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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

School of Music

Learning the lute in early modern England, c.1550-c.1640

by

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Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the popularity of lute instruction in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England and the ways in which this accomplishment was used in constructions of social status. The opening chapter outlines the functions of the lute in early modern English culture and surveys previous research on the instrument and its repertory. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the hierarchical structure of Elizabethan society, highlighting shifting conceptions of “gentle” status during the sixteenth century. The complex position of music within early modern discourses on elite identity is discussed, alongside the potential of lute-playing skills to contribute towards social advancement.

Four case studies follow, each exploring the uses of lute-playing amongst practitioners located on the hazily defined boundaries between “gentle” and lower-class status. Chapter 3 uses the autobiography of Thomas Whythorne as a focal point in order to examine the ambiguous role of musicians in household service. By teaching coveted “courtly” skills to their social superiors, these music tutors were in an advantageous position to secure further rewards and enhance their status. Chapter 4 reassesses the Mynshall lutebook, highlighting the roles of music-making and literary production amongst a circle of mercantile-class men in provincial England. It reveals how lute-playing and poetic exchange facilitated social interaction and consolidated kinship bonds within this group as they sought to forge a collective identity grounded in the cultural practices of more elite circles.

The role of recreational music-making amongst university men is examined in Chapter 5 through a reappraisal of the Dallis lutebook, showing how playing and collecting lute music could form a strand in the fashioning of a distinctively learned “scholarly” identity. My final case study assesses the printed tutor books marketed from the 1560s onwards, paying close attention to the material forms of extant copies (as evidence of their usage) and their paratextual materials. A close reading of Thomas Robinson’s *Schoole of Musicke* (1603) reveals how this publication was designed to appeal simultaneously to two very different markets: aspirant middle-class autodidacts, and wealthier “gentleman” readers who could provide further patronage and career advancement to the author.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Michael David Gale

declare that the thesis entitled

Learning the lute in early modern England, c.1550—c.1640

and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
- where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
- where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
- where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
- where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
- none of this work has been published before submission.

Signed:

Date:.....

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Abbreviations

Key musical sources are represented in the text by the following abbreviations. Infrequently cited sources are referenced in full within the text.

<i>Ballet</i>	Dublin, Trinity College MS 408 (the so-called William Ballet lutebook)
<i>Barley</i>	<i>A New Booke of Tabliture</i> (London: William Barley, 1596)
<i>Board</i>	London, Royal Academy of Music MS 603 (Margaret Board's lutebook)
<i>Dallis</i>	Dublin, Trinity College MS 410 (the so-called Dallis lutebook)
<i>Folger</i>	Washington DC, Folger Shakespeare Library, Ms .V.b.280 (the so-called Dowland lutebook)
<i>Le Roy 1568</i>	Adrian Le Roy, <i>A Briefe and easye instru[c]tion to learne the tablature to conducte and dispose thy hande unto the Lute</i> (London: John Kyngston for James Rowbotham, 1568)
<i>Le Roy 1574</i>	Adrian Le Roy, <i>A briefe and plaine Instruction to set all Musicke of eight divers tunes in Tableture for the Lute</i> (London: James Rowbotham, 1574)
<i>JP</i>	London, British Library, Egerton 2046 (Jane Pickeringe's lutebook)
<i>ML</i>	London, British Library, Add. 38539 (the M.L. lutebook)
<i>Mynshall</i>	London, Royal Academy of Music MS 601 (Richard Mynshall's lutebook)
<i>Robinson</i>	Thomas Robinson, <i>The Schoole of Musicke</i> (London: Thomas East for Simon Waterson, 1603)
<i>Varietie</i>	Robert Dowland, <i>Varietie of Lute-Lessons</i> (London: Thomas Adams, 1610)
<i>Welde</i>	Willey Park (Salop.), private collection of Lord Forester (John Welde's lutebook)

Editorial Note

When quoting from manuscript and early printed sources, I have largely preserved the spelling and punctuation of the original texts, although the use of interchangeable letters (i/j, u/v) has been standardised. All editorial additions and expansions appear in square brackets. Of course, primary texts quoted from modern editions may have been modernised by their respective editors.

Since Lady Day (25 March) was regarded as the first day of the year in many early modern administrative documents, I have given dates in a combined format in order to avoid confusion. For example, what we would consider to be 24 March 1603 becomes 24 March 1602/3 (since 1603 begins on Lady Day rather than January 1).

Citations from early modern printed volumes refer to page numbers, unless foliation or signature letters are explicitly stipulated. When giving signature information which combines letters with Roman numerals, I have converted Roman into Arabic numerals for the sake of clarity (i.e. sig. Aiii, recto becomes A3r).

Introduction

The origins of this project go back over a decade to a time when, after a couple of years spent working closely with the sources of English lute music within the context of another research project, I began to earn my day-to-day living as an instrumental teacher, giving lessons to individuals and small groups of children aged eight upwards. Besides their instrument, each of my students brought at least one volume of printed music to each lesson (either a tutor book or an anthology of more advanced repertoire) and often a number of loose printed sheets preserving additional pieces and technical exercises. During our lessons, these items were often annotated with suggested fingerings, aids to rhythmic accuracy, performance directions, reminders about accidentals, and so forth. Of course, these are exactly the kinds of materials that music historians puzzle over when attempting to reconstruct the pedagogical practices of earlier times, so I occasionally amused myself by wondering what musicologists a further four hundred years down the line might surmise about my own teaching from the material residues of these encounters.

Each pupil also brought along a standard-issue notebook in order to preserve a record of our lessons and, at the end of each one, I added a few words of instruction or technical advice, usually just enough to say which pieces or scales should be practised and how. Every day, the student would dutifully write in how long had been spent on these tasks and, ideally, their parents would sign before the next lesson in order to authenticate their claim. Inevitably, some of these notebooks remained almost unused, a symptom of a lack of organisation or enthusiasm on the part of the owner, but the most memorable of these books (which usually belonged to those most committed to their studies) would contain much more than just a record of practice. Other textual or pictorial materials might be added: simple compositions, attempts to write out well-known melodies (often in idiosyncratically devised notation), or perhaps additional music added in my own hand at their request. These books were sometimes flamboyantly decorated and personalised – with their owner's name emblazoned on the front, or with illustrations, stickers, or a new colour scheme. Most of all, they showed signs of usage and, in doing so,

revealed a little more about the content of my lessons and, more interestingly, something about the individual personalities and motivations of the participants too.

The question of student motivation is always a vexed one; why had they chosen to undertake instrumental lessons in the first place? In order to play a particular kind of music? Or perhaps to emulate the success of a friend or sibling, or in the hope of winning a place in the school band? Maybe it was simply because their parents saw it as a “proper” hobby for them to pursue. All of these stories (and more) were reflected in these documents but, of course, would not be detectable to the musicologists of, say, the twenty-fifth century without some kind of contextualisation or corroboration through other evidence.

In the midst of all this, I was struck again by parallels with the surviving pedagogical sources from the so-called English Golden Age of the lute (c.1580—c.1620). Many of those manuscript sources also contain far more than just music. Like the notebooks owned by my students, they too became repositories for “things”: other texts, drawings, doodles and scribbles – sometimes to the extent that it is unclear whether the owner even thought of the volume primarily as a music manuscript. What do those “things” mean, and what can be learnt about the motivations of the early modern subjects who owned, compiled, or used them? Some of the most generously packed lute manuscripts – often the messiest and most eclectic – remain underexplored, perhaps because of the challenges they pose to scholars working within their specific disciplinary frameworks. Similarly, the few extant copies of printed lute tutor books often show signs of use and modification, so the material forms of those publications ought to be explored rather than just the texts that they transmit.

These observations were the seeds from which this project grew, although it is not an exhaustive study of English didactic lute sources by any means. Instead, it comprises of four overlapping case studies, each focused around a key pedagogical document and contextualised with a wide array of supplementary materials. Twenty-first-century youths don’t leave behind much of a paper trail, but thankfully early modern subjects did, including letters, accounts in journals

and diaries, portraits, play-texts, verse and prose literature, educational tracts, autobiographical and biographical life-writing, administrative documents (e.g. parish registers and matriculation rolls), and various kinds of historical and antiquarian writing. Sadly, there is no extant “complete package” – that is, a pedagogical manuscript surviving alongside a set of financial accounts reflecting the cost the tuition and materials, prose descriptions reflecting on lessons or performances, and so on. But the quantity of surviving evidence is such that some kind of meaningful contextual frame can be reconstructed around these sources in order to aid their interpretation.

The choice of these case studies was thus largely defined by the scope of the surviving materials. However, a few guiding principles helped me to select areas for closer investigation. For instance, I have consciously avoided working on music-making in court circles and in the households of the aristocracy since these areas have received a good deal of recent scholarly attention; instead, I have focused rather lower down the social order, looking at life in minor gentry households from the teachers’ perspective, as well as exploring other non-noble circles.¹ On the whole, I have focused largely on subjects from what one might call (very vaguely) “the middle classes”. In using that label, I am aware of the objections raised against it by historians such as J. H. Hexter, but happy to use it in exactly the kind of broad, non-specific sense that enraged him: to describe a large, hazily defined stratum of society who did not necessarily hold lands, titles or arms but nevertheless had enough of a disposable income (however generated) that they could enjoy the pursuit of cultural activities such as sophisticated music-making.² I have also focused on male-orientated music-making, only recently recognised as an area worthy of study in itself rather

¹ Useful studies of music-making in noble households include Walter Woodfill, *Musicians in English Society: From Elizabeth to Charles I* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), chap.3; Lynn Hulse, “The Musical Patronage of the English Aristocracy, c.1590—1640” (PhD diss., University of London, 1992). Although it contains some significant factual errors and misjudgements, there is a wealth of useful material in David C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), esp. chap.3. For an important recent study focusing on the lower strata of society, see Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

² J. H. Hexter, *Reappraisals in History* (London: Longmans, 1961), 71-75.

than simply the societal *status quo*.³ There is already an important body of work on musical practices and early modern models of femininity, so I hope this study will go some way towards redressing the balance.⁴

Most of all, however, I have focused on where there appears to be a story to be told. In a period characterised by fragmentary and problematic evidence, I have focused on areas in which the evidence coalesces in order to give a snapshot of practice and, in particular, where I felt that individual musical sources had been unjustly neglected or misrepresented by previous scholarship. The first two chapters provide the conceptual framework on which the rest of the study depends; in the first chapter, I discuss the status and functions of the lute in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century music-making, mapping the terrain covered by previous scholars working on its repertory. The second chapter offers an overview of the hierarchical structure of Elizabethan and Jacobean society and highlights the shifting models of social relations that characterise the sixteenth century. The emergence of musical skill as a marker of social status is explored, as is the acutely problematic nature of music as recognised in sixteenth-century discourses on elite identity.

Against this backdrop, I move on to explore music-making in the lives of three subjects, all occupying somewhat problematic categories of social identity towards the middle of the social order, i.e. degrees of status on the fringes of the (increasingly vaguely defined) elite classes. Chapter 3 explores the social

³ For numerous stimulating studies of music-making as a masculine practice, see Ian Biddle & Kirsten Gibson, eds. *Masculinity and Western Musical Practice* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

⁴ For example, Linda Phyllis Austern, "'Sing Againe Syren': The Female Musician and Sexual Enchantment in Elizabethan Life and Literature," *Renaissance Quarterly* 42 (1989): 420-48; Julia Craig-McFeely, "The Signifying Serpent: Seduction by Cultural Stereotype in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Music, Sensation, and Sensuality*, ed. Linda Austern (New York: Routledge, 2002), 299-317; Austern, "Women's Musical Voices in Sixteenth-Century England," *Early Modern Women*, 3 (2008): 127-52; Regula Hohl Trillini, *The Gaze of the Listener: English Representations of Domestic Music-Making* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008), chap.1; Yael Sela, "An examination of virginal manuscripts owned by women in the context of early modern English keyboard music culture, ca. 1590-1660" (DPhil diss., University of Oxford, 2010).

standing of professional musicians employed in the households of the nobility. The autobiography of Elizabethan teacher and musician Thomas Whythorne (1528-96) provides a unique insight into the ambivalent forms of power and status that household service could generate, and the ways in which musical skills acted as a form of currency for professional and personal advancement there. Chapter 4 looks at the musical pursuits of Richard Mynshall (1582-1637/8), a well-heeled mercantile-class teenager living in provincial northwest England. It reveals a good deal about the use of communal music-making within that setting, and shows how the emulation of elite musical and literary practices formed a key part of his identity-formation. Learning to play music and to write verse were not only part of learning to be a man, but also a means of forging all-important social and familial connections.

After the specificity of chapter 4, the following chapter explores a manuscript which documents the studies of a musician whose identity remains elusive. The compiler of the so-called Dallis lutebook was probably a student at Trinity College, Cambridge during the 1580s, and this document offers a rare view of extra-curricular music-making amongst a male homosocial group with very different values and aspirations to those of Richard Mynshall's circle. The early modern university college was a peculiar environment, an arena in which different hierarchies of power and status operated, including those based on wealth, age, and intellectual standing. Here we see themes from the previous case studies combined, with music functioning as both as source of "worth" and as an agent of social cohesion, cutting across existing (external) social hierarchies in this environment. This manuscript thus reveals something about the place of music-making in the formulation of the new kinds of academic and scholarly identity that were emerging during the sixteenth century.

The final chapter shifts our focus from manuscript anthologies to the newly produced "teach-yourself" tutor books that were being marketed in Elizabethan England. After exploring both the content and material forms of extant copies of these books, I offer a close reading of one such text, Thomas Robinson's *Schoole of Musicke* (1603), in which my earlier themes of music as both a form of cultural capital and an agent of sociability are again drawn together. Robinson attempts, I argue, to market this volume to a dual readership of both aspirant middle-class autodidacts and gentry readers who were also likely to

hire household musicians as tutors. His sophisticated marketing strategy reveals much about early seventeenth-century views of music as a force for self-improvement, as well as the anxieties of the ruling classes who needed to learn these skills from their social inferiors. In this respect, this final case study brings us full-circle: to the same problems posed by conflicting forms of capital that we saw Thomas Whythorne negotiating in the households of the nobility some four decades earlier.

What emerges from these four case studies is a sense of the fluidity of social stratification and the potency of musical skills as a force for shaping individual identity and status. This, then, is not a study of how people actually learnt to play the lute but instead seeks to explore *why* they wanted to learn this instrument. At the heart of this project are the people who were engaged in this branch of musical learning, how they saw themselves and wanted others to see them. Rather than a study of pedagogical and instructional processes *per se*, it is an exploration of social relations in early modern English society and how one particular branch of musical education impacted upon it: as a means of binding people together (or sometimes distinguishing between them) through shared tastes, interests, and cultural practices.

Throughout this study, I have tried to tease out a narrative from fragmentary and often disparate sources and, in doing so, I was reminded of a complaint by the great cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz:

Doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of “construct a reading of”) a manuscript – foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behaviour.⁵

To this, I would add that trying to “do” ethnography merely *from* extant manuscripts and whatever corroborative source materials can be mustered (rather than through first-hand observation of living subjects) is more perilous still – and just as prone to misinterpretation and misunderstanding. In

⁵ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 10.

attempting to provide more nuanced readings of these musical sources, I accept that the burden of proof rests on me and that the whiff of conjecture can never fully be eradicated; certainly, the emergence of new musical or archival evidence in the future may necessitate some revision of these readings. I am also aware of the impossibility of divorcing one's personality from scholarly work, and these accounts are unavoidably coloured by my own interests, both in the choice of topics and how I have chosen to filter and interpret the available evidence.⁶ However, some interpretive and critical appraisal of these underexplored musical sources is already desperately overdue; as the Italians sometimes say, *se non è vero, è ben trovato*.

⁶ On the influence of scholars' personalities over their historical writing, see Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, *The Modern Invention of Medieval Music: Scholarship, Ideology, Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), chap. 4, esp. 239-42.

Chapter 1: The lute in early modern English society

Beloved Reader, you must know,
That Lutes could Speak e're you could so;
There has been Times when They have been
Discoursers unto King and Queen:
To Nobles, and the Highest Peers;
And Free Access had to Their Ears
Familiarly; scarce pass'd a Day
They would not Hear what Lute would say:
But sure at Night, though in Their Bed,
They'd Listen well what then She said.⁷

Why study the lute and its music? This was a question that Thomas Mace, former singingman at Trinity College, Cambridge and devotee of that instrument, was grappling with during the 1670s following a time of decline for the lute in England. It is, of course, a question that modern-day advocates of the lute need to confront too; why focus upon the lute when investigating the functions of musical education in early modern England rather than, say, studying viol, keyboard or vocal instruction instead?

The widespread popularity of the lute during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is a key factor here since, crucially, it was owned by members of various social groups rather than skewed towards one particular demographic. As Mace points out so eloquently, it was part of the fabric of the private lives of the ruling elite; lute instruction was part of the education of all four sixteenth-century Tudor monarchs, and in this study we will encounter several noblemen whose lute-playing formed an important strand in their childhood educational experience.⁸ But as an instrument of leisure, the lute was not simply confined to the households of the nobility, court life, and other

⁷ Thomas Mace, *Musicks Monument; or, A Remembrancer of the Best Practical Musicke* (London: T. Ratcliffe & N. Thompson for the Author, 1676), 35-36.

⁸ On the musical education of the royal family, see John Ward, "A Dowland Miscellany," *Journal of the Lute Society of America* 10 (1977): 112-17.

sites of elite status such as the Inns of Court and the universities. As Christopher Marsh and Michael Fleming have both shown, lutes were frequently listed in the wills and probate inventories of the non-noble classes as well.⁹

Lute-playing was a popular leisure pursuit across various social groups but also an important activity for professional musicians, arguably offering a career-path in its own right. Besides professional musicians working in household service, the lute was used by musicians working in civic contexts (such as town waits), in the theatres and, further down the professional and social hierarchy, by itinerant musicians (i.e. minstrels).¹⁰ Although the fragmentary nature of the surviving evidence makes it impossible to gauge the popularity of the lute accurately in quantitative terms, a few snippets of evidence underline its popularity: John Ward noted that, in one ten-month period (October 1567–August 1568), eighty-six lutes were imported into the country and, by 1582, the importation of these instruments was so common that they were included amongst the commodities listed in *The Rates of the Customes House*.¹¹ If this level of availability is indicative of a broader trend, then the lute must have been seemingly everywhere in Elizabethan and Jacobean England.

Besides its wide appeal across different classes of socio-economic status, the lute apparently also had cross-gender appeal. The instrument was often associated with female performers and was particularly *en vogue* amongst well-to-do young ladies. At the very top of society, Elizabeth I was famously depicted with her lute by Nicholas Hilliard and was said to be a fine performer on the instrument.¹² Similarly, other noblewomen were frequently pictured with

⁹ Marsh, *Music and Society*, 20-21; Michael Fleming, “An ‘Old Old Violl’ and ‘Other Lumber’: Musical Remains in Provincial, Non-Noble England, c.1580—1660,” *Galpin Society Journal* 57 (2005): 89-99. However, Fleming remarks that lutes are listed less often than expected (p.95).

¹⁰ Useful studies of the music profession during this period include Woodfill, *Musicians in English Society*, and Marsh, *Music and Society*, chaps. 2 & 3.

¹¹ Cited in John Ward, *Music for Elizabethan Lutes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), i, 25.

¹² The Hilliard miniature is reproduced in Roy Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1983), 83. For a useful summary of Elizabeth’s

their lutes, which were evidently considered an indispensable part of the education of cultured ladies of high standing. As one Elizabethan French-language primer makes clear, the girls of gentry families might expect to study a range of skills during their home-based education:

Our dancing Maister commeth about nine a clocke: our singing Maister, and he that teacheth us to play the virginalles, at tenne: he that teacheth us on the Lute and the Violl de Gambo, at foure a clocke in the after noone: and our French Maister commeth commonly betweene seaven and eight a clocke in the morning.¹³

The importance of musical and linguistic skills, alongside traditional feminine pursuits such as needlework and devotional activities, was apparently widely accepted in the training of virtuous young gentlewomen, something also borne out by the evidence of their diaries and life-writing.¹⁴

But playing the lute was not just for young ladies; it also played an important part in the formation of young gentlemen. Indeed, the ability to play this instrument was seen as an indispensable skill for gentleman courtiers, as Sir Frederick, one of the characters in Baldesar Castiglione's famous manual of courtly behaviour *Il Cortegiano* (1528), argues:

Pricksong is a faire musicke, so it bee done upon the booke surely and after a good sorte. But to sing to the lute is much better, because al the sweetnesse consisteth in one alone, and a manne is mucche more heedfull and understandeth better the feate maner and the aer or veyne of it, whan the eares are not busyed in hearynge anyer moe then one voyce: and beesyde everye little erreure is soone perceyved, which

musical activities, see Katherine Butler, "'By Instruments her Powers Appeare': Music and Authority in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I," *Renaissance Quarterly* 65 (2012): 363-68.

¹³ Peter Erondell, *The French Garden: for English Ladyes and Gentlewomen to walke in* (London: for Edward White, 1601), sig. F3v-[F4]v.

¹⁴ On music's relationship with contemporary notions of femininity and domesticity, see Trillini, *Gaze of the Listener*, chap.1.

happeneth not in syngynge wyth companye, for one bearerth oute an other. But syngynge to the Lute with the dyttie (me thynke) is more pleasaunte than the reste [i.e. than other types of musical accomplishment], for it addeth to the wordes such a grace and strength, that it is a great wonder. Also all instrumentes with freates are ful of harmony, because ye tunes of them are very perfect and with ease a manne may do many thinges upon them that fil the minde with the sweetnesse of musike. [...] They are meete to bee practised in the presence of women, because those sightes sweeten the mindes of the hearers [...]¹⁵

It is notable that Castiglione's original Italian text advocated "cantare alla viola" ("singing to the viol"); that this was changed to the lute in Hoby's translation (and in other sixteenth-century French and German translations) reflects the growing value attached to that instrument in later sixteenth-century models of courtly behaviour.¹⁶ The importance of musical skills in the formation of elite identity is one of the key themes of this study, and we shall encounter several examples of young noblemen (and aspirants) putting this theory into practice. But the lute was not only a vehicle for self-display in front of the eligible ladies at court; it also featured in recreational music-making within exclusively male spaces such as the universities and the Inns of Court.

We have already observed the lute being recommended for the accompaniment of courtly song, but it was also used in numerous other social contexts. Lute-song was used for domestic entertainment further down the social order and added an important dimension to public theatrical entertainments. Although it was a popular solo instrument, the lute was also used for duet-playing and in

¹⁵ *The Courtyer of Count Baldessar Castilio [...] done into Englyshe by Thomas Hoby* (London: William Seres, 1561), sig. M4r-v. Throughout this study I quote from Hoby's translation of Castiglione rather than the original text, thus employing his anglicised character names.

¹⁶ Discussed in James Haar, "The Courtier as Musician: Castiglione's View of the Science and Art of Music," in *Castiglione: The Ideal and the Real in Renaissance Culture*, eds. Robert W. Hanning & David Rosand (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1983), 174-77.

mixed consorts, the latter employed in gentry households for entertainment and to accompany dancing. Whether for courtly display, for private leisure, at sociable gatherings, or in the public theatres, the lute was becoming increasingly ubiquitous during the sixteenth century. In short, it was used both recreationally and professionally, to play simple ballad tunes and chordal song-accompaniments, or to explore learned counterpoint and proffer displays of florid virtuosity. As an instrument that crossed the boundaries of social class, gender and the amateur/professional divide, the study of the lute and its music offers a window onto the broader ideologies of musical practice that were developing during this period, as well as a vantage point from which to explore the social history of early modern England more generally.

Tablature notation

The widespread appeal of the lute (and related instruments such as the cittern, gittern, and bandora) was undoubtedly at least partially due to the tablature notation used for its music. Tablature arguably made this branch of musical learning more accessible than any other since, rather than providing a symbolic representation of the pitches and lengths of the notes to be played, tablature provides users with a set of physical instructions, simply indicating where one's fingers should be placed on the instrument's fingerboard. The relative durations of the notes are indicated by note shapes (much like those in conventional mensural notation) placed above these glyphs. Thus, tablature facilitated performance by those without conventional music literacy, and it could even be argued that one barely needed to be literate *at all* in order to use it: after all, the recognition of individual letter shapes was the very first step towards achieving basic literacy, just as it is today.¹⁷

This may explain why a number of pedagogical manuscripts include copies of pieces without any kind of rhythmic notation, i.e. purely as sets of letters (physical coordinates indicating "pitch"). For instance, *Folger* features a handful of pieces of this type in a rather shaky, inexperienced-looking hand and *Ballet* contains a number of works without any rhythmic information, added as space-

¹⁷ On the acquisition of basic literacy, see David Cressy, *Literacy & the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor & Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), chap. 2.

fillers to half-filled pages.¹⁸ It may be that the act of copying these “notes” down on the page (and then playing from those ciphers) was a simple enough task, but that learning to process additional rhythmic information (and to align this correctly with those notes when copying) was considered much more challenging.

Similarly, there are some tablature sources for accompanied song in which the scribe has opted not to use mensural notation for the melody line. *Board* is a pedagogical manuscript compiled probably during the 1620s by Margaret Board, daughter of a well-to-do Sussex gentleman. It includes a single song (“Fayre mysters disdayne me not”, f.23v), presented as a stanza of text placed alongside the tablature accompaniment; presumably the melody was overlaid from memory.¹⁹ Other contemporaneous sources suggest that this practice had some wider currency: the Brogyntyn lutebook features a number of intabulations of consort-song accompaniments minus their vocal lines²⁰ and Jeanice Brooks has noted the presence of several French *airs de cour* in British Library, Royal Appendix 55, preserved only as text incipits over a tablature accompaniment.²¹ Of course, it is difficult now to gauge the levels of musical understanding achieved by early modern musicians, and these rhythm-free and tune-less tablatures could represent something other than an inability to cope with more complex notation, such as a desire to save time. After all, why spend time writing out something which can be easily added from memory or worked out by ear, with the basic tablature acting as an *aide-memoire*?

Perhaps the safest thing to conclude is that tablature notation encouraged musicians with different levels of expertise to interact with the written musical text in a variety of ways. It may have offered a leg-up to non-musicians taking their first steps in their instrumental studies, but there is some evidence that it

¹⁸ *Folger*, ff. 3r and 6r; in *Ballet*, see pp. 3, 5, 7, 13.

¹⁹ This important Jacobean source contains pedagogical material apparently in the hand of John Dowland; see the facsimile edition: *The Board Lute Book, with an introductory study by Robert Spencer* (Leeds: Boethius Press, 1976) and Spencer, “Three English lute manuscripts,” *Early Music* 3 (1975): 122-24.

²⁰ Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Brogyntyn MS.27.

²¹ Jeanice Brooks, “A Singer’s Book in the British Library,” *Early Music* 26 (1998): 29-50.

piece from a lute tablature source for performance at the keyboard.

Tablature notation offered a simple and effective method of recording the lute repertory in an accessible format although, in doing so, it also concealed some musical information. It was certainly possible to follow tablature somewhat mechanically, without developing any understanding of the theoretical concepts underpinning the music being performed, and this evidently concerned some musical practitioners. Bemoaning the debasement of his profession, the composer and music tutor Thomas Whythorne wrote during the mid-1570s:

I cannot here leave out or let pass to speak of another sort that do live by music and yet are no musicians at all. And those be they who [...] have learned a little to sing pricksong, or else have either learned by hand or by ear or else by tablature [...] ²³

Whythorne had a point, of course; tablature *could* theoretically enable uneducated musicians to infiltrate the lower ranks of his profession, but he curiously neglected to mention that it also made musical skills accessible to another group at the opposite end of the social hierarchy: wealthy “gentleman” amateurs (whom he praises, as we shall see in chapter 3). For whilst tablature could make musical proficiency available to lower-class aspirants without formal musical training, it was paradoxically also ideally suited to the musical needs of the gentleman amateur, aiming to appear cultured and refined but aware that too much theoretical knowledge was dangerously suggestive of low-born professional status (discussed in Chapter 2). Thus, if playing the lute occupied a rather ambiguous position as a marker of social distinction, the nature of its tablature notation only served to complicate things a little further.

Previous studies of English lute music, 1550-1640

Although tablature made the lute repertory widely accessible at the time of its creation, it has acted as a barrier to the study of this music in recent times. As Thurston Dart noted over half a century ago, research on lute music has lagged

²³ *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, modern spelling edition, ed. James M. Osborn (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 205-6.

behind that on other aspects of Renaissance musical culture, largely due to the challenges posed by its notation.²⁴ A great deal of important ground has been covered since then, but there is still some truth in Dart's complaint; consider, for instance, the numerous volumes of Elizabethan and Jacobean madrigals, consort music, and the collected works of the English virginalists that have appeared in the *Musica Britannica* series – and the absence of volumes devoted to contemporaneous lutenist-composers in that collection.

Indeed, substantial studies of English lute music have been few. The 1955 thesis by Dart's student David Lumsden was the first systematic attempt to survey the English solo lute repertoire, including a thematic catalogue of all sources known at that time.²⁵ Diana Poulton's biography of Dowland and John Ward's extended review-*cum*-supplement covered much more ground than their titles suggest, revealing a great deal about the other musicians in Dowland's orbit and the contexts in which they worked.²⁶ Collected editions of the solo lute works of Dowland, Anthony Holborne and John Johnson have helped to bring this music to a wider audience,²⁷ whilst specialists have been well served by two important series of facsimile editions of manuscript sources, one edited by Robert Spencer for the Boethius Press and the other published by the UK's Lute Society.²⁸

²⁴ According to Dart, the study of lute music is “one of the most backward subjects in all musical research, although the field is vast and the music good”. See “Renaissance Music: Some Urgent Tasks for Scholars”, *Renaissance News* 7/3 (1954): 91.

²⁵ David Lumsden, “The Sources of English Lute Music (1540 – 1620)” (PhD. diss., University of Cambridge, 1955).

²⁶ Diana Poulton, *John Dowland* (London: Faber & Faber, 1972; rev. ed. 1982); Ward, “Dowland Miscellany”.

²⁷ Diana Poulton & Basil Lam, eds. *John Dowland: Collected Lute Music*, 3rd edition (London: Faber & Faber, 1982); Masakata Kanazawa, ed. *The Complete Works of Anthony Holborne*, i: *Music for Lute and Bandora* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1967); John M. Ward, ed. *The Lute Works of John Johnson*, Monuments of the Lutenist Art III (Columbus: Editions Orphée, 1994).

²⁸ The most pertinent volumes from these series are listed in the “Manuscripts” section of the Bibliography.

Although specific sources and composers have been studied in detail, broader overviews of the subject have been harder to come by. Julia Craig-Feely's 1993 thesis began life as a revision of Lumsden's work but ended up focused upon the palaeographical analysis of scribal hands in manuscript sources.²⁹ Her aim was to establish scribal concordances between sources and use these as a basis for a revised chronology, but few of those posited have been widely accepted. Her study does, however, provide broader contextual material on the instrument and its place in society and contains useful inventories of all the manuscript sources discovered since Lumsden's project (albeit without thematic incipits). More recently, Matthew Spring's monograph provided the first comprehensive history of the lute in Britain, offering a largely chronological approach to solo lute repertoire which is otherwise organised according by mediums of performance (i.e. the lute in consort, in song, etc.).³⁰ The outstanding strength of Spring's work lies in his coverage of post-"Golden Age" repertory (i.e. after c.1620), the subject of his doctoral thesis, and for the Elizabethan and early Jacobean Golden Age he offers a useful synthesis of earlier research, drawing together information from studies of individual sources by Ward, Poulton, Spencer, Ian Harwood and others. The recent monograph by Douglas Alton Smith includes a chapter on English lute music within his broader consideration of pan-continental traditions but, again, this synthesises existing research on the English sources rather than providing significant new information.³¹ Apart from these two monographs, there have been few substantial studies of English lute music published during the past

²⁹ Julia Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes, 1530—1630" (D.Phil diss., University of Oxford, 1993). Throughout this study, I have referred to the version of this thesis now available online, although its pagination differs slightly from the original version. See: <http://www.ramesescats.co.uk/thesis/> (accessed 1 September 2013)

³⁰ Matthew Spring, *The Lute in Britain: A History of the Instrument and its Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), based in part on Matthew Spring, "The Lute in England and Scotland after the Golden Age (1620-1750)" (D.Phil diss., University of Oxford, 1988), 3 vols.

³¹ Douglas Alton Smith, *A History of the Lute from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (n.p: Lute Society of America, 2002)

two decades, although several short descriptive accounts of newly discovered sources have appeared.³²

Limitations of previous work

Although a good deal of the fundamental work of transcribing and cataloguing sources has now been done, a number of these earlier studies have self-imposed limitations. For instance, Lumsden and Craig-McFeely both restricted their coverage to English solo lute repertoire, consciously omitting consort parts, manuscript sources of lute-song, and sources of continental music with an English provenance. This has resulted in artificial distinctions between different areas of musical practice – distinctions which are unlikely to have existed for the original users of these manuscripts. Certainly, whilst the close relationship between sixteenth-century lute music and other instrumental repertoires is now widely recognised, many studies confine themselves only to material for a particular instrumental medium. This conflicts with the holistic approach to music-making and music-collecting suggested by so many manuscript sources and, since much of the repertoire of c.1580–c.1620 is common across the lute, keyboard and consort traditions, one must be cautious when treating these as discrete repertoires. One brief example will illustrate the problems that these limitations can bring. British Library, Add. 31392 is an important source of music for the lute, bandora, and virginals, probably dating from c.1600. Yet to gain a full overview of its contents, it is necessary to consult three different reference works; no holistic overview is available.³³

Similarly, the strict chronological parameters of some previous studies are problematic since many musical sources preserve the repertoires of earlier

³² One important exception is Elizabeth Kenny, “Revealing their hand: lute tablatures in early seventeenth-century England,” *Renaissance Studies* 26 (2012): 112-37. For recently discovered manuscript sources, see Michael Gale, “Two newly discovered English lute tablature fragments,” *The Lute* 48 (2008): 54-70; David Greer & John Robinson, “A Fragment of Tablature in the Marsh Library,” *The Lute* 49 (2009): 30-35.

³³ Lyle Nordstrom, *The Bandora: its music and sources* (Warren: Harmonie Park Press, 1992); Craig-McFeely, “English Lute Scribes,” 298-304; Brookes, *British Keyboard Music*, 41.

generations. For example, the scope of Candace Bailey's catalogue of keyboard sources includes early seventeenth-century sources with retrospective content but omits Elizabethan sources that preserve largely the same repertory. Since many of these sources are dated conjecturally anyway, it seems unwise to be too legalistic about chronological boundaries in studies of this kind.

Furthermore, the importance of 1600 as a pivotal date in traditional music historiography (i.e. the "Renaissance/Baroque" divide) makes little sense in England; Jacobean instrumental music was essentially indistinct from Elizabethan, and it is telling that a recent study of the virginalist-composer Thomas Tomkins (1572-1656) styled him as "The Last Elizabethan", even though the majority of his adult life post-dated the death of Elizabeth.³⁴

Another problem with earlier reference works is the frequent omission of musical fragments, pedagogical matter, and theoretical tables from their inventories. A systematic exploration of the written traces of pedagogical activity would be a valuable piece of work, but undoubtedly hindered by the limitations of existing catalogues of primary source materials, some of which fail to mention the presence of non-musical marginalia, fragmentary and deleted musical content, or pedagogical tables (i.e. anything that is not classifiable as a complete musical "work").³⁵ For instance, *ML* includes some very interesting pedagogical exercises recorded on its opening pages: bass-lines notated in staff notation apparently in order to encourage continuous realisation. Yet readers relying on the inventory in Craig-McFeely's thesis, for example, would remain totally unaware of the existence of these materials.³⁶

As we shall see in this study, lute sources could serve as repositories for all kinds of disparate content and assume significance to their users in a multitude of ways. Whilst scholars clearly need to impose some artificial constraints in order to ensure that the scope of their studies is realistic, a set of decisions that suits "source-based" research can have a distorting effect

³⁴ Anthony Boden, ed. *Thomas Tomkins: The Last Elizabethan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005)

³⁵ These kinds of materials are significant features of the manuscripts explored in this study.

³⁶ For a discussion of these materials, see Kenny, "Revealing their hand," 117-18.

when trying to address something as intangible as lute-playing as a cultural practice.

Lute pedagogy

What do we actually know for sure about the process of studying the lute in early modern England? Conclusive evidence is sparse and is inevitably focused around the famed lutenists active in London rather than the network of lesser-known professionals who taught in the provinces and the country houses of the elite.³⁷ We know that John Dowland was active in two key fields of pedagogical practice, teaching both apprenticed boys who were seeking to become professional musicians and noble amateurs learning for recreation. In the former instance, this formed part of his duties as a royal lutenist in Denmark,³⁸ although it is clear that lutenists were trained in much the same way in England; the apprenticeship indentures of Robert Johnson and Daniel Bacheler both survive.³⁹ His work in the latter category, teaching the leisured classes in their homes, is represented by two manuscripts, *Board* and *Folger*.⁴⁰

From surviving pedagogical manuscripts, we can surmise something of the kinds of repertoire favoured in teaching contexts. There is a marked tendency towards using simple ballad tunes settings, often with relatively straightforward chord shapes using open courses and predominantly the first three or four frets. Lute duets were used frequently, usually a single-line treble part and a chordal ground (suited to pupil and teacher respectively) rather than the “equal” duets (i.e. where the instruments swap roles) found in more advanced anthologies.

³⁷ On these two distinct areas of practice, see Hulse, “Musical Patronage”, 51-54.

³⁸ See Poulton, *John Dowland*, 63.

³⁹ For Johnson’s indenture, see Ward, “Dowland Miscellany,” 88-89; for Bacheler’s, see Anne Batchelor, “Daniel Bacheler: The right perfect musician,” *The Lute* 28 (1988): 4. For an overview of the apprenticeship system, see Lynn Hulse, “Musical Apprenticeship in Noble Households,” in *John Jenkins and his Time: Studies in English Consort Music*, eds. Andrew Ashbee & Peter Holman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 75-87.

⁴⁰ On the London-based teaching activities of Dowland and other royal lutenists, see Michael Gale, “John Dowland, celebrity lute teacher.” *Early Music* 41(2013): 205-18.

Although something of Dowland's teaching methods can be deduced from the autograph traces he left in *Board* and *Folger*, no substantial musical documentation of his pedagogy survives.⁴¹ Indeed, the absence of any surviving "teachers' lutebook" has led some scholars to suggest that lute teachers instead left individual sheets with their students to copy. A number of recent finds seem to support this, but it is nevertheless difficult to be conclusive.⁴² More worrying, however, is that this hypothesis has begun to be repeated as established fact, shorn of the scholarly caution that initially accompanied it.⁴³ It is a plausible notion, to be sure, but to the best of my knowledge, no firm evidence for this practice has yet been uncovered.

The scope of this study

The processes of lute instruction remain hazily defined and, although plenty of disparate evidence survives, much of it has remained rather under-explored. At the heart of this study are close readings of selected musical sources dating from the second half of Elizabeth's reign, placed here within a broader chronological frame in order to interrogate them from a pedagogical perspective. In each case, I build upon an existing body of secondary research, but attempt to provide more holistically conceived and broadly contextualised readings of these materials than have previously been attempted.

⁴¹ On Dowland's contributions to *Folger*, see John M. Ward "The so-called "Dowland Lute Book" in the Folger Shakespeare Library," *Journal of the Lute Society of America* 9 (1976): 5-29; Ward, "Dowland Miscellany," 46-51. His contributions to *Board* are discussed in the publications by Robert Spencer already cited.

⁴² Julia Craig-McFeely, "Fragments of English Lute Music I: The British Library," *The Lute*, 32 (1992): 72-82; "Fragments of English Lute Music II: Oxford Libraries," *The Lute*, 33 (1993): 34-54; Peter Holman, "A New Source of Jacobean Lute Music," *The Lute*, 39 (1999): 7-15; Gale, "Two newly discovered," 58-66.

⁴³ Craig-McFeely, "Fragments of English Lute Music I," 73-4, suggests this form of textual transmission but admits its hypothetical status. A year later, however, this was being cited as fact; see "Fragments of English Lute Music II," 34. Spring does the same, citing Craig-McFeely's dissertation in support; see *The Lute in Britain*, 112.

i) The Mynshall lutebook

Mynshall offers an important window onto both the musical activities and wider cultural practices of Richard Mynshall (1582-1637/8), a young mercer living in the small town of Nantwich in southern Cheshire.⁴⁴ It provides an unusually rich insight into the roles of lute-playing in mercantile circles and, more broadly, in provincial urban society at around the turn of the seventeenth century. *Mynshall* first became known to musicologists through Lumsden's inventory and list of thematic incipits⁴⁵ and was subsequently bought in 1971 by Robert Spencer whose detailed research into its provenance has formed the cornerstone of subsequent investigations.⁴⁶ In particular, Spencer showed a keen interest in the manuscript's non-musical contents, identifying the contributors of the various signatures and verses it contains. However, whilst Spencer offered a brief prosopographical sketch of Mynshall's circle, he made no attempt to consider the role of the manuscript within the material culture of this group, suggesting merely that it was the product of Mynshall's teenage leisure time. Subsequent studies have been few but have included a useful transcription of the musical contents into staff notation.⁴⁷ Craig-McFeely also attempted to identify scribal concordances with other contemporaneous sources but these have been contested.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Various spellings of this name are used in the primary sources, including "Mynshull", "Minshall" and, most frequently, "Minshull". However, since "Mynshall" has been the preferred spelling in earlier musicological studies, I have used this except when quoting directly from original source material.

⁴⁵ Lumsden, "The Sources of English Lute Music," 309-11.

⁴⁶ Spencer, "Three English lute manuscripts," 119-21; *The Mynshall Lute Book with an introductory study by Robert Spencer* (Leeds: Boethius Press, 1975).

⁴⁷ Lawrence Zehring, "Richard Mynshall's Lute Book: A transcription and commentary" (DMA diss., University of Missouri, 1990). Zehring draws heavily on Spencer's earlier contextual sketch, but explores Mynshall's biography in greater depth than previous commentators and adds some new insights following a fresh re-examination of the archival sources.

⁴⁸ Craig-McFeely, "English Lute Manuscripts and Scribes," (chap. 7) argues that Mynshall was one of the scribes of London, British Library, Add.15117 (the Swarland songbook), a decade or so after copying *Mynshall*. For a convincing rebuttal, see David Greer, "Manuscript Additions in 'Parthenia' and other early English printed music in America,"

Mynshall's lutebook dates from the last few years of the sixteenth century and contains twelve folios of solo lute music plus several signatures, acrostics, verses and other textual items. For all its intrinsic interest, it has not received much scholarly attention, perhaps for three (related) reasons: firstly, it does not contain much music by major composers – the most significant items are a handful of works ascribed to Dowland and one to John Johnson. In fact, most of its musical contents are not even attributed to a composer at all, consisting mainly of settings of popular ballad tunes and standard chord progressions of the day (e.g. the *passamezzo*, *rogero*, etc). Whereas a good deal of musicological scholarship has been concerned with canonical composers and their works, most of the music collected by Mynshall can be said to reside firmly in the public domain.

Secondly, many of the works in the manuscript are textually problematic. Mynshall seems to have had particular difficulty with rhythmic notation at the start of his book, and some of the later pieces have few or no rhythm signs. As a result, *Mynshall* has not been seen as particularly useful for text-critical work such the preparation of scholarly editions.⁴⁹ Finally, since most musicological research has focused on well-documented spheres such as the English court and aristocratic circles, a source from a geographically peripheral location like Cheshire is likely to be marginalised; not only is it more difficult to contextualise, but it also appears less significant to a discipline geared towards the study of “great composers” and the establishment of authoritative texts of their works.⁵⁰ A provincial lute manuscript might well be less likely to contain

Music & Letters 77 (1996): 175-76. Craig-McFeely also suggested that the single page of lute tablature (f.24v) in the Mansell Lyra Viol tablature (Los Angeles, William Clark Andrews Library, M 286 M4 L992) is in Mynshall's hand. I am grateful to John Robinson for providing me with a copy of the Mansell page; I remain unconvinced that they are related and it is difficult to see how Mynshall could have accessed this unrelated manuscript, which has no known Cheshire connections.

⁴⁹ For instance, Poulton and Lam drew attention to these textual problems in their *Collected Lute Music of John Dowland*, 3rd edition (London: Faber Music, 1981). See 329, 331, 338 (nos. 43, 48, and 80 respectively).

⁵⁰ This is also true of Priscilla Bunbury's keyboard book (c.1630s), a relatively little-known pedagogical source with a Cheshire provenance, containing music by mainly

“good” texts of, say, Dowland’s solo works than one copied in London circles closer to the composer, but it has much to tell us about music-making and the forging of social connections within this particular community.

ii) The so-called Dallis lutebook

It is well known that music-making was widespread within the early modern universities, yet surprisingly few instrumental sources can be firmly connected to collegiate environments. *Dallis* was almost certainly compiled by a student of Thomas Dallis at Trinity College Cambridge during the 1580s but, although this large and important source has been known to musicologists for many years, it has remained curiously neglected.⁵¹ Although it has been thoroughly inventoried and the subject of some codicological investigation, no-one until now has attempted to interpret *Dallis* in the light of the vibrant musical culture at Trinity.⁵²

There may be several reasons why scholars have been reluctant to engage closely with this source. It is a dauntingly thick and untidy volume, containing some two hundred and seventy pages of music – mostly for solo lute but also some songs, lute duets, consort parts, miscellaneous items in staff notation and pedagogical instructions. Secondly, its bibliographic history is confused and it remains unclear how this manuscript found its way to Dublin, where it was bound together with an entirely separate manuscript (the so-called Dublin

provincial composers. See Virginia Brookes, ed. *Priscilla Bunbury’s Virginal Book: A Collection of Keyboard Music for a Young Lady of the Seventeenth Century*, Early Keyboard series 3 (Albany: PRB Productions, n.d.)

⁵¹ First described by H. Macaulay Fitzgibbon, “The Lute Books of Ballet and Dallis,” *Music & Letters* 11 (1930): 71-77.

⁵² See John M. Ward, “The Lute Books of Trinity College, Dublin, I: Ms. D.3.30/1: The so-called Dallis Lute Book,” *Lute Society Journal* 9 (1967): 17-40; Helmut Werner, “The Background, Content and Purpose of the Dallis Lute Book” (MA diss., National University of Ireland, 2000). For modern editions of selected music, see Christopher Goodwin, ed. *Songs from the Dallis Manuscript c.1583*, The English Lute Song before Dowland, i (n.p.: Lute Society, 1996); John H. Robinson, ed. “Complete Lute Music Ascribed to Thomas Dallis, Edward Herbert and John Lawrence plus a Selection from the Lute Books of John Wilson, Christopher Lowther, and Trinity College MS O.16.2,” Music Supplement to *Lute News* 83 (October 2007): 5-9.

Virginal Book) at some point during the eighteenth century (and then cropped and paginated as a discrete unit sometime after that). Furthermore, the absence of a scribal identity makes contextualisation challenging, and it is difficult to imagine how we might now, at a distance of over four hundred years, ever hope to securely identify the compiler.

Like *Mynshall*, *Dallis* has been portrayed as a peripheral source, occupying a marginal position in the conventional narrative of the development of English lute music. The most important study of *Dallis* was produced by John Ward and a team of Harvard graduate students during the 1960s, who drew attention to the unusually large number of continental works it contains and were able to identify concordances with numerous continental printed anthologies dating back as far as the beginning of the sixteenth century. In doing so, they set the tone for its future reception; Ward's closing reference to "the conservative and sometimes bizarre taste shown in the choice of its contents" painted an image of this source as an eccentric outlier.⁵³

When comparing *Dallis* with other extant English manuscripts of the period (most of which were recreational anthologies compiled by young gentlemen or women), it is easy to see Ward's point. But when considered within the context of the musical culture of the early modern university, *Dallis* assumes a new importance. Although its compiler remains an anonym, *Dallis* offers an illuminating window onto the musical interests of one particular learned character, showing us how musical skills were being utilised in the creation of a distinctive kind of scholarly identity. And as the sole surviving English manuscript of this type – there are plenty of analogous survivors from Continental Europe, as we shall see – it is hardly surprising that it differs so strikingly from its English contemporaries.

iii) Printed lute tutor books, 1568-1610

Although the circulation of lute music in England was primarily a manuscript phenomenon, the rapid development of music-printing in England during the second half of the sixteenth century also saw the publication of "teach-yourself" tutor books, catering for a new market interested in acquiring

⁵³ Ward, "So-called *Dallis*," 22.

musical skills. These books have been thoroughly explored by music bibliographers due to the various problems that they pose; for instance, *Le Roy 1568* and *Le Roy 1574* have been identified as English translations of lost French originals,⁵⁴ whilst *Barley* has achieved some notoriety due to both its plagiaristic relationship with the Le Roy volumes and in the light of Dowland's apparent criticism of it.⁵⁵ The appearance of pedagogical anthologies by both Thomas Robinson and Robert Dowland during the first decade of the seventeenth century arguably signalled a new chapter in the history of lute instruction in England. Whereas previous tutor books had been cheap quarto volumes, apparently the work of opportunistic printer-publishers looking to turn a quick profit, these two lavish folio anthologies were conceived with an altogether different function in mind: to generate prestige and aid career advancement for the famous lutenists that produced them.

Taken together, however, several other questions about these didactic volumes remain. Who bought these books, and how were they used? Could they provide the kind of self-directed education that they advocate, or did they serve other purposes for their owners? Although these sources are well known amongst modern-day performers and scholars, many of these basic questions have remained unconsidered. And although the analysis of their musical content is of course important, recent work in the fields of material cultural studies and book history has shown how the material forms of these books – their printed formats, bindings, and paratextual materials – can also reveal a good deal about how they were marketed and sold. Furthermore, annotations and other signs of usage in extant copies can tell us something about how early modern consumers utilised these texts.

⁵⁴ See Ian Harwood, "On the Publication of Adrian Le Roy's Lute Instructions," *Lute Society Journal* 18 (1976): 30-36.

⁵⁵ On the relationship between *Barley* and the Le Roy volumes, see Ward, "Dowland Miscellany," 125-26. On Dowland's response to *Barley*'s version of his works, see Poulton, *John Dowland*, 48. Both of these points will be revisited in more detail in chapter 6.

Broader contexts: two autobiographies by gentleman-lutenists

Whilst the main musical sources studied here belong to a period of just twenty years (c.1583-1603), other sources permit me to address a broader chronological span in this study. Although there is very little surviving lute music from before the 1560s, I have used other kinds of contextual evidence from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign onwards. As a broader chronological frame, I have drawn upon two autobiographical texts, both written by gentleman-lutenists and frustratingly short on musical content. However, both offer numerous insights into the social dynamics of early modern music-making and are returned to in various guises throughout the study.

The discovery in 1955 of a manuscript autobiography by the poet, composer and music teacher Thomas Whythorne must have seemed like a godsend for scholars of Elizabethan culture. Whythorne was previously known merely as a minor composer, one who had printed the earliest extant collection of English part-songs and whose work had been the subject of various critical assaults since the time of Charles Burney.⁵⁶ Whythorne's status changed dramatically with the publication of his autobiography which, in the words of its editor James Osborn, "enables us to know him more intimately as a personality than any other Elizabethan man of music, art, or letters".⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Besides his 1962 modern spelling edition (cited earlier), Osborn published a 1961 edition of the autobiography which preserved the idiosyncratic orthography of Whythorne's original and included a more substantial introductory study: *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, original spelling edition, ed. James M. Osborn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961). All subsequent references are to the 1962 edition unless stated. On the historiography of Whythorne's music see Whythorne, *Autobiography* (1961 ed.), xiii-xvii and Robert McQuillan, "Thomas Whythorne: Songs for Three, Four, and Five Voices 1571: an Edition and Commentary" (MA dissertation, Queen's University, Belfast, 1981), i, 1-17.

⁵⁷ The title "autobiography" is Osborn's, not Whythorne's; see also James M. Osborn, *The Beginnings of Autobiography in England* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, [1959]). This is not the place to enter the debate as to whether it constitutes an autobiography in the modern sense of the word; I use the title "autobiography" throughout this thesis for convenience, whilst acknowledging its problematic status.

The autobiography is an enigmatic document in many ways; nothing is known about its intended readership, and its date is uncertain (although it appears to break off around 1576). Nor was it even designed as an autobiographical document *per se*; Whythorne describes it simply as a book of his “songs and sonnets”, with the narrative sections added to reveal his reasons for writing these poems and the “secret meaning in divers of them”.⁵⁸ It is of great interest to literary scholars as a source of Whythorne’s poetry, and to linguistics scholars since Whythorne writes in a phonetic “New Orthographie” which reveals a good deal about Elizabethan pronunciation.⁵⁹ Probably written around 1576 but describing incidents going back to the 1550s, his writing about his wide-ranging career (which included teaching in various private households, as a private music teacher in London, and as a tutor in a Cambridge college) is a mine of information for social historians, casting light on the goings-on inside a number of institutions.

However, detailed descriptions of Whythorne’s musical activities are scarce. He gives useful information surrounding the publication of his musical works, many of which were evidently revisions of earlier songs sung to lute or keyboard accompaniment. No solo lute music by Whythorne survives and, although a number of his 1571 songs are known to have originated as lute songs, these were published in polyphonic arrangements without tablature accompaniment.⁶⁰ As a result, musicological coverage of the autobiography has been somewhat limited and largely concentrated on the few passages which do offer some musical detail.⁶¹ Literary scholars and historians have become

⁵⁸ Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 1.

