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A SHROPSHIRE LAD

Nigel Rogers talks to Poppy Holden

In 1969, as a fan of the Fires of London, I attended their Prom at the Albert Hall. I was a student at the time, at the Royal College of Music, which sits like a redbrick French château down the broad steps behind the Albert Hall. Out of inertia, and a desire to get a full pound's worth from my ticket to the upstairs gallery, I stayed to hear the second half of the concert, which consisted of early music performed by Musica Reservata. One member of the group had a voice of extraordinary beauty, so much so that I risked my life by leaning over the balcony and trying vainly to see its source. A glance at my neighbour's programme told me that this celestial tenor was called Nigel Rogers.

More than a quarter of a century later, I waited among the blood-red porphyry pillars in the newly refurbished lobby of the RCM to meet him for this interview. He's now on the staff there, teaching for a few hours a week the interpretation of Baroque music to students luckier than those in my day, when the teaching of singing technique was scandalously woolly and singers weren't expected to read music, let alone treatises on Baroque style. At least the music colleges now officially permit singers to explore techniques appropriate to early music, although as Catherine Bott confirmed recently on Classic FM, their attitude is still basically, 'louder, higher, opera or bust'.

Apart from the innate loveliness of his voice – its easy, unforced suppleness throughout its range – the quality that made me keen to hear it, then as now, is connected to his intelligence, his wit. Pioneering a new generation of singers, he attended to the words he sang, and to the harmonic requirements of the music. When we met, I asked him about his background – how did he turn out that way?

His childhood was spent in Golf Links Lane, on the outskirts of the small town of Wellington, Shropshire. Housman country. His parents had met by giving amateur concerts together. His father sang baritone in the church choir when not earning his living as a cashier in a local company, and his mother was a pianist who taught music privately. His uncle was music master at a public school.

Young Nigel read music before he could read words, and when his ability to sing was discovered, he was force-fed on music, becoming a busy boy treble. He was 'carted around local music societies, chapels, and village halls to pipe "Where'er you Walk", and "One is nearer God's heart in a Garden"'. On one occasion he shared a concert with a local team of handbell-ringers who had their trousers tied up with string, and this, coupled with the fact that one bell was out of tune, seemed so funny to the child prodigy that he nearly broke his angelic demeanour and laughed out loud. A recording from this period of those boy-treble standards, Mendelssohn's 'Hear my Prayer' and 'O for the Wings of a Dove', still exists on a 78 in Nigel's collection, complete with a few Great Western train whistles in the distance.

The fact that he went on singing treble until the age of fifteen brings out the old question of why voices break early nowadays. Is it to do with our modern protein-rich diet? He thinks maybe it's to do with the way that children in his day were made to stay children till later, though I'm not really convinced that wearing short trousers and reading Biggles till one's late teens would account for it. In Bach's time, Nigel says, boys were trebles till they were seventeen or eighteen. The part of the Evangelist was meant for a pubescent boy. Nigel wanted to become a tenor, but the (unspecified) efforts he made gave him laryngitis for weeks at a time.

He went up to Cambridge as a choral scholar at King's, where he was supervised by the organist and choirmaster Boris Ord. Here for the first time he had a singing teacher, Roy Henderson, who taught him a lot about interpretation and vocal technique. He's glad not to have been through King's from childhood, as 'one becomes part of a system'. Though perhaps the system may not have taken him in anyway, as 'I'm a Salopian, and a definition of a Salopian is someone who walks in the middle of the road when there's a footpath provided'.

This – shall we say *individuality* – is a notorious characteristic of Nigel's, and possibly explains why his career has not been as smooth as it might have been. 'You're supposed to behave so well in this country.' I remember what I gather is a fairly typical occasion, which took place in York in the late seventies, when Nigel was singing the main tenor part in the Monteverdi *Vespers*. He came to tea with me on the afternoon of the performance, and suddenly he began to sneeze violently. An allergy to my cats was the cause, and I said in consternation that if I'd known of his problem we could have gone to Betty's tea shop in town. 'Don't worry', he said. 'I'll have the usual row over money before the performance, and the ensuing adrenalin will clear the voice.' His voice that night was bell-like in its clarity, and the stories about the fight kept those involved dining out for weeks.

While reading music for the Cambridge Tripos, he

had a few lessons with Peter Pears in London. All Nigel can describe of Pears's teaching is (with a sweeping gesture) 'the whoole circle, the whoooole circle'. He learned more by osmosis – watching Pears and picking up the way the sound was made. Pears himself was working with Lucie Manen, the famous Viennese singing teacher whom Nigel visited later in Innsbruck.

In Cambridge, Nigel and other choral scholars frequented the school run by a certain Commander and Mrs Hudson for 'charming young Italian ladies of good family', in Brooklands Avenue, where the young men were invited to entertain the girls with vocal quartets. After that introduction, he was in love with the idea of Italy, and determined to go there.

In 1957, he went to Rome to study singing, sustained by teaching English. The following year he won a scholarship to Milan, where the vocal teaching was better. At this time his idea of early music was unaccompanied polyphony, the Byrd and Gibbons which he'd sung in church. His ambition, like most young singers, was to sing Verdi and Puccini.

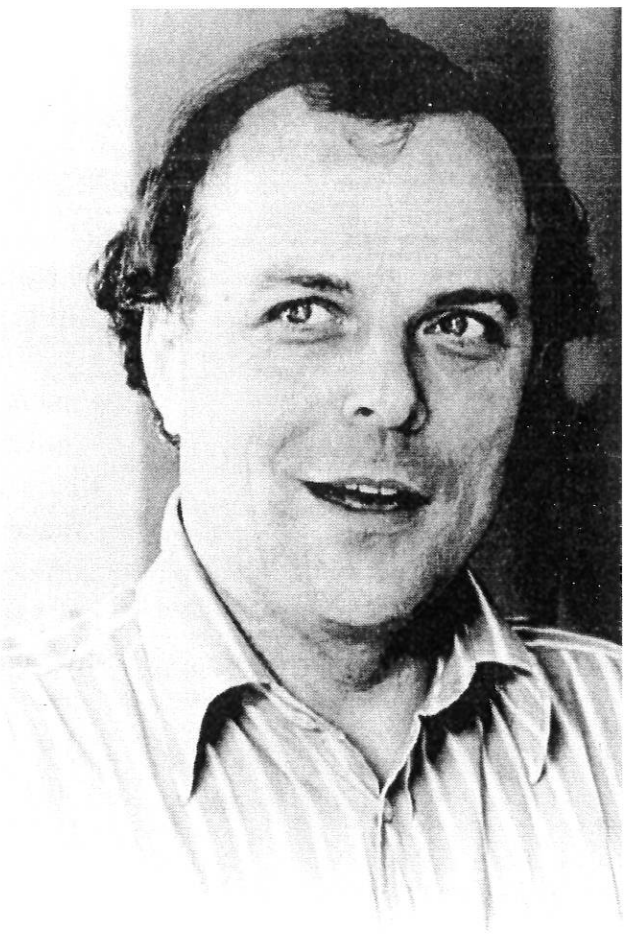
After his two years in Italy, he got a job teaching in the language school at Munich, and studied at the Hochschule für Musik with the baritone Gerhard Hüsch. Hüsch had been a well-known lieder singer in the thirties, who got into trouble when he finished his recital before the King of England with a Heil Hitler salute. When Nigel took a piece by Janáček to work on, Hüsch was furious to see that the edition was printed in *Brno* (Czech), rather than *Brunn* (the German name of the Czech city). He was a good teacher, being a stickler, not surprisingly, for the correct pronunciation of German, and the interpretation of lieder.

In Munich, Nigel joined up with a couple of Americans who had come there to set up an early-music group. Tom Binkley first called the ensemble the 'Studio für Alte Musik', then settled on 'Studio der Frühen Musik'. Although Andrea von Ramm was the only German in the group, the Goethe Institute provided money for this international ensemble – they had arrived at the politically correct moment. The Institute sent them all round the world, paying all the bills, while the British Council gave them sherry parties. Beginning in the early sixties they made over a dozen recordings for Das Alte Werk, principally of medieval and early Renaissance music: 'Oswald von Wolkenstein, Italian frottole, that kind of thing'. They considered Elizabethan music to be 'wildly modern'. I suggest it was a good repertory for a young tenor – better than going straight into Verdi.

Nigel reckons a tenor matures sooner than a bass – between twenty-five and thirty – by which rule he was by this time ripe for anything; but any singer must be careful to sing music that's meant for his own voice, and avoid being pushed into unsuitable repertory. He pointed out that Andrea von Ramm was persuaded to sing soprano parts, to her detriment, when she was really an alto. Musica Reservata, with whom he worked later, was marred for Nigel by Michael Morrow's love of extremes – 'making Jantina Noorman sound like a Bulgarian peasant when she could really sing beautifully'. Nigel refused to change his vocal production to suit Morrow's 'nasty noise theory', and so got into his bad books (and awakened my interest in early music).

Nigel left Germany when the prestigious agents, Ibbs & Tillett, offered to take him on to their books, and around the same time Aldeburgh asked him to be 'a swaying monk in Curlew River'. He was starting a new life as a married man (their first lodging in London was among the growing collection of fortepianos in Richard Burnett's tiny Pimlico home, now splendidly housed at Finchcocks in Kent), and had had enough of the medieval repertory: he wanted to get out into the solo world. He occasionally returned to Germany as a soloist, but settled down to a diet of Messiahs and Bach oratorios in England, getting work from Denis Darlow at the Tilford Bach Festival.

The truly unique thing about Nigel Rogers is surely the staggeringly fast fioritura that he loosed on the world in his famous recording of the title role in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. Many attempt it, but nobody does it



like he does. It's perfect for the Baroque *trillo* that Caccini describes as an essential part of any singer's technique. How did he learn the technique? It turns out that the revelation came when he spent a month in Delhi with the Studio der Frühen Music at an East–West music conference with Ravi Shankar, and Nigel developed a taste for Indian music, bringing back a record by a singer called Bhimsen Joshi, who had an astonishing technique, singing long coloratura passages 'which stop in the middle as if someone has grabbed him by the throat' – the sheer number of notes per second was unbelievable.

Nigel didn't think much more about it till Das Alte Werk engaged him to do the tenor part in a recording of the little-known *Vespers* by Monteverdi, with Jürgen Jürgens, Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Gustav Leonhardt. Nigel tried out the Indian technique, 'bouncing the articulation in the throat', and it worked fine. He developed his own technique from the Indian record, and says that, as with a modern trill, however much you study it, in the end either you can do it or you can't. When he teaches it, he offers the basic rules which Caccini gives in *Le nuove musiche*. You practise diminutions, starting slowly and then gathering speed by halving the length of the notes.

Some people have misinterpreted Caccini's instructions, and perform the whole exercise for doing a trillo instead of the trillo itself, which is just the fast bit right at the end of the exercise. Hence you get a lot of recordings where the singer breaks into a dutiful 'Ah! Hah! ah-ha, ah-ha, ah-ha-ha-ha', very slowly, which sounds unmusical in the extreme. When you get it right, it's a sort of spasm. It's like making your knee tremble, he says, and his knee promptly shakes in illustration: he says it's a useful demonstration for students, though if, like me, they can't get their knees to wobble, they may needlessly despair of finding the *trillo*.

When he's teaching, at the RCM, the Scola Cantorum in Basel and Dartington Summer School, he feels the same rules apply to any voice: for early music you need to be in control of your natural vibrato, adjusting it from none to maximum, as required. Like Harry Christophers a few issues ago, he points out the danger, though, of telling someone to take out a vibrato, because if it's habitual they may add tension rather than subtract wobble. He feels passionately that Baroque music is based on dissonance – he makes his pupils aware of the bass line, so as to make a dialogue with it, leaning on the dissonances. He teaches this by demonstration, and encourages his students to read the treatises – Caccini's *Le nuove musiche* is his bible. Other favourites are Bovicelli and Rognoni, and Howard Mayer Brown's *Embellishing 16th Century Music* – in spite of the title, the method still applies till the end of the seventeenth century.

His career follows the successful musician's usual punishing pattern of constant globe-trotting, but he has a wide variety of repertory and musical colleagues to keep him fresh. He works regularly with the lutenists Paul O'Dette and Jakob Lindberg, the harpsichordists John Toll and Colin Tilney, the fortepianist Richard Burnett, and the pianist David Mason. His flexible group of singers and orchestra, Chiaroscuro, recently gave the first modern performance of Alessandro Scarlatti's oratorio *San Filippo Neri*, 'a major oratorio by a major composer', at a BBC Invitation Concert, which was a big success and will be broadcast on Radio Three at a future date. ❦

SOME REFLECTIONS ON PALESTRINA'S SONG OF SONGS

Bruno Turner

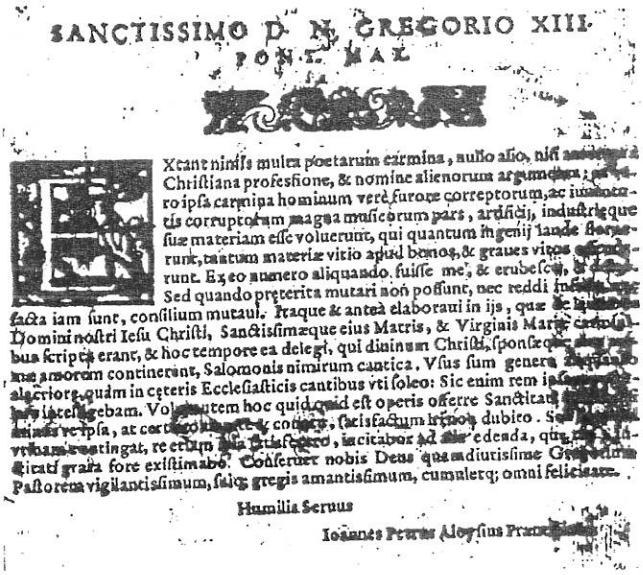
Bruno Turner is well known as an editor, writer and broadcaster and also for his performances and recordings as director of Pro Cantione Antiqua

It was in 1872 that Lewis Carroll presented Humpty Dumpty as saying: 'When *I* use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less'. The Church had been doing that too, for some fifteen hundred years, not always with complete success. In the fifteenth century Denys the Carthusian was worried that some persons neither properly prepared by study nor fully cognizant of the true meaning of the Song of Songs might be in danger of taking it at face value and of accepting its literal meaning as a poem of erotic love.

