

# The Recorder Consort at the English Court 1540-1673<sup>1</sup>

## Part I

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THE EXISTENCE of a recorder consort at the English Court in the sixteenth century has never been spelled out in the literature relating to the Court musicians, although a few researchers have concluded that there were recorder players at Court. Only one Court record published so far mentions recorder players, that in the Privy Purse Expenses of Princess (later Queen) Mary, which list payments of New Year's gifts in 1543 and 1544 to all the royal musicians of the time, including "The recorders."<sup>2</sup> In 1911 this document was noticed by Canon Francis W. Galpin, who commented:

The players appear to have been Venetians, and they were quite distinct from "the flutes."<sup>3</sup>

That a consort existed in the seventeenth century has been easier to see. The list of Court musicians who were issued liveries for the funeral of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603—which has long been known from Henry Cart de Lafontaine's famous book, *The King's Musick: A Transcript of Records Relating to Music and Musicians (1460-1700)*<sup>4</sup>—includes seven recorder players, five of them members of the Bassano family. Walter L. Woodfill, noting the presence of those Bassanos in a subsidy list of 1590, names them as the recorder players at

the Court in that year.<sup>5</sup> Thurston Dart, citing "hours spent with Lafontaine and Woodfill's invaluable books," claims that the Court had four recorder players in 1540 and six in 1547, and that the numbers of Court musicians in 1558, 1570, and 1590 were "much the same as [in] 1547."<sup>6</sup> He apparently based these figures on the assumption—which turns out to be correct—that the earlier members of the Bassano family were recorder players. Previous scholars, therefore, saw some of the clues relating to the Court recorder players and began to put them together.

My own survey of further Court records, both published and unpublished, has demonstrated the existence of a recorder consort and enabled its full personnel to be determined. It has shown that a consort of five, later six, recorder players was employed at the Court from 1540 until about 1630, when its members were absorbed into a general group of wind players. A few records relate to the consort's duties. The standard of performance of the consort and the sizes of instruments it would have used can be deduced from treatises and inventories. I have been able to trace some of the consort's probable repertory. I have also learned a great deal from Court and other records about the advantages of Court service for musicians and about

the lives of the recorder players.<sup>7</sup>

### *The arrival of the recorder consort*

When Henry VIII came to the throne of England in 1509, he inherited a small musical establishment that had changed little for centuries.<sup>8</sup> During the course of his reign he changed this establishment out of all recognition by increasing the number of musicians and adding new instruments. Besides keeping and augmenting the group of shawms and sackbuts used by his father, Henry introduced to his Court the fashionable Italian practice of having complete consorts of other instruments. One of the advantages of such a consort is that all the instruments can be tuned in the same way, thus potentially improving the intonation of the ensemble. He imported from Italy two such consorts (viols/violins and recorders) that were to play an important role in the musical life of the Court up to the early seventeenth century, and gradually formed a third consort (flutes/cornetts) by bringing players over from France.<sup>9</sup>

The term "consort" had various meanings in the sixteenth century.<sup>10</sup> That the word was used to refer to the groups of instruments at Court is shown by a document among the Cecil Family and Estate Papers at Hatfield House listing the New Year's gifts paid to some royal musicians on 1 January 1605: "the consort

<sup>1</sup>This article is an abridged version of Part B of my recent study, *Professional Recorder Players in England, 1540-1740*, 2 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Iowa, 1973), I, pp. 19-143. The tables first appeared in *Early Music* 10/1 (January 1982), p. 25. I would like to express my deep gratitude to Peter Holman (Colchester, Essex) and Roger Prior (Belfast, Northern Ireland), without whose help and friendship I could never have researched this material.

<sup>2</sup>See Frederick Madden, ed., *Privy Purse Expenses of the Princess Mary, Daughter of King Henry the 8th, afterwards Queen Mary* (London: William Pickering, 1831), pp. 104, 140.

<sup>3</sup>*Old English Instruments of Music* (London:

Methuen; Chicago: A.C. McClurg, 1911), p. 142; see also 4th ed., rev. Thurston Dart (London: Methuen, 1965), p. 106.

<sup>4</sup>London: Novello [1909]; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1973, p. 45.

<sup>5</sup>*Musicians in English Society from Elizabeth to Charles I* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), p. 300.

<sup>6</sup>"The Repertory of the Royal Wind Music," *Galpin Society Journal* XI (1958), p. 73.

<sup>7</sup>For detailed biographies of all the players in the Court recorder consort, see Lasocki, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 539-706.

