

*A Kalmus Classic Edition*

Johann Sebastian

**BACH**

**THE WELL-TEMPERED CLAVIER**

48 PRELUDES AND FUGUES

VOLUME 1

Edited by  
DR. HANS BISCHOFF

FOR PIANO










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## TABLE OF EMBELLISHMENTS



For the uninitiated performer the following indications will suffice — in reference to this volume.

1) Grace notes, like all other embellishments, enter ON the beat — not before it. Unless indicated otherwise, they should be executed quickly.

2) The trill (**tr** or ) generally begins on the auxiliary note. There is usually an after-beat, unless this is replaced by one or more indicated notes. The after-beat is unnecessary before a descending second. The symbol for the trill with an up-beat is  or . The trill starting on the lower note  and the one starting on the upper note  usually both end with an after beat. The following symbols may also be used to indicate the same:  and . The short trill  is usually tied to the upper second preceding. Its symbol frequently takes the place of  and **tr**.

3) The mordent  or  often takes the tone a minor second lower as the auxiliary note, although the neighboring note is sometimes a major second lower. (Compare Turk, Ch. IV p. 61.)

4) The turn  placed over a note is executed , placed between two notes it is played . In dotted rhythm, the turn proper ends on the dot .

5) The slurred note  is played .

6) Other embellishments are explained in the annotations.

**Dr. Hans Bischoff**

## PREFACE

The manuscripts used in the editing of this volume are, for the most part, the property of the Royal (now-State) Library in Berlin. Two important manuscripts belong to the Amalien Library of the Joachimsthal High School.

The first part of the “Well-Tempered Clavichord” bears the following autographic title:

“Das wohltemperirte Clavier oder Praeludia und Fugen durch alle Tone und Semitonia sowohl tertiam majorem oder Ut Re Mi anlangend, als auch tertiam minorem oder Re Mi Fa betreffend. Zum Nutzen und Gebrauch der Lehrbegierigen Musikalischen Jugend als auch derer in diesem Studio schon habil seÿenden besonderen Zeitvertreib aufgesetzt und verfertigt von Johann Sebastian Bach p.t. hochfürstl. Anhalt. Cöthenischen Capellmeistern und Directore derer Kammer-Musiquem. Anno 1722.”

Inasmuch as I had access to an unusually large quantity of autographic source-material—perhaps a larger quantity than any previous editor has been privileged to use—I might easily have dispensed with some rather valuable manuscripts. Yet the essentially critical intent of this edition has prompted me to investigate not only a great many autographic specimens, but also a number of printed copies. The divergencies in the autographs are very completely elucidated in the foot-notes; also the manifold variants in the manuscript copies of Kirnberger, Altnikol, Schwenke, Gerber and those from No. 205. Consideration is given to the untrustworthy Forkel copies mainly in the instances where they have directly influenced the edition printed by Hoffmeister. I have disregarded text alterations in manuscripts of an inferior category except when they seem to offer actual musical value or when they seem to be authenticated by other sources.

Insofar as the consideration of printed editions is concerned, I have limited myself strictly to those of unimpeachable authority—in order to avoid the necessity of evaluating a tremendous number of arbitrary and unsubstantiated attempts at so-called improvement. Of the older publications, only Hoffmeister, Simrock and Nägeli are of outstanding critical significance; important in more recent times is the work of Kroll (‘Peters’ and ‘Edition of the Bach-Gesellschaft’). Other publications are mentioned in exceptional instances only.

In citing the sources, I shall also express my opinion as to their authenticity and their critical and analytical value. They can be summarized as follows:

### *Autographs:*

‘A’ is the designation which I give to the Wagener-Volkmann autograph, (Royal Library). It is superior to all the other manuscripts that we can mention. In the first place, it is practically complete; only the F# major Fugue and the beginning of the F# minor Prelude are missing. Secondly, it has been prepared much more carefully than any of the other definitely authentic autographs. Since it had found its way into the Danube, where it remained for some time, some of the characters in the handwriting have faded. This resulted in many subsequent efforts to retouch the manuscript; to this we can scarcely object. On the other hand, the autograph shows evidence of many important corrections, the authenticity of which is highly questionable. Kroll evinces such an inexplicably strong predilection for these corrections that he has taken them over almost intact in his edition of the Bach-Gesellschaft. I cannot accept his decision as an improvement of the text; the fact that the alterations are also to be found in Kirnberger and Altnikol is certainly no evidence of their authenticity.

