

ANDRÉ BRAUN'S *GAMME ET MÉTHODE POUR LES TROMBONNES* REVISITED

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In the fifth volume of this *Journal*, I presented a source containing information of importance to our understanding of the trombone and its usage at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, André Braun's *Gamme et Méthode pour les Trombones*.¹ Since the publication of my article in 1993, I have continued to collect bits of information concerning André Braun and his trombone method. This new material, along with the appearance of two other articles in which Braun's method is treated,² made it seem appropriate to offer a sequel to my original article.

André Braun?

The various editions of Braun's *Gamme et Méthode pour les Trombones* give us only the author's family name. Because there were two brothers of this name who are known to have played trombone, a conclusive attribution proves to be a problem. In an article published in 1995, Raymond Lapie noted that the card catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale lists Jean-Frédéric Braun as the author of the *Méthode*.³ Lapie also mentioned that André Braun and his brother, Jean-Christoph, were members of the Masonic lodge *L'Olympique de la Parfaite Estime*.⁴ With this information we have a choice of three possible first names for the author of our trombone method. However, as I pointed out earlier, Fétis attributed the *Méthode* to André, and the German publisher of Braun's work, the firm of Johann André, Offenbach, was able to confirm this for me, providing the German form "Andreas."⁵ Moreover, an Italian edition, described below, is catalogued in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna under the name "Andrea Braun." The evidence therefore seems to weigh in favor of André/Andreas/Andrea.

Date of publication

In my original article, I postulated a date of publication between ca. 1792 and 1795 for the first edition of Braun's *Méthode*. In light of research on French music publishers unknown to me earlier, this dating must be slightly revised.⁶ Since the publishing history of the *Méthode* involves two closely related publishing houses with similar names and, in addition, addresses that changed with some frequency, it might also be a good idea to review this aspect in detail.

The original publisher of Braun's *Méthode* was Jean-Georges Sieber (born in 1738 at Reiterswiesen, Bavaria). His publishing house, Sieber et Cie, was founded in January 1771 and at first located in the rue des Deux-Écus. In September of that same year the firm moved to rue Saint-Honoré, à l'hôtel d'Aligre and was renamed "Sieber musicien." In January 1782 Sieber moved again, staying however in the same street: rue Saint-Honoré,

no. 92, *vis-à-vis l'hôtel d'Aligre*. Around 1793 the house numbers were revised, making Sieber's address rue Honoré, no. 85. ("Saint" was restored to the address only in 1800.) In October 1797 Sieber's son Georges-Julien joined the firm, which was now called "Sieber père et fils" (Sieber, father and son). Georges-Julien left his father's business to establish his own publishing house in January 1799, at which time Jean-Georges Sieber changed the name of his firm to "Sieber père." In February 1803 "Sieber père" moved back across the street to the Hôtel d'Aligre, now with the address rue Saint-Honoré, no. 199 (in 1805 it became No. 123), moving again in 1813 to rue Coquillière, no. 22. After Jean-Georges's death on 13 January 1822, his wife Marie-Julie carried on the business under the name "Veuve Sieber" (Sieber's Widow) until February 1824, when it was taken over by Georges-Julien.

Georges-Julien Sieber was born on 15 November 1775 in Paris. After working in his father's firm for a bit more than a year (October 1797 to January 1799), he left to establish his own publishing house under the name "Sieber fils, gendre de Leduc" (Sieber's Son, Son-in-law of Leduc) at rue de la Loi, no. 1245. In 1800 he shortened the name to "Sieber fils." The house number was altered to 28 in 1805, and the street name changed back to the pre-Revolutionary rue de Richelieu in 1807. He stayed at this location until April 1809, when he moved to 21, rue des Filles-Saint-Thomas. Following his father's death, he dropped the suffix "fils" from the name of his firm. On 1 June 1825 Georges-Julien's son (and Jean-Georges's grandson) Adrien entered the firm, which now received the name "Sieber et fils." It is this name that is found on the title page of the copy of Braun's *Méthode* preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and that has been repeatedly confused with the imprint "Sieber père et fils" employed by Jean-Georges Sieber from 1797 to 1799.⁷ Georges-Julien retired on 1 July 1834, selling the firm to his son for 40,000 francs. The business was liquidated by Adrien Sieber in June 1847, only six months after the death of his father on 22 January of that year.

The copy of Braun's *Méthode* in the Bibliothèque Nationale carries the imprint "Chez Sieber et fils, Rue des Filles-Saint-Thomas No. 21, Quartier Feydeau" on its title page, enabling us to date this edition between 1 January 1825 and 1 July 1834. As I pointed out in my earlier article, this is not the first edition, but rather a reprint for which the original printing plates were employed—with the exception of the title page, which was newly engraved.

