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COLLECTION OF CRITICAL EDITIONS OF THE WORKS OF  
*Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin*

N. 3

Ballade Op. 52

*Introduction, Text, Fingering, and Commentary*  
*by*

*Franco Luigi Viero*



*Free of Charge Editions Audacter.it*

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In the previous page: sculpture of Chopin's left hand carried out following the cast made by Jean-Baptiste Clésinger shortly after the death of the composer.

## Foreword

*With the fourth Ballade we continue our Collection of Critical Editions devoted to Chopin. We shall not repeat what we have expressed, in no uncertain terms, about the three most revered editions on the market place. We only underline that our editions are offered for free to visitors of the site [www.audacter.it](http://www.audacter.it)—particularly to students, pianists, musicologists and educated people—and can be printed and used in private. Law will prosecute any other use, if there is no contextual quotation of the author.*

*All documentation consulted has been paid by the editor, of his own pocket; in other words, he does not have to thank anyone, except the sites that provide free of charge the first editions of the Franco-Polish composer: CHOPIN'S FIRST ONLINE EDITIONS ([www.cfeo.org.uk](http://www.cfeo.org.uk)) and THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARY ([chopin.lib.uchicago.edu](http://chopin.lib.uchicago.edu)); not to mention a third meritorious site, that is IINTERNET ARCHIVE ([www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)).*

*This time, however, we have the joy to also thank the NARODOWY INSTYTUT FRYDERYKA CHOPINA for offering us the reproduction of the four pages containing the rejected autograph (A<sup>1</sup>) free, and we cannot overlook the beautiful site [www.polona.pl](http://www.polona.pl), which provides a lot of material valuable and useful, including autographs and the complete Tellefsen's and Mikuli's editions.*

*Then, it would be quite vulgar to ignore the contribution of those readers who kindly communicated us typos, omissions and various errors, and, thus, enhanced the quality of our publications. We hope they will not desist!*

*Obviously, we cannot assert that our edition is perfect, but we can certainly say that it is unrivalled.*

*If, on the one hand, we can prevent anybody from the squandering, although modest, for buying a harmful paid edition of the Ballade Op. 52, and, on the other, if we can stimulate a better understanding of the Chopin's new piano school, we will have achieved our goal.*

*Lastly, we exhort the students, who find the introduction a little boring, to study the musical text with the help of the comment.*



THE sources of the *quatrième Ballade* are: the three first editions, four autograph pages (mm. 1 to 79) of a version then rejected, and a second autograph, incomplete (mm. 1 to 136), which was used, so it would seem, from the German publisher. A sight certainly not ideal for those wishing to address a *recensio* of such a masterpiece, but, at first, much richer than that offered, e.g., by the *Prélude* Op. 45, handed down by just the three first editions.

Such a sight, however, becomes cloudy and hazy as soon as we take a look at the correspondence and the dates. The first mention of the *Ballade* is in a letter to Breitkopf of December 15, 1842, with which Chopin proposes some new works to the Leipzig publisher: “Gentlemen, I should like to offer you a Scherzo for 600 francs, a Ballade for 600 francs and a Polonaise for 500 francs. [...] If my Scherzo, Ballade and Polonaise are acceptable, please let me know by next post and suggest a time for their despatch.” (cf. HEDL.[1963] pp. 225f.) The offer suggests that those three works were already completed and ready to be copied and sent. We want to emphasize the date: we are in December of 1842.

According to Sylvie Delaigue-Moins, Chopin composed the *Ballade* in June and, after having finished the *Polonaise* in August, he began the *Scherzo* in September.<sup>1</sup> Although the biographer forgets—as most chopinologists—to document her claims, such assumptions are not farfetched: in fact, in June Chopin enjoyed the pleasant company of Delacroix, who frequently interrupted him indeed;<sup>2</sup> in July he was visited by Stephan Witwicki, and in September the Viardots arrived in Nohant. However, the publication of the three masterpieces will have to wait more than a year!

Unfortunately ACCFE neglects contracts with publishers. If, from a publishing point of view, the first issue of a work is comparable to a birth, the signing of the contract is its conception, whose date is, therefore, a very important datum, especially because it appears highly unlikely that a publisher undertakes to shell out money for something that he does not yet possess. Normally, the date of a contract is the one on which the author delivers his work and the publisher pays for it or, more often, undertakes to pay for it. In the case of Chopin, who accepted deferred payments too,<sup>3</sup> the date of contract is the day, with some exceptions, when his own manuscripts or the French pub-

<sup>1</sup> S. Delaigue-Moins, *Chopin chez George Sand à Nohant - Chronique de sept étés*, Le Pin (Impr. Roussel) 41996, pp. 81, 92, 93.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the letter of July 5, 1842 to George Sand, in *Correspondance d'Eugène Delacroix* (www.correspondance-delacroix.fr): «... take care of Chopin. Maybe he is working now that I do not interrupt him so much no longer. I am sure many times he neglected his work for keeping me company”.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Hummel's letter to Wessel of December 3, 1833 (KALLB.[1996] p.

lisher's proofs were delivered. Well, as to our *Ballade*, we know two contracts:

1<sup>st</sup>—The sale to Wessel of *Opp.* 52÷56 is reproduced in KALLB.[1982] p. 366: the top entitled “MEMORANDUM” brings no date; on the bottom, the “RECEIPT”, we read: «No. [space] RECEIVED of Messrs. Wessel & Stapleton, No. 67, Frith Street, Soho Square, | London, the sum of *Forty Nine* Pounds, *Nineteen* Shillings, for the absolute | Sale of all my Copyrights and Interest, present and future, vested and contingent, or otherwise, for the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, of and in the following work: | *Op. 52 Quatrième Ballade* | [...] | Composed by me. | *Paris* the [space] day of *August* 1843 | *Frédéric Chopin*.” In fact, that August Chopin went back to Paris “to see his music publisher and agree with him on some business” (cf. CGS VI p. 213, letter of 12 August to countess Marliani).<sup>4</sup> He arrived in Paris on Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, at h. 11:00 a.m., and left for Nohant on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> (cf. CFC III p. 142). The composer met definitely Léo, who kept up contacts with Wessel, and signed the contract between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> August. Must we believe that Chopin signed a receipt without receiving a penny? Yes, because the copies were not yet ready? Maybe Léo gave him an advance; anyway he urged the composer to submit the manuscripts; this is what we read between the lines of the letter dated October 15, 1843 (“Dear Mr. Léo, I send you, as you liked to allow me to do, my manuscripts for London...”, cf. CFC III p. 139). So, in mid-October Chopin sent his manuscripts to Léo, who shipped them to Wessel together with the contract previously signed. This means that in August 1843 the copies for Wessel were not yet ready.

