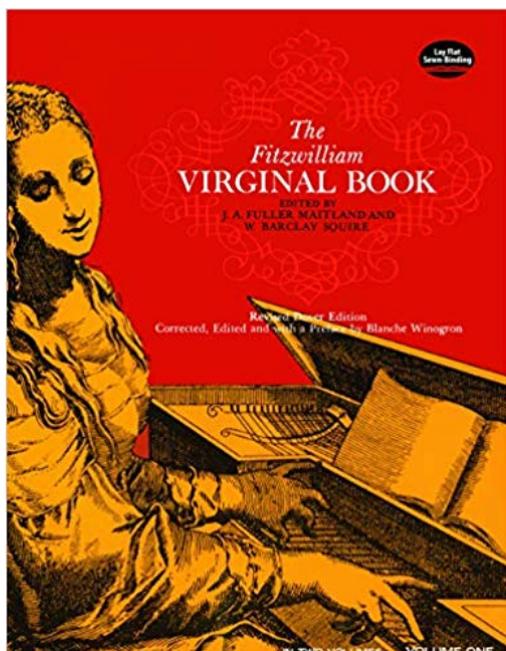


# The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, Vol. 1 *by* J. Fuller Maitland, W. Barclay Squire



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*The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* is "the most remarkable, and in many respects the most valuable collection of Elizabethan keyboard music," according to *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Of unknown origins, the previously scarce collector's item is now available at popular prices for the first time. The pieces herein, while composed for the virginal, can be played without difficulty on piano or any other keyboard instrument. The nearly 300 airs, variations, fantasies, toccatas, pavaues, galliards, allemandes, and courantes in these two volumes include some of the finest examples of Elizabethan and Jacobean music: compositions by Thomas Morley, Orlando Gibbons, Giles Farnaby, Thomas Warrock, Ferdinando Richardson, Peter Phillips, Thomas Tompkins, and practically every other composer of the virginalistic school. John Bull and William Byrd, two of England's greatest composers, are represented by over 100 works. J. A. Fuller Maitland and W. Barclay Squire set the music into modern notation, preserving faithfully the intent of the composers. The peculiarities of the original notation, time signatures, fingering, and the like as well as the ecclesiastical modes and accidentals employed by the composers are explained in a lucid introduction, which also discusses the history of the manuscript, the individuals connected with it, the composers, and the structure of the virginal. For this extensively revised and corrected Dover edition, Blanche Winogron, noted musicologist and performer, undertook a thorough critical reexamination of the 1899 Maitland Squire edition by closely comparing it to a copy of the original manuscript (the original is in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England) from which it was transcribed. Numerous minor errors, misprints, and misinterpretations in the Maitland/Squire transcription have been corrected, resulting in a new edition closer to the original than ever before. The period of this music was one of transition from the older principles and systems of notation to modern theories. This, then, is a most important document for musicologists and others interested in the history of music. But it is also a source of delight, allowing for countless hours at the keyboard for all lovers of good music.



## Reviews of the [The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, Vol. 1](#) by J. Fuller Maitland, W. Barclay Squire

BOND

Just soul-provokingly beautiful music. Upper intermediate or early advanced level. Some thick chords and some a bit thinner, a few pieces with counterpoint but mostly four, five or six part chords with a moving bassline and/or a particularly lovely melody, as is characteristic of Elizabethan England. The portrait on the front is the young Queen Elizabeth I of Elizabethan England, who played the virginals. The music is gorgeous and sings in one's soul. Very heart-felt beauty, pure chords. Composer William Byrd has a surprising use of dissonance for this time period, but most pieces are pure harmonies.

Balhala

I probably will not play extensively from this work but having it allows me to see what Schott ("Playing the Harpsichord") is talking about. I'm well past the age of adding much of this to my repertoire but I will certainly use some of the forward and several examples in what I do. I'm happy Dover provides works like this but I really dislike the binding which must be 'broken' in order to use the book on any kind of a key desk. I'd love to have it spiral bound but that would likely add more to the cost of what is probably a pricey sometime reference work for most new harpsichordists

WOGY

It will be awhile until I can master these pieces, but a welcome addition to my music library.

Fhois

This is a massive amount of music that is not well known in the general Baroque circles. It's interesting to see how the rules and styles of composition changed over time. If you aren't very skilled on the piano/keyboard I wouldn't buy it though, since it is relatively difficult.

Quttaro

A very fast and efficient service, arriving 1 month earlier than expected, I could not fail to be impressed. A volume for those interested in Elizabethan keyboard music.

Agamaginn

I got this quickly. It was in excellent shape. Since music books just sit around waiting to be played, there is not much more to critique.

Brariel

This and its companion volume *The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book: Volume Two* are the foundation of any early keyboardist's repertoire. I don't have the version with the CD, having bought mine some 10 years ago, but my students and I play from this book all the time, and it's a lot of fun if you love early English music. The selections are typical of the period and represent both well-known and lesser-known composers, and the critical notes are excellent. This book inspires me to practice!

Being just an 'average' 'Tudor period' keyboardist I can play 3, maybe 4, songs in this book. That beats the kids who can play 1, [kinda]. ... no-one I know can 'batter' more than 5. Worthwhile if you like to 'follow' CDs, and I do, but most folks will get so discouraged by trying to play this music they

would have to look up to see a lizard's belly ... the Rodgers Virginal Book, also by Dover, is a whole lot more realistic to play music from ... oh, it is not the 'high falooten' stuff in this but it doesn't drive one to strong drink in the knots of frustration as fast, either.

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