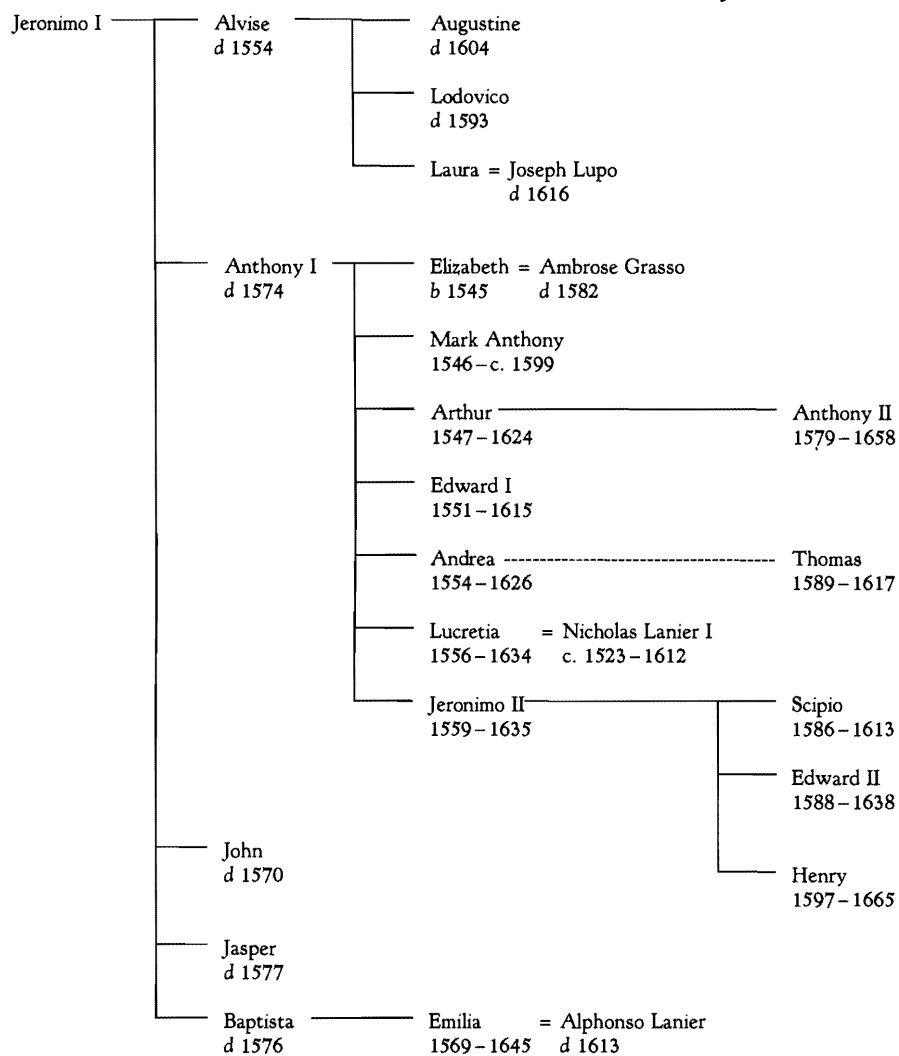
<sup>8</sup>See Richard Rastall, "The Minstrels of the

English Royal Households, 25 Edward I-1 Henry VIII: An Inventory," *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* IV (1964 [1967]), pp. 1-41.

<sup>9</sup>For details of the sackbut/shawm and flute/cornett consorts, see Lasocki, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 21-22. The violin consort is discussed in two studies by Peter Holman: "The English Royal Violin Consort in the Sixteenth Century," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* CIX (1982-83) pp. 39-59; and *The English Violin Band, 1540-1642* (Ph.D. dissertation, The University of London, forthcoming).

<sup>10</sup>See Warwick Edwards, *The Sources of Elizabethan Consort Music* (Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, 1974), I, pp. 36-43.

Table 1  
The musical members of the Bassano family



of viols," "the consort of flutes" and "the consort of hoboys and cornetts [sic]."<sup>11</sup>

Henry may have been particularly eager to secure consorts of flutes and recorders because he played the instruments himself. A chronicler reports that the summer Progresses of 1510, the second year of his reign, found him

exercising himself daily in shooting, singing, dancing, wrestling, casting of the bar, playing at the recorders, flute, virginals, and in setting of songs, making of ballads, and did set two goodly masses.<sup>12</sup>

As far as recorders are concerned, he brought over an existing consort of five players from Venice. Four of the players in question, Alvise, Jasper, Anthony, and John "de Jeronimo," were first employed at his Court in 1531 as members of the shawm and sackbut group.<sup>13</sup> These four men were in fact the Bassano brothers, the founders of the English branch of a family that was to dominate the Court wind music for the next century. The brothers seem to have returned to Venice within a few years, but Anthony came back to England by

1538, when he was appointed as "maker of divers instruments" to the Court.<sup>14</sup> The King then made great efforts to secure the return of the three other Bassanos to England with their youngest brother, Baptista, and to persuade the Venetian authorities to release them. In the only surviving letter from the sequence exchanged between Henry's Chancellor, Sir Thomas Cromwell, and his Venetian agent, Edmond Harvel, the latter wrote in October 1539 that the Bassanos were "all excellent[,] and esteemed above all other[s] in this city in their virtue" and that it would be "no small honor to His Majesty to have music comparable with any other prince[,] or perchance better and more variable."<sup>15</sup> Negotiations with the Doge of Venice for the release of the Bassanos broke down, but "putting also any displeasure or damage [that] might ensue unto them aside," they left for England "with all their instruments."<sup>16</sup> On 6 April 1540 Henry officially inaugurated the recorder consort by granting stipends to "Alvixus, John, Anthony, Jasper, and Baptista de Bassani, brothers in the science or art of music."<sup>17</sup>

Circumstantial evidence suggests that the Bassanos were originally Jewish refugees from the town of Bassano, about forty miles from Venice, who had settled in Venice at the beginning of the sixteenth century.<sup>18</sup> (They probably had become at least nominal Christians for the sake of gaining employment, before they came to England.) Their father, Jeronimo I, is likely to have been an instrument maker and a sackbut player in the *trombe e piffari* (sackbuts and shawms) of the Doge of Venice. Some of his sons may also have been members of the Doge's band. Thus the Bassanos were a significant addition to the Court's musical establishment, bringing with them to England not only a high standard of shawm and sackbut playing but fine instrument making and—apparently the greatest prize—recorder consort playing. A genealogy of the musical members of the family is given in Table 1.

#### Personnel

The Bassano brothers made up a five-member consort, as Table 2 shows. Augustine, the eldest son of Alvise,

<sup>11</sup>Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>12</sup>Edward Hall, *Hall's Chronicle; containing the History of England, during the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the succeeding monarchs, to the end of the Reign of Henry the Eighth* (London, 1809), p. 515.

<sup>13</sup>For full details, see Lasocki, *op. cit.*, II, pp.

549–50.

<sup>14</sup>*Calendar of Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII, XIII* (1892–93), p. 537.

<sup>15</sup>Public Record Office, SP1/153, f. 215.

<sup>16</sup>*Loc. cit.*

<sup>17</sup>"Fratres in sciencia sive arte musica." Public

Record Office, C66/690, m. 38.

<sup>18</sup>For details of the early history of the family, see Lasocki, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 584–91.

<sup>19</sup>For details, see *ibid.*, II, pp. 573–74.

