become [Kapellmeister](#) (music director). Lodewijk had one son, [Johann](#) (1740–1792), who worked as a tenor in the same musical establishment and gave lessons on [piano](#) and [violin](#) to supplement his income.^[2] Johann married Maria Magdalena Keverich in 1767; she was the daughter of Johann Heinrich Keverich, who had been the head chef at the court of the [Archbishopric of Trier](#).^[4]

Beethoven was born of this marriage in Bonn. There is no authentic record of the date of his birth; however, the registry of his baptism, in a [Roman Catholic](#) service at the Parish of St. Regius on 17 December 1770, survives.^[5] As children of that era were traditionally baptised the day after birth in the Catholic Rhine country, and it is known that Beethoven's family and his teacher [Johann Albrechtsberger](#) celebrated his birthday on 16 December, most scholars accept 16 December 1770 as Beethoven's date of birth.^{[6][7]} Of the seven children born to Johann van Beethoven, only Ludwig, the second-born, and two younger brothers survived infancy. [Caspar Anton Carl](#) was born on 8 April 1774, and Nikolaus Johann, the youngest, was born on 2 October 1776.^[8]

Beethoven's first music teacher was his father. Although tradition has it that Johann van Beethoven was a harsh instructor, and that the child Beethoven, "made to stand at the keyboard, was often in tears,"^[2] the

[Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians](#) claimed that no solid documentation supported this, and asserted that "speculation and myth-making have both been productive."^[2] Beethoven had other local teachers: the court [organist](#) Gilles van den Eeden (d. 1782), Tobias Friedrich Pfeiffer (a family friend, who taught Beethoven the piano), and Franz Rovantini (a relative, who instructed him in playing the violin and [viola](#)).^[2] Beethoven's musical talent was obvious at a young age. Johann, aware of [Leopold Mozart](#)'s successes in this area (with son [Wolfgang](#) and daughter [Nannerl](#)), attempted to exploit his son as a [child prodigy](#), claiming that Beethoven was six (he was seven) on the posters for Beethoven's first public performance in March 1778.^[9]

Some time after 1779, Beethoven began his studies with his most important teacher in Bonn, [Christian Gottlob Neefe](#), who was appointed the Court's Organist in that year.^[10] Neefe taught Beethoven composition, and by March 1783 had helped him write his first published composition: a set of keyboard variations ([WoO 63](#)).^[8] Beethoven soon began working with Neefe as assistant organist, at first unpaid (1781), and then as a paid employee (1784) of the court chapel conducted by the Kapellmeister [Andrea Luchesi](#). His [first three piano sonatas](#), named "[Kurfürst](#)" ("Elector") for their dedication to the Elector [Maximilian Friedrich](#) (1708–1784), were published in 1783. Maximilian Frederick noticed Beethoven's talent early, and subsidised and encouraged the young man's musical studies.^[11]

Maximilian Frederick's successor as the Elector of Bonn was [Maximilian Franz](#), the youngest son of Empress [Maria Theresa](#) of Austria, and he brought notable changes to Bonn. Echoing changes made in Vienna by his brother [Joseph](#), he introduced reforms based on [Enlightenment philosophy](#), with increased support for education and the arts. The teenage Beethoven was almost certainly influenced by these changes. He may also have been influenced at this time by ideas prominent in [freemasonry](#), as Neefe and others around Beethoven were members of the local chapter of the [Order of the Illuminati](#).^[12]

In March 1787 Beethoven traveled to Vienna (possibly at another's expense) for the first time, apparently in the hope of studying with Mozart. The details of [their relationship](#) are uncertain, including whether or not they actually met.^[13] After just two months Beethoven learned that his mother was severely ill, and returned home. His mother died shortly thereafter, and his father lapsed deeper into [alcoholism](#). As a result, Beethoven became responsible for the care of his two younger brothers, and he spent the next five years in Bonn.^[14]

Beethoven was introduced to several people who became important in his life in these years. Franz Wegeler, a young medical student, introduced him to the von Breuning family (one of whose daughters Wegeler eventually married). Beethoven often visited the von Breuning household, where he taught piano to some of the children. Here he encountered German and classical literature. The von Breuning family environment was less stressful than his own, which was increasingly dominated by his father's decline.^[15] Beethoven also came to the attention of [Count Ferdinand von Waldstein](#), who became a lifelong friend and financial supporter.^[16]

In 1789 Beethoven obtained a legal order by which half of his father's salary was paid directly to him for support of the family.^[17] He also contributed further to the family's income by playing [viola](#) in the court orchestra. This familiarised Beethoven with a variety of operas, including three by Mozart that were performed at court in this period. He also befriended [Anton Reicha](#), a [flautist](#) and violinist of about his own age who was a nephew of the court orchestra's conductor, [Josef Reicha](#).^[18]

Establishing his career in Vienna

From 1790 to 1792, Beethoven composed a significant number of works (none were published at the time, and most are now listed as [works without opus](#)) that demonstrated his growing range and maturity. [Musicologists](#) identified a theme similar to those of his [third symphony](#) in a set of variations written in 1791.^[19] Beethoven was probably first introduced to [Joseph Haydn](#) in late 1790, when the latter was traveling to London and stopped in Bonn around Christmas time.^[20] A year and a half later they met in Bonn on Haydn's return trip from London to Vienna in July 1792, and it is likely that arrangements were made at that time for Beethoven to study with the old master.^[21] With the Elector's help, Beethoven left Bonn for Vienna in November 1792, amid rumors of [war spilling out of France](#); he learned shortly after his arrival that his father had died.^{[22][23]} ^[24] Mozart had also recently died. Count Waldstein, in his farewell note to Beethoven, wrote: "Through uninterrupted diligence you will receive Mozart's spirit through Haydn's hands."^[24] Over the next few years, Beethoven responded to the widespread feeling that he was a successor to the recently deceased Mozart by studying that master's work and writing works with a distinctly Mozartean flavor.^[25]