2<sup>nd</sup>—The sale to Breitkopf of *Opp.* 52÷54, written in German, is dated October 31, 1843 (*ibid.* p. 348); then, with a letter of December 10, 1843 Chopin issues a receipt of payment of many works, including the «*Quatrième Ballade*» Op. 52 (cf. CFC III p. 146f.). The manuscripts for Leipzig were dispatched from Nohant to Gzymała with an undated letter, which, presumably, might have the same date of the envelope to Léo, i.e. 15 October. After that, Breitkopf sent Chopin the contract, always written in German, the composer signed and posted back on October 31. Hence, we can conclude that the manuscripts intended for Leipzig were sent simultaneously with those for London, or just before.

As for Schlesinger, the French publisher, the contract may have been one of the business to define, as Sand writes, and it may have been signed that August. But it is only a hypothesis, since the *Scherzo*, the *Bal-*

202), and the one written by Chopin himself to Wessel dated March 16, 1841 (*ibid.* p. 209).

<sup>4</sup> What Sand writes is only half true. Actually, Chopin had to attend to many commissions for his *maîtrise* (“[...] Chopin promises me to visit him [*scil.* Leroux], but he will have so short time and many runs to do [...]”, *ibid.*).

lade, and the *Polonaise* were ready ten months before!

Why such a delay? What had happened? Marie-Paule Rambeau says that the publication was postponed, “because Fontana was not there any more to deal with that”.<sup>5</sup> Other biographers report that he was no longer in France,<sup>6</sup> but this information is wrong.

Since November 1841 Fontana disappears from the correspondence of Chopin,<sup>7</sup> and yet he is in Paris and will leave for Cuba only in the summer of 1844. The evidence is that on March 17, 1843 Fontana gives a concert in a big way in the halls of Erard,<sup>8</sup> where he plays “the Scherzo of Chopin” too, while Chopin skipping his annual concert!

Hence, in December 1842 the break with Fontana had already taken place. What really happened is not known. In all likelihood Sand, who felt a great dislike for Fontana,<sup>9</sup> had a hand in that. In any case, Fontana has nothing to do with the delayed publication of the *Ballade*, the *Polonaise*, and the *Scherzo*.

The delay had more causes, all, like it or not, dependent on the composer himself: after Mallorca, no winter was spent in health; Chopin was hardly ever feeling well. Yet he had to give lessons to live, because he was used to spending without thinking over. He had a generous heart and was unable to save a penny; it is not hard to believe that he paid Sand much more than was actually due. So, with coughing fits, lessons and violent expectoration, winter 1842–’43 passed without being copied, presumably, one line of the compositions finished the previous summer.

When on May 22, 1843 Chopin arrived in Nohant, he knew he had to prepare copies of the three compositions already finished the year before. Moreover, he had decided (when?) to change the time of the *Ballade* from  $\frac{6}{4}$  to  $\frac{6}{8}$ , so that to the copies already budgeted other ones were to be added! Perhaps, it is because of

<sup>5</sup> M.-P. RAMBEAU, *Chopin. L'enchanteur autoritaire*, Paris (L'Harmattan) 2005, p. 686. This biography, valuable in some respects, is unfortunately polluted both by a naive trust in everything related by George Sand—whose skilful lies get evidence against Chopin—and by the following proportion: George Sand is to Literature as Chopin is to Music, that is to say that Sand would be a Homer or Dante or a Shakespeare in a skirt, and not a dairy cow, as rightly Nietzsche described her (*Milchkuh*, that Rémy de Gourmont translated into French by *vache à écrire*).

<sup>6</sup> Cf., e.g., S. Delaigue-Moins, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>7</sup> According to *CFC* the last letter to Fontana is dated 1<sup>st</sup> November 1841, but the date is wrong, because on that day Chopin was returning to Paris, where he arrived on 2.

<sup>8</sup> The event is announced among the *Nouvelles* of “RGM” of March 12, 1843 (p. 97), and positively reviewed in the number of March 19 (p. 103). Even “La France Musicale” devotes a paragraph in the issue of April 2 (p. 118).

<sup>9</sup> “I know this man only by sight and think of him as skinned alive, always ready to bear everybody a grudge for his woes. He is perhaps more worthy of pity than of blame; but he hurts the *other*, whose skin is so delicate, that a mosquito bite causes a deep wound.” (cf. CGS v p. 426, letter to Marie de Rozières). Apart from the judgment, quite fitting indeed, Sand, without realizing it, offers here a small example of her habit to lie: thank goodness she knew him only by sight!

such a thankless task of reviewing and copying that in the summer of 1843 he composed only the *Nocturnes* Op. 55 and the *Mazurkas* Op. 56.

And now we come to the first autograph (A<sup>1</sup>), of which we have only the first four pages (*v. supra*). The text is written in  $\frac{6}{4}$ . When the *Ballade* was offered to Breitkopf, that was the manuscript just ready. In the summer of 1843 (possibly earlier) Chopin rewrote the piece in  $\frac{6}{8}$ . It was not the first time that this happened: in fact, the *Étude* No. 2 Op. 25, formerly written in  $\frac{2}{4}$ , was published in  $\frac{4}{4}$ . We have here an umpteenth proof of how much importance the graphic appearance had for the composer. On the first page, top right, KOB. [1979] read: *p(our) M<sup>r</sup> Dessauer*, and attributed it to Chopin; KALLB. [1982], p. 175, confirms the reading but not the attribution: “... the manuscript [...] still carries Auguste Franchomme’s note “p(our) Mr. Dessauer” at the top of the first page”.<sup>10</sup> In contrast, we read: “*p. M<sup>r</sup> Desauer .*”, and next, perhaps, “*F. chopin ...*”. The quality of our reproduction does not allow more. The attribution to Franchomme appears very doubtful, since the abbreviation of *Monsieur* is usually *M.*, rarely *M.<sup>r</sup>*, not *M<sup>r</sup>*. Moreover, it is not likely that Franchomme did not know the spelling of the name of *Des-sauer* (with two *s*). Additionally, *M<sup>r</sup>* and *Desauer* seem written by different hands, not only because the pen and ink do not coincide, but also because the letter *r* of *M<sup>r</sup>* and the one of *Desauer* follow different models. Finally, *Desauer* is written over something else not readable from our reproduction. Anyhow, already Éd. Ganche knew that record was not of Chopin: “In November of 1933—he wrote—was sold in Lucerne an unknown manuscript of the 4<sup>th</sup> *Ballade*, which had been given to the musician Dessauer, a friend of Chopin (*En novembre 1933, on vendit à Lucerne un manuscrit inconnu de la 4<sup>e</sup> Ballade, donné au musicien Des-sauer, ami de Chopin*)»;<sup>11</sup> otherwise, he would have written: ... *donné par Chopin à son ami Dessauer, or au musicien Dessauer, son ami*. Any further speculation requires a careful examination of the original. Certainly, the backdating of the manuscript to 1841, supported by Ekier to make it coincide with the presence of Dessauer in Paris, is a forcing. The manuscript was, apparently, complete, but we ignore whether the four

