

THE ORNAMENTATION IN THE FITZWILLIAM VIRGINAL BOOK
WITH AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY OF CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE

by

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This dissertation is dedicated to
MARIE-CLAIRE ALAIN
whose pursuit of knowledge has
never ceased to inspire me

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
SUMMARY	vii
OPSOMMING	ix
BIBLIOGRAPHIC ABBREVIATIONS	xii
INTRODUCTION	1
1. INTRODUCTORY STUDY: ORNAMENTATION ON THE CONTINENT IN THE SIXTEENTH AND EARLY SEVEN- TEENTH CENTURIES	3
1.1 The <u>Ars Diminutionis</u> as a Sixteenth-Century Concept of Ornamentation	3
1.2 <u>Passaggi</u> and Specific Ornaments	11
1.3 The Earliest Records of Ornaments	16
1.4 Ornamentation Practice on the Continent Contemporary with the <u>FVB</u>	20
1.4.1 <u>Tremolo</u>	22
1.4.2 <u>Tremoletto</u>	27
1.4.3 Mordent	29
1.4.4 <u>Groppo</u>	31
1.4.5 <u>Groppetto</u>	35
1.4.6 <u>Tirata</u>	36
1.4.7 <u>Accento</u>	37
1.4.8 Slide	40
1.4.9 <u>Minuta</u>	43
1.4.10 <u>Quiebro</u> and <u>Redoble</u>	45
1.5 Classification of Ornaments	55
1.5.1 Three Groups of Ornaments	55
1.5.2 Alternating and Non-Alternating Ornaments	57
1.5.3 Comparison between Italian and Spanish Ornamentation	60
Table 1.1 Vocal and Instrumental Ornaments in Use on the Continent c.1250 to the Early Seventeenth Century	62
2. BACKGROUND TO ENGLISH ORNAMENTATION IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES	69
2.1 English Treatises	69
2.2 Ornaments in Virginal Music	73

2.3	English Keyboard Ornamentation after c.1625	76
2.4	Ornamentation of the Lute-Cithern Family and the Lyra Viol in England: the Early Sources	80
2.5	Later Sources for the Lute, Viol and Violin	91
2.6	Contemporary Lute Ornamentation on the Continent	99
Table 2.1	Ornaments in English Keyboard Music 1530-1660	105
Table 2.2	Ornaments in English Keyboard Music 1660-1696	107
Table 2.3	Lute and Viol Ornaments of the Elizabethan and Jacobean Periods ...	108
Table 2.4	English Lute and Viol Ornaments after c.1650	109
Table 2.5	Lute Ornaments of the Continent	112
3.	<u>THE PRINTED EDITION OF THE FITZWILLIAM VIRGINAL BOOK: A CRITICAL COMMENTARY OF THE ORNAMENTATION</u>	114
3.1	Background to the Printed Edition	114
3.2	Errors Occurring in the <u>FVB</u> (1979-80)	116
	3.2.1 <u>FVB</u> Volume I	116
	3.2.2 <u>FVB</u> Volume II	121
3.3	The New Edition	126
	3.3.1 Mistakes peculiar to the New Edition, <u>FVB</u> (1979-80)	126
	3.3.2 Corrections Introduced into the New Edition, <u>FVB</u> (1979-80) :.....	127
3.4	Non-Ornament Stenographic Signs in <u>Tr</u>	127
	3.4.1 The Horizontal Line through the Stem	128
	3.4.2 The Horizontal Line Flanked by Vertical Lines	129
	3.4.3 The Flanked Double-Stroke Ornament .	130
	3.4.4 The Cross	130
3.5	Alignment of Ornaments	130
	3.5.1 Alignment of the Single Stroke	131
	3.5.2 Alignment of the Double Stroke	132

