

Historical Practice

Do we need such test results about the string material in the historical harpichord making?

In former times the harpsichord makers did also not have string tests at their disposal.

We do not know how big the selection of string wires for the former harpsichord makers have been. Certainly the business in Europe with such specialities like fine wire was bigger than we can imagine. It is another question whether the individual of the instrument maker had access to the wire and whether he could afford the wire everytime. Principally the scaling was made to the requested pitch and to the available string material.

This is exactly the opposite we are doing today if we work on a historical model. We adopt a scaling although we do not have much information about the used string material.

So the harpsichord maker of today asks himself which material he can use for the original scaling. The same question arises at all restorings even if a musician wants to change only one string.

