

**JOURNAL OF THE
VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY
OF AMERICA**

Volume 48

2013–14

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Cover design by George Glenn, founder of the Viola da Gamba Society of America.

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ISSN 0507-0252

VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY OF AMERICA

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The Viola da Gamba Society of America is a not-for-profit national organization dedicated to the support of activities relating to the viola da gamba in the United States and abroad. Founded in 1962, the VdGSA is a society of players, builders, publishers, distributors, restorers, and others sharing a serious interest in music for viols and other early bowed string instruments. VdGSA members receive a quarterly newsletter and this annual journal, and have access to the many activities and valuable resources of the Society. The website provides additional information on the annual Conclave, instrument rentals, the microfilm lending library for researchers, and other offerings.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

The articles in this issue by two distinguished scholars of the viol differ in their approach and content. Mary Cyr examines the degree to which plucking was used in French viol music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Since the use of plucking was rarely, if ever, indicated in the music, Dr. Cyr uses her considerable experience as a performer as a practical tool to suggest conditions under which it would be appropriate.

Thomas MacCracken has devoted over two decades to documenting viols surviving from past centuries. His search has led him to explore hitherto unknown episodes in the history of the instrument. In his article he documents the viol-making activities in the United States of Arnold Dolmetsch, one of the prime movers in the revival of the instrument at the beginning of the twentieth century. These activities were stimulated in part by one of the most important piano-making firms in America, Chickering & Sons.

John Moran reviews a new facsimile edition of Johann Sebastian Bach's sonatas for viola da gamba and harpsichord, and Kenneth Slowik discusses the new edition of an interesting eighteenth-century German "Instruction" for learning to play the viol. The volume includes Ian Woodfield's list of recent viol-related research.

Robert A. Green

“DANS LE GOUT DU THEORBE”: HOW DID FRENCH VIOL PLAYERS PLUCK THE VIOL?

Mary Cyr

Abstract

The use of pizzicato is well known as a special effect in English lute viol music, but the extent to which it was used in French solo viol music has thus far received little attention in the viol literature. Although plucking was rarely indicated in French solo viol music, we can trace its use by surveying the historical, musical, and iconographical evidence, all of which strongly suggests that plucking was used. This evidence also suggests that the technique was more widely known to both amateur and professional players than has previously been acknowledged. Particularly significant for the study of how plucking was used in French solo viol playing is a short unpublished prelude attributed to Dubuisson that preserves specific marks indicating the use of the thumb and two fingers for plucking. To this musical evidence we can add the three published movements by Marin Marais that also specify plucking, allowing us to view the technique in a broader context. For modern players, the evidence that plucking was used in France from the 1660s until at least 1725 points the way toward the choice of appropriate pieces in which to employ pizzicato to add variety to the player’s expressive palette.

On his recent recording of De Machy’s solo viol suites, Paolo Pandolfo performs several movements entirely pizzicato, and for one movement, he alternately bows and plucks successive phrases.¹ Although the effect at first surprises the listener, Pandolfo’s use of articulation and subtle dynamics while plucking lends an attractive special character to these passages. His performance of De Machy’s music raises several questions that have thus far received little attention in the viol literature: was plucking used by French viol players? if so, within what time period, and in what sort of pieces? In this article, I examine the historical, musical, and iconographical evidence for using pizzicato in French solo viol music. To the three published pieces by Marin Marais that call for plucking, I propose to add a short seventeenth-century piece that, to my knowledge, has not previously been studied for its relationship to the tradition of plucking

¹ *M^r. De Machy, Pièces de Violle, Suites de danses, Paris 1685*, Paolo Pandolfo, viola da gamba, Glossa GCD 920413 (2012).

the viol. Taken together, all of this evidence, while not voluminous, nevertheless strongly suggests that plucking was used in French solo viol playing, and that the technique was more widely known to both amateur and professional players than has previously been acknowledged. For viol players, this investigation can point the way toward using pizzicato as a way of adding variety to the modern player's expressive palette.

In England, where solo viol playing was well established by the early seventeenth century, specific indications that the viol was to be plucked with the right hand (or sometimes with the left hand) can be found in printed and manuscript sources, especially in works notated in tablature and intended for the *lyra viol*.² In France, where solo viol playing developed somewhat later than it did in England, plucking the viol was also practiced, but it is more difficult to trace because it is rarely indicated in the music. Both tablature notation and plucking were techniques borrowed from the lute and theorbo, two instruments that had long-established solo traditions in France.³ Several of the players who first began to compose and perform solo music on the viol were already accomplished players of the theorbo.⁴ Nicolas Hotman and Sebastien Le

² Further on ornamentation and plucking in English *lyra viol* music, see Thurston Dart, "Ornament Signs in Jacobean Music for Lute and Viol," *Galpin Society Journal* 14 (1961): 30–33; Carolyn Coxon, "Some Notes on English Graces for the Viol," *Chelys* 2 (1970): 18–22; and Mary Cyr, "Ornamentation in English *Lyra Viol* Music, Part 1: Slurs, Juts, Thumps, and Other 'Graces' for the Bow," *JVdGSA* 34 (1997): 48–66; and "Ornamentation in English *Lyra Viol* Music, Part 2: Shakes, Relishes, Falls, and Other 'Graces' for the Left Hand," *JVdGSA* 35 (1998): 16–34.

³ The theorbo gradually replaced the lute in France, and after 1700 it too lost ground as a solo instrument. The theorbo still retained an important position as an instrument of the *basse continue*, especially for accompanying chamber music. See Peter Lay, "French Lute Music for Solo Theorbo: An Introduction," in *Lute News* (Lute Society of Great Britain) 40 (1996): 4.

⁴ On the early history of solo viol playing, see especially Michel Sicard, "The French Viol School: The Repertory from 1650 to Sainte-Colombe (ca. 1680)," *JVdGSA* 22 (1985): 42–55, and François-Pierre Goy, "Jean de Sainte-Colombe et le manuscrit de Tournus dans l'histoire de la musique," *Société des amis des arts et des sciences de Tournus* 94 (1995): 61–76. Also indispensable is the comprehensive study by Hans Bol, *La basse de viole du temps de Marin Marais et d'Antoine Forqueray* (Bilthoven: A.B. Creyghton, 1973).

Camus, both viol and theorbo players, received a joint court appointment in 1661, replacing Louis Couperin. At that time, Le Camus and Hotman were described as “the two most skilled players of these two instruments that the King had ever heard.”⁵ Hotman’s reputation as a composer and performer continued well after his death, as we learn from Sébastien de Brossard, who praised him as a composer and player of the bass viol and credited him with having introduced the theorbo in France.⁶

By the 1680s, Jean de Sainte-Colombe (fl. 1658–87; d. by 1701) emerged as an outstanding player and composer for the viol, and he too played plucked instruments. Sainte-Colombe attained almost legendary status as a performer, composer, and teacher of the viol. His pupils included Marin Marais and many of the notable French players of Marais’s generation. Neither Hotman nor Sainte-Colombe published their solo viol music, but a substantial number of pieces survive in manuscript sources.⁷ Although plucking is not specifically mentioned in the known sources of Sainte-Colombe’s music, we can confirm from historical documents by De Machy and Jean Rousseau that Sainte-Colombe did incorporate plucking in his performances. From these historical accounts, we can infer that the technique was also more widely known to other viol players.

The first printed reference in French sources to the technique of plucking the viol can be found in De Machy’s *Pieces de violle*

⁵ Marcelle Benoit, *Musiques de Cour, Chapelle, Chambre, Écurie, 1661–1733* (Paris: Éditions A. & J. Picard, 1971), 3, citing an archival document O¹ 7, fol. 264, dated August 29, 1661: “les deux plus habiles a toucher la violle et le torbe qu’elle [His Majesty] ayt encore entendus.”

⁶ Sébastien de Brossard, *Dictionnaire [sic] de musique* (Amsterdam: Estienne Roger, 1703/1705), 183–84, art. *theorba*: “On prétend que c’est le Sieur Hotteman [sic], si fameux pour le jeu & les pieces de la Basse de Violle, qui en a été l’inventeur en France d’où l’usage s’en est introduit en Italie & ailleurs.” Further on Hotman’s career, see François Moreau, “Nicolas Hotman, bourgeois de Paris et musicien,” in *Recherches sur la musique française classique* 13 (1973): 5–22.

⁷ On the manuscript sources of Hotman’s and Sainte-Colombe’s music, see Goy, “Jean de Sainte Colombe,” 62 and 64. Approximately 43 solo pieces for viol are extant by Hotman, and 174 solo pieces by Sainte-Colombe.

(1685).⁸ This set of eight suites for unaccompanied bass viol (four each in staff notation and tablature) was the first collection for solo viol published in France. In a lengthy preface (*avertissement*), De Machy describes the history of the viol as a solo instrument, its close relationship to the lute, theorbo, and harpsichord, and a few technical issues such as left-hand position, bowing, and ornament signs. He mentions that he had intended to include some pieces specifically intended to be plucked, but he decided against adding them, since more tablature would have been required.⁹ Although he acknowledges that “to play in harmony when playing alone”¹⁰ (that is, chordal playing) represents only one type of solo playing on the viol, he regards it as the principal manner and, in the tradition of Hotman, he believes that such pieces are more easily read from tablature. He also recognizes three other ways of playing the viol in addition to playing chords: playing a melody only, accompanying oneself while singing, and plucking the viol in the manner of the theorbo.¹¹ Unfortunately, he does not elaborate on each of these manners of playing or when they were used.

From another printed source published shortly after De Machy’s collection, we learn that the four manners of playing the viol that De Machy described were not necessarily accepted by all players as separate and equally valid ways of performing on the instrument. In particular, plucking the viol was one of several issues concerning viol technique that raised some controversy during the late 1680s. The principal document that records the controversy, Jean Rousseau’s *Réponse de Monsieur Rousseau à la lettre d’un de ses amis qui l’avertit d’un Libelle diffamatoire que l’on a écrit contre luy* (Paris, 1688), presents only Rousseau’s argument, but

⁸ Few biographical details are known about “Sieur De Machy,” not even his first name. He may have been a pupil of Hotman.

⁹ M^r. De Machy, *Pieces de Violle* (Paris, 1685), *Avertissement*, 4: “Si j’eusse voulu suivre mon inclination, je n’aurois mis en lumiere qu’un seul Livre de Pieces sur toutes sortes de Modes...& quelques Pieces à pincer: mais il faudroit avoir eu recours à la Tablature. Pour ne rien hasarder, j’ay pris le milieu, attendant que le temps puisse faire connoistre le reste.”

¹⁰ De Machy, *Avertissement*, 10: “... de faire harmonie quand on jouë seul...est l’ame de la Musique.”

¹¹ De Machy, *Avertissement*, 1.

we can infer from this statement that he was responding to a previous statement he viewed as “libelous” by an unidentified author, with whom he vehemently disagreed over several points of viol technique. François Lesure has shown that the unidentified author to whom Rousseau responded was De Machy.¹² Unfortunately, De Machy’s own statement about this controversy has not survived, but his views can be inferred at least in part from Rousseau’s response and also from De Machy’s own *avertissement* of 1685.

Rousseau’s statements about plucking the viol follow a comment about tablature, which he says was used by “Mr. Hotteman [*sic*] and other masters and is still in use [in 1688],” although Rousseau states that he does not find it as useful as his opponent (De Machy) does. Concerning plucking the viol, he continues:

He [De Machy] says that I have not spoken about plucking the viol. I didn’t believe I needed to do that, because it is not a way of playing the viol that is currently in use, and it should not be. I admit that Monsieur de Sainte Colombe does it admirably, but it is a special manner [of playing]¹³ that he acquired from his own playing of plucked instruments.

We do not have any evidence either to corroborate or to refute Rousseau’s claim that plucking the viol had fallen out of use by 1688. However, we do know that despite their obvious animosity toward each other, Rousseau and De Machy appear to have agreed that Sainte-Colombe did use plucking in his playing. By implication, we may also conclude that Hotman (who died in 1663), as a skilled player of both theorbo and bass viol, also used the technique. Rousseau’s claim that Sainte-Colombe was especially ad-

¹² François Lesure, “Une querelle sur le jeu de la viole en 1688: J. Rousseau contre De Machy,” in *Revue de musicologie* 46 (December, 1960): 181–99; the full text of the *Réponse* is included on pp. 184–99 of Lesure’s article. New biographical details about Jean Rousseau were discovered and reported by Sylvette Milliot, “Du nouveau sur Jean Rousseau Maître de musique et de viole (1644–1699),” *Recherches sur la musique française classique* 27 (1992): 35–42, including an *inventaire après décès* from 1701 that states that he owned five viols at his death (a pardessus, two trebles, and two basses); see Milliot, 39–41.

¹³ “Il dit que je n’ay point parlé de pincer la Viole. Je n’ay pas cru le devoir faire, parce que ce n’est pas un jeu de la Viole qui soit en usage & qui n’y doit pas estre, j’avouë que Monsieur de Sainte Colombe s’y fait admirer, mais c’est un divertissement particulier qu’il se donne par l’usage qu’il a des Instrumens à pincer.” *Réponse*, quoted by Lesure, “Une querelle sur le jeu,” 194.

mired for this manner of playing lends credibility to the notion that other players may have learned it from him too, or even copied it after hearing Sainte-Colombe perform. For evidence concerning another professional viol player and teacher who used plucking, we must turn to a seventeenth-century manuscript collection of suites for viol.

The earliest French musical source that contains evidence about plucking the viol is a manuscript of solo works by Dubuisson presently held in the Library of Congress (hereafter “the Dubuisson manuscript”).¹⁴ It bears the date September 1, 1666 and therefore qualifies as the earliest datable source of French solo viol music.¹⁵ It includes a total of twenty-one pieces in staff notation (arranged in four suites) for solo viol, plus two additional pieces in tablature notation. There are two other sections of the manuscript devoted to airs for violin and horn signals.¹⁶ Until recently, few biographical details about the composer and viol player called “Dubuisson” were known. Stuart Cheney’s extensive research has brought to light a considerable amount of new information about Dubuisson, whose real name was Jean Lacman (or Lacquemant).¹⁷ He was born in 1622 or 1623 in Picardie, and later began using the name “Dubuisson” as a pseudonym. In 1655, when he married Anne de Vertreuil, Dubuisson was living in Paris. He probably died in 1680

¹⁴ Washington, D.C., Library of Congress, shelf number Manuscript M2.1 T2 17C Case. See the facsimile with introduction and index by Stuart Cheney, *Recueil de pièces de viole en musique et en tablature. 1666. Fac-similé du Ms. M. 2.1 Book T2 Case, Washington, D.C., Library of Congress* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1998).

¹⁵ Hotman’s music was composed earlier, but none of the sources that preserve his music can be assigned a date as early as the Dubuisson manuscript. See Cheney, “Hotman and Dubuisson,” in *A Viola da Gamba Miscellanea*, ed. Christophe Coin and Susan Orlando ([Limoges]: Presses Universitaires de Limoges, 2005), 49.

¹⁶ For a full list of the contents of this manuscript and concordances, see Stuart Cheney’s introduction to the facsimile edition, *Recueil de pièces de viole en musique et en tablature, 1666*, 18–23; also, by the same author, “A Summary of Dubuisson’s Life and Sources,” in *JVdGSA* 27 (1990): 11–13, and “A Newly-Discovered Source of French Hunting Horn Signals, ca. 1666,” in *Historic Brass Journal* 20 (2008): 23–36.

