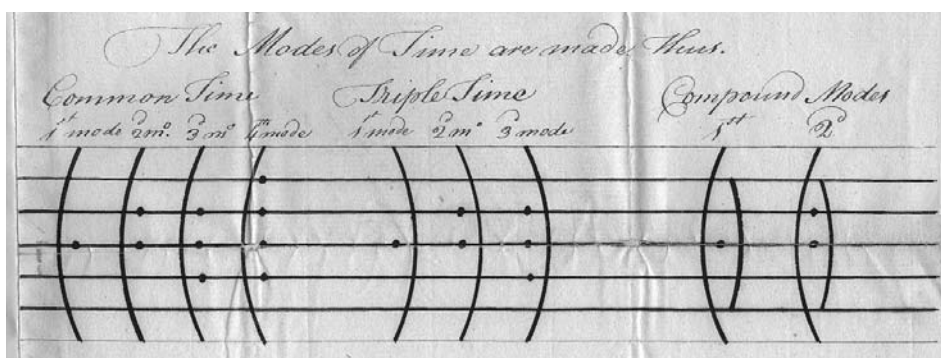


From the Archives

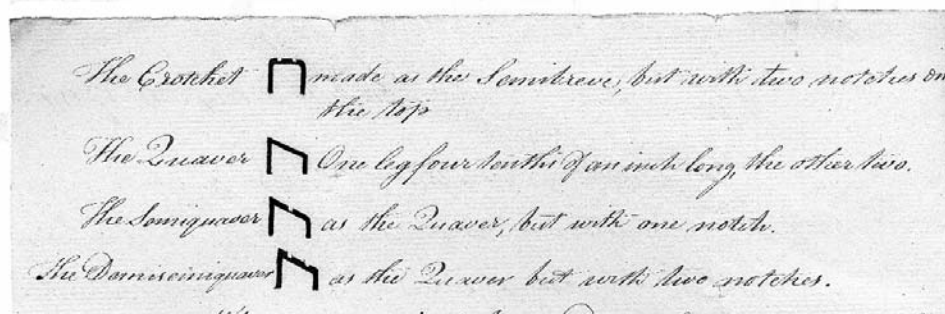
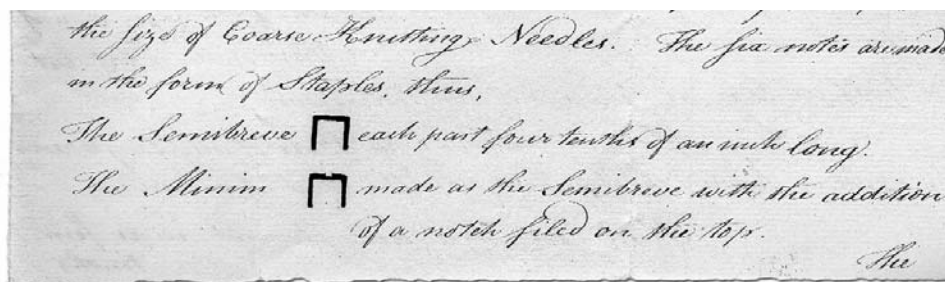
Benjamin Dearborn, an educator and inventor who was elected to the Academy in 1794, wrote to Academy President John Adams on August 19, 1794, and described his design for a “Music Board” for the benefit of blind people.

On presumption that an attempt which may in any measure alleviate the Calamities of Life, will be countenanced by the Academy, I have constructed the Music Board which is presented herewith for the benefit of the Blind; whereby all Notes and other necessary Characters in Music, with their Respective Stations on Lines or Spaces, are Readily Ascertained with great Precision, by a Touch of the Fingers.

Dearborn constructed the music board out of pine, using a sharp instrument to incise the lines of the staff. In his letter he described in great deal the design of notes and other characters, which he made out of brass wire, as well as their placement into holes along the lines. He also explained his method of indicating modes of time.



Modes of time on Dearborn's Music Board



Design of musical notes