Beethoven did not immediately set out to establish himself as a composer, but rather devoted himself to study and performance. Working under Haydn's direction,^[26] he sought to master [counterpoint](#). He also studied violin under [Ignaz Schuppanzigh](#).^[27] Early in this period, he also began receiving occasional instruction from [Antonio Salieri](#), primarily in Italian vocal composition style; this relationship persisted until at least 1802, and possibly 1809.^[28] With Haydn's departure for England in 1794, Beethoven was expected by the Elector to return home. He chose instead to remain in Vienna, continuing his instruction in counterpoint with [Johann Albrechtsberger](#) and other teachers. Although his stipend from the Elector expired, a number of Viennese noblemen had already recognised his ability and offered him financial support, among them [Prince Joseph Franz Lobkowitz](#), [Prince Karl Lichnowsky](#), and Baron [Gottfried van Swieten](#).^[29]

By 1793, Beethoven established a reputation as an improviser in the salons of the nobility, often playing the [preludes](#) and [fugues](#) of [J. S. Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier](#).^[30] His friend [Nikolaus Simrock](#) had begun publishing his compositions; the first are believed to be a set of variations (WoO 66).^[31] By 1793, he had established a reputation in Vienna as a piano virtuoso, but he apparently withheld works from publication so that their publication in 1795 would have greater impact.^[29] Beethoven's first public performance in Vienna was in March 1795, a concert in which he first performed one of his [piano concertos](#). It is uncertain whether this was the [First](#) or [Second](#). Documentary evidence is unclear, and both concertos were in a similar state of

near-completion (neither was completed or published for several years).^{[32][33]} Shortly after this performance, he arranged for the publication of the first of his compositions to which he assigned an [opus number](#), the [three piano trios, Opus 1](#). These works were dedicated to his patron Prince Lichnowsky,^[32] and were a financial success; Beethoven's profits were nearly sufficient to cover his living expenses for a year.^[34]

Musical maturity

Beethoven composed his [first six string quartets \(Op. 18\)](#) between 1798 and 1800 (commissioned by, and dedicated to, Prince Lobkowitz). They were published in 1801. With premieres of his [First](#) and [Second](#) Symphonies in 1800 and 1803, Beethoven became regarded as one of the most important of a generation of young composers following Haydn and Mozart. He also continued to write in other forms, turning out widely known [piano sonatas](#) like the "[Pathétique](#)" sonata (Op. 13), which Cooper describes as "surpass[ing] any of his previous compositions, in strength of character, depth of emotion, level of originality, and ingenuity of motivic and tonal manipulation."^[35] He also completed his [Septet](#) (Op. 20) in 1799, which was one of his most popular works during his lifetime.

For the premiere of his *First Symphony*, Beethoven hired the [Burgtheater](#) on 2 April 1800, and staged an extensive program of music, including works by Haydn and Mozart, as well as his Septet, the First Symphony, and one of his piano concertos (the latter three works all then unpublished). The concert, which the [Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung](#) described as "the most interesting concert in a long time," was not without difficulties; among the criticisms was that "the players did not bother to pay any attention to the soloist."^[36]

Mozart and Haydn were undeniable influences. For example, Beethoven's [quintet for piano and winds](#) is said to bear a strong resemblance to [Mozart's work for the same configuration](#), albeit with his own distinctive touches.^[37] But Beethoven's melodies, musical development, use of modulation and texture, and characterization of emotion all set him apart from his influences, and heightened the impact some of his early works made when they were first published.^[38] By the end of 1800 Beethoven and his music were already much in demand from patrons and publishers.^[39]

In May 1799, Beethoven taught piano to the daughters of Hungarian Countess Anna Brunsvik. During this time, Beethoven fell in love with the younger daughter [Josephine](#)^[40] who has therefore been identified as one of the more likely candidates for the addressee of his letter to the "[Immortal Beloved](#)" (in 1812). Shortly after these lessons, Josephine was married to Count Josef Deym. Beethoven was a regular visitor at their house, continuing to teach Josephine, and playing at parties and concerts. Her marriage was by all accounts happy (despite initial financial problems),^[41] and the couple had four children. Her relationship with Beethoven intensified after Deym died suddenly in 1804.^[42]

Beethoven had few other students. From 1801 to 1805, he tutored [Ferdinand Ries](#), who went on to become a composer and later wrote *Beethoven remembered*, a book about their encounters. The young [Carl Czerny](#)

studied with Beethoven from 1801 to 1803. Czerny went on to become a renowned music teacher himself, instructing [Franz Liszt](#), and gave on 11 February 1812 the Vienna premiere of Beethoven's [fifth piano concerto \(the "Emperor"\)](#).^[43]

Beethoven's compositions between 1800 and 1802 were dominated by two large-scale orchestral works, although he continued to produce other important works such as the piano sonata [Sonata quasi una fantasia](#) known as the "Moonlight Sonata". In the spring of 1801 he completed [The Creatures of Prometheus](#), a [ballet](#). The work received numerous performances in 1801 and 1802, and Beethoven rushed to publish a piano arrangement to capitalise on its early popularity.^[44] In the spring of 1802 he completed the [Second Symphony](#), intended for performance at a concert that was canceled. The symphony received its premiere instead at a subscription concert in April 1803 at the [Theater an der Wien](#), where Beethoven had been appointed composer in residence. In addition to the Second Symphony, the concert also featured the First Symphony, the [Third Piano Concerto](#), and the [oratorio Christ on the Mount of Olives](#). Reviews were mixed, but the concert was a financial success; Beethoven was able to charge three times the cost of a typical concert ticket.^[45]

Beethoven's business dealings with publishers also began to improve in 1802 when his brother Carl, who had previously assisted him casually, began to assume a larger role in the management of his affairs. In addition to negotiating higher prices for recently composed works, Carl also began selling some of Beethoven's earlier unpublished works, and encouraged Beethoven (against the latter's preference) to also make arrangements and transcriptions of his more popular works for other instrument combinations. Beethoven acceded to these requests, as he could not prevent publishers from hiring others to do similar arrangements of his works.^[46]

Loss of hearing

Around 1796, by the age of 26, Beethoven began to lose his hearing.^[47] He suffered from a severe form of [tinnitus](#), a "ringing" in his ears that made it hard for him to hear music; he also tried to avoid conversations. The cause of Beethoven's deafness is unknown, but it has variously been attributed to [typhus](#), [auto-immune disorders](#) (such as [systemic lupus erythematosus](#)), and even his habit of immersing his head in cold water to stay awake. The explanation from Beethoven's autopsy was that he had a "distended inner ear," which developed lesions over time.