¹⁷ See Cheney, “Hotman and Dubuisson,” 45–47.

or 1681.¹⁸ Six manuscript sources of his music are extant, offering a total of over one hundred solo viol pieces by Dubuisson.¹⁹

The earliest part of the Dubuisson manuscript is the section of unaccompanied viol music (fols. 2r–25r). Stuart Cheney has distinguished a principal hand which is that of a viol teacher (possibly Dubuisson himself),²⁰ and another hand, very likely that of a pupil. All of the solo viol music (both in staff notation and tablature) is in the principal hand. A set of bowing instructions at the end of the manuscript (fol. 90r) was entered by the pupil. Following the twenty-one viol pieces in staff notation (fols. 2r–22r), there are two additional viol pieces in tablature (fols. 22v–25r). One piece is titled “Prelude D.B.” [Dubuisson], and the other is untitled and without attribution. On the leaf opposite the bowing instructions at the end of the manuscript (fol. 89v), a brief demonstration of tablature letters and chords was entered in the principal hand. Coming as it does at the end of the manuscript, opposite the bowing instructions, the brief demonstration of tablature notation (see Example 1) appears to have served as an illustration for the teacher’s explanation to his pupil of how tablature letters work. No rhythms are indicated above the letters, possibly suggesting that this feature would have been explained verbally by the teacher.

It is the second tablature piece (fols. 24v–25r) in the Dubuisson manuscript that bears evidence of specific indications for plucking the viol, the significance of which appears previously to have gone unnoticed. To my knowledge, it is the earliest such direction in a French musical source for plucking notes on the viol. Although it bears neither title nor attribution, its length and musical features strongly suggest that, like the tablature piece that precedes it, this

¹⁸ Cheney, “Hotman and Dubuisson,” 46. *Mercurie galant*, March, 1680, 72. For fuller information on Dubuisson’s life and works, see also Cheney, “A Summary of Dubuisson’s Life and Sources,” 7–21.

¹⁹ For a summary of the contents of the manuscripts of Dubuisson’s works, see Cheney, “Hotman and Dubuisson,” 45 and 47–50.

²⁰ Cheney distinguishes, in all, four hands in the manuscript. He proposes that Hand A may be that of Dubuisson. See his article “A newly-discovered source,” p. 35 n. 4, and his introduction to the facsimile edition *Recueil de pièces de viole en musique et en tablature, 1666*, 1–7. His suggestion is based on a comparison of Lacman’s signatures in his marriage contract of 1655 and Hand A in the Dubuisson manuscript.

		<i>c</i> <i>c</i> <i>c</i>	<i>a</i> <i>a</i> <i>a</i>
		<i>c</i> <i>c</i> <i>c</i>	<i>c</i>
<i>c</i> <i>c</i> <i>c</i>	<i>c</i> <i>c</i> <i>c</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>c</i>
	<i>a</i>		

5

<i>a</i> <i>a</i> <i>a</i>	<i>e</i> <i>e</i> <i>e</i>	<i>f</i> <i>h</i> <i>h</i>	<i>h</i> <i>h</i> <i>h</i>
<i>a</i>	<i>f</i>		
<i>a</i>			
<i>c</i>			

Example 1. A demonstration of tablature notation (with modern transcription), from the Dubuisson manuscript (fol. 89v).

one is probably also a prelude composed by Dubuisson (see Example 2). It is short and through-composed, consisting largely of a few chords, eighth-note motion in broken chords, and a few double stops. Short melodic motives are occasionally repeated sequentially, for example in mm. 10–12, without any strong cadences until the end. Fingerings are indicated in several places, and a special feature of the notation of this piece, as compared with other pieces in this manuscript, is that it contains several marks commonly found in French lute music, where they are used to indicate plucking with the right hand.²¹ These include the short verti-

²¹ For a summary of the principal ornament signs used in seventeenth-century French lute music (based on Denis Gaultier, Mouton, and Gallot), see David Ledbetter, *Harpichord and Lute Music in 17th-Century France* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), 111 n. 57. Ledbetter indicates that the trill (a comma after the note) is the most common ornament in French lute sources. For the meaning of the single and double dots as right-hand index and middle fingers respectively, see Ledbetter, 99. Similar symbols to those in the Dubuisson manuscript can also be found, for example, in lute music by François Dufaut (c. 1604–c. 1672). See André Souris and Monique Rollin, eds., *Oeuvres de Dufaut* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1988), especially the table on page xlii.

The image shows a musical score for a piece in tablature notation with modern transcription. The score is divided into three systems, each starting with a measure number (3, 6, 9). Each system includes a bass clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, a tablature staff with letters (a, b, c, d, e) and numbers (1, 2, 3, 4), and a modern transcription staff with notes and stems. The piece is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature.

Example 2. Untitled and unattributed piece in tablature notation [a prelude by Dubuisson?], from the Dubuisson manuscript (fols. 24v–25r), with modern transcription. Tuning: normal six-string bass viol, d¹-a-e-c-G-D.

cal stroke, a single dot on a note, and a double dot. One of these three signs is indicated on nearly every note in this short piece. There are also some more familiar signs that are found elsewhere in the Dubuisson manuscript: a short horizontal line between letters indicating a broken chord (m. 2, beat 1), a longer oblique line indicating a *tenue* or hold (m. 1, beat 3), a comma after the note indicating a *tremblement* or trill (m. 3, beat 1), and a small half-circle under the note indicating a *port de voix* or appoggiatura (m. 13, beat 4).

For the present study, it is the symbols for right-hand plucking borrowed from lute music that are of particular interest, as shown in Example 2. The vertical stroke (pluck with the right-hand thumb), one dot (pluck with the first finger) and two dots (pluck with the second finger) are significant, because they document the use of plucking on the viol circa 1666,²² and also because they offer modern viol players specific indications about how to alternate the use of the right thumb and first two fingers when plucking. Most surprising to a player today, perhaps, is the frequency with which the vertical stroke (indicating the thumb) is used. It occurs on most downbeats, and also on double stops, chords, and low notes. Owing to the natural strength of the thumb in plucking, using it on the thicker, low strings and on multiple stops makes sense. That it also appears on most downbeats suggests that thumb-plucking was used to give stress, metric accentuation, or an agogic accent at these points. In passages that suggest two-part polyphony (for example, m. 6), the thumb is used on the lower moving line. Double stops are usually marked with a horizontal line between the letters indicating a “broken” interpretation. Three-note chords such as those in m. 7 (beat 4) and m. 10 (beat 3) of necessity would also be arpeggiated when plucked by the thumb. For the remaining notes not plucked by the thumb, alternating single and double dots direct the player to pluck with the first and second fingers respectively; again, the stronger first finger is normally employed on the main part of each beat. Using the

²² The date September 1, 1666 that appears on fol. 1v of the Dubuisson manuscript provides a *terminus a quo* for the manuscript, but some of the music may have been entered after that date. A *terminus ad quem* cannot be assigned, since no other dates appear in the manuscript.

stronger finger on rhythmically strong beats may suggest some correlation with inequality (*notes inégales*), although such an interpretation is far from certain. In any case, it appears clear that plucking, when chosen as a mode of performance for an entire piece, involved the use of the thumb and two fingers, not simply one finger, as modern pizzicato technique might otherwise suggest. The *tenue* marks, which indicate holding down notes with the left hand after playing them, demonstrate that this technique was applied in the same way as when bowing a passage.²³ Although not specifically indicated in this example, it appears self-evident that in a movement that is entirely plucked, a player would not normally be expected to hold the bow with the right hand while also plucking with the thumb and two fingers.

Following close study of the example from the Dubuisson manuscript, we can usefully apply similar plucking techniques to certain other solo viol pieces by composers who were known to have used plucking, such as De Machy and Sainte-Colombe. Since plucking is not specifically indicated in the manuscripts that transmit their music to us, some allowance for an *ad libitum* practice must be made. In that regard, we must look for the musical features that might suggest plucking as an alternative to bowing, for which the example from the Dubuisson manuscript provides a useful model.

In approaching De Machy's music with a view to choosing pieces that could be performed by plucking, we notice that his music, like Dubuisson's, exhibits a preponderance of double stops and chords that provide a harmonic framework. However, De Machy also tends to write longer melodic phrases than Dubuisson does, a feature that can present some challenges to the player when plucking. For this reason, De Machy's sarabandes and preludes probably lend themselves best to plucking. In De Machy's Sarabande from Suite 5 (Example 3), there is a clear melodic line throughout, but there are also many short passages of two-part

²³ The *tenue* was also used in performing on the lute and harpsichord, especially in unmeasured preludes. See Ledbetter, *Harpsichord and Lute Music in 17th-Century France*, 99–100. On its use and application in French viol music, see John Hsu, *A Handbook of French Baroque Viol Technique* (New York: Broude Brothers, 1981), 31–35.

The image shows a musical score for a sarabande in D minor by De Machy. It consists of two systems of music. The first system is in 3/4 time and has a key signature of one sharp (F#). The top staff is a treble clef with a melodic line, and the bottom staff is a lute tablature line. The tablature uses letters a, b, c, d, e, f and includes a '3' indicating a triplet. The second system starts with a measure number '5' and includes a double bar line with repeat dots. The tablature continues with various letter combinations and a 'd x' symbol.

Example 3. De Machy, from the Sarabande in D minor, Suite 5 (*Pieces de viole*, 1685, p. 20), mm. 1–8; tablature notation, with modern transcription (pitches and rhythms only).

writing. In all, the movement appears to be suitable for plucking throughout. Applying what we learned from the example in the Dubuisson manuscript, we would use the thumb to pluck the downbeats, double stops, and the three-note chord in m. 8. The melodic notes would be plucked alternately by the first and second fingers. De Machy also indicates *tenues* for the left hand, and in his *avertissement*, he directs players to observe these marks carefully.²⁴

There are three additional pieces by Marin Marais that can be added to our exploration of the musical evidence for plucking the viol. Marais's first published piece that specifies plucking is the

²⁴ De Machy, *Pieces de viole* (1685), *Avertissement*, 5.

Rondeau in A major from Book 2 (*Pieces de violes*, 1701).²⁵ Like all of Marais's solo viol music, this collection was published in two separate partbooks, one for solo viol and the other for the *basse continue*. In the Rondeau in A, Marais marks successive phrases throughout to be plucked (*pincé*) or bowed (*archet*) alternately (see Example 4). As a footnote in the viol partbook, he further suggests that the piece can instead be entirely bowed or entirely plucked, if one prefers.²⁶ Marais's directions to players raise a number of questions, but perhaps the most striking feature of all is the option for alternately bowing and plucking phrases. This manner might be understood as an expedient way of dealing with certain phrases that are difficult to pluck (for example, continuously melodic passages), but Marais also leaves open the option of plucking the entire movement. Evidently, then, he viewed the chordal passages, melodic writing, and even the sixteenth-note ornamentation as possible to be plucked throughout. Certain musical features of this rondeau are reminiscent of the earlier example from the Dubuisson manuscript that bore indications for plucking, especially passages of three-note chords in succession (mm. 11–14), and wide skips in the melody (mm. 5–6) across several strings.

In his *Pieces de viole*, Book 3 (1711), Marais includes a Gavotte in B flat major, with the instruction “in the manner of the theorbo that can be plucked if desired” (“du goust du Theorbe que l'on peut pincer si l'on veut”).²⁷ Of the three movements in which he specifies plucking, the gavotte from Book 3 is the only one in which Marais explicitly mentions plucking in imitation of the theorbo. In this case, no mention is made of the option of alternately bowing and plucking successive phrases. Plucking “in the manner

²⁵ The Rondeau is No. 141, pages 145–46 in the 1701 print. For a modern scholarly edition, see Marin Marais, *The Instrumental Works*, ed. John Hsu, vol. 2: *Pièces de viole, Second Livre (1701)* (New York: Broude Trust, 1986), 218–19, Rondeau (No. 141).

²⁶ Viol partbook, 145: “moitié pincé et moitié à coup d'archet si mieux l'on aime le pincer entièrement, et de même pour le coup d'archet.”

²⁷ The gavotte is No. 70, page 66 in the 1711 print. See Marais, *The Instrumental Works*, ed. John Hsu, vol. 3: *Pièces de viole, Troisième Livre (1711)* (New York: Broude Trust, 1996), 93, Gavotte (No. 70).

The image displays a musical score for the beginning of the Rondeau in A major by Marin Marais, measures 1 through 15, specifically the viol part. The score is written in 3/4 time and A major (three sharps). It is divided into six systems, each starting with a measure number (1, 4, 7, 9, 12, 14). The notation includes various techniques such as pincé (marked with 't') and archet (marked with 'archet'). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above or below notes. The score features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and some complex rhythmic patterns. The key signature is A major, and the time signature is 3/4. The piece is in the style of a Rondeau, characterized by its rhythmic variety and melodic grace.

Example 4. Marin Marais, beginning of the Rondeau in A major (*Pieces de violes*, Book 2, 1701), mm. 1–15, viol part only.

of the theorbo” may be a reminder to viol players of a practice that declined after the death of Sainte-Colombe (1701 or earlier), and it may also imply that the bow can be laid aside, allowing the full use of the right thumb and two fingers. The musical characteristics of this gavotte are similar to earlier pieces that call for plucking: wide melodic skips, three- and four-note chords, and fragments of two-part writing (Example 5). In m. 18, chords are marked with a slanted stroke between the notes, indicating arpeggiation. As in the example from the Dubuisson manuscript, these chords would very likely be played with the right thumb. The widely spaced quarter notes in Marais’s gavotte give the impression of two-part polyphony, which is carried forward into the upper register at m. 12 and expands across six strings in m. 15. The strong beats form a bass line (plucked with the thumb), while the melody notes played on unaccented beats, always on the top two strings, would be plucked with the first and second fingers in alternation.

In Book 5 (*Pieces de violes*, 1725), Marais’s last published collection of solo viol music, he includes a third example of a piece that can be plucked. Of the three pieces, this one makes the most virtuosic use of the combination of plucking and bowing, and in this case, Marais’s indications for *pincé* and *archet* even extend to similar marks in the *basse continue*. Like the Rondeau in A major from Book 2, this Rondeau in A minor also bears a direction that gives two options: plucking and bowing successive phrases as he marks them, or bowing throughout.²⁸ Phrases of plucked quarter notes, once again widely spaced as in the gavotte from Book 3, often end with a three-note chord that is arpeggiated (Example 6a, m. 12). The refrain, which is repeated with embellishments, is fully written out at each repetition, with the first statement plucked and the embellished repeat bowed (with written-out embellishments). The plucked statement moves most of the time in widely-spaced quarter notes, but at times it is varied with a dotted eighth–sixteenth-note figure. The *couplets* also alternate between plucked

²⁸ “Rondeau moitié pincé et moitié coups d’archet ou tout coup d’archet si l’on veut” (“Rondeau half-plucked and half-bowed, or entirely bowed if desired”), No. 15, pp. 15–16 in the 1725 print. For a modern scholarly edition, see Marais, *The Instrumental Works*, ed. John Hsu, vol. 5: *Pièces de viole, Cinquième Livre (1725)* (New York: Broude Trust, 2000), 23–25, Rondeau (No. 15).

*petite reprise pour la
2^e fois*

Example 5. Marais, Gavotte in B flat major (*Pieces de violes*, Book 3, 1711), viol part only.

and bowed phrases, and Marais uses many different sorts of articulation and dynamic nuance, such as *enflé* (swell, mm. 36–38) and *doux* (soft, m. 30) on successive arpeggiated chords. In the last statement of the refrain (Example 6b), a plucked phrase in leaping eighth notes is followed immediately by a bowed phrase that brings the rondeau to a virtuosic close with slurred thirty-second notes and a final *tirade*. The overall effect of alternately plucking and bowing contributes positively to convey a sense of exceptional skill required on the part of the player (especially when

**** 15. Rondeau moitié pincé et moitié coup d'archet ****
ou tout coup d'archet si l'on veut

[15, 12]

6x 6 6x 5 9 8 #

5 6x 6 6/5 # 7 6 4 # 3

9 6 6 4 3 6 6

Example 6a. Marais, from “Rondeau moitié pincé et moitié coup d’archet” (*Pieces de violes*, Book 5, 1725), mm. 1–13.

52 6 6 6x 5 9 8 #

57 6x 6 6/5 # 7 6 4 #

Example 6b. *Ibid.*, mm. 52–60.