Of course, there was some protection in the Latin, comprehensible only to the literate clergy and an educated minority. The patristic and later monastic interpreters (and their Jewish contemporaries) always feared that the allegory of the sacred Bride and Bridegroom, God and His people, Christ and the Church and, increasingly in the Middle Ages, the Virgin Mary, would be undermined by the seductive literal sense. No less a person than St Teresa of Avila had to burn her Meditation on the Song of Songs; St John of the Cross suffered for his involvement in the movement of Spanish mystical piety towards the allegorical use *in the vernacular* of erotic symbolism based firmly upon the Song of Songs; and Luis de Leon suffered imprisonment primarily because of his translation of the Song into Castilian.

All this is a prelude to asking the question: was Alfred Einstein right to accuse Palestrina of utter hypocrisy when he blushed and grieved (*erubesco & doleo*) that he had been in company with those whose musical art had been lavished on poems with no other subject than love of a kind quite alien to the Christian faith? He regretted that he had been one of those who were ruled by passion (*furore*) and corrupted by their youthfulness. (These last words are often given as 'corrupters of youth', but that is not how I read it; see Figure 1, Palestrina's dedication as reprinted verbatim in the edition by Angelo Gardano [Venice, 1587].) This was not the first time that Palestrina had claimed to suffer a bad conscience about the use of his gifts in the service of 'light and vain ideas'. When he was about forty-four he saw himself as one advancing in years and assured one of his dedicatees that his abilities would henceforth be devoted to 'things dignified and serious, worthy of a Christian soul'. That was in 1569.

When in 1584 the Roman printer Alessandro Gardano brought out *Motettorum Quinque vocibus Liber Quartus*, there was no indication on the title page (Figure 2) that the contents were drawn entirely from what the Latin Bible calls *Canticum Canticorum*. In his dedication (see Figure 1; this is from the 1587 edition because bleed-through prevents reproduction of the 1583/84 dedication pages), Palestrina follows his apology with this resolution: 'But as what is past cannot be altered nor deeds undone, I have changed my purpose'. Recently, he explains, he has composed music upon poems 'written in praise of our Lord Jesus Christ and His most Holy Mother the Virgin Mary' (presumably his *madrigali spirituali* of 1581), and now he has laboured upon poems containing the divine love of Christ and His spouse the soul, 'indeed the Songs of Solomon' (...*Salomonis nimirum cantica*). In the numerous later editions from 1587 to 1613, the title pages become more explicit, with phrases like *motettorum ex canticis Salomonis* or ...*ex cantico canticarum* [*sic*]. Never, by the way, is the word *motecta* used in the title, so why use it on a recent CD cover?


SANCTISSIMO D. N. GREGORIO XIII.
PONT. MAX.

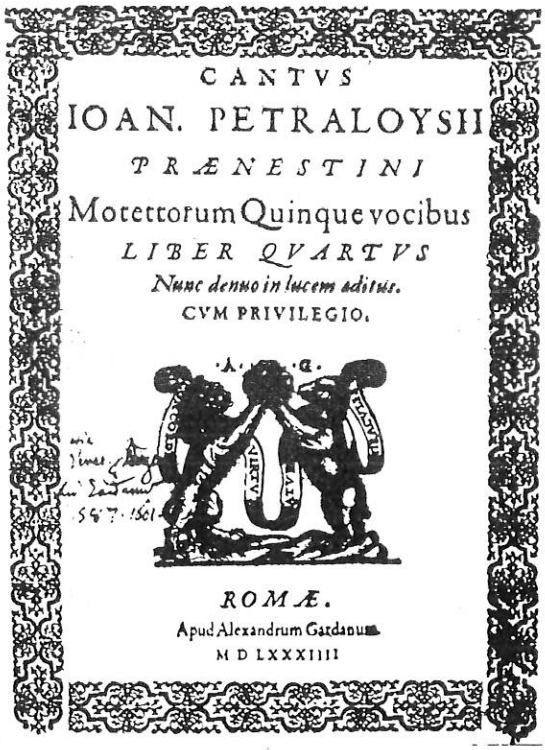
Humilia Seruus

Figure 1: The dedication of the 1587 edition

Let me mention here that there are some easy-to-obtain full translations of the dedication to Pope Gregory XIII, so you can check them against the Latin of Figure 1: Henry Coates's *Palestrina* (London: Dent, 1938), Oliver Strunk's *Source Readings in Music History: The Renaissance* (New York: Norton, 1965) and a fairly free but acceptable version in the liner notes to the CD recently issued by Collegium Records (John Rutter's Cambridge Singers).

Having broken off to mention translations, I will make a further diversion to mention recordings. In 1974 (so I recall), the BBC transmitted in instalments

the complete set of twenty-nine motets sung by 'Cantores in Ecclesia' (about sixteen voices) directed by Michael Howard. This highly idiosyncratic interpretation, with sopranos of a very un-early-music quality, was enormously powerful, dramatic and, one has to say, wilfully eccentric. The opposite is to be found in the fleetingly rapid refinement, cool-as-cucumber at English tea-time, of the Cambridge Singers. Howard's rendition, which came out on a L'Oiseau Lyre LP (three-disc set), has not made it to CD. It took 83 minutes; the Cambridge Singers' timing is 69 minutes. The Hilliard Ensemble of solo male voices, with sopranos added for the 'high-clef' motets (which are not transposed), takes 75 minutes (EMI, two-CD set including Petrarch settings by Palestrina). Soon to appear is my own new Hyperion CD, just over 80 minutes, with the quite various solo voices of Pro Cantione Antiqua, a performance which transposes the 'high-clef' motets down a fourth to match the rest.


CANTVS
IOAN. PETRALOYSII
PRÆNESTINI
Motettorum Quinque vocibus
LIBER QVARTVS
Nunc denuo in lucem editus.
CVM PRIVILEGIO.

ROMÆ.
Apud Alexandrum Gardanum.
M D LXXXIIII

Figure 2: The title page of the 1584 publication

My final addition to this digression is that Mapa Mundi will, later this year, offer my new performing edition in six volumes, available in a version for male voices with altos on top and in another version transposed for modern mixed choir. Anyone prepared (or even able) to cope with 'heavy' scholarship in early Christian and medieval theology may also be interested to know of my brother Dr Denys (*not* the Carthusian) Turner's book, *Eros and Allegory* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Press, 1994). Its translations and erudite commentaries left me a little daunted, but much wiser about medieval attitudes.

This brings me back on course, I hope, towards my original intention to examine Palestrina's motives. Here is a nice quotation from *Grove 6*: 'His career exhibits not only enormous artistic power and fecundity, exercised with great restraint, but also a strong religious feeling coupled with *a sense of worldly purpose*'. (Italics mine.) Now another quotation from Palestrina's dedication: 'I have used a style rather more lively [*alacriore*] than I usually have in church music for I understood this to be demanded by the subject itself'.

Can we see why Palestrina wrote this set, or rather what the set itself is? For it is certainly not liturgical at all, nor is it a set of madrigals that happens to be in Latin.

They are, I think, precisely what Palestrina said they were, and exactly what suited the private and public devotional gatherings that were encouraged, most notably by St Philip Neri, one of the most influential men of the Counter-Reformation, who, from the early 1560s, had transformed the cultural and religious life of Rome. Confraternities were formed for the practice of spiritual exercises. *Laudi spirituali* were revived and *madrigali spirituali* became a popular musical genre.

There are some indications of haste in the first printing of Palestrina's twenty-nine motets on the Song of Songs under the title of his *Fourth Book of Motets*, the tenor and bass part-books are dated 1583, the other three 1584. Publication early in 1584 can be assumed; we may guess that a special demand was being met. The Compagnia de i Musici di Roma dedicated to St Cecilia was started in 1584: Palestrina was a founder member. Could it be that the Song of Songs collection was Palestrina's inaugural contribution?

This is not to suggest that the Song was in any way a commission. I believe that the music was composed within a period of months, though not in a rush, rather than that it was any kind of retrospective collection of separate pieces composed over a number of years. I also think it is a figment of modern imagination to regard the twenty-nine motets as an integrated drama (as in Michael Howard's liner notes) nor should they be regarded as a continuous story (as does John Rutter). I cannot quite accept that Palestrina could have anticipated the imposed versification by numbers and the dialogue of Bride and Bridegroom with added Chorus that really attained general acceptance only after the promulgation of the 1592 revised *Biblia Vulgata*.

There are certainly a few errors and some minor differences in the Latin text in the first, 1583/84, edition that were changed in 1587 and subsequently. There are also some differences which it may be right to preserve in editing Palestrina's work. Just as composers generally have set the 'Crucifixus' of the Mass with

'...etiam pro nobis...[pause]...passus et sepultus est', despite nineteenth- and twentieth-century liturgical books insisting on the punctuation as 'etiam pro nobis passus, et sepultus est', so in the Song of Songs we constantly find editions and concert or recording texts giving 'Trahe me: post te curremus...' to follow the liturgical books of our time, in contrast to all the composers clearly understanding 'Trahe me post te: curremus in...'. No doubt some will disapprove of my retention of what looks like an error in Palestrina's 'Nigra sum sed formosa' where he uses '...filia Hierusalem', when the usual received text has 'filiae'. But as 'filia' is retained in every new edition, however else corrected, I think Palestrina understood 'I am black but beautiful, a daughter of Jerusalem, black as the tents of Kedar...' rather than the conventional 'O daughters of Jerusalem' as an exclamation aside. Enough of that. I simply wish to emphasize the necessity of trying to comply with what he, the composer, understood.

The same goes for translations of the biblical text that are based on Hebrew or Greek (Septuagint) sources. The Latin – even though scientifically wrong in places – is what Palestrina understood. So I have always counselled against the use of English (or other modern) translations that take account of modern biblical scholarship. I counsel against the King James (Authorized) version. I push for the Rheims–Douay–English 'ex-pat' Catholic version with a few changes. The Old Testament part of it dates from 1609/10 and at least it translates the Latin fairly literally. It gives an antique flavour that helps to reinforce the allegorical interpretation that we have to believe Palestrina intended. Like Denys the Carthusian, we might fear too much ribaldry from the singers if the translation were in a contemporary style and jargon. Besides, Palestrina always knew that music and its meaning must inevitably, just like the text, be subject to individual interpretation, person by person, era by era. That does not mean that we can evade trying to discover *his* understanding and motivation.

The flaunted badges of the Catholics in the new triumphalism that followed the Council of Trent were transubstantiation and the Virgin Mary. Roman authority stood behind the Triumph of the Virgin as well as her tenderness and her sorrows. The Spouse of the allegory is not only the Church or the soul but also the Bride, gentle Mediator and the powerful Queen of Heaven, the One who is arrayed for battle, perhaps even the Woman of the Apocalypse and, topically, the Virgin who won the Battle of Lepanto (1571; she appeared personally on Don John of Austria's great galley, now preserved in the Museu Marítim, Barcelona), and for whom the Papacy instituted the Feast of Our Lady of Victory.

Whatever we may know, or think we know, about the love poetry of desert nomads, of Babylon and of Sumer of the Chaldees, of long-gone goddesses and phallic towers of Lebanon, however much we can trace ancient eros through allegory into monastic Christian agape and back again, we simply must try to comprehend any 'early' musical settings as the composers did.

Pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol and countless other phrases from the Song were embedded deep in the minds of men like Palestrina and generations of musicians before and after him. The Song of Songs both in and out of the liturgy enshrined not only the gentle lady of the enclosed garden (*hortus conclusus*) of Virginity, but also the vision of triumph over evil.

I see no reason why Palestrina should not have exploited the renewed popularity of the Song, knowing its wide appeal and accepting its allegorical status. Who could deny the conviction and awe of Palestrina's great motet 'Assumpta est Maria' with its centre straight out of the Song: *Quae est ista...?* Let Luis de Leon answer: 'Virgin, arrayed in the sun, crowned with eternal stars, who walks her sacred feet upon the moon'. ❦

THE TRENT CODICES: AN INTRODUCTION

PETER WRIGHT

The author is a lecturer in music at the University of Nottingham.

Mention the north Italian city of Trent and most people, if they make a connection, think of the famous ecumenical council held there during the mid-sixteenth century. Mention the name to any specialist in fifteenth-century music and their mind inevitably turns to seven large volumes of vocal polyphony. For the 'Trent Codices', as these manuscripts have become known, form the largest and most important musical collection of the century. With more than 1500 pieces, most of them *unica*, it is a collection that no-one seriously interested in the development of European music between about 1420 and 1470 can ignore. As one colleague recently put it: 'the Trent codices are to fifteenth-century music what the Dead Sea Scrolls are to the Hebrew Old Testament'.

How did Trent, an otherwise undistinguished centre of musical activity in the fifteenth century, come to possess a collection of this magnitude? What do we know of the history of the collection, of its content and purpose?

It must be said straightaway that the codices are no feast for the eye. In fact they are very plain-looking volumes, copied without fuss or adornment, often in haste. Much of the calligraphy is scruffy or indifferent, a number of the scribes downright incompetent. Yet there is something physically very impressive about these manuscripts, not just in their size, but in the way they convey the realities of copying music and hence the compilers' underlying singleness of purpose. Unfortunately, too little of this is apparent from the published facsimiles, which are considerably reduced in size from the originals and omit many important paleographical details such as ink changes and marginal prickings.

The two oldest codices, Tr87 and Tr92, form a self-contained group devoted to music from the 1420s and 1430s. Unusually, they are an amalgamation of three sources of independent origin, the principal one of which is split between the two volumes. The compiler of this source was a musician-priest named Johannes Lupi who came from Bolzano, a prosperous town not far north of Trent. He matriculated at the University of Vienna in 1428 and during the 1430s and early 1440s was in turn a chaplain to Duke Frederick IV (the Elder) of Austria, Count of Tyrol, and an employee at the court of his cousin King Frederick IV at Graz/Wiener Neustadt. His duties in the service of the Habsburgs are not specified, but it seems most likely that he was employed as a music copyist. This hypothesis is considerably strengthened by the fact that at the Cistercian monastery of Zwettl in Lower Austria there survive, written in Lupi's hand, the remains of a large choirbook of the kind probably used in King Frederick's chapel.

The latter part of Lupi's life, from about 1443 until his death in 1467, was spent in Trent, where he worked as a priest and as cathedral organist. The key to his identity as a music copyist lies in the handwriting of his will, which miraculously survives in autograph form. This document also shows Lupi to have been a keen collector of musical instruments: two lutes and a variety of keyboard instruments are bequeathed to friends and colleagues.