<sup>20</sup>"...alevando senpre li figliuoli nelle virtu, per far servizio a sua maesta, si came anno fato et fanno del continuo." Public Record Office,

joined them in 1550, presumably when he became old enough to receive an official place. Since six was evidently considered the optimum number of players for the consort, perhaps Augustine was playing unofficially, without fee, as early as 1540.

As places in the consort became vacant in the sixteenth century through the deaths of their holders, they were filled initially from the second generation of the Bassano family in England. Alvise's place was taken by Augustine's younger brother, Lodovico. Both Augustine and Lodovico were composers, and both seem to have played the lute, although probably not at Court.<sup>19</sup> The places of Anthony I, Jasper, and John were taken by three of Anthony's sons, Arthur, Edward I, and Jeronimo II. All of them were taught to play by members of the first generation: in a letter to Queen Elizabeth written in Italian in 1568, fourteen years after Alvise's death, the four surviving brothers refer to their "always educating our sons in virtue to enable them to serve Her Majesty, as they have done and continue to do."<sup>20</sup> Like their father, Anthony's sons also played shawm and/or sackbut, and Jeronimo played the viol at Court.<sup>21</sup> The choice of who was to take up each place in the recorder consort as it fell vacant seems generally, but not always, to have been determined by the ages of those Bassano sons who did not yet have a place.

When Baptista died in 1576, Anthony's youngest son, Jeronimo, was only seventeen and may have been considered too young to take over the place. For the first time, then, the Court turned outside the Bassano family—to another foreign musician. The man recruited, William Daman, was also Italian and perhaps also a Jew.<sup>22</sup> He had been brought to England around 1565 by Sir Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, and had been "servant to the same."<sup>23</sup> Daman was a composer of both instrumental and sacred music.

Only two more places fell vacant during the reign of Elizabeth. When Daman died in 1591, none of the male members of the third generation of the Bassano family was old enough to assume the place (the oldest, Anthony II, was 11), so the choice fell on the son of

Table 2

The Court recorder consort

Alvise Bassano 1540–1554	Lodovico Bassano (1554) 1568–1593	Robert Baker senior 1594–1637	Robert Baker junior (by 1625) 1637–1642
Jasper Bassano 1540–1577	Jeronimo II Bassano 1579–1635	Henry Bassano (1622) 1635–1665	
Anthony I Bassano 1540–1574	Edward I Bassano 1576–1615	Anthony II Bassano 1615–1624	William Noke 1624–1631
John Bassano 1540–1570	Arthur Bassano 1570–1624	Anthony II Bassano (1609) 1624–1658	
Baptista Bassano 1540–1576	William Daman 1576–1591	Alphonso Lanier 1593–1613	John Hussey 1613–1629
	Augustine Bassano 1550–1604	Clement Lanier 1604–1661	

another foreign Court woodwind player. Alphonso Lanier was the second of the seven musical sons of Nicholas Lanier I, a Huguenot who had been recruited in France for the English Court flute/cornett consort in 1561.<sup>24</sup> Alphonso, who seems to have been born in France, could well have been trained by his father.

When Lodovico Bassano died in 1593, his place went to Robert Baker senior, the first member of the consort born in England of English parents. Baker had been apprenticed to Anthony Tyndall, a member of the London Waits. These were the official musicians of the City, a group that had been playing the recorder, among other instruments, since 1568. Baker became a London Wait himself for six years before moving up to the Court. His exceptional talent had been recognized early by the City of London authorities, who granted Tyndall a unique yearly payment to defray the expenses of training him, and later created an extra place in the Waits on his behalf. As a member of the Waits, Baker would have been expected to play the recorder, cornett, shawm and/or sackbut, and viol, and probably at least one instrument of the mixed consort (treble lute, bandora, cittern, flute, treble viol or violin, and bass viol).<sup>25</sup>

At the end of Elizabeth's reign, then, the men who held the six places in the recorder consort were Arthur, Augustine, Edward I, and Jeronimo II Bassano,

along with Alphonso Lanier and Robert Baker senior. These six plus Andrea Bassano, who held a place in the shawm/sackbut consort, appear under "Recorders" in the "Allowance of certain mourning livery to the following musicians for the funeral of Queen Elizabeth" in 1603.<sup>26</sup> Andrea seems to have been deputizing for Alphonso Lanier—who had been absent from the Court on army service in 1597 and 1599 and presumably continued to be away for military or business reasons—and this list includes both placeholder and deputy.

When Augustine Bassano died in 1604, his place was given to Clement Lanier, Alphonso's younger brother (probably in fact a half brother), whose mother was Anthony Bassano I's daughter.<sup>27</sup> In 1609, Anthony II was granted the reversion of his father, Arthur's, place in the consort.<sup>28</sup> (A reversion was the promise by the Crown of a future place.) Arthur did not die until 1624, however, and the prior death of Edward I Bassano in 1615 gave Anthony the opportunity to have a place earlier.<sup>29</sup> On Arthur's death Anthony surrendered Edward's old place and took up Arthur's, presumably because it carried a higher rate of pay.<sup>30</sup> In 1603, Anthony deputized in the flute/cornett consort and in 1630 was named among the company of players of the cornett, flute, recorder, and shawm.<sup>31</sup>

The list of twelve wind players who were paid "for attending the installation

SP12/47, No. 83.

<sup>19</sup>Public Record Office, E351/544, f. 16.

<sup>20</sup>See Roger Prior, "Jewish Musicians in Tudor England," *Musical Quarterly* LXIX/2 (Spring 1983), p. 265.

<sup>21</sup>R.E.G. Kirk & Ernest F. Kirk, *Returns of Aliens Dwelling in the City and Suburbs of London*

*from the Reign of Henry VIII to that of James I*, 4 vols., Huguenot Society of London Publications X/1–4 (Aberdeen: Huguenot Society of London, 1900–07), II, p. 39.

<sup>22</sup>*Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1561–1562* (1866), p. 229.

<sup>23</sup>See Lasocki, *op. cit.*, I, p. 224.

