DATE ESTIMATION

After examining sources of evidence in the manner indicated in the foregoing discussion and comparing the score in hand with published descriptions of first editions, such as those in Chominski & Turlo and in Hoboken, a date usually can be estimated. In almost all cases the date has a range of uncertainty that depends on the nature of the evidence. Notational conventions for expressing this range can be found in AACR2 rules (AACR2, 1988). In this catalog three general forms of notation suffice, as shown under “General date notation” on the next page. These forms are equivalent to three of the 12 rules adopted from AACR2 by the Library of Congress (1991, p. 38), in particular “[ca. 1580]”, “[between 1711 and 1749]”, and “[not before 1479]”. (Specific years are used only for illustration.)

In addition to these three generic forms of date notation, the catalog includes notation designed for five specific types of date estimate that occur frequently in Chopin scores. For convenience of reference each of these recurring types is given a “date code”, as indicated on the next page. Foremost among these codes is “fe”, for the inference of a first edition. In almost all instances this inference is based on negative rather than positive evidence, which is to say that no evidence was found that conflicts with the hypothesis that the score is a first edition. In these “fe” cases I set the score’s date equal to the work’s first-edition date for the publisher in question, given in the work imprint field. To indicate this inference, I insert an equal sign in front of the date. An example is “[= 1836]” for 1-mS-1. In assessing such “fe” inferences the reader should keep in mind that, as previously noted, music collation was not systematically attempted in this catalog, and this introduces an element of uncertainty in cases where there are multiple impressions of the first edition.

Application of the methods indicated in the preceding sections leads to an inferred date of the score. This date, enclosed in square brackets, is placed in the score imprint field. The evidence used for a particular score is indicated in the Date field of the notes group, in many cases by means of date codes defined as follows.
DATE NOTATION

Date code fe: first-edition inference

The bibliographic term ‘edition’ is used sparingly in this catalog, but many scores in the Collection are in fact first editions in the conventional sense. The basis for making this assertion for a particular score is simply a lack of evidence to the contrary. In such cases the score’s date is entered as ‘[= y]’, where ‘y’ is the publication year given in the work imprint field for the publisher in question.

Date codes c1, c2, c3: currency inferences

c1: [after 1840] The dating basis is the change of North German currency in January 1841 from Thaler and Groschen to Thaler and Neugroschen. The assignment is used for works originally published with price in Thaler and/or Groschen, and reissued with price in Thaler and/or Neugroschen. Before the change, one Thaler was equal to 24 Groschen; after the change it was 30 Neugroschen. Both the Groschen and Neugroschen were divided into 10 Pfennig. In this date inference I ignore German publishers’ citations of French publishers, which are often not updated.

c2: [1872–73] The dating basis is the change of German currency in January 1874 from the Thaler to the Mark. The assignment is used for scores priced in both Thaler (and/or Neugroschen) and Marks, a transitional form used in 1872–73. One Thaler was equal to 3 Marks, and one Mark was equal to 100 Pfennig.

c3: [after 1873] The dating basis is the change of German currency in January 1874 from the Thaler to the Mark. The assignment is used for scores priced only in Marks. One Mark was equal to 100 Pfennig.

Date codes W1, W2: Wessel inferences

W1: [1848–56] This refers to Wessel editions with a collective title that lists Op. 64 as the last entry and 229 Regent Street as Wessel’s address. The initial year is inferred from the publication date of Op. 64 (1848). The terminal year is inferred from the fact that Wessel moved from 229 Regent Street in 1856 (Table 5D).

W2: [1856–60] The Hanover Square address of Wessel & Co. dates from 1856 (Table 5D), and the firm was acquired by Ashdown & Parry in 1860.

General date notation

There are many date estimates in the catalog that do not conform to any of the above five cases. The most frequent notations are ‘[after y]’ (as in c1 above), where ‘y’ stands for an appropriate year; and ‘[y1–y2]’ (as

[ca y] approximate year. The nature of the uncertainty is stated in the Date field.

[y1–y2] closed range, including starting year “y1” and ending year “y2”. In this catalog, when the range is greater than about 10 years, ‘[after y1]’ is used instead.

[after y] open range, starting with the year after ‘y’.

in W1 and W2 above) for an inclusive range of appropriate years. Instead of ‘[after y]’ — or ‘[post y]’ suggested by Krummel (loc. cit.) — one could adopt ‘[not before y+1]’, used by the Library of Congress. Another equivalent is ‘[y+1 or later]’, suggested to me by Richard Macnutt. Rules in AACR2 include date notation not used in this catalog, such as a decade range ‘[184–]’. For these and other notation, see AACR2, 1988; Krummel, 1974, p. 51; Library of Congress, 1991, p. 38.).