He probably began collecting music while at university, continuing to do so avidly for the next ten to fifteen years. As individual pieces or groups of pieces came to hand, he copied them into unbound fascicles, eventually merging these with the two smaller sources he had acquired (one apparently from the Strasbourg-Basle region, the other probably from the area of Namur) to form the music books we now know as Tr87 and Tr92.

Together these books contain almost 400 pieces (their combined disc space would probably exceed that of *The Ring*!). There are items for the Mass Ordinary and Mass Proper, items for the Office, motets, songs, and a few pieces which were probably conceived instrumentally. The repertorial balance reflects the prevailing trends in European music, with English and Franco- Flemish composers present in large numbers, Italian composers hardly at all. Among the named composers are the most celebrated of the day – Dufay, Binchois, Dunstable, Power – as well as a host of minor figures including several whom we would otherwise never have heard of, such as Driffelde, Markham, Spierink and Tyling.

It is no surprise to find Dufay more strongly represented than anyone else, yet the sheer quantity of his music – about a fifth of all the works in Tr87 and Tr92 – is impressive none the less. There are songs, settings of Mass Ordinary movements, sequences and hymns, and four great occasional motets: *Vasilissa ergo gaude* (1420) celebrating the forthcoming wedding of Cleofe Malatesta and Theodore II Palaiologos; *Ecclesie militantis*, believed to have been written for the coronation of Pope Eugenius IV (1431); *Supremum est mortalibus bonum* for the entry to Rome of Sigismund, King of the Romans (1433); and *Nuper rosarum flores* for the consecration of Florence Cathedral (1436). There is much sacred music by Dufay's great contemporary Binchois,

and by his former colleague in the papal choir, Johannes Brassart, who was in charge of the imperial chapel choir during the 1430s and early 1440s and with whom Lupi was probably in direct contact. The English repertory includes Dunstable's celebrated isorhythmic motets *Veni sancte spiritus* and *Preco preheminencie* and one of the very first Mass cycles to be based on a borrowed melody: Power's setting of *Alma redemptoris mater*, here with the movements presented successively. Of the handful of works by Italian composers, Ludvicus da Rimini's motet *Salve cara Deo tellus*, a setting of a Petrarch poem in praise of Italy (DTÖ, 76), should perhaps be singled out.

The later codices, Tr88-91 and Tr93, are largely the work of a scribe named Johannes Wiser who spent about twenty years in Trent copying and assembling his great collection with the help of a number of assistants. Originally from Munich, he is first cited at Trent in 1455 where he was employed as succentor of the master of the cathedral school. By 1458 he himself had come to occupy the post of schoolmaster, and continued to do so until 1465. It was during his ten or so years at the school that most of Wiser's work on the codices was carried out. His duties there probably included musical instruction of the boys, for which his manuscripts would have served him well. On completion of his 'musical project' in the mid- 1470s he appears to have directed his energies elsewhere.

These later codices take us into murky waters, for their contents are generally less well known or understood than those of the earlier manuscripts. A major reason for this is the anonymity of the repertoire. Whereas Tr87 and Tr92 provide more than half of their works with an attribution, the later codices do so in fewer than ten percent of cases. Concordant sources provide a number of additional attributions, yet the vast majority of works are of unknown authorship or place of origin. This situation poses an enormous challenge for future research.

Of the composers represented in the two earliest codices in this group, Tr93 and Tr90 (compiled in the 1450s), many are already familiar from Tr87 and Tr92. But with the last three codices, Tr88, Tr89 and Tr91 (compiled between the late 1450s and mid-1470s), there is a greater emphasis on composers of a slightly later generation, such as Ockeghem, Martini and Touront. The generation which came to prominence in the last third of the century, however, is almost completely absent: there is apparently nothing by Obrecht or Josquin – to name the two leading figures – although a motet by Compère (born *c.*1445) is included in Tr91: his *Omnium bonorum plena*, thought to have been composed for the dedication of Cambrai Cathedral in 1472.

One is struck by the sheer preponderance of sacred music in the later codices; even works of secular origin have frequently had their texts replaced by sacred words. Most of this repertoire is specifically liturgical, embracing music for both Mass and Office. The Proper of the Mass enjoys a new prominence for the fifteenth century, especially in Tr88, where ninety-eight items are presented as sixteen cycles, eleven of them now accepted as by Dufay. But it is in the music for the Ordinary of the Mass that arguably the greatest of the codices' treasures are to be found.

In Tr93 and Tr90 most of the music for the Ordinary is in the form of single movements or pairs of movements. But in the youngest codices the cyclic Mass is the norm – a dramatic change that reflects the increased concern of composers with musical (as distinct from liturgical) unity. In a cyclic Mass, the five sections of the Ordinary (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus) are musically unified and as a rule are presented successively. The principal means of achieving unity is by placing a borrowed melody in the tenor of each movement – hence the term 'tenor Mass' used to describe works which employ this technique. It is probably fair to say that the tenor Mass was to the fifteenth century what the symphony was to the nineteenth: the chief vehicle for sustained musical thought. Composers borrowed their melodies from a whole range of sources and used them in an endless variety of ways. Nowhere is this more richly illustrated than in the later Trent codices.

Most of the Masses are based on either a plainsong melody (e.g. the anonymous English *Caput* Mass and the Ockeghem setting of the same chant) or a chanson (Dufay's Mass on his own ballade *Se la face ay pale*), while a much smaller number are based on Italian or German songs (the three anonymous settings of Bedyngham's ballata *O rosa bella* (DTÖ, 22), or the anonymous *Grüne Linden* Mass (DTÖ, 38). This repertoire also includes some of the earliest specimens of the 'parody Mass', a type of Mass which incorporates two or more voices of a polyphonic model, usually simultaneously (e.g. Bedyngham's setting of Binchois' *Dueil angoisseux* (DTÖ, 61)).

The Trent Masses demonstrate particularly vividly the international nature of Wiser's collection. There are Masses from England, the Netherlands, France and the Burgundian court, from Austria and Germany. Exactly how Wiser obtained such a large and varied repertoire is a matter for speculation, but we know that he was well connected and that Trent was a regular stopover for important travellers. Much of his repertoire probably reached him through a network of court chapels and cathedrals.

Hardly any of the music in the Trent codices appears to be of local origin. One or two motets in Tr88 may have been specially composed for Bishop Georg Hack (1444–65) (DTÖ, 14–15), but the poem in Tr89 celebrating the election of his distinguished successor Johannes Hinderbach (1465–86) appears without music. This seems to indicate a dearth of local talent,

as does the absence of any newly composed music for St Vigilius, patron saint of Trent. So far the only composer with any serious claim to be local is Christofferus Anthony, author of three works in Tr90.

It has sometimes been doubted whether the Trent codices were actually used in performance. A common objection is that the manuscripts are carelessly written and full of errors. In fact many pieces are relatively free from error, while others incorporate corrections of the very kind one would expect to have been made in performance. It would be surprising, moreover, if as practising musicians Lupi and Wiser had simply copied vast quantities of music with no intention of performing any of it. Whether the codices were sung from in public or in private must remain a matter for conjecture, but in Trent, as in any comparable central European city, there would presumably have been plenty of opportunity for polyphony to be performed: endowed Masses in guild chapels, services in the cathedral and the bishop's chapel, civic ceremonies and processions.

Lupi's and Wiser's collecting zeal must have far exceeded their repertorial needs; indeed it is difficult to believe that they had more than a nodding acquaintance with much of the music in their possession. The situation today is not so very different. Most of the music of the codices is still unpublished or only to be found in outdated editions and is therefore still not widely known. Much, much more of the Trent repertoire urgently needs to be made available in good modern editions. Only when it is will we really be able to get to grips with this remarkable collection. ❦

Reference materials, further reading & old editions

Census-Catalogue of Manuscript Sources of Polyphonic Music 1400–1550, 5 vols. (American Institute of Musicology, 1979-88) (Renaissance Manuscript Studies, 1). Gives summary information, editions and specialist literature for each codex.

Codex Tridentinus 87 [etc] (Rome, 1970). Useful but poor-quality facsimile edition of the seven codices.

DTÖ vols. 14–15, 22, 38, 53 and 61 = *Sechs Trienter Codices: Geistliche und weltliche Kompositionen des XV. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Guido Adler *et al* (Vienna, 1900–24; *R* Graz, 1959). Vol. 14–15 contains an introduction and a thematic index of Tr87–92, vol. 61 a thematic index of Tr93.

DTÖ vol. 76 = *Sieben Trienter Codices: Geistliche und weltliche Kompositionen des XIV. und XV. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Rudolf v. Ficker (Vienna, 1933).

Strohm, Reinhard: *The Rise of European Music, 1380–1500* (Cambridge, 1993)

Wright, Peter: 'On the Origins of Trent 87_1 and 92_2', *Early Music History*, 6 (1986), 245–70

Selected modern editions

Binchois, Gilles: *Die Chansons*, ed. Wolfgang Rehm (Mainz, 1957) (Musikalische Denkmäler, 2)

Binchois, Gilles: *The Sacred Music*, ed. Philip Kaye (Oxford, 1993)

Brassart, Johannes: *Opera Omnia*, ed. Keith Mixter, 2 vols. (Rome, 1965–71) (CMM, 35)

Canons in the Trent Codices, ed. Richard Loyan (Rome, 1967) (CMM, 38)

Dufay, Guillaume: *Opera Omnia*, ed. Heinrich Besseler, 6 vols. (Rome, 1951–66) (CMM, 1)

Dunstable, John: *Complete Works*, ed. Manfred Bukofzer (London, 1953; rev. edn 1970)

Fifteenth-Century Liturgical Music II: *Four Anonymous Masses*, ed. Margaret Bent (London, 1979), Early English Church Music, 22

Missae Caput, ed. Alejandro Planchart (New Haven and London, 1964) (Collegium Musicum, 5)

Power, Leonel: *Complete Works*, ed. Charles Hamm, vol. I: *The Motets* (Rome, 1969) (CMM, 50)

Power, Leonel: *Mass Alma Redemptoris Mater*, ed. Gareth Curtis (Newton Abbott, 1982)

Pullois, Johannes: *Opera Omnia*, ed. Peter Gülke (Rome, 1967) (CMM, 41)

Trienter Codices: Siebente Auswahl, ed. Rudolf Flotzinger (Graz and Vienna, 1970) (DTÖ, 120)

CMM = Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae
DTÖ = Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich

The Polonaises of Wilhelm Friedemann Bach

Paul Simmonds

Paul Simmonds is a professional harpsichordist and clavichordist. He performs regularly as soloist and as continuo player, mainly for Trio Basiliensis, whose CD 'Kammermusik mit Blockflöte' was recently issued by Ars Musici (Freiburg). His particular love is the clavichord, and he has given concerts on instruments in the collections of, amongst others, Leipzig, Bad Krozingen and Edinburgh. Teaching takes him monthly to Switzerland where he co-directs a course on performance practice.

The 'authentic' interpretation of music written in an earlier period than our own is generally considered a phenomenon of our own century, in particular of the last thirty years. It is therefore perhaps rather unusual to find a document dating from the early nineteenth century in which the author attempts to come to grips with music of a previous generation rather than merely 'updating' it to suit the current taste. Such a document does exist, however, in the form of a short preface by Griepenkerl to the first edition of the Polonaises of W. F. Bach published by C. F. Peters in 1819.

Friedrich Conrad Griepenkerl (1782–1849) was a man of wide education. He studied theology, philosophy and music theory as well as organ and piano (*sic*) under Forkel. Today he is known, and perhaps infamous, for his editions of the keyboard works, in particular the organ works of J. S. Bach, which, together with F. A. Roitzsch, he prepared for Peters from 1837 onwards. His edition of Bach's Chromatic Fantasy had appeared earlier, in 1819, with another interesting preface entitled 'Some comments on the performance of the Chromatic Fantasy' (Einige Bemerkungen über den Vortrag der chromatischen Phantasie).[1] This is a valuable document not only for what it contains about performing the Fantasy, but for what it contains about keyboard technique in general. Griepenkerl was a friend of Zeller, Weber, Spohr, Meyerbeer and F. Mendelssohn, and promoted concerts of J. S. Bach's works some years before Mendelssohn's more celebrated performance of the *St Matthew Passion*.

At the time of W. F. Bach's death in 1784 the 12 Polonaises appear to have been the pieces for which he was most remembered. They were written sometime between 1756 and 1764 and were already in circulation in manuscript copies, but were never published during Friedemann's lifetime. Breitkopf announced their imminent publication in 1774 and 1780, but this never occurred. That they were prepared for printing is clear from the fair copy made by Bach (nos. 1–6) and a copyist known to have worked for Bach (nos. 7–12). This fair copy, numbered P 699,[2] was apparently preserved in the Berlin Library up until the Second World War, was carefully stored during the war, and vanished immediately thereafter.[3] According to Falck[4] P 699 was printed by Peters 'almost without change to the dynamic markings' (*fast ohne Änderung der dynamischen Zeichen*) in 1819 with the preface by Griepenkerl. I would dearly like to know what Falck meant by 'almost', as the dynamic markings, as they appear in the 1819 print, are truly extraordinary for compositions of the mid-eighteenth century. According to Steve Barell the manuscript P 699 was examined shortly before it disappeared proving 'that the dynamic markings...were indeed [W. F. Bach's] own'.[5] On the other hand the title page of the 1819 edition bears the inscription 'with a description and annotation of the correct manner of performance as given by Friedemann Bach to Forkel, and from Forkel to his students'.[6] The wording of this suggests that the actual markings are not by Friedemann, but by Forkel or, most likely, by Griepenkerl himself. This is unlikely to be cleared up until the autograph resurfaces.[7]

Griepenkerl's preface seems for some reason not to have been bound in with the edition, but printed on a separate sheet with a different page format and presumably inserted loose into the publication. This may account for the fact that it is missing in both the copies in the possession of the Einsiedeln Monastery Library. Peters have issued over the years at least two further editions of the Polonaises, each one more heavily edited than the last. Neither of them includes the original preface, which is translated in full below.

