This manuscript is an early example of a retrospective compilation assembled over several decades. It contains instruction material, notably a series of preludes, but also preserves contrapuntal repertoire from an earlier period, probably copied as models for extemporization. Altogether there are thirty pieces organised by genre (twenty-one preludes and voluntaries, three grounds, two fantasias, a trumpet air, song arrangements and dances, and a figured-bass exercise) by John Bull, John Blow, William Byrd, John Dowland, Orlando Gibbons, Matthew Locke, John Maynard, Benjamin Rogers, Thomas Weelkes and Abiel Whichello. The music would have been performed on any available keyboard instrument (harpsichord, clavichord, chamber organ, or church organ). As a document of contemporary performance practice and musical pedagogy, the manuscript reveals important evidence about fingering, ornamentation, figured-bass, and keyboard improvisation. This edition provides a complete facsimile, a transcription of all thirty pieces in modern notation, together with critical commentary, and an extensive introduction discussing the source, its compilation, and performance considerations.

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27. A Voluntary

[Thomas Weelkes]