<sup>10</sup> Kallberg also reports that the attribution to Franchomme was suggested him by Eigeldinger (*ibid.* n. 37), who had indicated him a letter of the pianist Meumann to Ferdinand Hiller: «Paris, 29.x.1949 | Honoured Mr. Hiller! | [...] I stated him [*scil.* Franchomme] your request, and Franch[omme], although broken-hearted, is happy that you have turned up, and promised that he will do everything to let you have, as a friend, a souvenir (*Diesen habe ich mit Ihrer Bitte bekannt gemacht; Franch[omme] freut sich, in seinem Schmerz einmal etwas von Ihnen zu hören, und versprach, alles als Freund aufzubieten, um Ihnen einen Souvernir zukommen zu lassen*)...» (cf. *Aus Ferdinand Hillers Briefwechsel (1826–1861)* – Beiträge zu einer Biographie Ferdinand Hillers von Reinhold Sietz, Köln [Luthe-Druck] 1958, p. 79).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Éd. GANCHE, *Voyages avec Frédéric Chopin*, Paris (Mercure de France) 1934, p. 141.



pages that today we can read, are a partial concession of the collector, or the only ones actually remained.

The second manuscript—which, following *PE*, we call  $\mathcal{A}^4$ —is also incomplete, and is believed to have been used by Breitkopf as antigraph for his edition: in fact, the engraver's records relating to the pagination agree with *G*. In *UT* Ekier argues that “after a meticulous comparison (*nach einem genauen Vergleich*, poorly translated into English with *detailed correlation* [p. xxvi]—but in philology, the correct term is *Kollation*, *collation*) of the music marks and notation of the first editions with those of Aut 3 [=  $\mathcal{A}^4$ ] it was possible to prove not only that three earlier autographs had existed but also in what order they had been written and which parts of Aut 3 [=  $\mathcal{A}^4$ ] Chopin had copied from [Aut 1] [=  $\mathcal{A}^2$ ], which from [Aut 2] [=  $\mathcal{A}^3$ ].” Then he declares that “in principle”  $\mathcal{A}^4$  “has priority”. In *WN* he specifies that  $\mathcal{A}^4$  is “the chronologically last autograph/fair-copy” and his edition is based on  $\mathcal{A}^4$  up to m. 136, “and from bar 137, on *GE*, compared with *F* and *E*.” Well, neither the *Kritische Anmerkungen* of *UT* nor the *Source Commentary* of *WN* contain some evidence of what the editor stated, and the text, including variants, seems rather a mixture, whose recipe Ekier brought with him into his grave. As for autographs, we notice that: (a) to establish that they were three, there is no need of any collation; the correspondence is enough; (b) the fact that  $\mathcal{A}^4$  is “the chronologically last autograph/fair-copy” is irrelevant, especially since the fair copies of Chopin contain dumbfounding errors and omissions: a clear example, in addition to  $\mathcal{A}^4$ , is given by the autograph of the *Polonaise-Fantasia* Op. 61 used for *G*, which is the fair copy of the one used for *F*.<sup>12</sup>

But back to  $\mathcal{A}^4$ : it is a problematic fair copy indeed. We know that the German engravers, unlike the Parisian and English ones, did not follow scrupulously the writing of Chopin: in particular, they did not keep to stems' orientation and the disposal—inside a measure—of the various marks; which, of course, was only likely to increase the number of errors. Now we list several important dissimilarities.

— Mm. 1÷2:



Note that Chopin, alongside *p*, had written *legato*, which then he erased and rewrote between the semiquavers of r.h. Furthermore, in m. 2, a syncopated echo is highlighted by quavers. Finally, the five quavers played by l.h. are slurred.

Now, what does the engraver? Well, he neglects the indication *legato*, does not highlight the syncopated echo and omits the slur of l.h. These omissions, all in the first two measures (!), are too many indeed.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. m. 5, where Chopin writes a clear  $E\flat^3$  instead of  $D\flat^3$ , and m. 20, where the omission of a  $\sharp$  has established a false tradition, which pianists, because of an ear 'lame', cannot do without.



— M. 4:



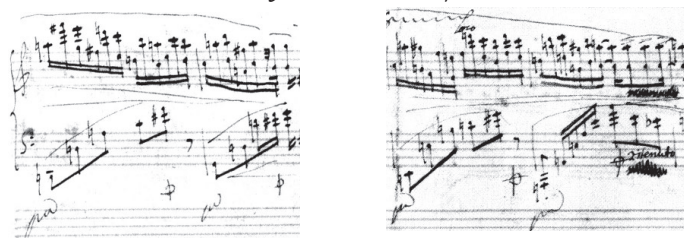
The sign of *brisé* to the first tenth of r.h. is omitted and, again, the syncopated echo in quavers is ignored.

— Mm. 8, 72 e 108:



Here the engraver omits the expression *in tempo*: three times out of six! And by *fz* (m. 72)  $>$  is missing.

— Mm. 102÷103 and 106÷107:



Both the *diminuendo* hairpins are absent, and in m. 107 even the *crescendo*

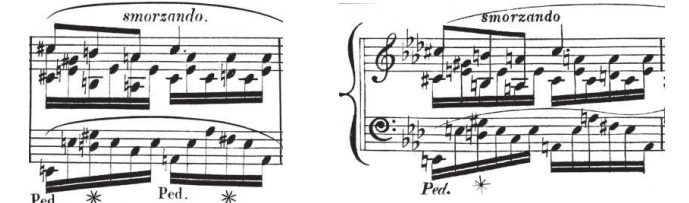


one, in the end of m., is missing. Conversely, five accidentals are added, which at first sight you might attribute to the intervention

of a proofreader, who, however, did not care about the missing hairpins (!) (but *v. infra*).