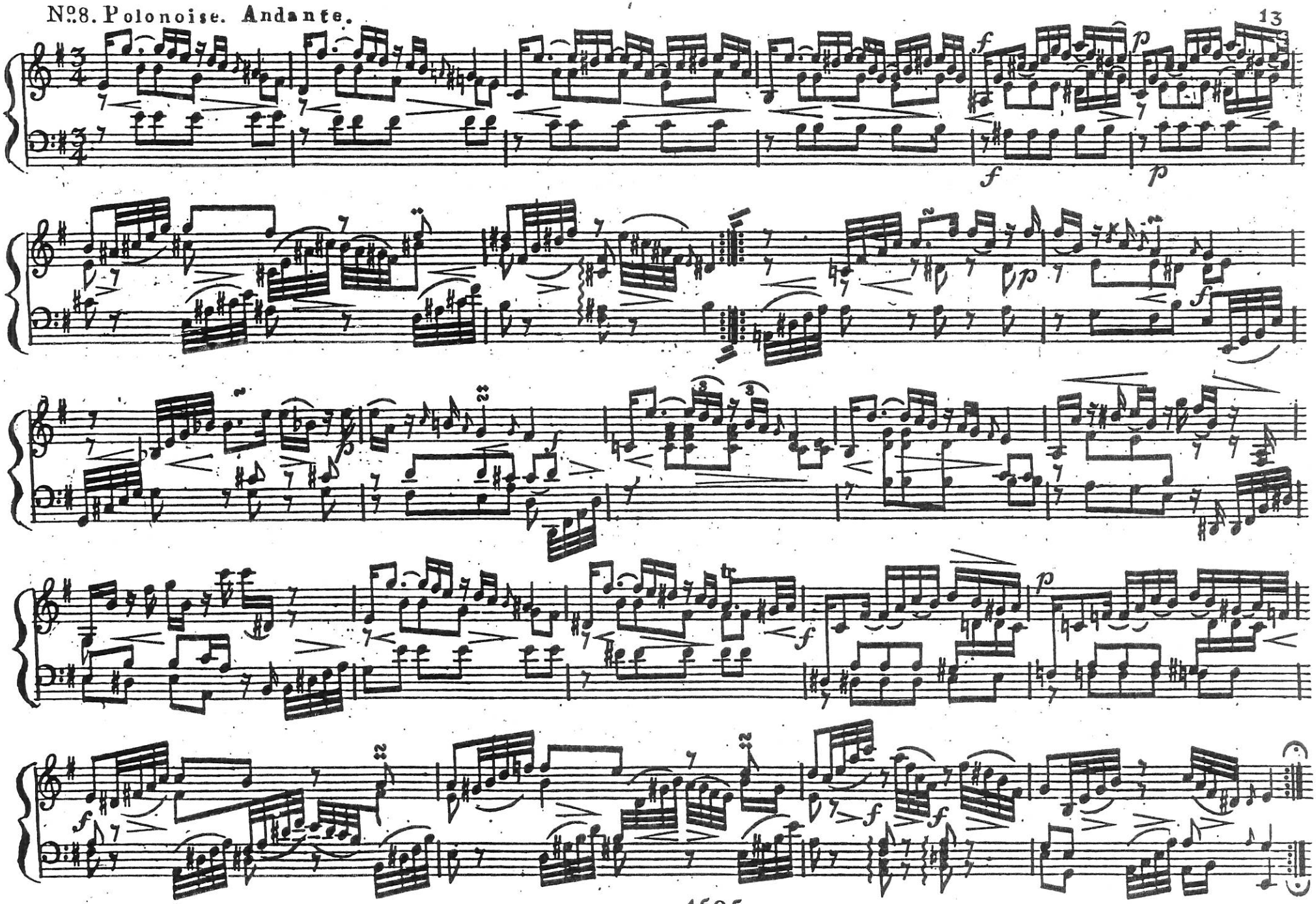
> With regard to musical declamation we have at the two extremes compositions of quite different sorts. On the one hand there are those works which require practically none, partly because of their inner richness, setting and purpose, but also because of the greatness and sublimity of their expression, and the seriousness and dignity of their meaning, which render such superficial adornment out of place. To this category belong, first and foremost, J. S. Bach's big Preludes and Fugues for organ with obligato pedal (those that have survived) together with many of his keyboard compositions. For these works clarity of detail, the correct accentuation and an understandable separation of the phrases [*Perioden*], at the same time carefully maintaining structural unity, is generally sufficient. The works at the other extreme require an over-rich declamatory style due to their 'inner' poverty, both intentional and unintentional. Without it they would sound too empty and trivial. To this category belong Italian opera arias which, to accommodate the individual artistry of the singer, have the mere bones of a melody and a more than easy harmonic accompaniment so that they can be easily understood. In these circumstances a personal style of delivery and the art of embellishment are vital for tastefully bridging the intentional gaps in the musical text and for attempting to make a painting from a sketch.

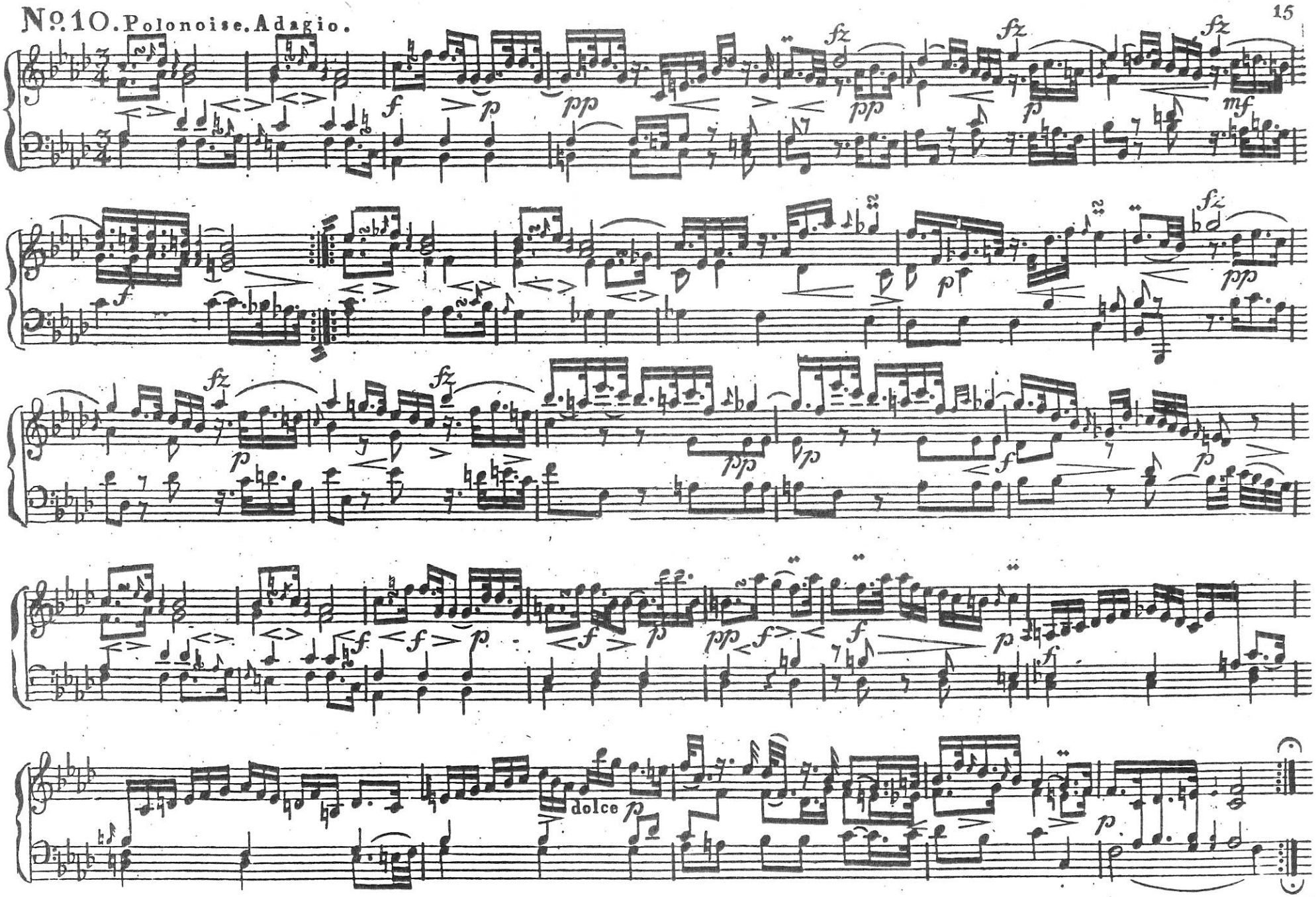
Between these two extremes stand compositions that present one with a abundant diversity of feeling, from smouldering passion to deep spiritual love and calm but oppressive melancholy. Such compositions force the sensitive interpreter to act out these feelings [*Affekten*] insofar as he is able to perceive them. He cannot fail, by virtue of his aroused complicity, to play with warmth and sincerity of expression. This art of expression, however, consists neither of superimposed ornamentation, nor in variations of the melody, nor in any kind of decoration or embellishment [*Schnörkelei*]. These will only cheapen a feeling [*Zierrath*] which is in itself genuine and serious in intention. In addition the composer has left nothing out, but has written down everything that he possibly could in the interests of clarifying and fulfilling his intentions. There is no melodic figure to be embellished or made more brilliant, because the composer has already chosen the most telling and beautiful means from the full range of his artistic repertory to express his feelings in the most elegant way possible. Also a superficial brilliance is so foreign to such a work of art, that a pure and true spirit would reject it completely. Only a hint, a signpost to the proper way, is possible, so that it can be found without too much exertion by those of a sensitive and easily aroused disposition. Under coarse hands a work of this kind would shatter despite the most complete instructions and annotations as to its performance. Spirits of this nature can only be awakened by kindred minds. The gates to their Heaven remain eternally closed to those in whose hearts nature has not placed the key. To this category belong these Polonaises by W. F. Bach and particularly those in minor keys. They represent the truest and purest image of a noble, sensitive and troubled individual [*Gemüth*].

Little remains to be added with regard to their performance, and that more as a caution than as instruction. The title 'Polonaise' could be misleading with regard to these works. They are as much intended to be danced as Haydn's fast Minuets, Rondos etc., so that the degree of speed in their movement should not be derived from the dance itself. Outwardly they have no similarity to the true Polonaise; only the inner rhythm is borrowed from this characteristic form. All those in a minor key are Adagios with a more or less slow pulse. The fastest [of these], which may almost be played in the speed of the old Minuet, is the fourth one in D minor, whereas the slowest is that in E-flat minor, no. 6. With regard to the interpretation of the prescribed ornaments it is worth mentioning, with particular regard to the tenth Polonaise in F minor, perhaps the most beautiful, that neither Friedemann Bach himself, nor Forkel, who studied with him, played all the given turns identically. They played nearly every one different from the others, often in slower moving notes which sounded as though they belonged to the main melody. The same applied to the appoggiaturas in all the others.

The Polonaises in major keys have a different

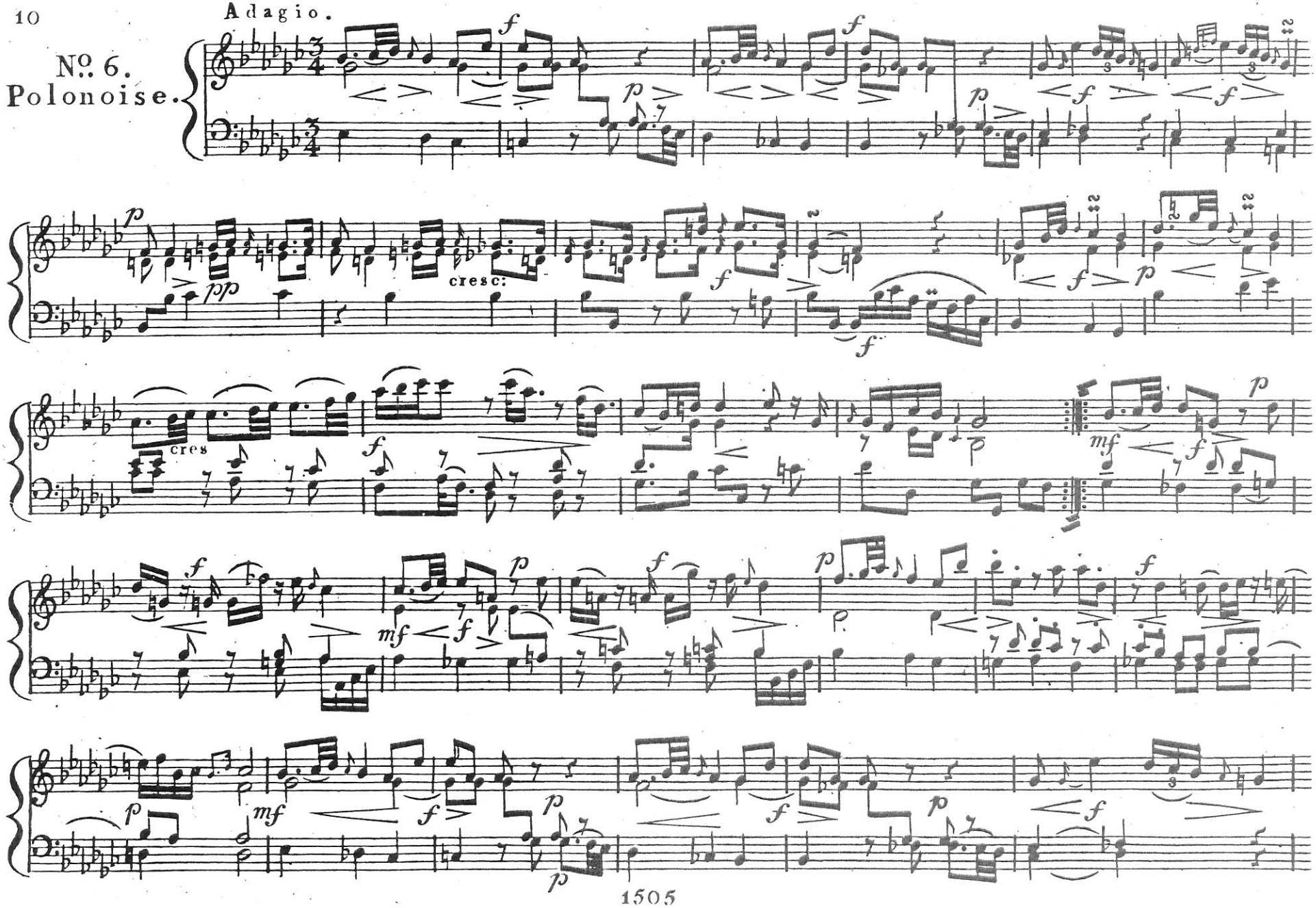
—continued on page 17

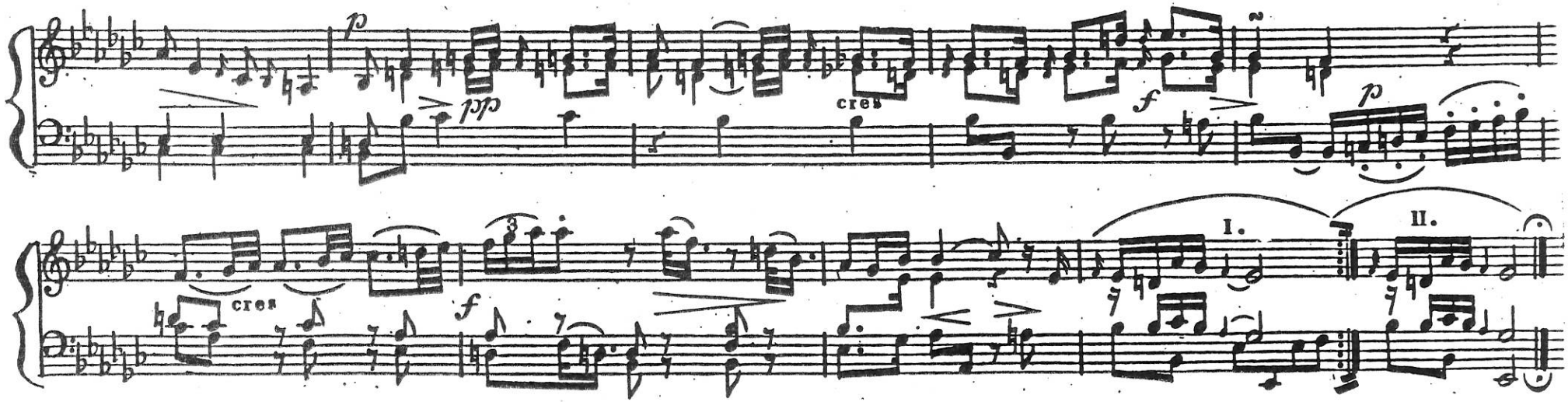

Nº8. Polonoise. Andante.