It would seem that Kirnberger undertook to improve Bach on his own responsibility. In view of his great repute, it is possible that some of his apocryphal variants have found their way from his copy into the ‘A’ autograph, since there is evidence of much tampering with the manuscript in various spurious hand writings. At this point I must mention the fact that a manuscript entirely unknown to me, bearing the date 1736, was used by Kroll (Bach-Gesellschaft XIV, page XV, No. 6). This manuscript seems to have absorbed only part of the above mentioned alterations of the ‘A’ autograph; moreover, it is important to realize that the ‘A’ manuscript bears the date 1732. Without completely rejecting the authenticity of the later version, I have adopted in the main text of my edition only those variants which I consider to be of unquestionable authority; I have placed on a third staff above or below the musical text those versions which may be justified, even though they are less probable; other questionable changes are indicated in the footnotes. There are no indications of these corrections in any of the other autographs, except the one mentioned in footnote 3 to the B minor Fugue.

'B' designates the second autograph, which extends from the middle of the C# minor Fugue almost to the end of the A minor Fugue. It was passed on by Friedemann Bach to Mueller, the organist of the Cathedral in Braunschweig, who added the missing items in the opening section of the manuscript. From him the manuscript was passed on to Griepenkerl. Friedemann Bach is supposed to have added the ending of the A minor Fugue and the numbers following it. The year of the manuscript is unknown. In the main, it follows the older readings in 'A', but is executed very negligently, particularly in the last part. Moreover, it has been impaired by many alterations added in spurious handwritings. The non-autographic portion is of little consequence.

'C' designates the so-called Fischhoff autograph. This is superior to 'B' but, unfortunately, its authenticity is questionable. It contains—as do most of Bach's copies—new possible versions; it is also interesting because of the allusions to older sources. For example, the sequence of tonalities—D minor, D major, E minor, E major, corresponds to the sequence of the Preludes in Friedmann's "Klavierbüchlein". This manuscript indubitably bears the stamp of authority. In reference to the printed note pasted on the manuscript—I should like to mention that the seemingly questionable response of the theme in the B minor Fugue (see note 3) may be genuine after all; for there are clear traces of it—despite erasure—even in 'A'.

'D' designates the autograph which is next in importance to 'A'. Spitta gives a precise description of it, together with an extremely worthwhile collection of variants, in the first volume of his biography of Bach (pp. 837 sq.) The manuscript was passed on—from owners whose identity is not definitely known—to Hans Georg Nägeli, from whose son it was passed on to Mr. Ott-Usteri of Zurich. The latter's son-in law, a Mr. Hagenbuch was the next possessor of this manuscript. According to reports which I have secured from the present owner regarding the fate of the Bach manuscripts from the Nägeli estate, there can be no doubt as to the authenticity of this autograph. With the exception of a few incorrect ornaments, the handwriting also appears genuine. There are fewer additions in spurious script than in either 'A' or 'B'. It does contain a number of errors due to excessive haste. It extends from the D minor Fugue to the very end; in the main it follows the older version of 'A'. Spitta makes the statement that the 'D' autograph was really written before the 'A'; this I can neither affirm nor deny.

I do not wish to detract from the credit due to Spitta for making the 'D' autograph available; yet I do think that he views this manuscript much too favorably. It doubtless is authoritative in solving many important questions; yet there is no dearth of errors—also of the little unimportant changes that Bach was prone to make—perhaps unconsciously—when copying his own words. In view of all this, I certainly cannot give more credence to the 'D' version than to the combined 'A', 'B', and 'C' autographs.

Generally speaking, I have made all decisions regarding notes as well as ornaments by comparing all four manuscripts, i.e. 'A', 'B', 'C', and 'D'. Kroll's strong predilection for the 'A' autographs—extending even to the ornamentation contained in it—has produced some questionable results. All the authentic ornaments are engraved in this edition in large type, the doubtful ones in smaller type. Critical details are presented in the footnotes. I have omitted a few unimportant errors in script which are of no interest whatsoever.

In certain places the text cannot be established with complete certainty due to the inconsistencies of the old orthography. In general we must adhere to the principal that every note without a sign of transposition must be played strictly according to the key signature, except when the same note reappears twice successively in the same voice. In this case the accidental is carried over from the first note to the second. Compare the annotations to some of the questionable places in the text.

Friedemann's "Klavierbüchlein" offers another interesting autographic source for some of the works contained in this volume. I refer to the Preludes in C major, C minor, D minor, D major, E minor, E major, F major, C# major, C# minor, E flat minor and F minor. Inasmuch as the Klavierbuchlein antedates 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', its version cannot be accepted as final. For our purposes, its chief value lies in the fact that some of the Preludes appear in an abbreviated form, which Forkel carried over into his own copy. The opinion that this abridged form represents Bach final creation, a hypothesis hard to justify from a musical point of view, has been historically disproved. (Compare Spitta, *Bach*—I, page 836.)