However, the biggest embarrassment is procured by m. 133: under the slur in upper staff the engraver of G inserted a hairpin, which is not in  $\mathcal{A}^4$ ! It is known that because of the unaware side-ways vision every copyist makes errors as unwitting as surprising; therefore, to justify such an addition, we have to check if nearby there is another

measure more or less similar, in which there is a hairpin. Now, m. 133 is the second of the last system of the fourth page, and in the system above there is no measure with a hairpin inserted below a slur. Perhaps, did the engraver invent it? No! The comparison with F and E allows to exclude this hypothesis: in fact, instead of the hairpin of G, both F (on the left) and E



have *smorzando*.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, the Leipzig engraver read that hairpin in a source other than  $\mathcal{A}^4$ . As for the quavers of m. 134, it is possible that the engraver, seeing no rests, ascribed to the composer himself the wrong (according to him) vertical alignment.

That  $\mathcal{A}^4$  is a fair copy prepared at the desk, not at the piano, is demonstrated by m. 7 (on the left), where the dyads of r.h. are exchanged.<sup>14</sup> But the same error, then corrected, had been made in  $\mathcal{A}^1$  (here below). This remark gives space to three hypotheses: (1) Chopin had difficulty reading his own writing, or (2) repeated the mistake (!); (3) the antigraph of  $\mathcal{A}^4$  was a copy in  $\frac{6}{8}$  of  $\mathcal{A}^1$ , where, however, the error had not been corrected. It

<sup>13</sup> The possible alternative—if not the identity—of a *diminuendo* hairpin with *smorzando* is shown by the correction of m. 549 in the autograph of *Scherzo* Op. 54.

<sup>14</sup> This is another evidence that Chopin—unlike Mozart and Beethoven, as we pointed out elsewhere—did not have a direct relationship with the notes on paper, but with the keys, that is, if Mozart and Beethoven, looking at a written note, ‘heard’ its sound and, looking at a key, caught only a correspondence (a certain key corresponded to a written note, which, once visualized, could ‘resound’ in their mind), for Chopin was the opposite: the sounds ‘heard’ by his creative imagination had a direct relationship with the keys, a secondary one with the corresponding notes. This explains his extraordinary ability to harmonize his improvisations. No other pianist of his contemporaries would have been capable to do the same.

is curious that F1 (on the left) shows a similar error in the second dyad: a distraction of the engraver or the composer?

From the above it appears that the relationship between  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and G was by no means exclusive. Which puts  $\mathcal{A}^4$  in a position that undermines its authority (assumed by Ekier, Samson and Müllemann) especially towards G and the other two lost autographs too. Moreover, not being  $\mathcal{A}^4$  a complete autograph, every deduction we can do, though acceptable, must be partial, that is to say  $\mathcal{A}^4$  is unusable as a primary basis for a correct *recensio*, which will be based on F G and E.

The collation of F G and E must first highlight any concordance and discordance.

F contains a large number of hairpins, which are neither in G nor in E. Here the list:

— in mm. 37, 68, 69, 98, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118÷119, 157, 176÷177 (where the hairpin incorporates the intensive accent on the first two quavers of m. 177); — in mm. 26÷27, 68, 69, 92÷94, 96÷97, 101, 105, 171, 214; — in mm. 1÷3, 3÷4, 98÷99, 191, 192, 193, 194, 211, 221÷222; — in mm. 5, 157÷158. Even if, preparing  $\mathcal{A}^2$  and  $\mathcal{A}^3$ , Chopin neglected some hairpins, he added most of them while proof-reading, as evidenced by m. 214: since there was no space, the engraver placed the hairpin on the slur.

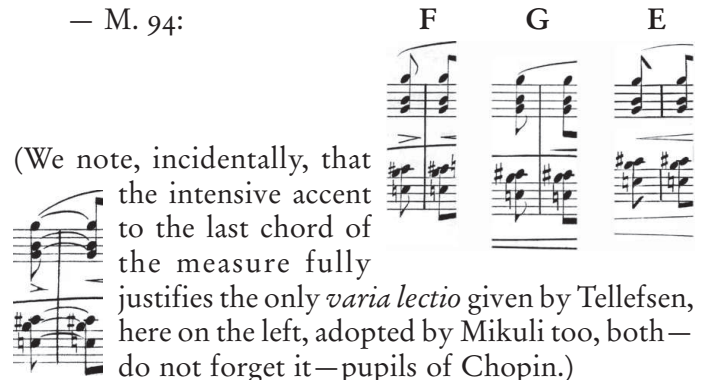
Some intensive accents are found only in F.

— M. 88:



As in F there are evident traces of a correction, it is likely that this was an opportunity that stimulated the addition of an intensive accent.

— M. 94:





— M. 156:

Unlike mis. 88, here it is more likely that the accent to  $F\flat^3$  was copied, but it would be difficult to determine if the insertion was recent or not. Let us go on.

— M. 179:

In G and E not only the intensive accent is missing, but also the *arpeggio* to last chord of r.h. This testifies a refinement after copying  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and  $*\mathcal{A}^3$ .

— M. 218:

not, however, a similar accent to the first duplet of semiquavers; you do not see any hairpin, any pedalling and one only tie; moreover, there is a simple slur instead of two. Instead, E, which nevertheless has a hairpin and two pedals, is without slurs, and the triplets of r.h. testify an expired *lectio*, although  $\mathcal{A}^4$ ,  $*\mathcal{A}^2$  e  $*\mathcal{A}^3$  are alleged to be nearly contemporary.

Going on to pedalling, in m. 2 the second Ped., very appropriate, is only in F, because Chopin probably added it, while he was proof-reading at the piano. In the three first editions the pedalling presents a large number of differences main-

ly due to two reasons: (1) the engravers' inaccuracy and (2) a certain mechanism by the composer. In general, it can be stated that in Chopin there are sections, in which the pedalling is indicated with great care, obviously marked when he was at the piano; elsewhere, however, you notice a certain inertia dominated by routine: this happens, when the pedalling was almost certainly added during copying, *i.e.* at the desk.<sup>15</sup> An example of what we mean by mechanical insertion of a pedal is given by m. 3 in E (centre):

There are, then, whole passages, where the pedalling is missing in one, while it is indicated in the other ones, as in miss. 129÷133 of G versus F & E, or in mm. 203÷206 of E versus F & G. In any case, the pedalling of F, although incomplete, is the one that received the most attention.