No. 10. Polonoise. Adagio.
dolce

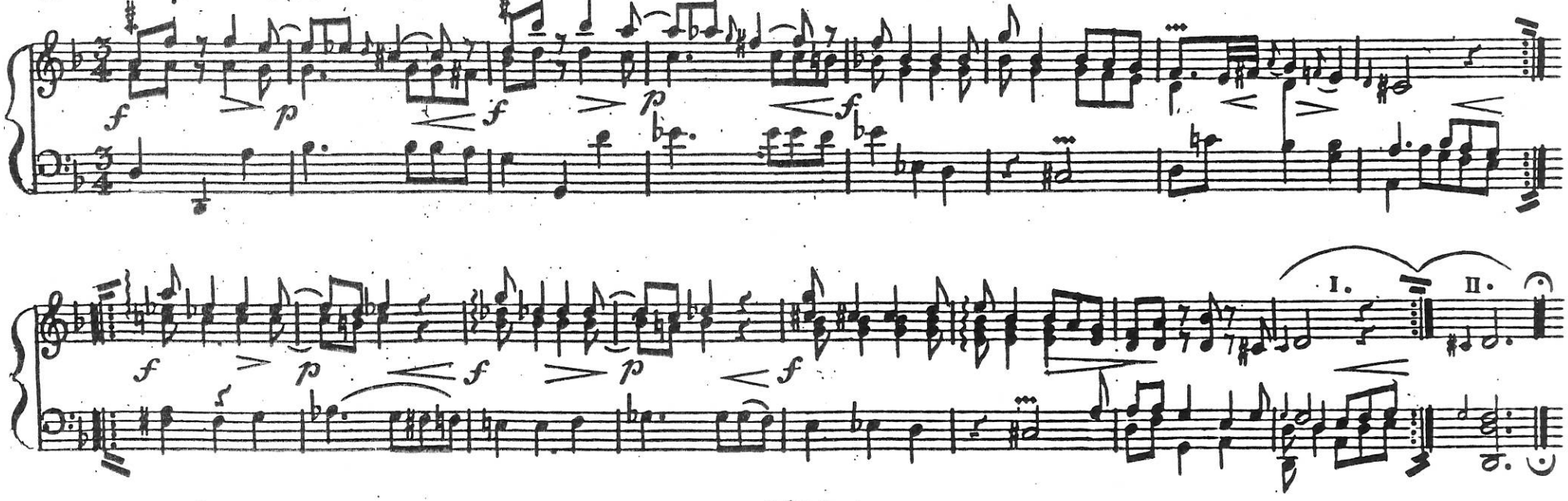
Adagio.

No. 6. Polonoise.





No. 4. Polonoise. Moderato.



character and demand a different treatment. Two of these, the E-flat major no. 5 and the F major no. 9, resemble closest the actual Polonaise. The others benefit from a moderate *allegretto* movement, and should be played elegantly and roundly [*rund*], in order to create a mood of cheerful serenity [*heitere Wirkung*].

The type of touch as used by Friedemann Bach and Forkel when playing these pieces, without which little can be achieved with them, has already been described in the Preface to J. S. Bach's Chromatic Fantasy. They are most effectively realized on the clavichord. Those, however, who wish to play them on the Piano-Forte should move the keyboard for those Polonaises in minor keys, so that only one string is struck by the hammers. There should be no further change of tone, other than that which can be produced by touch alone. They are all far too much out of one mould and unified within themselves that they could stand changes of register without being disadvantaged.

To substantiate the authority of the performance tradition implied on the title page, I should mention that W. F. Bach visited Forkel in Göttingen, where the latter was already Music Director, and stayed with him for a few months. Forkel's enthusiasm for genuine art, especially that appertaining to Bach, ensured that he learned more from Friedemann in this short time than anyone else ever would, a fact he related readily and often with shining eyes and charming modesty. For his part Forkel was the most conscientious and ardent teacher that one could wish for. He retained absolutely nothing for himself, giving freely of his knowledge and capabilities. He even knew how to inspire his students with his own enthusiasm and respect for compositions old and new. Only the untalented and arrogant were impervious to the strength of his influence.

Brunswick, Summer 1819
(translation: Paul Simmonds, 1992)

The facsimile reproductions included with this issue are from a copy of the 1819 publication, one of two in the monastery library of Einsiedeln, Switzerland. My thanks to the librarian for permission to reproduce them. I am hoping that someone reading this may know more or have ideas about this publication, in which case I would welcome contact with them. ❦

1 Reproduced and discussed by Ewald Kooiman in 'Bachs Klaviertechniek', *Het Orgel* (January 1983).
2 See M. Falck, 'Wilhelm Friedemann Bach' (Leipzig: C. F. Kahnt, 1913), p. 82.
3 This information from Steve Barell's introductory note to his 1990 recording of the Polonaises for Globe.
4 Falck, 'Wilhelm Friedemann Bach'.
5 Steve Barrell, introductory note, Globe 5035, 1990.
6 'Mit einer Beschreibung und Bezeichnung des wahren Vortrags, wie derselbe von Friedemann Bach auf Forkel und von Forkel auf seine Schüler übertragen worden.'
7 Since I compiled this introduction Steve Barrell has brought to my attention that the autograph of the first six Polonaises has turned up in Kraków and reveals that the original markings are sparse, and far more in keeping with what one would expect of the autograph. The latest edition of the Polonaises, by Henle, reflects these findings.

REVIEWS

European Recorder Teachers' Association Conference, Little Benslow Hills, 31 May 1994

The British arm of the European Recorder Teachers' Association (ERTA) came into being a year ago, and this conference was the first major event since its inception. ERTA now has over a hundred members, a third of whom were present. The proceedings were chaired by the founder, Peter Bowman, who also gave the opening address. He chose to describe the professional recorder player/teacher as a phenomenon of the twentieth century, justifying this by a comparison with the Bassano family, recorder players at the court of Henry VIII, who, he maintained, would have been multifaceted wind players. The professional recorder player in the UK was in the process of coming of age, and had reached the point of adolescence.

After the opening address the conference participants were divided into six groups, and each was handed a contentious statement to discuss. These were not plucked out of the air but had been assembled during the course of correspondence and telephone conversations with members, and raised the following provocative points:

(1) Should children start the recorder before their fingers can cover the holes?
(2) Recorder players are notorious for playing out of tune! Why?
(3) Is the recorder regarded as a soft option, an easier alternative to learning a more demanding instrument such as the piano?
(4) The examination system is a measure of achievement, not a curriculum of study!
(5) Young children should be taught musical rudiments by means of singing rather than by means of the recorder.
(6) Is a second-instrument recorder teacher acceptable at tertiary level – would this be acceptable in, for example, orchestral instruments?

After a brief discussion period the groups reported back. The first group was against the issuing of recorders to young children, pointing out that this contributed to the 'cheap' image the instrument tended to have. They felt that musical rudiments were more productively instilled by the use of singing/clapping etc. The second statement was contested on various grounds: that recorder players were no more out of tune than other instruments at the equivalent level; the variability in quality and tuning of instruments; and, invariably, poor teaching practice – the recorder with its flexible tuning and the possibility of filing holes on individual instruments should mean that intonation was no worse than any other instrument. The third group came to the conclusion that young children are not in a position to judge whether they

are being given a soft option or not. On being handed a recorder they are not aware of the difficulties involved and at best are only capable of judging in retrospect when they are older. The fourth statement inevitably produced a lively reaction, with the conclusions that examinations as a goal can be good (providing the goal is the child's and not the parents'!), but that they should certainly not be viewed as a method. The fifth group agreed that singing and body movement was a far better introduction to music than the recorder, but that for formal teaching an instrument was necessary. As to whether a second instrument teacher was acceptable at tertiary level, it was rightly pointed out that second-instrument status was not necessarily a sign of inadequacy or incompetence, and the parallel was drawn with the Baroque period, when musicians often had professional status on more than one instrument. (James Paisible, the composer of some of the finest solo recorder music of his time, was also an oboist and played the cello professionally.) What would be a more pertinent question, that of training and qualification, was, intentionally or unintentionally, avoided. I found this regrettable but perhaps understandable, although this surely lies at the heart of the matter. A seventh question, can a professional career with recorder be sustained for a lifetime, was thrown open to the floor. The general answer to this was (surprisingly?) *no*, and the point was made that even Brüggen had turned to conducting.

A short break was followed by a talk by Ross Winters entitled 'Searching for meaning'. As its name implies, this talk attempted to deal with the meaning of music over and above the written note, and how, and to what extent, to impart this to students. Mr Winters' point of departure was that of the musician being the servant of music, not deliberately imposing their individuality on a piece (a point I would not wholly subscribe to without more qualification than the speaker gave it). Equally, one is the servant of one's students – one shares one's knowledge with them in the humble realization that they may well surpass one. Sound should be the first thing to be developed on the recorder, and this is tied to good breathing practice. The relationship to the printed page must be established from the beginning – children should be taught to notice what is on the page, breath marks, staccato etc., separating out motifs, basically analysing what's there and what to do with it. The language of the music should be built up, every note having its reason or function. He touched on the difficulties in bringing out emotion in a piece, especially given the varying degrees of inhibition within individuals. Finally, the recorder is not the centre of the universe, but merely the means of expressing something much greater, an order that is already there.

Robert Hoult, himself a recorder player, followed on with a talk on the history and structure of the Kent

Music School, of which he is a regional director. The school came into being shortly after the Second World War as a result of the setting up of the Rural Music Schools Association, and has gradually grown into what is now the largest employer of musicians in Europe, with around 16,000 students receiving lessons each week! The school operates full-time from six purpose-built centres and part-time from a number of schools throughout the county. As with many educational establishments, the school is at present going through a period of re-structuring, necessitated by a drastic reduction in its subsidy.

The next speaker was Professor Gudrun Heyens, who teaches recorder at a Musikhochschule in Germany, who introduced the recorder method, 'Spiel und Spaß mit der Blockflöte' which she, together with a number of other leading recorder players, has recently compiled. The tutor, published by Schott, consists of two volumes and a teacher's book, for the descant recorder. The tutor has some unusual features, one of which, according to Professor Heyens, worried the publishers at first. This was that the tutor doesn't start, as many do, with the fingering of the first note, but concentrates on other aspects, breathing for example, for the first ten pages. The tutor contains a carefully thought-out system of study, backed up by traditional as well as specially composed literature and, with its many colourful illustrations, is certain to be a winner with young children. 'Spiel und Spaß' is at present only available in German, but it seems it is soon to be translated into English.

After a short lunch break Tony Knight, from the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority, gave a talk on the background to music in the National Curriculum. That Mr Knight was not preaching to the converted was clear from a show of hands, indicating how few of those present knew much if anything about the implications of the National Curriculum, which came about as a result of the 1988 Education Reform Act. One of the Ronald Deering revisions was to raise the status of music in schools. Originally on the lowest of three rungs, music has now been promoted to the second, on a par with subjects such as History, Geography etc., the top rung being occupied by English, Maths and Science. Mr Knight guided us through the booklet (it's really not that thick!) defining the aims and objectives and the basic skills to be taught. He divided the process of learning at all levels into (a) exploring/investigating, (b) recognizing and (c) internalizing, or absorbing the material. Children are divided into three key stages, defined by the age groups 5–7, 7–11 and 11–14 years. Notation is taught from 11 years onwards. Musical skills are to be built up through improvisation, memorizing and, eventually reading. For the GSE examinations it is not necessary to play an instrument. The goals at the end of each key stage seem not over-ambitious and the means of achieving them reasonable. It will remain to be seen if the idealism survives

the practicalities of the classroom.

Following this, Kathryn Bennetts gave a very personal account of her use of avant-garde techniques in teaching the recorder. She employs these techniques from the earliest ages, but finds that the age-group 7–11 is the most responsive, the 14-year-olds, predictably, being the most difficult, not wanting to seem out of control. The positive aspects of 'horrible' as well as 'beautiful' sounds are cultivated. Techniques are divided into three categories: tongue-based (extremes of articulation etc.), breath-based and finger-based (*glissandi*, expressive fingerings, percussive effects). She described how she gets children to illustrate various programmatic themes (wind, rush-hour, sea-side) and then poetry by means of these techniques. She ended her talk with a recording of Hans-Martin Linde's 'Music for a Bird' which she felt was a good introduction to avant-garde for older children. This was particularly welcome as it was the only time the recorder was heard during the course of the day!