⁵⁹ e.g. Rupert E. Palmer, *Thomas Whythorne’s speech: The phonology of a sixteenth-century Native of Somerset in London* (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1969)

⁶⁰ Thomas Whythorne, *Songes of three, fower, and five voyces* (London: John Day, 1571)

⁶¹ However, much of this material is found outside the main narrative of the autobiography; firstly, on the so-called “musical scrap”, a loose piece of paper tucked inside the manuscript which includes lists “Of Doktorz and Bachelorz of Miuzik In England” and “The doktorz and Bachelorz of Miuzik of lat tym”; transcribed in Whythorne, *Autobiography* (1961 ed.), 300-3. Secondly, Whythorne includes a set of “discourses” on the uses of music in ancient times, music’s status as one of the liberal

increasingly receptive to Whythorne's potential as a witness to cultural phenomena including poetic production and exchange,⁶² early modern notions of subjectivity and the development of life-writing,⁶³ and other kinds of social and amorous interaction.⁶⁴ In contrast, musicologists have been reluctant to view Whythorne's life story through any kind of interpretive lens, but his life-writing tells us a good deal about the social standing of a household musician/teacher and the dynamics of the early modern music lesson.⁶⁵

In my reading of Whythorne's autobiography, I explore his life as a music

arts, the different degrees of musician, and so on. See Whythorne, *Autobiography* (1962 ed.), 182-207.

⁶² For example, Robin Headlam Wells, "Ars Amatoria: Philip Rosseter and the Tudor Court Lyric," *Music & Letters* 70 (1989): 62-63; Catherine Bates, *The Rhetoric of Courtship in Elizabethan Language and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 35-36; Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 35-38; Ilona Bell, *Elizabethan Women and the Poetry of Courtship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 55-68; Jane Stevenson, "Women, Writing and Scribal Publication in the Sixteenth Century," *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*, 9 (2000): 6-9; Marcy L. North, *The Anonymous Renaissance: Cultures of Discretion in Tudor-Stuart England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 54-55, 247-249.

⁶³ e.g. Katharine Hodgkin, "Thomas Whythorne and the Problems of Mastery," *History Workshop* 29 (1990): 20-41; Andrew Mousley, "Renaissance Selves and Life Writing: The *Autobiography* of Thomas Whythorne," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 26/3 (1990): 222-30; David Shore, "The *Autobiography* of Thomas Whythorne: An Early Elizabethan Context for Poetry," *Renaissance and Reformation* 17 (1981): 72-86; Elizabeth Heale, *Autobiography and Authorship in Renaissance Verse: Chronicles of the Self* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 41-65; Ronald Bedford, Lloyd Davis & Philippa Kelly. *Early Modern English Lives: Autobiography and Self-Representation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 15-20.

⁶⁴ Mary Ellen Lamb, "Tracing a Heterosexual Erotics of Service in *Twelfth Night* and the Autobiographical Writings of Thomas Whythorne and Anne Clifford," *Criticism* 40 (1998): 1-25.

⁶⁵ One very recent study which addresses this lacuna is Katie Nelson, "Love in the music room: Thomas Whythorne and the private love affairs of Tudor music tutors." *Early Music* 40 (2012): 15-26. This is derived from her 2011 doctoral thesis on Whythorne (which was unavailable for consultation at the time of writing).

teacher in the households of the gentry, offering a window on a crucial moment of change from feudal models of social relations to a capitalist economy of service. We see how Whythorne, a proud and sometimes acerbic man, was a gentleman by birth but working in service, now trying to make sense of his position in society and using his musical and poetic skills to fashion his advancement. These skills formed an important part of the currency of social power within these households and his autobiography is rich in information about social relations within these contexts. Whythorne's life-writing forms the focus of my opening case study, but in many ways the issues raised here form a thread running throughout this entire project.

At the opposite chronological pole is another manuscript autobiography, written in around 1640 by the lute-playing nobleman Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury. Although Cherbury makes even fewer references to musical practices in his text than Whythorne, one extended passage is of considerable interest. Herbert also compiled a large manuscript anthology of lute music which, whilst not central to this study, seems to exemplify the musical changes afoot during the period 1590 -1640; it contains lots of Elizabethan solo music in *vieil ton* tuning alongside later music either collected in France or written in England in the French style.⁶⁶ As a gentleman amateur, he represents an important category of musician in this study and, in many respects, he forms a foil to Whythorne, the teacher serving in aristocratic households. Like Whythorne, Cherbury is something of a braggart and difficult to "read", but his writings tell us something about the place of music in university life, and the role of music in the self-cultivation strategy of a gentleman.

Cherbury's autobiography also suggests a useful terminal date for this study, since it coincides with a time of great social and political upheaval in England (culminating in the Civil War and Protectorate of the 1640s). It was also a time of great musical change, both in organological terms and regarding the actual usage of lutes. The sixteenth-century lute in *vieil ton* tuning (g'-d'-a-f-c-G) had gradually increased in size through the addition of bass courses: a seventh course became standard by around 1590, up to nine were the norm by about 1600, and a tenth was added beyond that. The 1620s and 30s saw widespread

⁶⁶ Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Mus. MS 689.

experimentation with the fashionable *nouveaux accords* (or transitional tunings) imported along with French repertory and, by the middle of the century, the standard instrument for solo performance was the so-called “French lute”, an 11- or 12-course instrument in “D minor” tuning (f'-d'-a-f-d-A).⁶⁷ This change of equipment went hand-in-hand with a gradual shift away from the use of tablature notation, with lutenists starting to favour staff-based notation and the developing *basso continuo* function of the instrument.⁶⁸ With all of this in mind, the time around c.1640 seems a natural point at which to break off this investigation.

Summary

The widespread popularity of the lute in early modern England was reflected by the multiplicity of different functions that it served. As a result, the dimensions of this study are kept deliberately fuzzy, both chronologically and in terms of scope, and although it remains “lute-centred”, this is really a study about music education in a more general sense. Nor is it really about “the music” *per se* but, instead, it seeks to explore the various kinds of musicking (to borrow Christopher Small’s term) that lutenists undertook – that is, the social practices involving musical performance or consumption in which they participated.⁶⁹ By treating lute-playing as a social and cultural practice rather than merely focusing on musical texts, surviving instruments or playing technique, I hope to provide a broad-ranging and holistically enriched view of the lute and its players. And rather than pursuing a “work”- or composer-orientated approach to the extant musical sources, my conception of these as material objects, each embedded in a wider mesh of meanings and functions, can yield new insights into the ways that this instrument was used in the production of identity.

⁶⁷ Michael Lowe, “The Historical Development of the Lute in the 17th Century,” *Galpin Society Journal* 29 (1976): 11-25.

⁶⁸ On the transition from tablature-based performance to continuo realisation from staff notation, see Elizabeth Kenny, “The Uses of Lute Song: Texts, contexts and pretexts for ‘historically informed’ performance,” *Early Music* 36 (2008): 285-99.

⁶⁹ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1998)

Chapter 2: Music-making and the social structure of Elizabethan England

I do add unto my name the title of gentleman, so I mean to show myself to be one,
as well in the outward marks as in the inward man [...] ⁷⁰

Thus wrote Thomas Whythorne, referring to the authorial portrait on the title page of his *Songes for three, fower, and five voyces* (1571).⁷¹ Whythorne was not alone in his preoccupation with social standing; the fluidity of social status was an area of broader concern across sixteenth-century England and his remark touches upon the issue at the heart of those anxieties: an ideological conflict between whether gentility was inherited (through lineage and material wealth) or something that could be acquired or earned – a tension between “birth” and “worth”. Whythorne’s “outward marks” included the coat-of-arms proudly displayed in the portrait and presumably also the fashionable courtly attire in which he is depicted. But his conception of his own “inward” gentility is harder to pin down – perhaps a reference to his gentle blood, or maybe an allusion to his learned and morally upright character. Either way, Whythorne’s comment encapsulates something about the status of the gentleman in early modern England, for gentility was at once something externally visible but also an intrinsic part of the self.

Taxonomies of status

Sixteenth-century England was a stratified society, often represented by contemporary social commentators in the form of taxonomic models.⁷² These depict a hierarchical structure essentially rooted in late-medieval feudal social

⁷⁰ Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 175.

⁷¹ Thomas Whythorne, *Songes for three, fower or five voyces* (London: John Day, 1571), tenor partbook only. This image was also used in his *Duos, or Songs for two voices* (London: Thomas East, 1590)

⁷² For helpful overviews, see Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1660* (London: Hutchinson, 1982), 17-38; J. A. Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History 1550-1760* (London: Edward Arnold, 1987), 152-75.

relations, with the upper classes defined by their ability to subsist through the income derived from their land-holdings, i.e. with no need to resort to physical labour or trade in order to remain solvent. For example, in his contribution to Holinshed's *Chronicles*, the clergyman William Harrison wrote that "we in Englande divide our people commonlie into foure sortes, as gentlemen, citizens or burgesses, yeomen, which are artificers, or laborers."⁷³ Harrison goes on to explain how the highest stratum ("gentlemen") has an internal hierarchy with the royal family at the top, the various ranks of peers and noblemen ("gentlemen of the greater sort"), and a lowest rung of untitled, rank-and-file "gentlemen".

Other sources suggest an even more intricately constructed hierarchy within the upper echelons of society. This "briefe ordre all of estates" (**Table 2.1**), amongst the surviving papers of Elizabethan antiquary James Strangman, shows how both inherited titles and positions within family lines of succession could combine in order to define a position within the social order.⁷⁴ Once again, the importance of noble lineage is paramount but the generic "gentleman" is included as the lowest rank of the elite classes.

⁷³ Raphael Holinshed, William Harrison, et al. *The First and second volumes of Chronicles* (London: [Henry Denham, 1587]), 156.

⁷⁴ Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Top. gen.c.90, f.105r. This manuscript apparently consists of loose papers bound together at an unknown date. On the single leaf of lute tablature (c.1590?) it contains, see Gale, "Two newly discovered," 55-58.

Table 2.1 **Oxford, Bodleian Library, Top.gen.c.90, f.105r**

A briefe ordre of all estates	
1	first Dukes of the blood Royall
2	then other dukes
3	then elder sonnes to dukes of the bloode
4	then marquesses
5	then elder sonnes to other dukes
6	then earles
7	then elder sonnes to marquesses
8	then yonger sonnes to dukes of the bloode
9	then elder sonnes of earles
10	then vicecountes
11	then yonger sonnes to other dukes
12	then yonger sonnes to marquesses
13	then Barons
14	then elder sonnes of vicecountes
15	then elder sonnes of Barons
16	then yonger sonnes of earles
17	then knightes Bannerete
18	then youngers sonnes of vicecountes
19	then younger sonnes of barons
20	then knighte Bachelere
21	then Squiers for the body
22	then sonnes & heires of knighte Bannerete
23	then elder sonnes of Bacheler knights
24	then squieres
25	then Gentlemen

But although anatomies of society like these can offer a useful insight into how social class was theorised by contemporary Englishmen, these schemas are, as Michael Braddick and John Walter have pointed out, merely “imaginative

constructions rather than simply material realities”, telling us little about the actual dynamics of social power.⁷⁵ Although social status could certainly be grounded in material wealth, inherited rank or land-holding, it was nevertheless not a fixed, quantifiable property but rather a relational concept; the status of those in one stratum of society was defined not necessarily by what they had, but by their power relationships with those in other societal groups.⁷⁶ And it was during the sixteenth century, as we shall see, that a particularly complex reconfiguration of elite social identity can be observed, resulting in the emergence of numerous new pathways to gentle status. With this in mind, it is little wonder that social commentators such as Harrison (not to mention concerned individuals like Whythorne) spent so much of their time and energy contemplating the subject.

New pathways to social advancement

The sixteenth century was a time of marked change in models of social relations, both in England and across Europe. This period saw a pronounced shift in the function of the nobility, whose collective identity had been bound up in land-ownership and (often reciprocal) provision of military support to the crown. But as other forms of service to the state became increasingly important (such as diplomatic, political, and administrative roles), the requirements placed upon the social elite changed, with displays of civility, refined behaviour and sound learning becoming important new components of elite identity.⁷⁷ In

⁷⁵ Michael J. Braddick & John Walter, “Grids of Power: Order, hierarchy and subordination in early modern society,” in *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy and Subordination in Britain and Ireland*, eds. Michael J. Braddick & John Walter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 8, 39.

⁷⁶ On this point, see also William M. Reddy, “The concept of class,” in *Social Orders and Social Classes in Europe since 1500: Studies in Social Stratification*, ed. M. L. Bush (London: Longman, 1992), 13-25.

⁷⁷ Useful studies dealing specifically with changes to English society include Frank Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), chap. 1; Keith Wrightson, “Estates, Degrees, and Sorts: Changing Perceptions of Society in Tudor and Stuart England,” in *Language, History and Class*, ed. Penelope J. Corfield (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 30-52; Jorge Ardit, *A Genealogy of Manners: Transformations of Social Relations in France and England from the Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University

England, the expansion of state bureaucracy during Elizabeth's reign did much to nurture this change, creating new opportunities for those with a good humanistic education, legal training or administrative skills. The English system of primogeniture played a part too, with the younger sons of the nobility needing to do *something* to sustain themselves. This perceptible shift from the primacy of land-based status led to new conceptions of gentle identity, nourished by alternative sources of power including trade, professional advancement, and various forms of education (legal, academic, or more broadly "cultural").

Certainly, by the mid-sixteenth century, gentility was no longer exclusively claimed by those of good birth. Arguably, it could be achieved simply by behaving like a gentleman or, as Humfrey Braham put it in his *Institucion of a Gentleman* (1555), by displaying a "gentleness and nobility of spirit".⁷⁸ This tract goes on to define three categories of gentility: first, the "Gentle gentle", those who are "borne of noble kynred descendynge of gentle blood, [...] having joined in hys gentle house, gentle maners and noble conditions".⁷⁹ Next is the "Gentle ungentle" man who is "descended of noble parentage [...] and hath in him such corrupte and ungentle maners [...] he justely deserveth the name of ungentle".⁸⁰ Finally, there are the "Ungentle gentle", including those "born of a low degree" but who "by his vertue, wyt, pollicie, industry, knowledge in lawes, valliency in armes, or such like honest meanes becometh a wel beloved and high estemed manne".⁸¹ In other words, gentility could be achieved through certain practices and behaviours, and thus the title "gentleman" was usefully imprecise, forming a permeable and rather loosely defined threshold into elite society. As Keith Wrightson has deftly summarised, by the late sixteenth century gentility was "a status dependent upon a compound of occupation,

of Chicago Press, 1998), chap. 6; Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998)

⁷⁸ Humfrey Braham, *The Institucion of a gentleman* (London: Thomas Marshe, 1555), sig. B6r.

⁷⁹ Braham, *Institucion*, sig. B6v

⁸⁰ Braham, *Institucion*, sig. C2r.

⁸¹ Braham, *Institucion*, sig. C4r

wealth and life-style in addition to *and sometimes independent of birth*.⁸²

Whilst the highest ranks of the gentle classes were still occupied by those with inherited wealth and power, William Harrison explains how practitioners of certain arts and professions could obtain the lesser title of “gentleman” through various means:

Whosoever studieth the lawes of the realme, who so abideth in the universitie giving his mind to his booke, or professeth physicke and the liberall sciences, or beside his service in the roome of a capteine in the warres, or good counsell given at home, whereby his common-wealth is benefited, can live without manuell labour, and thereto is able and will beare the port, charge, and countenance of a gentleman, he shall for monie have a cote and armes bestowed upon him by heralds (who in the charter of the same doo of custome pretend antiquitie and service, and manie gaie things) and thereunto being made so good cheape be called master, which is the title that men give to esquiers and gentlemen, and reputed for a gentleman ever after.⁸³

Harrison outlines various pathways to gentility here but it is notable that, whichever route to advancement is chosen, a certain amount of financial muscle was needed to legitimise the process through the purchase of arms. Furthermore, he still stresses the importance of avoiding manual labour; apparently a reasonable degree of wealth or patronage was needed even to become a “new” gentleman.

Nevertheless, the development of these newly calibrated models of elite identity offered a wealth of further opportunities. Newly valued skills and modes of behaviour were endorsed in didactic conduct books of which Castiglione’s *Courtier* was only the most famous. Amongst Castiglione’s courtiers, the merits of numerous different cultural and social practices are discussed, including musical and literary activities, modes of dress, and

⁸² Wrightson, *English Society*, 20. My italics.

⁸³ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 162.

conversational idioms, as well as other pastimes and pursuits.⁸⁴ These instructional volumes served a dual purpose, as Whigham has observed, codifying these new markers of elite identity in order to define the existing elite but also opening up access to a new aspirant readership, now able to learn these skills and (theoretically) achieve social advancement through the diligent study of these texts.⁸⁵

If the civility literature of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries outlined a new curriculum of skills, the personal miscellany manuscript of the Surrey gentleman John Ramsey (formerly a courtier himself under James I) showed how this theory model could work in practice. After listing the historical kings of England, Ramsey began work on another hierarchical sketch of English society, providing lists of Lords, Knights, Gentlemen and “Familia”, Captains, and finally “English ladyes & gentlewomen admirable for learning” (tactfully adding Mrs Ramsey at the very end). Amongst the gentlemen, Ramsey includes not only *bona fide* nobles but also representatives of the whole “gentleman’s curriculum”: scholars, poets, travellers, antiquaries, riders, fencers, and of course musicians. It is here, alongside many other luminaries of the day (including John Stow, William Camden, Samuel Daniel, and Michael Drayton) that Ramsey includes “Mr Dowland an excellent Musitian” and “Mr Ca[ve]ndish a fine Musitian”.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Throughout this study, I employ Castiglione (filtered through Hoby) as a representative of the civility literature of the period, whilst recognising that his views and recommendations on some aspects of courtly conduct differ from those in other texts within the genre. However, the widespread dissemination of his work in England justifies my reliance on this text; as Jeri McIntosh has pointed out, other texts had already begun to disseminate Castiglionian ideals in England even before the publication of Thomas Hoby’s 1561 translation; see Jeri McIntosh, “Mary’s Humanist Education”, paper given at *Mary and Elizabeth: Partners in Throne and Grave* conference, Chawton House Library, September 2007.

⁸⁵ Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege*, 18-20.

⁸⁶ Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 280, ff. 96r-105r. For an overview of this manuscript and what is known of Ramsey’s life, see Edward Doughtie, “John Ramsey’s Manuscript as a Personal and Family Document,” in *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society, 1985-1991*, ed. W. Speed Hill (Binghampton: Renaissance English Text Society, 1993), 281-88.

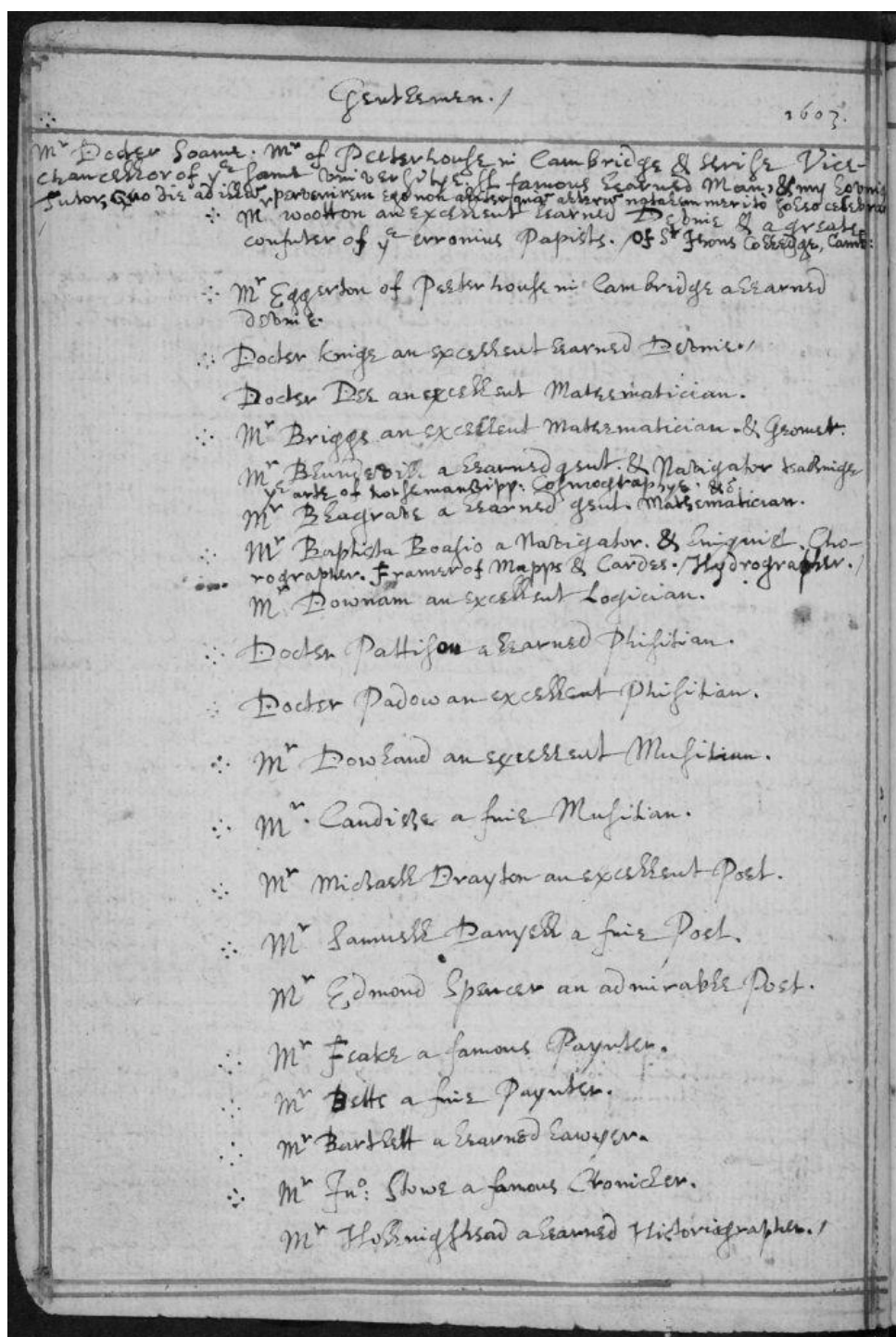


Figure 2.1 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 280, f.103v. Reproduced with permission of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.

Notably, most of Ramsey's "gentlemen" are listed not due to their gentle birth but because of their mastery of particular skills or pursuits. Of the two musicians listed, Cavendish was born a gentleman whereas Dowland most

definitely was not (and always preferred to advertise his academic credentials in print rather than presenting himself as such). Nevertheless, the point here is that these men, along with academics, cartographers, antiquarians, and other practitioners of prized skills, were now regarded as gentlemen by Ramsey. Thus, his list is a striking witness to changing models of social relations and seems to underline the message put across by the social commentators and theorists I have already cited: that gentility was no longer simply grounded in what the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has called economic capital (i.e. wealth or land) or social capital (in the form of lineage, inherited titles, or familial connections), but could now also be fashioned through the acquisition of cultural capital, in the form of approved skills and knowledge.⁸⁷

The performance of gentility

Of course, Ramsey's list tells us only that *he* regarded these figures as gentlemen, not whether the rest of society would have agreed. Indeed, Lawrence Stone's division of early modern English society into "a two-class society of those who were gentlemen and those who were not" was probably intended to stress the nebulous nature of gentility during this period, but comes across now as somewhat optimistic.⁸⁸ Whether or not these "new gentlemen" were widely accepted as such is an open question, and there is some reason to suppose that newly earned gentry status was merely illusory. Harrison certainly seems to suggest so, since he continues by saying that a newly gentrified lawyer or university graduate would nevertheless still be taxed according to his former rank:

Which is so much the lesse to be disallowed of, for that the prince dooth loose nothing by it, the gentleman being so much subject to taxes and publike paiments as is the yeoman or husbandman, which he likewise dooth beare the gladlier for the saving of his reputation.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," trans. Richard Nice. In *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. E. Richardson (New York, Greenwood Press, 1986), 46-58.

⁸⁸ Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 49.

⁸⁹ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 162.

This remark raises two issues: first, it reignites the debate about whether gentry status *could* actually be earned or learnt – evidently the tension between birth and worth was very real. Secondly, it highlights the performative nature of being a gentleman whereby (apparently) these new routes to gentility were not much more than ways of enhancing one’s reputation, of acquiring a veneer of gentlemanly respectability, even if the “inward man” remained base.⁹⁰ But then one might ask – wouldn’t the mere appearance of gentle status be enough? As James Cleland famously declared, “it is not in his hand who is honoured, but in the hearts and opinions of other men”; in other words, honour and status were generated only through being perceived and recognised by others.⁹¹ By extension, if one was to look, sound, and behave like a gentleman, then (arguably) one would become exactly that.

In developing this notion of elite identity as something that can be projected through certain skills, behaviours, and modes of display, I am using the word “performance” in the sense employed by the sociologist Erving Goffman⁹²: to refer to the *conscious* performance of a role or identity as part of a carefully constructed public persona, rather than using it in the more recent sense developed by Judith Butler in the field of gender theory.⁹³ What I am proposing is that the performance of gentility was a deliberate strategy, something

⁹⁰ For a thought-provoking discussion of the performativity of nobility, see M. L. Bush, “An anatomy of nobility,” in *Social Orders and Social Classes in Europe since 1500: Studies in Social Stratification*, ed. M. L. Bush (London: Longman, 1992), 26-46.

⁹¹ James Cleland, *The Institution of a Young Nobleman* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1607), 179.

⁹² Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London: Allen Lane, 1959), esp. 15-66.

⁹³ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York: Routledge, 1990). As Butler herself later clarified, what she describes is not a conscious act of performance, but instead the unconscious moulding of identity by socio-cultural forces and conventions; see Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the discursive limits of “sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 1-12. This seems at odds with the deliberate strategies at play in this study but, for a musicological study that stays closer to what Butler had in mind, see Ruth A. Solie, *Music in Other Words: Victorian Conversations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), chap. 3 (“Girling at the Parlor Piano”).

comparable to the theatrical “self-fashioning” described by the literary critic Stephen Greenblatt. For Greenblatt, the sixteenth century was an era in which there was “an increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process” and, in fashioning one’s identity in this way, he stresses (like Butler, as it happens) the need for the repetition of self-constituting acts: “identity is a theatrical invention that must be reiterated if it is to endure.”⁹⁴ My study also deals with this emerging sense of subjectivity, exploring contrasting uses of lute-playing within the context of those musicians’ broader strategies of “impression management” (to use another of Goffman’s terms).⁹⁵ Although J.A. Sharpe has suggested that “a gentleman was anybody who could get away with being accepted as such”, we have already seen that not *all* gentlemen were the same in the eyes of their contemporaries. However, the assimilation of musical skills nevertheless formed a useful component in the performance of elite social status and, as we shall find out, *sometimes* it worked.

The problematic status of music

Parad[inus]: The last of the Mathematical is Musicke, which word [...] we intend it heere (as properly it oughte) for the measuring, numbering, and perfect consent of sounds, consisting upon a concordancie of times and numbers, whosoever excelleth in the perfection of this science, should by the lawes of armes beare a coatarmor as a signe, that thereby he is made a Gentleman.

⁹⁴ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980): 2, 201. This appears to have some congruity with Butlerian performance, in which gender “ought not to be construed as a stable identity” but as “a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce an appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being” (*Gender Trouble*, 140, 33).

⁹⁵ Goffman, *Presentation of Self*, 183-87.

Torq[uius]: What? Shall a Minstrell be made a Gentleman? Ha ha he,
me thinks laws should not have that reverend opinion of
so base a profession [...]

Barth[olus]: You are no good expounder of lawes, for the law reacheth
only to a certain sort of bastard and mechanicall
practicioners in this facultie, there called minstrels,
wanderers, and vagarants [...] but it extendeth not to the
learned professor of that Science [...]⁹⁶

In the midst of their lengthy debate into the myriad ways of securing a coat of arms, the interlocutors in John Ferne's *Blazon of Gentry* arrive at the controversial topic of music. The herald Paradinus is obviously receptive to the idea that students of the liberal arts (which included music) could achieve gentility; on the other hand, his accomplice, the knight Torquatus, was thinking only of lowly minstrels. Ferne's broader aim was to protect the interests of the elite from the onslaught of new money aspirants and, as a result, he treats music here with some ambivalence. For Ferne, music could be one of two things: a rarefied branch of higher learning and a form of educational capital capable of bestowing gentility, but also a very base art-form, associated with lower-born itinerant professional classes.

But in sixteenth-century discourses surrounding the nature of noble identity, music was neither. Instead, it constituted another discrete area of activity altogether, forming an important ornament to the (intrinsic) worth of the elite-status amateurs who practised it. Castiglione's *The Courtyer* presents an extended debate between courtiers at Urbino regarding the qualities expected of the perfect courtier, and in it they offer an important discussion of the place of music in the formation of elite identity. Ultimately, it is decided, the courtier's highest priority is to perform heroic deeds on the battlefield, and many of the recommended pursuits are designed with this in mind (e.g. jousting and other sports). But these courtiers also stress the importance of engaging in witty banter and conversation, and performing poetry and music –

⁹⁶ John Ferne, *The Blazon of Gentry* (London: John Windet for Andrew Maunsell, 1586), 50-51.

all to be executed with *sprezzatura* (which Hoby translates as “recklessness”) – a kind of studied nonchalance, designed to give the impression of an effortless competence in these areas.

We saw already in chapter 1 that musical performance was exhorted by Castiglione as a good use of noble leisure time, and it is worth exploring his views on music here at greater length as it was such an influential and widely circulated book.⁹⁷ In another key passage dealing explicitly with musical accomplishments, Count Lewis of Canossa remarked that:

I am not pleased with the courtier if he be not also a musicien, and besides his understanding and cunning upon the booke, have skill in lyke maner in sundrye instruments. For if we waie it well, there is no wase of the labours and medicines of feeble mindes to be founde more honeste and more praise worthye in tyme of leysur then it. And, principally in Courtes, where (beside the refreshing of vexacions that musicke bringeth unto each man) many thynges are taken in hande to please women withal, whose tender and soft breastes are soone perced with melody and fylled with swetenesse.⁹⁸

Not only was music-making valued as a leisure activity, it was seen as particularly useful for pleasing and entertaining women; thus it constituted both a form of personal refreshment and recreation but also a mode of courtly display. The former function is rooted in classical thought, most notably the writings in Aristotle who underlined the usefulness of instrumental

⁹⁷ According to Roger Ascham, a year spent with Hoby’s *Book of the Courtyer*, if “advisedlie read, and diligentlie followed”, would do a young gentleman more good than three years spent studying in Italy; Roger Ascham. *The scholemaster or plaine and perfite way of teaching children* (London: John Day, 1570), f.20v. Almost half a century later, William Martyn concluded an advisory tract with the following words: “And as [...] the other qualities as are most fitting for you to entertaine, I will referre you to the deliberate reading and meditating upon that excellent, and ever most praise-worthie worke of Balthazer Castilion, who by his choise precepts, hath cast young gentlemen into a fairer moule then their fathers did.” See William Martyn, *Youths Instruction* (London: John Beale, 1612), 109.

⁹⁸ Castiglione, *Courtyer*, sig. J2r.

performance as a tool for self-cultivation in the *Politics*.⁹⁹ The latter, however, is a rather more multi-dimensional affair – musical performance constituted both a display of personal skill and accomplishment and a display of status, for achieving proficiency in music required both a disposable income (for lessons, instruments, books, etc.) and plenty of leisure time, free from the need to labour.

However, the benefits of music-making were not unanimously accepted; it should be stressed that Castiglione's characters were *debating* the benefits of music for the would-be courtier, not unanimously praising it, and a number of other sixteenth-century writers on noble identity expressed doubts about its validity.¹⁰⁰ Certainly, making music was not without some risk; a gentleman needed to take care not to appear too skilled at music, both to avoid the charge of being distracted by frivolous pursuits, and for fear of being mistaken for a lowly professional musician. Aristotle's warning that one should avoid ostentatious virtuosity or playing for audiences (instead of for private recreation) – again, for fear of being mistaken for one of the professional classes – is echoed in some sixteenth-century concerns about performance.¹⁰¹

In short, music-making was a beneficial activity but a slightly risky one. Music needed to be studied, to be sure – no-one simply picks up the lute and plays it without training – but this learning had to be worn lightly (with *sprezzatura*) in order to avoid possible charges of triviality and effeminacy. But if done right, musical learning constituted a powerful form of cultural capital, showing refinement and connoisseurship, and offering an important means of cultivating (and displaying) a virtuous and noble self.

⁹⁹ See Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History: Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950, repr. 1965), 14-25.

¹⁰⁰ On music and noble identity, see Jeanice Brooks, *Courtly Song in Late Sixteenth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), chap. 3; Richard Wistreich, *Warrior, Courtier, Singer: Giulio Cesare Brancaccio and the Performance of Identity in the Late Renaissance* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 260-67.

¹⁰¹ Strunk, *Antiquity*, 20.

Music as social capital

- Roland, shall we have a song? Yea Sir: where bee your bookes of musick? For they bee the best corrected.
- They been in my chest: Katherin take the key of my closet, you shall find them in a litle til at the left hand: behold, ther bee faire songes at fouer partes.
- Who shall singe with me?
- You shall have co[m]panie enough: David shall make the base: Jhon, the tenor: and James the treble [...] Roland, drink afore you begine, you will sing with a better corage [...] ¹⁰²

Although important as a form of cultural capital, music-making was not only a means of individual display and private recreation. This fictionalised scene, taken from the pages of an Elizabethan French-language tutor-book, conjures up a vivid image of music, wine and conviviality – of part-singing within a household environment after a sociable meal.¹⁰³ Of course, the social capital (i.e. social connections) that this kind of ensemble-singing could provide also generated cultural capital for, whilst solo performance can be construed as a rather ostentatious activity, ensemble performance of this kind offered a rather more demure outlet for the display of self-cultivation. Thomas Morley famously drew upon the anxieties associated with this kind of musical gathering in the opening part of his *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*:

But supper being ended, and Musicke bookes, according to the custome bejing brought to the table: the mistresse of the house presented mee with a part, earnestly requesting mee to sing. But when after manie

¹⁰² Claudius Hollybande. *The French Schoolemaister* (London: William How for Abraham Beale, 1573), pp. 126-8.

¹⁰³ For further connections between musical performances and sociable gatherings such as mealtimes, see Richard Wistreich, “Reading Between the Notes: Sight Singing and Sociability in the Sixteenth Century,” unpublished paper presented at University of Southampton, Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Culture seminar, 15 February 2010; Flora Dennis, “Scattered knives and dismembered song: cutlery, music, and the rituals of dining,” *Renaissance Studies* 24 (2010): 156-84.

excuses, I protested unfainedly that I could not: everie one began to wonder. Yea, some whispered to others, demaunding how I was brought up: so that upon shame of mine ignorance I go nowe to seeke out mine olde frinde master *Gnorimus*, to make my selfe his scholler.¹⁰⁴

The palpable sense of shame experienced by Morley's novice singer is very striking, as is his need to keep up appearances, maintaining his honour by participating in this social ritual. Evidently, the positioning of this material on the very first page of Morley's narrative is designed to stress the indispensable value of this accomplishment.

The dual nature of music-making – both part of the cultivation of a private virtuous self and a set of socialised practises inscribed with elite values – was evidently widely recognised. When dedicating a 1597 collection of part-songs to Sir George Carey, Thomas Morley wrote that “I have also set them Tablature wise to the Lute in the Cantus booke for one to sing and plaie alone when your Lordship would retire your selfe and bee more private.”¹⁰⁵ And in his *Compleat Gentleman* (1622), Henry Peacham summed up his expectations for his aspirant gentleman readership, stating simply that “I desire no more in you then to sing your part sure, and at the first sight, withall, to play the samme upon your violl, or exercise on the lute privately to your selfe.”¹⁰⁶ Again, the need to sight-read – to perform well in front of company – is stressed here. Thus *communal* music-making, including part-singing as well as instrumental-playing, offered the opportunity to display musical learning amongst peers. It was this shared musical interest that offered the possibility of creating new social bonds and, with it, increased social capital.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas Morley, *A plaine and easie introduction to practycall musicke* (London: Peter Short, 1597), sig. B2r.

¹⁰⁵ Thomas Morley, *Canzonets or Litle short aers to five and sixe voices* (London: Peter Short, 1597), dedicatory preamble.

¹⁰⁶ Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (London: for Francis Constable, 1622), 100.

Music maketh the (gentle)man?

We have seen how the rank of “gentleman” became achievable through performative strategies and how musical skills, as newly emerging markers of status, could generate useful cultural and social capital.¹⁰⁷ A professional musical career could bring advances in social and economic capital which could, in turn, lead to connections, money and power. Although it is debatable as to whether ennoblement could be achieved in this way, skill on the lute could, in the right set of circumstances, provide great scope for advancement. The case of Daniel Bacheler, although admittedly a rather extreme example, shows how this ladder to improved social status could operate for a musician.

Bacheler was born in 1572, the son of yeoman farmer from rural Buckinghamshire.¹⁰⁸ His rise began in 1579 when he entered the household of his uncle Thomas Cardell, a dancing master and musician at Elizabeth’s court. Bacheler was formally apprenticed to Cardell and learnt his trade from him before being passed on into the household of Sir Francis Walsingham, the Secretary of State, in 1586. This transaction would have served all three parties well – Walsingham gained a good musician (which attested to both his wealth and discerning taste), Cardell gained Walsingham’s favour, and Bacheler gained access to more powerful circles, albeit only as a servant. Bacheler was also able to continue his education there, both formally and through contact with the other musicians who passed through Walsingham’s orbit.¹⁰⁹

Shortly afterwards, the sixteen-year-old Bacheler copied a set of manuscript partbooks containing music for mixed consort, providing direct evidence of the kinds of ensemble practices going on in the Walsingham household.¹¹⁰ When

¹⁰⁷ This degree of status is invoked in the titles assumed by the elite group of professional singers who formed the monarch’s private ecclesiastical choral foundation: the “Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal”.

¹⁰⁸ What follows is derived from Batchelor, “The right perfect musician,” 3-12.

¹⁰⁹ For new evidence, see Jeanice Brooks, “Tessier’s Travels in Scotland and England.” *Early Music* 39 (2011): 184-94.

¹¹⁰ On the “mixed consort” and the sources for its repertory, see Warwick Edwards, “The Sources of Elizabethan Consort Music” (Ph.D diss., University of Cambridge, 1974), i, 28-34.

Walsingham's daughter Francis married Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex in 1590, Bachelier followed her into his household and ultimately ended up serving as a courier, carrying letters between his new master (later serving in Ireland) and Queen Elizabeth. And when Lady Essex was invited to attend the court of James I, Bachelier again went with her, serving Queen Anne as a Groom of the Privy Chamber. He was granted a coat of arms in 1606, completing his transformation from artisan professional musician to "gentleman of quality". Whether or not Bachelier was deemed to be a proper gentleman (or merely an upstart) is hard to ascertain, of course, but he certainly was now moving in enormously powerful circles – and it was his musical capital that had put him there.

The remainder of this study deals with people, like Bachelier, on the threshold of elite status, on the fuzzily defined boundary between "gentleman" and other levels of social standing. The imprecision of the title "gentleman" and the multivalent meanings attached to the idea of music in early modern thought make a powerful combination, creating an arena ideal for performative manoeuvring. I explore how musical practices are used to generate non-economic capital by members of three problematic social groups – professional musicians, academics, and the merchant classes – all with a view to either consolidating or enhancing their existing level of social standing.

Chapter 3: Household musicians and the performance of court(ier)ship

*All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players [...]*¹¹¹

Musical skills emerged as an important new marker of elite status during the sixteenth century, and lute-playing could form a key strand in the performance of courtly identity. For the members of noble families, the acquisition of these desirable skills began at home, taught either by resident household musicians or visiting teachers. The status of these teachers was somewhat ambiguous, however, since they were essentially servants but nevertheless possessed coveted knowledge. In this respect, household musicians belonged to a problematic social group including other skilled servants such as secretaries, tutors, and teachers of practical accomplishments such as dancing – all of whom were rich in cultural capital but relatively poor in terms of economic worth.

This situation was further complicated by the absence of a straightforward divide between the social elite and the so-called servant classes within the household. The nobility were traditionally served by the younger members of local gentry families, with the household mirroring the hierarchical arrangement of society as a whole.¹¹² These kinds of household service usually operated beyond the confines of a cash-based economy, with serving-men paid with benefits in kind (such as board and lodging) rather than a regular salary, and relying upon gifts, favours and the possibility of social advancement. Thus,

¹¹¹ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II.vii.139-40. In *The Complete Works: Compact Edition*, eds. Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett, & William Montgomery (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 638.

¹¹² For a useful summary of the organisation of Elizabethan households, see Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 82-87. On the place of musicians within these hierarchies, see Hulse, "Musical Patronage," 40-43.

in larger noble households, senior servants were usually of gentry stock, particularly those holding skilled positions requiring a high level of education such as tutors and secretaries. These posts offered the holder intimate access to the wealthy family members they served, increasing their chances of reward and career advancement. As the case of Daniel Bacheler has shown, a skilled servant from a humble background could, in theory, ascend through the hierarchy of different households, ending up as a gentleman moving within the most powerful circles in the land.

Tracing the lives of household music tutors

The household musician was in an especially advantageous position. Not only were they the custodians of an important source of cultural capital, but they enjoyed particularly close contact with the noble family-members, providing their entertainment and participating in social music-making alongside them. In a period when even the bedchamber and the closet were communal spaces rather than private ones in the modern sense of the word, music tuition offered a rare opportunity for one-to-one intimacy between servant and employer.¹¹³ Unsupervised access of this kind was particularly unusual between male servants and the young ladies of the household; why else would Hortensio and Lucentio have thought it best to disguise themselves as music tutors in order to gain unsupervised access to the daughters of the Paduan gentleman Baptista in Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*?¹¹⁴

The intimate nature of the early modern music lesson has only recently begun to be explored by social historians of music. Christopher Marsh has pointed out that it eroded the status-divide between teacher and pupil, to the extent that romance sometimes blossomed.¹¹⁵ And in her work on the life-story of Thomas Whythorne, Katie Nelson has further explored the erotically charged nature of the music lesson, characterised by music teachers singing love songs

¹¹³ For a stimulating study of the notion of privacy in England (and the essentially public nature of early modern living), see Lena Cowen Orlin, *Locating Privacy in Tudor London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)

¹¹⁴ Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, act 3, scene 1. In *Complete Works*, ed. Wells *et al*, 39.

¹¹⁵ Marsh, *Music and Society*, 201.

in order to woo their wealthy young pupils.¹¹⁶ In this chapter, I also explore the latent eroticism of the lute lesson, chiefly through Whythorne's autobiography which is a uniquely detailed source for exploring this kind of social interaction. But rather than viewing Whythorne's frequent forays into courtship as genuine attempts to marry a wealthy patron, I argue instead that this was part of a carefully judged strategy for career advancement.

Whythorne's position as a music tutor was doubly problematic, both in terms of class and gender ideology. Although he defined himself as a gentleman, his role was essentially one of servitude and typically involved acting as a servant to wealthy women, also posing a challenge to the traditionally dominant status of the male in early modern society. Yet the cultural transaction between a music teacher and his pupils was a complex one, involving intellectual and social intercourse as well as economic exchange, and Whythorne's career can be read as an attempt to maintain his honour and reputation in the face of these dual challenges. Whythorne's periods in household service came at a time of transition between older feudal models of social relations and a newly emerging capitalist economy of service, and I see his attempts at "courtship" as a symbolic gesture of deference as he sought to negotiate his own status within the household. By exploiting the conflicting hierarchies of capital at play in the household – cultural, social, and economic – Whythorne seized the opportunity for gentle self-fashioning but achieved this by forging a distinctly new kind of social identity for himself: a professional role, to be sure, but with its roots in feudal models of service. Luckily for Whythorne, the increased value attached to music, poetry and other creative practices during the sixteenth century made all this possible.

The household career of Thomas Whythorne

Whythorne's autobiography is characterised by two recurring themes: his insistence on his status as a "gentleman" and his various attempts at courtship, both as the pursuer and pursued. Although short on musical details, it is a rich source of information about the conditions of household service and its complex social dynamics. Much of the narrative is written in rather veiled

¹¹⁶ Katie Nelson, "Love in the music room: Thomas Whythorne and the private love affairs of Tudor music tutors," *Early Music* 40 (2012): 15-26.

terms and Whythorne carefully avoids giving precise dates for the episodes he describes or naming the key protagonists. Thus, a preliminary overview of Whythorne's known biography will be useful. In **Table 3.1**, I present information mainly deduced by James Osborn and have adopted his sobriquets for Whythorne's still-unidentified employers as necessary.

As this summary shows, Whythorne spent numerous periods of his life in household service, and it is clear that he himself understood the ambiguity of his social standing there, describing himself as "nothing inferior to [the other servingmen], and an ace above them by the means of my teaching the young gentlefolks in the house".¹¹⁷ Clearly, he was acutely aware of the advantageous position he occupied due to his access to senior household members and enhanced degree of cultural capital.

¹¹⁷ Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 74. During the course of this chapter, subsequent quotations from the *Autobiography* are referenced in parentheses within the main text.

Table 3.1 Overview of Thomas Whythorne's known biography

Dates (where known)	Event
1528	Born, probably in Ilminster, Somerset.
1538	Sent to live with uncle (a cleric) near Oxford.
1538-44	Studies at Magdalen College School.
1544-45	Magdalen College, Oxford as a 'demy' (i.e. a poor scholar).
1545-48/9?	Apprenticed to poet/playwright John Heywood in London.
?	Freelance teacher in London.
?	Unspecified household position (including the "verses in his gittern strings" episode).
?	Long period of illness.
?	Household position (employed by the "Suds of Soap" widow).
1554? - 55?	Travels on the continent.
? - 1555?	Teaching a lawyer's daughter in London.
1555 - ?	Employed in the household of Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick.
late 1550s	Another household position near London (the 'court lady').
early 1560 - early 1562	Tutor to William Bromfield Jr. at Trinity College, Cambridge.
until 1564/5	Acts as London agent for merchant William Bromfield Sr.
1571	Publishes <i>Songes for three, fower and five voyces</i> .
1571 - May 1575	Master of Music to Archbishop Matthew Parker at Lambeth Palace.
c.1576?	Writes his manuscript "autobiography".
May 1577	Marries.
1590	Publishes his <i>Duos</i> .
1596	Dies in London.

Whythorne's claim to gentry status, however, requires a little more unravelling. He was mindful that, as a practitioner of one of the liberal arts, he commanded a certain degree of social standing:

And I, for my part, seeing that my profession hath been and is to teach one of the seven sciences liberal, the which is also one of the mathematical sciences; and in the respect of the wonderful effects that hath been wrought by the sweet harmony thereof, it passeth all the other sciences; I do think that the teachers thereof (if they will) may esteem so much of themselves as to be free and not bound, much less to be made slavelike (p.46).¹¹⁸

Elsewhere, Whythorne echoes those sentiments we have already noted in the writings of William Harrison, although he cites other contemporary authorities on the subject:

Ye shall find in the book named The Accidence of Armoury that a king of Heralds may give arms to any that is excellently skilled in any of the seven liberal sciences (whereof music is one), although he nor his ancestors might never give any before (p.203).¹¹⁹

Clearly, Whythorne appreciated that a gentleman could now be made rather than born and, on the face of it, he appears to be invoking his training in the science of music as his route to social standing. Certainly, the need to distinguish oneself from "baser" sorts of musicians was deemed important and, if the interlocutors in Ferne's *Blazon of Gentry* were having trouble distinguishing between different kinds of musical practitioners, such confusion was probably more widespread. Understandably, some Elizabethan musicians went to great lengths to demonstrate their good standing and distance themselves from common minstrels; Richard Alison even fabricated a coat-of-

¹¹⁸ See also *Autobiography*, 197-98 for more on music as a liberal science.

¹¹⁹ The text cited is Gerard Legh, *The Accedens of Armory* (London: Richard Tottell, 1562).

arms so that he could fashion himself as a gentleman on the title page of his *Psalmes of David in meter* (1599).¹²⁰

In the light of all this, Whythorne's claim to gentility on educational grounds seems sensible enough, and has been emphasised by some scholars. For instance, Elizabeth Heale has suggested that "Whythorne's claim to social status seems primarily based upon his education, with an account of which the manuscript begins in preference to details of family or ancestry".¹²¹ However, this suggestion fades upon closer scrutiny; although Whythorne subsequently spent a year at Magdalen College, Oxford, he left without a degree and there is no direct evidence of him studying music as part of the university curriculum. In fact, he exhibits an openly antagonistic attitude towards those musicians who have studied *musica speculativa*:

There is another sort of musicians that be named speculators. That is to say, they that do become musicians by study, without any practice thereof. There have been of such who have made songs and have pricked them out, and yet could not sing a part of them themselves (p. 205).

Instead, Whythorne shows much more of an affinity with the Castiglionian gentleman-amateur, despite the apparent hypocrisy of a professional musician doing so:

¹²⁰ Richard Alison, *The Psalmes of David in meter* (London: William Barley, 1599). Coincidentally, Alison dedicates this work to Anne Dudley, Countess of Warwick, in whose household Thomas Whythorne had served a few decades earlier. On his falsification of arms, see John Robinson, Stewart McCoy & Robert Spencer, eds. *The Solo Lute Music of Richard Allison* (Guildford: Lute Society, 1995).

¹²¹ Elizabeth Heale, *Autobiography and Authorship in Renaissance Verse: Chronicles of the Self* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 47. Nevertheless, Heale rightly stresses the lasting impression that Whythorne's humanist education left on him; he was educated at Magdalen College School, arguably the most important centre of humanistic learning in England at this time; see Nicholas Orme, *Education in Early Tudor England: Magdalen College Oxford and its School 1480-1540*, Magdalen College Occasional Papers 4 (Oxford: Magdalen College, 1998)

There be another sort of lovers of music who do either learn the science as aforesaid, or to play and sound on musical instruments, or else to sing pricksong [...] and do not otherwise seek to live or further their livings thereby any manner of way. These are to be esteemed and preferred, according to their estates and also according to their skill therein, above those who do learn the science, or play on musical instruments, or else to sing pricksong (as is foresaid), to live by or to further their livings thereby. Those that do learn it, as aforesaid, for the love they have to the science and not to live by as the others do, these, I say, are to accounted among the number of those who the book named [Humfrey Braham's] *The Institution of a Gentleman* doth allow to learn music; and also which the book named *The Courtier* doth will to learn music in that sort and to that end. Which counsel of those books the nobility and the worshipful do much follow in these days. For many of those estates have schoolmasters in their houses to teach their children both to sing pricksong, and also to play on musical instruments (p.205).

Whythorne's reasons for aligning himself with gentleman amateurs soon become clear: he too is of minor gentry stock, with his family bearing a coat-of-arms and owning some land in Somerset.¹²² However, their finances were evidently in a poor state so, as a child, he had been sent to live with an uncle near Oxford who told him:

Although [...] your father is able to live of himself, yet he is not able to keep you and the rest of his children in such sort as ye may be live idly and at ease. And although ye shall have certain houses and lands after the decease of your parents, it is easily seen that whilst the grass groweth, the horse starveth [...] (p.5)

For Whythorne, then, his gentle birth was something well worth clinging to. After all, the underlying message in Harrison's description of upward social mobility (see chapter 2) seemed to be that "new gentlemen" would still be

¹²² On the family's coat-of-arms, see Sophia Rawlins, ed. *Visitation of London, 1568: With Additional Pedigrees, 1569-90, the Arms of the City Companies, and a London Subsidy Roll, 1589* (London: Harleian Society 1963), 88.

taxed as one of the base classes, despite their new titles; in other words, they were *intrinsically* still of lower rank, albeit beneath a veneer of newly acquired respectability. Whythorne, on the other hand, was faced with the opposite problem: he had a decent lineage but none of the financial assets necessary to maintain it.

Thomas Whythorne, gentleman-servant

With his ambiguous status firmly in mind, Whythorne set about trying to advertise his gentility, presenting his role as one of gentleman-companionship rather than fiscally motivated employment. When offered a household position by the so-called “Court Lady” and her husband, he remarked that:

I did covenant with the said gentleman and wife that [...] I would be used as a friend, and not a servant. Whereupon, they did not only allow me to sit at their table but also at their own mess, as long as there were not any to occupy the room and place that were a great deal my betters (p.81).

As Mark Girouard has shown, the dining arrangements in the great households were a useful barometer of the internal hierarchies of status in effect there; Whythorne was clearly trying to gain the explicit recognition of his status that he felt he was due.¹²³ Elsewhere, he was keen to describe his employment in another household as “not for profit, yet for good and friendly entertainment, diet and lodging”, again positioning himself as a gentleman-retainer rather than a paid serving-man.¹²⁴ By circumventing the newly emerging capitalist economy of service and instead invoking older traditions of feudal service, Whythorne attempted to use the noble household as an arena for his more broadly conceived performance of gentility.

¹²³ Girouard, *English Country House*, 88, 104-5.

¹²⁴ Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 131. However, when Ambrose Dudley fell on hard times and an annuity he had been promised failed to materialise, Whythorne left his service complaining that “my lord was not willing to give me mine annuity, yet he was offended with me in that I sought to be gone from his service” (72). This double-standard is noted by Lamb, “Tracing a Heterosexual Erotics,” 6; and Hodgkin, “Thomas Whythorne and the Problems of Mastery,” 26.

