INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Frank Bayford's Preludes Opus 1 are now the composer's earliest acknowledged work and they date from the period when he was a pharmacy student. Much of the composition was done at Theydon Bois on the edge of Epping Forest during the college holidays. They were completed there in June 1963. At this time there were nine preludes in the set but later on No. 8, which was written for right hand alone, was dropped. (The present No. 8 was originally No. 9.)

If any particular technique could be said to be in evidence in the collection it would probably be what could be called loosely 'two-part invention style'. Preludes Nos. 1, 2 and 4 certainly have something of this about them.

No. 3 is more harmonic in character and unlike all the others it is the only one that has a specific extra-musical association, in this case the monoliths of Stonehenge.

No. 5 is unusual in being totally diatonic, using only the white notes. It started life as an improvisation and existed as such for a while until the composer finally committed it to paper on 14th September 1962.

No. 6 has a little of the two-part element in it, but it is really dominated by a rising and falling six note motive which builds up to a powerful and unexpected climax.

No. 7, like No. 5, departs from the two-part style by using repeated chords to accompany a melodic line, a device the composer admired in some of Mendelssohn's 'Songs without Words'. In this prelude the melody has a strong English folk song flavour, although it is entirely original.

The present No.8 has a distinct remote quality, which is partly captured in Nos. 1, 4 and 6 but here finds its complete expression. It had a very personal significance for the composer and about half way through the manuscript is an inscription that reads:
"I sought new visions, and they were revealed in fullest majesty and splendour. But I alone could venture there, in solitude the same as here, and none would follow."
The composer has admired the music of Gustav Holst for many years, and this prelude shares something of the cool, sparse beauty of some of that composer's later scores.

On a personal note I would record how pleased I was when invited to contribute this introduction. These pieces much impressed me when I first got to know them in the mid 'Sixties. I was able to provide a private recording of them for the composer in 1965 and subsequently gave the first complete public performance of the set on 31st October 1981 at the Trent Park Music Centre, Enfield. It has been both a privilege and a pleasure to be associated with them.

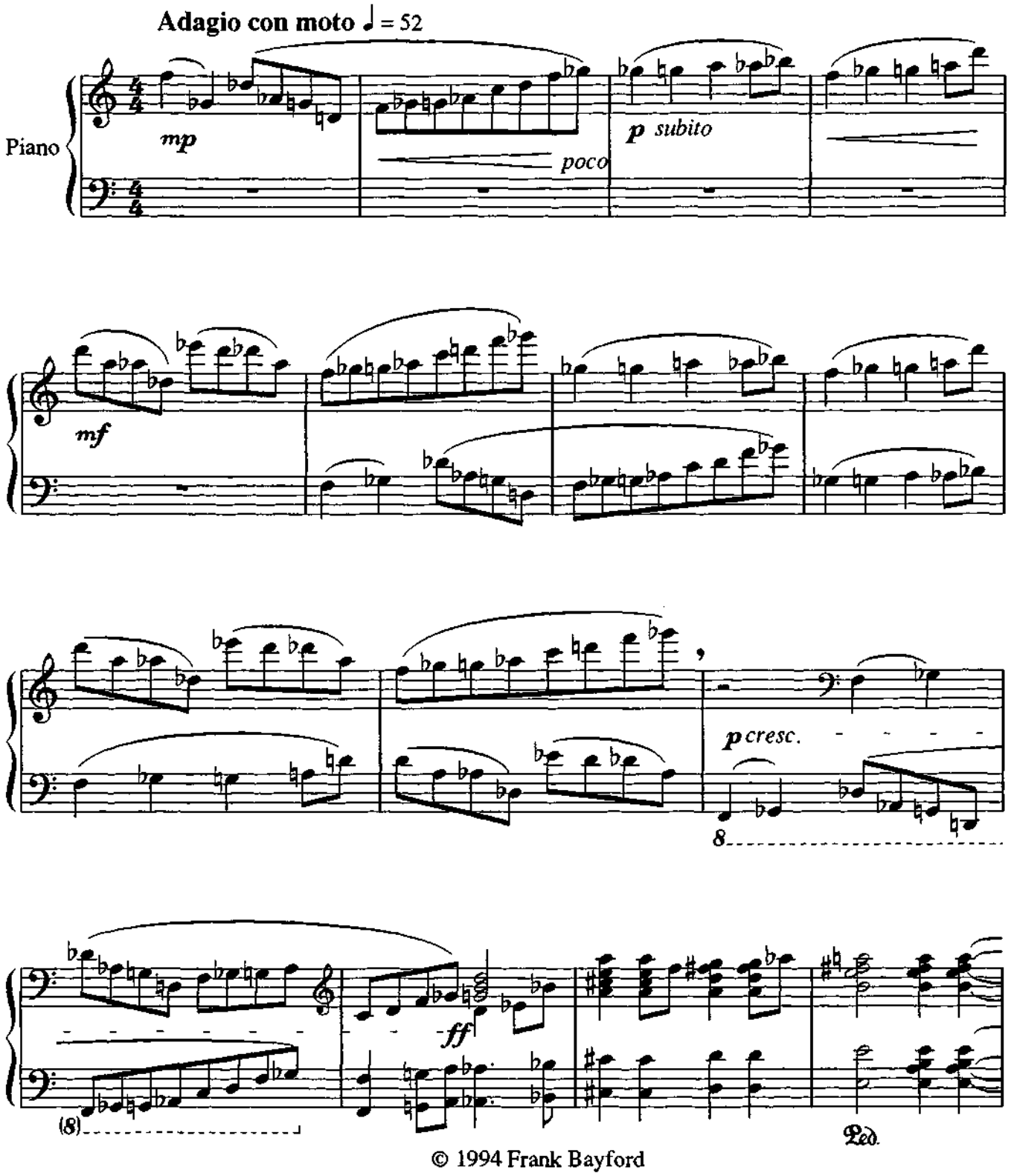
JOHN MITCHELL
Stanford North,
Kent.
March 1994