The final speaker was Philip Mundey, the Director of Examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Mr Mundey was to have shown us a video recording of examinations taking place, and was then going to get us to mark these examinations. This was to have been the springboard of a lively discussion. However, as Little Benslow Hills does not run to video equipment, Mr Mundey was reduced to a time-honoured musical skill: improvisation! This he did extremely well, and in the course of an hour gave us some interesting background information on the functioning of the Associated Board and the training of its examiners. The Board has 600 examiners on its books, 560 of whom work regularly. He gave a detailed account of the fate of the applicants to become examiners (around 200 annually) and of the rigorous training the successful candidates go through to ensure that the Board's standards are applied impartially and at a consistent standard across its world-wide field of activity. It was emphasized that the Board's standards were applied, and not those of the individual examiner. All examination reports are kept by the Board and referred to should there be any complaint or appeal against an individual examiner or result. Mr Mundey was quite outspoken about the number of incompetent teachers that the Board becomes aware of, and said that the abuses of the system, and many of the complaints, come from this quarter. While emphasizing the necessary standardization that was required in such an examining body, Mr Mundey was at pains to make clear that the system was not rigid and that a degree of flexibility was inevitable – 'a violin fingerboard rather than that of a guitar'! He outlined the specific changes that were being considered for the recorder syllabus, and, inevitably, faced a barrage of questions at the end. An interesting point raised from the floor was a comparison between the syllabuses of the Associated Board and its American counterpart. In

the latter, for example, much more by way of historical techniques, to the point of reading from facsimiles and reading from historical clefs, is required. It was suggested that the Board syllabus should be designed so as to eliminate incompetent teaching (again, the subject of qualification was not touched upon!). The discussion would have continued, but was necessarily brought to a conclusion by Peter Bowman.

The proceedings of the conference will be published, and will be available from ERTA (GB), 4 Heathleigh Cottages, Maidstone Road, Horsmonden, Kent. TN12 8JL. ❦

PAUL SIMMONDS

Colloquium on 'Le Roman de Fauvel: Chronicle, Allegory, Music and Image in Paris, B.N. f. fr. 146', Paris, Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 11–13 July, 1994.

The year is 1314, and the scene is both impressive and fearsome. By the river Seine stands the great royal *palais* of the French kings. Within very recent memory the chivalric order of the Templars has been suppressed, the Grand Master, old and infirm, burned at the stake on the Ile-des-Javiaux. During the years of the suppression the air has been full of nightmares as members of the order confessed to malefactions without number but especially to impiety and sodomy, the two sins which usually control the minds of the authorities when they sense the sharp odour of heresy.

Within the *palais* stands the Sainte-Chapelle. By mounting the *grand escalier* nearby we come to the Great Hall – even bigger than Westminster Hall in London – where the king dines and conducts business amidst statues of his ancestors. Within the *palais* royal servants come and go, including the notaries who copy and witness the documents that are produced in a never-ending stream by the royal administration.

Two of these notaries are intriguing men. One of them, Gervais du Bus, has recently written a poem in which, with the violence and indignation of an Old Testament prophet, he declares that human history is coming to an end: the long pilgrimage from the Creation to Domesday is nearly complete. The signs of imminent apocalypse are everywhere, says Gervais. Clergymen are neglectful and lascivious; the papacy is corrupt; even the king's administration is rotten. Clerics misdirect the Church's revenues in the royal government; children are appointed to senior posts because someone buys them a position; canons never appear in the choirstalls unless they are paid in ready cash. So it goes on.

In a moment of inspiration, this royal notary Gervais du Bus decides to present his denunciation of French society in terms of an image that is not original to his poem but never achieved elsewhere the intensity of meaning that he gives it. He imagines a horse whose flanks are filthy with the mud and foulness of the stable. The horse is called FAUVEL and the letters of his name stand for Flattery, Avarice, Villainy, Variance, Envy and Despicableness (*Lascheté*). Everyone, Gervais claims, is eagerly rubbing down the filthy flanks of this horse.

With this allegory in place, Gervais gets into the stride of his story. Fauvel realizes that Fortune is always fickle; no matter how prosperous one becomes by sinfulness, there is always a risk that Fortune will spin her wheel and one will fall from high to low. Fauvel therefore decides to offer Fortune his hand in marriage. Fortune refuses, offering him the hand of Vainglory instead. Like all who prosper by their wickedness, Fauvel does not recognize Vainglory for what she is and marries her willingly. The poem ends as their offsprings threaten to overrun the 'garden of sweet France'.

This all makes for a powerful poem: orthodox in meaning but vivid and passionate in expression, the sign of an outraged conscience. Soon another royal notary, named Chaillou de Pesstain, takes this *Roman de Fauvel* and adds material of his own. He produces a fine description of the marriage celebrations of Fauvel and Vainglory, then adds a tournament of the Virtues and Vices located on the fields of Saint Germain. It is Chaillou de Pesstain's next step, however, that makes him eternally famous. He decides to place within the newly enlarged *Roman de Fauvel* a vast quantity of musical compositions – motets, plainsongs, lais, rondeaux, ballades, refrains and scatalogical lyrics. All of this new material is then set down, together with pictures, in a large manuscript which is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (français 146). Sometimes these musical pieces are 'sung', as it were, by characters in the narrative – the ballades, for example, form part of Fauvel's wooing of Fortune – but many of them simply lie on the page close to episodes of the narrative whose meaning they echo or somehow expound. Many pages of *Le Roman de Fauvel* as it appears in this great manuscript are a collage of

music, text and pictures – a constant challenge to the ingenuity and imagination of any who turn the leaves.

Now the scene shifts to Paris in 1994. The Sainte-Chapelle is still there, and some towers of the *palais* can still be seen along the bank of the Seine in the *Conciergerie*. In response to the irresistible invitation 'meet outside Notre Dame on 10 July at two in the afternoon', more than twenty-five scholars gathered in Paris to hear one another's views about *Le Roman de Fauvel*. The invitation had been issued by two distinguished musicologists, Margaret Bent and Andrew Wathey, to colleagues in their own discipline but also to historians and to historians of art, literature and architecture.

The colloquium began with a 'Fauvel walk', superbly directed by Michael Davis, who took the delegates on a tour of Notre Dame and then of the visible remains of the royal *palais*. Those of us who delight in the Middle Ages but are well aware of the cruelty beneath the sublimity were impressed to see the sculpture, on the outside wall of the cathedral, showing how a Jew who dared to touch the coffin of the Virgin Mary became stuck to the cask. I seem to remember writing somewhere that 'there is a sinister meaning conveyed by cathedrals...they express, with sheer weight of stone, the power of a Church newly conscious...of the value of concerted action against its enemies'.

That same evening, Mme Hanson received the delegates to the conference in the magnificent flat, overlooking the Eiffel Tower, where that equally monumental series of editions, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century*, known throughout the world as 'PMFC', was initiated. We were all delighted to have an opportunity to thank Mme Hanson for her tireless work in completing the series – thanks that were expressed on behalf of all present with great style and improptu eloquence by Margaret Bent.

The next day work began in earnest. More than twenty papers were read which will surely flow over the boundaries of the projected volume of *Fauvel Studies* (perhaps two volumes?). It is difficult to make a selection from the many fine papers that were read. Emma Dillon, currently a graduate student at Oxford, presented an impressive and provocative study of materials in the manuscript relating to Philippe V, suggesting how the disposition of the materials on the page, together with many musical and textual details of a motet, might present a subversive and alarming message. Her analysis of one of the motets was very acute indeed, and her paper was generally agreed to be one of the high points of the colloquium. Wulf Arlt did his usual, astonishing trick of rolling up his sleeves as if about to cook dinner, and then moving closer to his audience to deliver a superb paper (in French) as if it were all the easiest thing in the world.

Among the historians, perhaps the most striking paper was Mary Rouse's brief demolition of the Jean de Lescurel myth. This composer is credited with an important body of monophonic songs (and one poly-

phonic rondeau) in the *Roman de Fauvel* manuscript, and work with Parisian archives long ago produced a rather extraordinary biography for this musician, including the succulent detail that he was hanged in 1304. By 1966 and the publication of Nigel Wilkins's edition of Escurel's songs, Escurel had become 'the gifted child of a broken family, talented enough to make an outstanding contribution to French music and literature at an early age but delinquent as a result of emotional instability'.[1] One of the great joys about being a medievalist is that one is not normally required to regard composers in this kind of light because the information does not exist to shed it, so it was a delight to be told by Mary Rouse that it is probably all nonsense. We do not know that Jean de Lescurel was hanged, nor do we know that his family life was troubled. Thank God.

Among the art historians, Martin Kauffmann of the Bodleian Library in Oxford was excellent on the images in the manuscript. I was particularly impressed by his theory that the image of Fauvel enthroned with his upper legs, hooves and all, splayed apart, draws upon the iconography of Christ shown seated and holding out his arms: like Christ showing his wounds, Fauvel shows who he is by revealing his body. Michael Camille, whose recent work on marginal images in medieval art marks him as one of the most challenging and original medievalists of his generation,[2] was able to run swiftly with the Fauvel miniatures; taking his point of departure from the various ways that Fauvel is shown in the manuscript, including depictions that present him with the upper body of a man but the lower body of a horse, Camille argued that beings which are half-beast and half-man are often depicted in the liminal positions of medieval art – the margins of manuscripts, the outside edges of churches, for example – but that in *Le Roman de Fauvel* a creature of this kind moves to the centre of the page and indeed to the centre of interest. This emphasizes the theme that recurs through *Le Roman de Fauvel*: that of the world turned upside down.

Other fine papers included two contributions by the organizers, Margaret Bent and Andrew Wathey, not to mention Nancy Freeman Regalado who showed that she still has a very great deal to say about *Le Roman de Fauvel* that did not fit into the lavish introduction to the recent facsimile. Throughout there was an atmosphere of mutual encouragement – indeed of euphoria. Contacts were made, new friendships were forged, and a great deal was learned. What more could anyone ask?

Now for the important part. The food was excellent, but nothing prepared us for the extravaganza of the conference dinner. Towards the end of the meal the lights in the restaurant flashed to announce that something was approaching. Two waiters appeared bearing a massive cake in the shape of the great *Roman de Fauvel* manuscript, français 146! It looked so much like a manuscript book that I half expected the librarian of the Bibliothèque Nationale to come running in and claim it back. We exchanged amazed glances, cameras blinked, and we promptly devoured it. A moment on the lips; a lifetime on the hips.

CHRISTOPHER PAGE

1 *The Works of Jehan de Lescurel*, ed. Nigel Wilkins, Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 30 (American Institute of Musicology, 1966).

2 See his *Image on the Edge: the Margins of Medieval Art* (London, 1992).

OBITUARIES

Michael Morrow, 2 October 1929–20 April 1994

In the summer of 1954, Michael Morrow left his native Dublin where he had done well as a painter. He had exhibited in his home town, and a scholarship from Dublin College of Art had taken him to Munich, Paris and Florence. Yet it was Morrow the musician that came to the fore in England, for it was in London that he began his early-music ensemble, Musica Reservata.

Morrow passed most of his boyhood at home, kept away from school because of his haemophilia. The family was not an especially musical one; his father sang a little and there was a banjo in the house. In due course, as if with the gift of prophecy, his father gave him a recorder. By the early 1950s, Morrow was taking a keen interest in the old musical instruments in the National Museum of Ireland and already discussing the performance of medieval and Renaissance music with his long-standing friend and fellow Dubliner, the harpsichordist John Beckett.

The years immediately after his arrival in England saw a nucleus of musical friends gathering around Morrow, beginning to catch his enthusiams. John Beckett was there, so too the recorder player John Sothcott. In a sense Musica Reservata already existed, but matters took a decisive turn in 1960 when the Dutch mezzo-soprano Jantina Noorman attended a summer school in Oxford and was overheard there by John Beckett. He was deeply impressed with her, and Morrow in his turn was captivated by her sound. The

elements of the ensemble as it was to be for more than a decade were now coming together. Morrow, Sothcott and Beckett – who conducted the group for many years in addition to playing organ and harpsichord – were joined by the counter-tenor Donald Burgess, and in due course the percussionist Jeremy Montagu.

An Irishman to the core, Morrow was not perturbed to discover that English audiences sometimes found the sound of Musica Reservata shocking. He consistently sought a straight tone from his singers with a minimum of vibrato, and often asked for a certain asperity. Tempi were to be strict, and save in exceptional cases, repeated material in a piece was not to be varied by means of a change in dynamics. The sound of the group was a constant challenge to the listener's complacency. How do you *know*, Morrow seemed to be saying, that it did not sound as extraordinary as this? One need only compare a recording by Musica Reservata with virtually any of its contemporary competitors to discover the revolutionary nature of his insights into the music he loved.

The concerts given by Musica Reservata in the late sixties, often on the South Bank, were spectacular occasions with as many as sixty pieces crammed into one programme. So many performers were required that a spell with Musica Reservata became something like a period of apprenticeship for early musicians. Behind each recital lay many hours of preparation. Morrow often worked on his bed, copying music for his performers with what may have been (to judge by the results) a sharpened telegraph pole. Many of the ensemble's performances were recorded for the BBC – the Corporation gave Morrow unflagging support – and were given with introductory talks, for Morrow was a gifted broadcaster with a beautiful speaking voice. Above all, however, he masterminded a set of exraordinary recordings whose influence has been incalculable, and it is much to be regretted that only one of them is currently available on compact disc.

Morrow was neither an organized man nor an ambitious one, which helps to explain the devotion and despair that he inspired in those who cared for him. He loved the medieval and Renaissance repertoires as if later music had never been invented. He was also deeply interested in many kinds of folk music, and the tapes passed on to him by A. L. Lloyd were a profound stimulus to him. The task of translating Morrow's wishes into detailed instructions fell to the conductor of the ensemble, John Beckett, a musician with a superb and intuitive understanding of Morrow's musical imagination. When Beckett left, the work was continued with distinction by Andrew Parrott, who conducted Musica Reservata's recording of Josquin's lament for the death of Ockeghem, *Nymphes des bois*. This was perhaps Jantina Noorman's finest hour, and many of today's musicians will feel anew the eloquence of its text: 'Dress in habits of mourning; you have lost your good father'. ❦

CHRISTOPHER PAGE

Christopher Kite, 5 November 1947–15 June 1994

For the twenty years or so that Chris and I knew one another, our relationship was inextricably linked to our activities at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. As any player will tell you, the last musician one encounters on a regular basis is one who plays the same instrument! Thus we avoided one another quite effectively except for those 'high days and holidays' when a large array of continuo-players is assembled (not often!) or when one finds oneself in the midst of the Bach concertos for two to four keyboards.