As early as 1801, Beethoven wrote to friends describing his symptoms and the difficulties they caused in both professional and social settings (although it is likely some of his close friends were already aware of the problems).^[48] Beethoven, on the advice of his doctor, lived in the small Austrian town of [Heiligenstadt](#), just outside Vienna, from April to October 1802 in an attempt to come to terms with his condition. There he wrote his [Heiligenstadt Testament](#), a letter to his brothers which records his thoughts of suicide due to his growing deafness and records his resolution to continue living for and through his art.^[49] Over time, his hearing loss became profound: at the end of the premiere of his [Ninth Symphony](#) in 1824, he had to be turned around to

see the tumultuous applause of the audience because he could hear neither it nor the orchestra. Beethoven's hearing loss did not prevent him from composing music, but it made playing at concerts—a lucrative source of income—increasingly difficult. After a failed attempt in 1811 to perform his own [Piano Concerto No. 5 \(the "Emperor"\)](#), which was premiered by his student [Carl Czerny](#), he never performed in public again until he conducted the Ninth Symphony in 1824.

A large collection of Beethoven's hearing aids, such as a special [ear horn](#), can be viewed at the [Beethoven House](#) Museum in Bonn, Germany. Despite his obvious distress, Czerny remarked that Beethoven could still hear speech and music normally until 1812.^[50] By 1814 however, Beethoven was almost totally deaf, and when a group of visitors saw him play a loud arpeggio of thundering bass notes at his piano remarking, "Ist es nicht schön?" (Is it not beautiful?), they felt deep sympathy considering his courage and sense of humor (he lost the ability to hear higher frequencies first).^[51]

As a result of Beethoven's hearing loss, his conversation books are an unusually rich written resource. Used primarily in the last ten or so years of his life, his friends wrote in these books so that he could know what they were saying, and he then responded either orally or in the book. The books contain discussions about music and other matters, and give insights into Beethoven's thinking; they are a source for investigations into how he intended his music should be performed, and also his perception of his relationship to art. Out of a total of 400 conversation books, it has been suggested that 264 were destroyed (and others were altered) after Beethoven's death by [Anton Schindler](#), who wished only an idealised biography of the composer to survive.^[52] However, [Theodore Albrecht](#) contests the verity of Schindler's destruction of a large number of conversation books.^[53]

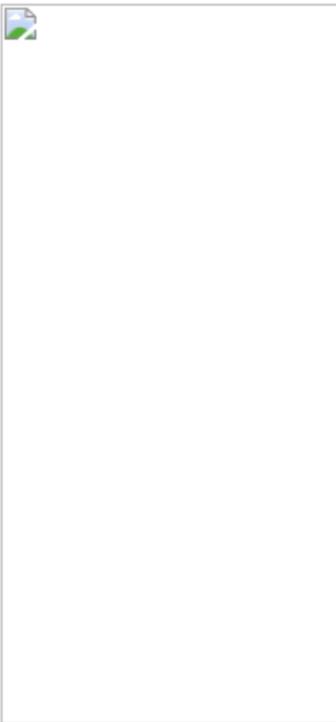
Patronage

While Beethoven earned income from publication of his works and from public performances, he also depended on the generosity of patrons for income, for whom he gave private performances and copies of works they commissioned for an exclusive period prior to their publication. Some of his early patrons, including Prince Lobkowitz and Prince Lichnowsky, gave him annual stipends in addition to commissioning works and purchasing published works.^[54]

Perhaps Beethoven's most important aristocratic patron was [Archduke Rudolph](#), the youngest son of [Emperor Leopold II](#), who in 1803 or 1804 began to study piano and composition with Beethoven. The cleric ([Cardinal-Priest](#)) and the composer became friends, and their meetings continued until 1824.^[55] Beethoven dedicated 14 compositions to Rudolph, including the [Archduke Trio](#) (1811) and his great [Missa Solemnis](#) (1823). Rudolph, in turn, dedicated one of his own compositions to Beethoven. The letters Beethoven wrote to Rudolph are today kept at the [Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde](#) in Vienna.^[56] Another patron was Count (later Prince) [Andreas Razumovsky](#), for whom the [String Quartets Nos. 7–9, Op. 59, Rasumovsky](#) were named.