The imprint on page 4 of this copy of the *Méthode* is presumably that of the first edition. The name "Sieber musicien" coupled with the address "rue Honoré ... No. 85" allows us to date the first edition between ca. 1793, when the house number was changed (from No. 92 to No. 85), and 2 October 1797, when Georges-Julien Sieber joined his father's firm. Taking into consideration the reference on the title page to Braun as a "Membre du Conservatoire," we can set that institute's date of establishment (3 August 1795) as the earliest likely date for the publication of the *Méthode*. Thus, André Braun's *Gamme et Méthode pour les Trombones* was probably first published between August 1795 and October 1797, but possibly as early as 1793.

Editions

Besides the original edition of Braun's *Méthode* published by Jean-Georges Sieber and the reprint by Georges-Julien Sieber, my previous article also presented a French-German edition by Johann André, Offenbach am Main, and pointed out that Joseph Fröhlich had relied heavily on Braun for his *Vollständige theoretisch-practische Musikschule* (Bonn, ca. 1811). Recent research done on the André publishing house by Britta Constapel makes it necessary to revise slightly the date of publication of that firm's edition of Braun. Rather than 1811, as stated earlier, André's edition was issued towards the end of 1810.⁸ An advertisement in the *Frankfurter Staats-Ristretto* from 11 December 1810 lists the French-German edition under the heading "Neue Musikalien" (new editions of music).

Recently, I discovered yet two other "foreign" editions: The first, *Scale et Metodo per il Trombone*, is an abridged Italian version published by Luigi Scotti in Milan. Scotti, a violinist at the Imperiale Regio Teatro alla Scala and an experienced engraver, was granted permission to print music in December 1826.⁹ The low plate number of his Braun edition (28) would seem to indicate a date of publication not too long after this.

There are several noteworthy aspects to Scotti's edition. Whereas the Sieber and André editions specify alto, tenor, and bass trombones on their title pages, Scotti mentions neither the alto nor the tenor (Figure 1). As in the other editions, the legend over the text reads "Scale and method for the bass trombone" (*Scale e Metodo per il Basso Trombone*) (Figure 2). Unlike the Sieber and André editions, which do at least give slide position charts for the alto and tenor trombones, Scotti dispenses with these completely. Also lacking are the two pages of interval exercises and simple pieces found in the Sieber edition. Scotti's handsomely engraved edition is all of four pages, including the title page. The text itself is a slightly abridged translation of the French original. The single illustration of a trombone differs from that in the original in that it depicts an over-the-shoulder model, but even here the *basso trombone* is clearly an instrument in B \flat (Figure 3).

As mentioned above, the Scotti edition also provides confirmation, albeit indirect, of Braun's first name: The entry for this edition in the card catalogue of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek gives the author's first name as Andrea, which is of course the Italian form of André.

The other "foreign" edition, *Unterricht für die Bass- Tenor- und Alt-Posaune*, does not mention Braun at all, giving instead M. Ellenrieder as its author (Figure 5). I have not yet been able to identify Ellenrieder, but that hardly seems necessary since his trombone method is actually little more than a pirated edition of Braun's. The copy in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek was printed in Augsburg after 1831 by Anton Böhm,¹⁰ its text being taken almost verbatim from the André edition of the *Méthode* (Figure 6). The quality of the engraving and printing is poor. The illustrated instruments are badly proportioned (Figure 7), with the alto and tenor trombones more resembling S-shaped Renaissance trumpets than trombones (Figure 8). Something not found in the authorized editions of Braun's *Méthode*, however, is a page containing three simple trios for three trombones, notated in alto, tenor, and bass clefs (Figure 9).

A Braun manuscript and more...

A possible Braun autograph predating the *Méthode* is to be found among a group of eighteen manuscript leaves bound into a copy of Louis-Joseph Francoeur's *Diapason général de tous les instruments à vent* in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale.¹¹ The four leaves (nos. 6, 7, 8, and 15) dealing with the trombone, and in particular one apparently penned by Braun, have already been mentioned in print, though the descriptions provided were anything but adequate.¹²

Francoeur's *Diapason général* does not contain any information about the trombone. This is not surprising when one realizes that the trombone had not yet been reintroduced into Parisian musical life even as the book was issued in its second printing in 1772. The manuscript leaves obviously represent material that Francoeur collected for a revised edition, which seems never to have appeared. Stewart Carter has surmised that the leaves were written during the 1780s.¹³

Leaf 6, labelled *Etendue des trombones donnée par Mr. Braune L.^e* (Range of the trombones supplied by Mr. Braun the Elder), has six staves (Figure 10). The upper three staves, grouped together by a brace, are in alto, tenor, and bass clefs, respectively. Divided into seven fields, they show the tones of the alto, tenor, and bass trombones in each of the seven positions. The first field is labelled *fermé* (closed); the second, *1^{er} p^{tion}* (first position); the third, *2^{me} p:* (second position), and so forth.