Such a mixing up of the sources is found throughout the *Ballade*. Let us take two measures that, apart from the pedalling, do not pose any serious textual problem. Mm. 12 to 13:

The differences concern the chords' place (m. 12), the stems' orientation and the pedalling. In G the stems of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> quaver of m. 12 e of the 4<sup>th</sup> quaver of m. 13 are reversed in com-

<sup>15</sup> Ernst Rudorff, in the first true Urtext edition of the *Études*, had already made a similar observation: "That Chopin wants a very extensive use of the pedal, anyone who is familiar with his music, understands by himself. [...] How much he felt essential this vital resource, it is clear enough from his indications. It is equally clear, however, another thing: he was extremely susceptible to any abuses that disturb the purity of resonance and let leaked sounds extraneous to harmony. The instructions of pushing and releasing the pedal, in an almost uninterrupted sequence, repeated countless times, flow in all his compositions, providing, with meticulous precision, to avoid any unpleasant sound. Yet even here, it is sometimes a flaw: it is not farfetched the impression that Chopin's way was very conscientious, yes, but in a certain sense more mechanical (*Dass Chopin vom Pedal einen sehr ausgedehnten Gebrauch gemacht wissen will, versteht sich für Jeden, der mit seiner Musik vertraut ist, von selbst. [...] Wie stark er die Unentbehrlichkeit dieses Hilfsmittel empfand, geht aus seinen Bezeichnungen zur Genüge hervor; ebenso deutlich*



parison with  $\mathcal{A}^4$ . In E, where the chords of m. 12 are all written in the lower staff, there is one only Ped., like in F and  $\mathcal{A}^4$ , where the second Ped. of m. 12 is not to be intended as written below the last

chord of the measure, but on the left of  $A\flat^1$ ; in any case, the pedals are three, not four.<sup>16</sup> From these two measures we can deduce that: (a) the writing of G is not conform to its alleged antigraph; (b) the pedalling of all three autographs delivered to publishers was completed at the desk, so it is not reliable to go back to their respective antigraphs, as it is clearly shown, be-

sides, by m. 22 of G (here on the right), where there is no second pedal, well indicated in  $\mathcal{A}^4$ . These differences between  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and G – without ignoring the natural to  $G^4$  – are added to the ones mentioned above, which are so many and such that they rule out, in spite of appearances, a direct and exclusive dependence of G on  $\mathcal{A}^4$ .

We must not forget that the three autographs given to publishers were fair copies, which Chopin had prepared by reading other manuscripts of his own.

Again about the dependence of G on  $\mathcal{A}^4$  let us see,



e.g., mm. 37÷38. Before confronting F and E, let us check the differences between G and the autograph. We note that both *legato* and *pp*, and even the first

Ped. of G, are arranged differently than  $\mathcal{A}^4$ ; not only, the German engraver changes the orientation of the stem of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quaver and does not copy the slur under the octaves in the



aber auch das Andere, dass er bis zum Äussersten gegen jeden Missbrauch, gegen jede Trübung des reinen Klanges, die das Hineispielen harmoniefremder Töne hervorrufen könnte, empfindlich war. In fast ununterbrochener Folge, unzählige Male wiederholt, durchziehen die Vorschriften für Niederdrücken und Aufheben des Pedals alle seine Compositionen, mit peinlichster Genauigkeit Sorge tragend, dass jeder mögliche Missklang vermieden werde. Und doch ergibt es sich auch hier zuweilen eine Unzulänglichkeit. Der Eindruck ist nicht zurückzuweisen, dass Chopin's Verfahren ein zwar sehr gewissenhaftes, aber in gewissem Sinne mehr mechanisches war.“ (cf. Friedrich Chopin, *Etüden für Clavier*, Leipzig [Breitkopf & Härtel] 1899, p. 4). E. Rudorff (1840–†1916) had been a member of the editorial board of the first critical edition of Chopin's works published by the same publisher: evidently the result of that issue had not seemed satisfying. At last, we want to inform our Readers that Rudorff's Urtext edition of the *Etudes*, after more than a century and the new pseudo-Urtext and pseudo-critical editions, is still the one that offers the best text.

<sup>16</sup>Ekier in *UT* follows G, whereas in *WN* he sets the first Ped. of m.

lower staff. But there is something more surprising:  $G\flat^2$  of the 3<sup>rd</sup> octave (m. 38) has a useless  $\flat$ , which the engraver cannot have copied from  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and no proof-reader would have added; therefore, this reiterated  $\flat$  comes from another source! Comparing F (left) and



E, we note that:—*legato* is written under the octaves of m. 38;—the first Ped. of F, missing in E, is placed as in G, not as in  $\mathcal{A}^4$ ;—like G, F adds to the second  $G\flat^2$  a second  $\flat$  that in E, like in  $\mathcal{A}^4$ , is absent;—in  $\mathcal{A}^4$  F and E the expression *pp* has the same position, and the slur, missing in G, is well marked;—F has an exclusive *dim.* and a hairpin (*v. supra*).

Above, about m. 107 in G and  $\mathcal{A}^4$ , we pointed out the missing hairpins and, as for the accidentals, we hypothesized a possible intervention of a proofreader. But look at all the details: in r. h. the engraver does not



copy the ties of the last sixth, quite clear in  $\mathcal{A}^4$ ; in l. h., the first quaver is not dotted, and the stems of the semiquavers are reversed, nevertheless three naturals are added.

It is a contradiction! Now look at E and F: both, like



$\mathcal{A}^4$ , have the hairpins and the ties (E adds two accidentals to the sixths of m. 108); in l. h.  $A\flat^1$  of E is dotted as in  $\mathcal{A}^4$ ; G has six  $\flat$ , E seven, F five. In other words, the naturals of G have not been added by any proof-reader! The indication *ritenuto*—written in  $\mathcal{A}^4$  under the syncopated sixths of r. h., then erased and rewritten under the quavers of l. h.—disappears in F, but reappears in E above the slur of r. h. In effect, cutting the only slur (l. h. of  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and G) in two (as in E and F), the thought is so clear, that the indication *ritenuto* can be considered as unnecessary.

Hence, the collation of m. 107 shows that  $\mathcal{A}^4$  cannot be the sole source of G, and the writing of l. h. in E

13 as it appears in  $\mathcal{A}^4$  (Müllemann does the same). But, when the notes in the bass clef were out of the staff, Chopin tended to write “ped” to the left of the note. The pedalling adopted by Ekier and Müllemann is vulgar, because it disturbs the entrance of the soprano. A second pedal in m. 12 is justified, of course, but  $A\flat^1$  requires a renewing of it. It is a simple question of vocal taste.



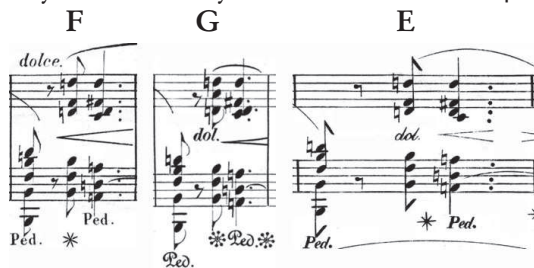
and F (with two slurs) represents a refinement in respect of  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and G.