In the Autumn of 1808, after having been rejected for a position at the royal theatre, Beethoven received an offer from [Napoleon](#)'s brother [Jérôme Bonaparte](#), then king of [Westphalia](#), for a well-paid position as [Kapellmeister](#) at the court in [Cassel](#). To persuade him to stay in Vienna, the Archduke Rudolph, [Prince Kinsky](#) and Prince Lobkowitz, after receiving representations from the composer's friends, pledged to pay Beethoven a pension of 4000 florins a year. Only Archduke Rudolph paid his share of the pension on the agreed date.^[57] Kinsky, immediately called to military duty, did not contribute and soon died after falling from his horse. Lobkowitz stopped paying in September 1811. No successors came forward to continue the patronage, and Beethoven relied mostly on selling composition rights and a small pension after 1815. The effects of these financial arrangements were undermined to some extent by [war with France](#), which caused significant inflation when the government printed money to fund its war efforts.^[citation needed]

The middle period



Beethoven Monument in
Bonn, Münsterplatz

Beethoven's return to Vienna from Heiligenstadt was marked by a change in musical style, and is now designated as the start of his middle or "heroic" period. According to Carl Czerny, Beethoven said, "I am not satisfied with the work I have done so far. From now on I intend to take a new way."^[58] This "heroic" phase was characterised by a large number of original works composed on a grand scale.^[59] The first major work employing this new style was the [Third Symphony](#) in E flat, known as the *Eroica*. This work was longer and larger in scope than any previous symphony. When it premiered in early 1805 it received a mixed reception. Some listeners objected to its length or misunderstood its structure, while others viewed it as a masterpiece.
[60]

The "middle period" is sometimes associated with a "heroic" manner of composing,^[61] but the use of the term "heroic" has become increasingly controversial in Beethoven scholarship. The term is more frequently used as an alternative name for the middle period.^[62] The appropriateness of the term "heroic" to describe the whole middle period has been questioned as well: while some works, like the Third and Fifth Symphonies, are easy to describe as "heroic", many others, like his [Symphony No. 6, Pastoral](#), are not.^[63]

Some of the middle period works extend the musical language Beethoven had inherited from Haydn and Mozart. The middle period work includes the Third through [Eighth](#) Symphonies, the [Rasumovsky](#), [Harp](#) and [Serioso](#) string quartets, the "[Waldstein](#)" and "[Appassionata](#)" piano sonatas, *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, the opera [Fidelio](#), the [Violin Concerto](#) and many other compositions. During this time Beethoven's income came from publishing his works, from performances of them, and from his patrons. His position at the Theater an der Wien was terminated when the theater changed management in early 1804, and he was forced to move temporarily to the suburbs of Vienna with his friend Stephan von Breuning. This slowed work on *Fidelio*, his largest work to date, for a time. It was delayed again by the Austrian [censor](#), and finally premiered in November 1805 to houses that were nearly empty because of the [French occupation of the city](#). In addition to being a financial failure, this version of *Fidelio* was also a critical failure, and Beethoven began revising it.^[64]

During May 1809, when the attacking forces of [Napoleon bombarded Vienna](#), according to Ferdinand Ries, Beethoven, very worried that the noise would destroy what remained of his hearing, hid in the basement of his brother's house, covering his ears with pillows.^[65]

The work of the middle period established Beethoven as a master. In a review from 1810, he was enshrined by [E. T. A. Hoffmann](#) as one of the three great "[Romantic](#)" composers; Hoffman called Beethoven's [Fifth Symphony](#) "one of the most important works of the age."

Personal and family difficulties

Beethoven's love life was hampered by class issues. In late 1801 he met a young countess, [Julie \("Giulietta"\) Guicciardi](#) through the Brunsvik family, at a time when he was giving regular piano lessons to [Josephine Brunsvik](#). Beethoven mentions his love for Julie in a November 1801 letter to his boyhood friend, Franz Wegeler, but he could not consider marrying her, due to the class difference. Beethoven later dedicated to her his [Sonata No. 14](#), now commonly known as the "[Moonlight](#)" *Sonata*.^[66]

His relationship with Josephine Brunsvik deepened after the death in 1804 of her aristocratic first husband, the Count Joseph Deym. Beethoven wrote Josephine 15 passionate love letters from late 1804 to around 1809/10. Although his feelings were obviously reciprocated, Josephine was forced by her family to withdraw from him in 1807. She cited her "duty" and the fact that she would have lost the custodianship of her aristocratic children had she married a commoner.^[67] After Josephine married Baron von Stackelberg in 1810, Beethoven may have proposed unsuccessfully to [Therese Malfatti](#), the supposed dedicatee of "[Für Elise](#)";^[68] his status as a commoner may again have interfered with those plans.

In the spring of 1811 Beethoven became seriously ill, suffering headaches and high fever. On the advice of his doctor, he spent six weeks in the [Bohemian spa town](#) of [Teplitz](#). The following winter, which was dominated by work on the Seventh symphony, he was again ill, and his doctor ordered him to spend the summer of 1812 at the spa Teplitz. It is certain that he was at Teplitz when he wrote a love letter to his "[Immortal Beloved](#)."^[69] The identity of the intended recipient has long been a subject of debate; candidates include Julie Guicciardi, Therese Malfatti, Josephine Brunsvik, and Antonie Brentano.

Beethoven visited his brother Johann at the end of October 1812. He wished to end Johann's cohabitation with Therese Obermayer, a woman who already had an illegitimate child. He was unable to convince Johann to end the relationship and appealed to the local civic and religious authorities. Johann and Therese married on 9 November.^[70]

In early 1813 Beethoven apparently went through a difficult emotional period, and his compositional output dropped. His personal appearance degraded—it had generally been neat—as did his manners in public, especially when dining. Beethoven took care of his brother (who was suffering from tuberculosis) and his family, an expense that he claimed left him penniless.