It should be remembered that Braun was originally a trumpet player. He possibly learned to play trombone in the course of training as a *Stadtppfeifer* before coming to Paris around 1773,¹⁴ but it was surely the "on-the-job" training in the various Parisian orchestras that enabled him to later write his *Méthode*. Yet when he made this position chart for Francoeur, he seems not to have been very familiar with the alto trombone. Indeed, the first two positions (*fermé* and *1^{er} p^{tion}*) are correctly notated, if somewhat sparsely. Braun falters, however, in the third position (*2^{me} p:*): The *f'* is of course available in this position, but the *b* is not, and the *b'* an octave higher, if really intended, would be the only seventh-partial note given in the entire position chart. Although Braun did not cross out this mistake, he did try again in the next field. This time he got it right, although the spelling *c[#]' - e[#]' - g[#]' - c[#]''* is rather unorthodox; in the *Méthode* he employed the more usual *ab - db' - f' - ab' - db''*. The spelling of the fifth-position tones, *b - eb' - f[#]' - b'*, is also a bit unusual, and the *G* in the tenor trombone's seventh position (*6^{me}*) was surely just a slip of the pen. The fifth staff also shows the tones available to the tenor trombone, but without the second-partial notes, which, with the exception of *Bb*, are also not given in the *Méthode*.

The next leaf dealing with the trombone (no. 7) was "supplied by Mr. Lefevre, copyist" (Figure 11). A mere scrap of paper torn from a larger sheet, it has three staves labelled *H.C.* (*haute contre*, i.e., alto), *tenore*, and *Basso*, and notated in alto, tenor, and bass clefs, respectively. Each staff shows a chromatic scale. That for the alto trombone extends from *a* to *c''*; for the tenor, from *d* to *a'*; and for the bass, from *F* to *c'*. The scale for the bass trombone originally ascended to *f'* and was only diatonic. The chromatic notes were obviously squeezed in later, and the tones *d' - e' - f'* crossed out. A note explains: "The three last notes can be played, but they are not used."¹⁵ Although the annotation giving the name of

the respective source is in the same hand (undoubtedly Francoeur's) on these two leaves, the musical scripts differ, making it likely that the person cited as the source of information was also the scribe.

Leaf 8 is written in yet another hand (Figure 12). No source is named. Headed *Gamme des Tromboni* ("Scale of the trombones"), it offers scales for the *Alto ou haute Contre*, *Tenor*, and *Basse* trombones that are almost the same as those supplied by Lefevre. The alto trombone has two additional semitones both at the bottom and top of its range (now *g - d''*). The tenor apparently also had two additional notes at the top, but they have been erased; the lowest tone, *d*, seems to have been forgotten, and added later. The text below the system tells us that "one should use the extreme high and low ranges only when absolutely necessary. The middle range of all the wind instruments is always the most beautiful. As an example, see how Mr. Gluck has employed them in *Alceste* and *Iphigénie en Aulide*."¹⁶

Leaf 15, which combines the information found on the other three, would seem to be from Francoeur himself (Figure 13). The handwriting is the same as that of the annotations on leaves 6 and 7—those attributed to Braun and Lefevre—but the musical script does not match any of those on the other three leaves. The title at the top of the page has been partially cut away, apparently a victim of the bookbinder's knife: "*Des Trombones [et de leurs Étendus]*" ("Of the trombones and their ranges"). The first three staves are grouped together by a brace, and labelled *alto ou haute contre*, *tenore*, and *Basso*, respectively. A note to the right of this system reads: "This scale was given to me by Mr. Louis of the Opera and by Mr. Lefevre, copyist of the Opera."¹⁷ Louis was undoubtedly the trombonist also known as Lowitz, who, along with the Braun brothers, is said to have played trombone in the first performance of Gossec's opera *Sabinus* in 1773.¹⁸ This note might also allow us to attribute leaf 8 to Louis.