3.6	Coloration (Blackened Notation)	132
3.7	Duration of Notes and Ornaments	133
3.8	Note Value Ambiguities	133
3.8.1	Notation in a Single Metric Diminution	134
3.8.2	Notation in a Double Metric Diminution	136
3.8.3	Notation in a Single Metric Augmentation	136
3.8.4	Inconsistent and Incorrect References	136
3.9	Textual Variants in Virginal Music Sources ..	136
3.9.1	Textual Variants in <u>Dr. Bull's Juell</u> .	137
3.9.2	Variants in Ornamentation	137
Table 3.1	Alignment of the Single Stroke	150
Table 3.2	Alignment of the Double Stroke	152
Table 3.3	Duration of Notes and Ornaments	155
Table 3.4	Notation in a Single Metric Diminution	157
Table 3.5	Notation in a Double Metric Diminution and Single Metric Augmentation, Incorrect References in the <u>FVB</u> to <u>Tr</u>	163
4.	<u>THE ORNAMENTS WRITTEN OUT IN NOTES IN THE FITZWILLIAM VIRGINAL BOOK</u>	165
4.1	<u>Clausula</u> , Formal Close and Cadence in Renaissance Theoretical Sources	165
4.2	The <u>Groppo</u>	178
4.2.1	Rhythmical Variants of the <u>Groppo</u> ...	178
4.2.2	The <u>Groppo</u> as Decoration of the Discant Close	184
4.2.2.1	The <u>Groppo</u> as Partial Decoration of the <u>Note</u> of Resolution	189
Table 4.1	Ornamental Figures Decorating the Note of Resolution	190
Table 4.2	Ornamental Figures which Include the Elementary <u>Groppo</u> -figure as Decoration of the Note of Resolution.	191
Table 4.3	Ornamental Figures plus the <u>Groppo</u> as Decoration of the Note of Resolution	192

	4.2.2.2	The Ornamented Anticipation of the Note of Resolution	198
Table	4.4	The Ornamented Anticipation of the Note of Resolution	199
	4.2.2.3	The Ornamented Anticipation in lieu - of the Suspended Dissonance .	205
	4.2.3	The <u>Groppo</u> as Decoration of the Tenor Close	211
4.3		The <u>Groppetto</u>	213
	4.3.1	The <u>Groppetto</u> as Decoration of the Tenor Close	214
	4.3.2	The <u>Groppetto</u> as Decoration of the Discant Close	218
	4.3.3	The <u>Groppetto</u> as Decoration of the Bass Close	223
4.4		<u>Groppo</u> and <u>Groppetto</u> as Virtuoso Decoration	227
4.5		The <u>Tirata</u>	235
4.6		The <u>Accento</u>	242
4.7		The <u>Tremolo</u>	243
4.8		The <u>Tremoletto</u>	244
4.9		The Slide	251
5.		<u>THE ORNAMENTS INDICATED BY SIGN IN THE FITZWILLIAM VIRGINAL BOOK</u>	259
	5.1	The Purpose and Use of the Single- and Double-Stroke Signs	259
	5.1.1	Places of Occurrence	263
	5.1.2	Melodic Contexts	269
	5.1.3	Texture	276
	5.1.4	Note Values	279
	5.1.5	Metric Use	281
	5.2	The Interpretation of the Single- and Double-Stroke Signs	296
	5.2.1	Solutions Suggested by Contemporary Musicologists	297
	5.2.2	The Interpretation of the Double Stroke	300
	5.2.3	The Interpretation of the Single Stroke	318



Table 5.1	The Melodic Contexts in which the Single-Stroke Ornaments Are Used	334
Table 5.2	The Melodic Contexts in which the Double-Stroke Ornaments Are Used	338
Table 5.3	Metric Use of the Double Stroke, Metric Use of the Single Stroke	341
CONCLUSION		343
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY		354



SUMMARY

THE ORNAMENTATION IN THE FITZWILLIAM VIRGINAL BOOK, WITH
AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY OF CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE

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This study sets out to examine the ornamentation in the manuscript GB-Cfm 32.G.29 (known as the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book) as representative of late sixteenth-century practice. The sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century ornamentation as practised on the Continent is also investigated, in order to elucidate the contemporary English practice, to evaluate it and place it in perspective. This period's concept of ornamentation is an ars diminutionis. The diminution technique (the breaking up of long note values into smaller ones) is expressed as passaggi (figurations) and ornaments, in order to provide a more elegant expression of the basic notes of a composition. Continental treatises describe the individual ornaments and thus provide a terminology with which to describe these ornaments.

The ars diminutionis manifests itself in the FVB as written-out figuration, written-out ornaments and ornaments indicated by sign, the latter consisting of the single and double stroke which are peculiar to virginal music. No explanation for the Virginalists' signs exists, nor are contemporary English instruction books concerning themselves with keyboard ornamentation available.