To John Mitchell

PRELUDES

Frank Bayford
Opus 1

Prelude No. 1



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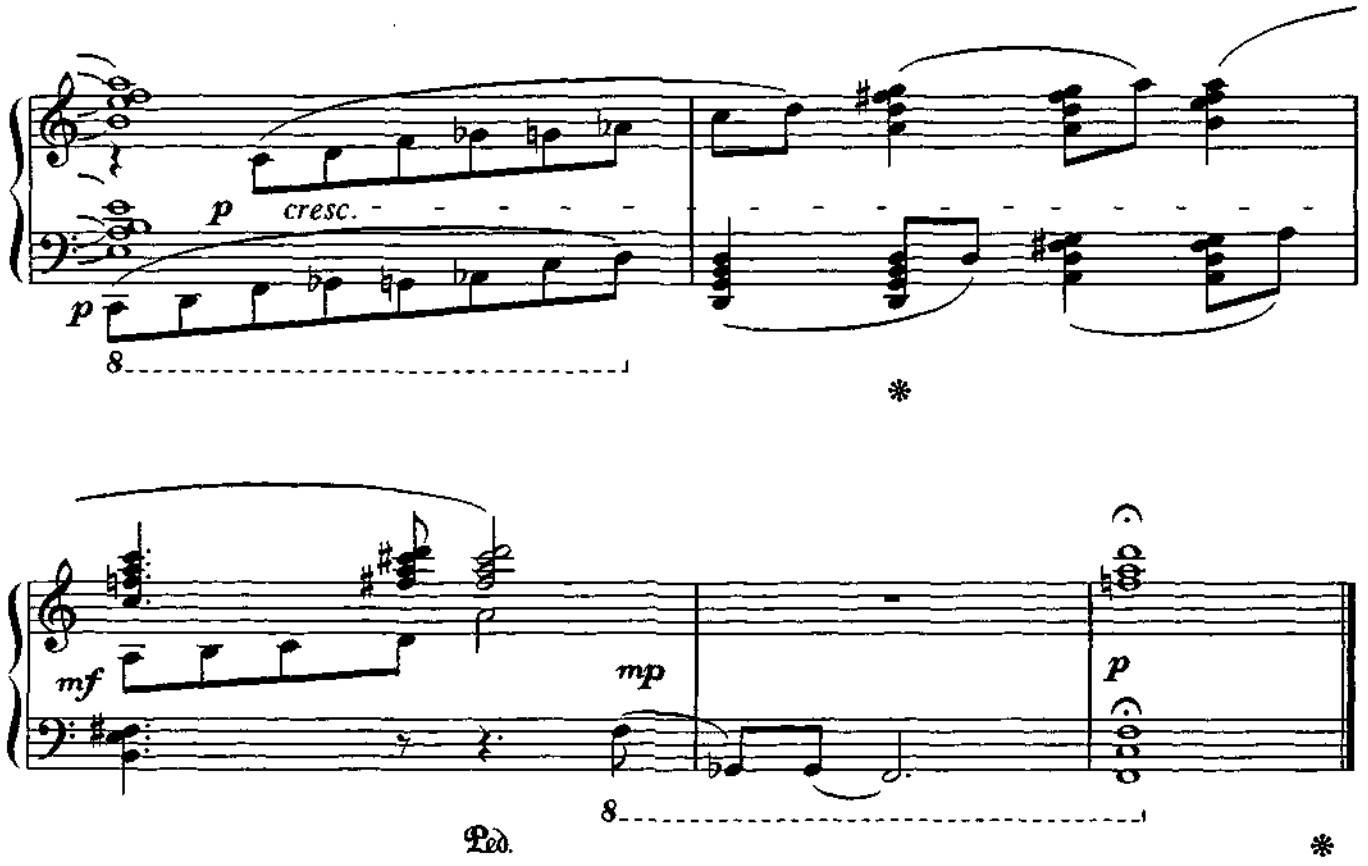
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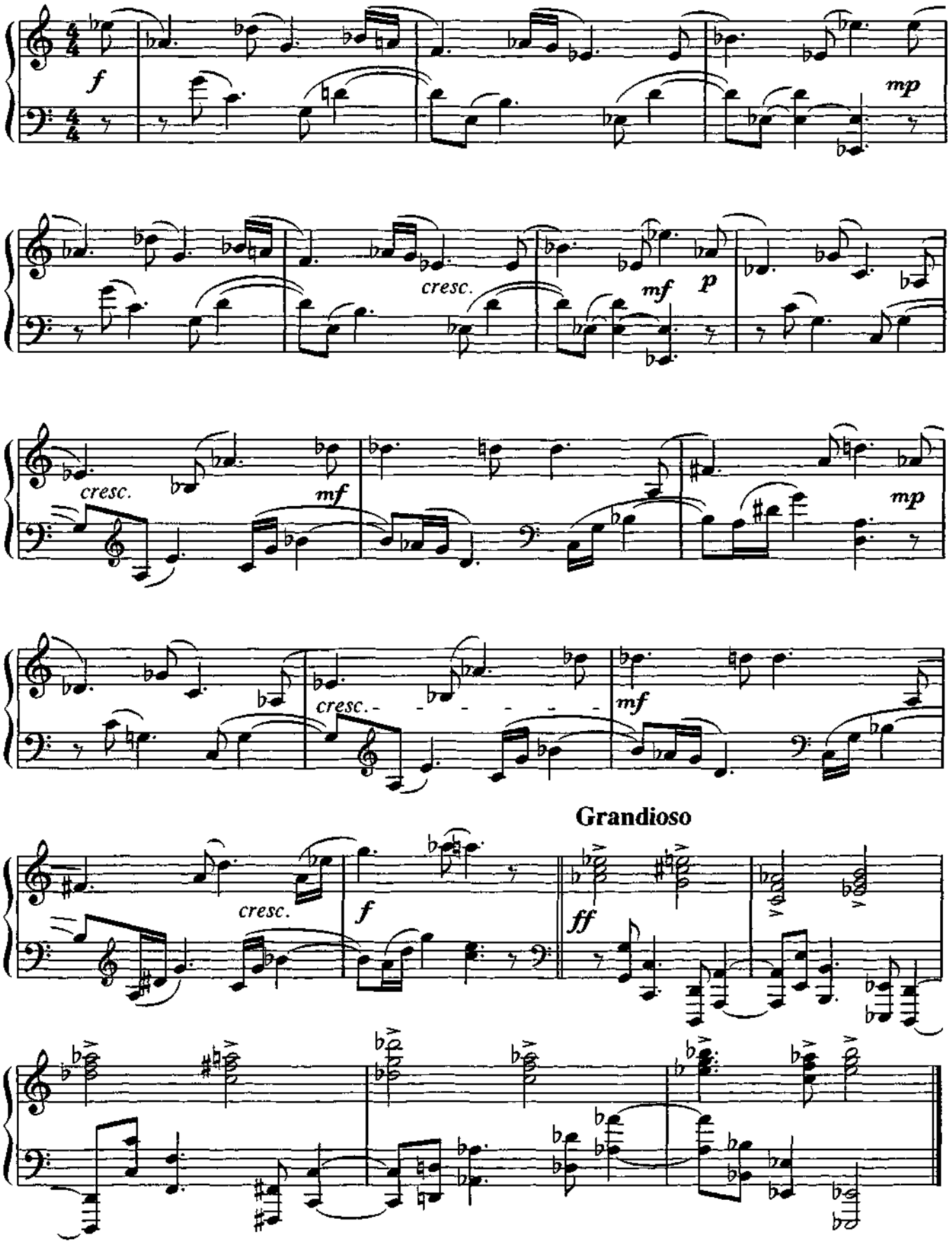
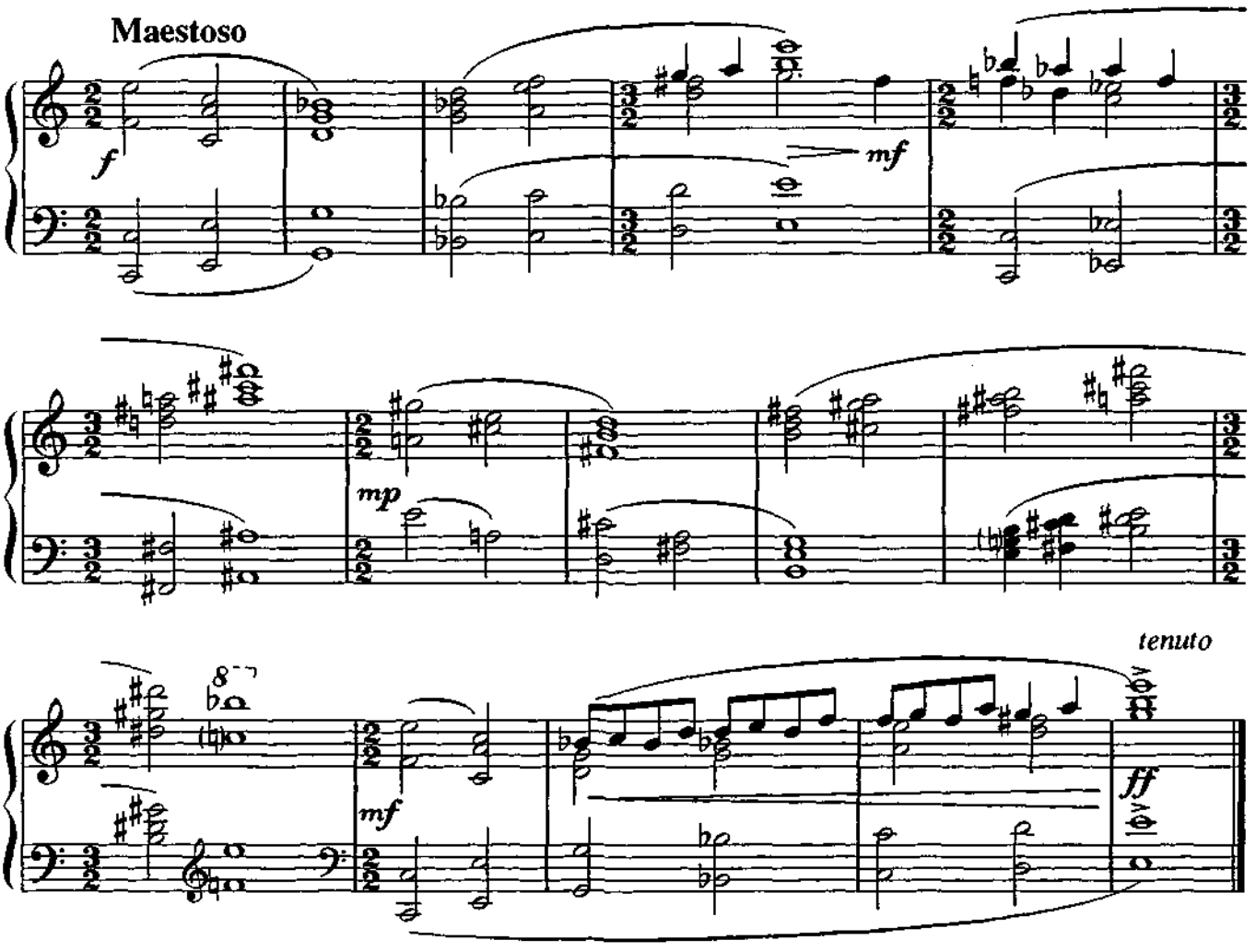
Prelude No. 2