Beethoven was finally motivated to begin significant composition again in June 1813, when news arrived of the [defeat of one of Napoleon's armies](#) at [Vitoria, Spain](#), by a coalition of forces under the [Duke of Wellington](#). This news stimulated him to write the battle symphony known as [Wellington's Victory](#). It was first performed on 8 December, along with his Seventh Symphony, at a charity concert for victims of the war. The work was a popular hit, probably because of its programmatic style, which was entertaining and easy to understand. It received repeat performances at concerts Beethoven staged in January and February 1814. Beethoven's renewed popularity led to demands for a revival of *Fidelio*, which, in its third revised version, was also well received at its July opening. That summer he composed a piano sonata for the first time in five years ([No. 27, Opus 90](#)). This work was in a markedly more [Romantic](#) style than his earlier sonatas. He was also one of many composers who produced music in a patriotic vein to entertain the many heads of state and diplomats who came to the [Congress of Vienna](#) that began in November 1814. His output of songs included his only [song cycle](#), "[An die ferne Geliebte](#)," and the extraordinarily expressive second setting of the poem "An die Hoffnung" (Op. 94) in 1815. Compared to its first setting in 1805 (a gift for [Josephine Brunsvik](#)), it was "far more dramatic ... The entire spirit is that of an operatic scena."^[71]

Custody struggle and illness

Between 1815 and 1817 Beethoven's output dropped again. Beethoven attributed part of this to a lengthy illness (he called it an "inflammatory fever") that afflicted him for more than a year, starting in October 1816.^[72] Biographers have speculated on a variety of other reasons that also contributed to the decline, including the difficulties in the personal lives of his would-be paramours and the harsh censorship policies of the Austrian government. The illness and death of his brother Carl from [tuberculosis](#) may also have played a role.



Beethoven in 1818 by
August Klöber

Carl had been ill for some time, and Beethoven spent a small fortune in 1815 on his care. After Carl died on 15 November 1815, Beethoven immediately became embroiled in a protracted legal dispute with Carl's wife Johanna over custody of their son Karl, then nine years old. Beethoven, who considered Johanna an unfit parent because of her morals (she had an illegitimate child by a different father before marrying Carl and had been convicted of theft) and financial management, had successfully applied to Carl to have himself named sole guardian of the boy. A late [codicil](#) to Carl's will gave him and Johanna joint guardianship. While Beethoven was successful at having his nephew removed from her custody in February 1816, the case was not fully resolved until 1820, and he was frequently preoccupied by the demands of the litigation and seeing to Karl's welfare, whom he first placed in a private school.

The Austrian court system had one court for the [nobility](#) and members of the [Landtafel](#), the [Landrechte](#), and many other courts for commoners, among them the Civil Court of the Vienna Magistrate. Beethoven disguised the fact that the Dutch "[van](#)" in his name did not denote nobility as does the German "[von](#)"^[73] and his case was tried in the Landrechte. Owing to his influence with the court, Beethoven felt assured of the favorable outcome of being awarded sole guardianship. While giving evidence to the Landrechte, however, Beethoven inadvertently^[73] admitted that he was not nobly born. On 18 December 1818 the case was transferred to the Magistracy, where he lost sole guardianship.

Beethoven appealed and regained custody. Johanna's appeal to the Emperor was not successful: the Emperor "washed his hands of the matter." During the years of custody that followed, Beethoven attempted to ensure that Karl lived to the highest moral standards. Beethoven had an overbearing manner and frequently interfered in his nephew's life. Karl attempted suicide on 31 July 1826 by shooting himself in the head. He survived and was brought to his mother's house, where he recuperated. He and Beethoven were reconciled, but Karl insisted on joining the army and last saw Beethoven in early 1827.^{[[citation needed](#)]}

Late works

Beethoven began a renewed study of older music, including works by [J. S. Bach](#) and [Handel](#), that were then being published in the first attempts at complete editions. He composed the overture [The Consecration of the House](#), which was the first work to attempt to incorporate these influences. A new style emerged, now called his "late period". He returned to the keyboard to compose his first piano sonatas in almost a decade: the works of the late period are commonly held to include the last five piano sonatas and the [Diabelli Variations](#), the last two sonatas for cello and piano, the late string quartets (see below), and two works for very large forces: the [Missa Solemnis](#) and the [Ninth Symphony](#).^[citation needed]

By early 1818 Beethoven's health had improved, and his nephew moved in with him in January. On the downside, his hearing had deteriorated to the point that conversation became difficult, necessitating the use of conversation books. His household management had also improved somewhat; Nanette Streicher, who had assisted in his care during his illness, continued to provide some support, and he finally found a skilled cook.^[74] His musical output in 1818 was still somewhat reduced, but included song collections and the ["Hammerklavier" Sonata](#), as well as sketches for two symphonies that eventually coalesced into the epic Ninth. In 1819 he was again preoccupied by the legal processes around Karl, and began work on the [Diabelli Variations](#) and the *Missa Solemnis*.^[citation needed]

For the next few years he continued to work on the *Missa*, composing piano sonatas and [bagatelles](#) to satisfy the demands of publishers and the need for income, and completing the *Diabelli Variations*. He was ill again for an extended time in 1821, and completed the *Missa* in 1823, three years after its original due date. He also opened discussions with his publishers over the possibility of producing a complete edition of his work, an idea that was arguably not fully realised until 1971.^[citation needed] Beethoven's brother Johann began to take a hand in his business affairs, much in the way Carl had earlier, locating older unpublished works to offer for publication and offering the *Missa* to multiple publishers with the goal of getting a higher price for it.^[citation needed]

Two commissions in 1822 improved Beethoven's financial prospects. The [Philharmonic Society](#) of London offered a commission for a symphony, and Prince [Nikolas Golitsin](#) of [St. Petersburg](#) offered to pay Beethoven's price for three string quartets. The first of these commissions spurred Beethoven to finish the Ninth Symphony, which was first performed, along with the *Missa Solemnis*, on 7 May 1824, to great acclaim at the [Kärntnertortheater](#). The *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* gushed, "inexhaustible genius had shown us a new world," and Carl Czerny wrote that his symphony "breathes such a fresh, lively, indeed youthful spirit ... so much power, innovation, and beauty as ever [came] from the head of this original man, although he certainly sometimes led the old wigs to shake their heads."^[75] Unlike his more lucrative earlier concerts, this did not make Beethoven much money, as the expenses of mounting it were significantly higher.^[75] A second concert on 24 May, in which the producer guaranteed Beethoven a minimum fee, was poorly attended; nephew Karl noted that "many people [had] already gone into the country."^[76] It was Beethoven's last public concert.^[76]