The chart given here is similar to that on leaf 8, although the ranges have been extended even further. Seven semitones have been added both to the bottom of the tenor's range (now *G - a'*), and to the top of the bass's range (now *F - f#'*). The text that follows is an elaboration of that presented on leaf 8:

Note: One should use the tones notated above in whole notes only when absolutely necessary, since the middle range of all wind instruments is always the most beautiful. One writes for these instruments just as one does for the stringed instruments, that is to say, in the key of the piece [i.e., non-transposing]. This instrument should be used only in dramatic pieces, and should therefore only play long tones and filler parts. See, as an example, how Mr. Gluck has employed them in his *Alceste* and *Iphigénie en Aulide*, etc.¹⁹

The bottom half of the page contains Braun's position chart, labelled here "[The] various positions of the instrument." Francoeur copied it, mistakes and all, from the leaf described above, though he does seem to have caught the incorrect *G* in the tenor trombone's seventh position (*6^e position*). In the note to the right of the system, Braun is also described as being "of the Opera."²⁰

Although probably published somewhat later than I originally suggested, André Braun's *Gamme et Méthode pour les Trombones* still lays claim to being the earliest modern trombone method. As the earliest document to depict the tenor and bass trombones as instruments in B \flat , however, it has now been supplanted by the manuscript leaf quite possibly in Braun's own hand. While it is difficult to determine to what extent Braun's work influenced trombone playing, it is clear that the *Gamme et Méthode* found wide distribution, both in authorized reprints and translations as well as in pirated editions, well into the nineteenth century.

Note: In a note, which, similar to the present one, was appended to the end of his *Méthode*, Braun recommended an étude book by F. Gebauer to be used following his own work. I recently discovered that my transcription—and consequently also my translation—of this note contains a small error: I incorrectly read the seventh word from the end as *dix* (ten) rather than *six* (six). Gebauer's work thus contains only six trios for three trombones. But more about this in the following article....

NOTES

¹ Howard Weiner, "André Braun's *Gamme et Méthode pour les Trombones*: The Earliest Modern Trombone Method Rediscovered," *Historic Brass Society Journal* 5 (1993): 288-308.

² Raymond Lapie, "The Braun Brothers, Two Names, One Method," *International Trombone Association Journal* 21 (1995): 30-31; Benny Sluchin and Raymond Lapie, "Slide Trombone Teaching and Method Books in France (1794-1960)," *Historic Brass Society Journal* 9 (1997): 7-8. The former, obviously written after my article but without knowledge of it, contains a few pieces of information that were unknown to me. Lapie failed however to recognize the significance of Braun's method.

³ Lapie, "The Braun Brothers," 30-31.

⁴ Lapie's source for this information was Roger Cotte, who tentatively identified André Braun as instructor of solfège at the Conservatoire at its inception in 1795. See Roger Cotte, *La Musique maçonnique et ses Musiciens* (2nd edn, Paris: Editions du Borrego, 1987), pp. 112-113, 169. Oddly, Lapie presented the three names—André, Jean-Frédéric, and Jean-Christophe—for the Braun brothers in the course of his article, yet titled it "The Braun Brothers: Two Names, One Method."

⁵ Weiner, "André Braun," 289-291. See also Britta Constapel, *Der Musikverlag Johann André in Offenbach am Main: Studien zur Verlagstätigkeit von Johann Anton André und Verzeichnis der Musikalien von 1800 bis 1840* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1998), p. 189.

⁶ Anik Devriès and François Lesure, *Dictionnaire des éditeurs de musique français; vol I: Des origines à environ 1820* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1979), s.v. "Sieber (Jean-Georges and Georges-Julien)."

⁷ Lapie, "The Braun Brothers," 30-31; Sluchin and Lapie, "Slide Trombone Teaching," 7-8.

⁸ Constapel, *Musikverlag Johann André*, p. 189.

⁹ *Music Printing and Publishing* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1990), The New Grove Handbooks in Music, s.v. "Scotti, Luigi," by Agostina Zecca Laterza.

¹⁰ *Music Printing and Publishing*, s.v. "Böhm," by Alan Pope. The copy preserved in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek is designated on the title page as the third printing (*3te Auflage*). I have also found bibliographical references to an edition of Ellenrieder issued by Böhm in or before 1829—in this case the publisher would have been Andreas Böhm, Anton's father—as well as to an edition published by Reitmayr jun. in Regensburg.

¹¹ Louis-Joseph Francoeur, *Diapason général de tous les instruments à vent* (Paris, n.d., 2/1772). The

copy in the Bibliotheque Nationale (Ms 1843) contains the annotation *Exemplaire de Francoeur, avec divers autographe Suppléments, corrections, etc. de l'auteur*. In addition, Francoeur's signature is found on the title page and at the bottom of the first manuscript leaf.