Now let us see some places that testify the mixing up of the sources. M. 65:



Leaving aside the obvious mistake of the engraver of F, who writes  $G^b$  instead of  $E^b$ , it is equally clear that G ( $<\mathcal{A}^4$ ) offers a lesson passed, because  $A^b$  is not yet separated from the chord, and the vertical squiggle to the first chord of l. h. is still missing. Hence, F ( $<^*\mathcal{A}^2$ ) and E ( $<^*\mathcal{A}^3$ ) have a common source, other than that of  $\mathcal{A}^4$ .

But you cannot say the same about m. 84:



Here it is not the German engraver's mistake that captures our attention, but the expression *dol* between the staves in G and E versus *dolce* of F. This means that, for this measure, the antigraph of  $\mathcal{A}^4$  (or other autograph served for G) and  $^*\mathcal{A}^3$  was the same.

More complicated is the case of m. 92:



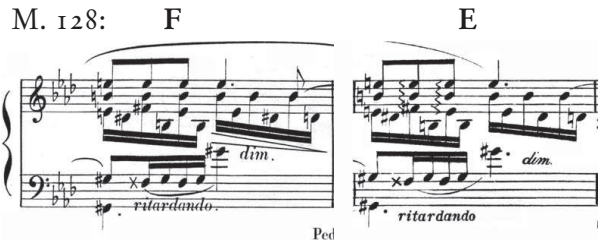
G and E have in common the text, including the  $\flat$  to the first  $D^1$  and the hairpin, whereas F and G share the fingering and the slurs of l. h. This measure shows that Chopin was copying from several manuscripts; so, the correction in  $\mathcal{A}^4$  seems to indicate that Chopin kept under his eyes a manuscript like  $^*\mathcal{A}^2$  ( $>F$ ), but then, remembering he had change something, picked up another manuscript.

M. 122: F E



Here, too, the sources' intersection is evident. In fact, in E and G (on the right), which more-

over does not respect the wideness of the first hairpin of  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and misinterprets the slur of the last four semi-quavers of l. h., the hairpin is in the same position; in contrast, in E (l. h.) there is a single slur, whereas in F and G the slurs are two.



In E and G, which does not copy from  $\mathcal{A}^4$  the stem to the last  $B^4$  nor the tie to  $G^{\sharp 2}$ ,

the first voice ( $E^5$ ) is alone, while in F and  $\mathcal{A}^4$  the stem to  $B^4$  adds a second voice; hence, Chopin copied a manuscript containing the added stem, which was not in the antigraphs of E and G. Moreover, the stem in  $\mathcal{A}^4$  excludes that the quaver in F was added while Chopin was proofreading. On the other hand, the indication *ritardando* is not in  $\mathcal{A}^4$  nor in G, where it is replaced by a hairpin. Finally, in F the *arpeggios* are missing, and in E there is no hairpin together with *dim.*, and the last but one  $D^4$  has not the useless  $\sharp$  of F and G.

... And we could go on like this for the whole *Bal-lade!*

We conclude our explanatory overview going back to m. 2. Above we showed as it appears in  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and G; now we also see F and E:



A first surprising remark is that  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and E are identical, i.e. they were copied from the same manuscript, while G looks like a sketch, as if it were the first trans-

cription from  $\mathcal{A}^1$ , where, however, the voices are well distinguished. F would be the second

version, a little more polished, while  $\mathcal{A}^4$  and E give the correct and final transcription of  $\mathcal{A}^1$ , but in  $6/8$ .

Therefore, the only m. 2 allows asserting with great likelihood that the main phases of the transition from the version in  $6/4$  to that in  $6/8$  were three.

#### CONCLUSION.

What has been described allows to establish that:

- (1)  $\mathcal{A}^4$  was not the only manuscript used for G;
- (2) Chopin prepared his manuscripts at the desk, keeping on the table all the material produced and copying now here now there, not so capriciously, but trusting to his memory, that is, taking in his hand, from time to time, the manuscript or the sheet on which he remembered he had jotted a change.

The result of such a procedure—constantly interrupted by guests of Nohant and a poor health—is that he prepared three manuscripts characterized by an incredible mixture of a lot of small differences we can divide into four categories:

- (a) obsolete writings (cf. m. 218 of E);
- (b) different writings, but substantially similar, indicating interpretative details not different, but considered from a different point of view (cf. m. 133);
- (c) amendments, *i.e.* re-use of rejected lessons (*see apparatus*);
- (d) real *variae lectiones* (*see text*).

*Rebus sic stantibus*, the risk that editor's personal beliefs can influence the *recensio*, is real.

The points, which we stuck to, are as follows:

- If a writing or a lesson appears evidently the most complete and accurate, we preferred that, putting the differences in apparatus;
- Between the real and/or dubious *variae lectiones* we included in the main text those that, according to our knowledge of the composer, are preferable, considering the remaining ones as variants;
- As for the pedalling, however flawed and incomplete, we admitted the indications that best agree with the principles of Chopin's piano school.

We list, below, the documents used in the constitution of the text:

- $\mathcal{A}^1$  Rejected autograph (*v. supra*): four pages containing mm. 1÷79. It belongs to a collector. Reproduction was provided to us for free by Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina of Warszawa. Cf. KOB.[1979] p. 115; *Katalog* p. 74.
- $\mathcal{A}^4$  Incomplete autograph: four pages containing mm. 1÷136. It is kept in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. We read it in the only facsimile edition available, cf. JIM SAMSON, *Fr. Chopin, Ballada f-moll op. 52, A II/52*, Warszawa (Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina) 2009. Cf. KOB.[1979] p. 115; *Katalog* p. 74.