Frank Bayford

Allegretto ♩ = 60



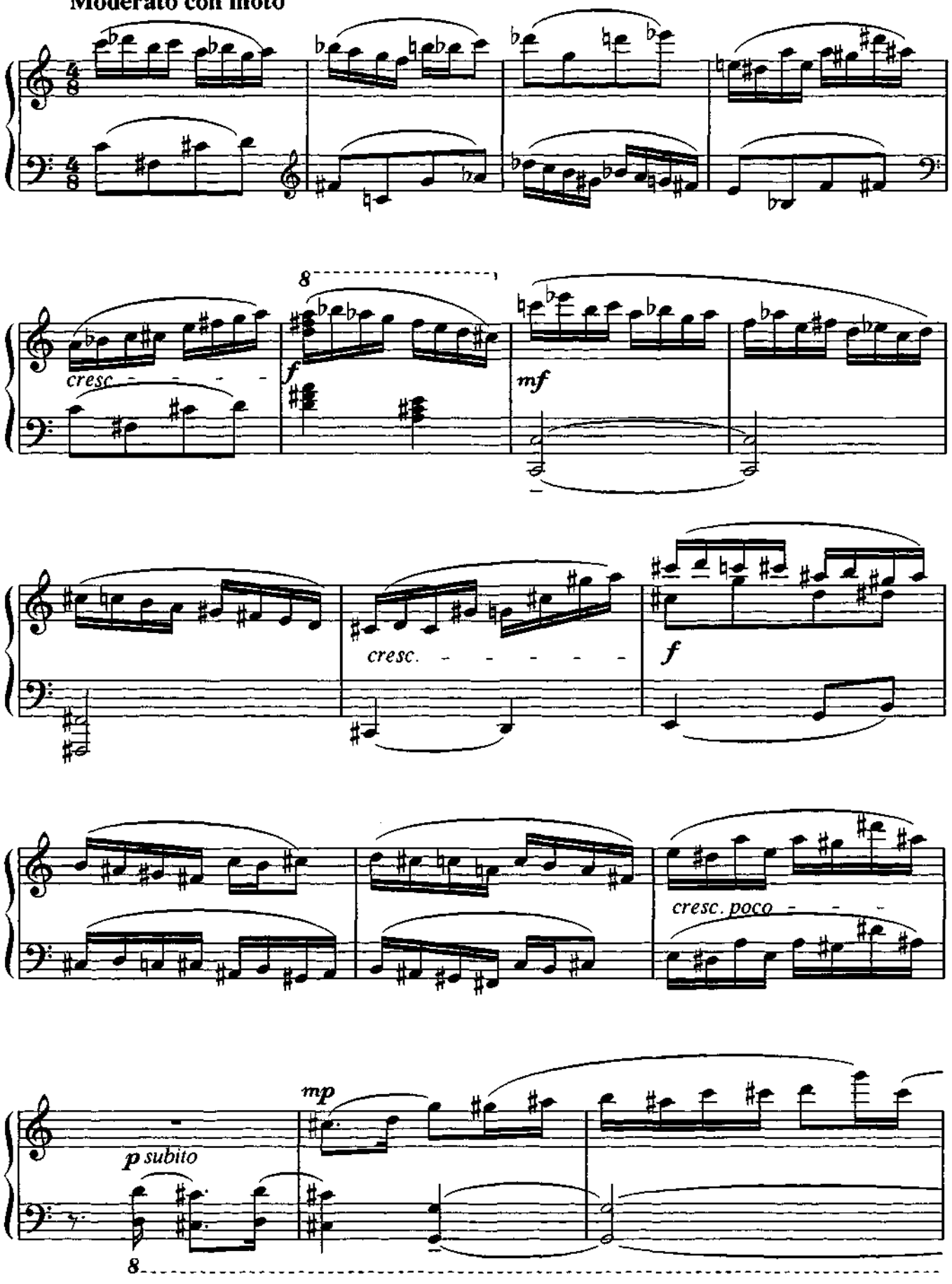
Frank Bayford

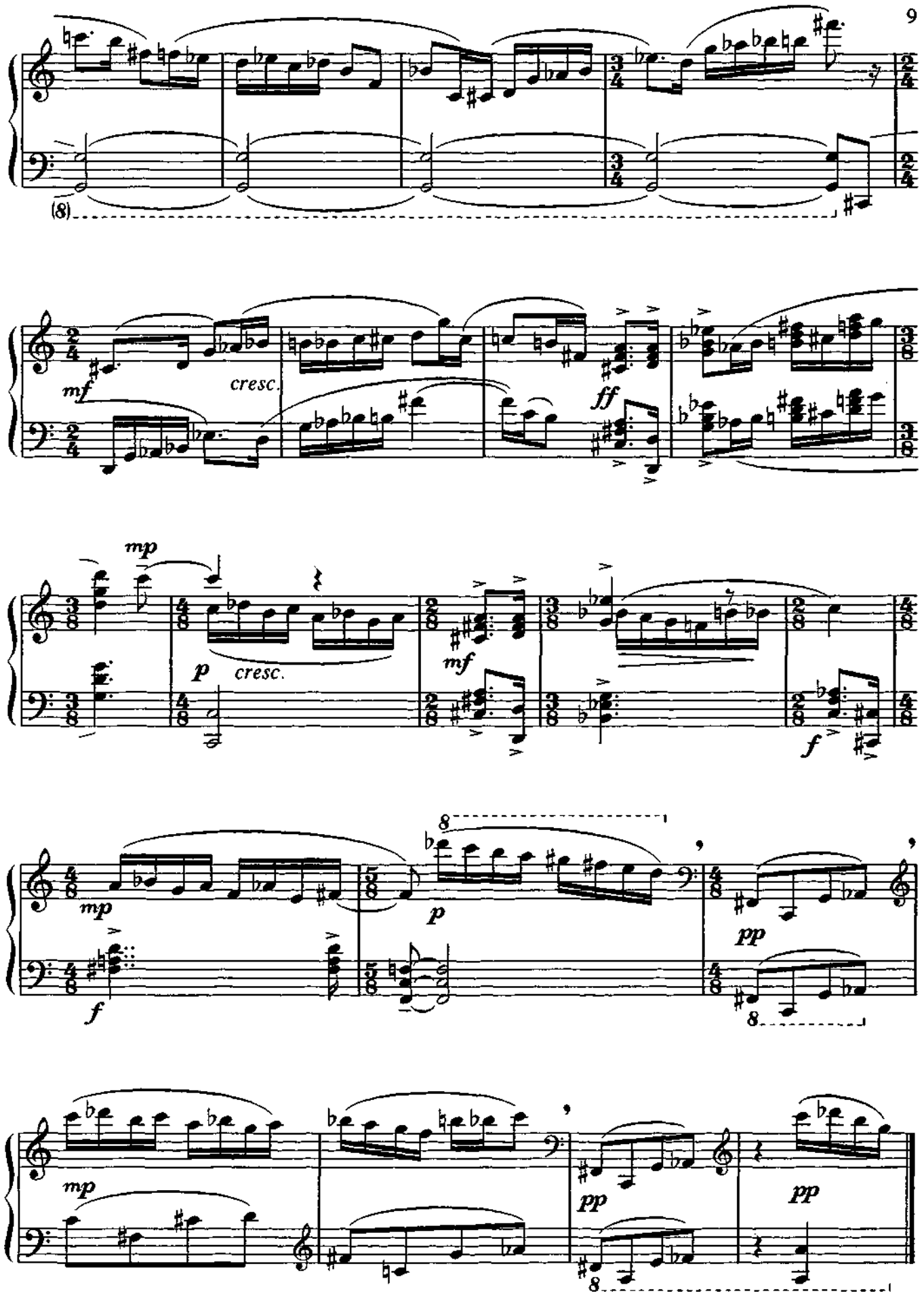


Prelude No. 4

Frank Bayford