¹² Lapie, "The Braun Brothers," 30; Sluchin and Lapie, "Slide Trombone Teaching," 8-9.

¹³ Stewart Carter, "Trombone Pitch in the Eighteenth Century: An Overview," a paper given on 20 November 1998 at the symposium *Trombones and Trumpets, History, Acoustics, Playing Techniques* in Kloster Michaelstein, Blankenburg (Germany). The mention of Gluck's opera *Alceste* in the text of two of the leaves (see below) allows us to set 1776, the year of this opera's first Parisian production, as the earliest possible date for these manuscript notices.

¹⁴ In another context, Hermann Eichborn refers to the "Braun brothers from Hannover." (c.f. Hermann Eichborn, *Die Trompete in alter und neuer Zeit*, [Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1881], p. 45). Researches carried out on my behalf by the Hannover City Archives (civic record books) and *Kirchenbuchamt* (baptismal records) could not confirm Eichborn's information.

¹⁵ "les 3 Derniers sont peuvant se faire mais on en fait point d'usage."

¹⁶ "il ne faut employer les extrémités du haut et du bas qu'en cas de nécessité absolue, le médium de tous les instrumens à vent étant toujours le plus beau. Pour Exemple on peut voir l'Employ que Mr. Gluck a fait dans *Alceste et Iphigénie en Aulide*."

¹⁷ "cette gamme me fut donné par Le S^r. Louis de L'opera, et par Le S^r. Lefevre Copiste de L'opera."

¹⁸ Weiner, "André Braun," 289.

¹⁹ "N^o: il ne faut Employer les tons désignez cy-dessus en Rondes que dans les cas de nécessité absolue, le médium de tous les instrumens à Vent étant toujours le plus beau. On Coppie pour ces instrumens comme pour tout instrumens à Cordes, C'est à dire dans le ton dont est fait le morceau. Cet instrument ne doit être employé que dans les Morceaux d'effets et ne doit faire en conséquence que des tenues et des parties de Remplissages. Voyez pour Exemple l'Employ qu'en a fait Gluck dans ses Opéra d'*Alceste et d'Iphigénie en Aulide*, &c."

²⁰ "Cette Etendue me fut donné par Le S^r Braun L'ainé de l'opéra."

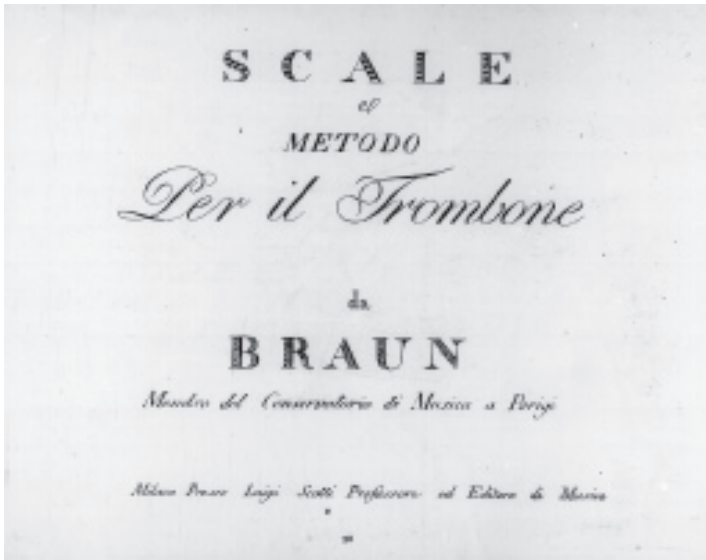


Figure 1

Braun, *Scale et Metodo Per il Trombone* (Scotti, Milano)

(S.A. 75. E. 17 from the Musiksammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek)

