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This is the second article I have written that covers ornaments that we might expect to encounter in Baroque music for the recorder. If you haven't read the previous article in this series on ornamentation, it may be helpful to you to read the Fall 2020 AR installment, which covers trills and appoggiaturas. In this issue, we will discuss the mordent or battement.

One of my favorite ornaments is the mordent. It often has a lively musical character but can also be drawn out to make a more expressive ornament. Players are often confused about the different names for various ornaments, as well as the different signs used to signify them. To add to the complications, the basic term mordent was used to mean something completely different in the 19th century—different from its meaning in the Baroque period.

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17th-century music, which may be played on recorder.

Some of the terms we see being applied to this ornament are:

- mordent
- mordant
- battement
- pincé.

I’ll use the French term battement (meaning to “hit” or “beat”) and mordent interchangeably throughout this article—remember that they mean exactly the same thing.

Below is an example showing the common signs and basic execution of the mordent.
In the chart on the previous page, note that **in actual speed, the 16th notes do not need to be played precisely as 16th notes.** Unless one is playing a slow movement, they would be **closer to 32nd notes.** The thing that matters is that the three notes of the mordent take up one quarter note beat—it’s less critical that they have a rhythm that is easy to notate.

As the mordent often has a lively character, the ornamental notes should be **quick—and played on the beat,** not before. In a description of playing ornaments written by French flutist and instrument maker Jacques-Martin Hotteterre, he includes the battement in the ornaments that one should adjust to fit the character of the piece being played. Thus, in a very slow movement, one should strive to slow down the ornament to fit the sense of the music. I will demonstrate how to do this on my video accompanying this article; visit [www.youtube.com/americanrecordermag](http://www.youtube.com/americanrecordermag).

We know from Hotteterre and others that a **battement is often included with a lower appoggiatura (Port de voix).** This is usually executed on fairly long notes—often a dotted quarter, half or whole note—and often, only the appoggiatura is notated. The performer would add the mordent once the appoggiatura is over. The mordent can also be repeated a couple of times (**listen to this in the video example**), and it becomes very much like a trill from below, rather than from above. If done well, this can be quite expressive. In the example marked “optional” below, you can see that there is no sign for the mordent, only the appoggiatura. Even though it isn’t specifically notated, it would be in good style to add the mordent.

![Port de voix with battement](image)

**Port de voix with battement**

I often try to help out with online discussions about ornaments, and I have been very surprised by how many people think that the inverted mordent (short upward trill) is an option to play instead of the downward mordent. In fact, there is just about zero evidence of the inverted mordent being part of the ornamental language of the Baroque wind player. In music from pre-1680 or after 1750, it does have a use, but not in our regular Baroque recorder repertoire. As best as I have been able to determine, no wind composer or treatise used a sign or description of the inverted mordent during the high Baroque.

Unfortunately, the complications regarding the **mordent and inverted mordent** have been made worse by oversimplified examples that can be found online. For example, visit [www.facebook.com/enjoylearnandplaymusic/photos/a.114654366732888/158704902327834](http://www.facebook.com/enjoylearnandplaymusic/photos/a.114654366732888/158704902327834). In this case, the sign for the mordent—and the fact that the note goes up, instead of down—is applicable only to 19th-century music, not to Baroque music. This usage came about as a way to play an abbreviated trill in places where there is not room to play a real upper note trill. The use of the \[\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}\] in our period indicates only a regular trill, which starts from the upper note.
François Couperin

How can we use the mordent properly when it isn't written in the music?
François Couperin is a composer who makes extensive use of the mordent, or as he would have called it, pincé. In the Allemande below from the Concerts Royaux, we can see that he uses two different ornament signs:

- the trill/tremblement
- and ♀ for the mordent/battement.

The mordent is used most often on the first note of a figure, as we see in the second line, measure 2, in the example below; or where approached from below, as in the first line, measure 2. Every once in a while, it can be approached from above, as in the second line, measure 3.

This is not recorder music, per-se, but some can be played quite effectively on the recorder.

François Couperin (1668-1733), excerpt from Concerts Royaux, original score at https://imslp.org/wiki/Concerts_royaux_(Couperin%2C_François)
Jacques-Martin Hotteterre
In the musical example below from Hotteterre, notice that his symbol for the mordent/battement is the vertical line, “\textbf{|}.” He notates the battement less often than Couperin does, but he often would expect the battement to be added in many places where he shows a Port de voix (upwards appoggiatura, or \textbf{v}). From a musical perspective he uses the battement to help punctuate a note or give separation between repeated notes.