Indeed, this period of transition between economic models of service encouraged such behaviours. As Mary Ellen Lamb has put it, “in the absence of a single ideology of service, the status of upper servants was [...] increasingly constructed according to the manoeuvrings of individual ambitions”.¹²⁵ Elsewhere, Whythorne spoke of household life in terms that bring to mind the scheming cut-and-thrust between the various factions at the Elizabethan court. Explaining how servants commonly tried to discredit those currently in favour with their master or mistress, Whythorne conjures an image of a highly competitive environment in which individuals were driven by a desire for personal advancement rather than the greater corporate good.¹²⁶ Arguably, the noble household can be seen as a microcosmic reflection of court life – an arena for performance and display, with personal advancement and favour as the ultimate goal.¹²⁷ All of this put a musician-poet such as Whythorne, a teacher of these new indicators of courtly accomplishment, in a very advantageous position indeed.

Whythorne’s “courtly” career

Although Whythorne had gentry blood, he recognised the need to be properly equipped if he was to prosper. After leaving behind the security of his apprenticeship with the poet John Heywood, a new self-consciousness is detectable in Whythorne’s writing:

The which changing of mine estate brought me other cares than I was troubled withal before. For whereas I was before but troubled with the fear of tutors and masters, I was afterwards brought to have a care of mine own credit and estimation (p.10).

Whythorne quickly realised that maintaining his reputation was the key to his success and immediately set about acquiring a new set of “courtly” skills,

¹²⁵ Lamb, “Tracing a Heterosexual Erotics,” 6.

¹²⁶ Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 36.

¹²⁷ On the essentially theatrical nature of courtly life, see Wayne Rebhorn, *Courtly Performances: Masking and Festivity in Castiglione's Book of the Courtier* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978).

having already learnt to write verse and play the lute and virginals under Heywood's tutelage:

I, being, then desirous to have and enrich myself with some more such exercises and qualities as young folks for the most do delight in, went to the dancing school and fencing school, and also learned to play on the gittern and cittern, which two instruments were then strange in England, and therefore the more desired and esteemed.¹²⁸

Castiglione's suggestion (noted in chapter 1) that lute-song was the most elevated mode of musical performance would have comforted Whythorne, as would his remark about fretted instruments being accessible (and thus ideal for the gentleman amateur to play with *sprezzatura*), justifying his decision to study the gittern and cittern.¹²⁹ Finally, the fact that music was regarded as an excellent way to entertain and (by extension) seduce women is also fundamentally important, since household musicians were frequently teaching young ladies keen to achieve this sought-after skill. Indeed, contemporary commentators referred to the value attached to musical performance by young gentlewomen (and their families) looking to secure a marriage-match. Richard Mulcaster complained that:

For then lightly forgetting Musicke when they learne to be mothers, they give it in manifest evidence, that in their learning of it, they did more seeke to please their parents, then to pleasure them selves.¹³⁰

Musical skill was evidently valued amongst well-to-do young ladies, even if it was forgotten once it had served its purpose. Thus, if a household musician

¹²⁸ John Ward has shown that these instruments were associated with the aristocracy at this time, although their status was rather downgraded by the end of the century: see "Sprightly and Cheerful Musick: Notes on the cittern, gittern and guitar in 16th- and 17th-century England," *Lute Society Journal* 21 (1979-1981): 22-28.

¹²⁹ Castiglione, trans. Hoby; cited in chapter 1.

¹³⁰ Richard Mulcaster, *Positions wherin those primitive circumstances be examined, which are necessarie for the training up of children [...]* (London: Thomas Vautrollier for Thomas Char[d], 1581), 178.

was to be a success, the ability to get along with his female clientele would be essential, with music and verse providing the ideal means of doing so.

The “Suds of Soap” widow

One episode from early on in Whythorne’s career seems to have been particularly influential in shaping his later behaviour. In early modern society, widows were powerful and ambiguous figures; as financially secure and sexually experienced women, they represented a challenge to masculine authority yet, to an aspiring social climber, they also offered a potential source of both monetary and land-based wealth (either through rewards or marriage).¹³¹ Whythorne accepted a position in the household of the so-called “Suds of Soap” widow out of financial necessity and once again sought to define his position within the higher reaches of the internal hierarchy:

I said that to be a schoolmaster I did not mislike; but to be a serving-creature or servingman, it was so like the life of a water-spaniel, that must be at commandment to fetch or bring here, or carry there, with all kind of drudgery, that I could not like of that life (p.28).

Before long, however, his employer was firmly in control:

Although I could better skill than she in music and teaching to play on musical instruments, yet could she better skill than I to judge of the natural disposition and inclination of scholars, how they should be used accordingly (p.29).

This slightly facetious remark marked just the beginning of Whythorne’s troubles and, before long, he was complaining about his employer in more detailed terms:

Her joy was to have men to be in love with her, and to brag sometimes how she could handle them such as were so: as how she could fetch

¹³¹ On the power and status of widows, see Lisa Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare*, 2nd edition (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, n.d.), 78-88.

them in, and then how she could with a frown make them look pale, and how with a merry look she could make them to joy again (p.29).

This appraisal of the widow's behaviour aptly reflects the sentiments offered by Lord Gaspar on the subject of women in *The Courtyer*:

And thoughe they love withal, yet rejoyce they at the tourment of lovers, because they suppose it greef, afflictions and the calling every hour for death, is a true witnessse that they are beloved, and that with their beawtie they can make men miserable and happy, and give them life and death, as pleaseth them.¹³²

Whythorne seems to take offence at her attempts to attract him, although he is keen to remain in her favour due to the possibility of advancement:

If she meant good will indeed, then I was not willing to lose it, because of the commodities that might be gotten by such a one as she, either by marriage or otherwise (p.31).

Clearly, then, the widow was in control of this situation, her authority grounded in both her wealth and her status as Whythorne's employer. But, interestingly, she also reminds Whythorne that he, as tutor, also possesses an alternative type of power. His musical skills and role as a teacher create an arena in which she invites him to exert his dominance over her:

Yet for the reverence I bare unto her, I would not reprehend her, and use such sharp words unto her as I would have done to other of my

¹³² Castiglione, *Courtyer*, sig, LL4r. When reading Whythorne's life-writing against Castiglione, there is of course "a danger of seeing Castiglione everywhere", as Peter Burke has pointed out in his reception history of *Il Cortegiano*; see *The Fortunes of the Courtier: The European Reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 82. But Whythorne makes it clear that he was familiar with this text, and it is arguable that Castiglione *was* everywhere - at least in the sense that he had codified courtly ideals which had already diffused into widespread circulation in England by the middle of the sixteenth century.

scholars. And she would therefore reprehend me, saying that whosoever would be a scholar must not disdain the due and lawful reprehensions of their teachers and schoolmasters when he taught them (p.30).

Perhaps buoyed by this, Whythorne is soon drawn into her courtly game, deciding that “to dissemble with a dissembler is no dissimulation”.¹³³ Although he had been judgmental about the duplicitous, dissembling nature of others earlier on in the autobiography, he now begins to adopt similar tactics of his own, choosing to use his own musical and poetic skills to test the water.¹³⁴ He offered forth a verse, making it possible that the widow herself was the object, but leaving it ambiguous enough that he could deny this if need be:

I made this song somewhat dark and doubtful of sense, because I knew not certainly how she would take it, nor to whose hands it might come after that she had read it. If she would take it to be written to herself, she might best do it; and, if she meant to take it well, then it was likely that she would keep it to herself. But [...] if she would not take it to herself or in good part, but would scoff thereat and show it to such whom she thought would take her part, [...] it is so made as neither she nor none other could make any great matter thereof [...] (pp.31-32)

Of course, this veiled mode of communication lies at the heart of courtly performance. In his *Arte of English Poesie*, George Puttenham describes a “courtly figure” that he calls *allegoria*, “which is when we speak one thing and think another, and that our words and meanings meet not”.¹³⁵ Puttenham also refers to the practice of writing “under covert and dark terms, and in learned and apparent speeches, in short sentences, and by long ambage and circumstances of words, and finally as well when we lie as when we tell the

¹³³ This eroticised courtly gamesmanship has already been discussed by a number of other commentators, notably Wells, “Ars Amatoria,” 62-63; and Lamb, “Tracing a Heterosexual Erotics,” 8-12.

¹³⁴ e.g. *Autobiography*, 19-20, 52-53.

¹³⁵ George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy: A Critical Edition*, eds. Frank Whigham & Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 270.

truth”.¹³⁶ The examples of *allegoria* Puttenham supplies are short verses framed within a narrative in which a nobleman enquires about a lady’s feelings towards him through the exchange of rhyming couplets – just as Whythorne does in his encounter with the “Suds of soap” widow. Whythorne appears to be participating in quite a conventional ritual of courtship, conducted entirely through the courtly media of verse and song.

Another particularly interesting sequence occurs in the autobiography shortly after Whythorne leaves the “Suds of Soap” widow’s service. Now in another unidentified household, Whythorne finds an anonymous love poem placed between the strings of his gittern.¹³⁷ Naturally, he responds in a similarly covert manner, again seeming to draw upon the cautious advice offered in Castiglione’s *Courtyer*:

In case you will needes write or speake to her, do it with such sobermoode, and so warilye, that the woordes maye firste attempt the minde, and so doubtfullye touch her entent and will, that they maye leave her a way and a certein issue to feine the understandinge that those woordes conteine love: to the entent if he finde anye daunger, he maye draw backe and make wise to have spoken or written it to an other ende, to enjoye these familiar cherishinges and daliances with assuraunce, that oftentimes women showe to suche as shoulde take them for frendshippe, afterwarde denye them assone as they perceyve they are taken for tokens of love. [...] Therefore (in my minde) the way which ye Courtier ought to take, to make his love knowen to ye woman me thinke should be to declare them in signes and tokens more then in woordes.¹³⁸

In this instance, however, Whythorne is disappointed to find that his admirer is not a woman of high status but a servant girl (who, as it happens, is eventually

¹³⁶ Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 271-72. Cf. also Puttenham’s description of *amphibologia* (“when we speak or write doubtfully and that the sense may be taken in two ways”); 344.

¹³⁷ *Autobiography*, 21.

¹³⁸ Castiglione, *Courtyer*, sig. Kk4r.

dismissed for her part in the episode). But two points of interest arise from this brief episode: firstly, it underscores the fact that women were also active participants, even instigators, in this kind of courtly game; secondly, it reveals that this kind of pseudo-courtly communication had been adopted even by lower-ranking household members.

The power of song

If the use of poetic language allowed the possibility of obfuscation amongst the participants in these courtly performances, the medium of song offered an even more opaque mode of communication. Setting a verse to music adds an additional layer of ambiguity, playing on the distinction between what Edward Cone has called “the composer’s voice” and the “vocal persona”/ protagonist.¹³⁹ The performer of a song might be conveying through its poetic text either the true sentiments of the poet and/or composer, or merely those of a character represented within the text (who may or may not offer a true reflection of the poet/composer’s viewpoint).

Courtiers of the highest rank became receptive to the potential of these modes of communication, sometimes offering their counsel or complaints to Queen Elizabeth in verse or song. Sir Henry Wotton, one-time secretary to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, reveals how Essex would hide behind these stylised courtly practices in order to address the Queen, employing a professional court singer to act as a kind of mediator:

My Lord of Essex chose to evaporate his thoughts in a sonnet (being his common way) to be sung before the Queene, (as it was) by one Hales, in whose voice she took some pleasure.¹⁴⁰

Robert Hales, a singer and lutenist, seems to have fulfilled a similar function on other occasions.¹⁴¹ In September 1602, William Brown wrote to his employer

¹³⁹ Edward Cone, *The Composer’s Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974)

¹⁴⁰ Henry Wotton, *A Parallel Betweene Robert late Earle of Essex, and George late Duke of Buckingham* (London: [unspecified publisher], 1641), 3.

¹⁴¹ For a summary of Hales’ career, see Diana Poulton, “The Favourite Singer of Queen Elizabeth I,” *The Consort* 14 (1957): 24-27.

Gilbert Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, from court with details of a scandalous incident in which Lady Derby had aroused the Queen's anger by carrying a miniature of her favourite Sir Robert Cecil. In order to restore harmony, Cecil resorted to writing conciliatory poems,

[...] and had Hales to sing them in his chamber. Itt was told her Ma[je]sty that Mr. Secretary had rare musicke and songes. She wold needes hear and so this ditty was sount which ye see first ... I do boldly send these to your Lo[rdship] which I wold not do to any one else, for I hear they are very secret.¹⁴²

So the act of setting a verse to music was a useful strategy, destabilising the listener's sense of whether a lyric should be taken at face value or was intended merely as stylised entertainment. And its performance by a third party such as Hales resulted in a further stage of refraction, rendering it uncertain who was even "speaking": the poet or the performer. Whythorne was evidently aware of this, acknowledging the usefulness of being able to hide behind stylised cliché if the sentiments of a love-song were not well received:

I used to sing my songs and sonnets, sometimes to the lute and sometimes the virginals [...] And sometimes it should be the better heard, because that the music joined therewith did sometimes draw the mind of the hearer to be the more attentive to the song. Also, if it were not to be well taken, yet inasmuch as it was sung, there could not so much hurt be found as had been in the case of my writing being delivered to her to read, for singing of such songs and ditties was a thing common in those days (p.40).

For Whythorne, the presentation of his own verses as lute-songs meant that he could disassociate himself from the sentiments they expressed, positing them

¹⁴² London, College of Arms, Shrewsbury Papers, M36; quoted in Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, 17 & 105.

as either the protagonist's voice or the composer's voice, as the situation demanded.¹⁴³

The performance of court(ier)ship

Although these kinds of pseudo-courtly pursuits are a common feature of Whythorne's autobiography, the question remains as to whether he genuinely expected to marry a social superior. Music teachers such as Whythorne had intimate contact with their female students and, with the female musician being regarded by many as a sexually voracious being (as Linda Austern has demonstrated), the intimate, tactile nature of the lute lesson would surely have resulted in an erotically charged environment.¹⁴⁴ Certainly, a young male tutor singing love songs must have added to these concerns, and there are certainly examples of musicians being caught up in intrigues with their social superiors, including some amongst the highest echelons of society. The 1563 murder of David Riccio, the Italian music-master, secretary and *valet du chambre* to Mary, Queen of Scots, was apparently plotted by her jealous husband Lord Darnley, enraged by rumours that she was carrying Riccio's child.¹⁴⁵ And during the 1530s, two of Henry VIII's wives were accused of sexual liaisons with court musicians: Anne Boleyn's execution was in part due to her contact with musician Mark Smeaton, one of the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, and Catherine Howard was convicted of committing adultery with music tutor Henry Manox.¹⁴⁶ Of course, it might be argued that these musicians were open to scandalous accusations – it was almost an occupational hazard. Whether or not these men were actually guilty of these charges is almost beside the point;

¹⁴³ It is striking, however, that Whythorne's account conflicts with what Cone theorises about the poet-composer who sets their own texts to music. Citing Campion and Wagner (!) as examples, Cone suggests that "the resultant voice is even more strongly that of the poet-composer as composer, for as poet he never intended his text to stand independently"; Cone, *Composer's Voice*, 42. Whythorne's remarks suggest that, far from giving authenticity to the composer's voice, the opposite was true here.

¹⁴⁴ See Austern, "'Sing Againe Syren'," 420-448.

¹⁴⁵ Rosalind K. Marshall, "Riccio, David (c.1533–1566)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), online at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23475> (accessed 19 July 2013)

¹⁴⁶ David Starkey, *Six Wives: The Queens of Henry VIII* (London: Vintage, 2004) discusses both Smeaton (565-78) and Manox (646-8 and 669-70).

their frequent unsupervised access to their pupils made such accusations plausible, perhaps even inevitable.

There was plenty of scandal associated with musicians outside royal circles too. According to Archbishop of Canterbury George Abbott, writing in 1613 to English diplomat (and amateur lutenist) Sir William Trumbull in Brussels, the émigré musician John Bull was a flawed man who “hath more music than honesty and is as famous for marring of virginity as he is for fingering of organs and virginals”.¹⁴⁷ Some stories had happier and more wholesome endings however; the daughter of Yorkshire gentleman Sir Hugh Cholmley was so besotted with her music master that she managed to persuade her father that she could marry him rather than the young gentleman to whom she was already betrothed.¹⁴⁸

It is difficult to gauge the frequency of these kinds of teacher-student relationships, but the fact Shakespeare chose to use music tutors as a cover for an attempted seduction in *The Taming of the Shrew* suggests that these kinds of occurrences were widely known – or at least widely feared. This may also be why illicit sexual congress was sometimes couched in musical imagery in contemporary literature, such as this passage from George Gascoigne’s “Adventures of Master F.J.”:

And in very deed, it fell out that the Secretary having bin of long time absent, and therby his quils and pennes not worn so neer as they were wont to be, did now prick such faire large notes, that his Mistres liked

¹⁴⁷ Letter from George Abbott to William Trumbull, Lambeth, 15 December 1613; cited in Allen B. Hinds, ed., *Papers of William Trumbull the elder January 1613-August 1614*. Report on the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Downshire preserved at Easthampstead Park, Berks, iv (London, 1940), 270-71. Trumbull’s manuscript lutebook is Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 8844.

¹⁴⁸ Hugh Cholmley, *The Memoirs and Memorials of Sir Hugh Cholmley of Whitby 1600-1657*, ed. Jack Binns (n.p: Yorkshire Archaeological Society/Boydell, 2000). I am grateful to Katie Nelson for this reference. For other examples of romantic liaisons between pupils and teachers, see Marsh, *Music and Society*, 198-203.

better to sing faburden under him, than to descant any longer uppon
F.J.[’s] playne song [...] ¹⁴⁹

However, there is a danger of reading Whythorne’s attempts at courtship rather too literally since there is good evidence within the autobiography that, far from being serious about securing a bride, these amorous pursuits were sometimes just another component of Whythorne’s courtly *modus operandi*. For instance, when attempting to woo a lawyer’s daughter who was under his tutelage, Whythorne confesses:

At this time I had gotten two or three pretty ditties made of love, the which, because I durst not deliver to her in writing for fear of afterclaps, I would sing them oftentimes unto her on the virginals or lute; by the which I made my first entrance into my suit unto her. And as I saw how she liked to hear them, then I would enter into talk of the same matter in such sort as I did see that time and place was convenient for the purpose. Then, instead of giving rich gifts, I did supply the want of the same (according to my skill, and as time served) with all other kinds of favours, ceremonies and dutifulness, appertaining to a lover’s services (p.64).

Here, the performance of love songs is merely a point of entry into a broader discourse of wooing, with Whythorne proceeding to another classic Elizabethan behavioural trope: acting out the servitude of a courtly lover.¹⁵⁰ As Catherine Bates has shown, the sixteenth century saw a semantic shift through which the

¹⁴⁹ George Gascoigne, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (London: for Richard Smith, 1573), 272. James Osborn was first to suggest that this text – an account of the amorous escapades of the eponymous serving-man – might have influenced Whythorne’s writing (see *Autobiography*, 1961, liv-lv). David R. Shore explored this idea but concluded that there was no direct influence in his “Whythorne’s *Autobiography* and the Genesis of Gascoigne’s *Master F.J.*,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 12 (1982), 159-78.

¹⁵⁰ On the origins of this within the medieval courtly love tradition, see John Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court* (London: Methuen, 1961), chap. 9.

meanings of the verbs “to court” and “to attend court” became interwoven.¹⁵¹ Several cultural historians have explored how Queen Elizabeth was able to exploit this double-meaning and, by using her unusual position as a female monarch, achieve control of the ambitious (and opposing) factions at court by encouraging them to adopt the deferent rhetoric of courtship.¹⁵² The performance of court(ier)ship, with Elizabeth as the unattainable prize at the centre, was to become a key component in the theatricality of court life.

Since the households of the nobility were sites in which numerous other aspects of court life were imitated (e.g. dress, musical provision, furnishings, etc.), it would seem quite reasonable to expect other performative aspects of courtly life to filter further down the social order there. Indeed, Frank Whigham has warned against focusing our attention entirely on life at court and attempts to win royal favour there when analysing social relations in Elizabethan England. Instead he describes “a many-layered matrix of mediation” in which:

Most actions of self-presentation flowed between individuals of *adjacent* ranks [...] Courtiers of all ranks were by turns [...] suitors to their superiors and patrons to their inferiors. The emphasis should not fall on the queen, who was only the ultimate end point of such suits, but on the activity that constituted and reconstituted the web of local bonds among courtiers of all subranks, and in doing so, reconstituted the categories of rank themselves.¹⁵³

Perhaps, then, a noblewoman expected to be “courted” by her upper servants as a way of reinforcing her dominant social position, much in the same way that Elizabeth required her ambitious courtiers to remain servile whilst vying for her favour. There are two reasons why this might be desirable to a

¹⁵¹ Bates, *The Rhetoric of Courtship*, chap. 2.

¹⁵² Arthur F. Marotti, “‘Love is Not Love’: Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences and the Social Order,” *English Literary History* 49 (1982): 398-99; Louis Montrose, “Shaping Fantasies’: Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture,” *Representations* 2 (1983), 79-85; Bates, *The Rhetoric of Courtship*, chap. 3; Ilona Bell, *Elizabeth I: The voice of a Monarch* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), chap. 2.

¹⁵³ Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege*, 12.

gentlewoman; first, it could be fun, flattering, perhaps even mildly titillating. But, more importantly, it helped to resolve the challenge posed to the social order by the possession of powerful non-economic capital by members of the serving class. (This, of course, was a controversial point raised by Octavio towards the end of Book IV of *The Courtyer*: if the courtier was to teach his master all of the virtuous qualities already discussed and act as a moral guide to him, surely that elevated him *above* his master...) ¹⁵⁴ For whilst the need to learn these valuable new forms of elite behaviour from a social inferior was potentially problematic, performing the role of a courtly suitor kept the ambitious lute teacher firmly in his place whilst nevertheless permitting him to define his status within the higher reaches of the household hierarchy.

Although Mary Ellen Lamb has convincingly outlined what she calls an “erotics of service” in some Elizabethan gentry households, the evidence from Whythorne’s autobiography clearly suggests that this kind of eroticised interaction was sometimes a stylised performance. This, of course, was a social discourse for which music-masters were particularly well-equipped due to nature of their everyday duties; the performance and rehearsal of love lyrics could transform a music-lesson into a scene laden with amorous undertones, and their other well-practised interpersonal skills such as witty conversation-making and subtle flirtation – again, at the core of Castiglionian courtiership – would only serve to intensify the effect.

In *The Courtyer*, courtship often takes place through subtle flirtation, with characters using thinly veiled allegories or asking supposedly hypothetical questions to hint at their desires, and there are traces of this rather elliptical mode of communication in Whythorne’s life-writing too. ¹⁵⁵ He writes of working for a gentlewoman who had “been sometime a courtier” and indulges in flirtatious debate with her about the nature of love.

¹⁵⁴ Indeed, Hoby concludes his translation by stating that “the final end of a courtier, whereto al his good condicions and honest qualities tende, is to beecome An Instructor and Teacher of his Prince or Lorde, inclining him to vertuous practises [...]”, *Courtyer*, sig. Zz2r.

¹⁵⁵ On this point, see Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier*, 46.

I said that nowadays there was no perfect love or friendship [...] to be found except it were between two of equal ability and gifts of fortune. [She replies:] She would rather wed an honest man in his shirt than such a one as were contrary, although he were worth thousands of pounds in money (p.81).

Whythorne clearly had impressive musical and poetic skills and, if this is anything to go by, he had mastered the courtier's art of suggestion too. But, for all his many accomplishments in the art of wooing, Whythorne reveals to us that he made a distinction between his "courting" and the genuine pursuit of love:

And yet when time served to be in company with women, to talk with them, to toy with them, to jibe and to jest with them, to discourse with them, and to be merry with them (all of which some do call courting), I could use the time with them somewhat aptly and fitly. But and if it came to making of love any word, sign or deed [...] I had no more face to do that than had a sheep (p.24).

And when a male companion suggested to him that one of his female employers was making herself available to him, his position was stated clearly: "I told him of the ill name that I should purchase thereby, whereby I should hinder myself very much, because no man would trust me to teach their children" (p.97). So despite his gentle self-fashioning, Whythorne's courtly performance seems to have been constructed, paradoxically, as part of a cultivated *professional* identity. Whilst the autobiography reveals Whythorne using his musical and literary skills in a eroticised performance of courtiership, this *was* merely a performance and there was a line here that could not be crossed.¹⁵⁶ And elsewhere, he hints again at the illusory nature of his

¹⁵⁶ A number of commentators have noted that the *Autobiography* seems to date from shortly before Whythorne's marriage in 1577. If my argument regarding the nature of Whythorne's professional persona is correct, this may not be entirely coincidental; certainly, he would no longer have been convincing as a courtly lover once a married man.

existence, writing of his need to retain a private space, or what Erving Goffman has termed “backstage”.¹⁵⁷

Then came I to London, which city is always my chief worldly refuge at such times of need. [...] [W]heresoever I do become in the country, I have always a chamber of mine own in that city to resort unto, in my time of need (p.80).¹⁵⁸

For Whythorne, his London chambers offered him a haven well away from the theatricality of the household, somewhere where his performance could finally cease.

The case of John Danyel

It is, of course, difficult to estimate whether this kind of performative strategy was common amongst household musicians, since Whythorne’s autobiography is somewhat unique amongst the surviving evidence. However, traces of the same kind of teacher-pupil dynamic can also be detected in the prefatory material to a collection of lute-songs published by John Danyel in 1606.¹⁵⁹

Danyel, the younger brother of the famed poet Samuel Danyel, spent several years working in the household of Sir William Grene (or Green) of Great Milton, Oxfordshire where his duties included giving music lessons to his daughter Anne, still in her mid-teens when the songs were published.

Unusually, Danyel dedicated his collection directly to Anne rather than to his patron, immediately suggesting the personalised nature of this publication. More conventionally, John Attey was later to dedicate a collection of his ayres to the Earl and Countess of Bridgewater, although they too were conceived during the education of their daughters:

¹⁵⁷ Goffmann, *Presentation of Self*, 97-98.

¹⁵⁸ On other early modern subjects who maintained private sanctuaries away from the theatricality of public view, see Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 45-47.

¹⁵⁹ John Danyel, *Songs for the Lute, Viol, and Voice* (London: T[homas] E[ast] for Thomas Adams, 1606)

[T]he best part thereof were composed under your rooffe, while I had the happinesse to attend the Service of those worthy and incomparable Ladies your Daughters, who (by Gods favour) shall one day repay unto you a plentiful Harvest, of that Noble and Vertuous education yu now bestow upon them.¹⁶⁰

Thus the dedicatory preface to Danyel's book immediately evokes a world of intimate privacy between Anne and Danyel (see **Fig. 3.1**). Furthermore, the book is an intensely personalised compendium of songs, many of which contain direct puns on Anne's surname by playing upon its obvious double-meanings of "youth" and "inexperience". The collection concludes with an extended set of complex variations for solo lute on the popular song "The leaves be grene".

The subtexts of these songs and their close connections with the dedicatee have long been recognised, although the most insightful discussions of them have appeared in liner notes to recordings rather than in the scholarly literature.¹⁶¹ However, until now, no-one has attempted to clarify exactly why Danyel might have conceived such an elaborate conceit. Yet when listening to these songs, it is easy to imagine Danyel using them to "court" young Anne in much the same way that Whythorne interacted with his wealthy female employers, underscoring her authority over him whilst simultaneously and suggestively undermining it. For instance, the opening song, "Coy Daphne fled from Phoebus' hot pursuit", can be read as depicting Anne herself as Daphne, the mythological Greek nymph associated with purity and virginity. Phoebus, of course, is another name for Apollo, patron god of music, complete with lyre (or, in this case, lute) in hand. Here Daphne resists the advances of her musical

¹⁶⁰ John Attey, *The First Booke of Ayres of Foure Parts with Tableture for the Lute* (London: Thomas Snodham 1622), dedication.

¹⁶¹ Anthony Rooley, liner notes to compact disc: *Danyel: Lute Songs, 1606*. The Consort of Musicke/Anthony Rooley, Decca Eloquence 480 1803 (2010; originally issued on LP, 1978); Robert Spencer, liner notes to compact disc: *Songs by John Danyel*. Nigel Short, David Miller, *et al.*, Hyperion CDA 66714 (1995).

pursuer, entirely in keeping with the conventional Jacobean ideology of chaste feminine virtue. As the punning last line says, “she rests still green”.¹⁶²

We could also imagine young Anne listening to Danyel perform his “Like as the lute delights” during the course of one of their lessons.¹⁶³ A setting of one of his brother Samuel’s *Delia* sonnets, this amorous text describes the poet-musician’s dependence on his muse:

Like as the Lute delights or else dislikes,
 As is his art that playes upon the same :
 So sounds my Muse according as shee strikes
 On my hart strings, high tun'd unto her fame.
 Her touch doth cause the warble of the sound,
 Which heere I yeeld in lamentable wise :
 A wayling descant on the sweetest ground,
 Whose due reports gives honour to her eyes.
 If any pleasing relish here I use,
 Then Judge the world her beautie gives the same :
 Else harsh my stile untunable my Muse,
 Hoarse sounds the voice that praiseth not her name.
 For no ground else could make the Musicke such,
 Nor other hand could give so sweet a touch.

Just as with Whythorne’s song performances, a private rendering of this piece could assume a range of meanings, with Anne left wondering whether or not to make a distinction between the composer/performer’s voice and that of the vocal protagonist. Is this the presentation of a conventional poetic trope (with Danyel singing in character), or is it a performance casting Anne herself into the role of his muse? The latter would be a symbiotic relationship, of course: Danyel was reliant on her for inspiration as well as a roof over his head, whilst Anne depended upon his guidance in order to accrue the invaluable cultural capital that these sought-after musical skills could provide.

¹⁶² Danyel, *Songs*, sigs. [A2]v-Br.

¹⁶³ Danyel, *Songs*, sigs. B2v-Cr

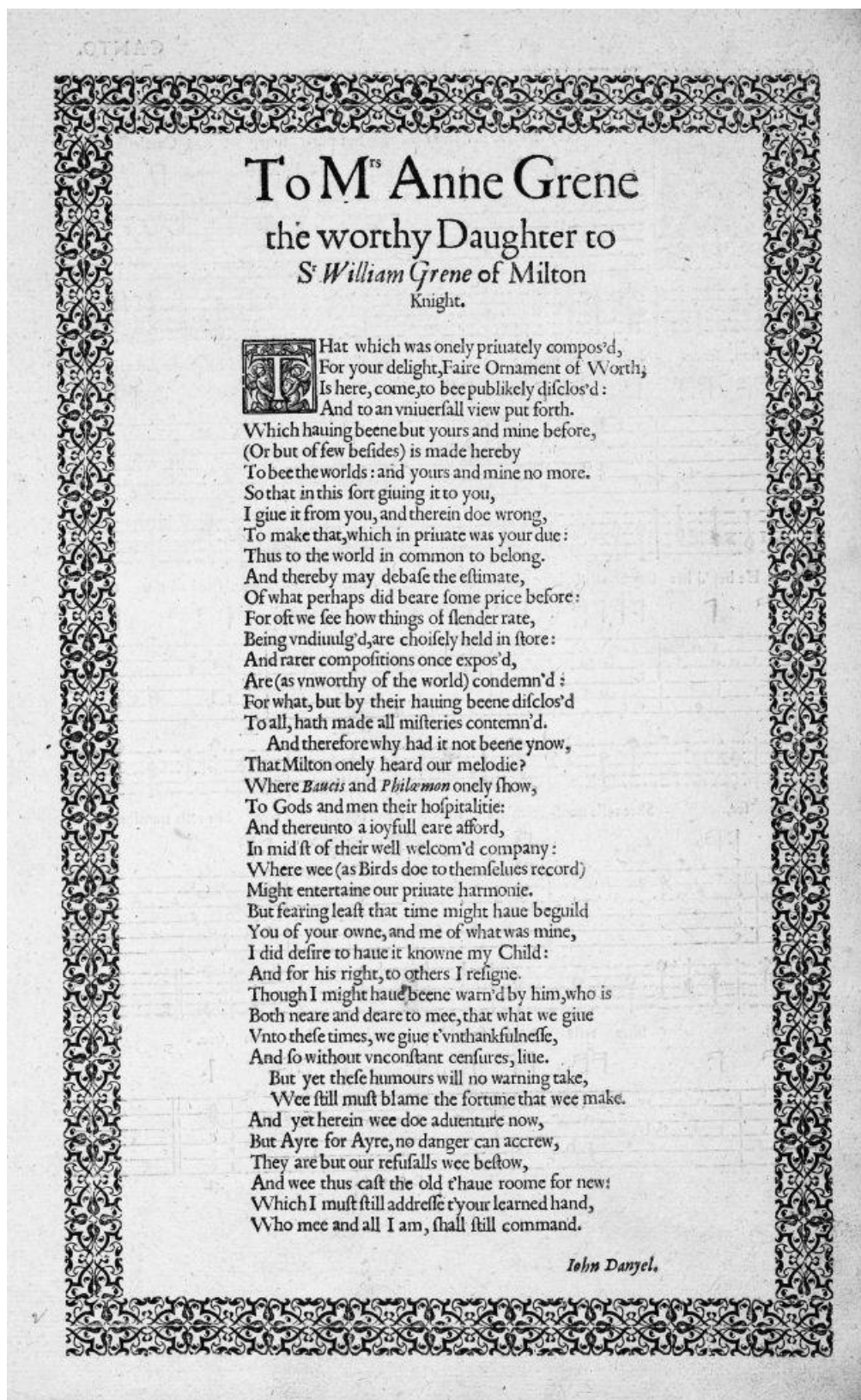


Fig. 3.1 John Danyel, *Songs for the Lute, Viol, and Voice* (1606), dedication. Reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

With all this in mind, it might initially seem surprising that Danyel chose to “go public” by publishing the fruits of their private, intimate musical meetings. On the face of it, Danyel is apologetic for doing so, conceding in his dedicatory preface that, by revealing “their” songs to a wider public, he would also devalue them:

[...] So that in this sort giving it to you,
I give it from you, and therein doe wrong,
To make that, which in private was your due:
Thus to the world in common to belong.
And thereby may debase the estimate,
Of what perhaps did beare some price before:
For oft we see how things of slender rate,
Being undivulged, are choisely held in store [...]¹⁶⁴

But, of course, by commodifying their private activities for the consumption of a lower-status, print-buying readership, Danyel was actually advertising both Anne’s authority as a patron and her credentials as a model of femininity and virtue. And this prestige is further amplified by the promise Danyel makes to her in his final stanza: readopting the rhetoric of servitude, he vows to replace these publicly revealed songs with new private ones.

We have seen how two lute teachers, working almost half a century apart, went well beyond simply teaching musical skills during their household service, assuming the role of the stylised courtier-lover during the course of their employment. In doing so, they confronted the conflicting hierarchies of power present in the household arena, underlining their subservience to their mistresses whilst simultaneously benefitting from the rewards that their attentiveness and displays of their superior cultural capital could generate.

Although Thomas Whythorne, working during the middle third of the sixteenth century, could have claimed gentle status as a practitioner of one of the liberal sciences (“ungentle gentility”, as Braham termed it in the *Institucion of a Gentleman*), he chose instead to rely upon the notion of gentility by birth. But

¹⁶⁴ Danyel, *Songs*, dedication.

by stressing his “gentle gentle” status, Whythorne was left with the problem of reconciling this with his financially perilous state, since many of the traditional indicators of elite identity (e.g. conspicuous displays of consumption and magnanimity) were well out of his reach. Thus Whythorne’s self-fashioning strategy hinged upon a conceptual sleight of hand; although the remnants of feudal traditions of household service provided him with an institutionalised arena in which to operate, he had to rely on newer Castiglionian precepts of courtly civility – musical and poetic accomplishments and civil behaviour – in order to sustain his performance of gentility. Indeed, Whythorne recognised his reliance upon various sources of non-economic capital; following an unsuccessful encounter with another unnamed woman, he wrote:

If the former good opinion that I had of myself had not been, as it were, augmented by the knowledge that I had got by my travel beyond the seas and experience at home, my courage would have been marvellously daunted and abated in this enterprise, because that my ability and wealth was so small in comparison of hers (p.62).

In other words, he felt that his travels and knowledge had imbued him with an alternative source of power, something comparable to money or land.¹⁶⁵ By drawing upon these new markers of social distinction to supplement his existing claim to gentility, Whythorne had constructed for himself a distinctively new (albeit somewhat oxymoronic) category of social identity during the course of his household service: that of the professional “gentleman”.

On the other hand, John Danyel made no attempt to style himself as a gentleman, preferring instead to list his B.Mus degree on the title page to his 1606 *Songs*. Nevertheless, he also placed the performance of court(ier)ship at the heart of his musical encounters with Anne Grene, and did not hesitate to sell this image in the capitalist marketplace of print. Both parties stood to gain from this, with young Anne publicly honoured by his efforts to court her and

¹⁶⁵ On European travel as an indispensable educational rite-of-passage, see Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, 692-702; Edward Chaney, *The Evolution of the Grand Tour: Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations since the Renaissance* (London: Cass, 1998), 58-101.

Danyel advertising himself as far more than just a composer of trivial ditties to be sung to the lute. And evidently, this strategy must have impressed the right people because, in late 1617, he was appointed one of the musicians to Prince Charles; he was now a *bona fide* courtier (although not a courter), something that Thomas Whythorne, as far as we know, never achieved.

Chapter 4:

The cultural circle of Richard Mynshall, provincial mercer and lutenist

[I]f goods were lost much were lost, if tyme were lost more were lost,
but if credit were lost all were lost.¹⁶⁶

In chapter 3 we saw how musical and poetic skills served as important forms of cultural capital: something independent of economic capital, and which could be used in the construction of elite identity. I now want to explore the use of these skills within a social group that challenged traditional conceptions of the social hierarchy: the trading or mercantile classes. In theory, a merchant was not a gentleman since the latter eschewed manual labour and trade, drawing instead upon their land-generated income in order to subsist. But, in practice, the wealthy merchant classes often enjoyed economic prosperity and status within their communities comparable to that of the gentry. They also displayed many of the external markers of elite status, possessing luxury goods and enjoying well-travelled, cosmopolitan, and fashion-conscious lifestyles, thus representing a problematic case for existing models of society.¹⁶⁷

Their problematic status was not lost on William Harrison, whose taxonomy of English society (discussed in chapter 2) listed “burgesses” (including wealthy merchants and officeholders) as a discrete category. Furthermore, Harrison remarked that merchants “often change estate with gentlemen, as gentlemen do with them, by a mutuall conversion of the one into the other”.¹⁶⁸ This fluidity of status might come about in two ways; successful traders converting some of their economic worth into land-based assets, or the younger sons of the nobility –

¹⁶⁶ Flemish merchants’ proverb, cited in G. D. Ramsey, ed. *John Isham, Mercer and Merchant Adventurer: Two account books of a London merchant in the reign of Elizabeth I*, Publications of the Northamptonshire Record Society 21 (n.p: Northamptonshire Record Society, 1962), 172.

¹⁶⁷ For a useful overview of the status of the non-landed elites (including merchants), see Sharpe, *Early Modern England*, 176-97.

¹⁶⁸ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 163.

without the inherited land and titles that their eldest brothers enjoyed – resorting to trade or one of the professions (e.g. practising law) in order to sustain themselves.

The mercantile classes, then, included a mix of gentlemen in decline and wealthy upwardly-mobile traders. And it should be remembered that many of the new elite of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had risen through trade; for instance, the Paston family, known today as affluent sixteenth-century patrons of music, made their money in the fifteenth century through trade which they subsequently converted into land and power.¹⁶⁹ Thus, merchants were typically economically strong but needed to accrue other kinds of complementary capital, and one way to do that was to emulate the cultural practices and patronage associated with the elite classes. Unsurprisingly, musical activities formed an important part of such emulation, as Nicholas Yonge revealed in the dedicatory preamble to his *Musica Transalpina* (1588):

Since I forst began to keepe house in the Citie [of London], it hath been no small comfort unto mee, that a great number of Gentlemen and Merchants of good accompt (as well of this realme as of forreine nations) have taken in good part such entertainment of pleasure, as my poore abilitie was able to afford them, both by the exercise of Musicke daily used in my house, and by furnishing them with Bookes of that kinde yeerly sent me out of Italy and other places [...].¹⁷⁰

Predictably, London, the epicentre of English trading, was an important scene for this cultural activity, and there is plenty of evidence to show how music-making was employed in mercantile circles there. For example, Susanne van Soldt, daughter of a London-based merchant from Antwerp, compiled a keyboard manuscript (dated 1599) which gives some idea of the pedagogical programme undertaken by the family members of a well-to-do businessman; it includes didactic materials

¹⁶⁹ For a useful introduction to the Pastons, see Philip Brett, “Edward Paston (1550-1630): A Norfolk Gentleman and his Musical Collection.” *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 4 (1964): 51-69.

¹⁷⁰ N[icholas] Yonge, *Musica Transalpina* (London: Thomas East, 1588), sig. A2r.

(notational tables, fingerings), simple psalm settings, and settings of popular tunes.¹⁷¹

Those active in the London textile trade seem to have been particularly interested in cultivating musical skills. The 1558 probate inventory of Gregory Isham, one of a family of prosperous textile traders with Northamptonshire roots, lists “a paire of virginalles” valued at 13s 4d,¹⁷² and John Welde, a student at the Inns of Court and son of a wealthy London haberdasher, was the original owner and user of *Welde*, a lutebook of around c.1600. Meanwhile, John Harley has recently shown that two of William Byrd’s brothers entered the London textile trade following their childhood education as choristers at St. Paul’s cathedral.¹⁷³ However, recent research on the musical cultures of important continental trading centres such as Antwerp and Lyon has shown that this mercantile interest in music-making was a pan-European phenomenon rather than something merely confined to London.¹⁷⁴

And this kind of activity was also pursued by provincial English traders (i.e. local retailers) as well as those powerful merchants involved in the large-scale import and export of goods.¹⁷⁵ For instance, the commonplace book of the early seventeenth-

¹⁷¹ London, British Library, Add. 29485. Edition in Alan Curtis, ed. *Dutch Keyboard Music of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, Monumenta Musica Neerlandica (Amsterdam: Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis, 1961)

¹⁷² Ramsey, *John Isham*, 155.

¹⁷³ John Harley, “Merchants and privateers: a window on the world of William Byrd.” *Musical Times* 147 (Autumn 2006): 51-66.

¹⁷⁴ For useful overviews, see Kristine Forney, “16th-century Antwerp” (361-78) and Frank Dobbins, “Lyons: Commercial and Cultural Metropolis” (197-215), both in Iain Fenlon, ed. *The Renaissance: From the 1470s to the end of the 16th century* (Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989). See also Forney, “A Proper Musical Education for Antwerp’s Women,” in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, eds. Russell E. Murray, Susan Forscher Weiss, & Cynthia J. Cyrus, 84-125 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010). For detailed studies of individual sources, see Jeanice Brooks, “Jean de Castro, the Pense partbooks and Musical Culture in Sixteenth-Century Lyons,” *Early Music History* 11 (1992): 91-149; George K. Diehl. “The Illuminated Music Books of a Renaissance Merchant,” in *Studies in Musicology in Honor of Otto E. Albrecht*, ed. John Walter Hill (Bärenreiter: Kassel, 1980), 88-109.

¹⁷⁵ In what follows, I use the term “merchant” in its broadest sense – to describe anyone whose livelihood was derived in large part from trade.

century Brecon mercer and haberdasher Phillip Powell reveals his interest in both musical and literary pursuits, containing a lot of poetic material plus a list of tune titles headed “lute leasons”.¹⁷⁶ The focal figure of this chapter, Richard Mynshall, was a mercer in southern Cheshire, showing a similar concern for writing and collecting verse besides playing the lute. Thus *Mynshall* is a remnant of a pan-European trend amongst late sixteenth-century merchant-class families for cultivating musical and literary interests – cultural behaviours that were more often associated with elite social groups. Furthermore, a study of *Mynshall* sheds important light on provincial music-making in one small English town, reveals how these practices played an important part in the consolidation of social ties and the fashioning of a collective identity.

As stated in chapter 1, *Mynshall* is situated on the margins of musicological discourse. Similarly, when discussed within the context of broader historical studies of Elizabethan Nantwich,¹⁷⁷ it is mentioned only briefly – more as a curiosity than as a document that might have anything useful to say about the social, political and economic structures that governed the town.¹⁷⁸ In this chapter, however, I demonstrate what can be learnt by moving this document from the periphery of these scholarly discourses to the centre of a micro-historical investigation. I reveal some of the functions that music-making fulfilled in this provincial trading centre and, by considering the role of the manuscript in this society’s material culture (rather than simply as a receptacle for musical texts), I show how it was used to reinforce social and family ties within this community. By reconstructing a more

¹⁷⁶ Sally Harper, “Music in the Commonplace Book of Phillip Powell of Brecon (c.1630-35),” in *Welsh Music Studies: Bearers of Song (Essays in Honour of Meredydd Evans and Phyllis Kinney)*, eds. Sally Harper & Wyn Thomas (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), 134-44.

¹⁷⁷ The most important studies are: James Hall, *A History of the Town and Parish of Nantwich, or Wich-Malbank, in the County Palatine of Chester* (Nantwich: privately published, 1883); Eric Garton, *Nantwich, Saxon to Puritan: a history of the Hundred of Nantwich c1050—to c1642* (Nantwich: Johnson & son, 1972); Garton, *Tudor Nantwich: A study of life in Nantwich in the sixteenth century* (N.p: Cheshire County Council Libraries and Museums, 1983); Jeremy Lake, *The Great Fire of Nantwich* (Nantwich: Shiva Publishing, 1983). Despite its title, Lake’s study also includes a good deal of information about the social fabric and economic climate of Elizabethan Nantwich.

¹⁷⁸ Isolated references to the lutebook include: Lake, *Great Fire*, 62 (one sentence); Garton *Tudor Nantwich*, 60, 87 (three paragraphs and a facsimile image).

detailed biography of Richard Mynshall than has previously been attempted, I show how his musical skills played an important role in the construction of his own social identity, whilst simultaneously offering a “biography” of his manuscript as a material object.

Reconstructing the life of Richard Mynshall

Richard Mynshall grew up in Nantwich, a prosperous town in southern Cheshire whose position on the main London-Chester route contributed to its importance as both a staging post and a trading centre. Early modern Nantwich has been extensively documented by local historians, particularly with reference to the great fire that devastated the town in December 1583. Because of its strategic importance on the road to Chester (a key port for carrying troops and supplies to the ongoing military struggle in Ireland), Elizabeth I sanctioned a well-documented nationwide relief scheme.¹⁷⁹

As well as this useful secondary literature, an unusually large number of primary sources illuminate Mynshall’s life, making it far easier to trace his activities than most provincial tradesmen of this period (**Table 4.1**). Nantwich has a complete set of parish registers dating from late 1572 onwards,¹⁸⁰ many of which are enlivened by the parish clerk’s habit of annotating them with snippets of gossip and information about recent events.¹⁸¹ An account book begun by Richard Mynshall’s father Thomas provides information about family affairs and local events as well as

¹⁷⁹ Hall, 104-10; Lake, *Great Fire*; C. J. Kitching, “Fire Disasters and Fire Relief in Sixteenth-century England: the Nantwich Fire of 1583,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 54 (1981): 171-87.

¹⁸⁰ In fact, two sets of parish registers survive for Nantwich. The original register (CRO P120/4525/1) records baptisms and burials from late 1572 to 1603 plus some fragmentary earlier material. The second (CRO P120/4525/2) is a later copy of the original, extended to the year 1653 and featuring a decorative title page. Hereafter, I refer to the second register (since it is paginated and covers the whole of the period with which we are concerned) except where stated.

¹⁸¹ These range from the local events (e.g. the great fire of 1583 (Parish Register, 208), bouts of the plague (231), and the casting of the town’s Great Bell (246)) to those of far wider significance (e.g. the Spanish Armada (214), the death of Elizabeth (230) and the Gunpowder Plot (240)).

financial accounts from the family mercery business.¹⁸² Several miscellaneous documents survive relating to financial transactions involving Richard Mynshall and his associates, most of which relate to their acquisition of property and land in the Nantwich area.¹⁸³

Table 4.1 Sources for the biography of Richard Mynshall

Sources	Location
Richard Mynshall's lutebook (c1597-1600)	London, Royal Academy of Music, MS 601
The Mynshall family account book (c1580s-1661)	Chester, Cheshire Record Office (= CRO) DBW/P/J/5
The Wilbraham family journal (1513-1962)	Private library of Ralph Wilbraham, Cuddington, Cheshire; photographic reproduction in CRO (DDX 210)
Thomas Wilbraham's personal account book (1613-1642)	CRO, DBW/P/J/7
Parish registers for Nantwich (1572-1653)	CRO, P120 4525/1 & P120 4525/2
Miscellaneous items (mainly wills and property-related documents)	CRO, various shelfmarks

Finally, the family of Mynshall's wife, Elizabeth Wilbraham, maintained a journal detailing births, deaths, and marriages, plus commentaries on various significant local events.¹⁸⁴ This was begun by Richard Wilbraham (1525-1611/2) and added to by his male heirs well into the twentieth century. A personal account-book that belonged to Elizabeth's eldest brother Thomas Wilbraham (1589-1643) also

¹⁸² CRO DBW/P/J/5 (hereafter *Mynshall Account Book*) contains accounts from the family business, for building/land-based expenditure, and snippets of family/local history and autobiographical writing. Thomas Mynshall filled it in between 1583 and 1597, although some of the business accounts appear to be summaries copied from another source. From 1602 onwards, the accounts are in Richard's hand and, following his death in 1637/8, the book was used by his wife Elizabeth and her brother Raphe Wilbraham. The book is unpaginated – folio numbers cited are my own.

¹⁸³ Numerous documents (of varying degrees of usefulness) survive in the Cheshire Record Office and The National Archives, London.

¹⁸⁴ Private collection of Capt. Ralph Wilbraham, Cuddington (hereafter *Wilbraham Family Journal*); a photocopy is accessible at CRO (DDX 210/1). Since the original is unfoliated, I refer throughout to the pencil foliation added to the CRO photocopy.

survives.¹⁸⁵ Although Thomas spent a good deal of time at Lincoln's Inn, at Brasenose College Oxford, and (later) travelling on the continent, he maintained regular links with Nantwich and these accounts offer a wealth of information about his continuing business interests there. Together these two documents are an invaluable source of information regarding this important Cheshire gentry family, as well as a window into early modern Nantwich on the whole. The fortuitous survival of so much relevant source material provides a rare opportunity to explore early modern lives in one remote corner of provincial Elizabethan England.

The Mynshall family

Richard Mynshall was born 26 December 1582, the only child of Nantwich mercer Thomas Mynshall (1552-1602/3) and his second wife Elizabeth Wright. Previously, Thomas had been married to Dulcia Mainwaring (d.1576) with whom he had produced one surviving daughter, Margaret (1573-1652). Margaret married well, wedding the prominent Nantwich gentleman Matthew Mainwaring (1561-1652) on the 10 December 1594. Thomas Mynshall's later marriage to Elizabeth Wright, daughter of local innkeeper Richard Wright, took place on 16 August 1581, and Richard Mynshall was the only issue from this union. **Table 4.2** gives a simplified Mynshall family tree and indicates how these persons are related to the documentary sources employed throughout this chapter.¹⁸⁶

Notes to Table 4.2

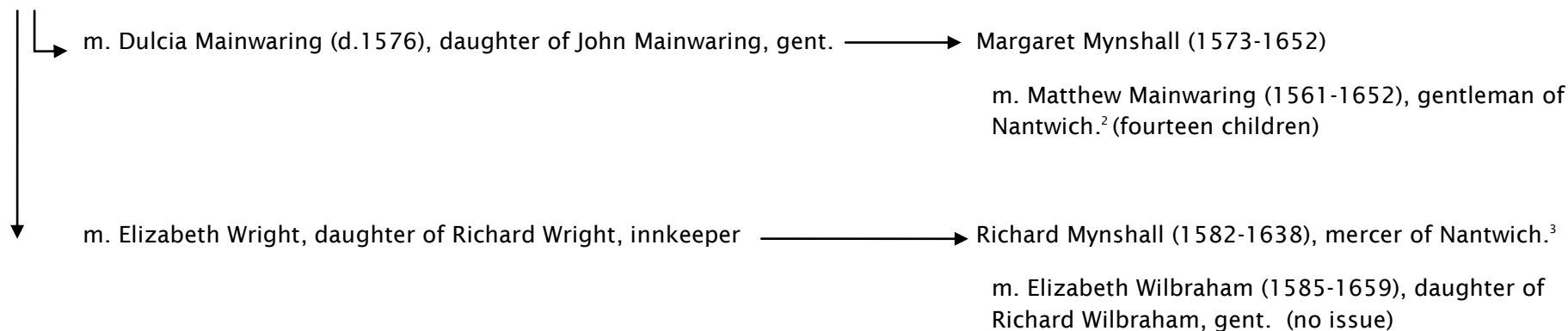
- 1) Original compiler of the Mynshall Accounts
- 2) Author of *Vienna* (various editions) and contributor to Mynshall lutebook
- 3) Main copyist and original owner of Mynshall lutebook; subsequent compiler of Mynshall Accounts; contributor of prefatory material to Mainwaring's *Vienna*.
- 4) Contributors to the Wilbraham family journal.
- 5) Subsequent owner of the Mynshall lutebook.