A comparison of the ornamentation of the manuscript with the printed edition of the FVB (1979-80), reveals many inaccuracies in the latter. These consist mainly of printer's errors, such as wrong placements and frequency of occurrence, which do

not correlate with the original, and stenographic cancellation signs which are wrongly interpreted as ornaments. All of these are corrected in the present study. A collation of other source copies with the same pieces found in the FVB reveals many textual and ornamentation variants between them.

Examining the written-out ornaments in the FVB, one finds that they are identical to the ornaments found in Continental sources. These ornaments are primarily employed as decoration of the individual closes in a cadence, where they occur as diminutions of the notes constituting the cadence. Here they are employed functionally, for example, to resolve the note of resolution in a discant close ornamentally, or to embellish the plain notes of a bass close. They are also used as virtuoso decoration as an intrinsic part of the passaggi, being diminutions of successive intervals.

The single- and double-stroke ornament signs appear at first glance to be indiscriminately scattered over the music without purpose. Research into their use reveals them to be employed systematically, besides being decorative elements which add brilliance to the music. The frequency with which they coincide with the pulse unit and the rhythmic pulsation created by it, together with the profusion of their occurrence, make these signs a unique phenomenon in late sixteenth-century ornamentation.

Their interpretation remains a difficult issue to clarify. The evidence assembled in this study points to a classification of the strokes according to the accenti e trilli principle. The single stroke can then be interpreted as a slide (from a third below the main note), and the double stroke as a tremolo or tremoletto - the most common sixteenth-century ornament. Its mirror-image, the mordent, is occasionally more appropriate in certain contexts, and in cadences the double stroke followed by a two-note suffix most likely signifies a grosso.

OPSOMMING

DIE ORNAMENTASIE IN DIE FITZWILLIAM VIRGINAL BOOK, MET 'N
INLEIDENDE STUDIE VAN KONTEMPORÊRE UITVOERINGS-
PRAKTYK

deur

WILLEM DIEDERIK VILJOEN

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In hierdie studie word die ornamentasie in die musiekmanuskrip GB-Cfm 32.G.29 (bekend as die Fitzwilliam Virginal Book) bestudeer as synde verteenwoordigende van die laat sestiende-eeuse Engelse versieringskuns. Die beoefening van die sestiende- en vroeg sewentiende-eeuse ornamentasie op die Europese Vasteland word ook ondersoek om sodoende die kontemporêre Engelse praktyk duideliker te kan maak, te kan evalueer en in perspektief te kan plaas. Die begrip 'ornamentasie' in hierdie tydperk is dié van 'n ars diminutionis. Die diminuerings-tegniek (die opbreek van lang nootwaardes in korteres) kom voor as passaggi (figurasies) en as ornamente wat ten doel het om 'n elegante uitdrukking te gee aan die basiese note van 'n komposisie. Die terminologie waarmee die ornamente beskryf kan word, is ontleen aan studies uit die Europese Vasteland.

Die ars diminutionis kry gestalte in die FVB sowel in die vorm van uitgeskrewe figuratiewe passasies en uitgeskrewe ornamente as in die vorm van twee ornamenttekens, naamlik die skuins enkel- en dubbelstreep. Hierdie twee tekens kom in die sestiende eeu hoofsaaklik in Engelse virginaalmusiek voor. Daar bestaan geen tydgenootlike verduideliking van die enkel- en dubbelstreep-ornamente nie, en tydgenootlike Engelse handleidings wat klawerbord-ornamentasie beskryf, ontbreek geheel en al.

'n Vergelyking van die ornamentasie in die manuskrip met die gepubliseerde uitgawe van die FVB (1979-80) bring verskeie onnoukeurighede in laasgenoemde aan die lig. Hierdie onnoukeurighede bestaan hoofsaaklik uit drukfoute (byvoorbeeld ornamente wat verkeerd geplaas is en ander wat weggelaat is) en uit stenografiese kansellasietekens wat verkeerdelik as ornamente vertolk is. Hierdie foute word in hierdie studie reggestel. 'n Vergelyking van musiekwerke wat in die FVB verskyn met weergawes wat in ander bronne voorkom, toon baie variante ten opsigte van sowel die musikale teks as die ornamentasie.