<sup>24</sup>Lafontaine, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>25</sup>E. Stokes, "Lists of the King's Musicians, from the Audit Office Declared Accounts," *The Musical Antiquary* II/3 (April 1911), p. 177.

<sup>26</sup>Public Record Office, Ind 6745 (unnumbered folio; grant made November 1609).

<sup>27</sup>Public Record Office, S03/6 (unnumbered fo-

Figure 1. Augustine Bassano, Pavana No. 1, probably for recorder consort, from British Library, Egerton Ms 3665, mm. 1–17 (© 1981 by Nova Music, London).

of the Elector Palatine at Windsor for 3 days in February 1613” consists of six members of the sackbut consort plus Andrea, Anthony II, Edward I, and Jeronimo Bassano, and Robert Baker and Clement Lanier.<sup>32</sup> It looks as if the latter six men were the current members of the recorder consort in practice. If so, then Andrea was continuing to deputize for Alphonso Lanier—who by that time may have been near death, since he was replaced only nine months later—and Anthony II, having received the reversion of his sixty-five-year-old father’s place, was now playing for him in the consort.

The next place to fall vacant was that

of Alphonso Lanier in 1613. Perhaps this place was out of the range of Bassano influence, for it was not given to the next in line of the third generation of their family—Edward II, at that time aged 24—but to John Hussey, an English musician about whose origins and training nothing is yet known.<sup>33</sup> Hussey was, however, a versatile musician. He seems to have also played the sackbut at Court,<sup>34</sup> and in his will he mentions owning a harpsichord, a tenor viol, and a case of flutes.<sup>35</sup>

Like Arthur Bassano, Jeronimo also made arrangements for one of his sons to succeed him in the recorder consort. In January 1622 he surrendered his place

and took up a new grant shared with his youngest son, Henry.<sup>36</sup> On 10 February 1624, Henry gave his share of the wages to Jeronimo for the duration of the latter’s life—in other words, Jeronimo received all the money for the joint place.<sup>37</sup> Henry succeeded to the full place on Jeronimo’s death in 1635. He also held a place in the shawm/sackbut consort, in which he may have specialized on shawm.<sup>38</sup>

On the death of Arthur Bassano in 1624, his place was given to William Noke, another English musician whose origins and training are as yet unknown.<sup>39</sup> Noke deputized in the flute/cornett consort in 1625.<sup>40</sup>

Robert Baker senior also arranged for his son to succeed him. The division of the place must have been made by 1625, since Robert junior is listed among the “Musicians for windy Instruments” in the accounts for the funeral of James I that year.<sup>41</sup> He succeeded to the full place on his father’s death in 1637.<sup>42</sup> He deputized in the shawm/sackbut consort in 1628; by 1630 was a member of the company playing cornett, recorder, flute, and shawm; and in 1633 had a (tenor?) cornett purchased for him.<sup>43</sup>

The next list to name all the current members of the recorder consort is that of the Court musicians who were excused from paying a subsidy on 22 December 1625.<sup>44</sup> They are given as Anthony II and Jeronimo Bassano, Robert Baker senior and junior, Clement Lanier, and John Hussey. Robert Baker junior, who by now shared his father’s place, was evidently playing in the consort instead of William Noke, who appears among the members of the flute consort. Three years later, however, on 15 July 1628, the “List of musicians who are discharged from paying the five subsidies lately granted by the Parliament” names the “Musicians for the recorders” as Anthony II and Jeronimo Bassano, Robert Baker senior, Clement Lanier, John Hussey, and William Noke—that is, the men who held the places before any arrangements were made for the succession of sons.<sup>45</sup>

When John Hussey died in April 1629, his place, curiously, was given to Clement Lanier, who already held a place in the recorder consort.<sup>46</sup> But Hus-

lio; grant made June 1615).

<sup>30</sup>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1623–1625 (1859), p. 346.

<sup>31</sup>Lafontaine, *op. cit.*, pp. 45, 72.

<sup>32</sup>Bodleian Library, Rawlinson Ms A239, f. 74.

<sup>33</sup>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1611–1618 (1858), p. 210.

<sup>34</sup>Public Record Office, E351/544, f. 163.

<sup>35</sup>Public Record Office, PROB 11/155, f. 256.

<sup>36</sup>Public Record Office, S03/7 (unnumbered folio).

<sup>37</sup>Public Record Office, E406/45, f. 70v.

<sup>38</sup>For details, see Lasocki, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 576–77.

<sup>39</sup>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1623–1625, p. 346.

<sup>40</sup>Lafontaine, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 66, 72, 83.

<sup>44</sup>Willibald Nagel, “Annalen der englischen

sey had been paid for providing sackbuts for the Court the previous year, and Clement's place was eventually passed on to a shawm and sackbut player,<sup>47</sup> so it looks as if this was partly a practical way of removing one of the recorder places and changing it to a shawm and sackbut place. In any case, by the following year the Court wind musicians had been reorganized from the three traditional consorts to three "companies" of mixed instruments (see part two of this article), so there was probably no need to keep six men in the recorder places. When William Noke died in 1631, after this reorganization, his place was given to Thomas Mell,<sup>48</sup> but there seems to be no surviving evidence that Mell ever played the recorder.

After the establishment of the recorder consort by members of the Bassano family, then, recruitment to the consort later came partly from second- and third-generation members of that family in England, partly from other foreign musicians or their descendents, and eventually from native musicians. In the sixteenth century, the succession of places seems to have been principally determined by the availability of young Bassanos to take them up. In the seventeenth, the three men who passed their places on to their sons made prior arrangements to ensure the succession—once by reversion and twice by division of the place.

Several records show that the practical arrangements for the consort involved the use of men who did not hold places in it. Andrea Bassano deputized for Alphonso Lanier, and Anthony II Bassano did so for his father after he had been given the reversion of his place. William Noke deputized in the flute consort, his place being taken by Robert Baker junior, the holder of a joint place. The story of what happened to the consort in 1630 will be taken up later.