Source: Marin Marais, *The Instrumental Works*, ed. John Hsu, vol. 5, *Pièces de viole, Cinquième livre* (1725), pp. 23 and 25. By kind permission of The Brodde Trust, New York.

holding the bow while plucking), convincingly demonstrated in a recent recording of the piece by Vittorio Ghielmi.²⁹

Visual images of the viol being plucked are rare. However, a well-known portrait of Marais by André Bouys shows him seated with the viol across his legs as if it were a theorbo, and he is plucking the strings while also holding a bow. Bouys executed the portrait both in oil and as an engraving for an exhibition in 1704. The painting that survives is not the original but an early copy, now residing at the Musée de l'Opéra in Paris.³⁰ The caption for the engraving, which was signed by Bouys, designates Marais as *ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy*, a position that he had held since 1679 (see Figure 1).³¹ A page of music sits open before him (on the floor), and a quill and inkwell are also visible on the desk. The image is rich with both literal and symbolic representation, and the act of plucking notes on the viol may communicate more than one meaning. Richard Leppert reads the image in a general sense as portraying Marais as a dutiful court musician and “keeper of the king’s sonoric prestige.” With reference to the viol, Leppert notes that Marais appears to be “sitting idly as if waiting for his summons...while perhaps practicing a bit.”³² In the context of the historical evidence for plucking the viol and Marais’s own compositions that incorporate that technique, we may be able to draw additional meaning from the portrait. In adopting plucking “in the manner of the theorbo,” Marais drew upon a technique that paid homage to his teacher, Sainte-Colombe, the legendary figure

²⁹ *Marin Marais, Jacques Gallot, La Force et La Douceur*, Vittorio Ghielmi (viol) and Luca Pianca (lute and theorbo), Passacaille 957, Musica Vera, 2009.

³⁰ Further on the portrait and the engraving by Bouys, see A. P. de Mirimonde, *L'Iconographie musicale sous les rois bourbons: La musique dans les arts plastiques (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris: Éditions A. and J. Picard, 1977), 2:47. On Bouys and the accuracy of musical detail in his work, see Mary Oleskiewicz, “The Hole Truth and Nothing But the Truth: The Resolution of a Problem in Flute Iconography,” *Early Music* 29 (February 2001): 56–59.

³¹ For his appointment as viol player at court, Marais replaced Gabriel Cagnet at his death. See Benoit, *Musiques de cour*, 68, citing an archival document O¹ 23, fol. 257v, dated August 1, 1679.

³² Richard Leppert, “The Musician of the Imagination,” in *The Musician as Entrepreneur, 1700–1914: Managers, Charlatans, and Idealists*, ed. William Weber (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 29.



Figure 1. André Bouys, *Marin Marais*, engraving (1704). Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

who was so admired for his special manner of plucking solo pieces on the viol. If the image does recall Sainte-Colombe in this way, it would not be the first time that Marais had acknowledged his debt to Sainte-Colombe. Stewart Carter has argued convincingly that

Marais included references in his *Tombeau pour Mr de Ste Colombe* to ancient Greek genera as a “secret” tribute to that master.³³ Marais’s moving *tombeau* appears in Book 2, the collection in which he also included the first of his three published pieces that call for plucking. We may also interpret the informal way that Marais is depicted, as well as the iconological symbolism associated with the quill and inkwell, as indications that Marais may be in the act of composing. In that case, his unusual manner of holding the viol appears to indicate that he may have used plucking either to try out, or perhaps to revise, his solo viol music.³⁴

Considered together, the Bouys engraving as well as the historical and musical evidence for plucking suggest that a small group of skilled players used the technique of plucking the viol from the 1660s (and perhaps earlier) until at least 1725. With the exception of Marais’s three pieces, the practice was largely an *ad libitum* one, determined by the skill and choice of the player. As such, it was very likely adopted by amateur as well as professional players. Nevertheless, plucking probably remained a special effect, one that appealed especially to viol players who also played the theorbo. With some attention to choosing pieces that are well suited to the technique, viol players today can also add plucking to the array of expressive options open to them in French solo music of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

³³ Stewart Carter, “Marin Marais’s *Tombeau pour Mr. de Ste. Colombe*: A ‘Secret Chromatic Art’?” in *“Hands-On” Musicology: Essays in Honor of Jeffery Kite-Powell*, ed. Allen Scott (Ann Arbor: Steglein Publishing, 2012), 309–17.

³⁴ This idea was suggested to me by Ronald Broude, to whom I offer my sincere thanks for the comment, and also for discussions about Marais’s works that contributed significantly to my research.

THE DOLMETSCH-CHICKERING VIOLS¹

Thomas G. MacCracken

Abstract

Arnold Dolmetsch is widely recognized today as an important pioneer in the revival of interest in early music, as both a maker of and a performer on a wide variety of instruments, including recorders, viols, lutes, and keyboards. This article focuses on the group of nine viols—three trebles, three tenors, and three basses—that he made while employed from 1906 to 1911 by Chickering & Sons, the famous piano manufacturing firm in Boston, Massachusetts. These instruments have remained almost completely unknown to musicians, collectors, and researchers, overshadowed in both quantity and reputation by the 75 keyboard instruments (clavichords, spinets, virginals, and harpsichords) he made during this period. In addition to describing and illustrating these earliest Dolmetsch-made viols, the article introduces some of the people who owned and played them originally, as well as revealing where some of them are today. It also considers their relationship both to some of the antique specimens with which Dolmetsch was acquainted prior to this time, and also to the viols he subsequently produced in his own workshop in Haslemere, England, beginning in the late 1920s.

As many readers of this journal are no doubt already aware, Arnold Dolmetsch (1858–1940) is widely acknowledged today as an important pioneer in the revival of interest in music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Although born in France, his career unfolded mainly in England, where, over a period of more than fifty years, he was active as both a performer on, and a maker of, a wide variety of instruments, including viols, lutes, several kinds of keyboard instruments, and recorders. His involvement with each type typically began by acquiring one or more antique specimens and restoring them to playability, followed sooner or later by beginning to make examples of his own, based more or less closely on the antiques with which he was familiar.

¹ Earlier versions of this essay were presented as papers on March 13, 2014, as part of the Roots of Revival conference held at the Horniman Museum in London, and on May 31, 2014, at the annual meeting of the American Musical Instrument Society in Huron, Ohio.

In this article I will focus on Dolmetsch as a maker of viols, specifically explaining how it happened that the first ones he ever built were made in the United States rather than in England, and moreover not until 1906–08, more than fifteen years after he began to give public performances on old instruments and yet two decades before he started making viols at his workshop in Haslemere. In addition to describing and illustrating these earliest Dolmetsch-made viols, I will introduce some of the people who owned and played them originally, as well as revealing where some of the instruments are today. Finally, I will consider their relationship both to some of the antique specimens with which he was acquainted prior to this time, and also to the viols he subsequently produced in England.

In view of his early training as a violinist, it is not surprising that Dolmetsch the performer was initially drawn to early music for bowed string instruments. After completing a course of study at the Brussels Conservatoire in 1883, he moved to London in order to enroll in the newly opened Royal College of Music. A few years later, having acquired a viola d'amore,² he visited the libraries of the Royal College and the British Museum in search of music to play on it, but there, according to his wife Mabel, he instead “made the startling discovery that there existed a wealth of English concerted music for viols in from two to six parts, of which he instantly appreciated the true value.” She goes on to report that “The gathering together of a chest of viols was a gradual process,”³ but by January 1891 he had managed to acquire a serviceable—if somewhat anachronistic—group of eighteenth-century instruments, which he used to illustrate a lecture by A. J. Hipkins, play-

²“It is not clear when he acquired the viola d'amore attributed to Testore, though a photograph in the Dolmetsch Collection of him holding it is dated ‘c. 1888’.” Peter Holman, *Life After Death: The Viola da Gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 2010), 333 and Plate 26.

³Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections of Arnold Dolmetsch* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957), 10. Dolmetsch's biographer says that it was in 1890 that “he decided to start collecting a chest of viols”: see Margaret Campbell, *Dolmetsch: The Man and his Work* (London: Hamish Hamilton [also Seattle: University of Washington Press], 1975), 22.

ing three movements from Matthew Locke's *Consort of Four Parts*, a set of six suites probably composed in the mid-1650s and among the last pieces of music written in England for viol consort.⁴

As an instrument maker, however, Dolmetsch did not begin with bowed strings, presumably because for many years he was able to find a sufficient quantity of restorable antique viols to supply the needs of his family, colleagues, and students. Instead, he first turned his attention, in 1893, to constructing a copy of an old Italian lute he had impulsively purchased at an auction a few years earlier,⁵ which he subsequently restored and taught himself to play. In 1894 he made a group of four clavichords, based on one by Johann Adolf Haas that he had likewise bought and restored,⁶ and in 1896 he built a harpsichord and displayed it at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society's show in October of that year.⁷

For the most part, however, during the 1890s and the first few years of the twentieth century Dolmetsch's activities as a maker of new instruments took a back seat to his growing career as a researcher and performer of early music. In due course this led to op-

⁴ A. J. Hipkins, "Cantor Lectures. Musical Instruments: Their Construction and Capabilities. Lecture I.—delivered January 26th, 1891," *Journal of the Society of Arts* 39 (1891): 739–48, at p. 746 (viewed online at <https://books.google.com>). As played on that occasion by Dolmetsch and a group of his students (unnamed except for his 12-year-old daughter, Hélène), the ensemble consisted of a pardessus de viole by Louis Guersan (1761), a treble viol by the French maker Feyzeau of Bordeaux (1753), "a five-string tenor, probably by Simpson, London," and a bass by Barak Norman (1702). The first, second, and fourth of these are known to survive today, still in private hands, but the identity and whereabouts of the third remains a mystery.

⁵ In 1890, according to Campbell, *Dolmetsch*, 226.

⁶ Peter Bavington, "Arnold Dolmetsch's Clavichord-Making in the Years Before 1914," *De Clavicordio* 8 (2008): 27–42, at pp. 27–28.

⁷ The lute and harpsichord are both now at the Horniman Museum in London (nos. M11-1983 and M72-1983, respectively). One of the clavichords has been at the Royal College of Music (no. 211) ever since it was made for that institution, while another is in the Bate Collection at the University of Oxford (no. 969) and a third at the Castello Sforzesco in Milan (no. 580); the current location of the fourth is unknown. See Jenny Nex and Lance Whitehead, "The Six Early Clavichords of Arnold Dolmetsch: Their Construction and Inspiration," *Galpin Society Journal* 53 (2000): 274–300, at p. 275.

portunities to tour abroad, first to Italy in 1897, then to New York and Boston in January 1903, followed by several weeks in Paris during the summer of that same year. The trip to America was so successful that he was invited to return for a more extended series of engagements during the autumn of 1904, not only in cities on the East Coast but ranging as far west as Chicago and eventually even to California. For this tour the ensemble consisted of Arnold himself, his (third) wife Mabel, and the harpsichordist Kathleen Salmon (Figure 1). According to Margaret Campbell, “The tour had originally been planned for seven weeks but it was continually being extended. [...] As further requests for concerts poured in from music clubs throughout the country, Dolmetsch decided with some misgiving to settle in the States for good.”⁸ The plan was to establish a base of operations in Chicago and to continue touring and providing incidental music for theatrical productions in other cities; as he wrote to the poet William Butler Yeats on April 2, 1905, “They are willing to support me here, whilst in England they let me starve.”⁹

However, early the following year something unexpected happened that would radically change Dolmetsch’s life for the next five years and indeed well beyond. In Mabel’s words, “it was during a second visit to Boston that the turning-point in Arnold’s career arrived. One morning we were called upon by a representative of the House of Chickering, piano makers. [...] The outcome of our meeting was that Arnold was offered the complete control of a department of Chickering’s factory, where he would be free to manufacture harpsichords, clavichords, large oblong virginals, triangular spinets, small octavina virginals, lutes and viols! [...] This remarkable offer was accepted and after fulfilling the remaining concert and stage engagements ... we set about reorganizing our lives....”¹⁰

⁸ Campbell, *Dolmetsch*, 161.

⁹ Quoted by Campbell, *Dolmetsch*, 162.

¹⁰ *Personal Recollections*, 64–65. Margaret Campbell states that the Chickering contract was signed “during the winter of 1905” (*Dolmetsch*, 168), but Mabel Dolmetsch clearly says the offer was not made until after Christmas of that year.



Figure 1: Arnold and Mabel Dolmetsch on tour in America in 1905, with the harpsichordist Kathleen Salmon (from Mabel Dolmetsch, “Personal Recollections of Arnold Dolmetsch” part 5, first published serially in *The Consort: The Journal of the Dolmetsch Foundation* 11 [1954], opposite p. 36).

The Chickering piano company had been founded by Jonas Chickering in Boston in 1823. Thirty years later he brought his sons into the business as partners, and although he himself died soon thereafter, they continued to run the business for another four

decades, with one serving as president, another as the head of a New York office, and the third as manager of the factory on Tremont Street in Boston, the same building where Dolmetsch would later work. Toward the end of the nineteenth century they took on first one and later several partners from outside the family. By 1906 all three sons had died and the president of the company was a wealthy Boston businessman named Charles Henry Wheelwright Foster (1859–1955; Figure 2).¹¹

The working arrangement that Chickering & Sons offered to Dolmetsch was close to ideal: as he himself later wrote, “These farseeing and generous people offered me a good salary, a choice corner in their factory, the pick of their eighteen hundred workmen, every facility and freedom to carry out my ideas.... They also helped me to organize concerts, in fact gave me every assistance to accomplish what I wanted to do.”¹² Mabel notes that at one point after beginning his work in Boston “Arnold felt some anxiety as to the financial results of all these bold enterprises: but when he questioned Mr. Foster on this point, he was answered, ‘We are not worrying about that.’”¹³

However, only a few years later circumstances had changed. Partly as a consequence of a general economic downturn in the United States, Chickering & Sons in 1908 joined with four other piano manufacturers to form a consortium called the American Piano Company, later to become well known as a maker of player pianos under an abbreviated version of its name, Ampico. Subsequently, as Margaret Campbell explains, “Chickering’s began to doubt the wisdom of maintaining Dolmetsch’s luxury de-

¹¹ For a brief summary of the firm’s history, see Cynthia Adams Hoover, “Chickering,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 2001), 5:605. The impetus for hiring Dolmetsch actually came from a junior partner by the name of F. H. B. Byrne, whom Mabel Dolmetsch describes as “Possessed ... of artistic tastes and keenly interested in the older music, ... [and] able to inspire his superiors, Messrs. Foster and Eddy, with his own enthusiasm” (*Personal Recollections*, 64).

¹² Arnold Dolmetsch, “The Evolution of the Dolmetsch Instruments,” in *Dolmetsch and His Instruments* (Haslemere: Arnold Dolmetsch, Ltd., 1929), 3; cf. Larry Palmer, *Harpichord in America: A Twentieth-Century Revival* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), 20.

¹³ Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections*, 67.



Figure 2: Charles Henry Wheelwright Foster (from Charles Henry Wheelwright Foster diary 8 [February 1906], part of the Foster Family Papers Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society; reproduced by permission).

partment when orders for their mass-produced pianos were steadily declining. Reluctantly the directors told him that they could not renew his contract when it expired....”¹⁴ As a result, in the winter of 1911 Arnold and Mabel Dolmetsch and their young family—now consisting of three children: Cécile, born in March 1904 in England; Nathalie, born in July 1905 in Chicago; and Rudolph, born in November 1906 in Boston—moved to France, where he had been offered a three-year contract with the piano firm Gaveau. There, as noted by Larry Palmer in his book *Harpsichord in America*, “he was, once again, to have his own department devoted to the manufacture of early stringed instruments and keyboards.”¹⁵

The instruments produced under Dolmetsch’s supervision at Chickering & Sons are documented in a ledger now preserved at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., as part of a set of nearly fifty volumes recording details of the company’s output of more than 250,000 pianos during the century and a half of its existence, from 1823 all the way to 1985.¹⁶ Since Chickering was, after all, a piano manufacturer, it is not surprising that the majority of Dolmetsch’s time there was devoted to producing historical keyboard instruments, a total of 75 examples including all five types mentioned by his wife in describing the offer of employment. These are listed chronologically in a single numerical series occupying the first five pages of the register. Briefly, the subtotals amount to 34 clavichords, 19 ottavinos, 13 double-manual harpsichords, 3 Flemish-type virginals, 3 spinets, and 3 fortepianos.¹⁷

¹⁴ Campbell, *Dolmetsch*, 178.