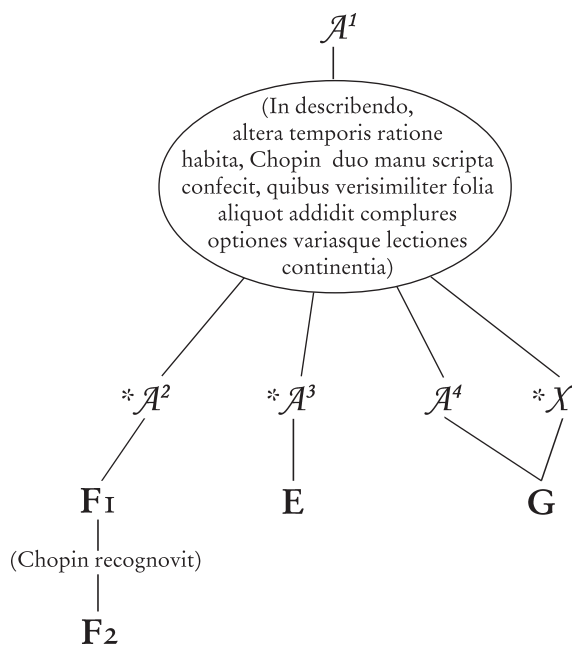
- F1 First French edition, published by Schlesinger, plate no. 3957 (cf. *ACCFE* p. 386). The date of *dépôt légal* is December 14, 1843, while the announcement of publication is on the last page of "RGM" of December 24, 1843, p. 438 (cf. *ibid.* p. xxxix), where, however, the announcement of *Opp. 52÷54* is below that of the *Album de M<sup>lle</sup> Lia Duport* for 1844 and is followed by that of the *Fantaisie brillante pour le piano sur des motifs favoris de Beatrice di Tenda* by Thalberg together with the version for violin and piano composed by Thalberg himself and Panofka. Now, the version for violin and piano of that *Fantaisie* was again announced on "RGM" of January 7, 1844 (p. 8) and repeated on January 14 (p. 16). On 21 and 28 January, the same magazine announces several new piano compositions, but not the three Chopin's masterpieces, which reappear on February 25 (p. 71) in an advertisement without emphasis, among many others. In other words, there is sufficient circumstantial evidence to say that *Opp. 52÷54* did not come to light in 1843.
- F2 Second French edition, same publisher and plate no. (cf. *ACCFE* p. 386): compared with F1 it contains two only corrections.
- G First German edition, published by Breitkopf & Härtel, plate no. 7001. It seems to have been printed first, since the announcement on "Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung" is dated November 22, 1843 (cf. *ibid.* p. xlv).
- E First English edition, published by Wessel, plate no. 5305: it is the last appeared in order of time. The Stationers' Hall date is March 1, 1844, but the press advertisement is April 24, 1845 (cf. *ibid.* p. lv).
- F1<sup>J</sup> copy of F1 from the so-called *exemplaires Jędrejewicz* (cf. EIGELD.[2006] pp. 276ss.). In *UT* Ekier says that it contains "two corrections in Chopin's hand" (p. xxvi), but in *WN* he restricts himself to quoting the score. Samson and Müllemann do not say a word about. From our microfilm we note the addition of a ♯ to  $E^b$  in m. 57, which is not in Chopin's hand, though. As for the second correction—which escaped us but not a reader with an excellent sight (April 2018)—seems to be the stroke added to  $A^3$  in m. 130 (fifth semiquaver): actually, Chopin himself might have traced it.
- T1 *Collection des Œuvres pour le Piano par Frédéric [sic!] Chopin | I BOLERO - 4 BALLADES - I BARCAROLLE, 6.<sup>e</sup> Livraison, publié par T. D. A. Tellefsen, Paris (Richault) s.d. (but 1860), pp. 38÷50. In spite of the title page, the in-*



dex contains the *Fantaisie Op. 49* too. The issue is available on [www.polona.pl](http://www.polona.pl).

**Mk** *Fr. Chopin's Pianoforte-Werke*, revidirt und mit Fingersatz versehen (zum größten Theil nach des Autors Notirungen) von Carl Mikuli, Band 4, *Balladen*, Leipzig (Fr. Kistner) s.d. (but 1880), pp. 32÷43.

Here is, at last, the *stemma*:



In our opinion is not possible to further clarify the sources' relationship, since the collation allows only two firm conclusions:

1. **G** made use of a different source than **A⁴**, which we called **\*X**.

2. The three first editions (**F1**, **E** and **G**) contain simultaneously and equally lessons expired and improvements in writing, as well as exclusive features, in a mixture that can be justified only by an almost simultaneous use of multiple sources, alternated by changes of mind the composer introduced there and then during copying.

Why two manuscripts? And why additional leaves? The course was probably the following: changing the time  $\frac{6}{8}$ , Chopin began a new manuscript, which—as was his, so to speak, *modus componendi*—he filled with corrections and changes, annotating alternative solutions, when was no more space, on loose-leaves. And then he rearranged all in a second manuscript, not free, of course, from corrections and changes. All of this material, without excluding **A¹**, was used for setting up the manuscripts intended for the publishers.

**PE** is based on the erroneous «convincing argu-

ments» (p. 67) of Ekier, whereas the *stemma* of **HN** is rather fanciful.

#### NOTE ON FINGERING.

The critical edition of a piano work cannot ignore the point of view of piano playing, especially when it is dealing with Chopin, creator of a new piano school, in which the fingering plays a fundamental role. Mikuli asserts that the fingering given in his edition comes, for the most part, directly from his Master. His statement, which is true, should be integrated. In fact, when he was not able to find anywhere the fingering of his teacher, he gives his own, sometimes exasperating the principles learned, so as to suggest hyper-chopinian or completely anti-chopinian solutions. So, it is up to any philologist-pianist—who has well assimilated the basics of the Chopin's piano school—to analyse every passage and verify the claim of Mikuli.

In Chopin, notes—*i.e.* keys—and fingering are closely connected. In some cases, the valuation of the fingering—and we will see that in other editions—can resolve textual doubts. This does not exclude that a passage may be fingered in two different ways, but some fingerings, albeit seemingly plausible, are to be rejected.

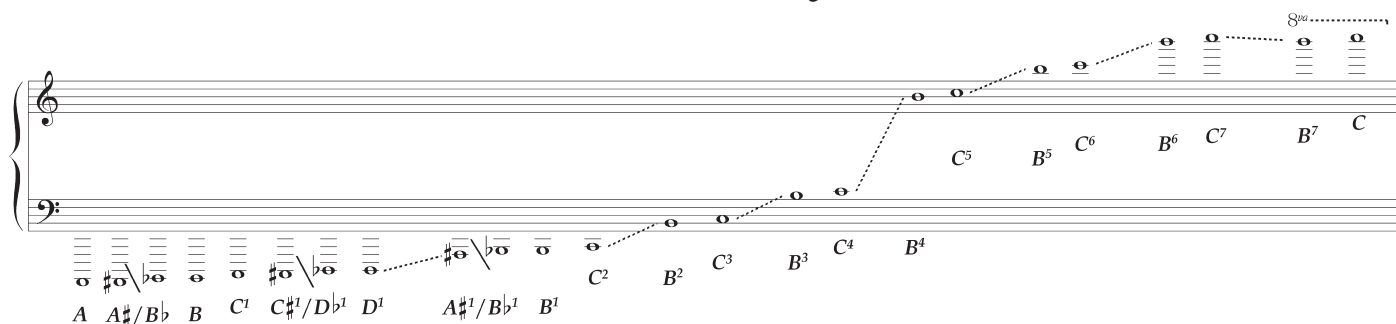
We have distinguished with different founts Chopin's fingering (mm. 91÷92 and 160: **1 2**) from that of Mikuli (**1 2 3 4 5**), which forms the base. In the passages, in which Mikuli's fingering is missing or not in conformity—in our opinion—with the principles of Chopin's piano school, we proposed ours (**1 2 3 4 5**); moreover, we use no. **8** when the thumb has to press two keys, *cf.* *MOZZATI. Esercizi di tecnica pianistica*, a cura di A. Baldrighi, Milano [Ricordi] 1994, p. 5). The symbol  $\frown$  indicates the exchange between two fingers on the same key, while  $\sphericalangle$  indicates the slide of the same finger from one key to another; a horizontal line (—) preceding the number prescribes that, on that key, the finger remains the same.