#### Standard of performance

Surviving records contain virtually nothing about the state of the practice of recorder playing in England in the sixteenth century. But some sense of the quality of performance the Bassanos would have brought with them from Venice can be deduced from a Venetian



Figure 2. Augustino Bassano, Galiarda No. 1, probably for recorder consort, from British Library, Egerton Ms 3665, mm. 1-12 (© 1981 by Nova Music, London).

and another Italian source of the first half of that century.

Sylvestro Ganassi's treatise on recorder playing, *Opera Intitulata Fontegara* (Venice, 1535),<sup>49</sup> is of paramount importance for our purposes, since it was written by a recorder player employed by the Doge of Venice at the time the Bassanos may have been. In any case, they were in the same city at the same time. The Bassano brothers would surely, therefore, have been acquainted with Ganassi. Furthermore, if, as Henry VIII's agent Edmond Harvel claimed, the Bassanos were "all excellent[,] and esteemed above all other [musicians] in [Venice] in their virtue,"<sup>50</sup> they would presumably have been among those leading recorder players of the time with whom Ganassi says he had studied and played. They would therefore have brought with them to England the expressive style of recorder playing that Ganassi described, based on an imitation of the human voice and achieved by a combination of good breath control, a knowledge of alternate

fingerings, a wide variety of articulations, and virtuoso diminution technique. Even if they had used only the basic compass of a thirteenth for the recorder before the publication of Ganassi's treatise in 1535, they would almost certainly have been aware of his work and perhaps adopted some or all of his extended range.

Almost everything Ganassi tells us about the recorder technique of his day is confirmed by Jerome Cardan (1501–1576), the great Italian Renaissance philosopher, mathematician, and physician, in his treatise, *De Musica*, written around 1546.<sup>51</sup> Cardan's fingering charts show a basic compass of only a ninth, although he says that with a very intense breath one can produce two octaves.<sup>52</sup> He knows the extra seven tones added by Ganassi and reproduces them in a chart but prefers to use a smaller size of recorder for those pitches.<sup>53</sup> Cardan, like Ganassi, holds the human voice as a model and considers that the recorder is suitable for exact imitation of the voice, not just the approximation that all in-

Hofmusik von der Zeit Heinrichs VIII. bis zum Tode Karls I. (1509–1649)," *Beilage zu den Monatsheften für Musikgeschichte* XXVI (1894), p. 40.

<sup>47</sup>Lafontaine, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>48</sup>Public Record Office, S03/9 (unnumbered folio).

<sup>49</sup>Andrew Ashbee, *Lists of Payments to the*

*King's Musick in the Reign of Charles II* (1660–1685) (privately printed, 1981), pp. 117, 126.

<sup>48</sup>Lafontaine, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>49</sup>Facsimile, Milan: La Musica Moderna, 1934. Edited with German translation by Hildemarie Peter, Berlin-Lichterfelde: Robert Lienau, 1956.

English translation by Dorothy Swainson from the German translation, Berlin-Lichterfelde: Robert Lienau, 1959.

<sup>50</sup>See footnote 15.

<sup>51</sup>Trans. & ed. Clement A. Miller in Hieronymus Cardanus, *Writings on Music* (n.p.: American Institute of Musicology, 1973). See also Miller's

Figure 3. Jeronimo Bassano, *Fantasia No. 2*, probably for recorder consort, from *Oxford, Christ Church Mss 716-20*, mm. 6-14 (© 1981 by Nova Music, London).

struments are capable of producing.<sup>54</sup> Cardan, too, stresses the importance of breath control and goes beyond Ganassi's simple information on the breath to make the important distinction between the amount (full, shallow, or moderate) and the force (relaxed or slow, intense, and the median between them) of the breath used on wind instruments. He also distinguishes the different kind of breath needed for each size of the same instrument. Finally, Cardan uses Ganassi's

three basic forms of articulation syllables and reiterates the importance of diminution technique in recorder playing.<sup>55</sup>

We might also mention that Hercole Bottrigari, writing in 1594, confirms that good sixteenth-century wind players were skillful at playing in tune. He includes wind instruments "such as [recorders and flutes], and straight and curved cornetts" in his category of "stable but alterable instruments"—that is,

"those which, after they have been tuned by the diligent player [or maker], can be changed, augmented, or diminished in some degree, according to the good judgment of the player."<sup>56</sup> Even though these wind instruments

may have a certain stability because of their holes, the accomplished player can nonetheless use a little less or a little more breath and can open the vents a little more or a little less, bringing them closer to a good accord. Expert players do this.

#### Repertory

No sixteenth-century English compositions have survived that are marked specifically for recorders. The repertory of the Court recorder consort must therefore be pieced together from indirect evidence. The obvious place to look is among compositions by members of that consort, particularly the Bassano family. About twenty sixteenth-century pieces by Augustine and Jeronimo II Bassano and William Daman, surviving in consort versions and/or lute or keyboard arrangements, seem to represent part of the repertory. Some of the early seventeenth-century repertory, including ten dances probably by Augustine and Jeronimo Bassano, is almost certainly contained in the Fitzwilliam Wind Manuscript (see below).

No music by members of the first generation of the Bassano family seems to have survived, if indeed they composed any. Perhaps part of their repertory consisted of vocal music. The title page of Ganassi's recorder treatise depicts three recorder players and two singers performing from printed (vocal) partbooks. This may have been a common Venetian practice that the Bassanos could have brought to England.

Considerations of musical style show that the earliest surviving compositions by members of the Bassano family apparently are the *Pavana Bassano* and *Galliarde Bassami* that appear in the Susanne van Soldt keyboard book, dated 1579 on its cover and probably copied in The Netherlands.<sup>57</sup> The pavan is also to be found in the Trumbull manuscript (compiled c. 1595) in a lute version a fourth lower attributed to "Augustin"—

article "Jerome Cardan on the Recorder," *American Recorder* XII/4 (November 1971), pp. 123-25.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>56</sup>*Il Desiderio or Concerning the Playing Together of Various Musical Instruments*, trans. Carol Mac-

Clintock (n.p.: American Institute of Musicology, 1962), p. 15.