Beethoven in 1823 by
Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller

Beethoven then turned to writing the string quartets for Golitsin. This series of quartets, known as the "[Late Quartets](#)," went far beyond what musicians or audiences were ready for at that time. One musician^{[[who?](#)]} commented that "we know there is something there, but we do not know what it is." Composer [Louis Spohr](#) called them "indecipherable, uncorrected horrors." Opinion has changed considerably from the time of their first bewildered reception: their forms and ideas inspired musicians and composers including [Richard Wagner](#) and [Béla Bartók](#), and continue to do so. Of the late quartets, Beethoven's favorite was the [Fourteenth Quartet, op. 131](#) in C# minor, which he rated as his most perfect single work.^[77] The last musical wish of [Schubert](#) was to hear the Op. 131 quartet, which he did on 14 November 1828, five days before his death.^[78]

Beethoven wrote the last quartets amidst failing health. In April 1825 he was bedridden, and remained ill for about a month. The illness—or more precisely, his recovery from it—is remembered for having given rise to the deeply felt slow movement of the [Fifteenth Quartet](#), which Beethoven called "Holy song of thanks ('Heiliger Dankgesang') to the divinity, from one made well." He went on to complete the quartets now numbered [Thirteenth](#), [Fourteenth](#), and [Sixteenth](#). The last work completed by Beethoven was the substitute final movement of the Thirteenth Quartet, which replaced the difficult [Große Fuge](#). Shortly thereafter, in December 1826, illness struck again, with episodes of vomiting and diarrhea that nearly ended his life.^{[[citation needed](#)]}

In 1825, his nine symphonies were performed in a cycle for the first time, by the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under [Johann Philipp Christian Schulz](#). This was repeated in 1826.^{[79][80]}

Illness and death

Main article: [Death of Ludwig van Beethoven](#)

Beethoven was bedridden for most of his remaining months, and many friends came to visit. He died on 26 March 1827 at the age of 56 during a thunderstorm. His friend [Anselm Hüttenbrenner](#), who was present at

the time, said that there was a peal of thunder at the moment of death. An [autopsy](#) revealed significant [liver](#) damage, which may have been due to heavy alcohol consumption.^[81] It also revealed considerable dilation of the auditory and other related nerves.^[82]

Beethoven's funeral procession on 29 March 1827 was attended by an estimated 20,000 Viennese citizens. [Franz Schubert](#), who died the following year and was buried next to Beethoven, was one of the torchbearers. Beethoven was buried in a dedicated grave in the [Währing](#) cemetery, north-west of Vienna, after a requiem mass at the church of the Holy Trinity (Dreifaltigkeitskirche). His remains were [exhumed](#) for study in 1862, and moved in 1888 to Vienna's [Zentralfriedhof](#).^[81] In 2012, his crypt was checked to see if his teeth had been stolen during a series of grave robberies of other famous Viennese composers.^[83]

There is dispute about the cause of Beethoven's death: [alcoholic cirrhosis](#), [syphilis](#), [infectious hepatitis](#), [lead poisoning](#), [sarcoidosis](#) and [Whipple's disease](#) have all been proposed.^[84] Friends and visitors before and after his death clipped locks of his hair, some of which have been preserved and subjected to additional analysis, as have skull fragments removed during the 1862 [exhumation](#).^[85] Some of these analyses have led to controversial assertions that Beethoven was accidentally [poisoned](#) to death by excessive doses of lead-based treatments administered under instruction from his doctor.^{[86][87][88]}

Character

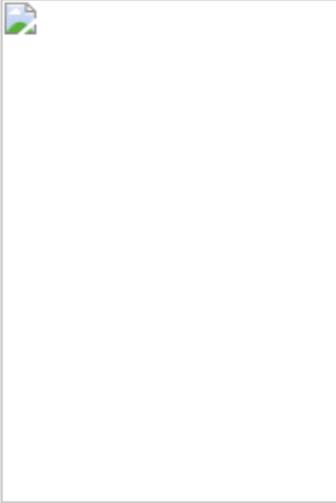
Beethoven's personal life was troubled by his encroaching [deafness](#) and irritability brought on by chronic abdominal pain (beginning in his twenties) which led him to contemplate suicide (documented in his [Heiligenstadt Testament](#)). Beethoven was often irascible. It has been suggested he suffered from [bipolar disorder](#).^[89] Nevertheless, he had a close and devoted circle of friends all his life, thought to have been attracted by his strength of personality. Toward the end of his life, Beethoven's friends competed in their efforts to help him cope with his incapacities.^[90]

Sources show Beethoven's disdain for authority, and for social rank. He stopped performing at the piano if the audience chatted amongst themselves, or afforded him less than their full attention. At soirées, he refused to perform if suddenly called upon to do so. Eventually, after many confrontations, the Archduke Rudolph decreed that the usual rules of court etiquette did not apply to Beethoven.^[90]

Beethoven was attracted to the ideals of the [Enlightenment](#). In 1804, when Napoleon's imperial ambitions became clear, Beethoven took hold of the title page of his [Third Symphony](#) and scratched the name Bonaparte out so violently that he made a hole in the paper. He later changed the work's title to "Sinfonia Eroica, composta per festeggiare il sovvenire d'un grand'uom" ("Heroic Symphony, composed to celebrate the memory of a great man"), and he rededicated it to his patron, Prince Joseph Franz von Lobkowitz, at whose palace it was first performed.^[citation needed]

The fourth movement of his [Ninth Symphony](#) features an elaborate choral setting of [Schiller's](#) Ode *An die Freude* ("Ode to Joy"), an optimistic hymn championing the brotherhood of humanity.