Moderato con moto

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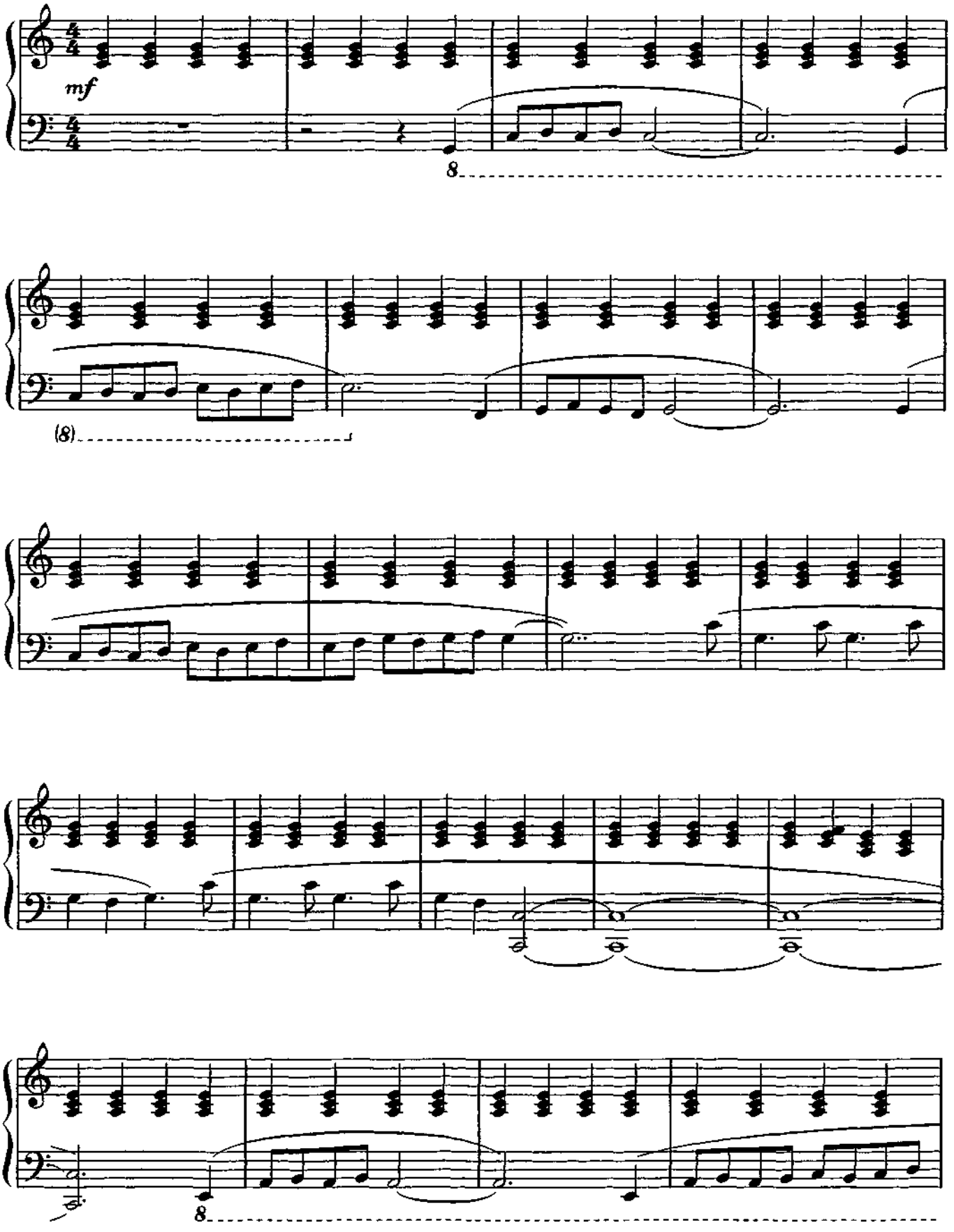
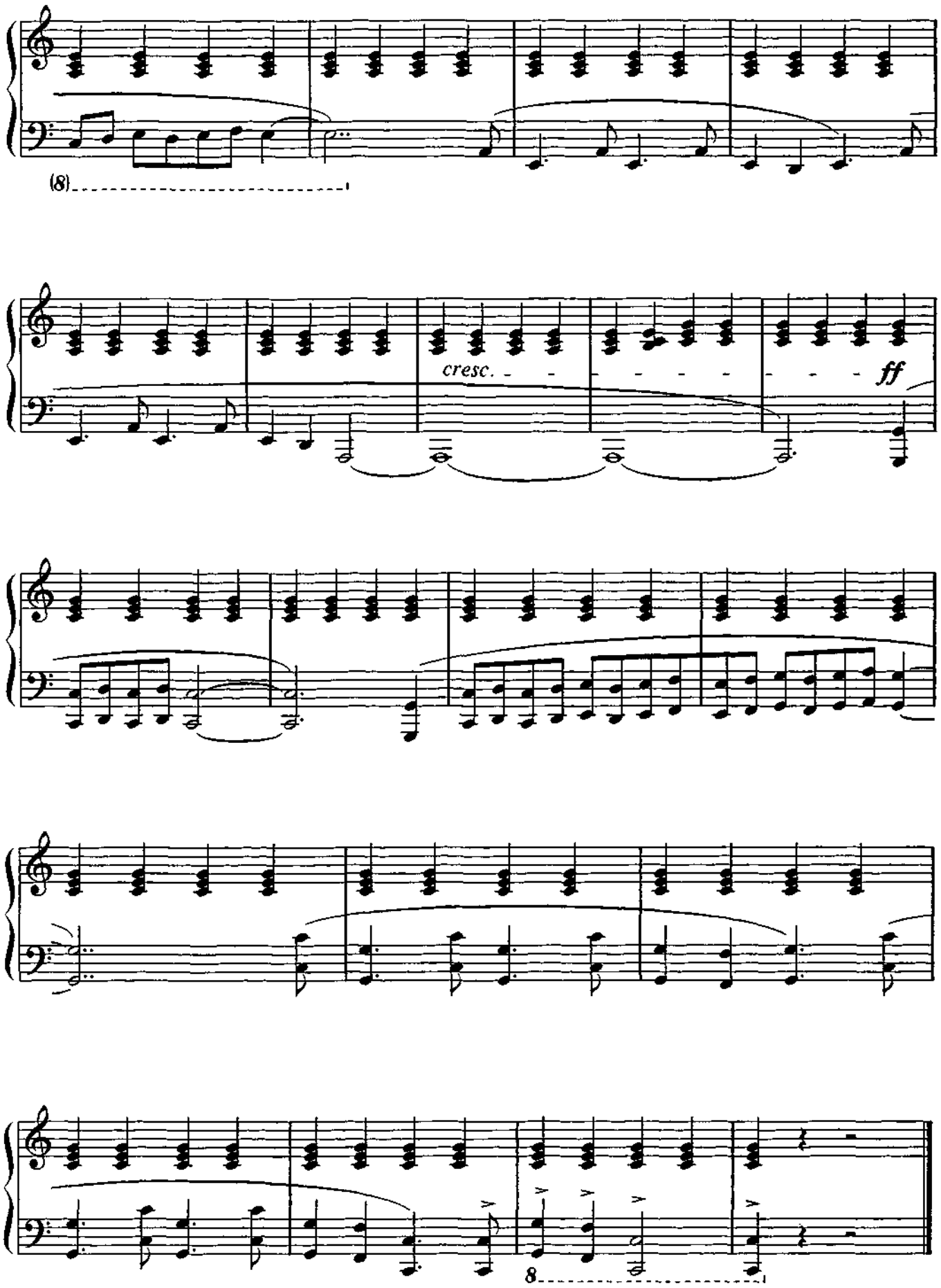
Prelude No. 5