Die uitgeskrewe ornamente in die FVB is dieselfde as dié wat in die musiek van die Vastelandse komponiste aangetref word. Dié ornamente word primêr gebruik as versiering van die individuele clausulae in kadense waar hulle verskyn as diminuerings van die stempartye waaruit die kadens bestaan. In hierdie situasie word die uitgeskrewe ornamente funksioneel aangewend, byvoorbeeld om die oplossingsnoot van 'n diskant-clausula ornamenteel te laat oplos, of om die interval van 'n vyfde in 'n bas-clausula in te vul. Die uitgeskrewe ornamente word ook as 'n onlosmaaklike deel van die passaggi gebruik en dien as virtuose ornamentering van opeenvolgende intervalle.

Die verskyning van enkel- en dubbelstreep-ornamenttekens blyk met die eerste oogopslag lukraak te wees. Navorsing oor hulle aanwending toon egter dat hulle wel sistematies gebruik word, afgesien daarvan dat hulle ook dekoratiewe elemente is wat sprankel aan die musiek verleen. Die feit dat die tekens hoofsaaklik op die polsslag voorkom (en daardeur ritmiese stuwings aan die musiek verskaf) en die oordadigheid waarmee hulle verskyn, maak hierdie tekens 'n unieke fenomeen in die laat sestiende-eeuse ornamentasie.

Die interpretasie van die tekens bly 'n netelige kwessie. Die inligting wat in dié studie byeengebring is, dui daarop dat hulle volgens die accenti e trilli-beginsel geklassifiseer kan word. Die enkelstreep kan geïnterpreteer word as 'n glyer (vanaf die onderterts) en die dubbelstreep as 'n tremolo of tremolletto - die mees algemene sestiende-eeuse ornament. In sekere



omstandighede is die spieëlbeeld van laasgenoemde, naamlik die mordent, meer gepas, en in kadense kan die dubbelstreep saam met die tweeknotslag as 'n groppo geïnterpreteer word.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ABBREVIATIONS

Manuscripts

- AC Huntingdon, Cromwell Museum, Anne Cromwell's Book
(known as 'Anne Cromwell's Virginal Book')
- Be London, British Library, Add. MS 31403
(GB-Lbm Add.31403)
- Bu Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds du Conserva-
toire, Rés. 1185 (F-Pc Rés. 1185)
- Co London, British Library, Royal Music Library
MS 23.1.4 (GB-Lbm Royal 23.1.4, known as 'The
Cosyn Virginal Book')
- D₂ New York City, New York Public Library, Drexel
MS 5612
- DVM Dublin, Trinity College, Marsh's Lib. D.3.30
(known as 'The Dublin Virginal MS')
- El Oxford, Library of Christ Church College, Music
MS 1113 (GB-Och 1113)
- Fo London, British Library, Royal Music Library
MS 24.d.3 (GB-Lbm Royal 24.d.3, known as
'The Will Forster Virginal Book')
- L₁ London, British Library, Add. MS 29996
(GB-Lbm Add.29996)
- Ma Edinburgh, National Library, MS Panmure 9
(GB-En Panmure 9, known as 'Clement Matchett's
Virginal Book')
- Me London, British Library, Add. MS 23623 (GB-Lbm
Add.23623)
- Mu London, British Library, Add. MS 30513 (GB-Lbm
Add.30513, known as 'The Mulliner Book')
- Ne Private collection, 'My Ladye Nevells Booke'
- P₁ and P₂ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds du Conser-
vatoire, Rés.1186 and 1186 bis (F-Pc Rés.1186
and 1186 bis)
- PB Private collection, 'Priscilla Bunbury's Book'
(known as 'Priscilla Bunbury's Virginal Book')
- Ro London, British Library, Add. MS 10337 (GB-
Lbm Add.10337, known as 'Elizabeth Rogers'
Virginal Book')



- Roy App 56 and 58 London, British Library, Royal Appendix 56 and 58
- To Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds du Conservatoire, Rés.1122 (F-Pc Rés.1122)
- Tr Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 32.G.29 (GB-Cfm 32.G.29, known as 'The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book')
- Tu London, British Library, Add. MS 36661 (GB-Lbm Add.36661)
- Wr London, British Library, Add. MS 30485 (GB-Lbm Add.30485)