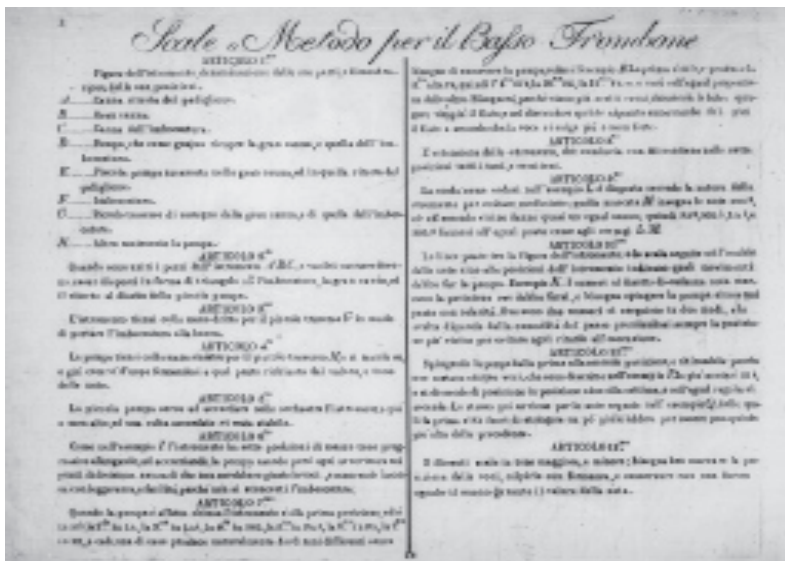


Figure 2

Braun, *Scale et Metodo Per il Trombone*, p. 2

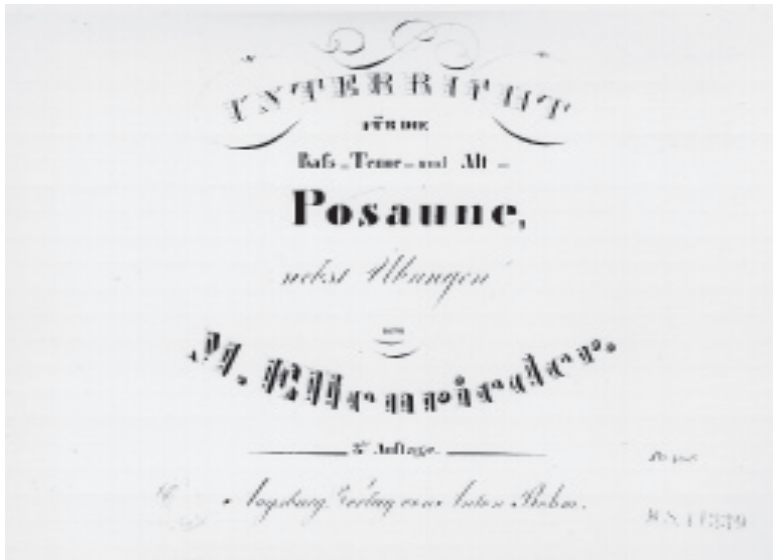


Figure 5

Ellenrieder, *Unterricht für die Bass-Tenor- und Alt-Posaune* (Böhm, Augsburg) (M.S. 11339 from the Musiksammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek)