¹⁸⁵ CRO DBW/P/J/7 (hereafter *Thomas Wilbraham's Accounts*). Also unfoliated – my editorial folio numbers used.

¹⁸⁶ For a full Mynshall (Minshall) pedigree, see Hall, 467-78.

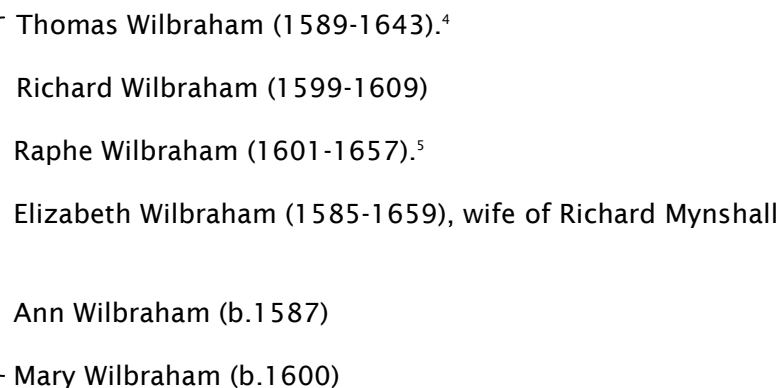
Table 4.2 Richard Mynshall's immediate family

Thomas Mynshall (1552-1603), mercer of Nantwich.¹



Richard Wilbraham (1552-1601), gentleman of Nantwich.⁴

m. Elizabeth Puleston (d.1612)



For Mynshall, Mainwaring and Wilbraham family pedigrees, see Hall, *Nantwich*, 470-71, 457-59, and 436-39. All dates here are given as New Style, i.e. with the calendar year beginning on January 1st.

On 2 January 1602/3, Richard Mynshall married Elizabeth Wilbraham, daughter of another important local gentleman Richard Wilbraham, thus forging another important link in this network of alliances between prominent Nantwich families.¹⁸⁷ Indeed, William Webb's *Itinerary of Cheshire*, written in the early 1620s, reveals not only the prosperity of early modern Nantwich, but also how the Mynshall family were living on the fringes of several wealthy and powerful families:

[T]here can hardly be found a town meerly uplandish, as we term it, neither traded into by waters, nor enriched by any special trades of manufactures, that hath such a knot of wealthy and landed men in so small a compass [...] [W]hich way soever you come [into Nantwich], your eye is entertained with a fair gentlemanly house at the end or entry of the first street every way; as, namely, that which is called *Welsh Row*, with that of *Mr. Wilbrahams*; that of Beam Street, where they hold yet weekly great markets of cattle, with a fine house of the *Mainwarings*, [...] and the Barkers-street or Mills-street with a very fine brick house of *Mr Wrights* [...].¹⁸⁸

The *Mynshall Accounts* suggest that their family business was fairly typical for the period, at least when compared with what little is known about other provincial mercers.¹⁸⁹ Although they dealt mostly in fabrics, they also stocked other luxury items for which there must have been a market amongst the affluent residents of Nantwich. Elsewhere, other provincial mercers seem to have dabbled in the book and stationery trades,¹⁹⁰ and some even sold musical

¹⁸⁷ Keith Wrightson has stressed the importance of these kinds of kinship/marital bonds amongst the regional gentry during this period; see *English Society 1580-1680*, 48-49. For a useful account of the Wilbraham family and their pedigree, see Hall, *Nantwich*, 437-39.

¹⁸⁸ Cited in Hall, *Nantwich*, 123.

¹⁸⁹ e.g. Mona C. Harrison. "The Probate Inventory of an Early Seventeenth Century Northampton Mercer and Linen Draper." *Northamptonshire Past and Present* 6/6 (1982): 313-17; D. G. Vaisey. "A Charlbury Mercer's shop, 1623." *Oxoniensia* 32 (1966): 107-16.

¹⁹⁰ Ronald M. Berger. *The Most Necessary Luxuries: The Mercers' Company of Coventry, 1550-1680*. (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1993), 37; Pamela Redwood.

accessories such as cittern and lute strings.¹⁹¹ In this light, it is interesting to note that the Mynshalls sold “lewtes [,] sowerdes[,] saddles and gitternes”.¹⁹² There is no indication as to where the Mynshalls obtained these instruments. However, just as there is nothing amongst their accounts to suggest that they imported their cloth from the continental centres of the textile trade (such as Antwerp and Genoa), we might assume that these were locally sourced and that the Mynshalls were prosperous local retailers rather than merchants in the truest sense of the word, actively involved with the import and export of goods. Alongside his mercery business, however, Thomas Mynshall became increasingly interested in acquiring property and generating an income through this.¹⁹³ In the *Mynshall Accounts*, he cites his worth “in landes, leses and goodes”, suggesting both a certain degree of entrepreneurialism and his aspiration towards land-based status.¹⁹⁴

The *Mynshall Accounts* include a gap for the years 1597-1602 and Richard Mynshall’s whereabouts are unclear. He reappears in extant documents on 8 January 1602/3 when he married Elizabeth Wilbraham in Nantwich. Socially and economically, this was an important step up for Mynshall, marrying into one of the most important gentry families in Nantwich. Indeed, Elizabeth’s eldest

“Early Seventeenth Century Mercers in Brecon.” *Brycheiniog* 32 (2000): 71-84; Richard Suggett. “Pedlars and Mercers as Distributors of Print in early modern Wales,” in *The Mighty Engine: The Printing Press and its impact*, eds. Peter Isaac & Barry McKay (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2000), 23-32.

¹⁹¹ See J. J. Bagley, “Matthew Markland, a Wigan mercer: the manufacture and sale of Lancashire textiles in the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I,” *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 68 (1958): 45-68 (lute strings and cittern wire); Berger, *Most Necessary Luxuries*, 36 (lute strings); Fleming, “Some Points Arising”, 309-10 (various examples).

¹⁹² *Mynshall Accounts*, f.[7]r. This provides a rare glimpse of a provincial instrumental trade in Cheshire. See also J. L. Boston, “An Early Virginal-Maker in Chester, and his Tools,” *Galpin Society Journal* 7 (1954): 3-6. It is often assumed that instruments were largely imported from the continent (e.g. Bologna and Cologne for lutes) or made by a narrowly circumscribed group of London-based craftsmen; this evidence may suggest otherwise.

¹⁹³ For details of Thomas Mynshall’s property acquisitions, see Lake, *Great Fire*, 39-40 and 44; Garton, *Tudor Nantwich*, 55-60.

¹⁹⁴ *Mynshall Accounts*, f.[9]r.

brother Thomas was esteemed enough that his household hosted James I and “divers other Lords and Knights” as they passed through the area *en route* from Scotland in August 1617.¹⁹⁵ A few days after Richard and Elizabeth were married, on 13 January 1602/3, Thomas Mynshall died and Richard became responsible for the family business. From this point on, the *Mynshall Accounts* are in Richard’s hand, and it is notable that accounts for the mercery business only survive for the year 1602. Thereafter, only rental income from family-owned properties is recorded, so it seems that Richard shifted his emphasis towards a land-based business, something which coincided roughly with his marriage into the Wilbraham family.¹⁹⁶

Other documents besides the *Mynshall Accounts* also testify to Mynshall’s reconfiguration of his business interests. The private accounts of Elizabeth’s eldest brother Thomas reveal that, whilst Thomas was away from Nantwich, Mynshall acted as an agent for him, collecting money on his behalf from his various tenants and debtors; the accounts include “a note of Remembrance left w[i]th my Brother Mynshull the 4 November 1613”, listing the amounts that he was to collect. They also reveal that Mynshall himself frequently owed money to his wealthy brother-in-law.¹⁹⁷ A detailed account of Richard Mynshall’s property acquisitions would be beyond the scope of this study, but it is pertinent to note that these transactions also frequently involved Thomas and Mynshall’s other brothers-in-law Raphe Wilbraham and Matthew Mainwaring.¹⁹⁸ For instance, Mynshall is listed as a signatory (alongside Mainwaring, Thomas Wilbraham and the other principal landowners of Nantwich) of a 1632 petition, designed to assist the local poor by preventing non-locals from renting property in the town.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ *Wilbraham Journal*, f.[15]r.

¹⁹⁶ *Mynshall Accounts*, ff.[12]v–[22]v.

¹⁹⁷ *Thomas Wilbraham’s Accounts*, f.[5]r; see also Mynshall’s personal debts at f.[5]r and f.[6]v. One ambiguous entry includes a list of clothing to be supplied by Mynshall (f.[8]r). However, this appears to indicate Mynshall acting as the supplier (i.e. running an errand) rather than as a trader; elsewhere in the accounts, Wilbraham records payments to other Nantwich mercers, suggesting that Mynshall was no longer in that trade.

¹⁹⁸ For accessible summaries, see Garton, *Tudor Nantwich*, 60-62; Lake, *Great Fire*, 39.

¹⁹⁹ Cited in Hall, *Nantwich*, 130.

By the time of his death in 1637/8, Richard Mynshall was evidently a man of some means, and it is striking that he described himself in his will as “gent.” whereas, some thirty-five years earlier, his father Thomas had merely described himself as “mercier” (i.e. of merchant class) in his.²⁰⁰ For an indication of how far Mynshall had progressed, we can look to the local parish church of St Mary’s, Nantwich. As Robert Tittler has pointed out, the allocation of pews in small, single-parish towns can act as a useful indicator of social status since this was hierarchically arranged and the entire population would have attended the same church.²⁰¹ In the case of Nantwich, detailed information about this survives from the year 1633, and it is notable that Thomas Wilbraham and Matthew Mainwaring – the “old money” gentry – are amongst those allocated stalls near the pulpit. Mynshall, on the other hand, was allocated a seat in a much more modest location.²⁰² We have seen that Mynshall was by then associated with the most prominent gentlemen in this community, through both family connections and their shared business interests; clearly, he had come a long way during the first decades of the seventeenth century.

Mynshall, then, seems to have occupied a somewhat nebulous position somewhere on the boundary between “gentle” and merchant-class status, constructed through a combination of his family connections and growing wealth, his reputation as a virtuous and charitable man and (I shall argue) other supplementary performative strategies including his music-making. Both Thomas and Richard Mynshall seem to exemplify a particular kind of upper middle-class identity discussed in recent socio-economic work by H. R. French. In rejecting the notion of a homogeneous “middling sort” in seventeenth-century England, French draws attention in particular to a top layer of middle-class inhabitants in provincial English towns who, through their material possessions, patterns of consumption and occupation of important fiscal and

²⁰⁰ Cheshire Record Office, WS 1638 (will of Richard Minshall); WS 1602 (will of Thomas Minshall).

²⁰¹ Robert Tittler, “Society and Social Relations in British Provincial Towns,” in *A Companion to Tudor Britain*, eds. Robert Tittler & Norman Jones (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 375.

²⁰² See Hall, *Nantwich*, 131-34. Evidently, pews were not customarily re-allocated in order to take recent social-climbing into account.

administrative positions, aspired towards (and thus adopted the behaviours associated with) gentility.²⁰³ French concurs with the point made in chapter 2 of this study – that, by the seventeenth century, gentility could be essentially performative – and I shall argue Richard Mynshall’s musical and literary skills were just one strand in his wider performance of gentility (which included other important markers of status such as magnanimity, charity and virtuous piety). Notably, Mynshall’s funerary memorial in St Mary’s Church bore the following inscription:

He lived wonderfully beloved, being of a most sweet, affable, pleasant and generous nature; upright in his dealings, charitable to the poore, and a great lover and maker of peace. He died very piously upon the 17th day of February 1637, being the 56th year of his age, leaving behind him no child, but his good name, which his most dear, and sorrowful wife her registers in his deserving character.²⁰⁴

Whilst it is quite conventional funerary rhetoric to draw attention to the piety of the deceased, what *is* striking here is that Mynshall’s honest business practices and wholesome reputation are also stressed. Of course, it is easy to dismiss the words of a public monument as mere panegyric, yet in another (private) context we find further evidence of the esteem in which he was held within his community. In an entry in the *Wilbraham Journal*, Thomas Wilbraham recorded his death with poignant sincerity:

My truest and kindest friend and Brother in law Richard Minshull died upon Saturday at night betwixt 6 and 7 a clock. 17th Feb 1637.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ H. R. French, *The Middle Sort of People in Provincial England 1600-1750*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). His overall thesis is that there was no uniform middling sort and that, in provincial communities, the most ambitious actively sought to emulate more elite social groups. Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680*, also points specifically to merchants taking up local offices in order to increase their power and status (29).

²⁰⁴ No longer extant, but the full text is cited in Hall, *Nantwich*, 314.

²⁰⁵ *Wilbraham Journal*, f.[20]v.

Music-making in early modern Nantwich

In the primary documents I have used to illuminate the life of Richard Mynshall, references to music-making are conspicuously absent. Nevertheless, it seems that Mynshall's musical interests were not particularly unusual amongst the residents of Nantwich at this time. A number of professional musicians seem to have been based in the town,²⁰⁶ including another man named Richard Minshall whose relationship to the subject of this study (if any) I have been unable to determine.²⁰⁷ Furthermore, many more men of both gentry and trading classes seem to have enjoyed music as a leisure activity, and Elizabeth Baldwin has noted "an unusually high number of stringed instruments" amongst Nantwich probate inventories and wills during this period.²⁰⁸ Most pertinently, the innkeeper Henry Wright left a bandora to his brother James and his viola da gamba to his nephew Richard Mynshall.²⁰⁹

We have already noted how Mynshall consciously sought to raise his social status in the years following his father's death, and that Thomas had invested heavily in property during the final years of his life. Yet Thomas seems to have been happy for his son to pursue an interest in music at precisely the same time that his mercery business was struggling the most.

²⁰⁶ For a useful summary, see Elizabeth Baldwin, *Paying the Piper: Music in Pre-1642 Cheshire* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University, 2002), 101-105.

²⁰⁷ The Parish Registers contain a baptismal entry dated 30 November 1606 for "Thomas sonne of Richard Mynshall mussisyan" (p.85). Some scholars have accepted this to be the owner of *Mynshall* (e.g. Zehring, "Richard Mynshall's lutebook", 12) although Baldwin remains cautious about this (*Paying the Piper*, 104). However, I remain very doubtful that they are the same man since we know that Richard and Elizabeth Mynshall remained childless and, even if a child of theirs had died in infancy, the event would surely have been mentioned in *Wilbraham Journal*. Furthermore, being identified as a professional musician would have been extremely undesirable for anyone with aspirations towards gentility.

²⁰⁸ Baldwin, *Paying the Piper*, 104. For further documentary evidence, see Elizabeth Baldwin, Laurence M. Clopper & David Mills, *Records of Early English Drama: Cheshire including Chester* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), i, 733-41.

²⁰⁹ Cheshire Record Office, WS 1607 (will of Henry Wright)

Figure 4.1 **Mynshall, f.5v.** Reproduced by permission of the Royal Academy of Music.



The only date recorded in *Mynshall* is the inscription 1597 on f. 5v (**Fig. 4.1**), and the annual profit recorded in the *Mynshall Accounts* for that year is very revealing:

All the gene [gains] of my shop was spent but v^{li} [£5] by resone of the Darthe and great charges I lived at and giving a wey to the powre, for corne was at such a verie fearfull price.²¹⁰

All in all, it had been a difficult year in the Mynshall household due to rises in the cost of living; recent hard winters had led to crop failures at a national level and, subsequently, the inflation of food prices, yet young Richard was pursuing a costly activity that was a luxury (at best), perhaps even a frivolity in some eyes.²¹¹

Perhaps, then, we should view the music-making activities represented in *Mynshall* as part of their broader strategy of social aspiration, as an attempt by the younger Mynshall to accrue some additional cultural capital to accompany his family's attempts to increase their net worth. As a merchant family, the Mynshalls would have been acutely aware of the importance of "credit", often used during this period to mean the reputation or perceived worth of a person or household. At a time when most transactions were dependent on trust and honour rather than actual financial exchange, honesty and trustworthiness were particularly prized components in the public projection of a family's worth.²¹² As Craig Muldrew has pointed out, economic capital becomes

²¹⁰ *Mynshall Accounts*, f.[11]r. In the Parish Registers at the end of 1597: "This yeare was a great Dearth of corne and other vittuls Gennerally throughout this Lande [...] [T]he scaresety was soe great that many pooer people were a ffamished, and soundrey of good account were utterly impoverished."

²¹¹ For a broader discussion of the economic challenges faced by the country during the final years of the decade, see Ian Archer, "The 1590s: Apotheosis or Nemesis of the Elizabethan Regime?" in *Fins de Siecle: How Centuries End 1400-2000*, eds. Asa Briggs & Daniel Snowman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 65-97.

²¹² Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The culture of credit and social relations in early modern England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998); Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 188-95. The concept of credit was also important in contemporaneous France. Sharon Kettering

inseparable from social relations in such a model; it was only through maintaining social links and retaining a strong public image that a family could prosper, whether in trade or as landowners. This also led to “a sort of competitive piety in which households sought to construct and preserve their reputations for religious virtue, belief and honesty in order to bolster the credit of their households so that they could be trusted”.²¹³ This might well explain Thomas Mynshall’s insistence on maintaining his donations to the poor, even during the worst of the 1597 dearth, not to mention his continued support for his teenage son’s fledgling musical aspirations. Even though his annual profit had dropped to a mere £5, this expenditure was necessary in order to preserve his family’s credit – it was an investment in their future.

It no doubt proved to be a good investment, although Thomas sadly didn’t live to see it bear much fruit. Certainly, the ability to play the lute and participate in social music-making must have been useful for Richard Mynshall, especially after his marriage into the powerful Wilbraham family. After all, his wife’s eldest brother Thomas was a keen musician whose personal accounts reveal his fondness for music and dancing, and it seems inevitable that the two men would have bonded through their shared interests.²¹⁴ And it is this connection that offers the key to understanding the true significance of the musical contents in *Mynshall*. This source mostly contains “public-domain” works, i.e. settings of popular ballad tunes and ground basses, plus versions of popular Elizabethan “standards” (**Table 4.3**) The “everyday” (and, in some cases, even mundane) nature of the repertory in *Mynshall* has left this source regarded as rather unexceptional by musicologists, yet it is precisely this characteristic that

has defined *crédit* as primarily “the belief or trust inspired by someone”, noting that it “derived from personal reputation, rank, title and family name, wealth, office-holding, clients and patrons.” See *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 43. See also Kristen B. Neuschel. *Word of Honor: Interpreting Noble Culture in Sixteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

²¹³ Muldrew, *Economy of Obligation*, 148-49.

²¹⁴ *Thomas Wilbraham’s Accounts* include payments for a treble viol and strings (f.[8]v), payments for dancing lessons (f.[9]v) and a record of the bass viol that he had lent out to one Ann Whittington (f.[14]r).

tells us something about the intended function of the manuscript; as a facilitator of social interaction, the choice of repertoire in *Mynshall* is ideal.

Certainly, *Mynshall* is full of pieces which seem to encourage group performance. Besides a number of duet parts, it also contains numerous works that might be considered essential repertoire for social music-making, including well-known ballad tunes and core chord progressions such as the *passamezzo antico* and the *ruggiero*. In his recent study of communal music-making in various present-day cultures, Thomas Turino has made an important distinction between *presentational* performances – those aimed at a separate listening audience – and *participatory* performances in which an artist/audience separation is not necessarily a requisite.²¹⁵ It is striking that so many of the works in *Mynshall* share the characteristics of the participatory musics that Turino describes, including the use of short sectional forms, cyclical (i.e. ostinato-based or ground-bass) structures, and the use of repeated melodic formulae. It seems likely that, for Mynshall and his associates, these pieces constituted a body of knowledge which formed the basis of any musical gathering they might attend, just as the corpus of pop and jazz standards does for anyone attending a jam session today. Furthermore, when seen in this light, the “faulty” musical texts that *Mynshall* preserves are not really all that problematic, since they function as *aides-mémoires* and guides for further elaboration and improvisation rather than as legalistic, prescriptive notation.²¹⁶

²¹⁵ Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 26-27.

²¹⁶ The analogy with the repertoire of jazz “standards” is a useful one here, since that is another participatory tradition predominantly focused around the assimilation of harmonic templates (e.g. core chord progressions such as the twelve-bar blues (and related forms), the changes from Gershwin’s “I got rhythm” and other popular Broadway and Tin Pan Alley songs, and so on). In both jazz performance and the Elizabethan repertoire discussed here, much less emphasis is placed on the accurate replication of melodic details. Often only the key melodic gestures and overall contour of a standard’s melody are required in order to produce a satisfactory rendering of it. This is the information recorded on lead-sheets and in so-called “fake-books” (whose texts for the “same” songs often diverge significantly from one another) and I suspect that Richard Mynshall’s musical texts served him in much the same way.

Table 4.3 Musical contents of the Mynshall lute book

Location	Title (spellings modernised; only Mynshall's composer ascriptions listed)	Other information
f. 1r	Preludium My Lord Willoughby's welcome home John Dowland's Galliard	Ballad tune
f. 1v	Quadran pavan	Based on <i>passamezzo moderno</i> ground
f. 2r	The heart oppressed	Duet treble
f. 2v	Passingmeasures pavan	Duet treble; based on <i>passamezzo antico</i> ground
f. 3r	Greensleeves	Duet treble; based on <i>romanesca</i> ground
f. 3v	Rogero	Duet treble; based on <i>ruggiero</i> ground
f. 4r	The galliard to the quadran pavan	
f. 4v	The flat pavan	Elizabethan "standard"
f. 5r	The galliard to the flat pavan The Spanish pavan	[divisions on a ground]
f. 5v	The Scotch huntsup Orlando Furioso	[divisions on a ground] Dated 1597 in MS
f. 6r	The galliard to the quadran pavan	
f. 6v	Mrs Jane Leighton's choice The Earl of Essex's dump Labandalashot galliard	Ballad tune
f. 7r	A coy joy An almain My Lord of Oxford's march	Elizabethan "standard"
f. 7v	[John] Johnson's delight pavan My Lord Zouche's mask Mistress Chidley's farewell	Elizabethan "standard" Elizabethan "standard"
f. 8	In Crete when Daedalus first began The morris Dowland's bells Bonny sweet Robin	Ballad tune Ballad tune
f. 8v	The passingmeasures galliard Packington's pound	Based on <i>passamezzo antico</i> ground Ballad tune
f. 9	Packington's galliard	
f. 9v	Fortune [my foe] Dowland Lady Marie's galliard	Ballad tune
f. 10r	Dowland's almain Monsieur's almain	Ballad tune
f. 10v	[John] Taverner's In nomine Mr Lusher's almain]	
f. 11r	Lachrimae Pavan [first 2 bars only]	Elizabethan "standard"
f. 11v	Mall Symes	Ballad tune
f. 12r	Lavecchia pavan	Elizabethan "standard"
f. 12v	Dowland's galliard	

Table 4.4 Overview of the contents of the Mynshall lutebook

Location	Summary of contents
f. [i]r	Raphe Wilbraham's ownership mark Signatures of Richard Mynshall, Tho[mas] Smith, Hughe Allen, and Thomas Crockett Three Latin phrases (in Mynshall's hand) Acrostic on 'Thomas Crockett' (in ?Crockett's hand)
f. [i]v	Verses by Matthew Mainwaring and Richard Mynshall (in their own hands) Acrostic on 'Marie Unton' Unidentified literary quotation (?)
f. [ii]r	Acrostics on 'Richard Mynshall' Signatures of Richard Mynshall and Anne Burges
f. [ii]v	Index to musical contents of MS
ff. 1-12	Lute music [see Table 4.3]
ff. 13-14	Cut out
ff. 15-97	Blank music staves (f. 89 cut out)
f. 98r	Military-themed poem, beginning 'Soldiers are like the armour that they wear' (in Richard Mynshall's hand); no concordances listed in Steven W. May & William A. Ringler, Jr. <i>Elizabethan Poetry: A Bibliography and First-Line Index of English Verse, 1559-1603</i> (New York: Continuum, 2004)
f. 98v	'A charm for the toothache' Copy of a letter from Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, to Elizabeth I (original dated 30 Aug 1599)
Inside back cover	Pen trials and signatures by Richard Mynshall

The non-musical contents of *Mynshall*

Whilst *Mynshall* has not been highly valued by modern scholarship as a musical source, some of its non-musical contents have attracted considerable interest, most notably a near-contemporary copy of a letter from Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, to Queen Elizabeth I. This letter, dated from Ardracken in Ireland on 30 August 1599, shows Essex in a desperate state of mind shortly before he abandoned his post and returned to England to face the Queen's

displeasure.²¹⁷ Robert Spencer was the first to conjecture some kind of direct connection between Essex and Mynshall; after outlining several pieces of circumstantial evidence to support the idea that Mynshall had served in Ireland alongside Essex, he suggested either Essex dictating a draft to Mynshall at Ardracken or perhaps Mynshall “being party to letter-opening at Nantwich”.²¹⁸ This idea has been eagerly accepted by several subsequent writers²¹⁹, with one even suggesting that the lutebook belonged to Essex himself.²²⁰

As appealing as this hypothesis may be, however, this particular letter enjoyed a wide circulation in Elizabethan and Jacobean manuscript miscellanies, something that has gone unnoticed in previous musicological studies but has been discussed by literary scholars.²²¹ Indeed, it is one of a corpus of widely circulated letters by important and controversial figures, usually with court connections, including Francis Bacon, Walter Raleigh, and several more by Essex.²²² The 1599 Ardracken letter features in over a dozen manuscript miscellanies that differ widely in their scope, including collections of papers

²¹⁷ Original in London, British Library MS Loan 23(1), f.127. For an accessible modern edition, see Walter Borchier Devereux, ed. *Lives and Letters of the Devereux, Earls of Essex, in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. 1540-1646* (London: John Murray, 1853), ii, 68.

²¹⁸ Spencer, “Three English Lute Manuscripts,” 121; Spencer, ed. *The Mynshall Lute Book with an Introductory Study*, unpaginated but see commentary on f.98v. I have found no evidence of Essex in Nantwich although it is likely that he would have taken this route to Ireland.

²¹⁹ Garton, *Tudor Nantwich*, 38; Zehring, “Richard Mynshall’s Lutebook,” 12-13.

²²⁰ Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, 165. Writing about Dowland, Price suggested “No doubt he enjoyed an especially important relationship with Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, a relationship implied in his selection of verse for the first and second *Bookes of songs or ayres* (1597/1600) and in the ownership by Essex of a Dowland lute manuscript.” Price’s n.3 reveals that he is referring to the Mynshall book.

²²¹ Edward Doughtie, “The Earl of Essex and Occasions for Contemplative Verse,” *English Literary Renaissance* 9 (1979): 355-57; Steven W. May, ed. “The Poems of Edward De Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford and Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex,” *Studies in Philology* 78/5 (1980): 92.

²²² These included Essex’s “complaint” the night before his execution (1601), Raleigh’s letter to his wife on the night before his (cancelled) execution (1603), Raleigh’s letter to James I on his return from Guyana (1618), etc.

pertaining to the “Irish problem” (which often include political and historical tracts as well as copies of correspondence) and literary anthologies compiled by students at one of universities or Inns of Court.

It is unclear how this particular letter came to be copied into *Mynshall* but, as Gary Schneider has pointed out in his study of early modern English letter-writing practices, “the letter was recirculated, copied, and preserved as an artefact of social prestige, as a sign of access to nobler social circles, or as a piece of news or history”.²²³ Famous letters were also circulated as stylistic models or merely enjoyed for their own sake as literary creations and, since any of these explanations could apply to Mynshall’s copy of the Essex letter, there is no reason to suppose any kind of direct connection between these two men.²²⁴

A social network in manuscript

Sadly, interest in the Essex letter has rather overshadowed some of the more interesting non-musical aspects of *Mynshall*, including the presence of signatures and literary contributions by Mynshall himself and a number of his associates. Although Robert Spencer helpfully identified some of these figures, little more has been said about these materials since then and nothing at all about the possible motivations behind these literary forays. During the course of my archival research I have unearthed some further biographical information

²²³ Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity: Vernacular letters and letter writing in early modern England, 1500-1700* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005): 26. On the scribal circulation of letters, also see James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512-1635* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), chap. 7.

²²⁴ It is also tempting to ask whether the lutenist-courtier Daniel Bacheler may be the connection between Essex, his letter, and *Mynshall*. After all, Bacheler is known to have carried letters between Essex and Elizabeth in August 1599 (see Batchelor, “Daniel Bacheler,” 5) – i.e. around the time that Essex wrote home from Ardracken – and, with Nantwich lying on the postal route between London and Ireland, it is even possible that Bacheler carried this particular letter through Nantwich at some point. But the circumstances that might have led to Mynshall copying it from Bacheler’s possession remain difficult to envisage and, in the absence of any supporting archival evidence, this rather appealing explanation remains speculative.

about the contributors, supplementing (and occasionally revising) Spencer's preliminary sketch (see **Appendix 1**).

The first few pages of the manuscript present a number of acrostics and verses by Mynshall and members of his immediate social circle, most notably his gentleman brother-in-law Matthew Mainwaring and Nantwich innkeeper Thomas Crockett (**Figs. 4.2 & 4.3**). The acrostics on "Thomas Crockett" (f. [i]v) and 'Richard Minshall' (f. [ii]r) are strikingly pious in tone, whereas the acrostic on "Marie Unton" (in Mynshall's hand) is designed as a New Year gift, clearly stating friendship as its goal rather than amorous intentions. Crockett and Mynshall's creations are written in rhyming couplets, displaying a certain amount of ingenuity and presumably intended to be seen as the outcome of the virtuous use of leisure time, an indicator of elite status:

R emember that thou worship God	M y heart rejoices in the Lord
I n faith, in word, and deed.	I n singing of his praise.
C ee therefore that thou keep his laws	N ot then among the guilty sort
H elp thee he will with speed.	S hall I be found always
A nd if that thou forgot his laws	H e helpeth all that in him truth
R emembering not thy God	A nd all be in distress
D eliver he will thy then from bliss, and	L et every one that knoweth
scourge thee with his rod.	God, would he would do no less.

Matthew Mainwaring's contribution (f. [i]v) is more erudite still, composed in the form of an enigma on his own name which he has encoded through a clever combination of three indicators of status: Christian piety, military imagery, and kinship.

Figure 4.2 **Mynshall, f.[i]v.** Reproduced by permission of the Royal Academy of Music.

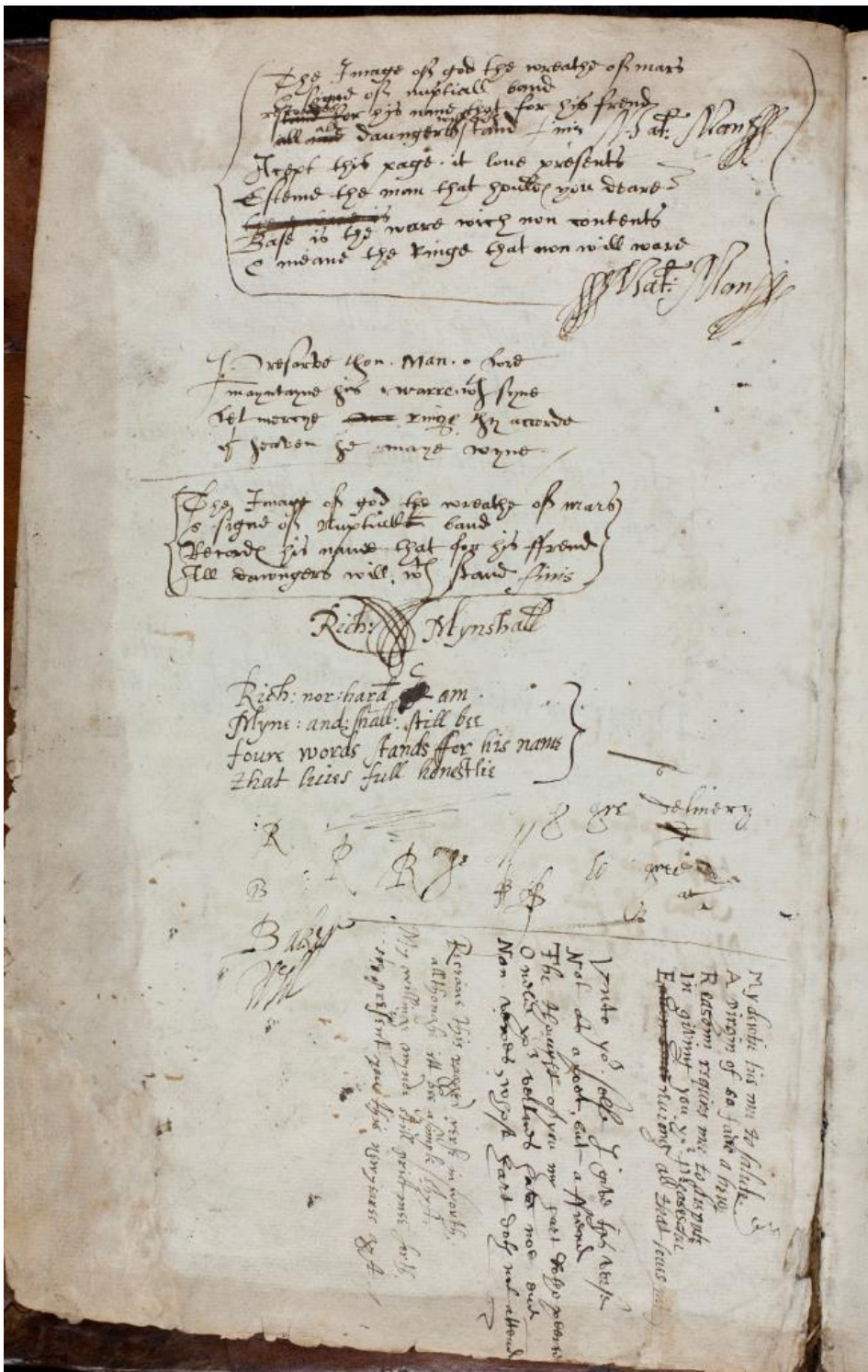
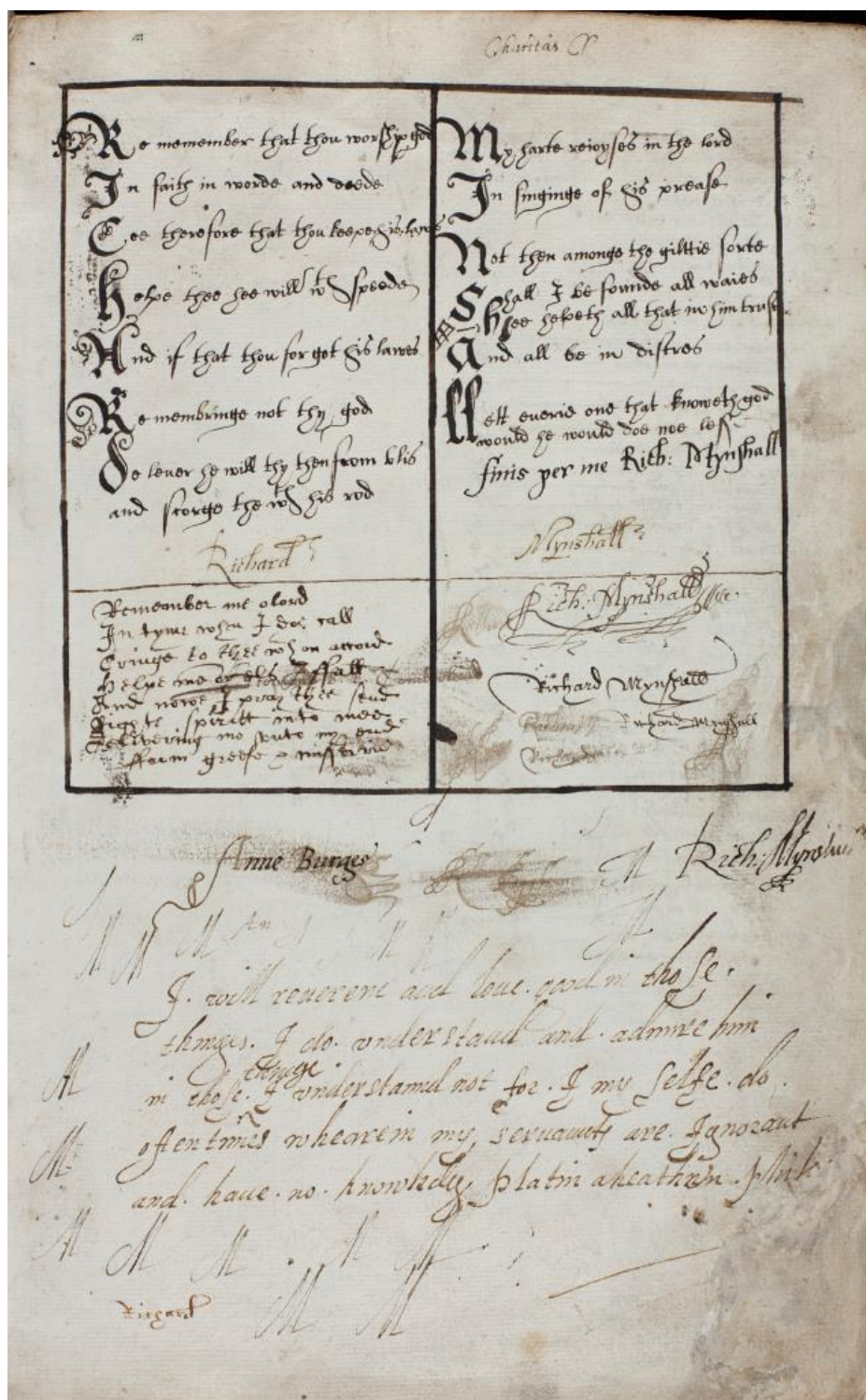


Figure 4.3 **Mynshall, f.[ii]r.** Reproduced by permission of the Royal Academy of Music.



The Image of god [= **MAN**], the wreath of mars [= **WAR**]
 A signe of nuptiall bond [= **RING**]
 Records his name that for his frend
 All daungers will with stand.

Furthermore, his contribution is itself a gift to Mynshall, pledging to protect the younger man and designed to strengthen their familial bond; it continues “Acept this page it love presents / Esteme the man that houlds you deare [...]”. Beneath this, Mynshall has responded in a similar fashion on his own name, stressing his own credentials as an honest citizen worthy of credit:

Rich: nor: **hard** I am
Myne: and **shall** still bee
 Foure words stands for his name
 That lives full honestlie

Overall, this opening layer of literary material brings together a mixed community of “middling” and gentry-class participants, with the three main protagonists – Mynshall, Mainwaring, and Crockett – actively drawing upon the poetic practices of the social elite. Certainly, the circulation of personalised enigmas and verses mirrors a well-established courtly tradition of poetic exchange, although the products of those encounters were later disseminated in the manuscript anthologies of the lower classes.²²⁵ Mynshall’s lutebook, then, is being used as a private space for collective self-fashioning within his

²²⁵ See, for instance, the exchange of enigmas between Sir Henry Noel and Sir Walter Raleigh, copied into both the diary of law student John Manningham and the poetic miscellany compiled by cathedral singingman John Lilliat. See *The Diary of John Manningham of the Middle Temple 1602-1603*, ed. Robert Parker Sorlien (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1976), 161-62; Edward Doughtie, ed. *Liber Lilliat: Elizabethan Verse and Song (Bodleian MS Rawlinson Poetry 148)* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1985), 42-43.

close-knit social circle who, by using these socialised literary practices, pious reflection, and (presumably) their shared musical interests, were able to strengthen their bonds and define themselves as a cultured and sophisticated group.

And there is a sense in which this must have been an educational process in itself, rather than just simply a matter of friendship and collective “impression management”. Although this opening layer of manuscript material is undated, it seems likely that it was compiled early in the seventeenth century and that we are seeing at first hand the process of Mynshall learning to be a (gentle)man, guided here by his older friends and relations. As Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos has shown, the forging of kinship bonds beyond those of the nuclear family was a significant stage in the adolescent development of early modern subjects,²²⁶ and Kate Chedgzoy’s recent work has revealed how the process of learning to write verse was an important educational and developmental rite-of-passage for young elite men.²²⁷ The Mynshall lutebook provides us with a rare opportunity to observe both of these processes in action.

The coterie in print

After witnessing Mynshall, Mainwaring and Crockett drafting and exchanging their personalised verse within the privacy of Mynshall’s lutebook, we can see all three men connected again through a printed text which, I shall argue, offered a more public articulation of their collective self-fashioning. Matthew Mainwaring’s *Vienna* (1628) is a lengthy prose romance,²²⁸ related to a

²²⁶ Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 165-70. It might be argued that Mynshall’s social circle still constituted a familial unit since, as Alan Bray demonstrated, the early modern conception of “family” encompassed a spectrum of different relationships, including friends, blood relations, marital relations, and those connected through patronage. See Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003)

²²⁷ Kate Chedgzoy, “Make me a poet, and I’ll quickly be a man: masculinity, pedagogy and poetry in the English Renaissance,” *Renaissance Studies* 27 (2013): 591-611.

²²⁸ M[atthew] M[ainwaring], *Vienna. Wherein is storied ye valorous atchievements, famous triumphs, constant love, greate miseries, & finall happines, of the well-deserving, truly noble and most valiant Kt. Sir Paris of Viennae and ye most admire[d],*

fifteenth-century French work by Pierre de Cypede and probably derived from late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century English translations (although Mainwaring gives no explicit indication of his sources).²²⁹ It is a fantastical tale of jousts, dragons, daring rescues, scheming stepmothers and of course true love, centring on the knight Sir Paris and his loyal “companion in Armes” Lanova. Paris, a man of low birth but a model of chivalrous virtue, contests and eventually wins the hand of Vienna and, along the way, keenly employs his musical skills (like so many adherents to the “new noble identity” from the mid-sixteenth century onwards) alongside more traditional martial and chivalric acts.

However, it is not the story but the prefatory material of *Vienna* that interests us here, since it reunites three of the contributors to Mynshall’s lutebook: Mainwaring, Crockett, and Mynshall himself. The frontispiece opens with the following lines, combining the martial and amorous imagery that is to run continually throughout the book:

Just in the Cloud doth lovely Cupid stand,
With Quiver at his side, and Bow in hand:
Which shewes when his swift Arrowes pierce the
heart,
The wound must cured be, by Love, not Art:
And Mars the God of Warre to giue renowne
Unto desert, doth here true Valour crowne, [...]

amiable princess the faire Vienna (London: for George Percivall, [1628]). Later editions of 1632 and 1650 survive, but references to earlier ones appear to be misleading, perhaps stemming from one of the earliest published discussions of this text: [unsigned], “Matthew Mainwaring’s ‘Vienna,’ 1621,” *The Palatine Notebook* 3 (July 1883): 156-59. Certainly, there are no pre-1628 editions listed in the *English Short-Title Catalogue*.

²²⁹ *Vienna* has received almost no scholarly attention beyond that in Helen Cooper’s useful article, “Going Native: The Caxton and Mainwaring versions of *Paris and Vienne*,” *Yearbook of English Studies* 41 (2011): 21-34.

Curiously, however, Mainwaring chose not to reveal his authorship explicitly, offering instead his initials and concluding with the following enigmatic couplet that refers obliquely to his coat-of-arms:

*If that the barres were red and Scutch'on white
The Coate would show who did this story write.*

This is followed by his dedication “To his worthie Brother in law, Mr. Richard Minshull, all health and happinesse”, along with a poem employing the same kind of punning already seen in the lutebook:²³⁰

More *Rich-art* thou in mind then Mynes,
but *Myn-shall* be the joy of heart;
Since still thy love with mine combines,
and smells of Nature more then Art:
For bloud with bloud, and sacred writ,
Such knots of love in Love hath knit.

To thee therefore I onely send,
this Spiders Web so vainely spunne,
Which my best thoughts to thee commend,
since what is done, for thee is done:
If any taxe my idle braine,
Say once a yeare fond fooles doe raigne.

Initially this dedication might seem rather puzzling, since the usual purpose of dedicating a book was to curry favour with either an existing or potential patron; the gift of a dedication was one that demanded reciprocity, usually in the form of a payment or some other kind of benefit.²³¹ Yet in this case

²³⁰ *Vienna*, sig. A2r. This is related to (but not, as Zehring states, exactly the same as) the verse in the lutebook (see Zehring, “Richard Mynshall’s Lute Book,” 15).

²³¹ However, Natalie Zemon Davis has observed that “the turning of the dedication away from the preoccupations of patronage into more general social or religious uses is one of the most striking features of the sixteenth-century book.” See “Beyond the Market:

Mainwaring offers his gift to a man of lower social standing, seeking instead to publicly declare and strengthen the bonds of kinship between them.

Mainwaring then turns to address the reader, taking care to stress that this work was not intended to generate a profit but was rather the product of his idle leisure time.²³²

Not with intent to passe the speaking Presse,
Or challenge Praise of any more or lesse.
This Booke was writ, the Author for his paines,
Did neither ayme at merit, praise, or gaines;
To gratifie a well deserving friend,
This Story fain'd, at vacant houres was penn'd:
Which though now to the world expos'd it be,
The Authors heart is from vaine glory free.

Here Mainwaring stresses his gentle status, locating the work within the milieu of virtuous solitary labour and banishing any suspicion of professional activity or financial necessity on his part. This idea is then developed further in the first of several laudatory verses by Mainwaring's associates, written by none other than "Tho. Croket":²³³

If graver heads should hold it to be vaine,
that thou (well strucke in yeaes) do'st write of Love,
Say thou the finest dye soon'st takes a staine,
and soundest Wits light subjects often prove:
But thou hast temp'red so thy Love with Armes,
with Knightly prowesse, and with Martiall feates;
That thy smooth stile (like sweet bewitching charmes)

Books as gifts in sixteenth-century France," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 33 (1983): 79.

²³² *Vienna*, sig. A2v.

²³³ *Vienna*, sig. A3r.

compells all sorts to reade without intreates:
 Then blush not since thy Pen such Art hath showne,
 as proves the difference 'twixt Love and Lust;
 And stirres up Valour almost overthrowne,
 whose Armes lye canker'd with consuming rust:
 But rather glory in thy taken paines,
 for which the world indebted aye remaines.

Crockett clearly alludes to Mainwaring's status as a military man, evoking the image of a retired and noble soldier engaged in a profitable and virtuous retirement. (This is a cultural trope most famously rehearsed by the courtier Sir Henry Lee, whose tilting helmet became "a hive for bees" in his poem "These Golden Locks".)²³⁴

A succession of other verses follows including several by other members of Mainwaring's immediate family (either represented by their initials or anagrammatic renderings of their names) and one by the playwright Thomas Heywood. Finally, however, Richard Mynshall himself "speaks" to accept the gift of the dedication, stressing his connections to Mainwaring through the "treble bands" of "marr'age, bloud, and friendship".²³⁵

And I the last, but not the least, whose Love
 to thee, and thine, is ty'd in treble bands;
 For marr'age, bloud, and friendship which may prove,
 our constant buildings are not on the sands:
 Therefore with thanks for this thy well wrote Story,
 Though mine it is: yet thine shall be the glory.

Your Kinsman, Brother in law, and Friend,
 Richard Mynshall.

²³⁴ This text was famously set to music by John Dowland; see *The Firste Booke of Songes*, no. 18.

²³⁵ *Vienna*, sig. A3v.

Thus the paratextual material to *Vienna* served as an arena in which the gift of a literary dedication was given, endorsed, and accepted – in the process, defining a social circle and publicly reinforcing the ties between the contributors. Indeed, *Vienna* concludes with a signature couplet closely related to the one we saw drafted by Mainwaring in Mynshall’s lutebook, simultaneously revealing and concealing his identity as author and once again underscoring the gift-function of his dedication to Mynshall:

*The Image of God; the wrath of Mars; and pledge of Nuptiall rite;
Records his name, that for his friend, this triviall toy did write.*²³⁶

Coterie and credit

Taken together, Mynshall’s lutebook and Mainwaring’s *Vienna* reveal a small group of Nantwich gentlemen constructing a collective identity by drawing upon aspects of elite coterie culture. This potent combination of literary endeavour, pious virtue and military honour that had previously been rehearsed in the privacy of Mynshall’s lutebook is now transferred into the wider arena of print where they were able to publicly fashion themselves as a refined collective. Mainwaring’s decision to obscure his own identity (and that of some of the other contributors to the volume) also contributed towards this goal because, as we have seen, it invites the reader to try to solve the puzzle and gain access to an otherwise closed social circle. As Marcy L. North explains:

The suppression of names also illuminates or traces the social boundary for the particular coterie, subtly distinguishing the insiders with their undisclosed knowledge about authorship from outsiders with their less reliable and more public information.²³⁷

Thus Matthew Mainwaring’s dedicatory gift to Richard Mynshall was undoubtedly one founded upon a common self-interest; both men certainly

²³⁶ *Vienna*, sig. Aa3v (= p. 180)

²³⁷ Marcy L. North. *The Anonymous Renaissance: Cultures of Discretion in Tudor-Stuart England*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 167.

stood to gain credit through their association with one another and this public act of self-fashioning. Similarly, for Thomas Crockett, the contribution of his laudatory verse served as a way of positioning himself within this cultural circle and sharing in the credit that it could generate. And, of course, the fact that the initial “rehearsals” of these cultural practices can be found in Mynshall’s lutebook should not be considered a mere coincidence. This material was presumably copied into Mynshall’s lutebook (rather than, say, onto one of the many vacant pages in the *Mynshall Accounts*, or into a blank notebook) because music-making also formed an important strand of this group’s identity.

Postscript: the afterlife of Mynshall’s lutebook

Richard Mynshall’s lutebook served several functions during his lifetime and seems to have served an entirely different one following his death. Mynshall left very specific instructions in his will regarding the disposal of his books:

Item I give to my nephew Thomas Mainwaring my signit ring and all those bookes in my Study which were my Fathers. Item I give to my Brother in law Raphe Wilbraham the rest of my bookes in my Studye w[hi]ch were not my fathers and the Case or chest wherin they are.²³⁸

Raphe Wilbraham (1601-1657) was largely London-based, although many of his business interests concerned lands in Nantwich. During the last decades of Mynshall’s life, the paths of these two men crossed frequently (particularly regarding property-related matters) and it seems likely that Wilbraham returned to the Nantwich area to live at some point. Otherwise, however, little is known about Wilbraham’s life beyond the fact that he died unmarried and without an heir in 1657, leaving his entire estate to the poor.²³⁹ In any case,

²³⁸ Cheshire Record Office, WS 1638 (will of Richard Minshall). Sadly, nothing is known about the books that he inherited from his father; Thomas’s will names only one volume (which he left to one Henry Maisteron), a copy of *The whole workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, three worthy martyrs, and principall teachers of this Church of England* (London: John Day, 1573); see CRO WS 1602 and Lake, *Great Fire*, 62. Otherwise, Thomas’s library was simply listed as ‘Bookes’ in his probate inventory.

²³⁹ For his epitaph, see Hall, Nantwich, 322-23.

Wilbraham was evidently pleased enough with this bequest from Mynshall that he recorded both his name and that of the donor at the front of the manuscript; the front flyleaf bears the inscription “Raphe Wilbraham his Booke from his Brother Minshull”.²⁴⁰

Until now, no further attention has been paid to either the nature of Mynshall’s book collection or his bequest to Raphe Wilbraham. But since Mynshall’s social identity seems to have been so closely bound up with his musical and literary interests, such a project would be of enormous interest and even my very preliminary findings can reveal something useful about the later function of the Mynshall lutebook.²⁴¹ From my preliminary enquiries, I have been able to identify two surviving printed volumes of poetry that passed through Mynshall’s hands: a copy of the 1613 edition of Michael Drayton’s epic topographical poem *Poly-Olbion*, and a copy of John Donne’s *Devotions upon emergent occasions* (1624) which features an almost identical ownership mark (see **Table 4.6**). At first glance, it might be assumed that these two volumes were part of the same bequest as the lutebook – that they were part of Mynshall’s own collection and passed on to Wilbraham at his death. But could the subtle change of wording in Wilbraham’s ownership marks have some significance here? Could it be that these two volumes were actually conventional gifts from Mynshall to Wilbraham rather than posthumous ones? Natalie Zemon Davis has written extensively on gift-giving practices in sixteenth-century society and highlighted in particular the exchange of books as a means of strengthening family and social bonds.²⁴² And my identification of at least two other volumes that made the return journey – from Raphe Wilbraham to the Mynshalls – suggests that books were frequently circulated as gifts between these two branches of the family. By giving printed books to one another as gifts, Wilbraham and the Mynshalls were not only exchanging

²⁴⁰ *Mynshall*, f.[i]r.

²⁴¹ Since research into the provenance of early printed books and manuscripts is a laborious, time-consuming process (and often reliant upon serendipitous discovery), my plans to reconstruct the contents of Richard Mynshall’s library must remain work in progress and, as such, beyond the scope of this thesis.

²⁴² Davis, “Beyond the Market”, 69-88, especially 82-84. Also see (more generally) her *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

tokens of their mutual affection but also forging a further bond based upon their shared interests and values.