¹⁵ Palmer, *Harpsichord in America*, 27. Palmer describes the change in working conditions at Chickering & Sons that prompted this move thus: “Instead of the luxury of fine workmanship and artistic (but unprofitable) endeavor, the emphasis of the new partnership was on increasing sales and decreasing the time required for the production of instruments—hardly an atmosphere conducive to the work of Arnold Dolmetsch.”

¹⁶ Chickering & Sons Piano Company Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Series 7, Box 38. The hardbound volume measures approximately 12 by 14.5 inches (in upright format) and bears on its spine the title “Miscellaneous Instruments 1–3,200.”

¹⁷ Two important articles have been written about the Dolmetsch-Chickering clavichords (Richard Troeger, “The Dolmetsch/Chickering Clavichords and

In addition, the final two pages of the volume contain a separately numbered list of eighteen non-keyboard instruments, beginning with four psalteries and concluding with two lutes, two theorbo lutes, and an Aeolian harp (Figure 3). In between these two groups of hand-plucked instruments appear entries for nine viols—three trebles, three tenors, and three basses—which were assigned the serial numbers 5 through 12 and 15. As far as I have been able to determine, these were the first such instruments Dolmetsch ever built himself, some twenty years before beginning the production of viols at his workshop in Haslemere (England) in 1927.¹⁸ They were also in all likelihood the first viols made by anyone in North America, in either historical or modern times.

As mentioned above, presumably the reason he had not previously made any viols is simply that there had been no need to do so, since a sufficient number of restorable antiques could easily enough be found in England. But in America he was faced with quite a different situation: William Lyman Johnson, a musician and collector who described himself as a close personal friend of Dolmetsch's during the latter's time in Boston, later recalled that "To the writer Mr. Dolmetsch stated that in 1905 there was not a

Their Model," *De Clavicordio* 2 [1996]: 213–23, and Bavington, "Arnold Dolmetsch's Clavichord-Making," cited above), but the other types of keyboard instruments, being less numerous, have received little scholarly attention apart from some individual entries in museum catalogues. It is possible that the three fortepianos were never built, as no purchaser is listed for any of them, in marked contrast to all the other keyboard instruments.

¹⁸ The first of the latter series was a tenor, now privately owned in England, whose manuscript label states "This is the first viol made at my / workshop in Haslemere, England. / Arnold Dolmetsch / November 1927". This instrument therefore predates the one mentioned by the maker himself as a pioneering effort: "The year 1928 was full of memorable events for us. In April my first Treble Viol was finished" (Arnold Dolmetsch, "The Evolution of the Dolmetsch Instruments," 4; cf. Campbell, *Dolmetsch*, 224). Over the course of the next two years he made at least four more viols, including a treble dated "Feb. 20th 1929 No. 10" (sold at Sotheby's on November 20, 1980, as lot 537), two tenors dated "July 26th 1929" (No. 11, privately owned in the United States, and No. 12, privately owned in England), and another treble dated "Sept. 1929 No. 13" (sold at Sotheby's on November 25, 1976, as lot 297). All of these have cornerless body outlines, unlike the trebles and tenors Dolmetsch had made in Boston. It is not presently known whether instruments numbered 2–9 were also viols or other types, bearing in mind that in Boston Dolmetsch had used a single numerical series for all kinds of non-keyboard instruments.

NO.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	NAME	ADDRESS	SHIPPED
105 1	Violon	35	Ben. H. Mason & Co. Boston	225 Washington St. Boston, Mass.	Oct. 25, 1907
106 2	Violon	35	Frank O. King	125 W. 4th St. New York N.Y.	March 13, 1907
107 3	Violon	35	Franklin K. Benjamin	100 Essex Street New York N.Y.	July 27, 1907
108 4	Violon				
109 5	Viola da Gamba		E. W. Foster	Boston Mass.	
110 6	Viola da Gamba				
111 7	Viola da Gamba		E. W. Foster	Boston Mass.	July 7, 1909
112 8	Viola da Gamba				
113 9	Viola da Gamba				
114 10	Viola da Gamba				
115 11	Viola da Gamba				
116 12	Viola da Gamba				
117 13	Viola da Gamba	160	John Conchell	Boston Mass.	Dec 27, 1907
118 14	Viola da Gamba				
119 15	Viola da Gamba		Frank O. King	125 W. 4th St. New York N.Y.	July 19, 1907
120 16	Viola da Gamba	200	Frank O. King	125 W. 4th St. New York N.Y.	July 6, 1907

Figure 3: Last page of a ledger recording the instruments made at Chickering & Sons in Boston “under the supervision of Arnold Dolmetsch,” showing the first sixteen non-keyboard instruments (Chickering & Sons Piano Company Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Series 7, Box 38, volume “Miscellaneous Instruments 1–3,200”; reproduced by permission).

viol in Boston and no one had ever played one.” If he wanted to continue presenting the English viol-consort repertoire in his concerts, therefore, Dolmetsch would not only have to recruit and train other players (to join himself and his wife), but also provide

them with instruments. Accordingly, as Johnson reports, “After he had produced six viols he sought for good amateur violin players who could better give the time for learning to play upon the instruments than professional violinists.”¹⁹

In fact, during the years he lived in America Dolmetsch’s activities as an instrument maker were regularly supplemented by teaching and concertizing. As his wife later explained, “Musically, the firm of Chickering was as generous as on the instrumental side. Not only did they approve of Arnold’s accepting from time to time concert engagements that necessitated his temporary absence from the workshop, but themselves sponsored during the height of each season a series of grand concerts in Chickering Hall.”²⁰ The first of these took place on February 27, 1907, and featured “English music from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for a ‘chest’ of six viols, the lute, virginals, violins, [and] treble and bass voices.”²¹ It is doubtful whether Dolmetsch had by this time, barely a year after his arrival in Boston, already completed six new viols; instead, he and the other players would likely have used antique instruments from his personal collection.²²

¹⁹ William Lyman Johnson, “The Golden Age of Music in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” *Harvard Musical Association Bulletin* no. 14 (April 1946): [8]–[14], at p. [11] (unnumbered pages); viewed online at <http://hmaboston.org/files/bulletins/april1946.pdf>.

²⁰ Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections*, 67.

²¹ The concert was announced in a column entitled “Boston’s Budget of News,” datelined “Jan. 25, 1907” and published in *The Music Trade Review* 44/4 (1907): 29 (viewed online at mtr.arcade-museum.com/MTR-1907-44-4/MTR-1907/44/4/29.pdf); cf. Palmer, *Harpichord in America*, 22.

²² This assumption is supported by a brief, unsigned review of the concert published the following week, which refers to “a ‘chest’ of six viols, each of which was of great antiquity”: see “The First Dolmetsch Concert,” in *The Musical Courier* 54/10 (March 6, 1907): 31 (viewed online at <http://books.google.com>). In fact, it appears that only one piece on the program (a suite by Martin Pierson) called for as many as six viols, one other (a pavane by Thomas Tomkins) for five, and a third (a suite by Matthew Locke) for just four; what seems to be the full program is listed in another review, also unsigned, that appeared in a subsequent edition of the column “Boston’s Budget of News,” this one datelined “Feb. 28, 1907,” in *The Music Trade Review* 44/9 (1907): 31 (viewed online at mtr.arcade-museum.com/MTR-1907-44-9/MTR-1907/44/9/31.pdf).

However, at least one Chickering viol, a bass, was finished more than four months before the date of this concert. Mabel's recollection that "The first viola da gamba was destined for Mr. Foster, as a compliment to the head of the firm"²³ is confirmed by the workshop register, in which his name appears as recipient of the first viol, no. 5 in the list of non-keyboard instruments (see Figure 3). No date for its delivery is given there, but Foster's diary (preserved with his other papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society) records that it was on Thursday, October 18, 1906, that he had "Lunch with Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Dolmetsch in Cambridge. [...] The occasion was honored by the presentation to me of a Viola da Gamba which Mr. Dolmetsch and others in the factory had made."²⁴ In addition to his many business interests, Foster was an enthusiastic amateur musician who already played several instruments, including cornet, piano, and mandolin. Mabel's comment that "He immediately set himself to learn how to play it" is confirmed by the surviving handwritten program for a holiday concert given at home only six weeks later (on Thanksgiving Day, November 29), in which Foster played his new viol to accompany two of his children, who performed on violin and virginals respectively.²⁵

Having described the circumstances that led Dolmetsch to build these viols in Boston, let us turn now to the instruments themselves. So far I have been able to locate six of the nine, including one treble, all three tenors, and two of the basses. Foster's bass is currently owned by the New England Conservatory of Music, located on Huntington Avenue in Boston, less than half a mile from the factory where the instrument was made. It has been there since 1941, when Foster (by then aged 81) wrote in his diary for February 8 of that year, "Today presented to the New England Conservatory of Music the four viols made for me by Arnold Dolmetsch

²³ Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections*, 66.

²⁴ Charles Henry Wheelwright Foster Diaries, Massachusetts Historical Society (Boston, Mass.), carton 1, volume for 1906.

²⁵ I am grateful to Molly Warner (a great-granddaughter of C. H. W. Foster), for sending me a digital image of this program attached to an e-mail dated February 17, 2013; the original is in the possession of one of her cousins.

in 1907 when working for Chickering & Sons....”²⁶ The conservatory also owns two Dolmetsch-Chickering tenor viols (nos. 10 and 11), which must have been part of this gift even though Foster’s name does not appear as their owner in the workshop register. It once had a Chickering treble viol as well, which must be the one listed as no. 7 in the register, showing Foster’s name as recipient, together with a date of January 7, 1909 (see Figure 3). Unfortunately, this smallest member of the set is reported to have disappeared some time before the mid-1970s, while on loan to a conservatory student whose apartment was burglarized.²⁷

Figure 4 shows the three remaining viols of the quartet that Foster donated to the New England Conservatory in 1941. Each of them has a carved head instead of a scroll at the top of the pegbox. As may be seen in Figure 5, while the female figure on the bass appears to be a fairly generic example, the woman on one of the tenors presents a rather different and more modern appearance. Writing in the mid-1950s, Mabel Dolmetsch explains that “Some fine tenor viols were produced, whose heads were carved by a Bavarian wood-carver. The first of these was intended to be a portrait of Arnold, while the second portrayed my own features....” In fact, the conservatory’s tenor viol no. 10 is the one depicting Mabel herself, who goes on to note that “an accompanying treble viol had a charming likeness of Cécile as a little winged sprite. This viol and the first tenor, after a period of wandering, are now among the family collection.”²⁸

Today, more than half a century after the publication of Mabel’s memoirs, the Cécile treble (no. 9) and the Arnold tenor (no. 12) are still owned by family members, namely her twin granddaughters Jeanne and Marguerite Dolmetsch; the carved

²⁶ C. H. W. Foster Diaries, carton 7, volume for 1941.

²⁷ E-mail of October 11, 2012, to the author from Meg Pash, recalling her time as a viola da gamba student at the conservatory in the mid-1970s: “I did hear that there had been a Dolmetsch treble, but I am pretty sure it was already gone when I was a student. The story I heard was that it was stolen from a student’s apartment and never recovered.”

²⁸ Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections*, 66.

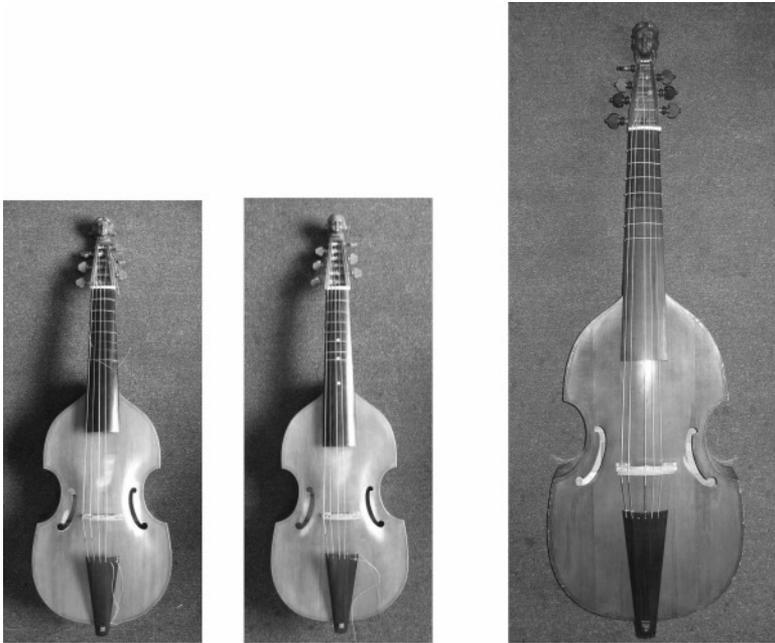


Figure 4: Tenor violas nos. 10–11 and bass viola no. 5, donated in 1941 by Charles H. W. Foster to the New England Conservatory (photos by the author).

heads on these instruments are shown in Figure 6.²⁹ Moreover, the conservatory's other tenor (no. 11, not mentioned by Mabel) is graced with the head of another young child, which bears a striking resemblance to family photographs of her son Rudolph (Figure 7).³⁰ Meanwhile, it seems highly likely that one of the missing

²⁹ The treble belongs to Jeanne and the tenor to Marguerite. According to Jeanne, "Sadly, we have no information on their life before they came to Haslemere" (e-mail to the author, August 21, 2012), but she does recall that the treble was the first viola she learned to play on, at the age of eight (e-mail to the author, July 19, 2012), meaning that at least that one of the pair must have arrived at Haslemere by about 1950.

³⁰ For example, one showing him at the age of eighteen months, reproduced in Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections*, facing p. 81. Although all three tenors contain labels dated 1907, this one at least is unlikely to have been completed until late that year, because Rudolph was only born on November 8, 1906, and the carving (which was probably based on a photograph rather than done from life) does not look like a newborn infant.

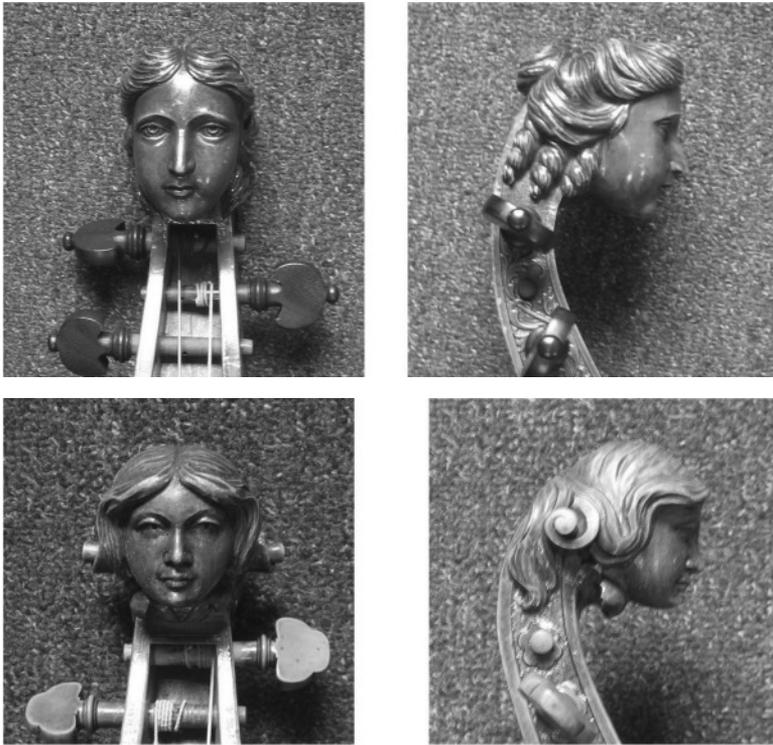


Figure 5: Carved female heads on bass viol no. 5 and tenor viol no. 10, the latter showing Mabel Dolmetsch (photos by the author).

treble viols would have been given a head representing the second Dolmetsch daughter, Nathalie: surely her father would not have had carvings done of his and Mabel's eldest and youngest children while skipping over the middle one.³¹

A second bass viol is essentially a twin to Foster's, except for having a different female head atop its pegbox (Figure 8). It bears the date 1908 on its label and is listed as no. 15 in the workshop

³¹ It remains a matter for speculation whose head would have appeared on the third treble: Dolmetsch's younger son, Carl, was not born until August 23, 1911, after the family had left Boston for France, while his eldest child, H el ene (born in 1878, issue of his first marriage to Marie Morel), was by this time nearly thirty years old and had not come to America with her father and step-mother. Birthdates for all five children are taken from a family tree found on the Dolmetsch website (<http://www.dolmetsch.com/Doltree.htm>).