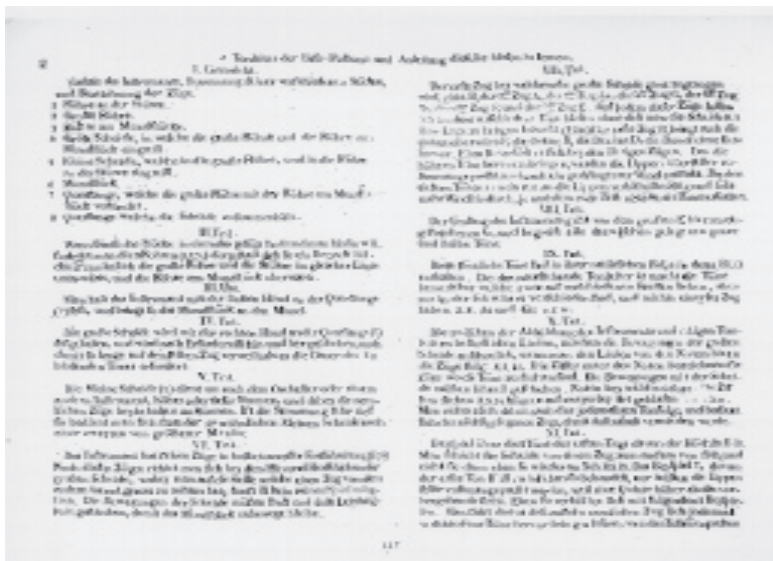


Figure 6

Ellenrieder, *Unterricht für die Bass-Tenor- und Alt-Posaune*, p. 2

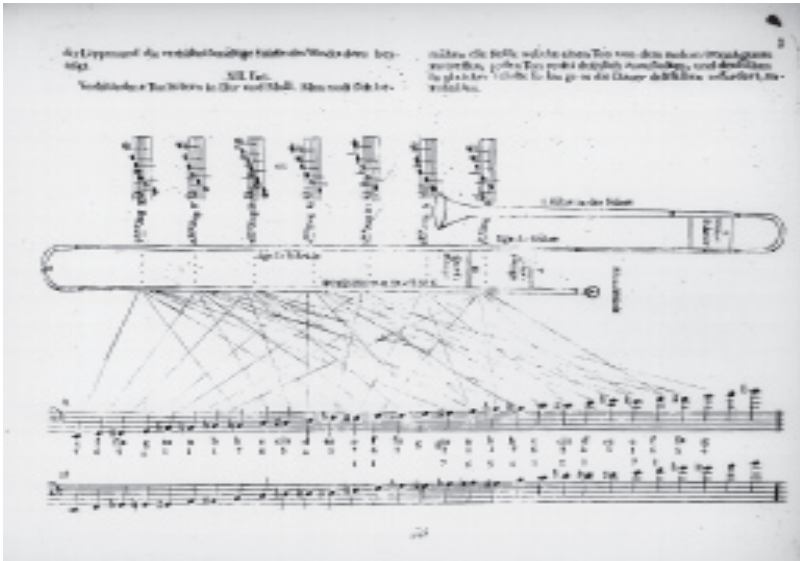


Figure 7

Ellenrieder, *Unterricht für die Bass- Tenor- und Alt-Posaune*, p. 3

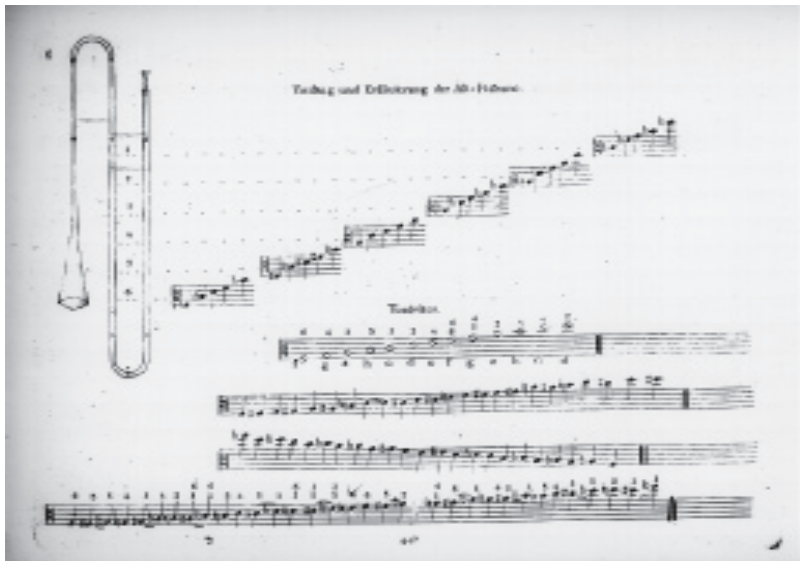


Figure 8

Ellenrieder, *Unterricht für die Bass- Tenor- und Alt-Posaune*, p. 6

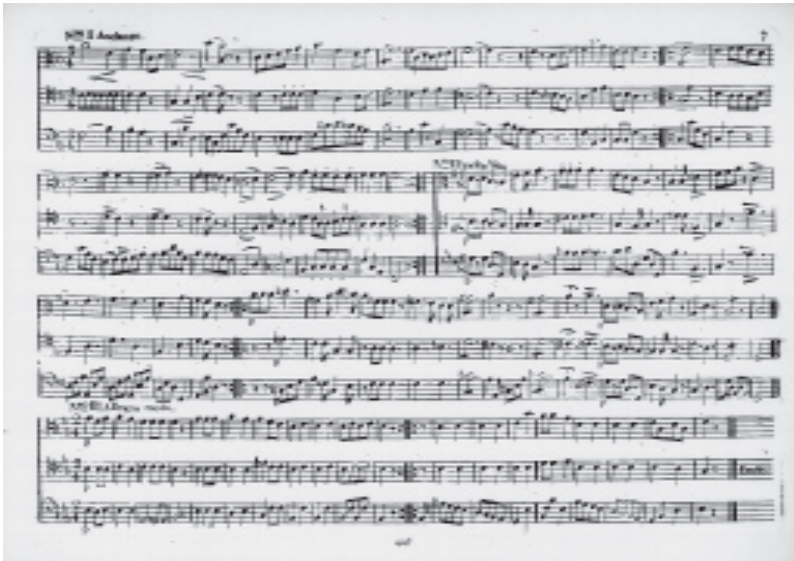


Figure 9

Ellenrieder, *Unterricht für die Bass- Tenor- und Alt-Posaune*, p. 7

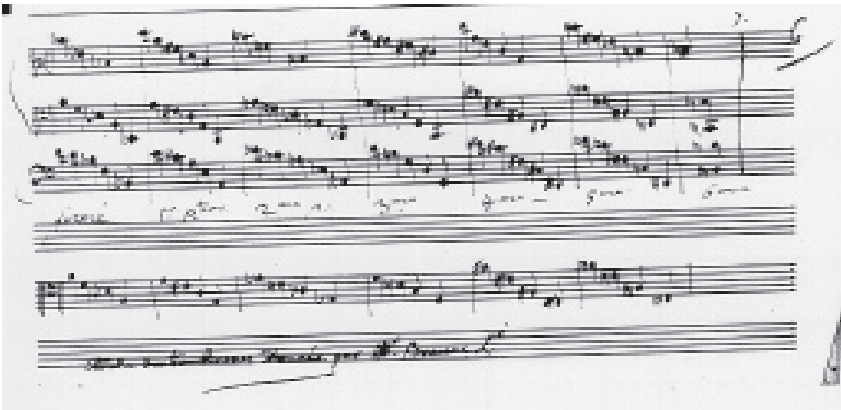


Figure 10

Braun, manuscript leaf from Francoeur, *Diapason général*