By the time of Richard Mynshall's death in the late 1630s, his lute manuscript was probably diminishing in practical value as a musical document. The Elizabethan repertoire it preserves may well have been regarded as old-fashioned and, in any case, there is no surviving evidence to suggest that Raphe Wilbraham was even a practising musician. However, as a private memorial to a much-loved family member and a personalised memento of their friendship, Richard Mynshall's lutebook would have made an ideal final gift to Raphe Wilbraham. In this respect alone, it is worthy of our attention for many of the same reasons advanced by James Davies in his recent study of early nineteenth-century musical annuals: rather than as merely a musical text *per se*, Mynshall's lutebook can be seen as a souvenir object, an emblem of past bonds and affections.²⁴³

This previously underexplored document apparently served three related functions during the first few decades of its existence. First, it began life as document of social aspiration c.1597, preserving a musical repertory designed to facilitate social interaction. Secondly, it served as a space for communal self-fashioning, probably during the earliest years of the seventeenth century. It is a rare remnant from the material culture of Mynshall's social circle, revealing their construction of a collective identity incorporating aspects of military honour, musical and literary skill, and Christian piety. By emulating the cultural practices of the social elite, they were aiming to increase their credit and, for Mynshall, this strategy would help him to consolidate his progression from merchant-class status towards land-based wealth. Finally, following Mynshall's death, his lutebook assumed a new dual function: as both a gift and a memorial to its previous owner and his circle, now assuming much greater importance as a material object than as a musical source.

²⁴³ James Davies, "Julia's Gift: The Social Life of Scores, c.1830," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 131 (2006): 287-308.

Table 4.5 Volumes associated with Richard Mynshall & Raphe Wilbraham (a checklist in progress)

Source	Copy details
London, Royal Academy of Music Library, MS 601 (the Mynshall lutebook)	Front flyleaf: "Raphe Wilbraham his Booke from his Broth ^r Minshull"
John Donne. <i>Devotions upon emergent occasions, and severall steps in my sicknes.</i> (London: A[ugustine] M[athews] for Thomas Jones, 1624)	Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC copy, shelfmark: STC 7034 copy 1. Front free endpaper: "Raphe Wilbraham his Booke by gift from his deare Broth ^r in law Mr. Richard Minshull"
Michael Drayton. <i>Poly-Olbion.</i> (London: H[umphrey] L[ownes] for Matthew Lownes, J. Browne, J. Helme, and J. Busbie, 1613)	Current whereabouts unknown, although known to have entered the private collection of US dealer/collector John Fleming (d.1987). Front flyleaf: "Raphe Wilbraham his Booke. The gift of his deare Broth ^r in Law Mr Richard Minshull." See sale catalogue description in <i>English Poetry to 1700</i> (Philadelphia & New York: The Rosenbach Company, 1941), Lot 294 (p.71)
George Hakewill. <i>The Vanitie of the eie, first beganne for the Comforte of a Gentlewoman bereaved of her sight.</i> (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1608)	Current whereabouts unknown. Described in an 1898 sale catalogue as a "presentation copy from Raphe Wilbraham to Richard Minshull". See <i>Catalogue of the Valuable Library of Books and Manuscripts of the late R. W. Wilbraham, Esq. of Delamere House, Northwich, Cheshire</i> [June 20-22, 1898] (London: Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, 1898), Lot 244 (p.21)
Anthony Wotton, <i>A dangerous plot discovered.</i> (London: [J. Dawson] for Nicholas Bourne, 1626)	Durham University library copy, shelfmark: SB 2407. Front free endpaper: "Raphe Wilbraham his book given to his sister Minshull".

Chapter 5: Learning the lute in Oxford and Cambridge colleges

[W]ere it not for that love I beare to the true lovers of musicke, I had concealde these my first fruits, which how they will thrive with your taste I know not, howsoever the greater part of them might have been ripe inough by their age. The Courtly judgement I hope will not be severe against them, being it selfe a party, and those sweet springs of humanity (I meane our two famous Universities) wil entertain them for his sake, whome they have already grace't [...].²⁴⁴

In the preface to his popular *First Booke of Songes* (1597), John Dowland rather coyly conceded that its contents were not new but had in fact been in circulation – in manuscript presumably as well as orally – for some time. In doing so, he evoked the vibrant musical environment of the Elizabethan universities where, just as at court, his songs had met with a favourable reception. The musical dimensions of early modern collegiate life have long been recognised, of course, but scholarship has been focused around either the treatment of music within the university curriculum or the famous choral institutions there. Much less has been done on music-making as a leisure activity amongst the student body, either in terms of what they learnt or, more importantly, why.

To speak of the universities in England during this period meant only the ancient universities of Oxford and Cambridge – or, more particularly, the various constituent colleges that made up those institutions.²⁴⁵ The English

²⁴⁴ Dowland, *First Booke of Songes*, “To the courteous Reader”, sig. [A]r.

²⁴⁵ There was, of course, a third “university” in England: the various Inns of Court which offered legal training to young men of similar age as Oxford and Cambridge. Whilst extra-curricular music-making was also common here, I have chosen not to cover this because a) there is a lack of musical sources which can be firmly associated with these institutions; b) music was *only* an extra-curricular practice amongst the students here, not a professional activity or an area of academic study. The most thorough overview of music-making in the Inns remains Robert W. Wienpahl, *Music at the Inns of Court*

university college was a peculiar environment: an autonomous, semi-private world that was in many ways detached from the larger university infrastructure and wider civic contexts that accommodated it.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, they were exclusively male homosocial spaces in which complex social dynamics came into play; on one hand, the colleges mirrored aspects of the hierarchical social organisation of the outside world, but other factors such as academic hierarchy – what Bourdieu would describe as educational capital – also played an important role in their organisation. This was an environment which saw conflicting hierarchies of power and tension between social groups, but this unparalleled mix of intellectual, economic, and age-based stratification needs to be read against an increasingly prevalent sense of scholarly or academic identity as a discrete pan-European social grouping, as scholars such as Richard Kirwan have recently shown.²⁴⁷ As we saw in chapter 2, a university graduate could arguably call himself a gentleman (although, needless to say, this was not universally accepted) and it is clear that higher studies provided some kind of opportunity for social advancement.

It is against this backdrop of an emerging sense of scholarly identity that I will examine musical practices within university circles. We have already seen that music can function as both an indicator of high status and a lowly artisan/professional mechanical art, and both social groups were present in this environment. But music also had the capacity to bridge this divide and to

during the reigns of Elizabeth, James, and Charles (UMI, for California State University, Northridge, 1979).

²⁴⁶ On the complex relationship between colleges and the university and on ‘town/gown’ relationships, see Carl I. Hammer, Jr., “Oxford Town and Oxford University,” in *The Collegiate University*, ed. James McConica, *The History of the University of Oxford* iii (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 69-116 ; also Alexandra Shepard, “Contesting Communities? ‘Town’ and ‘gown’ in Cambridge, c. 1560-1640,” in *Communities in early modern England: Networks, place, rhetoric*, eds. Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 216-34.

²⁴⁷ For instance, Richard Kirwan, “Scholarly Self-Fashioning and the Cultural History of the Universities,” in *Scholarly Self-Fashioning and Community in the Early Modern University*, ed. Richard Kirwan (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 1-20; Marian Füssel, “A Struggle for Nobility: ‘Nobilitas literaria’ as Academic Self-Fashioning in Early Modern Germany,” in *Scholarly Self-Fashioning*, ed. Kirwan, 103-20.

play a role in the forging of this uniquely “learned” identity. Writing about King’s College Cambridge, the early seventeenth-century clergyman Thomas Ball referred to “the Genius of the College, & that was musique”, acknowledging that music was a key part of that particular college’s corporate identity and individual complexion, despite being little to do with its official function as an educational institution.²⁴⁸ In this chapter I will use *Dallis* to see how two of the functions of musical learning already discussed – music as a marker of elite status and music as a form of social interaction – were shaped into the discourse of scholarly identity where it represented both a form of connoisseurship but also a learned activity. This is both congruent with music’s place in the models of elite behaviour already explored in this study but also distinct from them – with a greater focus on music-making as an intellectual pursuit rather than merely as an ornament to one’s innate worth.

“Our two famous universities” and the English collegiate system

The early modern university was founded upon a simple premise: young men gathered together with the shared aim of pursuing higher learning, particularly in the fields of humanistic knowledge that became fashionable during the sixteenth century. The sense of intellectual community fostered by this shared goal was fortified by the peculiarly English collegiate system which emerged at this time.²⁴⁹ In the Continental universities (and pre-sixteenth-century Oxford and Cambridge), students normally lived in the surrounding town, either in lodgings or inns.²⁵⁰ These residences were often defined according to the students’ geographical origins; for instance, Willem Otterspeer has observed how English, French, and German students studying at Leiden University in the

²⁴⁸ Thomas Ball, *The Life of the Renowned Doctor Preston, writ by his pupil, Master Thomas Ball, D.D., Minister of Northampton in the year 1628*, ed. E. W. Harcourt (Oxford & London: Parker & Co., 1885), 5-6.

²⁴⁹ See James McConica, “The Rise of the Undergraduate College,” in *The Collegiate University*, ed. McConica, 1-68; Rainer A. Müller, “Student Education, Student Life,” in *Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*, ed. Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, A *History of the University in Europe 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 326-54.

²⁵⁰ Although some continental universities also used a comparable system (e.g. Paris and Louvain), their colleges were closely linked to individual university faculties; see Müller, “Student Education,” 333-39.

Netherlands resided together in segregated boarding houses and inns, often run by expatriates from their own countries.²⁵¹

The English collegiate system created self-contained communities of students and teachers living and working together under one roof. This was a hierarchically organised body of people, comprised of a Master, a number of tutors and fellows, then students of varying degrees of academic standing. The master and tutors were responsible not only for the educational progress of their students but also for their moral education, pastoral well-being and for overseeing their finances. Early modern university students were exclusively male and unmarried, and generally aged between thirteen and twenty years old.²⁵²

The collegiate population

Two brief examples will give some idea of the make-up and governance of these colleges. Trinity College, Cambridge, was founded by Royal Charter in 1546 through the amalgamation of two earlier institutions and enriched with recently confiscated monastic lands. Along with Christ Church, Oxford, it is an example of what Hugh Kearney has described as an “academic palace”, that is, a large wealthy institution with an impressively sizable adjoining choral institution.²⁵³ According to its Elizabethan statutes of 1560, Trinity was to be staffed by a Master, sixty Fellows, four chaplains, sixty-two scholars and thirteen poor students (known as “sizars”) who also acted as servants to the

²⁵¹ Willem Otterspeer, “The Mediating Role of the University: Leiden University, Its Structure and Function during the First Two Centuries of its Existence,” *History of Universities* 18/2 (2003): 181.

²⁵² On average matriculation ages, see Lawrence Stone, “The Size and Composition of the Oxford Student Body, 1580-1910,” in *The University in Society, i: Oxford and Cambridge from the 14th to the Early 19th Century*, ed. Lawrence Stone (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 29-33 and 74-77. On the limited roles for women in academic life, see Victor Morgan, *The History of the University of Cambridge, ii: 1546-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 297-303.

²⁵³ Hugh Kearney, *Scholars and Gentleman: Universities and Society in Pre-Industrial Britain 1500-1700* (London: Faber & Faber, 1970), 21.

tutors and fellows.²⁵⁴ The sizable choral foundation attached to the chapel accommodated several professional singers, a number of choristers, an organist and a Master of the Choristers who assumed responsibility for the education and training of the boys.²⁵⁵

The grandeur of Trinity can be contrasted with somewhere like Corpus Christi College Oxford – an early sixteenth-century foundation and one of the smallest colleges in either Oxford or Cambridge.²⁵⁶ The original 1517 statutes at Corpus Christi provided for a president, twenty fellows, and just twenty undergraduates. Again, there was provision for professional musical and clerical staff in the college chapel, but only a mere four chapel personnel (a precentor, sacristan, sub-sacristan, and an organist). There was some modest expansion of the musical provision in the chapel as the century progressed – the addition of two choristers in 1528, for instance – but nothing approaching the scale of what was going on next door at Christ Church or places like Trinity College, Cambridge.²⁵⁷

Although college statutes provide information about the envisaged dimensions of these institutions, in practice it is difficult to assess accurately their precise make-up. Indeed, it is difficult even to put a precise number on student membership, let alone answer more complex questions regarding the social make-up of the student body. Many of the wealthier attendees failed to

²⁵⁴ For a detailed discussion of the structure of college, see W.W. Rouse Ball, *Cambridge Notes chiefly concerning Trinity College and the University*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons., 1921), 22-32.

²⁵⁵ See Ian Payne, “The Musical Establishment at Trinity College, Cambridge, 1546-1644,” *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 74 (1985): 53-69.

²⁵⁶ For an in-depth study of Corpus Christi in the earliest years of its foundation, see James McConica, “The Prosopography of the Tudor University,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* iii/3 (1971): 543-54; McConica, “Elizabethan Oxford: The Collegiate Society,” in *The Collegiate University*, ed. McConica, 645-732.

²⁵⁷ Helen Marsh Jeffries, “‘But a Musician’ – The importance of the underdog in musico-historical research: Music professionalism in a Small Sixteenth-Century Oxford College,” in *Music and History: Bridging the Disciplines*, eds. Jeffrey H. Jackson & Stanley C. Pelkey (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), 23-43.

matriculate formally²⁵⁸ or even to study for a degree, instead treating their colleges, as Peter Clark memorably put it, “rather like a fashionable holiday camp”.²⁵⁹ And, as James McConica has conceded, even a thorough survey of admissions registers and other administrative records “leaves undisclosed the presence of *extranei* – servants, commoners, and boarders of various kinds – who were often migrant and usually numerous”.²⁶⁰ Certainly, a student from a wealthy family would often be accompanied by a retinue; the Surrey gentleman John Ramsey compiled a set of notes for new Cambridge undergraduates (“Observations for a freshman”) in which he outlined some of the expenditure that they would need to anticipate. This included, for example, the cost of a cook, a butler, and a place on the tennis courts, as well as more general information about the hierarchy of his college, Peterhouse.²⁶¹ To Ramsey’s list, we can add the fees payable to other professional educators who habitually visited (or even resided in) students’ lodgings: musicians, dancing masters, language teachers, and other private tutors. It is notable that Thomas Whythorne spent three years acting as a live-in tutor to a young gentleman at Trinity College, Cambridge between 1559 and 1562. Yet, if he hadn’t devoted part of his autobiography to this episode of his life, we would have no idea of his presence there. There must have been many more like him for whom no historical record remains.

Another elusive group are the foreign nationals of various types who visited the colleges. Foreign students seem to have matriculated at Oxford and Cambridge comparatively rarely, perhaps because of the requirement there that students subscribed to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Faith, but there seem to have been some migrant residents, mostly Protestants seeking sanctuary from

²⁵⁸ On the problems of relying on matriculation records before the Civil War, see Lawrence Stone, “The Educational Revolution in England,” *Past and Present* 28 (1964): 49-51; McConica, “Prosopography”, 549-50; on Continental universities, see Maria Rosa di Simone, “Admission,” in *Universities in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Ridder-Symoens, 286-87.

²⁵⁹ Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 37.

²⁶⁰ McConica, “Prosopography”, 550.

²⁶¹ Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 280, f.6r. Ramsey had been a student at Peterhouse, Cambridge in 1601/2 under the tutelage of “Dr Soame” (f.8v).

religious turmoil in mainland Europe.²⁶² For instance, the Protestant theologian and preacher Martin Bucer (1491-1551) lived at Trinity College Cambridge during his final years (although he was never formally a member of the college), and the sons of Swiss reformer Ulrichus Zuinglius were at Trinity during the 1570s.

It was also quite common for young gentlemen to visit universities in continental Europe for short periods of study, with France, the Low Countries and Italy particularly popular destinations. For instance, Padua (which was under the jurisdiction of the Venetian Republic rather than Papal control) was a popular choice with young Protestant Englishmen, and Leiden in the Netherlands was a popular destination for medical studies in particular.²⁶³ Besides the matriculation rolls of those institutions, *alba amicorum* also offer a glimpse of the social interaction between university men of different international origins (although it can be difficult to know whether such meetings took place in England or overseas). One such document, apparently largely compiled in Oxford, is the *album amicorum* of the clergyman and philosopher Nathaniel Carpenter (1589-1628), elected Fellow of Exeter College in 1607, proceeding BA (1610), MA (1613) and BD (1620).²⁶⁴ It contains numerous entries dated 1612-17 which coincide from his time at Exeter, and the use of Latin, German, French, and Italian for the entries (as well as some Greek phrases) says something about both scholarly modes of communication and the cosmopolitanism of the student body. The inclusion of musical notation in two entries also suggests that it was taken for granted that a learned man could understand and appreciate these – a point to which we shall return in due course.²⁶⁵

²⁶² Stone, “Size and Composition,” 35-37; Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, “Mobility,” in *Universities in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Ridder-Symoens, 429.

²⁶³ For a broad overview, see de Ridder-Symoens, “Mobility,” 416-48. Individual case studies include Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors: English Students in Italy, 1485-1603* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1998); R. W. Innes-Smith, *English-Speaking Students of Medicine at the University of Leyden* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1932)

²⁶⁴ Dublin, Trinity College MS 150 (*album amicorum* of Nathaniel Carpenter)

²⁶⁵ There are two musical entries – a short monophonic tag with Latin text (f.75r) and an eight-note theme to be performed as a four-part round (f.94v).

Overall, the early modern college was a homosocial space of great cultural diversity – a wide range of social backgrounds was represented, resulting in a more cosmopolitan mix than probably anywhere else in England apart from London’s merchant communities. On one hand, the collegiate body was subject to conflicting hierarchies – of social status *versus* academic standing – but its members were unified by their common interest in acquiring non-economic capital – whether in the form of educational capital (qualifications) or cultural and social capital (the cultivation of other skills or contacts). Thus college membership instilled into the student a sense of corporate identity, since everyone there was committed to the pursuit of learning of some sort (whether according to the orthodox curriculum or not).

The social dynamics of the early modern university

Entertaine therefore the acquaintance of men of the soundest reputation for Religion, Life, and Learning, whose conference and company may bee unto you a living and a moving library [...] For the companions of your recreation, consort your self with Gentlemen of your owne ranke and qualitie for that friendship is best contenting and lasting [...] ²⁶⁶

It was with these words that Henry Peacham, a student at Trinity College Cambridge himself during the 1590s, advised his readers when broaching the subject of the university environment. After stressing first and foremost the importance of keeping the right company there, Peacham goes on to make a division between work and play: it was sensible to seek out pious and learned companions when studying, whatever their social status. But for leisure activities, sticking amongst your own was definitely the best policy.

Yet this view was not entirely congruent with the ethos of university life. In theory, at least, the group of men who constituted a college’s membership were the embodiment of an older medieval humanistic idea: a community of equals whose social status *beyond* the walls of the college was of no great consequence within them. These student bodies were governed by strict

²⁶⁶ Peacham, *Compleat Gentleman*, 39-40.

statutes so, as a collective, they were all unmarried and expected to adhere to a strict code of behaviour (including religious stipulations), focused on the pursuit of humanistic scholarship, and required to use spoken and written Latin for formal purposes. United by this shared purpose, their status within the college was not founded upon inherited privilege or wealth but rather shaped by their achievements within an intellectual meritocracy that rewarded scholarly distinction.²⁶⁷ This notion of the college as a self-contained world gave rise to a growing awareness during the sixteenth century of academic identity as a discrete social group – something nourished by (but not entirely synonymous with) the broader humanistic notion of belonging to a pan-European “Republic of Letters”.²⁶⁸

The sixteenth century saw rapid expansion by the universities in England. The social make-up of the colleges during this period has been debated at great length – whether they were swelled by the ranks of rich men’s sons (as Elizabethan commentators such as William Harrison famously complained) or whether this marked increase in student numbers is evidence of wider access for those from further down the social order. The scholarly literature surrounding this question is vast and contentious and it is not my intention to adjudicate here.²⁶⁹ However, it is important to note that this period of growth

²⁶⁷ See J. H. Overfield, “Nobles and Paupers at German Universities to 1600”, *Societas* 4 (1974): 175-210; Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, “Rich Men, Poor Men: Social Stratification and Social Representation at the University (13th-16th Centuries)”, in *Showing Status: Representation of Social Positions in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Wim Blockmans & Antheun Janse (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 165-67.

²⁶⁸ Richard Kirwan, *Empowerment and Representation at the University in Early Modern Germany: Helmstedt and Würzburg, 1576-1634*. Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung 46, (Harrassowitz: Wiesbaden, 2009); Peter A. Vandermeersch, “Teachers,” in *Universities in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Ridder-Symoens, 244-52. On the Republic of Letters, see Anthony Grafton, “A Sketch Map of a Lost Continent: The Republic of Letters,” *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts* 1, no. 1 (May 1, 2009): <http://rofl.stanford.edu/node/34> (accessed 30 December 2011)

²⁶⁹ Important studies include: Hexter, *Reappraisals in History*, 45-70; Mark H. Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge in Transition 1558-1642: An essay on the changing relations between the English universities and English society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959);

goes hand-in-hand with a broader change in the functions of university education during the sixteenth century. Formerly intended to train poor boys for a career in the church, universities were now also preparing students for secular careers, such as practising law or medicine or joining the army of administrators needed in order to support the bureaucracy of the Elizabethan state.

What has gone relatively unexplored is how these different social groups interacted within the collegiate environment. There is little doubt that the colleges catered for a wide range of social backgrounds; James McConica's common-sense conclusion was that "the universities may have served a wide spectrum of English society throughout the late Tudor and early Stuart periods".²⁷⁰ But, as Lawrence Stone mused, the presence of both gentle and non-gentle students doesn't mean that they actually mixed.²⁷¹ It may well be that Mark Curtis, evoking the idea of a community of equals, was being over-optimistic when stating that the universities "promoted unity and cohesion by fostering a mutuality of outlook and feeling among men from diverse classes in English society and by facilitating social mobility".²⁷² Peacham's advice certainly seems to contradict this.

Indeed, external social rank undoubtedly *was* important amongst the student body. Considerable social stratification persisted, much of it administratively ingrained into the collegiate system. For instance, the process of matriculation included a declaration of social rank, since there was a sliding scale of fees payable that corresponded to this.²⁷³ Everyday living within college was also to

Joan Simon, "The social origins of Cambridge students, 1603-1640," *Past and Present* 26 (1962): 58-67 (which questions Curtis's statistical methods); Stone, "Educational Revolution"; Stone, "Social Mobility in England, 1500-1700," *Past and Present* 33 (1966): 16-55; McConica, "Prosopography"; Morgan, *History of the University of Cambridge*, ii, 131-46.

²⁷⁰ McConica, "Prosopography," 547. Stone ("Educational Revolution", 67-68) had drawn the same conclusion.

²⁷¹ Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, 682-83.

²⁷² Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge in Transition*, 266.

²⁷³ For a discussion of people lying about their status (in *both* directions!) see Stone, "Educational Revolution," 60-61.

some extent shaped by class identity. Students were classified into one of three groups that defined their duties and privileges. At the top were “fellow commoners”, wealthy students who paid a premium to be able to eat and mix with the fellows. Next were the “pensioners” (or “commoners”) who paid their own commons (i.e. tuition and lodgings) whereas “sizars” were poor students who waited on the fellows and wealthier students in return for their tuition and lodging. This hierarchy was most visible in the college dining hall, where the fellow-commoners had literally bought their way to the top of the college hierarchy (dining with the fellows) whilst the sizars served those students of higher social rank before being able to eat themselves. As Alan Bray has pointed out, this arrangement is analogous to the symbolic social hierarchies that were displayed in the dining halls of the great elite households of the period.²⁷⁴

Nevertheless, the influx of rich students presented unprecedented opportunities for poor scholars to gain access to university education. It should be stressed that recruitment of sizars was a relatively new practice that emerged during the sixteenth century, as the correspondence of Brian Twyne makes clear. Whilst still a student at Corpus Christi College, Oxford in 1597, Twyne wrote home to his father in Sussex, complaining that his father’s prudence with his allowance prevented him from keeping a poor scholar as a servant:

The time was and custome was in your beinge here y^e no scholler of our house might be suffered to have a poor scholler, but every scholler did his owne affaires and businesse, but for me to have done it in these times (as you would have had me) and no man else, it had bene worse then homely and beggarly: should I have carried woode and dust, and emptied chamber pots and no man no scholler so doinge but myselfe, it had beene intollerable and to base for my minde [...]. myselfe being a Gentleman.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁴ Bray, *The Friend*, 151-52.

²⁷⁵ Letter of 25 September 1597 to his father; cited in [H. G. S.] “Some Correspondence of Brian Twyne: Part I,” *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 5, no. 56 (1927): 216.

For Twyne, the menial chores usually assigned to the lower-ranking sizars were clearly incompatible with his view of his own self-worth.

However, in collegiate society, another parallel hierarchy co-existed (and at times conflicted with) the external social order: that of academic rank. Educational capital evidently could stand independently to economic capital here, and it is notable that during Elizabeth I's 1564 progress to Cambridge, the members of the university were hierarchically arranged according to their academic rather than social ranks in order to greet her:

The 5th of August, the Queenes Majestie in her Progress, came to the University of Cambridge, and was of all the students (being invested according to their degrees taken in the schooles) honorably and joyfully received in the King's College [...]²⁷⁶

Later on the same day, however, Elizabeth entered the college chapel accompanied by "all the other Ladies followed in their degrees"; in other words, since women could not study for academic qualifications, they reverted to the more conventional system of social stratification.²⁷⁷ This display of academic ceremony was a powerful reminder that, within the college walls at least, academic standing could trump social status. Worth, it seems, *could* triumph over birth.²⁷⁸

And for those from lower down the social order, the achievement of academic credentials arguably had the power to reconfigure their social status. We noted William Harrison's rather pointed remark that anyone holding a degree could call themselves a gentleman back in chapter 2, and for those able enough to pursue an academic career following their studies, even greater advancement was theoretically possible. The interlocutors in John Ferne's *Blazon of Gentry*,

²⁷⁶ John Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth* (London: John Nichols, 1823), i, 149.

²⁷⁷ Nichols, *Progresses*, i, 163.

²⁷⁸ However, the practice of conferring honorary degrees upon visiting noblemen amongst the Queen's retinue during these progresses did, of course, mean that the social order was reconstituted.

for instance, devote a considerable amount of time to discussing the comparative status of various kinds of higher-degree holders (e.g. Doctors of “Physick” and Law) when measured against that of a knight, the epitome of traditional, martially-grounded noble status.²⁷⁹ Of course, it is hard to believe that an Elizabethan readership would have actually ranked the Master of an Oxford or Cambridge college over and above someone like Philip Sidney or the Earl of Essex, the great neo-chivalric figures of the age, both of whom were invested with noble blood and honour that had been hard-won on the battlefield. But the fact that this debate was deemed to be worth having at all suggests that the alternate form of capital possessed by learned men was beginning to be recognised and valued during this period.

Certainly, Thomas Whythorne thought so when he rather churlishly commented upon the inflated views of self-worth that he saw as prevalent amongst scholars:

When they have taken degrees, the first year after the taking of them they do bear daggers in their sleeves to kill as many people as they do meet that be prouder than they be. And yet, for all that, they do kill nobody.²⁸⁰

Elsewhere, Whythorne reminds us again of the tension between birth and worth and the class divisions lurking beneath the surface of college life at Trinity College Cambridge. During the time he spent there as a private tutor to William Bromfield Jr., the son of a wealthy London merchant,²⁸¹ he became embroiled in a conflict with Bromfield’s college tutor. It is striking that Whythorne’s method of attack, as a professional tutor of minor gentry stock, was to point out that this particular tutor started his academic career there as an *obsecro* – that is, a

²⁷⁹ Ferne, *Blazon of Gentry*, 32-50.

²⁸⁰ Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 102. It is worth remembering, of course, that Whythorne didn’t take a degree during his time at Magdalen College, Oxford.

²⁸¹ Matriculated pensioner 1557/8, BA 1561/2; see W.W. Rouse Ball & J. A. Venn, eds. *Admissions to Trinity College, Cambridge*, ii (1546-1700) (London: Macmillan, 1913), 33.

poor student (or sizar) earning his keep by acting as a servant to wealthier ones. Whythorne records the following rather spiteful verse:

*Nothing is sharper than low things, when they by growth on high be brought
So none in pride and cruelty are like to those who rise of nought.*²⁸²

If this kind of ill-feeling was detectable between adult members of the college, it is likely that tensions existed within the student body too. If the collegiate environment represented a meritocracy in the intellectually gifted could prosper, regardless of their social rank, it follows that this could instigate tension, not least amongst elite students faced with the threat of lower-born students achieving intellectual equality or even superiority.²⁸³ This anxiety would have been particularly acute amongst those wealthy students who were actually trying to achieve a degree, since it was required that they participate in competitive displays of intellectual prowess – characterised by Rosemary O’Day as the “adversarial model of the formal disputation” – in which they would be pitted against lower-class students in a competitive, public arena.²⁸⁴

We saw in chapter 3 how alternative forms of capital could create conflicting hierarchies of status within noble households. But whilst the possession of cultural capital offered both Thomas Whythorne and John Danyel some scope for personal advancement, they nevertheless remained figures of servitude there. The formalised academic hierarchy of the university, however, arguably facilitated real, institutionally endorsed advancement – at least whilst one remained within the confines of the academic world. As Hilde de Ridder-Symoens has usefully summarised, the early modern college appeared as a community of equals to the outside world; inside, class divisions remained

²⁸² Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 103. This is apparently a proverb rather than a verse of Whythorne’s own. A variant version appears in the verse miscellany of cathedral singingman John Lilliat (?1590s); see Doughtie, ed. *Liber Lilliati*, 43.

²⁸³ Elizabeth Hanson, “Fellow Students: Hamlet, Horatio, and the Early Modern University,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62 (2011): 205-29, esp. 210-19.

²⁸⁴ Rosemary O’Day, *Education and Society, 1500-1800: The social foundations of education in early modern Britain* (London: Longman, 1982), 112. On the disputation, also see William Costello, *The Scholastic Curriculum at Early Seventeenth-Century Cambridge* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 15-31.

intact to some extent, but it still remained an enormously fertile area of opportunity for those from poorer backgrounds.²⁸⁵ McConica's notion of a divided "double society" within college walls may be grounded in cold reality, but does not take into account the ways in which the conventional social order could be subverted by academic achievement. Nor does it acknowledge the permeability of boundaries between social classes and the ways in which performative markers of status (such as musical skills) could help to bridge that divide.²⁸⁶

Music-making in the colleges

It has long been recognised that university colleges were important sites of musical activity during this period, with music present in four discrete spheres of practice. For undergraduate students, the purely theoretical study of music (*musica speculativa*, as a branch of mathematics) was a mandatory part of the curriculum studied for the BA degree.²⁸⁷ Secondly, both universities had awarded BMus and DMus degrees since the fifteenth century, although this was done on an almost honorary basis, following a lengthy period of external study and the submission of a composition as an examination piece. In the period covered by this study, the BMus degree was mostly awarded to composer-organists, usually with Chapel Royal connections (although John Dowland, who claimed to be "Bachelor of Musicke in both the Universities", is an important

²⁸⁵ de Ridder-Symoens, "Rich Men, Poor Men", 173-75. See also James McConica, "Scholars and Commoners in Renaissance Oxford," in *The University in Society, i: Oxford and Cambridge from the 14th to the Early 19th Century*, ed. Lawrence Stone (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 175.

²⁸⁶ McConica, "Scholars and Commoners", 176.

²⁸⁷ For useful overviews of the Oxford and Cambridge BA curricula, see Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge in Transition*, 85-94; J. M. Fletcher, "The Faculty of the Arts," in *The Collegiate University*, ed. McConica, 157-99. On the music-specific components, see Nan Cooke Carpenter, *Music in the Medieval and Renaissance Universities* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958; repr. New York: Da Capo Press, 1972), 153-210; John Caldwell, "Music in the Faculty of the Arts," in *The Collegiate University*, ed. McConica, 201-12; P. M. Gouk, "Music," in *Seventeenth-century Oxford, The History of the University of Oxford iv*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 621-40.

exception).²⁸⁸ Crucially, there was no residency requirement for those undertaking the BMus degree, whereas BA students were required to attend a prescribed number of lectures and participate in formal disputations throughout their course of study.²⁸⁹

A third area of musical practice was centred around everyday worship in collegiate establishments, since many supported choral foundations in which both boy choristers and professional singingmen were trained and employed.²⁹⁰ These institutions formed an important part of collegiate identity just as, even today, many of these college's reputations depend in some part upon the success of their choirs. Finally, musical activities also offered extracurricular entertainment to students, particularly those from wealthy backgrounds who could afford tuition and equipment.²⁹¹ It was quite common among adolescent "gentlemen" to pursue instrumental or singing lessons whilst at university, just as it was to spend time reading and writing verse, learning to dance, and staging and watching dramatic productions.

However, these contrasting areas of musical practice have tended to be explored independently of one another; for instance, the musical provision in college chapels is usually worked into broader narratives concerning the stylistic development of music in cathedrals and other large ecclesiastical institutions.²⁹² But by treating this apart from the recreational music-making

²⁸⁸ Dowland, *First Booke of Songes*, title page.

²⁸⁹ On BMus degrees, see Caldwell, "Music in the Faculty of Arts", 206-08; Gouk, "Music", 622-24.

²⁹⁰ Important studies include Frank Ll. Harrison, *Music in Medieval Britain* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958); Peter Le Huray, *Music and the Reformation in England 1549-1660* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1967); Hugh Benham, *Latin Church Music in England, 1460-1575* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1977)

²⁹¹ On music-making in the universities, see Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, 19-27; Hulse "Musical Patronage", 156-64.

²⁹² And, even within the colleges, there is also a tendency to treat college choirs as insular bodies rather than interacting with the rest of the institution. On this point, see Beth Anne Lee-De Amici, "Academic Colleges in the Oxford Community, 1400-1560," in *Music and Musicians in Renaissance Cities and Towns*, ed. Fiona Kisby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 94-105. Lee-De Amici shows how the practice of

going on within the same institutions, it easy to overlook the fact that these spheres of practice could overlap – with professional singers acquiring instrumental skills, for instance – and probably involved some of the same people.²⁹³ This historiographical trend is not just down to a slavish observance of sub-disciplinary boundaries, I suspect, but also due to the nature of the surviving evidence. A number of musical sources can be connected to chapel-based music-making during this period, and professional musical institutions also tend to leave administrative paper-trails from which detailed information about staff membership and their remuneration can be gleaned. Yet for informal recreational activities, we are largely reliant upon fleeting references in financial accounts and in descriptive sources such as letters, autobiographical writing and diaries. There is not much overlap in this polarisation of the evidence but, in what follows, I have endeavoured to provide a more holistic view of collegiate musical life than has previously been attempted. In doing so, I have drawn upon evidence from various Oxford and Cambridge colleges because, whilst mindful of their individual differences (e.g. some favoured intakes from particular geographical or religious backgrounds) and localised idiosyncrasies, they shared a common demographic and educational ethos. In treating them as a unified collective, I have followed the lead of the Elizabethan clergyman William Harrison, who concluded that:

There is so great equalitie betweene these two universities [...] that they seeme to be the bodie of one well ordered common wealth, onlie divided by distance of place, and not in freendlie consent and orders. In speaking therefore of the one, I can not but describe the other; and in commendation of the first, I can not but extoll the latter [...]²⁹⁴

giving oblations enabled the college members to experience one another's choral services, functioning as a form of institutional display and interaction.

²⁹³ On this latter point, see Ian Harwood, "A Lecture in Musick, with the Practice thereof by Instrument in the Common Schooles', Mathew Holmes and Music at Oxford University c.1588-1627," *The Lute* 45 (2005): 1-70.

²⁹⁴ Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 149.

Tracing musical practices

It is clear that well-heeled students frequently sought out musical entertainment, as numerous references to instruments, lessons and other musical items (strings, books, etc.) appear in students' financial accounts and inventories. For instance, a 1594 inventory entitled "A note of such things as Mr Thomas Thynne left at Oxenforde" reveals some of the luxury items enjoyed by this young aristocrat whilst studying away from home. Besides listing "a lute & a lute booke", it provides detailed information about his reading which included classical Latin literature, Chaucer and more recent works by Sidney, Spenser, and Samuel Daniel.²⁹⁵ Elsewhere, the personal accounts of John Pulteney record his payments for lute lessons whilst studying at Lincoln College, Oxford in 1601,²⁹⁶ and the account-books of John Newdigate (1602-42) and Richard Newdigate (1602-78), sons of a prominent Warwickshire gentleman, shed light on the period they spent at Trinity College, Oxford (from 1618) and in London at the Inns of Court (early 1620s). Neither son actually completed a formal degree course but both nevertheless had a lot of fun, and their accounts detail almost every aspect of their expenditure including payments for lute and viol lessons, repairs and replacement strings.²⁹⁷ At almost exactly the same time, William Freke, son of Dorset gentleman Sir Thomas Freke, was residing at St. Mary Hall, a hall affiliated with Oriel College, Oxford. During his three-year stay (1619-22), he too made frequent payments for viol lessons, strings, and repairs.²⁹⁸

The surviving account-books compiled by college tutors (who were acting *in loco parentis*) also reveal a good deal about the musical interests of their students. For example, the accounts of Joseph Mede (a biblical scholar, lecturer in Greek, and a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge from 1613) contain a wealth of information for the period 1613 to 1637 including regular payments from several students to an unnamed instrumental teacher (giving mainly viol

²⁹⁵ Longleat, Thynne papers, Box 32 (= vol. lxxix), f.22.

²⁹⁶ London, The National Archives, State Papers 46/60, f.118.

²⁹⁷ Vivienne Larminie, ed., "The Undergraduate Account Book of John and Richard Newdigate, 1618-1621," *Camden Miscellany* 30, 4th ser., 39 (1990), *passim*.

²⁹⁸ G. W. Prothero, "A seventeenth-century account book," *The English Historical Review* 7, no. 25 (January 1892): 88-102.

lessons for a flat fee of 6s 8d per month).²⁹⁹ The entries relating to Hammond le Strange (admitted as a Fellow-Commoner on 16 October 1623) give a flavour of the musical culture that Mede was overseeing during his time at Christ's.³⁰⁰ Besides monthly payments to this teacher, le Strange also spent 6d on 'a singing book', 3s on 'a violl-book', and purchased lute strings (4 knots for a shilling) and 'Davids Psalmes in 4 parts' (at the cost of 2s 6d).³⁰¹ The latter purchase, probably a copy of Richard Alison's *Psalmes of David in Metre* (1599), would have enabled him to try out both his lute-playing and his singing skills, either in an ensemble setting or perhaps in self-accompanied song. There was probably a strong extra-curricular musical culture at Christ's, extending well beyond those activities traceable through Mede's accounts. For instance, Iain Fenlon has suggested that Michael Honnywood, later Dean of Lincoln Cathedral and a voracious collector of music books, formed his interests whilst a student there.³⁰²

The letters of the Oxford antiquary Brian Twyne shed interesting light on his student days at Corpus Christi College in the 1590s and early 1600s. It is clear that recreational music-making was important to him during his time there; in one letter (dated 22 February 1602) he asks his father whether he has received the lute-strings he had sent (before asking for more money whilst waiting to be elected to a fellowship), and he also reveals something of the interaction between the college students and the wider music trade in Oxford. In a letter of 19 March 1602 he wrote:

The stringes which you sent me are very good I thank you, but I never thought my lute had beene worthy of so good, untill y^e other day a certaine lute maker in Oxford laide me down for my lute 5^l 10^s halfe in

²⁹⁹ Cambridge, Christ's College, T.II.1-3.

³⁰⁰ See John Peile, *Biographical Register of Christ's College 1505-1905* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), i, 355.

³⁰¹ Christ's College, T.II.2, ff. 121v-124v.

³⁰² Iain Fenlon, "Michael Honnywood's Music Books," in *Sundry Sorts of Music Books: Essays on the British Library Collections presented to O. W. Neighbour on his 70th birthday*, eds. Chris Banks, Arthur Searle & Malcolm Turner (London: British Library, 1993) 183-200.

silver and halfe in gold and swore unto me y^t if I would take it he would get 16^s by the bargaine, and saith y^t there is not forty of such lutes in Englande.³⁰³

It is interesting to note this as evidence of colleges acting as focal points for the local music trade – as “one-stop shops” where instruments, lessons and other accessories could be purchased, involving clients and providers from across the entire college hierarchy. Similarly, Michael Fleming has observed that Robert Mallet (d.1612), manciple at St Edmund Hall, Oxford (i.e. supplier of provisions/building superintendent) owned numerous plucked instruments and woodworking tools according to his probate inventory. It seems likely that he was also operating as an on-site instrument-maker and repairer.³⁰⁴

Motivations: i) private leisure

Why might an undergraduate student study music-making in the first place? Henry Howard, the future Earl of Northampton who was educated at King's College, Cambridge tells us a little about his motivations in an undated letter “from Cambrydg this present Monday”. Writing to Michael Hicke (secretary to William Cecil in London and another Cambridge alumnus), he asks him to recommend a lute teacher:

[...] as I am nowe of late very well dysposed to bestowe some ydell time uppon the lute I though good to request you that yf you canne heare of any commendyde for that qualyty and bente to serve that you wyll send hym to mee whear he shall fynde entertayment [...]³⁰⁵

³⁰³ H. G. S. “Some Correspondence of Brian Twyne: Part III,” *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 5, no. 58 (1927): 269-72.

³⁰⁴ Michael Fleming, “Some Points Arising from a survey of wills and inventories,” *Galpin Society Journal* 53 (2000), 301-11 (at 302-3).

³⁰⁵ Educated initially at King's College (MA, 1566), he also studied civil law at Trinity Hall and later taught as Reader of Rhetoric at Cambridge until at least 1569 – probably the only nobleman to teach at either university; London, British Library, Lansdowne MS 109, no. 51, f. 116r; cited in John Harley, *The World of William Byrd: Musicians, Merchants and Magnates* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 174.

It was not simply a case of filling up some spare time, but also a matter of doing it constructively and fruitfully (in itself a marker of elite identity). Writing of his time as an undergraduate at University College Oxford during the 1590s, Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury sheds light on this theme:

During this tyme of living in the University or at home [...] I attained also to sing my part at first sight in Musicke, and to play on the Lute with very litle or almost noe teaching [so] that I might entertaine my selfe at home and together refresh my mynde after my studyes to which I was exceedingly inclined, and that I might not neede the company of younge men in whome I observed in those tymes much ill example and deboist [= debauchery].³⁰⁶

This passage is explored in more detail in chapter 6, but what interests us here is his reassertion of the Aristotelian view of music as a suitable solitary activity for virtuous members of the elite classes. Here, music functions as a moral preservative and is prescribed as an antidote to youthful debauchery. The threat of debasement and moral corruption whilst away from home at university was a very real one in early modern thought; for instance, Alexandra Shepard has explored ritualised violence amongst English students, often performed to emphasise collegiate rivalry and for stressing social divisions within the student body.³⁰⁷ William Martyn went as far as publishing a didactic behaviour manual, written for a son about to depart for Oxford, in a bid to keep him out of trouble.³⁰⁸

ii) Social interaction

But besides keeping the respectable young student quietly occupied in his chamber, music-making was also an inherently social practice, as Cherbury's preoccupation with sight-singing (which only becomes important when you are performing amongst others) reveals. Thus music was, once again, an important force for social cohesion, offering one way in which social groups could define

³⁰⁶ *The Life of Edward, First Lord Herbert of Cherbury, written by himself*, ed. J. M. Shuttleworth (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 16-17.

³⁰⁷ Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 96-126.

³⁰⁸ William Martyn, *Youths Instruction* (London: Printed by John Beale, 1612)

themselves through their shared interests and displays of erudition. Nowhere was this better (or more famously) expressed than in the opening pages of Thomas Morley's *Plaine and easie introduction to practycall musicke* (1597), as we saw in chapter 2. Morley made it very clear that the ability to participate in communal music-making was an important social skill, but the very end of his treatise is equally notable since the two scholars reveal then to their master that they are travelling to university the following day:

Tomorrow we must be busied making our provision for our journey to the University so that we cannot possible see you again before our departure, therefore we must at this time both take our leave of you and entreat you that at every convenient occasion and your leisure time you will let us hear from you.³⁰⁹

In other words, they vow to stay in touch, perhaps mindful of the fact that they might need a music tutor again once they get there. Morley's broader message to his readership is very clear; you need musical skills if you are to mix well, whether in after-dinner madrigal-singing sessions in a well-to-do household or whilst away at university.

Certainly, there is direct evidence of these kinds of sociable part-singing taking place within collegiate society. A payment record dated 1596 describes John Hilton, organist and master of choristers at Trinity College Cambridge, buying "singing books of Mr Morley's delivered to Mr Hylton for the Colledge".³¹⁰ And the probate inventory of Godwin Walsall, a pensioner at Corpus Christi College in 1598 (BA, 1601/2; MA, 1605) and later fellow and (probably) Hebrew lecturer at Pembroke College, includes a lute in a case and copies of "Dowlandes songs in 2 volumes. sticht" and "benetes songs in 4. partes. 4°

³⁰⁹ Morley, *Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 182.

³¹⁰ Cited in Ian Payne, "Instrumental Music at Trinity College, Cambridge, c.1594-c.1615: Archival and biographical evidence," *Music & Letters* 68 (1987): 131. These were probably copies of Morley's *First booke of balletts to five voyces* (London: Thomas East, 1595)

sticht”.³¹¹ Interestingly, the accounts of Samuel Walsall, his brother and executor, reveal that the Dowland volume was one of a number of volumes that he had on loan from one “Mr Hall” at the time of his death, showing how books were circulating amongst members of the college communities, as part of the currency of social exchange there.³¹²

Music for all?

Thus far, I have focused largely on the accounts and letters of the social elite, the gentleman amateurs who learnt music whilst at college. But it was not just the idle rich that made music in this environment, or just the BA students for that matter. Music-making appealed to men of all ranks (academically and economically), ages, and across numerous fields of academic specialism.

i) Choristers

Musical skills offered a route into academic life for poor men – potentially providing a pathway towards degree-holding status and the various kinds of social and professional advancement associated with that. Certainly, a number of famous scholars began their university careers as choristers, most notably the Elizabethan antiquarian William Camden. According to Anthony Wood, Camden was the son of an artisan painter-stainer and was sent to Magdalen College School in 1566 “in the condition of a Chorister or Servitour”.³¹³ As it happens, the choral institution at Magdalen had something of a reputation as an outreach project for poorer scholars, although Camden later missed out on a place as a “demy” (i.e. a sizar) in the college proper and so moved across town to Broadgates Hall.³¹⁴

³¹¹ E. S. Leedham-Green, *Books in Cambridge Inventories: Book-lists from Vice-Chancellor's Court Probate Inventories in the Tudor and Stuart periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), i, 557-59. The Dowland book cannot be identified specifically, but the John Bennet volume was probably his *Madrigalls to fowre voyces*, (London, 1599).

³¹² Leedham-Green, *Cambridge Inventories*, i, 557.

³¹³ Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses* (London: for Tho[mas] Bennet, 1691), 408.

³¹⁴ On this aspect of Magdalen's reputation, see McConica, “Scholars and Commoners”, 170.

Elsewhere, Helen Marsh Jeffries' work on Corpus Christi College, Oxford reveals how sixteenth-century choristers could progress into the undergraduate ranks whilst academic fellows were often needed to sing in the chapel alongside the professional singers.³¹⁵ Overall, there is plenty of evidence that choristers and professional singers could use their employment as a route further into collegiate life, transferring to student status later on and even advancing to become a member of academic staff. The Oxford philosopher John Case (Fellow of St John's College and author of a tract on music) is a particularly striking example, starting his career as a chorister at Christ Church but ending up as a renowned intellectual figure whose fame stretched well beyond the confines of the university.³¹⁶

And, most notably, choristers were not only taught to sing but to play the keyboard, plucked instruments, and to perform in consorts. Michael Fleming has noted the 1602 probate inventory of John Mathew, singingman at Christ Church, Oxford, which lists music books, viols, virginals, and no fewer than eleven lutes.³¹⁷ It seems probable that these items were used for training the choristers at Christ Church and, as Ian Harwood has shown, the important collection of solo lute and consort music manuscripts copied by Mathew Holmes was certainly used in this way until his departure in 1597.³¹⁸ The Holmes manuscripts also contain numerous pieces for mixed consort by Richard Reade (BMus, 1592), Yeoman Beedle of the Law Faculty (a senior administrative position), again showing how men from different walks of university life were brought together by their music-making. But the most striking aspect of the Holmes manuscripts is that the solo lute and mixed consort repertoire they contain is of exactly the same type as that found in

³¹⁵ Jeffries, "But a Musician'," 28-37.

³¹⁶ John Case, *Apologia Musices* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1588). The anonymous *The Praise of Music* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1586) is no longer thought to be Case's work; see J. W. Binns, *Intellectual Culture in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: The Latin Writings of the Age* (n.p: Francis Cairns, 1990), 436-43.

³¹⁷ Fleming, "Some Points arising," 301.

³¹⁸ Ian Harwood, "The Origins of the Cambridge Lute Manuscripts," *Lute Society Journal* 5 (1963): 32-48; also Harwood, "A Lecture in Musick".

contemporaneous collections from noble and gentry households. The use of this common repertory to train the choristers is a further indication of how musical learning could bridge the divide between professional and amateur practitioners (and, by implication, between high and low social status).

ii) Academics

However, musical skills were not simply the domain of the young and poor scholars; there is plenty of evidence of high-ranking scholars pursuing musical interests. Elisabeth Leedham-Green's extensive work on the probate inventories of university men has revealed a good deal about reading habits as well as information about the possession of musical books and instruments across the breadth of the academic hierarchy. For instance, the 1591 probate inventory of Thomas Lorkin, Regius Professor of Physick at Cambridge from 1564-91, lists a number of instruments including a pair of virginals, a lute and two gitterns.³¹⁹ His huge personal library, much of it later bequeathed to the University Library, unsurprisingly contained numerous medical texts but also included lots of English literature and poetry, plus a couple of musical items: 'the psalmes in 4 parts' valued at 16d and 'a cittarn booke' worth just a penny.

The inventory of Andrew Perne (?1519-1589) demonstrates that musical interests were pursued by those at the very top of the academic hierarchy. Highlights of Perne's long and illustrious career included five stints as vice-chancellor of Cambridge University plus the mastership of Peterhouse from 1554.³²⁰ Perne owned a lute with a case, a bandora, and "a wind instrument of box, broken". In his inventory (18 May 1589), he bequeathed a large number of books from his personal library to Peterhouse including "A sett of songe books 4o", "fabri musica 4o", "compendium musices 4o" (by Coclico), "the praise of musicke thrise 8o", and "a song boke ruled 4o".³²¹ What is particularly striking here is that, besides instruments and songbooks for recreational music-making, Perne also studied Latin treatises on music and *The Praise of Music*, a philosophical tract in defence of music (formerly attributed to Dr John Case). As one would expect of a man of his intellectual standing, his interest in music

³¹⁹ Leedham-Green, *Cambridge Inventories*, i, 492-508.

³²⁰ *ibid.*, i, 419-79.

³²¹ *ibid.*, i, 469.

went well beyond simply learning to play and sing, encompassing the philosophical and theoretical traditions that underpinned the subject as well.³²²

Taken together, these are important reminders that music formed one part of a suite of intellectual interests commonly explored by learned men. Music was enjoyed by men at all levels of the academic hierarchy (from sizar to vice-chancellors) and by those from across all faculties of study. Although Penelope Gouk has explored significant links between musical circles and the practitioners of experimental science later on in seventeenth-century Oxford, there is substantial evidence of cross-faculty interest in music stretching back well into the sixteenth century.³²³

Music and academic prestige

In the light of this, it is also significant that the Holmes manuscripts include a number of works dedicated to prominent academics. This underlines the level of prestige that famous university men enjoyed, as they were being honoured in exactly the same way that composers flattered high-ranking members of the nobility: through the dedication of a personalised pavan or a galliard, usually in an attempt to seek their preferment or patronage. The best-known example is probably John Dowland's "Do[ctor] Cases Paven",³²⁴ but Holmes also copied a work by Anthony Holborne that honoured Dr Nicholas Bond of Magdalen College, Oxford³²⁵ and a piece by Richard Reade dedicated to the Dean of

³²² It is also interesting to note that Thomas Campion was a student at Peterhouse between 1581-85 and thus in the same musical orbit as Perne. Although I am not aware of direct evidence of Campion's musical activities whilst in Cambridge – his lute-song publications appeared in the early 1600s, during which time he also studied medicine at the University of Caen (1605) – it seems likely that his musical interests would have been formed much earlier.

³²³ See Penelope Gouk, *Music, Science and Natural Magic in Seventeenth Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), esp. chap. 2. For more on the range of people pursuing musical interests in sixteenth-century Oxford (including students, academics, and clergymen), see Caldwell, "Music in the Faculty of Arts", 208 n.5.