Music



Beethoven is acknowledged as one of the giants of [classical music](#); he is occasionally referred to as one of the "[three Bs](#)" (along with [Bach](#) and [Brahms](#)) who epitomise that tradition. He was also a pivotal figure in the transition from the 18th century musical [classicism](#) to 19th century [romanticism](#), and his influence on subsequent generations of composers was profound.^[90] His music features twice on the [Voyager Golden Record](#), a phonograph record containing a broad sample of the images, common sounds, languages, and music of Earth, sent into outer space with the two [Voyager](#) probes.^[91]

Overview

Beethoven composed in several musical genres and for a variety of instrument combinations. His works for [symphony orchestra](#) include nine [symphonies](#) (the Ninth Symphony includes a chorus), and about a dozen pieces of "occasional" music. He wrote seven [concerti](#) for one or more soloists and orchestra, as well as four shorter works that include soloists accompanied by orchestra. His only [opera](#) is *Fidelio*; other vocal works with orchestral accompaniment include two [masses](#) and a number of shorter works.

His large body of compositions for [piano](#) includes 32 [piano sonatas](#) and numerous shorter pieces, including arrangements of some of his other works. Works with piano accompaniment include 10 violin sonatas, 5 cello sonatas, and a sonata for [French horn](#), as well as numerous [lieder](#).

Beethoven also wrote a significant quantity of [chamber music](#). In addition to 16 [string quartets](#), he wrote five works for [string quintet](#), seven for [piano trio](#), five for [string trio](#), and more than a dozen works for various combinations of [wind instruments](#).

The three periods

Beethoven's compositional career is usually divided into early, middle, and late periods.^[90] In this scheme, his early period is taken to last until about 1802, the middle period from about 1803 to about 1814, and the late period from about 1815.^[citation needed]

In his early period, Beethoven's work was strongly influenced by his predecessors [Haydn](#) and [Mozart](#). He also explored new directions and gradually expanded the scope and ambition of his work. Some important pieces from the early period are the [first](#) and [second](#) symphonies, the set of six string quartets [Opus 18](#), the first two piano concertos, and the first dozen or so [piano sonatas](#), including the famous [Pathétique](#) sonata, Op. 13.

His middle (heroic) period began shortly after Beethoven's personal crisis brought on by his recognition of encroaching deafness. It includes large-scale works that express heroism and struggle. Middle-period works include six symphonies (Nos. 3–8), the last three piano concertos, the [Triple Concerto](#) and [violin concerto](#), five string quartets (Nos. 7–11), several piano sonatas (including the [Moonlight](#), [Waldstein](#) and [Appassionata](#) sonatas), the [Kreutzer](#) violin sonata and Beethoven's only [opera](#), [Fidelio](#).

Beethoven's late period began around 1815. Works from this period are characterised by their intellectual depth, their formal innovations, and their intense, highly personal expression. The [String Quartet, Op. 131](#) has seven linked movements, and the [Ninth Symphony](#) adds choral forces to the orchestra in the last movement.^[90] Other compositions from this period include the [Missa Solemnis](#), the last five string quartets (including the massive [Große Fuge](#)) and the last five piano sonatas.

In popular culture

Film

Main article: [List of composers depicted on film](#)

[Un grand amour de Beethoven](#) was directed in 1937 by [Abel Gance](#). It stars [Harry Baur](#).

[Eroica](#) is a 1949 [Austrian](#) film depicting the life and works of Beethoven ([Ewald Balser](#)). It was entered into the [1949 Cannes Film Festival](#).^[92] The film is directed by [Walter Kolm-Veltée](#), produced by Guido Bagier with Walter Kolm-Veltée and written by Walter Kolm-Veltée with Franz Tassié.^[93]

Ludwig van Beethoven is a 1954 documentary directed by Max Jaap in the [GDR](#) that presents the life of Beethoven. Original documents, letters and photos are combined with highlights of Beethoven's musical oeuvre.^[94]

In 1962, [Walt Disney](#) produced a [made-for-television](#), largely fictionalised, life of Beethoven titled *The Magnificent Rebel*, starring [Karlheinz Böhm](#) as Beethoven. The film was given a two-part premiere on the [Walt Disney anthology television series](#), and was released to theatres in Europe.^[95]

Beethoven – Days in a Life is a 1976 feature film directed by [Horst Seemann](#) and produced by the former East German [DEFA](#) Studio for Feature Film. Beethoven is portrayed by [Donatas Banionis](#). The film covers Beethoven's life in Vienna between 1813 and 1819.^[96]

[Neil Munro](#) portrayed Beethoven in the 1992 Canadian television movie *Beethoven Lives Upstairs*; it won a [Primetime Emmy Award](#) for Outstanding Children's Program.^[97]

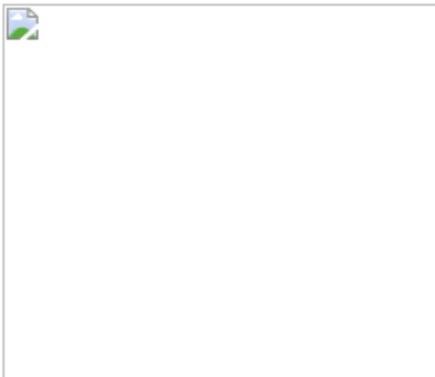
[Gary Oldman](#) portrayed Beethoven in the 1994 film *Immortal Beloved*, written and directed by [Bernard Rose](#). The story follows Beethoven's [secretary](#) and first [biographer](#), [Anton Schindler](#) (played by [Jeroen Krabbé](#)), as he attempts to ascertain the true identity of the *Unsterbliche Geliebte* (*Immortal Beloved*) addressed in three letters found in the composer's private papers after his death.^[98]

In 2003 a made-for-television [BBC](#)/[Opus Arte](#) film *Eroica* dramatised the 1804 first performance of the *Eroica* Symphony at the palace of Prince Lobkowitz. [Ian Hart](#) was cast as Beethoven, while [Jack Davenport](#) played Prince Lobkowitz; the [Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique](#) conducted by Sir [John Eliot Gardiner](#) perform the Symphony in its entirety during the film.^[99]