<sup>57</sup>British Library, Add. Ms 29,485, ff. 10-10v, 11-11v. Modern edition ed. Alan Curtis, *Dutch Keyboard Music of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Monumenta Musica Neerlandica III (Amsterdam: Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis, 1961), pp. 19-22.

<sup>58</sup>Reading, Berkshire Public Record Office,

Trumbull Add. Ms 6 (on loan from the Marquess of Downshire), ff. 7v-8.

<sup>59</sup>Cambridge University Library, lute part Ms Dd.3.18, f. 36v; recorder part Ms Dd.5.21, f. 41; bass viol part Ms Dd.5.20, f. 4; cittern part Ms Dd.14.24, f. 22. For more information on these manuscripts see Ian Harwood, "The Origins of the Cambridge Lute Manuscripts," *Lute Society Journal* V (1963), pp. 32-48.

presumably Augustine Bassano.<sup>58</sup> A further version of the pavan exists in an incomplete set of partbooks—the tune is missing—in the Cambridge consort lessons,<sup>59</sup> where it is called *Alphonso's Paven*, suggesting that Alphonso Ferrabosco I arranged it for mixed consort.<sup>60</sup> Both the type of cadence employed in this pavan and galliard, and the very short phrases, demanding a faster tempo than the dances current later in the sixteenth century, suggest a composition date perhaps as early as 1550. The figuration in the rather clumsy keyboard version consists mostly of written-out trills, whereas the idiomatic lute version contains many rapid stepwise divisions in a completely different style. Both these arrangements were probably made from a lost original for four- or five-part consort that was part of the early repertory of the Court recorder consort. If the ornamentation is subtracted, the four voices in the keyboard version appear to have as their lowest notes *d'*, *g*, *c*, and *G*. These pitches correspond almost exactly to the lowest notes of the four sizes of recorder in use in Italy in the mid-sixteenth century—the high instrument (soprano) in *d'*; discant or cantus (alto) in *g'*; tenor in *c'*; and bass in *f*. The range of the original parts is difficult to discern from the arrangements but seems to be well within the basic compass of a thirteenth mentioned by Ganassi in 1535.<sup>61</sup>

Probably the next surviving compositions in chronological order are four pavans and three galliards by Augustine and two galliards by Jeronimo Bassano that are written in the style current in England in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. One pavan by Augustine and two galliards by Jeronimo exist in an incomplete set of what seem to have originally been six partbooks in the Filmer manuscripts.<sup>62</sup> The composers are all instrumentalists associated with the Court, so these dances could well have been part of the repertory of the recorder consort.<sup>63</sup>

One of the Tregian manuscripts (probably copied by Francis Tregian the younger during his imprisonment in the Fleet c. 1609–19) contains two pavans and two galliards by Augustine Bas-

The image displays a musical score for a six-part setting. It is organized into four systems, each containing six staves. The first system begins at measure 55, the second at 60, the third at 65, and the fourth at 75. The notation includes various note values, rests, and bar lines, with some measures containing complex rhythmic patterns. The score is presented in a clear, black-and-white format typical of a printed edition.

Figure 4. William Daman, *Fantasia di sei soprani*, from *New York Public Library, Drexel Ms 4302*, mm. 54–77 (© 1981 by *Mapa Mundi*, London).

<sup>58</sup>Alphonso Ferrabosco: *Collected Works for Lute and Bandora*, ed. Nigel North (London & New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

<sup>59</sup>Swainson translation, p. 9.

<sup>60</sup>Yale University Library, Filmer Ms 2, first set, No. 4, ff. 3v–4; second set, No. 7, ff. 8v–9; second set, No. 8, ff. 8v–10v. The two surviving partbooks are in the mezzo-soprano and bass clefs. No. 18, an allemande by J.H., is the same piece as





Figure 5. Jeronimo Bassano, *Note felice*, probably for recorder consort, from Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Mus. Ms 734, mm. 1–13.

sano.<sup>64</sup> The first of the pavans also survives as an idiomatic lute piece in the Trumbull manuscript referred to above,<sup>65</sup> the two versions sound like independent workings of a common tune (“gist”) and bass. The consort version of this and the three other dances have parts with the following ranges: 1.  $d'-e^{b''}$ ; 2.  $g-b^b$ ; 3, 4.  $c-g'$ ; and 5.  $F-b^b$ . Their lowest notes and restricted ranges (never greater than a twelfth) would exactly fit a consort of five recorders consisting of soprano, alto, two tenors, and bass (sounding an octave higher than notated). Oliver Neighbour has written that the style of these compositions is simple, with “no imitation beyond the occasional passing-note figures,” and that they were “either originally composed in four parts or devised by [a composer] who thought more naturally in four parts than in five.”<sup>66</sup> The pavans are built in sixteen-measure strains.<sup>67</sup> Figure 1 shows the opening of the first of Augustine’s pavans, and Figure 2 the start of the corresponding galliard. Neighbour

points out,

The traditional way of composing a galliard to follow a pavan was to boil the same material down into half the number of  $3/2$  bars .... [Of] the two by Bassano, the second is irregular in having eleven instead of eight bars to each strain, but both are exactly modelled on their pavans and can have cost their author very little effort.<sup>68</sup>

Four five-part fantasias by Jeronimo Bassano survive in two rather late, related sources probably written in the 1630s or 1640s.<sup>69</sup> Figure 3 shows part of the second fantasia. Peter Holman has observed that these pieces

are written in a free contrapuntal style in which two or three ideas are combined and in which expressive harmony is often as important as counterpoint. This style is common in mid-16th century English music—it is found in the church music of Shepherd, Tye and Mundy and the consort music of Parsons—but it is rarely found after about 1580.<sup>70</sup>

Three of the fantasias would fit a con-

sort of two sopranos, alto, tenor, and bass recorders; the fourth, two sopranos, two tenors, and bass.