³²⁴ Cambridge University Library, Dd.2.11, f.14v

³²⁵ Cambridge University Library, Dd.5.78.3, f.5v ("Mr D[r] Bonds Galliarde")

Christ Church, Dr. William James.³²⁶ Being honoured in this way – just as Dowland and others had dedicated works to noble patrons first in manuscript and later in print – is another indication of the power of educational capital. Since the professoriate was largely made up from the ranks of the lower middle classes, this reveals the degree of social advancement that the possession of intellectual capital could open up.³²⁷

And it should be stressed that music could, in itself, represent a legitimate branch of the learning that these men displayed. In this way, the multivalent conceptions of “music” we noted in chapter 2 could actually increase its effectiveness as a pathway to social advancement. Music had a utilitarian, everyday function, to be sure, but it was also admissible as a form of specialised knowledge, not to mention its advantageous status as an elite leisure practice. It provided a means of access to higher education to poorer students and provided an area of common ground across all ranks of the college hierarchy. Whilst it would undoubtedly be overstating things to say that *everyone* in a college environment would have been interested in music-making, it would certainly have been part of the fabric of their daily lives (if only through enforced exposure during chapel services), and musical leisure activities were evidently common enough that one Oxford coachman even factored in the transportation of instruments home for the vacation periods when devising his tariff. A diary entry for 16 December 1626 by the Oxford divine Thomas Crosfield includes “a convocation for y^e carriers”:

4d for each person in the waggon, lesse for children: schollars to be first served: lutes virginalls – as they can agree. deliver letters & things wthin a day.³²⁸

³²⁶ Cambridge University Library, Dd. 3.18, f.12r (“Mr Dr James[,] Dean of Christ Church his paven”)

³²⁷ On the social standing of the professoriate, see Vandermeesch, “Teachers”, 245-52, including examples of Continental professors actually being ennobled in recognition of their distinguished academic service (249).

³²⁸ *The Diary of Thomas Crosfield M.A., B.D. Fellow of Queen’s College Oxford*, ed. Frederick S. Boas (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), 7.

Repertory

Despite the plentiful evidence for collegiate music-making, much less is known about what was actually played by these enthusiasts. Although we have noted the ownership and circulation of some printed music books, there are very few manuscript musical sources indeed that can be firmly connected with college circles. Important exceptions include a set of partbooks (dated 1581) that were compiled by Robert Dow whilst studying law at All Souls College, Oxford.³²⁹ These contain instrumental pieces, consort songs, anthems and motets, suitable for part-singing and consort-playing. The Bacchanalian Latin tag on the title page (“Vinum et Musica Laetificant Cordas”) conjures up images of convivial, wine-sodden musical gatherings, despite the rather sober counterpoint of much of the music collected here.³³⁰

Another musical source probably connected with collegiate life is British Library Add. MS 36526 A, a single bass partbook containing the inscription “Joseph Palmer of Cropredy”. Christopher Goodwin has identified this man as a miller’s son from Cropredy (Oxon.) who matriculated as a sizar at Christ’s College, Cambridge in 1597/8 (BA, 1600/1; MA, 1604) before returning to his home parish as a minister.³³¹ If Goodwin is correct, then this source provides a rare insight into the musical activities at Christ’s in the decades before Joseph Mede’s tenure there. It contains a selection of retrospective English music (dating back to the 1560s), theoretical materials (including a *gamut* and sol-fa instructions), and parts copied directly from Dowland’s *First Booke of Songes* (1597) and Morley’s *Consort Lessons* (1599). This is important evidence of the music-collecting practices prevalent amongst university students, notably even amongst poorer scholars who were using their university education as a form of professional training.

³²⁹ See David Mateer, “Oxford, Christ Church music MSS 984-8: an index and commentary,” *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 20 (1986-7), 1-18. For a facsimile edition, see John Milsom, ed. *The Dow Partbooks: Oxford, Christ Church Mus. 984-988* (Oxford: DIAMM, 2010)

³³⁰ “Wine and music gladden the strings (!)” A variant of this Latin phrase also appears on the title page to *Schele*, a lutebook with connections to Leiden University circles.

³³¹ Christopher Goodwin, private e-mail communication (10 January 2012).

Another unusually detailed manuscript with Cambridge connections is the keyboard book of Clement Matchett (b.1593), the son of a Norwich schoolmaster admitted as a scholar to Caius College in 1609. Matchett's modestly-sized anthology contains works by Byrd, Bull and Wilbye and is particularly noteworthy since each individual piece is recorded with the date on which it was copied.³³² This collection was evidently compiled over the course of a couple of weeks in 1612 (13-25 August) and suggests that the systematic compilation of this manuscript was the source of some pride for this young man – an example of a kind of scholarly labour to which we shall return later.

Lute sources

Given the fondness for lute-playing amongst English university men, it is curious that hardly any of the extant sources of English lute music can be connected with these environments. (Conversely, a significant number of surviving continental lute manuscripts were compiled by students, as Peter Kiraly has pointed out,³³³ and recent work on Hans Newsidler has shown that almost all extant copies of the printed Newsidler lute volumes can be traced back to university men.)³³⁴ It is important to bear in mind that present-day possession of a lute source by a college library is not necessarily indicative of a university provenance. The Mathew Holmes manuscripts, of course, are indisputably connected with Christ Church, Oxford, but as Ian Harwood has shown in a number of important articles, they seem to have been used in the

³³² Thurston Dart, ed. *Clement Matchett's Virginal Book (1612)* (London: Stainer & Bell, n.d.)

³³³ See Peter Király, "Einige Beobachtungen und Anmerkungen über Lautenmusikquellen, Lautenisten und Amateure im 16. und frühen 17. Jahrhundert," *Die Laute* 1 (1997): 24-44; *idem.*, "Studentisches Lautenspiel im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert – Eine Betrachtung mit Hinblick auf Leipzig," in *600 Jahre Musik an der Universität Leipzig*, ed. Eszter Fontana (Halle: Verlag Janos, 2010), 131-141; Klaus-Peter Koch, "Studentischen Lauten- und Claviertabulaturen im Ostseerraum des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts und ihre Bedeutung für die Vermittlung eines europäischen Repertoires," in *Universität und Musik in Ostseeraum*, eds. Ekkehard Ochs, Peter Tenhaef, Walter Werbeck & Lutz Winkler (Berlin: Franke & Timme, 2009), 117-31.

³³⁴ Joachim Lüdtke, "Hans Newsidler in Nuremberg," *Journal of the Lute Society of America* 44 (2011): 100-2.

training of professional musicians and choristers there.³³⁵ For evidence of recreational music-making within the student body, however, there is very little to go on. For instance, British Library Add. MS 6402 appears to be connected with Balliol College, Oxford, since this fragmentary source has the words “Baliol Coll: Statutes” written underneath the music on the back of one of its sheets. However, this could merely indicate the frugal re-use of unrelated scrap paper, something which certainly appears to be the case with Cambridge, Trinity College MS O.16.2. The fact that this source contains lists of the members of Trinity College Cambridge has led some scholars to assume a Trinity provenance. However, these lists post-date the lute music (c.1630) by some time, and the fact that they are copied over it in places suggests that a partially-filled lutebook had been purchased as a scrap notebook.³³⁶

Thus, I have chosen to focus the remainder of this chapter around the only substantial English lute source with a secure university provenance, the so-called Dallis lutebook. This source can be firmly connected to Trinity College, Cambridge c.1583 and more broadly contextualised through a fortunate confluence of surviving source materials relating to that college from the period c.1560-c.1600. When considered alongside the household and professional anthologies that form most of the corpus of surviving English lute manuscripts, the Dallis lutebook has usually been regarded as something of an oddity by scholars – a curiously retrospective anthology with an unusually cosmopolitan set of musical contents. But when re-read within the context of the peculiar collegiate environment that shaped its production, it emerges as a key witness to the kinds of musical practices being undertaken in this social setting.

The Dallis lutebook and music-making at Trinity College, Cambridge c.1580

Unusually for an Elizabethan music manuscript, the genesis of the Dallis lutebook can be pinpointed with some accuracy. Although the student who compiled it remains frustratingly unidentified, he wrote the following on p.12:

³³⁵ It is, however, difficult to know which of these sources were compiled wholly or partially after Holmes left Christ Church for Westminster Abbey in 1597.

³³⁶ This point was made in Spring, “The Lute in England and Scotland”, ii, 21-22.

*Incepi Nonis Augusti praeceptore Mro Thoma[s] Dallis.
Cantabrigiae Anno 1583.*

I began on August 9 with Mr Thomas Dallis as my preceptor.
Cambridge 1583.

This points to Trinity College, Cambridge as the likely place of compilation since Dallis was Master of Choristers there at Midsummer 1580.³³⁷ Beyond this, his Trinity connections are less clearly defined, but Thomas Whythorne associated him with the college when mentioning him on the “musical scrap”, a post-1592 slip inserted into his manuscript autobiography.³³⁸ And a surviving *supplicat* dated 7 June 1594 shows that the lutenist-composer Edward Johnson requested Dallis as one of the examiners for his BMus degree, suggesting not only that he was still in Cambridge but also that he had now increased his standing in academic circles.³³⁹ Indeed, Dallis might well have taken the career pathway discussed earlier in this chapter; from his position as a professional musician in a collegiate foundation, he furthered his career along academic lines (although the exact nature of his employment remains unknown). The student under his tutelage, on the other hand, cannot be identified, although John Ward was persuaded that he was a Dutch-speaker living in Cambridge (due to the presence of Dutch-texted works in the manuscript).³⁴⁰ However, no obvious candidate is suggested by the Trinity admission registers and, if this was an itinerant student from overseas, there is little hope of identifying him now.

³³⁷ See Cambridge, Trinity College Archives, Senior Bursar’s Account, ff. 347v-348r; cited in Payne, *The Provision and Practice of Sacred Music at Cambridge Colleges and Selected Cathedrals, c.1547-c.1646* (New York: Garland, 1993), 280.

³³⁸ Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 1961 ed., 302.

³³⁹ Cambridge University Archives, Supplicats (1593/4), cited in Payne, *Provision and Practice*, 280.

³⁴⁰ Ward, “Lute Books of Trinity College, Dublin: I,” 22.

Music at Trinity College

Trinity was one of the largest and wealthiest colleges in Elizabethan Cambridge, with a rich musical culture and well-funded choral foundation that has been documented extensively by Ian Payne.³⁴¹ The early Elizabethan statutes of the college (1560) stated that a lecturer should be appointed to teach all four areas of the *quadrivium* (geometry, arithmetic, logic, music); in other words, all undergraduates studying for the BA would be lectured on music as a branch of mathematical study.³⁴² The statutes also outlined the provision for the adjoining chapel, which included four priests, six lay clerks, ten choristers, and a Master of Choristers (whose duties included teaching them and playing the organ). Payne's exhaustive research has shown how viols were also used in the chapel by the musicians (and presumably for recreational use too); for instance, John Hilton, the organist appointed late in 1593 or early 1594, received payments for lute and viol strings in the late 1590s and early 1600s.³⁴³ A lively musical culture prevailed in other areas of college life too; the presence of trumpeters, the waits and other noisy civic musicians seems to have been a regular occurrence.³⁴⁴ The frequent dramatic productions within the college would undoubtedly have featured musical contributions too, both from visiting professionals and student participants.³⁴⁵

It is much harder to uncover the practices of amateur student musicians at Trinity, but we find traces in the extant account-books (1570-76) of John Whitgift, then master of the college and later Archbishop of Canterbury. Like Joseph Mede at Christ's College a few decades later, Whitgift had a duty of care to his students that extended far beyond simply teaching them. He acted as a financial mediator, receiving money from their parents upon their arrival and

³⁴¹ See Payne, "The musical establishment at Trinity College"; *idem*, "Instrumental Music at Trinity"; *idem*, "British Library Add. MSS 30826-28: A set of part-books from Trinity College, Cambridge?" *Chelys* 17 (1988): 3-15; *idem*, *Provision and Practice*.

³⁴² Carpenter, *Music in the Medieval and Renaissance Universities*, 190.

³⁴³ Payne, "Instrumental Music at Trinity," 138-39.

³⁴⁴ See Alan H. Nelson, *Records of Early English Drama: Cambridge* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), i, *passim*.

³⁴⁵ On drama at Trinity, see Alan H. Nelson, *Early Cambridge Theatres: college, university and town stages 1464-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 38-60.

during meetings with them in London, and scrupulously recorded how this money was spent.³⁴⁶ Whitgift's accounts make fascinating reading, revealing payments for matriculation fees and everyday necessities such as food, candles, clothing and shoes, coal, and wood. They also shed light on educational expenditure, detailing the costs of stationery and books,³⁴⁷ and on trivial items and entertainment – including dentistry bills, payments to barbers and tailors, purchases of mousetraps, and payments to their servants and sizers.

In amongst this, there are some payments to dancing teachers and for musical costs, such as an entry for 3s in May 1571 concerning Matthew Sutcliffe (1550-1629?) and his brother Luke, for “teaching on them to sing” (3s).³⁴⁸ The musical pursuits of the elder Sutcliffe brother are of particular interest here. A future Dean of Exeter, Matthew was admitted to Trinity as a scholar on 30 April 1568, having previously spent a couple of years at Peterhouse. He graduated BA at Trinity in 1571 and was admitted a minor fellow on 27 September 1572, before securing an MA and being elected as a major fellow in 1584. Although he studied law and was awarded the degree of LLD in 1581, he was a man of wide and varied interests, being appointed *Lector Mathematicus* at Trinity in 1579. In other words, he was the man responsible for teaching the “music” component of the BA curriculum to undergraduate students and, given the timing of his appointment, it seems likely that he would have taught this to the young student who compiled the Dallis lutebook.

Another of Whitgift's students was George Clifford (1558-1605), 3rd Earl of Cumberland, who arrived at Trinity in 1571 and graduated MA in 1576. His expenditure included a payment of 10 shillings on 9 May 1571 for “a githern lute”.³⁴⁹ Elsewhere, there is further evidence of well-off students pursuing

³⁴⁶ Excerpted in S. R. Maitland, “Archbishop Whitgift's College Pupils,” *The British Magazine* 32 (1847): 361-79, 508-28, 650-56; *The British Magazine* 33 (1848): 17-31, 444-63.

³⁴⁷ For identifications, see Philip Gaskell, “Books bought by Whitgift's pupils in the 1570s,” *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 7 (1979): 284-93.

³⁴⁸ Maitland, “Whitgift,” (1847), 654.

³⁴⁹ Maitland, “Whitgift,” (1848), 19.

musical interests; the probate inventory of Nicholas Sharpen (7 April 1576) includes “a lute booke” amongst almost 100 other non-musical volumes. Sharpen is yet another example of a musical student who then stayed on to pursue an academic career of sorts; he matriculated as a pensioner in 1566, graduating BA (1570/1) and MA (1574) before securing a fellowship (1573-6) before his untimely death.

At the other end of the social spectrum, there seem to have been poorer students at Trinity who were able to use their musical skills to gain a foothold in the academic hierarchy and open up potential career opportunities (just as we observed already at Magdalen College and Corpus Christi College Oxford). Payne’s research has revealed the practice of employing “dry choristers” at Trinity – that is, using adult male undergraduates in the choir, thus collapsing the distinction between professional and amateur musicians in this environment. George Barcroft (d.1610) is a good example of this; after receiving his early training as a chorister at Winchester Cathedral, he matriculated as a sizar at Trinity in December 1574, graduating BA in 1578. Besides his waiting duties as a sizar, he also seems to have funded his stay at Trinity by working as a singingman in the chapel choir (1575-77). He went on to pursue a successful career as a cleric and cathedral musician at Ely after leaving Trinity.³⁵⁰ Finally, the presence of Thomas Whythorne at Trinity, acting as private tutor to William Bromfield Jr. (winter 1559 – early 1562) provides a rare first-person account of everyday life in the college. Since it was compiled just a couple of decades before Dallis was teaching his lute student at the same institution, Whythorne’s autobiography serves as a useful lens through which to view that document.

³⁵⁰ Roger Bowers, “Barcroft, George (d. 1610),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004): <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1355> (accessed 22 June 2013)

Figure 5.1 *Dallis*, p.20. Reproduced by permission of Trinity College, Dublin.

The top two staves feature tablature letters in red ink (with the rhythm signs added in black), apparently belonging to the earliest layer of the manuscript. The bottom piece (possibly a consort part to a work by Thomas Whythorne) is a space-filler, added later in grey-black ink.

The image shows a manuscript page with musical notation. The top two staves contain tablature letters in red ink, with rhythm signs in black. The middle section features a large, stylized 'FINIS ROGERO' written vertically. Below this, there is a piece of music with a consort part, including a space-filler piece in grey-black ink. The page number '20' is visible in the bottom right corner.

The Dallis lutebook revisited:

i) Getting started: an unofficial music curriculum at Trinity?

Given the near-certainty of *Dallis's* Trinity provenance, it is strange that no attempt has been made to examine it in the light of other known musical activities there. This is probably a result of its material form: the book is large, messy, and has been compiled in a seemingly haphazard, non-sequential manner, making its contents difficult to parse.

First, it seems sensible to establish what Dallis actually taught his student, although the book itself is unhelpful in this respect. John Milsom and Iain Fenlon have suggested that the printed tablature pages in *Dallis* were probably issued under the 21-year patent enjoyed by Thomas Tallis and William Byrd from 1575 onwards.³⁵¹ Although the manuscript appears to have been written in a single hand, it uses a number of different notational styles (particularly with regard to rhythmic notation) as well as different inks and nibs of varying thickness.³⁵² Nor was the manuscript compiled sequentially; instead the scribe seems to have partially filled a number of pages before going back through later, filling in gaps with shorter “space-fillers”. This accounts for the rather complicated jumble of different inks and nib-thicknesses detectable in the texts. (Fig. 5.1)

John Ward observed that a marginal note on p.59 identified that particular piece as part of a pavan-galliard pair with another work (to be found on the

³⁵¹ Fenlon & Milsom, ““Ruled Paper Imprinted””, 148-49, 158.

³⁵² Ward was unclear about whether he considered *Dallis* to be the work of a single scribe. After initially implying that this was the case (“Lute Books of Trinity College”, 17), he suggested otherwise in subsequent work (e.g. commenting that the works ascribed to ‘Mr david’ in the manuscript are “all written in the same distinctive hand”); see Ward, “Additions to the inventory of TCD MS. D.3.30/1.” *Lute Society Journal* 12 (1970): 43. In his detailed codicological study of the manuscript, Helmut Werner suggested that the manuscript is in one hand but that it has evolved – sometimes rather dramatically – over a period of time. See “The Background, Content and Purpose of the Dallis Lute Book” (MA diss., National University of Ireland, 2000), 30-47. I agree with Werner’s conclusion, although the manuscript’s somewhat haphazard compilation makes it difficult to state this with certainty.

original “fol. 2”).³⁵³ Since the other piece in question appears on the current p.17, it follows that the sequence now paginated 11-21 was an early layer of 5 folios (two unnumbered, then foliated ff.1-3). The two unfoliated leaves included the introductory inscription (now p.12) and rudimentary theoretical tables concerning tuning and rhythmic notations – exactly the things one would expect to find at the very beginning of a pedagogical document. In time, the numerous blank endpapers were hand-ruled and music was later added.

This hypothesis is also supported by the distinctive notational appearance of these pieces and the use of red ink to provide the tablature letters on these pages – these contrast with the space-fillers appearing lower down on the same pages. As I observed in chapter 1, the copying of lute tablature merely as a sequence of letters (without any rhythmic notation) is a feature of several pedagogical manuscripts, and this appears to be the case here. Although this remains conjectural, I suspect that Dallis set his pupil the task of copying in some music to form the basis of his preliminary studies, and that the rhythmic information was added later. Rhythmic patterns could, of course, be worked out by ear or memorised, much in the same way that modern-day users of guitar tablature employ that notation. The same physical characteristics are present in another layer, pp. 189-194 (i.e. another 3 folios); although the reasons for the spatial separation of these layers are unclear, they appear to have formed part of the same phase of tuition. (**Table 5.1**)

In all likelihood, these two distinct layers represent this student’s original course of lessons with Thomas Dallis. The repertoire preserved here differs greatly from that encountered across rest of the book, providing a diet of very simple and beginner-friendly English music. Whilst *Dallis* is characterised by the cosmopolitanism of its contents, it is very striking that these two layers preserve only indigenous material, popular English tunes and grounds that were very much in the public domain (just as we find in the earliest layers of other English pedagogical manuscripts such as *Folger*, *Board*, *JP*, and *Mynshall*).

³⁵³ Ward, “Lute Books of Trinity College,” 19.

Table 5.1 A course of lessons with Thomas Dallis?

Current pagination	Contents [* = piece added later as a space-filler]	Original foliation
p. 11	[blank]	f. [i]
p. 12	Inscription: <i>Incepi Nonis Augusti praeceptore Mro Thom[a] Dallis [...]</i>	
p. 13	[Tuning instructions]	f. [ii]
p. 14	'bandalashote galyarde'*	
p. 15	Theoretical tables in Latin	f. 1
p. 16	'Grounde'; [fragment of psalm?]*; 'pavana'*	
p. 17	'O what it is to love'; 'quadro pavin galliard'*	f. 2
p. 18	'Le passe Meze de pavana'	
p. 19	'The passa Meze gailiard'; 'Leve le coeur' [fragment]*	f. 3
p. 20	'Rogerero'; 'Wugorns gayliarde'*	
p. 189	'The passe Meze pavin'; [short fragment = end of piece on p. 188]*	f. [x]
p. 190	[Passamezzo antico]	
p. 191	[Passamezzo antico cont.]	f. [y]
p. 192	[Queen Mary's dump]	
p. 193	[Queen Mary's dump cont.]	f. [z]
p. 194	[pavan]; [unidentified fragment]*	

The similarity here with the music on the earliest pages of *Mynshall* is particularly instructive as, once again, it is easy to imagine how these kinds of material served to facilitate social interaction in the collegiate environment. Just as we envisaged Richard Mynshall participating in musical gatherings with the gentlemen of Nantwich, we can imagine Dallis's student being able to join in with communal music-making from quite an early stage in his studies, playing these versions of popular ballad tunes and constructing simple improvisations using these well-known chordal formulae. Certainly, the social benefits of being able to negotiate simple ground bass-derived pieces are underlined in an episode described by Thomas Whythorne. He recalls an evening spent at Trinity in which various religious controversies were discussed by the gathered company before things turned towards more light-hearted, jocular musical entertainment. Whythorne records all thirty-three

stanzas of a rather scurrilous poem entitled “Friar Robard”, remarking that “I, being then set on a merry pin, wrote thereof upon an old ground”.³⁵⁴ Given the fondness for grounds displayed in *Dallis* – around a quarter of the works in the manuscript are based on either the *passamezzo antico* or *moderno* basses, as Ward pointed out – it is very tempting to conclude that they might have been used frequently in these kinds of informal collegiate gatherings.³⁵⁵

ii) Homegrown music

If *Dallis* did, as I have suggested, play a role in the social life of the college, one might also expect to find some evidence of home-grown music (with explicit Trinity connections) within it.³⁵⁶ It is just about possible that one short piece is a previously unrecognised instrumental work by Whythorne.³⁵⁷ On p.20 there is a short (and somewhat uninspiring) piece entitled “Wugorn’s galliard” which appears to be a consort part rather than a lute solo since it has no real melodic profile to speak of. (Fig. 5.2)

Contrary to the suggestions of John Ward and others, this is not a setting of “Wigmore’s Galliard”, found in a number of other contemporaneous lute and consort sources.³⁵⁸ The curious ascription to “Wugorn” might be explained as a corruption of “Wigorn.”, (i.e. “Wigorniensis”, *Lat.* “of Worcester”), but, in this particular context, it does appear to be being used as a name. Could “Wugorn” perhaps be a scribal corruption of the name Whythorne? This is conceivable when one remembers that Whythorne used the Anglo-Saxon thorn character to represent the digraph ‘th’ throughout his autobiography; thus a spelling of his name as “Whiporn” could easily be misconstrued as “Wugorn” during subsequent recopying.

³⁵⁴ Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 109-12.

³⁵⁵ Ward, “Lute Books of Trinity College”, 21.

³⁵⁶ See Payne, “British Library Add. MSS 30826-28”, 4-5 for discussion of an early seventeenth-century “Trinity Colledge Pavan” for viols.

³⁵⁷ For the only known surviving instrumental work by Whythorne, see Bruno Bouckaert & Eugeen Schreurs, “A New Fragment with 16th-century Keyboard Music: An unknown composition by Thomas Whythorne (1528-1596) in a manuscript from the Low Countries (Gent-Rijksuniversiteit: Ms. G11655),” *Yearbook of the Alamire Foundation 2* (1997): 121-28.

³⁵⁸ Ward, “Lute Books of Trinity College,” 26.

Figure 5.2 *Dallis*, p. 20, “Wugorn[']s Gayliarde”

This attribution is conjectural, of course, but it seems likely that some of Whythorne’s music would have remained in circulation at Trinity following his time there. And since there are no composers named “Wigorn” or “Wugorn” represented in other Elizabethan sources (to my knowledge, at least), this is not a huge leap of imagination.

Another work in *Dallis* with more secure Cambridge connections is the galliard on p.126, designed to be paired with the preceding setting of Peter Phillips’ famous “1580” pavan. Although Ward read the ascription as “Thomas Wudd”, he also considered the possibility of “Mudd” as an alternate reading³⁵⁹ and the latter interpretation seems more likely to me as there was a Thomas Mudd at Gonville & Caius College in 1577, proceeding BA from Peterhouse (1581) and MA from Pembroke College (1584). Whilst at Pembroke, Mudd seems to have

³⁵⁹ Ward “Lute Books of Trinity College,” 22.

delivered lectures on music, and it was on the strength of this that his contemporary reputation was apparently founded. He is cited by Francis Meres amongst the “excellent Musicians” of the age, a list that saw “M. Thomas Mud, sometimes fellow of Pembroke hall in Cambridge” placed alongside other famous Cambridge-connected musicians such as Christopher Tye, John Bull and “Doctor Dallis”.³⁶⁰

It is also tempting to speculate about the identity of the otherwise obscure figures with English surnames represented in the Dallis manuscript. For instance, the composer of the “Pavane of Newman” on p.196 and “Galiard of newman” on p.200 remains unidentified; a small corpus of works for lute and keyboard ascribed to Newman survives but, as John Robinson has pointed out, the sources that preserve these pieces span a period of over thirty years and there is no conclusive evidence to link these works to any of the candidates that can be put forward. Could the *Dallis* Newman be the Andrew Newman who matriculated as a pensioner at Trinity around Easter 1578 (BA, 1582/3; MA, 1586)? He was there at exactly the same time that the manuscript was being compiled.³⁶¹ However, this too remains speculative, but what can be stated with certainty is that the indigenous English materials in *Dallis* are very much in keeping with the pedagogical materials found in other English lute manuscripts. Initially, then, *Dallis* seems much more conventional than Ward and others have suggested.

iii) Collecting and connoisseurship

Once a certain level of musical competence had been achieved using these basic home-grown materials, it appears that Dallis’s student began to shape his anthology in an entirely new direction that sets it apart from other extant English lute sources. Avidly collecting and copying in other music, he began to fill the spaces on half-completed pages in a seemingly haphazard manner; no obvious pattern of copying can be discerned. As John Ward pointed out, there

³⁶⁰ Francis Meres, *Palladis Tamia* (London: P. Short for Cuthbert Berbie, 1598), f.288v.

³⁶¹ John Robinson, “The Complete Lute Music Ascribed to Master Newman – plus Wigmore[']s Galiard”, music supplement to *Lute News* 38 (June 1996).

are a huge number of continental works present, many of which were copied directly from earlier prints.³⁶²

Another feature is the presence of multiple copies of very similar or, in some cases, virtually identical pieces. In particular, the large number of pieces based on either *passamezzo antico* or *moderno* basses is very striking, and these are often only very finely differentiated. This serves as a reminder that, whilst pieces on grounds were used for the first steps on the lute, at a more advanced level they provided a conceptual framework within which great invention and creative distinction could be displayed. Indeed, far from seeing the ground as merely beginners' territory, the lutenist Thomas Mace (1613-1709) – himself a singing-man at Trinity during the 1630s – described the “The Ground” as an arena for demonstrating both physical and intellectual skill:

a set Number of Slow Notes, very Grave, and Stately; which (after It is express'd Once, or Twice, very Plainly) then He that hath Good Brains, and a Good Hand, undertakes to play several Divisions upon It, Time after Time, till he has shew'd his Bravery, both of Invention, and Hand.³⁶³

Although Mace's time at Trinity came much later, it is not unreasonable to assume that this view was also held by earlier generations of Trinity-based musicians. So, although we have already heard how Whythorne and his companions were employing grounds in a light-hearted vein, it is tempting to view this extensive collection of ground-bass variations as an attempt to systematically collect and absorb some of the creative possibilities posed by these frameworks. Such an endeavour suggests a concern for displaying good taste and exercising connoisseurship, as well as chiming nicely with the humanist ideal of spending leisure time engaged in acts of virtuous labour.³⁶⁴ This was perhaps the same impulse that drove Robert Dow to produce his

³⁶² Ward, “Lute Books of Trinity College,” 20-21.

³⁶³ Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 129.

³⁶⁴ On the humanist-inspired trend for collecting texts, see Marjorie Swann, *Curiosities and Texts: The Culture of Collecting in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 152-56.

beautifully calligraphed set of manuscript partbooks, or Clement Matchett to compile his meticulously dated collection of keyboard music.

iv) The social circulation of texts

Of course, it must be remembered that this kind of collecting, whilst ostensibly an act of solitary labour, is not without its social dimension. Some scholars have suggested that *Dallis* may have been compiled using printed exemplars held in the college library,³⁶⁵ but the numerous detailed studies of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century college libraries make it clear that these facilities did not usually hold music books³⁶⁶ unless they had been donated as part of a special bequest.³⁶⁷ In the specific case of Trinity, Philip Gaskell has painstakingly elucidated the content of its library c.1600 from early catalogues and extant lists of bequests; no music volumes were present, however, so it can be stated with some confidence that the *Dallis* copyist was not collecting his materials in this way.³⁶⁸

Instead, he was probably borrowing music from his fellow students, with the exchange of musical texts constituting another form of sociable “musicking” within the collegiate environment. Indeed, one curious feature of *Dallis* is the presence of multiple copies of the same works in very similar versions, suggesting that the wholesale (and somewhat indiscriminate) copying of music

³⁶⁵ e.g. Craig-McFeely, “English Lute Manuscripts”, 159 (and the preamble to the inventory given as an Appendix); Werner, “Background, Content, and Purpose”, 54 n.77.

³⁶⁶ Important studies include N. R. Ker, “Oxford College Libraries in the Sixteenth Century,” *Bodleian Library Record* 6 (1957-61): 459-515; Kristian Jensen, “Universities and colleges,” in *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland*, i: *To 1640*, eds. Elisabeth Leedham-Green & Teresa Webber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 345-62.

³⁶⁷ For two pertinent examples, see: C. J. Fordyce & T. M. Know, “The Library of Jesus College, Oxford, with an appendix on the books bequeathed thereto by Lord Herbert of Cherbury.” *Oxford Bibliographical Society Proceedings and Papers* 5 (1936-1939), 53-115); R. F. Ovenell, “Brian Twyne’s Library,” *Oxford Bibliographical Society Publications*, New Ser., IV (1950), 3-42.

³⁶⁸ Philip Gaskell, *Trinity College Library: The first 150 years* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)

from other collections was taking place. This has been observed elsewhere in manuscripts associated with collegiate circles, both amongst the Mathew Holmes manuscripts³⁶⁹ and in the production of verse miscellanies compiled by early seventeenth-century university students.³⁷⁰

Similar copying practices also occurred amongst continental university students; the so-called “Herold lutebook”, dated 1602 and according to a flyleaf note produced at the University of Padua (by an unnamed German student), is a direct copy of a lutebook (now lost) owned by one Christoph Herold, a student at Padua who had earlier studied at Leiden in the Netherlands (1598-1601).³⁷¹ From the contents of the manuscript, it seems likely that the original volume reflected Herold’s lute studies in Leiden since it contained a number of works attributed to Leiden-based lutenist Joachim van den Hove. And, like *Dallis*, it also includes some Italian pieces copied directly from printed volumes, here with the sources indicated in accompanying marginal notes.

In other cases, it seems that the exchange of musical texts was even more elaborately bound up with social interactions between university men. Thomas Whythorne mentions a purely instrumental composition only once in his entire autobiography, during an episode which occurred whilst at Trinity:

I having at this time devised a fantasy to be played upon the lute, the which I gave unto a friend of mine, I wrote in the paper where the fancy was written this following:

*All that which fancy here brought forth, thy fancy to revive,
Hold here, my H., for Whythorne did the same for thee contrive.*³⁷²

³⁶⁹ Spring, *Lute in Britain*, 117.

³⁷⁰ Mary Hobbs, *Early Seventeenth-Century Verse Miscellany Manuscripts* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1992)

³⁷¹ For information, see Andreas Schlegel & Francois-Pierre Goy, introduction to facsimile edition: *Ms. Herold, Padua 1602* (Lübeck: Tree Edition, 1991)

³⁷² Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 105.

It is perhaps significant that Whythorne mentions a fantasia here since, as Matthew Spring has observed, this is a comparatively rare genre amongst English sources (despite their abundance on the Continent).³⁷³ But, of course, it might be expected that learned university scholars would gravitate towards the most erudite genres of instrumental music, rather than contenting themselves with settings of the popular tunes of the day. Thomas Morley famously described the fantasia as:

the most principall and chiefest kind of musicke which is made without a ditty [...], that is, when a musician taketh a point at his pleasure and wresteth and turneth it as he list, making either much or little of it according as shall seem best in his own conceit.³⁷⁴

In other words, the fantasia was the thinking man's music: rather than simple chordal material or a tune with accompaniment, this learned and sophisticated genre was characterised by the statement of an initial motif that was subsequently repeated and developed as the texture builds, resulting in a complex web of interweaving lines derived from the opening material.

Whythorne's lute fantasia (sadly no longer extant) would not only have resonated with the learned ethos of this particular social circle at Trinity, but also formed part of a gift-giving culture here, comparable with the socialised processes of poetic exchange that we saw amongst Mynshall's circle back in chapter 4. Again, social and textual exchange have become intertwined, with textual exchange and collaboration serving as a useful way of consolidating bonds between friends and peers. And, with this episode in mind, it may be significant that one of the few works actually ascribed to Thomas Dallis himself in the manuscript is a short polyphonic fantasia, perhaps offered from teacher to student as a token of their shared erudition and learned identity.³⁷⁵

³⁷³ Spring (*Lute in Britain*, 145-46) also discusses the few exceptions which prove this rule.

³⁷⁴ Morley, *Plaine and Easie Introduction*, 180-81.

³⁷⁵ "Fansye. M[r]. T. Dallis", p. 27. For a transcription, see Werner, "Background, Content, and Purpose", 69.

Thus the compilation of encyclopaedic volumes such as *Dallis* should probably be seen as a testament to both the collecting impulse prevalent amongst scholars and their predominant modes of communication and socialisation. Other Continental lute manuscripts would appear to support this: *Schele*, another lute source connected with Leiden University, reveals the extended period of continental travel enjoyed by its compiler; the pieces it contains are not only dated (to the precise day) but also record the place of their acquisition.³⁷⁶ Sources like *Schele* make it is easy to imagine how instrumental music spread via the actions of peripatetic students, and the case of German traveller Hans von Bodeck shows how music could circulate through socialised scribal activity, both within collegiate circles and beyond.³⁷⁷ Von Bodeck's *album amicorum* accompanied him on stays in both Oxford and Cambridge in the early 1600s, and whilst passing through London where he met renowned professional lutenists such as Dowland, Campion, and Rosseter (who also added musical materials to his book). It may well be that *Dallis*'s pupil was involved in similar kinds of textual exchange, both copying music and providing material to be copied whilst at home at Trinity, and whilst on any travels that he might have undertaken.

We have already noted two lute manuscripts connected with Leiden that provide an analogue for the kinds of copying practices seen in *Dallis*. But there is another which is perhaps more closely linked still. As John Ward noted, there are a number of works by 'mr david' (i.e. David Padbrué) in both *Dallis* and the Thysius lutebook, a large volume compiled by the preacher and lecturer Adrian Smout, most probably during his student days at Leiden in the 1590s.³⁷⁸ In fact, *Dallis* has great deal in common with the Thysius lutebook: both are huge, encyclopaedic volumes, containing vast amounts of textual material

³⁷⁶ See the facsimile study and introduction: Ralf Jarchow, ed. *Ernst Schele: Tablaturbuch* (Glinde: Jarchow Verlag, 2004)

³⁷⁷ Kenneth Sparr, "Some Unobserved Information about John Dowland, Thomas Campion, and Philip Rosseter", *The Lute* 27 (1987): 35-37.

³⁷⁸ Jan W.J. Burgers & Louis Peter Grijp, eds. *Het Luitboek van Thysius/The Thysius Lute Book*: Facsimile edition of Leiden, Bibliotheca Thysiana 1666 (Leiden: Nederlandse Luitvereniging & Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis, 2009), 3 vols.

assiduously collected over a long period of time. Furthermore, the contents of both books stress the social dimensions of lute-playing in university life, containing duets, consort parts for lute, and some multi-lute ensemble works (the Thysius manuscript contains several lute quartets, whereas *Dallis* includes a lute quintet), testifying to the importance of these kinds of collective musical activities.³⁷⁹ Rather than treating *Dallis* as an outlier, perhaps we were just making an invalid comparison when looking at it within an English manuscript tradition that is defined largely by lute sources from gentry households.

We have considered elsewhere that music-making served as both a private leisure practice and as a form of sociability, but it seems that *Dallis* reveals another form of social interaction – the circulation and exchange of texts amongst friends and acquaintances. Whereas Ward viewed this collecting mania as rather odd, it actually seems very natural to imagine university men lending one another their manuscripts and printed books in order to create their own personalised compilations. This mirrors the kinds of practice that have long been recognised by literary scholars as leading to the creation of early seventeenth-century verse miscellanies, the vast majority of which are connected with the universities or Inns of Court.³⁸⁰ As Arthur Marotti and others have shown, the circulation and exchange of texts formed an important ingredient in the social life of the early modern college – and the collecting of texts serves as a means of defining a social group.³⁸¹ Viewed in this light, *Dallis* seems to provide an interesting corollary to other forms of textual collecting within collegiate circles, such as the compilation of student miscellany manuscripts³⁸² and the *album amicorum* tradition which also preserved the textual traces of social interaction.

³⁷⁹ Todd Lane, “The Lute Quartets in the Thysius Lute Book,” *Journal of the Lute Society of America* 22 (1989): 28-59.

³⁸⁰ See Hobbs, *Early Seventeenth-Century*, esp. chap. 2; Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), chap. 5; Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 31-35; Swann, *Curiosities and Texts*, esp. chaps. 2 and 4.

³⁸¹ Marotti, *Manuscript, Print*, 152-56; Love, *Scribal Publication*, 80.

³⁸² Miscellany manuscripts are sometimes simply verse collections, but often much more. A systematic investigation of students’ miscellanies would be an invaluable resource and certain to yield new musical discoveries. However, locating and

v) Intellectual curiosity

Finally, it might be expected that amateur musicians within a scholarly community would be interested in acquiring a deeper understanding of the craft of music rather than simply learning a repertoire of tunes. The clergyman John Preston (1587-1628) was sent to King's College Cambridge in 1604 (later Fellow of Queen's, 1609, and Master of Emmanuel) and set about doing just that, although it seems he found putting it all into practice rather harder than expected:

Here he did as young schollars used to doe, that is applyed himself to the Genius of the Colledge, & that was musique; and finding that the theory was shorte and soone atteyned, he made account y^e practise would also be so; and accordingly adventured upon the Lute, the hardest instrument; but heere he found though theory was shorte, art was long; & so as unwilling to attend it, he used to say whilst fingering his lute, "Quantum hoc tempore Legi potuit;" [...]³⁸³

We have already seen evidence of men like Andrew Perne and John Case taking a firm interest in the science of music as well as the practice, and so it is interesting to observe Dallis's student also showing an interest in more advanced areas of musical practice such as composition and arrangement. It is worth recalling the words of Whythorne who had stressed the importance of these skills as part of his conception of being a "true musician":

I cannot here leave out or let pass to speak of another sort that do live by music and yet are no musicians at all. And those be they who, after they have learned a little to sing pricksong, or else have either learned by hand or by ear or else by tablature, to play or sound on musical

cataloging such sources is both time-consuming and rather luck-dependent. For useful partial checklists, see: Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge*, 283; Kearney, *Gentlemen and Scholars*, 193-98; Hobbs, *Early Seventeenth-Century*, 152-55; Marotti, *Manuscript, Print*, 32.

³⁸³ Ball, *Life of the Renowned Doctor Preston*, 5-6: "at this time, I read as much as possible" (my translation)

instruments such music as hath been and is made by others, and not by them [...]³⁸⁴

For Whythorne, it was essential to be able to create your own music rather than relying on the labours of others. Luckily, Dallis's student shows exactly the kind of intellectual curiosity that one might expect from a university student; for instance, the lutebook includes a long sequence of step-by-step re-workings of a simple devotional song ("Leve le Coeur") scattered across the volume as space-fillers. These include basic settings in a number of keys, plus fragments with different harmonisations and melodic decoration.³⁸⁵ Dallis, or perhaps a subsequent teacher, was evidently trying to teach this young lutenist how to re-work and vary pre-existing musical materials – how to intabulate, transpose, and decorate this simple piece.

Even more interesting are the numerous pages (pp. 230-2) of what a modern-day guitarist might call "licks", i.e. short, elaborated chord progressions, often revealing different re-workings of terminal cadential gestures. These musical cells sometimes constitute just a few notes, obviously to be learnt and assimilated "under the fingers" in order to form the building blocks of a basic musical vocabulary for further improvisation and composition. The ethnomusicologist Jeff Todd Titon has called these kinds of patterns "preforms" during his work on the transmission and memorisation of blues guitar "licks" through tactile learning.³⁸⁶ (**Figs. 5.3a and 5.3b**)

³⁸⁴ Whythorne, *Autobiography*, 205-06.

³⁸⁵ Transcribed in Werner, "Background, Content, and Purpose", 93-100.

³⁸⁶ Jeff Todd Titon, "Every Day I Have the Blues: Improvisation and Daily Life," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 42 (1978): 85-98.

Figure 5.3a *Dallis*, p.226. Reproduced by permission of Trinity College, Dublin.
Numerous ornamented cadential figures (added after a piece for solo
“pandore” (= bandora))

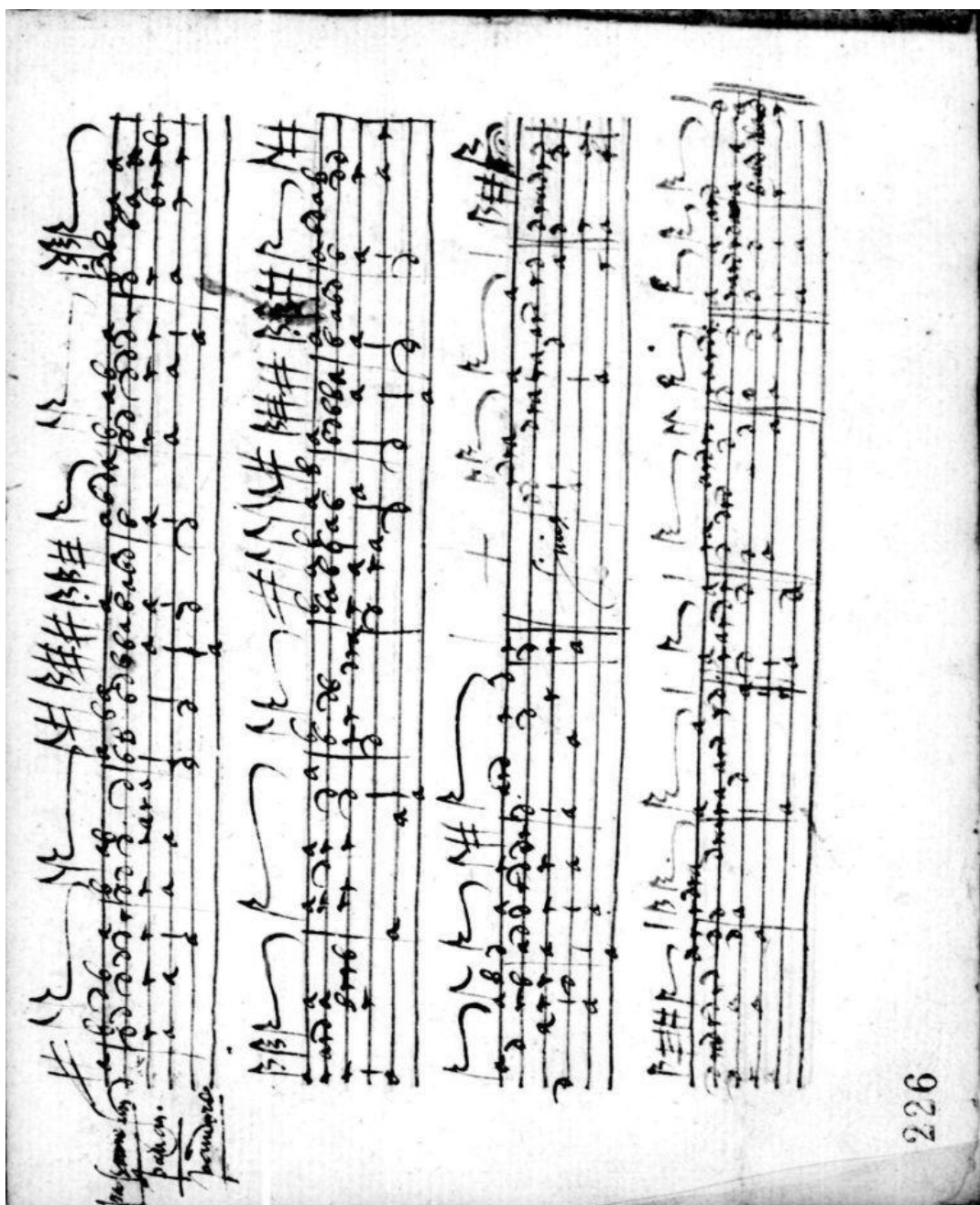


Figure 5.3b Transcription of ornamented progressions, *Dallis*, p.226

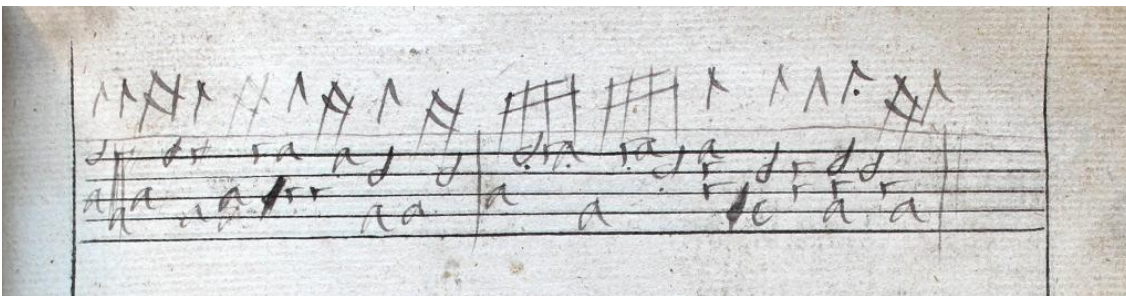
The image displays three systems of musical notation for piano, arranged vertically. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music is written in 4/4 time. The first system shows a right-hand melody with a series of eighth-note ornaments and a left-hand accompaniment of quarter notes. The second system continues the right-hand melody with similar ornaments and a left-hand accompaniment of quarter notes. The third system shows the right-hand melody with more complex ornaments and a left-hand accompaniment of quarter notes. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings.

Titon defines these as musical units which are “preformed, memorized, and stored. [...] A preform carries the connotation of something roughly sized and shaped, but not finished. Stored in its rough state, it is given whatever final shaping is necessary as it is fit [*sic.*] into the accompaniment”.³⁸⁷ Just as a blues guitarist can use these memorised preforms to embellish a repeated, familiar chord progression, it is easy to imagine Dallis’s lute pupil trying to graft these melodic formulae onto the standard grounds and progressions that make up much of the content of his book.

These, then, are features through which *Dallis* shows a marked departure from other English lute manuscripts of the period, which are very much conceived as collections of repertoire to be learnt. Very few English lute sources show a similar concern with musical elaboration and, where it is explored, it tends to be just fragmentary sketches that remain. For instance, there is a short tablature sketch in a single Elizabethan vocal partbook now in the Rowe Music Library at King’s College, Cambridge:³⁸⁸

Figure 5.4a Cambridge, King’s College, Rowe 316, f.85v (detail).

Reproduced by permission of the Provost and Scholars of King’s College, Cambridge.



³⁸⁷ Titon, “Every Day”, 91. For more on the use of “prefabricated” materials by instrumentalists during the Renaissance, see John Griffiths, “Juan Bermudo, Self-instruction, and the Amateur Instrumentalist,” in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, eds. Russell E. Murray, Susan Forscher Weiss & Cynthia J. Cyrus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 134-35.

³⁸⁸ For descriptions, see Iain Fenlon, *Cambridge Music Manuscripts, 900-1700*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 135-37; Warwick Edwards “Sources of English Consort Music”, 101-2. Both note the presence of the tablature fragment but offer no further comment on it.

Figure 5.4b Transcription of Rowe 316, f. 85v

Although the user of this source remains unidentified – nothing is known about its provenance prior to its donation to King’s by Boris Ord in the 1960s – it is clear that this is a pedagogical sketch, a brief example noted down to show how this simple progression might be ornamented in practice. It is just a mere trace, however, and it is only in *Dallis* that we gain a fuller picture of how a young lutenist might learn the musical processes and “preforms” (rather than fully formed works) from which further acts of musical creation could be generated.³⁸⁹ In this light, this fragmentary pedagogical material is very important, since musicological enquiry is generally focused on the idea of learning and transmitting *repertoire* in the form of discrete pieces (rather than dealing with smaller and more loosely defined musical units). One important exception was Jessie Ann Owens’ ground-breaking 1997 study of compositional procedure in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Drawing upon sketches, deleted passages, and manuscript revisions – materials usually either omitted from modern editions or relegated to the critical commentary – Owens was able to elucidate some of the processes by which Renaissance composers planned, elaborated and shaped their works.³⁹⁰ This study was a milestone in getting away from ‘work-centred’ musicology, that is, scholarship

³⁸⁹ This interest in the *processes* of learning (rather than the end products) is also emerging in other disciplines; for instance, in a recent study of early modern note-taking practices: Christopher Burlinson, “The Use and Re-Use of Early-Seventeenth-Century Student Notebooks: Inside and Outside the University,” in *Material Readings of Early Modern Culture, 1580-1700*, eds. James Daybell & Peter Hinds (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2010), 229-45.

³⁹⁰ Jessie Ann Owens, *Composers at Work: The Craft of Musical Composition 1450-1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

concerned only with the study of finished (and, by implication, fixed) musical works, but nevertheless it remained rooted in “composer-centredness”. *Dallis* shows how we might start to look at other anonymous, fragmentary didactic materials in order to gain insight into the more malleable, improvisatory approaches to musical learning also being practised during the Renaissance.³⁹¹

Reassessing *Dallis*

The recent reception history of *Dallis* has been strongly influenced by John Ward’s judgment regarding “the conservative and sometimes bizarre taste shown in the choice of its contents”.³⁹² Previous work has stressed its conservatism and cosmopolitanism, but without attempting to understand why this manuscript exhibits these characteristics. But if we regard the works contained in *Dallis* as directly representative of the kinds of people with whom the compiler was familiar, the internationalism of the repertory is much less surprising than Ward and others have made out. And by using other sources relating to music-making in the early modern college as an interpretive tool, we can begin to make sense of some of the *Dallis* book’s more unusual features.

Although the identity of *Dallis*’s pupil remains a mystery, his book casts important light on practices and tastes of a cosmopolitan, learned community. Of course, it may not be the case that the book was entirely compiled in Cambridge; John Ward noted the presence of a number of pieces by ‘Mr david’ (= David Padbrué), a Leiden-based lute teacher and, citing the presence of several Dutch-texted psalm-settings in the manuscript, suggested a Dutchman in Cambridge as the compiler. This is quite conceivable – the widespread political upheaval in Antwerp (including its sacking by Spanish/Habsburg imperial troops) towards the end of the 1570s would have made emigration quite an appealing option for Dutch Protestants living in that locale. But it is equally possible that it was copied by an English student visiting the Netherlands – the long-standing tradition of English students studying at Leiden makes this conceivable too.³⁹³ Whatever the truth of the matter, *Dallis* is

³⁹¹ Some of the fragmentary sketches added to *Ballet* as space-fillers warrant further scrutiny in this respect.

³⁹² Ward “Lute Books of Trinity”, 22.

³⁹³ See, for instance, R. W. Innes-Smith, *English-Speaking Students of Medicine*.

perhaps best understood as textual collection that mirrors some of the shared concerns and values of the collegiate community in which it was compiled. For instance, this anthology seems to be at once rather insular – even parochial – and daringly cosmopolitan. It juxtaposes very simple English music (suitable for a lutenist’s “apprenticeship”) with sophisticated continental lute music in various styles and idioms. Whereas most of the extant English lute manuscripts can be said to be representative of a specific time and place – often the London townhouse or country seat of the young gentle(wo)man who produced it – the Dallis lutebook, as the product of close-knit student circles either in Cambridge or abroad, represents the music of multiple localities brought together into one document.

It also reflects some of the traits that one would expect to witness in a conscientious young scholar: it contains expressions of Protestant piety and reflects a willingness to engage in the arduous labour of collecting and copying a huge number of texts. There is a clear sense of learned erudition and good taste at play here, plus evidence of the intellectual curiosity which led this particular lutenist to learn how to arrange, decorate and perhaps even compose for himself. But crucially, these private labours cannot be separated from the social transactions associated with musical activity: getting together to play duets and consort music or to sing to the lute, and in the exchange of books and manuscripts in order to complete such a project – at the same time defining the parameters of that social circle.