Frank Bayford

Maestoso

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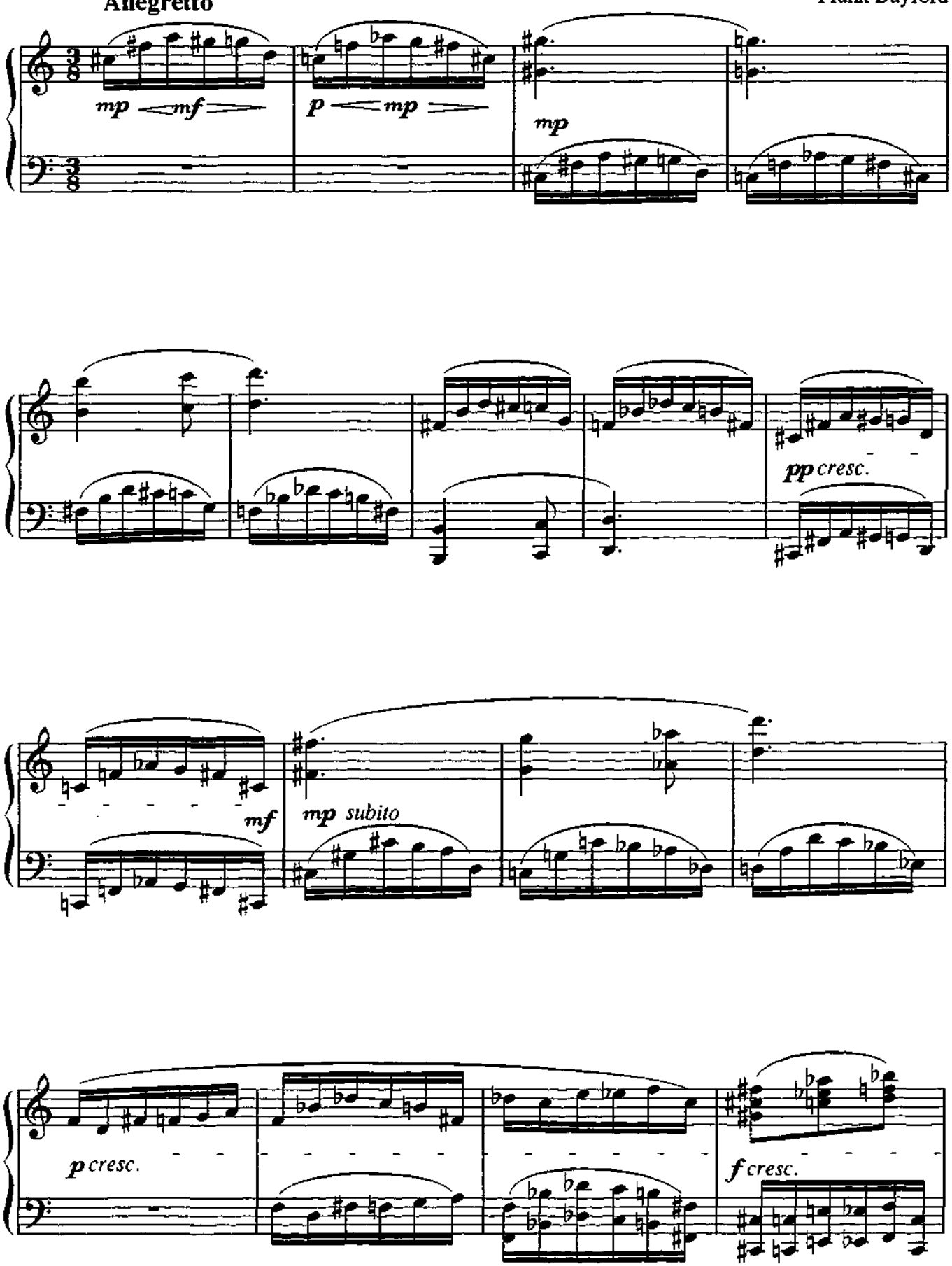
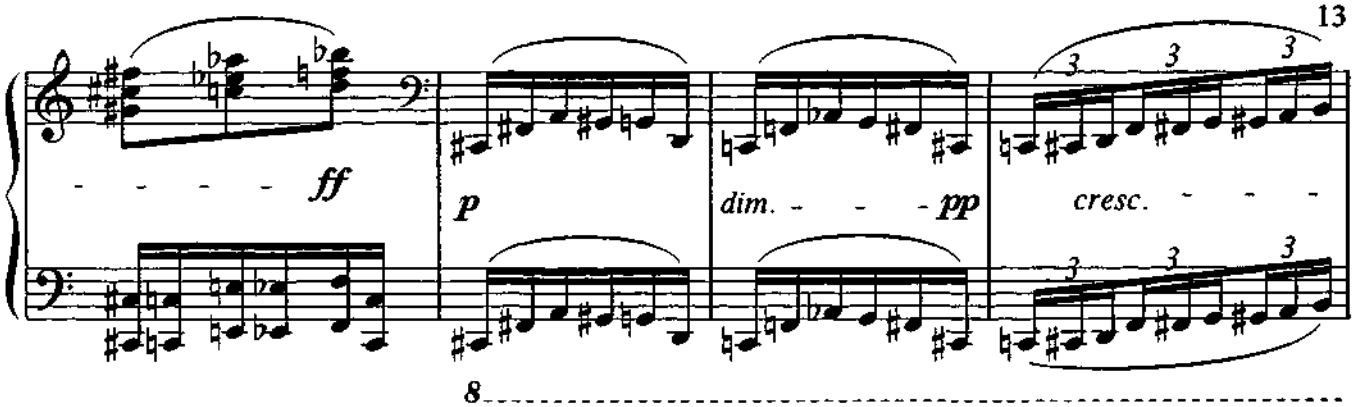
Prelude No. 6