Figure 6: Carved heads on treble viol no. 9 and tenor viol no. 12, the former showing Cécile Dolmetsch as a young child and the latter her father, Arnold Dolmetsch (photos courtesy of Brian Blood).

register, accompanied by a faint pencil inscription reading “Loaned Miss Alice Kelsey, 4 Buckingham Pl., Cambridge, Jany 19/09.”³² As Margaret Campbell explains,

One particular family, the Kelseys, were closely associated with the Dolmetsches throughout their stay in Cambridge. There were three children, Laura, Alice and Paul, all musical and eager to learn about the early music. From Alice Kelsey’s diary in 1906, when she was fourteen, we learn some interesting sidelights on the Dolmetsch approach. In the beginning, she was taken on by

³² This was the day before Alice’s seventeenth birthday, when she was still a student at the Cambridge Latin School, from which she graduated (as valedictorian of her class) in June 1909 (*The Cambridge Tribune*, Saturday, July 3, 1909, p. 8, viewed online at <http://cambridge.dlconsulting.com>). For her date of birth, see the following footnote.



Figure 7: Carved head on tenor viol no. 11, showing Rudolph Dolmetsch as a baby (photo by the author).

Mabel.... After she had made sufficient progress she was permitted to meet the master himself, [whom she described as] ‘a most fascinating man and a pure musician’. [...]

Perhaps because of her extreme youth, Alice Kelsey did not remember being afraid of Dolmetsch.... However, she recollects most vividly that when she told Dolmetsch that she was going on to Radcliffe instead of taking up music full-time, he stormed at her, telling her she was making a terrible mistake.³³

³³ Campbell, *Dolmetsch*, 170–71. At the time Campbell was researching her book, in the early 1970s, Alice Kelsey Dunn was a widow living in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Born on January 10, 1892, she graduated from Radcliffe in 1913 and six years later married John G. Dunn, a 1913 graduate of Harvard Law School. The U.S. Federal census reveals that by 1920 they were living in Detroit, Michigan, in which state they spent the rest of their lives. John retired from the practice of law in 1968 and died the following year, while Alice herself died on October 14, 1982, at the age of 90. In all likelihood Alice’s diary from 1906 does not survive, as her only child, Richard F. Dunn (1923–2002), died unmarried and childless, with only four first cousins listed as his next of kin.

Alice’s birth and death dates come from her death certificate, a copy of which is in the author’s possession; her birth date also appears as part of her entry on p. [78] of her college yearbook, *The Book of the Class of Nineteen Hundred Thirteen, Radcliffe College* (viewed online, the Radcliffe College Archives, <http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/22804408>); and a notice of her marriage appeared on p. 2 of the *Cambridge Tribune* for September 27, 1919 (viewed online at <http://cambridge.dlconsulting.com>). The 1920 census was consulted online at www.ancestry.com, *1920 United States Federal Census* (database indexing the Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920). An obituary for John Dunn, formerly a resident of Schenectady, N.Y., was published in the *Schenectady Gazette*, September 13, 1969, p. 23 (viewed online at <http://news.google.com/>



Figure 8: Bass viol no. 15 (photo © Christie's Images / Bridgeman Images; reproduced by permission).

newspapers; issue indexed with that of September 12, 1969); Richard Dunn's obituary appeared in *The Daily Gazette* (Schenectady), January 11, 2003, p. B6 (viewed online at <http://news.google.com/newspapers>).

Nevertheless, it seems that Alice continued to play the viol in college, because the Radcliffe archives contain a photo of a student theatrical troupe, complete with accompanying musicians, taken during her freshman year, which shows her holding a bass viola da gamba (Figure 9).³⁴ Nor was this the first time she had played music to accompany a theatrical production, for in May 1908 all three Kelsey siblings had joined Arnold and Mabel Dolmetsch (and two other people) in providing music for a Radcliffe performance of *Comus*, a masque by John Milton (1634).³⁵

Exceptionally, a second entry for this instrument appears on a different page of the Chickering ledger book, at the very end of the list of keyboard instruments. This documents its sale to E. B. Dane of Boston on April 16, 1914, less than a year after Alice Kelsey had graduated from college and fully three years after the Dolmetsches had left Boston for France. Ernest Blaney Dane (1868–1942) was a wealthy banker and treasurer of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, who that same day also purchased a Dolmetsch-Chickering harpsichord (no. 18), having a month earlier bought another harpsichord (no. 61), and before that a clavichord (no. 34, in June 1911). There is no reason to think that Dane played any of these esoteric keyboard instruments himself; rather, they were undoubtedly intended as furnishings for the large music

³⁴The photo is found in a scrapbook compiled by Marian Blackall Miller, Radcliffe College Class of 1911, and was probably taken in 1909–10, based on Miller's identification of students shown in it as members of the classes of 1910–13. The scrapbook is item SC 8 in the Radcliffe College Archives, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.; this photo (identified as "Work 11 of 58: Theatrical performance at Radcliffe College") was viewed online at <http://via.lib.harvard.edu/via/deliver/deepcontentItem?recordId=olvgroup11666%2CRAD.ARCH%3A1105032>.

³⁵"School and College: Radcliffe College," *Boston Evening Transcript*, May 18, 1908, p. 13 (viewed online at <http://news.google.com/newspapers>; issue indexed with that of May 16, 1908). Moreover, in a letter to Carl Dolmetsch dated February 25, 1972 (a copy of which was kindly made available to me by Jeanne Dolmetsch from the family archives at Haslemere, via an e-mail of December 8, 2012), Alice noted that she still played the viol in her sophomore year, "despite being busy with my lectures and studies," for some of the twelve lectures that Arnold Dolmetsch gave at Harvard in the winter of 1911, shortly before leaving Boston.



Figure 9: Detail from photo of a “Theatrical performance at Radcliffe College,” circa 1910, showing Alice Kelsey holding a bass viol, almost certainly Chickering no. 15 (from a scrapbook compiled by Marian Blackall Miller, Class of 1911, item SC 8 in the Radcliffe College Archives, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University).

room in his mansion in suburban Brookline, and the same is surely true for the viola da gamba he bought.³⁶

³⁶ The music room was large enough to accommodate a four-manual organ of 84 stops built by the Kimball-Frazee Organ Company: see Christine Merrick Ayars, *Contributions to the Art of Music in America by the Music Industries of Boston, 1640 to 1936* (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1937), 183, who describes it as “one of the largest private organs in the United States today”; see also Wilbur Hascall, “New England” [i.e., Report of Activities of the New England Chapter of the American Guild of Organists], in *The American Organist* vol. 2, no. 7 (July 1919): 306. The mansion still stands and is now the Ferry Administration Building on the campus of Pine Manor College; however, the organ was removed and donated to the Eliot Church in nearby Newton, Mass., shortly before

In 1929 Dane donated harpsichord no. 18 and the clavichord to Harvard University, where they remain to this day; soon after their arrival there, they were the first historical-type keyboard instruments that Ralph Kirkpatrick played on as an undergraduate, an experience that ultimately led to his distinguished international career as a concert harpsichordist in the middle decades of the twentieth century.³⁷ I have not been able to learn how much longer Dane continued to own either the other harpsichord or the bass viol, but the latter was acquired some time in the early-to-mid-1950s by the pioneering American gambist Alison Fowle, who continued to play on it, both professionally and in retirement, until shortly before her death in 2008.³⁸

The information presented thus far accounts for six of the nine Dolmetsch-Chickering viols, as shown in Figure 10: two in Haslemere (a treble and a tenor), three in Boston (two tenors and a bass), and one in my own collection (another bass). Still awaiting rediscovery, therefore, are two more trebles (nos. 7 and 8) and the third bass (no. 6). If anyone reading these lines can provide a clue

the property was sold by the Dane family to the college in 1961 (see <http://thedaneestateatpinemanorcollege.com/#!/history/csn3>).

³⁷ “Kirkpatrick began his career at Harvard where he was studying fine arts. The university acquired a harpsichord in 1929 and he was given the opportunity to learn how to play the instrument. In May 1930, he gave his first public harpsichord recital in Paine Hall at Harvard.” Meredith Kirkpatrick, *Ralph Kirkpatrick: A Bibliography and Discography*, www.bu.edu/library/guide/ralphkirkpatrick/, paragraph 3. A few years later, in 1934, Kirkpatrick himself acquired harpsichord no. 60 (which had initially been given on long-term loan to the composer Ferruccio Busoni but subsequently returned to Chickering & Sons), and in 1948 also no. 55, originally assigned in the shop register to Dolmetsch himself. Both are now in the Yale University Collection of Musical Instruments: see Richard Rephann, “Dolmetsch-Chickering Instruments at Yale,” *Newsletter of the American Musical Instrument Society* 21, no. 2 (June 1992): 1–2.

³⁸ The instrument came to my attention when it was offered at auction by Christie’s in New York in April 2012; after it failed to find a buyer at that sale, I was able to buy it a few months later, prompting me to begin researching the whole group of nine Chickering viols. At the time of writing this article, harpsichord no. 61 was being offered for sale by Zuckermann Harpsichords, Inc., in Stonington, Conn.

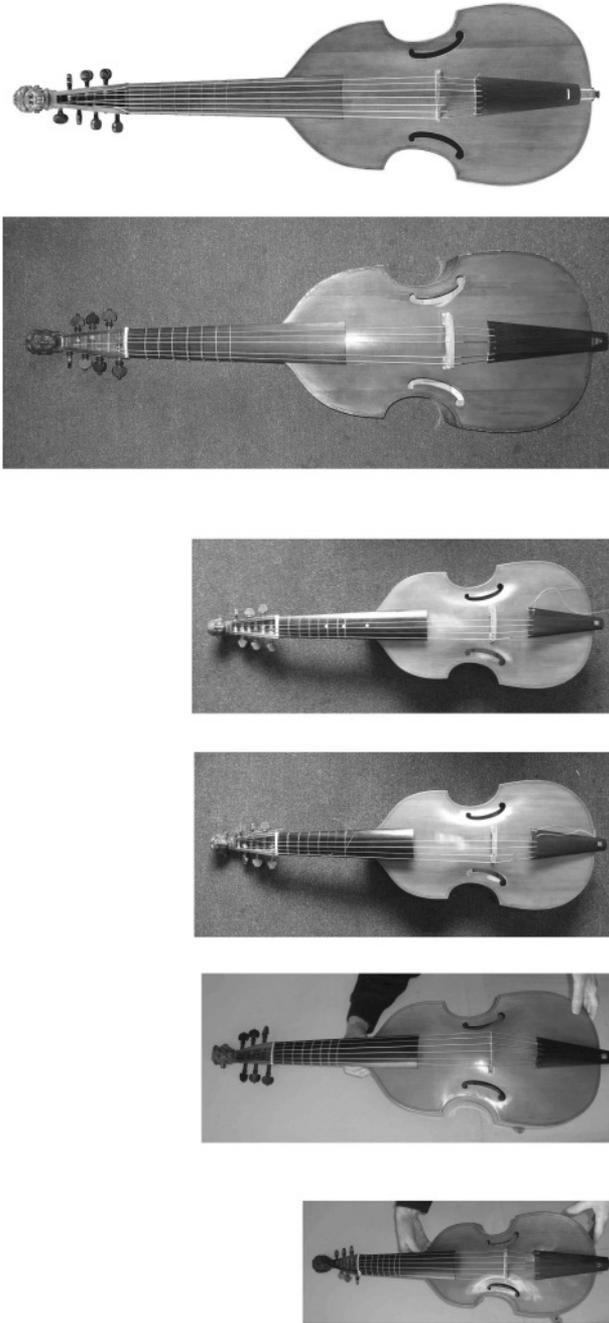


Figure 10: Six of the nine Dolmetsch-Chickering viols, shown approximately to scale (first two photos courtesy of Brian Blood; next three by the author; last © Christie's Images / Bridgeman Images).

as to their current (or past) ownership or location, I would be most grateful to receive this information.³⁹

Meanwhile, it is possible to suggest with some confidence where the missing bass viol spent its first decade or two, and also to shed some light on who played the bass originally loaned to Alice Kelsey after its subsequent purchase by Ernest Dane. Mabel Dolmetsch, after noting that the first bass to be completed was presented to Mr. Foster, goes on to say that “Another went to a Frenchman named Kefer, first ’cellist of the New York Symphony Orchestra, and a third to Adamoffsky, violinist in the same orchestra.”⁴⁰ Actually, the Polish-born violinist Tymoteusz (or Timothée) Adamowski (1857–1943; Figure 11) was a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1884 to 1907, and thereafter taught at the New England Conservatory until 1933.⁴¹ In all likelihood, the viol he used was the one acquired by Ernest Dane in 1914, since Dane was an active patron of the orchestra in which Adamowski played.⁴²

As for the missing bass, it must be the one played by Paul Kéfer (1875–1941), a Frenchman who came to New York during the first decade of the twentieth century and served for five years as principal cellist of the New York Symphony before resigning in 1913 to

³⁹ A query published in the *VdGSA News* (supplemented by questions posed directly to a number of long-time Boston-area viol players and teachers) has yielded no useful results.

⁴⁰ Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections*, 66.

⁴¹ Adamowski also founded both a string quartet and a piano trio named after himself and served as the first conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra (in 1890–94, and again in 1900–07), the summertime counterpart to the Boston Symphony. Nicholas Slonimsky, ed., *Baker’s Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, 5th ed. (New York: G. Schirmer, 1971), 7; obituary from the *New York Times*, April 19, 1943 (also at http://www.poles.org/db/A_names/Adamowski_T.html).

⁴² This would mean that Adamowski’s activity as a gambist took place after the Dolmetsches left Boston, so Mabel’s knowledge of it would only have been second-hand, which could easily explain her minor memory slip in identifying the orchestra of which Adamowski was a member.



Figure 11: Timothée Adamowski, who probably played Chickering bass viol no. 15, on loan from Ernest B. Dane (TCS 1.46, Harvard Theatre Collection, Harvard University).

pursue a career as a soloist and chamber musician.⁴³ At the Paris Conservatoire Kéfer had been a student of Jules Delsarte, who was himself a pioneer in the revival of viol playing at the end of the nineteenth century, as one of the founding members of the Société des Instruments Anciens in 1889. After graduating in 1900, Kéfer served as principal cellist of several European orchestras before emigrating to the United States to take a similar position with the New York Symphony. In addition to playing in various ensembles—including (from 1914 to 1920) the Trio de Lutèce with flutist Georges Barrère and harpist Carlos Salzedo—he frequently collaborated with pianist Arthur Whiting, who gave concerts of Baroque music using his Dolmetsch-Chickering harpsichord.⁴⁴ From 1923 until his death in 1941, Kéfer was professor of cello at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. (where his responsibilities also included serving as cellist of the Kilbourn Quartet and principal cellist of the Rochester Philharmonic), but inquiries there have not turned up any evidence that he continued to play the viol during this final stage of his career, or any information about what happened to his instrument either before or after his death.⁴⁵

It is all but certain that Kéfer had acquired his viol at least by mid-1910, because the Harvard *Crimson* for November 22 of that

⁴³ Information about Kéfer has been drawn from a number of sources, including a profile entitled “Paul Kefer, Successful Cellist” in *The Musical Courier* 58/7 (February 17, 1909): 15; *Baker’s Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, 5th ed., 815 (though this gives the wrong month for his death, and wrong year for his arrival in New York); and announcements of concerts in which he participated or was featured, published in various newspapers during the years 1910–14.