So whether Dallis’s lute student was a wealthy aristocratic amateur studying at Trinity or, at the other end of the social scale, a sizar or a ‘dry chorister’ singing in the college choir (in order to pay his way) is not really all that important. Collectively, these kinds of men all reflected a newly emerging conception of scholarly identity, founded upon a common goal of pursuing non-economic capital of some kind or another; within this, music-making would have had the power to transcend those externally-defined boundaries of social status. This becomes a little clearer when we re-visit Henry Peacham’s advice to the would-be university student, presumably a reflection of his own experiences at Trinity College just a decade after the Dallis lutebook was compiled there. For Peacham had suggested mixing with learned and pious men when studying, but only with fellow gentlemen when at leisure. But, as the

Dallis lutebook shows, music-making could be many things, since it constituted a set of cultural practices with multiple meanings and functions: it could be pious in nature, but also a branch of further learning; a means of displaying one's erudition and connoisseurship, or a pathway to social interaction. In other words, playing the lute could be almost all things to almost all men, perfectly reflecting the complexities of the emerging conception of academic identity during this period.

Chapter 6: “Thou mayest easily learne by thy selfe, with very small helpe of a teacher”: Music and self-education in Elizabethan and Jacobean England

...this booke will sufficiently serve to be Schoolemaster
unto such that will but spare some of their idle howers...³⁹⁴

In the three preceding case studies, we have observed how early modern subjects learnt to play the lute through social contact of some kind or another – either with their teachers, or within a circle of friends or peers in which musical activities were taking place. But the rapid development of print technology during the sixteenth century facilitated the production of new kinds of texts that promoted self-directed study, enabling users to eschew the social dimensions of learning if they so wished. We have already drawn upon various examples of these kinds of didactic literature³⁹⁵ during the course of this study, including courtesy/behavioural manuals, language primers, poetic treatises and, of course, musical texts.³⁹⁶ The most famous musical self-tuition book of all was undoubtedly Thomas Morley’s *Plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke* (1597) and we have already seen how Morley played upon

³⁹⁴ William Barley, *A new Booke of Tabliture* (London: William Barley, 1596), sig. Br.

³⁹⁵ During this chapter, I use the term “didactic literature” only to describe texts designed to teach proficiency in particular skills, rather than in a broader sense which would also include, for example, moralistic texts and devotional instructional materials such as catechisms.

³⁹⁶ Useful overviews of the production of early modern didactic texts include: Louis B. Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935); Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege* (on courtesy/civility literature); and the various essays in Natasha Glaisyer & Sara Pennell, eds. *Didactic Literature in England 1500-1800: Expertise Constructed* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003). However, the notion of autodidacticism as a broader trend in intellectual history warrants further exploration; the history of self-education is (as far as I know) still waiting to be written, although some periods have been explored in detail, e.g. Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century working class “self-improvement”.

contemporary readers' anxieties about not being able to measure up to the level of musical competence expected by polite society as he sought to market this volume.

But whilst theoretical tracts like Morley's are undoubtedly of great importance, a number of books dealing with instrumental skills were published in the decades either side of it, yet they have not received nearly as much scholarly attention. Indeed, it is notable that *all* of the volumes of solo lute music published in England between c.1560 and 1610 were ostensibly didactic in design, in contrast to the Continent where lute music was often published merely as anthologies of repertoire without any additional instructional content. These English collections make it very clear that they were being sold as tools for self-directed learning. For instance, in 1568 John Alford published a translation of an earlier French lute tutor by Adrian Le Roy in which he assured the reader that "thou mayest easily learne by thy selfe, with very small helpe of a teacher".³⁹⁷ An expanded version of this pedagogical text was published in 1574, this time with a prefatory piece by the alchemist and occult philosopher Jacques Gohory added. After citing numerous classical precedents for autodidactic endeavour, he recommended that:

Like thankes ought they to give to Adrian le Roy: which shal become good players on the Lute without further helpe: chiefly those with being farre from Citties and teachers, that even so receive this commoditie to learne to se[t]: all songes upon the Lute, whereby they may obtaine the glorius title of Auctodidactes.³⁹⁸

And in his 1603 self-tuition book *The Schoole of Musicke*, Thomas Robinson promised that "I will (God willing) shew you how your Lute shall instruct you to sing insomuch that you may be your owne teacher, and save the charge of a singing man".³⁹⁹

³⁹⁷ *Le Roy 1568*, "The Author to the Reader" (unpaginated)

³⁹⁸ *Le Roy 1574*, sig. A3r.

³⁹⁹ *Robinson*, sig. C2v.

Taken at face value, these books were designed to fill a practical need, helping aspirant social-climbers who were geographically or financially disadvantaged to acquire the valuable cultural capital that lute-playing skills could offer. But I also want to explore the notion of autodidactic learning in a little more depth and consider whether this educational approach may have had alternative meanings attached to it. In order to do that, let us return to a passage from the autobiography of nobleman and diplomat Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, already discussed in this study but now finally quoted in full. Writing of his time as a student at University College, Oxford during the late 1590s, Lord Herbert revealed:

During this tyme of living in the University or at home, I did without any Master or Teacher Attaine the Knowledge of the French Italian and Spanish languages by the helpe of some bookes in Lattaine or English translated into those Idiums and the Dictionaries of those severall Languages. I attained also to sing my part at first sight in Musicke, and to play on the Lute with very litle or almost noe teaching. My Intention in Learning Languages being to make my selfe a citizen of the world as farr as it were possible, and my learning of Musicke was for this end that I might entertaine my selfe at home and together refresh my mynde after my studyes to which I was exceedingly inclined, and that I might not neede the company of younge men in whome I observed in those tymes much ill example and deboist [= debauchery].⁴⁰⁰

This is the most substantial reference to music-making in the entire autobiography and raises a number of key themes: his ability to sight-sing, stressing his competence in social music-making (cf. chapter 2) and his employment of music as a moral preservative (cf. chapter 5). But most striking of all is Herbert's eagerness to stress his self-taught status, both as a linguist and a musician. The latter claim is particularly notable as we can be fairly sure that he was being disingenuous about this; Herbert was also the owner and copyist of a large manuscript lutebook now in the Fitzwilliam Museum,

⁴⁰⁰ *The Life of Edward, First Lord Herbert of Cherbury, written by himself*, ed. J. M. Shuttleworth (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 16-17.

Cambridge⁴⁰¹ which contains fairly conclusive evidence of the input of at least one teacher, the little-known lutenist-composer Cuthbert Hely.⁴⁰² And, more recently, Christopher Morrongiello has argued that the corrections to pieces by Daniel Bacheler in this manuscript are in the composer's own hand, perhaps suggesting that Herbert had received tuition from him too.⁴⁰³ Of course, it might be the case that, when writing his memoirs in c.1640, Herbert meant merely to suggest that he had *started* his musical life as an autodidact (his lutebook dates from well after his time in Oxford). However, the impression given is that he is, at best, being economical with the truth, which in turn suggests that there was something to be gained from making such a claim.

My aim in this chapter, then, is to explore the motivations behind this widespread interest in self-directed learning for, whilst there was probably a pragmatic purpose for some (such as limited funds or the geographical inaccessibility of lessons), there may have been more sophisticated motives in the case of wealthy gentlemen-amateurs such as Herbert. In order to do this, I will concentrate in particular on how these tutor books were marketed and used, since most previous scholarly consideration of them has been focused either around text-critical judgments (i.e. which text contains the most printing errors?) or the complex bibliographical relationships between these sources (i.e. who plagiarised whom?). By interrogating these texts from the perspective of their actual usage as well as their content, we can see how these publications represented an important commodification of one particular kind of cultural capital – and offered a novel route to obtaining it.

⁴⁰¹ GB-Cfm Mus. MS 689. The literature on this manuscript is extensive; for a useful summary, see Spring, *Lute in Britain*, 232-34.

⁴⁰² Little is known about Hely beyond the works of his contained in Herbert's manuscript, although François-Pierre Goy is currently engaged in fresh archival research into his life.

⁴⁰³ Christopher Morrongiello, "Edward Collard (d.1600) and Daniel Bacheler (d.1619): a critical study and edition of their lute music," (D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 2005), i, 156-63.

Printed instrumental instruction books in England, c.1565-1610

A small but significant body of music tutor books appeared as the burgeoning English music printing industry became established during the early years of Elizabeth's reign.

Table 6.1 Chronological overview of instrumental self-tuition books using tablature notation published in England c.1565-1610.

Date	Book
[1565/6]	John Alde. <i>The Science of Lutyng.</i>
[1566/7]	Robert Ballard. <i>An Exortation to all Kynde of Men how they shulde learn to play of the lute.</i>
1568	Adrian Le Roy. <i>A Briefe and easye instru[c]tion [lute]</i>
[1569]	[Adrian Le Roy. <i>An instruction to the Gitterne.</i>]
1574	Adrian Le Roy. <i>A briefe and plaine Instruction to set all Musicke of eight divers tunes in Tabletoe for the Lute</i>
1593	William Barley. <i>A new booke of Citterne Lessons</i>
1596	William Barley. <i>A new Booke of Tabliture</i> [for lute, bandora, orpharion]
[1597]	William Haskins. <i>A playne and perfect Instruction for learnynge to play on ye virginalles</i>
1603	Thomas Robinson. <i>The Schoole of Musicke.</i> [lute, viol, and voice]
1609	Thomas Robinson. <i>New citharen lessons.</i>
1610	Robert Dowland. <i>Varietie of Lute Lessons.</i>

The relative scarcity of such works (when compared with the output of the continental presses) may be attributable to two factors. Firstly, the technological equipment (i.e. tablature font) and know-how needed in order to print lute music came relatively late to England.⁴⁰⁴ Secondly, the marketplace for printed music in England was controlled by Thomas Tallis and William Byrd under the terms of the royal patent they held between 1575 and 1596; both men were apparently indifferent to lute music as composers (and also to printing instrumental music more generally). It is striking that the years immediately following the expiry of their patent saw not only the publication of

⁴⁰⁴ See D. W. Krummel, *English Music Printing 1553-1700* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1975), 102-11.

Barley's three tablature books, but also anthologies including cittern music by Holborne, consort music with tablature parts by Morley, and of course John Dowland's *First Booke of Songes* (which seems to have instigated the short-lived craze for printed lute-songs in England).⁴⁰⁵

Although the didactic musical literature of early modern England also included theoretical tracts, I have focused here only on those teaching instrumental skills through tablature notation. Back in chapter 1, the benefits of tablature as a means of widening access to musical skills were discussed, so although my main interest here lies with the volumes for lute, I have also included some discussion of primers for closely related instruments such as the cittern, gittern, and bandora.⁴⁰⁶ As well as sharing a notational system, Ian Harwood also showed that these instruments were very often approached using a common playing technique; as such, any distinction between the lute tutors and these would seem to be an artificial one.⁴⁰⁷

Although I have explored the musical and pedagogical content of these volumes as a primary concern, the prefatory material they contain often says something more about the motivations of their producers and their target consumers. I have also undertaken first-hand examinations of the vast majority

⁴⁰⁵ William Haskins also registered a volume in keyboard tablature with the Stationers' Company on 7 March 1597/98: *A playne and perfect Instruction for learnynge to play on ye virginalles by hand or by booke both by notes and by letters or Tabliture never heretofore sett out*; see Edward Arber, ed. *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London 1554-1660* (London: privately printed, 1875-94), iii, 81. No copy is known to survive, and it is possible that it was registered but never actually published.

⁴⁰⁶ The accessibility offered by tablature notation has also been stressed in recent work on the printed Spanish vihuela tutors. See John Griffiths, "Juan Bermudo, Self-instruction, and the Amateur Instrumentalist," in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, eds. Russell E. Murray, Susan Forscher Weiss & Cynthia J. Cyrus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 129-30; Deborah Lawrence, "The Music of Social Climbing: Spanish Vihuela Prints as Commonplace Books," *Musical Quarterly* 96 (2013): 148.

⁴⁰⁷ Ian Harwood, "Thomas Robinson's 'Generall Rules'," *Lute Society Journal* 20 (1978): 18-22.

of the surviving copies in order to understand better their status as objects in early modern material culture; evidence taken from bindings and ownership marks is often revealing about the markets for these volumes, and manuscript annotations in early printed books often demonstrate something about how readers engaged with these texts.⁴⁰⁸ In **Appendix 2**, I provide a summary listing of all known copies including brief information about bibliographic features including notable bindings, marginalia, and provenance data. As well as synthesising information currently scattered across a good deal of secondary sources, I also include some recently rediscovered copies not listed in standard bibliographic reference works such the *English Short-Title Catalogue*.⁴⁰⁹

I have also included information about what might be termed “ghost” publications, that is, books known from entries in the Stationers’ Company registers or booksellers’ trade catalogues but of which no copies are known to survive. The requirement in England that every new title was registered with the Worshipful Company of Stationers prior to its production means that we can be more confident about the scope of the English print marketplace than in some other geographical areas. And although titles were sometimes registered but apparently never printed, even this scenario tells us that somebody thought that there was a market for such a title, even if ultimately the project never came to fruition.

Sixteenth-century publications:

i) Two “ghosts”

The two earliest didactic lute sources in England are both now known only from entries in the Stationers’ Register.⁴¹⁰ Nothing is known about their content and it might be that they were never even produced following their

⁴⁰⁸ In the handful of cases where first-hand examination was impossible (due either to economic constraints or the restricted availability of sources), I have been fortunate to be able to rely on specialist advice from various curators and scholars, and on digital surrogates.

⁴⁰⁹ For the online version of the *English Short-Title Catalogue*, see: <http://estc.bl.uk> (accessed 10 September 2013)

⁴¹⁰ See Arber, *Company of Stationers*, i, 298 (Alde) and i, 343 (Ballard).

registration. Since John Alde, who registered *The Science of Lutyng*, was well-known as printer of broadsides, it is possible that this publication at least took that form. Indeed, broadsides bearing lute instructions were quite common on the continent, as Dinko Fabris and others have shown, and the rather fragile and ephemeral format of such publications might also explain why no copies are extant.⁴¹¹

ii) The Le Roy lute volumes

Two lute tutor-books by the French royal lutenist Adrian Le Roy survive in contemporary English translations. The first of these, published in 1568, is based on a work no longer extant.⁴¹² This volume contains a set of twenty-five pedagogical rules, outlining the fundamental rudiments of tablature notation and some basic instrumental technique. It also includes some simple repertoire, much of it straightforward dance music suitable for beginners. A second Le Roy translation was published in 1574, again based upon a lost French original. This work is really three books in one: the first section is an intabulation treatise, the second essentially reproduces the twenty-five rules of the 1568 book, and the third presents a selection of simple repertoire, mainly psalm tunes and French chansons. It is the first book that is particularly noteworthy, a step-by-step instruction concerning the intabulation of vocal polyphony for the lute. Le Roy uses eleven four-voice French chansons by Lassus (plus one by Arcadelt) to demonstrate this process; each is given as a plain, note-for-note intabulation, then followed by an elaborated (“more finelier handled”) version employing idiomatic decoration.

⁴¹¹ Dinko Fabris. “Lute tablature instructions in Italy: a survey of the *regole* from 1507 to 1759”. In *Performance on Lute, Guitar, and Vihuela: Historical Practice and Modern Interpretation*, ed. Victor Anand Coelho (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 42-45; Kenneth Sparr, “An Unknown and Unique Broadside Lute Instruction,” *Lute Society Journal* 27 (1987): 30-34. On musical instructions on broadsheets more generally, see Jessie Ann Owens, “You *Can* Tell a Book by its Cover: Reflections on format in English Music ‘Theory’”, in *Music Education*, ed. Murray *et al.*, 361-68.

⁴¹² Ian Harwood, “On the Publication of Adrian Le Roy’s Lute Instructions,” *Lute Society Journal* 18 (1976): 30-36.

The emphasis on intabulation here is, of course, curiously at odds with the surviving manuscript sources of the English lute tradition. With the exception of the various Paston manuscripts (which in any case contain an unusually high concentration of Continental repertoire), English manuscripts tend to focus upon ballad tunes and pieces derived from grounds, not to mention popular dance-forms such as the pavan and galliard (as we noted in connection with *Mynshall* back in chapter 4). However, the arrangement of vocal music *was* very much the focus of printed Continental collections – see, for instance, the various Phalese anthologies, the publications of the Spanish vihuelists, and Italian didactic sources such as Vincenzo Galilei’s *Il Fronimo* (1568, rev. ed. 1584). Nevertheless, there are some indicators that these kinds of intabulation practices were being adopted in England, even if the musical evidence is now fairly scant. For instance, Lady Grace Mildmay (c.1552-1620) wrote in her autobiography that “also every day I spent some time in playing on my lute and setting songs of five parts thereunto and practised my voice in singing of psalms”.⁴¹³ Elsewhere, a short tablature fragment of the opening of an Arcadelt madrigal survives in a manuscript at York Minster, apparently a sketch produced during the course of the intabulation process.⁴¹⁴ It remains possible, of course, that these are just isolated remnants of a much more widespread trend for intabulating vocal music in England, but, from the scope of surviving manuscript sources, this seems unlikely. Instead, it is tempting to view the two Le Roy books as continental publications that were literally translated for the English market without any modification of their content to suit the differing needs and tastes of this new readership. Certainly, the unthinkingly literal translation of the prefatory material to the 1568 volume suggests that this was the case, telling its English readers that “there be an infinite number of good wits in francke, the which for that then cannot all dwell in or neere the Cittie of Paris”.⁴¹⁵

In between these two important lute publications, another translation of an

⁴¹³ Linda Pollock, *With Faith and Physic: The Life of a Tudor Gentlewoman, Lady Grace Mildmay, 1552-1620* (London: Collins Brown, 1993), 35.

⁴¹⁴ York Minster MS M 91 (S)

⁴¹⁵ *Le Roy 1568*, “The Author to the Reader”.

instrumental book by Le Roy appeared in England. In the second part of his *Catalogue of English printed Bookes* (1595), Andrew Maunsell had listed “A briefe and plaine instruction for to [*sic.*] learne the Tablature to Conduct and dispose the hand unto the Gitterne”, although no copies were known until comparatively recently.⁴¹⁶ As early as 1963, Daniel Hartz had suggested that this was an English translation of a 1551 guitar book by Le Roy, but it was not until the late 1970s that John Ward was able to confirm his hunch with the discovery of two leaves from this (probably discarded proof sheets), now in the Van Pelt Library, University of Pennsylvania.⁴¹⁷ Shortly after Ward’s discovery, Peter Duckers, an amateur British lutenist, unearthed additional fragments from a copy of this work which had been extracted from the binding of an early Elizabethan devotional book and were being offered for sale at an antique fair near Lancaster, UK. These latter fragments subsequently passed into the collection of Robert Spencer and are now amongst his papers held at the Royal Academy of Music library. Fortuitously, these fragments also come from the same portion of the book as Ward’s, permitting reconstruction of a short sequence of the book’s contents.⁴¹⁸

iii) William Barley’s tablature books

William Barley was not a musician at all but rather a businessman – a publisher, printer, and bookseller – with a very shrewd eye for the market and a keen sense of what would sell.⁴¹⁹ Although best known amongst musicologists for the four musical tutor books he published in 1596, he was apparently

⁴¹⁶ Andrew Maunsell, *The Seconde parte of the Catalogue of English printed Bookes* (London: James Roberts for Andrew Maunsell, 1595), 18.

⁴¹⁷ Daniel Hartz, “An Elizabethan Tutor for the Guitar,” *Galpin Society Journal* 16 (1963): 3-21; John M. Ward, “Sprightly and Cheerful Musick,” 16-17, 107-8.

⁴¹⁸ Discussed in James Tyler & Paul Sparks, *The Guitar and its Music From the Renaissance to the Classical Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 26-29. Tyler’s account of their discovery differs slightly from Duckers’ own version (Peter Duckers, personal communication, October 2010).

⁴¹⁹ On Barley, see John L. Lievsay, “William Barley, Elizabethan printer and bookseller,” *Studies in Bibliography* 8 (1956): 219-26; J. A. Lavin, “William Barley, Draper and Stationer,” *Studies in Bibliography* 22 (1969): 214-223; Gerald D. Johnson, “William Barley, ‘Publisher & Seller of Bookes’, 1591-1614,” *The Library*, 6th ser., 11 (1989): 10-46.

responsible for another “ghost” volume that appeared in 1593 entitled *A new booke of Citterne Lessons with a plaine and easie instruction for to learne the Tablature*. Although no copies survive, it was registered by John Danter in the Stationers’ Register and the fact that it too was listed in Maunsell’s catalogue suggests that it actually made it into print.⁴²⁰ John Ward has speculated that Thomas Robinson compiled this volume, suggesting (not entirely convincingly, it must be said) that the title of his *New Citharen Lessons* (1609) implies that he had already been responsible for some “old cittern lessons”.⁴²¹

Following Rowbothams’s 1574 Le Roy translation, over twenty years passed before another lute tutor was published in England. As a number of scholars have observed, William Barley’s *New Booke of Tabliture* was conceived as a modular publication, with four individual sections available on a “pick and mix” basis: a theoretical treatise entitled *The Pathway to Music* and three tutor books for plucked instruments (lute, bandora and orpharion).⁴²² Each component has a separate title page and is independently paginated, although only the lute volume contains a full layer of prefatory material. The three instrumental books each have different musical content and the bandora book also contains a number of songs (with an untexted melody line in mensural notation).⁴²³

Barley’s modern-day reputation amongst musicologists is primarily as a pedlar of pirated texts. Two of the most prominent composers of his age, John Dowland and Anthony Holborne, issued music-books in 1597 in which they complained about their music being ripped off; “there have bin divers Lute-lessons of mine lately printed without my knowledge, falce and unperfect”, as

⁴²⁰ Arber, *Register of Stationers*, ii, 604; Maunsell, *Seconde parte of the Catalogue*, 18.

⁴²¹ Ward, “Sprightly and Cheerful Musicke”, 68-70.

⁴²² Perhaps the first to note this was John M. Ward, “Barley’s Songs without words,” *Lute Society Journal* 12 (1970): 14. For further evidence, see Ian Harwood, *Wire Strings at Helmingham Hall: an instrument and a Music Book*. Lute Society Booklets 10 (Guildford: Lute Society, 2005), 40.

⁴²³ Discussed in Ward, “Barley’s Songs,” 5-22.

Dowland put it.⁴²⁴ Less frequently noted is the fact that the twenty-four pedagogical rules contained in Barley's lute volume are clearly derived from the twenty-five in the earlier Le Roy volumes – clearly, his propensity for plagiarism extended beyond purely musical texts.⁴²⁵

Although the lute music contained in Barley's volume is far from easy, it does contain some didactic features such as right-hand fingering dots and hold lines. But there is certainly no sense of graded progression detectable across the volume, which instead comes across as a selection of the best English solo lute music in circulation during the 1590s, including several works by John Dowland and Francis Cutting. It is very difficult to see how this book could “serve as a schoolmaster”, as the preface suggests, since the gap between the rudimentary matters covered in the pedagogical rules and the repertoire that follows is a large one. Overall, William Barley seems to have been an opportunist who spotted a gap in the marketplace and set about filling it.⁴²⁶

Seventeenth-century publications

So far, the autodidact tablature books we have considered have all been modest oblong quarto volumes which, as Jessie Ann Owens has recently highlighted, was the conventional format for the publication of relatively inexpensive didactic texts.⁴²⁷ These volumes also all seem to be the product of opportunist entrepreneurial thinking rather than the work of professional musicians; for instance, the translator John Alford wrote the dedicatory preface to *Le Roy 1568*, whereas *Le Roy 1574* features a dedication to Edward Seymour by James Rowbotham, the printer. Barley was certainly not a musician either and, although it has been suggested that he employed a professional lutenist

⁴²⁴ Dowland, *First Booke of Songes*, f.A1r; also see Anthony Holborne, *The Cittharn Schoole* (London: Peter Short, 1597), f.[A2]. For a reasoned defence of the quality of Barley's texts (when compared with other contemporary music prints), see Ward, “Dowland Miscellany,” 123-33.

⁴²⁵ Ward, “Dowland Miscellany,” 125-26.

⁴²⁶ It should be noted that these musical self-tutor books appeared from his press at around the same time as “teach-yourself” volumes on other topics: e.g. *The pathway to knowledge* (1596; covering weights, measures, and accountancy) and *A booke of curious and strange inventions, called the first part of needleworkes* (1596).

⁴²⁷ Owens, “You Can Judge a Book,” 351-57.

to prepare and edit the copy, Barley was clearly the main beneficiary from this enterprise.⁴²⁸ After all, it was Barley who dedicated the volume to Countess Bridget of Sussex (and presumably enjoyed any reward that this gesture produced – probably the real source of Dowland’s and Holborne’s irritation). In summary, those sixteenth-century lute tutor books are essentially just “products” without an associated author-figure, somewhat cynical attempts to commodify the process of learning this musical skill – and of course it remains debatable as to whether they were even fit for this purpose.

The beginning of the next century apparently saw a distinct shift in the ways that lute tutor books were produced and marketed in England. Two volumes survive from the first decade of the seventeenth century, both large anthologies of music in folio format and associated directly with lutenist-composers as authorial figures rather than cobbled together by other agents. Both of the authors, Thomas Robinson and Robert Dowland, were well-known instrumentalists and teachers and, although their books sit poles apart musically, they had much the same underlying purpose: they served as vehicles for the self-promotion of their authors who were using print to underline their credentials and advance their career prospects.⁴²⁹

i) Thomas Robinson’s tutor books

Robinson’s *Schoole of Musicke* (1603) is in many ways much more than merely a lute tutor, although that is chiefly where its interest lies for this study. After prefatory material by Robinson and his dedication of the volume to James I, there is a lengthy passage set in the form of a dialogue which contains the precepts of lute instruction, i.e. the basics of tablature notation and playing technique. After this, a substantial layer of lute music follows, leading to a

⁴²⁸ Ward suggested Francis Cutting (“Dowland Miscellany,” 124), although Matthew Spring disagreed (*Lute in Britain*, 140). Ian Harwood (*Wire Strings at Helmingham Hall*, 48-51) suggested that Cutting died part-way through the project and it was rushed to completion.

⁴²⁹ Anthony Holborne’s *Cittharn Schoole* (London: Peter Short, 1597) is another important example of a single-author tablature anthology which appeared at around this time, but it falls outside the scope of this discussion as it is just an anthology of repertoire, containing no explicitly didactic content.

section of “Rules to instruct you to Sing”, using a viol (in tablature) as a guide, doubling the voice at all times.

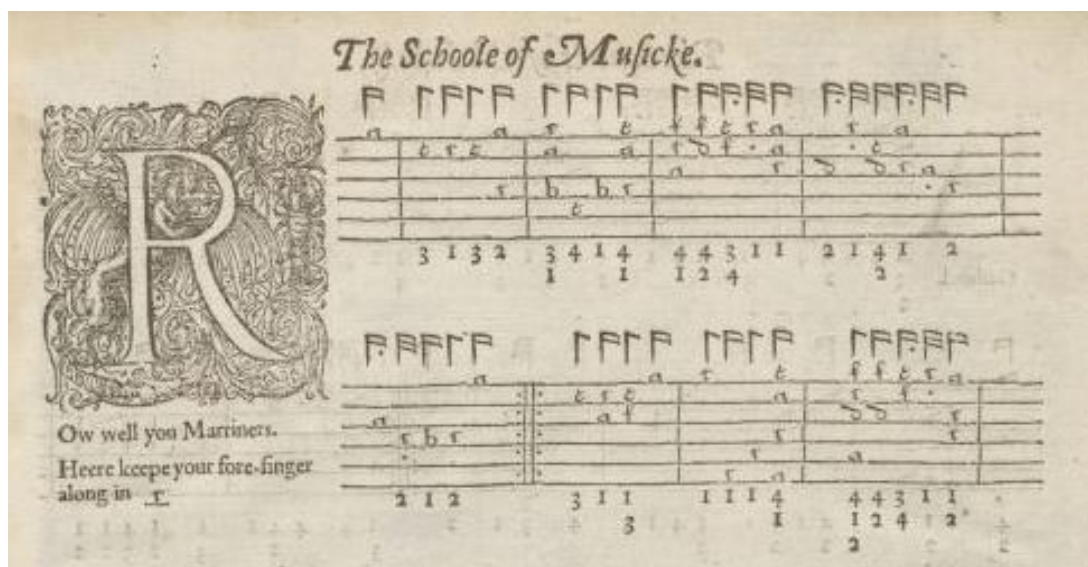
Since Robinson’s prefatory and instructional dialogue is the subject of an extended discussion later in this chapter, my focus here is on the musical content of the volume. The *Schoole of Musicke* is notable in that the lute repertoire it contains concurs more closely with the contents of surviving English manuscript sources than that of any other of the English pedagogical prints. Just as we observed in *Mynshall*, Robinson includes settings of numerous popular ballad tunes, pieces based on standard ground-bass progressions (such as the *passamezzo antico* and *The Spanish Pavan*) and various Elizabethan ‘evergreens’, usually with virtuosic divisions added. Furthermore, Robinson opens his volume with a handful of treble-and bass-duets – that is, single line treble parts and simple repeated chordal accompaniments, suitable for student and teacher to play together – just as we find on the opening pages of didactic manuscripts such as the *Board, Folger* and *JP*. In terms of musical content, the *Schoole of Musicke* is essentially a “greatest hits” compilation of a sort, quite a contrast with the earlier Le Roy volumes that clearly stood apart from the English manuscript tradition of their day.

Robinson’s collection is also more overtly didactic in tone than the other English printed sources. Although it does not appear to be entirely progressively ordered, there is some implicit grading of the pieces in evidence, with simple works and treble/bass duets at the beginning and much more challenging works (including equal-lute duets, where the two instrumentalists swap roles) towards the end. The second work in the collection is a useful case in point; this treble-bass duet arrangement entitled “Twenty ways upon the bells” is built upon a short simple accompaniment pattern, repeated *ad infinitum*.⁴³⁰ The treble part contains a good deal of step-wise melodic material, and rarely demands more than one note at a time, making it ideal for a novice. The notation is also unusually prescriptive, indicating not only which right-hand fingers to use but (more unusually) left-hand fingering too.

⁴³⁰ *Robinson*, sig. Dv.

Elsewhere in the volume, there are other suggestions of pedagogical design. “Row well you Marriners” (sig. D2r) begins with some advice on fingering, and also includes fully worked out left-hand fingerings, even for the chordal passages that it contains.⁴³¹

Figure 6.1 *Robinson, “Row well you Marriners”, sig. D2r (detail).*
Reproduced by permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.



The *Schoole of Musicke* does, however, also include more challenging material later on; by the second half of the book, neither right- or left-hand fingerings are indicated, and some of the solo works are genuinely taxing; Robinson’s setting of “My Lord Willobies welcome home” includes perhaps the most elaborate set of divisions of all the surviving settings of this popular ballad tune.⁴³²

Overall, Robinson’s *Schoole of Musicke* shows an important shift of emphasis amongst the English tutor books. Most notably, it comes across as a collection with realistic didactic applications, whereas the volumes by Barley (and, as we shall see, the *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*) are anthologies of attractive but very difficult solo music. They are totally unsuitable for an unsupervised beginner, and give the impression that their printed instructions were added more as a

⁴³¹ *Robinson*, sig. D2r.

⁴³² *Robinson*, sig. K2v-Lr.

selling point. Furthermore, Robinson's collection appears well-judged towards the tastes of his English readership, unlike the two Le Roy volumes which were direct translations of French originals with no adaptation of the musical contents made to suit the English market. In fact, it could be said that Robinson's collection almost constitutes an English pedagogical manuscript in printed form (if this oxymoron can be forgiven). Rather than simply offering users a repertory to learn and replicate, it presents them with a compendium of musical "processes" to assimilate (chord progressions, melodic formulae, famous tunes, etc.), all assiduously annotated with performance-related information. And, just as we saw with the Mynshall lutebook back in chapter 4, Robinson's book would teach you all that you would need to know in order to participate in an Elizabethan "jam-session": well-known duets, popular tunes and standard chord progressions, just as today's jazz musicians all know slightly different versions of the same core repertory of "standards". Robinson's book was astutely designed in order to endow its users with a set of social skills as well as musical ones. It is also pertinent to note that a later work by Robinson, his *New Citharen Lessons* (1609), displayed a similar emphasis on public-domain musical materials (including a number of the same pieces rearranged) and, as Ian Harwood has pointed out, the same "general rules" as the lute book.⁴³³

ii) Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*

As early as 1597, John Dowland had stated that "I purpose shortly my selfe to set forth the choisest of all my Lessons in print, and also an introduction for fingering[...]", a promise that he reiterated a dozen years later in the preface to his translation of the *Micrologus* by Andreas Ornithoparcus.⁴³⁴ In the event, he produced another translation – of part of Jean-Baptiste Besard's *Thesaurus*

⁴³³ Harwood, "Thomas Robinson's 'Generall Rules'," 18-22. For a lengthy discussion of Robinson and his cittern collection in particular, see Ward "Sprightly and Cheerful Musicke," 60-82.

⁴³⁴ Dowland, *First Booke of Songs or Ayres*, sig. A1r; Andreas Ornithoparcus, *His Micrologus*, trans. John Dowland (London: [Thomas Snodham] for Thomas Adams, 1609), sig. [A]v: "My industry and on-set herein [...] shall encourage me shortly to divulge a more peculiar worke of mine owne: namely, My Observations and Directions concerning the Art of Lute-playing".

Harmonicus (1603)⁴³⁵ – and his own rather miscellaneous “Other Necessary Observations belonging to the Lute”, both of which were published within his son Robert’s *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* (London, 1610).⁴³⁶

Following these prefatory instructions, however, the *Varietie of Lute-lessons* is first and foremost a compendium of the most significant solo lute music available at that time from both England and across Europe. The works are arranged by genre, in the manner of Continental lute anthologies: first, complex multi-voiced fantasias, then dance movements – pavans, then galliards, followed by the lighter forms such as almains, corantos and voltes. Besides works by the two Dowlands, it contains items “selected out of the best approved authors, as well beyond the Seas as of our owne Country”.⁴³⁷ In the latter category are demanding works by Holborne and Bacheler; in the former, items by Diomedes Cato, Laurencini, and Moritz, Landgrave of Hesse, *inter alia*.

There are some superficial similarities with Thomas Robinson’s earlier primer, not least the emphasis – largely absent from the sixteenth-century volumes – that is placed on the notion of musical authorship. Similarly, it is another folio volume, and even uses the same template for its title-page as Robinson’s book; presumably it was the standard frontispiece supplied with the tablature font used to set this volume. But it is here that the similarities end for, whilst Robinson’s materials are genuinely suited to the very earliest stages of learning, this anthology has no obvious didactic intent. Much of the music is very technically demanding and there is no sense of graded progression here. Indeed, the elder Dowland’s rendering of this advice by Besard seems to apply to the whole work: “yet thinke not I set it forth to the end to draw thee away from the lively teaching of thy Maister, (whose speach doth farre exceede all writing [...]).”⁴³⁸ It is very difficult to believe that a genuine autodidact would make much progress armed only with this volume, which instead comes across

⁴³⁵ Jean-Baptiste Besard, *Thesaurus Harmonicus* (Cologne, 1603).

⁴³⁶ In the *Varietie*, Robert still refers elsewhere to “[when] my Father hath finished his greater Worke, touching the Art of Lute-playing” (sig. A2r).

⁴³⁷ *Varietie*, title page (unpaginated)

⁴³⁸ *Varietie*, sig. Br.

as a cosmopolitan showcase anthology. It is an important collection of the best lute music available from across Europe, and its association with John Dowland, the most famous lutenist of the age, probably served a dual purpose: to help launch Robert's career but also to publicise John's own availability as a teacher.⁴³⁹

The dissemination and use of music tutor books

Previous work on these volumes has encompassed text-critical issues, the preparation of critical editions of their music, and the discussion of the bibliographic problems that they pose. But, taken collectively, these manuals are yet to be considered in the light of more recent methodological advances overseen by book historians, who have begun to explore the material aspects and paratextual materials of early printed books as well as just their primary textual content. Furthermore, rather than remaining focused on authors and other agents of textual production, recent research has also sought to cast light on the readers and users of such materials, both in order to explore how they shaped the production of texts and how they engaged with those in their possession.

And so we might ask: who actually bought these kinds of music books, and why? How were these volumes employed, and in what kinds of educational and social contexts? Did they support genuine self-directed learning, or were they used in other ways by teachers and novices alike? In order to address these questions, it is necessary to collate a good deal of fragmentary evidence about both the producers and consumers of these books. By "producers", I mean anyone who was involved in any way with the production and sale of these texts, including authors, translators, printers, stationers and booksellers. "Consumers", on the other hand, can include anybody who can be said to have owned or used these texts, whether or not they can be identified specifically by name. As the book historian Roger Chartier has pointed out, "a book changes

⁴³⁹ On Dowland's influence over the career of his son, see Poulton, *John Dowland*, 387-88. For Dowland's teaching career, see Gale, "John Dowland, celebrity lute teacher," 205-18.

by the fact that it does not change [...] when its mode of reading changes”.⁴⁴⁰ In other words, the same text can accrue multiple meanings according to how it is treated by its various users. And, of course, these multiple meanings may be quite different to those envisaged by its producers; Elizabeth Eisenstein (amongst others) has warned of “the need to discriminate between ‘audiences’ – that is, actual readership as determined by library catalogues, subscription lists and other objective data – and ‘publics’, the more hypothetical targets envisaged by authors and publishers, those to whom they address their works”.⁴⁴¹ In order to do this, I will be drawing upon a range of evidence including probate inventories plus ownership marks and manuscript annotations in surviving copies. With such a small number of surviving copies available and limited contextual evidence, we must be cautious about drawing wide-ranging conclusions from such an investigation but, nevertheless, this approach yields some important new insights into the uses of these texts and will surely be expanded upon as additional new evidence comes to light in the future.

i) Producers

Evidence concerning the commercial production of printed music in England is very patchy. Some information can be gleaned about the availability of such volumes from sources such as booksellers’ inventories and trade catalogues, but little is known about production costs, print-runs and profit margins associated with the publication of English music books, apart from in isolated cases such as the publication of Dowland’s *Second Booke of Songs*.⁴⁴² Further

⁴⁴⁰ Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 16.

⁴⁴¹ Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), i, 64.

⁴⁴² The Dowland case is only documented because of an associated legal dispute; see Margaret Dowling, “The Printing of John Dowland’s *Second Booke of Songs or Ayres*”, *The Library*, 4th ser., 12 (1932): 365-80; In contrast, a good deal is already known about the economics of printing Spanish vihuela books. See, for instance, John Griffiths & Warren E. Hultberg, “Santa Maria and the Printing of Instrumental Music in Sixteenth-Century Spain,” in *Livro de homenagem a Macario Santiago Kastner*, eds. Maria Fernanda Cidrais Rodrigues, Manuel Morais & Rui Veiera Nery (Lisbon: Fundacao

difficulties arise when looking at booksellers' accounts and inventories, which are often frustratingly non-specific; for example, an entry for a "lutebook" might refer to a printed book or a manuscript volume (which could be purchased either as a blank tablature book or a ready-copied "scribal publication").⁴⁴³ We do know, however, that no new lute tablatures were printed in England between 1574 and 1596, so we can assume that the "luting book" stocked by Shrewsbury stationer Roger Ward in 1585 was either a copy of one of the Le Roy volumes or a blank or ready-copied manuscript notebook.⁴⁴⁴ We can conjecture the same about the "tua lute bukes" listed in the inventory of Scottish printer Thomas Bassandyne (d.1577).⁴⁴⁵

The appearance of trade catalogues (in England, from the time of Andrew Maunsell's onwards) provides us with another body of useful evidence.⁴⁴⁶ These give us an indication of which texts were still in circulation, and it is clear that there was a market for older-style lute-song collections and other Elizabethan and Jacobean musical anthologies even as late as the end of the seventeenth century. It is not always entirely clear, however, whether an entry in a bookseller's catalogue meant that a title was actually in stock, or merely that it

Calouste Gulbenkian, 1992), 347-60; Griffiths, "Printing the Art of Orpheus: Vihuela Tablatures in Sixteenth-Century Spain," in *Early Music Printing and Publishing in the Iberian World*, eds. Iain Fenlon & Tess Knighton (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2006), 181-214.

⁴⁴³ I adopt the term "scribal publication" here from Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), esp. ch. 2, who discusses the circulation of seventeenth-century viol music in this way. Amongst extant lute manuscripts, *Welde* is widely regarded as a "scribal publication" – see Ian Harwood & Stewart McCoy, eds. *The Welde Lute Book*, Lute Society Facsimiles 4 (Guildford: Lute Society, 2004), viii. On the production of printed blank music-papers, see Iain Fenlon & John Milsom, "'Ruled Paper Imprinted': Music Paper and Patents in Sixteenth-Century England," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 37 (1984): 139-63.

⁴⁴⁴ Alexander Rodger, "Roger Ward's Shrewsbury Stock: an Inventory of 1585," *The Library*, 5th ser., 8 (1958): 252.

⁴⁴⁵ F. S. Ferguson, "Relations between London and Edinburgh printers and stationers (— 1640)," *The Library*, 4th ser., 8 (1927): 167.

⁴⁴⁶ For a useful list of extant early modern trade catalogues which list music books, see Owens, "You *Can* Judge a Book", 350-51.

was considered obtainable on request. However, there is one extant 1691 sale catalogue which makes it clear that Robinson's *Schoole of Musicke* was still in stock almost a century after its publication. Amongst the numerous English music publications from the turn of the seventeenth century listed is a copy of Philip Rosseter's *Ayres* (1601) with the note: "There is sow'd up with this above the School of Musick, by T. R."⁴⁴⁷

Furthermore, some booksellers' catalogues apparently functioned as bibliographies rather than lists of existing stock, offering (relatively) complete lists of previously printed musical works.⁴⁴⁸ With this in mind, it is notable that Maunsell's 1595 list includes just one entry under the heading 'Lute' – the 1574 Le Roy volume. Presumably it was felt that this had superseded the 1568 volume, which was no longer worth listing. Even more instructive is the *Catalogue of all the Musick-Bookes That have been printed in England*, compiled by John Playford in 1653.⁴⁴⁹ This single-sheet listing includes the three Barley treatises ("Lessons for the Lute, Orph. & Bando" under "Musick Books in quarto") but, notably omits both of the Le Roy volumes. This cannot be simply because the Le Roy tutors are a few decades older, since Playford *does* list even earlier titles such as Thomas Whythorne's 1571 *Songes* ("Withornes 4, 5 parts"). Instead, this perhaps suggests that Playford felt that there was no longer a market for the Le Roy books. As we have already seen, Barley had taken Le Roy's rules and presented them afresh, now within a musical context much more in keeping with English tastes and practices; in doing so, he apparently rendered the original Le Roy volumes redundant.

⁴⁴⁷ *A Catalogue of Ancient and Modern Musick Books, both Vocal and Instrumental, with Divers Treatises about the same, and Several Musical Instruments* [...] 1691, sig. A2r, items 20 & 21.

⁴⁴⁸ Chartier has identified several French booksellers' catalogues from the sixteenth century that served the same function; see Chartier, *Order of Books*, 61-88.

⁴⁴⁹ *Catalogue of all the Musick-Bookes That have been printed in England, either for Voyce or Instruments* (London: John Playford, 1653); reproduced in William C. Smith, "Playford: Some Hitherto Unnoticed Catalogues of Early Music," *Musical Times* 67, no. 1001 (1926), 637.

ii) Consumers

There are several kinds of evidence which can reveal a person's possession of a particular text, including ownership marks in extant copies, entries in probate materials, library records and booklists/inventories. However, again we are faced with the problematic nature of surviving evidence: an entry for a "lutebook" in an inventory can again refer to either a manuscript or a printed volume, and we must take care not to assume that all "music books" listed in English inventories were necessarily English ones. Indeed, there is plentiful evidence of the acquisition of imported music books amongst the English gentry during this period and, whilst these are frequently fashionable Italian madrigal publications, there were clearly also some Continental books for plucked instruments circulating in England.⁴⁵⁰ We have already seen how the compiler of the Dallis lutebook had access to printed Continental exemplars, and the British Library's copy of five Le Roy guitar books (all French editions from the 1550s, bound together as one) may well have been used by a similarly close-knit circle of Englishmen (if the various signatures on the front flyleaf are anything to go by).⁴⁵¹

Continental prints sometimes appeared in the collections of English noblemen too; Edward, Lord Conway possessed copies of tablature volumes from Spain and the Low Countries (as well as English didactic texts), and a copy of Phalese's *Theatrum Musicum* (1571) now in Cambridge University Library was once owned by Sir Thomas Knyvett, whose signature can be seen twice on the title-page.⁴⁵² The 1667 inventory of the Cheshire gentleman Sir Peter Leycester

⁴⁵⁰ On English music collections featuring continental prints, see Michael G. Brennan, "Sir Charles Somerset's Music Books," *Music & Letters* 74 (1993): 501-18; John Milsom, "The Nonsuch Music Library," in *Sundry Sorts of Music Books: Essays on the British Library Collections*, eds. Chris Banks, Arthur Searle, & Malcolm Turner (London: The British Library, 1993): 146-82; Iain Fenlon, "Michael Honnywood's Music Books," in *Sundry Sorts of Music Books*, 183-200.

⁴⁵¹ Discussed and transcribed by Ward, "Sprightly and Cheerful Musick", 16, n.58.

⁴⁵² Barra Boydell & Máire Egan-Buffet, "An early seventeenth-century library from Ulster: books on music in the collection of Lord Edward Conway (1602-55)," in *Music, Ireland and the seventeenth century*, eds. Barra Boydell & Kerry Houston (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009), 98-100. The Cambridge Phalese volume has the shelfmark M.8.7; listed

lists numerous items including various Elizabethan lute-song anthologies, theoretical texts, and a copy of Adriansen's *Pratum Musicum* (1584).⁴⁵³ However, these kinds of evidence must be treated with some caution for, as Jason Scott-Warren has pointed out, "a book owned is not necessarily a book read [...] Furthermore, much that is read is not owned. Reading matter is borrowed or shared, or it is too ephemeral to preserve in a collection, or it is too trivial to catalogue among the contents of a library or the property of its deceased owner".⁴⁵⁴

Turning to a consideration of the surviving books themselves, annotations in early printed books have recently begun to be recognised as an important object of study in themselves.⁴⁵⁵ Although musicologists have been relatively slow to follow the lead of book-historians in this respect, important recent work by Susan Weiss has begun to show that we can uncover a great deal about different users' responses to theoretical texts by exploring their marginal annotations.⁴⁵⁶ But whereas Weiss has focused on popular texts for which several exemplars survive, relatively few copies of the English lute tutor books are extant and, unsurprisingly, these are relatively free of annotations

in David McKitterick, *The Library of Sir Thomas Knyvett of Ashwellthorpe, c1539-1618* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

⁴⁵³ See Ward, "Sprightly and Cheerful Musick," 99-101.

⁴⁵⁴ Jason Scott-Warren, "News, Sociability, and Bookbuying in Early Modern England: The Letters of Sir Thomas Cornwallis," *The Library*, ser. 7, 1 (2000): 382-83.

⁴⁵⁵ Conversely, past generations of antiquarian book traders and library curators had sometimes sought to eliminate the traces of earlier readers. For a terrifying account of this, see William H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 151-78.

⁴⁵⁶ For a discussion of annotated copies of Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction*, see Susan Forscher Weiss, "Didactic Sources of Musical Learning in Early Modern England," in *Didactic Literature in England, 1500-1800: Expertise Constructed*, eds. Natasha Glaisyer & Sara Pennell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 56-62; Weiss, "Vandals, Students, or Scholars? Handwritten Clues in Renaissance Music Textbooks," in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, eds. Russell E. Murray, Susan Forscher Weiss, & Cynthia J. Cyrus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 207-46.

and markings.⁴⁵⁷ However, there are enough remaining traces that we can capture some important glimpses of how these books were used by their readers. And, taken together, these disparate forms of evidence – whilst fragmentary and sometimes problematic – can help us to address fundamental questions about the use of these English lute tutors: were they bought for their didactic content; as collections of music; received as gifts; or acquired as part of a collecting impulse? Were they used for self-directed learning, or as supplementary material to be used with a lute teacher? We can now begin to sketch a response to some of these questions, albeit an incomplete one.

i) Didactic usage

There is certainly evidence that the instructional content of these lute volumes was actually being studied, i.e. they weren't merely used as collections of music to play. For instance, the Bodleian Library copy of *Le Roy 1574* has some minor annotations to the “rules” and all three extant copies of *Robinson* have some additions.⁴⁵⁸ The Royal College of Music copy has some underlining and marginal comments added to the lute instructions⁴⁵⁹ whereas the British Library exemplar has solmisation syllables added to the vocal instructions later on in the volume.⁴⁶⁰ The Cambridge copy, on the other hand, has a psalm text underlaid on one page in the final section (where the music has only a text incipit). This suggests the importance of this material to its unidentified user; clearly, it wasn't only the lute music that was of interest.⁴⁶¹ Collectively, these examples show how the didactic materials within these volumes were being explored but it is still unclear whether this was self-directed learning of the kind advocated by these texts.

⁴⁵⁷ Copies often survived precisely because they were clean and therefore attractive to dealers, collectors, and curators.

⁴⁵⁸ Oxford, Bodleian Library, shelfmark: Douce R 120; for instance, the “common accordes” on f.68v have been numbered 1-22.

⁴⁵⁹ London, Royal College of Music, shelfmark: D110; underlining and partially illegible comment attached to passages on fingering technique (sigs. B2v and Cr)

⁴⁶⁰ London, British Library, shelfmark: K.2.d.1; sig. N2r – both psalms have solmisation syllables added.

⁴⁶¹ Cambridge University Library, shelfmark: Syn.3.60.1; text added (“O god that art my righteusesnes [...]”) to untexted psalm-setting on sig. Or.

ii) Teachers and experienced users

Even if autodidactic learning was the stated aim of most of these tutor books, it is also likely that they were used during conventional face-to-face tuition, just as instrumental teachers today will ask their pupils to buy a tutor book for use during lessons. In the sole surviving copy of *Le Roy 1568*, three of the simpler dance pieces feature manuscript annotations that might indicate the guidance of a teacher.⁴⁶² In each case, these three pieces for six-course lute have been amended to accommodate a larger nine-course instrument, a process that was surely beyond the capabilities of an unaided novice. Furthermore, the use of a nine-course instrument suggests that this volume had a rather longer pedagogical life-span than might be assumed – possibly even later than c.1600, when this had become the standard instrument employed for solo playing in England.

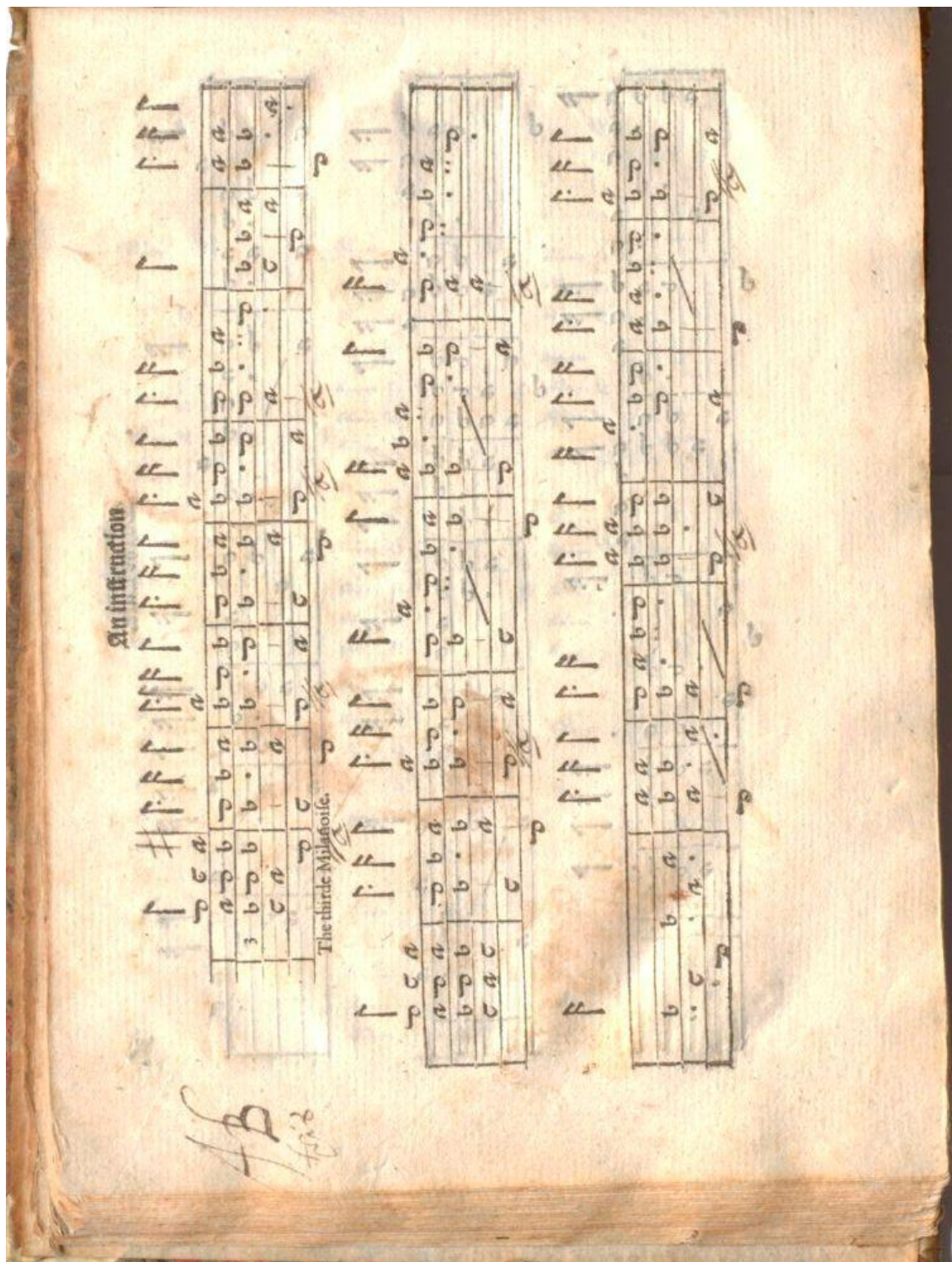
Figure 6.2a *Le Roy 1568*, f. 36v, bars 1-4.

a) printed 6-course version; b) amended for 9-course lute

The image displays two musical staves, labeled a) and b), representing different versions of a piece from *Le Roy 1568*, f. 36v, bars 1-4. Both staves are in 3/4 time and G minor (one flat).
 Staff a) shows the printed 6-course version. The upper staff (treble clef) contains a melody of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a bass line of quarter notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, G2.
 Staff b) shows the version amended for a 9-course lute. The upper staff is identical to staff a). The lower staff (bass clef) contains a more complex bass line: G2, A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. This lower line is written in a lower register than the printed version, indicating the use of a larger instrument.