Sadly, Chris and I hardly ever worked together in this manner, and it was only with his appointment at the GSMD as Head of Music Studies with special responsibility for the Early Music Department that we became much closer, not just professionally but personally too; a chance encounter in a corridor involving an initially brief discussion of some administrative point often tended to develop into a 'chat' lasting twenty minutes or half an hour, making us both late but feeling much the better for it.

The combination of performing talent with that for administration – and the political niceties of administration – is unusual in my experience, and Chris had those in abundance, making him very good at his job, but just as importantly for me he had a huge sense of humour where the ridiculous side of administration and administrators was concerned. Holding auditions, for example, became a delight: in between candidates the stories would flow and the funny side of situations would always be seen. In fact, the longer he spent in the job the more relaxed and humane he became; in the cause of early music his was a benign influence which, certainly for me, made the running of our department much smoother and happier.

As the musical public knows, he continued to perform and study throughout his administrative career, which also helped to maintain this relaxed attitude towards bureaucracy and indeed, if the bureaucratic running did get too rough, he would occasionally become 'unavailable', retreating to the British Museum for an hour or two's rediscovery of his roots in Classical antiquity before emerging once more into the fray of the late twentieth-century musical world. He will be badly missed for his talents as a musician, his unique qualities as an administrator and his humanity. ❦

DAVID ROBLOU

Alan Frank, 10 October 1910–23 June 1994

Oxford University Press has been fortunate in those who shaped its Music Department, from its founding

editor Hubert Foss (1899–1953) to his successor Alan Frank, who recently died after a short illness. Foss was musician, composer, writer of books on music and lover of fine printing, a tradition Frank followed, adding to these accomplishments a gift for friendship and a love of good company and wine. He brought a number of English composers into the fold, such as Gordon Crosse, Alun Hoddinot and William Mathias, and had longstanding, highly entertaining correspondences with such bastions of the OUP list as William Walton. He had studied the clarinet with Frederick Thurston, with whom he wrote a clarinet method in 1939; earlier, in 1935, he had collaborated with the violinist George Stratton in *The Playing of Chamber Music*.

Early Music has much to thank him for. In 1972, when an initial plan to expand Schott's *Recorder and Music Magazine* into an early-music journal foundered through a variety of reasons, I had two further possibilities – Macmillan and Oxford. These two houses were the only ones who maintained an extensive journals list. I knew nobody at Macmillan, but I did know Alan Frank at Oxford.

So I rang Alan on a bleak January day from Suffolk, where I was preparing an exhibition for the 25th Aldeburgh Festival in 1972 on 500 years of British music printing. 'Would the idea of an early-music journal interest you enough for me to write to you?' I asked, 'or will you turn me down over the phone?' 'Send me the letter', he quickly replied, and when I had given him a sample contents list he submitted the proposal to the Delegates of the Press. Six months later, in June, he came to see my printing exhibition at Grove Park in Yoxford, and as he got out of his car he turned and said 'The Delegates have given the green light. I'd like the first issue out in January 1973 as part of our 50th birthday celebrations.' And so it happened.

But in a sense the most important of all Alan's decisions at that time was his choice of typographer. 'I've put our best designer on to it', he said, 'Roger Davies'. Roger's initial sketches scarcely needed changing and from that time on the journal's scholarly reputation went hand in hand with its visual distinctiveness. Alan remained always a benign presence, supportive, positive and sometimes cautionary as when he surveyed our second colour cover of a Renaissance pageant in Antwerp and murmured 'You'll get into trouble over this – but it's wonderful'.

After his wife, the composer Phyllis Tate, died in 1987, he travelled extensively, until this year he suffered a brain haemorrhage. Fortunately, I had arrived from New Zealand in time to visit him in the Royal Free just a day or two before he died. Flashes of his old wit and *joie-de-vivre* appeared, as when he wanted to meet a patient opposite him who was entertaining his visitors with what seemed ribald stories. In response to my enquiring as to whether he listened now to much music, back came the reply 'as little as possible', and when I turned to go he grasped my hand and said 'We did some good things together'.

JOHN M. THOMSON

LETTERS

The Elizabethan Fever: A follow-up

I am always curious to read accounts and evaluations of events in which I was closely involved, which took place long before the essayists themselves were born. Inevitably I recall that 'I was there', and think how gladly I would have helped them enhance their writings had they given me the opportunity, as indeed ever more researchers are doing these days.

In her wide-ranging survey, 'Elizabethan Fever', Elizabeth Roche rather underestimates the impact of the Haslemere Festival and Dolmetsch concerts worldwide on the twentieth century early-music revival. I lived and worked through most of the period covered. This includes seventy years' unbroken participation in the Haslemere Festival, which I have also directed for the last fifty-four years. I can therefore speak from first-hand experience of the Festival's far-reaching influence, direct and indirect, on the musical 'revolution' which now engulfs us all.

When Arnold Dolmetsch died in 1940 the majority of today's leading figures in the movement were as yet unborn, while those of Thurston Dart's generation were still in short trousers (he was only four years old in 1925). Even their older contemporaries – such as Robert Donington, Marco Pallis, Gerald Cooper, Diana Poulton and Suzanne Bloch – were still sitting at the feet of Arnold Dolmetsch.

If the term 'mainstream' has any bearing here, it certainly applies for most of the Festival's seventy years. In fact, it was not a case of being *in* or *out* of the mainstream, for it was the *only* stream of its kind for many years to come. As such it attracted countless distinguished musicologists and music-lovers from all over the world. This it continues to do. If there has been a change in the centre of gravity *vis-à-vis* the proliferation of early-music activity, this should not be at all surprising, for it merely bears testimony to the profound influence the Festival has had on the world of music, while in the process, creating a gigantic band-wagon on to which so many self-styled 'mainstream' groups have jumped during the last thirty years and, it must be said, with little acknowledgement of the debt they owe to those who built the vehicle. Elizabeth Roche refers to many nineteenth- and twentieth-century events and publications, mostly of early vocal music, and rightly stresses their importance in the modern revival. It should be remembered, however, that much of this music was being performed by trained voices of the time, mainly with excessive vibrato and little respect for the original style and ornamentation.

While very properly praising modern publications of madrigals and lutesongs (adapted for the piano), it might also have been appropriate to mention Arnold Dolmetsch's two books, *Select English Songs and Dialogues of the 16th and 17th Centuries* and *Fourteen Select French Songs*, published by Boosey & Co. from 1898 onwards. After dwelling on those mainly vocal performances and the occasional performance of English consorts of viols *on modern strings*, Elizabeth Roche suggests that the 'fever' had 'peaked' by 1925, when the Haslemere Festival was founded. It is pertinent to ask who else at this period, outside the Dolmetsch entourage, was playing five- and six-part Elizabethan consorts of viols *on viols*, full recorder consorts, Dowland works on the genuine lute, lutenist songs accompanied on the lute (not the piano!), and who else was playing the cittern, rebec, violone, *pardessus de viole*, lyra viol, violoncello piccolo, tenor violin etc. etc.? At that time performers such as Harold Samuels and Harold Craxton, cited by Elizabeth Roche as playing Elizabethan keyboard music, were pianists who occasionally paid lip-service to early music by playing it on the piano, yet understood nothing of the original style and, in particular, the ornaments which, at most, were regarded as an embarrassment to be ignored in favour of a 'smooth, plain line'.

My recollections of the first Haslemere Festival are particularly clear, especially the involvement of the BBC, to which Elizabeth Roche refers. There were of course some *ad hoc* details she could not possibly have learned about from official BBC records, if such exist. Obviously the Festival was by far the earliest event of its kind ever to be broadcast. I am glad to be reminded that two entire and two half concerts were transmitted. In those days broadcasts (other than gramophone records) were of course transmitted *live* and on-the-spot arrangements were improvised. In the case of one of the half programmes, the producer and engineers waxed so enthusiastic that they telephoned headquarters 'insisting' that the programme be allowed to run its full course. This entailed delaying a performance by the Savoy Orpheans who were waiting to go into action with 'music' of a very different kind!

With apparent surprise that the Haslemere Festival survived for so long after the 'craze' was over, Elizabeth Roche suggests that it was thanks to 'a faithful band of Dolmetsch disciples rather than to new converts from a wider musical world'. The booking forms over the years tell quite another story. In fact, the audiences built up to such an extent after the war that for some years the Wednesday and Saturday concerts had to be given twice over to accommodate the overflow audiences. Another significant fact revealed by the booking forms was that at least one-third of the audience each year consisted of newcomers, indicating a very healthy turnover. They came from far and wide; not merely the obvious Germany, France and USA, but such far-flung places as Alaska, Tibet, Mexico, India, Australia and New Zealand. However, like most activities in the entertainment world, the Festival has felt the effects of the recession and the increased costs of travelling have deterred many. None the less, our audiences still number more than 'a small band', which is why we are all working for our 70th Festival due to open on 15 July 1994.

And finally, a short supplement to Paul Simmonds's report of the International Clavichord Symposium. In what must have been an inadvertent understatement in his opening words he says that 'Of all the instruments "revived" in the past thirty years...'. The actual revival actively began when Arnold Dolmetsch built the first modern clavichord over one hundred years ago. The advent of these new Dolmetsch clavichords prompted Bernard Shaw to write in *The World* on 3 July 1894:

> A first-rate clavichord from the hands of an artist–craftsman who, always learning something, makes no two instruments exactly alike, and turns out each as an individual work of art, marked with his name and stamped with his style.... Above all, you can play Bach's two famous sets of Preludes and Fugues, not to mention the rest of a great mass of beautiful old music on your clavichord. These observations have been provoked by the startlingly successful results of an experiment made by the students of the R.C.M. They, having had their ears and minds opened by Mr Dolmetsch's demonstration of the beauty of our instruments and music, took the very practical step of asking him to make them a clavichord....And after some months' work he has actually turned out a little masterpiece, excellent as a musical instrument and pleasant to look at, which seems to me to be likely to begin such a revolution in domestic instruments as William Morris's work made in domestic furniture and decoration, or Philip Webb's in domestic architecture. I therefore estimate the birth of this little clavichord as, on a modest computation, about fifty thousand times as important as the Handel Festival.

Prophetic words indeed. Not surprisingly, Shaw duly acquired a Dolmetsch clavichord for his own recreation, which remained with him until his death at Ayot St Lawrence. As a matter of current interest, the Dolmetsch clavichords built for Shaw and Violet Gordon Woodhouse were auctioned by Messrs Phillips Son & Neale on 24 March 1994.

Dear Madam,

Like your correspondent Steve Heavens (*Leading Notes*, 4/1, Spring 1994) I too heard Denis Stevens's demolition job on the Consort of Musicke's recent discs of Rore and Marini. However, unlike Mr Heavens, I found the mocking and sneering manner

adopted by Professor Stevens thoroughly objectionable. This performance, coupled with his outburst about the BBC's Monteverdi Day in the national press (admirably answered by Nicholas Kenyon), will do little to enhance Stevens's reputation as a musicologist.

Unfortunately the criticism of Stevens and Heavens overlooks two important facts. Firstly, that over some twenty years the Consort of Musicke has provided lovers of Renaissance and Baroque music with the opportunity to become familiar with hundreds of works they would never otherwise have heard, an achievement which comfortably supercedes any contribution made by Stevens to the music of the period. To suggest that the performances on the two discs in question (and I am sure Stevens's rubbishing of the Consort goes well beyond that) are so 'insipid, anorexic and passionless that it was impossible for the listener to get any idea of what the songs were about' is not only patent nonsense but insulting. The second point is the totally negative nature of the criticism. If the Consort's pioneering work in the field is as valueless as Stevens and Heavens believe, perhaps these two gentlemen would be kind enough to inform the rest of us where we might receive true enlightenment. I suspect that Stevens at least would shake his head and tell us that no one does Monteverdi *et al.* properly today. In that case is it not time he formed a group of singers himself and instructed them in the correct way of performing this music? Or do I remember an extremely dull recording of music by Wert directed by Professor Stevens being issued on the Vanguard label some years back?

Yours faithfully,
Brian Robins

Dear Madam,

Might I respond to Clifford Bartlett's review of the two volumes of anthems by S. S. Wesley I edited for the *Musica Britannica* series (*Leading Notes*, 4/1, Spring 1994, pp. 10–12)? Whilst I am well aware that the first volume (*MB* 57 – the first to be set by computer) contains far too many errors for which I can offer no defence, his review incorporates several factual errors from which he proceeds to draw debatable conclusions.

Firstly, there is his misleading implication that the source for all the previously published (or revised) anthems is the Novello octavo edition in current use which, he argues, should have been reproduced 'with errors corrected and critical notes added'. In fact, of the sixteen works or versions included in the two volumes only two are based on a Novello octavo edition. A further seven are certainly based on a Novello edition, but one in the folio format he criticizes *MB* for using (and using C clefs to boot).

Secondly, when he writes in detail about 'Blessed be the God and Father' he introduces a red herring with his frequent references to the revised Novello octavo edition of the anthem. As a glance at the score will reveal, the music has been re-set, perhaps between 1910 and 1920 but certainly well after Wesley's death. Any changes it introduces thus cannot have had the composer's authority. From this it follows that references to it (particularly in relation to bars 21, 45 and 85) have no relevance. Mr Bartlett's comment on the cautionary accidental in bar 85, however, suggests that even though he claims the support of the revised Novello edition he should look at it again: the note in question, *a'*, is in fact prefixed by a flat. My comment that a cautionary natural had been 'printed in all previous eds' was intended to convey the information that such an accidental was present in all editions prior to the one used as the source. With regard to his comment that *MB* 'ignores the increasingly sanctifying capitalization of the sources' in bar 45, the removal of the third source from contention weakens an already questionable argument. Wesley was himself notoriously careless and inconsistent in his notation (both musical and verbal) with the score of the original version of 'Blessed be the God and Father' (Hereford Cathedral Library, MS C.9.xii, pp. 80–91) containing no punctuation apart from a single comma. I suspect that both punctuation and capitalization owe more to the house style of Novello, Ewer & Co. than to any particular desire of the composer, and it was on these grounds that the editorial decision to follow the source of the text was made.

Thirdly, Bartlett appears not to have read either the 'Notes on Performance' or the 'Editorial Method'. His complaint that no mention is made of the fact that the altos are required to sing below their falsetto range at bar 21 in 'Blessed be the God and Father' ignores the statement on p. xxvii of the former that here 'they [the altos] were clearly expected to use the baritone register', while his comment that in bar 25 the organ part follows the *12 Anthems* rather than the Novello octavo version takes no account of the statement that sometimes 'notes originally assigned to one stave are here transferred to the other' (p. 233). That such a transfer results in a return to a former version is purely coincidental.