(Ms 1843, Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

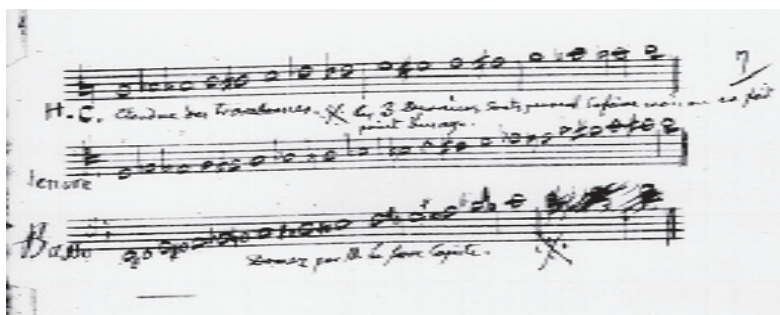


Figure 11
Lefevre, manuscript leaf from Francoeur, *Diapason général*

Genre des Trombones.

il ne faut employer les extrêmes du haut et du bas que la dernière fois afin
 le médium de l'un le contenant le haut et le bas toujours le plus beau.

Les Basses on peut voir d'employer que III. Qu'on a fait
 dans l'Alceste et Polydore en l'acte de

Figure 12
Louis(?), manuscript leaf from Francoeur, *Diapason général*

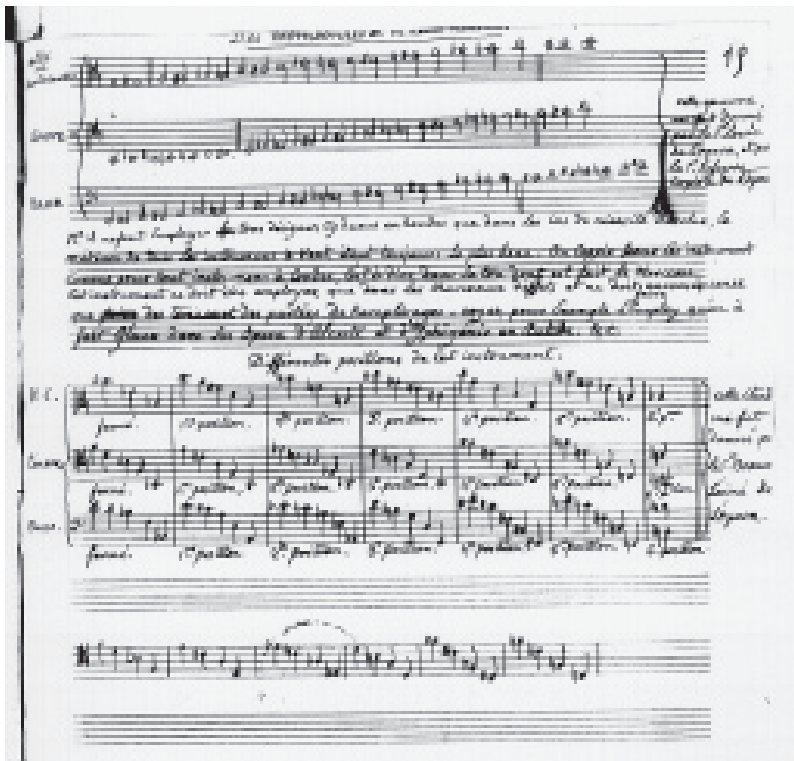


Figure 13
Francoeur, manuscript leaf from *Diapason général*