⁴⁶² London, British Library, shelfmark: K.1.c.25; three “Gaillardes Milanoises” updated for a nine-course lute using F, E-flat, C diapasons (34v, 36v, 38v).

Figure 6.2b. Le Roy 1568, f. 36v (British Library copy: K.1.c.25).
Reproduced with permission of the British Library Board.



The Huntington Library copy of the Barley lute volume also contains a large number of annotations, in this case corrections to its very problematic printed text. These corrections (which are numerous and widespread throughout the volume) are not readily discernible using digital surrogates of this copy. Although I have not yet been able to undertake a detailed examination of this exemplar, **Fig. 6.3** serves as a sample, showing how a user has deleted tablature glyphs placed on the wrong line and inked them into the correct position:⁴⁶³



Figure 6.3. *Barley*, sig. F4r (Huntington Library copy); detail showing manuscript corrections. Reproduced by permission of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

This kind of editorial intervention requires a level of stylistic judgment and in-depth musical understanding well beyond what could be expected of a self-taught beginner. It is possible that this copy was either corrected by a teacher

⁴⁶³ San Marino, Huntington Library, shelfmark: RB 35074. I am grateful to Stephen Tabor for his correspondence on this matter, and hope to undertake a full examination of this copy in due course.

for use during a lesson, or that it was used by a more experienced player as a repository of music rather than as a didactic tool.

The idea of both the Barley volumes and Robert Dowland's *Varietie of Lute-lessons* serving as anthologies of repertoire for non-beginners has already been raised, and there is additional evidence of tablature primers being used in this way. Both extant copies of Thomas Robinson's *New Citharen Lessons* (1609) have been used as a starting point for further collecting of repertoire. The British Library copy has a couple of items added on a single page, whereas the copy in the Nanki Music Library, Tokyo has been extensively annotated throughout with additional pieces. Rather than being used to get started on the instrument, the latter copy gives the impression as being treated as a ready-made anthology to which additional, personalised choices have been added.⁴⁶⁴

iii) Other functions

Besides their obvious functions for either guided or private musical study, a number of other purposes can be associated with specific copies of the English tablature primers. For example, the copy of Barley's bandora and orpharion books recently discovered at Helmingham Hall is in an elaborate contemporary binding embossed with the name Edward Stanhope. Ian Harwood highlighted connections between Stanhope and William Barley (Stanhope was godfather to one of Barley's children), plausibly suggesting that this lavishly bound, personalised copy was a gift or presentation copy.⁴⁶⁵

Music books were acquired for other reasons too. The copy of *Robinson* in the famous music library of King Joao IV of Portugal was one of a number of English music publications he owned (although the only English lute tutor book, according to the 1649 catalogue). As David Cranmer has remarked, this was very much a private library, conceived for the personal edification of the monarch; as such, the Robinson volume was presumably not for self-directed

⁴⁶⁴ London, British Library, shelfmark: K.2.d.2; Tokyo, Nanki Music Library, shelfmark: BM-4540-ne. These additions are printed in Ward, "Sprightly and Cheerful Musick," 161-70.

⁴⁶⁵ Harwood, *Wire Strings at Helmingham Hall*, 33.

study *per se*, but kept there instead as a commodity within the collection and (perhaps) for more contemplative reflection and appreciation.⁴⁶⁶

Although the Portuguese royal music library was sadly destroyed by an earthquake during the eighteenth century, a somewhat happier tale is associated with an English lute tutor book once owned by another seventeenth-century collector. During his visit to London in 1630, the East Prussian aristocrat Achatius von Dohna-Schlobitten purchased a set of the complete printed works of John and Robert Dowland (including a copy of *Varietie of Lute-lessons*). These were originally bound together to form one volume, apparently forming a souvenir of his travels in England. The story of this book is a remarkable one, for it was the sole survivor from the family library which was destroyed by advancing Russian troops during World War II. It subsequently found its way into the Robert Spencer Collection in the Royal Academy of Music Library, London, although the volume has now been split and the contents bound separately.⁴⁶⁷

The paradox of “gentleman” owners

As we have noted already, these tutor books were frequently marketed as an alternative means of pursuing musical studies for those unable to afford or access a teacher. In this light, it is puzzling to discover them in amongst the collections of wealthy noblemen, particularly those who are known to have employed household musicians who might have provided conventional face-to-face tuition. For instance, the music collection of Edward, Lord Conway (1602-55) included a copy of *Le Roy 1574* as well as Barley's *The Pathway to Musick* and other theoretical texts.⁴⁶⁸ According to Boydell and Egan-Buffet, Conway's collection formed part of a working library (he had large libraries at his houses

⁴⁶⁶ David Cranmer, “English Music in the Library of King Joao IV of Portugal,” *Sederi: Yearbook of the Spanish and Portuguese Society for English Renaissance Studies* 16 (2006): 153-60.

⁴⁶⁷ See Tim Crawford, “Robert Spencer (1932-1997), lutenist and collector,” in *Collectionner la musique: au coeur de l'interprétation*, eds. Denis Herlin, Catherine Massip & Jean Duron (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 74-75.

⁴⁶⁸ Boydell & Egan-Buffet, “An early seventeenth-century library from Ulster,” 99, 103-105.

in both London and Ulster) rather than just a formal collection. In other words, this music was probably owned in order to be *used* rather than merely possessed or displayed and, given the presence of professional musicians in his household, it is possible that they were used as supplementary materials during lessons with them.

Another nobleman who frequently purchased music books was William Cavendish, 1st Earl of Devonshire (1551-1626) who amassed in particular a wide-ranging array of English lute-song and madrigal prints. As Lynn Hulse has demonstrated, his extant household accounts provide detailed information about his book-buying as well as his patronage of household musicians, music teachers, and the purchase of instruments and musical accessories.⁴⁶⁹ Cavendish's book-buying can be usefully considered alongside the book collection outlined in the manuscript miscellany of John Ramsey, a source well known to musicologists but frequently misrepresented. Amongst other things, Ramsey includes a lengthy list of book titles including a section of music which, like Cavendish's, represents a fine sample of English printed music from the period c.1595-1610.⁴⁷⁰ However, many scholars have failed to notice that this is a plan for a *projected* book collection, not an inventory of items that he already owned.⁴⁷¹ On f.118r, Ramsey explains that only those volumes asterisked are currently in his possession ("theise possest of noted w[i]th this Marke"); elsewhere he states that he intends to put together this collection, guided by the stationer William Ponsonby who is acting as a kind of personal shopper.⁴⁷²

One of the relatively few music books already owned by Ramsey was listed simply as "Robinson", most probably a copy of *The Schoole of Musicke*. Similarly, Cavendish's accounts for September 1604 include:

⁴⁶⁹ Lynn Hulse, "Hardwick MS 29: A new source for Jacobean lutenists," *The Lute* 26/2 (1986): 62-72.

⁴⁷⁰ Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 280, f.120r.

⁴⁷¹ e.g. Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, 187-88.

⁴⁷² See Michael Brennan, "William Ponsonby: Elizabethan Stationer," *Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography* 7 (1983): 91-110.

Six settes of english songs bookes vizt, 4. 5. & 6. partes of Watsons/
 Wilkes sett Est his madrigalls Rossesstors booke Dowlandes 3d booke/
 Robinson scoole of musicke, xxxix^s iiii^d.⁴⁷³

The similarity between the contents of Cavendish's collection and Ramsey's projected library is striking but perhaps unsurprising; the various madrigal prints and songbooks included were, after all, the most fashionable titles of the age. But it is also worth noting other connections between these two men. As I have discussed elsewhere, they both seem to have patronised the same circle of professional lutenists whose duties probably included tuition as well as other forms of household service; these included John Dowland, the lutesong-composer Michael Cavendish, one "Mr Piers", and (in the case of Ramsey) John Sturt, a royal lutenist associated with the compilation of *ML*, another pedagogical lute manuscript.⁴⁷⁴

Taken together, Ramsey and Cavendish make an interesting pair; both were wealthy gentlemen who frequently used their money for similar kinds of musical expenditure, sometimes including the same books and teachers. Both valued lute instruction as an activity and yet, despite the presence of those teachers in their households, bought Robinson's *Schoole of Musick*, a book ostensibly designed for autodidactic learning. Since both men were clearly aware of the social benefits of music-making – they frequently bought printed madrigals and consort music, after all – perhaps this is why they selected Robinson over, say, Barley's *New Booke of Tabliture*: for its duets and "public domain" pieces – the repertory one needed to know in order to join in with the communal music-making in their households.

Thomas Robinson's *The Schoole of Musicke* and the politics of the early modern music lesson

In the final part of this chapter, I focus on *Robinson* which is both the most overtly didactic and under-explored of the English tutor books. The reasons for this neglect are understandable enough. Robinson has been very much

⁴⁷³ Hulse, "Hardwick," 70.

⁴⁷⁴ Gale, "John Dowland, celebrity lute teacher," 213.

overshadowed by his countryman John Dowland and, although he reveals that he taught Queen Anna, wife of James I, whilst in Denmark, little is known about his life in England.⁴⁷⁵ There is certainly no indication that he achieved a post at the English court; instead, he appears to be another example of that most elusive of historical figures: the professional musician working largely in peripatetic household service. And although his *Schoole of Musicke* is perhaps the most useful (in didactic terms) of all the English lute tutors, it poses none of the complex bibliographical questions or controversial text-critical problems that some of the others have.

By examining the three extant copies of *Robinson* and other evidence of its dissemination, we have already begun to consider what Eisenstein called the “audiences” (or users) for this text. But I now want to focus upon the “publics” that Robinson had in mind when creating it, the hypothetical markets to which he addressed the work. For he seems to have pitched this product to a wide range of potential purchasers, perhaps aware of the plurality of functions and users already identified in this chapter. The lengthy layer of paratextual material that precedes the music is our main source of evidence here, comprising of a title page, dedicatory address and an address to the reader, followed by a lengthy set of pedagogical instructions presented “dialogue wise, Betwixt a Knight, (hath children to be taught) and *Timotheus*, that should teach them”.⁴⁷⁶ Although previous writers have commented upon this dialogue, some assuming the influence of Morley’s *Plaine and Easie Introduction*, most have viewed it as a rather quaint literary device and none have attempted to “read” it as a text that has anything to say about the musical materials that it frames or the broader functions of this publication. But, as literary scholars such as Paul Voss and Michael Saenger have recently argued, the paratextual material of printed text was, by the end of the sixteenth century, usually conceived in unashamedly commercial terms, often as a form of advertising rather than a plea for patronage.⁴⁷⁷ Certainly in the case of *The Schoole of Musicke*, this

⁴⁷⁵ For some helpful background information, see Ward, “Dowland Miscellany,” 119-23.

⁴⁷⁶ *Robinson*, sig. Br.

⁴⁷⁷ For example, Paul Voss, “Books for Sale: Advertising and Patronage in Late Elizabethan England,” *Sixteenth-Century Journal* 29 (1998): 733-56; Michael Saenger,

material forms part of a rather sophisticated marketing strategy, providing an arena for the exploration of contemporary anxieties about the possession of elevated levels of cultural capital by members of the servant classes. Yet, at the same time, it also provided Robinson with an opportunity to advertise his own expertise through the medium of print.

The title page of the *Schoole of Musicke* promises a great deal to its readers: it is a method for playing numerous stringed instruments, plus a tutor in ‘prick-song’ – that is, vocal music in mensural notation – without any need for a teacher. The following address “To the Reader” immediately states a specific target readership: “Right courteous Gentlemen, and gentle Readers”.⁴⁷⁸ And central to this passage is another reference to what is now evidently a common concern amongst gentlemen – the ability to play fluently at sight. As Herbert of Cherbury, Henry Peacham, and Thomas Morley have already shown us, the ability to sing at sight was an important prerequisite for participating in social music-making, and playing the lute or orpharion in a consort of refined gentlemen must have held a similar cachet (as we posited in the case of Mynshall and his Nantwich circle back in chapter 4). For Morley, Robinson and others, the promise that you would be able to hold your own musically whilst in polite company was clearly a strong selling point.⁴⁷⁹

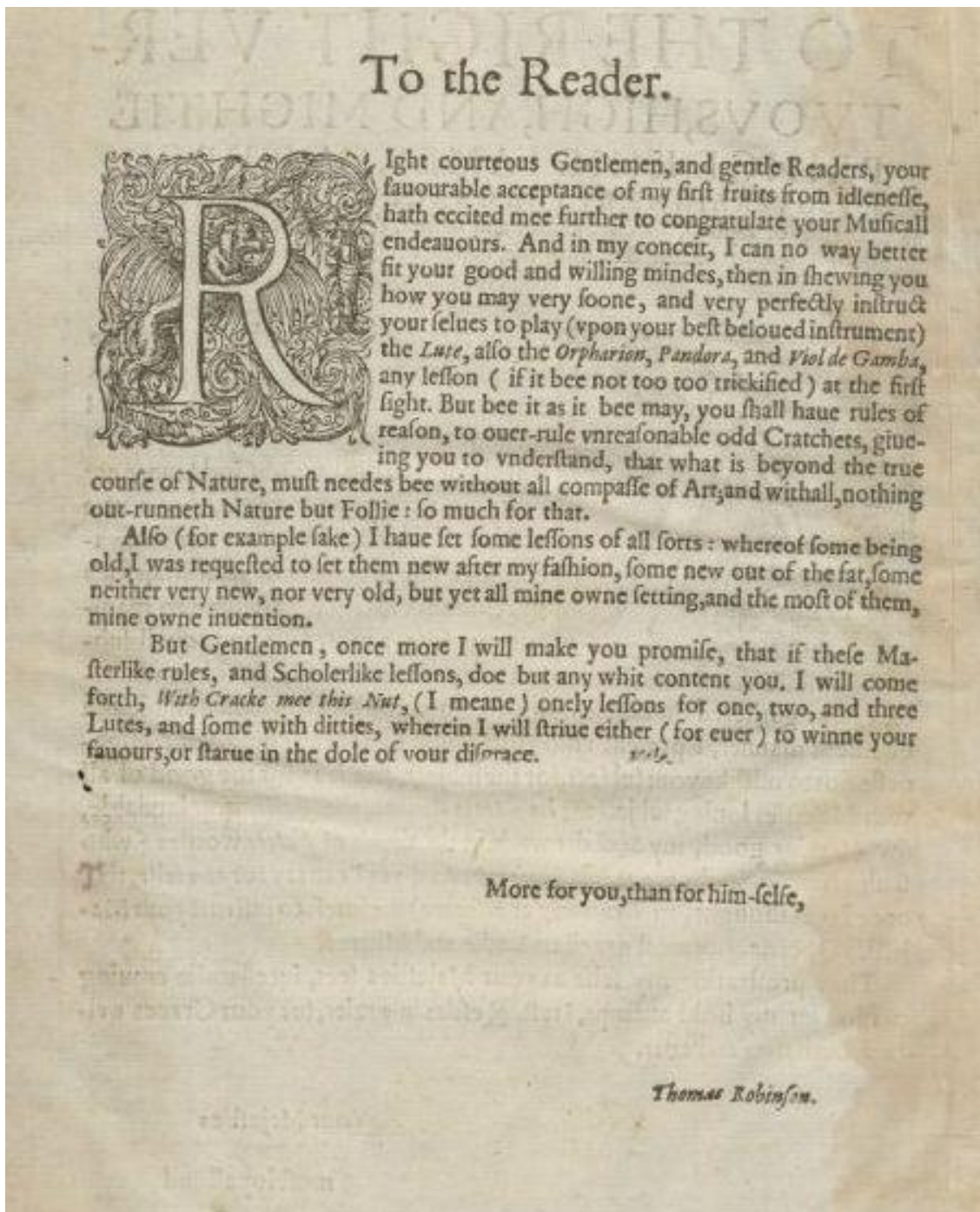
Another notable feature of this introductory text is the odd mix of deference towards these gentle readers that Robinson shows, contrasting with his own awareness of his own cultural capital. This is particularly pronounced in the final lines, with a striking juxtaposition of the rhetoric of servitude (Robinson promises to produce more works to please them, if they so wish) alongside the rather dismissive manner in which he signs off: ‘More for you, than for himselfe’. Robinson, whilst accepting that he needs these people as his clients in order to prosper, was also very aware that he held the key to *their* success as they sought to achieve musical proficiency.

The Commodification of Textual Engagements in the English Renaissance (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), esp. 35-81.

⁴⁷⁸ *Robinson*, sig. [A]r.

⁴⁷⁹ For a fuller exploration of this phenomenon, see Richard Wistreich, “Reading Between the Notes”.

Figure 6.4 *Robinson, "To the reader"*. Reproduced by permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.



Timotheus and the Knight

This dedication is followed by the eight-page dialogue between a Knight and Timotheus, a lute teacher being interviewed for the job of teaching his children. The scene is a gentry household somewhere in the countryside, the very setting in which a middle-class reader might aspire to live. Timotheus immediately gets the dialogue underway with a spirited defence of music's status as one of the seven liberal arts, stressing its credibility within the curriculum of humanistic learning.

Robinson's choice of the name Timotheus for his lute-teacher character is a significant one, of course, for this was also the name of an influential musician in the service of Alexander the Great. In a story concerned with the various melodic modes and their power to inflame different aspects of the human temperament, Timotheus famously worked Alexander into a rage merely by playing to him in the Phrygian mode before placating him again by playing in another mode, causing him to put down his weapons. This story was widely recycled as a cultural trope during the sixteenth century, and a number of re-workings appeared in popular English literary and didactic texts.⁴⁸⁰ The crux of this story, of course, is that music enabled the servant Timotheus to exert a disproportionate degree of power over Alexander, his social superior. In this respect, the figure of Timotheus encapsulates the problem posed by cultural capital for the ruling classes; the exercise of a specialised and desirable skill such as musical performance could create an area of advantage for the servant, as we have already seen in chapter 3. However, whilst Whythorne's solution to this particular problem was to perform an eroticised role of courtly servitude for his wealthy mistresses, Thomas Robinson was faced here with different version of the same problem: he was keen to advertise his skill and proficiency to would-be gentlemen patrons, but understandably reluctant to cause this

⁴⁸⁰ For a useful overview of contemporary English re-workings of this story (discussing writings by John Case, Castiglione, Dowland and Spenser, *inter alia*), see Nan Carpenter, "Spenser and Timotheus: A Musical Gloss on E. K.'s Gloss," *PMLA* 71/5 (1956): 1141-51. For French sources that employ this trope, see Jeanice Brooks, *Courtly Song*, 131-33. See also Roger Harmon, "Timotheus' Speeches in Thomas Robinson's *The Schoole of Musicke* (1603)," *The Lute* 41 (2001): 39-46.

kind of status-based anxiety amongst his superiors. His solution to this problem, as we shall see, was ingenious.

In the ensuing discussion, Robinson's Knight goes to great lengths to assert his superiority over Timotheus, rehearsing a number of tropes found in other sixteenth-century discourses on music and elite status. For instance, he makes several laboured points about how he has forgotten his youthful lute studies, assuring Timotheus that "I am now content, to give place both to youth, and the time, onelie content to be an auditore, and lover of the best [...]".⁴⁸¹ This echoes Castiglione's recommendation regarding music-making as something best suited to younger nobles, to be followed up later in life with a more passive role as a connoisseur listener. In Hoby's 1561 translation, Sir Frederic talks of the absurdity of seeing old men performing music in public:

And in case olde men wil sing to the lute, let them doe it secretly, and onely to ridde their mindes of those troublesome cares and grevous disquietinges that oure life is full of: [...] And set case they exercise it not at all: for that thei have gotten a certain habit and custome of it, they shal savour it mucche better in hearing, then he ye hath no knowledge in it: [...] the eares that be exercised in musike do mucche better and sooner descerne it, and with much more pleasure judge of it, then other [...] that have not bene practised in the varietie of pleasant musike [...] This is therefore the pleasure meete for olde men to take in musike.⁴⁸²

Yet for a man who has "forgotten" his earlier musical studies, Robinson's Knight then proceeds to display a surprising amount of specialised subject knowledge, spending much of the remaining dialogue grilling Timotheus about how he intends to teach particular musical concepts and skills.

Following this, we reach the "Generall Rules" section of the volume, still cast as a dialogue but in effect becoming a curious three-way transaction between the Knight, Timotheus, and now his (hypothetical and silent) children.⁴⁸³ Again, this

⁴⁸¹ *Robinson*, sig. Br.

⁴⁸² Castiglione, *Courtyer*, sig. N1r.

⁴⁸³ *Robinson*, sig. Bv

section consists largely of the Knight asking Timotheus how he would address particular aspects of their musical training, in what order he would cover them, and so on. This is a calculated display of the kind of musical connoisseurship that only privileged status could bring. The Knight frequently displays his in-depth technical knowledge, yet does so ostensibly on the grounds of checking the credentials of a social inferior as part of a business transaction. For this particular gentleman, it is just as important to show that this knowledge is of little importance to him as it is to have it in the first place.

A similar assertion of elite status can be detected just a few years earlier in the writings of the French soldier-courtier François Le Poulcre de la Motte Messemé:

As for kings, it is for them to render justice to men, to keep them in God's commandments and obedient to the king's own edicts [...]; it is for them to maintain their subjects in their privileges, by rewarding the good and punishing the wicked, these activities in truth are more worthy of them than to hear them discuss with Vaumesnil or Perichon [two famous French lutenists] whether one *chanterelle* [the highest string] on a lute is better than two, which have a tendency to go out of tune, or if two fifths in a row would be in bad taste.⁴⁸⁴

Once again, a high-status figure is making a point of demonstrating his musical knowledge, casually discussing rather specialised matters such as lute-stringing and contrapuntal technique, clearly indicating his privileged educational background. Yet, crucially, he does this only in order to dismiss this knowledge himself as being trivial, a mere luxury that serves only to underline his elite status.

For Robinson's Knight, the musical proficiency that he desires for his children is clearly an ingredient within a broader strategy of self-cultivation, just as we have seen in the performances of status by Whythorne, Mynshall, and others. Towards the end of the printed dialogue, the Knight seeks explicit assurances that his children will be taught to sight-read, asking Timotheus how he will go

⁴⁸⁴ Cited and translated in Brooks, *Courtly Song*, 165-67.

about teaching this vital skill.⁴⁸⁵ Evidently, there was no point in acquiring these expensive skills if there was no-one about to notice them.

Robinson's "publics"

Overall, this rather contrived prefatory sequence seems to have been designed by Robinson in order to appeal to two distinct markets. On one hand was the traditional target readership of such volumes: middle-class amateurs hoping to engineer some kind of social mobility through the acquisition of these valuable skills. When reading this preface rather literally, it transports the aspirant reader into an affluent, desirable social milieu and Robinson's alter-ego Timotheus provides an exemplary demonstration of the author's technical and professional credentials, assuring the reader of the quality of this product. But, on the other hand, a professional teacher such as Robinson would want to reach out to higher-status readers like William Cavendish or John Ramsey, wealthy gentlemen who were likely to be offering further patronage or employment to impressive young professionals as well as reading their books. In order to do this, Robinson wisely addresses the inherent problem posed by cultural capital to the upper classes, encapsulated through the awkwardness of needing to learn from a practitioner of lower social standing. By showing his Knight as engaging with (and frequently getting the better of) Timotheus, Robinson's text seeks to reassert the conventional hierarchical order of gentleman over servant, noble pupil over professional-class teacher. If we see Robinson's *Schoole of Musicke* as a vehicle for advertising his availability as a teacher, he is reassuring potential clients here of his sensitivity to the thorny issue of teacher-pupil social dynamics – a strategy that may well have helped him to secure further employment in well-to-do households. And certainly there is some evidence to suggest that it worked: the preface to his *New Citharen Lessons*, published six years later, reveals that he had recently been teaching Edward Winne, a gentleman in the powerful circle of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury.⁴⁸⁶

Instrumental skills were an important form of cultural capital in early modern England, both for reinforcing elite status and for those aspiring towards it. Yet

⁴⁸⁵ Robinson, sig. C2r-v.

⁴⁸⁶ Thomas Robinson, *New Citharen Lessons*, "To the Reader" (unpaginated)

the necessary reliance upon lower-status figures in order to acquire these skills could be a source of anxiety for “gentle” practitioners and it was this discomfort, I suggest, that also led Lord Herbert of Cherbury to present a disingenuous image of his own self-taught proficiency. For rather than admitting his reliance on professional lutenists and language tutors to bolster his skill-set, Herbert was no doubt aware of what Pierre Bourdieu has described as “the enterprise of legitimate autodidacticism [...], the highly valued “extra-curricular” culture of the holder of academic qualifications [as opposed to] the illegitimate extra-curricular culture of the autodidact”.⁴⁸⁷ In other words, Lord Herbert’s already-powerful status as both a university-trained man and a member of elite society lent credence to his autodidactic endeavours in other (unrelated) fields, allowing him to generate additional prestige from them.

The printed lute tutor-books of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were thus an important new commodification of this form of cultural capital, but sat rather awkwardly between two stools. Perhaps, if we take the addresses to “gentle readers” in the Barley and Robinson volumes at face value, these books did offer a face-saving solution for the wealthy who could now bypass the need to learn from a real teacher. But as I have also shown, aspirational middle-class users might have used these books unaided and, in practice, they seem to have been used in many other ways too.⁴⁸⁸ The most skilful designer of such a book, Thomas Robinson, recognised and embraced this plurality of functions, simultaneously promising increased cultural capital to his middle-class readers whilst taking great care not to alienate the higher-status market to which he was looking for future employment. As a professional teacher of these sought-after skills, he was evidently aware of the potential of print for the elevation of his own status. So whether we are considering the middle-class users of these texts, their “gentle readers”, or

⁴⁸⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1986), 24-25.

⁴⁸⁸ Susan Weiss has reached a similar conclusion in her study of theoretical tracts – that they were used in various different ways, by learned musicians and teachers as well as by genuine autodidacts; see “Vandals, Students, or Scholars?,” 236. Deborah Lawrence echoes these sentiments in her discussion of the users of Spanish vihuela books; “Music of Social Climbing”, 159-60.

even the lute teachers associated with them, the Latin inscription added to the title-page of the Royal College of Music copy of the *Schoole of Musicke* seems to be very apt:

*Doctrina non gravet circumferentem.*⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁹ London, Royal College of Music, shelfmark D110: "Let not learning weigh down those who carry it around" (my translation)

Conclusion

Silus hath sold his Crimsen Satten sute,
and needs would learne to play upon the Lute
'Tis well done (*Silus*) for such sutes soone wast,
whereas thy skill in Lutes will ever last.⁴⁹⁰

In this short verse, the epigrammist Henry Parrot deftly reflects upon the value attached to lute-playing as an accomplishment in early modern England, stressing the longevity of musical skills when placed alongside more ephemeral markers of status such as clothing. Evidently *Silus* concluded that the cultural capital generated by playing this instrument represented a safer financial investment than the sartorial elegance offered by his satin suit.

It is likely that the main protagonists of this study would have felt the same. For Thomas Whythorne, Richard Mynshall, the unidentified student of Thomas Dallis, and the other characters featured in this story, the ability to play the lute was of great importance as they sought to configure their identities, both in terms of status and power and also in relation to those with whom they lived and worked. That they were able to do this was due to the imprecise definition of two concepts in early modern English thought. First, the notion of music-making was multi-faceted; musical skill was at once an indicator of worth, good breeding, refined taste, admirable skill and learning, but also accompanied by the suspicion of frivolousness, triviality, and its association with base professional-class identity. Secondly, the rank of “gentleman” within hierarchical models of English society was somewhat nebulous, being used to mean both those of gentry blood – the “gentle gentle” as Humfrey Braham called them – and those who had risen to that title (the “ungentle gentle”) who may have achieved their status through strategies including economic gain or the accrual of various forms of educational or cultural capital.

Communities of practice

As older models of social relations became complicated by the establishment of alternative routes to elite status during the second half of the sixteenth

⁴⁹⁰ H[enry] P[arrot], *The Mous-trap* (London: F. B[urton], 1606), sig. E3r.

century, lute-playing became a particularly useful means of recalibrating one's social identity. Throughout this study, I have tried to remain sensitive to the fact that people evidently learnt these skills in a number of ways: through conventional face-to-face tuition, independent book-aided study, and more informal processes of socialised learning (which might include the aural, tactile, and text-derived acquisition of knowledge). In analysing this complex set of interactions between people, texts, and material objects, I have tried to get away from pursuing a merely text-orientated approach to music pedagogy.⁴⁹¹

Rather than viewing music education as simply the assimilation of a set of physical skills and associated cognitive and theoretical knowledge, my emphasis has been on the sociology of musical learning – on learning to play the lute as part of achieving or maintaining membership of particular social groups – which finds some resonance in recent developments in educational theory. Instead of focusing on the individual mechanics of lute-learning, I have focused on lute-playing as a skill which bonds groups together, as a component in their collective performance of a shared group identity. In each of my chapters, then, the main figures belong to what Etienne Wenger has called a *community of practice* in which musical skills are placed at the centre.⁴⁹² A community of practice, as Wenger has explained, is not just a group of people belonging to a particular social category, nor a group of

⁴⁹¹ In this respect, my work might be seen as reflecting the methodological leanings of some recent work in intellectual history; for instance, Pamela H. Smith and Benjamin Schmidt have observed that “we are in the habit of identifying the end products of knowledge making – texts and books, data and ideas – rather than the manner and means of their production”, pointing to the need to “emphasize the shared and collective nature of knowledge making: the communications between different modes of cognition and between different strata of society”. See “Knowledge and Its Making in Early Modern Europe,” in *Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: Practices, Objects, and Texts, 1400-1800*, eds. Smith & Schmidt (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 3 and 7.

⁴⁹² This term was first introduced in Jean Lave & Etienne Wenger. *Situated Learning: Legitimate peripheral participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) and was further explored and refined in Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)

people who are connected through interpersonal links or a geographical location (such as a group of friends or neighbours). It is something much more than that: a community characterised by collective participation in a shared activity, through which some kind of collective identity can be generated.⁴⁹³ Membership of a community of practice suggests more than just an interest in something – it requires active participation and results in the process of learning together.

This is perhaps most clearly articulated in the case of Richard Mynshall, in which we saw a young upwardly mobile mercer quite literally learning how to be a gentleman. By positioning himself within a familial and friendship network in which certain kinds of elite cultural practices were being collectively explored, Mynshall could forge a discrete community with Matthew Mainwaring and others which was rooted in those practices, and for whom learning and playing the lute was also very much part of their educational and social enterprise. Similarly, for the student of Dallis at Trinity College Cambridge, the pursuit of music-making was very much part of the fashioning of a collective identity. However, the very different contents of that manuscript – so very distinct from the other English manuscript sources of the period – show how an alternative complexion of elite status was being constructed here, one rooted in the notion of a learned, scholarly identity. In both of these cases, the shared practice of music-making created cultural capital for the participants which, in turn, forged additional social capital through their formation of bonds with the other practitioners.

The case of Thomas Whythorne also showed us how musical and poetic skills could permit membership within multiple communities of practice. Decades before Dallis was teaching there, Whythorne fitted into the community of Trinity College by using his musical skills, both as a means of gaining entry to this institution but also for participation in the social life of the college. Yet he also played an active role in the pseudo-courtly culture of the gentry households in which he worked, with musico-poetic activities and his performance of courtiership coming together in that theatrical arena to both underscore and playfully undermine divisions of status between participants. In

⁴⁹³ Wenger, *Communities of Practice*, 72-85.

these environments, Whythorne's playing, singing and conduct combined to shape his "courtly" persona; arguably, the gentry household represented another community of practice (one which saw the participation of household musicians and gentlefolk alike) that was as much concerned with the collective cultivation and display of elite behaviours as it was about the acquisition of musical skills.

Finally, we have seen how the production of printed "teach-yourself-music" books for the burgeoning print market commodified the skills that were necessary in order to participate in one of these communities. Although ostensibly aimed at autodidacts, we saw how these volumes could be used either by the upwardly aspirant social-climber or those wealthy enough to afford conventional face-to-face tuition, but perhaps discouraged by the threat posed to them by the powerful cultural capital of a socially inferior lute-teacher. These books, like the possession of an instrument or a lute manuscript, constitute what Bourdieu calls the "objectified state" of cultural capital.⁴⁹⁴ But they could be used in a number of musical and social contexts, as we have seen, to convert that into an embodied form of that capital, i.e. resulting in the assimilation of associated skills or knowledge. And this, in turn, could be used in the creation of further social capital, as we have seen in various ways throughout this study.

Future work

In exploring the acquisition of musical skills as a cultural practice, I have drawn upon perspectives and techniques from other disciplinary areas such as literary studies, history of the book, material-cultural studies, and local history to produce a new, culturally-grounded reading of these musical sources, now interpreted against a much wider backdrop of contextual information.⁴⁹⁵

Certainly, by moving the focus away from text-critical, 'work'-focused, and composer-focused enquiry in order to pursue something more holistically conceived, new insights can be gained into old and well-known sources. Now,

⁴⁹⁴ Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 47.

⁴⁹⁵ Thus taking, arguably, a more "ethnomusicological" approach to these materials. See Nicholas Cook, "We Are All (Ethno)musicologists Now," in *The New Ethno(musicologies)*, ed. Henry Stobart (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2008), 48-70.

the Dallis lutebook can be seen as an apt reflection of the scholarly community that created it rather than simply an eccentric outlier, and as a document of musical processes and socially-grounded textual transactions rather than just a gigantic storehouse of miscellaneous pieces. Similarly, the Mynshall lutebook no longer comes across as containing merely the semi-coherent jottings of a musically aspirant adolescent. When viewed against the broader tradition of early modern miscellany-compilation and located firmly within its social milieu in well-to-do Nantwich, it becomes a valuable witness to the ways in which the production of music and verse functioned within these specific social contexts. In both cases, these chapters revealed examples of learning that took place not just from musical texts but, in all likelihood, as part of a group – through tactile learning, mutual listening, observation, and sharing.⁴⁹⁶ John Griffiths has recently underlined the value of employing non-musical sources (especially civic documents) to reconstruct the material worlds and instrumental practices of members of non-noble social groups, highlighting the need “to forge alternative models [of urban musical history] combining micro-history with a social history of music built ‘from the bottom up’”.⁴⁹⁷ This study is, in many respects, a response to that challenge and, just as Griffiths has shown in his own closely related field of research, it has revealed that there is much to be gained from getting away from the exclusive study of court life and music-making amongst the social elite.

It has also been refreshing to get away from one of the towering musical figures of the age, John Dowland, who casts a long shadow over any consideration of Elizabethan and Jacobean lute music. Of course, he has made fleeting appearances during this study and it is only right that this is so: his music appears in almost all of the extant English manuscript anthologies from the 1590s to c.1630 (including two pedagogical sources directly associated with him) and the production of his son’s *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* was probably closely connected to him, after all. But, as the finishing touches were put to

⁴⁹⁶ Of course, these are non-text-centred educational strategies that continue to persist to this day; see Lucy Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), esp. 59-98.

⁴⁹⁷ John Griffiths, “*Hidalgo*, merchant, poet, priest: the vihuela in the urban soundscape,” *Early Music* 37 (2009), 355.

this project in the midst of the Dowland anniversary celebrations of 2013, it has nevertheless been fruitful to move him momentarily to one side and consider what else was going on in the sphere of lute-playing during his lifetime. Indeed, it has given us the opportunity to consider the professional activities of Thomas Robinson, Dowland's one-time colleague at the Danish court, and subject his career advancement strategies to some long overdue scrutiny.

This study is only an instalment in (and hopefully a stimulus to) a much broader-ranging consideration of the lute's role in early modern society, not to mention the exploration of other comparable cultural practices. As the re-contextualisation of several familiar manuscripts and printed sources here shows, there is still much to learn about this music, although a good deal of information is now surely irretrievably lost to us. Frustratingly, the musical dimensions of many early modern lives remain uncharted; it is sobering to consider, for example, that there is no indication whatsoever of Richard Mynshall's musical interests amongst the numerous other surviving documents pertaining to his life and activities. Without the chance survival of his lute manuscript, we would know nothing at all of his musical life and how it permeated his social and familial relationships.

But from the stories reconstructed here, we have a much broader insight into what it meant to learn the lute in early modern England, and how it could shape the ways in which those subjects saw and presented themselves. This represents a significant new chapter in our understanding of that most important and emblematic of Renaissance musical instruments but, in a sense, lute-playing is just the lens through which I have chosen to scrutinise broader-ranging issues in early modern English society: the preoccupation and anxiety surrounding notions of social status, and the potential of educational capital – both in institutionalised and informally acquired forms (such as group participation and socially-derived skills) – to aid social mobility. In fact, these issues might have been probed through the exploration of any one of several other areas of practice: for instance, learning to write, dance, or to speak French, or through early modern sporting activities such as riding or archery. All of these activities and more saw an increase in their perceived usefulness during the sixteenth century, as models of social relations changed and the

Elizabethan state provided new opportunities for those with bureaucratic and diplomatic skills. As the need to do battle in order to achieve honour and construct elite status began to wane, new skills became valued and offered a potential doorway to advancement. It will be fascinating to see how lute-playing formed just a single strand in a much broader suite of tools for self-cultivation in early modern England, an interest in which seems to have been one of the defining characteristics of the age.

Appendix 1: Contributors to the Mynshall lutebook

These miscellaneous notes on the contributors of signatures, verse and acrostics to *Mynshall* are intended as a supplement to the information given by Robert Spencer in the commentary accompanying his facsimile edition.

Matthew Mainwaring (1561–1652)

Matthew Mainwaring, gentleman of Nantwich, married Richard Mynshall's half-sister Margaret on 10 December 1594, a union that was to produce fourteen children. Today he is primarily remembered for his literary connections: as the author of the prose romance *Vienna*, and as the dedicatee of a 1618 volume by his nephew Geffray Minshull.⁴⁹⁸

There are several hints amongst the prefatory material to *Vienna* that Mainwaring had served in the military, most probably in Ireland. A man of this name also held various administrative positions in Ireland during the early seventeenth century, although it is unclear whether this was the same figure, his namesake son (bap. 4 March 1599), or nephew (bap. 9 May 1592).⁴⁹⁹

Mainwaring evidently maintained a close relationship with the Mynshall family; he acted as a witness to the wills of both Thomas Mynshall (CRO WS 1602) and Richard Mynshall (CRO WS 1638) as well as receiving bequests from both men.

His status as an authoritative and venerable figure within the community of Nantwich is hinted at by a recollection made by the herald and antiquary Sir William Dugdale (1605-86) during his 1663 Visitation of Cheshire. Referring to a disputed family deed that could not currently be located, Dugdale vouched for its previous existence, recalling being shown it some years earlier by "one Mathew Manwaring of Namptwich (a very old man)".⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁸ G[effray] M[y]nshull], *Certaine Characters and essayes of prison and prisoners*. (London: William Jones, 1618).

⁴⁹⁹ For a family tree, see Hall, *Nantwich*, 457-59.

⁵⁰⁰ *The Life, Diary and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale*, ed. William Hampner (London: for Harding, Lepard & co., 1827), 209.

Thomas Crockett (?1581–1623)

Another Nantwich gentleman, perhaps the man of this name who was baptised 9 November 1581. His name appears in a list (dated 4 November 1613) of those owing rents to Thomas Wilbraham which were to be collected by Richard Mynshall in Wilbraham's absence.⁵⁰¹

In 1613, Crockett also stood as a defendant in a case brought to the Star Chamber regarding an alleged attempt to swindle Alexander Walthall (the son of a prominent local landowner) out of his inheritance.⁵⁰² Crockett and his associates – who included his wife Elizabeth, and Anne Burges (see below) – were accused of befriending the seventeen-year-old heir and, “presuming to work uppon his tender yeares”, manipulating him into a clandestine marriage with Burges. According to Walthall's deposition, Crockett “inticed him home to his said dwellinge house being a comon Inn in wichemalbanke [Nantwich]”, which suggests that he was one of the Crockett family that ran the Crown Inn (rebuilt in 1584 following the Great Fire and still standing today).⁵⁰³

Despite his involvement in this dubious episode, Crockett seems to have achieved a respectable level of social standing in Nantwich. He was clearly on friendly terms with the Wilbrahams since his death is recorded in their family journal (“Tom Crockett dyed 8 Apr: 1623”), and the parish registers record the burial two days later of “Mr Thomas Crockett, gent.”⁵⁰⁴

Anne Burges (b.1585?)

Contributed only a single signature to Mynshall's lutebook, and Spencer was unable to indentify her. However, in the court proceedings described above, Walthall describes her as “a wooman of meane [i.e. middle-class] p[ar]entage, small abillitie, and of noe good reporte, said beinge of the age of eighte and

⁵⁰¹ CRO, DBW/P/J/7, ff. 4v-5v

⁵⁰² The documentation for this case survives in London, The National Archives, Star Chamber Proc. James I, 8/292/27. Walthall's statement for the prosecution is item 7; items 1-6 are statements taken from the various defendants.

⁵⁰³ London, The National Archives, STAC 8/292/27, item 7.

⁵⁰⁴ *Wilbraham Journal*, f. [16v].

twentie yeares or thereaboutes” (i.e. born in around 1585).⁵⁰⁵ Conversely, Burges’s co-defendant James Dod provides further information about her background – she was a servant in his family household – and speaks highly of her good character.⁵⁰⁶

Hughe Allen

Another Nantwich mercer who contributed several signatures to the lutebook. He was presumably close to the Mynshalls as he is mentioned in both Thomas and Richard’s wills. His name crops up frequently in the *Mynshall Accounts* as a tenant between 1637 and 1661 (i.e. following Richard’s death) and he is often described as a ‘cosen’, suggesting some kind of kinship. The baptisms of several of his children appear in the parish registers between 1606 and 1615. He evidently had some business dealings with the Wilbrahams and Matthew Mainwaring; a document pertaining to the purchase of a wichhouse (i.e. saltworks) by a group of prominent gentlemen (including Allen) survives.⁵⁰⁷

Thomas Smith (b. 1574?)

Spencer tentatively identified this man as a bone-lace weaver of that name who was baptised in Nantwich on 1 June 1574. His only contribution to Mynshall’s lutebook was a single signature on f. [i]r, which also appears to match one belonging to a sheriff named Thomas Smith in the Cholmondeley Lieutenancy Letterbook.⁵⁰⁸ This signature is attached to a list of men and provisions to be transported from Chester to the military campaigns in Ireland, dated 25 July 1600. If the signature in the Mynshall lutebook *is* the mark of the same man, then this may represent a significant link between Richard Mynshall, his music-making, and those involved with recruitment for the military campaigns in Ireland.

⁵⁰⁵ The National Archives, STAC 8/292/27, item 7.

⁵⁰⁶ The National Archives, STAC 8/292/27, item 6.

⁵⁰⁷ CRO P120/4525/260 (dated 30 May 1639)

⁵⁰⁸ CRO DDX 358/1 (the Lieutenancy Letter Book of Sir Hugh Cholmondeley, 1595-1604)

Appendix 2:

Extant copies of English tutor books for plucked instruments, 1568-1610

This is a summary listing of all known copies of the self-tutor books included in **Table 6.1** and discussed in Chapter 6. They are listed here in chronological order by publication date and accompanied by brief remarks on notable material features (e.g. bindings, manuscript annotations, ownership marks), although a full codicological assessment of these books lies beyond the remit of this study.

I have tried to inspect all of these items in person, although there were some instances where this was not feasible, either due to the inaccessibility or distant location of a copy, or because it had already been the subject of an in-depth scholarly appraisal. The following legend explains how the information recorded here was obtained:

- * copy inspected first-hand
- ** surrogate copy inspected (e.g. microfilm, photographic reproduction, etc.)
- *** information supplied by librarian at holding institution or by another third party.

<p>Adrian Le Roy. <i>A Briefe and easye instru[c]tion to learne the tableture to conducte and dispose thy hande unto the Lute englished by J Alford Londenor.</i> London: Jhon Kyngston for James Roubothum, 1568.</p>	
<p>* London, British Library (K.1.c.25)</p>	<p>Formerly in Douce collection. "Wm Herbert 1774" on title page; (cf. Bodleian copy of <i>Le Roy 1574</i>); Some MS alterations to the musical text to update it for 9-course lute (e.g. ff. 34v, 36v, 38v)</p>

<p>Adrian Le Roy. [<i>An instruction to the Gitterne.</i>] London: James Rowbotham, 1569.</p>	
<p>* London, Royal Academy of Music, (no shelfmark)</p>	<p>Fragments only; two leaves (= four pages of music) Part of the Robert Spencer collection; now mounted in a small notebook which also includes an unpublished bibliographical study by Spencer and page/binding fragments from the Elizabethan devotional book in which these were discovered.</p>
<p>** Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Van Pelt-Dietrich Library (MT654.C58 .L47 B7 1568)</p>	<p>Binding fragments removed from another printed volume. Two leaves (= four pages of music) Reproduced in Ward, "Sprightly and Cheerful Musick," insert between pp. 16-17.</p>

<p>Adrian Le Roy. <i>A briefe and plaine Instruction to set all Musicke of eight divers tunes in Tabletoe for the Lute. With a briefe Instruction how to play on the Lute by Tablature, to conduct and dispose they hand unto the Lute, with certaine easie lessons for that purpose. And also a third Booke containing divers new excellent tunes [...] translated into English by F. Ke. Gentelman.</i> London: James Rowbothome, 1574.</p>	
<p>* London, British Library, K.1.c.19</p>	<p>Imperfect copy; extensive water damage and numerous incomplete folios. Partially legible signature on title page: 'Tho: W_____' MS note: "Presented by Sir John Hawkins"</p>
<p>* Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce R 120</p>	<p>"Wm Herbert 1773" on title page (cf. BL copy of <i>Le Roy 1568</i>) Some signs of use (e.g. chords sequentially numbered in table on f.68r) Foliation occasionally corrected in ink</p>
<p>*** Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale de France, Rés. Vm8 u 5⁵⁰⁹</p>	<p>Clean copy apart from 18th-/19th-century note in ink on title-page; late 18th-century (?) binding. Copy not listed in the <i>English Short-Title Catalogue</i> but included in Howard M. Brown, <i>Instrumental Music Printed before 1600</i> (p.270)</p>

⁵⁰⁹ I am grateful to Jeanice Brooks for inspecting this copy on my behalf.

<p>William Barley. <i>A new Booke of Tabliture, Containing sundrie easie and familiar Instructions, shewing howe to attaine to the knowledge, to guide and dispose thy hand to play on sundry Instruments, as the Lute, Orpharion, and Bandora [...]</i> London: William Barley, 1596.</p>	
<p>*** Helmingham Hall, nr. Ipswich, (no shelfmark)⁵¹⁰</p>	<p>This copy consists of the bandora, orpharion, and <i>Pathway</i> parts only, bound as one. See Harwood, <i>Wire Strings</i> for a detailed discussion. Original binding, stamped 'Edward Stanhope'; has apparently remained at Helmingham since his acquisition. No annotations mentioned in Harwood. Not listed in <i>ESTC</i>.</p>
<p>*** Kettering, Boughton Hall, (Montagu Music collection 427)</p>	<p>All four parts of the <i>New Booke</i> (lute, orpharion, bandora, <i>Pathway</i>) bound together as a single volume.</p> <p>"Richard Toward, his booke" in ink on the title page of each part (in early 17th-cent. (?) hybrid secretary/italic hand)</p> <p>According to Paul Boucher, "the only annotations are the owner's name at the beginning of each section, a small correction, and a few indistinct comments in faded ink".⁵¹¹ Victorian (?) half-calf binding. Not listed in <i>ESTC</i>.</p>
<p>* London, British Library (K.1.c.18)</p>	<p>Clean copy; no annotations or ownership marks.</p> <p>All three instrumental parts; originally bound together with the BL copy of the <i>Pathway</i>.</p>
<p>* London, Royal College of Music (G12/1-3)</p>	<p>Clean copy; no annotations or ownership marks.</p> <p>All three instrumental parts bound together as one.</p>
<p>** San Marino (USA), Huntington Library (RB 35074)</p>	<p>Lute section only. Bookplate of Julian Marshall</p> <p>19th-century collectors' binding signed by 'F. Bedford';</p> <p>Numerous MS corrections to the musical text throughout (mostly after sig. [G]1)⁵¹² Has f.44 of a copy of Sebastian Vreedman, <i>Carminum Quae Cythara [...]</i> (Leuven, 1569) taped to a flyleaf.</p>

⁵¹⁰ I am indebted to the late Ian Harwood for his correspondence regarding this volume and for sending me a copy of his in-depth study of it.

⁵¹¹ Private e-mail communication, 22 September 2011. I am very grateful to Mr Boucher for his assistance in this matter.

⁵¹² Many thanks to Stephen Tabor for supplying information about this and the Huntington copy of *Varietie*.

Thomas Robinson. <i>The Schoole of Musicke: wherein is taught the perfect method, of true fingering of the Lute, Pandora, Orpharion, and Viol de Gamba</i> [...] London: Thomas Este for Simon Waterson, 1603.	
* Cambridge, University Library (Syn. 3.60.1)	“Jo. Armstrong, Cantab.” (currently unidentified; late 17th-century (?) italic hand) on title-page in ink; a few pen trials too. 18th-/19th-century binding. Text added (“O god that art my righteusnes [...]”) to untexted psalm setting on sig. Or.
* London, British Library (K.2.d.1)	Some small annotations to the vocal part of the book, e.g. solmisation syllables on sig. N2 and a note referring to these on sig. O2v. Otherwise a clean copy. Recent binding with a British Museum stamp.
* London, Royal College of Music, (D110)	Latin tag on title page: “Doctrina non gravet circumferentem” Contemporary annotations in instructional material: sig. B2v (underlining passage about fingering) and sig. Cr (smudged comment, apparently on same topic).

Thomas Robinson. <i>New citharen lessons, with perfect tunings of the same, from Foure course of Strings to Fourteene course</i> [...] London: William Barley, 1609.	
* London, British Library (K.2.d.2)	Largely clean copy except some MS music added (sig. B4r) – a setting of ‘Qui passa’ and an unfinished untitled work. See modern tablature edition in Ward, “Sprightly & Cheerful Musicke,” p.161
**Tokyo, Nanki Music Library (BM-4540-ne)	“George Baker his hand and book 1629” on verso of title page. Musical MS additions throughout. Microfilm images available at http://nanki-ml.dmc.keio.ac.jp/M-06_072_R044/ (accessed 1 November 2010) Modern tablature edition of MS additions in Ward, pp.162-70.

<p>Robert Dowland. <i>Varietie of Lute Lessons [...] Whereunto is annexed certaine Observations belonging to Lute-playing</i>” by John Baptisto Besardo of Visonti. Also a short <i>Treatise thereunto appertayning: By John Douland Batcheler of Musicke.</i> London: Thomas Adams, 1610.</p>	
* London, British Library (K.2.i.81)	Bookplate of collector Julian Marshall. Clean copy; no annotations or markings/
* London, Royal Academy of Music, (A/3/DOWLAND 1610)	Purchased in 1630 in London by Prussian traveller Achatius von Dohna-Schlobitten (see title page inscription); now in Robert Spencer collection. Originally part of vol. containing copies of all of Dowland’s printed works (and other items); separated by Robert Spencer and rebound individually; see Crawford, “Robert Spencer”.
* Oxford, Bodleian Library (Arch. A c.14 (4))	Mid-seventeenth-century binding (also 17th-cent. printed matter used as endpapers) but probably acquired mid-century already bound – not a Bodleian binding. ⁵¹³ Bound as 4th item (of 4) with copies of: John Maynard. <i>The XII Wonders of the World</i> (1611); John Coperario. <i>Songs of Mourning</i> (1613); Robert Dowland, <i>A Musicall Banquet</i> (1610). All completely clean copies; no annotations.
** San Marino Huntington Library (RB 59100)	Formerly in the Bridgewater Library Clean copy; no annotations
** Washington DC, Library of Congress (MT 640.D7)	Clean copy; no annotations James E. Matthews copy Photocopy in the Robert Spencer Collection at the Royal Academy of Music (no individual shelfmark)

⁵¹³ Thanks to Clive Hurst for this information (private e-mail communication, 26 November 2010).

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