Two consort pieces by William Daman have survived. Both have curious counterparts by Alphonso Ferrabosco I. The first, *Ut re mi fa sol la* for three voices, was printed in Amsterdam in 1648 in a collection of fantasies for viols.<sup>71</sup> The ranges of the parts are: 1.  $c'-a''$ ; 2.  $g-c''$ ; and 3.  $c-g'$ . A three-part piece by Ferrabosco with the same title exists in five manuscript sources, with ranges 1.  $a-e''$ ; 2.  $g-a'$ ; and 3.  $c-e'$ .<sup>72</sup> The second of Daman’s pieces, a fantasia entitled *Di sei soprani*, is found in a companion Tregian manuscript to the one discussed above; its ending is given in Figure 4.<sup>73</sup> The upper five parts are written in the treble clef and the lowest in the soprano clef. The ranges of the parts are: 1, 2, 3, 5.  $d'-g''$ ; 4.  $c'-g''$ ; and 6.  $b^b-d''$ . Preceding it in the manuscript is Ferrabosco’s fantasia *Di sei bassi*, the parts of which are all notated in the bass clef, with ranges: 1.  $c-d'$ ; 2, 4.  $F-c'$ ; 3, 5.  $F-b$ ; and 6.  $D-f$ .<sup>74</sup>

When and for whom were Daman’s pieces written, and what is their connection with Ferrabosco’s? On the question of dating, Peter Holman has written of the two six-part pieces:

Ferrabosco is known to have left England in 1578, and so the pair presumably dates from before then. The style of the music confirms this. Daman’s counterpoint is of the free type that uses sonorous chording and rhythmic imitation rather than the more modern and stricter counterpoint that was coming into England from the continent during the 1580s.<sup>75</sup>

He adds that “an early date for Daman’s piece, perhaps in the 1560s or 1570s, could mean that it was written for Thomas Sackville’s household musicians,”<sup>76</sup> of which Daman was a member from about 1565 until his appointment to the Court recorder consort in 1576. Sackville’s household may well have had musicians who could muster a six-member consort of recorders, flutes, or cornetts, and he may have asked both Daman and Ferrabosco to write for it. However, I believe that the pieces are

No. 1 in the dance section of the Fitzwilliam Wind Manuscript, partbooks 2 and 6. Therefore the Filmer manuscript may also have had six partbooks.

<sup>65</sup>The composers are Edward Collard, J[ames] H[arding], A[nthony] H[olborne], J[oseph] L[upo], T[homas] L[upo], and W[alter] P[iers].

<sup>66</sup>British Library, Egerton Ms 3665, ff. 520v–521. Modern edition ed. Peter Holman, *The Royal Wind Music, Vol. I: Pavans and Galliards in 5 Parts by Augustine Bassano* (London:

Nova Music, 1981), pp. 2–7.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, ff. 8v–9.

<sup>68</sup>*The Consort and Keyboard Music of William Byrd* (London: Faber & Faber, 1978), pp. 181–82.

<sup>69</sup>Eight-measure strains in Holman’s transcription (Neighbour uses a standard measure worth a whole note). The three types of treatment of the strains are analysed in Neighbour, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>70</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>71</sup>Oxford, Christ Church Mss 716–720, pp.

21–24; London, Royal College of Music Ms 1145, cantus (ff. 52v–54), altus (ff. 53–54v), and tenor (ff. 52v–54) (only three of the five parts survive in this source). Modern edition ed. Peter Holman, *The Royal Wind Music, Vol. II: Four Fantasias in 5 Parts by Jerome Bassano* (London: Nova Music, 1981). For a discussion of the sources, see the preface to his edition.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*, preface.

<sup>73</sup>XX. *Konincklycke Fantasien, om op 3 Fioolen de Gamba en ander Speeluygh te gebruycken* (Am-



more likely to have been written for the Court, at which Ferrabosco worked intermittently between about 1562 and his departure from the country sixteen years later.<sup>77</sup> In that case Daman's six-part piece would have been written for the complete recorder consort between 1576 (when he joined the consort) and 1578 (when Ferrabosco departed), making use of four soprano recorders in d'', a soprano in c'', and an alto.<sup>78</sup> Similarly his three-part piece, which is written in the same style, would fit a soprano recorder in c'', an alto, and a tenor. Ferrabosco's three-part piece would fit two alto recorders and a tenor, but could have been intended for any of the Court consorts— recorders, flutes and cornetts, shawms and sackbuts, or violins. His six-part piece seems most likely to have been intended for shawms and sackbuts.

In this section I have discussed a number of pieces by Augustine and Jeronimo Bassano and William Daman that probably formed part of the repertory of the Court recorder consort in the sixteenth century. The evidence is not conclusive, however, and a few puzzles remain. Why are Augustine's pavan and galliard, quoted in Figures 1 and 2, in the unusual key of G minor? Was it to produce a particular veiled tone quality (because of the several forked fingerings necessary in this key)? And why do the bass parts contain so many low F-sharps, which are almost impossible to obtain on this size of recorder, owing to the key covering the lowest hole of the instrument? Did the Bassanos make basses (that have not survived) with a more complicated key arrangement? Or did the consort perhaps transpose the pieces up a step—a common Renaissance practice, especially for shawm players,<sup>79</sup> which several, if not all, members of the consort also were?

During the reign of James I (1603–1625), the Court recorder consort continued to use music written by Augustine and Jeronimo Bassano. The repertory has survived in a collection now known as the Fitzwilliam Wind Manuscript (after its owners, the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge), which was first



Figure 6. Augustine Bassano, Almande No. 3, probably for recorder consort, from Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Mus. Ms 734, mm. 1–14.

described in print by Thurston Dart in 1958.<sup>80</sup> The manuscript comprises a set of five (originally six) partbooks, each of which has the arms of James I impressed on its side. Dart's suggestion that they "must have been prepared originally for the royal wind music of King James"<sup>81</sup> was at first generally accepted. More recently, Richard Charteris has argued that the music was intended for viols,<sup>82</sup> although his argument has, to my mind, been convincingly refuted by Peter Holman.<sup>83</sup>

The collection contains three groups of pieces. Of the first group of thirty-five, all but three are apparently motets and madrigals by such sixteenth-century Italian composers as Lasso, Marenzio, and Vecchi. The exceptions are two madrigals and a six-part fantasia by Jeronimo Bassano. The latter was proba-

bly composed around 1580, as were his five-part fantasias discussed above.<sup>84</sup> Since no words are given for any of the vocal pieces beyond short incipits, they were presumably intended for instrumental performance. Unfortunately, these pieces have not yet been thoroughly studied or published in a modern edition, but they all, especially those by Jeronimo Bassano, could well have formed part of the repertory of the Court recorder consort. (The opening of Jeronimo Bassano's *Note felice* is shown in Figure 5. The tenor part of this six-part piece is missing.)