⁴⁴ Whiting’s harpsichord was no. 59, originally sold to Mrs. Joseph Chamberlain of New York and now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; it is illustrated on the cover of Laurence Libin, *American Musical Instruments in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York and London: Norton, 1985). I thank Richard Troeger and Larry Palmer for providing me with this information.

⁴⁵ I am grateful to David Peter Coppen, Special Collections Librarian and Archivist at the Eastman School of Music, for providing information from documents in his care and for referring me to the Monroe County (N.Y.) Surrogate’s Court, which was able to supply a copy of Kéfer’s will and estate inventory. The latter mentions only “Two cellos” (which, together with “household effects and personal clothing” were valued at only \$900); it is conceivable, though not very likely, that one of these instruments was in fact a viol rather than a second cello.

year announces a concert of French Baroque music to be given at the university that evening by Whiting, Barrère, and “Mr. Paul Kefer, viola da gamba,” together with soprano Edith Chapman Goold.⁴⁶ Further details of interest are found in an article entitled “Paul Kefer and the Viola da Gamba,” published in an as-yet-unidentified music trade periodical also dating from the autumn of 1910.⁴⁷ Subtitled “Old Instrument Attracts Attention of ’Cellist—How It Differs from the ’Cello,” the three-paragraph story is illustrated with a photo showing the artist playing his viol (Figure 12). It begins:

Paul Kefer, the first ’cellist of the New York Symphony Orchestra, has lately become interested in the viola da gamba.

He was lucky enough to secure a beautiful copy of an old instrument made under the supervision of Arnold Dolmetsch by Chickering & Sons. Instead of four strings, as on the ’cello, the viola da gamba (or bass viol) has seven, which, being tuned in fourths and thirds instead of fifths (as the ’cello), make the fingering absolutely different and tax the memory of the player to the extreme. The bowing is also quite different and the instrument has to

⁴⁶ Viewed online at <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1910/11/22/first-chamber-concert-pmr-arthur-whiting/>. The program featured works by Couperin, Rameau, Lully, and Leclair, as well as viol solos by Marais (*Plainte*), and Caix d’Hervelois (*Le Papillon*). The same program was announced a little more than a year later, in the *New York Times* of January 7, 1912 (viewed online at <http://nytimes.com>), for a concert to take place the following day at Rumford Hall in New York City.

⁴⁷ A clipping of this article, taken from the original publication, was offered for sale on eBay in January 2014 and purchased by the author. The vendor, doing business as “ads@237.com,” identified it as “1910 Paul Kefer photo & Viola Da Gamba vs cello trade print article,” but did not reply to an inquiry as to the exact source. (Subsequent investigation has revealed at least that it is not *Musical America*.) Confirmation that this article was published in late 1910 is provided by another article found on the verso of the clipping, headlined “Singers Arrive for Boston Opera: Lipkowska and Baklanoff in Vanguard of Russian Artists Here from Europe,” which specifies that they had arrived “Monday morning” on the *Nieuw Amsterdam*. A passenger list for that ship’s arrival in New York on October 31, 1910 (viewed in the online resource *New York Passenger Lists 1820–1957*, at www.ancestry.com), includes the names of soprano Lydia Lipkowska and her then-husband, baritone Georges Baklanoff, listed (together with at least a dozen others) as associated with the Boston Opera Co. The periodical in which these articles appeared must therefore have been published (probably in New York, and probably as a weekly) during the first few days of November in that year.



Figure 12: Paul Kéfer with his Chickering bass viol, almost certainly no. 6.

be held between the knees without the helping use of a “pique,” so it is really a different instrument from the ’cello although they are so closely related.

Confirmation that Kéfer’s bass viol, like its two siblings, had seven rather than six strings and a carved female head can be found on the first page of an autobiography published by the younger of his two daughters, born in 1906, who grew up to become an actress using the stage name Rose Hobart. In the second paragraph she writes that “My first awareness is sitting on the floor, watching my father practice on a viola da gamba, a seven-stringed cello with a woman’s head and bust instead of the usual scroll at the top.”⁴⁸

As the foregoing accounts reveal, the viols that Dolmetsch made in Boston were initially played by both amateur and professional musicians, with Charles Foster and the Kelsey siblings exemplifying the former group⁴⁹ while Paul Kéfer and Timothée Adamowski represent the latter. However, despite Mabel Dolmetsch’s statement that “all the instruments produced found ready buyers, even to the lutes and viols,”⁵⁰ it is not clear that any of the nine viols were actually sold during the years that Dolmetsch was in Boston, since no names besides Foster’s (and Dane’s, belatedly in 1914) appear next to their entries in the shop register, in marked contrast to the meticulous listings of this and related information for purchasers of keyboard instruments.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Rose Hobart, *A Steady Digression to a Fixed Point* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1994), 1. Rose Hobart died in 2000, at the age of 94, and her only child was born nearly a decade after his grandfather’s death, so even if he could be located today, it is unlikely he would know anything about what happened to the viol.

⁴⁹ However, Laura and Paul Kelsey, unlike their younger sister Alice, went on to become professional musicians, playing and teaching the violin and cello, respectively. It is not known whether Alice continued to play music in any way (either on the viol or otherwise) after her graduation from college and subsequent marriage.

⁵⁰ Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections*, 66.

⁵¹ Because no price is listed for Foster’s treble, it may also have been a gift; and he may well have acquired his two tenors *ex officio*, as surplus merchandise so to speak, when they remained unsold after Dolmetsch’s department was closed and he moved to France in 1911.

Although much remains unclear about the history of these viols in the middle decades of the twentieth century, in broad terms it can be said that during those years at least some of them continued to be used by both categories of gambists, amateurs and professionals. In retirement, during the 1930s, Charles Foster played his viols in diverse kinds of chamber music (not necessarily from the Renaissance or Baroque period), together with friends performing on flute, oboe, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano.⁵² By the mid-1960s his quartet of viols, though officially belonging to the New England Conservatory, was being used by participants in consort classes run by the nearby Museum of Fine Arts, a circumstance that ironically rendered them unavailable to at least one would-be gamba student then enrolled at the conservatory as a viola major.⁵³ Soon after this, though, NEC hired Grace Feldman to teach the viol in-house, and during the 1970s and 80s the Dolmetsch-Chickering viols were used by both major-study and other students at the conservatory.⁵⁴

⁵² According to one of Foster's great-granddaughters, "From 1930 to 1941 CHWF's diaries recorded music sessions with friends two to four times per month from October to June ... with CHWF usually on the tenor viol (he wrote of the treble viol and the viola da gamba less frequently)." Molly Warner, "The Musical Life of C.H.W. Foster," typescript essay prepared for a binder of historical materials distributed at a family reunion of Foster's descendants in April 2013 and kindly shared with the present author soon thereafter.

⁵³ Mary Anne Ballard, e-mail to the author, April 14, 2014; letter of August 1964 from Narcissa Williamson (then a staff member of the Education Department of the Museum of Fine Arts) to the British Viola da Gamba Society, excerpted in the society's *Bulletin* no. 22 (December 1964), 16: "We have offered two courses of class instruction in successive years under the excellent tutelage of Judith Davidoff. ... [W]e provide the viols and have seven for this purpose, ... [including] a set of four made by Arnold Dolmetsch while he was here working for the Chickering firm in the first decade of this century...."

⁵⁴ Feldman recalls that "I started teaching at NEC around 1966. [...] The Dolmetsch instruments at NEC were there when I came" (e-mail to the author dated October 14, 2012). Meg Pash writes that "I first studied viol with Grace Feldman at NEC in 1975-76.... The Dolmetsch bass was the first bass viol I played, and I used it for quite some time. I remember it fondly" (e-mail to the author, October 11, 2012). Peter Sykes, well known as a player of many kinds of historical keyboard instruments, recalls that "I also once played a Chickering tenor viol that belongs ... to the New England Conservatory when I played in a viol consort as a student in the '80s" (e-mail to the author, June 3, 2012).

Meanwhile, by the mid-1950s the bass originally sold to Boston Symphony patron Ernest Dane had been acquired by Alison Fowle, a cellist who (inspired by contact with the viol virtuoso and teacher August Wenzinger both in Switzerland and at Harvard) became one of the first professional gambists of the post–World War II generation in the greater Boston area, performing with groups such as the Boston Camerata and the New York Pro Musica and teaching at several colleges in New England (Figure 13).⁵⁵ By about this same time, two of the smaller Chickering viols had been returned (by pathways no longer known) to the Dolmetsch family in England, where no doubt they would have been used from time to time in the family consort in their regular public performances at the Haslemere Festival and elsewhere.

Finally, let us briefly consider what instruments Dolmetsch might have used as the basis for his design of the viols he made while working in Boston. All three sizes have what is sometimes described as a normal or classic viol outline, with sloping shoulders and four unpointed body corners, together with C-shaped soundholes, a flat back, and flush edges. However, they do not appear to have been made as exact copies of any specific antique instruments, or even in the style of any one maker, an approach that in any case was not generally in favor at that time, and to which Dolmetsch in particular did not subscribe.⁵⁶

Both in their overall shape and in the details of their body decoration they seem to be influenced more by English instruments of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries than by French or German viols of the same period. For example, the use of dou-

⁵⁵ A brief biography of Alison Fowle appears in Phyllis Olson, *Pastime With Good Company: The Early Years of the Viola da Gamba Society of America* (Carlsbad, CA: Viola da Gamba Society of America, 1998), 127; according to her family, she purchased the Chickering viol “in the mid-1950’s, perhaps as early as 1953 or 1954” (e-mail from her son-in-law Arthur Lafave to the author, August 15, 2012), but they do not know from whom.

⁵⁶ Writing about the four clavichords he had made in 1894, Dolmetsch noted many years later that “I understood that copying other people’s work, the best training for a beginner, should only be a step to higher achievements. [...] Feeling that I had imagination and skill, I endeavoured henceforth to realize my own ideals” (“The Evolution of the Dolmetsch Instruments,” 3).



Figure 13: Alison Fowle with her Dolmetsch-Chickering viol no. 15, circa 1990 (family photo courtesy of James Fowle and Rebecca Lafave).

ble tracks of purfling around the edges of the belly and back is a characteristically English practice, and the stylized floral orna-

ments found at the bottom of the back on most of the Chickering viols are copied directly from the work of Barak Norman (1651–1724), the most prolific English maker of viols.⁵⁷ On the other hand, the basses differ from normal English practice in having seven rather than six strings; Dolmetsch probably wanted to make an all-purpose instrument that could handle equally well either the classic English consort literature or the later (and mostly French) solo repertoire of suites and sonatas that frequently calls for a seventh string tuned to low AA.⁵⁸

In size, the Dolmetsch-Chickering viols for the most part fall comfortably into the range of those that survive from the seventeenth century and the first quarter of the eighteenth, with body lengths of about 39 cm for the trebles, 51 cm for the tenors, and 68 cm for the basses (though in truth the tenors are somewhat on the small side).⁵⁹ However, in each case their vibrating string lengths are a few centimeters shorter than their bodies, in accordance with standard (modern) practice for instruments of the violin family.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Specifically, they exactly match the triple flower found in the same place on the 1713 bass viol by Barak Norman formerly owned by Dolmetsch and now at the Horniman Museum in London (no. M60-1983). Foster's bass (no. 5) has no flowers at the bottom, but does have a matrix of small diamonds at the top of the back; the other known bass (no. 15) has both, while the Cécile treble (no. 9) has neither.

⁵⁸ So far as I am aware, no English bass viols were ever originally built with seven strings, but there is ample historical justification for such instruments, because French players of the early eighteenth century liked to take older English viols, which were prized for their superior tonal qualities, and reneck them in order to play the then-current solo repertoire that usually called for a seventh string.

⁵⁹ The half-dozen surviving English tenors from this period have body lengths between 54 and 56 cm; the approximately 40 extant trebles range from 33 to 44 cm, suggesting that they may not all have been intended for the same tuning or at least may have been tuned to different reference pitches. Antique English basses can measure anywhere from 60 to 76 cm, which may to some extent reflect the size difference between consort, division, and *lyra* basses described by contemporary writers. These statistics are derived from my Database of Historical Viols, of which the English and French segments are currently available online at the website of our Society (www.vdgsa.org/pgs/viols/viols.html), to be joined by the rest in due course.

⁶⁰ As currently set up, Dolmetsch's treble, tenor, and bass viols have string lengths of 36.4, 47.5, and 65.8 or 66.8 cm respectively; for the treble and tenor sizes this represents about 93% of the body length, while the same ratio for the

This is the opposite of what we find in the few old English bass viols that survive with their original necks, where the string length is typically close to 104% of the body length.⁶¹

It should be emphasized that in choosing to make viols of all three standard sizes, namely trebles and tenors as well as basses, Dolmetsch was, to the best of my knowledge, unique at this time. Although a handful of other luthiers—mostly in France and Belgium—did try their hand at making bass viols (and even a few *pardessus de viole*) during the quarter-century or so prior to World War I, these were undoubtedly intended for the solo literature. Many of the basses were inappropriately fitted with a set of sympathetic strings, while others were clearly influenced by elements of cello design.⁶²

Because relatively few English treble and tenor viols survive from the historical period, it is likely that Dolmetsch designed the bass first—perhaps keeping in mind examples by Richard Meares, George Miller, and Barak Norman that he had owned during the previous decade and a half (Figure 14)⁶³—and then scaled that

basses is approximately 97%. Norms for modern violin-family instruments are a string length of 33.0 and a body length of 35.6 cm for violins and corresponding lengths of 70.0 and 75.5 cm for cellos (in both cases producing ratios of just under 93%); violas are notoriously unstandardized.

⁶¹ For example, the Henry Jaye of 1619 and the Richard Meares of c. 1660 formerly owned by Dietrich Kessler and now at the Royal College of Music, or the Barak Norman of 1692 in the same collection.

⁶² Examples include extant basses by Parisian makers Gustave Bernardel (1896), Joseph & Georges Chardon (1900), Henri Français (1902), and François Marchand (1904), as well as Georges Mougenot (1897) and Emile Laurent (1910) in Brussels. Only a handful of people are known to have made more than two viols during this period, including Hilaire Darce (four basses and two *pardessus*, 1890–1915) and Charles Hautstont (four basses, 1898–1903) in Brussels, the prolific antiquarian and cellist August Tolbecque in Niort, France (four basses c. 1899, plus others as early as 1865 and 1877), and George Saint George in England (three basses, one of them currently known [1895] and two more documented but unlocated). Though dating from the start of the modern early-music revival rather than from the historical period properly speaking, all of these instruments are included in the Database of Historical Viols cited above.

⁶³ These three basses are illustrated in Arnold Dolmetsch, “The Viols,” *The Connoisseur* 10 (1904): 134–38 and 13 (1905): 112–16. Those by Miller (1669) and Norman (1713) are now at the Horniman Museum in London (nos.



Figure 14A: Bass viols by Richard Meares (1669) and George Miller (1669) (left photo courtesy of Rodrigo de Zayas; right © Heini Schneebeli, courtesy of The Horniman Museum and Gardens, reproduced by permission).

M50-1983 and M60-1983, respectively), while the Meares (also dated 1669) is privately owned in Spain.



Figure 14B: Bass viols by Barak Norman (1713) and Arnold Dolmetsch (1906) (left photo © Gertraud Bossert, courtesy of The Horniman Museum and Gardens, reproduced by permission; right by the author).

model down for the tenor and treble sizes. At a minimum, we can say that the trebles made in Boston are larger than either of the two French (eighteenth-century) instruments he had been using for consort playing since the early 1890s,⁶⁴ while the tenors have nothing at all in common with the only tenor viol he ever owned, an anonymous Italian instrument with a cornerless or figure-eight body outline that he purchased from the personal collection of William Henry Hill in 1899.⁶⁵

On the other hand, that tenor clearly was the model for the tenor and treble viols Dolmetsch made at Haslemere beginning in 1927, for these are likewise cornerless, though having C-shaped instead of F-shaped soundholes (Figure 15).⁶⁶ In contrast, the bass pictured in a sales brochure published in 1929 (Figure 16) appears to be essentially similar to the ones made earlier in Boston, even to the extent of being equipped with seven rather than six strings, though having a simple open scroll instead of a carved head.⁶⁷

While it is almost certain that Arnold Dolmetsch himself established the basic design of all three sizes of viols made both in Boston and in Haslemere, it does not necessarily follow that he personally crafted each of the resulting instruments. Charles Fos-

⁶⁴ The one Chickering treble located so far has a body length of 39.1 cm, compared to 32.4 cm for Dolmetsch's Guersan pardessus and 37.4 cm for his treble by Feyzau.