The Hotteterre example below is part of the opening slow section from his Première Suite de pièces, 1712 (in some editions, spelled Suite rather than Suite, a spelling used at that time by French composers including Hotteterre, Philidor and Dieupart). This edition is from Vista Mare Musica, a smaller web site for downloading free Renaissance and Baroque music.

Pierre Danican Philidor
As I have mentioned, the mordent is an ornament that has a number of different symbols associated with it, and the composers often do not include a chart that explains their own signs.

A good case in point is Pierre Philidor, one of a family of musicians serving at the French court. He wrote a wonderful set of 6 Suites for two flutes and 6 Suites for flute and continuo. These are excellent pieces for recorder, when transposed up a minor third.

There are a number of very special things in Philidor’s publications, as he not only uses signs for trills and appoggiaturas, but he also notates flattement (finger vibrato—the subject of the next article in this series). His flattement sign is the long squiggle beginning with a hook. Also, he sometimes puts in phrase marks.
Showing flattement and phrase markings is extremely unusual in Baroque music.

In the case of the battement, Philidor offers us a bit of confusion, since his mark for battement is the same as Hotteterre’s Coulement sign, an appoggiatura going down (^). Only by looking at the musical context can we see that Philidor means something else—a battement or Port de voix with battement.

Philidor makes things even more complicated by occasionally using Hotteterre’s sign for battement as well. You can see it in the example below, on the first note of measure 17 (the B section). He doesn’t explain what this means, but my opinion is that it is played correctly as a battement—without a preceding appoggiatura. In many cases where he uses the other sign, he adds the appoggiatura specifically.

Charles Dieupart
Composers are often very sparing with the ornaments they write for wind players. An interesting example occurs in the French harpsichordist Charles Dieupart’s suites, which he first wrote to be solo keyboard pieces. For these, he has a nice chart of ornaments. He makes extensive use in his music of these ornaments, many of which are specifically for keyboard.

He also made a version of his suites where he writes a recorder part, basically the harpsichord's top line—and interestingly, this version has only a few select trills written in. It contains none of the fancy ornamentation spelled out for the harpsichord.

I have had students create their own editions of Dieupart, adapting the keyboard ornaments to fit the recorder part. This significantly improves the music, and one must assume that recorder players at the time would have created their own ornaments or possibly have borrowed from the harpsichord version. (A modern version of Dieupart’s chart is on page 32—and

The Texas Toot
The Texas Toot is still alive! Through the generous support of Amherst Early Music, we presented the first online Fall Toot in November 2020, with many of our familiar and faithful faculty, and also welcomed some newer faces.
We’re not sure what the coming year will bring, but we hope there will be joyous celebration of playing together in person once again!
If not, then at least (necessity being the mother of invention) enterprising people have made great leaps in technology, letting us come virtually together to play the music we love.
Keep up with us at
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Allemande
Charles Dieupart
Suite 4, 1701

Charles Dieupart (c.1667-1740), Allemande from Suite No. 4, available in the original edition at https://imslp.org/wiki/6_Suites_(Dieupart%2C_Charles)
Charles Dieupart (c.1667-1740), Explication des Marques (top, chart of ornaments typeset by Hermann Hinsch) and first phrase of the harpsichord version of Allemande from Suite No. 4 in manuscript; Dieupart's ornament table plus score and parts for several versions of the entire set of pieces in the original edition are at https://imslp.org/wiki/6_Suites_(Dieupart%2C_Charles)
part of the harpsichord music, for those who want to try creating your own recorder part.) The Dieupart example on page 31 is a movement showing the recorder part as I might ornament it, using trills, appoggiaturas and battement. I have used Philidor’s marking for the battement.

Dieupart’s suites are available in many modern editions. Note that the only ornaments marked in the original on IMSLP are the two marked (+). The original indicates that this piece is for fourth-flute, a soprano recorder in B♭.

The battement/mordent is usually quite easy to play and is a great way to add a little spice to your musical experience.

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Michael Lynn performed at the Inaugural Luncheon for President Obama’s first term and has played throughout the U.S., Canada, Taiwan and Japan with Apollo’s Fire, Mercury Baroque, ARTEK, Oberlin Baroque Ensemble, Smithsonian Chamber Players, Tafelmusik, American Baroque Ensemble, Handel & Haydn Orchestra, Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Houston Symphony, Cleveland Opera, Santa Fe Pro Musica, and many other ensembles. Lynn serves on the faculty of Oberlin Conservatory as Professor of Recorder and Baroque Flute, and teaches each year at the Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute. He writes regularly for flute magazines around the world and is noted for his presentations and videos on History and Development of the Flute.

A noted collector of flutes, he has a web site where you can view them at: www.originalflutes.com. His music and videos are posted at: www.soundcloud.com/mloberlin and www.youtube.com/MichaelLynnFlute.