The second group is a numbered sequence of twenty-one dances and two more wordless madrigals, with the composers identified only by their initials, plus an extra dance by Jo[h]n Ad[son]—who did not gain a place at Court until

sterdam, 1648), No. 7. Modern edition ed. Paul Doe, *Elizabethan Consort Music: 1*, Musica Britannica XLIV (London: Stainer & Bell, 1979), pp. 1–2. A manuscript lute arrangement of the lower two voices also exists in British Library, Add. Ms 29,246, f. 31.

<sup>77</sup>Modern edition, ed. Paul Doe, *op. cit.*, No. 2, p. 2.

<sup>78</sup>New York Public Library, Drexel Ms 4302, p. 259. Modern editions, 1. ed. Paul Doe, *op. cit.*, No. 67, pp. 128–30; 2. ed. Peter Holman, *Fantasia di Sei Soprani* (London: Nova Music, 1980).

<sup>79</sup>John V. Cockshoot, "Alfonso Ferrabosco (i)," *The New Grove VI*, p. 478.

<sup>80</sup>Drexel Ms 4302, p. 255. Modern edition ed. Paul Doe, *op. cit.*, No. 68, pp. 131–33.

<sup>81</sup>Introduction to *Fantasia di Sei Soprani*, *op. cit.*

<sup>82</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>83</sup>John V. Cockshoot, "Alfonso Ferrabosco (i)," *The New Grove VI*, p. 478.

<sup>84</sup>The c soprano was first described by Michael Praetorius in 1619. See his *Syntagma Musicum, II: De Organographia* (Wolfenbüttel, 1619), p. 34.

Facsimile ed. Wilibald Gurlitt (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1959).

<sup>77</sup>See *ibid.*, II, p. 37.

<sup>80</sup>*Op. cit.*, pp. 70–77.

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>82</sup>"A Rediscovered Source of English Consort Music," *Chelys: The Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society V* (1973–74), pp. 3–6.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup>Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Mus. Ms 734, No. 32. Modern edition ed. Thurston Dart,

1633—in a later hand. The third group, evidently dating from after the Restoration, is a sequence of “5 part things for the cornetts,” consisting of music by Matthew Locke, Charles Coleman, and Nicholas Lanier II.

The second group almost certainly contains part of the repertory of the Court recorder consort. The initials of the composers fit either known members of the Court recorder and flute consorts—J[ames] H[arden], one of the flutes,<sup>85</sup> J[eronimo] B[assano], and A. B[assano]—or Court composers who wrote theatre or masque music (A[l-phonso] F[errabosco II], N[athaniel] G[iles], R[obert] J[ohnson], and T[homas] L[upo]). Peter Holman, in the introduction to his edition of the dances from this group of pieces, has written that, with the exception of a pavan by “A.B.,” they are all

almans in style if not in function. They are examples of a type that was popular in England and France from the end of the 16th

century onwards that combines an airy melodic style with clear directional harmony. [Since this style was] particularly associated with the main dances of Jacobean masques ... it is no surprise to find that at least four of the ones in the Fitzwilliam collection come from English court masques around 1610, and that another four probably do.<sup>86</sup>

The pavan by A.B., probably Augustine Bassano,<sup>87</sup> fits the same consort as the two by him in the Tregian manuscript, and stylistic considerations suggest that it dates from the same period—the third quarter of the sixteenth century.<sup>88</sup>

Holman’s analysis of the part ranges of these dances shows that they fall into two categories, corresponding to the above-mentioned groups of composers. First there are pieces with restricted ranges, suitable for a six-part recorder or flute consort playing an octave higher than written (one piece by Jeronimo Bassano is unique in having a lower *bassus* part, going down to D). Second there are pieces with extended ranges and often in sharp keys, probably in-

tended for cornetts and sackbuts, or shawms and sackbuts, or a more mixed group of loud wind instruments; these are probably all arrangements for wind instruments of dances from the masque repertory.

The ranges of the restricted parts (an octave higher than written) are: *cantus* d'' – g'''; *altus* b' – f'''; *quintus* c' – a''; *sextus* c' – f''; and *bassus* f – b<sup>b</sup>' (No. 14, d – f'). One of the probable ensembles for which this group was written is a consort of recorders consisting of one d'' soprano, two g' altos, two c' tenors, and one f bass. The exceptionally low *bassus* part in No. 14 could have been intended for a quint-bass recorder (lowest note B<sup>b</sup>). The opening of the third piece, an alman by A.B., is shown in Figure 6, with missing tenor part reconstructed by Peter Holman.

*Part two includes a discussion of the instruments and duties of the Court recorder consort, as well as the reorganization of the wind musicians at the Court around 1630.*

*Suite from the Royal Brass Music of King James I* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), No. 3, pp. 5–8.

<sup>85</sup>For the life of Harden, see Mary Edmond, “Limners and Picturemakers: New Light on the

Lives of Miniaturists and Large-scale Portrait-Painters working in London in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” *The Volume of the Walpole Society* XLVII (1978–1980 [1980]), pp. 76–81, *passim*.

<sup>86</sup>Holman, *op. cit.*

<sup>87</sup>For details of the identification see Lasocki, *op. cit.*, I, p. 74.

<sup>88</sup>Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Mus. Ms 734, No. 16, attributed to “A.B.”

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