⁶⁵ Now no. M30-1983 in the collection of the Horniman Museum, London; information about its acquisition by Arnold Dolmetsch was provided in an e-mail from Jeanne Dolmetsch to the author, July 19, 2012.

⁶⁶ Cornerless trebles and tenors continued to be made until at least the mid-1950s, to judge from the appearance of this same photo on p. 19 of an illustrated booklet written by Dolmetsch's son-in-law and pupil, C. Leslie C. Ward (*The Dolmetsch Workshops* [Haslemere, Surrey: Arnold Dolmetsch Limited, 1949; rev. ed. 1954]), a copy of which is in the author's possession. According to Jeanne Dolmetsch (in conversation with the author, July 11, 2014), trebles and tenors of the classic outline were not (re)introduced into the Dolmetsch product line until about 1960.

⁶⁷ John Pringle comments that "the Boston viol looks closer to both the Miller and the Meares than the Norman. It has the squarer lower bout and long C-holes. On the other hand the 1929 viol is definitely closer in shape to the Norman. All of which suggests to me that he looked at whatever he could, and took what he liked and made it his own while remaining quite faithful to the spirit of the originals" (e-mail to the author of February 21, 2014).



Figure 15: Left: anonymous Italian tenor viol, owned by the Dolmetsch family from 1898 to 1983 (from Nathalie Dolmetsch, “Antique Bowed Instruments in the Dolmetsch Collection,” *JVdGSA* 15 [1978]: 55); right: tenor viol by Arnold Dolmetsch, labeled “This is the first viol made at my workshop in Haslemere, England. Arnold Dolmetsch November 1927” (photo by Ted Copper, reproduced by permission).



Figure 16: Tenor, bass, and treble viols offered for sale by Dolmetsch in 1929 (from *Dolmetsch and his Instruments* [Haslemere: Arnold Dolmetsch, Ltd., 1929], 13).

ter, in noting the gift to him of the first one produced in Boston, called it “a Viola da Gamba which Mr. Dolmetsch *and others in the factory* had made” (emphasis added). Mabel Dolmetsch explains that “As soon as his department at Chickering’s had been organized, he was allowed to take his pick from among the working staff, and was thus enabled to assemble a choice band of excellent collaborators of various nationalities. Among these his most trusty helper was a Swede named Ericsson.”⁶⁸ And indeed,

⁶⁸ Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections*, 65–66. Margaret Campbell, while not giving Ericsson’s name, provides important additional information by

Ericsson's name appears on small supplementary labels found inside both treble viol no. 9 and tenor viol no. 12, on the upper portion of the back: the former, printed in script, reads simply "Nils J. Ericsson," while the latter is handwritten and specifies the date, "N. J. Ericsson / March 20th 1907".⁶⁹

Although Jeanne Dolmetsch has described the treble as "built by Nils Ericsson under my grandfather's direction," she also notes that "AD would not only have directed the building of the viols but also have been involved in the actual making. If these were his first modern viols he would have been very careful to ensure that these pioneer instruments were successful in every respect. Close examination of the Cécile treble and Arnold tenor has revealed a very high standard of craftsmanship, particularly in the lining of the joints. Later viols not made or supervised by AD are not of this quality."⁷⁰ And there is no question that Dolmetsch himself possessed significant craft skills, having learned them as a teenaged apprentice in the shop established by his maternal grandfather Armand Guillaouard, an organ and piano builder in Le Mans, France; as Campbell notes, "By the age of 16 he was thoroughly trained in workshop technique."⁷¹

More than forty years ago the noted harpsichordist Ralph Kirkpatrick, who had first learned to play on a Dolmetsch-Chickering harpsichord while an undergraduate at Harvard and later himself owned two of them, commented that they "are most remarkable for their time because for the next 30 or 40 years they were the only instruments that had much relation to the 18th-century harpsichords. [...] It certainly presented me with an idea of sound that was otherwise not available in the average French or

noting that among Dolmetsch's staff was "his right-hand man, an immigrant Swede who had originally trained as a violin-maker" (*Dolmetsch*, 176). Mabel Dolmetsch adds (p. 115) that the relationship between her husband and Ericsson was so close that he followed them to France in 1911 and became foreman of Dolmetsch's department at the Gaveau factory.

⁶⁹ I am grateful to Jeanne and Marguerite Dolmetsch, the current owners of these two viols, for allowing me to examine them (in Haslemere, on July 11, 2014) and thereby to discover these additional signatures.

⁷⁰ E-mails to the author of July 12 and 19, 2012.

⁷¹ Campbell, *Dolmetsch*, 5.

German instrument of the time.”⁷² Much the same could be said about the Chickering viols, which even today, more than a century after they were made as Dolmetsch’s first ventures in this area, remain very satisfactory playing instruments with good tone and response, only slightly more heavily constructed than more modern viols and almost totally lacking in features reminiscent of the cello. This is surely due in large part to their having been designed and built by someone who, though originally trained as a violinist, had never played or made a cello but who had spent more than fifteen years restoring and performing on antique viols. He thus was in a position to draw his stylistic and technical inspiration directly from historical examples, in contrast to the relatively few luthiers of the early twentieth century who ventured to make viols, typically for clients who were cellists seeking something not too different from their primary instrument. The resulting gambas (nearly all of bass size) were often strung heavily, with a string length and neck dimensions suitable for playing without frets and using an overhand bow hold—in other words, a kind of hybrid instrument for which the humorous term “cellamba” has sometimes been used.⁷³

But while Dolmetsch’s earliest viols were significantly closer to antique models than most of the few others made at about the same time (or indeed for several decades thereafter), as has already been noted he did not believe in making exact copies of particular

⁷² Margaret Campbell, “The Dolmetsch Heritage,” *The Consort* 45 (1989): 8–12, at p. 10 (quoting from an interview in 1971). According to Howard Schott, the Chickering harpsichords were “freely derived from a French 18th-century harpsichord used in Dolmetsch’s concerts (the so-called ‘Couchet-Taskin’ ... now in Edinburgh). [...] While heavily cased, the Dolmetsch-Chickering harpsichords were lighter in construction than most other contemporaneous examples. The scaling was longer than that of 18th-century French harpsichords and the ribbing of the soundboard, while light, was distinctly modern, crossing under the bridge. The tone, somewhat lacking in brightness, was nonetheless closer to the sound of antique instruments than any modern harpsichord had been” (Howard Schott and Martin Elste, “Harpsichord, §5: After 1800,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. [London: Macmillan, 2001], 11:37).

⁷³ This coinage is often credited to Thurston Dart, the English musicologist and harpsichordist (and also gambist, though he rarely if ever played in public), who used it in his seminal book *The Interpretation of Music* (London: Hutchinson, 1954), 32.

instruments. And although he was unquestionably and absolutely dedicated to reviving the music and instruments of a bygone age, he was also a man of his own time. With respect to the viols he made in Boston, this is nowhere more clearly revealed than in the carved designs that decorate the backs of their pegboxes, which are quite unlike anything to be found (at least as original components) on instruments made in the seventeenth or eighteenth century (Figure 17).⁷⁴ In more than one way, therefore, Dolmetsch's

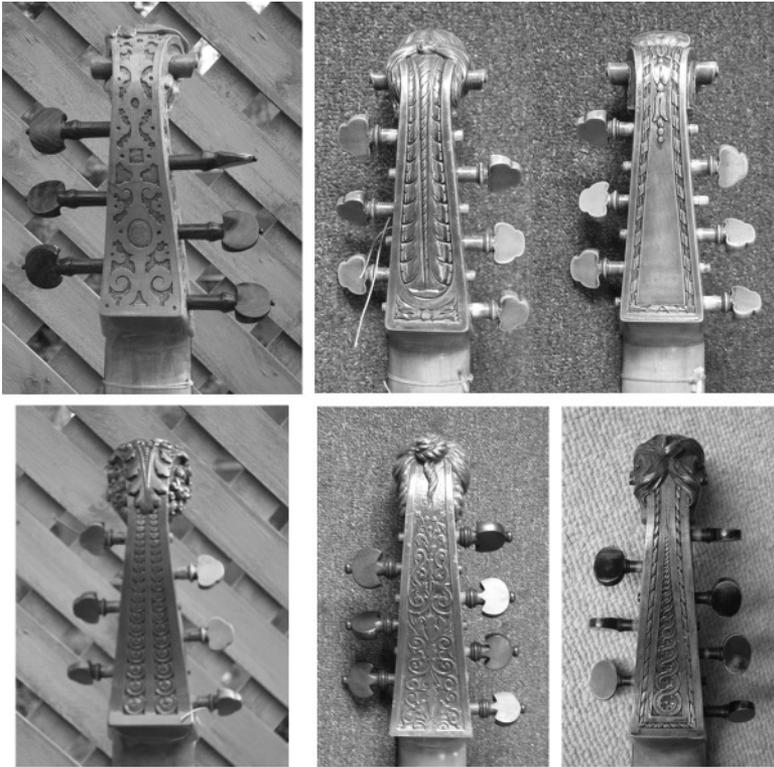


Figure 17: Carved pegbox backs on six Dolmetsch-Chickering viols, dated 1906–08. Top row (left to right): tenors nos. 12, 10, and 11; bottom row: treble no. 9, basses nos. 5 and 15 (first and fourth photos courtesy of Brian Blood, others by the author).

⁷⁴ Although these were probably executed by the anonymous Bavarian craftsman whom Mabel credits with carving the likenesses of family members, rather than by Dolmetsch himself, they were made under his close supervision, and therefore their designs must have met with his approval.

earliest viols, made in New England rather than in Olde England, represent a fascinating and important point of intersection and contrast between the past, whose music he sought so energetically to revive, and the era in which he himself lived.

RECENT RESEARCH ON THE VIOL

Ian Woodfield

This bibliography is intended as a concise guide to recent research related to the viol. It lists books, articles, dissertations, selected reviews, published papers, and major scholarly editions of music. Research on any aspect of the viol (and related instruments such as the baryton) will qualify for inclusion. A sign of the changing times, this list incorporates an increasing number of on-line citations. Suggestions for additional entries in any language would be most welcome. They should be sent to Ian Woodfield, School of Creative Arts, Queen's University Belfast, Belfast BT7 1NN, Northern Ireland, or e-mailed to <i.woodfield@qub.ac.uk>.

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REVIEWS

Johann Sebastian Bach. *Drei Sonaten für Viola da Gamba und obligates Cembalo, BWV 1027–1029.* Facsimile ed. Hille Perl. Edition Walhall EW 888, Magdeburger Faksimile Edition, Magdeburg, 2014. ISMN M-50070-888-9. €29.80.

Over the course of his life Johann Sebastian Bach assembled groups of his instrumental pieces by genre into sets, often of six pieces, and nearly always in multiples of three, forming cumulative, exemplary cycles. The *Six Concerts à plusieurs instruments*, known as the “Brandenburg” Concertos, BWV 1046–1051, form the most famous example. Bach wrote out the entire set in his most beautiful hand in 1721, dedicating it to Christian Ludwig Margrave of Brandenburg. Bach sent his meticulously prepared presentation copy hoping for a position that did not materialize. He also collected his *Sei Solo*, the six Sonatas and Partitas for unaccompanied violin, BWV 1001–1006, in a beautiful autograph copy, and, despite the lack of an extant autograph, ample evidence exists with the copy of his *6 Suites a Violoncello Solo senza Basso*, BWV 1007–1012, in Anna Magdalena Bach’s hand to indicate that beyond writing six suites, he was concerned with their organization and presentation as a set. Bach’s obituary, written jointly by his son Carl Philipp Emanuel and his former pupil Johann Friedrich Agricola, corroborates the importance accorded to sets of pieces, citing the six violin solos and the six cello suites among Bach’s unpublished works worthy of special mention.¹ Neither of these sets was destined for a wider audience during Bach’s lifetime, each being first published nearly a century after their completion, and neither bore a dedication. For Bach, organizing pieces into larger sets also had personal significance that went beyond any outward search for affirmation or remuneration: a way to satisfy his own artistic sense of integrity, if not to pass the music on to posterity.

¹ David, Hans T. and Arthur Mendel, rev. and expanded by Christoph Wolff: *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), 394.

While Bach clearly took a great deal of interest in the viola da gamba, prominently featuring it in both of his surviving Passions and including obbligato parts for the instrument in Cantatas 76, 106, 152, 198, 199, 205, and the sixth Brandenburg Concerto, not to mention the three sonatas for harpsichord and viola da gamba,² no evidence survives to suggest that he planned or completed any sort of retrospective project featuring the viol. Unlike the six sonatas for violin and harpsichord, BWV 1014–1019, which were transmitted as complete sets in two important sources,³ the source material for Bach's gamba sonatas is more fragmentary in nature and does not collect the three works into a set. While the idea has been posited that with exactly twelve sonatas for harpsichord and melody instrument, Bach might have conceived the three for traverso along with the three for gamba as a counterpart to the six for violin, to form a larger cycle of twelve, much as the six violin solos together with the six cello suites form a larger cycle of twelve pieces for unaccompanied string instruments,⁴ no surviving evidence explicitly links these pieces in such a grand scheme. Each of the three sonatas for viola da gamba and obbligato harpsichord survives in its own unique source, all of which are now in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. The source for the first sonata in G major, BWV 1027, is a set of parts in Bach's own neat autograph, dating from about 1740, now the second work bound into a volume of Bach autographs collected by Georg Poelchau (1773–1836), with the call number P 226.⁵ The other two sonatas survive

² For further details on Bach's use of the gamba see Ulrich Prinz, *J. S. Bachs Instrumentarium: Originalquellen, Besetzung, Verwendung* (Stuttgart: Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart, 2005), 538–55.

³ A set of parts to the six harpsichord and violin sonatas, primarily copied by the Bach pupil Johann Heinrich Bach, but with a couple of movements in J. S. Bach's hand, prepared in 1725 in Leipzig, as well as the complete set in score in the hand of the Bach pupil Johann Christoph Altnickol, prepared between 1747 and 1759, can be found in the Berlin State Library (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin), with the call numbers St 162 and P 229 respectively.

⁴ Siegbert Rampe, *Bachs Orchester- und Kammermusik: Das Handbuch, Teilband 2: Kammermusik* (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 2013), 130.

⁵ John Butt's essay "The Sources," included in Lucy Robinson's edition of the gamba sonatas (London: Faber, 1987) provides an excellent overview of the

in manuscript copies from 1753 in the hand of Christian Friedrich Penzel (1737–1801), a Bach pupil who, after Bach's death, became prefect of the Thomasschule in Leipzig, where he had ready access to Bach's items that remained there. Like Bach's autograph version of BWV 1027, Penzel's copy of the third sonata in G minor, BWV 1029, with the call number St 163, transmits the piece in two separate parts, one for the viola da gamba and one labeled "Cembalo," which contains only the harpsichord part. A set of autograph parts to BWV 1029 was available to Wilhelm Rust in 1859 when he prepared the Bach-Gesellschaft's edition of the gamba sonatas, but its whereabouts can no longer be traced. Penzel's copy of the second sonata in D major, BWV 1028, presents the work in a score, call number P 1057, which is accompanied by a separate gamba part in an unidentified hand, which contains many slurs that differ from those in the score.