A copy of the C major Prelude contained in the larger "Klavierbüchlein" of Anna Magdalena (1725), probably written by Bach's wife is important only because it, too, omits the measure contained in "Schwenke".

#### *Copies:*

The copies are of secondary importance. Yet I have endeavored to treat the more important ones very exhaustively in my collection of variants. I have omitted the relatively unimportant deviations in matters of ornamentation.

*Kirnberger:* (Amalien Library) — This is based largely on the later corrections in 'A'—though it does contain certain intentional alterations of its own. The No. 49 of the Amalien Library follows the Kirnberger text rather closely, but it has been issued with much greater care.

*Altnikol:* (Royal Library)—This also follows, in the main, the later corrections in 'A'; however it contains some original variants which the author, as Bach's son-in-law, probably wrote down as the result of "word-of-mouth" tradition. It is hard for us to justify some of the other alterations. The manuscript is unquestionably trustworthy and there is no reason to assume that the corrections are spurious.

*Schwenke:* (Royal Library)—This copy, written in 1783, is more correct in some ways; but it contains numerous versions not substantiated by the autographs. These are cited—particularly in the instances where they have influenced the Simrock printing.

*Forkel:* (Royal Library #212)—This is a very limited and highly inaccurate copy. I would not consider it at all—except for its influence on the Hoffmeister and Peters editions.

*Gerber:* (Property of Dr. Prieger in Berlin)—This version was copied in 1725, in the year when Gerber studied with Bach. It is incomplete and altogether lacks the dependability which is so manifest in Gerber's copies of the Suites. It is interesting in that the great majority of the minor movements end on a minor third.

*Numbers:* '205', '208', '207' and '417' (from the Royal Library in Berlin) have their points of interest as well as a host of inaccuracies.

#### *Printed Editions.*

*Simrock* is based chiefly on *Schwenke*.

*Hoffmeister* is based chiefly on *Forkel*.

*Nägeli* is based largely on 'D'. However it contains many distorted readings. Just as Nägeli naively tried to improve Beethoven's Sonata op. 31 no. 1—(see Thayer-Beethoven, Vol. II, p. 206), it is highly probable that he attempted to do the same thing with Bach.

I consider these editions inadequate, for they give little evidence of critical conscientiousness. I had to take them into consideration only because they furnish a common source for subsequent editions. The first exhaustive printing was that of *Kroll*, in the Peters editions; his manuscripts also served as a basis for the edition of the Bach-Gesellschaft. I do not cite the Peters-Kroll edition very often because the edition of the Bach-Gesellschaft by Kroll is a better source for our critical purposes.

With the exception of the seemingly unimportant copies designated by Kroll as 'No. 6' and 'No. 9' (see Edition of the Bach-Gesellschaft, annual series XIV, page 15 and 16), I am thoroughly familiar with all the source-material used in that edition. The fact that our edition deviates in many instances from the above edition is due to the greater body of source-material at our disposal, and to the influence of this increased material upon our evaluation of the later corrections in the autographs. Since I have brought forward many details overlooked by Kroll, I feel particularly obligated to acknowledge the true conscientiousness of that worthy scholar.

At this point I should like to take opportunity of thanking Mr. Robert Schaab (of Leipzig) for his scrupulous correction of this edition.

In this edition, the original ties which Bach wrote appear in darker type than the phrasing indications of the editor. The less autographic staccatos are indicated by lines.

Berlin, August 1883.

DR. HANS BISCHOFF.

## PRAELUDIUM I. 1)

(Moderato ♩ = 112)

1) The form in which we issue this prelude is authenticated by 'A' and many good manuscripts. However, there do exist two other undoubtedly genuine sketches of this prelude. The earliest one was published by Forkel under the erroneous assumption that he reproduced the author's true intention. His harmonic succession, with the retention of the same pianistic figuration as our text offers, is as follows:

In Friedemann's "Klavierbüchlein" this piece seems to undergo further development. The first eleven measures appear just as the

composer had written them down in 'A'. Thence he digresses as follows:

At  $\Phi$  he makes a transition into the Forkel version, and ends from  $\times$  onward as follows:

The Gerber copy, dating from the year 1725, offers the same text as Bach retained in the completed version of 'A' in 1732. The same is also

attested, with the exception of an error in script, by Anna Magdalena's "Klavierbüchlein" (1725).