#### NOTE ON APPARATUS.

In order to avoid waste of space, the measures we have already shown in the introduction, are not reproduced in the apparatus, where you will find the reference with the page number and the column (*a* or *b*) of the introduction, where the measure you are looking for is shown.



## Notes and keys



[To make a simple and immediate connection between the notes on the pentagram and the corresponding keys, we preferred a system of easy understanding for the piano student. Notes without number in superscript correspond to the few keys, which do not belong to full octaves and are at the ends of the keyboard; all the other notes are numbered from 1 to 7 depending on the octave (from C to B), to which they belong, from the lowest to the highest one.]

## Abbreviations and bibliography

- ACCFE CHR. GRABOWSKI & J. RINK, *Annotated Catalogue of Chopin's First Editions*, Cambridge (Cambridge University Press) 2010.
- CFC *Correspondance de Frédéric Chopin*. Recueillie, révisée, annotée et traduite par BRONISLAS ÉDOUARD SYDOW en collaboration avec SUZANNE et DENISE CHAINAYE et IRÈNE SYDOW. ÉDITION DÉFINITIVE, REVUE ET CORRIGÉE, 3 voll., Paris ("La Revue musicale" – Richard Masse, Éditeurs) 1981.
- CSG *George Sand - Correspondance, Tome VI*, éd. de G. Lubin, Paris (Éd. Garnier Frères) 1969.
- EIGELD.[2006] JEAN-JACQUES EIGELDINGER, *Chopin vu per ses élèves*, Nouvelle édition mise à jour, Paris (Fayard) 2006.
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- HN Frédéric Chopin, *Balladen*, hg. von Norbert Müllemann, Fingersatz von Hans-Martin Theopold, München (G. Henle Verlag) 2008, pp. 39÷55, 63÷66, tr. ingl. 72÷74 (v. anche le relative *Bemerkungen* online [[www.henle.de](http://www.henle.de)], pp. 12÷16).
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- KALLB.[1996] JEFFREY KALLBERG, *Chopin at the Boundaries – Sex, History and Musical Genre*, Cambridge-London (Harvard University Press) 1996.
- Katalog Józef M. Chomiński, Teresa D. Turło, *Katalog dzieł Fryderyka Chopina*, Warszawa (PWM) 1990, pp. 74÷75.
- KFC *Korespondencja Fryderyka Chopina*, zebrał i opracował BRONISŁAW EDWARD SYDOW, I-II, Warszawa (Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy) 1955.

- XIV
- KOB.[1979] *Frédéric Chopin. Thematisch-bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis*, von Krystyna Kobylańska, München (G. Henle Verlag) 1979, pp. 114÷116.
- KOB.[1983] Frédéric Chopin, *Briefe*, hg. mit einem Vorwort und Kommentaren von Krystyna Kobylańska, Berlin (S. Fischer Verlag) 1983.
- OP.[1931] *Chopin's Letters*, Collected by HENRYK OPIEŃSKI, Translated... by E. L. VOYNICH, New York (Alfred A. Knopf) 1931.
- PE *The Complete Chopin, A New Critical Edition, Ballades*, edited by Jim Samson, London (Peters Edition Ltd.) 2006, pp. 41÷57, 66÷69.
- PW F. F. Chopin, *Dziela Wszystkie [Complete Works]. III. Ballady [Ballades]*, ed. by L. Bronarski & J. Turczyński, Warsaw (P.W.M.) s. d. (but 1958 or 1959, English edition).
- “RGM” “Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris”, Paris.
- UT Frédéric Chopin, *Balladen*, hg. und mit Fingersätzen versehen von Jan Ekier, Wien (Wiener Urtext Edition) 1986, pp. VIII, 40÷55, XIX÷XX.
- WN Fryd. Chopin, *Ballady*, ed. by Jan Ekier, Paweł Kamiński, Warszawa (Wydanie Narodowe) 1997, pp. 48÷93, *Source Commentary*, pp. 10÷12.



4<sup>E</sup>

**BALLADE**

POUR

**PIANO**

dédiée

*à M<sup>me</sup> Nathaniel de Rothschild*

PAR

**F. CHOPIN**

AV

*Op: 52.*

*Pr: 7<sup>f</sup> 50.*

*A PARIS, chez M<sup>CE</sup> SCHLESINGER, Rue Richelieu, 97*  
*Londres, Wessel et Stapleton. Prop<sup>s</sup> des Editeurs. Leipzig, Breitkopf et Hartel.*  
*M. S. 3957.*



## *Siglorum notarumque conspectus*

<i>A</i> <sup>1</sup>	autographum recusatum ( <i>v.</i> Intr. p. XIa)
<i>A</i> <sup>4</sup>	autographum alterum, de quo <i>v.</i> Intr. p. XIa.
<b>F<sub>1</sub></b>	prima Gallica editio
<b>F<sub>2</sub></b>	altera Gallica editio
<b>F</b>	= <b>F<sub>1</sub></b> + <b>F<sub>2</sub></b>
<b>E</b>	prima Anglica editio
<b>G</b>	prima Germanica editio
<b>Mk</b>	Mikulii editio
<b>Tl</b>	Tellefsenii editio
<...>	quae addenda
{...}	quae delenda
(...)	et quae explicanda esse videntur
<i>add.</i>	vox aliqua verbi <i>addere</i> ('to add')
<i>cf.</i>	<i>confer</i> ('compare')
<i>Comm.</i>	forma aliqua vocabuli <i>commentarium</i> ('commentary')
<i>edd.</i>	<i>editores</i> ('editors')
<i>mis./miss.</i>	forma aliqua vocabuli <i>misura</i> ('measure', 'bar')
<i>om.</i>	vox aliqua verbi <i>omittere</i> ('to omit')
<i>scil.</i>	<i>scilicet</i> ('that is to say')
<i>v.</i>	<i>vide</i> ('see')
<i>v.l.</i>	<i>varia lectio</i>