Bach's gamba sonatas have benefited from surprisingly few editions that actually include a part for the viola da gamba, as opposed to an arrangement for the cello, the viola, or something even further afield.⁶ Because the three sonatas are not preserved as a set in a single source, and because two of the sonatas survive only in non-autograph, posthumous copies, it is not really surprising that the item under consideration here is the first printed facsimile to be published. Hille Perl's new facsimile edition reproduces the three sources from the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin: Bach's autograph parts to BWV 1027, P 226; Penzel's score copy of BWV 1028, along with the viol part in a different hand, P 1057; and Penzel's parts to BWV 1029, St 163. Perl includes a one-page Preface in German, with an English translation by Howard Weiner. The edition consists of a full-color photographic reproduction of the three sources, measuring approximately 34.0 × 21.3 cm, large enough to show each of the sources at original size, although they all appear to be slightly reduced in the facsimile. The edition consists of the

subject. Laurence Dreyfus's edition of the gamba sonatas (Leipzig: Peters, 1985) also contains helpful information on the sources.

⁶ Mary Cyr's review of the four practical editions released between 1985 and 1987—those of Lucy Robinson (1987) and Laurence Dreyfus (1985) mentioned earlier, as well as those of Hans Eppstein (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1987) and Jean-Louis Charbonnier (Paris: Heugel, 1985)—in *Early Music* 17, no. 1 (February 1989): 106–13, traces the publication history of Bach's gamba sonatas.

main, softbound volume that contains the facsimiles of the harpsichord parts, or in the case of BWV 1028 a three-staff system, for the three sonatas and all the editorial material, together with an inserted booklet containing the three gamba parts. The relatively heavy paper seems to be of good quality, and the definition of the high-quality, four-color color printing is very fine with the resolution of the image on the page clear enough to reveal further detail under the magnifying glass.

The question that arises then, in an age when so much music is available free of charge on the internet, is, "What does the print edition offer beyond what is available online?" In fact, all three sources can be viewed and downloaded from IMSLP in high-resolution scans. In the case of this edition, the quality of printing and paper are excellent and the format, close to the size of the original sources, is larger than would be possible with the printers most people have for personal use. Because the sources are perfectly legible, it would be possible, as Perl suggests in her preface, to play from this facsimile. However, most players probably want to add their own indications to their performance copies of pieces, and the paper used here does not look as though it would take pencil easily. In any case pencil marks would not show up well against the light brown background of facsimile, and, furthermore, it would be a shame to obscure the original image with many extra markings.

Perhaps the publisher could have gone just a bit further in adding value to the facsimile. In particular, it would have been nice to have more detail on the sources. The notes provided by Laurence Dreyfus in his 1985 edition and the brief essay on the sources by John Butt in Lucy Robinson's 1987 edition both contain considerably more detail than the preface to this facsimile. For example, Butt puts forward a coherent case to support the idea that Penzel's copy of BWV 1029 likely would have been faithful to Bach's lost autograph in great detail, perhaps even with regard to how the music was laid out on the paper. Perl makes no mention of the other extant version of the G major sonata as trio for two flutes and continuo, BWV 1039, nor of the surviving parts for the piece in that version. With nearly three decades intervening since the publication of the performance editions of Dreyfus, Robinson, Hans

Eppstein, and Jean-Louis Charbonnier,⁷ one would think that the time would be ripe for a thorough and updated summation of the state of knowledge on the sources, and that the first publication in facsimile of these sonatas would be the ideal place for such an essay. Additionally, it would not have been too difficult to add a little more labeling to make it easier to identify the origins of each source, without having to refer back to the preface. The actual appearance of the facsimile with each sonata following the previous one in a booklet does little to discourage the misapprehension that the three sonatas were actually collected into a set by Bach or by one of his pupils, when, in fact, the first known occasion where these sonatas were brought together was their publication by the Bach-Gesellschaft in about 1860.

In short, this is a well-produced and reasonably priced facsimile of the primary sources for three works that are central to the viola da gamba repertoire. All but the most budget-conscious viol player will find it a valuable library addition.

John Moran

Anonymous. *Instruction oder eine anweisung auff der Violadigamba* (Instruction or a Method for the Viola da Gamba). Facsimile ed. Bettina Hoffmann. Edition Güntersberg G240, Heidelberg, 2014. xii + 56 pp. ISMN 979-0-50174-240-0. €23.50.

The German/Italian cellist, musicologist, and viola da gamba player Bettina Hoffmann (whose previous publications include several books and articles about the viola da gamba, plus editions of Antonio Vivaldi's cello sonatas, Domenico Gabrielli's cello *Ricercare*, and Silvestro Ganassi's viol music) offers here a true rarity: an anonymous German viola da gamba tutor attributed to the first half of the eighteenth century. As Hoffmann explains at the outset of her five-page introduction to the facsimile, "no other German text from the Renaissance or Baroque periods which deals exclusively with this instrument and provides technical instruction on fingering and bowing has survived or is even known by name."

⁷ See footnote 6.

The volume in question was originally part of the collection of Carl Ferdinand Becker (1804–1877), who, in addition to his activities as organist at Leipzig’s Nicolaikirche (one of the four churches for which J. S. Bach had been responsible) and teacher at the Leipzig Konservatorium, amassed a collection that today is among the few large private music libraries of the nineteenth century to have survived virtually intact. Although Hoffmann’s introduction speaks of the collection as comprising “over 1,100 printed works” and a “much smaller section of fewer than 20 manuscripts,” the website for the University of Leipzig (<https://www.ub.uni-leipzig.de/forschungsbibliothek/projekte/projekte-chronologisch/musikbibliothek-von-carl-ferdinand-becker/>), where the Becker collection now resides, cites around 1900 music items (575 in manuscript and 1325 in print), some 1499 music theoretical works from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries, and 280 volumes of libretti and concert and opera programs. From the publication dates of the two nineteenth-century catalogues of this assembly and a notation in Becker’s hand on the title page of the *Instruction*, he apparently acquired it in 1844. The small collection of Becker’s manuscript items considered by Hoffmann, unlike the geographically wide-ranging components of his printed collection, are almost all linked to one or another of four Saxon cities: Leipzig, Dresden, Zschopau, and Weißenfels. Becker dated the *Instruction* (identified by the RISM number 225005554) “about 1730.” Hoffmann, accepting this timeframe and stressing that the anonymous author of the treatise must himself have been a player, offers a speculative list of the gamba players “active in the political and geographic environs of Leipzig in the first decades of the eighteenth century” that includes some well-known names—Christian Ferdinand Abel (known to J. S. Bach at Cöthen), Michael Kühnel, and Ernst Christian Hesse—among several more obscure ones: Gottfried Bentley, Johann Christian Hertel, Johann Philipp Eisel, and one Müller, whom Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg called “an excellent gambist” in his 1754 *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*.

In his otherwise enthusiastic review of the *Instruction* for the English *Viola da Gamba Society Journal* 8 (2014), Richard Carter

seems to take issue with Hoffmann's easy acceptance of Becker's dating of the treatise: "Without a more closely defined context the significance of the manuscript is difficult to assess. Until we know more about the circumstances of its genesis and the status of its author it is only possible to speculate on how much weight can be attached to its content. Much could change, if Becker were shown to have been wrong about the date, or the manuscript were found to originate elsewhere." But Thomas Fritsch, in his equally positive review in *Viola da Gamba* 94 (December 2014/January 2015), the magazine of the Viola da gamba-Gesellschaft (based in Switzerland, but catering to the entire German-speaking gamba community), gives a fascinating insider's perspective on the orthography of the *Instruction*. Being a Leipziger, he explains, he is well acquainted with (and loves) many of the peculiarities of the Saxon dialect still spoken in that city, including the way many vowels are drawn out and several consonants frequently exchanged (*d* and *t*, *b* and *p*, *n* and *m*). "I was therefore astonished to find in the *Instruction* many examples of such alterations of words, alterations adhered to with, for the time, surprising consistency." He then lists ten such examples, among them "samft" for "sanft" (gently), "dobbeliret" for "verdoppelt" (doubled), "egahl" for "egal" (equal), etc., concluding: "This is strong proof of the origins of the author. The words sung by the chorus to Peter in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* come to mind: 'Wahrlich, du bist auch einer von denen; denn deine Sprache verrät dich.' [Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee.]" (How many times, one wonders, must Fritsch, a virtuoso called by the American Bach scholar Robert Marshall "the Casals of the gamba," have listened to those words while "recovering" from playing the tenor aria "Geduld, geduld," and awaiting the great "Komm, süßes Kreuz"....)

The facsimile is presented in landscape paperback format, with the *recto* and *verso* of each of its 18 sheets reproduced—very slightly larger than its original 16 × 20.5 cm size—on the right side of the book's page spread. (At some point, sheets 2r to 18r were numbered in pencil from 1 to 33. The facsimile omits blank pages, and therefore begins with the title page 3, followed immediately by pages 5 to 30.) The left-hand side is reserved for an exact tran-

scription of the page's contents, given both in the original German, and in a finely done English translation by Australian musicologist and gamba player Michael O'Loughlin. Since the majority of the manuscript (with the exception of Latin or Italian terms) is written in *Kurrentschrift*, a kind of "cursive Fraktur" with which today even most German speakers are not very familiar, Hoffmann's transcription into Roman type will serve her German audience nearly as well as O'Loughlin's work will serve English readers. In the last lines of her introduction, Hoffmann points out that the translation occasionally departs from a literal rendering of the German into something a bit more clearly related to gamba playing. In this regard, O'Loughlin may be said to assist bi-lingual German/English readers as well as pure Anglophones. The manuscript is a fair copy, probably penned by a professional. Hoffman suggests that it might have served either as a *Stichvorlage* (final preparation copy) for an intended edition that never materialized, or as one of the numerous handwritten items that circulated throughout the eighteenth century in lieu of printed versions. On only a small handful of leaves, clarifying comments in another, less polished, hand appear, as if a student were making notes.

At first glance, the *Instruction* appears not as detailed as the viol treatises of Simpson (1659, with reprints 1667 and 1713), Danoville (1687), or Rousseau (also 1687), nor, as one might expect from a work of "about 1730," as lengthy or thorough as later German treatises such as those of Johann Joachim Quantz (1752), C.P.E. Bach (1753/62), or Daniel Gottlob Türk (1789). No details about holding the instrument or bow are given, only the bass gamba is addressed, and, with the exception of a few short continuo-like examples encountered in the section devoted to bowing, no pieces or even exercises of any real length are given. And yet, quite a bit of information lies within its modest confines, particularly when one realizes that nearly a third of its pages are taken up with rudimentary matters such as counting notes and rests, tuning the viol by unisons, the meanings of various Italian tempo indications, how sharps and flats function, and how to read seven (!) different clefs. (No octave-transposing treble-clef tenor consort parts here, since "from these clefs comes transposition, for which one imagines one [of them].... Thus with these seven clefs one can

transpose [the notes] on any line or space.” The reader will be forgiven if this rather offhand statement brings to mind Simpson’s simple admonition following the third of his musical examples, on page 6, which already ascends to a perfect twelfth above the open top D string (*a*’): “If you find any difficulty in this Example, Play it the slower, until your *Hand* shall have overcome it.”) Fingerings for an ascending chromatic scale from the low open D string show covering both the first and second frets with the first finger, and no use of the fourth finger until the top string is reached. However, the first complete page’s “*ablication*,” or the mapping out on the fingerboard the various notes it contains, shows chromatic “1-2-3-4” fingerings from every fret, including the top one. The prospective bass violist is thus shown, at the very outset, a range nearly as large as Simpson’s.

One of the most interesting features of the *Instruction* is its discussion of bowing. Two-note slurs are introduced as early as page 5, and pages 12–14 give rules for bowing—illustrated by eighteen short examples in which the direction of each bowstroke is indicated—that correspond closely with those in George Muffat’s 1698 *Florilegium secundum*. A vertical stroke indicates a push bow, a “V” a pull bow. The overarching concern is to have a push bow at the beginning of a bar whenever possible. To accomplish this, the examples frequently require the “pull-pull” hooking encountered in Marais’s “*t-t*.” But lifting the bow following a last-beat-of-the-measure “push” in order to retake and play the next downbeat “push” is also common, and infers a more highly articulated style, perhaps, than many continuo players might be otherwise inclined to adopt. Further on, page 26 shows a variety of different ways to arpeggiate chords (any one of which might, for example, be applied to the *St. Matthew Passion* recitative “Ja, freilich will in uns das Fleisch und Blut”). Present without comment is also an example showing eight sixteenth notes, each with its own staccato dot, under one slur, proof that the author of the *Instruction* was not unfamiliar with more virtuosic bowings.

Five pages are devoted to scales, chords, and cadence formulas. On page 15, the major and minor scales beginning on A, B \flat , C, D, E, F, G, and B \sharp are presented in what may seem—to any modern player familiar with the kind of scale books that contain, on page

after page, only three- and four-octave scales written out in their entirety, ascending and descending—to be a rather peculiar fashion. Only the first, third, fifth, sixth, and seventh notes are given. This format immediately highlights the triad associated with each key. An accompanying prose description informs the reader that “the second and fourth always remain [the same], according to the initial key signature.” The following four pages amplify this theoretical approach, showing, for the same keys, examples that begin with an ascending triad, followed by a complete ascending or descending scale that includes a *cadens*, or cadence point, on what moderns would term the leading tone (for the ascending scale) or supertonic (for the descending one). Each scale terminates in a three-, four-, or six-note chord. Most of these are playable on the bass gamba, but some (such as the E minor chord *E-B-e-g-b-e'*) would require awkward shifts or unusual fingerings. A Bas Clause (translated as “bass formula”) consisting of the two dominants and tonic that would support the sequence “tonic second inversion, dominant, tonic” is also provided for each key. Though the major and minor keys built on C#, D#, F#, and G# are cited, they are not provided with examples, since “these keys are very rarely used.” (In a rather surprising omission, the *Instruction* contains no discussion of keys whose tonics are flatted notes beyond B♭, though surely E♭ and A♭ major would have been in general use.)

Pages 20–22 discuss the proper placement and execution of trills, and the final four pages give a series of ornaments on forty-six different, frequently encountered two- to six-note intervals or melodic patterns. The student is thus instructed in the art of *extempore* ornamentation by the same combination of careful observation, structured elaboration, memorization, and osmosis advocated in methods from Ortiz through Quantz.

In large letters following the final, quite florid ornament example (which includes twenty-one notes under a single slur!), the anonymous author concludes with: “When the SCHOLAR has understood and put into PRACTICE these INSTRUCTIONS, he needs no further INFORMATION, and can assist himself. FINIS.” Richard Carter finds this “a grandiose claim for such a modest document.” But the gamba player who has thoroughly internalized all of the practical and theoretical knowledge presented in the *Instruc-*

tion would indeed be positioned to acquit himself well in most musical situations with which he might be presented. We thus owe Bettina Hoffmann and the Güntersberg Verlag a debt of gratitude for making available, in such an accessible format, this fascinating document.

Kenneth Slowik

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John Moran teaches viola da gamba, Baroque cello, and musicology at Peabody Conservatory. He studied modern and Baroque cello at Oberlin, where he was fortunate to get his foundation on the viol with Catharina Meints. He studied Baroque cello at the Schola Cantorum (Basel) with Hannelore Mueller, subsequently earning a Ph.D. in musicology at King's College London where his advisor was Laurence Dreyfus, all the while practicing viol in secret. As a member of REBEL, he performs all over the U.S. and in Europe. With violinist Risa Browder, he co-directs Modern

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Ian Woodfield received his bachelor's degree from Nottingham University and his master's and doctorate from King's College, University of London. He was Herschel Fellow at Bath University in 1976–77. In 1978 he was appointed to the music faculty of Queen's University Belfast, where he is now Director of the School of Music. His first book, *The Celebrated Quarrel Between Thomas Linley (Senior) and William Herschel: An Episode in the Musical Life of 18th-Century Bath*, was published by the University of Bath in 1977. He has also contributed articles and reviews to *Early Music* and the *Proceedings of the Royal Music Association*. His book *The Early History of the Viol* (published by Cambridge University Press in 1984) is now a classic on the subject. He delivered two lectures at the 1994 VdGSA Conclave. He has recently published two books: *Music of the Raj* (Oxford University Press, 2000) and *Opera and Drama in Eighteenth-Century London* (OUP, 2001).