Printed Music

- CEKM Corpus of Early Keyboard Music ([Rome]: American Institute of Musicology)
- EECM Early English Church Music (London: Stainer and Bell)
- FVB The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, ed. by Fuller Maitland and Barclay Squire (New York: Dover, 1979-80), printed edition of GB-Cfm 32.G.29 (Tr)
- MB Musica Britannica (London: Stainer and Bell)
- I. The Mulliner Book, ed. by D. Stevens (1954), printed edition of GB-Lbm Add.30513
- V. Thomas Tomkins: Keyboard Music, ed. by S. Tuttle (1964)
- XIV. John Bull: Keyboard Music I, ed. by J. Steele and F. Cameron (1967)
- XIX. John Bull: Keyboard Music II, ed. by T. Dart (1970)
- XX. Orlando Gibbons: Keyboard Music, ed. G. Hendrie (1967)
- XXIV. Giles and Richard Farnaby: Keyboard Music, ed. by R. Marlow (1965)
- XXVII and XXVIII. William Byrd: Keyboard Music I and II, ed. by A. Brown (1976)



- Pa Parthenia (London: George Lowe, (1612/13)),
facs. (New York: Broude, 1972)
- PI Parthenia In-Violata (London: John Piper,
(c.1625)), facs. (New York: New York Public
Library, 1961)



INTRODUCTION

The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book was compiled by the younger Francis Tregian from 1609 until his death in 1619, during his imprisonment in the Fleet for recusancy. It is a monumental collection of virginal music, with 297 pieces totaling 936 pages of printed music. The earliest dated work is Felix Namque by Tallis (1562) and the latest Ut re mi fa sol la by Sweelinck (1612). The largest part of the anthology is taken up by works of Byrd and Bull, some of which have not survived in any other source, and it includes composers which would otherwise not have been known, such as Oldfield, Galeazzo, Oystermayre and Marchant. It is also the primary source for most of Giles Farnaby's and Peter Philips' keyboard output. The manuscript is presently preserved in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, where it has long been erroneously known as 'Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book'. It is named after Lord Fitzwilliam, in whose possession the manuscript was in 1783.¹

English keyboard music from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is generally referred to as virginal music. The term 'virginal' derives from the English word 'virgule' (Latin: virgula = a twig), and refers to the wooden jack in the instrument. The virginal is an instrument of oblong shape, with the keyboard on the long side. Its strings are plucked and run parallel with the keyboard. In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries the term 'virginal' was also used to describe any keyboard instrument of which the strings were plucked. Queen Elizabeth I herself possessed and played the virginal.

It is the purpose of this study to:

- provide a background against which the keyboard ornamentation of Elizabethan England can be understood and compared,

¹ For a history of the manuscript, see J.A. Fuller Maitland and W. Barclay Squire, eds., The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf, 1899 : reprint, New York: Dover, 1963), I:v-xi. Newly rev. and ed. by B. Winogron (New York: Dover, 1979-80).



through a documentation of contemporary Continental practice, as well as the contemporary practice of other instruments in England;

- establish a correct printed text of the ornamentation in the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book;
- examine the use of both the written-out ornamentation and ornaments indicated by symbol;
- contribute to greater clarity concerning the interpretation of the Virginalists' ornament signs through the knowledge gained from this study.

As no bar numbers have been added to the FVB (the printed edition of Tr) by the editors, the following system will be used instead for ease of reference. For example, FVB II 2:6:1 will refer to: vol.2 of the FVB, page 2, system 6, bar 1. This procedure has been adopted due to the immensity of the FVB, and because pieces contained in the FVB available in other editions where bar numbers are supplied, are often based upon different primary sources (such as Bu and Co) in which the total number of bars may differ from that in Tr. The indication of note pitches follows the Helmholtz system where c' is middle c, c" the octave above, c the octave below c', C the octave below c, etc. The capital letters SATB identify the voice parts, i.e., soprano, alto, tenor and bass respectively, and when followed by a number, e.g. S.3, it will mean : the third note in the soprano.

The musical ornamentation of virginal music, and of the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book in particular, is a subject which has hitherto received little attention in research projects. The pioneer work of Nancy Mould Barnes and Erich Paul Schwandt has therefore been invaluable to the present study.