Allegretto

Frank Bayford

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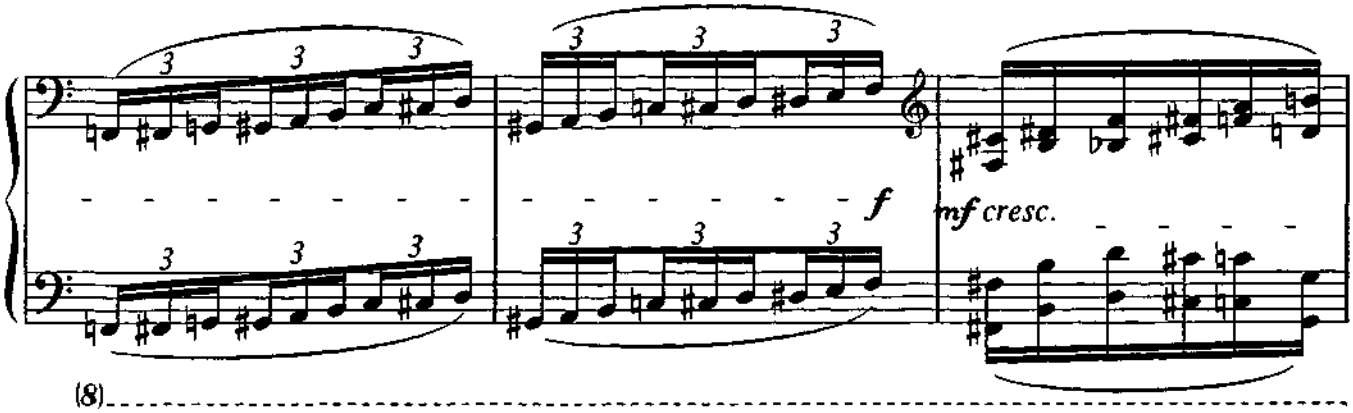
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