In a 2005 three-part BBC miniseries, Beethoven was played by [Paul Rhys](#).^[100]

A movie entitled *Copying Beethoven* was released in 2006, starring [Ed Harris](#) as Beethoven. This film is a fictionalised account of Beethoven's production of his [Ninth Symphony](#).^[101]

Legacy



German stamp on the occasion of the opening of the Beethovenhalle in Bonn, 1959

The [Beethoven Monument, Bonn](#), was unveiled in August 1845, in honour of his 75th anniversary. It was the first statue of a composer created in Germany, and the music festival that accompanied the unveiling was the impetus for the very hasty construction of the original [Beethovenhalle](#) in Bonn (it was designed and built within less than a month, on the urging of [Franz Liszt](#)). A statue to Mozart had been unveiled in [Salzburg](#), Austria in 1842. Vienna did not honour Beethoven with a statue until 1880.^[102] His is the only name

inscribed on one of the plaques that trim [Symphony Hall, Boston](#); the others were left empty because it was felt that only Beethovens' popularity would endure.^[103]

There is a museum, the [Beethoven House](#), the place of his birth, in central Bonn. The same city has hosted a musical festival, the [Beethovenfest \(de\)](#), since 1845. The festival was initially irregular but has been organized annually since 2007.

The [third largest crater](#) on Mercury is named in his honor, as is the main-belt asteroid [1815 Beethoven](#).

See also

- [Beethoven and his contemporaries](#)

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Notes

- ¹ ^ Beethoven was baptised on 17 December. His date of birth was often, in the past, given as 16 December, however this is not known with certainty; his family celebrated his birthday on that date, but there is no documentary evidence that his birth was actually on 16 December.
- ² ^ **a b c d e** Grove Online, section 1
- ³ ^ Barry Cooper (8 October 2008). *Beethoven*. Oxford University Press. pp. 407–. [ISBN 978-0-19-531331-4](#). Retrieved 15 April 2012.
- ⁴ ^ Thayer, Vol 1, p. 49
- ⁵ ^ Thorne, J. O. & Collocott, T.C., ed. (1986). *Chambers Biographical Dictionary*. Edinburgh: W & R Chambers Ltd. p. 114. [ISBN 0-550-18022-2](#).
- ⁶ ^ Thayer, Vol 1, p. 53
- ⁷ ^ This is discussed in depth in Solomon, chapter 1.
- ⁸ ^ **a b** Stanley, p. 7
- ⁹ ^ Thayer, Vol 1, p. 59
- ¹⁰ ^ Thayer, Vol 1, p. 67
- ¹¹ ^ Thayer, Vol 1, pp. 71–74
- ¹² ^ Cooper (2008), p. 15
- ¹³ ^ Cooper (2008), p. 23
- ¹⁴ ^ Cooper (2008), p. 24
- ¹⁵ ^ Cooper (2008), p. 16
- ¹⁶ ^ Thayer, Vol 1, p. 102
- ¹⁷ ^ Thayer, Vol 1, p. 104
- ¹⁸ ^ Thayer, Vol 1, pp. 105–109
- ¹⁹ ^ Cooper (2008), pp. 35–41

20. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 35
21. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 41
22. ^ Thayer, Vol 1, p. 124
23. ^ Thayer, Vol 1, p. 148
24. ^ **a b** Cooper (2008), p. 42
25. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 43
26. ^ Grove Online, section 3
27. ^ Cooper (2008), pp. 47,54
28. ^ Thayer, Vol 1, p. 161
29. ^ **a b** Cooper (2008), p. 53
30. ^ Cross (1953), p. 59
31. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 46
32. ^ **a b** Cooper (2008), p. 59
33. ^ Lockwood (2003), p. 144
34. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 56
35. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 82
36. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 90
37. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 66
38. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 58
39. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 97
40. ^ See Beethoven's love letter to Josephine, March/April 1805, in Schmidt-Görg 1957, pp. 12–14, where he referred to this time.
41. ^ There were (as mentioned in Goldschmidt 1977, p. 484), over 100 love letters between the newly weds, indicating that a healthy erotic relationship was growing between the spouses. [Steblin](#) (2007, p. 155, n. 41) announced a forthcoming publication of these letters.
42. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 80.
43. ^ Thayer, Forbes (1970), p. 526. – Prior to this *first* performance, there were others based in earlier sketches, as early as 22 December 1808, p. 476.
44. ^ Cooper (2008), pp. 98–103.
45. ^ Cooper (2008), pp. 112–127
46. ^ Cooper (2008), pp. 112–115.
47. ^ Grove Online, section 5
48. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 108
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51. ^ Solomon (2001)^{[[page needed](#)]}

52. ^ Clive, p. 239
53. ^ "In any case, it now becomes abundantly clear that Schindler never possessed as many as ca. 400 conversation books, and that he never destroyed roughly five-eighths of that number." [Theodore Albrecht](#), 'Anton Schindler as destroyer and forger of Beethoven's conversation books: A case for decriminalization', *Music's Intellectual History*, [RILM](#) 2010, 168–81.
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60. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 148
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64. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 150
65. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 185
66. ^ Details in [Steblin](#) (2009).
67. ^ Cooper (2008), pp. 146, 168.
68. ^ Lorenz (2011), Steblin (2014).
69. ^ Brandenburg (1996), #582.
70. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 212
71. ^ Lockwood (2003), p. 278.
72. ^ Cooper (2008), p. 254
73. ^ **a b** On 18 December 1818, the Landrechte, the Austrian court for the nobility, handed over the whole matter of guardianship to the Vienna Magistrate, the court for commoners. "It ... appears from the statement of Ludwig van Beethoven, as the accompanying copy of the court minutes of 11 December of this year shows, that he is unable to prove nobility: hence the matter of guardianship is transferred to an honorable magistrate."
74. ^ Cooper (2008), p 260
75. ^ **a b** Cooper (2008), p. 317
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