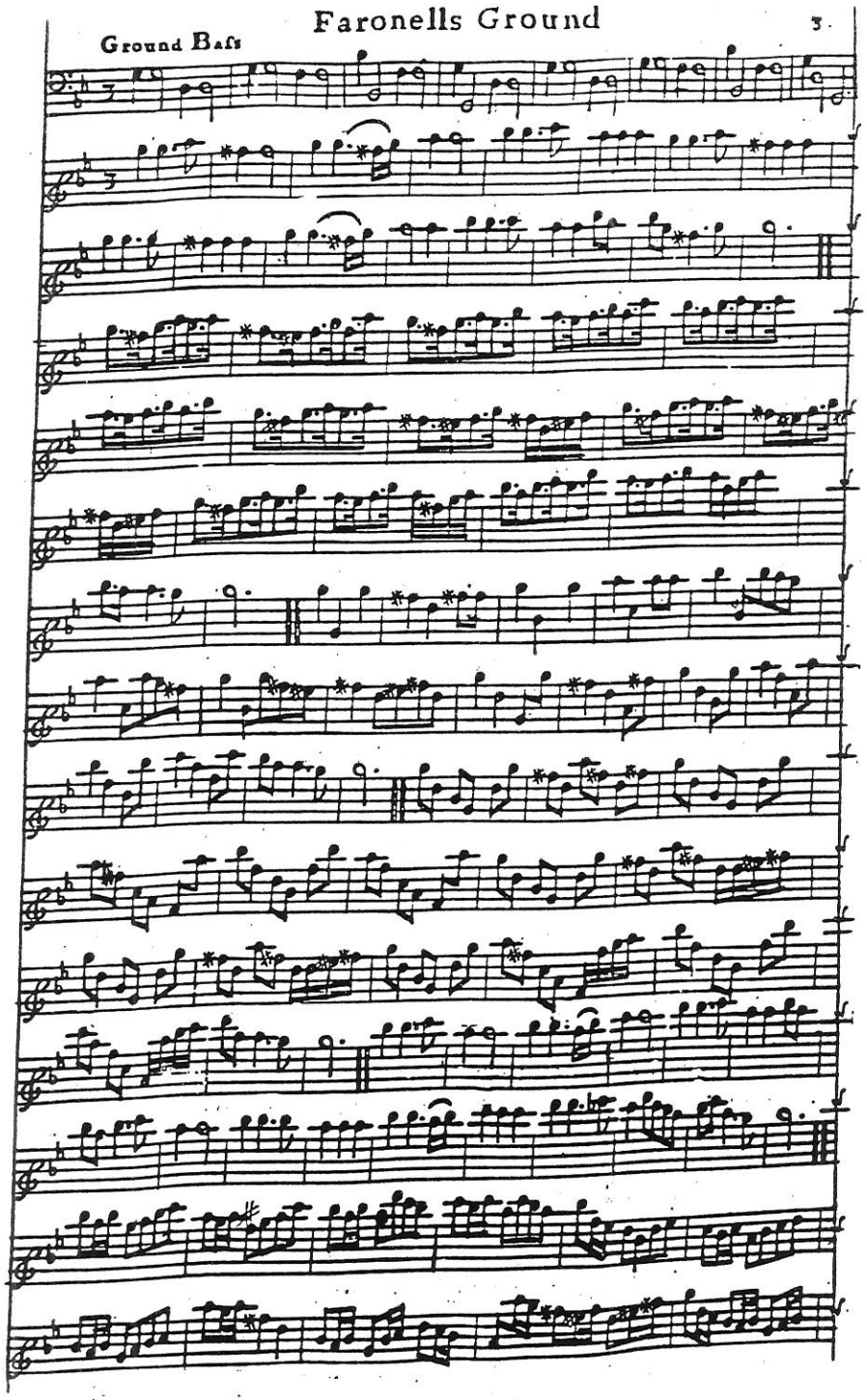
Finally, I would disagree with Mr Bartlett when he writes that 'the use of modern-style beaming of quavers...encourages misaccentuation' in bar 107. The triplet to which he objects is found in an earlier manuscript source, but that apart, the bar in question contains sixteen crotchet beats and is surely an example of measured rather than unmeasured recitative. As such I fail to see how modern beaming affects the issue.

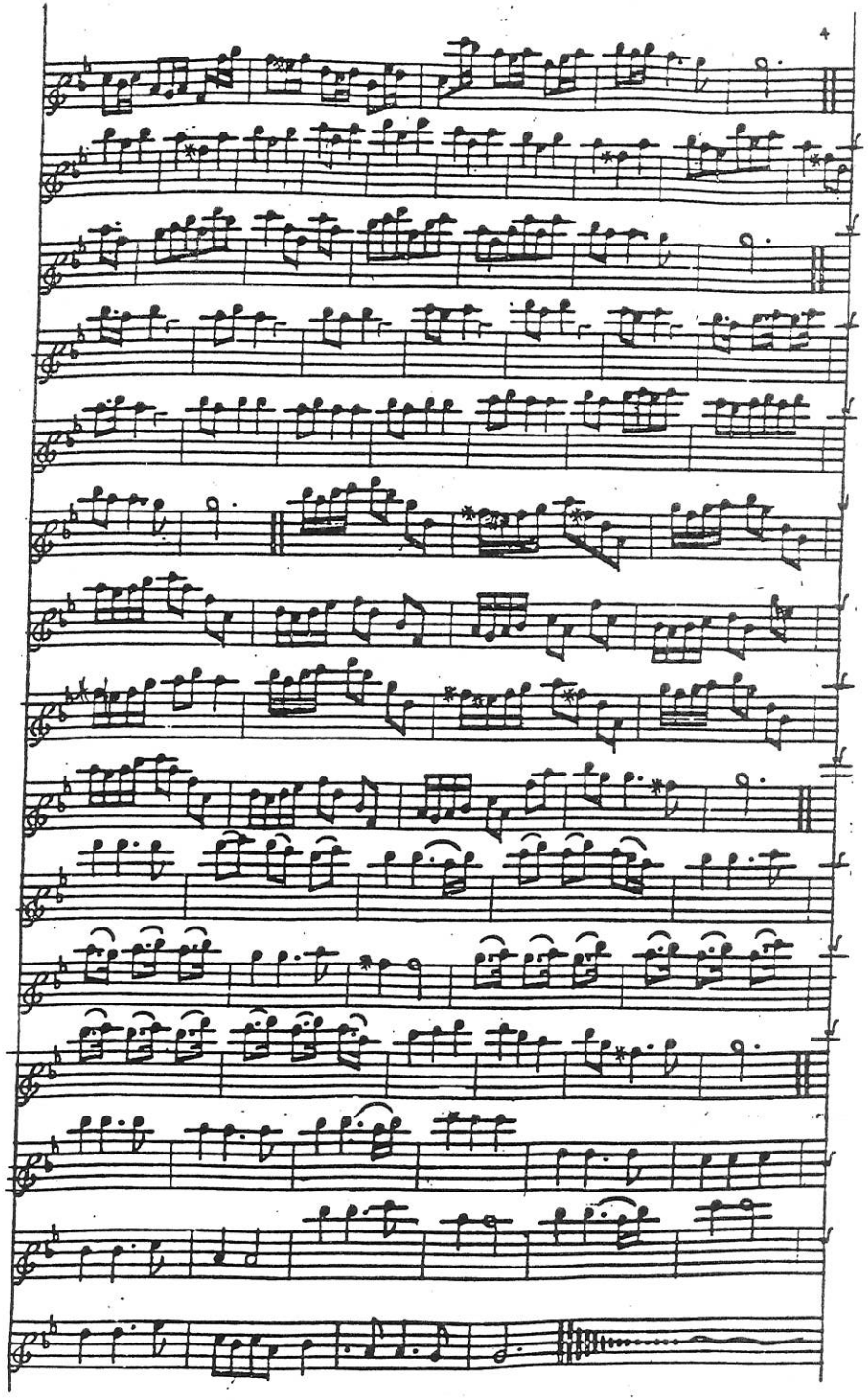
As Clifford Bartlett admits, many of these points are trivial. That does not, however, lessen the need for them to be referred to accurately.

Yours faithfully,
Peter Horton

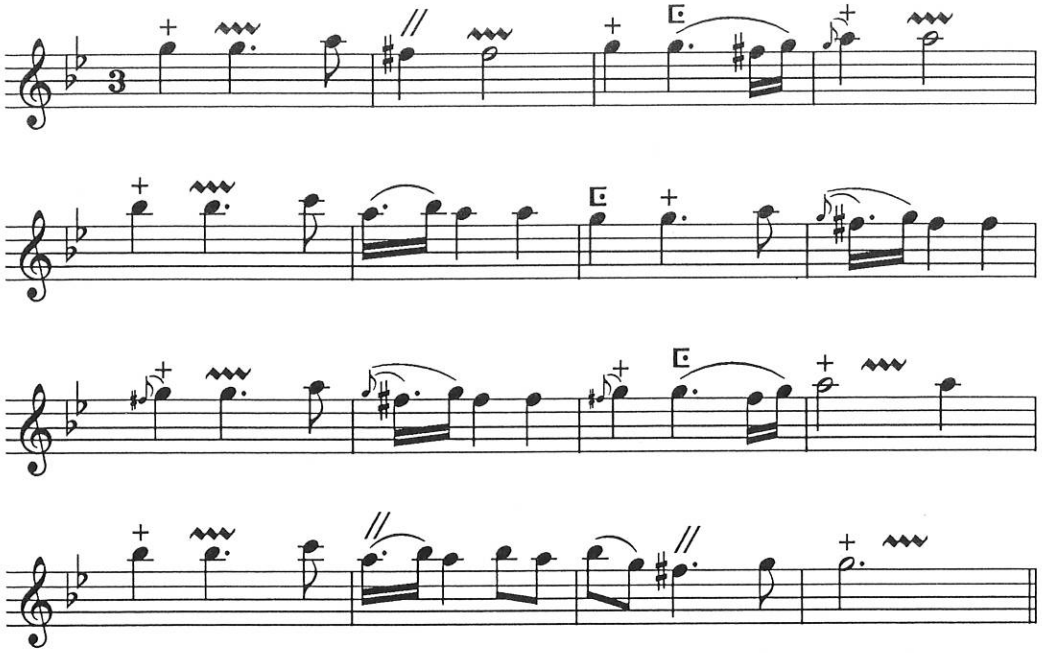
Ground Bass

Faronells Ground

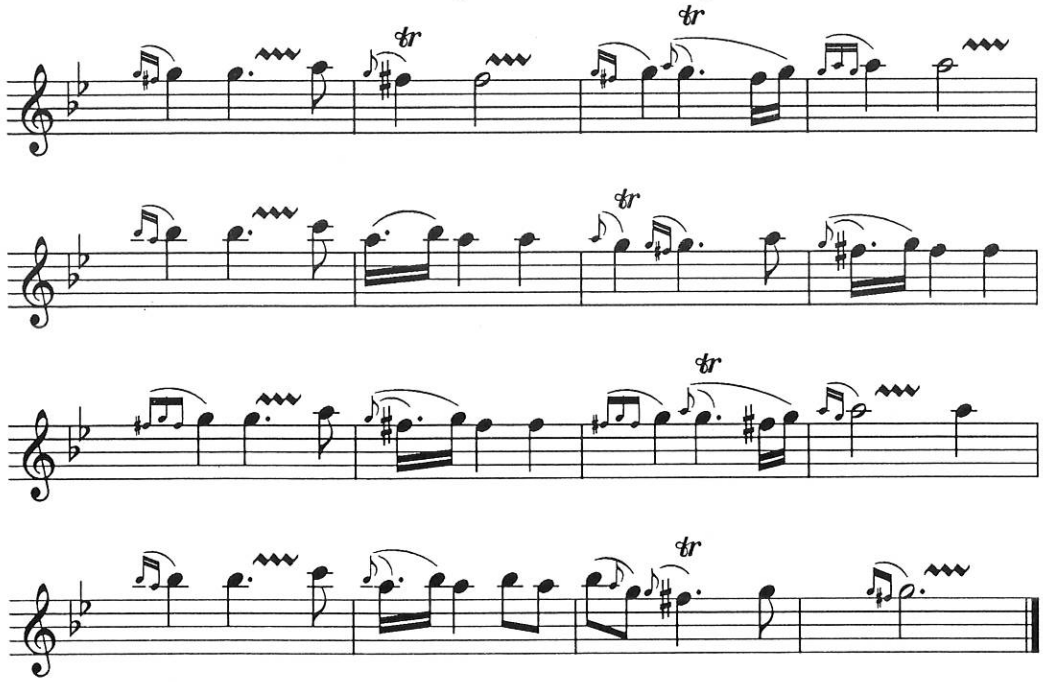


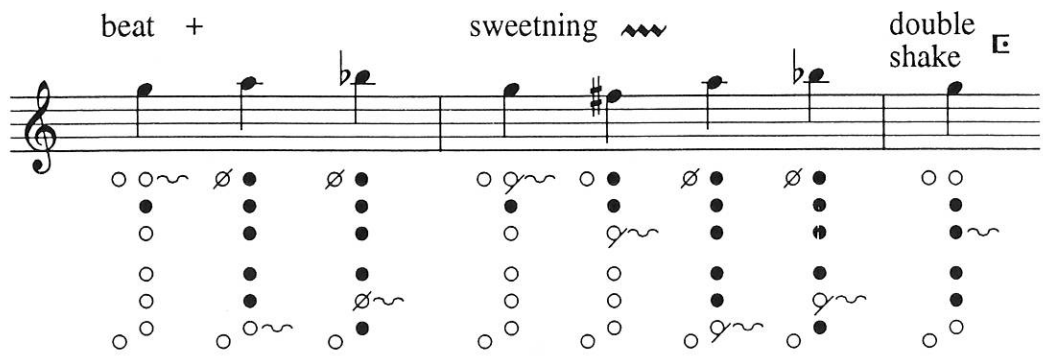


The Division Flute (1706): 'Faronells Ground'



The ornaments interpreted after Anonymous 1695





● hole closed ○ hole open ⌀ half-hole ◌ less than half ~ finger which is moved for ornament

Note: due to a lack of space, this page and the facsimile overleaf had to be left off of the Spring 1994 issue of *Leading Notes*.
To accompany the article by Marianne Mezger, 'Performance practice for recorder players'.