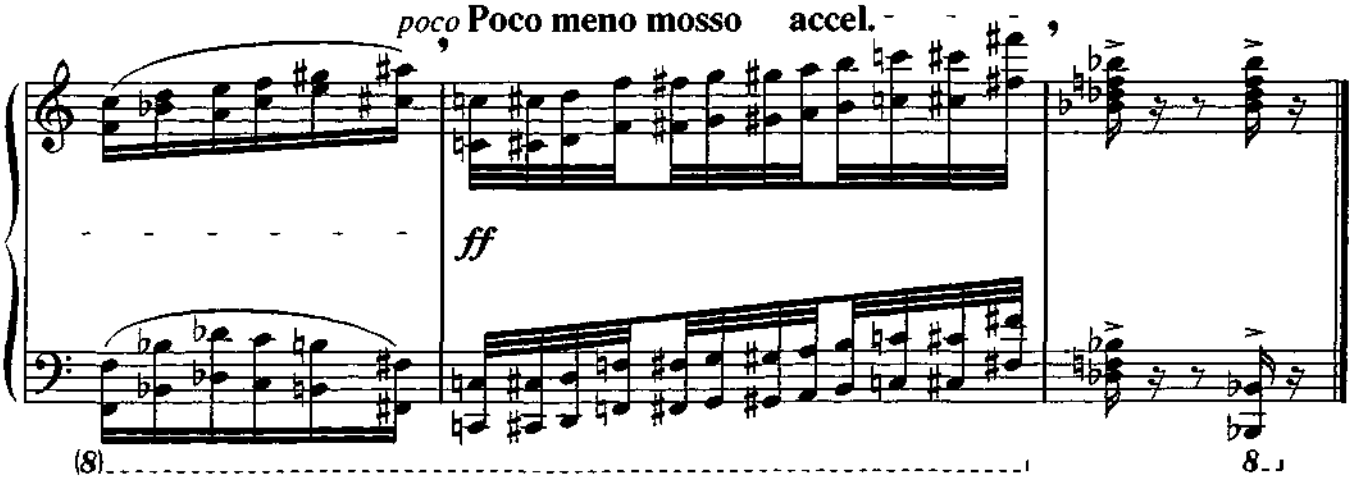
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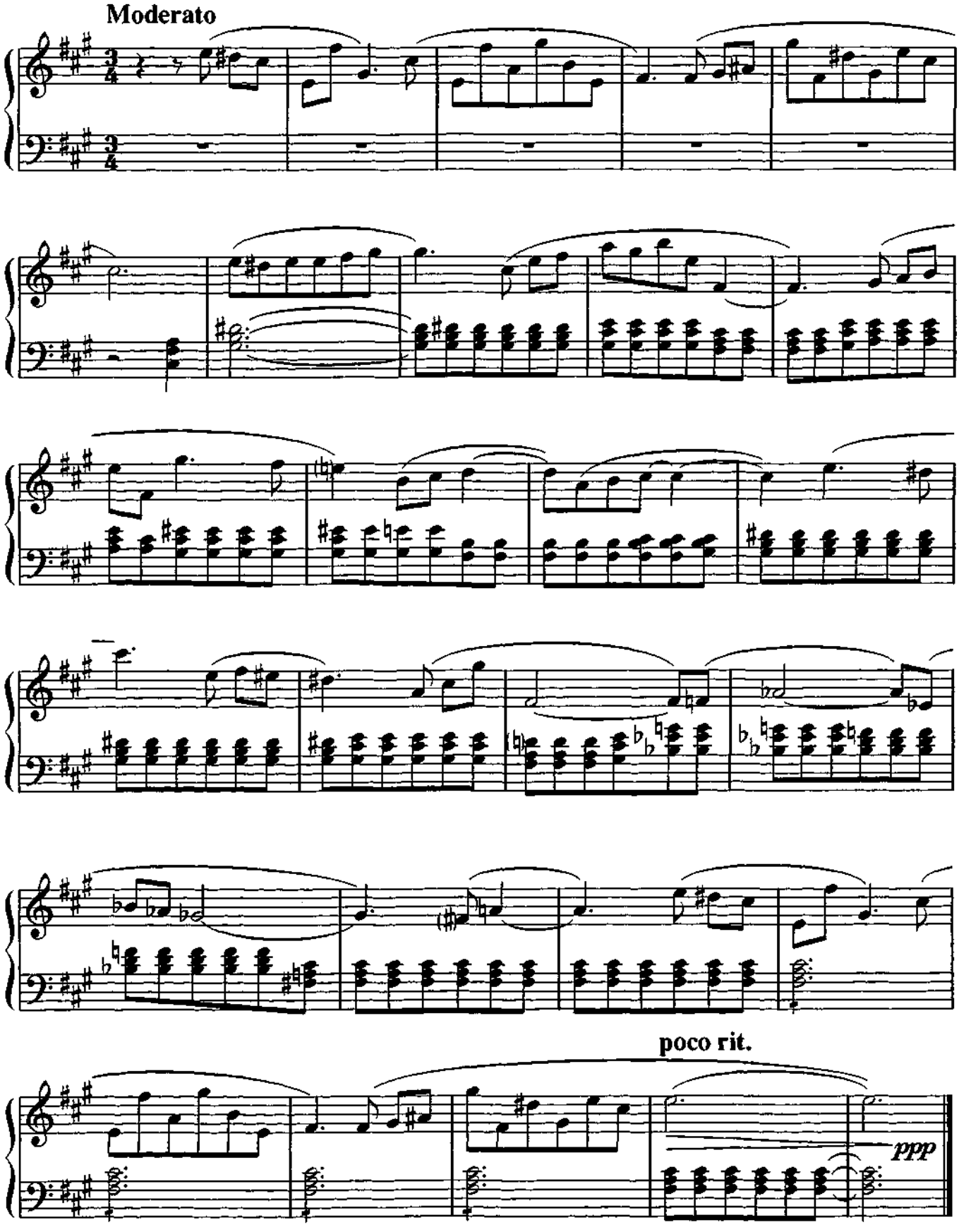
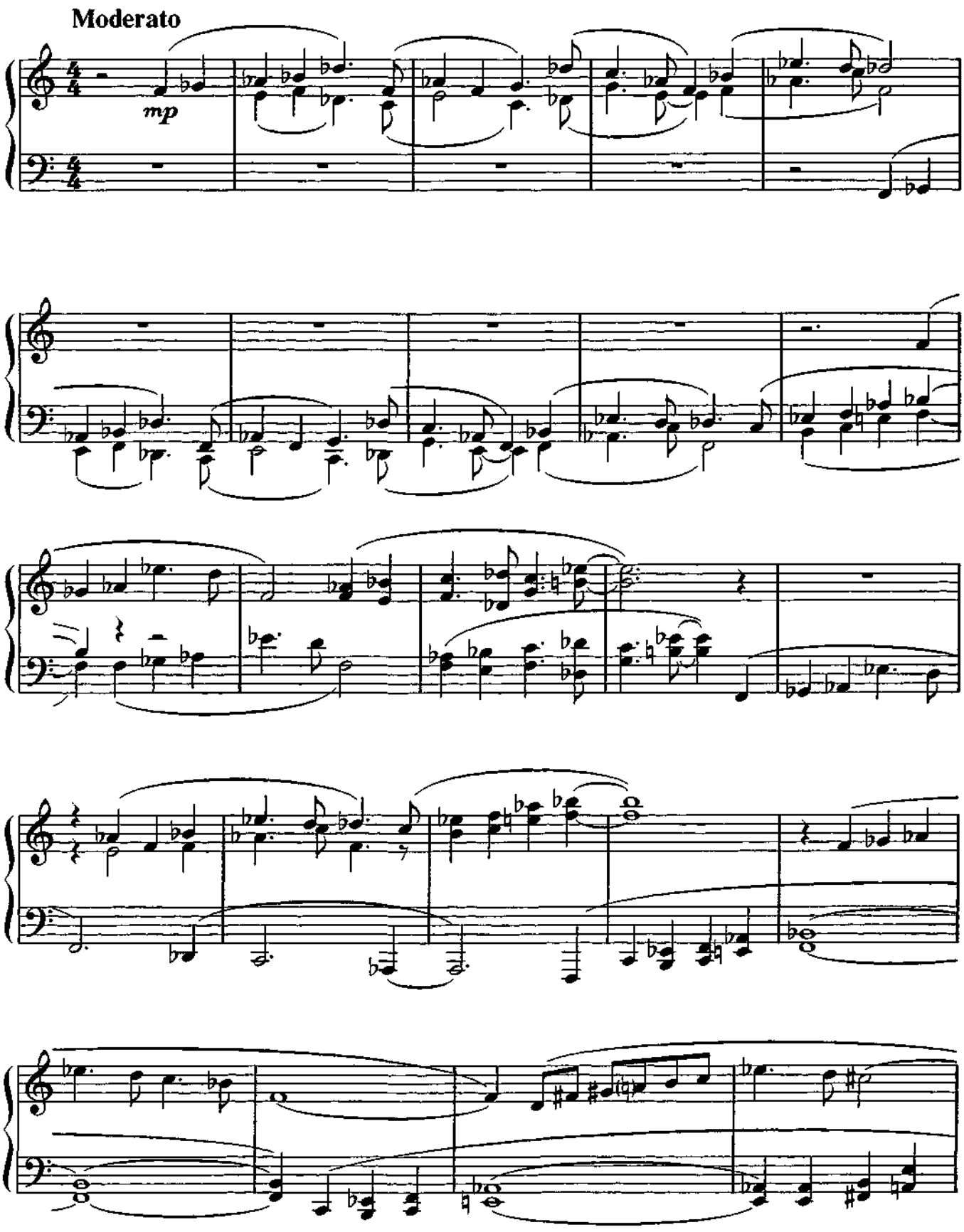
Prelude No. 7

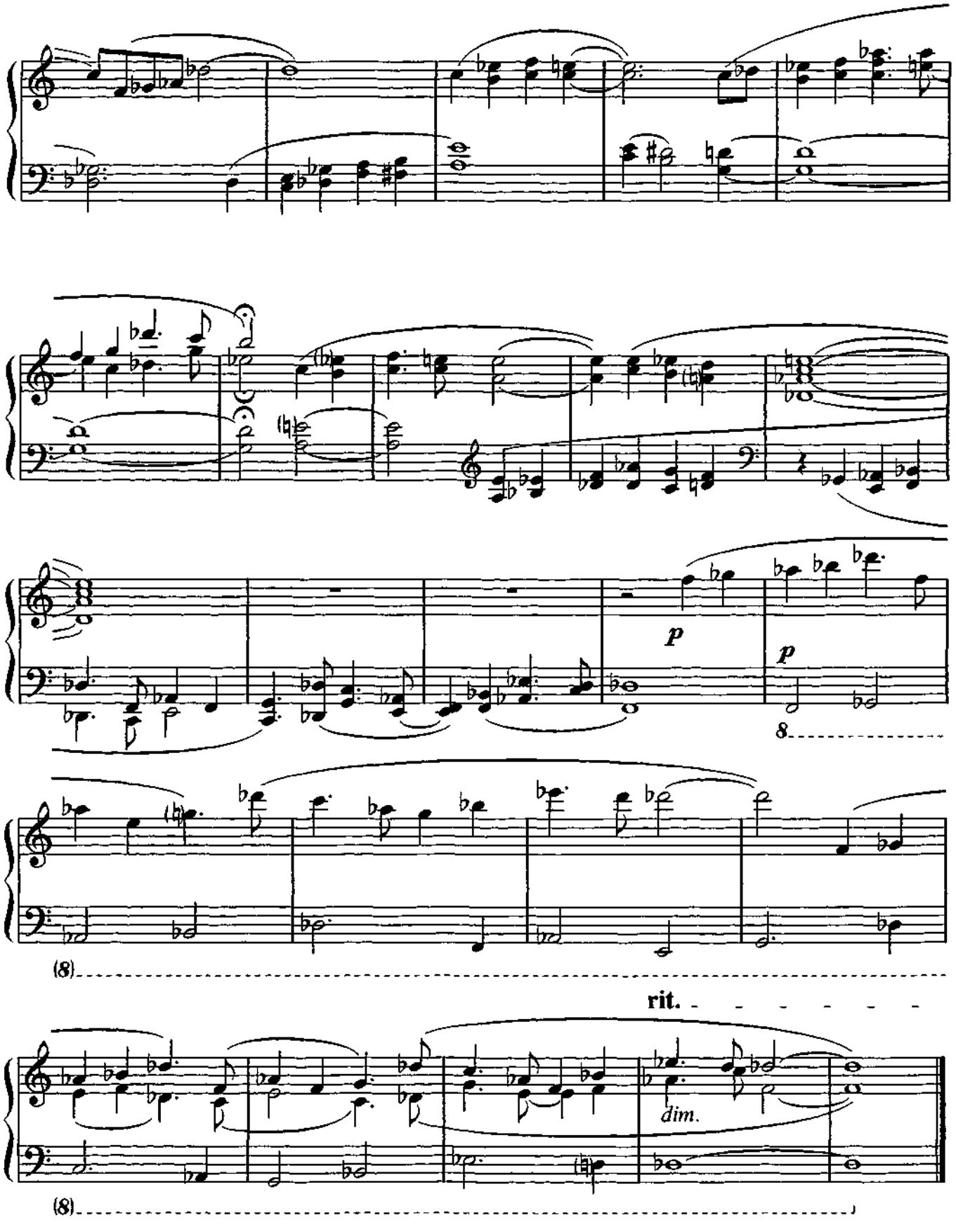
Frank Bayford



Prelude No. 8

Frank Bayford

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